



# FALL 2013 NEWSLETTER

## 475TH FIGHTER GROUP HISTORICAL FOUNDATION

### Welcome to the 475th Fighter Group Historical Foundation (FGHF) Newsletter!

The 475th Fighter Group Historical Foundation's Board wanted to let you know what has been happening in the past year with the Museum and the Foundation. We have chosen this as a way to get the word out there to all of you who may not be able to come to the museum or the reunions to get updates in person.

Enjoy this edition and we hope you look forward to those to come as well.

### PRESIDENT'S UPDATE - Chris Madison

As always, it was wonderful to be with everyone in Nashville and share our thoughts, ideas and the progress we have made during the year. We had an active year; we've added three new board members, Jon Sparrman, Nick Martin and Craig Taggart. Craig is joining us as a 3rd generation member and I am very pleased that the young people are eager to participate in the 475th Foundation. It is no secret that the board of trustees has shown strong interest in the archiving of our assets. (Assets) are the memorabilia that has been given to the museum by the pilots, crew members and their families. We are working on these assets so that they are protected for future generations. We are also currently in discussion with the Pacific Aviation Museum Pearl Harbor in Hawaii to archive our memorabilia. I strongly urge all of you to join us in Chino for the 475th Fighter Group Reunion in May 2014.

### REUNION NEWS! - Dana Grossman

Hi all! If you didn't get to come to Nashville, you missed a fantastic party! Rhonda Rose, daughter of 431st member Marvin Rose, out did herself with putting on a weekend event that will long be remembered.

The weekend started with everyone arriving and settling in. Friday morning the 475th Historical Foundation Board met for the annual meeting. Much was discussed and then passed on to the membership that afternoon during the General Meeting. Please see the President's article for a summary of what was discussed. After the General Meeting, the nine veteran members agreed to a panel discussion of their experiences. They graciously answered questions from the families in attendance and we all had fun seeing which of the balsa wood airplanes flew the farthest

— I'm not really sure who won. *Cont...*





as we were all having such fun picking them up and starting again! Friday night, we were on our own for dinner and many ventured out on the town for adventures. The hospitality suite was rocking as nine veteran members kept us up late telling their stories. The regular gang made their way to Nashville including, P.J. and Bobbie Dahl, Marvin and Pat Rose, Dale Burgess, Howard Max, Dave Berby, Dale and Barbara Thisted, and Bud Lampert. We had one member who had not come in years – William H. Meyer and Roy Roper attended for the first time – wheelchair, cane, horn and all. We also had the pleasure of having Ann Madison Gagliardi and Bob Gagliardi, Edith Berger and Earlene Jaekle and her good friends Sandy and Joyce.



Saturday, the Hermitage, home to Andrew Jackson, called to some. It was fun to see his home and get some of the history of the area. Roy Roper and his daughter Ronda saved the day as some of us missed the bus and caught a ride to the Hermitage with them. Others had the option of shopping at the Opry Mills shopping area or hanging out at the hotel and resting up for the banquet.

Saturday night, the banquet included an honor color guard with bagpipe escort. The Memorial Service was moving. Dale Thisted read their names, Mark Filley was responsible for the bell toll and we remembered our 12 Fallen Heroes as the trumpeter played TAPS.

The speaker for the evening was a veteran of the Iraq war, Sal Gonzales who is associated with the Wounded Warrior Project. His talk was inspiring. It was humbling to experience the mutual respect in the room between the veterans.



The dinner was delightful and the entertainment sublime! The live band played music from the 40's and 50's and was so good that everyone had to dance. Most notable was Mark Engleman and his best partner, Earlene Jaekle. Although, Sandy and Joyce gave her a run for her money! The dancing would not have been complete without these three! It was wonderful to see all of our veterans and members dancing the night away.

### **Well done Rhonda!!!!**

We welcomed back Chris Madison, Marshall Hanson, Danny and Susie Hoxie, David and Carol Hoxie, Bonnie Black, Kim Max, Roxanne and Gene Jordan, Joe Kentz, Ken Weaver, Mark Engleman, Joe Angochiodo, Denny Rybarik, Ann and Ron Malak, Lisa Williams, Brian Lampert, and Bruce Lampert. It was great catching up on everything since the last reunion.

Several families came for either the first time or for the first time in a very long time. They included Jane and Joe Young (daughter of Marvin Rose); Margo Craig and family (daughter of Marvin Rose); Mark and Annette Filley (son of Marvin Rose); Mark and Kathy Tillman (nephew of Leo Mayo) with their neice Kim McMasters (grandneiece of Leo Mayo); Rod Max (son of Howard Max); Craig McBreen (son of Donald McBreen) with his niece Khristie Barker and her two sons, Mack and Evan; and Brian Lampert's daughters and son-in-law, Erin and Andy Field and Cory Lampert (granddaughters of Bud Lampert). Bud Lampert saw his great granddaughter for the first time at the reunion!



**It was great to see and meet everyone and I hope to see you all in Chino next year!**



# SAVE THE DATE!

The next 475TH Fighter Group reunion will be **May 1-4, 2014** and will be in conjunction with the Planes of Fame Annual Air Show. The P-38 is scheduled to fly! Reserve your room now at **Ayres Hotel Chino Hills!**

Call (909) 631-2922 and let the reservations clerk know you are with the 475th Fighter Group reunion.

The group rate is \$89.00 (plus tax) for a King Suite and \$99.00 for a Double Queen Suite. A few ADA rooms are available and if you need one please contact Dana Grossman at [dana@grossman.info](mailto:dana@grossman.info) or **858-692-1358** to make arrangements. More details to come soon! **Hope to see you all in Chino!**

## FROM 475TH FG FOUNDATION PRESIDENT EMERITUS

### P.J. Dahl

For those who missed the Nashville, 2013 Reunion, you really MISSED one. This was the first one not hosted by one of the old timers. If any old heads had second thoughts about a second generation person being able to put on a reunion that was just put to rest. This reunion hosted by Rhonda Rose, daughter of our famous Marvin Rose, has to rate among the very best. The banquet featured a full-blown, 1940s big band. The nostalgia was overwhelming and I, along with many others, could not stop the tears from swelling as they opened with the Glenn Miller favorite "In the Mood".

It brought us back to the good old days, when the people were united as never before for the well being of our beloved U.S of A. Rhonda had a dance floor installed and the music was so beautiful and compelling it propelled 90 plus year old veterans like Marvin, Howard Max, PJ Dahl and others onto the dance floor. Rhonda had administrative help from Dana Grossman, daughter of Barbara and Dale Thisted and what a team those two make. Dana will be hosting reunion 2014 featuring the Planes of Fame Air Show.



God Bless the USA...PJ

## FROM OUR REUNION HOSTESS Rhonda Rose

I want to thank PJ and Bobbie, Ann, Bob, the Jordans, Dale and Barbara Thisted and Dana Grossman for all the help they gave and time they put in getting things set up before everyone arrived at the hotel. You helped make it a big success!

Rhonda Rose





## GET TO KNOW YOUR 475TH MEMBERS

In this edition we get to know **Victor Meyer**.

Victor E. Meyer, originally from Shiner, Texas joined the Army Air Corps in August, 1939 and left the Air Force in December, 1970. Here is his story:

I enlisted at Randolph Field near San Antonio. I went to 52nd School Squadron where I did Basic in the basement of the barracks.

I was assigned as an apprentice mechanic - OJT working on Primary Training Aircraft. Before going to the Pacific I went from Randolph to Langley AFB, VA with the 8th Pursuit GP, 35th Fighter Squadron, then to Mitchell Field Long Island New York. Six month maneuvers to Barksdale Field LA and Greensboro NC. From Mitchell AFB I was in charge of 60 men to Hamilton Field California which became Hamilton Field Combat team. I left Hamilton January 12, 1942 on the ship President Coolidge and arrived in Melbourne, Australia February 2, 1942. I went to Royal Park for a few days and then on to Adelaide and then to Port Pirie. On February 19, 1942 we left for Darwin, Australia and arrived over Darwin but could not land there due to the bombing of Darwin so we landed 60 miles from Darwin at Batchelor Field, Northern Territory. Our combat team was supposed to maintain 60 P40's at Darwin that were all lost in the raid on Darwin. This all was an effort to raze Java. At Batchelor we had A-24 Dive Bombers which we crewed with the 17th Bomb Squadron.

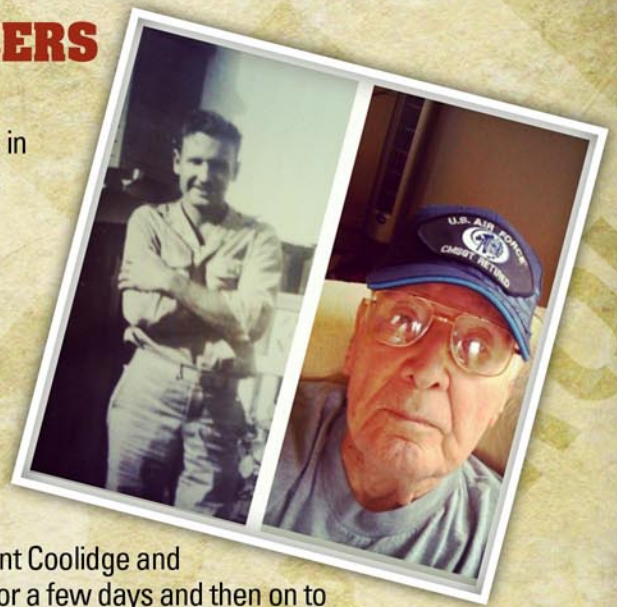
On March 31, 1942, we moved to Darwin, gained the 9th Pursuit Squadron of the 49th Group and I was assigned as crew chief of a P-40. LT Manning was my pilot. April 28, 1942 we left Bachelor Field in a C-57, Lockheed Transport, but had a forced landing in Richmond QLD in a cow pasture. We boarded a train to Townsville QLD which took 24 hours. There I joined the 36th Pursuit Squadron, 8th Group where I crewed P-39's. The 36th was the first U.S. Fighter Squadron in New Guinea, Port Moresby. The 36th lost all their planes in Moresby, went to Townsville and got more P-39's and went to Milne Bay New Guinea for six months where almost all had malaria. Only 12 men in the Squadron did not have malaria; I was 1 of 12 who did not have malaria. From Milne Bay we went to Mareeba QLD, Australia then back to Moresby on May 16, 1943. On June 27, 1943 we left Moresby on a C-53 transport bound for Townsville and then to Brisbane QLD by train. On June 30, 1943 I joined the 432nd Fighter Squadron of the 475th Group at Amberly Field. My favorite memory of the 475th is when we finally got a plane that was able to shoot down "Jap" planes. I had many friends in the 475th. Genarlsky in the 433rd - he was second in command of the Combat Team. Among others - Magann, Booker, Price, Vogt, Beecher, Plecker, Stein, Kennington, Yates, Greenberg, Sandvig, Rawalli, Hodel, Bigelow, Powell, Dygas, Pinkerton, Heap, Eiler, Jones, Giraud, Kabaly, Brown, Bishop, Kupnewski, and Morrow. I remember a story of when an Army truck brought a load of butter and we had pancakes for a week; that was a real treat. I bonded with my main pilot - Campbell P. M. Wilson. I crewed about ten different P-38's and different models - I lost three planes due to non-combat reasons: one to an enemy Ack-Ack with a gaping hole in the wing - one that took off from a forward base and landed in the water, Pilot Wilson was saved - and another to a coolant system contamination.

The best thing that I got from home was mail. I spent time in the hospital with Dengue fever in Dobochochura. I left the 432nd in Biak, after Lae, Nadzab, and Hollandia, on September 16, 1944 to go to Finchafen Rotation Camp. I left there on November 15, 1944 for the U.S. A. I got married in Australia to Agnes Grace Kerley on October 1, 1943. We had two sons and one daughter and six grand children. My wife died on January 25, 2011. I left the military in 1944 for six months and then reenlisted. I retired with 30 years of service as Chief Master Sergeant in December, 1970. As a civilian, I stayed in the aircraft maintenance field. I acquired an aircraft and power plant license while I was in the service and it was key to several jobs that I had. I worked till I was 72 years old. Seven years civil service in maintenance helped my retirement pay. My last duty station was Hawaii at Hickam, AFB where my two sons got married. I moved to San Antonio, Texas where I worked in maintenance of aircraft. Three years later I moved back to Hawaii. I have all my family in Hawaii and that is the best thing about retirement.

I might mention that of 30 years in the military, 10 were spent overseas during wartime, WWII, Korea, Vietnam.

**ALOHA!**

Vic





# 475TH FIGHTER GROUP HISTORICAL FOUNDATION

Planes of Fame Air Museum - Chino Airport, Chino, California



**WE'RE ON THE WEB! [WWW.475TH.ORG](http://WWW.475TH.ORG)**

If you have stories, suggestions, ideas or pictures you would like to share with the group, please feel free to contact the editor.

**Editor of the Newsletter:**

Dana Thisted Grossman - [dgrossman70@yahoo.com](mailto:dgrossman70@yahoo.com)

**Newsletter Design:**

Jon Sparrman - [sparrmandesign@icloud.com](mailto:sparrmandesign@icloud.com)

## **475th Fighter Group Historical Foundation**

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