



IS A FLYING P-40 REPLICA IN YOUR FUTURE?

THE TRIP TO HALLS, TENNESSEE

I.

The Genesis of the Trip

The morning of Saturday, April 26, 2003, dawned with low clouds over the southeast, and I had been invited to attend a fly-in in Halls, Tennessee. My destination airport, Arnold Field (M31) did not have an instrument approach. However, Dyersburg Airport in close proximity did have a VOR approach. A weather briefing from the Macon Flight Service Station suggested the trip was feasible, and I launched into the clouds. As I approached Arnold Field, the ASOS at Dyersburg Airport declared that the ceiling was 2,400 feet MSL, and as luck would have it, the minimum vectoring altitude (MVA) for Memphis Center was 2,100 feet. After descending through the clouds to 2,100 feet, Arnold Field came into view, and the landing was uneventful. I then came to meet the people who will be discussed in the remainder of this article.

I made the trip to Arnold Field to see the replica P-40 that was being developed by Jack Landree. Jack Landree has a passion for this aircraft, and he is assisted by Jim Delaney, who has developed a propeller for this aircraft.



Jack Landree, and Jim Delaney with Alan

Their idea is to employ either a Packard-built Merlin engine, Model No. V-1650, or a suitable liquid-cooled automobile engine to power this P-40 replica aircraft. The P-40 replica will be a full-sized aircraft. The P-40 replica will be a full-sized aircraft. However, it will be lighter in weight with a fuselage structure composed of 4130 chrome steel covered with a fiberglass structure to give the replica the same appearance as a real P-40 aircraft.

The aircraft will not have machine guns, and the wing structure of the aircraft will be lightened and have fewer spars than the original 4 ½ spars that were found in the original P-40 aircraft.

Additional information concerning this project



can be directed to Jack Landree, dvebomber@aol.com, E-mail; telephone 901-268-8243, website: [http://www.aircorpssp-](http://www.aircorpssp-40.com)



40.com. Information concerning the propeller being developed for the P-40 replicas can be obtained from Jim Delaney, thunderjug1948@yahoo.com, telephone: 319-351-2762.



James Reed of the The Fighting 33rd Nomads and Leroy Neal

III.

While visiting with Jack Landree and Jim Delaney, I was introduced to James Reed who flew P-40s in Africa. Pictured above are Leroy Neal and James Reed. Mr. Reed has written an account of his activities which consists of two volumes and is entitled “The Fighting 33rd Nomads in World War II.” Mr. Reed was among the P-40 pilots who launched from an aircraft carrier off the coast of Africa as American forces were fighting with the Vichy French. His outfit tangled with Messerschmitts and Focke-Wulfs and he found those aircraft quite competitive when flying the Curtis P-40.

IV.

The Dyersburg Army Air Base Museum

To the credit of the community of Halls, Tennessee, a museum has been constructed adjacent to Arnold Field to memorialize the contributions made to the war effort by personnel at Dyersburg Army Air Base. This airfield served as a training field for B-17 Flying Fortress crews during the Second World War.



The Dyersburg Army Air Base Museum is filled with photographs, uniforms, and artifacts that relate to the exploits of the 8th Air Force in Europe

On the preceding page is a display of insignia typical of the complete collection displayed all over the museum. The Dyersburg Army Air Base Museum is filled with photographs, uniforms, and artifacts that relate to the exploits of the 8th Air Force in Europe during the Second World War. After meeting Leroy Neal who served in the 723rd Bomber Squadron of the 450th Bomber Group, I also was befriended by Sonny Higdon and Dale McCaslin (seen below)

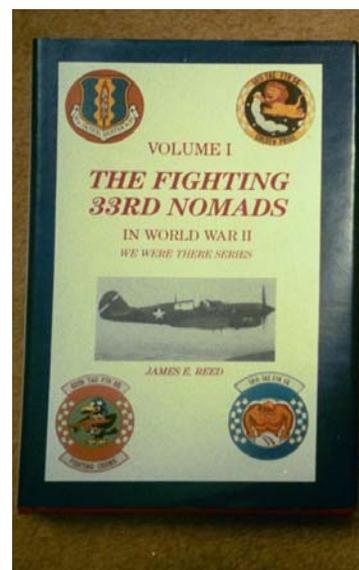


who were in charge of the Dyersburg Army Air Base Museum at the time of my visit. The Museum has some interesting photographs and artifacts. If one were flying about the vicinity of Memphis, Tennessee on a Saturday afternoon, this would be a nice place to visit and spend several hours with the kind folks in Halls, Tennessee.



V. Conclusion

It is heartening to find Americans who, at their own expense, work to keep the history of World War II alive for future generations. The trip to Arnold Field in Halls, Tennessee confirmed that there are fine people in this country working to preserve aviation history for future generations. I wish to thank the kind people in Halls, Tennessee for their courtesy during my visit.



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