

Granite City Flight Lines

EAA 551 OFFICERS:

October 13, 2010

Tim Mahoney, President 320/259-9307

John Voth Bd M 320/252-9177

Dale Field, VP 320/252-2596

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Jim Hayes, Bd M 763/262-4004

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Bob Barrett, Newsletter Editor 320. 253. 8620 robertebar@msn.com Please submit articles to the e-mail address. The views expressed in this news letter do not necessarily reflect those of Chapter 551 or the EAA. Submission deadline is the second Monday of each month. Submissions for publication are strongly encouraged should be given to Bob Barrett. Preferred method is e-mail. Permission is hereby granted to other EAA Chapters to use the non-copyrighted portions of this publication. **For updated information check eaa551.org**

NEXT EAA CHAPTER MEETING 10/18/10 EAA 551 Hanger 7:00PM Clear Lake We will have a barbeque at 6:30 PM \$5.00 donation to cover costs. We will have election of officers and we will nominate people who are not there to defend themselves!!! Come early because people have been known to bribe members to vote for their absent friends. Rumor has it Tim Mahoney is offering good money to whoever votes for someone else for President.

CHAPTER 551 BOARD MINUTES 10-4-10

Treasurer \$5128.29 Aviation library fund \$2827.90 General fund \$2300.39

Oct. 18th meeting at Clear Lake Barbeque at 6:30pm, meeting at 7pm election of chapter officers. The chapter is in need of new members to fill the officer positions, if you are up to the task show up. We will also review the chapter by-laws. Nov. meeting is still open to suggestions?

Rolf Turner gave a report on the aviation library located at the LXL terminal.

The board is requesting input from chapter members on activities for the 2011 year. If there is no input from members then the board will set the activities for meetings. Please give your suggestions to any of the chapter officers listed at the top of your newsletter.

Mark P. asked the board to consider purchasing a portable audio system and a big screen for chapter presentations. Meeting adjourned at 8:20pm.

CALENDER OF COMING EVENTS

10/30/10 EAA Chapter #745 Fly-in/Drive-in Pancake Breakfast 8 am - 11 am, at Benson's Airport, White Bear Lake, MN. Contact info: Kim: (763)-503-0161

Airport Phone: 651-429-0315. www.eea745.org

6MN9 Benson Airport Latitude: 45° 6' 59.88" North Longitude: 92° 59' 45.78"

West Unicom: 122.700; Runway 12/30 (2000' x 75'), Surface: Turf According to

Google Earth, Benson's is 9 miles almost straight south of the Forest Lake airport.

Two landmarks for finding Bensons are the water tower inside the pattern and Bald

Eagle lake just to the west. Benson Airport, 5860 Highway 61 N, White Bear Lake

MN 55110-2371 (651)-429-0315

**10/30/10 CAF Halloween Benefit Saturday 7:00 AM Minnesota Wing Hangar
Hanger #3 Fleming Field 310 Airport Road South St. Paul MN 55075 (651) 455-6942
For More info please check out their website at www.cafmn.org**

**11/12/10 Monthly Fly-in Hosted by EAA Chapter 1446, "Bigfork Fly By Knights"
November 12, 2010 Lunch served at 12:00 PM (Noon) Bowstring Airport, (9Y0) No
charge lunch served beginning 12:00 Noon. Beautiful, well cared for grass strip.
This is a monthly event, the 2nd Saturday each month. Gene Ward, Secretary, EAA
Chapter 1446 For more information please call: 218-743-6175**

**12/11/10 Monthly Fly-in Hosted by EAA Chapter 1446, "Bigfork Fly By Knights"
December 11, 2010 Lunch served at 12:00 PM (Noon) Bowstring Airport, (9Y0) No
charge lunch served beginning 12:00 Noon. Beautiful, well cared for grass strip.
This is a monthly event, the 2nd Saturday each month. Gene Ward, Secretary, EAA
Chapter 1446 For more information please call: 218-743-6175**

***Program/Social Meetings* are held on the third Monday of every month. *Business Meetings* are held on the first Monday of every month. Locations and exceptions are announced in the monthly newsletter. Also revised and updated Chapter information can be found at eaa551.org**

THE DOOLITTLE RAID ON TOKYO!

This is the third of a series of this pilots participation of the Doolittle Raid on Tokyo in

After having our plane serviced, we flew on to Alameda Naval Air Station in Oakland . As I came in for final approach, we saw it! I excitedly called the rest of the crew to take a look. There below us was a huge aircraft carrier. It was the USS Hornet, and it looked so gigantic! Man, I had never even seen a carrier until this moment. There were already two B-25s parked on the flight deck. Now we knew! My heart was racing, and I thought about how puny my plane would look on board this mighty ship. As soon as we landed and taxied off the runway, a jeep pulled in front of me with a big "Follow Me" sign on the back. We followed it straight up to the wharf, alongside the towering Hornet. All five of us were looking up and just in awe, scarcely believing the size of this thing. As we left the plane, there was already a Navy work crew swarming around attaching cables to the lifting rings on top of the wings and the fuselage. As we walked towards our quarters, I looked back and saw them lifting my plane up into the air and swing it over the ship's deck. It looked so small and lonely.

Later that afternoon, all crews met with Colonel Doolittle and he gave last minute assignments. He told me to go to the Presidio and pick up two hundred extra "C" rations. I saluted, turned, and left, not having any idea where the Presidio was, and not exactly sure what a "C" ration was. I commandeered a Navy staff car and told the driver to take me to the Presidio, and he did. On the way over, I realized that I had no written signed orders and that this might get a little sticky. So in I walked into the Army supply depot and made my request, trying to look poised and confident. The supply officer asked "What is your authorization for this request, sir?" I told him that I could not give him one. "And what is the destination?" he asked. I answered, "The aircraft carrier, Hornet, docked at Alameda ." He said, "Can you tell me who ordered the rations, sir?" And I replied with a smile, "No, I

cannot." The supply officers huddled together, talking and glanced back over towards me. Then he walked back over and assured me that the rations would be delivered that afternoon. Guess they figured that something big was up. They were right. The next morning we all boarded the ship.

Trying to remember my naval etiquette, I saluted the Officer of the Deck and said "Lt. McElroy, requesting permission to come aboard." The officer returned the salute and said "Permission granted." Then I turned aft and saluted the flag. I made it, without messing up. It was April 2, and in full sunlight, we left San Francisco Bay . The whole task force of ships, two cruises, four destroyers, and a fleet oiler, moved slowly with us under the Golden Gate Bridge . Thousands of people looked on. Many stopped their cars on the bridge, and waved to us as we passed underneath. I thought to myself, I hope there aren't any spies up there waving.

Once at sea, Doolittle called us together. "Only a few of you know our destination, and you others have guessed about various targets. Gentlemen, your target is Japan !" A sudden cheer exploded among the men. "Specifically, Yokohama , Tokyo , Nagoya , Kobe , Nagasaki and Osaka . The Navy task force will get us as close as possible and we'll launch our planes. We will hit our targets and proceed to airfields in China ." After the cheering stopped, he asked again, if any of us desired to back out, no questions asked. Not on did, not one. Then the ship's Captain then went over the intercom to the whole ship's company. The loudspeaker blared, "The destination is Tokyo !" A tremendous cheer broke out from everyone on board. I could hear metal banging together and wild screams from down below decks. It was quite a rush! I felt relieved actually. We finally knew where we were going.

I set up quarters with two Navy pilots, putting my cot between their two bunks. They couldn't get out of bed without stepping on me. It was just fairly cozy in there, yes it was. Those guys were part of the Torpedo Squadron Eight and were just swell fellows. The rest of the guys bedded down in similar fashion to me, some had to sleep on bedrolls in the Admiral's chartroom. As big as this ship was, there wasn't any extra room anywhere. Every square foot had a purpose... A few days later we discovered where they had an ice cream machine!

There were sixteen B-25s tied down on the flight deck, and I was flying number 13. All the carrier's fighter planes were stored away helplessly in the hangar deck. They couldn't move until we were gone. Our Army mechanics were all on board, as well as our munitions loaders and several back up crews, in case any of us got sick or backed out. We settled into a daily routine of checking our planes. The aircraft were grouped so closely together on deck that it wouldn't take much for them to get damaged. Knowing that my life depended on this plane, I kept a close eye on her.

Day after day, we met with the intelligence officer and studied our mission plan. Our targets were assigned, and maps and objective folders were furnished for study. We went over approach routes and our escape route towards China . I never studied this hard back at Trinity. Every day at dawn and at dusk the ship was called to general quarters and we practiced finding the quickest way to our planes. If at any point along the way, we were discovered by the enemy fleet, we were to launch our bombers immediately so the Hornet could bring up its fighter planes. We would then be on our own, and try to make it to the nearest land, either Hawaii or Midway Island .

Dr. Thomas White, a volunteer member of plane number 15, went over our medical records and gave us inoculations for a whole bunch of diseases that hopefully I wouldn't catch. He gave us training sessions in emergency first aid, and lectured us at length about water purification and such. Tom, a medical doctor, had learned how to be a gunner just so he could go on this mission. We put some new tail guns in place of the ones that had been taken out to save weight. Not exactly functional, they were two broom handles, painted black. The thinking was they might help scare any Jap fighter planes. Maybe, maybe not.

On Sunday, April 14, we met up with Admiral Bull Halsey's task force just out of Hawaii and joined into one big force. The carrier Enterprise was now with us, another two heavy cruisers, four more destroyers and another oiler. We were designated as Task Force 16. It was quite an impressive sight to see, and represented the bulk of what was left of the U.S. Navy after the devastation of Pearl Harbor.. There were over 10,000 Navy personnel sailing into harm's way, just to deliver us sixteen Army planes to the Japs, orders of the President.

As we steamed further west, tension was rising as we drew nearer and nearer to Japan . Someone thought of arming us with some old ...45 pistols that they had on board. I went through that box of 1911 pistols, they were in such bad condition that I took several of them apart, using the good parts from several useless guns until I built a serviceable weapon. Several of the other pilots did the same. Admiring my "new" pistol, I held it up, and thought about my old Model-T.

More Next Month

MEMBERSHIP INFORMATION:

Please submit membership inquiries, enrollments and profile updates to Mark Priglmeier: notam@eaa551.org Or by calling: (320) 229-8563. If you do not wish to receive emails from EAA Chapter 551, email: notam@eaa551.org with a subject line "*Please unsubscribe from EAA Chapter 551email*". submitted/mailed to EAA 551's Treasurer Kenneth HT Olson CPA LTD, 2330 Troop Drive, Sartell MN 56377 kolson@khto.com (320) 253-5850

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