

AirshowStuff

Magazine



Inside:

Off Season Special:

*Spotting
Museums*

Airshows

1948 National Air Races

Living Legends of Aviation

Best of 2011

and more!

February 2012

AirshowStuff Magazine Photo Contest

If you are a photographer, pick your best shots and enter the AirshowStuff photo contest! Once you've got them chosen, send them in to RS@AirshowStuff.com!

Photo Contest Rules

- Two entries per person per issue.
- All entries must be your own work.
- All photographs must be from the current calendar year.
- Photos must be at least 1700 pixels on their longest side.
- The photographer retains all rights to the entered images, but grants AirshowStuff Magazine the right to publish them with any necessary modifications, such as cropping to fit.

We will review all of the entries and pick one winner and four runners up to get published. If you don't win, try again next month! Good luck!



A NOTE FROM THE EDITOR

Four years ago, with a bit of free time and a touch of inspiration, I decided to launch a small 'virtual magazine' as a little side project along with the website I had started a couple years before that. I recruited a few friends to help, and spent a couple days putting the first issue together. I never expected it to become a huge project or to get much attention; I just thought it was kind of cool to do.

Now, four years later, this online magazine has become the majority of AirshowStuff. Thanks to a number of amazing contributors and newfound friends, it has grown to regularly include over 100 pages, and in some cases 200. The coverage has spread to cover the country and the world. In this issue alone, we have articles from New York City and Southern California, Florida and Washington state, even Finland and Malaysia. We have been able to publish some jaw-dropping photos, and learned more about how to take them along the way. It has truly become a success beyond my wildest dreams!

However, the growth I have been so excited to watch is a double edged sword. With every bit of growth, the time and money invested grew as well. Although I had hoped to keep the magazine free to everyone, it has reached the point where I can no longer afford to keep pace with the work it requires of me. But instead of scaling back and leaving out coverage, we are going to press ahead. This year, we will begin charging a very small amount - about the same as an app for your smartphone - in order to cover the costs of running the magazine and to allow for even more expansion. In return, we are delivering a brand new, highly interactive format that actually harkens back to the flash files the magazine started out as. This new format has features like searching, improved hyperlinks, and the ability to embed videos directly onto the page. Most importantly, it offers a button to save the issue as a PDF, so those who wish to skip this new stuff can do so easily.

While I recognize the annoyance of paying for things online, I hope you recognize that your support is vital to keeping this magazine going, and I hope that you will choose to join us for many issues to come as we see just how awesome this 'little side project' can become!

Ryan Sundheimer
Editor in Chief

AirshowStuff

Magazine

February 2012

Cover Photo

An OH-58D Kiowa from the Tennessee National Guard races down the runway and towards the camera at the Tullahoma Regional Airport. Photo by Antonio Gemma More'. For more of Antonio's spotting photos, see page 48.

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See yourself here!

If you are an airshow enthusiast, we want your help! Everything you see in this magazine is created and submitted by people like you. All it takes is a simple e-mail each month with photos or articles you would like to submit. We may even be able to help you get a media pass if you cover a show for us! If you would like to join our team, please drop us an e-mail at RS@AirshowStuff.com

We'd love to talk with you!

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What is Vintage Wings?

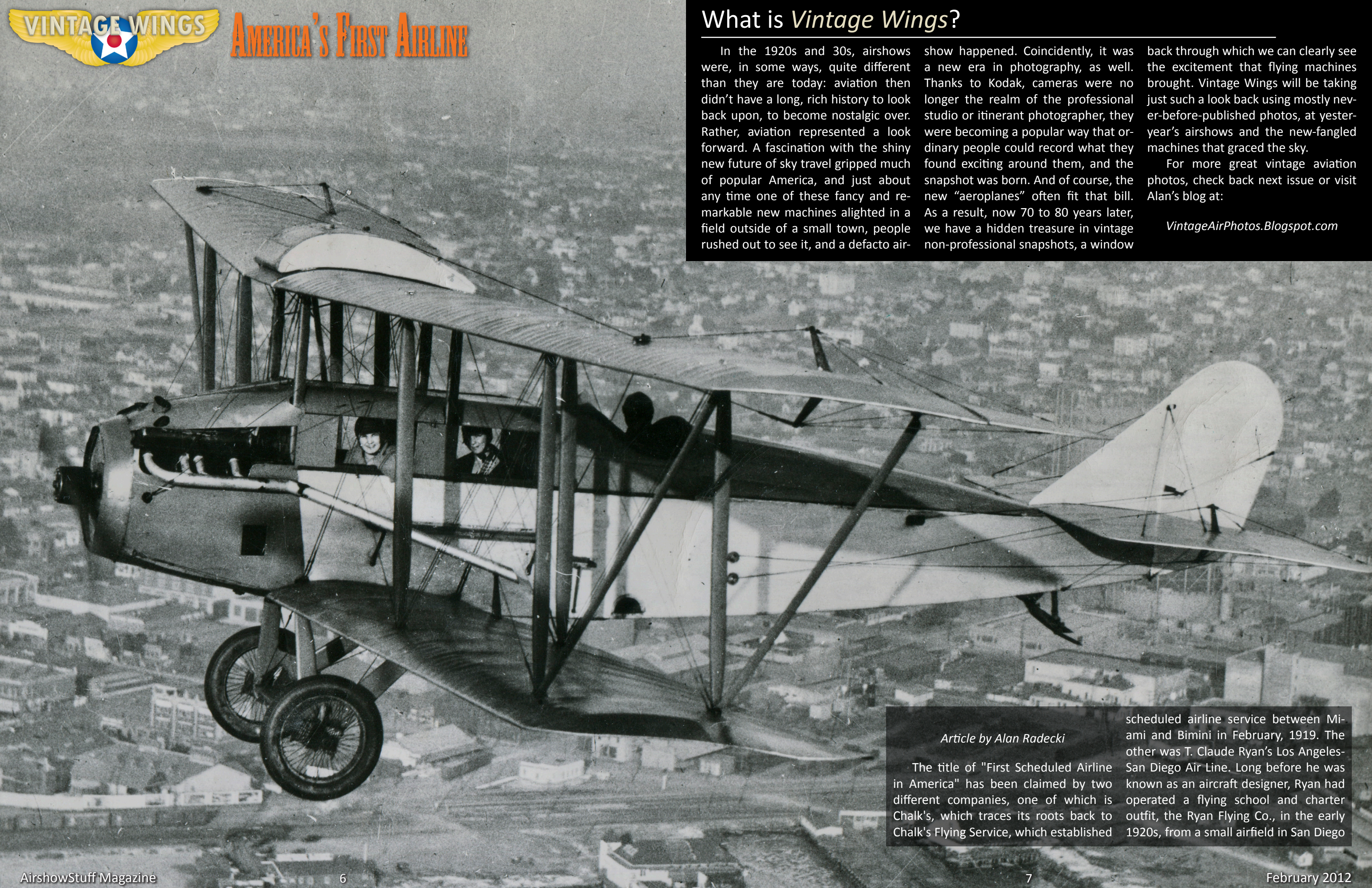
In the 1920s and 30s, airshows were, in some ways, quite different than they are today: aviation then didn't have a long, rich history to look back upon, to become nostalgic over. Rather, aviation represented a look forward. A fascination with the shiny new future of sky travel gripped much of popular America, and just about any time one of these fancy and remarkable new machines alighted in a field outside of a small town, people rushed out to see it, and a defacto air-

show happened. Coincidentally, it was a new era in photography, as well. Thanks to Kodak, cameras were no longer the realm of the professional studio or itinerant photographer, they were becoming a popular way that ordinary people could record what they found exciting around them, and the snapshot was born. And of course, the new "aeroplanes" often fit that bill. As a result, now 70 to 80 years later, we have a hidden treasure in vintage non-professional snapshots, a window

back through which we can clearly see the excitement that flying machines brought. Vintage Wings will be taking just such a look back using mostly never-before-published photos, at yesteryear's airshows and the new-fangled machines that graced the sky.

For more great vintage aviation photos, check back next issue or visit Alan's blog at:

VintageAirPhotos.Blogspot.com



Article by Alan Radecki

The title of "First Scheduled Airline in America" has been claimed by two different companies, one of which is Chalk's, which traces its roots back to Chalk's Flying Service, which established

scheduled airline service between Miami and Bimini in February, 1919. The other was T. Claude Ryan's Los Angeles-San Diego Air Line. Long before he was known as an aircraft designer, Ryan had operated a flying school and charter outfit, the Ryan Flying Co., in the early 1920s, from a small airfield in San Diego

known as Dutch Flats. He used a variety of aircraft, including U.S. Army surplus Standard J-1 trainers.

Some of Ryan's most lucrative charters were flights up to Los Angeles, and one of his flight students, Benjamin Franklin Mahoney (B.F. or Frank, to his friends), suggested that there might be some money to be made in going one step farther: establishing daily, scheduled airline service between San Diego and Los Angeles. Mahoney offered to help fund the venture, if Ryan would provide the planes.

Ryan looked around for a relatively inexpensive, passenger-capable plane, and found none. On the other hand, there were plenty of Standard J-1s lying about. The type was, by all accounts, a terrible airplane. In the midst of WWI, the Army had desperately needed training aircraft, and simply couldn't get all the Curtiss JN-4 "Jennies" that they wanted, so they bought the J-1 from Standard Aero Corporation of Plainfield, New Jersey.

Much of the J-1's problems can be attributed to the highly unreliable Hall-Scott A7a engine, which was underpowered, vibrated terribly and had a nasty habit of catching fire. But the Army bought it anyway, with over 1,600 being produced. By 1918, though, the Army had enough of the technical and safety issues (the J-1 had a much higher accident rate than the JN-4), and with sufficient quantities of Jennies now on hand, they grounded them, and many were never even unpacked. After the Armistice was signed, the Army promptly began dumping the unwanted assets onto the civilian market, and therefore Standards could be picked up for a song, many still in their original shipping crates. However, when re-engined with an OX-5 or even a more powerful Hispano-Suiza, the reliability of the J-1 increased dramatically, and they became popular on the barnstorming circuit and with the private flight schools that were springing up all over the country, like Ryan's.

Ryan found three "new" J-1s in

Texas, bought them for a few hundred dollars, and then began to modify them. In Army service, the J-1 was a two-seater, instructor and student. For the new airline, Ryan re-engineered the fuselage, eliminating the forward open cockpit, and building an enclosed four-place passenger cabin, with large windows for sightseeing. He replaced the troublesome 90hp Hall-Scott engine with a 180hp Hispano-Suiza, and suddenly he had a dynamic performer on his hands.

Calling the new variant the "Ryan Standard", he christened the first ship Oneota after a friend's ranch. The second was the Miramar and the third, which was further modified with a wider, two-person cockpit, the Palomar. Our featured photo shows the Oneota in flight over San Diego's waterfront area, and was likely taken very early in the operation - or possibly before it officially started. This photo was used in both news releases about the Line, as well as on the cover of its time table, as can be seen in this sample.

Daily round-trip service commenced on March 1, 1925. (And that is where the claims for the "first airline" differ - Chalk's offered scheduled service, but it wasn't daily. Thus, the Ryan/Mahoney operation could justly claim to be America's first daily-scheduled, year-round airline.) The one-way fare was \$14.50, and a round trip cost the princely sum of \$22.50, calculated on breakeven costs if only one passenger was on board. The fares also included to/from hotel transportation.

Understanding that a regular airline was going to need a lot of publicity to draw passengers, Ryan invited Hollywood celebrities out to the inaugural round-trip flights, which would start from Los Angeles, flying from a small airfield at 99th Street and Western Ave. All three of the Ryan Standards - one of which would be flown by Ryan himself - would together make the first flight. Other celebs, including Robert Vignola, Hedda Hopper and Vera Reynolds, came down to witness the flight,

drawing crowds to see them as much as to see the novel planes. As a part of the first-flight festivities, three military aircraft, representing both the Army and Navy, were tapped to "escort" the three passenger planes to San Diego.

With the military aircraft orbiting the airfield overhead, the three Ryan Standards climbed skyward at 10am, heading south at 1,500 feet for the 90-minute journey. At the same time, two Navy carrier pigeons were also released, a stunt that backfired on the airline, as one of the feathered birds arrived "home" at San Diego's North Island before the formation of six airplanes landed at their destination just across the narrow harbor.

A month and a half after service started, on April 19, Mahoney bought half of all of Ryan's business interests, and the two formally became partners, under the name Ryan Airlines. Besides offering travel, Ryan Airlines soon started building and selling airplanes to other carriers as well, the first being the Ryan M-1, six of which were bought by another fledgling airline, Pacific Air Transport. But despite its glamorous start, traffic - and revenue - from the San Diego to Los Angeles service started to drop off. To compensate, fares were increased to \$17.40 and \$26.50, and to further garner publicity and passenger interest, Ryan Airlines bought a larger Douglas Cloudster, which was converted to carry 10 people in carpeted luxury.

It was to no avail, there just wasn't the passenger demand. In September 1926, the airline service was cancelled. Ryan and Mahoney's partnership was terminated two months later, with Mahoney buying out Claude's interest, but keeping the Ryan Airlines name, and continuing to build airplanes. And five months after that, a young air mail pilot by the name of Charles Lindbergh, who had been impressed with Pacific Air Transport's M-1s, contacted Ryan Airlines to inquire whether they could build a version of the aircraft capable of flying across the Atlantic.

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CHINO CONNIE

EC-121 ARRIVAL AT YANKS AIR MUSEUM

Article by Matt Shinavar

On January 14, 2012 the only flight-worthy EC-121 Warning Star throttled up its engines for a ferry flight from Camarillo to Chino. As

the EC-121 barreled down the runway and the weight came off the landing gear, seven years of work to get the airplane flight worthy had concluded. The flight through the Los Angeles air traffic took the better part of an hour. The Super Constellation lined up on the runway for a 500 foot AGL pass before turning to join the pattern. As the Connie taxied to the gate, it seemed as if the whole crew and airplane wanted to savor the roar of 72 cylinders as they sucked gas and oil in a smooth and rhythmic beat.

The EC-121 is the military intelligence gathering version of the Lockheed Super Constellation, an airplane that was born from a seemingly small challenge from the airlines – transport 40 passengers across the country without stopping for fuel. ‘Connies’ began flying during WWII as C-69 transports but not until 1954 did the military purchase some loaded to the skins with electronic equipment, including the two additional radomes. EC-121s performed a role similar to the modern AWACS, scanning the skies for en-

emy aircraft and missile launches. Yanks’ EC-121, now N548GF, was delivered to the US Air Force in the summer of 1955 to be part of the 552nd Airborne Early Warning Wing. Through its distinguished military career, the aircraft spent time in Florida, Taiwan, South Korea, Iceland, and was finally ferried to Davis Monthan AFB in Tucson to be stored in 1978. The aircraft was acquired by Yanks in 2004 and underwent restoration to flight worthy status into 2012.

The arrival of N548GF to Yanks

at Chino adds the largest aircraft to the collection, totaling more than 170 aircraft. The Yanks collection is the largest private collection of American WWII aircraft. Many aircraft in the collection are the last examples of their kind in the world. All their aircraft are restored to original condition and are flight worthy; the only modifications made to the original design are those required by current FAA law to operate.

For more on the Yanks Air Museum, see page 62.





National Air Races: 1948

A USAF F-86 Sabre and a US Navy FJ-1 Fury are seen and filmed by a large crowd on the field.

Photos Courtesy Chris Tieman

The 1948 National Air Races, the third to be held after the resumption of the event following WWII, were held on the long Labor Day weekend of September 4 – 6 in Cleveland, Ohio. The Air Force and the Navy sent a large contingent of aircraft to show off America's air power.

Possibly the most famous trophy annually contested at Cleveland was the Bendix Trophy (traditionally

a cross country race from a starting point that varied year to year and ending up in Cleveland), and like the two years prior, this race had a propeller division and a jet division. The prop or R Division was dominated by P-51s, and was won by Paul Mantz.

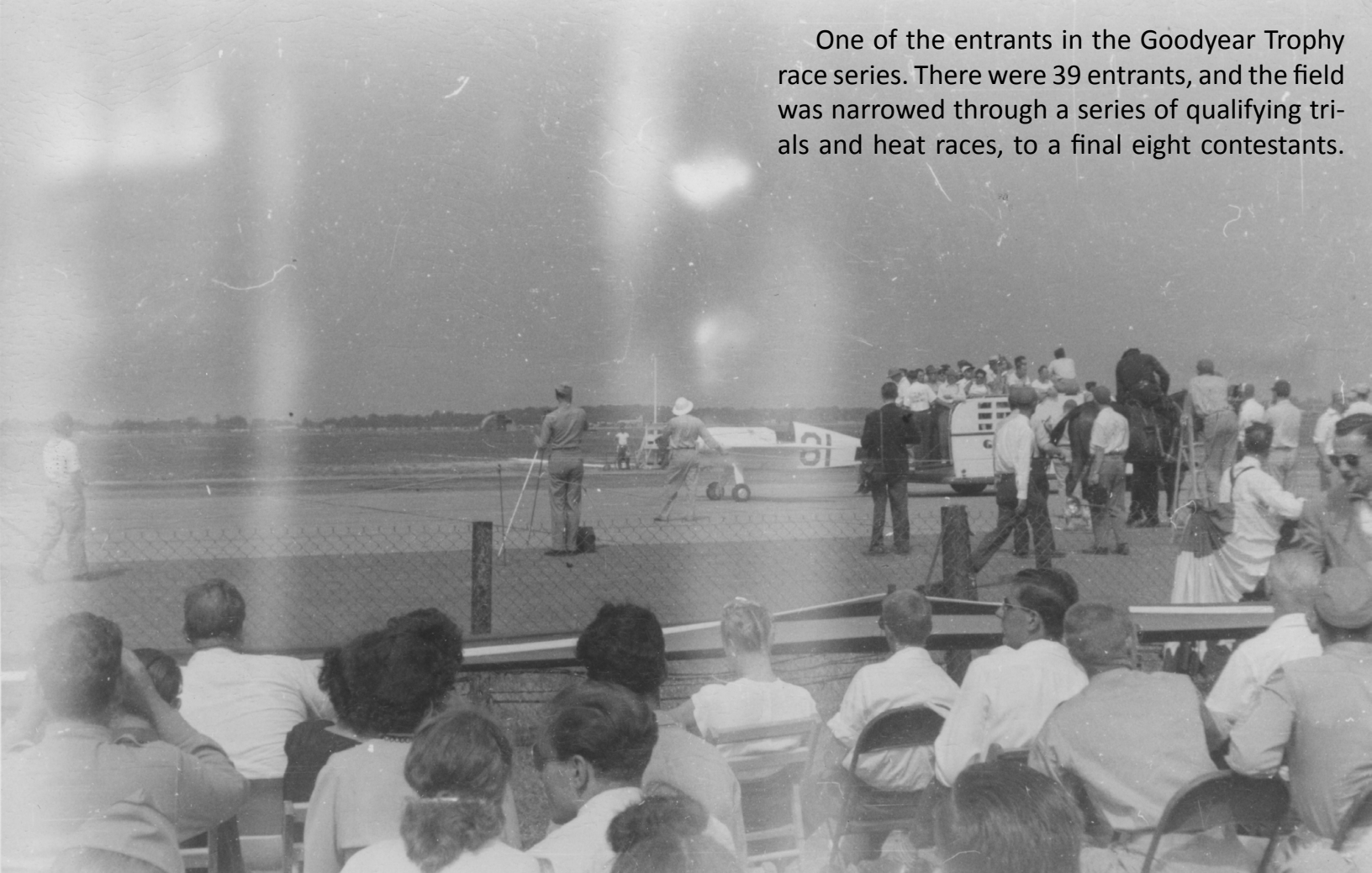
The SOHO Handicap Trophy race and the Tinnerman Trophy race were both a 105 mile, 7-lap event that fielded a mix of civilian P-51s,

P-38s and P-63s. The Kendall Trophy race was a T-6/SNJ race for women only. The Thompson Trophy race, over a 300 mile, 20-lap course with a race-horse start, also featured a mix of P-51s, P-38s, F2Gs and other warbirds. Interestingly, the P-51 "Galloping Ghost" took 2nd place.

Now, with these rare and probably never before published images, you can experience the 1948 Air Races for yourself!



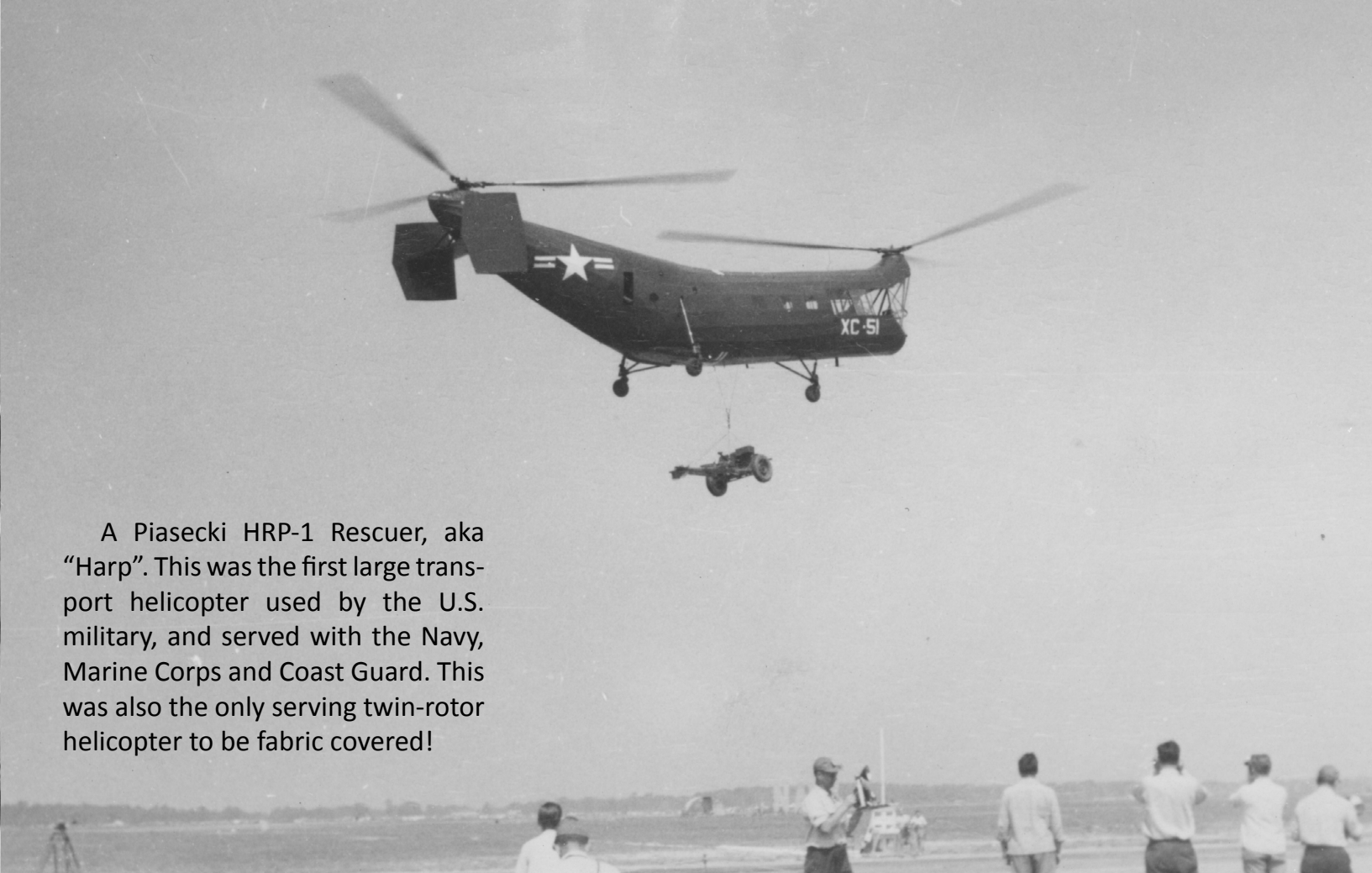
One of the entrants in the Goodyear Trophy race series. There were 39 entrants, and the field was narrowed through a series of qualifying trials and heat races, to a final eight contestants.



A JATO takeoff demonstration by a large twin engine aircraft, likely an A-20 Havoc or A-26 Invader.



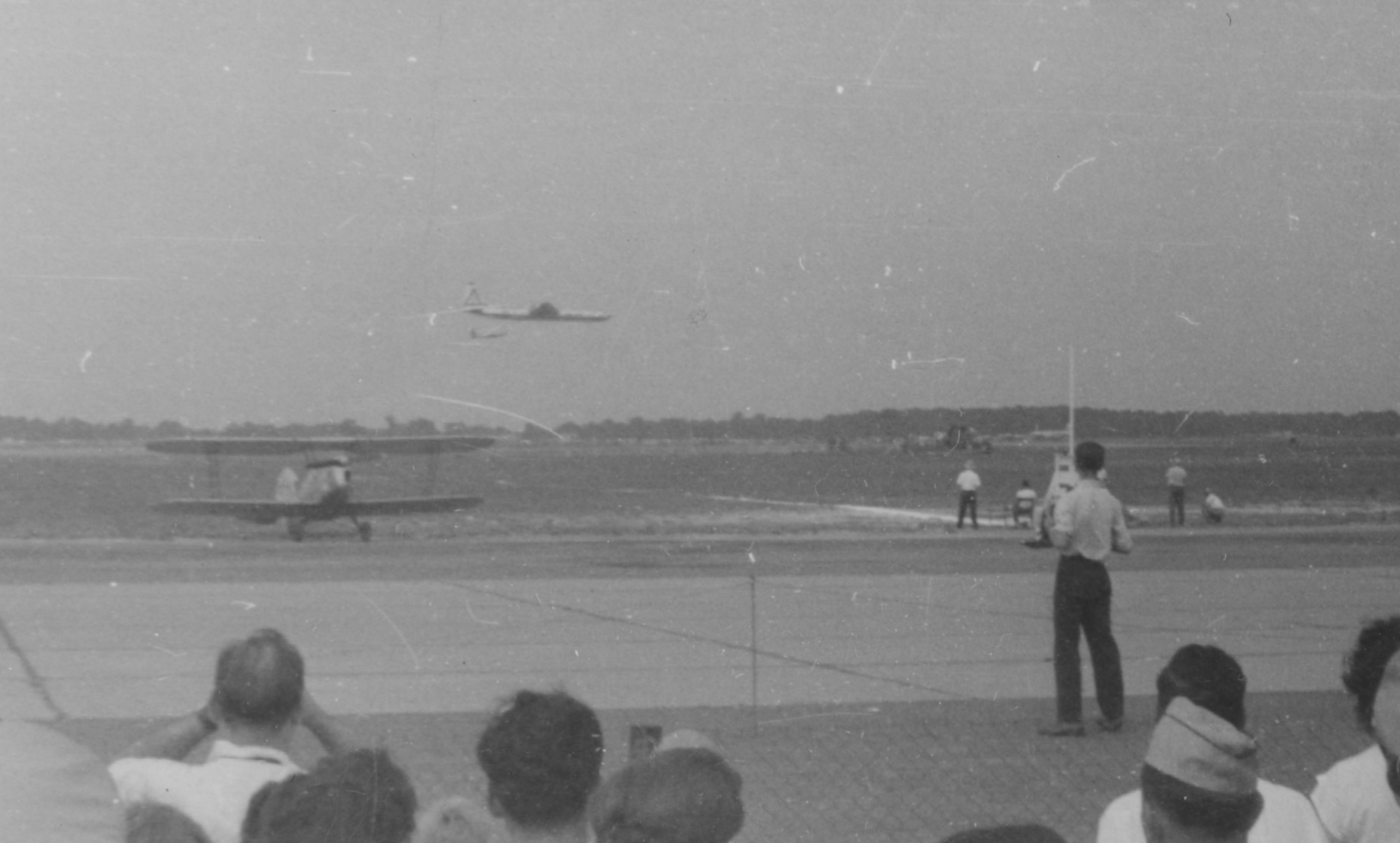
A Piasecki HRP-1 Rescuer, aka "Harp". This was the first large transport helicopter used by the U.S. military, and served with the Navy, Marine Corps and Coast Guard. This was also the only serving twin-rotor helicopter to be fabric covered!



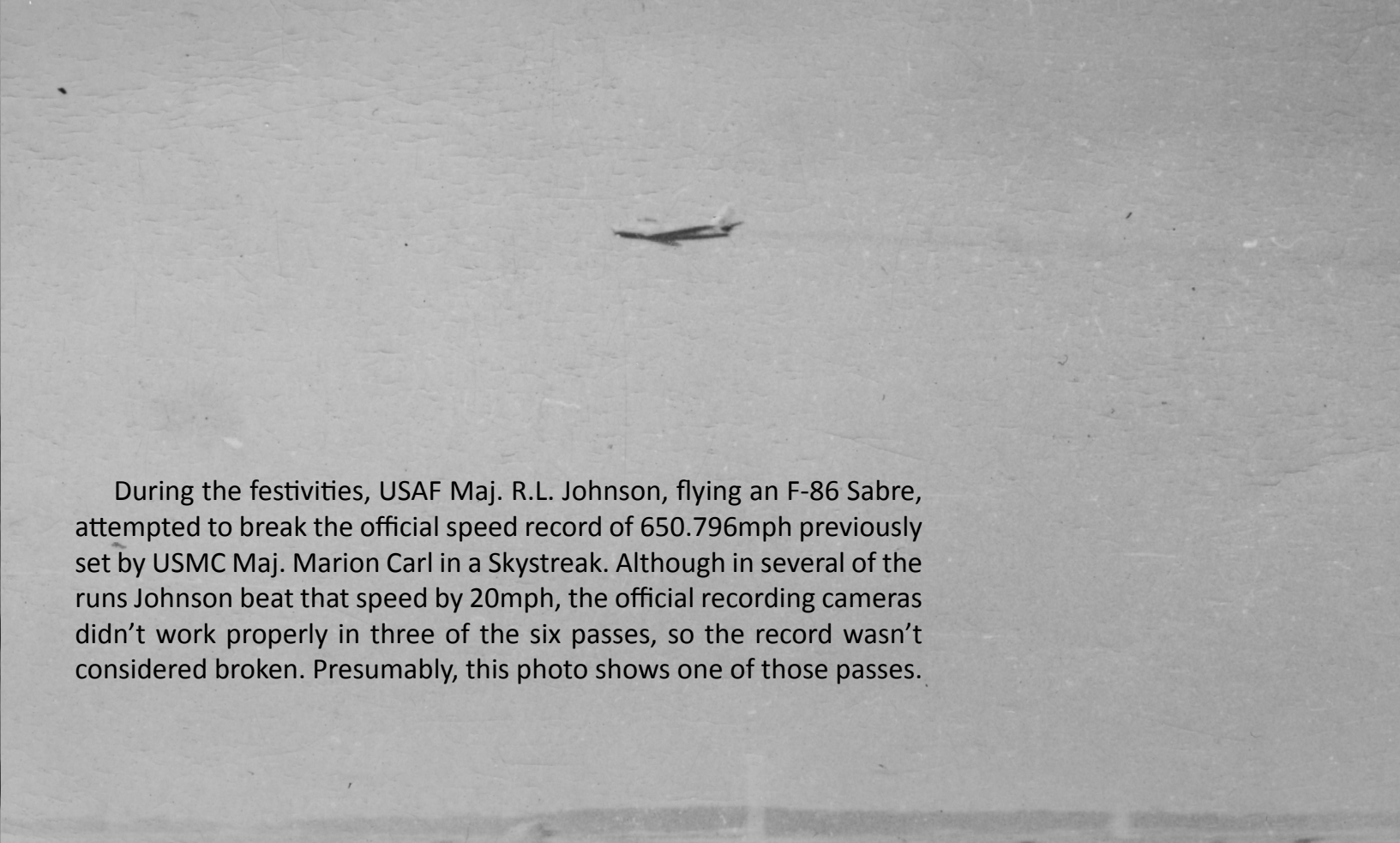
A formation of at least 16 Boeing B-29 Stratofortresses thunders over the Cleveland airport. Today, only one B-29 in the world remains flying.



A B-36 Peacemaker and F-84 Thunderstreak in formation at very low level.



During the festivities, USAF Maj. R.L. Johnson, flying an F-86 Sabre, attempted to break the official speed record of 650.796mph previously set by USMC Maj. Marion Carl in a Skystreak. Although in several of the runs Johnson beat that speed by 20mph, the official recording cameras didn't work properly in three of the six passes, so the record wasn't considered broken. Presumably, this photo shows one of those passes.



Two Navy FJ-1 Furys. Like earlier, pre-war races, military aircraft still participated in the actual air races along with civilians. For the 1948 Bendix Trophy portion of the National Air Races, the race began in Los Angeles. For the J Division, all of the contestants were from squadron VF-51 and flew FJ-1s. They made the trip with a full load of ammunition and made one stop for fuel en route. Two of the Bendix contestants also flew in the Allison Jet Trophy race.



A formation of three F8F Bearcats passes by the crowd.



LIVING LEGENDS OF AVIATION 2012



Bob Hoover presents the Bob Hoover Freedom of Flight Award to Burt Rutan. Rutan is currently working with Paul Allen on a revolutionary space travel project called Stratolaunch Systems, as well as an innovative design for a new type of hybrid; a flying car.

Article and Photos by Michelle Rouch

Internationally renowned artists Mimi Stuart and Michelle Rouch, members of the American Society of Aviation Artists (ASAA), received a special invitation to attend the 9th Annual Living Legends of Aviation Awards Ceremony, often referred to as the Academy Awards of Aviation.

Kiddie Hawk Air Academy, a non-profit organization, is dedicated to sparking kids' interest in aviation. In 2008 they acquired the production of Living Legends of Aviation, an annual fundraiser held every January in Beverly Hills. Living Legends is known for bringing together aviators who have become celebrities and celebrities who have become aviators to raise funds for Kiddie Hawk Air Academy. The guest list reads like a veritable "who's who", saluting special birthdays to Bob Hoover and Dr. Buzz Aldrin, as well as joining legends Harrison Ford, Morgan Freeman, Julie Clark, Lynn Tilton, Tony Bill, Burt and Dick Rutan, Kermit Weeks, Treat Williams, Joe Clark, and others.

Patty Wagstaff and Julie Clark lead the audience in a warm 90th Happy Birthday melody to Bob Hoover.

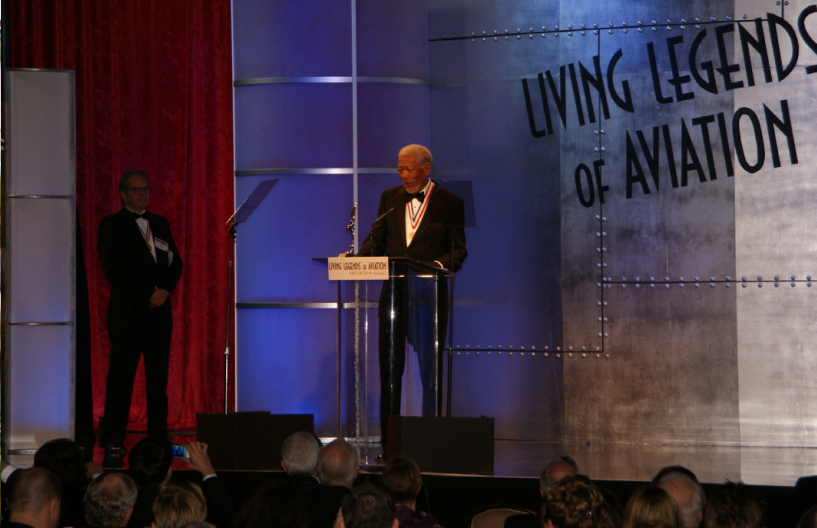


A Stuart contribution, titled "Flown West," offers a special tribute to Cliff Robertson. Cliff Robertson's family from left to right: Carol, Sidney, Stephanie, and Donald Saunders.



Harrison Ford autographs "The Pilot's Pilot, Bob Hoover" painting. He presented the Harrison Ford Aviation Legacy Award to Dr. Richard Sugden for his contribution to the Wounded Warrior Program, EAA Young Eagles Program, wildlife conservation improvements and his efforts to thwart poaching in Kenya.

A Rouch contribution, titled "The Pilot's Pilot, Bob Hoover" depicts Bob Hoover's grand finale demonstrating the capabilities of his Strike Commander by shutting down both engines and executing a loop before the crowd.



Tony Bill presents the Aviation Inspiration and Patriotism Award to Morgan Freeman.



Famed stunt and test pilot Bob Hoover and his wife Colleen share memories of his P-51 "Ole Yeller" with artist Mimi Stuart. "There are no fighter pilots down in hell," remarks Hoover.



"Inspiration," Stuart's portrait of Morgan Freeman, welcomes guests to the gala festivities.





Red Tails actor Marcus T. Paulk, Mimi Stuart, and screenwriter known as Smoove with Rouch's "Airman on Airfield" and Stuart's "American Royalty: Tuskegee Airmen." The pair took the time to make a special appearance at Living Legends to meet Morgan Freeman and to view the Tuskegee Airmen paintings on the way to the Redtails movie opening.



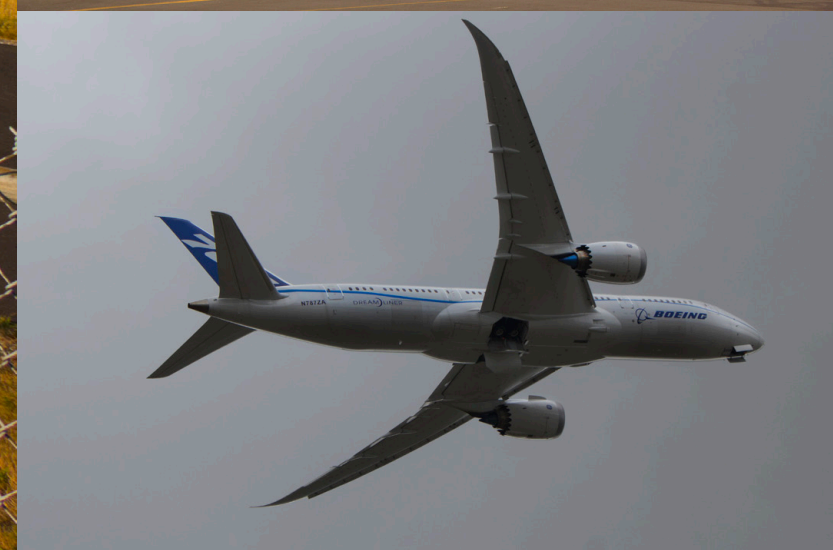
Rouch offers a fine art giclée Limited Edition, titled "Airman on Airfield" depicting a Tuskegee Airman overlooking the Red Tails flying in the sky. Photo by Steve Schapiro.

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Most folks like to say that despite how far you may travel during your lifetime, nothing will ever quite be like your hometown. I'm not one for clichés, but this simple statement has proven itself to be a universal truth for many things in my life, and with aviation in particular. For me, my hometown is Knoxville, Tennessee and my home airfield is the McGhee Tyson Airport located there.

McGhee Tyson is named in honor of local son Charles McGhee Tyson, who was a Navy pilot lost on patrol in World War I. The field opened in 1927, added a new air traffic control tower in 1941, and the trademark parallel runways were constructed in 1943. KTYS is blessed with several unique features which include the two parallel 9,000 ft concrete runways as well as a commanding view of the nearby Great Smokey Mountains National Park.

The western half of the airfield

is shared by four major users: the 134th Air Refueling Wing, which operates KC-135 Stratotankers, the Tennessee Army National Guard's Army Aviation Support Facility #2, which flies OH-58D Kiowa Warriors, a FedEx and UPS air cargo hub, and a large Continental Airlines maintenance facility which services the company's fleet of Embraer Regional Jets.

The eastern side of the features the airport's "public face" - a welcoming airline terminal where passengers can board any one of seven major airlines flying to twenty-one non-stop destinations nationwide. Situated to the northeast is the busy general aviation ramp managed by the TacAir fixed-base operator, with several different business and corporate users scattered across their large asphalt ramp.

According to the Metropolitan Knoxville Airport Authority's website, airfield operations have an

over \$1 billion annual impact and contribute over 2,700 jobs to the local economy. All revenues are generated by user fees and rental income alone, so no taxpayer dollars are used to fund airport operations.

The airport is just one mile northwest of Alcoa Tennessee, and the major thoroughfare which links Alcoa to Knoxville is known as the "world famous Knoxville airport motor mile." The area is teeming with many great eateries, and Alcoa has become a major shopping and tourism corridor in its own right, allowing visitor's access into both the nearby national park as well as metropolitan Knoxville itself.

Another unique local feature is the little-known Snowbird military operations area, or MOA, which drapes over several high-altitude and low-level portions of the nearby park. Although the Great Smoky Mountains is the nation's busiest national park, few visitors who trav-





el to Gatlinburg on vacation likely ever realize the large number of military aircraft which use the area for weapons delivery practice, mock air-to-air combat, and low-level navigation training. This unique chunk of airspace attracts a steady flow of east coast military users, many of which drop in to KTYS to refuel between sorties or even to spend the night.

My photography at McGhee Tyson was, in the beginning, barely "photography" at all. On the rare weekend we would be in the area, my family and I would make the drive out to KTYS to peer through the tall barbed-wire topped chain-link fence to watch airliners arrive and depart. I still have some of those first photos - taken on an old Kodak 3.2 MP point-and-shoot no less, and they include aircraft ranging from a China Lake VX-31 F/A-18F Super Hornet to an old twin-prop, twin-jet ex-Navy Neptune fire bomber.







About two years later I returned to Knoxville several times as the final step of earning my private pilot's license, completing my cross-country training. Many passing jewels - ranging from a Barksdale A-10C flying as "Gunhawk 01", to my last chance to photograph an F/A-18A+ from the "Flying Gators" of VMFA-142 before the unit was placed in cadre status - form my memories of those early days.

For the last three years, however, my technique (and luck) has changed in a major way. During my college career studying mechanical engineering in Cookeville, Tennessee I spent several of my weekends making the trip from middle to east Tennessee in search of a unique photo-opportunity.

It never ceases to bring a smile to my face when I read online posts where airshow fans lament the time and effort they spend to drive to far-away airshows. It is true that I'm not quite as dedicated as most, but every time I make the 3+ hour round-trip drive to Knoxville I have absolutely no clue if any military aircraft are even there! Oc-

asionally, I spend my afternoon watching ERJ after ERJ arrive and depart, but more often than not the results have been simply spectacular...

Knoxville is best known as a "gas-n-go" stop for many East Coast Navy bases including NAS Oceana's Hornets as well as MCAS Cherry Point's Harriers. Knoxville also sees an incredibly large number of Navy T-45C Goshawks from NAS Meridian, plus a healthy number of Air Force T-6A Texan II turboprops plus T-38C Talon and T-1A Jayhawk jets from Columbus AFB in Mississippi.

Over the years, McGhee Tyson has held a number of firsts for me, including my first sighting of an EA-6B Prowler, F/A-18F Super Hornet, MH-60R Seahawk, and perhaps most memorably, the TAV-8B Harrier. As an aspiring naval aviator, these positive memories are a huge motivator to "stay the course" in both college and graduate school, and serve as a great opportunity to meet like-minded aviators as they pass through the area.

One of my traditions also got its start because of a chance meet-up I had two years ago on the transient ramp in Knoxville. After an afternoon class was cancelled in October of 2009, I had the opportunity to make a Friday evening drive out to KTYS and was rewarded with a seemingly sad sight - as I pulled onto the airport motor mile just north of the airfield, four two-seat US Marine Corps TAV-8B Harrier jump-jets screamed into the air just over my head departing to the west for Yuma, AZ. After almost two hours on the road battling traffic, I felt defeated. As I swung into the TacAir parking lot, however, my fortunes swung 180 degrees immediately...







These first encounters only wet my appetite for more, and on subsequent trips I have photographed many other unique aircraft in Alcoa including a Euro-NATO T-6A Texan II, special-ops Air Force MC-130H Hercules, US Customs and Border Patrol UH-60 Blackhawk, plus the standard parade of Navy T-45s and Air Force T-6As. In fact, my most frequent “customers” are the Navy Goshawk student pilots, and more than half of the DVDs I send out now go to Meridian, Mississippi or Kingsville, Texas!

Despite the financial costs (\$45+ in gas per round trip, \$10+ in materials and postage per DVD package, etc.) and the time it takes to capture these images, the trade-off is more than worth the expenses in my book. Over the last several years I have mailed off almost a dozen photo packages to military pilots I met in Knoxville, each containing a DVD of high-resolution images plus several 4x6 prints. It is a very special feeling to receive thank you calls and e-mails from these true American heroes, and these humbling experiences are what bring me back time and time again.

Even though I visit KTYS a little more than once per month on average, I have still had several unique occurrences from these trips. On one Saturday trip I met a Navy commander delivering a VFA-106 T-34C Turbo Mentor from NAS Oceana to NAS Lemoore; the next Friday, I met him again bringing a squadron F/A-18B Hornet back home from Lemoore to Oceana!

In another similar twist of fate, I photographed the same T-45C Goshawk from VT-9/ TW-1 on a Sunday in Nashville, TN as part of a Tennessee Titans game flyover and then again only five days later in Knox-



ville as the jet was headed to Virginia on a weekend cross-country training flight. The world truly is a small place, and neat coincidences like these always make for memorable stories.

Despite the long list of exciting experiences and memorable photos I have gleaned from my travels home to KTYS, the crowning jewel of McGhee Tyson is - in my humble opinion - the people. When I am taking photos I interact mostly with the front desk staff and flightline crew at the TacAir fixed-base operator, and I cannot say enough nice things about this well-coordinated group. TacAir manages a very complex ramp servicing a wide range of users - from the University of Tennessee's executive flight department to several major maintenance and avionics shops to the multitude

of operational and training military aircraft which pass through every week - all the while making their top-notch performance look easy.

The kindness and good nature with which general manager Randall Honea and line manager Grant Hawkins manage their team is evident, and these gentlemen have made their TacAir FBO a wonderful gateway to eastern Tennessee which welcomes thousands of visitors to the area every month.

In closing, I would like to dedicate this article and my photos to all the military aircrews I have met as they passed through McGhee Tyson as well as to the fine men and women of TacAir Knoxville. Without their steadfast support I would not have many of the wonderful memories and friendships I have today, and for that I am truly thankful.

Hidden behind a newly-constructed hanger were four AV-8B Harriers from VMA-542 plus a lone F/A-18C Hornet of VFA-34. Talk about a roller coaster of emotions! I spent the afternoon and evening photographing the Harriers as they refueled, departed KTYS for the Snowbird MOA, and then returned to the ramp for more fuel and a quick de/re-brief. While we waited,

I also had a chance to speak with the newly-minted “Blue Blasters” F/A-18 pilot who was returning home from carrier quals on the west coast in preparation for an upcoming deployment on the USS Abraham Lincoln.

As the sun began to set and the Marines buttoned up their jets for the night I ran through my camera's memory card checking photos - it had truly been a “once in a lifetime” Hallmark-card kind of day. I caught up with the pilots as they hiked back to the FBO carrying their G-suits and helmet bags, and suddenly it occurred to me: maybe these guys would like my photos. After exchanging e-mail addresses, I sent off the first of many such e-mails followed the next week by a DVD of my images.

After exchanging e-mail addresses, I sent off the first of many such e-mails followed the next week by a DVD of my images.



Chino airport is a general aviation airport in suburban Los Angeles, surrounded by acres upon acres of cows. Some people know Chino airport is home to the Planes of Fame museum, an amazing collection of aircraft. Right next door to Planes of Fame is the Yanks Air Museum. The Yanks museum is an extremely impressive collection of mostly American aircraft from all throughout aviation history.

To describe the Yanks museum hardly does the experience justice; walking through their hangars is a moving experience for the aviation enthusiast. The collection extends from WWI into nearly the present day, and it has been announced that they have obtained an F-15 and F-16 for the collection. All aircraft have been restored to a like new, flight worthy condition, which is the most amazing part of the museum.

The first hangar contains aircraft from WWI, the inter war period, and WWII. I would consider myself to be fairly knowledgeable about aviation and aircraft, but my day at the museum was a rude awakening on how much I have to learn. In the first hangar, there was maybe a handful of aircraft I recognized, and even some of those airplanes were deceptive. There was a P-38, only it wasn't; it was an F-5, the reconnaissance version of the P-38. They have the only airworthy O-52 Owl, a KD-1 autogiro from 1935, and the only surviving example of seven Ryan B-1s made. It is a sister ship to the Ryan NYP "Spirit of St. Louis" and sits inconspicuously among the collection. These three are surrounded by so many other unique aircraft with rich histories.

The other hangar is stuffed full of airplanes from WWII right up to

the early modern era. In true Yanks fashion, many of these aircraft are there because they are special even among the ranks of already special aircraft. For example, it wasn't enough to have an F-9F Panther; the Yanks example is actually an RF-9F complete with optical glass in the nose for the trimetrogon camera system.

Seeing a P-63A Kingcobra is fairly rare today, with six claimed flying examples, three of them A models. Yanks has two A models of their own proudly sitting inside. There is a CL-13 Sabre (an F-86 in the US) sporting a high polish skin, with an F-105 and F-106 chase plane nearby. The F-106 sports a sharp paint job with a vertical tail indicating its participation in the B-1B chase program – this aircraft supported the program until 1999 and remained in active service until 2003, not too

shabby for an aircraft delivered in 1958!

Yanks also has a third hangar attached to their boneyard, where all the aircraft restoration takes place. Unfortunately admission into this hangar requires escort by a museum worker and with the excitement of the EC-121 arrival, a museum worker was not in sight. Peering

through the window showed the hangar to be stacked to the ceiling with old parts just waiting to be polished to new condition and placed on their respective aircraft before being wheeled out to the museum floor.

Both hangars of display aircraft at Yanks meet some pretty stringent criteria: desirable in collections, rare

in both type and model, rich in history, and flight worthy. The combination of those factors makes Yanks an outstanding museum to attend for the general public and hardcore aviation enthusiast alike.

More information on the museum can be found at:

www.YanksAir.com





A fifteen-minute walk from New York's Times Square is all it takes to arrive at Pier 86 on the Hudson River, home to the USS Intrepid Sea, Air, and Space Museum. This National Historic Landmark is the third of twenty-four Essex-class aircraft carriers built during World War II and is host to a wide variety of aircraft that are on display to the public. Aviation enthusiasts will not want to miss this fantastic opportunity to board the Intrepid and see the multitude of exhibits that helped shape the future of flight.

The Intrepid Museum will celebrate their thirtieth anniversary this coming August, making 2012 a great year to visit. August also marks thirty-five years since NASA's first landing by the original

Space Shuttle Orbiter Vehicle "Enterprise," which will soon join the museum's many exhibits.

Preparations are currently underway for Intrepid to receive the Orbiter Vehicle Enterprise, set to arrive from Virginia's Dulles Airport in late spring to early summer. This vehicle was constructed for atmospheric testing purposes, which included five actual landings at Edwards Air Force Base, California. Beside surface and airborne tests, the original Orbiter toured Western Europe on the back of a Boeing 747, and made the rounds to several US States before retiring from the shuttle development program.

The Enterprise will eventually be displayed on the Intrepid's aft flight deck, enclosed in a dome



John Nyren



John Nyren



John Nyren

Courtesy USS Intrepid Sea, Air, and Space Museum



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structure for protection against the elements. Positioning the vehicle by barge from JFK Airport to the new Hudson River location is quite an undertaking, however, this is not the first massive delivery to the western end of 46th Street.

As a two-year renovation of the Intrepid concluded, a former British Airways' Concorde was delivered along the carrier's port side in October 2008. G-BOAD arrived on her final flight to JFK Airport with the highest number of flight hours among the twenty Anglo-French SST's built.

Touring Concorde is an option available to museum visitors. Groups of around fifteen people (to a maximum of twenty) can go inside the supersonic transport, including the small but complex cockpit area. Those opting for this unique guided tour will experience what it is like to sit in the forward section of this all first-class cabin.

The Concorde represents just a fraction of the many more aircraft on hand at the museum. This impressive collection is found on both the flight and hangar decks of the Intrepid. One will certainly want to arrive early, as there is much to explore.

Walking out on the newly renovated pier, visitors have the option of taking an elevator or several flights of stairs up a platform adjacent to the Intrepid. A short gangway extends to the flight deck and provides a great view of the five helicopters that are located amidships on the port side.

There are two Sikorsky models with markings from Floyd Bennett Field's Coast Guard Station in Brooklyn, New York: the HH-52 Seaguard, credited with more lives saved than any other helicopter; and the H-19

Chickasaw, powered by a 700 horsepower radial engine.

Three Bell helicopters complete the line-up with a Vietnam era UH-1 "Huey," a fully restored Army AH-1S Cobra, and a USMC AH-1J Sea Cobra. The latter made its final landing aboard Intrepid in 1993, when transferred by the US Marines.

Aft, beyond the now-operational portside aircraft elevator, there is a sign depicting Gun Tub 10, which was replaced by the angled flight deck in the mid 1950s. A kamikaze attack in the Philippines occurred at this position on October 29, 1944.

There are currently three Mikoyan-Gurevich fighters displayed, commonly known as the MiG-15, MiG-17, and MiG-21. The MiGs are part of the seven foreign jet collection lined up on the angled flight deck.

Crossing the stern, a beautiful vista overlooking the Hudson River, one can find the West's answer to the Soviet aircraft threat of the Korean and Vietnam eras. Examples such as the Douglas F3D Skyknight, McDonnell F3H-2N Demon, and later the highly successful F-4 Phantom illustrate the progression in US fighter development. There is also a British Aerospace AV-8C Harrier included in this group of aircraft.

Peter Torraca is in the process of restoring the F3H-2N Demon, on loan from the National Museum of Naval Aviation in Pensacola, Florida. This lesser-known aircraft has a fascinating, though brief, operational history and will truly add an interesting dimension to the current collection. The Demon can be viewed by looking into a temporary deck hangar just aft of the carrier's island. Peter's background in graphic arts combined with a life-long interest in aviation has already contrib-

uted to the completion of another huge project.

A Grumman F9F-8 Cougar, rescued from a state of neglect, abuse, and disrepair, is now beautifully restored and displayed on the starboard bow. This classic jet spent most of its retirement life in a New Jersey park before the Navy reclaimed the Cougar, later loaning her to the museum. Under the direction of Eric Boehm, Curator for Aviation and Aircraft Restoration,

Peter helped to restore the aircraft with accurate markings thanks to Eric's passionate research efforts. This nineteen-month project involved the removal of all major components, some requiring rebuilding from scratch prior to re-installation.

Blue Angels' fans will appreciate the Grumman F11F Tiger located just aft of the Cougar. This aircraft flew in the number five position during the 1961-1963 show seasons and is represented in those mark-



Courtesy USS Intrepid Sea, Air, and Space Museum
John Nyren



John Nyren

ings today. There are several more Grumman aircraft displayed on the flight deck; these planes were designed at the company's nearby Bethpage, Long Island facility. They include the E-1 Tracer, A-6 Intruder, and the F-14 Tomcat of "Top-Gun" fame.

The United States Air Force is represented by the first production Lockheed A-12, which later lead to the SR-71 Blackbird Mach three reconnaissance plane. There is also an F-16 Fighting Falcon that served in Operation Desert Storm.

Descending to the hangar deck, one will find several more aircraft on display, including a magnificently restored Douglas A-4B Skyhawk that actually served aboard Intrepid during her first Vietnam tour in 1966. This jet also displays the accurate markings of the Fifth Squadron's

aircraft number twelve, thanks to the countless hours of research by Curator, Eric Boehm.

Eric has also spent a tremendous amount of time working on a gun turret display adjacent to a TBM-3E Avenger, the oldest airplane aboard the ship. This three-man torpedo bomber was equipped with a gun turret as a defensive measure. Eric's father actually served as a gunner aboard Avengers. This complex device incorporates a cam mechanism which electronically interrupts the gun's trigger as the barrel swings through a path that could interfere with the wingtips and tail section. Avengers operated from the deck of the Intrepid during World War II, making a significant contribution to the victory in the Pacific. This particular aircraft served as a Canadian water bomber, fighting wildfires

during its post-war life.

A North American Aviation FJ-3 Fury, a derivative of the F-86 Sabre, was also rescued from certain deterioration. This aircraft had been purchased from the Navy as scrap then was subsequently used as a sign, directing guests to a campground in New Jersey. Fortunately, the swept-wing jet was purchased by the museum for one dollar, and then restored to its current showroom condition.

The hangar deck features a presentation entitled "Kamikaze: Day of Darkness, Day of Light." This is an absolute must for visitors. It is shown every hour on the half and is fourteen minutes long. This multimedia experience takes place at the actual shipboard location that the November 25, 1944 attacks occurred, killing 69 and seriously

wounding 35 officers and crew.
 The orbiter vehicle Enterprise will not be the first association the Intrepid has had with NASA's space program. Capsules from both the Mercury and Gemini programs were recovered aboard the ship in the 1960s, and there is a replica of a Mercury capsule located on the hangar deck.
 Naval history buffs will want to check out the optional tour of the USS Growler submarine, also located alongside pier 86. This is the only U.S. diesel-powered strategic missile submarine open to the public.
 This month, the Intrepid Sea, Air, and Space Museum will be featuring the new exhibit, "Ship Shape: Nautical Scale Models." Visitors should check the latest happenings, listed on the website:
www.IntrepidMuseum.org



John Nyren



John Nyren



Courtesy USS Intrepid Sea, Air, and Space Museum



John Nyren



John Nyren

Aviation Museums of Finland

Article and Photos by Pieter Stroobach

The nation of Finland as we know it today rose from the remains of the Russian empire, which collapsed in 1917. In the first half of 1918, a civil war raged between the Reds (communists with support from the Soviets) and Whites (conservatives with support from the Germans) in what was called the Grand Duchy of Finland.

The Whites won, and in the aftermath of WWI, Finland arose as an independent, democratic republic. The Fins were under German influence until 1944, when they changed sides and signed an armistice with the Soviet Union. A peace settlement was reached in 1947 and Finland remained neutral during the cold war.

For those of you who feel awkward seeing a swastika on the early Finnish aircraft, a little bit of detailed history to explain. In early 1918, Swedish Count Eric von Rosen gave the Whites an aircraft to use in their fight against the Reds. His personal good luck charm, painted on the Thulin Typ D aircraft (a Swedish derivative of the French Morane-Saulnier L), was a blue swastika, which is an ancient symbol for the sun and good luck. This aircraft is regarded by many as the first Finnish military aircraft. To honor the Count for his support, the roundel of the Finnish aircraft became a blue swastika on a white circle from April 1918 on. In 1945, an Allied Control Commission decreed that it had to

be abandoned for all of the obvious reasons.

At the beginning of the civil war, only the Reds had any aircraft, former Russian models. At the end of the war, however, the Whites had an aviation force of about 40 aircraft from several sources. After the civil war, several clashes with the Soviet Union occurred between 1918 and 1920, as well as in 1939 (the Winter War) and 1941 through 1944 (the Continuation War). The Ilmavoimat (Finnish Air Force) was established in 1925 and received aircraft from all over Europe, the USA and the Soviet Union (both captured and purchased). During the inter-war period, most aircraft came from European suppliers like Caudron,



domestically produced trainers. After the cold war ended, Finland purchased the F-18C Hornets that make up its frontline fighter fleet today.

Scattered throughout Finland are a number of clubs, organizations, and societies dedicated to preserving the aviation history of the country. Last June, I joined a trip organized by Ian Allan Aviation Tours to visit some of the museums in Finland. It is very convenient to step out of your plane, go through customs, and find a coach driver with an Ian Allan sign waiting for you. With the first location only a one hour drive away, everything was set up for a good trip. During this trip, we visited four locations; the Paijat-Hameen Ilmailumuseo, the Finnish Air Force Museum, the Hallinportii Aviation Museum, and Finnish Aviation Museum Society.

The Paijat-Hameen Ilmailumuseo in Lahti was founded in 1962 and is based in a hangar situated on the Lahti-Vesivehmaa Airfield (EFLA). The hangar itself was built during the Winter War when Bristol Blenheims were stationed there. The highlights of the collection are an Aero A-32, the only Blackburn Ripon IIF in the world, and the remains of a Caudron C.R.174, but there is much more, including a Vampire FB.52/T.55, C.59, Gnat FR.1, CM.170 Magister, D.26 Haukka 1, K.1 Kurki, Kassel 12A, MiG-15UTI, MiG-21bis, Mi-8PS, RC-3, SAAB 35S, and a Kotka II.

Despite great enthusiasm from our hosts, it was clear that money is urgently needed for upkeep. With the exception of the recently retired aircraft, much of the collection is in dire condition. The state of disrepair does not detract from the historical value, however, and it is well worth a visit.

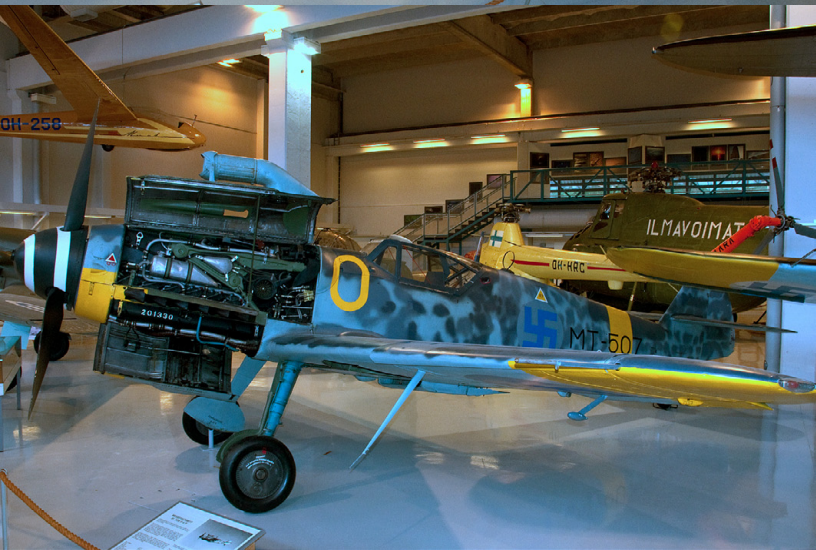
The Keski-Suomen Ilmailu-museo is the official Finnish Air Force Museum at Tikkakoski (near Jyväskylä AFB) and it shows. This museum details the history of the Finnish Air Force from 1918 to the present day. Its collection begins with a replica of Count von Rosens Thulin and ends with recently retired MiG-21s and SAAB Drakens. Apart from the aircraft, there is also a large collection of accessories and communications equipment

as well as numerous models. Upon our arrival we were welcomed by museum officials, who opened the museum early especially for us! A tour took us along the museum exhibits and the workshop. Two restoration projects are currently in progress; in the workshop itself is a Hawker Hurricane Mk I nearing completion, and on the nearby Air Force Base is a Douglas DC-2-115E. Unfortunately, this location is not open to the public.





The highly varied collection in the museum provides a very nice impression of the turmoil Finland went through in the twentieth century. The most interesting to me were the numerous Finnish-built aircraft like the I.V.L. C.24, VL Humu, VL Pyorremyrsky, and VL Vihuri II because they cannot be seen anywhere in the world but Finland. However, seeing the likes of a Martinsyde F.4 Buzzard is also not an everyday occurrence! The collection, which also includes an Avro 504K, Breguet 14.A.2, Buffalo, Blenheim IV, DH.60X Moth, Vampire T.55, C-47A, Gnat F.1, Fw44J, D.XXI, CM.170, GL22B2, Il-28R, C.24, Bf109G-6Y, MiG-15UTI, MiG-21bis/F-13/U/UM, Mi-4, MS502C, Lim-5, SAAB 35CS/35F/35S, SAAB 91D, SAAB MFI-9, and a TL-90TP is by no means small. All the aircraft are relatively spaciouly placed, which comes in handy when taking photos. All in all, a very attractive museum where one can spend lots of time.





The arrival at Hallinportii Ilmailu-
 museo, or Hallinportii Aviation Mu-
 seum, was an example of looks
 being deceiving. The moment you
 arrive you see a number of prefab-
 ricated corrugated iron huts and a
 rusty Mikoyan Gurevich MiG-15UTI.
 The place does not very promising,
 until you step inside and are instan-
 tly face to propeller with a Rumpler

6B. Sitting behind the Rumpler are
 an Aero A-11, a Bristol Bulldog IVA,
 a Caudron G.III, a Fw44J, an Haukka
 II and VL Saaki II in various stages of
 restoration. The G.III and the Bull-
 dog look especially superb. The fact
 that this unique collection is housed
 in a bare bones workshop is a bit
 surprising to say the least. It is re-
 grettable that these rare aircraft are

not keep in better conditions. One
 of the other huts has a large col-
 lection of Air Force uniforms, flight
 equipment, measuring devices,
 weaponry, and radio equipment
 from different eras. Although pho-
 tography is a bit of a disaster at this
 location, it is also somewhat jaw
 dropping that these historic aircraft
 are around. An absolute must see.





Last but not least was the collection of the Suomen Ilmailumuseo RY, or the Finnish Aviation Museum Society, which close to Vantaa IAP so if you ever are around don't hesitate to visit it. This is a loaded museum. It has two halls, one focused towards military aviation and the other for the civilian side. Both

halls are loaded with an impressive array of 72 aircraft ranging from the Adaridi AD 3, the first aircraft designed and built in Finland, to a number of jets on display outside. The military hall is dominated by an IVL A.22 Hansa seaplane, a Finnish license-built copy of the Hansa-Brandenburg W.33. With no less

than 120 built in the early 1920s, this aircraft would become the second most numerous aircraft that has ever been built in Finland for the Finnish Air Force. There are also a number of aircraft present as only wreckage, unfortunately. One other plane in the collection deserves extra attention and that is the Polikarpov UTI-4 (I-16 UTI), believed to be the sole surviving dual seater of this type. The variety of aircraft squeezed into the building is massive.

The main aircraft inside the civilian hall are a Douglas C-47A Dakota, a Lockheed 18-07 Lodestar, and a Convair 340. Rounding out the collection are an Atol 450, a Beech 95-A55, a Bell 47D-1, a Blomqvist-Nyberg, a Buffalo, a Blenheim Mk.I, a Bryan HP-16, a Caudron C 60, a Vampire F.B.52/T.55, a DHC-2, an Eklund TE-1, an FI 156K-1, an Fw44J, a CM.170, two Gnat F.1s, a Gamecock MK.II, an IVL A.22 Hansa, a Junkers A 50, a Klemm L25, an S.218A, a BF-109G-2, several MiG-21s (bis/F-13/UM), an Mi-4, two Mi-8PS/Ts, a PA-28R-180, a PZL SM-ISZ, a Reims/Cessna 150J, several SAAB Drakens (J35BS/CS), a Saab 91D, a Tuuli III, a Vihuri, a Pyy II, a Saaski II, a Tuisku II, and a Viima II. With such a wide variety of aircraft it was a great stop of a very well organized trip! Many thanks to Ian Allan Aviation Tours for allowing me to see these rare pieces of aviation history.





Woohoo! Airshow season is back, albeit with a slow start. The Cable Airshow is the first airshow in the southern California area after the not so long and not so cold break following Nellis in November. Cable airport is a relatively small general aviation airport in Upland, California. For one weekend, the lineup at Cable is quite different and much more diverse than the standard privately owned Cessnas and the like.

The show started off with the National Anthem and skydivers. The list of performers varied significantly in the performance characteristics of their aircraft and it seemed as if the airshow organizers scheduled the show so the performances swung from high perfor-

mance to lower performance and back as each performer took to the sky. The high performance acts included Rob Harrison – The Tumbling Bear – in his Zlin 50LS, Doug Jardine in his Sbach 342 “Thunderbolt”, a modern composite aircraft, and Dr. D’s Old Time Aerobatics in his Taylorcraft. The lower performance solo aircraft performances included a couple different Stearmans throughout the day, Clay Lacy in his Pilatus Turbo Porter, and a group of Van’s RVs demonstrating formation flying around a racetrack pattern. Most of these performances were repeated in the afternoon half of the show. Repeating the acts in afternoon affords some benefits: late comers to the show don’t miss any of the performances and photogra-

phers get another chance to get the winning shots.

There was a collection of vintage aircraft and warbirds to conclude the morning and afternoon performances. The Commemorative Air Force had an FM-2 Wildcat fly race-track patterns; it was much louder than I remember Wildcats being. There were three Ryan PT-22s flying in formation, one of the most numerous of still-flying warbird types. “Big Panda”, an Antonov AN-2 Colt showed that it is possible to have short takeoff and low speed flight characteristics, while also holding the title of the world’s largest production biplane. Among many other interesting airplanes flying during the vintage segment of the show, a Yak-18, complete with Aeroflot liv-

ery, stood out as one of the rarer airplanes to be seen at an American airshow.

Separating the morning and afternoon shows was an RC aircraft demonstration as well as a classic car parade. In one corner of the airport there was a car show all day for those only mildly interested in airplanes. The collection of cars was extensive and admirable; anyone with an interest in cars could spend a significant amount of time pouring over the collection. The afternoon show kicked off with the C-53 “Victory Girl” dropping the Just In Time Parachute Team, followed by a repeat the morning performances.

While all these demonstrations were performed throughout the day, the public was able to purchase rides in Robinson R22s, Cessna 172s, a North American T-6, and a de Havilland Tiger Moth.

This is the first year I attended the Cable Airshow, despite it being the closest airshow to me. After attending this year, it became quite apparent all those years of missing the show have been a big mistake on my part. I know I will be looking forward to next year.





American Heroes Airshow - Ft. Myers, FL

Article and Photos by John Nyren

Five weeks before the Minnesota Twins take the field to play against Tampa Bay in the spring-training season opener at Hammond Stadium, another event warmed up the grounds of the Lee County Sports Complex in Ft. Myers. The American Heroes Air Show came to life on Saturday, January 28th with the arrival of twenty helicopters onto the adjacent baseball fields at this South Florida venue.

The American Heroes Air Show is a California-based organization, which produces community events in several U.S. cities each year. The primary focus of this program is to increase public awareness of the critical role that rotary-winged aircraft play in our daily lives. Bryan Smith, a pilot with the Lee County Sheriff's Office, has coordinated these events in Florida for the past five years. The 2012 show was the second consecutive annual display to take place in Ft. Myers, with the remaining three occurring in Gainesville before Bryan's relocation to Lee County.

The event started Wednesday, January 25th with a Cost of Freedom tribute. A scale-replica of Washington D.C.'s Vietnam Memorial Wall was on display at the Lee County Sports Complex along with other items to remind us of the sacrifice that so many men and women of the United States Armed Forces have made. American Heroes' Traveling Tribute displays this wall and the many other items to honor veterans who gave all. There were other community programs that took place during the three days leading up to Saturday's air show, including

a fly-by of EAA warbirds on Thursday.

The first helicopter to arrive on Saturday was Lee County's own Eurocopter Astar 350, the only one to land before dawn. Eighteen more rotorcraft would follow between the

morning hours of 7:30 and 10:17, with the final arrival mid-afternoon. Air Boss Mike 'Pop' Warner was instrumental in coordinating the marshalling of each arrival to a pre-planned location on any one of four baseball fields.



Gates officially opened to the public at 9:00 am for this static display show. Over sixty volunteers helped to insure the smooth and safe flow of traffic to and from the sports complex. These volunteers consisted of a group of Sheriff Office Explorers, Aviation Explorers Post 491, and the Civil Air Patrol. The weather was perfect for this family friendly program with mostly clear skies and temperatures in the eighties. Attendance has been estimated at 7,000.

The popularity of the Weather Channel's "Coast Guard Alaska" se-

ries attracted many to a Eurocopter Dolphin HH-65 rescue helicopter, one of five operated by Miami's Coast Guard Station. Rescue swimmers were happy to demonstrate the equipment used to help those in need.

Three TH-57 Sea Ranger advanced training helicopters arrived from Florida's Naval Air Station South Whiting Field, two with Navy markings and one with a Marine livery. The TH-57 is the military version of the Bell Model 206 Jet Ranger.

Florida Air National Guard's UH-72 Lakota was one of three twin-

engine rotorcraft at the show. This is a highly advanced and militarized version of the Eurocopter EC-145. It is considered a light utility helicopter designed to aid in homeland security and is used by multi-purpose aviation units throughout the country.

Law Enforcement was well represented by Lee, Collier, Hillsborough, and Sarasota Counties. The latter had a Bell 407 on display, which is capable of fighting fires. Though firefighting represents ten percent of the usage of Sarasota's civil utility helicopter (the remaining ninety percent being law-enforcement), this is a very critical feature, especially in the current dry season.

Fitted with the Simplex Model 308 Fire Attack System, the Bell 407 is capable of filling its 245 gallon composite tank in just 53 seconds by lowering a 24 volt, 300 gallon-per-minute pump, whilst hovering over a water source that is at least two feet deep. Once filled, water (or foam) can be rapidly ejected over the fire area using either one or both doors on the bottom of the tank. Smoke is a primary factor in maneuvering around fires. In some cases, the Forest Service gets involved with an overhead fixed-wing aircraft directing multiple fire fighting helicopters and heavy ground equipment. Florida has certainly seen its share of fires this season already.

Helicopters that are used in law-enforcement are usually staffed with both a pilot and a Tactical Flight Officer, or TFO. These professionals receive significant training in the operation of high-tech equipment used in search, rescue, surveillance, and the apprehension of suspected criminals.

The Drug Enforcement Agency,
February 2012

commonly referred to as the DEA, displayed their Bell 407 helicopter, which is used to support their mission of investigating and prosecuting major drug violations.

Two air-ambulance helicopters were also on display. First to arrive was Lee County's Bell 430 Medstar, powered by two Allison 250-C20 Series Turbo-shaft engines. The second, a Eurocopter EC-135 PT, flew in from Tampa General Hospital.

Tampa General Hospital (TGH) has over 1,000 beds and 6,700 employees. They operate as a teaching hospital in partnership with South Florida University. In addition to their Trauma unit, TGH is one of the leading organ transplant centers in the United States. They are located on the Davis Islands in the Tampa Bay area.

Tampa General Hospital operates their helicopters primarily with one pilot, an EMT, and a paramedic. The interior contains all of the equipment that one would find in an ambulance. Once a call is received, the crew is usually airborne within five minutes; this occurs two or three times per day on average. Some flights are between hospitals while others involve operating into various landing zones, usually directed by Emergency Management Services (EMS).

Mosquito control is another important service required by Southwest Floridians, especially in the wet June-September season. Lee County Mosquito Control District displayed two helicopters dedicated for this purpose, an Allison-powered Bell 206B and the popular Bell UH-1H "Huey."

Nearby Manatee County displayed a highly maneuverable Hughes 369D, also used for Mosquito control. During the off-season,

the helicopter undergoes maintenance and is used for public awareness events.

Five civilian helicopters completed the display. A Hiller UH-12C, built in 1958 and owned by Michael K. Hein of Leigh Acres, Florida, looked like it had just rolled off the factory floor. Later in the afternoon, a second Hiller arrived, bringing the total static display aircraft to twenty.

Two pontoon-equipped Robinson helicopters were at the Sports Complex, the R-22 Mariner owned

by Boatpix.com and the R-44 Clipper I, operated by Ocean Helicopters of West Palm Beach.

Boatpix.com uses thirty R-22s across the country to photograph yachts, later marketing these images to vessel owners. Two qualified pilots who are also accomplished photographers operate the Mariners; this increases operational efficiency as boats can be photographed on either side of the flight path. The pontoons serve as a safety back up only, as company policy



prohibits routine water landings.

Bristow Academy flew in one of the many Schweizer 300CBis from their Titusville headquarters. This model is a two-seat trainer powered by a Textron-Lycoming 180 horsepower reciprocating engine. It has a useful load of 648 pounds and can cruise at eighty-five knots. Instructor William Oathwaite was on hand

to answer questions about the process of becoming a helicopter pilot. In addition to the numerous helicopters on display, there were several emergency service vehicles present. Lee County displayed a bomb-squad unit, a Sheriff car, and their Mobile Communications Command Center. The MCC is used during major incidents and is capable

of transmitting and receiving on a wide range of frequencies including the bands used for aviation.

There were several representatives on hand to increase public awareness in topics ranging from U.S. citizenship to the honoring of our fallen heroes. Jim Scollen, the Florida State Coordinator of the Missing in America Project (MIAP)





was available to answer questions regarding this program, which helps to locate, identify, and inter deceased veterans whose remains are unclaimed for a variety of reasons. Once the tedious process of identification is completed, these fallen heroes are often eligible for free interment in either national or state veterans' cemeteries.

MIAP has visited more than 2,200 funeral homes, located 1,898 veterans, and interred 1,631 veterans and eligible dependents to date. They are a 501c(3) corporation that has an amazingly low administrative cost of less than one percent of donations. With over 99 percent of these donations going directly to the intended cause, this is a great charity for those wishing to make a financial contribution to a program that they can feel good about. Volunteers are in high demand in all areas of the country, as this work requires many man-hours to complete. You can find more information on volunteering and contributing through MIAP's website at: www.MIAP.us. MIAP is active in almost all states and residents can contact their state coordinator to learn more or donate.

The entire American Heroes event was very informative and visitors left the grounds with a much better understanding of the services that their tax dollars provide. It is quite reassuring to know that these highly trained men and women that serve the public are there for us at all times. We would like to add our sincere thanks to the individuals that participated in this year's air show.



Langkawi International Maritime and Aerospace Exhibition - Malaysia

Article and Photos by Pieter Stroobach

The 2011 Langkawi International Maritime and Aerospace Exhibition (LIMA) was held from December 6th to the 10th. The LIMA has been a trade show for manufacturers targeting the growing Asia Pacific markets for nearly 22 years. It

is a biannual event which is held on the airport and harbor of Langkawi, an island off the coast of Peninsular Malaysia close to the Thai border. Malaysia is a nation close to the equator and has the tropical weather one might expect; scorch-

ing heat, torrential downpours, and everything in between, always with extremely high humidity. It is also one of the more economically successful nations in Asia.

No less than five Malaysian semi-military organizations have some sort of air wing. The Tentera Udara Diraja Malaysia (TUDM - Malaysian Air Force) is the largest of the five and is the first line of air defense. It has quite an impressive range of fighters in its arsenal; the Su-30MKM, F/A-18D, MiG-29N, Hawk Mk 108, and F-5E. As you can tell, the Malaysians have a habit of buying relatively small numbers of many different types of fighters. Apart from the fighter fleet there are of course aircraft for the equally important duties of transport (C-130H-MP, C-130H-30, C-130T, CN235-220M, Beech 200T), training (MB339CM, Hawk Mk 208, MiG-29NUB, F-5F, PC-7, PC-7 MkII, MD3-160), VIP Transport (AS61N-1, S70A-34, F28-1000, Falcon 900, BD700, B737-7H6, CN235-220M), several recce jobs (RF-5E, Beech 200T) and helicopter duties (S-61A-4, Alouette III).

The other units are the Tentera Laut Diraja Malaysia (TLDM - Malaysian Navy) with two squadrons of helicopters (Super Lynx Mk300 and AS555SN), the Tentera Darat Malaysia (TDM - Malaysian Army) with one squadron of helicopters (A109LOH), the Agensi Penguatkuasaan Maritim Malaysia (APMM - Malaysian Maritime Enforcement Agency) with three Eurocopter AS365N3s and two Bombardier 415MPs, and the Jabatan Bomba dan Penyelamat Malaysia (JBPM - Malaysian Fire and Rescue Department) with Mil-17-

1Vs, Mi-171s, A109Es and AW319s. All of these branches were present during the show, so apart from the trade show it was a nice chance to see a lot of the Malaysian military air power. There were also some interesting foreign visitors; Thai SAAB JAS-39 Gripens, a Singaporean S-70 Seahawk and Fokker F50, and a US Lockheed P-3C Orion and Boeing C-17A Globemaster III.

With Malaysia currently seeking 4 maritime patrol aircraft, 36-40 fighters to replace the F-5s and MiG-29s, an airborne early warning capability, and new attack helicopters, plus taking delivery of 12 EC725 combat search and rescue helicopters from 2012 onwards and 4 Airbus Military A400Ms on order, it is clear why manufacturers and suppliers like to come here.

Given that the airport is civilian, one could enjoy the show both on and off the airport without any problem. In the days before the show, many participants rehearsed their performances and attracted large crowds of curious onlookers. The arrival of many of the participants and their supporting planes is always an absolute pleasure. In between the practices and arrivals, airliners arrived bearing more tourists.

The show itself was actually a somewhat minor affair which only lasted about an hour and a half from 11:30 until 13:00. Unfortunately for the photographers in attendance, the lighting was very unforgiving. The show opened with a surprise high speed pass by an F-5E and an F-5F, complete with pyrotechnics to underline the opening. This was directly followed by a demonstration of the Eurofighter Typhoon by No. 6 Squadron of the RAF. Although Eurofighter did not





ble aircraft, and had been giving familiarization flights before and during the show. The F/A-18F put on a magnificent show to the delight of the crowd. After the Super Hornet was the Su-30MK. With these two aircraft flying back to back, it was a nice chance to compare their demos. The winner at this show was the Su-30, an absolute highlight of the show.

The jet-powered thunder gave way to a moment of relative quiet in the form of a Dornier Do-228NG, nowadays built by Swiss based RUAG, which has reenergized the production with an entirely digital cockpit version of this proven design. It was certainly a crowd pleaser and the four day journey by the Do-228 crew to get to the aircraft to the show was time well spent. Next came the neighbors from Singapore with a General Dynamics F-16C Fighting Falcon display. I had never seen the Singaporean display of the F-16 before and it can certainly hold its own when compared with the European versions I have seen many times over. The F-16 was followed by a Hawaiian 15WG/154WG Boeing C-17A Globemaster III. Apparently the people at Boeing see potential sales in the region and hope to keep the production line open just a little longer. The demo they give with the C-17 is an amazing one.

Next came another Malaysian contribution, the "Smoking Bandits". Given that they fly the MiG-29N/NUB, smoking is an entirely appropriate description! I was impressed that the TUDM is able to organize a jet team, especially given the fact that there are only ten operational MiG-29s in the TUDM inventory. Their show was, like all jet demo teams, an impressive

officially participate in the show, it just so happened that the squadron was in Malaysia for an exercise to train with the Malaysian, Singaporean, Philippine, and Australian air forces. The Australians also parked a nice Airbus KC-30A tanker in the statics.

The TUDM has a history of setting up a special demo team for the LIMA, and this year was no exception. A team of four Extra 300s was put on a display of high precision

formation flying with one of them as a solo for the extra punch. The fact that they gave such an excellent show with less than a month of training says a lot about the capabilities of the TUDM pilots. It makes one wonder how many air forces are capable of doing something similar? The Extras were followed by another jet from Europe; the French Dassault-Brequet Rafale. The Boeing F/A-18F Super Hornet flew next. Boeing sent two of these very capa-





one and certainly a highlight of the show. The finale of the show came in the form of a Eurocopter EC665 Tigre HAD. It was the only attack helicopter present, and with the Malaysians seeking to buy some attack helicopters, the likes of the AH-61 and T-129 teams missed a nice opportunity.

Altogether LIMA was a very nice show, although it was somewhat short and timing would have been better had it been held earlier or later on the day. In the end, it was a great opportunity to see a lot of the TUDM and that in itself is reason enough to come back.



THE BEST OF

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As we kick off our 2012 coverage, we look back at 2011 with a collection of the best photos our contributors captured. Enjoy!





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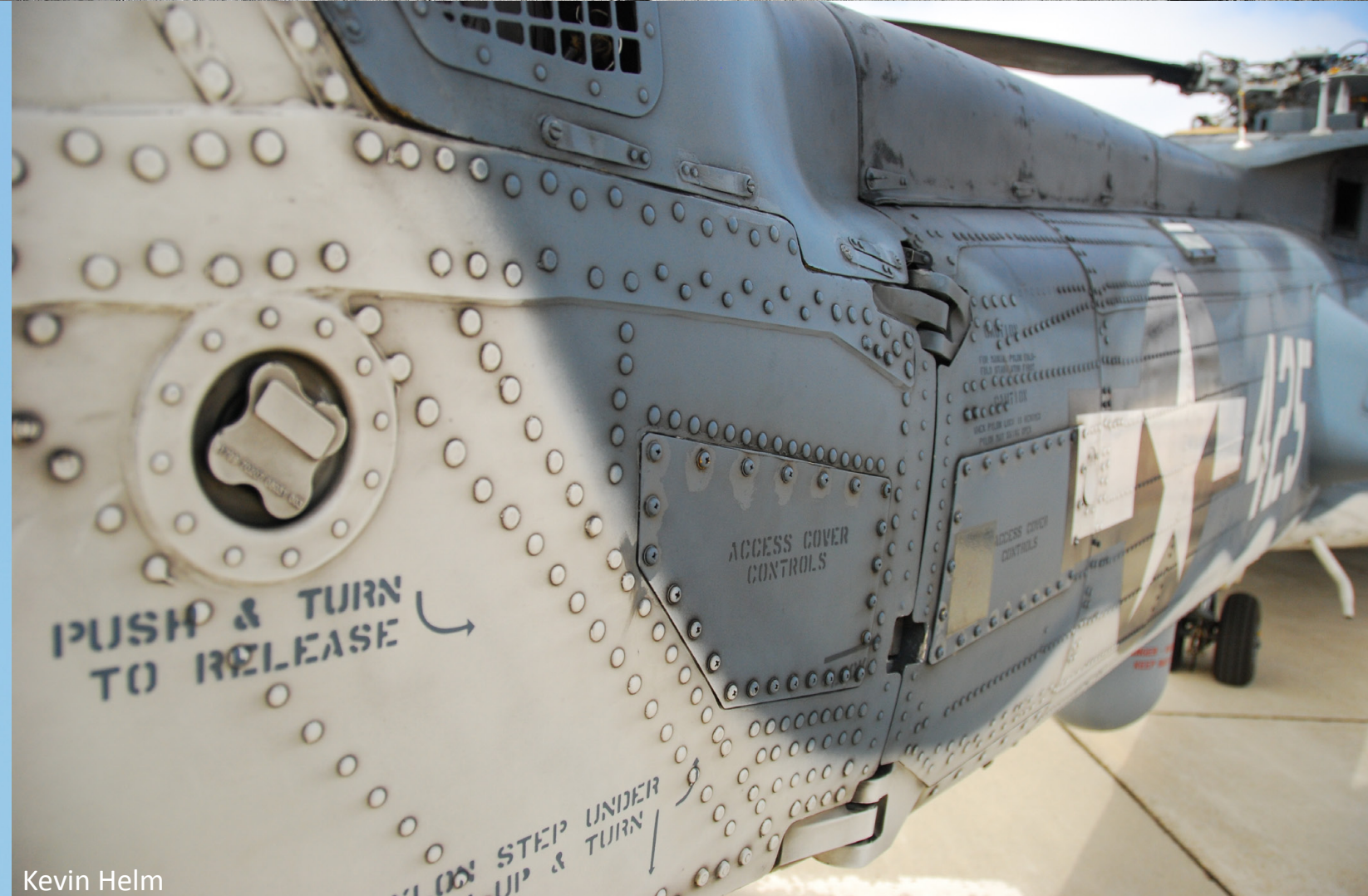
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