

*This is the meeting place of the WAR BIRDS flying club.
Each month news of the organization and members will be discussed.*

THE COCKPIT
(WAR BIRDS 12/33)

MEETING called to order!

Squat comfortably, Kaydets, because this is going to be the darnedest meeting we've had since the WAR BIRDS were organized. A lot of you lads came in here with blood in your eyes, chewing nails and swinging the old shoulders. I don't blame you. The Adjutant's office has been snowed under and he's been slow in mailing out the commissions. Hold everything a minute—and Hush! To make you all feel good, I'm going to tell you about the personal Christmas present that will come out to you from the C.O. Okay, after a while . . .

First, we've got to deal with those muggs in the rear pew. Somebody always comes late and these lads didn't even show up the last two sessions. A.W.O.L., by Jimminy! Well, you regulars will have to squeeze it a minute while we wise the newcomers up on what this is all about.

You are sitting, Kaydets, in the charmed circle of those who are accepting the torch of tradition from '17. This is the pow-wow tent of the WAR BIRDS, composed exclusively of those who flew in the grand fracas and of those who would have flown if their birthdays had not been late (like the Adjutant's stuff). No other organization on earth is like this one. You qualify for the wings you wear and you can neither buy nor finagle them. To get them you must pass rigid tests that will prove or disprove the genuineness of your interest in flying and in the traditions of wartime service. Nobody can get in who merely comes along for the ride, because that kind of a lad will never pass the test.

Your answers will be an infallible indicator of how seriously interested you are—and just try and fool a hard-boiled old bird like the G.O. (Note: The C.O. was a Naval flyer in the late guerre, and you know how rough the flying Navy is. Nuf sed.)

Anyway, if you get in you're to be congratulated and you'll participate in privileges unobtainable elsewhere.

Now that's enough for you rookies. You turn at once to Page 120 and read the rules of the WAR BIRDS. While you're filling out your coupon, we'll be going ahead on this meeting.

THANKS for waiting around, Boys. You knew all this stuff, but we had to be together. Now about those commissions; It's a sad story and it's happened before. The good old U.S.A. sent over 200 flyers to England for training in 1917. Then the War Office got bogged down on paper work and some of those lads had been trained assigned to squadrons, and shot down in battle before the paper squad caught up and sent their commissions along.

Your Adjutant is in the same fix. The mail that has poured in during the past couple of months just staggers belief. We've got every greaseball in the shop busy opening letters and the officers have been sitting up nights without benefit of cognac to try and give everybody service.

In spite of that, we've fallen behind and some examination papers are mighty slow in going out, examination papers slow in being graded, and commissions slow in being certified. It's a tough spot and we're sorry; but we didn't expect you all to be so prompt and so enthusiastic and you snowed us under.

It takes time a-plenty to get an organization like this under way. But, brethern, it is going to be more than worth it. The WAR BIRD wings are worth the wearing. So please be patient.

Whoa! The tall lad from Idaho has just brought up a good point. He says that he was one of the first in and he knows it. That's sad, too. I'll try to explain. You see in the wild scramble, with thousands of letters coming in, we had to shift the mail several times to different parts of the tent and the shifting scrambled it. So some of the first became last and vice versa. Sorry.

And now that that's explained, I hope you'll all be patient—and that those of you who have not sent in applications will fire them along. We're putting on more help and shaping things up rapidly and there's a mighty important reason why you should all have your wings by Christmas (all of you that can qualify). Listen!

If it wasn't for the need of the explanation and the apology, the C.O. was going to give me the whole column for details of the surprise in store. Now, as it is, I have to just hint at it and promise full details for next issue. Here's the dope . . .

To every qualified member of the WAR BIRDS whose commission is in good standing by midnight of December 20, the

C.O. is going to send out a personal Christmas present. Yes, sir. What is it? Well, I can't tell you but I heard the Chief giving an order for one helluva pile of genuine war photographs: aces, ships, etc., that have never been distributed before and I wouldn't be a darn bit surprised, Kaydets, if he was planning to send each of you a package of the prints as a kind of friendly salute.

And you ain't seen nothin' yet. There are many things being planned for you. Don't delay in getting aboard. Shoot the coupon right along if you haven't sent one in already.

We've got a big crew of ack emmas now and we have to keep them busy . . . and watch that Christmas announcement next month.

Salute . . .
The Adjutant

Notes of the War Birds

A page devoted exclusively to the honors list, citations, promotions and squadron news of the War Birds

THIS page was going to be just chuck full of gossip and news this month but the C.O. has put the big "CENSOR" stamp on it and we have to keep it thin. The Skipper opines that it is not a fair shake for us to start patting people on the back as long as the Adjutant's office is so far behind in mailing out the examination papers and certifying commissions. So he is making us wait on the big hurrah until we can all start equal. And that sounds fair enough at that.

There is an idea that has come in, however, that is worth passing along. You know how the American Legion names its Posts after individuals? Well, there's a WAR BIRD out in Shelbyville, Indiana, (his name next issue if the C.O. approves the citation for exceptional service) who has organized a WAR BIRD Post named after his favorite author. It already has ten members and that's a nice, tight unit. Regular meeting nights have been set aside and the group has a real program.

Up here at H.Q. we are tickled to death about it and we hope that more of you carry out the idea. It is a nice compliment to any writer to name a post after him, but it does not have to be u writer; you can name your pouts after favorite aces if you prefer. Anyway, it's an idea worth considering and we hope that you'll let us know about it if you organize a post; name of the commander, number of members, name of the post, etc. We're going to have Post news in this column as we swing along.

The organization of squadrons moves right along. We had quite a debate up here at H.Q. about the applications coming in from abroad. It was felt that this organization was primarily American and patriotic in its scope and members from foreign nations presented something of a problem. We held a Court on it and decided that we were being a bit narrow.

The World War was a war of the world—and we didn't have any copyright on it. Since our purpose is avowedly to keep alive the patriotic fervor and the flaming spirit that sent men across the battle lines awing, it is hardly consistent in us to deny membership to any man who flew— or would have flown—in the war of the nations.

There is only one thing in reserve on the docket of the court. We had two applications from Germany; one of them from Berlin and the other from Hamburg. It was felt that we could hardly act on these applications till we had an expression of opinion from you fellows.

How about it? Shall German and Austrian members be admitted to the WAR BIRDS or not? Drop us a line and let us know what you think. It's a neat problem and there can't be too many minds working on it.

SINCE the last issue went to press, we have added nine new squadrons; squadrons that we never expected to have, some of them—and we are proud of our growing organization. Salute the newcomers!

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APPLY FOR YOUR WAR BIRDS MEMBERSHIP NOW

Instructions

Membership in War Birds are neither sold nor given away; they must be earned.

- (1) Clip the coupon from this issue and mail it to Wing Commander, War Birds, 100 Fifth Avenue, New York City, N. Y., properly and completely filled out.
- (2) If you want the free booklets described elsewhere in this issue enclose five cents in coin or stamps to cover postage and handling. You do not have to order these booklets if you do not want them, but they will be helpful in passing the tests.
- (3) The Adjutant will mail you your examination questions and problems. They will be based on information contained in the previously mentioned booklets and in current issues of WAR BIRDS. Your answers to the questions and the problems should be mailed back promptly to Headquarters.
- (4) If your grade in the examination is satisfactory, the Wing Commander's adjutant will mail you a handsome card of membership certifying to the fact that you have qualified for WAR BIRDS and are entitled to the privileges of membership.
- (5) You will be assigned to a squadron and your squadron designation will appear upon your card.

That is all there is to it but we want to emphasize the fact that WAR BIRDS is a patriotic organization solely. We have nothing to sell. For all purposes of the organization, the WAR BIRDS card is sufficient. It is the member's identification and obtains for him all of the privileges allowed to members.

As a convenience, however, to those members who would like silver lapel wings we are making arrangements with a manufacturer to supply the WAR BIRDS emblem at a nominal price. Future issues of WAR BIRDS will contain further details on such insignia as well as on the various other plans now being formulated.

There is in prospect at present a FREE distribution to members of:

- (1) Genuine war pictures
- (2) A special discount price list on planes and equipment
- (3) A discount price on flying instruction.
- (4) Conventions for members
- (5) Special services of a research bureau.

This is but a beginning. A membership in WAR BIRDS is going to mean something. Get in on the ground floor now and be one of the originals.

Mail your application TODAY.

A FREE LIBRARY FOR YOU

You may have the following booklets free by mailing your request promptly to the Wing Commander, War Birds, 100 Fifth Ave., New York City, N. Y., with five cents to cover postage and packing.

WAR PLANES OF ALL NATIONS — a booklet containing the full dope on 135 war time planes; speed, horse-power, performance.

PLANE FACTS—a war pilot's frank discussion of little known phases of flying in France.

SYNTHETIC ACES—an expose of the fakers who pose as war flyers with tips on how to unmask them.

ARCHIE — the complete story of anti-aircraft; its successes and its failures, with extracts from an archy gunner's dope book.

These booklets will help you to pass your examination for admission to WAR BIRDS. Don't delay in placing your order. Send your request today on the coupon form provided below.