



PACIFIC AVIATION MUSEUM

PEARL HARBOR

Hangar 37, Ford Island - 319 Lexington Blvd, Honolulu, HI 96818 - tel (808) 441-1000 - fax (808) 441-1019
e-mail: info@pacificaviationmuseum.org - web: www.pacificaviationmuseum.org

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

June 16, 2009

CONTACT:

Anne Murata, Director of Marketing
808/441-1013; 375-9577 (cell)
Anne@PacificAviationMuseum.org

Ken DeHoff, Executive Director
808/441-1017; 808/754-6871 (cell)
ken.dehoff@PacificAviationMuseum.org

Historic WWII Bomber to be recovered from Lake Michigan Friday; Headed for Return Home to Pacific Aviation Museum Pearl Harbor

WAUKEGAN, IL--A World War II bomber that has been sitting at the bottom of Lake Michigan off the Chicago shoreline for more than 60 years will be brought to the surface Friday, June 19, 10am, with its new home to be Pacific Aviation Museum Pearl Harbor, Hawaii where it originally flew its WWII missions.

Pacific Aviation Museum Pearl Harbor, in Honolulu, has sponsored the location, recovery, restoration, and eventual display of this World War II Douglas SBD Dauntless dive bomber from the depths of Lake Michigan. According to Pacific Aviation Museum Executive Director Ken DeHoff, who will be on site for the recovery Friday at Lake Michigan, "The recovery and restoration efforts will be funded by a donation by Fred L. Turner, Honorary Chairman and former Chief Executive Officer of McDonald's Corporation in Oak Brook, Ill. Mr. Turner, a friend of our Museum, has generously committed a \$1 million personal gift toward this project."

A Grumman F4F Wildcat that saw duty on Guadalcanal in WWII and later went into Lake Michigan was restored years ago and is already part of the Pacific Aviation Museum's collection at Pearl Harbor. The museum's future recovery plans include a Gull Wing F4U Corsair that flew out of Guadalcanal and a Grumman F6F Hellcat. "We know that there are other combat-experienced aircraft that have historic Pacific Theater value that are on the floor of Lake Michigan, and we hope we can continue to go through this process," DeHoff said.

The National Naval Aviation Museum, in coordination with the Naval History and Heritage Command, the Illinois Historic Preservation Agency and the Naval Aviation Museum Foundation, will complete the recovery portion of the effort Friday, using a crew from A&T Recovery.

(more)

Historic WWII Bomber to be recovered from Lake Michigan Friday; Headed for Return Home to Pacific Aviation Museum Pearl Harbor

(add 1)

The restored plane will prominently feature the name of U.S. Navy Rear Admiral James D. “Jig Dog” Ramage, who sank a Japanese aircraft carrier with a 500-pound bomb in 1944, earning him the Navy's highest honor, the Navy Cross, as well as the Distinguished Flying Cross and the Air Medal.

“I have the highest respect and admiration for the brave Americans who fought in World War II, and especially for the pilots of the SBD dive bombers,” Turner said. “My friend “Jig Dog” Ramage showed incredible leadership and courage during the war. I’m a history buff, and I consider him to be a hero. This gift is my way of honoring Jig Dog and his fellow pilots, and saying thank you for their service. My hat is off to Pacific Aviation Museum Pearl Harbor for its commitment to displaying this restored plane so future generations can learn and reflect on the crucial role of the SBD in the war.”

The airplane was lost in Lake Michigan on February 18, 1944. The pilot was Lieutenant Junior Grade John Lendo of Massachusetts. LTJG Lendo later went on to serve in the Pacific Theatre of Operation where he gave the ultimate sacrifice in protecting America’s freedom.

The Douglas SBD Dauntless was credited with winning the Battle of Midway and turning the tide of the Pacific war in America’s favor. This airplane crashed in Lake Michigan during aircraft carrier qualification training, which was conducted on Lake Michigan during the early to mid 1940s. More than 17,000 pilots completed the training including LTJG George H. Bush, later to become U.S. President. The aircraft carriers used for training docked at Navy Pier in Chicago and the airplanes and pilots flew from Glenview Naval Air Station in Glenview, Illinois. Prior to the activities on Lake Michigan this SBD-2 (2173) Dauntless served with the very distinguished US Navy Aircraft Carriers USS Enterprise (CV_6) and the USS Yorktown (CV-5) at Pearl Harbor.

The Illinois Historic Preservation Agency, the state government agency that administers all state and federal historic preservation programs in the state, approved the salvage operation. The Agency has jurisdiction over historic resources in Illinois, including those located beneath Illinois territorial waters such as Lake Michigan.

MEDIA ADVISORY: The salvaged airplane will be removed from the water at approximately 10 a.m. Friday, June 19 (weather permitting) at Larsen Marine at Waukegan Harbor in Waukegan, Illinois. News media coverage of this portion of the operation is welcomed, and media should call Taras Lyssenko at (305) 794-4457 for updates. Larsen Marine is located 625 E. Sea Horse Drive at the northern end of Waukegan Harbor, and may be contacted at (847) 336-5456.

Additional contacts:

CAPT Robert Rasmussen, USN (Ret.), Director, National Naval Aviation Museum
850-452-3604 ext. 3119.

CAPT. Ed Ellis, USN (Ret.), Secretary, Naval Aviation Museum Foundation
800-327-5002.