



THE BUZZ

Official On-Line publication of Echo Company, Kemper Military School

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GASKILL SEEKS ROTC INFO

MAJ Robert Gaskill, USA,Ret. Is seeking information which he can use to build a white paper research study for use by the US Army. Major Gaskill, a 1978 graduate of Kemper Military School has extensive experience in ROTC having served as an instructor and front-line Infantry officer. Specifically, Major Gaskill is interested in the thoughts and ideas of those who are schooled in ROTC and in particular those who were commissioned through Kemper's two-year commissioning program.

Echo Company, Kemper Military School is pleased to be a part of this important study and, if you would be interested in participating in this study contact:

ECHO COMPANY
ATTN: ROTC Study
P.O. Box 883
Fallon, Nevada 89407-0883

Your help and assistance in completing this important project is very much appreciated. If you volunteer to participate in this study you can expect to receive a questionnaire and asked to provide a narrative of your overall experiences.



ECHO COMPANY INITIATES MONTHLY E-PUBLICATION OF "THE BUZZ"

"It was the last cadet published newsletter from the Kemper Corps of Cadets prior to the school closing in 2002." Remarked John Downs, Adjutant of Echo Company, Kemper Military School. "Resurrection of 'THE BUZZ' demonstrates the commitment Echo Company has to all Kemper Old Boys!"

THE BUZZ e-publication is available on-line only and will not affect the publication, quality, or timely distribution of the **THE ECHO**, which is Echo Company's premiere award winning newsletter will remain unchanged. The addition of the "BUZZ" newsletter will compliment the current publications.

BOARD ACTS TO ADD WEBSITE FEATURES

The Board of Directors for Echo Company, Kemper Military School overwhelmingly approved a motion to add the names of all Kemper graduates to the existing website at www.echocompany.org

The addition means Old Boys will be able to see a complete listing of every Old Boy who graduated from the school from 1844-2002.

BOONVILLE MOVES TO DEMOLISH KEMPER STRUCTURES

The Boonville City Council has approved a motion for the demolition of "unsafe buildings" in the community of Boonville. The motion will likely have an impact on those organizing efforts and seeking donations to preserve portions of the Kemper buildings.

"Once the buildings are razed, the construction of Kemper Park will begin!" Said John Downs, Adjutant of Echo Company. "The entire Board of Echo Company supports the efforts of the City to respectfully pay tribute to the school we all remember."

"Those who sought to use this occasion as a means of raising funds are disappointed as well they should be." Downs added.

The buildings are scheduled for demolition over the summer months of 2015.

GLITCH CREATES INTERESTING TURN OF EVENTS

A computer glitch created substantial confusion among a large group of Kemper Old Boys when the Graduate Registry was added to the www.echocompany.org website. For some reason, high school graduates who went on to also graduate the junior college only had the JUCO graduation date recognized in the registry. Echo Company apologizes for this error and we are working on a remedy.

A PILOT'S STORY

Submitted by Bill Burkett

After fighter pilot gunnery, All of us were sent to a miserable coal-dust covered place called Goxhill to practice shooting at towed-target sleeves. Averaging only 4.5% bullet holes in his target sleeves [5% minimum was required for graduation] Bob Johnson ' BUSTED OUT ' with his continually poor air-to-air gunnery scores.

Only because there was an urgent need to fighter pilots, was Johnson released to fly air combat.. Surprisingly, Bob Johnson went on to become the US Air Corps' number two fighter ace in Europe.

Francis Gabreski had a similar experience; because of weak flying skills early during his flight training, ' Gabby' nearly ' washed out. ' Of course, he continued on in a swashbuckling way to become this country's Number # 1 Fighter Ace in Europe.

Early during his air combat missions, Bob Johnson was chastised several times for "going off on his own". After one memorable chewing out he resolved to stick with his formation. However, as the flight climbed over the English Channel, it was attacked by sixteen Fockewulfe 190 fighters. Before he could call his leader, A Fockewulfe's cannon shell smashed his canopy. When his frantic mayday's drew no response, Bob was inspired with an overwhelming urge to bail out. More explosions smashed through his tough Republic Thunderbolt. Now it spun crazily out of control and engine flames enveloped Johnson's shattered canopy. The canopy frame was twisted and would not open,

An adrenaline charged Bob Johnson attempted to squeeze through the hole in the broken glass. But the opening was too small for both him and his parachute to exit the stricken aircraft. Almost miraculously, the P-47's engine fire ' blew out.' Johnson recovered from the spin, as dark engine oil spewed back from his still running engine. It covered his windscreen, and through the shattered cockpit, droplets of oil now sprayed into his eyes and injured face.

Although forward visibility was poor, he decided to crash land then attempt to evade capture. He bent the airplane south toward a pre-planned escape and evasion route.

After struggling with hypoxia, Johnson's reasoning began to return. He realized that his P-47 was still flying fairly well. So Bob changed his mind again. He would trust his high altitude advantage to assist in his struggle to complete a partially powered glide back home.

He pointed his ' Jug's ' burned nose toward England. In his pre-flight excitement, Bob had forgotten to take along his goggles. The slip stream constantly blew oil and hydraulic fluid into his eyes and cut-up face. Any attempt to rub his eyes caused more discomfort. Johnson painfully flew toward home in a shredded and marginally-functioning machine.

Approaching the coast - heavily defended by the enemy - Johnson desperately swiveled his head in an effort to evade German fighters. Then, The worst happened. Johnson froze in horror as a solo German fighter ' zeroed in' on him - a beautifully painted blue Fockewulf 190 - with a bright yellow cowling.

Johnson was helpless as he waited to be killed. The enemy fighter pilot turned out to be Gruppen Kommandeur Egon Mayer - a fighter pilot Ace with nearly 100 kills. All Mayer had to do was to approach from close behind, then administer Robert J Johnson's execution. Taking his time with the crippled American, Mayer slowly closed in. Still unable to free himself from his cockpit jail, Johnson could only hunch down as low as he could, within the profile of his armored seat.

Mayer opened fire, raking Johnson with torrents of 30-caliber machine gun fire. There was no missing. Streams of lead poured into the battered Thunderbolt. Johnson rapidly kicked his rudder left and right to quickly reduce his speed. This last ditch maneuver caused Mayer to overshoot. As the German fighter passed by, Johnson fired all of his workable guns in his general direction. Egon Mayer evaded the last ditch bullets fired by a game - but half-blinded, Bob Johnson. Then, Egon Mayer circled back and flew in formation just off one of Johnson's battered wings. From various angles, Mayer examined the shredded Thunderbolt . . shaking his head in mystification.

Determined to get the kill, Mayer banked away, then dove in directly behind Johnson and fired another long burst of .30 caliber bullets. But, somehow, Republic Aviation's ruggedly built ' Jug ' remained airborne - its sick engine just chugged along. □ As they approached the southern English coast, Mayer pulled up alongside to take another look. By this time Johnson realized how fortunate he was that Mayer spotted him only after the German had fired out all of his heavy cannons', probably while firing into the never-ending B-17 armadas.

As they flew out over the English Channel, the German maneuvered behind for the third time and poured bullets directly into the ' Jug' including Bob's slab of seat armor. Huddled behind the steel plate, Bob continued in his inexhaustible good luck. And his tough ' Jug' just ' kept on . . keeping on.'

Just as they approached the English coast, not knowing that Bob Johnson would go on shoot down 27 of his flightmates multiple ace Mayer pulled up alongside, rocked his wings in salute, then turned away. Johnson had survived the pointblank machine gun fire. But he still had to land his shattered plane. He contacted Mayday Control , who instructed him to climb if he was able to climb. The " Jug ' climbed a little bit and after more radio conversation, Bob headed toward his home field. Because Johnson had no idea if his landing gear would go down, landing results would be ' iffy.' He used up his last fragment of luck, for that day as his wheels locked into place.

SIDE NOTE From Bob Johnson : " None of the German fighters were as rugged as a P-47. When I was badly shot up on June 26, 1943 [above story] I had over twenty 20mm cannon shell holes in that airplane, and more than 200 7.92mm machine-gun bullets. One BULLET nicked my nose and another entered my right leg . . where the bullet split in half.]



OH BROTHER! THEY'RE AT IT AGAIN!!

Editorial

Recently the KMS AA held an annual meeting. The actual meeting was not open to the public, where appropriations, selections and decisions are made. However, after the meeting the KMS AA Board was quick to announce the results of the selection process to their newly initiated Hall of Fame. Included in the list of names were James B Herring, Laura Gramlich, and Laura Spice Williams, as well as Bill Richardson, Doug Burns, Michael Stepto and a few others.

We found it interesting that the KMS AA felt a need for a Hall of Fame since Echo Company, Kemper Military School has operated one for more than seven years. What we found even more odd was the noteworthy absence of the school's founder and Colonel T. A. Johnston.

Some have criticized the voices of Echo Company for raising any issues at all which call into question the motives of the KMS AA. However, this most recent stunt is so ham handed, and absent minded it really needed to be addressed. Not long ago someone asked, "Why are there two groups of Kemper Old Boys?"

The answer is because one acts like spoiled children or rioting looters in a St Louis suburb while the other acts to honorably tell the Kemper story while continuing the heritage and teachings of Kemper. We will leave it up to you to decide who is who.

Echo Company will continue the works we have placed in progress hoping for the day when responsible minds assume control of a once honorable institution, the KMS AA.

IT'S ALL YOURS!!!

You can make things change and see the difference your opinion makes. Just take a few minutes to contact us and let us know how we are doing. Echo Company knows that pleasing everybody all the time is just about impossible but if you see room for improvement please take the time to let us know how we are doing.

Over the years we've had hundreds of suggestions which involved everything from story content to artwork. One all-time favorite comment from a reader was how the **ECHO** is not even good fish wrapper since the paper is too small and unlike conventional newspaper. We liked that one so much we had it framed and it hangs on our wall!

Seriously, you read the **ECHO**, and now you can read the **BUZZ** so, tell us how we are doing, what you think we can improve and so forth. After all, it is *your* newsletter!

**You can contact Echo Company,
Kemper Military School at:**

**ECHO COMPANY
P.O. Box 883
Fallon, Nevada 89407-0883**