

1st Fighter Association Newsletter



27th



71st



94th

Volume 31 No. 2

August 2012

1st Fighter Association Officer and Enlisted Membership Initiative

(June 5, 2012) The 1st Fighter Association has initiated a process to increase both Officer and Enlisted membership in the Association. To that end the Association Board has approved an interim new position designated "Enlisted Advisor," currently filled by Randy Dodge, for the purpose of providing a personal contact for new enlisted members and also to improve communication thru adoption of new social media opportunities. The initiative has been briefed to the 1st Fighter Wing Command Chief, Chief Carter, and will be briefed to Wing and Squadron leadership in the near term.

The criteria for Officer and Enlisted membership varies according to circumstance. All 1st Wing enlisted and officer members are eligible to join the Association as dues paying members and participate in all events and activities. It is the goal of the Association to offer Wing Leadership the opportunity to recognize certain individuals for outstanding accomplishments with an Honorary Membership for one year, officer or enlisted. It is the goal of the Association that at the completion of the 1 year the individual will transition to permanent, dues-paying,

membership status. In addition, Enlisted wing members, upon their retirement, can be recommended by Unit Leadership to the Association for Honorary membership. Those individuals, so recognized, will be offered their Honorary membership at their retirement ceremony.

Except for use in Wing Recognition Programs, Honorary Memberships will not be offered to Officers. Involvement by the Association in many wing and squadron events provides ample opportunity for Officers to learn of the Association and recognize the benefits of membership. The Association will ask that the Units to promote membership by offering locations for display of the quarterly Association Newsletter, display newly obtained memorabilia and have membership applications readily available for those interested.

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Racquet's Corner

The Association has experienced a very productive quarter. First, I want to thank Pete Marty and Bill "Gopher" Roege for consolidating the survey results, publishing them and placing them on the website for everyone to view. Secondly, I am pleased with the number of folks who participated in the survey and for the comments that were submitted on ways to improve the Association. I do however want to point out that the numbers who participated in the survey are very close to the number of members who normally respond to issues, attend reunions and other events. When our roster contains over 300 names it indicates that only about 33% of our members are really active. The Board has suspected for a while that this was the case and where it becomes very important is when we plan reunions and similar events we do not want to over plan the number of attendees which in the long run complicates many of the cost factors. The Board plans on doing an executive review of the survey, assess all the suggestions and where possible take the best for implementation.

We are well down the road on implementation of our Officer and Enlisted Membership initiative. We have had over a year of experience with various free one year membership and other incentives and the response has been somewhat disappointing as that the honorary members do not become paying members after the one year grace period. We have come up with a new process that will access interest before the fact and hopefully increase the percentage of folks that follow up as due paying members. We have appointed Randy Dodge as our Enlisted Advisor. He has written an article for this Newsletter which he discusses some of the social media initiatives being implemented. Additionally, Bob Correia has volunteered to develop and publish a new 1st Fighter Association brochure that we

plan to have available in ready rooms and lounges around the Wing so that everyone can become familiar with the Association and what we do.

The mini-reunion, hosted by Moose and Corrine Moore in Nashville was a great success. We all had a chance to welcome Bubba Parker back to good health and back as President of the 27th Historical Society. I want to thank Frank Pickart for filling in for Bubba, he did a great job and offered many recommendations for improving the Association. At the Reunion the members of the Board wore one of the new prototype Associations golf shirts to try out and let everyone see what they look like. I took orders for 11 additional shirts and hope to be able to have the vendor take orders for additional at the next Reunion if not sooner. The picture below is also on the website for a better view the website.



I was informed recently the Brian Leslie, the 1st Fighter Wing Historian, has been reassigned to US SPACECOM and will leave at the end of the month. Brian has been a strong supporter of the

Association and has worked diligently to display our memorabilia in the wing and squadron display areas. Please join me in wishing Brian the best as he moves on. I hope to meet and work with the next Historian as soon as named.

In closing I am pleased to inform everyone that the health of the Association remains viable and growing. Our interface with the Wing is strong, very supportive and looking to become more viable in the future. I hope that all those members I mentioned earlier who are not as active as they should be will become more active in the future so the next reunion will be the biggest and best that can be offered.

Check 6

Racquet

Notes from the Secretary

Remember to keep your personal information up to date by sending changes to me at 1stfighter@comcast.net.

Survey URL:

<http://www.sboa.biz/1stfighterassociation/news/News/2002278578/Article.aspx>



Cheers,

Pete

In Remembrance



Virgil Olson

Olson, Virgil (96) Aug 27, 1915 - Sep 25, 2011. Virgil was a 1st Lieutenant in the U.S. Army Air Corps during WWII and served as a fighter pilot (71st Squadron).



Robert "Irish" Casey

Robert James Casey, 70, died Tuesday, July 24, 2012. Mr. Casey was an Air Force veteran and a recipient of the Air Force Flying Cross while flying five different generations of jet fighters the F-102 through the F-15. (1st Wing DO)



(Bubba Parker wrote – Irish was the DO of the 1st TFW I first got to Langley. He has been battling cancer for about a year. His wife, Mary Frank, is also battling the disease. Irish was also a member of the First Fighter Association.)

Association Member Publishes New Book

"I got *Look Mom – I Can Fly* on my Kindle yesterday & read it non-stop! Smoky has come up with a gem. I thoroughly recommend it to all the 1st Fighters."

Jim Graham

Bob "Smoky" Vrillakas has recorded his military experiences in a book entitled, *Look Mom—I Can Fly*. It was taken from his memoirs and

relates how a small town boy, drafted into the army before Pearl Harbor, learned to fly P-38 fighters and flew 51 combat missions in the Mediterranean Theatre of Operations with the famed 94th Hat-in-the-Ring Squadron (WWII 1943/44). It also describes growing up during the depression in a small California town and, as an epilogue, some of Bob's post war experience in the USAF.

Bob was spurred on to write a book, because those that have read his memoirs all had one question which was—"Why isn't this in a book?" So, with that in mind he tackled it about a year ago. His eldest daughter and her son are both authors and were of great help in the editing and proof reading area.

You can view and order the book at the following web site:

<http://www.ampubbooks.com/index.html>

If you would like a signed copy, Bob has some set aside for that purpose just call him at 503-658-5436 and he will work out an arrangement to get you as many as you want (\$16.95 plus shipping cost).

The book is also available in eBook form at Amazon, Barnes & Noble and most major book sellers.



Fightin' Eagles Hold Mini-Reunion in Nashville, TN

(Bubba Parker) The 27th Fightin' Eagles conducted a "mini-reunion" in Nashville, TN the weekend of 20 July 2012. Moose Moore organized the event and served as host for over 30 Fightin' Eagles and their spouses. We were also honored to have Maj Gen Brett "E.T." Williams, Deputy Chief of Staff for Operations, Plans and Requirements, Headquarters U.S. Air Force and his wife, Marriane as well as Colonel Kevin Robbins, 1st FW Commander, in attendance. E.T. made sure everyone knew what was going on in today's Air Force and Hollywood just stood around with a big smile on his face knowing everyone was envious that he was flying F-22s.



Activities included a dinner at Moose's home on Friday evening, a brunch in Southern's Restaurant in Nashville on Saturday, and drinks and BBQ at the Wild Horse Salon in Nashville on Saturday evening. The Fightin' Eagles outnumbered a group of US Army attendees at the Wild Horse and ensured the crowd knew it.

Frank "Easy" Pickart shanghaied Bubba Parker into reassuming the duties of President of the 27th Historical Society. Since a quorum was present, the election was deemed official and Bubba was unanimously elected (well, almost unanimous as Bubba opposed but relented when presented a bottle of Jeremiah Weed which he immediately uncorked and passed around).

There were a couple of minor injuries playing Crud in the Wild Horse; however, nothing more serious than a couple of guys having to admit

they weren't as young as they used to be. All in all, a great time was had by all.



Moose and Corinne did a superb job in organizing and hosting this event. Many of the attendees expressed this was the best reunion yet as was a great warm up for next year's First Fighter Reunion to be held at Langley in the fall of 2013. For those of you who didn't make it, you were missed and we look forward to seeing everyone next year at Langley. As usual, Bubba challenges the other 2 squadrons to top 27th attendance at Langley in 2013, so pencil in September or October in 2013.



More information about the reunion on page 11

F-15A serial number 75-0023 "MALONEY'S PONY"

A GREAT JET...AN UNDESERVED ENDING

(Randy "Mopar" Dodge) I arrived at Langley Air Force Base in early October of 1978 as a no stripe, wet behind the ears Airman Basic. I was assigned to the 1st Aircraft Generation Squadron and 27th Aircraft Maintenance Unit to eventually be a Dedicated Crew Chief. First, I had to go through 14 weeks of F-15 specific maintenance training. The exciting part for me was I actually got my first choice of PCS assignments coming out of Tech School at Sheppard AFB in Wichita Falls, Texas. Before I went to Basic, I knew I wanted to be around F-15's, and being familiar with the area I wanted to be at Langley.

In January of 1979 on a cold, windy morning I made my debut on the flight line of the 27th Tactical Fighter Squadron. After a week or so I was assigned as the Assistant Crew Chief on aircraft tail number 75-0023. It had "Maloney's Pony" painted on the left side of the nose. I figured that would make it easy to find each morning, if nothing else. Sadly, none of the other maintainers knew the story behind the nickname, so it was a long time before I knew how important it was to the heritage of the 27th.



F-15A 75-0023

A few months passed, and the then current Dedicated Crew Chief was honorably discharged from the Air Force and I was given the title of Dedicated Crew Chief of the Pony. Imagine being 19 years old, and being completely responsible for whatever happens on what at the time was the most awesome, not to

mention expensive, piece of hardware in the fighter inventory. My name was on the side of that airplane before the other Crew Chief was off the base! I still believe my friends from high school that were in their freshman year of college were missing out!!! Through the efforts of all the maintainers who ever worked on the Pony, the aircraft became and was maintained as one of the highest flying hour per month aircraft in the squadron. It rarely if ever came back code 3, and if it did we could usually get her back to Fully Mission Capable (FMC) without missing more than one assigned sortie. The pilots who flew her still comment today how well she flew. By no means was she the only Eagle that flew that well in the 27th, but I always worked hard to keep her flying as much as possible. When the weather cooperated the 1st Tactical Fighter Wing would do a demo each Friday afternoon from Spring through the Fall, and most days they chose to use not just the 27th TFS, but "Maloney's Pony" as well. However, as the saying goes, all good things must come to an end. Unbeknownst to me the end would come for "23" sooner than I had hoped.

In early February, 1980 the jet came back code 3 from a mission. With the story that follows you can understand why I don't remember exactly what the issue was that broke it, but it went to a hangar immediately. As per normal, in the coming days with the slow supply chain and against my wishes, the airplane was cannibalized for parts until there was almost nothing left but an airframe. One day I actually had to go to the hangar and let air out of the nose gear shock strut to keep her from tipping backward onto her tail cones. The aircraft looked like it had been abandoned.

Toward the end of February it was decided to put "23" back together. By then I had been temporarily assigned to another jet which was flying, so I couldn't help a lot with that process. It was frustrating, to say the least. The main goal was to have the airplane flying in less than 2 weeks. Any maintainer will tell you that when you hurry to put something back together you are just asking for trouble. Well, the powers that be "asked," and got trouble in spades!

On a Wednesday in early March I went on a TDY to Buckley Air National Guard Base in Colorado with 4 jets to participate in an exercise called "Aspen Flag." We were to come back on Sunday. Anyone who was there will tell you we kicked ass and had a great time. [Editor Note: Tub "Axe" Washburn led Gopher, Bubba and Duke on this TDY.] Before we left Langley, the Maintenance Supervisor told us that "23" would have its "ops/systems check" engine run done, and the aircraft would be FMC by the time we returned. We brought the aircraft out of the hangar (reluctantly) the day before we left for Colorado. I say reluctantly because there was a MAJOR fuel leak at the base of the left anti-collision light located at the wing root of the airplane. Why MAJOR? The tech order said that any fuel leaking at a rate of more than 2 drips per minute was considered a "Red X," and the airplane was not to have electrical power applied to it in any way, shape, or form. The Pony was leaking close to 10 drips per minute. This was a catastrophe waiting to happen, and eventually it would.

The rest of this story was related to me less than an hour after the event by the crew chief who was told to do the engine run (a Senior Airman and good friend of mine). I will not mention names out of respect to those directly involved, and my personal viewpoint based on the information I know. The rest of that week there was a constant argument over whether time should be taken to investigate the leak and have it repaired, or run the engines and try to meet the Deputy Chief of Maintenance's schedule. The Staff Sergeant who was put in charge of that weekend's duty crew was told by his superiors to make sure the aircraft got the engine run accomplished. Most of these superiors made the call without ever looking at the airplane. Unfortunately, this particular Staff Sergeant had arrived at Langley about 3 weeks prior, and had never even seen an F-15 until he got there. He had also been through no formal F-15 specific training. No disrespect to the pilots who have flown the F-4, but a maintainer will tell you that from our perspective, the Phantom and Eagle are two very different aircraft. On Sunday (the day we were returning

from Colorado) this Staff Sergeant instructed my friend to perform the engine run on "23". Before he did his inspection, the crew chief showed the fuel leak to the supervisor who told him "run it anyway." The crew chief followed procedure to the letter, and showed the supervisor in the tech order where it said he could not run the engines with the aircraft in that condition. The supervisor then ordered my friend to run the engines. In my personal view, at that point my friend needed to find someone who out ranked the supervisor and knew the F-15 (possibly whoever the pilot on duty that weekend was) and get him to countermand the order to run the aircraft. He did not. He climbed into the cockpit, arranged everything per the tech order and pulled the JFS handle. What happened next was obviously, and unfortunately preventable. When my friend engaged the finger lift on the #2 engine throttle, the left wing root exploded immediately and catastrophically. The ensuing fire raged against the entire left side of the airplane, melted some of the canopy and windscreen glass, and welded screws in place. The fire got so hot it literally melted the nose landing gear strut. Normally the nose gear retracts forward for flight. This day it folded backwards underneath the airplane. The airplane came to rest on her nose. Thankfully my friend was able to shut down the engine, and bail over the right side canopy rail to safety. The airman on the ground was hit by a piece of shrapnel which broke his leg. Thankfully, this was the only injury from the incident. The airman operating the fire bottle did his job, but was no match for this fire. About 30-45 minutes after this all happened, we landed at Langley. As we flew over we could see an aircraft that had obviously caught fire and was resting on its nose in a huge puddle of foam and water. However we couldn't tell which airplane it was. I knew it was the Pony when I was immediately stopped as I got off our airplane and was escorted down to the AMU where I was told what happened and who was involved. They let me talk to my friend to find out the details. However they would not let me talk to the supervisor. In retrospect, probably a good idea considering if I found him I was going to...

let's just say, explain clearly how I felt about his involvement in the day's events.

Anyway, that was the end of 75-0023 "Maloney's Pony." It would not be replaced until the "C" model Eagles came to Langley with 81-0023 and later 82-0023. These would not be replaced until 2011 when the F-22 Raptor 09-174 was dedicated as the new "Maloney's Pony." When you visit Langley, ask to see it. It

U.S.S. Barb: The Sub That Sank a Train

This is as complete an accounting (short of reading the book) of this accomplishment as I have read. Makes a great US Navy read. Captain Fluckey's book Thunder Below can be found on Amazon.

Great story of American ingenuity – one of the factors that makes the American military so good. (Sam Terry)

In 1973 an Italian submarine named Enrique Tazzoli was sold for a paltry \$100,000 as scrap metal. The submarine, given to the Italian Navy in 1953, was originally the USS Barb, an incredible veteran of World War II service with a heritage that never should have passed so unnoticed into the graveyards of the metal recyclers.

The U.S.S. Barb was a pioneer, paving the way for the first submarine launched missiles and flying a battle flag unlike that of any other ship. In addition to the Medal of Honor ribbon at the top of the flag identifying the heroism of its captain, Commander Eugene "Lucky" Fluckey, the bottom border of the flag bore the image of a Japanese locomotive. The U.S.S. Barb was indeed, the submarine that "SANK A TRAIN."

July 18, 1945 (Patience Bay, off the coast of Karafuto, Japan): It was after 4 A.M. and Commander Fluckey rubbed his eyes as he peered over the map spread before him. It was the twelfth war patrol of the Barb, the fifth under Commander Fluckey. He should have turned command over to another skipper after four patrols, but had managed to strike a deal with Admiral Lockwood to make one more

has its own special covers, and also has "Major Thomas E. Maloney" listed as the pilot on the nose gear door. The 27th FS and 1st Fighter Association did a magnificent job bringing "Maloney's Pony" back to life in the 27th. The crew chief of that aircraft is SSgt Nicholas Banks, and he has related to me a couple different times how well the new "Pony" flies. You gotta love tradition!!!

trip with the men he cared for like a father, should his fourth patrol be successful. Of course, no one suspected when he had struck that deal prior to his fourth and what should have been his final war patrol on the Barb, that Commander Fluckey's success would be so great he would be awarded the Medal of Honor.

Commander Fluckey smiled as he remembered that patrol. "Lucky" Fluckey they called him. On January 8th the Barb had emerged victorious from a running two-hour night battle after sinking a large enemy ammunition ship. Two weeks later in Mamkwan Harbor he found the "mother-lode"...more than 30 enemy ships. In only 5 fathoms (30 feet) of water his crew had unleashed the sub's forward torpedoes, then turned and fired four from the stern. As he pushed the Barb to the full limit of its speed through the dangerous waters in a daring withdrawal to the open sea, he recorded eight direct hits on six enemy ships.

What could possibly be left for the Commander to accomplish who, just three months earlier had been in Washington, DC to receive the Medal of Honor? He smiled to himself as he looked again at the map showing the rail line that ran along the enemy coastline.

Now his crew was buzzing excitedly about bagging a train!

The rail line itself wouldn't be a problem. A shore patrol could go ashore under cover of darkness to plant the explosives...one of the sub's 55-pound scuttling charges. But this early morning Lucky Fluckey and his officers were puzzling over how they could blow not only the rails, but also one of the frequent trains that

shuttled supplies to equip the Japanese war machine. But no matter how crazy the idea might have sounded, the Barb's skipper would not risk the lives of his men. Thus the problem... How to detonate the charge at the moment the train passed, without endangering the life of a shore party. PROBLEM?

Solutions! If you don't look for them, you'll never find them. And even then, sometimes they arrive in the most unusual fashion. Cruising slowly beneath the surface to evade the enemy plane now circling overhead, the monotony was broken with an exciting new idea: Instead of having a crewman on shore to trigger explosives to blow both rail and a passing train, why not let the train BLOW ITSELF up? Billy Hatfield was excitedly explaining how he had cracked nuts on the railroad tracks as a kid, placing the nuts between two ties so the sagging of the rail under the weight of a train would break them open. "Just like cracking walnuts," he explained. "To complete the circuit (detonating the 55-pound charge) we hook in a micro switch...between two ties. We don't set it off, the TRAIN does." Not only did Hatfield have the plan, he wanted to be part of the volunteer shore party.

The solution found, there was no shortage of volunteers; all that was needed was the proper weather... A little cloud cover to darken the moon for the mission ashore. Lucky Fluckey established his own criteria for the volunteer party:

....No married men would be included, except for Hatfield,

....The party would include members from each department,

....The opportunity would be split between regular Navy and Navy Reserve sailors,

....At least half of the men had to have been Boy Scouts, experienced in how to handle themselves in medical emergencies and in the woods.

FINALLY, "Lucky" Fluckey would lead the saboteurs himself.

When the names of the 8 selected sailors were announced it was greeted with a mixture of excitement and disappointment. Among the disappointed was Commander Fluckey who surrendered his opportunity at the insistence of his officers that "as commander he belonged with the Barb," coupled with the threat from one that "I swear I'll send a message to ComSubPac if you attempt this (joining the shore party himself)." Even a Japanese POW being held on the Barb wanted to go, promising not to try to escape!

In the meantime, there would be no more harassment of Japanese shipping or shore operations by the Barb until the train mission had been accomplished. The crew would "lay low," prepare their equipment, train, and wait for the weather.

July 22, 1945 (Patience Bay, Off the coast of Karafuto, Japan): Patience Bay was wearing thin the patience of Commander Fluckey and his innovative crew. Everything was ready. In the four days the saboteurs had anxiously watched the skies for cloud cover, the inventive crew of the Barb had built their micro switch. When the need was proposed for a pick and shovel to bury the explosive charge and batteries, the Barb's engineers had cut up steel plates in the lower flats of an engine room, then bent and welded them to create the needed tools. The only things beyond their control were the weather...and time. Only five days remained in the Barb's patrol.

Anxiously watching the skies, Commander Fluckey noticed plumes of cirrus clouds, then white stratus capping the mountain peaks ashore. A cloud cover was building to hide the three-quarters moon. This would be the night.

MIDNIGHT, July 23, 1945: The Barb had crept within 950 yards of the shoreline. If it was somehow seen from the shore it would probably be mistaken for a schooner or Japanese patrol boat. No one would suspect an American submarine so close to shore or in such shallow water. Slowly the small boats were lowered to the water and the 8 saboteurs began paddling toward the enemy beach.

Twenty-five minutes later they pulled the boats ashore and walked on the surface of the Japanese homeland.

Stumbling through noisy waist-high grasses, crossing a highway and then into a 4-foot drainage ditch, the saboteurs made their way to the railroad tracks. Three men were posted as guards, Markuson assigned to examine a nearby water tower. The Barb's auxiliary man climbed the ladder then stopped in shock as he realized it was an enemy lookout tower...an OCCUPIED tower. Fortunately the Japanese sentry was peacefully sleeping and Markuson was able to quietly withdraw and warn his raiding party.

The news from Markuson caused the men digging the placement for the explosive charge to continue their work more slowly and quietly. Twenty minutes later the holes had been dug and the explosives and batteries hidden beneath fresh soil.

During planning for the mission the saboteurs had been told that, with the explosives in place, all would retreat a safe distance while Hatfield made the final connection. If the sailor who had once cracked walnuts on the railroad tracks slipped during this final, dangerous procedure, his would be the only life lost. On this night it was the only order the saboteurs refused to obey, all of them peering anxiously over Hatfield's shoulder to make sure he did it right. The men had come too far to be disappointed by a switch failure.

1:32 A.M: Watching from the deck of the Barb, Commander Fluckey allowed himself a sigh of relief as he noticed the flashlight signal from the beach announcing the departure of the shore party. He had skillfully, and daringly, guided the Barb within 600 yards of the enemy beach. There was less than 6 feet of water beneath the sub's keel, but Fluckey wanted to be close in case trouble arose and a daring rescue of his saboteurs became necessary.

1:45 A.M: The two boats carrying his saboteurs were only halfway back to the Barb when the sub's machine gunner yelled, "CAPTAIN! Another train coming up the tracks!" The Commander grabbed a megaphone and yelled through the night, "Paddle like the devil!"

knowing full well that they wouldn't reach the Barb before the train hit the micro switch.

1:47 A.M: The darkness was shattered by brilliant light and the roar of the explosion. The boilers of the locomotive blew, shattered pieces of the engine blowing 200 feet into the air. Behind it the cars began to accordion into each other, bursting into flame and adding to the magnificent fireworks display. Five minutes later the saboteurs were lifted to the deck by their exuberant comrades as the Barb turned to slip back to safer waters. Moving at only two knots, it would be a while before the Barb was into waters deep enough to allow it to submerge. It was a moment to savor, the culmination of teamwork, ingenuity and daring by the Commander and all his crew. "Lucky" Fluckey's voice came over the intercom. "All hands below deck not absolutely needed to maneuver the ship have permission to come topside." He didn't have to repeat the invitation. Hatches sprang open as the proud sailors of the Barb gathered on her decks to proudly watch the distant fireworks display. The Barb had "sunk" a Japanese TRAIN!

On August 2, 1945 the Barb arrived at Midway, her twelfth war patrol concluded. Meanwhile United States military commanders had pondered the prospect of an armed assault on the Japanese homeland. Military tacticians estimated such an invasion would cost more than a million American casualties. Instead of such a costly armed offensive to end the war, on August 6th the B-29 bomber Enola Gay dropped a single atomic bomb on the city of Hiroshima, Japan. A second such bomb, unleashed 4 days later on Nagasaki, Japan, caused Japan to agree to surrender terms on August 15th. On September 2, 1945 in Tokyo Harbor the documents ending the war in the Pacific were signed.

The story of the saboteurs of the U.S.S. Barb is one of those unique, little known stories of World War II. It becomes increasingly important when one realizes that the 8 sailors who blew up the train near Kashiho, Japan conducted the ONLY GROUND COMBAT OPERATION on the Japanese "homeland" of World War II. The eight saboteurs were:

Paul Saunders
William Hatfield
Francis Sever
Lawrence Newland
Edward Klinglesmith
James Richard
John Markuson
William Walker

Footnote: Eugene Bennett Fluckey retired from the Navy as a Rear Admiral, and wears in addition to his Medal of Honor, FOUR Navy Crosses...a record of awards unmatched by

any living American. In 1992, his own history of the U.S.S. Barb was published in the award winning book, THUNDER BELOW. Over the past several years proceeds from the sale of this exciting book have been used by Admiral Fluckey to provide free reunions for the men who served him aboard the Barb, and their wives.

PS: The Admiral graduated from the US Naval Academy in 1935 and lived to age 93, passing on in 2007.

More 27th Reunion Photos



(Membership Initiative, continued from page 1)

This initiative will also formalize the membership process. When a person receives an Honorary membership or joins as a dues-paying member and submits his or her application they will be entered into the Association Roster system, receive a welcoming letter from the appropriate Squadron Historical Society President [27th, 71st, 94th], a membership certificate and appropriate Squadron lapel pin. Additionally, they will receive the Quarterly Association Newsletter and periodic update forwarded thru the Association Constant Contact program. Sustaining the Association Heritage program in support of the 1st Fighter Wing and maintaining the camaraderie between the many generations of past and present members are key elements

of the Association Charter. Actions to maintain and or grow our ranks are key to a successful future.



There are only two types of aircraft: fighters and targets.

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Place stamp
here