



Friends of the Museum Newsletter



Commemorative Air Force

Southern California Wing

455 Aviation Drive, Camarillo, CA 93010

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Fairchild F-24R Restoration Project

By Ceci Stratford



Here is a photo of what our Fairchild F-24R may look like once it is fully restored, painted and flying.

Our Fairchild F-24R Restoration Team has been hard at work restoring this unique aircraft to its former glory.

The first Fairchild F-24 was the 1932 2-seat model 24C8, powered by a 95 h.p. engine. It was built of wood, fabric-covered, with a welded steel fuselage frame. It was last produced as the 1948 4-seat model 24R46, powered by a 200 h.p. Ranger engine.

Aside from being a famous 1930s "gentleman's airplane," the Fairchild 24 saw military service in WWII for the U.S. as the UC-61, as well as for several allied air forces.

The Fairchild 24 is described as flying easily, competently, and with a minimum of fuss, producing climb rates and cruise speeds rather better than you would expect, and it descends with truly remarkable celerity – all in a fore-and-aft attitude that never varies more than about 7 degrees from the horizon, across the entire performance envelope.

Our plane will be in British colors, and will use the British name "Argus." It will be available for air shows and for our Warbird Ride Program – once it is fully restored and flying.

Our Wing started restoring our 1937 Fairchild F-24R three years ago. Originally, the CAF acquired numerous pieces

of two Fairchild F-24s, and decided to select the best parts from each to create a complete and flying aircraft. The data plate chosen was from a Fairchild type (Argus) used in Great Britain during WWII. Its colors will be all silver, with British markings and, believe it or not, it will carry a real bomb rack for authentic purposes.

The team working on the Fairchild F-24R Restoration Project is a tight group, with varied backgrounds. They obviously enjoy working together, and, every work day, after their arduous tasks, they gather in their comfortable work space to kibitz, share, cajole, drink (soft drinks, of course), and tell big stories. Each member has a unique function to perform, and contributes something special to the airplane's rebuilding process.



© Photo by Dave Flood

Part of the "Fairchild Country Photo Board" created by Jim Hinckley – showing the F-24R Restoration Team members at work.

Let me introduce you to the F-24R team:

Robert Albee – Crew Chief – pilot and owner of an Aeronca Champ (also a wood & fabric aircraft). He's been with the F-24R project since the beginning (3 ½ years ago). His favorite aspect of this project is the people.

His biggest challenge: getting funds to finish the restoration! His crew members call him among other things, the “plotter, planner and banker.”

Norm Swagler – Also 3 ½ years on the project and an original participant. His specialty is woodworking, a job I hear he’s an expert at. He’s a retired electrical engineer for Northrop Grumman. However, at home, he’s a super carpenter. Norm also loves solving engineering challenges, of which the team has many.

Jim Price - Also with the team since the start. His participation has been gluing ribs and stringers, working on the wood interior, and cutting fabric.

Jim Hinckley – Started in January, 2008, after he realized that he couldn’t do a good job as a Docent in the WWII Aviation Museum due to his hearing loss. A retired Colonel from the U.S. Army, Jim is a general “gofer” and gathers supplies, shirts and caps for the crew. He’s most proud of arranging the work area to make it more comfortable and pleasant to work in. He has also assembled a photo display of the crew members and another display of the airplane restoration process for visitors.

Dave Sica – A relatively new member of the team, Dave joined about nine months ago, after working on the C-131 for several years. He’s the key man right now on cabling, ailerons, controls, tail section and our Ranger engine. Dave must also be given 90% of the credit for hooking up all of the carburetion and fuel lines, enabling us to get the engine started on the first three turns.

Howard Ulm – Our electrical and electronics specialist. Howard installed the electrical system and the instruments, two BIG jobs.

Dan Cuvier – With the crew for one year. He’s worked on covering the wing, painting and helping with the woodwork – an all-around good worker.

Gil Brice & George Sands – They are the fabric specialists for the Wing. They have covered the “tail feathers” and the left wing, and will be starting soon on the right wing. They volunteered to do the unique stitching job on the fabric for our plane, and have done a magnificent job.

From time to time, other CAF members pop in to help. Some of those who have contributed significantly, just to name a few, are: **Shari Heitkotter, Eric Lange, Robert Blair, Al Smith, Robert Hohls** and **Joe Peppito** (always with sage advice). **Bob Monetti** is a brand-new member.

Be sure to stop by the F-24R Restoration Project in the Restoration Hangar and meet these members. Look at the displays and see the progress. The tail is completed and covered. The left wing has been covered and recently attached to the fuselage. The engine has been run three times and sounds great. They hope to see the airplane flying some time next year! Good work and good luck, guys!



© Photo by Dave Flood
The F-24R’s left wing has just been attached to the fuselage after it was covered and painted. The team members are basking in the afterglow of the event. Robert Albee is framed by the gear struts.



© Photo by Dave Flood
Gil Brice, Dan Cuvier and Mike Hohls putting finishing touches on the left wing of the F-24R.



© Photo by Dave Flood
Dan Cuvier, Robert Seeger, Jim Hinckley and Gil Brice beginning to flip over the F-24’s left wing for finishing painting on the other side. It was attached on 7/24/08.

Warbird Flight Program

by Dave Flood

Recently our Warbird Flight Program, in which we sell airplane rides of a 20-minute duration to the public for \$300, played host to a Navy veteran pilot who had flown F6F Hellcats. His name is John Seagoe, and he is in his mid-80s. Esper Petersen, one of our Wing's benefactors, sponsored John for the flight. John's son had gone to school with Esper many years ago in the Chicago area.



© Photo by Dave Flood

Here's John with a big smile after his flight!

The Warbird Flight Program has been most successful. Over 60 people have signed up for the program. Plans are in place for adding the Fairchild PT-19A to the program @ \$225 for a 20-minute ride.

We have six of our pilots who are qualified. Steve Barber was John's pilot, and, of course, let John take the controls for a while during the flight. John had not been in an SNJ for over 50 years, but he said it was just like riding a bicycle...you never forget. After they landed, Steve asked John if he'd like to take the Hellcat up on his next visit. John replied emphatically, "Hell, no, I want the Bearcat!"



© Photo by Dave Flood

Here's John with Steve after the flight. In order to order your own or a friend's flight, call 805-482-0064.

The Docent / Visitor Connection

by Dave Flood

It's been no secret that our Wing needs Docents in the Aviation Museum. We would like very much to open every day instead of being open just five days a week. Word is getting around about our Museum and our planes and our commitment to passing on the history of military aviation to new generations. In order to fulfill our mission, we need more Docents – men and women who can pass on our enthusiasm about military aviation to those who visit us.



© Photo by Dave Flood

Here's a mother and her children, Natalie and Michael, who visited our Museum on Thursday, June 19. They really enjoyed their tour of our facilities, and Michael was very knowledgeable about our airplanes. These are the kind of people you can meet and enjoy when you become a Docent in our Aviation Museum! Please call (805)482-0064 to volunteer your services. Thanks!

Important Dates To Remember

- **August 16, 17** : EAA Air Expo, Camarillo Airport. The CAF Aviation Museum will be closed those two days, but our gift shop and airplanes will be outside on the ramp. Stop by and visit us! (There is an admission charge for the Expo).
- **September 6** : Commemoration of Battle of Midway, CAF Hangars and Ramp. Come see the airplanes and special displays; purchase a ride in our SNJ-5 Texan or PT-19A Cornell; and enjoy light refreshments. Special speaker on the famous "turning point" battle at 1:00 p.m. Bring family and friends. Admission donation requested (Friends of The Museum admitted free by showing ID card).
- **December 6**: Commemoration of Pearl Harbor, CAF Hangars and Ramp. Come see the airplanes and special displays; purchase a ride in a WWII trainer; and enjoy light refreshments. Bring family and friends. Friends of the Museum admitted free.

COMMEMORATIVE AIR FORCE SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA WING
World War II Aviation Museum
455 Aviation Drive Camarillo CA 93010 (805) 482-0064
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The CAF So Cal Wing offers a financial donation opportunity through the "Friends of the Museum" program. (Note, this is not a membership program. Rather, it is a fund raising program.)

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

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

FRIENDS OF THE MUSEUM DONOR FORM

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

Date _____

q Check here if renewing. What is your Friend ID #? _____

Print Name(s) _____

Address _____

Phone () _____ Cell () _____

Email _____

q Check here if you are a current CAF Colonel

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

Credit Card # _____ Exp. Date _____

Check One Visa **q** Master Card **q** Discovery **q**

Signature _____

Mail to above address.



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

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

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

Friends of the Museum Levels and Benefits

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