



Contents

General Information.....	Page 1
Went to Sick Call and Got a Cabbage!	Page 2
Hedy Lamarr.....	Page 3
The Mystique of the U-2.....	Page 4
Safety Tips.....	Page 6
Easy Eddie, Al Capone and Butch O'Hare.....	Page 7
Seasoned Citizens.....	Page 8
Celle-Wietzenbruch '59.....	Page 9
A Message from the VA Secretary.....	Page 10

We will hold our annual reunion April 27th through May 1st, 2015, at the Comfort Suites West of the Ashley, located at 2080 Savannah Highway, Charleston, SC., five miles from Charleston Historic District and eight miles from the Airport!

Charleston, SC has a colorful history. We will tour the history district and all the lovely homes along the Battery, the 19th century Rainbow Row, the Warren Lasch Conservation Center, the aircraft carrier Yorktown, and the Confederate submarine H. Hunley. Five days of fun and camaraderie!

Please make your own reservations as soon as you can. Cut off date is 03/09/2015, then the block of rooms will be returned to the hotel's inventory and subsequent reservations taken on space available basis. Telephone Numbers 843-769-9850 and Toll Free number 877-717-3877.

Web Site: www.choicehotels.com/hotel/sc369

Price per night: \$89.67 which includes Hospitality Room for the week, hot breakfast, indoor pool and WI-FI. The agenda cost is \$260 to cover the tours and the theater visit and/or \$240 for the tours without the theater visit.

Airport Shuttle Private: Horace Freeman. Will wait at the airport for arrivals. Telephone number: 843-830-7673. Email: ride@chastaxicom

Please make your own reservations early and mention that you are with our group: The 601st & 615th AC&WS Association.

Visit our web site to download a descriptive copy of our Agenda for 2015. Just click the following link:

www.601st-615th-acw.org/index.html



Went to Sick Call and Got a Cabbage!

Art and story by Wil Rodriguez



I would have never believed that I would have to endure a three-way bypass surgery! Actually, I did not know what a bypass surgery was until I was being prepared for one!

I was told that during coronary artery bypass graft surgery (CABG), also known as “Cabbage”, a blood vessel is removed or redirected from one area of the body and placed around the area or areas of narrowing in order to “bypass” the blockages and restore blood flow to the heart muscle. This vessel is called a graft!

To make the story short, it all began Sunday, July 7th, 2014, when I couldn’t sleep the night before. I felt so poorly, that on Monday, July 8th, 2014, I decided to get up early and go to the Emergency Room where our Madigan’s Army’s Medical Center provides everyone “Sick Call”.

During the initial evaluation, one of the nurses asked me if I was having a heart attack. Honestly, I did not have chest pains, but a bit of chest discomfort. As soon as she heard the words “chest” and “short of breath”, she turned around, sat me on a wheel chair and down to the treatment room we went! Before I knew what was happening, I had three IV’s connected, a hospital gown, no pants on, two monitors connected, and three doctors looking at the monitor watching the play-by-play game of my heart! The doctors had hoped to see the “heart attack in living colors”! Since they couldn’t see anything, they called supporting help to run other tests. That took all morning.

That afternoon, around 1 pm, a doctor came in to tell me that three of my main arteries were almost 99 percent blocked and the fourth one not looking too good either! He added that I needed immediate cardiothoracic surgery to correct my problem. “Me? Going to surgery? No way,” I said, “Doctor, I have never had surgery in my life!”. “Are you sure you have the right person?” Didn’t get an answer, but that afternoon, I was on my way by ambulance to the Tacoma General Hospital for surgery! I was puzzled by the fact that I began at a military hospital for sick call and transferred to a civilian hospital for surgery. On top of that, military doctors were going to perform the surgery! It freaked me out!

The following day, July 9th, I was wheeled on to the surgery room. Four persons were in the operating room, but I cannot remember anything that happened until I read the surgeon’s 4-page Operative Report six hours later. The report was written in so many medical terms that the only thing I can gather from it was that they cut me up real good!

The evening following the surgery, I felt terrible to say the least! I couldn’t breathe, couldn’t swallow, couldn’t move, and connected to so many tubes and wires that I was afraid to open my eyes in fear that all the wires would electrocute me! It was hell trying to breathe with a tube coming out of my throat, four from small tubes in my arms and three coming out my stomach! “Dude, since this is your first surgery, why did you have to select the top of the line one?” I kept asking myself. There were no answers. And I kept on breathing so terribly hard that my granddaughter, a medical trainee, told her mom, “Sorry, mom, Opa is going down”. I spent the entire night and the morning hours coughing and gasping for air!

Like every moment in life, there are always some funny things that we will remember dearly! Since I was still under the effects of the general anesthesia, I kept having nightmares. Remember that these nightmares or hallucinations (whatever they are called!) were taking me to the time of the Pharaohs and old Egypt. There I was dressed in an Egyptian’s outfit in a bazaar selling ice in the middle of the desert to customers. Next to me, there was a camel that I kept referring to as “Aismet”. Believe me, the hallucinations were real!

The second day was as bad as the first. I kept gasping for air and the hallucinations continued. I remember that I was able to talk to those people in my 3D world, while listening to what was going on in my ICU room! Weird!

The evening of the third day, I was still gasping for air and coughing pretty badly due to the therapy that the doctors were giving me for my lungs. As I was gasping and coughing, I opened my painful eyes and noticed a man dressed in black with a hat on by the door, just like those in the old detective movies! He scared the living life out of me when he said, “Hello”. “Here is the dude in the black outfit to take me away”, I thought. He turned out to be a catholic priest doing his rounds helping people with their religious needs. What a relief! I almost had a heart attack! We became good friends and he visited and gave me Communion throughout my stay in the hospital.

On my fourth day, I was still in pain, breathing hard and coughing a lot. In the morning hours, I was exhausted and able to fall sound asleep for a few hours. But, somehow, I kept waking up to the sound of distant music. I thought that I was close to the Pearly Gates in Heaven! I opened my sleepy eyes, looked around the room, and asked my nurse, “Are you one of my Guardian Angels?” She began to laugh. “Are you still hallucinating?” she asked me. “I don’t know”, I answered, “I kept listening to far-away music, and it sounded like music from Heaven!” “Oh,” she said, “You were listening to music coming from the main lobby played by our part-time piano player who comes every Sunday to entertain the patients.” Oh, boy was I relieved! For a minute I thought that I was cooked!

On my fifth day and until the time I was sent to cardiac rehabilitation, my life began to improve, except for the food. The food I was fed, a Cardiac/Diabetes/Low Carb diet, was terrible. I couldn’t eat it, except for the oatmeal in the mornings. All throughout my stay at the hospital, my menu was oatmeal. I lost nearly 40 pounds in four weeks!

On my eleventh day, I was transferred to another hospital to begin Cardiac Physical Therapy to prepare me to leave the hospital and take care of myself. They did a fantastic job!

Today, I am still doing outpatient, Cardiac Physical Therapy, three times per week; skinny; getting stronger; and reminiscing about my first operative experience! Those were the days!

Thanks to all who sent me get well cards, to those who called me wishing me well, and to those who cared for me during my stay at the hospitals. My eternal gratitude!

Hedy Lamarr Actress and Scientist

By William Hanson

During the middle of the 20th century it was said that actress Hedy Lamarr was the most beautiful woman in the world. Her beauty and acting ability were augmented by, in my view, an intriguing accent that commanded complete attention to her presence on the screen. Most of us know of her successful acting career but probably few are aware that she played a significant role in the allied effort during World War 2.



She was born Hedwig Eva Maria Kiesler in 1914 in Vienna, Austria-Hungary. At age 19 she married Friedrich Mandl, a munitions manufacturer. Mandl had close business ties with the governments of Germany and Italy, selling them munitions. Lamarr would later write in her memoirs that both Mussolini and Hitler had attended parties at their home. Her interest in war materials and science was born during these times. Mandl was a very controlling husband. The marriage would later become unbearable as she became a virtual prisoner in their

home. She managed to escape to Paris and, as we know, eventually ended up in Hollywood.

During the war Lamarr and composer George Antheil experimented with the idea of radio controlled torpedoes. She had learned something about torpedoes during conferences held at the home of her husband. Since enemy jamming could cause the torpedo to go off course, they developed the idea of frequency hopping. A continuous, rapid change of frequencies at the source and at the torpedo would make it impossible for an enemy to interrupt control of the weapon. This idea became expanded, which led to a communications system made unbreakable by the enemy.

They received a patent for their invention in 1941. Lamarr wanted to join the National Inventors Council, but was reportedly told by NIC member Charles F. Kettering and others that she could better help the war effort by using her celebrity status to sell War Bonds.

It was again used later during the Cuban Missile Crisis and in many later applications. It would eventually become the backbone of our modern-day communications technology. We can thank Hedy Lamarr for paving the way for cell phone technology and other wireless communication uses.

In 1997, Hedy Lamarr, at the age of 82, and George Antheil (posthumously) were honored with the Pioneer Award by the Electronic Frontier Foundation. They were inducted into the Inventor's Hall of Fame in 2014.

Your annual membership dues are still \$20.00. Please renew your membership as soon as possible and/or before December 31st of each year. Make your check payable to the Association Treasurer, Howard Dickey, 27382 450th St., Leonard, MN 56652 .Thanks.



The Mystique of the U-2

The early years

By Dick Peiffer

Recently, I was reminded of a dear departed friend, golf buddy, fellow pilot, and the Lockheed U-2 aircraft that he flew many years ago. It brought back, not only fond memories of my friend, but times during my work life in aviation. It's been nearly sixty years since the U-2's initial flight and it is still in use today. Although much has been written about the U-2, here are a few, generally unknown, highlights of the early years. Maybe you will recognize some.

With the start of the Cold War, there became a growing need for aerial intelligence gathering over the USSR. The Eisenhower administration was worried about the Soviets' progress with bombers, ICBMs and nuclear weapons. The areas of interest were too far for aircraft of the day. Nonetheless, the RAF, USAF and USN all flew shallow and sometimes deep-penetration overflights. These flights were very high risk and not without the loss of many lives.

In 1953, the USAF solicited bids for a high altitude reconnaissance aircraft. It called for a cruise altitude of 70,000 feet, a radius of 1,500nm and carry 700lbs.



Because they anticipated the need for only a few aircraft, the solicitations went to smaller manufacturers, Bell Aircraft, Fairchild Aircraft, and Martin Aircraft.

By late 1953, Kelly Johnson's Skunk Works team at Lockheed Aircraft, had also begun working on a

high altitude photo-reconnaissance aircraft. It was a basic F-104, modified with glider-type wings. The design was called the CL-282. Lockheed submitted their bid in March 1954. The USAF liked the Martin submission, a RB-57, because of the two engines. But, weighing the proposals, the overseeing Killian Commission and the CIA agreed the CL-282 was best suited for deep-penetration missions. With the President's blessing, "Project Angel" was born, and Lockheed was awarded a \$35M contract to supply 20 aircraft. The program was so secret, the first check from the government was made out to Kelly Johnson personally, and sent to his home.

Testing could not be done in public view at Lockheed's Burbank Airport. So Johnson, sent Chief Test Pilot, Tony Lavier in an unmarked Beechcraft Bonanza, to find a remote location that could be used for a testing. They found an abandoned airfield on the east side of Groom Dry Lake, about 100 miles north of Las Vegas, NV. It was in the middle of nowhere. The airfield was unsuitable, but a three-mile-wide dry lakebed next to it was perfect. To lure workers to the program, Johnson

called it "Paradise Ranch". The CIA approved the site and named it "Watertown," after Director Allen Dulles' birthplace, Watertown, NY. It has also been called, Area 51, The Ranch, Home Base, Dreamland and others. Officially it was the, "Nevada Test and Training Range," a detachment of Edwards AFB. The site and program were labeled Top Secret and assigned to the CIA with the USAF providing support.

That December the U-2 modified from the original CL-282, was in production at Lockheed. To save weight, it had un-boosted flight controls, no ejection seat, (added after the loss of several pilots) and a bicycle type landing gear system with outriggers, or "pogos" that held the wings level for taxi and takeoff. The cockpit was pressurized, to some extent, to enable pilots to operate for up to 10 hours without full pressure suits. Fuel was developed to prevent freezing at high altitude.

By July 1955 the isolated base was complete. There was a 5,000 foot runway, three hangars, a control tower, fuel storage tanks, basic accommodations for essential personnel, a mess hall and several water wells. Quarters were sparse and some personnel commuted daily by military aircraft from California.

The first U-2, was delivered to Groom Lake on July 15, under wraps in a C-124 Globemaster. It was assembled, and testing began. It was light, fragile and a very challenging airplane to fly. At high altitude the margin between critical Mach speed and stall was about two-and-a-half knots. So an autopilot was essential not just to reduce pilot workload, but without an autopilot, the U-2 could be driven into the "Coffin Corner" where maximum speed and stall speed converge resulting in loss of control. A number of landing accidents proved the U-2, was also very difficult to land.

The program called for civilian pilots and operated only under cover and in the greatest secrecy. Pilots and support personnel were selected, from the Air Force, mostly SAC, and reassigned to the CIA. That coined the phrase, "Sheep Dipping." All personnel signed Nondisclosure or Secrecy Agreements so, no one talked about what they did or where they did it to anyone, including family or if assigned to some other service or department to their work peers or bosses. Work was, need to know and eyes only.



Continued on Page 5

The Mystique of the U-2

By January 1956 the U-2 had a range of nearly 3,000 miles and could cruise at 66,000 feet. It was ready for operational deployment. "Project Aquatone" was born. Lockheed improved each model with better engines, from the original 'A' model with a J57 to the 'C' model with a J79 that improved reliability, cruise to 74,500 feet, and mission range to over 4,000 miles.

On June 15, the 4080th SRW (Strategic Reconnaissance Wing) Det. A, was established at Wiesbaden, Germany. They settled in under a cloak of utmost secrecy. The National Advisory Committee on Aeronautics (NACA), predecessor to NASA, released a cover story stating the unit was the 1st Weather Reconnaissance Sq., Provisional (WRSP-1). Its mission was the study of high-altitude weather phenomena.

Five days later, on June 20, the President approved overflights. Within hours, Carl Overstreet departed on the first operational U-2 mission over East Germany and Poland. Thus began a CIA manned photo-reconnaissance program that lasted 20 years.

On July 2nd Jake Kratt and Glen Dunaway each flew seven hour missions over East Germany, Hungary, Romania, and Bulgaria to the Black Sea and return.

Then on July 4, Harvey Stockman, flew the first mission over the USSR that lasted 8 hours and 45 minutes. He entered East Germany near Fulda, flew over Poland, and into the USSR near Grodno. Then over Minsk, Leningrad, and returning along the Baltic Sea. He photographed various bomber bases, naval shipyards and bases at Leningrad and along the Baltic States. He was tracked by Soviet radar and fighters attempted multiple unsuccessful intercepts. This aircraft is now in the National Air and Space Museum.

The next day, July 5, Carmen Vito, flew the second mission over the USSR, crossing East Germany, over Warsaw, passed south of Minsk, then over Moscow filming the Fili airframe plant and the flight test and research center at Ramenskoye. Turning west he photographed bases enroute to Kaliningrad, along the Baltic, and back to Wiesbaden over Berlin. Again, Soviet fighters attempted multiple intercepts.

Overflights continued over the USSR with one on July 9, by Carl Overstreet over Czechoslovakia, Hungary, over the Ukraine to Kiev crossing over various bomber bases. The next day, Glen Dunaway flew a mission a little south of Carl's route. The Soviets delivered an official protest of the flights over the USSR, on July 10, and President Eisenhower, temporarily suspended the flights.

The data collected by these missions was vital to the intelligence community. An analysis of the photos taken showed the Soviets were nowhere near Khrushchev's boasting about missile and bomber buildup. Eisenhower

had the information he needed to avert a massive arms build-up — and a potential war.

The success of these missions, led to the CIA and military, to press the White House for additional missions. Although the Soviets protested, they were unable to prove the aircraft were American. Proceeding in complete secrecy, Det. B, was established at Incirlik AB, near Adana, Turkey with forward bases in Pakistan. In August, the second class of pilots graduated and assigned to Incirlik. Daily missions were flown over the Middle East monitoring the Suez Canal crises in late 1956. These verified the Soviets had not sent aircraft there despite their threats to Britain, France and Israel.

On the night of September 17, 1956, a U-2 crashed near Kaiserslautern, killing pilot Howard Carey. It was believed that wake turbulence from four preceding Canadian F-86 fighters caused structural failure of the U-2. This accident made the headlines and was the first time a U-2 aircraft was mentioned in the news.

In December, Carmen Vito, flying over the Balkan's nearly bit on the suicide L-pill, mistaking it for one of the gum drops he was eating. The L-pill was available until January 1960 when it was replaced by a poisoned saxitoxin-impregnated needle hidden inside a silver dollar.

In June 1957, Det. C, began operations out of Eielson AFB south of Fairbanks, Alaska. Missions were conducted out of Eielson and Atsugi, Japan over the Soviet Far East. Major interest was ICBM and nuclear testing by the Soviets.

On nearly every mission fighters attempted to shoot down the U-2. So a stealth coating material was added to some aircraft. Those were called "Dirty-Birds" but the weight of the coating limited the aircraft to about 59,000 feet. A "Dirty-Bird" flown by Barry Baker out of Eielson, on September 16, 1957, was intercepted by 5 Soviet fighters over the Kamchatka Peninsula. Looking down through the drift-sight he could see the helmet of the Soviet fighter pilot only a few thousand feet below. Obviously, the radar absorbing material was not working. A blue-black paint known as 'Sea Blue' was adopted. This didn't deflect radar returns, but made the U-2 more difficult for fighter pilots to see from below.

Over-flights continued through April 1960 and then on May 1, 1960, Francis Gary Powers, was shot down near Aramil, USSR, by a SA-2 SAM, while enroute to photograph ICBM sites at Baikonur and Plesetsk. He crashed in Sverdlovsk and was captured. Soviet fighter pilot, Sergei Safronov, pursuing Powers, was killed when hit by one the SAM missiles meant for the U-2. Powers was convicted of espionage, and spent two years in prison until exchanged for Soviet spy Rudolf Abel.

Continued on Page 6

The Mystique of the U-2

The incident ended some of the mystique of the unseen aircraft able to cruise above 70,000 feet. The media around the world carried news of the shoot-down, pictures and the ensuing trial of the American pilot.

That incident did not end the use of the U-2 for aerial reconnaissance. Overflights continued, as necessary, around the globe. Pilot Rudolph Anderson was killed when shot down over Cuba during the Cuban missile crisis, nearly

escalating the dispute into a world war. During the mid-sixties, missions were being conducted over North Vietnam and the Republic of China Air Force, formed the Black Cat Squadron for U-2 overflights of mainland China that lasted until 1974.

Finally, in 1974 the CIA gave the overflight program to the USAF where it remains to this day.



Safety Tips!

GOOD VISION IN A DOWNPOUR

How to achieve good vision while driving during a heavy downpour.

We are not sure why it is so effective; just try this method when it rains heavily. This method as told by a Police friend who had experienced and confirmed it. It is useful even driving at night.

Most of the motorists would turn on HIGH or FASTEST SPEED of the wipers during heavy downpour, yet the visibility in front of the windshield is still bad.....

In the event you face such a situation, just try your SUN GLASSES (any model will do), and miracle! All of a sudden, your visibility in front of your windshield is perfectly clear, as if there is no rain.

Make sure you always have a pair of SUN GLASSES in your car, as you are not only helping yourself to drive safely with good vision, but also might save your friend's life by giving him this idea..

Try it yourself and share it with your friends! Amazing, you still see the drops on the windshield, but not the sheet of rain falling.

You can see where the rain bounces off the road. It works to eliminate the "blindness" from passing semi's spraying you too.

a semi or car in the rain. They ought to teach that little tip in driver's training. It really does work..

This warning is a good one! I wonder how many people know about this.

A 36 year old female had an accident several weeks ago and totaled her car. A resident of Kilgore, Texas she was traveling between Glade-water & Kilgore. It was raining, though not excessively, when her car suddenly began to hydro-plane and literally flew through the air. She was not seriously injured but very stunned at the sudden occurrence!

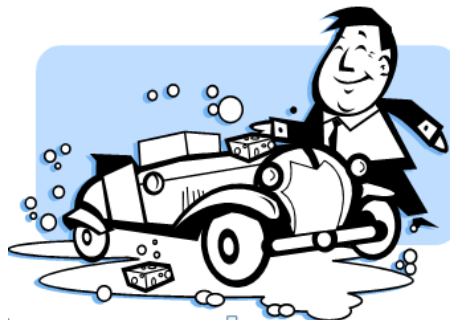
When she explained to the highway patrolman what had happened he told her something that every driver should know - NEVER DRIVE IN THE RAIN WITH YOUR CRUISE CONTROL ON. She thought she was being cautious by setting the cruise control and maintaining a safe consistent speed in the rain. But the highway patrolman told her that if the cruise control is on when your car begins to hydro-plane and your tires lose contact with the pavement, your car will

accelerate to a higher rate of speed making you take off like an airplane. She told the patrolman that was exactly what had occurred.

The patrolman said this warning should be listed, on the driver's seat sun-visor - NEVER USE THE CRUISE CONTROL WHEN THE PAVEMENT IS WET OR ICY, along with the airbag warning. We tell our teenagers to set the cruise control and drive a safe speed - but we don't tell them to use the cruise control only when the pavement is dry.

The only person the accident victim found, who knew this (besides the patrolman), was a man who had a similar accident, totaled his car and sustained severe injuries.

NOTE: Some vehicles (like the Toyota Sienna Limited XLE) will not allow you to set the cruise control when the windshield wipers are on.



Easy Eddie, Al Capone, & Butch O'Hare!

Many years ago, Al Capone virtually owned Chicago. Capone wasn't famous for anything heroic. He was notorious for enmeshing the windy city in everything from bootlegged booze and prostitution to murder.

Capone had a lawyer nicknamed 'Easy Eddie.' He was Capone's lawyer for a good reason. Eddie was very good! In fact, Eddie's skill at legal maneuvering kept Big Al out of jail for a long time. To show his appreciation, Capone paid him very well. Not only was the money big, but Eddie got special dividends, as well. For instance, he and his family occupied a fenced-in mansion with live-in help and all of the conveniences of the day. The estate was so large that it filled an entire Chicago City block.

Eddie lived the high life of the Chicago mob and gave little consideration to the atrocity that went on around him. Eddie did have one soft spot, however. He had a son that he loved dearly. Eddie saw to it that his young son had clothes, cars, and a good education. Nothing was withheld. Price was no object. And, despite his involvement with organized crime, Eddie even tried to teach him right from wrong. Eddie wanted his son to be a better man than he was. Yet, with all his wealth and influence, there were two things he couldn't give his son; he couldn't pass on a good name or a good example.

One day, Easy Eddie reached a difficult decision. Easy Eddie wanted to rectify wrongs he had done.

He decided he would go to the authorities and tell the truth about Al 'Scarface' Capone, clean up his tarnished name, and offer his son some semblance of integrity. To do this, he would have to testify against The Mob, and he knew that the cost would be great. So, he testified. Within the year, Easy Eddie's life ended in a blaze of gunfire on a lonely Chicago Street. But in his eyes, he had given his son the greatest gift he had to offer, at the greatest price he could ever pay. Police removed from his pockets a rosary, a crucifix, a religious medallion, and a poem clipped from a magazine.

The poem read:

The clock of life is wound but once, and no man has the power to tell just when the hands will stop, at late or early hour. Now is the only time you own. Live, love, toil with a will. Place no faith in time. For the clock may soon be still.

World War II produced many heroes. One such man was Lieutenant Commander Butch O'Hare.

He was a fighter pilot assigned to the aircraft carrier Lexington in the South Pacific.

One day his entire squadron was sent on a mission. After he was airborne, he looked at his fuel gauge and realized that someone had forgotten to top off his fuel tank.

He would not have enough fuel to complete his mission and get back to his ship.

His flight leader told him to return to the carrier. Reluctantly, he dropped out of formation and headed back to the fleet. As he was returning to the mother ship, he saw something that turned his blood cold; a squadron of Japanese aircraft was speeding its way toward the American fleet.

The American fighters were gone on a sortie, and the fleet was all but defenseless. He couldn't reach his squadron and bring them back in time to save the fleet. Nor could he warn the fleet of the approaching danger. There was only one thing to do. He must somehow divert them from the fleet.



Butch O'Hare

Laying aside all thoughts of personal safety, he dove into the formation of Japanese planes. Wing-mounted 50 caliber's blazed as he charged in, attacking one surprised enemy plane and then another. Butch wove in and out of the now broken formation and fired at as many planes as possible until all his ammunition was finally spent.

Undaunted, he continued the assault. He dove at the planes, trying to clip a wing or tail in hopes of damaging as many enemy planes as possible, rendering them unfit to fly.

Finally, the exasperated Japanese squadron took off in another direction.

Deeply relieved, Butch O'Hare and his tattered fighter limped back to the carrier.

Upon arrival, he reported in and related the event surrounding his return. The film from the gun-camera mounted on his plane told the tale. It showed the extent of Butch's daring attempt to protect his fleet. He had, in fact, destroyed five enemy aircraft. This took place on February 20, 1942, and for that action Butch became the Navy's first Ace of WWII, and the first Naval Aviator to win the Congressional Medal of Honor.

A year later Butch was killed in aerial combat at the age of 29. His home town would not allow the memory of this WW II hero to fade, and today, O'Hare Airport in Chicago is named in tribute to the courage of this great man.

So, the next time you find yourself at O'Hare International, give some thought to visiting Butch's memorial displaying his statue and his Medal of Honor. It's located between Terminals 1 and 2.

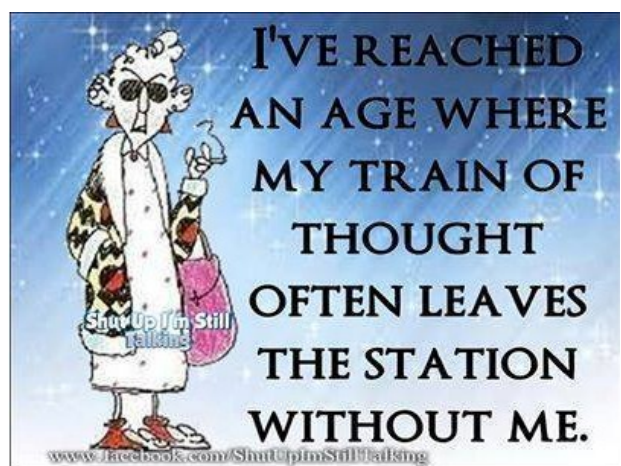
SO WHAT DO THESE TWO STORIES HAVE TO DO WITH EACH OTHER?

Butch O'Hare was 'Easy Eddie's' son.

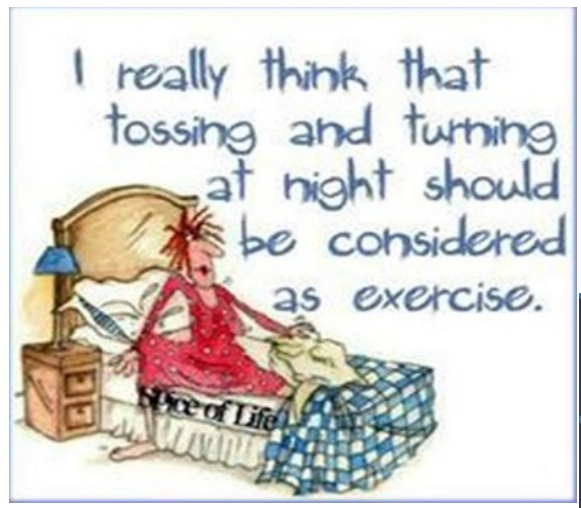
YIPPEE! I WOKE UP!



Seasoned Citizens



My brain is like the Bermuda Triangle.
Information goes in
and then it's never
found again.



**When I get old, I'm going to
move in with my kids,
hog the computer,
pay no bills,
eat all the food,
trash the house,
and when asked to clean,
pitch a fit like it's killing me!**



Celle-Wietzenbruch '59

Story By
Brian Coy

These are my memories of the year I was assigned to OL 6, 601st Tactical Control Squadron. That was 55 years ago, so I won't guarantee their accuracy,

I had been assigned to the 807th TCS, working in the cave at Kindsbach. I was the NCOIC of the Offensive Missions Section, where we controlled all the TDP (Tactical Direction Post) activity within Germany.

A TDP used a level bombing radar to acquire and control a fighter-bomber or a missile and guide it to a specific target.

From the Offensive Missions Section we scheduled missions, maintenance and performance for all the TDPs. The TDPs were Operating Locations, subordinate to the AC&W or TCS Squadrons. In



View from gate shack, Celle radar site.

this way I became acquainted with the locations of the TDPs.

When I re-enlisted, in January 1959, I requested transfer to OL 6, 601st TCS, located at Celle-Wietzenbruch. This was in the British sector of Germany, a few miles north east of Hanover. I was born and raised in England, so this duty sounded good to me, and I was right.

Celle-Wietzenbruch had been a Luftwaffe base during the war (in my room I had a bookcase with the Luftwaffe emblem stamped on the back), then the Royal Air Force had it and used it during the Berlin Airlift. They had given the base back to the German Air Force shortly before I arrived, and OL 6 was a tenant unit.

There were about 50 men assigned to a TDP, and we got our support from 601st HQ at Rothwesten, or from the local British regiments. Our married personnel had British family housing, shopped in the British NAAFI or on the economy.

Our OL had a 2-story barracks for the troops, a small shop for vehicle maintenance, and a multi-purpose building that housed the Orderly Room, mess hall, NCO club, theater, and Medic. Out by the runway, in the middle of the radar, radio, crypto vehicles was a small building that served as the Ops Office/ Maintenance Office. The mess hall had a fully equipped kitchen, but no food service personnel were assigned, so we hired some German cooks, and they provided 3 meals a day, with sandwiches for midnight chow.

A TDP was a self-contained, mobile unit. All the equipment was mounted on trucks, and we had diesel generators to supply power. When we went on alert we could pack up the whole shebang and be on the road in 20 minutes. We were scheduled for 3 or 4 missions per week. We couldn't go firing missiles for practice, so our missions were with Fighter-bomber aircraft flying out of France (until DeGaulle withdrew from NATO), Germany and England. The aircraft would fly to a check-point, we would acquire and lock on with our radar, and guide the plane to a practice target. At the target we would not drop a dummy bomb, but a second TDP would be tracking the plane, and would score us. We manned the radar 24/7, and updated the tracking data to our real targets every 3 hours.



When we were not on duty Celle was a good place to enjoy the local beer, wine and food.

I spent a lot of time at the British units in the area. When our Commander found out I was of English birth he had me do most of the 'liaison' work with the Brits. Usually that consisted of scrounging material and supplies over several beers in the regiment's NCO Mess. I was also the Housing NCO. The site had been assigned several housing units in the British housing area, and they came furnished, so I had to inventory the units for incoming and outgoing families. British enlisted ranks were not authorized refrigerators or couches, so I could draw them from the supply warehouse in Rothwesten and haul them up to Celle. This usually involved a certain amount of beer!

At Christmas 1959 we threw a party for the local orphanage. The orphanage staff gave us the info on each kid – age, sex, clothing sizes – and we bought each kid some needed clothing, and a toy. We raised the money for this by holding raffles, a casino night, and donations.

One of the German AF units on the base was a helicopter squadron. We got to know a couple of the pilots, and we persuaded one to dress up as Santa Claus, and the other one flew him in with his chopper. There was an open area in front of our barracks, so we lined the kids up and they saw Santa arrive in style. After that we fed them cake, cookies and ice cream, with gallons of soda, and then gave them their gifts. For some of them it was the first time they had something that was their very own. A great day.

In January 1960 the 601st formed a new TDP, OL 14, at Linderhofe, SW of Hanover, and because there was no married housing available, they pulled unmarried troops from the other TDPs to man it. I was one of those selected, so my assignment to OL 6 lasted exactly one year, but it was a great year to remember.

See the Celle section of our web site, www.601st-615th-acw.org/index.html for more pictures.

A MESSAGE FROM THE VETERAN DEPARTMENT SECRETARY

An Open Letter to America's Veterans

At the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA), we have one of the most noble and inspiring missions in Government. I accepted this job and joined this mission to better serve you-our Veterans-and improve the delivery of the care and benefits you have earned. It is our privilege to serve you, and I have made clear that as we move forward as a Department, we will judge the success of all our efforts against a single metric-the outcomes we provide for Veterans.

The Veterans Access, Choice, and Accountability Act of 2014 (VACAA), enacted less than 3-months ago, goes a long way toward enabling VA to meet the demand for Veterans health care in the short-term. VA has put considerable focus and attention on ensuring the law is implemented seamlessly, without confusion, and without creating hardships for Veterans. This legislation provides authorities, funding, and other tools to better serve Veterans in the short-term. We are appreciative of this temporary measure to improve access while we build capacity within the VA system to better serve those who rely on us for health care.

From June 1 to September 30, 2014, VA completed more than 19 million Veteran appointments in our facilities and made nearly 1.1 million authorizations for Veterans to receive care in the private sector and other non-VA health facilities-a 46.6-percent increase over the same period in 2013. This was all done under existing programs prior to the passage of VACAA, and sets the stage for strengthening existing partnerships between VA and the private sector. We have much we can share with one another to the benefit of Veterans.

VA has signed contracts with two private health care companies to help VA administer the Veterans Choice Program (Choice Program) under VACAA. The Choice Program is a new, temporary benefit allowing some Veterans to receive health care in their communities rather than waiting for a VA appointment or traveling to a VA facility. It does not impact your existing VA health care or any other VA benefit you may be receiving. We will begin implementing this benefit on November 5, as required by law. A call center is now operational to answer your questions and verify your eligibility for this program.

As part of this new program, we are issuing a Veterans Choice Card to every Veteran who is potentially eligible for the new, temporary health benefit. The Choice Card allows Veterans to elect to receive care outside of VA when they qualify for the new program based on the distance of their residence from a VA care facility, or when wait times for VA health care exceed the standards established in law. The Choice Card does not replace the identification card you already use to access other VA benefits; please do not throw away that identification card.

The Choice Card will be issued in three phases. The first group of Choice Cards along with a letter explaining eligibility for this program is currently being sent to Veterans who may live more than 40 miles from a VA facility. The next group of Choice Cards and letters will be sent shortly thereafter to those Veterans who are currently waiting for an appointment longer than 30-days from their preferred date or the date determined to be medically necessary by their physician.

The final group of Choice Cards and letters will be sent between December 2014 and January 2015 to the remainder of all Veterans enrolled for VA health care who may be eligible for the Choice Program in the future.

We are continuing to work with our partners-Congress, Veterans Service Organizations, and others-to get the information about this health program out to Veterans in as many ways as possible. Please visit our Web site at www.va.gov/opa/choiceact where we have provided helpful information on Choice Program eligibility. We will work with our partners to keep you informed as we improve our delivery of high-quality, timely care.

Thank you for your service and sacrifice.

Sincerely,

Robert A. McDonald