

Letter to Adam re the 75<sup>th</sup> anniversary remembrance in Kocina on October 20, 2019 (Corrected version).

It is hard to believe that it has been 75 years since my father's plane EW250 was shot down near Kocina on October 16, 1944. I was a young boy just 18 months old when this happened. I had last seen my father, Lt. Charles Franklin, just four months before his death. My aunt, who was babysitting me at the time in Pretoria, South Africa, told me that when my father came to say goodbye as his 34<sup>th</sup> SAAF squadron was about to fly north to join the war, I grabbed his leg, stamped my little feet, and didn't want to let him go. Obviously this little boy, just 13 months old, somehow knew this would be the last time he would see his father.

So here we are 75 years after EW250 was shot down, and I want to recognize and thank from the DEPTHS OF MY HEART, the Polish remembrance committee who have been so amazing in keeping these memories alive by inviting descendants of the seven airmen who lost their lives on EW250, and the one who survived, to come to Kocina to see the crash site, by presenting me with a piece of my father's plane (dug up at the crash site), by establishing in Kocina a magnificent carved stone memorial of the tragic event, and in keeping the memories alive of the sacrifice of these airmen on this 75<sup>th</sup> anniversary.

I would also like to greet members of the Pither and Bardsley family. I know they wanted to take part in the October 20 event but now hear that they will be unable to attend due to unforeseen circumstances. It would have been wonderful to have attended together with them as ONE FAMILY with a shared history, together with our Polish friends who did not let the sacrifice and deaths of our fathers pass without recognition.

Even now, 75 years later, I have strong memories of my father because my mother painted many pictures of him (she was an artist) and I have his war diary, as well as photographs of him and stories of his (short) life in the Great Brak River museum.

Once again, to the Polish remembrance committee, THANK YOU, THANK YOU, and THANK YOU again from co-pilot Lt. Charles Franklin's son, Jonathan, in Canada. May our memories last for many more years. I just wish I could still give my Daddy a big hug.

Jonathan Franklin  
Saint John, N.B., Canada