

Pilot Briefing

Volume 1, Issue 4

May 2009



Upcoming Events!!!

Next meeting: May 4, 2009

Field work parties:

Walkill May 2nd at 9am rain date of 5/3

Officers:

President :
Warren Batson

Vice President:
Vic Horton

Secretary:
Flavio Ambrosini

Treasurer
Whitney Philbrick

Membership:
Rob Stubbs

Field Director-Hopewell
Mark Monroe

Flight Instructor
Walt Ericson

Safety Officer
Jerry Rohling

News Editor
Bob Magee

Directors at Large
Bob Allen
Rick Knight
Bob Magee

Pilot Briefing Editor
Ron Revelle

President's Corner

Well it looks like the flying season is finally upon us. Hope everyone has been enjoying the fields so far this year. I would like to take this opportunity to thank the members that attended the Hopewell work party. There was an excellent turn out (37 in all) and it was truly amazing to see how much work was done in 4 hours time. Way to go guys.

I want to especially thank the crew that cleared the brush around the road and the far side of the field by the ditch. I understand that many including myself got some amount of poison ivory.

The Hopewell field hasn't looked this good in years. Now we can enjoy this great field for the rest of the year.

I am happy to report that the new Red Wing Field seems to be getting some steady usage. I hope this field will get more usage once we have the work party there on May 16 and get all the brush down. You can still fly around it but, it needs to be cleared for larger aircraft. I will send out a note of what we intent to do and the tools needed.

We have one more regular meeting at the church on May 4th. Our meetings for the summer months of June, July and August will be held on the first Friday of the month at the Hopewell field. There is planned to be food and drink at each summer meeting thanks to Jonathan and Lynda Elie. Meeting will be at 7pm but please come early and enjoy the food and fellowship and most of all the flying.

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President's Corner Continued

In closing I hope everyone gets to enjoy the 3 great fields we have this year.

Included in the newsletter is a list of the people that attended the Hopewell work party. I have to admit I do not like putting lists on a public form like this because invariably some one get left out and gets hurt feelings. So PLEASE if we left you off the list please let me know and I will make this correction in the next newsletter.

Ambrosini, Flavio
Batson, Warren
Callen, Louis
Elie, Jonathan
Elie, Lynda
Erickson, Walter
Faetsch, Gunter
Horton, Victor
Klein, Henry
Knapp, Ron
Knight Jr, Richard
Lederer, Bill
Lunn, Howell
Magee, Robert
Malouf, Joseph
Mayes, Wayne
McConnel, Kyle

McConnel, Peter
Monroe, Mark
Philbrick, John
Philbrick, Whitney
Quick, Lloyd
Rangitsch, James
Rebh, William
Rizza, Rick
Robinson, John
Rohling, Jerald
Romano, Anthony
Russo, Mark
Smith, Kyle
Stabe, Roger
Stouter, Albert
Stubbs, Robert
Tebolt, Michael

Urciouli, Dennis
Williams, Joe
Winkler, William
Winkler, William

Warren Batson
President



Ready for work!



Fun time after mowing.....

A tribute to some of the best of the best in aviation! 100% Scale Pilots



Back row L to R. Tom Conroy, Scott Scooter Vance, Bill Veto Trainor, Rich Foot Conway, Mike Squirrel Rioux, John Cat Cheshire, Bob Brillo Alston, Bob Yogi Bero, Matt Ski Lisowski, Howy Young, Steve Sabu Sabin, Ted T-Bear Carson, Ron Mugs McKeown, Don Scott, Mike Boom Boom Norman, Marty Streak Chanik, Tom O'Leary, Al FATAL Krause, Bill Snyder
Front row L to R. Jack Fingers Ensch, Gary Turner, Bill Lee, Herb Whammo Stockton, Bob Bad Dog Shaw, Brad Ler Poeltler, Rick Barfly Phillips, Greg Weaver

My friends, you are looking at the Wolf Pack

Most of us have seen the movie Top Gun at least once and probably more than once. If you have not seen the movie, you owe it to yourself to go out and purchase a copy of the film on DVD. A used copy will cost about ten dollars! Don't read any further till you have seen the film at least once!

Now, your are aware, I am sure, trophies were not awarded to a "winning" pilot and RIO at the United States Navy Fighter Weapons School or as it is known, TOPGUN. But if you look over "Iceman's" shoulder in the "Target Rich Environment" scene you will see a real squadron plaque listing the names of its members. The squadron is the VF-1 Wolf Pack. Now, I must admit I am a bit biased in my view of this group, because one of my very best friend's has his name on that plaque. His name is Herb "Whammo" Stockton, (first row, fourth from the left) who is a graduate of the U.S. Naval Academy and a graduate of TOPGUN. He flew F-14 Tom Cats off the USS Enterprise as member of the Wolf Pack. But allow me to make my case, without taking anything away from any of the many fabulous squadrons of heroes that have served our country with distinction and made this country safe for us.

Let me share a little "pilot briefing" on some of the squadron members. First, let me say that if you met Herb, you would likely hear non of this and he would be the last person to provide you with details. Over the years, as a result of questioning and prying on my part I discovered I was in the company of a very select, talented and distinguished group of fighter pilots. Unless I brought the topic up, we were likely to be talking about what was hatching on the Yellowstone River or laughing about Herb's lightning fast reflexes ripping the lips off a fish on the Delaware River. Or laughing at Greg wearing his night vision goggles from his F-16 Super Hornet days to spot fish at night on the Madison.

Now, break from this article and take a look at this video:

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=kx8NK5z03A0>

In the video you will see some amazing flying by Ron "Mugs" McKeown (back row, seventh from the right) and Jack "Fingers" Ensch (First row first on the left). Both pilots are TOPGUN graduates. Who said you can't do 3D with an F-4 Phantom? Maybe this is where the film "maneuver" came from that Tom Cruise used to "hit the brakes" and let the adversary fly by. As you can see, the real life maneuver is even more amazing. And though you will hear in the video, Mugs' sidewinder was dodged by the Mig, Mugs and Fingers got two Migs in Nam. These two Navel Aviators were credited with the first twin kill of Migs during the Viet Nam Conflict.

A Tribute.....continued

"Fingers" got shot down on his next cruise with a different pilot (who was killed) and spent some time at the Hanoi Hilton. In his own words:

"Immediately after being captured and I was taken to the Hilton with (among numerous other discomfoting wounds) two dislocated elbows and a partially severed left thumb from my high speed ejection. I underwent around the clock interrogation for 3-4 days (with threats of being left to die w/o medical treatment) until I finally "cooperated." I was then blindfolded and taken to a medical facility somewhere in the vicinity. There I was strapped down to a table and held in place by several "physician's assistants" while a doctor (?) proceeded to amputate my thumb - sans anesthesia - and bandaged the wound. They then sat me in chair and held me in place while the same doctor (?), foot on my chest, tugged on my arms until the elbows snapped back into place (or at least close to in place), wrapped them in crude splints, then blindfolded me again and returned me to my cell. The rest is history - thank God. As painful as the experience was, I guess it beat the alternative. But, I still don't have a warm and fuzzy feeling for the Vee's version of 'humane treatment.'" So, Mr. Ramsey Clark, I think I'd prefer doing time at Gitmo under the USA's supervision."

Jack "Fingers" Ensch therefore got his call sign "fingers" complements of the North Vietnamese. After release from Nam, Jack "Fingers" Ensch regained flight status and became my friend Herb's (RIO) backseater for over a year. In a typical teasing mode, the guys on deck would call to Fingers to give them a "thumbs up" on launch. He would pull up the empty thumb pocket of his glove and oblige. Ron "Mugs" McKeown became squadron leader.

Also a member of the Pack is Marty "Streak" Chanik . Back row, fourth from the right. "Streak" will later become the Captain of the USS Enterprise and Commander of the US Navy's Second Fleet. "Streak" flew the F-14 Tomcat, was an instructor at TOPGUN twice and a test pilot, accumulating 4,800 flight hours and 850 traps. His first command was VF-84, the Jolly Rogers, He also commanded the fast combatant support ship Camden, the aircraft carrier Enterprise as mentioned and the Carl Vinson Battle Group.

For some extensive coverage of another fighter pilot's bio from this group, check out <http://flitetime.net/http://flitetime.net/>

There you will see "Cat's" personal story. John "Cat" Cheshire now lives in San Diego and has shared with me that his role model and mentor like mine flew a B-24 in WWII. The list could go on....but I expect I have made my case about the exceptional quality of the men in this group. I close my case with a quote from someone who shares my view.

It has been said that "the first two operational *Tomcat* squadrons were a veritable who's who of future Naval Aviation leaders.



The "Pack"



CAVU till Next Time!

The man who taught me to love flying and airplanes and to respect those who serve!.....my dad, Lt. George Revelle, with the B-24 he flew in the 8th Air Force 389th BG in World War II