

7-17-1992

Paul D. Schlundt 3149 Winfield Ave. Indianapolis, IN 46222-1953
Dear Paul, RE: Douglas, Ga. 43-F

Will try to be brief on my Cadet and other Army Air Force experience WW2.

Enlisted in May 1942 as a Cadet but decided to Not wait to be activated and entered the service as buck private.

In-service training as a weather man at Chanute Field, Il. Instead of attending the weather school there, 10 of us were taught by on-duty weathermen. Others at other bases doing the same to increase the trained numbers beyond that of the schools.

Soon promoted to Cpl and then Sgt., then called to Pilot training, class of 43-F. Nashville, Tn., Maxwell Field, Al., to Douglas Ga. for primary.

While at Douglas, I had about 3 instructors (as I remembered it) being contract civilians. Names escape me but Cadets I remember were Emil Estok, Foley and Bates. The last two 1st names? Have had no contact with anyone from Cadet days until your letter.

On to Shaw Field, S.C. at Sumter where I had some interesting experiences in B-13's and B-15's. Instructor was Flight Officer Basil Bensted, Royal British Air Force, one of several just over for R & R from the Battles of Britain.

He was about 5 feet plus tall, light weight and a concert pianist with the London Philharmonic. WOW, how he could fly!

His first question to me (and others in our group) was "do you want to learn the American way or would you rather do it our way and stay ALIVE?"

So off I went into the wild blue yonder hedge-hopping as he taught they did in Europe barely off the ground so noone could dive onto your tail.

Now I'm sure you have guessed that I violated the 500 foot rule above any obstacles and one day I turned out the lights in our part of S. C. (flew through some high tension wires) and went before a board that washed me out-no bother with the check-ride bit. Other threats, etc. were also made and F/O Bensted's letter giving me an excellent evaluation (I still have it!) did not change their mind. I had some 32 hours.

Thus, I was transferred back into the Weather Squadron, stayed at Shaw as a Sgt. until moving out to India. Left the States from Wilmington, Ca. in July 1943 with the 10th Weather Squadron of the 10th Air Force.

Passed thru New Zealand, Australia, Bombay, Karachi, Agra, then stationed in the jungles of Assam Province, then the Calcutta area, back thru Suez Canal to New York and honorably discharged Dec. 5 1945. Around the world in some 2 1/2 years!

Graduated as Civil Engineer from Michigan Technological University 1950.

Worked 33 years for several Cities, last 27 as City Manager, retired 1983.

Sincerely,

Dave

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