

# The Roundtable Forum

official newsletter of the  
**Battle of Midway Roundtable**

[www.midway42.org](http://www.midway42.org)



**MARCH 2025**

## ~ INTRODUCTION ~

Our request in the last issue for info on VT-8 pilot Ed “Frenchie” Fayle brought an audio recording from Don Velazquez. It’s an oral history interview with Fayle himself when he was 94 years old. He describes the circumstances around the injury that prevented him from flying at Midway, and his explanation is quite different from what some have guessed (or accused) in the past. Give it a listen by clicking the link in Don’s message on the next page.

Also, Bill Longton comes aboard with info on that unfamiliar photo of the *Akagi* in our January newsletter, and Chuck Wohlrab sends a link to a pretty good video simulation of the B-26 attack that raises a question about torpedoes on Marauders—were they supposed to be there?

Finally, we have another colorized version of a familiar BOM photo, plus a new special feature on the Roundtable that many of you should find helpful. Thom and I hope you enjoy the March newsletter and welcome your comments.

—Ron Russell  
1 March 2025

~ AROUND THE TABLE ~

MEMBERS' TOPICS IN THIS ISSUE:

1. VT-8 pilot Edward "Frenchie" Fayle
2. The B-26 torpedo attack at Midway
3. *Akagi* photo in the January newsletter
4. Annual *Yorktown* association reunion

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1. VT-8 PILOT EDWARD "FRENCHIE" FAYLE  
(see the [February](#) newsletter)

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2 February 2025  
From: Don Velazquez  
California  
(Editor/publisher, *Heart Like a Mustang*)

I've pasted in a link [below] for an interview of Eddy "Frenchie" Fayle that was done several years ago. I'm gathering additional information on him for the BOM group. I've personally heard comments about him (from someone of VT-8 who did not fly) and read other comments here and there....you probably know of which I speak.



I thought it should be known that Fayle's 'questionable knife wound' could no way indicate his reluctance or fearfulness to fly in combat. Far from it. I think between the information my father gave in *Heart Like A Mustang*, Fayle's interview, and then Swede Larsen's own written recommendation for citation (Larsen witnessed Fayle's unescorted torpedo run), Fayle had quite the opposite of whatever some may have thought.

<https://www.hometownheroesradio.com/mp3/FAYLEPOD.mp3>

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As mentioned in the introduction, Don's link takes you to an interesting oral history recording by Fayle in his senior years. The above photo of him, from Bob Mrazek's [A Dawn Like Thunder](#) website, appears to date in the late 1940s.

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## 2. THE B-26 TORPEDO ATTACK AT MIDWAY

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24 January 2025  
From: Chuck Wohlrab  
Virginia

An interesting video on the B-26 attack on the carriers at Midway. I admit I was surprised that it is of decent quality. Most are not worth the time to watch.

This leads to a question for our aviation experts. I had thought that the torpedo mounts on the B-26s were designed for the aircraft. The video claims they were jury-rigged. I had read somewhere that torpedo-carrying B-26s were used in at least one other attack during the war, though I have forgotten details. Can anyone confirm that the torpedo mounts were specially designed and not jury-rigged? Thanks.

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Chuck has found us a pretty good BOM B-26 video. To give it a look, [click here](#). There are several things in it that a Midway purist (like us) could readily quibble about—for example, notice the palm trees alongside Midway's runway as *Susie-Q* lands after the mission. But at least, the video is a whole lot better than the ridiculous B-26 sequence in the 2019 *Midway* movie.

As to Chuck's question about the torpedo mounts on the Marauders, Barrett Tillman sent a link to a very interesting WW2 Army Air Forces training video that covers the subject really well. Check it out [here](#).

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## 3. AKAGI PHOTO IN THE [JANUARY NEWSLETTER](#)

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12 February 2025  
From: Bill Longton  
Florida

The January BOMRT asked a question about the identification photo of the carrier *Akagi*. According to a book I have titled *The Darkest Hour: Vol 1* written by Michał A. Piegzik (ISBN 978-1-915070-61-6) that photo of the *Akagi* was taken on the morning of April 5, 1942 when she sailed in the Indian Ocean with Kido Butai to attack British installations on [Ceylon] (now Sri Lanka). The a/c on deck are Nakajima B5N2 "Kate" torpedo

bombers fitted out with 60kg bombs to attack land targets. The photo (page 28) credits the Naval History and Heritage Command.

The 2 volumes cover the Japanese attack up to and through the raids on Colombo and Trincomalee, including attacks on British shipping during that time. If you are interested in them, they are packed full of details for the nerds like me who enjoy that sort of thing. Highly recommended.

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#### 4. ANNUAL YORKTOWN ASSOCIATION REUNION

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2 February 2025  
From: Warren Heller  
North Carolina

FYI, this year's CV-5 reunion will be in Mobile, AL, Thursday-Sunday, May 15 - 18. For more details, email to [wghfrh@gmail.com](mailto:wghfrh@gmail.com).

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Warren, many thanks for this announcement. The USS *Yorktown* CV-5 Club has long been associated with the Roundtable through its many *Yorktown* vets and their family members. I was especially pleased to meet large numbers of them during the combined BOM-CV5 anniversary event at San Francisco in 2007. ([Click here](#) for info on that one.) It's great to see the club is still going strong, year after year. Visitors and newcomers are welcome at their events; click the email link above to get started. —RR



***Now hear this!***

#### NEWS AND INFO IN THIS ISSUE:

- Taps for *Yorktown* vet John Hancock
- The Battle of Midway—colorized
- Roundtable book reviews
- Editor's Notes

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## TAPS FOR YORKTOWN VET JOHN HANCOCK

In his message above, Warren Heller also advised us that Captain John Hancock, USNR-Ret, mentioned as one of the Roundtable's surviving Midway vets in the February newsletter, actually passed away a couple years ago. He had been a CV-5 seaman at the start of his naval career and a regular participant with the *Yorktown* club. Belatedly but with equal sincerity, we salute and thank him for his BOM service and beyond. Fair winds and following seas, Captain Hancock.

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## THE BATTLE OF MIDWAY—COLORIZED

Continuing with our series of colorized versions of familiar BOM photos, another example from the *Hornet* air group appears at the end of this newsletter. The original black and white picture was initially brought to our attention by VB-8 pilot and key Roundtable member Clay Fisher. For a lot more from Fisher about Stanhope Ring and the *Hornet* at Midway, see [issue 2004-09](#) in our archives.\*

\*Revised link 3/3/25.

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## ROUNDTABLE BOOK REVIEWS

Recent discussions of BOM books that were reviewed in our newsletters over the years have demonstrated the need for a convenient index of all those reviews. To satisfy that interest, the table starting on the next page lists every book review that we've published since going online in 2004. The list is in alphabetical order by title, and includes the author's name and a link to the page on our website where it can be found.

Each of the links has been tested, but please let us know if you find one with any sort of problem. Your comments pro or con about this new Roundtable feature will be sincerely appreciated.

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## EDITOR'S NOTES

- Scott Kair brought our attention to Alvin Kernan's book *The Unknown Battle of Midway*, available on [Amazon](#) for free in the Kindle edition (as of late February) and at very low cost on the used market. If you don't have this title in your collection, it's one of CV-6 veteran Kernan's better works—not quite as good as his stellar *Crossing the Line*, but still worth a spot on your bookshelf (real or digital). Check out the book's review on our website: [click here](#).
- I'm happy to report that our webmaster Thom Walla continues to make excellent progress in recovering from a stroke last September. We recently had a detailed conference on his gradual return to managing our newsletter and website, and the outlook is very promising. More about that in next month's newsletter.
- Thanks to everyone for your continued interest in and support of the BOMRT, and do keep your comments and questions coming. Our email address is:

[midwayroundtable@gmail.com](mailto:midwayroundtable@gmail.com)

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## INDEX OF ROUNDTABLE BOOK REVIEWS

Version 1.0, 3/1/2025

**Note:** a link that shows a date (month and year) will take you to the newsletter issue in our archives that has the indicated book review. Other links will take you to various pages on our website where a lot of our older reviews were uploaded.

TITLE	AUTHOR	LINK
Adrift	Kernan	<a href="#">Jan 2023</a>
And I Was There	Layton	<a href="#">Reviews p. 3</a>
Attack on Pearl Harbor	Zimm	<a href="#">Reviews p. 5</a>
The Battle of Midway (#1)	Symonds	<a href="#">Reviews p. 7</a>
The Battle of Midway (#2)	P. Smith	<a href="#">Reviews p. 2</a>
Beyond Pearl Harbor	Werneth	<a href="#">Reviews p. 3</a>
Black Shoe Carrier Admiral	Lundstrom	<a href="#">Reviews p. 3</a>
Carnage and Culture	Hanson	<a href="#">Aug 2023</a>
Carrier Combat	Mears	<a href="#">Reviews p. 5</a>
Combined Fleet Decoded	Prados	<a href="#">Reviews p. 5</a>

<b>Crossing the Line</b>	Kernan	<a href="#">Reviews p. 6</a>
<b>The Conquering Tide</b>	Toll	<a href="#">Oct 2015</a>
<b>Dauntless</b>	Tillman	<a href="#">Sep 2021</a>
<b>A Dawn Like Thunder</b>	Mrazek	<a href="#">Reviews p. 2</a>
<b>The Eagle's Claw</b>	Shaara	<a href="#">July 2021</a>
<b>Enterprise</b>	Tillman	<a href="#">Reviews p. 7</a>
<b>Eyewitness to History</b>	Jacobsen	<a href="#">Reviews p. 3</a>
<b>Halsey's Bluff</b>	Schweikart	<a href="#">Reviews p. 6</a>
<b>Hawaii Under the Rising Sun</b>	Stephan	<a href="#">Reviews p. 3</a>
<b>Heart Like a Mustang</b>	Velazquez	<a href="#">Jan 2025</a>
<b>Joe Rochefort's War</b>	Carlson	<a href="#">Reviews p. 7</a>
<b>The Last Flight of Ens. C. Markland Kelly, USNR</b>	Weisheit	<a href="#">Reviews p. 2</a>
<b>Love and Glory</b>	Kernan	<a href="#">Reviews p. 6</a>
<b>The Man Who Won World War II</b>	James	<a href="#">May 2022</a>
<b>Midway (novel version of the 1976 movie)</b>	Sanford	<a href="#">Reviews p. 6</a>
<b>Midway 1942 (#1)</b>	Healy	<a href="#">Reviews p. 4</a>
<b>Midway 1942 (#2)</b>	Stille	<a href="#">Reviews p. 2</a>
<b>Midway: Battle for the Pacific</b>	Castillo	<a href="#">Reviews p. 4</a>
<b>Midway Dauntless Victory</b>	P. Smith	<a href="#">Reviews p. 2</a>
<b>Midway Inquest</b>	Isom	<a href="#">Reviews p. 2</a>
<b>Midway: Turning Point in the Pacific</b>	W. Smith	<a href="#">Reviews p. 4</a>
<b>Miracle at Midway [note: not the Prange book]</b>	Mercer	<a href="#">Reviews p. 4</a>
<b>Never Call Me a Hero</b>	Kleiss & Orr	<a href="#">July 2022</a>
<b>Nimitz at War</b>	Symonds	<a href="#">Sep 2022</a>
<b>No Right to Win</b>	Russell	<a href="#">NRTW reviews</a>
<b>The 'On the Roof' Gang (vol. 1 &amp; 2)</b>	Zullo	<a href="#">Jun 2022</a>
<b>Pacific Crucible</b>	Toll	<a href="#">Reviews p. 7</a>
<b>Pacific Payback</b>	Moore	<a href="#">Mar 2022</a>
<b>Refighting the Pacific War</b>	Bresnahan	<a href="#">Reviews p. 3</a>
<b>Rendezvous at Midway</b>	Frank-Harrington	<a href="#">Reviews p. 4</a>
<b>SBD Dauntless and the Battle of Midway</b>	Hernandez	<a href="#">Reviews p. 5</a>
<b>Shattered Sword</b>	Parshall-Tully	<a href="#">Reviews p. 2</a>
<b>The Ship That Held the Line</b>	Rose	<a href="#">Reviews p. 5</a>
<b>Showdown in the Pacific</b>	Martell	<a href="#">Feb 2015</a>
<b>The Silver Waterfall (#1)</b>	Miller	<a href="#">May 2020</a>
<b>The Silver Waterfall (#2)</b>	Simms-McGregor	<a href="#">May 2022</a>
<b>Stanley Johnston's Blunder</b>	Carlson	<a href="#">Sep 2017</a>
<b>Torpedo 8</b>	Wolfert	<a href="#">July 2019</a>
<b>The Unknown Battle of Midway</b>	Kernan	<a href="#">Reviews p. 6</a>
<b>Walk Around: SBD Dauntless</b>	Dann	<a href="#">Reviews p. 5</a>
<b>War and Remembrance (BOM segment)</b>	Wouk	<a href="#">Reviews p. 6</a>

## The Battle of Midway — colorized



In this familiar BOM photo the of USS *Hornet* (CV-8) on 4 June 1942, note Clay Fisher's SBD (yellow arrow) with the ship's chief photographer standing on the wing root, explaining the special camera mounted on the aircraft. As wingman for CDR Ring, Clay was supposed to snap photos of their dive on a target, which he told us would have been totally impossible. (They didn't dive on a target anyway, but that's a another story.)

As for the colorizing in this one, the *Hornet's* deck color looks more authentic than the images featured in recent newsletters. And like the others, the color of just about everything else looks quite real.