

*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 9/34)

THE C.O.'S MESSAGE

GENTLEMEN:

As we sit down to this meeting, we have a few matters that were carried over from last month, principally the matter of procedure for the proper conduct of a War Bird meeting. Several matters have come up lately, however, which we are going to put first on the docket.

Through the splendid efforts of Captain William H. Hoffman of 43 Squadron, we have added another airport to the list of those extending courtesies to members.

Mr. A. Becker, manager of Bettis Field, located on the McKeesport-Pittsburgh Road, extends an invitation to the War Birds. Upon presentation of membership card. War Birds will be allowed courtesy of the port; including the privilege of visiting the hangars, machine shop, administration building, the inspection of planes. Mr. Becker adds that the pilots and mechanics will be glad, too, to answer any questions.

On behalf of the War Birds, I want to thank Mr. Becker for his courtesy and to assure him that no War Bird will abuse his privileges. I want to thank our own Captain Hoffman, also, and to congratulate the Winged Keystone Flight of which he is the commander, for a real constructive piece of work.

Now to another memo on the desk! Second Lieutenant Edward B. Conlon of Waterbury, Conn., reports an incident which should impress all of you with the value of the War Birds commission. When the 12-passenger Boeing on the Chicago-New York run crashed in the fog at Bethel, Conn., recently, Lieutenant Conlon made all haste to visit the scene of the crash. There were police lines out and the crowd was being held back, but Lieutenant Conlon whipped out his War Bird card and went on through. Not only that, but he came out with a piece of the wing as a souvenir.

If you've been regarding your War Bird commission as just another piece of paper, you may have been overlooking some bets. Don't undervalue your commission, you officers. There have been hundreds who failed to win that commission. And to the Non-coms, I want to say that the membership card is only a shade less valuable than the commission. Get a case or a wallet and carry the card with you always. You may get into a spot like Lieutenant Conlon did.

We're instituting a new feature this issue; a sort of grunt and growl and talk it over department. We hesitated a lot over this because we don't want to encourage an attitude of bickering and snarling. There are, however, things which come up from time to time in connection with stories and articles and upon which a reader is legitimately entitled to an explanation. There are times, too, when the suggestions or criticisms of a reader can bring out information of interest to our entire membership.

So we give you the "PROP WASH" department which has been suggested by our good comrade, Lieutenant Wyman Phalen of No. 1 Squadron. It is yours to use and I'm trusting your good judgment not to abuse it. Don't take pokes for the sake of poking and don't look for things to crab about. When you see something that you don't like—or something with which you disagree—state your case in a gentlemanly manner. So much for that. I'll be watching that department.

NOW for meetings.

Every War Bird Flight should have a specific interest in addition to our common interest in aviation. Any gathering of human beings has to have an aim, a goal, a mutual interest. The purpose of the club should

be outlined clearly in the first meeting and the conduct of future meetings will hinge a lot on that purpose.

Where the members build models, of course, there is a strong bond. Members will want to exchange plans, will want to discuss planes to be built and planes already built. The topics of discussion are of endless variety. In the other flights, age will be a factor. Some flights will be informative or educational in purpose. The members will decide that they want to collect world war aviation data and learn all that they can of that colorful period. The aim then will be the gathering of accurate information and members can bring up topics for discussion and where different opinions on any subject exist, the flight can make it a matter of business to see that the question is settled.

Some of you fly. Flights composed of pilots and students have, of course, many matters in common to discuss. Others of you are "airport hounds." Such flights can plan trips, can amass information on modern motors and planes. Such groups will not need to be told what to discuss at a meeting.

Okay. Your flight has been organized and it has a purpose. There is a definite meeting date and a definite time for getting together. Start out right. Make it a practice to get to meetings on time and arrange for penalties where members are late; not so steep a penalty that it will cause members to drop out, but steep enough to hold the men in line as they would be held in a regular military organization.

Next organize a treasury. You know best how much you can afford to pay into the flight treasury each week or month. That is up to you. But I give you this thought—you'd have to pay money for a picture show, and a well-conducted flight meeting will give you as much enjoyment. Think that over. The money collected can either be spent for current needs as voted (pennants, pictures, books, etc.) or it can be accumulated into a fund to ultimately purchase a glider, a plane, flight instruction or something in harmony with the War Birds spirit. That, too, is up to the members.

Okay. That is done. We have a flight and a purpose and a treasury. We have a meeting night and all the members arrive on time. What happens?

The Flight Leader takes his place in front of the group and calls the meeting to order. Once the meeting is called, he can either remain standing or take a chair; the latter procedure favored. He then calls upon the flight adjutant to call the roll. Any absentees are so marked. He then asks a report from the Adjutant on any business carried forward from the last meeting. If there is any such business, it is brought up for discussion by the men assigned to attend to the matter at the last meeting (finances, information, membership, etc.).

Next in order are reports from officers charged with special duties if any. When the reports are heard, voted on if necessary, and any discussion pertinent has been taken care of, the meeting moves on to the next topic. The flight leader can permit the privilege of the floor to any member requesting it, but no member may rise to speak without the flight leader's acknowledgment and permission. To grant this permission, the flight leader need only nod and repeat the member's name; thus — "Mr. Blank."

As before stated, the purpose of the club will then determine the procedure. If the purpose is educational and informative, a member will rise and say "I have been checking my files and I cannot find the type of engine used on the so-and-so plane. Does any member know?" The discussion can then go on.

That, in outline, is the simplest method of getting a meeting under way. The flight leader should have matters well in hand and never permit discussion to get out of hand or noisy. Also, he should know how to terminate a discussion when it has gone far enough.

In future talks, I will outline the finer points in connection with the conduct of meetings and answer any questions that you may care to send in.

I will take leave of you now with the injunction that you read the War Bird news and the various departments that follow. A good War Bird will keep up with all of the activities of his order.

My compliments to you.

Carson W. Mowre,  
Officer Commanding.

#### SPECIAL NOTICE

ONE of our senior members who is an old hand in the game of battling the elements for the right to stay aloft, has written to me with an offer that is of interest to every War Bird. Attention!

Ray L. Thompson of Hollywood has just received his War Birds commission. Mr. Thompson has been flying since 1916, has 772 hours and has built and flown 11 planes of his own design and construction. He has made a hobby of investigating freak aeronautical engines and designs and he is interested in hearing from any War Bird who has run across any freaks or off-breed designs. Out of his great experience, Mr. Thompson is in a position to supply information on the operation, etc., of experimental engines and planes and he will be glad to do so.

Scout the airport in your district and if there are any off-the-norm jobs —either engines or planes—in your vicinity. Shoot a letter to Mr. Thompson and if possible, send him a snapshot or any data obtainable. In return you will get information that you would find it hard to get anywhere else.

You might let me know, too, about any jobs that you report. I rather enjoy these off-trail experiments myself and the rest of the War Bird family might be interested in your correspondence with Mr. Thompson. The address: Mr. Ray L. Thompson, 1128 No. Edgemont Street, Hollywood, California.

Another thing, in writing to Mr. Thompson, be specific and conduct your correspondence in a military manner. Don't ramble, but ask your question quickly and state your wants plainly. Also, enclose a stamped self-addressed envelope for reply.

#### CITATIONS AND PROMOTIONS

LIEUT. WILLIAM H. HOFFMAN, Squadron 43, for exceptional service in organizing the Winged Keystone Flight and for his efforts in obtaining airport courtesies for all War Birds at the Bettis Field Airport (see the C.O.'s chat in this issue). Lieutenant Hoffman is raised to the rank of Captain.

SECOND LIEUT. WYMAN PHALEN, No. 1 Squadron, for his active interest at all times, for his suggestion on the Prop Wash Section and for several professional finish insignia and heading sketches submitted. Second Lieutenant Phalen is raised to full rank as First Lieutenant.

SECOND LIEUT. C. D. McCOY, 11 Squadron, for an excellent set of Flying Ten Commandments submitted.

SECOND LIEUT. JOHN P. La-VENTURE, 20 Squadron, for an amusing personal insignia submitted and for notifying us of his flying activities in an old Jenny out at Oakland Airport.

SECOND LIEUT. CHARLES E. WILLIAMS (in private life, a member of the 64th Service Squadron of the U.S. Army Air Corps) of 20 Squadron, for his suggestion that we publish details of bombs and how they work—and for other valuable suggestions and general interest.

SECOND LIEUT. R. MILAN for his suggestion that we have naval squadrons or flights in the War Birds for those who are primarily interested in naval aeronautics. (Note from the C.O.—This is an excellent suggestion and, of course, there has been nothing stopping any of the naval enthusiasts from doing just that. Consider it now, however, as a suggestion of merit and let us see how many navy-minded people we have.)

SECOND LIEUT. CLARENCE MILLER, No. 1 Squadron, for his suggestion that we make a survey of the

leading powers and publish data on the aircraft available for war in the present day. Lieutenant Miller's suggestion was very well expressed.

SECOND LIEUT. ROBERT H. TOWNSEND, 20 Squadron, for his active interest and for sketches submitted.

SECOND LIEUT. HOSEA WEBSTER, 27 Squadron, for his insignia sketch and for general active interest as evidenced by suggestions.

SECOND LIEUT. DANIEL PHILLIPS, No. 1 Squadron, for active interest evidenced by suggestions.

SERGEANT JOHN G. HEARD, 16 Squadron, for his suggestion that the Non-coms receive recognition in the book to the extent of having an article or two on famous flying non-coms of the war. Also for other suggestions showing active interest.

#### NON-COM'S MESS

DAWGGONE. . . .

Modocs, I'm as blue as a muzzled monkey on a peanut stand. I'm worse than that. I feel like I did the day after the Armistice in sunny (oh yeah) France. Stop me if you've heard this one and then duck. Me, I don't stand for guys that have heard this one, and I don't care if your cousin says that it happened to him. I was the guy.

It was France and peace had broke out and me, I'd been living on what a non-com usually lives on when he's with a squadron that is right in the thick of it. Me, I was disgusted with it and I craved eating like grandpa used to make. Well, Modocs, there was food some places and one of those places was Paris and Hallelujah if I don't get sent up in the wrong cockpit of a D.H. to LeBourget (which is allasame in Paris practically). I had a pair of trained dice that I was saving for an emergency, and before I went up, they did their stuff. Me, I had francs.

Well, the Rue de la Paix is a place where anything can happen to you. But all I was looking for was grub. The bow-legged Frog waiter who got flat feet from ducking heavy stuff at Verdun brought me a menu. All in French, it was, and the kind of French that I knew wasn't on any menu card (I hope it wasn't). Anyways, the Frogs is suddenly high-hat because they won the war and they won't talk American or English any more. This big hanky-sniffer just points at the card and jabbers. Well} Modocs, I was proud and I wouldn't admit nothin'. Acting just as high-toned as he does, I points to something on the menu that looks like one of the battles I was in.

"*Oui, Oui,*" says this big goldbrick and he waddles off.

Modocs, that word was "soup." Okay. I could use some soup and I does. He juggles the card at me again and I picks another number. "Mais oui," he sez . . . and, Modocs, that was soup, too. Well, I could still use soup, so I doesn't do a thing that's violent. I just attacks that wet nourishment and then picks another number.

I'll be a Marine, Modocs, if I wasn't still picking soup. There's more soup on a French menu than in a Campbell factory, and I guess wrong twice more before the frog brings me in the thickest, juiciest, damnedest steak I ever saw.

And, Modocs, I couldn't swallow a bite.

I wept at that steak, Brethren, I sure did. And between the sobs and the pearly drops, I choked out my soul's anguish. "Here I am," I bleats pitifully, "with the chance of a lifetime before me, I'm full of soup . . ."

Modocs, I'm like that now only worse. I stepped out with my chin at an angle and with confidence in you

buzzards filling me from heart to gizzard. AND WHAT HAPPENS?

You cross-frazzled mugs, you've let me down. You ain't joining my Non-com Mess worth a continental damn. You sure ain't. Some of you rushed around with the coupons and made my old wishbone throb with joy, but the rest of you sat on your hands and refused to sign coupons. Yezzir—you got proud and shiny-booted and full of catsup and you wouldn't be a lowly Non-com. Humph— And what does that make me? Up here at H.Q. they are hooting at me. The roll call of commissioned officers looks like a N. Y. telephone book and I can put the names of all of you Non-com buzzards in my hip pocket. Me, I'm humiliated and disgusted . . .

I got a citation for one of my boys this month, too.

But for the rest of you lads who aren't War Birds at all, and who are too stuck up to be Non-coms, I've got nothing but a big ache. And if you want a happy Adjutant around the house, you better flog in some coupons and toot sweet.

Me, I'm sick o' soup ...

The Adjutant.

#### FLIGHT PARADE

THE Flights listed below have complied with regulations and have submitted reports to H.Q. on membership since the last issue went to press.

FLYING CIRCUS FLIGHT, 222-OS Jamaica Avenue, Queens Village, N. Y. Six members. Meetings held every Wednesday night. First Lieut. M. Tezai, flight commander. Roll call: George Hollister, Stanley Hollister, George McAllister, Herbert Homme, Leslie Caulfield, Clinton Mott. No insignia reported.

NINETY FOURTH PURSUIT FLIGHT, 30 Belknap Street, Arlington, Mass. Five members. Meetings every Tuesday. Second Lieut. Paul E. Cunha, flight commander. Roll call: Joe White, William Nostrom, David Sewell, Harold Nostrom.

THE EAGLES FLIGHT, 1201 North Pennsylvania Ave., Roswell, N. M. Five members. Meetings every Monday. First Lieut. Eugene Monk, flight commander. Roll call: Harold Read, John Gaddy, W. M. Groseclose, Ralph Monk. Report on insignia later.

WINGED KEYSTONE FLIGHT, 516 Viola Ave., Duquesne, Pa., Nine members. Meetings every Friday night. Capt. William H. Hoffman, flight commander. Roll call: William Cooper, Clyde E. Griffiths, Dennis Travis, John Pryzkaposky, Alex E. Obsince, Andrew W. Szuch, Russel W. Douglass, Jack Flister. Last three named are cadets. Insignia is the "winged keystone.

FLYER'S ROOST FLIGHT, 1463-c St. Louis Ave., St. Louis, Mo. Second Lieut. Harry Plummer, flight commander. Roll call: Cecil Reed, Ed Keefe, Bill Henderson, Milo Watt, Don Watt, Bill McGuire, Hank Hef-rin. Meetings every Monday. No insignia reported. All these lads live in a dormitory.

LONE EAGLE FLIGHT, 357 No. Pennsylvania Ave., Wilkes-Barre, Pa. Ten members. Meetings every Monday. First Lieut. William Oliver, flight commander. Roll call: Second Lieutenants Robt. Lehman and John Oliver. Cadets John Hontz, Edwin Cantrill, Jr., Raymond Oliver, Joseph Eastman, Franklin Ogin, Eliaz Hontz, Thomas Stritzinger. This flight has built 44 different types of model planes and a total of over a hundred ships.

FOUR ACES FLIGHT. Please re-enter your report and put the name of your town on the coupon, not merely the street address.

FLYING PHANTOMS OF ARKANSAS, 915 Huntington Avenue, Jonesboro, Ark. 11 members. Meetings

every Saturday, 7 p.m. First Lieut. Dan McGuire, flight commander, Second Lieut. Chas. Clark, adjutant; Randolph Graham, armament officer; Bill Parker, enrollment officer; Richard Word, co-ordination officer; Leon Smith, engineering officer; Billy Brandon, newspaper officer. Non-coms, John Heard, Guildford Webb, Jimmy Ray, Bob Lile. Meetings conducted in military style, orders executed on the dot. Insignia: two tone circular disc with inverted half moon above it bearing name War Birds. White half of disc has letters FPA, grinning skull centerpiece, skeleton fingers holding machine gun on dark half of disc. Standard wing spread with disc as badge.

THE FLYING ARROWS, previously reported at 66 Decker Ave., Staten Island, have changed Flight name to "Mystery Flight,"

#### WORDS A-WING

Publication of your name in this department entails an obligation to answer all letters received. Post card replies are permissible, but WAR BIRDS who fail to obey the rules governing the use of WAR BIRDS facilities and privileges are subject to court-martial and the revocation of commissions.

WYMAN PHALEN, Shortsville, N. Y. ( who is quite a clever artist, wants letters; particularly from Alaska and England. He is 16, stands five foot nine and weighs 150 pounds.

DAVID CURLAND, 8704 Flatlands Avenue, Brooklyn, N. Y., wants to hear from comrades in Squadron No. 1. Particularly the Brooklynites. Will also welcome letters from elsewhere.

LAWRENCE REYNOLDS, 47 Elizabeth Street, New Haven, Conn., is a poet and has written some poems about the Akron and Macon. Will be glad to send copies to interested members.

ROY L. BAKER, 19144 Teppert Avenue, Detroit, Mich., is a photography enthusiast and would like to swap talk with those who share his hobby.

REG. TABER, South Street Road, Le Roy, New York, is a licensed chute jumper and has bailed out sixteen times to date. Will be glad to swap letters with other War Birds.

#### SPARE PARTS HANGER

E. L. CHAPMAN of Lacey Springs, Va., has a German Mauser rifle cut to shorter' type. Wants .22 repeater or what have you?

WM. W. PURVIANCE of 144 Linden Avenue, Leechburg, Pa., has to trade: three model aeroplanes ready to assemble, also a toy tractor by the Marx Brothers. What have you?

EARLE JEPSON of Wintersport, Maine, has three model planes to trade: Fokker, Aeronca and Curtiss.

STEPHEN KUNALC of 433 East 81st Street, New York City, has "High Adventure" by James Norman Hall and pile of magazines. List on request. Will trade for world war airplane plans.