

# Flight Line

**The Official Publication of the CAF**

Southern California Wing

455 Aviation Drive, Camarillo, CA 93010

(805) 482-0064



June, 2016

Vol. XXXV No. 6

COMMEMORATIVE  
AIR FORCE



© CBS Channel 2 News

**Col. Marc Russell, Crew Chief of "Semper Fi," with his wife and daughter, admiring the plane that he and his team perfected.**

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



© Photo by Frank Mormillo

**"For once you have tasted flight, you will forever walk the earth with your eyes turned skyward. For there you have been, and there you will always long to return."**

Leonardo da Vinci – 1452 - 1519

**Wing Staff Meeting, Saturday, June 18, 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.

# June 2016

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
Museum Open 10am to 4pm Every Day Except Monday and major holidays			1	2 Work Day	3	4 Work Day
5	6 Museum Closed	7 Work Day	8	9 Work Day	10	11 Work Day
12	13 Museum Closed	14 Work Day	15	16 Work Day	17	18 Wing Staff Meeting 9:30 Work Day
19 Father's Day	20 Museum Closed First Day of Summer Docent Meeting 12:00	21 Work Day	22	23 Work Day	24	25 Work Day
26	27 Museum Closed	28 Work Day	29	30 Work Day	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  
455 Aviation Drive  
Camarillo, CA 93010-9501

## SoCal's PBJ Flies After 23 Years

From "On The Fly" – CAF, May, 2016

On Sunday May 15, 2016, just before 2 p.m. local time, the world's last known surviving PBJ-1J Mitchell took to the skies over Camarillo, California. The return to flight followed a decades-long, down-to-the-last-rivet restoration by the CAF's [Southern California \(SoCal\) Wing](#).

The flight went smoothly and many supporters were on hand to see her soar again and cheer her home.

The PBJ was the Navy version of the B-25 and served almost exclusively with the US Marine Corps during WWII. **WarbirdsNews** published an extensive article [HERE](#) on the lengthy restoration, featuring dozens of photographs by contributor (and So Cal Wing member / PBJ Restoration Team member) Dan Newcomb.

This PBJ came off the North American's Kansas City production line as B-25J, 44-30988, in early 1945. Following conversion and acceptance by the Navy, the newly-minted naval patrol bomber became Bu.No.35857. The aircraft never saw combat, and is one of a handful of PBJs to make it onto the civilian registry.



The SoCal Wing painted the airplane to represent PBJ-1J, Bu.No. 35243. Marked as MB 11, the aircraft flew with Marine Bombing Squadron VMB-611 in the Pacific Theater. Sadly, 1st. Lt. Doit L. Fish and his seven man crew were lost in MB 11 during a strike on the Kibawe Trail near Davao on May 30, 1945. Lt. Fish's son, David, is a volunteer with the Wing, so it seems more than appropriate that the PBJ serves as a tribute to his father's crew and all the Marines who flew the PBJ.

CAF President Stephan C. Brown said "I am happy for the Southern California Wing's members, this has been an ongoing project for more than two decades and it's great to see their hard work pay off." Brown attended the PBJ's first flight and added, "This is what the CAF mission is about, honoring military aviation and inspiring others to work hard and accomplish their goals."

With the PBJ flying once more, she will undoubtedly become a regular performer on the air show circuit. The CAF Headquarters wishes to offer the SoCal Wing

volunteers our heartfelt appreciation for persevering with such dedication on this difficult project and that the aircraft enjoys many years of successful flying ahead!

**To support the CAF Southern California Wing's efforts and contribute to the ongoing operation of the aircraft, donations can be made by [clicking here](#).**

## Reflections of A Long-Time PBJ Crew Member

by Col. Dan Newcomb

<http://www.warbirdsnews.com/warbirds-news/caf-social-wings-pbj-1-restoration-update.html> ("Ctrl" plus click)

Article from Warbird News, 2015

This article (se link above) came out a little over a year ago. Some of you may not have seen this. As I look at these pictures they conjure up many memories. Most are fond memories.

It has been a long road but with a few rough spots. When I look at the PBJ I see so much more than aluminum. When I started there were only 4 or 5 on the crew. Work was slow. Most only showed up one day a week. I remember fighting with other wing members over space in the hangar. We were stuffed back in a corner and everybody dumped their crap around us.

Few thought we would ever fly. Several thought the wing was wasting time and money on a piece of junk. Crew members came and went. We stopped work for over 10 months to do structural repair to China Doll. During that time Scotty fell and shattered his wrist and the injury damned near ended his flying career.

At least four crew members that I worked with never lived long enough to see the plane fly. I remember the constant struggle for money and how we always seemed to find a way to get by. I remember the first time we pulled the plane out for the August air show. No engines, wings or tail but we were so proud!

I think of a late afternoon years ago when Tim and I put two lawn chairs up in the cockpit and armed with a six pack sat and dreamed. There were weddings, divorces, and births. New friendships and broken relationships. A move from Bakersfield to Simi Valley.

This long road has been one hell of an adventure. I have been dreaming of seeing this bird fly for years....

**Our Wing is so very proud of the PBJ Restoration Team that has worked so hard and long over the past twenty-three years to put back into the sky a truly magnificent airplane. It has been a labor not only of great perseverance, but of aviation expertise, with a great sense of history and a generous dash of love**

## Downed Pilot's Son Rebuilds Plane

### Aircraft is similar to one missing in World War II

By John Mitchell, [jmitchell@VenturaCountyStar.com](mailto:jmitchell@VenturaCountyStar.com)  
September 26, 2006 (Reprinted with permission)

One of the photographs that Dave Fish treasures shows his father holding him in his arms in Decatur, Ill., on Sept. 8, 1944. Actually, you can't see the infant because a baby blanket was covering his face from the sun. However, Fish, now 62, a 34-year resident of Camarillo, takes comfort from looking at the photo, knowing that for a few brief moments, he was close to his father.

Less than a month later, on Sept. 26, Capt. Doit Fish, a U.S. Marine Corps pilot, stepped aboard the SS Zoella Lykes, a freighter-turned-troopship, at Port Hueneme. Then, he and other members of VMB 611, a bomber squadron, sailed off to do combat with the Japanese. Some of the men came back. Doit Fish did not.

He was the pilot of a PBJ-1, the Navy's version of a B-25 Mitchell bomber. He flew 25 combat missions, the last one against Japanese targets on the large island of Mindanao in the Philippines to support ground assaults.

His aircraft did not return to Moret Field in Zamboanga, Mindanao. It just disappeared. No amount of searching could find it. Doit Fish and his seven crew mates were declared missing in action. The date was May 30, 1945. Eleven years later, on Nov. 16, 1956, the aircraft wreckage and crew's skeletal remains were found.

Although individual identification was impossible, it was confirmed that the remains were of Fish and his crew. On July 15, 1957, a group burial with full military honors was held at Fort Logan National Cemetery in Denver. Dave Fish was not there. He said his mother, Dorothy, and stepfather had decided not to attend.

Nearly 50 years later, Dave Fish and members of the Commemorative Air Force Southern California Wing at Camarillo Airport are rebuilding a PBJ-1 J, similar to the one flown by Capt. Doit Fish and his crew. The Southern California Wing acquired the plane from Midland, Texas, in April 1993. After inspection, it was put into a long restoration process. According to the Southern California Wing's Web site, the plane will be painted the colors of a Marine Corps PBJ-1 J, and its name will be Semper Fi.

Dave Fish and his mother had left Illinois and come to Ventura County when Dave was 5. He attended El Rio School and three years at Oxnard High School before moving back to Illinois, where he finished high school.

At the end of his junior year in high school, Dave Fish moved back to Illinois, where his grandparents were. "They discussed my dad all the time, and that piqued a sense of inquiry in me," he said. "I asked questions, and I started learning more about my father. The door had been opened. I got more information from my grandparents." He found himself getting sentimental and emotional on Memorial Day, because it was on a May 30 when his father disappeared.

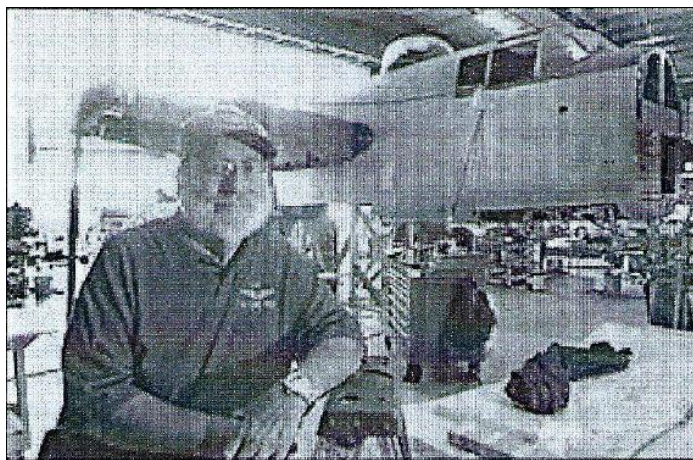
On Nov. 16, 1963, seven years to the day after his father's remains were located, Dave Fish married Mary Waalewyn in Belvedere, Ill. The next day, they began their journey to Oxnard and, on the way, they stopped in Denver. "We stopped to see Dad's grave site for the first time," he said. "That visit had a great impact on me. It was emotional because like other families with MIAs, there had been no closure. On that day, I got a sense of closure. He was there with the crew he trained with, the crew he flew combat missions with, who were shot down together and who are now together for eternity.

Shortly before his wedding, his mother gave him some of his father's personal effects that had been mailed to her. "They included his log book, a boomerang he had bought in Australia, his billfold, watch, ink pen, a \$1 bill, and photos of my mother and me," Dave Fish said.

In 2004, Fish began striking gold with the Internet. He got his dad's military records from the Military Records Center in St. Louis. "I found out that he had left from Port Hueneme; until then I had no idea he had been here," Fish said. "I learned the name Zoella Lykes and was put in touch with a guy who was a Navy armed guard during that voyage, and he remembered Dad and the others."

Fish also learned about the survivors of VMB 611, that they had a reunion each year. He met them and learned that one had driven the jeep that brought his dad from the barracks to the flight line for that ill-fated mission.

He also met his father's wingman on that flight, an old man still suffering from survivor's guilt, "I think this put a finality to everything," said Fish, referring to a book written in 1981 by one of his father's squadron mates. "That was the year he and other surviving squadron members learned my dad's plane had been found." The book ends with these words: "At long last, after 36 years, we can close the book on VMB 611. All planes are in."



© Photo by Rob Varela, Ventura County Star  
**Col. Dave Fish with PBJ "Semper Fi," to be painted in the colors of Marine Squadron VMB-611**



## PBJ "Semper Fi" Archive Photos

These are from the "Flight Line" archives. The three below are from the April, 2005 issue. *Pride of The Yanks* was the name chosen after the original, "Big Ole Brew."

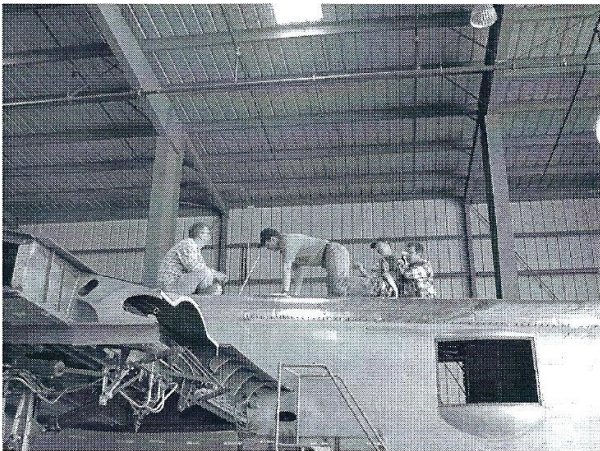


Photo by Dave Flood

The B-25 "Skin Game." Our skilled "dermatologists" have just about completed the skin applications on *Pride of the Yanks*. Here are, from left: Marc Russell, Tom Van Stein, Dan Newcomb, and Jeff Birdt.

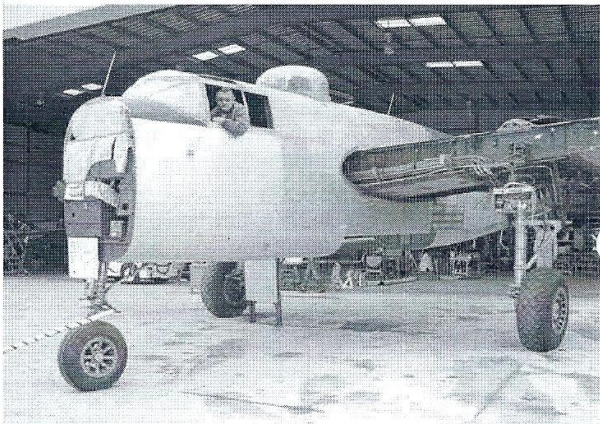


Photo by Dan Newcomb

With Ken Barger at the controls, our B-25 (PBJ) moved out of the hangar during its 180 degree turnaround.

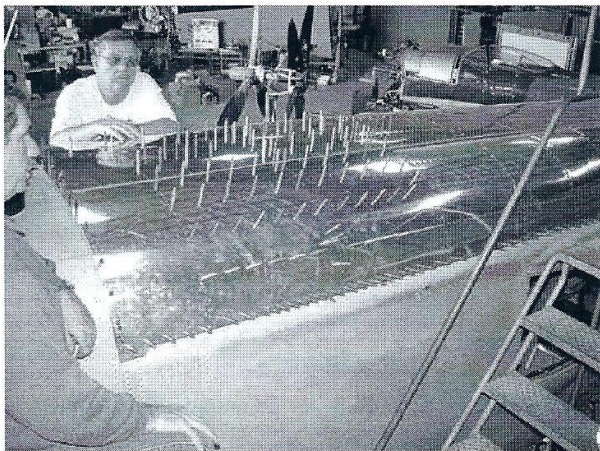


Photo by Dan Newcomb

Scott Drosos (left) and Ken Barger surveying their work.



© Photo by Dan Newcomb

This photo in the August, 2007 issue of "Flight Line" shows the PBJ ready for rollout for the 2007 Camarillo Air Show.



© Photo by Dan Newcomb

The PBJ's nose in the colors of VMB-611. This photo from August, 2007.

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Here is a link to a video of PBJ-1J "Semper Fi" in her successful first flight of May 15, 2016:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Yp3fZs4IWSI>

## Wing Air Show Schedule: 2016

June 4,5	Kirkland AFB	P-51, Spitfire
June 8-12	Photo Ops	All aircraft
July 8,9	Tahoe/Truckee	P-51,F6F,F8F,PBJ
July 28,29	Skyfair-Seattle	F6F, Zero
Aug 5-7	Oregon Intl. AS	F6F, Zero
Aug 20,21	Wings Over CMA	All aircraft
Sept 14-18	Reno Air Races	TBD
Sept 23-25	Sacramento AS	TBD
Nov 10,11	Nellis AFB	TBD

Note: If you plan to attend any air show, please call us at 805-482-0064 to confirm the date.



## Photo Page I: PBJ's First Flight

© Photos by Frank Mormillo



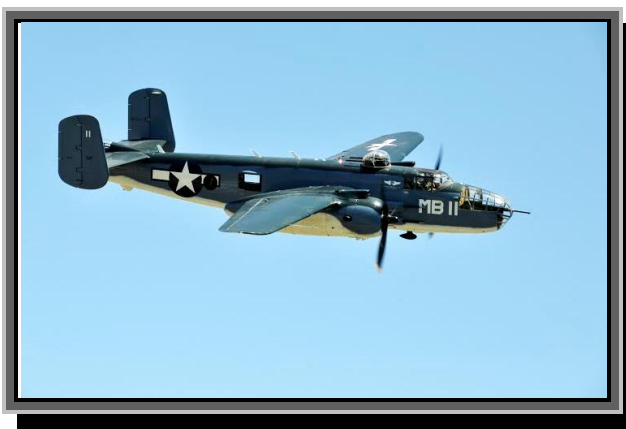
David Fish (left), whose father, Doit Fish, was the pilot of MB11 of the VMB-11 Marine Squadron based in the Philippines in WWII. MB11 was MIA in 1945 after a mission over Mindanao – later found in 1956. All crew members are buried in the Denver National Cemetery. With David is Verne Horton, one of the last survivors of VMB-11 – a Marine aerial gunner in a PBJ much like our “Semper Fi.” Verne has been a frequent visitor. “Semper Fi” is dedicated to the crew of MB11.



The crew of “Semper Fi” on her first flight, including “Semper Fi’s” Crew Chief Marc Russell, our CAF President Steve Brown, and Dick Troy.



Taxiing out to the runway.



## Photo Page II: PBJ's First Flight

© Photos by Frank Mormillo





## Photo Page III: PBJ First Flight

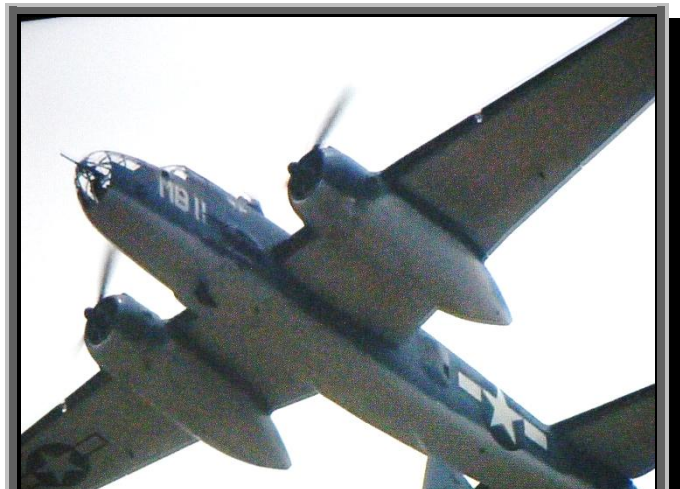
© CBS, Channel 2 News



Col. Marc Russell, Crew Chief of PBJ-1J Mitchell bomber "Semper Fi," being interviewed by CBS Channel 2 on the event of the first flight.



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## Art Fiedler Goes West – An Ace in the 325<sup>th</sup> Fighter Group in World War II

Arthur Fiedler, 92, passed away on May 11, 2016. One of the Greatest Generation, and a true American Hero. Art was born on August 1, 1923, in Forest Park, Illinois. Among his early accomplishments – he became a violin concert master. He was probably on his way to being a musician when WWII interrupted and placed him on the path to a military career.

Art qualified for flight school with the United States Army Air Corps, and, after completing training, he graduated as a 2<sup>nd</sup> Lieutenant. He then married his high school sweetheart, Helen Lossin. Immediately after they were married, Art was deployed to the European Theater – assigned to the Fifteenth Air Force, 325<sup>th</sup> Fighter Group, the “Checkertail Clan,” and the 317<sup>th</sup> Fighter Squadron. Stationed in Lesina, Italy, he transitioned to P-51s, naming his assigned Mustang “Helen.” Over the course of two years and 60 plus missions, Art accumulated eight confirmed victories (Nazi planes shot down) and one probable kill – earning him the prestigious fighter “Ace” designation.

After the war, Art graduated from the University of Illinois with a B.S. in Mechanical Engineering. He was reactivated in the Air Force for the Korean War. Art was assigned to Vance Air Force Base as a flight instructor – then choosing to continue his career as a military pilot. Subsequent assignments included Germany; Montgomery, Alabama: Command and Staff, Kansas; Space System divisions in Garden Grove, CA, Japan and Boston. While in Japan, Art flew C-130 missions in Vietnam with the Flying Jennies.

Art retired in 1976 as a full Colonel in the USAF. He and Helen moved permanently to Oxnard Shores, CA later that year. Subsequently, Art involved himself with sharing his WWII experiences worldwide. He has contributed to a number of books, and participated with other WWII heroes in air show discussion panels, and autograph signings of aviation art. Art was highlighted on the History Channel in the “Dogfight” series – in the episode “No Room For Error.” Throughout his life, Art participated in many clubs, activities and organizations – including Toastmasters, Checkertail Clan (325<sup>th</sup> Fighter Group), and the Quiet Birdmen.

Art’s many decorations include: The Silver Star, Legion of Merit, Distinguished Flying Cross (with Oak Leaf Cluster), Air Medal (with 2 Oak Leaf Clusters), and the Congressional Gold Medal, awarded in 2015.

Art is survived by his beloved wife Helen. Art and Helen celebrated their 72<sup>nd</sup> wedding anniversary on December 14, 2015. He is also survived by: three devoted sons and daughters-in-law: Skip and wife Veronica, Jon and wife Joan, and Philip and wife Cindy; seven grandchildren and nine great-grandchildren. Art was preceded in death by their daughter, Karen Johnson.

Art was laid to rest at Ivy Lawn Memorial Park, Ventura on May 19<sup>th</sup>. A reception and celebration of his life followed at the Commemorative Air Force, Southern California Wing’s Aviation Museum in Camarillo.

### Obituary in the *Ventura County Star*

We, of course, were awed by Art Fiedler, and considered him an honorary member of our Southern California Wing of the Commemorative Air Force.

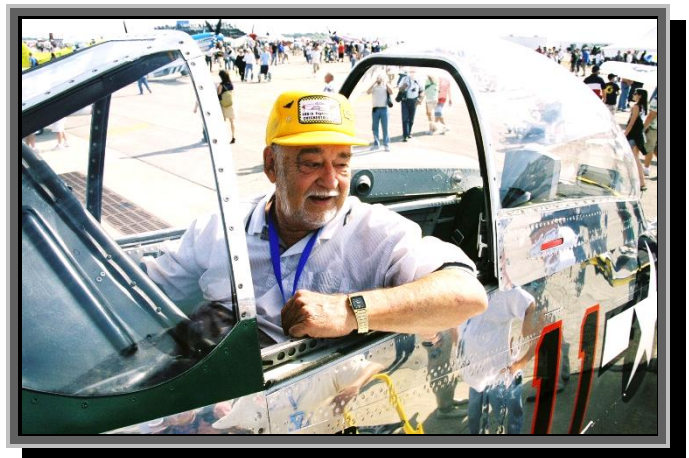
We hosted a memorial service for Art at our hangars, and gave him a good send-off as he “Goes West” into the California sunset.

We will always remember Art as a true American Hero - a terrific representative of the Greatest Generation - an Ace among Aces. We will remember him every time our P-51 takes off, even though it doesn't have that famous checker tail of the vaunted 325th Fighter Group of WWII!

Rest in peace, old warrior - you have earned your place in God's country!



Art Fiedler in his P-51 “Helen” in WWII



Here’s Art in a P-51 cockpit during a recent air show.

# CONFEDERATE AIR FORCE



Jan. 9, 1981  
Van Nuys 19:00 hrs.

## SECOND SOUTHERN CALIF. MEETING

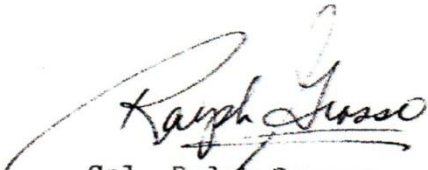
### MINUTES

Invitations were sent out for this meeting by Col. Ralph Grasso (Adjutant/Finance Officer) to Colonels in the one hour or less driving distance to Van Nuys Airport. Posters were posted at airport FBO's in the local area and a newspaper ad were all handled by Col. Bill Gillespie (Executive Officer) for the purpose of inviting non-member guests to this open house meeting. Our operations officer had his P-51 Mustang placed at the door for the guests to see.

Our Commander Col. L. Dickson Griffith called the meeting to order, and welcomed our some 200 members & guests to the meeting. Col. Griffith then explained briefly the purpose of the CAF, introduced the present acting staff officers explaining that the officer assignments would be open for members confirmation at a later meeting. The by laws & review of Article VII were gone over followed by Wing Charter & a review of CAF Policy Letter dated 10/15/71 & a review of Col. Jim Hill's Directive. The meeting was then open to questions & discussion. Following this was a film reproduction of a segment of the Today TV Show in which host Hugh Downs interviewed Col. Griffith about the CAF. We then had the film on The History of the CAF.

Everyone was very excited, and Colonels from as far as San Diego showed up stating they were impressed by our preparedness & organization. All wanted to give their support in making this become the So. Calif. Wing of the CAF. Ten Colonels from the San Diego area who are members of the Arizona Wing will also be giving us their full support, stating their desire to become a part of the So. Calif. Wing in the Los Angeles area.

Guests were very enthusiastic, & many applications for commission were requested & handed out. We met many people this evening who wanted to help. Some knew of aircraft engines, radios, and parts & one had parts, radios, and bombsights he would be glad to donate. We met people who worked on B-29s & B-17s. All wanted to contribute and be a part of the So. Calif. Wing. Our meeting of staff officers next week will be to organize our next general meeting & to prepare a follow-up letter to all Colonels & prospective members.

  
Col. Ralph Grasso  
CAF Adjutant/Finance Officer



# CONFEDERATE AIR FORCE



Jan. 16, 1981  
19:30 Hrs.

## THIRD SO. CALIF WING MEETING STAFF OFFICERS MEETING

### MINUTES

This meeting of staff officers was called to make plans for our next open house meeting. It was decided that the meeting would be held on Friday Feb. 6th, '81 at our base of operations at Van Nuys Airport.

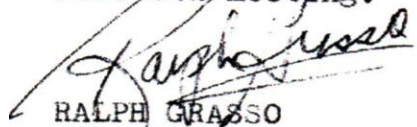
Col. Ralph Grasso suggested we send out a questionnaire along with our invitations. This questionnaire would determine the CAF status of our guests, as well as the names of the Colonels who wish to be a part of the So. Calif Wing. This will also help to form a participation mailing list. This was agreed to by the Staff. The Feb. 6th meeting will also be used to help process more new applicants to the CAF.

Col. Paul Dean had called Col. Gillespie to volunteer as Information Officer & as Editor of our Newsletter. Col. Grasso met with Col. Dean & Col. Vince Carbone. It was agreed to that Col. Dean would become the new Information Officer & Newsletter editor & Col. Carbone would assist him. A newsletter will be prepared & be included with our questionnaires & our invitations for the Feb. 6th meeting.

Our Commander Col. Dick Griffith proposed Col. Clay Lacy as our Flight Safety Officer. Col. Stan Daniels would be the chairman of the Procurment Committee. Col. Bill Gillespie volunteered to help Col. Grasso with the preparation & mailing of the Feb. 6th meeting mailing. Col. Gillespie will also be in charge of the doorprize giveaway of CAF calendars & a copy of the History of the CAF Ghost Squadron book.

Mrs. Stan Daniels (Col. Daniels' wife) will work on organizing the ladies wishing to participate in the So. Calif. Wing.

The meeting was adjourned with everyone making ready for the Feb. 6th meeting.

  
RALPH GRASSO  
COLONEL, CAF  
Adjutant/Finance Officer

## David Baker Leaves For Spain

Here is a farewell letter from long-time member David Baker to members of our Wing:

Hi Folks,

Well, the time has come for me to leave these fair shores of California. I left Tuesday, May 17<sup>th</sup>, first to London and then on to my final destination – Southern Spain.

I will initially be moving into a small flat in La Heradura, which is about 50 kms east of Malaga, right on the Mediterranean coast of the Costa del Sol.

Around September/October I will be moving again – to a larger apartment, in the same area, which, hopefully, will be my final move. I will be very close to my daughter and grandchildren – which will be wonderful. I have seen far too little of them over the last few years.

Here is my initial temporary address and permanent cellphone number (the permanent address will follow later in the year):

Edificio Las Brisas No. 26  
Calle Maravillas Norte  
La Loma  
LH 18697  
(Granada)  
Spain

Mobile phone: + (34) 658 654 409

E-Mail:

I do hope we can stay in touch. I hope to return to California sometime in the future – but if you find yourself in Southern Spain, please do get in touch and I'll have a cold libation and a tapas ready for you!

My sincerest wishes to you and yours,

David Baker

## SAFETY CORNER: by Gene O'Neal, Safety Officer

Air show season is in full swing with heavy schedules and last minute changes. Do not let this compromise your SAFETY.

This is a good time to review all phases of our operations. Talk to each other and in groups about MARSHALLING, FIRE GAURDING, PREFLIGHTING, AIRCRAFT SERVICING, and SAFETY ON THE RAMP -AND IN THE HANGAR.

Since we do not have an annual Ground School on each aircraft, we recommend the pilots get together and talk things over to keep everyone well informed. Everyone should review all our paper work, which is very important.

If it is UNSAFE, stop what you are doing and make it SAFE. DO NOT WALK THROUGH THE PROPELLER ARCH, GIVE IT RESPECT.

**ALL ACCIDENTS ARE PREVENTABLE.**



## Finding Bob Goubitz

by Col. Dan Newcomb

It is good to have friends. It is even better to have GOOD friends.

Last weekend I was flying up in Porterville when who should I see flying in to drop off his passenger? Bobby Goubitz. It is amazing how small the aviation world can be sometimes!

Many of us at the SoCal wing know this man. He is a hard working Dutchman and used to fly our C-46 but made a move to Colorado years ago. He has been missed. Bob is a long time CAF member and a supporter of the PBJ. Bob believed in us when few did.

Bob has just started flying out of VNY and hopefully we will see him around the hangars again.



© Photo by Dan Newcomb

Here's Bob waving from his Pilatus PC-12 aircraft.



# CAF SoCal Ground School

*continues*



Towing out the PBJ!



P-51 – Sat, Jun 18, 2016, 10:00am  
☀️ Annex Conference Room  
- Lips Hertberg



Spitfire – Sat, Jul 16, 2016, 10:00am  
☀️ Annex Conference Room  
- Steve McCartney



PBJ – Sat, Aug 13, 2016, 10:00am  
☀️ Annex Conference Room  
- TBD

Dates and times subject to change due to a million reasons  
- Check monthly Flightline or with Lips

*To Honor American Military Aviation Through Flight, Exhibition and Remembrance*

# *Hellcat Day*



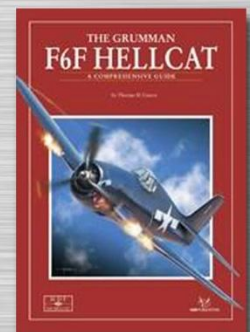
***Sunday, June 19, 2016***

***Fathers' Day - 11:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m.***

***Commemorative Air Force Aviation Museum***

***455 Aviation Drive, Camarillo Airport***

- Presentations on The History of Our Hellcat***
- Thomas Cleaver, author of "The Grumman F6F Hellcat:  
A Comprehensive Guide" (SAM Publications)***
- Pilot Questions and Answers***
- Fly-bys of our Grumman F6F Hellcat "Minsi III"***



***Bring your father/ grandfather/ husband/ boyfriend  
to our Aviation Museum for a Fathers' Day treat.  
His/ their mind(s) and heart(s) will soar with  
the Hellcat. It will be a day he/ they will remember  
forever!***