



AvAr Bulletin: 003

Subject: Project Updates

Date: 07.05.06

Sterling B-24

At the crack of dawn this coming Saturday (July, 8, 2006), AvAr team members Larry Liebrecht, Brian Richardson, Duke Sumonia, and Len Wallace will be stoked on coffee/diet coke and traveling eastbound across the prairie to Sterling, Colorado in search of a WWII B-24 crash site.

A site Duke has long had his eye upon, this we'll be a preliminary survey aided by an actual witness; Vern "Slim" Koester was 13 years old when the bomber attempted a "gear down" landing on the prairie, flipped over and caught fire. Five of the eight crew members died in that crash; Duke is trying to locate the three surviving crewmembers.

Our goal for this venture is to simply identify location/coordinates and ownership. We will make the necessary arrangements for future site survey and excavation activities. In addition, Duke and Len will be making a presentation during the early afternoon to some town representatives to garner interest in a memorial for the site.

Reporters from the Denver Post and Sterling Newspaper will accompany this team effort.

Adobe Creek Reservoir AT-17C

On December 23, 1942, two young airmen faced a difficult decision: one leapt to safety via parachute; the other elected to ride his stricken aircraft to a watery grave. AT-17C, serial number 42-13815, disappeared beneath the surface of Blue Lake, 14 miles north of Las Animas, Colorado. The next day, Christmas Eve, most of the aircraft was recovered, but the body of pilot Lt. Donald E. Spencer, as well as one of the aircraft's engines, were nowhere to be found.

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Adobe Creek Reservoir AT-17C. cont.

A dialogue has been established with the responsible Division of Wildlife manager for that county, Mr. Steve Keefer. He's informed us that certificates will have to be pulled before we can remove the remains of this aircraft. However, the search for these remains may be conducted uninhibited. (Mr. Keefer is very much interested in aviation history and willing to support our cause.)

Anyone wishing to spend a weekend in the water searching for these remains, please let us know. We presently have two qualified divers, one high speed boat (equipped with single sensor sonar) and a canoe available. We are in need of another boat and or a dual sensor sonar unit, as well as a magnetometer. All AvAr team members are encouraged to spend some time on this site.

Although the date is yet to be established, we are considering mid-to-late August, or possibly early September, for this adventure. Let us know what your availability is!

Send comments, corrections or submissions to aviator_b@msn.com.