

# PROP NOISE

SPECIAL  
**WARBIRDS  
OVER THE BEACH**  
EDITION

The Membership Newsletter for The Military Aviation Museum

Summer 2009

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**Military Aviation Museum**

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**Virginia Beach Airport**

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## Warbirds Over the Beach Premieres

by RR "Boom" Powell

The first performance of what will become an annual airshow in Virginia Beach took place on Saturday, May 16, 2009. Unlike theater shows, weather plays a major role in such outdoor displays. Heavy showers, high winds and low clouds had an effect even before show time. Three warbirds and the tow plane for the TG-4 glider were unable to fly in.

Saturday began with rapidly building cumulus clouds which threatened to spoil the festivities, but they did provide a spectacular background for photographs and videos. Several of the museum's warbirds warmed up with short flights while a stream of riders went up in PT-19 and AT-6 WWII trainers throughout the morn-

ing. The clouds stayed white and puffy long enough for the flying display to begin.

First off was the trainer group which began with a massed fly-by and extended to individual passes down the show line for the benefit of photographers.

The takeoff and landing order was determined by speed. First was an SNJ flown by John Mazza, down from Matoaca, VA, for the occasion. Obie O'Brien was at the controls of the DHC Chipmunk and Nelson Eskey was in the Stinson L-5 (which is technically



*Jerry Yagen flying the Stearman N2S*

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## Air Show Entertainment

by Christine Pinkston

The ambience of the 1940's was delivered through the first-class entertainment provided continuously during the Warbirds Over the Beach air show. Attendees were treated to some of the most well-known musical and comedic entertainers, as well as orchestra entertainment delivered by talented local musicians and nationally known singing groups.

Theresa Eamon, a jazz vocalist from Idaho Falls, Idaho, opened the entertainment line up for the weekend with music from the World War II era. She performed the well known songs of that time period that our men and wom-

en in uniform listened to during their wartime years. The Ultimate Abbott and Costello Tribute Show took the stage and made us laugh. Through original Abbott and Costello skits, the audience was transported to another time through the witty and quick exchanges of those brilliant and famous comedians. The Abbott and Costello show reminded everyone of an important part of entertainment history.



*Bill Riley and Joe Ziegler of the Ultimate Abbott and Costello Tribute Show*

The American Belles, based in New York City, were a big crowd favorite. Their vocal performances are reminiscent of the famous Andrews Sisters. They were costumed in red, white, or blue uniforms and delivered songs of the war period with choreography and a big sound.

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*Premiere... Continued from page 1*

a liaison aircraft versus a trainer). Andy Michalak from Easton, MD, was in the PT-22 and Jerry Yagen himself flew the Stearman N2S. The oldest of the group, the DeHavill-

*The B-25 roaring to life*

land Tigermoth, was flown by Jerry Fotheringham who came all the way from Ontario, Canada just for the show.

While the trainer group was landing, spectators near the ramp area were treated to the sound

and smoke of the bomber group starting engines. For round engine fans, it was a toss-up which was more exciting; seeing the two R-1830's of the B-25 starting or the largest engine in the museum's collection, the 2,800hp R-3350 in the Skyraider cranking. Mike Spalding left his job flying corporate jets and the quiet of his farm in North Carolina to be first off in the Douglas AD Skyraider. John Fuentes is a captain with a major airline and gets a thrill flying airplanes older than he is, like the Grumman TBM Avenger. To modern thinking, an airplane as large as the B25 Mitchell taking off on green grass seems odd, but is completely authentic as many of the airfields during the Second World War were grass or worse. The B-25 was flown by Don Anklin, who as manager of the Fighter Factory, is responsible for the superb

condition of the museum's flying aircraft, with Lou Radwanick working as copilot. The PBY Catalina was nothing short of majestic as it rolled down the runway and lifted leisurely into the sky, flown by a pair of Bobs, Hill and Cope, both from the FAA and up from Tennessee. The fly pasts were a good mix of bank angles and speeds with bomb bays and speed brakes opened and closed. The group landed and rumbled past the crowd to their parking spots. Then, the rains came.

Most retreated into the spacious hangars to wait out the shower. The exception was the WWII reenactors who reveled in the authenticity of their canvas shelters and rain gear. Only the Afrika Korps were heard muttering there is no rain in the desert.

They had an earlier surprise when they found there were sand dunes placed on site for their use. (Not really; the sand is for the construction underway at the airport. Hmmm, the sand piles proved so popular, maybe they will be left as a special habitat.)

The dunes did provide a good

*PBY Catalina*

location for the marquee that shielded Air Boss Walt Ohlrich and, what the Navy calls the Mini-Boss, Felix Usis, from the sun and, fortunately, rain. Walt and his team did a super job keeping all the airplanes on schedule and safe. Also taking advantage of the raised, albeit shifty, vantage point, were show announcers Boom Powell, YHS, and television personality and longtime local aviation maven, Joe Perkins. Next year the hilltop gang has been promised a more permanent structure in the form of the control tower imported from the old bomber base in England. They'll get to stand on the top deck counting the planes like Clark Gable, Gregory Peck and Walter Pidgeon. The entire show was recorded by Channel 4 TV. Copies of the broadcast are available from the Museum shop on DVD.

*PBY Catalina in mid-flight**Wet airplanes on display**The planes were grounded as the rain moved in.*

The pause for the rain storm gave plenty of time for Jerry Yagen and Obie O'Brien to get out of their trainers and into the Mustang and Corsair. Mike Pancia manned the Hurricane, Andy Michalak the Spitfire, and Ray Scott the P-40 for the fly-by of fighters from the Fighter Factory (interestingly,

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## Living History

by Andrea Docos

The first annual War Birds Over the Beach air show not only gave visitors an incredible look at some of history's most amazing aircraft, but it gave visitors a chance to meet some of the men that actually flew them. One of the highlights of the weekend event was the "Living History" portion where visitors got to sit down



Guest veteran, Gottfried Dulias



and talk with some of the real life heroes that bravely fought for our country during WWII and the Korean War. Talking with the veterans gave visitors a chance to recognize and appreciate the faces of the men and women that truly saved the world more than 60 years ago. It gave them a unique opportunity to delve into the memories of those that stepped up when their nation needed them most, and hear first hand accounts of what it was like to fly the great warbirds that are in our museum.

The veterans brought photographs, maps, flight jackets, books and a lifetime of experiences to share with our visitors. The veterans seemed to enjoy chatting and swapping stories with each other just as much as they

did with visitors at the air show. "Never in a million years did I think I would be signing autographs!" said Ret. Lt. Col. Don Wagner who was assigned to the 500th Bomber Squadron and flew 43 combat missions in the B-25.

One of the guest veterans was Gottfried Dulias who flew for the German Luftwaffe. Dressed in his original German uniform, he captivated visitors with his display of pictures and his description of getting captured by

the Russians and serving in a POW camp for over three years. In his book, "Another Bowl of Kapusta: The True Life Story of a World War II Luftwaffe Fighter Pilot and POW in Russia," he talks about being active in "Hitler's Youth" as a young child, and growing up in Germany during a very volatile time in history. Dulias' participation in the event gave visitors a unique opportunity to take a look into the life and experiences of someone who fought for the other side. It was interesting watching the other veterans interact with him. There wasn't one veteran who didn't make a point of shaking his hand and asking about the infamous Luftwaffe. "I flew in

the Pacific – I've got nothing against him!" one vet laughed. "Can't you move his table closer to ours?" said another, "We don't want anyone to think we don't want to sit next to him!"



Tuskegee Airman, former SGT Harold Quinton

Some of our other celebrated guests included Bill Temple, who was at Wheeler field when Pearl Harbor was bombed by the Japanese in 1941. Dressed in what he called his "Pearl Harbor Survivor Uniform" – a Hawaiian shirt -- He described the first moments of the attack and his daring attempt to get airplanes into the air as Japanese Zeros strafed the field. He went on to fly P-40s in the Pacific, and perked up the second he heard one take off during the flight demonstration portion of the weekend. "There goes my baby," he said. "I could recognize that sound anywhere."

Norwood Thomas was part of the 101st airborne and parachuted into Normandy on D-day at the age of 21. He went on to glide into Holland in a Waco CG-4A as a part of Operation Market Garden. Visitors were enraptured by his stories of fighting in the Ardennes during the Battle of Bastogne, and of transitioning home after being away at war.

Ret. Captain Bob Gohr was assigned as a reconnaissance pilot flying a photo-recon version of the F6F Hellcat over Iwo Jima and Okinawa; Carl Adkins trained B-17 pilots



Retired USAF Col. Don "Buzz" Wagner (left) and retired Navy Captain Bob Gohr (right)

in Florida during the war. Visitors also got the opportunity to shake the hands of two Tuskegee Airmen. One of which was Ret. Corporal Wilbert Gore who was with the 477th Composite Group and subsequently assigned to the 118th Army Air Base Unit. Mr. Chalker described what it was like to see Germany through a Norton bombsite is

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his B-24. He made a point of sitting with the Tuskegee Airman saying, "These guys escorted us safely every single time. I feel a sort of connection with them."

Ret. Lt. Col. John Corley II was our "three war veteran". After flying P-51s and P-47s in the Philippines campaign in the Pacific, he went on to serve in Korea and finished his career as a forward air controller during Vietnam. His logbook includes time in the P-47 Thunderbolt, F-85 Thunderjet, F-110 as well as the F-86.

As one of the volunteers that got a chance to spend the weekend with our veteran guests, I would go as far to say that it was one of the most memorable experiences I have ever had. What an incredible privilege it was to sit face to face with someone who at the age of 19 or 20 (or in the case of Mr. James Reagan - 17!) stopped what they were doing and answered the call to serve. Each veteran humbly accepted thanks and praise from our gracious visitors, saying that they were just doing their job and what they had to do. The world asked a lot of them at such a young age and they stepped up to the challenge simply because, as one veteran put it, "There wasn't a lot of choice. Something had to be done, and we just did it." In the words of President Roosevelt in 1936: "To some generations much is given. Of other generations much is expected. This generation of Americans has a rendezvous with destiny." Our visit with our veteran guests at the Air Show showed us that this statement could not be truer. The stories and histories of these men must be shared and preserved, and their presence at our event truly brought the weekend to life. □

**Entertainment... Continued from page 1**

The Silver Tappers, a local ladies group composed of women 50 years old and older tap danced their way through many favorite songs.

Theresa Eamon, Abbott and Costello and the American Belles alternated performances throughout both days. All of the entertainers posed for photographs with enthusiastic spectators.



*Jazz vocalist,  
Theresa Eamon*

The SuperBand was the dance band for the Saturday night hangar dance, creating the mood of the big band era. Swing dancers, re-enactors and guests danced the night away. Big band entertainment on Sunday was provided by the Metro Band and the Symphonic Artistry Band whose final number closed the air show. □



*The American Belles put on an  
entertaining, high-energy show*



*Local favorites, the Silver Tappers*

**Premiere... Continued from page 3**

four of the five have similar V-12, liquid cooled engines; Merlin, Allison, Packard. Only the F4U (actually a FG-1) Corsair had a radial, 2,000 hp R-2800). The five fighting machines made several passes before breaking off and landing on the east-west runway. The finale for the aviation fans was the parade of classic fighters taxiing past back to the museum.

In the author's 40 plus years in aviation, he has never seen a weather front move in as fast and forcefully as one did on Sunday. The skies darkened, you could feel the

temperature plunge and the wind shifted a full 90 degrees and blew hard enough to make the wind sock look like it was starched. The downpour began minutes later. The flying part of the programme was postponed, delayed and put off until finally, and with regret, cancelled. The only good thing to come out of the rain was some artfully composed, moody photos of war-

birds glistening with rain. □



*B-25 Bomber in flight*

## Reenactors at Warbirds Over the Beach Air Show

by Peter Shuffels

Alongside the Museum's many aircraft at the air show were units of Allied and Axis Reenactors. The living history demonstrated by the reenactors gave a snapshot of life and equipment used during the Second World War. All of the units take great care in representing an accurate picture of what it was like to be an infantryman; aircraft support unit, fighter pilot, parachute infantry, and anti-aircraft defense.

The Old Dominion Living History unit manned the museum's 8.8 cm 18/36 anti aircraft gun (Fliegerabwehrkanone = FLAK) giving an impression of a Luftwaffe FLAK unit complete with search light and power supply (generator).



*3rd infantry (U.S.) mortar team*

Other displays at the Air Show showcased U.S. Army, USMC and Navy impressions, also German Mountain Troops and Russian infantry units to include Russian women pilots, known by the Germans as Night Witches.

There were also a variety of Jeeps, Motorcycles and a German Sd-Kfz 251 armored half-track.

The living history presented by the reenactor's gives us a glimpse of what it was like to have taken part in the 2nd world War.



*Polish RAF visits an American camp*

The 601 Squadron (Royal Air Force) fielded several Bell tents to include the squadron mess tent. Along side the 601 was a USAAC (U.S. Army Air Corps) support unit to include mess tents and sleeping quarters. There was also home front display showing what life was like for the factory workers that supported the war effort.



*German soldiers on a Panzeraufklarungs Abteilung (11th Panzer division)*

British, Canadian Polish, and German units, represented parachute infantry from both sides, that included U.S. 504th and 505th Parachute Infantry Regiments, 2nd Battalion 1st Airborne British, 1 Canadian Para, 305th PAF Polish, and the 5th Fallschirmjager Division. All of the displays showed the weapons and equipment used by both Allied and Axis units. □



*An OT-18 restored to look like WWII German Sd. Kfz-251*



*The crowds wandering through living history*

## What's New at MAM?

by David Hunt

For those regular visitors you may have noticed we have two new staff members working at the Museum. A familiar face, Shane Kaufman, returned to work at the Fighter Factory. We are, also, pleased to welcome Don Siemieniak, as our new facility manager. Don joined MAM in May and has an impressive background which includes over 30 years in the U.S. Navy. Our other new staff member, Angela Snow, hired in April and brings a wealth of retail knowledge to the Museum's store.

Our most colorful acquisition has been the eagerly awaited British open-top, double-decker bus. Made by British Leyland in 1962 it is a vintage Routemaster. The bus was originally titled in Eng-

land and then later transferred to Scotland as part of the Edinburgh City and Castle tour. After being painted with the MAM logo and planes, the Routemaster will run a regular bus-tour service from Virginia Beach's 24th Street and Atlantic to the Museum. The bus will also be available for special events.

The new planes will be hanging out at MAM. In future issues of the newsletters, we will give more details on new planes that have been added to the collection and are now on display at the Museum. We will also have more exciting additions arriving in the coming months. □



*The museum's new 1962 Routemaster, British open-top, double-decker bus*



*WACO YMF-5 89 Classic replica based on the 1935 model.*



*General Motors Wildcat FM-2 1944*



*FOKKER Dr 1 Tri motor WWI replica*



*Ryan PT-22 WWII Trainer*

## Hangar Happenings

by Debi Ernest

Spring was in full bloom at the museum and packed with events. We greeted summer with “Flags and Flight” day on June 27th. The American Legion, 2nd District, performed a flag disposal ceremony, usually done at the site of an American Legion Post. Visitors were encouraged to bring their tattered U.S. flags for proper disposal. Afterwards, the museum flew it’s P-40. The Boy Scouts were also in attendance, helping to shred the flags before burning. Special thanks goes to George Lutz and Tom Leisher for displaying the Honor and Remember Flag and explaining its meaning. The Honor and Remember organization’s mission is to create, establish and promote a nationally recognized flag that would fly continuously as a visible reminder to all Americans of the lives lost in defense of our national freedoms. All Military lives lost not only in action but also in service, from our nation’s inception. Also, thank you to Gary Comper for the entertainment.

### Other events in May and June included:

Bitton/Wagner Wedding Reception \* Ron Villanueva Baptism Reception \* Tidewater Chapter of the Air Force Association’s Heritage Aviation Gala \* Virginia Beach Crime Solvers Pig Pickin fundraiser \* Stihl Banquet \* Hampton Roads Association of Naval Aviation Banquet \* Hornet International Conference

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## Upcoming Events

**September 19 & 20** – Radio Controlled Warbirds over the Beach and Glider days. Calling all radio controlled warplane pilots, sign up to participate. For more information go to [www.MilitaryAviationMuseum.org](http://www.MilitaryAviationMuseum.org)

**September 26** – Tidewater Wings and Wheels – The Tidewater Region of the Antique Automobile Club of America will hold its 36th Annual Wings and Wheels Show from 8 am until 4 pm. Come see antique, classic, hot rod, modified and special interest vehicles.

**October 3** – Halos and Heroes fundraiser benefitting Air Compassion for Veterans, provides medically-related air transportation at no cost to troops, veterans and their families affected by military deployment in Operation Iraqi Freedom and Enduring Freedom.

**November 27, 28, 29** - Trains and Planes – Model Train Show. The museum will be packed with model train enthusiasts displaying all types. It will be a fun way to kick off the holiday season with Santa flying in on Saturday the 28th.

**December 5** - It’s one big Christmas Party! Does your company, organization or group have an annual Christmas party? Why not have it here, guarantee it won’t be like any other Christmas party you have had before. The big band sounds of the Terry Chesson Orchestra will be playing, great food and your own section. More details to follow soon, sign up for the email updates.

For more detailed information on these events and others go to the museum website. Sign up to get email updates. Now we are also on Facebook – so become a friend and keep up on what’s going on. Are you into Twitter? We are too, get up to minute information and follow our tweets.



## The Museum Now Has 24-Hour Live Video Online!

Please visit the museum's website at [www.militaryaviationmuseum.org](http://www.militaryaviationmuseum.org), click on the Video link in the top right corner anytime to see one of four different views of the museum including; the Navy Hangar, the Army Air Corps Hangar, an outside westbound view and and eastbound view.

- Navy Hangar- ~ Naval aircraft from the Second World War including the Korean War era.
  - Army Air Corps Hangar ~ Allied and axis Air Force aircraft from World War One and through World War Two
  - Westbound view ~ Outside the hangar toward the West and toward the cross wind runway
  - Eastbound view ~ Eastbound view of the tarmac and mile long turf runway
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