

Flight Line

The Official Publication of the CAF
Southern California Wing
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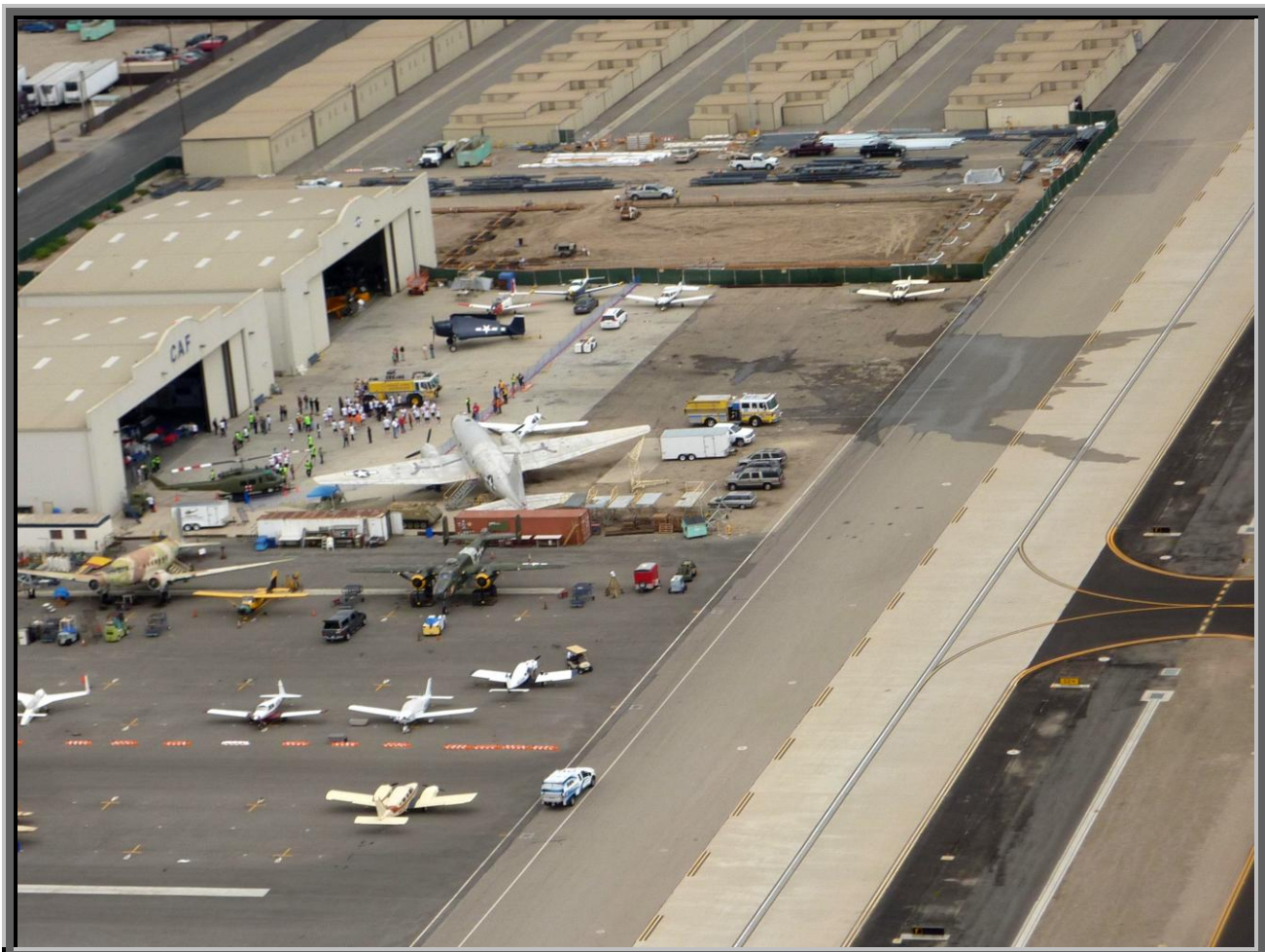


August, 2015
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A donated 1947 Navion is our newest project.

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© Photo by Avery Willis

Aerial view of our Aviation Museum, showing the New Zealand and Saudi Arabia Special Olympics teams on our ramp. Notice also the view of the site of our new hangars.

**Wing Staff Meeting, Saturday, August 15, 2015 at 9:30 a.m. at the
CAF Museum Hangar, 455 Aviation Drive, Camarillo Airport**

THE CAF IS A PATRIOTIC ORGANIZATION DEDICATED TO THE PRESERVATION OF THE WORLD'S GREATEST COMBAT AIRCRAFT.

August 2015

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
Museum Open 10am to 4pm Every Day Except Monday and major holidays						1 Work Day
2	3 Museum Closed	4 Work Day	5	6 Work Day	7	8 Work Day
9	10 Museum Closed	11 Work Day	12	13 Work Day	14 Docent Meeting 3:30	15 Wing Staff Meeting 9:30 VJ Day Work Day
16	17 Museum Closed	18 Work Day	19	20 Work Day	21	22 Wings Over Camarillo Air Show
23 Wings Over Camarillo Air Show	24 Museum Closed	25 Work Day	26	27 Work Day	28	29 Work Day
30	31 Museum Closed	Museum Open 10am to 4pm Every Day Except Monday and major holidays				

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* Denotes Staff Position

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Submittal Deadline - 15th of the month

Southern California Wing
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Camarillo, CA 93010-9501

The Final Stretch: PBJ-1J Mitchell “Semper Fi”

While the meaning of the title suggests we are in a race, allow me to elaborate a little. It's been over 20 years since we took delivery of the PBJ, so for the most part, we have not been racing. With a lot of work going on behind the scenes, our pace seemed very slow at times. That pace was also slowed by all of the other projects our team has taken on over the years; everything from the roof of the C-46 to the wings of our SNJ's. Regardless, now that we are close to completing the restoration, we truly are now in a bit of a race as air shows are showing interest. While we won't compromise to meet a specific date, it is our aim to be flying by late August so that we can participate in the Camarillo Air Show. After that is Pt. Mugu, and possibly Reno.

So where are we right now? So many things are complete that it is impossible to list them all. Most of what we are doing are the final steps in getting the systems complete. The flap system has a few more days of work, as does the fuel system. The hydraulic system has a few issues, but we will be hooking up the hydraulic mule and running gear swings and operating all of the other systems. The props are going through their 5-year inspections, and the prop governor cables are being installed. Engine hook-ups are nearly complete and oil shut-off valves are being installed.

The instrument panel has only a few holes left to fill, but I will get to that next. We have two main gear wheels with new tires, tubes and bearings ready to install after we do some taxi testing. Seats are being manufactured so that we can carry as many passengers as insurance will allow, and a spare-parts box is being built so we won't ever be stranded while out and about.

So what's left? While there are a lot of little things to complete, hitting the larger items is in order. Through the amazing generosity of some of our members, we now have everything we need in the way of avionics. We have a few minor details to work out but they are minor, and our avionics components are being wired together at this time. While our panel won't look very authentic, it will be very useful and reliable. In fact, it will be extremely impressive by any standard. Beyond communication and navigation, it will also provide the latest weather at any airport, show any storms that may be ahead, and indicate all terrain issues along our path. We will also be able to track our fuel usage better than we can with any other aircraft in our fleet.

All of these are important if we start taking this incredible machine out on the road for long flights. And while the avionics are going together, we can now complete the wiring. Jeff Nelson has done a superb job of building a wire loom for the PBJ, and if you haven't seen it, it is a work of art. Every wire installed has its own identification number, which will come in very handy during trouble-

shooting. The wires are all tied with wax string to keep them in a bundle. When clamps were needed, we used clamps with white insulation so that the wires would not be discolored. Now that all components are installed, Jeff can complete this monumental task. Just a hint, but as soon as Jeff hooks up the last wire, we will be able to **START THE ENGINES**.

So what are some of the small things? We have to get a few more things from Aero Trader for the fire system and install them. We have to put oil in the tanks, finish testing the fuel system, hook the avionics and intercom system to the airplane, weigh the airplane, and do more paperwork. The final inspections are being done by Rick Johnson and areas are already signed off and closed. We still are waiting for the final turret dome, but that should not hold us up.

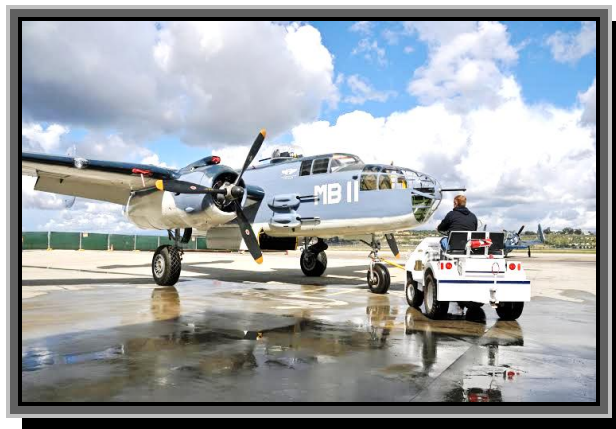
While our team has been working very hard, the support we have had has been amazing. Between the Wing, through Steve Barber, providing us two freshly overhauled engines, recent donations to complete the avionics, and individuals becoming sponsors, we have come a long, long way. Beyond the engines, the Wing has been fantastic - making sure finances would not cause us any delays. Add to that all of the assistance we have had from the people in the hangar for various things such as fixing the leading edge of the wing, making sure our prop inspections go smoothly, fund raising, and so many other tasks, it is obvious that we have the backing needed to be flying soon.

The magic day is just around the corner and we are going to get there. Don't blink too much. as you might miss something important.

Marc Russell and the entire PBJ “Semper Fi” Crew

Editor's Note: you may get on board the “Semper Fi Final Stretch Express” by sending your donation to: CAF – So Cal Wing, Attention: Marc Russell, 455 Aviation Drive, Camarillo, CA 93010.

Many thanks for your continuing support!



**© Photo by Frank Mormillo
Our North American PBJ-1J Mitchell bomber
“Semper Fi” in April, 2015.**

THE BATTLE OF PALMDALE

ATTRIBUTED TO: WIKI-PEDIA; INFOWARS.COM; PETER W. MERLIN; LOS ANGELES TIMES; THE CHINA LAKER.

August 16th 1956, the typical clear blue California sky shone brightly.

At Point Mugu Naval Air Station, ground crews prepped an F6F-5K Hellcat drone for its last flight ever. The Hellcat was painted high-visibility red and was rigged to be guided by remote control. The plane was to fly out over the vast pacific into a training scenario where the navy would blast it out of the sky for target practice. But the Hellcat had other ideas.



Grumman F6F-5K Hellcat Drone at Pt. Mugu NAS

Shortly after 11:30 a.m., the Hellcat drone took off from the Pt. Mugu Naval Air Station -- heading west over the ocean. Soon thereafter, it started a lazy turn to the south and began heading straight towards the teeming metropolis of Los Angeles. The remote controllers at the navy base tried frantically to turn the escaped plane back out to the ocean to no avail. Having lost contact, it proceeded to head straight into the heart of one of the most populated areas in the country.

When all backup systems failed, the Navy finally gave up and called for assistance. As the Navy had no fighter aircraft standing by, they swallowed their pride and made a call to Oxnard Air Force Base. Five miles north of the navy base were two F-89D Scorpion interceptor jets ready to scramble. Being that this was in the thick of the cold war era, the planes were armed and fueled and ready to go. The Scorpions were armed with two rocket pods containing 52 Mighty Mouse rockets. These rockets were designed to be fired into approaching Russian bomber formations and thus had no guidance systems.



F-89D Scorpions at Oxnard Air Force Base

However, today, this was an altogether different threat. 1st Lt. Hans Einstein and his radar op 1st Lt. C. D. Murray sprinted across the tarmac and climbed into their waiting silver steed. 1st Lt. Richard Hurliman and 1st Lt Walter Hale jumped into the second plane and joined the pursuit.

The Air Force planes raced southward at full speed to intercept the small wandering blip on their radar. At 30,000 feet just north of Los Angeles the sprinting jets intercepted the portly drone. It was on a southwest course that took it directly over Los Angeles, then it turned slowly circling over the city of Santa Paula. The pilots were waiting for it to wander away from populated areas so they could blast it from the sky.

Soon the red Hellcat drifted over a rural area known as Antelope Valley. The pilots tried to fire their rockets with a turning fire-fire control method, but a malfunction in the system prevented the rockets from igniting.

The drone then turned southeast and began heading back for the center of Los Angeles. Under pressure, the pilots decided it was now or never. They abandoned the automatic fire modes on the rockets and decided to launch them manually. One snag was that the gun-sights had recently been removed from the planes! The theory was that they shouldn't ever have to use them because the automated firing system would target the rockets, but it had failed.



The pilots decided to fly by the seat of their pants and began their first rocket run. They set their intervalometers to "ripple fire," which would strafe the plane with three rocket salvos. The first plane lined up and let loose... and missed completely. The second plane's rockets undershot the fleeing drone.

The rockets blasted past the mindless drone, overshooting their target. They then descended into the mountains near the town of Castaic and exploded in the forest below. They started a raging forest fire that would destroy 150 acres in an area known as Bouquet Canyon.

The second salvo of rockets also missed the drone, blasting into the town of Newhall. These rockets started fires in an oil field. They ignited a number of oil sumps and began a fire that burned more than 100 acres of brush.

These fires blazed out of control and almost reached the Bermite Powder company's explosives plant!

The Battle of Palmdale, continued...

The drone continued to drift northward toward the town of Palmdale. Frustrated, the pilots tried another rocket run. The first salvo went wide again, and of the second salvo, a few Mighty Mouse rockets bounced harmlessly off of the slow moving drone's belly.



An F-89D Scorpion firing its rockets

Suddenly, in the quiet bucolic town of Palmdale, all hell broke loose. Mighty Mouse rockets fell from the sky like fiery hail. An explosion outside Edna Carlson's house caused shrapnel to smash her front window, blast through a wall, and wreck her pantry. Mrs Lilly Willingham heard a deafening explosion and nearly missed being maimed by a hot piece of metal that lodged in the wall inches from her face in her own living room. A rocket exploded in the middle of the street directly in front of the car young Larry Kemp was driving. The explosion blew out his tires, and made Swiss cheese of the front of his vehicle.

After a few minutes the mayhem subsided and the bewildered residents of Palmdale searched the skies. Was this a coordinated Russian attack? A nefarious Sunday surprise? Luckily, no one was injured in the battle and 13 dud rockets were recovered by air force ordinance disposal teams. But it took 500 of the region's firefighters two days to put out the brush fires that raged.

The pilots of the interceptor jets were running on fumes, so they abandoned the mission and returned to their base – utterly defeated. The drone itself headed east and ran out of fuel. It descended in a spirale glide into an unpopulated area eight miles east of Palmdale. In it's final moments, it sliced through some power lines and cartwheeled into the dirt, disintegrating in the crash.

So this was the story of one of the only aerial battles to be fought in the skies over the continental United States. The story of how one oblivious, mindless drone evaded the concerted attacks of the state-of-the-art weaponry of its day.

A day that will live in infamy for the rest of recorded history and will always be known as the Battle of Palmdale.

Thanks to Steve Barber, Sr. for sharing this article.

Finding the Site

On July 5, 1997, I searched for the crash site with a colleague, Tony Moore. Using information from old newspaper articles, we identified our search area. When we arrived, we followed the power lines to the location that had been described, and immediately spotted aircraft debris.

It soon became apparent the the pieces belonged to a relatively small, propeller-driven airplane. Some of the pieces had part numbers and Grumman inspection stamps. Fragments of exterior skin were painted red, just as the drone Hellcat had been. There were numerous data plates from various components. We also found items from the cockpit and parts of the right camera pod. There was no question that we had found the crash site of the F6F-5K.

The wreckage is all that remains to commemorate the day that an unarmed, unmanned and obsolete prop-driven plane eluded two of America's most advanced jet interceptors. Looking at wreckage scattered in this yet undeveloped section of the Antelope Valley, I couldn't help but wonder how the incident affected the careers of the various participants of "The Battle of Palmdale."

Navy officials at Point Mugu must have initially felt embarrassed, having to ask the Air Force for help in shooting down the runaway drone. Later, they may have felt relief that Navy pilots were not to blame for the ensuing debacle. The interceptor pilots, on the other hand, must have watched their egos deflate as fast as their rockets were ineffectively expended over the communities of Southern California.

Bombing taxpayers doesn't foster community support or win promotions for junior officers. Only the fact that no lives were lost prevented the comedy of errors from becoming a tragedy.

By Peter W. Merlin, X-Hunters, The Aerospace Archaeology Team <http://www.thexhunters.com>



Secret Fuel for The Battle of Britain

The 75th Anniversary of the Battle of Britain approaches this summer. Here, an update item for the history books.

No one questions the valor of the RAF pilots & crews who held off Hitler's Luftwaffe. But they had a secret edge, not available to the Germans. 100 octane aviation gasoline, produced by a new catalytic cracking process, which improved the performance of their Spitfires & Hurricanes. British refineries could not produce this secret fuel, and it was purchased almost entirely from the United States. The primary facility which produced this fuel was the ESSO refinery at Baytown, Texas. Logisticians delivering the goods are indispensable & unsung heroes of war. .

In 2009, the year that marked the 70th anniversary of the outbreak of the Second World War, a previously untold story emerged of how, through a "miracle" chemical breakthrough, Spitfire and Hurricane fighters gained the edge over German fighters to win the Battle of Britain. An American scientist and author has claimed that the famed pair of war-winning airplanes gained superior altitude, maneuverability and rate of climb by a revolutionary high-octane fuel supplied to Britain by the USA just in time for the battle.

Books, documentaries, and movies have chronicled the brilliant contribution of UK designers and engineers behind the legendary fighter planes that won the Battle of Britain, preventing invasion of the British Isles.

The courage and sacrifice of RAF pilots who flew the airplanes is rightly celebrated and their bravery has become an inspirational chapter of the British national story. What has not been known until now, however, is the story of the revolutionary aviation fuel supplied to the RAF by an American company, using a process invented by a Frenchman, without which Spitfires and Hurricanes might not have achieved crucial dominance over the Luftwaffe.

The Royal Society of Chemistry read the claims about Eugene Houdry, and his process at the Sun Oil Company, in a paper written originally for the journal *Invention and Technology* by American science writer Tim Palucka. The introduction to the paper by Palucka says of Houdry: "His miraculous catalyst turned nearly worthless sludge into precious high-octane gasoline and helped the Allies to win World War II."

He continued: "That process would make a crucial difference in mid-1940 when the Royal Air Force started filling its Spitfires and Hurricanes with the 100-octane gasoline imported from the United States instead of the 87-octane gasoline it had formerly used."

The RSC is inviting experts and the public to challenge the new claim and if it remains intact then the society will send the report to aviation and military historians to mark the newly-discovered contribution of chemists to victory in one of the key battles of World War II. Eugene Houdry, born in

France, developed, after settling in the USA, one of the earliest catalysts to convert useless crude oil into high octane fuel. He revealed the "cracking" process at a Chicago chemicals conference in 1938.

The 100-octane fuel that resulted from the Houdry Process increased the Spitfire's speed by 25 mph at sea level; and by 34 mph at 10,000 feet. This extra speed gave the British fighters in the summer of 1940 the edge over the Luftwaffe above the English Channel and in the skies of London and south-east England. With the balance tipped towards the British, the German invasion was abandoned and Hitler turned eastwards, allowing the UK armed forces time to regroup and to revive.

"Luftwaffe pilots couldn't believe they were facing the same planes they had fought successfully over France a few months before. The planes were the same but the fuel wasn't," said Palucka.

Tim Palucka says that in the 1943 book *The Amazing Petroleum Industry*. V A Kalichevsky of the Socony-Vacuum Oil Company explained what high-octane gasoline meant to Britain. Kalichevsky wrote: "It is an established fact that a difference of only 13 points in octane number made possible the defeat of the Luftwaffe by the RAF in the fall of 1940. This difference, slight as it seems, is sufficient to give a plane the vital edge in altitude, rate of climb and maneuverability that spells the difference between defeat and victory."

Thanks to Gary Barber for this interesting article.

Safety Corner

by Gene O'Neal, Safety Officer

There is always something new in SAFETY. A new concern happened while closing the hangar doors.

One of our helpful members was pulling the doors toward him when his foot became wedged between the door and the steel bar that holds the barrier chain, which is imbedded in the concrete. OUCH.

Proving that we must always be aware of new dangers. In this case it is recommended that we fight (if need be) our way to the back of the doors and PUSH them closed. Pulling the doors also opens the risk of getting your shoe caught under the door; not a good plan.

This is a good time to say that flip-flops and open-toed footwear is not appropriate in the hangar or on the flight ramp.

Situational awareness is a pilot thing, but it also applies in all situations around the hangar and on the flight ramp. THINK AHEAD AND ALWAYS BE LOOKING AROUND. ALWAYS BE SAFE.

Remember a CLEAN work area improves SAFETY. Everyone please help clean up just a little every day. All accidents are preventable. Think about it!

August, 2015 Photo Page I



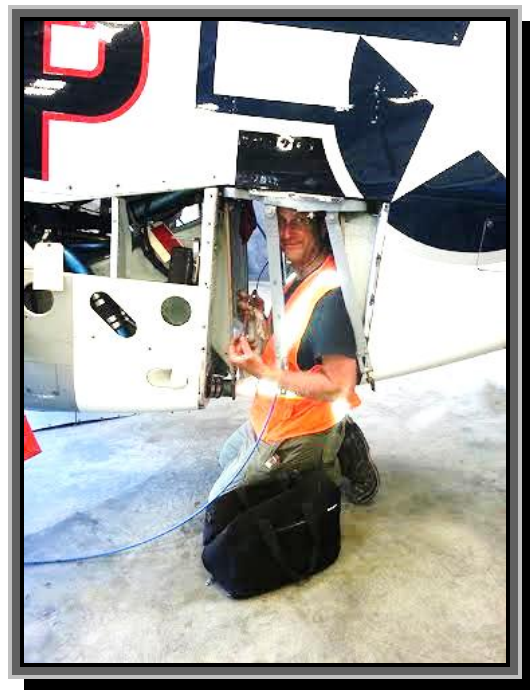
A very happy father with his three girls after a once-in-a-lifetime ride in our P-51 "Man O' War". To reserve a ride for a relative or friend, call 805-482-0064.



© Photo by Dan Newcomb
Memorial Day Flyover at Santa Barbara by the T-34 squadron – taken from Marc Russell's T-34.



© Photo by Dave Flood
World War I Display in our Aviation Museum, highlighting "The Red Baron" and planes of the Allied Forces and Germany.



© Photo by Trace Eubanks
Tom Newhard installing radiator in P-51



© Photo by Dave Flood
The AVG "Flying Tigers" Display, designed by Col. Charlie Carr and team. It is the "Moveable Feast" Display found between the museum rest rooms.

Robin Olds: So Much More Than A Consummate Warrior

John Q Public, By Tony Carr, 2 May 2015

Robin Olds is generally regarded as the definitive icon of the 20th century Air Force. But beyond etching his place into airpower history as an elite practitioner and institutional contrarian, Olds was a leader, intellectual, and mentor of the first order.



A good friend of mine was doing some research recently and found himself leafing through the papers of retired Brig. Gen. Terryl Schwalier.

Turns out that as a Major, Schwalier had researched and written a paper for Air Command and Staff College. The report, titled "The Tactical Flight Commander — Developing Warriors," was designed to give guidance to flight commanders, identifying personal qualities and leadership traits essential to success in the role.

As part of his research, Schwalier reached out to several prominent leaders in the airpower community to ask their insights on the role of Flight Commander.

Among the names on that roster was someone whose powerful blend of stalwart leadership and warrior acumen made him a favorite among squadron-level operators at the time. Someone with whom fighter pilots in particular heavily identified. That someone was none other than retired Brig. Gen. Robin Olds.

The late Olds responded in a way consistent with his reputation. He sent Schwalier a five-page handwritten letter absolutely dripping with leadership.

Olds not only helped Schwalier with his original question, but gave him some incredible bonus material: singular insight into systemic problems with the institutional Air Force and the timeless struggle of airmen and leaders in finding fulfilling roles in a bureaucratic morass that seems to only grudgingly tolerate its dual status as a combat organization.

Here's a transcription of his response:

Dear Major Schwalier,

Your question, or better request, is provocative, to say the least. I have thought much since receiving your Oct 21 letter, and the more I consider your topic, the more difficult it becomes to frame a reasonable or even useful response. I'll try to boil down my thoughts, hoping something useful may distill.

First, let me get some negatives in perspective. In my view, current Air Force philosophy and practice have all but eliminated any meaningful role playable by an officer placed in a so-called position of command.

Authority has evaporated, sucked up to the rarified heights of "they," who are somehow felt to exist in the echelons above. For your information, "they" do not exist. Neither is there any "he" fulfilling that role. Authority is expressed through the medium of committee consensus, leadership has become a watered down adherence to the principles of camp counsellorship, with a 90% emphasis on avoiding any action that may in any way be questioned by any one of hundreds of piss ants on the administrative ladder above.

In fact, leadership (and I use that term with contempt) has become a process of looking busy as hell while doing nothing, avoiding personal commitment, and above all, making no decision without prior approval.

Historical example: as a 22 year old Major, commanding a squadron in 1945, I was responsible for and empowered to: pay the troops; feed them; house them; train them; clothe them; promote; demote; reward; punish; maintain their personnel files, etc. When I retired as a BG in 1973, I possessed not one of those authorities or responsibilities. Get the drift?

And you ask the importance of a flight commander. I am tempted to say NONE. But that is not true, for in spite of the system, in spite of the executive and administrative castration, a man instinctively looks to a system of military authority in a military situation or system. If that authority is waffled or watered, he still looks to those appointed to the military echelons to do their best under the circumstances.

A man (a nation for that matter) wants, demands, leadership. So today's flight leader/commander leads and commands by example, by appeal to basic instinct, and by light footed avoidance of error, like walking a tightrope. He has responsibility, for sure. But he does not have authority, or freedom of discretion/interpretation. Unfortunately, in some units he really isn't given much voice. Yet he functions, and if he is successful (perhaps a better word is "effective") it is greatly to his credit for having done so under the prevailing circumstances.

Another thought. All else to the contrary, two basic demands are faced by the Flight Commander. One is

Robin Olds, continued...

PEACE, the other is WAR. It has been my experience, in the fighter business I hasten to add, that the man who may excel under the one is not necessarily worth a damn under the other. Many examples come to mind. I do not (and did not) condemn one man or the other, rather I accepted the challenge of recognizing the difference and choosing accordingly.

I hope some of this makes sense.

Sincerely,

Robin Olds

P.S. For your information, there is no such thing as HQ, USAF. The highest echelon is a faceless entity, composed of thousands of diverse individuals loosely arranged by a system of interlocking committees and headed by an individual technically labeled the "Chief of Staff." Note he is not called the Commander. By law, he cannot be. By nature he is forced to be the consummate bureaucrat, fighting for the all-mighty dollar, serving as a buffer between Sec Def / Congress and the people and mission of his service – a demanding, demeaning role playable by very few.

Many thanks to Steve Barber, Sr. for this article.



Then Col. Robin Olds, USAF

Brig.Gen. Robin Olds' hallmarks were boldness, courage and leadership. A World War II ace and Air Force Cross recipient, he gained widespread fame and respect as the aggressive commander of the 8th Tactical Fighter Wing during the Southeast Asia War

Robin Olds grew up amongst military aviators and aircraft - his father was a World War I pursuit pilot, an aide to Brig. Gen. Billy Mitchell, and commander of the first B-17 squadron. Robin Olds attended West Point, where his characteristic boldness allowed him to excel on the football field -- in 1942, he was selected as an All-American tackle. After Olds graduated in 1943, he attended flight training and went to Europe as a P-38 pilot.

Olds stood out as a daring pilot and a natural leader. Within a few months, he shot down five enemy fighters to become the 479th Fighter Group's first ace. At the very young age of 22, he was promoted to major and given command of the 434th Fighter Squadron. Olds continued his success after the unit converted to P-51s, and he ended the war with 12 victories.

Following World War II, Olds flew in the first P-80 jet demonstration team, followed by command of several operational units, and then staff jobs. Unable to get a combat posting during the Korean War, Olds became determined to get into combat when the Southeast Asia War escalated.

In the fall of 1966, Olds took command of the 8th Tactical Fighter Wing (TFW) at Ubon Royal Thai Air Force Base. Olds' charisma and courage endeared him to his people, and under his leadership, the "Wolfpack" became the USAF's top MiG-killing wing in Southeast Asia. Olds also played a key role in the creation of the Red River Valley Fighter Pilots Association, which improved coordination between USAF wings in Southeast Asia and became a lasting fraternal organization.

Olds led from the front -- he shared the same risks as his aircrews by flying on the most dangerous missions. He received many decorations for his audacity in combat, including the Air Force Cross for a mission in August 1967, when he led a strike force against the heavily-defended Paul Doumer Bridge in No. Vietnam.

The crowning achievement for Olds was planning and leading OPERATION BOLO, when North Vietnamese MiG-21 pilots were tricked into an air battle at a disadvantage. Olds shot down a MiG-21, and his 8th TFW F-4 aircrews shot down six others with no losses. He also shot down three other MiGs during his tour. When added to his WWII victories, his lifetime victory total was 16 enemy aircraft.

Promoted to brigadier general in 1968, he became the commandant of cadets at the U.S. Air Force Academy, and he retired from active duty in 1973. Robin Olds died on June 14, 2007 at the age of 84.



CO Col. Robin Olds after last mission in Vietnam.

The Iwo Jima Statue: A Moving Story of Six Boys

By Michael T. Powers, "Heart Touchers"



Each year I am hired to go to Washington, DC, with the eighth grade class from Clinton, WI where I grew up, to video tape their trip. I greatly enjoy visiting our nation's capital, and each year I take some special memories back with me. This fall's trip was especially memorable.

On the last night of our trip, we stopped at the Iwo Jima Memorial. This memorial is the largest bronze statue in the world and depicts one of the most famous photographs in history -- that of the six brave soldiers raising the American Flag at the top of a rocky hill on the island of Iwo Jima, Japan, during WW II.

Over one hundred students and chaperones piled off the buses and headed towards the memorial. I noticed a solitary figure at the base of the statue, and as I got closer he asked, 'Where are you guys from?' I told him that we were from Wisconsin. 'Hey, I'm a cheese head, too! Come gather around, cheese heads, and I will tell you a story.'

(It was James Bradley who just happened to be in Washington, DC, to speak at the memorial the following day. He was there that night to say good night to his dad, who had passed away. He was just about to leave when he saw the buses pull up. I videotaped him as he spoke to us, and received his permission to share what he said from my videotape. It is one thing to tour the incredible monuments filled with history in Washington, DC, but it

is quite another to get the kind of insight we received that night.)

When all had gathered around, he reverently began to speak. (Here are his words that night.)

'My name is James Bradley and I'm from Antigo, Wisconsin . My dad is on that statue, and I wrote a book called 'Flags of Our Fathers'. It is the story of the six boys you see behind me.

Six boys raised the flag. The first guy putting the pole in the ground is Harlon Block. Harlon was an all-state football player. He enlisted in the Marine Corps with all the senior members of his football team. They were off to play another type of game. A game called 'War.' But it didn't turn out to be a game. Harlon, at the age of 21, died with his intestines in his hands. I don't say that to gross you out, I say that because there are people who stand in front of this statue and talk about the glory of war. You guys need to know that most of the boys in Iwo Jima were 17, 18, and 19 years old - and it was so hard that the ones who did make it home never even would talk to their families about it.

(He pointed to the statue) 'You see this next guy? That's Rene Gagnon from New Hampshire. If you took Rene's helmet off at the moment this photo was taken and looked in the webbing of that helmet, you would find a photograph...a photograph of his girlfriend Rene put that in there for protection because he was scared. He was 18 years old. It was just boys who won the battle of Iwo Jima. Boys. Not old men.

'The next guy here, the third guy in this tableau, was Sergeant Mike Strank. Mike is my hero. He was the hero of all these guys. They called him the 'old man' because he was so old. He was already 24. When Mike would motivate his boys in training camp, he didn't say, 'Let's go kill some Japanese' or 'Let's die for our country' He knew he was talking to little boys. Instead he would say, **'You do what I say, and I'll get you home to your mothers.**

The last guy on this side of the statue is Ira Hayes, a Pima Indian from Arizona. Ira Hayes was one of them who lived to walk off Iwo Jima. He went into the White House with my dad. President Truman told him, 'You're a hero'. He told reporters, 'How can I feel like a hero when 250 of my buddies hit the island with me and only 27 of us walked off alive?'

So you take your class at school, 250 of you spending a year together having fun, doing everything together. Then all 250 of you hit the beach, but only 27 of your classmates walk off alive. That was Ira Hayes. He had images of horror in his mind. Ira Hayes carried the pain home with him and eventually died dead drunk, face down, drowned in a very shallow puddle, at the age of 32.

'The next guy, going around the statue, is Franklin Sousley from Hilltop, Kentucky. A fun-lovin' hillbilly boy. His best

friend, who is now 70, told me, 'Yeah, you know, we took two cows up on the porch of the Hilltop General Store. Then we strung wire across the stairs so the cows couldn't get down. Then we fed them Epsom salts. Those cows crapped all night. 'Yes, he was a fun-lovin' hillbilly boy. Franklin died on Iwo Jima at the age of 19. When the telegram came to tell his mother that he was dead, it went to the Hilltop General Store. A barefoot boy ran that telegram up to his mother's farm. The neighbors could hear her scream all night and into the morning. Those neighbors lived a quarter of a mile away.

'The next guy, as we continue to go around the statue, is my dad, John Bradley, from Antigo, Wisconsin, where I was raised. My dad lived until 1994, but he would never give interviews. When Walter Cronkite's producers or the New York Times would call, we were trained as little kids to say 'No, I'm sorry, sir, my dad's not here. He is in Canada fishing. No, there is no phone there, sir. No, we don't know when he is coming back.' My dad never fished or even went to Canada. Usually, he was sitting there right at the table eating his Campbell's soup. But we had to tell the press that he was out fishing. He didn't want to talk to the press.

'You see, like Ira Hayes, my dad didn't see himself as a hero. Everyone thinks these guys are heroes, 'cause they are in a photo and on a monument. My dad knew better. He was a medic. John Bradley from Wisconsin was a combat caregiver. On Iwo Jima he probably held over 200 boys as they died. And when boys died on Iwo Jima, they writhed and screamed, without any medication or help with the pain.

'When I was a little boy, my third grade teacher told me that my dad was a hero. When I went home and told my dad that, he looked at me and said, **'I want you always to remember that the heroes of Iwo Jima are the guys who did not come back. Did NOT come back !!'**

'So that's the story about six nice young boys... Three died on Iwo Jima, and three came back as national heroes. Overall, 7,000 boys died on Iwo Jima in the worst battle in the history of the Marine Corps. My voice is giving out, so I will end here. **Thank you for your time**.'

Suddenly, the monument wasn't just a big old piece of metal with a flag sticking out of the top. It came to life before our eyes with the heartfelt words of a son who did indeed have a father who was a hero. Maybe not a hero for the reasons most people would believe, but a hero nonetheless.

Let us never forget - from the Revolutionary War to the current War on Terrorism and all the wars in-between - that sacrifices were made for our freedom...please pray for our troops.

Thanks to Avery Willis for this moving story.

Subject: A day in Airline Pilot Retirement.

by A. Anonymous

We have a cockpit mock-up in a walk-in closet in our house. When I mention to my wife that I miss flying, she puts me in the mock-up around bed time for 8 hours.

She has a chair in the closet, puts on the vacuum cleaner on the chair to simulate cockpit air noise, has a dim nite-lite to simulate cockpit lighting, serves luke-warm chicken with cold vegetables on a tray.

When I get sleepy and attempt to doze off, she knocks twice loudly on the door to simulate the Flight Attendant entering the cockpit.

Then after 6 hours she turns on a flood light directly in front of me to simulate the sun coming up when heading eastbound at 5:00 am. I then get a cup of coffee that has been in the coffee maker all night. Finally, she lets me out and I have to get in the back seat of her car while she runs morning errands to simulate the bus ride to the hotel.

When we get home I tell her I am ready for bed, the bedroom door is locked for an hour to simulate the hotel rooms not being ready. When I promise to never "complain" again about being retired, I am allowed to enjoy my "layover" and go to bed.

Oh....and one more thing - she talks to her friends loudly outside the bedroom door on the phone to simulate the hotel maids chattering in the hall in some foreign language. After two hours of sleep she calls the phone next to the bed from her cell phone and says "This is crew scheduling and we have a reroute for you. Do you have something to write with?"

No, I guess I really don't miss it after all.

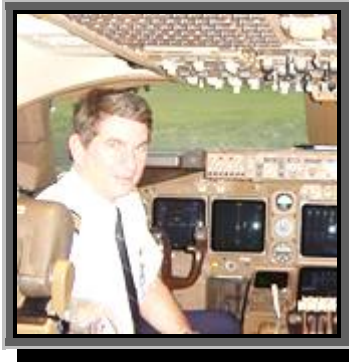
Thanks to Gary Barber for this revelation.



Report From The Road

Text and Photos by Col. Scott Drosos

Note: Scott is a captain with Atlas Air, a major cargo carrier. He flies all over the world. This is an excerpt from his latest journal. Scott is a long-time member of our PBJ-1J "Semper Fi" renovation team.



New feature!

Let me interrupt my story for a moment to tell you that I just discovered a great new website that draws a map showing "great circle" routes (the routes we normally fly) between any airports in the world. I thought it would be fun to start including them in my trip reports for an easy visual image of the routes I flew on that particular trip. The only problem is that the program will only show the three or four-letter code for the airport, and not the name of the city, but you can probably figure it out from the story. It also gives total distances, so I'll include them too, just for fun. Below is a map of this trip. Hope you like this new feature!



**A map showing the route of flights I took on this trip.
Total distance: 17,641 miles.**

And now, back to the story...

From Houston (IAH on the map), I was to fly a freighter airplane to Port Harcourt, Nigeria (PHC) in the center of the west African coast, where the coastline runs east and west. I'd never been to Port Harcourt, but I knew it wasn't exactly a garden spot, and this would be a long night flight, departing at 9:16 that evening, so I already knew this wasn't going to be the best trip assignment. I had no idea how bad it would really be though.

The problems began before we even got out of Houston. After pushing back and starting engines we had a number 2 engine bleed valve problem and had to return to the ramp. We hadn't even gotten started, and already I would have to write a flight crew report to the company to explain my "block turn-back" (returning to the gate without getting airborne). In the tightly regulated world of aviation, virtually any anomaly requires some kind of paperwork. It drives me crazy sometimes!

It took the mechanics another hour to correct the problem, and we finally departed at 10:30 PM. The 13-hour and 10-minute was flight mostly over water, so there wasn't much to look at even after the sun came up, which happens fast when you're flying east. I had only flown across the central part of the Atlantic once or twice before, so I had to re-familiarize myself with communications procedures on that route. Along the way we talked to air traffic controllers at places like Sal, Puerto Rico; Dakar, Senegal; Niamey, Niger; Accra, Ghana; and finally Kano, Nigeria. That can be challenging sometimes!

I was the flying pilot on this leg, and it was rainy, but with good visibility when we landed at Port Harcourt at 5:41 PM local time the next day. I was not at all impressed with the airport. Every building was filthy looking and seemed to be falling apart. There was nothing scenic anywhere. It was just an indicator of things to come, though, because it turned out that the entire city looked like that.

One of the terminal buildings was just a crumbling shell that looked like it had been bombed out, but my assumption was that it was being razed to make way for a new structure. Let's hope so, anyway!

We parked on a ramp in front of a smaller building that was apparently acting as a temporary terminal. After clearing customs and immigration there we were led out the back door along a wooden walkway between large tents that were being used as a baggage claim area for passenger flights. Then we squeezed through a gate and waited in the rain on a muddy gravel street with dozens of other people trying to get some form of transportation. Our handler told us that a van would be along shortly to take us to the hotel.



**People waiting in the rain behind the airport.
It took forever for our van to take us to the hotel!**

“Shortly” though, in Africa time, could mean anything. We were already exhausted from the long flight, but had to wait at least another hour before our van finally appeared, squeezing between cars in the traffic jam on the crowded road.

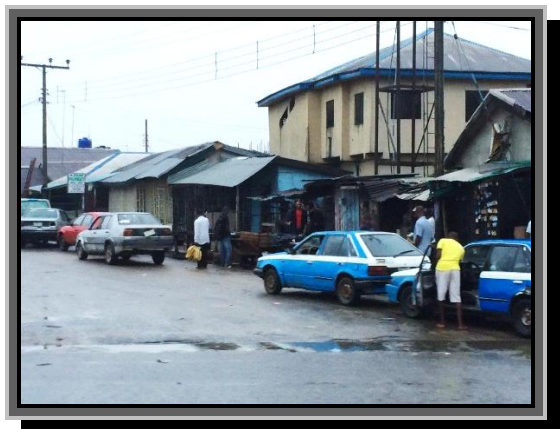
What a rat hole!

We boarded the van in the middle of the muddy street, and were finally on our way to the hotel, but the drive took almost another hour. Along the way we got to see what the rest of the city looked like, and it was no better than the airport. *How do people live here?* I wondered to myself.

Now folks, if you’ve been following my reports over the years you know that I’ve been all over the world. I’ve been to some crazy places, whose names I could barely even pronounce. Some of the cities I’ve been to in India, Bangladesh, Pakistan, Afghanistan, and other parts of Africa could be considered real dumps by our standards. I’ve seen my share of filth and poverty, and not much shocks me, but I have to tell you, this was probably the worst place I’ve ever been. As much as I hate to put down anyone else’s city, let’s just say I wouldn’t advise taking a vacation there! There was literally nothing good about it. Everything was muddy or dirty or rundown, and it didn’t seem like there was even a clean place to step anywhere in the city. I had to wonder what the hotel would look like. I decided this would be one of the few places I go where I wouldn’t want to drink the local tap water. I also wondered what the food would be like here, and if it would be safe to eat.

The hotel wasn’t bad after all

The hotel turned out to be a Novotel, which was actually pretty decent, considering its surroundings. We had a short layover though, and had already wasted several hours just getting to the place. Then it took forever to check in. I was traveling with three other pilots, a mechanic and a load master, and we were all hungry as well, but didn’t want to waste any more time trying to find something to eat.



One of the pictures I took on the drive to the hotel. There was nothing pretty about the city.



The hotel, on the other hand, was actually fairly decent.

Get your own catering!

I was told that no acceptable food vendor was available at the airport, so catering for the airplane for our flight out the next day would be provided by the restaurant at the hotel. Airplane catering is normally handled automatically by our operations department, but in a place like this normal procedures don’t necessarily apply. I learned that we would have to order our own meals from the restaurant and make sure they got put on our van to the airport the next day. Who was going to be responsible for getting everything up the stairs and loaded into the airplane’s galley I didn’t know – probably us!

Fortunately the hotel restaurant was still open when we got there, and after a lengthy explanation with one of the staff about what I was trying to do, I ordered a variety of meals as takeout food for the next day, and told her they would have to be ready by 6:00 the next morning. What were the chances of that?

I also ordered sandwiches for my crew to take to their rooms. That took forever as well, but at least we had something to eat before going to bed. My only concern was how to justify it all when Atlas got the bill for a bunch of restaurant food on my corporate credit card (usually a big no-no).

The wakeup call came all too early the next morning, and another long day loomed ahead. We met in the lobby, and after a struggle to get checked out and find someone to drive the van we finally loaded up for the trip to the airport. I enquired about the food, and was told it had already been loaded into the van. I should have checked myself, because when we got to the airport and began unloading no food was to be found.

As we often say in such situations, “What do you expect? It’s Africa!”

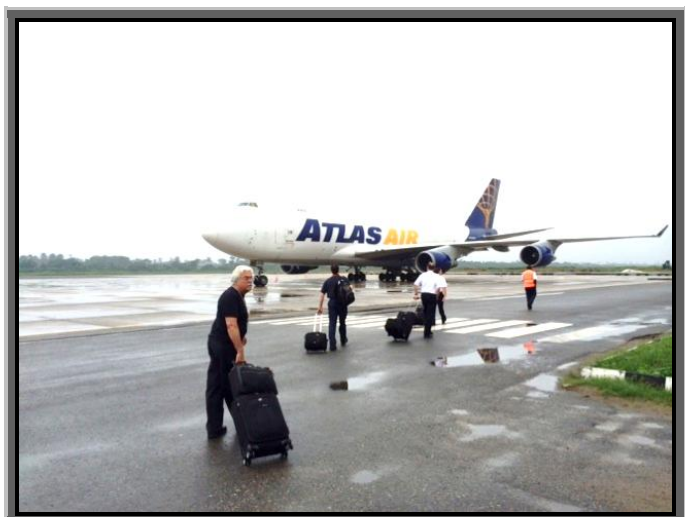


Our airplane on the ramp at Port Harcourt. The airport was not exactly scenic or lovely!

Hemmed in on the ramp

When we arrived at the airport early that morning the terminal building was empty and we had to roust someone up to clear us through customs and immigration. Then we just walked out the door and across the ramp to get to the airplane. I guess that's the norm there, because the other airlines' passengers did the same!

The ramp was empty when we arrived and we didn't anticipate any problems getting out, but what we didn't know was that the morning bank of arriving passenger flights was set to descend on us very shortly. By the time we had the airplane ready to go an hour later, numerous other planes had landed and pulled in to park right in front of us, blocking us in on the ramp. So much for an on-time departure! We weren't going anywhere until several of them moved. As a captain, I'm pretty used to having to make things happen when necessary, but there was nothing I could do about this! I shook my head and cursed in disgust, but all we could do was sit and wait for the airplanes in front of us to leave. That's Africa flying!



How you get to your plane in Port Harcourt.



A view from the cockpit an hour later. We were stuck! At this point we were the only airplane on the ramp. Note passengers walking among airplanes, fuel trucks, etc.

Still more problems

As I've come to expect from places like this, we had other problems as well. Paperwork was late in arriving, we had problems getting the steps up to the airplane, and there was a delay getting a fuel truck. In the meantime, the catering miraculously showed up, but it wasn't the meals I had ordered. I still don't know how that happened, but at least we had food. We weren't sure if it was edible though, because it didn't seem like it had been kept refrigerated.

This is nuts!

While we waited for the airplanes blocking us in to move, I sat in the cockpit and watched the chaos on the ramp in front of us in near disbelief. I say "near" disbelief, because I've seen a lot of craziness in my career, and not much surprises me anymore. This, however, was a flagrant violation of security and safety protocols. Airplanes were taxiing in and out, picking up and dropping off people right on the ramp. Passengers transiting back and forth to the terminal building wandered around among aircraft with running engines, moving fuel trucks, baggage carts, and stair trucks. It was nuts! I couldn't imagine what the FAA would say if they had jurisdiction here. But, they don't. That's Africa flying! The next time you complain about how your airline treats you in the US, remember that it could be a lot worse!

Finally on our way

Surprisingly, the morning "rush hour" at Port Harcourt died down almost as fast as it had started, as the airplanes that had just arrived took off again with another load of passengers a short time later. When we were finally able to start engines and taxi out we were 1 hour and 48 minutes late, but it could have been much worse. Still, I'd have to write another crew report to explain to the company why I couldn't get the airplane out on time. Too bad I hadn't written this yet, or I could have just cut-and-pasted it into my report!

August, 2015 Photo Page II



© Photo by Casey de Bree

Construction site of the new hangars, just to the west of our present hangars. Here you see workmen preparing the foundation of the ramp.



© Photo by Avery Willis

Concrete trucks arriving to start the pouring of the footings.



© Photo by Avery Willis

Rebar being set before the concrete is poured. Work is progressing nicely on our new "campus!"



© Photo by Ron Fleishman

It's Party Time! Another beautiful set-up of tables for a large party at our Museum Hangar. LaTanya Barber is the person to contact to plan for a memorable special event in our unique ambience! Call her at (805) 302-8136, or e-mail: barber.latanya@gmail.com.



Wing Air Show Schedule, 2015

Date	Place	Aircraft
Aug 14,15	Big Bear	F8F, Zero, Spitfire, P-51
Aug 22,23	Camarillo Airport	All Aircraft
Sep 13-21	Reno Air Races	All Fighters
Sep 25-27	Pt. Mugu NAS	All Fighters, PBJ (if ready)

If you are planning on attending any or all of our air shows, please contact us first at 805-482-0064 to get any updates, because sometimes there are changes made.



“Zero” In The Wild

Text and Photos by Col. Charles “Sid” Gillman

Only a handful of World War Two aircraft make it to “War Bird” status. Even the remnants from a war now some 70 years ago, if they are not already in a museum, in the main do not exist anymore as time takes its toll.

On a working trip in the spring of 2014, a rare layover to Palau afforded the opportunity for some exploring. Palau is an archipelago some 500 miles to the east of the Philippines.

Occupied by Japan from World War One through the Second World War, it was a major stepping-stone used by Japan in its conquest of the Philippines and the entire South West and South Pacific.

It was also a stepping-stone used by the United States as it worked its way back to the Philippines in late 1944. While the Japanese installations all over Palau were attacked, only Peleliu and two nearby smaller islands were taken by the United States.

Peleliu was assaulted in September 1944 by US Marines and the US Army and is considered one of the bloodier battles of World War Two and perhaps an unnecessary one as General MacArthur moved forward towards the Philippines.

It was the airfield on Peleliu that was considered valuable. While it was taken within two days of the invasion, it took over a month to secure the rest of the island - especially the infamous “Bloody Nose Ridge” which commanded the entire island, including the airfield.

The only item of note achieved by taking Peleliu and its airfield was that after delivering the first atomic bomb to Tinian Island in 1945, the heavy cruiser USS Indianapolis was sunk by a Japanese submarine while on its way to the Philippines. It was a search plane from Peleliu that discovered the survivors whose ship was not realized to be overdue at port, and whose crew suffered through both exposure and multiple shark attacks before being found.

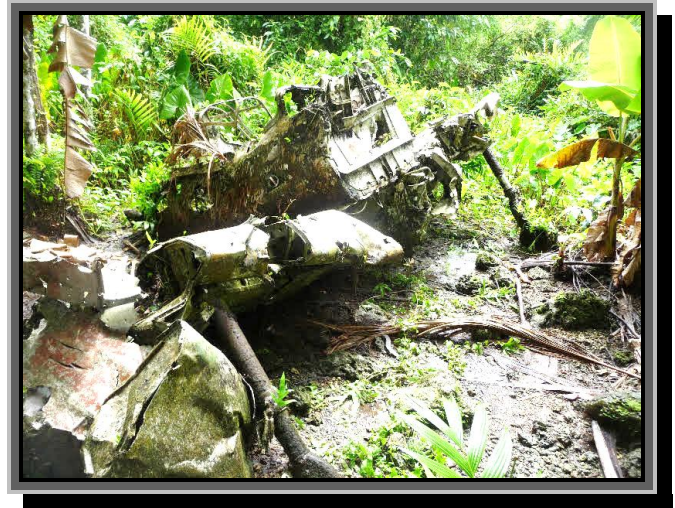
A remnant of its former tenants is still in evidence at Peleliu’s airfield in the shape of a Mitsubishi A6M Zero or “Zeke” Imperial Japanese Navy fighter aircraft.

Sitting in the jungle that has taken back much of both the buildings and destruction present those seven decades ago, it still sits there as a slowly deteriorating marker from another time.

In the series of photos (right column), you can still see its distinctive canopy frame, main landing gear strut and some of the red primer used by Japanese aircraft manufacturers in evidence. Some bullet holes are on the underside of the aircraft near the fuel tanks, which were

probably placed there by Marines or soldiers who occupied the area, as it was likely just convenient target practice.

If any CAF sharp-eyed persons can tell if this Zero is an A6M2, A6M3 or A6M5 by what remains here, then you really know your stuff!



August, 2015 Photo Page III

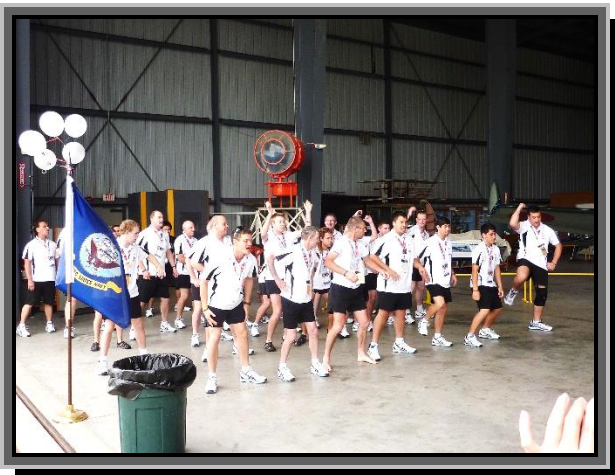
© All photos by Col. Avery Willis



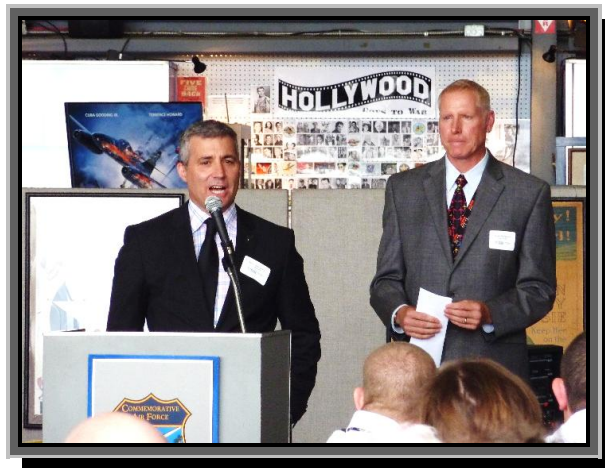
The Special Olympic Teams from New Zealand and Saudi Arabia who were competing in the games in Los Angeles, made a special trip to our Aviation Museum on July 22, 2015. Here are some of our members greeting them.



Docent Col. Bill O'Neill telling a group from New Zealand all about our Grumman F6F-5 Hellcat.



Here's the New Zealand Special Olympics Team doing their special dance routine in our Museum Hangar.



New Zealand's Consul-General, The Honorable Leon Grice, addresses those in attendance at the reception for the Special Olympics athletes in our Aviation Museum. Todd McNamee, the Director of Airports for Ventura County, waits to speak.



The New Zealand Special Olympics Team poses in front of our C-46 Commando "China Doll"



And here's the Saudi Arabian Special Olympics Team! It was our honor to host both teams in advance of their participation in The Special Olympics World Games, starting Saturday, July 25, 2015 at the L.A. Coliseum. More than 7,000 athletes & 2,000 coaches from 177 nations competed in 27 sports.

Wings Over Camarillo AIRSHOW

Featuring:
MV-22 Osprey Demonstration
by the 3RD Marine Air Wing

Saturday & Sunday August 22 & 23, 2015

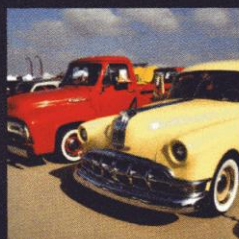
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