

GOOD ARTICLE
FOR ECHOES

NOV 24 82

Dear Bill

An answer to a long desire came true on the 13th of NOV here AT Pensacola. I got to ride as ~~Bomb~~ Bombelin on a B-17 G named the TEXAS RAIDERS. CONFEDERATE AIR FORCE.

I had heard that there was a B-17 on the field (NAVAL AIR STATION) so I said I had to go to this air show (1ST OUR FORME) Having a Base sticker tag because I am retired I went over early Saturday morning to get a close up of the '17. I was wearing an old A-2 jacket so it rather helped me get close - I got talking with one of the crew members and was able to get inside of the old bird - a lot of things flashed through my mind as I made my way up to the nose and mean time the rest of the crew had arrived. One man had an old B-15 jacket on and we commented about the age of ~~our~~ ^{our} jackets - When the man pulled his old B-15 jacket off I was flabbergasted to see the old ~~Red~~ ^{Group} H Patch and I said 306TH. He looked funny and said 'yes' and then we really got to talk - He was DELLON Bum GARDNER 1200 Smith ST HOUSTON TX 77002 a former 368TH Pilot. Well this helped me get my ride - I was amazed on how quiet the plane was but how long the pressure G's lasted on take off. After take off I got to sit in the nose where there is a VORDEX Bomb sight. My God Bill it was some thing to just ride the old bird but we went through the reenactment of the Bombing of Pearl Harbor - We came in close to the deck about 25 ft - Full Power - charges were going off along side the field - Jap zeros and zebras, P-40's and Hell cats were strafing the area with the allied planes. After the ~~first~~ planes - We made a second pass with one wheel down no 3 feathered and the

charges were making a bang as we went so close - Blew the right side panels off a Jap zeke - Horribly it did - No one got hurt and the pilot landed ok - But a Jap zero with a P-40 shot over us with a roar and with ~~this~~ this all going on - and I in the front seeing and riding through it all the emotions hit me all of a sudden and tears came to my eyes -

I am truly a blessed man to have done this - and I can say that my emotions were for the men who did it for real -

It was another thing to ride with a 306th man - all in all it was one of the days in my life I will never forget -

Enclosed is a 10 dollar check for one of the 306th caps -

Hope all is well with you and if you ~~are~~ or any one of the 306th is down our way let us know and there will be a cup of coffee, Bed - and a trip to the Air museum here -

As ever
Dane Twombly