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## Meeting Announcement

**Date:** Tuesday, September 2

**Time:** 7:30pm

**Program:** Maps and Navigation by  
John C. Cox

**Place:** Duncan Aviation Engine Shop  
5000 NW 44<sup>th</sup> St.  
Lincoln, NE

## Chapter 569 picnic

The weather was fantastic for the annual Chapter 569 picnic. Temperatures in the 70s and overcast skies greeted picnickers at Shoemaker Airfield.



*Thanks to Don and Yvonne Shoemaker for hosting this great event.*

We had around 40 people go through the line. Thanks to Yvonne Shoemaker for making the delicious sloppy joes. They were tasty!

Dennis Crispin, who volunteers every year at Airventure, gave a very fine PowerPoint slide show of the air show. He talked about the experience of taking his two 12 year-old granddaughters to Oshkosh. His granddaughters had a great time and are already making plans for 2009.



*Hangar flying.*



*Doug Prange, in his nice C-150, was one of a few that flew in for the picnic.*



*Dennis gave a nice presentation on Oshkosh 2008. Mark Gaffney also shared his experience flying to Oshkosh.*

# The B-17 Event Was a Fantastic Success

by Dennis Crispin

On July 1 & 2, Chapter 569 had the honor of hosting the EAA's B-17 Flying Fortress on a stop of the summer's exhibition tour. The tour had previously encountered some hard luck when the floods in Iowa necessitated the cancellation of one stop and the reduction of another stop to just one day. Then adverse cross winds severely minimized the number of flights that could be put up at Plattsmouth.

When the plane arrived in Lincoln everything just seemed to fall together. We were blessed with really great weather and our friends in the media did an excellent job of getting the word out. We ended up with a wildly successful event.



The only problem we had was when incoming bad weather in the Kansas City area made it necessary for the plane to leave early for its next event. We apologize to those who were expecting to tour the plane late on Wednesday afternoon.

A great many people got to look at, touch, smell, crawl through and experience the fully restored World War Two bomber. For the younger generations, the plane is a wonderful education of a significant piece of world history.

The daily flights allowed a number of individuals to experience the thrill of a ride in living history. While airborne the riders could move about

in the plane and visit the flight deck, man the waist guns, sit at the radio operators console and enjoy the awesome view from the bombardiers station in the Plexiglas nose bowel. Being airborne in the historic airplane while your imagination fills in the details of the fear and exhilaration of a combat mission is an experience one won't soon forget.

The finest part of exhibiting the B-17 is talking to the "old timers" who come out to see it. The men and women who built, maintained and flew the military aircraft of World War Two each have a story to tell, sometimes humorous, sometimes tragic, but always fascinating.

One lady thought that we should be exhibiting a P-38 Lightning – because she had helped build P-38's. Another lady called me with some questions about the flight. She said that she and her siblings had bought a flight for their father, a WW2 aircraft mechanic. She said "There were tears in Dad's eyes when we told him that we had made arrangements for him to fly on the B-17. We had never before seen Dad cry!"

Each time we bring Aluminum Overcast to Lincoln there are fewer of the Greatest Generation that come out to see it. It has now been sixty three years since the end of World War Two and their valiant contribution to our history will soon be lost from living memory.

It is now time to give recognition to all those who made the event so successful.

Our first big thank you goes to our hosts, Dan Hinnah, Kyle Olinger and the staff of Silverhawk Jet Center. They opened their business to us and provided our every need. We thank them so much.

Another big thank you goes to John Wood and Bryan Johnson at Lincoln Airport Authority.

Amy Francis and the other controllers at Lincoln Tower expedited the movement of our airplane and kept it positioned over the city for maximum exposure. Thank You

Thanks to Tony Holecheck and Brian Lammers of Anderson Ford for supplying a car for the flight crew.



*Chris Bruner at the controls*

We are most grateful for the support of the area media. Many Lincoln radio, TV and newspapers gave us great coverage and we had stories in outlets as far away as Hastings and Kearney. The fine publicity brought out the public and assured our success.

Thank you to Chapter 80 in Omaha. We cooperated on advertising and promotion wherever possible to the benefit of both their B-17 stop at Plattsmouth and ours at

Lincoln. An extra thank you goes to Kevin Farris, Chapter 80's B-17 coordinator, for setting up the telephone information lines for both stops.

A special thank you goes to the musical group AVI8OR. They allowed us to pass out our leaflets at their Lincoln concert and even made an announcement from the stage. AVI8OR recreates the music of WW-2 and the 1940's. There could not have been a better venue to promote the B-17.

Thank you to Ronnie Mitchell editor of PIREPS for helping spread our message statewide.

Harry Barr's P-51 Mustang, Mark Novak's AT-6/SNJ and Larry Bartlett's PT-17 Stearman were displayed near the B-17, adding another dimension of WW-2 aviation. Thank you all for your great contribution.



Thanks to Jim Snider and the Lincoln V-8 Club for arranging for the display of some 1940's cars.



My personal thank you goes the members of Chapter 569. Many did a little; a few did a lot, all contributed

significantly to a most successful event.

More thanks to President Don Shoemaker and the club officers who gave me free rein in organizing the event, even when it came to spending the club money.

Andy Lahr served as the equipment and personnel chairman and took the responsibly of running down all of those endless details in organizing the event. When Andy takes on a project, it gets done without any hassle.

Brand new member Cristi Higgins stepped up to volunteer as Promotions Chairman and then took on the task of organizing the raffle. Her contacts with the local media proved very valuable. After receiving some late raffle ticket submissions, she even leaned on me to allow the drawing of an extra winner.

John Cox told me that he would do whatever I needed done, so I immediately dumped the pop stand responsibility on him. He brought Lori and Jamie along and the team of Cox, Cox and Cox did their usual super job.

We thank pilots George Daubner and Sam Bass and support personnel Michael Digangi, Paul Workman, Pam Workman and Gerald Johnson. Their only rewards are the thanks that they receive along the way and their intense personal commitments to the importance of maintaining the public exhibition of this bit of living history. Flying the big old airplane is simply hard work and maintaining the aircraft and moving from location to location involves long hours and dedicated effort.

And another special thank you goes to Sue Strehlow, EAA Aircraft Operations Program coordinator for her patience and professionalism in answering the same dumb questions over and over.



*Bill Schock and Dennis Crispin*

Dick Miller of Lincoln (a Chapter 569 member) and Bill Schock of Falls City rode on the press flights as our guests. Both gentlemen were Eighth Air Force B-17 pilots during the darkest days of World War Two. Miller was forced to belly land his battle damaged aircraft in Poland and avoided capture while he made it back to England. Schock jumped from a burning bomber over Germany and spent the rest of the war in a German prisoner of war camp. To Bill and Dick, we thank you so very much for your participation in our event and your help in bringing the story of the legacy of the Eighth Air Force and the B-17 to the modern public.

Dennis Crispin  
EAA 569  
B-17 Tour Stop Chairman

*(More B-17 tour pictures are in the Photo Gallery at [www.eaa569.org](http://www.eaa569.org). Thanks to Cristi Higgins for sharing her photos. – Ed.)*

## “My grandfather is a hero.”

by Jason Schock

My grandfather and I stood under the cockpit of the famed World War II B-17 bomber and he pointed out the place where he, 12,000 feet above ground Easter Sunday, April 9, 1944, jumped head-first from a burning airplane into Hitler's Hinterland and the cold arms of Nazi soldiers.

A poignant moment, one that slaps away a guy's egocentric tendencies and brings into focus an unretouchable big picture. We may strive to establish order or perceive predictability in our lives, but the reality is that had he not jumped from there, I wouldn't be standing here.

That's life, and we all have crossroads positioned on our personal and family maps. There are countless small twists and bends taken throughout the journey and then there are the sharp turns where, if you're going too fast, maybe just two wheels touch ground. Perhaps you bring those other two wheels back; perhaps you don't. Either way, a new road is forged. For our family, that life-defining moment came in – or from a hatch under – the cockpit of the renowned Flying Fortress.

My grandfather returned to his old post, this time just behind the co-pilot seat, for a brief flight last month in Lincoln, some 65 years after that fateful Easter Sunday. I had the privilege of riding along.

The short flight from the airstrip through downtown and southwest Lincoln, was part of the Experimental Aircraft Association's "Salute to Veteran's" Tour. The restored B-17, considered one of the greatest military planes ever built, is making 60 stops in 12 states this summer and fall.

The EAA's Aluminum Overcast was

built in 1945, but never saw active service in WWII. The refurbished plane, boasts the EAA, "creates many emotional reunions for veterans who participated in B-17 operations during WWII...the outpouring of emotion and memories have created a unique link through these veterans."

My grandfather, who recently celebrated his 90<sup>th</sup> birthday (or 32,850<sup>th</sup> day, his 12 year old great-granddaughter pointed out), and who was enjoying his second "mission" aboard the Overcast, wasn't outwardly emotional, but reflective. He said it was indeed more pleasant to fly when people weren't shooting at you.

Lt. William G. Shock of the 8<sup>th</sup> Air Force logged about 400 hours in a B-17 and was shot at a lot. On his second mission, the aircraft took 42 damage holes in critical positions. That plane never flew again, but the co-pilot sure did. A tour of duty was 25 completed missions (the average number of missions completed by bomber crew members was 15) and the loss rate gave my grandpa about a 1-in-4 chance of accomplishing that trick. Each mission ended with a jigger of scotch at the base and Lt. Schock saw the bottom of 24 jiggers.

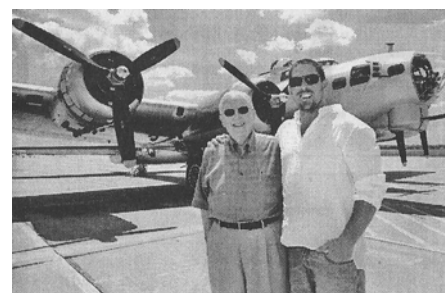
A 25<sup>th</sup>, needless to say, was not served in the dungeon in DuLag Luft. Garbage and insults, however, were hurled by German citizens as the prisoners of war were marched through the streets.

Lt. Schock's one year, nine months and 22 days spent in Germany – 13 months as POW – are well chronicled in a book Bill Schock wrote in the years following the war. The book was written for his two children. And then his three grandchildren. And then his three great-grandchildren. They haven't

read it, but they will. It's an amazing story – one my grandfather for decades kept largely close to the vest. It is, however, making the rounds now. The book, titled "Thrills, Chills and a Spill," is available at the library. It recently got significant publicity from the Lincoln Journal-Star and writer Joe Duggan, who penned an excellent feature article last spring and also wrote on our jaunt in the B-17.

It is with only moderate enthusiasm that the story is out there – my grandfather is a humble man who would abhor the notion that he is in any way trying to bring attention to himself or his story. Fear of that thought, actually, I think keeps him up at night.

And Bill Schock goes to great lengths to dispel the notion he's a hero. He rightly points out that 17 million Americans fought that war – 400,000 didn't come home. One death is too many, but those are difficult numbers to get your mind around. Consider we've lost about 4,200 in Iraq since 2003. They're all heroes.



*Bill and Jason Schock*

My grandfather is a hero. If not for, alongside millions other Americans, saving the world from tyranny, then for the perspective the whole experience gave him. On Aug. 6, he received 160 birthday cards and welcomed 300 people to an open house to celebrate his birthday.

They didn't come because he survived 13 months in a German prison camp, but they came because of the life he's lived and man he is. And much of that man, I speculate, was shaped when, during 13 months in a German prison camp, he wondered if each day would indeed be his last.

"I always said that if I leave this place (the POW camp), I'll never again leave the city limits of Falls City," he told me.

In fact, Hitler did order all Allied POWs killed in the last days of the war. The Wehrmacht refused to carry out the order. At the conclusion of his book, he writes about the Major who led his Group into the flak, instead of around it, the day his plane was shot down. They ran into each other after the liberation, as Lt. Schock and the others awaited sailing orders for America from a U.S. base in France.

"But bygones are bygones and I'm just happy to be alive and headed homeward. We say a lot of nice things about seeing each other again," he writes.

It's *that* kind of guy who has 300 friends stop by on his birthday.

"Like the feller says," he continues, "I wouldn't do it again for a billion bucks. And, on the other hand, I wouldn't take a billion bucks for what I've gone through.

"They just have to be the greatest experiences of my life."

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It's Summer 2008, at Steele Cemetery west of Falls City. The William Schock section sits right off the path in the middle of the park, close to the entrance. My great-grandparents are there. My Aunt Marj. Tootsie, who died in February, is there. Beside her stone is another

that reads "G.W. Bill Schock – August 6, 1918." It's unnerving for me. Customary, I understand, but unsettling nonetheless.

An engraved stone chronicles the passing of several generations of my family. It's noticeable enough, but not extravagant.

"I'm proud to be part of this," I contemplate.

But I'm in no hurry to permanently make my move west, and notice that space won't likely allow for my inclusion when that time comes.

Now if that stone read "August 6, 1918 – April 9, 1944," there would be ample room – but only for somebody else's family.

My experience in a B-17 was short-lived and without incident. But hardly insignificant.

*(This article is reprinted with permission from the Falls City Journal – Ed.)*

## Minutes of the Executive Meeting

The August 13, 2008 meeting was attended by: Don Shoemaker, Erick Corbridge, Dean Hoy and Doug Volkmer.

The B-17 tour appears to have been profitable. The net result is still not yet known.

Oshkosh 2008 was discussed. Still waiting on feedback from members that went.

Ideas for future programs was discussed. Entertainment for the Christmas party was also discussed.

Dean Hoy, Secretary

## Classifieds

**FOR SALE** – Glastar Kit #5367 with many extras, located in York, NE. Life is too busy. Over \$50,000 has been invested in this kit. I have built and fly Glastar Kit #5363. I have over 500 hours of enjoyable flight on this airplane but I do not have enough time to complete the second kit. \$19,500 Joe Block 402-710-2228.

**Want to learn to fly?** Time for a BFR? Or want to just polish up your skills? John C. Cox of rural DeWitt recently became a Certified Flight Instructor and would be glad to help you out. John can be reached at 239-3953.

### Interested in becoming an EAA 569 member?

If you are interested in becoming an EAA 569 member or simply want to attend a meeting, please contact President Don Shoemaker at 402-797-7200 (home) or 402-475-4800 (work).

TO: ROGER ASPEGREN



Dear Roger,

I read with interest EAA Chapter 569's August newsletter and the article you wrote regarding Aluminum Overcast. I'm glad you all had a wonderful time and the opportunity to fly along with the airplane to its next stop. At 87 years of age, I still have the privilege of flying the airplane occasionally - not as much as I used to, but at 87, I must be thankful for all the wonderful airplanes I've been able to fly and, in particular, all the wonderful men and women I've met during my years of service in my EAA work. Every day has been a great blessing for both Audrey and I.

Please give everyone in the chapter our best regards.

Sincerely,  
Paul H. Poberezny  
Founder and Chairman of the Board  
EAA  
ppoberezny@eaa.org

P.S. Audrey and I have been busy assembling the history of EAA that we've kept for some 55 years - the rich history of your organization that will be proudly displayed in the Founders Library within the EAA Museum complex and will be dedicated at next year's fly-in.

## Events

**York Airport (JYR)**, EAA Chapter 1055 Fly-in breakfast on the 1<sup>st</sup> Saturday of every month. 0800-1000. Pilots eat free.

**Crete Airport (CEK)**, EAA Chapter 569 Fly-in breakfast on the 3<sup>rd</sup> Saturday of every month. 0800-1000.

**Sept 2 Fremont (FET)** – Fly in breakfast sponsored by Fremont Rotary Club, 7:30-11:30am, pancakes and sausage. Pilots and one passenger eat free. More info: Scott 402-721-5995.

**Sept 20 Grand Island (GRI)** – Military Appreciation Day, 9am-6pm. Static displays of old and current military aircraft. Bell Ringing Ceremony for Fallen Troops at 11am. More info: Doug Brown 308-390-5372.

John Cox  
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