



THE FLYER

Commemorative Air Force
B-29 / B-24 Squadron

Welcome Home



The Squadron tours the NAEC
Summer 2021



3 people who made
NAEC and our new
 home possible:
David Oliver
RozeLyn Beck
Neils Agather

THANK YOU!!!

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Volunteer Spotlight:
Truitt Harper



Featured Story:
Leonard Ross,
B-24 Tailgunner
by Bill Hickox



Feature Story:
The son of the
pilot who flew Lil
on 7/24/41



Photo by Chuck Belanger

Photo Album:
APHT 2021
Summer Tour



COMMEMORATIVE
AIR FORCE

*B-29/B-24 Squadron
Officer & Staff Listing*

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Crew Chief	Ben Powers	214-277-3150		f14_ad@yahoo.com



CAF AirPower History Tour

National Air Tour of Historic World War II Aircraft



2021 Fall Tour Schedule

Click on any stop below for more information

[Colorado Springs, Colorado](#)
[September 1-6, 2021](#)

[Duncan, Oklahoma](#)
[September 9-12, 2021](#)

[San Marcos, Texas](#)
[October 1-3, 2021](#)

[Denton, Texas](#)
[October 9, 2021](#)

[Fort Worth, Texas](#)
[October 16, 2021](#)

[Waco, Texas](#)
[October 23, 2021](#)

[WINGS OVER DALLAS](#)
[October 29-31, 2021](#)

[Blytheville, Arkansas](#)
[November 5-7, 2021](#)

[Dallas, Texas](#)
[November 13, 2021](#)



www.cafB-29b24.org

972-387-2924 (Hangar)

432-413-4100 (Ride Desk)

*Schedule subject to change

Check www.airpowertour.org



Squadron Report

It was great to see many B-29/B-24 Squadron members last week during our first in-person meeting in a long time. The Henry B. Tippie National Aviation Education Center at Dallas Executive Airport is a fabulous facility. Thank you, David Oliver, RozeLyn Beck, and Craig Tuminaro, for attending the meeting and hosting everyone through the new complex. The next Squadron meeting is on September 18. Thanks go to Neils Agather for providing lunch for the event.

The B-29 and B-24 are in Colorado Springs until September 7 and will head to Duncan, OK next, and we are returning to Dallas/Fort Worth area on September 13. Wings over Dallas airshow is quickly approaching October 29-31, and we need several volunteers for that event. Our Squadron supplies the food for the volunteers during the air show as usual, plus ride desk and other needed volunteer areas. We are sending out a separate email asking for volunteers for the Wings Over Dallas Air Show.

This year's tour has been outstanding, and the demand to see the aircraft has been a lot heavier than usual. We have sold out most seats at each stop, and the weather has been pretty good throughout the tour. We are also moving our equipment from Fort Worth Meacham Airport to Dallas Executive Airport to prepare for the aircraft's arrival back from the road. There is a request for volunteers to help Rick and Ben with that move.

In conjunction with our move to our new Squadron home at Dallas Executive Airport, Neils Agather is working on a SPECIAL project and needs your help. Please send him your favorite pictures of you while engaged in Squadron or CAF activities. It can be a picture of you alone or with your fellow Colonels. Some examples might be a picture on *Lil* or *FIFI* while in flight and you as a crew member, or at a tour stop and you and a fellow Squadron member are at the ride desk or giving a cockpit tour, or perhaps a group picture sharing a drink or breaking bread. Neils cannot promise to use it, but he always does his best to include your photos in his project.

Please send the pictures as digital files to Neils email address:

vnagather@agather.com

I look forward to seeing everyone at the Wings Over Dallas Airshow.

Thanks for being part of the B-29/B-24 Squadron

Archie Taylor
Squadron Leader



Photo by Andrew Smith, Adventure Photography

Executive Officer Report

Summer is Tour Season, so along with many dedicated volunteers, I've had the privilege to tour with *FIFI*, *Lil* and the other APHT aircraft.

Much planning goes into the Tour, yet day to day operations frequently require the crew to be nimble in responding to changes – Weather, Ground Operations, Aircraft Maintenance, etc. It is the mark of an outstanding organization that we adapt to the conditions at hand to complete our Mission. Time and again I've witnessed those who have put in long days, double-down on doing whatever is necessary to get the job done. This is especially true of our Flight Engineers/Maintenance Team who work so hard to keep our fleet flying.

Pilots flying the smaller aircraft also put in long hours, flying many rides per day, as there is a great demand from the public to fly these iconic aircraft.

We run a very solid, safe, professional operation, and to maintain those standards, each year we strive to identify things that we may need to update/tweak for the next tour season. Now is the time to begin collecting feedback on all aspects of the operation, which will be vetted, so some new ideas and improvements can be taught at next year's Ground School and implemented in 2022. If you have suggestions for Checklists, Manuals or just general operational items, please send me an email to have those ideas considered.

Al Benzing
Executive Officer



Al brought Ike's Bird to Warbirds on Parade in Lancaster, TX on 9/4/21.

Flight Operations Report

Much has happened since my last officer report in May of this year, some of it has been good, a little bit has been bad, and one thing has been horrific.

I will start with the horrific. We lost one of our pilots, Andy Travnicek, in a tragic accident on August 20, 2021. He was flying the #3 T-6 Texan for the Geico team conducting a formation takeoff in a 2-ship when the accident happened. I knew Andy well as we had worked and flown together outside the unit at several NATA formation clinics where he volunteered as a formation instructor and check pilot. He and his wife Sandy flew the WASP T-6 for us on the APHT this season. Andy also had recently transitioned into our Stearman and flown it on tour for us.



Andy was a graduate of the USAF Academy as well as an instructor at that prestigious institution. Following the accident, which took place while practicing for an airshow at Wilkes Barre PA, the USAF Thunderbirds performed a missing man formation in his honor. Blue skies my friend.

Here are some good things that have taken place. The tour has been going well operationally and financially so far. As I write this our two bombers are transitioning from Scottsbluff NE to Denver CO. On the national tour only Denver, Colorado Springs and Duncan OK remain.

October and November will see all of our events start and end from home base in Dallas. These will be either one day local events or out of town events over a weekend.

As soon as we return from Duncan OK in mid-September we will conduct several pilot training sorties from VFM in Fort Worth. Only one of these will take place on *FIFI* so she will return to Dallas on or about Sept 17th. *Diamond Lil* will be a bit busier and likely not return to Dallas until after the San Marcos stop on October 3.

Some of you may be wondering why we are doing training well into the tour season, well there are lots of reasons but primarily because we started off the year with little money for training and a plan to spread the expensive training events throughout the year as we were able to do so. We are continuing to do just that.

More good happened this summer. *Diamond Lil* joined the APHT in Niagara Falls after missing some early season tour stops due to maintenance issues with the custom-made landing gear parts we had ordered. Once she arrived on scene ride flights and additional training flights continued throughout the tour season. *Lil* has been selling rides well and performing superbly.

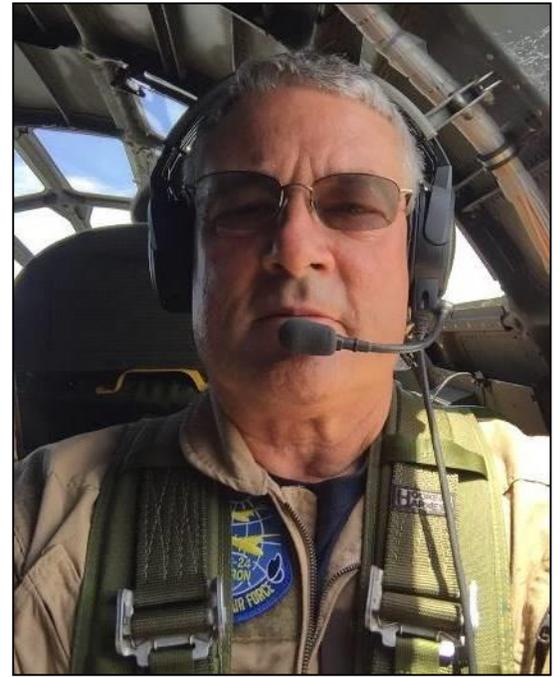
Congratulate our Squadron pilots for their recent achievements when you see them. Jeremy Lashbrook – Stearman IP/CP and B-24 SIC, Randall Haskin – Stearman PIC and B-24 SIC, Neil Broussard – B-24 SIC, Kathy Royer – B-29 SIC, Jonathan Hardwick – Stearman PIC, Matt Hood – Stearman PIC.

Al Herum
Flight Operations Officer

Maintenance Report

As we proceed down the home stretch of another amazing tour season, we can't help but reflect on the success we enjoy thanks to the preparation and maintenance our aircraft receive throughout the year. This includes having a spare engine ready for a 3-day engine change in Sioux Falls. What a team we have!

Those of us lucky enough to spend time touring the country with these treasures get a real feeling for the honor and awesome responsibility we have been bestowed. Why would anybody want to spend weeks away from home, living out of a suitcase, rooming with people we barely know, spending long hours in the hot and cold? Look what we get to do! We are the custodians and crews of historical flying treasures. Hats off to all of the volunteers making this happen.



While on a mission from Sioux Falls *FIFI's* number two engine developed a problem forcing shut down and eventual engine change. After 1 day of preparation, Crew Chiefs Rick Garvis and Ben Powers drove a truck carrying our spare engine QEC (quick engine change) and tooling to Sioux Falls arriving on Thursday. In the meantime, our crew members had already prepared the engine for removal. The replacement engine was installed and ready for a maintenance flight by Monday. We owe a special thanks to *LIL's* flight engineer Matt Ellison for making arrangements with his contacts at the National Guard Base, there in Sioux Falls, availing access to their ramp, personnel and support equipment. More to follow after our engine builder Anderson Airmotive completes their evaluation of the ailing engine.

Soon it will be time for winter maintenance along with the challenges of moving into our new home at CAF Headquarters. We ware going to be needing lots of help. Please keep your eyes open for postings.

Again, thanks to all our dedicated volunteers who keep us flying.

Phil Pedron
Maintenance Officer



Photo by Andrew Smith, Adventure Photography

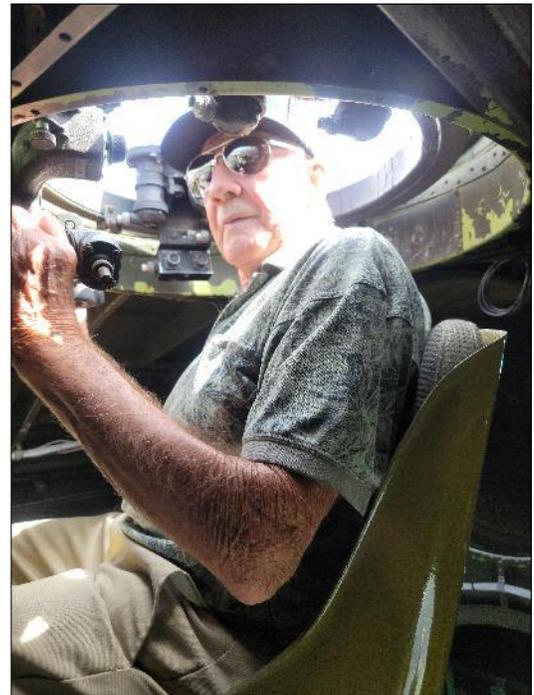
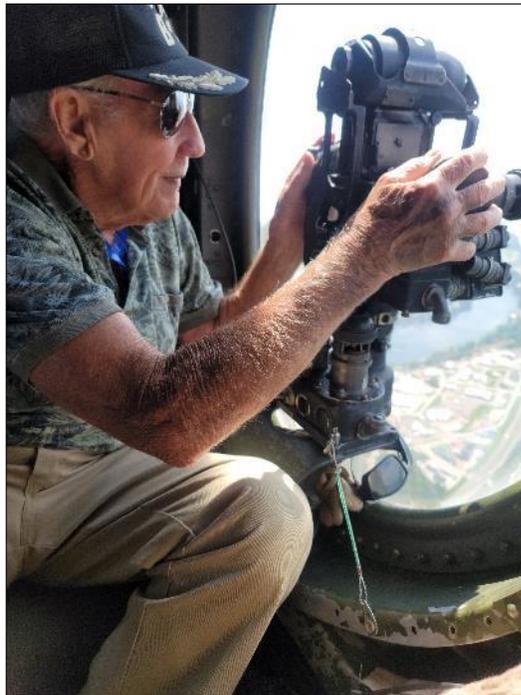
Training & Safety Report

The best thing we can all do for the Squadron and for the Scanner Community is to refresh ourselves and get as current as possible before the next flight we take. There are some significant changes in our operations and training as we internalize the lessons of other outfits that have had deadly incidents. We have done very well with the two real incidents that we experienced on tour this year with engines 2 and 4. Correct procedures were taken very quickly.

Could you or I have done as well? When was the last time we read and reviewed the emergency procedures part of our Scanner Manual? I would like us all to take the time to read IN DETAIL both the Operations Manual and Scanner Manual for two good reasons. First so that we can get and sustain currency and second to suggest ways to improve both documents for next year. I commit to you that I will do it and I ask you to do it also.

In my years of military experience I've found that no outfit just stays the same over time. An outfit is either getting better or getting worse. By doing what I ask of you above, we can keep getting better and safer. "Scanners Watch Your Engines" Thanks, Stu

Stu Watkins
Safety Officer



On tour, Stu enjoyed the company of a B-29 gunner who was based at Kadina AFB during the Korean War.

PIO Report

Now that the 2021 Summer Tour Season is winding down, I'm going to stray from the typical PIO report this month to bring you an update on an activity that has been near and dear to my heart this year: CashLess Per Diem.

As most of you are aware, the Squadron Officers took a decision this spring to pursue the notion of automating the way per diem is paid out, either by direct deposit or by check. This was done in order to support a number of goals; primary among those was to reduce the after-hours work required of the Tour Leader to pay per diem, to simplify the overall process, and to minimize the handling of cash.

We explored various mechanisms to facilitate this: Venmo, PayPal and Zelle. We decided on Zelle for a number of reasons:

Zelle is ubiquitous in the sense that it already used by and integrated into many, if not most (but certainly not all) major banks. It is already part of all the squadron's banking apps (Chase, NationsBank and Wells Fargo). Many folks already use Zelle for their personal needs.

We found the set-up process much less clunky and intrusive than the others. Those actually invoked a third-party to link to one's checking account, requesting user bank user-id and Password, or actual bank routing/account info. That set off a big red flag, and we didn't like that. If your bank is in the Zelle network, the app sends you to your own bank's site to complete the registration. If not, it registers you by using your debit card.

Transactions processed through Zelle are seamless, that is to say when the disbursement is made from the squadron account, it goes directly to your checking account. With Venmo, (as with PayPal) the money goes to your Venmo account, and requires a separate step for the user to transfer the funds to their checking account. Zelle is timely, the money transfer happens virtually instantaneously. With Venmo, the transfer from Venmo account to user account can take (according to their own website) 1 to 3 business days. You can choose "Instant Transfer", but then there is a fee involved.

We have hit one major downside. Our Squadron Chase Checking account is a Business Account. And although you can set up a Zelle account even if your bank is not in the Zelle network, the Zelle app does not like to pay from a business checking account to a checking account with a bank that is not in the Zelle network. Consequently, many of you that have gone through the process of getting yourselves set up with Zelle are getting paid per diem via a check sent to your home address. We are working to try to eliminate this issue, but so far to no avail.

In any event, I would like to thank all of you that have responded to our requests to get set up with this process. It has reduced a work effort by the Tour Leaders that used to literally take hours to minutes.

And just because I can't leave you without some statistics, of the 94 folks that toured in 2020:

- 8 have opted out, for one reason or another (9%)
- 79 have signed up with Zelle (84%)
- 62 are paid by direct deposit (66%)
- 17 are paid by check (18%)
- 7 have not yet responded to set up request (7%)

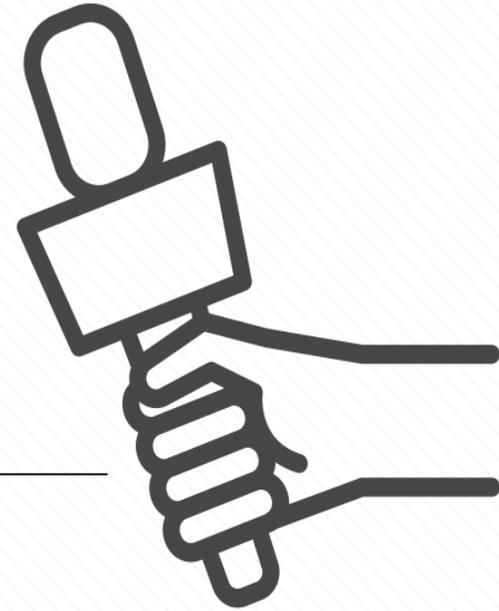
I, and your Tour Leaders, thank you!!

Jacques Robitaille
Public Information Officer





APHT 2021 in the news



Story Links

Denver

<https://www.airforcemag.com/fifi-the-b-29-bringing-ww2-history-to-local-flight-lines/>

Lincoln, NE

<https://www.klknv.com/history-meets-the-future-at-lincoln-airport/>

Rochester MN

<https://www.kimt.com/content/news/AirPower-Squadron-tour-takes-flight-in-Rochester-574954661.html?fbclid=IwAR0Xnfc9w2U54wVORGps5rN1-CAa4u0HVMTJv7EZkGXjwhGI-f0fDmUo3w8>

Rochester MN

<https://kttc.com/2021/07/26/rarest-wwii-planes-touchdown-in-rochester/?fbclid=IwAR1waDK1DLFLSmD0Jgc1nNXP9MjMXmv6HHS-Dr8XI1DGm-0ZNvF1e-eXx4>

Janesville, WI

https://www.gazettextra.com/multimedia/galleries/warbird-weekend-at-southern-wisconsin-regional-airport/collection_8725ccd5-7014-58eb-a88f-d8beedb9727e.html?fbclid=IwAR2LGuczowIhndjoiW1s4kj84mfNdMPy5YAmb-HDtbp0-PC7McVVAkwlhYk#1

Chicago IL

https://www.fox32chicago.com/news/wwii-bomber-planes-arrive-in-chicago-area-take-a-tour-fly-in-them?fbclid=IwAR0kNCenEkLROixX-SNxdFesq_om3qKjmX1DqJuQr9pDQUo4D0EY8czNsnc

Baltimore

https://www.wmar2news.com/voiceforveterans/memorial-day-honor-cruise-for-vets-on-wwii-boat?fbclid=IwAR1yoGMYtK58yNFjplKTzi18M_hkShebsZ90zG2zSqKoCyEqa99tz5X7oNw

TriCities

https://www.wjhl.com/news/an-outdoor-history-lesson-wwii-aircraft-on-display-at-tri-city-aviation/?fbclid=IwAR0lCOxXQ7-lBgUIaRHMaDyC1_J65rM-Rc5Js_VJ4I9BH0L7Xkk9f4veSko

Diamond Lil webinar

CAF Warbird Tube - The Oldest Liberator

<https://youtu.be/hJSJw0xHHB0>

Education Report

RC, RC, RC

This issue's enhanced education report is about RC aircraft and other vehicles. As I surf around for info, it is hard to differentiate data on RC toys used by recreational hobbyists and the emerging drone industry with a hobbyist angle as well as multi-faceted commercial and career opportunities. I've covered drones, so let's look at traditional RC aircraft.

Walter and Bill Good, are credited with building the first successful RC aircraft in 1937. Using their knowledge of radio technology and model aircraft, they built a gas-powered plane with 96 inch wingspan called "The Big Guff" operated by their own custom-built radio equipment. Guff was the winner of the national model airplane championship from 1938-1940. Today it is on display at the Smithsonian.

Founded in 1936, the Academy of Model Aeronautics (AMA) <https://www.modelaircraft.org/> promotes model aviation as a sport and recreational activity. AMA charts 2,500 flying clubs and boasts a membership of around 150,000 with more than a third under 19 years old. Over 2,000 sanctioned model aviation competitions are held annually. I enjoyed this short video about the history of radio control devices <https://youtu.be/G-DOfHgRtg?t=2>

Of course, I know Flyer readers are interested in seeing video of RC aircraft in flight, so I browsed YouTube for some RC flying action...wow!...a lot to see. Coincidentally, a video was recently posted on the new *FIFI* B-29 Superfortress group on Facebook. Check out this huge RC B-29 Superfortress – and it's *FIFI*! <https://youtu.be/NKXyruyYCoU?t=4>

I visited my local HobbyTown in Lewisville, TX. Almost a third of the store is dominated by RC models, tools and supplies. I acquired the card of an employee who was agreeable to answering e-mail questions. No response yet.

That was OK because I knew I could count on a friend and member of our Squadron for help with my report. B-29 and B-24 pilot, Curt Lewis, is an avid RC hobbyist. You may already have seen Curt's RC *Diamond Lil* B-24 Liberator at an air show or featured in a past Flyer. *Lil* is just part of Curt's RC air force. I interviewed Curt about his RC hobby and was invited to watch him fly his planes the other night at a field in Grapevine, TX.

When did you start RC?

I have been flying RC for just about as long as I can remember. I was probably about 6 years old when my dad started teaching me the basics with his 2-meter span, high-start launched gliders.

When did you really get into it?

I was lucky to grow up with a nice field right behind our house that belonged to a local church and by the time I was in 5th grade - I would try to fly every morning before walking to school and again in the evening to take advantage of the calm air. That lasted until I started high school, when any money that I ended up with needed to go towards my actual flying lessons and it became harder to justify spending money on my RC hobby. I hardly flew RC at all until 2015 when I was flying professionally FT and had time and money to re-ignite my RC hobby again in a big way.



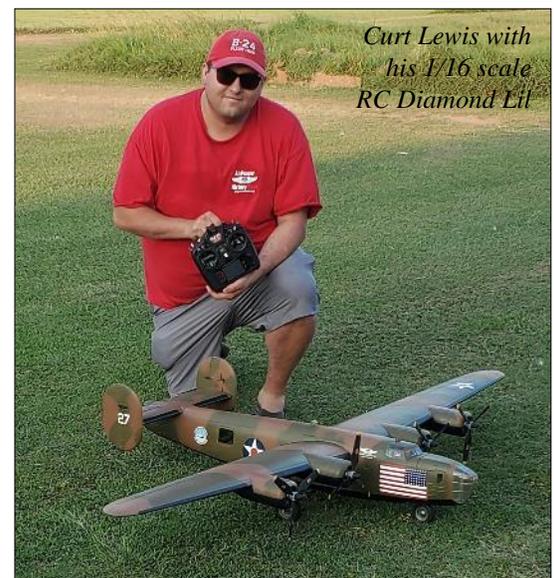
Walter Good launching the Big Huff with Bill at the controls



Walter and Bill Good



A replica of the Big Huff



Curt Lewis with his 1/16 scale RC Diamond Lil

Have you had anybody really mentor you on RC in recent years? A fellow enthusiast?

Aside from my dad getting me started when I was young, I can thank the internet community for answering any specific questions that I have about my RC fleet in the last few years. My best friend and fellow squadron member Dylan Phelps is a great RC pilot as well and we have a lot of fun when we can get out and fly together.

What aircraft do you have?

My current fleet is my 2-meter wingspan B-24, a 2m model of Mike Patey's Draco, an F-86, F-18, P-47, T-6, Stearman, and a sport bush type plane that is on floats.

Do you have a favorite?

I will use the same answer when I am flying our fleet on tour - "my favorite is the one that I am flying at that particular minute." That said - the F-86 and B-24 get flown the most.

How does being a professional pilot and flying RC complement each other (skill? enjoyment? challenges?)

There are quite a few professional pilots that spend a lot of time out at the RC club that I usually fly at. I don't really feel like the two have anything to do with each other fortunately. Professional aviation is generally rule based decision making - whereas RC flying allows you the freedom to make decisions based on common sense and your own risk assessments. The skill required to fly an actual airplane vs an RC airplane are very different - and just because you are good at flying one does not at all mean that you will be able to do both without practice and training. That said - if you are able to fly an actual airplane and RC airplanes - the experiences between the two can translate to improve your overall aviation experience. The knowledge of aerodynamics you get from training towards an FAA pilot certificate can be applied practically - and in a more extreme way - to RC airplanes to develop a more thorough and practical understanding of the entire operating envelope.

What resources have helped you expand this hobby and take it up a few notches?

In the modern era it is all about the internet. There are many reviews of products from people on YouTube, and great online communities like RCGroups.com and HobbySquawk.com

What will be your next RC model?

I don't know! I have been eyeing a 2-meter span P-51 to paint up as Gunfighter - but would really love for Freewing RC to produce a very large B-29 to go with their B-24 that I currently have.

If anyone in the Squadron wants to come out with you, is that doable?

Of course! I usually fly at 114th RC Aero Squadron in Grapevine, TX (<https://www.114thrc.org>) in the evenings when I am home. During our touring months I very rarely get to fly RC because of how little I am home, but in the Fall when we are off tour and the weather is nice I usually go out there a few times per week. Get in touch with me if you are interested in knowing when I will be heading out there.

I captured video of Curt flying his B-24, F-86 and Stearman. Considering I was chasing the planes with my Samsung phone, the videos are really pretty good. Be sure and expand your screen and crank it up.

RC Diamond Lil walkaround
<https://youtu.be/MyUOoFVF8Ig>

RC Diamond Lil landing and taxiing
<https://youtu.be/ztskpaVgAhA>

RC Diamond Lil control surfaces check
<https://youtu.be/6GuId20ICVc>

RC F-86 Sabre flying
<https://youtu.be/oX4LOLHmUes>

RC Diamond Lil landing gear check
<https://youtu.be/y2hMcptyt3I>

RC PT-13 Stearman flying
<https://youtu.be/HMctXWmB8Js>

RC Diamond Lil flying
<https://youtu.be/9ONvEyypuq0>

Kon-clusion: Maybe it's time to branch out from my hobby building static plastic models to RC aircraft. This looks like a lot of fun. Thank Curt!

“Keep ‘Em Flying, big and small”



Three aircraft in the Curt Lewis RC fleet



Member News Summer 2021

The Squadron welcomed the following new members in Summer 2021

- | | |
|---|---------------------------------------|
| <i>David Arber, Fort Worth, TX</i> | <i>Melissa Shattuck, Goshen, NH</i> |
| <i>Frank Burcham, Castle Rock, CO</i> | <i>Michael Lashbrook, Reno, NV</i> |
| <i>Michael Maloney, Bonaire, GA</i> | <i>Ben Cook, Meridian, ID</i> |
| <i>Scott Dube, Rocky Face, GA</i> | <i>Paul Harrigan, Lewiston, NY</i> |
| <i>Jon Bailey, Moscow, TN</i> | <i>Jason Depew, Lithia, FL</i> |
| <i>Frazier Jones, Pierson, FL</i> | <i>David Menno, Lancaster, NY</i> |
| <i>Jordan Drischler, Fort Worth, TX</i> | <i>Michael Elrod, Cantonment, FL</i> |
| <i>David Eppler, Kennett Square, PA</i> | <i>Jennifer Watson, Arlington, VA</i> |
| <i>Andrew Howard, Voorhees, NJ</i> | <i>Brett Shaeffer, Denton, TX</i> |
| <i>Josh Smith, Forney, TX</i> | <i>Landon Studer, Dallas, TX</i> |
| <i>Andre DeLombard, Bedford, TX</i> | <i>Zachary Tyson,</i> |
| <i>Rory Cahoon, Arlington, TX</i> | <i>North Richland Hills, TX</i> |
| <i>Chris Slight, Durham, CT</i> | <i>Bob Markert, Littleton, CO</i> |
| <i>Michael Hirsch, Cambridge, MA</i> | <i>Sean Elder, Brighton, CO</i> |

Toni Rabroker, Adjutant & Membership Coordinator



Check the Squadron website under the Members Only section for your Squadron membership status. If you have membership questions or there is anything I can do to help you get involved, please let me know.
- Toni Rabroker

If you have any membership questions, please feel free to contact me at rabroker@hotmail.com
Dues and new member apps can be mailed to:
CAF B-29/B-24 Squadron
PO Box 763577
Dallas, TX 75376



July 31, 1945



WANTED – Wings over Dallas volunteers

Our B-29/B-24 Squadron supports many activities at Wings Over Dallas. We will need plenty of volunteers to ensure this year is another success. For WOD, we are in need of ride desk support, individuals to drive golf carts to and from the aircraft, people to take riders to the plane on the hot ramp, and numerous volunteers to support the lunch effort for CAF Colonels. If you are willing and able, please click the link below to sign-up and submit your availability. A spreadsheet will then be worked up to outline the various tasks and we'll get you the proper credentials for helping out. Thanks in advance!

Wings over Dallas – Squadron Volunteer link

https://caf.formstack.com/forms/volunteer_wingsoverdallas

September Squadron Meeting on 9/18 @NAEC

Our next Squadron meeting is Saturday, September 18, from 11:00, am - 1:00 pm, at Dallas Executive Airport. Lunch will be provided.



Make sure you visit the Squadron Px for all your APHT bling

Px Captains, Alma and Rocky Smith will take care of you.

Whether we are on tour or home, we can fill your order. Short or long sleeve uniform shirts, performance polos, quarter zip fleece, as well as hats and tshirts (as found on www.B29B24PX.org). We will even do name drops on the shirts. Email alma@B-29b24px.org with size, quantity, your phone and email information.

Find us on 

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OCT 29-31 2021

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Squadron Training CONGRATULATIONS

NEW BLACK HATS

Squadron members who have qualified for Scanner, FE or Pilot position on *FIFI* or *Diamond Lil* during the APHT 2021 Summer Tour



SCANNERS - Steve Glenn (L) and Steve Weisner (C)



SCANNER - Ray Furlong (L)



SCANNER - Christian Vaughn (R)



SCANNER - Michael Bauer (R)

NEW RED HATS



SIC - Jeremy Lashbrook (R)



SCANNERS - Ron Barret (C) and Ron Thorson (C)



In Memoriam Brad “Launchpad” Marzari

Brad Marzari was tragically killed in a plane crash on July 4, 2021. He will be missed by his family, aviation friends, and our Squadron. Brad had a big impact on everyone he met and was a larger than life character – always sporting his unique handlebar mustache. Squadron member, Natasha Sanders created a video tribute to Brad at this link -

<https://youtu.be/bkIVLxgHyiw>

Blue skies Launchpad.

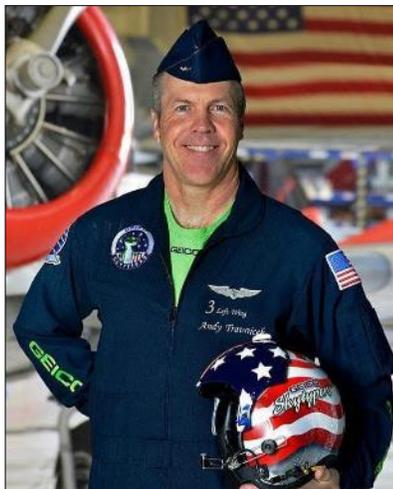


In Memoriam

Andy Travnicek

It is with great sadness that we announce the loss of Andy Travnicek on Friday, August 20, 2021. Andy flew the T-6 and Stearman for our Squadron this summer. He was an accomplished pilot and friend to all who knew him.

Andy was actively involved with the Airpower History Tour, Highland Lakes Squadron, Tex Hill Wing, WASP Squadron, and New England Wing. Please join us in keeping his wife Sandy in our thoughts and prayers.



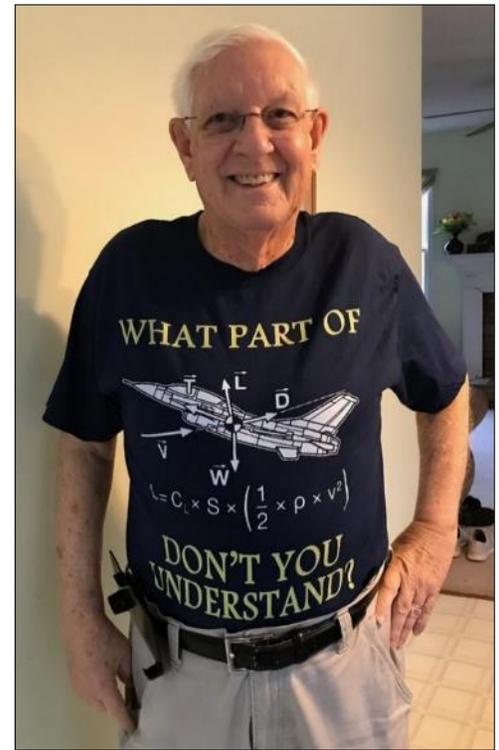


Volunteer Spotlight Truitt Harper

By Konley Kelley

It's way too hard to pick just one label to give CAF B-29/B-24 Squadron member Truitt Harper and his amazing career in aviation. So why not a word cloud?

Missionary Pilot A&P | Aircraft Mechanic
Chief Pilot of Lockheed Flying Club
Airline Transport Pilot APFT Tour Veteran
Pilot/Inspector - Home Built **Warbird Pilot** B-29 Scanner
Flight Instructor
Cargo Pilot **Seaplane pilot** Formation Pilot
Test Pilot **Bush Pilot** Airshow Pilot



If you asked Truitt, he'd also want you to know he is husband, proud father of four, and "Dee-Daddy" to 16 grandkids while living a comfortable and content life in the little suburb of Hiram, just west of Atlanta, GA.



Truitt Harper and Don Boccaccio

CAF Development Officer and Tour Leader, Don Boccaccio, recommended Truitt for a volunteer spotlight. He told me Truitt has an incredible life story. Now that I've interviewed Truitt, I totally agree.

Truitt was born on January 6, 1943 in Atlanta, GA. His father, Truitt Sr., was a successful architect and mother, Eva Payne, a homemaker. He has a younger sister named Patsy. It was a happy childhood in a close knit family. He enjoyed school and was active in football, basketball, and a starter on the track team. He wasn't a big kid but enjoyed the competition and "toughed" it out.

He was fascinated by airplanes at a very young age and bought model kits and balsa wood gliders at the local dime store. He regrets misplacing or destroying so many of these neat models and toys as a kid. He's made up for that in the years since (more on that later).

Truitt's Dad worked very hard, often bringing his work home. Truitt hung out with the neighborhood kids. In the summer he helped the breadman make deliveries. He remembers Uncles coming home after serving in the military and the family celebrations that followed.

After high school, he enrolled at Georgia Tech to study aerospace engineering. He was never one to make the Dean's list but hung in there and passed his classes. He also joined the civil air patrol but said all his unit really did was march and study for classes.

Ultimately, his smart choice for a major was validated when he landed a job and went right to work three days after graduating college as a test engineer at Lockheed Martin in Marietta, GA in 1966. In a pneumatics lab, his team tested fatigue on the wing and fuselage components of a C-5 Galaxy. In his free time, he took flying lessons and eventually achieved ratings for many types of aircraft. He was a member of the Lockheed Flying Club and put in a lot of hours.

Truitt stayed at home to save money. With his income, he bought a 1966 GTO. Between flying and work, he didn't have a lot of time to think about much else but that all changed when he met Joy at church. Joy was in nursing school and the daughter of missionaries. Truitt and Joy married in 1971. Around that time, work at Lockheed slowed. He had an opportunity to go to Africa with his wife and her parents and fly for church and humanitarian needs. He asked his boss if he could be laid off versus quitting which set him up a little better financially. Before they left for Africa, the Sudan Interior Mission (SIM) sent them to orientation at Biola College in La Mirada, CA.

In 1972, they arrived in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia. In the first few months, he worked alongside his stepfather and the government to set-up an aviation ministry program, establish airstrips, and raise money for aircraft and supplies. A return trip to the U.S. afforded him the opportunity to attend an A&P program in Elizabethton, TN. While in the U.S., a civil war in Ethiopia ended hopes to return so his family redirected to West Africa and the city of Niamey, in Niger. Here Truitt began flying a lot. He piloted a Comanche and Cherokee Lance.

On one memorable day, he was flying a missionary family over a desolate region and had engine trouble. He radioed mayday and a British aircraft responded. He lost engine power but landed safely with damage to the landing gear. He said it couldn't have been that bad a landing because one of the children in the plane slept right through it. Five hours later a Land Rover came to the rescue. They pushed the plane under a tree and a local villager was hired to guard it. Returning three months later, they replaced the engine, repaired the landing gear, cleared a makeshift runway, and flew away.

Overall, Truitt spent six years involved with mission work overseas and stateside. While in Niger, he logged 600-800 hours per year flying medical supplies, students and missionaries to various destinations. As missions became more established and self-sufficient, flying assignments decreased.

He and Joy also began raising a family. Michael was born in Ethiopia. Scott was born in Tennessee and a girl, Melody, was born in Niger.



Truitt with his damaged aircraft in February, 1977.

In 1977, they returned to Atlanta, GA. With no job, Truitt did some flight instruction but it wasn't enough money to get by. A friend hooked him up with a cargo company flying DC-3s for FedX. He flew routes all over the south and earned his airline transport certificate and rank of Captain. He and Joy also welcomed a little girl named Karen.

Truitt's boss at Lockheed reconnected and offered him an engineer's position testing aircraft again. It was 1980 and he was pretty much back with the same team. The components they were testing now were composites made of carbon fibers covering the surface of aircraft rudders and leading edges. They worked on everything from the Osprey to jets for Gulfstream. His team did composite manufacturing for components of the F-117 Stealth and F-22 Raptor. This job continued for 13 years and he began to supervise a team of engineers.



Truitt gave flying lessons to the owner of this DC-3 in 1981

He never got to fly in one of these incredible aircraft but did spend time in an F-22 flight simulator. He also rejoined the Lockheed Flying Club and became their chief pilot and instructor.

He was invited to a meeting at the Airbase Georgia of the CAF. Truitt loved the old warbirds, particularly a C-45 Expeditor called *Bucket of Bolts* that he flew for six years. He retired from Lockheed and became an instructor-pilot with the Airbase Georgia flying in many of their famous warbirds including the P-51 Mustang *Red Nose*, the first plane acquired by the CAF, SDB Dauntless, T-6 Texan, Japanese Kate, Fairchild PT-19, and T-34 Mentor.

His friend, Joe Broker, introduced him to the CAF B-29/B-24 Squadron. Truitt joined up and did B-29 Ground School in 2014. He has been a regular at the Scanner position on tours from 2014 to present including the Arsenal of Democracy flyover in 2015 and Canada tour in 2018.

Truitt was on the transition flight aboard *FIFI* this summer from Sioux Falls, SD to Lincoln, NB. In the left scanner position, he spotted some smoke from #2 and alerted the flight crew. *FIFI* was grounded and, in a few days, our Texas maintenance crew arrived to swap out the engine.

He has had some memorable interactions with WWII veterans. A B-29 tail gunner told him he was ordered to search the aircraft for something that was smoking. He found a shorted electrical box in the bomb bay. With no warning the bomb bay doors opened. His headset was blown off and, unable to reach him, the crew thought he'd fallen out the bomb bay.

Truitt also remembers getting permission to take a veteran to the gunner compartment and watching him work our gunsight nearly 70 years since the airman did this on active duty in WWII. It was remarkable to watch. It has been his privilege to meet so many veterans and represent the Squadron.

Truitt is very fond of his touring crews and especially tour leaders like Phil Pardon and Don Boccaccio, both very good friends of his. He once bunked in the same home with Neils and Archie at Oshkosh. Other Squadron members he has pleasure of knowing include Toni and Steve Rabroker, David Oliver, Jonathan Oliver, Bill Goeken, Steve Zimmerman, Al Herum, Al Benzing and many others. He has a long list of CAF folks he can call friends. He also believes he honors the aviation friends he's personally lost over the years by continuing to volunteer and serve the mission of the CAF.



Bucket of Bolts



Red Nose

Photo by John Willhoff



FIFI at the Arsenal of Democracy (2015)

Truitt had a bout with cancer in 2020 and was touched with the outreach from his CAF family checking on his well-being. It meant a lot to him. Today he is cancer free and feeling better day by day.

He is blessed his children live near him in Atlanta and his family has grown to include 16 grandchildren. His friends are urging him to write a book. He has meticulously kept a logbook since 1956 and can tell you about every plane he has ever flown. In 2017, he received the Wright Brothers Master Pilot Award and Charles Taylor A&P Master Mechanics Award from the FAA, only the fourth person in GA to receive both. He has been an active member of the EAA and AOPA. Truitt also claims to have one of the most spectacular aviation-themed basements in the world with a rare collection of die cast aircraft, models, art, books and a unique collection of airline boarding passes and sick sacks. As a pilot, Truitt said he takes special pride in saying he has never failed to come down in the same plane in which he left...he has never had to jump.

Truitt gives thanks to the Lord for 55+ years in aviation. Thank you Truitt for making the CAF part of your incredible flying career.



Sitting in a F117 cockpit at the SAC Museum



Chatting with a B-29 bombardier.



Not facepaint, forehead paint 😊



Receiving both FAA awards in 2017.



At the grant opening of the B-29 Café in Ozark, MO.



Diamond Lil and Truitt in 2021



L-R: Michael, Truitt, Scott, Joy, Karen, Melody.



The whole family.



Photo Album

Henry B. Tippie

National Aviation Education Center

On August 21, 2021, the **Squadron** held its first membership meeting at the NAEC, the new home of *FIFI* and *Diamond Lil* at the **CAF Dallas National Airbase**.



CAF National Aviation Education Center (NAEC) building side facing highway 67 in South Dallas.



Big flags for a big hangar.



The NAEC hangar has more than enough room for *FIFI* and *Diamond Lil*.



A Red Tail Mustang greets you in the lobby.



This space will be turned into a mini-theater



The world-famous CAF nose art collection is here!



Rozelyn Beck, CAF Chief Relationship Officer in a conference room.

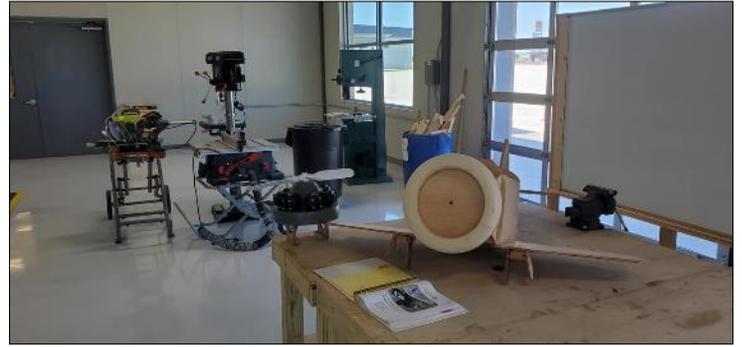


Classroom activity. Create a historic plane profile.

Photo Album – CAF Henry B. Tippie National Aviation Education Center



Classroom space – The Build Guild



Machining Tools and a wooden plane project.



A lot of creative workspace



Classroom.



Hallways with unique runway flooring design.



David Oliver, CAF COO, and Neils Agather,



Squadron Leader Archie Taylor at the podium.



The neighboring former Dallas Police Helicopter Hangar will be the Squadron's new home following renovations.

**Next Squadron meeting
at NAEC
Saturday, September 18
11:00, am - 1:00 pm,
Dallas Executive
Airport**



Grand Opening 11/11/21



Attn: Squadron Members T-34 Sponsor Group

**Sponsors
Needed**



From the T-34 Sponsor Group –

The T-34 Mentor is back and doing better than ever. We are busy providing training to our active Sponsors and taking the T-34 to APHT tour stops. We are looking for 2-3 more Sponsors. If you are interested, please contact Lloyd Hedges using the info below. Thank you.

“Keep ‘em Flying!”



Lloyd Hedges
T-34 Sponsor Group Aircraft Coordinator
Phone: 214-244-9179
Email: lloydthepilot@gmail.com

PHELPS/BONEYARD SAFARI



Photo Album

APHT 2021 Summer Tour

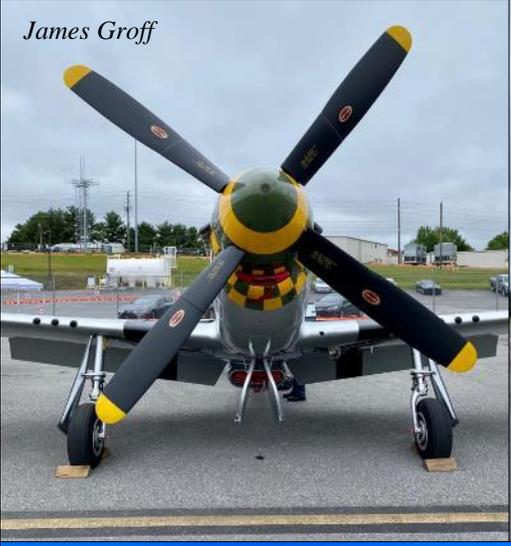
Thank you to all the CAF and fan photographers whose work is represented here. With such an active summer tour season, there were a lot of pictures. If I failed to credit you or made a mistake with a photo credit, my apologies – The Editor



Chattanooga, TN



Tricities, TN



Baltimore, MD



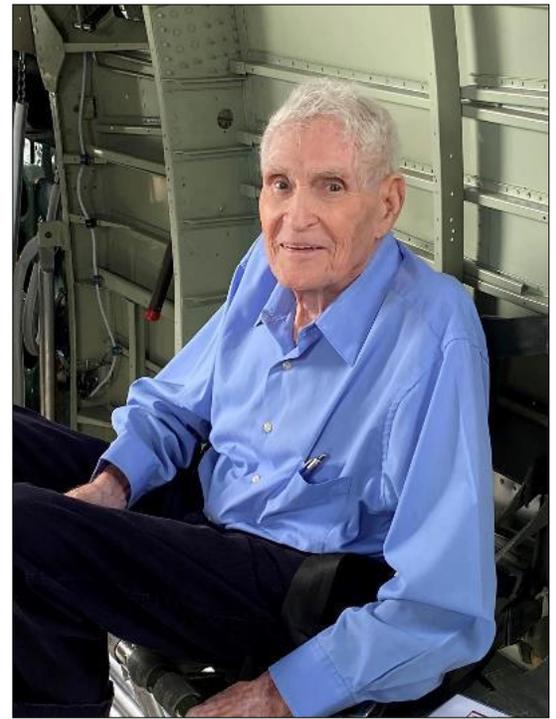


Feature Story

S/Sgt. Leonard Ross

B-24 Tail Gunner

By Bill Hickox



One of the main motivations I had for joining the CAF B-29/B-24 Squadron back in 2008 was that it would give me the opportunity to meet my real life heroes, WWII veterans. Talking with those who were actually there helped to bring history to life for me, much like the experience of hearing the rumble of *FIFI's* engines and smelling *Diamond Lil's* exhaust. Talking with my heroes and experiencing the sights and sounds of WWII aviation has always been a package deal on tour. Sadly over time fewer and fewer of my heroes are able to attend our events. Many have flown West, while others are just not physically able to come out to the ramp anymore. But when they do, it certainly is special.

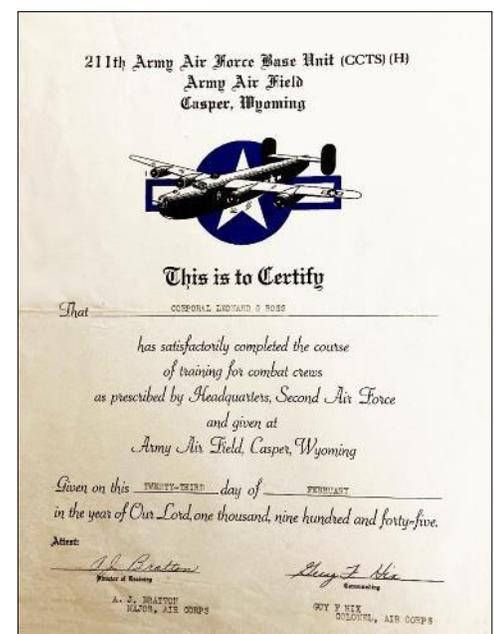
One of our guests who took a ride on *Diamond Lil* at the Sioux Falls, SD stop was Leonard Ross, a WWII veteran and a tail gunner on a B-24. It was the first time he's stepped foot on a B-24 since April 25, 1945. A little about Leonard...

Leonard Ross was born on Jan 27, 1926 in Rossford, OH. When the war broke out Leonard, like most young men of his generation, wanted to get into the fight, so much so that he dropped out of school as a sophomore at 16 ½ years old to enlist. His father refused to give him permission to enlist early, but his mother agreed to sign the paperwork so Leonard traveled to Toledo, OH to sign up. His excitement soon turned to disappointment when he weighed in at TWO POUNDS under the minimum requirement of 115 lbs. They wouldn't accept him! Not to be deterred, he traveled to Ft. Wayne, IN to try again, this time eating a bunch of bananas prior to weighing in. It worked! He weighed in at a whopping 116 lbs., one pound over the minimum and good to go! Leonard was sworn in on December 1, 1943, but the Army wanted him to be a little older before they sent him into combat so they told him they'd call him in for duty once he turned 18. Leonard earned his GED and passed the time until the day he was called in for active duty by contributing to the war effort. He worked at the Goodyear factory in Toledo, OH assembling the gull-wings of the Corsair!

On March 18, 1944, Leonard reported for duty in Toledo. He tested for pilot, but the Army Air Corps had too many pilots at that time so Leonard was approved to start training as an aerial gunner. After graduating from gunnery training on September 30, 1944, he was then cross-trained as an assistant B-24 Flight Engineer graduating December 4, 1944 from Flight Engineer training. It was time to go to war.

Leonard was assigned to the 485th Bomb Group, 829th Squadron, 55th Wing of the 15th Air Force, based out of Venosa Army Airfield, Italy. His trip overseas took from March 5 to March 25, 1945. Combat began for Leonard on April 15, 1945, after 6 days of crew assembly and processing,

Interestingly, prior to departing for Italy, Leonard's crew picked up a brand new B-24 in Topeka KS, their new aircraft. When they arrived in Italy, they learned that they were not assigned to fly "their" B-24. Instead they were assigned an older, battle worn aircraft to fly into combat! So much for the new plane smell.



Leonard's graduation certificate.

As historians, we are accustomed to seeing the heavy bombers decorated with flashy (and often risqué) nose art and clever names. Leonard's B-24 didn't display any nose art and was never given a name. Had they been in theater longer, that might have changed but the war in Europe was quickly coming to a close. Leonard and his crew flew four combat missions before the war came to an end. They dropped bombs to destroy enemy bridges and troop positions. Even though it was late in the war, flak and fighters were still a real threat and Leonard experienced the wrath of both, but keeps those memories close to his chest like so many of his brothers in arms. He did say that, "...every time we went up, we knew we weren't coming home. We just accepted it."

A few fun facts he shared about his missions made me smile. The ball turret gunner could not wear a parachute while in the ball-turret, so Leonard "borrowed" his buddy's parachute so he could sit on both his parachute and his buddy's in his tail turret. In his words, he figured both chutes would "protect his butt" from incoming flak! He also shared they flew missions between 22,000 and 24,000 feet, requiring oxygen masks and heavy gear due to the cold. Well, Leonard smoked at that time in his young life and chose to remove his oxygen mask in flight, at altitude, to sneak in a quick smoke from time to time. Can't say that I blame him, considering he was on his way to meet with the enemy!



S/Sgt. Leonard Ross



At _____ base



Leonard (far right) and his B-24 crew



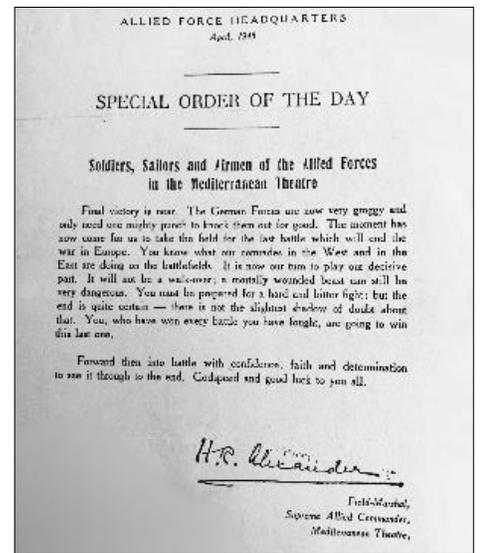
Bomb damage assessment photos



Another memory he shared was on one mission he remembered looking out and seeing nothing but B-24s, B-17s, P-51s and P-38s as far as the eye could see. He took some photos during their bomb runs too, and those photos can be seen in this article, along with photos of Leonard in uniform and with his crew.

Germany surrendered on May 7, 1945, so Leonard's combat tour in Europe effectively ended on that day as well. On May 15, he shipped out of Italy, bound for the States, and arrived on May 24, 1945. He mentioned they traveled back on the *SS America* (the Army renamed it the *West Point*). There were 10,000 men on board that ship. They traveled 600 miles each day for a total of 4,000 miles. Packed like sardines, this was no luxury cruise, but to the men on board it was even better...they were coming home.

Upon arriving back in the U.S.A., Leonard was given a choice to finish service in the States or go into combat in the Pacific Theater. Leonard felt he still had some work left to do for Uncle Sam so he chose to stay in the Army and train in B-29s to bring the fight to Japan! He was sent to Sioux Falls, SD and later to Sioux City, IA to train as a gunner in the B-29 in July 1945. While he was in training, "they dropped the bomb and that was it."



Don't let your guard down men!

After the war, Leonard was stationed at several bases and crewed B-17s and B-25s to earn his flight pay until he was discharged on March 14, 1946. While in Sioux City, IA, Leonard met and married Margaret, his bride to be and future mother to his seven children.

After the war, Leonard attended Spartan School of Aviation in Oklahoma in 1946. A testament to his aviation prowess, within six months Leonard had earned his private, commercial and flight instructor certificates. From 1947-1952, he and his dad bought an airport in Montpelier, OH. There, Leonard instructed new pilots, flew charter flights, flew airshows in a Stearman and an Alliance Aircraft Argo. Interestingly, the actual Argo that Leonard piloted in airshows is now hanging in the Ohio Historical Center. N596K is the tail number. Leonard recalls his wife chewed him out several times for flying so close to the ground during airshows!

Leonard was an FAA examiner for private and commercial pilot certification and also flew as a crop duster. The company that hired him as a crop duster made him an offer he couldn't refuse to move to Clarksdale, MS to crop dust in a Stearman. He and his wife moved to Clarksdale where their son Tim was born (Tim accompanied his father to the airshow where we met and was instrumental in ensuring this article was able to be written). Crop dusting is dangerous work. Ask anyone who has done it, and "incidents" can and do happen. After flying too low on a couple flights and hitting a tree on one, and a cotton storage house on another (actually flipping his aircraft), Leonard's wife Margaret informed him that he was now a *retired* crop duster.

Leonard and his family moved back to Sioux City, SD where he worked at Graham Field (used to be Rickenbacker field) as the chief flight instructor, examiner etc. from 1954-1958. While running the flight school, Leonard decided to get his A&P license as well. In 1959, Leonard took a job flying for Ozark Airlines flying DC-3s, but didn't like it.

In 1960, a former flight student and good friend hired him to start the flight department for the Wilson Trailer Company. He did this from 1960-1992. Wilson Trailer Company specializes in livestock trailers. Leonard's son Tim, took over in 1992 but Leonard still stayed on and flew as captain until the insurance company made him stop at age 80. Leonard wasn't happy about that because he was still a very competent pilot and could pass all of his flight physicals and check rides! Leonard retired with well over 30,000 flight hours.

Leonard has lived, and continues to live, a blessed life. He has planted seeds of aviation in his family that continue to bloom to this very day! As mentioned earlier, Leonard has 22 grandkids and 33 great grandkids. Leonard's son Tim still runs the Wilson Aviation Flight Department, with Pat (his brother), Adam (his son), and Justin (his nephew, Pat's son) and grandson Ross Clarey (Leonard's great grandson). Kelly (other brother) runs a flight department for another company, and flies a Phenom. Another grandson, Mike McManus, is a pilot. Leonard also taught his father to fly sometime back in the 50s.



Leonard and a P-63 Airacobra.



Leonard's medals and wartime memorabilia



Leonard with family and friends after flying on FIFI in 2019.

Thank you for your service, Mr. Ross! We owe you, and your brothers in arms, a debt of gratitude.

Leonard joins our APHT crew and Diamond Lil for a ride in Sioux Falls, SD in 2021



July 1940

Dad, but not Meredith (Hostesses could not be married) continued to fly the Stratoliners for the rest of 1940 and into early 1941, and became the senior TWA co-pilot with the most 4-engine flight time. Most of these trips were from Kansas City west to Albuquerque and on to Burbank. In 1941, TWA signed an agreement to provide training for British pilots who were ferrying bomber aircraft across the Atlantic. TWA established The Eagle Nest Flight School in Albuquerque.



Boeing 307 Stratoliner

July 1941



Liberator, AM 927

In mid 1941, The Brits had ordered the Consolidated B-24 Liberator, which they called the LB30-B, a large 4-engine bomber. AM927 was diverted to Kansas City in June where Dad, flying as captain, flew 5 checkout flights, flew AM927 to Albuquerque, and began training the Brits. The locals called it "Air Monster927". There was a history of brake issues; Consolidated sent their brake experts to Albuquerque. Dad also flew a Lockheed Hudson light bomber in the training program.

Dad and Meredith rented a small house on 3333 Purdue Place in ABQ and lived there for a few months. In July, Dad flew 12 flights on AM 927 and 2 flights on AM 736. On July 24th, after 3 test flights of AM927, on landing, the right brake locked, the tire blew, and the wheel failed. Despite all corrective controls, the aircraft departed the runway, the #4 engine prop and wingtip were in the sand and the nose wheel and bomb bay doors were damaged. Flight engineer Al Brick secured the engines, checked and saw no fire, and said, "Well in case anyone is interested, it's raspberry ripple time"indicating that this was just another landing. They say any landing you can walk away from is a GOOD landing, and a GREAT landing is one where you can use the airplane again.....in this case for EIGHTY MORE Years! AM 927 would not fly again until December 1941, when it was returned to the Factory in San Diego and converted into the first XC-87, the executive transport version fitted with seats and a cabin and it is still flying. Dad saw it all shiny in Washington DC one day, and today it flies as Diamond Lil for the Commemorative Air Force. The brake problem was solved for future B-24s



Hudson, AM 736



XC-87 AM927 in July 1942

May 2021!



B-24 927 "Diamond Lil"

The Eagle Nest Flight School trained over 1100 pilots for the Brits, and was absorbed by the Army and RAF in 1942.



Bill and son, Gary Badges



Bill, Gary and Diamond Lil riders



Co-pilot Neil Broussard at work



Pikes Peak and the Garden of the Gods



Lil in flare 90 kts 6 ft AGL



Bill in Lil's cockpit



Palmer Divide



US Air Force Academy



Lil has landed



Bill and Gary poking out of Lil's cockpit



Bill waves hello



Special Feature

Pearl Harbor Aviation Museum

By Konley Kelley



My family vacationed this summer in Hawaii. We've never been to Hawaii and my whole extended California family came making 17 of us. Luckily the more rigid C-19 testing requirements lifted the week before so we had a relatively hassle-free 5-hour flight from Dallas to Oahu. The jet lag was crazy.

As you've probably guessed, I planned our "Pearl Harbor Day." It was just the five of us for PH, my wife Whitney, daughter Katie, son-in-law Micah, and son Kurt. Thanks to Kurt's iPhone skills, we were able to get what was remaining of the free daily ferry tix from the National Park Service to visit the *USS Arizona Memorial*. Visitors to Pearl Harbor need to make a separate reservation for the *USS Arizona Memorial* ferry, and thanks to changing C-19 restrictions limiting memorial visitors, the reservation window kept shifting as our trip got closer.

Our "Passport to the Pacific" package covered everything else for the day including a self-guided tour of Gato-class submarine and combat veteran, *USS Bowfin* and tour of the iconic battleship *USS Missouri*. My wife said the *USS Missouri* interiors were palatial compared to the cramped quarters of the *USS Bowfin*.

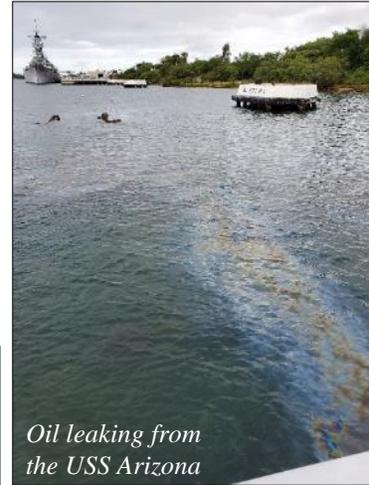
Our day culminated with a visit to the Pearl Harbor Aviation Museum (PHAM) on Ford Island. The museum, part of a planned rebirth of Ford Island for tourism, was the vision of WWII veteran and US Senator, Daniel Inouye. The first section of the museum, historic seaplane hangar 37, opened on December 7, 2006. Hangar 79, known as the restoration hangar, was added later.

<https://www.pearlharboraviationmuseum.org/>

In June, I was on a Battle of Midway webinar featuring Shattered Sword author Jonathan Parshall hosted by PHAM. I mentioned in the chat I was coming to Oahu and Pearl Harbor in July with my family. Ford Ebesugawa, the museum's Youth and Scouts Programs Manager, chatted back and offered to meet us when we came and give us a tour.



USS Arizona Memorial



Oil leaking from the USS Arizona



Names of 1,177 crew members killed



Anchor from USS Arizona



USS Bowfin SS-287



Surrender plaque



USS Missouri BB-63

When we arrived at PHAM, my son surprised me with tickets to the Fighter Ace 360 degree flight sim. I agreed to do it even though I'd regrettably become sea sick and chummed the waters on our shark cage adventure at North Shore the day before. In the sim, I felt fine and it was me doing the wild flying and barrel rolls freaking out the kid. I guess I am a not a good pilot 😊

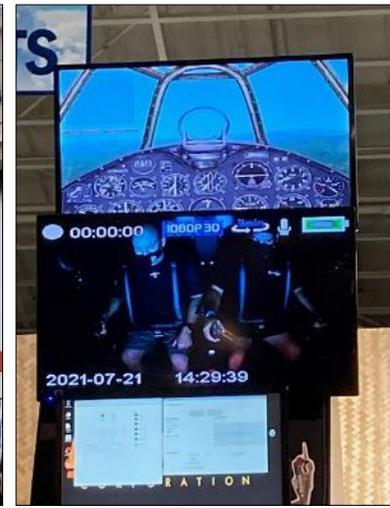
We met Ford. He is a retired Army sergeant and police officer who raised four Eagle Scouts. After retiring, he volunteered at the new PHAM and loves every minute of it. Ford whisked us off to a SUV outside. He drove us to the location where the first bomb dropped by a Japanese Val dive bomber struck Ford Island on December 7. You can still see the scarring on the concrete. We walked along the seaplane ramp where there were visible impact trails from machine gun fire.

He gave me a very old, rust and sea life encrusted object he found washed up a few days before. I firmly believe it might have been blown off a battleship moored nearby during the attack.

We headed over to the *USS Utah Memorial* on the east side of Ford Island and then to the *USS Oklahoma Memorial* near the entrance to the *USS Missouri*. Ford was well-versed in stories about the fates of these ships and sailors on December 7.



Front entrance to PHAM



Me and my co-pilot Fighter Ace 360



Artist view of Val dropping first bomb



Bomb scarring in concrete



Walking seaplane ramp with Ford



Machine gun impact trail



Ford island under attack on 12/7



Artifact from a battleship?



USS Utah Memorial on the east side of Ford Island. 58 sailors killed. This is where the carriers would have been moored if they were in the harbor on December 7.



USS Oklahoma Memorial. Each white marble post represents one of the 429 men killed in the attack.





PHAM Hangar 37



Mitsubishi A6M2 Model 21 Type 0 Zero & IJN Kaga



Armor piercing bomb Torpedo rigged with wooden fins for shallow water



Back inside PHAM, we started at the Zero and Japanese carrier display. Ford's first volunteer project at PHAM was the restoration of this aircraft, one of the most accurate representations of a Zero in any museum today.

We moved on to see wreckage of a rare Japanese Kate, bombs, torpedoes with wooden fins, more Pearl Harbor artifacts, and the remains of a Zero piloted by Airman First Class Shigenori Nishikaichi. After the second wave on December 7, this pilot crash-landed his Zero on the northernmost island of Ni'ihau. The wreckage appears exactly as it did after Nishikaishi burned his plane. This was my favorite lesser known story of Pearl Harbor. I can't do it justice in The Flyer so google or check out the Ni'ihau incident at the link under the panel to the right.



<https://www.historynet.com/the-niihau-incident.htm>

In hangar 37, PHAM features a Doolittle B-25, F4F Wildcat, Dauntless and gorgeous Flying Tiger, in addition to other aircraft. I could have spent plenty of time wandering the hangar and looking up close at the exhibits. The staging of the aircraft and artifacts made great use of maps painted on the flooring, large murals, well-designed information kiosks, and lighting.



SBD Dauntless and Battle of Midway display

Wreckage of Shigenori Nishikaichi's Zero.

We left Hangar 37, walking past the famous red/white striped Ford Island control tower and vintage fire truck. It and other exterior locations looked familiar having watched PEARL HARBOR as much as I have. Many of the action scenes in the film were filmed on location at Ford Island.

Hangar 39 has some WWII aircraft but is dominated by jet aircraft. As you enter, your attention is diverted to panes of glass riddled with bullet holes from enemy or friendly fire on December 7.



Ford Island control tower

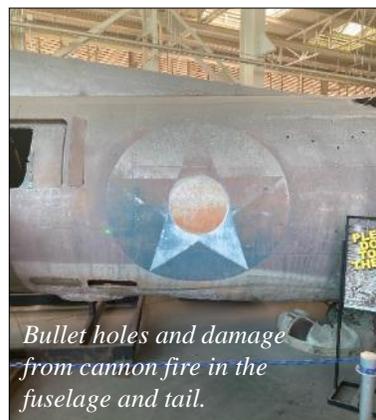


Hangar 39

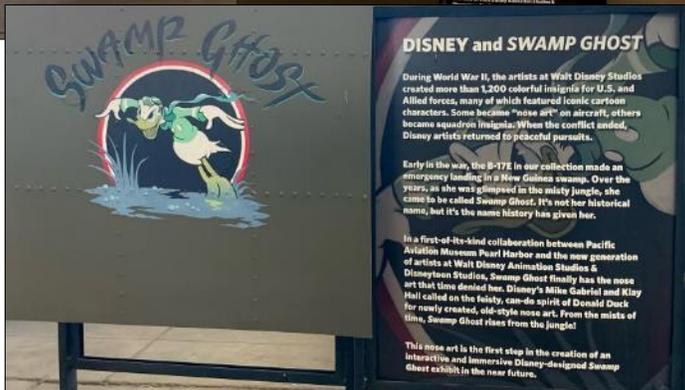


Mig Alley

The featured attraction in Hangar 39 is the *Swamp Ghost*. This wreckage of an early model B-17 was found in a marsh in Papua New Guinea 30 years after its bombing mission over Rabaul and run in with nine enemy aircraft on February 23, 1942. *Ghost* was returned to the US in 2010 and purchased in 2013 by PHAM for restoration purposes. With no visible nose art, Disney artists, whose cartoons frequently inspired aircraft nose art in WWII, created the *Swamp Ghost* character and legend for the combat veteran. Ford thinks it would be a shame to restore *Ghost* to a factory-fresh period B-17. The wreckage tells a compelling story of an epic fight for survival with machine gun and cannon fire damage visible in many places on the *Ghost*.



Bullet holes and damage from cannon fire in the fuselage and tail.



Thank you Ford and PHAM!

We said goodbye to Ford and caught one of the last shuttles back to the Pearl Harbor Visitors Center. On the way to our hotel we stopped at a pho restaurant in Chinatown and recapped our great day. It could not have gone better. I admired my unique Pearl Harbor artifact and marked something I've always dreamed of doing off my bucket list.

Editor's Corner

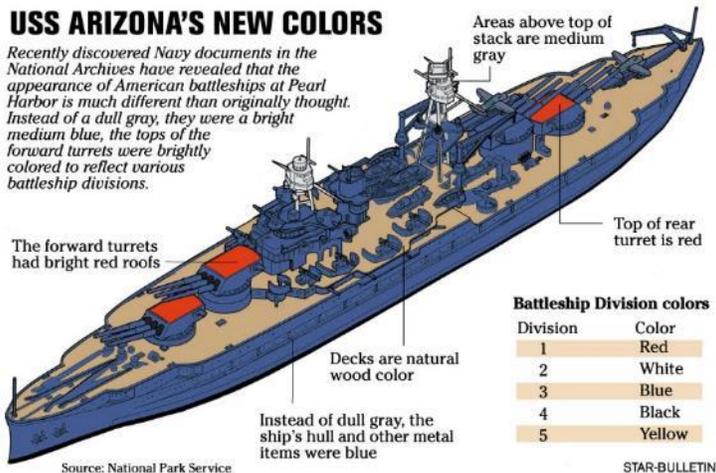


Modeling Pearl Harbor

As our big family vacation to Oahu in July drew closer, I chose to model two of the famous battleships we planned to visit on our tour of Pearl Harbor, the *USS Arizona Memorial* and the *USS Missouri BB-63*. I purchased two 1:700 scale kits and did my research. In recent years, historians have argued the ships on Battleship Row were not all dull grey. Prior to the attack, the *USS Arizona BB-39* was being painted Sea Blue and three of her four turret tops were red corresponding to Battleship Division One. Painting the turret tops made it easier for seaplanes to locate their home ship.

USS ARIZONA'S NEW COLORS

Recently discovered Navy documents in the National Archives have revealed that the appearance of American battleships at Pearl Harbor is much different than originally thought. Instead of a dull gray, they were a bright medium blue, the tops of the forward turrets were brightly colored to reflect various battleship divisions.



Division	Color
1	Red
2	White
3	Blue
4	Black
5	Yellow

Source: National Park Service

STAR-BULLETIN

The *USS Missouri* was painted haze grey with a light blue stripe on the hull. At the time of the surrender on September 2, 1945, her decks were painted blue as seen in this color photo of the Japanese delegation.



I wore one of Rocky's Squadron t-shirts on our Pearl Harbor Day. It was a moving day filled with history. We saw where WWII began and ended. I was grateful to experience it with my family.



1:700 *USS Arizona*
by Konley Kelley



1:700 *USS Missouri*
by Konley Kelley



THE FLYER WANTS YOU!

You are welcome to contribute a story, photographs and artwork for this decades-old newsletter. If you are a veteran, please tell us your story. Squadron members continually meet veterans at the hangar, on tour and in everyday life – let us know their stories. We're also looking for contributors for "This Month in History" and news spotlighting our aircraft and members.

Thank you and "Keep 'Em Flying!"

Konley Kelley

THE FLYER editor

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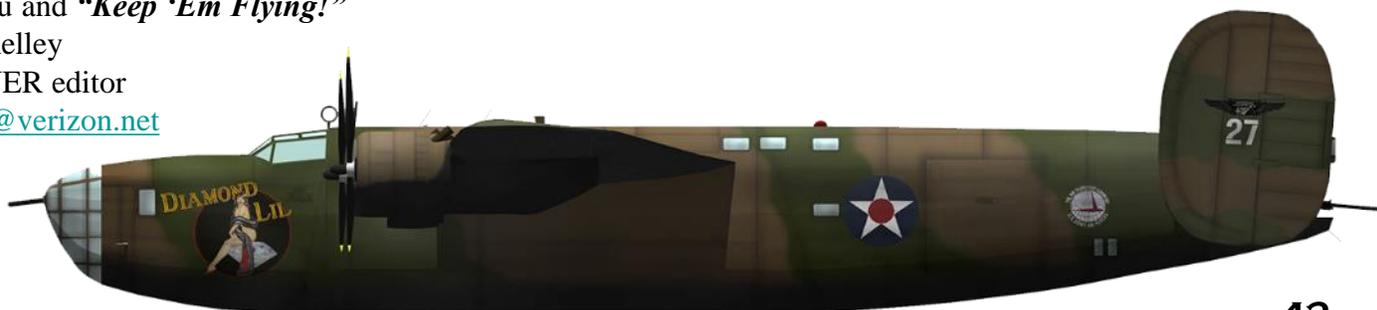




Photo by Scott Slocum



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