

Janis Kozlowski: Were you surprised by how much damage there was when you got on the ground?

John Pletcher: Well, yeah, because when we were flying along when that thing hit – I felt it hit, it just went “thunk” and I thought, well, I’ve never been hit by a bullet or anything before [*laughing*] and I thought well, it must have been a 50 caliber or something. So, the wing man called me and said, “Hey, Pletcher you’ve got a hole in the side of your airplane”. I said, “Yeah, we got a 50 caliber or something hit us”. And he didn’t go ahead and explain that it was a big hole [*laughter*].

So, when we landed – it was a daylight raid – so when we landed, of course, it was daylight and I and the co-pilot noticed there were people running over toward the airplane as we pulled in to park. And I told Ashley – Ashley Orr (sp?) he lives down in California now – I said, “Ashley, we must have a hole we don’t know about” [*laughter*]. So we went ahead and filled out the flight papers and everything casual-like, you know. And you entered in, you went in and out of the cockpit through the nose wheel doors, there’s a stair there, so when I finally got out of the seat and dropped down to the ground and looked up at the hole in the airplane, I was surprised [*laughter*]. I didn’t realize, you know, you couldn’t tell it on the flying of the airplane, it just flew like normal, no problem, no noise.

Janis Kozlowski: Were they able to repair it, then?

John Pletcher: I don’t know what they did to it. I think they cut a new skin.