



## American Military Heritage Foundation

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

**“If you’re not moving forward, you’re not evolving, you’re devolving, and I don’t want to go  
backwards. I want to be better at what I do tomorrow than I am today.”**

*Audra McDonald*

*Actor, singer*

December 2020

This year has been one of many changes, to say the least, and it does not appear to be over yet. I have just about stopped watching the news networks because I am not sure I can believe any of them. I guess I could go to the internet because we know everything on the internet is factual and true. OK, you can get up off the floor and stop laughing. I don’t know how many of you have read much about Will Rogers. However, he would come on stage with a newspaper rolled up under his arm, do any of you remember when we received all our news that way? He

would then say, “all I know is what I read in the paper.” He would then start his routine using basically the newspaper for his prep. Can you imagine the material he would have available today?

As an organization we have survived a very unusual year. We faced many problems and still persevered. This is something all of you should be proud of. The good news is we did receive a grant in the amount of \$4,330.59 from the Indiana Arts Commission and the Indiana Destination Development corporation, IAC/IDDC. This was accomplished by Mr. Stucker making the application and providing the necessary paperwork to satisfy the application. Thanks to Mr. Stucker for a job well done.

For those of you who have been around The AMHF for more than a couple of years are aware of the D-Check and all that goes along with it. For our new members and friends, it is an annual inspection to assure that the plane is airworthy, and nothing is occurring that would cause it to be unairworthy. This year we happen to have a major inspection item to comply with on the propellers. This is something that we are not able to comply with at our facility. Therefore, both propellers must be removed and shipped off to a prop shop to have this check done. This inspection comes up every five years and this is the year.

The work crew is working each Saturday. Right now, the current plan is to work regardless of the weather. If it is fit to work on the plane that is where we will be; if not, we will be in the hangar. There is need for cleaning and organization, AND a good inventory will help greatly with the D-check. By doing this it will give some of our members a chance to learn what some of the items are and where they are used. A good example of this is the AN507 and AN509 screws and where each is used.

I would be remis if I did not give the maintenance crew a big thank you. It is interesting to me the different experiences you can go pay to have. Were you aware that if you are a musician and so desire the experience you can find a place to pay and get to play with a 1940's dance band? If you are into pottery you can again receive lessons on pottery if you are willing to pay for it and the list goes on. However, here at the AMHF we will give you training on a piece of history from 1945 and not charge you one cent other than your dues to belong. Now in today's

marketplace that is an excellent buy. The Wright brothers flew on December 17, 1903, they were airborne for 12 seconds, and covered 120 ft. So the time spread from the Wright brothers to the Harpoon is 42 years and we advanced to two engines at 2,000 hp each, a speed of 282mph, a ceiling of 23,900 ft., a range of 1,790 miles, and a gross takeoff weight of 36,000 lbs. I would say those are rather good advances. I had a person come onboard at one of the air shows and they wanted to know what the cables were running down the left side of the airplane were for. I told them that it was the original fly by wire. Their response, "you changed it over." I just kept a straight face and did not respond. Therefore, we need to somehow inspire the next generation to learn the workings of this piece of history and keep it alive. Our maintenance people are doing a great job of performing this function, AND they manage to have the plane airworthy and flying during the air show season. For all of that I believe they are worthy of recognition.

There is another expensive item that we will need at the end of the D-check and that is a new battery. So far no one has been able to come up with a donation or a reduced price. The best we have been able to come up with is approximately \$3,000.00. Not quite like going to the auto parts store and picking one up. Therefore, if anyone has connections to acquire a new battery please let me know.

Congratulations and a big thank you for all the members and what they have been able to achieve during this past year. We all hope that the air shows will return, time will tell.

**"We are all experts in our own little niches."**

*Alex Trebek*

*Television personality, game show host*

*1940-2020*

Per the above quote perhaps you have the expertise that is needed in a particular area, don't hesitate to come forward and help.

I think that just about ends 2020 so the next newsletter you see will be 2021.  
Stay safe and enjoy the Christmas season for what it really is, and the pandemic  
should have less effect on you.

Have a great New Year,

Gaylon

I hope you enjoy the following story I believe you will find the ending quite  
different and interesting.

## Carl E. Brooke

### U.S. Navy

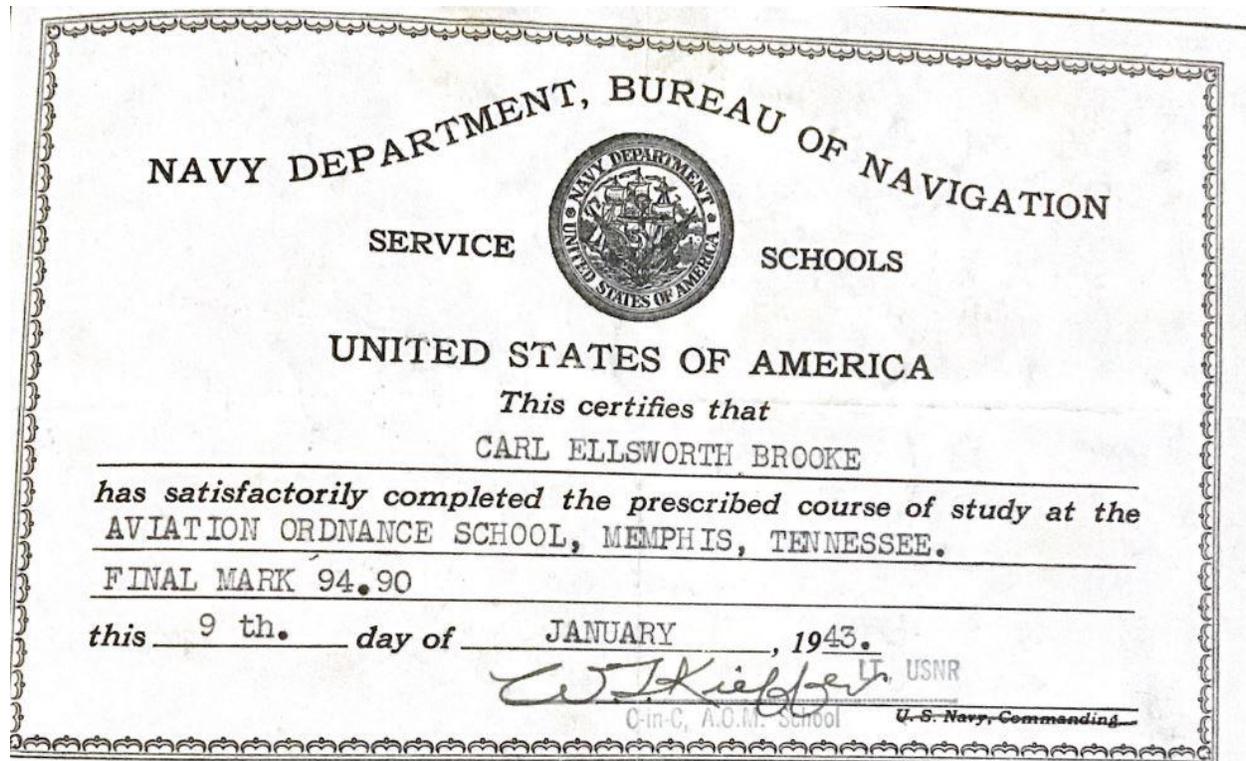
Carl E Brooke, like many other boys of the greatest generation, was not a warrior. Rather, they were young farmers, factory workers, truck drivers that represented a cross section of America that had to be developed into warriors. In the case of Carl E. Brooke, he was a natural born marksman. He did not love weapons; he respected them and required the same type of respect from his children when they were using them.

On December 7, 1941 Carl suffered a loss that weighed heavy on his emotions. One of his neighborhood friends was entombed on the USS Arizona. By August of 1942 Carl had graduated from high school and had a job with the telephone company when he decided to enlist in the Navy. On August 7, 1942 he took his basic training at the Great Lakes Naval Training Center. The picture below was a postcard produced by the Navy showing their boys "enjoying" boot camp.



*Boys in Hammocks*  
U. S. NAVAL TRAINING STATION, GREAT LAKES, ILLINOIS  
REAR ADMIRAL, JOHN DOWNES U.S. NAVY, COMMANDING OFFICER.

From there Carl was sent to Aviation Ordnance School at Memphis. He completed that school with a score of 94.9%. He was then sent to NAAS Deland then to NAAS Boca Chica in Florida where he was introduced to the PV-1 Ventura as a gunner with VB-133.



The PVs of VB-133 were assigned to the patrol in the Caribbean to protect shipping from German U-Boats. Carl was selected to fly with Lieutenant Commander William C. Murphy. Murphy was a straightforward man that received his command while in detention. It seems Murphy had a physical confrontation with the cook over how the eggs were prepared and the cook was not open to constructive criticism. Carl flew with a very skilled crew. Zilker was their radioman and could operate two telegraph keys simultaneously. This crew was often assigned missions detached from the squadron. On one occasion Carl was told by Murphy to get ready to fly. Carl looked up from the book he was reading and said, "where are we going skipper?" Abruptly, Murphy spun around and said, "never ask where we are going or tell anyone where we have been." End of discussion!

On a solo detached flight, in the PV-1, they traveled to Brazil, over the Andes Mountains, up the Amazon River and across the Atlantic to Senegal and Libya. Carl was concerned about flying over the dense jungles of South America and he saw an opportunity when he found a broken machete. He brazed a tang on to the blade then fashioned a handle from layers of aluminum and Plexiglas. This material was all salvaged from a German aircraft left in Brazil. Carl then went to LDCR Murphy and requested permission to fly with the machete. Carl received the OK but was told to take the edge off the blade. In retrospect that was probably not a totally bad

decision. While flying over the Andes Mountains they experienced a downdraft that dropped them 500 feet that instantly and sent anything unsecured flying. The machete is shown below.



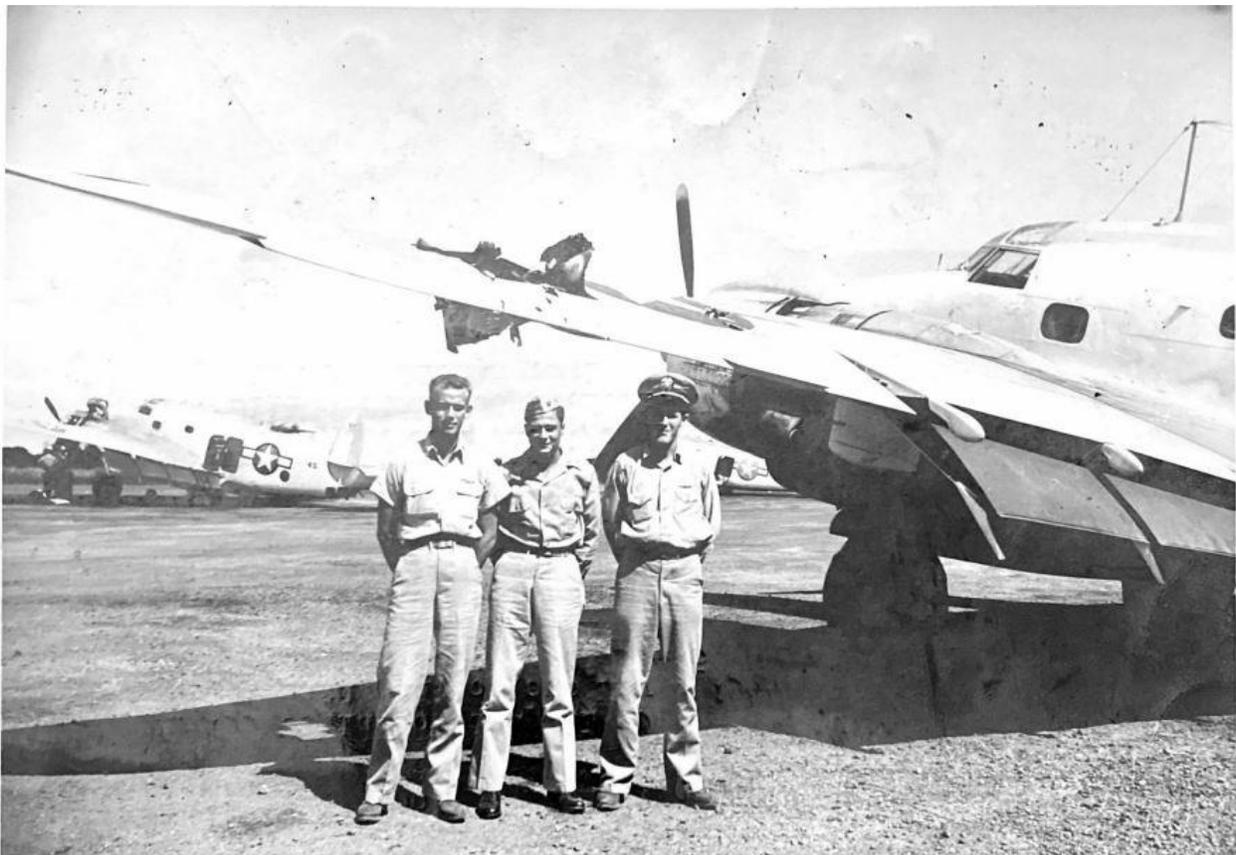
Patrols of the Caribbean were both beautiful and boring because the U-boats could easily spot the PVs on patrol and dive before they could be identified on the PV's surface radar. Since the U-boats had to surface to charge their batteries, they hoped the air patrol served to reduce the capability of the German Subs. In July of 1943, a Pan-American Airways radio reported a submarine on the surface. Lieutenant RB Johnson of VB-133 found the submarine on the surface and made a bombing run. The Bomb bay doors did not open on the first pass. However, the charges were laid across the submarine during a second pass as the submarine dove below the surface. This encounter was scored as a probable U-boat sinking; however, the Germans did not confirm a loss.

In October of 1943, the squadron was re-designated patrol bomber squadron VPB-133 and all the PV-1 Ventura's were transferred to NAF Hato Field on Curacao. When Murphy was confronted with 42 engine failures, he grounded the squadron from October 28 to November 01. The fault was found in the ignition system and repairs were made.

On the morning of the 8<sup>th</sup> of November Murphy and his crew left Curacao in route to San Juan Puerto Rico to attend an important meeting. On board they had an unidentified man that Carl referred to as a flat hat. The man had a brief case attached to his wrist, nothing else was known about this man. Suddenly, Zilker, the radio man, reported that he saw something strange on the radar. He climbed down to verify the bomb bay was unlatched but before he could return to the cockpit the Ventura was on a diagonal attack path with the intention of dropping six depth charges on the diving sub. The sub did not dive but remained on the surface and started firing its 20 MM gun hitting the PV four times. One round hit the port engine with a second going through the wing. Shrapnel from a round struck under Carl's gun turret and the

concussion broke his jaw. Carl had slid a piece of metal under his seat and that action may have saved his bottom some pain. The PV returned fire and when Carl had the angle, he fired. Surprisingly the Flak gun went quiet. Throughout his life Carl hoped that he had convinced them to stop firing and in fact no one was hurt. The dropped depth charges did not have the effect they would've had, had the U-boat submerged. The Ventura turned from the attack assessed the damage and decided to fly the 90 miles back to base. This required everyone to help keep oil going to the damaged engine. The radio operator notified the base of the location of the encounter and pointed out to all attacking aircraft that they should follow the black smoke trail back to its origin to find the sub. Each aircraft took to the hunt as they were ready and flew directly to the fight. Carl could see each of them approaching at full throttle and each left a contrail as they passed the Ventura.

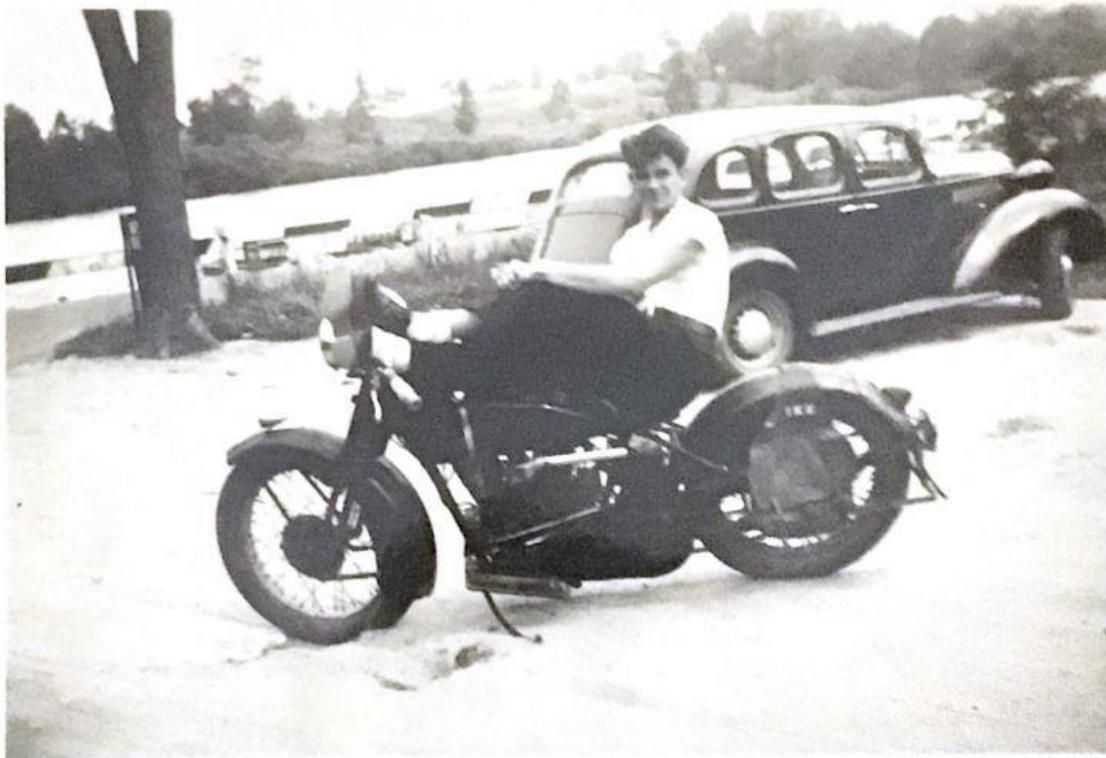
Following the crash-landing Carl exited through the top hatch with fire extinguisher in hand on his way to the engine. A hand grabbed Carl on the shoulder and a sailor told him, "step back we got this." Carl was taken to debriefing and was told to wash up. Carl later said, "what he saw in the mirror that day was a real shock."



Left to right Dillon plane capt., Williamson LT jg, Murphy LTDR

Zilker Radioman, and Brooke Gunner (not shown) notice hole through wing.

During the debriefing Carl was told he would be going home and would not be reassigned to Officer Training School. Within a week he was walking down a snow-covered street on his birthday to his home and his mother in Lansing Michigan. Carl never saw any of the crew again. He spent the remaining years of the war in college where he met his wife. Carl was a farm boy not a warrior as were many other boys of the greatest generation.



The person on the motorcycle is Carl E Brooke my father. I am Alan Brooke and I currently live in Virginia. My father passed away a few years ago and I have been going through his many letters and pictures. I have tried to piece together all the information that I could find. I would like to remind everyone who has a living father or mother who served in the military to try and get their story before it is too late. Once they are gone you have lost all the first-person information. They may not want to talk about it, accept that and try to get as much information as possible and understand where they are coming from and respect them for that. VPB-133 ended the war in the Pacific. I also have many other pictures and document of VPB-133 if there are any others associated with that squadron.

Thank you,

Alan Brooke