

Week of the Eagles 2014

We will be at Fort Campbell, Kentucky for the Week of the Eagles the 15th through the 17th of May. We will be setting up our displays across the street from the Pratt Museum. This year we will be including more Viet Nam display items.

Dayton V.A. Freedom Festival

On Saturday 24 and Sunday 25 May 2014 the 101st AB 502nd Living History and the Central Ohio Military Museum (COMM) will set up at the Dayton, Ohio Veterans Administration. Displays will include AC patches, airborne patches, D-Day items, Handie Talkie, knives, uniforms of WWII veterans, weapons, T-5 parachute, posters, 30 cal machine gun, bazooka with rocket, 60mm mortar, ammo crates, grenades and sand table. The VA is open from 11:00am to 6:00pm daily.

We will be located adjacent to the museum. The Boy Scouts and Cub Scouts will put flags on the graves to honor the veterans. We will participate in formation to honor Gold Star Mothers.

Poultry Festival - Versailles, Ohio

We will return to the Poultry Parade and Festival in Versailles, Ohio on Friday June 13th, Saturday the 14th and Sunday the 15th. Displays will include the sand table, a marker panel, the mortar, the camo netting and a 1942 GPW (jeep). In the tent we will have a weapons area, a display of infantry equipment, airborne equipment, uniforms on shirt forms (Army, Navy, Marines and Armor), a display case (with a map and edge weapons) and much more.

Fort Hayes Update

On May 14th I have a meeting and tour with Carol Oshavsky. She is the Senior Executive for Facilities for the Columbus Public Schools in charge of the school properties. We will be looking at buildings that may be available at the Fort Hayes campus in Columbus, Ohio. I will continue to send out updates.

Corporal James R. Youngker - ASN# 15314023
13th Air Force 308th Airdrome Squadron
Awards & Campaign Medals: Good Conduct, American Defense,
Asia-Pacific(4 stars), Philippine Occupation (1 star) and WWII Victory.

Jim was born in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania on 3 April 1926. He enlisted in the Air Corp on 1 June 1944 and was processed at Fort Thomas in Newport Kentucky. He went to Amarillo Army Airfield in Texas for boot camp. In twelve weeks he went through orientation, testing, lectures, physical training, weapons training, drill and more.

He went to Harlingen Army Airfield for basic gunnery training for six weeks.

Harlingen Airfield consisted of two parallel 6000-foot runways aligned North/South, and two 5,200-foot diagonal runways aligned NE/SW and NW/SE. A large parking ramp and several aircraft hangars were constructed along with a support base of warehouses, dormitories, a fire station, some water towers and a number of support buildings all constructed of wood and tar paper on concrete blocks. An auxiliary airfield at Port Isabel, Texas was also constructed to support the training and flight operations at Harlingen. Training was conducted in both air-to-air & air-to-surface gunnery. The air-to-air training used a variety of aircraft, including [AT-6 Texans](#), [BT-13 Valiant's](#), [P-63 King cobras](#), [B-17 Flying Fortresses](#) and [B-24 Liberators](#). For ground-based training, a number of facilities were available, including the moving target ranges and a number of gunnery simulators. The first class of aerial gunners graduated from the Gunnery School in January 1942.

On 8 January 1943, the War Department constituted and activated the 79th Flying Training Wing (Flexible Gunnery) at Harlingen and assigned it to the AAF Eastern Central Training Command. Gunnery practice was carried out by having the student fire at a sleeve target towed by an AT-6. Students were also taught strafing techniques. A series of shop silhouettes were installed offshore near South Padre Island and students fired at these water targets from B-34 and AT-6 aircraft. The planes utilized for training and transportation at the Harlingen Army Air Field were the Vultee BT-13 Valiant, Bell P-39 Airacobra, Bell P-63 King cobra, Beech C-45H Expeditor, Lockheed A-29 Hudson, Lockheed B-34 Ventura, Martin B-26 Marauder, North American B-25 Mitchell, Douglas C-47 Skytrain, North American AT-6 Texan Trainer, and Consolidated B-24 Liberator.

He went to Mountain Home Airfield in Idaho for advanced gunnery training for twelve weeks. He trained only for ball (Sperry) turret gunner. In fact he got the nickname Sparry because he mispronounced Sperry.

Mountain Home Airfield: Crews started building the base in November 1942 and the new field officially opened on August 7, 1943. Shortly thereafter, airmen at the field began training [United States Army Air Force](#) crews for World War II. The [396th Bombardment Group \(Heavy\)](#) was the first unit assigned and its planned mission was to train crews for the [B-17 Flying Fortress](#). However, before the first B-17s arrived, plans for the field changed and the 396th was transferred to [Moses Lake AAF, Washington](#).

Instead of training B-17 crews, Mountain Home airmen began training crews for the [B-24 Liberator](#). The first group to do so was the [470th Bombardment Group \(Heavy\)](#), which trained at Mountain Home from May 1943 until January 1944, when the unit moved to [Tonopah AAF Nevada](#). The [490th Bombardment Group \(Heavy\)](#) replaced the 470th and trained B-24 crews until it deployed to [RAF Eye England](#) in April 1944. The [494th Bombardment Group](#) then replaced the 490th, once more training Liberator crews.

The base also received fighter aircraft to add realism to its training. A few [P-38 Lightning](#) and [P-63 Kingcobra](#) pursuit planes arrived in January 1945 to simulate attacks on B-24s. In June 1945, Mountain Home also briefly served as a training base for the new [B-29 Superfortress](#) with the [301st Bombardment Group \(Very Heavy\)](#) training for combat, but the Japanese surrender in August brought a swift end to the new mission and, for a time, to the base at Mountain Home.

The base was placed in inactive status in October 1945.

THE COMM

SPRING 2014

Jim began his overseas duty when he left San Francisco, on to Hawaii and then to Manila in the Philippines. It took 36 days to get there. Jim's crew flew a B-24 Liberator. It had ten guns and he was the ball turret (belly) gunner as well as the assistant flight engineer.

Clark Air Base was originally established as [Fort Stotsenburg](#) in [Sapang Bato](#), [Angeles City](#) in 1903 under control of the [U.S. Army](#). A portion of Fort Stotsenburg was officially set aside for the Aviation Section of the Signal Corps and named Clark Field in September 1919. Clark served as a landing field for medium bombers and accommodated half of the heavy bombers stationed in the Philippines during the 1930s. It was very large for a landing field of the day. In the late summer and fall of 1941, many aircraft were sent to Clark in anticipation of war with [Imperial Japan](#).

The base was overrun by [Japanese](#) forces in early January 1942. The base then became a major center for staging Japanese air operations. Japanese aircraft flying out of Clark participated in the [Battle of Leyte Gulf](#), considered to be the largest naval battle of the [Second World War](#).^{[1] [2]}

During the war, the Allied prisoners of the [Bataan Death March](#) passed by the main gate of Clark Air Base, as the soldiers followed the direction of the railway tracks north, towards [Camp O'Donnell](#). Clark Air Base was recaptured by Americans in January 1945, after [three months of fierce fighting](#) in the Philippines.

Jim was sent on to Halmahera where he assigned until the war was over. They shared the 1 mile by 3 mile island with Aussie and British units. While he was on the island their crew participated in four missions. They would strafe and bomb cargo barges or other enemy targets. On one "milk run" they flew at 5,000 feet. The ocean was on one side of the plane and land on the other. The bomb run was successful so Jim and a friend were looking out the camera hatch. Just then the Japanese began to shoot "flak" at the planes. Jim said he never got into his flak suit so fast in his life! From then on they flew at 18,000 and turned away from land after they dropped their load of bombs. Jim said B-24's had four bomb bays. They would fill two bays with gas tanks so they could fly a mission to Borneo. It was an 18 hours round trip. He said the planes would utilize their glide path to maximize fuel. He said when they got back they were on fumes and couldn't wait to land...first come first serve.

Halmahera had an important role during World War II. It was here that the Americans started their allied invasions against the occupied Philippines and South Pacific Islands. General McArthur resided on a small island close to Daruba where he planned and coordinated countless air strikes, sea invasions and counter-attacks against the Japanese. The American Daruba Airfield has seven runways and can still be sighted today. Due to the enormous amount of explosives, ammunition and guns still found in the shallow waters, the island remains out of bounds for divers. Only designated surveyors dive here.

Jim said just 10 miles away the Japanese had 20,000 men an island. But, since they were cut off they were of no threat. Now that the war was over, Jim returned to Clark Field and then onto Laoag. He drove a refueling truck and helped refuel planes. Jim participated in four offensives: Japan, New Guinea, Luzon and the Western Pacific.

Jim arrived in the states on 11 April 1946 and was separated out of Camp Shelby, Mississippi on 19 April 1946. Jim is married and has two children, a boy and a girl. He lives in Versailles, Ohio.

THE COMM

SPRING 2014

13th Air Force



Constituted as 13th Air Force on December 14, 1942 and activated January 13, 1943.

The 13th AF served in the South and Southwest Pacific.

It was also known as the Cactus Air Force

The Thirteenth AF was constituted on 14 Dec 1942. They were activated in New Caledonia on 13 Jan 1943. They served in the South Pacific and, later, Southwest Pacific, participating in the Allied drive north and west from the Solomons to the Philippines. The 13th remained in the Philippines, as part of Far East Air Forces, after the war. They transferred, without personnel and equipment, to Okinawa in Dec 1948 and back to the Philippines in May 1949.

Commands: XIII Bomber: 1943-1946. XIII Fighter: 1943-1946.

Stations: New Caledonia, 13 Jan 1943; Espiritu Santo, 21 Jan 1943; Guadalcanal, 13 Jan 1944; Los Negros, 15 Jun 1944; Hollandia, New Guinea, 13 Sep 1944; Noemfoor, 23 Sep 1944; Morotai, 29 Oct 1944; Leyte, 1 Mar 1945; Clark Field, Luzon, c. 1 Jan 1946; Ft William McKinley, Luzon, 20 May 1946; Clark Field, Luzon, 15 Aug 1947; Kadena, Okinawa, 1 Dec 1948; Clark AFB, Luzon, 16 May 1949-.

Commanders: Maj Gen Nathan F Twining, 13 Jan 1943; Brig Gen Ray L Owens, 27 Jul 1943; Maj Gen Hubert R Harmon, 7 Jan 1944; Maj Gen St Clair Streett, 15 Jun 1944; Maj Gen Paul B Wurtsmith, 19 Feb 1945; Maj Gen Eugene L Eubank, 4 Jul 1946; Maj Gen Charles T Myers, 1 Dec 1948; Maj Gen Howard M Turner, Jun 1949; Maj Gen Ernest Moore, 16 Oct 1951; Maj Gen John W Sessums Jr, 10 Oct 1952; Brig Gen William L Lee, 27 Aug 1954-.

Campaigns: China Defensive; Guadalcanal; New Guinea; Northern Solomons; Eastern Mandates; Bismarck Archipelago; Western Pacific; Leyte; Luzon; Southern Philippines; China Offensive.

Decorations: Philippine Presidential Unit Citation.

Insignia: On a blue disc, bordered golden orange, a pair of golden orange wings surmounted in base by a white star charged with a red disc; all below the Arabic numeral "13" in white (Approved 18 January 1944.)

308th Airdrome Squadron Dagupen, P. I. 070 SF

