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Wings & Things Guest Lecture Series

American Raiders: The Race to Capture the Luftwaffe's Secrets

German immigrant and retired Air Force Colonel Wolfgang Samuel uses official Air Force records and survivors' interviews to tell the story of the disarmament of the once mighty German Luftwaffe and to discuss Operation Lusty.

Thank you very much for the generous introduction. I was stationed here at the Wright-Patterson Air Force Base and I think it was 1978 I recall it was...it was a cold winter. One day we had a blizzard, we had a blizzard and I was stuck in Beavercreek for three days. I couldn't get out, and this morning I opened up my drapes and I looked out and here was snow driving. All the days to pick to come out in another blizzard heading into Dayton Ohio. Fortunately it wasn't nearly as bad as what I experienced back then and I am very, very happy to see so many of you here and hopefully we can all have a good time this evening for the next hour or so. I cannot think of a more appropriate place than for this presentation than right here at the former Wright Field where the man at the center of my story through Army, Air Force's Colonels spent most of their professional lives serving the country with foresight and determination. This to Wright Field that Colonel Harold Watson and Donald Putt, I hope these names are familiar to some of you, but the remarkable ME262 and the Arado-234 jets for test and evaluation. A thousand tons of blueprints and critical test data which was supposed to help our industry played catch-up and nearly 200 first grade scientists on a project overcast and paperclip came right here to Wright Field, largely due to the efforts of these two men and one of the most prominent among the German scientist of course was Dr. Hans Von Ohain, and he became in time the chief scientist at the Wright-Patterson Air Force Base laboratories proof that America was and still is the land of opportunity.

I think I am probably an example of that too. The United States has always been a great land of opportunity for me and I hope I can continue to serve in some capacity as long as I am alive. American Raiders is a story of disarmament of the German Luftwaffe of the exploitation of its technological secrets and the Operation Lusty. It's a story of creation of Air Force Technical Intelligence variously known as T2, ATIC, FTD now the National Air and Space Intelligence Center and still the same organization doing great service to this nation, and above all American Raiders is the story of people who love their country and cared for our future. Let me share with you maybe how I got to write this book. In 2000, I think it was sometime I went to an 8th Air Force Association meeting in spring, in Maryland and you may wonder why I a German would...of German heritage would go to an 8th Air Force Association meeting, well when these guys were bombing in 1944, 1945, I was a kid living in Berlin and so I was a frequent target and as a result I became a member of this organization [Laughing]. All of you can understand that right. So anyway we have a nice table here and the fellow sits next to me, his name is Bob Strobel. I asked Bob politely, what did you fly B17 B 24s he said neither I flew a P47 and ME 262.

You can imagine I was taken a little bit a back by the latter and I said what did you defect the Luftwaffe so you could fly the jets, no...no...no. He said very seriously you know, at the end of the war we didn't have any jet fighters and we needed what they had back in the United States as quickly as possible and I worked for colonel by the name of Watson and there was seven of us and we got up onto these jets together and in a roundabout way, then managed to get them to Paris and then to France and finally got them over here to Wright Field. This is a cradle of American Military Aviation and I never will forget that Wright Field, Wright Palace and Air Force Base place is much history. Well Bob Strobel then gave me the names of other Watson's wizards, they called themselves wizards some of you probably know this. One evening they were sitting around the campfire boiling some trout, which they had fished out in the river out there, they were screwing some hand grenades and oh, trout came to the surface and they beat C rations and K rations and one of the guys Bob Hansbo said won't it be fun whizzing around the countryside in these German jets and so they became Watson's Wizards.

I mean they worked for Watson so, ah...in fact they became actually America's first jet pilots and they taught themselves. There wasn't anybody really to teach them how to fly and the jet was quite a transition, believe me. When you flew P-47 you know, you taxi down the runway like that and you never knew where you were going and a jet, here in ME 262 suddenly could look straight ahead and that was quite a revolution for these people you know, and then of course in a prop job, when you pull the power back boom you had no power right and when you wanted power, you shoved the throttle forward and there was power was a jet and that was a learning curve and they had this didn't have any you pull the throttle back nothing seems to happen you know, but then slowly you lose your power and when you want power additional power you push the throttle forward, I thought for long time for the windmills to get wound up again, it was a surprise that they didn't at least kill one or two of them but they tried very hard at times [Laughing sound]. I said to Bob has anybody have written your story, anybody written a book about this obviously very important event, contributions you and your people made to this country, and he said no. Why should anybody do then I said I think it is important. I did a little research you know, quick and I found that there were few articles out filled with a lot of errors I said I don't know what I am going to do with this Bob I called him up and I said Bob would you mind me interviewing you and said no...come on out.

I interviewed him for three hours he told me all his war stories which I then verified in the Air Force history office you know you can't believe the fighter pilots [Laughing sound] so and I am glad I did this because he died six months later. If I hadn't interviewed him I would have lost a great source of information because Bob, the first lieutenant, he is the one who commanded this little group of captains and lieutenants whom Watson had recruited to fly these jets. So he gave me a lot of insights. I was going to have one of Watson's Wizards here this evening, former lieutenant Roy Brown and unfortunately because of the snow he could not make it. He lives in Chillicothe and I think it's a loss, I am sorry that he isn't here because you would have all enjoyed meeting

him. So before Bob died he gave me the addresses of this other wizards and then I went out and interviewed this good folks about their experiences. Ah...I finally decided to write this book because I found out this was such an important event in American history the transfer of this technology to this country and how it was accomplished and I wanted to do my little bit of saving American Aviation History that is why I wrote American Raiders not for any personal benefits. Well, everything that happened in American Raiders is portrayed and they of course happened within the context of World War II and the World War II how should I define World War II? Many of you have experienced it. I experienced it as a child it was a terrible war.

Some historians say 55 to 70... 55 million people died John Tegan, others say well no really 70 million people died in that war. I tried to think about the numbers most of them were Europeans, but there wasn't anybody there to really definitively count how many people died. It was just a murderous conflict.

One thing we knew after it was all over that Europe was a Heap of Ashes from the City of Coventry to the Ural Mountains in Russia, it was a terrible place. Believe me the amazing thing to me is when I go back there I am sure when you all traveled there you can't find any sign, any evidence of conflict of this nature ever having taken place. I can get my arms around numbers like 55 million or 70 million that is just too big numbers. So let me give you a little different perspective. The United States Strategic Air Force as in World War II, which consisted of eighth Air Force to the 15th Air Force, the ninth Air Force and the first Technical Air Force provisional. These people lost in the period of less than three years, sixty thousand men. I am talking about 60,000 people died in air accident in less than three years. I am not talking about the people who were taken the prisoners of war, not talking about the many more wounded who were sent home back to the United States. It was a bloody conflict. We lost only in the eighth Air Force over 6,500 B-17 and B-24 bombers. Just try to think of the numbers and loses.

We are stalling an air plane right here in the museum right now called the Memphis Belle, which was sent back and completed 25 missions. Very few people completed 25 missions in the early days of World War II. It was that kind of a bloody conflict. Let's look at it from the British perspective. The Royal Air Force bomber command lost over 55,000 people killed. They lost over 10,000 Aircraft in combat that counted the ones lost due to accident also so nearly 120,000 people died in the air war against Nazi, Germany and that is more people than we lost in the entire cold war from the Berlin Airlift through Korea into Vietnam. That is how bloody the conflict was and the amazing thing is that in 1945 the United States Strategic Air Forces consisted of 450,000 men right now our Air Force I think has less than 350,000 this was only one part of the Army Air Forces, it was that big and Gen Spaatz the commander of United States Strategic Air Forces in Europe had 17,000 aircraft of all types. 11,000 of them were considered first line aircraft. I mean just think of the numbers we will never see Air Forces of that size again. That's one amazing thing. This is most powerful air armada that was ever assembled in history but you know, among all those airplanes there was not one jet fighter squadron there was not one jet bomber squadron.

While in contrast, the Germans flew their first jet fighters in mid 1944 and then Arado-234 jet reconnaissance bomber truly a fine Airplane we don't have one here but there is one in the Udvar-Hazy Center in Washington in great condition. That particular Aircraft flew for the first time after the D-Day landings. For people who think that the success of the D-Day landing for instance was a pre old day in conclusion but we remind you all these that Airplane could fly without opposition anywhere across England and had it been available only two months earlier it could have detected Patton's army across [inaudible] where Hitler thought the American forces were and that we would be attacking across the narrowest part of the channel. It has been very easy for this Airplane to take the pictures and find out if there were any tanks or were any troops down there, so even the small things like that, ah...can affect the outcome of an operation.

The Germans had the bombsight in this Arado-234, which was far superior to our Norden Bomb-Sight, which we of course try to protect like...like it was a piece of gold those are some treasure but by 1943, the Germans already had the paperwork for Norden Bomb-Sight and their scientist rejected it as being inadequate. So...[Laughs] they developed the first cruise missile the V-1 because the V stood for revenge weapon for [inaudible] you know, and when we captured our first ones in 1944, we shipped it back here to Wright Field, made copies and it was known as a JB-2 Loon and we built a whole bunch of these things to use against Japanese but fortunately we never did have to use them, but German technology started flowing into American Aviation very very early as early as 1944 and then of course when our technical intelligence teams went through the Nazi's, the Luftwaffe's technological pantry, we came up was 138 missiles in various stages of development. You all remember the [inaudible] Ajax [phonetic] [00:15:27] right this German Missile and they made a quick transition. Can you imagine that weapon being used against our cumbersome B-17 or B-24 formations. So there was lot of technology which could have been very very dangerous to all our people and finally of course the Germans had the wind tunnels and the scientist to develop and build Aircraft to fly beyond the speed of sound.

Let me read you something here. Dr. F. Shweky may be you wouldn't know why he always went by Dr. F; the reason was his name was Fritz and in 1944 and 45, Fritz was not a good name [Laughing sound]. So...he just went by F, but Dr. Shweky was fled Germany after Nazis came to power and he was an Astrophysicist at Cal Tech and he wrote a report which was published in 1946 for the Army Air Force Scientific Advisory Group and he was part of this group and this is what Dr. Shweky had to say. The technical representatives who have carefully studied the war technical efforts of the Germans are rather hard put for an explanation of why the enemy did lose the war. The German supersonic experts did an outstanding job. We are many years ahead of all other countries in spite of all other mistakes made the Nazis might well have won the war. World War III, its outcome was not preordained. The Nazis were technologically, can I use the word stupid they didn't understand they only called on technology when they felt lose around their necks and then suddenly when the technology to save their regime but they had lost two precious years when Hitler in 1941 thought he had won the war and started victory celebrations in Berlin after his troops had marched as far as Moscow and

all major scientific work was stopped at that point of time and of course by 1943, you know, well my scientist you know, myself to save me that was little late.

So General Arnold the command of the only Air Forces. I considered him as one of the three best chiefs that Army Air Force in the United States Air Force ever had farsighted decisive man.

He certainly wasn't aware that of what the Germans were doing. He was aware of their developments in jet technology so, but he thought he had a handle on things I mean we had the P-59 and in 1942 it flew for the first time. It was a twin engine jet fighter; it looked ugly, and flew ugly. By 1943, the test pilots here at the Wright Field right outside this building in front of those big hangers if the engineers decided that we go tell the general this thing isn't going to make it, you know, as a matter of fact it is not going to be good enough to be even a good trainer. Maybe it could be a trainer or something anyway he finds himself between a rock and a hard spot. General Arnold because this was before you know D-day and that this was critical period during war so he turned to the Lockheed corporation and to a young engineer who had designed the P-38 that is one here, Kelly Johnson. I still love the P-38, the great Airplane it reflects the greatness of that man and he is in so many words said the Kelly, build me a jet fighter and that Kelly just that under 138 days he and his small team designed the P-80. In April 1944, General Arnold ordered 1000 P-80s. Ordering a jet fighter and designing an airplane frame does not make the jet fighter make, you got to have the power plant and we continue to experience problems with power plant.

We just, we just couldn't work it right Colonel Watson when you spoke to a group here in Dayton in 1945 he said the bucket kept flying apart you know, not coming apart to mean the combustion chamber they just, just couldn't built it right, and by 1945 all the airplanes that general tourist spots had we had four P-80 jets in Europe, one crashed, the other one ended up in the factory, a British factory for engine modifications and two of them were sent down to Italy in the 15th Air Force for moral flights. We did not have a jet fighter as a matter of fact by 1948 early in 1948, Stalin was tightening the noose around Berlin, guess what all our Air Force consisted of in Europe. United States Air Force is in Europe then commanded by the Lieutenant General Lame and I served in his Air Force for five years and strategic air command later on, and that he had one P-47 fighter group. That's all he had, there wasn't one jet fighter in Europe to oppose the Soviets. The P-80 finally turned into a real airplane we used few of them in Korea. It was never a great fighter but tens and thousands of American pilots cut their teeth from the T-33 on the trainer version, and it did a great job for us, but as far as General Arnold was concerned of course he did not have any jets. Bringing home the German technology was not an option for General Arnold, it was imperative, he had to do that. He was thinking of the future of the United States and he knew all those airplanes he had over the Europe the B-24s and B-17s were good for one thing, mostly pots and pans. They had outlived the usefulness.

Allow me at this time to focus on the individual on Colonel Donald Putt. Great American who was commander of Air Materiel Command finally when he retired he had

Wright Field, as I told you Wright Field this is the cradle of American Military Aviation and you know, all that and I wanted to talk to you about the defining moment in American Aviation history. Donald Putt was an engineer, a test pilot here at Wright Field was assigned the bomber flight test and it was Halloween in 1935 he set out here in an X-299, it was a predecessor to the B-17 fully fueled and he was the copilot and they put the pilot to the airplane and they took off and the airplane went into a steep climb and then a did what we call a wing over, and that came down like this and crashed in a big fireball. Most of the crew was killed, Putt survived the crash. Reason the airplane crashed until then all control surfaces on airplanes had always been locked with wooden wedges you know, it is red stringers hanging from them, Boeing had put a mechanical system in to X-299 here and the pilot thought that Putt has stomped on this lever, and removed the locks and then of course the copilot thought his pilot had done that I mean they did not have checklist in those days and everything was kind of seat of the pants and they paid for it, you make a mistake you didn't get fired in this Army Air Corps, where as the was very small and Putt was a bright guy. In 1937, he went to Cal Tech and he studied aeronautical engineering was fairly aware discipline at that time and Dr. Theodore Von Karman and all of you know Von Karman was one of the great aeronautics.

He too was a refugee from Germany and fled Hitler's reign. In 1938, Putt comes back here to Wright Field and he was program manager for the B-26 and B-25. Now, I am going to say something to you here if you are a B-26 performer or B-26 pilot you probably would don't like to hear this but Putt said that B-26 was a dog of all dogs. He was talking about the short wing airplane. So, I see a post card here in the museum it says B-26, [inaudible] B-26 has been any other aircraft in World War II I don't know about it but down at McDill when they head the B-26s they had the saying one a day in Tampa Bay, you know, I am not talking about B-47s but B-26s. So that is the flying lie from those days and then he got involved in the first jet bomber competitions those to speak out here in the Wright Field and Army Air Force went out and said to the manufactures, give us something with jets on it, and so the competition was for the B-45, B-46, B-47 and B-48 they were all according to him like B-29s with straight wings with jet pots on struck in the wings or on the side of the fuselage nothing imagined and another thing I need to mention right here American industry did not really believe in jet power. They thought that was some kind of a toy and one of the engine manufacturers I don't want to mention the name here still in existence hold the paper to Putt and said that the piston engine is the ultimate form of powering in aircraft, right he better understand that. So that is where we stood we had an industry that didn't believe in new technology to move forward.

So Donald Putt then in 1945 along with Harold Watson both of them Colonels here at Wright Field get sent over to Europe the Head Quarters of United States Air Force in Europe which is located of course in Paris, right in a nice building on the banks of the Seine. They do various things there and I am not going to talk about Watson later but on April 13, 1945 the City of Brunswick was captured by American troops and a car came into headquarters U staff to the exploitation division there and they said the Germans have a Research Center here that we did even know of. So Colonel McDonald was the chief of intelligence for tourist spots told Putt they all knew each other in this world you

know, McDonald, [inaudible] [00:26:51], Putt they knew each other from the early days I mean it was a very small army [inaudible] [00:26:54] you have to keep in mind I have a copy of telephone book here those days consisted of two pages, Wright Field telephone book. Yeah. Well. So he sensed Putt heading in air technical intelligence team to Brunswick to this Research Center called Falcon [inaudible] [00:27:14]. There he found seven research labs I mean top flight the best the British and our forces never knew it existed these labs were fit the buildings into a forest, the buildings looked like farm houses and so they had wind tunnels there that all engineers could only dream of.

Putt being an aeronautical engineer he looked at things there and he picked up the phone and he called up and tacked on Dr. Von Karman and I need to talk a little bit about Dr. Von Karman. Dr. Von Karman was the head of the only scientific advisory group and he was appointed by General Arnold to tell him where American Research and Development Aviation should be going in the future. So Putt was a team of first full top flied engineers and scientist was in Europe at that time. So Putt calls up his former professor and says you got to come out here Von Karman, you got to see what these people have. So here is this meeting an American Aviation history which truly changed aviation and obviously Putt was there and there was Dr. Von Karman in the number of his people and then there was Dr. Arnold Booserman. Dr. Arnold Booserman who came right here to Wright Field after the war and worked many many happy years in the United States and after that Dr. Arnold Booserman was the swept wing expert of the day. He was expert on compressibility on high speed air flow I mean he had tested models in his one wing tunnels with 45 degrees wing sweep.

I mean nobody was thinking of wing sweep in those days at all. The ME-262 had wing sweep and that was to deal in was dragged that was because then 262 had a send of gravity problem. So Booserman was the world's expert in this particular field. So here you have these two people Dr. Von Karman the American, and Booserman. Now these guys knew each other from the old days. Karman used to be working at the University of [inaudible] [00:29:43] where they also had good wind tunnels also so Putt says when they met it was like homecoming, you know, back slapping and all this and then they addressed each other by their last names. That is where European scientist do that. I tried to recall this interchange for you. Karman says to Booserman why the swept wings Booserman, and Booserman says ah...by sweeping the wings I filled the air into thinking that if the plane was not moving through the air as fast as it really was [Laughing sound]. You know, he delayed the onset of drag then let me tell you what is so significant about this. This is the most knowledgeable scientist in the world and he speaks in very simple terminology. When Dr. Von Karman turned in his study to new horizon to longer in study to General Arnold I have a copy of it, I didn't forget to bring it from my hotel room, what impressed me to and that study was simplicity of language of this learned men today you cannot go to any pentagon study and find simple language, they are filled with jargon and of course it inhibits communication.

So I was told by young officers in the past if somebody can't explain the complex problem in simple terms he doesn't know what he is talking about. Believe me that is true [Laughing sound]. So anyway these two guys conversing and then Karman says

where and when did you get this idea and Booserman says Karman don't you remember you gave a paper, the Volta Congress in Rome in 1934 that gave me the suggestion and then the more to Karman supposedly went like that of course and I so this is a funny thing how these guys converse. In 1935 Booserman gave a paper at the international conference talking about swept wings after that the subject was dropped and became a state secret, German state secret but they also wasn't any interest. So Booserman had been working on this for a long time. George Sharer the chief designer for the Boeing company sat in the back of the room and listened to all this and of course he was designing what airplane, the B-47 that would change the entire world of aviation and the B-47 of course had straight wings like all the other jets the B-45, B-46 and then he sent the tricks back to his team and he told them stop work until I get back and when he got back he and his engineers put into the B-47 everything they learned from Booserman and the German experiment and the Airplane that is sitting out there in the Cold War hall as an another fact had flown number of missions in that particular plane and reconnaissance missions against you know, Soviet Union have 2000 hours in the B-47 and the injection seats not very comfortable, ah... that airplane really is German Technology that flown into American aviation here as early as 1945, changed everything. This tense formation was very quick really you all know the F-86, I think it is one of the greatest fighters ever built. You know, the first F-86 was a straight wing job you know, just like F-84 and not very impressive and the North American they took all the German data and then the F-86 got the swept wing and very well and then tail plane leading edge flaps which we didn't even have in the F-4 later on and speed brakes and all kinds of good stuffs.

The F86 is the really the son of the ME-262. At the time of 1945, the Germans if I have gone this long already [Laughing sound], the Germans actually were testing supersonic models. If you give me 10 more minutes or something I love the subject but I know I am probably boring you today [Laughing and clapping sound] say...ah...so anyway we have this great event that took place which changed all aviation. General, back to General Arnold in why I am considering one of our great chief of staffs. He went to tourist spots in 1944 after the D-day landings and he could see that Germany wasn't going to last and much longer he said to me like would you do three things for me they didn't talk this but I tried to simplify the things as you said I want to dissolve my Luftwaffe and when they talked about the armament not like what we did in Iraq her but down to hunting life, we have nothing, don't leave him anything, now the to find what technologies do German shared with the Japanese. Yet to remember there was still a war going on in the pacific was a bloody war, we lost over 10,000 marines in Okinawa alone in April and nobody really wanted to go in there and land in Japan and that if the Germans gave their technology to the Japanese the last thing that we wanted was suddenly they pulled it out of their head with ME-262 like aircraft was yet surface missiles and so on, we wanted to prevent that from happening and then he said to him bring home the German jets and wind tunnels and everything we got to play catch up in this country. This was easier said than done and there was lot of opposition to doing this believe me. So the first thing I am not going to spend much time on this armament part it is funny in some ways but we took 10 combat crew team which went to busy anymore at that point in time made this armament squadrons other that you should read that part in the book because it is really hilarious at times, but these squadrons were very very important in helping our air

technical intelligence team find the technologies to gather together and then package it and send it home.

Then finding out what the Germans had given to the Japanese and this was one of the project lusty tasks. One of our regular intercept teams picked up some communications of the German air staff between Admiral Donuts and the air staff group down in Austria [phonetic] [00:36:39] and Colonel McDonald then told one of our lieutenant colonel get yourself some folks down and head down them and capture them take them to [inaudible] [00:36:47] and that is what this lieutenant colonel did. He captured 85% of the German air staff like going to the pentagon you know, and taking 85% of our air staff and putting them some. Taking down the [inaudible] [00:37:02] we were good planners in those days and we had a team of British and American interrogators waiting in London they were flown right into [inaudible] [00:37:11] the interrogation process started and one of very first things that they learned was that from one engineer that he had been offered a job in Japan early in the year and he had turned it down that about 10 German submarines stuff was all kinds of good stuffs were on their way to Japan this was passed to the US Navy they captured the bunch of them three ended up in Portsmouth Harbor and the others were sunk, three of them I think made it to Japan but more importantly they found a treasure trove of documentation which laid out everything the Germans that ever given to Japanese. Believe it or not they gave the Japanese every bit of their technology I wouldn't even do that for my brother [Laughing sound] you know, so I wouldn't tell my girlfriend all my secrets.

They gave up to Japanese just want the in-depth enough to translate those technology into something useful and they built the Japanese version of ME-262 but never amounted too much. This info was the boxes by ship to National Airport in Washington they were exploited there, the data was sent to the 20th Air Force which bombed the sites all that was in the papers which were working with German technologies bombed them and burned them down [inaudible] [00:38:31] Air Force did Berlin. So that problem was solved very quickly and now let me just briefly focus on only one other aspects of operation Lusty and it is much more complex than this and our friend Colonel Watson and I have to tell you a couple of things Colonel Watson, I liked the guy he was a commander of foreign technology division at one time where I worked so have to like him but I like him. He, he got his engineering degree at the [inaudible] [00:39:03] Institute in Troy, New York and in 1932 he wanted to fly I don't know every American boy in those days wanted to fly. They saw the bomb stormers and so I wanted to fly airplanes and so he goes out to the airport and there was fellow by the name of Simon Bittner, very very well-known stunt flyer and Watson stands by the fence and looks at the airplane every day. Finally Simon after flying his stunts taxi's up shout down to the kid what do you want kid. Either get in the front only costs five bucks and I will give you a ride or get the hell out of here right? You are making bad luck for me and Watson did not have any money really he said so I want to fly can't you teach me how to fly your airplane I want to fly the way you do and by the Watson turned out to be a superb pilot and Bittner scratched his head supposedly and said hey kid are you an engineer you look like someone who might be an engineer and Watson said yes sir I graduated here just a few weeks and said lot you teach me little more math so I can fly my air plane better,

yeah and I will teach you how to fly. So they go flying on flight# 3. Watson sits in the front, it's a bi-plane and the Bittner in the back and then Bittner shouts to Watson see you in the coffee shop and Watson didn't know what the heck Bittner was talking about but then he looks back and there is nobody back there.

Bittner had bailed out parachute of course and you know, I presumed he broke into a cold sweat I would have but then he said that the airplane flying anyway and so he landed and I think Bittner I think had told him any landing you make you can walk away if its going to be a good landing see even the better landing if you can use the airplane again [Laughing sound]. So you know, Watson accomplished both things. So he goes running into the coffee shop you know, like master here I am and Bittner says you know, what took you so long [laughing sound]. It is an important story because it showed the kind of man that Watson was in how and what kind of a leader he was he was hard but pop and Whitney and then he joined the Air Force because he was selling engines to the Air Corps and he said I need to know more of my customer. That is why he went in and in his class was Hub Zemke many of you know he was one of our great P-47 jocks and also Philip Cochrane, Lieutenant Curtis Lemay was his flight commander. So then he was a scientist setting bomb group at Langley there was a bomber field in those days he worked for Lieutenant Colonel [inaudible] [00:41:59]. So I am telling you they all knew each other. Sputz knew Watson when Watson was called to Europe in 1944 it wasn't by accident. You know, they all knew their talents and so Watson gets to get his break in April 1945, the war wasn't quite over yet and on April 28, 1945 [inaudible] [00:42:25] was captured.

This is where a huge plant was and they were going to test the first Super Sonic Air Craft and there they had a bunch of test pilots assembled and maintenance people and all this good stuff and why over 50 German ME-262 fighter [inaudible] [00:42:41] they took some pictures. You know, so Watson thought this is the good place to find my German jets which Arnold wanted back in the states. So they get the log I like felt here over 50 ME-262s but Patton's 3rd army had come through that, you know, when these tankers saw Swastika guess what happened boom, they fired the shell through it you know, so there wasn't hardly anything usable and unlike I felt. The first airplane they got is an ME-262 on May 8th which sits now in Air and Space Museum in Washington and it was flown by fellow name, Fritz Muller. Fritz Muller was a cocky pilot according to [inaudible] [00:43:34] this guy comes in with his ME-262 and puts on an air show before he lands and then turns it over that, that airplane is as I said, and that was him the airplane that is here actually was flown by Bob Strobel the fellow I told you about earlier. So then they acquired the bunch of other ME 262s that manage that did not put them together from parts of various air planes as you read in some publications. These were all functional pretty much functional airplanes which they manage to assemble. They got 10 one of them Watson gave it to the French why did he give them to French because he depended on the French for a lot of support you know, we were going to ship the airplanes from a French Port. So it was kind of a thank you very much type, type of thing. He was very good at that and then on June 10th this is quite amazing from late April by June 10th they had this nine ME-262s ready and they flew them in relays from [inaudible] [00:44:48] to Malone Airfield near Paris. Now they were going to be shipped back on the British Aircraft carrier to the United States here and then the air planes were

going to be flown here at Wright Field and to Freeman Field in Indiana and why do you think they went to Malone.

Well headquarters was United States strategic air forces was in Paris and I guess who was there General Spaatz and hey Watson wanted to get promoted too yeah [Laughing sound], Many of his friends had lot of decorations he didn't and so he wanted to show General Spaatz what he had pulled together in addition to these 262s he also got some Arado-234s four of them two of them he stole from the Britts, then Britts only wanted to give us two initially. The other two he managed to abscond yet to read in the book how he did it. Actually I interviewed a Britt who was in Norway when these two air planes were sort of stolen. Anyway he has these four airplanes there and then General Spaatz comes out and they have of course big bosses there they walk around and they have a fly by Bob Strobel leads to three ship formation and Bob says I have to admit to you Wolf to this day I regret what I did. They are flying by their level they are coming in diving in pretty much at 500 knots and so he does a barrel roll, you know Jumbo 004 engines in the ME-262 were very susceptible to flaming out when you had any change of airflow so it could have lost the air plane right there by doing that and they did not add anything you know, but anyway they made three flybys, General Spaatz was duly impressed and then the fun began.

They transferred the airplanes now to Kirksville Airport at Chabua [phonetic] [00:46:56]. The airfield one of the reserves names was Bon Anspor. Bob is a nice guy who lives in Orlando now, and so when they are not going to fly over 10,000 feet in these airplanes as they transferred them because it did not want to mess with oxygen tanks and things of that nature and was a double cloud tech Bob says and he wanted to see what these airplane could at a higher altitude any way so high I go up to 15,000 feet so what he does he flies that recommend. You know, he gets to a point says well I think I have to break out now go down to Kirksville are to be right down there but there was nothing but water. So he admits to me to panic you know so which few pilots do, but he did. He did one small thing he did a 180, he did not linger and go left right or anything but he did a 180 I came from there may be I can't find land again and he was running more on fuel so he sees land at Iowa, Jersey so he is running out of fuel he has no option he has to land and so the ME262 supposedly needed 6000 feet of concrete or macadam runway anyway there is only grass lay and he lands and he lands that airplane one of the British observer said that when he came in his gear down, he came over the church steeple and he thought he was going to take the steeple off but he gets early needed past church. Well Bob Strobel who was running this operation he didn't have the famous idea where his guy Hansbo was and he thought he was crashed and was gone to heaven you know, but three days later Hansbo manages to get in contact with him tells Strobel hey I am over here you know, I got lost and the Strobel said hey Bob you got yourself in the mess you get yourself out of the mess.

I will send you some kerosene in the C47 which you know, then they pumped the kerosene into the wind tanks and here is Bob now he has the short may be at most 4000 feet runway yeah of grass strip and this thing supposedly take 6000 feet and was a issue of pride to and it puts the power to it and he I said to Bob when we flew out of

[inaudible] [00:49:21] Aleutian Island in B47 often we were so heavy you know we go off the edge and then you drop down you pick up air speed there is you know, there is no sweat. Well he said I didn't know that. Ah he got it off in 4000 feet and the German test pilot they use [inaudible] [00:49:38] bomb said I wouldn't believe you but I know what you did. I know the dimensions of this island. So he got it off got it home but Bob you know, was a kind of guy he knew this wouldn't be the last incident he had, you know, the come in threes. So then they setup back to Paris he picks up another airplane this one [inaudible] [00:50:02] hasn't come down so that is a spectacular picture out which you probably have in your archives here so as in ME 262 was lots of fire that was Bob and Sputz sitting in there and they put it out and the air plane was saved nicely about the ME 262 was you could take a nose off in half in less than half an hour and put a new nose on you could take an engine off in less than an hour and any maintenance people in this crowd know that is an achievement yeah and replace it, and anyway so Bob knew the third event was somewhere out there in the future he said we all of us flew was his [inaudible] [00:50:40] throat after that and that came. Transferring [inaudible] [00:50:43] Wolfgang 190 from the East coast he was trying to land at Pittsburgh and then fly here to Wright Field, and so he had to runaway trimming. Yeah that means the control surface wouldn't respond anymore and this air plane went in to a loop and he barely was able to control the machine and then he bring it then in to some field near Pittsburgh.

One good thing about it was this was number 3 and he knew he was free from then on you know, and Watson just sent in another air plane picked him up and I was in and told the propeller ended up in some hunting lodge there in Pennsylvania or something. Overall the transfer of air planes went actually very well. They lost one more air plane and this air plane had a 50 mm gun in the nose and that gun is right here in the museum if you want to look at it, it was mounted in the nose of the ME 262 was intended to shoot down with one or two or three rounds bomber like the B17 and the B24 it was never employed. They used the German test pilot to fly from Paris to [inaudible] [00:52:05] he experienced a catastrophic engine failure and Bob told me if hadn't been and the airplane if I had one of my guys flying that air plane he would have died he would not have known to get out of that air plane. This was air plane Watson loved more than anything else this was the air plane that American intelligence right here and Washington was enthralled with because of that a big gun in the front. And Bob almost got court marshalled over this thing any way the gun was retrieved and you can look at here in the museum. The air plane how Watson got an air craft career at the time when the war was still going on in the pacific beats me but he was persistent he was not going to have his air plane dismantled. Like many of them have been before we brought them the Wright Field they were never put back together right in another field right he was going in the ship back on the air craft and carry for majesty's government provided a jeep carry and got all these air planes and one thing I can figure out they took home in addition to this advance jets you know, there was some trainer versions ME109, now who the heck needs the ME108 trainer.

I think they brought them home this personal air craft and they thought they could somehow get away with it they didn't somehow they never got clearance to fly those good things. Ah... Watson came home in a German four engine aircraft the Yonka 290

and some people down think that the Germans knew how to build the four engine aircraft they knew how to build them they just made some bad decisions they didn't build anymore. Any way this airplane so the interesting story how we got this air plane and so on so he flies with a crew of nine and they land in the what was a transatlantic hop including Bermuda and what are the islands we use Portuguese they land, the Azoros guess who is the general Arnold all over this the people and one of the people I interviewed he said it was just hell this and hell that and it was as if old time buddies any way he gives them Donald Arnold two of these air planes General Arnold flies home Watson beats him on the way back and as German Junker the Junker 290 plans right here at the Wright Field and he was welcome, if you read the paper clippings or so it was really something. What did Watson do after that. He put on a bunch of air shows. Right here at the Wright Field and at the Freeman Field and there was a reason behind that. We had great problems getting funding for all our jets at that time, and in was I think August 1945 which Richard Bong our greatest Ace 40 kills in the pacific killed himself in the 180. Congress decided we don't need any money for what you call jets if all best pilots can't fly these air planes you know, we don't need those air planes. So there was a reason for bringing in what they called Radio man what they call the Newspaper man and all the press. When they had these air shows at the Wright Field I am not talking about the 100, 200, 300 people showing up somewhat 10,000 people would come out here. They love to see Watson fly the German jets around and I have pictures in my book.

When he flew he flew 250 feet off the ground they would not allow that today anyway in front of the reviewing stand our people were thrilled and after that of course it is Watson who arrived here at the Wright Field truly created what I served in the foreign technology division but some of you sitting out here your technical intelligence center or the new center, it was Watson who gave it legs and specifically exploitation during the Korean war of the MIG 15. They did an outstanding job at the time and to organization after that became I think it always has been probably the best aeronautical and technical intelligence organization in existence bar none and we compared it when I was there say we compared achievements against many other well-known organizations which I won't mention an FTD always came out on top. In closing let me say that Watson established Wright Field T2, at the Wright Field he later on became the air technical intelligence center commander he retired as a two star, General Putt retired as a three star and by the way General Putt ended up winding as I said up to 200 of the German scientist here and he ended up having done so to speak under his command. He worked very very hard to get these people you know, out in to academe and industry was quite successful doing that. One thing these men did not let themselves be blinded by our stunning victory in 1945 they knew there was work to be done to make up omissions of the past. Ah...we owe a lot to the people like, Watson and many others who made sure that all our future would be solid and you can imagine that there was a lot of oppositions to German scientists coming over here the holocaust was just being revealed and in all its dimensions and yet we needed the knowledge. North American field the remarkable sweat spring F-86 as a result the B-47 came about and the only field at to Nike an suddenly made on their German team developed follow on versions to the V2 the Saturn rocket and took us to the moon, it was a good investment in our future. Most importantly from my perspective something changed within the management structure of whatever

we call it Army Air Forces, United States Air Force is no Air Force chief after World War II with accept or think ever again of settling for second rate technology that is what we had, that is what we fought World War II was, was second rate technology it didn't have to be that way and that is what Watson and Putt told these people for a long time, we didn't have to be out there scrounging but the Germans had developed be sure that been able to develop it on our own. And that is the reason for existence for the national air and space technology center. We will never again fall behind and no air force chief of staff is going to buy a second rate follow on air plane. May be you can understand the debate that is ongoing at the present time for this "expensive fighter" that we want in our inventory. There are many many interesting stories that I wish to have the time to tell you and talk about but I hope this was an enjoyable presentation for you and I will be happy to answer any questions.