

WARBIRD FLYER



★★★EAA Warbirds Squadron 2 Newsletter★★★



My Uncle Anthony

By Tony Caruso

This story is about my uncle, Anthony DeFusco, who was a Radio Gunner on a B-25 two-engine bomber during W.W. II.

My grandparents lived in Providence, Rhode Island. They had six sons, five of them and two grandsons served in the military during W.W.II; Uncle Anthony was the only one who did not come home.

Uncle Anthony was a Radio Gunner on a B-25, he and his crew was part of the 11th Bomb Squadron attached to the 341st Bombardment Group. They were in the Pacific and flew from an airbase located somewhere in China. They were part of the CBI (China-Burma-India) operation.

We never have had a lot of details about various missions, but I will try to recall what I can, please understand I was a young boy when all this was happening.

I do remember that during their 25th or so mission, they took a lot of ground fire and Uncle Anthony was hit in the foot. He wrote to the family from a field hospital and apparently he recovered from that injury without a great deal of difficulty. After returning to his crew (with his Purple Heart), they continued to go out on bombing missions. Not too long after his first injury, Grandma and Grandpa received a message via Western Union that the crew was missing in action. Months passed and a second Telegram arrived stating that the War Department had to presume the crew was lost. Their final flight was from Kweilin, China on a low-level combat mission to Anjen, China. They were reported lost near Lingling, China.

I have located a few records; the crew Uncle Anthony served with was as follows:

2nd Lt. John C. Halsell
2nd Lt. John M. Nagy
S/Sgt. Carroll B. Duncan
S/Sgt. Anthony J. DeFusco
S/Sgt. Joseph J. Kaldon

After the war, my Grandparents had a phone call from one of Uncle Anthony's war buddies who asked if he could visit them. At that time, I was probably about eight years old, but to this day

I can picture that young man walking through the door and sitting at the kitchen table with Grandma and Papa. You know it's not a good day when your Papa has tears in his eyes. The young man explained that he had gone through radio and armament school with Uncle Anthony and they were close friends. He said they were returning from a low-level combat mission when they ran

into bad weather. He was in another B-25 in the formation they were flying with. The aircraft commanders decided it would be wise to put some distance between them in such bad weather, he waved to Uncle Anthony, the aircraft turned away from each other and that was the last they saw of them. For that young man to come to see my grandparents, look them in the eyes, and tell the story must have taken as much courage as preparing for a mission (perhaps even more). I wish I could visit with this man, maybe some of his style would rub off!

The following is some additional information I have learned on the Internet: Uncle Tony was a member of the 11th Bomb Squadron, 341st Bomb Group, 10th Air Force, 14th Air Force (attached), China-Burma-India (CBI). They were part of the American Volunteer Group (AGV) which later became the Chinese American Task Force (CATF).

During 1942 they went to Karachi, India and later moved on to Chakulia, about 150 miles west of Calcutta to support General Claire Chennault's forces. The 11th Bomb Squadron made many bomb runs in an effort to destroy the Japanese railroad systems as well as roads. They made a lot of low-level bomb runs and were subjected to mass ground fire.

Doing additional research on the Web during 1998 I learn more about the 11th Bomb Squadron. Although de-activated after W.W.II, the squadron was later put back together and during 1998 they were flying B-52 aircraft out of Barksdale Air Force Base, Louisiana. The squadron commander was kind enough to send me a decal and a current squadron patch, the same as the one shown on Uncle Anthony's jacket. Imagine-- they started with B-25s and later flew B-52s.

I would love to hear from anyone connected with the 11th Bomb Squadron. ☺



WARBIRD FLYER

★★★ Cascade Warbirds ★★★
EAA Squadron 2 Newsletter

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Articles can be submitted via e-mail, to the editor's address.

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Editor's Page

By Frank Almstead

The results are in and we have a winner! Your *Warbird Flyer* took home first place at Airventure! The EAA Newsletter Editor Awards recognize the editors who have shown high excellence in their newsletters while focusing on content, layout, appearance, and consistency.

EAA Chapter Newsletter Editor Awards went to Frank Almstead, Warbirds of America Squadron 2, Seattle, Washington, first place; Allison Banning Chapter 822 in Wetumpka, Alabama, second place; and Ed Seurer, Chapter 35 in San Antonio, Texas, third place.

Again, I appreciate being out in front of the *Warbird Flyer* but it is the content that our members provide that makes the newsletter a quality product and they deserve the bulk of the credit. Those of you who have not yet contributed I hope you will take the time to give it consideration, and help capture the knowledge that each of you have, and record the history that you have lived.

As we roll into the end of the year Susan and I are reviewing the submissions for the 2010 Warbird Literary Award. This year those contributors were Ron McIlroy, Walt Spangenberg, Lyle Jansma, Chris Zimmer,

CO's Cockpit

By Greg Anders

Personally, I'm still waiting for summer....

We are starting in to our meeting season. If you did not make a meeting last year, you have missed a critical element of squadron ownership that carries some unique benefits. Most importantly, it is the heart of the winter camaraderie that is so critical to the health of our organization.

Every meeting covers the business of the squadron as well as covers a "Know Your Warbird" topic. We have had great speakers of every warbird generation giving first hand insight on the topics of flying warbirds, and more importantly and interesting, employing warbirds in the mission environment. We have also started the "Know Your Warbird Squadron"

Pete Stekel, Tony Caruso, Dick Kloppenburg and John Clark. In addition, I would like to thank our regular contributors Greg Anders, Fred Smyth, Curt Kinchen and Ed Rombauer for their timely (for the most part...), high quality efforts that are put forth for every edition. ✪

Let's hear it at editor@cascadewarbirds.org



segment which gives better insight to what the squadron does or how it works.

If we are meeting at our usual spot at the Museum of Flight, I try to make breakfast at Randy's just down the road. There are always squadron members there for breakfast prior to the meeting, and Randy serves a great meal. After the meeting, we enjoy lunch at the Museum café, then up for the board meeting, which all members are welcome and encouraged to attend.

Please make a concerted effort to join us for our meetings this year. We'd love to see you there.

Sic Tempus Ad Fugit!! ✪

Final Closure

By Richard L. Kloppenburg

In September 2004 I attended an airshow in Olympia, Washington, with my USAF 0-2 airplane (FAC or forward air controller aircraft). It was during that airshow, a Mr. James Miller of Bremerton came to my airplane and told me that his son, Lt. Fred Miller, was killed in an airplane like mine. He told me that the only details that he was given about his son's death was that he died in an airplane crash in Khe Sanh, in February of 1967. I was a Army pilot in Vietnam during 1967. He wanted to know more details about his son's death. I told him that I could probably find out what happened to the pilot, and thus that same fate would have probably been shared by his son.

I found that most U. S. Army records were destroyed by a fire at the record center in St. Louis. Consequently, most details of the crash are no longer available. Last year I became familiar with the POW/MIA agency in Hawaii, now called JPAC. I called a source at JPAC and asked if they could be of some help in my search for answers. The only thing that I had to go on, was that the crash was in Khe Sahn in 1967. My source indicated that he would do his best to solve the mystery.

When the details were obtained by JPAC, my source called me and told me that the Pilot's name was WO (Warrant Officer) Richard Wright and the crash site was in Phan Thiet, not Khe Sanh. I almost dropped the telephone; I was there that day. Now I had the day and place in Vietnam and I could then fill in the details. I was very involved in the search and rescue (SAR) and I could now report the details to Mr. James Miller. Final closure is now due.

The Pilot, WO Richard Wright, was initially an Army Caribou pilot. The Army transferred the Caribou's to the Air Force and Wright was subsequently transferred to the 183 Aviation Company (0-1 airplane company). I was already assigned to Phan Thiet when Wright was assigned to our 2nd Platoon. Wright was then given temporary duty and assigned to the 101 Airborne, which was operating in our area. Wright had not been in Phan Thiet more than a month.

The passenger, in the rear seat, was 1st Lt. Fred Miller, who was an intelligence officer in the 101st Airborne. Miller had volunteered to fly with the pilot, and to report any enemy activity to the 101st Airborne, who would then

search for the Viet Cong. That day, they were conducting visual recon, looking for any enemy activity, in an area West of Phan Thiet. Phan Thiet is a flat region that stretches about 30 miles from the South China Sea to the mountains. The landscape is dotted with rice paddies. I can still see the mountains in the distance from Phan Thiet.

The weather that day was clear and Wright was flying due West towards the mountains and entered a box canyon. Wright was forced to execute a 180 degree turn to avoid crashing into the canyon walls. During the turn, a down draft forced the 0-2 into the side of the mountain. The aircraft crashed at a high rate of speed with the fuel not shut off. Both Wright and Miller were killed instantly and the aircraft burned and was destroyed in the post crash fire.

When Wright's visual recon mission did not return to Phan Thiet airfield all pilots were directed to conduct a search mission. WO Wright did not give a distress call and we only knew the approximate vicinity of the flight. The jungle was extremely dense in the mountains and the airplane would have been very difficult to see from the air. The crash site was located by the smoke rising from the wreckage. The pilot and passenger were extracted by helicopter and the next day the Air Force conducted an air strike to destroy the airplane. This was required in order to destroy the radios and prevent them from falling into Viet Cong hands.

To authenticate this report I contacted my commanding officer, a Major Alvin Solomon. Major Solomon is currently retired and living near Ft. Rucker, Alabama. He personally visited the crash site to view the crashed airplane. In fact, Major Solomon ate breakfast with WO Wright the morning of the crash. Lt. Miller was positively identified by his Officer Candidate School class ring. This report has also been authenticated by the Public Affairs Office, Hickam Air Force Base, in Honolulu, Hawaii. The agency is the Joint POW/MIA accounting command (JPAC).

His father, Mr. James Miller, was a tail gunner in a B-17. His airplane was shot down in 1944 over Northern Germany where he was captured and interned in a prisoner of war camp for one year.

Richard L. Kloppenburg, Captain, Vietnam 1966-1967 ✪



Lt. Fred Miller's M-16 found post crash. (Richard Kloppenburg photo)

Squadron News

NOVEMBER SPEAKER SET

We are pleased, no, honored, to report that on 13 November our featured speaker will be Col. John Misterly, USAF (Ret). Colonel Misterly spent over thirty years flying warplanes for his country and his stories are for the ages. Initially a navigator aboard the famous B-29, John later completed pilot training, earned his wings, and flew the B-29, plus so many more aircraft that even a biographer cannot keep track. Join us on the 13th to hear the amazing story of the colonel's rubber raft ride, his earning of the submariner's dolphins, how he became an ace with a C-54 kill, and what it was like to be chosen as an exchange officer assigned to the U S Navy. Bring your checkbook; Col. Misterly has published two books detailing his career and will be happy to autograph your copies after the meeting.

SAVE THE DATE

It may seem early to think about the holidays, but save Saturday, December 11, to attend our Annual Christmas Banquet. This is our primary off-season event of the year and the camaraderie has been exceptional each time. We will again gather at The Medallion Hotel in Smokey Point (Arlington) and take over the combined Pilchuck and Olympic banquet rooms. The cocktail hour – once again to be expertly staffed by Beaver – runs from 1730 until dinner at 1900 (I know, that's an hour-an-a-half, but some of us drink slower than others). Dinner will include both Chicken Picatta and Mediterranean Flat Iron Steak. Salads, potatoes, rice, etc will complete the meal. The price has been held to just \$38 this year, and that includes the meal plus gratuity. We must pay in advance, so please send your checks

NOW to CWB, 1066 Yates Road, Oak Harbor, WA 98277.

Another bonus is that you can “Take the Elevator Home” and stay at the Medallion for just \$89 – your choice of a King or two Queens (assuming you reserve early). Call 888.784.2320 for your rezzie. And the room price includes a pretty nice hot breakfast buffet the next morning. For those of you unfamiliar with the Medallion, they have a spa and salon plus a great indoor pool that we seem to take over every year. If you're really energetic, there's also a fitness room on the premises.

Make your decision now and remit promptly. This event is also our annual awards banquet, plus we give away two (2) tickets for a B-17 flight next May. You could be a winner – if you're in attendance, that is. Our web site will have up-to-date info in there are any changes. Hope to see you there.

WINTER MEETING SKEDS

October starts our winter meetings at the Museum of Flight in Seattle. We get together on the second Saturday of October, November, January, and February at 10:00 AM. The speakers have been exceptional over the years and you can look forward to harrowing wartime exploits of heroes who have “been there, done that” as well as learn about different warbirds in our squadron. There's always an interesting tale to tell and plenty of “ready room” chatter to go along with the rest. This season we'll also hear from some of our scholarship winners, both those enrolled in the ground school-flight program and those who attended the Air Academy at Oshkosh. The sessions last two hours and we get together after in the Wings Café for a no-host luncheon. This is just the type

event that sounds legitimate enough to get you out of those pesky Saturday morning household chores. Kitchen passes will be countersigned at the door.

VINTAGE AIRCRAFT WEEKEND

VAW was another rousing success this recent Labor Day weekend. The Third Annual iteration, sponsored by Historic Flight Foundation, Snohomish County - Paine Field Airport, and others, showed just how much fun can be had when the aviation community gets together to showcase their airplanes. The military vehicle folks joined in and, even with the weather threatening, the civilians turned out in droves to learn a bit about history. Better than words can express, visit www.cascadewarbirds.org to see this first-rate collection through the lens of John Clark. Many thanks to all the volunteers who brought this event together.

EAA RECONSIDERING SQUADRON AIRCRAFT OWNERSHIP

In a very exciting move from headquarters, EAA Warbirds of America membership director, Adam Smith, has taken the initiative to open a dialogue among the Warbird Squadrons on organizational ownership and operation of aircraft.

While not yet an approved program, the discourse is being taken under consideration in hopes that it can be presented to the EAA board for eventual amendment to the current organizational bylaws that allow squadrons to possess only restoration projects, which must be sold prior to operation.

Squadron News

WARBIRDS WINGS PROGRAM DELEGATION

At EAA AirVenture, CO Greg Anders, and XO Dave Desmon, met with Bill Fischer, EAA Warbirds of America Executive Director, and Rick Seigfried, EAA Warbirds of America President, to discuss the “Warbirds Wings” program in the Northwest.

Working together, they concluded that the EAA’s current process, of National level designation of the venue for “Warbird Wings” programs, made it difficult to accurately reflect the interests of EAA Warbirds of America. As such, EAA Warbirds of America has delegated the authority to designate the venue for the Northwest region “Warbirds Wings” program to the Cascade Warbirds.

Greg notes, “Rick and Bill clearly understand that the squadrons are the backbone, eyes, and ears of the whole organization. To them, it was no big deal to vest this authority in the squadron, I think it is a fantastic statement and am thrilled that the Cascade Warbirds were the first squadron to be granted delegation authority.

WEBSITE STATISTICS FOR 2010

John is readying the website for 2011 and there are some exciting changes in store. 2010 was another great year for the website. Since our website was created it has had over 64,000 hits with about 32,000 new visitors. On the average about 30 people visit the site per day and on high months that average can go over twice that. The data gathered shows that the site is following its previous pattern within a couple of hundred visitors each month. However, it is on track to land over 1000 hits for the first time in September. Of those, 78% are new visitors.

Breaking the hits on the site down, the Airshow page is the most popular, followed by the newsletter archives and the comms page. The biography pages are next and continue to be a hit with those surfing our site. Lastly the scholarship link rounds out the top five pages with the most hits.

Our visitors keep on coming from all over the world. As you would expect, the United States is the top country with 92% of all hits coming from here. Canada follows with 5% and then Taiwan, Germany and Australia follow rounding out the top 5 countries. The graph below contains the history of the website hits for the past 6 years.

DON'T FORGET THE CWB MARKETPLACE

If you have something aviation related and you would like to peddle it, submit an ad for inclusion in this newsletter. Current members of the Squadron will be able to place classified-style “For Sale” and “Wanted” ads at no cost. Space limitations may apply on occasion, so the Editor will have final say on each issue on what gets in and what doesn't

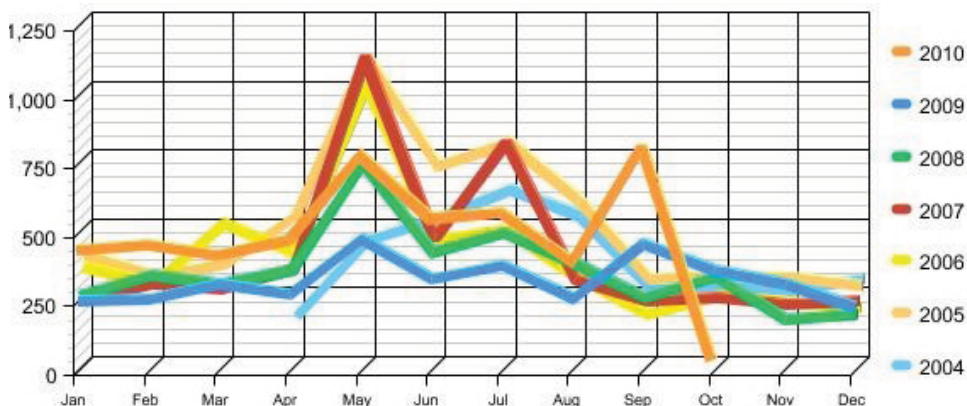
EDDIE PICARDO

Edward Samuel Picardo (1922 - 2010) passed away Aug. 24, 2010. Eddie was 88 years old. Eddie was born in South Park, went to Roosevelt High School until he joined the war effort. He was a B-24 Tail Gunner in World War II and flew 33 bombing missions. He was discharged June 6, 1945 and received the air medal and the Certification of Valor. He came back to Seattle and started his own produce route. He serviced grocery stores and restaurants in the Seattle area for 40 years. In 1996, he published a book about his experiences called “Tales of a Tail Gunner: A Memoir of Seattle and World War II.” He will be remembered for his crazy sense of humor, his war stories and his big heart.

NEW MEMBERS

We've had some folks see the light and take the plunge. When you meet them, wish them well and make them feel comfortable.

Stan Gatewood	Snohomish, WA
Mike Lavelle	Issaquah, WA
Jack Peeples	Oak Harbor, WA
Kyle Yates	Maple Valley, WA



Stuff Happens

By Ed Rombauer

The following story is true, only the names have been changed to protect the guilty.

There you are sitting in that shiny new turbine-powered aircraft that's big enough to load all your family, the dog, a load of luggage, and enough fuel to fly halfway across the country. The maintenance on the airplane is still under warranty so nothing has been neglected. You've got an aeronautical engineering degree from an expensive ivy league school as well as ten thousand hours as a military test pilot. Your current job as an F.A.A. flight examiner gives you plenty of practice and currency. You are as prepared for whatever the gods of aviation can throw at you as any person on this planet. And yet, sometimes no matter

to follow the Skippers lead and stay out of trouble. As he practiced his flying skills in the F-8 Crusader that the squadron was flying, he became a proficient, if not an inspired, type of pilot.

Towards the end of the training cycle and prior to shipboard deployment, the aircraft were armed with sidewinder missiles in order to practice missile tracking. This was in the days when fighter aircraft had no search radar and relied either on ground radar or the old Mk-1 eyeball to find the targets. Common training practice at the time was to power up the missile seeker head and use it to gain a slight advantage in finding the target. The missiles were fairly large, consisting of seeker electronics followed



Jimmy Labianco Photo via www.wikipedia.org

how much experience and training you have, no matter how good the maintenance or how much money you pour into your flying machine, stuff happens.

Arthur was the junior officer in the squadron. Fresh from flight training and advanced training in the RAG, he was happy to be assigned to a fighter squadron that was flying high-performance aircraft with a mission to be shipboard qualified and combat ready in less than a year. Realizing that he was young and inexperienced, Arthur was careful to pay attention and follow orders; he was, in other words, a non-risk taker.

As the junior pilot in the squadron, Arthur was assigned to fly on the squadron commanders wing, where he learned

by the war head and propelled with a five-inch rocket motor, while the training missiles were identical but carried no explosive charge in the war head.

It was a sunny clear day out over the Pacific Ocean training range where Arthur and his C.O. practiced their "find me if you can" games. First Arthur was the target and then after about thirty minutes they traded off and he became the hunter, trying to find a speck on the horizon while listening for a rasping tone from the missile seeker head. Being the target was easy, especially if you wanted to make your leader look good by not being too hard to find. But now the shoe was on the other foot as he tried to impress his C.O. by finding and tracking him quickly.

The minutes dragged by as the fuel gage approached minimum fuel while Arthur tried to find the more experienced pilot in the afternoon haze. For a moment he thought that his career as a fighter pilot might be in a graveyard spiral, when he thought that he saw something at about 3 o'clock. Checking the fuel gage, it indicated that he had just enough fuel for one last intercept, if he did it just right. Swinging the big Crusader around to the right, he brought the J-57 engine up to full military power and tapped the burner briefly to increase his speed to Mach. Reaching down to the armament panel he checked that the missile power switch was on and that the master arm switch was

However, the one sharp thump of flying through the other aircraft's wake is not what got his attention, for with the seeker tone angrily buzzing in his ears and the other aircraft filling his windscreen, Arthur's sidewinder had fired and was now locked on and heading for his Commanding Officers' aircraft! "Break left" Arthur screamed into his radio. The C.O. instinctively checked his mirror and seeing a rocket trail right on his tail slammed the stick over and pulled hard.

The missile passed harmlessly under the Crusader's wing and as it was an inert warhead, there was no exploding wire to cut the F-8's tail off. But what did go wrong?



Bud Taylor Photo via www.midwaysailor.com

off. This would allow the seeker head to help him find the target while not letting the rocket motor fire. As the range decreased, Arthur could clearly see that it was indeed the other F-8 and that he was perfectly positioned for an intercept. The sidewinder tone in his headset was growing in intensity as the two F-8s drew closer together, however wily coyote leader had caught a glimpse of his wingman and now pulled hard left to escape the sidewinder's tracking cone. Arthur, being less experienced, was a little slow to react and as he rolled the F-8 on its side and pulled hard to keep the missile lock on, the aircraft flew through, or rather settled through, the wake turbulence of his C.O.'s aircraft.

Everything had been done "by the book," the pilot made no mistakes, the ground crew had set the missile up properly, the aircraft maintenance was thorough, and proper procedures had been followed. Upon careful examination of the aircraft and of all the circuits associated with the missile, it was found that a small piece of wire, less than a half-inch long, used to jumper two switch contacts together, had broken both solder connections and when the aircraft hit wake turbulence the small piece of wire fell and shorted the missile jettison contacts causing the sidewinder to fire. What experience tells you is that in flying complex aircraft you can do everything right, and still stuff happens. ✪

Operation Midway: The Battle of Midway from the Japanese Navy Perspective

By John H. Clark

The world now knows the Battle of Midway as the turning point of the war in the Pacific for the United States. This pivotal conflict in the early days of WW2 didn't start out that way in name or intent on the part of the Japanese. Here, the Midway Operation will be outlined from the Japanese perspective; a viewpoint that is rarely explored in the popular retelling of the battle. In part one of this article, we will explore the following questions:

Why Midway?

What was the primary goal of the Japanese?

What did they hope to gain?

The strategies to accomplish the goals via the battle plan and action preceding the events of June 4th will be relayed as they occurred from the Japanese point of view.

The benefit of hindsight will be minimized except where necessary to complete the story.

In the Spring of 1942 Japanese forces were proving to be an unstoppable juggernaut. The Japanese Army and Navy under direction from the Imperial

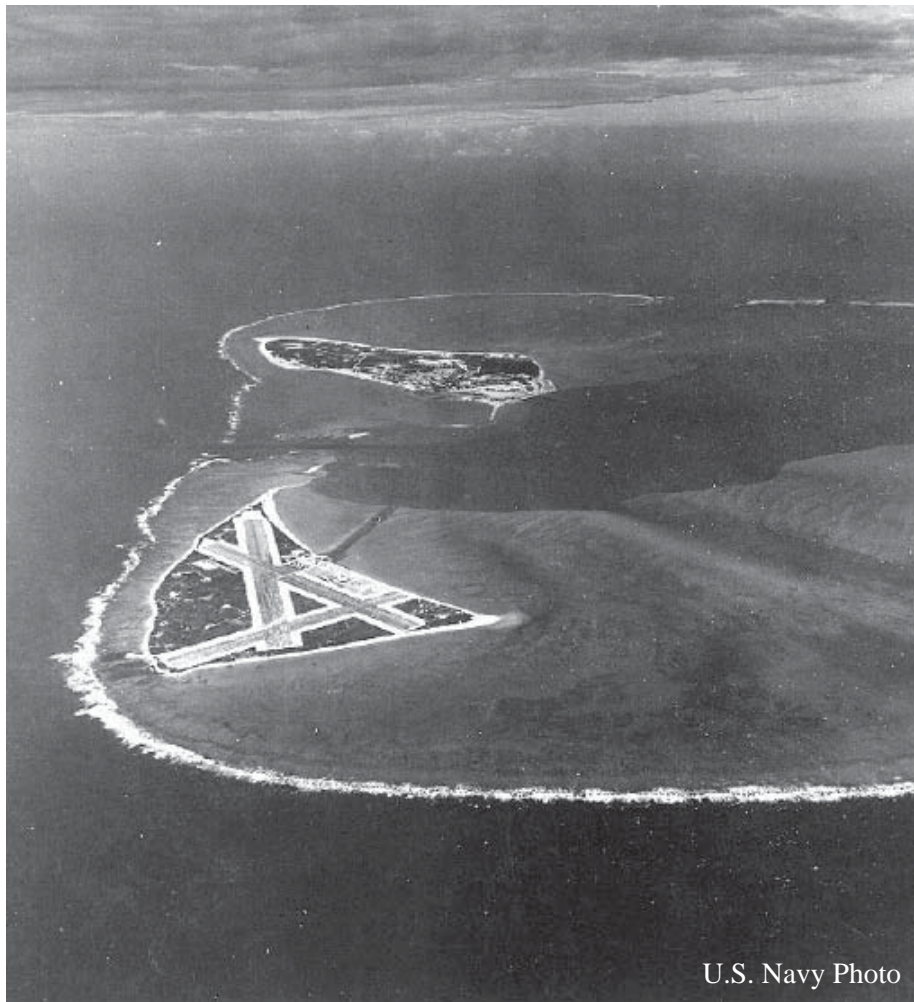
General Headquarters sought to expand the empire's sphere of influence from the Indian Ocean to the middle of the Pacific. The surprise attack at Pearl Harbor and the outright routing of British Navy in the Indian ocean helped to bolster Japanese confidence that no enemy was capable of a measurable defense. The Japanese military had absolute conviction that they were invincible and experience had verified that conviction time and time again. Yet there was one force that had yet to be conquered; the US Navy and specifically it's carrier-borne air power.

Japanese efforts for expansion into Asia and the Pacific

had been underway for nearly three years. The aim was to secure and control the regional resources while still protecting the home islands. Japanese Combined Fleet Rear Admiral Matome Ugaki surmised that a fast moving offensive was a far preferable measure than an in-place defense that would eventually be overrun by the great industrial potential of the U.S. If he could eliminate all American offensive capabilities in the Pacific, the United

States would take significant amount of time to recover any meaningful offensive capabilities.

Yet in April of 1942 the Doolittle raid had shown that American aircraft carriers could still pose a threat not only to Japanese Naval forces but also the sacred Japanese homeland. This attack cemented Japanese resolve to carry out plans that had been in development during the spring of 1942. These battle plans involved simultaneous strategies that included establishment of bases in the Aleutians as well as the two-island



U.S. Navy Photo

Photo # 80-G-451086 Midway is., with Eastern I. in foreground, Nov. 1941

atoll called Midway. Attacks on the American homeland could be staged from the Aleutians with a new four-engined Kawasaki bomber. Japanese air and naval bases would be created at Midway where attacks on Hawaii could be staged. End goal was to enable an invasion of Hawaii and at the very least the denial of it's use by enemy American forces.

Japanese Naval leadership surmised that by luring the US fleet to a place that they must defend, a swift and decisive strike could be made to eliminate any potential threat to the overall territorial expansion plans. With the

majority of the defensive capability of the US in the Pacific removed, Japanese forces could directly pressure Pearl Harbor and potentially the US mainland. This offensive posture would keep any retaliatory forces at bay and would allow unhindered Japanese expansion to the remaining territories throughout the Pacific. In terms of naval strength, the US had fewer ships by a ratio of 1:3 and limited combat experience. The USS Hornet was believed to be out of commission after sustaining heavy damage during the battle of Coral Sea. That left two operational carriers, the USS Enterprise and the USS Hornet and their battle fleets. Extensive tests with multiple war game scenarios on the battleship Yamato had confirmed the war planner's beliefs; the odds of success were stacked heavily in Japanese favor.

The Midway Operational fleet was made up of several forces, each with specific missions.

- A Northern Force commanded by Vice Admiral Hosogaya with two carriers, cruisers, destroyers, submarines and transports would strike Dutch Harbor then attack and invade the Aleutian islands of Attu and Kiska. Used primarily as a diversionary force, attacks would be made prior to operations at Midway to lure the US fleet to a point NNW of Hawaii and initially away from Midway.

- A combined Midway Invasion Force under command of Vice Admiral Kondo would attack from the Southwest of the island after airborne defenses had been destroyed. His force consisted of battleships, cruisers, destroyers, seaplane tenders, minesweepers and a Midway landing force of 5000 troops onboard a dozen transports.

- A Main Body force under command of Admiral Yamamoto contained an escort and guard force of battleships, cruisers, seaplane tenders, destroyers, and one light carrier. The Main Body would parallel the carrier strike force for enroute protection, guard the carriers and invasion force during operations and move in to attack US surface fleets at night.

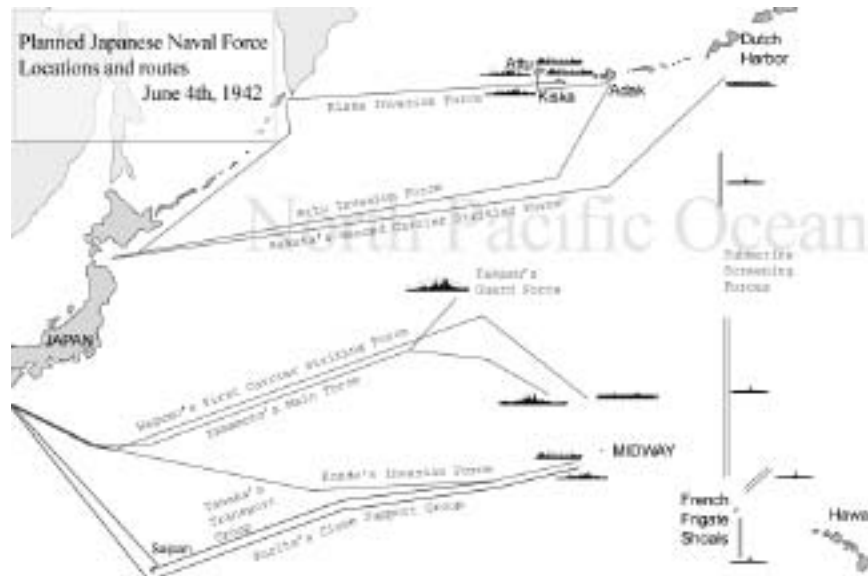
- A First Carrier Strike Force under Vice Admiral

Nagumo consisted of two carrier divisions of two carriers each, 261 aircraft, a supporting battleship, along with several cruisers and destroyers. Their course would take them to a point Northwest of Midway for the launching of airstrikes on the island and US Naval forces (A third carrier division of two carriers was included in the original task plan but did not participate after heavy aircrew losses at Coral Sea.)

- An Advance Submarine Force under Vice Admiral Komatsu with 15 submarines and two submarine tenders. This force was tasked with setting up four submarine screens along the possible US Fleet routes East of Midway island.

- A reconnaissance force called Operation K with two flying boats would operate out of French Frigate Shoals at a point halfway between Midway and Hawaii.

So it was that the Japanese Navy set out from Ominato on May 26th in the North and Hashirajima Bay on May 27th in the South of Japan with a multi-pronged battle force designed to at once deceive, surprise and destroy the US Navy in the Pacific. Midway attack operations would commence on June



5th (June 4th Midway local time).

The Midway and Aleutian attack fleets sailed as planned but the weather was challenging with heavy fog and relentless stormy seas; almost immediately for Hosogaya's force and after two days with Yamamoto's Midway forces. With strict radio silence in effect, even visual communication with signal flags and lights proved difficult; at times, impossible. Massive ships from the Main Body and Carrier Force cut through the dark gray ocean and atmospheric mist on an easterly course to a point after the invasion and carrier forces split in order to reach their intended attack points. The fog helped screen the ships from enemy submarine patrols but the heavy seas forced a reduction in speed to a point where defensive maneuvering had to be discontinued.

Radio operators aboard the Yamato reported lengthy coded transmissions addressed to Midway directly in the

Operation Midway (Continued)

path of the troop transports. Additional and increasing coded enemy radio traffic was reported in the directions of Hawaii and the Aleutians, indicating the possibility of US ship sorties being launched. At nearly the same time, the planned establishment of a seaplane base at French Frigate Shoals had been neutralized upon the discovery by a recon submarine that enemy ships were already at anchor. The failure to initiate Operation K would end the possibility of eastward search and intelligence gathering missions.

On June 1st, Japanese radio silence had been broken after refueling oilers missed their rendezvous with the Midway fleet. The weather seemed to follow the ships, making refueling activities too hazardous to continue. Encounters with US submarines and patrol planes were growing, as was enemy radio traffic. By June 2nd submarine intelligence was relayed concerning the condition of Midway island. Few, if any, of these reports and radio intercepts were reaching Admiral Nagumo aboard the Akagi. The carriers were not equipped with the extensive communications gear aboard Yamamoto's flagship, the Yamato. With radio silence, the Yamato was not able to share the intelligence with the rest of the forces.

By the morning of June 3rd the Aleutian force had commenced operations with air attacks on Dutch Harbor. A break in the weather allowed the launch in the pre-dawn hours but weather and enemy patrols near the target foiled the attack. Photographic intelligence taken during the mission yielded a complete surprise to the Japanese. The

base at Dutch was far more developed than expected and the attack yielded little effect on its operational capabilities. As this situation unfolded, the submarine screening forces arrived on station to the east of Midway island, the north and south of French Frigate Shoals. Their arrival was scheduled two days earlier.

At this same time the forces to the west of Midway saw an end to the torrential rain and the split of a Main Body guard force to sail North for coverage of the Aleutian invasions. Almost immediately, radio reports were received from the transport convoy to the south indicated that they had been discovered by patrol aircraft at a point

600 miles from from Midway. Nine high altitude bombers overflew and attacked the invasion fleet with no damage inflicted. The potential for a complete surprise had eroded and intelligence gathering efforts on US fleet locations

and movement had not occurred as planned.

Evening on June 3rd arrived with reports that enemy aircraft were spotted over Nagumo's force and fighters were launched to intercept. Subsequent sightings were reported as the stars came out among the clouds but nothing was found by the interceptors. The news unsettled Nagumo who was to launch the first of his air strikes against Midway Island just hours from that point. With no intelligence that indicated

the presence of any substantial enemy naval force in the area, Nagumo would soon order the launch of his first wave of attack and reconnaissance aircraft.

To be continued in the next issue of the Cascade Warbird Flyer. ✪



Centennial of Naval Aviation

Via U.S. Navy

The United States Navy's official interest in airplanes emerged as early as 1898. That year the Navy assigned officers to sit on an interservice board investigating the military possibilities of Samuel P. Langley's flying machine. In subsequent years there were naval observers at air meets here and abroad and at the public demonstrations staged by Orville and Wilbur Wright in 1908 and 1909. All were enthusiastic about the potential of the airplane as a fleet scout. By 1909, naval officers, including a bureau chief, were urging the purchase of aircraft.

It was in 1910 that a place was made for aviation in the organizational structure of the Navy. That was the year Captain Washington I. Chambers was designated as the officer to whom all aviation matters were to be referred. Although holding no special title, he pulled together existing threads of aviation interest within the Navy and gave official recognition to the proposals of inventors and builders. Before the Navy had either planes or pilots he arranged a series of tests in which Glenn Curtiss and Eugene Ely dramatized the airplane's capability for shipboard operations and showed the world and a skeptical Navy that aviation could go to sea.

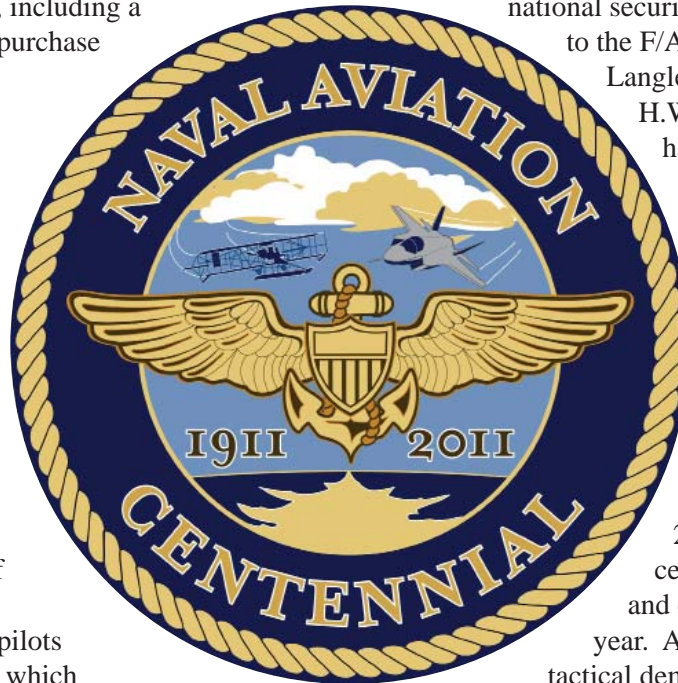
Early in 1911 the first naval officer reported for flight training. By mid-year, the first money had been

appropriated, the first aircraft had been purchased, the first pilot had qualified, and the site of the first aviation camp had been selected. The idea of a seagoing aviation force was beginning to take form as plans and enthusiasms were transformed into realities. By the end of the year a humble beginning had been made.

Naval Aviation has grown from a tactical afterthought and support capability to a primary instrument of our national security. From the Curtiss A-1 Triad, to the F/A-18 Super Hornet, from the USS Langley (CV 1) to the USS George H.W. Bush (CVN 77), Naval Aviation has scored an impressive list of achievements in peace and war. The first crossing of the Atlantic by air, victory at the Battle of Midway, and the first American in space, to name a few, have put Naval Aviation at the forefront of our national destiny.

The Centennial of Naval Aviation kicks off January of 2011 and continues as a year-long celebration with a variety of events and commemorations throughout the year. Airshows, art exhibits, flyovers and tactical demonstrations are but a few of the events being planned.

The Navy, Marine Corps and Coast Guard along with many other organizations, are working together to ensure that proper recognition is given for this most important anniversary year. 🌟



2011 Centennial Events



- January - Naval Aviation Centennial Kickoff - San Diego, CA
- February - Super Bowl Flyover - Dallas, TX
- March - NAS JRB Fort Worth Air Show & Open House - Dallas, TX
- May - New York Fleet Week/Jones Beach Airshow - New York, NY
- May - Indy 500 Flyover - Indianapolis Motor Speedway, IN
- June - 69th Battle of Midway Commemoration - San Diego, CA
- July - EAA AirVenture Oshkosh - Oshkosh, WI
- August - MCB Kaneohe Bay - Kaneohe, HI
- August - City of Chicago Air & Water Show - Chicago, IL
- August - Seattle Sea Fair - Seattle, WA
- September - Reno Air Races - Reno NV
- September - National Air Show - Washington, DC
- September - NAS Oceana Air Show - Virginia Beach, VA
- October - MCAS Miramar Airshow - San Diego, CA
- October - San Francisco Fleet Week - San Francisco, CA
- November - Blue Angel Homecoming - Pensacola, FL
- November - Centennial Gala Closing - Washington, DC



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**Have Your Dues Expired?
Check The Expiration Date Below.**

**Cascade Warbirds
Quick Look Calendar**

October

- 9* Squadron Meeting at
Museum of Flight
- 9-10 San Fran Fleet Week
- 16 Heritage Flt Museum
Open House at BLI
- 21-23 Copperstate

November

- 13 Squadron Meeting at
Museum of
- 20 Heritage Flt Museum
Open House at BLI

December

- 11 Annual Christmas
Dinner Banquet
Arlington, WA
- 18 Heritage Flt Museum
Open House at BLI

January

- 8 Annual Squadron
Meeting at MoF
- 15 Heritage Flt Museum
Open House at BLI

* Denotes Max Effort Event
See Website for Detailed List

Check Six



Edward Samuel Picardo (1922 - 2010)