



SCHAF Newsletter for February, 2020

Reminder: The next SCHAF Open House will take place on Saturday, Feb 8, 2020 from 10am-1pm at Hangar Y-1 Hamilton/Owens Airport.

Foundation Happenings

We hope everyone is having a great start to 2020! We are so thankful for our members and volunteers. If not for all of you, we would not exist. In 2019, we had over 1100 hours of volunteer work. We hope to increase this amount for 2020. If you have any time to spare for SCHAF, we are always looking for volunteers. Even if you do not want to work on restoration work, we need help with all sorts of items such as publicity, organizing the hangar, etc.

We are extremely excited to announce that the bomb bay section is open! This area has not been seen in over 35 years! In the pictures below, you can see the bomb bay racks are still there. This year we will be working on cleaning and repairing this area. The biggest item will be getting bomb bay doors made for GF2. When looking towards the back, you can see into the tail of the plane. The frame for holding the bottom turret is still in place. Very exciting to be able to see areas that we have not been able to access.

This picture is looking towards the front



This picture is looking towards the rear



History of GF2

We are continuing to share some old Index-Journal newspaper articles that tell the history of GF2. Last month we left off at Aug 4, 1983. Below are some quotes from more articles written during the week the plane was brought back to the surface.

In the Index-Journal article written on Aug 5, 1983, it is very apparent that GF2 was exciting news:

An estimate 1,200 to 1,500 people crowded the bank of the cove behind the Panorama Lodge restaurant on Highway 34 this morning to watch the B-25 'Mitchell' bomber brought to the surface....Equipment operators were forced to work close to spectators who were constantly vying for a better viewing position.

"I haven't felt this much excitement in a long time" said Cmdr Frank Wood of the Naval Reserve. Wood said he estimated the crew had approximately 1,300 to 1,400 manhours in the project since last Saturday. "That isn't including loading and unloading and all the other work we've put into it. If you consider everything, I would estimate around 3,000 manhours."

The Aug 6, 1983 Index-Journal article features the now famous pictures of GF2 surfacing and being towed to shore! Excerpts from that day's article:

For almost 40 years, Greenwood area residents wondered if the rumors of a downed B-25 bomber in Lake Greenwood were true. Well, now they know....The reflection of the bright sunshine was dulled by the tarnished aluminum skin, but the old bomber glittered with success and triumph against the odds. The remaining fabrics on the vertical control panel (rudder) began flowing in a gentle breeze shortly after surfacing, and a spark of applause set off by a jubilant diver spread on the shore and broke into sporadic cheers. "Get that beer ready" yelled a Navy Reservist from the lift barge. "Right on" came a reply from the shore.

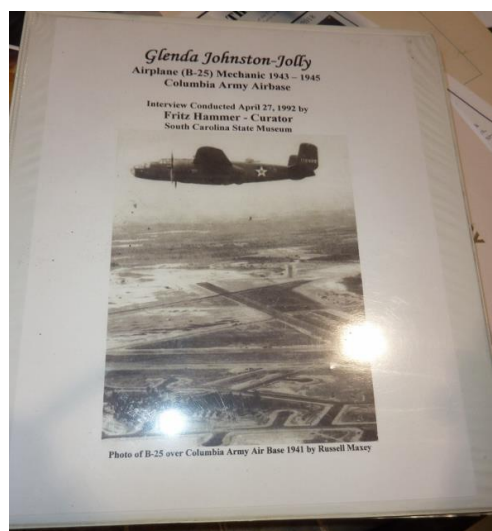
About eight reservists towed and pushed the bomber through the water without benefit of a motor for a few yards until the landing gear, which was down on the right side, struck the bottom. There the Reservists pumped 10 drums of gas from the tanks and two drums of lube oil from the plane. More buoyancy was added, and the empty fuel tanks were filled with carbon dioxide to neutralize the gas fumes and reduce fire hazards.

Donation to SCHAF:

SCHAF member, Ted Podewil donated items that belonged to a friend, Robert G Hurst. During WWII, Hurst served as the radio operator on a B-24 airplane, "Little Iodine". Included in the documentation are pictures of his plane as well as daily excerpts from his diary describing 33 missions. His first mission was in support of D-Day, June 6, 1944. There is a nice framed certificate to Hurst from the 489th Bomb Group. We placed all of Hurst's documentation in a notebook to be shared with visitors to the hangar. These personal accounts are priceless in recording the history of our veterans.



We are establishing an area in our library dedicated to SC veterans. Another personal account like the one above was written by Glenda Johnston-Jolly who was a B-25 Mechanic at the Columbia Army Airbase from 1943-1945. She mentions recovering propellers from a B-25 that crashed in Lake Murray.



Black History Month:

In honor of Black History Month, we wanted to mention some original Tuskegee airmen with ties to SC. This information is from a 2004 book commemorating the 60th Anniversary.

LTC Paul Adams – Born in Greenville, SC. 302nd squadron, 332nd fighter group, pilot. He served in Italy flying the P-40 and then later flew the P-39 when he patrolled Naples Harbor.

1st Lt Leroy Bowman – Born in Sumter County, SC. 301st, 332nd fighter group, pilot. In Italy, he completed 36 bomber escort missions, numerous diving bombing and strafing missions.

Ernest Henderson, Sr – Born Laurens County, SC. 99th fighter squadron, 332nd fighter group, pilot. He was both a pilot and flight instructor at the Tuskegee Institute.

MSgt W.T. “Bill” Simmons – Born Anderson County, SC. 332nd fighter wing. After the war, Simmons stayed in the Air Force until he retired in 1966. He remained with the 332nd until 1949 and served in Korea during the Korean War.

Odds and Ends:

Here are some interesting links sent in by SCHAF member, Dave McIntosh.

Before the Dambusters there were Bridgebusters: <https://www.mirror.co.uk/news/real-life-stories/forgotten-raid-nazi-bridge-risked-16183517>

This is a great YouTube video featuring the Michael Beetham Conservation Centre which is part of the Royal Airforce Museum <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=8acNFwlurOw>

WWII plane dropped 750,000 poppies over the Cliffs of Dover in Tribute to British war dead: <https://www.thesun.co.uk/news/10316895/poppy-drop-ww2-plane-dakota-spitfires-kent/>

If you have something you would like to share in a future newsletter or if you have any questions, please send an email directly to SCHAF at info.schaf@gmail.com.

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