

A.M.H.F.

**Dedicated to preserving, in flying condition, a vintage PV-2
Harpoon in memory of all who fought in the air on behalf of
the United States of America**

News Letter January 2015



Greetings to members of the AMHF,

Well the last time I was writing to you we were ending a year so now writing again and we are starting another year. I don't have a crystal ball or know of anyone who does so we will just have to be ready to take advantage of anything that should come our way.

All of the old tanks have arrived safely at Aero-Tech, located in California. Naturally it was December when they arrived and with all of the holiday festivities going on not much has happened. I anticipated talking with them around the 12th and maybe things will be back to normal or at least closer. I am hoping that by the February newsletter I will be able to have some sort of an estimate as to when the first ones will come back.

Now that you know the status of the tanks I would like to remind you that we have a lot of work to accomplish before we can put them in so I hope some of you will be able to step up and help out so we can get everything done. We are also in the process of going through all of the items that were donated to us. This is going to be quite a task. However, we may have hardware we will not need to buy and some that we might be able to trade or turn into cash to help out in other areas.

In the November newsletter I had an article about the Handley Page H.P.42 which was a 25 passenger biplane. According to the January issue of AOPA Pilot there were only eight of these planes ever built and none remain. They are establishing a museum for all of the artifacts. This plane had a wingspan of 130 ft. and they are planning on building a new one from scratch. It will be built by teams in three different locations and assembled by two teams at two different locations. Team Merlin has put together several sponsors and has over 20 years of research to find technical data for the build. They expect it to take two to three years to build, depending upon how much money they have to throw at the project. Making replacing thirteen fuel tanks and three tires look like a walk in the park.

We are still working with our consultants and the Indianapolis Airport Authority on having a hanger. The Board of Directors has seen a preliminary layout and it looks pretty nice. Currently we are waiting on the consultants to get back with us on a final design and cost. Paula did respond, from last month, that she could be retrained without too much pain to work in a hanger out of the weather. So we are now in the holding pattern waiting to see where the consultants are going to take us next.

At the end of this newsletter there is an article about Hot Stuff submitted by Paula. I think you might find it interesting and nothing you would expect unless you have seen it someplace before. This was a first for me. However, ever since I started trying to do this newsletter it seems I have had a lot of firsts, some good and some not.

The link below some of you may have already seen. It was sent in by another member and has some nice things to look at and some good comments about warbirds and restoration.

<http://www.aopa.org/AOPA-Live/Aircraft?watch={CB960922-399A-4E00-94CA-8C69AE636C20}>

There is an attachment with this newsletter and it would be great if each one of you could take a look at it and return to me as soon as possible. Since, somehow I have inherited both the newsletter and membership rolls I would sort of like to get it up to date and straightened out. We have some phone numbers, some addresses, and e-mail. I also know we have some sponsors on our membership list and they are greatly appreciated. With that said it is my hope no one will be offended by my request and I can get an accurate and up to date membership established.

People often say that motivation doesn't last. Well, neither does bathing -- that's why we recommend it daily."

*Zig Ziglar,
American author and motivational speaker*

Well I guess that just about brings the first newsletter of 2015 to a close. As always please let me know if something needs to be changed or if you would like to contribute to the news letter.

Have a great year,

Gaylon

"The one thing all famous authors, world-class athletes, business tycoons, singers, actors, and celebrated achievers in any field have in common is that they all began their journeys when they were none of these things."

*Mike Dooley,
American author*

Memphis Belle vs. Hot Stuff: How history came to celebrate the wrong WWII airplane



ERAU Professor William Waldock spoke Wednesday on the strange circumstance that caused history to celebrate the Memphis Belle instead of Hot Stuff, the bomber that actually first flew 25 missions in World War II.

Scott Orr
The Daily Courier

PRESCOTT - If you've seen the 1990 film "Memphis Belle," you know the story of the B-17 and her trusty crew, the first heavy bomber of World War II to complete 25 missions and return home.

It's a stirring tale and the movie included an all-star cast.

Only problem is, it isn't true.

Memphis Belle was not the first to complete the required number of missions. In fact, she may have been the third.

Embry-Riddle Aeronautical University Professor William Waldock, an accident investigator and "aviation archaeologist," has studied the history and explained why that myth has persisted Wednesday night at ERAU's Davis Learning Center as part of the school's Aviation History series.

Once an aircrew wrapped up 25 missions, the War Department, predecessor to the Department of Defense, would bring the bomber home and have the plane and crew do a nationwide promotional tour to sell war bonds to fund the war effort, Waldock said.

But Memphis Belle was beaten to the punch by another B-17, six days earlier.

It was named "Hell's Angels," Waldock said, and "there was a little bit of concern about promoting 'Hell's Angels' and trying to promote war bonds with it."

That airplane is listed in some publications as the first to complete 25 missions.

"But that's not right, either," Waldock said.



A B-24 named "Hot Stuff" flew her 25th mission on 7 February 1943, three-and-a-half months before Memphis Belle. The bomber crashed in Iceland 3 May 1943. Capt. Robert H. Shannon (pilot) had completed his tour and was flying home. Lt. Gen. Frank Andrews had taken the place of the co-pilot when it crashed in terrible weather conditions.

The very first was a B-24 named "Hot Stuff," he said.

"Hot Stuff flew her 25th mission on the 7th of February, 1943. It's well-documented. That was three-and-a-half months before Memphis Belle," he said. "So how come we haven't heard of her? Why isn't she in the movies? Why isn't the crew the famous folks?"

The answer, Waldock said, is because the B-24 crashed and was destroyed, and this is where the story takes a strange turn.

Hot Stuff was set to return to the U.S. on May 3, 1943. But first, the plane was set for an "inspection tour" of Iceland with a VIP aboard: Lt. Gen. Frank Andrews, the commander of all U.S. forces in the European Theatre.

Andrews, an experienced, instrument-rated pilot, bumped the normal co-pilot off the plane and flew in his place.

Also aboard were Andrews' staff and four clergymen, who bumped five other crewmen.

"There are plenty of anecdotal sources that say the real purpose of General Andrews' travel was that he was going back to Washington, D.C., to be blessed by Congress and the president, awarded his fourth star, and formally named Supreme Allied Commander in Europe," Waldock said.

But he didn't make it. The plane skipped a scheduled stop at which the crew would have learned the weather at their destination in Iceland was miserable, with zero visibility. And the aircraft's radio was apparently not working.

Because the B-24's commander was a captain and the co-pilot was a three-star general, it's likely that Andrews was making the decisions, Waldock said.

The plane made it to their destination airfield, but couldn't land, and headed for another airfield. It, too, was socked in, so Andrews decided to turn back to the original field.

The plane climbed to 900 feet, and, slightly off course, Hot Stuff crashed into a 1,100-foot mountain. Fourteen of the 15 people aboard were killed.

U.S. officials, hoping to divert attention from the crash and death of a high-ranking military official, decided to promote Memphis Belle as the first airplane to complete 25 missions and sent the crew on the promotional tour, Waldock said.

After Andrews' death, Dwight D. Eisenhower was named Supreme Allied Commander, and went on to become president.

In 1948, the base for the president's airplane was named after Andrews.