

# Flight Line

***The Official Publication of the CAF***

Southern California Wing  
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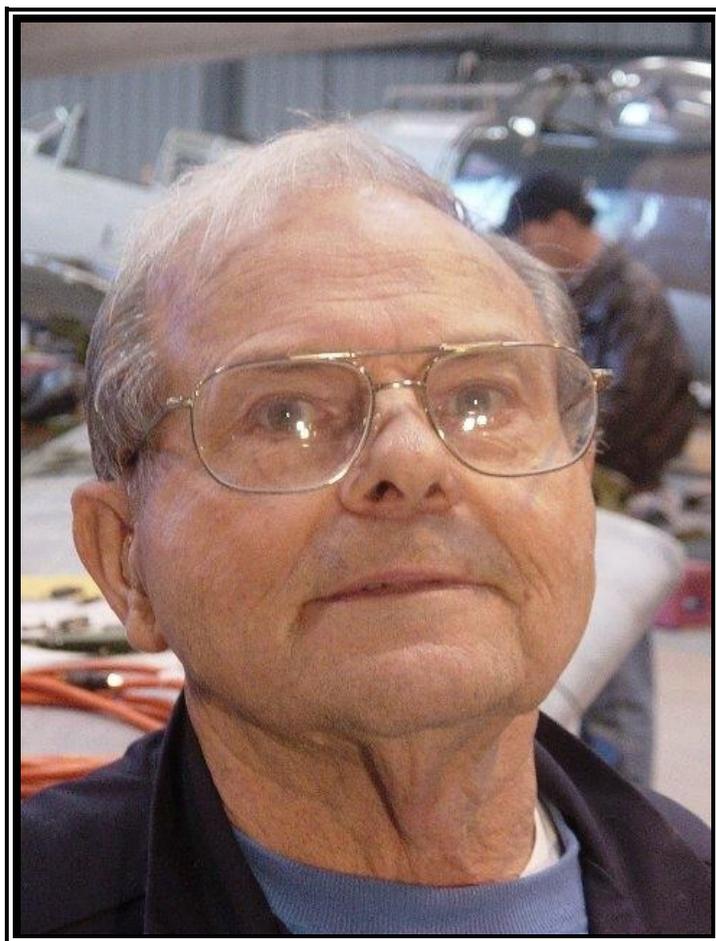
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© Photo by Dan Newcomb



© Photo Courtesy of Dan Newcomb / Marc Russell

**Col. Gil Brice**

**May 15, 1927 - April 11, 2009**

**Gil was our Fabric Guru extraordinaire. We remember him on Pages 4, 5 and 6.**

**Special Note: Because of the coverage of Gil's passing in this issue, we are postponing our "Missing In Action: Down Behind Enemy Lines in Italy – Part 3" until next month.**

**Wing Staff Meeting, Saturday, May 23, 2009 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.**

## May 2009

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
Museum Open 10am to 4pm Every Day Except Monday and major holidays					1	2 Work Day
3	4 Museum Closed	5 Work Day	6	7 Work Day	8	9 Work Day Special Event Women In War
10 Mother's Day	11 Museum Closed	12 Work Day	13	14 Work Day	15 Air Show Chino	16 Work Day Armed Forces Day Air Show Chino
17 Air Show Chino	18 Museum Closed	19 Work Day	20	21 Work Day	22 Air Show Watsonville	23 Work Day Staff Meeting 9:30 Air Show Watsonville
24	25 Museum Closed	26 Work Day	27	28 Work Day	29 Air Show Madera	30 Work Day Air Show Madera
31 Air Show Madera	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	* Bob Albee	(805) 583-4872	loll@earthlink.net	Wing Calendar . . . . . 2
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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	Maintenance Officer's Report . . . . . 3
Operations Officer	* Gary Barber	(805) 659-4319	bearcat69@pacbell.net	We Remember Gil – Part I . . . . . 4
Maintenance Officer	* Joe Peppito	(805) 498-4187	jocafpeppo@msn.com	We Remember Gil – Part II . . . . . 5
Safety Officer	* Norm Swagler	(805) 482-6994	pswagler@hotmail.com	We Remember Gil – Part III . . . . . 6
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Gift Shop Manager	Sarah de Bree	(805) 389-9185	scdebree@aol.com	I Was There . . . . . 8
Public Info Officer	Pat Brown	(805) 479-2221	(no e-mail)	Bearcat Bucks . . . . . 9
Hangar Event Mgr	Stephen E Barber	(805) 223-1077	barber.stephen@gmail.com	Remembering Jack Broome . . . . . 10
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Air Show Officer	Jason Somes	(818) 292-4646	nbnh@aol.com	No Parking Notice! . . . . . 11
Air Show Coord.	Bill O'Neill	(805) 495-4915	scwairshow@aol.com	Wing Golf Tournament . . . . . 11
Facility Officer	(Vacant)			Spitfire Mk XIV #NH749 . . . . . 12
Personnel Officer	Norm Swagler	(805) 482-6994	pswagler@hotmail.com	Wing Air Show Schedule . . . . . 13
Historian	Ron Fleishman	(805) 384-4426	oldplanec46@aol.com	Hangar Fund Donors . . . . . 13
Training Officer	(Vacant)			Museum Update . . . . . 14
Collections Manager	Jim Tierney	(805) 522-7067	jimerniet@aol.com	Special Event: Women in War . . . . . 14
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<p style="margin: 0;">HANGAR PHONE (805) 482-0064</p> <p style="margin: 0;">HANGAR FAX (805) 482-0348</p> <p style="margin: 0;">WEBSITE <a href="http://www.orgsites.com/ca/caf-socal">www.orgsites.com/ca/caf-socal</a></p>				<p style="margin: 0;"><b>Submittal Deadline - 15th of the month</b></p> <p style="margin: 0;">Commemorative Air Force Southern California Wing 455 Aviation Drive Camarillo, CA 93010-9501</p>

\* Denotes Staff Position

## Wing Leader's Report

by Robert Albee

Dear CAF Member,

This is an important letter to all CAF – So CA Wing members in our files, past and present, as of May 1, 2009.

We are requesting donations from you to help our Wing restore to flying condition our Grumman F8F-2 Bearcat.

As you may have heard, the CAF's Bearcat recently had to make an unscheduled landing at Burbank (CA) Airport while returning from the Riverside Air Show. Pilots flying alongside the Bearcat noticed black smoke coming from the exhaust, then there was loss of oil pressure and engine power, and eventually, engine seizure once the plane was on the ground. Because of the outstanding piloting abilities of the pilot, Steve Barber, there is no other damage to the aircraft, except for the engine.

This solicitation is a plea for all members to extend their financial support to the fullest extent possible with donations to help replace the R-2800 engine (see Joe Peppito's Maintenance Report on this page).

Our need is to raise \$35,000. We already have committed monies in another plane's account to this project, and several generous donors have pledged about \$12,500 to replace the engine. The \$35,000 is to make up the difference to arrive at the total amount needed for the replacement project.

We have the aircraft mechanics and special volunteers committed to do the work, but your financial support will be crucial to get the job done.

There is new life sprouting up at our Southern California Wing's Museum and Restoration Hangar. Museum attendance is up, new freeway signs advertise our WWII treasures, the Spitfire restoration is advancing with the newly-rebuilt engine nearing completion, the C-46 *China Doll* is nearing flight status, and we are giving rides in the SNJ-5 Texan and the PT-19A Cornell airplanes.

\$35,000 may be a lot of money, but if our 250 members were to pledge \$20 per month for seven months, we would make our goal. For those of you who can send (or pledge) more, we would be eternally grateful. We know this is a tough time for all of us to dig deeper into our pockets – but our need is great, and we want to get the Bearcat back up into the air so we can send her to air shows later this summer and make some money for the Wing.

Please send your check (or pledge) to:

CAF, So CA Wing  
455 Aviation Drive  
Camarillo, CA 93010  
Attn: Casey de Bree – mark: "Bearcat Bucks"

Thanks so much to all of you for your dedication!

## Maintenance Officer's Report

by Joe Peppito

By now every member of the Wing has probably heard about Steve Barber's emergency landing at Burbank Airport. Steve had engine problems, and had to set the airplane down in a hurry. He did a great job, with no damage to himself or the airplane. The airplane is still at Burbank awaiting an engine change.

We are negotiating for a replacement engine with Ray Anderson. This will be a P&W R2800-CB-3 engine, which will replace the present R-2800-34 engine. This will provide a little more power and is a stronger and better engine.

We will probably need to have maintenance crews go to Burbank to work at replacing the engine, so we are looking for volunteers. If you are interested in working at Burbank on this airplane, contact me, as I will be arranging the work schedule according to the work force available.

We now have our C-46 *China Doll* with a working landing gear and operating engine systems, thanks to Dick Troy and crew. We also want to thank Jeff Whitesell for the use of his engine preoiler and work on the airplane. We were able to get a replacement elevator flying trim tab from Midland, borrowed from Tinker Belle.

Work on the B-25/PBJ is still progressing well and rather rapidly. The wing repairs are really moving along with little delay. Iran, Jerry and Ken are getting the ailerons, wing tips and accessories all ready for installation. Good work fellows - a job well done!

The SNJ-4 crew is still working on getting the wheel brakes working, I think they have finally succeeded, thanks to Wayne, Alan, Sib, Alex and good old Keith.

The Spitfire is still awaiting the Griffon engine from the overhaul shop. We hope to have it before the end of this month. The Spitfire crew is still hard at work getting the rest of the airplane airworthy and ready to fly. This airplane will be a big money-maker once it gets back in the air.

The rest of the flying airplanes; F6F, SNJ-5, PT-19 and Zero are all doing well - flying at air shows and giving rides and making money for the Wing.

I want to personally thank all of the airplane maintenance personnel for all the support and dedication to keeping these airplanes airworthy and flying. We couldn't have done it without you.

Thanks Again and "Keep 'Em Flying."

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*Special Note: For donations or pledges of \$140 or more to our "Bearcat Bucks" Fund, we will send the donor a beautiful Bearcat Tee Shirt and a color photo of our Bearcat.*

## We Remember Gil – Part I

I was so sorry to hear of Gil's passing. I will really miss him! The place just won't be the same without him around. Fair winds, my friend, for someday we must all fly west...

Scott Drosos



This is one of those times when I can't seem to find the words. But, come to think of it, words aren't necessary. If you knew him you are feeling what I'm feeling now.

Gil was a perfect example of a guy who wasn't a pilot but found a place for himself in our Wing. He was a retired high school wood shop teacher who volunteered to learn aircraft fabric restoration. Virtually all of our planes have benefited from his skill. Gil loved to teach, and did us the great service of passing his knowledge on so that we may continue on with our mission.

I will miss you Gil.

Dan Newcomb



I'd like to thank everyone for the kind words about Gil. I know that he was very proud of his association with Wing and the work performed by the all members. I'm not sure what details have been shared but here is what I know. On Saturday morning Gil suffered, what the ER doctor would later term a "significant stroke", while vacuuming around our workbench. Thankfully he was found by Dick Roberts semi-conscious on his back bleeding from his nose. Unfortunately, I was late on Saturday and arrived just as the emergency vehicles were leaving. At the hospital the doctors didn't hold out much hope. In order to stop the bleeding they would have to thicken his blood, which would put a strain on his already weak heart. Unknown to many was the fact that Gil's heart was operating at 25% of capacity on a good day. If they didn't thicken his blood, the aneurism would continue to bleed into his brain. A real Catch 22 situation. Fortunately, Gil remained conscious for a couple hours that allowed his wife and family members to spend a little time with him.

Personally, I've lost a mentor and a good friend. Gil taught me so much more than just fabric work. Words can't express my gratitude. While I have many photos of Gil working, I've attached one that was his favorite. A couple of years ago there was an SBD and P-40 parked on the ramp. Gil's favorite plane was the P-40. All morning he was distracted. He kept talking about the P-40. Finally I said, "Well, lets take a break and go look at that bad boy" and grabbed my camera. Look at that smile. That's how I'll remember him and I hope that's how you will remember him.

George Sands



© Photo by George Sands

**Gil with his favorite airplane, the P-40 Warhawk.**



A very sad day and major loss to the restoration teams. Gil's memory will live on through each aircraft that he has worked on. They will be a continuing monument to a true gentleman and a person for whom I was proud to be a friend. The legacy that he leaves is 'No job is worth doing unless done right'.

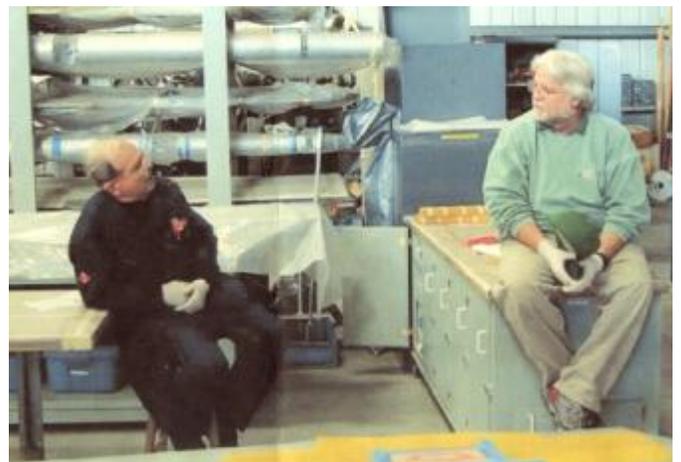
With sadness,

Iran Ausley



Amen to all of that. He was a wonderful man, a great craftsman and an all around good person.

Gary Barber



© Photo by Jim Hinckley

**"Why do we always have to do it your way, Gil?"  
"Because it's the right way, George!"**

Photo & caption provided, with love, by Jim Hinckley.

## We Remember Gil – Part II



© Photo by George Sands

**Gil working patiently on trimming the gas tank section of the Fairchild F-24 wing in early covering work.**

George, thank you for sharing your thoughts of Gil with us and telling us what had happened. The photo you attached and the photos from Dan will be preserved in my memory of a quiet man who just went about his business with no fanfare. Gil is someone that I admire and I, too, will miss him in person and for the work he did so unselfishly for the Wing.

Terry Cedar

Dear Gil,

In your quiet, friendly way  
You helped to stitch together  
The fabric of our CAF team.

Your sunny smile and cordial manner  
Sewed a quilt of friendship  
Around our volunteers.

Your perseverance in the face of physical hardship  
Was a shining example to us all.  
We wish we could have mended your heart  
With glue and needle and thread.

But you died doing what you loved to do,  
And seldom missed a day – with no complaints.

We'll miss you more than you can know.

Goodbye, old friend – we'll meet again...some sunny day!

Dave Flood

I'll always remember Gil as a quiet guy and so dedicated to his work at the CAF. He always had a special smile and greeting for me, and I loved to see him at the CAF. I'll certainly miss him.

Ceci Stratford

Jo and I are finding it most difficult both to absorb the loss of Gil and to find a way to adequately express our admiration of the man.

I remember so very clearly the day that Gil, along with several others visitors, was touring the museum and restoration hangar. When they came by the Fabric Shop, Jo and I stopped our activity for a moment to explain the work we were doing. I think we were recovering one of the PBJ rudders. When I told the group that they too could be involved in this work, I saw Gil's face light up with that signature smile that George has shared with us. I think it was the following workday that he showed up - eager to get to work.

However, I must tell a bit of a story about Gil. At the time he joined the Wing, both of his hearing aids were being worked on by his audiologist. Trying to communicate with Gil caused more than one sore throat. I only wish that I could have just one more opportunity.....with or without his hearing aids.

I think most know that Gil built the roll-around cabinet that has become the centerpiece of the Fabric Shop, as well as the rack that is holding pieces ready to be reinstalled. I suggest we have a plaque made up and mounted on the cabinet to memorialize the man and his contribution.

Jack 'n Jo Brinckerhoff



© Photo by George Sands

**Gil carefully making a cut on SNJ-5's rudder fabric.**

# We Remember Gil – Part III

## Obituary

**Gilbert E. Brice**

Gilbert E. Brice of Camarillo died on Saturday, April 11, 2009 at the age of 81.

Gilbert was born May 15, 1927 in Hutchinson, Kansas and moved with his family to the Los Angeles area in his early childhood. Following his high school education he enlisted in the U.S. Navy and served during World War II. Gilbert attended the University of California at Santa Barbara, where he received his Bachelor of Arts degree in Industrial Arts, and it was during this time that he met the love of his life Gilda (Zanini) Brice, who became his wife and they celebrated 55 years of married life.

The couple settled in the Hacienda Heights area, where Gilbert began teaching in the Montebello Unified School District. He also continued his education and received his Master of Arts degree in Industrial Arts from Pepperdine University.

Gilbert retired from teaching after 30 years, and he and Gilda moved to Camarillo in 1987. Among his hobbies, Gilbert enjoyed flying his Aero Flight from the Camarillo Airport, and he also became a member of the Commemorative Air Force, where his specialty was applying the cloth material to the control surfaces of the older classic airplanes.

Gilbert will be dearly missed by his many friends, and especially by his wife Gilda; his son Cameron Brice; his two grandsons Daniel and Anthony and numerous nieces and nephews.

A graveside service was held at 2:00 p.m. on Thursday, April 16, 2009 at the Conejo Mountain Memorial Park in Camarillo, with military honors. Three planes from the Southern California Wing of the Commemorative Air Force did a flyby in honor of Gil, with a "missing man" formation, during the service.

*From the Ventura County Star, Wednesday, April 15, 2009.*

All the members of the Southern California Wing of the CAF sends its deep felt condolences to Gilda and all the Brice family. We will all miss Gil and will keep him in our hearts.



## Thank You From Gilda

I want to thank all the CAF members and families for their thoughts of Gilbert. I know he would want to thank everyone. Thank you again.  
Gilda & Family



© Photo by Dave Flood

**Thirty plus members of the Southern CA Wing attended Gil Brice's graveside memorial services on Thursday, April 16, 2009 at Conejo Mtn. Memorial Park.**



© Photo by Dave Flood

**Naval Honor Guard folding the American Flag for presentation to Gil's widow, Gilda Brice at funeral.**



© Photo by Dan Newcomb

**Three planes represented our Wing in a memorial fly-over for Gil. Al Kepler in the SNJ #290, Marc Russell in his T-34, and Jason Somes in his Pitts did the honors.**

## Wing Photo Page I



© Photo courtesy of Jerry Burkhardt

**Jerry Burkhardt, a new member of the PBJ Team (right), with the Owner/President of CK Technologies, Carl Zimmerman, and (left) Tim Kelly, Production Manager. CK Technologies allowed Jerry to machine a part for our PBJ at their plant. Many thanks to them!**



© Photo by Frank Mormillo

**Our F6F-5 Hellcat lining up its sights on our A6M3 Zero in their Dogfight Routine during the Riverside Air Show on March 28. The duo is becoming very popular at air shows this season. Ken Gottschall is the pilot in the Hellcat and Jason Somes is flying the Zero.**



© Photo by Dave Flood

**Here's our Exec Officer, Shirley Murphy, taking a well-deserved break from her work in the "O Club." Laying new floor tiles is Cadet Scott Stebbins,**



© Photo by Dave Flood

**Many thanks to all who lent a hand in making our "O Club" look as sharp as this (above and below) ! One member who did yeoman work: Lloyd McAfee.**



© Photo by Dave Flood

# IT WAS A DAY LIKE ANY OTHER DAY, EXCEPT - I WAS THERE.

by Steve Barber

My apologizes to Walter Cronkite in the title, but this is a little story of what can happen - and how best to prepare for it if in fact it does occur.

Saturday, March 28<sup>th</sup>, 2009 - Jason Somes in the F6F Hellcat, Ken Gottschall in the A6M-3 Zero and I, your trusted story teller, in the F8F Bearcat - had just finished our final formation fly-by at the close of the Riverside, California Air Show and turned west for home, Camarillo, California.



© Photo by Frank Mormillo

## Steve Barber ready for takeoff from Riverside.

Ken, being chosen as lead in the Zero, had dialed up So Ca Approach. We were assigned our squawk code, and requested a climb to 6500 feet. Our selected route of flight would take us northwest until over the 210 freeway, then almost due west, direct to Camarillo Airport. Our formation was somewhat spread-out in trail after our final pass, as we had all settled down and were selecting climb power, cowl flap positions, oil-cooler door positions, temps and pressures. Once these items were satisfactory, it was time to level out in cruise. With Ken handling the radios and squawk codes, Jason and I were free to look around and enjoy the ride. We were cruising in loose formation with me in the Bearcat as #3 on the left and in trail of #2.

A few minutes after our turn westbound, I felt that the engine was not "feeling" right. What do I mean by not "feeling right?" I can only tell you that I sensed a decrease in horsepower. I scanned all of the gauges and all readings appeared normal. Oil pressure, oil temperature, manifold pressure, R.P.M.'s. I was about to key my mike and ask my wingmen if they noticed anything, Before I could do so, Ken called me to say, "Bearcat, you are really putting out black smoke!" My first thought was that the AMC on the carburetor had failed and gone full rich - which might explain the black smoke. I've had this happen on other round engines, and you can help it by manually

leaning way back on the mixture control. I tried this and nothing changed, neither in the smoke volume, as verified by Ken and Jason, nor in a perceived increase in engine power by me.

We were coming up on the Rose Bowl at about this time, and Ken had called So Ca Approach to tell them one of our flight was having a problem and at the same time he had come close to me to check underneath to see if he could possibly tell me anything about what was happening to the Bearcat. As he was telling me what he was seeing (very heavy black smoke), my engine really started unwinding. Ken said it looked as if I went into reverse as he went way in front and under me. So Ca Approach wanted to know my intentions. I said, "Land at Burbank now!" They asked me "what runway do you want?" I replied, "what are the winds?" They came back that they were out of the south. I said "I'll take 15." They replied that I was cleared to land on any runway. Now all I had to do was make it.

I should add that while all this was going on, I had begun a shallow climb while the engine was still making some power. If I remember correctly, I got to just a little over 7000' when the engine quit making any noticeable power, and down I came. So Ca Approach called to give me a squawk code - which I entered on my transponder as up to then I was on standby on the transponder as Ken was Lead and squawking for the flight. I remember at the time feeling irritated that I had to change my focus of making the airport to enter a code on the transponder. Funny how you remember things at this time of high stress.

When the engine began losing major power, the smell of hot oil permeated the cockpit, and I was ready to start hitting the fire bottles that Ken Kramer and crew had installed in the Bearcat - utilizing 3 separate Halon bottles. Engine fire is a big problem in the F8F due to the fact there is no real firewall, and the aileron control rods are directly behind the engine and would be the first to fail in event of a major fire.

Ken Gottschall then called to tell me that the engine was now putting out white smoke in large amounts. Shortly thereafter, the smell of hot oil was replaced by the smell of hot metal. Now I'm thinking, "Great, if I bend this airplane Ken Kramer, my brother Gary, Joe Peppito, and the rest of the Wing will kill me if I survive!"

Best rate of glide speed in the Bearcat is 140 knots clean - that is gear and flaps up. Now I'll tell you this, it is amazing how fast that Bearcat can descend with a slowly turning propeller, and the short wingspan of this aircraft. I was turning downwind for runway 15, and my altitude was about 3000'. I selected gear down, as I was afraid of the engine seizing and then having to do a manual extension of the gear with little time to do so. Boy, did this increase the rate of descent! Just as I passed the runway touchdown zone I turned base. "Still high," I thought, I selected 20 degrees flaps. What I noticed was how, with the gear down, flaps at 20 degrees, and the propeller

barely turning, the trajectory was that of a “greased crow bar.” As I remember it - the biggest problem I was having was maintaining 100 knots once the gear was extended.

While I was concentrating on arriving at the airport safely, Approach called me several times to contact the tower. Now folks, the last thing I was going to do was take my eyes off of my landing area, distract myself with any non-essential items, so I did not answer them. Again, going through my mind was, “Boy, I’ll bet the tower or approach will be pissed at me!”

I had by this time cranked in full nose up trim and the stick was still nose heavy. In very quick order, I pulled back to round out the landing, the airplane arrived solidly on the runway in a three-point attitude. At the same instant the Bearcat touched down, the propeller seized. I turned off the mags, mixture to idle cut-off, master switch off - while I was rolling out on the runway. I knew they had closed the airport to other traffic for my landing, and my intent was to clear the runway if able to on the roll-out. As I made a right turn off of the active runway, a fire truck was entering right where I wanted to clear the active beyond the “hold short line.” The fire truck saw there was no fire, guessed what I was trying to do, and put his truck in reverse. However, by this time I had begun braking, seeing him coming at me. Long story short - I didn’t make it totally clear of the active runway.

I rechecked the switches, un-strapped, unplugged and jumped out. The fire trucks were checking the aircraft over and found no fire, and waited around for 20 minutes just to be sure.

A few more items I’d like to relate to the readers of this narrative: my wingmen did all the right things. First, they alerted me to my aircraft smoking. Secondly, they coordinated with Approach and relieved me of most of the radio work. Third, they followed me down all the way to my touchdown in case I needed any help. And lastly, they landed after I was safely on the ground to check on me and the aircraft.

Things I could have done better: if you are flying formation, fly forward enough so that lead can just look out to see your position, and give you a heads up if he sees anything wrong. I was too far back at first trying to figure out if I had a problem. Secondly, as I was down to 1600 R.P.M.’s, I didn’t try to pull the propeller back anymore than where I had it set. As this was an Aeroproducts propeller, oil was not necessary to govern R.P.M.’s - as long as the engine was still turning. Therefore, I might have picked up a little better glide ratio. Lastly, Jason tells me I didn’t land on the center-line of the runway. Picky...picky!

Make sure your plane is fully serviced! I had 17.5 gallons of oil on departure from Riverside, and once the problem started up to the landing, all of the oil was gone! This occurred in a time of less than 7 minutes! Just imagine what could have happened if I had flown with minimum oil.

Failure could have occurred much sooner - without the landing option I had. Oil pressure and temperatures were all in the normal range until the last 3 minutes.

Kudos to So Ca Approach for a very professional job. Ditto to the fire department at Burbank Airport and to all of the airport personnel for the friendly and professional way that they dealt with me. And lastly - to Millionaire Aviation, who assisted us with towing the aircraft to a safe parking area. Speaking of the tower (remember Approach telling me to contact them) - the airport manager asked that I call them as they wanted to talk to me. He gave me the number and as I dialed my phone I thought, “Here comes my ass chewing.” When the tower chief answered he asked if I was the pilot, and I said “yes.” He said, “Great job, sir! We’re glad you are all right.” Talk about class - my thanks to all for a wonderful assist.

When I teach transition into high performance fighters (for that matter any aircraft) - I harp at the students: speed and altitude are your friends! You can be low to the airport environment, but you either need to have the runway made or be going at the “speed of stink.” You can be slow, but you better be high if you need to translate that altitude to speed. Nothing gets me harping on pilots more than a long drawn-out final, with gear and flaps down. You have no chance if the worst happens. Speed is life, and in our high-performance aircraft, you can take that to the bank!

*Editor’s Note: I can speak for the whole Wing when I say we all let out a huge sigh of relief to hear that Steve was down and safe in Burbank!*



© Photo by Frank Mormillo

**Our fighters beginning their return flight to Camarillo from the Riverside, CA Air Show on March 28, 2009.**

## **Bearcat Bucks**

To help us pay for a new engine for our Bearcat, send your “Bearcat Bucks” to: CAF, 455 Aviation Drive, Camarillo, CA 93010 Attn: Casey de Bree. Mark your check: Bearcat.

If you send a check or make a pledge for \$140 plus, you’ll receive a Bearcat T-Shirt and a photo of the Bearcat.

Our goal is \$35,000. Thanks for your support!

## Remembering Jack Broome, The Quiet Birdman



© Photo Courtesy CSU Channel Islands

**John Spoor Broome**  
1918 – 2009

“CSUCI Benefactor, Rancher John Spoor Broome Dies” *by Jean Cowden Moore*  
*Ventura County Star, Thursday, April 16, 2009*

“John Spoor Broome, an Oxnard rancher, philanthropist and avid sportsman who helped fund the library at CSU Channel Islands in Camarillo, has died at the age of 91.

Broome died Friday (April 10, 2009) at Rancho Guadalasca, his home in Oxnard. He had suffered several strokes recently.

Broome donated \$5 million in 1999 for the library at CSUCI which bears his name. The glass and steel library, designed by renowned British architect Sir Norman Foster, opened last year.

‘He wasn’t looking for praise or public adulation,’ Richard Rush, president of CSUCI, said Wednesday. ‘He was just a good man, a kind man, and he wanted to help out.’

In addition to his gift to CSUCI, Broome supported Casa Pacifica, a home for abused and emotionally disturbed children near Camarillo; the Quiet Birdmen, an association of former pilots; his alma mater, Louisiana State University; two military history museums; and the Olympics, said Handel Evans, president emeritus of CSUCI, and a close friend.

‘He was a very private and very quiet person,’ Evans said. ‘He operated in the background a lot.’

When he offered to help fund the library at CSUCI, Broome wanted his gift to be anonymous. He agreed to go public only when Evans told him it would lend credibility to the fledging university.

At the dedication, a beaming Broome opened his arms wide and declared the library a gift to both students and the people of Ventura County. ‘This is a day of celebration for all who are formally, informally, or just philosophically associated with the university,’ he said.

Broome also was an accomplished pilot and yachtsman. He was a transport pilot in World War II, then flew for American Airlines, Evans said. He was flying his Mitsubishi twin turbo, a difficult plane to handle, until two years ago.

Broome also competed in the Transpacific Yacht Race from Los Angeles to Hawaii. He still had a boat in San Pedro, and regularly offered to take people out on it, Evans said.

Broome’s family began farming in Ventura County in the 1880s.

‘He was one of the most extraordinary, kind and generous people who ever walked the face of the earth,’ said Michael Maloney, a longtime family friend who runs a management-consulting firm in Camarillo. ‘I never saw him without a smile on his face. He always treated everybody with respect.’

Broome is survived by his wife, Patricia; daughters, Ann Priske of Houston and Elizabeth Grether of Camarillo; son, John S. Broome, Jr. of Camarillo; and eight grandchildren.

A private service was held in Santa Barbara on April 15. A public memorial service is being planned by the family.”

### Editorial Excerpts

#### “Remembering A Special Man”

*Ventura County Star, Thursday, April 16, 2009*

“CSU Channel Islands lost a beloved benefactor and Ventura County a special man with the passing last week of John S. ‘Jack’ Broome.

He was among that rare breed of people who never sought the spotlight for doing good deeds. Instead, this private man stayed in the background and just kept giving to worthy causes.

This very special man was never afraid to step forward to do what was right. He will be dearly missed by those who loved him, and by the thousands who will benefit from his lifetime of giving.”

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**The members of the Southern California Wing of the Commemorative Air Force send special condolences to Mrs. Broome and all the Broome family. Jack was a very special friend to all of us at the CAF-SoCAWing.**

## Wing Photo Page II



© Photo by Dave Flood

**Our C-46 *China Doll* crew hard at work on the right engine. They are hustling, under Dick Troy's direction, to get our "Mother Bird" up and flying.**



© Photo by Dave Flood

**The EAA's beautiful B-17G "Aluminum Overcast" taking off from CMA after a visit to the airport.**



**Dean Browne (left) and crew of CAF-High Sierra Squadron in Reno, Nevada with their rebuilt NAF N3N.**



© Photo by Dave Flood

**Jim Tierney ready to fly in our SNJ-5. Jim correctly answered the "Albee Challenge" of last month. The most heard sound during the Korean War was the rotor 'whomp whomp' of the Bell 47 helicopter.**



**Ceci Stratford and CDR Valerie Overstreet, USN in the cockpit of an E2C Hawkeye simulator. Valerie will be a featured guest at our Women In War Event on May 9.**

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### No Parking Notice !

Absolutely NO parking is permitted in front of the Restoration Hangar. This is a fire lane – and must be kept clear for access by fire and emergency vehicles.

Violation of this rule may result in loss of airport card access privileges.

If any questions – contact Robert Albee, Wing Leader

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### Wing's Golf Tournament

Steve Barber, Jr. has announced that our First Annual Golf Tournament has been postponed until further notice.

## Spitfire FR Mk XIV #NH749 by Alan Gaynor

On July 14, sixty two years ago, a Supermarine Spitfire FR Mk.XIV was on its way to the sub-continent of India. Today that same aircraft, serial number NH749, is sitting in our hangar here in Camarillo. How it got here and what has happened to it since then is an interesting story.

Built at the Supermarine factory and assembled at the satellite plant at Aldermaston where it was test flown in late 1944. It was delivered to number 33 Maintenance Unit (MU) on 23<sup>rd</sup> Feb. 1945. From there it went to 215 MU on 20<sup>th</sup> May 1945. Having missed the war in Europe, she was sent on 2<sup>nd</sup> July 1945 to India on the S.S. *Samsturdy* arriving on the 28<sup>th</sup>. On the 9<sup>th</sup> of August she was assigned to the RAF's South East Asia Command. Since this was the day that the second atom bomb was dropped and Japan surrendered five days later it seems that the RAF never found it necessary to operate NH749. Instead she went into storage until being sold to the Indian Air Force on 29<sup>th</sup> Dec 1947. Her service in India remains largely a mystery, although a tantalizing reference appears here: <http://www.bharat-rakshak.com/IAF/History/1950s/Wilson01.html>

She was found by the Hayden-Bailey brothers languishing there in 1978, and was brought back to England. <http://www.bharat-rakshak.com/IAF/History/Aircraft/Spitfire/SpitNH749o.jpg>

The fighter was restored to flying condition by Craig Charleston, sold to Keith Wickenden and appropriately registered G-MXIV. The next owner was David Price's Museum of Flying in Santa Monica, from 1985 until 2005 - when he sold it to us.

Shortly after arriving at our facility, the aircraft was being flown by Steve Barber when it suffered a loss of coolant. Steve is a very experienced and skilled pilot and he was able to nurse the aircraft back to Camarillo for an uneventful landing. It was determined that the engine needed to be removed and sent out for overhaul. Mike Nixon's excellent *Vintage V-12's* facility in Tehachapi, California was selected for this work.

Removing the engine was quite a task, and this was overseen by Leslie Bedding, who was a mechanic in the RAF during WW2 and had, coincidentally, served in India. Les is a very gifted craftsman and a stickler for detail and high standards. He determined that our Spit needed quite a bit of work. To achieve all this, he assembled a team of volunteers consisting of his son Colin, Dick Roberts, Robert Seeger, and Steve Nagle.

The entire coolant system has been refurbished, the engine mounts have been sent out for x-ray testing, as have the undercarriage components. All of the wing attach bolts as well as the undercarriage attach bolts have been replaced with newly manufactured ones. The canopy was found not to operate correctly, so that's being redone. The hydraulic, pneumatic and electrical systems have all been

thoroughly tested by Les and components repaired or replaced as necessary. The colors used in the original restoration were not stock and so it was decided to restore the cockpit, engine compartment and as many other components as possible to their proper colors. Colin Bedding is leading this effort and it is far from easy!

The aircraft is now being reassembled in preparation for the return from *Vintage V-12* of our engine. The installation of the engine represents an enormous undertaking. The cooling system and its associated plumbing is complex, and the airframe in which they fit is very tight. There are many busted knuckles and frayed tempers on the horizon.

At the moment, the aircraft is finished in South East Asia markings. This is about to change, as we are considering a European color scheme and the markings of 41 Squadron, which flew low-backed F Mk.XIVs with the 2<sup>nd</sup> Tactical Air Force from former Luftwaffe bases in liberated Europe in 1945, scoring many victories over a wide range of German Air Force types, including a number of jets. 41 Sqn. is one of the oldest still serving with the RAF today after 92 years of continuous service.



**Our Spitfire will eventually have colors much like the Spit in this photo – a Mk.XIV of 414 (RCAF) Squadron, Wunstorf, Germany, April, 1945.**

Each of the combatant nations involved in the Second World War seems to have produced an aircraft that has become an icon. For the U.S., it is the P-51. For the Germans, the Bf 109 and the Japanese have the Zero. For the British, that aircraft is the Spitfire. Even people with absolutely no interest in aviation can usually recognize the graceful form of the Supermarine Spitfire. The Southern California Wing is fortunate enough to count one of these fighters in our collection.

As most of you know, the Spitfire was designed in the mid thirties by R.J. Mitchell, and the prototype, serial number K5054, was first flown by Supermarine chief test pilot Mutt Summers at 4:35 p.m. on March 5<sup>th</sup>, 1936. The flight lasted 8 minutes with no problems, and, as he stepped down from the aircraft afterward, Mr. Summers' terse instructions were, "I don't want anything touched!!" It was an auspicious beginning.

The Spitfire was accepted by the Air Ministry and, although it's designer died shortly after it's first flight after a long illness, responsibility for it's subsequent development was

placed in the very capable hands of an unassuming man with an unassuming name; Joe Smith. Throughout its entire development period from 1935 to 1948 there were no significant failures of the basic design. Mutt Summers moved on to become the chief test pilot for Vickers, and most of the production and developmental test flying was accomplished by Jeffrey Quill and Alex Henshaw, ably assisted by others too numerous to mention here.

Smith, Quill and Henshaw oversaw improvements in the capabilities of the Spitfire which can only be described as remarkable. To give some idea of the engineering genius of this team, please consider the following comparisons between the Mk.III, which achieved immortality during the Battle of Britain in 1940, and our FR. Mk.XIVe, which first saw action in 1944:

Gross weight went from 6000 lbs to 8400 lbs. The FR Mk.XIV used a Rolls Royce Griffon 65 of 2050 HP ([http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Rolls\\_Royce\\_Griffon](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Rolls_Royce_Griffon) and <http://www.spitfireperformance.com/griffon-65.pdf>) versus the Mk.III's Merlin XII of only 1175 HP. ([http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Rolls\\_Royce\\_Merlin](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Rolls_Royce_Merlin)) Maximum speed of the Mk.III was around 355 mph at 19,000 ft, while the Mk.XIV achieved 448 mph. Handling was similarly improved, with roll rates at high speed providing the most dramatic evidence of this: at 400 mph a pilot could roll the Mk.XIV 60 deg. in 1.2 seconds, whereas the Mk.III took almost 5 seconds. Range also went up, almost doubling to 860 miles.

These huge improvements were achieved with very few changes to the basic layout or dimensions of the original design. For some very complete information on Spitfire performance and original flight test data go to this website: <http://www.spitfireperformance.com/spitfire-XIV.html>

Mk.XIV Spitfires came in two flavors: F for "fighter" and FR for "Fighter Reconnaissance." These can be distinguished by the fact that the FR version has a camera port on each side just aft of the cockpit canopy, which the F version lacks. The Mk.XIV also has two fuselage versions known as either "High Back" or "Low Back". The "High Back" has the normal, classic Spitfire three-piece canopy that we are all familiar with, whereas the "Low Back" has a lower turtle deck and a bubble canopy similar to a P-51. F Mk.XIV's could be either high or low back versions, whereas FR Mk.XIV's are always low back.

The Mk.XIV Spitfire was feared by the Luftwaffe, who referred to it in combat reports as the "Long-Nose Spitfire." The aircraft could out-turn, out-climb and out-run every aircraft in the Luftwaffe inventory except their jets, and even those were not safe.

The Mk.XIV was sold to France, Belgium and India – to name but a few, and continued to operate well into the 1950s.

For more Spitfire specifics, check this website out: [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Supermarine\\_Spitfire](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Supermarine_Spitfire)

## Wing Air Show Schedule:2009

May 8-10	San Diego, CA – Tailhook Flight	F6F
May 15-17	Chino, CA	F6F, Zero
May 22,23	Watsonville, CA	F6F, Zero
May 29-31	Madera, CA SNJ-5, PT-19, C-46,	F6F, Zero
Jun 5-7	Hill AFB, UT	C-46, F6F, Zero
Jun 9	QB Air Show, CMA	F6F, Zero
Jul 10-12	Geneseo, NY	F6F
Jul 24,25	Milwaukee, WI – Legacy	F6F
Jul 27-Aug1	Oshkosh, WI	F6F, Zero
Aug 22,23	Camarillo, CA	All Aircraft
Aug 28-30	Chico, CA SNJ-5, PT-19, C-46,	F6F, Zero
Sep 25-27	Redding, CA SNJ-5, PT-19, C-46,	F6F, Zero
Oct 6,7	Tucumcari, NM	F8F, F6F, Zero
Oct 8-11	Midland, TX (Airsho 2009)	F8F, F6F, Zero
Oct 16-18	Edwards AFB SNJ-5, PT-19,	F8F, F6F, C-46, Zero

Note: The above information is subject to change. If you are planning to attend any of these air shows, please be sure to check with us before you go – at (805) 482-0064.

## Donors To Our Wing's Hangar Fund

by Russell Drosendahl



© Photo by Casey de Bree

**Some of Howard Ulm's donation came from his piggy bank, in the form of: 1,515 dimes; 748 nickels; 163 pennies; 1 quarter; 1 dollar coin; 1 10-cent New Zealand coin; and a 20-cent Euro coin.**

Jack & Jo Brinkerhoff	Richard Johnson
Stephan Doerfler	Walter Metcalf
R. E. Drosendahl	William Montague
Ronald Fleishman	Shirley Murphy
George Foster	John Macintosh
Bob Hemborg	Gene O'Neal
James Hinckley	Jack Rogers
Richard Holdridge	Howard Ulm
Gary Koch	Horst Wallasch
Paul Kleinbaum	

Thanks to all for your generosity! To join the above donors, kindly send your check to: CAF, SoCAWing, 455 Aviation Drive, Camarillo, CA 93010 – attn: Casey de Bree. We appreciate your helping us to "Keep 'Em Flying!"

## Museum Update.....

by Sarah de Bree

When you see these very hard workers, be sure to say many thanks to the beautiful work done on putting the finishing touches, including flooring, in the 'O' Club. Shirley Murphy and Lloyd McAfee put in many hours, and days, on making the room look professional and clean. It is now up to each and every user to do their part in keeping the room looking this way by cleaning up after their lunch and trying as much as possible to not bring in greasy shoes, or boots, and not sit on cloth furniture with greasy clothes. You wouldn't do this at home, so please give our 'O' Club the same respect.

Also thanks goes to Shirley, Jim Hinkelman and Pat Brown for putting in the time needed to return our Research Library into its original, professional environment. Again, if you use it for a meeting or luncheon, please clean up the area so the public will always see a clean room in which to do their studies. This new arrangement will give this writer more space to prepare Special Event materials and lay out a new work area for Pat. This hard work is very much appreciated.

The beautification project on the planter alongside the hangar on the Aviation Drive side is still on-going; so if you would like to make a monetary contribution for the materials for this very large project it would be much appreciated. Send contribution to Casey de Bree, and annotate 'beautification project' on the check.

A reminder of the 'Women in War' event on May 9<sup>th</sup>. Everyone, try to attend.

Until next time...



© Photo by Dave Flood

**Paul Besterveld, one of our Wing's sponsors, and owner of a P-51 Mustang at Camarillo Airport, and also father of children in the first and third grades at Kester School in Van Nuys, brought about 40 pupils to our WWII Aviation Museum on April 23, 2009. Here are some first graders with our SNJ-5 Texan.**

## Women In War World War II Aviation Museum 10:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. Saturday, May 9, 2009

455 Aviation Drive  
Camarillo Airport

Donations accepted  
(805) 482-0064

[www.orgsites.com/ca/caf-socal](http://www.orgsites.com/ca/caf-socal)

**Women from our community who served will be honored guests**

**CDR Valerie Overstreet, USN, new Commander of VAW-117 Hawkeye Squadron, Pt. Mugu NAS, will be our featured guest.**

**Come visit us and bring the family!**

**1:00 Presentation  
Excerpts from Movie "Fly Girls"  
Vintage Airplane Display  
Antique Auto Display  
Commemorative Fly-Over !**

