



Wings Over Wine Country AIR SHOW 15

Air Force Wings of Blue Skydivers Added to Air Show Lineup

[Tickets On Sale Now](#)
[In Gift Shop and Online](#)

We are very pleased to announce that the U.S. Air Force Wings of Blue Skydiving Team will be dropping in to the 2015 Wings Over Wine Country Air Show! The Wings of Blue is the parachuting unit at the United States Air Force Academy...

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First Hot Dog Thursday of the Season April 2



The weather's warming up, spring is in the air, and the hot dogs will be on the grill

April 2. You read it right here: Hot Dog Thursday returns for another season.

If you've never experienced a Hot Dog Thursday at the Pacific Coast Air Museum, you don't know what you're missing.

Imagine a warm spring or summer day, the breeze blowing, the aroma of grilling hot dogs filling the air, and a friendly crowd of aircraft aficionados gathered on the shaded PCAM patio and wandering among our collection of classic planes and helicopters. The dedicated Hot Dog Thursday team, under the leadership of Paul Heck, has turned this monthly lunch opportunity into a fun social event for folks from all over the local area.



We would like to thank sponsors [North Coast Air](#) and [Task Mortgage](#) for helping make this event possible.



Join us between 11:30 and 1:30. \$5.00 gets you admission, a large hot dog, chips, and soda or water (\$4.00 for Museum members). Ice cream is available at an additional charge. Hot Dog Thursday is an important fund raiser for the Museum, and a pleasant way to get out of the office for an hour or two. ★

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The PCAM Mission

“To Educate and Inspire both young and old about our aviation heritage and space technology, to Preserve historic aircraft and artifacts, and to Honor veterans.”

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...near Colorado Springs, Colorado. Over the last several decades, the Wings of Blue has been one of the outstanding parachute units in the United States. They only make 20 civilian air show appearances each year, so Wings Over Wine Country is very fortunate to have them at our show.

Tickets Now On Sale

If you can't wait to get your Air Show tickets, we can help. President's Club (\$150) and General Admission - are now on sale in the Museum Gift Shop and online. All types, including Boxes and Bleachers, are available [online at our ticket sales website](http://www.wingsoverwinecountry.org). You can visit www.wingsoverwinecountry.org to get more details.

Moving Back North

The Air Show will be on the north end of the airport as it was in 2012 and 2013. This is largely because the giant C-17 Globemaster III Transport is expected to show up for walk-through tours and only the north end of the airport can accommodate its weight. Paperwork is nearly complete to secure its appearance.

Volunteers Needed: Get in FREE!

Come on out and get involved! Get your friends, family, and co-workers to volunteer as well and they'll all get in FREE! We need people to do everything from



Paperwork is almost complete for securing the appearance of the C-17 Globemaster III. If things work out it will be available for walk-through tours, but it won't fly during the show.

serve the beer to help visitors park their cars. The best jobs go first so contact Dave Kinzie, our volunteer coordinator, now, at davidkinzie@yahoo.com or 415-279-8759.

Canadian Forces Snowbirds, F-16, and More!

Visit the newly updated Air Show website at www.wingsoverwinecountry.org for photos of all our performers and descriptions of their acts. The Air Show is really taking shape. The Museum thanks the Executive Committee and the large team of other contributors who are working behind the scenes to make this the best show ever . 🌟

April in Aviation History...

On April 15, 1986, the United States attacked terrorist facilities in Libya. Operation El Dorado Canyon was executed in response to several international acts of terrorism sponsored by the regime of Muammar Khaddafi, in particular the 1986 Berlin discotheque bombing. The operation involved A-6E Intruders, F/A-18 Hornets and A-7 Corsair IIs from the aircraft carriers USS America and USS Coral Sea. Two dozen F-111Fs also participated, flying all the way from England around the southern coast of Spain and through the Strait of Gibraltar. They refueled several times on the way there and back. At right: the Pacific Coast Air Museum's A-7 Corsair II (top) and A-6E Intruder (bottom). The Museum also has an F-111 cockpit capsule (not shown). 🌟



This aircraft is on loan from the National Naval Aviation Museum at Pensacola, Florida.

President's Message: The topic for this month is Networking!

I have always been a pretty good networker. I keep in touch with many of my high school classmates to this day. And many of my close friends are people I have worked with over the years at a number of companies. I also went through a number of job changes in the past and every new job I found was through personal networking (not through classified ads, or agencies, or the websites).

When I think back, I actually started networking in the Air Force. After a delightful boot camp at Lackland AFB in San Antonio, Texas and four months of Tech School (Radar Operator) at Keesler AFB in beautiful Biloxi, Mississippi, I got stationed at Pt Arena AFS up on the Mendocino coast (that's where I met my Brother-in-Law, Mike Lynch).

Anyway, when I got there I was thinking to myself – who do I need to know? What's important? The first thing that came to mind was food, so I got to know one of the cooks in the chow hall so I could get snacks whenever I wanted. The next thing that popped to mind was information (knowing what's going on), so I got to know the senior Admin Clerk. Lastly, I thought what if I get into trouble? So I became friends with one of the Air Police. That was the start of my networking career.

I know you're all asking "What is he *talking* about???"

Well, here's the reason for this discussion. Christina has or will be getting out a calendar that shows all our upcoming events. Among them will be our annual Pig Roast on June 20. This will be Allan Morgan's last Pig Feed as he will be moving to Texas in July. Next up will be our Vietnam War commemorative weekend August 14, 15, and 16. And, of course, we have the annual Wings Over Wine Country Air Show coming up September 26 and 27. We have an outstanding lineup this year.

Division Directors Nancy Heath, Julia Hochberg, and Christina Olds are all working hard to promote these events and others. **We need every member to help spread the word too.**

In other words – Start Networking!

And who do you network with, you ask? Here's a start. Your family members and friends, co-workers and past co-workers, clients, suppliers, business associates, teachers and students, and all the professional people you know and deal with: lawyers, accountants, engineers, business consultants, architects, doctors, dentists, vets, barbers, hairdressers, etc, etc.

If every member got the word out about what we're doing and the events we have coming up, this could really have a positive impact on our attendance.

Thanks Everyone.

— Jim Sartain

Gift Shop April News: Kids' Snowbirds Jackets

The Canadian Forces Snowbirds are coming to the 2015 Wings Over Wine Country Air Show this September! Show your enthusiasm for our Canadian friends! Children's sizes 3 (toddler) through 12 are now available in the Gift Shop. \$39.99 - \$43.99.

Get your discount! All Museum members get a 10% discount on these and all other regularly priced merchandise! ★



New TSA Security Measures at PCAM: They're Definitely Watching Us

Volunteers needed for Regular Shifts to Watch our Fence Lines

By Peter Loughlin

I was on the PCAM field for about fifteen minutes one day in the middle of March just to take a couple pictures of the new security fence. In that brief time, an Airport Security SUV happened to drive up and stop. Was there an agent from the Transportation Security Administration (TSA) on board, checking up on us? I don't know but it certainly shows that everyone is being vigilant about the new security requirements.

For those who may not have heard, TSA (part of the Department of Homeland Security) has mandated that a PCAM member with an AOA badge must be out on our field during open hours whenever customers are present. As you can see, they are watching to make sure we are in full compliance. And we know for a fact that TSA has already tested us and will do so again by intentionally attempting to breach our security measures. They could shut us down if we don't do things properly.

To that end, we are signing up volunteers who have a current, valid AOA badge to spend a couple hours on the field watching the northwest corner to make sure no unauthorized people leave the Museum grounds and enter airport property. We are looking at three two-hour shifts on Tuesdays, Thursdays, Saturdays, and Sundays. Volunteers are especially needed on Saturdays and Sundays. You can volunteer by...

- Entering your name on the sign-up sheet in the break room at the Museum.
- Phoning the Museum at 707-575-7900.
- Emailing Christina.Olds@pacificcoastairmuseum.org

This is an easy but important job, and a great excuse to spend time at the Museum! All volunteers will be fully briefed. You can read more on the PCAM website at <http://pacificcoastairmuseum.org/news/announcements.asp> or in the March 2015 Straight Scoop newsletter. And a big Thank You to all the folks who have volunteered so far! 🌟



Airport Security watches PCAM security volunteer Jim Mattison watching them watching him. Paranoia? No, just a case of airport officials ensuring that we remain in compliance by having an AOA badge-equipped member on the field.

New Members Since February

John Gramke, Ukiah
Bill McDermott Family, Sausalito
Robert Phillips, Lakeport, CA
Loren Davis, Santa Rosa
Dean Hamlin, Santa Rosa
Tom & Sheri Kemper Family, Windsor
Gerald Hetzer, Sebastopol

Khaled Halawah Family, Santa Rosa
Paul & Jennifer Totten Family, Petaluma
Kim Mcfarland Family, Santa Rosa
Masis Babajanian Family, Santa Rosa
Tracy Jones Family, Santa Rosa

Flight Wing Report: Queen “B” (Cessna 170B) Restoration Update

By Lynn Hunt



So what do you do with an aircraft engine that hasn't run in 30 years? Good question.

There will be questions about the integrity of any engine that has sat for that length of time either inside a hangar or out. The only way to know for sure what condition it is in is to look inside. Much can be learned by simply removing a cylinder but there was enough corrosion on the outside of the engine to make us want to clean it up as well. All six cylinders were removed. The engine was disassembled for a complete inspection. Not surprisingly the wear measured on the crankshaft and cam were consistent with what you would find on a 600 hour engine which is basically still within “new” tolerances. No rust or deterioration was found. While it was apart we took the opportunity to clean and repaint the various components. They, together with a new gasket set and new rings, will be reassembled into a time-continued, freshly inspected engine and it will be reinstalled on the Cessna and ready for flight.

Final clean-up of the airframe components is ongoing as we prepare the aircraft for paint.

The bulk of the many hours of work has been donated by four students from



Windsor High students Sara Clark, Erik Robertshaw, Ben Cullen (left) and Jason Allen (right) are doing most of the Cessna's restoration work. They are shown here fixing corrosion and prepping for paint.



The “Queen B's” cylinders before cleanup, inspection, and painting (top) and after (bottom).

Windsor High who chose PCAM and our Flight Wing project to base their school project around. They have worked hard on the project and their efforts are clearly visible. For several reasons it makes sense to paint the entire airframe even though its original paint scheme from the factory was mostly bare aluminum. The roughly 30% of surface area that was painted at the factory was in the best condition and the remainder of the unprotected exterior was where the corrosion was. Flight Wing members are currently considering paint color and paint scheme choices. ✨

Aircraft & Asset Management

By Mark Fajardin, Sr.

Castle Air Museum Trip

I got a call from my Prowler buddies in the Navy, asking me to attend the induction of EA-6B Prowler 160436, from strike test squadron VX-23, into the Castle Air Museum collection in Atwater, California. On March 18th I met the team from VAQ-134, the "Garudas," which just returned in October from the last Navy deployment of the EA-6B Prowler. That final Prowler tour was on board the carrier George Bush (CVN 77) fighting ISIS forces in Syria and Iraq. At 11:30 the Prowler arrived, bouncing once then pulling into a sixty degree climb-out! After she landed there was a welcome party, and work began on the jet. The Garuda team invited me to get my hands dirty demilitarizing it, the 5th prowler to join a West Coast museum. Only four more museum Prowlers to go!

Acquisitions

AH-1J Sea Cobra

Our Cobra helicopter (#157785) turns out to be a celebrity. Well, at any rate it's located on the AMARG Tucson tour known as "celebrity row." It arrived at Tucson on April 23, 1992 from HMA-773 stationed at NAS Atlanta Georgia. I am still awaiting the demil cost from AMARG personnel. So stay tuned!



This AH-1J Sea Cobra at AMARG Tucson is slated for PCAM, if we can get the funds together for de-mil and transport to Santa Rosa. She's shown wrapped in white protective materials.



The honorably retired EA-6B Prowler #160436 during "de-mil" at Castle. Demilitarization means the removal or disabling of all military equipment such as ejection seat charges, engines, etc.

T-34B Mentor

It's ready to go at NAS North Island San Diego and I'm currently in the process of purchasing a tandem axle 24ft deckover trailer to not only bring the T-34 home but also to provide transport for all the other equipment acquired. We have decided it's time to stop borrowing other people's trailers and have our own for larger loads.

Missiles

Missiles are on my mind, and to that end I've established a good relationship with the man at AMMO PAC who can hopefully load some on the new acquisitions trailer if they become available. AIM-9 & HARM are at the top of my list, but even with this it will take some doing as both missiles are going through an upgrade process which makes the program managers want to hang on to them. We are also working an angle for missile fins and other components to build them ourselves if we need to.

F/A-18 Hornet

I spoke with my contact in the Pentagon who controls aircraft inventory. The current status of the legacy Hornets is to keep them in service until 2019. There are two going to SARDIP (cannibalization) and two Blue Angels F/A-18s going to the National Naval Aviation Museum in the first quarter of 2016. I have an inquiry in on these aircraft, but it's a long shot. Next up are the P-3C Orions which begin retiring in 2017. ✪

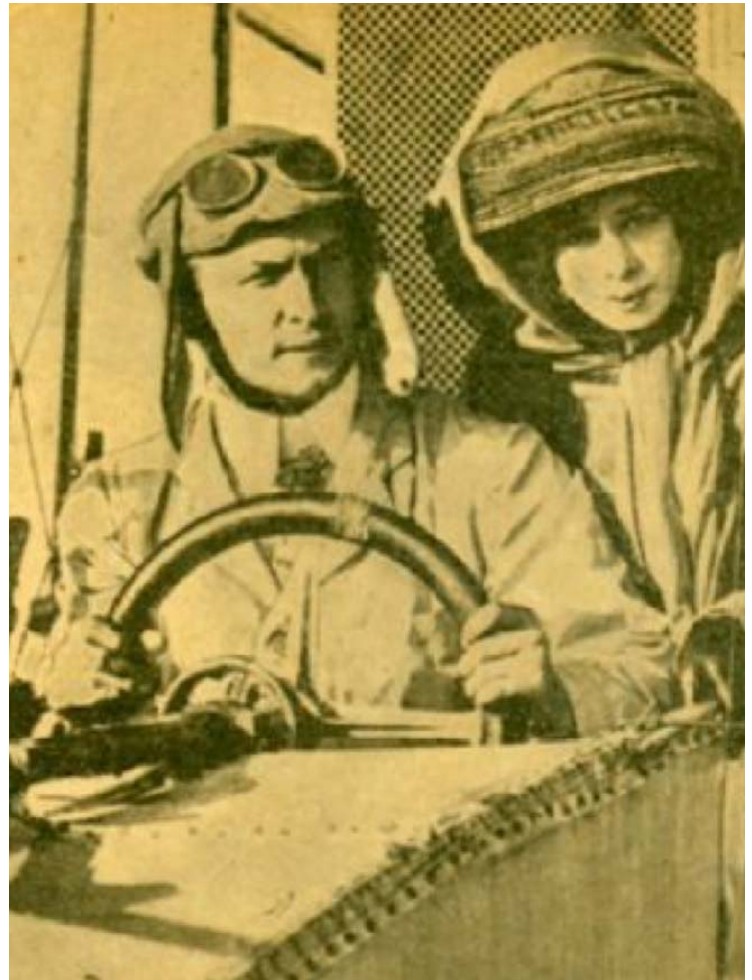
In Case You Missed It: March 18 Member Meeting Guest Speaker: Roy Mize on Harry Houdini, Pilot

By Peter Loughlin

Our guest speaker at the Pacific Coast Air Museum member meeting on March 18, 2015, was aviation historian Roy Mize. Roy's career as an aviation historian began in 1995 when he went to an estate sale. Under an old pile of newspapers he found an old photo album with sixteen pictures, one of them of a metal-hulled flying boat biplane at Crissy Field, San Francisco. After two years of research (this was *before* the Internet with its instant results) he found out that it depicted the Rodgers flight, the first attempt to make a non-stop flight from the mainland to Hawaii. Roy was hooked and began researching a number of areas. One of the fascinating things he discovered was that legendary escape artist and illusionist Harry Houdini had learned to fly just six years after the Wright Brothers' famous flight, and that he made his mark on the aeronautic history of Australia. Roy talked about a number of aviation topics, but focused on Houdini's airborne exploits.

Harry Houdini Learns to Fly

Houdini was born Eric Weisz on March 24, 1874 in Budapest, Hungary. His family soon emigrated to the United States. Erik had several brothers and a sister. When he was only five or six years old he started doing card tricks and in his teens was performing magic for money. He married Wilhelmina Beatrice "Bess" Rahner in 1894, and she became his constant companion, ardent supporter, and talented co-star in many of his acts. He made a name for himself escaping from handcuffs, securely chained boxes thrown into rivers, straight jackets (while suspended by his ankles), and any number of other incredible situations. He began calling himself Houdini during the 1890s in homage to a French magician and was internationally famous by 1900. Throughout his career he explained his amazing escapes and death-defying feats by saying "My brain is my key", meaning that there was nothing magical about what he did despite the ardent belief by some (including Sir Arthur Conan Doyle, creator of the sublimely rational Sherlock Holmes) that they could only be facilitated by spiritual help from "the other side."



Harry Houdini in his 1909 Voisin biplane, with his wife Bess.

Every act eventually gets old and Houdini, always the consummate showman, was continually refining his and adding new twists in order to stay current.

In August 1909 the first international air show, the *Grande Semaine d'Aviation de la Champagne*, was held in Reims, France. It attracted over 500,000 people. American Glenn Curtiss won the speed event by about eight seconds over a French flyer. The huge attendance at this event illustrated how deeply airplanes had captured the public attention. They were still dangerous and rare but you could fly one fairly safely if you were taught well and had a bit of skill.

Houdini was inspired to add flying to his repertoire. He asked Orville and Wilbur Wright and Glenn Cur-

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tiss to sell him a plane but they wouldn't. Later in 1909 Houdini went to an air show in Berlin and approached the winner of one of the races. He offered to buy the plane and pay the pilot to teach him to fly. This transaction concluded, he asked the German military at Frankfurt if he could use their parade ground as a place for flying lessons. They agreed with one provision: he must teach three of their officers how to fly after he learned himself. He came to regret this arrangement during the Great War, and did his best to conceal how he had helped teach the Germans to fly.

Houdini's airplane was a Voisin, named after its French designer/builder. It looked more like a box kite than a modern airplane and with good reason. Its design was based on principles worked out years before by an Australian named Lawrence Hargrave who had built the first controllable box kite. Houdini's Voisin had a pusher engine and performed quite well for its time.

In retrospect, it may seem odd that the magician should seek to become a pilot. But flying, then as now, is an art based upon stern scientific principles. And that mirrored how he approached his career as a magician. If his brain was his key to handcuffs and other restraints, it was also his key to staying in the air.



Houdini's newly purchased Voisin biplane, 1909, shown in Germany.

Harry Houdini goes to Australia

In 1910 the Australians made Houdini an offer he couldn't refuse: they would pay him generously if he would spend six weeks there flying in public shows. He, his wife, and his ground crew packed up the Voisin, boarded an ocean liner, and set up operations at a place called Digger's Rest, Victoria, near Melbourne. He went on the record books as the first person ever to fly an airplane in Australia but this is hotly debated in some circles. In an email conversation following his presentation, Roy explained that he has done a lot of research on this topic, reading contemporary news sources and analyzing the conflicting opinions. At least two men "flew with an engine" in Australia before Houdini did, but they did not meet the standard that earned the Wright Brothers the title of First to Fly: powered *and* sustained *and* controlled. As Roy puts it, these other two did not have "...three-axis control (up/down, right/left, turns), an airplane with an engine, and a flight that started and finished at the same place. Houdini did all of this and more." Thus, in Roy's opinion, Houdini flew first, an opinion shared by several Australian sources. Houdini was presented with a trophy for his achievement and was lauded in the press.

Regardless of any controversy, it is gratifying to know that film of his celebrated flights still exists and you can view it here: <http://www.airspacemag.com/videos/category/history-of-flight/houdini-in-australia/>. Footage of the actual flight is brief, but you will probably appreciate the kite-like nature of both the airplane and its flight characteristics.



Houdini flying in Australia, 1910. This screen capture is from a video available at the Smithsonian's [Air & Space Magazine website](http://www.airspacemag.com/videos/category/history-of-flight/houdini-in-australia/).

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Harry Houdini goes to Hollywood

After a tour spent entertaining troops during the Great War, Houdini went to Hollywood and started a film processing company. It failed. Undaunted, he became a film actor himself and starred in several serials and movies. Only two of his movies survive: *The Man from Beyond* and *The Grim Game*.

The Grim Game (1919) features some notable flying scenes, which Roy showed on screen. The plot is... well, the plot is really just a showcase for Houdini's escape tricks. The part of interest to us is when the Villain absconds with Houdini's fiancée, and escapes in a Curtiss JN-4 "Jenny". Good Guy (played by Houdini) and a pal take off after them in another JN-4. Rather than simply pursuing to the next airfield and settling the thing on the ground in a gentlemanly fashion through fisticuffs, Good Guy climbs out of the passenger cockpit, onto the wing, and thence down a conveniently knotted rope into Villain's airplane. Right.

They used a stunt man to substitute for Houdini. But all publicity of the time stated that Houdini himself climbed down that rope into the other airplane. Still the consummate showman, he was perfectly happy to let the public believe he had.

The sequence can be seen online here: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=s7sXLOEaxSA>. Roy suggests it is some of the best surviving period footage of JN-4s in flight. Plot holes aside, this really is an amazing piece of airmanship.

First, there are no "special effects" the way we know them. The man on the wing is a real man, and he is actually dangling from a Curtiss Jenny moving at about 60 miles per hour several thousand feet up. No computer-generated images back in 1919, folks, and apparently no safety harness either!

Second, the pilot of the upper plane (the one from which Good Guy is dangling) cannot see Villain's airplane below him because the structure of his own plane blocks his view. So holding formation for the



At one point while filming *The Grim Game*, the planes were even closer than shown here. The exact degree of overlap of the planes is hard to gauge but the stunt man's reaction — he doubles up his legs to avoid the propeller (red arrow) — and the shadow on the lower plane's wing show they were pretty close.

stunt man to climb into the other plane must have been nearly impossible, as evidenced by the continually shifting positions of the planes.

Third, during one heart-stopping moment the dangling stunt man comes horrifyingly close to the propeller of the lower plane. It's pretty clear that if either plane had moved a foot or so in the wrong direction there would have been a grisly accident. See the photo above.

Fourth, everyone survived the crash. Not surprisingly, these airborne antics led to the planes bumping into each other most spectacularly, and it was caught on film. The moments leading up to the actual collision are missing. But the last few seconds show the planes entangled, with the trailing edge of one wing streaming bits of shredded linen. Then that airplane spins out of control. In the movie, the plane crashes upside down in the village square. In actuality, the pilot managed to recover a few hundred feet from the ground and crash land. The cameras kept rolling and this unscripted event was incorporated into the film.

Fifth, that stunt man actually did make it from one plane to the other, though he was pulled out again a moment later when the planes separated after the collision. The makers of the film

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Too close! The movie planes actually collided and it was caught on film. The stunt man can be seen still swinging from his rope and a moment or two later he swoops out of view with the plane, hanging on for dear life. We assume he had the presence of mind to climb back up into the plane before landing. The other, damaged plane went into a spin, but the pilot recovered and landed.

claim it to be the first such in-flight transfer ever, but this fact has not been checked. And since he never let go of the rope we're not sure it even counts. Watch for it in the video. It's pretty clear he's still attached to the first plane. See the excerpt from *The Grim Game* here: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=s7sXLOEaxSA>

Sixth, the camera plane had to be flown with great skill to keep it and its primitive movie camera in the right position despite clouds, collisions, and such.

SPOILER ALERT:

After pulling her from the wreckage, Good Guy gets the girl. But you probably guessed that.

All of us at the Pacific Coast Air Museum thank Roy for his presentation and this rare look into early flight, when every pilot was a celebrity whether he or she was an internationally famous magician or not.

About Roy Mize

Roy Mize is a retired aerospace R&D program planner who became an early aviation historian after he began to research some 1925 U.S. Navy biplane photos bought at a Palo Alto estate sale. His search turned into an odyssey and over the next twelve years he looked for other forgotten stories about the beginnings of flight. That effort has morphed into two books and a two volume anthology of early flight entitled *Forgotten Stories of Early Aviation, 1843 to 1945*.



Roy Mize during his March 18 presentation.

Roy has Bachelors' degrees in Business Administration and Science in Business as well as an MBA. He served in the US Army Air Defense School at Ft. Bliss, Texas where after 18 months of training became a Nike Operations Instructor. He has taught Continuing Education courses at UC Santa Cruz Extension, UCLA Extension, Sonoma State University-Professional Development, and Sunnyvale Adult Education and has led various corporate in-house training courses. 🌟

Air Show Flashback

Old Glory is an immaculately restored B-25J, and is often seen at air shows around the American West. Here, she makes a low pass during the photo fly-by portion of the 2014 Wings Over Wine Country Air Show.



April 15 Guest Speaker:

Richie Roads: Life is Sweet at 2,000 Feet

If you listened to airborne traffic reports on the San Francisco Bay Area's Leading Radio Stations KGO, KBLX or KNBR in the late '90's through 2008 you no doubt will recognize our April 15 speaker's voice. For nearly twelve years, Richie Roads reported Bay Area traffic conditions mornings, noon and afternoons while flying in a Cessna 172 or a Bell Jet Ranger helicopter over our freeways and bridges. Join us Wednesday evening April 15 as Richie shares some of his adventures including police chases, historical events and yes, some possible UFO sightings.



About Richie Roads

Richie Roads started his career in the 1970's as a Barker in the Broadway area of San Francisco. His next stop was Las Vegas where he spent the early '80s as an announcer on the hotel, casino, and night club scene. He returned to his home town of New Orleans in the early '90s where he became an on-air personality for two of the most popular radio stations in the southern major market, WNOE and KOOL 95. He came back to the San Francisco Bay Area in 1996 (where he had lived as a teenager) to be hired by the nation's largest radio reporter contract provider, Metro Networks. A year later he signed on for Airborne Reporter Patrol and spent the next eleven years giving guidance for those stuck in commutes and reporting on major local news events from San Jose to Santa Rosa. In the process, he logged over 10,000 hours in several aircraft and enjoyed a multitude of aeronautic experiences.

Time and Location:

Wednesday, April 15, 7:00 p.m.
Mesa Beverage Company, Inc.
3200 N. Laughlin Road. Santa Rosa, CA ★

Help Wanted: Administrative Assistant for PCAM Office

By Christina Olds

We need some office help! Our highly valued David Kinzie, who has managed a lot of the administrative functions here in the PCAM office for the past two years, is moving on to other things. Although he'll still be deeply involved in the Museum and helping out on Hot Dog Thursday, he won't be helping in the office any more. We need someone to take his place.

We are looking for someone to come in at least two or three days a week for four hours at a time on an ongoing basis to help with answering the phones, sending out membership letters and other correspondence, keeping our member database up to date, and doing similar jobs. We need someone with computer skills including the Microsoft Office Suite of Word, Excel, and PowerPoint. If you know about social media (Facebook) so much the better! There is also a museum database called PAST PERFECT which is used in processing membership information and we can train you in this once you're comfortable with PCAM basic information.



Office volunteer David Kinzie is moving on to other things. We need someone to fill his role!

It's a fun, friendly and busy environment. You'll be part of PCAM's highly valued office staff, without whom our Museum could not function. There are always interesting visitors, fun goings-on, and a family atmosphere. If you're interested, contact me at christinaolds2@gmail.com or 970-333-1196 ★

Of MiGs, Drones, & Parachutes

CJ Stephens on Flying the MiG-15, Part I

By Peter Loughlin

It may seem odd that an airplane created by a longtime enemy might be used to test and perfect something for the U.S. military, but it happened at least once. Here's the story of how a Soviet MiG-15 was used to test components of a U.S. Navy target drone.

CJ Stephens is a founding member of the Pacific Coast Air Museum and one of the most experienced pilots in our midst. Just a few of his qualifications include 232 combat missions over Vietnam in F-4 Phantoms, an "All Types Authorization" to fly any piston powered ex-military aircraft, racing Sea Furys in the Unlimited class at Reno, instructor and pace/safety pilot in the Sport class at Reno, 14 years as Chief Test Pilot for the CAFÉ Foundation, and the list goes on and on. I spoke with him in March 2015 about some flight testing he did on behalf of a U.S. Navy contractor using, of all things, a Soviet-built MiG-15.

The MiG Comes to Santa Rosa

Back in the early 1990s, local pilots and businessmen Steve Penning and Bruce Etchell jointly purchased a 1954 vintage two-seat MiG-15 UTI from Czechoslovakia. They jumped through all the hoops to import it and reassembled it here at the Charles M. Schulz-Sonoma County Airport. Problem was, they couldn't fly it because they didn't have any jet time and were not licensed for it. So they asked CJ to be their test pilot and flight instructor. CJ wasn't licensed for it either, but soon got checked out by another MiG pilot.

The plane was flown out of Santa Rosa a lot. But back then the runway was only 5,000 feet, a bare minimum for the MiG which has some unusual flying tendencies that make short runways difficult. The MiG also drank a lot, so a single 40-minute flight could consume \$400 to \$500 in fuel, and that was at early 'nineties prices of about \$2.50 per gallon. So their plan to fly it a lot and sell back-seat rides in a real MiG never came about. Soon, they were looking for a longer runway and a way to subsidize the cost of fuel.



This two-seat MiG-15 UTI was based at Santa Rosa for a number of years in the early 1990s, and PCAM member CJ Stephens flew it to test parachutes for Navy drones.

Testing for the Navy

Fortunately, Another PCAM member hooked them up with FNC Corporation, which was developing a new parachute recovery system for the Navy's BQM-74 aerial target drone. This drone was first used in the 1960s and updated versions are still in use in 2015 when this article was written. They are not shot at with live ammunition, but are used in training as a radar tracking target. These things are expensive, so they are built to be recovered and are equipped with parachutes. FNC needed to test the parachute system's

Continued on next page



A BQM-74 launching from a cruiser during a Navy exercise

Continued from previous page capabilities at all points of the envelope: high, low, fast, and slow in all possible combinations. A deal was struck whereby FNC would compensate the team, buy the fuel, and store the airplane, and CJ would fly the tests.

This parachute system was designed for forcible ejection from the drone by means of an explosive charge. FNC designed a test canister that was really just several hundred pounds of concrete to simulate the weight of the actual drone, plus a slow-deploy 54-foot parachute and explosive charge in the back. The canisters were about eight feet long, weighed 840 pounds, and looked a little like a small H-bomb. The idea was to carry them aloft under the wing of an aircraft, where the slipstream simulated the drone's actual flight conditions. At the appointed speed and altitude, a button push by the test pilot



The test canister mounted on the MiG. The MiG was a good aircraft for this because of its speed and built-in hard points designed for carrying heavy, droppable loads.

would simultaneously drop the canister and blow the 'chute.

Why use the MiG?

The MiG came equipped with two under-wing pylons intended for heavy fuel tanks. With some slight modifications the pylons could carry and release the canisters. And the MiG could fly safely throughout the entire range of altitudes and speeds (between about 200 and 400 knots), though the slow-speed tests were down at the

minimum possible given the weight the plane was carrying. A business jet can cover the same range but how many of those have drop-tank pylons? So an old MiG ended up helping develop a tool used to figure out how to shoot down new MiGs. Military history is replete with such ironies.

Next Month: Part 2, Flying the Tests ✪

Merit Badge Classes: Next one April 25!

The Pacific Coast Air Museum offers four Boy Scout Merit Badge classes each year, which earn the Scouts a Merit Badge in aviation.

The next one is April 25. Sign up soon because seats go fast! Get details online at <http://pacificcoastairmuseum.org/classes/meritbadge/>.

The March 7 class was a near sell-out, with kids and parents coming from as far away as Truckee, California. At other times we've had students from Mendocino County, Southern California, and all over the San Francisco Bay Area. It's great fun, affordable, and the \$70 class tuition includes a free graduation flight with a licensed pilot!



Flight instructor Art Hayssen (right) was one of two pilots to give the Scouts their graduation flights.

In other education news, PCAM was present at the College and Career Fair at Analy High School in Sebastopol on March 24, 2015. Over 500 attended. Education Director Allan Morgan hosted a table and greeted many enthusiastic students with whom he discussed careers in aviation. Thank you Allan! ✪

Topeka Mars Flying Boat to Visit Spring Lake

Local Bass Fishermen “Pretty Peeved”

By Peter Loughlin

April 1, 2015 — The Pacific Coast Air Museum is pleased to announce that on June 20th, 2015, the historic “Topeka Mars” flying boat is going to visit Santa Rosa.

The “Mars” flying boats, designed and built by the Glenn L. Martin Company during World War II, were enormous aircraft with 200-foot wingspans and four Wright R-3350 18-cylinder engines. They had no landing gear and could only operate from water. They were given romantic, exotic names: Hawaii Mars, Philippine Mars, Marianas Mars, Caroline Mars, Topeka Mars, and the like. Topeka Mars was the last constructed and received none of the fame of her sisters. Retired from the Navy in 1956 along with all the other Mars flying boats, Topeka Mars went on to an inglorious life as an agricultural sprayer and airborne movie theater, whereas some of her sisters gained celebrity status as fire-fighting aerial tankers.



The “Topeka Mars” takes off from Santa Rosa’s Spring Lake during a previous visit in the 1960s.

The upcoming event will see Topeka Mars land on Spring Lake, a 154-acre suburban reservoir surrounded by idyllic woodlands, for the first time in over fifty years. Visitors will be welcome, for small donations of \$1,000 each to help cover fuel costs. A local aviation group may sponsor and promote the event, but cooler heads seem likely to prevail.

“They’re going to do what?” asked amphibian pilot Lynn Hunt. “Is this some kind of joke? The speed limit on that lake is only five miles per hour.” Fellow amphibian pilot Duane Coppock commented, “They’ll never make it above single engine control airspeed by the time they lift off.”

We found PCAM President Jim Sartain on the field recently and wouldn’t leave him alone until he said something good about the event. He commented, “Look, I’m trying to be nice here. I think there are more productive ways for us to use our resources than supporting an event that is so poorly conceived. Have they even looked at the lake? It’s pretty small. Can’t we write about something else, like the Stinson Voyager? I hear it could be flying soon.”

*Hi folks!
Sorry to disappoint, but this event is
CANCELLED. It seems a large community
of weasels living in one of the engine
nacelles chewed through a bunch of
hydraulic lines. Repairs will take all
summer. But that’s probably best for all
involved. We didn’t have time to write
another article so please, just pretend you
never saw this.
- Editor*

We also interviewed some Spring Lake regulars. Warren “The Hook” Bufordson, local resident and avid bass fisherman, wasn’t pleased. “You land that thing here and there’ll be hell to pay. We’re having the International Brotherhood of Tire Re-Treaders Local 351 Fourth Annual Invitational Bass Derby here just a couple days after. It’ll put the fish off their chum for at least a week and you’ll have four or five mighty angry anglers. We’re pretty peeved about it.” One of the park rangers just shook her head and pointed to a sign that read “No gas engines. Electric trolling motors only.”

Despite the controversy we are sure this will be a great event for all aviation enthusiasts. For a show that you’re certainly never going to forget, contact event manager April Phuyale for details. 🌟



The Pacific Coast Air Museum

Location

One Air Museum Way, Santa Rosa, CA, 95403
www.pacificcoastairmuseum.org
707-575-7900

At the Charles M. Schulz-Sonoma County Airport, north of Santa Rosa. Hwy 101 north to Airport Blvd. and go west. Turn left on North Laughlin Rd, right on Becker Blvd. then right on Air Museum Way.



Hours

Tuesday, Thursday, Saturday and Sunday.
10:00 a.m.—4:00 p.m.

“Climb Aboard”

A selected aircraft is available to “Climb Aboard” the third weekend of each month (weather permitting). Please visit our web site at www.pacificcoastairmuseum.org or call 707-575-7900 for details or more information.

Member Meetings

Normally held on the third Wednesday of each month, 7:00 p.m. at Mesa Beverage Company, Inc. 3200 N. Laughlin Road, Santa Rosa, CA

“Straight Scoop” Newsletter

The museum newsletter, “Straight Scoop” is published monthly and is available online on the museum’s web site. Members are encouraged to submit articles for possible publication. Deadline: the 26th of the month prior to publication. All articles in the newsletter are covered by copyright. If you wish to submit articles or use any of the content, please contact Peter Loughlin, Editor: pcam-news@loughlinmarketing.com, 707-575-7900.

Membership Renewals

\$40 per year individual; \$60 per year for families. Send renewals to the museum, address below.

Address Corrections

Please send to Pacific Coast Air Museum, One Air Museum Way, Santa Rosa, CA 95403

Visit our web site at www.pacificcoastairmuseum.org or call 707-575-7900 for more information.

Read the “Red Baron Flyer,” the quarterly newsletter of the Charles M. Schulz-Sonoma County Airport: <http://www.sonomacountyairport.org/red-baron-flyer>

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PCAM YouTube Video Channel
<http://www.youtube.com/user/PCAMvideos>



STRAIGHT SCOOP

April 2015

*Climb Aboard
April 18-19, 2015
TOPGUN Weekend:
F-14A Tomcat F-16N Viper
and F-5E Tiger II*

REMEMBER THESE DATES

April 2, 2015	11:30 a.m. - 1:30 p.m.	Hot Dog Thursday — First of the season!
April 15, 2015	6:00 p.m. - 6:45 p.m.	Air Show Meeting at Mesa Beverage
April 15, 2015	7:00 p.m. - 9:00 p.m.	PCAM Member Meeting at Mesa Beverage
April 18, 2015	1:00 p.m.	Commemoration of last USAF P-51 Flight, Petaluma
April 19, 2015	12:00 p.m.	P-51 Symposium, Petaluma.
April 25, 2015	9:00 a.m. - 3:30 p.m.	Boy Scout Merit Badge Class (advance registration required)
May 7, 2015	11:30 a.m. - 1:30 p.m.	Hot Dog Thursday
May 27-29, 2015	Times TBA	Collings Foundation B-17 & B-24 visit Santa Rosa
June 6, 2015	7:30 a.m. - 6:00 p.m.	Bus Trip to Hiller and Computer History Museums

P-51 Commemorative Flight and Symposium

To commemorate the last official flight of a U.S.A.F P-51 Mustang back in 1955, there will be a special commemorative flight at the Petaluma Airport on Saturday, April 18 and a P-51 Symposium at the Petaluma campus of the Santa Rosa Junior College on Sunday, April 19. Visit <http://www.earthquaketitus.com/> for details. 🌟

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