



Dan Barry flies his L-3 Aeronca over the Auburn Veterans Day celebrations. Photo: Stan Kasprzyk



❖ Cascade Warbirds Squadron Newsletter ❖

CO's COCKPIT

By John "Smokey" Johnson



SEASON'S GREETINGS TO EVERYONE. I hope this newsletter finds each and every one of you healthy, sane, and fighting to maintain some degree of normalcy. This holiday season will most probably be as unusual as the rest of the year due to continuance of the COVID-19 virus. I am sure by now you are all tired of wearing masks, maintaining social distancing, isolating ourselves from each other, and cancelling all our seasonal social events, including

our annual Christmas party. The CWB Board of Directors waited until the very last moment in the hopes that the unrelenting virus might have been brought under control. We arrived at the decision point and had no choice but to cancel due to Washington State's COVID regulations.

It gets increasingly difficult to find something positive to write about in this portion of our newsletter. It feels as if this viral infection has completely demoralized everyone in our communities. I am sure we have all known or experienced someone who is struggling with depression and or anxiety over the past several months. It is vitally important for all of us to make sure all our friends and family members are doing OK and get help if it is needed. Stay in touch with your friends by phone or email. Do not let yourself fall into despair, depression, or isolation. If you know someone struggling with any of these symptoms reach out to them and try to assure them that this too will pass.

We are all waiting to see if the predicted COVID spike will materialize after the Thanksgiving holiday and if the vaccines will work to stop the spread of COVID. We recently heard that the NW Aviation Conference and Trade Show normally put on during February in Puyallup, WA has decided to cancel their event for 2021. My former airline, Flying Tigers, also recently canceled its reunion in late April in San Antonio, TX.

I sincerely hope that this virus will either burn itself out or the vaccine will bring it under control before springtime so we can all get back to our former normal activities, events, and airshows.

Today, Washington's governor, Jay Inslee, extended the stay at home order until mid-January. Unfortunately, that means we will have to cancel our January members meeting.

Yesterday was December 7, 2020, which was the 79th anniversary of the surprise attack on the U.S. Navy Pacific Fleet at Pearl Harbor and all the other military installations on the Hawaiian is-

land of Oahu. The next day, President Franklin D. Roosevelt asked the United States Congress to declare war on the Empire of Japan. That was the beginning of World War II for the U.S.

As many of you know, last summer I had the honor and privilege to participate in the Pacific portion of the Arsenal of Democracy, which was the 75th Anniversary of V-J Day WWII events, located in Pearl Harbor, HI. A total of thirteen WWII aircraft made plans to rendezvous at Naval Air Station North Island and be lifted aboard the USS *Essex*, an LHD carrier, for transport to Hawaii. There are more details and some photos in an additional story inside this issue.

Stay healthy, try to maintain a positive outlook, and hope 2021 will be a much better year. Happy Holidays, Merry Christmas, Happy Hanukkah to all and have a Happy New Year. ❖



Memorial Scholarship

Our youth flight training scholarship is open through February 28, 2021.

Encourage a deserving and dedicated young person to apply for their head start on learning to fly. Or make a tax-deductible donation to continue this program's good works. Thank you!

www.cascadewarbirds.org/youth

WARBIRD FLYER

♣ Cascade Warbirds ♣

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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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SQUADRON NEWS

REMEMBERING...

We lost some very good friends and longtime warbirders this past year. We are the better for having known them.

Bill Junjek	Renton
Dave Cook	Reno
Ron Ochs	Madras
Norm Gordon	Everett
Jim Fernandez	Bellevue
Ed Rombauer	Tacoma

WE THANK YOU

Several of you made generous gifts to our scholarship fund this past year and we want to thank you for your support. As recently seen in a compilation by Kerry Edwards, CWB is making a huge impact in the Northwest when it comes to connecting area youth with aviation careers. Your belief in our efforts is evidenced by your generosity.

DUES TIME

As January rolls around, we like to remind all of you that it's time to pay for another year. Your annual dues are still only US\$20 and the remittance address is still CWB, 1066 Yates Rd, Oak Harbor, WA 98277. If you are unsure of your status, please get in touch with Fred; he'll be happy to review the records. Be sure to renew—our programs are important in our efforts to Keep 'Em Flying.

AVIATION SCHOLARSHIP PROGRAM

This past November kicked off our 2021 scholarship program. The program description and application form is available on our webpage and the deadline for applying, by email or snail mail, is February 28. Briefly stated, our selected scholars will receive books and tuition for the private pilot ground school as well as two instructional flights. Help us spread the word to area youth ages 16 to 21. [See www.cascadewarbirds.org/youth. —Ed.]

SCHOLAR PROGRESS

Our 2019 Aviation Grant award winner, Keith Steedman, had the bad luck to

start his additional training in the face of the pandemic. What was supposed to be a summer filled with flying resulted in not too much before he took up his college courses in the fall. Keith reports that when he finishes his first quarter finals, likely accomplished by the time you read this, he expects to actually take his first solo flight.

Harry Pulido, our 2020 winner, was able, with reduced pandemic restrictions, to log several flights as summer progressed. He took a short break for a college tour at Embry-Riddle and plans to take his solo flight any day (also likely accomplished by the time you read this).

The Aviation Grant award provides an additional \$2,500 per scholar for further training, payable as milestones are reached. First solo earns \$1,000, completion of the long cross-country another \$1,000, and award of the private pilot certificate a final \$500.

We wish these lads well as they continue their training.

RENO AIR RACES

The National Air Races are scheduled for September 15–19, 2021. The reserved-seat box prices have not yet been set as of this writing, but the squadron still retains our unique A-41 location. You can reserve your place in our box by sending US\$200 per seat to CWB; see above at Dues for the address. Follow this link for the most recent directly from the Reno folks: <https://airrace.org/save-the-races/>.

SURVEY RESULTS

We recently wondered what your favorite WWII warbird was. Some 20% of the membership responded and the results were not unexpected. In descending order: B-17, P-47, P-38, P-51, P-40, and F-6F were the favorites. No real surprises there. Another twelve received at least one vote each. Hope you enjoyed thinking about it.

AIRCRAFT AVAILABLE

Pilot and Vietnam veteran **Richard Kloppenburg** owns a restored 1967 O-2 that also saw service in Vietnam. He is

OPS TEMPO

By Stan "Sundance" Kasprzyk

AS I WRITE THIS IN MID-DECEMBER, the planned February 2021 NW Aviation Conference and Trade Show has already been cancelled, along with the June 2021 Paris Air Show. The airshow forecast for the beginning of 2021 will be slow. Especially for the first half of the year, I propose we start planning mini-events of our own to gain and maintain flight and formation proficiency which will be needed to conduct any safe operations as a group.

An example that worked well this November was our Auburn Veterans Day flyover gathering at the Boeing Employees Flying Association (BEFA) ramp and hangar at Renton. BEFA graciously allowed the use of their facilities, allowing for ramp access and COVID-compliant briefing facilities. Even though the weather limited participation, the pilots who were able to fly received some needed exercise and the veteran flyby salute was enjoyable.

In 2021, we should plan for similar opportunities to gather with six to twelve aircraft, practice formation procedures, and combine the proficiency flights with flybys to honor both veterans and those helping out during the pandemic, including venues such as hospitals, care facilities, and other related locations.

If you have ideas of venues that we can salute, pass them on to me and we'll build a plan to continue to stay proficient and safe in 2021 and fly to honor war veterans and COVID veterans! Let's go fly! ✈

seeking its next caretaker; is it you? E-mail him for details at kloppenburg@mac.com.

Former member **Bill Junjek's** 1947 Navion was an airshow regular and has a few upgrades. It would make for a fine first warbird. Contact markjunjek@gmail.com with interest.

Read more about both airplanes and see photos at www.cascadewarbirds.org/for-sale/. ✈



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



Bill Junjek's 1947
Navion.
Photo: Mark Junjek

BOOK REVIEW

By Justin Drafts

WITH SO MUCH READING to indulge my enthusiasm for aviation history, I've discovered that there seems to be an abundance of enlightening WWII memoirs by pilots and aircrews of the Third Reich, the Royal Air Force, and certainly from the United States military branches. While a few number of memoirs exist by former pilots of Imperial Japan, they are just that, few in number. Those rare memoirs I have encountered are indeed well-written, yet are often presented from the understandably limited stance of one person at a lower operational level without access to the "big picture" of the relevant overall military campaigns.

For whatever reasons, the operations of the Japanese air forces from the late 1930s until 1945 have held a particular interest for me personally, with legendary fighter aircraft fighting across vast skies of China and from the lush islands of the South Pacific. Although the events of such tumultuous, world-changing military campaigns are well documented in broad brush strokes, I have found detailed records of Japanese air operations to be elusive, vague, and only hinting at the specifics of these histories.

Until I discovered the book, *Zero*, co-authored by Masatake Okumiya and Jiro Horikoshi. What an astonishing first-person narrative that opens wide the worthy story of not only the iconic A6M Zero fighter but presents intimate details of life in the Imperial Japanese Navy Air Service during WWII. First published in 1956, the stories and memories are painfully fresh in the hearts and minds of the authors, with a respectful frankness and honesty that never attempts to deflect responsibility for the Pacific war. The Zero fighter's chief design engineer, Jiro Horikoshi, shares incredible and unrivaled insights into the aircraft industry of Japan in WWII, particularly the overwhelming and vacillating demands by the military bureaucracy that proved no less damaging to aircraft production than the relentless Allied bombing offensives. The inconveniences of production requirements early in the war and the significant loss of quality and outright paralysis by materials shortages brought by Japan's gradual defeats are described in a very open and readable manner. Engineers, mechanics, and certainly readers without a technical background will enjoy Horikoshi's narrative.

The greater part of the autobiographical story is told by Masatake Okumiya, a high ranking officer and pilot in the Imperial Navy who had survived an air crash and was relegated to administrative assignments, affording him access to the larger picture of overall theater operations. However, in no way did this duty keep Okumiya from the front lines, as he personally witnessed—and relates—watching one of Doolittle's B-25 bombers flying by during the ominous Tokyo raid in 1942. He offers invaluable firsthand insights

(Continued on page 11)

ENGINE FAILURE ON TAKEOFF

By Dan Shoemaker

SATURDAY, 11 JULY 2020 WAS INTERESTING, to say the least. Because of the coronavirus, this summer's airshow season was a bust for both the pilots and the aviation photographers who frequent them. So, a group of photographers organized a meet-up at Arlington Municipal Airport and put out a request for airplanes to photograph. Several Cascade Warbirds pilot/owners took up the challenge, and we were going to meet up at Arlington and give them some formations to shoot. It was looking to be a fun day, and I was eagerly anticipating the opportunity to finally get aerial formation shots of a couple newer owners' airplanes.

I met Dave Osgood at his hangar at Paine Field in Everett, and we were going to depart in his Navion and form up with Bob Hill and his IAR-823 to make a grand entrance at Arlington. We did a sequenced formation takeoff from Runway 34R, with Bob in the lead. Takeoff was normal, and shortly after Dave raised the landing gear, when we were between 100 and 150 feet above the ground, the engine let out a bang and then got really quiet. My first thought was that Dave had pulled the power for some reason, but then he said, "Oh shit." I responded with my own "Oh shit," and I took my camera from around my neck and put it in the back seat so it wouldn't end up embedded in my face or chest if things went even more sideways. In retrospect, knowing what I know now, I kind of regret that decision, as the video would have been amazing. However, at that point the outcome was far from certain, and Safety Dan had throat-punched Paparazzi Dan and thrown him in the back seat with the camera.

Dave made the most Hollywood mayday call I've ever heard: "Mayday, mayday, mayday. We're going down." Then he dropped the landing gear and made a slight adjustment to line up on Airport Road—which lines up almost perfectly with 34R to the north—since there was nothing else in the area but buildings and trees, and we started our trip back to Mother Earth.



The gear collapse ground down a fuel drain and left a trail of avgas on Airport Road. Photo: Dan Shoemaker

Thankfully, traffic on Airport Road was very light, so we stood a good chance of not hitting any cars. However, between us and the street were the stoplight at Airport and 94th and several sets of overhead wires. Dave made the right call to dive under the stoplight and keep his airspeed up rather than to sacrifice airspeed trying to clear the tops of the lights and then duck under the wires immediately afterward. As we rapidly descended toward that stoplight and it got bigger and bigger in the windscreen, the thing that struck me at the time, and that stuck with me afterward, was that the light was green. We were still airborne as we passed under the stoplight.

We touched down hard just past it and rolled about 100 yards down the road before the left main gear collapsed and we slid to an abrupt stop on the left tip tank. The hydraulic pump died with the engine and, without its assistance, the left main gear didn't have time to properly lock down. According to Dave, the first thing I said after we came to a stop was, "Good call on the seats, dude," a reference to the new seats with four-point harnesses that Dave had just installed. After a few moments to let our brains catch up and count our arms and legs and fingers and toes, we got the hell out of the airplane. A guy from the first in a long line of cars that had stopped stepped up and tried to help us out, but the knowledge that we had just dragged a fuel tank across the pavement was all the help we needed. I couldn't help but notice that every car in that line had at least one arm holding a phone sticking out its window. It was so 2020.

The Paine Field Fire Department, Everett PD, and the Snohomish County Sheriff's Department showed up very quickly, and they were all rock stars. The police got the area cordoned off and set up traffic control while the firefighters cleaned up the little bit of fuel that leaked out of the tip tank and used their airbags and Jenga-like blocks to lift the wing of the airplane so we



The fire department uses wood blocks and air bags to lift the wing and lock the gear down. Photo: Dan Shoemaker



Damage was primarily to a fuel drain, some paint, and a flap. Photo: Dan Shoemaker

could get it back onto all three wheels. Bob returned for landing and joined us at the site. Fellow Cascade

Warbirds pilot Chad Hawthorne and friends Bill Lattimer and Logan Shepard (Dave's mechanic) also showed up at the site.

The Paine Field Operations staff

came out, conducted an initial investigation, and helped get us a tug to tow the airplane back to the airport. Everybody pitched in when it came time to cut open the airport fence to get the airplane back in; the airport doesn't have any 36-foot-wide gates.

The only visible damage to the aircraft was a delaminated trailing edge of the left flap, a scraped left tip tank and ground-away fuel drain valve, a minor abrasion to the left main gear door, and some heavy wear on the tires. And, of course, whatever happened to the engine to turn a fun flight into Mister Toad's Wild Ride.

All credit for getting us down safely goes to Dave, who was in pure airmanship mode and never stopped flying the aircraft until we were safely down on the ground. We did have some fortunate happenstance working for us, as well.

First, we took off on Runway 34R. The wind was variable all day, and just before we taxied out for take-off, Runway 16L was in use. As I said earlier, Airport Road lines up as an almost perfect extension to 34R. Had we taken off from 16L, the area south of the airport is nothing but trees, industrial buildings, and residential neighborhoods. There is one big four-lane road to the south, but it's at a 45-degree angle to the runway and has numerous curves.

Second, traffic on Airport Rd. was light on this particular Saturday morning, so we had a pretty clear landing area. It's one of the main arteries for all the Boeing facilities in the area so had we caught a shift change the road would likely have been full of cars.

Timing was also a key factor in our survival. Had the engine quit sooner, we would not have had enough altitude to make it to Airport Road. Any later, and we could have ended up going into the Boeing plant at the end of Airport Road.

After the fact, Logan's extensive knowledge of the airplane allowed him to help the firefighters safely get the plane up onto all three wheels and then get it back to Dave's hangar without incurring any fur-

ther damage.

Despite how it looks in the accompanying photos, this was not a crash. It was a safe emergency off-airport landing where the one unlocked landing gear slowly retracted once the airplane was already on the ground. Both Dave and I got out unharmed, and no structures, vehicles, or people on the ground were hit by us. The whole trip was probably about one minute of powered flight, followed by about twenty seconds of glider time. Afterward, we went back to Rancho GUSO (Dave's hangar) and once the airplane was bedded down, we sat around, talked about the incident, had a few really good laughs at some of the goofy things we remembered about what happened, and enjoyed the best-tasting pizza and beer we'd ever had.

The following day, Logan inspected, started, and performed a test run of the engine, which appeared to operate normally. Dave recovered flight data from the plane's engine monitor, which showed that there was a fuel pressure spike immediately prior to our bang and loss of engine power. To be safe, the airplane's fuel system was subsequently removed and sent out for inspection. The shop noted several discrepancies between the fuel system components and the entries in the engine's logbook and that, despite records of a recent overhaul, the fuel system appeared untouched. A few key components were unairworthy. It's suspected that the badly worn fuel pump impeller and/or worn drive coupling may have resulted in a spike in the fuel flow, which caused a backfire (the bang we heard) and flooding of the engine, resulting in the engine failure in flight.

The fuel system has since been completely overhauled and repaired, its reliability no longer in question, and the damaged flap has been replaced. The left tip tank fuel drain valve, which ground down to a nub as it was dragged across the pavement after the left main gear failed, spared the tip tank itself any serious damage, and a new valve has been installed. Dave's Navion had its first post-accident test flight on 10 December 2020 and flew again on 12 December, along with Bill Lattimer and Tanner Matheny in their Navions. The plane flies well, with the new fuel system improving its performance considerably. 38K is back. 🍕



Bill Lattimer's L-17 leads 38K and Tanner Matheny's Navion in a post-repair formation. Photo: Tanner Matheny

CELEBRATING THE 75TH ANNIVERSARY OF V-J DAY, PART I

By John "Smokey" Johnson

AFTER OUR SUCCESSFUL V-E DAY FLY-BY on May 8, 2020, every other event and airshow was canceled due to COVID-19. As unpredictably as everything was going, I signed up to participate in the Reno Air Races and the 75th anniversary of V-J Day in Pearl Harbor, Hawaii. It was a little crazy trying to figure out which, if not both, events would cancel or go on as scheduled. As it turned out, Reno decided to postpone until 2021 but the 75th anniversary of the end of WWII decided to press on and proceed full speed ahead.

We began preparations for our departure by getting the airplane ready to go. I did an oil change and replaced the used oil with nine gallons of AeroShell 120. My crew chief, Dave Richardson, and I applied four gallons of ACF-50 anti-corrosion fluid into every inspection opening and pulled the wing tips to make sure all the surfaces were prepared and protected against the assault from the saline marine air the airplane would be subjected to on the transit over to Pearl Harbor on the USS *Essex*. Meanwhile, there was paperwork and more paperwork to fill out and sign in triplicate to be sent to the U.S. Navy and Department of Defense.

With everything completed and the airplane fueled and loaded, we departed Diamond Point Airport (2WA1) on July 12, 2020 and headed south towards Naval Air Station North Island (NASNI). We made our first stop in Scappoose, OR (KSPB) to stretch our legs and hit the loo, then went on to Willows, CA (KLWL). When we arrived, it was 109° F with a slight breeze from the southeast. It felt like being in a convection oven, but it was a dry heat. We rapidly fueled the airplane and were hoping to visit the local airport restaurant to cool off and get a beverage, but it had just closed. One of the airport maintenance employees directed us to some cool water for our second leg to Sierra Sky Park (E79) near Fresno, CA, where we were going to spend the night at a friend's house. It was a cool 104° F there, with lots of smoke from the fires burning in the area.

As I was securing the airplane in the cockpit after shutdown, I noticed a television crew shooting video for a local news station, so I waved at them as I took my



Smokey and his T-6G, *Playtime*, after arriving at NAS North Island. All photos: John Johnson

helmet off. Just then, I heard a loud noise and felt the airplane move slightly. As I looked towards the left and rear, I noticed Dave lying on the ground. He had started to egress the back seat, his foot slipped on the oily rear side step, and he fell and did a most excellent parachute landing fall. He immediately sprung to his feet and then also noted the television crew. He and I casually walked over to them and asked if they captured the slip. Naturally, the cameraman said, "Of course," with a smile. Our friend who lives in Fresno said he would be sure to get a copy of the "incident" for future enjoyment. We also did a short interview and explained what we were doing there and the story of the V-J Day 75th anniversary in Pearl Harbor.

After securing the airplane, we shed our flight suits and downed another bottle of water. We spent an enjoyable evening with our friend, which included dinner and several adult recreational beverages, while discussing all the current events affecting aviation and airshows. We retired to a well-deserved restful sleep so we could wake up refreshed and ready to continue our trip south in the morning.

We awoke at 0600 hours the next morning to be back out at the airport to get airborne before the day's heat started. I had decided to refuel in the morning due



to the heat and potential fuel expansion the afternoon before. Just as I walked out towards the T-6, I saw a Jet A fuel truck parked in front of it and the driver getting ready to dispense some into the left fuel tank. I quickly hollered across the ramp for him to hold up a second and, fortunately, made it to the airplane before he started to fill the tank. I asked the young man if this looked like a jet or even a turbine engine and he responded that he didn't know the difference but that I had red fuel caps. Instead of getting angry, I spent a few minutes explaining the P&W 1340 radial engine and other aspects of the T-6.

After that close call, we loaded our gear and started to prepare for our next leg. We departed Fresno, CA and headed south by Fox Field, adjacent to Edwards AFB, then over Lancaster, CA, El Cajon Pass, and south by Lake Elsinore, CA to Brown Field (KSDM) to top off our fuel before the short leg into NASNI (KNZY). I contacted SOCAL Approach abeam March AFB and the controller cleared me direct to Brown Field and advised he would give me vectors and altitude changes en route. I was amazed that I could get such an easy clearance through some complex airspace adjacent to and through Camp Pendleton and Miramar MCAS bases.

We were very careful as we approached Brown Field (KSDM) because of its extremely close proximity to the international border and the Gen. Rodriguez International Airport in Tijuana, Mexico (MMTJ), a mere two nm to the south. I didn't want to be that guy who landed in Tijuana, especially with the border closed due to the COVID-19 pandemic. I visually acquired Brown Field and maneuvered to a right downwind for landing on runway 26R. We taxied clear of the runway to the FBO ramp and Dave monitored the fueling while I went inside to call NASNI to get our permission to land there, a short fourteen nm away. The Navy wanted our fuel tanks to be $\frac{3}{4}$ or more full for the shipboard transit to Pearl Harbor, Hawaii.

We took off to the west and immediately switched to SOCAL, who told us to fly the U.S.-Mexico border fence to the west and maintain 2000 feet MSL. The controller then switched us over to the NASNI tower controller, who advised that there was a C-2 on approach at my ten o'clock and to follow that traffic to runway 29, num-

ber two, cleared for landing. I slowed, put the landing gear down, and noticed I was still gaining on the C-2 ahead of me. Just as I was going to ask the tower controller how our spacing was, he advised me that the C-2 was going to stop and turn around on the runway due to a taxiway closure. He instructed me to do a right 360 for spacing. I asked if I could do a left break to land for spacing and the controller said, "You can do that?" I responded with, "Yes, sir," and he said, "Go for it!"

I added power, retracted the gear and flaps, climbed back up to pattern altitude, and did my left break at the arrival end of runway 29. On downwind, I extended the gear and, once abeam the numbers, departed the perch and turned left base. The tower cleared us to land and I extended final flaps and did my GUMPS check just as I turned a one-mile final. Since the winds were right down the very long (7501') and wide (200') runway, I elected to do a three-point landing, which went very well. Once I had the airplane slowed down and turned onto taxiway B3, the controller said, "Great job and welcome to North Island, contact ground on 118.0." I checked in with the ground controller and he advised me to follow the Follow Me truck to parking, which was easy to do. We taxied by lots of C-2 Greyhounds, CH-60 and CH-53 helicopters, F-18 Growlers, and an F-35. I shut down the engine and secured the airplane.

We had departed home two days early to avoid a weather system which might have brought low ceilings and visibility and now had two extra days in San Diego. The organizers were gracious enough to let us check into our hotel early. We were staying at the Navy Lodge, on the beach with a stunning view of Point Loma. We rented a car for a few days to do some provision acquisition missions including hardware, clothing, and a grocery store before our mandatory fourteen-day quarantine lock down prior to boarding the USS *Essex*.

One afternoon, while still free to roam around the base, we saw *Essex* depart the harbor and head out to sea. It was going on a week's family cruise up towards Camp Pendleton before setting sail for RIMPAC and our mission to Pearl Harbor. The USS *Essex* is an LHD and not a standard fleet carrier. The ship carries helicopters, Harriers, V-22 Ospreys, and soon the F-35. Amphibious assault landing craft and L-CAT vehicles are





stored in a huge cavernous well deck at the stern of the ship which can be flooded to facilitate their deployment and retrieval.

After our two free days, we were told to start our quarantine. We could leave the hotel to go for walks on the beach or around the base but were not supposed to interact with any other of our group's pilots/crews or U.S. Navy personnel.

The rest of the aircraft started arriving intermittently, including a Grumman F8F Bearcat, F4F Wildcat, North American P-51D, four more North American T-6s/SNJ's, a North American B-25 Bomber, a Boeing PT-17 Stearman, a North American T-28B, and two Consolidated PBY Catalina flying boats. Also, a U.S. Army C-12 (Beechcraft King Air 200) would go with us to Hawaii. Most of the pilots were not going on the ship on the way over but would join up with us once we arrived in Pearl Harbor. They would have to comply with different COVID testing requirements set forth by the governor of Hawaii. Those requirements kept changing, which was just one of the reasons Dave and I elected to go over with the ship.

Most of our time was spent thinking about the adventure ahead once we cleared quarantine and were aboard *Essex* and headed to Pearl Harbor. We did order some additional cameras to shoot video, plus a few items we forgot at home. You can't really pack much personal baggage in a T-6, especially once you put in all the chocks, spare tail wheel, cleaners, and spare hardware for the two-month mission.

We received our daily meals each evening from a local upscale restaurant called Brigantine, which was across from the famous Hotel Del Coronado. The food was amazing, especially when compared to what we saw being delivered to the Navy personnel also being quarantined before deployment. We always had extra items and started leaving them in front of random doors as a surprise for the recipients. We also met families with three to five kids living in our same two-person

room, awaiting assignment of quarters or for a change of station move. We began to give them all our extra juice, milk, and any other items that we just could not consume before the next meal delivery. They were all very appreciative and one young mother with three kids even started crying, saying, "Thank you so much."

In the evenings, we would sit on our balcony as the sun started to set, have a beverage, and just relax from our day of doing nothing.

By day five, things had settled into a routine and the confinement was starting to have a noticeable effect. I was going on two or three walks a day on the beach. 2.5 miles over to the flight line and back just to get out and not feel trapped in the room. I read a lot and, believe it or not, we were still filling out forms for the military.

The following week, we observed the USS *Essex* returning to port and realized we only had six more days to go before we would be released and have our airplanes craned aboard the ship.

Five days prior to our sailing date, we started to move all the airplanes from the tarmac at NASNI to the carrier pier for loading aboard ship. Each aircraft was towed down the main avenue on the base toward the carrier pier with a police escort. It was quite a spectacle to see all these magnificent WWII aircraft being escorted down the main street. The B-25 used up most of the road with its 67' 7" wingspan. The two PBYs had to take off from the runway at NASNI and then land on the water in San Diego Bay before being towed through the security barrier to the ship. It was quite a sight to see the two PBYs land in the harbor. They had to do a lot of coordination among all the private boats, U.S. Navy and civilian ships, and even the FAA control tower at Lindbergh Field (KSAN) just a mile to the north of their landing site. Then they were lifted aboard the ship. Each aircraft was loaded aboard ship with a large deck-side crane known as Big Red. They were towed to their designated spots and secured to the deck with chains

and straps.

The day finally arrived and we were called to the ship's dock to be tested for COVID-19 prior to going aboard. There was a solitary chair in the middle of the expansive carrier pier and two Navy corpsmen waiting for us. We did rock-paper-scissors for who went first and I won the honor. I sat down, the corpsman took out a swab that looked two feet long, and told me to tilt my head back. He started to insert the swab and it felt like he was scratching the back of my skull with it. Then he twisted and rotated it just enough to make my eyes water. I grabbed the bottom of my chair and held on until he retracted it and said, "All done."

After everyone finished, we got back into the van to return to our rooms and wait for the call to see whether we were going or denied, if the test was positive.

Approximately two hours later, the ship's doctor called and said we were cleared to grab our gear and come aboard the ship. We went downstairs, caught our ride to the pier, and unloaded our bags. We were greeted by several young seamen and petty officers who would escort us aboard ship to find our quarters and get settled in prior to shoving off later that same day. We worked our way up the ramps and through the corridors of the ship to find the office where we would be assigned individual rooms. We were wet with perspiration and slightly out of breath from the arduous hike. Dave and I were both assigned rooms up in the bow of the ship where the floor was green. We later found out this is where the Marine officers quarters were located, if they were aboard, but no one else was around us due to COVID restrictions for the RIMPAC exercise. We settled in our rooms for about thirty minutes then went top side for departure.

Soon, we were casting off all lines as the tugs pushed and pulled the massive ship away from the pier, going by the USS *Theodore Roosevelt* and USS *Abraham Lincoln* on our way out to the main channel. Then we were under our own power and moving slowly down the channel toward the mouth of the harbor. The ship had four .50 caliber machine guns and five M240 porta-

ble machine guns manned in case there were any security issues while departing the harbor.

As we approached the mouth of the harbor, we noticed a small 28-foot sailboat towing an inflatable raft crossing directly in front of us from starboard to port (that's right to left for all you land lovers). It soon became apparent that he was not going to alter his course and the *Essex* was not able to either as we were constrained to the channel by the submarine base on our starboard side and a U.S. Navy destroyer taking on munitions on our port side. The captain blew the ship's collision horn twice and then the collision alert just as we saw the sailboat go underneath the bow of the ship. We ran over to the port side to see that he just missed getting hit. I think the bow wave and the bulb on the bow may have pushed him to the side and saved his life. He was yelling at the ship saying he had right-of-way but he actually didn't in this case. Like parking your car on the railroad tracks and telling the locomotive to stop because you were there first? Potential Darwin Award winner?

We finally cleared the harbor and turned to the southwest, picked up speed, and were soon headed off into the sunset towards Pearl Harbor, Hawaii. The sunset was spectacular and soon we saw everyone vanish below decks. I asked one of the deck chiefs where everyone disappeared to and he said it was time for evening chow.

We went to our quarters in Marine Country, a four-man room but there were minimal Marines aboard. We each had our own room with lots of space not usually afforded to the Marines when they occupied the same rooms. We headed down to the officers' wardroom and got in line for dinner. We had to keep our masks on until sitting and every other seat was vacant, which limited capacity. After dinner, we went across the hall to the officers' conference room and read for a while. At 2100 hours, I retired to my quarters and read a little bit more before going to sleep.

The shipboard portion of our adventure had begun. ✪



VETERANS DAY FORMATION

By Stan "Sundance" Kasprzyk

THE CITY OF AUBURN, WA has been hosting a Veterans Day weekend celebration since 1965. In 2020, due to COVID restrictions, a planned parade was downsized to a vehicle procession through downtown Auburn. Former F-105 Wild Weasel pilot Dan Barry had previously flown over the parade in his Aeronca L-3 and contacted me to try to coordinate more participation from local north-west warbird pilots. Due to our minimal flying opportunities because of lockdowns and cancellations this year, I received enthusiastic responses from thirteen aviators to join in a November flyby.

I was able to obtain ramp space in front of the Boeing Employees Flying Association (BEFA) hangar at the Renton airport. Even though we took a number of "pre-combat losses" from our original potential list of thirteen airplanes, five intrepid aviators made it to Renton, with four making it "to the target" over Auburn.

"Pre-combat losses" were as follows:

- Troy Larson/John Parker (video chase Bonanza) – Cancelled early as a safety measure due to COVID issues in the Parker household. Get well, Parker family!
- Joshua Weinstein (T-34) – Stuck in annual
- Tom Hoag (Seabee) – Starter issues
- Tom Rogers (Stearman) – Busted oil line
- Bob Hill (IAR-823) – Timeline issues with Museum of Flight preparation
- John "Smokey" Johnson (Bonanza) – Mechanical issues
- Vic Norris (IAR-823) – WX cancelation due to freezing rain at Bremerton

Doug Clough (Stearman) would actually be considered a "combat loss" since Doug was able to launch from Kapowsin but had to turn back due to IFR conditions north of Auburn. The five aviators who made it to Renton had to delay due to weather.

Ryan Georgi and I launched as a weather ship in Ryan's 1946 Luscombe 8E. I had never flown a Luscombe previously but always enjoy flying in any airplane that has sticks instead of yokes! The Luscombe has an inherent short takeoff and landing capability with its wing design and, even with an 85-hp engine and no flaps, we still leaped off Renton's runway 16 in a few hundred feet. We cruised south among the pockets



Pre-flight briefing in BEFA's hangar. Photo: Dan Shoemaker

of low clouds, fog, and rain while I got a feel for the Luscombe's flight controls, noticing slightly heavier aileron forces than I had anticipated. The airplane is quite stable in pitch and can be easily trimmed for hands-off flight. It's an honest airplane, with surprisingly good over-the-nose visibility for a tail dragger. The only real difference in the right seat is that there are no brakes on the right side, with heel brakes only on the left.

Once Ryan and I found acceptable weather over Auburn, we raced back to rally the five-ship. Just after run-up, Tanner Matheny and Damon "Manpad" Kroes had to ground abort due to an imminent "hot chocolate recycling drainage leak" from the two young co-pilots in the backseat, Dylan and Henry. Crisis averted, but too late to join the four-ship. Tanner made a run to join but had to turn for home due to weather.

So, Dave Desmon's four-ship evaporated to a single and he headed to the target solo, smoke on, with Dan Shoemaker and Ron "Capt Mac" McElroy in the cockpit. In trail was the only true close formation of the event, with Ryan getting his first experience as lead (and me in the right seat for guidance) and Dan Barry in his Aeronca L-3 stuck like glue on the left wing. You looked great, Col. Barry!

In trail of the two-ship were Tom and Marian Jensen, who were able to join in a nice route formation right over the target. Kudos to Tom and Marian for braving the cold, rain, and wind in their open cockpit N3N—they were awesome! I think Marian bent the throttle forward in the front cockpit for the extra speed.

After our target runs, all involved separated for their home airports. Thanks to everyone for providing a positive salute to our veterans. Also, thanks to BEFA for their hangar use and Boeing for their ramp space at Renton. Well done, all! 🇺🇸

Luscombe, Navion, N3N, and reconnaissance. Photos: Stan Kasprzyk



into that “superb” attack that was anticipated by the Japanese yet expected to be from high altitude and by shorter range, single-engine bombers. The many stunning victories in Japan’s rampages across China and greater Southeast Asia are well-related with unparalleled levels of detail. This includes stories of the early fixed-gear A5M Claude fighter operations against China’s inferior aircraft of the late 1930s, as well as a remarkable hour-by-hour description of the hunting and sinking of the British warships *Repulse* and *Prince of Wales* in late 1941. He even describes the bomber crews’ favorite onboard meals. Throughout the narrative, the indispensable and undeniable role of the new Mitsubishi A6M Zero fighter is revealed, shockingly superior to all aircraft it opposed, a surprise to Western observers. With the A6M, the Japanese navy truly ruled the skies of Asia for a terrifying season.

Given the severe limitations of production capacity and blinded by such sweeping early victories, Okumiya again asserts that the stifled warnings by cautionary voices in the militarized Japanese government were gradually revealed to be all too accurate. “While the course of the Pacific War for its first six months became a parade of brilliant Japanese victories, no sensible man could honestly believe that an abrupt change was not in store for our country.” The turning of the Pacific war’s tides is well-related with unprecedented detail. In fact, Okumiya is one of very few survivors of the brilliant P-38 fighter attack on Admiral Yamamoto’s escorted G4M Betty bomber formation and he gives us an eye-witness account of the aerial ambush from the vantage of the second of two Betty bombers, also downed but not before Okumiya could observe Yamamoto’s stricken bomber falling in flames nearby. Further, a recovered Okumiya relates with great detail from difficult personal experience the steady deterioration of living conditions for Japanese air and ground crews at South Pacific bases in the ensuing months. We see the poor sanitation, sleep deprivation, incessant bombing attacks, tattered mosquito netting, and the toll of relentless tropical insects and harsh climate. We learn of the ultimate costly fate of maintenance crews being largely abandoned at forward air bases as air crews were hastily withdrawn as well as the fact that surviving aircrews downed at sea knew that a rescue was highly unlikely.

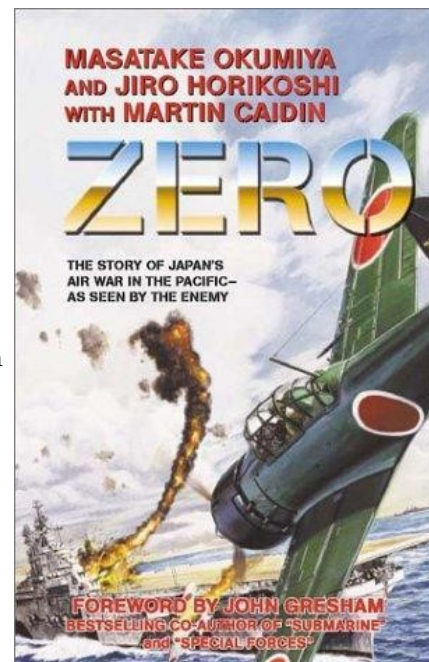
As Tokyo pressed forward with the unsustainable war, Okumiya relates that the vast industrial and engineering potential of the United States was rapidly waking. The Allied fighting potential and production capacity for better fighter aircraft that could meet, and beat, the largely stagnant performance of the Zero became apparent as the months wore on. At one time unrivaled, the mainstay Zero fighter was gradually overwhelmed by the P-38 Lightning, the gull-winged F4U Corsair, and particularly, per Okumiya, the F6F Hellcat fighters which appeared in increasing numbers. With Japan’s aviation industry crippled and eventually devastated by

Allied raids of B-29 bombers of unmatched range and performance, and with the unrecoverable losses of experienced, let alone qualified, aircrews, the exceptional new Japanese fighter designs could not be fielded in numbers that could hope to make any significance difference in the obvious outcome of the war. The authors offer no pretense of surprise at the predicted stunning losses and retreats before a determined Allied enemy, culminating in the irresistible atomic blasts that finally forced Japan’s reluctant surrender in 1945.

Naval historians will certainly appreciate the book’s detailed explanation of Japan’s aircraft carrier development and uses throughout the Pacific War. Pilots will appreciate not only the accounts of flying the Zero but also the descriptions of operations by other famous Japanese aircraft such as the Nakajima Type-97 Kate torpedo bomber and the Mitsubishi G3M Nell medium bomber. Political history enthusiasts will be grateful for the insight into the fanatical and ultimately suicidal devotion of Japan’s wartime ruling hierarchy. I cannot recommend highly enough the text *Zero* by Masatake Okumiya and Jiro Horikoshi.

For broader reading and information, I would recommend the following additional resources:

- *Samurai!*, a memoir by Saburo Sakai, Japan’s highest-scoring fighter ace to survive the war
- *Shig: The True Story of an American Kamikaze*, a memoir by Shigeo Imamura, a surviving Japanese-American pilot of the infamous “Special Attack” corps who provides personal insights into life and pilot training in an increasingly desperate country
- *Divine Wind: Japan’s Kamikaze Force in World War II*, a firsthand account of the kamikaze corps by several of its surviving officers, Rikihei Inoguchi and Tadashi Nakajima
- *American Zero Fighter*, a video by Mark Felton Productions, presents a brief but excellent history of the Zero captured nearly intact in the Aleutian Islands, allowing US analysts to finally gain invaluable information about the mysterious fighter:
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=tDY0CD0-jxQ> 📺



Zero: The Story of Japan’s Air War in the Pacific—As Seen by the Enemy

Author: Masatake Okumiya, Jiro Horikoshi, Martin Caidin

Paperback, 364 pages

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UPCOMING EVENTS

STAND BY TO STAND BY

The January, February, and March membership meetings at the Museum of Flight are cancelled.

Alternate events will be attempted as conditions allow, including a possible April 10 membership meeting.

Our full list of events and their status is updated regularly on our calendar at www.cascadewarbirds.org/events.

CHECK SIX



On September 2, 1945, sailors aboard USS Missouri packed into every available space to watch the Japanese surrender ceremony in Tokyo Bay while massive formations of Allied aircraft flew protective cover overhead.

Left: US Army, <https://catalog.archives.gov/id/148727264>

Above: US Navy, <https://catalog.archives.gov/id/100311097>