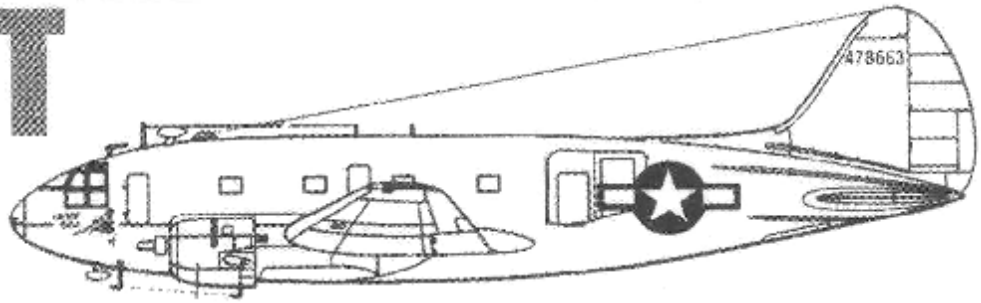


# FLIGHT LINE



THE OFFICIAL PUBLICATION OF THE SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA WING OF THE CAF

Vol. XXVI No. 4

Visit us on the web at [www.orgsites.com/ca/caf-socal](http://www.orgsites.com/ca/caf-socal)

April 2006

## CAF'S POLIKARPOV I-16 FLIES FROM CAMARILLO!



Photo by Jim Hinkelman

*Col. Carter Teeters gives the traditional thumbs up signal after a successful flight of the CAF's Polikarpov I-16 on Sunday, March 12<sup>th</sup> from the Camarillo airport. He made 3 uneventful touch and go landings before returning to the hangar. Carter said as he climbed out of the cockpit "the flight went well, except for having to battle strong cross winds during the landings."*

**WING STAFF MEETING, SATURDAY, APRIL 8, 2006 AT 9:30 AM AT  
THE CAF HANGAR, 455 AVIATION DRIVE, CAMARILLO AIRPORT**

THE CAF IS A PATRIOTIC ORGANIZATION DEDICATED TO THE PRESERVATION OF THE WORLD'S GREATEST COMBAT AIRCRAFT - 1939-1945

## April 2006

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
						1 Work Day  Air Show Riverside
2 Daylight Savings Time Begins	3	4 Work Day	5	6 Work Day	7	8 Work Day Staff Mtg 9:30AM
9	10	11 Work Day	12	13 Work Day	14	15 Work Day
16 Easter	17	18 Work Day	19	20 Work Day	21  Air Show Gillespie	22 Work Day  Air Show Gillespie
23  Air Show Gillespie	24	25 Work Day	26	27 Work Day	28  Air Show March AFB	29 Work Day  Air Show March AFB
30  Air Show March AFB						

### STAFF AND APPOINTED POSITIONS

Wing Leader	* Casey de Bree	(805) 389-9185	scdebree@aol.com
Executive Officer	* Dave Long	(805) 497-8306	toropoo@adelphia.net
Adjutant	* Bob Albee	(805) 583-4872	loll@earthlink.net
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Operations Officer	* Gary Barber	(805) 659-4319	bearcat69@pacbell.net
Maint Officer	* Dick Troy	(805) 522-5061	konvair@aol.com
Safety Officer	* Bob Goubitz	(805) 388-8341	rgoubitz.cafsocial@zoemail.net
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 WEBSITE [www.orgsites.com/ca/caf-social](http://www.orgsites.com/ca/caf-social)

\* Denotes Staff Position

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### Submittal Deadline - 15th of the month

Commemorative Air Force  
 Southern California Wing  
 455 Aviation Drive  
 Camarillo, CA 93010-9501

## Wing Leader's Report

by Casey de Bree



Caf Headquarters is planning a big CAF Convention and 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary celebration, which will include a mini Airsho, to be held in July or August 2007. It's hard to believe, but we will soon be 50! They wanted something extra special so they are planning to hold it in Las Vegas and are looking for a big turnout. There is

a copy of the Headquarters announcement brief on page 8 of the Flight Line and a pre-registration questionnaire on page 9. Headquarters would like your response and comments, even if you are not interested in going.

The cost is planned to be \$795 per person, which covers a 4-day and 3-night hotel stay, registration, reception, Gala Banquet, conferences, Expo, Airsho, and lectures. The cost does not include travel to and from Las Vegas, entertainment, gambling, or gratuities. They require a \$100 deposit with your reservation, which will be refunded if the event does not happen. It sounds like a lot of fun, an event not to be missed.

Southern California Wing Museum Director Glenn Bachman resigned in February after serving in that capacity for many years. We are indebted to Glenn for his outstanding work in developing many new and exciting exhibits, creating a wonderful gift shop, and greatly improving museum revenues. Glenn is a difficult man to replace, and I am delighted that my wife, Sarah, has volunteered to fill the position and her appointment was announced at the March 4 Wing Staff meeting. I am relieved that we have someone to continue Glenn's good work, and both Sarah and I are grateful for the expressions of support and offers of help she has received from a number of Wing members. She has expressed to me that she is excited about the museum and is looking forward to working with all of you.

I attended the CAF Winter Staff Conference in Midland in late February. There was one thing that was stressed that I wish to pass on to the membership. Headquarters hired John Lage as their Director of Marketing and Communications almost a year ago. John is a young, enthusiastic, very dynamic individual who is determined to market the Commemorative Air Force to the public, and will probably shake the CAF old timers to their boots in the process. As part of his strategy, John feels it is important to present one face to the public and to do that we must be proud of our past heritage as the Confederate Air Force, but we are now the Commemorative Air Force and we should present that face everywhere. That means that we no longer wear the Confederate Air Force patches or grey uniforms to the hangar, air shows, or to official events. I support John in what he is trying to do and give him the tools to achieve his goals for the organization. If

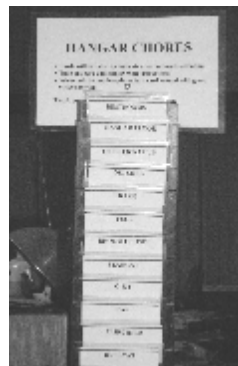
John is successful, it will mean more corporate sponsorships and money for Headquarters and possibly the Wings. To bring this home, Chief of Staff Joe Cowen was caught wearing a Confederate Air Force Shoulder patch on his uniform. This was staged, but was very convincing. During the closing remarks, John Lage ran up to the podium, grabbed Joe's microphone, and dressed him down, as only John can, for wearing a Confederate Air force patch. He promptly ripped the shoulder patch (with threads appropriately cut) from Joe's uniform, and ordered him to replace it with a Commemorative Air Force version of the patch that he handed him, addressing him as 'Sir' all the while. Joe asked if the new patch was a gift, and John said "No Sir, it will cost you \$5." Joe produced a \$5 bill and took the patch. Headquarters is serious about this and I want all of you to help John succeed. If you have one of the old grey uniforms and wish to continue to wear it to the hangar, please upgrade the patches. We are the Commemorative Air Force, all of us.

Another thing that came up at the conference was the modernized CAF logo that has been used by Headquarters for several years now. It was designed by a public relations firm, who wanted to modernize the image of the CAF. Almost no one likes the logo, and the General Staff has been receiving a steady stream for complaints about it since it was introduced. A member of the Highland Lakes Wing ragged on Chief of Staff Joe Cowan until he agreed to revisit the logo design, but made no promises. If the logo is changed, the existing supply of stationary and brochures will be used until the supplies are exhausted, to minimize the cost impact. We will see what happens.

It is interesting that Headquarters never imposed the new logo on the Wings and Units. The Southern California Wing still uses the classic logo, a literal image of the aviator's wings, on our brochures, stationary, envelopes, and business cards. Here are the two logos:



Bob Goubitz came up with a Hangar Chore Board that



tells members what needs to be done on work days. Each task has a card and if it needs doing the card is turned so the red band is showing. A member can take on that chore and when it has been done turn the card so the green band is showing. Chores like dumping the trash, sweeping, tidying the O' Club, and tending the restrooms are included as well as each of the Wing's aircraft if extra help is needed there. It just might work. The board is located alongside Executive Officer Dave Long's desk

Until next month. . . .



## FINANCE OFFICERS REPORT

*By Jason Vosburgh*

It's that time of month again; yes it's the finance column time! This column is to help our members

understand how we financially operate as a wing. This month we'll cover the concept of MCRP. So here we go! The Minimum Cost Recovery Program (MCRP) was begun to safeguard the museum's operational aircraft from cheapskate pilots. We all love to fly them, but then come the maintenance bills. Rather than pay for the work, wings were doing something called "deferred maintenance". That way the cheapskates could fly and fly until... the aircraft had a mechanical failure and potentially wrecked somebody's day. MCRP stops that from happening. For every hour we fly a certain aircraft, we as a wing must pay a given amount for its maintenance. Think of it as social security for the wing aircraft. The MCRP accounts are held by the CAF in Midland Texas, which we can draw upon for maintenance for its designated aircraft. If you are so inclined please take a look as to how much money is held in each aircraft account in the book labeled "HQ Aircraft Accounts" in the maintenance hanger.

That's just one point of many concerning the inexplicable world of finance. So until next month enjoy your time in the hanger!



## MAINTENANCE OFFICER'S REPORT

*By Dick Troy*

Well it's that time of year again. Airshow 06. I honestly do not know where the time has gone between the last show of 05 and the beginning of the 06 season. The first engagement we have is Riverside which is a one day affair. The Convair is ready to go as we just returned from Rialto after completing the required A.D on the number two prop. The aircraft is in good shape and ready to participate in whatever shows we are invited to. That's the good news. The not so good news revolves around our veteran C-46 China Doll. It seems we have some repairs to accomplish on both engine fire-warning systems the parts of which are becoming increasingly difficult to find. Seems that several of the heat sensitive units are faulty and need replaced. The problem is finding them at a price we can afford. We have several leads but nothing in hand so far. Additionally the corrosion inspection in the wing center section and the outer wing attach angles need to be inspected to insure there are no hidden flaws that may not be detectable by a cursory visual inspection. Chances are the aircraft will not be available for the first part of the airshow season at least.

As most of us know by this time our AM6-3 Zero is in Midland Texas for its 90 day rotational stint. After that it will be flown a closer location outside of California to reside there for the remainder of the time necessary to comply with the State of California sales tax laws.

The transaction with Mr. Price was consummated outside the State of California to prevent the C.A.Fs having to pay a considerable sales tax fee that we simply could not afford. In conjunction with that transaction the aircraft cannot re-enter

the State of California for a period of one year. We will still be able to use it for shows outside the State but nothing inside.

Our Bearcat is being put back together however we are again experiencing recurring problems with fluid leakage from the prop hub. This is a vexing problem that for some reason defies a solution. We are considering the possibility of changing out the hub and all internals with a Skyraider hub, or seek advise from other operators.

The F6 is in good shape and ready to fly as is the SNJ. The rest of the fleet remains about the same and the crews are making steady progress.

Once again I am going to solicit help in maintaining our Convair.

Several things have occurred that will make life difficult when it comes time to do the annual inspection, which is not imminent, but not that far down the road. Most of the other maintenance crew folks that we have depended on in the past for help cannot for one reason or another devote as much time to this aircraft as they have in the past, myself included.

If you think you may be qualified to help us with this project please let me know. While there are no major problems with the aircraft the inspection requirements are very labor and time intensive.

That's about it for this month so until next time fly safe and be safe.



## POTENTIAL AIR SHOW SCHEDULE FOR 2006

*By Bill O'Neil*

The 2006 air show schedule through June, 06 is as follows:

*March, 31/April 1, Riverside, C-131 and 3 fighters*

*April, 21/23 El Cajon, Wings over Gillespie, C-131*

*April, 28/30, March AFB, C-131, F-6, F-8*

*May, 19/21, Chino, Negotiating*

*May, 26/29, Watsonville, Negotiating*

*June, 2/4, Beale AFB, Negotiating*

*June, 10, Hemet Air Show, Negotiating*

*June, 11, Van Nuys, Negotiating*

*June, 9/11, Hill AFB, Utah, Negotiating, C-131*

*June, 16/17, KJWL Fathers Day, Fresno, Negotiating*

*June, 23/25, Ramona Air Fair, Negotiating*

*June, 30, July, 2, Kirtland AFB New Mexico, Negotiating*

I will keep you informed as I receive any new information.



## WHERE ARE YOU, COLONEL?

*By Charles Miller*

I have need to use the wing roster occasionally, and recently got a copy of the latest edition dated February 18, 2006. As usual I was struck by the wide spread geographic area our membership covers. This time, however, I was curious enough to start tallying, and this is what I found.

There are 318 members listed on the roster. Of these 41 live in the city of Camarillo, 13% of the membership. Moving

on to Ventura County, excluding Camarillo, there are an additional 89 members, 28%. Adding in Camarillo, 130 members live in Ventura County, 41% of the membership. Excluding Ventura county there are 105 members who live in Southern California, 33% if the membership. Including Ventura County there are 235 members, 74% of the membership. This would indicate that it is truly "Southern California Wing."

There are 25 members scattered through out the rest of California, for 8% of the total. Adding this to the 235 of Southern California give the total 260. Thus 82% of our members live in California, leaving 58 members, 18%, for the rest of the world.

I find it interesting that there are 52 members who live in 23 states and one territory (2 members in Guam.) These compromise 16%, leaving six members, 2%, for other countries.

The six members live in four places; three in Japan, one in Switzerland, and one each in Hong Kong and Singapore. Incidentally, these percentages were rounded off, and if added together will probably not be exactly 100%.

Many of the people living out of the state I recognize as many of them have had active participation in the wing while previously living in the area. and despite having moved, they still participate to a lesser extent. However, there are a number of names that no one seems to recognize, in some rather distant location, such as Silver Springs, MD and Fargo, ND. Now it is flattering and gratifying that we have such appeal, but what is it that we offer to make it worth while to these members? Maybe I'll call the member in Fargo and ask. I imagine the members in Guam figure that if they want wing affiliation that we are about as close as they can get.

We know the Japanese members well. Through employment with Japan Air Lines they are frequently in the area and active with the wing when present. Again we are pleased with their membership. I can't imagine why the appeal to our Swiss member and those in Singapore and Hong Kong. Hey, people, don't be shy. Let us hear from you!



## A VERY SPECIAL LETTER

*By Bill O'Neil*

The following is a letter sent to the Wing from Valentine Flight winners Chris and Tony Rollins. I thought it would be nice to share it with you.

*Dear CAF,*

*We want to thank you so very much for one of the best times we've ever had. From the fabulous sunset ride in that wonderful vintage plane to all the details mixed in; the great crew, the food, the champagne, the sweets, the flowers, the limo, the Pierpont with the great rooms, the fruit basket, the wine, the fireplace, and the wonderful food at dinner and breakfast and beautiful ocean view and all you fabulous people at CAF.*

*Thank you!!!*

*Who knew that the purchase of a few raffle tickets and winning would give us all this and so much more than we ever expected. We want to try and win again next time. It's well worth it to help keep CAF alive and well. We love all for the efforts and the care that went into this event. We look forward to seeing you all in the future. One last thing, guys, we tried to*

*think of things to make your next "Valentines Day Flight of Love" even more successful and you know what? We couldn't come up with even one, you covered it all!!!!*

*Thanks again,*

*Tony and Chris Rollins*

*P.S. you even covered a Photo Album! How wonderful! See, you really did think of everything!*

*Isn't that a nice letter?*

*If any of you members out there have any ideas of how to raise funds for the Wing let us know.*



## OUR OWN HEROES!

*By Col. Ceci Stratford*

We wish to honor and acknowledge our members who served in World War II.

This is just a small tribute to our members who served. Each one deserves much greater recognition, but at this time let's give these heroes a big salute!!

**Les Bedding** – Entered the RAF in 1939 and served in England until 1941 and in India from 1941 to 1945 working as a mechanic on British and American aircraft. In 1945 he returned to England and continued to work as a mechanic. He left the RAF in 1946 and worked in civil aviation. In 1975 he came to the U.S.

**Wally Brown** – Trained in the U.S. Army Air Corps in Kansas, Iowa and Montana. Served as radio operator in the C-46, flying in India and over the Hump from 1943 to 1944. Was in Ferry Command in B-29s from 1944-1945. Stayed in the service for 20 years. Participated in the Berlin Airlift.

**Russ Drosendahl** – Enlisted in the Army Air Corps in 1942 and called for duty in January 1943, graduating from Moody Field, Valdosta, GA. Trained in B-24s and served as a B-24 instructor pilot in Maxwell and Courtland Fields. Assigned to Maxwell Field again for B-29 training until the war ended in August 1945. Retired from the Air Force in 1945 as 1st Lieutenant.

**Carl Eichner** – Joined the German Air Force when he was 15 ½ (he was afraid he would miss something if he didn't do it!) He served as an antiaircraft gunner from January 1944 to February 1945. In 1953 he came to the U.S. as an exchange student. In 1956 he came back for good.

**Ed Foster** – Joined the Army Air Corps in 1943 and trained as a tail gunner at Luke AFB (Phoenix) and Biggs Field (El Paso). He served in England in the 8<sup>th</sup> Air Force, 398<sup>th</sup> Bomber Group, in Squadron 600. He flew 23 missions as a tail gunner in B-17s. On his last mission his aircraft made a forced landing in France (after liberation), where they were treated royally and sent back to England. In 1945 he came home to Florida to train on B-29s. During that time the war ended.

**Jim Hinckley** – Commissioned in 1943. Served in the Pacific Theater, flying in Field Artillery Battalions' L-5s of 27<sup>th</sup> Infantry Division during Saipan invasion in 1944 and

Okinawa invasion in 1945. Held the same duty in Japan with the 1<sup>st</sup> Cavalry Division Courier L-5s from late 1945 into mid 1946.

**Ken Kramer** – Joined the U.S. Navy in April 1944 and received air crew training in Florida on TBMs (Torpedo Bombers) and as a radio gunner. He was discharged in 1946 and called back for the Korean War in September 1950. There he served as a mechanic/plane captain for F4Us. He was discharged in December 1951.

**Bill Main** – Joined the Army Air Corps in 1943, receiving cadet training in Santa Ana, Blythe, Merced and Pecos. After graduation he went to Roswell, NM for B-17 training, then overseas to England at the end of 1944. He served in the 8<sup>th</sup> Air Force and flew 35 missions, all but the first as command pilot. After completing his missions one of his flights was ferrying a B-17 from France to England, then he flew a B-17 home to the U.S. He was discharged in August 1945 as a 1<sup>st</sup> Lieutenant. He served in the Reserves until 1950 when his was hired by American Airlines.

**Don McMillan** – Entered the U.S. Navy in May 1941, training as a cadet in Corpus Christi. Later he became a flight instructor in Texas and Kansas, flying primary and intermediate advanced aircraft. In 1943 he went to Los Alamitos where he trained in Torpedo Bombers. He continued training in TBMs in Maui. He was assigned to the U.S.S. Lexington, where he served from July to December 1944, flying TBMs in combat. One accomplishment in combat was sinking a Japanese Merchant marine ammo ship near Formosa. His last action was in the Battle of Leyte Gulf where he participated in sinking the flagship of the Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor. He served in the Reserves after WW II in an intelligence unit, retiring as a Commander in 1946.

**Joe Peppito** – Served in U.S. Army Air Corps from April 1943 to April 1946. Was a P-47 crew chief in Eglin AFB, Florida until July 1945. (Eglin was the Proving Ground Command for aircraft ordnance). Then he trained on B-29s as a Flight Engineer. He was discharged in February 1946.

**Charlie Valentine** – Entered U. S. Army Air Corps in March 1943 at age 18. Completed pilot training in August 1944 and was in command of a B-25 combat crew enroute to the South Pacific when the war ended. Remained in the USAF and served during the Korean War, the Cold War in Germany, England and Saudi Arabia, and in Vietnam where he flew 455 combat and combat support sorties.

(If anyone knows other members not listed here who served in WW II, please let Ceci Stratford know so we can update the list and acknowledge them in the Flight Line. Soon, we'll do another article about members who served in other wars.)

## FROM WARBIRDS TO ROCKETS!

*By Col. Ceci Stratford, Photo by Lillian Darling Holt*  
Students from Oaks Christian School in Westlake Village took an exciting look into Space, the past, the present and the

future, at the school's "Symposium 2006 – In Pursuit of Space" on February 28.

The SoCal Wing of the CAF represented the past with their exhibit of artifacts and models from our World War II Aviation Museum. Representatives from NASA, JPL, Boeing, Rockedyne, and the Traveling Space Museum brought the students up to the present and the future.

CAF members Jim Tierney, Carol Bachman, Charlie Miller, Ceci Stratford, and intern Shane Rucker selected items from our vast collection of World War II memorabilia, such as helmets, bombs, uniforms, posters, model airplanes, survival gear, radio and communication equipment and other treasures. Ceci coordinated with the school and supplied them with bios and photographs of CAF members who helped.

Jim Tierney and Bill O'Neill packed up the exhibit and drove it to the school on Monday afternoon in the pouring rain! Larry Kates helped them set up our booth in the gym, where other exhibitors were set up, too.

The day of the Symposium started out bright and clear. Doents and volunteers were treated to a continental breakfast before the festivities started. Everyone was given a beautiful program brochure that outlined the event and presented bios of speakers and volunteers.

The school is next to Calvary Church, which has the biggest auditorium in the area (it seats 2800 people) as well as state-of-the art audio-visual equipment. After viewing clips of Hollywood movies about space and the IMAX movie "Space Station", the keynote speaker took the podium. Dennis Tito, the first paying civilian in space, told us about fulfilling a life-long dream of going into space. It was inspiring to adults and students alike.

Then the students (middle and high school grades), in waves of 300, started visiting the exhibits and booths. In the gym were booths highlighting space food, rocketry, astronauts, careers, the sun, astronomy, a Mars rover, and others. Manning the CAF booth were Larry Kates, Bill O'Neill, Frank Doerfler, and Shane Rucker. They showed the 7-minute DVD about our Wing and explained our artifacts to interested students. Each student who visited our booth received a colorful warbird postcard (of course, with our name, phone and website on the back).

Ceci had already committed to help the Traveling Space Museum with their modules, which were outside. These included an Orion mini-shuttle flight simulator, a lunar utility vehicle, a UFO spaceship, a space station lab mockup with a mission control console, and a space toilet. Guess who got to show the kids how astronauts go to the bathroom in space!! Yes, Ceci. (It turned out to be the most popular exhibit of the day!)

After 900 kids finished participating in the Symposium, the school treated the volunteers to a lunch and thank you farewell.

It was inspiring to be a part of such a well-organized event. The students were absolutely well behaved and sharp; the teachers, just as interested. I know we made a difference in these kid's lives, in showing them how the past (World War II) has contributed to our Freedom and our future.

I'd like to see us participate in more events such as this and even set up a Footlocker program. Anyone interested in participating in these activities, please call Jim Tierney or Ceci at the CAF.



Ceci and a Oaks Christian teacher demonstrate a "Space Toilet"

Note: One of the big sponsors of the Oaks Christian School is our own David Price. AND, one of the teachers there, Brad Livingstone, actually teaches a class about World War II. Every semester he brings his class to visit our Museum and Restoration Hangar. He coordinates with David Price who brings his P-51 and gives rides to some of the students.

## NAVY LOG NOW FREE AT U.S. NAVY MEMORIAL

By Dave Flood

*The United States Navy Memorial has made enrollment in its Navy Log of sea service members – active duty, reserve, and veteran – free of charge.*

By the end of January, 2006, over 9,500 new enrollments had been made, and many Navy Log updates were completed.

"It is our mission to honor the men and women of the United States Navy – past, present and future," said Adm. Rick Buchanan, President and CEO of the United States Navy Memorial. "The focus of the United States Navy Memorial is not a particular type of ship, battle or conflict, but rather each *individual* whose service and sacrifice is honored and celebrated. One of the greatest assets of the Memorial is the Navy Log," he continued, "because of its enduring capability to reach out to a global audience for generations to come."

"The goal of the Navy Log is to record the service history of all eligible uniformed individuals and veterans," Buchanan added. "We welcome all Sea Service members and veterans to join the Navy Memorial in continuing this nation's great maritime legacy."

For those of you who are Navy veterans, and would like to enroll your name and record of service on the Navy Log free of charge, go to the U.S. Navy Memorial website at: [www.lonesailor.org](http://www.lonesailor.org)



Photo off the internet

OK guys, lets see you do this.

## THE LAST OF A LINE

*From the January 1966 "Flying Review International"*

When the last of the Grumman "Cats", the Bearcat, was phased out of the Fleet units in 1950, the US Navy saw the end of an era; of the piston engined shipboard interceptor. Enjoying distinguished ancestry which included the Wildcat and the Hellcat. The Bearcat was the culmination of a thoroughbred line and perhaps the finest airscrew-driven interceptor ever to be launched from a deck, but its relegation to the reserve units went unnoticed for having never fired its guns in anger, it made little claim to fame. From the reserve units it should have logically have passed quickly into history as one of those aircraft that arrived just to late to participate in the Second World War; but no, for by a quirk of fate, the Bearcat was to find itself firing its guns in earnest against the same Viet communist forces that its lineal descendant, the A-6A Intruder, would be attacking 14 years later to the month. The same latitude longitude, give or take a minute or so, and the same war, but the Bearcat bore French roundels and Vietnam was then called French Indo-China.

The Bearcat found itself in a war totally dissimilar to that for which it had been designed; a conflict in which its principal virtues could not be employed to advantage. Grumman's last piston-engined was essentially an interceptor, and a superbly maneuverable interceptor of which no pilot had a bad word, but there was nothing to intercept in Indo-China skies, and its carrier-deck tyres suffered severely on the PSP and laterite airstrips from which the Bearcat was forced to operate. But its excellent short-field characteristics and rocket like climb the latter vitally necessary for strafing operations in mountainous areas were the delight of its French pilots. It could certainly get off the ground faster than any of its contemporaries, and once off the ground it climbed "like a bat out of hell", as one ex-Bearcat pilot recalls. Indeed, US navy pilots still tell the story of a USAF pilot who pitted his F-51D against a Bearcat in a mock dogfight. The two fighters took-off side by side from a standing start, and the Bearcat had made two passes at the Mustang before the latter raised its flaps and wheels.

In 1951 the French units left Indo-China and its Bearcats were taken over by GCI/8 Saintong which, by the end of the year, had flown a thousand sorties with the Grumman fighter.

(Below right) An F8F-1 Bearcat of the 2nd Fighter-Bomber Wing, Royal Thai Air Force (circa 1957), and (inset) emblem of individual squadron



Upper tailplane surfaces of left

(Below) Emblem of Thai 2nd Fighter-Bomber Wing (colour indicated squadron), and (below right) an F8F-1 Bearcat of the 2nd Wing in natural metal finish



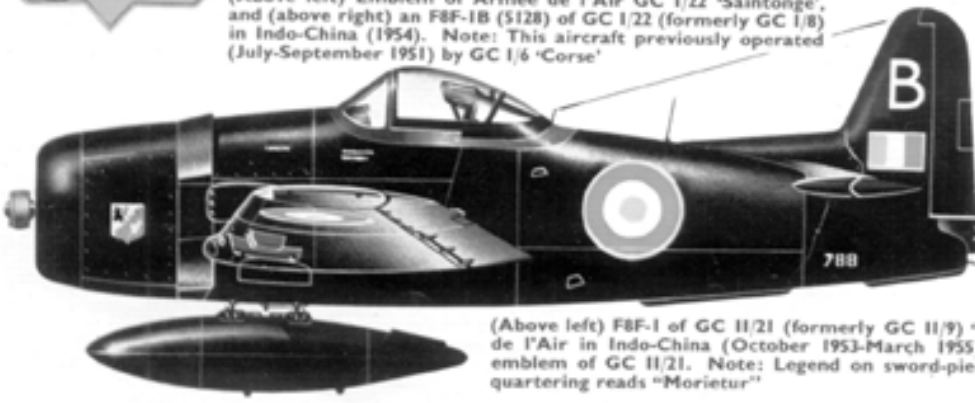
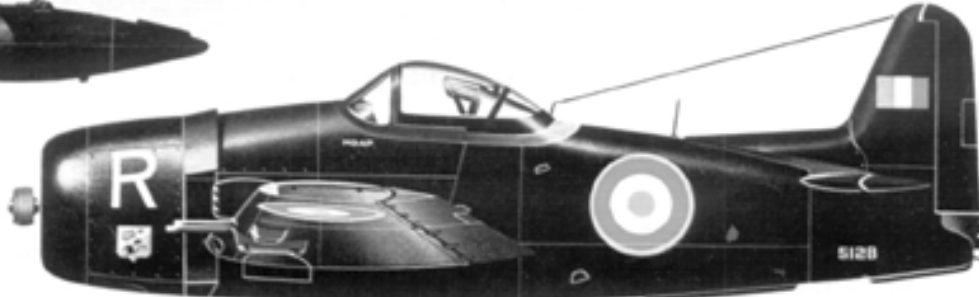
(Below) F8F-1B of 1st Fighter-Bomber Wing in natural metal finish. All -1B aircraft later cannibalised for spares. Note: Unit and individual aircraft identification number (1323) repeated under wings, the '13' appearing immediately inboard of roundel under starboard wing and '23' in similar position under port wing



(Below) Emblem of Thai 1st Fighter-Bomber Wing. Colour indicated squadron



(Above left) Emblem of Armée de l'Air GC 1/22 'Saintonge', and (above right) an F8F-1B (5128) of GC 1/22 (formerly GC 1/8) in Indo-China (1954). Note: This aircraft previously operated (July-September 1951) by GC 1/6 'Corse'



(Above left) F8F-1 of GC II/21 (formerly GC II/9) 'Auvergne' of Armée de l'Air in Indo-China (October 1953-March 1955), and (above right) emblem of GC II/21. Note: Legend on sword-pierced shield in lower quartering reads "Morietur"







## URGENT BRIEF – CAF 1ST NATIONAL CONVENTION & 50<sup>TH</sup> ANNIVERSARY 3/3/06

**TO ALL UNIT LEADERS: DISSEMINATE TO ALL UNIT MEMBERSHIP BY WHATEVER MEANS NECESSARY**

### OVERVIEW:

Summer 2007 marks two significant events in the great history of the CAF—Our 50th anniversary and first annual national convention. With nearly 10,000 members located in 80 wings and squadrons in 28 states and 4 different countries and membership in all 50 states and 25 different countries, you can imagine the size and scope of planning an event of this magnitude! Your immediate help is urgently needed to facilitate the logistics and planning of this grand endeavor.

### GOALS:

Our goals for financing the event are:

1. Subsidize the administrative cost of the event through corporate sponsorship.
2. Generate substantial registration to ensure the lowest possible group prices available.
3. Bid out the event to ensure the best location available for a potential group of this size.

Our goals for the anniversary and the convention are:

1. Celebrate 50 years of being the world's leader in the preservation of military aviation.
2. Celebrate 50 years of "Honoring America's Legacy of Freedom."
3. Raise awareness of the CAF, nationally, by making this a recruiting rally nationwide.
4. Provide a comprehensive educational forum whereby unit leaders, unit members and general membership are empowered with the strategic tools for sustained growth.
5. To renew the spirit of those dedicated to the mission statement of the CAF and its programs by having a significant showing of membership present at the same time.

### BENEFITS OF CONVENTION:

- A rally of this type is just what the CAF needs in its growth cycle. This convention would invigorate membership, sustain enthusiasm and drive and provide units with educational tools and networking opportunities that they might not otherwise enjoy.
- HQ will use resources available to promote the event to the industry, corporate sponsors and the public through a well conceived radio, print and television campaign starting early 2007. This will positively affect general membership, specific unit membership, and corporate sponsorship interest. Ultimately this function will raise credibility, public awareness and financial support for the CAF, its mission & programs.

### MEMBER COST:

Once again, obviously more people who confirm that they would be willing come to such an event will lower the end cost for the CAF group as a whole. Our challenge is that the **CAF MUST FINANCIALLY GUARANTEE** a certain number of people to obtain the low rates we hope for. Since we have never attempted such a program of this magnitude, we have no basis for predicting the turnout. Therefore, I implore you all to immediately consider this an RSVP for the event. Summer 2007 may seem far off but our window to produce this event is limited.

It would be prudent to estimate the **cost per person** assuming no group discounts at this time. However, ALL DISCOUNTS will be passed on to membership as the numbers of those attending increases.

- 4 days and 3 night stay at one of the exclusive Las Vegas Strip or Harrah's properties.
- Room, meals, registration, receptions and Gala Banquet included.
- Conferences, Expo, Airshow and lectures included

**\$795.00 Per Person\*** Does not include travel to/from Las Vegas entertainment, gambling or gratuities at this time.

CAF HQ – MARCOM – LAGE – 432 563 1000 EXT 2242 – [marketing@cafhu.org](mailto:marketing@cafhu.org)  
9600 Wright Drive, PO Box 62000, Midland Texas 79711



### EVENT DATES AND LOCATIONS:

We will put this package out to bid to convention entities for consideration at one of the premiere Las Vegas, Nevada strip resorts. Possible event dates are:

• July 8 - 13, 2007 • July 15 - 20, 2007 • July 29 - August 3, 2007 • August 5 - 10, 2007

### CONVENTION ACTIVITIES PLANNED OR IN PLANNING STAGES:

- Summer Wing Staff conferences: would be held at the convention instead of Midland, giving membership a chance to view the proceedings.
- Mini AIRSHOW: at one of the Las Vegas airports. Our chance to expose the CAF fleet to people from all over the globe at the world's preeminent vacation destination.
- Mini TRADESHOW: Our goal is to provide a forum for 40 qualified sponsors who would like to expose their product or service to a select demographic audience like the CAF membership. Companies like financial services, auto, plane and RV manufacturers, jewelers, and travel agencies, to name a few.
- Conferences, Lectures and Breakout Sessions: Opportunities to learn how to market, promote and advertise your unit more effectively. How to obtain grants and sponsorship on a local level. Also, hear forums on preservation, the changing dynamics of the airshow industry, strategy sessions on the CAF – yesterday, today and tomorrow, networking with large market units – how you can emulate their success.
- Entertainment: Possibly a slot tournament and/or a golf tournament. We will contact guest lecturers outside the CAF, comedians, personalities and M/C's.
- Gala Banquet: No 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary would be complete without a Gala Banquet. The chance to dress up in formal and meet 10,000 of your closest friends & neighbors from 50 states and 25 foreign countries!

### ACTION NEEDED: IT IS IMPORTANT FOR ALL TO RSVP - YES OR NO

For this convention to become a reality, we need favorable responses forthwith. Copy, email, fax or U.S. mail the attached preliminary **RESPONSE INVITATION SHEET**, with this letter, to your unit membership. I ask that anyone in possession of this invitation respond, either way. I also ask that all those who would attend send a deposit of **\$100.00 PER PERSON before June 1, 2006**. Make check payable to the Commemorative Air Force. Please indicate "CAF NATIONAL CONVENTION" in the memo line. If it turns out that there is not sufficient interest for such an event, your deposit will be refunded in full after June 1, 2007.

### CLOSING:

This is clearly the opportunity of a lifetime. We have never had an event in which a significant portion of membership was present in the same location at the same time. This can be the mother of all conventions; a rally, a reunion and resurgence for the CAF. Heck, Mary Kay conventions draw 50,000 ladies in pink Cadillac's to Vegas! We can do better than that!

We are poised for unprecedented growth. Patriotism is at an all-time high. People want to do their part to show their support for this country, veterans and enlisted men and women. We have always been the leaders in those categories. However, in 2006 we are still relatively unknown to the general public. Our motto comes to mind: "Let We Forget". I say it's time to "storm the Bastille". Now, we have the unique opportunity to let America know what we have known for the last 50 years....

The Commemorative Air Force "Honors America's Legacy of Freedom".

Send in your deposit today. I promise you won't regret it. Viva Las Vegas!

Tailwinds,

John A. Lage Sr.  
Director of Marketing & Communications

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**CAF NATIONAL CONVENTION - 50<sup>TH</sup> ANNIVERSARY CELEBRATION**

Las Vegas, Nevada - Summer 2007

**RESPONSE SHEET**

NAME(S): \_\_\_\_\_

MEMBER # \_\_\_\_\_

ADDRESS: \_\_\_\_\_

PHONE: \_\_\_\_\_

UNIT(S) \_\_\_\_\_ IF NO UNIT, WOULD YOU LIKE TO BE? \_\_\_\_\_

**PLEASE FILL OUT AND RETURN ASAP**

WHICH DATES WOULD BE FAVORABLE TO YOU?

PLEASE CHECK - IF NO PREFERENCE CHECK ALL

July 8 - 13, 2007 \_\_\_\_\_ July 15 - 20, 2007 \_\_\_\_\_ July 29 - August 3, 2007 \_\_\_\_\_ August 5 - 10, 2007 \_\_\_\_\_

**RSVP (please check)**

\_\_\_\_ Yes, I would like to attend. I have enclosed a check for \$100.00 per person as a deposit. I understand that this deposit will be applied to the reservation if the convention becomes reality. If not, this deposit will be refunded after June 1, 2007.

\_\_\_\_ No, I will not be attending. (There is space provided if you'd like to elaborate)

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**WING PHOTO PAGE**

Photos by Casey de Bree



Wing pilot Doug Matthews (L) prepares for a flight in the F6F Hellcat while Jason Somes assists



You were supposed to bring the parachute. No, you were...



The 'before start' checklist is complete, let's go fly



Doug looks great taxiing the Hellcat to the run-up area