



MILE HIGH FLIGHT 18

Order of Daedalians

Newsletter

Aug 2005

Toast J-surrender 60th at Richthofen

Remaining 2005 flight schedule

Flight 18 normally meets on the third Friday of each month. Exceptions are announced in the newsletter and through the caller phone tree. Your caller should contact you via phone/e-mail 7-10 days prior to each meeting. If not, please advise Flight Adjutant Bob Resling.

<u>Date</u>	<u>Location</u>	<u>Speaker/activity</u>
19 Aug	Aurora Hills*	War Stories
02 Sep	Richthofen Castle	WWII Beer Call
16 Sep	Aurora Hills*	Steve Ritchie
21 Oct	Aurora Hills*	A-10 Warthog
18 Nov	Aurora Hills*	Annual Bus Mtg
?? Dec	TBA	Christmas party

* Aurora Hills Golf Course Tin Cup Bar & Grill

Celebrate end of WWII, view surrender document at Castle beer call 2 Sep

World War II hostilities ceased on 15 August 1945 (VJ-Day), when Japan capitulated nine days after the Hiroshima A-Bomb, six days after the Nagasaki bomb.

Nearly three weeks later on 2 Sept, a delegation from Japan boarded USS *Missouri* in Tokyo Bay to sign the formal surrender papers. The following day, surrenders were also signed in Singapore and Baguio.

All of this was 60 years ago, more or less. And the 60th anniversary of the Allied victory over the Axis in World War Two is particularly significant in that it may be the last major anniversary of the event that most of its surviving veterans will experience. Sad but true.

In other words, this anniversary is a big deal. Here's your chance to celebrate it in style at 1700 Friday 2 September—60 years to the day after Japan formally surrendered to end WWII. Jerry Priddy, owner of Denver's Richthofen Castle, is making *der Richthofen* available for a beer call for Flight 18, the COANG 120th Fighter Squadron and members of Flight 11 who are able to attend. A major attraction will be the display of General Jonathon Wainwright's copy of the Japanese surrender document (*see P. 3*), which Jerry procured at an estate auction. Dress is dignified informal—Daedalian blazers/sport coats encouraged, ties not required; flight suits welcome.

Location: 7020 E. 12th Ave, Denver (south side of 12th Ave, three blocks west of Quebec – not on Richthofen Place). Parking on nearby streets. Car pooling recommended.



From the Flight Captain



Fellow Daedalians,

Halfway through another year and it's been a huge success so far. Our thanks to the Lafayette Foundation for hosting us and our wives in May. It was a wonderful event enjoyed by all. We are equally thankful to Col Jack Wilhite for hosting us at the Jeffco Airport.

In **August** we'll have our second "War Stories" session of the year. Remember, at least 10% truth is required from volunteer speakers. In **September**, we have two events. The first is a Daedalian Beer Call at the Richthofen Castle on Sep 2nd in celebration of the 60th anniversary of Japan's formal surrender on that day in 1945 (*see Pages 2/3*).

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Japan surrenders; WWII ends; Cold War begins



The Nagasaki bomb photographed at ground level. At least eight residents of Hiroshima who were within one mile of Ground Zero in that city on 6 Aug survived the first A-bomb virtually unscathed, then made the fateful decision to board a train to Nagasaki. They arrived just in time to experience—and survive—a second atomic blast three days after the first. Japan capitulated on 15 Aug (14 Aug in the U.S.), which President Truman proclaimed VJ-Day.



Foreign Minister Shigemitsu, representing his government, leads the Japanese delegation as it arrives aboard USS Missouri on 2 September 1945 to sign the surrender documents. Among measures taken to defend against rogue Kamikaze attacks during the post-VJ-Day ceremony, sailors manned fully ready anti-aircraft batteries and the Navy flew non-stop CAP missions over the Allied ships anchored in Tokyo Bay.

CAPT Stuart S. Murray was C.O. of USS Missouri at the time of the surrender ceremony. Years later, ADM (Ret) Murray recounted the day's events. Selected excerpts of his oral history follow:

“Shigemitsu had a wooden leg, his own having been blown off in Shanghai several years before. That presented a problem. General MacArthur had said he didn't want the Japanese aboard the MISSOURI on its weather deck more than five seconds and he didn't want them to be even a fraction of a second late in getting up there. Nine o'clock was the official time. So we took young sailors and took a swab handle and put it down their trousers' legs so they couldn't bend their legs, strapped it on them and they'd get in a small boat just exactly like the one the delegation would come over in, and they would be Shigemitsu, who was rapidly named 'Pegleg Pete' by all the sailors and officers. Well, we practiced this about twenty times, how long it took to get them out of the boat from sitting in it, get up on the bottom platform for the forward gangway, come up the gangway, and so forth.”

“Along with General MacArthur and his staff, an Army colonel had flown out with the surrender papers. It was the first time we'd seen them. One look at these documents and all hell broke loose! They were about 40 inches by 20 inches each and two of them had to be in line. Our beautiful mahogany table, a gift from the British Navy for the occasion, was 40 by 40! Couldn't do it. So I called the four nearest sailors and we dashed down to the crew's mess. We grabbed the first table—the mess cooks were just cleaning it up—and took it on up. On the way by the wardroom I yanked a green cover off the first wardroom table I came to and said to the guys out there on the deck to set up this mess table and spread the green cloth on it. It really looked very nice...and the group was all aboard then.

Later we noticed that the green cloth had a lot of coffee spots on it from coffee spills in the wardroom.”

“General MacArthur, when he signed, asked General Wainwright, who had been captured when Corregidor fell and kept a POW, and also General Percival of the British Army, who had been in command at Singapore and taken prisoner, to come and stand alongside him. They were, of course, very emaciated looking and had just been flown in the day before from a prison in Manchuria where they'd been released by the Japanese or rescued. He gave Wainwright his first pen when he started out signing and Percival the second one. The other three he put in his pocket.”



Gen. Jonathan M. Wainwright was the Commander of the Filipino-American forces on the Island of Luzon. When MacArthur was ordered off Bataan in March 1942, Wainwright, promoted to temporary Lieutenant General, succeeded to command of US Army Forces in the Far East, a command immediately afterward redesignated US Forces in the Philippines. When Corregidor was still under siege, Wainwright's concern became twofold: to preserve the morale and fighting spirit of his men, and to try to arrange for the evacuation by submarine of selected personnel, including intelligence specialists, grounded aviators, and nurses. His remaining duty was to tie up the Japanese for as long as possible. He chose to stick it out in Corregidor and stay with his men. His last duty was to surrender Corregidor to the Japanese on May 6, 1942 which turned out to be the most painful and shattering experience in his military career. He was then held in prison camps in northern Luzon, Formosa, and Manchuria until he was liberated by Russian troops in August 1945. After witnessing the Japanese surrender aboard USS *Missouri* on **September 2, 1945** he returned to the Philippines to receive the surrender of the local Japanese commander. On his return to the United States, he was given a hero's welcome, promoted to General, and awarded the Medal of Honor. He retired from active duty in August 1947 and died at San Antonio, Texas on **September 2, 1953**.

Photos clockwise from top left:

- ♠ *Foreign Minister Shigemitsu ("Pegleg Pete") signs two copies of the surrender documents, one copy for Japan and one for the Allies. The Allies' copy would be taken back to CONUS by Admiral Nimitz, who had signed on behalf of the United States.*
- ♠ *1,000 Navy carrier planes fly over USS Missouri in Tokyo Bay during the surrender ceremony.*
- ♠ *Japanese delegation departs USS Missouri 2 September 1945 after signing the surrender documents.*
- ♠ *Gen Wainwright on the cover of Time 8 May 1944.*

