

THE FLYER

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Published By Jackson Chapter 304 Of The Experimental Aircraft Association July/August 2007

www.eaa304.com

Chapter Meetings are held the first Wednesday of each month at the Sport Aviation Center, 3600 Wildwood Ave, Jackson, Michigan 49202-1811 unless otherwise published....

The July Meeting has been cancelled and rescheduled for Wednesday, August 1st, at 6:30PM.

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CHAPTER NOTES

Chapter Minutes (June 6, 2007)

The Membership present voted to cancel the July Meeting and reschedule it for Wednesday, August 1, 2007.

The Chapter President discussed the upcoming Fly-In Breakfast scheduled for June 10th and answered any relevant questions relating to the success of the Fly-In.

John Feldvary brought the membership up to date on the tragic loss of Dennis

Hoyes, the Crew, and the Medical Personnel in the crash of the Citation after taking off from Mitchell Field in Milwaukee, Wisconsin. They had just taken off when Dennis called in advising the tower that they were experiencing some difficulty. Before the tower could respond the aircraft had fallen off the radar and dove into Lake Michigan. The crash was very sudden and the debris field was very small, there were no survivors. The aircraft was flying donated transplant organs to the University of Michigan Hospital in Ann Arbor, Michigan.

Dennis was an excellent high time pilot and would give multi-engine instruction at Jackson Community College whenever he could fit it into his schedule...

As well as a close friend to everyone here at the Jackson County Airport, Dennis was just a nice guy... His life centered around; his family, his friends, and his flying...

The Meeting was adjourned.

July Meeting Rescheduled To August

The July Meeting has been cancelled due to the fact that the meeting date fell on July 4th which is Independence Day... The Membership voted to reschedule this meeting to Wednesday, August 1st at 6:30pm.

At this August meeting we will kick off another season with Chapter 304 with a Hot Dog Roast or maybe Sloppy Joe's or maybe Tacos.... Or... it even could be Brats in a bun... for sure it won't be Egg Rolls and Fried Rice... But it could be Sushi, if they can't get the gas grills fired up...

We'll let those of you that just attended Air Venture 2007, relate your experiences while they're still fresh in your mind... We'll discuss the success of our 2007 Fly-In Pancake Breakfast... and maybe have an "After Action Report" ... to see if any improvements can be made...

For example:

We found that we must have a designated "Handicap Parking Area" two of our most innovative thinkers had to improvise an area while monitoring the show car – community parking area.

Also, we found that many patrons had to ask directions to the Pancake Breakfast, after parking their cars. We need, at least, a couple of large "Pancake Breakfast Signs" with arrows to facilitate patron movement...

For some reason when our innovative thinkers gave directions such as;

"Ok... Pal, ... see the Green Portable Toilet next to the Hangar... Well, once you pass the John, turn and walk through the chain-link fence gate..."

Now, how appetizing are those directions!

I'm sure we lost some paying customers to the Airport Restaurant... with those directions...

Next year that "Whiz Rocket" just, has to be placed in a less conspicuous location...

Fly-In 2007

What can be said about the Fly-In? The only utterance that can describe it is, "It Was Superb! The turnout of Volunteers was fantastic; The Weather was fantastic; the Community turn out was magnificent..."

First; the Officers would like to thank all that volunteered their time to make this Fly-In a success....

Second; our thanks go out to fellow member, Randy Maiville, for bringing his "Birddog" for all to admire. Every time I looked over, Randy was giving his oration about the restoration of the aircraft to a captivated audience of people...

Third; our thanks to John Feldvary for he and his wing-man for parking their SNJ's for all to admire...

Forth; our thanks go out to Chuck Furgason for rounding up all those Class, Antique, Show Cars for all to admire... This was no small feat for Chuck and Linda Furgason, because they pounded the pavement at the May Downtown Car Show handing out Fly-In Flyers. And, then had to convince these car aficionados to display their cars at the Fly-In, before driving to another car show that was taking place, less than a half-mile from the airport...

A rough estimate was that sixty to seventy cars were at the Fly-In. This number was based on the number of dash plaques that were handed out....

We were light on show planes as well as planes flying in for the breakfast but that didn't halt the Community from enjoying our fine event. .. Last year the estimate was that we enlisted over 850 servings, which we thought was a little high. This year the count was close to 740, which we thought was more on the mark. Last year the serving lines came in spurts which were quite long, but this year the serving lines were shorter but very steady...

But the real measure of success is how much revenue is left after all the expenses are paid. Now the Fly-In of 2006 was our most profitable Fly-In in the history of the Chapter... But get this! ... 2007 was our second best Fly-In and all the details will be given at the August 1st Meeting.

Hey, I guess we'll be able to pay the summer property taxes on the Sport Aviation Center....

Again, our thanks go out to all that participated...

IAC (July 6th, 7th, and 8th)

Well, it's that time of the year, again, to watch those Aerobatic Planes spin, twist and dive...

The IAC is coming to the Sport Aviation Center July 5, 6,7,8, 2007....

As usual we'll be serving lunch on Saturday and Sunday charging and outrageous price... to all those unsuspecting pilots and their friends...

Again, we need a few volunteers to assist in serving lunch... Just like last year the lunch will be served between 11:00am and 2:00pm ... And, you'll find its really much more fun than work...

Joe Foss: From Farm Boy to Medal of Honor Recipient

By

J. R "Bill Bailey

Published by the Foundation Magazine, Spring 2007, National Museum of naval Aviation

Joe Foss was born on the family farm just outside Sioux Falls, South Dakota on 17 April 1915. His father had come to the United States from Norway and his mother, who was Scots-Irish, had immigrated, with her family, from the State of New York. With the open range found in South Dakota, Foss went hunting and fishing at every opportunity. His father bought him his first rifle, a Remington .22-caliber rimfire, and he soon became an excellent shot. In March 1933 Foss' father died and Joe became the head of the family...

In 1937 Foss entered Sioux Falls College where he worked several jobs, including joining the 147th artillery of the Army National Guard, to pay his expenses. During this time he also began taking flying lessons...

After a year at Sioux Falls College he transferred to the University of South Dakota where he continued to work a number of different jobs. However since the school had a government flying course, this was a good move for Foss despite the costs. In February of his senior year he joined the Marine Corps and was accepted for pilot training...

Upon graduation from college in June of 1940, he began elimination base training to determine if he should go on to flight school. The E-base training lasted five weeks, during which he learned Navigation, Morse Code and Meteorology and gained twelve hours of flying instruction.

After successfully graduating from E-base training he reported to NAS Pensacola, Florida. There his mornings were dedicated to physical conditioning, while the rest of the time Joe received training in basic flying. He completed primary instrument and formation training and by January 1941 was sent to NAS Opa-Locka, Florida...

He went through fighter training at Opa-Locka flying the Boeing F4B-4 Biplane. He was trained in aerobatics and gunnery with the targets fixed on the ground or towed behind another aircraft. In this he excelled because of his hunting and shooting experiences as a youngster...

After seven months, Foss received his commission as a second lieutenant on 15 March 1941. On 29 March, he received his wings and was assigned to flight school as a primary flight instructor at Saufley Field at Pensacola. This was a crushing blow for Foss as he had his heart set on getting into combat training...

Foss was at Saufley Field on 7 December 1941 when Japanese Air Forces attacked Pearl Harbor. He was now instructing more advanced students in aerial aerobatics and decided to volunteer for a fighter squadron but was turned down because of his advanced

age of 26. He then volunteered for a photo reconnaissance squadron and was sent to *North Island at San Diego...*

Foss continued working and eventually moved into the *Advanced Carrier Training Group* where he earned the highest gunnery score in his class. He was then sent to *Camp Kearney*, which is now *MCAS Miramar*, just outside of *San Diego*, as executive officer of *VMF-121*. On 11 August 1942, he was promoted to Captain and on 11 September was on his way to an undisclosed destination in the *Southwest Pacific...*

Prior to *Foss*' transfer to the *Pacific*, on 7 August 1942, the 1st *Marine Division* landed 19,000 men on *Guadalcanal*, an operation code-named "*Cactus*." The Japanese were constructing an airfield on the island, which would have threatened supplies going to *Australia*. The *Marines* captured *Henderson Field*, which was named in honor of *Major Lofton Henderson*, a *Marine Corps Aviator*, killed during the *Battle of Midway...*

On 1 September *VMF-121* sailed from *San Diego* aboard the troop transport *USAT Etolin*, formerly the World War I transport *USS Matsonia*, while their *Grumman F4F Wildcats* were ferried earlier aboard the escort carrier *USS Copahue (ACV-12)*. The squadron and their planes were reunited at *Noumea* on *New Caledonia*. They flew combat drills and discussed tactics and the pros and cons of the *Mitsubishi A6M Zero (Allied code name Zeke)*.

The Squadron was again at sea on 6 October aboard the Aircraft Carrier *USS Long Island (ACV-1)* on their way to the *Solomon Islands*. On 9 October they landed on the Marston matting runway on *Guadalcanal*. However, this was the bomber runway and they had to taxi to *Fighter One*, a coral airstrip called the "cow pasture" where they became a part of the "*Cactus Air Force*."

They would be replacing *VMF-223*, which had been on the island for six weeks and were exhausted and sick with malaria. The "*Three Flying Fools of Guadalcanal*," *Major John Smith*, *Captain Marion Carl* and *Major Robert Galer*, all members of *VMF-223*, had shot down Forty-six Japanese Aircraft and *Foss*

tried to learn as much as he could before they departed...

The day after *VMF-121* arrived, the aircraft were ready and they flew a mission up the "slot" escorting dive-bombers. On 11 October the squadron intercepted 28 bombers and 21 *Zeros* from *Bougainville*, shooting down two bombers. The following morning they escorted a number of dive-bombers which in turn sank two destroyers and a cruiser...

VMF-121 personnel found *Guadalcanal* to be thick with mosquitoes, and so hot, steamy and wet that nothing dried out. There were nightly bouts of shelling, rocket and mortar fire and "*Maytag Charlie*," an unsynchronized twin-engine Japanese airplane that dropped bottles and bombs so as to keep them awake. In the early morning of the 13th, they were bombarded by, 900 shells from the 14 and 16-inch guns from ships offshore, after being ranged from star shells dropped by Japanese planes. After that shelling there were only seven *F4Fs* in flyable condition...

Fuel was scarce and they tried to find it any way that they could. This included draining the fuel tanks of wrecked enemy aircraft, but there were problems with some of the recovered fuel. On 14 October an armada of *Mitsubishi G4M bombers (Allied code name Betty)* and several *Zeros* were coming down the "slot." The fighters were scrambled and *Foss* shot down a *Zero*. He then developed engine trouble from a plugged carburetor due to dirty fuel that had been recovered from an enemy plane...

Later in the day, a Japanese convoy loaded with war material and thousands of soldiers was attacked by *Douglas SBD Dauntless Dive-Bombers* and *F4F Wildcats Fighters*. One transport was sunk but 4,000 troops, tanks and heavy artillery landed on *Guadalcanal* only 10 miles from *Henderson Field*.

On 15 October 450 barrels of gasoline were discovered hidden in half a dozen subterranean caches. The *F4Fs* were re-fueled and scrambled in time to meet 28 bombers and 64 *Zeros*. During the action *Foss* almost crashed into a mountain due to lack of oxygen when his oxygen mask slipped off...

The next day the flight made a treetop-level attack on Japanese forces in a valley. They strafed the Japanese troops and the dive-bombers followed destroying several anti-aircraft guns and killing hundreds of Japanese troops...

In a melee the following day, *Foss* was able to shoot a Zero off the tail of an *F4F* and damaged another. Suddenly a Zero made a head-on attack on *Foss*, but pulled up at the last second and *Foss* was able to claim his fifth victory. Spotting a "V" formation of Betty Bombers, he pulled up and fired into the belly of a bomber, which immediately exploded.

The engine of *Foss*' *F4F* then coughed and he had to make a dead-stick landing onto *Fighter One Airstrip*...

The *Marines* learned that there would be a change of command, which they enthusiastically received. *Vice Admiral William F. Hasey* relieved *Admiral Ghormley* of command of the *South Pacific Area* and the *South Pacific Forces*...

Colonel Joe Bauer called *Foss*' flight "*Foss*' *Flying Circus*," because of his acrobatic escapades against the enemy. However, on one occasion *Foss* brought the full wrath of *Colonel Bauer* upon himself. During an air raid *Foss* jumped into a *F4F* that had been "downed" for excessive magneto drop and on his second attempt was able to get airborne. Shortly after, the engine quit and he made a dead-stick landing, totaling the airplane and almost killing himself... *Colonel Bauer* gave him a royal chewing out for being so careless...

Late in the afternoon of 7 November 1942, the flight was airborne to strafe ten destroyers and a cruiser, and to act as a decoy while torpedo planes made their attack. The ships were escorted by six float-planes and *Foss* shot down two, bringing his score to 19. The rear gunner of a float plane had put a few rounds into *Foss*' *F4F* and his engine began cutting out, forcing him to make a water landing five miles from an island. He had opened the canopy but it slammed shut when the *F4F* hit the water, and the plane began to sink immediately...

He was finally able to fight his way out of the already submerged airplane and swim for four or five hours. When he heard voices and canoe paddles he was sure that the Japanese had found him. But, his luck held, and he was picked up by *Father Dan Stuyvenberg*, a *Catholic Priest*, and natives in an outrigger canoe. He was taken to *Malaita Island* where he spent a little time before being picked up by a *PBY Catalina* flying boat.

The following day *Vice Admiral Halsey* awarded *Foss* the *Distinguished Flying Cross* for shooting down seven Japanese Planes. Due to the time that it had taken for the paperwork to go through, *Foss* had already added another 12 to that score...

In the early morning of 11 November, *Foss* led a strafing mission but returned in time to help intercept a raid by 50 Japanese aircraft. In this action, 11 *Betty* bombers and *Zero* were shot down, to a loss of seven U. S. Aircraft and five pilots...

The next day coast-watchers on *Bougainville* reported *Betty* bombers with escorting *Zeros* headed toward *Guadalcanal*. *Foss* took his flight up to 29,000 feet and circled. The bombers dropped out of the clouds near *Florida Island* and started to make their torpedo attack on the allied ships from an altitude of 500 feet. *Foss*' flight, along with *Major Paul Fontana*'s flight from *VMF-112*, dropped down and started to pick off the enemy aircraft. The anti-aircraft guns from the ships began firing on the Japanese Airplanes, with *P-39 Airacobras* from the *67th Pursuit Squadron* also joining in the attack. When the action was over, only two bombers and a *Zero* escaped; *Foss* having shot down two bombers and a *Zero*...

Reinforcements, including the *Bell P-39 Airacobra*, *Douglas SBD Dauntless*, *Martin b-26 Marauder*, *Grumman F4F Wildcat*, *Grumman TBF Averger* and *Lockheed P-38 Lightning*, were being sent to *Guadalcanal*. Meanwhile, maintenance crews worked around the clock to get as many of the damaged aircraft back into flyable condition as possible...

Early in the morning of 13 November, a battle erupted between U. U. and Japanese surface vessels. Aircraft were armed and at 1000 attacked the *Japanese Battleship Hiei*. Fighters

and Dive-Bombers made vertical attacks while the Torpedo Bombers attacked at sea level. By sunset the *Hiei* lay sinking off *Savo Island*...

That night *Guadalcanal* was heavily shelled. The following day, the “*Cactus Air Force*” attacked Japanese cruisers, destroyers and transports and by late afternoon most of the ships were sunk. *Colonel Joe Bauer* was on this mission when he disappeared, but was later spotted swimming in the water. A search for *Colonel Bauer* was launched early the following morning. But, he was never found...

On 19 November, *Foss*’ flight was sent to *Noumea, New Caledonia* for rest and recuperation. On 30 November, they flew to *Sydney, Australia* where the people were very friendly and the marines did not have to pay for anything...

A group of *Australian Pilots* had just returned from *North Africa*, where they saw combat against the *German Luftwaffe*. They asked *Foss* for tips, about fighting the Japanese, and he said that he would do this if they would let him fly one of their *Spitfires*... They agreed and *Foss* told them about tactics and the two-plane “*Thach Weave*,” where eyes and guns pointed in all directions at all times between the two pilots. The *Australian Pilots* laughed at the advice. *These pilots went to New Guinea a week later, ignored Foss’s advice, and got cut to ribbons*...

Foss was back on *Guadalcanal* for a second tour on 1 January 1943. The island had not been bombed since 14 December and they were getting regular supplies and movies. Also, *Fighter One* was now a landing strip of steel Marston matting. *Foss* was now the commanding officer of *VMF-121* and flew regular missions, mostly against Japanese cargo ships...

In the morning of 15 January a force of *Wildcat Fighters* and dive-bombers attacked nine Japanese destroyers, damaging two. They then encountered a force of *Zero Fighters* and shot down 11, to a loss of four *Wildcats*...

That afternoon *Foss* and his flight, along with some *Army P-39 Airacobras*, encountered the

new *Zero* with square wing tips, which carried the Allied Codename, *Hamp*. *Foss* shot down three of the Japanese aircraft. This gave him a total of 26, tying *Eddie Rickenbacker’s* score from *World War I*...

Almost everyone on *Guadalcanal*, including *Major General Francis P. Mulcahy*, thought that the battle for *Guadalcanal* was over. *Foss* thought otherwise and kept eight *F4Fs* hidden under the palm trees. This was to protect the field while the rest of the fighters were out on missions.

Foss was called to *Major General Mulcahy’s* tent where the *General* asked him if he was holding eight aircraft in reserve. *Foss* said that he was, because he thought that the Japanese would return. *Major General Mulcahy* became angry as *Foss* tried to explain and he told *Foss* that tomorrow would be his last day; consider himself fired...

The next morning, 25 January 1943, the *F4Fs* were out on a wild goose chase when radar picked up aircraft near *Savo Island* and *Foss* immediately scrambled his flight... At 18,000 feet he nosed up through some clouds and spotted 18 Japanese dive bombers, 24 *Betty Bombers* and 64 *Zeros*, with more coming in from the Northwest. He got on the radio and told them to scramble everything and to clear everything away from the landing strips. Shortly after, four *P-38 Lightnings* joined up with *Foss*’ flight...

A few *Zeros* tried to lure them into battle, but *Foss* knew that this would leave the way open for the Japanese Bombers to bomb the Air-strip. Every time a *Jap Zero* would drop down below the clouds to see where *Foss*’ flight was, he would move them. *Foss*’ flight did not attack, but played cat and mouse with the Japs. The Japanese, thinking that there were more U.S. Fighters than there actually were, called off the attack and headed back to their base...

Word flashed around the island telling of *Foss*’ “*tactical brilliance*” and bluff...

Major General Mulcahy sent a full report of this action to *Maj. General Geiger, Commanding General of the First Marine Air Wing and Senior Aviation officer* in the area, recommending *Foss* for the *Medal of Honor*.

Maj. Gen-eral Geiger followed this up by writing President Frank-lin D. Roosevelt in Washing-ton and recommended that Foss be awarded the medal...

The day after the air action, *Foss* and his flight flew from *Guadalcanal* to *Espiritu Santo*. And, on 25 March 1943 the group boarded the liberty ship, *USAT Juan Cabrillo*. The ship docked at *Long Beach, California* and the group was taken to *Camp Kearney* at *San Diego*. The next day *Foss* boarded a *R-5C*, which took him to *Washington, DC*.

In *Washington* he was greeted by a host of dignitaries and military leaders. He then went to the *Pentagon* where he gave a talk to *Army Intelligence Officers*. He then spoke to the men at the *Marine Base at Quantico, Virginia*, the *Midshipmen at Annapolis* and finally to the *National Press Club...*

He traveled almost non-stop around the *United States* making public appearances, selling war bonds and recruiting for the *Armed Forces*. He was even able to visit the *Grumman Aircraft Plant at Bethpage, Long Island* where he thanked the people for building the reliable *F4F Wildcat* that saved his life more than once...

On 18 May 1943, *Captain Joe Foss* was summoned to the *White House*. With his mother at his side, He was awarded the *Medal of Honor* by *President Franklin D. Roosevelt...*

Then on 4 July *Foss* was sent to *Santa Barbara, California* to command and train another squadron for duty in the Pacific. The squadron *VMF-115*, was equipped with the new *Vought F4U Corsair*, which was plagued with a number of problems.

Foss who had been promoted to major, told his commanding officer that they needed an expert to work out the problems with the *F4U*. So *Foss*' C.O. contacted *General Bill Wallace* and *Foss* was able to explain to him about all the problems that they were having with the *Corsair*. The General told him that he would have an expert there the next day...

Two days later the *F4U* expert arrived at *Foss*' office in the form of *Charles A. Lindbergh*, the same *Lindbergh* that had flown across the Atlantic alone in 1927. He immedi-

ately went to work solving the many Problems *Foss*' Squadron had discovered...

Thanks to *Lindbergh*'s help, the squadron deployed for the South Pacific aboard the escort carrier *USS Copahee (CVE-12)*, in January 1944. They landed at *Guadalcanal* and flew to *Bougainville*. After shuttling *F4Us* around the islands, they made their first strikes against the Japanese Base at *Rabaul, New Britain...*

The squadron next moved to *Emirau Island* to begin search and destroy missions. *Foss* had promised *Charles Lindbergh* that he could fly with him anytime and the squadron had just settled in when *Lindbergh* showed up to see if *Foss* would keep his word. *Foss* told him to consider himself on flight duty right then. *Lindbergh* flew missions from dawn till dusk and even taught them how to extend their *F4U* range...

During this flight a Japanese aircraft was shot down and an official report had to be filed. When *General Douglas McArthur* saw that *Charles Lindbergh* had been flying combat missions and credited with shooting down a Japanese aircraft, he was sent home, *General McArthur* did not believe that civilians were to be used in a combat role...

By fall 1944, the squadron had moved to the *Philippines*. *Foss*' malaria had returned and this time it could not be brought under control. He was then sent to *Klamath Falls, Oregon*, for a six-month recovery period. While there, he was appointed commander of the *Second Battalion Marine Base in Klamath Falls...*

Following his recovery, he was sent to the *Marine Corps Air Station at Goleta near Santa Barbara, California*. He was at *Goleta* when the Japanese surrendered, and was released from active duty around Christmas 1945...

PostScript: He was, again, called to active duty during the Korean War but was to remain State side. In 1955 Foss became the Governor of South Dakota and served two terms. Foss stayed active and served as Commissioner of the American Football League.... And then hosted a television program titled the "American Sportsman."

Words of Wisdom

“Before you criticize someone, you should walk a mile in their shoes. That way, when you criticize them, you’re a mile away, and you have their shoes.” – *Kamikaze Joe*

Pacer Project

The Pacer Project was put on hold while we got organized for the 2007 Fly-In. Well, it’s time to, again, establish a work plan and show some movement... The consensus is that we’ll start covering the smaller assemblies to get up to speed on the whole process, and by the middle of September we will be well on our way toward a full restoration...

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Disclaimer for errors in print: “One who reads everything is a litterateur. One who believes everything he reads is Da-nincompoop”...

– *“Never let the truth get in the way of good fiction”- Kamikaze Joe -*