

RAY FORDYCE BIO & PRESENTATION TOPICS



Ray Fordyce is Historian for an 8th Air Force group, and the son of Capt. RB Fordyce who served with the 8th AF (B-17s) in England during WW2. He once worked as a ranch hand in Argentina, went to West Point, and retired from a career in management with IBM and Siemens with three US patents. Ray spoke at major events, press and product announcements worldwide for both companies. Elected to the Cobb County Civil Service Board in 2016, Ray is now Chairman.

He has had numerous articles published and spoken to audiences around the country about the air war in Europe and other aviation-related topics, including twice at Mighty Eighth Air Force Annual Reunions. Ray is also a pilot, an advanced-certified scuba diver and plays piano, once playing at a German WW2 fighter pilot reunion! Additionally, he serves as a docent at the Aviation Wing Air Museum in Marietta.

Active in community affairs, animal rescue and with veteran's groups, he resides with his wife Nila, five cats and a dog in Acworth, Georgia.

Presentation topics, all of which have numerous unique visuals, include:

Target: The Third Reich – This talk describes the experiences and sacrifices of wartime aviators of *The Greatest Generation*, and centers on what missions entailed and the challenges faced by the men who flew them. From the perspective of both sides, tactics evolution, weapons systems and vulnerabilities of the combatants will be discussed. The talk often begins date-specific to the date of the presentation, except in 1943, '44 or '45.

Defending the Offense – The Germans, the British and then the Americans all learned that a daylight bombing offensive involved great risk for the attacking bomber formations in the absence of robust fighter support. Hence, both the Germans and the British resorted to night attacks. The Americans, however, persisted in pursuing a daylight, precision-bombing strategy and attempted a number of different measures to protect the attacking bombers. These are discussed as they were rolled out, and the varying degrees of success they achieved.

The Air Defense of The Reich – By late 1943, Germany was devoting 40% of the economy to stopping the bomber offensive by the Allies, as the attacks were significantly affecting The Third Reich's war effort. The "tiered" defense employed was highly effective for much of the war, and is discussed along with the changes in tactics employed by both sides as the war progressed.

Rosie's Hammer – This talk centers on the bomber forces the United States brought to bear during World War II. Particular attention is paid to the two heavy bombers in the European Theater of Operations ("ETO"), the B-24 and the iconic B-17, although other theater aircraft are discussed as well.

Heroic Women in Aviation – This presentation can focus strictly upon the military contributions women made to the war effort in World War II and later, or can include often little-known or recognized actions by women in the civilian sector that had great impact on flight emergencies

The presentations described can be modified and/or time-adjusted to run from 30-60 minutes, depending upon the requirements of the venue. Additional topics are under development.