



STRAIGHT SCOOP

PACIFIC COAST AIR MUSEUM

President's Message

Greetings,

This is my last President's message to you as I term out of office. The last six years spent on the board of directors has been truly an honor. I've met many new people and sadly had to see some pass on. This isn't the last of me! I'll still be doing a lot around PCAM. It has been an exciting year on every account, and I gotta see it through.

This past year has been a record-setting year by far. Hot Dog Thursday set attendance numbers that we thought would never happen. Another amazing Wheels & Wings car show earned over \$24,000, with 175 cars and some 1500 people. Construction plans are being made and preparations are in progress with the Butler Hangar. The new gift shop inches closer to getting our building permit, which is currently sitting at the last four of the 14 processes with the FAA approval office.

Our private events have been picking up. As the word is out about Hangar 2, we have received more requests. As of December 7 we received our A-6 Intruder Tribute Monument. The year 2024 is going to be huge for PCAM. Not only is it our 35th anniversary, we will see huge changes to the Butler Hangar and old Dragon Fly Building. I look forward to next year's achievements and seeing what new records can be set. May you all have a safe and Happy Holiday!

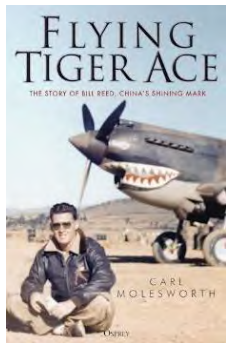
Chris Brown

Member Meetings

Member Meeting Round-Up

By Dana Hunt

The last two months yielded a couple of very interesting talks. In October, our own Jim Mattison took the stage to give a short but precise presentation on the Air Defense system of North America during the Cold War. One of the most notable facts presented was the number of aircraft that successfully intercepted the Tupolev Tu-95 "Bear" bomber. It was nice knowing that, in mere minutes, we could scramble our fighters to intercept any incoming threat well before they reached our shores.



In November, we were treated to author Carl Molesworth to talk about his book "Flying Tiger Ace," a story about Bill Reed who flew P-40s in WWII. Although his life was cut short, Reed's story provided many interesting tales of heroism and bravery. Carl read several excerpts from his book during the presentation, captivating the membership with every sentence. He actually sold out of all his copies before the meeting even started.

We look forward to many more great presentations in the coming year. Member meetings are on the third Wednesday of every month beginning at 7 pm in Hangar 2.

Winter 2024

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PCAM Value Statements Integrity:

- Demonstrate daily the highest levels of honesty and strong moral principles.
- Accountability:** Be accountable to our members, our patrons and our community.
- Customer Service:** Strive to achieve the highest levels of service and satisfaction.
- Achievement:** Become a recognized and valued asset to our community.
- Education:** Complement local institutions with unique learning opportunities.
- Innovation:** Constantly evolve the museum, the stories it tells and how it tells them.
- Diversity:** Create a climate of respect that is supportive of a diverse organization.

PCAM Mission Statement

"To educate and inspire both young and old about our aviation heritage and aerospace technology, to preserve historic aircraft and artifacts, and to honor veterans."

2024 PCAM Board Positions

By Dana Hunt



Dana Hunt, President



Billy Kerkhof, Vice-President



Janet Doto, Secretary and Event Coordinator

Photos courtesy of Dana Hunt

With the new year approaching it was time to get some new faces on PCAM's Board of Directors. President Chris Brown reached the end of his second three-year term, and a replacement was needed. Three choices filled the ballot and the PCAM membership chose to re-elect Dana Hunt for his second term and elect a returning Janet Doto to the board. In the December board meeting, the board decided to appoint Megan Sweeley to the ninth position. Dana Hunt was chosen as the new president, and Billy Kerkhof was elected vice president. Janet Doto will serve as secretary and continue in her current role as Events Coordinator. The 2024 board looks forward to a successful year for PCAM as we celebrate 35 years!

Display Acquisition and Preservation

A-6 Tribute Monument

By Chris Brown

December 7, a date which will live in infamy as the 82nd anniversary of the attack on Pearl Harbor, marks another important day at PCAM. We received our A-6 Intruder Tribute Monument! This beautiful laser-etched solid granite monument weighing in at 12,000 pounds was carefully unloaded and installed on a concrete slab poured in September.

At 0830 we met up on Flight Line Drive with the installation crew, Vern and Kenny and a delivery truck that arrived from Ohio. We escorted them through the airport gate and started unloading the delivery truck around 0900, removing the base, middle sections and the laser-etched panels of the monument. Once the boom truck arrived at 1000, he was able to unload the final top section which weighed 7000 pounds. Due to the rain, it took a little longer to install than we expected, but once the skies cleared the monument revealed its true beauty. This winter the landscaping around the monument will be completed, and the A-6 and EA-6 will be moved next to the monument for an April dedication ceremony.

Our A-6 Tribute monument is one of five tributes paid by members of the A-6 Intruder Association. On the monument around the midsection are the names of all the donors who contributed. The top section has aircraft information, Navy and Marine squadrons, and history information etched on black granite slabs. We can't thank the Intruder Association enough for considering PCAM worthy to receive one of these works of art. We are truly fortunate as this will be an amazing display for years to come.



Report Volunteer Hours

Jim Mattison

I will accept volunteer hours **No Later Than 5 Jan 2024.**

Hours will be tabulated and results will be announced at the January meeting.

Bulk hours for the entire year are acceptable and preferable, as we are at year's end.

Here's how you can submit your volunteer hours to Jim Mattison:

- Email at jmatti@sonic.net
- Hand deliver at the December meeting
- Online form at <https://bit.ly/3V0Qm4w> Or
- Scan QR Code for volunteer hours form

Veterans and Oral History

American Fighter Aces Association Gathering of Ace Pilots (2023)

By Oral History Team

Did you know that there are only 12 American ace pilots still alive? Seven of them are WWII pilots and five of them served in Vietnam. A military “ace” pilot is one who has shot down five or more enemy aircraft in aerial combat. Only one of the remaining ace pilots is a **triple ace, Brigadier General Clarence “Bud” Anderson**, who had 16-1/4 aerial victories.

The American Fighter Aces Association (AFAA) recognizes the 1,447 pilots who have gained ace status among the 60,000-plus military pilots who flew in conflicts from WWI through Vietnam. During WWII, only 5 percent of military pilots were collectively responsible for one-third of all air victories. Many of the members of this exclusive club attribute their successes to having very acute eyesight.

On October 21, 2023 several of the surviving ace pilots met in Texas for a “Gathering of the Aces.” The mission of the AFAA is to preserve and promote the distinguished history of ace pilots while educating future generations about the very remarkable story of these American heroes. The gathering was moderated by current AFAA Commander Randy “Duke” Cunningham. US Air Force Colonel Charles DeBellevue was the guest speaker.

Many thanks to Jim Anderson (Bud’s son) for providing the following photos.



US Navy Lt. and current AFAA Commander Randy “Duke” Cunningham (left), US Air Force Colonel Charles DeBellevue (middle), and US Air Force Brigadier General Clarence “Bud” Anderson (right).



US Navy Commander Lester E. Gray Jr. and USAF Brigadier General Clarence “Bud” Anderson



Colonel Charles DeBellevue (left), Commander Lester E. Gray Jr, (middle) and Brigadier General Clarence “Bud” Anderson



Brigadier General Clarence “Bud” Anderson presents the Francis S. Gabreski Award to Captain Charles Parker Jax. Francis “Gabby” Gabreski was a career USAF pilot who retired as a colonel after 26 years of military service. He began his military career during WWII.

George F. Curtis: Vietnam Veteran and Noteworthy Health Care Practitioner

By Oral History Team

Santa Rosa-born George F. Curtis served in the US Army from 1968 until 1970. He was assigned to the United States Headquarters and Headquarters Company 20th Engineer Brigade at Long Binh Post in Vietnam. Because of his Top Secret Crypto clearance, he was part of the nuclear assembly weapons team.

As the result of a gunshot wound from a hunting accident in his youth, he was classified 2B after he was drafted. He believes that the only other draftee of note to receive this classification was Muhammad Ali. This determination kept him out of direct combat. In 1968 he was sent to Fort Lewis, WA for basic training. While there, he was tested repeatedly and was told he could “select any assignment he wanted,” reportedly

because he was identified as being very smart. This was in stark contrast to his earlier education in his youth where he graduated last in his high school class with a 1.0 grade point average (later determined to have been because of dyslexia). This led George to later joke that “Ds get degrees,” since he eventually went on to earn multiple college degrees.



From Fort Lewis, WA George was sent to Fort Sill, OK and was given the Military Occupational Specialty (MOS) classification 13E20, Artillery, Operations and Intelligence. During the education process for this MOS, he was told he was going to learn how perform the calculations to make an artillery shell hit wherever he wanted 27 miles away. He graduated second in his class at Artillery School, and was then assigned to be an instructor at Fort Sill the next day. While at Fort Sill, his entire group was sent to Chicago to perform riot control at the Democratic National Convention in support of the Chicago Police Department.

Back at Fort Sill, he was put on a Nuclear Weapons Assembly Team because he was an “armorer.” They were trained to assemble and arm nuclear weapons in case they were ever deployed.” Subsequently, he was sent to Vietnam. He landed at Cam Ranh Bay, and from there he flew to

Saigon where he boarded an Army bus to Long Binh Post. Previously, the perimeter of Long Binh Post had been breached by Viet Cong soldiers during the 1969 Tet Offensive because it had been protected by non-combatant personnel who did not understand how to utilize the defense resources they had available. George became a member of a two man team responsible for educating post guards on proper procedures. He also oversaw investigations on what type of arsenal had been used in these attacks. His responsibilities encompassed one-third of the Long Binh Post perimeter, making sure the bunkers were adequately supplied and the resources properly deployed. Proper communications equipment and procedures were also emphasized. He also interviewed “informants” in Saigon to see if the information they offered was of benefit in securing the Long Binh Post perimeter. While in Saigon, he observed Viet Cong dressed up as Buddhist Monks with AK-47 weapons under their robes.

Before George returned to the States, he was involved in meetings that planned the invasion of Cambodia and the use of “cluster bombs,” then known as aerial denial weapons.

George returned to the States via Travis AFB. Since his military service helped him gain self-confidence, he was determined to use the GI Bill to go to college. He first majored in biology at the College of Marin, then earned a dual degree in biology and chemistry at Sonoma State College. Because his GI Bill funding would end if he graduated, he decided to apply to UCSF School of Pharmacy before graduating. He was accepted and graduated from UCSF School of Pharmacy in 1978

George’s heritage played a large role in his past and current lifestyle. Herbert Hoover’s Vice President, Charles Curtis, was his grandfather’s brother’s son. He was 1/4 Kaw Indian from Kansas. His father was raised on the Devil’s Lake Sioux Reservation in North Dakota (now known as Spirit Lake), so George was raised with a hunter’s/gatherer’s orientation. He wanted to work on an Indian Reservation after graduating from college, but public health service was “too much like the Army.” So he went to work at Marin General Hospital where he started the Hospice of Marin, working as a pain and symptom management specialist. This led to his introduction of the use of THC (“Marinol”) in the management of nausea and pain. He also opened a home infusion company that allowed people to leave the hospital early.

George served on the faculty of UCSF from 1980 until he retired in 2022. He was the hospital pharmacist at both Marin General and Palm Drive hospitals. Additionally, George worked in the Native American community helping diabetics get off insulin via positive dietary changes. To this day he remains focused on good nutrition, even growing his own food on his small farm.

Thank you, George, for your significant contributions during your military career, and afterwards in the health care industry and your community service contributions.

PCAM Oral History Team Honors Larry Scott

At a recent military pilots' luncheon, Larry Scott was honored by members of the Oral History Team for his US Air Force service during the Cold War period. First Lieutenant Scott flew B-47 and B-52 aircraft over the Defense Early Warning (DEW) Line for the Strategic Air Command (SAC) from 1953 until 1957.

The DEW Line grew out of a detailed study made by a group of American scientists who met at MIT in 1952. The subject of their study was the vulnerability of the USA and Canada to air attack. Their recommendation was to build a DEW line across the North American Arctic border. Larry's SAC flights involved carrying an atomic bomb in his aircraft that was activated when he crossed the line into the Arctic region, and deactivated when he returned.

A humble man, Larry was most appreciative of this acknowledgement for his important and dedicated service to our nation. Thank you, Larry, for your service and for helping to protect our country during a volatile period.



The American flag Larry received was flown over the US Capitol Building in his honor on September 29, 2023. It was approved by Thomas Manger, Chief of the US Capitol Police, and coordinated by former Capitol Police Chief Steve Sund.



Richard "Rick" Walzer, F4 Back Seat Navigator, Vietnam

By Oral History Team

Captain Rick Walzer served in the US Air Force from 1966 until 1971. A recent college graduate from Queens College in New York, he decided to enlist in the Air Force to avoid being drafted. He was immediately qualified to be a pilot and was commissioned as a 2nd Lieutenant. Later he voluntarily decided to change from being a pilot to a navigator because of his lack of prior aviation experience.

Rick initially began his military career at Lackland AFB, but soon was transferred to Mather AFB near Sacramento. As an Easterner by birth, culturally this move to California was "a blessing" for him. At Mather he attended celestial navigation training, which proved to be a challenge, especially using a sextant. He was one of the first navigators assigned to F-4 back seat positions, and never used celestial navigation after that.

Later, at Davis-Monthan AFB, Rick was trained in the use of the F-4 aircraft technology, air-to-air combat, the role of a back seater, inertial navigation, low-level navigation, nuclear arms delivery and how to fly the plane since his F4 was a dual controlled aircraft. After airplane training, he went through sea survival, land survival, and jungle survival training. This training mimicked the harsh treatment American soldiers would experience by the Viet Cong if captured. Among this survival training was the order to have the captured soldier walk on the American flag, which proved to be distressing to Rick.

He arrived at Da Nang AFB in Vietnam just after the Tet Offensive. His 480th Tac Fighter Squadron supported "in country" Marines and Army troops with close air support. Of his 250+ combat missions, 52 were over North Vietnam, but the rest were "in country" (South Vietnam). They occasionally flew as many as three missions in a single day.

The main "objective" during his early tour was Tiger Island off the coast of the DMZ. It was inhabited by the North Vietnamese and was riddled with significant weaponry. One of his missions to Tiger Island earned Rick the Distinguished Flying Cross. While sitting on alert with his aircraft commander Major William Creamer, they were "scrambled" to Tiger Island to provide support for a rescue mission of his Squadron Commander and his back seater who had been shot down. The rescue helicopter was also shot down. In order to draw fire away from the second rescue helicopter, Rick and Major Creamer had to fly multiple passes over the rescue site to allow the second helicopter to successfully rescue everyone.



The DFC Rick received read as follows:

First Lieutenant Richard M. Walzer distinguished himself by heroism while participating in aerial flight as an A-4D Aircraft Pilot over Southeast Asia on 20 October 1968. On that date, Lieutenant Walzer scrambled to support the rescue of an F-4D crew and Jolly Green helicopter crew. Disregarding an estimated 1,000 rounds of anti-aircraft artillery and a 4,000 foot overcast. Lieutenant Walzer tenaciously and accurately suppressed the host guns and was a deciding factor in the successful rescue of six downed crewmen. The outstanding heroism and selfless devotion to duty displayed by Lieutenant Walzer reflect great credit upon himself and the United States Air Force.

To avoid the anti-aircraft fire aimed at them, they kept their speed very high. Fortunately their mission was successful and they returned safely.

Rick also flew night missions over Laos. The North Vietnamese had lined the mountains in the area with weaponry, so pilots kept dark aircraft to avoid being detected. Occasionally senior officers would fly a mission to stay current. On one mission, a Colonel dropped his bombs and then "lit his after burners" lighting up the sky. This caused significant fire power attempting to take them down. This was a stark reminder to these infrequent pilots to pay attention to their original training.

Other missions Rick flew were to interdict the Ho Chi Minh trail.

Very frequently Rick flew escort for the Ranch Hands that carried and sprayed Agent Orange to defoliate the jungles. They flew in the wake of these aircraft to suppress anti-aircraft fire. The danger of agent orange finally impacted Rick's health years later and he underwent six chemotherapy treatments over the past summer.

While in Vietnam Rick's group was granted R&R every eight weeks. This allowed Rick to visit and explore countries like Malaysia, Australia, and Hong Kong.

Later, Rick was deployed to Eglin AFB (Florida) and Yokota Air Base (Japan) for counterinsurgency training. This continuous training in Japan was in support of the time when they "might" need to return to Vietnam and potentially drop a nuclear bomb.

(Continued)

One month out of every three, they were sent to Osan Air Base in Korea. They spent this time practicing delivering nuclear weapons. They never knew if the mission was practice or real until they “cracked the cookie” which noted predetermined targets. Fortunately, all of his missions were practice and not real.

In 1971, four months before his date of separation, his squadron was moved to Kadena Air Base in Okinawa. Since he was a “short timer” he was transferred to Holloman AFB in New Mexico where they did practice missions with the 38th Tactical Fighter Squadron. They ferried planes to Germany (Hahn AB) giving new pilots and back seat navigators practice. When Rick separated from the military in November of 1971 his former group was redeployed to Vietnam and many were shot down. Fortunately, Rick was not among them.

After military service, Rick attended graduate school at San Jose State University since he knew he wanted to stay in California. He earned a Masters degree in Education and Counseling, a field in which he worked for 30 years. For the past 12 years he’s worked at UC Berkeley evaluating undergraduate applications for admissions, with special attention to minority applicants.

PCAM thanks Rick for sharing his fascinating story and his noteworthy service to our Nation. We wish Rick the very best with his chemotherapy and hope for a speedy and complete recovery. Thank you, Rick.

Recent Events

WWII Veterans Honored at Schulz Museum Veteran Day Event (and afterward)
By Oral History Team

Ninety-eight year old Dr. Richard Baum served in the 20th Armored Division during WWII. He was one of two honored guests at the recent Charles M. Schulz Museum Veteran Day event who unveiled the plaque honoring Charles “Sparky” Schulz for his WWII service also in the 20th Armored Division. The other WWII veteran doing the unveiling honors was Theodore “Ted” Moneymaker. Manual “Mike” Lownes was also supposed to participate, but he took an unfortunate spill the day before and was unable to attend.



Mike Lownes and Dr Richard Baum

Both Ted and Mike (HDT regulars) were also acknowledged during this event with Congressional Certificates from Congressman Mike Thompson. Since Mike Lownes was unable to attend, Dr Richard Baum graciously met him at PCAM on Sunday, Nov. 11, and did the honors. Both Mike and Ted appreciated their “Certificate of Special Congressional Recognition” for their noteworthy service to our nation. PCAM grateful to Dr. Baum for his generosity in making the delayed presentation to Mike.

Afterward Dr. Baum was given a personal tour of the PCAM displays and a bit of history about the Santa Rosa Army Air Corp Base during WWII. Dr Baum is a retired cardiologist and internist who practiced medicine at Cedar Sinai Hospital in Southern California until his retirement.

Mike is a Healdsburg native who served in the US Army. Ted is a Santa Rosa resident who served in the battles of Papua New Guinea, Leyte, and Luzon under General Douglas McArthur.



A Day of Honoring Veterans, Past and Present

By Oral History Team

After years of being the recipient of major support from the Schulz family and museum, PCAM had the good fortune to reciprocate by assisting with planning activities for their Veteran Day event on November 10. On that date, the 20th Armored Division honored Charles M. "Sparky" Schulz posthumously with a special plaque for his service during WWII. The Nation's Finest Veteran Service also honored several local veterans, including Claudio Calvo (Hearts for Veterans, a regular at PCAM's Hot Dog Thursday lunches), and Vietnam Veteran Association Chapter 223's Ken Holybee who has supported past PCAM activities.



The United States Coast Guard Training Center Petaluma Honor Guard presented the colors during the ceremony.

The Schulz Plaque and Other Honors



Rich Mintz of the 20th Armored Division Association was responsible for facilitating the acquisition of the plaque honoring Sparky's service. WWII veterans Dr Baum Richard and Santa Rosa's Theodore "Ted" Moneymaker did the unveiling honors during the ceremony.



Jeannie Schulz, Charles Schulz's widow (left) and Gina Huntsinger, Director of the Schulz Museum (right), proudly watch their excellent planning efforts

Congressman Mike Thompson presented Congressional certificates to WWII veterans Theodore "Ted" Moneymaker, Dr Richard Baum, and Manual "Mike" Lownes (who was unable to attend because of a fall). Ted served in the Pacific Theater in the battles of Papua New Guinea, Leyte and Luzon. Dr. Baum served in the European Theater in the 20th Armored Division, and is an active member in the 20th Armored Division Association. Dr. Baum later graciously presented Mike's certificate to him at PCAM (see that article in this newsletter).



Ted Moneymaker (left). Dr Richard Baum (middle), Congressman Mike Thompson (right)

PCAM Organized Displays



PCAM Board member Janet Doto staffed a PCAM information table in the Schulz Museum and received many inquiries about our activities. She was also interviewed by KTVU Reporter Tom Vacar who reported on the event during the evening news (see Janet's interview at 01:57 in link below)

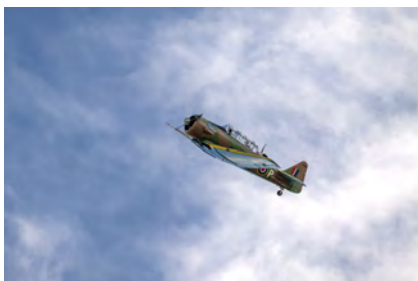
<https://www.ktvu.com/news/peanuts-comic-strip-creator-honored-for-world-war-two-combat-service-for-veterans-day>

PCAM's Hot Dog Thursday organizer Paul Heck scoured the county for WWII military vehicles and was able to recruit other owners who brought a WWII halftrack like the one Sparky rode in across Europe, a Troop carrier that was involved in the D-Day invasion, an Open Cab Weapons Carrier, and two jeeps, including his own. The other jeep is owned by Craig Schulz's son. Thanks, Paul, for your hard work in helping acquire these special displays.

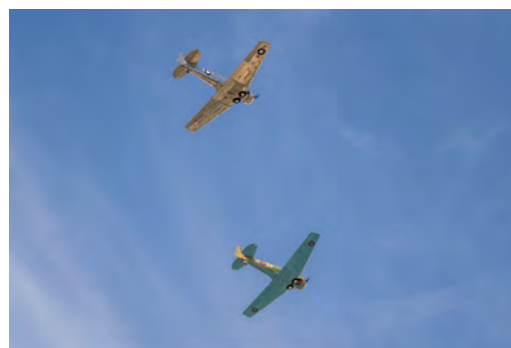


Special Activity Coordinated by PCAM

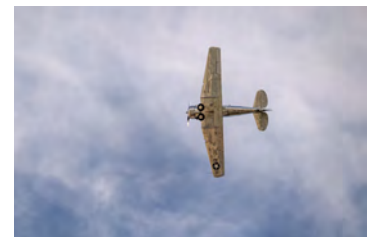
One of the highlights of the event was a series of flyovers in military trainers by Phil Gatusso and Bruce Etchell, both commercial pilots at VineJet. Phil flew his T-6 Harvard trainer, the "Regal Beagle," and Bruce flew his SNJ Texan. Phil coordinated his aircraft's nose art with the approval of Craig Schulz. PCAM thanks both pilots for generously supporting this special day with multiple exhilarating passes over the Schulz Museum during the celebration.



Phil's "Regal Beagle"



Bruce's SNJ Texan (top) and Phil's T-6 Harvard (bottom)



Bruce's SNJ Texan

Conclusion

The Schulz Veteran Day event was a tremendous success because of the exceptional efforts of the Schulz Museum planning team, including Gina Huntzinger, Jessica Ruskin, Sara Merirck, and Stephanie King.

Others who contributed in making this a special day for the Schulz family and museum, and the attending veterans who served our nation included:

- The US Coast Guard Petaluma Training Center Honor Guard
- The Maria Carrillo High School Jazz Choir, who sang the National Anthem
- The 20th Armored Division Association, who provided the plaque honoring Charles Schulz
- The Nation's Finest Veteran's Services, who honored local veterans
- Congressman Mike Thompson, who acquired and presented Congressional certificates to the WWII veterans
- The Pacific Coast Air Museum, who coordinated the flyover and the military vehicles, provided the veteran videos, and staffed an information booth.

PCAM is grateful to have been included among these noteworthy participants by helping in a small way. They would like to extend a special thank you to the following individuals for helping them support this special day.

The Military vehicle owners:

Paul Heck - WWII jeep
Tim Sutter - Halftrack
Matt Parry - Weapons carrier
Lee Hoskins - Troop carrier

The Pilots:

Phil Gatusso - T-6 Harvard
Bruce Etchell - SNJ Texan

It was indeed a team effort in making this a memorable day for all who attended.

A special thank you to John Nelson for providing all of the photographs in this article. John also produced the two WWII veteran videos featured in the Schulz Museum auditorium during the event. These videos will eventually be available for general viewing once PCAM establishes a video library section at the museum where the Oral History Team interviews will be featured.

Greenough Speaks at Memorial Dedication

by Gary Greenough

PCAM's PIO Gary Greenough delivered the following speech to an audience of several hundred citizens who attended the dedication of the Fallen Flyers Memorial at Windsor Green on Sat., Nov. 4. The program also featured a children's choir, the presentation of colors by American Legion Post 111, and the blowing of TAPS.

Fallen Flyers Speech

Good morning. For a moment, just listen....what do you hear? While mostly peaceful now, from 1942 to 1946, the skies above us were filled with the thunderous sounds of mighty warbirds, practicing the art of war and aerial combat, as pilots prepared to risk their lives in the war in Europe, and the Pacific.

The men listed on this monument were from all over the country, but for a brief time, they called this their home. 86 of them died in Sonoma County and the North Bay region. These were pilots who had already earned their wings elsewhere and were here to learn combat tactics. Some of those who perished did so due to air-to-air collisions flying in close formations, or overstressing both their aircraft and themselves, to know what both were capable of doing.

Look around you, what do you see? While we are used to these grounds now, in 1939, from the Mayacama Mountains to the east, to the Coastal Range to the west, there was nothing here but open fields, with grazing cattle and sheep. Windsor was nothing but a gas station and a store, with a few ranches, as you drove up THE Redwood Highway.

The County of Sonoma purchased 350 acres in 1939 for a county airport to the south of where we are. The County put in a short runway and general aviation began in earnest in Sonoma County. Then came World War II.

The Army Air Corps was looking for locations to train pilots for combat at various locations all over the West Coast. They chose Sonoma County and its fledgling airfield. The County handed over the keys, and the Army Air Corps took over the airport from 1942 to 1946. The Army purchased another 850 acres to the east of the airport for fuel storage, ammo dumps, and other military uses. They extended the runway and added a cross runway, both of which are in use today. They built hangars and buildings all over the property. The Army also experimented with camouflage and did so with the airfield, making it look like the neighboring grasslands. The museum has photos where you cannot recognize the airfield or the control tower. There is a story of a squadron of Army planes arriving for training at the airfield and could not find it. They had to fly six miles to the south, to the Naval Auxiliary Air Field, near Finley Ave, to get directions. That probably played well in the next Army-Navy game.

At the peak of World War II, Santa Rosa Army Airfield had nearly 2500 permanent staff. It is estimated that nearly 10,000 military staff of ground crews, support staff, pilots, and civilian workers, cycled through the training base in those 4 years. It was truly a military city. Santa Rosa at the time only had 12,000 people by census. With both local military airfields, the skies were filled with warbirds, day in and day out.

When the war was over, Santa Rosa Army Airfield began to downsize and left in 1946. The Army Air Corps became the United States Air Force in 1947. The Army took its military items and handed the keys back to the County of Sonoma, with much of the infrastructure still intact. Sonoma County Airport was now back in civilian hands. From a small, sleepy county airport in the late 1940s, to today's bustling facility, the Charles M Schultz-Sonoma County Airport now has a new enlarged terminal, and four commercial airlines operating out of the facility. It has become a hub of air transportation in the North Bay.

Some of the Army's infrastructure is still in use. The large Butler Hangar, built in 1943/44, has been in continuous use all these years by various aviators. It was featured in the 1963 movie, Mad Mad Mad World, where a Beech 18 aircraft actually flew through it. You can see it on

YouTube. When asked to do a second take for the fly-through, the pilot said.....NO! The Pacific Coast Air Museum has been using it for

several years and the hangar is now going through a renovation into a world-class display area. The ramp, where the air museum display aircraft sit, is the original 2-foot-deep concrete apron poured in 1942, that many of our Fallen Flyers walked on.

All over Sonoma County, in every town, there are monuments to those lost in war from that town. However, the 86 pilots who lost their lives flying from Santa Rosa Army Airfield, Naval Auxiliary Air Field Santa Rosa, Hamilton Field, Alameda Navy Air Station, and other military airfields in Northern California, who perished in the north bay region, and who were not 'Sons of Sonoma County', had been forgotten. Until now. After years of research, continued and completed by Steve Lehmann, of the Windsor Historical Society, after hundreds of hours of research, the names were compiled and a plan was made for a monument. With the help of Karen Alves, whose tenacity for the project was unrelenting, and with the help of many individuals and organizations who contributed tens of thousands of dollars, this monument became a reality.

So on this day, may we remember those 86 Flyers. It is most appropriate that the Town of Windsor, a mere two miles from the old Army Airfield, has this monument dedicated to those daring young men, from all over the country, who learned to fly elsewhere, trained to fly combat here, but never made it to the combat zone. They are no longer forgotten.



Gary dressed as WWII Army Air Corps pilot



Member Stories

Pearl Harbor – Revisited

By Andy Werback

What, yet again? Sure, why not? New information, new conclusions, required reading. And here we are, nearing the 82nd anniversary of December 7, 1941.

In 2021, District of Columbia Police Chief Steve Sund was fired for apparently failing to do his job on January 6, in the aftermath of the assault on the Capitol. Never mind that he did an excellent job with the information he had at the time. Never mind that the Capitol Police was never envisioned or organized to address an event of this sort. Numerous failures in the chains of command were involved. But he was the guy, and the powers that be said he had to go. We know him from his book, "Courage Under Fire", and from meeting him a few months ago. He also coordinated the display of American flags over the Capitol for the Pacific Coast Air Museum's Veterans program (<https://pacificcoastairmuseum.org/wp-content/uploads/2023/01/Straight-Scoop-Winter-2023.pdf>)

A similar event happened because of the surprise Japanese air attack on Pearl Harbor, HI, on December 7, 1941. Both the Navy and Army commanders, Admiral Husband Kimmel and General Walter Short, were relieved of their jobs, as they were in charge when bad things happened. Several congressional investigations showed conclusively, at least as the American people were aware, that they were to blame for this lack of preparedness and the permanent or temporary loss of the eight battleships in the Pacific Fleet. (USS Arizona was a total loss. USS Oklahoma was raised but sank on the way to Bremerton for repairs. The others were repaired and modernized as needed and fought on in WWII).

Samuel Eliot Morison's "History of the US Navy in World War II" (Volumes II and III) pretty much goes along with this narrative, using the information available during and immediately after the War. The Japanese were intent on securing their perimeter in the western and southern Pacific Ocean areas, getting access to raw materials such as oil, and had been brutally occupying mainland China since 1933.

Intense negotiations had been going on for months after President Roosevelt embargoed shipments of oil and scrap metals that Japan sorely needed. Japanese naval and consular encoded messages had been flying back and forth, and US naval stations in the Philippines, Hawaii and Washington DC had been trying hard to analyze traffic as well as attempt to decode the messages.

The Japanese goal at Pearl Harbor was to take the US Navy out of the war for at least 6 months, until they could consolidate their gains. They sent covert intelligence specialists to Pearl Harbor and enlisted the help of Issei (born in Japan) or Nisei (native born US residents) to obtain intelligence about the US fleet – what ships were in port, where were they docked, were there anti-torpedo nets, etc. And especially, where were the aircraft carriers?

There were many events that should have been handled better, but there were plenty of offsetting events. For instance, nowhere in the Japanese message traffic was Pearl Harbor or Hawaii ever mentioned. There was plenty of information pointing to the South Pacific – Philippines, Borneo, Indo-China, but never Pearl Harbor. Was there an implied warning? Maybe, maybe not. Did Washington keep Pearl Harbor adequately informed as to the status of the diplomatic negotiations? They thought they had sent appropriate warning messages, but certain people in the Naval intelligence command chain vetoed these communications. Did General Short and Admiral Kimmel appropriately share information? Yes, but maybe not enough. How did the message about sighting and sinking a midget submarine just offshore from Pearl Harbor take literally hours to get to the Naval command staff? How were attacking Japanese planes mistaken on radar for arriving B-17s? The B-17s were homing on the local AM radio broadcast stations (specifically left on that night) from the east, not coming in from the north. And the weather – the Japanese picked the perfect spot and time – December 7 was a Sunday, fleet in port, relaxing. Weather was poor to the north, so long range patrols couldn't have spotted them. Besides, the available long-range patrols were looking at the southern approaches that would be coming from the Japanese mandate islands. Other aircraft were not available as they were training or transitioning to support the likely target, the Philippines. (And talking about the Philippines, they had their airfields and aircraft blasted too, even with actual warnings from the Pearl Harbor attack hours earlier! General MacArthur was never questioned about his lack of preparedness!)



Entrance to Pearl Harbor Historic Sites, Pearl Harbor, Hawaii



USS Arizona Memorial with USS Missouri, Pearl Harbor, Hawaii

However, there is always more to the story. Information that couldn't or wouldn't be divulged due to security or to protect the command structure, or even just due to personnel "turf" issues. Two books in particular provide a lot of insight as to other events that were taking place.

First, "Joe Rochefort's War," by Elliot Carlson, is a biography of the commander of Station Hypo at Pearl Harbor (Naval Institute Press, 2011). He was a central figure in analyzing the information provided by the local naval radio receiving station and correlating other sources of information. He was also the key figure in providing accurate intelligence that led to the US Navy's success at the epic Battle of Midway – where the Japanese lost four of their fleet aircraft carriers. This was a few days less than 6 months after Pearl Harbor. His group was also able to advise Admiral Nimitz (who took over as Commander Pacific Fleet on 31 December 1941) regarding the Battle of Coral Sea and Japanese intentions early in the war. He was removed from command shortly after Midway without any official recognition for his role. Rochefort and his crew had correctly predicted June 4, north of Midway. Washington's analysts had the wrong location and time. Years later, posthumously, he was finally awarded the Distinguished Service Medal.

By the way, after he was relieved from intelligence duty, he requested sea duty. As he had special knowledge, he could not be assigned to a ship that might go to the war zone, so he was assigned as the captain of the new Advanced Base Sectional Dock USS ABSD-2, as it was being tested in Paradise Cove (San Rafael), near San Francisco.

The second book is "And I Was There," by Rear Admiral Edwin Layton, Captain Roger Pineau and John Costello (William Morrow & Company, 1985). Ed Layton was the Pacific Fleet's Intelligence officer, reporting directly to Admiral Nimitz. His background, knowledge and insight, plus all of the more recent research and access to declassified files, gives the Pearl Harbor story a whole new perspective. Captain Pineau was a Lieutenant in WWII, and did a lot of research for Samuel Eliot Morison's History series. John Costello is a British historian with many books to his credit. Together, these three men provide a chilling narrative of the "other" events that led to Pearl Harbor and the US Navy's Pacific Fleet intelligence operations in WWII.

It should be noted that both Rochefort and Layton had an early interest in the Far East, and specifically in the Japanese language and culture. They both spent three years stationed in Japan at the American embassy specifically to learn the language. That enabled them to deftly handle the limited and many times confusing intelligence that came in through the radio listening stations. In addition, both officers met and socialized with their Japanese hosts – Layton in fact played bridge with Admiral Isoroku Yamamoto.

These books have a lot in common – Rochefort worked closely with Layton, they both had major issues in dealing with the Navy's designated intelligence group OP-20G in Washington DC. Many questions are raised and answered, many are not. There is a lot to the Pearl Harbor story. Maybe we're not done yet. But certainly, there was plenty of blame to go around, and not just at Pearl Harbor.



Japanese "Zero" Mitsubishi A6M on display at Pearl Harbor Aviation Museum



Surrender ceremony on the deck of the USS Missouri, September 2, 1945

An Unforgettable Ride in History

by Gary Greenough

Having been a member of PCAM off and on, as life allowed, since 1993, it was always a bucket list wish to go for a ride in a plane, hopefully, a warbird. When in the service, I took flying lessons off base with a 150 and 172 and had my "solo shirt" taken from me. That was in Texas while in the Navy. After transferring out to the West Coast and then Vietnam on the USS Ranger, I was around aircraft much of the time, occasionally having business on the flight deck while working in aviation supply as an Aviation Storekeeper. I launched off the carrier on my way home. The joke is, to be a member of the Tailhook Association, you have to trap (land) and launch (take off) or, in other words, make a complete evolution to become a member. Since I only launched, that makes me "half a hooker." College was next, but being a poor college student, I no longer tried getting my pilot's license, as it was expensive. I had friends who occasionally took me up, and I kept my logbook for years, and they would let me take the stick from time to time. For a while I even had a girlfriend whose father had a twin Beech and he let me fly it a couple of times.

Joining PCAM has been a highlight of my life, working with several people who were very dedicated to the preservation of the aircraft and the history of flight in general and Sonoma County. I was the first Crew Chief for the A6, as it had served on Ranger, my ship. Many know the infamous story of taking the A6 to the Sonoma County fair and the fun we had towing it through town, asking where the closest gas station was, and telling one lady that it was a delivery, COD, and we'd take a check for 2.5 million.

During my numerous years being a Deputy Ramp Boss during the airshows, I often saw other members of the museum going for flights with various pilots who were their friends, and I was always on the ground, watching with longing to know what it was like. On the second airshow, a pilot was walking by the Ramp Shack and I casually asked, "What the heck does it take to get a ride in one of those birds?" It was Steve Penning, and he paused and said, "Let's go." The next thing I knew, I was strapped into Seth Dempsy's T-28. It was a short flight, but I had finally taken to wing again. A few years later, an unscheduled air show participant just showed up in an Electra and took people for rides after the show, and he also took the entire Ramp Crew up for a short flight.

Other members of the museum had gone up in warbirds, and I so wanted to go, but I didn't seem to have the right connections, or I was too low on the totem pole. There was a joke going around that I was going to get a T-shirt with a P-51 on it with the words MAYBE THIS YEAR, as 2019, 20, 21, 22 came around, and the numbers would be crossed off as the years passed. But it finally happened in late September on a Tuesday. I got the call. I initially thought it was a crank call, but it wasn't. I was to report to the airport at 1400 for my flight. Lynn Hunt was the pilot in RED DOG XII.

Being not a small person, it took a shoe horn and Acme Crane Service to get me into the rear seat. But once in, and after holding short for what seemed a long time, we launched into the speckled sky of fluffy clouds. "Shooting the clouds" and doing a couple of lazy barrel rolls was amazing, and being familiar with Sonoma County from the air, all landmarks were easily spotted. We flew toward Lake Sonoma, did lazy turns through the clouds, and flew over the old Naval Air Station, which can be easily seen from the air, its markings obviously there, including the intruding housing development. We pulled a 3.5g turn on final approach, which was a thrill in itself. The flight lasted for quite a while, yet seemed only minutes.

It is difficult to describe being back in the air, in a historic warbird, my first flight in such a plane. It was beyond great, a flight of a lifetime. The shoe horn and Acme Crane Service were there to assist me out of the plane. Thank you, Lynn and Dana, for facilitating this opportunity. Now I don't have to cross out the '23 on my shirt!



Photos by
Dana Hunt



Dates to Remember

Member Meetings

January 17, 2024
February 21, 2024
March 20, 2024

Hangar 2 Third Wednesday of the month 7:00 p.m. - 9:00 p.m.
Entrance is near the old Dragonfly building. The first portion of the meeting is informational. Get the scoop on the latest happenings at the museum. Catch up with fellow members during the break, followed by a guest speaker presentation.

Open Cockpit Saturdays

Open Cockpit Saturdays at the Pacific Coast Air Museum are a great activity for kids and family. We raise the canopies and open the doors to give you an unobstructed view inside a genuine fighter plane, attack plane, transport, or helicopter.

You can even sit inside some of our planes and see what it was like to be the pilot or crew! On some planes, the controls are still hooked up to the control surfaces. So if you move the stick or wheel, you can see the ailerons or elevator move! It's a great way to learn about how a plane is controlled.

Some of the docents who guide you into the planes actually flew these very same aircraft. They'll be happy to tell you all about it.

We have Open Cockpit on select Saturdays except January (because of the weather.) Check www.pacificcoastairmuseum.org for information regarding dates and which aircraft will be open.



Jim Mattison, crew chief and docent

The Pacific Coast Air Museum's Platinum Sponsors

The Pacific Coast Air Museum thanks its Platinum Level Sponsors whose contributions help make our museum the thriving community resource it is! If you would like to find out about sponsorship opportunities with the Pacific Coast Air Museum, contact Doug Clay, PCAM Development Chair, 925-997-2774 or dougclay@gmail.com.



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PLATINUM
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Santa Rosa

Pacific Coast Air Museum

Location

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

Directions

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

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

Open Cockpit Saturdays

One or more aircraft are open for close examination on the third Saturday of each month (weather permitting) and you can climb aboard some of them! For more info, phone 707-575-7900 or visit www.pacificcoastairmuseum.org.

Member Meetings

Third Wednesday of each month, 7:00 p.m. at Hangar 2 on museum property.

“Straight Scoop” Newsletter

The PCAM newsletter, “Straight Scoop,” is published quarterly and is available online on the museum’s web site. Members are encouraged to submit articles for possible publication. Deadline for article submission is the 10th 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 Dana Hunt at albaviper44@yahoo.com or 707-540-5758.

Be sure to advise the museum of any updates to your contact information by calling 707-575-7900 or email admin@pacificcoastairmuseum.org

Membership Renewals Send renewals to Pacific Coast Air Museum, One Air Museum Way, Santa Rosa, CA 95403

\$50	Individual	\$250	Silver
\$100	Family	\$500	Gold
\$40	Seniors, Teachers, Students	\$750	Platinum
\$25	Veterans and Active Duty Military	\$1,000	Lifetime

The Pacific Coast Air Museum hosts many family-friendly and child-friendly events all year 'round. We host monthly member meetings, monthly Hot Dog Thursday lunches from April through October, and special events like car shows, guest lecturers and more!

Most events focus upon aviation and our collection of over 35 historic aircraft including military jets, helicopters, and other classic airplanes.

Members are encouraged to 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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