

# AirshowStuff

Magazine



## Inside:

*The 787 Visits San Diego  
Carolinas Aviation Museum  
USS Hornet  
Golden Knights Winter Training  
Blue Angels 2012  
Photo Contest  
Reports From the Field  
and more!*

March-April 2012



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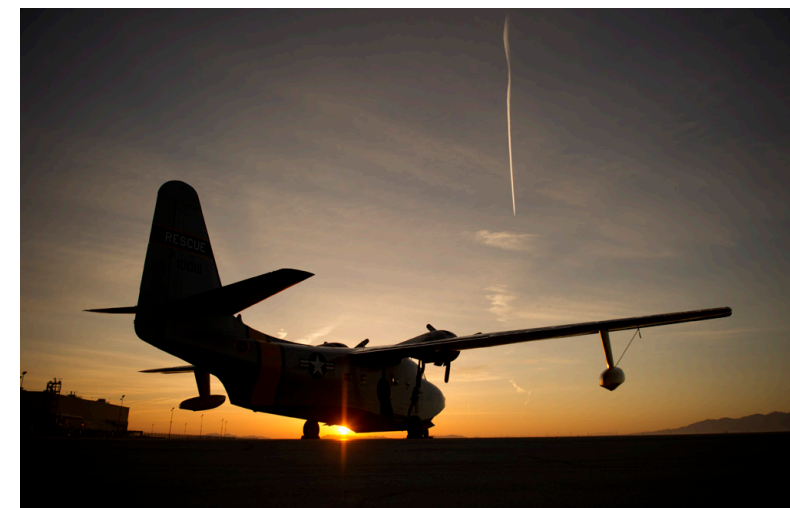
# AirshowStuff Magazine

## Cover Photo

Members of the United States Army parachute team, the Golden Knights, exit their C-31 Troopship jump aircraft over Florida during the team's winter training period. Photo by Kevin Martini. For more on the Golden Knights winter training, see page 42.

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Mark Hrutkay

### 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](mailto:RS@AirshowStuff.com)

We'd love to talk with you!

### Corrections From February 2012

- The photos in the "Chino Connie" article were not properly credited. Four of the photos are from Matt Shinavar, and the other two are from Eric A Rosen.
- The Super Hornet takeoff picture on page 116 should be credited to Matt Shinavar, not Christopher Roberts.

### Thanks to those who contributed to this issue!

- |                   |                     |
|-------------------|---------------------|
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| Charlie Lai       | Eric A. Rosen       |
| Jonathan Loveless | Michelle Rouch      |
| Kevin Martini     | Matt Shinavar       |
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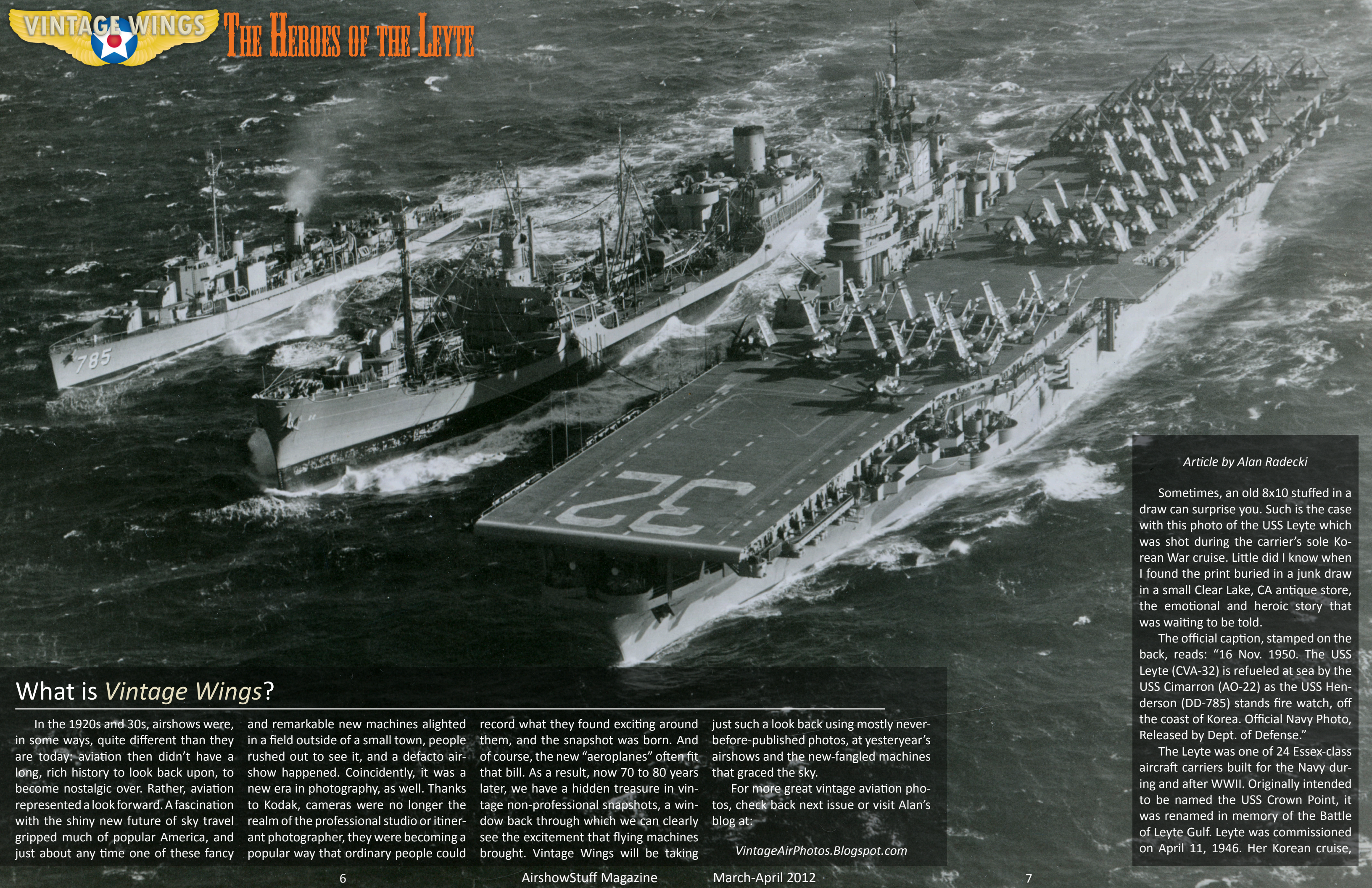
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*If you can dress yourself,  
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Article by Alan Radecki

Sometimes, an old 8x10 stuffed in a draw can surprise you. Such is the case with this photo of the USS Leyte which was shot during the carrier's sole Korean War cruise. Little did I know when I found the print buried in a junk draw in a small Clear Lake, CA antique store, the emotional and heroic story that was waiting to be told.

The official caption, stamped on the back, reads: "16 Nov. 1950. The USS Leyte (CVA-32) is refueled at sea by the USS Cimarron (AO-22) as the USS Henderson (DD-785) stands fire watch, off the coast of Korea. Official Navy Photo, Released by Dept. of Defense."

The Leyte was one of 24 Essex-class aircraft carriers built for the Navy during and after WWII. Originally intended to be named the USS Crown Point, it was renamed in memory of the Battle of Leyte Gulf. Leyte was commissioned on April 11, 1946. Her Korean cruise,

## 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 airshow 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](http://VintageAirPhotos.Blogspot.com)



as a part of Navy Task Force 77, lasted from October 9, 1950 through January 19, 1951, during which her crew earned two battle stars. On board, she carried a mix of old F4U Corsairs, AD-1 Skyraiders, and a handful of F9F Panthers.

One of the Corsair squadrons on board the Leyte was VFA-32, the "Fighting Swordsmen" (they are still active today, flying F/A-18 Hornets, most recently from the USS Harry S. Truman), and one of the pilots from this squadron was the Navy's first African-American Naval Aviator, Ensign Jesse L. Brown.

About three weeks after this photo was taken, Brown, flying as call-sign "Iroquois 13", was part of a six-ship element flying a close air support mission in support of Marines of the US X Corps, fighting during the crucial Battle of Chosin Reservoir. He was hit by Communist Chinese ground fire, and was forced to put his Corsair down in a remote, snow-covered area. The plane broke up, but Brown survived the landing.

Brown's wingman, Lt.(JG) Thomas J. Hudner, Jr., saw that he was alive but pinned in (some sources say under)



the burning wreckage of the Corsair, so Hudner deliberately crash-landed nearby in order to rescue his fellow flyer. A rescue helicopter soon arrived, but the rescue crew, working with Hudner, was unable to free Brown. Approaching darkness forced the helicopter crew to have to return to base with Hudner, and leaving Brown behind. Brown died that night, of a combination of his injuries and exposure to the extreme cold. In order to prevent Brown's body from falling into Chinese hands, Navy pilots

bombed the wreck site with napalm two days later, while reciting the Lord's Prayer over the radio.

Jesse L. Brown was the first Navy officer killed in the Korean conflict. He was posthumously awarded the Distinguished Flying Cross, the Air Medal and a Purple Heart. In 1972, the Navy also named the Knox-class frigate USS Jesse L. Brown (FF-1089) in his honor. Meanwhile, for his efforts in trying to rescue his fellow Naval Aviator, Hudner was awarded the Medal of Honor.



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# DREAMTOUR SAN DIEGO



Christopher Roberts

Article by Christopher Roberts

With its sleek new nose mammoth nacelles, the Boeing 787 Dreamliner touched down on runway 27 of San Diego International Airport for the first time on March 12, 2012. The plane was met by thousands at the fences and surrounding areas as the brand new aircraft seemed to whisper by.

The aircraft, which was the third test aircraft off the assembly line, made the historic stop in San Diego to promote the 787 Dreamliner on its Dreamtour. San Diego was the 19th stop on the Dreamtour, which will showcase the plane on five continents by the time the tour ends in mid April. The purpose of the Dreamtour is to showcase this remarkable aircraft to airline customers, Boeing employees, as well as employees of major suppliers. In the case of this leg of the tour San Diego is home to Hamilton Sund-

strand Power Systems, responsible for the auxiliary power system, and Goodrich Aerostructures, which provides fuel quantity indicating, proximity sensing, and cargo handling systems, electric brakes, and one of the most distinctive features of the 787, the scalloped engine nacelles. These engineering marvels were designed and assembled right down the road in Chula Vista.

Hundreds of employees from

these two companies were invited to the airport to tour the aircraft and experience firsthand what they had helped create. Guests were given the chance to roam about the cabin and discover the many new features that come with the Boeing 787. Most visitors were impressed with the cabin windows of the plane. First, the size of the cabin windows are much larger than traditional commercial aircraft and



Scott Kopp



Scott Kopp





Scott Kopp  
Scott Kopp

the new “dimmbable” windows (there are no shutters) impressed the crowds. Guests were also given the opportunity to walk around the aircraft’s exterior. While on the ground most of the guests were drawn to the large Rolls Royce engines with Goodrich Aerostructures nacelles on them.

For the Goodrich and Hamilton Sundstrand employees lucky enough to tour the 787, it was a great opportunity to see their hard work’s result and to see what the latest and greatest in commercial aviation has to offer.

San Diego is also the type of city that the 787 was geared for. The city has a large population but is seen as a minor airport in terms of international air traffic, with most international travelers from the region having to fly through Los Angeles for overseas travels. However, Japan Air Lines announced that they would be introducing a direct flight from San Diego to Tokyo, the first ever non-stop flight to Asia in San Diego International history. The flights start in December of 2012.

Christopher Roberts



Scott Kopp

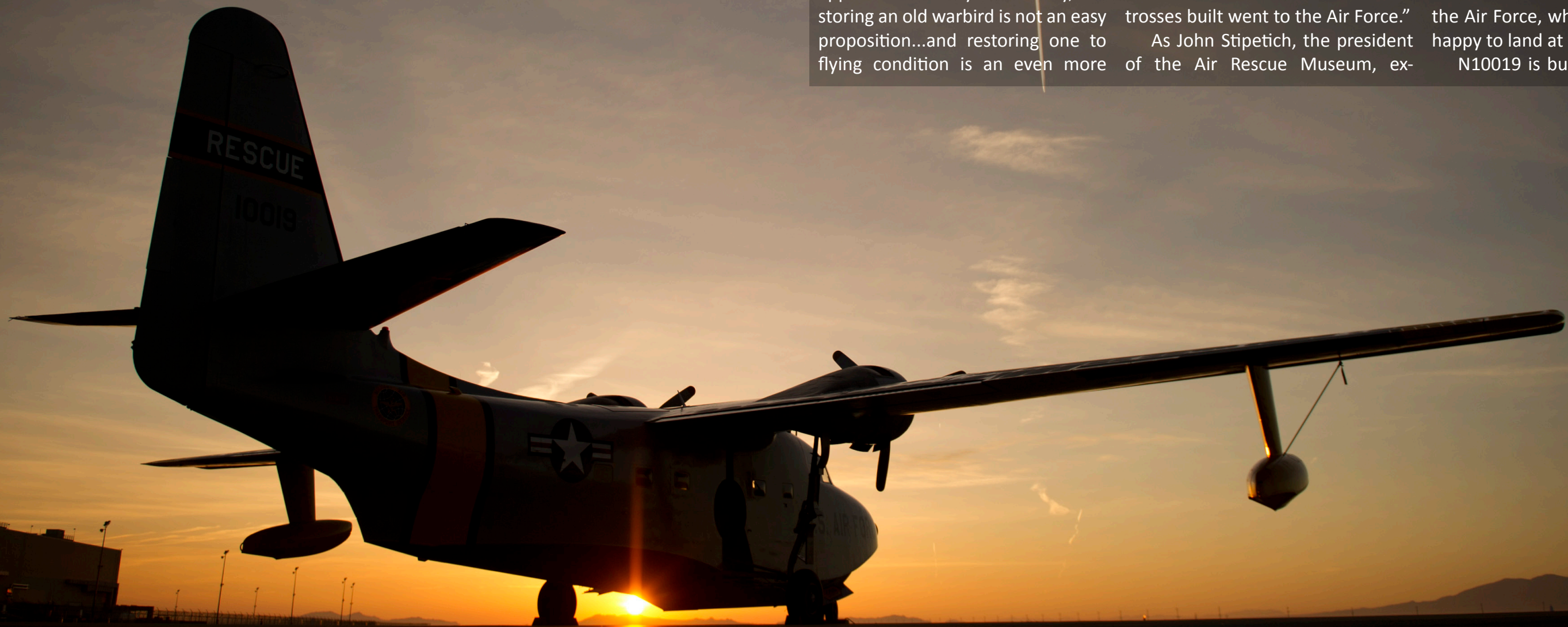




# OLD GIRL NEW CLOTHES

NORTHROP GRUMMAN AND PPG PAINT A RESTORED ALBATROSS

*Article by Rebecca Amber - Courtesy of Aerotech News  
Photos by Alan Radecki - Courtesy of Northrop Grumman Corp.*



The airshow circuit now has one more restored beauty this season, thanks to the efforts of the Air Rescue Museum of Tucson, Arizona, with help from Northrop Grumman and PPG Aerospace. Sixty-one years after leaving Grumman's Bethpage, NY assembly line, Air Force HU-16B Albatross serial 51-0019 (now wearing civilian registration N10019) returned to its maker - although a continent away from its birthplace - for the final touches in a long restoration effort.

As is becoming more and more apparent in today's economy, restoring an old warbird is not an easy proposition...and restoring one to flying condition is an even more

daunting task. However, that didn't stop owner Bob Ryan and the Air Rescue Museum team. Ryan has been passionate about the Albatross for years, as a sort of monument to his father's service to this country in the Air Force. The senior Ryan flew B-17s during WWII, and spent the last 20 years of his career flying the large twin-engine amphibians. "This is a way to honor the guys of my dad's generation," said Bob. And yes, he asserts, the Air Force flew amphibians. "What most people don't realize," he said, "is that two-thirds of all the Albatrosses built went to the Air Force."

As John Stipetich, the president of the Air Rescue Museum, ex-

plained, while the first prototype Albatross was built for the Navy, they didn't initially show much interest in the type, but the Air Force jumped on it. It was only later that the Navy decided it wanted the amphibian, and then the Coast Guard joined the party. When discussing the role of the Air Force in water rescue operations, Stipetich even points out that the Coast Guard, for a time, avoided salt water landings in their Albatrosses, due to the extra maintenance and cleaning that was involved, and when a water rescue was needed, they'd call in the Air Force, who were more than happy to land at sea.

N10019 is built mainly from Air





Ryan Sundheimer



Force serial 51-0019, with parts of -0016 and one other used as well, explained Ryan, to create "one really nice airplane." It was originally delivered from Grumman, in December 1951, to the USAF's 2156th Air Rescue Squadron, based at McDill AFB. Records show that -0019 spent time in Morocco before heading for the Pacific, where it was stationed at Kadena Air Base, Naha on Okinawa and at Clark Air Base in the Philippines. The HU-16B was then transferred to the Rhode Island Air National Guard before being retired to Davis-Monthan.

From there, the plane's history gets "really interesting," according to Ryan. "It was resurrected and passed through several legal firms as owners before it showed up in the Philippine Air Force. There is some very strange paperwork associated with that period! It flew in the Philippine Air Force for only a

short time, and then was sold to a private company in the Philippines.

Ryan continues, "We found it in Tainan, Taiwan, where it had sat for over 17 years. It appears that when Ferdinand Marcos was deposed, his buddies used the Albatross to escape from the Philippines with suitcases full of cash and boxes of gold bars. That was the story we heard, and it would fit the circumstances. They left the airplane there in Taiwan. An old Taiwanese man ended up owning it, [and] when he died, his daughter just wanted to get rid of it. So we took it off her hands."

Ryan and crew returned the aircraft to a private compound next to Davis-Monthan where, since 2003, the plane has slowly returned to life. Just about everything on it has been overhauled or repaired. The last step was to have it painted. Through a series of connections, the management of Northrop Grum-

man's Palmdale Manufacturing Center at Air Force Plant 42 learned about the project, and teamed with PPG Aerospace to paint the aircraft at no cost to the museum. Northrop would paint the aircraft at its state-of-the-art Palmdale facility, and PPG would donate the paint and materials, which are manufactured nearby at its Mojave plant.

Tommy Tomlinson, Northrop Grumman's Vice President of Production Operations, and Palmdale Site Manager, said in a statement, "Northrop Grumman prides itself on our greatest asset - our employees. They not only took on the challenge to restore the Albatross to its original paint scheme, but by doing so preserved a piece of history for others to see in this 'flying museum'. It is a tradition for Northrop Grumman to give back to our communities, and our employees are second to none in doing so."





*Lt. Colonel (retired) Charles "Chuck" Manning, who holds the world altitude record for the Albatross, relives memories in the captain's seat.*



*Northrop Grumman's Ian Hall hands the keys of the freshly painted Albatross to owner Bob Ryan.*





**NORTHROP GRUMMAN**

N10019 emerged from the Northrop paint shop in the wee hours of the morning on Friday, March 16. After a dawn “glamour shoot” out on Plant 42’s taxiway, the “old girl in her new clothes” was fired up and ferried a short distance to Lancaster, California’s Fox Field for its public debut to local media and the families of the Northrop Grumman crew who painted it. That afternoon, it left for the MCAS Yuma air show, the first of many public showings to come.

Ryan’s 23-year-old son Jordan recently qualified to fly the Albatross, making three generations who have time in type, and was on hand with his dad for the delivery flight. “It says something that it’s been flying for three generations, I don’t think there’s too many planes that hold up so well,” commented Jordan.

Joining the Albatross flight crew was 88-year-old retired Air Force Lt.





Col. Charles "Chuck" Manning, who currently is housed at the Museum of the U.S. Air Force in Dayton Ohio. "Once I did that, I thought I would never fly [an Albatross] again," said Manning, "and then to be able to fly it again.... I spent the better part of my life flying in it and I loved the mission; 'That others may live.'"



Rebecca Amber - Aerotech News



Rebecca Amber - Aerotech News





# The Carolinas Aviation Museum



Michelle Rouch

Article by  
Michael Misorski

Nestled in the northwest corner of Charlotte Douglas International Airport lies the Carolinas Aviation Museum. Visitors are first greeted by an AC-130 Hercules on the winding road leading to the museum. The Hercules actually belongs to the NC Air National Guard, whose entrance is only blocks away. We had no other option but to visit the

museum on a gloomy, cloudy, and rainy day. However, the weather did not put a damper on our plans to visit even though half of the aircraft on display are located on the ramp outdoors. Pulling into the parking lot at 10:30am, a Hercules on the ANG ramp was performing run-up checks and departing aircraft were rocketing off of runway 18L. Even though it is not a very big museum, there are exhibits you will not find anywhere else in the world. By far

the best exhibits were located on the inside, not being punished by the forces of nature. Very knowledgeable volunteer staff members happily guided us around upon our request and shared their personal aviation stories making it an enjoyable experience like no other.

The museum's main attraction is without a doubt the A320 from 'The Miracle on the Hudson', a story which just about everyone knows by now. When N106US was pass-

ing through 3,200 feet after taking off from New York's La Guardia Airport, two male geese were ingested into the right engine and a male and female struck the left, altogether weighing approximately twelve pounds.

Tests have been done in a flight simulator after the crash with other experienced pilots to try to recreate what had happened. No one could recreate what was performed. The immediate options for the crew

were to turn back towards La Guardia or head for nearby Teterboro. During the tests, one pilot made it safely to Teterboro; but only by turning directly for it as soon as the double engine failure happened, with zero hesitation.

The US Airways flight crew instead did what their training specified; go through a three-page checklist to restart the engines that was designed for use at 32,000 feet, not 3,200 feet. Sully was nearing

the impact point when they were faced with another obstacle; the George Washington Bridge, which they narrowly avoided. First Officer Jeff Skiles had gone through as much of the checklist as he could in the one minute and twenty one seconds airborne after ingestion of the geese. Unfortunately, Skiles did not get to the point of flipping the ditch switch, which is located on the very last page of the checklist. All personnel on board had 24 minutes before the A320 would be fully submerged in the water. Sully's loyalty to the passengers led him to remain on board and check the aircraft not just once, but twice before he fled himself.

US Airways 1549 now sits in the museum on an eleven degree metal stand, which represents the crucial angle of attack as it hit the water. If the angle had been shallower, the plane's nose may have gone under upon impact, snapping the fuselage in half at the wings. In order to transport the aircraft by truck from Newark to Charlotte, the wings had to be cut from the fuselage with a saw on the top and torch on the bottom, which lost about six inches of frame and skin on the wing. At first glance, the visible nose cone damage appears to be from the flock of Canadian geese that hit the aircraft. It is actually from ice chunks that were floating in the harbor where the aircraft lay hanging from boat cranes before it was lifted onto trucks for FAA inspection. The dents on the left side of the fuselage are from the ferries rescuing the survivors. The left engine was first to impact the water, just a second before the right. The left engine and pylon were completely torn off the plane, while the right engine was torn from the pylon but small parts of



# "We're Going Into the Hudson"

Article and Images  
Courtesy of Michelle Rouch

Many recall the famous successful ditched landing of Flight 1549 in the Hudson River after taking off from LaGuardia Airport in New York. It was destined for Charlotte/Douglas International Airport in North Carolina.

The Carolinas Aviation Museum February 2011 monthly newsletter announced, "Maybe a little late, but US Airways Flight 1549 will make it to Charlotte after all." The journey to North Carolina began in June 2011 and crossed nearly 800 miles, touching the hearts in many cities. January 15, 2012 marked the 3rd Anniversary of that ill-fated flight and the museum held a special opening for the survivors. Today, visitors can see the entire airframe nearly assembled together.

Aviation artist Michelle Rouch donated a painting to the Young Eagles Program. The organization, established in 1992 and currently co-chaired by Chesley B. "Sully" Sullenberger III and Jeffrey Skiles, offers our youth between the ages of 8 through 17 an opportunity to learn general aviation and how to fly. The original painting, titled, "We're Going Into the Hudson," was signed by both co-chairmen and unveiled on 29 July 2010 at the EAA Gathering of Eagles gala. The artwork is a heroic rendition of US Airways Flight 1549, piloted by Captain Sullenberger and First Officer Skiles, who made a miraculous landing into the Hudson River and saved the lives of all the 155 passengers and crew members on January 15, 2009.



the cowling remain attached. One engine was dismantled by General Electric for further investigation.

Every attempt has been made to keep the aircraft in the same shape it was in when it was ditched. The wings now stand in place of where they were but aren't yet fully connected. The aft fuselage is ripped from wings all the way to the back where the APU sits on the floor in a pile of tangled metal. Wing tip fences are discolored from the US Airways blue to aluminum gray and mangled. Ailerons have been broken off, flaps are missing in places and the leading edge has dents. Lying on the side of the aircraft is the original deflated life raft and life jackets. Glass show cases provide a description of how it was transported to its current location. Artifacts recovered from the flight are on display such as pop bottles, safety cards, lottery tickets, and much more. Visitors are able to watch a documentary about the "Miracle on the Hudson" from a small theater. A quick glance away from the TV and reality will strike when the aircraft shown in the movie is in front of your own eyes. US Airways Flight 1549 was headed for Charlotte when it departed from La Guardia that fateful day. Though it was certainly not the intended fashion, it did get there after all. Originally the flight was estimated to take one hour and forty minutes, but three years later it reached its destination and final resting place at the Carolinas Aviation Museum when, on June 10th, 2011, the aircraft arrived at the hanger by truck. The interior of the aircraft is not open for public viewing due to insurance regulations. Museum staff commented, "The interior looks like it would be ready for a flight."



# AirshowStuff Magazine Photo Contest

If you are a photographer, pick your best shot and enter our monthly photo contest! Just take your photos at an airshow or airport and send them in to [RS@AirshowStuff.com](mailto:RS@AirshowStuff.com)!

## Photo Contest Rules

- Two entries per person per month.
- All entries must be your own work.
- All photographs must be from the current calendar year.
- Photos must be at least 1200 pixels on their longest side.
- The photographer retains all rights to the entered images.

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!



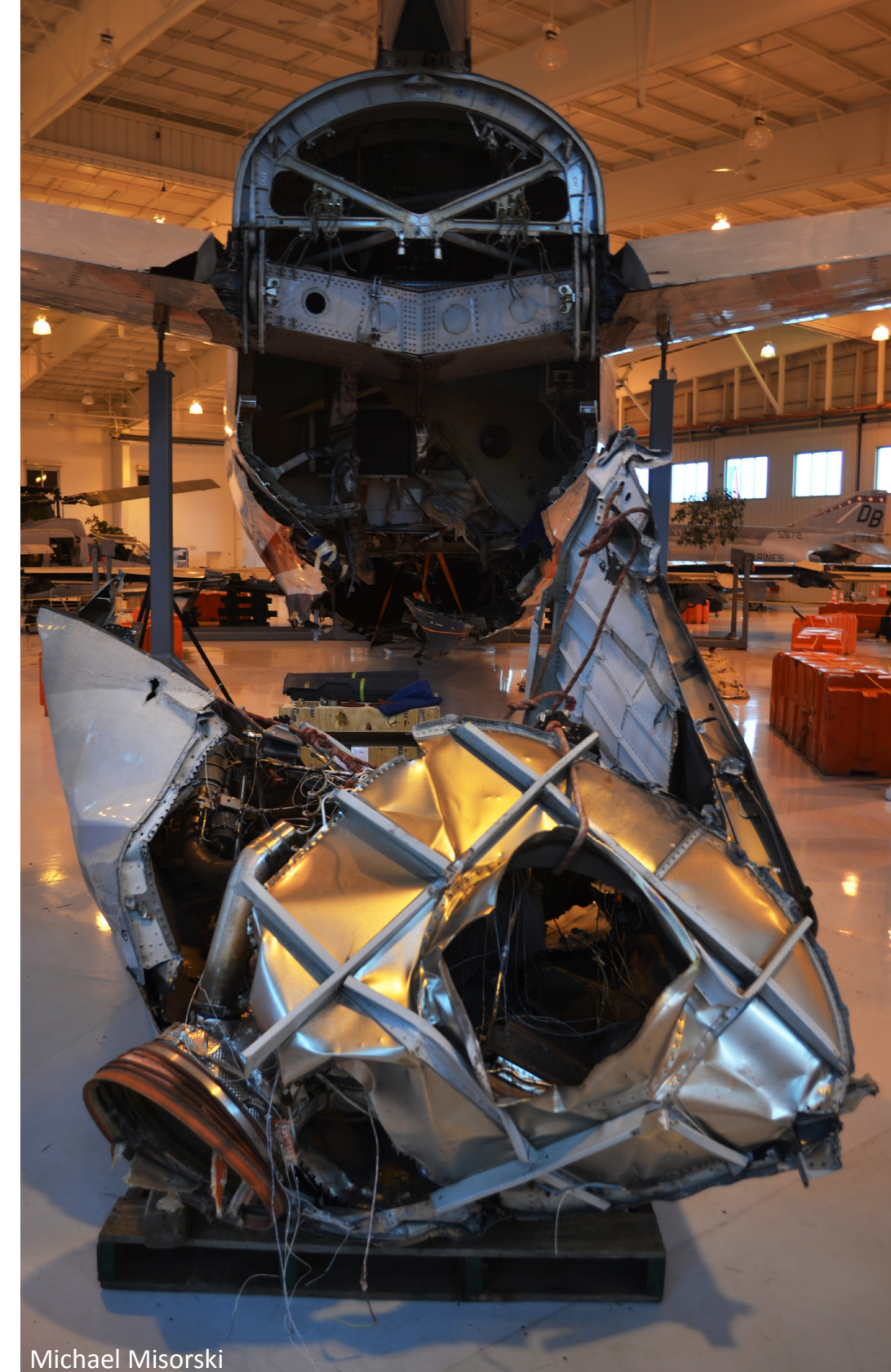
Michael Misorski



The museum also has a CH-46C Sea Knight that served in both the Vietnam War and Desert Storm. When the museum first received the CH-46, it was painted in a Desert Storm scheme. However, after researching the history of the helicopter more, they discovered its role in Vietnam, which came with an interesting story. The helicopter was assigned a mission to pick up four wounded soldiers in a mine field. The pilot landed in an area where all the mines had been blown. Just before liftoff, crew member PFC Raymond Clausen, Jr. noticed eight men in the field of live mines that had not been detonated. He jumped out of the helicopter and took each individual by hand back to the awaiting chopper. For his heroic actions, he received the Medal of Honor.

Another aircraft in the collection is a US Marine Corps AV-8B Harrier (161397, CN 2/2). It was the second US-produced Harrier to be built and flown. Pilot Jackie Jackson racked up more than 5,530 hours of flight time in this Harrier. Many modifications had been placed on this aircraft to test various features on the Harrier.

N44V, a Douglas C-47 Skytrain, formerly owned by Piedmont Airlines, also sits on display inside the hanger in flyable condition. A 1942-built Douglas C-47 was purchased by Piedmont Airlines in October of 1986 and was painted in the airline's classic colors to represent the 22 DC-3s operated by the airline between 1948 and 1963. The aircraft was restored and flown for many years by Piedmont, and then by US Air until 1996. Since then, the aircraft has been owned and operated by the Carolinas Aviation Museum. To show the strong connection the DC-3 type has to Piedmont Airlines and to the Carolinas, it is



Michael Misorski

still marked with Piedmont Airlines scheme. The aircraft has been used in a number of movies, and performs at airshows.

Not all exhibits are of aircraft. Other interesting exhibits include an RC model of a Concorde built precisely to scale with jet engines costing a whopping half a million

dollars to build. Three cockpit displays are available for guests to climb in and step back into history. You can fly an F-4 Phantom from the front or back seat, and experience a 1940s KC-97 air refueler by sitting in the navigators, pilots, or co-pilots seat. Visitors can also climb into the cockpit of a Cessna A-37B Dragon-



fly and size themselves up and see firsthand how big the main landing gear of a Boeing 747 is by standing next to it and snapping a picture. A tire from a space shuttle, whose short life spans 60 seconds, sits on display next to an SR-71 Blackbird tire.

viewing ramp. Due to a new taxiway extension in 2010, the museum relocated to a new hanger with 40,000 square feet of space. The original hangar is still part of the museum and can be seen across the runway from the new hangar. It is used for storage of the museum's aircraft not currently on display. The new build-

ing is only a part of the envisioned plan for a museum to rival any other in the world. It is already very good and a worthwhile stop!

*For more information on the Carolinas Aviation Museum at Charlotte Douglas International Airport, visit their website at [www.CarolinasAviation.org](http://www.CarolinasAviation.org)*



Michael Misorski  
Michael Misorski



Michael Misorski

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# USS HORNET

OF SAILORS AND ASTRONAUTS

*Article and Photos by John Nyren*

Seventy years ago this month, sixteen B-25 bombers were hoisted aboard the USS Hornet (CV-8) at Alameda Naval Air Station's Pier Three. This was in preparation for Colonel Doolittle's raid on Tokyo. On Apr. 18, 1942, the Japanese were quite surprised by the arrival of these Mitchell Bombers. The ability to reach Japan with B-25s was a huge boost to American morale, though resultant damage to the island nation was minimal. Many believe that this operation was the key turning point for the United States in the Pacific theatre.

Six months later, the USS Hornet was severely wounded in the Battle of Santa Cruz. Despite efforts to res-

cue CV-8, the Yorktown-class vessel sunk the following day, on Oct. 27, 1942.

Nearly three months after the loss of CV-8, the USS Kearsarge (CV-12,) under construction in Newport News, Virginia, was renamed USS Hornet. She was launched on Aug. 30, 1943 and returned to haunt the Japanese who nicknamed the ship "Grey Ghost." This latest USS Hornet was the fourth of twenty-four Essex-Class carriers built during World War II and shortly thereafter.

Today, the USS Hornet (CV-12), the eighth ship of the U.S. Navy to bare this name, is docked at the same Pier Three in Alameda. She is now a museum, open to the public

nearly every day of the year. Rich with naval aviation history, this is an excellent place to spend an entire day visiting.

Beyond the USS Hornet's bell at the Hangar Deck entrance, museum guests will receive a tour guide and map, which is helpful throughout this 894 ft long National Historic Landmark. There is an orientation briefing just forward of the admission area, where a short video about the ship is presented. Docents explain specific tour options. These vary depending on available staff and group interests. The Island tour is highly encouraged. Other options may include an informational tour of the Engine Room, The C.I.C.







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mitting. Although there is no cafeteria aboard Hornet, a catering truck stops by the pier around noon. The lunch wagon's arrival is announced over the ship's public address system. Several area restaurants are also nearby and visitors may return to the museum without paying an additional entrance fee.

Forward of the Fantail, there is currently a 1960s vintage US-2B Tracker ASW utility aircraft undergoing restoration in the aft portion of the Hangar Deck. A TBM-3E Avenger is displayed with wings folded back. There is also a naval version of the F-86 Sabre, the FJ-2 Fury.

Four helicopters are on display, including a HUP-1 Retriever, UH-34D Seahorse, SH-2 Seasprite, and SH-3H Sea King. The latter rotorcraft was used in the recovery of Apollo astronauts.

USS Hornet retrieved the capsules from both the Apollo Eleven and Twelve missions. The Mobile Quarantine Facility (MQF), where the first astronauts to land on the moon were monitored is displayed along with other space-related artifacts. President Nixon greeted these pioneers, upon their return to Earth, aboard this ship.

Below, there are a tremendous amount of historical items to see on a self-guided tour of the Second Deck. Numerous compartments display items relating to other aircraft carriers that are no longer afloat. Visitors should wear comfortable clothing and good footwear for exploring the many areas on this level. You will want to move freely through the many passageways.

The USS Hornet Museum is unique in that so much of the ship is available to the public. There are even "Living Ship" days where visitors can watch various components

or Combat Information Center, Catapult Room, Brig, and other areas, which are not part of the self-guided tour.

Three Navy aircraft are adjacent to the orientation area. A TA-4J Skyhawk, in the markings of the VC-8 Aggressor Squadron, is forward on the starboard side. Across the deck is a T-28B Trojan, a radial-engine trainer used by the U.S. Navy from the 1950s to early 1980s. A Vietnam era F8U-1 Crusader is the third aircraft in this group.

An escalator, added to help pilots laden with gear, is the recommended way to get up to the Flight Deck. Here you will find three additional aircraft. Facing out, over the bow, is a subsonic, all-weather, multi-mission S-3B Viking. Forward of the Angle-Deck (another post-construction modification), is a

McDonnell-Douglas F-4J Phantom II fighter/bomber. A Desert Storm veteran F-14 Tomcat is toward the stern. The latter two jets were too heavy to operate on the USS Hornet.

Visitors meet for Island tours near a display of multi-colored shirts, worn by crewman, according to their duties onboard. This location is underneath the large white "12," painted on the superstructure. Docents give a quick briefing before leading small groups up five levels of ladders to the Primary Flight Control area or "Pri-Fly."

The camera platform area is a stop along the way up to this operations center. This platform, also known as "Vulture's Row" for off-duty pilots eager to critique the trap landings of others, is where images were recorded of all aircraft recov-

eries. This data would be used for de-briefing purposes.

In addition to explaining the Pri-Fly area, docents discuss various methods of nautical navigation used during the Hornet's era, and provide guests with the opportunity to see both the Navigation and Flag Bridges.

Back on the Hangar Deck, there is a seating area on the Fantail which overlooks San Francisco Bay. On clear days, the city can be seen beyond this same body of water where Eugene Ely made the first aircraft landing aboard a ship. The US Navy's cruiser USS Pennsylvania had a wooden deck constructed for this 1911 experiment that also included a successful takeoff after Ely's lunch with Pennsylvania's captain.

The Fantail's seating area is a great place to dine, weather per-



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1820	2					1414 CAP
1855	6					

Aircraft Schedule & Status

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				4			
	277.0	R3-2	4	5			
				6			
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CHANNELIZATION  
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Communication Channel Assignments

ACTH	R-RADAR	X-CERTAIN	X-SUB DIVER
10-7	Y-VISUAL	Y-PROBING	Y-SUB DAMAGED
	Z-POSTURE	Z-SEARCH	Z-SUB DAMAGED
	E-ECW	O-SEARCH	O-SUB DAMAGED
	F-JULTE	D-ASDC	D-SUB DAMAGED
	V-TERRAIN	C-CONTROL CENTER	C-RESEARCH
	S-SOUND	E-CONTROL CENTER	E-RESEARCH
	B-ATTACK	F-CONTROL CENTER	F-RESEARCH
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		CA-CONTROL CENTER	CA-RESEARCH

HS VS DD BUOY  
HS VS DD BUOY

A detailed view of the control console area, featuring a large circular display with a yellow glow, surrounded by numerous control panels with various knobs, buttons, and switches. The equipment is illuminated with blue and red lights, creating a futuristic atmosphere.



operate, such as the aircraft elevators. Flashlight tours are given on certain days each month, opening up even more of the ship for exploration. Special events can also be booked aboard the ship.

There is a gift shop of course, located near the exit on the Hangar Deck. Author Lee W. Meredith has a book, titled "Grey Ghost: The Story of the Aircraft Carrier Hornet", which is an invaluable source of information pertaining to the ship. In addition to a detailed history of CV-12, there is an excellent section which outlines a self-guided tour. I recommend obtaining a copy of this publica-

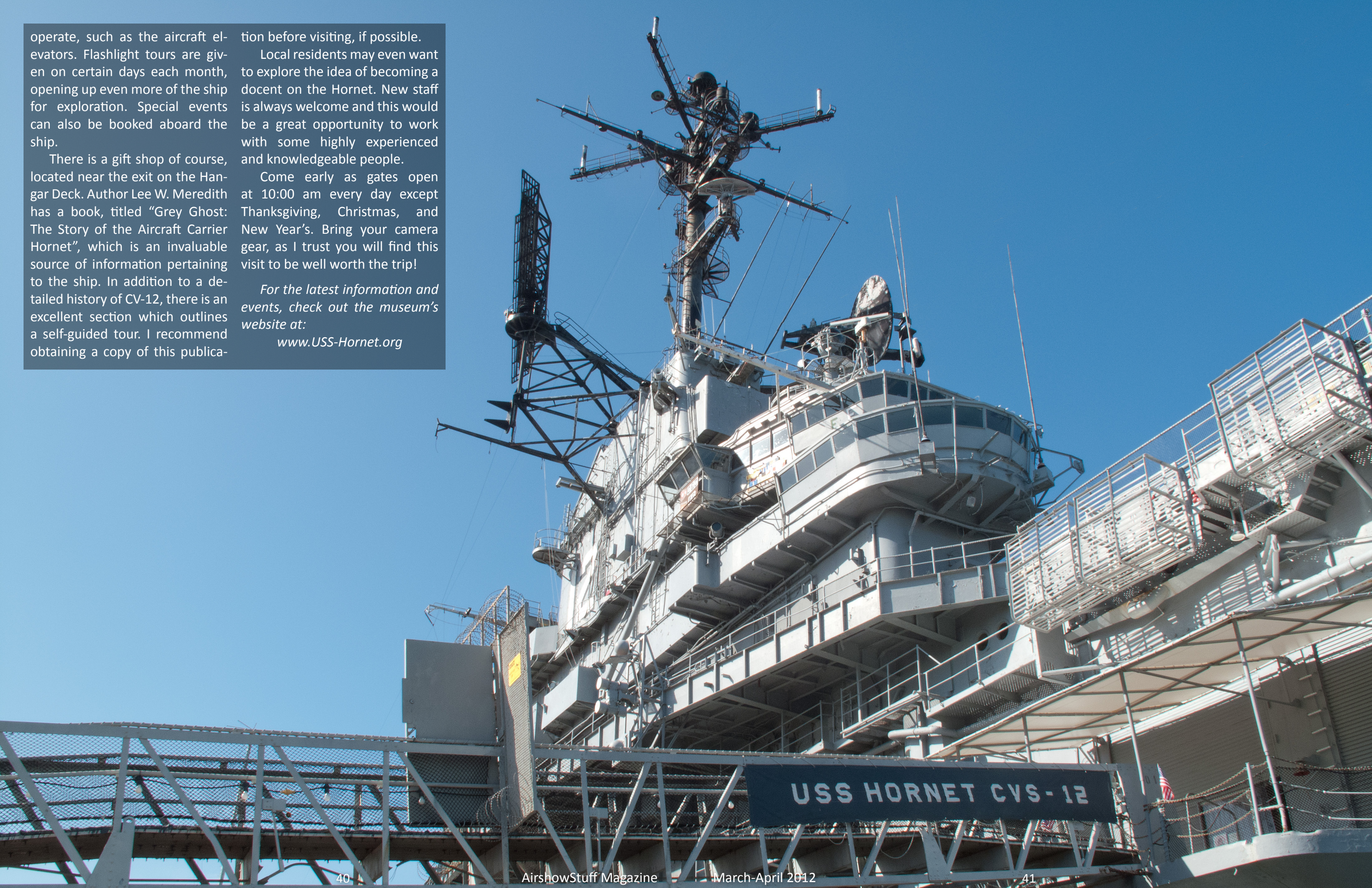
tion before visiting, if possible.

Local residents may even want to explore the idea of becoming a docent on the Hornet. New staff is always welcome and this would be a great opportunity to work with some highly experienced and knowledgeable people.

Come early as gates open at 10:00 am every day except Thanksgiving, Christmas, and New Year's. Bring your camera gear, as I trust you will find this visit to be well worth the trip!

*For the latest information and events, check out the museum's website at:*

*[www.USS-Hornet.org](http://www.USS-Hornet.org)*







# GOLDEN KNIGHTS

WINTER TRAINING

Article and Photos  
By Kevin Martini





Winter training. I don't know about you, but those two words conjure up a very distinct set of thoughts in my mind. I immediately envision cold air. So cold that it pierces your lungs with what feels like a thousand little needles. I picture being trained to find shelter from anything that nature provides: A fallen tree, a cave, or even just digging a hole in the snow. I imagine cold, wet, and numb hands scrambling to scrape the wet bark from pieces of wood in order to even attempt to make a fire. I think of all these hard tasks, from the warm, sunny location of Homestead, Florida. Just what in the world do Homestead and Winter Training have in common you ask? It is the winter home of the US Army's elite parachute team, the Golden Knights, and I am lucky enough to share with you a little of what winter training means to them.

The day starts early and it's 7:00 am as I walk into an unassuming building on Homestead Air Reserve base. I step in and immediately meet my contacts for the trip, Mrs. Donna Dixon, and Mr. Mike Battise. Donna is the media relations supervisor for the team, and Mike is the team's videographer. We exchange pleasantries for a few minutes, getting to know each other a little in a way that feels very familiar and welcoming. Perhaps it's the shared passion for all things photography, or for the Golden Knights, but quickly we find ourselves conversing in a casual, friendly way. In the media relations office along with Donna and Mike are Dave Herwig and Will Fallon. Together, they form the team that is responsible for interfacing with the media around the world, a responsibility that has an enormous number of tasks. Things like sched-

uling interviews, documenting all of the team's activities with video and still photography, providing graphics to media outlets as well as to fans at local airshows. We don't get to chat long before I'm told that one of the jump teams was already in the air, and that we should get outside and get started because winter training wasn't going to wait for us.

We step out into the sun around 7:30 and I am quickly given the tour of the landing zone. As soon as

you step onto the grass, there is a large, black, open-air tent. Inside, it houses the gear bags and miscellaneous items for both the Black and Gold jump teams. In the middle of the field is a large black and gold windsock, placed there to give the jumpers a glimpse of what the wind is doing during their final approach. Immediately to the right of the windsock is the "X marks the spot" target. When the team is scoring accuracy, each jumper is critiqued







in how close to dead-center he/she is upon landing. In the back section of the landing zone is a large field where jumpers who are practicing swooping, one of the more exciting landings the Golden Knights skillfully demonstrate, make their high-speed approaches and landings.

I hear the sound of twin-turbo-prop engines overhead and look up. Jumpers are already away, and canopies are open. I find myself almost mesmerized watching the team floating down under their parachutes. The gold color in striking contrast against the early morning blue sky was quite beautiful. I stay in this daze, watching them drift along in the wind like leaves that I almost miss the first jumper already on his final approach. I quickly raise my camera and get to work. The jumper is getting closer and closer in my view finder as I keep happily snapping shots and backing my zoom out farther and farther. In what seems to be a blink of any eye, I'm at the widest view my lens will give me, yet the jumper keeps getting closer and closer. I feel a slight twinge in the back of my neck. "Kevin, you've done something wrong. You're in his way and he's going to simply land ON you." Donna, sensing what I was thinking, coolly leans over and says "don't move." Sure enough, the jumper lands well clear of me, and I chuckle internally as I look at Donna and smile. "Safety is of the utmost priority for the Golden Knights" Donna starts, and begins to explain that the jumper knows what both he, and the wind is doing. So he is going to put himself into the most safe and precise position possible...in that order. By moving from your spot at the last second out of fear, you might just walk right into his intended land-



ing spot potentially causing an accident. Point taken and solidified: Don't move.

One by one, the Gold team makes their landings. All the while, being watched and graded by the team's senior staff. The winds are fairly light this morning, so most are landing right on target. Others, being hit by unexpected gusts of wind, are blown a few feet away. As each jumper lands, I begin to notice the team congregating in the grass just in front of the black gear tent. These guys aren't on the ground for 5 minutes before they are lined up and working hard to repack their parachutes. You can tell by the ease of which they perform this duty, that it's something that has been performed hundreds of times by each member of the team. In a matter of 15 minutes, a jumper will have landed, repacked his parachute, and begin to review the jump with the team leader and the rest of the team. It's usually not too much longer before the transport bus pulls up, and the team loads back up to make their way over to the jump plane for another jump. The efficiency of the operation is impressive.

In the short break between jumps, I am enjoying the music playing on a set of loud speakers when all of a sudden I hear familiar words, in a familiar tone, saying "Gooooo afternoon ladies and gentlemen." I look over, and see one of the jumpers with a microphone in his hand beginning to practice the narration that is part of each demonstration. Every member of the Golden Knights team is required to know, and be proficient at delivering the demonstration's narration. It's easy to assume that the team performing at your local airshow is



the whole of the Golden Knights. Not true. The Golden Knights are made up of several demonstration, tandem, and competition teams that are sent all over the country and world. Making sure that each member can perform the necessary narration insures that a narrator is always ready while on the road. Several times throughout each day, I find myself hearing "and now ladies and gentlemen if you would direct your attention high and to the right...." Instinctively I turn my head and look high and to the right, only to see nothing but blue sky, and I chuckle internally with embarrassment after realizing it's just another team member practicing.

Time is quickly flying by as it always does, and I find myself sensing a connection within the group. It doesn't jump out right away, and it's not something that you can simply point to a few actions and say "ah ha...there...that's family." It's a collection of observations of the group as a whole over time. These men and women not only click amazingly well as a team, that goes without saying, but you can see that it goes much farther than that. They are one large family. And, it's infectious. Several times I find myself almost cheering "great landing" to someone. I catch myself, and think "What do I know? I'm just a photographer from Cleveland!" So







I smile, and shout it out inside of my head...I can't help it...being this close you really feel like part of the group.

It's getting close to noon as I start to feel the familiar twinge of hunger in my stomach. A group of Knights are just finishing re-packing their parachutes, so I start to make my way back to building to grab a quick bite to eat. I'm almost to the door when I hear the call over the radio. Jump plane is inbound for a

hot target. Did I miss something? I look around and realize that the Gold team is packing, yet the Black team is nowhere to be seen. That's because they are 12,000 feet above me, about to make yet another jump. That's what winter training is all about for the Knights. If the wind and weather cooperate, jumping is the goal of the day, and this team works amazingly hard at it. Prepare, jump, land, repack, and review. Prepare, jump, land, repack,

and review. They do this over and over, with only a 5 minute bus ride from the landing zone to the airfield in which to grab a quick lunch. At first glance, touring all over the world and country jumping out of airplanes might appear to be an easy job, but these guys work incessantly hard to bring the very best to each and every demonstration they perform.

I abandon my lunch and head back out onto the landing zone to capture images of the Black team's jump. Just as they finish landing, I hear the transport bus' engine fire. Mike steps up and asks "want to go for a ride?" I quickly grab my jacket, fill out the necessary forms, and before I know it I'm with the Gold team heading towards the flight line. We pull up to an already running plane and the team exits the bus. The jumpers form a line and perform a quick equipment check on each other. I fall into the back of the line, and we all make our way across the 50 yards of tarmac, and then up the waiting steps of the jump plane. Both I and my camera are secured with two seat belts. It might seem a little excessive, but when you











are seated at the very last spot on a bench a whole four inches from the always-open door, you tend to be thankful for those two strips of fabric making sure you don't fall. We taxi out to the runway, and all is well until the pilot advances the throttle for takeoff. I know that turboprop engines do not have afterburners, but it sure felt like it. Most of us have felt the acceleration of a commercial jet. This is easily twice as much. I have to lean into the direction we're accelerating and place my foot farther out just to keep from tipping over. I glance up, and several of the guys closest to me are watching my feeble attempts at looking cool with a casual grin on their faces. In my head, I was cool hand Luke, but in reality I probably

looked a lot like a cat in cold water scrambling for a foothold.

The Fokker F-27 is large enough to fit the entire jump team and myself comfortably. The only downside of this particular plane is that it is much slower reaching jump altitude than the De Havilland Twin Otter that the tandem team uses for their jumps. While you might not think that is a significant fact, but when sitting next to an open door waiting to hit jump altitude, it counts. They say on average, you lose three degrees for every 1,000 feet of elevation. That means with the first jump at 7,000 feet, it's 21 degrees cooler than on the ground. Doesn't seem bad at first, but then you have to factor in the wind-chill generated by sitting next to an open

door of a climbing aircraft.

A few of the team members chat with me as we climb. It's a friendly banter of "where are you from's" and "how are you holding up's" to obviously required "are you cold yet?" Thankfully, their distraction worked, because before I could really focus on the wind chill, the first audible alarm is going off and the team begins to stage for the jump. The jump master leans out of the door, focusing on the landing zone. He relays, through the use of hand-signals, directional changes the pilot needs to make to keep the plane on the right track. Just before the jump, the jump master signals with his arms crossed in an X - a "Hot Target." That call is echoed by each member of the team down







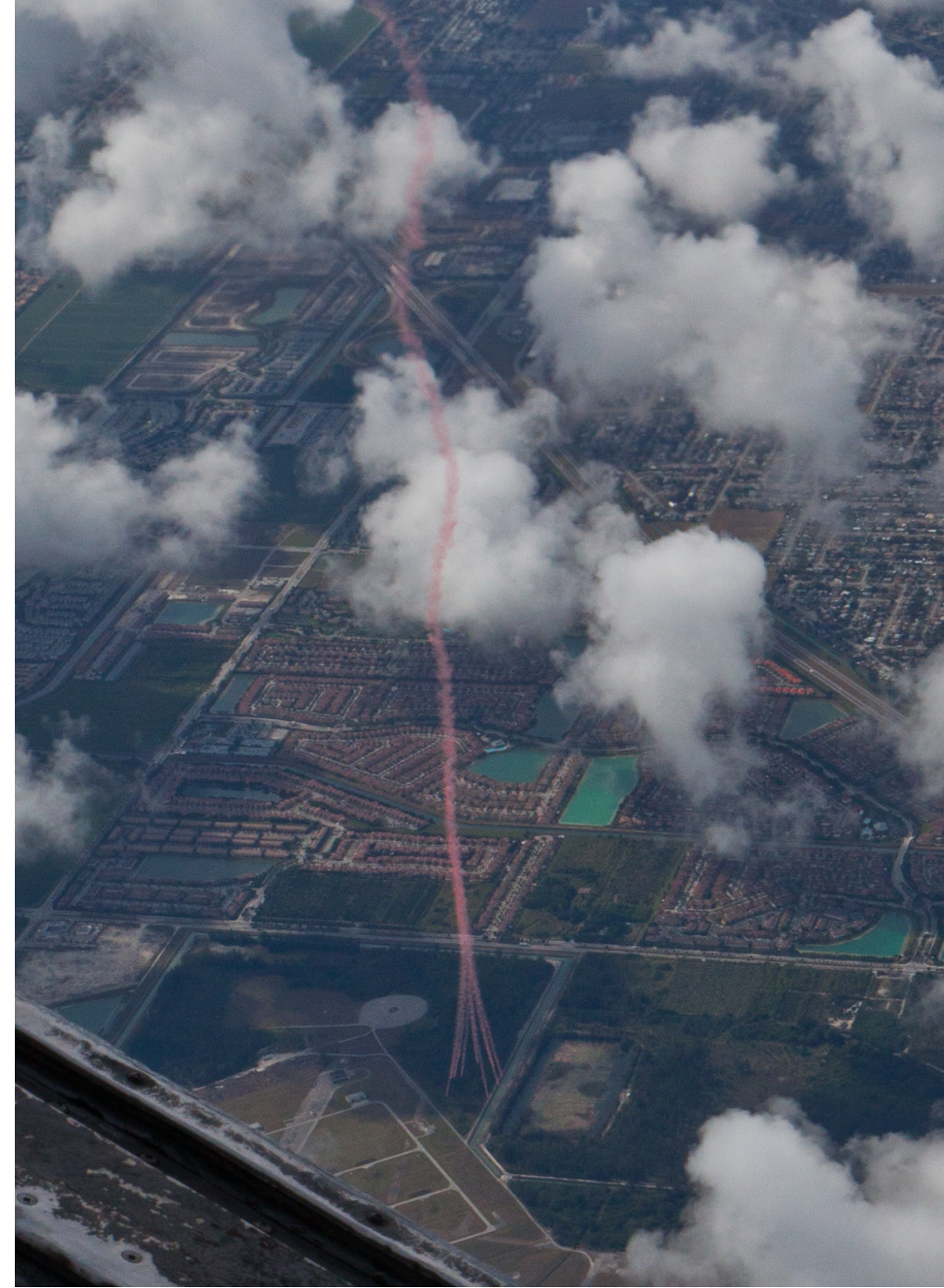


12,500 feet. It gets much colder than the previous flight, quickly becoming 30 degrees in the cabin, even lower with the always-there wind chill. On this particular jump, the team is planning on exiting rapidly en masse, rather than two at a time. Like before, the jump master calls "Hot Target", everyone stages themselves close to the exit door. The jumpers equipped with camera gear actually climb outside of the aircraft, in the fast moving airstream, holding on to just a couple of hand-holds and a single foot hold. I can barely make out words being shouted over the noise of the wind when I catch the last two syllables of a countdown. Then, in one swift and coordinated movement the team vanishes into the air. It's like watching a roller coaster going over the top of the big hill. A few seconds of movement, always accelerating, and then poof...gone. If only the economy section of a commercial flight could clear out like that when you're stuck in the back row. The pilot quickly pitches forward and this time banks to the right. In doing so, I'm just able to catch a glimpse of the team, red smoke pouring from their canisters, and in formation. The plane finishes its turn and we straighten back out when I see the team again out of the opposite door. They've already broken formation and deployed their parachutes. In only a matter of minutes, they will be back on the ground, working hard to repack, review, and then do it all over again.

I get back to the landing zone and have enough time to grab a drink of water before I hear over the radio that the combined teams are inbound for a large, group jump. I notice how strong the winds had

become as I step off of the transport bus, and into the grass. The jump plane flies overhead and after a few seconds, you can begin to make out a cloud of tiny gnats forming behind the plane. It's amazing to look at it and think that they are not gnats, but 20-some individual men and women falling together towards the earth at over 120 MPH. They hold their formation for several seconds and then break apart, each tracking away from the other to ensure safe separation before deploying their parachutes. They drift gently down from the sky, in that "fall leaves" way, and enter a pattern to land. Due to the higher winds, the team sides with safety and "scrambles" the target. By folding the X-marks-the-spot target in on itself, it tells the jumpers in the air that they should only land in a safe location, and not aim for the target. One by one they float in, landing in different locations, but all still very close. A group of Boy Scouts and Webelos have been invited on base to watch, and it's fun to see the excited looks on their faces, and to hear the oooohs and ah-hhhs. After the team safely lands, they invite the kids over to watch and even help them repack their parachutes. Some of the kids look a little star struck, frozen in place, as a team member asks him to hold part of the parachute. Others seem to be so diligent and excited about that the task. There are several that I'm sure if asked, would strap on a parachute and make a jump themselves.

Sadly, the winds keep growing larger and larger as the entire team interacts with the kids. It's not too long before they peak over the 20 mph mark. That initiates a 30-minute weather hold. Again focusing



on safety first, the Golden Knights will not jump if the wind speeds at the landing zone are greater than 20 mph. It's simply too dangerous to attempt pin-point landings of 10 or more people in those kinds of winds. I stand next to the anemometer, watching the smiles on all the little kids' faces, as well as some big kids faces too, but disappointedly I keep seeing the wind speeds increase. The 30 minutes go by, and the wind speeds are now gusting upwards of 25 mph. The forecast confirms

that it's not expected to lessen, and team leaders have no other choice but to scrub the rest of the day. The team takes it in stride, and simply spends more time with the kids. Dave Herwig and Will Fallon make sure that each of the scouts has a team flyer, and a Golden Knights pin. Armed with this gear, the kids walk around talking with each of the Golden Knights, asking for autographs and to pose for pictures. This is where the Golden Knights' work is really done. Jumping into

the length of the fuselage. I barely have enough time to verify my camera settings before the team begins the jump. One by one they exit the aircraft and leap into the 120 MPH wind. Before I know it, I'm the only one left in the very rear of the plane. Sergeant Jusseppe Silvagnoli, looks back from his position and gives me a thumb's up. I respond with a smile and a thumbs up of my own as I feel the plane quickly pitch forward and the pilot come off of the throttles.

We circle in the pattern a couple of times as we descend, until I finally see the runway ahead through the cockpit windows. We touchdown perfectly and then taxi over to the ramp. The transport bus is already there waiting with the Black team, ready for their next jump.

The team quickly loads up into the Fokker, shaking hands with Jusseppe as each member boards. Same as before, we quickly taxi and then take off, this time heading to



airshows or sports stadiums is only part of the job. The real work is done with the community. After lining up for a huge group photo with the team, it's not long before the troop's transportation arrives; the kids all begrudgingly walk away and head home. The Golden Knights smile, wave, say goodbye, and then turn back towards their equipment. Even though the rest of the day's jumps are scrubbed, there is still work to be done. Equipment needs to be maintained, and then put away. Jump footage needs to be analyzed and reviewed. It's all part of the ongoing work that it takes to

be a Golden Knight.

A thought rings through my head as I pack up my gear and then thank everyone I see for an amazing time; the amount of work that it takes to be a Golden Knight. It's not just the jumpers who have to work hard. It's everyone. The flight crews: responsible for safely carrying the teams to altitude, and then returning to do the same for the next group. Over and over each day, sometimes up to 16 flights in a single day. The tandem teams: who rotate through their jumps at such a rapid pace, that they have a dedicated team member to re-pack

their parachutes. The media group: who not only has to both film and shoot each jump into the landing zone, but also assist with visitors such as ROTC, or Scouting organizations. The senior staff and commanders: working all the time to help train, score jumps, and oversee the safety of everyone on site. This is a large group of very hard working individuals, who come together in order to showcase for us the exhilaration of skydiving and parachute flight. They come together as a family. They come together, as the Golden Knights.





# WINTER TRAINING FOR THE *Blue Angels*

*Article and Photos by Christopher Roberts and Courtesy US Navy*

2012 marks the 66th year for your United States Navy Blue Angels flight demonstration squadron. As usual, the Blues made the 1,670 mile trip from their home base in Pensacola, Florida to the sunny confines of the Imperial Valley.

The team arrived at NAF El Centro in the first week of January, ready to kick off the 2012 season. Returning to lead the Blue and Gold

this year is Captain Greg McWherter. Boss McWherter lead the Blues from 2009-2010, and was asked to return to the team in May 2011 when then Boss Cmdr. Koss stepped down. Throughout the 2012 Winter Training, Boss McWherter's two and a half years of experience was evident as the team looked sharp from the beginning. The Blues also received great weather (no shocker

there) thanks in part to the Pacific Ocean's La Niña conditions. Aside from one small storm (see the following NAFEC photocall story) and some windy days, the team was able to fly almost all of the scheduled practices in preparation for the upcoming season. The team wrapped up winter training in early March and flew their first show at NAF El Centro on March 10.







Squadron 154 (VFA-154), the “Black Knights,” at NAS Lemoore. While assigned to VFA-154 John completed two deployments aboard USS John C. Stennis (CVN 74) and flew in support of Operations Enduring Freedom and Iraqi Freedom. In December 2009, John reported to Marine Fighter Attack Squadron 101 (VMFAT-101), the “Sharpshooters,” at MCAS Miramar, Calif., for transition to the F/A-18 C/D Hornet. John joined the Blue Angels in September 2011; this will be his first season flying with the team.



**#3 – Left Wing, Captain Brandon Cordill, call sign ‘S’UPP’:** Cordill, one of the two USMC representatives, is a native of Hemet, Calif., and graduated from Hemet High School in 1998. Brandon received his commission after completion of Officer Candidate School and reported to The Basic School (TBS), at Marine Corps Base (MCB) Quantico, Va., in January 2004 earning his wings of gold in June 2006. Brandon then reported to Strike Fighter Squadron 106 (VFA-106), the “Gladiators,” at NAS Oceana, Va., for initial training in the F/A-18 Hornet. In July 2007, he reported to Marine Fighter Attack Squadron 122 (VMFA-122), the “Werewolves,” at Marine Corps Air Station (MCAS) Beaufort, S.C. While assigned to VMFA-122, Brandon deployed to Iraq and flew in support of Operation Iraqi Freedom. He then reported to the United States Navy Fighter Weapons School (TOPGUN), at NAS Fallon, Nev., and graduated in March 2010. Brandon again deployed with the “Werewolves” to Afghanistan in November 2010, where he flew in support of Operation Enduring Freedom. Brandon joined the Blue Angels in September 2011; this will be his first season flying with the team.

Making up your 2012 United States Navy Blue Angels are:

**#1 – Flight Leader/Commander, Capt Greg McWherter, call sign ‘Boss’:** McWherter is a native of Atlanta, Ga., and graduated from Avondale High School in 1986. Greg reported to Naval Air Station (NAS) Pensacola, Fla., for aviation indoctrination in June 1990, earning his wings of gold in September 1992. Greg then reported to Strike Fighter Squadron 106 (VFA-106), the “Gladiators,” at NAS Cecil Field, Fla., for initial training in the F/A-18 Hornet. Upon completion of the Fleet Replacement Squadron, he

reported to Strike Fighter Squadron 131 (VFA-131), the “Wildcats,”. While assigned to VFA-131 Greg completed two deployments to the Mediterranean Sea and Arabian Gulf aboard USS George Washington (CVN 73). He graduated from the United States Navy Fighter Weapons School (TOPGUN) in May 1995 and was selected as VFA-131’s Pilot of the Year in 1996. In March 1997, Greg reported to NAS Fallon, Nev., as a TOPGUN Instructor where he served as a Training Officer. Greg returned to the fleet in March 2000 with Strike Fighter Squadron 34 (VFA-34), the “Blue Blasters,” at NAS

Oceana, Va. While assigned to VFA-34 Greg completed two more Mediterranean Sea and Arabian Gulf deployments aboard USS George Washington (CVN 73). After completing refresher training in the F/A-18 Hornet in March 2006, Greg reported as Executive Officer of Strike Fighter Squadron 192 (VFA-192) stationed at Naval Air Facility (NAF) Atsugi, Japan. He commanded the “World Famous Golden Dragons” through three major deployments aboard USS Kitty Hawk (CV 63) from June 2007 until July 2008. As stated before, Greg commanded the Blue Angels from November 2008 to November 2010 and returned to lead the team again in May 2011.

**#2 – Right Wing, Lt. John Hintz, call sign ‘J.K.’:** Hiltz is a native of Fort Mitchell, Ky., and graduated from Covington Catholic High School in 1998. John reported to Naval Air Station (NAS) Pensacola, Fla., for aviation indoctrination in July 2002. He earned his wings of gold in August 2005. John then reported to Strike Fighter Squadron 122 (VFA-122), the “Flying Eagles,” at NAS Lemoore, Calif., for initial training in the F/A-18E/F Super Hornet. In August 2006, he reported to Strike Fighter







**#4 – Slot, Major Brent Stevens, call sign ‘Two Face’:** Stevens, also a Marine Corps representative, is a native of Knoxville, Tenn., and graduated from Farragut High School in 1994. Brent received his commission through the Platoon Leaders

Class (PLC) program and reported to The Basic School (TBS) at Marine Corps Base (MCB) Quantico, Va. He then reported to Naval Air Station (NAS) Pensacola, Fla., for aviation indoctrination in November 2000. He earned his wings of gold

in September 2002. Brent then reported to Strike Fighter Squadron 106 (VFA-106), the “Gladiators,” at NAS Oceana, VA., for initial training in the F/A-18 Hornet. In January 2004, he reported to Marine Fighter Attack Squadron 232 (VMFA-232), the “Red Devils” at Marine Corps Air Station (MCAS) Miramar, Calif. While assigned to VMFA-232, Brent completed multiple Western Pacific deployments aboard USS Nimitz (CVN 68) and flew in support of Operation Iraqi Freedom and Operation Enduring Freedom. In April 2008, Brent reported to Marine Fighter Attack Squadron 101 (VMFA-101), the “Sharpshooters,” at MCAS Miramar, Calif. Brent joined the Blue Angels in September 2010; during his first season Brent flew Blue Angel #3 on the Left Wing.

**#5 – Lead Solo, Lieutenant C.J. Simonsen, call sign ‘Brostache’:** Simonsen is a native of Coon Rapids, Minn., and graduated from Coon Rapids High School in 1995. In January 1996, he enlisted in the Navy and completed Basic Training at Recruit Training Command (RTC) in Great Lakes, Ill. C.J. then reported to Naval Nuclear Power Training Command in Orlando, Fla.,

for Machinist Mate “A” school and Nuclear Power School. Upon completion in June 1997, he reported to Naval Nuclear Power Training Unit in Charleston, S.C., to complete his training aboard USS Daniel Webster (SSN 626), where he served as a nuclear machinist mate. While in Charleston, C.J. was accepted to the Naval Academy Preparatory School (NAPS) in Newport, R.I., which he completed in May 1998. C.J. reported to Naval Air Station (NAS) Pensacola, Fla., for aviation indoctrination in July 2002, earning his wings of gold in April 2005. C.J. then reported to Strike Fighter Squadron 122 (VFA-122), the “Flying Eagles,” at NAS Lemoore, Calif., for initial training in the F/A-18E/F Super Hornet. In January 2006, he reported to Strike Fighter Squadron 102 (VFA-102), the “Diamondbacks” at Naval Air Facility (NAF) Atsugi, Ja-

pan. While assigned to VFA-102, C.J. completed multiple Western Pacific deployments aboard USS Kitty Hawk (CV 63) and USS George Washington (CVN 73). In February 2009, C.J. reported to Strike Fighter Squadron 106 (VFA-106), the “Gladiators,” at NAS Oceana, Va. While serving as an instructor pilot with the “Gladiators,” he served as the Schedules Officer. C.J. joined the Blue Angels in September 2009; he served as the Narrator and VIP pilot in 2010 and as the Opposing Solo pilot in 2011.

**#6 – Opposing Solo, Lieutenant David Tickle, call sign ‘Elmo’:** Tickle is a native of Birmingham, Ala., and graduated from Jefferson County International Baccalaureate School in 1998. David reported to Naval Air Station (NAS) Pensacola, Fla., for aviation indoctrination in July 2002, earning his wings of gold in April

2005. David then reported to Strike Fighter Squadron 106 (VFA-106), the “Gladiators,” at NAS Oceana, Va., for initial training in the F/A-18C Hornet. In February 2006, he reported to Strike Fighter Squadron 136 (VFA-136), the “Knighthawks,” also at NAS Oceana. While assigned to VFA-136, David completed deployments aboard USS Enterprise (CVN 65), and flew in support of Operation Iraqi Freedom and Operation Enduring Freedom. Upon completion of the second deployment, David transitioned along with VFA-136 to the F/A-18E Super Hornet. In February 2009, David reported to the Training Squadron 9 (VT-9), the “Tigers,” at NAS Meridian, Miss. David joined the Blue Angels in September 2010 and served as the Narrator and VIP pilot in 2011.

[www.BlueAngels.navy.mil](http://www.BlueAngels.navy.mil)











First Place - Matt Shinavar (20 points)



Third Place - Andy Backowski (12 points)



Second Place - Andy Backowski (19 points)

# Photo Contest

Congratulations to the unanimous winner of the March-April photo contest - Matt Shinavar! If you want to see your photos here, be sure to enter next month's contest! The rules are on page 28 and at: <http://magazine.airshowstuff.com/contributing.html>. Thanks to everyone who entered!

*Judging: Each judge selects their top five pictures. Their first choice gets five points, their second choice gets four, and so on. The points are added up and the one with the most points is the winner.*

Fourth Place - Jonathan Loveless (11 points)



Fifth Place - John Nyren (7 Points)





# *NAF El Centro Photocall*

*Article by  
Eric A Rosen*







Eric A Rosen

With a few weeks left in the Blue Angels winter training season, the PAO Office at El Centro offered a photo call for a lucky few aviation photographers. This past winter saw several weeks of mild temperatures and sunny days. As luck would have it, a storm had moved in during the week of the photo call, threatening to cancel it altogether. There were still threatening clouds all throughout that Thursday, enough that some photographers ended up staying away. For the rest of us who decided to chance the elements, we were rewarded with lots of photo opportunities under some awesome sky conditions.



Eric A Rosen



Christopher Roberts



Christopher Roberts  
Christopher Roberts











past at a distance of less than 50 feet from where you are standing. Throughout the day, most of the fighter jets that were going through their training paces were F-18s from VFA-122 “Flying Eagles” based out of NAS Lemoore. El Centro also served as a fuel stop for a couple of CH-53s from HMH-465 “Warhorses” based at MCAS Miramar. Toward the end of the day, as we were preparing to leave, we were told that some Harriers from VFA-513 “Flying Nightmares” based at MCAS Yuma were coming in for a landing. As always, the Harriers were a treat to watch.

All throughout the day, the skies served as an ominous backdrop. In any given direction, the forming clouds turned the sky everything from dark gray to bright blue as we panned with the jets on their

practice runs. For this photo call, I felt the weather gave us an added bonus. I heard some photographers who complained about the dark clouds and crazy contrasting light that afternoon; perhaps it is me, but my perception of some of the best aviation photographs are those which contain an element that will bring your primary subject forward. This photo call was a really great opportunity to photograph some impressive airplanes in a striking fashion.

I would like to thank the PAO Office, especially Michelle Dee, her entire staff and our sailor escort Nicholas Sanchez, who escorted us down the flightline, for putting together this wonderful opportunity as well as for allowing the photo call to continue despite the weather conditions.



# Eindhoven Airport

## *A Brief History*



Article and Photos  
By Pieter Stroobach

In 1932, an airstrip named Welschap was built near the city of Eindhoven in the southern region of the Netherlands. The field was used by the Noord Brabantsche Aero Club, nowadays known as the Eindhovense Aero Club, to promote aviation. The club, which has glider and motor flying branches, is still based at Welschap, now also known as Eindhoven Airport or Air Base Eindhoven depending on who you talk to. From 1932 to 1939, the field was mainly used for civilian purposes, including the first KLM flights and a flying school. Fokker also made use of the field and did some test flights with their D.XXI and G.I. aircraft. The airstrip was comman-

deered in 1939 for use by the Lucht Vaart Afdeling (LVA - Dutch Army Air Corps), which placed a number of Koolhoven FK.51 recce aircraft on the field.

In May of 1940, the Netherlands was conquered by the Germans and Eindhoven became Fliegerhorst Eindhoven. Initially the 1st Gruppe of Jagdgeschwader 26, flying Me-109Es, was stationed there, but later in the war German bombers were also based at Welschap. The RAF regularly bombarded the field between 1941 and 1944, before Eindhoven was liberated during the famous Operation Market Garden, when a platoon of paratroopers landed to occupy the now greatly expanded airport.

In October 1944, Hawker Typhoon fighter bombers of the 2nd Tactical Air Force (2TAF) were sta-

tioned on the field, which was bombarded several times by the Luftwaffe. The RAF maintained a presence at Eindhoven through the rest of the war and until 1961, even though the field was transferred to Dutch control in the early 1950s. Civilian use of the field was reestablished in the late 1940s both by KLM and the flying department of Philips (Philair).

From 1952 until the early 1990s, Eindhoven was also a Dutch fighter base; home to 314, 315 and 316 squadrons, which were equipped with Republic F-84E/G Thunderjets, F-84F Thunderstreaks and Northrop NF-5A/B Freedom Fighters. The end of the Cold War brought big changes and a major rebuild. In 1992, 334 Squadron, with its Fokker F-27 Troopships, was stationed at Eindhoven next to 314 squadron, flying

General Dynamics F-16A/B Fighting Falcons, until 314 was deactivated in 1994.

As 334 Squadron's mission changed, it traded its Troopships in for two Fokker 50s, four Fokker 60UTAs, a Gulfstream IV, two Lockheed C-130H-30 Hercules and two McDonnell Douglas KDC-10 tankers. As a result of budget cuts and the rising need of strategic transport for the ongoing operations in Afghanistan, all of the Fokker aircraft were later withdrawn from service and two secondhand Lockheed C-130H Hercules were purchased, along with a secondhand DC-10. All of the C-130s were placed in one squadron, the 336th.

Civilian operations also underwent major changes; Eindhoven Airport is nowadays a major destination for low cost airlines like Corendon Airlines, Ryan Air, Transavia, and Wizz Air. It is expected that Eindhoven will handle 2.5 million passengers a year in the near future.







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# REPORTS FROM THE FIELD

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We have some of the best airshow photographers helping us bring you amazing photographs and informative reviews from airshows all over North America and even the world. The following pages are stuffed with this outstanding coverage of recent airshows and aviation events.

If you would like to see your own photos and reviews here, just contact us and ask how to contribute. The only requirement is a passion for aviation!



# Valkaria Air Fest - Valkaria, FL

Photos by Charlie Lai









**TICO Warbird Airshow - Titusville, FL**  
Photos by Charlie Lai













# NAF El Centro Airshow - NAF El Centro, CA

Article by Matt Shinavar



Matt Shinavar

NAF El Centro feels like it's in the middle of nowhere; three hours outside of Los Angeles in the desert just north of the Mexican border. The temperature in El Centro never seems to drop below 70 and usually is quite north of that modest temperature. The Blue Angels find both of these qualities perfect for their winter training, and have called El Centro home since 1967. El Centro also holds a special place in my mind because they're one of the few military installations that opens its doors to a small group of photographers for an amazing opportunity to photograph daily operations. We have covered these El Centro photocalls many times, and you can see the most recent on page 72.



Sean Sydnor

The Blue Angels call El Centro home throughout the winter, so it makes sense that their first public show of the season is there as well. Even though El Centro is nearly in the middle of nowhere, the Blue Angels always draw a crowd with

their precision flying. The aircraft on static display at this year's show were interesting and far more varied than the standard fare. The static displays varied from a P-51 to a Super Hornet, a B-52 to a T-6 Texan II, and a

Spitfire to an S35 Bonanza. Guests were welcomed up the rear ramps of a V-22 Osprey and CH-53 Sea Stallion to get a close look at some of the transports our soldiers are well acquainted with. A B-52 out of Barksdale had conveniently placed



Sean Sydnor  
Eric A Rosen



airstairs, which allowed airshow attendees a rare glimpse into the dated cockpit of one of the longest serving aircraft ever. Next to the B-52 the Metal Mulisha motorcycle group had set up jump ramps 75 feet apart where they put on their

own aerial demonstration of sorts. A quick walk across the dirt to the crowd line, and the show was off to a start. A couple of the actors from Act of Valor and a handful of elite Navy personnel, the Leap Frogs, jumped out of a C-2 Grey-

hound to open the festivities. Bill Cornick took to the skies in his Pitts biplane shortly after the C-2 Greyhound recovered to put his body through torture for our enjoyment. Spencer Suderman's Meteor Pitts took off and shot across the sky like



a meteor skipping along; this time the Meteor Pitts harassed the Rocketbilly Jet Truck, which had been towed out onto the runway. Eventually the Rocketbilly Jet Truck had enough of Spencer and dropped the hammer, unleashing 12,000 horsepower and hurtling down the runway at 300 miles per hour.

A demo by a Super Hornet out of VFA-122 brought the jet truck performance to a quick ending, doubling the number of engines at the disposal of an individual. Shortly thereafter another Super Hornet launched to form up with a Bearcat for a Legacy Flight. NAS Fallon sent a UH-60 search and rescue helicopter to perform their annual El Centro demo; taking place right in front of me, it was very interesting to see man and machine in perfect unison so close by. Bill Cornick and Spencer Suderman took to the air again for an acrobatic race; a new craze with a set of 10 acrobatic maneuvers where the first to finish the set wins. Continuing with the acrobatic theme, Tim Weber took his Geico-sponsored MXS up to push the airframe to 60% its potential, only 10gs. The MXS is a high performance carbon fiber monoplane that is far more capable than a human; the 16g limit on the airframe hardly seems practical and the one and a half revolution per second roll rate seems more than enough to centrifuge food from the digestive tract to the windscreen.

Torrey Ward in his Glassair went through a number of maneuvers which would leave all but the most conditioned blacked out. The Glassair, while not an MXS, was still very impressive. Slightly different than the MXS and Glassair, it was time for the pre-Blue Angels C-130 presentation. Fat Albert normally



Sean Sydnor



Matt Shinavar



Matt Shinavar



Sean Sydnor



Matt Shinavar



Matt Shinavar



Matt Shinavar





Eric A Rosen  
Matt Shinavar



Eric A Rosen



Sean Sydnor



Eric A Rosen



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Eric A Rosen



Eric A Rosen



Matt Shinavar





does the honors, however with Bert away for scheduled maintenance, a backup C-130, affectionately known as Ernie, did the honors. Ernie performed the same routine flown by Fat Albert and proved that other than the fancy paint job, Fat Albert is no different than any other C-130 serving soldiers worldwide.

Now for the moment everyone had been waiting for, the 2012 season opener for the Blue Angles. Per standard practice, the precision by which the pilots walked out, the preflight checks were completed, and engines started was impeccable. There was no unnecessary gesture, everyone was orderly, and everything was done with the utmost speed without sloppiness or a mistake. To say the preflight routine was perfect would be an understatement; an indicator of the care and pride our Sailors put into their job.

Everything went off without a hitch until Blue Angle 5 told the Boss there was a problem, shut his machine down, and was quickly shuttled off to Blue Angel 7 on the other side of the ramp as the other five taxied out. Boss called for a last minute wind check before having the guys push the throttles forward bring the four-ship formation into the air. They make it all look effortless. Blue Angel 5 hauled down the taxiway to line up and wait along with the other solo Blue Angel – I wouldn't be surprised if engine two was still coming up to speed as he released the brakes and started taxiing. Shortly after the diamond passed overhead, 5 and 6 each took to the air. As with all other Blue Angel performances I've seen, the four-ship diamond performs what appear to be the laziest of maneuvers – except the separation with which

they fly makes every lazy maneuver all but impossible to everyone but the most skilled pilots. The two solo pilots put on their individual performances, each equally impressive in their own right – including two sneak passes, no doubt a crowd favorite. Finally all six formed up in the Delta formation to show while each person has a specific job to do, at the end of the day we're all on the same team.

A special thanks is due to all the people that worked to make the 2012 El Centro Airshow a success.



Sean Sydnor



Sean Sydnor



Sean Sydnor



# MCAS Yuma Airshow - MCAS Yuma, AZ

Article by John Nyren

Wind forecasts of up to fifty knots did not deter an estimated sixty thousand spectators from attending this year's MCAS Yuma Airshow. Fortunately, the weather turned out to be quite pleasant throughout the St. Patrick's Day event, with just a slight breeze and temperatures in the low seventies.

Marine Corps Air Station Yuma held their 50th annual air show during this 100-year anniversary of Marine Corps Aviation. This Southwestern Arizona location is the

busiest airport for US Marine Corps flight operations and home to the only USMC F-5 Adversary Squadron, VMFT-401. The new F-35 Joint Strike Fighter is expected to join the base later this year.

Gates opened to the public at eight o'clock on Saturday morning for this free event. Early birds had much to explore before the day's flying program would commence. There were around thirty aircraft on static display and most had crews on hand to answer questions.

The US Marines featured several helicopters in addition to the MV-22 Osprey tiltrotor. Fixed-wing aircraft from the Corps included a C-130J Hercules, F/A-18E Super Hornet, and an AV-8B Harrier. The Navy also had two Super Hornets on display.

Air Force assets on the ramp at Yuma included a C-17 Globemaster III from Charleston, a single F-16 Fighting Falcon from Luke AFB, and a B-52 Stratofortress from Barksdale AFB in Louisiana. The latter bomber had a set of stairs which allowed vis-

itors to look into the cockpit through the left-side windows.

In addition to the wide range of aircraft available for close-up tours, military vehicles, weapons, and hardware from the nearby Yuma Proving Ground were set up near the civilian planes. Vendors provided a large selection of merchandise and food options. Many visitors from young to old were seen wearing shades of green to celebrate the Irish holiday, as they wandered the vast tarmac.

Shortly before ten o'clock, the Marine Corps 3MAW band approached from the northeast, before stopping near show center to further perform. Thunderbird 8 had just landed after a media flight, and taxied past the band marching in the opposite direction.

A US Army C-41A (CASA-212) aircraft released five jumpers from the Military Free Fall School, based at the Yuma Proving Grounds. The first four parachutists carried flags for the Air Force, Army, Marines,

and Navy, while the fifth presented the US Flag with a perfectly timed landing at 10:30 am. Three minutes later, the jump plane approached in landing configuration for a low pass down runway 3R, before returning to base.

The Commemorative Air Force (CAF) flew four warbirds for twenty-five minutes, first in formation passes, then solo flybys. These aircraft consisted of the Grumman F6F Hellcat and F8F-2 Bearcat, the F4U Corsair, and the North American P-







John Nyren



John Nyren



John Nyren



John Nyren



John Nyren



John Nyren



John Nyren



John Nyren



John Nyren



John Nyren







### 51D Mustang "Man O' War."

Once the CAF pilots had taxied back to the ramp, the Marine Corps demonstrated a Search and Rescue (SAR) operation utilizing the HH-1N Iroquois. Pilots Major Troy Smith and Captain Alfred Njie maneuvered the Huey while HN Curt Van Hansen and Lance Corporal Myles Davis coordinated the retrieval of a rescue basket, airlifted from the ground.

One hour into the air show, John Collver made several passes in his North American SNJ, "War Dog." This advanced-training aircraft from the past is painted in Marine Colors with the VMT-2 Squadron. John is well known to air show enthusiasts in the southwestern United States.

Mentioned earlier, four F-5 Tiger IIs from the local VMFT-401 Fighter Training Squadron returned for two formation passes before landing and taxiing down the show line. The USMC pilots, led by Lt. Colonel Brian Chambers, were Major Donald Nolan and Captain Beau Wisdom. Captain Darren Woodside from the US Air Force completed the formation.

Tora Tora Tora took to the skies next, as replica Japanese Zeros, Kates, and a Val approached from the southwest. This re-enactment of the raid on Pearl Harbor took place to the sound of air-raid sirens blaring in the background as the tragic events of that December 7th

day were narrated. Many pyrotechnic effects added to the realism of the display. The aircraft used were modified from U.S. built planes for the filming of the movie "Tora Tora Tora" in the 1960s.

Following a short break, flying resumed with the MV-22 Osprey from the US Marines VMM-561 Squadron. This Bell-Boeing tiltrotor began the demonstration with a high-speed pass from the northeast before transitioning to a hovering regime of flight. Swinging from right to left then back over taxiway Delta at show center, the pilots revealed the versatility of this unique aircraft. Returning to forward flight, the Osprey flew down runway 21L for a roll-on landing, occurring around fifteen knots of forward airspeed. The MV-22 was crewed by Capt. Josh Carpenter, 1st Lt. Evan Bernstein, Sgt. Jeffrey Schneider, and Cpl. Tad Klein.

Following a US Navy F/A-18E Super Hornet demo flight, another "Rhino" departed to join up with the two CAF Grumman aircraft, which had flown earlier in the day. The F/A-18E, F6F Hellcat, and F8F-2 Bearcat made up the Legacy Flight that would make two passes overhead before breaking off for separate landings.

Marine Capt. David Selmo performed a thrilling AV-8B Harrier maneuver series, including everything from high-speed flight to a vertical





Eric A Rosen



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landing and takeoff complete with visible jet exhaust from underneath the fuselage. Capt. Selmo also rotated the Harrier 360 degrees while hovering over a fixed point on the ground.

The United States Air Force Thunderbirds took to the skies for their first air show performance of the 2012 season. Lt. Col Greg Moseley, the new Commander / Leader, conducted an excellent perfor-

mance, accurately completing the high-altitude show routine. Captain Ryan Riley, returning to fly Thunderbird Two (Left Wing), addressed the crowd prior to the diamond's takeoff roll, saluting his parents who reside in Yuma, Arizona. Major J.R. Williams (last year's opposing solo pilot) now flies the lead solo position in Thunderbird Five. Major Caroline Jensen (Right Wing) and Captain Blaine Jones (Opposing Solo)

are the new pilots in Thunderbird Three and Six, respectively. Captain Nick Holmes (Slot) has also returned to fly Thunderbird Four.

The men and women of Marine Corps Air Station Yuma did a fantastic job organizing this event, and with Mother Nature's cooperation, the day was a huge success. Fans are already looking forward to next year's event, which is expected to include the new Joint Strike Fighter.



# Feria Internacional del Aire y del Espacio Santiago de Chile, Chile

Article and Photos by Pieter Stroobach

From March 27th to April 1st, the Feria Internacional del Aire y del Espacio (FIDAE) took place in Santiago de Chile, Chile at Aeropuerto Internacional Arturo Merino Benitez, also known as Santiago IAP or BA Pudahuel. The event is already in its 30th year, so it is quite an established event. FIDAE is a trade show for all sectors of the aviation industry with a nice airshow portion that covers both military and civilian aircraft. It is a great opportunity to see a lot of the Fuerza Aerea de Chile (FACH - Chilean Air Force). The event also attracts visitors from

other South American air forces, so there are a lot of interesting spotting opportunities.

The USA was represented by a KC-10A Extender, two Texas ANG F-16Cs, and a C-130. They were outdone by a larger and somewhat more interesting Brazilian contingent consisting of two Dassault Mirage 2000Cs, an Embraer R99 AEW, an Embraer C99, a Eurocopter EC 725 Caracal and several versions of the C-130. However, the award for the most interesting support aircraft goes to the Embraer C-120 from Uruguay, which is not seen

very often.

The show was kicked off by the Halcones with their five Extra 300Ls. This FACH demo team gives a very good performance and is clearly popular with the Chilean crowds. Bell Helicopters was next with two of their latest products, the 429 and the 407 AH, on display. It is clear that the 407 is the one for somewhat more ruggedized flying and put on a demo that most likely would not be allowed in Europe or the US. It was a very impressive show from the very capable chopper. Compared to that, the Eurocopter AS350B3 was



a somewhat more civil affair. It was clear that they aimed at the business market but still showed off the aircraft's capabilities. Bombardier was present with the Challenger 300 business jet and the Dash-8Q-400, both in the latest version. The Alenia Aermacchi C-27J Spartan tried to sell itself with an impressive demo but will face massive opposition from the similar EADS (CASA) CN-235 and Embraer products, which have a well established customer base on this continent. Also present was the demo team of the Força Aérea Brasileira (FAB - Brazilian Air Force), the Esquadrão de Demonstração Aérea (EDA - Aerial Demonstration Squadron) more popularly known as the Smoke Squadron, flying seven Embraer T-27 Tucano basic trainers.

Airbus brought two of their products to Santiago, the A380-800 and the A400M Grizzly, which received a wet welcome by the fire brigade because it was the first time it arrived at Santiago. The A400M had a very short stay as it left for La Paz, Bolivia for some high altitude tests on the 29th.

The FACH put on an F-16AM demo which was somewhat rough around the edges but still nice to see. Korean aircraft manufacturer KAI is trying to push its T-50A Golden Eagle to South American customers and made a good start with an improved demo. After that was a performance by a FAdeA AI-63 Pampa Series II. This 20 year old design has been completely updated, including a new engine. No less than 40 updates have been purchased by Argentina, so far the only operator of the type. The last demo of the show was a firefighting version of the Air Tractor AT802F. A successful show and one the people of Chile should be proud of!











Charlie Lai  
Charlie Lai



Charlie Lai  
Charlie Lai



Charlie Lai











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Jonathan Silva



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***Thanks for Reading!***