

Flight Line

The Official Publication of the CAF

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

Vol. XXVII No. 6

June 2007

Visit us online at www.orgsites.com/ca/caf-socal



Photo courtesy of Bob Albee and the F24 restoration team



© "Tigers Over Kweilin," original painting by Thomas Van Stein

© Photo by Dan Newcomb

Thomas Van Stein's painting entitled "Tigers Over Kweilin." This beautiful painting, on loan currently to our CAF WWII Aviation Museum, was unveiled before a large crowd on Saturday, May 5, 2007. The artist, a member of our Wing, dedicated the painting to the spirit of the AVG.

See more about the painting and the artist's motivation in painting it on Page 12.

**Wing Staff Meeting, Saturday, June 9, 2007 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 2007

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
					1	2 Work Day
3	4	5 Work Day	6 D-Day Anniversary	7 Work Day	8	9 Work Day Staff Meeting 9:30 AM
10	11	12 Work Day	13	14 Work Day Flag Day	15	16 Work Day Air Show San Diego, CA
17 Father's Day Air Show San Diego, CA	18	19 Work Day	20	21 Work Day	22	23 Work Day
24	25	26 Work Day	27	28 Work Day	29	30 Work Day

STAFF AND APPOINTED POSITIONS				IN THIS ISSUE	
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Operations Officer	* Gary Barber	(805) 659-4319	bearcat69@pacbell.net		Dick Updegraff – Volunteer of the Year . . 4
Maint Officer	* Joe Peppito	(805) 498-4187	jocafpeppo@msn.com		Saga of A Bomber Pilot 5
Safety Officer	* Marc Russell	(805) 388-8341	captmarcr@aol.com		Cappuccino 6
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Training Officer	(vacant)				Wing Photo Page I 7
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* Denotes Staff Position					
Submittal Deadline - 15th of the month					
Commemorative Air Force Southern California Wing 455 Aviation Drive Camarillo, CA 93010-9501					

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Wing Leader's Report

by Steve Barber



This has been another busy month for your Wing. We are into the fifth month of the year and it seems as if we just got started. Many of you are having health problems, and I ask our membership to make sure you say a prayer for them. Take time to call or visit if you can. I know they will appreciate it.

I picked up the new exhaust stacks for the Bearcat from Sam Davis in Corona. Gary and crew are just about finished with the installation and for safety sakes, I'm very happy we have these new pipes. Fire is probably the biggest hazard in the Bearcat and these heavy-duty new stacks give us peace of mind in that area. Thanks, Sam. Beautiful job!

The Hellcat is up and flying. Chris Rushing, Ken Gottschall and Jason Somes have been working very hard getting that ship in first-class condition. Chris was able to purchase a Garmin 496 GPS at a very good price, and Ken wired it up to the ship's electric system. We now have our own built in navigation device so the pilots don't have to carry their own and figure how and where to mount it temporarily. Our goal is to have a new GPS mounted in each of the So Ca Wing's aircraft in the near future. One more step for safety and to reduce our fuel consumption to a great degree on cross-country flights.

Our financial review committee is hard at work. They are really whipping our books into order for ease of getting important information for planning purposes. Thanks guys. I really appreciate all of your hard work.

Maintenance crews are, as always, working their fingers to the bone on all of your aircraft. I've seen a few new faces coming out to work, and I thank you. We still need many more to help with the hundreds of jobs we have to do to accomplish our mission. Come on out, don't be shy. We don't bite! Well, Joe Peppito does, but he's really a nice guy. Don't let that handsome Italian exterior fool you, he's tough, kind and very smart. He's so even-tempered. Make sure you bring him a hard-boiled egg, he loves them.

Sib, Alex and crew are working hard to pull the engine off of our SNJ #290. The crankshaft was found to be out of limits and the engine is approaching high time, so the decision was made to put on a zero-time engine, since major replacement is necessary. Jack Rogers, working with Joe Peppito, got us a very good price on an exchange engine, and it should be here by the third week in May. The crew have almost got the old engine removed, and will be ready to hang the overhaul when it arrives.

Les Bedding and his hard-working crew are making big gains on the Spitfire. We have raised enough money for our next installment on the engine overhaul and we will be visiting Vintage V-12's soon to personally take them a check.

Col/Gen Reg Urschler has been very generous to your Wing, with the gift of \$35,000.00 towards the retirement of the Spitfire note. Thank you so much Reg, you have been a strong force in the CAF for so many years. I can't say enough for doing such a wonderful thing.

For many years the members have pushed for the CAF to have a special event, something really great and would be remembered for years to come. The General Staff heard your requests and last year, decided to celebrate the 50th Anniversary of the CAF with a huge event in Las Vegas. Now folks, this event takes planning, commitment, and most importantly, money. Reserving the rooms, meeting facilities, hiring quality speakers, dealing with the multitude of issues, is a daunting job. Headquarters has done this. I believe the event they have put together will be outstanding. Now, there's one thing missing, YOUR PARTICIPATION! We need you to register, get your friends to register, get your enemies registered, I don't care. Just do it. It's open to the public, not just CAF members, and with only two months remaining before the event, your response is slow in coming. NOW is the time to REGISTER! Don't wait. We are committed as an organization, and if we don't have enough folks attending, your organization will be in deep yogurt.

We all love what we do for the CAF, we know why we do what we do. Why not enjoy a fantastic event and get to see your friends from all over the United States and beyond, and make new friends. DON'T WAIT, DO IT NOW, REGISTER!!!!!!!!!!!!

Until next month, so long.

Ed. Note: For a registration form to sign up for the CAF's PATRIOTIC RALLY 2007 in Las Vegas, go to:

<http://www.ghostsquadron.org/members/Contrails/Contrails-2007-05.pdf>

You'll be asked for your User Name and Password.

Your CAF Member Number is your User Name, and your Password is your last name in lower case only.



Col/Gen Reg Urschler in his famous P-51D Mustang "Gunfighter." Our whole SoCAWing thanks you, Reg!

NAvion Nuggets!

By Jason Vosburgh

Now that I'm leading the charge on grant funding for our wing, I have time to talk about something I really like – NAvions! Yes, NAvion - with a capital "NA", I'll get back to that in a minute. First lets talk about WWII and aviation. Contracts handed out by the Government in the war years to produce a myriad of aircraft were plentiful. Less than two weeks after the hostilities ended with Japan, which was a surprise for aircraft manufacturers because the atomic bomb ended it rather abruptly, almost all aircraft orders were cancelled. In mid-1945, North American Aviation had over 31,000 contractual airframes to build for the good old USA. After the Japanese surrendered, the orders dropped to fewer than 30 airframes. That's right - 30! The story goes that the CEO of North American Aircraft slammed a Sears catalog on the conference table in front of all the execs and stated: "I can't think of a darn thing to build: a dishwasher, pans, what?" In desperation, one of the engineering execs said: "What about an airplane?" And so... the NAvion was born!

From pencil on paper to a flying aircraft took less than 90 days. Some sacrifices were made to produce the NAvion, the leading sacrifice being profit. The airframe costs \$9,000 to manufacture and had a sales price of \$7,000. NAA wanted to keep the best aeronautical engineers on staff, and that's how they did it. Later, they would produce the F-86 and make back the money they lost.

The idea with the NAvion from a marketing standpoint was that all these guys coming out of the newly-formed Air Force after the war would want to continue flying back home. They would love their NAA aircraft so much that pilots would purchase a NAvion to share with the wife and kids. It kinda looks like a P-51 for dads. Even the name is a conglomeration of North American aViatION. The Army put in an order for several hundred. The specs for the airframe were in large part dictated by the Army. So things should be fine... right? Wrong! In 1946 the Army dropped it's order and almost all the pilots coming home didn't want to share what they had been through with anybody. NAA began a campaign to market the NAvion to the general public. That's where my plane comes in. Fourth production N91103, and sixth production N91105 NAvions flew around the country to promote the plane. My plane, our ramp queen, fifth production N91104, stayed at Mines Field (LAX) and served as the company demonstrator for potential buyers - sometimes twelve a day. The plane was flown on many such flights by RJ Woods, the chief designer of the P-39. The NAvion was the first production high-performance-complex aircraft ever offered for sale to the US public. N91104 came to life July 17th 1946. The thing I love about the bird is that it's almost all original. Same engine (E-185-3), same panel, same almost everything. The skins were intended for B-25's that never got built, the instruments are meant for T-6's and P-51's that never got built. I love it. Anyway, NAA sold off the rights to build Navions (they dropped the "A") when Korea needed those F-86's and the Army did refill its order later on, as L-17's, also used in Korea. N91104 is now over 60 years old. I wonder who will be pattering around the sky in her 60 years from now?

Dick Updegraff – Air Park Museum “Volunteer of the Year”!



Photo Courtesy of Dick Updegraff

Dick Updegraff in the Air Park Museum's F-106

Col. Dick Updegraff, a Wing member who lives in Carmichael, CA has been named "Volunteer of the Year" at the Air Park Museum, Sacramento, CA (formerly the McClellan Aviation Museum).

Here is the presentation made by Tim Pickney at the Volunteers Appreciation Dinner and Awards Night:

He has been with the museum from about day one when it was McClellan Aviation Museum, meaning "since forever." He has pretty much been everything and done everything in the museum.

*When I think of the recipient, I visualize his massive hand dwarfing mine as we shake hands. At about the same time, I also remember I forgot my sunglasses as his beaming smile brightens even a Sacramento summer day. Our first VOY in the Air Park category has served as Air Park Manager, Collections Manager, Volunteer Coordinator and even Museum Director. Now, he's managing the airpark, replacing Bill Roughton, who is on medical leave. By now, you've probably guessed that our recipient for the first **Air Park VOY** is **Dick Updegraff**. He is responsible, not only for the planes, but for scheduling the volunteers in the Air Park. He also serves as crew chief manager, responsible for making sure the 39 crew chiefs keep the planes in presentable order, AND... He also chairs their monthly meetings. He has participated in the plane moves and assists wherever and whenever the need arises...AND tons of stuff that we don't even know about, but we do know that he's had a hand in almost everything this museum has done for the last two decades!!*

Congratulations, Dick. Our Wing is certainly proud of your accomplishments at the Air Park Museum! Now please explain how you find time to come down and help us out so much on our air shows? We are just so fortunate to have volunteers like you!

Saga Of A Bomber Pilot

by Dave Flood

Harold W. Watson was born in Nashua, NH over 80 years ago. He worked as a teenager at a nursery to earn money for flying lessons. His parents insisted that if he wanted to learn to fly, he would have to pay for the lessons himself (thinking that he would soon tire of it). Harold never got tired of it, and got his pilot's license before he got his driver's license. He maintained his active pilot's license until he was into his 80s. A medical condition finally grounded him, and he sold his beloved Citabria airplane.

Harold learned to fly in a Piper Cub. He graduated to Stearmans and PT-19s as an Army Air Corps Cadet at the age of eighteen. He graduated in 1942, weeks before his 20th birthday and was commissioned as a 2nd Lieutenant.



Harold Watson as a young Aviation Cadet

Harold flew thirteen missions as a B-17 pilot out of the airfield at Kimbolton, England. On his eighth mission, his plane was shot down and he parachuted into Belgium. He came down on a snow-covered hill and was immediately taken into custody by American soldiers. Because Germans were attempting to infiltrate the American lines, they found a soldier who was from Milford, NH, close to where Harold told them he was from. The soldier asked him questions about NH and Milford, and was convinced Harold was "legit" when he told the soldier about the circular road around the park in the center of Milford.

After World War II, Harold, then married with two small children, went back to Nashua and worked in a mill until his love of flying led him to become an airline pilot with TWA. He flew the Boston to Chicago route, which on the western leg stopped at Worcester, Albany, Williamsport, Pittsburgh, Columbus and Chicago, and was non-stop going east back to Boston.

After flying for TWA for awhile, he applied to fly again with the Air Force in the now-famous Berlin Airlift. On the way to Great Falls, Montana for training, he read the C-54

manual from front to back, and when he reached Montana, he aced his check ride in the C-54, even though he had never seen the plane.

During the Berlin Airlift, he worked 12 hours a day/ 7 days a week for 12 days – then had 72 hours off time. They flew 10 tons of provisions on each trip into Berlin – had 3 trips daily. It was around-the-clock, in-all-kinds-of-weather flying. Harold flew 200 missions in 100 days. At a reunion many years later, the German people remembered how much the air lift had meant to them, and greeted the reuniting pilots and crews with affection.

After the Berlin Airlift, Harold was head of pilot training with an Airborne Early Warning squadron out of Otis AFB in Massachusetts. They flew Super Constellations over a several hundred mile area off the east coast – identifying every aircraft flying towards North America. If one could not be identified, fighters were scrambled and would go out for positive "eyeball" identification. Russian "Bear" bombers routinely flew down the east coast on their way to Cuba, staying just east of the 200 mile line off the coast.

Harold developed a special training school for the squadron's pilots, utilizing a mock-up of the Constellation's cockpit. During his three years with the squadron, they had a record of zero accidents.

A memorable flying experience for Harold was when he flew top generals from Wright Field in Dayton, Ohio in 1945-46 to aerospace companies on the west coast for checks on major airplane contracts. Generals included in his VIP passenger list were Eisenhower, Nate Twining, and Curtis LeMay.

Harold earned five Air Medals, two Purple Hearts, and two Berlin Airlift Medals during his 23 years in the Air Force.

He has been retired for years now, and has become a philanthropist and active member of local committees in his home of Merrimack, NH, donating his finances, time and energy to improving the lot of his home town and its citizens. Well done, Harold!



Harold Watson today – doing well in his 80s

Cappuccino

by Clifford Brown

I really like coffee. I'm particularly fond of cappuccino, which is about half strong coffee and half frothy milk. I spike mine with at least four little packets of sugar, regardless of the size of the cup. Nothing is better than drinking a hot cup of cappuccino on a nippy winter day.

Growing up, we kids weren't allowed to drink coffee. My mother said it was too strong for kids.

As many of you know, I had been a Sergeant in the California National Guard - 40th Division while I was still in high school. On January 11, 1952, I had the misfortune to find myself getting off a troop ship at Inchon Harbor in Korea. The Korean War had been going on for a while, and we weren't winning that one either. I was in the same situation as many of our troops in Iraq. Involuntarily activated. The harbor at Inchon, which is southwest of Seoul, was in good enough shape, so the Victory ship I was on was able to actually dock, and I could walk down a gangplank. I hate combat landings – scrambling down a cargo net into those little bouncing boats.

It was late afternoon as we disembarked. Full combat pack, carbine, and a full duffle bag. It was a full load. Once off the ship we were herded into a nearby shell of an old warehouse. The windows and doors were all shot out, but it was shelter from the icy wind that blew down from Siberia.

No hot chow since morning. But we were given a couple of boxes of K rations. I saved mine. No telling when we would get more. Anyway, they were very hard to heat and tasted terrible cold. We moved to the end of the building and were given a canteen cup of coffee. I didn't drink coffee. I wasn't old enough. I just drank milk. A canteen cup is an aluminum cup that a canteen fits into and the whole thing hangs on a cartridge belt around your waist. The cup has a folding handle and holds over two normal cup of liquid. In the Army, you always took whatever was offered, even if you didn't want it. There was always someone who did, and you could trade for something you did want.

So there I was, stuck with this steaming canteen cup of strong Army coffee I didn't want. I turned to look around for someone to trade. We were so packed together into this old warehouse that someone jostled into me. About half the cup of coffee went all over the front of me. My first thought was: now I'm going to have to live in a wet soggy uniform. This is not a pleasant thought for a soldier who is going to have to live outside in the winter. Suddenly, there was a cracking sound. All of the spilled coffee suddenly turned an icy white and then fell off onto the ground at my feet. The temperature was 15 degrees.

From that day to this I have been drinking coffee. But with at least four of those little packets of sugar.

USMC Silent Drill Platoon

by Dan Newcomb

It was many years ago that I sat in the stands at a high school and witnessed an event that absolutely astounded me. I had seen an ad in the paper promoting a visit of the President's Own USMC Band. Normally, the only way to see these guys was to make a visit to Washington, D.C. The unit was making a rare tour of the west coast, and was, for some unknown reason, visiting the then very small community of Temecula. The event would end with a demonstration by the USMC Silent Drill Platoon. The band and the music were great - but the best was saved for last.

There were only about 200 people in the stands, but as 24 riflemen silently marched onto the field we knew we were in for a treat. Silently is not quite true. As they marched in there was a rhythmic cadence as they slapped their rifles with their hands. The crowd hushed. What I witnessed in the next ten minutes took my breath away.

A rifle drill like few I have ever seen, all done without any verbal commands. Performed with fixed bayonets. Performed flawlessly. The closest thing to perfection you will ever see. This was in the early 1980s, when being in the military was very out of fashion! I was working for the police department and I felt very out of fashion!



The famous United States Marine Corps Silent Drill Platoon doing their thing before a hushed audience. The USMC Silent Drill Platoon is based at the historic Marine Barracks in Washington, D.C.

Members are hand-picked from all over the United States Marine Corps. They must have the ability to carry out precisely-orchestrated rifle drills (with bayonets fixed), with no verbal commands whatsoever.

The USMC Silent Drill Platoon performs all summer at 8th and I Streets, Washington, D.C. The bleachers at the parade grounds are usually filled, and the Platoon puts on a memorable display of precision drilling. The Platoon also tours extensively throughout the world. They are definitely a credit to the Corps!

Go to: www.youtube.com/watch?v=OdCvIrIWhLg&NR=1

Wing Photo Page I



© Photo by Dave Flood

Yoshi Abe, the new crew chief for the Mitsubishi A6M3 Zero, in an authentic replica pilot's uniform from WWII.



© Photo by Dave Flood

Dick Troy and his crew doing a test runup of the engines on our C-131 Samaritan, after it returned from a maintenance visit to Rialto, CA.



© Photo by Eric Lange

China Doll in early morn, before flying to Riverside.



© Photo by Eric Lange

Eric took this photo from *China Doll* arriving over our hangars, coming back from the Riverside Air Show.



© Photo by Dave Flood

A special breakfast at the Way Point Café was held on Saturday, April 28 to celebrate Russ Drosendahl's 85th birthday. Jim Hinckley (left) was the host. Russ is 2nd from left, with his grandson Eric Lange next to him.



© Photo by Jim Hinckley

Ron Fleishman doing extra duty as a Museum Docent.

A Funny Thing Happened On My Way To The 'DZ'

by Dan Cuvier

Well, it wasn't so much a 'funny thing' as much as it was almost a disaster. It all started on April 12, 2007 at the ungodly hour of 0400 hours, when I had to get up from my nice warm bed in Thousand Oaks to make an 0700 hours "show time" at the Santa Barbara Skydiving FBO located at Lompoc Airport. After arriving at 0637 hours, and after preflight briefing, paperwork and suiting up, seven other poor souls and I finally lifted off the runway in a majestic Cessna Caravan. We began our climb to a lofty 13,500 foot altitude, and shuffled to the exit door in our assigned order. Then it was my turn...standing in the door (the view was fantastic!).

I assumed the proper body position, made eye with my Jumpmaster, and yelled: "Check In!" Then I yelled: "Ready! Set! Go!" The relative wind hits you with full force, as it assaults your body at approximately 65 knots. Then you're free-falling, and all you can hear is the rush of air passing by your head at 120 mph as you plummet towards the Earth at approximately 100 feet per second, or even faster, depending on what shape you hold your body in. Since I was performing my Level II training jump, I had to demonstrate to my Jumpmaster two 90 degree turns, and making forward movement for three seconds, then stop. By the time I did all this, I 'locked on' to my wrist altimeter at the prescribed 6,000 feet and pulled my main 'chute at exactly 5,500 feet.

Only problem was, as my 'chute deployed, my body had somehow begun spinning. So by the time I'd stopped spinning, my suspension lines were tangled. This had happened to me before during a jump out of a C-141 Starlifter in the Army, so I knew just what to do. I kicked (or cycled) my legs to make me spin in the opposite direction to the tangle. Then, after about 45 seconds (which is a long time when you're falling toward the ground), I managed to get untangled and, after getting control of my steering toggles, began trying to fly over to the Drop Zone assigned to me.

The problem was that I was about one mile downwind of the DZ, and, since the winds had really picked up since we had taken off, it was impossible for me to make it there.

So, I had to do what I was trained to do. I picked an alternate DZ, and there was a nice one just about 300 feet ahead of me. It was a grassy field, approximately 200 by 150 feet. And so that's where I made a perfect stand-up landing! People from the Wal-Mart parking lot stared at me as if I had come from another planet – but I didn't utter a word.

I called my Jumpmaster with the 2-way radio I had been issued, and was picked up and driven back to the FBO without any bodily or property damage. Now doesn't that sound like fun? I love it, and will be going back soon to complete my Level III training.



Photo Courtesy of Dan Cuvier

Heeeeere's Dan! His 'chute has deployed and he's looking for the Drop Zone. Looks like fun! Geronimo!

Bomb Doors Found For CAF's B-24 "OI' 927"

Gary Austin, crew chief for the B-29/B-24 Squadron, has scored again – this time locating a set of bomb doors for the B-24A "OI' 927," formerly "Diamond Lil." Through the Warbird Information Exchange site, Gary was put in contact with someone who had the doors. Although the owner didn't want to part with them, he was impressed with Gary's work posted on WIX thus far, and decided that our B-24 would be the best use for the bomb doors. He agreed to trade the doors and four bomb racks for some surplus parts owned by the B-29/B-24 Squadron. To save the squadron \$2,500 in shipping, the owner rented a U-Haul and drove the parts here from the northeast. He even slept in his truck to save them from paying for a hotel. The squadron did spend approximately \$400 from public donations to pay for his gas. The doors and racks will not be added to the B-24A immediately due to the time factor, but it's a great option to have them available for future use. For pictures of the doors (and a hint as to the future paint scheme for the B-24A) go to:

<http://warbirdinformationexchange.org>.

Kay Crites
Director of Public Relations
CAF Headquarters, Midland, Texas

Air Show Report

by Jason Somes

June 09	Kansas City, MO (AFNG)(tent.)	C-131
June 16-17	Wings Over Gillespie, CA	C-46
Aug 18,19	EAA Camarillo Air Show	All Aircraft
Sept 30-Oct 01	Fina Airsho, Midland, TX	All Avail. Aircraft
Oct 06	Prescott, AZ	F6F, Zero

Note: Since changes may occur in the final scheduling of the above air shows, please call (805) 482-0064 to confirm information before you go.

Wing Photo Page II



© Photo by Dan Newcomb
The Fairchild F-24 crew joined by the PBJ crew in attaching one of the wings to the F-24.



© Photo by Dan Newcomb
Bob Albee, the F-24 Crew Chief, supervising the wing "hanging." Sib Bosso, the Crew Chief on SNJ-5 #290 is in the background. All crews pool their talents when there are special tasks to perform on each plane.

You may donate to any of our restoration projects by sending your donation to:

CAF – Southern California Wing
455 Aviation Drive
Camarillo, CA 93010

Please specify: (1) F-24; (2) SNJ-4; (3) PBJ-1J; or (4) Spitfire Mk-XIV.

To become a Friend of the Museum, see page 14.



© Photo by Dan Newcomb
A broader pic of the combined augmented crew working on the F-24 wing attachment.

27TH ANNUAL **EAA** EXPERIMENTAL AIRCRAFT ASSOCIATION, CHAPTER 723

Camarillo Air Show

AUGUST 18 & 19, 2007

**AVIATION
PROPELLING THE COMMUNITY**

www.camarilloairshow.com

Flying Displays of Experimental, Military, and Vintage Aircraft	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Aerobatics • Airplane Rides • Live Entertainment • Food
--	--

Fun for the Entire Family!

\$10.00/person, \$16.00/couple, \$6.00/ages 12-16, 11 & under free.
Air show proceeds support aviation in the community through the
Experimental Aircraft Association, Chapter 723.
No Pets Allowed.

Museum Update

by Sarah de Bree



With the fighters away, the historical cars will play.

While the fighters were doing their spectacular flybys at an air show, the Museum held a Model A Club car show.



The Home Front artifacts shown in our refurbished display cabinets.

This view shows one of six refurbished artifact cabinets that went from a beat up dull pink to the beautiful sky blue shown above. Thanks to Shirley Murphy for all the work!



The China-Burma-India Campaign Display.

The elements of the CBI campaign are illustrated. Note the C-46 flying "Over The Hump" in the painting on top left (art work by Thomas Van Stein).

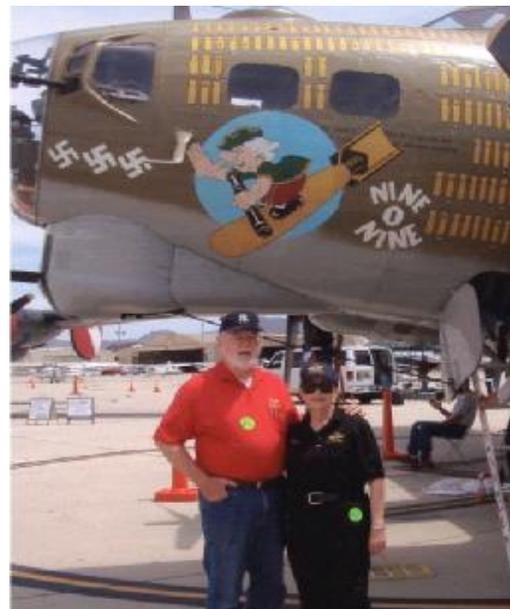


New display fixtures for the gift shop.

Thanks to a kind CAF supporter, we now have two display fixtures that have allowed us to rearrange the gift shop, resulting in more open and clear spaces. The area looks bigger, giving the shoppers more room to move around. Come in and see the improvements and the new items: CAF Polo Shirts, CAF Sweat Jackets, CAF Tee Shirts, aircraft designated hats and many aircraft model kits.

On May 5, 2007 the Museum held a special event that combined an Art Gallery review featuring the paintings of Thomas Van Stein and also some Robert Taylor prints. The large painting, shown earlier, was done specifically for the Wing and depicts a dog-fight between a Japanese Zero and American P-40s in the WWII fight for China. Thank you Thomas, It's beautiful!

On Friday, May 4, many of our members took advantage of the airplane rides being offered near the Way Point Café. There were choices of a B-17, B-24, or B-25. Those that took a ride seemed to have difficulty getting the smiles off their faces...all day!



Jim Tierney and Shirley Murphy are all smiles after their ride on the Boeing B-17 Flying Fortress bomber.

Museum Update (cont'd.)



(Top to bottom): Steve Barber in the Zero; Ron Hackworth in the Warhawk; Chris Rushing in the Hellcat; and David Price in the Mustang.

A special attraction during our May 5 unveiling of Thomas Van Stein's "Tigers Over Kweilin" was to be the flybys of the Planes of Fame's Curtiss P-40 Warhawk and our Mitsubishi A6M3 Zero. We decided to add the Grumman F6F-5 Hellcat to the mix. As the planes were lining up to take off, one of our Wing's benefactors, David Price, happened by in his North American P-51D Mustang – so he also joined the formation. This brought the large assembled crowd to their feet. What a heart-throbbing, pulse-quickenning happening – maybe a once-in-a-lifetime for many in attendance.

To make the day even more exciting, we also had a commercial shoot going on right next to our gathering. This event was all day and didn't conclude until 3:00 am. It involved laying down some artificial snow around an airplane...so we had January Aspen weather in May Camarillo!

Thank you Dick Burrer, your grandson and his friend, for sticking with this event until the wee hours.

Support the Wing; visit the gift shop; shop early, shop often! We're open every day from 10:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. Just follow our new signs on Las Posas & Pleasant Valley Roads.

Until next time...



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© Photo by Eric Van Gilder www.vg-photo.com
David Price showed up at our hangars on May 5 in his Mustang just in time to join our Zero and Hellcat, and Planes of Fame's Warhawk in a spectacular formation flyby. Good to have you with us, David!



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© Photo by Eric Van Gilder
Some of the "boys" enjoying the Special Events Day. Front: (L to R) Joe Peppito and Ed Foster. Rear: Jack Broome and Bill Main. They are definitely from the "Greatest Generation!" Thanks, guys, from all of us!



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© Photo by Eric Van Gilder
What a beautiful warbird! Many thanks from our Wing to the Planes of Fame Museum in Chino for sending this magnificent machine to participate in our Special Unveiling Event Day. And thanks to pilot Ron Hackworth for flying her to Camarillo. What a treat!

Unveiling of “Tigers Over Kweilin”

By Dave Flood



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Thomas Van Stein standing proudly before his monumental art work, “Tigers Over Kweilin.”

Thomas Van Stein, a member of our Wing, and a renowned landscape artist, was present on May 5, 2007 at the unveiling of his work of art depicting two Curtiss P-40 Warhawk fighter planes downing a Japanese Mitsubishi Zero over Kweilin, China, during May, 1942.

The origins of his painting came almost serendipitously, as Thomas had prepared this large canvas for a completely different painting. Once, when in the art supply shop, he spotted a black and white photograph of a fascinating Chinese landscape on the wall. It had meadows and sharply shaped “ice cream cone” mountains. He began to envision a painting of planes of the American Volunteer Group (AVG) dog-fighting with a Japanese Zero – superimposed over this exotic kind of landscape.

Two years later, he had produced “Tigers Over Kweilin,” and added a special dedication on the painting to “the spirit of the AVG.” Thomas wanted his painting to inspire in viewers a sense of the sacrifice that the American pilots who joined General Chennault in the famous Flying Tigers Squadron made in behalf of all of us. They left promising careers in aviation and the fledgling Army Air Corps to join an outfit that was not really recognized by the United States. And yet, they fought gallantly in the air over China

against the onslaught of the Japanese war machine, which threatened to devour all of Asia.

Many of the AVG pilots gave up commissions and comfort and put their lives on the line to fight for a cause which was the frontier of freedom for all of their fellow Americans back in the U.S.A. The war they conducted, practically single-handedly, was not at all popular in the U.S. After we entered the war against the Japanese (it took Pearl Harbor to wake us up), our generals were not receptive to honoring the AVG heroes. They were not offered their commissions back, and were demoted in rank, with lower pay, if they returned to the USAAC. Many of them opted to return to civilian life in the U.S. rather than take that insult from their own country.



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Our Grumman F6F-5 Hellcat and Mitsubishi A6M3 Zero flying with the Planes of Fame’s Curtiss P-40 Warhawk (in the middle). Chino was most generous to our Wing in loaning their beautiful warbird, and the pilot, Ron Hackworth, to really make a unique formation in the skies over Camarillo. Those in attendance actually got to see two of the planes in Thomas’s painting – flying!

It took another year and a half after the completion of his painting to finally bring it to our museum and the wonderful event of May 5. Spearheading the campaign to have the painting become a temporary work of art on our WWII Aviation Museum Art Wall was Dan Newcomb, along with his colleagues on the North American PBJ-1J Restoration Team (of which Van Stein is a member).

Van Stein, on a visit to Vandenberg Air Force Base, met Hal Geer, of Simi Valley. Hal had been a highly-decorated war photographer for the Army Air Corps. He told Thomas about being with the 14th Air Force when they took over from the American Volunteer Group in Kweilin, China. He remembered vividly how the 14th had to burn everything prior to the Japanese advance on the Kweilin area.



© Photo by Eric Van Gilder

Some of the large crowd that attended the unveiling of the Thomas Van Stein painting “Tigers Over Kweilin”

As Thomas was giving his talk, explaining his motivation to do the painting, he mentioned the valiant efforts of the pilots and crewmen who flew the C-46 Commandos “over the Hump” from India to China to help supply needed materials to the Chinese in their fight against the Japanese. At that very moment in his speech, our Curtiss C-46 Commando *China Doll* appeared over the Camarillo Airport runway in its landing approach. Perfect timing!



© Photo by Eric Van Gilder

Thomas giving his impassioned speech to the rapt audience. Note that he is wearing a Flying Tigers cap.

Thomas Van Stein wants his painting to not only remind us of the tremendous sacrifices that men like the AVG pilots and crewmen made to insure our freedoms, but also to keep us ever aware that the constant fight against those who would take away our freedoms really never ends. We of the SoCAWing of the CAF are proud of Thomas and

indebted to him for his art and for his vision. He truly helps us “Keep ‘Em Flying”! Come in and see his painting!

Maintenance Officer’s Report

by Joe Peppito

Hallelujah! The C-46 *China Doll* is back in the air and is flying well. We can thank the dedicated maintenance crew on the C-46, and especially Col. Gene O’Neal for his dedicated effort in investigating some of the major problem areas and his coming up with the necessary repairs and fixes. Thanks again to Crew Chief Charlie Valentine for organizing this effort.

The new exhaust stacks have arrived for the F8F-2 Bearcat and are being installed. Crew Chief Ken Kramer was out for awhile, and John Jones went over from the SNJ-4 crew to help Gary Barber complete the engine installation on the airplane.

If you haven’t noticed, the Fairchild F-24R is now sporting both wings on the airplane. Crew Chief Bob Albee and Norm Swagler have been working very diligently to install the fuel tanks in the wings before the wings were installed on the airplane. Norm and Bob have also been working on completing the airplane’s wooden frame around the fuselage. Howard Ulm has just about completed all of the electrical installation on the airplane.

During our inspection of the SNJ-5 #290, we found the splines on the propeller shaft were worn beyond the acceptable limits. This requires us to replace the engine due to a crankshaft replacement. We have contacted Chester Roberts Engines, and they are sending us a replacement overhauled engine.

The PBJ-1J crew is still making progress in the repair of the right wing center section. This has turned out to be a major sheet metal repair project that requires quite a bit of sheet metal repair expertise. Luckily, the PBJ crew has that expertise.

We are having some engine problems with the right engine on the C-131 Samaritan. The airplane was scheduled to fly up to Rialto for some propeller work when the right engine started acting up on takeoff and the flight had to be aborted. I’m sure that Crew Chief Dick Troy will have the engine working again soon and the airplane will be back in the air.

The Mitsubishi A6M3 Zero, Grumman F6F-5 Hellcat, Planes of Fame’s Curtiss P-40 Warhawk, and David Price’s North American P-51D Mustang “Cottonmouth” all flew during our special events day honoring our artistic member Thomas Van Stein for his loan of the painting “Tigers Over Kweilin.”

That’s all for now. Participate! Keep ‘Em Flying!

Friends of the Museum

by Ceci Stratford

Please encourage your relatives, friends, co-workers, check-out people at the supermarket to become Friends of our WWII Aviation Museum. There are various levels of giving – with one just right for Uncle Joe. See Page 14 for a Friends of the Museum application form.

**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 application and send it to the CAF at the address above. (Feel free to make a photocopy of the application).

FRIENDS OF THE MUSEUM APPLICATION

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 _____

Signature _____

Mail to above address.

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



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

- Individual \$50
- Family \$75
- Supporter \$250
- Sustaining \$500
- Patron \$1,000
- Benefactor \$5,000

Friends of the Museum donation is valid for 1 year from the month of donation.
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