

HELP US BRING A PBY HOME TO NAVAL AIR STATION PEARL HARBOR!



Dear Reader,

The Pearl Harbor Aviation Museum is a place where history is remembered. All around us is history – the aircraft, flight gear, artifacts, buildings, control tower and the Japanese bullet riddled hangars – all echo the past and tell a story.

We serve as a repository of a rich aviation history, on a battlefield where men and women served and sacrificed in uniform to guarantee freedoms we enjoy today.

Thank you for all you have done to help us tell this powerful story and fulfill our mission!

Your past support has helped us to preserve and add to the Museum's collection of aircraft and other artifacts, all tools to bring the past alive and teach future generations about service, sacrifice and aviation. We could not have done it without you!

As we near the end of the year, I am writing to ask for your continued support.

One of the true icons of our aviation Museum is missing – we do not have a PBY Catalina Flying Boat in our collection, which is vital to tell the Ford Island battlefield story!

When the Japanese attacked Pearl Harbor, their main targets were battleships and aircraft carriers. However, Ford Island was also a key target because of the big PBY Catalina flying boats which could be used as long-range reconnaissance aircraft to find the Japanese fleet.

The good news is that we have found a WWII-era Navy PBY Catalina flying boat that the Naval History and Heritage Command has offered to loan us for our collection, but we have a challenge, we have to move the plane quickly to Hawaii.

Currently the PBY is in Pensacola, Florida, where it was slated for restoration. Exposure to the elements, heat, humidity, and the threat of hurricanes, could further harm this rare plane.

Shipping this plane to Hawaii is going to cost \$200,000.

I am writing longtime friends like you to ask your help. We need to raise the funds needed to bring this PBY Catalina to Ford Island to fill the gap in our aviation collection and to tell this battlefield's story.

I am hoping I can count on your support with a special year-end contribution!

One of our great joys at the Pearl Harbor Aviation Museum is when we can connect the past with the present. We are fortunate to have among our ranks WWII veteran Jack Holder, one of this Naval Air Station's PBY squadron members who endured the horrors of the attack on Pearl Harbor and participated in the Battle of Midway, a battle that turned the tides of war. It's those connections to our collection that help bring this Museum alive for our visitors.

Jack will turn 101 years of age on December 13, 2022, yet the horror of the attack on Pearl Harbor remains a vivid memory.

As you read the words and remembrances of Jack Holder that follow, shared in his book, *Fear, Adrenaline, and Excitement*, with Veteran of Day News and with me personally, we ask you to embrace his commitment: To bring a PBY home to Naval Air Station Pearl Harbor, the battlefield our Museum protects.

As a young man, Jack grew up in rural Texas during the great depression. Like so many others he sought a better life and the excitement of seeing the world in April 1940. He enlisted in the Navy upon graduation from high school with a dream to be an

Jack Holder's World War II Navy portrait, (left) and participating in a December 7th Remembrance ceremony at Pearl Harbor.



HELP US HONOR THOSE WHO HAVE DEFENDED OUR FREEDOM.



Jack Holder was honored multiple times by the U.S. Navy for his heroism during World War II. At right, a recent photograph of Jack.

aviator. After basic training in San Diego, Jack completed an additional four months of training as an aviation machinist's mate and was deployed aboard the USS *Platte* and arrived in Pearl Harbor in December 1940.

"When I got the orders to transfer to Hawaii, I was delighted," Holder said. "Upon arrival in Pearl Harbor, I went straight to the VP-23 PBY squadron based on Ford Island."

Help us bring a PBY home to Naval Air Station Pearl Harbor!

The PBY wasn't a high-performance aircraft like the famous P-51 Mustang, but boy was it versatile. PBYs were used for search and rescue, for convoy escort duties, for anti-submarine patrols, as bombers, and, in a pinch, for cargo transport. "My first four months in the Navy, I was part of the beach crew. And following that, I was assigned to an aircraft crew as a first mechanic and a waist gunner. Four months after that, I became flight engineer."

"I knew I was in the middle of the beginning of something that would change the world and my life."

Holder was 19 years old on December 7, 1941, a day that was so powerful in his memory.

"At 7:55 AM on December 7th, my section had just fallen in for muster in our hangar. As our section leader began calling roll, we heard a screaming aircraft, then, a terrible explosion. We ran outside. The neighboring VP-21 hangar just a hundred yards away had been hit by the first bomb dropped on Ford Island. Squadron VP-21's hangar was severely damaged.

As you read the words and remembrances of Jack Holder that follow, we ask you to share in his commitment: To bring a PBY home to Naval Air Station Pearl Harbor, the battlefield our museum protects.

"Luckily, the hangar was empty; the squadrons PBYs were in the Philippines on advanced base training. My hangar was riddled by machine gun fire. Overhead, we saw several planes with the rising-sun insignia. We immediately realized what was happening. Someone in our section knew that there was a sewer line being constructed behind the hangar. He yelled, 'Let's go to the ditch.' About 20 of us followed him and jumped in the ditch.

"As we ran, I looked up and saw a Japanese plane circle and head straight for us. The pilot saw us and as he approached, I helplessly clung to the side of the ditch, sure this was the end for us all. I could see the expression on his (the pilot's) face—I froze. The war had started and I just knew I was going to die. I'm an old man now, and it is harder for me to remember things...but as long as I live, I'll never forget that moment: the face of the pilot, the roar of the plane's engine, and sight of its guns aimed right at me....

U.S. Navy PBY Patrol Bomber is shown near a seaplane ramp during World War II. PBYs performed with distinction throughout the Pacific Theater and across the globe.



HELP US TRANSPORT AND RESTORE OUR ICONIC PBY PATROL BOMBER!



PBY on Ford Island during the attack, and (at right), PBYs and other aircraft on NAS Pearl Harbor seaplane ramp on December 8, 1941.

“I remember my hands clenching my shipmate’s shoulders—God, don’t let me die in this ditch.

“Our fear was intense but our determination was unrelenting...First the fear, then the adrenaline, and then you act. When I left the ditch, I saw the devastation of the PBY hangars...and all our aircraft engulfed in smoke and flames; I knew I was in the middle of the beginning of something that would change the world and my life. The flames and wreckage surrounded and suffocated me with grief, but I had little time to review the damage. What was really the horror was seeing my shipmates jumping off the ships into the water that was covered in oil and on fire.”

History reports the damage and impact of the attack, but it cannot share the emotions of those caught up in the struggle. In the end, 2,400 American service members and civilians were killed, nearly 20 ships were sunk, and hundreds of aircraft were destroyed. Jack recalls working to repair his commander’s aircraft immediately after the attack, installing new spark plugs, preparing the engine, loading the fuel and two 1,000-pound bombs. The captain and his crew flew more than 19 hours looking for the Japanese forces but ultimately, found nothing.

The PBY was vital to winning WWII - we need your help to bring this majestic aircraft home.

Following Pearl Harbor, Jack Holder continued to fly as a flight engineer on a PBY-5 with Patrol Squadron 23 (VP-23). A few months later, he soon found himself on the front line again as intercepted radio traffic indicated an imminent Japanese attack at Midway.

“VP-23, my squadron, left for Midway on May 26 and began to search for the Japanese forces in the week before the battle... On June 3, 1942, we found them. Lieutenant Howard Ady and his crew from VP-23 was the first plane to sight the fleet. My aircraft, piloted by Lieutenant Junior Grade Murphey, was the second aircraft to see this armada. It looked like black pepper on a fried egg. We imagined that this is what the fleet that attacked Pearl Harbor must have looked like from the air, we were ready for some revenge.

“On June 4, my aircraft was airborne, carrying four 500-pound bombs. At 0545, a PBY reported many planes 150 miles away headed toward Midway. Only moments later, my aircraft sighted two aircraft carriers still under a weather front at a distance of 180 miles headed toward Midway. Both sightings were radioed to Midway control.

“Flying patrol in the PBY has been defined as hours of boredom punctuated by brief moments of sheer terror.”

During the Battle of Midway, Jack spotted a Japanese submarine attempting to submerge. They dropped two bombs and watched as the surfacing debris confirmed they had hit their target.

Help us bring the PBY Catalina back to Naval Air Station Pearl Harbor, an aircraft that saved the lives of many during WWII.

Jack went on to fly a total of 110 missions, most in the PBY - approximately 10 missions over Midway, 48 over Guadalcanal and the Solomon Islands, and, in the closing years of WWII, Jack flew 56 missions over the English Channel in the Bay of Biscay in a PB4Y, the Navy’s designation for the B-24. Jack had the “pleasure of shooting down one German Messerschmitt Me109 fighter.” Jack Holder was honorably discharged in 1948 with the rank of aviation machinist’s mate first class. During his service, he received

When you send your gift to the Museum, you’ll receive a copy of Jack Holder’s book about his experiences during WWII.



OUR PBY WILL BE ARRIVING SOON. PLEASE HELP US PRESERVE IT!



Our PBY will soon travel from Pensacola, Florida to its permanent home at Pearl Harbor Aviation Museum, where it will be fully restored.

several honors, including two Distinguished Flying Crosses, numerous commendation medals and a Combat Action Medal.

Like most of our WWII heroes, he came back from the war and immersed himself in making a life for himself and his family. It was not until he was in his 90's, following participation in an honor flight to Washington D.C., that he realized others might be interested in his story. He authored *Fear, Adrenaline, and Excitement*, sharing his experiences to ensure that what happened during WWII was not forgotten.

"Help us ensure that Jack will again sit in the cockpit of a PBY on this historic Pearl Harbor aviation battlefield."

While Jack's story is unique and connected to the PBY and the Naval Air Station Pearl Harbor, he shares a common connection with millions of other men and women who donned the uniform and served our nation during WWII.

Bringing a PBY Catalina back to the Pearl Harbor Aviation Museum and Ford Island is a priority as it is a vital part of the Ford Island battlefield story that needs to be told.

Every day that passes we risk losing this aircraft to the elements in Florida, or another Museum that might have the funds to move it.

Can we count on you for a special year-end contribution earmarked for the PBY Catalina?

It's vital that we raise the \$200,000 needed to transport this aircraft from Florida to Ford Island and the Pearl Harbor Aviation Museum.

With your support, we can bring a PBY back to Naval Air Station Pearl Harbor and ensure that Jack will again sit in the PBY cockpit on this historic Pearl Harbor aviation battlefield.

Jack joins me in this appeal, signing this letter. For all those who contribute \$100 or more, we will send you a signed copy of Jack's book chronicling his wartime experiences with our sincere thanks for your generous support (while supplies last). Donations of \$50 or more will also receive a limited-edition PBY patch.

Thank you in advance for helping us bring a PBY back to Ford Island and Pearl Harbor Aviation Museum. Working together, we can ensure this important story is remembered and shared with future generations!

Sincerely,

Jack Holder

Jack Holder
PBY Flight Engineer
Pearl Harbor Survivor

Elissa Lines

Elissa Lines
Executive Director



Not actual size of patch.