

# Volume 6, Issue 1 January 2005 VAREAR BERED PROVIDENT \*\*\*EAA Warbirds Squadron 2 Newsletter\*\*\*



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# CO's Cockpit

#### By Dave Desmon

Happy New Year!

It is said that an organization either grows bigger, or gets smaller and dies - never does it stay the same. The signs are positive for the Cascade Warbirds. With over 235 members in Washington, Oregon, British Columbia, Idaho, Alberta, and a few other places, I believe we are the largest Warbird squadron around. We had 77 of our fellow members at the annual Christmas party, or, Winter Solstice Pagan Ritual at Ammirato's Airshow Bar & Grill on Dec. 4th. It sure was great to see so many of you there, and to end 2004 with a bang! That does not mean we can stop recruiting however. Remember - grow or die! We'll need young pilots to give us rides when we're old(er) & gray(er).

2005 will be another outstanding year. We'll start the year off with the National Warbird Operator's Conference (NWOC) in Seattle. This is a great opportunity to meet other Warbird operators from around the nation, discuss issues of mutual interest, learn something new, take some interesting tours and quaff a libation or two with your new friends. Speakers include the head of the FAA's Aeromedical Certification Division. Dr. Warren S. Silberman. This Year, NWOC will include a breakout session just for L-Birds & Primary Trainers, and Squadron 2 will have a booth in the trade show, so I highly encourage you to attend. Let's show the community what a great Warbird presence we have in the Northwest.

We will be kicking off the 2005 Flying season in April with "Cascade Warbirds Day" at the Museum of Flight and the Skagit Tulip Festival Fly-in. Look for a draft copy of the Northwest air show schedule in this newsletter. There will be a few a changes, but it's a good start. Speaking of schedules, we will be posting a 3 tier schedule this year. We will list as many events of interest as possible, but only some will be designated "Official" Cascade Warbirds events. All else being equal, we'd like to see you try to make those. The top level will be the "Max Effort" Shows. These are the 1000 plane raids – do whatever you have to do to get your Kitchen Pass, but make these events. We need your input to decide which shows rate this "Max Effort" rating, so let us know which ones are your favorites.

We have quite a bit of interest in bringing the Cascade Warbirds to several shows in Canada in 2005. Our Canadian members are great about coming down to support state-side shows, so we're planning an invasion of Canada!! The idea is to gather at some forward rally point South of 49 N and get a briefing by a real, live experienced Canadian!! They'll fill us in on border crossing, flying in Canada, radio procedures, etc. then we'll mass for the push North, cross together under the watchful eye of our brave native Canadian guide, to an enjoyable weekend in the Great White North.

In truth, crossing the border is EASY, and there's lots of fun things to do up there. Any group that would let me poke this much fun at them – well, you know we'll have a great time!! So plan on a group foray North this Summer. Details to come.

Get your rest now – cuz it's going to be a busy Flying Season!!

Keep 'Em Flyin !! Dave �

WARBIRD FLYER, January 2005

# WAIRBIRD

# LYTER

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

> Commanding Officer: Dave Desmon Executive Officer: Curt Kinchen Operations Officer Ken Morley Veterans Affairs R.D. "Crash" Williams Finance Officer Fred C. Smyth Newsletter Editor Frank Almstead Publisher Ed Rombauer

This is the official publication of the Cascade Warbirds EAA Squadron 2. As such, it serves principally as a communications vehicle for our membership. The views and opinions expressed in this newsletter are those of the individual writers, and do not constitute the official position of the Squadron or the EAA. As members you are encouraged to contribute articles, comments, squadron news, and anything else involving Warbirds or associated subjects to the editor. He will gladly work with you and see that your material is put into print and included in the newsletter, no matter your level of writing experience or computer expertise. Articles can be submitted via email, to the editor's address. Deadline for submission of articles is generally two weeks prior to the next publication, but earlier is always appreciated!

> Business Office: 1066 Yates Road Oak Harbor, WA 98277

Cascade Warbirds Homepage: www.cascadewarbirds.org

Editorial E-Mail: editor@cascadewarbirds.org

EAA Cascade Warbird Squadron 2 is a tax-exempt charitable organization as described in section 501(c)(3) of the IRS Code.

# Editor's Page

#### By Frank Almstead

Why do so many of our members restore and fly ex-military aircraft when the cost associated with doing so rises daily? Why do so many non-owners and non-pilots join our squadron? What is the draw that binds us together? Quite simply, we all want to be a part of preserving military aviation history and of telling the story so few are left to tell on their own. Of the 16 million veterans of World War II, just one in four is still alive, and every day sees the passing of another thousand heroes.

Our involvement also reminds us of the veterans and their sacrifices, the sacrifices they made in order for us to enjoy the freedoms that we have today. It has been said that we are not owners, but caretakers, of these aircraft and of the living history they represent, and that we are doing so in order to pass that history on to others. This is true.

As we begin the New Year, one of our resolutions should be to reconsider our commitment to this purpose. Each of us should ask ourselves if we have contributed meaningfully and in a way that satisfies the reason we joined. We should also ask if we have done everything possible to pass along our special knowledge to those who want to learn. Together, as an organization of over 230 members, we can have a profound impact on each other and beyond. We look to the organization to guide us as we seek to meet our objectives. The Board of Directors gladly accepts this responsibility, but it comes with a challenge for them: they want to know what we individuals need help with in order to do their part. The Board is asking for your participation.

To get started, we're having a contest to consider renaming this newsletter. Though there's nothing wrong with the existing Warbird Flyer name, if you think there is a more appropriate one, submit your entry to the Editor. To the winner goes the famed Cascade Warbird shirt with embroidered name and squadron logo. But we ask for more. Take the time to submit articles for publication in order to share your knowledge with the membership. Or request articles on topics you want to learn about. Suggest how the organization can help you accomplish your goals. And be sure to attend our member meetings and air shows to meet our veterans as well as each other. Participation is the key!

Let's hear it at  $\underline{editor@cascadewarbirds.org}$ . Then we'll get to work for you.  $\bigcirc$ 

#### Correspondence

To the Editor,

When I joined the squadron some time ago, I was given to understand that a newsletter would be published four times each year. Because I am unable to attend many meetings or air shows with the squadron, I rely on the newsletter to keep me up-to-date. As I ponder whether to renew my membership for 2005, will you please tell me what I might expect in terms of newsletter frequency.

A Curious Member

As we move forward, the newsletter will be published quarterly. If there is positive feedback and participation from squadron members, in the form of content, it is possible that the newsletter will be published bi-monthly or better. Ed.  $\bigcirc$ 

# Squadron News

## ANNUAL PAGAN RITUAL SETS RECORD

This year the Annual Pagan Ritual (a.k.a. the Christmas Party) set a new attendance record. 77 members and guests gathered at Ammirato's Airshow Bar & Grill in Bremerton to celebrate. The crowd consisted of a nice mix of old and new members. We would like to thank Bill and his staff for an outstanding Prime Rib and Ham dinner. We owe the "Magnificent Seven," an anonymous group of members, a debt of gratitude for the generous donation that provided the social lubricant. For those usable to attend, John has posted pictures on our website.

## 2005 ANNUAL DUES NOW DUE

It's that time of year again when you get to show your support for what we do by renewing your membership. Please send your US\$20.00 to Cascade Warbirds, 1066 Yates Road, Oak Harbor, WA 98277. If you're not sure if you've already paid, you are welcome to email the Finance Officer at <u>fred@fcsmyth.com</u> for the definitive answer. Please help us to Keep 'Em Flying by paying early.



This year the Cascade Warbirds are proud to co-sponsor the National Warbird Operators Conference (NWOC) being held in Seattle, Washington. Founded in 1993, the annual NWOC event brings together warbird owners, operators, and museum directors to address particular events facing warbird owners and to discuss common goals related to the ever-changing economics, operations and regulations pertaining to flying ex-military aircraft.

NWOC focuses on the exchange of ideas and information concerning the safe operation and restoration of warbird aircraft. This unique educational conference offers programs to enhance pilot skill and knowledge, expand aircraft maintenance technician and restorer knowledge, develop awareness of medical and insurance facts, and address aircraft-specific topics to ensure continued flight for these unique historic aircraft.

Detailed history and agenda can be found on their website at <u>www.warbirdconference.com</u> or you may call 480-951-1667 for more information.

## **RENO AIR RACES 2005**

Now is the time to start planning for your September 2005 activities. One of the best around is joining your squadron mates at the races in Reno from the  $15^{th}$  through the  $18^{th}$ . We're located front-and-center in the comfort of reserved box seating and that's the only way to see the races. Reserve your seat at \$100 each by sending your check to Cascade Warbirds, 1066 Yates Road, Oak Harbor, WA 98277. Reno will determine the 2005 box seat prices by April or so and we'll pass that info on to you. If you have any questions, email Fred at fred@fcsmyth.com or visit www.renoairrace.org. Don't miss out this year!



John Clark captured the action at Reno '04

"Start planning for the Reno Air Races in September 2005"

## Squadron News

CWB WEBStats			
	Country		
1.	United States	5,890	
2.	Canada	1,317	
3.	France	24	
4.	Great Britain (UK)	19	
5.	Germany	18	
6.	Japan	17	
7.	Sweden	16	
8.	Australia	10	
9.	Taiwan	9	
10.	Belgium	9	
11.	Spain	8	
12.	Netherlands	6	
13.	Russian Federation	5	
14.	Poland	5	
15.	New Zealand	5	
16.	Kuwait	3	
17.	Chile	3	
18.	Mexico	2	
19.	Romania	2	
20.	Singapore	2	
21.	Indonesia	2	
22.	Ireland	2	
23.	Iceland	2	
24.	Italy	1	
25.	Argentina	1	
26.	Hungary	1	
27.	Mauritius	1	
28.	Israel	1	
29.	Venezuela	1	
30.	Portugal	M 1	
31.	Switzerland	1	
32.	Cyprus	1	
33.	Greece	1	
34.	Hong Kong	1	

#### PARA-PHERNALIA EMERGENCY PARACHUTE TALK

Para-Phernalia is going to do its annual Emergency Parachute Egress talk on March 19, 2005 from 10:00 – 12:00 at the Boys & Girls Club in Arlington (across the street from the airport). The program is free to all pilots and they would be honored to see a bunch from Cascade Warbirds attending. The featured speaker is Allen Silver. Para-Phernalia, Inc. will be supplying FREE coffee and doughnuts. This has been a well attended program for the past 5 years and this year the talk will be an FAA WINGS qualified program!

For questions contact: Dan Tarasievich, Para-Phernalia, Inc. at 360-435-7220 or email <u>dant@pstbbs.com</u>

### **B-25 FLIGHT TIME**

To help get the B-25 "Old Glory" up to Arlington for display, Taigh Ramey has offered members a unique opportunity. A day of Ground School, loggable flight time, and instruction on the flight to and from AWO. Participants will split about 4 hours of flight time each way. Participants will share operating expenses for the trip. If you're interested contact Tony Caruso for details at <u>t-caruso@msn.com</u> or Home#:425-454-5036 Cell#:425-443-6200. Capacity is 4 or 5 members each way, so don't delay! Also see: <u>http://www.twinbeech.com/oldglory.htm</u>

### **ORDER NAME TAGS**

Do you like the Squadron name tags you see others wearing? Does your spouse have one yet? Well, they're still available. Complete with both the Squadron logo and your name, these tags are available with up to three lines of printing, a maximum of 12 letters or numerals per line. Also available is your choice of clasp: military (push pin) \$7.00; safety pin \$7.00; magnetic \$10.00. Add \$2.00 postage for up to 3 tags per order. Contact Fred at fred@fcsmyth.com and mail your check to Cascade Warbirds, 1066 Yates Road, Oak Harbor, WA 98277. Make sure your fellow Squadron members know who you are.

### GIFT GIVING AND CORPORATE MATCHING

The Squadron is a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization and donations to it are tax deductible to the full extent provided by law. Thus, we are eligible for employer matching of gifts you make to the Squadron, thereby effectively doubling the size of your gift. If you have any questions regarding a gifting program, please contact the Finance Officer or one of the board members. Thanks for your continued support.

### **ERRORS AND OMISSIONS**

The Squadron likes to stay in touch with its members, but it takes your help to do so. Most often missed is an update to your email address. We also don't know when you move, or even when you get a new telephone number. So take a minute and send us any new information. Email it to <u>fred@fcsmyth.com</u> or mail it to Cascade Warbirds, 1066 Yates Road, Oak Harbor, WA 98277. Rest assured we use this strictly for Squadron business. Lastly, we'd like to know if you belong to EAA and Warbirds of America. Would you please include your membership numbers for our records. Thanks for your help. �

WARBIRD FLYER, January 2005

# New Members

Please welcome the following new members to our ranks. When you have a chance to run into one of them along the way, take the time to introduce yourself and make them feel welcome. <sup>O</sup>

Pat Barrett Tedd McHenry Naomi West Harry Kelly Peter Herzig Walt Brown Alan Anders Jim Cool Bill Hopman Brad Johnson Bruce Meyers Beth Plummer Jon Schmitt David Sproule David Swett Vic McMann Romavne Ketcha Dutch White Gary Bunn Art Armstrong Lee Faulk Erin Darling Curtis Block Craig Ellison Skeets Mehrer Dale DeTour Tom Elliott Sandra Horne Lou Gates **Rick Davis** Kurt MacKenzie

Poulsbo, WA Surrey, BC Kennewick, WA San Diego, CA White Rock, BC Boise, ID Bow, WA Richmond, BC Quincey, CA Sumner, WA Issaquah, WA Burien, WA San Andreas, CA Delta, BC Valencia, CA Point Roberts, WA Tacoma, WA Hayden, ID Prescott, AZ Vancouver, WA Hillsboro, OR Tenino, WA Olympia, WA Silverton, OR Portland, OR Vancouver, WA Sandy Valley, NV Milwaukie, OR Corvallis, OR Everett, WA Silverdale, WA



Members old and new pose for the camera at the annual Christmas party.

Last Name       First       M       Spouse         Mailing Address	Last Name		(c)(3) Corporation	
City       State       Zip         Pilot Certificates, Ratings       Aircraft Owned         Home Phone       Work Phone       Cell Pho         Email Address       Fax Number         EAA Membership #       Warbirds Membership #         A short bio of you as it relates to aviation		First	М	Spouse
Pilot Certificates, Ratings       Aircraft Owned         Home Phone       Work Phone       Cell Pho         Email Address       Fax Number         EAA Membership #       Warbirds Membership #         A short bio of you as it relates to aviation	Mailing Address			
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EAA Membership #       Warbirds Membership #         A short bio of you as it relates to aviation	Home Phone	Wo	rk Phone	Cell Phone
A short bio of you as it relates to aviation           NOTE: There are 3 membership options when joining Cascade Warbirds:           1) Join by completing this app and sending \$20 to the mail address.           2) Join Cascade for \$20 and join EAA for \$40. Complete this app and send check for \$60 to the mail address.           3) Join Cascade for \$20, Join EAA for \$10, and Join EAA Warbirds for \$45. Complete this app and send a check for \$75 to the mail address.           Cascade Dues year is the calendar year. New members joining Jan-Aug are pay for the current year. Sep-Dec are paying for the following year.           New members receive a shoulder patch, window decal and engraved nametag. How do you wish your nametag to read? Three lines maximum:           1)           2)	Email Address			Fax Number
<ol> <li>Join by completing this app and sending \$20 to the mail address.</li> <li>Join Cascade for \$20 and join EAA for \$40. Complete this app and send check for \$60 to the mail address.</li> <li>Join Cascade for \$20, Join EAA for \$10, and Join EAA Warbirds for \$45. Complete this app and send a check for \$75 to the mail address.</li> <li>Cascade Dues year is the calendar year. New members joining Jan-Aug are pay for the current year. Sep-Dec are paying for the following year.</li> <li>New members receive a shoulder patch, window decal and engraved nametag. How do you wish your nametag to read? Three lines maximum:         <ol> <li>2)</li> </ol> </li> </ol>				
2)	<ol> <li>Join by comp</li> <li>Join Cascade check for \$6</li> <li>Join Cascade Complete th</li> <li>Cascade Dues year for the current yea</li> <li>New members rec</li> <li>How do you wish</li> </ol>	pleting this app are for \$20 and join 0 to the mail adde for \$20, Join EA is app and send a r is the calendar y r. Sep-Dec are p eive a shoulder p.	d sending \$20 to t EAA for \$40. Cor ress. A for \$10, and Join check for \$75 to th ear. New members aying for the follow atch, window decal	he mail address. nplete this app and send a n EAA Warbirds for \$45. ne mail address. s joining Jan-Aug are paying ving year. and engraved nametag.
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# Warbird Restoration of Pendleton

ascade Warbirds member Dutch White has opened Warbird Restoration of Pendleton (WRP) and is doing business as Majestic Machines, Inc. WRP is a full service restoration, repair, maintenance, and fabrication company for the owners of Antique, Classic and Warbird aircraft. WRP has leased Building #113 at Pendleton airport for at least 5 years, with the intention of purchasing the hangar after this time. Building #113 is a WWII hangar built in 1940. It is the largest structure on the field, also known as Eastern Oregon Regional Airport at Pendleton. WRP has contracted to have a new roof installed on the hangar to correct years of neglect. WRP will bring the hangar up to code, make it handicap accessible, and at the same time modify it to meet their needs by completely overhauling and repairing the interior of the structure. WRP plans to have the hangar doors open for business this month. Construction of the hangar interior spaces will continue for the next year and a half, but will not affect their ability to operate the business.

#### <u>Staff</u>

**Carl "Dutch" White** operates and manages WRP. Dutch has 27 years of industry experience covering the gamut of aircraft recovery, restoration, maintenance and fabrication. He is the previous owner of Warbird Restoration Inc. of California and North Idaho Warbirds.

The Shop Foreman is none other than **Andrew "Andy"** 

**Netzel**, formerly of the Chino Planes of Fame Museum. Andy has worked for Dutch for a number of years in both Chino, California and in Coeur d'Alene, Idaho. Andy enjoys some 20 years of Warbird maintenance and restoration experience. **Roland "Jim" DuBois**, IA, brings 35 years of experience in all facets of aviation maintenance to the shop.

Mark Rhodes, D.M.I.R. and fabricator, adds another 32 years of industry experience to the equation.

James "Scotti" Orr, A&P, possesses a solid 27 years experience with Warbirds, Antiques and Classic airframes. Justin Rugg, A&P and Avionics Tech, rounds out the shop floor.

**Paul Dworshak**, Engineering, has been in the business since 1958. Paul has worked for airframers General Dynamics, Lockheed Aircraft, and Lear Fan Corp, as well as Steward-Davis, Inc.

Lt.Col. Roy Macdonald (USAF Ret.), serves as the company test pilot.

**Rebecca Clark**, Office and Sales Manager, has 19 years experience in aviation. Yes, she speaks airplane and can order parts!

#### **Current Projects**

Currently Warbird Restoration of Pendleton is standing by to bring several restoration projects they have purchased into the hangar. As soon as work on the roof is completed WRP will roll in a MiG-15 UTI, a MiG-21R, two T-28C's, two Lockheed PV-2 Harpoons, and in the near future, a Fairey Firefly. These aircraft are slated for extensive rebuild and restoration. As WRP progresses on these restorations they will eventually be offered for sale. Dutch invites Cascade Warbird members to stop in and inspect their work.



Bldg #113 at Pendleton is the hangar that the famed Doolittle Raiders operated from.

#### **Capabilities**

Warbird Restoration of Pendleton has the capacity to handle just about everything an aircraft owner can imagine. WRP has the tooling and experience to accomplish everything from a major restoration to clearing up hangar rash. Other capabilities include annual inspections, engine and prop overhauls, avionics installation, fabric repair and restoration, welding and fabrication, aircraft painting, aircraft servicing as well as recovery of downed aircraft.

Warbird Restoration of Pendleton will continue with the dream Dutch White started 27 years ago: Affordable maintenance and restoration, by highly qualified technicians, for the Antique, Classic and Warbird aircraft owner. Warbird Restoration of Pendleton will maintain the tradition of award winning aircraft restoration and superior service for the discerning owner.

WRP is now prepared to book available slots for maintenance, service or restoration. Dutch does not believe in turning away work that will benefit the aviation community, there is no job too small and WRP appreciates the business. Dutch has offered outstanding pricing for Cascade Warbird Squadron 2 members.

Contact Dutch for details:

Phone: (208) 762-4961 Office/Home (208) 660-2339 Cell

e-mail: warbirdrestorationpdt@yahoo.com or: t28dutch@yahoo.com �

WARBIRD FLYER, January 2005

# Media Reviews



Warbird Digest Editor: Tim Savage Historic Aeroplane Works Website: www.warbirddigest.com

Warbird Digest is a new quarterly publication. Tim Savage, a Warbird owner, has launched the magazine with the mantra "written by Warbird people for Warbird people." His publication will focus on aircraft across the spectrum of the Warbird movement including trainers, transports and liaison aircraft. Feature

articles concentrate on the people and their machines, dealing with topics such as aircraft recovery, restorations and restoration companies, pilot profiles, pilot reports, museums, and a smattering of history. Regular columns focus on safety and operational issues, quarterly news updates, as well as book and movie reviews. While only two editions into its run, it is clear to me that Tim has assembled a skilled and qualified team of contributors. Warbird Digest is printed on glossy heavyweight paper and includes beautiful, crisp photographs. Tim states his number one goal in producing Warbird Digest is quality, both in content and production values. I am very satisfied with my return on investment of \$29.95 for a one year subscription. For a preview of the first issue, published in August 2004, visit their website or see me at the next meeting, I'll bring my copies.

Lastly, Warbird Digest is extending a special offer to the Cascade Warbirds. For each order received with the subscription card posted on the Cascade Warbirds website, Warbird Digest will return 15% of the subscription fee to our organization.

Frank Almstead



Half a Wing, Three Engines and a Prayer: B-17's Over Germany Author: Brian D. O'Neill Paperback - 454 p Special edition (April 30, 1999) McGraw-Hill; ISBN: 0-07-134145-5

Half A Wing, Three Engines And A Prayer by Brian D. O'Neill, is a great read. The book is based primarily on a B-17 crew of the 303<sup>rd</sup> bombardment group skippered by Robert J. Hullar. The primary source of material if from the wartime diary of the crew's navigator, Elmer L. Brown, Jr. His accounts are supplemented by the writings and recollections of five other crewmembers in addition to the official records

of the 303<sup>rd</sup> Bomb Group and other pertinent Eighth Air Force sources. Armed with this information O'Neill has written a vivid description of what it was like to fly the B-17 on combat missions during the worst period of America's air war in Europe. The book steps through 25 missions individually and also taps the memories of others in the group that flew the same missions. Beyond the text of the story are the appendices. One of which includes suggestions for further reading and research. Lastly, the Epilogue, talks of Ed Snyder, Hullar crew's Squadron Commander, who lives in Tacoma and Louis "Mel" Schulstad the Assistant Group Operations Officer, who lives in the Seattle area.

Frank Almstead

If you would like to contribute to the Media Reviews please submit it at editor@cascadewarbirds.org. Reviews should be approximately 250-300 words in length.



# **CASCADE WARBIRD**

Box 975 Mercer Island, WA

#### **Cascade Warbirds** Squadron 2 Calendar

#### .Januarv

08	Squadron Meeting at Museum of Flight
Februar	'v
<i>Februar</i> 12	Squadron Meeting
	at Museum of Flight
11-12	NW Council of
	Airshows Conference
24-27	National Warbird
2.2/	Operators Conference
26-27	Washington State
20 27	Aviation Expo
	Aviation Expo
<u>March</u>	
12	Squadron Meeting
12	at Museum of Flight
	at Museum of Fright
Anvil	
<u>April</u> 09	Cascade Warbird Day
09	at Museum of Flight
16-17	NWCAS Board of
10-1/	Directors Meeting
22	
23	Skagit Tulip Festival
	Fly-In
<u>May</u>	C ( 011
21-22	Concrete Old
	Fashioned Fly-In
<u>June</u> 4-5	
4-5	Nanaimo Flying Club
4.5	Fly-In
4-5	Malstrom AFB
	Thunderbirds
17-19	Gathering of Warbirds Olympia, WA
	Olympia, WA
18	Nampa, ID Airshow
17-19	Calgary Aviation Day
25-26	Bellingham Airfest
Saua	dron Meetings at the
	n of Flight start at 1000
1.140041	

WARBIRD FLYER, January 2005

# EAA CHAPTER

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## Tail Light

You lived and died alone, especially in fighters. Fighters. Somehow, despite everything, that word had not become sterile. You slipped into the hollow cockpit and strapped and plugged yourself into the machine. The canopy ground shut and sealed you off. Your oxygen, your very breath, you carried with you into the chilled vacuum, in a steel bottle. If you wanted to speak, you used the radio. You were as isolated as a deep-sea diver, only you went up, into nothing, instead of down. You were accompanied. They flew with you in heraldic patterns and fought alongside you, sometimes skillfully, always at least two ships together, but they were really of no help. You were alone. At the end, there was no one you could touch. You could call out to them, as he had heard someone call out one day going down, a pitiful, pleading, "Oh, Jesus." but they

could touch you not.

James Salter, "The Hunters" and excerpted in "Gods of Tin."

I belong to a group of men who fly alone. There is only one seat in the cockpit of a fighter airplane. There is no space alotted for another pilot to tune the radios in the weather or make the calls to air traffic control centers or to help with the emergency procedures or to call off the airspeed down final approach. There is no one else to break the solitude of a long cross-country flight. There is no one else to make decisions.

I do everything myself, from engine start to engine shutdown. In a war, I will face alone the missiles and the flak and the small-arms fire over the front lines. If I die. I will die alone.

Richard Bach, "Stranger to the Ground"