

COMBAT AIR MUSEUM

December 2019 | January 2020
Vol. 35, No. 6



Cool temperatures and overcast skies did not stop the public from attending Girls in Aviation Day at the Combat Air Museum on Saturday, October 5. Lots of hands-on activities, aircraft to tour and an exciting flypast by four F-16s made for our best Girls in Aviation Day yet!

Over 200 Girl Scouts and 100 adults began the day at the Museum of the Kansas National Guard, where they broke into groups and moved through activities. They heard from Kansas Air and Army National Guard women pilots and maintainers, a flight nurse and a skydiver. The girls enjoyed a hands-on exploration of electrical circuits with Kansas STARBASE teachers, and toured the

museum. Then they moved to the Combat Air Museum for more activities.

At CAM, the Girls Scouts and adults ate their lunch and then joined the public, experiencing a wide range of aviation experiences. Inside the hangar, Bruce Couch helped kids build and fly paper airplanes. Rance Sackrider, an experienced skydiver, advised the children as they made parachutes from coffee filters. Student pilot Christine Marquardt and Marise Smirl taught the girls how to preflight the Museum's Fairchild UC-61. Children got to remove and install a spark plug on our Lycoming O-145 engine under the watchful eye of former Air Force maintenance officer Dennis Smirl. Deb Lamere

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COMBAT
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THE OFFICIAL NEWSLETTER OF THE
COMBAT
AIR MUSEUM

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MUSEUM HOURS

January 2 - February 28/29

Mon.-Sun. Noon - 4:30
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 Years Day, Easter,
Thanksgiving, Christmas Day

PLANE TALK
Newsletter Layout & Design
Nels Anderson

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

From the Chairman's Desk

By Gene Howerter, Chairman, Board of Directors



The Kansas Electric Cooperative publishes a monthly magazine entitled "Kansas Country Living" and sends it to their customers. After receiving my copy of the November issue, I contacted Vickie Estes, the editor, and she gave me permission to share the following information concerning Veterans Day. As some of you know, Kansas played an important role in establishing Veterans Day, recognized annually on November 11. Vickie spent time researching facts from the Department of Defense (DoD) and the National Archives and her article filled in some information I did not know. I would like to share some of the facts Vickie wrote about in her article, "Veterans Day."

Vickie noted Veterans Day does not have an apostrophe; it's not Veterans' or Veteran's. The DoD points out the day does not belong to one veteran or multiple veterans, so no apostrophe is needed.

Veterans Day was originally called Armistice Day and commemorated the "eleventh hour of the eleventh day of the eleventh month" of 1918 that signaled the end of World War I. The United States celebrated Armistice Day annually from 1926 and it only became a legal holiday in 1938.

What I learned from Vickie's research was that Raymond Weeks, a Navy veteran of World War II, had the idea to expand Armistice Day to honor all veterans, not just those who died in World War I. He organized a day of festivities on November 11, 1947, in Birmingham, Alabama honoring all veterans who had served in the US armed forces.

Now the rest of the story; I had often heard what Vickie had detailed and wrote concerning Veterans Day having its roots in Emporia, Kansas. Here is one of the missing pieces written in her article which set me straight. She wrote, "In 1952, Alvin J. King, an Emporia, Kansas shoe salesman who lost a close nephew in World War II, worked with Rep. Edward H. Rees, also of Emporia, to change the law." Rees introduced a bill in Congress to change November 11 from a day which commemorated the end of World War I into a day to "pay proper homage to all veterans of all wars." I personally like and approve of the wording "all veterans" rather than all veterans of all *armed forces*. For me any individual who takes time to serve this nation deserves to be honored on Veterans Day.

President Dwight D. Eisenhower, a fellow Kansan himself, signed the law on October 8, 1954, changing the name from Armistice Day to Veterans Day. In 2003, King was recognized as the creator of Veterans Day and Emporia, Kansas was declared the founding city of the Veterans Day holiday. As a lifelong Kansan I am proud to know that we hold this wonderful distinction right here in our own back yard. The city of Topeka, Kansas held numerous and varied events in honor of those who served in all services again this year. And finally I am pleased to say we hosted a group of veterans and their care givers at the Combat Air Museum on Veterans Day last month. **We made the day very special for each of the veterans who attended.** ♦

Photo by Noah Albro, Command and General Staff College

Fly Like a Girl!

By Dennis Smirl

Our guest at the October membership meeting was United States Air Force (USAF) Major Bri Patterson. Currently attending the prestigious U. S. Army Command and General Staff College at Fort Leavenworth, Kansas, Major Patterson and members of her family drove to the Combat Air Museum to enjoy a covered dish luncheon and then share career highlights and some 'insider' information on flying multi-engine aircraft in support of the mission of the USAF.

The purpose of the U. S. Army Command and General Staff College is to provide continuing education for promising and able field grade officers (in the USAF and Army, majors and lieutenant colonels) with the idea that graduates of such a program will increase their skills as agile, innovative, and adaptive leaders within increasingly complex and uncertain environments. More specifically, the mission of Air Force training within the Command and General Staff College is to educate and prepare future senior leaders on operational concepts, emphasizing air power applications while supporting the ground personnel.

Major Patterson is a T-1 instructor pilot, recently from Joint Base San Antonio. As a pilot, Major Patterson has more than 2,600 flying hours in various aircraft. She informed the group that the Air Force has two tracks for new pilots. For those who intend to fly cargo and tanker aircraft, the Raytheon T-1 Jayhawk is the designated trainer. Pilots selected to fly fighter aircraft train on the Northrop T-38C Talon.

Major Patterson, a native of Algonquin, Illinois, told the group that she enlisted in the United States Air Force Reserve in 2002 and served as a reservist until 2007, when she was accepted into Officer Training School (OTS) at Maxwell Air Force Base in Alabama. Upon completion of OTS she was

commissioned as a second lieutenant in the USAF and then began pilot training at Pueblo, Colorado in 2008.

The Major's first piloting experience was flying the Cirrus SR20, an advanced single-engine aircraft. Upon completing the Cirrus SR20 syllabus, she transitioned to the Beechcraft T-34C Turbo-Mentor, an airframe

derived from the earlier Beechcraft Bonanza. Providing significantly more performance than the Cirrus SR20, Major Patterson's success with the T-34C led to training in the Raytheon T-1 at Vance Air Force Base near Enid, Oklahoma. While she was at Vance, Bri often flew into Forbes Field on training missions, where she learned about the Combat Air Museum while enjoying barbeque lunches at the Jetaway Café! The assignment to the T-1 meant that Patterson would be flying 'heavies' in cargo delivery or air-refueling missions.



Upon completion of the T-1 school, she was assigned to a C-17 squadron flying out of Hickam Air Force Base, Honolulu, Hawaii. She said that normal progression to aircraft commander in the C-17 would require 2-3 years of experience for the average Air Force pilot.

Major Patterson's next and most recent assignment was to a squadron flying the Beechcraft MC-12W Liberty. The MC-12W is an intelligence, surveillance and reconnaissance (ISR) aircraft of the USAF acquired for Project Liberty, which includes



Photo by Kilo Hobbs

Continued from pg 3

Operations ENDURING FREEDOM and IRAQI FREEDOM. A medium-altitude aircraft, the MC-12W is based on the Beechcraft King Air 350ER. The MC-12W now equips the Air National Guard's 137th Special Operations Wing at Oklahoma City, Oklahoma.



Photo by Kilo Hobbs

CAM Chairman Gene Howerter and Major Patterson

Once Major Patterson completes her assignment at the Command and General Staff College, she will transfer to Joint Base Andrews (formerly Andrews Air Force Base) in Maryland where she will be flying the USAF's Boeing C-32 (military version of the Boeing 757 passenger liner), transporting U. S. government VIPs on flights all over the world. While assigned at JB Andrews, Major Patterson's husband Grant and her two children Gavin and Riley will accompany her. ♦

Upcoming Events

December

9-Membership Luncheon

Dr. John Curatola will speak about "General Curtis LeMay: Combat Leader, Innovator, War Hero or War Criminal?"

January

1-New Year's Day, Museum closed

2- Winter hours begin, Museum open noon-4:30 p.m.

February

1-Winter hours continue through the end of the month

10-Membership Luncheon

New and Renewing Members

New:

James Baird & family | Debra & Donald Butz
Juan Chavarria & family
Donald & Kathy Jensen | Caleb Klein
Richard McCarthy | Juan Moreno & family
Jim Pinegar & family | Lawrence Oxenberg

Renewing:

Nathan & Beth Benfield | Jon & Peggy Boursaw
Charie Broughton | Linda Coash
Kevin & Susan Drewelow | Donald & Rebecca Duncan
Joe Fives & family | Justin & Leslie Gordon
Charles & Dagmar Gorges | David Gurske & family
Chuck & Peggy Hanna | Paul & Jean Henson
Al Holloway | David Houser
Terry Love | Samantha Lowell & family
Larry R. Madden | Jerry & Karen Milbradt
William Morgan | Todd Morgenstern & family
George Orff | Richard Painter
Dr. George & Linda Parkins | John & Janice Pickett
Tad & Dee Pritchett | Sharon Rosenow
Sue Ann & Rod Seel | Tom & Pat Thomas
Don Thun | Chuck & Marlene Urban
Conrad & Sharon Youngblom

In Memorium

Rev. David M. Hitchcock, USAF (Ret.)

CAM member #5433

A member since 2014, Rev. Hitchcock passed away on September 27, 2019

Anderson W. Chandler

CAM member #3225

January 21, 1926–October 29, 2019

Andy served as president of the Kansas Bankers Association as well as many other associations. He will always be remembered for his avid feelings and involvement with the Boy Scouts of America; however, Andy's first love was for family and the person at the top of his list was without doubt his brother, George Chandler. George was an ace fighter pilot in the South Pacific during World War II and later served as head of the Second Yamamoto Mission Association. Andy was often seen at the Museum just looking at the George Chandler display case along with a single picture of himself taken under his B-17G. Andy was the crew chief and flight engineer of the plane while stationed at Keesler Field, Biloxi, Mississippi during World War II. Andy enjoyed coming to our bi-monthly membership gatherings and listening to the speakers' presentations. ♦

Chinook Restoration has begun!

By Kevin Drewelow



Photo by Kevin Drewelow

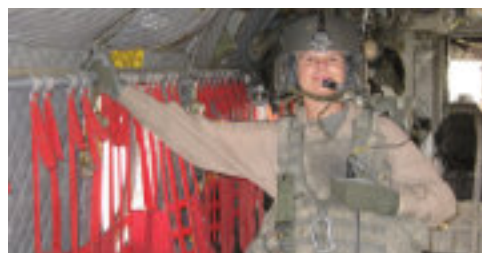
The Combat Air Museum's Boeing CH-47D Chinook 85-24346 now looks more like a helicopter than a boxcar since volunteers from Delta Company, 7-158th Aviation Combat Brigade, United States Army Reserve at Aviation Support Facility Olathe assisted Museum members and others in reassembling the historic flying machine.

While the temperature was agreeable, high winds ahead of a cold front plus the promise of late afternoon rain kept the crew busy. BRB Contractors provided a crane and operator, and Million Air loaned us a telescopic boom lift. The Army Reservists brought the special tools required to lift and install the aft pylon, combining transmission and forward transmission. All the time and hard work that Deb Lamere, Don White, Brenda Dole and her son Juan Chavarria, Jr. put into cleaning and preparing the aft pylon and helicopter paid off when the reservists inspected the components and quickly had the aft pylon in the air and then on the helicopter, where they quickly installed the main attaching bolts. The team then made quick work of installing the combining transmission in the forward part of the aft pylon. After a brief lunch break, the team installed the forward transmission. The team collected tools and restored the ropes and stanchions around 346 just as the rain arrived.

Doug Brown, a photojournalist with WIBW TV, captured some of the early lifting and interviewed

Deb for a segment that aired that evening. You can see the segment on the Combat Air Museum's Facebook page in an entry made on November 20 or at <https://www.wibw.com/content/news/Historic-helicopter-arrives-at-Combat-Air-Museum-565238242.html>

There is much more to be done before we are ready to install the rotor heads and blades. We must still remove mold from the helicopter's interior and source some parts, some of which will be very expensive. Please consider making a donation to help restore the Chinook. You can deliver or mail your donation to the Combat Air Museum at 7016 SE Forbes Avenue, Topeka, KS 66619-1444 or make an online donation at <https://www.gofundme.com/f/ch47chinook> Winter weather will limit but not prevent us working on the helicopter and you're welcome to join us. **Deb Lamere is supervising the restoration of 346 and you can reach her by email at chinookfe@combatairmuseum.com** ♦



IN THE HANGAR: North American's F-86 Sabre- A Mid-Century Marvel

Part Three | *By Dennis Smirl*

To be complete, any F-86 Sabre story must include coverage of the D, K and L models. But these Sabres were so different they started development as the XF-95 as North American Aviation and the United States Air Force (USAF) thought the big-radome aircraft was so unlike the other F-86 models that it deserved its own numerical designation. Congress was not so inclined; the Air Force managed a quick and graceful turnaround, re-designating the big-radome bird as the F-86D.

To get the radar power the new breed of interceptors required, a new radar system with a big disc had to be developed. The Hughes AN/APG-36 vacuum-tubed all-weather radar was bulky and heavy and the entire nose section of the original Sabre design had to be enlarged and heavily modified. Rather than an almost circular intake, the inlet duct on the F-86D looked like a toothless smile under a big nose. It wasn't pretty but it worked, and it provided enough air for the General Electric J47 engine and an afterburner.

Having an afterburner meant consuming a lot more fuel which necessitated larger tanks within the fuselage. Larger tanks meant a bigger, wider fuselage. When all the changes were put together, the F-86D shared only a 25% parts commonality with the F-86A, E, and F. Other differences included a clamshell canopy and very different external fuel tanks.

Weapons for this generation of Sabres aircraft included 50 caliber machine guns and 2.5 inch folding fin rockets. The idea was that one hit with the 2.5 inch folding-fin rocket would disable a Soviet bomber, while two or more hits would probably take the enemy aircraft out of the air.

It didn't work out that way. The 2.5 inch folding-fin rocket was a terrible idea. The missiles were

unguided and once launched often chose unusual paths, never coming close to the intended target. Even worse for the F-86D (which depended entirely on the 2.5-inch rocket as its armament) was the tendency of the folding fins to break away from the rocket on launch and get sucked into the jet intake of the launching aircraft. Incidents and accidents occurred, and although the Air Force persevered, the folding-fin rocket was never a success. The F-86D was, at best, a marginally successful interceptor, severely limited because its only armament was a tray of 24 folding-fin rockets.

The F-86D evolved into the F-86L, with 981 D models converted to Ls. Still armed with the folding fin rockets, the rebuilt aircraft were equipped with new electronics, a more ergonomic cockpit, a better wing and an upgraded engine. Data link antennae were added to the underside of the L models, and that link was to SAGE (Semi-Automated Ground Environment) which allowed ground operators to 'fly' the L model all the way to an ideal firing point for the folding-fin rockets. Once the 24 rockets were fired, the pilot took control of the aircraft and flew it back to the air base to refuel and rearm. The L model was a huge improvement over the D, mainly in the ease of flying and better fuel economy with the improved engine, but the basic concept, because of the unreliability of the folding-fin rockets, remained disastrously flawed.

North Atlantic Treaty Organization member nations wanted none of the problem. They ordered a special version of the F-86D (the F-86K) which included an Autonetics MG-4 fire control system, Hughes APG-37 radar, four 20 mm M24A1 cannon with 132 rounds per gun, and the more ergonomic cockpit. North American built 120 of these aircraft and Fiat assembled 221. It's been suggested that this



North American F-86 D at the National Museum of the United States Air Force

PLANE TALK



Boeing CH-47D Chinook...In late October volunteers spent a day mooring the Chinook to its parking spot just outside hangar 604. We used wire ropes, turnbuckles and other hardware to tie down the helicopter in such a way that it will hold the helicopter in place but not present a trip hazard to visitors; see the last issue of *Plane Talk* for design details. Unseasonable weather delayed initial reassembly of the Chinook, but did not

prevent CAM members Brenda Dole, her son Juan Chavarria, Jr. and Don White from helping Chinook project director Deb Lemare clean and prepare the helicopter. They spent hours cleaning bird nests and residue from the backbone of the Chinook

and inside the aft pylon. On November 20, we installed some major components as detailed on page 5 of this issue.

Lockheed EC-121T Warning Star...CAM volunteer and member of our Board of Directors Wes Barricklow took advantage of some great weather in late October to paint the radome on our Warning Star. It's amazing how a couple of hours of work and some paint has transformed the appearance of the big Lockheed!



Beech SNB-5...Our Twin Beech now sports a new tail wheel tire and tube, thanks to the efforts of Joe Wulfkuhle, Don Dawson, Danny

San Romani and Kevin Drewelow. Kevin and Joe found the vintage Goodrich tail wheel to be a bit different than modern aircraft wheels, using a large snap ring in place of more common tie bolts, but it all went together well. Don Dawson does a great job of maintaining our ground support equipment and routinely checks and services tire pressures on the Museum's aircraft. We have many more tires and tubes to replace in our fleet so the work is far from over.

North American F-86H Sabre...Danny San Romani is repairing the fairings that fit between the fuselage and tail surfaces. He's found and replaced many rusted and broken nut plates and is treating a few spots of light corrosion. ♦



Photo by Kevin Drewelow

Photo by Kevin Drewelow

Photo by Kevin Drewelow

Combat Air Museum Raises Admission and Membership Prices

By Gene Howarter, Chairman of the Board of Directors of the Combat Air Museum

The Combat Air Museum last increased general Admission and Membership prices in 2000. As you well know from your own experiences, many of our daily, monthly and annual operating expenses required to run the facility, utilities, supplies and insurances to name a few, have increased exponentially over the last 20 years.

One of the key performance indicators we track on a monthly and annual basis is the average admission rate paid per visitor. We've seen that rate as trending flat for a number of years now while operating costs continue to rise.

For these reasons the CAM Board of Directors increased our admission and membership rates as of October 28, 2019.

The new admission rates have been increased by a modest \$1 per visitor as follows:

| | | |
|-----------------------------------|------------|--------------------------------|
| Youth aged 5-17 | \$5 | |
| Visitors 18 years and over | \$7 | |
| Currently serving military | \$5 | |
| Youth tour groups | \$3 | (an increase of \$0.50) |
| Adult tour groups | \$6 | (an increase of \$0.50) |

Annual membership dues have increased by \$5 for the Individual and Family classifications, with Life membership by a little more.

As most members usually add a little extra donation when paying their dues, we hope that you will still be kind and consider continuing this generous practice.

| | |
|-------------------------------------|----------------|
| Individual annual membership | \$35 |
| Family annual membership | \$45 |
| Lifetime membership | \$1,200 |



This small adjustment will help keep CAM moving forward with the same sort of progress that you have witnessed over the last few years, with some demonstrable capital improvements to the Museum facilities and operations.

Thank you, members, for the continued support of your Museum.

Visitors

1203 people from 37 states and Brazil, Canada, Germany, Great Britain, Italy, the Netherlands, New Zealand, the Philippines, Spain and Switzerland visited the Combat Air Museum in September. In October, 1160 visitors from 37 states, Puerto Rico, Brazil, Germany, Great Britain, Italy and Poland toured your Museum.

Museum Notes

By Kevin Drevelow



Photo by Kilo Hobbs

Winged Foot 5K/10K Run and 4K Walk...The weather was splendid for running and walking on September 28 as the Combat Air Museum hosted its 15th annual Winged Foot 5K/10K Run and 4K Walk. Plenty of volunteers, many but not all CAM members, turned out to make this important Museum fundraiser successful. The cadets of the Highland Park High School Air Force Junior Reserve Officer Training Corps assisted with many duties before, during and after the event. CAM will use the proceeds to cover winter operations when our visitor count declines due to adverse weather.

Capital Projects Committee...This group of volunteers meets on “Fix-It Fridays” to repair and improve the Museum’s infrastructure. Recently, they hung an electric heater from the ceiling of the carpentry shop in hangar 604. Until now, volunteers working in the shop in the winter relied upon an anemic space heater that provided more moral support than British Thermal Units! The new 220 volt heater will allow the shop to be used more often and more comfortably than ever before. “Fix-It Fridays” are held on the second and fourth Fridays of each month. Chairman Gene Howerter added shelves in the kitchen and then built a new fence around the air conditioners on the west side of hangar 602.

Photo by Kevin Drevelow



Halloween at CAM...

Sharon Nolde was the best dressed volunteer at CAM on Halloween this year when she arrived to run our gift shop!



Photo by Kilo Hobbs

Fall Fashion – The “Chinook Look”: Nels Anderson, the Museum’s graphics designer, created a special logo to commemorate the arrival of our historic Boeing

CH-47D Chinook. We just received a shipment of fleece sweatshirts and long and short sleeve t-shirts in a variety of colors featuring the Chinook design. Stop by the Museum gift shop to pick yours and some for your friends.

Flight Simulator update...Nelson Hinman, Jr. has assembled our new flight simulator system and at press time was conducting system operational checks. Nelson has consulted with Randy Hemm, who helped design and build the Museum’s first flight simulator. The flight simulator will return to service very soon.

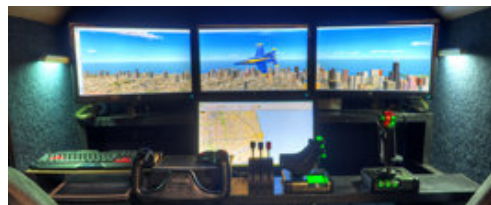


Photo by Kilo Hobbs



Photo by Kevin Drevelow

Our Phantom has a mascot: Museum member Joe Wulfskuhle spent time around F-4 Phantoms during his Air Force tour in Southeast Asia and thought something was missing from our jet. He made a small replica of “Spook” the unofficial mascot of Phantom squadrons around the world and you’ll find Spook on the left wing of our F-4. Learn more about “Spook” at <http://www.8tfw.org/pages/spook.htm> ♦

Continued from pg 6



was the aircraft the F-86D/L should have been, but hindsight often makes the better choice.

As this series has shown, from the XP-86 to the F-86L, North American's Sabres went



from straight winged airplanes with unreliable and anemic jet engines to sweeping the skies above Korea and well into the Cold War for both America and its allies. ♦

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Ways You Can Support the Combat Air Museum



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. Dillon's Stores donates millions to non-profit organizations. Our Museum benefits 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/enrollCommunityRewardsNow> 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!

Amazon Smile *

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Every item available for purchase on www.amazon.com is also available on AmazonSmile (smile.amazon.com) at the same price. You will see eligible products marked "Eligible for AmazonSmile donation" on their product detail pages. You use the same account on Amazon.com and AmazonSmile. Your shopping cart, Wish List, wedding or baby registry, and other account settings are also the same.

To shop at AmazonSmile simply go to smile.amazon.com from the web browser on your computer or mobile device. You may also want to add a bookmark to smile.amazon.com to make it even easier to return and start your shopping at AmazonSmile. On your first visit to AmazonSmile smile.amazon.com, select "Combat Air Museum" to receive donations from eligible purchases before you begin shopping. Amazon will remember your selection, and then every eligible purchase you make at smile.amazon.com will result in a donation. To get started, visit <https://smile.amazon.com>

Combined Federal Campaign (CFC) *

If you are eligible to donate through the Combined Federal Campaign, please consider contributing to the Combat Air Museum. Your donation will be put to good use in one of our education, restoration or maintenance projects. Be sure to add our Museum's CFC code number, **59834**, when making your donation.

A Ride on the Wild Side

By Dave Murray

On Wednesday, November 6, volunteer Chuck Watson and I joined 27 other civilians at the 190th Air Refueling Wing (ARW) base at Forbes Field for a training mission in the skies over Kansas and Missouri, refueling a Northrop B-2A Spirit 'Stealth' bomber from Whiteman Air Force Base. Some distinguished guests were amongst the civil leaders on the mission, including Lieutenant Governor Lynn Rogers and several members of his staff.

Potentially bad news greeted us when we assembled at 8 a.m. for a preflight debriefing by Major Kimberly Marling, 190 ARW Wing Executive Officer. The Boeing KC-135R Stratotanker aircraft designated for our mission had been redirected and the next craft available was still in maintenance, and thus our trip would be delayed by an hour. Not the worst news as we got to do an hour of training in the boom operators' flight simulator on base. After this extra training we all felt that we were "almost" qualified to step in should the boom operator on our flight get sick – obviously this is a joke and it takes many months longer than one sim operation to train as an efficient 'boomer' and years on the job to take one's rightful place in this fine unit.

On that cold and crisp day, we took off from Forbes Field and headed straight for Joplin and Springfield, Missouri where we soon met up with the B-2. The Spirit pilot was also training on his or her first refueling flight and the first boom connection had to be aborted abruptly but safely. Crouching in the belly of the KC-135, we did notice the maneuver but, as we had been briefed and warned about this possibility during our flight sim training, we knew what had transpired.

Thereafter the hookups went smoothly and all 29 of us civilians got a chance in turn to lie next to the 'boomer' to observe one of the hookups and decoupling of the two birds.

While the temperature was reasonable inside the body of the KC-135, the pilot had thoughtfully turned up the heating. Being down in the boom area and shielded only by the thin skin of the plane, at about

260 knots, a chill definitely crept into the old bones; thank goodness I brought a warm jacket to fend off the cold!



Photo by Chuck Hanna

Each of us also got to visit the cockpit to observe the two pilots in their seats of a jet that was originally built in 1960 and updated many times in the 59 year old craft's history. The Kansas Air National Guard technicians have maintained their craft superbly and all of the members of this fine Air Force organization are justifiably proud of their unit and their immaculate aircraft. Kudos to the men and women of the 190th Air Refueling Wing of the Kansas Air National Guard and a large thank you from Chuck and myself on a job well done – and for bringing us home safely. ♦



Photo by 190 ARW

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Permit #181



COMBAT AIR MUSEUM
7016 SE Forbes Avenue
Topeka, KS 66619



PLANE TALK

ELECTRONIC SERVICE REQUESTED

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

One More Roll

COMBAT AIR MUSEUM **12**

By Captain L. Coffee, USN (Ret)

We toast our faithful comrades
now fallen from the sky
and gently caught by God's own hand
to be with him on high.

To dwell among the soaring clouds
they knew so well before
from dawn patrol and victory roll
at heaven's very door

And as we fly among them there
we're sure to hear their plea-
"Take care my friend; watch your six,
and do one more roll... just for me."

