



R. D. "Crash" Williams flies his TBM Avenger. Photo: John Clark



★ Cascade Warbirds Squadron Newsletter ★

CO'S COCKPIT

By John "Smokey" Johnson



WINTER HAS ARRIVED and the holiday season is in full swing. Last winter, we were still meeting remotely due to the Museum of Flight's in-person meeting restrictions. In the spring, it was nice to get out and start having events. During May, several of us flew over the Armed Forces Day Parade in Bremerton and then continued on to Port Angeles for their Airport Appreciation Day event. We had a strong showing of aircraft at the Olympic Air-

show on Father's Day weekend in June. We also continued to provide missing man formations for veterans who had gone west. In July, the NW Multi-signatory Formation Clinic was held at the Bremerton Airport and many of our members attended the four-day training event. Unfortunately, Tacoma Wings and Wheels was canceled but several of us attended the one-day Fly-in and Car Show at the Bremerton Airport. Numerous members attended the Reno Air Races held in September at Stead Airport in Nevada.

We had our first in-person meeting in October at the Museum of Flight. There was a large number of our members in attendance and our presentation was a talk by Bud and Ross Granley, to honor Bud Granley's long-time participation as a warbird airshow performer. It was wonderful to once again gather as a group, see everyone in the audience, and share a meeting and presentation.

I was very happy that we managed to overcome numerous obstacles and have our annual Christmas holiday party. I hear that everyone had a great time at the Hilton Garden Inn at Paine Field. The catering was provided by Shawn O'Donnell's American Grill and Irish Pub and the reviews of the dinner served were very positive. We are in the process of trying to secure the hotel and caterers again for 2023.

As I write these comments, it is only one week until the New Year and 2023. There are some changes to the Cascade Warbirds Board as our Operations Officer, Stan Kasprzyk, has decided to step down so he can spend more time with his family and dedicate time teaching his grandkids in CA how to fly. He will remain on as Assistant Operations Officer to help out when he can. Ron McElroy also resigned from the Board because he retired and has relocated to Las Cruces, NM.

I would like to express my personal appreciation and say thank you to them for their time, energy, and service to Cascade Warbirds and wish them both the best in their future endeavors. Fortunately,

Dan Shoemaker, who is our current Chief Photographer and EAA B-17 Tour Stop Coordinator, has stepped forward and volunteered to take over the Operations Officer position.

We are in the process of assembling the year's schedule of events and will keep everyone posted using the CWB calendar, so be sure to check the website frequently for updates.

We are all volunteers working to conduct the day-to-day and annual tasks it takes to make Cascade Warbirds continue to thrive and able to carry out our mission. I would like to express my gratitude and thanks to all the volunteers and Board members who expend their personal time and energy to keep the organization going and growing. We are always looking for more volunteers to help out and carry on, so if you have some spare time and the inclination to help further the mission of Cascade Warbirds, please contact me or any of the other Board members. Our emails are listed on the website.

Wishing everyone a very Happy New Year! ★



Open until March 17!

Memorial Scholarship

Our annual scholarship program is funded by donations from benefactors like you. Consider making a tax-deductible donation to fuel aviation's future. Thank you for your generosity!

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 email or mailing addresses below.

Business Office

1066 Yates Road
Oak Harbor, WA 98277

Editorial Email

editor@cascadewarbirds.org

Cascade Warbirds is a tax-exempt charitable organization as defined in section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code.

Annual newsletter value: \$6.00
Published quarterly

www.cascadewarbirds.org

NEW RATINGS

Rumor has it that our very own **Justin Drafts** recently added his ATP-AMEL rating. Congratulations, Justin, on another step in your aviation career.

WELCOME ABOARD

Say hello to new member **Mark Still**. He's a USAF vet residing in Kirkland and now flies corporately. He's the proud owner of a Cirrus SR22 G3 TN.

RENO AIR RACES

We'll be back in Reno come September 13th, reveling in the Moya Lear box at show center, aka A-41. If we spill over there, our second box is just rearward, B-40. We currently have seats available up front; simply place your deposit of \$100 per seat with Fred. Plan to pay in full during February or March. We don't yet know the 2023 pricing, but it should be similar to 2022. Enjoy!

2023 SCHOLARSHIPS

Our 2023 aviation scholarship program is officially open. So help us spread the word to any area youth you think may be interested. The program is the same as the past several years—four or five young adults will be selected to receive books and tuition for the private pilot ground school plus two instructional flights. The value of this scholarship is approximately \$1,500.

Come September, those who completed the ground school phase and logged

their flights can apply for a further grant of \$2,500 toward earning their private. Partner schools in the Puget Sound area include Galvin Flying and Rainier Flight Service. Go to cascadewarbirds.org/youth for our application.

OSHKOSH HOUSE

Anyone interested in a room in the Cascade Warbirds rental house for the 2023 EAA AirVenture Oshkosh, please contact Dave Desmon to hold your spot. Close to the field, the lake, the neighborhood bar, and your CWB comrades. Rooms fill up fast. Price is not final yet but expected to be approximately \$550 per person for the entire week (8 days). Get details from Dave at davedesmon@yahoo.com.

IT'S TIME

With the new year comes our reminder to you for our 2023 dues. Still just \$20, you can pay with Zelle, PayPal (if you absorb any fee), a check to CWB mailed to 1066 Yates Rd., Oak Harbor, WA 98277, or cash if you happen to run into the Finance Officer at a meeting. Check your membership expiration date on this newsletter's envelope and plan to stay current!

AIRCRAFT AVAILABLE

Mike Jones is selling his Nanchang CJ-6A. It even comes with parachutes! Contact **Larry Pine** with your interest. More info and a link to the Barnstormers ad are at cascadewarbirds.org/for-sale. ✪



Four of our previous flight training scholarship winners were introduced at our October meeting. Corey Zendejas (left) received the 2022 Continuing Aviation Education Grant. Photo: Dan Shoemaker

AS OUR DAYS START GETTING LONGER, it's a perfect time to catch up on all your winter maintenance and start exercising your flying skills. We often have long stretches of cool but clear weather early in the year, so do your pre-heating and get some air under your wings. Try to fly at least once a week to keep both your airplane and your piloting skills in decent shape.

Your Cascade Warbirds finished last year with an impressive number of honor flights, fly-overs, and missing man flights, all honoring our deceased (and a few living) veterans and their families. Special thanks go to John "Smokey" Johnson, Dave "Prancer" Desmon, Bob Hill, Vic "TO/GA" Norris, Dave "GUSO" Osgood and Roger "Ramjet" Collins for participating in many of the memorial events.

Bob Hill flew a wide circle after his missing man pull-up during a summer fly-by, to rejoin with the departing three-ship. I was on the ground at the Tahoma National Cemetery with Tom "TP" Jensen for that fly-

by and we were both surprised by the family's very positive and emotional reaction to that parting single-ship pass. I think Bob Hill has inadvertently added a re-quired element to our "standard operations" for fly-bys.

My wife, Mary, was on the ground at Tahoma for the last missing man in November and I asked Bob to try his return pass a little tighter this time. Mary and all the veteran's family members thought the second single-ship pass was very appropriate and moving, bringing tears to the eyes of those on the ground, as it signified their loved one making one last solo pass before departing.

This is my last Ops Tempo article as your CWB Ops Officer since I'll be very busy over the next two summers teaching my young grandsons Alex and Nathaniel to fly in California. I've handed over the Ops O reins to Dan "FAGIB" Shoemaker, who will hopefully be quite busy as the 2023 airshow season warms up.

Fly safe by flying often! ✪

PARTY ON!

By Dave "Prancer" Desmon

ON DECEMBER 10, 2022, the Cascade Warbirds held our first Christmas party in three years at the Hilton Garden Inn at Paine Field in Everett. Forty members attended, and the atmosphere was festive. It was great to see so many old friends and spend the evening merrily socializing.

The facility was wonderful, and Shawn O'Donnell's catering provided probably the best meal in recent memory with turkey, prime rib, traditional fixings, Irish bread pudding, and apple crisp. The bar was open until midnight and was well patronized. Dan Shoemaker and John Clark provided a slide show highlighting CWB activities over the past couple of years and remembering friends lost.

Stan "Sundance" Kasprzyk provided a great overview of the honor flights and missing man tributes CWB has done in the last year, including a nice video segment by KING-5 TV on a 100th birthday overflight for a vet in Chehalis named Bob Kabel.

It was our honor and privilege to present the 2022 CWB Volunteer of the Year Award to both Sundance and Tom "TP" Jensen for all the work they did scheduling, organizing, conducting, and coordinating those flights, a major contribution to the mission of CWB.

All in all, the evening was a great success, with a reprise currently planned for Dec. 9, 2023, in the same location. Hope to see you all there! ✪



A four-ship formation flew over veteran Bob Kabel's 100th birthday party in Chehalis.



Sundance and TP received 2022 Volunteer of the Year awards at the Christmas party. Photos: Dan Shoemaker

SEAHAWKS HONOR DICK NELMS

By Kerry Edwards

MIKE FLOOD, SEAHAWKS VP, Community Outreach, is a CWB member and retired Coast Guard pilot. Part of a larger NFL program, the Seahawks honor a local veteran at home games. Mike attended our October meeting, saw the replay of our Chehalis aerial salute, and asked Dave Desmon about saluting that veteran. Dave noted that the 100-year-old was not very mobile, but we had a very impressive man in our midst—CWB member and USAAF Captain Dick Nelms, B-17 pilot for thirty-five missions over Europe and current Museum of Flight docent. Mike inquired with Dick's family, interviewed him at the B-17 at the Museum of Flight, and the rest is history.

Dick was recognized during the November 27, 2022, game against the LA Raiders. He and his family were invited to the Field Club and to watch the game in a team suite. Participating were Dick, his son Garet, Garet's girlfriend Maria, and Dick's friend Brad Bullick, along with Mike Flood and Seahawks Community Engagement Manager Nino Gray.

Mike later wrote: "Brad and all: What a great day for the 68,000 fans who got to salute Dick! We were honored to have such a gracious and heroic man with us for the day. For everyone who met him, Dick's kind and humble spirit made a lasting im-



Photo: Gary Lott, courtesy Seahawks VP Community Outreach Mike Flood

pression. That includes the military personnel, vets and first responders who had the pleasure of talking with Dick. Herman Davis, 89-year-old Alaska Native Elder and Marine vet, was thrilled to receive the Seahawks-military coin which Dick presented before the game." 🇺🇸



Dick meets with veteran Herman Davis, Seahawks players, and poses with family and friends.

Photos courtesy Brad Bullick



A LEARNING EXPERIENCE (FOR SOMEONE)

By Vic "TO/GA" Norris

A GOOD DAY TO FLY! The day started out with a good flight to Paine Field (PAE) and progressed to a great honor flight combined with a flight review. After the pass over the cemetery for the missing man flight, I broke away from the formation to finish up the flight review. After some normal maneuvers like the "possible turn" (only losing 400ft in a power off 360° turn), Stan "Sundance" Kasprzyk and I headed back to Paine for landing.

At about ten miles out, I made a normal call to let the tower know I was inbound and wanting to land. As I was coming in on the east side of the field, and already set up on a long 45 for it, this landing was going to be a southbound landing on runway 16 Left. At about the point I entered the Paine Field airspace, I received a call, "Experimental 66KB, traffic is Cessna on two-mile final, cleared to land 16 Left". So I acknowledge and figure if the Cessna is on a two-mile final and I'm five miles from landing, the Cessna will be on the ground long before me, even if I am a bit faster.

As I turn onto my downwind leg for 16 Left, I see smoke from lead of the formation I had been in starting their break for 16 Right. Cool, I think to myself, we will be landing about the same time. So, normal landing, I have clearance, the sky (should be) clear. Heard some calls for 16 Left but they are a bit far out, so I want to keep it tight and not tie up the airspace. Make my base/final turn in a good warbird round off and...*oops!* There is that Cessna, on short final. Whelp, no reason to ruin a perfectly good go-around with a bad landing! Push power and start to go. As I am at a towered airport, I let the tower know, "Paine Tower, 66KB is on the go-around." Nothing for a few seconds. I'm in a good position, I have all of the traffic in sight, I'm side-stepped to the left a bit to keep the landing aircraft in sight, the downwind aircraft is off to my left, good clearance, all safe. Then the learning starts...

From the tower: "Aircraft on short final, GO AROUND!" (Note: The controller has been speaking on *both* frequencies, setting up landings and takeoffs for both runways all day.) So I am already on the go, the

aircraft below me and to my right is now on the go, and I found out later the formation of three on the other runway is now on the go! To fix this mix-up, the tower gave the direction, "66KB, offset to the right between the runways." Umm, NO! I am looking down on a Cessna, I am already overtaking, he is climbing and on my right! So I stay put as I am now past the downwind traffic and in safe clear air. If I were to attempt to offset as directed, I would be a part of a fireball involving a Cessna and an IAR-823.

I admit, at this point I did NOT do as I should have and say "66KB, unable." I just flew the plane in a safe manner. As I had clear air, I started the left hand turn to downwind and got from a flustered tower, "66KB, enter left pattern for 16 Left," so I acknowledged and started the downwind well behind the Cessna on downwind. The tower is still transmitting on both frequencies and I hear instructions for the formation to enter right pattern for 16 Right and the Cessna, now behind me, to enter left pattern for 16 Left. All is good now, the Cessna ahead on his 747-sized pattern turns in and gets clearance to land, I extend downwind...and extend...and extend. Now I can turn base and final and not eat the Cessna up. So here I am on final for a bit, then eventually over the Boeing building on short final.

"Paine Tower, Experimental 66KB is on short final for 16 Left." "Oh, 66KB, cleared to land 16 Left." "66KB cleared to land, 16 Left." Touchdown. Taxi off and a good debrief with Stan.

I'm not sure who learned what, but I do know someone learned something from this experience. If nothing else, *stay safe*, fly the plane, and if the directions from ATC are wrong or dangerous, *you* are in command of the aircraft! *You* need to keep it safe despite their direction!

Evidently, this plus the fact that I am apparently the party guy has now "earned" me the callsign "TO/GA" for "Take Off/Go Around" (a button on airliners) and because toga parties are a thing. ✪



CWB flew honor and memorial flights over Chehalis and Tahoma National Cemetery. Photos: Dan Shoemaker

WHEN DID WORLD WAR II OFFICIALLY BECOME WORLD WAR II?, PART II

By Peter Stekel

[CWB's resident author concludes his history of the name of a world event we often take for granted.—Ed.]

IDENTIFYING AND NAMING WORLD WARS was different at *The Washington Post* than *The New York Times*. Several weeks after the invasion of Poland in 1939, the *Post* was headlining articles about, “the last World War,” and revealing the death of a soldier from that war. A 19 September 1940 letter to the editor laments, “World War II, grave and awful as it is, is merely a temporary phase” to be endured because “during the past decade no attempt has been made to destroy Naziism.” In September of 1941, the *Post* was writing about how substantially lower the stock market was performing currently versus “when world War II got under way two years ago,” and how the current war compared to the similar time frame during “World War I” when “popular enthusiasm for war babies resulted in skyrocketing stock prices.” Given extreme Russian losses on the eastern front, an article from 10 October 1941 says it is time to “discard the theory that casualties in World War II would be minor,” comparing blitzkrieg warfare to the trench warfare of World War I.

Six days following the Japanese attack at Pearl Harbor, *The Washington Post* reports, “America’s roll of honor in World War II began emerging today from the smoke and flame over the Pacific,” as it chronicles the death of United States Army Air Forces B-17 pilot Captain Colin Kelly, Jr. On the 29th of that month they report “Senator Joseph F. Guffey (Democrat), of Pennsylvania, said last night that World War II would have been avoided if the United States had not junked Woodrow Wilson’s League of Nations peace plan.”

By late 1942 the *Post* is fully committed to the name “World War II,” proclaiming in headlines such as these: “Hull Blames Japan For World War II” and “Baptist Church Honors First Member to Die in World War II.” On 5 May 1945, V-E Day, the *Post* simply reports that, “the war is over.” A person would have to have spent the previous six years living in a hole in the ground to not know what war the *Post* was talking about. Which might explain why people referred to the war simply as, “the War.” See, for instance, the Ken Burns PBS documentary of that name. Adding a literary bent to how people referred to the war is French writer and novelist Marguerite Duras, who simply titled her World War II memoir *The War*.

Before hostilities in Europe began, American magazines were running regular features from their correspondents in Great Britain and the continent. Reportage from *The New Yorker* is indicative of articles being filed for readers in the United States. The magazine’s evolution on what to call the war is interesting because it doesn’t follow newspaper war naming at all.

In the beginning, A. J. Liebling wrote on 28 October 1939, “Theoretically, there is as much danger from the

air this week as on the first day of War ‘39, as Frenchmen call this one to distinguish it from the other.” The name, “War ‘39,” has a hopeful quality to it. As if this current war won’t last as long or be as grievous as the previous one.

One impression of how the last war bears upon the current one comes in December 1939 from Princess Paul Sapiéha in an essay published on the second of that month. Making those comparisons, the American-born princess naively reflects upon the “parades on Fifth Avenue, a plethora of flags, much advertising of Liberty Bonds” and atrocity stories focused on the Germans following the war’s end and being told that the armies back then “had been composed of simple men who hated to kill one another and suffered mostly from cold hands and wet feet.”

By his 12 May 1940 *New Yorker* article, A. J. Liebling writes, “The new phase of the second World War was announced to Parisians at daybreak Friday.”

Later, Mollie Panter-Downes is writing in a 1 June 1940 published piece about atrocity stories still remembered by those “over thirty from the last war” turning up again. To Panter-Downes this war is still unnamed other than referring to the last one.

A. J. Liebling also refers to “the last war” in an article published on 14 February 1942. But he uses the term “The first World War” in an article published 29 July 1944.

The next month, as Brendan Gill shows in his 12 August article, the term “world war” is being used in a matter-of-fact way as if in practice for years. He writes, “Being on the air when the flash announcing the second World War came through, I can remember the time exactly: it was 2:17 A.M., on September third, 1939.” There wasn’t any “second World War” then; only the German invasion of Poland and subsequent declaration several days later of war by France and Great Britain. But nobody was calling it the “second” of anything.

Much later in the war, when naming is ready to be set in stone, in his “Letter From Rome,” published 19 May 1945, Philip Hamburger concludes an article about the effect of Allied bombing on the stored and sequestered artwork of Milan by wondering if any has “survived the second World War.”

Vanity Fair was an important magazine for style and trends during the early 20th century until the Depression forced it to cease publication in 1936. But it was also an important magazine for covering politics, current national and international events, and the national mood. In its February 1919 issue is a book advertisement for Frank H. Simonds’ five volume *History of the World War*. The August 1932 issue has an extended essay about the European war reflecting, “the heavy expense is not the initial cost of fighting the War, but the upkeep of veterans afterward.” In December of that year is an essay by Walter Lippmann where he refers

many times to “the World War.” In the June 1935 issue of *Vanity Fair* is a penetrating and thoughtful analysis and appraisal of air power and how it will affect “the next war” much differently than “the last war.”

Elizabeth Nix in an article for the on-line magazine History.com writes with clarity that, “It’s hard to pinpoint precisely when the World War I and World War II—or First World War and Second World War—monikers arose.” This is because, “During World War I, of course, nobody knew that a second global conflict would follow closely on the heels of the first, so there was no need to distinguish it as the first of its kind.” Nix says people in the United States began using “World War” once America entered the conflict in 1917, preferring at first to refer to it as, “The European War.” Meanwhile, Britons preferred calling it the “Great War” or more simply “the War” and this usage continued until the late 1940s. On the other hand, Nix says that Winston Churchill in his 1927 memoir *The World Crisis* preferred calling it the “World War.”

Nix goes on to say that “World War II” first appeared in print “all the way back in February 1919, when a *Manchester Guardian* article used the term much in the way people today predict a hypothetical ‘World War III.’” But it was Franklin D. Roosevelt in 1941 who “would publicly label the conflict the ‘Second World War,’ and his fellow Americans quickly followed suit.”

Nix writes that in 1942 a contest was run to come up with another name for the war. Though there were 15,000 submissions, none garnered acceptance. Some of the names were the “Do-or-Die War,” the “Freedom-or-Slavery War,” the “Liberty-Eclipse War,” and the “Christianity-Against-Paganism” War. This contest may be the source of complaint in a 10 April 1942 letter to the editor in *The Washington Post* that rails about these “silly names” the public has come up with to rename “World War II.” The letter writer says, “This war is not called by that appellation because someone named it that, but because that is exactly what it is—the Second World War.”

In the introduction to *American Air Navigator*, published by the Consolidated Vultee Aircraft Corporation in 1944, Chairman of the Board Tom M. Girdler comments that aviation has been “forced by the second World War to regard the entire globe as a flying field.” Though “second” is in lower case and the term “World War II” is not specifically used, it is indicative that in official publications there was an awareness of how to call this current war.

A web posting at the US National Archives in 2014 probes how “World War II” became the official name of the war. According to Dr. Greg Bradsher, writing for the War Department in a 1 August 1945 letter to the commanding generals of the United States Army Service Forces, Ground Forces, and Air Forces, Brigadier General Thomas North posed the question of what the official designation of the present war should be. “He mentioned that in official documents, Acts of Congress,

publications and in current usage various names and designations had been applied to hostilities which began December 7, 1941,” and various committees of the Congress had made reference to, “the wars [*italics added*] in which the United States is presently engaged.”

Bringing up General Orders No. 115 from 1919 and how the 1914–1918 war had been officially designated “The World War,” North suggested that for reasons of simplicity and uniform terminology “World War II be the officially designated name for the present war covering all theaters and the entire period of hostilities.” He pointed out that “the term ‘World War II’ has been used in at least seven public laws” and “analysis of publications and radio programs indicates that this term has been accepted by common usage.”

Approval of the naming convention was also sought of, and granted by, of the Secretary of War, Secretary of the Navy, and other major decision makers. On 10 September 1945, Secretary of War Henry L. Stimson and Secretary of the Navy James Forrestal wrote to President Harry Truman with the proposal. The president signed his approval on 11 September 1945. The letter of approval was published in 10 Federal Register 11881 as “Paragraph No. 1 of War Department General Orders No. 80, dated September 19, 1945.” It provided that “the war in which the United States has been engaged since 8 December 1941 will hereafter be designated in all official communicates and publications as ‘World War II.’” The bureaucrats had made their major contribution to the war effort.

Common usage in modern times in the west of the term “World War II” for the conflict waged between 1939 and 1945 is so well accepted that the name origin is never questioned. It’s plain the name had its origins in the 1914–1918 “World War” because, as has been pointed out, there would not have been a “World War II” unless there had been a “World War I.” The naming of World War II in the United States was an evolutionary process played out in newspapers and magazines, public spaces, the military, and in government, and it’s impossible to locate any one, specific, or particular starting date or first usage.

In conclusion, from the beginning and ending of hostilities between 1939 and 1945 the war within the United States was known by many names including, “the current war,” “this war,” “the four year war,” “the European War,” the European conflict,” “war ‘39,” “the second World War,” “the wars,” and, finally, officially, “World War II.” For the men and women living through, surviving, and fighting it, it was better known and accepted as, simply, the War.

My appreciation goes to Dr. Adrian Hunt, director of the Flying Heritage and Combat Armor Museum in Everett, Washington, who was an integral contributor in thought, philosophy, and review to this article. Also, thanks to Diane Sepanski for her editorial corrections and contributions. I made extensive use of www.newspaperarchives.com for the newspapers cited in this article. ☺

CRASH WILLIAMS OBITUARY

COMMANDER EMERITUS AND CWB CO-FOUNDER Robert D. “Crash” Williams, died on November 15, 2022, at the age of 93. His wife of sixty-eight years, Sonya, passed away last January 31st at the age of 90.

Originally from Minnesota, Crash graduated from the University of Minnesota and joined the Air Force. He trained in T-6s and then went on to fly P-51s for the Minnesota National Guard. Crash’s non-flying career was as a radio and TV station manager and advertising executive, which took him all over the country. It also provided him a chance to fly jets for the National Guards of Iowa, Oklahoma, and New Mexico.

We know Crash because of his passion for flying warbirds privately. Cascade Warbirds owes its very existence to him and a few other Pacific Northwest warbird luminaries. CWB lore records that Crash, warbird collector and pilot Carl Terrana, aviation historian Mike Lavelle, and Air Force and airline pilot Rick Fernald heard about Warbirds of America at the Arlington Fly-in. They decided to form a squadron and filed papers of incorporation in July 1993. Rumor holds they missed being Warbirds of America squadron number one by mere days.

Born of the then-nascent PNW warbird community, word about CWB spread and others joined. Soon you could find the L-3, O-2, Stearman, T-6, T-28, Yaks, P-51, B-25, TBM, Tutor jet, and more among members’ aircraft. One year at Arlington there were about eighty-five CWB aircraft on display! Someone eventually sug-

gested holding meetings to talk about warbirds during the long, wet winters. In short order, we began to hold our monthly October through March meetings at the Museum of Flight. This year will mark the thirtieth anniversary of what Crash helped create.

Crash was well-known for flying his Grumman TBM Avenger, *Blue Lady*, named for Sonya. It was built too late to be shipped overseas, so it flew for the Navy and Marine Corps and as a fire bomber in Canada before returning to the US, where Crash eventually bought it. A rare aircraft to see in the air even then, Crash flew it at air shows with the help of his crew chief, our own Paul Youman.

Prior to *Blue Lady*, Crash was noted for tearing up the skies in his T-28 *Mean Machine*, which he claimed was painted with Sears’ best house paint, applied with a broom. It bore the number 953, the month and year of his and Sonya’s wedding anniversary.

Crash was larger than life—known to all, a consummate leader, showman, jokester, promoter, and philanthropist. He will be greatly missed. Crash’s legacy will be remembered by all who will ever be part of CWB. It is, quite simply, Cascade Warbirds. ✪



Photos:
John Clark

ON SUNDAY, JANUARY 8TH, 2023, notable Alaskan pilot Merrill Wien, a loving husband, father, and grandfather passed away at age 92 with his family at his side.

Merrill was born on April 4th, 1930, to Noel and Ada Wien and into a famous flying family in Alaska. Merrill inherited a love of aviation and had a career that spanned the postwar period in Alaska. He flew round engine 1930s-era bush planes, WWII trainers, bombers and transports in the Air Force, and airliners as a pilot for Pan Am and Wien Air Alaska. He ushered in the jet age to the 49th state and later flew wide-body aircraft all around the world.

Merrill embraced all of aviation. To fly was what he wanted to do ever since the days of sitting in his classroom and watching airplanes land at Weeks Field in Fairbanks. He could hardly wait for school to get out so he could run to the airport. By the time he was 16, he even had the opportunity to fly borrowed airplanes on his lunch break. Merrill's days of flying for a living couldn't come soon enough.

And come quickly it did. While taking a break from flying for Wien to attend the University of Washington in his early 20s, Merrill was asked if he'd like to fly for Pan Am out of Seattle. He jumped at the chance, even though he knew he could be drafted since he wouldn't be in school. Soon, he found himself flying in the four-engine DC-4 on trips to Hawaii. He thought it couldn't get better. It wouldn't last long, though.

While at Pan Am, Merrill was drafted into the army for the Korean War. He wanted to fly, so he joined the Air Force. He went through Air Force primary training and eventually became an aircraft commander in the C-119 Flying Boxcar, flying in a top-secret reconnaissance program to photograph Russia. It turned out to be a harrowing assignment catching cameras that were dropped via parachute, out of the air and from the water (where they frequently landed) using a hook on the back of the airplanes. Those years turned out to be some of the most difficult flying of his career.

After getting out of the service, Merrill chose to stay in Alaska and fly for Wien, rather than return to Pan Am, with his original 1950 date of hire. Flying for Wien would continue the adventure, as he found himself occasionally landing a DC-4 on ice islands just shy of the North Pole instead of the tropical islands of Hawaii.

He never regretted his decision to return to Wien. He loved flying the DC-3, C-46, Lockheed Constellation, and Fokker F-27 out of Fairbanks and the Boeing 737 and 727 from Anchorage and Seattle well into the 1980s before the airline was liquidated by a corporate raider.

While at Wien, he and his brother saw an opportunity to use B-25s to fight forest fires and, shortly after, brought helicopters into their operation. Along with Doug Millard and Stan Halverson, the brothers started Merric and built it into a successful service for the state before merging with Era Helicopters.

Merrill finished his airline career with a charter company operating the Lockheed L-1011, an airplane he thoroughly enjoyed, even though the long-haul flying to Europe, the Middle East, and Asia took a toll on him.

Upon reaching the mandatory retirement age for the airlines, he worked for his friend Lowell Thomas Jr. offering sightseeing flights over Denali and as a test pilot for the Soloy Corporation in Olympia, Washington. Later, Merrill flew freight in a C-46 out of Fairbanks for Evert's Air Cargo as a "retirement job."

His hobby on days off usually involved flying of some sort. He took the family on fishing trips out of Anchorage and over the years acquired a number of WWII aircraft and brought them back to active flying status, including two B-25s, a T-6, P-38, Stearman, and Grumman Widgeon. Merrill also volunteered as an instructor pilot with the Commemorative Air Force, flying their B-29, *FIFI* to airshows across the country for seven years and performing check rides for other pilots in all types of warbirds as an FAA designated examiner. Merrill also became involved in the flying community in the Seattle area where he and his wife Barbara have lived since the mid-1980s. He managed to complete his career with many thousands of hours of accident-free flying.

On the first page of his book *Born to Fly*, Wien says, "I never went looking for adventure, but my early interest in flying brought adventure to me. I suppose I was somewhat destined to become a pilot." Recently, he said, "I've had a wonderful and full life—don't be sad when I go."

Merrill and his former wife, Kathy, had three children, Kimberlee, Kurt, and Kent, while living in Fairbanks and Anchorage. Later, Merrill married his current spouse, Barbara, and helped raise her two children Eric Guina and Suzanne Guina Sagiao. They were married in Seattle and have been together for forty years.

He is survived by his wife Barbara, brother Richard and his wife Sally, as well as by five children, six grandchildren, nieces Dona, Robyn, Kelly, and Leslie, and nephew Loren. He was preceded in death by his parents Noel and Ada, sister Jean, and nephew Michael.

A celebration of his life is planned for later this spring in Seattle. ✪

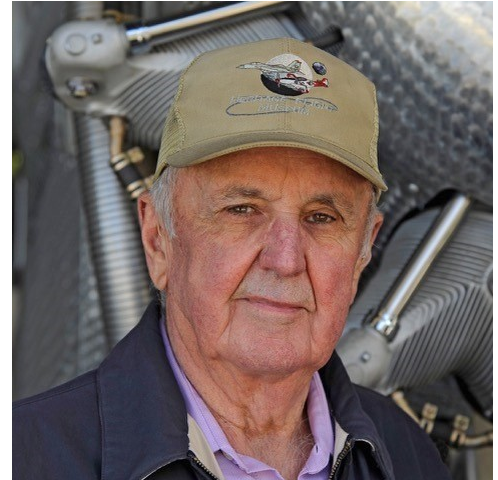


Photo courtesy Kent Wien

CWB SUPPORTERS

PhotosHappen.com
Air-to-Air Photography

Member: WPA, AOPA, EAA, Cascade Warbirds,
Red Star Pilots Association

Karyn F. King
PhotosHappen@aol.com
(206) 795-2796



KEEP 'EM FLYING
Your ad here for only
\$25 per issue!

TOM PATTEN
PRESIDENT

DataSupply
COMPANY, INC

4624 16th STREET EAST SUITE A-2, TACOMA, WA 98424

(253) 922-3494

e-mail: datasupply@w-link.net

CHECK SIX



Crash's Avenger served as an aerial tanker fire bomber in British Columbia and New Brunswick, Canada from 1958 to 1984. Here, registered as CF-IMI, numbered 601 on the tail, and painted "Skyway" on the side for Skyway Air Services of Langley, BC, Avenger serial number 53337 drops fire retardant in BC in the early 1960s.

This photo and more history at <https://forestprotectiontombavengers.wordpress.com/fmx-series-canada/conair-601fpl-1-bu53337/> and <https://www.aerialvisuals.ca/AirframeDossier.php?Serial=5004>. Scan the QR codes with your phone camera.



UPCOMING EVENTS

January

- 14 Member meeting, 10 AM
- Board meeting, 1 PM
- Museum of Flight (Seattle, WA)

February

- 11 Member meeting, 10 AM
- Board meeting, 1 PM
- Museum of Flight (Seattle, WA)

March

- 11 Member meeting, 10 AM
- Board meeting, 1 PM
- Museum of Flight (Seattle, WA)

See cascadewarbirds.org/events for details or contact the Ops Officer.