

# M.A.R.C.S. SPARKS

Monthly Newsletter of the Madison Area Radio Control Society  
Madison, WI

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## *Come Fly With Us*

MARCS meetings are held on the first Thursday of every month at 7:00 P.M. in Room 201B of the Madison Labor Temple, 1602 S. Park St. in Madison. Visitors are always welcome. We think we have a great hobby and we invite you to come and see and consider joining us.

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Contribution of articles is encouraged. Deadline for submittal is the 20th of the month

## Minutes of MARCS General Membership Meeting, August 1, 2002

*By Burr Fontaine*

The meeting was called to order by President Wayne Lanphear at 7:05 p.m. with 35 in attendance.

**July Minutes:** The minutes of the July meeting as printed in the August issue of SPARKS were accepted as published.

**Treasurer's Report:** Expenses for the July 21 Float Fly and Family Picnic totaled \$280.

**Old Business:** Charlie Schultz summarized the Float Fly and Family Picnic as "very successful but HOT." Several planes were flown, at least two got wet, but none were destroyed. Approximately 80 people turned out to sample LaVerne Randall's excellent roasting efforts with the pig. LaVerne made the 10 hour drive straight through from his home in Arkansas to have the pig ready in time for the picnic. The picnic next year will be a week earlier to be more compatible with LaVerne's schedule.

Jerry Buss thanked the club members that helped out with the Boy Scout fly-in last month. Eleven scouts and four adults showed up and all got to build an AMA glider and to fly a trainer with a buddy box. Lunch was provided for everyone. The scouts sent a nice letter of thanks for the day. It is posted on the back of the frequency board at the field.

**New Business:** A sign, "No Powered Vehicles Allowed in this Park," has been installed by the City on the park land between the east end of the field and the county highway that is east of the field.

Larry Landucci forecasted abundant thermals for the 1.5 meter, hand launch glider contest on August 17 at the Long Island Sod Farm in Marshall, WI. Larry has a good track record, the weather has been good for this contest for the last six years. About half of the participants are expected to be from outside the Madison area.

Don Weigt summarized the status of the preparations for the August 18th Ken Kindschi Scale

Rally. Additional help is needed for the flight line and the food handling and for some miscellaneous jobs during the event. Help is also needed beforehand, on Friday morning, August 16, to trim the grass at the field at 6 p.m. Saturday evening to setup on Sunday at 7:30 AM and on Sunday and after the Rally, about 3 p.m., to cleanup. Don also cited the need for one or two additional canopy shelters. Last year we had four and needed five and the situation is the same this year.

John Thompson has a number of fun events planned for the August 24 Fun-Fly. Among them, the Trash Can Dive sounds particularly interesting. A trash can located in the middle of the field is the target and anyone scoring a direct hit with a RC dive into the can will be declared a winner(s). John has a variety of events planned with varying degrees of difficulty so there should be something for beginning as well as experienced pilots.

There is a new model bench, built by John Thompson, at the field. President Lanphear would like feedback and suggestions for changes, if any, in the design. Once a final design is selected, additional benches will be built to replace some of the older ones that are in need of extensive repairs

There have been some close calls with mix-ups in cards on the frequency board. Don't remove someone else's card from the board unless you have positive identification or confirmation that the member is no longer at the field. If you leave the field for any reason and come back to fly, make sure your frequency is not in use by someone else.

**Raffle Winners:** John Cevanberg - Hat; Charles Weber - Hat; Bill Kinney - Fairchild PT-19; Bill Rewey - Cup; Don Weigt - Booster "Y" Extension; Wendell Hottmann - Cup; Jerry Buss - Book; Hubi Schneider - Aileron Extension; Mike Bitter - Hat; Ed McDonald - Aileron Extension; Ken Larsen - Hat.

**Show & Tell:** Jerry Buss displayed a nice looking GeeBee Tiger Moth kit that he assembled but he did not have very much enthusiasm for it -- millions of parts, inadequate manual, and poor quality balsa all added to his frustration during the assembly.

**Bill Kinney** is anxious to fly his new Apache II ARF trainer with flaperons that he purchased from Richmond RC in Canada and brought with him tonight.

**Program:** Scott Christiansen, Vice President of Product Development at SIG Mfg., displayed and discussed some of SIG's newer products. Scott

brought several models with him tonight, but much of the interest by members was centered on the new, 12 pound, ARF Rascal 110 with a 1.32 cu-in gas engine. This model will be available in October.

The meeting adjourned at approximately 8:45.

## Philosophy 101

Bragging doesn't bring happiness, but no man having caught a large fish ever goes home through the alley.

## Magazine Subscriptions

I just received a copy of the Northwoods RC Flyers News, the monthly bulletin of the Rhinelander club. One of their members found that his copies of Model Aviation News were not arriving as expected. Upon checking with MAN circulation and reporting that he had paid his money to an outfit called Publishers Service Exchange, he was told that that firm was not affiliated with MAN. Apparently his premium was in some unintended pocket. MAN made good on the subscription cost, despite their lack of obligation to do so.

If you are approached by Publishers Service Exchange, you might do well to steer clear.

## What a Great Scale Rally

Well, the Ken Kindschi Scale Rally is in the books for another year and it was a quite a day! No mayhem was inflicted on any of the planes, at least none that I saw, other than a landing gear that collapsed on one of Harley's crop dusters on landing. It was a beautiful, clear, sunny, cool day with a modest wind coming right down the runway. There was lots of participation by pilots from the club and from out of town. There were lots of beautiful planes. I think I'll never get tired of watching that huge B-32 from Mayville in the air. I may have burned some of the brats while it was aloft. The formation flying by the T-6's was also a high point.

Thanks to all the members who helped out on the operations end of it and in the food stand. You were great. To Don Weigt, who ramrodded the thing, well done!

## Whizzers WardBird Report

*By Craig Lovell*

This month's gathering was interesting, with the usual cast of characters; let me give you the highlights.

Bill Kinney brought along the Assembly Manual

## MARCS 2002 Calendar of Events

Event	Date	Location
Fall Thermal Soar	September 7 Hey!! What where did summer go?	Long Island Sod Farm

for the new 1/4 scale Fokker DVIII by Balsa USA. This is another in an expanding line of WWI aircraft they have been cranking out. If your not familiar with the numbers, the is the Fokker with a single, cantilever, parasol mounted wing, often referred to as the Razor. The construction looks straight forward and from what I could tell, they seen to cover the tricky parts of aligning the wing fairly well. Should be an impressive airplane. I did catch the eye of a number of us and the possibility of a full squadron isn't out of the question. I'm sure Bill has it mostly put together by now, right Bill?

Tom Lazar brought in his Bf-109 (well just the fuselage on the gear... the rest of it wouldn't have fit though the door!). This is a Bf-109-G that he's been detailing to look like one flown by Macky Steinhoff of JG-52. Most of the color and markings appear to be on the airframe with work still progressing on some weathering and placards. A very impressive model.

We also had the usual mix of new stuff in print, pictures, and as always, lots of hangar flying. We're looking into a trip up to the EAA Air Museum when the flying season winds down so we can paw through the Eagle Hangar. We're also looking into holding a future meeting at the Museum of Aviation, thanks to Leroy Stuczynski.

That's it for now... We're off!!!

### **The Bent Bird**

#### **Fuel Follies II**

*By Don Weigt*

So, you may remember this column began with my reporting about flooding the interior of Scientific Mercury oldtimer with glow fuel when the tank split, and I filled it not once, but two or three more times! This seems to be my "bad luck with fuel" airplane, as it has had two more mishaps...

New Mishap #1: I think it was sometime late last year when I flew the plane, then brought it home in a real hurry because of bad weather. Often, habit is a good thing. I ALWAYS drain the fuel tanks on my models at

the field, before cleaning them. Always, that is, except that one time. Well, probably because I always empty the tanks at the field, I didn't remember to empty the tank that time after I got the plane home.

My glow powered planes have the more typical fuel tank setup, with two lines, not three. I fuel through the line that feeds the engine, and the overflow is the line that goes to the muffler pressure tap. So, it's a nearly closed system.

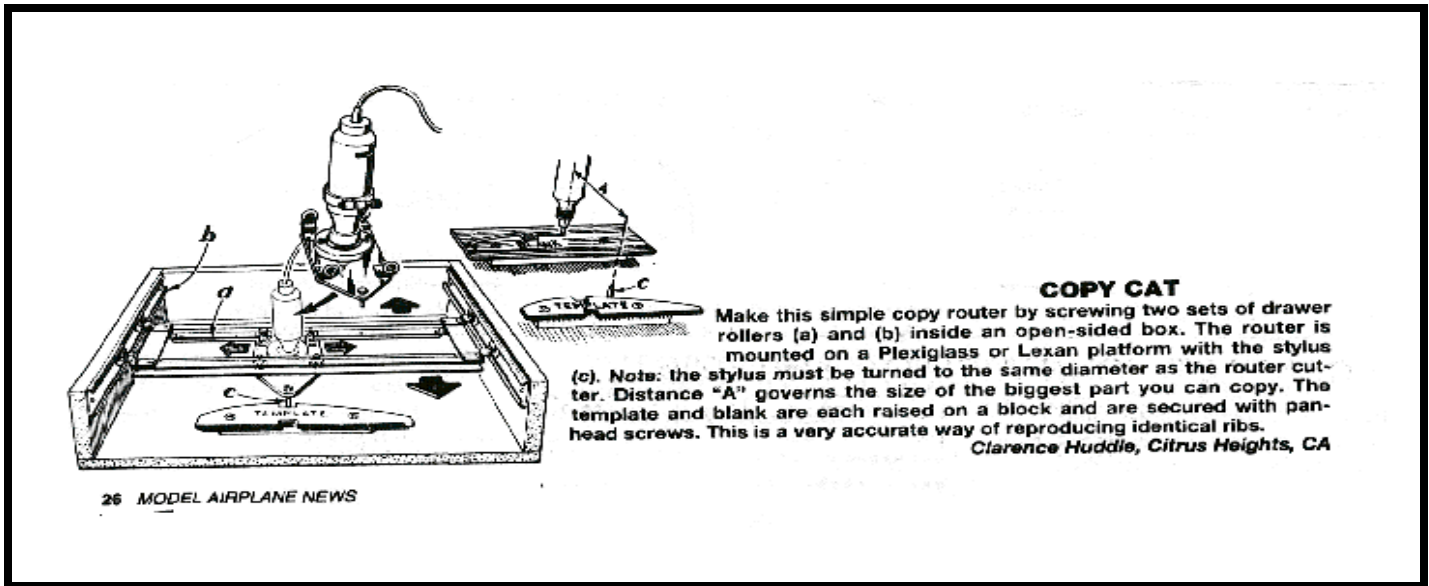
This plane has an older OS MAX .40 plain bearing engine. Good or bad, I store it on its nose, leaning against a shelf. The pickup clunk (weight) stays near the back of the tank because the pickup line isn't flexible enough for it to easily get to the front. So, when the plane is stored on its nose, the clunk is above the surface of the fuel. Fuel should just stay in the tank, right?!

Wrong! The vent line is near the front of the tank. When the plane is on its nose, if there is much fuel in the tank, the vent line is below the surface, becoming a pickup. The clunk, being above the fuel level, becomes a vent. So, sometime during the following weeks or months, most of the fuel in the tank managed to pass through the vent line into the muffler, where the alcohol evaporated. A little fuel or oil leaked out, and dampened the rag on the floor that the engine rests on. But, every engine has oil in it, so I didn't worry about that!

The rude surprise came this spring, when I picked up the plane to check it. As I brought it level, it poured several ounces of oily fluid onto my basement concrete floor! Ughh! I wiped up most of it, but some soaked in, making a stain that's probably permanent.

I guess the lesson here is: pay attention, especially when your routine is interrupted; and take care at home of whatever you didn't complete at the field.

New mishap #2: I replaced the fuel tank, and all its hardware and tubing last year after the old tank split. I was careful not to over tighten the screw that expands the stopper to seal the tank opening, as I didn't want to split the new tank. The new stopper was pretty stiff, but seemed to seal OK and felt secure. It worked fine for the rest of the year.



### COPY CAT

Make this simple copy router by screwing two sets of drawer rollers (a) and (b) inside an open-sided box. The router is mounted on a Plexiglass or Lexan platform with the stylus (c). Note: the stylus must be turned to the same diameter as the router cutter. Distance "A" governs the size of the biggest part you can copy. The template and blank are each raised on a block and are secured with pan-head screws. This is a very accurate way of reproducing identical ribs.

Clarence Huddle, Citrus Heights, CA

26 MODEL AIRPLANE NEWS

I've been busy flying my gas powered PT-19 and my electrics this summer. Hadn't flown with glow power all year. In July, I decided it was time to fly the Mercury, and burn some of my old fuel while it would still run the engine.

Took it out the day the Scouts were at the field. Fueled it up, and it started OK, but was a little balky: Well, it hadn't been run all year. Probably would be fine after it cleared itself of old oil, cobwebs, and whatever.

Tweaked the needle valve, took off, and it was fine for a few minutes. Before 5 minutes were up, it was dead stick. It seemed to be out of fuel, but it should run more than 12 minutes. Maybe there was a hole in the pickup fuel line, or some dirt in the needle valve? Fueled it again, fussed with the needle valve setting again, flew again, landed dead stick again! One more try: same results.

Maybe it's bad fuel, or something. Let's take it home, check it out, and think it over. Removed the wing, and found the fuselage full of fuel and vapor! Oh, oh! Again?! How?! Did the new tank split already?

Over one of the trash barrels, I cut a hole in the Monokote covering on the bottom of the fuselage near the wing's trailing edge. I drained out about 8 ounces of fuel. Ugh! The wood was soaked, as was the bottom of the foam protecting the battery pack and the receiver...

I pulled out the tank, and found it was fine, except the stopper had come out of the hole! I knew the new stoppers were firmer than the old ones, but it had seemed tight in the tank when I installed it. Now, about a year later, it had been expelled by the pressure from the muffler. Bummer!

I don't know if the tank expanded, which seems doubtful, or the stopper relaxed, or the oil from the fuel in the tank all winter managed to work into the seal and make it slippery. I am certain that the stopper blew out, and that's all!

Cleaned everything enough so it wouldn't make a mess in my car, and took it home. Removed the battery pack and receiver, dried them, and repacked them in new vinyl sheet foam material. Poured kitty litter into the bottom of the fuselage to absorb as much of the fuel and oil as possible, then vacuumed and shook it out after a week or more.

Patched the hole in the Monokote. Replaced the tubing in the tank, because that's where it seems to fail first, and the line to the needle valve because the old one was too short to work back through the hole in the firewall (the tubing gets threaded through snug holes in the firewall, then the tank with tubing attached is inserted into the nose through the battery compartment in the cabin.)

Tightened the screw through the stopper about 2 more turns, and put the tank back into the plane. Cut the new tubing to length, and connected the tubes to the needle valve and muffler. I think this time the stopper may be tight enough to hold a seal. I sure hope so: it's a lot of work to clean up a plane after fuel leaks into it.

I'm concerned that the tank didn't come with any instructions about how much to tighten the screw through the stopper. I think that information was included about 20 years ago. These new stoppers are so stiff, it seems difficult to judge how much to tighten them, and when they are secure, yet not so tight they could split the tank.

I did prove that having the stopper too loose is just

as bad for the plane as having it too tight and splitting the tank!

Again, as earlier when the tank split: if the engine run is short, the tank seems empty, and especially if the needle valve setting changed, it's a good idea to check the plane's interior for a fuel leak, and not just fill it up again and give it another try. It may be a bother to remove the wing, as it is on my Mercury, but I sure wish I'd done it!

## Interrogating the Kriegies

By Jerry Buss

The official name of the place was *Durchgangslager der Luftwaffe*, or Transit Camp of the Air Force. POW's referred to it as the Dulag Luft. The prisoner ID number system listed them on rosters as "*Kriegs Gefangener (number)*" so, using typical American shorthand logic, they referred to themselves accordingly as *kriegies*. The camp was located at Oberursel, a few miles to the northwest of Frankfurt am Main. For shot down American and allied air crewmen, this was where their careers as prisoners of war began. Initially this was the place of interrogation, but as "business" increased it was necessary to move that part of the operation to another camp about forty miles to the northeast. Thereafter, kriegies were received at the Dulag and sent on to the interrogation center, known as *Auswertestelle West* as interrogation capacity allowed. When finished there, they came back to the Dulag for forwarding to a permanent camp. White painted stones at *Auswertestelle West* spelled out "POW" and it was hoped that this would serve to protect both the camp and the adjacent optical manufacturing facility from the B-17's.

Many new prisoners arrived at the Dulag suffering from wounds and burns of varying degrees of severity. Needed medical care was provided unstintingly and men who received it praised it.

Bomber crews tended to fill the Dulag up too quickly and overwhelm the interrogation capacity with many redundant potential informants and so usually only the pilot and perhaps the navigator, if they survived, would be held for interrogation with the rest of a surviving crew being shipped out immediately. Once at *Auswertestelle West*, the Germans had an amazing library of information on the Allied air forces that faced them and this was carefully researched for kriegie specific information before any of them were ever interviewed. What was so amazing was that if you were an allied fighter pilot, they had a file on you.

Once at the interrogation center, which consisted of 14 buildings, they were confined in a large single story U-shaped building, the two upright wings of which were prison quarters. It was called the "cooler." The rooms were very small, large enough for a bed with a straw mattress, a chair and little else. Each room had a single window with opaque glass that let in light, but that could not be seen through. When they needed to go to the toilet at the end of the hallway they pushed a rod through the door as a signal to the guard, who, in his own good time and when no other kriegie was in there, would open the cell door and permit him to go and relieve himself. No contact was allowed between kriegies but that didn't stop them from trying.

Flyers were given solitary confinement for at least a few days while their interrogator prepared for their first interview. This meant the only contact with any human was with the guard who allowed the kriegie to go to the toilet and who brought him food. The opaque window remained closed at all times and he was confined at all times. There were no outside exercise periods nor books loaned by the camp library. Geneva Convention rules prohibited more than 28 consecutive days of solitary and this was scrupulously complied with, although a good many did serve the limit or nearly that much. If a man showed fear or other weakness, he might be threatened with torture. Torture was never carried out, but the threat was effective sometimes. Others were bribed with luxury food or personal items or other preferences. Those who showed strength and determination not to give information were usually treated with deference and respect, but often served long term testing of their resolve in solitary. At least this how most interrogators dealt with their kriegies.

The usual length of stay was anywhere from a week to about four or five weeks. American thinking was that anyone who stayed more than a week must be talking and would be considered for courts martial upon repatriation. In fact, it was the other way around. Those who would talk usually did so quickly and were moved out accordingly because there was a limit to any information they might have. The tight lipped ones were kept longer in a generally futile effort to get them to talk.

The food was fairly bad however that was a standard condition in wartime Germany for Germans as well, but all in all they were fairly well treated. That was not always the case for the few flyers who fell into the hands of the SS or Gestapo before the Luftwaffe got control of them, however.

The interrogators were Luftwaffe personnel, nearly all low ranking enlisted men. They were not given officer's commissions because they were not professional soldiers, but rather well educated, highly intelligent civilians who were fluent in American or UK English and who just happened to be in the Luftwaffe due to wartime circumstance..

Few, if any, of the interrogators were trained in psychology. Those assigned to question Americans were highly proficient in American idiom and slang. Many had actually lived in America or other English speaking countries before the war. Irwin Stovroff was amazed to discover that his interrogator had lived a block away from him in Buffalo, NY and he had been the interrogator's family's paper boy. The interrogator had been a high school classmate of Stovroff's older sister. Knowing Stovroff was Jewish, the interrogator put a question mark in the box for religion on his information sheet, probably saving him great trouble and possibly saving his life.

Interrogators were arrayed by specialty. Some questioned only bomber crews while others talked to fighter pilots. Hanns Joachim Scharff, specialized in fighter pilots of the US 8th and 9th Air Forces.

Like his fellows, Hanns Scharff was neither a psychologist nor a soldier. Born in 1907, he was a business executive who was educated in Leipzig. He was also an artist who worked in mosaics. He lived for about ten years before the war in South Africa where he married the daughter of Lt. Col. Claude Stokes, an RFC officer killed by Manfred von Richtofen in 1917. They had three sons and a daughter. On almost the same day that Stokes died, Hanns's own father also died of wounds suffered a year earlier at Soissons.

The Scharff family was well to do. Both of Hanns's parents were children of families that were very successful in the textile business. In South Africa, he had been promoted to manager of the Overseas Division of Adlerwerke, a firm that built automobiles, airplanes, tiger tanks, typewriters and other implements of both peace and war. While on a rare holiday in Germany in 1939, war broke out and he was dragooned into the Wehrmacht as a panzer grenadier.

When, in 1941, he was on the verge of being shipped to the Eastern Front, his English wife, instead of seeing him off at the railroad depot, stormed into a general's office and protested the lunacy of sending such a well educated and able executive off to die in Russia. Surely such a man could be used more profitably by the Reich. Rather than laughing at her, he took her argument

to heart and had Hanns's orders canceled and rewritten assigning him to an intelligence unit. Ultimately, he was assigned to cooperate with the Luftwaffe at Oberursel and later was transferred out of the Wehrmacht and into the Luftwaffe. Other than a fine command of English, he had nothing in his background to suggest that he might become an astonishingly effective interrogator.

He seemingly lived in a world that was walled off and separate from the bestiality of Nazi Germany, although he was fiercely loyal to his Fatherland. He was absolutely chivalrous in his abhorrence of inhumane treatment of prisoners. It was common for him to visit and sometimes go to unusual lengths to provide aid and comfort to wounded and sometimes dying prisoners. On the other hand, he was so good at interpreting eye movement, facial expression, vocal variations and other body language, as well as guiding conversation, that he could get whatever information he wanted without apparent effort. One former prisoner said that he believed Hanns Scharff could get a confession of infidelity from a nun. Many men agonized for years wondering what information they had given unknowingly in the small talk that Scharff promoted and what harm it might have done.

In his book, *Tumult in the Clouds*, James Goodson (133rd Eagle Squadron, later 8th Air Force, 4th Fighter Group, 30 or 32 kills, sources vary, but 15 air-to-air), describes at length his experience with Hanns Scharff.

"---A good looking young man in the uniform of a Luftwaffe private looked up at me. I didn't know it then, but I was in the presence of Hanns Scharff, the Luftwaffe's Master Interrogator.

"I stood at attention, steeling myself to give only name rank and serial number, regardless of threats or even torture.

"He got up from his desk, hands outstretched and a broad smile on his handsome face.

"Well, Goody! We've been waiting for you for a long time! I'm delighted to see you.'

"Goody was a nickname used by only some of my closest friends, and, occasionally as a call sign on missions.

"Look,' he went on. His English had only the slightest trace of an accent. 'You're in my hall of fame. These are the top VIP's - that's Very Important Prisoners - I've been waiting for you.'

"I found myself looking at a photograph of myself pinned to the wall. There were also pictures of Zemke,

Gabrewski, Blakslee, Godfrey, Gentile and a few others.

“Scharff was happily chatting on. ‘You’ll soon be seeing a lot of your friends from Debden. Some of them you probably thought had been killed. We’ve got Peterson, Bunte, Clodfelter, Van Epps, Mills, Oh! And your closest friend, Milliken. I’ll try to arrange for you to go to Stalag Luft III. That’s where Millie is.’”

Scharff went on to tell Goodson that his poor mother had been informed quite callously by the Pentagon that her son was missing and presumed dead. He had been on the run for some time after being shot down while strafing an airfield and before being captured. Then there had been a week long confinement in a local jail followed by a long trip by rail, moving only at night, to get to Oberursel. By all means, he must get a letter off to her through the Swedish Red Cross as soon as possible to relieve her troubled mind. And, oh, by the way, she had moved since he had been shot down and was no longer living in Miami. She had gone to Bermuda and was living now in Nassau. Scharff wrote out the address and gave it to him. It proved to be correct.

After several days of small talk, Goodson remarked that it seemed strange that Scharff was not asking him any questions. Scharff replied, “The trouble is I know all I need to know about the Fourth and all I need to know about the details of your Air Force career. I even know how much you know so I know you don’t know anything that I don’t already know.” That, of course, probably wasn’t so, nor was it the same as saying that he hadn’t gotten or wasn’t looking for confirmation of what he already *thought* he knew.

Scharff lead Goodson on several guided tours of the old castles, a park-like forest in the adjoining mountain range, called the Tannus, and other landmarks in the area, chattering amiably and showed little concern about escape and no interest in interrogation. One day they took the tram to Frankfurt and spent the afternoon at the public swimming pool. Through it all, Goodson couldn’t get out of his mind that somehow, without his knowledge, he must be giving away valuable information, even in irrelevant small talk. He may well have been, for this was typical of the way Scharff got his kriegies to talk. If, as Scharff said, Goodson didn’t know anything that he needed to know, why would he have kept him around rather than sending him on to a permanent camp? He was not there to be a good host; he was only one while some potential for extracting information might still exist.

When Goodson was eventually assigned to a permanent POW camp, he told Scharff that he was disappointed in him. Whether or not feigning it, Scharff angrily questioned why. “You never asked me for my name, rank and serial number,” Goodson replied. :”Damn it,” said Scharff, “I always forget something.”

Although he usually wore a gefrieter’s (lance corporal, the equivalent of a PFC in the American army) uniform, most prisoners suspected that this was for effect and that actually he must be at least a mid level officer. In fact he was not. Yet, he was so effective at what he did that even Hermann Goring knew personally of him and supported his methods enthusiastically.

Although in the book by Raymond Toliver and Scharff, *The Interrogator*, there is a picture of Goodson, there is no mention of the interview with him. Scharff does describe his contact with Francis Gabreski, however. It is almost a verbatim recitation of Goodson’s account of his initial interview (A warm, friendly handshake. Gabby, welcome to Germany, We’ve been waiting for you. Here’s my VIP gallery, etc. A very recent picture of Gabreski and several of his fellow pilots that had been taken after their return from a mission only a few days before he took off on his last, fateful sortie was included. Excursions to the forest, the castles and the swimming pool.) It was a canned, but carefully planned and executed tactic that he was able to pull off with no suggestion of it having been well rehearsed or used a hundred times before on other kriegies.

The information Scharff got from any particular prisoner was seldom a complete picture, but rather a shred of a fact here and another there. Probably few pilots had the complete picture the interrogators looked for. The shreds were then matched up with what he and other interrogators got from other prisoners and turned into a jigsaw puzzle, not unlike creating the kind of mosaic artistry for which Scharff would become renowned after the war. He was a mosaic artist in more ways than one.

*Editor’s note: I was going to finish this article this month with only information obtained from the Internet and Goodson’s book, but on the eve of having to send this issue of SPARKS to the printer, the Madison Public Library finally came through with a long ago requested copy of The Interrogator, the book mentioned above. After scanning it, it was apparent that the Internet material was hopelessly inadequate for telling the story of Luftwaffe intelligence gathering practice and this remarkable man and his place in the*

*history of World War II as it deserves to be told. Therefore, this article will be continued next month, at least, and likely beyond.*

*Next month, we will look at how Scharff got the kind of detailed information that he laid before the prisoners to impress them that he didn't care if they talked or not since he already knew all they knew anyway. In that way, he brought their guard down and they said things they would not have said otherwise - things that they never dreamed had any military intelligence value anyway..*