

# Flight Line

**The Official Publication of the CAF**

Southern California Wing  
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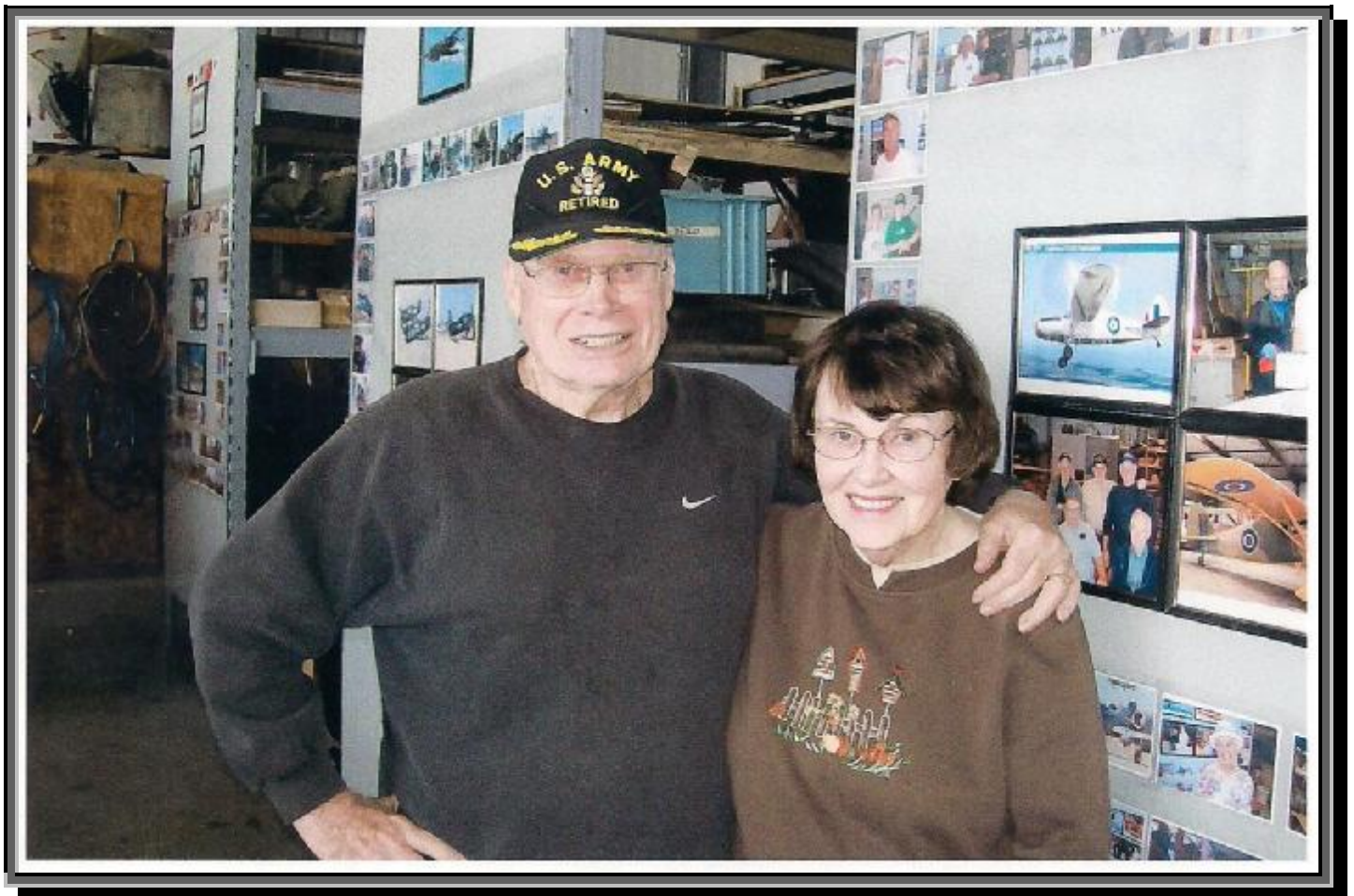
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FDR awarding Jimmy Doolittle the Medal of Honor at the White House in WWII for his part in the famous raid on Japan in April, 1942.



© Photo courtesy of Jim Hinckley

**Col. Jim Hinckley and his wife Katie, in front of their “masterpieces” of memorial photos on special boards erected in the Maintenance Hangar in memory of all the members who have worked on each of our Wing’s aircraft. Thanks, Jim and Katie, for a fitting tribute !**

**See Page 9 for photos of their beautiful work.**

**Wing Staff Meeting, Saturday, March 13, 2010 at 9:30 a.m. at the  
CAF Museum Hangar, 455 Aviation Drive, Camarillo Airport**

**Our CAF Mission: To Honor American Military Aviation Through Flight, Exhibition and Remembrance.**

# March 2010

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
	1 Museum Closed	2 Work Day	3	4 Work Day	5	6 Work Day  "All Hands" Meeting 4:30
7	8 Museum Closed	9 Work Day	10	11 Work Day	12	13 Work Day Wing Staff Meeting 9:30
14 Daylight Savings Time Begins	15 Museum Closed	16 Work Day	17 St. Patrick's Day	18 Work Day	19	20
21	22 Museum Closed	23 Work Day	24	25 Work Day	26	27 Work Day
28	29 Museum Closed	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	* Shirley Murphy	(805) 482-6406	sdmurphy07@verizon.net	Wing Calendar . . . . . 2
Executive Officer	* Dick Troy	(805) 624-6971	Konvair@aol.com	Staff and Appointed Positions. . . . . 2
Adjutant	* Terry Cedar	(805) 570-8048	tac1966@msn.com	Wing Leader's Report . . . . . 3
Finance Officer	* Casey de Bree	(805) 389-9185	scdebree@aol.com	Joe Peppito Steps Down . . . . . 3
Operations Officer	* Gary Barber	(805) 659-4319	bearcat69@pacbell.net	The Saga of Doolittle #13, part 2 . . . . . 4
Maintenance Officer	* Mike Perrenoud	(805) 857-5580		Vicki Cruse Remembered . . . . . 7
Safety Officer	* Norm Swagler	(805) 482-6994	pswagler@hotmail.com	Mike Perenoud - New Maint Officer . . . . . 8
Museum Director	Sarah de Bree	(805) 389-9185	scdebree@aol.com	Membership Meeting. . . . . 8
Gift Shop Manager	Sarah de Bree	(805) 389-9185	scdebree@aol.com	Wing Asymmetry . . . . . 8
Public Info Officer	Pat Brown	(805) 479-2221	(no e-mail)	Wing Photo Page I: Photo Displays . . . . . 9
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Chief Docent	Ron Fleishman	(805) 384-4426	oldplanec46@aol.com	The Making of SNJ-4 "Bluebird" . . . . . 11
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Air Show Coordinator	Bill O'Neill	(805) 495-4915	scwairshow@aol.com	A Stellar Performance . . . . . 15
Facility Officer	Al Kepler	(818) 352-4318	kepler53@yahoo.com	Wing Photo Page II: Zero to NZ . . . . . 16
Personnel Officer	Norm Swagler	(805) 482-6994	pswagler@hotmail.com	Looking for a Laptop Computer . . . . . 16
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* Denotes Staff Position				

## Wing Leader's Report

by Shirley Murphy



### Report to The Crew:

Our current programs at the Wing are filled with great challenges and promise. The transport of our Zero to New Zealand for an air show has resulted in a major effort by our crew in the preparation to insure the safety of the aircraft. Jason Somes and Lloyd McAfee are two of the crew who have put in many hours on the project.

Steve Barber, Jr., our Hangar Events Officer, is successfully filling our calendar. Members who would like to help with the events – please contact Steve at (805) 223-1077 or at [barber.stephen@gmail.com](mailto:barber.stephen@gmail.com).

The crews in the Maintenance Hangar are the ones that make our aircraft airworthy. Without them, our aircraft would simply be static displays. They make it possible for us to reach for the sky. Anyone who would be interested in being a part of this vital operation is encouraged to join a crew.

Our actual members who volunteer their time in the varied operations of the Wing are helping to preserve our U.S. Aviation History. The docents who serve as our ambassadors to the visitors, those who serve in the Gift Shop, public information, cataloguing artifacts and displays, air show staff, safety and maintenance crews, and those involved in the care of our Research Library all are who make our Aviation Museum what it is today.

So come on down and join in this program. I will be glad to help you find the job that best suits you, both in the “time” factor and the “subject” location.

Remember, we are the “bridge” between those who have served, their children who are the adults of today, and their children who will be the adults of tomorrow.

Your help and time will keep that bridge strong and our proud history alive!

“Let's ‘Git’ ‘Er Done!”

## Joe Peppito Steps Down



Joe Peppito (l.) – at his 86<sup>th</sup> birthday party in our “O” Club. Jim Hinckley is congratulating him.

Citing his medical conditions, and his doctor's advice, Joe Peppito has handed in his resignation as Maintenance Officer of our Wing.

Joe has been an extremely active member of our Wing since 1983. He has served in previous years as Wing Leader, Crew Chief, Maintenance Officer (twice), and on many committees. He will continue to serve as our new Training Officer.

His recent brainchild was the Cadet Training Program, which Joe designed and which may get under way later this year.

Joe just became 86 years young, and, in spite of some health set-backs of his own in the past couple of years, has been keeping up a pace that some of our young “whippersnappers” have trouble following.

One of Joe's greatest achievements for our Wing is the completion of our new SNJ-4 Texan “Bluebird” (see pages 10 to 13).

Thanks, Joe, for all your hard work over the years! You have contributed much to making our Wing second to none in the Commemorative Air Force!



Joe Peppito working on his “Bluebird”

## Saga of Doolittle No. 13: Pt. 2

By Edgar "Mac" McElroy

Early the next morning, I was enjoying a leisurely breakfast, expecting another full day on board, and I noticed that the ship was pitching and rolling quite a bit this morning, more than normal. I was reading through the April 18th day plan of the Hornet, and there was a message in it which said, "From the Hornet to the Army - Good luck, good hunting, and God bless you." I still had a large lump in my throat from reading this, when all of a sudden, the intercom blared, "General Quarters, General Quarters, All hands man your battle stations! Army pilots, man your planes!!!" There was instant reaction from everyone in the room and food trays went crashing to the floor. I ran down to my room jumping through the hatches along the way, grabbed my bag, and ran as fast as I could go to the flight deck. I met with my crew at the plane, my heart was pounding. Someone said, "What's going on?" The word was that the Enterprise had spotted an enemy trawler. It had been sunk, but it had transmitted radio messages. We had been found out!

The weather was crummy, the seas were running heavy, and the ship was pitching up and down like I had never seen before. Great waves were crashing against the bow and washing over the front of the deck. This wasn't going to be easy! Last minute instructions were given. We were reminded to avoid non-military targets, especially the Emperor's Palace. Do not fly to Russia, but fly as far west as possible, land on the water and launch our rubber raft. This was going to be a one-way trip! We were still much too far out and we all knew that our chances of making land were somewhere between slim and none. Then at the last minute, each plane loaded an extra ten 5-gallon gas cans to give us a fighting chance of reaching China.

We all climbed aboard, started our engines and warmed them up, just feet away from the plane in front of us and the plane behind us. Knobby, Campbell, Bourgeois and me in the front, Williams, the gunner was in the back, separated from us by a big rubber gas tank. I called back to Williams on the intercom and told him to look sharp and don't take a nap! He answered dryly, "Don't worry about me, Lieutenant. If they jump us, I'll just use my little black broomsticks to keep the Japs off our tail."

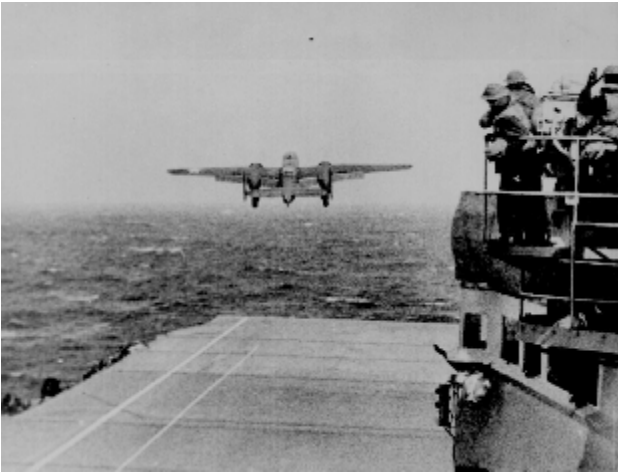
The ship headed into the wind and picked up speed. There was now a near gale force wind and water spray coming straight over the deck. I looked down at my instruments as my engines revved up. My mind was racing. I went over my mental checklist, and said a prayer? God please, help us! Past the twelve planes in front of us, I strained to see the flight deck officer as he leaned into the wind and signaled with his arms for Colonel Doolittle to come to full power. I looked over at Knobby and we looked each other in the eye. He just nodded to me and we both understood.



**One of the first of the B-25s lifts off the Hornet. Note the heavy seas and the cant of the carrier deck.**

With the deck heaving up and down, the deck officer had to time this just right. Then I saw him wave Doolittle to go, and we watched breathlessly to see what happened. When his plane pulled up above the deck, Knobby just let out with, "Yes! Yes!" The second plane, piloted by Lt. Hoover, appeared to stall with its nose up and began falling toward the waves. We groaned and called out, "Up! Up! Pull it up!" Finally, he pulled out of it, staggering back up into the air, much to our relief! One by one, the planes in front of us took off. The deck pitched wildly, 60 feet or more, it looked like. One plane seemed to drop down into the drink and disappeared for a moment, then pulled back up into sight. There was sense of relief with each one that made it. We gunned our engines and started to roll forward. Off to the right, I saw the men on deck cheering and waving their covers! We continued inching forward, careful to keep my left main wheel and my nose wheel on the white guidelines that had been painted on the deck for us. Get off a little bit too far left and we go off the edge of the deck. A little too far to the right and our wing-tip will smack the island of the ship. With the best seat on the ship, we watched Lt. Bower take off in plane number 12, and I taxied up to the starting line, put on my the brakes and looked down to my left. My main wheel was right on the line. Applied more power to the engines, and I turned my complete attention to the deck officer on my left, who was circling his paddles. Now my adrenaline was really pumping! We went to full power, and the noise and vibration inside the plane went way up. He circled the paddles furiously while watching forward for the pitch of the deck.

Then he dropped them, and I said, "Here We Go!" I released the brakes and we started rolling forward, and as I looked down the flight-deck you could see straight down into the angry churning water. As we slowly gained speed, the deck gradually began to pitch back up. I pulled up and our plane slowly strained up and away from the ship. There was a big cheer and whoops from the crew, but I just felt relieved and muttered to myself, "Boy, that was short!"



**Up, up and away! And off the Hornet's deck safely!**

"We made a wide circle above our fleet to check our compass headings and get our bearings. I looked down as we passed low over one of our cruisers and could see the men on deck waving to us. I dropped down to low level, so low we could see the whitecap waves breaking. It was just after 0900, there were broken clouds at 5,000 feet and visibility of about thirty miles due to haze or something. Up ahead and barely in sight, I could see Captain Greening, our flight leader, and Bower on his right wing. Flying at 170 mph, I was able to catch up to them in about 30 minutes. We were to stay in this formation until reaching landfall, and then break on our separate ways. Now we settled in for the five hour flight. Tokyo, here we come!

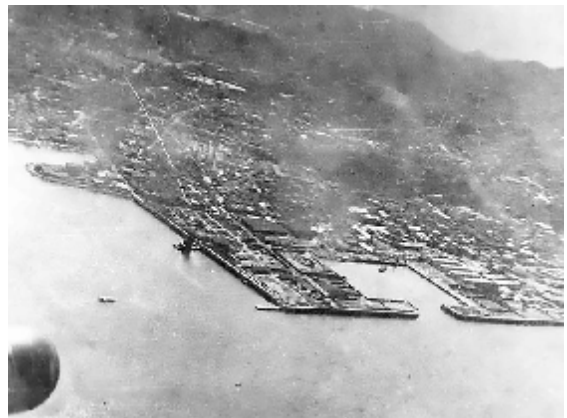
Williams was in the back emptying the extra gas cans into the gas tank as fast as we had burned off enough fuel. He then punched holes in the tins and pushed them out the hatch against the wind. Some of the fellows ate sandwiches and other goodies that the Navy had put aboard for us... I wasn't hungry. I held onto the controls with a firm grip as we raced along westward just fifty feet above the cold rolling ocean, as low as I dared to fly. Being so close to the choppy waves gave you a true sense of speed. Occasionally our windshield was even sprayed with a little saltwater. It was an exhilarating feeling, and I felt as though the will and spirit of our whole country was pushing us along. I didn't feel too scared, just anxious. There was a lot riding on this thing, and on me.

As we began to near land, we saw an occasional ship here and there. None of them close enough to be threatening, but just the same, we were feeling more edgy. Then at 1330 we sighted land, the Eastern shore of Honshu. With Williams now on his guns in the top turret and Campbell on the nose gun, we came ashore still flying low as possible, and were surprised to see people on the ground waving to us as we flew in over the farmland. It was beautiful countryside.

Campbell, our navigator, said, "Mac, I think we're going to be about sixty miles too far north. I'm not positive, but pretty sure." I decided that he was absolutely right and turned left ninety degrees, went back just offshore and followed the coast line south. When I thought we had gone

far enough, I climbed up to two thousand feet to find out where we were. We started getting fire from anti-aircraft guns. Then we spotted Tokyo Bay, turned west and put our nose down diving toward the water. Once over the bay, I could see our target, Yokosuka Naval Base. Off to the right there was already smoke visible over Tokyo. Coming in low over the water, I increased speed to 200 mph and told everyone, "Get Ready!"

When we were close enough, I pulled up to 1300 feet and opened the bomb doors. There were furious black bursts of anti-aircraft fire all around us, but I flew straight on through them, spotting our target, the torpedo works and the dry-docks. I saw a big ship in the dry-dock just as we flew over it. Those flak bursts were really getting close and bouncing us around, when I heard Bourgeois shouting, "Bombs Away!" I couldn't see it, but Williams had a bird's eye view from the back and he shouted jubilantly, "We got an aircraft carrier! The whole dock is burning!" I started turning to the south and strained my neck to look back and at that moment saw a large crane blow up and start falling over!... Take that! There was loud yelling and clapping each other on the back. We were all just ecstatic, and still alive! But there wasn't much time to celebrate. We had to get out of here and fast! When we were some thirty miles out to sea, we took one last look back at our target, and could still see huge billows of black smoke. Up until now, we had been flying for Uncle Sam, but now we were flying for ourselves.



**Yokosuka Naval Base, with smoke rising over targets hit by Doolittle No. 13.**

We flew south over open ocean, parallel to the Japanese coast all afternoon. We saw a large submarine apparently at rest, and then in another fifteen miles, we spotted three large enemy cruisers headed for Japan. There were no more bombs, so we just let them be and kept on going. By late afternoon, Campbell calculated that it was time to turn and make for China. Across the East China Sea, the weather out ahead of us looked bad and overcast. Up until now we had not had time to think much about our gasoline supply, but the math did not look good. We just didn't have enough fuel to make it!

Each man took turns cranking the little hand radio to see if we could pick up the promised radio beacon. There was no signal. This is not good. The weather turned bad and it

was getting dark, so we climbed up. I was now flying on instruments, through a dark misty rain. Just when it really looked hopeless of reaching land, we suddenly picked up a strong tailwind. It was an answer to a prayer. Maybe just maybe, we can make it!

In total darkness at 2100 hours, we figured that we must be crossing the coastline, so I began a slow, slow climb to be sure of not hitting any high ground or anything. I conserved as much fuel as I could, getting real low on gas now. The guys were still cranking on the radio, but after five hours of hand cranking with aching hands and backs, there was utter silence. No radio beacon! Then the red light started blinking, indicating twenty minutes of fuel left. We started getting ready to bail out. I turned the controls over to Knobby and crawled to the back of the plane, past the now collapsed rubber gas tank. I dumped everything out of my bag and repacked just what I really needed, my .45 pistol, ammunition, flashlight, compass, medical kit, fishing tackle, chocolate bars, peanut butter and crackers. I told Williams to come forward with me so we could all be together for this. There was no other choice. I had to get us as far west as possible, and then we had to jump.

At 2230 we were up to sixty-five hundred feet. We were over land but still above the Japanese Army in China. We couldn't see the stars, so Campbell couldn't get a good fix on our position. We were flying on fumes now and I didn't want to run out of gas before we were ready to go. Each man filled his canteen, put on his Mae West life jacket and parachute, and filled his bag with rations, those "C" rations from the Presidio. I put her on auto-pilot and we all gathered in the navigator's compartment around the hatch in the floor. We checked each other's parachute harness. Everyone was scared, without a doubt. None of us had ever done this before! I said, "Williams first, Bourgeois second, Campbell third, Knobloch fourth, and I'll follow you guys! Go fast, two seconds apart! Then count three seconds off and pull your rip-cord!"

We kicked open the hatch and gathered around the hole looking down into the blackness. It did not look very inviting! Then I looked up at Williams and gave the order, "JUMP!!!" Within seconds they were all gone. I turned and reached back for the auto-pilot, but could not reach it, so I pulled the throttles back, then turned and jumped. Counting quickly, thousand one, thousand two, thousand three, I pulled my rip-cord and jerked back up with a terrific shock. At first I thought that I was hung on the plane, but after a few agonizing seconds that seemed like hours, realized that I was free and drifting down. Being in the total dark, I was disoriented at first but figured my feet must be pointed toward the ground. I looked down through the black mist to see what was coming up. I was in a thick mist or fog, and the silence was so eerie after nearly thirteen hours inside that noisy plane. I could only hear the whoosh, whoosh sound of the wind blowing through my shroud lines, and then I heard a loud crash and explosion. My plane!

Looking for my flashlight, I groped through my bag with my

right hand, finally pulled it out and shined it down toward the ground, which I still could not see. Finally I picked up a glimmer of water and thought I was landing in a lake. We're too far inland for this to be ocean. I hope! I relaxed my legs a little, thinking I was about to splash into water and would have to swim out, and then bang. I jolted suddenly and crashed over onto my side. Lying there in just a few inches of water, I raised my head and put my hands down into thick mud. It was rice paddy! There was a burning pain, as if someone had stuck a knife in my stomach. I must have torn a muscle or broke something.

I laid there dazed for a few minutes, and after a while struggled up to my feet. I dug a hole and buried my parachute in the mud. Then started trying to walk, holding my stomach, but every direction I moved the water got deeper. Then, I saw some lights off in the distance. I fished around for my flashlight and signaled one time. Sensing something wrong, I got out my compass and to my horror saw that those lights were off to my west. That must be a Jap patrol! How dumb could I be! Knobby had to be back to my east, so I sat still and quiet and did not move.

It was a cold dark lonely night. At 0100 hours I saw a single light off to the east. I flashed my light in that direction, one time. It had to be Knobby! I waited a while, and then called out softly, "Knobby?" And a voice replied "Mac, is that you?". Thank goodness, what a relief! Separated by a wide stream, we sat on opposite banks of the water communicating in low voices. After daybreak Knobby found a small rowboat and came across to get me. We started walking east toward the rest of the crew and away from that Japanese patrol. Knobby had cut his hip when he went through the hatch, but it wasn't too awful bad.

We walked together toward a small village and several Chinese came out to meet us, they seemed friendly enough. I said, "Luchu hoo megwa fugi! Luchu hoo megwa fugi!" meaning, "I am an American! I am an American!" Later that morning we found the others. Williams had wrenched his knee when he landed in a tree, but he was limping along just fine. There were hugs all around. I have never been so happy to see four guys in all my life!"



**Chinese soldiers helping transport Doolittle Raiders out of China to safety.**

"Well, the five of us eventually made it out of China with the help of the local Chinese people and the Catholic missions along the way. They were all very good to us, and later they were made to pay terribly for it, so we found out afterwards. For a couple of weeks we traveled across country. Strafed a couple of times by enemy planes, we kept on moving, by foot, by pony, by car, by train, and by airplane. But we finally made it to India .

I did not make it home for the baby's birth. I stayed on there flying a DC-3 "Gooney Bird" in the China-Burma-India Theatre for the next several months. I flew supplies over the Himalaya Mountains, or as we called it, over "The Hump" into China . When B-25s finally arrived in India , I flew combat missions over Burma , and then later in the war, flew a B-29 out of the Marianna Islands to bomb Japan again and again.

After the war, I remained in the Air Force until 1962, when I retired from the service as a Lt. Colonel, and then came back to Texas, my beautiful Texas, first moving to Abilene and then we settled in Lubbock, where Aggie taught school at MacKenzie Jr. High. I worked at the S & R Auto Supply, once again in an atmosphere of machinery, oil and grease.

I lived a good life and raised two wonderful sons, who I am very proud of. I feel blessed in many ways. We have a great country, better than most folks know. It is worth fighting for.

Some people call me a hero, but I have never thought of myself that way, no. But I did serve in the company of heroes. What we did will never leave me. It will always be there in my fondest memories. I will always think of the fine and brave men that I was privileged to serve with.

Remember us, for we were soldiers once and young. With the loss of all aircraft, Doolittle believed that the raid had been a failure, and that he would be court-martialed upon returning to the states. Quite to the contrary, the raid proved to be a tremendous boost to American morale, which had plunged following the Pearl Harbor attack. It also caused serious doubts in the minds of Japanese war planners. They in turn recalled many seasoned fighter plane units back to defend the home islands, which resulted in Japan 's weakened air capabilities at the upcoming Battle of Midway and other South Pacific campaigns."

*Edgar "Mac" Mc Elroy, Lt. Col., U.S.A.F. (Ret.) passed away at his residence in Lubbock, Texas, early on the morning of Friday, April 4, 2003. May he rest in peace.*

*Editor's Note: Many thanks to Col. George Robillard, USMC (Ret.), who sent this story of the Doolittle No. 13 B-25 to me. George is a decorated veteran of the Vietnam War, and is the "other grandfather" to two of our wonderful grandchildren, Annie and Kevin.*

## Vicki Cruse Remembered...



Vicki Cruse, president of the International Aerobatic Club, died on August 22, 2009 during a Silverstone Race Circuit air show in Northamptonshire, England.

The 40-year-old aerobatic pilot, from Santa Paula, CA, was pronounced dead at the scene after her single-seat Zivko "Edge" 540 nosedived into the ground during a training-day practice session.

According to an eyewitness on the ground, "She flew straight up in the air and then straight back down again."

The practice session was in conjunction with the World Aerobatic Championship competition held from August 17 to August 29, 2009, featuring 60 pilots from 19 countries.

Vicki had won the U. S. National Unlimited Aerobatic title in 2007. She had been a president of the IAC since 2005. She was also a member of the Ventura County 99s, who have established a memorial scholarship fund in her memory. Our CAF-SoCAWing is proud to have been a contributor to the fund in Vicki's memory.

May she rest in peace.



Vicki Cruse's Zivko "Edge" 540 racing plane

## Mike Perrenoud – New Maintenance Officer

by Dave Flood



© Photo by Dave Flood

**Mike Perrenoud, in front of our F8F-2 Bearcat, whose new engine he worked on diligently for many months.**

With the resignation of Joe Peppito (see Page 3), our Wing Leader, Shirley Murphy, reached out to one of our members who has put in untold hours of volunteer maintenance work on many of our aircraft.

Mike Perrenoud has accepted the role of filling Joe's shoes as Wing Maintenance Officer.

Mike is currently one of our CAF pilots and the Crew Chief on the Fairchild PT-19A Cornell.

Besides working on the PT-19A, Mike has done yeoman work on the F6F-5 Hellcat, the SNJ-5 Texan #290, the A6M3 Zero, the Spitfire Mk XIV, and was one of the key volunteers who commuted to Burbank Airport for several months to help replace the engine in our F8F-2 Bearcat.

Mike spent three years in the U.S. Air Force working on jet engines as an Aircraft Maintenance Specialist. He holds an A & P – Aircraft and Powerplant Mechanic rating.

Before joining our Wing, Mike worked as a road construction crew supervisor with Los Angeles County.

He also has volunteered at other warbird locations, including the Planes of Fame in Chino, CA.

Our CAF-SoCAWing is proud to have Mike as our new Wing Maintenance Officer!

## Membership Meeting

by Dick Troy

Just a reminder: please don't forget about our Membership Meeting scheduled for Saturday, March 6, 2010 at 4:30 p.m. in the Museum Hangar.

## WING ASYMMETRY

by Casey de Bree

A number of aircraft have been designed and built where the wings can be moved in flight. They are moved to a straight configuration for low speed, and a swept back configuration for high speed. Examples of such aircraft are the American F-111, F-14, B-1, the French *Mirage*, and the German/Italian *Tornado*. When designing a swing-wing aircraft the engineers must consider a variety of failure modes having to do with the operation of the variable sweep actuating mechanism to prevent asymmetric deployment of the two wings, which could result in an uncontrollable aircraft.

In designing the F-14 *Tomcat* swing-wing system, Grumman engineers incorporated a number of safeguards to force mechanical synchronization of the wing panels as they were extended and retracted. However, a few in-service wing-position asymmetries showed up because of double mechanical failures. Fortunately the asymmetries were small, but they caused the Navy to have NASA flight-test some large asymmetry cases intentionally set up.

An F-14 was flown with progressively greater wing asymmetries until it was finally flown with one wing fully retracted and the other wing fully extended, see photo below. The aircraft was quite stable in pitch, but was very much out of trim in roll, which was fortunately controllable due to the large amount of roll control authority available in the F-14. The photo shows a large control surface deflection on the left wing was required to hold the aircraft level.



**F-14 in flight with left wing fully swept and right wing fully extended. Note control surface position on left wing required to hold the aircraft level.** NASA photo

The pilot reported he would be willing to land the aircraft on a carrier with the extreme asymmetry, but fortunately no one ever had to consider doing that.

Navy pilots took comfort in the fact that they could at least fly their *Tomcat* back to the vicinity of their carrier before pulling the striped handles.

(Source data from "Flight Journal" magazine, June 1998)



**Wing Photo Page I: Maintenance Hangar Photo Displays** Photos by Dave Flood



Jim and Katie Hinckley have created some spectacular Photo Boards, each one memorializing a CAF aircraft and its crews. Members who assisted Jim & Katie include: Mike Hohls, Richard "Doc" Witten, Jim Hinkelman, Norm Swagler, Lary Kates, Robert Seeger, Dick Roberts, and Cadets Zack, Pace and Benjy.



The Spitfire Mk XIV's Photo Board



The SNJs' Photo Board



Here's the Photo Board dedicated to our C-46 *China Doll* and her crews over the years. Charlie Valentine, long-time *China Doll* Crew Chief, is highlighted. Other Photo Boards represent our SNJs, PBJ, Hellcat & Bearcat, Spitfire & F-24R. They include photos taken of the planes and crews over many years. Jim & Katie are working on boards for the Zero & PT-19A now.



The F6F-5 Hellcat's & F8F-2 Bearcat's Photo Board.

Thanks, Jim & Katie for all the wonderful work!



North American SNJ-4 Texan  
"Bluebird"  
#N6411D

"Bluebird" – Rarin' to go !

**Commemorative Air Force**

**455 Aviation Drive, Camarillo, CA 93010**

**(805) 482-0064**

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## THE MAKING OF AN AIRPLANE: SNJ-4 #N6411D "BLUEBIRD"



© Photo by Alan Nicholson

Our SNJ-4 #N6411D Texan "Bluebird" on her first flight.

I would like to dedicate the completion of the 5 plus year's restoration of the SNJ-4 "BLUEBIRD" to all the men and women who built, trained, flew and maintained these type of aircraft during the World War II period.

There were hundreds of thousands of pilots trained in advanced flying and combat techniques in AT-6/SNJ "Texan" advanced trainer aircraft all over the world.

Bless them all and the mechanics who worked to maintain them and keep them flying.

Also - thanks to the restoration crew that worked so hard and long to complete the restoration of the "Bluebird".

*Joe Peppito, Former Crew Chief, Maintenance Officer and Wing Leader.*

## The Making of SNJ-4 "Bluebird"



Some early work on one of "Bluebird" wings –  
Circa 2003



Howard Ulm doing early work on the cockpit.



The crew fitting the spar to the fuselage.



Tom Branch tightening bolts on the wing.  
Note the gear has been attached.



Crew members checking the gear.



The "Bluebird" crew getting ready to attach the  
engine.



Joe Peppito, the Crew Chief, with the new engine.



The engine and the propeller have been installed,  
and the crew is ready to work on the wiring,  
instrumentation and controls.

## The Making of the "Bluebird" – contd....



Much of the cockpits, wiring and cables have been installed.



Some fine tuning before the engine test.



Here's the completed "Bluebird" ready for her test flight. Isn't she a beauty?



Lift off! After 6 years of "blood, sweat and tears," the crew watches their "Bluebird" take off on her first test flight!



Believe it or not, this is what #N6411D "Bluebird" looked like when she arrived at our ramp in 2003 !



Here are a few of the "Bluebird" crew who worked so hard and long to get their bird in the air. From left: Alan Nicholson, Keith Bailey, Wayne Brancato, Sib Bosso and Alex Ferrasci. Their Crew Chief, Joe Peppito, was the "guiding light" throughout the long restoration period.

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North American SNJ-4/AT-6 Texan "Bluebird"  
Serial No. 88-10177 / #N6411D  
U.S Army Air Corps Trainer  
Canadian / RAF Version call "Harvard"

The "Bluebird" was originally built in 1943. It was delivered to our Wing in 2003 by truck in many pieces (see photo above).

The restoration is completed from a number of different SNJs / AT-6s.

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All the SNJ-4 "Bluebird" Restoration Crew is a great crew that worked together as a team over the five plus years of restoration work on the airplane. They all deserve a great deal of the credit for its completion and their dedication to the CAF-SoCAWing.

Joe Peppito, their Crew Chief, and all the crew can all share in the satisfaction of seeing all the planning and hard work come to fruition in the shape of a well-restored aircraft: SNJ-4 #N6411D Texan – "The Bluebird."

Kudos to all of you for a job very well done!

## Wing Members Who Have Worked On the Restoration of the SNJ-4 #N6411D “Bluebird”

Robert Albee	Chad Eatherton
Gary Koch	Vern Olson
Keith Bailey	Alex Ferrasci
Ken Kramer	Joe Peppito, Crew Chief
Gary Barber	Joe Fitzgerald
Frank Lozano	Kelvin Rautiola
Steve Barber	Ron Fleishman
Steve McCartney	Barry Roberts
Les Bedding	Alan Gaynor
Phil Most	Jack Rogers
Robert Blair	Bill Gordon
Anthony Murray (Cadet)	George Sands
Sib Bosso	Stan Heller
Alan Nicholson	Jay Schmidt
Wayne Brancato	Shari Heitkotter
Ken Nishimura	Greg Schuh
Tom Branch	John Jones
Misa Nishimura	Robert Seeger
Gilbert Brice	Albert Kepler
Matt Norklun	Dave Sica
Larry Simmer	Chuck Williams
Norm Swagler	Ken Barger
Howard, David & Steven Ulm	Dan Newcomb
Richard Vandenberg (AA, Kansas City)	Marc Russell
Terry Cedar	David Baker
	Dan Cuvier

## Donors Who Have Contributed to “Bluebird”

Stan Palmer	Al Kepler	Bob Thompson
Wayne Brancato	Russ Drosendahl	Chuck Tully
David Baker	Chuck McCammon	Howard Ulm
Ginny LeFever	Steve McCartney	Dick Updegraff
Steve Barber	Bill Montague	Horst Wallasch
Terry Cedar	Ken Nishimura	Don Wheeler
John Deakin	Joe Peppito	Don Margolin
Bob Goubitz	Dave Sica	Tom Wilson
Robert Smith		Jim Hinckley



You are all heroes in the eyes of our CAF – So CA Wing!

## THE DOUGLAS DC-5

by Casey de Bree

There really was a Douglas DC-5, but few airplane books make mention of it, perhaps because it is a relatively obscure airplane with only four examples having gone into airline service, and eight more seeing service with the US Navy/Marines designated as R-3D/C-110.



**Brand New KLM DC-5 PH-AXB in El Segundo in May 1940. It went to the West Indies re-registered as PJ-AIZ *Zonvogal* (Sunbird). It later went to KNILM in Java as PK-ADC, the only DC-5 to survive the war.**

The DC-5 was designed in El Segundo by a team led by project engineer Leo Devlin and supervised by the well-known Douglas designer Ed Heineman. It was strongly influenced by the Douglas DB-7 medium bomber design, which found its way into the USAAC as the A-20 *Havoc*, a shoulder-wing, twin engine aircraft with tricycle landing gear. Work on the DC-5 began in 1938 in anticipation of demand for a short-haul feeder transport with the performance of the DC-3, and the prototype aircraft made its first flight on February 20, 1939 with Douglas pilot Carl Cover at the controls.

Interesting features of the DC-5 were a high wing combined with tricycle landing gear. A strengthened keel ran the length of the fuselage to offer protection in the event of a wheels-up landing. It had fully retractable landing gear with the mains retracting outboard into the wings, and full-span wing flaps. The outboard wing panels were slotted, giving the DC-5 near STOL performance. The aircraft had a wingspan of 78 ft. and a length of 62 ft. 2 in. The areas forward of the firewall, exhaust collector rings, control runs, rudder pedals, and pilot seats were from the DC-3. It was designed with accommodations for a crew of three and sixteen passengers in the standard configuration, but would accommodate 22 passengers in high-density configuration. Customers were offered a choice of engines between the Wright *Cyclone* R-1820 rated at 1,100 hp or the Pratt and Whitney *Twin Wasp* R-1830 rated at 1,200 hp. The wings carried 550 gallons of fuel, giving the DC-5 a range of 1,600 miles at 202 mph and 10,000 ft.

KLM was the first to place an order for four R-1830 powered aircraft. Pennsylvania Central followed with an order for six, and Colombian Airline SCADTA ordered two. Shortly after, the U.S. Navy ordered three for the Navy as the R-3D and four for the Marines as the C-110, all R-1820 powered. Then British Imperial Airways placed an order for nine aircraft. After completion of certification, the prototype DC-5 was purchased by William Boeing, of

Boeing Aircraft Company. However, because of the outbreak of WW-II only the four KLM aircraft and the seven U.S. Navy aircraft were produced, the other orders being cancelled. The prototype DC-5 sold to Boeing was impressed into U.S. Navy service as a C-110, leaving a total of only twelve DC-5s produced.

By the time the four KLM aircraft were completed in May 1940 Germany had occupied Holland and KLM sent two DC-5s to its KNILM subsidiary in the Dutch East Indies, and the other two to its West Indies Division on Curacao, in the Caribbean. The DC-5s in Curacao operated there for one year, when they were returned to Douglas for overhaul and assigned to KNILM in Java, who then operated all four aircraft. They carried registrations PK-ADA, PK-ADB, PK-ADC, and PK-ADD.

As the Japanese began to overrun the Pacific, the KNILM DC-5s were used to evacuate refugees to Australia until the Dutch East Indies itself was overrun in April 1942. During an attack on Kemajoran airport at Batavia on the island of Java, DC-5 PK-ADA was about to take off when it was damaged and had to be abandoned. It was repaired by the Japanese and flown to Japan, where it was evaluated by experts from the Tachikawa Aeronautical Institute, and ended its life as a navigation trainer there.

The remaining three DC-5s were flown to Australia, one crashing en route at Charleville, Queensland and was used for spares. The remaining two became part of the Allied Directorate of Air Transport and flew charters within Australia. Only DC-5 PK-ADC survived the war.



**Shown in March 1948 at Lydd airport Israel, the last DC-5 in service, the former KNILM PK-ADC, registered VH-ARD of New Holland Airways, then named *Bali Clipper*. It ended its days at the Tel Aviv Aeronautical Technical School in Israel.**

The DC-5 was not produced after WW-II because of the availability of thousands of surplus C-47s at give-away prices. The DC-5 design influenced the design of later aircraft, such as the Fokker/Fairchild F-27 *Friendship*, one of the most widely used turboprop transports ever built.

As an aside, the author had occasion to fly in several KNILM DC-5s when a small boy living on the island of Java, having a father who managed the KNILM repair facility located at Bandoeng, Java. The author's family was evacuated to Australia in April 1942 on board a KNILM DC-3 the day before Java fell to the Japanese.

© "Douglas Propliners, DC-1 to DC-7" by Arthur Percy

## A Stellar Performance!

by Dave Flood

I have never been prouder of our Wing than I was on Saturday, February 20, 2010.

Our Wing Staff held a special meeting that day to discuss and then vote on the future of our Curtiss C-46 Commando twin-engine cargo plane "China Doll."

At least 21 Wing members, including the 7 Wing Staff Officers, got to share their thoughts about how they felt about the possibility of our Wing either keeping "China Doll" or sending her back to Midland CAF Headquarters.

Everyone present at the meeting listened attentively to each speaker, and, though it became apparent there were some basic differences of opinion, there was no rancor or disrespect shown. We were pleased that our good friends and fellow members Bob & Georgia Thompson joined us from Colorado for this momentous vote!

Wing Leader Shirley Murphy masterfully conducted a very positive meeting, with many excellent points being put forward.

The financial concerns about keeping "China Doll" in flying status were enumerated, and her loss in producing income at air shows was pointed out. On the other side of the coin, some members outlined the positive side of keeping "China Doll" within the Museum Hangar, as will be required by Midland as of October, 2011: she would be out of the weather and always accessible to visitors while inside; she also would be the focal point of the Aviation Museum; and the cost to the Wing would be less and could be covered by tours through her at the Camarillo Air Show and by other projects.

Other members voiced concern that "China Doll" had been our first airplane, and visitors were thrilled to see her and tour inside her – actually absorbing aviation history inside an airplane that represents so many planes of the WWII era. They mentioned all the members, going back to 1981, who had been involved in so many ways with "China Doll."

The role of "China Doll" as the "Highlight" of our Aviation Museum tours was mentioned, and her symbolism as an example of the CAF goals of "Exhibition," "Remembrance," and "Education" was pointed out.

One member reminded us of a financial factor – the use of "China Doll" as a basis for advertisements and music videos, among other potential money-making roles, and that once she was lost to us, that possibility would be non-existent.

A negative view of the Museum Hangar being too cluttered with airplanes as a result of "China Doll" being in the hangar was countered by several members, who pointed out that we can move the smaller fighters and trainers out of the hangar during the day, while visitors tour our facilities. It was even suggested that some of the fighters, or trainers, or one of the rental airplanes might be moved to the Maintenance hangar. A good possibility of our losing one plane currently on static display to another museum could help to further alleviate congestion.

There were many positive solutions to a problem that has arisen concerning our keeping of "China Doll." But the beauty of our discussion focused mainly on the positive solutions to the problem, rather than rejecting solutions out of hand.

Several members voiced their emotional involvement with "China Doll," and, while the Wing Staff concentrated on a non-emotional, business-like decision concerning her fate, these members reminded us all that our main goals at CAF are to use the airplanes to impress the public visitors to our Aviation Museum with the importance that these vintage planes had made to preserving our freedoms. Emotion is a great part of what CAF is all about. We do not appeal to kids' sense of financial responsibility when we take them into "China Doll," and they say, "Wow! I'm a pilot flying over the mountains to China!"

When we hear a kid (or adult) say how much they are impressed with all our stories about our planes and what their history has been, and what kind of men and women flew them and worked on them – then we have done our job – and we have impressed them through their emotions. I have seen many visitors, after a memorable tour by one of our stellar docents, put a \$20 bill into the donation jar as they exit the Aviation Museum.

One member also reminded all in attendance that "China Doll" is the official airplane of the City of Camarillo, and we would create a very negative feeling with many residents of Ventura County by letting her go. She belongs, in essence, to the people of our community.

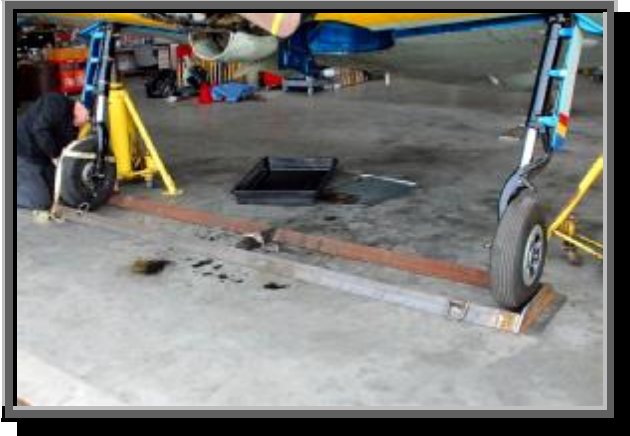
The upshot of this memorable meeting was that the Wing Staff Officers, after hearing all of the cogent ideas concerning the future of "China Doll" – voted unanimously to keep her at our Wing as our primary vintage warbird attraction! They made their decision not only by taking into account all the input, but also because of the premise that "China Doll" could recover her costs.

What a shining moment for all of us at the Southern California Wing of the Commemorative Air Force!

And our "Mother Bird" is still watching over us and pointing us toward the future!



## Wing Photo Page II: Zero To NZ



© Photo by Dave Flood

Here's a look at the Zero's gear "cradled" in a special form made at our Maintenance Hangar by Lloyd McAfee. It will hold the gear in place during the journey to New Zealand.



© Photo by Dan Newcomb

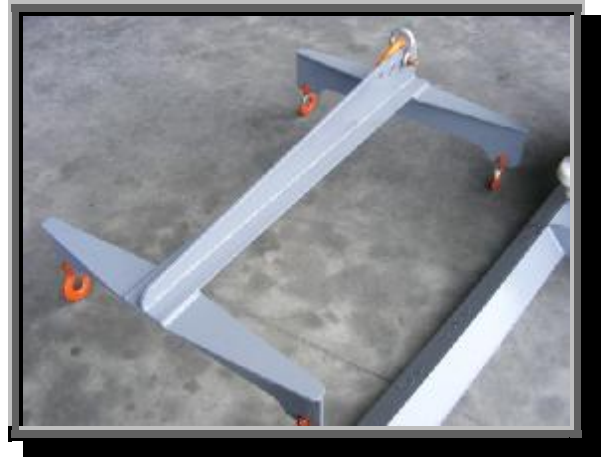
Lloyd hard at work fitting together the Zero's gear "cradle." Lloyd also made up a special hangar harness attachment for the crane at Long Beach Port to lift the Zero onto the freighter that will take her to NZ.

### Looking For A Laptop Computer

If you or anyone you know might have a workable laptop computer that is gathering dust, we sure could use one!

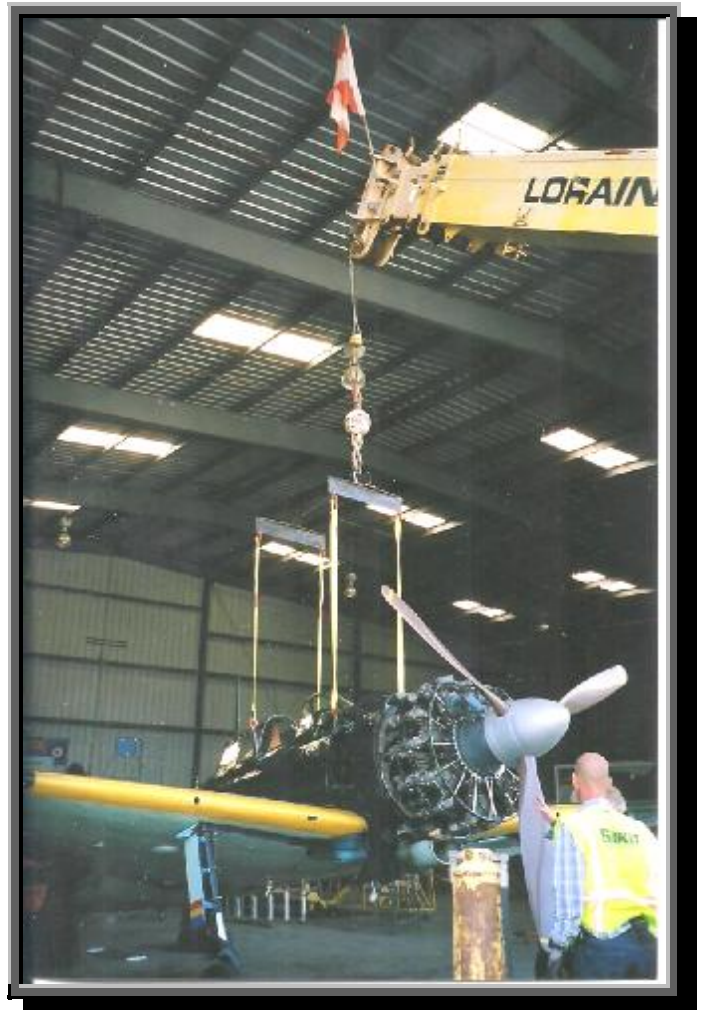
Our Educational Outreach Committee is looking for one to use in power-point presentations to schools and service clubs. We have the projector and are developing several different power-point displays to go along with our presentations, but need a laptop to hook up to the projector; one which has the power-point software installed.

If you should have one you can donate, please call Dave Flood at (805) 482-0595 or (805) 204-7660. Thanks!



© Photo by Dave Flood

Cable attachment custom-made by Lloyd McAfee from original Japanese drawings to enable the Zero to be lifted onto the ship at Port of Long Beach.



© Photo by Russ Drosendahl

Here's the special crane attachment in operation, using a borrowed crane to test the lifting capability of the apparatus. The Zero is scheduled to fly to Long Beach Airport on Thursday, March 4; then be trucked to Port of Long Beach on March 5 for loading and eventual shipping to New Zealand.