

COMBAT AIR MUSEUM

→ → → Plane Talk → → →

The Official Newsletter of the Combat Air Museum

December 2004 / January 2005 • Vol. 21, No. 1



Our old F-84F Thunderstreak gets a makeover

How many of you remember the F-84F Thunderstreak that sat in the grass between Hangars 602 and 604? It had been on loan to CAM for a number of years from the US Air Force Museum, and had been used as a helicopter sling load for training with the Kansas Army National Guard when they flew CH-54 Tarhes (Sky Cranes). To say that s/n 52-6458 was a bit dilapidated is being kind. We had a much better example of the Thunderstreak fighter in our collection with s/n 51-1659.

We offered 52-6458 back to the Air Force Museum in 1999, but it was not until early 2002 that things started in motion to get the F-84F to a new home. The interested party was the 104th Fighter Wing, Massachusetts Air National Guard, Springfield, MA. The 104th once flew F-84Fs. Today they fly A-10 Thunderbolt IIs, the Warthogs.

On March 17, 2002, s/n 52-6458 left CAM for a brief stay at the 190th Air Refueling Wing, Kansas Air National Guard for disassembly, and then it was on its way to Springfield. The photo above was forwarded to us on October 21, 2004. It shows what two years of time and effort have created. Kudos to the personnel of the 104th Fighter Wing for producing such a fine restoration. →



The F-84F Thunderstreak, before (left) and after (right)

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Museum Hours

Monday - Saturday

9 A.M. - 4:30 P.M.

Last Admission 3:30 P.M.

Sunday Noon - 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.

Improvements continue on Hangar 604

In the February/March 2004 issue of *Plane Talk* we reported on the improvements being made in Hangar 604 with the erection of eight-foot wall panels and sloped caps along the north and west hangar walls to the workshop. That project is done, and all the panels and caps have been painted white.

A number of volunteers were involved over time with the painting, including **Stu Entz, Bob Crapser, Don Dawson, Pat Marriot, Zach Amos, and Danny San Romani.**

At the time we were painting the panels, additional improvements were going on in the front of the hangar. **Martin Moyer, Amos Page, and Dale Allen** water-blasted and cleaned the lower seven feet of the interior hangar doors to prepare them for priming and painting. Those three and Don Dawson then did the priming, painting, and remarking of the doors. These were also painted a semi-gloss white. The work has not only improved the appearance of 604, it has helped make the hangar a little brighter.

During the time all this work was going on, curator Danny San Romani walked into the 604 workshop as Martin Moyer told Don Dawson, "The damn crew will not be in tomorrow." Well, San Romani was curious who this crew was and what had they done to upset Martin? It turns out all is well. It was not a "damn crew," it was the "DAM crew" made up of Dale, Amos and Martin. You learn something new every day.

The next phase of improvements in 604 may have to wait until spring. We are going to take the northeast corner floor section and clean it, acid etch it, then prime and

paint it with a concrete floor paint. It will be a test site to see how well it holds up to wear and tear of traffic and aircraft. The most critical part will be the cleaning and etching of the floor. If this is not done properly, the paint will not stick. We need to wait for warm air and floor temperatures to come back. ➔

2005 Events Calendar

Events subject to change

March

21-24 *Aviation
Education Class*

April

30 - *Celebrity
Pancake Feed*

May

21 - *Heartland Park's
Armed Forces Day Salute*

June

6-9 *Aviation
Education Class*

July

11-14 *Aviation
Education Class*

August

1-4 *Aviation
Education Class*

➔ ➔ ➔

*Visit the Gift Shop
for some great
stocking stuffers*

Membership categories explained

We have had several inquiries concerning our Museum membership categories. The following explanations are provided:

Student: \$15/year – An individual membership for a child up to the age of 17. This could be an ideal gift for a niece, nephew, grandchild or even a young person who has impressed you. At age 18, the membership changes to the adult individual category.

Individual: \$30/year – A membership for those age 18 and older.

Family: \$40/year – A group membership for parents (or 2 adult guardians) and children under the age of 18 living at the same address.

Lifetime: \$500 one time fee – A membership extending for the life of the member. This applies to only one person.

If you are interested in establishing a membership, give us a call at 862-3303. →

Museum's T-28 sold

The Museum's North American T-28B Trojan was sold to a private owner on October 7, 2004. The aircraft was acquired in 1984 through the then Naval Air Systems Command and Federal Surplus Property for the purpose of having another flying airplane in the Museum.

The sales transaction started at 6 a.m. in Hangar 604, and by 7:20 a.m. the owner made out the initial purchase check. The final payment

has since been made, and upon the new owner's next visit, the bill of sale and other pertinent paperwork will be completed. The T-28 will remain in 604 in the meantime. It will eventually be based in the San Antonio, Texas area.

The majority of the money from the sale will be placed in an interest bearing account. Some will be used to fund projects, and smaller amount will be held as contingency funds. →

Speaker will discuss his experiences in General Patton's Army

Gene Howerter has made arrangements for **Mr. Carl Nall** of Topeka to be our speaker for the December luncheon. Mr. Nall will speak of his experiences with General George Patton's Third Army in World War II as it crossed the Rhine River and advanced into Germany.

The Potluck Membership Luncheon is Monday, December 13 at 11:30 in the Jean Wanner Education Conference Center. →

Visitors

During **September** the Museum had **881** visitors from **38** states and Washington, D.C. and

- Australia
- Canada
- Germany
- Great Britain
- Ireland
- Switzerland

During **October** we had **698** visitors from **35** states and

- Australia
- Canada
- Germany
- Great Britain
- Netherlands
- New Zealand
- Switzerland

→ → →

Join the Combat Air Museum!

Your membership and support are important to us.

Tales of Partisan Rangers and old bones

Mr. Randy Thies was our guest speaker at the October 11th Membership Luncheon. Randy is a member of the Museum and thought that he had a topic that might be interesting to our luncheon attendees, and he proved to be absolutely correct in his thinking. His topic was "Tombstones to Die For" and dealt with the Civil War raid on Lawrence, KS by Missouri guerillas and the Missouri guerilla leader, William Quantrill.

Randy told us about the August 21, 1863 raid on Lawrence by Confederate guerillas, or Partisan Rangers, as they called themselves. Over 150 people, mostly adult men, were killed during the raid, and sections of Lawrence were burned to the ground. Randy used slides during his presentation and showed a number of grave-stones and monuments in Lawrence cemeteries for those who were killed during the raid, including some unknowns buried under a local monument.

Most of these tombstones read that the deceased was killed in the "Lawrence" raid or the "Quantrill" raid. He also showed slides of markers located around Lawrence showing where a group of Lawrence citizens were killed on that particular spot, or in some cases, giving the names of the citizens who were killed at that particular location. He included one slide of a gravestone outside of Kansas that mentions the raid. It was of a tombstone in New Hampshire for the parents of Frederick Dunster. The tombstone mentions that Dunster was killed by guerillas.

We learned that, for the most part, the killings were not random, but that the guerillas had a list of names of who to target. Lawrence had its share of Southern sympathizers who helped generate the list. Randy told us about one man who was mistakenly killed during the raid. Nathan Stone was a Lawrence businessman who ran some of the Lawrence hotels and was sympathetic to the Southern cause. He was present during the raid, and the raiders were told not to harm him. At least one raider did not get the word. A drunken guerilla named Skaggs killed Stone, and was in turn captured by Lawrence town folk. They killed Skaggs and left his body unburied in a ditch for quite some time.

Randy then talked about William Quantrill, a Captain in the Missouri Partisan Rangers, and leader of the Lawrence raid. Quantrill led various sizes of raiding

groups from 1861 until the end of the war in 1865. After the armistice was signed, Federal bushwhackers raided his camp in Kentucky, and Quantrill was shot in the spine. He lingered with his injury for about a month at a Federal prison camp in Louisville, Kentucky and died in June 1865.

Prior to his death, Quantrill converted to Catholicism and told a local priest how he wished to be buried after his death. But these wishes were not met. Quantrill was buried in an unmarked grave about 10 feet from the back door of a cemetery cottage in Louisville. The reasoning for this manner of burial was that if the grave were marked and known it could become an icon for Southern loyalists, or Unionists could desecrate it. The grave site was not maintained in any manner—actually, quite the opposite. The occupants of the cottage routinely dumped their night soil and kitchen slop on the grave to hide it.

Some years after his death, Quantrill's mother wanted to know where his

remains were buried, so they could be brought back to Dover, Ohio for burial in the family plot. A Dover newspaperman, W. W. Scott, began seeking Quantrill's remains on his mother's behalf. In December 1888, after some searching, Scott was shown Quantrill's grave. He had the remains dug up. Most of Quantrill's bones had moldered, and these were left in the ground. But some leg and arm bones and Quantrill's skull were recovered. Quantrill's mother identified the skull as his, based on a chipped tooth.

Scott allegedly placed the remains in a box for transport back to Ohio, and the box was buried in the family plot in Dover, Ohio. This was no small feat as Ohio was soundly Unionist and the Dover town fathers only agreed to the burial if the grave were unmarked. However, as the story unfolded, some questions came up later as to what was actually in the box.

Randy told us that Scott had actually kept the skull and other bones in his newspaper office. He wrote a letter to the Kansas State Historical Society, asking what the skull would be worth to them. Scott even traveled to Kansas with the shin bones he removed from Quantrill's grave. He used these as a teaser to the Kansas State Historical Society, hoping they would want to purchase

One had to wonder what exactly was buried in Dover.

the skull. Kansas did not purchase the skull, but kept the shin bones.

Scott died in 1902. His widow asked the Kansas State Historical Society if they wanted three arm bones and a lock of Quantrill's hair. What with all the bones the Scott's had kept, one had to wonder what exactly was buried in Dover. The Historical Society really did not know what to do with the bones and hair once they received them, but Kansas's law at that time forbade the return of the bones. It would not be until the mid-1960s that Kansas could finally be rid of Quantrill's bones.

In the mid-1960s, the American Indian Movement and its lawyers got existing laws changed and new laws passed to get Indian mounds closed, and Indian remains returned to Native Tribes for burial according to Indian customs. As it turned out, Quantrill's bones fell under the new criteria for returning remains. He had no living descendants, so arrangements were made to transfer his remains to the Sons of the Confederates Veterans in Missouri. Randy was involved with this transfer of Quantrill's bones from Kansas to this organization. The exchange took place at a truck stop near Higginsville, Missouri. In the rear parking lot of the truck stop, members of the Sons of Confederate Veterans conducted a brief but dignified ceremony to honor Quantrill's remains coming back to Missouri. Then, on October 24, 1992, a formal burial with Confederate re-enactors took place at the Old Confederate Veterans Home and Cemetery near Higginsville, now an historic site. Randy said everything about the transfer and burial went off very well and with much pomp and circumstance. He noted that one individual in the crowd wore a ball cap that read "Burn Them Again," but that was an exception to the crowd's overall demeanor.

But there still remained one important question. "What ever happened to Quantrill's skull?" And there was an answer. Scott had kept the skull in the back of

his newspaper office in Dover. In 1910 a young man's social fraternity was formed in Dover, and between 1910-1943 some 242 inductees were sworn into the fraternity on "Old Jake." "Old Jake" happened to be Quantrill's skull. At some point in time after this, the skull was placed in the Dover Historical Society. A wax head likeness of Quantrill was made over the skull – much like a forensics skull is made, and it proved to be a big draw for the Dover Historical Society. But six days after the burial at the Old Confederate Veterans Home and Cemetery in Missouri, Quantrill's skull was buried in the family plot in Dover, in a now-marked grave site. Finally, the bones of Captain William Quantrill, Missouri Partisan Ranger, were at rest, albeit in three different states.



Guest speaker
Randy Theis

Randy talked about the white government gravestone markers used for veterans. He told us you could tell the difference between a gravestone for a Union soldier and a Confederate soldier by their shape. The Union gravestone has a rounded top. The Confederate gravestone has a pointed top. Randy said legend has it that the Confederate gravestone is pointed on top so, as one Confederate General supposedly said, "No damn Yankee will set his fat ass on my gravestone."

Randy took questions from the audience. It was very evident that the audience really enjoyed the presentation about a relatively local piece of Kansas' history and the man who was much involved with it. ➔

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Letters and mission logs from Korea

Excerpts from letters and combat mission logs written from South Korea in 1952 by USMC Second Lieutenant John Walker Hatcher, who flew Corsair fighter-bombers. Times are based on a 24-hour, military clock. USS BATAAN (CVL-29) was a light aircraft carrier. The text appears as originally written.

Excerpts from Letter No. 15 [R&R - Japan] Sunday, 22 June

Dear Folks,

I had R&R this past 6 days, and it was pretty disappointing, considering that I spent 4 of the 6 days traveling. Kiser & I went up to Itami (which is more or less the center of R&R activities, etc.), and it took us two days to get there. We spent two days in that general area, shopping and trying to "rest and relax", and then spent two days getting back here to Sasebo. What a fouled up mess! Travel is fairly inconsistent and uncertain, as you can see. (By the way, Sasebo is near the south-western tip of the Japan chain, while Itami AFB is near Osaka, which is nearer the center of the chain).

One bright side of the story is that I got a camera. It was very hard to find, but I finally got what I wanted: a Bolsey C-mode 35 mm double reflex camera – cost \$76 at the Kyoto PX. I also purchased an Exposure Meter (or light meter) – a Weston Master II for \$20. Total of \$100, quite an investment, eh? That would cost at least \$130 in the States, not including Sales tax, I guess. Anyway, I feel that I can get some good pictures now, either color or black & white. It (the camera) has an f-stop range from 3.2 to 22, and shutter speeds from Time to 1/200 second. It has a range finder (standard) and a reflex range finder, to get fine focus. A pretty good little camera.

Well, enough of that. This time in port I got your letters of June 2, 4, 5, 7, 9,

and 10. We really look forward to getting to port, with the resultant deluge of mail. Quite a morale factor...

...(ESSAY after reading it over!) I used to envy and admire men who said that they had been overseas, for overseas was synonymous with combat, but now I feel and know differently. (last war included) The only men whose experiences I respect are pilots, front-line troops, and forward air controllers. These are the only men who get shot at, and who know what it's really all about! And only one soldier out of 20 is a front-line troop! I realize that the truck drivers, typists, cooks, mechanics, sailors, etc. are all doing necessary jobs, but they are always in the rear areas. Only the fighting man on the front lines is "in combat"; but from my experiences and observations, when the other fellows (cooks, typists, Navy personnel, drivers, GHQ, loafers, etc.) get back home – they were "in Korea", and everyone automatically thinks they are heroes. (These fellows do nothing to correct or explain the facts, either). I'm just trying to correct in your minds that situation or connotation, although I realize that it is prevalent throughout the U.S. Maybe I'm just bitter because I have seen too many "fat asses" bursting with authority and knowledge over here, when the majority of them have never heard or seen a shot fired in anger. You know (Dad): GHQ personnel, civilian workers who get R&R (ha) and the terrific waste of money that the USAF is effecting, as I've seen at their bases in Japan (which we will soon be giving back to the Japanese, who are 50% (?-maybe not that much) Communist now). This whole "war" is a farce, and I can see bigger things ahead. END OF ESSAY

I haven't become one-sided or radical: that last paragraph is just what I know to be true, and I'm "blowing off steam" –

just putting down things as I think of them! Not a very coherent letter, eh?

Now, after that small outburst showing the futility and frustration most of us feel against the U.S. Far Eastern forces (controlled mostly by the USAF) with its resultant policies and red tape inefficiency and bungling, let's get back to the lighter side of things.

(Maybe I should write a book, eh? Ha Ha).

We are going out tomorrow for our next cruise. I think I was erroneous when I told you previously that it was a "10 day on, 10 day off" program; I think it would be more accurate (or approximate) to say 2 weeks on, 1 week in port. (By on, I mean on the line, or flying). That is confidential, though. We should be back in port this time about 6 July, but I don't know whether we'll be here, or at Kobe.

I'll try to take some pictures of my rocket and bomb hits (or at least the results) on this cruise, with the new camera. Buildings, bridges, gun positions, bunkers, trucks & carts, etc. Should be interesting as a record or diary.

Well, I'll close now. Will write again in a few days. (Note) We got 10 new pilots (mostly reserves from the last war) this cruise, so at that rate I should get a desk job about Oct. 15.

Love, Johnny

Mission #26 [USS Bataan] 25 June TARCAP (Johnson)

Armament – 1 x 500# GP, 8 x WP, 6 x .50 cal

TO – 0930 BL – 1000 Land – 1135

Assigned primary target was gun posit. on island at XC 8074. Recco'ed island, Johnson dropped long, we strafed and saw no movement. We spotted a good highway bridge at approx XC 8666, and I dropped my 500# on it. Got almost a direct hit, and dropped the span at the

southern end. Set fire to several bldgs with our WP. Started many good fires. A good hop. We received small arms fire several times, but got no hits on our a/c.

**Mission #27 [USS Bataan] 25 June
SC Recco (Munro, Reese, Kiser)
Haeju - W**

**Armament 1 x Napalm, 8 x WP, 6 x .50's
TO - 1330 BL - 1350 Land - 1530**

We were assigned 3 targets: a group of supply bldgs. At approx. XB 9298, 5 trucks & platoon NKA at another point nearby, and a rail junk at XC 8804. We attacked the bldgs. First mentioned, where I dropped my NAPALM, destroying 5 bldgs. We continued to other targets, but NO JOY. We reccoed the SC area, and attacked village (Suya-ri) at YC 2424 with WP, starting fires. We received .50 cal fire here. Returned to original target, I fired remainder of WP, destroyed 5 more bldgs. Average recco.

**Mission #28 [USS Bataan] 26 June
TARCAP (Munro)**

**Armament 1 Napalm, 8 x WP, 4 x .20mm's
TO - 0530 BL - 0600 Land - 0740**

Expended majority of ordnance on supply bldgs (village) at XC 8069, destroyed at least 15 bldgs, good fires. Caught a couple of oxen. My ordnance was poor this hop. Otherwise. Average TARCAP.

**Excerpts from Letter No. 16 [USS Bataan]
Thursday, 26 June
Dear Folks,**

... We've had 3 planes this cruise come back already with machine-gun bullet holes in them; in fact, Kiser even got his feet wet. He had a .30 or .50 cal explosive hit his wing near the end - not much damage. Just a small hole. That's his first one (of course, I'm a veteran, now).

I guess that you can tell from the papers, etc., that we've finally opened up on their (N.K.) dams and reservoirs, electric installations, etc. We saved them during the winter, because they weren't in use much. We opened up on those the 24-25 June.

That's about all. I'm starting to get a sun bath daily on the bow (when we're not launching or recovering aircraft, naturally), and am getting brown again.
Love, Johnny

**Mission #29 [USS Bataan] 27 June
TARCAP (Munro)**

**Armament 1 x 500#, 8 x 100#, 6 x .50's
TO - 1740 Land - 1945**

Prebriefed target was 200NKA troops with 100 horses in a village southeast of Pungchon. We dropped a couple of 100#'ers and 2 WP, then proceeded to recco the area. We found a large viaduct ESE of Chinnampo, and Rod got a near miss. I dropped my 500# bomb on the viaduct, and got the best hit I've had so far. Viaduct was approx. 15' wide and 100' long; my bomb hit dead-center. When we left, water gushing out was flooding the entire area around there. We proceeded back to primary target, and dropped rest of ordnance.

Large fires were burning when we left; estimate 25 buildings destroyed by blast & fire.

**Mission #30 [USS Bataan] 28 June
CAP (Munro)**

**Armament 1 Rescue Kit
Average CAP.**

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In Memoriam

Laura E. San Romani
November 7, 1921 –
November 17, 2004
Emporia, Kansas
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December/January Calendar of Events

DECEMBER

Monday, December 13

Membership

Potluck Luncheon

Jean Wanner Education

Conference Center

11:30 a.m.

Saturday, December 25

The Museum is Closed

JANUARY

Saturday, January 1

The Museum is Closed

There is no Membership

Luncheon in January.

The next luncheon is

Monday,

February 14.

→ → →



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