

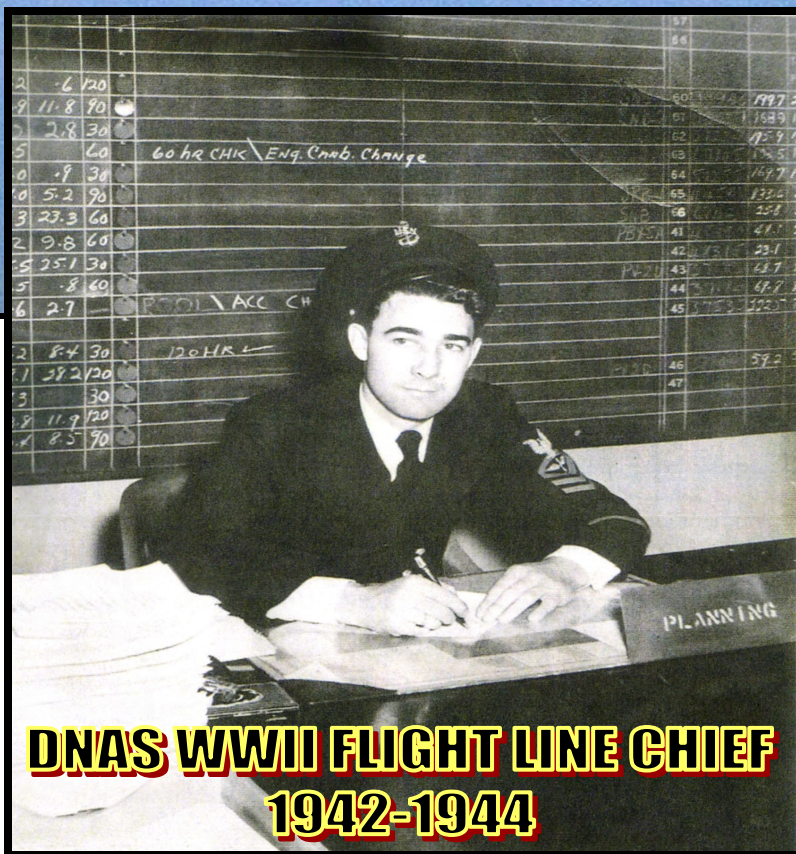
# DELANDINGS



AUGUST 2016 - KEN TORBETT

WWII DNAS FLIGHTLINE CHIEF

## Remembering WWII Veteran



**DNAS WWII FLIGHT LINE CHIEF  
1942-1944**

# Ken Torbett

**January 22, 1921 - July 10, 2016**



**With great sadness, the DeLand Naval Air Station Museum Volunteers grieve the loss of Kenneth S. "Ken" Torbett, WWII DeLand Naval Air Station Flight Line Chief and founding member of the museum 21 years ago. Ken passed away on July 10, 2016 at his home in Palm Coast, Florida. We send our most heartfelt condolences to his loving wife Marty and the Torbett family.**



**Ken Torbett was stationed at the DeLand Naval Air Base during WWII 1942-1944. At age 23, he served as a Flight Line Chief and was responsible for the training of young Navy pilots preparing for their flight mission assignments. He served in the United States Navy for 21 years, including Naval Intelligence. He had a successful business career in financial services and manufacturing. His passion for golf led him to become the inventor of the patented Gunsight Putter and the author of the book "80 Years on the Putting Green".**

**Ken loved DeLand. In a recent interview, he was asked about the best thing and the worst thing about being stationed in DeLand, Florida during the war. He quickly replied that there was only good memories of what a nice place DeLand was to live and how friendly and supportive the people of DeLand were to DeLand Naval Air Station personnel.**

**He was happy to support and passionate about the success of the DeLand Naval Air Station Museum. His strong recall about the history of the Navy base during WWII was a valuable resource of information and he was always available to consult and share facts and details of events or to confirm information about educational public displays of museum memorabilia.**

**We will miss his gentle demeanor and smooth southern Virginia accent. He had a great sense of humor and loved to share his passion for golf and big band music. We will remember him dancing the night away during our Big Band Hangar Dances and proudly waving in the Veterans Parade. Ken has a permanent place of honor on the DNAS WWII Mural in downtown DeLand where he sits high in the clouds in a SBD-5, representing the young pilots who trained in DeLand.**



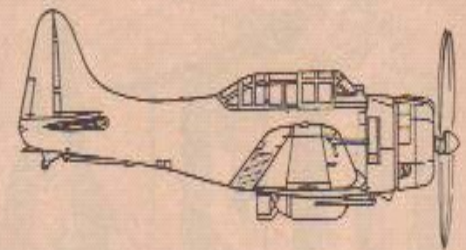
**Ken Torbett will be greatly missed. He was our friend and mentor and we were proud to know him. He has gifted us with a great legacy for future generations that will be honored and remembered at the DeLand Naval Air Station Museum.**





**11/11/1995: (Left) DNAS VETERAN KEN TORBETT SPEAKS TO SUPPORTING CROWD AT THE DEDICATION CEREMONY OF THE DeLAND NAVAL AIR STATION MUSEUM OPENING.**

**(Below) KEN WITH OTHER DNAS WWII VETERANS AT THE MUSEUM GRAND OPENING.**



*DeLand NAS veterans who attended the dedication of the Museum included those shown at the left. Left to right are Dale Alexander, Bob Freeburg, R. H. Baldwin, Jack Fortes, Monte Westberry, Nelson Root, Joe Dalton, Bob Sanford, Ken Torbett, Harry Brown, and Niven Thompson.*





**2/7/2007: DNAS VETERAN KEN TORBETT SITS IN THE GUNNER POSITION IN THE CENTER OF THE 100'x18' mural featured on the Fish Building on the northwest corner of New York Avenue and Woodland Boulevard in DeLand, Florida. Ken addressed the crowd at the ribbon cutting. He spoke about 125 airplanes and 10,000 people training at NAS DeLand, with more than 100 personnel killed. "Some crashed on takeoff and some crashed into the dive-bomb targets." Torbett said many of those who died in training have been forgotten because they didn't die in combat. "They were the heroes who never got to the war zone," "They were young and fresh from high school and college. The next thing they knew, they were flying a high-efficiency airplane."**



**IN 2015, KEN TORBETT WAS ON THE SCENE OF THE OSTEEN WWII SBD-5 PLANE CRASH SITE DISCOVERED BY RODNEY THOMAS. HE PROVIDED VALUABLE INFORMATION ABOUT THE PLANE, TRAINING FLIGHT DETAILS AND IDENTIFICATION OF WRECKAGE PIECES COLLECTED.**



**KEN TORBETT AND MARTY TORBETT (CENTER) WITH RODNEY THOMAS (LOWER RIGHT) AND MEMBERS OF THE CENTRAL FLORIDA METAL DETECTING CLUB WHO SEARCHED THE OSTEEN SITE.**





**(Above/Center) KEN ENJOYED HIS TIME WITH OTHER DNAS VETERANS SHARING THEIR MEMORIES AND EXPERIENCES OF THEIR MILITARY SERVICE. IN 2015 DR. HARRY PRICE FILMED HIS RECOLLECTIONS OF THE WWII FLIGHT LINE.**

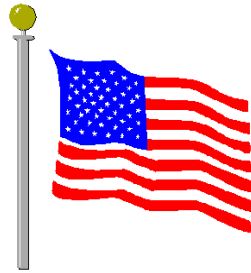
**(Below) KEN WITH OTHER DNAS WWII VETERANS VIRGIL LINDER AND JACK FORTES. KEN DANCING AT THE 2015 24TH BIG BAND HANGAR DANCE WITH WIFE, MARTY TORBETT.**

# **The Spirit of Ken Torbett and All The Young Men and Women Who Served In DeLand Will Always Be On The Flightline**



## **"In Memory of All Who Served"**





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