

# **The Manfred Memories**

*“A Peek into the Past”*

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This book is dedicated to friends.  
Thank you Jeremy, Bill, Bill, Alexandra, Denise, Susan, and “Mav”.  
And thank you to all my guardian angels that watch over me in my times of need.

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## CHAPTER 1 - INTRODUCTION

As a very young child I used to dream about flying a red bi-plane and wearing pants that were tucked into the boots. I used to also have the fanciful wish to have a long white scarf and a flying helmet just like Snoopy's. I don't recall whether I shared these thoughts with my parents though they did know that I was very fond of Snoopy and his WWI antics. Although I do recall telling my mother that I thought I must have been a pilot from WWI at some point because I remember her asking me if I was the famed American pilot Eddie Rickenbacker. I remember clearly thinking about the name; Rickenbacker as I stood in the hallway near the linen closet with my mother waiting for an answer. Letting it settle into my brain and feeling for something unknown, and then after some thought I replied to my mother, "No, I was not him." By the time I reached high school age, the thoughts of being the pilot settled down to that I was a good looking nobody that had loved a lovely dark haired lady. I had also come to the conclusion that I had not been an American and was perhaps German or British. Any thoughts of being Manfred von Richthofen, the Red Baron, were dashed away at age 7 or 9 when I had read a book about the Red Baron that stated he was a confirmed bachelor. And when I asked my mother what a confirmed bachelor was, she had replied that it was a nice way of saying a man that doesn't like women. I took that literally and to heart and decided that I didn't want anything to do with this man that didn't like women. So now, strangely enough, I have come full circle back to the topic of being a pilot from the past and that Red Baron fellow has popped up again. He would not go away and especially after I had realized that I had received the blue and gold Maltese cross known as the Blue Max or Pour le Mérite. And as the memories started to flood in, I realized I was German and had the same friends and family as that Red Baron fellow. He had come back to haunt me, so I started doing research on this man to see if he matched what I knew about myself as a man from that time.

This book is the collection of past life memories that I have written down and my journey to figure out what happened during my lifetime in early 20<sup>th</sup> century Germany. Why would I want to write such a book as this? To simply answer: fulfil deep down inside need to share all of this and perhaps set a few things straight. From a philosophical point of view, I wanted to share my experience with the world so that others like me could see that they were not alone. When I first started to have memory flashes, the numerous Internet past life posting forums did not exist. There was a historical aviation posting forum that I visited and I caused a bit of ruffled feathers there. Many of the posters there thought I was some old codger having mixed up war memories while others simply thought I was a nut. Strangely enough, those with military combat experience were the most sympathetic and open to my declarations.

And to add to all of that I realized that I had unfinished business when I read Der Rote Kampfflieger by Manfred von Richthofen. The book was so compromised by politics and propaganda and the sheer joy and ego of youth, that the young man who wrote it didn't even realize until later that it lacked depth. Anything that revealed too much humanity or human frailty was edited out. The German government did not want a hero that was human, but a warrior that wore untarnished armor to the point of seeming larger than life. The desire for this same hero in MvR lingers today, but I was far from that ideal image. As Manfred, I doubt I had an evil bone in my body; but, I was far from being pure and perfect. As the First World War progressed, I realized I needed to rewrite Der Rote Kampfflieger. Unfortunately, it was not meant to be. I died before the end of the war, before I could rewrite the book, or at least make a sequel, and before I could share a happy married life with the woman I loved.

These feelings from the past still linger within me today and from what I understand of recent psychology trends, past life regression therapy is coming into fashion. There seems to be a renaissance in the interest of reincarnation and past life experiences. As the world becomes more

mechanical and computer oriented, more people are seeking out things spiritual in nature. This happened during the Industrial Revolution/Victorian Era. Humanity loves technology but the desire for that intangible magical experience beyond simple scientific explanation calls to us. Humanity wants more than hard cold facts. I have observed this phenomenon on the Internet. There are many websites now dedicated to all forms of spiritualism, religion, reincarnation, and paranormal study. You name it, it is out there. Some of it is quality, while some of it is crap. You, as the reader, will have to judge for yourself what is acceptable and believable. When I first contemplated the idea of writing a book, there was no “market” for such a book. I can only recollect Shirley MacClain’s book about reincarnation making the seller’s list. It seems that the general population is always nosey about what famous people are doing. Trust me as Manfred, I do remember that quite clearly. But her fame did not make her impervious to the humor and ridicule of the skeptics, and even though she wrote her book quite a while ago, the topic of reincarnation and having past life memories is still apparently frowned upon by the general public. Or is it? I have had a good amount of traffic pass through my past life memory website and I have seen a great deal of interest on the posting boards of several reincarnation websites. There is a growing interest. And from my observations of some of these people who post on these websites, I would be willing to “guess-estimate” that 75% of them are what would fall into that category of just “plain old regular people.” And what I mean by “regular” is that these folks get up in the morning, prepare for the day, send children off to school, kiss their spouse good-bye, and go to their own work and then come home. Just plain old regular people. I have no idea if every cultural aspect of modern society is represented on these posting boards, but that is more of a question for a student of sociology or psychology. It would probably make a good research topic for some college student.

So what about the remaining 25%? I put those people in the “I just don’t know” category. I haven’t met these people face to face and most of them I have never talked to on the telephone either,

so when some posters make odd statements, one has to carefully evaluate what they have written in the past and if someone else has written something that may have upset them. I used to post on a really nice aviation historical website, but the rude behavior of just a few people made it an unpleasant experience. For awhile, I fought back at these people and then finally I asked myself, "What do these people mean to me?" and, "Why am I allowing this jerk to upset me?" He had no relevance to my life, past or present, and I didn't care to make him part of my future. Posting on the Internet can be good fun and one can make lots of friends, but there is also an entire army of idiots out there waiting to stir the pot and ruin the broth. I think this is something that faces every website with a forum or chat area for visitors. Manners seem to have gone out the window in these past few decades, so when someone who wants to learn about reincarnation and past life memories and visits these sites, they must exercise caution. Some of the posters are short a few cards from their deck while others are just as genuine as the earth beneath one's feet.

It has also been asked of me why I was someone famous. This question often leaves me feeling a bit confused because I really do not see myself as some legendary war hero that people are willing to argue violently over, and I have no choice over who I was. I think what is really being asked is why is it always someone famous that people claim to be. I think this can be answered easily. One, the majority of people do not claim to be famous (please check out the Carol Bowman website forum); and Two, when someone claims to have been Fred Smith, a pig farmer from South Dakota during the 1800's, no one cares. They think that is interesting or nice, but nothing more. People tend to notice a familiar name when it is mentioned, and this question of fame and past lives has been a topic of discussion on some of the past life forums and the resulting conclusion was that most people do not claim to be someone famous. Claiming to have been someone famous puts one in a more difficult position. One can be held up to ridicule or authenticity verification more often than someone claiming to be the unknown pig farmer. On the positive side, it is more likely to find

information on someone famous than an unknown individual. There are more pictures, references, possibly film footage, which all can help one determine if they really were that person or not. The difficult part is when the information is not completely accurate. Most historical records are written by a third party and seldom by the actual participants. Data is collected by these third parties and they do their best to interpret what they think happened. Emphasis on “what they think happened.” And don’t forget that old saying that , “The victor writes the history books!” Most “victors” are not unbiased.

So the task of proving oneself as having been someone famous may prove to be an arduous task because anyone can memorize facts and data and then claim to be someone. And then there is the question: who are we to prove our identity to? Who has the right to judge whether we are false or correct? Not an easy question. Strangely enough, I am not sure whether proving someone’s claim should be all that important. I needed to know for myself, and what the rest of the world believes comes second. If one cannot be honest with oneself then what is left? Nothing. This may sound lofty and idealistic, but I think the experience of remembering and learning how it all fits into one’s life is more important than researching proof. It has been my experience that many claimers to being famous people tend to be close friends or family of the famous individual. I have met several individuals who had originally thought themselves to be me turn out, in reality, to be close friends of mine during that lifetime. The only reason why they latched onto my identity was because nothing much was written about them. They had no place to start their search for their identity except for in what was written about me because that seemed familiar to them.

Probably the greatest factor that has contributed to my ability to remember so much about this past life time is that so many photos, books, and films have been written about my former self. Of course most of them are not too accurate, but they are out there. The photos and films have especially had an impact since they often evoke feelings and stimulate memory recall. When buying

books on German WWI aviation, I seldom read the text now, I just buy the books for the photos. The reason for this is that I have discovered that many of these books have gross inaccuracies when discussing personal aspects about myself and the other pilots that I served with. Many times I have come to realize that getting frustrated with these people is a waste of my time and energy, so it is better to just enjoy looking at the old photos. Some authors of these historical accounts have no business writing the fiction that they create while others really have no means of finding more accurate material. My past life parents did their best to cover up what they didn't want known and the addition of the Second World War also added a few other interesting obstacles to finding accurate information. I have an excellent little book about a little known Jewish pilot from WWI who earned the Pour le Mérite. I can guarantee that much information was lost during the Nazi civil war. So, for the most part, I do not hold it against any of the writers for their mistakes, only the two that have personally written to me and stated that they would adjust history to suit their personal needs. Call me idealistic, but that's just wrong.

And finally, not all of my lives were of famous individuals. I have had more than one lifetime that I can recall. From what I can remember, I have been a Roman centurion several times, a Master Tile setter in Rome, a Pictish king, an Arthurian lifetime, a Medieval knight of the Imperial Order (1042), a Medieval princess, a Bavarian knight during the early part of the Renaissance (approx. 1480 to 1525), another Bavarian Knight during the middle 1500's, a Templar Knight during the early 1700's, and a Prussian Cavalry Leutnant Johaunnes von Trauttenburg-  
"Schullenbach?" serving the Habsburgs in Vienna ( approx.1760 to 1800). I have varying degrees of memory recall on each of these lifetimes, but the lifetime that I remember the clearest is that of Manfred von Richthofen. In that life I started out as cavalryman and ended up as a pioneering fighter pilot that held the highest victory score during the First World War. I am often referred to as the Red Baron. And no, I didn't shoot down any beagles on dog houses and I do not resemble the

man on the pizza commercials, though I do have a fondness for Snoopy and pizza. ☺