

1LT William B Hauke—Pilot

Let's see if I can make any sense out of this mish mack (sic) and my memory.

I was married Jan 24, 1942 and living in Detroit, Michigan. The draft board was breathing down my neck; so I looked around and found that the Army Air Corps was the only one I could enlist in and have a delay of going active. I needed that so I could be home when our son was born (DEC 12) and I went active on FEB 18, 1943.

1. Miami Beach for Basic Training
2. Western Reserve University in Cleveland for a couple of months of college (time delay?) getting in 10 hours of flight training in Piper Cubs in the process.
3. Maxwell Field for pre-flight (SEP 43)
4. Helena Ark. Primary Flight training (DEC 43)
5. Basic flight training Newport, Ark. (FEB 44)
6. Advance twin engine flight training (APRIL 44) Stuttgart, Ark. got my wings and my commission, Class 44D
7. Went to Columbus, Ohio for 4 ENGINE transition in B-17s, when we were just finishing up they came around asking for volunteers to go on to B-29s (what the hell is a B-29?). I figured if I had to go 4-engine I might as well go as new and as big as they had (a decision I had cause to question when we got to flying some of the first ones built)
8. Lincoln, Neb. got together with A/C Bill Wilson and a couple of the crew (not all stayed in crew all the way for reasons I never heard or understood (the army way?))
9. Went to Alamogordo, NM for B-29 transition—very educational to say the least. Editors Note: Initial plans called for the base at Alamogordo to serve as the center for the British Overseas Training program. The British hoped to be able to train their aircrews over the open New Mexico skies. However, everything changed when the Japanese launched a surprise attack against the Hawaiian Islands on 7 DEC 1941. The British decided to no longer pursue its overseas training program, and the United States military saw the location as an opportunity to train its own growing military. Construction began at the airfield on 5 FEB 1942 and forces began to move into Alamogordo Bombing and Gunnery Range on 14 MAY 1942. The base was equipped with aprons, runways, taxiways and hangars during the summer of 1942 being renamed Alamogordo AAF in June. From 1942-1945, Alamogordo AAF served as the training grounds for over 20 different groups, flying initially Boeing B-17 Flying Fortresses then Consolidated B-24 Liberators and B-29 Superfortresses.
10. Hays, KS—Walker Air Field—It was during this time that a Group CO wanted me to keep track of the formation during our training, so I rode in the tail gunner position; I recall looking out the side window and into a #2 engine of another B-29! I thought I was going to die! That was the last time I wanted to ride tail gunner, but I did it again on one mission overseas. We also went to Cuba during this time and completed over-water training flying out of Cuba for a couple of weeks. The 330th was formed at Walker—including ground support {they went to Guam 3 months before we got there (the ground support went by boat)}. We gradually got our new planes at Walker and flew them over San Francisco — Pearl Harbor ... it was still a mess of stuff left from DEC 7—sometimes I wonder if the powers that be left it that way so we arrived at Guam highly pissed off at JAPS. —Gas stop at KWAJALEIN {5000 FT. AIRSTRIP ABOUT 6FT ABOVE SEA} —THEN ON TO GUAM ————— after we got to Guam the planes got the Ks and numbers painted on and later lead planes got lead ID stripes added.

While we were flying our early missions our plane started to get tail heavy and the powers that be wouldn't let anyone else fly it. As lead crew we alternated flying every other mission in the normal rotation—most other lead aircraft got flown by other crews when they were not leading. While under fire our tail guns failed. When we got back, they pulled up the floor in the tail turret...it was full of water. To keep from working in a puddle they put an old empty 55 gallon barrel down under the tail and drilled a drain hole in the bottom. The barrel ran over before the water drained (an excess 700 pounds or so just as far back as it could go). Some worker put a rivet in the hole (it was part of a rivet seam) that was the drain. They started drilling a drain hole about 8" away in all planes after that. At our last reunion, I checked under Bockscar at Dayton, and it had the hole. A test flight showed our tail heavy problem was gone. So the next mission that we didn't go on they let another crew use it. They got it shot up so bad they had to put it down on Iwo Jima and it got stripped for parts and the rest was dumped in the ocean. So ended K-52 (#1); we got the next replacement plane, it was painted to become the new K-52.

In our between mission leads we were available to do "slow time" on planes with new engines and "calibration checks". We were going on a slow time and were on a taxi strip at the north end of the field next to a construction road for NW Field, a few miles west of us along came a dump truck, he pulled over to check out the plane. He hollered it was a nice



plane and sure wished he could get a ride. Bill looked at me, didn't say anything, didn't have to (in training if you goofed up they threatened to send you to combat). I said to Bill, "we're in combat, do you think they would send us stateside?" We waved the guy to come around to the front and climb in; put up front and went on down and took off. We showed him around front and we went on to do our thing and sent him back through the tube so the guys in the back could give him the rest of the tour. We finished our stuff and got him back up front to land. Bill asked him if he wanted to see the field he was building from the air? Yes! We took him down his field runway at 50 FT; he was living it up in the nose waving at his friends. We made his day (he said his WAR). We went back and landed and let us run long so we ended up near his truck and bid goodbye to a happy man. Of course, he missed his rotation; they found his truck was OK. Last we heard he had gotten eaten out but was still a very happy guy. We got what we expected (you don't give rides to unauthorized personnel)...how do you explain an extra body with a truck driver's MOS on his dog tags if you have an accident. We heard later the jungle telegraph was at work, they had a rash of requests for how to get a ride on a B-29! Never happened.

One day I saw our cook chasing Lizards up a tree with a machete; I wondered what we were eating!

The first time we landed on Iwo Jima (to refuel) we had to stay on the plane overnight, and were sure to have our guns ready; our Flight Engineer had the put-put ready! The only gas they had was in a tanker which they off-loaded over night. We were parked near a large depression...roped off with fence, lights, Marines...during the night they would turn on the flood lights and shoot anything that moved—they told us to get in the plane and stay there until daylight (gas us and get us out).

On our next to last mission we were given some sealed orders to open and follow if the weather was good when we got to Japan—it was— we ended up flying to Nagasaki and flew around at low level for about an hour and took a few pictures. When we got back to Guam they called us as we were on the final approach and told us to stay buttoned up and pull off at the far end (ocean end) and shut down and wait for them to get to us. A few minutes later along came a jeep and a couple of weapons carriers, they stopped a few hundred feet from us—out jumped a bunch of guys in coveralls carrying meters; they started walking circles around the planes, getting closer each time. It dawned on us, they didn't know if we were going to glow in the dark—we didn't, thank God! Years later at the reunions I found out that another crew did the same thing only at Hiroshima.

Our last mission was on September 2—we flew over the Missouri while the surrender was happening in a stream of hundreds of B-29s and other allied aircraft—some news media pictures show a shot of it. After going over the ship to the coast we were allowed to break formation and sight see as we turned around to head back. We went low and checked one airfield, the planes there had their props off (required by the terms) but it didn't matter the fighter boys had shot them to ribbons anyway—wasn't a solid window in any of the buildings—went down at roof top level to Yokohama, Japs shaking their fists at us—as we went out over the inland sea, we came across Japs in small boats fishing and they waved at us (glad it was over).

—U.S. subs we re surfaced 10 miles off shore

—we didn't carry any bombs but our guns were loaded and ready just in case.

We got in 22 missions by the time the end came. On 3 September 1945 we were given SPECIAL ORDERS; the orders directed us to proceed to Washington D.C., purpose: delivery of photographs. "The senior pilot will be designated as official courier to deliver photographs to Colonel Bowman, Office of Information Service, Pentagon Building." The orders show a double flight crew—lots of Chiefs, not many Indians—2 A/C, 2 P, 2 FE, 2 N, 2 RO. We met a B-17 crew at Iwo Jima who brought the pictures from Japan—they didn't think Japs didn't have suitable strip for B-29s.

Our B-29 took a visual pass of Wake Island before flying on to Hawaii (Hickman and John Rogers Fields); our #3 engine was acting up so we only had four hours of sleep while they worked on #3. We then flew on to Washington, DC. We were flying at 30,000 feet and lost our #3 engine over the Rockies, at which point we dropped to a 20,000 in order to save fuel. We didn't know why at the time, but we found that we were going faster on three engines at 20,000 feet than we were on four at 30,000 feet—we were in the Jet Stream. Washington D.C. was socked in, so we landed at Wright-Patterson AAF, Dayton, Ohio; the photos were taken by train to Top Brass in Washington, D.C. We received VOCO (Verbal Orders from a Commanding Officer) to leave for our homes. There was a civilian cafeteria on the Army Base—off limits to military personnel, but who cares! What we're they going to do to us?—our Radioman, Robertson, and I both got a quart of milk and went out to the shady side of the hanger, sat down, lent against the wall and nursed the milk for about an hour. Then I took a train to Michigan and waited for my orders to catch up with me. On 9 OCT 1945, in a memo to the Commanding General, 314th BW stations in San Francisco, CA, I was listed among "personnel found ineligible to return overseas by reason of excessive ASR scores". After about two weeks in Michigan, I received orders to return to Topeka, KS. As I recall, I had to make a stop at Wright-Patterson where I found the plane we came in on had not been serviced and stunk to high heaven!



I then spent another two months waiting for my discharge in KS. I was there seven nights a week, but the movies were only shown six nights a week!...we did lots of bowling. During this period I got another leave and brought my '37 Ford back for transportation. My records show that I flew a little over four-hour flights on 11 OCT 1945 and again on 30 NOV 1945...four hours a month was required in order to get flight pay. Finally my orders caught up with me. On my way home I dropped Robby off at the Toledo Bus Station—he went East to Pennsylvania and I went North to Detroit. Seventeen days after receiving my orders I was discharged in Detroit on Dec 12, 1945 - my son's 3rd birthday.

After the war I went back to Federal Motor Truck—I could see it going broke. Five years later, I went to Radio School for two years and held a job as a Radio Engineer for 26 years. In 1975, the FCC rules changed and Radio was not required to staff Engineers. I joined Honeywell in 1977 as a Service Representative/Technician. I retired in 1987 and we moved to Florida where we have been living ever since. We are both hanging in there...we both just got our drivers licenses renewed for six years—have to stay alive to get my moneys worth (\$48.00 EACH).

