Editorial

A New Year, A New Start, A New Newsletter

It's been a while since the last Plane Talk War Eagles Air Museum newsletter appeared. Actually, it's been about two years. The reasons are many, but mainly involve the lack of a staffer or volunteer able to commit the time and effort to what is, if done right, a fairly major undertaking. Publication of this issue marks the first step in the rejuvenation of the newsletter.

We're restarting small—this issue is eight pages long, with lots of pictures. It may grow to 12 pages, or even more. We think the timing is more important than the size. We plan to bring it to you regularly, four times a year, every quarter, like clockwork. We’ll include features of interest to a variety of readers, and try to make sure each issue offers something for everyone. For example, each newsletter will include the history of one of the Museum's aircraft, like the Hawker Sea Fury story in this issue. Profiles of staff members and volunteers will help you put a face to the Museum’s activities. We’ll report the latest status of Museum projects, such as aircraft restorations or new acquisitions. But most of all, we hope to offer an interesting, informative and useful publication that you will look forward to reading.

‘Til next time—enjoy.

Featured Aircraft

The Hawker Sea Fury was the British Royal Navy’s last piston-engined fighter. Although developed during World War II, it did not see operational service until after the War. Many consider it the fastest piston-engined aircraft ever built.

The Sea Fury owes much of its design to a navigational error. In June 1942, Luftwaffe pilot Oberleutnant Arnim Faber landed his Focke-Wulf FW-190A-3 at RAF Pembrey, apparently thinking he was at a Luftwaffe coastal airfield. Quickly pouncing on this intact example of the bothersome German fighter, the British used their windfall to good advantage. Specification F.6/42, for a

Featured Aircraft (Continued on page 2)
From The Director

Welcome to the War Eagles Air Museum newsletter. We hope you'll read it from cover to cover, and that you find it interesting. As the article on Page 4 explains, one of our goals for the future is to reinvigorate the Museum's volunteer program. Volunteers play a key role in the operation. We appreciate all they've done, and continue to do, in preserving, maintaining and interpreting the examples of “living” aviation history in our hangar. We’re developing ways to better match up volunteers’ interests and Museum needs. Look for more details on this “new” volunteer program in future newsletters.

We’re also trying to figure out how to boost admissions and memberships, which have held steady or even declined slightly, in the last few years. The Museum’s unique collection of flightworthy aircraft and roadworthy automobiles deserves to be better known. A typical visitor comment is, “Wow, what a great place! We didn’t even know you were here!” As we consider ways to “get the word out,” please tell a friend about us, or pass on this newsletter. We look forward to seeing you at the Museum soon.

Skip Trammell

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New high-performance fighter, was issued shortly thereafter, and incorporated lessons that the “boffins” learned from their examination of Faber’s aircraft.

At the time, Hawker Aircraft’s chief engineer Sydney Camm and his team were developing a lighter, smaller version of the venerable Tempest. In January 1943, Hawker management decided to revise this design to meet the requirements of Specification F.6/42. The project was then called the Tempest Light Fighter, or Centaurus. Two months later, the Government wrote specification F.2/43 specifically for the Hawker project. In April 1943, Camm realized that, with a few minor changes and an engine upgrade, the F.2/43 project aircraft could also meet Royal Navy Specification N.7/43 for a carrier-based interceptor. So the Royal Navy’s requirements were combined in Specification F.2/43. After Hawker decided to abandon the land-based version of the Tempest Light Fighter to concentrate on the Royal Navy’s requirements, the resulting aircraft was named Sea Fury.

With a Royal Navy contract for 200 Sea Furies soon in hand, Hawker began to bend tin. The first Sea Fury prototype, SR661, flew on February 21, 1945, behind a Bristol Centaurus XII engine with a four-bladed propeller. The second, fully “navalized” prototype, SR666, had a Centaurus XV, a five-bladed prop and folding wings. SR661 took part in naval fighter suitability and deck landing tests beginning in May 1945, and was still in test when Japan surrendered in August. With the end of the War, the Royal Navy cut its Sea Fury order in half.

The first production Sea Fury, a Mk. X, flew on September 7, 1946. After deck trials aboard HMS Victorious, the Royal Navy approved the aircraft for carrier use in the Spring of 1947, and soon equipped five Fleet Air Arm squadrons. The Mk. X was followed by the Mk. XI fighter-bomber, of which Hawker eventually delivered 615 to the Royal Navy. It was the Fleet Air Arm’s principal single-seat fighter until the jet-powered Sea Hawk joined the Fleet in 1953.

Sea Furies served extensively in the Korean War, operating from Royal Navy carriers HMS Glory, HMS Ocean and HMS Theseus, and Au-

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First Sea Fury Prototype, SR661, in 1944.
stralian carrier HMAS Sydney. They usually paired with Fairey Fireflies for ground attack missions. The Sea Fury excelled in this role, often proving superior to the enemy’s modern jets. For example, on August 9, 1952, Royal Navy Lieutenant “Hoagy” Carmichael, flying a Sea Fury of HMS Ocean’s 802 Squadron, shot down a Soviet-built North Korean Mikoyan-Gurevich MiG-15, marking the first such kill by a piston-engined fighter, and the only air-to-air kill by a British pilot flying a British aircraft in the Korean War.

The Royal Navy disbanded its last Sea Fury squadron in 1955, but these popular, versatile aircraft continued to fly for years elsewhere. Canada, Holland, Australia, Iraq and other countries also used this high-performance Hawker aircraft.

Today, many of these historically significant aircraft survive around the world. Recent estimates range to over 68, with about 43 of these airworthy as of 2000. The War Eagles Air Museum’s K-253 Magnificent Obsession is one of these.

Magnificent Obsession is not properly called a Sea Fury; more accurately, it is just a Fury, although the sign placed next to the aircraft in the Museum includes both names. This aircraft, delivered to the Iraqi Air Force on November 21, 1949, is one of 55 “Baghdad Furies.” For the Iraqi order, Hawker built a “de-navalized” Sea Fury that lacked a tail hook, folding wings and other naval equipment. Iraq used these fighters until well into the 1970s, when a couple of enterprising warbird collectors bought Iraq’s remaining 24 Furies and all spares and shipped them to Florida. Four of these ex-Iraqi Furies made their way to Australian warbird collector Guido Zuccoli. Iraqi Air Force Fury number 253 eventually ended up in the hands of Ted Allen, a Queensland earthmoving contractor. He restored the machine and painted it in Royal Australian Navy colors, including black-and-white “invasion stripes” as sported by Sea Furies flying off HMAS Sydney in the Korean War. Its Australian Civil Aviation Authority registration number was VH-HFA.

The first record of this aircraft in the War Eagles Air Museum archives is on June 8, 1984, when a logbook entry documents a major inspection by Darwin General Aviation Pty., Ltd, in Winnellie, Northern Territories, Australia. Estimated Total-Time-In-Service (TTIS) at that time was 2,500 hours—whether or not this corresponds to the actual hours accumulated in the Iraqi Air Force is unknown. Two weeks later, on June 21, the Australian government issued a permit to fly. VH-HFA logged just over another 100 hours in Australian skies until her next inspection on August 15, 1988. Shortly afterwards, in October 1988, the aircraft was disassembled in Darwin and shipped to Long Beach, California.

There, on March 14, 1989, the reassembled aircraft was registered to John MacGuire. On May 19, the first flight since arrival in the States took place at Chino, California, and the aircraft later flew in the Chino Air Show. After that, the logbook is blank. Long-time War Eagles volunteers recall that the Fury arrived at Santa Teresa Airport in 1989, piloted by John Mazzala of Chino. After a flyover for aerial photographs, Magnificent Obsession landed and joined the Museum’s warbird lineup.

Call for Volunteers

Are you tired of being a couch potato? Would you like to do something new, interesting and educational? Do you like to be around old airplanes and motorcars? Are you an active or former military pilot with stories to tell and experiences to share?

Then come on out and volunteer at War Eagles Air Museum. With the Museum’s collection of nearly 30 aircraft and over 40 automobiles, most of which are flyable/drivable, there is always something for dedicated and motivated volunteers to do. If this sounds like fun to you, talk to Guy, Terry or Skip and find out how you can become a part of one of the Southwest’s premier aviation museums.
Volunteer Program Rejuvenation

Pitching in to help out in all areas of operations, the War Eagles Air Museum’s volunteers are an essential part of the organization. Thanks to the many talented and dedicated volunteers who selflessly spend their time and energy on any jobs that need to be done, the Museum can offer visitors a much more exciting and educational experience than would otherwise be possible.

There is no way to overstate the importance of volunteers in maintaining the Museum’s reputation as a high-profile regional attraction, a “must-see” stop for visitors to El Paso and southern New Mexico, and a destination in its own right. In each future issue, we’ll profile one of the volunteers. But first, here’s some news about ways we’re working on to improve and enhance the value of our volunteers and their contributions.

Over the last several years, the number of active Museum volunteers has declined. One of the reasons for this is undoubtedly because, due to skyrocketing insurance costs and other reasons, the Museum’s aircraft no longer regularly fly, thus removing a strong motivation for volunteering. Those volunteers who still participate, even without the monthly airshows, are particularly dedicated and especially appreciated.

The skills and interests of the volunteer cadre vary widely. Some prefer to work in the Gift Shop. Others like to lead personalized tours, or shepherd large groups of schoolchildren through the hangar. Still others feel at home working in the library or the archives, sorting and cataloging the Museum’s extensive holdings of historical aviation material. Some are willing and able to lend a hand in the Maintenance Shop to help repair an aircraft or participate in a restoration project.

Regardless of a volunteer’s specific interests and expertise, more than enough things need to be done at the Museum to keep everyone busy.

What’s missing from the equation is an up-to-date, detailed list of exactly what those things are that need to be done. That’s where the new volunteer program “rejuvenation” comes in.

This scheme, which we hope to put in place by summer, is an attempt to match up volunteers with Museum tasks. If it works, a volunteer will be able to come into the Museum, take a quick look at a listing of the tasks that someone needs to do, find out which of those tasks other volunteers or staffers have already done, then pick one that’s “open” and go off and do it. Not only will this assure that what needs to be done gets done, it will also hopefully increase everyone’s sense of satisfaction by showing how their contributions fit into the larger picture.

Another idea for matching up volunteer interests and Museum tasks involves reinstating the Crew Chief or “Adopt-a-Plane” program that some folks remember, fondly or otherwise, from years ago. A Crew Chief or Aircraft Adopter would be responsible for dusting his or her aircraft, swabbing up oil leaks, keeping the tires properly inflated, etc.

A similar program could apply to the Museum’s automobiles. There are more automobiles in the collection than aircraft, and nearly all of them need to be driven regularly. How about a system where an interested volunteer, after a short familiarization session, could “sign out” an automobile due for a drive and take it for a spin up and down the taxiway? Would this be a good way to maintain or increase the level of volunteer participation while helping to keep the Museum’s collection in tip-top condition?

If you have any ideas about other ways to improve the experience of volunteering at the Museum, let Skip or Terry know.

Hall of Fame Inductees

At its annual banquet on November 9, 2002, the El Paso Aviation Association inducted into the El Paso Aviation Hall of Fame two local aviators with ties to the Southwest and to War Eagles Air Museum. The inductees were Marion S. “Jack” Bell and Major General Franklin A. Nichols, USAF, Retired (posthumously).

Jack Bell, a War Eagles Air Museum volunteer and member of the Board of Directors, was a U.S. Marine Corps pilot in World War II. He flew TBM Avengers (the General Motors-built version of Grumman’s TBF-1) off the U.S.S. Cape Gloucester on patrols and shipping strikes in the East China Sea. After the war, he flew P-51D Mustangs in the Colorado Air National Guard. Since 1983, he has flown with Skytypers of New York. In 1987, Mr. Bell retired as President of Phelps Dodge Refining Company and Phelps Dodge Copper Products. Mr. Bell is a member of the EPAA and the El Paso Daedalian Flight, an organization of ex-military pilots.

General Nichols was at Wheeler Field, Hawaii, in 1941 when the Japanese attacked Pearl Harbor. In the war, he flew Curtiss P-40E Warhawks with the 7th Pursuit Squadron in New Guinea, and later was the Commander of the 431st Pursuit Squadron, flying Lockheed P-38 Lightnings. He was a WW II ace, scoring five confirmed kills and four probables in 175 missions. His Air Force career included service in Viet Nam, for which he received numerous decorations. At the time of his death on September 16, 2002, General Nichols was also a member of the Daedalian Flight. General Nichols’ Hall of Fame induction plaque and other memorabilia are on display at War Eagles Air Museum near the P-38L.
Museum Collections

If you’re not that familiar with War Eagles Air Museum, or if it’s been a while since you last visited, you may be surprised at the extent of the aircraft and automobile collections housed in the Santa Teresa hangar. As of early 2003, the Museum contains 30 aircraft, mainly of World War II and Korean War vintage and most of them in flyable condition, and 43 land vehicles (automobiles, motorcycles, trucks and military vehicles), the majority of them drivable. Here, in conveniently alphabetized form, are lists of the aircraft and motor vehicle collections:

Aircraft

- Canadair T–33 Silver Star
- Cessna 140A
- Convair L–13A
- Curtiss P–40 Warhawk
- de Havilland DH 82A Tiger Moth
- Douglas A–26C Invader
- Douglas DC–3
- Fieseler Fi–156 Storch
- Great Lakes 2T–IA Sport Trainer
- Hawker Siddeley Sea Fury
- Lockheed P–38L Lightning
- Mikoyan–Gurevich MiG–15 Fagot
- Mikoyan–Gurevich MiG–15UTi Midget
- Mikoyan–Gurevich MiG–21PFM Fishbed F
- North American AT–6F Texan
- North American F–86 Sabre Mk–VI
- North American FJ–2 Fury
- North American P–51D Mustang
- North American TF–51 Mustang
- North American T–28 Trojan
- Northrop T–38B Talon
- Piper J–3 CUB
- Republic F–84F Thunderstreak
- Stinson AT–19 Reliant Mk I
- Tupolev Tu–2
- Vought F4U–4 Corsair
- Vought A7–E Corsair II
- Vultee BT–13 Valiant

Motor Vehicles

- American Motors Rambler (1960)
- Aston Martin DB4 (1962)
- Auburn Model 851 Convertible Boattail Speedster (1935)
- Buick Special (1950)
- Cadillac 2-Door Coupe Fastback (1942)
- Cadillac Sedan (1956)
- Cadillac Biarritz Convertible (1958)
- Cadillac Eldorado Convertible (1963)
- Cadillac Eldorado Convertible (1975)
- Chevrolet 2-Door Coupe (1932)
- Chevrolet 4-Door Sedan (1937)
- Chevrolet Corvair Monza (1963)
- Ford Model "T" Touring Car (1927½)
- Ford Model "A" Touring Car (1929)
- Ford Model "A" Roadster with Rumble Seat (1930)
- Ford F–100 Pickup (1955)
- Ford Thunderbird 4-Door (1967)
- Honda 600 GT Coupe (1972)
- Jaguar E-Type Series II Roadster (1970)
- Lincoln Continental Mark 4 (1973)
- Maserati Mistral Spyder (1967)
- Morris Minor 1000 Coupe (1958)
- Oldsmobile Custom 8 Cruiser (1908)
- Oldsmobile (1940)
- Overland (1908)
- Packard Super 8 Convertible (1936)
- Porsche 912 (1968)
- Rolls Royce Silver Cloud II (1960)
- SAAB Sonnet II (1972)
- Volkswagen "Beetle" Convertible (1956)
- Volkswagen "Beetle" (1962)
- Volvo 122S Coupe (1965)
- BMW R5 Motorcycle (1936)
- BMW R60 Motorcycle w/ Sidecar (1958)
- Honda 125 “Suitcase Cycle” (1974)
- Moto Guzzi Motorcycle (1972)
- Buick Buick 8 Sedan (Army) (1937)
- Dodge M37 ¾ Ton Truck (Navy)
- M–163 Vulcan self-propelled 20mm gun system
- Ford Chassis Searchlight Truck (Army) (1959)
- Willys M38 Jeep (Army)
- Willys M38 Jeep (Marines)
- Truck, Crash, Fire/Rescue

Humor Corner

Shamelessly plagiarized from the CAF Arizona Wing Newsletter, January 2003, and slightly edited.

Are Turbines Ruining Aviation?

We gotta get rid of these turbines—they are ruining aviation. We need to go back to big round engines.

Anybody can start a turbine. You just need to move a switch from “OFF” to “START,” and then remember to move it to “ON” after a while. My PC is harder to start.

Cranking a round engine requires skill, finesses and style. On some planes, the pilots aren’t even allowed to do it. Turbines start by whining for a while, then they give a small ladylike “poot” and start whining louder. Round engines give a big satisfying rattle-rattle, click-click, BANG, more rattles, another BANG, a big macho fart or two, more clicks, a lot of smoke and finally a serious low-pitched roar.

When you start a round engine, your mind is engaged and you can concentrate on the flight ahead. Starting a turbine is like flicking on a ceiling fan—useful, but hardly exciting. Turbines don’t break often enough, leading to aircrew boredom, complacency and inattention. A round engine at speed looks and sounds like it’s going to blow at any minute. This helps concentrate the mind. Turbines don’t have enough control levers to keep a pilot’s attention. There is nothing to fiddle with during long flights. Turbines smell like a Boy Scout camp full of Coleman lanterns. Round-engined airplanes smell like God intended flying machines to smell.

Uh, oh, I think I hear the nurse coming down the hall. I gotta go...

- Ex-round-engine driver
Holiday Party 2002
Membership Application
War Eagles Air Museum

The War Eagles Air Museum collects, restores and displays historic aircraft, mainly from the World War II and Korean War time periods, to encourage awareness and appreciation of military aviation history through exhibits, educational programs and special events. The Museum is a non-profit organization as defined by the United States Internal Revenue Code. Operated by staff and volunteers, the Museum is supported by funds obtained from admissions, memberships and contributions. All dues and contributions are tax deductible to the extent permitted by law.

War Eagles Air Museum memberships are available in six categories. All memberships include the following privileges:

- Free admission to the Museum and all exhibits.
- Free admission to all special events.
- 10% general admission discounts for all guests of a current Member.
- 10% discount on all Member purchases in the Gift Shop.

In addition, a Family Membership includes free admission for spouses and all children under 18 living at home.

To become a Member of the War Eagles Air Museum, please fill in the information requested below and note the category of membership you desire. Mail this form, along with a check payable to “War Eagles Air Museum” for the annual fee shown, to:

War Eagles Air Museum
8012 Airport Road
Santa Teresa, NM 88008

NAME (Please print)___________________________________________________
STREET ____________________________________________________________
CITY ______________________________ STATE _____ ZIP ________—______
TELEPHONE (Optional) _____—_____—____________
E-MAIL ADDRESS (Optional) ___________________________________________

Will be kept private and used only for War Eagles Air Museum mailings.

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War Eagles Air Museum gratefully acknowledges the following organizations for their 2002 support of the Corporate Youth Sponsors Program. Because of this support, student groups in the El Paso/Juarez area can learn about the contributions of military aviation to America’s history. For many students, visits to the Museum made possible by donations from these sponsors kindle interest in aviation and related fields as possible career choices.

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Project Status

The Museum’s latest restoration, a rare Soviet Tupolev Tu-2 twin-engined bomber rescued from China, is finished. The aircraft sits proudly on the ramp just outside the Gift Shop. First flown in October 1940, Tu-2s entered service with the VVS (Voenno Vozdushnie Sili, or Military Air Force) in August 1942 and remained basically unchanged through the end of WW II. They served in the Soviet Union through 1950, were used by North Korea in the Korean War, and continued to fly into the 1960s in the Peoples’ Republic of China and other communist countries.

The last of the five P-51 Mustangs in John MacGuire’s collection is in the shop being restored as an F-6D photo-reconnaissance variant. Dan Taylor and Carl Wright work on it whenever they have a chance, building up the three-camera-bay fuselage from scratch. Cal-Pacific, in Salinas, California, is restoring the wings, and Vintage V-12s in Tehachapi, California, is working on the big 12-cylinder Packard engine. There’s no schedule for completion, but work is progressing steadily.

After a years-long restoration in Arizona, War Eagles’ 1962 Aston Martin DB4 is finished. The stunning blue coupe will join the automobile lineup in the hangar extension this spring. One of the most highly regarded cars ever made at the Newport Pagnell, England, factory, the DB4 is often considered to be the best all-around GT car of its era. Its 260-hp, 3.7-liter, in-line six-cylinder engine gave it great performance. In 1964, Aston Martin dropped a more powerful four-liter engine into the DB4 body and created the famed DB5, “star” of the James Bond movies Goldfinger and Thunderball.

Cosmetic restoration of the static-display, engineless Vought A7-E Corsair II continues outside the Maintenance Hangar.

This Quarter in Aviation History

January 6, 1979—General Dynamics delivers the first production F-16A Fighting Falcon to the 388th Tactical Fighter Wing at Hill Air Force Base, Utah.

February 12, 1959—the Air Force retires its last Convair B-36 Peacemaker strategic bomber.

January 16, 1945—Allied aircraft, after being grounded for days by bad weather and fog, finally take to the air and break the back of the German offensive known as the Battle of the Bulge.

March 20, 1922—the U.S. Navy commissions the USS Langley, its first aircraft carrier.

For more information, visit: www.war-eagles-air-museum.com