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PEARL HARBOR AVIATION MUSEUM • FORD ISLAND, HI

SUMMER 2020 | ISSUE #41

Hope...

...[for] a world dedicated to
the dignity of man and the
fulfillment of his most
cherished wish for freedom,
tolerance, and justice...

General Douglas MacArthur, Sept. 2, 1945



Join Today!



Becoming a member of Pearl Harbor Aviation Museum directly supports our mission and efforts. Members get free admission to the Museum and special events, discounts at our Museum Store and Laniākea Café, and much more.

Questions? Ready to join? Contact us by mail, phone, or by email at: 808-445-9062, Members@PearlHarborAviationMuseum.org

PEARL HARBOR AVIATION MUSEUM — HONORING OUR PAST AND INSPIRING OUR FUTURE

Historic Ford Island, 319 Lexington Blvd. Honolulu, Hawaii, 96818
www.PearlHarborAviationMuseum.org



EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR’S REPORT



It is by understanding history, both the events and their impact, that we are best prepared to face our future. **This Place Matters** for many reasons.

As a museum, we display artifacts, tell the stories of those who were there, and interpret events in an effort to immerse people in experiences that stimulate thought, dialogue, and discussion. Our exhibits record history, trigger remembrances, inspire action, and challenge learning. By definition, “a **museum** is an institution in the service of society and its development, which acquires, conserves, researches, communicates, and exhibits the tangible and intangible heritage of humanity and its environment for the purposes of education, study, and enjoyment.”

Sharing history has taken on new meaning recently. The need to address the impact of COVID-19 demands collective action that reminds us of the resilience of the American people during WWII. Our WWII veterans and an entire generation of Americans came together to defend freedom and powered us forward with a special patriotism that highlighted the need for sacrifice to protect the greater good.

Today, as we gain ground against an invisible enemy, other events have reminded us that as a nation, we are constantly being challenged to remember and to embrace our foundational values. President George W. Bush recently wrote, “America’s greatest challenge has long been to unite people of very different backgrounds into a single nation of justice and opportunity...The answers to American’s problems are found by living up to American ideals—the fundamental truth that all human beings are created equal and endowed by God with certain rights. The heroes of America— from Frederick Douglass to Harriet Tubman, to Abraham Lincoln to Martin Luther King, Jr. – are heroes of unity.”

David M. Rubenstein, in his book, *The American Story: Conversations With Master Historians*, highlighted both the wisdom and pragmatism of our Founding Fathers. Rubenstein quoted a question that Pulitzer Prize-winning historian Jon Meacham would have liked to ask Thomas Jefferson: “Why, given your clear moral sense that slavery was the fire bell in the night....did you not use any political capital in the twenty years of your political dominance to try to ameliorate the situation?” Mr. Meacham provides a response from Thomas Jefferson’s writings on slavery, “Nothing is more certainly written in the book of fate than that these people shall be free...But I can’t do anything about it. It will be the work of another generation.”

Whether we study the influenza pandemic of 1918 or the plight of our WWII Tuskegee Airmen, heroes in battle yet often disparaged as citizens at home, history provides the lessons and our values provide the solutions. Maya Angelou stated this with great eloquence, “History, despite its wrenching pain, cannot be unlived, but if faced with courage, need not be lived again.”

Not only must we find a vaccine to thwart the spread of an invisible virus; we must also take action to teach and live by the values that make our nation great. As always, it will be the Spirit of Americans that carries us through these days of trial until we triumph.

Mahalo,

Elissa Lines

Front cover : Wounded Staff Sgt. Arthur Moore looks up as he watches the ticker tape rain down from buildings near Grand Central Station in New York. AP Photo



A PIERCING BLOW: THE AERIAL ATTACK ON THE USS ARIZONA

By Rod Bengston, Director of Exhibits, Restoration, & Curatorial Services



A Piercing Blow: The Aerial Attack on the USS Arizona has taken center stage in Hangar 37.

Pearl Harbor Aviation Museum has unveiled the USS *Arizona* relic exhibit in a new display in Hangar 37. The exhibit, built in part due to support provided by Hawai'i Tourism Authority's Community Enrichment Program, is titled, *A Piercing Blow: The Aerial Attack on the USS Arizona*. The display features a portion of the USS *Arizona*'s main deck galley structure. In fact, wood planking was attached to it to create the first memorial platform over the ship. The construction of the platform and the daily raising of the American flag were ordered by Admiral Arthur Radford in 1950. By 1959, an architect, Alfred Preis, was selected by the U.S. Navy to design a permanent memorial structure for the ship. Construction began in 1960. The stunning memorial structure built over the USS *Arizona* amidships was dedicated on Memorial Day 1962. To accommodate the new memorial, artifacts still visible above water were removed from the future memorial's footprint. This artifact remained in U.S. Navy storage near Pearl Harbor for sixty years. Now we are incorporating the section of the main deck galley into our Hangar 37 story of the attack on December 7, 1941.

After two years of preparation and planning, and with the invaluable assistance of Jim Neuman, History and Heritage Outreach Manager, Commander Navy Region Hawaii Public

Affairs Office; Daniel Martinez, Pearl Harbor National Memorial Chief Historian, National Park Service; and the U.S. Navy Seabees, our section of the USS *Arizona* has completed its final journey from the site of the deadly attack to historic Hangar 37 on Ford Island.

Pearl Harbor Aviation Museum was at the center of the aerial attack on Pearl Harbor, the attack which awakened the world to the nascent power of aerial warfare. It was also witness to the tremendous impact and loss of life, both military and civilian, that occurred in those moments. We were forever changed after that day.

It is with great pride and even deeper respect that we add this artifact to our collection as a reminder of the historic significance and consequences of the Japanese aerial attack. The importance of naval aviation, and the future of all military aviation was firmly fixed for the duration of that war and for the next three-quarters of a century. This artifact represents the birth of America's quest to maintain air superiority, no matter what the world situation, but more importantly, it represents America's greater desire and steadfast commitment to global and lasting peace.



THANKING OUR VETERANS: JACK HOLDER AND HANK KUDZIK REMEMBER WORLD WAR II

By Brad Ball, Board of Directors

The most devastating war in world history came to an end 75 years ago. Of the 16 million men and women who served, less than three percent are still living. This is our last chance to hear their stories and to thank them. In our next three NOTAM issues, we will interview a total of six WWII veterans, beginning with Jack Holder, a flight engineer, and Hank Kudzik, a submariner. While their duties of war were quite different, both men agree that they will forever cherish the unbreakable bonds formed with those who fought alongside them.

Jack Holder, Pearl Harbor and Battle of Midway Veteran



Jack Holder survived the attack on Pearl Harbor on Dec. 7, 1941, and attended the 75th Anniversary commemoration at Wheeler Army Airfield in 2016. DoD photo by Lisa Ferdinando

A lean and determined Texan, ready to fight, Jack Holder almost succumbed to appendicitis en route to San Diego for military training. He finally arrived six months before the Selective Service was reinstated in April 1940. He was 18 years old.

Once at Pearl Harbor, Jack was assigned to a PBY squadron on Ford Island. Every branch of the service depended on flying boats for anti-submarine patrol and rescue missions. On the evening of December 6, Jack enjoyed a meal of pork chops and his favorite ice cream. Paradise was about

to become hell; little did he know what dawn would bring. Jack was on duty when the attack sent him diving for cover. A sewer line ditch saved Jack and many others, but they had to watch the PBY fleet go up in flames. When he saw his commanding officer, still in pajamas, firing a pistol at the strafing aircraft, Jack leaped up and helped ready the only flyable PBY to go find the Japanese fleet. They searched for 19 hours but “no joy.” As Jack writes in his memoirs, “The Japanese bloodied our nose, but guaranteed their ultimate defeat.” The survivors spent the next few nights sleeping in trenches and manning machine



Flight Engineer Jack Holder, 1940.

safe from our bombers. Midway, in turn, was to be Japan’s retaliation for our April 18 attack. The U.S. had to win or Japan would have a straight shot to the West Coast.

A PBY squadron headed for Midway on May 26 to begin the search for the Japanese. On June 3, just before the attack, two PBY’s, Jack’s and another from VP-23, spotted them less than 200 miles from Midway. On June 4 the attack began. Nearly all of the U.S. torpedo bombers were shot down. Meanwhile, Jack’s plane continued to patrol, sinking a Japanese sub. Low on fuel, they landed at sea hoping for refueling help in the morning. “None of us on the plane knew how the battle was going. Did we win or lose? Our radio was out,” Jack recalls. “I tied myself to the antenna on the wing and drifted off to sleep, exhausted.” The tide turned when the Americans hit three of four Japanese carriers within approximately five minutes. Jack awoke to the good news that the shift of power in the Pacific was occurring, ultimately leading to America’s victory.

Jack participated in the Battle of Guadalcanal and others, including the Gilbert Islands Campaign, but his anti-submarine experience was desperately needed in the European Theatre. He was assigned to one of five B-24 squadrons on anti-sub patrol over the English Channel. In 13 months, Jack flew 56 missions—double the quota of “25 missions and home.” He was among the small group who fought in both theatres of the war. He even shot down a German Me-109 fighter!

guns. Jack had grown up fast. The military sent cards to the parents of those in the attack saying, “I am wounded” or “I am ok.” Nothing more. Jack remembers returning home briefly following the attack. His mother handed him the postcard and practically broke his ribs with her hug.

The Doolittle Raid, in April 1942, was America’s answer to Pearl Harbor. This attack was meant to let Japan know that their homeland was not

Hank Kudzik, Battle of Midway Veteran

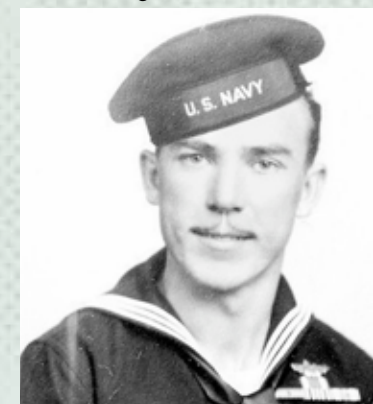
Hank Kudzik enlisted in the U.S. Navy immediately following the attack at Pearl Harbor. Once he turned 17, the Navy assigned him to the USS *Nautilus*, where he rose to Chief Gunners Mate. The early days of the war offered little good news for the U.S. The Japanese fleet looked unstoppable. The Doolittle Raiders delivered a psychological punch by bombing Japanese soil in April 1942, but Japan’s plan to secure the islands from Tokyo to Australia was nearly complete.



The U.S. Navy submarine, USS *Nautilus*.

Fortunately, U.S. codebreakers discovered that the Midway atoll, two small islands 1,300 miles west of Hawaii, was Japan’s next move in revenge for bombing Tokyo. Hank and 93 fellow submariners had never been in a battle before, but they would be on the front line to stop the advancing fleet—the same carriers that had devastated Pearl Harbor.

The USS *Nautilus* was literally underneath the Japanese fleet for the duration of the three-day battle, surviving deafening blasts from depth charge attacks. Initially, American aviators were having little success, and losses were mounting. However,



Petty Officer First Class Hank S. Kudzik, 1944.

the tide turned when we hit three of their carriers in approximately five minutes. As the *Nautilus* dove and surfaced to survive the depth charges, she sighted the damaged carrier *Kaga* (misidentified as *Sōryū*). Maneuvering into position, she fired four torpedoes. The first stuck in the tube, the second and third missed widely. The fourth hit *Kaga* squarely

but failed to detonate. Ironically, the torpedo broke in half and provided floatation for Japanese sailors in the water. For unknown reasons, the crew of *Nautilus* reported a hit with visible flames. Hank says that right then, he hoped never to cast off a bowline again. That was not to be—Hank served in the Navy for close to 15 years. In November 1943, the *Nautilus* went to the Gilbert Islands to deliver assault teams of Marines headed for the beaches of Tarawa.



Hank Kudzik with his daughter, Wanda Frecks, upon arrival to L.A. for the Midway movie premiere.

En route, Hank bonded with a Marine named Harry. “He was like a brother to me...and as we approached that island, I warned him to be careful. Our big guns will do everything we can to annihilate that island you’re attempting to secure.” Following the battle, Hank assisted the medics in recovering the wounded. His friend didn’t survive. Hank dropped to his knees, prayed and promised he would find Harry’s mother and share his story of bravery. Even today, Hank describes in excruciating detail, the steps to prepare fallen service members for burial at sea. Through his tears, Hank shares the story of losing his dear friend, as if it were just yesterday.

Remembering our veterans as they near the age of 100 reminds us how fortunate we are to have the liberties we have today. They are living proof that good will always triumph over evil. God bless Jack, Hank, and all of those who served before and after them.

If you have a veteran story you would like featured, please connect with us at Communications@PearlHarborAviationMuseum.org.

RESTORATION: PRESERVING HISTORY IN HANGAR 79

By Rod Bengston, Director of Exhibits, Restoration, & Curatorial Services



Hangar 79 at night: TBM Avenger in foreground, SBD Dauntless in the middle, and B-17 "Swamp Ghost" in background.

Although the image above may make you think it was taken during our forced hiatus brought on by the COVID-19 pandemic, it is, instead, an image from months ago when the TBM was nearing completion. Randy Gratz, our Restoration Shop Manager, shot a picture to text an update to me on the day's work. For those of us, our Restoration staff and volunteers especially, who have had the privilege of lingering in Hangar 79 late into the evening, this image captures the twilight glow of the hangar's night-lighting and the nostalgic reverence for all that has happened within and just outside these thin steel walls. We can easily imagine sailors and Marines working on aircraft for long hours into the night—readying each for trusting pilots and their crews for vitally important missions. These machinists, mechanics, sheet metal workers, electricians, ordnance details, shipping clerks, and a number of other classifications, took their jobs seriously. The proper maintenance of an aircraft could mean the difference between life or death for its crew. Every part of the aircraft had to be ready for flight and ready to fight.

We are proud to be entrusted with the care, maintenance, and preservation of historic Hangar 79 and its vintage workshops.

The Shealy Restoration Shop resides in a hangar full of vintage machines, hardware, and indelible history. At our feet, we walk daily by the poignant hand-written scrawl of a long-departed sailor, declaring *It's 1942 and I am here*, in what was once wet concrete. Daily we enter the original wire-fence tool room and pull its massive door closed at the end of every day. What you can only catch a glimpse of in the picture above, is the massive American flag that waves over the shop and the rest of the aircraft in the hangar, day and night. There is always a light on that flag. Very late at night, only the Hangar Owls see it. But we want you to know and remember, no matter where you are, and no matter what your stay at home/safer at home circumstances are—that the flag is still there and we're proud of it.

The entire team of the Exhibits, Restoration and Curatorial Services staff are ecstatic to be back to our physical work. After tirelessly tele-working plans and organizing resources for our return, we are thrilled to be back to our projects in Hangar 79 with a few of our trusty volunteers (our fellow Hangar Owls). We welcome you to come visit – it will be a *hoot*!

VOLUNTEERING: IT'S A FAMILY AFFAIR

By Mark and Ashleigh Houff, Pearl Harbor Aviation Museum Members and Volunteers



Ashleigh Houff, Graduate Student in Library and Information Science, University of Hawaii, and her father CAPT Mark Houff, USN.

Ashleigh: If I were to pinpoint one common denominator for all the places my family has lived in my 21 years, it would be aerospace museums. No matter where we end up—even when we were stationed overseas—my dad, Mark, always manages to stumble across an amazing museum at which we end up investing a good bit of our time. Naturally, visiting these amazing collections of aviation history often leads to museum memberships and volunteer service mostly along the east coast and now, in the Pacific. In the past, I may have wrinkled my nose at the prospect of visiting yet another aviation museum, but after discovering my passion both for library and archival sciences and aerospace during high school, volunteering at museums has been a great way for me to gain experience in what I hope will one day be a part of my career. Since our move to Honolulu, volunteering at Pearl Harbor Aviation Museum also has given me and my dad a chance to bond over shared interests. In fact, we spent a few days of my last winter break cataloging books in the Museum's library. It was the epitome of what makes volunteering so great: Doing good for something I love with the people I love.

Mark: Ashleigh has related how our love of aerospace museums and membership at Pearl Harbor Aviation Museum led us to connect as volunteers with Rod Bengston and Alexis Stallings in the Curatorial Department. During the library-cataloging project, it was amazing to see and touch first edition books

signed by historical figures, such as Fleet Admiral Chester Nimitz, Colonel Gregory "Pappy" Boyington, and Colonel Paul Tibbets. This curatorial project also allowed me—guided by Rod and Alexis—to springboard into the Museum's upcoming December 7, 1941, project (see the Spring 2020 NOTAM for details). Specifically, they supported me in researching the few U.S. Army Air Force and U.S. Navy pilots who responded to the Japanese attack on Oahu and, in some cases, engaged Japanese warplanes. The Museum will expand its existing displays on Second Lieutenants Taylor and Welch, who flew their P-40s from Haleiwa against the Japanese, to profile other pilots and Hawaii residents who were involved in combat on December 7, 1941. Some of these individuals, such as LT Clarence Dickinson, USN,—winner of three Navy Crosses—went on to have distinguished careers in World War II (and beyond) and others, such as Second Lieutenant Gordon Sterling, USAAF, tragically didn't survive that morning.

The excitement of volunteering on these projects also opened further opportunities for us through an invitation to work on the Museum's planned exhibits on Hawaii's military heritage during World War II. We've just begun working with local military historians and the Naval History and Heritage Command to gather documentation on the construction of military facilities on Maui including NAS Kahului and Puunene, which were among the largest U.S. Naval Aviation facilities built during the war.

Through my job at the U.S. Indo-Pacific Command, I am also privileged to be working as a planner with both Pearl Harbor Aviation Museum and the Hawaii State Committee for the 75th Commemoration of the End of World War II to provide military support for multiple commemorative events, which are scheduled to occur on Oahu from August 29–September 2, 2020. These events will draw the attention of people and countries throughout the world to Hawaii as we celebrate the peace that was gained at the end of WWII. As a nation, we continue to honor the men and women who answered the call of duty to serve during WWII and in the decades since.

If you are interested in volunteering at Pearl Harbor Aviation Museum, please contact Katie Moriarty at Kathryn.Moriarty@PearlHarborAviationMuseum.org.

CELEBRATING THE START OF A LASTING PEACE AND PARTNERSHIP IN THE PACIFIC



As we celebrate 75 years of peace and partnership between the United States and Japan, we take a look back at the place where WWII formally ended and peace began, on the deck of the USS Missouri in Tokyo Bay on September 2, 1945. The ship's flag fluttered in the breeze on that historic day, as sailors packed the decks of the mighty battleship. Dignitaries from Japan, the United States (led by Gen. Douglas MacArthur), and our allies, combatants in the Pacific Theater, signed the Instrument of Surrender that ended the war. Formations of U.S. aircraft flew above the ship, and Americans celebrated on the battlefield and throughout the nation. Since then, these former combatants have established a warm, powerful and enduring friendship.



EDUCATION: ONLINE WEBINARS AND RESOURCES

By Shauna Tonkin, Ph.D, Director of Education & Visitor Experience



BG Charles McGee, famed Tsukegee Airman, joined us for our webinar commemorating the 75th Anniversary of the Victory in Europe.

The year was 1945. As the Allies heralded the end of war in Europe, hopes remained high that they would soon finish the job in the Pacific. Families and communities were embracing the “new normal” as they counted the cost of global war, welcomed the heroes as they returned, and mourned the loved ones that had sacrificed everything in the name of freedom. Although our citizens breathed a collective sigh of relief, they knew that the work of peace and healing would require them to continue innovating and working together. As we commemorate the 75th anniversary of the end of WWII in the midst of the COVID-19 crisis, we understand that their response to the challenges facing our nation in 1945 provide timeless lessons for today. The sacrifices, courage, and persistence of the Greatest Generation give us hope for the future.

As it has with many non-profit organizations, COVID-19 brought an abrupt end to our spring and summer plans.

FAREWELL TO SHAUNA TONKIN

By RDML Alma Grocki, Board of Directors, Executive Committee and Education Committee



Shauna Tonkin has been a critical and integral part of Pearl Harbor Aviation Museum. As the Director of Education, she arrived at the Museum when education programming needed strong and visionary leadership, which Shauna quickly provided. Over the eight years she has been with the Museum, Shauna developed strong, enduring connections with the community here on Oahu, the neighbor islands, the mainland, and even internationally to China. Under her leadership, student participation soared to over 40,000 annually, due in part to partnerships with Chaminade University, the University of Hawaii, the U.S. Naval Academy, the Smithsonian Museums, the American Alliance of Museums, the Scouting program, local schools, and many other local and national organizations.

Pearl Harbor Aviation Museum will miss Shauna’s passion for education, her inspired vision for the Museum, and her strong leadership. We all thank her for her dedication and inspiring work.

Recently our team created “Pearl Harbor At Home,” a digital resource created to virtually share historical and educational experiences with our visitors and community from the comfort of home. Families, teachers, students, and history buffs now have a central point for accessing a wide variety of resources for education and entertainment. “Pearl Harbor At Home” emphasizes on-demand information that is available at any time, and includes our new “Discover Your Future in Aviation” (DYFA) webpage. DYFA highlights a wide range of information for youth and young adults who want to find out more about careers and opportunities in aviation. Take a tour for yourself at www.PearlHarborAviationMuseum.org.

We’ve expanded our outreach beyond the webpage to include online webinars for youth and adults. These events are offered live and then made available on our YouTube channel for viewing at a later date. Notable speakers such as Jonna Doolittle Hoppes, Dorinda Nicholson, BG Charles McGee, MG Suzanne Vares Lum, and Captain Tammie Jo Shults joined us in April and May to discuss the Doolittle Raid, a young person’s experience of WWII, the Tuskegee Airmen, and opportunities available in aviation for youth and women. In June, we featured RADM Brian Fort, Craig Symonds, and Jon Parshall to commemorate the Battle of Midway. If you missed any of these webinars, go to “Pearl Harbor At Home” and select from our archived programs.

This year has been filled with obstacles and difficult decisions that impact all of us. Here at the Museum, though, we look forward with hope knowing that our supporters provide a firm foundation for success. Thank you for your sustained interest and contributions that help us continue this important work.

For information about our upcoming programs, follow us on Facebook or visit our upcoming events page at www.PearlHarborAviationMuseum.org/news-events.

A GENEROUS DONOR HELPS DREAMS TAKE FLIGHT

By Clint Churchill, Board Chairman



The current site of the Museum’s future Aviation Learning Center, just across from the historic Ford Island Control Tower.

Most of us carry special memories of people, events, and experiences that remain deep within us throughout our lifetime. As we progress through life, we realize that these life-altering impacts become clearer to us as we move further from them. The joy of a first flight is one of those tremendously impactful events. Leonardo DiVinci said it best, “Once you have tasted flight, you will forever walk the earth with your eyes turned skyward. For there you have been, and there you will always long to return.”

For Pearl Harbor Aviation Museum, and ultimately for thousands of Hawaii youth, this phenomenon is extremely meaningful. Former board member Dr. Thomas Kosasa, a leader in his medical field, is also a passionate aviator. His eyes immediately light up when the conversation turns to anything about flying. His personal achievements in flight, his military service, and his enthusiastic enjoyment of the challenge of piloting have played an important role in his life since he earned his private pilot’s license in the early 1960s.

Recently, Elissa and I met with Dr. Kosasa to share our vision for a new Aviation Learning Center, an educational resource that will introduce thousands of Hawaii students to the exciting field of aviation and aerospace, to include building the proficiency in math and science needed to support future career opportunities. The concept won the support of the Ray Foundation which made a \$1 million challenge grant to our Museum. If we could raise \$1 million to invest in the future of our children, the Ray Foundation would match it. Before we had a chance to completely outline our vision to him, Dr. Kosasa pledged his support to fund the entire



Rendering of the Aviation Learning Center, to be completed in 2021, thanks to the generosity of Dr. Thomas Kosasa.

challenge grant amount of \$1 million! Both he and his wife, Mi, are enthusiastic supporters of aviation-based educational programming that can and will change lives.

The Aviation Learning Center will open sometime in 2021, a 4,000 sq. ft. facility built within a historic WWII Link Trainer building, located just a few feet from the Ford Island Control Tower. The Link Trainer was the primary flight simulator used to train pilots during WWII. In our new center, students will be introduced to the mathematic and scientific principles of flight and then get a chance to experience the thrill of flight through simulation. They will pre-flight an actual aircraft, learn to chart a course and navigate using not only modern-day GPS technology, but also mathematical triangulation, visual topographical recognition, and other basic aeronautical skills. They will also be introduced to far-reaching career opportunities in aviation, engineering, aerospace, and more. Classroom teachers will benefit from the support of a subject matter expert who will help them integrate a full STEM curriculum, aligned with state and national standards, into classroom work prior to their visit to the Center. Students and teachers will also receive additional content-rich curricula to continue the educational impact when the students return to their classroom.

It is with our deepest appreciation that we thank Dr. Thomas and Mi Kosasa for their generosity and visionary support, and for reminding all of us that these learning experiences do indeed deliver long-lasting impact on the lives of young people, turning dreams into reality.

PAPER FLOWER LEI ACTIVITY

We understand that many of our out-of-state members and friends are unable to make a trip to Hawaii this year. Share some aloha at home, wherever you are, with your friends and loved ones by creating your very own paper lei!

Supplies

- Paper
- Straws or coffee stirrers
- Crayon
- Needle and thread

Instructions



Create a template using heavy paper or cardboard.



Trace the outline on a piece of construction paper -- use any color you like!



Cut the shape out. You can fold the paper and cut out several at once. You'll need about 50 pieces.



Using a crayon, color the center of the flower and fade the color as you go outward.



Fold the petals up about 45 degrees to give the flower some volume.



Use a round pen or pencil to curl the petals under.



Cut the straw or stirrers into ¾ inch lengths. Sew the lei with needle and thread, alternating flowers and straw. Tie the ends together and you're done!



FAMILY ROOTS: THE F-4U CORSAIR

By Dr. Janice A. Nielsen, Founding Member



U.S. Navy Vought F4U-1 Corsairs of Fighter Squadron 17 (VF-17) "Jolly Rogers" in flight, in 1943.

My passion to help acquire an F-4U Corsair for Pearl Harbor Aviation Museum stems from wanting to pass on a great piece of flying history to future generations. I also want to honor my father, Dr. Kaj L. Nielsen, and my "hanai" Uncle Thomas R. Mutz. I have said that I would like to see this plane in the Museum before I die. Hopefully, I will be here for years to come, but just in case, let's try to get a Corsair here sooner rather than later.

My father, Dr. Kaj L. Nielsen, at age 29, worked for Chance Vought Aircraft (1944–1945, Analytic Project Engineer). He was a Ph.D. mathematician who helped calculate and refine the angle of the curve in the wing and other advancements of the aircraft's design. He was also the designer for the Vought XF-5U "Flying Flapjack."



Vought production line, 1943.

He once said that he would go down to the Vought production line at the plant in Bridgeport CT, to watch the assembly of the planes. He probably watched Rosalind Palmer

(Walker) who as a young woman was employed as a riveter on the Corsair. Rosie inspired the creation of "Rosie the Riveter", a song about civilian women employed in the war industry. I wonder if my Dad and Rosie ever met.



Tom Mutz in Guadalcanal, Nov. 1942.

My "hanai" Uncle, Capt Thomas R. Mutz, U.S. Marine Corps (retired Maj) was a highly decorated Corsair pilot (VMF 124), awarded seventeen Distinguished Flying Crosses, the Navy Air Medal, two Silver Stars, the Purple Heart, the Navy Cross and campaign ribbons for the various theaters of war he participated in: Solomon Islands, Caroline Islands, Marianas, and Japanese Islands. Of the original 33 pilots of the VMF 124 that sailed to the Pacific on January 8, 1943, 11 survived the war to rejoice in the victory. And celebrate my Uncle Tom did. Capt Mutz was one of the pilots that flew over the USS *Missouri* during the surrender signing ceremony in Tokyo Bay.

My father and my Uncle Tom did not meet until after the war, when their wives (my Mother, Carlene Weikel Nielsen, and



Capt Thomas R. Mutz, U.S. Marine Corps.

Aunt Joyce Chenoweth Mutz) reunited in Indianapolis after the war in the early 50s. The two women had gone to high school together in Springfield Illinois. We all ended up living around the corner from each other. Uncle Tom and Aunt Joyce's children, Frank (who later became a pilot, like myself), Greg, and Sonnie were like my brothers and sister for some years. It was interesting that my Dad gave my Uncle the platform he needed to help achieve victory in the Pacific. They never talked about it, at least not

around us kids. So, I did not know of their wartime connection until years later, after they had both passed away.

So, my passion and dream continues to be seeing an F-4U Corsair at Pearl Harbor Aviation Museum someday. It is where she belongs, back here in the Pacific, to honor all those who built and flew her to victory.

DON COLEMAN - B-24 LIBERATOR BOMBARDIER & NAVIGATOR

By Greg Coleman, Board of Directors



Don Coleman (Sr.), 1944.



Top Row (from left to right): Don Coleman (Sr.), Mario Anzecchiarico, Cleo Walker, and Elmer Green. Bottom Row (from left to right): George Grout, Harry Bell, Julien Rentaria, Harry Kerr, and George Bohatka.

“Are they going to bury me on American soil?” This was the last question I vividly remember my grandfather asking from his hospital room in Long Beach, California. Like many from his generation, my grandfather never spoke much about his war years and it struck me as odd that he would experience a flashback when he was well into his seventies. Had I known what he lived through, I likely wouldn’t have been surprised. Unfortunately, my grandfather, Don Coleman (Sr.), lost his battle to cancer before I had the chance to hear from him directly about his days as a World War II aviator. As time would tell, however, I would come to learn my grandfather was a hero who completed 35 missions as a bombardier/navigator aboard a B-24 Liberator and kept a shoebox filled with medals hidden inside his closet.



From left to right: My father, Don Coleman (Jr.) and brother, Don Coleman (III) and me, Greg Coleman.

I always knew my role model, Grandpa Don, was a brave and humble man, who displayed his crew’s photo on his nightstand and never missed an opportunity to fly the American flag. What I didn’t know was the reason he was awarded the Silver Star, Distinguished Flying Cross, and Purple Heart. So began my hunt to uncover the answers to this mystery. Unweaving the details of his story took more than 20 years, and many of the details are still unknown. To answer the riddle, my father and I began researching and dating back photos, tracking down service records, newspaper clippings, attending the annual 459th Bomb Group reunion and even finding his lone surviving crew member, a flight engineer named Harry Bell. With each nugget of information, I became more curious and deeper in awe.

As I would learn, the 15th Air Force was based out of Northern Italy which served as a launch pad for the Allies to bring the fight to Germany and its controlled territories. Hitler’s crown jewel, the heavily fortified oil fields of Ploesti, Romania, was an early target of this group. Without oil, the German war machine could not fight, and thus, my grandfather’s crew was sent through the thick of enemy flak to drop a payload of bombs. During a barrage of anti-aircraft fire, his Liberator nicknamed “Miss Patches,” was struck so much that the right main landing wheel tire was torn away, along with the hydraulic system, the oxygen system on the flight deck, the right wing gas and the number four engine. Still, the mighty crew limped to the target and dropped their payload.

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Don Coleman - continued

After hitting the target, the top turret gunner, George Bohatka, was hit and bleeding profusely from both legs. To treat his crewmember, my grandfather discarded his flak jacket, crawled through the belly of the plane and began applying first aid. He did this at an altitude of 20,000 feet with a depleted oxygen supply which he spared for his wounded gunner. As soon as the B-24 crossed the Adriatic on the return leg, the pilot ordered the crew to brace for a crash landing. Rather than strap himself in a safer place for landing, my grandfather volunteered to stay with Bohatka and wrapped his own body around the injured man to protect him from the impact. The belly down landing

collapsed the flight deck and pinned both my grandfather and his gunner for nearly 15 minutes as the crew worked to free them from the wreckage. Thankfully, both men survived the crash and would later return to the fight. Although I never heard my grandfather’s account directly, researching my family history has inspired me in many ways. Following my grandfather and father’s footsteps, I earned my pilot’s license and found ways to work with Pearl Harbor Aviation Museum to preserve the history of other fine heroes so that their stories may also inspire the next generation.

THE POWER OF ONE BOARD MEMBER AND USN VIETNAM WAR VETERAN ALEXANDER “SANDY” GASTON

By Danielle Bowers, Director of Development



Pearl Harbor Aviation Museum board member Alexander “Sandy” Gaston’s name is synonymous with Pearl Harbor Historic Sites. His involvement with the USS *Bowfin*, USS *Missouri* and Pearl Harbor Aviation Museum began on day one—he was among the first to invest in the vision of preserving these three sites. As Sandy explains, “patriotism is in my blood.” The spirit of our Greatest Generation

influenced his life-path, and he is committed to ensuring the stories of these exemplary men and women are used to shape tomorrow’s leaders. Born just one year after the end of World War II, Sandy grew up eager to serve. As a young teenager, he spent weeks at a time building model ships and airplanes, committing their statistics to memory. After building his own fleet, he decided to join the Navy. He enlisted in the U.S. Naval Reserve four days after his 17th birthday, training while also attending high school. Sandy began his active duty service in January 1967. “I reported aboard the USS *Princeton* in Long Beach, California and left for Vietnam four days later.” He was in combat operations in Vietnamese coastal waters, working in the ship’s pilot house, assisting with navigation. Later, he deployed on the USS *Wexford County*. Sandy’s service left a profound impact on his character, instilling discipline and broadening his patriotism.

Upon leaving the Navy in 1969, after two years off the coast of Vietnam, Sandy entered a career in photography and, later, investments. Sandy also became a lifelong member of the Navy League, which led to his commitment to philanthropy—supporting patriotic organizations that share his passion for sharing American military history and values with students. World War II veteran Harold B. Estes inspired Sandy’s support of the Pearl Harbor Historic Sites. Harold, who helped bring both the USS *Bowfin* and the USS *Missouri* to Hawaii, invited Sandy to be one of the first to support both Museums. “Harold was a galvanizing force, he could charm a cat off a shrimp boat,” Sandy fondly recalls. Later, in 2006, Sandy became a founding supporter of Pearl Harbor Aviation Museum opening within the historic hangars and buildings that withstood the December 7, 1941 attack. Because of his dedication to this work, Sandy created an estate plan that will carry forward his legacy—leaving both his home in Hawaii, and his incredible collection of historic memorabilia and artifacts to Pearl Harbor Aviation Museum. Sandy has been collecting since he was a child—his collection is so vast, he hangs a sign stating “The Museum” over the front door to his home. Planned gifts, like Sandy’s estate plan, are a decision made in the present to give in the future through bequests, charitable remainder trusts, gift annuities, and so on. A planned gift commitment is an extremely meaningful way to leave your legacy. These gifts enable our work at the Museum – preserving our history and inspiring our community. If you are interested in learning about planned giving, I invite you to give us a call. We are interested to learn about your vision, and to share information about the options available to you. Call or e-mail us anytime at (808) 824-3505 or Danielle.Bowers@PearlHarborAviationMuseum.org.