



JF Vallee leads a formation over Sedro-Woolley's July 4 celebrations. Photo: Tanner Matheny



## ★ Cascade Warbirds Squadron Newsletter ★

### CO'S COCKPIT

By John "Smokey" Johnson



**THE DAYS ARE GETTING SHORTER**, the leaves are starting to turn colors, and there is a snap in the morning air so it must be fall? Where did the summer go? I think 2020 will be one of those years most of us want to forget and file away where bad memories reside. After our successful V-E Day fly-by on May 8, every other event and airshow was canceled due to COVID-19. It was interesting to see how everyone kept hoping the virus would ease up

and events and airshows could proceed normally. But as springtime went on to summer, the virus did not abate and it seemed like every airshow was mowed down as the deadlines approached.

All this is new and unprecedented to most of us in modern times but there was another earlier global pandemic: the Spanish flu pandemic of 1918, which was the H1N1 influenza virus. It lasted from February 1918 to April 1920 and was responsible for infecting 500 million people and killing 17-50 million worldwide. Of course, the world did not have 24-hour news networks or the internet and general hygiene was much worse back then, so people didn't know it was happening and fatalities were worse.

Also interesting, then-President Woodrow Wilson downplayed the 1918 pandemic. He continued to recruit, train, and deploy troops to Europe during the pandemic even though it was believed the war would be over soon. He got violently sick in April 1919 while he was in Paris, France, to attend the Big Four peace talks and tried to hide it from the rest of the attendees by saying he just had a bad cold. He felt it was more important for him to participate in the ongoing peace talks because there was a belief that, "without him and his guidance Europe would certainly have turned to Bolshevism and anarchy." This was quoted from a letter recently made public from Rear Admiral Cary T. Grayson, personal physician to the president.

Eventually, the Spanish flu faded away into the history books and I hope the COVID-19 pandemic will do the same thing soon. In the meantime, I hope everyone stays healthy and tries not to overindulge with food and adult recreational beverages. Try and get as much exercise as you can before the rainy weather keeps us indoors for longer periods of time. Sign up for refresher courses, get another rating on your pilot or mechanic certificate. Don't turn into a couch potato. I am still hoping the COVID "Grinch" virus will not take our Christmas party away. We are monitoring the situation weekly and will advise everyone if and when we officially cancel the party. ★



## Memorial Scholarship

### Attention All Personnel

Our youth flight training scholarship opens next month for 2021 applicants!

Your donation to the Cascade Warbirds Memorial Scholarship program directly supports our mission to inspire today's youth to become tomorrow's aviators.

Read more about this worthy program at [www.cascadewarbirds.org/youth](http://www.cascadewarbirds.org/youth) and consider making a tax-deductible donation in any amount. Thank you for your generosity!

Support our students and...

**KEEP 'EM FLYING!**



**Extra! Extra!**

Enjoy this special color print issue at a time we can use a little brightness! Thank you for your continued membership.

## Squadron Commander Emeritus

R.D. "Crash" Williams

### Commanding Officer

John "Smokey" Johnson

### Executive Officer

Dave Desmon

### Operations Officer

Stan "Sundance" Kasprzyk

### Adjutant

Fred C. Smyth

### Finance Officer

Fred C. Smyth

### Officer-at-Large

John Clark

### Newsletter Editor

John Haug

This is the official publication of Cascade Warbirds. The views expressed in this newsletter are those of the individual writers, and do not constitute the official position of Cascade Warbirds. Members are encouraged to contribute any matter related to warbirds, which the editor will gladly work with you to publish.

It is the goal of Cascade Warbirds to promote the restoration, preservation, operation and public display of historically significant military aircraft; to acquire and perpetuate the living history of those who served their country on these aircraft; and to inspire today's young people to become the aviation pioneers of tomorrow.

All correspondence to the squadron may be submitted via the e-mail or mailing addresses below.

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## A DIFFERENT KIND OF YEAR

As you'll read elsewhere in these pages, abnormal is our new normal. Nearly every single thing that was supposed to occur this year was cancelled and we have little idea what to expect over the next three months. We do know there will be no October member meeting at the Museum of Flight and the November meeting is also cancelled. Further, we have no idea what to expect regarding our scheduled annual dinner party on 12 December. We'll communicate updates via email blitzes.

## WELCOME ABOARD

We want to welcome **Jonathan Gilson** of Renton. He's an ex-Marine Corps F/A-18 pilot with multiple deployments, including one aboard the USS *Theodore Roosevelt*. Once we're back in the swing of things, we expect to see Jonathan very active with our organization.

## SCHOLARSHIP PROGRAM

Our scholars have also been challenged this summer. Candace Do, Inayah Farooqi, Riley Brux, and Harry Pulido were each selected to receive our memorial scholarship. With our partner Galvin Flying, each received tuition for the private pilot ground school course, all books and supplies, and two instructional flights. Those who completed the ground school and flights by 30 September were eligible to compete for a further \$2,500 grant to continue their flight training.

## WE HAVE A WINNER!

**Harry Pulido** has been selected to receive the 2020 Supplemental Aviation Grant. Harry, training at Snohomish Flying Service at Harvey Field in Snohomish (duh!), will receive this money as training milestones are achieved—\$1,000 after first solo, another \$1,000 after completion of his long cross-country, and the final \$500 when he passes his check ride. We wish Harry the very best in his future aviation endeavors.

## MEMORIAL SCHOLARSHIP PROGRAM 2021

Within the next few weeks, the 2021 scholarship program application process will kick off. Notice will be posted on our web page, on our social media platforms, emailed to Puget Sound area high school counselors, and email blitzes to you, our membership. If you know an area youth who may be interested, have them check our web site after November 1 for a 2021 application.

## AS SEEN IN...

Warbirds of America's full-color magazine, *Warbirds*, had a nice surprise for us in its September 2020 issue—a six-page spread on the history of our squadron, our approach to "Keep 'em Flying," and our efforts to introduce area youth to the world of aviation. In case you missed it, you can read the article online at [www.casadewarbirds.org/news](http://www.casadewarbirds.org/news). We have our very own *Warbird Flyer* Editor John Haug to thank for this exceptional article. Well done, John!

## AIRCRAFT AVAILABLE

Pilot and Vietnam veteran **Richard Kloppenburg** owns a restored 1967 O-2 that also saw service in Vietnam. He is seeking its next caretaker; is it you? E-mail him for details at [kloppenburg@mac.com](mailto:kloppenburg@mac.com). Read more about it at [casadewarbirds.org](http://casadewarbirds.org). ✪



Richard Kloppenburg's 1967 O-2A Saigon Tea.  
Photo: Richard Kloppenburg

**AS I WRITE THIS LATEST** Ops Tempo update, I've just sent out the latest Cascade Warbirds calendar update to the board, showing that the last scheduled event for the 2020 flying season, the Benton Air Faire scheduled in October, has officially been cancelled.

Even with all the cancellations that did occur, warbirds pilots in the great Northwest did pull off a few events to honor our veterans this season during formal and informal events.

Our main event of the summer was the eleven-ship V-E Day salute led by Smokey Johnson, flown all over the Puget Sound, including four T-6s, four Navions, two Nanchang CJ-6s, and a lone IAR-823.

On the 4th of July, CWB member J. F. Vallee led a five-ship with three Navions, a Nanchang, and an IAR-823 in remembrance of veterans over the town of Sedro-

Woolley, with strong support from the mayor and local community.

Tom Hoag led two "follow the leader" events for L-birds in his Seabee in July and August from Bremerton, helping keep the rust out and proficiency up.

The informal formation proficiency day in August at Bremerton also helped a few keep somewhat current.

Many aircraft owners took the season's airshow down time to upgrade their aircraft, overhaul or install new engines (your Ops O included), and generally prepare our aircraft for next year. Take this gift of time to upgrade that private certificate to a commercial, get an instrument or CFI rating, or add on that seaplane rating you've been thinking about. Be sure to take advantage of the cooler (and hopefully less smoky) autumn air to keep your proficiency up! Let's go fly! 🛩

## SCHOLAR UPDATE

By Gabriel Bacerdo

**IT HAS BEEN A WHILE** since I last checked in. My name is Gabriel Bacerdo and I was a recipient of the 2016 aviation scholarship. I cannot thank the Cascade Warbirds enough for introducing me to the world of aviation from the pilot's seat. In a COVID-free world and once I am back home, I would love to attend a meeting and thank you all in person. Prior to completing ground school and the two intro flights at Galvin, I had never been behind the controls of an airplane.

I am very grateful for what I have been able to accomplish since those two intro flights in the C-152. Tomorrow, I will be starting my senior year at Purdue University studying Professional Flight. While it seems most of the world has slowed down, flight training definitely has not. Since the university opened back up in July, every plane in the fleet has been in use from 7 am to 9 pm each day. This fall will mark my second year as a flight instructor at Purdue. I received my CFII in June, and this past weekend, my first instrument student passed his check ride.

July marked a major milestone in my career as well. After a year of ground school and simulator training, I was finally able to fly the university's Phenom 100 jet in both pilot flying and pilot monitoring roles. Following a short cross-country and a landing lesson, it was then time for the long cross-country. My partner and I were both allocated two hours of flying from the left seat in the pilot flying role. The other hour would be spent in the pilot monitoring role from the right seat. For my two-hour leg, I was able to fly from KLAF in West Lafayette, IN to KISP MacArthur on Long Island, NY. It was my first time being up in the flight levels and the experience was as real world as it gets. Our arrival into Long Island took us directly over New York City and JFK International before we tracked along the coast of Long Island for the visual.

After a quick fueling stop, we then flew up to KPSM in Portsmouth, NH for lunch. Then it was back west to KPCW in Port Clinton, OH along Lake Erie. Finishing up the day, I then flew the pilot monitoring leg back to KLAF. The next day, another group of students took the jet back east to Portland, Maine where they picked up a box of live lobsters and brought them back to Purdue. The experience was bittersweet, as it marked the last time the jet would be used for student flight instruction. It was recently sold, and starting in the fall, will be replaced by a full motion Hawker 900 simulator.

As I complete my final year at Purdue, I have started to look at employment opportunities outside of flight instructing at school. With the current situation, sometimes I wish I had accepted the appointment to the Coast Guard Academy. One of the areas I was looking at was the Air National Guard or Air Force Reserve. Are there any members of Cascade Warbirds actively in the Guard or Reserve, or who have served in the past? Thank you. 🛩

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*[E-mail us at [editor@cascadewarbirds.org](mailto:editor@cascadewarbirds.org) if you wish to contact Gabriel and we'll put you in touch.—Ed.]*



Gabriel logs his first turbine time in Purdue's Phenom. Photo: Gabriel Bacerdo

# KEITH ANDERSON MEMORIAL

By Brandon Edwards

**HERE IN THE PACIFIC NORTHWEST**, we grieve and honor the passing of another great hero. Our dear friend and member of Cascade Warbirds and the Greatest Generation, 96-year-old 398th Bomb Group Captain Keith Anderson, passed away peacefully Tuesday afternoon, July 21, 2020.

He was interred at Tacoma National Cemetery on Thursday, August 6 at 1130 hours. Due to COVID-19 and state restrictions, they held a small ceremony provided by the cemetery and Air Force with no further reception or gathering.

His family expressed their appreciation for supporting his ministry in his final years. I know he loved working beside all of you and the *Aluminum Overcast* and valued his friendship with Veterans Liaison, Brandon Edwards. He was buried in his AO jacket with a nice bottle of Chardonnay by his side, two of his favorite things.

You may recall Keith Anderson, B-17 captain and former Assistant Squadron Operations Officer, shared his eleven-month WWII experiences with us in February 2017. He flew 29 lead missions in 1944 and 1945 in the 8th Air Force, 398th Bomb Group, 600th Bomb Squadron based at Nuthamstead, England. This includes three times to Berlin. During his military career, he flew 1,600 hours, 230 in combat, piloting PT-19, BT-13, AT-6, AT-9, AT-17, A-26, B-17, B-25, B-24, P-47, and P-51.

Keith had supported the B-17 *Aluminum Overcast* since 1978, serving with other 398th Bomb Group members we also have the pleasure to know: Lou Stoffer, Fred Parker, and Allen Ostrom (RIP 4/28/2017). Both Keith and Allen were hands-on and raised funds, resulting in *Aluminum Overcast* being painted in the livery of the 398th. I was honored and fortunate to visit with and escort Keith several times since meeting him for our 2016 *Aluminum Overcast* tour and 72nd D-Day commemoration media event. I gained significant insights to his past service in the US Army Air Corps, post-war with the FBI, as a fire protection insurance broker at LaBow, Haynes insurance brokerage, and later as owner of a couple of Pacific Ocean fishing vessels. Keith's impressive charac-

ter and nature remained one of great integrity and fundamental principle.

Keith returned to have his hands on the yoke of *Aluminum Overcast* multiple times and shared more personal details of his military service, both overseas and after returning to the States. He served as a flight instructor and test pilot at Wright Field and five years in the reserves here at Sand Point and McChord. Keith also treasured his three years as an FBI Special Agent in the early 1950s in Canton, Ohio and New York City before resettling in Washington, spending sixty years in Issaquah raising four daughters with his wife Charlane ("Chucky") of 67 years. She preceded him in death last year. Keith enjoyed routine and special visits with his family, which includes three grandchildren and six great-grandchildren, all residing near him in western Washington.

In February of 2017, I asked Keith, "What do you want us all to know?" He replied, "I am grateful, all my decisions worked out, and I have no regrets." I want to share this quote from an interview he gave for EAA's "Timeless Voices" oral history project in 2006: "I had a 7th grade teacher that was a Communist. And she was promoting Stalin and Russian Communism. We all thought that was ridiculous, her arguments. I got a very early feeling of anti-Communism."

He will not be forgotten; his character and patriotism have left a fine legacy and inspired friends and family far and near! ✪

Photo collage: Brandon Edwards



In Memory of Captain  
**Keith Anderson**  
RIP  
July 21, 2020  
96 years of the finest example!



Great Patriot,  
Hero, Husband,  
Father, & Friend!  
*We will not forget...*



## L-BIRD FORMATION PRACTICE

By Stan "Sundance" Kasprzyk

**THE SUMMER OF 2020** had turned into a summer of cancellations on the warbird and air show circuit, due to COVID-19 concerns and social restrictions. A few formation flying opportunities had luckily occurred for Northwest warbird pilots, notably an 11-ship V-E Day flypast and a 4th of July veterans flyby.

Tom Hoag had been flying some formation in his Seabee with Dan Barry and his Aeronca L-3 and found the Seabee and L-3 were matched well in their speed range. OK, yes, they were equally S-L-O-W.

Tom started arranging for a simple in-trail formation session with as many L-birds (or liaison birds) that he could muster. In addition, Tom contacted me about acting as a chase bird in the Nanchang, helping to shepherd the L-birds for correct spacing and formation positioning. I contacted the Nanchang owner, and Justin agreed for the two of us to join in the 'Chang as chase and shepherd for the liaison birds.

Tom planned for two in-trail formation flights, allowing the L-bird pilots to "get the rust out" in safe station keeping, with a planned round robin flight from Bremerton (KPWT) to Sanderson Field (KSHN) in Shelton and a stop at Shelton for a "socially-distanced" lunch. Justin and I would help maintain flight spacing as we remained outside the main flight, while having the advantage of speed and maneuverability to position as required.



Tom Hoag's Seabee leads Jeff Kimball's L-16. Photo: Alex Munro

gusty winds and keeping everyone safely in their chocks until brakes were available. Once all five of us cranked, Tom led the gaggle to runway 20 for takeoffs at a six-second interval for 500-foot spacing. Due to the L-birds' stately pace into the winds, we had no problem joining the extended trail formation and positioning ourselves for photos and spacing calls.

Tom led the formation through a number of in-trail turns while proceeding generally toward Shelton, and we had a blast in the Nanchang maneuvering all the around the flight, which kept its spacing quite well even in the somewhat turbulent conditions. As we flew closer to Shelton, a check on wind conditions confirmed that it was even more gusty and windy there, so the backup return to Bremerton became the primary plan.

After attempting a few in-flight videos, and capturing a few decent still photos, Justin and I departed the flight and raced back to Bremerton to cover the four L-birds landing. It was quite a sight watching them turn from base to final and almost come to a stop on final in the strong headwinds! Touchdown speeds looked to be around 30 knots, with everyone making early

turnoffs to parking.

Tom led the debrief, again on the windy ramp, and presented each of the flight members with a commemorative "CWB 2020 Liaison Flight" patch. Nice touch, Tom! As the winds continued to increase, we launched the three small L-birds first to return home safely, and then the Seabee and Nanchang to our home bases.

Tom, thanks for your coordination efforts and including us as Liaison Chase. Keep 'em flying! 🍷

L-bird flight ready for launch (center and below). Photos: Alex Munro



Justin and I flew the Nanchang from Paine Field to meet the group at Bremerton, and landed in strong wind conditions, which were thankfully right down runway 20. However, we noticed as the L-birds arrived that while their landings looked nice and slow, their ground handling when turned into any crosswind was challenging. Tom had arrived early in his Seabee N217G as Liaison Lead and briefed on the ramp in the wind when all three wingmen arrived. Liaison #2 was Jeff Kimball in his Aeronca L-16A N3703C, Liaison #3 was Alex Munro in his Citabria N602Z, and Liaison #4 was Dan Barry in his Aeronca L-3 N49203. The Nanchang would fly as Liaison Chase and photo bird.

Tom briefed the round robin plan to Shelton, with a backup of a return to Bremerton if the high winds and gusts at Shelton stayed as forecast. It was fun prop-starting two of the L-birds in the



*[CWB member Jack LaBounty is working to restore a T-28A. He has offered to introduce us to his machine and walk us through parts of the restoration process so far in this and future newsletters.—Ed.]*

### RESTORATION PROCESS

Given I am really starting with a clean slate for a T-28A, I am not restoring it to an original appearance. My goal is to make a safe aircraft. I ask, “what would North American do” if they were building the aircraft today? Nothing airframe-wise or aircraft operation-wise is changing. I will be using current day components in the instrumentation, avionics, and in some systems. Fortunately, the aircraft is in the Experimental–Exhibition category. I will not mention the paint scheme at this time because I could change my mind again. The intent is to use current military colors. As Robert “Crash” Williams used to say about his T-28B, “it had the best Sears paint available.” Unfortunately, there are no more Sears stores near where I live.

North American designed the T-28 series for strength and endurance. At the time, they probably were trying to keep many of their engineers and manufacturing personnel who remained from the WWII era. I believe with the complexity of some of the T-28 systems and components, a number of engineering awards must have been handed out. All parts, down to every little angle bracket, are individually stamped with a part number and painted with zinc chromate prior to assembly. The aluminum extrusions and magnesium parts were chemically treated. Most aluminum castings and parts made from aluminum sheet were not chemically treated for the T-28A production but were later treated for the T-28B and production T-28C. Zinc chromate tends to trap moisture under the paint on the surface of the material, so many of the non-treated aluminum parts ended up with corrosion issues. Most steel parts were cadmium plated. In keeping with North American,

almost all my parts were hand paint stripped, chemically treated, cadmium II plated, or polished if stainless. Only the fuselage framework that was not disassembled was plastic media blasted and the empennage framework was soda blasted.

I may soda blast the framework in the outer wing panels before primer painting and reskinning. Soda requires a very thorough cleaning so as not to leave any residue between parts that touch each other in the structure. If not cleaned, corrosion could occur in the future. Media blasting can rough up the surface of the material, remove the Alclad coating on aluminum and, if blasted with too much pressure, harden the material.

North American has very good documentation. In the Parts Manual, most hardware items are listed with their AN, MS or NAS number. Some other manufacturers use their own part numbering system for a standard part number so that the aircraft buyer has to go back to the manufacturer for a part. I believe an aircraft company that was based in Seattle used to do this with the “BAC” part number series. A few part numbers are North American specific, but most of those are actually the dimensions of the part, such as a special washer.

We are quite fortunate in the Pacific Northwest and along the west coast to have aircraft companies that can supply the hardware needed and have the skills to perform required maintenance or manufacturing. My restoration is really the result of many people being involved.

### FUSELAGE EMPENNAGE RESTORATION

We removed all the flight controls and skin panels from the empennage. Given how far down the rest of the fuselage had been disassembled as shown in the 2015-01-27 photo, it was decided to do the same with the fuselage empennage section. The 2018-07-13 photo shows the empennage framework being washed after soda blasting. After thoroughly cleaning the framework,



Fuselage disassembly in January 2015 (left) and empennage before blasting in July 2018 (right). Photos: Jack LaBounty



Jack slowly riveted himself into a corner while reskinning the empennage. *Help!* Photos: Jack LaBounty

it was painted with an epoxy primer. All the skin panels on the empennage are “flat” sheet panels, unlike the fuselage intermediate and cockpit sections which have compound curved skin panels. Skin panels were replicated, chemically treated, and painted with epoxy primer.

Now the real time-consuming work begins—riveting the panels on. Since we did not have a jig, we sat the empennage vertically on a table that had a large hole cut into the top. It was positioned vertically so that none of the framework would sag. I was the one designated to crawl up inside the empennage while standing on a ladder to buck the rivets. A series of photos show the progress on the last side of the empennage reskinned. My biggest concern was that everyone would

go home and leave me inside the empennage while doing the last side.

After repositioning the empennage assembly horizontally, the horizontal left- and right-hand stabilizers were temporarily attached to make sure of their fit. The stabilizers had been reskinned many years ago and fit perfectly. The vertical stabilizer assembly was also temporarily fitted without issue. The flight controls that are inside the empennage will be reinstalled later this year.

I will write other articles on restoration of aircraft sections or systems in future newsletters if there is an interest. There is plenty of work left to be done. I figure I have only 18,000 rivets left to buck in the fuselage and outer wing panels. ✪

## YAK-3

By Bill Shepherd

**MY YAK-3 N17ZA** is now up and flying. It came to me in a shipping container late last year and required some changes and upgrades, as it last flew in Australia.

It now has US tires, wheels, brakes, and comm radio, with other instruments converted from the metric system.

It is one of the “new built” Yaks, coming out of the Yakovlev Design Bureau in 1993. It has an Allison V-1710 US engine

and Hamilton Standard prop. The Yak-3 design was the last series propeller fighter to come out of Russia, even after the Yak-9.

I hope to make some of the Cascade Warbirds events if we ever get out of this COVID mess. ✪



This 1993 Yak-3M looks just as good as its 1940s predecessors. Photo: Bill Shepherd

# THE TRANSFORMATIONS OF A VINTAGE FLYING MACHINE

By Allan Snowie

## FIRST TRANSFORMATION: “ORTHOPEDIC SURGERY”

Now of an age considered vintage for aircraft, N678DW's story began in 1957 at the Champion factory in Osceola, Wisconsin. Launched as a Champ 7FC Tri-Traveler, she was a nosewheel version of the famous Aeronca 7AC line. It could be said, and frequently was, that her landing gear configuration looked a tad ungainly in appearance compared to her conventional tailwheeled siblings. It is perhaps no surprise then that many were later converted to 7EC “tail draggers,” as was this particular wee bird in 1980.

An additional advantage of such a change flows from the fact that the Tri-Traveler has a front-end structure fortified to carry the nose oleo plus steering gear. This beefier frame is a bonus when upgrading to a more powerful, and quite likely heavier, engine.

## SECOND TRANSFORMATION: “HEART TRANSPLANT & COSMETIC SURGERY”

In 2003, our Champ gained an additional ten horsepower with the replacement of its Continental 90 for the O-200 powerplant from a Cessna 150. Concurrent with that engine change, the aircraft was disassembled, the wings were given new front and rear spars, and she was re-skinned in Poly-Fiber. A greenhouse roof and a removeable full plexiglass door were installed, and she was liveried in a USAF L-bird scheme of “stars and bars” to complete the picture. Americans flew the Aeronca in World War II as a liaison aircraft designated the L-3 Grasshopper, and again with an L-16 designation during the Korean Conflict. By 1955, most had been transferred to the Civil Air Patrol.



Allan flies his beautifully restored L-bird tribute Champ. Photo: Lyle Jansma

In keeping with the L-bird theme, and with a nod to the famous *Memphis Belle*, we've designed a “Belle-Bird” pinup for the engine cowl. The famous cartoon dog Snoopy had a lesser-known sister named Belle who appeared in some of his Red Baron comic strips as a Red Cross nurse.

## THIRD TRANSFORMATION: A JOB—VIMY FLIGHT TEAM TRAINER

On the 9th of April 2017, Canada commemorated the centennial of its First World War victory at Vimy Ridge in France. A team of eleven pilots was formed for a ceremonial fly past of that nation-creating battle. All were former military (with one active RCAF) and as the primary *raison d'être* was to salute Canada's Great War Expeditionary Force, formation ability had to be assured. Since the plans included flying replica First World War Nieuport biplanes, the need of a training aircraft became evident.

Purchased in October 2014, our Champ was flown north from California to its new base at Bellingham, Washington (KBLI), just two dozen miles south of the British Columbia border. It was here and at a local grass field that the Vimy Flight pilots utilized the Champ as a training platform prior to their first flights in the single cockpit Nieuport aircraft. Understanding and mastering tailwheel ground behaviors became the most important phase of that checkout.

And ground handling of an aircraft steered from behind made for some interesting episodes! Fortunately, humor prevailed as we watched one another come to grips—*toe grips* that is—with the fact that rudder bars are not foot rests. Our former Sea King helicopter pilot had absolutely no problem. For the rest of us, the “fixed-wingers,” well, let's just say we had our moments...

Finally, in transitioning to the 7/8th scale Nieu-



Every vintage airplane needs vintage nose art. Photo: Allan Snowie



ports, we 9/8th scale aviators soon learned that heavy flying boots are no help at all in those tight cockpits. For the short-coupled 1914-18 biplane replicas, we found that thin-soled wrestling shoes best allow for the footwork feel required to effectively “rudder dance” the aircraft straight along the runway. These were grand team-building times for our small squadron as we happily gathered around a Nieuport after each pilot’s first flight, finding him still strapped in the cockpit and wearing a big silly-assed grin.

In addition to functioning as superb training platform, the Champ also proved herself an ideal photo ship. This was during our 2016 formation workups that were graciously hosted by the RCAF at the Comox airbase on Vancouver Island. With the side door removed, professional aviation photographer Lyle Jansma captured some great shots. Evidence of the success of this operation can be seen in the January/February 2017 edition of *Canadian Aviator*, on the front cover and in the six-page article titled, “History in Slow Motion.”

**TODAY: A LITTLE MORE COSMETICS BUT NO SURGERY**

Recent photographs of Champ N678DW have also been taken by Bellingham-based Lyle from his new photo ship, a modified Cessna 172. These air and ground photos show the Champ now sporting new markings: a rendition of the Second World War’s British Pacific Fleet. This “Forgotten Fleet” of some 800 vessels, including five armor-decked aircraft carriers, operated in support of the larger United States naval effort taking the war to the shores of Japan. For

that mission, the Royal Navy eliminated the red center of their roundel to prevent confusion with the “rising sun” insignia of enemy aircraft. In the furball of aerial combat, when split seconds count, the flash image of a red disc could easily be mistaken for a Zero.

Today, N678DW enjoys all the advantages of an ADS-B installation that readily identifies the position, altitude, and direction of other aircraft. A single flight with this new gadget transforms the doubtful to a believer when the Mark I eyeball fails to spot oncoming traffic. Other additions include vortex generators on the wings and horizontal stabilizer. The VGs produce a crisp feel on the joystick and joy is truly the word that best describes flying the Champ. For this 1963 Fleet Canuck graduate of the Air Cadet Flying Scholarship program, it is a trip back in time. The perfect match: a vintage aircraft and a vintage aviator. ✪



© LYLE JANSMA | AEROCAPTURE IMAGES 2020



Allan’s Champ showing the British Fleet Air Arm roundel used in the Pacific during WWII.

Photos: Lyle Jansma

See more about Allan’s Champ in the September/October 2020 issue of *Canadian Aviator* magazine.

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### ★ KEEP 'EM FLYING ★

Your advertisement could be here  
for only \$25 per issue!

## CHECK SIX



From contributor Allan Snowie:

Of historic note, related to the Champ's new paint scheme.

On August 9th, 1945, Lieutenant Robert Hampton Gray (from Nelson, BC) led a flight of Corsair fighter-bombers off the deck of HMS *Formidable* against airfields and shipping around the Onagawa Wan bay of mainland Japan. In the face of intense anti-aircraft fire, "Hammy" pressed home an attack, sinking the destroyer *Amakusa*.

During these same moments, his Corsair was hit. Flipped inverted, it plunged into the water. For this supreme sacrifice, Gray was posthumously awarded the British Commonwealth's highest military honor, the Victoria Cross.

Six days later, the war was ended. Of eight Canadians flying with the squadrons in *Formidable*, only two were still alive. Let us think of them on August 15, 2020, the 75th anniversary of V-J Day, victory over Japan.

Photo: Canada Department of National Defence,  
<http://www.cmp-cpm.forces.gc.ca/dhh-dhp/gal/vcg-gcv/bio/gray-rh-eng.asp>

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## UPCOMING EVENTS

### STAND BY TO STAND BY

The October and November membership meetings at the Museum of Flight are cancelled.

The annual holiday dinner party in December is TBD.

Our full list of known events and their status is updated regularly on our calendar at [www.cascadewarbirds.org](http://www.cascadewarbirds.org).