



EDUCATE

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HONOR

Keep the Home Fires Burning

By Col Tom Howe
Editor

“Keep the home fires burning” – An idiom of long stature reflecting the need to keep things working at home while another part of the family, group, company, etc., are away because of other callings. You’ll be pleased to learn that while the Rocky Mountain Wing (RMW) museum and hangar are closed that the Wing Staff and officers are still working to keep the Wing’s “...home fires burning.” No, not actual fires, but the actions, reports, planning, training and other functions to keep the wing operational.

On April 4, 2020, RMW officers Cols. Taylor, Toth, Maddock, Thompson, Mummary, Suevel, Beede, Webb, & Howe all met via a virtual

connection arranged by Wing Leader Taylor to cover some CAF Regulatory and Operational training for the staff’s newest members. A review of the CAF organization and operational guidelines along with a review of the new (2020) Unit Manual were the highlights of the 1 ½ hour meeting.

Besides exciting some Internet electrons, the group laid plans for the changing of the guard for the Finance Officer, Adjutant, and Executive Officer positions to the new staff members for those positions. New Adjutant Joe Webb was officially appointed to the position by the staff.

Discussion included having another virtual meeting for the com-

plete staff on April 11th to discuss other pending wing issues.

With apologies to the National Guard, know that you can sleep safe tonight because your RMW staff is awake.

See page 5 for an update on the April Webinar Conference your Wing Staff held on April 11th.



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And on the page 6 a report regarding the UFO 2020 event project.

Reports are that some (see picture above) that were planning to attend the RMW UFO 2020 are having second thoughts because of an earthly viral that has gone viral.

And yes, the RMW Museum and hangar remain closed until our leaders allow us to again inhabitate among each other.



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

RMW AIR SHOW SCHEDULE - 2020

MONTH	DAYS	LOCATION	SHOW	TBM	CUB	STATUS
MAR	21,22	Phoenix, AZ	Luke AFB TB			CANCELED
		Peru, IL	Gathering of Avengers			DELAYED
JUNE	13	Grand Junction, CO	Unique Aircraft			CANCELED
	20	Boulder, CO	40's Dance & Open house			CANCELED
	27,28	Ogden, UT	Hill AFB TB			CANCELED
JULY	11	Salida, CO	Airport Open House			CONFIRMED
	25,26	Rapid City, SD	Ellsworth AFB TB			PENDING
AUG	15	Dalhart, TX	Airport Open House			PENDING
	15	Glenwood Springs, CO	Airport Open House			CONFIRMED
	28,29	Lander, WY	Airport Open House			CONFIRMED
SEP	5,6	Kansas City, MO	Airport Open House			PENDING
	12	Eagle/Vail, CO	Airport Open House			CONFIRMED
	19,20	Montrose, CO	Tribute to Aviation			CONFIRMED
OCT	3	Prescott, AZ	Airport Open House			CONFIRMED
	10,11	Palmdale, CA	Edwards AFB, CA TB			PENDING
	17,18	Santa Maria, CA	Central Coast Airfest			PENDING
	23,25	Dallas, TX	CAF Airfest			POSSIBLE

"THE" virus is taking hold of our season. All Air Shows with national recognition have been canceled into June as of this publication. The RMW is impacted losing the Luke AFB show - traditionally one of our best shows. As it looks now, there will probably be more cancellations coming.

Col Thompson will be monitoring all our currently scheduled activities We'll be reporting status as deemed appropriate.

We'll be Ready!

TB=Thunderbirds
BA=Blue Angles

4/27/20

RMW CAF Non Air Show 2020 Events

Month	Days	Event Type	Location
April	11	RMW Staff Meeting	CANCELED
May	9	RMW Staff Meeting	Pending CAF-RMW Museum
June	TBA	Airshow PX Training	RMW Museum and Hangar
June	13	UFO Fly-In / Discovery	CANCELED
June	13	RMW Staff Meeting	CAF-RMW Museum
July	11	RMW Staff Meeting	CAF-RMW Museum
August	8	RMW Staff Meeting	CAF-RMW Museum
September	12	RMW Staff Meeting	CAF-RMW Museum
October	10	RMW Staff Meeting	CAF-RMW Museum
November	14	RMW Staff Meeting	CAF-RMW Museum

TBA = To Be Announced





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Keep 'em Flying

WING LEADER'S REPORT

*By Col Kent Taylor
Wing Leader*

As I reported last month, this year's plans are up in the air. Conditions change daily, COVID-19 restrictions, information, misinformation, recommendations, and impact flood the news outlets and internet. The only certainty is that things are in flux and will remain uncertain for some time. Virtually all our events have been cancelled or postponed through June. And as long as the *no gatherings of more than 10 people* rule stays in effect, airshows, open houses, and dances are pretty much rules out. In-person Staff Meetings and potluck lunches are also off the table, especially since the majority of our members are in high risk age categories.

Rocky Mountain Wing Status Update (as of April 23).

The Museum will remain closed to the public until further notice, and I ask RMW Members not to come to the Museum unless absolutely necessary – primarily as a personal safety measure and

PHOTO OF THE MONTH



This may seem like just another picture of "309" on the ramp waiting for the ground crew to give Pilot Bill Shepard the "start engine" signal. 309 did get the signal and Pilot Shepard did take 309 for its first flight of 2020. But, after return from that flight, 309 must feel like a debutant all donned in her new gown (winter maintenance,) that had practiced a few quick pre-event dance steps with her father, and was then told the ball had been canceled. But, she is still beautiful!



secondarily to minimize utility costs. If you do come to the Museum, when you leave, make sure that you

Turn off all lights

Turn the thermostat down to 45°

Check that all the oven and burner controls on the kitchen stove are turned completely off

All of the doors are locked.

The TBM is airworthy and ready to fly when restrictions are relaxed, but it will remain grounded until then, as we've suspended our flight insurance for another significant expense reduction – we will be able to reactivate it with one-day notice.

Another expense reduction came to us from the Grand Junction Airport Authority, who kindly waived our ground lease pay-

ments for 3-months.

Angela Padalecki alerted us to a GJ Grant Program that is working its way through the City Council. It should be voted on at the May 6 meeting of the Council. It's a local stimulus program to help small businesses and other entities (like us) survive the pandemic by providing a subsidy to cover fixed operating costs – maximum \$7,500. We will be following this opportunity closely!

The May 9 RMW Staff Meeting is in limbo. It is extremely unlikely that it will be an in-person meeting. We can do a Web Meeting if there is any controversial business to be discussed. If not, we will provide an email synopsis of actions taken.

We are fortunate to live in a party of the country that has experienced little impact from the COVID-19 pandemic. Let's all do our part to keep it that way.





MAINTENANCE REPORT

Submitted by Executive Officer Col Fred Suevel - one of our dedicated and expert TBM Wrench Wranglers.

After a winter of full engine checks (spark plugs, cylinder inspections, oil filters replaced, & magneto timing checked), hydraulic cylinders on the wings fixed and new hydraulic hoses on those cylinders, new hose on the tail gear hydraulic cylinder, landing gear drop down tests completed, add-

ed some hydraulic fluid, replaced inoperable electronic hydraulic gage in the cockpit with regular hydraulic gage (gage connected directly to hydraulic line), and removed holes and dents in the bomb bay doors and repainted them to near new condition. Also, all the wing and fuselage inspection ports were pulled to check for corrosion. None was found. Col Maddock added that they have installed a generator cut off switch but have not tested it jet.



Avenger Maintenance aboard USS Intrepid. Your Editor thinks this is probably a TBF.

WWII QUIZ

ANSWERS ON PAGE 5

Code Names

1. What was the name of Hitler's private Train?

The War on Land

2. Why did Canada wait seven days, until September 10, 1939, to follow Britain, Australia, New Zealand and India in declaring war on Germany?

Thanks to author Timothy B. Bensford



"TB" & "Jay"



*By Col Ernie Stech
Contributing Writer*

TB was chuckling to himself but he couldn't help but laugh out loud. He was wiggling up and down.

Jay looked up at him. "What's so funny?"

TB was all choked up and had trouble talking.

"Okay, I'll wait," the little yellow airplane whined.

After a few more minutes, TB calmed down. "Oh Jay, I just heard the funniest thing!"

"Was it a joke?"

"Oh no. It really happened."

"So, what was it?" Jay was getting impatient with his big friend.

"I just heard my ground crew guys talking. The last time we were outside a nice young reporter from the local newspaper came out. She had not been around airplanes all that much."

"What did she do?"

"She watched while my pilot unfolded my wings and operat-

ed the bomb bay. She was really impressed with the wing folding but got the wrong idea."

"How could she? She actually saw your wings unfold and then fold."

"That's what so funny." TB started laughing again. "She went back to her office and wrote all about me. She even wrote that I fold my wings BEFORE landing."

Jay giggled. "Not too smart!"

"She had good intentions, I guess," TB said after calming down again "I'm glad she was impressed with the folding wings. But I could just imagine



what would happen if I folded my wings before landing. Splat!"

The buddies enjoyed the moment.

Above: TBFs Parked on a WWII Carrier Deck. Note all engines are running.

Below: Wings folded parking on USS Roosevelt.



RMWCAF STAFF OFFICERS

Wing Leader Kent Taylor
 Executive Officer Fred Suevel
 Finance Officer John Mummery
 Adjutant Joe Webb
 Operations Officer Bob Thompson
 Deputy Operations Officer Kaleb Julius
 Maintenance Officer Dick Maddock
 Museum Officer Dorothy Dutton
 Safety Officer Byron Huffman
 Education Officer Tom Howe
 Development Officer Dale Beede
 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 OPEN
 Grants Officer Tom Dennis

**NEXT STAFF MEETING
 TO BE ANNOUNCED
 RMWCAF HANGAR
 SUPPORT YOUR CAF WING.**

**WWII QUIZ (SEE PAGE 4)
 ANSWERS**

Code Names

1. Amerika.

The War on Land

2. Because Canada was expecting large shipments of war materiel from the U.S. The U.S., which was neutral, could not send such materiel to a belligerent. The delay permitted the delivery.



April Staff Meeting Bullets

Compiled monthly from RMW Staff Meeting Notes.

**RMW SPECIAL BOARD MEETING
 APRIL 4, 2020
 VIRTUAL WEBCAST MEETING**

Purpose. Bob Thompson nominated Joe Webb for the position of Adjutant. Fred seconded.

Motion passed without objection. Joe was assigned to fill Keith Swinehart's term as Adjutant..

Motion to Adjourn. 11:15 am

Motioned passed unanimously.

**RMW STAFF MEETING
 APRIL 11, 2020
 VIRTUAL WEBCAST MEETING**

Wing Leader's Comments:

Our financial status is fine right now, and we will be solvent through the rest of the year without any event or airshow income. However, we will look at our Goals and Budget when we get to the New Business agenda item. It is pretty clear that we are not going to meet all of our revenue goals this year.

Operations Report: Col Thompson presented an update on airshow scheduling during the COVID-19 Pandemic. Most of the Air Shows that were scheduled through June have been cancelled. However, the May 15-16 Gathering of Avengers in Peru, IL looks like it is still a possibility.

Maintenance Report: Col Maddock reported that the generator switch is installed, but it still needs to be tested..

Education Report: Col Howe reported that he is working on class development opportunities for the Arsenal of Democracy curriculum.

Development Report: Col Beede reported that he is still working on the Queen Air situation. He is hoping to meet up soon with Tommi Hall to get the log books, and finalize the deal. Dale is also working on dates for next year's UFO Fly In and is reaching out to ANB Bank. The Airport Board and West Star Aviation will be contacted to schedule a weekend for the event, hopefully the end of April or May,2021.

**RMW 2020 Focus
 and Objectives**

Fund Raising: – continue to plan for fall dance fundraiser and get to as many air shows and local fund raising events as possible.

Explore partnerships with other local non-profits.

A.D. Prop Maintenance for the TBM was discussed. It has to be done by March of 2021, and the cost is estimated to be \$3,000 to \$5,000. Dick suggested that West Star could do the required testing of the blades if we can disassemble/reassemble the propeller assembly.

New Business

Col Taylor will email the Board the letter from Jim Lashe detailing the need for operations and maintenance training. In the letter Jim discussed revising and reviewing operations manuals CAFR 60-1 and CAFR 66-1. Kent suggested we look at the manuals and provide input. HE emphasized the need for CAF members to be good citizens and to document everything we do to comply with FAA and CAF regulations.

Why did the US Navy want the TBF/TBM?

In 1939 the US War Department went out for bids to replace the Douglas Devastator that was the US Navy's line Torpedo Bomber. They recognized the Devastator was obsolete. Boy, was it ever!



The Douglas Devastator represented a major advance on its predecessors. First flying in 1935, it was one of the first carrier based mono-

planes, the first all metal naval plan and the first with a fully enclosed canopy. At this stage it was, arguably, the most advanced torpedo bomber in the world. By the time of Pearl Harbor it was, however, completely obsolete, yet with its replacement, the TBF Avenger, still in testing stages there was no alternative. With a top speed of 331kph (206mph) the plodding Devastator was gravely vulnerable to patrolling fighters. To make things even worse, the crude torpedoes it carried could not be released above 185kph (115mph) and often broke up or failed to explode. Testing had been carried out with dummy torpedoes with warheads filled with water, and little thought had been put in to how they would perform in combat.

In the initial stages of the Pacific War the Devastator performed fairly well, sinking 2 transports and a destroyer and contributing to the destruction of the carrier Shoho during the Battle of the Coral Sea. However, it was the decisive Battle of Midway where the aircraft would find infamy. Poor weather and a lack of co ordination meant the Devastator's Wildcat fighter escort did not show up and its fate was sealed. VT-8 torpedo squadron pressed home their attack against the carrier Kaga, but having to fly straight and level with no escort, the result was a massacre. Patrolling Zeros quickly shot down all 15 aircraft with only a single airman later being plucked from the sea. Of the 41 Devastators deployed that day, only 4 would return and not a single torpedo hit its target. Their sacrifice wasn't entirely fruitless, however; in drawing the defending fighters to low altitudes they allowed the Dauntless dive bombers a relatively clear run to sink 3 of the 4 Japanese carriers, and help turn the tide of the war. The few survivors were immediately withdrawn from service, and none survived beyond 1944.

Number 8 from article [The Top 10 Worst Airplanes of WWII](#)



By Col Tom Howe
Editor
Education Officer

The UFO 2020 staff held a brief conference call on April 1st and agreed that any further attempts to plan, organize and actually have the UFO 2020 event would be fruitless. So a vote of the attending staff members canceled the 2020 event with agreed upon guidelines to continue to move forward to have the event in 2021.



Action items necessary to cancel the event included notifying all the event listing websites (10 in total) to re-

move UFO 2020 from their lists, contacting all 110+ schools, contacting sponsors, contacting other CAF Units that were going to provide support as well as CAF HQ in Dallas.

As of this publication date all those required actions have been completed.

The UFO Staff will get an early start working with the Airport Staff as well as West Star Aviation to find a few dates during the spring of 2021

that might allow the event to be held before the end of the school year which would allow schools to schedule the event as part of their planned curriculum. That will open the opportunity for more students to attend if the schools can arrange bussing.

So even though our 2020 plans have been dashed, we have 2021 to bring our event to reality. Lets do it!

Hopefully, all the contacts made with prospective UFO pilots and owners as well as the sponsor support we had already received for this year's event will move forward with us into next year.

Fortunately, this decision to cancel the 2020 event was done prior to any significant funds being spent .

Now we need to begin the planning for UFO 2021 which might



bring some families we don't expect. You never know about the **Unknown!!**



USAAF Statistics - Reprinted from the CSF Great Plains Wing Newsletter

Almost 1,000 Army planes disappeared en route from the US to foreign locations in WWII. An eye-watering 43,581 aircraft were lost overseas including 22,948 on combat missions (18,418 against the Western Axis) and 20,633 attributed to non-combat causes overseas. In a single 376 plane raid in August 1943, 60 B-17s were shot down. That was a 16 percent loss rate and meant 600 empty bunks in England. In 1942-43 it was statistically impossible for bomber crews to complete a 25-mission tour in Europe.

Pacific theatre losses were far less (4,530 in combat) owing to smaller forces committed. The worst B-29 mission, against Tokyo on May 25, 1945, cost 26 Superfortresses, 5.6 percent of the 464 dispatched from the Marianas.

On average, 6,600 American servicemen died per month during WWII, about 220 a day. By the end of the war, over 40,000 airmen were killed in combat theatres and another 18,000 wounded. Some 12,000 missing men were declared dead, including a number "liberated" by the Soviets but never returned. More than 41,000 were captured, half of the 5,400 held by the Japanese died in captivity, compared with one-tenth in German hands. Total combat casualties were pegged at 121,867. US man-power made up the deficit. The AAF's peak strength was reached in 1944 with 2,372,000 personnel, nearly twice the previous year's figure. The losses were huge---but so were production totals. From 1941 through 1945, American industry delivered more than 276,000 military aircraft. That number was enough not only for US Army, Navy and Marine Corps, but for allies as diverse as Britain, Australia, China and Russia. In fact, from 1943 onward, America produced more planes than Britain and Russia combined. And more than Germany and Japan together 1941-45.

However, our enemies took massive losses. Through much of 1944, the Luftwaffe sustained uncontrolled hemorrhaging, reaching 25 percent of aircrews and 40 planes a month. And in late 1944 into 1945, nearly half the pilots in Japanese squadrons had flown fewer than 200 hours. The disparity of two years before had been completely reversed.

Uncle Sam sent many of his sons to war with absolute minimums of training. Some fighter pilots entered combat in 1942 with less than one hour in their assigned aircraft. The 357th Fighter Group (often known as The Yoxford Boys) went to England in late 1943 having trained on P-39s. The group never saw a Mustang until shortly before its first combat mission. A high-time P-51 pilot had 30 hours in type. Many had fewer than five hours. Some had one hour. With arrival of new aircraft, many combat units transitioned in combat. The attitude was, "They all have a stick and a throttle. Go fly 'em." When the famed 4th Fighter Group converted from P-47s to P-51s in February 1944, there was no time to stand down for an orderly transition. The Group commander, Col. Donald Blakeslee, said, "You can learn to fly P-51s on the way to the target. A future P-47 ace said, "I was sent to England to die." He was not alone. Some fighter pilots tucked their wheels in the well on their first combat mission with one previous flight in the aircraft.

Many bomber crews were also still learning their

trade: Of Jimmy Doolittle's 15 pilots on the April 1942 Tokyo raid, only five had won their wings before 1941. All but one of the 16 copilots were less than a year out of flight school. In WWII flying safety took a back seat to combat. The AAF's worst accident rate was recorded by the A-36 Invader version of the P-51: a staggering 274 accidents per 100,000 flying hours. Next worst were the P-39 at 245, the P-40 at 188, and the P-38 at 139. All were Allison powered.

Bomber wrecks were fewer but more expensive. The B-17 and B-24 averaged 30 and 35 accidents per 100,000 flight hours, respectively-- a horrific figure considering that from 1980 to 2000 the Air Force's major mishap rate was less than 2. The B-29 was even worse at 40; the world's most sophisticated, most capable and most expensive bomber was too urgently needed to stand down for mere safety reasons.. The AAF set a reasonably high standard for B-29 pilots, but the desired figures were seldom attained. The original cadre of the 58th Bomb Wing was to have 400 hours of multi-engine time, but there were not enough experienced pilots to meet the criterion. Only ten percent had overseas experience. Conversely, when a \$2.1 billion B-2 crashed in 2008, the Air Force initiated a two-month "safety pause" rather than declare a "stand down", let alone grounding. The B-29 was no better for maintenance. Though the R3350 was known as a complicated, troublesome power-plant, no more than half the mechanics had previous experience with the Duplex Cyclone, but they made it work.

Perhaps the greatest unsung success story of AAF training was Navigators. The Army graduated some 50,000 during the War. And many had never flown out of sight of land before leaving "Uncle Sugar" for a war zone. Yet the huge majority found their way across oceans and continents without getting lost or running out of fuel --- a stirring tribute to the AAF's educational establishments.

It was possible for a flying cadet at the time of earl Harbor to finish the war with eagles on his shoulders. That was the record of John D. Landers, a 21-year-old Texan, who was commissioned a second lieutenant on December 12, 1941. He joined his combat squadron with 209 hours total flight time, including 2 in P-40s. He finished the war as a full colonel, commanding an 8th Air Force Group --- at age 24. As the training pipeline filled up, however those low figures became exceptions. By early 1944, the average AAF fighter pilot entering combat had logged at least 450 hours, usually including 250 hours in training. At the same time, many captains and first lieutenants claimed over 600 hours.

At its height in mid-1944, the Army Air Forces had 2.6 million people and nearly 80,000 aircraft of all types. Today the US Air Force employs 327,000 active personnel (plus 170,000 civilians) with 5,500+ manned and perhaps 200 unmanned aircraft. The 2009 figures represent about 12 percent of the manpower and 7 percent of the airplanes of the WWII peak.

Whether there will ever be another war like that experienced in 1940-45 is doubtful, as fighters and bombers have given way to helicopters and remotely-controlled drones over Afghanistan and Iraq. But within living memory, men left the earth in 1,000-plane formations and fought major battles five miles high, leaving a legacy that remains timeless.