



# Friends of the Museum Newsletter



## Commemorative Air Force

455 Aviation Drive, Camarillo, CA 93010  
(805) 482-0064

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© Photo by Eric Van Gilder [www.vg-photo.com](http://www.vg-photo.com)  
Our Mitsubishi A6M3 Zero's Crew Chief Col. Yoshi Abe, wearing an authentic Japanese WWII flight suit. See the story of Yoshi's Zero on Page 3.

## Grand Reopening Celebration

To celebrate our WWII Aviation Museum's reopening, after having been closed due to code problems for a few months, we will be having an open house on Saturday, February 9, 2008 – between 11:00 a.m. and 4:00 p.m. Come see our new look and thrill to some aircraft flyovers. Be sure to bring your camera!

## Report From The Museum Director

By Sarah de Bree, CAF-SoCAWing Aviation Museum Director

Good news!!! We are fully open and operational again! Our museum has been cleaned and rearranged and our new exhibits on Korea and Vietnam are set up. We're welcoming visitors, and especially hope to see our Friends of the Museum stop by.

Groups are invited to have their special events in our facility.

On February 9 we're having a Grand Reopening Celebration, with all the airplanes on exhibit, light refreshments and a well-stocked Gift Shop. Come and bring your friends.

If you are interested, we invite you to consider becoming a Docent or Helper. We need volunteers to help "man the store," prepare exhibits, catalog items, and do general clean-up work. Let me know if you can help. Please call me at (805) 482-0064.



© Photo by Dave Flood

Here's Walt Fuller, one of four first riders in our SNJ-5, on Saturday, February 2 just prior to take off. The public can now participate in our Warbird Flight Program by reserving rides at 805-482-0064.

# AN ADVENTURESOME YOUNG MAN!

by Ceci Stratford



© Photo by Dave Flood

Jason Somes, only 36, flies the So Cal Wing's Zero, Bearcat, Hellcat, SNJ, and most recently, PT-19.

He became interested in flying because of model airplanes. As a very young boy he started making plastic models, then quickly progressed to remote control airplanes. But he wanted to fly the real thing, so started taking lessons in 1987 at 16 years of age. His first 30 hours were in a Pitts (a high performance aerobatic biplane) and then he moved to tail-wheel airplanes. He obtained his instrument, commercial, and multi-engine ratings. Also, he is a licensed A & P (Airframe and Powerplant) aircraft mechanic, as well as an IA (Inspection Authorization). These licenses enable him to work on his own airplanes as well as the CAF's.

Jason came to the Commemorative Air Force because of his interest in World War II aircraft. After he joined, he asked if he could start flying the fighters. Being an owner of a Pitts, a T-6 (World War II trainer) and a Formula 1 racer (now "deceased"), as well as his experience in aerobatics and in high performance tail wheel aircraft, gave him the skills needed to check out in the fast, tricky fighters. He also flies the C-46 Commando (twin-engine cargo airplane).

Air racing became another obsession, which he participated in for five years. He recently retired because of an accident at Reno in 2007--a mid-air collision between his Formula 1 and another aircraft. He was lucky to survive, so called it quits. However, he will soon be instructing rookie air racers in pylon racing skills, using his Pitts.



© Photo by Chris Luvara

**Jason flying his Pitts Special over canyon country.**

Jason's goals are simple. He plans to continue flying these amazing military airplanes, hoping to add many hours and additional aircraft to his logbook entries. He wants to buy a Culver Cadet, just because he likes the airplane! *(Note - The Culver Cadet was an uncommon little airplane even in its day. It was used by the Civil Air Patrol and the Army Courier Service during World War II. It's a two-place side-by-side airplane, with an all-wood fuselage, and 120 mph cruise speed. Only 400 were built).*

Professionally, Jason is an Aviation Consultant. He oversees the completion of Gulfstream 550s at Long Beach Airport, serving as liaison between the customer and Gulfstream to assure the customer gets a quality product (including the airplane interior, fittings, lighting, paint, etc.). He also maintains a Gulfstream aircraft at Camarillo Airport and he runs a small business selling model airplanes.

The next time you're out at the CAF, ask to meet our adventuresome young pilot, Jason Somes.



© Photo by Eric Van Gilder

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**Jason, with his Banzai headband on, taxiing back to CAF hangar during CMA Air Show-2007 in the A6M3 Zero.**

## Our “Zero Tolerance”

by Dave Flood



© Photo by Eric Van Gilder [www.vg-photo.com](http://www.vg-photo.com)

The Mitsubishi A6M “Zero” (“A” for fighter; “6” for 6<sup>th</sup> model; “M” for Mitsubishi) was a lightweight carrier-based fighter aircraft in the service of the Imperial Japanese Navy Air Service from 1940 to 1945.

At the time it was introduced, the Mitsubishi A6M was the best carrier-based fighter plane in the world, and was feared by Allied pilots because of its superior maneuverability in dogfights.

By 1942, thanks to new tactics and techniques in the art of aerial dogfighting, and new sturdier and more maneuverable aircraft (e.g., the Grumman F6F Hellcat), allied pilots were able to engage the Zero on more equal terms. As it became more outdated later in WWII, the Zero was relegated to being used in kamikaze operations.

It is universally known as the Zero – from its Japanese Navy designation “Type 0 Carrier Fighter.” The “0” in the designation is taken from the last digit in the Imperial Calendar year 2600 (1940), when the aircraft entered service. In Japan, the Zero was unofficially referred to as both **Rei-sen** and **Zero-sen**. The official Allied code name for the Zero was **Zeke**.



© Photo by Shaun Edelstein

**Our Zero and Hellcat in formation at an air show.**

## Mitsubishi A6M3 Zero Specifications:

**Type:** Fighter

**Manufacturer:** Mitsubishi

**Introduction To Service:** July, 1940

**Number Built:** 10,500

**Wing Span:** 36 feet, 1 inch

**Length:** 29 feet, 9 inches

**Height:** 11 feet, 5.75 inches

**Engine:** R-1830 Pratt & Whitney

(Original engine was a Nakajima Sakae)

**Max. Speed:** 346 mph

**Ceiling:** 35,100 feet

**Range:** 1,118 miles (1,930 with drop tank).



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**Our Zero trailing smoke after being “shot down” at a recent air show. A highlight of air shows that our planes participate in is the dogfight between our Zero and Hellcat.**

Our Zero, #N712Z, came originally from New Guinea – from a place near the town of Babo. It was put, in pieces, on a ship and sent to Russia, where it had a partial renovation. After it was shipped to the U.S.A., it received further renovation, and was eventually purchased by David Price, who, in turn, made it possible for the CAF to acquire it. It is one of only three Zeros in the world that are flying.



© Photo by Eric Van Gilder [www.vg-photo.com](http://www.vg-photo.com)

**Col. Yoshi Abe is our Zero’s Crew Chief. He treats his bird as a dear and revered lady – with much TLC.**

**COMMEMORATIVE AIR FORCE SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA WING**  
**World War II Aviation Museum**  
**455 Aviation Drive Camarillo CA 93010 (805) 482-0064**

The CAF So Cal Wing is looking to increase support for our Wing's Museum from the public. The Wing has created a financial donation opportunity by establishing a "Friends of the Museum" program. (Note, this is not a membership program. Rather, it is a fund raising program.)

The Museum operates on the support of members, events, and donations. The "Friends" annual donation entitles them to unlimited admission to the Museum, discounts at our gift shop, a "Friends Newsletter", and special levels of benefits. At each level, donors have the satisfaction of knowing that their gift helps enrich our educational programs, expand our exhibits, and maintain our airplanes.

If you or someone you know is interested in supporting our mission of preserving aviation history of World War II and beyond, complete this form and send it to the CAF at the address above. (Feel free to make a photocopy of the form).

**FRIENDS OF THE MUSEUM DONOR FORM**

**COMMEMORATIVE AIR FORCE – SO CAL WING  
WORLD WAR II AVIATION MUSEUM**

Print Name(s) \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Phone ( ) \_\_\_\_\_ Cell ( ) \_\_\_\_\_

Email \_\_\_\_\_

Check here if you are a current CAF Colonel

Form of Payment: Cash  Credit Card  Check   
(Make check payable to "CAF SoCal Wing - Friends of the Museum")

Credit Card # \_\_\_\_\_ Exp. Date \_\_\_\_\_

Check One Visa  Master Card  Discovery

Signature \_\_\_\_\_

Mail to above address.



**Select Participation Level** (Benefits for each level are listed below)

- Individual \$50
- Family \$75
- Supporter \$250
- Sustaining \$500
- Patron \$1000
- Benefactor \$5000

Friends of the Museum donation is valid for 1 year from the month of donation.  
The CAF is a 501(c)3 organization. Your contribution is tax-deductible.  
(See your Tax advisor for your individual tax situation.)

**Friends of the Museum Levels and Benefits**

BENEFIT	INDIVIDUAL \$50	FAMILY \$75	SUPPORTER \$250	SUSTAINING \$500	PATRON \$1000	BENEFACTOR \$5000
Unlimited Museum Access	X	X	X	X	X	X
Personalized Friends of the Museum ID Card	X	X	X	X	X	X
"Friends Newsletter"	X	X	X	X	X	X
Gift Shop Discount 10%	X	X	X	X	X	X
Wing Patch			X	X	X	X
Drawing for Ride in SNJ				X	X	
Framed Certificate					X	X
Ride in SNJ and Photo						X
Name on Plaque in Museum						X