

WW I AVIATOR REUNION

- In an attempt to identify the many hundreds of Air Service personnel shown in its large collection of World War One motion pictures, the Air Force Museum sent out a call for help to Capt. Eddie Rickenbacker, Douglas Campbell and Reed M. Chambers, famous names of the 94th Aero Squadron. These men promptly organized a reunion of WWI aviators in and around New York City. This was held informally at the headquarters of Eastern Air Lines in the RCA Building, 40 East 42nd St., on 2 December, 1960.

Royal D. Frey, Chief of the Reference and Research Division of the Museum, had written to many of the Air Service officers whose names were supplied by Capt. Rickenbacker, inviting them to attend for the purpose of reviewing the films. It was intended to run the films and to simultaneously record the comments of the assemblage on tape.

The reunion group began to show up about 8:00 A.M. Each one was greeted by Capt. Rickenbacker and a small identification card was pinned on each by his long-time personal secretary, Miss Shephard. The Air Force personnel, Mr. Frey, Capt. York, and Mr. Elliott, the photographer, took them in tow for a few moments for further introductions and photographs. At about 9:30 Capt. Rickenbacker convened the group in the small theatre downstairs in the RCA Bldg. and, after again giving a warm personal greeting to all (and telling several of his famous jokes about flyers and angels) turned the meeting over to Mr. Frey.

Mr. Frey explained the purpose of the meeting and gave a brief description of the movies to come. He asked for comments from the audience and stressed the need for recognition of the men to be shown in the films. Leads to the events they depicted, the times and

places, were requested. During the two hours that followed he got an enthusiastic response; indeed, it was difficult to keep up with the shouts of recognition, the recollections of events and places, and the anecdotes that were told. There were frequent interruptions and playbacks as those in the audience reminded each other of the happenings of 42 years back.

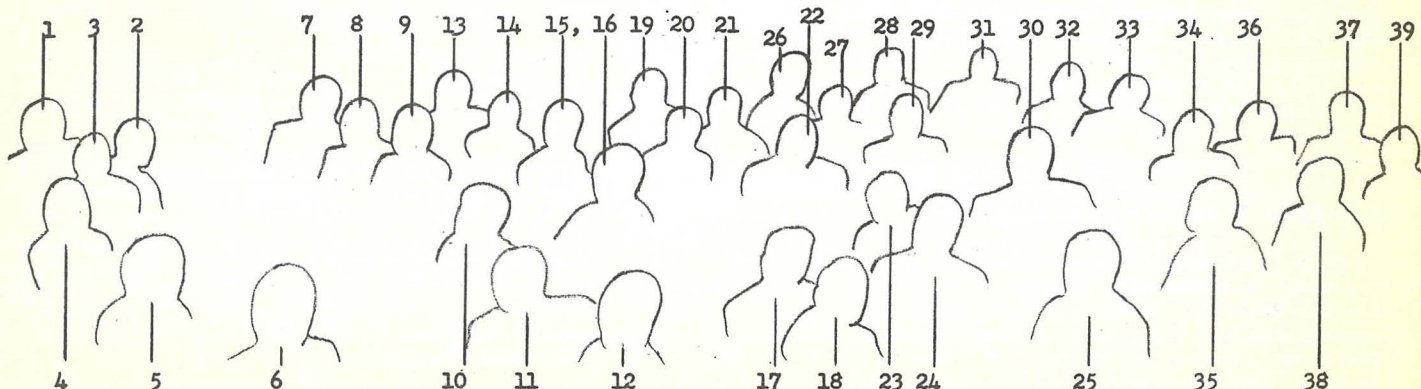
The Press was called in at 1:30 and statements were recorded for local New York news distribution. At 2:00 the group went upstairs for lunch. The picture opposite shows the gathering in the Netherlands Club, where they were guests of Rickenbacker, Campbell and Chambers for cocktails and lunch. During the morning there had been many greetings between old friends and squadron mates. Typical was that of Charles R. D'Olive to J. Dickenson Este: "Why, the last time I saw you we were standing in line to be decorated by General Liggett at Rembercourt on November 10th, 1918." Throughout lunch the re-acquaintances continued and many exchanges of "keep in touch, you old so-and-so." were made.

The flyers gathered again in the little theatre in the late afternoon for more motion pictures until 5:00 P.M. Mr. Frey announced plans to have a larger reunion and air show some time in the Summer at Wright-Patterson Air Force Base and he invited all those present to come. He requested that each one advise other WWI aviators of the plans, and asked for addresses so that invitations could be sent out as soon as the plans were made firm.

Although the meeting was officially over at 5:00, many groups of 2, 3, and 4 went off together to continue discussions, no doubt 'til the wee hours. Needless to say, the reunion was a huge success for all present.

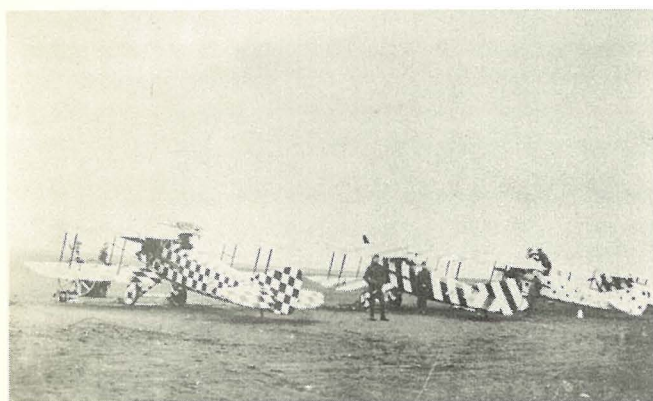
The following men were present (keyed to the drawing below): The WWI unit in which each served the most is given in parentheses.

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| 1. Chester A. Snow (94th) | 18. R.S.V. Elliott (R.F.C.) | 33. M. Edwin Green (94th) |
| 2. Charles T. Crocker III (94th) | 19. Charles H. Woolley (95th) | 34. C.S. Jones (Issoudon Instr. Ctr.) |
| 3. Leland M. Carver (90th) | 20. Lester S. Brady (Cigognes, Fr. Army A.S.) | 35. Paul D. Meyers (1st) |
| 5. Frederick H. Prince (Lafayette Escadrille) | 21. Robert C. Cates (94th) | 36. Everett R. Cook (91st) |
| 7. Raymond Brooks (22nd) | 22. Edward V. Rickenbacker (94th) | 37. Bogart Rogers (R.F.C.) |
| 8. Theodore F. Tarbox (139th) | 23. J. Dickenson Este (13th) | 38. George A. Vaughn (17th) |
| 10. Harold B. Willis (Lafayette Escadrille) | 24. Thomas Torrance (Tours Instr. Ctr.) | 39. Edward P. Curtis (95th) |
| 11. Reed M. Chambers (94th) | 25. Arch Whitehouse (R.F.C.) | |
| 13. Bruce C. Hopper (96th) | 26. Douglas Campbell (94th) | Others: |
| 14. Leighton Brewer (13th) | 27. Clayton Knight (R.A.F.) | 4. Royal D. Frey (Air Force Museum) |
| 15. Robert L. Moore (with French Army Air Service) | 28. Charles R. D'Olive (93rd) | 6. Capt. J.G. Sparks (USAF Office of Information Services) |
| 16. Donald G. Herring (94th) | 29. Sumner Sewell (95th) | 9. Warren D. Shipp (A.A.H.S. Director) |
| | 30. Alex H. McLanahan (95th) | 12. James J. Sloan (A.A.H.S. Director) |
| | 31. John Mitchell (95th) | 17. Herbert Mason, Jr. (TRUE Magazine) |
| | 32. Arthur H. Alexander (96th) | |

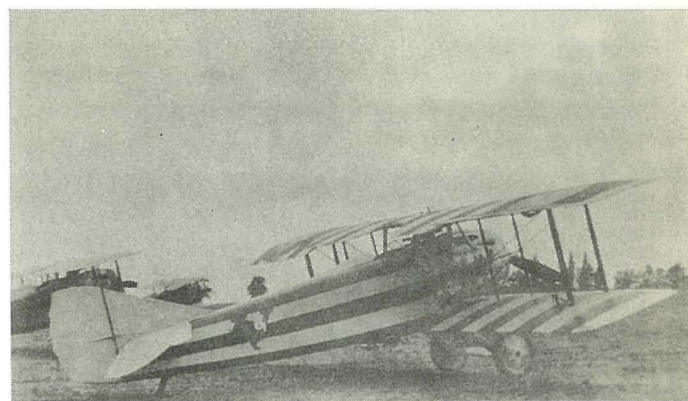




Reunion of World War One aviators, Netherlands Club, New York City, 2 December 1960



The above pictures show SPAD 13's decorated for the Third Army Carnival held at Coblenz, Germany on April 23rd to 27th, 1919. Almost the final demonstration by the Army of Occupation, it included, of course, parades, a motor show, horse shows, races and track meets, and the last day was given over entirely to the Air Service. Many of the pursuit planes were gaily decorated for the occasion. At left (courtesy of Col. John N. Jeffers,



then Lt., 94th Aero Sqdn.) are four planes of the 94th. The one at far right was that of Lt. Leo H. Dawson's, in white with green clubs. Next to it was Lt. Sammy Kaye's in red, white and blue polkadots. Owners of the other two are not identified. The photo at right shows Major Maxwell Kirby's SPAD, in red and white stripes with blue fin and rudder having white stars. Maj. Kirby was C.O. of the 5th Pursuit Group. Photo supplied by J.J. Smith.