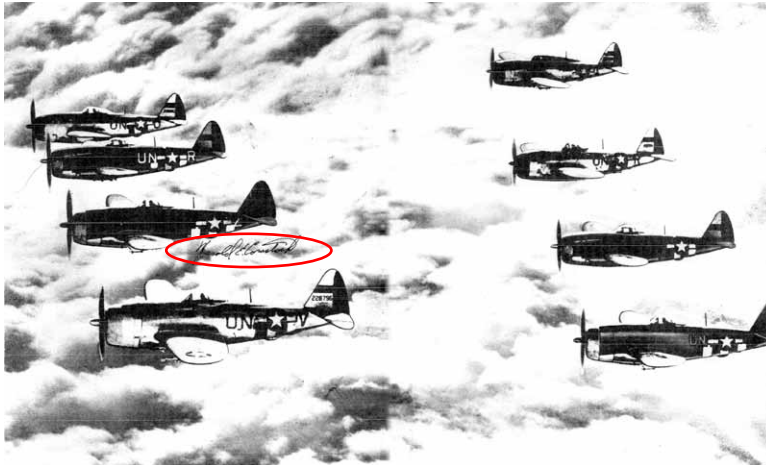


NEWS & COMMENTS FROM OUR MEMBERS



LEFT: Signed cover from The 56th Fighter Group In World War II. RIGHT: Image published with the article.

The First Zemke Fan, May 12, 1944, Vol. 62, No. 4, Winter 2017

Member Tom Lowe has helped clarify information associated with an image published in this article. He provided the following:

I would like to comment on the caption to the photograph of the seven P-47s in flight in the article about “The First Zemke Fan” on page 235 published in Vol. 62, No. 4, Winter 2017 issue of the *AAHS Journal*. It stated in part that “UN-Z....could be Zemke.” I can confirm that UN-Z was the aircraft assigned to Col. Zemke, but most likely the pilot of that aircraft in this photo was Maj. Harold E. Comstock, the CO of the 63rd FS and not Col. Zemke. Major Comstock was one of the many aces of the 56th FG and was officially credited with five aerial victories, (2 ME-109s, 2 FW-190s and 1 ME-110), one probable and seven damaged. He also was credited with two aircraft destroyed on the ground and also 22 locomotives.

In the mid-1960s Lt. Col. Harold E. Comstock was the CO of the 481st Tactical Fighter Squadron (F-100) stationed at Cannon AFB, Clovis, New Mexico. I served as the Intelligence Officer for the 481st TFS at that time. I spent many hours with Lt. Col. Comstock, then, and also in subsequent later years, talking with him about his experiences in WWII with the 56th FG. He was an outstanding fighter pilot, a real leader of men and a life-long friend and mentor.

In the official unit history book *The 56th Fighter Group In World War II*, the front and back covers have on their inside a full size two page print of the same photo that was published in the *Journal* except that it shows eight P-47s in formation rather than seven P-47s as shown in the photo in the *Journal*. A copy of that photo is enclosed.

Close examination of the two photos shows that all the aircraft in both photos are the same. The unit identification numbers on the fuselages are all the same, the aircraft are in the same order of flight and all have bubble canopies with the

exception of one which is a razorback P-47. Obviously these two photos were taken at the same time, or the one just excluded the one aircraft. Why the one P-47 is missing from the photo published in the *Journal* is certainly open for question.

You will note that on the photo I have included from my 56th FG unit history book, Col. Comstock has signed the image underneath UN-Z (circled) signifying that it was the airplane he was flying. He confirmed to me that UN-Z was the aircraft assigned to Col. Zemke but that he was flying it when this photo was taken and that he was the flight leader of this group of eight P-47s.

For some additional information concerning Col. Comstock’s experience with the 56th FG see the article “The Dive”, co-authored by Col. Comstock and myself in the *AAHS Journal*, Vol. 43, No. 1, Spring, 1998, page 45.

Congratulations on another outstanding issue of the *Journal*.

Sincerely,

Thomas E. Lowe
AAHS Life Member 132

The Boeing System, Vol. 62, No. 3, Fall 2013

Regarding the article, I have an issue in the second full paragraph, p. 202. To my knowledge there never was a company called the Hamilton Propeller Co. Established in 1914, the Hamilton Aero Manufacturing Co., focused on designing and building of aircraft, floats and, yes, propellers. Immediately after being acquired by Boeing and Rentschler, it was merged with the Standard Steel Propeller Corp. to form the Hamilton-Standard Propeller Corp.

I recognize that this is a trivial point, but aviation history is comprised of a million such points.

Collen Green
Atlanta, Ga.