

Colorado Aviation Historical Society 2021 Autumn Journal

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Next Annual Event

Colorado Aviation Historical Society Annual Meeting & Directors' Election

(Date TBD)



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Cover Photo: View west from Pikes Peak – Source: Anonymous



Colorado Aviation Hall of Fame Presents 2021 Life-Time Achievements Special Award: Inducts Colorado Laureates



John Barry
Special Award



Robert Olislagers
Laureate



Johnnie Pinell
Laureate

51st Colorado Aviation Hall of Fame Banquet Attendees Deem Event Highly Successful!

On Saturday, October 9th, the 51st Hall of Fame Banquet was held at the Lakewood Country Club. Robert Olislagers and John A “Johnnie” Pinell Jr. were the 2021 inductees into the Colorado Aviation Hall of Fame.

Mr. Olislagers has been the CEO of Centennial Airport for 21 years, during which time the airport has become a tremendous economic engine in the south metro region. Johnnie Pinell has become the embodiment of professional flight training in the Colorado Springs region during a career that has spanned six decades. This year, a special achievement award was presented to Major General John Barry, CEO of Wings Over the Rockies Air & Space Museum. Profiles of

these award recipients are found on pages 2-4 of this issue.

FAA representatives Eric Thomas and Brian Richardson awarded two 50 year Wright Brothers Master Pilot Awards to Mike Silva (Hall of Fame Laureate 1988) and Dale House. Both of these gentlemen are highly decorated Vietnam combat helicopter pilots.

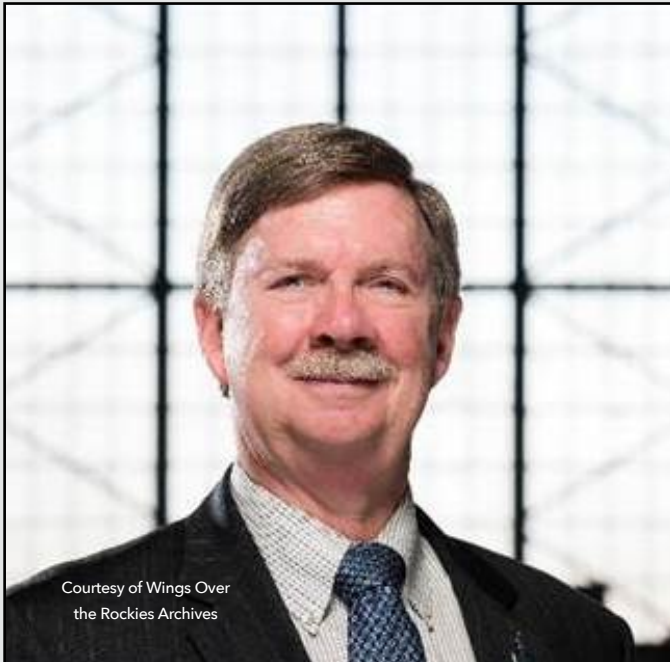
The Society thanks everyone who took part in the planning and execution of a remarkable event, attended by 177 members and guests. Society members Dave Kempa and Linda Morris were the leads for banquet planning and Lakewood Country Club Catering Director ,Michelle Kiser, did an admirable job

— For personal profiles see Pages 2-4 —
— For HoF pictorial see Page 5 —

2021 Colorado Aviation Hall of Fame Award

Maj. Gen. John Barry (Retired)

DENVER / CENTENNIAL, COLORADO



John L. Barry, Maj Gen, USAF (Ret) is President and CEO of the Wings Over the Rockies (WOTR). WOTR is comprised of Wings Over the Rockies Air & Space Museum, Colorado's Official Air and Space Museum, located in historic Lowry in Denver, CO and the newly-opened Exploration of Flight campus, located in Englewood, CO at Centennial Airport.

Mr. Barry served as President and CEO of the Boys and Girls Clubs of Metro Denver (BGCMD) from 2014-2016. He was responsible for 17 standalone and school-based sites serving 2,000 kids each day with 10,000 registered members, 225 full and part-time staff, and a \$16 million annual budget.

General Barry served as Superintendent of Aurora Public Schools for seven years, from 2006-2013. Before returning to Colorado, he served in the United States Air Force for over 30 years as a combat veteran, fighter pilot/USAF "Top Gun" graduate, Military Assistant to the Secretary of Defense, and commander multiple times at the squadron, group and twice at the wing command level. He is also a survivor of the 9/11 attack on the

Pentagon. He retired in 2004 as a "Two Star", Major General, and served his last tour on active duty as Board Member and Executive Director for the Space Shuttle Columbia Accident Investigation. His immediate job for 3 years after the USAF was serving as the Vice President for Defense and Security at SAP, a multi-billion dollar international corporation and leader in industrial software.

Mr. Barry is a 1973 Honor Graduate of the United States Air Force Academy, with a double major in International Affairs and Political Science. He received his Masters in Public Administration from Oklahoma University, was a White House Fellow in 1986-1987 assigned to NASA as Special Assistant to the Administrator and White House Liaison, attended the Kennedy School of Government at Harvard on a fellowship in 1993-1994, and is a 2004 graduate of the Broad Superintendent Academy.

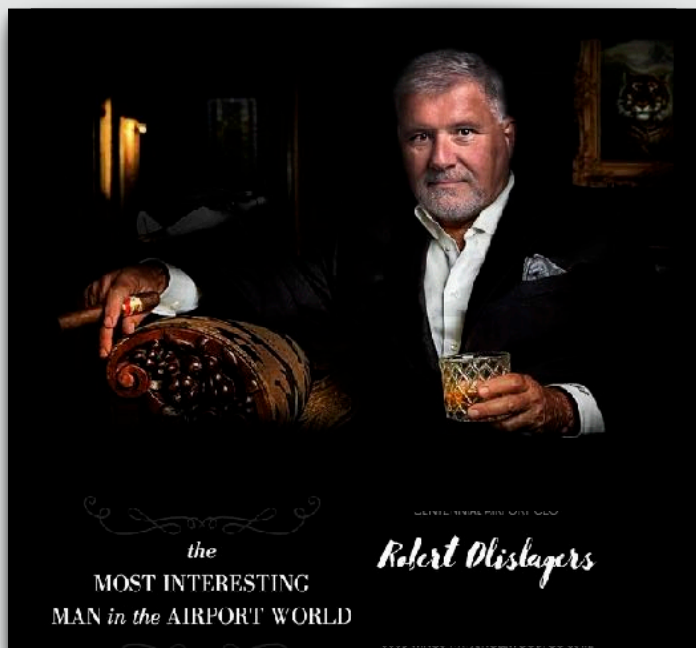
In 2011, John Barry was selected by the Colorado Association of School Executives as the Colorado Superintendent of the Year. In 2013, he was selected as the Communicator of the Year by the Colorado School Public Relations Association. John Barry has been recognized as one of the top ten "Tech Savvy Superintendents" in the Nation by eSchool News and also as the Business Person of the Year by the Aurora Chamber of Commerce. Additionally, in 2021 he was selected as one of the Titan 100 CEOs in Colorado.

Barry has served on numerous boards and organizations nationally and in the Denver-Metro area to include: Board Member and Chairman, Wings Over the Rockies Air & Space Museum; Colorado Forum; Colorado Cooperation; School Leaders for America; Public Education and Business Coalition; Rose Foundation, Education Committee; Big Brothers/Big Sisters; Junior Achievement. CURRENT: Colorado Forum; Member Council on Foreign Relations; Board VP, Air Force Historical Foundation; Board Member, National Aviation Hall of Fame. . . .

2021 Colorado Aviation Hall of Fame Laureate

Robert Olislagers

CENTENNIAL AIRPORT, COLORADO



Robert Olislagers was born on the Island of Java, Indonesia in 1954 to Dutch parents Peter and Barbera Olislagers who left Amsterdam after WWII. After moving back to Holland, Robert came to the US in 1973 to study Anthropology, graduating in 1977/78 with BA and MA degrees from the University of Buffalo.

His first airport job was at Transit Airpark in Lockport NY, while pursuing a doctorate in Anthropology with a minor in economics. He never looked back. He soloed there on 9/27/1983 under the watchful eye of OX-5 Hall of Fame Pioneer and CFII Howard Lee. He joined Buffalo International Airport in 1985 as an unpaid intern, and then within the year left for Bakersfield Municipal Airport in CA, where he rebuilt the airport.

Resolving complex EPA issues regarding air quality that blocked FAA funding, he earned Airport Manager of the Year Award for his efforts. In 1992 Robert landed at McClellan-Palomar Airport in CA and recruited United and American Airlines with daily service to LAX. Returning to exclusively General Aviation airports in 1995, he joined San Bernadino County Airport, managing its six-airport system. During this time Robert distinguished himself nationally, serving on the board of directors of the American Association of Airport Executives, as well as President of its southwest chapter. During his tenure there, he also found time to write a History of Airports in the Southwest entitled "Fields of Flying" (1996) with a foreword by Gen. Chuck Yeager, who was his childhood hero.

In 2000 Robert joined the Arapahoe County Public Airport Authority, owner and operator of Centennial Airport in CO. Working with US Sen. Ben Nighthorse Campbell (R-CO), he wrote Public Law 108-7, Sec. 321, which was signed into law by President George W. Bush on February 20, 2003. It restored federal funding to the airport, lost in 1999. Robert tripled the asset value of the airport and raised its yearly economic impact to the community from \$815 Million in 2008 to \$2.1 Billion in 2020.

Following the events of 9-11, Robert took a deep dive into national and international security, becoming an Intelligence Analyst while still managing the airport. He helped write the security guidelines for general aviation airports for the Department of Homeland Security and Transportation Security Administration, which remain in effect today. He was named [counter] Terrorism Liaison Officer of the Year in 2014 for his work. Robert also wrote and helped pass legislation in CO creating Aviation Development Zones, as well as "fly-away" tax exemptions for aviation manufacturing companies, saving them millions.

Robert served on the Colorado Aeronautics Board for six years, including as chair in 2020. He was also active in the community serving on numerous boards and charities.

His numerous awards include the Distinguished Service Award from the American Association of Airport Executives, the highest award bestowed in the airport industry; The Airport Partnership Award from the National Aviation Transportation Association, The Capt. Eldridge Lifetime Achievement Award from the University Aviation Association; the Medal of Merit from the Air Force Association; Man of the Year award from the City of Aurora, as well as citations and commendations from the FAA, USSS, ODNI, USAF, FBI, DHS and others. * . * . *

2021 Colorado Aviation Hall of Fame Laureate

Johnnie Pinell

COLORADO SPRINGS AIRPORT, COLORADO



John A. (Johnnie) Pinell, Jr. has been flying the Colorado skies for over sixty-one years now, and doing flight instruction for fifty-five of those years. Most of his flying has been in the Southern Colorado area.

Johnnie comes from a 'Colorado Pioneer' family...his grandparents emigrated from Italy through Ellis Island and eventually settled in Colorado Springs. During WWII, when Johnnie was a youngster, his family moved to California for a short period of time, but returned to Colorado after the war. It was during this time in California that Johnnie became "enthusiastic" about his desire to become a pilot...airplanes were everywhere, with many having been manufactured and test flown near where his family lived.

Johnnie started flying in January 1958. He trained at a small private airstrip South of Colorado Springs Municipal Airport. He soloed on February 5, 1958, and received his pilot's license on July 24, 1959. He went on to gain his commercial, multi engine, instrument, instructor, glider, glider instructor, and commercial glider ratings.

During this time he was instrumental on helping a family member start Pikes Peak Airport in the Fountain/Widefield area south of Colorado Springs. He sold aircraft, help build and rent hangars, gave flight

instruction and was a Citabria dealer and sold several aircraft through the 1970's.

Johnnie completed training for his multi engine rating and received his multi license on May 3, 1968. He received his Instrument rating on June 9, 1974, and flew for a local corporation as a pilot and co-pilot from the 1970's up to 1985. He flew the Cessna 402, 421, King Air A-90, BA-200, Cessna Citation 550, Sabliner 40, and several single and other multi engine aircraft for that company and others.

He started a small Fixed Base Operation (FBO) on Meadowlake Airport, northeast of Colorado Springs. He sold gas, rented aircraft, sold aircraft and started a restaurant. Johnnie has been active as a flight instructor during these past 6 decades. He has taught 3 generations of pilots in several families and soon could teach a 4th generation of one family.

Johnnie is still active today in the flying community. He is still giving tail wheel endorsements on his original J-3 Cub in which he soloed in 1958. He gives instruction in several aircraft, from homebuilts to factory built aircraft. The most important point is he has never had an accident or ever had any violations filed against him! In 2018, he received the coveted Wright Brothers Master Pilots Award. He has flown 76 different types of aircraft and has a total logged time of 9485 hours to date.

Being in his senior years now, age eighty-eight years young, Johnnie's dedication to flight instruction and general aviation is unparalleled. Johnnie has taught hundreds of individuals to fly over the years, many becoming professional pilots in the military, the airlines, and corporations. Very seldom will you mention the name "Johnnie Pinell" to a fellow pilot, and not receive the response - I know Johnnie or I know of him. Whether an individual is a "natural" or a "hard learner," Johnnie takes great pride in getting his students soloed and eventually licensed. His philosophy of flight instructing has been "honed" over the years. . . .

51st Annual Colorado Aviation Hall of Fame Award & Laureates



Photos by Joe Suchman

2021- Presentation of Special Achievement Award to John Barry, Steve Kelly (CAHS President), and Major Gen. John Barry (2021). (L to R)



Presentation of Hall of Fame plaque to Johnnie Pinell, Steve Kelly (CAHS President), Richard Janitell (sponsor) and Johnnie Pinell, Laureate (2021). (L to R)



Presentation of Hall of Fame Plaque to Robert Olislagers; Joe Thibodeau (sponsor) and Robert Olislagers. (L to R)



Presentation of the Wright Brothers 50 Year Master Pilot Awards to Mike Silva and Dale House; Brian Richardson (FAA), Eric Thomas (FAA) Dale House, Mike Silva (HoF Laureate 1988). (L to R)



Steve Kelly, President

President's Message:

Colorado Aviation Historical Society Has Become Fiscally Sound

Our Society Is Expanding – The Community Affiliate Program

As with many 501(c)3 organizations, we have felt the impact of the ongoing COVID problem over the past year and seven months – loss of members; disruption of planned activities; and even suspension of our ability to access our office and archive space in the Wings over the Rockies hangar. The COVID problem came on the heels of a year in which we faced extraordinary expenses due to the completion of the new Hall of Fame gallery which led us to reduce expenses in a number of areas. This resulted in a serious examination of our finances during 2020.

This year, we have been able to meet all of our obligations and achieve stability in our spending. Also, we are back on track with organizing activities that our members enjoy, with in-person events which now include a virtual component.

I am very grateful to our board members and volunteers for the effort that has been given to make some big strides over the last year.

Looking to the future, the society needs to explore new sources of revenue. We will continue to pursue our primary missions of honoring the Colorado citizens who have made contributions to our aviation heritage, and expand our efforts to educate the next generation about the importance (in fact, the necessity) of a strong aerospace sector in the state's economy. To create the type of professional programming and museum displays that will engage young people, we will need to secure new financial resources.

The Community Affiliate program has been designed to provide us with the additional funding to keep the organization strong in the coming years and expand our core missions.

The plan is to offer special memberships to individuals, organizations, associations, and corporations who wish to support the work of the Society. Four tiers of membership have been established (at \$500, \$750, \$1000, and \$1500). Each of these levels provide the sponsor with specific benefits which include advertising space in the CAHS Journal, recognition at the Hall of Fame banquet, invitations to take part in future events, and name and logo displays on the Society web-site. The Colorado Aviation Historical Society (CAHS) is an IRS 501(c)(3) non-profit organization, registered with the State of Colorado, so all gifts are fully tax deductible.

I ask all of our readers to help us identify organizations, corporations, or other business types that would be potential Community Affiliates. The point of contact for more information on this program is CAHS Secretary Ernie LeRoy (ejl@mymountain.com).

Never Forget Pearl Harbor Day! - 7 Dec 1941



Mark your calendar for Tuesday, December 7, 2021, 7 pm.

The Colorado Aviation Historical Society is sponsoring a commemoration of the 80th anniversary of the 1941 Pearl Harbor attack with guest speaker Dick Hugens—an eyewitness to the event.

Dick Hugen is the Son of United States Navy Senior Chief Petty Officer R.G. Hugen. He was born in Tsingtao, China while his father was assigned to the USS ISABEL.

Dick and his mother were living ashore in Honolulu when the Japanese attack took place on Sunday, December 7th, 1941. Just 5 years old, he nonetheless remembers most of the significant events of the day. Mr. Hugens has been a student of the Pearl Harbor attack and has made presentations on this subject to numerous groups.

This presentation will be held at Exploration of Flight on Tuesday, December 7 at 7:00pm. It is free to Society members and their guests. Exploration of flight is located on the south side of

Centennial Airport, the address is 13005 Wings Way, Englewood, CO 80112. For directional map, Please see Page 20. Hope to see you (See map on Page 14, if attending) or join us on Zoom at the URL below:

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/86293611319?pwd=T0JpRnBpcDdPbnhxMHZSa0QzbzRzUT09>

Meeting ID: 862 9361 1319 - Passcode: 469825



Brian Richardson

Aviation ARcheology:

Notes From the Field

A Lonely Stretch of Prairie

By Brian Richardson

The windshield wipers were having a tough time keeping up with the falling snow as Emil "John" Jonach struggled to keep his car on the dark stretch of county road that late January night in 1943. Suddenly, a U.S. Army bomber passed low, crossing the road just ahead of the car. The noise of its four massive engines seemed muted to him,

making a sort of popping, swishing sound, as if they'd been cut for a landing. Glancing back in the rearview mirror, he witnessed a brilliant burst of flames as the aircraft appeared to tumble and crash into the prairie. As he turned around and drove to the crash site, it was immediately obvious that there was nothing that could be done. He drove to the Hixson Ranch and called the La Junta Army Air Base.¹

Early the next day military recovery personnel from Pueblo Army Air Base (PAAB), located approximately 52 miles to the west of the crash, were on scene to recover the ten crewmembers and begin salvage efforts at the crash site. It was noted by an Associated Press reporter that one soldier relayed that so devastating was this accident, that they couldn't determine whether this was a B-17 or a B-24.

The subsequent Army Air Force investigation, completed just eleven days later February 4, 1943, signed by Major Albert F. Hillix, President of the Review Board, concluded that the responsibility for this accident... *"cannot be placed definitely due to lack of evidence."*

Sixty-six years later, on an overcast Saturday morning in October 2009, six team members from the Colorado Aviation Historical Society (CAHS) Aviation Archaeology (**AvAr**) program arrived at this now pastoral crash site and began collecting data. Metal detectors and snake-gators were employed; numerous micro-artifacts of aircraft debris were located and not one rattlesnake was encountered.

Of most importance, what appeared to be a portion of aircraft wing spar was found (by metal detector) buried vertically, deep into the prairie on the western edge of the debris field. This artifact was provided to the Pueblo Weisbrod Aircraft Museum.

After several hours investigating the site, the team members were confident that they had positively identified this site as that of A.F. No. 42-5334, a Boeing B-17F, and determined the original Army Air Force report accurately described the event of impact and subsequent debris field.

So, what were the events that brought a tragic end to this aircraft and its ten-man crew? Using modern methodology and technology, **AvAr** believes it can accurately establish the causal factor(s) of this aircraft accident.

2nd Lt. Edward Woodward, pilot-in-command of A.F. No. 42-5334, a Boeing B-17F, was assigned to the 334th Bombardment Squadron, 95th Bomb Group, Rapid City, South Dakota. He was temporarily deployed to Pueblo Army Air Base (PAAB) for additional combat crew training. Fully briefed and cleared at takeoff time, he launched this mission at 1654 hours MWT, January 23, 1943.

Taking-off late in the afternoon with scattered cloud cover, he headed east-southeast above a growing undercast. He was flying his training crew on a practice nighttime bombing and navigation exercise. It was a multi-leg sortie. He was to remain airborne the entire time, drop bombs on a specified target, and then return to Pueblo Army Air Base late that night.

(Continued to Pages 9-12)

***AvAr* Notes From the Field (...continued...)**

Records indicate that at the time of the accident, Lt. Woodward possessed a total of 374 hours flying time, with 54 of those hours logged in B-17s. Further, it was noted, that in the previous six months, he had accumulated a little over 28 hours of night flying and 18 hours of instrument flight time. Unfortunately, this information provides a common portrait of the average bomber pilot in 1943 nearing the end of his training cycle and preparing to deploy overseas for combat.

At 1850 hours the base weather officer advised the group operations officer to anticipate weather below instrument minimums for the local area by 2300. Group operations then instructed the control tower to contact all aircraft and determine their position relative to the station. Radio reception was difficult to impossible at PAAB due to static interference from atmospheric conditions and the number of airborne aircraft attempting to contact Pueblo.

No contact was made with the Woodward crew.

Concerned that they hadn't contacted the training crew, PAAB tower contacted the Civil Aeronautics Administration (CAA) radio station at the Pueblo Municipal Airport, identified as Pueblo Radio located about ten miles west-southwest of the air base, asking for assistance. It was assumed that the Pueblo transmitter/receiver was much more powerful than the Army's and hopes were that they could locate the aircraft.

Pueblo reported that at approximately 2030 hours (the exact time was not captured in official reports) La Junta AAB, situated about 55 miles east-southeast of Pueblo, overheard A.F. No. 42-5334 trying to contact PAAB tower. While it is known that Pueblo Radio heard several calls from Lt. Woodward's plane to PAAB tower over a period of three hours, they couldn't establish two-way voice communications that night, due to extreme radio interference.

About 2230 hours a transmission from what is believed to have been A.F. No. 42-5334, was heard by Pueblo Radio. According to the CAA radio operators on duty that night, this transmission, although garbled and largely unreadable due to static interference, was very strong, indicating that the aircraft had passed close to the station.²

Sometime around 2315 hours, a transmission from an unidentified source, also believed to be from Woodward's crew, was heard by Pueblo Radio, giving a position report of... "35 or 40 miles east of PAAB at 6500 feet" in the twilight-zone of the east leg of the Pueblo range. This would mean that the pilot was within a few moments (three degrees) of intercepting the radio-navigational aid, a virtual "highway in the sky" that would identify approximately where he was in relation to the airfield and lead him confidently back to Pueblo Army Air Base. That was the last transmission received from what is believed to have been A.F. No. 42-5334.

According to La Junta Army Air Base (LJAAB) transcripts, weather reported at 2330 hours that night was low overcast, with approximately 400-foot ceilings and one to two miles visibility. LJAAB is situated 28 miles south of the crash site and about 350 feet lower than the terrain elevation reported on the rising prairie at the crash site. All things considered; this would mean that Lt. Woodward had but a fraction of a second to consider his options as he broke out of the overcast. He was about 50 feet above terrain, travelling at or near 100 MPH³, when slamming into the ground.

A witness statement, incorporated as an allied document within the original Form 14⁴ indicates that A.F. No 42-5334 impacted terrain left-wing low, then cartwheeled across the prairie, breaking up and bursting into flame.

Unfortunately, PAAB records do not indicate whether A.F. No. 42-5334 was the last aircraft left to be recovered that evening. However, given the communications traffic adopted into this report, it seems likely that this aircraft was the only one unaccounted for.

Considering all these facts, what does ***AvAr*** believe caused this fatal accident? Well, let's start with the fundamentals and what we know from historic research.

1943 was a banner year for the United States Army Air Force (USAAF). Its strategic training plan came to fruition that year, following 1942's massive construction and development efforts to catch-up with the world war. New airfields and rapidly

AvAr Notes From the Field (...continued...)

developing training programs were accepting inductees as quickly as they could receive them. In 1943 alone the USAAF graduated 165,000 pilots from flight training. There were 12,587 aircraft training accidents in CONUS (Continental United States) that year. Of the B-17 training aircraft alone; 539 accidents were recorded with 120 of those causing fatalities, resulting in a total of 789 airmen deaths. While the Boeing B-17 was essentially a sound aircraft, the rapid expansion plan for training qualified combat crews left little room for error and expected a great deal of performance from these young, inexperienced airmen. Far too many instances are recorded of WWII training missions that resulted in unnecessary loss of life. The need for qualified combat crews was intense and training commands were expected to deliver, so the pressure was on. Seven day-per-week training schedules became common throughout most stations to meet demand.

2nd Lt. Edward Woodward was obviously a qualified military aviator. He had completed primary, basic, and advanced pilot training. He received a B-17 type-rating and was sent to combat crew training at 334th Bombardment Squadron, in Rapid City, South Dakota. At this point he was deemed competent and assigned a crew of nine other airmen; nine men that he would train with and then lead into combat. After some local orientation training, Lt. Woodward, his crew, and A.F. No. 42-5334, were ordered south to Pueblo Army Air Base in Colorado, for additional bombing practice. Technically, Woodward met all the minimum requirements expected of an aircraft commander at that time.

Sunday would ordinarily be a day of rest, but at this point in the war, the pace of training had been accelerated to equip as many squadrons as possible with qualified crews. Routinely rising early, this crew most likely had been awake for hours before they received their mission briefing. Those crewmembers with religious affiliations no doubt attended services earlier in the day. Without knowing this crews' regular work/rest cycle, it may well be that this nighttime mission was a challenging interruption to their normal routine. When the crew of A.F. No. 42-5334 took off at 1654 hours, fatigue may have already been setting in. After another six hours of strenuous foul weather and nighttime flying, fatigue indisputably was an

issue in this crews aeronautical decision-making process when the accident occurred. Today, aeronautical decision-making (ADM) is recognized as one of the leading causal factors in most aviation accidents and incidents.

Aeronautical radio-navigation technology in January 1943, although then state-of-the-art, was seriously flawed. It involved listening to the Morse code identifiers for the various legs of the 4-way radio range stations, over painfully tight fitting headsets for extended periods of time. Precipitation interference, in the form of rain or snowstorms caused additional reception problems and annoying static. Airmen would often turn the radio volume up to a point of discomfort, straining to hear the Morse code signal buried deep within the incessant static. This added to the fatigue of the pilot, co-pilot, and navigator during such non-precision approaches. Adverse weather conditions were known to cause a phenomenon called a "false virtual course," which literally swapped the expected radio signals from one course line to another, leading airmen completely off course. All these cumulative factors certainly caused strain and worry during serious weather flying.

AvAr's conclusion, based on all information available at the time of this accident review is *Pilot Error!* Contributing factors include inclement weather, inadequate technology to meet the weather demands, and human factors issues.

This young pilot did everything he was supposed to. He launched and presumably flew the assigned mission, accounting for the three-and-one-half hours of lost time between 1654 and 2030 hours in the official transcripts, before he began calling PAAB tower for further instructions. His crew managed to intercept the radio range and fly over or close to the station at altitude, then followed standard procedures and flew outbound, maintaining a relative position to the beam, flying above the undercast or in instrument conditions.

Unfortunately, weather, coupled with the inadequate technology of that time conspired to overwhelm Lt. Woodward. Most likely the radio range signal, as well as communication with the base, was lost and now uncertain of his actual location and increasingly concerned about time and fuel

AvAr Notes From the Field (...continued...)

remaining, this young pilot committed the fundamental mistake of attempting to get below the undercast without knowing his exact position relative to terrain elevation. Common practice at that time would have been to climb the aircraft to a safe altitude and have the crew bail out. Of course, not knowing his exact position, Woodward may well have been worried about his abandoned aircraft causing casualties on the ground.

Both the supposition that the airplane impacted terrain in a stalled (left-wing low) configuration and **AvAr's** uncovering a formed-piece of aluminum wing structure buried almost vertically on the western periphery of the search area, indicate that the USAAF Form 14 report is most likely correct. This, unfortunately, was a common mistake for inexperienced airman in instrument meteorological conditions; loss-of-control resulting in stall/spin accidents accounted for a great number of the WWII training losses and still plague general aviation to this day.

However, was the Woodward crew really qualified and prepared for the conditions encountered that night? An Army Air Force historical study⁵ conducted around that time states... "*Expediency dictated that peacetime perfection must give way to minimum standards of proficiency.*" They were all young, vulnerable and willing to give their all to the cause of freedom.

It should be remembered that approximately 15,000 airmen died because of training accidents in the Continental United States during World War II and that more than 7,000 American aircraft were lost to such training events. 1943 was the worst year for training accidents in all stateside military aircraft.

Today, out of the 12,731 B-17 bombers that were constructed between 1935 and 1945, only 46 (0.003%) are known to exist worldwide. Of these, 10 are regularly maintained by trusts and private collectors in an airworthy condition. The remainder are on display in museums or undergoing restoration. On a similar note – fewer than 300,000 (18%) of the 16,000,000 American soldiers that served in World War II, remain today.

On a dark and lonely stretch of prairie in Southeastern Colorado, when the temperature fell below freezing amidst falling snow, ten young enthusiastic Army Air Corps airmen surrendered their lives to the cause of freedom on Sunday, January 23, 1943. May their souls rest in peace!

AvAr is dedicated to researching, locating, and documenting all historic aviation properties for posterity. Although our calendar is certainly crowded, **AvAr** regularly trains new applicants, schedules expeditions, and provides for speaking engagements as time and members permit.

We continue to preserve these sites to the best of our ability. If you are truly interested, **AvAr** is looking for new members to help us in our research efforts. Even though **AvAr** is based in Colorado, we have trained team members residing in many other states conducting independent investigations. The only prerequisite is that you have an interest in preserving our nation's rich aviation history.

Please contact aviator_b@msn.com for more information on our program schedule.

¹This is a composite synopsis of the statements given by Mr. Emil Jonach and his companion that night, Miss Muriel Hixson. They were driving southbound towards the Hixson Ranch, when this accident occurred at around 23:05 hours MWT.

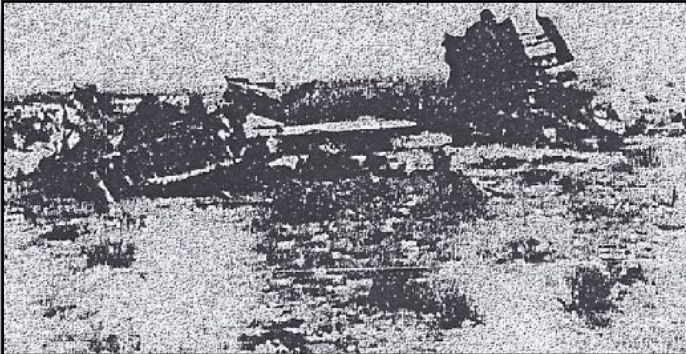
²Unfortunately, as A.F. No. 42-5334 was not attempting to contact Pueblo Radio, but rather the Pueblo Army Air Base tower, those Civil Aeronautics Authority personnel on duty that night were not logging the transmissions received. So, no accurate record of actual times was captured.

³Stalling speed for the B-17 was around 89 MPH with flaps extended for landing, and 100 MPH clean (without flaps extended).

⁴Army Air Force Form 14 was the official document used by the USAAF during World War II to record all basic findings of an accident investigation.

⁵United States Army Air Forces, Army Air Forces Historical Study, No. 18: Pilot Transition to Combat Aircraft (Maxwell AFB AL: United States Army Air Forces Historical Division, [1944]), 38. •••

AvAr Notes From the Field Photos (...conclusion.)



One of the two USAAF accident investigation photos incorporated in the official report. It is easy to see why one of the recovery technicians stated that they couldn't tell if it was a B-17 or B-24. (Photo Credit: USAAF)



Artifacts found as they lay in the debris field identified during 2016 AvAr visit. (Photo Credit: Larry Liebrecht Collection)



Needle from an engine manifold pressure gauge for either the left or right wing. (Photo Credit: Larry Liebrecht)



Participants from the 2016 International Wreckchasing Symposium, hosted by the Colorado Aviation Historical Society Aviation Archaeology (AvAr) program, and sponsored by the Pueblo Weisbrod Aircraft Museum, being briefed before exploring the crash site of A.F. No. 42-5334. Basically, the briefing consisted of "Don't disturb any artifacts; don't pick-up any ammunition; and don't handle the rattle snakes." (Photo Credit: Larry Liebrecht Collection)



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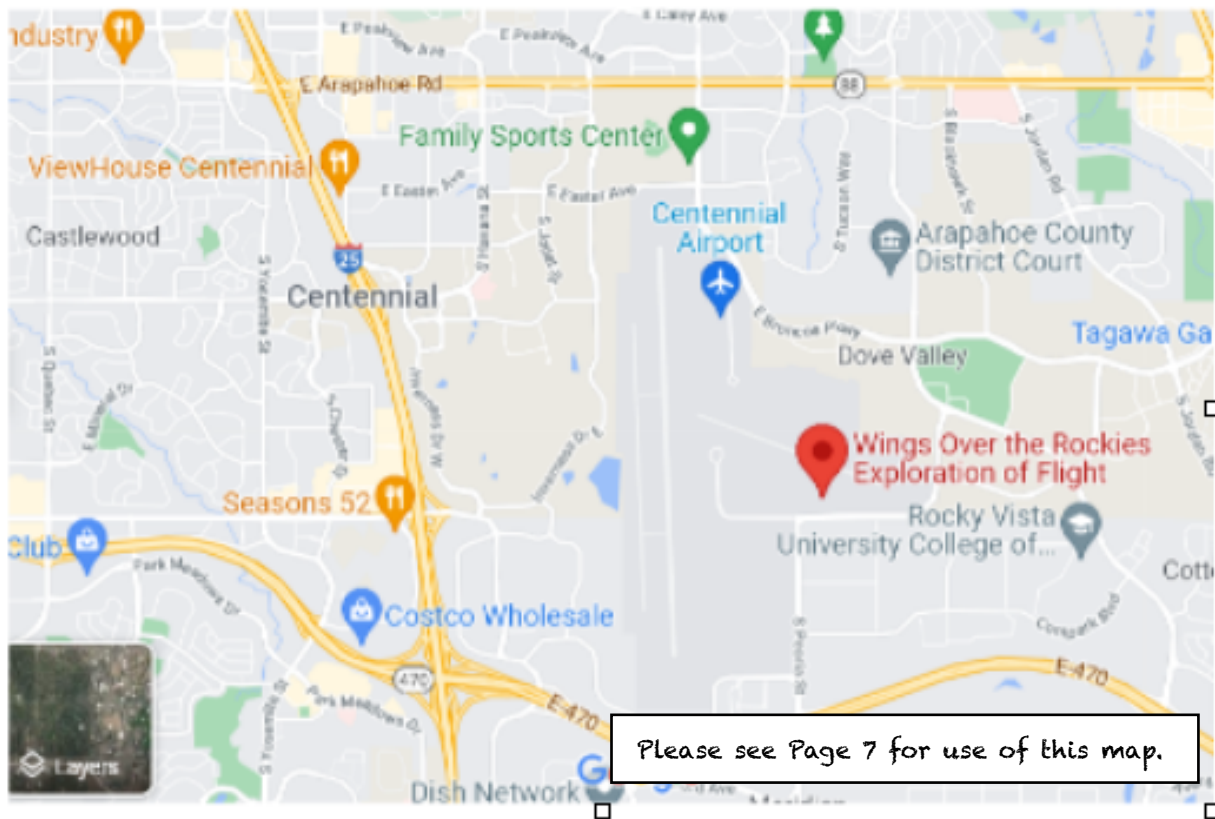
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