



THE GRAPEVINE



There is a very fine line between "hobby" and "mental illness."

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Meeting And Program

NOTICE: Our December meeting will take place at 7:30 P.M. on the 7th of November. The meeting will be at the FBO/Main Terminal Building on the grounds at KLVK.

Calendar:

Month	Date	Speaker	Topic
October	3 rd	Stu Eberhart	Racing a P-51 at Reno
November	7th	Dick Jones	Aerial photography — 40 years worth
December	5th	EAA HQ	Chapter video's — quite good actually

For Our December program, EAA HQ has provided monthly videos for all chapters to show. We will see a couple of them.

Mailbag:

This is a special story shared by Bob Cowan B-17 "All American" (414th Squadron, 97BG)

Crew

Pilot- Ken Bragg Jr.
Copilot- G. Boyd Jr.
Navigator- Harry C. Nuessle
Bombardier- Ralph Burbridge
Engineer- Joe C. James
Radio Operator- Paul A. Galloway
Ball Turret Gunner- Elton Conda
Waist Gunner- Michael Zuk
Tail Gunner- Sam T. Sarpolus
Ground Crew Chief- Hank Hyland

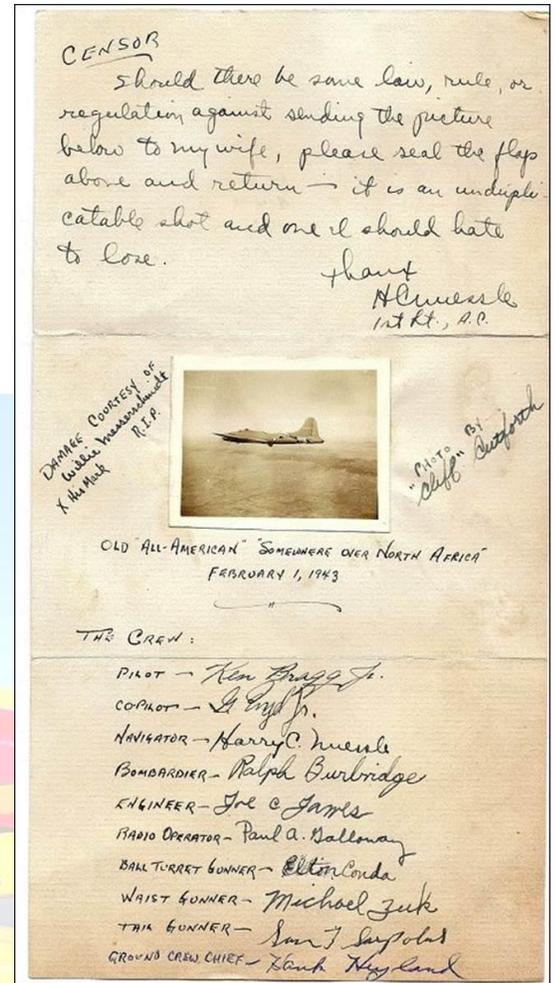
In 1943 a mid-air collision on February 1, 1943, between a B-17 and a German fighter over the Tunis dock area, became the subject of one of the most famous photographs of WW II. An enemy fighter attacking a 97th Bomb Group formation went out of control, probably with a wounded pilot, then continued its crashing descent into the rear of the fuselage of a Flying Fortress named "All American", piloted by Lt. Kendrick R. Bragg, of the 414th Bomb Squadron.

When it struck, the fighter broke apart, but left some pieces in the B-17. The left horizontal stabilizer of the Fortress and left elevator were completely torn away. The two right engines were out and one on the left had a serious oil pump leak. The vertical fin and the rudder had been damaged, the fuselage had been cut almost completely through connected only at two small parts of the frame, and the radios, electrical and oxygen systems were damaged. There was also a hole in the top that was over 16-feet long and 4 feet wide at its widest; the split in the fuselage went all the way to the top gunner's turret.



bomb run and released his bombs over the target.

When the bomb bay doors were opened, the wind turbulence was so great that it blew one of the waist gunners into the broken tail section. It took several minutes and four crew members to pass him ropes from parachutes and haul him back into the forward part of the plane. When they tried to do the same for the tail gunner, the tail began flapping so hard that it began to break off. The weight of the gunner was adding some stability to the tail section, so he went back to his position.



Although the tail actually bounced and swayed in the wind and twisted when the plane turned and all the control cables were severed, except one single elevator cable still worked, and the aircraft miraculously still flew!

The tail gunner was trapped because there was no floor connecting the tail to the rest of the plane. The waist and tail gunners used parts of the German fighter and their own parachute harnesses in an attempt to keep the tail from ripping off and the two sides of the fuselage from splitting apart.

While the crew was trying to keep the bomber from coming apart, the pilot continued on his

The turn back toward England had to be very slow to keep the tail from twisting off. They actually covered almost 70 miles to make the turn home. The bomber was so badly damaged that it was losing altitude and speed and was soon alone in the sky.

For a brief time, two more Me-109 German fighters attacked the All American. Despite the extensive damage, all of the machine gunners were able to respond to these attacks and soon drove off the fighters. The two waist gunners stood up with their heads sticking out through the hole in the top of the fuselage to aim and fire their machine guns. The tail gunner had to shoot in short bursts because the recoil was actually causing the plane to turn.



Allied P-51 fighters intercepted the All American as it crossed over the Channel and took one of the pictures shown. They also radioed to the base describing that the appendage was waving like a fish tail and that the plane would not make it and to send out boats to rescue the crew when they bailed out.

The fighters stayed with the Fortress, taking hand signals from Lt. Bragg and relaying them to the base. Lt. Bragg signaled that 5 parachutes and the spare had been "used" so five of the crew could not bail out. He made the decision that if they could not bail out safely,

then he would stay with the plane to land it.

Two and a half hours after being hit, the aircraft made its final turn to line up with the runway while it was still over 40 miles away. It descended into an emergency landing and a normal roll-out on its landing gear.

When the ambulance pulled alongside, it was waved off because not a single member of the crew had been injured. No one could believe that the aircraft could still fly in such a condition. The Fortress sat placidly until the crew all exited through the door in the fuselage and the tail gunner had climbed down a ladder, at which time the entire rear section of the aircraft collapsed.

This old bird had done its job and brought the entire crew home uninjured.



I love these old war stories, especially the ones with a happy ending!

November 2013 Minutes

MINUTES: GENERAL MEETING, EAA CHAPTER 663, 7:30 PM, 11/7/2013, TERMINAL BUILDING KLVK.

Chapter president Ralph Cloud called the meeting to order.

Guests Scott and Gerald Mulholland (sp?), and our guest speaker Dick Jones introduced themselves.

The minutes of the October meetings were approved as printed in "The Grapevine".

Treasurer Mark Palajac reported membership at 98 soles with 6 for next year. The chapter fund stands at \$3,553.40. His report was approved.

Business: The annual dinner: The date will be January 18th, 2013 cocktails at 6, dinner at 7. We are going to try and get the same caterer as last year. There were no complaints. It was decided to charge \$25 per person to cover costs. We are still grappling for a speaker.

Web master Brad Olsen mentioned that he is making the standard up dates to our web site. He also mentioned the imminent arrival of the first of his RV-14 kit.

Newsletter: Editor Jeffry Larson reported that there were three correct answers to the “What Is It” contest. Barry Weber Bob Tucknott and Dave Flournoy identified the DR-109, the One Designs big brother. None were present so the monthly prize will be kept until next month.

Announcements: The time for paying dues has arrived: \$30. The next board meeting will be on 11/21 at Ralph’s place, the general meeting 12/5.

Member’s forum: Dave Dent reported on the first flight of Tom Irion’s (sp?). It flew nicely but there was some shaking (more on that later). Dave Stiehr asked for suggestions on a good handheld radio. We had nothing. Ralph mentioned that the airport commission will meet on Monday the 18th at 6:30 in the terminal, topic: changes coming to the airport. The Livermore City Council meets on 11/25 at 7:00 down town. Matters concerning the airport are on the agenda. Ralph suggested looking on their website to determine the order of business and plan your arrival accordingly.

Break and then Program: Dave Dent said that Tony Ginn our original hopeful couldn’t make due to other commitments, but he did introduce Dick Jones, aerial photographer, author, actor, and one of the “Keepers Of The Blub” (the 112 year old light bulb in the East Avenue Fire Station). Dick showed many examples of his photography, some he actually gets paid for! He also passed on many stories from his past. He’s been hanging around the airport since 1964. Thanks Dick.

Meeting adjourned for pie.

November 2013

MINUTES: BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING, 11/21/2013, 7:45 PM, RALPH’S PLACE.

Ralph Cloud, Dave Dent, Bob Farnam, John Goldsmith, Bruce Cruikshank and Bob Cowan were present.

The treasurer was not present, and there was no report.

Business: Tools: Bob Farnam’s hangar has a new functioning lock box protecting the same old tools.

Annual dinner: There was more discussion on possible speakers. Dave Dent is trying to convince Steve Losey, crew chief on nearly all Scaled Composites projects to come talk to us. John Goldsmith suggested Paul Dye current editor of “Kit Planes” magazine and former Lead Flight Director of NASA’s Human Space Flight Program. John will see if Paul is willing and able. Dave Dent contacted the caterer we had last year, Bonehead’s Texas BBQ will again provide the food with the same menu as last year.

The program for the December meeting may be a couple of the videos from EAA Headquarters meant for this purpose.

Announcements: Next meeting will be 12/5 with the board following 12/19.

Interspersed between the above topics was a good bit of hangar talk.

8:50, meeting adjourned for pie.

Respectfully submitted, Bruce Cruikshank, Secretary.

Feedback/Questions/Suggestions

Any and all feedback is welcome. Please take a few minutes to send suggestions, tips, corrections or any other feedback to: jeffrylite@comcast.net.

Cool videos found on the internet.

[Evian - A pretty darn good commercial.](#) – Thanks to Bruce Cruikshank

[Who needs a runway? Ok, maybe a little Dramamine.](#)

[I'm a Pilot – The Smothers Brothers are still funny.](#)

[A single harmonica at Carnegie Hall.](#) Not your grandpa's harp.

[Huge bear surprises photo shoot in BC.](#) – Thanks to Bruce Cruikshank

What is it? From last month Sponsored by:



3 correct entries were submitted, correctly identifying the DR-109. Bob, Dave and Barry failed to make the meeting so the final prize from Aircraft Spruce will be available for our December contest.

Congrats to all that participated and added points towards the year end prize of the custom made 17" model from Factory Direct Models. Sponsor prizes thanks to Aircraft Spruce. Don't forget to thank them when you call and make that next order. Might be worth jotting down a note in the comments section if you order online. Missed guess's still count one point each, tallied to the end of the year with a 2 guess limit per month.

Thanks to those that called Aircraft Spruce and mentioned this contest in the newsletter as they have agreed to continue their sponsorship. Prizes are available thanks to them. Please give them a call with your next order and tell them how much you

appreciate their generous donation to our monthly newsletter. Submit your answer to the newsletter editor to be eligible for a prize to be awarded at the regular chapter meeting. **You must be present to win but points are cumulative and incorrect guesses count.**

Winning entries will be decided by the email that is received with the earliest time stamp and the correct naming of the make/model of the pictured airplane as discovered. Winners that correctly identified the winning make/model that do NOT attend the meeting will forfeit the prize to the next available submission. Winning entries will be decided by the email that is received with the earliest time stamp and the correct naming of the make/model of the pictured airplane as discovered. Winners that correctly identified the winning make/model that do NOT attend the meeting will forfeit the prize to the next available submission. Chapter Judge's decision on correct identification is final.



Take a friend for a flight to an airport restaurant and he'll buy your lunch. If he doesn't, remind him how long the walk home is.

What is it?
Sponsored by:





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