



HONORING AMERICAN MILITARY AVIATION THROUGH FLIGHT, EXHIBITION AND REMEMBRANCE

OH! So Close - We Think, We Hope !!!

By Propwash Editorial Staff

It's the last day of May and again the front page of the Propwash Gazette is (was) being held for the announcement that "309" was on its way home. Reports are that the first flight is underway as this report is being typed.

As Col Bob Thompson says, "if no [significant] issues arise, test pilot John Lohmar from CAF Dallas will put a few more hours on "309" there locally in Mesa, AZ and will then reposition to Kirtland AFB, NM on Friday.

Watch your e-mail for updates as this week goes forward because Cols Bob and Georgia Thompson along with Col Dorothy Dutton plan to leave Thursday to haul the PX to Albuquerque to meet "309" and set up for the show Saturday and Sunday. These three overly dedicated Colonels need your help.

If there is any way you and others can break away this coming first weekend of June to spend two great Air Show days in the New Mexico desert (ABQ highs forecasted around 89-90, lows in the low 60's) take advantage of the expected excellent flying/driving weather (no precip. Forecast - clear skies) and have some fun at the base of Sandia Peak.

Photo by Col Dick Maddock



We really need to step up and make this first appearance an important one. It has been a long two years - very wearing - but let's not stop our work now!

Call Col Thompson (921-4088 or 209-2127) and tell him you're willing to help.

Above : cowl flaps installed around a nice, shiny, engine. Pretty Cool! Looks like right out of the factory

Below: A well organized hydraulics panel in the bilge.



Photo by Col Dick Maddock



COMMEMORATIVE AIR FORCE



Photo by Col Sam Caskey

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RMW AIR SHOW SCHEDULE - 2016

MONTH	DAYS	LOCATION	SHOW	TBM	CUB	STATUS
Jun	4-5	Albuquerque, NM	Kirtland AFB			CONFIRMED
	18	Boulder, CO	Airport Day			CONFIRMED
	25-26	Ogden, UT	Warriors over the Wasatch			CONFIRMED
Jul	4	Glenwood Springs	Independence Day			PENDING
	27	Cheyenne, WY	Frontier Days w/TB			DOUBTFUL
Aug	19-20	Powell, WY	Wings & Wheels			CONFIRMED
	27	Evanston, WY	Airport Day & Airshow			CONFIRMED
	31 - 9/4	Grand Junction, CO	FIFI visits GJT			CONFIRMED
Sep	2 - 4	Steamboat, CO	AirFest			CONFIRMED
	10	Eagle / Vail, CO	Wings & Wheels			CONFIRMED
	17-18	Durango, CO	Aviation Celebration		?	PENDING
	30-10/1	Prescott, AZ	Arizona Skyfest			CONFIRMED
Oct	1	Telluride, CO	Airport Open House			CONFIRMED
	28-30	Dallas, TX	CAF AirSho			POSSIBLE

As of 5/31/16, Both the TBM and you are expected! But...

As noted on the front Page, we may be really, really close to actually appearing at an air show.
 And then the TBM could be home in GJT as early as next Monday, June 9th to get dressed for the big dance in Boulder on the 18th.
 WOW! Ready to help??

RESTORING A WILDCAT CAN BE...WILD!

By Col Mike Heiny - RMW

Wildcats were designed to operate from aircraft carriers with very short deck. Due to the narrow six-foot gear, six-foot-high center of gravity, and short length combined with more than ample horsepower, it's the most difficult of all WWII fighters to pilot. With a power (1,300 horsepower) to weight (5,500 pounds) ratio of 1-to-4.5, takeoff, acceleration, and climbs were even more brisk than the P-51.

Mr. Bob Reiss ask me to locate and purchase a FM-2. I searched for 2 1/2 years to find an owner who would sell. Mr. Nichols in Chino offered to trade



N5833 for a particular P-51. We bought the P-51 for \$285. And the trade was made.

I supervised the restoration and the test flight, flown by Chuck Hall, returned to flight status, and donated to the CAF by Mr. and Mrs. Reiss in the fall of 1985. The paint scheme on the Wildcat, was for VOC-1, CDR Wm Bringle, (retired has Adm)

USS Wakeisland CVE 65 1945.

Note: The paint scheme on the Wildcat and polishing the stainless steel exhaust stack panels was my idea. I painted mine in 1985 and within one year there was 2 Wildcats and 1 AT-6 in that paint. The intelligentsia of the CAF threw a fit because I had painted the warbird in a non-

Editor's Note:
 You may recall this photo from last month's issue about the turkey gathering (TBM's) in Ill. I couldn't help but comment about the little Wildcat showing up at the Big Boy's gathering. Our Col Mike Heiny (Mr. Wildcat) responded with this article.

military paint scheme. They called it a Tijuana paint job. Later Lefty Gardner told me they were too embarrassed to apologize when they finely found they were wrong. It is powered by a 1,350 horsepower Wright 1820 radial engine and a Curtiss electric propeller. However, this FM-2 had a prop from an F4F-4 Wildcat with a Pratt & (Continued on Page 6)

May Staff Meeting/Potluck

By Col Tom Howe - Editor

Another collection of Colonels began arriving at the RMWCAF Hangar before 10:00AM on Saturday May 14th. A quorum of voting staff members were present so actual business was conducted.

The cub pilots will have to meet new CAF drug testing criteria which will cost the wing about \$1,000 per year to comply. It's complicated and the Cub sponsors will work it out - - - somehow.

Gunny Steve Hildabrand

backfilled for our scheduled Marine Pilot speaker that was unable to attend. Once again, a Gunny saved the day!

Steve is the commander of the local USMC and Combined Honor Guard that provide all the military honors at military burials in the grand valley. Everyone learned a lot and will welcome Steve back any time.

Former RMWCAF Wing Leader Collin Fay was reroute to Spokane, WA and dropped in. Collin is going



Photo by Col Tom Dennis

Gunny Steve Hildabrand carried the Colors for the USMC

to be flying a Pilatus for one of the aerial tanker firms for the next few months. Everyone really enjoyed having Collin stop by.

A big, big bright spot - Gabe Toth reported that the lunch donation jar spilled out \$661.00! Do we have great Colonels or What!

Former RMWCAF Wing Leader Collin Fay



Photo by Col Tom Howe



Photo by Col Sandi Caskey

But in the traditional RMWCAF way...there always seems to be...

...LUNCH!



Photo by Col Sandi Caskey



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“Keep 'em Flying”

Best shot by 45 cal. Pistol

Owen John Baggett was born in 1920 in Graham, Texas. By 1941 he graduated from college and went on to work on Wall Street, but by the following year, he enlisted in the Army Air Corps (now USAF) when the United States entered the war.

A studious man, he graduated from pilot training in just five months and was sent to Burma, flying a B-24 Liberator.

What he happened the following year is one of those stories we just described. On March 31st, 1943, Baggett and his squadron were sent on a mission to destroy a bridge of strategic importance. On their way, the B-24s got intercepted by Japanese Zeros which hit the squadron hard. Baggetts' plane was riddled with bullets to such an extent that the crew was forced to bail out.

While parachuting, a Japanese pilot decided that downing the plane wasn't enough.



He circled around and **started shooting at the bailed out pilots**, killing two of the crew.

Seeing this, Baggett did the only thing he could. He played dead.

Not convinced Baggett was dead, the Zero pulled up to him at near stall speed, the pilot opening his canopy to check on his horrendous work.

PHOTO OF THE MONTH



RMWCAF's very own Col Mike Heiny , ...a few pounds ago" as Mike put it.

This is Mike in the Wildcat he helped acquire that eventually became a CAF aircraft.

Please see the related article on page 2.

Not wasting any time and thinking on his feet (no pun intended), **Baggett pulled out his pistol and shot the pilot right in the head.**

This is considered the best shot by a Caliber .45 M911 pistol of ALL TIME.

The last thing he saw was the Zero spiraling toward earth.

When he landed, he and the other bailed out crew members were captured and sent to a POW camp where they remained till the end of the war. They were liberated by OSS agents (World War II version of the modern CIA) and Baggett was recognized as the **only person during the war to shoot down a Zero with a pistol.**



RMWCAF STAFF OFFICERS

Wing Leader	Bob Caskey
Executive Officer	Kent Taylor
Finance Officer	Robert Toth
Adjutant	John Mummery
Operations Officer	Bob Thompson
Maintenance Off.	Dick Maddock
Museum & Mess Sergeant	Dorothy Dutton
Safety Officer	Floyd Suits
Judge Advocate	Gerald Feather
Public Information Officer	Tom Dennis
PX Officer	Dick Maddock
Newsletter Editor	Tom Howe
TBM Aircraft Coordinator	Bob Thompson
Cub Aircraft Coordinator	Charlie Huff
Facilities Manager	Kay Johnson
Recruiting Officer	Dick Maddock
Grants Officer	Dave Shepard

OTHER WWII AIRCRAFT



The Vultee XP-54, certainly a distinct aircraft was in response to an Army Air Corps Request R-40C. Vultee employees tagged it the "Swoose Goose" which doomed itself due to the inclusion of unproven systems, subsystems, and design philosophies generally out of Vultee's control. It never made it past the "X".

WWII QUIZ

ANSWERS ON PAGE 6

Multiple Choice

1. Which Allied General was code-named Duckpin?
 A. Devers B. Eisenhower C. Truscott

The Air War

2. What was the seagoing version of the RAF Spitfire known as?

Thanks to author Timothy B. Bensford

B-29 "DOC" has delays too

By Col Tom Howe, Ed.

The group that has been working so hard for so long to restore what we all hope will be the second flying B-29 is experiencing even more frustrations than our Wing during the repair of "309".

Shown below, beautiful "DOC" has been through engine run-ups after sitting outside all winter in Wichita, Kansas.

Delays have included, but are not limited to:

- FAA Airworthiness Certificate which was finally awarded just in the past weeks.
- Flight Crew - especially flight engineers. CAF is providing both pilots and a "certified" B

-29 flight engineer for the first flight. As it turns out getting flight engineers "certified" is not easy. As a result he CAF B-29 Flight Engineers are the only salaried crewmembers within the CAF.

- And then the government even makes B-29 life more difficult. Right now the aircraft will be allowed to use a runway at McConnell AFB for high speed taxi tests but once the aircraft leaves the ground - it will not be allowed to land at McConnell again!

Good luck to the "DOC" crowd. We want you in the skies with FIFI!



RESTORING A WILDCAT (CONTINUED)

(Continued from Page 2)

Whitney 1830 engine and only 1,200 horsepower. Without the correct prop Chuck Hall, an ex-Air Force test pilot, could not complete the necessary test flights.

One day I was looking through Barrett Tillman's book for the 100th time about the surviving Wildcats and noticed a picture of the Quantico Marine Museum's F4F-4. It had the wrong propeller, an FM-2 prop! I called the cura-

tor and blew smoke up his skirt about what a beautiful restoration he'd done. As I was about to hang up I humbly admitted that our restoration was not as good as his, however it would have the correct prop. Within the hour, after checking serial numbers, he called back distraught that his F4F-4 Wildcat had been displayed for 17 years with the wrong prop. I reached hero status by offering to trade him the correct F4F-4 prop in my possession.

Another great find came my via a phone call a San Diego resident, who asked if anybody at the airport have interest in airplane drop tanks for a AT-6? Since AT-6's do not have drop tanks, I was curious and went to see him. He told me that he purchased the set at a garage sale for \$20. They were Wildcat tanks in very good shape. I told him that they were to small to be of any value but I offered him \$55. For the pair, I left happy and he was smiling.

I flew the fantastic and sometimes terrifying aircraft for seven years and 350 hours.

Mike has another Wildcat article that appeared in the CAF Dispatch. Ed.



Goleta Air & Space Museum
www.Air-and-Space.com
Photographer: Brian Lockett

Photo # 80-G-7026 Grumman F4F-4 "Wildcat" of Fighting Squadron 41 in flight, circa early 1942



Photo by Col Rich Connor



SHE ANSWERED THE CALL OF A COUNTRY AT WAR
Now she needs YOUR HELP!

On March 17, 2014 the Rocky Mountain Wing of the CAF's 18th Avenger "189" suffered a collapse of the left main landing gear. Besides replacing the engine and propeller, structural repairs will also be required to the wing, bomb bay, and forward fuselage. Parts for these warbirds are scarce, not easy to find, and expensive when they are located. Many parts will need to be machined from scratch. The CAF is taking donations to help get "189" repaired. Now's your chance to help get the 18th Avenger back to an airworthy condition!

TO MAKE YOUR DONATION, PLEASE VISIT:
www.rockymountainwingcaf.org

WWII QUIZ (SEE PAGE 5)

ANSWERS

1. B. Supreme Commander, Allied Expeditionary Force in Europe, General Dwight D. Eisenhower was Duckpin.
- 2The Seafire

Ed: When Col Heiny saw this photo of the original May issue subject Wildcat, he shouted over the Internet to the Propwash Staff (all CAPS and that sort of stuff) that the Wildcat in the photo has a DC-3 Propeller on it!! Mike appeared to be aghast - as though that is cheating (which I suppose, technically, it is cheating!) The ensuing exchange prompted this article which discussed another Wildcat with a similar prop discrepancy.