



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

UPDATE: Sept. 2, 2010

Pacific Aviation Museum Pearl Harbor Takes Control: Historic Tower Lease Signing Marks Restoration Start

Honolulu, HI—Pacific Aviation Museum Pearl Harbor, recently named one of America’s Top 10 aviation attractions by TripAdvisor, signed the lease on the Ford Island Control Tower and Observation Deck, heralding the beginning of the long awaited and badly needed Tower restoration and stabilization project. The Tower stood guard over Ford Island on the day of the Imperial Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor, December 7, 1941.

The signing ceremony was held on Thursday, September 2, 2010, 11:00am, at the Museum on Ford Island, in front of the historic tower, followed by a reception. Participating in the signing event were those instrumental in getting the long awaited deal to the table: Pacific Aviation Museum Executive Director Kenneth DeHoff, Commander of Navy Region Hawaii Rear Adm. Dixon Smith, Steve Colon of Hunt Development Group, and Museum Board President Clint Churchill.

Also at the event was Pearl Harbor attack survivor George Bennett, who was on active duty on Ford Island near the Tower, during the attack.

According to Executive Director Kenneth DeHoff, “This is one of our highest priorities, to keep the tower from further deterioration. Admiral Dixon Smith has been most instrumental in securing the lease between the Navy and Ford Island Ventures/Hunt Development Group, the landlord for this property. We are extremely grateful to him and anxious to get started preserving this important beacon of history.”

It is estimated that \$7.5 million is needed to completely restore the Tower. Former Congressman Neil Abercrombie was instrumental in helping to secure \$3.8 million through the Department of Defense appropriations for the stabilization and restoration of an historic landmark.

The Ford Island Tower complex constructed in 1941 consists of a 3rd story Aerological Center and Observation Deck on top of the 2-story Operations Building, and the Air Traffic Control Center on top a 158-foot steel water tank tower. The Tower played a major role in the naval activity at Pearl Harbor, especially during World War II. The Tower is registered as a Category I structure in the Pearl Harbor Naval Base Historic Preservation Plan of 1978.

The Tower and two-story concrete building and its third story observation structure have been in need of attention over the past 30 years and have deteriorated. The steel components throughout the structure which include the tower skin, stairs, landings, ladders, beams, fascia and flanges are experiencing severe corrosion. Many of the components require repair and refinishing, and in some areas complete removal and replacement. The concrete spalling has occurred on the building structure.

The prominent 158 foot tall, 15 foot diameter water tank tower built of steel plates and rivets is seen by over 2 million people per year as they visit the National Park Service's World War II Valor in the Pacific Monument including the USS Arizona Memorial, USS Oklahoma Memorial, USS Utah Memorial, and the additional Pearl Harbor Historic Sites of the Battleship Missouri Memorial, Bowfin Submarine Park and Pacific Aviation Museum Pearl Harbor. Ford Island is also home to over 1000 military families as well as those who work at Joint Base Pearl Harbor-Hickam, Defense Information Center, Artificial Intelligence Warfare Center and the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration Pacific Region Headquarter site.

The Ford Island Control Tower project is to stabilize and renovate the water tower, operations building, and grounds surrounding the structure. The first phase of this project will focus on limited public access but move to the full use of the concrete structure and Aerological Tower. Renovation will include abating the tower and building of the hazardous materials, repairing the steel structures around the water tower and observation level, and painting the exterior. The project will close and secure all openings and reroof all levels of the structure.

The second phase of the project will renovate the interior two stories of the Operations Building from the garage to the third level of the observation

level into administrative offices, curatorial center, and research library. This is most important to the mission of the Pacific Aviation Museum's programs to protect the artifacts, documents and information collections. It is important to the sharing of the information stored within the Museum's archives. Very specialized equipment will be employed for the data collection, translations, storage, restoration, display and distribution.

Pacific Aviation Museum Pearl Harbor is open 8am to 5pm daily and is accessed by shuttles from the USS Arizona Memorial Visitor Center at Pearl Harbor. Daily, visitors from all over the world view the vintage aircraft, enjoy hands on technology experiences including combat flight simulators, hear moving stories told by veteran docents, and experience world class aircraft and "The Date That Shall Live In Infamy" through historic films and video displays. The Museum Store and Laniakea Cafe restaurant are unique in their offerings and their authentic 1940s ambiance.

Phone (808) 441-1000 or visit www.PacificAviationMuseum.org for tickets, membership, donations, and more information. **Tickets and a free Flight Simulator coupon are available online.** Pacific Aviation Museum Pearl Harbor is a 501(c)3 nonprofit organization located at 319 Lexington Boulevard, Ford Island, Pearl Harbor, Oahu, Hawaii 96818.

###