



San Diego Chapter 1 Member Biography

Fred Kennie

8TH Air Force, 95th Bomb Group, 334th Squadron

Was a Co-Pilot, flying the B-17 Bombers in WW II. On his 7th mission his plane was shot down on a raid to Munster, Germany, October 10, 1943. Following bailout over Western Germany he hid out; walked by night and evaded into Holland.

When he could walk no more, due to frozen feet lack of water and food; he was discovered in a farmer's haystack. Circumstances were such that the "Dutch" Authorities were compelled to turn him over to the Germans, otherwise the Occupying Forces would kill 10 or more randomly selected citizens, as they had done just several weeks earlier, when another Allied flyer had escaped into the "Dutch Underground".

Fred spent the remainder of the War, 19 months, as the guest of the German Reich in a German Prisoner of War Camp known as Stalag Luft I. The camp was located in Northern Germany in the small town of Barth on the Baltic Coast. At the war's end in May 1945, the camp was liberated by the Russian Armed Forces.



After returning home to Pennsylvania, he attended Purdue University, in Indiana, graduating with a Bachelor of Science Degree in Airport Management. While in school, he continued flying in the Reserves as time permitted. He accepted a position in 1950 as Airport Manager of the Williamsport Municipal Airport in Pennsylvania.

Shortly after the death of his wife, he moved to California and settled in San Diego in early 1952. While visiting with Jim Bellingham, a Flight School and POW room-mate he accepted employment with Convair, as a Logistics and Contracts Administrator. He married in San Diego the following year, raised two children; and after 49 years of marriage, lost his wife, who had been ill for 24 years. He was

active in Boy Scouts, camping and hiking; which included two hikes of Mt. Whitney.

Fred & Jim soon after that found Edwin Davidson, whom they knew in Flight Training and POW Camps as he was transferred by American Airlines to the San Diego. The three of them enjoyed their get-to-gathers, and travels.

Fred says he was lucky; very lucky; to meet and marry Beulah in 2005. They keep busy with hobbies of model railroads, airplanes, photography, travel and grand children.