

# COMBAT

## AIR MUSEUM

February 2019 | March 2019 | Vol.35, No. 1

## Taming the Tomcat: F-14 RIO Joe Fives

By Dennis Smirl

Our speaker for the Combat Air Museum Christmas membership meeting was Joe Fives, currently the Director of Technology for the Kansas City, Kansas Public Schools. Formerly an officer in the United States Navy, Joe spent twelve years on active duty followed by three years of service in the United States Navy Reserve.

During his time with the service, Joe was a Radar Intercept Officer (RIO) riding in the back seat of Grumman F-14 Tomcats. A veteran of hundreds of flights with many of them involving a catapult launch followed by a 'trapped' landing on one of several aircraft carriers, Joe had an almost endless supply of information and anecdotes to share with the large turnout of CAM members.

Having developed a powerful interest in military aviation as a boy, and carrying it through his years in college (as a computer science major), Joe was extremely disappointed when the Navy denied him the opportunity to attend pilot training due to a minor color vision problem.

After talking with a U. S. Navy recruiter, Joe applied for admittance to the Aviation Officer Candidate School (AOCS) in Pensacola, Florida. He had almost given up on being accepted until the call came a year after he'd



Photo by Kira Hobbs

filed his application. As the maximum age for acceptance was 26, and he was getting close to that limit, Joe accepted at once and headed for Florida.

During his time in AOCS, Joe made excellent grades and passed all the rigorous physical tests demanded of him. He told us some of the details, and said his most difficult test was swimming a mile in flight suit and boots, against a clock. Other demands involved being dropped into a tank of water individually in an upside-down cockpit, and then having the same experience in a helicopter mockup where everyone—except Joe—scrambled for the exit, fighting their way to safety. He said he could hold his breath for a very long time, and he waited for everyone to get out of his way before swimming to the surface and passing the test.

Once Joe graduated from AOCS and received his commission as an ensign, he went on to RIO training. He said the need was

(continued on page 14)

### INSIDE THIS ISSUE

- 1 From the Chairman's Desk
- 2 PLANE TALK has a New Look
- 3 Museum Notes
- 7 A C-124 Globemaster II for CAM
- 8 Simulator to First Flight
- 9 In Memorium

- 10 Projects Update
- 12 The Last Dam Buster
- 13 Celebrity Pancake Feed
- 15 Dillon's Community Rewards Program
- 16 Treeclimbing Tiger Moth



## PLANE TALK





## From the Chairman's Desk

By Gene Howerter,  
Chairman, Board of Directors



### COMBAT AIR MUSEUM

#### Topcka Regional Airport

Hangars 602 & 604  
7016 SE Forbes Avenue  
Topeka, KS 66619-1444  
Telephone (785) 862-3303  
www.combatairmuseum.org

Hosted by  
Rossini Management Systems, Inc.

Email: office@combatairmuseum.com

Museum Director ~ Kevin Drewelow  
Office Manager ~ Nelson Hinman, Jr.  
European Liaison Officer ~ Huw Thomas

#### Board of Directors

Gene Howerter - Chairman  
Dave Murray - Deputy Chairman  
Tad Pritchett - Secretary  
Wes Barricklow - Les Carlson  
Stu Entz - Ted Nolde  
Bill Stumpff - Dick Trupp  
-Mike Welch-

### Museum Hours

January 2 - February 28/29

Mon. - Sun. Noon - 4:30 P.M.

Last Entry Every Day is 3:30 P.M.

March 1 - December 31

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

Sun. Noon - 4:30 P.M.

Last Entry Every Day is 3:30 P.M.

Closed

New Year's Day, Easter, Thanksgiving, Christmas Day

Newsletter Layout & Design  
Nels Anderson ~ Design Shop

Plane Talk, the official newsletter  
of the Combat Air Museum  
of Topeka, Kansas,  
is published bi-monthly.  
*We welcome your comments.*

Your membership is  
important to us.

Join the  
COMBAT AIR MUSEUM.

Changes are in the air for the Combat Air Museum as we begin our 42nd year of operation. First, during the latter part of 2018, the Museum started working with Giant Communications, who gave us guidance for installing a new and more sophisticated phone system than the one we have had forever. In order to save money, Museum volunteers installed underground PEX pipelines through which they pulled fiber optic cable Giant provided for the new phone system. Of special interest is the fact the new Voice Over Internet Protocol (VOIP) system will cost far less per month than what we were paying for our legacy phone service. Additionally, this system has many features which allow us to connect in a more professional way with callers than in the past. Most notable is the use of phone extension numbers, paging, and intercom use for different offices. This allows callers to leave a message for the person they want to talk with when not available, freeing up our office manager who used to take all messages and passed them along. Giant completed and activated the system in early January, and after a little training and phone usage we expect to be off and running to a great new year.

Second, as we were investigating a new phone service for the Museum, we calculated what the cost of office copying items and equipment were running each year. After our office manager and deputy chairman had tallied our past annual cost for printing etc., we held several meetings with Logan Business Machines, a reputable local company, for comparison of cost on an annual basis. Our two entities not only compared figures

but sharpened our pencils, negotiated and finally arrived at a cost that would save the Museum money each year and one that both of us could support. We felt this deal not only saved money but completely lightened the load on our office manager again. Logan Business Machines will handle all of our printing needs on an annual basis which includes most supplies and servicing of the new Lexmark Universal v2 PS3 printer.

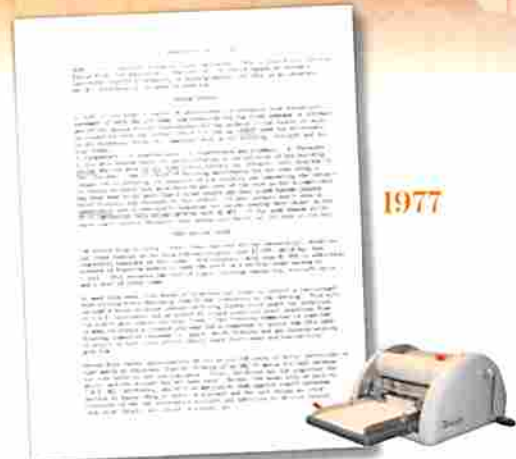
The third and most notable change which members will experience this year is the redesign of this newsletter. The look and feel of our newsletter has changed several times over the past 42 years. In this edition you will see a copy of the front page from our first ever newsletter. I think you will all agree these changes are good. Along with these changes the Museum should be able to save money considering the newsletter is printed in house since our new Lexmark is capable of printing, stapling and folding. Yes, it requires a little extra labor from members to get it ready for mailing, but for us a penny saved is a penny earned and volunteers have already stepped up and committed to this service. For those of you who may be wondering why we are not converting the newsletter to an online publication only, we have been down that road before and have always felt we preferred sending a paper copy. For many of our more senior members a paper newsletter is warm and friendly as well as personal. Frankly, I may be showing my age but I personally prefer reading a hard copy. Also it is handy to place *Plane Talk* by my favorite chair and glance at it a second and third time between issues. I hope you will do the same.

Gene



PLANE  
TALK  
HAS  
A NEW  
LOOK!

By Kevin Drewelow



1977

YAF Newsletter Vol. No 1 from 1977 was printed on a mimeograph machine

As you've already noticed, the New Year has brought a new look to *Plane Talk*. The format change is the first in the last 22 years, and comes after the confluence of two events.

Logan Business Systems in Topeka showed the Museum how we could acquire a new printer/copier and save money by printing and assembling the newsletter ourselves. Minuteman Press of Lawrence, Kansas has printed *Plane Talk* for nearly 20 years. Dee Bisel, Eric Bowen and everyone else at Minuteman always delivered exceptional service and often found ways to help us work smarter and save money; they even offered us some very helpful advice on how to proceed with self-publishing. We are sad to leave them.

Toni Dixon began as the creative force behind *Plane Talk's* format in February 1997. Before Toni, the CAM newsletter was imaginatively named "CAM Newsletter" and, while produced on a copier instead of the mimeograph used when the Museum began in 1977, showed room for improvement. Toni changed the name to *Plane Talk* and, with the writing of Danny San Romani and Kevin Drewelow, transformed the newsletter into the professional and award winning publication we've enjoyed since. We have always appreciated working with Toni, who has given us nothing but the greatest cooperation, service and creative ways to improve *Plane Talk*. It is with the greatest regret that we have decided to move on to a new graphic designer.



1978

CAM Newsletter #8 from 1978 was the first to feature the P-51 Mustang on the nameplate

1995



The July 1995 'CAM Newsletter' was the first to be printed on a printer

continued from page 3

1995

**PLANE TALK**  
THE OFFICIAL NEWSLETTER OF THE COMBAT AIR MUSEUM

**FYLER SIGNS BOOK AT MUSEUM**



**D** Carl Fyler spent part of Saturday, December 9 at the museum signing copies of his recently published autobiography *Stunt Pilot*. He can be seen at Fyler's book at the museum gift shop.

**Museum Tops \$52,000 in Admissions**

The Combat Air Museum topped \$52,000 in admissions for 1995. This represents an increase of about 8.2% over 1994 and is due to the museum's growing at a very healthy rate. The center is being upgraded, the facilities cleaned and the grounds landscaped and redone.

The office received a 200% computer and we took away 104 capabilities on two of the computers. One of the hard drives can take the page layout program. Adobe PageMaker, which allows us to create more sophisticated and professional looking correspondence on site.

The gift shop has over \$20,000 in gross sales in 1995. This represents an average of over \$17 per visitor in sales the year as compared to \$16 per person in previous years.

The special event in the edition of the newsletter is a summary of events that took place over the past year.

**JANUARY 1996 NEWSLETTER**  
VOLUME 12 • ISSUE 1

The first issue of Plane Talk, July 1995

1995

**Plane Talk**

The Official Newsletter of the Combat Air Museum February 1997 • Vol. 13 No. 2

**Construction begins on a new addition to the Museum**

As rapid improvements program phases have progressed the largest structural undertaking in the history of the Museum. It is a huge job and we are glad to be doing the Museum under Tony Dixon's direction. The most exciting part is the foundation will be visible to the program is gathering in the business community. It is comparable to the funds for the project. Tony Dixon's program will be a worthy contribution and have a great impact.

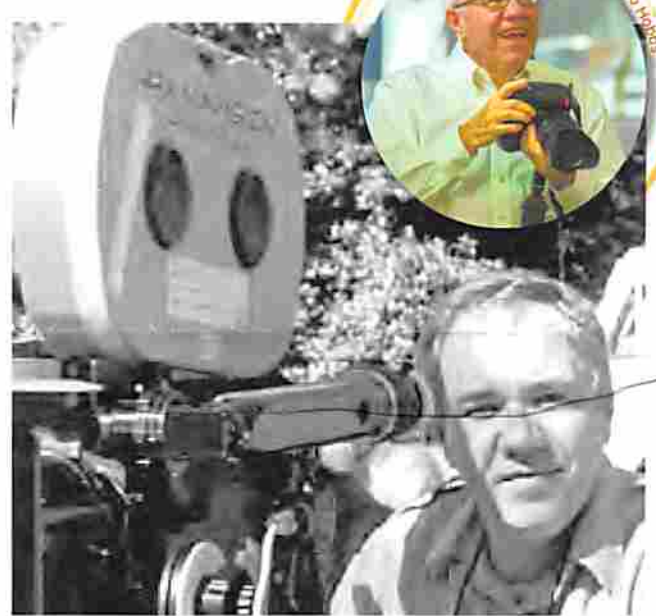
The Combat Air Museum Board has approved the construction plan and we have in hand construction contracts by the time you receive this newsletter. No only will there be a new construction project as well. These new areas will be heated and air conditioned. The construction team will be approximately 25-30 in 1997. There will be additional work done before the end of the year and the project will be completed by the end of the year. The construction will be a great project and we are glad to be doing it. The construction will be a great project and we are glad to be doing it.

*Continued on page 3*



Toni Dixon's first Plane Talk, February 1997

Nels Anderson recently retired from the City of Topeka where he was a graphic designer. His career path began at the Atlanta School of Art at the High Museum and took him from being an art director at a television station to television photography for national networks. He received multiple photography awards from United Press International and the Associated Press, three Emmys, to name only a few.



He operated his own motion picture company serving corporate clients such as Delta Airlines. Nels returned to Topeka after retiring but kept busy by working for the City of Topeka. Although he retired again, he continues to scratch his creative itch by doing design work for various non-profits in Topeka. After doing some photography and design work for the Museum, he submitted a proposal for changing the format of *Plane Talk*. We found it to be irresistible and we hope you like it.

*(Dave Murray contributed to this article.)*





## Museum Notes

By Kevin Drewelow

**A Chinook for CAM:** The Combat Air Museum may soon gain a very historic Boeing MH-47D Chinook helicopter, thanks to Bravo and Delta Companies, 7th Battalion, 158th Aviation Regiment, United States Army Reserve at Aviation Support Facility Olathe, Olathe, Kansas.



Boeing MH-47D Chinook 85-24346 at Olathe

Photo by Kevin Drewelow

Preliminary research shows “our” Chinook has a storied history. Boeing built this helicopter in 1967 as a CH-47C and it has a combat history in Viet Nam. In 1985, Boeing rebuilt the helicopter to the CH-47D standard; it gained its new serial number then, 85-24346. At some point, it was further converted to a MH-47D, the special operations variant. It has served in Iraq and Afghanistan with the 7-158th, a special operations unit. 346 was removed from service and demilitarized. It is partially disassembled but would arrive with everything required. After reassembly it will require repainting. CAM is looking into transportation availability and cost. The MTAA has approved our request to park the MH-47 on the ramp at the north end of hangar 604. We’ll provide more details as they become available. The MH-47D will be an outstanding addition to our collection; this particular Chinook has many historic and important tales to tell!

**“Kansans Go to War”:** The Combat Air Museum loaned some artifacts to the Topeka Shawnee County Public Library for their “Kansans Go to War” display at the Alice C. Sabatini Gallery from October through December. The display focused on the role Kansans played in World War One and featured

period artifacts from the Combat Air Museum, Museum of the Kansas National Guard and the library’s collection. It complemented the large traveling photographic exhibit *Over There: Americans Aboard in World War I* on loan from the National Archives.

### Lawrence High School students filming at CAM:

Several ambitious and skilled film students from Lawrence High School are creating a short movie about American pilots over Europe in World War Two and they recently completed their first shoot at the Combat Air Museum. Andrew Williams is the director; he and his team of actors and technicians will transform our Vultee BT-13 into a North American P-51; Kilroy will become the cockpit of a Flying Fortress; and our Beech SNB will serve as a B-17 waist gunner’s position. The students will use



Lawrence High School students filming on location at CAM

Photo by Kevin Drewelow

special effects and green screens along with the Museum’s aircraft to complete the story. Once complete, their production may be featured on the Museum’s website.

**Benefit runs bring 1500 visitors to CAM:** CAM’s certified 5K/10K course at Forbes is attracting organizations and people to the Museum. Two local non-profit organizations recently held their fund raising runs at CAM, bringing over 1500 people out to the Museum.

Sheepdog Impact Assistance is a national non-profit organization that exists to engage, assist and empower the men and women who make up our



— continued from page 5

nation's military, law enforcement, fire and rescue, and EMS professions – society's protectors, our "Sheep Dogs." The Topeka chapter held their second annual "Turkey Trot" on a clear and cold Thanksgiving morning and over 300 people attended, as did Khan, the canine mascot of the Metropolitan Topeka Airport Authority (MTAA) Police and Fire Department.

Nine days later, the YWCA of Northeast Kansas Girls on the Run program held their 5K run at CAM. The parking lot on the west side of the Museum was absolutely full due to 1242 race entries plus family members attending! Girls on the Run is a national non-profit program that is presented locally by the YWCA of Northeast Kansas. The 20-lesson Girls on the Run curriculum combines training for a 5K (3.1 miles) running event with lessons that inspire girls to become independent thinkers, enhance their problem solving skills and make healthy decisions.

**Capital Projects Committee update:** Winter weather was no match for the Capital Projects Committee until January. Committee members and volunteers completed one large project and made substantial progress on another.

Our new phone system required the installation of fiber optic cable between the hangars and common telephone cable to each new telephone. Giant Communications allowed us to do that work, saving thousands of dollars if Giant had done the work, and Giant provided all of the needed materials. Thanks to Mike Welch's construction/excavation knowledge, Nathan Benfield's previous experience installing fiber optic cable, Gary Naylor's love of working at great heights, and several other volunteers, we got the work done and it passed Giant's subsequent inspection and operational checks. We owe a special debt of gratitude to the MTAA Maintenance Department and their Director, Rod Niehaus. We needed to excavate a small trench next to the fence between the hangars and planned to rent a small trencher, but Rod heard about it. The MTAA has a small trencher that sees infrequent use. Rod sent a crew to CAM with the trencher and they quickly excavated the trench, getting valuable training on the equipment while assisting the Museum.

Anyone who has been to the Museum over the last two months has seen the construction underway at the entrance to the Bob Dole Education Center on

the north side of hangar 602. Committee members and volunteers have excavated and poured a large concrete pad as the first step towards constructing a vestibule at the entrance. Once again, the experience and knowledge of our some of our volunteers really paid off. CAM board member and professional architect Ted Nolde designed the vestibule, using a double glass door the Museum has available. Construction professionals like Tom Crafton and Mike Welch, aided by skilled members Mike Madden and Gary Naylor, to name but a few, made a challenging project go rather smoothly. We poured concrete just before the cold weather arrived and will resume work as soon as conditions allow.

**The internet arrives in the workshop:** With the advent of the new VOIP telephone system (described elsewhere in this newsletter), volunteers had to run a fiber-optic cable from the workshop in hangar 604 to the phone terminal in the upstairs offices in hangar 602. This was a painstaking project as fiber-optic cable cannot, under any circumstances, be bent or crimped and for amateur cable-laying lay folk, the task was daunting. Nevertheless they completed the project on time and under budget (budget obviously was set at \$0). Now that the workshop is wired and modern telephone has reached the outskirts of the Museum, so has the internet! Danny San Romani, Don Dawson and other workshop volunteers now have contact with the outside world for any necessary technical information they need to research their projects, and with further generosity from benefactor Karen Waller, a new laptop and monitor are engaged in 21st Century work for the good of the Museum.

*(Dave Murray contributed to this article)*



MTAA crew digging a trench between hangars 602 and 604

Photo by Kevin Drewelow



# A Douglas C-124 Globemaster II for CAM

By Kevin Drewelow



The Combat Air Museum collection now includes a model of the Douglas C-124 Globemaster II, and like the actual aircraft it represents, it is gargantuan! This radio controlled model aircraft has a seven-foot wingspan, is five feet long and two feet tall. Gary Patterson of North Platte, Nebraska, drove to Topeka to deliver the model. He acquired it among some items he found at an estate sale. He said Don Briggs of Curtis, Nebraska, built the model. Mr. Briggs had been an aircraft mechanic in the Air Force, possibly on C-124s. Briggs completed but never flew the Globemaster model. As an experienced radio control pilot, Gary realized the scale model's wing was too small to fly successfully so he didn't attempt it. He removed the model's engines and remounted the propellers. He couldn't bring himself to discard the airplane, and a friend in Topeka contacted CAM to see if we were interested in it, and we were. The model is temporarily displayed atop the USS MACON airship display in hangar 602 until we can suspend it from the ceiling in the same room. The Globemaster II's roots run back to the Douglas C-54 Skymaster. In 1942, Douglas engineers scaled up the C-54 into a large, heavy air lifter. The Army ordered 50 of the new C-74 Globemasters but with the end of the war reduced the order to 14. The Air Force soon required a larger airlifter, so

Douglas developed the C-74 into the C-124 Globemaster II. The new aircraft made its first flight in late 1949; production began and Douglas delivered 448 of the behemoths through 1955. Large cargo went up a ramp and through the clamshell doors in the nose; an elevator in the belly handled smaller cargo. C-124s handled heavy airlift during the Korean Viet Nam wars. Most C-124s transferred to the Air National Guard and Air Force Reserve in 1970, and the type's service ended in 1974. The Globemaster II had a wingspan of 174 feet and a maximum speed of 320 miles per hour. Four Pratt & Whitney R-4360 Wasp Major four-row radial engines, each producing 3,500 horsepower, made it possible for the C-124 to lift up a maximum payload in excess of 90,000 pounds. The C-124 was an unpressurized airplane known to its crews as "Old Shakey." Only nine Globemaster II's exist today. The National Museum of the United States Air Force in Dayton, Ohio has one on display that visitors may enter. ***It must be seen to be believed!***



Photo by Kevin Drewelow

COMBAT  
AIR MUSEUM

## From Flight Simulator to First Flight

By Dennis Smith

Chris Marquardt, one of our newer members, just achieved a first that started with a casual interest in the museum's flight simulator. After a couple of sessions in which Chris 'flew' a simulated Cessna 172, she decided to work with the simulator on a weekly basis until she mastered several flying benchmarks. With practice, Chris was able to start her simulated flight from the ramp in front of hangar 602, taxi out to runway 03, take off, fly a local, make a successful approach, land on runway 21, and taxi back to park at hangar 602.

After logging 10 flying hours on the CAM flight simulator, Chris was ready. She called Hetrick Air Services in Lawrence, Kansas, and arranged a time for her first flying lesson in a Cessna 172. On January 10—a day after her birthday—she arrived for an early morning flight and a bit of a surprise. She had practiced on our 'round-dial' simulator, but the

aircraft she would be flying had a glass cockpit...where a few computer screens replace the individual instruments!

Not to be daunted, Chris got acquainted with Noah, her certified flight instructor (CFI), and after a few minutes discussing basic expectations, headed out to the left seat. That put her in a position in which she had to manage landing lights, master switches, and the real fun of magneto checks.

Once they completed their preflight inspection and determined the aircraft was airworthy, Chris and her CFI taxied out to the end of runway 15 for takeoff. Everything went smoothly: Chris operated the aircraft exactly as she was told by her instructor, and about 30 minutes later, returned the aircraft to the ramp in front of the passenger terminal. She had met all the expectations of her first flight, and has chosen to enroll as a student at Hetrick so she can earn her private pilot's license!



Noah and Chris out on her first flight. "Toni Dixon's first Plane Talk, February 1997"



Student pilot Chris Marquardt





## Upcoming Events

### February

1-Winter hours continue through end of month  
Museum open noon-4:30 p.m.  
No visitors admitted after 3:30 p.m.  
Museum open Sun noon to 4:30 p.m.  
11-Membership Luncheon

### March

1-Normal hours resume, Museum open  
Mon-Sat 9 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.,  
no visitors admitted after 3:30 p.m.  
Museum open Sun noon to 4:30 p.m.  
10-Daylight Savings Time begins  
11-14 Young Aviators Class

### April

8-Membership Luncheon  
21-Easter, Museum closed  
27-Celebrity Pancake Feed

## New & Renewing Members

NEW

David Benton & family  
Michael B. & Candace Bush  
Michael J. Bush & family  
Brandon Crispin & family  
Shaun & Inga Finn  
Holly Grassy & family  
Frank Holsburg  
Breanna Johnson  
John Seddon & family

RENEWING

Gary Bender  
Ted & Cindy Berard  
Bruce Bevitt & Tyler  
Gardner  
Jon & Peggy Boursaw  
Len Carlson  
Les Carlson  
Linda Coash  
Duane Coash & family  
Thomas Crafton  
Rodney & Martha  
Duerksen

Leonard Faulconer  
Michael Fewell & family  
Justin & Leslie Gordon  
Travis Gould  
Ernest Hedges  
Brad Link  
Hal & Nice Loney  
Larry & Nancy Mann  
Jerry & Karen Milbradt  
William Morgan  
Todd Morgenstern &  
family

Mary Ann Naylor  
Loren Otis  
Richard Painter  
John & Holly Pickett  
Tad & Dee Pritchett  
Michael Rockefeller &  
family  
Dennis & Galene San  
Romani

## In Memoriam



In Memoriam

**Merton H. Wilch**

November 6, 1923 – December 13, 2018

CAM #29

Merton joined the Combat Air Museum in April of 1978.  
During World War II, he worked at the North American Aviation  
B-25 factory in Kansas City before he joined the Army Air Corps.

Merton was a Boeing B-17 Flying Fortress flight engineer/top turret gunner and flew 32  
combat missions over Europe from his base in England. Those of us who knew Merton will dearly miss him.



## Visitors



**1,780 people from 30 states,**

868 people from 35 states, Canada, Germany, Japan,

Russia, South Africa and Spain visited the Combat Air Museum in November.

In December, 1,780 visitors from 30 states, Puerto Rico, Brazil and India visited your Museum;

1,242 of those attended the YWCA Girls on the Run 5K held at the Museum on December 1.



CAM

# Projects Update

By Kevin Drewelow

**"Project X" unveiled:** A few months ago, *Plane Talk* mentioned some CAM volunteers were working on "Project X" in the workshop. The Topeka Pilots hockey club unveiled the secret article at a home game early in the season. The Pilots conduct a "Chuck a Puck" contest during the second intermission of each home game in which fans throw foam rubber pucks onto the ice, attempting to win a prize by getting their pucks to land on or in a target. The Pilots asked CAM for a suitable aviation-

themed target. CAM volunteers built and modified a child's pedal Gee Bee aircraft from plans the Pilots bought. Danny San Romani coordinated the project. Veteran woodworkers Jim Braun, Nelson Hinman, Jr. and Dave Rector, aided and abetted by Don Dawson, Kevin Drewelow and Danny San Romani, completed the Gee Bee and delivered it to the team. The aircraft is prominently marked "COMBAT AIR MUSEUM" and "TOPEKA PILOTS" and is used at every home game.



Photo by Kevin Drewelow

CAM volunteers built this Gee Bee for the Topeka Pilots

Photo by Kevin Drewelow



continued from page 10

CAM  
**Projects Update**



Photo by Megan Watson

Sawyer Watson, son of Topeka Pilots head coach Simon Watson and Megan Watson, is ready for takeoff

**Singer-Link GAT-1 General Aviation Trainer:** The Combat Air Museum's display of flight simulators has increased by one. Don Dawson completed his work making our Singer Link GAT-1 safe for public display. He installed a clear plastic cover over the instructor's control panel and secured the entry door. He and Danny San Romani assembled the instructor's seat and student step before moving the GAT-1 from the workshop. You'll find the 1960s-vintage turquoise trainer on the north side of the workshop. We're seeking technical information on the trainer with the hopes of making it operational again.

**Washburn Tech adopts our Weasel:** In early January, several Washburn Institute of Technology students and their instructor "weaseled" out of class and came to the Combat Air Museum to see our Weasel. Eric Showalter is a collision repair technical instructor at Washburn Tech; he and his students partnered with the Combat Air Museum to restore and paint the Ryan Firebee drone now displayed on the west side of hangar 602. Before they arrived, Don Dawson, Gary Naylor and Danny San Romani extracted the 1945-vintage Studebaker M29 "Weasel" cargo carrier from hangar 604 and parked it on the flight line side of the hangar. Showalter and his students quickly loaded the small tracked vehicle on their trailer and departed for Washburn Tech. They will clean and paint the vehicle and install several parts not previously fitted. If the quality of their work on the Firebee is any indication of future performance, then CAM will be proud to display the completed Weasel.



Photo by Kevin Drewellow

Washburn Tech students loaded the Weasel for the trip to their school







# THE LAST DAM BUSTER

*The Eder dam after the attack*

## The Last Dam Buster

By Kevin Drewelow

May of 2018 marked the 75th anniversary of the Royal Air Force's bold attack upon the great dams of Germany. In under two months, 617 Squadron formed, trained and then struck several dams in the Ruhr valley with a secret, spinning bomb designed by Sir Barnes Wallis to skip across the surface of the water, sink and then detonate near the base of the dam, breaching it. The 1955 English movie "The Dam Busters" brought the story to the big screen. During the raid, 55 of the 133 bomber crewmen perished. Many more did not survive the war. By the time of the diamond anniversary, only two remained. Fred Sutherland, a Canadian, was the front gunner on the third Avro Lancaster to strike



Squadron Leader  
George Leonard "Johnny" Johnson, MBE, DFM

Fred Sutherland

the Eder dam, causing the breach. Johnnie Johnson was the English bomb aimer on the first Lancaster to attack the Sorpe. Just before this issue of Plane Talk went to press, sources announced the passing of Fred Sutherland at the age of 95. CBC News said, "In a later operation, Sutherland bailed out of a bomber and spent three months trying to escape Nazi-occupied Europe." Johnnie Johnson is the last man standing of the 133 Dam Busters of 617 Squadron. The world is fortunate Sutherland, Johnson and others like them volunteered for this and other very dangerous missions which shortened the war and changed world history.





**MISSION STATEMENT and GOALS of the COMBAT AIR MUSEUM**

"Through the efforts of dedicated friends and volunteers, our mission is to provide a center for education and for the preservation of military aircraft and artifacts by showing their importance to the world today."



2019

**CALENDAR of EVENTS**

**February**

- 1-Winter hours continue through end of month  
Museum open noon-4:30 p.m.
- No visitors admitted after 3:30 p.m.
- Museum open Sun noon to 4:30 p.m.
- 11-Membership Luncheon

**March**

- 1-Normal hours resume, Museum open  
Mon-Sat 9 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.,  
no visitors admitted after 3:30 p.m.
- Museum open Sun noon to 4:30 p.m.
- 10-Daylight Savings Time begins
- 11-14 Young Aviators Class

**April**

- 8-Membership Luncheon
- 21-Easter, Museum closed
- 27-Celebrity Pancake Feed

**May**

**June**

- 3-6 Young Aviators Class
- 10-Membership Luncheon

**July**

- 8-11 Young Aviators Class
- 29-Aug 1 Young Aviators Class

**August**

- 12-Membership Luncheon

**September**

- 28-Kansas Chocolate Festival  
Winged Foot Run

**October**

- 5-Girls in Aviation Day
- 14-Membership Luncheon

**November**

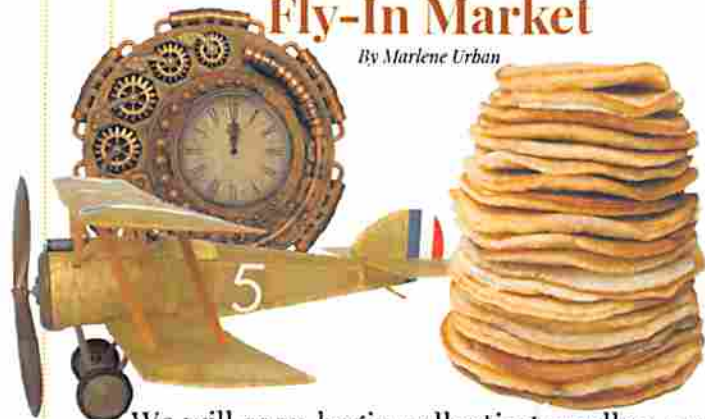
- 3-Daylight Savings time ends
- 28-Thanksgiving, Museum closed

**December**

- 9-Membership Luncheon
- 25-Christmas, Museum closed

**CAM seeking items for  
Celebrity Pancake Feed  
Fly-In Market**

*By Marlene Urban*



*Photo by Brigitte Isahn*

We will soon begin collecting smaller, new or gently used items and estate sale type items for the 2019 Fly-In Market which will be held in conjunction with the Celebrity Pancake Feed on April 27. We welcome cash donations; however, we will not accept clothing. All proceeds will be used to support the Museum's day-by-day operation. You may bring items to the Museum after March 1 and place them on a table in the gift shop office. We can offer some of the items through the gift shop before the event, so please bring them in any time after March 1. We also welcome lawn, garden, shop, exercise and camping equipment and will begin accepting these larger items after April 1.



Your membership is important to us.

Join the  
Combat Air Museum.

Learn more at  
[www.combatairmuseum.org](http://www.combatairmuseum.org)



continued from page 1

## “They were approaching until the F-14 radar locked on...”

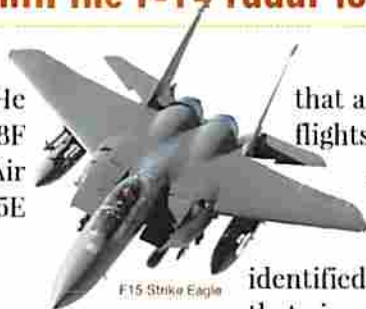
great for his specialty as all F-14s carried a RIO. He talked about the use of 'back-seaters' in the F/A-18F Hornet, the EA-18G Growler, and in the U.S. Air Force, the Weapons Systems Officer in the F-15E Strike Eagle.



On a typical mission, Joe's responsibilities as a RIO included directing the pilot with heading and altitude reference in order to engage the enemy. He would lock the radar onto the target (actually as many as six targets at once) and assist in selecting the use of the Tomcat's Sidewinder, Sparrow or Phoenix air-to-air missiles. He said the 'back seater' was always an extra pair of eyes, useful in seeing bogeys or surface-to-air missiles (SAMs). He then gave us some details about an actual engagement with two MiGs. They were approaching until the F-14 radar locked on in preparation for a missile launch, which caused the MiGs to immediately turn sharply away and retreat. One item of note was that the MiGs were flying in such close formation that initial radar imaging saw them as one passenger-size aircraft instead of two fighter aircraft.'



Joe was also qualified to operate the Tactical Air Reconnaissance Pod System (TARPS). He explained they carried the TARPS pod on one of the wing missile stations. He said all F-14 squadrons had three TARPS-qualified crews, and



F15 Strike Eagle

that a typical mission involved flights at 540 knots at 500 feet above ground level. He mentioned that the TARPS system often identified objects on the ground that aircrew could not spot due to the high speed at low altitude.

One of the other items Joe mentioned was his attendance at SERE (Survival-Evasion-Resistance-Escape) in winter. He said he'd never been so cold in his life, and that finding something to eat became a real concern early in the experience. He also mentioned 'the box', a confining space that was very difficult for any officer with even a touch of claustrophobia. He wasn't troubled by this, and because he was smaller than average, could go to sleep in 'the box', frustrating his 'captors.'

After his talk, Joe spent more time in answering questions from CAM members, providing them with specific information about his time in the U. S. Navy and on the F-14 Tomcat.

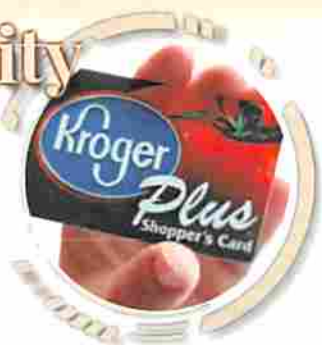


Chairman Howerter presents a certificate to Joe Fives

Photo by Kilo Hibbas



## Dillon's Community Rewards Program



If you shop at Dillon's and have a **Plus Shopper's Card**, you can help support the Combat Air Museum with just a phone call or a few keystrokes. Our Museum is benefiting from CAM members who have registered with Dillon's Community Rewards Program. Enrolling in this program will not increase your grocery bill and will not affect your fuel points.

Enrolling in the Community Rewards program is a one-time event and no longer requires annual registration. If you've already signed up, no further action is required. Go to <https://www.dillons.com/account/enrollCommunityRewards> Now to create a Dillon's account before enrolling in the Community Rewards program. You can also call 800.576.4377 and the Dillon's customer service representative will register you.

You'll need to provide them with the Combat Air Museum's new five-character Non-Profit Organization (NPO) account number, GA302. Thanks to your generosity, each quarter the Museum receives a check from Dillon's that really helps us maintain the collection and facilities and provide the classes and service our visitors enjoy.

Last year, Dillon's donated \$851 to CAM; that amount is less than the previous year because we have fewer donors than before. If you haven't joined, why not take a few moments now to do so? Dillon's and CAM will do the rest!

**Our Museum is benefiting from CAM members who have registered with Dillon's**

<https://www.dillons.com/account/enrollCommunityRewards>



Shop the CAM Gift Shop for Unique Gifts







**COMBAT AIR MUSEUM**  
7016 SE Forbes Avenue  
Topeka KS 66619-1444



PLANE TALK

ELECTRONIC SERVICE REQUESTED



Non-Profit Org.  
US POSTAGE  
**PAID**  
Topeka, KS 66603  
Permit #181

*Visit the Combat Air Museum for fun, information and an educational experience.*

## Treeclimbing Tiger Moth



From Flight magazine, 10 August 1951: "From Broxbourne, too, comes news (see photograph) of a treeclimbing Tiger Moth. Its achievement has prompted the following poetic gem (with apologies to the author of Trees) from Mr. H. A. Smith, one of the club's engineers: "



**"BIRD-NESTING:** Having deposited his machine neatly in the trees bordering Broxbourne airfield (see above), it appears that the pilot need only sit back and wait for his registration lettering to bring help."

To think that I should ever see  
A Tiger Moth up in a tree:  
A tree whose countenance is pressed  
Against the Tiger's oily chest,  
A tree whose leafy arms embrace  
This thing which came to her through  
space.  
A tree who may in summer wear  
A battered airscrew in her hair,  
And on her bosom shyly borne,  
A set of mainplanes, somewhat torn,  
While, lying close beside her heart,  
Is tightly pressed an undercart.  
A tree who held with tender care  
This navigator of the air,  
Until some men with tools and crane  
Her burden carried home again.  
Planes are repaired by fools like me,  
But how can we repair the tree?