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COMBAT AIR MUSEUM

PLANE TALK

July-December 2025
Vol. 41, No. 3

The Red Baron's 80 victories displayed at CAM

By Kevin Drewelow

Baron Manfred von Richthofen was the top scoring ace of World War I after shooting down 80 Allied aircraft. Over a century later, visitors can see paintings of each of those engagements on display at the Combat Air Museum.

Tom La Padula is a renowned illustrator, art teacher, and aviation artist with over 50 years of experience in all kinds of illustration. Three years ago, he began a project to document the Red Baron's aerial victories. Tom painstakingly researched each of the 80 encounters...time of day, weather, location, other aircraft in the area... and then painted the moment of the Baron's victory. Tom painted them on 20" x 16" Masonite boards and varnished and sealed the paintings. Tom has combined his illustrations with the story of each engagement in a book entitled, "The Red Baron's Kills: An Illustrated Portrayal of Manfred von Richtofen's Victories" published by Pen and Sword Books and available in June 2026.

But how did Tom hear of the Combat Air Museum and how did the paintings get here? Last April, Tom's daughters visited CAM and spoke with Gene and Kevin. They really enjoyed their visit; they told us their father was an aviation artist and might like to display some of his paintings here. We said that would be nice, a coup for our Museum, gave her a business card, and didn't think anything would come of it.

A week later, we received an email from Tom. He described the concept behind the collection of paintings and then offered to make them available for display with no exhibition fee, saying "I want people to see these images and let them judge what flying in an open cockpit was like." We immediately contacted Chuck Watson, our art curator, and made him aware of Tom's offer. Chuck is a retired art teacher and an active multimedia artist with a healthy sense of skepticism. Chuck very quickly explained that Tom is a highly accomplished artist, a graduate of Parsons School of Design where he later taught and now teaches at Pratt Institute, both highly acclaimed art institutions. Chuck contacted Tom and the two hit it off quickly.

Tom La Padula ***(K. Hobbs photo)***

Chuck immediately began to plan the display of the 80 paintings. He took many measurements and thought he could display them on the back side of the line of showcases at the west end of hangar 602. He even made a scale model of the showcases and determined that 74 of the paintings would fit on them. The other six would go on the north wall at the entrance

Continued on page 3

INSIDE

THE OFFICIAL NEWSLETTER OF THE COMBAT AIR MUSEUM

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We welcome your comments!
Newsletter Layout by Megan Garner

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 Year's Day, Easter,
Thanksgiving, Christmas Day

Your membership is important to us! Join the COMBAT AIR MUSEUM

From the Chairman's Desk

By Gene Howerter, Chairman, Board of Directors

I want to thank all of you who have joined as either individual or family membership partners for supporting the Combat Air Museum (CAM). Please remember that you are especially important in keeping CAM alive and open daily. Allow me to step back in time and make my point.

As I mentioned in the past newsletter, the Combat Air Museum will celebrate its 50th anniversary in 2026. Would you believe I can still remember that chilly winter evening in 1976 when some interested people gathered at Washburn University to discuss the possibility of giving birth to our museum? After several more meetings, we agreed that we would like to partner with Mr. David Tallichet's Yesterday's Air Force Museum in California, and we would assume the title of **Yesterday's Air Force Kansas Wing**. A year later, in 1977, we dissolved the former partnership and our members voted to change our identity to **Combat Air Museum, Topeka, Kansas**. It is hard to believe that, almost 50 years later, we are still a viable volunteer organization, with many thousands visiting the Museum each year from all over Kansas, as well as from all 50 states and the world.

CAM is planning a prestigious golden anniversary celebration for this milestone occasion. Board member Tim Felks has agreed to share some of his thoughts with the board, as this is an area in which he has previous experience. We may open a few of our aircraft for public tours and individual personal photos and offer free hot dogs, chips, potato salad, and drinks to attendees while they enjoy live music and static displays. If you have other suggestions, please let us know what you have in mind. We hope to have a date and time firmed up as soon as possible. Trust me, we will keep you informed. We want a large turnout for the celebration, and this is your invitation to participate. Better yet, you can volunteer to ensure the event runs smoothly.

During the past 50 years, the Museum has had many volunteers. Yes, we are a volunteer-driven museum. CAM's success is attributable primarily to the invaluable contributions of its volunteers, our directors, and our office manager and treasurer. Most of these people have shown a tremendous "labor of love" for their work. We only have so much time on this earth, and the turnover has been significant. The Museum constantly needs support for replacements for those who have died or are past the age at which they can volunteer. If the Combat Air Museum is to survive in the future, we must see an endless number of individuals who love the Museum as much as those from the past have and who are willing and able to volunteer as a labor of love. Please share any thoughts or suggestions you have for the Museum's future with us. Finally, I would like to thank all who have supported us financially. Many of you have always sent a little extra when you pay your membership dues, which helps us keep CAM economically sound. We will keep working on ideas and a plan to share this Museum with future generations, and thanks again for your loving support. Let's hear it for another 50 years at the Combat Air Museum. You may want to start volunteering now. I hope to see you at the Museum. ◆

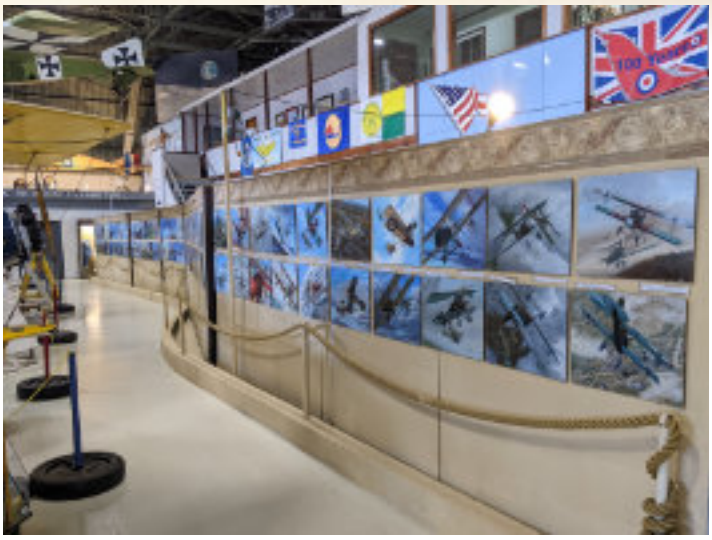
The Red Baron *Continued from page 1*

to the Bob Dole Education Center. Chuck spent considerable time prior to Tom's arrival preparing the showcases to receive the paintings. He painted the backs of the showcases and added a border across the top, cleared the bulletin board by the classroom door, and added signage.

Tom and his son packed the paintings in four tubs and transported them in a rented minivan from New Rochelle, New York to Topeka...at no cost to CAM... and arrived on the afternoon of July 29. Several media representatives were at CAM and provided great coverage of Tom and the upcoming exhibition. Tim Hrenchir's account of the visit was on the front page of the Topeka Capital-Journal on Sunday, August 3. The reporters interviewed Tom and then he and his son went to their hotel before joining some Museum members as our guests for dinner at the Blind Tiger.

The next day, Chuck and Sharon Nolde began hanging the paintings and adding small labels describing each dogfight. Their work took four days, and it was time well spent.

Visitors must see the collection to appreciate it. From the first to the eightieth image, the viewer finds oneself in the middle of the action and gains an appreciation of how fragile these early aircraft were. Chuck said Tom's paintings "are meticulously researched and then arranged in dynamic scenes that freeze the fast-changing situation and [are] then captured in vivid fine and accurate detail. His mastery of color and light make the scenes jump out at the viewer but also convey the horror that air warfare had so quickly become."



The paintings on display *(K. Drewelow photo)*

Tom will return to CAM and speak at our membership luncheon on Monday, April 13. "Richthofen's Victories Illustrated" will remain on display at the Combat Air Museum through May 24, 2026. ◆

Visitors

572 people from 21 states, Washington, D.C., Puerto Rico, Bulgaria, Canada, Germany, Mexico and Türkiye visited the Combat Air Museum in February.

In March, 1,694 visitors from 35 states, Australia, Austria, Denmark, Germany, India, Ireland, Japan, Kenya, Mexico, the Netherlands and Ukraine toured your Museum.

1,580 people from 39 states, Puerto Rico, Australia, Belgium, Canada, China, France, Germany, Great Britain, Mexico, Japan, New Zealand. Peru, the Republic of the Philippines and Poland visited the Combat Air Museum in April.

In May, 1,599 visitors from 40 states, Puerto Rico, Australia, Belgium, Brazil, Canada, Chile, the Czech Republic, France, Germany, Great Britain, Korea, Mexico, Micronesia, the Netherlands, Poland, South Africa, Sweden and Switzerland toured your Museum.

1,580 people from 42 states, Washington, D.C., Argentina, Brazil, Canada, China, Colombia, Dominican Republic, France, Germany, Great Britain, India, Ireland, Japan, Mexico, Poland, Russia, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland and Ukraine visited the Combat Air Museum in June.

In July, 2,821 visitors from 44 states, Washington, D.C., Puerto Rico, Australia, Brazil, Canada, China, Denmark, France, Germany, Great Britain, India, Japan, the Netherlands, the Republic of the Philippines and South Africa toured your Museum.

1,993 people from 45 states, Washington, D.C., Puerto Rico, Australia, Belgium, Canada, China, Colombia, Finland, Germany, Great Britain, Japan, Mexico, the Republic of the Philippines and Spain visited the Combat Air Museum in August.

In September, 1,155 visitors from 45 states, Washington, D.C., Australia, Austria, Belgium, Canada, Denmark, Germany, Great Britain, Hungary, Italy, Pakistan, Poland and Spain toured your Museum.

1,844 people from 38 states, the Virgin Islands, Australia, Belgium, Brazil, Canada, China, Great Britain, Mexico, Norway, Spain and Switzerland visited the Combat Air Museum in October. ◆

5th Annual "Car Show on the Tarmac"

By Kevin Drewelow

The Combat Air Museum held its fifth annual car show on Sunday, October 5 and, simply put, it was our best yet! Excellent weather, generous sponsors, great vendors, a record number of both cars and visitors, and hard-working volunteers set the bar even higher than last year's show!

Planning for this show began shortly after the conclusion of the 2024 event and it showed. We coordinated with the Metropolitan Topeka Airport Authority (MTAA), the Kansas Army National Guard and Million Air to close and block Echo taxiway in front of the Museum for three days to double the ramp space available to display cars. Jay Eddy designed another amazing logo and began a superb online advertising campaign. Jay, Rob Goodrich, and other planners came up with VIP entry and parking, early access and other features which attracted more cars and vendors while increasing revenue. Volunteers contacted many businesses for donations and Jay produced 3D printed trophies.

The Museum's aircraft tow team began early on Friday, October 3 and, by the end of the day, had 14 aircraft arranged on the ramp so car owners could park near their favorite aircraft. Our friends at Vaerus Aviation generously allowed us to use over 100 metal pedestrian barriers to block Echo taxiway at both ends to prevent errant drivers from entering the airport operations area.

The cars began to arrive early on the day of the show. VIP cars entered through the gate north of the Combat Air Museum while the others entered through the gate on the south side of hangar 604. Jay and Rob recruited a good number of car enthusiasts who were willing to spend the day helping run the show by working the gates, parking cars, and staffing the registration booth. Cars began to fill the parking lot west of the Museum as people came out to see the show.

Things got busy and then, as quickly as it started, it was over. Rob announced the winners of the various categories, passed out the distinctive trophies and then people began to leave, many taking the time to take pictures of their cars by the various aircraft.

An intensive downpour on Monday morning delayed towing the aircraft back into the hangars, but not before the aircraft received an overdue wash, assisted by an MTAA fire truck and crew!

The 2025 car show was a complete success! Our organizers attracted and registered 251 show cars, compared to 235 in 2024. 818 people visited the Museum that day, while the show attracted 552 visitors last year. And combining registration fees, vendor donations and money from sponsors who contributed and added their names to special t-shirts that Gene coordinates each year, the 2025 show raised a significantly larger amount of money for the Combat Air Museum than did last year's show. The money raised by the car show will pay the Museum's bills during the winter months when attendance drops significantly.

Six years ago, our 5K/10K run and walk was our winter fundraiser but participation in run/walks was dropping nationwide. We know we needed to find a different way to raise money, but the way forward was unclear...until Rob Goodrich and his fellow car show enthusiasts offered to put on a car show to help the Combat Air Museum. And the rest is history! The 2026 "Car Show on the Tarmac" will take place on Sunday, October 4, 2026...mark your calendars! ◆

2025 Car Show on the Tarmac ***(B. Dallman photo)***

The Doolittle Raider *from Kansas*

By Keith Fulton

Kevin Drewelow, the director of the Combat Air Museum, asked me several months ago if I was interested in assisting with the development of a new display in the museum for a fellow Kansan. This individual participated in the famed "Doolittle Raid" on Japan in April 1942. Sergeant Harold A. Spatz, a native of Lebo, Kansas, was a member of the unit participating in this raid, a retaliation to the bombing of Pearl Harbor, Hawaii five months prior. In reality the raid itself was not designed to satisfy a strategic goal but it sure provided a morale boost for the American forces that were preparing to go to war in the Pacific and let the world know that this island nation was susceptible to attack. My recent visit to the United States Air Force Museum in Dayton, Ohio, inspired me to write this article as a forerunner of the future display at the Combat Air Museum for Sgt. Spatz. Part one was published in the January-March 2025 edition of Plane Talk.

Part Two

On March 25, 1942, Doolittle and his crew (later identified as Crew #1) had departed for the west coast. The next day the remaining 21 crews were alerted early in the morning and ordered to depart for McClellan Field, just outside of Sacramento, California. They were to fly the entire route at treetop level as this would be their last training flight. Once they arrived in California the aircraft underwent the replacement of the engine propeller blades. Months of use found that most of the B-25 props were pitted from taxi and runway debris; new engine propellers provided a more efficient engine performance during their upcoming mission, saving even more fuel. A few more modifications were requested as well but not all the necessary parts had arrived yet to complete the updates Doolittle wanted.

Civilian contractors oversaw the prop replacements, however, as they started their work these workers found engine modifications that were not to normal specifications for the B-25. They took it upon themselves to complete additional work in replacing other engine parts, especially the modified carburetors installed during previous aircraft maintenance work. Doolittle was furious when he found out about this "unauthorized" work.

Doolittle was running out of time; the best time frame for his attack was before the severe spring weather Japan normally experienced beginning in the month of May. So, on April 1, 1942, without completing the additional modification work, each B-25 crew was ordered to depart McClellan Field. Before Doolittle himself departed he was asked to complete a service debrief form offered by the maintenance depot at McClellan. There was only one word that described the work performed: "LOUSY" was rapidly etched across the blank form.

The crews were told to fly at least an hour before landing at Naval Station Alameda, located near San Francisco to determine the airworthiness of their aircraft after the maintenance work performed at McClellan Field.

The temptation of flying under the Bay Bridge before landing at Alameda was too great for two of the pilots who completed the task.

Once they landed, each B-25 was met by a jeep with a large "Follow Me" sign directing them along the taxi route to the shipyard dock area adjacent to the aircraft carrier USS Hornet. A total of twenty-two aircraft arrived at Alameda, where each crew reported their maintenance status directly to Doolittle himself as a tug was attached to tow the aircraft either to the pier where the Hornet was docked or to the Navy aircraft hangar area located a distance away. If something was wrong, the aircraft was to be towed off to the Navy hangars. If there were no maintenance issues, Navy personnel took control, drained most of the remaining fuel, attached cables to strong points on the aircraft wings and fuselage and hoisted the large plane onto the carrier deck by a crane. Doolittle's aircraft was parked off to the side, it was the last one to be placed aboard the carrier, as he would be the first to launch. The first few crews that arrived were not aware of the procedure; if they reported a maintenance issue, no matter how minor, then the aircraft and crew were to be scrubbed from the mission. Word eventually got out and some of the pilots who arrived later reported an "OK" flight even if there was a small maintenance issue. Only sixteen B-25s fit on the carrier deck with room for a takeoff roll, removing six aircraft and 30 flight crew members from the mission.

They were still not told the exact nature of the mission as they arrived at the Naval Air Station and boarded the carrier.

Once loaded on the aircraft carrier, Navy personnel towed the B-25s into a staggered parked formation and tied down to the flight deck, leaving just enough room for a clear takeoff run of 467 feet for all the aircraft to depart over the bow of the ship. In fact, the last aircraft in the row was parked with its tail extended out over the stern of the ship.

Sgt. Harold Spatz was assigned to this very last B-25 Mitchell parked on the carrier, position #16. This aircraft was named "Bat Out of Hell" (no nose art image) tail # 40-2268 and commonly referred to by the crew as "The Bat." The rest of Spatz's crew eventually consisted of:

Lieutenant William Farrow – pilot
Lieutenant Robert L. Hite – co-pilot (who replaced an unknown individual)
Lieutenant George Barr – navigator
Corporal Jacob DeShazer – bombardier

2nd Lieutenant William "Bill" Farrow, age 23, was a youth leader in his church, an Eagle Scout, and graduated from high school in 1935. Farrow continued his education by attending the University of South Carolina. While attending classes in 1939 he

Continued on page 6

The Doolittle Raider Continued from page 5

also completed a civilian pilot training program before enlisting in the AAC in 1940. Farrow received his pilot wings and was commissioned as a 2nd lieutenant in July 1941. He went on to complete B-25 training and was assigned to Pendleton Field, Oregon.

2nd Lieutenant Robert "Lowell" Hite, age 22, grew up in small communities in Georgia and later Texas. His family farmed and was hit hard by the depression and dust bowl years but endured. Hite graduated from high school in 1937 and attended college for 3 years before joining the AAC in 1940 with the goal of becoming a pilot. He was commissioned as a 2nd lieutenant and received his pilot wings on May 29, 1941. After training, Hite was assigned to the 17th BG in the reconnaissance squadron. Hite was originally a pilot on a B-25 that was scrubbed from the mission because only 16 aircraft fit and later replaced Farrow's original co-pilot for unknown reasons. He refused offers of up to $500 (over $9,220 in 2024 dollars) from other pilots who were also removed and wanted to go.

2nd Lieutenant George "Red" Barr, age 25, was an orphan in a boy's home in Yonkers, New York from age 9 through high school. Barr's nickname derived from his bright red hair. He attended Northland College in Ashland, Wisconsin where he was considered the best basketball player the school ever had. Barr left college his senior year and on February 10, 1941, joined the Army aviation cadet program to become a pilot. In May 1941 he transferred to navigator training and received his wings on December 6, 1941 at Pendleton Field where he became a navigator in the 17th BG.

Corporal Jacob "Jake" DeShazer, age 29, grew up in a wheat farming community in central Oregon and graduated from high school in 1931. He attended one year of college before leaving school to work raising sheep and turkeys. After a few lean years, he decided to join the military. On February 26, 1940, he joined the Army as a bombardier/aircraft mechanic. After completing military technical schools, DeShazer was assigned to the 17th BG at Pendleton Field, just 200 miles from home. While on KP duty, peeling potatoes in the chow hall, he heard of the bombing of Pearl Harbor and shouted, "Japan is going to pay for this!"

The following is from the book ***"The First Heroes"*** by Craig Nelson; it is the Army Air Force report for the volunteers on this mission which stated:

> *"The men who were to compose this expedition thus were not in any sense hand-picked. They were not the 'cream of the crop', but average flying men of the United States Army Air Force. The gunners, almost without exception, had never fired a machine gun from an airplane. The navigators had had very little practical experience. None of those who had come forward was versed in combat or seasoned in any kind of action against an enemy. None of the crews had worked together as a group before they began their training."*

The Army flight crews also boarded the aircraft carrier with what few personal effects they brought with them. Each

Crew 16, Spatz in center *(af.mil photo)*

performed the proper boarding procedure Lt Miller had taught them. They were shown to their sleeping berths, officers sharing rooms with Navy officers and enlisted crew members quartering with enlisted personnel or other areas where a cot could be set up, even in the ship captain's ready room. Joining the sixteen mission flight crews were the majority of the remaining six crews scrubbed from the mission because their aircraft did not fit on the carrier deck. They were added to keep the secrecy of the mission intact and to fill in case any of the chosen primary crews fell ill or backed out at the last minute. USAAF staff personnel were also added for crew mission briefings and a few maintenance personnel were needed to complete the modifications Doolittle wanted and the service/repair of any aircraft discrepancies found during the voyage west. A total of 132 USAAF personnel boarded the Hornet joining the full contingent of over 2,900 Navy officers and enlisted personnel already aboard the carrier.

Most of the USAAF personnel wore dirty/tattered flight or utility uniform clothing and unpolished boots as they boarded the ship. Constantly working around B-25s a person could get dirty and greasy with the oil the engines leaked and hydraulic fluid present. The underside of the aircraft was not a hospitable place to work around if you wanted to retain a clean uniform. Doolittle demanded them to complete a regimented training program in a short period of time and did not care about their personal appearance. Of course, there were a few who were disciplined enough to maintain their military bearing throughout the training. Some Navy sailors even joked at the Army's personal appearances as they boarded the Hornet, not knowing yet what their purpose was. Most believed the Navy was simply transporting the Army aircraft and crews to a forward land-based location.

The USS Hornet (CV-8), a Yorktown class aircraft carrier, was the 7th U.S. Naval vessel to hold that name, and the newest carrier in the U.S. Navy Fleet. The Hornet was commissioned on October 20,1941 at Norfolk, Virginia before her sea trials and participated in the February flight test by Doolittle with two B-25s on board. She was later transferred to the Pacific and arrived at the Alameda shipyard in late March 1942 via the Panama Canal. After the bombers were loaded and secured to the flight deck the Hornet

B-25s aboard U.S.S. Hornet *(af.mil photo)*

departed the dock area and set anchor in the center of the harbor.

Doolittle wanted his crews to enjoy one last evening out on the town. Most of them took up his offer and set out to the San Francisco night life and were ferried back to shore. All the men who took advantage of the evening out made it back to the carrier intact. When Doolittle himself returned to the carrier, he had messages waiting for his review. One wishing him luck from General Hap Arnold, a second secret message informing him that the Chinese landing bases logistic support were requested, and the last was from General George C. Marshall, the Army Chief of Staff, wanting him to call. When Doolittle made the call, Marshall wished him well and good luck.

The USS Hornet raised anchor and departed for her maiden operational mission on the morning of April 2, 1942 as the lead ship in Carrier Task Force 18. The carrier, accompanied by a cruiser and several destroyers, passed under the Golden Gate Bridge, traveling slowly westward. Besides the B-25s on the deck, the Hornet also carried a partial complement of 72 Navy aircraft parked in the lower hangar deck as this was all the aircraft the Navy could afford to assign them; the normal complement was 97 total aircraft. With the B-25s strapped to the flight deck this gave all the Navy personnel an uneasy feeling as they would be without their own aircraft flying overhead to ward off any enemy who may approach the task force. If discovered by the Japanese en route, the plan called for the removal of the B-25s either by pushing them off the deck; the USAAF crews flying them to a close "friendly" destination, depending on their current position; or flying on to Japan as planned if close enough. After the removal of the Army aircraft from the flight deck the Navy would bring up their own aircraft to protect the fleet.

Two days after the Hornet left port, the ship's commander, Captain Marc Mitscher, announced over the intercom to the ship's complement, ***"This ship will carry the Army bombers to the coast of Japan for the bombing of Tokyo!"*** Immediately a cheer arose from the entire crew. The Navy personnel soon changed their minds and any negative remarks of the Army crews and personnel were forgotten.

Three days after Doolittle departed McClellan Field the parts finally arrived at the base. These parts were soon loaded onto a Navy blimp (identified only as L-8), flown out to the Hornet during the voyage west, and lowered by rope to the deck of the carrier. Now, the remaining aircraft modifications Doolittle requested at McClellan were soon completed by the USAAF and Navy maintenance personnel. Each of the 16 aircraft were fitted with a movie camera and six were also fitted with still cameras to record the bomb runs.

On April 12, 1942, just north of Hawaii, Task Force 18 met up with another carrier, the USS Enterprise, and the rest of Carrier Task Force 16 made up of two cruisers, several destroyers, and other support ships commanded by Vice Admiral William "Bull" Halsey, who took overall command. Aircraft from the Enterprise provided top cover for the now larger Task Force 16 as they proceeded toward Japan. The plan was to get within 400 miles of the island nation, launch the bombers, and the task force would depart the area hopefully undetected.

During the voyage the B-25 pilots met individually with Doolittle and the Hornet's intelligence officer, Lieutenant Commander Stephen Jurika. They were offered a choice of which target they wanted to bomb, the route it took to get there, and the egress route to recover at airfields in China. Lt. Commander Jurika grew up in the Philippines and spoke both Chinese and Japanese well. After graduating from the Naval Academy and flight training, he spent several months attached to a Japanese Navy Aviation unit as an Assistant Naval Attaché for Air a couple years before the war.

After this meeting each pilot took their target choice to the rest of his crew where the navigator plotted their route on his map and the crew discussed their course of action during the flight. No markings were to be made on the maps they would take with them in case they fell into enemy hands, all routing information had to be from memory. Each day of the voyage the crews studied their mission to the last detail, aerial photos were available to aid in identifying targets, and these had to be memorized as well, no photos could be taken with them. Lt. Commander Jurika also taught each crew basic Chinese and Japanese phrases.

When not studying mission details, the crews worked on the aircraft, fitting the modifications Doolittle wanted and other routine aircraft maintenance including daily engine runs. The gunners even had practice shooting at kites and balloons the Navy launched behind the carrier. The flight crews also attended classes offered by the Flight Surgeon, Lt Thomas "Doc" White (Crew #15 gunner), on combat first aid and the importance of water purification. White had requested to go on the mission; however, he was told he had to earn his spot on a crew, as an extra crew member added extra weight. He took it on himself to attend gunnery school and rated second in his class - he was added.

Continued on page 14

Museum Notes

By Kevin Drewelow

Hard at work inside the storage room *(K. Drewelow photo)*

Danny and Dave admire Susan's work *(K. Drewelow photo)*

Artifact storage/engine display addition complete... Our Fix-It Friday team, augmented as needed by some professionals, completed construction of our new addition on the south side of hangar 602 in October! They gathered several days a week to make progress, such as framing the building in March; adding siding in April; and installing gutters, electrical service and HVAC in May. They then turned to roofing and finally the construction of shelves. The west two-thirds of the addition provides climate-controlled storage for artifacts while the east third serves as expanded space to display engines. Volunteers made this possible, too many to try to name, but volunteers are the heart and backbone of the Combat Air Museum!

Danny and Deb install a Sabre elevator *(K. Drewelow photo)*

New display... When Susan Sittenauer retired from Seaman High School last year after teaching history for four decades, she expressed interest in volunteering at CAM. In March, after reading "The Women" by Kristin Hannah, she offered to create an exhibit about combat nurses in Vietnam. We quickly told her, "Yes" and promptly cleared a showcase. Susan's display tells the story of the critical but underreported work military nurses did during the war in southeast Asia. The showcase is at the south end of the gift shop and across from the USS TOPEKA display.

Vehicle maintenance... Gary Naylor, Joe Wulfkuhle and Paul Williams spent the summer returning our second aircraft tug to life! They spent as much time under the tug as around it, curing a variety of leaks, repairing wiring and lots of other work. They brought the small blue Clark tug to hangar 604 and even got it to run, although it needs further work. Gary recently acquired a vintage MHU-83 bomb-loading vehicle, better known as a jammer. It is in hangar 604 where the fellows are stopping leaks, converting the electrical system to 12 volts and correcting other conditions. It will be a great addition to our growing collection of airfield vehicles!

F-86H Sabre progress... May was a busy month for our volunteers working on our North American F-86H Sabre. Danny San Romani, Deb Lamere and Gary Naylor installed the ailerons and flaps and wound up other smaller jobs. In June, our volunteers towed the F-86 and MiG-17 out of hangar 604 and exchanged their places, the next step in painting the Sabre. We are currently sourcing paint for the F-86 and will have more news soon!

Remington Stiles graduated from the Air Force Academy... Remington Stiles began volunteering at the Combat Air Museum years ago, dusting airplanes, running the flight simulator, anything he could do to help. Four years ago, he was accepted to attend the Air Force Academy in Colorado Springs, Colorado. In May, he graduated and received his commission as a second lieutenant in the United States Air Force. Museum director and retired Air National Guard Senior Master Sergeant Kevin Drewelow had the honor and privilege of attending the graduation ceremony and providing 2nd Lieutenant Stiles with his first salute. Remington was selected for pilot training and is currently assigned to Vance Air Force Base in Enid, Oklahoma where he is awaiting the start of his initial pilot training. In the meantime, he has stopped by CAM on occasion where he has reverted to his old practices, dusting airplanes and running the flight simulator. We are quite proud of his accomplishment and look forward to following his progress!

Kevin Drewelow and 2nd LT Stiles ***(K. Drewelow photo)***

Library expansion... Aviation author Terry Love recently donated his extensive library to the Combat Air Museum. Gary Naylor and Kevin Drewelow met Bob Crapser, Darren Roberts and Dave Hargitt at Terry's home in Shawnee, Kansas on May 9 to transport the books and five bookcases. We nearly filled Gary's trailer with over 1,000 books and delivered them to CAM. Steve Wodtke made room in our small library for the bookcases which Mike Madden and Mike Welch moved in. Steve is beginning to document and shelve the books. Terry's generous donation will benefit Museum members for quite a while!

Jacking the EC-121 ***(K. Drewelow photo)***

Lockheed EC-121 Warning Star progress... Our Fix-It Friday team and other Museum volunteers made time between other projects to dramatically improve our Lockheed EC-121T Warning Star. Our friends from Worldwide Aircraft Recovery, Ltd. In Bellevue, Nebraska, stopped at CAM on the way to a job on July 9. They helped us jack the EC-121 so we could place stands under the landing gear. It took most of the day, but it was time well spent, and Worldwide donated their time and expertise...it's great to have friends like them! In September, volunteers gathered for concrete work at the Lockheed. They moved the staircase away from the aircraft and demolished the original sidewalk. They framed a new sidewalk, a pad for the staircase and molds around the bases of the stands and then mixed and poured concrete into the molds. A small team from the Metropolitan Topeka Airport Authority (MTAA) used their all-terrain forklift to place the staircase on the pad and its supports. Our volunteers also replaced the tailstand under the aircraft. Be sure to visit the EC-121 next time you are at CAM and see it for yourself!

EC-121 sidewalk and staircase ***(K. Drewelow photo)***

Continued on page 10

Sunflower Summer Summary:

By Dave Murray

Last year CAM participated in the popular tourism program Sunflower Summer whereby Kansas residents register themselves and their children on an app and, for a designated period, can visit over 200 attractions in Kansas, for free.

The State of Kansas in turn, refunded these tourist locations, at their normal admission rates, for such visitors. In 2024 we experienced a surge of 2,505 extra visitors to the Museum during the Sunflower Summer period of 80 days, or an average of 31 extra visitors/day.

The 2024 program turned out to be so popular that the State of Kansas ran way past the budget provided for the program, by several million dollars!

The 2025 program was clearly in danger of being cut by state budget constraints and it was only through some serious lobbying efforts by the tourism groups in Kansas, that the State allocated a fixed amount of $3 million, way below the over $5 million spent on the 2024 program.

The 2025 school summer vacation program was therefore more strictly controlled, the visiting time reduced from 80 to 25 days, and the number of parents or grandparents allowed free with their children or grandchildren, cut to one person from two. Despite this CAM received 1,110 visitors for an average of 44 visitors per day. Thus, while the overall refund of admissions was cut from $14,500 in 2024, we still received a total of $6,200 – a boost to our attendance and income revenue during the summer period. ◆

Museum Notes *Continued from page 9*

Girls in Aviation Day... The Combat Air Museum and the Museum of the Kansas National Guard partnered again on Saturday, September 6 to put on Girls in Aviation Day at Topeka Regional Airport. The day began at the Guard Museum where the event was called "Scouts in Aviation Day" as they focus on members of the Girls Scouts and Scouting USA. There they heard from women who fly, maintain and support military and civilian aviation, toured the Guard Museum and enjoyed a STEM demonstration by Kansas STARBASE. The event moved to the Combat Air Museum where the children enjoyed a range of events. Washburn University history professor Dr. Robin Hanson portrayed Amelia Earhart and CAM's own Joyce Parker talked about her experience participating in the all-female Air Race Classic transcontinental air race. The Federal Aviation Administration Aviation and Space Education office had a display, as did the National Weather Service office from Topeka's Billard Airport, the Civil Air Patrol, Aviation Explorer Squadron Post 8 and Kansas State University Salina. Children also built and flew paper airplanes and tested their skills with an age-appropriate (and safe) axe-throwing activity. When the children stepped outside, they found a great mix of aircraft parked on our ramp, all open for tours: a Kansas Army National Guard Sikorsky UH-60M Black Hawk helicopter; a Kansas Highway Patrol Cessna 206; a K-State Cessna 172; the Air Explorer Post's Piper Cherokee 180; George Laliberte's Alon Aircoupe; Darrell Linenberger's Aeronca 7AC; Joyce Parker's Beech 24R "Joybird"; and Derek Rogers' Nanchang CJ-6. The purpose of Girls in Aviation Day is to get kids out to the airport, meet women who fly and support aviation, and get a close look at some aircraft to help them decide if aviation might be for them in the future. It seems we succeeded in doing that!

Taps Across America...CAM held our annual Taps Across America event on Memorial Day, May 26. Mike Eichten provided a musical prelude; the Washburn Rural High School Air Force Junior Reserve Officer Training Corps (AFJROTC) honor guard handled the colors. Kansas Army National Guard Command Sergeant Major Jeremy Byers was the keynote speaker. American Legion Post 400 Honor Guard provided a volley rifle salute and flag ceremony; and Vietnam veteran and CAM member Mike Welch received the flag. Retired Air Force Captain Herschel Stroud played "Taps" followed by retirement of the colors.

Rotating beacon operating... Last year the MTAA Maintenance Department replaced the rotating beacons at both Billard and Topeka Regional Airports and placed both beacons on long-term loan to the Combat Air Museum. The beacons were turned on at night and during low visibility to help pilots locate the airport. These beacons had been in use for decades and helped countless pilots find Topeka airports during that time. Gary Naylor and Paul Williams disassembled, cleaned and reassembled the smaller beacon and fitted it with a lamp with a much lower wattage or brightness. They installed the beacon on top of the workshop in hangar 604 and Paul added a timer which actuates the beacon during Museum hours. They have already started work on the larger beacon, which will find its way to hangar 602 when it is complete!

WIBW highlights CAM member...WIBW Channel 13 in Topeka highlighted a Combat Air Museum member in their "Salute to Heroes" series. WIBW reporter Reina Flores met with CAM member Mike Welch at the Museum in late October to interview him for their series. Mike was an Army artillery officer in Vietnam in 1968; afterwards, he studied civil engineering at the University of Kansas and went to work for BRB Contractors. You can see his interview online at https://www.wibw.com/community/salute-the-badge/ ◆

PLANE TALK

COMBAT AIR MUSEUM 11

New & Renewing Members

New Lifetime Members:

Dan & Janet Hinnah

New:

Brian von Bevern | Sam & Victoria Brock | Stephen & Rae Fasano | Nancy Greuntzel & family | Chuck & Dana Hale | Mike & Hannah Kimsey | David Korbe | Gregg Krumme | Michael Moon | Madeline O'Murphy & family | Bart & Alyssa Plumb | Lonnie Hamilton & Mari Schwinn | Steve & Sheryl Speier | Rose Sumaya & family | Bob Rowland & family

Renewing:

Nels Anderson V & family | Bill Ankenbauer & family | Chuck Atherton | David Bainum | SSG David Baker, Ret. | Wes Barricklow & family | Harold & Carol Benoit | Bruce & Tyler Bevitt | Lynne Bourne | Charles & Connie Bradshaw | Jim & Mary Braun | Marty Braun & family | James & Susie Brewer | Brian & Connie Bryant | Shelly Buhler & family | Hector & Marla Camacho | Samuel Carkhuff | Les Carlson | Ron Cates | George Catt | Donald & Shirley Crenshaw | John Davis | Michael & Tammie DeBernardin | Robert Deever | Colonel Anthony DeJesus, Ret. | Dennis Donahue | Leon Dultmeier | Norman Dysart | Kristen Duncan & family | Joe Fives | Virginia "Kay" Foster | Paul & Betty Frantz | Richard Gates | Dale Gay | John & Julie Geohrung | William & Donna Gilliland | Tom & Diane Gorrell | Ron & Judi Gray | Shawn Guinty | Chuck & Peggy Hanna | David Hargitt | William & Marilyn Hensley | Connie Houser | Cloeva & Eric Idol | Jeff Kahrs & family | Jeffrey Keating | Dr. Kay Kile & family | Angela Konda & family | Mike & Patricia Kozubek | George Laliberte | Louise "Cookie" Langberg | Joseph Ledbetter & family | James & Ruby Leighton | Mike & Karen Madden | Becky Mathers | Roland Mayhew & family | Luke Medcalf & family | Patti Mellard & family | Bob Miller | Larry Morgan | Ron Morrison | Steve & Monica Morrison | John & Rita Moyer | Dave & Judy Murray | Bruce Nall & family | Bill & Toni Newman | Ted & Sharon Nolde | Dillon O'Keefe & family | Shaun O'Keeffe & family | David Pierce & family | John Plumb | Adam Polter & family | Michael Rockefeller & family | Lt. Col. Thomas & Carole Rost | Chris Rundel & family | Robert Runion | Wes Russell & family | Rance & Laraine Sackrider | Earl Sadberry | David Salguero | Roger & Bryan Schaaf | David & Lisa Schmitt | Darrell Schmitz | Gipsy Schneider | Bill Shaffer & family | Dennis & Marise Ann Smirl | Michael Spangler & family | Jay & Marty Stevenson | Mike & Kimberly Stewart | Capt. Herschel Stroud & family | Joel Stellwagon | Bill Stumpff | Ed & Mary Sykes | Joe Taylor & family | Chester & Mary Thompson | Larry Todd | Hannah & Denton Turley | Joe & Peggy Turner | Ryan Vincent & family | Terry Wages | Scott Wagner | Dr. Howard & Marilyn Ward | Mark Washburn & family | Ramon Washington | Chuck Watson | Dr. Rees Webber & family | Mike Welch & family | Steve & Rosie Williams | Patrick Wilson | Joe Wulfkuhle & family | Dr. James Young & family

2025-2026 Calendar of Events

November

2—Daylight Savings Time ends

27—Thanksgiving, Museum closed

December

8—Membership Luncheon-bring a covered dish

25—Christmas, Museum closed

January

1—New Year's Day; Museum closed

2—Winter hours begin,
Museum open noon–4:30 p.m.;
no admissions after 3:30 p.m.

February

1—Winter hours continue through the end of the month

9—Membership Luncheon, Brown Bag

March

1—Normal hours resume, Museum open
Monday-Saturday 9 a.m.–4:30 p.m.,
no admissions after 3:30 p.m.
Sunday noon–4:30 p.m.;
no admissions after 3:30 p.m.

8—Daylight Savings Time begins

April

5—Easter Sunday, Museum closed

13—Membership Luncheon, Brown Bag

25—Celebrity Pancake Feed

Membership Luncheon Speakers in 2025

By Kevin Drewelow

In addition to being the Combat Air Museum's Vice-President and Chief Financial Officer, Dave Murray also seeks out and schedules very interesting people to speak at our bimonthly membership luncheons at the Museum. He did his usual fine job again in 2025.

Our own Bill Stumpff spoke about early Kansas aviation history at our February meeting. He talked about how Clyde Cessna was the first Kansan to fly, although his flight took place in Enid, Oklahoma on June 2, 1911. Three months later, Topekan A.K. Longren became the first Kansan to fly in Kansas when the airplane he designed and built took off from a field less than four miles from where the Combat Air Museum would one day be situated. Bill talked about some of the aviation pioneers that passed through Kansas in the early years of the 20th Century and the effect they had upon several young Kansans. He talked about the contributions Kansans made to military aviation before, during and after World War I. Bill explained how the discovery of oil near El Dorado, Kansas created oil barons who, in turn, invested in aviation around Wichita, building the foundation of that industry and transforming Wichita into the "Air Capitol." Wichita saw the rise of Cessna, Stearman, Beech and many other aircraft factories. The Depression closed many of these companies, but with the coming of World War, several reorganized and directly contributed to America's arsenal and, later, became the names we know today: Beech, Boeing and Cessna, among others.

In April, Dr. Tom Hanson, a professor of military history at the U.S. Army command and General Staff College at Ft. Leavenworth, Kansas, was our speaker. He said most people are aware of Germany's bombing campaign against Great Britain during World War II, but far fewer know about Germany's aerial attacks over England during World War I. "G-Planes, R-Planes and Zeppelins: Germany's Strategic Bombing Campaign in the First World War" was the title of his talk and was a great presentation. This aerial campaign spread more fear among the population than it did damage to the nation, but this perception of the value of damaging morale from the air stayed with British national leaders well into the next war.

Our June speaker was Command Sergeant Major Jeremy Byers, command historian of the Kansas Army National Guard. Sergeant Byers spoke about his 2024 deployment to the Middle East/Southwest Asia as part of Operation Spartan Shield (OSS). Headquartered in Kuwait, OSS is the overarching Allied support for friendly governments and forces in the area, and the deterrent for Iran, Yemen and other bad actors in the region. Sergeant Byers' group was comprised of Army National Guard Soldiers from Kansas, North Carolina, Georgia, California and others. They found themselves traveling across the region, working with military forces from several nations. Sergeant Byers addressed the way drones are changing the nature of conflict in the world and offered some observations on recent events in Ukraine.

Retired Air Force Colonel Ed Sykes signs his name followed by "wgfp" – "World's Greatest Fighter Pilot." Colonel Sykes spoke to us about his extraordinary career at our August luncheon. Col. Sykes received his Air Force commission through the University of Wisconsin's Air Force Reserve Officers' Training Corps in 1967, completed undergraduate pilot training and then qualified on the Republic F-105 Thunderchief at McConnell Air Force Base (AFB). He soon found himself in Thailand flying combat missions. After completing 118 such trips he returned to the States and became a flight instructor on the Cessna T-37. Missing the F-105, Ed returned to McConnell and transferred to the 184th Tactical Fighter Group, Kansas Air National Guard, the F-105 schoolhouse. His career in the 184th took him all the way to group commander in 1986 and gave him the opportunity to also fly the McDonnell Douglas F-4D Phantom and General Dynamics F-16 Fighting Falcon or Viper. After retirement, Ed made several trips to Vietnam to search for the remains of a good friend who was lost in the crash of a Thunderchief. He was eventually successful in locating his friend's remains and tells the story in his book, "The Patch and the Stream Where the American Fell."

Our October luncheon featured two Air Force officers attending the U.S. Army command and General Staff College at Ft. Leavenworth. B-52 navigator Major Joshua Stevens and Major David Miller, a logistician, described their career path and experiences.

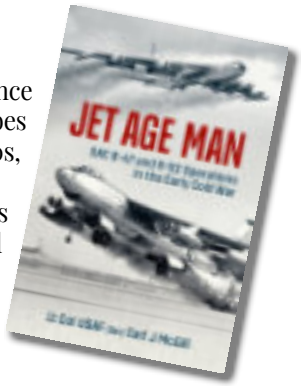
Facebook no longer allows us to store videos of our speakers on our page, but you can see any of these presentations by emailing Kevin at director@combatairmuseum.com to request a link via Google Drive or another file sharing service. ◆

Pilot's Notes: a Book Review

"Jet Age Man: SAC B-47 and B-52 Operations in the Early Cold War"

by Lt Col USAF (Ret) Earl J. McGill

Reviewed by Kevin Drewelow



A recent visitor to the Combat Air Museum told me his friend flew Boeing RB-47 Stratojet reconnaissance bombers from Forbes decades ago and wrote a book about it called, "Jet Age Man." I grew up just northeast of Forbes Air Force Base and was (still am) fascinated by the B-47s I saw flying overhead until they departed in the mid-'60s, so I had to find that book. Thanks to the internet, my copy arrived and I was hooked!

Earl McGill enlisted in the Air Force and became a weather observer and forecaster; he later received his commission, became a pilot in December 1950 and flew 28 missions over Korea as a B-29 copilot. In 1954, McGill and his wife arrived at Forbes Air Force Base in Topeka, Kansas, where McGill would spend the next six years flying the Boeing RB-47E with the 90th Strategic Reconnaissance Wing. He moved on to the B-52 in 1960 and participated in several Arc Light bombing missions over southeast Asia before he retired in 1969.

The B-47 was America's first sweptwing jet bomber and it taught many lessons to the pilots, mechanics and engineers involved with it. The Stratojet incorporated many revolutionary features: engine pods, bicycle landing gear, ejection seats, rocket-assisted takeoffs and many others. The bomber's design went beyond the airframe. The anemic performance of its six Pratt & Whitney J47 turbojets required longer runways. "No production airplane before or since has required the miles of concrete the B-47 required," hence the long runways at Forbes, McConnell and Salina in Kansas and many other bases. He asserts the B-47 was pressed into service before the aircraft was fully tested and makes a good case.

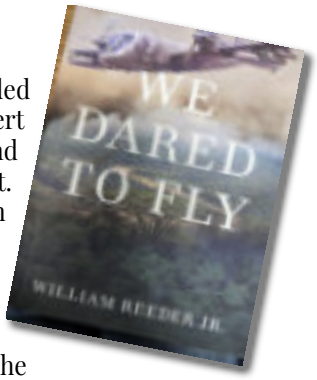
McGill provides a great background to the B-47 in general and especially the RB-47E, designed for photographic reconnaissance, that McGill flew. He includes several stories that took place at or near Forbes Air Force Base as well. McGill loved to fly the B-47 but said part of its allure was that it continually tried to kill its crew.

The lessons learned from the short-lived B-47s were woven into the then-new B-52 Stratofortress and McGill followed. He provides a great exposition upon the design, construction and employment of the B-52. McGill's experience with the B-52 included sitting and flying nuclear alert, being airborne during the Cuban missile crisis and wondering if he'd ever see his family again, and even flying Arc Light missions over South Vietnam before he retired.

"Jet Age Man" is a well-written first-hand account of the America's early strategic bombers and the rise of Strategic Air Command. ◆

"We Dared to Fly" *by William Reeder Jr.*

Reviewed by Chuck Watson



The cover of this book caught my eye with not only the artwork, but because the rather unheralded aircraft featured was what my childhood neighbor Norman maintained in Vietnam. The mostly covert missions flown by Army units using the Grumman OV-1 Mohawk went largely unheard of in the press and history books even though the daring missions almost decimated many of the squadrons, crews and aircraft.

The author relates his Army flight training and quickly jumps to his yearlong tour flying Mohawks on observation flights, searching for enemy troops and equipment. Flying not much faster than helicopters, the OV-1 was a bug eyed, twin engine, triple tailed turboprop that gave pilots and observers great views while presenting them as easy targets to Viet Cong troops. Assigned to the 131st Surveillance Company based at Phu Bai and known by their call sign of Spuds, the pilots flew a mixture of daytime and night missions over areas traversed by the infamous trails that spread over Vietnam and neighboring countries. The intelligence gathered was critical to planning by Army and Air Force commands trying to stem the influx from the north. Using electronic surveillance equipment new at the time as well as their eyes, the brave two-man crews flew unarmed and lingered over suspected troops all the while being an easy target themselves.

The author spins a continuous tale of missions mixed with raucous stories of off times in their Officers' Club, blowing off steam and trying to forget the death and losses inflicted daily. Most missions were quickly planned and usually secret and often over Cambodia and Laos as well as Vietnam. The author survived crash landings, and an ejection but survived his tour to come back for future ones. Reeder came back the second time flying Cobras and was shot down, becoming a prisoner for over a year. Highly decorated, he had a lengthy Army career followed by finishing a doctoral degree and years writing and speaking on military affairs. He is quick to lay the credit for the Spuds' success on the enlisted troops who maintained and repaired the Mohawks, one of which was my old friend, Norman. At 200 pages with many personal photos mixed in, the book is a must read and a break from all the stories of the fast movers usually thought to be the air warriors of the long war. ◆

In Remembrance

H. Philip Elwood
June 22, 1946-December 24, 2024
CAM #1530

Phil served in the Kansas Army National Guard, earned his private pilot's license and was restoring a vintage Ryan PT-22 Recruit primary training aircraft. Phil joined CAM in 1988 and remained a member for the rest of his life.

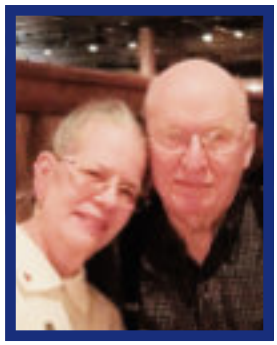
Bob Kelly
December 16, 1930-April 15, 2025
CAM #3693

Bob served in the Army Reserves in counterintelligence before going to work for the Santa Fe railroad. He and Mary moved to Topeka in 1976, and he retired in 1988. Bob became a member of the Combat Air Museum in 2001 and enjoyed leading tours for our visitors. Bob left the Museum a very generous bequest in his will for which we are very grateful.

Kathleen "Katie" Sherrow
May 2, 1921-April 18, 2025
CAM #5714

During World War II, Katie worked for Lockheed Aircraft in California where she helped build P-38 Lightnings and C-69 Constellations. After the war, Katie worked for the City of Topeka Parks Department. Katie spoke at our Girls in Aviation Day in 2017 and was surprised and delighted at the number of little girls who gathered around her for a photo after she spoke! Katie was a member of CAM since 2017.

Sharon McDorman
November 6, 1943-May 13, 2025
CAM #741



Sharon was married to Richard Long and was a CAM member since 1986.

Diane Todd
November 2, 1944-July 22, 2025
CAM #4044

Diane was married to Larry Todd and was a CAM member since 2009.

The Doolittle Raider

Continued from page 7

Also, twice a day the B-25 crews responded to the ship's "general quarters" alarm where they had to run to their aircraft as quickly as possible. The little free time during the voyage was occupied by three square meals a day, poker games, crap games, and other exercise/recreational activities. The ship's cooks asked the men if they could prepare a favorite meal for each of the USAAF crews. Lt. Ted Lawson (Crew #7 pilot) asked for a blueberry pie. As the cook was delivering the pie the ship's general quarters alarm sounded; but instead of running to his B-25 as directed, Lawson ignored the alarm and stayed in the ship's galley to enjoy the pie, all by himself! His story is told in the book "Thirty Seconds Over Tokyo" written in 1943 by Ted Lawson and Robert Considine. The book was the basis for a movie of the same name produced in 1944, starring actors Spencer Tracy as Doolittle and Van Johnson as Lawson.

Consideration had also to be made as the Task Force passed through six time zones from California to the launch point. They also crossed the international date line located between Midway and Wake Islands, losing a day en route (the actual launch date was April 18th, Task Force 16 time, but the calendar read April 17th in the United States). Note, this loss of a day was not accounted during the logistic plans for the China arrivals. As a result of this oversight, what ground support Doolittle thought available for his B-25s on the 18th in China was 24 hours behind. Work/rest periods varied from day to day as they passed through another time zone. From the planned launch point the crews had to fly across one more time zone to reach Japan itself and yet another time zone as they flew on to China losing another hour but gaining valuable daylight.

Daily aircraft maintenance and engine runs were completed on each of the aircraft during the voyage. In fact, one aircraft check found an engine problem where the engine had to be removed from the bomber

Continued on bottom of page 15

Ways You Can Support the Combat Air Museum

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. 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/i/community/community-rewards 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 $815 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!

Volunteer

The Combat Air Museum exists solely upon the money we raise from admissions, donations, grants and gift shop sales. We rely on volunteers to run our gift shop and the need for these volunteers has become even more urgent. We'll train you for this crucial and enjoyable task. If you could spare one day a month, please call the Museum Monday through Friday between 9 a.m. and noon at **785.862.3303** and ask for Nelson, our office manager and volunteer coordinator.

Continued from page 14

and taken to the hangar deck below to repair it. Once the engine was disassembled, it was found to contain a faulty part. A modified part was installed in it its place and after an engine run up the crew was satisfied with its performance and returned it to service.

Personal firearms were not issued to the flight crews by the USAAF. Some of the crew members did bring along a weapon, given to them by family or a friend. The Navy offered those who wanted a weapon a box of several old and worn military issued 1911 Colt .45 caliber pistols. Several of the crews took from the box, disassembled the weapons, attempting to find serviceable parts, cleaned, and reassembled them from various 45s making a functional weapon.

During the evening of Friday April 17, 1942, several bombs were brought up from the Hornet's magazine to the flight deck. Before loading them into the B-25s a ceremony was held for all USAAF members to attend. Doolittle tied several medals to a few of the bombs. The Japanese government previously presented these medals to U.S. dignitaries and military personnel for various achievements. These medal recipients wanted them returned "in proper fashion" due to the attack on Pearl Harbor. After the ceremony the men were allowed to sign or write messages on the bombs.

Again, Doolittle asked if any of the crew wanted to back out, none did. He then approached each first (left seat) pilot and asked if they wanted any of their crew removed from the mission. Only one pilot responded: Lt. Farrow (Crew #16 pilot) asked Doolittle to remove his co-pilot for performance reasons, which Doolittle did and replaced the co-pilot with one of the extra pilots who were on board. This was when Lt Hite became Farrow's co-pilot. Photos were then taken of each crew in front of their aircraft by Navy photographers.

(To be continued. Abridged from the original article by Keith Fulton, a retired KC-135 Stratotanker inflight refueling specialist with the 190th Air Refueling Wing, Kansas Air National Guard, Topeka, Kansas). ◆

COMBAT AIR MUSEUM
7016 SE Forbes Avenue
Topeka, KS 66619

PLANE TALK

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

Two Pictures – 1917

By Gordon Alchin

Gordon Alchin joined the Royal Field Artillery, transferred to the Royal Flying Corps and finally the Australian Flying Corps. He received the Air Force Cross for his service during the Great War.

'Closing Up' by Horace Davis (iwm.org.uk photo)

COMBAT AIR MUSEUM 16

Dawn...
And the dewy plain
Awakes to life and sound-
Where on the flying ground
The ghostly hangars blaze with lights again.
The giant birds of prey
Creep forth to a new day,
And one by one,
As morning gilds the dome,
Leave the grey aerodrome-
The day's begun.

Dusk...
And the vanish'd sun
Still streaks the evening skies;
Below, the prone earth lies
Darkened, wherever warring night has won.
The planes, returning, show
Deep black in the afterglow,
And one by one
Drop down from the higher airs,
-Down, down the invisible stairs-
The day is done.