

COMBAT AIR MUSEUM

→ → → Plane Talk → → →

The Official Newsletter of the Combat Air Museum

October / November 2003 • Vol. 19, No. 8

CAM says good-bye to Loyd

From the first organizing days through the next 27-plus years, **Loyd Ellison**, member #61, was an integral part of Combat Air Museum. Everyday was Loyd's day at CAM. When Loyd passed away on Sunday, August 17, we lost a wonderful, loyal friend and committed member and volunteer. And although the oldest register on hand shows Loyd as #61, he was among the group of founders of the Museum, originally known as Yesterday's Air Force, Kansas Wing.

Loyd worked on more projects than we could keep track of. He always had a project going, many known, others just simply done. Then there were the countless times Loyd set aside his work to help someone else on another project. Loyd was a master machinist and master mechanic.

The Fairchild UC-61K Forwarder was his finest project. This was a basket case collection of pieces and parts that maybe only Loyd could see as being airborne again. He started work on the plane in 1990. Ten years and over 14,000 man-hours later, we all saw the Fairchild fly on July 22, 2000. It was a magnificent sight watching Loyd see his aircraft aloft that day at Forbes Field.



Other recent notable works include the Republic F-84F and the 1941 Dodge Ambulance, also a basket case, which is largely finished, and was the final project Loyd was working on.

In between major restorations, Loyd was continually busy repairing, improving, building, and visiting with



Loyd with his masterpiece, the UC-61K

guests; always working hard to improve CAM. This was his pride and joy. And Loyd was our pride and joy. We have all been made better knowing Loyd Ellison. From his years at Ellison's garage through these past years at CAM, Loyd was hard working, dedicated to his tasks, and committed to excellence in everything he attempted.

We shall miss Loyd very, very much. Thank you, kind sir, for the memories. →

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Museum Hours

Monday - Saturday
9 A.M. - 4:30 P.M.
Last Admission 3:30 P.M.
Sunday 10 A.M. - 4:30 P.M.
Last Admission 3:30 P.M.

Plane Talk, the official newsletter
of Combat Air Museum
of Topeka, Kansas,
is published bi monthly.
Your questions and comments
are welcomed.

Any information for **Plane Talk**
should be submitted to CAM office.

New Supporters

Lee & June Boles
Herschel Gott
Alex Houghton
Admiral Thomas & Peggy
Hayward
The Hovorka Family
Joe, Ruth, Julane, Mary,
Zach, Maureen, Gus, Ann,
Mike & Joe
The Owen Family
Charles, Janet, Mary, Anna,
Micah, Seth, Amy, Laura,
John, Luke, & Robert

Renewing Supporters

Bill & Carol Ballentine
Rebecca Carter
Bob & Judy Crapser
Bob & Mary Ann Kelly
Dave Moffitt
Everett Worley

→ → →

Join the Combat Air Museum!

Visitors

During **July**
the Museum had
1,419 visitors
from **38** states
and
Australia
Chile
Czech Republic
Denmark
Germany
Great Britain
Japan
Mexico
New Zealand
Norway
Sweden
Switzerland

During **August**
we had
1,141 visitors
from **39** states
and
Germany
Great Britain
Netherlands
Scotland
Venezuela

→ → →

"Letters from Korea," continued from Page 6

(or with George James), and he should keep me & you posted of any significant changes in the car situation. This steel strike should only raise the price about \$50.

I have cancelled my insurance (car) as of 12 April 52, and today will notify *Time Magazine* and *Book of the Month Club* of my change of address. That should just about square all my affairs away, both personal & business.

It looks like we should have a good tour over there; the weather is best about now, and the action is not too heavy. Naturally, I shall ask many questions before and during my hops with the experienced men (and all of my hops for the first 3 months will be led by men who've been there for quite awhile). I believe I'll keep a log of my combat hops, too. Some fun, eh? Well, I'll write again when I get settled in Korea. That will be in about one week.

Love, Johnny

To be continued in the next issue of *Plane Talk*

Volunteers add a storage shed

Throughout this summer, a project took place to create a space for the Museum's lawn mowers, weed whackers, and other various grounds maintenance equipment. There was a real need for a place to put this equipment, as, for several years, equipment was parked and stowed just outside the north end of the workshop inside Hangar 604 and alongside the UH-1M Huey helicopter north of the workshop. In our continuing efforts to clean up

604 as an exhibit area, we needed to come up with a more suitable place for the grounds equipment. Key planners, managers and builders of the new equipment shed were **Martin Moyer** and **Amos Page**.

An existing fenced-in area on the south side of Hangar 604 was the chosen spot for the new shed. A concrete slab inside the fence used to have three large transformers on it. The site was rather ideal, as the fence provided security for the building and the concrete slab would serve as foundation for storage lockers. The south wall of the hangar served as the north wall of the building. Using Martin and Amos' input, **Dave Houser** drew out some plans of the proposed building.

The work started in June with holes being dug for support posts, which were cemented into the holes. From there, work progressed through the summer building the structure. Along the way, Martin and Amos picked up help from **Gene Howerter** and his grandson **Phillip**, **Don Dawson**, **Dick Trupp**, **Bob Crapser**, and **Dave Houser**.

The resulting building has room for all the grounds maintenance equipment, and includes a flammable liquids locker for gasoline and motor and hydraulic oils. A set of shelves holds tools and smaller equipment. Racks were installed on the north wall to hold garden hoses. A small loft provides storage of materials for grounds keeping and other materials for the carpenter shop. As part of the work, Martin and Amos relocated an old bus section used for lumber storage from the west side of the new shed to the east side.

During the first week of September, Martin and Amos built a sliding door for the shed, and once they and Dick installed it, the project was essentially completed. Martin and Amos are still doing some trim around the structure, but the mowers and other grounds maintenance equipment are now stowed in the new shed. It even has a name, thanks to a signboard provided by Dick - the "M & A Motor Pool" (Martin and Amos Motor Pool). →



Above: the new grounds maintenance shed on June 13.

Below: The M&A (Martin & Amos) Motor Pool on September 10.

October/November Calendar of Events

October

Monday, October 13

Membership Luncheon

Jean Wanner Education

Conference Center (JWECC)

11:30 a.m.

This will be a potluck luncheon.

Saturday, October 25

Model Contest

Hangar 602

9 a.m. - 2:30 p.m.

November

There is no Membership Luncheon in November.

The next luncheon is

Monday, December 8th.

It will be a potluck luncheon.

Thursday, November 27

Thanksgiving Day

The Museum is closed.

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The D-Day and WWII historical sites of Normandy

Brian Meredith and his wife, Rebecca Martin, visited Normandy last summer and plan to return for the 60th Anniversary of D-Day. The following is the conclusion of Brian's article begun in the August / September issue of Plane Talk.

In Caen we spent most of a day at Le Memorial, a peace museum and garden. The museum is first rate and has an excellent and touching film that shows American, British, and German troops preparing for the invasion and the ensuing battle for Normandy. The museum includes exhibits up to the present day, but we liked the World War II exhibit much more than the post war displays.

To visit the invasion sites, we rented a car in Caen and spent a day driving along highway D-514. We stopped at several invasion sites before stopping at Granville for the night. Highway D-514, a narrow two-lane road, winds its way along the coast. There are many examples of the hedgerow country along the highway. We visited two British beaches, Gold and Juno. We met a British couple that was in Normandy looking for the husband's father's grave. We parked above Arromanches to see the Mulberries and we walked down to the town. The view from the parking area is quite spectacular. If you have time, Arromanches might be a nice place to spend a night. We visited the American cemetery above Omaha Beach and we walked down to the beach. The walk was quite steep. There was a lot of vegetation that I am sure was not there in 1944. On

my way back up the hill, I found a German bunker and I took too many pictures of it. Our last stop was St. Mere Eglise where John Steele of the 101st Airborne landed on the church steeple. I had always wanted to see this church ever since I watched the movie "The Longest Day."

This took us about six hours to complete. The only museum we visited was the Airborne Museum at St. Mere Eglise. We did not stop at Utah Beach, Ponte du Hoc, nor did we see the museums at Arromanches and Omaha Beach.



*Photos, clockwise from upper right:
Omaha Beach, Normandy, France.
A paratrooper mannequin hangs from the church roof in St. Mere Eglise.
A German bunker used as an observation/gun position above Omaha Beach.
Omaha Beach looking toward German bunkers.*

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I was excited about visiting Normandy as part of our trip. I had not read anything on the invasion in many years. A year or two earlier I picked up Carlo D'Este's "Decision in Normandy" from the bargain book table at Hastings. This book is a comprehensive study of the invasion and the battle for Normandy. The author discusses all the controversies and highlights the tensions among the Allies. At 508 pages it may be too comprehensive for some people. John Keegan's "Six Armies in Normandy," the other book I read before the trip, is much shorter and Keegan is a very entertaining writer.

If you are doing your own planning for your trip, I suggest that you buy Major and Mrs. Holt's "Battlefield Guide to Normandy Landing Beaches." You will probably have to special order this book. It comes with suggested tours and a map of the battlefield, with every monument, museum and war relic marked. I took the book on the trip with us.

One of the best books that helped us get around Europe was Rick Steves' "Europe Through the Back Door." You may have seen Steves' travel show by the same name on PBS. This book is loaded with travel tips. It includes everything from how to avoid being taken advantage of to how to read a menu at a French restaurant. Steves writes for people who do not have a lot of money to spend and who want to really experience Europe. My wife and I adopted his philosophy. We traveled light and stayed at small hotels. I think it greatly added to our enjoyment of the trip.

Driving in Normandy was remarkably easy, but it is different than driving in the United States. In the United States there are a lot of signs telling you what road you are on. In France the road signs deal with towns you are heading to, not the road on which you are driving. I found this a bit annoying at first, but we adjusted. We made sure that we knew the name of the next town on the road we wanted to be on. Following this strategy, we never got lost.

The best travel tip we got was to ask "Bonjour, do you speak English?" to a Frenchman before you start talking to them in English. You do not have to memorize this in French, unless you want them to answer you in French. If the Frenchman says, "A little" you are home free. If he says, "No" that means I could help you, but it would be work for me and right now I want to take a break. A friend of my wife, who lives in Grenoble,



France, says that Americans make the mistake of assuming that everyone speaks English. Simply asking them if they speak English and using one French word buys you a lot of good will. We used this strategy and we found the French to be very easy to get along with.

My wife and I enjoyed our trip to Europe so much that we cannot wait to go back. As school came to an end this year and the weather started to warm up, I kept remembering how much fun I had last year traveling around Europe. I hope that you consider taking a trip. I am sure you will find it worthwhile. ➔



Letters and mission logs from Korea

*With this issue we begin a series containing letters and combat mission logs written from South Korea in 1952 during the Korean War. Then 22-year old Second Lieutenant **John Walker Hatcher**, US Marine Corps Reserve, wrote these. He flew propeller-driven Vought Corsair fighter-bombers in Korea.*

Colonel John W. Hatcher is now retired and living in Leavenworth, KS and is a lifetime member of CAM. In January 2002, he donated a copy of his "Mission Log & Letters From Korea - 1952" to the Museum and recently gave us permission to reproduce his letters and mission records in Plane Talk. We reproduce it here from the original text.

Besides his time in Korea, the book also touches on his military training and flying career before and after Korea from 1949 - 1970, and his civilian flying career from 1955 - 1980 with TWA.

It contains photocopies of his handwritten mission notes and has a number of photographs from his flight training days, from Korea, and afterwards.

From April 27, 1952 - November 10, 1952, 2nd Lt Hatcher flew 85 combat missions in Korea. Unless otherwise noted, all combat missions took place over North Korea. It is interesting to note that the censorship so common in World War II letters regarding places and units seemed much more relaxed in Korea.

Last Letter Written in the States

Saturday, 12 April [1952]

Dear Folks,

This will be my last letter in the States, although I'll telephone tonight. This is a way of setting down any last minute items, etc.

I drove up to Bennett's again yesterday, to leave my Radio & another bag of gear, and to get some stuff I needed. Now I'm finally squared away. Everything I have out here is stored there in Bennett's guesthouse. [Ed. Note: Lyle Hatcher Bennett, who lived in the LA area, was a sister of John's father. The oldest sister, Lois Hatcher Simpson lived in Huntington, PA].

I trust that by this time you have received the \$700 in money orders, the letter of credit and power of attorney, and the insurance "dope". I will mail the insurance policy today, if I can get that letter stating that I'm paying double premiums by allotment. I also made out an allotment of \$100 to J.H. Hatcher, Jr. to be used for savings. You all will get the first one sometime in June. A good way of saving, eh? Enough for the car (almost) right there.

I will correspond to a limited degree with Miller Chevrolet

"Letters," continued on Page 2



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