



ANA **GRAMPAW PETTIBONE**
SQUADRON INC.

1 NOVEMBER 2018

www.gpsana.org



Editor Hal McDonnel

The Grampaw Pettibone Squadron is a non-profit organization (IRS Sect. 501(C)(4) which, through meetings, discussions, speaker programs, and periodic field trips, serves to educate squadron members and the general public on the requirements of an adequate national defense, especially maritime aviation, which is essential to a free society, and to support the military professionals (active and reserve) responsible for many aspects of national defense. GPS also seeks to foster the strong pride, esprit, and fraternal bonds which exist among those associated with Naval Aviation.

THE GPS LUNCHEON MEETING

WILL BE HELD ON

THURSDAY, 8 NOVEMBER 2018

AT THE

GARDEN GROVE ELKS LODGE

LOCATED AT 11551 TRASK Ave., GARDEN GROVE

Hangar doors open at 1130, Luncheon is at 1200, secure at 1330.

Please make reservations before 9 PM on Monday 5 November.

COST IS \$18.00. FOR RESERVATIONS Please E-mail

RayLeCompte34@Gmail.com or by Phone: 562-287-4846

About our speaker's topic:

COLD WAR AIR DEFENSE



During some of the darkest years of the Cold War, one of the most critical capabilities of the US armed forces was the ability to repel Soviet bombers armed with nuclear weapons. Before the advent of



ballistic missiles, the interception of attacking manned aircraft was of paramount importance, not only for strategic deterrence, but also for public morale. We have the privilege of hearing from one of those stalwart Cold Warriors, Captain David Wensley, who mastered the radar-equipped F-86 D. Serving in continental US and in North Africa, Captain Wensley helped to hold the line through the tense period of the late 1950s. Join us, to hear this intriguing story.

Our speaker:



CAPTAIN DAVID C. WENSLEY, USAF

B-24 DURING WWII

By David L. Malmad - PAO



The Grampaw Pettibone Squadron was honored to have as guest speaker, Mr. Bob Ruiz, share his experience as a 21 year-old, 1st Lt. Army Air Corps pilot in command of a B-24 during WWII. He earned the Distinguished Flying Cross and seven Air Medals during his time in the service. GPS member Bob

Olds introduced our speaker.



Bob Ruiz(L) is was thanked by Bob Olds(R)

Bob grew up in Pacific Beach, a community near La Jolla, CA, graduating high school in 1941. He shared a little bit of his family history. Bob took his entrance exam for the Army Air Force in early 1942 and was called up in early 1943. Bob was initially sent to Lincoln, Nebraska to learn to be a soldier. He was then sent

to Missoula, Montana, for basic training before being sent to Santa Ana Army Air Base for preliminary pre-flight training as an aviator or crew member. At Santa Ana Army Air Base he was stationed for three months of training where he was tested and selected for pilot training.

Pilot training took place at Santa Maria Airfield where Bob had to qualify in a Stearman aircraft, PT-17 during primary training. According to Bob, if a trainee did not solo in a Stearman aircraft within seven hours of training, he was washed out of flight school. Upon completing primary training, Bob moved on to advance training at Douglas, AZ, in a twin engine aircraft, the AT-9. Bob was able to solo within the nine hour requirement and after successfully completing advance training, he then was sent to B-24 pilot training in Pueblo, Colorado, where he was assigned a crew.

After three months training he and his crew were assigned to the 8th Air Force, shipped out to Hethel Air Base , near Norwich, England – headquarters of the 389th Bomb Group. They sailed from New York Harbor to England on a 14 day voyage in July of 1944, just one month after the Normandy, D-Day landing.

Bob described the first mission he flew as a new pilot: waking at 3 in the morning, getting breakfast and then going into the briefing room to find out their mission for the day. A large board is covered in front of the room and the briefer

removes the curtain to show the mission and route of flight. As a pilot Bob sat in the left seat, however, a more experienced pilot commanded the mission and flew from the right seat. Bob flew the plane from lift off to the IP-Initial Point, about five minutes from the target, when the more experienced pilot took over. Bob indicated the target, the city of Hannover, west of Berlin. It was a clear day on a Sunday over the target when all of a sudden the sky suddenly filled with explosions. This was Bob's first experience with flak. The plane next to him took a direct hit and disappeared. Though the flak and enemy fighter attack was heavy, he completed the mission and returned to his base without any injuries. In talking about his crew, Bob noted that two of the gunners in his crew were just 17 and 18. Returning from the first mission, Bob checked the next day's schedule and noted he was set to fly. Compared to his first mission, the second one was not too bad, very quiet.

Bob stated that every three weeks he would get leave and would go to London for a rest. He explained that he volunteered to be a pilot to have a good time, eat in a mess hall, have a warm bed to sleep in and not be on the ground like the GIs living in foxholes, eating K rations and in the winter time freezing their you know what. He said he felt sorry for them.

In speaking about WWII statistics, Bob indicated that total US casualties exceeded 408,000 personnel, a high percentage were 19-20 years old. The 8th Air Force suffered over 26,000 casualties, plus numerous POW and MIA.

When describing his experience, Bob stated that he would have to fly 35 missions before going home. Some missions lasted 10-12 hours, taking 4 hours to form up. Major targets had as many as 1000 planes participating. He noted that fighter pilots had to fly many more missions before they were sent back home. While fighter pilots could take evasive action when attacked, the bombers had to maintain formation in order to complete their mission and deliver their bombs on target, a more challenging assignment.

Bob spoke about meeting Hollywood actor Jimmy Stewart, who was assigned to a bomb group at the same base as Bob, where as a Colonel he was assigned as a pilot. He described him as a 'heck of a nice guy'.

Bob stays active today with the Freedom Committee, as a Docent at Lyon Air Museum and was a participant as a member of the Honor Flight, to visit Washington, DC. When he returned from his flight, the airport honored the members of the flight by having the fire trucks spray the plane as it pulled in to the gate.

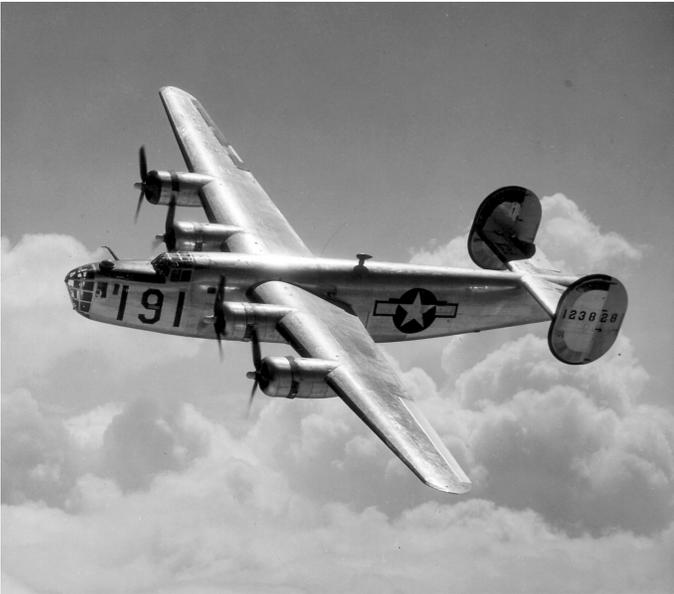
As a Freedom Committee member, he visits local high schools and presents information about WWII. According to Bob, only a few students knew some information about WWII.

Our speaker related his experience about a business trip that occurred many years after the war. While sitting in a hotel bar he had a conversation with another customer and noticed an accent. When Bob inquired as to where he was from, the customer answered Germany. In asking what

he did in the war, the man answered, Luftwaffe. Bob told the stranger he was in the 8th Air Force flying bombers and the stranger asked him what was the color of the tail on his plane. Bob answered, it had a white stripe and the stranger remarked, 'I remember you.'

Bob took questions at the end of his talk, the first one asking about the frequency of flying the same plane. Sometimes he flew the same plane; however, as a rule you flew whatever was available. Bob answered a question regarding aircraft model and noted that his unit only had B-24s, though adjoining units flew B-17s. A number of questions were regarding comparison of B-17 v B-24. The B-24 was a faster plane, had a longer range and greater bomb load. Asked if it was easy to fly, Bob remarked, 'for me, it was'.

B 24 Number built 38500



B 17G Number built 12731



CO COLUMN

Tim Brown

This month we will honor the men and women sailors who have performed in an outstanding manner at NWSSB and NMC. It is always a rewarding experience for me to participate in our program. Thanks to Bill Thompson, Don Pageler and Sel Ramsay for running the programs.

I might also remind you that Bill and Don work very hard canvassing Seal Beach, Long Beach and Los Alamitos to find restaurants that might wish to participate in the program that presents the SOQ's with gift certificates that are tangible rewards for their outstanding performances. You can do your part by mentioning your appreciation if you frequent one of those restaurants. Just say thank you from GPS and the SOQs for their gifts. Also, if you have a favorite restaurant that is near NWSSB and not participating, and if you know the owner or manager, start a conversation about the SOQ program. If the owner/manager seems the least bit interested, let Bill, Don or me know and one of us will follow-up.

Last weekend I went down to Huntington Beach to watch the Thunderbirds do their thing. They are really good...and loud. Great weather on Saturday and big crowds. That reminded me that we will have an Air Force pilot as our speaker this month. I think that Bob Ruiz who spoke last month about his experiences in WWII was Army Air Corps, so Dave Wensley will carry on the history of that branch. Should be a great presentation.

We could not get a Marine representative to this month's meeting because the Marine Corps Ball celebrations are taking place that week and weekend, leaving no time for a trip up to Garden Grove from Miramar or Pendleton. Cindy is working diligently towards getting us some active duty Marine and/or Navy Aviators as speakers in the new year. Again, if you have contacts in the active duty sector, pass on contact info to Cindy.

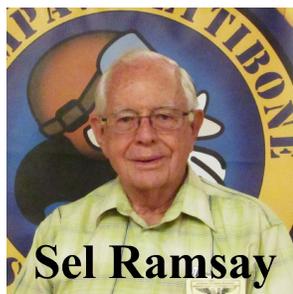
See you all at our next meeting and bring a friend, just like Life Member Ted Carlson did at this last meeting. Ted brought his dad, Don, who was in WWII in the Army Air Corps and regular Army. For this month, bring somebody who was in the Air Force or who served during the Cold War. They will enjoy their time with us and maybe they will join up. And, finally I just

want to recognize Ted's continued work with *Wings of Gold*, supplying quality images for our magazine. An example of Ted's work is the cover photo for the Fall 2018 issue of WOG. Nice!



From The
CHAPLAIN
Bill Thompson
CHAPLAIN
WORDS

It's a fact of November... Veterans Day, Thanksgiving, The Marine Corps Birthday, and Election Day all come together. And you may want to add other significant days to your November. My hope is that November will be remembered as a significant spiritual experience for all of us. When we thank a veteran for his service, let me suggest you say, "Thank you for your sacrifice." When we celebrate Thanksgiving, remember it was Lincoln who set Thanksgiving as a national celebration. His proclamation stated: "We have been the recipients of the choicest bounties of heaven; we have been preserved these many years in peace and prosperity; we have grown in numbers, wealth and power as no other nation has ever grown. But we have forgotten God. We have forgotten the gracious hand which preserved us in peace and multiplied and enriched and strengthened us...." And, of course, we say, "Semper Fidelis" to the Marines, and we will be faithful in casting our ballot on the right day. You may need a joke to lighten up things a little--"Why can't you take a turkey to church? Because they use such fowl language."



From the
MEMBERSHIP
OFFICER
Sel Ramsay

Not all of our ANA members are Veterans, but a lot of us are. It feels good to speak up for someone who gives Veterans a little "thank you" for their services rendered in uniform.

Each year, around Veterans Day, Knott's Berry Farm in Buena Park gives away free admission to the Park to Active Duty Military, Retired/Veterans and spouse (or

1 guest). This year, starting Thursday, November 1 to Thursday, November 15, a maximum of 2 complimentary admissions will be issued. Additional tickets for \$39 each may be purchased for up to six persons. Valid proof of military service and photo I. D. is required. Eligible person must be present.

According to Knott's, a similar admission period will occur between November 26 and December 21, with cost of the up-to-six additional tickets at \$45 each. Call Knott's at (714) 220-5200 for additional information.
Thank you, Knott's!

GRAMPAW PETTIBONE SQUADRON OFFICERS

As the Staff Officers of GPS, we are here to keep everything running smoothly and assist members as needed. Please contact the appropriate Staff Officer with your questions and/or comments.

Commanding Officer- Tim Brown – timb53@hotmail.com
Executive Officer – Vincent van den Brink – vincentvdb1@yahoo.com
Operations Officer – Cindy Macha – cm@wmof.com
Admin Officer – David Franzen – mdfranzen@sbcglobal.net
Treasurer – Ray LeCompte – raylecompte34@gmail.com
Assistant Treasurer – Chris Kretsinger – hpydolphin@aol.com
Membership Officer – Sel Ramsay – ramsayengineerco@cs.com
Public Affairs Officer – Dave Malmad – dmalmad613@gmail.com
Flight Surgeon – Bob Helton – bobby726921@gmail.com
Chaplain – Bill Thompson – chapbillt@aol.com
Greeter/Raffle – Andy Benjock – abenjock@cox.net
Greeter/Raffle – Ed Mason – chirpy26@sbcglobal.net
OP-Plan Editor - Hal McDonnel – hmcdonnelz@yahoo.com

Staff Officers Monthly Meeting

When: The 1st Thursday of January, February, May, August and November.

Special Meetings: As directed by the C.O.

Where: Usually at Garden Grove Elks Lodge but contact the C.O. in advance if you have not received a reminder email or if you intend to attend to observe and are not on the staff.