

Volume 5, Issue 1

Spring, 2011

D. L. SEARS BOOKS

Log Book



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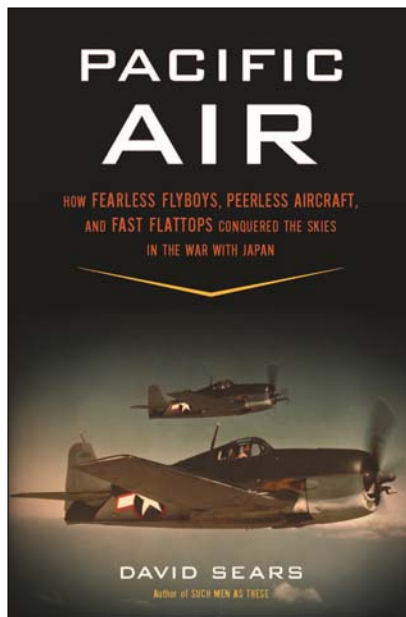
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Updates:

Pacific Air set for publication

Pacific Air, David Sears new book, is being published by Da Capo Press in May.

Pacific Air recounts World War II's epic carrier battles and tells the story of the U.S. Navy aviators who conquered the skies in the war with Japan.

Pacific Air will be available in quality book retailers and online sites in late May 2011. Personally inscribed and autographed copies may be ordered now from D. L. Sears Books for May delivery (see the order form p. 4)

Following is a brief excerpt from *Pacific Air*, Chapter 8 - Jimmie and Butch:

★★★

Jimmie Thach and Butch O'Hare were still in VF-3's ready room leafing through intelligence reports when the call came. They raced to the flight deck where plane handlers were still busy with the emergency re-spot. Thach's Wildcat was by then at the head of the pack, but O'Hare's and Sellstrom's planes were still several rows back. Even as Thach strapped in, VS-2 air crews, many of them without helmets and other flight gear, were scrambling into the cockpits of their Dauntlesses.

Thach realized that Lovelace's division was still overhead, joining in the fracas but likely apprehensive about their depleted fuel reserves. Lexington was now heeling to port to get the wind over her bow. As the forward edge of the flight deck swung across the mid-afternoon horizon, Thach could see the six planes of Gayler's Third Division. In their haste to respond, none of them had taken time to form up. Instead,

Updates:

Courageous Calendars®

Courageous Calendars®, our annual historical calendars celebrating the lives and legacies of the U.S. Navy's ships and seagoing veterans begin their third year.

Tin Can Calendar® 2011 was shipped during the first week in January, delayed by the number of new ship and sailor additions to Roll Call—over fifty new ships and nearly two hundred new names.

We are getting an early start on Tin Can Calendar® 2012—aiming to print and

distribute the 2012 edition at the beginning of December 2011. To meet that schedule, we will be "closing out" Tin Calendar Roll Call® on September 30, 2011. (Roll Call updates received thereafter will be incorporated in the Roll Call for Tin Can Calendar® 2013.)

For 2012 we will be following through on the launch of Carrier Air Calendar® 2012, Tin Can Calendar's® companion edition

(*Courageous Calendars Continued on page 2*)



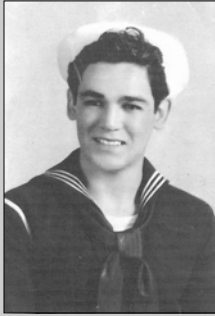
USS *Turner Joy* (DD-951)
Tin Can Calendar© 2011



USS *Intrepid* (CV-11)
Carrier Air Calendar© 2012

Pacific Air (Continued on page 3)

★ Taps ★



★ Herbert James Garcia ★
USS *Ammen* (DD-527) SN1c
December 12, 2010



★ David Louis Harman ★
USS *Valencia* (AKA-81) PhM3c
July 13, 1926 - December 26, 2009



★ LT Dale B. Hanson ♥★
USS *Bryant* (DD-665)
January 5, 2011



★ LT Edgar A. (Ed) Hawk ★
USS *Melvin* (DD-680) LT (MC)
August 3, 2010



★ Ed Jackson ♥★
VF-112
September 2010



★ Ralph H. Magoon ★
LCS(L)-89, RDM
March 12, 2010



★ LT George Schnitzer ★
2011



★ Wade Taylor Winstead ★
USS *Bache* (DD-470)
June 16, 1925 - January 4, 2010



- ★ Robert M. Aguilar, USS *Bush* (DD-529) February 18, 1924 - September 17, 2010 ★
- ★ George Carbon, S1c USS *Samuel B. Roberts* (DE-413) November 10, 1925 - July 13, 2010 ★
- ★ George Cintron, GM3c USS *Braine* (DD-630) June 6, 2010 ★
- ★ Raymond A. Cole, GM3c USS *Hugh W. Hadley* (DD-774) September, 2010 ★
- ★ Raymond N. Diemert, ET3 USS *Frank Knox* (DDR-742) May 20, 2010 ★
- ★ Alvin L. Gallin ♥, LT USS *Bryant* (DD-665) October 14, 1920 - July 13, 2010 ★
- ★ Al Graham USS *Howorth* (DD-592) November 21, 2010 ★
- ★ Edward V. Hathaway, USS LCS(L)-34 2010 ★
- ★ George E. Jonsson, USS *Hank* (DD-702) March 1, 2010 ★
- ★ William D. Kennedy, TM3c USS *Wedderburn* (DD-684) April 23, 2010 ★



(Courageous Calendars Continued from page 1)

celebrating the lives and legacies of the U.S. Navy's aircraft carrier-based sailors, aviation squadrons and aviation veterans. It's "full speed ahead" with Carrier Air Calendar® 2012!

The Roll Calls for both Courageous Calendar® 2012 editions are undergoing major enhancements.

- ★ We are expanding individual Roll Call listings to include as much of each Veteran's seagoing experience as

possible.

- ★ Each Tin Can Calendar® Roll Call veteran will have a "Primary Ship," the "Tin Can" under which his service information will be listed.
- ★ Service aboard other U.S. Navy ships (of any type) will be listed along with the Veteran's name under the Primary Ship
- ★ In 2012 we are highlighting "Shellbacks" —Veterans who participated in "crossing-the-line" ceremonies—in a special segment of the

2012 Roll Call.

- ★ For 2012 we have set ourselves the goal of recognizing within "Taps" all the Roll Call veterans who have passed—regardless of the date of decease.
- ★ For each such veteran we are obtaining birth and decease dates and will include veteran photos (where available) for inclusion in the Taps section.
- ★ We will be making special note of Tin Can Sailors who were wounded or killed

(Continued on page 3)

(Courageous Calendars Continued from page 2)

in the line of duty. We will be featuring their photos and pinpointing the dates where many gave “their full measure.”

- ★ As Roll Call space permits we will also be incorporating photos of other Tin Can Sailors—with special emphasis now on portraying the most senior Veterans among the constantly expanding Tin Can Roll Call.

To accomplish all this and stay ahead of the curve, we are in the process of contacting each Roll Call Veteran or—in the case of deceased Veterans— family members to obtain photos and information on service histories. Many have already been contacted—and we expect to reach out to all others before midyear.

In the meantime, if you’re a Tin Can or Flattop sailor or a veteran of a carrier-based aviation squadron, we invite you to join the Roll Call for Tin Can Calendar®, Carrier Air Calendar® —or both!

Please also keep in mind the following key dates and deadlines:

June 30, 2011:

Last day to reserve/purchase Tin Can Calendar© 2012 at \$15.95 rate (rate goes to \$19.95)

September 30, 2011:

- ★ Last day to reserve/purchase Carrier Air Calendar© 2012 at \$15.95 rate (rate goes to \$19.95)
- ★ Last day to update Roll Call information for Tin Can Calendar© 2012 (information received thereafter goes into Tin Can Calendar© 2013)

October 31, 2011:

- ★ Last day to update Roll Call information for Carrier Air Calendar© 2012 (information received thereafter goes into Carrier Air Calendar© 2013)
- ★ Tin Can Calendar© 2012 goes to press; last day to reserve/purchase copies with assurance copies will be available

November 30, 2011:

- ★ Carrier Air Calendar© 2012 goes to press; last day to reserve/purchase copies with assurance copies will be available.

Pacific Air (Continued from page 1)

each was flying independently, each clawing for altitude while pounding upwind towards a distant line of barely discernable specs.

Herb Duckworth, now brandishing a bullhorn, called for “Thach in 13, Sellstrom take 2, O’Hare in 15, Dufilho, 4.” Once he had these four aloft, all of VF-3’s sixteen operable Wildcats (and all but two of Thach’s pilots) would be committed to the fight.

★

Thach was first off the deck at 4:36 PM. Three minutes later, ten miles northwest of the task force and flying through light cloud cover at an altitude of 13,000 feet, Gayler’s Third Division Wildcats were finally positioned for high-side runs into the heart of the enemy’s “Vee-of-Vees” formation 2,000 feet below.

Pilot circuit chatter had identified the Japanese formation as consisting of nine twin-engine bombers. Their wings were wide at the root but narrow at the tips; and their cigar-shaped fuselages were painted mottled brown and green. (They were Mitsubishi G4Ms, within months to be known, with respectful familiarity, as Bettys.) Somewhat unexpectedly, the Japanese planes were lining up not for torpedoing but for horizontal bombing. Over the next two minutes, lookouts spotted three of these enemy aircraft dropping out of formation, one of them being chased to the water by a lone Wildcat. To the amazement of some witnesses, the six remaining aircraft merely closed up ranks and continued on.

By 4:43 PM one more Japanese plane was seen dropping. Speculation had it being the flight leader; the five other enemy aircraft, seemingly disoriented, flew past the ships before finally swinging around to parallel Lexington’s course and overtake her from astern. The task force cruisers were now firing their five-inch antiaircraft batteries but their aim was poor. Shrapnel from the time-fused projectiles appeared more a threat to friend than foe. Three minutes later, with Lexington’s flight deck bow finally clear of F4Fs and SBDs, CO Ted Sherman turned his ship out of the wind, released his own antiaircraft batteries and began defensive maneuvering.

As one more of Japanese bombers tumbled

(most likely from aerial attack, though cruiser gunners later claimed credit), the four survivors soldiered on towards release points. Japanese formation discipline had been eerily impressive throughout the murderous run, but bombing accuracy was blessedly not. Of the four bombs that now dropped from their bays, the nearest exploded no closer than three thousand yards from Lexington.

The only serious destructive threat in all this time came from one of the wounded bombers. Its pilots, struggling to keep their damaged plane aloft, flew in low on Lex’s starboard bow. As the distance closed and Sherman maneuvered to keep clear, secondary antiaircraft batteries on the starboard catwalks all but ripped the plane apart. The wreckage finally crashed and burned in the big carrier’s wake, just 75 yards astern.

At 4:49 PM, in midst of this valedictory brush with disaster, Lex’s Air Plot had a first fix on entirely new bogeys, these thirty miles north-northeast. For the moment, however, Red Gill saw no way of interrupting the action aloft to vector an intercept.

★

Jimmie Thach had lacked time and altitude to get into the main event, but now, with the three Japanese survivors making for the exits, his Wildcat loaded with ammunition and fuel, and his combat appetite whetted, Thach couldn’t resist joining the chase. He still lacked a wingman, but that was not an immediate concern. There were no Japanese fighter escorts to contend with and Sellstrom could catch up.

Thach’s decision left Butch O’Hare and Duff Dufilho behind again as the others, like a pack of fox hounds, pursued the Japanese. Held in reserve by Gill, there was little for O’Hare to do but gather Dufilho (who’d also entirely missed the fight) and orbit the task force as the only fighter CAP.

Within moments, however, that all changed. At 4:56 PM destroyer Patterson (DD-392), dropping astern of the task force to retrieve a downed flyer, spotted the new menace—a formation circling ten miles to the northeast. Four minutes later, Red Gill confirmed the sighting, and dispatched O’Hare and Dufilho. He also tried recalling the distant hounds.

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At 5:05 PM O'Hare and Dufilho had visual on what they reported as a formation of nine bombers a few miles astern of the task force. In truth there were eight aircraft: two three-plane Vees and an echeloned pair on the right. The two Americans were then at 12,000 feet, about a thousand feet above the Japanese who were in a shallow dive, gaining speed and lining up to bomb. Approaching the enemy formation head on but apparently undetected, O'Hare and Dufilho allowed the lead Vee to pass below them before rolling into for a high-side attack on the formation's right flank.

O'Hare aimed for the outermost bomber. Always deadly accurate in practice gunnery, O'Hare's high-deflection aim was no less so here. A short .50 caliber burst pierced the bomber's wing root and starboard engine, releasing streams of oil and smoke.

The wounded plane slowed so abruptly that O'Hare had to pull up his nose to get out of its way. But even as this first victim fell, O'Hare still had a chance to aim and fire at the plane adjacent to it. This next burst hit this aircraft's starboard engine and must have also ruptured the wing tank. A thin white contrail-aviation gasoline-traced the plane's downward arc.

The end of this first pass placed O'Hare momentarily ahead and on the left side of the Japanese bomber formation. As he wheeled to port and climbed to regain altitude and again get behind the Japanese, O'Hare looked for Duff Dufilho but saw no sign of him. Dufilho, it turned out, had fallen victim to faulty ammunition belts. None of his six guns would fire and he had pulled off, desperately trying to clear his guns. O'Hare and BuAer 4031 were on their own.



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Order Form

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|--|------------------------|-------------|-------|
| <i>Pacific Air</i> Hardcover edition (May 2011) | | \$26.00 | |
| <i>Such Men as These</i> Hardcover edition | | \$25.00 | |
| Tin Can Calendar® 2012 (orders received on or before June 30) | | \$15.95 | |
| Tin Can Calendar® 2011 (orders received after June 30, 2010) | | \$19.95 | |
| Tin Can Calendar® (3-Year Subscription) | | \$39.95 | |
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