



HONORING AMERICAN MILITARY AVIATION THROUGH FLIGHT, EXHIBITION AND REMEMBRANCE

“309” is a National Historic Structure

By Col Tom Howe
Editor

Wing leader Col Kent Taylor heard from one of our champions at History Colorado, Erika Warzel, that the application prepared by History Colorado was approved by the National Register of Historic Places and TBM Avenger N53503 was designated a National Historic Structure on November 13th, 2017. Wow! What an honor!



“309” is smiling and feeling very proud! The first CAF Aircraft to be gain National Historic Recognition!

“309” becomes the sixth aircraft in history (and CAF’s first) to be honored this way - and one of only two that are actually flying. There is a P-51D in Indiana that is also flying and a DC-3 that formally belonged to the FAA being restored to flying condition in Anchorage, Alaska.

Thanks to Col David Shepard that began this effort a number of years ago and contin-

ued through by gaining History Colorado designation. Then, with History Colorado’s help, “309” has now gained national recognition.

Be proud! If our Wing wasn’t so cohesive, so dedicated, so willing to be creative - this never would have happened! More Celebration coming!



Inside this issue:

2017 RMW AIR SHOW SCHEDULE COMPLETE	2
HOLIDAY HAPPENINGS	2
WING LEADERS REPORT	3
PHOTO OF THE MONTH	3
MAINTENANCE REPORT	4
WWII QUIZ	4
STAFF MTG. BULLETS	5
“TB” & “JAY”	6

(ALMOST) NEVER ENDING STORY

For the Rocky Mountain Wing (RMW) members that live in and near the Grand Valley, the past month’s activity at the Grand Junction Airport (GJT) has been in the local news, but for the benefit of our not so close members – here’s your editor’s recap. The news is less than positive, but the game isn’t over until the fat lady sings.

A few weeks ago the mostly new members of the politically appointed GJT Airport Authority Board (“Board”) announced a quick decision to abandon the efforts previously taken and still underway to modify the Airport Operations Area (AOA) to enable the General Aviation (GA) area of GJT to open the two security access gates in the black

wildlife control fence that surrounds ¾ of the airport. That fence has since morphed into a “security” fence that has isolated GJT GA and the RMW from public access.

For six years, the entire GA community has suffered as a result of the fence. GA-related commercial service businesses, a charter airline based in the GA portion of the airport, and other aviation businesses have either watched their customers disappear and closed their doors or moved away from the Grand Valley. The RMW has survived thanks to the relentless perseverance of our local, active members. GJT has earned a national reputation as an unfriendly GA airport – directing many

cross country travelers away from GJT where they probably would have stopped for fuel, lodging, shopping and other activities (like visiting the RMW museum). Is that what the community wants?

Due to the fence and other airport tenant issues, two RMWCAF Colonels, David Shepard and Bill Marvel that both have GJT hangars, formed a GJT GA community user’s group in 2011. That group worked with the then airport Board & airport management to initiate a committee to investigate and form possible solutions to the GA security access problem created by the fence.

The resultant Security Solutions Committee

Continued on Page 4



RMW AIR SHOW SCHEDULE - 2018

MONTH	DAYS	LOCATION	SHOW	TBM	CUB	STATUS
May						
Jun						
Jul						
Aug						
Sep						
Oct						

Operations Officer
Col Thompson
Will be in Las Vegas planting the seeds for bookings throughout our 2018 show season.
Be ready to work hard at Air Shows and show support in 2018!
RMW needs You!

WE'RE BUSY! BUT, WE'RE NEVER BUSY ENOUGH!!



HOLIDAY HAPPENINGS



2017 SURVIVOR'S PARTY DECEMBER 9TH ROCKY MOUNTAIN WING HANGAR!

We've all survived an especially eventful year - time to kick back and



CELEBRATE!

This is a **MUST ATTEND** event! Time to relax instead of work when going to the CAF Hangar.

See the particulars below and be sure to contact Col Taylor with your RSVP so you'll be sure to have enough to eat and drink!

You worked HARD! You've made our Wing Successful!

Come and have some FUN!

Saturday December 9. 11:00 – 2pm ±
 \$20 Single, \$25 Couple, Paid at the Door.

Feel free to invite family, friends, and neighbors and any WWII veterans you think would attend.

RSVP Required by November 30, to:
acrokent@outlook.com

SANTA FLYING IN TO GRAND JUNCTION FOR A PHOTO SHOOT!

Submitted by Col Keith Swinehart

The Jolly Old Elf will land at Grand Junction Airport **December 10th**. He will be seated below the wing of a torpedo bomber and invites youngsters to come and visit.

A photographer will snap a picture of the young boy or girl with Santa for only \$10.

The photo shoot will take place between noon and 4:00 PM.....so

Mark your calendar for Sunday, December 10, 2017, noon to 4:00 PM to meet the fly-in Santa and have a pic-



ture taken!

Directions: drive in to airport and turn right at Navigator Way, first road to the right. Go straight ahead to Gate 10. Someone will be there to direct you to Santa.



**COMMEMORATIVE
AIR FORCE
ROCKY MOUNTAIN WING**

Primary Business Address
PO Box 4125
Grand Junction, CO 81502

Propwash Gazette Editor
Col Tom Howe
Phone: 970-872-7373
Fax: 970-872-7474
e-mail: howet@hughes.net

RMWCAF on the Web
www.rmwcaf.org

"Keep 'em Flying"

PHOTO OF THE MONTH



Colonel Bob Caskey has purchased this fully restored military jeep shown above. "Doc" seems to approve and has staked out his spot in the back seat. Colonel Caskey has offered to make this great vehicle available to the Rocky Mountain Wing for event display and use in parades, at other venues, etc. Thanks Bob! What a great find!

WING LEADER'S REPORT

*By Col Kent Taylor
Wing Leader*

What can I say about this Year? We've had some ups and downs, but overall, it has been a great year for the Rocky Mountain Wing. You can all give yourselves a big pat on the back!



- ☐ Lots of activity pretty much every month – with a bunch of media coverage!
- ☐ Good Airshow season in spite of startup delays and weather cancellations TBM and Cub running and looking good.
- ☐ Thirteen new members.
- ☐ Three new TBM pilots.
- ☐ Finances in the black, cash flow positive.
- ☐ Restoration debts being paid down.
- ☐ Lots of energy and innovation to help raise revenue.
- ☐ Getting ready to launch our own Rise Above program with Grand Valley, Montrose, and Delta schools.
- ☐ TBM on the Colorado Register of Historic Properties.
- ☐ And as of November 13, our TBM has been listed

on the National Register! See Tom's Cover Story for details. Time for another – bigger and better – celebration!

Only a few downers to consider: Bob Caskey's battle with bladder cancer, the last minute disappearance of a potential new home for the Museum and our air-planes, and the collapse of negotiations regarding the

Gates – See the other front-page story for details.

Bottom Line: The CAF Rocky Mountain Wing has plenty to be Thankful for. Have a blessed Thanksgiving day.

Hope to see you all at the Survivors' Party on December 9, and Photos with Santa on the 10th!



Little friend, Big Friend - Something you don't see everyday!

NEVER ENDING STORY (CONT.)

Continued from Page 1
(Committee) was staffed with individuals heavily experienced in aviation related issues, airport operations and federal aviation regulatory issues. That Committee began a long and very detailed investigation into the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) requirements for airport security regulated by the Transportation Security Administration (TSA) – the two federal entities that issue and enforce the new and ever evolving post 911 airport security regulations.

The Committee was active for years, with direct assistance from AOPA and both Colorado US Senators Bennet and Gardner plus US Representative Scott Tipton. The Committee produced a negotiated solution with both the FAA and TSA whereby the GA area of GJT could be reopened to the public. The implementation of a field proven ground radar security system between the GA area and the remainder of the Airport Operations Area was in place and in final testing when the then airport Director (relatively new and now gone) disbanded the Committee. That action effectively killed the final testing process that would have led to approval to open the black fence gates into the GA area on a trial basis - clearly a major disappointment for the entire GJT GA community.

The present Board took their seats after the Committee was disbanded and the testing of the ground radar as a solution to open-

ing the GA area had been left in limbo.

The present Board appears to understand the need for public access and has experience in local government management and private sector business practices and success. However, they may not have sufficient experience in the aviation sector to push an effective solution through the FAA and TSA. Either the present board was not completely informed about the progress the Committee had made, or chose to ignore those efforts.

Your editor wrote an email to the board members expressing concern about the decision to leave the gates closed which resulted in a response from one board member that, in part, stated:

"I am also upset about the fencing. The entire board is upset about it. We tried multiple options and were continually told no by both the TSA and the FAA. We redrew the lines multiple times to try to open up the CAF to the public and were told by the TSA that we couldn't discriminate- we either had to open the AOA to all tenants or no tenants. We couldn't open it to just one tenant. When we proposed opening up the entire AOA to the FAA, they informed us that if we did that, we'd have to pay back the full amount for the fence and that it would affect funding for future projects."

"We went into it sure that we could find a solution and after multiple attempts came to the conclusion that the only solution is to build a commercial aviation park outside of the current one. If the CAF is open to relocat-

WWII QUIZ **ANSWERS ON PAGE 5**

Multiple Choice

How many aircraft did the Russians employ when they began their attack across the Oder that began the Battle of Berlin on April 16, 1945

A. Under 2500 B. About 6,500 C. Over 9,000

The WAR on Land

Who signed actor Clark Gable's discharge papers in 1944?

Thanks to author Timothy B. Bensford

ing, we'd like to figure out a way to make that happen.

You have my sincere apology that we couldn't come up with a solution. If you have one that doesn't require us to pay \$4M to the FAA, I'm all ears." [Highlights added.]

While we appreciate the concern for the RMW, the response certainly reinforces the observation that our current Board is lacking in aviation operations experience and evidently was unaware of, or felt that the Security Committee's long investigation and largely successful efforts to reach a working solution could not be sustained.

Thankfully, your local RMW members and the GJT GA community will not accept this conclusion!

Your RMW Staff has chosen to take advantage of the "I'm all ears" offer above. Hopefully we can convince the Board to reinstate the Security Committee and encourage that group to "push back" against the federal bureaucracy and come to a settlement that will enable the GA community and our aircraft and museum to once again effectively serve the entire community.

Keep listening!



MAINTENANCE REPORT

*By Col Dick Maddock
Maintenance Officer*

Maintenance this month consisted of rebuilding the propeller governor and getting the oil temperature gauge repaired. We are in the process of pulling our all inspection covers and making our annual inspection of the air frame.

We are doing minimum winter maintenance on the plane so it will be ready for Santa's arrival on December 10.

After December 10 we will do the following:

- Move radios
- Jack up plane, check landing gear and wheel drop
- Check valve clearance
- Check magnetos and timing
- Repair minor oil leaks
- Clean and wash plane

RMWCAF STAFF OFFICERS

Wing Leader Kent Taylor
 Executive Officer OPEN
 Finance Officer Robert Toth
 Adjutant Becca Walters
 Operations Officer Bob Thompson
 Maintenance Off. Dick Maddock
 Museum & Mess Sergeant Dorothy Dutton
 Safety Officer Robert Owen
 Judge Advocate Gerald Feather
 Marketing Officer Kathryn Bennett
 Public Information Officer OPEN
 PX Officers OPEN (Bob & Georgia temp.)
 Newsletter Editor Tom Howe
 TBM Aircraft Coordinator Bob Thompson
 Cub Aircraft Coordinator Charlie Huff
 Ambulance Coordinator Byron Huffman
 Facilities Manager Kay Johnson
 Recruiting Officer Keith Swinehart
 Grants Officer Dave Shepard

NEXT STAFF MEETING
DECEMBER 9, 2017
PRIOR TO 11:00 ELECTION
RMWCAF HANGAR
SUPPORT YOUR CAF WING.
SEE NOTICE ON PAGE 2
SURVIVOR'S PARTY

WWII QUIZ

(SEE PAGE 5)

ANSWERS**Multiple Choice**

About 6,500, which came in to finish the job started by the thirty-five minute artillery bombardment.

The WAR on Land

Fellow actor, and future President of the United State, Ronald Reagan.



A great poster put together by the So Cal wing showing all six of the Commemorative Air Force's B-25 (PBJ-1) Bombers.

From the top down:

Maid in the Shade (Airbase AZ)
 Devil Dog (Devil Dog Squadron)
 Semper Fi (So Cal Wing)
 Yellow Rose (Centex Wing)
 Show Me (Missouri Wing)
 Miss Mitchell (Minnesota Wing)

**Staff Meeting Bullets 11/11**

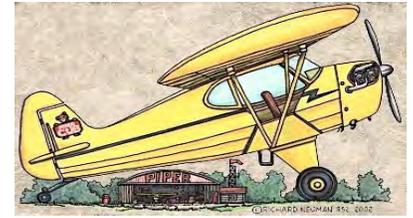
- Operations - three new TBM pilots this year! We need support crews trained and ready to support next year's Air Show Schedule Really need six people per show!
- Automatic Detection System (ADS) electronics for TBM. Required by 2020. Letters going out to more then two dozen manufacturers requesting equipment donations or discounts.
- New Ambulance Tires and lug nuts purchased for Discount Tire. Ambulance Officer Byron Huffman says Ambulance now drives almost like it had power steering!
- Airport Fence - New airport board issued statement the gates will not be opened ("removed"). [See article on page 1.]
- PX - Inventory complete - new inventory orders will be placed in February.
- Request made to all members to send letters to the Airport Board as well as City and County politicians. [See article on page 1]
- Education - Work beginning on organizing Rise Above events for Montrose, Delta and Grand Valley schools. Detailed planning will begin in January. We need WWII veterans that will participate.
- December Staff Party - December 9th. 11:00 AM Election, 12 Noon Ballot Count, 1:00 PM Meal catered at \$20.00 per individual, \$25 per couple. Guests invited.
- 2018 40's Dance. Col Robert Owen to command - tentatively June 2nd.
- Santa Photo Shoot - Col Swinehart will arrange. [See page 2]
- Recruiting - Col Swinehart is looking for organizations where RMW Cols can attend meetings and make presentations about our Wing.
- Maintenance - Winter maintenance underway. Nothing major planned but several need to do items on the list.
- The Wing needs a Col to step forward and take over the Executive Officer duties.
- The wing also needs Cols to concentrate heavily on fund raising duties. Helpers are willing but need a Fundraising Officer
- There's lots of sodas left over from the 40's Dance. For Sale in the kitchen, \$2.50 (six pack?)
- Visitor Judd Kuehn that made a donation to our TBM 12 planes of Christmas fund in his father's name gave a presentation about his father's navy career flying TBM's off USS Ticonderoga. You should have been there!



MEET “TB” & “JAY” A TALE OF TWO AIRPLANES

By Col Ernie Stech

Hangar Flying with two Warbirds



Ed. Note: Part 2 of the introduction article about TB and Jay by RMW Colonel Ernie Stech. Maybe more stories to follow?

Part 1 appeared in the November 2017 issue.

Ed. Note: TB and Jay had sat contemplating their earlier discussion when...

Late in the afternoon, Jay says, “Okay, tell me your war stories.”

“Hey, now you’re the one being nasty!”

“Sorry,” responds Jay. “Go ahead and tell me about your wartime work.”

“We were torpedo bombers. That meant we had to fly low over the water once we got close to enemy ships. We lined up with the side of a ship and dropped the torpedo.”

“So what is a torpedo?”

“It’s a long sleek metal thing with an explosive at the head. In back there is a small motor and a propeller. Once it gets in the water, the propeller starts turning and the torpedo heads for the ship. If we aimed it right, it would hit the ship right in the middle and explode. That would usually make the ship sink. At least the smaller ones.”

“What did you do after you dropped the torpedo?”

“The pilot would point my nose up and gun the engine. That way we would go higher in a big hurry while turning away from the ship we were trying to sink. There were always a lot of ships. They would try to shoot us down. Many of my buddies never came back to the aircraft carrier.”

“Wow. That’s really sad!”

“Yeah. I never got used to it.”

“TB, I’ve got a question about something else. What happened to your tail hook?”

“Not a long story. When I retired from the Navy after the war, some folks wanted me for other kinds of work. There was no need any more for the tail hook. So they took it off. Made me a bit lighter. I never did like the darn thing, to tell the truth. After the war it just reminded me of landing on aircraft carriers. And that was no fun. So what happened to you after the war?”

“There were people who wanted to be able to fly. They didn’t have much money so they bought us and took us to civilian airports. Some of my buddies were still used for training. I went with a nice guy who kept good care of me. He flew me maybe once a month. We had a good time. How about you?”

“They needed airplanes to drop water and stuff on forest fires. I spent quite a few years in western states just like Colorado. So that’s what I did for a long time. They kept me running in good shape most of the time. I was only used during fire season, like in the summer and fall. Rest of

the time I sat in a hangar, just like here.”

Again there is silence in the hangar until a couple of people come in and do some work on TB. The two people don’t talk much. They grunt a lot as they tighten things. Most of the noise comes from their tools, particularly when they drop them.

That night, with just a dim light in the hangar, TB says, “You know, I guess what I learned today is that it took big airplanes and little ones to win the war. We were all needed.”

“I like that idea,” replies Jay.

More silence.

“You know,” Jay says quietly, “I guess you and your buddies did have a tough job. Getting shot at and all that.”

It takes a minute for TB to reply. “Yeah. And I guess you guys did have it rough. Never knowing if your pilot was going to land you right side up or not.”

“I guess they needed both of us to win the war.”

“Exactly.”

“But you still do get a lot more attention than I do...”

“Oh no, let’s not start that all over again.”



← A flock of “Turkeys” (TBMs) off the Carrier Bunker Hill on a mission over the Pacific during WWII.

A well used TBM that earned a rest as a sprayer / fire bomber after the war - just like our “309”. ↓

