

## **FEBRUARY 16, 2009 F.A.H.P. NEWS**

**Lowly Second Lieutenants:** During World War II, Second Lieutenants in the Army of the United States (as opposed to the regular U.S. Army) were given jobs no other officers wanted. Despite this less-than-esteemed rank, which I held for 16 long months, it was a very good deal compared with not receiving a commission at all. What a change it was after that day in early June, 1944, when my serial number changed to 087-1244 (who cares?).

My first orders as an officer, issued on 5 June, 1944, stated: "Report to Commanding Officer, Roswell Army Air Field, Roswell, New Mexico, with 10 days delay enroute". This meant a furlough or leave of 10 days was allowed, in addition to travel time from Cambridge, MA, to Roswell. I took my orders seriously, and tried to report to the C.O. at Roswell on the morning of June 24. It turned out the C.O., a full colonel, had no thought of seeing all the new officers (or enlisted men) who were assigned to Roswell. All other bases were the same, I'm sure, but I was naïve enough to take the orders literally. A sergeant checked me in without fanfare, somehow I was assigned to a room in an officers' barracks, and my new duties and a hot New Mexico summer were up and running. Two other new weather forecasters, fresh out of meteorology school (one from the Univ. of Chicago, and one from NYU), arrived at Roswell when I did.

All new second lieutenants had to draw a duty called "Officer of the Guard". This required duty between 11 P.M. and 7 A.M. about one night a month, and had to be worked in so that it didn't conflict with forecasting schedules. I guess it was necessary, but I'll never know. A corporal would pick me up in a jeep, and I'd strap on a belt with side arm (hand gun) attached in case of trouble. We would ride around the air base "checking things out". About the only thing we accomplished was taking the coins out of the soda machines all over (and there were a good many), making some sort of accounting of our deposit before going off duty, and turning in our belt and side arm. There was a better job called "Officer of the Day" but this was assigned to first lieutenants. That position entailed slightly more authority and probably even less work.

One of the most useless things I did was to censor enlisted men's mail after arriving on Guam in June, 1945. With the Pacific war only 2 months from being over, censorship was not very important by that time, especially letters written to loved ones back in the States (which we called "Stateside"). New second lieutenants in our squadron were given that censoring job. We read the personal letters before they were approved for transmittal to the addressee. It was none of my business, but I couldn't believe what some of those letters contained. A man might be writing the same letter confessing love and devotion to 3 young women, one of whom was his wife. He would promise each the same thing. Never having been exposed to the ways of the modern world, I couldn't believe what I was reading, but there was no reason to censor it, so all the letters were approved and presumably went through. Our job, at least in the summer of 1945, had very little to do with preventing the Japanese from bombing the West Coast.

The Executive Committee of the Board met last Tuesday at 4:30, and put finishing touches on the Strategic Plan and its action steps to be reported at the Annual Meeting on 2/17, and to the Board at its 2/19 quarterly Board meeting. On Thursday at 5:00, the Finance Committee met with Bob Reilly and Mike May on a Conference Call, to settle on our Budget for 2009, also to be presented for approval at meetings this week. Stan Wilcox and his Nominating Committee have worked hard to come up with a strong slate of candidates for election to the Board, and of officer candidates for 2009 to be elected at the February 19 Board meeting. The Collections Committee, chaired by Greg Landrey and Mike May, will meet Wednesday, Feb. 18, at 6 P.M., and the February Board Meeting is scheduled for Thursday, February 19, at 6:30 P.M. in the F.A.H.P. office. THERE WILL BE NO WORK SESSION ON TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 17.

Work sessions last week accomplished many things. More parts were removed and stored from the Stanley Model 607, including the removal of the front cross-sill from the main wooden frame. Dave Lumley, Bob Stransky, Bob Jordan, Geoff Fallows, Jim Personti, and Steve Bryce were responsible for this. The cranks of the engine's "beefing-up" kit were exchanged with Howard Johnson, as the new ones represent an improved design. Ted Kamen finished the 20-H.P. burner, and the 30-H.P. burner from the Model 87 was finished and installed back under the boiler of this car (Jerry Lucas, Art Wallace, Lou Mandich and Richard Bernard accomplished this job). Kelly Williams, with help from Walter Higgins and Dan Citron, completed the third layer of wire winding on Kelly's boiler, and that job is finished. Jeff Pollock, Brent McDougall, and Emil Christofano began the installation of the third R.R. track in the shop's basement, which is coming along well. Jerry Novak brought us more useful items donated by the estate of George Barczewski: 5 sections of steel shelving, a gas-welding outfit, and a full case of new 8-foot fluorescent light tubes. Thank you, Jerry, and Sara King, executor (George's daughter). Refinements were installed on the new heating boiler in the shop's basement, and it appears to be working flawlessly.

Rose Ann Hoover, Richard Bernard, and Catherine Coin plan to attend the Regional Museum annual conference in Ocean City, MD, next Sunday through Tuesday, 2/22-24, and Rose Ann has a Museum Committee meeting scheduled for Friday, February 27 at 11 A.M. Immediately thereafter, we hope to have a plan for exhibit improvements for the 2009 season, which plan needs to be implemented by May for our "Steamin' Sundays" starting June 7.

The *Friends of Auburn Heights Preserve* wants to thank Joe Mosteller, one of the earliest members of F.A.H.P., for his service as treasurer and Board member, who is retiring from the Board this month. Joe and his wife have moved into Maris Grove, a modern retirement community near Concordville, PA, about 12 miles from Auburn Heights. We wish them well, and hope they will continue as active members of FAHP.

PLEASE REMEMBER OUR ANNUAL MEETING, TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 17, 2009, AT 7:30 P.M. IN THE AUDITORIUM AT THE CENTER FOR CREATIVE ARTS, 410 UPPER SNUFF MILL ROW, YORKLYN (just off Route 82, 6/10 of a mile from Auburn Heights). WE HOPE ALL WHO ARE ABLE WILL ATTEND. (No Work Session on 2/17). Tom

