

COMBAT AIR MUSEUM

→ → → Plane Talk → → →

The Official Newsletter of the Combat Air Museum

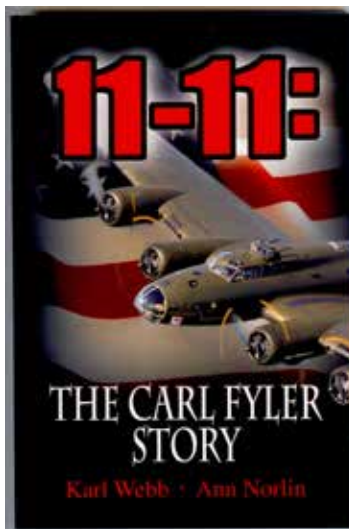
Forbes Field Topeka, Kansas

February / March 2013 • Vol. 29, No. 1

The Challenge

Based on our need to raise \$20,000 to renovate the east face of Hangar 602, Capitol Federal Foundation has issued us a challenge. They will match our donations with \$10,000! I have in hand \$1,200 now (which includes \$1,000 from one of our members). Needless to say, I accepted the offer. With approximately 200 members, the average is \$44 per person to raise \$8,800. If Capitol Federal Foundation recognizes our value, can we not respond? Let me hear from you.

- Dick Trupp



The book co-written by Karl Webb and Ann Norlin.

Biographer tells the story of pilot and POW Carl Fyler

CAM member **Sue Ann Seel** was our guest presenter for the December Membership Luncheon. Sue Ann volunteers her time with **Dick Trupp** and **Dave Murray** to help plan and conduct our Youth Aviation Education classes. She wanted to take the aviation education class herself a couple of years ago, but Dave told her it was for youth and said she should come out and help, which she did. Sue Ann is originally from Sa-
"Carl Fyler," con't. on page 8

Our Annual Report for 2012

The Combat Air Museum finished the year with 10,608 visitors, up 897 from 2011. The following is a summary of the recorded visitor attendance for 2012.

(1) 4,603 (43.39%) of the total were from Kansas, outside of Shawnee County.

(2) 2,468 (23.27%) of the total were from Shawnee County.

(3) 3,289 (31%) of the total were from 47 States, Washington D.C., and Puerto Rico. There were no visitors from Maine or Vermont.

(4) 210 (1.98%) of the total (210) were from 34 other countries.

(5) 38 (0.36%) of the total were from residences not known.

1st Quarter	2,158
2nd Quarter	3,566
3rd Quarter	3,219
4th Quarter	1,665

Museum tour-guides conducted 71 scheduled tours for a total of 2,513 visitors. Nine of these were motor coach tours (390 people).

The top five states outside of Kansas were Missouri (877), Texas (325), Colorado (193), Oklahoma (156), and California (149).

The top five countries were Canada (33), Great Britain (30), Australia (15), Mexico (14), and a tie between Finland and Germany (9).

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Combat Air Museum

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Museum Hours

January 2 - February 28/29
 Mon. - Sun. Noon - 4:30 P.M.
 Last Entry Every Day is 3:30 P.M.
 March 1 - December 31
 Mon. - Sat. 9 A.M. - 4:30 P.M.
 Last Entry Every Day is 3:30 P.M.
 Closed New Year's Day, Easter,
 Thanksgiving, Christmas Day

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 of Combat Air Museum
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 Your comments are welcomed.

From the Chairman's Desk

Gene Howerter, Chairman, BOD

The year 2012 is now history and the results are in. The "bottom line," (as Henry Fonda said to his new son-in-law to be in the movie On Golden Pond, "SO YOU ARE A BOTTOM LINE MAN, ARE YOU?" one of my favorite all time movie lines), we did very well last year. I am pleased to tell you the Museum finished 2012 with one of our better finishes in the past decade. At a time when the U.S. economy is really up in the air I can say it was a real good feeling when we ended last year on such a good note. That is not to say we got rich or anything, but just that we had a good year. You can really feel good about your Combat Air Museum as we start another year debt free and reconciled. Cheers are extended to many of you members who sent a little extra with your annual dues payment and a staff which kept the annual spending in check. As chairman of the Museum I can tell all of you it is always a relief when the Museum ends the year on such a good note and we don't need to mortgage assets to pay our bills. I pray all of you will hang in there with us this coming year. We really have a great museum and I wish you could hear the kind words expressed almost daily by visitors from all over the world as they leave the Museum.

The new museum year is off to a rousing start. As I write, we have had visitors most days tour the Museum. When we get visitors in the winter months like we had

last year and have had so far this year, the Museum does well. Visitors are our life blood. Guests at this time of year create a win-win situation, that is, they enhance Museum admissions and Gift Shop sales. Perhaps it should be pointed out these were the two major goals established at our annual volunteer meeting January 15th, held in the Museum's conference room. If you are not in the area and want to support the Museum, please encourage others to visit us.

Finally, I would like to invite all members who can to attend our Membership Luncheon meetings this year. You should receive a small rack card in the mail soon that has full details about each of the meetings for 2013. I think each program and presenter will keep you on the edge of your seat, and you will want to return again and again. We love each and every one of you. Again, thanks for your support of the Combat Air Museum.

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Supporters

New Supporters

Jon Boursaw
 Bill Grinstead

Renewing Supporters

- Les Carlson
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- Len Faulconer
- Ernest Hedges
- Jane Holley
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- Mark & Kris Johnson
- Bob & Mary Ann Kelly
- Jerry & Karen Millbradt
- Roger & Lois Miller
- Mary Naylor
- Bud & Muriel Spenser
- Victor, Julie, Edmund & Ella Tyler
- Vic Van Camp
- Jack & Carlene Vaughn
- Dr. Howard & Marilyn Ward

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**Join the
 Combat Air
 Museum!**

In Memoriam
Robert "Bob" Kaps

1928 – 2012
December 17, 2012
Olathe, Kansas
Member Number 6670
Nine year Lifetime member

Bob Kaps was unique among our members in that he actually flew one of the aircraft in our collection. He flew the Grumman F9F-5 Panther, Bureau Number 126226, in fighter squadron VF-51, the Screaming Eagles, during the Korean War. VF-51 operated from the aircraft carrier USS VALLEY FORGE (CVA-45) at the time.

Bob was a native Kansan, born on a farm near Bunker Hill. He graduated high school there and attended college at Fort Hays and Kansas State. He entered the US Navy Aviation Cadet program in 1948, received his Naval Aviator wings and com-

mission in 1950, and left active duty in 1953. He made two deployments to Korea, one aboard the USS ESSEX (CVA-9) and again on VALLEY FORGE. He accumulated 103 combat missions over Korea.

In 1957 Bob began a 29-year Civil Service career with the Federal Aviation Administration. After retirement he and his family remained in Kansas, eventually settling near Wellsville in 1999. He joined the Museum in February 2003 after learning about the existence and restoration of 126226. Bob did volunteer time cleaning aircraft and would come to Topeka with fellow FAA retiree Marshall Wolfe and long time CAM member **Jim Braun**, who was also living in Wellsville at the time. He was an honored guest at a dedication ceremony for the Panther in September 2003, along with three other pilots who flew the fighter jet in Korea.

Bob was preceded in death by his wife of 47 years, **Betty**, and is survived by five children, and grandchildren and great grandchildren. →

Calendar of Events for
February & March

February

Monday, February 11

Membership Luncheon

Jean Wanner Education Conference Room

11:30 am

Major General Mark Musick, USAF (RET) is our guest speaker for the February Membership Luncheon. He will speak about author Douglas Ellman's book *Boxes: The Secret Life of Howard Hughes*. General Musick was a key researcher for this book.

March

Monday, March 18 - Thursday, March 21

Youth Aviation Education Class

Jean Wanner Education Conference Room

9 am - 12 pm

Sunday, March 31

Easter Sunday

The Museum is closed

There is no luncheon in March. The next luncheon will be Monday, April 8.

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Visitors

During **November**
the Museum had

556 visitors

from **39** states, Puerto Rico,
Washington, D.C.,
and

Austria

Belgium

Canada

Germany

Great Britain,

Mexico

Netherlands

Venezuela

During **December**

we had

461 visitors

from **25** states,
and

Belgium

Canada

Germany

Honduras

Poland

Taiwan

Australia

Brazil

Canada

Great Britain

Honduras

New Zealand

Scotland

Switzerland

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Program Schedule for 2013

The program speakers lined up for our 2013 Membership Luncheons include:

February 11, 2013

Major General Mark Musick (Retired)
The Faked Death and Final Decades
of Howard Hughes

April 8, 2013

Susan Sittenauer and Students of Seaman
High School Presentation of
History Day Competition Topics
Specific topics will be announced.

June 10, 2013

Dan King, author
Will discuss his book
"The Last Zero Fighter"
First person accounts from five
World War II Japanese pilots.

August 12, 2013

Officers from the Command
and General Staff College
Fort Leavenworth, Kansas

October 14, 2013

Deb Goodrich Bisel
will discuss
The Civil War In Kansas

December 9, 2013

Major Roger Locher, USAF (Retired)
Will discuss his 23 days of evasion
and escape after being shot down
behind enemy lines
during the Vietnam War.

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**Learn more
about the
Combat Air Museum at
www.combatairmuseum.org**

Displaying the rotary cannon on the F-14 Tomcat

Several volunteers recently enhanced one of our aircraft exhibits. **Dick Trupp** and **Dave Murray** had discussed how we might be able to exhibit the rotary cannon on the Grumman F-14 Tomcat. They and **Gary Naylor** and **Don Dawson** looked at three panels on the aircraft that needed to be removed and questioned whether clear plastic replacement panels would bend to match the shapes and compound curves of the removed panels. They decided to contact a local plastics company to see if they could bend or mold shapes to fit the frames, and re-installed the aircraft panels.

Dick Trupp contacted Cope Plastics in Topeka, and arranged for an employee to come out to the Museum and look at the project. The day the employee arrived, Gary and Dick removed the panels, and they measured dimensions for the needed plastic panel shapes. The employee said that if these panels could be formed to the compound curves of the aircraft structure, then that work would be done at the parent factory. In the event the panels could not be shaped, the group discussed how wood shapes might be installed to lessen the degree of the compound curves.

As it turned out, Cope Plastics said no to forming/molding the shapes and cut flat sections of clear polycarbonate sheet to the measurements taken earlier. We paid for a full sheet of the material, thereby having extra to work with, if needed. The plastic is 0.060 (a bit less than 1/16 inch) thick and has good flexibility.

With Gary off to California for school and training on Gray Eagle unmanned aerial systems, Don Dawson and **Russ Wiedle** worked on installing the plastic panels. As expected, there were some minor problems with the compound curves, but not to the extent first thought. Wood shapes would not be needed. In a few areas, Don and Russ used a heat gun to make the polycarbonate a bit more pliable. The middle panel did not fit correctly, as cut, so Don made a new one from the leftover sheet and fitted it to the aircraft.

For attaching each panel to the aircraft, Don fitted the plastic sheet over the opening and marked where it needed to be drilled for fasteners. He installed a few fasteners along one edge to initially hold the panel in place, then worked the two adjacent edges, trimming the plastic as needed, and repeated the process for the last edge. He then completed marking and drilling the holes and screwed the panels to the frame. The finished panels clearly show the

"Rotary cannon," con't. on page 11



*Top and center:
Views of the M61A1
gun on the Tomcat.
Right: A closer view
of the gun drive
motor.*

Restoration of the Pratt & Whitney R-2800 radial engine cutaway requires tedious work and patience

Don Dawson has a winter project going on in the Hangar 604 workshop. He is cleaning, de-rusting, and painting sections of an cutaway Pratt & Whitney R-2800 Double Wasp radial engine. We acquired the engine from University of Kansas Aerospace Engineering Department in the spring of 2009 after the Department declared it surplus to their needs. Dick Trupp and Stu Entz recovered the engine from the University's hangar at the Lawrence, Kansas, airport. Since its arrival, we have exhibited the engine near the tail of the F-14 Tomcat, not that the two were related, but there are times when we exhibit things where they can fit.

The cutaway is very impressive and allows people to look into the internals of the engine. Whomever cut the sections away from the engine did an excellent job, as all the cuts are smooth and polished. The engine is on a roll-around stand, and it is attached to a ring that allows it to be rotated about the axis going through the propeller shaft, so the cutaway section can be presented in differing views. The engine can also be rotated 180 degrees using a large gear on the stand along the axis perpendicular to the propeller shaft. This allows the propeller shaft to be horizontal to one side or the other, or vertical, or in positions in between. This feature proved quite handy in getting the engine inside the workshop.

The major problem with the exhibit is the stand and sections of the cutaway that are steel are not treated or painted. As a result, a lot of rust began appearing on both. Some aluminum parts that are cutaway also showed evidence of corrosion.

So, Don took on the project to spruce up the condition and appearance of the exhibit.

Following what appears to be a standard for exhibiting cutaway engines, we decided to clean and prep all the cutaway edges and paint them red. All other steel and aluminum areas showing corrosion would likewise be cleaned and either clear-coated or painted. Don's approach to the cleaning includes liquid and mechanical means. Some areas have been treated with an environmentally-safe liquid rust remover/inhibitor. On other surfaces Don uses fiber cleaning discs and/or wire brushes to remove rust and corrosion, and in hard to reach areas he has used a bead blaster.

It took very little time to see the effects of his work. Parts of the engine literally began to shine. When Don started painting the edges of the cutaway sections, they really popped

out visually. This is tedious work and requires some patience. So far, Don has not thrown up his hands and headed out the door. Coffee breaks and contemplation at the lunchroom table may be a bit more frequent, but it is all good. Right now, it is hard to say what percentage of the engine is completed as Don continues to find small edges to paint. Prepping, priming, and painting the stand still needs to be done, but it is worth a daily trip to the workshop to see how much more has been done.

Pratt & Whitney introduced the R-2800 in 1939 and placed it into production in 1940. The 2800 represents 2,800 cubic inches. The Double Wasp refers to two rows of nine cylinders each. The original ratings of the engine were 1,385 horsepower normal and 1,800 horsepower for takeoff. Early on in World War II, 2,000 to 2,100 horsepower was the norm, and post war aircraft of the 1950s carried R-2800s rated up to 2,500 horsepower.

Perhaps the best known operators of the R-2800 included fighters of World War II. The Republic P-47 Thunderbolt, Northrop P-61 Black Widow, Grumman F6F Hellcat, and Vought F4U and Goodyear FG-1 Corsairs all flew with the R-2800. Then there was the Douglas A-26 Invader and Martin B-26 Marauder in the attack and bomber categories. Perhaps not as well known were the Lockheed (Vega) Army Air Force B-34 Lexington and US Navy PV-1 Ventura and PV-2 Harpoon bombers. Cargo/transport haulers also flew with the Double Wasp. These included



the Curtiss C-46 Commando and the late war production Fairchild C-82 Packet. The advanced trainer of the B-26, the AT-23, had R-2800s.

Consolidated built an R-2800-powered torpedo bomber, the TBY Seawolf during the war, but production stopped after 180 were built. They apparently never became operational.

Two Grumman fighters, the F7F Tigercat and F8F Bearcat were built too late to see action in World War II. Both carried the R-2800, the former had two and the latter one. The Tigercat did fly combat in the Korean War as a Marine Corps night fighter. The Bearcat flew combat as a French fighter against communist insurgents, including those in Indochina (Vietnam). Corsairs of various types, the re-designated B/RB-26 Invader, and C-82s joined the Tigercat in Korea.

Other aircraft introduced in the 1950s that flew with the R-2800 included the Douglas C-118/R6D Liftmaster, Fairchild C-123 Provider, Convair C-131/R4Y Samaritan, and Convair T-29 Flying Classroom. These aircraft continued to operate into the 1970s and 1980s. There were a few post World War II R-2800-powered military aircraft that did not go to war. These were primarily US Navy aircraft. They included two versions of the Grumman AF Guardian anti-submarine warfare plane that operated together and a hunter-killer team. One version operated with a large belly radar, the hunter. The second version carried weapons, the killer. North American built the AJ Savage nuclear strike aircraft for the Navy that flew with two R-2800s and two Allison J-33 turbojets. Then there was an odd looking, twin rotor helicopter built by the Bell company for the US Navy. It was designated an HSL and was intended for anti-submarine warfare. It was powered by a 2,400 horsepower R-2800-50 engine, mounted horizontally in the fuselage space not far back of the center of the helicopter. Deliveries to an operational squadron began in January 1957, but production stopped after 50 were built. The Coast Guard received two RM-1Z (later VC-3A) VIP transports in 1952, based on the Martin 4-0-4 airliner.

The Vietnam War saw use of C-118s, C-123s, C-131s, and brought back to its third war the venerable A/B-26 Invader. A newcomer to the war that first appeared in the mid-1950s was the Sikorsky H-37 Mojave twin engine heavy transport helicopter. First developed for the Marines, the Army received their first units in 1956. Both services flew the heavy lift helicopters, doing a yeoman's service in recovering downed aircraft and other equipment. They were eventually replaced by the newer, turbine powered,



*Far Right: A view of the cutaway section.
Above: An oblique view showing the large gear wheel for rotating the engine through an 180 degree arc.*

CH-53 Sea Stallion (Marines) and CH-54 Tarhe (Army).

Our R-2800 does not have a data plate on it, so we do not know its date of manufacture or its dash number. A dash number would help determine the type of aircraft that flew with this engine. Then, for all we know, this exhibit may have been originally assembled as a cutaway and was never operational. The only tag on the unit is a metal tag attached to the stand that reads

PROPERTY OF
DEFENSE PLANT CORPORATION
AN INSTRUMENTALITY OF THE
UNITED STATES GOVERNMENT.
3B 6379 140 is stamped below this.

When complete, this exhibit will make an excellent comparison and contrast with the much smaller Kinner R-55 (R-540-1), five cylinder, radial cutaway on exhibit in Hangar 602. Ryan PT-22 primary trainers used the R-540-1 during World War II.

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"Carl Fyler," con't. from page 1

lina, Kansas, and her husband is a Topeka native. She is a minister with the Potwin Presbyterian Church in Topeka, but at the luncheon we also learned she is an historical researcher and author. Under the pen name Ann Norlin, she co-authored a book titled 11-11: The Carl Fyler Story, with Karl Webb, a nephew of Carl Fyler. The book was published in September 2012 and is a biography of the late Carl Fyler, a World War II veteran, former prisoner of war, and a 27-year member of Combat Air Museum.

Sue Ann met and got to know Carl Fyler through the church. She remembered her first meeting with him well. She said she told Dr. Fyler she was interested in history and ended up talking with him for some three hours during that first visit. Sue Ann remembered he was not shy about his experiences. As a friendship developed with this man who was so passionate about the plight of veterans and former Prisoners of War, Sue Ann also became active with POW/MIA (missing in action) issues. At some point, Dr. Fyler asked her to write his biography. His nephew, Karl, joined in this effort, and the research began.

Sue Ann said Dr. Fyler talked profusely about his war experiences, but after his death in 2009, as she sorted and read through reams of documents, papers, and numerous scrapbooks and other information at his home, she found she was not just reading about Carl Fyler, but about his ancestors, for several generations back. The more she read, the more she was convinced his story had to include an overview of his ancestors and their contributions. Sue Ann said it took her two years to compile all of the information before she and Karl Webb began writing the book.

Three children of Roman Fyler of Cornwall, England, Walter, George, and Anne, and a grandson, George, Jr., chose to go to the "New World" to worship as they saw fit. They set sail for America in March 1630. They arrived at the mouth of Boston Harbor in May. Walter was a lieutenant in the British Army, and Sue Ann said he and other members of the Fyler family engaged in many of the conflicts of the New World from the time after they arrived in Massachusetts. The book touches on these, including the 1637 war between New England settlers and the Pequot Indians, the French and Indian

War, Revolutionary War, and the Civil War where seven Fylers fought with the Union.

Dr. Fyler's grandfather, Carlton Fyler, was orphaned as a four year old and raised by another family on a farm near Abilene, Kansas, in the 1860s. He married Florence Kirby in 1883, and the marriage produced five children, three boy and two girls. An economic downturn in 1890 forced Carlton Fyler to begin a new career, and he became a traveling dentist. His travels, often by train, took him to LaCrosse, Kansas, and the family eventually settled there. One boy, John, moved to Finney County, Kansas, as a young man. While there he met a young woman from Wisconsin and was quite taken with her. He began to court her by letters, and she eventually agreed to marriage and moved back to Kansas. John and Helen Fyler became the parents of Carl Fyler on May 14, 1921. Carl grew up in the small town of Spearville, Kansas, about 20 miles northeast of Dodge City.

Sue Ann then showed a YouTube presentation about the book, 11-11: The Carl Fyler Story. The four minute clip included artwork and images of the wars that Dr. Fyler's ancestors fought in, images from the book, images of World War II, and several images of Dr. Fyler's crew. Specific images and reference to a Staff Sergeant (S/Sgt) Joseph R. Sawicki were in the clip, and Sue Ann later explained the significance. A violin and guitar played background music to the video, and Sue Ann said she wrote the music, "Soldiers' Lament," and played the guitar.

In January 1942 Carl Fyler was an Aviation Cadet in the Army Air Corps. Seventeen months later, on June 3, 1943, he and his crew arrived in England with him piloting a Boeing B-17 Flying Fortress bomber. They and the B-17 parted company at Liverpool, England. From there the crew went by rail to London and then Kettering, before taking a truck to Molesworth Air Base, about 70 miles north of London. Molesworth was the home of the famed 303rd Bombardment Group, "Hell's Angels." Over the next three weeks he and his crew familiarized themselves with Molesworth, the 303rd Group, and received combat orientation. They were assigned to the 360th Bombardment Squadron.

Carl Fyler's first combat mission was June 30, 1943. He was flying with an experienced combat pilot, but the

bomber only made it as far as the English Channel before the pilot aborted the mission due to a malfunctioning turbocharger on one of the engines. Fyler's second mission, and the first that counted, took place on July 4. He piloted his own bomber on this mission to bomb a Le Mans, France, airfield.

Some 4 months and 25 days later, Fyler flew his 25th mission. Twenty-five was the magic number in those days. Once an individual completed 25 combat missions, they were eligible to go home. In his own book, *Staying Alive*, Dr. Fyler titled the chapter about his 25th mission *A Good Day to Have Stayed in Bed*. It was November 29, 1943. Three days earlier, after a tough mission to Bremen, Germany, he was walking back to his tent from the mess hall, in the dark, when he was struck by a squadron vehicle, knocking him through the air. After a visit to the infirmary, he was placed on bed rest. At 2 am on November 29, a duty officer awakened him to get ready for a mission. The bed rest was over, and Fyler found out he was to lead the high squadron on a return mission to Bremen. His aircraft for this mission was a B-17G, named *Dark Horse*. On this mission, the crew numbered 11 men instead of the normal 10, as a combat photographer joined the crew.

Over the target, as they released their bombs, German flak (anti aircraft artillery) hit *Dark Horse* causing fatal damage to the plane. The right horizontal stabilizer and part of the right wing were torn from the plane and both right engines were damaged and feathered. A third engine later caught fire. This flak hit and wounded tail gunner S/Sgt Joseph Sawicki. He lost his left arm below the elbow and suffered wounds to his mid section.

Sue Ann told us Joseph Sawicki was born in the United States and signed up with a Polish squadron of the Royal Air Force after war broke out in Europe. He flew on 14 missions and became a decorated airman with awards including the Polish RAF Cross of Honor and the Polish Legion of Merit. After the United States entry into the war, Sawicki returned to the US and enlisted in the Army Air Corps.

S/Sgt Sawicki crawled into the waist position of the B-17 and found both waist gunners down with injuries. The flak hit had thrown them up against the top of the fuselage then down to the floor. He got parachutes on



Sue Ann Seel giving her presentation about Carl Fyler.

both gunners, then shoved and kicked them out of the rear fuselage door. He never got off the bomber, and his body was found with its wreckage.

In the front of the plane, Carl Fyler and co-pilot Bob Ward knew nothing of this. They were fighting to keep *Dark Horse* flying, but it was not to be. A Focke Wulf Fw-190 fighter fired into the crippled plane causing further damage and injury to the crew, including Fyler. The intercom was out, and he motioned to nearby crewmen to get out of the plane. Soon after, *Dark Horse* began a downward spiral, and Fyler finally bailed out through the nose hatch. His parachute landing knocked him out and cleared a number of limbs from a pine tree. Carl Fyler was captured soon after and began a 510 day period of captivity in Germany.

After initial confinement and interrogation, he was shipped to Stalag Luft I at Barth, Germany. While there, he was able to account for the officers in his crew, but not the enlisted men. Then one day he saw T/Sgt Bill Addison, the top turret gunner. Addison had been with both waist gunners after capture, and learned from them what S/Sgt Sawicki had done. His meeting with Carl Fyler was short-lived as he and the waist gunners were shipped to Stalag Luft 4 in Gross Tychow, Prussia, now Poland.

On April 29, 1945, Russian troops liberated Stalag Luft I, but the ordeal for POWs in the camp did not end. The Russians moved on, and there was no one to feed, care for, or evacuate the prisoners. On May 13, Fyler was at a nearby Luftwaffe airfield when a B-17 landed and taxied up to the hangar. A man on the plane yelled they had room for 35 people, and Carl Fyler was among the group who climbed aboard. The plane landed in Lyon, France. Eventually, the former prisoners were loaded onto a truck for transport to a train station. By train, they arrived in Reims, France, were once again placed on trucks, and transported to Camp Lucky Strike. Some 40,000 former prisoners of war eventually occupied this camp.

Dr. Fyler was able to find more members of his crew at

"Carl Fyler," con't. on page 10

"Carl Fyler," con't. from page 9

Camp Lucky Strike, and he was able to piece together what happened with his crew. S/Sgt Sawicki and S/Sgt Ray Ford, the ball turret gunner, died with the Dark Horse. Radio Operator Ray O'Connell and Combat Photographer Nellins Egge bailed out but died after reaching the ground, apparently killed by Germans. The seven remaining crew were all captured.

He also found another crewman at the Camp Lucky Strike infirmary, waist gunner S/Sgt Martin Stachowiak. He learned directly from Stachowiak what Bill Addison had told Fyler during their brief meeting at Stalag Luft 1. Stachowiak told Fyler he had written up Sawicki for a Medal of Honor as soon as he reached Camp Lucky Strike and also wrote up Fyler for a Silver Star.

After hearing the waist gunner's story, Carl Fyler also took up the cause to get S/Sgt Joseph Sawicki the Medal of Honor, and Sue Ann told us his efforts continued up to two days before he died. She also said that she and Karl Webb promised Dr. Fyler they would continue to pursue the Medal Of Honor for Sawicki, and the pair have worked with the 303rd Bombardment Group Association and its curator since. She told us the the paperwork written up by S/Sgt Stachowiak was allegedly lost. Dr. Fyler also wrote up a recommendation while in Camp Lucky Strike, and it, too, was lost. Another attempt was made in 1947 with no results.

Other roadblocks encountered by Dr. Fyler regarding the Medal of Honor recommendation included that it was not filled out in a timely manner. Apparently the fact that he and his surviving crew were POWs was not and have not been taken into consideration. There were no living relatives of Joseph Sawicki, but that has been proved incorrect, as a nephew does survive. There was no first hand account nor living witnesses to collaborate Sawicki's actions. This is true. Both waist gunners are now deceased. Sue Ann said George Fisher suffered a severe head injury during the November 29 shoot down and told different accounts of what happened afterwards during his life.

US Representative from Kansas Jim Slattery introduced the Medal of Honor recommendation for Joseph Sawicki to Congress, but it died for lack of support.

Sue Ann also told us about efforts to confirm remains of crewmen who bailed out of the B-17 but died on the ground. She has been in contact with a Robert Rumsby of the 95th Civil Affairs Brigade (Airborne) who has an interest in Missing In Action (MIA) issues. Radioman Raymond O'Connell remains MIA. The remains of Combat Photographer Nellins Egge were apparently co-mingled with others killed in action. Sue Ann pointed out there was no DNA testing available during or after the War and did not become available until the 1980s.

Rumsby and his group are running archaeological sites and digs, looking for MIA remains. Sue Ann said they recovered Nellins Egge's top jawbone, now identifiable by DNA testing.

A Mr. Gary Moncur, who maintains the website www.303rdbg.org contacted Sue Ann and Karl. He told them that there are still some 73,000 MIAs from World War II. Nineteen thousand are in Europe.

Sue Ann told us Dr. Fyler never threw anything away. While doing her research she found correspondence for Raymond O'Connell's mother. He was her only son. She said Dr. Fyler's study was full of



Gene Howerter presents Sue Ann with a certificate of appreciation.

items, and he continually tried to get honors for his crew. Soon after he came home from Europe he began writing down the events of his World War II service and capture, much of it on scrap paper. These notes were later incorporated into his book *Staying Alive*, parts of which Sue Ann and Karl included in their book and relied on heavily when writing about the World War portion of their book. She said that much, much later [1982] Dr. Fyler received a Distinguished Flying Cross. He never got it originally because he did not complete 25 combat missions. He departed on his 25th, but did not return. In 2003 he received a Silver Star for his actions on that final mission.

Sue Ann told us it was an honor and privilege to know Dr. Fyler and to undertake the task of writing his biography. She said he was passionate about helping people with their VA benefits and was a major contributor to the 8th Air Force Museum in Savannah, Georgia. The title of the book *11-11: The Carl Fyler Story* is directly related to his death. As written in his obituary, he died on the 11th hour of the 11th day of the 11th month.

Sue Ann said she had never done that kind of research nor written a book before and found it to be a truly rewarding experience.

For anyone who would like to order a copy of *11-11: The Carl Fyler Story*, visit www.dittoink.weebly.com.

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"Rotary cannon,"
con't. from page 4

rotary cannon and really enhance the presentation of the Tomcat.

The F-14's rotary cannon is a General Electric M61A1, 20mm Vulcan gun. It was a hydraulically driven, rotary action, six-barreled, Gatling-style cannon that had a high rate of fire. It was air-cooled and fired electrically. The initial development of the gun was the M61 and this was modified and improved with the M61A1. The Vulcan has been in use on US military aircraft since 1959, introduced on the Lockheed F-104 Starfighter.

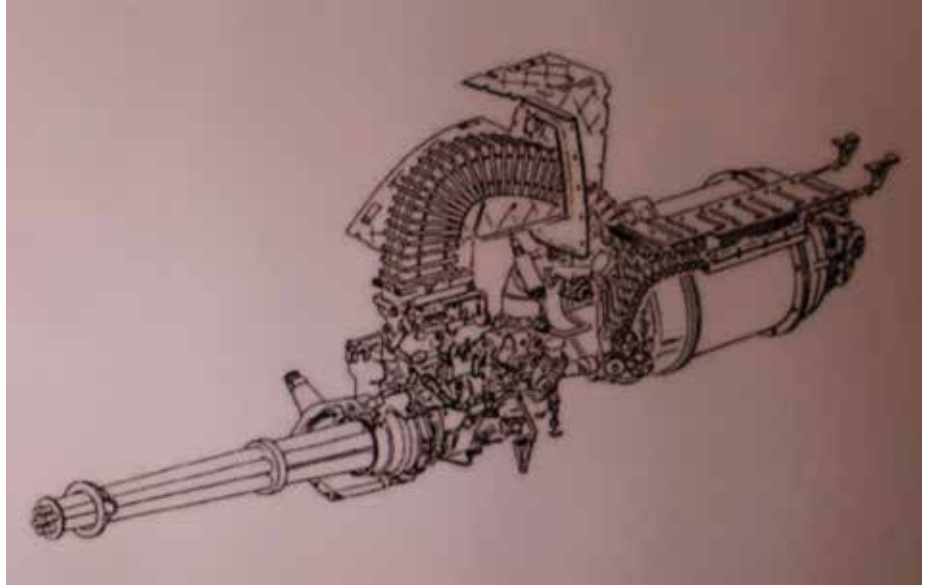
Each of the cannon's six barrels fires once, in turn, during each revolution of the barrel cluster. The multiple barrels provide both a very high rate of fire - around 100 rounds per second - and contribute to long weapon life by minimizing barrel erosion and heat generation. The mean time between jams or failures is in excess of 10,000 rounds, making it an extremely reliable weapon.

The F-14 Tomcat had a drum system which carried a total capacity of 675 rounds, fed into the gun by a link-less feed system. A muzzle gas diffuser was installed to prevent gun gases from getting sucked into the engine intakes where they could cause engine flameouts. When the guns fired, the empty casings were returned to the drum rather than being ejected outside the aircraft. This prevented the jet's center of gravity from shifting when the guns were fired and also prevented the spent casings from being sucked into the air intakes. The feed system added some 300-400 pounds (136-181 kg) to the complete weapon.

Practically no powered rotary cannon is supplied with enough ammunition for a full minute of firing because of the weight of ammunition. In order to avoid using up the 675 rounds carried by the Tomcat in a single trigger pull, a burst controller was used to limit the number of rounds fired each time the trigger was pulled. Bursts of from 2 or 3 rounds up to 40 or 50 rounds could be selected.

Other aircraft in our collection that used the Vulcan cannon or a variant include the Republic F-105D Thunderchief (M61) and The McDonnell-Douglas F-4D Phantom that could carry a variant of the weapon in a pod (GAU-A/A). →

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A diagram of the Vulcan gun system.

2013 Events

February

11 - Membership Luncheon

March

18 - 21 Spring Break Aviation Education Class

31 - Museum Closed, Easter

April

8 - Membership Luncheon

27 - Celebrity Pancake Feed

June

3 - 6 Aviation Education Class

10 - Membership Luncheon

July

8 - 11 Aviation Education Class

August

5 - 8 Aviation Education Class

12 - Membership Luncheon

September

28 - Winged Foot 5K Run/10K Run and 5K Walk

October

14 - Membership Luncheon

November

28 - Museum Closed, Thanksgiving Day

December

9 - Membership Luncheon

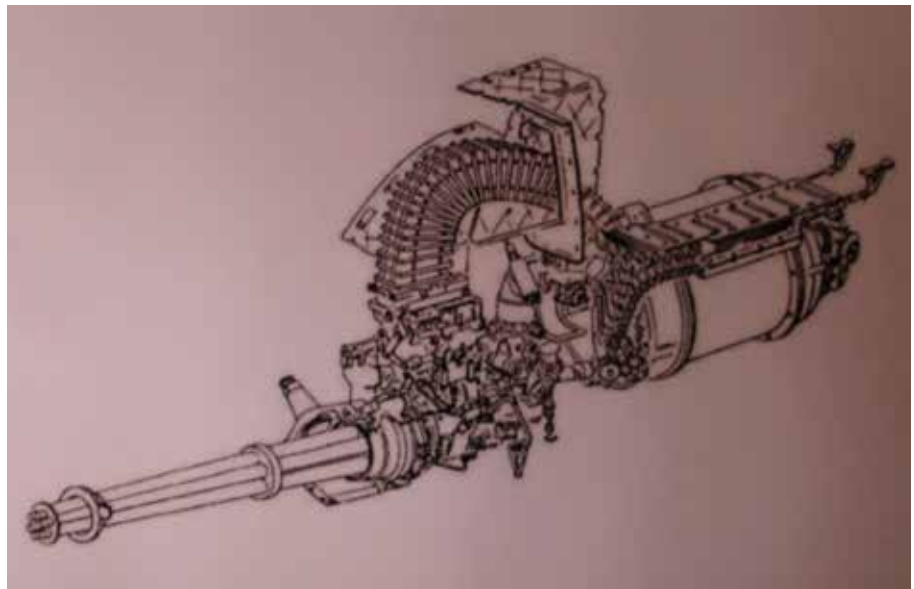
25 - Museum Closed, Christmas Day

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February program features a book on Howard Hughes

Major General Mark Musick, USAF (RET) is our guest speaker for the February Membership Luncheon. He will speak about author Douglas Ellman's book *Boxes: The Secret Life of Howard Hughes*.

General Musick was a key researcher for this book and over several years interviewed a woman claiming to be Howard Hughes' widow. He then worked for two more years with Douglas Wellman to produce the book. For details, come to the February 11 luncheon, 11:30 am, Jean Wanner Education Conference Room. →



A diagram of the Vulcan gun system.

Learn more about this rotary cannon on the F-14 Tomcat, on page 4.
It is now on display in the Combat Air Museum.