

# Flight Line

**The Official Publication of the CAF**

Southern California Wing  
455 Aviation Drive, Camarillo, CA 93010  
(805) 482-0064



Our newest addition: the Yak-3 – coming soon to an Aviation Museum near you!

Vol. XXXI No. 4

April, 2011

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© Photo by Sharon Dwyer

The Spitfire Crew, basking in the afterglow of the special event “Battle of Britain/Spitfire Appreciation Day” on March 5, 2011. From left: Jessica Bauman, Robert Seeger (Crew Chief), Greg Bauman, Dave Spence, Les Bedding, Jennifer Bauman, Colin Bedding.  
In front: Dan Eizak, Dick Roberts.

See pages 7, 10 & 13 for articles and photos of the event.

**Wing Staff Meeting, Saturday, April 9, 2011 at 9:30 a.m. at the  
CAF Museum Hangar, 455 Aviation Drive, Camarillo Airport**

**Our CAF Mission: To Honor American Military Aviation Through Flight, Exhibition and Remembrance.**

# April 2011

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
<b>Museum Open 10am to 4pm Every Day Except Monday and major holidays</b>					1 <b>April Fool's Day</b>	2 <b>Work Day</b>
3	4 <b>Museum Closed</b>	5 <b>Work Day</b>	6	7 <b>Work Day</b>	8 <b>Docent Meeting 3:30 Air Show Bullhead City</b>	9 <b>Work Day Wing Staff Air Show Bullhead City</b>
10	11 <b>Museum Closed</b>	12 <b>Work Day</b>	13	14 <b>Work Day</b>	15	16 <b>Work Day</b>
17	18 <b>Museum Closed</b>	19 <b>Work Day</b>	20	21 <b>Work Day</b>	22	23 <b>Work Day</b>
24 <b>Easter</b>	25 <b>Museum Closed</b>	26 <b>Work Day</b>	27	28 <b>Work Day</b>	29	30 <b>Work Day Air Show Beal AFB (tentative)</b>

<b>STAFF AND APPOINTED POSITIONS</b>				<b>IN THIS ISSUE</b>	
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Operations Officer	* Jason Somes	(818) 292-4646	<a href="mailto:nbnh@aol.com">nbnh@aol.com</a>	Help Needed With Our History	3
Maintenance Officer	* Ken Gottschall	(818) 439-5885	<a href="mailto:kgts@netzero.com">kgts@netzero.com</a>	SoCaWing Gets Local Grant	3
Safety Officer	* Shari Heitkotter	(559) 285-0430	<a href="mailto:planejanex15@gmail.com">planejanex15@gmail.com</a>	Valor in the Dark	4
Museum Manager	John Woolley	(805) 407-4800	<a href="mailto:jwools@sbcglobal.net">jwools@sbcglobal.net</a>	Operation <i>Crippled Chick</i>	5
Gift Shop Manager	Jim Tierney	(805) 522-7067	<a href="mailto:jirneriet@aol.com">jirneriet@aol.com</a>	Wing Photo Page I	7
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Personnel Officer	Norm Swagler	(805) 482-6994	<a href="mailto:pswagler@hotmail.com">pswagler@hotmail.com</a>	Robert Seeger Earns A&P Certificate	10
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			<a href="http://www.orgsites.com/ca/caf-social">www.orgsites.com/ca/caf-social</a>	455 Aviation Drive	
				Camarillo, CA 93010-9501	

\* Denotes Staff Position

## Wing Updates

Mark your calendars for Saturday, April 16. We will have a General Wing Meeting at 4:00 p.m. in the Museum Hangar on that date – right after the work day ends.

A presentation of Legacy Formation Flying with Navy jets will be a highlight. Also – for our enjoyment – photos of the El Centro NAF air show and the Yuma MACS air show will be shown.

Our Wing Staff Officers will fill us all in on the latest developments in several areas.

Refreshments and beverages will be available – with donations happily accepted.

**That's Saturday, April 16 at 4:00 p.m. in the Museum Hangar. Be there ! Aloha !**

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## Yakovlev Yak-3 Coming To Our Wing

Bill Montague, a long-time member of our Wing, and a veteran Navy fighter pilot (Hellcats) has generously made plans with Steve Barber to make it possible for us to add a “modern” Russian Yak-3 to our aircraft inventory.

We hope to have the Yak-3 flying with our fighters at future air shows.

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## Wing Air Show Schedule: 2011

Apr 8-10	Bullhead City	A6M3, Mk XIV, P-51, SNJ-5
Apr 30-May 1	Beale AFB	Tentative
May 14-15	Chino	F6F, F8F, A6M3
May 27-28	Half Moon Bay	P-51, SNJ-5 (Rides)
Aug 20-21	Wings Over Camarillo	All Aircraft



© Photo by Dave Flood

**David Baker gave a very informative seminar on the Spitfire MkXIV for the Spitfire crew and all interested members – with excellent graphics. Nice job, David!**

## Help Needed With Our History!

by Ron Fleishman, Wing Historian

When I came back from Kansas City a few years ago, there were two projects that I wanted to get caught up on. One was to build up two files - one of all issues of our newsletter, “Flight Line,” and the other of issues of the CAF “Dispatch.”

This being our Wing’s 30<sup>th</sup> anniversary, it seemed like a good time to start. After all, we had copies of both publications in our filing cabinets in the back room. All I’d have to do is take them out, put them in order, and put them into binders.

Well, there seems to be a small problem. The issues are not in file boxes in the back room, at least not all of them.

There are some copies that have survived, but the sad fact is that approximately 60 % of the Wing’s copies of “Flight Line” do not exist, at least not in the Museum Hangar.

Most of our files have been subject to several moves – from the old museum to our new buildings – with side trips to storage containers. Often they fell victim to various “clean-up” and “make space” campaigns which were necessary to make space for new things and for re-arrangement of offices and equipment.

Now, when we would like to put them to use for reference and historical research, we find that they are gone.

So...I am appealing to the membership for help. If you still have early copies of “Flight Line” – especially from 1981 through the 1990s and early 2000s, and want to “clean house” with your files, please let me know.

Just about the same dates apply for the CAF publication “Dispatch.” We still have some copies of both publications, but we are nowhere near a complete collection.

This is our Wing’s history, and we want to preserve it and that of our national organization – and the part we have played in CAF history. If you can help – please let me know, bring in your old “Flight Line” and “Dispatch” copies, and we will take care of the rest. Many thanks!

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## CAF-SoCAWing Gets Local Grant

We have received a Community Service Grant from the City of Camarillo for the 2011-2012 year in the amount of \$3,000. The money will be used to develop a web-based computerized system for organizing our Military Aviation Library books, videos, manuals and magazines so that our collections may be accessed by all citizens of Camarillo and Ventura County, and, in particular, by school students. Computer Science students from CSUCI will be helping Jim Hinkelman and his library staff to implement the program. Thanks to all involved in supporting this project.

## U. S. Naval Aviation Centennial: 2011 Valor in the Dark

by Capt. Vincent Secades, USN (Ret)

*Editor's note: Lt. j. g. Clyde Lassen was the first Naval Aviator to be awarded the Medal of Honor in Vietnam.*

In the middle of a dark night June 19, 1968, the Search and Rescue (SAR) alarm blared aboard USS PREBLE (DLG-15). Lt. j.g. Clyde Lassen stumbled out of his bunk and rushed to man his UH-2A Seasprite. An F-4J had been hit by a Surface-to-Air Missile (SAM), and two aviators, Lt. Cmdr. John Holtzclaw and Lt. Cmdr. John A. Burns, had ejected 20 miles inside North Vietnam.

This event triggered one of the most daring helicopter rescues in naval aviation history.

Clyde Everett Lassen was born in Fort Myers, Fla. On March 14, 1942. He entered the Navy as an Airman Recruit on September 14, 1961. After completing Aviation Electronics Technician School, he served with VT-2, NAS Whiting Field, Fla. In 1964 he was accepted into the Naval Aviation Cadet Program, and pinned with his wings of gold October 12, 1965.

During his first operational tour with HC-1 he served as Officer in Charge (OIC) of Detachment Cubi Point, RP, and OIC of H-2 CSAR detachments in the Gulf of Tonkin. In 1967 these detachments became part of HC-7.

On that night (June 19, 1968) Lt. j.g Lassen, with copilot Lt.j.g Leroy Cook and gunners/rescue air crewmen ADJ3 Donald West and AE2 Bruce Dallas, launched from USS PREBLE into the darkness and was vectored by the Rescue Combat Air Patrol (RESCAP) aircraft to the survivors' location, a heavy forested area.

After establishing radio contact with the survivors, Lassen set the helo on a rice paddy nearby. The UH-2A began to take small arms fire. With "Come get us" calls coming through his earphones, he decided to try to get above the survivors and hoist them aboard. Using the illumination from RESCAP parachute flares, Lassen positioned the helicopter above the survivors, between two towering trees.

Before the air crewmen could begin the hoisting operation, the flares went out. Lassen recounted, "I added power and was just starting to climb when I hit the tree. I felt a large jolt, and the helo pitched down and went into a tight starboard turn. I regained control and waved off." The helicopter was still in flying shape.

Lassen had to postpone another rescue attempt until a new RESCAP aircraft with more flares could arrive. He determined that the survivors would have to make their way to the clearing if they had any hope of being rescued.

Informed of the situation, Burns and Holtzclaw made their way down the slope. As Lassen approached the clearing

for a second landing, small arms fire erupted along the perimeter. The survivors were too far away and Lassen aborted the approach. During the third approach the last of the illumination flares went off. Lassen decided to turn the landing light on and expose the aircraft to enemy gunners rather than abandon the survivors.

For two minutes he hovered, with the landing gear just touching the mud, while Dallas and West blasted away at the tree line nearby. Finally, Burns and Holtzclaw emerged from the dark and dashed toward the helicopter. Dallas reached out and yanked them inside the UH-2A, which departed immediately.

With the aircraft vibrating abnormally, a malfunctioning compass, and a low fuel state, Lassen headed for the coast while dodging antiaircraft fire. He landed the crippled helicopter aboard the closest ship available, USS JOUETT (DLG 29), with 135 pounds of fuel, enough for five minutes of flight time, left in the tanks.

For his heroic actions Lt. j.g. Clyde E. Lassen was awarded the Medal of Honor.

Lassen continued a successful naval career, serving tours with VT-1, USS AUSTIN (LPD-4), NAS Norfolk, HS-11, HS Wing One, and command of HT-8. Upon completion of his command tour, he retired from active duty in December 1982.

What the North Vietnamese gunners could not do, cancer did. After a short but brave battle with this terrible disease, this modest and unassuming, but decisive and courageous man passed away April 1, 1994. He is buried in Barrancas National Cemetery, NAS Pensacola, Fla.

Lt. Lassen became the first naval aviator and fifth Navy man to be awarded the Medal of Honor for bravery in Vietnam.

On April 21, 2001, the United States Navy commissioned USS LASSEN (DDG-82) in his honor.



© Photo by Vincent Secades  
**Cmdr. Clyde Lassen, CO**  
**Helicopter Training Squadron 8 (HT-8)**

## U.S. Naval Aviation Centennial:2011 Operation *Crippled Chick* – The Seabees Build An Emergency Airstrip Behind Enemy Lines

By Steve Karoly

A flight of seven Vought-Chance F4U-4 Corsairs slowly circles over Wonsan Harbor. Each pilot in turn glances at his fuel gauge. With fuel reserves short, they realize that their only option is to bring the fuel-starved birds down onto the deck and ditch them into the icy waters off Wonsan, North Korea.

But this option does not comfort the flight leader or any of his squadron mates. To ditch, they risk injury. And these pilots realize that their squadron, VF 193 from the *USS Princeton* (CVA 37), would lose half its complement of precious Corsair fighter planes.

After a fruitless afternoon searching for a downed naval aviator near Hungnam, the flight leader's immediate concern is to find sanctuary for his flight. But they had spent too much time searching for their downed comrade. As they flew over the small task group of American destroyers and minesweepers, they knew they would be quickly plucked from the frigid water of the Sea of Japan by waiting boats.

This option, later described as one that pits you "between the Chinese Dragon and the deep blue sea," would not be exercised that afternoon.

For soon Radio Yo Do began broadcasting the call "Steak for dinner." Once he heard those comforting

words, VF 193's flight leader instructed his flight to bank their planes toward a 2,400-foot runway in the middle of Wonsan Harbor.

The fighters landed at half past two on a rainy afternoon on an Allied-occupied island located some four and a half miles off shore in a harbor belonging to the enemy. Although North Korean gunners could, at any moment, lob hundreds of 76 and 105-mm. shells onto the runway, the pilots knew their chances of survival were greater on the island than in a yellow life raft.

A small team of Seabees quickly refueled three of the Corsairs so they could return to the *Princeton* that evening. The remaining four were refueled in the morning before taking off for the aircraft carrier. The Corsairs and their pilots flew off so they could return to battle again.

This was a day of jubilation for the Seabees. They had worked 19 long days to complete the emergency landing strip, dubbed Briscoe Field in honor of the commander of the 7th Fleet. The seven Corsairs of VF 193 were the first planes to make an emergency landing on the strip.

### How the airfield came to be

The assignment to build the emergency landing strip on Yo Do fell to ACB 1's Det. George. Led by Lt. T.E. Rowe, Det. George was composed of one warrant machinist, six chief petty officers and 69 Seabee enlisted men. Six of these Seabees proudly wore the blue, yellow and red ribbon for the Presidential Unit Citation, which was awarded to ACB 1 for the landing at Inchon almost two years earlier.

The tide turned for the Allies when the Chinese Communist Army struck the 8th Army in late November. The 1st Marine Division came under attack on November 27, 1950. For the next three weeks, the Marines made their famous "advance to the rear" as they evacuated Chosin Reservoir. The 8th Army lost all the territory they had gained as they fell back. Inchon and Wonsan were evacuated and Seoul fell on January 4, 1951. By the end of November, all Seabees but one had evacuated Wonsan. This time Wonsan would remain in enemy hands for the rest of the war.

To keep the Communists from using Wonsan, Navy Task Force 77 stepped up its air interdiction efforts in the spring and summer of 1951. In the sixteen months since the evacuation of Wonsan and Hungnam, the Navy waged a campaign of destruction along the northeast coast of North Korea. Almost daily, pilots struck key transportation and supply points.

But by the spring of 1952, the Navy recognized a problem. Scores of aircraft had been lost to the anti-aircraft guns around Wonsan. One ship, the converted helicopter landing ship *USS LST 799*, had plucked 24 Allied aviators from the Sea of Japan. Most of these aviators were rescued in the vicinity of Wonsan. Destroyers waiting in the bay picked up many more aviators.

These pilots had a choice: They could crash land in North Korea and face capture by the Communists or ditch their craft in the icy waters alongside an Allied ship. If a ship's boat crew or rescue helicopter reached the pilot before hypothermia set in, he had a chance of survival. Although the plane was lost to the Sea of Japan, the pilot lived to fly again.

But Lt. Col. Richard G. Warga, commander of the US Marine garrison on Yo Do Island in 1951, had a better idea. After interviewing several pilots who had ditched in the bay in the summer of 1951, Warga and his naval liaison, Lt. James S. Lampe, Jr., reasoned that the approaching winter would make survival difficult. So they recommended that the Navy build an emergency airfield on the island.



Seabees refueling seven Corsairs on Yo Do on July 15, 1952.

## Seabees build an airfield

The 7th Fleet commander, Vice Adm. Robert P. Briscoe, carefully weighed all the factors involved. A 1953 Navy press release characterized this analysis much like an accountant gazes at a balance sheet. While there were concerns for how the North Koreans would react to construction of an airfield, Briscoe felt that salvage of a single plane was worth the effort. In the end, it cost the Navy \$5 million to save nearly \$10 million in aircraft.



An aerial view of the emergency airfield on Yo Do - June 26, 1952, the day the Seabees finished the runway.

The balance sheet would not be complete unless you consider the human factor. Dozens of pilots were saved from capture and possible death at the hands of the Communists. Damaged planes landed on dry land, thus keeping them out of the frigid waters off

Wonsan. The remaining factor cannot be measured, which can be called the "comfort factor." As pilots circled over their targets, they knew that all they had to do was fly a few miles to safety if their aircraft was crippled by antiaircraft fire or ran low on fuel.

On June 6, 1952, the Seabees initiated Operation Crippled Chick, the code name for the effort to build the emergency airstrip on Yo Do. Det. George, which was assembled for the job because all available mobile construction battalions were tied up building the airfield at Cubi Point in the Philippines, sailed on the *USS LST 692* from Japan on June 3.

The first obstacle that confronted the Seabees was how to beach the pontoon causeway on a beach that had a very shallow gradient. Officers on the beach were concerned that the Seabees would not get causeway high enough onto the beach to anchor it properly.

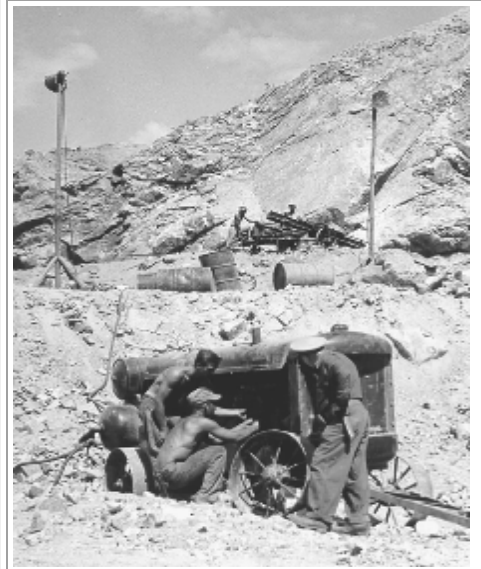
But the Seabees had an answer: After they dropped the causeway sections into the water and had connected them together, these resourceful Seabees pushed the causeway onto the beach with the bow of the LST. An officer on the scene later commented that the Seabees off loaded their equipment in "jig time."

The plan was for Det. George to have a 120-foot by 2,400-foot airfield operational in 45 days. Nineteen days later, on June 27, Det. George boarded an LST and returned to Japan, their mission complete.

They filled in and leveled the only rice paddies on the island, the only possible location for an airstrip. The runway ran from one side of the island to the other, bisecting the island. For the first 12 days ashore, the Seabees worked 16-hour days. On June 15, two days after receiving their first of two shelling from North Korean batteries on the mainland, the officer-in-charge reported that the runway was 50 percent complete. At that point it was 80-feet wide and 1,600-feet long. Eventually, the runway was widened to 200-feet.

Det. George twice received shellfire from the North Koreans. On June 13, 21 rounds fell between 2015 and 2030. All it did was interrupt the Seabees' work day. Det. George worked an extra hour to compensate. The log of the detachment again reported shellfire on June 21. This time 41 155-mm. rounds fell among the small boats kept

on the island. There were no Seabee casualties.



Seabees use a wagon-wheeled air compressor to drive the rock drills. It took four hours to drill to a depth of 18 inches in order to reach an adequate depth for blasting.



The SeaBee Memorial Monument, Washington, D.C.

The SeaBee Memorial is located at the entrance to Arlington National Cemetery. The nine-foot sculpture of a SeaBee is shown holding the hand of a little child. The inscription on the base: **"With Compassion For Others – We Build – We Fight – For Peace with Freedom."** The motto **"SeaBees – Can Do"** is inscribed over a panorama of SeaBees at their various trades. Below are the words: **"With Willing Hearts and Skillful Hands – the Difficult We Do At Once, The Impossible Takes a Bit Longer."**

*From: "The SeaBees in War and Peace," by Kimon Skordiles, Argus Communications, Inc., 1976.*

## Wing Photo Page I: Battle of Britain/ Warbird Appreciation Day – Spitfire



© Photo by Dave Flood

An estimated 400 plus people attended our special event held in our Aviation Museum on Saturday, March 5, 2011 to commemorate the Battle of Britain and to show appreciation to our Spitfire Mk XIV.



© Photo by Avery Willis

The RAF flag flew proudly with our Old Glory at the entrance of our Aviation Museum – welcoming all to celebrate with us the bond we have had with the UK since WWII.



©Photo by Gene O'Neal

Clyde East, WWII Spitfire pilot, was a featured speaker. Clyde first flew for the RAF, then for the Army Air Corps – switching to P-51 Mustangs.



© Photo by Gene O'Neal

Here is our Warbird of Honor for the day! The Spitfire Mk XIV did some flybys with the P-51 Mustang “Man O’ War” after the speaking presentations.



© Photo by Sharon Dwyer

Walt Metcalf gave a presentation on RAF's Squadron 242. His dad, P/O N.N. Campbell, was a Hawker Hurricane pilot with the 242, and was killed on October 17, 1940, near the end of the Battle of Britain.



© Photo by Sharon Dwyer

Another presenter was Ron Fleishman, our Historian, who enumerated the aircraft involved in the Battle of Britain.

## In Memoriam: John “Jack” Hartswick



**John “Jack” Hartswick**  
**1923 – 2011**

Jack Hartswick has “gone west.” He was one of the original members of our Wing. Jack had been a pilot in the USAAF during WWII, flying P-40s in the China-Burma-India campaign. His outfit was known as the “Burma Blasters.” He also flew P-47s later in the war, and had an infamous landing in a “Jug” during an air show at Pt. Mugu.

Jack flew our C-46 Commando “China Doll,” and, as some members remember, was an “aggressive” pilot. He liked to fly the C-46 to its very limit, and some of our members remember telling him not to fly the C-46 like a P-40 – just because both of them were made by Curtiss.

Jack lived in Bell Canyon, in the San Fernando Valley, for many years. He had a long career as a pilot for United Air Lines. He worked on the original restoration of our “China Doll.” He also flew warbirds with the famous Steve Hinton, currently of *Planes of Fame* in Chino, CA.

Joe Peppito and Bill Main have fond memories of Jack flying “China Doll” to air shows. On one flight, a spark plug blew out, and Jack did not feather the engine, just pulled down the power in that engine and continued on to Camarillo. On another flight, there was a hydraulic line break, and Joe P. was getting covered with red hydraulic fluid. Jack took his time getting back to CMA and did not hurry the landing.

He must have liked the way Joe looked all covered with red oil.

All of us at CAF-SoCAWing send our condolences to Jack’s son Chris and all the family. We will miss him. RIP.

## April *Flight Line* Museum Contest

By Ron Fleishman

This will be the first of a series of contests for our members and anyone who reads the *Flight Line*. The rules are simple: identify the object (completely) and you will receive a unique prize.

In the Aviation Museum, in a glass case, is a mannequin wearing the uniform of a female WWII veteran of the Woman’s Army Corps (WAC). The uniform is complete and includes four (4) service ribbons located over her left pocket.

The first one to tell *Flight Line* what the ribbons were awarded for (she served in WWII doesn’t count as an answer) will win an original So. CA Wing “Yosemite Sam” patch. This patch was our original insignia for many years until replaced with the “Flying C-46 and Palm Tree” insignia. The award patch is brand new, and has never been sewn on a uniform.

To make things a little easier – here is a photo of the service ribbons in question.



© Photo by Dave Flood

**These are the four ribbons you are asked to identify.**

Books and/or the Internet can be used, but you have to identify each of the ribbons by name.

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## It Seems Like Only Yesterday!

2011 marks the 30<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the So. CA Wing. We’ve come a long way from having meetings and no airplane to having ten airplanes and two hangars housing an Aviation Museum to be proud of and a Maintenance Hangar turning out some of the finest aircraft of WWII.

***Flight Line* will be highlighting some moments from our past just to remind the “old hands” how far we have come, and to tell the “new guys” what it took to get us to today.**

## The Battle of Britain: 1940

*"Never in the field of human conflict was so much owed by so many to so few." Words of Winston Churchill.*

During the Battle of Britain, in the summer and fall of 1940, Supermarine Spitfires and Hawker Hurricanes were flown by British, Canadian, American and Polish pilots who exhibited extraordinary heroism in their valiant and successful efforts to beat back the German Luftwaffe onslaught.

Of these brave young warriors, Winston Churchill, the British Prime Minister, spoke these words that have echoed down the corridors of history:

***The gratitude of every home in our Island, in our Empire, and indeed throughout the world, except in the abodes of the guilty, goes out to the British airmen who, undaunted by odds, unwearied in their constant challenge and mortal danger, are turning the tide of the world war by their prowess and by their devotion. Never in the field of human conflict was so much owed by so many to so few.***

We must also remember that Churchill's tribute to "the British airmen" included the aviation mechanics at the fighter bases throughout England who maintained, repaired, and patched up the Spitfires and Hurricanes after each battle, and got them back into the air to fight again against the repeated attacks of a determined and persistent Luftwaffe force.



Three of the British aircraft most famous for their part in helping the Allies to conquer the German Luftwaffe in World War II. The Supermarine Spitfire (fore), the Hawker Hurricane (top) and the Avro Lancaster. The Spitfire and the Hurricane were instrumental in winning the Battle of Britain in 1940 against the wave of attacks by the German bombers and fighters. The Lancaster was used in the bombing of key German industrial sites, and perhaps best known for the creatively-designed bombing of the Rhine bridges – the operation called "The Dam Busters."

## Battle of Britain: History of No. 242 Squadron.

**Aircraft:** [Hurricane Mk.1](#)

**Motto:** *Toujours prêt* - 'Always ready'

**Badge:** A moose's head erased. At the time that the badge was awarded the officers serving with the squadron were Canadian.

No 242 Squadron was formed in August 1918 from Nos 408, 409 and 514 Flights at the seaplane station at Newhaven and nearby airfield at Telscombe Cliffs. It carried out anti-submarine patrols over the English Channel until the end of World War One. On 15 May 1919, the squadron was disbanded.

On 30 October 1939, No 242 reformed at Church Fenton as a fighter squadron and initially had a large number of Canadian personnel on strength. In December it received Blenheim fighters which were replaced in January 1940 by Hurricanes, the squadron becoming operational on 23 March. Operations over France began on 16 May, a detachment being based at French airfields until evacuated on 16 June to take part in the Battle of Britain.



*A Hawker Hurricane Mk 1 in 242 Squadron markings*

### Stations

Coltishall 18 June 1940

Duxford 26 October 1940



242 Squadron pilots included Squadron Leader Douglas Bader (center) and Pilot Officer Norman N. Campbell (in white next to Bader). Campbell was Walt Metcalf's father. He lost his life while pursuing a German Dornier DO 17 on October 17, 1940. He was shot down by a gunner on the DO 17. His *Hurricane* crashed into the North Sea some 30 miles off Yarmouth. His body was recovered and he was buried on October 31, 1940. He was one of "The Few."

## Museum Update

by John Woolley

Our Special Event, "Battle of Britain / Warbird Appreciation Day" was held on Saturday, March 5, 2011. As our "warbird of the day" we featured our Spitfire MkXIV, which was, along with the Hawker Hurricane, one of the major players in the defeat of the Luftwaffe's attempt to subdue Great Britain in WWII during the summer of 1940. It will be forever known as "The Battle of Britain."

Our event marked the 75<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the first flight of a Spitfire – March 5, 1936.

Approximately 400 people attended our event, with standing room only in the Museum Hangar for the presentations, which included:

- Welcome and introductions by John Woolley, Museum Manager;
- Battle of Britain overview by John Woolley;
- Battle of Britain aircraft by Ron Fleishman;
- Walt Metcalf recounting his father's (P/O Neil N. Campbell, RAF) experiences with the famous RAF 242 Squadron;
- Background on the RAF's 303 "Kosciusko" Squadron, the famous group of Polish fighter pilots – by Terry Tagnazian, President, Aquila Polonica Publishing Company;
- Experiences recounted by Clyde East, RCAF and then USAAF fighter pilot who flew both Spitfires and P-51 Mustangs in WWII;
- History of our Spitfire Mk XIV by Robert Seeger, Crew Chief.

Following the presentations, our Spitfire Mk XIV fired up and flew formation fly-overs with the P-51 Mustang "Man O' War." After the flight, the pilot of the Spitfire, Wing Leader Steve Barber answered questions from the assembled spectators about the Spitfire.

We also had Richard Witten and Chuck Williams taking photos of attendees (for a fee) in the cockpit of our SNJ-4 "Bluebird." Docents also gave ongoing tours.

The event proved to be an overall financial success, and very well received by all who attended.

The elements that contributed to the success of the event:

- Good planning – begun in November, 2010;
- Good publicity – we ran effective ads in the *VC Star* and the *L.A. Daily News*.
- Widespread distribution of colored posters – provided by Steve Barber's firm;
- Presentations to community groups, such as British organizations, service clubs, schools, etc.
- Great weather.

The Museum Committee is presently beginning planning for the next Special Event. Stay tuned!

## Projects With CSUCI Students

We are currently involved in two projects involving a collaboration with the Computer Sciences Department of California State University – Channel Islands.

A team of three students, under the direction of Professor John Price, is working on the implementation of a program that will develop a database of all our Military Aviation Library books, videos, manuals, and magazines. The program is called "KOHA," and was developed in New Zealand ("KOHA" , in the Maori language, means "sharing").

John Woolley, Dave Flood, Jim Hinkelman, Jim Tierney, Ron Fleishman and Bill Main are the members working closely with the CSUCI students.

Our Wing has received a grant to implement this program. See Page 3 for details on the grant.

The other project in which we are working with John Price's students is a Website Unification Project, whereby we are attempting to merge our two websites into one effective website. This project also involves three Computer Sciences students, all seniors, working with John Woolley, Dave Flood, Ken Gottschall and Pat Brown to create a very user-friendly, attractive website through which we will be able to merchandise products related to our aircraft and to also sell Vintage Aircraft rides – a major source of revenue for the Wing.



**The Website Unification Team includes (from left); John Woolley, Syed Mujtaba, Marc "Chris" Ong, Dave Flood, and Professor John Price of CSUCI. Ken Gottschall and Bryan Tanjutco are also members.**

## Robert Seeger Earns A & P Certificate

Our Spitfire Crew Chief, Robert Seeger, has earned his Airframe and Powerplant (A & P) certificate from the FAA after taking a course at North Valley Occupational Center. Robert was awarded the license on January 25, 2011, and is currently a jet aviation mechanic at Jet Suite Air at Van Nuys Airport. His new firm has twelve jet aircraft that they charter to businesses. Congratulations, Robert!

## Wing Photo Page II



© Photo by Dave Flood

**Ceci Stratford speaking to 2<sup>nd</sup> graders at Las Posas Elementary School, Camarillo- one week prior to their field trip to our Aviation Museum.**



© Photo by Dave Flood

**Mrs. Angeli's 2<sup>nd</sup> grade class from Las Posas Elementary School. Their bus transportation was paid for through a Camarillo City Community Service Grant.**



© Photo by Dave Flood

**Part of a visiting Camarillo High School history class, with David Baker, who expounded on the Spitfire. The Battle of Britain was part of their curriculum.**



© Photo by Dave Flood

**Gene O'Neal with P-51 "Man O' War" prior to his flight with Ken Gottschall to the El Centro NAF air show. Gene's photos of El Centro will be in the May issue.**



© Photo by Dave Flood

**Steve Barber in the F8F Bearcat and Ken Gottschall and Gene O'Neal in the P-51 Mustang ready to take off for the El Centro NAF air show – March 19 & 20.**



© Photo by Shari Heitkotter

**Safety Officer Shari Heitkotter arranged for Steve Baker of the Ventura County Hazardous Materials Team to give a seminar on how to handle and report hazardous materials. A very informative meeting!**

## John Stobart: Lover of Spitfires

John Stobart, America's most celebrated maritime artist, is a lover of Spitfires. He says, in the introduction of his monumental book, "The American Maritime Paintings of John Stobart", by John Stobart, with Robert P. Davis:

"I feel that my first appreciation for design, or how a magnificent form arrives out of function, came from the immediate admiration I felt for the British Spitfire.

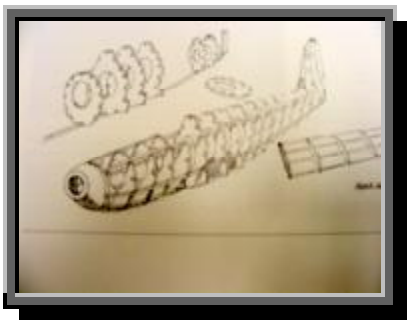
This may have been the most beautiful aircraft ever designed.



© Painting by Barrie Clark

Its lines grew out of a series of racing seaplanes that were designed for the Schneider Trophy contests, which began in the late twenties. Reginald Mitchell, the father of the Spitfire, as well as many other speed breakers, was as much of an artist as a fine designer of fast planes. Sadly, this talented engineer died in 1937; so he didn't see his Spitfire, built by the Supermarine Company, fight the Battle of Britain along with the Hawker Hurricane.

The Spitfire was a work of pure art. The shape of the wings, engine cowling, cockpit and tail – the proportions: I knew them intimately and spent my wartime school days (in Leicester, England) out of sight of the teachers on the back row of class, producing drawing after drawing of the plane in all imaginable positions.



An early sketch by John Stobart of a Spitfire model.

This led me to realize and understand the rudiments of structure and perspective in a far more intense manner than if I had been studying them in an art class.

One of the most important things developing in my nature was an undying urge to make things – especially out of

pieces of wood. This derived naturally from what became almost a mania for building model airplanes.

The self-taught lessons in achieving a perfect model were enormous. In the first place, one gained a knowledge of the structure of things. In fact, one was building a plane in much the same way the real thing was built in the factory.

But the meticulous work of cutting and setting up sections developed one's patience and resolve to stay with a complex project and see it through.

Within this sphere of activity was revealed the truth of the adage that was hammered into us at that time – *'If a job's worth doing, it's worth doing well.'*



© Painting by John Stobart

**"New York: The 'Henry B. Hyde' Leaving Pier 20, East River, 1886"**

The above painting by John Stobart is a testimony that he used all his training and innate talent and experience to produce a work of beautiful maritime art, one that was certainly "done well."

When John Stobart visited the Ventura County Maritime Museum, he had heard from Jim and Katie Hinckley, friends of the museum, that we have a Spitfire in our Aviation Museum. He immediately asked to see it, and Jim and Katie brought him out to our hangars on February 20. They were joined by David Baker, a fellow Englishman.



© Photo by Katie Hinckley

**John Stobart, flanked by Jim Hinckley & David Baker**

## Wing Photo Page III: More Special Event Photos



© Photo by Dave Flood

The Bearcat on display with her borrowed prop –from an AD3. Note the blade clearance with the ground. The F8F’s prop is currently being overhauled.



© Photo by Dave Flood

Steve Barber gave an informative talk to spectators after his flight in the Spitfire. There were many people of British ancestry at the event.



© Photo by Dave Flood

Colin Bedding’s 1955 Jaguar was one of many British sports cars on display during our Special Event.



© Photo by Sharon Dwyer

John Woolley, our Museum Manager (right), acted as Master of Ceremonies at our Battle Of Britain/Warbird Appreciation Day. Here he is introducing Robert Seeger, the Spitfire’s Crew Chief.



© Photo by Gene O’Neal

The P-51 Mustang “Man O’ War” and the Spitfire Mk XIV running up their engines prior to their special flyover formation for the Special Event.



© Photo by Gene O’Neal

A look at part of the large crowd that attended the March 5 event – coincidentally the 75<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the first Spitfire flight.

## A Wild and Crazy Time

by Gail Metcalf

December 6, 1960: It was a very cold morning as my husband, Walt Metcalf and I waited on the ramp for permission to board the DC-3 parked on the northwest edge of Burbank Airport. My dad, Lawrence Carmody, was piloting a group of amateur anthropologists/ archeologists to San Miguel Island to search for Juan Cabrillo's grave, and he had invited us to join the adventure.

For many years, Dad and I had observed those Channel Islands off the coast of Venture and Santa Barbara Counties as we drove on Highway 101. Dad and I frequently talked about the islands, and were fascinated by the thought of visiting them. Dad probably had wonderful aerial views of them as he flew north and west from Los Angeles as a commercial pilot.

It was time to board the "workhorse of the air" and get settled and buckled in for the first leg of the trip – to Oxnard, California. There we would be meeting the rest of the members of the expedition. First, however, Dad had to get the engines of the old DC-3 started. He needed external power to get the engines turning. In my lay terms, I would describe it as a "battery jump." That was an unexpected experience, but Carmody, as usual, was calm and ready for the flight.

The landing at Oxnard was routine. This is where a jeep was to be loaded onto the plane. A rough ramp was secured to the cargo door. The jeep was started and driven partway up the ramp. It wasn't going to make it under its own power, and the men took over, pushing and lifting until the jeep was in and tied down toward the front of the cargo bay. The passengers sat in utilitarian seats safely secured to the floor. We were ready to fly on to San Miguel Island.

Approaching the island, a Cessna 150, which had accompanied us, landed first to measure the landing site in order to be sure that the DC-3 could set down there safely on the grassy plain. The DC-3 was the largest plane to land on the island up to that point.

The Cessna pilot radioed Carmody and gave him the green light to land. It was a bumpy landing and an even bumpier taxi trip to where the jeep was to be unloaded. Now the reverse of the process that occurred at Oxnard Airport was to take place. The laws of physics were now on the jeep-handlers' side. Unloading the jeep via the same ramp was much easier. As we stood by the plane on the grass "runway," we could see a few ranch buildings nearby. But first, we all got into the jeep to cruise around the island and get the lay of the land.

In the jeep, I was given a real seat and many others piled in around me. We must have looked like part of a contest to see how many people could fit in one vehicle. It was so cold that I enjoyed having all those warm bodies close to me. Mr. Cooper, the leader of this expedition, was the

driver. He had some maps that showed where the grave of Spanish explorer, Juan Cabrillo should be. Mr. Lester, the caretaker, who lived on the island, had campaigned for a monument to Cabrillo to be placed on San Miguel Island. It was installed in 1937.

The spot was at the top of a cliff, which showed signs of severe erosion from centuries of wind and rain. It didn't seem practical to excavate there, so we all climbed aboard the jeep once again and enjoyed the barren landscape, treeless and wild with an ample display of coreopsis

We found a trail to a sandy beach that was broad and strewn with rocks, shells and flotsam and jetsam. We hiked down and discovered that some of the rocks contained turquoise. There was a cave that was a place where Chumash Indians, the early inhabitants of the Island, piled abalone shells in an orderly shape.

Before we explored the beach, the remains of a B-24 were spotted. It had been there since the years of World War II and had crashed for reasons unknown to us. There were guns, engines, seats, and other major parts of the plane that encouraged photographers to take pictures of the site.

After a busy day, we came back to the island's old ranch house, and explored what little of it that remained. The house had been built in a "V" shape that helped protect it from the strong, prevailing winds. One could feel the ghosts of the island, as Betsy Lester Roberti, the caretaker's daughter, claims she did. I was so glad Dad thought to ask me to explore our long-held dream of seeing our Channel Islands.

The jeep was going to stay on the island for awhile, so all we had to load was ourselves into the plane. It was just sunset and there was a storm blowing our way. Dad started the engines without a jumper cable and we were on our way back to Oxnard to drop off Mr. Cooper and his explorers. Shortly, we were landing at Burbank Airport and got home ahead of the rain that soon began to pour down.

It was surely a wild and crazy day that I have remembered for years and will continue to remember for years to come.

