



Eagle Screams



Vol. II, Issue X

Monthly publication of the Screamin' Eagles

October 2001

The Screamin' Eagles Giant Scale Model Airplane Club meet on the 2nd Thursday of the month. If you have any questions about club activities or meeting location please contact one of the following members.

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October Meeting:

The October meeting of the Screamin' Eagles will be held at JJ's Top of the Swamp (Previously referred to as the Bavarian Inn) in Madison on October 11, 2001. As you know, they have good food at very reasonable prices so plan on grabbing a bite to eat there to show our appreciation for using their place as our fall and winter meeting site.

Member Web Pages

Leroy Brandt - <http://www.execpc.com/~lebrandt/>
 Rob Goebel - user.internetwis.com/~robbyg/goebeldash/
 Mike PirkI - <http://maddog-aviation.rcplanet.com/>
 Le Roy Stuczynski - <http://galleryofaviation.com/>



Prez Sez – By Rob Goebel

If you are like me, you probably have forgotten to renew your AMA membership for next year. Now is the time to do so in order to have all of your credentials ready in time to renew with the mighty Screamin'

Eagles by the first of the year. Feel free to send the president any change from your membership fees :-).

See you at JJ's on Thursday.

Rob



Next Month:

Mike PirkI will tell you about Captain Lance Sijan of Milwaukee, WI who was an F-4 pilot during the Vietnam War.



September Minutes – By Le Roy Stuczynski

The meeting, scheduled to be conducted at the Quarry field, was moved to the City Limits because it was too darn cold and dark. When we arrived at the City Limits we were greeted by a parking lot so full of vehicles that a scooter couldn't be parked. Wasn't that just "ducky". Shot down by "Ducks Unlimited". We then moved the meeting to the Lodi Bowl where we were greeted by, as Rob says "country music?...I can't conduct a meeting to country music".

Le Roy gave a Treasurer's report and it was accepted as presented.

Rob passed around the extra photos taken at our June event for all to enjoy. Bill Disch suggested we send photos of out-of-town pilots airplanes to them. This motion passed and Bill volunteered to mail the photos. We also agreed to give Bill's son Jerry \$50 for his costs associated with taking the pictures.

Our Saudi Arabia member Ahmed Jazzar was in New York awaiting a flight to Madison for a medical appointment at the UW Hospital when the terrorist attack happened. He was actually planning to attend this meeting but instead ended up witnessing the terrible tragedy at the Trade Center and, of course, was stranded in New York. Le Roy announced he received an e-mail asking everyone to step outside and light a candle at 7:00 PM on Friday as well as wear red, white, and blue that day.

Rob indicated the IMAA election was coming up.

Charlie Schultz introduced Art Harkman who is an avid airplane enthusiast and a very ambitious builder.

Mike Bitter announced he has a lot of RC equipment and airplanes for sale. He's not quitting the hobby but he is just giving it a rest for a while. Sounds like he needs money to feed his big snake.

Rob commented that, after what went on this week, he is proud to live in this country and most likely we wouldn't be meeting tonight if we lived in another country. All members enthusiastically echoed his comment. God bless America!

The meeting was adjourned for burgers and beer. And Rob did survive the music. *E Hah!*



Hi Dad, I was going to surprise you for your Birthday.

AMA CHARTER CLUB #671

WAUSAU R/C SPORTSMEN'S SEVENTH ANNUAL R/C SWAP MEET & AUCTION

SUNDAY, OCT. 28, 2001

ST. MATTHEW SCHOOL GYM
28TH AVE. • WAUSAU, WIS.

SETUP AT 8:30 AM SWAP 9 AM TO NOON AUCTION 11:00 AM

ADMISSION – \$4.00 12 & under FREE

50+ TABLES AVAILABLE
(NO CHARGE)

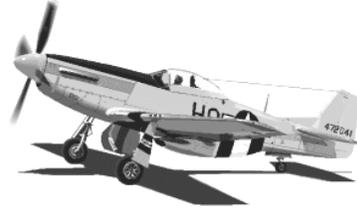
RAFFLE PRIZES
(DRAWING AT NOON)

– LUNCH –
Coffee • Donuts • Hot Dogs
Hot Sandwiches • Pop

FOR INFORMATION CONTACT
Russ Putman – 715-536-9214
Dick Lehmann – lehmann@dwave.net
Pope's Hobbyland 715-842-4371

Bill Shomo-Instant Ace

Researched by Mike Pirkl from the Air Force Magazine, Valor, March 1984, Vol. 67, No. 3, by John L. Frisbee



After 16 months of shooting up ground targets, Bill Shomo finally got a crack at a whole squadron of enemy fighters. There are pilots who fly fighters, and there are fighter pilots. Bill Shomo was a fighter pilot, and a frustrated one at that. For 16 months, the 82nd Tactical Reconnaissance Squadron to which he was assigned had moved from strip to strip along the north coast of New Guinea and finally to Morotai, some 250 miles northwest of the big island. The squadron was equipped with obsolete P-39s and P-40s, too short-ranged to reach the air-to-air combat action where every true fighter pilot wants to be. The P-38 and P-47 jocks got the glory, while Shomo and his squadron mates supported General MacArthur's drive to the Philippines by photographing and shooting up ground targets--hazardous work, but not very satisfying for a fighter pilot.

As 1944 drew to a close, it looked as though the war would end before Shomo had a chance to test his skill in air-to-air combat. Then, in December, things began to pick up. The squadron learned that it was getting North American P-51Ds equipped for photo-recce work. Shomo had flown two local check-outs in the P-51 and one short mission to test its guns when, on Dec. 24, he was called to group headquarters on Leyte. There he was made commander of the squadron and ordered to move it to Mindoro, an island off the southwest coast of Luzon, to support MacArthur's landing about 75 miles north of Manila, which would take place on Jan. 9, 1945.

A fortnight after Shomo took command of the 82nd, it was in place at Mindoro, and on Jan. 9 he led his first P-51 combat mission (which was also only his sixth flight in the Mustang). It was a low-level recce to find out what air strength the Japanese had in northern Luzon. As they approached the Japanese airfield at Tuguegarao, Shomo spotted the first aerial target he had seen while airborne in all his months of combat--a Val dive bomber, turning onto its final landing approach. One burst from his six .50-caliber guns brought it down at a spot Shomo can describe as precisely today as he could on that January day 39 years ago.

Two days later, on Jan. 11, Captain Shomo and his wingman, Lt. Paul Lipscomb, were heading north on the deck to photograph and strafe Japanese airfields at Tuguegarao, Aparri, and Laoag at the extreme north of Luzon. Over the exact spot where Shomo had picked up the Val, they caught a brief glimpse of enemy planes flying south above broken clouds at about 2,500 feet. How many enemy planes? What difference did it make? Shomo and Lipscomb pulled up through the clouds in an Immelmann and rolled out behind a Betty bomber that was being escorted by a squadron of fighters 11 Tonys and one Tojo.

On their first pass through the formation, Shomo and Lipscomb had the advantage of surprise. Shomo shot down four Tonys, then came up under the bomber, putting a burst into its belly. The flaming Betty headed for a crash landing with two Tonys still hanging to its right wing.

Shomo and Lipscomb pulled up in a tight vertical spiral to regain altitude while the Tojo latched onto Shomo's tail, firing until it stalled out and dove into the clouds. The Betty blew up as it bellied in, and the two escorting Tonys headed for the hills, staying on the deck. Shomo made a second diving pass, nailing each Tony with a short burst, for a total of seven victories. In less than six minutes, Bill Shomo had become an ace, the ultimate goal of every fighter pilot. Lipscomb got three-fifths of the way to that goal. The last three enemy fighters then disappeared into the clouds.

On April 1, 1945, William A. Shomo, by then a major, was awarded the Medal of Honor for leading an attack against heavy odds and destroying seven enemy aircraft. Only one other USAAF pilot, Bill Leverette in the MTO, scored that many confirmed victories in a single mission.

In more than 200 combat missions Shomo saw only 14 enemy aircraft from his cockpit. He attacked and shot down eight of them. Shomo credits that remarkable record to closing within 40 yards of each target and not wasting ammunition on deflection shots. It may be credited equally well to the valor of a fighter pilot who didn't stop to count the odds. Shomo is retired and living in Pittsburgh.

Trez/Ed Sez: *By Le Roy Stuczynski*

The month of September brought a special visitor to the Gallery of Aviation. Presidential Pilot of General Eisenhower, Ernie Tresch, filled the museum with stories of the caliber which haven't been heard since dad left us on September 26, 2000. Ernie lives in Oregon, WI and is 84 years young and I swear would still be capable of flying even more missions in his B-26 Marauder than the 40 he amassed before becoming "Ike's" personal pilot. Ernie is still in love with aviation and thoroughly enjoyed his visit to the Gallery. In his spare time he is a parking attendant at the Dane County Coliseum and for the last 10 years has been a school crossing guard in Oregon.

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I learned about Ernie a couple of years ago from co-worker, Joni Fletchall (also from Oregon) who has known him for numerous years. She told me about Ernie and that he was featured in a book written by Kristen Gilpatrick of Monona, WI. Titled "The Hero Next Door". Before dad died Joni brought a copy, autographed by Ernie, for the Gallery. Dad never did get to meet Ernie but I can visualize the camaraderie they would have exhibited had they met. Below I have reproduced an excerpt from Kristen's web page detailing a portion of Ernie's story. When we were going through the Army Air Corp. uniform section I happened to notice a gold bust of General Eisenhower dad had with the display. I asked Ernie what kind of a guy Eisenhower was. Ernie went on to emotionally describe his impression of the man. Read the below article why General Eisenhower still has a very special place in Ernie's heart. Thank you Ernie for your very special visit. Kristen's website can be viewed at <http://heronextdoor.homestead.com/>.

MEET A HERO NEXT DOOR

Featured Profile:

Presidential Pilot

Ernie Tresch

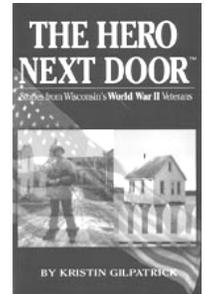
Oregon, Wis.

U.S. Army Air Corps

Nov. 7, 1941 - April 1, 1948



Martin B-26 Marauder



Annie and Ernie Tresch



When Ohio farm boy Ernest Tresch, now of Oregon, WI, enlisted in the Army Air Corps November 7, 1941, he just wanted to find a job that would let him do what he loved ... fly. Little did he know the flying job he enlisted for would take him soaring with the highest ranking military official of World War II, and the future president of the United States, Dwight D. Eisenhower.

After flying 40 combat missions over Africa, Sicily, Sardinia and Italy as pilot of a Martin B-26, Tresch was flying shuttle runs of supplies to Paris and wounded soldiers back to the U.S. After one of those runs, in November 1945, Tresch got a call from General Eisenhower's staff. They needed a pilot for their crew and wanted him to interview for the job.

"I was at home when I got a call from the colonel at the base who said General Eisenhower's pilot was getting out of the service and he wanted me to come in for an interview. But, after the interview I came back through operations and told the operations officer that I didn't expect to hear anything more. **I never expected they'd pick me.**"

Then, about 7 a.m., the next morning, Tresch got a wake up call from General George. "He asked if I had any relatives in Germany. I said no; he said thanks and slammed down the phone."

That afternoon the farm boy received orders to join General Eisenhower's crew in Frankfurt, Germany.

"How I wound up on that crew I could never tell you because I had absolutely no political or military pull."

Tresch started flying with General Eisenhower during the six weeks before the general returned stateside after the war and when he was serving as Army Chief of Staff. Tresch was co-pilot and pilot on Eisenhower's C-54 aircraft (similar to a commercial DC-4) for a year until the fall of 1946.

From day one Tresch was impressed with the general not only for his military achievements in World War II but for his personal character.

"The first time I saw him was when I reported to his headquarters in Frankfurt. It was rather a good feeling. My first introduction to him was just a very formal one in the office with the general's aide and me as the new crew member." Shortly after that Eisenhower was needed in Berlin and Tresch's career flying the top brass of World War II around the world took off.

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Tresch says the general was a great boss and a great man. “He was really a wonderful fellow to work for. The reason I say this is that all the time I was on his crew he was continually doing something for somebody else instead of tooting his own horn. I’ve made the comment many times. **General Ike was the most man in one individual that I had the privilege of meeting.**”

Tresch recalls the general was serious most of the time, yet sensitive. “He had great character and little ego. Look at General Douglas MacArthur who was a hell of a showman; General Ike was just the reverse. He was always concerned about the other guy. I admired that.”

As an example, Tresch recalls one very personal thing the general did for him.

“About six weeks after I joined the crew, my father was taken with a heart attack. We’d brought General Eisenhower back to the states before that and were returning to pick up more of the supplies from his headquarters in Frankfurt, Germany, when my family called his office trying to get a hold of me to tell me my father had died. Word caught up with me on a shuttle flight down in Bermuda. He had the base commander come to meet the airplane and tell me. We refueled and went right to Washington.”

“When I got there, Colonel Jim Stack, the general’s aide was there to meet the plane with a personal letter of sympathy from General Eisenhower and his personal offer to have his staff take care of travel arrangements and, if necessary, General Eisenhower wrote: ‘use my plane to your better advantage.’ A five star general just doesn’t have to do that for a first lieutenant!”

But that’s how General Eisenhower was all the way through, he adds.

“The general had a sense of humor too but he was always so doggone busy that most things were business. Sometimes, he’d come up to the cockpit and pat the breeze with us though. He was a regular kind of guy.” Occasionally, General Eisenhower would even take the controls himself on long flights as he had a commercial pilot’s license.

After their year together, General Eisenhower accepted a job as president of Cornell University in Ithica, N.Y. Tresch was assigned to the special air mission squadron out of Bolling Field in Washington, D.C., where he continued to fly top brass and politicians for another year and a half.

Then in 1948, Tresch heard his old boss was running for the biggest job in the country; president of the United States.

“I was very glad to hear he was running. I was out of the service and flying a corporate plane out of Marietta, Ohio.”

Knowing the general so well, Tresch was sure he’d make a great president.

“He was always thinking of the other guy and what he could do to make it better for the other guy, whether it was an individual or the whole army. He was truly selfless.”

Read more about Ernie Tresch’s experiences flying General Eisenhower’s plane as well as the 40 combat missions he and his B-26 bomber crew survived before he ever met the future president in his chapter in *The Hero Next Door*.



***The Screamin’ Eagles extend their sincere condolences to
Cha | chultz***