



THE ATLANTA WORLD WAR II ROUND TABLE

PRESERVING HISTORY

INTERNET: <http://www.atlantawwiiroundtable.org>

VOL. 27 No. 8

268th MEETING

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Contributor(s) To This Newsletter

- * Bruce Gamble
- * Lt. Col. Vincent Masters
- * Randolph Goulding / Lee Weinstein
- * Joe Jordan / Jim Dean
- * Jay Lenny / Bob Rivers

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Date: APRIL 18th, 2013 (THURSDAY) >> Next Meeting MAY 16th

Time: Social Hour: 11:00 AM - 11:30 AM > MEETING START TIME 11:30 AM - Speaker Immediately Following Lunch

** PETITE AU BERGE RESTAURANT
2935 N. Druid Hills Road, Web Site: www.petiteauberge.com
Atlanta, Georgia 30329 (Restaurant Phone: 404-634-6268)

Price: \$ 15.00 Per Plate ** NO RESERVATION REQUIRED **

Speaker: Bruce Gamble

Subject: “Fortress Rabaul: The Battle for the Southwest Pacific, January 1942 - April 1943”

Mission Statement

We, who by our own actions, and by our heritage, know that liberty has not, is not, nor ever will be free, do in association with our friends and comrades, who believe as we do, pledge that we will meet at the call of our Commander no less than ten times a year:

- * To hear of the war experiences of our members and invited guests
- * To encourage and demonstrate pride in our country and its armed forces
- * To pass on to posterity our knowledge of World War II, and of the price - human and material - that was paid by our nation for the preservation of liberty in the United States and the world

Speaker for APRIL 18th, 2013– Bruce Gamble (To Be Introduced By Deputy Commander Weinstein)

Our April 2013 meeting will feature author Bruce Gamble as our speaker. Bruce is a award-winning author and historian and has written several books on World War II history specializing in highly-readable narratives about World War II in the Pacific.

Bruce’s book *Fortress Rabaul: The Battle for the Southwest Pacific, January 1942 – April 1943* highlights the story of what was to become known as *The Yamamoto Mission* but officially chronicled as *Operation Vengeance* by military planners. Many of you will recall that Admiral Yamamoto was believed to be the architect of the December 1941 attack on Pearl Harbor which initiated the state of war between the U.S. and Japan.

The mission consisted of 18 P-38’s fitted with special drop-tanks to accommodate the 1000 mile flight and Navy ship compasses to aid in navigation; the P-38’s taking an indirect over-water route from South and West of the Solomon’s to avoid detection and ‘wave-hopping’ all the way to Bougainville at altitudes no greater than 50 ft. while maintaining radio silence en route. One flight of 4 P-38’s was designated as the ‘killer’ flight and would intercept Yamamoto’s Solomon Islands itinerary on April 18th, 1943 exactly one-year following the U.S.’ most direct ‘blow’ to Japan with the *Doolittle Raid*. It was anticipated that the death of the Admiral would demoralize the Japanese Navy, create a huge gap in the Japanese Naval ranks with the loss their most experienced and accomplished Admiral, and in-turn boost the morale of the Allied forces.

The entire operation was top-secret since the Allies had broken the Japanese Naval Code, had obtained Yamamoto’s itinerary and were gambling that the Japanese considered their Naval and Diplomatic Codes unbreakable.

Gamble was raised in Central Pennsylvania and served as a Naval Flight Officer from 1980-1988 during the closing years of the Cold War. He was deployed aboard the Aircraft Carrier *Carl Vinson* in the Pacific and Indian Oceans and did a tour as a instructor in Pensacola Naval Air Station, FL. Diagnosed with a malignant spinal cord tumor and after undergoing radical surgery, he retired in 1989, spending several years as a volunteer at the National Museum of Naval Aviation then as a staff historian at the Museum. He interviewed several notable authors, wrote articles for the Foundation Magazine and in 1998 made the leap-of-faith to become a freelance writer, publishing his first book that year.

Bruce will go into many other details about this episode of the *Solomon Island’s Campaign* and the War in the Pacific. He has a total of five titles now in print and has gained national recognition as one of the most respected authors on the War in the Pacific. His other book titles include: *The Black Sheep: The Definitive History of Marine Fighting Squadron 214 in World War II* (published in 1998); *Black Sheep One: The life of Gregory “Pappy” Boyington* (published in 2000); *Darkest Hour: The True Story of Lark Force at Rabaul – Australia’s Worst Military Disaster of World War II* (published in 2006); *Swashbucklers and Black Sheep: A Pictorial History of Marine Fighting Squadron 214 in World War II* (published in 2012)

Please welcome Bruce Gamble as our April 18th, 2013 speaker (**268th Meeting.**)

CONTINUED ON BACK

Review of March 21st, 2013 Speaker –Lt. Col. Vincent Masters (Introduced by Deputy Commander Weinstein)

The attendees at the March 21st meeting were honored to hear Lt. Colonel Vincent (Big Doc) Masters tell us a bit about his exploits in World War II. They were far too numerous to go into detail on any specific one and we can only thank Deputy Commander Weinstein for refraining from reading Dr. Masters 6-page resume to us since that would have consumed so many of the wonderful moments that the good Doctor spoke to us. (Masters obtained the rank of Lieutenant Colonel in 1945 earning his Medical Degree from Stanford University Medical School in 1953.)

Vincent became the lead pilot of a B-17 Squadron after graduating from advanced training at Luke Field in Arizona. He and his crew were selected to become the lead crew to prepare a new B-17 Flying Fortress for WW II combat. The aircraft designers and U.S. Air Force felt the B-17 could defend itself and therefore didn't send fighter aircraft to support many of their early missions. Dr. Masters recounted one of the early missions which he called *The African Mission*, his squadron flying a bombing mission over Regensburg and Schweinfurt Germany to inflict damage on the ball-bearing and Messerschmitt production facilities in those cities. The squadron then flew on over the Alps, over Italy and finally to North Africa.

Needless to say, the military command learned the B-17 could not defend itself under these circumstances but not before hundreds of these Flying Fortresses were lost on these missions. Vincent flew 28 combat missions as a B-17 pilot earning the Distinguished Flying Cross, the Silver Star and other medals.

He would also fly P-51 Mustang Fighter as Commander of a elite group, The 3rd Scouting Force, a secret scouting force that reported weather conditions to the Command Pilots leading the bombing missions.

Thank you Colonel Masters for sharing your stories with the Round Table, for keeping some of those Damn Fokkers from tearing-up your aircraft, for *Preserving History*, and for a job well done.



I am pleased to announce that we have one (1) new member who has joined us since the March 21st meeting:

Veteran Paul Crowder – Paul served in Vietnam in 1967, U.S. Army SP4, at the Artillery Fire Direction Center. His interest in WW II centers around the D-Day to Berlin Ops and Island Hopping in the Pacific.

Please welcome Paul as our newest member at the April 18th, 2013 meeting.



SPECIAL MEMBER ANNOUNCEMENTS & UPCOMING EVENTS

>>> **(UPDATED) UPCOMING SPEAKERS for - 2013** Program chairman Larry Robert has done a splendid job in lining up a wonderful list of speakers for the Atlanta WW II Round Table for our January through June 2013 meetings. The following speakers will be making a presentation to the Round Table in: **April – Bruce Gamble – Author “Fortress Rabaul: The Battle for the Southwest Pacific, January 1942 – April 1943”**; May – Phil Nordyke – Author “Put Us Down In Hell – Combat History of the 508th Parachute Infantry Regiment in WW II”; June – Deborah Lindsay – The National World WW II Museum / New Orleans. Please note that the speaker's engagements are subject to change. Thank you Larry Robert for you're continuing efforts to seek-out and engage excellent speakers for our meetings and for a job exceedingly well done.

>>> **(NEW) UPCOMING EVENT - WW II HERITAGE DAYS – April 27th (Saturday) –April 28th (Sunday), 9AM-4PM - Opening Ceremony – Saturday at the Dixie Wing Hanger / Atlanta Regional Airport – Falcon Field in Peachtree City, GA. Rain or Shine Event.** This is the 10th annual WW II Heritage Days event and this year's opening ceremony is expected to be one of the largest gatherings of WW II veterans in Georgia this year. The keynote speaker will be Mr. Ewoud Swaak, the Honorary Consul to the Netherlands for Georgia and South Carolina. The theme of the program, Operation Market Garden: History and Legacy, will commemorate a battle in September 1944 when 40,000 Allied Paratroopers attempted to liberate a series of cities, towns and bridges in Holland in an effort to shorten the war. For more information about the WW II Heritage Days event, please visit

www.wwiideays.org or contact the PR Officer for the CAF Dixie Wing, Round Table member Chris Madrid at 770-655-3315 (Cell).

>>> **(NEW) UPCOMING EVENT – Night At The Museum – May 17, 2013 – 6:00PM – 9:00PM**

The Atlanta History Center is asking for WW II veterans (and reenactors) to participate in this last event before the History Center breaks for the summer. They are looking for soldiers to be part of their exhibitions which will feature characters such as Amelia Earhart, Civil Rights Leaders and others. Participants will interact with the kids attending in a museum-wide scavenger hunt and will help the museum come-to-life! Please call Sara Wilder at 404-814-4000 if you would like to participate in the event.

>>> **(NEW) HEARING AIDS** *Commander Goulding has a limited number of special Hearing Enhancers that the Round Table is making available for members and guests. These Bell & Howell Hearing Enhancement devices have both a volume control and on-off switch and are available on a first-come, first-serve basis. Please note that these need to be returned to Commander Goulding after each meeting.*



>>> **REQUESTS BY INDIVIDUALS TO MAKE ANNOUNCEMENTS AT ROUND TABLE MEETINGS** – In a effort to not interfere with our scheduled speaker's allotted time and also to allow more time during our lunch for table-conversation, the Atlanta WW II Round Table Executive Board has approved the following policy: ***Requests by individuals to make announcements during the Atlanta WW II Round Table meetings must first be cleared through the Commander prior to the date of the meeting.*** The number of announcements will be limited at each meeting and will also be based on priority of interest to the Round Table. Commander Goulding can be contacted at **770-436-4254** or via email at rgoulding@charter.net



Monthly Quotation: “*The best way out is always through.*”

Robert Frost – American Poet 1874-1963