

NOTAM

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PEARL HARBOR AVIATION MUSEUM | FORD ISLAND, HAWAII

**WWII B-24
FLIGHT ENGINEER
JOHN GLEESON
AT 101!**





ON THE COVER (LEFT):

B-24 flight engineer and aerial gunner John Gleeson took part in many Allied bombing missions over Europe during WWII. Today he volunteers at PHAM on Sundays, while sharing his great stories and passion for aviation with visitors.

NOTAM

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BUILDING CONNECTIONS:

A MESSAGE FROM THE MUSEUM'S NEW INTERIM EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

By Janeen Woellhof, Interim Executive Director

In the last few months, Pearl Harbor Aviation Museum (PHAM) has notably gone through some changes, with the recent retirement of beloved former Executive Director, Elissa Lines, and the introduction of a new, Interim Executive Director. I am Janeen Woellhof, and I'd like to share a personal introduction of myself with you.

CONNECTED TO THE PURPOSE I AM SERVING

A traditional introduction might include my credentials, professional experience, and some "fun facts" about who I am, but I have reflected a lot about how I got to this point in my career and why I feel so connected to this purpose I am serving. I am locally born and raised in Hawaii, and come from a family of military service. My father, a Vietnam Veteran, served in the Marine Corps, and later continued his career working at Pearl Harbor, where my mother was first stationed in the Navy. My siblings currently serve in the Air Force, and I actively serve in the Army Reserve. Our service connects us not only to each other, but to all of those whom we closely refer to as our brothers and sisters in arms. As we lean into Veterans Day coming up, those with service will be reminded of that deep connection – a family-like connection – of service and sacrifice.

CHILDHOOD MEMORIES OF PEARL HARBOR

In Hawaii, military service is deeply woven into the fabric of its communities and an integral part of its economy, and my childhood memories included that military connection, especially with my dad's affiliation to Pearl Harbor. As a young girl, we visited Pearl Harbor to occasionally pick up or drop off my dad at work. I remember greeting him at the dock of what was known as Iroquois Point, where he would catch the ferry to and from work. As children, my father took us fishing at Iroquois Point, which looked out onto Pearl Harbor. Most of my memories, like the ones I've shared, include family, and are layered with local Hawaiian tradition, cultural exposure, and military connection. These memories are close to me, and have shaped the character and foundation in which I am firmly rooted.



The Museum's New Interim Executive Director Janeen Woellhof.

BRINGING A "PEOPLE" SKILLSET TO PHAM

Fast forward to the present, I have gained a vast set of experiences formed by my 22-year military career and paralleled civilian career, of which I spent about 15 years in human resources. In my careers, I drew on my "people" skillset to make genuine connections with employees, leaders, professional colleagues, friends and family. "People" influenced my relationships, development, leadership, and success in everything I did. This people skillset is what I bring to PHAM, and I look forward to leveraging it to build meaningful connections with all those in my extended PHAMily and to lean forward together toward a common purpose.

STEWARDED THIS WWII AVIATION BATTLEFIELD

The Museum is embarking on exciting plans to enhance our ability to deliver the mission of stewarding this historic WWII aviation battlefield, honoring those that defended our freedom, and educating and inspiring future generations. It is an honor and privilege to be a part of this PHAMily, and I look forward to what is yet to come.

HISTORIAN DANIEL MARTINEZ AWARDED SPECIAL HONOR

By Elissa Lines, National Campaign



Military historian John Di Virgilio, Pearl Harbor Aviation Museum Historian Daniel Martinez, and Consul General Yoshinori Kodama of the Consulate General of Japan in Honolulu (left to right), at the award ceremony.

On Thursday, July 25, 2024, at the Consul General's Official Residence in Honolulu, the Order of the Rising Sun, Gold and Silver Rays was conferred to Daniel Alan Martinez. Daniel served the U.S. National Park Service for 44 years, a career that included his role as the Chief Historian at the USS Arizona Memorial and Pearl Harbor National Memorial. Upon his retirement, Daniel became the Historian at Pearl Harbor Aviation Museum, bringing his years of service and research to a new purpose, helping our Museum memorialize the history of that fateful day.

Throughout his tenure at the Pearl Harbor National Memorial, Daniel worked diligently to build and strengthen the relationship and friendship between Japan and the United States. As stated by the Consul General of Japan, Yoshinori Kodama, "Daniel dedicated himself to achieving balanced historical exhibits that encompass perspectives from both Japanese and American viewpoints, particularly focusing on the attack on Pearl Harbor." In the press release sharing this honor, Consul General Kodama summarized Daniel's words of acceptance, "thanking those in attendance for their support, noting that his own efforts to make Pearl Harbor a symbol of reconciliation and friendship between Japan and the United States was made possible only through the support of many people."

It is with great appreciation for Daniel's leadership and commitment that I accepted the invitation to deliver the closing Kanpai, a traditional Japanese toast in his honor:

"In 1991, Daniel supported the planning of the 50th anniversary of the attack on Pearl Harbor. At that time, another member of the planning team, John Di Virgilio, observed that 'it took fully as much courage for the aging American and Japanese fighting men and their families to come forward and to meet each other in friendship as it took for them to go to war.' I would guess that no one attending that reunion in 1991 could have imagined the joint visit to Pearl Harbor by President Obama and Prime Minister Abe in 2016. It was a historic moment.

It is my privilege to pay tribute to Daniel Martinez in honor of today's Imperial Decoration Conferment Ceremony, the presentation of The Order of the Rising Sun, Gold and Silver Rays."

We honor Daniel's work and dedication in building peace and friendship among nations. In the words of Dwight D. Eisenhower, "Freedom has its life in the hearts, the actions, the spirit of men and so it must be daily earned and refreshed - else like a flower cut from its life-giving roots, it will wither and die."

A SPECIAL PEARL HARBOR EXPERIENCE FOR HAWAII STUDENTS

By Woo Ri Kim, Sr. Director of Philanthropic Strategies and Programs

Part of our mission at Pearl Harbor Aviation Museum is to honor and celebrate the past while inspiring tomorrow's leaders. Every day, our educational programs turn this vision into reality. We are excited to announce the launch of the Pearl Harbor Explorer Program, a new immersive experience for students. This multi-day, multi-site program was developed in collaboration with the Pearl Harbor Historic Sites -- the Pearl Harbor National Memorial/USS Arizona Memorial, Pacific Fleet Submarine Museum, Battleship Missouri Memorial, and Pearl Harbor Aviation Museum.

From historical exploration to STEM, aviation, robotics, ship and submarine technology, this new educational program will offer students an understanding of the past and an appreciation for the future. The program includes a visit to each of the Pearl Harbor Historic Sites and an overnight stay aboard the Battleship Missouri. The Pearl Harbor Explorer Program is open to Hawaii students in grades 4-12, and offers customizable itineraries to fit classroom needs.

HONORING THE VISION OF SANDY GASTON

The Pearl Harbor Explorer Program was inspired by the vision of Alexander "Sandy" Gaston, who believed that Hawaii students should have the opportunity to experience the rich history and educational offerings at each of the Pearl Harbor Historic Sites. His dedication to this vision led to the creation of the Alexander "Sandy" Gaston Pearl Harbor Historical Sites Fund, managed by the Hawaii Community Foundation. Thanks to this Fund,

financial aid for program fees and ground transportation is available to support Hawaii schools in need.

PARTNERSHIP WITH SOUTHWEST AIRLINES

One of our greatest challenges is ensuring that these crucial educational experiences aren't just limited to students on Oahu, but also reach keiki on the neighbor islands. Recognizing the importance of accessibility, Southwest Airlines® has generously partnered with the Pearl Harbor Historic Sites to donate 200 complimentary round-trip travel vouchers to fly students for an overnight Pearl Harbor excursion.

SUBMIT YOUR APPLICATION TODAY

We encourage interested Hawaii schools to apply for Pearl Harbor Explorer program! Support for travel, program fees, meals, and overnight accommodations are available and will be awarded through a competitive selection process. NOTE: For schools that are seeking airfare support for the Spring 2025 school semester, applications must be submitted by November 15, 2024.

To apply, visit bit.ly/phexplorer, or contact us at education@PearlHarborAviationMuseum.com for more information.

Our deepest gratitude to the Alexander "Sandy" Gaston Pearl Harbor Historical Sites Fund, Southwest Airlines, and our Pearl Harbor Historic Sites Partners for supporting this exciting endeavor. Together, we can have a lasting impact in the lives of our keiki across the state of Hawaii.



The Pearl Harbor Explorer Program will offer students from across the state of Hawaii an immersive Pearl Harbor experience.



FIRST AVIATION PATHWAYS COHORT SOARS TO NEW HEIGHTS

By Rojo Herrera, Sr. Manager Aviation Pathways

On November 5, 2023, 20 aspiring young aviators began their journey as the first-ever cohort of Pearl Harbor Aviation Museum's (PHAM) newly launched Aviation Pathways Program. Thanks to the generous support of the Ray Foundation and other generous donors, these student pilots, also known as Pathfinders, were awarded grants to pursue their Private Pilot License (PPL). They made a commitment to earn their PPL by October 1, 2024. Each of them has risen to the occasion, overcoming obstacles and tackling challenges to achieve their dreams.

ON TRACK TO MINT 17 NEW PRIVATE PILOTS

The program began with a three-day Boot Camp that included team building, goal setting, and ground school. Nineteen of the 20 passed their FAA Written Exam and advanced to the initial solo phase, where 18 of the 20 were able to experience the thrill of solo piloting a small aircraft. The final benchmark of this program is for the Pathfinders to achieve their PPL, and while there are a few more FAA check rides to go, the Aviation Pathways Program is on track to mint 17 new private pilots! This is an incredible achievement considering the national average of successful completion for people who begin their PPL is only 30%.

This past year has been about far more than just flying milestones—it's been a journey filled with new learning experiences and profound growth. Our Pathfinders have received support and personal mentorship from a variety of pilots—young and old. They toured the amazing Hawaii Air Traffic Control Facility and saw first-hand operations in the Honolulu tower. In addition, they visited the Hawaii Air National Guard where they saw the launch of F-22 Raptor life support operations from the airfield. Students also received multiple tours of a privately-owned executive business jet, piloted by



At the Hawaii Air National Guard's Daniel K. Inouye Fighter Squadron Operations Aircraft Maintenance Facility.

Andy Corrie and owned by Dr. Thomas Kosasa, both committed supporters of the Museum and the Aviation Pathways program.

EXCITING MENTORSHIP OPPORTUNITIES

They also participated in two once-in-a-lifetime mentorship opportunities from two industry giants. The Alaska Airlines' Pilot Development team took the time to meet with them to unveil a thrilling vision of the possibilities that await them in the future. Hawaiian Airlines also stepped up and hosted the Pathfinders for four days, presenting corporate briefings focused on purpose, vision, finance, recruiting, and more. Students also learned about the operational training involved for all aircrew positions and spent an unforgettable day on the ramp of the Honolulu International Airport.

In addition to these incredible opportunities, our Pathfinders voluntarily supported two of the Museum's premier events—the annual *For Love of Country* gala and Flight Adventures featuring the Biggest Little Airshow. At the gala, they were celebrated and brought on stage, representing the next generation of leaders who understand the importance of hard work and honoring the legacy of the heroes who shaped our nation's history.

Leading this first Aviation Pathways cohort has been both fulfilling and exciting and I am eager to continue this work with our next cohort of Pathfinders this fall. Although I can't say when, where, or how these young men and women will do it, I am certain that they will, someday, be in key leadership positions in the aviation industry in Hawaii.



The first Aviation Pathways cohort at the Museum's ALC.

AVIATION PATHWAYS: NAVIGATING MY DREAMS OF FLIGHT

By Heather Smith, Aviation Pathways Grant Recipient

Flying is more than just a dream for me; it's a passion and a goal. My name is Heather Smith, and ever since I was a kid, I've enjoyed traveling to different parts of the world. During my last year of middle school, I realized that while I loved traveling, I was even more fascinated by the possibility of experiencing the earth from far above ground level as a pilot.



Heather earned her Private Pilot License on August 27, 2024!

I was born and raised in Hawaii, and my aviation journey started when I was 13. I enrolled in Pearl Harbor Aviation Museum's Flight School for Girls program in the summer of 2021. On the last day of the week-long camp, I met inspiring women with various aviation careers, sparking a new dream to begin flight training.

After researching flight training options, I discovered that most flight schools in my area had long waiting lists. Along the way, I faced numerous challenges, such as overcoming my expectations, finding a mentor, and funding the training. My first flight hours came from glider and powered orientation flights provided by my local Civil Air Patrol squadron in 2021.

LAUNCHING INTO FLIGHT TRAINING

The excitement of that first glider flight led me to start flight training in single-engine planes. Finding a flight school and an instructor willing to take a young student was difficult.

Nevertheless, I found an instructor who was patient, outgoing, and knowledgeable. My first flight lesson, where I learned to conduct a preflight check, take off, and do simple maneuvers, was an incredible experience that intensified my growing interest in piloting. Over the next few months, I worked with my instructor to plan future lessons to attain my Private Pilot License (PPL).

Over the last three years, I have taken flight lessons and studied for the knowledge exam. With roughly 25 hours of flight experience and some aviation knowledge, I was encouraged by a retired Air Force pilot, whom I met through my grandfather, to apply for an aviation grant in 2023. I was so nervous and thrilled when I learned that I was selected to be a part of Pearl Harbor Aviation Museum's first-ever cohort for their Aviation Pathways Program, providing me with a generous grant and guidance to help me reach my goals.

CHALLENGING BUT REWARDING

Balancing school, sports, extracurricular activities, and flight lessons has been challenging but rewarding. The Aviation Pathways Program has given me opportunities to connect with other awardees my age, meet professionals in the aviation industry, and explore career opportunities I hadn't previously considered. Most importantly, it has shown me that people believe in my potential. Furthermore, I am acquiring valuable technical skills in navigation, aircraft systems, and maintenance that are essential for my journey toward becoming a pilot.

After completing my first solo flight in December 2023, I began preparing for my check-ride. I turned 17 in August, which meant I was finally eligible for a Private Pilot License. I'm thrilled to announce that on August 27, 2024, I officially earned my PPL! My aviation journey started with a dream, and my passion for flight has fueled my commitment to building a career in this industry.



Training in a Flight Simulator in the Museum's Aviation Learning Center.

VOLUNTEER SPOTLIGHT: WWII VETERAN JOHN GLEESON

By Bill Miller, Director of Visitor Services

Statistically, 15% of these airmen were killed or captured...

"We had a job to do," responded John Gleeson when asked about his feelings before climbing into his B-24 *Liberator* on a mission over occupied Europe with the legendary Eighth Air Force. For many of us, this conjures romantic imagery, but in reality, a lonely and gut-wrenching fear climbs into the aircraft with you. A sense of duty erodes the dread, but courage is required to overcome and step up into the aircraft; before you do the job at hand.

WORKING IN THE SHIPYARDS DURING ATTACK

During the Pearl Harbor attack, John Gleeson was working in the Long Beach shipyards. In 1941, the outcome of the war in Europe, let alone the Pacific, was uncertain, and a follow-on attack on California ports was a logical concern. Duty called, and like many of the Greatest Generation, John decided to enlist in the USAAF.



John Gleeson in 1944.

Mechanically minded, he first served as a B-24 *Liberator* flight engineer and aerial gunner, manning the top turret with twin .50 calcs mounted above and between the pilot and copilot. An important position on the aircraft and within the crew, he quickly established himself while training in Georgia as a valued crewmember to his fellow airmen and his pilot, Sam Webb, a hardcore Texan.

FLYING B-24 MISSIONS OVER EUROPE

Practice complete, Johnny and crew shipped out to England to replace lost crews and began flying missions, their first over German U-boat pens in occupied France. The dangers of flying in an unpressurized aircraft at 20,000 feet with temperatures well below freezing are compounded by curtains of flak and Luftwaffe fighters. After a few months, while supporting the British OSS in a blacked-out B-24 supplying explosives to the Norwegian resistance, Johnny lost friends like John Large and Charlie Baker, but reflected, "We accepted that as the risk; we experienced it every time we got in the aircraft to go on a mission."



Museum visitors gather to hear John Gleeson's story.

During a massive air mission briefing, Cologne was revealed as the target and the command briefer emphasized avoiding the famous cathedral within the city. Recognizable by its massive spires, it was commonly used by aircrews as a landmark, but giving a wide berth was difficult for many crews and the building received over 14 hits during the course of the war. Years later, John Gleeson and his wife, Barbara, visited the once-raided city and were able to reflect on the scars still pockmarking the cathedral.

GIVING BACK TO SUPPORT THE MUSEUM

Bullet holes are also memorialized on Hangar 79's windows at Pearl Harbor Aviation Museum, where John Gleeson was a founding figure. He helped curate and organize the Museum in the early years and has now, years later, returned to serve as a volunteer on Sundays, sharing his stories with visitors.

John continues to pursue his passion for aviation and share it with others. He volunteered much of his time flying cadets in the Civil Air Patrol out of Dillingham; his last flight was when he was 100 years old. A few months ago John traveled to Normandy to recognize the 80th anniversary of the longest day. While there, he shared with Steven Spielberg his account of how he danced with Betty Grable and was later arrested.

You can catch the rest of the story with John on Sundays from 12:30 - 2:30 pm.

We're always seeking volunteers for various positions at our Museum. If you're interested in contributing your time and skills, please contact Docent & Public Programs Assistant, Arisa Helbick, at ArisaH@pearlharboraviationmuseum.com.

Facing Page: John Gleeson shares his harrowing story in Hangar 37.

I WAS THERE

Stories with a WWII Veteran

JOHN GLEESON

Blonde BOMBER

PEARL HARBOR
EXHIBITION MUSEUM



US ARMY PVT. JACK LANE'S WWII SOUTHWEST PACIFIC DIARY

By Art Podell, *Legendary Musician and Jack Lane's Nephew*; and Greg Waskul, *National Development Director*

Here's a brief perspective on Jack Lane by his nephew, Art Podell, an original member of The New Christy Minstrels, who is still writing, performing, recording, and playing softball at age 88. He even has his own music radio show in Los Angeles.

I knew him only as Uncle Jack and he was one of my mother Anne's four brothers. Along with one sister, the Lefkowitz clan landed from Poland in the Flatbush section of Brooklyn in the early 1920s. The name they brought with them was Tavischevich, but they felt the name Lefkowitz was more appropriate for an American family living in heavily Jewish populated Brooklyn. Their children, Nathan, Charles, Albert, Jacob, Sylvia, and Anne (my mother) took the next step. Hence the name Lane. We knew our uncles as uncles Nat, Charlie, Al, and Jack. The boys went to trade school and learned the printing trade.

Of the four brothers, Jack was the quiet one. Shorter than the others, slightly over 5 feet tall, he said little in family gatherings and expressed himself more in actions than in words. Small gifts would appear from him at the slightest prompting. When I mentioned to mom that I'd like to learn the guitar, a brand-new guitar appeared in my room with a note from Jack. He tried learning to play the harmonica. That didn't last long. He was proud of his physique and maintained a rigorous exercise schedule. Handball at local parks and summertime resorts was popular and Jack excelled. Did he brag about it? Never.



Jack Lane (center) with famed singing group The New Christy Minstrels in the early 1960s. Art Podell is at left.

He was the kind of person you discovered only through careful observation. When the war erupted in 1941, Jack was one of the first to enlist. A postcard now and then was all we knew and when he returned, he returned to work in the print rooms of the New York Post and remained quiet uncle Jack. I learned of his passing sometime in the early seventies from my mother. And that was it. Did we know him? I'll never know. Will I ever forget him? Never.

Jack Lane's WWII diary and photo book capture the life of the Army Private in 1943 and 1944, while he served in the Southwest Pacific. These historical treasures have been donated to the Emil Buehler Perpetual Trust Library and archive at Pearl Harbor Aviation Museum by Jack's family. The photo below and those on the page to the right are from Jack's photo book, which is filled with images he and friends took during the war. Here are a few excerpts from Jack's WWII diary.



GUADALCANAL:

"We were to make a landing where the fighting was still in full swing and enemy snipers were all over the place...The heavy rainfall we had while at the canal looked like a hurricane. The rain fell for three days and flooded the Montego River, almost causing a tidal wave."

SOLOMON ISLANDS:

"The strafing and bombing was so close that I thought the whole company would be wiped out. We had no foxholes, so all we could do was to lie down flat and trust to luck."

MUNDA, NEW GEORGIA, SOLOMON ISLANDS:

"Enemy planes were back again. We quickly got into our foxholes with the full moon shining on the hills. It was like putting a spotlight over us. We could hear the bombs whistling close by. One bomb hit the foxhole ten yards from the one we were in. We heard the cry for help from those that were still alive. We finally got to the men, using shovels to get out the two that were buried. That's about the closest call I ever had."

BOUGAINVILLE, PAPUA NEW GUINEA:

"The Japanese got a big surprise when one of the biggest barrages of shells ever to be thrown at an enemy in the Southwest Pacific commenced. Ninety-seven guns of almost every calibre were shooting at one time—75s, 90s, 105s, 155s, machine guns, mortars and various other kinds from land and sea. For every shell they threw, we would retaliate with about 100. Some of our shells were falling short and our troops were more afraid of getting hit by our own shells than the enemy's."

MANILA, THE PHILIPPINES:

"I worked on a bridge in the heart of Manila that was to be put across the Pasig River next to the walled city called the Intramuros. We were working under fire day and night. When we finished the bridge, our boys crossed the river and routed the enemy."



Jack Lane (left) and a couple of his fellow soldiers enjoy some time to rest and relax.



Portrait of Jack Lane.



Cape Torokina, Bougainville, Nov. 1943.



Jack Lane's buddies at Cape Torokina beach, Nov. 1943.



Landing at Cape Torokina, Bougainville.



Jack Lane's friend Eddie Mazza with pet monkey in Manila, 1944.



Crashed Japanese bomber at Munda, New Georgia, July 1943.



US Navy Landing Craft are pictured at Liana Beach, New Georgia, Solomon Islands in September 1943.



P-40 Fighters in famous Flying Tigers paint scheme on flight line at Munda, New Georgia, Solomon Islands in July, 1943.

THE LEGACY OF THE F4F WILDCAT IN THE PACIFIC WAR

By Daniel Martinez, Pearl Harbor Aviation Museum Historian



F4F Wildcats on the flight deck of USS Ranger in autumn 1942.

As the clouds of war began to stir in Europe and Asia, the United States Navy found itself with carrier fighters that were woefully inadequate to meet the challenge of war. Carrier fighters were entrusted with the mission to protect the carrier task force, and act as an escort for dive-bomber and torpedo aircraft. By 1935, the Bureau of Aeronautics (Navy) found it imperative to acquire a next-generation mono-wing fighter.

The story of the famed F4F “Wildcat” aircraft began under unfortunate circumstances when the Navy Department canceled Grumman’s contract for the XF4F-1, in July 1936, in favor of the Brewster XF2A-1, a mere four months after it was awarded. Sent back to the drawing board, Grumman would emerge a year later to deliver the XF4F-2 to the Navy on December 23, 1937.

XF4F-2 UNDERGOES US NAVY TRIALS

Upon its arrival, the XF4F-2 would undergo trials at Naval Air Station Anacostia and the Naval Proving Grounds in Dahlgreen, Virginia. Competing against the Brewster XF2A-1 and the Seversky NF-1, the XF4F-2 would face a severe crash while conducting simulated catapult and carrier landing trials on April 8, 1938. Despite its strong performance, this incident, as well as the difficulty of transporting the aircraft over land, was enough for the Navy to declare the XF2A-1 the competition winner.

Undeterred, and with considerable Navy interest, Grumman would work feverishly to redesign the XF4F-2, and emerge with the XF4F-3. Equipped with a Pratt & Whitney “Twin Wasp” SC2-G (XR-1830-76/86), an increased wing span, squared wing tips, and various other modifications, the XF4F-3 was awarded a



F4F Wildcat soars over the Pacific Ocean during WWII.

production contract by the Navy, in August 1939. By December 1941, 248 F4F-3/3As “Wildcats” had been delivered to the Navy and USMC squadrons at Quantico, Virginia, and Ewa, Hawaii. This marked the start of a legendary service career giving the Navy and its aviators a rugged and stubborn warfighting platform during the early years of the Pacific War until it was able to obtain more capable fighter aircraft like the F6F Hellcat.

MARINE AVIATOR MARION CARL SUMS IT UP

Perhaps the War Hero and famed Marine aviator Marion Carl summarized it best when he recalled his experience with the Wildcat:

“The combat tour of the Wildcat was relatively short, but it arrived on the scene when badly needed and in sufficient numbers to make a major contribution toward winning the war in the Pacific. Those of us who flew the Wildcat in combat feel nothing but respect and admiration for the people who designed and built the F4F.” — Maj. Gen. Marion E. Carl, U.S. Marine Corps (Ret.)

The F4F Wildcat would prove its worth throughout the Pacific, playing an active role during the Battle of Wake Island and as part of the “Cactus Airforce” during the Guadalcanal Campaign of 1942. Aviation Historian Barrett Tillman noted that “Intelligent application of tactics, exploiting the F4F strengths against the enemy’s weakness, was the bedrock of that success.” Be sure to check out future NOTAM articles that will highlight the experiences and exploits of F4F Wildcat pilots and ground crews during the Guadalcanal Campaign.

A "KID" MAKES AN IMPORTANT CONTRIBUTION TO THE P-38

By David Kleine, Supporter and Friend of Pearl Harbor Aviation Museum

Men like Fred Brammer from rural Nebraska traveled west in the late 1930s to explore what might be a career. At that time Grand Central Air Terminal in Glendale, California was a budding place for aviation interest and development. While working there as a carpenter, Fred met aviators such as Jim Fergusson, Howard Hughes, Paul Mantz, and Wallace Berry. He got to see the newest aircraft of the time.

Because of Fred's keen interest in aircraft, a mentor and friend encouraged him to attend The Curtiss Wright Institute, located at the terminal. He took a course for mechanical skills in sheet metal which opened the door to employment at Lockheed Aircraft Corporation in 1938.

LEGENDARY AIRCRAFT DESIGNER KELLY JOHNSON

The P-38 was in development under the direction of Kelly Johnson. He was the brilliant engineer of what is still known as the "Skunk Works" top secret division.



475th Fighter Group Commander Col. Charles MacDonald flies his P-38 Lightning over the Markham Valley in Papua New Guinea.

The development of what would become the Lockheed P-38 *Lightning* began in February 1937 when the U.S. Army Air Corps (USAAC) put out a specification (Spec. X-608) for an interceptor. At Lockheed the development of what would become the XP-38 was initially spearheaded by project engineer Kelly Johnson, who is famously known for establishing Lockheed's top-secret division "Skunk Works" in 1943. Lockheed would be awarded a contract for the XP-38 in June 1937.

As a Control Development Mechanic, Fred Brammer worked on the cockpit and cable controls to the wings. He made parts by hand and developed ways to do tests for quality control.



Fred Brammer works on a Lockheed P-38. Early versions of P-38s regularly took off from Lockheed Air Terminal in Burbank, CA.

One issue challenging the development of the P-38 *Lightning* was its inability to climb to 20,000 ft altitude. Turbochargers were needed for each engine, but the engineers' plan was not working. In a meeting where Fred proposed a solution, the engineers said, "they were not going to listen to a 19-year-old snot nosed kid!" The boss's reply was "I am going with the kid" and that resulted in the successful installation of turbochargers that allowed the P-38 *Lightning* to fly to the design specifications Kelly Johnson had promised the Military.

Fred worked for 45 years in the Skunk Works, jokingly saying, "I made handles for wheelbarrows" to abide by his top-secret clearance rules. But of course, he worked on every one of the Skunk Works' planes until he retired. His favorite aircraft of all was the SR-71 *Blackbird*.

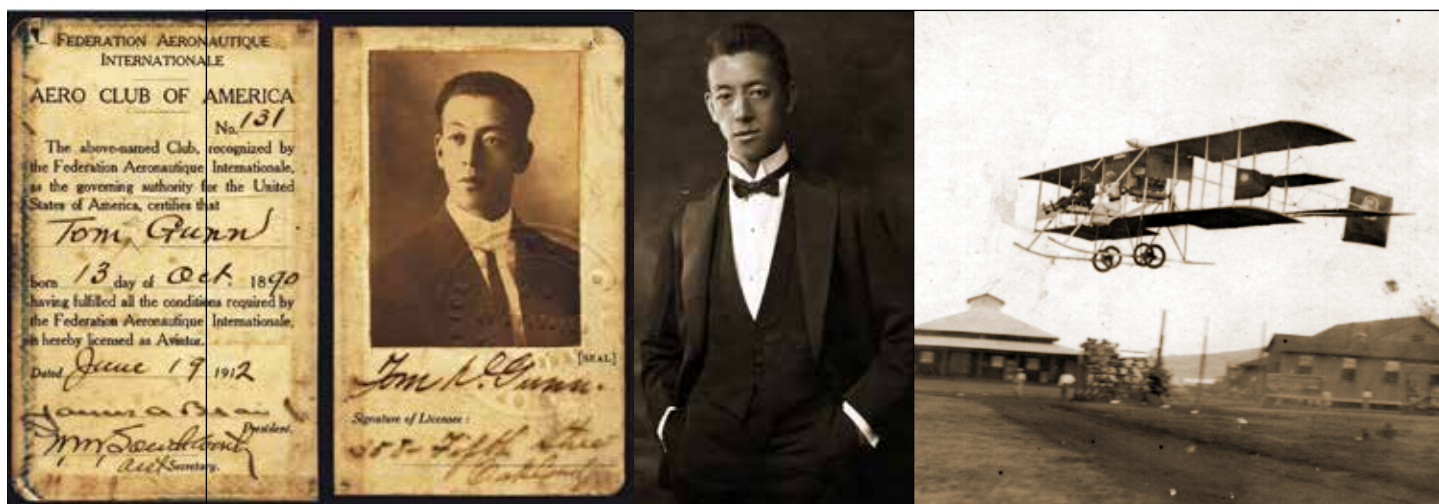
Fred's daughter, Florence Kleine, shared his passion for aviation. She was an avid volunteer with Oshkosh Air Show auctions as well as with Pearl Harbor Aviation Museum. As Florence's husband, I've worked in airplane industry consulting, and through that exposure, she found an avenue to contribute to the memorializing of aviation's story, so dear to her life and heart.



P-38 Lightning patrols the Pacific Theater during WWII.

MEMBER CONVERSATIONS: DISCOVERING THE JOURNEY OF AVIATOR TOM GUNN

By Michael Boutte, Museum Membership



Tom Gunn's pilot's license from the Aero Club of America, his portrait, and giving an airplane ride at Schofield Barracks in 1913.

Every morning, as I drive onto Ford Island to begin the work day, I wonder what I'll learn from our amazing Members today. Each of them has a reason for joining and through our conversations, I learn why Pearl Harbor Aviation Museum matters to so many different people. A telephone call from Pam Carleton of California to renew her Museum Membership offers an example. "My great uncle was Tom Gunn," she told me.

A REMARKABLE MAN

Tom Gunn was a remarkable man. Born in San Francisco in 1893 to Chinese immigrant parents, he developed a strong interest in aviation, then in its infancy. During the early days of the aircraft era, the biplane could only travel a short distance and had many issues. It was impossible to fly over a vast ocean. Therefore, an aircraft that could take off and land on water was a desirable option.

Tom Gunn was deeply influenced by the famous American aviation pioneer and aircraft designer Glenn Curtiss. The novel seaplane was very attractive to him. Tom began designing and building seaplanes by himself. In July 1910, he successfully built a seaplane with a new structure based on the Curtiss Model F: the engine was installed on the air nose. This aircraft won a medal at the 1910 Los Angeles International Air Meet at Dominguez Field in Southern California.

In 1911, Tom Gunn enrolled at the Glenn Curtiss School of Aviation in San Diego. After graduation in 1912, he received his pilot's license (International Aviation Federation No. 131 Pilot

License and California Flight Association No. 15 License). Gunn was among the early aviators whose participation in air races, meets, and flight exhibitions kicked off a wave of public enthusiasm for aviation that circled the globe.

EVER HIGHER, FASTER AND FARTHER

The aviators who flew ever higher, faster, and farther were great heroes to the public during this era.

From July of 1913 through January of 1914, Tom Gunn thrilled the people of Hawaii with a series of aerial demonstrations across the island chain. Utilizing three different aircraft of his own design, he flew Hawaii's first paying air passengers on Oahu, Maui, Kauai and the Big Island, and carried mail to demonstrate the possibility of air mail.

DEVELOPING THE REPUBLIC OF CHINA AIR FORCE

During the tumultuous early years of the Republic of China, Sun Yat-sen enlisted Tom's services to develop the new republic's air force. Tom died in Shanghai in 1925, the victim of a probable traffic accident. Though speculation that he was assassinated due to his importance to the Nationalist government is common, there is no proof of this. In any case, few early aviators accomplished as much as Tom Gunn did in his short life.

My conversation with Pam Carleton introduced me to a larger-than-life figure I had not before known. Our Museum Members are precious to us and I am honored to have the opportunity to serve them.

PEARL HARBOR PICKLEBALL INVITATIONAL IN HISTORIC HANGAR 79

By Lori Vreeke, Director, Si Robin Foundation

Hangar 79 is an 80,000 square-foot maintenance and engine repair facility which miraculously survived the December 7, 1941 attack on Pearl Harbor. Currently the hangar houses the Shealy Restoration Shop and is the future site of expansion of Pearl Harbor Aviation Museum.

BRINGING PICKLEBALL TO FORD ISLAND

When touring the facility in 2023, as the director of the Si Robin Foundation, I was excited to hear that many of the Navy personnel in the area enjoy the growing sport of pickleball. As a pickleball player myself, I thought it would be a great idea to bring pickleball to Ford Island.

Navy personnel currently must leave Ford Island to play pickleball, causing unnecessary commutes to Oahu public courts, overcrowding, and limited time available to play.

SHOWCASING THE MUSEUM'S FUTURE PLANS

With the upcoming plans to expand the current Museum, I came up with the idea to kick off the renovation of Hangar 79 with a pickleball tournament fundraiser open to Navy personnel as well as the public, in order to showcase the future plans for the Museum.

It is also a great opportunity to share some of the more "human" interest aspects of our military history. For example,

during my research of Ford Island during WWII, I came across a Navy directive promoting the physical fitness of their recruits – and tennis was identified as a key sport to build strength and endurance. There were many tennis courts on the naval base as WWII unfolded.

TRANSFORMING HANGAR 79

Hangar 79 will be temporarily transformed into 7 regulation size pickleball courts by installing court lines, fencing, spectator seating, and a championship court. The tournament will be held on December 13 – 15, 2024 hosting all ages and abilities broken into the following brackets: Mixed Doubles, Men's Doubles, Women's Doubles, Singles, Youth and Beginners.

The event will also include food trucks, pickleball vendors and participation swag and medals. Players and spectators will be transported from the Pearl Harbor National Memorial by shuttle buses to Ford Island.

A GROWING SPORT

Anticipating that the tournament will be a great success, I do hope that the sport of pickleball will continue to develop and grow, not only in public use areas but perhaps, even within the perimeter of our military neighborhoods and physical fitness facilities. It would be great to see families and military personnel alike enjoying the sport of pickleball!

★ **ALL PROCEEDS BENEFIT PEARL HARBOR AVIATION MUSEUM** ★



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Questions - Please contact
Pickleball@PearlHarborAviationMuseum.com

 **Fri Dec 13 - Sun Dec 15**
HISTORIC HANGAR 79 - PEARL HARBOR

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