

Chapter Contacts

Please forward to your members!

IPMS PATRIOT

BILLERICA, MA



Well, I'd better start over. I'd barely started yesterday with Pip Moss' latest [Patriot](#), when the computer hiccuped and what little I'd written vanished into cyber-land somewhere. Then I was called off to attend a Command Performance (ten year old Grandson's lacrosse game, you can guess who commanded), and on return I fell asleep in my recliner before it was even dark outside. Now it's VERY dark outside....in fact, one of those Oh-Dark-Hundred thingies ...and when I couldn't get back to sleep it's back in front of this one-eyed box of tricks again.

So, what has editor Pip Moss included in his latest newsletter from the Boston 'burbs? Lots of really neat pictures of members' models, for one thing.



One of them is Ken Meyer’s early-model Boeing B-47. Mentioned is that the bomber is in the markings of the 306th Bomb Wing as the type’s original operational development unit. (Think Jimmy Stewart, in “Strategic Air Command”.) Multiplied by 3, the original 306th Bomb Group was famous as the real-life model for the fictitious 918th Bomb Group of “Twelve O’clock High” of that book and famous movie.



Today the 306th carries the old unit's colors as the flying training unit of the Air Force Academy, where in three flying squadrons, cadets get their first taste of the Wild Blue Yonder in gliders, parachutes (?), and the above Cirrus T-53! *(My question mark after "parachutes" reflects my inherent aversion to the parachute ("unless the damn plane is on fire") of all old Troop Carrier pilots. We saw at first hand, all the things that can happen when you jump out of airplanes, and all but one of them are bad.)*

That T-53 is a long way from "General Savage" and his B-17F "Piccadilly Lilly" of the movie....



...or the REAL "Piccadilly Lilly"!



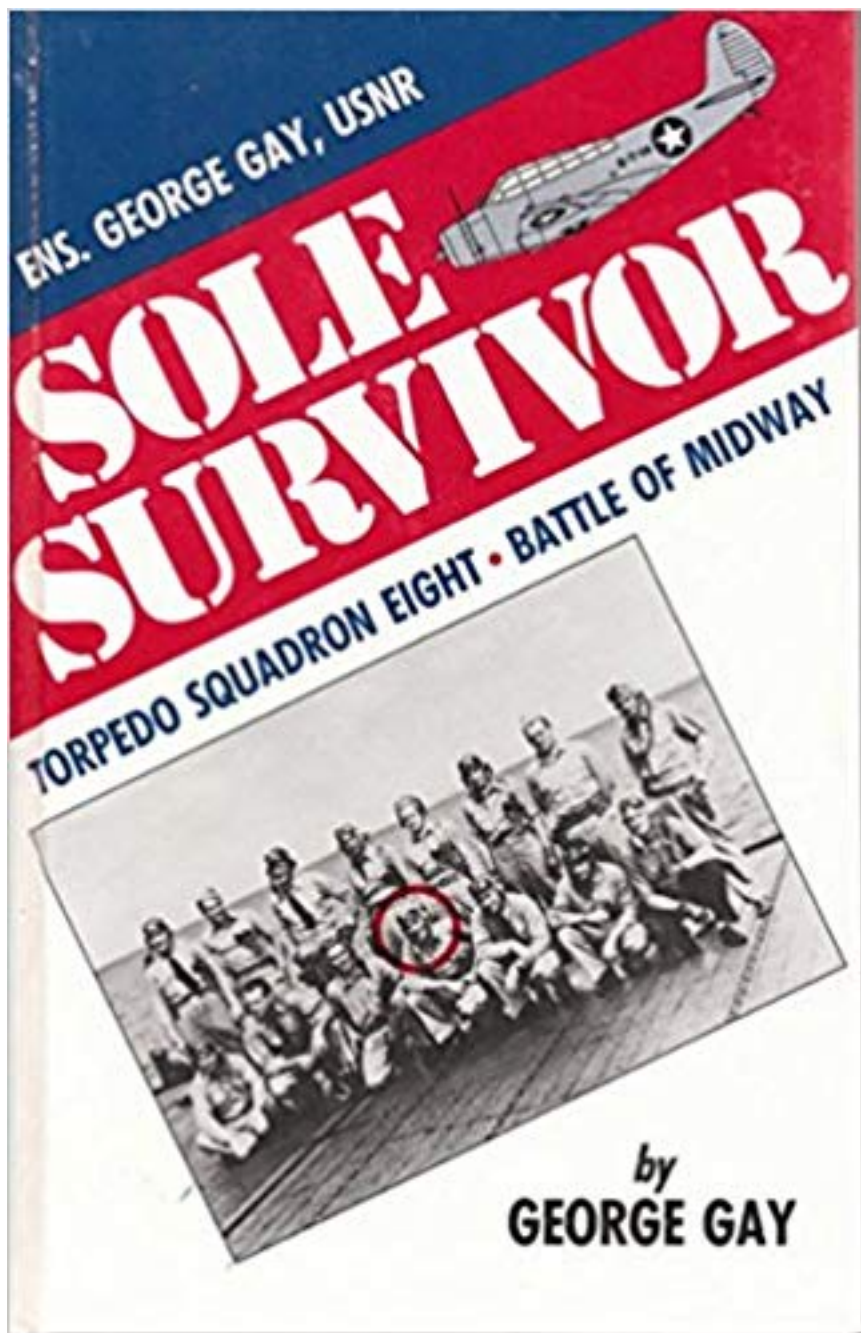
Meanwhile, ANOTHER model featured in the Patriot is a VERY neat 1/72nd Avenger (Hasegawa kit) by Jim Qualey. Mentioned is that the type's first combat had been something of a disaster. At the time of the Battle of Midway, the advance element of Torpedo 8, already in transition to the Avenger, was rushed to the island. Of six launched from the island, five were lost and the sixth badly shot up with one crewman killed.



Photo # 80-G-17063 Surviving VT-8 TBF at Midway after battle, June 1942

The remainder of the squadron was still flying Douglas TBD's and the entire squadronexcept for survivor George Gay ...lost when flying from Hornet. <https://www.ibiblio.org/hyperwar/OnlineLibrary/photos/events/wwii-pac/midway/mid-4a.htm>

Gay went on to fly the Avenger a lot more than he had ever done with the unfortunate Devastator, including another combat tour flying with VT-11 from Guadalcanal. Mentioned earlier, his "Sole Survivor" is a recommended read...



About Jim's model: he must have been shooting for depicting his TBF on factory rollout at Bethpage, before the engine is cranked for the first time! Hardly any airplane powered by a Wright R-2600or any other Big Round Enginewas ever that clean.



Or maybe it's just that most of the airplanes that I flew were the aerial equivalent of trash trucks, and got just about as dirty ...in fact, the "Troop Carrier" name was slurred to "Trash Carrier" for good cause. When you play down in the dirt, they get dirty....



(Cu Chi, Vietnam; Tet Offensive, spring 1968)



IPMS 6390

P.S. Mentioned earlier was a visit to the National Museum of the United States Air Force last October ...



...the occasion being the 60th year reunion of my USAF pilot training class. (56M)



A highlight was a tour of the museum's restoration facility, which of course has been working on famed B-17F "Memphis Belle" for a number of years.



Mark Young, a fellow retired blue-suiter, long time friend, IPMS'er, and NMUSAF restoration volunteer; recently sent this video update link about how the old girl is progressing....

<https://www.facebook.com/AFmuseum/videos/10155098816532230/>