

COMBAT AIR MUSEUM

✈ ✈ ✈ Plane Talk ✈ ✈ ✈

The Official Newsletter of the Combat Air Museum

Forbes Field Topeka, Kansas

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Mike Welch, right, presenting a Plaque of Appreciation to Butch Teppe, center, President, and Brad Renyer, Topeka Manager, of Victor L. Phillips Co.

Speaker shares Battle of the Bulge and Nuremberg experiences

Our Christmas Membership Luncheon brought a capacity crowd and included recognitions, announcements, and an excellent presentation by our guest speaker.

The meeting began with a presentation of a plaque to representatives of **Victor L. Phillips Company (VLP)** from Kansas City and Topeka for their contributions of equipment used to lay a new water line for Hangar 602 last June. **Mike Welch**, who donated some 70+ hours of his time to operate the equipment and help lay the new line, made the presentation of a plaque to **Messrs. Butch Teppe**, President, and **Brad Renyer**, Topeka Rental Manager of VLP. **Clyde Adams**, Sales Representative of VLP, was also present.

Gene Howerter also recognized several volunteers who work to make our Membership Luncheons a success. They included **Marlene Urban**, **Marcella Briery**, **Mary Naylor**, **Helen Wiedle**, and **Deloris Zink**. **Tad Pritchett** introduced a group of guests who are members of the **Battle of the Bulge Association**.

Dick Trupp talked about the fund raising campaign for the F-86H project (see article on this page), and also

See "Speaker," con't. on page 5

Help us complete the F-86H Restoration Project

This restoration project has been underway at the Museum for a long time! We are now, however, close to the finish line but in need of just over \$6,000 for the final materials, primer and paint to complete the restoration.

The plane will be finished in the final paint scheme and marking as it was on active duty with the Massachusetts Air National Guard in the 1960s. We will be displaying the completed plane in the Museum's collection, and we believe it will be an outstanding exhibit.

To date we have reached approximately 25% of the funds needed, and we are now appealing for your help to reach our financial target. This would be a great opportunity for you to help us finish the project.

Please consider what you can do to help. If each member gave \$30, \$40, or even \$50 we would very quickly attain our goal of \$6,000.

Please help us reach the magic target and, thus, help us create this outstanding addition to the Museum's collection.

Dick Trupp

F-86H Campaign Chairman

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Doug Jacobs

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Dick Trupp

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.

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

Closed New Year's Day, Easter,

Thanksgiving, Christmas Day

Newsletter**Editing & Design**

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Plane Talk, the official newsletter
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of Topeka, Kansas,
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Your comments are welcomed.

In Memoriam**Margaret Knehans**

Topeka

July 14, 1932 - January 18, 2011

28-year member #308

CAM lost a long time supporter to cancer with the passing of **Margaret Knehans**. Margaret was a behind-the-scenes supporter whom we usually saw at Museum events such as the Pancake Feed.

She taught school for 37 years and was a volunteer with several organizations. One of these was the Topeka Shawnee County Library. As the

library accumulated books for its annual Friends of the Library sale, she and her husband of 55 years, **Ralph**, would watch for aviation-related books that might go with CAM's fledgling library. They purchased these books and then donated them to CAM. We can document well over four hundred books donated by Ralph and Margaret, and there are certainly numbers more that came in un-documented.

An even greater contribution from Margaret was her willingness, patience, and understanding to allow Ralph to spend the vast amount of time and effort with CAM in support of his love of aviation and aviation history. Ralph has always been an ambassador-at-large for Combat Air Museum. He lead the fund raising campaign to procure the Meyers OTW and is a former member of the Board of Directors. He remains one of our oft-used tour guides and comes out to walk around with visitors as they go through the Museum. Without Margaret's support, it would have been difficult for Ralph to put as much of himself into this Museum as he has. ➔

New Supporters

LCDR Walter Hoeg, USNR (RET)

Steve & Zona Hudkins (Lifetime)

Steve Kean

Rex, Robin, Max, Makade, &

Makenna Orton

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Merton Wilch



Rearrangement of artifacts makes for some new displays

New exhibits have gone up around the Museum thanks to the efforts of **Dick Trupp**, **Gene Howerter**, **Dave Murray**, and **Larry Mann**. The exhibits were formed around artifacts and items that have been with CAM for a number of years.

The first exhibit can be seen as people come through the Hangar 602 entrance hallway to the Gift Shop. The wall case has had, for quite some time, two World War II German U-Boat models in it with signage about the Battle of the Atlantic, and small photocopies of period posters about the convoys and U-boats. One submarine is a remote control model, over five feet long. The second is a plastic model about 20 inches long with a cutaway hull section and detailed interior. Many times visitors looked at the two models without reading the signage about US Army Air Forces and US Navy air actions against U-boats. The visitors would ask why an aviation museum was displaying submarine models. We had a story in the exhibit, but we needed to present it in a better fashion.

Dick and Gene took on the project and began planning how to better present the aviation side of the story. **Danny San Romani** looked through our boneyard of model airplanes and found we had examples of aircraft involved with the Battle of the Atlantic. Some were ready to go into the case as built, one needed to be built from a kit, and a couple more needed to be repainted in appropriate markings. The collection included a hunter-killer team of a TBM *Avenger* and FM2 *Wildcat* such as those flown from escort carriers in the Battle of the Atlantic. There was a J2F *Duck*, B-24D *Liberator*, a Navy blimp kit, and a PV-1 *Ventura*.



(Above) The refurbished Battle of the Atlantic exhibit.
(Left) The M16A1 exhibit.

Dick contacted **Larry Mann** and turned over the *Duck* and *Liberator* for repainting, and the blimp kit for building. The *Avenger*, *Wildcat*, and *Ventura* were in correct markings already. Larry completed the work on the models, and modified the B-24D so that it became a PB4Y-1 *Liberator* with a ball turret on its nose.

A large nautical chart of the North Atlantic Ocean became a center backdrop of the exhibit. Dave rewrote and printed out new signage. Dick placed a third U-boat model in the exhibit, this being the U-505, captured by a US Navy Task Group on June 4, 1944. The group was formed around the escort carrier USS GUADALCANAL (CVE-60) and five destroyer escorts. Today, U-505 is on exhibit in the Museum of Science and Industry in Chicago, IL.

Dick and Gene arranged the models in the exhibit case and added patches for the First and Sixth US Army Air Forces, whose aircraft also participated in the Battle of the Atlantic. Dick added a chart and three figures depicting merchant shipping losses during different phases of the Battle of the Atlantic, and the refurbished exhibit was complete.

Five more exhibits are also up due to the efforts of Dick, with Dave providing appropriate signage.

Some time in the past, the Museum acquired a number of oversize, wooden training aids for combat equipment from Fort Riley. They have been out and about in Hangar 604, but not really close for people to look at. Dick placed a 40mm grenade launcher, a "walkie-talkie" radio receiver-transmitter, and two wood dummy artillery rounds in one exhibit case. A separate pedestal holds a wood mock-up of an M34A1 sight unit used for pointing weapons such as mortars, and a wooden dummy mortar round.

See "New displays," con't. on page 4

Rare WW II photos left on CAM's doorstep

We'd like to learn more about them.

On a Sunday in October 2010 an envelope containing 23 rare WWII photos was left, anonymously, at the entrance door to the Museum. The images show the arrival of the original Japanese surrender delegation on the island of Ie Shima, Okinawa, in two "Betty" bombers (Mitsubishi G4M-1) shortly after noon on 19 August 1945.

The delegation of 16 military and civilian representatives disembarked from the two bombers and assembled in the shade, under the wing of an American C-54 Skymaster transport plane. There they were addressed by the island American commanders who briefed them about the forthcoming flight to the Philippines to meet with military representatives for General Douglas MacArthur. The Japanese delegation then boarded the C-54 for the trip to Manila, there to receive the terms for Allied occupation of the Japanese homeland and formal Japanese surrender. The crew of the two Bettys were detained overnight on Ie Shima until the surrender delegation returned from Manila the following day.

The WW II photographer who took these images is unknown, as is the 2010 donor of the photographs. The Curator at the Museum would like to discover who the donor is, in order to find out more about the original photographer.

A number of published accounts about the end of Pacific hostilities do not cover the interim period of planning and jump directly from the Imperial Rescript on the Termination of the War by Emperor Hirohito on August 15 (Japan Standard Time) to the September 2nd signing of the formal surrender documents in Tokyo Harbor. However many procedural arrangements had to be finalized between August 15 and September 2, including the arrival of American occupation forces on the main island of Japan on August 28.

These images (and others already published, notably by the US Naval Historical Center and *Life Magazine*) help portray the beginning of that process.



CAM collection photos included in this book

Recently, **Lieutenant Colonel Rick Rodrigues**, USA (RET) donated a book to CAM that includes photos from our collection. Originally published in 2006, the book is *Aircraft Markings of the Strategic Air Command 1946-1953*, published by McFarland & Company, Inc., ISBN-13: 978-0-7864-2496-6 and ISBN-10: 0-7864-2496-6.

Colonel Rodrigues was traveling through Topeka on his way to Salina, Kansas, and stopped by the Museum to give us a copy of the book. Three images in this book are from our collection. One is of a 55th Strategic Reconnaissance Wing Boeing RB-50 *Superfortress* and two are of 90th Bomb Wing Boeing B-29 *Superfortress* aircraft.



"New displays," con't. from page 3

In Hangar 602, Dick placed an exhibit by the UH-1H *Huey* that holds a very realistic looking 2:1 scale mock-up of an M16A1 Assault Rifle. Unlike the wooden mock-ups, this is a precision-built aide with moving parts. It appears to have the same plastic as the actual weapon. There are cutaway sections in the gun, showing metal and plastic internal parts. Several dummy, metal rounds are included with the aide, also in a 2:1 scale.

To enhance three exhibit cases showcasing drone engines, Dick built a cradle that now supports two wooden wings that were once on target drones. He placed these on top of one of the cases.

Dick's most recent work involved some ordnance pylons and racks, typically found on F-4 *Phantom* fighters. Four assemblies have lain on a pallet under the F-105 for several years and Dick figured out a way to better display them. He found a low, roll-around, metal frame box and had a wood cradle built to set on the top of the box. Two multiple ejector racks (MERs) and two outboard ordnance pylons now have their own spots on the cradle and look like they are on exhibit rather than just piled together on a pallet. They are under the F-105. Dave will make appropriated signage for the items. →

"Speaker," con't. from page 1

asked members to start saving items we can use for the April 2011 Pancake Feed Silent Auction.

Gene spoke about the upcoming Kansas Sesquicentennial and that Combat Air Museum will join with the Museum of the Kansas National Guard for a celebration of armed forces on June 4 and 5. Gene has taken point for getting events set up for CAM for that weekend. Plans are to include a fly in and have static aircraft displays on the ramp outside the Museum, a classic car show on Saturday and an antique car show on Sunday. Military reenactments, a pancake feed, and a display of military vehicles by the Military Vehicle Preservation Association are some of the events scheduled for the National Guard Museum.

Gene talked about a new highway sign for the Museum along the southbound lanes of US Highway 75, north of Topeka. The existing sign disappeared last summer in a tornado, and despite a couple of members driving county roads in that area, no remains were ever found. **Mr. Steve Kean** of Dawson, Nebraska, drives US 75 frequently, and noticed the sign was gone, and called the Museum about it. He spoke with Dick and Gene during subsequent calls and donated \$700 for a new sign. He made the donation on his and his late father's behalf. The new sign was placed on the frame and base of a sign we used to have along Interstate 70.

Klio Hobbs, who has done several series of photographs of the Museum, showed his latest creation of CAM. It is a panoramic view of Hangar 602 that is actually a composite of some 49 exposures. Klio used a tall platform ladder and shot from the east (hangar door) end of the hangar toward the west end. The view is impressive as it includes almost the entire width and height of the hangar. Unframed prints are available in the Gift Shop for \$15. Framed prints sell for \$45.

Gene presented several new clothing items that are now on sale in the Gift Shop. The merchandise comes from **Zona's Engraved Creations**, located in North Topeka. The owner, **Zona Hudkins**, has a long time association with CAM. She is the daughter of **Marcella and the late Bill Briery**. The new items include ash colored pullover sweatshirts and short sleeve T-shirts with the CAM wings logo, and long and short sleeve white T-shirts with a color image of our C-47, *Kilroy is Here*. Other samples included the dark blue polo shirt with CAM's winged logo and a T-shirt with a small CAM logo on the left chest.

Tad Pritchett then introduced our guest speaker for the Membership Luncheon, **Mr. Jim Sharp** of Manhattan, Kansas, a World War II veteran who served with the 1st Infantry Division. Mr. Sharp was involved with the Battle of the Bulge, the remainder of the Rhineland Campaign, and



Tad Pritchett presents a Certificate of Appreciation to Jim Sharp, center, as Gene Howerter looks on.

was Sergeant of the Guard at the Nuremberg trials of the Major War Criminals after the end of the war. He published his record of military service titled *Diary of a Combat Infantryman: From the Bulge to Bavaria*. Mr. Sharp earned three battle stars for action in the Battle of the Bulge, the Rhineland and Central Europe campaigns. He earned a Bronze Star for actions at the Rhine River crossing. As he began his presentation, Dave Murray held a flag that Mr. Sharp brought with him. It was a German War Flag with the familiar red background, black and white stripes, and black swastika on a white disc. This particular flag carried a formee cross in one corner, denoting it as a *Kriegsmarine* (German Navy) flag.

Jim Sharp was born in rural Morris County, Kansas, and graduated from White City, Kansas, High School. He told us he was home listening to the radio when the news was broadcast that the Japanese were bombing Pearl Harbor. He enlisted in the Army although he had an agriculture deferment because his brothers were already in the service. He completed recruit training at Fort McClellan, (Anniston) Alabama. Mr. Sharp said he boarded a boat (ship) in December 1944 to go overseas. He said that Red Cross ladies were giving out ditty bags, and he used a book in his bag as a diary. He also said that they were not supposed to keep diaries. His eventually became his book.

At this point he showed a map of Europe in 1942 showing the extent of the German occupation of Europe and also the allies of Germany and their respective occupations. Allied forces were well into Belgium, France, and Italy when he arrived and entered the Battle of the Bulge. He said that battle began December 16, 1944, and involved an 80-mile front with one million troops on each side. The battle took place during the coldest winter in 40 years and was the largest battle fought by US troops. Mr. Sharp said our troops

"Speaker," con't. on page 6

"Speaker," con't. from page 5

attacked on foot or with tanks. The weather kept air support grounded. He said that there were 100,000 casualties on each side. He showed a photo of a typical concrete bunker used by German troops.

Mr. Sharp said the Germans blew up transportation facilities to slow the Allied advance and that many cities were devastated. His troopship arrived at Le Havre, France, January 2, 1945, and he was struck by the destruction of this city. It had been 90% destroyed by an 800 plane Allied bombing raid.

As soon as he arrived in Le Havre, Mr. Sharp was shipped to the front, and that is when he realized he was a replacement for a casualty of the battle. He was assigned to Company B, 18th Infantry Regiment, 1st Infantry Division and began his war as a combat infantryman.

As the Allies pushed back the German offensive, they continued to the Rhine and across that key river, and Mr. Stark's unit battled through the Rhineland and into central Europe. They were in Czechoslovakia on VE (Victory in Europe) Day, May 8, 1945.

With the end of the war, Mr. Sharp said that combat infantrymen such as himself became military police to find and round up Nazi officials, mostly political Nazis, low, city officials. Then he was assigned to guard duty in Nuremberg, Germany, where the Four-power International Military Tribunal of the United States, Great Britain, France, and the Soviet Union held the war criminal trials. He was there during the period called the Trial of the Major War Criminals from November 25, 1945 to October 1, 1946. Other trials lasted into 1949. Eventually, Mr. Sharp became Sergeant of the Guard both in the courtroom and the prisoner cell block. In this capacity Mr. Sharp had to ensure that all guards understood their duties and orders. He was responsible for maintaining adequate communication with them while on duty and was responsible for their conduct.

Mr. Sharp showed photos of the Palace of Justice where the trials took place. Other photos included the courtroom, the trial proceedings, and some of the defendants, including former Nazi Deputy Rudolf Hess, Reichsmarschall Herman Goering, and Foreign Minister Joachim von Ribbentrop.

Mr. Sharp said the Germans spoke excellent English and were well educated and held professional degrees. He said he got autographs from a number of prisoners, including Goering's and Colonel General Alfred Jodl, Chief of the Operations Staff of the Armed Forces High Command.

Mr. Sharp spoke about Death Head units as the model for the Aryan Race. The units were the elite of the SS troops.

He mentioned eugenics in the sense that the pure Germans would be created by controlled human mating. Men and women would be chosen for selected breeding, using men from the Death Head SS troops and Norwegian women. Lebensborn was the organization set up by SS leader Heinrich Himmler to create the master race. Himmler committed suicide before the trials on May 23, 1945.

Mr. Sharp said those defendants sentenced to life and those sentenced to 10-20 years served their sentences in Spandau prison in western Berlin. He ended his presentation by stating that Hitler's 1,000 year Reich lasted 12 years. Forty-five million people were killed in Europe during World War II, including 25 million in the Soviet Union.

Several questions and comments came from the audience. One comment and question was in regard to a recent History Channel program that said the bones that were found that were allegedly Hitler's were not. The question was, "Did Hitler survive or commit suicide?" Mr. Sharp said he was not familiar with the program. He said the Russians captured Berlin and supposedly found Hitler's remains.

Another comment was that the pure race of German people would not include gays, but supposedly, many of Hitler's higher ups were gay. Mr. Sharp said nothing came out about that during the trials.

A comment was made from the audience that the Hitler regime did not invent the swastika. It was ancient Germanic symbol. The Nazis put a twist on the symbol, rotating it 45 degrees.

Mr. Sharp spoke further about Heinrich Himmler. He was captured by British troops about two weeks after the war ended trying to pose as an enlisted man. The British soon recognized who he was, and once Himmler knew this, he committed suicide.

This brought up comments and questions about Hermann Goering's suicide before he was to be hanged. Mr. Sharp talked about US Army Private Harvey [sic] Lee Stivers, a guard from California. There was a documentary with Stivers' wife regarding the suicide. Stivers had a German girlfriend who knew friends of Goering. Stivers was given some medicine for Goering that he supposedly was not getting. The medicine was given to Stivers in a pen which he passed on to Goering. The pen contained a cyanide capsule.

Another story was about US Army LT Jack G. Wheelis, whom Goering befriended. LT Wheelis allegedly smuggled the cyanide to Goering. Another version was that Goering's wife brought the cyanide to him during her last visit.

When sentenced to death by hanging, Goering, and others, requested death by firing squad rather than being hung as a common criminal. The request was denied, and Goering took the cyanide.

Another question asked was whether or not the Allies felt that certain "neutral" countries were in fact neutral. Mr. Sharp said no to Spain. In regard to Switzerland, a lot of bombers landed there, and the planes and crews were interned.

This concluded the comments and questions. Tad Pritchett presented Mr. Sharp with a certificate of appreciation. After the luncheon ended, several attendees talked further with Mr. Sharp.

The luncheon ended with presentations of the poinsettia table decorations and several other door prizes with a Christmas theme. We owe a special thanks to **Bob and Mary Ann Kelly** and **Don and Peggy Dawson** for providing the poinsettias and door prizes. ➔

2011 Events Calendar

Dates subject to change

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Dates Subject to Change

February

Aviation Merit Badge class
and tours for Boy Scout
Anniversary Week
celebration.

February 5

March

Aviation Education Class
March 21 - 24

April

Pancake Feed
April 30

June

Kansas 150th Sesquicentennial
Celebration
June 4 - 5

Aviation Education Class
June 20 - 23

July

Aviation Education Class
July 11 - 14

August

Aviation Education Class
August 1 - 4

September

Winged Foot 5K Run/Walk
September 24

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February Membership Luncheon

Mr. Mike Kozubek, a CAM member, is our speaker for the February Membership Luncheon. Mike is a private pilot and long time member of the Experimental Aircraft Association. His home is by the Buena Terra Airport in North Topeka, and he and his wife, Pat, own and operate *Airport Antiques*, also by Buena Terra. Mike will talk about the EAA and activities of local chapters.

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Visitors

During **November**
the Museum had
576 visitors
from **25** states,
and
Guatemala
Israel
Netherlands
Russia

During **December**
we had
433 visitors
from **22** states
and
Mexico
New Zealand
Russia

➔ ➔ ➔

February/March Calendar of Events

February

Saturday February 5

Aviation Merit Badge class
and tours for
Boy Scout Anniversary Week
celebration.

Jean Wanner Education
Conference Room

Monday February 14

Membership Luncheon
Jean Wanner Education
Conference Room
11:30 a.m.

The guest speaker will be
CAM member

Mike Kozubek.

He will be speaking about the
Experimental
Aircraft Association.

March

Monday March 21 -

Thursday March 24

Spring Break Aviation
Education Class
Jean Wanner Education
Conference Room
9 am - 12 noon daily

There is no Membership
Luncheon in March.
The next luncheon will be
April 11.

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Join the Combat Air Museum!

Our newsletter is an award winner



Plane Talk has gotten some special recognition. The Association of Marketing and Communication Professionals (MarCom) Awards recently announced winners for the 2010 international awards competition that recognizes outstanding creative achievement by marketing and communication professionals. Combat Air Museum's membership newsletter was awarded Honorable Mention in the External Newsletter / Non profit category.

Toni Dixon, a freelance editor who has performed the editing, layout and design of *Plane Talk* for many years, entered our newsletter in the MarCom competition. "I have seen this publication evolve over the years and now it is also available on the CAM website. I am pleased to see *Plane Talk* receive this kind of recognition from such a prestigious award program."

There were almost 5,000 entries from throughout the United States, Canada and several other countries in the 2010 competition. MarCom entries come from corporate marketing and communication departments, adver-

tising agencies, PR firms, design shops, production companies and freelancers.

A look at the winners shows a range in size from individual communicators to media conglomerates and Fortune 500 companies. The competition is so well respected in the industry that national public relations organizations, local ad clubs, and local business communicator chapters are entrants.

MarCom Awards is administered and judged by the Association of Marketing and Communication Professionals. The international organization consists of several thousand creative professionals. Judges are industry professionals who look for companies and individuals whose talent exceeds a high standard of excellence and whose work serves as a benchmark for the industry. Winners were selected from over 200 categories in seven forms of media and communication efforts- marketing, publications, marketing/promotion, public service, pro bono, creativity and electronic/interactive. ➔