

THE OFFICIAL NEWSLETTER OF THE

# COMBAT AIR MUSEUM

# PLANE



# talk

August | September 2018 • Vol. 34, No. 4

TOPEKA REGIONAL AIRPORT, FORBES FIELD, TOPEKA, KANSAS



## Glück ab!

## Zeppelins and the origin of strategic bombing

By Dennis Smirl

ZEPPELINS! What we didn't know about them, and what we know now....

Mark Hull, PhD, JD, was the guest speaker for our June 11 membership luncheon. An associate professor at the U.S. Army Command and General Staff College at Fort Leavenworth, Kansas, he teaches the advanced trial course, war crimes law and history. Having earned an undergraduate degree in history from The Citadel, he went on to earn a doctorate in WWII history at the University College Cork in Ireland, and the Juris Doctorate from the Cumberland School of Law.

Prior to his present teaching assignment at Leavenworth, Dr. Hull worked as a criminal prosecutor and served as a brigade intelligence adviser to the U. S. Army 1st Infantry Division military transition team in Iraq from 2006 to 2007.

His published books include "Irish Secrets: German Espionage in Wartime Ireland" and "Masquerade: Treason, the Holocaust, and an Irish Impostor." He is an elected fellow of the Royal Historical Society and

was named Instructor of the Year for the Department of Military History.

After Chairman Gene Howerter introduced him, Dr. Hull began his talk with a short explanation of the title of the presentation, "Glück Ab! World War One Zeppelins and the Origins of Strategic Bombing." The best English translation for "glück ab" is "good luck!"

"Zeppelins," con't on page 8

---

### Inside This Issue

---

<i>From the Chairman's Desk</i>	2
<i>CAM's Shenyang J-811 to fly again...on a simulator</i>	3
<i>Museum Notes</i>	4-5
<i>Projects Update</i>	6-7
<i>Topeka Gives!</i>	7
<i>Pilot's Notes: A Book Review</i>	10

## Combat Air Museum

Topeka Regional Airport  
Hangars 602 & 604  
7016 SE Forbes Avenue  
Topeka, KS 66619-1444  
Telephone (785) 862-3303  
FAX (785) 862-3304

www.combatairmuseum.org

Hosted by  
Rossini Management Systems, Inc.

Email: office@combatairmuseum.com

### **Museum Director**

Kevin Drewelow

### **Office Manager**

Nelson Hinman, Jr.

### **European Liaison Officer**

Huw Thomas

### **Board of Directors**

Gene Howerter - *Chairman*

Dave Murray - *Deputy Chairman*

Tad Pritchett - *Secretary*

Wes Barricklow

Les Carlson

Stu Entz

Ted Nolde

Bill Stumpff

Dick Trupp

Mike Welch

### **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.

Sun. Noon - 4:30 P.M.

Last Entry Every Day is 3:30 P.M.

Closed New Year's Day, Easter,  
Thanksgiving, Christmas Day

### **Newsletter**

### **Layout & Design**

Toni Dixon

**Plane Talk**, the official newsletter  
of the Combat Air Museum  
of Topeka, Kansas,  
is published bi-monthly.  
We welcome your comments.

## From the Chairman's Desk

by Gene Howerter, Chairman, Board of Directors

In the last issue of Plane Talk I commented on the new CAM sign on the Topeka Turnpike, northbound on I-335, about two miles from the South Topeka exit. We were hoping to raise an additional \$1,500 to keep this sign up through 2019. With the good and generous efforts of several members, we have reached half that goal and I've gone ahead and committed to Lamar Advertising for the sign until the end of 2019. Please consider helping us reach the monetary goal in order that we can keep this powerful sign up for all motorists on I-335 to see.

Here at the CAM we often find ourselves involved in various community relations which even surprise us. This summer our local North American Hockey League team announced it had been sold. The new management wanted to start over with a clean slate beginning with the name. Formerly the Topeka RoadRunners, the team has changed its name to the Topeka Pilots and asked area fans to vote on a new logo. Since the Combat Air Museum represents the Pilot theme in our community, I contacted the hockey team's office and suggested they host a public team meet-and-greet at our Museum before the season starts in mid-September.



**New sign on the Kansas Turnpike as seen from the Burlingame Road bridge (photo by Dave Murray)**

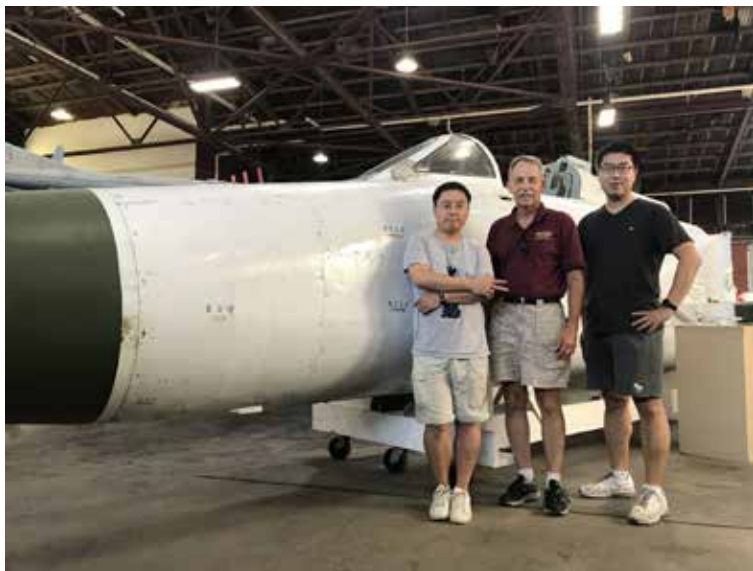
The new owner, coach, and staff joined us for a tour of the Museum and we discussed our offer. They decided that our Museum will host an open house for the fans and community on a date and time to be announced soon. It is a real pleasure for us to be able to host such an event. It will even give some of the Topeka Pilots players an opportunity to see what it is like to be a real airplane pilot when they fly our flight simulator.

We hope to build a great relationship between the Combat Air Museum and the Topeka Pilots organization. I invite every member

**"Director," con't. on page 9**



## CAM's Shenyang J-8II to fly again...on a simulator!



*(left to right) Xueqian Zhao, CAM Director Kevin Drewelow and Zupei Li (photo by Zupei Li)*

*By Kevin Drewelow*

In early July two software developers spent a full day cleaning, surveying, measuring and recording every detail of the cockpit in CAM's rare Shenyang J-8II (NATO designation Finback) nose section.

Xueqian Zhao and Zupei Li of Deka Ironworks Simulations develop aircraft modules for Digital Combat Simulator World, an online free-to-play digital battlefield (see their website at <https://www.digitalcombat-simulator.com/en/products/world/>).

Xueqian and Zupei are creating a digital model of the Finback that will be available in about a year. They visited the J-8 at the Chinese Aviation Museum near Beijing, but were not permitted the detailed access they require. At CAM, they had full access and made the most of their time. They spent a full day, without lunch, documenting CAM's J-8II cockpit mockup.

In 1986, China and America signed the "Peace Pearl" arms deal. As part of that deal, Northrop Grumman was to update the avionics package on China's J-8II fleet. The Chinese sent the J-8II cockpit to America to aid design and installation of the improved systems.

The program abruptly ended after the events that took place in Beijing's Tiananmen Square in 1989. The Finback cockpit found its way to Boeing in Wichita. Boeing donated the cockpit to the Kansas Aviation Museum in 1996, who then donated it to the Combat Air Museum in 2009.

Xueqian and Zupei's survey began with physical measurements and moved on to include video and audio recording. Their quest for detail included measuring the degrees of travel of each switch and even the sound of the switch being thrown! They also cleaned the cockpit as they progressed, something long overdue! Despite the heat and humidity, they completed their work after a long day. They donated \$200 to the Museum and even helped office manager Nelson Hinman, Jr. solve a small problem with our flight simulator.

If all goes to plan, in about a year people around the world will have an opportunity to fly a Shenyang J-8II, thanks to Xueqian and Zupei and the Combat Air Museum!

→ → →



## Museum Notes



*Left: The new James W. Mirick Gallery at CAM*

*Below: Bombs from the Eisenhower Museum on display next to 'Kilroy' (photos by Kevin Drewelow)*

*By Kevin Drewelow*

**The James W. Mirick Gallery at the Combat Air Museum is now open:** Chuck Watson's vision of an art gallery at the Combat Air Museum has come to fruition. Chuck held a soft opening of the art gallery during our celebrity pancake feed in April and it remains open for your viewing pleasure. Once he completes a few remaining details, we'll plan a more formal opening. It will be named the James W. Mirick Gallery at the Combat Air Museum in honor of James Mirick of Lawrence, a long time college art teacher and aviation artist. Mirick taught art at Kansas City Kansas Community College from 1965 to 1999. He recently donated a large collection of his military aviation-themed paintings to the Museum of the Kansas National Guard; several of those paintings are on loan to and displayed at the Combat Air Museum.

**Eisenhower Museum donates bombs:** The Eisenhower Presidential Library, Museum and Boyhood Home in Abilene, Kansas, donated four World War II era bombs to CAM. Troy Elkins, registrar at the Eisenhower Museum, offered two 4,000 pound M56 block buster bombs and two 500 pound AN58 semi-armor piercing bombs, all inert of course, to CAM in April. CAM quickly accepted the offer. The bombs arrived at CAM on July 3 thanks to Gary Naylor once again donating the use of his truck and trailer, time and fuel; Danny San Romani and Kevin Drewelow travelled with Gary to Abilene to assist. Troy Elkins and several other Eisenhower staff brought the bombs to the loading dock and helped us prepare the load. The Darby Corporation of Kansas City, Kansas produced the bombs but World

War Two ended before the bombs could be shipped for arming. They remained in the basement of the Darby Corporation until 1993 when the company donated them to the Eisenhower Museum. The museum in Abilene just closed for a year-long renovation; when it reopens, it will focus more closely on the life and achievements of the 34th President, rendering a number of artifacts redundant and, therefore, available to other museums. We've already learned a lot about these bombs and will soon have signage in place to tell their story.

**CAM and MoKNG team up for the Rotary Freedom Festival:** For the second year, members of the Combat Air Museum and Museum of the Kansas National Guard teamed up to staff a display at the Rotary Freedom Festival in downtown Topeka on June 30. We set up our pop-up tent and displayed artifacts from both museums, along with CAM's 1952 Jeep. The heat and humidity kept a lot of people home, but we were in the shade and a steady southerly wind kept us cool. We met



a number of people and told them about the museums at Forbes Field. The Jeep developed a coolant leak on the return trip to Forbes so we'll soon work to correct it and have the jeep ready for the next trip. CAM also displayed the Jeep at the Museum of the Kansas National Guard during their Heartland Military Day event on June 9.

**Capital Projects Committee update:** Despite an appalling lack of construction skills and abilities among his colleagues on the committee, Mike Welch led the successful improvement of the drainage ditch on the south side of hangar 602 where the sidewalk connects to hangar 604. Committee members first excavated the low-lying areas on either side of the sidewalk. Mike obtained some leftover rebar, pipe, plywood and other supplies from BRB Contractors and built forms around the new drains. Kansas Sand and Concrete was generous in supplying the concrete we poured to complete the project. Now, two proper drains have replaced the open ditches that previously existed.

Capital Projects Committee members replaced a small siding panel on the south side of 604 that was the result of wind damage from a recent storm. Committee members are now hard at work to install a water line from hangar 602 to hangar 604 that will allow us to turn off the water meter at hangar 604 that costs us \$90 per month. Metropolitan Topeka Airport Authority President Eric Johnson suggested the project; after Mike Welch determined we could do it for less than \$500, the Museum board voted to proceed.

For many years we have noticed that the front door to the Bob Dole Education Center is especially susceptible to northerly winds and have thought that we need some form of an air lock system to control this entrance. One way is to build a vestibule at this door to eliminate the impact of the wind on this door. This would also help with energy conservation and comfort issues for members or visitors when the door is unlocked. Ted Nolde has designed a vestibule to be built at the exterior entrance to the Education Center. After pouring a concrete floor, the vestibule will incorporate a glass door assembly donated by Stormont-Vail Hospital that matches the door assembly between the Education Center and main bay of hangar 602. Chairman Gene Howerter has submitted a grant request to cover most of the cost of the materials for the project; work will commence when and if the Museum receives the grant.

**Topeka High Marine JROTC and Civil Air Patrol cadets volunteer at CAM:** Eight cadets from the Topeka High School United States Marine Corps Junior Reserve Officers Training Corps (MCJROTC) and three members of the Civil Air Patrol (CAP) Topeka Composite Squadron volunteered to help when the Combat Air Museum hosted a memorial service in late May.

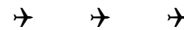


***CAM volunteer  
Nathan  
Benfield  
(photo  
by Kevin  
Drewelow)***

The eight MCJROTC cadets volunteered to help CAM members tow four aircraft out of hangar 602 to make room for the service. They first watched a short training video and then arrived at CAM to help. They were very professional and focused on the task at hand; with their assistance we towed the Canadian Car & Foundry Harvard, Grumman F9F Panther, McDonnell Douglas F-4D Phantom II and Republic F-84F Thunderstreak out; several of them came back the next day to help return the aircraft to their usual spots in hangar 602. The three CAP members, all from Saint Marys, cheerfully helped set up and later take down over 200 folding chairs. Afterwards, the students spent some time in the Museum's flight simulator as a reward for their generosity and assistance.

### **CAM Mowing Team Doubles in Size!**

When he's not volunteering in the gift shop, CAM board member Bill Stumpff keeps busy mowing the Museum's grass. For the last two years he's done it all pretty much by himself, but this mowing season he received some well-deserved assistance. Nathan Benfield started sharing mowing duties this year and Bill is happy to have his help. Nathan enjoys lending a hand at the Museum, and it seems the higher the temperature and humidity, the more Nathan likes it!



## Projects Update



*By Kevin Drewelow*

**Fokker Dr. I Triplane and Engine:** Thanks to Don Dawson, Danny San Romani and Dave Murray, CAM's Fokker Dr. I triplane will soon have an engine installed. When Dick Lemons donated the 75% scale replica Fokker to CAM, he removed and kept the Volkswagen engine. Dave Murray is using some spare 3D-printed parts Huw Thomas made while producing an 80% scale Gnome Monosoupape rotary engine for our Airco DH-2. Dave found enough parts to assemble

the crankcase and four cylinders, all that will be visible once the cowling is complete. Don is preparing the Fokker for the engine installation by adding a mount on the firewall to support the engine, propeller shaft and propeller. He is also fabricating a sheet metal cover for the front of the cowling. Once complete, the Fokker will look ready for Baron von Richtofen to take it into the sky once more!

**"Projects," con't on page 7**



**Above: Engine mockup for the Fokker Dr. I**

**Left: F-86H Sabre right speed brake bay after priming**

**(photos by Kevin Drewelow)**



**"Projects," con't. from page 6**

**Lockheed EC-121T:** Stu Entz and Danny San Romani are working on a display to explain the markings and data on the clear plastic plotting board of our EC-121 during its final flight in Air Force service. Stu, Danny and Tom Gorrell determined the board is centered on Key West, Florida. They plan to post a similar sized map behind to the plotting board to show details of the area depicted on the plotting board.

**MiG-15 main landing gear servicing:** The left main gear shock strut on the Museum's MiG-15 collapsed during cold weather earlier this year, not uncommon for aircraft during a significant temperature change. The maintenance manuals described construction of the landing gear but did not specify servicing information. Remarkably, the MiG-15 was not converted to use NATO-standard petroleum based hydraulic oil; it still contained a Soviet-era mixture of glycerin, alcohol and water. Don Dawson, Kevin Drewelow and Danny San Romani's initial attempts to service the strut were not successful as the Museum lacked a hydraulic jack short enough to do the job safely. Kevin works part time for David Christy, owner of Blackhawk Aircraft LLC, an aircraft maintenance company in Meriden, Kansas. David loaned CAM an aircraft jack normally used on low wing Piper aircraft. Kevin obtained some glycerin, alcohol and water, mixed it to the prescribed ratio by weight, and filled the strut to the top of the servicing port. The team then serviced the strut with nitrogen to 1280 psi in accordance with the MiG-15 manual. The strut must have been low on fluid as it extended and remains so today. Next time your Mig-15 needs its struts serviced, see the experts at the Combat Air Museum!

**North American F-86H Sabre:** Danny San Romani has been busy working on the speed brakes and speed brake bays on the Sabre. He has bead blasted both brakes and bays, and has been focusing on the right brake and bay, where he has applied zinc phosphate primer. North American used a particular shade of green on the aircraft interior and some components. Danny had some paint made that matches the North American interior green and will apply it to the brakes and bays soon.

→ → →

**Topeka Gives!***By Dick Trupp*

The Topeka Community Foundation hosted its sixth annual "Topeka Gives" fundraising event at Fairlawn Plaza Mall on June 5th. The Combat Air Museum has participated in every "Topeka Gives" event and 2018 was bigger and better than ever! Eight volunteers staffed our display table from 7 a.m. to 6 p.m. and spoke with people about our Museum, its mission, why people should consider volunteering at CAM and encouraged them to visit us at Forbes Field. Those of us who met the crowds found the experience to be very rewarding. Jon Boursaw, Stu Entz, Betty and Paul Frantz, Gene Howerter, Dave Murray, Dennis Smirl and Dick Trupp all took turns representing the Combat Air Museum.

Two weeks later, the Topeka Community Foundation presented fundraising reports and checks to each of the 166 participants. Twenty-three people donated \$3,675 to CAM. The Topeka Community Foundation matched 16.3% of the funds raised, which added \$598 for a total of \$4,273-not a bad effort for a one-day fundraiser! Our donors have been a little more generous each year, always exceeding the amount donated the previous year.

We plan to participate in "Topeka Gives" again next year and we would love to have your help staffing our display. Let me know if you'd like to take a turn at our table. You will enjoy your time at the mall and feel good about the Combat Air Museum!

→ → →

Join the  
Combat Air Museum.  
Learn more at  
[www.combatairmuseum.org](http://www.combatairmuseum.org)



**Gene and Dr. Hull**  
(photo by Dave Murray)

### "Zeppelins," con't. from page 1

After hearing what the Zeppelin crews did in WWI, they certainly needed a lot of good luck.

Dr. Hull took us back to 1900 and the first Zeppelin, accompanying his narrative with some excellent photographs. Count Ferdinand von Zeppelin invented and funded his self-named airship, yet despite many very successful demonstration flights, he was unable to attract investors for bigger and better Zeppelins, so he disassembled and stored the prototype.

Attitudes changed as World War I approached. Powerful military officers in both the Imperial German Army and Navy saw in airships the potential as a bombardment platform. They gave orders to start building a fleet of airships for the Army and Navy. The navy purchased Zeppelins while the army obtained most of its airships from Zeppelin's competitor, Luftschiffbau Shütte-Lanz. Britons applied the term "zeppelin" to all German airships.

Using a framework of aluminum, gas bags of organic material that would not leak hydrogen gas, and diesel engines to turn 16 foot diameter propellers, large zeppelins over 600 feet in length could carry sizable bomb loads as long as conditions were right. Later airships could fly very high for the time at 20,000 to 22,000 feet above sea level, but strong head winds could greatly reduce their forward air speed. Dr. Hull mentioned that there were times when zeppelins on their way to bomb England encountered opposing high winds that pushed them in the opposite direction, sometimes forcing them to cancel the sortie.

Bombing, when the zeppelin could overfly its target area in clear, calm air, was simple and direct: 1) fly over the target and 2) drop bombs. The airships flew so slowly that the bombs fell almost straight down, little affected by the wind. Things were not so easy on a cloudy, windy day. On such occasions the airship crews used an ingenious—if crazy—solution for aiming their bombs. They employed a winch and very long cable to lower a small, bomb-shaped

## ***Upcoming Events***

### **AUGUST**

6-9 Young Aviators Class

Monday, August 13

Membership Luncheon

Bob Dole Education Center, 11:30 a.m.

*Boxes: Howard Hughes' Secret Life*  
Retired Nebraska Air National Guard Major  
General Mark Musick dedicated over a decade  
to uncover a story which  
he never expected  
nor sought to tell.

Yet, through a strange twist of fate  
in which a key figure in the story entrusted him,  
there was the answer  
to one of the single and biggest mysteries  
of the late 20th century.

### **SEPTEMBER**

29-Kansas Chocolate Festival Winged Foot Run

### **OCTOBER**

8-Membership Luncheon

13-Girls in Aviation Day

→ → →

"sky-car" carrying an observer through the clouds until he could see the ground. The low-altitude observer used a telephone to tell the bombardier in the zeppelin when to release the bombs.

Despite this new technology, many of the bombs did not hit military targets. Instead, they landed on homes, schools, hospitals and civilians but did nothing to weaken British morale and resolve to continue the war.

Operating altitude was an advantage for the zeppelins. Early in the war, with few exceptions, Royal Flying Corps aircraft could not fly high enough to attack the zeppelins. Later, with the development of superchargers, certain British aircraft could reach them, attacking with machine guns. One might think this would be effective, but Dr. Hull told us it wasn't. Germany built and employed eighty-eight Zeppelins; the Allies only shot down thirty. Getting hydrogen to burn turned out to be more difficult than expected. Bullets passed through the gas bags, making small holes from which hydrogen would slowly escape.

"Zeppelins," con't. on page 9



## 2018 Calendar of Events

### 2018 Calendar of Events

#### August

6-9 Young Aviators Class  
13-Membership Luncheon

#### September

29-Kansas Chocolate Festival  
Winged Foot Run

#### October

8-Membership Luncheon  
13-Girls in Aviation Day

#### November

4-Daylight Savings time ends  
22-Thanksgiving, Museum closed  
22-2nd Annual Sheep Dog Impact Assistance  
Turkey Trot for Heroes  
5K/1 mile fun run/walk and virtual 5K

#### December

10-Membership Luncheon  
25-Christmas, Museum closed

→ → →

Shop the  
Gift Shop  
at the  
Combat Air Museum  
for unique gifts  
you won't find  
anywhere else

### "Director," con't. from page 2

within easy driving distance of the Combat Air Museum join us for this gathering. Better yet, why not join us at the Topeka Expo centre this year for an exciting hockey game? If you have never attended a hockey match here, this is your invitation.

The Museum is doing well at this time. We are not rich financially by any means but we are making it month to month. Your extra consideration when paying dues and supporting other activities are what keep us open. We will soon send our letters asking for sponsors for our Museum charity benefit 5K run/10K run/4K walk. This is the event that keeps our doors open year round. A sponsorship is \$100 for a spot on our beautiful special event race shirt and each sponsor receives a free shirt. For all who have been sponsors in the past, thank you and please hang in there with us again this year.

CAM needs a few more gift shop volunteers. We'll train you to do it without a lot of anxiety and it's very rewarding as you meet and greet the public from all over the USA and the world at our front door. Other volunteer opportunities are tour guides and flight simulator support. We train all volunteers before we ask you to take over. If you or someone you know enjoys people, you will enjoy this work at the Museum. Give us a call. I hope to see you soon at the Combat Air Museum!

→ → →

### "Zeppelins," con't. from page 8

In many cases, an airship managed to limp home after receiving significant battle damage. Using incendiary bullets to ignite the hydrogen didn't work well either. The hydrogen and atmospheric oxygen had to be in the proper concentration to ignite, which rarely occurred.

Dr. Hull concluded his presentation with photos and a short summary of the U.S. Navy's use of airships, which included internal hangars where fighter aircraft used a trapeze to lower the aircraft for launch and recovery, as seen in the USS Macon display at the Museum, and the post war use of Zeppelin-built airships as passenger carriers. He followed his presentation with a question and answer session that added several interesting facts and aspects to an amazing story.

→ → →

Your membership is important to us.  
Join the Combat Air Museum.

## Pilot's Notes: A Book Review

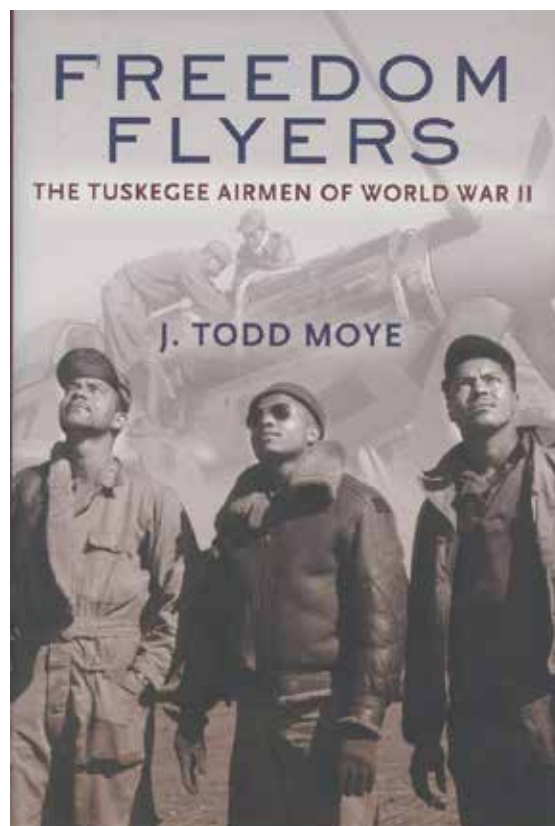
### *“Freedom Flyers – The Tuskegee Airmen of World War II” by J. Todd Moye*

*Reviewed by Kevin Drewelow*

While attending the Air Force Senior Non-Commissioned Officer Academy in Montgomery, Alabama in 2003, I had the good fortune to hear firsthand accounts from a panel of eight Tuskegee Airmen and I was fascinated. Author J. Todd Moye used over 800 interviews of Tuskegee Airmen, many of which he conducted himself, as the basis of this book. Moye directed the National Park Service's Tuskegee Airmen Oral History Project from 2000 to 2005.

Moye explores early black aviation history; the factors leading to President Roosevelt's decision in late 1940 to begin aviation training for African-Americans in segregated units and bases; opposition among some within the black community to “Jim Crow aviation units”; and the argument for more efficient integrated training and service. He details the selection of Tuskegee, Alabama over Chicago and other sites and describes the training, deployment and combat experiences of the Airmen. He also examines the various ways the Tuskegee Airmen responded to the racial inequality they encountered during and after the war. Moye also discusses the impact the Tuskegee Airmen had on integrating the armed forces and, years later, American society. On a more local level, it is interesting to read of the roles several former Tuskegee Airmen had in the Brown vs. Board of Education decision. If you enjoyed the movie “Red Tails” and wanted to learn more about the Tuskegee Airmen, this is the book for you.

→ → →



**“Freedom Flyers-the Tuskegee Airmen of World War II” published by Oxford University Press, 2010**

visit our website  
at [www.combatairmuseum.org](http://www.combatairmuseum.org)

## Visitors

1,113 people from 38 states, Brazil, Canada, Germany, Great Britain, Mexico and Ukraine visited the Combat Air Museum in May.

In June, 1,305 visitors from 39 states, Australia, Canada, France, Great Britain, Mexico, Poland and Sweden toured your Museum.

→ → →

*Introduce a friend to  
the Combat Air Museum.*

## New & Renewing Members

### NEW

Tod & Barbara Bunting  
Ian Farthing & family  
Joseph Ledbetter  
Col. Ronald McKay (USMC Ret.)

### RENEWING

Wes Barricklow & family  
George Catt  
Allen Corzine  
Adam & Rebecca Fast  
Michael Fewell & family  
Paul Frantz & family  
Richard Gates  
Raymond & Cheryl Kulp  
Becky Mathers  
Larry Morgan  
Rebecca Norburg  
Dan Pulliam  
Carl & Betty Quarnstrom  
Capt. Herschel Stroud Ret.  
Dr. Rees Webber & family  
Mike & Carla Welch  
Kenneth Wright  
Joe Wulfkuhle & family

→ → →



## Spirits in Flight

I saw them return, seven spirits in flight,  
Engines fired by the sparks of the night,  
Lumbering, throbbing like a battered ghost,  
So thankful for a friendly coast.

Glowing and gliding, a Lanc without sound,  
The rubber screams as it kisses the ground,  
Perfect touchdown on a deserted plain;  
Now a cornfield, a field with no name.

Night after night, mission after mission;  
Helmets, goggles, masks and ammunition,  
The seven Sky Warriors from long past,  
All knowing tonight could be their last.

I hear the field alive with noise,  
Filled with brave men; some of them just boys,  
I see them walk in their suits of leather,  
Slowly and proudly they walk together.

Where their Lancs rose to meet the foe,  
Now the larks rise, from their nests below,  
Down the runway only peace is heard,  
Save for the wind and the song of a bird.

Time passes, January to December,  
From spring to winter the years drift on,  
Every April, every Easter, I will remember  
Cliff, Al, Pete and John -- Nick, Stan and Skipper Don.

*By Eddy Coward dedicated to his brother Cliff and the  
crew of Lancaster LL899 of 49 Sqn lost 12 April 1944.*





*Boeing RB-47H Stratojet of the 55th SRW in front of Hangar 604  
at Forbes AFB between 1955 and 1966.  
Hangar 604 is now the Combat Air Museum's south hangar  
(photo by vetfriends.com)*

---