

# Flight Line

*The Official Publication of the CAF*  
Southern California Wing  
455 Aviation Drive, Camarillo, CA 93010  
(805) 482-0064



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COMMEMORATIVE  
AIR FORCE

Visit us online at [www.cafsocal.com](http://www.cafsocal.com)



**Col. Gary Barber, who will be turning 80 on January 7, getting into a place where he is most comfortable – the cockpit of a CAF fighter plane (or it could be a C-46 or even a DC-10).**

**Happy Birthday, Gary! We all are proud to serve with you at CAF – So Cal Wing!**

**Welcome to the Octogenarians' Club, Gary! See Page 5 for more info.**

**Wing Staff Meeting, Saturday, January 23, 2016 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.**

# January 2016

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

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## IN THIS ISSUE

Wing Calendar	2
Staff and Appointed Positions	2
New Wing Staff Officers	3
Alan Gaynor and David Casey	3
Follow That Fjord!	4
Gary Barber Biography	5
Santa Barbara City College Contributes	6
Photo Page I	7
"Hump Airlift" Pilots Remembered	8
"Spruce Goose" Flyover	10
2016 Wing Member Renewal Notice	12

## Submittal Deadline - 15th of the month

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\* Denotes Staff Position

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## New Wing Staff Officers

The 2015 So Cal Wing Election Committee, comprised of members Ron Fleishman, Paul Kleinbaum and John Syrdahl, made the announcement of our newly-elected Wing Staff Officers to serve during 2016-2017 at the Wing's Annual Christmas Party on December 18, 2015.

The newly-elected Wing Staff Officers are:



**Col. John Lowe – Adjutant**



**Col. Paul Willett – Finance Officer**



**Col. Jason Somes – Operations Officer**

**Congrats to all three new staff officers!**



**Alan Gaynor & Dave Casey**

**We'll take a bit o' kindness yet,  
For Auld Lang Syne**

Oh, we've missed you for these many months,  
Ever since you went away  
To that eternal flying field far above  
The frenzied fray.

Where the weather's always pleasant,  
And the beer is always cold,  
And the winds are always peaceful,  
And you never e'er grow old.

Oh, now we know you're flying  
With Bill and Charlie and Dave,  
And your crews are Ken and Les and Joe,  
For you they'll always slave.

We've been getting into Yuletide...  
It's been two since you went down,  
And again we raise our glasses...  
And for you – another round!

We will keep remembering your smiles  
As we go about our lives,  
And we'll never e'er forget you,  
As long as memory survives.

**Dave Flood  
2015**



## Follow That Fjord !

by Dave Flood



© Photo courtesy of Charles Valentine

**Bluie West One – situated at the end of Eriksfjord, with a glacier at its east end. Col. Charlie Valentine provided several photos of his approach to BW-1.**

Bluie West One (BW-1) airfield was built on a glacial moraine at what is now the village of Narsarsuaq, near the southern tip of Greenland. Construction by the U.S. Army began in June, 1941, and the first plane landed there in January, 1942. As a link in the North Atlantic Ferry Route during World War II, it had a peak population of about 4,000 American servicemen, and it is estimated that some 10,000 aircraft landed there en route to the war in Europe and North Africa. Other important bases in Greenland were Bluie West Eight near the present-day town of Kangerlussuaq, and Bluie East One on the almost-uninhabited east coast.

Bad weather is frequent in southern Greenland, and Narsarsuaq is virtually surrounded by high mountains, making the approach to the steel-mat runway exceedingly difficult. The usual approach was a low-level flight up Eriksfjord. Landings were (and still are) made to the east, with takeoffs to the west, regardless of the wind direction.



© Photo Courtesy of Charles Valentine

**Here's the entrance to Eriksfjord. Three fjords looked exactly alike, and the pilot had to choose the right one.**

Bluie West One's importance declined postwar, but the U.S. Air Force maintained it as Narsarsuaq Air Base

during the early Cold War years, when it served as a refueling station for jet fighters and for helicopters crossing the North Atlantic. The runway, by this time, had been paved with concrete. Jets require a longer take-off run than do propeller-driven aircraft, and the air base used a small tugboat to move icebergs out of the way of planes taking off over the basin west of the runway.

The advent of aerial refueling, and the opening of the larger Thule Air Base in northern Greenland, made BW-1 redundant, and it was turned over to the Danish government of Greenland in 1958. Today it is Narsarsuaq Airport, and is served by twice-weekly passenger jets from Reykjavik, Iceland, as well as by commuter aircraft from Kangerlussuaq and other Greenland airfields. The airport is designated UAK, and the runway headings are 07 for landing and 25 for takeoff (070 and 250 degrees magnetic). There is no control tower, and a 4,000-foot ceiling is advised for an approach on instruments.



© Photo by Jacky Simoud)

**Narsarsuaq Airport today. Note the glacier to the east.**

An important navigation aid for BW-1 occurred on July 6, 1942 when the supply ship *Montrose* hit a cliff and sank 16 nautical miles southwest of the airfield. Its rusting hulk became a checkpoint for pilots hoping to reach BW-1.

Eric Gann, in his famous book *Fate Is The Hunter*, tells about his flight to BW-1 in an overloaded DC-3 in 1942.

*It is about thirty miles up the correct fjord on the north side. If you do not see that freighter you are in the wrong fjord...You will not actually see the field until you have made the last turn around that cliff; then it will appear all of a sudden so you'd better have your wheels down a little early. It's a single runway with quite an incline...You have to land whether you like it or not.*

After approaching the fjord at 50 feet above the waves, Gann entered the fjord, and, when he finally spotted the *Montrose*, knew that he was on the right approach.

**Thanks to Charles Valentine and to [www.warbirdforum.com](http://www.warbirdforum.com)**

**Note: this article is reprinted from our Jan., 2009 issue**

## Gary Barber Biography

Gary was born on January 7, 1936 in Kalamazoo, Michigan. His father was a private pilot and Gary took his first airplane ride when he was six weeks old. He grew up in the small town of Plainwell, MI, a little north of Kalamazoo. In 1940, the family moved to San Diego, CA so his dad could work at Consolidated Aircraft, building PBYS. In late 1941, the family moved back to Michigan because war was imminent, and his father wanted all the family to be together.

Gary's dad left to fly in the Civil Air Patrol (CAP) at Pascagoula, Mississippi – hunting Nazi U-boats off the east coast – for about a year. After the CAP was disbanded, he was taken into the Army Air Force as an armorer on Lockheed P-38 Lightnings at Santa Rosa Army Air Base in California. He wanted the family to join him, and, in 1944, Gary and his mother took the train to California.

A happy year was spent on a ranch outside of Santa Rosa, where Gary's mother was hired as a cook and Gary was hired to take care of the eight horses. After that, they lived in a "trailer park" – not like the nice ones we are accustomed to seeing nowadays. Another fond memory was when the three of them (yup, Steve had not been thought of yet!) went down to San Francisco to see the wild jubilation on Victory Over Japan (VJ) Day! The war was finally over!

The family moved back to Michigan, and Gary continued his schooling, which was considerably more intense and more difficult there than it had been in California. In 1947, along came brother Steve.

In 1951, Gary's father's health deteriorated, and they went back to California, this time settling in Brea. He spent his last three years of high school at Brea-Olinda High School, and some of his closest friends are among the fifty graduates. After high school, Gary attended Fullerton College for a year.

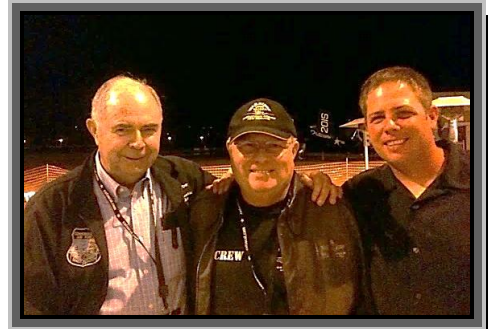
During high school, Gary had joined the California Air National Guard as an aircraft mechanic. This was a real love of his young life, and it evolved (after a wild ride in a T-33 having a dogfight with four F-86s) into the Aviation Cadets organization at the tender age of twenty.

Gary got to fly three different models of the F-86, the T-33, and the C-47. It was wonderful! In civilian life, Gary worked for his father in a liquor store and a Foster's Freeze for a few years, and in 1961, moved to Ventura where he and his father opened Barber Ford dealership.

Not loving the car business that much, when the opportunity appeared for a career as a pilot for an airline Gary jumped at it. A career of thirty-one years with American Airlines ensued. Gary retired at the mandatory age of sixty in 1996 – as a DC-10 captain. Gary is married to Nancy, and they have two living children and five grandchildren.

Gary had a two-hour "sit-around" in Harlingen, Texas when the CAF was based there, and, upon checking over the operation, he joined in 1983. He did not join any unit, but kept up his membership, and in 1991 joined the Southern California Wing. Gary was Wing Leader from 1996 – 1998, and served as Operations Officer for four years. He also served on term on the CAF Board of Directors. He loves the CAF and considers his colleagues some of the finest people around.

Gary currently flies the F8F-2 Bearcat, the F6F-5 Hellcat, the SNJ-5 Texan and the P-51 Mustang. He is qualified to fly our C-46 Commando, but she is currently "out of service." This keeps him busy and out of the bars (most of the time).



**Gary, brother Steve, and nephew Steve, Jr.**



**The Barber Brothers – no doubt reminiscing.**



**Here's Gary (second from left) receiving the Civil Air Patrol's Medal of Honor on behalf of his and Steve's late father, Stanley, who flew for the CAP in WWII. Our Fairchild F-24R Forwarder is in the CAP colors in honor of Stanley Barber. Presenting the award was Col. Frank Blazich, CAP National Historian.**



## Santa Barbara City College's Contribution to Our PBJ "Semper Fi"

By Macklin Bickford

When we enrolled in Professor Julie Brown's Marketing 101 course at Santa Barbara City College in mid-August, my fellow students and I hardly suspected that we would be given a chance to contribute to the rekindling of American history. Professor Brown had sought to create a class that would teach the fundamentals of marketing, help students learn how to appeal to multiple target audiences, and to support a worthy cause. She challenged us to create a fundraising campaign for a non-profit organization. To that end, she partnered with Colonel Marc Russell of the Commemorative Air Force (CAF) – Southern California Wing, to create a campaign in which SBCC students could raise funds to contribute to the restoration of their North American PBJ-1J Mitchell bomber "Semper Fi."



© Photo by Arash Afshari

**Col. Marc Russell showing one of the SBCC fund-raising teams our North American PBJ "Semper Fi."**

Each student group had a goal of \$1,000 to contribute to the restoration of the PBJ to its original, flying condition. To provide a scope of the total cost of the repair, the engines alone cost \$60,000 each. To date, about \$6,000 and counting has been raised by all twelve groups -- reaching 60% of our estimated goal. The plane's location at the Camarillo Airport in Camarillo, CA allowed Professor Brown to incorporate the restoration project into her curriculum. More specifically, because the plane is only a thirty-minute drive from SBCC, the campaign to help rebuild the PBJ was a perfect fit for Brown's class.

The PBJ has been the personal project of Col. Russell and his dedicated team of restoration volunteers for the past twenty-two years because it is the last Navy PBJ to survive World War II. Built in Kansas City in 1944, the PBJ was the type of B-25 bomber used by the Marines in the second World War,

The So Cal Wing's PBJ-1J is in the colors of Marine Bomb Squadron 611 – dedicated to the PBJ piloted by member Dave Fish's dad and his crew, who were lost in the Philippines on a mission in WWII. Their plane was not

found until 1955, and the remains of all the crew members are interred at the national cemetery in Denver, CO.

Because the PBJ has held such an important place in military aviation history, marketing and fundraising for its restoration has been easier due to its "halo effect" on crowdfunding. The "halo effect" is a term used in marketing to describe a relationship between consumer and firm that is biased due to a positive experience in the past. Being a war-bird from WWII means there's a large segment of Americans who have some type of sentimental attachment to military history. Twelve groups of students have been raising funds for individual parts of the aircraft -- from the bomb bays to the engines -- each group developing a dynamic marketing campaign to assure that every segment of the aircraft is funded. Because finding or building genuine parts for the retired war-bird are so costly, the restoration process has gone slowly. However, thanks in part to Professor Brown and the students of her Marketing 101 class, the PBJ is scheduled to fly this January for the first time since 1993 - providing a happy ending to the long struggle to rebuild one of mankind's finest pieces of aviation history.

As of now, all twelve groups of marketing students have fundraising pages on either Kickstarter or Indiegogo; averaging ten backers per group so far. Any kind of contribution is welcome for the PBJ and its marketing groups. And for those who donate funds to the nonprofit effort, there is always the added benefit of the tax write-off, making a charitable donation even more appealing.

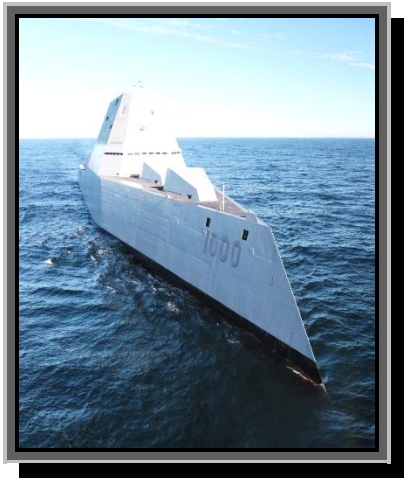
As a student, the opportunity to be involved in such an inspiring class project that provides real-world skills has been a refreshing change from textbook learning. Having to collaborate as a group, and to make trips to visit the war-bird at the CAF airfield, has brought the value of the class to a personal level. As a fulltime student, I can confidently say that I have never been a part of a scholastic program that has required and taught me as much as this marketing campaign has. A project like this forces us students to take the initiative and apply our full effort in order to succeed and be a part of the overall effort by many people over many years toward the goal of returning a WWII warbird to its former glory.



© Photo by Arash Afshari

**Part of one of the SBCC fund-raising groups of students. Many thanks to them and their teacher, Ms. Julie Brown – for their contributions to our Wing!**

## Wing Photo Page I – January, 2016



© U.S. Navy photo

The shape of the new Navy ships – the guided-missile destroyer USS Zumwalt (DDG-1000), launched at the Bath, Maine shipyard in Oct., 2013. At-sea trials began in the Atlantic on Dec. 7, 2015. It has stealth capabilities – its radar cross-section is akin to a fishing boat. It can carry two SH-60 helicopters & 80 missiles.



© U.S. Navy photo

For comparison, here's the destroyer USS Dahlgren (DLG-12), the ship member Avery Willis served on during the Vietnam War. Note how the new USS Zumwalt is built for stealth – no extraneous jutting surfaces.

"I first saw the USS DAHLGREN DLG-12 in the summer of 1966. The ship took my breath away! She looked like a warship should look, ready for anything. We spent some yard time modifying the stern to allow helicopters to land, then down to San Juan for gunnery practice - back to Virginia to take on ammo and supplies, and then off to Vietnam. Our jobs: SAR duty in the Gulf of Tonkin. My Gulf of Tonkin Yacht Club patch is in our Vietnam exhibit." Col. Avery Willis (thanks to Avery for this article)

Comparisons:	USS Dahlgren	USS Zumwalt
Displacement:	5,800 tons	14,564 tons
Length:	512 ft.	600 ft.
Beam:	52 ft.	80.7 ft.
Speed:	36 knots	30.3 knots



© Photo Courtesy of Charlie Plumb

"Proud to be with Viet Nam POW No. 1, Everett Alvarez, on POW Day with the crews of the USS Stockdale and USS Lawrence." Charlie Plumb

Note: Charlie was a POW in Hanoi for six years, along with Admiral Stockdale, John McCain, and Everett Alvarez. We are proud to count Charlie as a member of our CAF – So Cal Wing.



The "Missing Man" table set at a Georgia Chick Fil-A restaurant to remember our service men and women who have not returned from conflicts that our country has been involved in over its history. We thank God for their sacrifice, and pray that there will truly be "peace on earth, good will toward men."



## Focus: WWII 70th Anniversary

# 'Hump Airlift' pilots remembered

NANJING EXHIBITION PAYS TRIBUTE TO ALLIED FORCES WHO NAVIGATED THE SKIES IN DANGEROUS MISSIONS

By WANG XIN and CANG WEI  
in Nanjing

Liao Yongbao was 64 years old before he learned the whereabouts of his father's grave. That was in 2004, when Liao, now 75, first saw his father's name engraved on a black marble tablet.

Liao Jingcheng, who was killed in aerial combat on June 18, 1941, when his son was just 10 months old, is buried at the Nanjing Anti-Japanese Aviation Memorial Hall, a complex in Zhongshan, one of the most picturesque areas of the capital of East China's Jiangsu province, surrounded by trees and bathed in melodious birdsong.

"After years of searching, I finally found my father in the memorial hall," Liao says. "Tears streamed down my face as I read his name and the details of his life on the marble slab. I began to learn more about him when the workers sent me material related to him."

In 2009, the Jiangsu provincial government officially honored the elder Liao as a revolutionary martyr.

"Although I never had the chance to grow up with him, he will always be my hero," Liao says of his father.

The memorial hall holds the remains of 3,305 martyrs from the Japanese occupation of China: 2,197 of the dead were from the United States, 236 came from the former Soviet Union and two were Korean nationals. The other 870 were Chinese.

The martyrs' cemetery, built by the Chinese government, tells the story of how airmen from China, the US and the Soviet Union fought side by side against the Japanese.

The graveyard was badly damaged in the late 1960s. But in 1987 work began to restore it to its original glory, and construction of the memorial — 30 black marble tablets engraved with the names of the fallen in Chinese, English and Russian — was completed in 1995. A memorial plaza was added a short time later.

In 2008, the Nanjing government invested 40 million yuan (\$6.4 million) to renovate and expand the hall, which was officially opened to the public in 2009.

Luo Chaofan, deputy curator of the memorial hall, says the heroes sacrificed their lives in the battle against the Japanese aggressors, which was also part of the global war against fascism.

"Every year, more than 100,000 people visit to pay tribute to them. Their contribution to the country will never be forgotten," he says.

Luo recounts that in the autumn



A father and son walk past statues at the Nanjing Anti-Japanese Aviation Memorial Hall.

PHOTOS BY SUN CAN / XINHUA

## MEMORY OF FLYING TIGERS BURNS BRIGHT

In 2005, 15 former pilots from the Flying Tigers, the nickname of the American Volunteer Group (AVG), visited the Nanjing Anti-Japanese Aviation Memorial Hall to lay wreathes and honor their fallen comrades.

Between August 1941 and July 1942, the Flying Tigers, led by General Claire Chennault, harassed the Japanese forces from the air. The pilots were all former members of the US Army Air, Navy or Marine Corps. On Dec 20, 1941, the AVG

saw action for the first time, shooting down three Japanese bombers and destroying a further six on the ground, according to the Flying Tigers Museum in Kunming, the capital of Yunnan province, where much of the aerial combat took place. People in Kunming set off firecrackers to celebrate the victory.

The Chinese air force was severely depleted and the Soviet Union had withdrawn its aircrews, so the AVG represented China's only real aerial

resistance to the Japanese.

The Flying Tigers participated in more than 100 battles, shooting down 272 Japanese aircraft and destroying another 225 on the ground, according to the museum.

The group was formally absorbed into the US military in 1942 as the 14th Air Force, but the three newly formed squadrons — named Adam and Eves, Panda Bears and Hell's Angels — remained under Chennault's command.

CANG WEI

of 1937, the Soviet Union government sent 1,091 aviators and technical experts to aid China's fight against Japan.

"Before they returned to the Soviet Union in 1941, they had taken part in more than 50 battles in several major cities, and managed to shoot down 81 Japanese aircraft and blow up 114 aircraft and 14 ships."

According to Sun Yao, a guide at

the hall, in the early years of the Pacific War, all aid from the US came in the form of private donations from individuals. Following the Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor in 1941, however, the US government officially began providing aid too.

"The Soviet Union was the first country to offer help to China, but the US played a crucial role in the latter half of the war against the

Japanese," Sun says, adding that US aviators destroyed more than 2,600 Japanese aircraft and 44 ships, and killed or wounded more than 66,700 soldiers.

It's appropriate that since April the hall has hosted an exhibition about the Hump Airlift, the longest, largest and most dangerous strategic airlift of World War II.

The operation, which began in

1942 and continued daily until 1945, saw military supplies, fuel, food and clothing transported over some of the most dangerous airspace in the world, from Assam in northeastern India to Kunming, the capital of Yunnan province.

The routes — one north and one south — were China's only lifelines with the outside world once the Japanese had closed all the sea and overland routes into the country.

The planes left Dinjan Airfield in Assam and headed east to cross the Himalayas, the Gaoligong Mountains, the Hengduan Mountains and several major rivers before finally arriving at Kunming. The route got its nickname because the aircrews thought the rolling mountains resembled camels' humps.

For the pilots, the flights required endurance, supreme flying skills and bravery. At an average height of 4,500 to 5,500 meters, the terrain over which the aircrews flew is some of the highest in the world, reaching 7,000 meters at its highest point.

Moreover, the local microclimate results in thick fog, violent thunder-

>> PAGE 23



## FROM PAGE 22

storms and strong winds.

Sun says China National Aviation Corp (CNAC) — jointly owned by the Chinese government and Pan American Airways — and the US Army Air Force Air Transport Command combined to undertake the airlift and transport large quantities of supplies to China.

CNAC was the perfect partner, having already undertaken many military transport flights between 1938 and 1941.

In July 1937, a gun battle at Lugou Bridge — also known as the Marco Polo Bridge — in Beijing signaled the start of Japan's invasion of China. Although the Japanese occupied several major cities, including Beijing, Shanghai and Nanjing, the war quickly reached a stalemate.

The severing of all the supply lines on land and at sea left China isolated and in desperate need of supplies, without which it could not hope to survive.

The Hump Airlift was the only feasible response, but its success came at a high price and took a huge toll on both men and machines.

"China and the US allocated 2,200 aircraft and more than 84,000 people to transport more than 740,000 tons of supplies and 33,477 combatants via the Hump," Sun says. "Those airlifts became aerial lifelines for China."

The 100 aircraft owned by CNAC, the only commercial airline involved in the operation, transported 74,809 metric tons of supplies in 43,611 flights.

"The airlift was the longest, most dangerous and most difficult in the history of global aviation," Sun says. "Both countries made enormous sacrifices to achieve it."

According to the literature at the memorial hall, many pilots preferred to take the northern route, which was far more difficult to fly than the southern one, to avoid Japanese fighter planes.

Irrespective of the route they chose, however, they still had to negotiate high mountains and contend with adverse weather conditions on the Routes of Death, as many of the pilots called them.

"More than 1,500 pilots and aircrew members lost their lives in the Hump Airlift," Sun says.

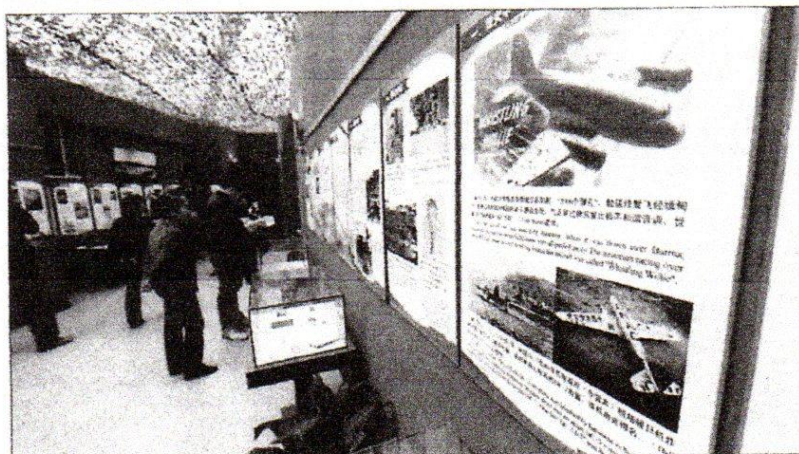
"More than 500 aircraft crashed, of which 468 belonged to the US. About one-third of the 103 pilots and aircrew employed by the China National Aviation Corp were Americans."

About 100 of the downed planes have never been located, meaning their crews have never been formally honored.

The hall's literature tells of how one former hump pilot always referred to the airlift as Aluminum Valley, because on clear days the crews could see the glistening wreckage of crashed aircraft scattered in the valleys below.



Russian students pay tribute to heroes from the former Soviet Union who died while assisting China against Japanese aggression in WWII.



The memorial hall hosts an exhibition about the Hump Airlift in April. It holds the remains of 3,305 martyrs.

Luo says 990 newly identified martyrs — 586 Chinese and 404 US nationals — will have their names and stories engraved in the hall by Aug 15. The number of heroes will rise to 4,295, with US nationals accounting for more than 60 percent of the total.

Li Juan, director of the Nanjing Aviators' Association, says the process of finding and identifying the fallen is often difficult and time-consuming. "We have to check the information with known materials, foreign embassies and authorities,

including defense departments," he says.

"The association will continue to work with aviation organizations and museums in Taiwan, Hong Kong, the US and Russia to identify more martyrs."

All the relevant information, including name, rank or title, hometown, date of birth and death, as well as the cause of death will be recorded. Some relatives have asked for more details so they can learn more about their family's lost heroes.

"We pay our respects to the heroes

by identifying them, engraving their names in marble and reuniting them with their old comrades, the men they fought side by side with."

Luo, the hall's deputy director, says researching personal histories and the conflict proved difficult because many of the men were very young when they died.

"The average age of the heroes who were killed was 23," Luo says. "Some of them have been forgotten by posterity and aren't remembered at all."

"Also, very few experts in China conduct research into the history of

More than 1,500 pilots and aircrew members lost their lives in the Hump Airlift.

SUN YAO  
GUIDE AT THE NANJING ANTI-JAPANESE AVIATION MEMORIAL HALL

Chinese aviation, while the number of experts researching the country's history during World War II is small."

"We'll continue to keep history in mind, commemorate the martyrs and cherish our life today," he adds.

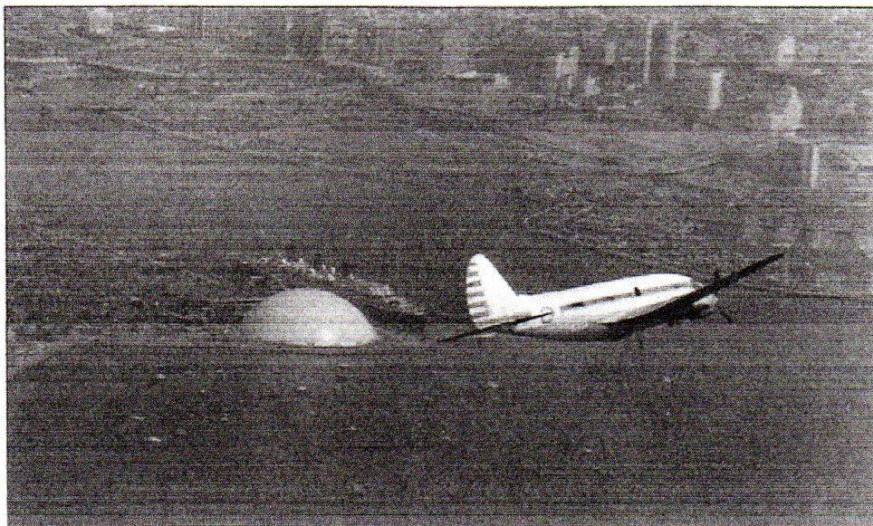
For Sun, the Hump pilots and aircrews are the forgotten heroes of China's WWII history.

"The people who flew the airlift may not be as famous and glamorous as the Flying Tigers, but they transported every single gallon of fuel and every bullet used on the battlefield," she says.

"The history of the Hump Airlift was written in the blood of these young heroes. We will always remember their names and hold them close in our hearts."

Contact the writers through  
cangwei@chinadaily.com.cn





In a sweeping 180° turn, "Humpty Dumpty" passes over the Spruce Goose exhibit dome and the Queen Mary, permanently moored alongside in Long Beach Harbor.

Roger Hardy



Wing Leader Dick Griffith thanks Wrather Port Properties Ltd., which operates the exhibit, by presenting a plaque to assistant public relations director Bill Winberg, center. Also shown is Wing Executive Officer Paul Dean, right.

Los Angeles Times Photograph



Southern California members were among the guests at a special reception held in the shadow of the Spruce Goose. Howard Hughes' 200-ton flying boat, the H-4, recognized as the largest aircraft ever built, was designed during WWII as the ultimate transport but it managed only one flight.

Los Angeles Times Photograph

## Southern California Wing Coordinates Fly-Over of WWII Aircraft At "Spruce Goose" Open House

Hardly anyone in the United States could have lived through the week of 14 May 1983 without hearing of Howard Hughes' "Spruce Goose". The infamous giant aircraft went on public display, for the first time in 33 years, inside a monstrous geodesic dome built at Long Beach Harbor outside Los Angeles.

Members of the Southern California and Arizona Wings had an opportunity to do more than just watch the television news reports. Six weeks before the grand opening, the SoCal Wing was asked to coordinate a fly-over of World War II aircraft. They agreed, although they knew their own Wing-assigned aircraft, the C-46 "Humpty Dumpty," had not flown in over 10 months. The propellers were the problem, and \$6,000 was needed to pay for an overhaul. An immediate search for funds began. Col Charles Knabbe donated a \$3,500 sponsorship, and other contributions put the total at \$4,500. But that wasn't enough.

Everyone knew — or at least those in the right places — that Col Paul Dean, Wing Executive Officer and Los Angeles Times columnist, had recently been involved in another exciting sport. Fast cars have always rivaled Dean's love for aircraft, but his fellow members prepared to show him how he could combine the two.

Dean had been invited by Toyota USA to drive one of its modified Celicas in a supporting race at the Long Beach Grand Prix. The competition was stiff, putting him against professional race drivers and other celebrities. But when the checkered flag was wav-





Dick Hemphill handled last minute planning and aircraft schedules. Jerri Fleishman



Ready for the mission — Crew and passengers were Ron Fleishman, Pat Brown, Cliff Brown, co-pilot Bill Main, pilot Bob Van Ausdell, Horst and Rudi Wallasch, Bud Crosby, Ross Knudson and Mel Nethery. Jerri Fleishman

ed, Dean had captured first place in his class and prize money of \$2,000.

Soon after that, the need for money arose — and Dean generously donated his \$2,000 winnings to the \$4,500 already raised to put the bank account over the top.

Ron Fleishman, Wing Maintenance Officer, and Bud Crosby, Wing Procurement Officer, spent their spare time working on "Humpty Dumpty" to get the aileron repaired and the props over-

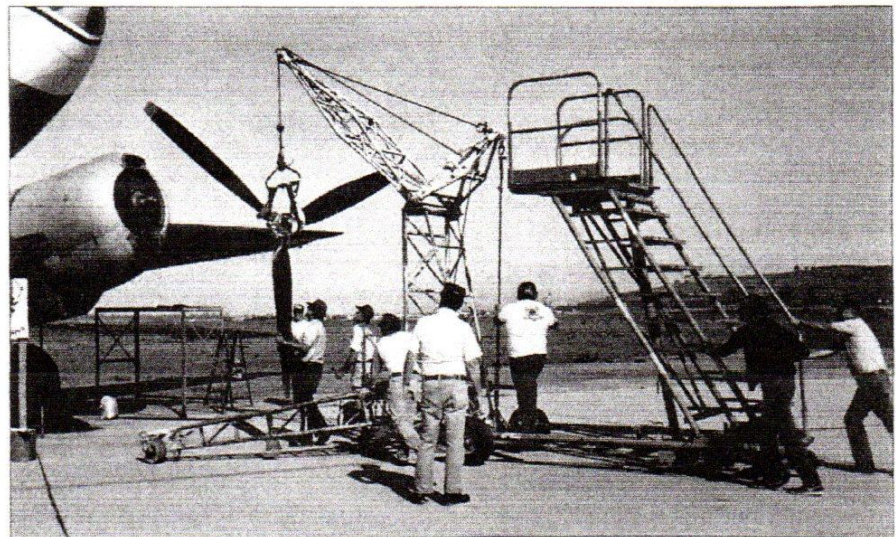
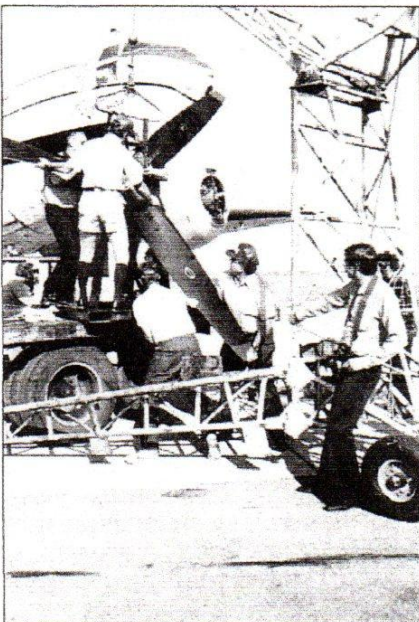
hauled. Even then, the fly-over plans were up in the air until a test flight the day before the opening. Meanwhile, the SoCal Wing had invited the Arizona Wing to bring its B-17 "Sentimental Journey" to California. Of course, they agreed. Col Dick Hemphill took over the last minute planning to coordinate the aircraft schedules.

All the hard work paid off at 10 a.m. 14 May when the C-46 flew over the "Spruce Goose" and 20,000 people gathered for the

grand opening. Col Bob Van Ausdell was pilot; Col Bill Main co-pilot. "Humpty Dumpty" was followed by "Sentimental Journey," a P-51 flown by Col Charles Knapp, an F-4U Corsair flown by Col Bob Guilford and a P-40 from the "Planes of Fame" Museum. An SNJ piloted by Marshall Moss flew as photo chase plane.

An all-out effort by many members when time was short, once again proved **teamwork works!**

★ ★ ★



After a \$6,000 fundraising effort and a trip to the shop, newly over-hauled propellers are delivered to Camarillo Airport for rehangng. Pictured are many of the members and workers who contributed to the overall effort to make the C-46 airworthy. Jerri Fleishman





Southern California Wing  
455 Aviation Drive  
Camarillo, CA 93010

## 2016 WING MEMBERSHIP RENEWAL NOTICE

January 1, 2016

Dear Wing Member,

It's time again to renew your annual membership in the Southern California Wing of the Commemorative Air Force. We sincerely hope you will retain your affiliation with our wing since we expect exciting things to happen in 2016.

We are one of the leading wings in the CAF with more than 250 Wing members and 10 assigned aircraft. Our museum has become a major attraction in Ventura County and both attendance and museum income have risen steadily. Our plans are to continue this growth and we want you to be a part of these exciting happenings.

To renew your membership, just remove this page from the newsletter (or make a copy of it), complete the information requested, enclose your check payable to the Southern California Wing, and return by March 1, 2016 to:

CAF Southern California Wing  
455 Aviation Drive  
Camarillo, CA 93010  
Attn: Personnel Officer

Any contribution in addition to your \$50.<sup>00</sup> annual dues will be greatly appreciated. Contributions are welcome to help us complete the many projects we are undertaking, such as building the new museum facility, the B-25/PBJ restoration, or the Fairchild F-24 restoration, or any other project you may wish to support.

If you joined the Southern California Wing in October, November, or December, 2015 your dues are considered paid for 2016, but any contribution to any of our projects that you wish to make will be greatly appreciated.

Sincerely,

(signed)

Ron Missildine, Wing Leader

2016 Wing Dues	\$50. <sup>00</sup>
Hangar/Museum Building Fund	_____
B-25/PBJ Restoration	_____
Fairchild F-24 Restoration	_____
Other _____	_____
Total	_____

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Col. #: \_\_\_\_\_

Street: \_\_\_\_\_ City: \_\_\_\_\_ State: \_\_\_\_\_ Zip: \_\_\_\_\_

Home Phone: \_\_\_\_\_ Work Phone: \_\_\_\_\_ Cell Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

E-mail: \_\_\_\_\_

THE CAF IS A PATRIOTIC ORGANIZATION DEDICATED TO THE PRESERVATION OF THE WORLD'S GREAT COMBAT AIRCRAFT  
**CONTRIBUTIONS TO THE CAF ARE TAX DEDUCTIBLE**