

22 July 1986

Mr. Dellon Bumgardner
2901 Brammel Ln, #37
Houston, TX 77098

Dear Dell:

I am wondering if you would give some thought to writing a piece for Echoes on your feelings and reactions to once again flying a B-17, for the Confederate Air Force?

I think it would be a popular bit of reading for many people, along with a picture of you and the plane, paired perhaps with a WWII picture of you.

I have also asked Larry Emeigh, an old crew chief who has been working on the restoration of Shoo-Shoo Baby in Delaware to write a piece from the ground crew side of it. I'd like to pair the two articles, so I'll tell you what I told him--there is no limit on the length at this point, just that I'd like a good story.

After 40 years, I think a great many of the readers of Echoes would find your comments to be of considerable interest.

I am looking forward to hearing from you.

Sincerely yours,

Russell A. Strong

cc: Ralph Bordner

Nov 1, 1986

Dear Russ,

After so long a time, here is my response
I promised about flying the B-17 that
you requested. Hope you find it useful.

You have my permission to edit, polish,
delete, add, ignore or otherwise change
this epistle as you see fit.

Yrs truly,

Walter Bungebauer - telephone (713) 524-5840

As an aside, maybe some of our membership would help us complete the restoration by helping us find the following:

1. We have the chin turret mounted with 50 cal. guns, but we have been unable to find the bombardier's control yoke for this that swung out from his right side.
2. We have the top turret and guns mounted, but no understructure the engineer gunner stood in from the ring gear down.
3. We have the ball turret mounted but no mast.
4. Tail wheel tire and tubes are scarce, 26".
5. Main gear wheels, tires and tubes almost as scarce, 56" 22 ply.

PS. Could send all kinds of pictures. Black and white? Color? Maximum size? What of?

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "R. Kelly", is centered on the page.

FUSS STRONG
2041 HILLSDALE
KALAMAZOO MI 49007

Sun Jan 4, 1987

Dear Russ,

Here is some of the material you requested.

1. A bunch of pictures
2. EAF DISPATCH SEPT-OCT '86 & NOV-DEC '86
ISSUES.

Have asked for copies of the two pictures
on pg 11 Sept-Oct issue and cover picture
of Nov-Dec issue - but I doubt these will
come thru before your deadline.

3. VHS video tape

Please return this material when you are finished
with it as some is not mine.

Yrs truly
Melby

August 23, 1987

Dear Russ:

Helton & I very much enjoyed meeting your son and his lovely family while we were on tour with "B-17 Super Raiders" in Columbia, S. Carolina last month.

Sincerely,
Weldon B. Gardner

Nelda Bumgardner

WWII bomber takes to the sky



Craig Rubadoux, FLORIDA TODAY

PILOT DELLON BUMGARDNER, left, of Houston and flight engineer Robert Millford III of Orlando discuss their flight Monday from Kissimmee to Titusville's Space Center Executive Airport aboard a B-17 "Flying Fortress." Bumgardner, a retired Air Force colonel,

flew the bomber on 35 missions in World War II as a pilot with the 306th Bomb Group. The plane will be featured in the upcoming War Bird Show. Tours of the vintage craft also are available through Thursday at Titusville's Discovery Aviation Space Coast Airport.