

# Flight Line

**The Official Publication of the CAF**  
Southern California Wing  
455 Aviation Drive, Camarillo, CA 93010  
(805) 482-0064



June, 2015  
Vol. XXXIV No. 6

COMMEMORATIVE  
AIR FORCE



© Photo by Frank Mormillo  
See Page 19 for story of air terminal named for  
Capt. David McCampbell – Navy pilot of Minsi III

Visit us online at [www.cafsocal.com](http://www.cafsocal.com)



© Photo Courtesy of Dan Newcomb

Here's Col. Dan Newcomb in one of his favorite seats – the rear seat in Marc Russell's T-34. Dan wears several hats in our Wing. Other than his helmet, he is a long-time member of the PBJ Restoration Team; is the official historian of our PBJ-1J "Semper Fi;" is a "Flight Line" author and photographer; and currently has taken on the job of Cadet Program Manager. See his stories on pages 12 and 17. Thanks for all you do, Dan!

**Wing Staff Meeting, Saturday, June 20, 2015 at 9:30 a.m. at the  
CAF Museum Hangar, 455 Aviation Drive, Camarillo Airport**

THE CAF IS A PATRIOTIC ORGANIZATION DEDICATED TO THE PRESERVATION OF THE WORLD'S GREATEST COMBAT AIRCRAFT.

# June 2015

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
	1 Museum Closed	2 Work Day	3	4 Work Day	5	6 Work Day
7	8 Museum Closed	9 Work Day	10	11 Work Day	12	13 Work Day
14	15 Museum Closed	16 Work Day	17	18 Work Day	19 Docent Meeting 3:30	20 Wing Staff Meeting 9:30 Work Day
21 Longest Day of the Year	22 Museum Closed	23 Work Day	24	25 Work Day	26	27 Work Day
28	29 Museum Closed Memorial Day	30 Work Day	Museum Open 10am to 4pm Every Day Except Monday and major holidays			

<b>STAFF AND APPOINTED POSITIONS</b>				<b>IN THIS ISSUE</b>
Wing Leader	* Ron Missildine	(805) 404-1837	missing@pacbell.net	Wing Calendar . . . . . 2
Executive Officer	* Steve Barber	(805) 302-8517	f8f2cat@gmail.com	Staff and Appointed Positions. . . . . 2
Adjutant	* Janet Rizzoli	(805) 441-7529	Janet@cafsocal.com	"Blast From the Past" . . . . . 3
Finance Officer	* Paul Willett	(818) 469-8480	pwillett@ix.netcom.com	Navy's Largest Base in WWII . . . . . 4
Operations Officer	* Jason Somes	(818) 292-4646	nbnh@aol.com	TBM-3E Restoration . . . . . 6
Maintenance Officer	* Mike Perrenoud	(805) 857-5580	mikepcaf@gmail.com	Wing's Air Show Schedule . . . . . 7
Safety Officer	* Gene O'Neal	(805) 383-9485	geneoneal@aol.com	Bob Hoover, Part IV . . . . . 8
Museum Manager	John Knopp		jknopp.cafsocal@gmail.com	Bob Hoover Saves P-51 at 90 . . . . . 11
Gift Shop Manager	Holly Barber		hwiesehan@gmail.com	Another Good Day at CMA . . . . . 12
Public Info Officer	Pat Brown	(805) 479-2221	pio.cafsocal@gmail.com	A Rookie Crew Goes to War . . . . . 13
Public Info Officer	Michael Greywitt	(805) 908-1548	mpgconsult@roadrunner.com	Photo Page I . . . . . 16
Hangar Event Mgr	La Tanya Barber	(805) 302-8136	barber.latanya@gmail.com	A Fabled Formation . . . . . 17
Friends Coordinator	Ceci Stratford	(805) 630-3696	cecipilot@sbcglobal.net	Photo Page II . . . . . 18
Air Show Officer	Jason Somes	(818) 292-4646	nbnh@aol.com	McCampbell Terminal, Palm Beach . . . . 19
Air Show Officer	Jason Somes	(818) 292-4646	nbnh@aol.com	Wing Photo Page III . . . . . 20
Facility Officer	Dick Troy	(805) 404-3311	Konvair@aol.com	So Cal Wing Staff Minutes . . . . . 21
Personnel Officer	Shirley Murphy	(805) 504-6744	sdmurphy@verizon.net	
Historian	Ron Fleishman	(805) 384-4426	oldplanec46@aol.com	
Training Officer	Joe Peppito	(805) 498-4187	jocafpeppo@msn.com	
Collections Manager	(Vacant)			
Newsletter Editor	Dave Flood		dmpflood31@gmail.com	
Newsletter Production	Casey de Bree	(805) 205-0494	scdebree@aol.com	
Webmaster	Bill O'Neill	(805) 495-4915	scwairshow@aol.com	
Librarian	Jim Hinkelman	(805) 581-5520	(no e-mail)	
Displays/Artifacts Mgr.	Charlie Carr	(415) 812-3317	charlescorycarrjr@yahoo.com	
HANGAR PHONE (805) 482-0064 HANGAR FAX (805) 482-0348 WEBSITE www.cafsocal.com				<b>Submittal Deadline - 15th of the month</b>  Southern California Wing 455 Aviation Drive Camarillo, CA 93010-9501

\* Denotes Staff Position

This issue of Flight Line is copyrighted 2015 by the CAF, Southern California Wing. All rights

## **“Blast From The Past”**

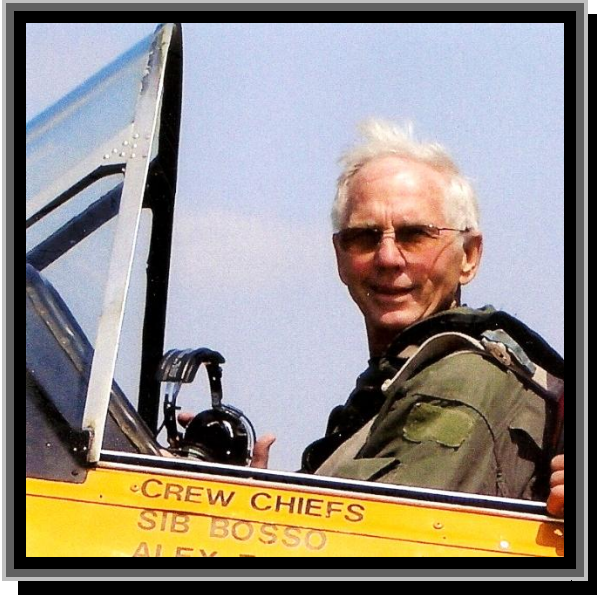
by Col Terry Cedar

Reprinted from the May, 2010 “Flight Line”

Still very much apropos!

**Accentuate The Positive!**

**Editor’s Note: And let’s “eliminate the negative!”**



**Col. Terry Cedar – Wing Adjutant and Warbird Rides Pilot**

It seems the tone of recent years has been to emphasize the issues confronting the So Cal Wing and to jump into conversations that discuss all the things that are wrong with the Wing. This attitude and approach certainly tears down the morale within the organization; makes potential new members unwilling to join our Wing; looms as a disincentive to the present members who are about ready to throw up their hands and say: “Why bother to keep trying?”

One of the blessings of this Wing is our Finance Officer, Casey de Bree, and his conservative approach to the Wing’s accounting. The Financial Review Committee (FRC), which was formed some four years ago, established a more stable accounting system and began the budgetary process. Monthly financial statements, specific monthly financial reports on all aspects of the Wing are available – income and expenses for the museum, air shows, individual aircraft, donations, event income, etc. This information is available to anyone who has an interest in looking at it.

Because of the new accounting system and the information that was forthcoming, Staff was able to make a good decision to sell the Convair C-131 and recover some money from its sale. If this decision had not been made, interest and loan pay-down would have taken a significant toll on the Wing’s financial health.

How many of us realize what Steve Barber, David Price and others did to sell the static display Zero and pay off all but \$150,000 for the Wing’s present Zero. This balance

was paid off and funds received to finish paying off the Spitfire – again through the efforts of very special individuals. A matching grant request for \$50,000 was written and submitted to Midland to finish paying for the Spitfire Griffon engine - and for the continuation of the Spitfire restoration.

If you analyze the positive events that have taken place, why does it seem that the museum side is against the pilot/maintenance side? I am so impressed with the dedication of the museum director, the docents, the event coordinator, museum staff ... and I am so impressed with the dedication of the mechanics - including pilot/mechanics – who work on the aircraft. How about the passionate folks working on the restoration airplanes which are a big deal: the SNJ-4 is now flying; the Spitfire restoration end is in sight; the PBJ is in a constant progression and the restoration crew’s enthusiasm is contagious; the F-24 is starting to get back on track. How about the dollars being raised and utilized on these projects? The PBJ now has a \$33,500 matching grant; the SNJ-4 has a new engine, propeller, instrument panel and a restored airframe (\$125,000); the Spitfire’s \$150,000 engine has been paid for, along with the overhaul of the airframe and systems; the SNJ-5 has received a new engine and prop as of about two years ago and has about 220 hours on them.

I then look at the members in the maintenance hangar that keep the equipment operational; parts being ordered and received; records being kept for aircraft and pilots; attempts are being made to keep the hangar, ramp, bathrooms and floors cleaned.

And the pilots, who not only sponsor the airplanes they fly, but also work on the airplanes and fly them at air shows – some as far away as Geneseo, NY and Wanaka, New Zealand. The flying aircraft are in a good airworthy condition and are reliable; they are ready to perform at an air show or to give a paid ride, again because of the commitment of these people.

Think about the efforts in getting the Bearcat back up after its emergency landing in Burbank; the days and hours spent modifying the airplane to accept a more reliable variant of the original engine. We will never realize how these guys, including non-pilot members, gave of themselves in behalf of our flying museum. The Wing had to raise over \$70,000, including pulling from the Wing general fund, to get that airplane back into the air with a fresh engine. It was the Wing members who helped support this Bearcat effort...a team effort from all directions. By the way, I am one of the pilot / mechanic exceptions - but I do help clean the airplanes every so often.

Let’s swing over to the museum side of the So Cal Wing operation and remember what the museum folks had to go through when the museum hangar was shut down because of Ventura County code violations. It took the diligence of several people to deal with the issues, plus \$67,000 in funds. A cadre of members tackled the “O”



Club and completed it – and now it's warm during the winter months and cool during the summer! Another small group of members have taken on the responsibility of getting the permits, contractors, donated materials, etc. to eliminate the final constraint to having a museum hangar that is completely legal; a fire wall between the maintenance hangar and the museum at a cost of \$30,000. The Wing has the funds to complete this last facility project - but it does drain the hangar fund and reserves.

Have we taken the time to reflect on the hours that the docents spend educating the visitors about the importance of aviation in WWII, Korea, Vietnam, and the Desert Wars - and about the Wing's specific aircraft and exhibits? Can you imagine trying to keep the museum displays, floors, walkways clean and safe? I can't! The museum and gift shop income covers the facility bills and allows the Wing members to continue to build and make stronger the CAF So Cal Wing.

Have you thought about the labor of love that takes place behind the scenes as members put together exhibits, display artifacts, publish the Flight Line, maintain the Wiing website, promote air shows, meet to establish procedures and policies, provide outreach to community groups and schools, maintain an active Friends Program, put on successful hangar events such as "Wine And Wings", create and stage special events such as the "Women In War" program, create and erect memorial displays for each aircraft, run the successful Warbird Rides Program utilizing our SNJ-5 and PT-19A, etc., etc.? The dedication to the CAF Mission of so many people is an inspiration and we should all appreciate these members.

Administration and Staff are willing to make hard decisions for the long term benefits of the Wing and the C-46, China Doll, is a perfect example: the airplane is down for the time being, but I do expect that, as the members see how far we have come and the struggles that should be behind us, they will step up and get China Doll back in operation. With good promotion and controlled pilot training, the airplane will once again become a hit on the air show circuit and profitable.

Staff is working hard to establish and maintain good fiscal responsibility and establish the disciplines of good business practices. The bills are being paid current except for monies due HQ, but the Wing is making in-roads on getting that current, despite the dramatic increase in ANUAC costs two years ago.

I am proud to be a member of the So Cal Wing and I look forward to what our Wing will be as we all pull together as one unit supporting each area of endeavor.

You have shown me your generosity by the giving of your time, your talent and treasures. A sincere "thank you"!

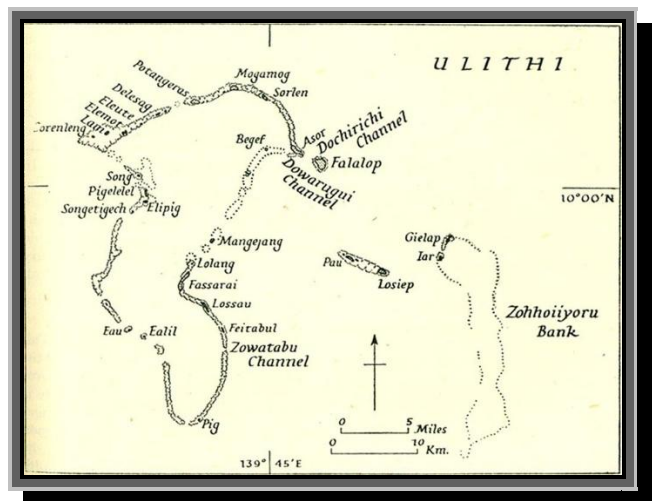
*Editors' Note: We can only add "Amen" to Terry's words.*

## Navy's Largest Base in WWII

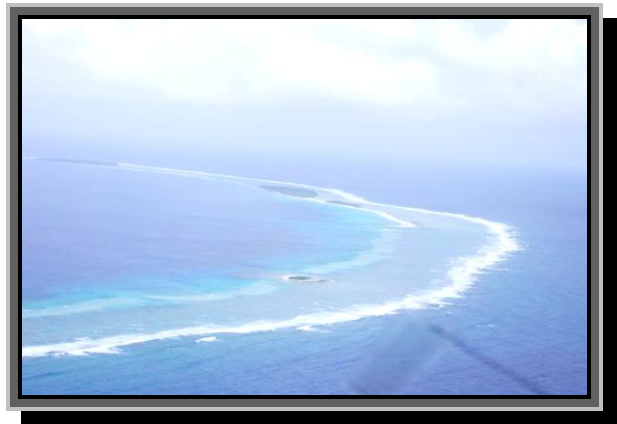
**Its existence kept secret throughout the war, the US naval base at Ulithi was for a time the world's largest naval facility.**

**BY GEORGE SPANGLER**

In March 1945, 15 battleships, 29 carriers, 23 cruisers, 106 destroyers, and a train of oilers and supply ships sailed from "a Pacific base." What was this base? The mightiest force of naval power ever assembled must have required a tremendous supporting establishment. Ulithi, the biggest and most active naval base in the world, was indeed tremendous but it was unknown. Few civilians had heard of it at all. By the time security released the name, the remarkable base of Ulithi was a ghost. The war had moved on to the Japanese homeland, and the press was not printing ancient history about Ulithi.



Ulithi is 360 miles southwest of Guam, 850 miles east of the Philippines, 1300 miles South of Tokyo. It is a typical volcanic atoll with coral, white sand, and palm trees. The reef runs roughly twenty miles north and south by ten miles across enclosing a vast anchorage with an average depth of 80 to 100 feet - the only suitable anchorage within 800 miles. Three dozen little islands rise slightly above the sea, the largest only half a square mile in area.



The U.S. Navy arrived in September 1944 and found resident about 400 natives, and three Japanese soldiers. The natives on the four largest islands were moved to smaller Fassarai, and every inch of these four was quickly put to use.

Asor had room for a headquarters: port director, radio station, evaporator (rain is the only freshwater supply), tents, small boat pier, cemetery. Sorlen was set up as a shop for maintaining and repairing the 105 LCVPs and 45 LCMs that became beasts of all work in the absence of small boats. Mogmog was assigned to recreation.

The big island, Falalop, was just wide enough for a 3500-foot airstrip for handling the R4Ds (Douglas DC-3s) and R5C Commandos, which would presently fly in from Guam 1269 passengers, 4565 sacks of mail and 262,251 pounds of air freight a week. This took care of a few services - but where were they going to put the naval base?



Enter "the secret weapon," as Admiral Nimitz called Service Squadron Ten. Commodore Worrall R. Carter survived Pearl Harbor to devise the miraculous mobile service force that made it possible for the Navy to move toward Japan in great jumps instead of taking the slow and costly alternative of capturing a whole series of islands on which to build a string of land bases.



Within a month of the occupation of Ulithi, a whole floating base was in operation. Six thousand ship fitters, artificers, welders, carpenters, and electricians arrived aboard repair ships, destroyer tenders, floating dry docks. USS AJAX had an air-conditioned optical shop, a supply of base metals from which she could make any alloy to form any part needed.

Many refrigerator and supply ships belonged to three-ship teams: the ship at Ulithi had cleaned out and relieved sister ship No. 2 which was on the way back to a rear base for more supplies while No. 3 was on the way out to relieve No. 1.

Over half the ships were not self-propelled but were towed in. They then served as warehouses for a whole system of transports which unloaded stores on them for distribution. This kind of chain went all the way back to the United States. The paper and magazines showed England sinking under the stockpile of troops and material collected for the invasion of Normandy.



The Okinawa landings were not so well documented but they involved more men, ships, and supplies-including 600,000 gallons of fuel oil, 1500 freight cars of ammunition, and enough food to provide every person in Vermont and Wyoming with three meals a day for fifteen days.

The smaller ships needed a multitude of services, the ice cream barge made 500 gallons a shift, and the USS ABATAN, which looked like a big tanker, really distilled fresh water and baked bread and pies. Fleet oilers sortied from Ulithi to refuel the combat ships a short distance from the strike areas. They added men, mail, and medical supplies, and began to take orders for spare parts.

When Leyte Gulf was secured, the floating base moved on, and Ulithi which had had a temporary population the size of Dallas and had been the master of half the world for seven months, shrank to little more than a tanker depot. Once again, it became a quiet, lonely atoll.

[Thanks to David Baker for this article.](#)

**TBM-3E Restoration  
Association with USMC Squadron  
VMTB-143  
CAF's National Capitol Squadron  
[www.nationalcapitolsquadron.org](http://www.nationalcapitolsquadron.org)**



**National Capitol Squadron's Grumman TBM-3E Avenger.**

TBM-3E Avenger -N40402/BuAer 91426 is a Grumman designed (TBF) aircraft built under license by GM in New Jersey in 1945. Assigned initially to the US Marine Corps, we know that this aircraft served as a replacement aircraft in several USMC training units in California from 1945 to 1948 and then was transferred to the Royal Canadian Navy in 1952. It was modified by Fairey Aviation (Canada) for anti-submarine warfare (turret removed; ASW operator station installed in its place; and MAD boom installed).

Acquired by Forest Protection in New Brunswick (called Tanker 18) after this service, it was modified as a spray plane with a protruding conformal tank in the bomb bay (doors removed and discarded) and a fairing installed on the aft part of canopy where the turret originally was.

The Avenger was bought by the CAF Stars & Stripes Wing in 2001 for \$64,000 and flown to Frederick, MD for restoration to the TBM-3E WWII configuration. All flight control surfaces were recovered, new bomb bay doors bought for \$20,000, and three decrepit turrets acquired from HQ CAF for \$500 with partial restoration done by Col Norm Birzer. This effort ended and the TBM was put up for assignment when the Stars & Stripes Wing disbanded.

HQ CAF assigned the aircraft to our unit in July, 2008 and the Avenger was moved to Jack Kosko's restoration facility in Fawn Grove, PA that fall. Major restoration efforts began early in the first quarter of 2009 and final restoration of the TBM into its original WWII configuration was basically completed with over \$200,000 spent in May 2014.

Our restoration crew is shown below with the CAF President's Choice Award for 2011 which they played a significant part in winning! Maintenance flight operations were done in early 2014 at Hagerstown, FAA approval for

return to flight status received and the aircraft flown to our facility in May.



**National Capitol Wing's TBM Restoration Team**

According to resaearch with the Natiional Museum of the Marine Corps, TBM-3Es served in many Marine VMTB units in the Pacific: 131, 132, 134, 143, 232, 233, 234, 242, & 332. After research on possible unit association and aircraft finish schemes for the TBM restoration, the Squadron has decided to finish the aircraft as one of the USMC VMTB-143 TBMs assigned to the USS Gilbert Islands (CVE 107). This conclusion is based on several aspects of the findings of the research conducted:

The aircraft was originally a USMC aircraft assigned to training units at the end of WWII.

VMTB-143 was organized and trained as a Close Air Support (CAS) unit, which fits nicely with the CAS history of our L-5 "Gayle Ann" (which also directed USMC aircraft in an airborne FAC role).

VMTB-143 flew its combat missions off the USS Gilbert Islands, one of the so-called "jeep carriers" of WWII (total of 122 built). The carrier survived as the last of her class through the Korean War, and re-commissioned as the USS Annapolis (AGMR-1), served during the Viet Nam war. This allows us to tell a unique USMC/USN story with regard to marketing and display of the aircraft.

With our BT-13 (USN designation SNV) and our associated SNJ aircraft combined with the Avenger and L-5, we will also be able to present a package of Basic, Advanced and Combat aircraft for display at air shows to tell the story of WWII USMC pilot training and transition to mission readiness and accomplishment.

The following short summary of VMTB-143 history is extracted from a number of places in the excellent website material on the squadron at [www.adamsplanes.com](http://www.adamsplanes.com)

**VMTB-143 (the "Rocket Raiders")** has its own place in history as one of the first to be specifically trained for close air support from carriers. It became apparent to the Marine leadership that once the battle zone shifted to the



mid-Pacific and then near to Japan that there would be no land-based Marine air squadrons within reach of the ground Marines until an airbase could be captured. Unless something happened all close air support (CAS) would have to come from the Navy.

They argued successfully to have their own carriers with specially trained CAS units. Thus in June 1944 VMTB-143 reformed at the **MCAS Goleta** to train for this carrier duty aboard the Gilbert Islands. Not only were they to become carrier qualified, but the 3-man crews were expected to be proficient in bombing, rocketing, depth charging, strafing, torpedoing and aerial defense.

The Gilbert Islands was one of only 4 carriers with all-Marine flight crews in WW2 (the ship's complement was still Navy). If the war had gone on for a few more years, as widely anticipated, there were more such carriers in the planning. While on the Gilbert Islands, the squadron earned 3 battle stars for supporting the Marines on Okinawa, air support for the Australian landings at Balikpapan, Borneo, and for operations off the coast of Japan. VMTB-143 also had the highest scoring air to air shoot-downs of any USMC or USN TBM Unit!



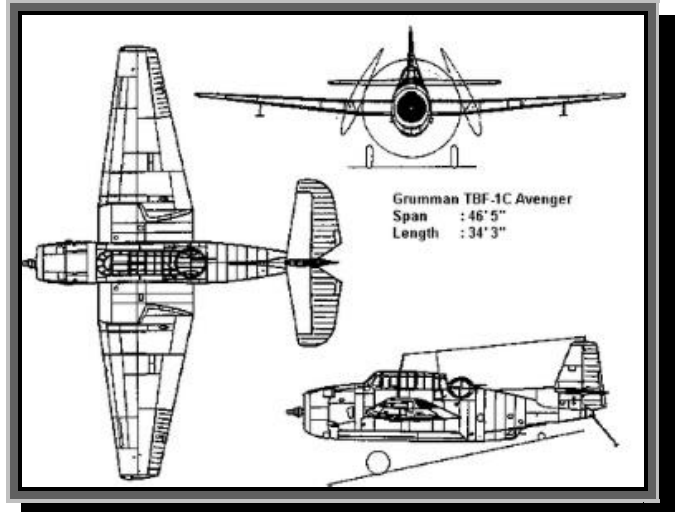
The TBM's engine – 1,900 hp Wright R-2600-20.



The finished product, with a team member next to the massive left gear. The wings fold much like the Hellcat's wings. The TBM is a large airplane, and needs constant attention by the pilot to trim controls to fly.

### Grumman TBF/TBM Specifications:

- Folding wings
- Three seats
- Powered rear turret
- Three .30 caliber machine guns
- Large internal bay
- Empty Weight: 10,843 pounds
- Maximum Weight: 18,250 pounds
- Maximum Speed 267mph @ 16,000 feet
- Service ceiling: 23,400 feet
- Range: 1,130 miles
- Crew of three: Pilot, Turret Gunner and Radioman/bombardier/ventral gunner.



**Note:** Our long-time member, Dave Wood, who now lives in northern Virginia, rode in the National Capitol Squadron's TBM as it participates in the Arsenal of Democracy Flyover on May 8, 2015.

### Wing's 2015 Air Show Schedule



© Photo by Frank Mormillo

Date	Place	Aircraft
July 10-13	Truckee/Tahoe	P-51,F6F,SNJ-5
July 18	Torrance	F6F, Zero
Aug 14,15	Big Bear	F8F,Zero, Spitfire,P-51
Aug 22,23	Camarillo Airport	All Aircraft
Sept 13-21	Reno Air Races	All Fighters

If you are planning on attending any or all of our air shows, please call us at 805-482-0064 to get an update, in case of any changes.

## Bob Hoover: A Calm Voice in the Face of Disaster – Part Four

By DI Freeze *Airport Journals*

### The need for speed

In 1946, Hoover evaluated the Heinkel 162, a German jet fighter, before his assignment to a Messerschmitt 163 Komet program. The German rocket plane had reached nearly 600 miles per hour. “They had gotten it up to .92 Mach number before hitting compressibility,” he said. “I was ready to fly with a rocket motor, but the power plant division decided it wasn’t worth the risk.”

By 1946, several aviators had died trying to break Mach 1, the speed of sound, including Geoffrey de Havilland Jr., a British pilot who attempted it in the Sparrow. The National Advisory Committee on Aeronautics (forerunner to the National Aeronautics and Space Administration) was pinning its hopes on the Bell Aircraft Company’s X-1, a bright orange, \$6 million rocket-propelled craft, with 6,000 pounds of thrust. It would be dropped from the belly of a B-29 mother ship at 25,000 feet. Then, without fuel, it would glide back and land. A civilian test pilot, Chalmers “Slick” Goodlin, had made more than 20 flights in the aircraft, and had taken it to .8 Mach.

Engineers were concerned that the X-1’s structural integrity wouldn’t withstand the extreme stress loads likely to be encountered at Mach 1. Although it was considered a highly dangerous test flight, Bell Aircraft and NACA balked at Goodlin’s demand for a \$150,000 payment upon successfully exceeding Mach 1. In May 1947, they started a search for a qualified military pilot.

Several pilots signed up for the mission. Told by Counsel that he was his choice, Hoover started preparing. Things changed, however, after Col. Boyd took over the flight test division, and called Hoover to his office, to inquire about an incident that had occurred months earlier. A P-80 had buzzed the Springfield Airport, upside down, and Hoover reluctantly admitted to the deed. Boyd said he respected his honesty, but added that he thought Hoover could also be irresponsible. He pulled him off the number one slot on the X-1 program.

Hoover, now the backup pilot, was devastated. “I thought, ‘If I have to back up someone whose skills I don’t respect, the next several months are going to be miserable,’” he recalled. Weeks later, Hoover was told of the selection of Chuck Yeager, a 24-year-old captain. “I could hardly keep a smile off my face,” Hoover said. “I told Boyd, ‘He’s the greatest aviator I’ve ever known; you couldn’t have made a better decision.’”

Decades later, Hoover says Yeager is still “the best.” “I respect and admire him,” he said. “We were fighting buddies in the air. He was the only person I had ever encountered that I couldn’t shoot down.”



**Chuck Yeager (left) and Bob Hoover share a laugh During the 1999 Gathering of Mustangs and Legends**

After Hoover arrived at Wright Field in early fall 1945, he was assigned to a P-38 prop fighter. Yeager, a maintenance officer, was flying a Bell P-59 jet. Yeager would later recall that the two pilots started a dogfight in the air. As Yeager whipped his jet around, he pulled straight up into a vertical climb, and his plane stalled. “I started spinning down, and that damn P-38 was spinning up. Both airplanes were out of control,” Yeager said. They went by each other less than 10 feet apart, and decided to stop the fight. “Yeager told me, ‘You can sure fly the hell out of that airplane,’” Hoover reminisced. “I said, ‘Look who’s talking! I’ve never met anybody as skilled as you.’ We became good friends.”



**Bell X-P59A being tested at Muroc Dry Lake, CA – October, 1942**

### Number 2

Some people believed that Hoover and Yeager were chosen for the flight because they were among the most junior pilots in Wright’s flight test section and were expendable. “I think the rumor may have been right,” Hoover grinned. “We were both only 24.” He added that if things went wrong, their inexperience could be blamed. As



backup, Hoover took part in all meetings with Yeager, flight engineer Jack Ridley and a handful of others on the program. "I was as prepared to go as anyone could be," Hoover said. "People jokingly said I was keeping my fingers crossed, but our friendship was stronger than that."

Both men had to participate in NACA medical tests before the flight. "Chuck and I had some real severe centrifuge testing to establish how much we could handle," Hoover said. "The airplane was good for 18 positive G's. That's a lot more than we could handle physically." The men were locked in altitude test chambers and strapped to various centrifuges. The equipment exposed them to high G's to determine their level of tolerance before blackout and unconsciousness. Once, the chamber technician forgot to open the valve on Hoover's oxygen supply. "I can't express the helpless feeling of having your lungs locked in the middle of a breath, unable to inhale or exhale," he said. "If Chuck hadn't looked through the porthole window at that instant, I would've been asphyxiated."

### Muroc



**Bell X-1, nicknamed "Glamorous Glennis" for Yeager's wife**

Tests on the X-1 began in late July 1947, at Muroc, Calif., chosen because of its isolation and miles of dry lakebed. Walt Williams headed the NACA team, in charge of monitoring instrumentation aboard the X-1. Hoover said Muroc resembled an Old West ghost town. It consisted of modest World War II barracks, a Spartan headquarters building and two hangars. A general store near the base offered necessities. Pilots wound down at Pancho Barnes' Fly-Inn Bar and Restaurant, later to be known as the Happy Bottom Riding Club. The hotspot at the edge of Rogers Dry Lake also displayed constant reminders of the dangers test pilots faced; photos of pilots, who had died at Muroc, were hung behind the bar. "Fatality rates were extremely high in those days," Hoover said.

The first non-powered flights were in August. During those flights, after being dropped at 25,000 feet, Yeager would glide back and land on the lakebed. During the first glide flight, Bell X-1 project engineer Dick Frost flew low chase,

while Hoover flew high chase (above 40,000 feet). As Yeager waited for Maj. Bob Cardenas, piloting the B-29, to drop him, Hoover, in the P-80, buzzed him. "He flew by so close, he almost knocked me loose from the B-29," Yeager said. "On my second glide flight, Hoover about shook me out of the airplane again. On my last glide flight, when I dropped out of the B-29, Hoover had already buzzed us and turned back in, so I turned back in to him." Their dogfight lasted down to the deck, and Yeager almost stalled the X-1. During his first powered flight, on the last day of August, Yeager reached .7 Mach. While diving for Muroc, he reached .8 Mach—a dive-glide faster than most jets at full power.

On October 5, his sixth powered flight, at .86 Mach, he experienced shock-wave buffeting for the first time. On his seventh flight, Yeager reached .94 Mach, but lost elevator effectiveness, due to the loss of pitch control, resulting in uncontrollability of the X-1. Analyzing the telemetry led to the realization that a shock wave had formed on the horizontal stabilizer at about .88 Mach. It was a problem, but Ridley suggested a successful fix.

For the next mission, the NACA team suggested a speed of .97 Mach. However, when they analyzed the flight data several days later, they discovered that Yeager had already officially flown .98 Mach, while testing the stabilizer. Yeager considered the possibility that he had already attained supersonic speed.

A few days later, following dinner at Pancho's, Chuck and Glennis Yeager enjoyed a midnight horse ride. While racing back in the moonless night, Yeager's horse hit a gate. He was thrown from the horse, cracking two ribs. Yeager kept the accident a secret to all but those closest to him and the local doctor who taped his ribs. The next afternoon, he drove to the base. Unlocking the cockpit door required considerable strength. Ridley suggested a 10-inch piece of broomstick to lift and lock the door handle, and it worked.



**Florence "Pancho" Barnes, legendary women aviator, owner of the Fly-In Bar and Restaurant, known affectionately as the "Happy Bottom Riding Club."**

On Oct. 14, 1947, Hoover was again flying high chase, when Yeager broke the sound barrier. "Boy, he was whistling," Hoover recalled. "He went by me as if I were standing still. He radioed Jack, 'You're going to have to get this Machmeter fixed. It just jumped, and then it went off the scale.' As soon as Chuck said that, we all knew he had broken the sound barrier. Those on the ground heard what they said sounded like thunder in the distance."

When Yeager broke the sound barrier, traveling at more than 700 mph (1.07 Mach), Hoover took the first photographs of the diamond-shaped shock waves from behind the X-1's exhaust plume. It was a wonderful day for both of them. "On our way down, I got back on his wing again," he said. I said, 'Pard, you got a steak dinner coming tonight at Pancho's.'"

Barnes had told them that steak dinners would be waiting when their goal was reached. However, the celebration was cut short. "Somebody came in and said, 'This is top secret,'" Hoover recalled. "I said, 'It's too late! We've already been talking about it.' He said, 'From now on, don't open your mouth.' Of course, by then, the horse was already out of the barn."

### Another disappointment

One of Hoover's greatest disappointments was that he never flew the X-1. A month after Yeager's historic flight, Hoover had suffered serious injuries on an F-84 Thunderjet project. The engine had caught fire over the Antelope Valley. "I was at about 40,000 feet," Hoover said. "In those days, we had no pressurization. I was all iced up, so I couldn't see out. No pressurization or heat. Both fire lights came on, and I knew the plane could blow up at any minute." Hoover prepared to eject, using the first ejection seat in America, copied from a German airplane he had tested. The aircraft was in a steep dive, at high speed, when he attempted to bail out, but the ejection handle failed. He unfastened his safety harness and oxygen hose and jettisoned the canopy.



**Republic F-84 Thunderjet**

"I was sucked out," he said. "I went right into the tail, hitting the backs of my legs." When his face slammed into his knees, his rubber oxygen mask offered little protection. "It knocked out a couple of teeth and busted up my jaw," Hoover said. He gathered his wits and pulled the

parachute's ripcord. "I landed, crumpled up on the ground," he said. "The wind kept the parachute inflated and it dragged me across the desert. I tried to pull the clamps, but it was too much force for me."

Finally, sagebrush caught the bottom of the parachute, and it collapsed. A farmer found Hoover an hour later, and rushed him to Antelope Valley Hospital, in Lancaster. Because he was in the military, he couldn't be treated there, and was ambulated back to the base. Doctors put his broken left leg in an ankle-to-hip cast and his right leg in a brace. They later determined that his right leg was also broken. After six weeks of rehabilitation, Hoover resumed his test-pilot duties at Wright Field.

"I could fly again, but the X-1 was behind me at that point."

### Changing course

Hoover left the military in December 1948, and joined General Motor's Allison Division as a test pilot. His salary would be twice his military pay. That meant a lot to 27-year-old Hoover and his wife, the former Colleen Humrickhouse, whom he met on a blind date and married in September 1947.

At a starting salary of \$850 per month, he tested Allison engines at Weir Cook Airport in Indianapolis, Ind. In 1951, he left to work for North American Aviation, located at Los Angeles International Airport. James H. "Dutch" Kindelberger headed the company; Lee Atwood was his second in command. "I was with that company for 36 years, testing airplanes and demonstrating all over the world," Hoover said.

He was one of six test pilots assigned to the engineering department, testing aircraft including the T-28 Trojan, FJ-2 Fury, AJ-1 Savage, F-86 Sabre and F-100 Super Sabre. In 1955, Atwood reorganized and expanded the company. Hoover was appointed director of customer relations and assistant to the marketing director. Soon after, Hoover became executive assistant to Gen. Austin Davis, who headed the aircraft divisions in Los Angeles; Tulsa, Okla.; and Columbus, Ohio. "I had been promoted out of flight test, but Lee said that as long as I wished to fly, I could."



**Bob Hoover with the North American F-100**

**To be continued...**

## Bob Hoover, at 90, saves a P-51

From AOPA [www.aopa.org](http://www.aopa.org)

by Jim Moore

The North American P-51 known as “The Brat III,” owned and operated by the Cavanaugh Flight Museum in Dallas, escaped damage Feb. 26, 2015, following a landing gear malfunction.

Circling above Mobile, Ala., on Feb. 26 with the left main landing gear of the vintage P-51 stuck halfway down, pilot Chuck Gardner calmly worked the procedures. When that failed to produce the desired result, a little advice from fellow aviators—including 90-year-old aviation legend Bob Hoover—proved helpful.

Gardner, with a passenger on board, started a conversation with a fellow pilot on the radio, who relayed messages to and from Doug Jeanes, the director of the Cavanaugh Flight Museum, who answered the troubling phone call in Dallas. The [museum is touring](#) “The Bratt III,” a World War II combat veteran, and has owned the vintage P-51 for about 20 years, including eight years spent restoring it.

Landing with one of the main wheels more horizontal than vertical was not an appealing option for the pilot, passenger, or owner. After picking the brains of various pilots, it occurred to Jeanes that Hoover, whose storied career included many flights in a P-51, might have something to offer. “Chuck had really tried just about everything,” Jeanes recalled.

Hoover, a veteran military, airshow, and test pilot, spent decades as the official starter of the Reno Air Races, guiding pilots into line abreast with his P-51, then announcing “gentlemen, you have a race” as he pulled up to circle above the contest. If an airplane got into trouble, as they often did, Hoover would form up on the wing and talk the pilot through it.



**The North American P-51 known as “Brat III,” owned and operated by the Cavanaugh Flight Museum in Dallas, escaped damage Feb. 25 following a landing gear malfunction.**

“Somebody would have a problem almost every other race, and over the years I must have talked down 30 or 40 airplanes that were in real trouble,” Hoover said in a

telephone interview. “As a test pilot, I had more experience, probably, than most people.”

Hoover also had experience with a very similar problem—twice over. First in World War II, and later at the Transpo ’72 airshow at Washington Dulles International Airport, Hoover had to land a Mustang on one wheel. In 1972, Hoover explained, the up lock failed to release, and there was no hope of extending both wheels. He put the old warbird down on one leg, walking away uninjured, but the aircraft required extensive repair following the inevitable prop strike.

On Feb. 26, Hoover said, the main wheel was not locked inside the fuselage, so he encouraged Gardner to keep trying a couple of promising maneuvers: an abrupt pull-up that could dislodge the gear with G forces, and a hard yaw to bring the force of the slipstream to bear on the stuck gear assembly.

“Boot enough rudder there at landing gear down speeds, get a side load on it, it would force it out and into the locked position,” Hoover said. “I’ve been there, I’ve done that a couple of times.”



**Hall of Fame pilot Bob Hoover signs copies of Forever Flying at the 2010 AOPA Summit.**

Jeanes, on the phone from Dallas to Hoover in Los Angeles, encouraged Gardner to keep trying the maneuvers over Mobile Bay. “Just slip it, skid it, yaw it, whatever you have to do to get some air under the door.”

After about an hour of maneuvering, the landing gear dropped at last into the down and locked position, and a smooth landing followed (with fire engines waiting just in case).

Jeanes said the problem was caused by a bad valve which controls the pressure in the shock and strut assembly, preventing the strut from fully extending. Fortunately, the P-51 had departed with plenty of fuel on board.

“Everybody was real calm. Nobody was panicking,” Jeanes said.

Hoover said he was happy to lend his experience to a pilot in a pinch—again.

“I was so pleased we could save the airplane, or that I had anything to do with it,” Hoover said.



## Another Good Day at CMA

Text and Photos by Col. Dan Newcomb

The PBJ was pulled out on the ramp for her first fueling in over 20 years. Yes, as anticipated we had a couple of leaks but they will be corrected.



The Collings Foundation flew in for a three day visit bringing their B-24, B-17 and P-51. On Thursday they asked if it would be possible for them to use our maintenance hangar for a few hours to work on their Mustang. It was suggested that if they agreed to donate a case of beverages we might find a way to accommodate them. I always have our wing's best interest in mind so I lent my vast knowledge to the beverage selection process.



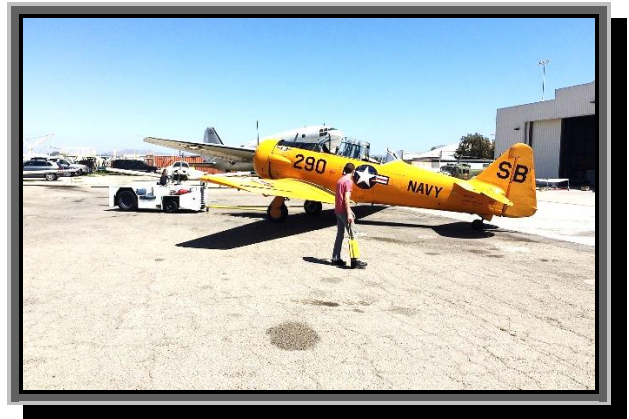
Also on Wednesday Marc and I had the pleasure to visit Si Robin and present him with a framed photo of our PBJ as thanks for his generous donation to our project. Si personally spent over an hour showing us around. We also thanked him for his donation and support of our new hangars and future museum build out.

On Friday morning the museum hangar was emptied for an event and in the afternoon the Zero, and our two Cats blasted off for Chino. Folks worked all week on both Cats to get them ready to fly.



Saturday we had two events booked for the hangar. By the way I want all of you to know that our cadets worked both the Friday event and Saturday's events. These kids do most of the heavy lifting and as you can see one of them drives a mean fork-lift!

Also on Saturday maintenance was conducted on the Spitfire, Mustang, the PT-19 and Bluebird and we flew a ride in 290.



And last but not least, work continues on the big dig as we get closer to building the new hangars.

As the weeks go by I am more amazed at how much work gets done!



## A Rookie Crew Goes To War: A Memoir – Part I by Col. Norm Ewers, USMC (Ret.)

When the Japanese attacked Pearl Harbor on December 7, 1941 I was an 18-year old freshman at Occidental College in Los Angeles with nothing more serious on my mind than my girlfriend and making the freshman football team.

That quickly changed. To begin with, I and all my buddies were ripe for the draft. Soon an Army Captain, wearing a snappy be-medalled uniform, and driving a late model convertible, showed up for an all-men's assembly in the gym to tell us the Army had recently reduced the education requirements for pilot and officer training. We could serve our country as a pilot officer in the Army Air Corps. (The Navy had a similar program.)

Several of us made a bee-line for the military recruiting station in Los Angeles. I chose the Navy and in June 1942 I was sworn into the Navy's V-5 pilot training program. Me, who didn't know the first thing about airplanes or piloting one of them was about to learn.

The first thing the Navy did before I was even called to active duty, was send me to Quartzsite, Arizona, just across the Colorado River from Blythe, California, in the heat of summer to learn how to fly a Piper Cub. When I showed them I could, the Navy decided I was worth further consideration.



**Civil Pilot Training (CPT) at Quartzsite, Arizona**

In October '42 they gave me a midshipman's uniform and sent me, and a host of other 18-19-year olds, off to Saint Mary's College, near San Francisco, for "pre-flight" training. This was to be followed by primary flight training

in open-cockpit "yellow peril" bi-planes (N3N & N2S) right here in Orange County at the Naval Air Station, Los Alamitos. What fun! In April 1943, I completed "Primary", a major flight training hurdle. I figured I had it made. I was given a surprise 7-day leave before reporting to NAS Corpus Christi, TX for final training in larger, higher-performance SNV and SNB aircraft. My girlfriend, Miss Susan Byrd, and I decided it could be now or never and snuck off to Yuma, AZ. There, in defiance of Navy Regs, we were secretly married. I soon discovered that several of my Corpus Christi classmates had done the same thing (but with different girls).

During final flight training, cadets at Corpus Christi were given a choice of which branch of the military service in which they wished to be commissioned. In the mistaken belief that there were P-38 twin-engine fighters parked "wingtip-to-wingtip" at a Marine Corps Air Station (MCAS) Cherry Point waiting for me, I elected to become a Second Lieutenant in the Marine Corps Reserve.

I completed flight training in August 1943, received my Navy Wings and my Marine Corps commission as a 2<sup>nd</sup> Lt. My new wife and I headed for Cherry Point, NC in my 1934 Ford Coupe. When we finally found this mysterious MCAS (it was actually on the North Carolina coast not far from Marine Corps Base Camp Lejeune), I discovered, to my dismay, that there weren't Lockheed twin-engine P-38 fighters wingtip-to-wingtip. Instead, there were North American PBJ twin-engine bombers awaiting my arrival.

While I went through three more months of "operational" training in this new bird (which I learned to love), my poor young wife was ensconced in a rented room of a house full of other young Marine Corps wives. In October 1943, I became a member of Marine Bombing Squadron (VMB) 614, one of the new PBJ squadrons being commissioned at Cherry Point. The Commanding Officer was Major "Bucky" Walsh, a congenial transport pilot recently returned from combat in the South Pacific. I expected to spend the rest of the war as a member of VMB-614, under Major Walsh's command.

As a full-of-himself 20-year old, I had no intention of being someone else's co-pilot. I wanted my own plane and crew; so, when the opportunity presented itself, I approached him and said, "Major, I want a crew of my own," he responded, simply, "OK." That was it.

What I didn't know was that VMB-614 was also tasked with providing replacement crews for PBJ squadrons already engaged against the Japanese in the South Pacific.



I and my crew remained in VMB-614 until May 31, 1944, when we were detached with the mission of delivering a new PBJ-1D aircraft (Bureau Number 35190) to the First Marine Aircraft Wing, "wherever it may be."

## THE CREW



**The Crew**

Front; l-r: 2d Lt Ewers pilot, 2d Lt Rigdon co-pilot  
Back; l-r: Cpl Neeson waist gunner, Cpl Pattison turret  
gunner, Cpl Biondolino, waist gunner, Sgt Remarzyk tail  
gunner, Sgt Meeks, navigator/bombardier

One thing I had promised myself upon becoming the pilot-in-command of this seven-man crew was that before we left the U.S. we would visit the hometown of every member of the crew. That included Buffalo, NY, Chicago, IL, Kansas City, MI, Pueblo, CO, Roswell, NM, and Pasadena, CA. That little promise almost got me court martialled. I was required to file a Remain Over Night (RON) message every time we stopped on our cross-country trip. I did (big mistake).

When we reached the Naval Air Station North Island, San Diego, CA I had to report to the Commander, Air Forces Fleet Marine Pacific. The Lieutenant Colonel who "welcomed" me to ComAirFMFPac was livid with rage. What the h\*\*\* are you doing, Ewers? You were ordered to "proceed and report", not take some scenic tour of the U.S.! Get yourself and your crew over to NAS El Centro, CA where they will prep your plane for its trans-pacific trip while we decide what to do with you.

I beat a hasty retreat, turned our records in and got out of there. The folks at ComAirFMFPac apparently had other, more important things to do than court martial some wayward 2<sup>nd</sup> Lt - because that was the last I heard about my circuitous route to the West Coast.

When we reached El Centro, the repair facility there spent about three weeks removing our heavy armaments and replacing them with long-range fuel tanks in the bomb bay and radio compartment. We also detached our turret gunner and 2nd radioman who travelled by ship to Honolulu with the combat armament stripped from our plane.

Those three weeks turned into a kind of second honeymoon for me and my now-pregnant wife. Except for an occasional test flight our time was our own. I was assigned quarters in a half-quonset hut, 1br/1ba apartment. As soon as that happened I phoned my wife and she hastened down to be with me while my plane was being readied for its long transpacific journey. Those Quonset hut quarters became known as the "tunnels of love," for the number of young officers who did the same as I and my wife did.

The repair facility completed its work by July 4, 1944 and we were on our way to the Army airfield at Fairfield-Suisen via AirFMFPac to pick up our records. The same LtCol who had welcomed us before again lectured me to go straight to Fairfield-Suisen, no funny business! I replied, "Yes, sir" and left. I had actually told my wife that I would buzz Tujunga (a residential community near Pasadena, CA) where she was staying with her parents). If I buzzed going north it was "bye, bye baby, see you when the war is over." If I buzzed going south we would RON (NO message to AirFMFPac) at the airfield in nearby Glendale, CA. I buzzed going south and had one last night with her and our family. The rest of the crew had one last time out on the town (Hollywood, CA) before we headed on our way to war.

It so happened that there was another VMB-614 replacement crew passing through AirFMFPac we met at North Island. We decided to dazzle the Navy by making a forbidden formation (2-plane) takeoff before going our separate ways; my crew to RON (no-message) at Glendale, and the other crew to make a (no-message) RON at NAS Moffett Field, near San Francisco. An interesting thing about that other crew; the pilot had smuggled his wife aboard dressed in a Marine Corps flight suit. When they landed at Moffett and a woman debarked from the plane the driver of the "Follow Me" jeep didn't know what to do. This woman was obviously where she shouldn't be. Luckily he did nothing and our two crews met again at Fairfield-Suisen the next day to wait our turns to start the next leg of our trans-pacific journey.



For us, it was a 12.2 hour flight to MCAS Ewa, Honolulu, HI on 14 July 1944. Our flight to Ewa was not an easy one. To begin with our auto-pilot didn't work, so Rigdon and I had to take turns holding our bird at 8,000', 160 kts. and on course. Then, after about two hours we discovered that our electric fuel pump had quit transferring fuel from the long-range tanks to the main tank which fed the engines.

We had a big problem. We could turn around, go back and get it fixed while waiting in line again. That didn't sound good. Or, we could press on using the emergency hand-pump in the navigator's compartment to transfer the fuel, if it worked. The crew chief and 1<sup>st</sup> radioman, were trapped by the long range fuel tanks in the rear of the plane. They would be no help. It would be up to Sgt Meeks, who had the build of an NFL line-backer anyway, to give it a try. I told him to drop his navigation gear and "man the pump." It worked. By working that pump vigorously, Meeks moved the fuel fast enough to keep ahead of consumption. En route, we were able to home in on a Coast Guard ship's navigation homer signal. And once we got within 600 miles of Honolulu we were able to ride its homer on in.

When we landed at Ewa, there were our two missing crew members, Pattison and Biondolino. Also there was the aircraft armament that had been removed from the plane back at El Centro. We stayed at Ewa until 28 July, enjoying the island's "Aloha" while the repair facility there put our plane back to combat ready status. We flew a couple test flights to make sure everything was in working order. On 2 August we started the final and longest part of our odyssey.

The first stop was the island of Palmyra, 6 hours flying time south of Honolulu. Before WW II, Palmyra had been a Pan-Am waystop on its Pacific route. We landed in a driving rain on its coral runway and spent the night. (No RON message). RONs at Canton Island. Funafuti Island, Espirito Santo Island followed, then up the Solomon slot stopping at Guadalcanal. We arrived at our ultimate destination, the Island of Bougainville, where the First Marine Aircraft Wing was headquartered, on 8 August 1944, seventy days after leaving Cherry Point on 31 May. Our odyssey also had us crossing the equator and the international dateline after leaving Ewa. On 9 August the Wing told us to fly another 2.5 hours, skirting the Japanese-held New Ireland Island, to Emirau Island, where we were to deliver our plane to Marine Air Group 62 and stand by for assignment.

Our poor bird had a short and ill-fated combat career. On about its third or fourth mission its pilot tried to land during

one of the thunder storms that frequented the area. He skidded off the runway and slid across a ditch that broke the aircraft's back.



**Untimely End of PBJ-1D, BuNo 35190**

We remained at Emirau until early September familiarizing ourselves with the area and flight procedures by making passenger and cargo flights to other islands in the area. We were then transported to Green Island, an atoll a few miles north of Bougainville. Green Island was the home to Marine Corps fighter aircraft, New Zealand Air Force (RNZAF) P-2V bombers, Navy PBV search rescue seaplanes and Marine Bombing Squadron 423. We joined VMB-423 and remained members until we were sent home at the end of the war.

**To be continued...**

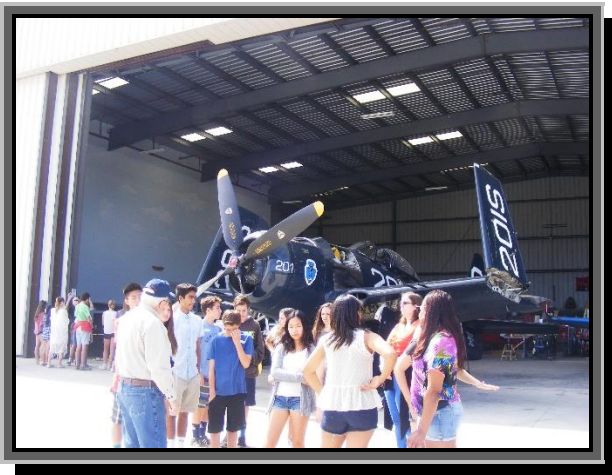


# June, 2015 Photo Page I

© Photos by Dave Flood



Classes from the Santa Rosa Technical Magnet School visited our Aviation Museum on April 30. They came in two buses provided free of charge through a grant from the City of Camarillo.



A group of students listen as Docent Hugh Richards explains our F8F-2 Bearcat and its history.



John Knopp, our Museum Manager, talks to some students about our PBJ Mitchell bomber and its significance in WWII in the Pacific Theater.



Bill O'Neill telling Santa Rosa Technical Magnet School students about our Curtiss C-46 Commando, "China Doll," and how this type of aircraft carried thousands of tons of war materiel "over the Hump" from India to China during WWII.



Charlie Carr, our Displays/Artifacts Manager, enlightening students about our Spitfire Mk XIV and its important part in winning the Battle of Britain in 1940.



Students checking out our many displays in the museum area of our Aviation Museum.

## A Fabled Formation

© Text and Photos by Col. Dan Newcomb



**Marc Russell's T-34, with Mike Hohls in front and Dan Newcomb in the rear seat – off Florida's coast.**

On April 15<sup>th</sup> Mike Hohls and I flew Marc Russell's T-34 from Camarillo to New Smyrna, Florida to attend a T-34 formation clinic hosted by George Baker Aviation on the following Saturday, Sunday and Monday.

I'm a lucky guy. For more than a dozen years I have been privileged to fly as a "back-seater" in T-34's. A good number of those flights have been in formation.

I have flown with some of the best in the business. Formation flying has become my favorite way to fly.

Over the years I have met some very interesting people - many of whom have become close friends. Last week, while in Florida, I met two very special T-34 pilots. One a retired USAF 4- star general and the other a retired US Navy commander.

As it turns out - they had much more in common than first appearances would suggest. You see, they were both ex-jail birds. The general served 2,488 days in the slammer. The commander got off a lot luckier - as he only had to do 335 days in the joint. Their crime? They were both convicted of being "Yankee Air Pirates" over Vietnam.

General Charles Boyd [Air Force Cross, Silver Star(2), DSM, Legion of Merit (3), DFC, Bronze Star with "V" device(3), Purple Heart (3)], was shot down while flying his Republic F-105 "Thud" on his 105<sup>th</sup> mission.

Commander J. B. Souder [Silver Star, DSM, DFC(2)] was shot down as he flew as RIO in the back seat of a Douglas F-4 Phantom on his 335<sup>th</sup> mission.

On Tuesday Mike and I flew Marc's plane down to Lakeland FL in an 8-ship formation -where we participated in the opening of the annual Sun 'n Fun Air Show.

We stayed with Marc's dad. I flew in 4 different planes. Dick Russell's plane was also involved. Marc and his dad both flew it. I figure I flew about 18 hours that week!



**Gen. Charles Boyd when he was Deputy Commander-In-Chief, U.S. European Command. He had been a prisoner of the Viet Cong from 1966 to 1973, and was the only Vietnam War POW to reach the rank of four-star general.**

I suggested that it would be a great photo opportunity to have Gen. Boyd and CMDR Souder fly together in the general's plane. We organized a 4-ship formation flight - and here are the results.

It was a great honor and privilege for me to do this.



**Gen. Charles Boyd's T-34, in USAF colors, with CMDR J.B. Souder in the rear seat.**



**Three of the four T-34s in formation – with the left and right planes flying wing with the general.**





© Photo by Dan Newcomb

Collings Foundation's Boeing B-17G Flying Fortress – a recent visitor to Camarillo Airport.



© Photo by Dan Newcomb

In addition to the B-17, Collins also had a Consolidated B-24 Liberator bomber, one of only two flying in the world today (the CAF has the other one). The bombers, along with their P-51, parked outside the Waypoint Café, and offered tours and rides.



© Photo by Dan Newcomb

Colling's P-51 Mustang stopped by our Maintenance Hangar for some needed repairs. We're always willing to oblige. See Dan's article on page 12 for details.



© Photo by Dave Flood

Cols. Keith Bailey and Lloyd McAfee giving TLC to a Lloyd-designed cart for transporting visitor-control stands used for special events. It's named: "LaTanya's Trolley," and "nose art" is by Shirley Murphy.



© Photo by Dave Flood

The PBJ-1J Restoration Team had their aircraft out for an engine test – then found a gas leak and spent some time looking for it. Once corrected – they'll run-up the engines for the first time in decades!

### Safety Corner by Col. Gene O'Neal, Safety Officer

Many things impact our safety and YOU play an important role. Always think safety as you work and move around the hangar and ramp. If it does not look right, stop and fix it or report it to others. Help each other be safe. Remember a CLEAN work place are goes a long way to make your day safer, so always clean up and put things away. Everyone is doing better. Keep up the good work.

When you are working on a ladder, please do not lay tools or equipment on the steps or on the top. Why? Because when you or others move the ladder it all comes raining down on your head.

Be extra careful with oily rags and other flammable paints and chemicals.

SAFETY BEGINS WITH YOU. BE SAFE.

## The David McCampbell Terminal: Palm Beach, Florida's Airport



photo by Joseph May  
26° 41' 17" N / 80° 05' 22" W

The formal name of the Main Terminal at Palm Beach International (PBI) Airport

The passenger terminal located at the Palm Beach International Airport (KPBI) was dedicated in honor of local Medal of Honor awardee US Navy Captain David McCampbell, who is a native of the area.

On June 19, 1944, during the "Marianas Turkey Shoot," Commander McCampbell shot down five Japanese 'Judy' dive-bombers, to become an "ace in a day". Later that afternoon, during a second sortie, McCampbell downed another two 'Zekes' over Guam. On October 24, 1944, he became the only American airman to achieve "ace in a day" status twice. McCampbell and his wingman attacked a Japanese force of 60 aircraft. McCampbell shot down nine, setting a U.S. single mission aerial combat record. During this same action, his wingman downed another six Japanese warplanes. When he landed his Grumman F6F Hellcat aboard USS Langley (Essex's flight deck wasn't clear), his six machine guns had two rounds remaining and his airplane had to be manually released from the arrestor wire due to complete fuel exhaustion.<sup>[1]</sup> Commander McCampbell received the Medal of Honor for both actions, becoming the only Fast Carrier Task Force pilot to be so honored. is the US Navy's highest scoring ace with 34 total victories.

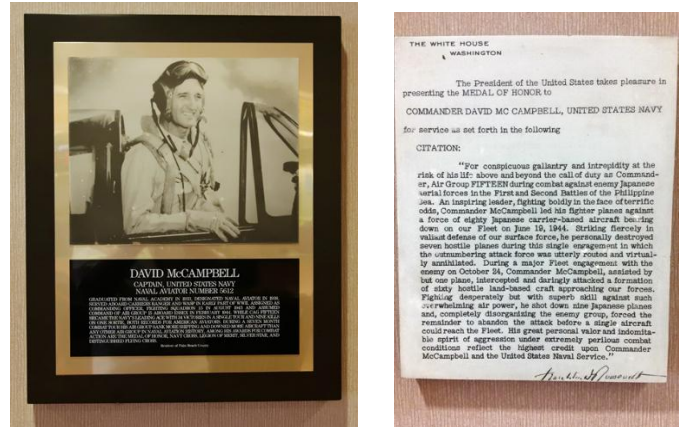
The Commemorative Air Force Southern California Wing's F6F Hellcat is a flying representative of David McCampbell's aircraft from World War II –*Minsi III*.

It is in second floor somewhat out-of-the-way northeast corner where its secret name lies, the "Captain David McCampbell, USN Terminal" as it turns out to be.



The corner of PBI's terminal devoted to Capt. David McCampbell and his WWII exploits.

If one goes close and reads the material, you learn that the terminal is named for an incredible aviator — the U.S. Navy's World War II all-time leading ace and Medal of Honor recipient. It is fitting a terminal is named for him but especially this one - as he was a West Palm Beach native.



A plaque honoring Capt. McCampbell and a reproduction of his Medal of Honor Citation on the wall in the area honoring the Navy's top air ace.

The secret has to be sought as the only appearance if the terminal's formal name is in this corner — but the corner area is comfortable (far more than nearly every other airport we have been) and only a tad out-of-the-way (enough for the space to be a bit quieter than the rest of the terminal).



A photo of McCampbell's Hellcat "Minsi III" on the carrier USS Essex during WWII.



Navy carrier USS Essex, on which Capt. McCampbell was CO of the famous fighter group VF-15.

Thanks to Col. Charles "Sid" Gillman for this story.



# Photo Page III: Chino Air Show

© All photos by Frank Mormillo



Col. Ken Gottschall in our Bearcat flying with a British Hawker Sea Fury.



Col. Steve McCartney in the Zero, in a dogfight with the Chino Planes of Fame's Chance-Vought F4U.



Cols. Ken Gottschall in the Grumman F8F-2 Bearcat and Col. Steve Barber in the Grumman F6F-5 Hellcat.



A Mig 15 in tight formation with an F-86.



Our F8F-2 Bearcat lookin' good!



Our Mitsubishi A6M3 Zero flying high, with Rob "Lips" Hertberg piloting.



F6F-5 Hellcat *Minsi III* putting on a show!

# CAF So Cal Wing

## Unit Staff Meeting Minutes April 18, 2015

### Opening

The regular meeting of the CAF So Cal Wing was called to order at 9:30 am on April 18, 2015 in the O'Club by Wing Leader, Ron Missildine.

### Staff Officers Present

Ron Missildine, Steve Barber, Mike Perrenoud, Paul Willett, Janet Rizzoli, Gene O' Neal

### Staff Officers Absent

Jason Somes

### Approval of Minutes

The minutes of the previous meeting were unanimously approved as distributed.

### Open Business

#### Facility Build-out

#### Executive Officer—Steve Barber

- Hangar progress
- Have grading permit
- Walt negotiated a \$10K discount if we pay for the hangar in advance

### New Business

#### Wing Leader Report—Ron Missildine

- New items in PX, looking good, well stocked
- Ron Schofield looking at obtaining a permit to sell water and packaged goods
- Looking into PX possibly taking over vending machines and upgrading them; looking at refrigerator machine
- B-17 Collings Foundation at CML the end of month; set up a display table at the Waypoint Café and include a/c for display?
- New member Scott has agreed to clean tool area; Ron M. requested he ask others to help him load pallets with items for sale or recycle; please support him
- Per Gene O. we need to set rules on how we're going to do this, where items should be stored so they can be found; can't just hide things to make the place look good. We should inventory items.
- Mike P trying to separate non a/c items; main goal of clean up right now

- Student From SBCC will help us set up ebay account to sell things we don't need
- 
- New website up; functioning well, updating is easy
- Steve B thanks Paul W., Bill O. and Ron M. for getting site going
- Will add members area
- For any changes, suggestions, additions or notices of hangar closure due to special events, send email to Paul at [admin@cafsocal.com](mailto:admin@cafsocal.com) with request
- 
- Encourage the use of Face Book to get photos up of activities; Taylon talking care of our Face Book account, and has added a lot of great information
- 
- Tugs/equipment are being left out and keys left in ignition
- 
- Doors are being left open; police each other. Will have security system up soon. People are coming from Waypoint Café to look around and when we leave things out, people climb on a/c, may put signs out
- 
- Fathers day major event; put plan together for Jun 20-21, hours of 10-4; advertise with radio, print, social media, do the admissions like B-29, PX sales, ride program table, refreshments, make it an event and have drawing for PT-19 ride.
- 
- Dave Flood 75th anniversary of the Battle of Britain then, use Spitfire, include local British car club. Per Gene O. check city calendars to see if other large events going on. Ron asking for volunteers.
- We should have one event per quarter set target of earning \$30-40K

#### Safety Report—Gene O'Neal

- Keep fire bottles clear
- Hazards working around fuel, solvents, potential of getting sprayed in eyes....
- 
- Eye washes: One by first aid kit, another inside men's bathroom. Body wash; have showers in each bathroom in the mx hangar to get rid of toxic items
- 
- Per Ron M. we need to have indoctrination for new members to where safety things are.
-



- Shirley can help; per Shirley, not getting new member applications. Paul will make sure she gets them.

### **Finance Report—Paul Willett**

- Have ample cash available for routine operating expenses
- Paid monthly bills, fuel, lease
- Still need to pay Ward Bros., Wing credit card Bills, plus other late month bills
- Waiting for funds for mustang rides from B-29 squadron, given at Van Nuys and Las Vegas during visit and also PT-19/SNJ rides sold in Camarillo, Palm Springs, Van Nuys and Las Vegas
- Sold 27 mustang rides; 16 rides already given and 11 still to be given.  
Received payment from El Centro show
- More shows on the board with deposits in
- March/Apr hangar rentals looking good
- We're current on construction bills
- Need to make payment on Yak engine, insurance, ANUAC and on PBJ gun turret plexiglass
- Cash flow picking up but still have significant money to pay back construction fund.
- Need to save money so we're not so much hand to mouth
- Have new email accounts for staff positions; will get list for Dave to put in newsletter. Use instead of personal accounts so others can use them as staff members change

### **Maintenance Report—Mike Perrenoud**

- Changing leads out of Bearcat; test flight today
- Minor things to do for Hellcat

### **Operations Report—Steve Barber for Jason Somes**

- Scheduling air shows now and attempting to get Reno and get paid to go
- Next show in Chino May 1-3
- Chino on Friday/Saturday, then leave for Washington DC on Sunday (subsequently cancelled).
- Per Ron; Tahoe/Truckee show has requested mustang images for t-shirts
- Introduced Charlie Gillman (Sid) new member. Per Steve B, he's a historian and pilot

### **Museum Report—no report**

### **Special Events Report—LaTanya Barber**

○

- Kids birthday today, Dining Out event with the Navy in the evening
  - Wedding next Saturday
  - April good month; May looks even better.
  - On July 22, Camarillo agreed to host spec Olympians; with the 99's will have lunch and tour
  - Camarillo will be hosting 50 Saudi Arabian men and 50 men/women from New Zealand
  - Will coordinate with docents regarding help

### **Other**

Per Dan Cuvier, the mobile compressor has disappeared. Has searched annex, hangar. Needs assistance painting Navion and compressor would be necessary.

### **Adjournment**

Meeting adjourned at 10:20 by Ron Missildine. The next general meeting will be at 9:30 on May 16, 2015 in the O'Club.

### **Minutes Submitted By:**

Janet Rizzoli, 5-8-15



© Photo by Craig Fry, Associated Press

**Our North American P-51D Mustang "Man O' War" flying escort for the CAF's Boeing B-29 Superfortress "FIFI" over Yuma, AZ on March 7, 2013.**

### **Wing Sick Bay**

We were remiss in not calling attention to the fact that our good friend and fellow member, Ron Fleishman, went through a difficult knee replacement surgery recently. He had been in the hospital, and is now currently going through rehab therapy.

Even so... Ron has been back on the job as our venerable Wing Historian and super Docent – almost as if nothing had happened.

Can't keep a good man down!

Thanks, also, Ron, for being one of our stellar "Flight Line" photographers!