



# WARBIRD FLYER

Tim Lachenmayer Photo



★★★EAA Warbirds Squadron 2 Newsletter★★★



## CO's Cockpit: Life Cycle of the Warbird Owner

By Greg Anders

I am wise enough to know that it isn't your background, it's who else is in the room when you start trying to claim you are an "experienced" warbird pilot and owner. And ten years of warbird ownership is a deep well of experience to some, and a shallow puddle to others, and that's where I am. But as an observer, I have been seeing a relatively consistent life cycle of the warbird owner and have made some observations. Since it is a goal of the Cascade Warbirds to meld warbird enthusiasts at all levels within this cycle, I think it is important to understand ownership and the ownership life cycle.

Let me start by defining "ownership" because there are several forms of it. The obvious form that we tend to sometimes get fixated on is the form whereby someone has legal ownership in the form of the title. But that is not the only form. There is a lingering "ownership" of having had your name on the title. There is the "ownership" of being a designated crew chief on a warbird. There is the "ownership" of being the mechanic on a warbird. There is the "ownership" of being the marshaller of a warbird. There is the "ownership" of being the one who simply cleans the windscreen for the pilot. And there is the "ownership" of being the pilot. I dare say there is even the "ownership" of simply loving to see them, flying or static.

Granted, some of these forms of ownership are a little more ephemeral than having your name on the title, but in some cases, they are less ephemeral. I don't have the privilege of holding the title on "Impatient Virgin?" but having had the privilege of flying her, I will always feel some "ownership" of her. Just like Paul and Crash will always have some ownership of the Blue Lady. And that is an ownership that can never be sold.

While I think the cycle can be germane to all forms of ownership, I would like to focus on the common form of ownership that has your name on the title since that is the

main form of ownership that gets stuck with the bill, and takes the primary financial risk every time it flies. These two elements are the primary drivers to "aging" through the ownership life cycle. Surprisingly, the first three phases occur before you even have your name on the title.

The first phase is very common and usually the most ephemeral form of "ownership." It is the "Lust" phase. We all get it. I am stricken by it with almost every warbird I see. "Boy, I'd love to own that one." Then our eye wanders down the ramp fifty feet and our lust is replaced. "Wow, that is sweet, I'd sure look good sitting in that one."

Sometimes we actually put our gray matter to work and step beyond lust and get into "Courtship". This isn't really us courting the planes, it is the planes courting us. "What's the right one for me?" "What can I afford?" "How much is a 'good' one?" "How much fuel does it burn?" "What's an annual cost?" "Do I need to keep it in a hangar?" "How much would insurance cost?" "Do I look good sitting in it?" If anyone can find a warbird that flies like the P-51, can take friends and cargo while landing on both land and water like an Albatross, burns fuel like a Chipmunk, is as easy to maintain as a Honda, and costs as much as a Cub, let me know, I want one. Sometimes we find a match between financial ability and lust and we decide we can make this happen. Usually the decision disregards the old saw that if it flies or floats, it's cheaper to rent it, and lust gets the better of us again.

Next is the acquisition phase. The major step of the acquisition phase is the first step of commitment: picking one to buy. We must get beyond wanting them all and, for example, have decided that we want a T-6. Into "Trade-A-Plane" and we start looking for the perfect example, see the prices of the perfect example, then start looking for one in good mechanical shape but needing a little TLC. Hopefully we don't go to looking for a project as a financial decision

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★★★ Cascade Warbirds ★★★  
EAA Squadron 2 Newsletter

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This is the official publication of the Cascade Warbirds EAA Squadron 2. As such, it serves principally as a communications vehicle for our membership. The views and opinions expressed in this newsletter are those of the individual writers, and do not constitute the official position of the Squadron or the EAA. As members you are encouraged to contribute articles, comments, squadron news, and anything else involving Warbirds or associated subjects to the editor. He will gladly work with you and see that your material is put into print and included in the newsletter, no matter your level of writing experience or computer expertise.

Articles can be submitted via e-mail, to the editor's address. Deadline for submission of articles is generally two weeks prior to the next publication, but earlier is always appreciated!

## Business Office:

1066 Yates Road  
Oak Harbor, WA 98277

## Cascade Warbirds Homepage:

[www.cascadewarbirds.org](http://www.cascadewarbirds.org)

## Editorial E-Mail:

[editor@cascadewarbirds.org](mailto:editor@cascadewarbirds.org)

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## Editors Page

By Frank Almstead

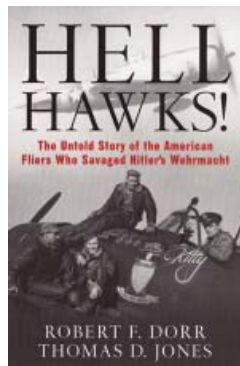
Congratulations to everyone! Welcome to the greatest edition of the *Warbird Flyer* yet. It is 12 full pages of outstanding content submitted by several members of our squadron.

The purpose of the *Warbird Flyer* has always been to educate, motivate and keep the squadron members informed on a variety of topics. It is my hope that by reading *Warbird Flyer* your enthusiasm will grow and it will give you a reason to continue contributing to the squadron. This is a newsletter you can be proud of.

In other news, I will be leading the nominating committee for our 2010 slate. I believe that this is one of the most important committees of the Board, and as such, I'd like to start earlier rather than later. My intention is to form a committee that represents a cross section of our membership and drive some healthy discussion. Of course this will require some meetings. If you are interested in participating please drop me an e-mail and let me know before 30Apr09. ✪  
Let's hear it at [editor@cascadewarbirds.org](mailto:editor@cascadewarbirds.org)

## Media Review

By John Clark



### **Hell Hawks!: The Untold Story of the American Fliers Who Savaged Hitler's Wehrmacht**

Authors: Robert F. Dorr and Thomas D. Jones

Hardcover - 336 pages (June 15, 2008)

Zenith Press; ISBN 0760329184

Chronicling the exploits of one of the many operational P-47 Thunderbolt squadrons in the European theater of WWII, the authors take the reader on a true flying and fighting adventure.

The three squadrons in the 9th AF's 365th Fighter Group, aka "Hell Hawks," flew the P-47 from mid-1943 until the end of the war in Europe. Their primary job was to follow and protect the Allied ground troop advances from the coast of France all the way into the Ruhr.

Fighter groups like this received little glory from the press but garnered the accolades of the troops they protected. With crushing accuracy, the pilots rained tons of bombs and hundreds of thousands of rounds into the German forces attempting to engage the Allied troops. The Thunderbolt was ideally suited to this mission and interviewed German troops attest to their effectiveness in the ground attack role. Squadron ground crews are given special attention in chapter seven. It

was their dedication to duty in the outdoor revetments that made it possible for the pilots of the 365th to continue their fight.

The Hell Hawks were not limited to ground pounding and faced many aerial engagements. Often times, the 365th found themselves facing dozens of German Bf 109's, FW 190's and even the Me 262 later in the war. Chapter nine captures a large aerial battle from first contact through the devolvement into well-told individual combats. Not all Hell Hawk pilots made it through battle unscathed. Enemy fighters and flak took their toll, leaving several pilots to crash land or bail out. Several even made it back from occupied territory and their harrowing ordeals are revealed in great detail.

In almost a bonus fashion, the authors study Allied strategy and tactics at the operational level as it affected the 365th. Insights are given as to how the command structure of an everyday US squadron worked during the war.

With "Hell Hawks!" Dorr and Jones created a book that deserves to be on every WWII history buff's bookshelf. ✪

# Life Cycle of the Warbird Owner (Continued)

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Continued from page 1

because if you do, call me and we'll talk. Rarely is a project cheaper in the end.

As in the case of my first Warbird purchase, I found a T-6 in good mechanical shape, but needing paint. I have always been very happy with this decision as it afforded me the opportunity to paint it in the scheme I wanted, without the agony of painting over a good paint job.

Once it is found, the actual purchase is a very technical process with some basic due diligence steps such as reviewing the status of the title, having a mechanic check out the bird, and making sure you get the title when the seller gets your money. Do not go this road alone on your first outing especially. Since the T-6 was my first Warbird purchase, I used many friends and professionals to get me through the acquisition process.

We've closed on the aircraft, had our checkout and have brought our airplane home. Now we are in the first phase of true ownership and boy are we excited!!! We want everyone to see our plane!! Is there an Air Show this weekend we can take it to and show it off?? Sure I'll pay for the gas, pay admission for the show, the hotel room and the car. I just want people to admire how GOOD I look sitting in my new Warbird!!

The life span of this phase is directly proportionate to how closely we (or our spouses) review the credit card bill every month. If you live in a world of limited budgets for flying, you begin to wonder whether some stranger thinking you look good in your plane is worth the gas, hotel and car.

And you start to drift into the next cycle of Warbird ownership. First, you impose the "Morley Rule" and refuse to pay admission to bring your warbird to a show because you'll be darned if you'll pay to let them have your bird in their show. Then you start asking if the Air Show is giving gas for you bringing your airplane and grumble if they don't, but you still go. Then you start asking questions like "Who is covering the hotel?" "How do I get around when I get there?" "Do I have to pay for a rental car?"

If you are lucky, or bought a very low operating cost warbird, or you never have to replace an engine; you may never have to come to the realization that the time period that you are able to afford to hold the title to your Warbird is dependant on your ability to control cost. And, if you are hoping to extend the time you hold the title to your Warbird, you transition into the next phase of warbird ownership. This phase is fundamentally characterized by the title holder being a little frustrated that of all the people enjoying your warbird, you're the only one that has to pay the bills. And you realize that the cost of fuel is only a small part of the cost of running any aircraft. And, eventually, even the Air Shows, Fly-ins, etc. that fill you up with gas begin to

lose their luster as you realize that even those are expensive weekends. May the fun you derive always exceed the cost, but I guarantee there will come a day when you arrive at an Air Show and you are treated like you are more annoyance than attraction, and your Warbird is taken for granted. You will wonder whether it is worth it.

Hopefully, the title holder doesn't fall bitterly into the next phase of Warbird ownership life cycle. That phase is characterized by frustration that while everyone else is enjoying your warbird without the bills, you are the one that pays the bill to keep your warbird flying. Some folks in this phase depart the public flying scene and their Warbirds are seldom, if ever, seen at Air Shows and Fly-ins. Some chalk their Warbird ownership experience up to a good run and sell their Warbirds. Either way, the non-title "owners" of that bird have lost their Warbird.

As CO of the Cascade Warbirds, I see it as one of the fundamental responsibilities of the squadron to keep the Warbirds flying within the Cascade Warbird organization. I equate this responsibility to breathing, because if there are no Warbirds, what's the point of our organization? If you don't breathe, walking, running and dancing are not options for you.

Our squadron is blessed with a strong group of title holders that are all in varying stages of the ownership life cycle. And they are the life's breath of our squadron. I ask those owners that do not bear the privilege and responsibility of holding the title to respect the effort and expense our title holders endure to keep their warbird flying for you. Without our title holders, we, as a squadron, can kind of "walk" by having our winter meetings. But we certainly can't "run" by having CWB attend a fly-in, and we certainly can't "dance" by doing our squadron fly-by. Education programs, scholarships, honoring our vets, are all forms of walking, running or dancing. None of which we can do without breathing.

One of my primary goals for the squadron is to keep the title holders progressing as slowly as possible along the life cycle of ownership, preserving that "new owner" enthusiasm for as long as possible, and hopefully preventing them from falling into that stage of the life cycle of reclusion from the squadron activities, or sale of their Warbird. If they get there, the Warbird is lost to the squadron.

The Heart of our squadron is camaraderie. Our breath is our aircraft. With the two of them kept in top shape, we can always enjoy another dance.

Sic Tempus Ad Fugit!! 🌟

# Squadron News

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## ALUMINUM OVERCAST RETURNS

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EAA and their B-17G are coming back to Seattle this Spring for what is our largest fund raiser of the year. They'll be here a week this year, flying six full days, and we need your help with the logistics. If you can volunteer a couple of hours, whether for only one day or longer, then get in touch with Doug Owens at [dnowens@qwest.net](mailto:dnowens@qwest.net) and he'll line you up with one of our coordinators. We have staffing needs in the memorabilia sales trailer, escorting folks during the ground tours, and helping with security around the airplane. Your help will be most appreciated. Plus, you may, just maybe, get a chance to fill an otherwise empty seat on one of the flights. Aluminum Overcast will be here from 20 May – 26 May.

## YOUTH SCHOLARSHIPS

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The Squadron has again teamed up with EAA and will be providing scholarships for attendance at EAA's Summer Aviation Camp. The two sessions this year are July 21 thru July 29 and July 31 thru August 8. Both these sessions overlap EAA's AirVenture, so attendees will have a couple days to see the world's largest fly-in. This Air Academy program is for 16 – 18-year-old teens with a passion for or an interest in aviation. You'll stay at the Air Academy Lodge immediately adjacent to the Pioneer Airport and your entire week will have you immersed in all aspects of aviation. You'll even get a flight in an airplane or, if you're really lucky, maybe in a helicopter. For more information about EAA's program, go to [youngeagles.org](http://youngeagles.org) and click on the EAA Youth Programs button.

For a Cascade Warbirds application form to attend this event, contact Pete Jackson at [songbirdt50@aol.com](mailto:songbirdt50@aol.com). You'll have the time of your life.

## FASTEST MOTOR SPORT

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If any of you would like to attend the Reno Air Races this September, there is still room for you in the Squadron's reserved seat box. The price per seat is only \$320 and that includes daily pit passes as well. Get in touch with Fred at [fred@fcsmyth.com](mailto:fred@fcsmyth.com) if you have further questions or to make your reservations. If you've never been, you don't know what you're missing. If you've attended, then you know what it's all about!

## UNCLE FRED WANTS YOU

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To pay your dues, that is. Many thanks to those of you who already have renewed and we're thinking of enlisting your aid to help collect from the others. Dues are still only \$20 and you can send your check to CWB, 1066 Yates Road, Oak Harbor, WA 98277. Have a look at your mailing label to see if you're current.

## RANGE DAY RAFFLE

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Our friends at Puget Sound Military Vehicles Collectors Club are raising money to add some "heavy iron" to their collection. To raise that money, they're raffling a Day at the Range where the winner will have the opportunity to fire military weapons. How about an M40 sniper rifle? Or an AK47? Or an M1 Thompson? The list is three times this long and includes use of the weapons, range fees, shooting instructions and, most importantly, ammunition! Tickets are only \$5 each and you can get yours by contacting Bill High at

[psicylinders@msn.com](mailto:psicylinders@msn.com).

## PLANNING AHEAD

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Come January, 2010, the membership (that means you) will again choose your leaders for the next two years. To that end, the board has selected the Chairman of the Nominating Committee, Frank Almstead. Frank will work to fill the rest of the committee, then they will begin querying our members regarding potential new board members. If you, or someone you know, would be interested in serving our organization, get in touch with Frank at [fns5@verizon.net](mailto:fns5@verizon.net). Remember, if you're not part of the solution, you'll have no room to complain.

## LETTERS

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Do you have an opinion? Is it related to the Squadron or what we do? Would you like to share it with the rest of us? Well, then, take the time to author a missive and send it along to Frank at [editor@cascaedwarbirds.org](mailto:editor@cascaedwarbirds.org). Sometimes there are things other people would like to know, opinions that need expressing, or even questions than can generate useful answers. Don't be shy.

## IT'S FOR SALE!

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What we mean is, if you have something aviation related and would like to peddle it, submit an ad for inclusion in this newsletter. Members of the Squadron (paid-up members, Fred sez) will be able to place classified-style "For Sale" and "Wanted" ads at no cost. Space limitations may apply on occasion, so the Editor will have the final say each issue on what gets in and what doesn't.

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## WELCOME ABOARD

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We're always happy to learn there are folks out there who are appreciative of our efforts and want to join in what we do. Recent new members include these folks who saw the light:

Erika Lofquist Point Roberts, WA  
(she and husband Jesse – also a member - own a TWIN! Navion)

Brian Nosko Surrey, BC  
(he owns a CJ-6A)

David Watson Edmonton, AB  
(he owns a Harvard and a Yak-52)

Jed Keck Port Orchard, WA  
(he owns an Evangel 4500 – look that one up!)

When you see them, say “Hello” and make them feel welcome.

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## CHANGES IN BOARD MEMBERS

There's been some shuffling going on with the makeup of the Board of Directors. Curt Kinchen was chosen to fill the vacancy at Ops O, Dave Desmon moved into the XO slot, Frank Almstead took over the At-Large position to round out the Executive Board and Ron Morrell was selected to fill Frank's old seat. Ron has provided a short bio to introduce himself to the members. The complete list of your Board Members and their contact info can be obtained from the Squadron's web site. We are all grateful to these folks who invest their time to further the aims of the Cascade Warbirds. Thank you.

## RON MORRELL BIOGRAPHY

I started out life as a young boy growing up in Michigan. That takes care of the first 18 years. After graduating from High School in 1978, I took my first airplane ride to a small school in Colorado Springs called USAFA. In spite of my awe of the mountains and high altitude, I managed to graduate in 1982 and begged to get the earliest slot to pilot training that I could...the Air Force complied and I spent 11 lovely months at Columbus AFB in steamy Mississippi. The young military Lt. life didn't kill enough brain cells and I was rewarded by an assignment to the venerable A-10 Warthog. The days of fighter Lead-in and A-10 RTU were fast and furious and then came “Combat Readiness” at Myrtle Beach in South Carolina. My time flying the A-10 started with the 353rd Tactical Fighter Squadron, then my blatant volunteering got me to the 25th Assam Draggins in Suwon, Korea. After my Korean peninsula year, I spent my last 3 years of Hog flying at Eielson AFB in Fairbanks, Alaska.

My flying career did a 90 degree turn in 1989 when the airlines bribed me to start boring holes in the sky and putting up with passengers and other “crewmembers”. I never knew the definition of “crew” until then. The Airline career has consisted of flying the B-727, A-320, DC-10, and presently the A-330. In exchange for being required to fly straight and level for hours at end, I have taken up the mantle of Warbird enthusiast. I have not missed a single Reno Air Race weekend since 1992, I even attended the cancelled 2001 weekend. I started down the path of experimental homebuilder until I came nose to spinner with a CJ-6 in 2002. I have yet to yearn for the hours of bucking rivets on a non-warbird. My CJ and I have attended Sun-n-fun and done the longest cross-country possible while going in a relative straight line and staying with the borders of the United States. My CJ and I flew from Detroit to Florida, to Mississippi, to Oklahoma, to Colorado, to New Mexico, to California, to Oregon, to Paine Field.

Since settling into a life in the Pacific Northwest, I have come to thoroughly enjoy the company and camaraderie of the Cascade Warbirds. The airshows, fly-ins and meetings have exemplified what it means to be involved with the flying, preservation and education that should be the focus of any warbird squadron. Just to be fair to those who keep up the friendly jesting between American warbirds, and warbirds of a foreign design, I am also the Director of the Northwest Region of the Redstar Pilots Association. I look forward to combining the training, enthusiasm and zest for warbird rivalries with both of our groups!

Ron Morrell, “Draggin 23”  
Renton, WA  
Home Airport: Paine Field Hangar 42-19  
Aircraft: Nanchang CJ-6A

# A 50 Year Old True Story: How Crash Crashed

By R.D. "Crash" Williams

On Sept. 21, 1957, 4 people started out from ABQ, NM, to Sioux City, IA, to visit the home office of station KQUE in ABQ. The group consisted of R.D. Williams, his wife Sonya, and Mr. & Mrs. Dave Herman. Herman was the accountant of the station and from the Sioux City area originally. KQUE Radio was owned by a group of businessmen in Iowa. Williams was part owner and General Manager and Williams owned 50% of the 1954 Piper Tri-Pacer they used.

We loaded the four of us in the plane and started out for Iowa to the NE of ABQ. We skirted around Sandia Crest and headed toward Las Vegas, NM, our first check point. Las Vegas would take us about 30 miles out of our way so Williams decided to cut the corner to save time and go over several ridge lines of the Santa de Cristo Mountains. The largest ridge line was approximately 8000 ft with a valley following and then another 8500 ft ridge line. We passed over the first ridge line and into the first valley. It was then the problem started. There was a flow of air that day flowing SW to NE (our route) and this passage of air was like a flowing river. As it flowed over the first ridge and across the valley, it then bounced over

the second ridge and up. So our plane was like a boat in a river. We were being carried across the valley into the second ridge, and without enough altitude or power, we couldn't get out of the flow. As we approached the second ridge I could see that we were not going to clear it, so did what I was taught in flight school by my Air Force flying instructor, Al Graham. I picked a meadow on the side of the hill and tried to get into it. The plane, at that point, was in a stalled condition and sinking. We got into the meadow but were shy about ten pine trees from making it in one piece. We stalled into the trees

and ended up in the meadow, sans one wing. The cockpit was intact but my wife and I went into the instrument panel with our right knees and popped our right hip sockets on both of us. In addition to her hip, my wife had a broken leg with major lacerations and was in a cast and on crutches for 18 months.

The Hermans, in the back, were all right. We ended uphill from a cabin, fully stocked with food, and it was 26 miles from the nearest civilization. Dave Herman walked down to the cabin, about 50 yds away, and got a wheelbarrow to haul Sonya and me to the cabin. He then started walking out to get help. He had walked about a quarter mile when a pick-up truck arrived with a man sent by the owner of the cabin to close the cabin for the year. He took Dave the 26 miles to call for help and

the state police ended up leading an ambulance out of Sante Fe to the scene.

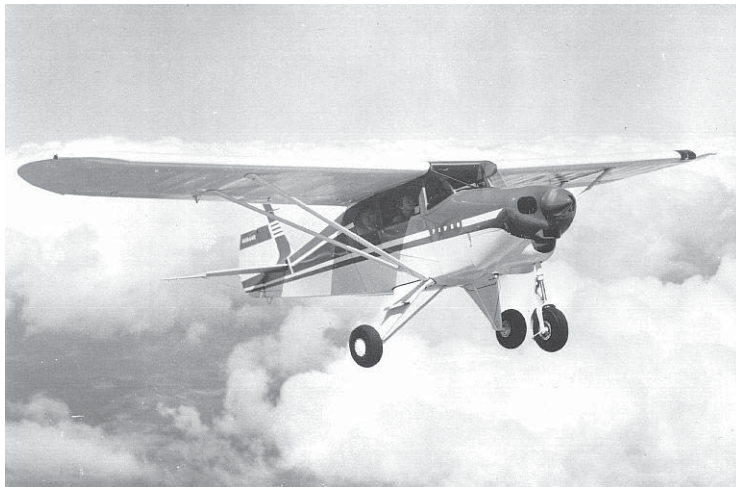
We have thought of the way we were given additional life by our Lord these fifty years and wanted our family and friends to have this brief story of what really happened.

I also want to use this forum to thank my wife, Sonya, for the loving way she has handled this horrible accident.

She could have, very

easily, become a very bitter woman. She has, instead, encouraged my love of flying these fifty years as I accumulated over 15,000 hours flying in the Air National Guard and in later years, ownership of several WWII Warbirds. This, while SHE still has a fear of flying that requires a pill from our doctor to enable her to even fly commercial.

AND SOME SAY THERE'S NO SUCH THING AS GUARDIAN ANGELS? WE KNOW DIFFERENTLY...



A classic shot of a 1954 Tri-Pacer via [www.StinsonFlyer.com](http://www.StinsonFlyer.com)



# Memorable Flights

By Terry Brennan

It's a long way from Oshkosh, Wisconsin to Hollister, California, and the head winds typically associated with a trip west, don't shorten the time in the saddle either. Never mind, I can't think of any place I would rather be than in the PIC seat of the T-34, wherever the flight would take me.

This particular aerial adventure found Dick Tews, Kris Cox, Dave Holt, and me winging our way over the verdant farmlands of Iowa on a perfect day for flying. With fifty miles of visibility, the geometric pattern carved in the earth below by the vast machinery of the food making industry, stretched as far as the eye could see like some giant patch work quilt. A cloudless sky contrasted the smoke trails that we occasionally created for the enjoyment, or at least the curiosity, of those a few thousand feet below.

When Dick advised of his intent, and then pulled out of the formation, none of us gave it much thought or concern enjoying, as we were, the beauty of nature at its best in all quadrants. Dick's voice on the company channel a few minutes later alerted us once again to his presence as he announced that he was about to make a gunnery pass on the group. "Tighten up and hold your positions" he said, as he pointed his nose downward from a high perch, "leading" the rest of us much the same as you would lead a clay pigeon. Down he came with airspeed far greater than that of his friends and formation

partners a thousand or so feet lower than he.

Swooping beneath us at an angle tangential to the formation, the visual experience was overwhelming. With relative movement in three planes of reference, something we experience only rarely in other places, we could only giggle and beg for more. Always one to oblige, Tews continued to "beat up" on us until one of us offered to perform the gunnery run duties.

Now there is no question about it, viewing the run from the flat and level is visually a treat beyond your imagination, but the reference from the aggressor's seat is just as exciting, if not more so. YEE HAWW is about all you can think as the other three pass tangentially above and behind as your dive ends. This is truly a hoot.

The fuel stops arrived much more quickly than we might otherwise have expected as we wove our way across the country, with gunnery run after run, the thrill losing none of its original luster as the miles passed beneath our wings. Throw in the Rocky Mountains for a backdrop and the excitement grew until the final stop of the day put an end to our frolic.

Why do we fly? Some fly because to do so provides a speedy means to get from one place to another. Why do I fly? For many reasons you can be sure, but with friends like mine in a group of '34s, and a long cross-country flight in front of us, getting from here to there ranks well down the list. ✪



(L-R) Dave Holt, Terry Brennan and Dick Tews. Terry Brennan Photo

## CWB Marketplace

### **For Sale: British Auster AOP Mk. 6**

Aircraft built by Auster Taylor Craft Rearsby, England, November 1947. Struck in October 1966. Restoration completed in 1999. A multiple trophy winner.

Contact: Hank Bullock  
16741 NW Countryridge Dr.  
Portland, OR 97229  
(971)-219-9343 cell  
(503)-439-8218 home  
austerpilot@verizon.net

### **For Sale: Dave Bauer T-28 T-Shirts**

Light blue Gildan brand T-shirt with Dave Bauer's T28 on front. No pocket. 100% cotton preshrunk. \$10 for a shirt, includes postage shipped to your home. Send a check along with your size request.

Contact: Kathy Bauer  
94 Cascade Key  
Bellevue, WA 98006  
(425) 269 5777 cell

# Night Flight

By Ed Rombauer

Over a half century ago, cross-country flying, especially night flying, was quite different than it is today. At that time there was no Air Traffic Control system as we know it now, the VOR OMNI range was the latest navigation aid, and most two-way radio communication was limited by the number of crystals in the transmitter. Weather reports and forecasting were not necessarily current, and getting a weather report in a light aircraft meant listening to static on an AM radio while the radio operator on the ground read a sequence report. Many light aircraft of this time were only equipped with an ADF so that you could navigate from one town to another. If you were unlucky, all you had to find your way was a manual DF which increased the pilot's workload considerably. It was in such an airplane that I found myself one night.

On a rainy day in a long ago April, I was talking with a lawyer friend of mine when he mentioned that he was representing a pilot who had been arrested by the State Patrol for putting on an impromptu air show at the Port Angeles airport. The owner, he told me, said that if he could find a pilot he could use his airplane to fly between Seattle and Port Angeles to facilitate representing him. "Would I be interested?" he asked. Other than a sketchy description and an N number my friend knew nothing more about the aircraft – so it was off to Boeing Field to take a look.

As we arrived at the outdoor tie downs, I was expecting to see a cloth covered vintage GA aircraft in run down condition. Imagine my surprise when the airplane turned out to be a very racy looking red and white SNJ, just waiting to be flown. Needless to say, I quickly accepted my friend's offer to fly him in the airplane over to P.A. to see his client. As it had been a few years since I had last flown an SNJ, flying this airplane was like meeting an old friend after a long absence. Over the next few weeks, we made several round trips between Seattle and Port Angeles in an effort to mitigate with the court the charge of reckless flying against the pilot. But alas, pilot Joe Cool was turned into Joe Fool by the county prosecutor. It was ninety days in jail.

The finance company, unable to get their airplane payments from someone in jail, repossessed the airplane and asked if it could be flown to San Francisco. I "reluctantly" said yes. Preparations were made, charts purchased, tanks filled with fuel, a last hour stop at the radio shop to fix the sometimes-it-works old military

VHF radio, and we were ready.

On the day of departure, the old adage "Time to spare, Go by air," was never truer as my lawyer friend (who would ride in the back seat) tried to clear his work schedule, while I spent most of the day at the radio shop trying to get the communications radio to consistently work. As the sun disappeared in the West and the cloud layer started to form with its watery content, I knew that if there was any chance of taking off ahead of the rain it had to be done that night. I told my passenger that all we had to do was fly to Portland, wait for daylight, and all would be well. And so, at about ten o'clock at night, under a broken cloud layer, we departed.

My plan was simple; fly the airway down to the Portland airport staying below the clouds, spend the rest of the night at the airport and then continue on to San Francisco in the morning. Through breaks in the clouds, a full moon lit our way as we roared off into the darkness. As I turned to a heading that would take us South to Portland, I felt relief at having finally gotten the show on the road. Also, with the full moon, visibility was not too bad, which helped as our only means of navigating was with an old broken ADF that had to be manually cranked to turn the DF loop to find the station. As I continued my climb to a comfortable altitude, I noticed that the familiar lights of towns on the ground had given way to a black nothingness. Remember, this was before the concrete compass of the Interstate had been built, and Radar Air Traffic control was non-existent. We were on our own.

The SNJ Texan was designed and built as a trainer in a time when flying was labor intensive and pilot comfort was a low priority. The aircraft I was flying that night was simply a surplus military trainer that had not been changed in any way, other than the outside paint. I was lucky that any of the flight instruments worked at all – the lights in the cockpit were a bonus. Not a good choice for a night IFR flight to an unfamiliar airport.

As we flew towards the Portland airport, the comforting sound of the smoothly running engine gave me a sense of security that the ever increasing momentary encounters with small clouds tried to take away. A few more minutes and we would be close enough to the airport to see it. Suddenly, the occasional small clouds turned into solid overcast, with our aircraft trapped in the middle of it. We were now totally and irretrievably solid IFR with no way to find the airport. Quickly I reached over to the ADF control box and



cranked the loop around to point at the station and give me the bearing I needed to find the field. Unable to descend, as I had no idea of what the ceiling was, we continued on at altitude. After repeatedly trying to raise the tower with the radio, I was able to get a ceiling and visibility report. It was not good. The visibility was fine but the ceiling had dropped down to about seven hundred feet with light rain showers. It was time for plan B, except I didn't have a plan B. In the back seat, my lawyer friend's plan B, as this was his first (and probably last) night flight, was to fish the bottle of vodka out of his jacket pocket and begin his own "happy hour."

Sitting in that old cockpit, in the middle of a dark ball of cotton, I thought of St. Exupery's story "Night Flight" in which the pilot Fabien is caught lost and out of fuel on top of the overcast, where he accepts his ultimate fate. Fortunately, we had plenty of fuel; what I needed to know was when we were over the airport. I remembered that the radio beacon has an ever widening cone of silence above it that marked its location. Listening intently to the beacon identifier and flying directly toward the station, the coded signal slowly started to fade until it was completely gone. I waited until the signal started again on the far side of the beacon, and then reducing power, I started a descending left bank to keep me within the silence cone.

As we slowly descended in an ever tightening spiral that would keep me over the radio beacon, I knew that somewhere below me was not only the safety of a large airport, but also the dangerous hills and mountains around it. The moon-illuminated higher clouds with their reflective water vapor were giving way to a black nothingness that allowed no visibility. Turn by turn the old airplane came closer to the ground. Concentrating

on the turn needle in the dim red instrument lights, my mind raced through a mental checklist of procedures and hazards, hoping that I had not forgotten anything. Even though I had practiced this type of approach many times in training, there is nothing like the reality of darkness, clouds and mountains to intensify the situation. The tower called assuring me that we were the only aircraft in the area and as the safest place to be is over the middle of an airport – if that was where we were – I felt some comfort in knowing that nobody else would be foolish enough to be flying that night.

It was becoming more and more difficult to fly within the confines of the beacon's cone. Twelve hundred, eleven hundred, one thousand, the altimeter slowly unwound as my heart rate rapidly increased. Was it to be a mountain or an airport? Suddenly, as quickly as the lights on the ground had disappeared earlier, they now reappeared as we descended through the lower edge of the overcast. The anxiety washed away in a moment as I realized that we had descended directly over the center of the Portland airport. The illuminated runway was below us, and

very soon we would be spending what remained of our night sleeping on an old leather couch in the passenger terminal. Later that morning with the color restored to my friends face and his bottle safely stowed, we would continue our journey on to San Francisco. Afterwards, I would play the "what if" game where I would wonder what would have happened if the old VHF radio had died, or the ADF had been totally non-functioning, or the wind had been stronger and blown us past the beacon. Among these "what ifs" was the thought that had any of these occurred, someone else would have written this story. What I learned from this was to always fly with a plan B, and I don't mean a bottle in your pocket.

Fly Safe 🍀



John Clark catches Bud Granley in his Texan

# The Haiphong POL Strike

By Walt Spangenberg

Unlike the long-wait-and-little-flying routine of late 1964 in our CONSTELLATION cruise, when RANGER and AIR WING 14 reached the line in late 1965, the flying routine was enough to keep us busy. The targets assigned in North Vietnam left much to be desired, however, and the worst part of it was that we all knew there were lucrative targets that could have been hit, but they were “off limits” and not to be attacked. In addition, there were on two occasions bombing halts, one lasting 30 days, during which we were permitted to hit nothing in North Vietnam, while the North Vietnamese were effectively given the opportunity to move materiel around and restock all of their ammo supplies. Such was the direction that came from Washington in the Vietnam effort.

In both of our fighter squadrons we had done enough reconnaissance up and down the Gulf of Tonkin to observe the parade of Russian and other ships in and out of the port of Haiphong. We had even flown low enough to count the trucks carried on the weather decks of the Russian freighters. We were not allowed to attack these ships, of course, and we knew that we would later wind up trying to find each of those trucks with its ammo load under the jungle trees on the Ho Chi Minh Trail. We had also seen the tankers that came to Haiphong and tied up in the River alongside a large POL (petroleum-oil-lubricants in the jargon of air intelligence people) facility. We all thought that the POL storage facility would make a first-rate target if our real objective was to cripple the NVN war effort, but we were not allowed to attack it, although that had been suggested to higher authority repeatedly.

Finally, in June of 1966, the word filtered down that, well, maybe a strike on the Haiphong POL storage facility would be authorized, but it was off-and-on in Washington and no one could guess when or if it might really happen. The go-signal finally came late in June,

after the decision had already leaked in the *NEW YORK TIMES*, apparently (so the NVN defenses would be ready, we assumed).

I was involved in the Haiphong POL strike on 29 June, as leader of a four Phantom TARGAP (Target Combat Air Patrol, to deal with enemy fighters should they appear). I suggested a coast-in south of Haiphong and a course headed straight for Hanoi; then when Haiphong was abeam to starboard, a turn down the River, hit the target with everything on one dive, and then straight out to feet wet. I figured that would fool the NVN regarding our intended target, surprise the extensive defenses around Haiphong, and get us out as safely as possible.

“Shoes” Schaufelberger did a perfect job of strike lead, and the VA guys did a superior job of bombing the oil storage tanks with not a splinter hitting the verboten



Strike photo via [www.HistoryCentral.com](http://www.HistoryCentral.com)

Russian ships tied up next to the POL facility. The MiGs did not come out, there were no SAMs, and the Flak was very late and desultory as we retired. When we returned to the ship, at 20,000 feet and about 135 miles south of Hon Gay, we could still see the black smoke column over the target area.

We all felt that we had at last accomplished something on a significant target, and had put a crimp in the

NVN logistic effort to supply their troops to the south. David Halberstarn subsequently wrote in his book, *THE BEST AND THE BRIGHTEST*, that the strike accomplished little because the NVN subsequently “dispersed their reserves to areas invulnerable to American attack.” I find that hard to accept when I think about what it would take to unload an oil tanker directly into trucks and then spread those trucks out into the jungle before attacking aircraft could get at them. We must have caused them a lot of grief and extra effort! As it turned out, there were no further strikes authorized on the Haiphong POL storage. ★

# Greg's Retirement

By Kate Simmons

*"Success means we go to sleep at night knowing that our talents and abilities were used in a way that served others." – Marianne Williamson*

Greg Anders is a great many things; a pilot, the Executive Director of a museum, a Dad, a husband, a combat veteran, a brother, a son, and the CO of our own Cascade Warbirds. Now too he is a civilian. This may not seem like any great feat to most of us, but for those like Greg who have spent a majority of their life in service to their country, returning to civilian status is a huge leap.

At the Heritage Flight Museum's February Open

House, Lt.Col.

Tony Pollizzi,

USAF,

Commander

CAP/USAF

Pacific

Liaison

Region,

conducted

Lt.Col. Greg

Anders' retirement

ceremony, and thus officially

drew to a

close a career that spanned

23 years of dedicated

service. CAP

Cadet Master

Sgt. Erika

Nonhoff

emcee'd the

ceremony,

and surprise

guest Lt.Col.

'Kingman' Kinsley shared a message from Greg's Dad,

Maj. Gen. Bill Anders. In addition to receiving his retirement orders, Lt.Col. Pollizzi bestowed upon Greg the Meritorious Service Medal, third oak leaf cluster – indicating the fourth time he has been recognized for meritorious service.

We learned a few things about Greg during this event... Mainly that he entered the Air Force Academy

at 18 years of age and seemingly never looked back! He circled the globe in the venerable B-52, guarding our country's 'fail safe' points, and developed an unusual affinity for long stories and obscure quotes from 'Dr. Strangelove'... He piloted the F-15 Eagle with the Bold Tigers... met his wife Judy and grew two wonderful kids... flew A-10's with the Idaho Air National Guard and brought that airframe's special brand of close air support to the enemy during the first Gulf War... put his years of experience to use for the Civil Air Patrol's efforts with the Hurricane Katrina disaster and other CAP activities... and lastly, as evidenced by his wish to have a small and relatively informal ceremony, that as

with so many veterans, Greg is modest about his service and desires no special attention for the roles that he served.

Now, in his retirement and return to the title of 'Mr. Anders', Greg will follow in the fine tradition of his parents before him and continue to be busier than a one-legged man in a butt kicking contest – running the Flight Museum, being a family

man, flying for

the USAF Heritage Flight Program, and serving as the Cascade Warbirds CO!

Greg, from your friends, your peers, your fellow Warbird pilots and crews – all of whom are members of a grateful nation – we thank you for the sacrifices that you and your family made in order for you to serve this country. You've made us all proud, and we will not soon forget it. ✪



Al Sauer captured Greg standing tall during his retirement ceremony at the HFM.



## CASCADE WARBIRD

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**Have Your Dues Expired?  
Check The Expiration Date Below.**

#### Cascade Warbirds Quick Look Calendar

##### April

- 18 Heritage Flt Museum  
Open House at BLI
- 24-26 West Coast TRARON  
Castle, AFB
- 25\* Skagit Tulip Fest

##### May

- 16 Heritage Flt Museum  
Open House at BLI
- 16 Chino Air Show, CA
- 16\* Paine Field GA Day
- 22-26 EAA B-17 at Museum  
of Flight
- 23\* Cascade Warbird Day  
at Museum of Flight

##### June

- 6 Manitoba Airshow
- 12-14 Golden West Fly-In
- 20 Heritage Flt Museum  
Open House at BLI
- 20-21\* Gathering of Warbirds  
Olympia, WA
- 27 Richland
- 27-28 Helena Airshow, MT
- 28-4Jul American Navion Soc.  
Convention, UT
- 29-4Jul Collings Bombers at  
Museum of Flight

##### July

- 4 Tacoma Freedom Fair  
and Airshow
- 8-12\* Arlington Fly-In
- 12-17 PSAAC Air Tour
- 18 Peace River Airshow
- 18 Heritage Flt Museum  
Open House at BLI
- 18-19 Thunder over MI
- 24-26 Tri-Cities
- 27-2Aug Oshkosh 2009

\* Denotes Max Effort Event  
See Website for Detailed List

## Check Six



An F/A-18 Hornet from the West Coast Demo team out of Lemoore, CA taxis to the active at Skagit Regional Airport in 2007. (John Clark photo)