

News of the 1st Fighter Group Association, representing the 27th, 71st, and 94th Fighter Squadrons



1st Pursuit Group
5 May 1918



27th



71st



94th

1st Fighter News

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Send articles to Bruce Gordon, 105 Broadbill Ct., Georgetown, KY 40324 502-867-1171
Send Dues & changes of address to Bob Correia 1st Fighter Assoc. POB 6964, Warwick, RI 02887



"Victory or Death"
motto of the 1st Fighters since WW I



Photos from our website: www.1stfighter.org. Go there for excellent photos! Yes, that's an F-22 Raptor with the F-15 over Langley!

Association Officers

President

Jim Graham, 71st
7620 So. Sunnycrest Rd.
Seattle, WA 98178-2746
Tel/Fax 206-772-2752
e-mail: jnmig@email.msn.com

Vice President

Alfred Eberhardt, 94th
615 Willow Valley Lakes Dr.
Willow Valley, PA 17584
717-464-4111
1100 S. Collier Blvd #1023
Marco Island, FL 34145-6432
239-394-2050
xp38pilot@yahoo.com

Secretary-Treasurer

Bob Correia, 27th
3 Midway Dr.
Warwick, RI 02886-8114
401-737-3268
robtcorr@aol.com

Immediate Past President

Hershel Baird, 94th
702 Valley View
Scottsbluff, NE 69361-1452
308-632-3946
first_fighter@yahoo.com

Official 1st Fighter Website: <http://www.1stfighter.org/>

Send 1st Fighter News Articles to:

Bruce Gordon, Editor
105 Broadbill Ct.
Georgetown, KY 40324
502-867-1171
Bruce29@aol.com

DATES TO REMEMBER

MAY 21-23, 2004 Air show, Langley AFB. P-38
'Glacier Girl' in Heritage flight MAY 29, 2004 WWII
Memorial Dedication, Washington D. C.

SEPTEMBER 14-19, 2004 1st Fighter Association
Reunion, Seattle , Washington

DUES REMINDER

This is to remind those members who received a dues notice in December and have not sent in their dues for 2004. We hope that you will not delay in mailing the blue envelope with your payment. If you did not receive a dues notice, then your dues were paid in advance. You are paid through the year shown on your address label.

If you didn't keep the blue envelope, dues are \$15 annually and should be paid to Bob Correia at the address on the left of this page.

Harry E. Urton passed away on Aug. 28, 2003. He was 83 years old and was a crew chief with the 27th FS.

Cecil Quesseth

In the 94th Ftr. Sqdn. Cecil Quesseth was always called "Ques". He was quiet and self effacing for a fighter pilot, but very stable and competent. The kind of pilot you would want leading the pack or on your wing. He could do both exceptionally well.

On top of that he was a great person to know and to have as a loyal friend.

When he voluntarily took on the task of escorting a group of unescorted Liberators, he reported it at debriefing as a routine matter. The details were learned later when the forever indebted, and grateful commander of the bomb group called the commander of the 1st Ftr. Gp. to report that Ques, by his quick thinking and act of heroism, had saved the bombers from untold losses to enemy fighters. The bomb group commander recommended that Ques be awarded the Silver Star medal and it was subsequently awarded to him by then Major General Twining.

IN MEMORIAM

Bob Longworth
Cecil Quesseth

Dave Thomas
Harry Urton

You had to know Ques awhile before realizing that his modest manner hid an enviable record of past accomplishments. He was a star basketball player in high school and college and could hold his own in any golf match. As an attorney and officer of the 1st Ftr. Gp. Assn. He gratuitously did all the legal spadework to formalize it's organization. He wrote most of the original by-laws and secured the Assn. as a tax exempt veterans organization. A matter of great benefit to all of us. Over the years any question about tax, bylaws, etc. got bumped to Ques, which he handled expertly.

As respected attorney in Salem, Oregon he contributed his legal talents unselfishly to the promotion of programs to benefit the community . Ques personified the highest values of character, integrity and the legal profession. When you hear someone put down a lawyer, as some are wont to do, you have to say to yourself, "there's a person who didn't know Cecil Quesseth".

Ques will be missed by all of us and will never be forgotten.

Bob Longworth

Jan 29, 1923 - Jan 9, 2004



Bob's wife Ellen wrote the 1st Fighter News:

Bob was flying Piper Cubs when he was still in high school. When he graduated from East High in Rochester, NY, he enlisted in the Army Air Corps. He was in training to be a glider pilot, and was ready to graduate when he received orders that he had been accepted for Cadet training as a fighter pilot. He flew the P-38 out of Foggia, Italy and when he finished his tour was sent home to Van Nuys. He had more than enough points to get out so he could go to college. He was recalled in 1947 and served in the Air Force in Japan. In 1948 the Air Force was cut and Bob was sent home. We then went to Rochester, NY where he went to school at night and worked at jobs during the day.

He put his G.I. Bill to good use. He graduated in 1954 with a B.A. in Business from U. of R. His real love was and always has been flying. He was so proud of his P-38.

His obituary in the Amador Co. Calif. Ledger Dispatch:

Robert "Bob" Longworth, 80, passed away on Friday, Jan. 9, 2004. Mr. Longworth was born on Jan 29, 1923 in Rochester, N.Y. He was a veteran serving in WW II, in the 71st Fighter Squadron as a P-38. fighter pilot in the U.S. Air Force. He was a graduate of the U. of Rochester. After 28 years with General Electric, he and his wife retired to the beautiful foothills not far from Lake Tahoe. He is survived by his wife of 58 years, Ellenetta Longworth; and two daughters, Alice Royall of Los Gatos and Sandra Bailes of Las Vegas.

BOOK REVIEWS

by Bob Correia, 27th Fighter Sq.

P-38 Lightning Aces of the ETO/MTO \$18.95

By John Stanaway, Osprey Publishing 96 pages

Nice small soft cover book that contains text, B&W photos, colored plates of 40 aircraft and a list of ETO/MTO Aces.

Convair F-102 Delta Dagger \$29.95

By Wayne Mutza, Schiffer Publishing 192 pages

Best book so far on the "Deuce". Covers development and operation with text, B&W and colored photo's, unit insignia in color of all the F-102 operators. Well worth the money.

Aces against Germany Volume II \$24.95

By Eric Hammel, Presidio Press 323 pages

Hardcover book covering first person accounts of actions against Axis forces by 39 American Aces. You may want to write your own memoirs after reading this book.



"Indy", the 1st OSS commander, debates the finer points of tactics with "Jeckyll", as Indy's wingmen study their mission data cards prior to a combat mission. The 71st commander, "Mac", looks on in the Ops tent's "mission briefing room."



The 71st's Flight Doc braves the great outdoors during a sandstorm (photo courtesy A. Starr)

The 1st Fighter Wing deployed to the Middle East for Operation Iraqi Freedom from March to April of 2003. The 27th FS continued the homeland defense role, flying in Operation Noble Eagle and patrolling the east coast of the US. The 94th was deployed to Incirlik AB, Turkey, in support of Operation Northern Watch (ONW) and Operation Iraqi Freedom (OIF). The 94th concluded the 12 year long ONW operations at Incirlik AB, but was grounded for the duration of OIF due to regional political issues. The 71st deployed to an undisclosed location in the Middle East and provided air superiority for the theater along with the 58th FS from Eglin AFB. Within a few days of the start of OIF, air dominance was assured and the F-15Cs were held in a ground alert status. Based on the USAF's undefeated air combat record from Operation Desert Storm (33-0), and the overwhelming superiority of the coalition forces, the Iraqis were convinced to ground their fighter fleet, leaving complete freedom of action to the coalition air forces.



The men and women of the 71st pose for a squadron photo at their operating base during Operation Iraqi Freedom, somewhere in the sandy regions of the Middle East.



*The dusty homes of the 71st Fighter Squadron for March-April 2003 during Operation Iraqi Freedom.
(photo courtesy A. Starr)*



"BuriedFoxbat": The Iraqis chose not to send their pilots in to the air only to be slaughtered by the Ironmen (or to defect), and instead buried their aircraft under mountains of sand to avoid destruction (and use). (DoD photo)

Pete Bartos sent these photos of the 71st during Operation Iraqi Freedom

WAS IT WORTH IT?

Note: I have left the last names blank to protect their identities.

It was the spring of '45 and I had just gotten out of the hospital and was assigned to ground duties before getting back on flying status. I received a call to go to the flight strip and pick up two pilots assigned to our squadron. I went to the maintenance shack to pick them up and found them to be two guys who had been missing for almost a month. Pappy —— (we called him “Pappy” because he was much older than the rest of us—probably 25 or 26 years old) and a guy named Larry ——. They had been shot down by ground fire in Northern Italy on the same mission some time earlier and had been listed as missing in action.

After picking them up I took them over to the mess tent and got them something to eat during which they entertained me for well over an hour with their stories before I had to take them to intelligence where they gave their Official Report.

The real story begins when Pappy's P-38 gets hit pretty heavily and he had to bail out. Well, Pappy's chute worked just fine and he landed in a good size vineyard where the local Italian farm workers captured him. They proceeded to work him over pretty good until the owner of the vineyard who spoke English rescued him. It turned out that the farmer had a brother in California also in the wine business. It just so happened that Pappy was from the California wine country, so they got along famously. The farmer hid Pappy in his wine cellar, which I'm sure, was safest place around. Now that was like throwing the rabbit into the briar patch.... Because Pappy thought he had died and had gone to heaven.... When the farmer told him to help himself to anything he found there. And he found a lot. The farmer told Pappy that he would contact the Partisans and see about returning him to the Allies. Pappy told him not to go out of his way and not to be in any hurry, and then he settled down to sit and drink the war out in that wine cellar. Well, as luck would have it he managed to stay there for a week before the farmer was able to contact some New Zealand troops passing by on the main highway to liberate Venice. The New Zealander's were happy to have Pappy along because he shared a sack of bottles of wine with them that the his farmer friend had given him to see him through the trip.

So off he goes with a Jeep load of New Zealand Infantry to liberate Venice. Now it just wasn't one Jeep but more like a regiment—anyway the Germans had already departed the city upon their arrival. So Pappy and his New Zealand Regiment liberated and occupied the city. During the liberation ceremony Pappy became the USA representative.

Larry, who had been shot down, had to bail out about the same time as Pappy but in a different location some miles away. For those not familiar with Italy, many of the communities are build around a square or courtyard with commercial building and houses located around the square. Larry landed, unhurt, right in one of these squares, which turned out to be the German Army Headquarters for that sector. He was immediately captured and hauled into the CO's Office for questioning. After taking his dog tags and billfold (which he wasn't supposed to carry on a mission over enemy territory) questioning had barely begun when Italian Partisans attacked the place. Bullets began to fly through the window and all hell broke loose. The Germans forgot about Larry and made a fast getaway. Believing that he would be shot if he stayed in the office he grabbed his billfold and dog tags and followed the Germans.

Well, It seems that this particular German Army Unit read the hand writing on the wall and for some time had known that the war was lost and had prepared for the end. Their headquarters was located on the bank of a river (maybe the Po—I don't recall but in any case the river ran down to Venice). The Germans had a good size boat at the ready—full of food and drink and I mean drink because their plan was to live it up on the trip to Venice before surrendering to the Allies.

As Larry caught up with them at the boat they welcomed him aboard and formally surrendered to him and so both parties drank a toast or maybe a few to the idea. Well, it took a few days to get to Venice and as they docked there was a parade going by the city government buildings. It was a victory parade and Larry was invited to parade his prisoners past the reviewing stand. So he did. Much to his surprise when he passed the reviewing stand or steps he recognized Pappy —— standing to the right of the mayor who was wearing a brightly colored ribbon across his chest much like you see in the old movies.

It didn't take them long to get together. Pappy had settled in at one the better hotels so Larry moved in with him and the parties began. Having no money they simply charged everything to the US Army. They signed chits for everything, i.e. Captain H, USAC and were planning to sit out the rest of the war in place. Unfortunately, word finally filtered down, through

the Allied command that two pilots who were escaped prisoners of the Germans were hiding out in Venice. Eventually they were repatriated and flown back to the squadron. They were both given ground duties for the remainder of the war.

They both agreed the IT WAS WELL WORTH IT.

Both Pappy and Larry had completed a 50-mission tour and were working on a second tour when they were shot down. They had seen more action than the average pilot in Europe.

Story by Guy Casey 27th FS and edited by Bob Correia

Al Eberhardt (94th) remembers: (almost 1945)

It was Christmas Eve, 1944 and we were feeling sorry for ourselves. Phil Fisher and I went over to the O' Club to have a couple and welcome in the special day. We then decided to take Mich (my crew chief- John Michunovich) up on an invitation to celebrate at the Non-Com's club. After having a few with Mich & the guys, the party deteriorated into a drinking contest—who could chug-a-lug the most anisette while standing on one foot on top of the bar.

I have never been so drunk before or since !! Needless to say, the pilots lost in this contest. We had to crawl back to our shack on our hands and knees. About 4 hrs. later someone was shaking me to wake me up; I got out of bed and dizzily spun back into it. I was scheduled to fly the mission that Christmas morning !!

I was helped into my plane (named Liberty Belle) while still very much under the influence. I put on my oxygen mask and selected pure oxygen which cleared my head enough for take-off; flew the entire mission (looser formation than usual) on a rich oxygen mix, exhausted my supply of oxygen while descending thru 15000 ft. Fell asleep at debriefing, then was helped into my sack (still in flight gear) and slept for 14 hrs. straight !!

Diana Thompson's book "Finding Billy" was featured in our November issue. She wrote:

The spread on "Billy" was wonderful, and I'm embarrassed not to have said so and thanked you properly before now. Unfortunately, not one sale has come out of it, but that's not unusual for newsletter responses. I've managed to get the book mentioned in several bomb group and fighter group



Capt. Tom Prout 27th Maintenance Officer
young & handsome!

Looks like Foggia, based on the stone building. Photo is from Col Richard's collection (1st Group Commander from Sep 43-Nov 44). The 1st was at Salsola (Foggia #3) Italy, from Jan 1944 until the end of Col Richard's tour as Commander. Thanks to Pete Bartos for this photo.

newsletters, and I think I've sold about three books as a result. The big news is that "Billy" was #2 on the local best-seller list for the week ending December 21, and it can now be ordered by credit card by calling the Tattered Cover Book Store toll-free at 1-800-833-9327.

One bit of interesting news I gleaned from my book signing at the Tattered Cover that you might be able to use as filler: Two people in the audience were members of AWON, the American WWII Orphans Network. In my talk, I mentioned that there were more than 78,000 servicemen missing from WWII. When you put that in perspective, that's half again as many as died in Vietnam. But the AWON member was able to add an even more astounding fact — only about 300 of the missing 78,000 have ever been found. That makes Billy's story even more significant.



94th Fighter Sq leaves for Georgia

*By Tech. Sgt. Mark Getsy
1st Fighter Wing Public Affairs*

The 94th Fighter Squadron leaves today (23 Jan 04) for a two-week training exercise to the Combat Readiness Training Center in Savannah, Ga. The training being conducted is primarily for dissimilar air combat focusing on four-ship and large force employment missions. The deployment also allows the 94th FS the opportunity to certify new pilots as "mission ready" while deployed and operating from a strange field.

According to Lt. Col. Jeffrey Prichard, director of operations for the squadron, more than 160 troops and 14 aircraft will be involved in the deployment. Personnel will deploy from a variety of organizations including the 94th, 1st Aircraft Maintenance Squadron, 1st Logistics Readiness Squadron, 1st Security Forces Squadron and the 1st Civil Engineer Squadron Fire Department. During the deployment, the 94th plans to fly approximately 220 sorties. "The type of missions will include deployment sorties as well as training and incentive flight sorties," said Colonel Prichard.

The 94th will train with F-16 squadrons from the Ohio Air National Guard, South Carolina Air National Guard and Shaw Air Force Base, S.C., as well as F-18s assigned to Beaufort, S.C. Also participating will be AWACS from Tinker AFB, Okla.; and the JFK Carrier Battle Group will play a part in the exercise.

This isn't the only training the 94th receives throughout the year. They are also actively involved in Red Flag, the Weapons System Evaluation Program and Weapons School support. The last time they deployed to Savannah was in June 2003. The 94th is committed to Aerospace Expeditionary Force 8 in March supporting operations in Keflavik, Iceland, and Operation Noble Eagle.

Do not be among the missing

It is crucial to advise the Secretary of any change of address before it occurs. When you move and your forwarding address expires before the next mailing, the Association loses track of you. Update your address with:

Bob Correia, Secretary/Treasurer, 3 Midway Drive, Warwick, RI 02886-8114

Editor
First Fighter Group Association
105 Broadbill Ct.
Georgetown, KY 40324

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