

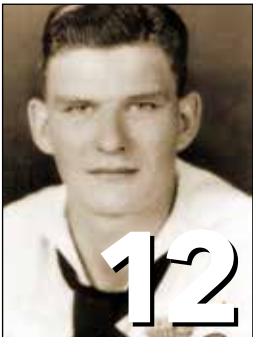
NOTAM

NOTICE TO AIRMEN | VOL. 4 2024 | ISSUE #58

PEARL HARBOR AVIATION MUSEUM | FORD ISLAND, HAWAII

SI ROBIN: THE SPIRIT OF AVIATION





ON THE COVER (LEFT):

Legendary inventor, philanthropist and aviation enthusiast Si Robin was honored with the prestigious "Spirit of Aviation Award" at Pearl Harbor Aviation Museum's Annual "For Love of Country" Gala on December 7, 2024.

NOTAM

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REFLECTING ON A SEASON OF REMEMBRANCE WITH GRATITUDE

By Janeen Woellhof, Interim Executive Director



The end of the year marks a shift in seasons, weather, and sentiments. As the holiday season comes to a close for many around the globe, we at Pearl Harbor Aviation Museum are also wrapping up a busy season of our own—a season inspired by our mission to steward America’s WWII aviation battlefield and to share stories of the

many heroes from the Greatest Generation, so that we may inspire those who will lead us into the future.

Each and every day, we open our doors to guests from all over the world to share the history of what happened on our hallowed grounds on that very day of infamy. Yes, it is our mission to do this all throughout the year, but the recent anniversary of Pearl Harbor on December 7, holds special significance and reverence.

INSPIRATION FOR PRESENT & FUTURE GENERATIONS

Out of such tragedy came heroism, honor, legacy, and peace that carries forward today. Decades later, we see fewer and fewer of our nation’s WWII heroes, making it ever so important for us to ensure their service, sacrifice, and stories carry on as inspiration for our present and future generations.

At Pearl Harbor Aviation Museum, we don’t just preserve history and share stories of our heroes, we educate young children through school programs and offer opportunities to high school students and young adults to help them pursue careers in aviation. We carry out our whole mission each day with talented staff, caring volunteers, dedicated leaders, and generous supporters – all of whom I am so incredibly grateful for.

This past December 7, we commemorated the 83rd anniversary of Pearl Harbor and celebrated Pearl Harbor Aviation Museum’s 18th anniversary since opening its doors in 2006. On this extra special day, we held a commemorative ceremony during our annual *For Love of Country* Gala in Historic Hangar 79. We joined together to give reverence,

honor our heroes, commit to our purpose of preserving history while educating the future, while enjoying the company of friends and PHAMily.

APPRECIATION FOR THOSE WHO HAVE SERVED

After a few months in this role and quite a bit of reflection, I can’t help but feel inspired and overwhelmed with gratitude. And in the spirit of thankfulness, I want to first share my appreciation for those who have served and whose sacrifice inspires us today. I also want to extend a heart-felt “Mahalo” (thank you) to the PHAMily and friends of the Museum; whether you are Member, volunteer, employee, or donor (or any combination of these), thank you for your support and commitment to enabling our mission.

I look forward to continuing this important work in 2025. Together, we are preserving history, honoring our heroes, and shaping the leaders of tomorrow.



Pearl Harbor Aviation Museum's Iconic Control Tower.

DOCENTS CORNER: WHAT IF THE USS ARIZONA WAS NOT HERE?

By Tim Baier, Museum Docent

As a Museum Docent, I engage with visitors daily, sharing the significance of the attack on Pearl Harbor, including the story of the USS *Arizona*. Every day, I see first-hand how the fate of this battleship deeply resonates with people from across the globe. Sometimes I wonder: what if the USS *Arizona* was not here on December 7, 1941? That is not to say that the attack by the Empire of Japan would not have occurred, but I can't help but think about how many lives might have been spared—or how many more might have been lost—if another ship or ships had been stationed in the USS *Arizona*'s place.



The USS Arizona and USS Oklahoma (both in the top right corner) at Pearl Harbor on October 13, 1941, just five days before the battleships left for training maneuvers on October 18, 1941.

According to the book *All The Gallant Men* written by USS *Arizona* survivor Donald Stratton, the battleship was scheduled to return to Bremerton, Washington, in November 1941 for an overhaul. This meant the crew would spend the holidays stateside and perhaps even be granted military leave to go home. Many members of the crew had already notified their families of the possibility. In October 1941, those plans were abruptly changed.

ORDERED ON TRAINING MANEUVERS

USS *Arizona*, USS *Nevada*, and USS *Oklahoma* operating as part of Battleship Division One (BatDiv 1) and Battleship Division Two (BatDiv 2) of the US Navy's Task Group 2.1 were ordered on training maneuvers from October 18 to 26. During routine target practice, 90-degree starboard zigzag maneuvers were introduced. These timed turns, made in unison with other ships, were evasive moves to be used if submarines were in the area. The ship's Officer of the Deck coordinated the turns at designated times. During these maneuvers, fog lookouts were posted on the bow and wings of the bridge to make sure they were in sync with the other ships.

On October 22 – 45 days before the attack – visibility was poor due to heavy fog, and at the time, none of these ships were equipped with radar. The crew of the USS *Arizona* had no way of knowing how close the ships were to each other. According to the USS *Arizona* Deck Log, at 18:17 the *Oklahoma* was observed on the port side of the *Arizona* on a collision course. The Captain of the *Arizona*, “took the conn, turned the ship hard right, assumed flank speed, sounded one short blast on whistle, sounded siren, collision quarters.”

Recognizing the situation, the *Oklahoma* also sounded siren. At 18:19 the *Oklahoma* collided with the *Arizona* on the vessel's port side at frame 75, and all engines were stopped. Both ships were damaged, but the *Arizona* took the worst of it, ending up with a hole in her side 30' by 20' wide. The resulting flooding caused the ship to list 2.5 degrees until counter-flooding reduced her list by 1 degree. Both ships limped back into Pearl Harbor.

DAMAGE KEPT THE BATTLESHIP IN PEARL HARBOR

The USS *Arizona* was put straight into drydock. The damage delayed her departure to Bremerton, and on that fateful Sunday morning in December 1941, the USS *Arizona* was hit by four armor-piercing bombs. The resulting explosions effectively tore the ship in half, killing 1,177 of the 1,512 crewmen on board.

There were 2,403 human casualties at Pearl Harbor that day. Tragically, nearly half of the casualties occurred on the *Arizona*. Imagine the anguish felt by surviving crew members and families! I can't help but wonder: *what if the Arizona had not been in port that day, spared by the October collision?* While the “what ifs” of history may stir our imaginations, the truth remains: we can't alter the past, only learn from it.



Damage to the USS Arizona after colliding with USS Oklahoma. The ship entered drydock for repairs, which postponed a trip to Washington and remained at Pearl Harbor until December 7, 1941.



USS Arizona explodes (top photos) after being hit by four armor-piercing bombs dropped by Japanese aircraft.

The fire on the Arizona continued for two days, during which time the ship slowly sank into the bay. Tragically, 1,177 of the Arizona's crew were killed in the attack.

The USS Arizona Memorial (bottom) is shown, with the Pearl Harbor Aviation Museum's Control Tower in the background.



THE HONOLULU FIRE DEPARTMENT ON DECEMBER 7, 1941

By Kerwin Lum, Pearl Harbor Aviation Museum Volunteer

Sunday, December 7, 1941, seemed like any other Sunday in paradise. The sun was brightly shining, white clouds drifted across the blue sky and a gentle breeze caressed the islands. But this was all about to drastically change. At 07:40 am, Japanese Commander Mitsuo Fuchida issued the preliminary deployment order, and carrier-based aircraft peeled off to strike their targets across the island of Oahu.

Shortly after 8:00 am, Honolulu Fire Department (HFD) Lieutenant Frederick Kealoha answered the telephone at Station 6 (Kalihi). Hickam Field reported a structure fire at Hangar 11. Kealoha sounded the station alarm.

OAHU WAS UNDER ATTACK

At this time, off-duty fireman Anthony Lopez was driving to church when a low-flying aircraft marked with red circles zoomed overhead. He thought it was just part of another local military maneuver that was common at that time. During the sermon, he heard the sirens of passing fire trucks. Then came more. He knew it was a second alarm: something major was happening. While heading home to get his gear, the car radio announced that Oahu was under attack. Then the radio went silent.

As Engine 6 raced towards the airfield, the firefighters could see columns of black acrid smoke towering into the sky. As they passed through the main gate, the tragedy of what was happening unfolded before them. The airfield was an inferno of burning buildings and aircraft. As the intensity of the attack subsided, the dead and wounded lay where they fell.

But this lull was just a momentary pause as the second wave of attacking aircraft arrived over the island. Within minutes, HFD was once again under a torrent of bombs and bullets with nothing to defend themselves, little protection, and minimal resources.

A BURNING, SMOLDERING WRECK

They were supposed to assist the men of Hickam Field's Fire Station, but they were no more. The station was now a burning, smoldering wreck with one of its engines still inside. Their other vehicle was bullet-riddled on the tarmac, the driver dead at the wheel. HFD was all alone and were the only firefighters available. They needed help fast. But this was not to be. The rest of HFD was tending to other emergencies across Oahu.

When they got to Hangar 11, they were joined by Engine 1

(Downtown) and Engine 4 (Kuakini). The building and the housed aircraft were a raging firestorm. With no higher leadership, Kealoha took command. When the fire hoses were turned on, there was no flow. The irrigation system had been destroyed. Water had to be drawn from a water-filled bomb crater. A pumper truck refilled the puddle. With only a handful of firefighters and a limited supply of water, they did the best they could, with what they had, under the most perilous of circumstances.

HFD fought the roaring flames at the risk of their own lives. Captain Thomas Macy of Engine 4 and Captain John Carreira of Engine 1 were killed by a bomb while fighting the angry flames inside the hangar. Hoseman Harry Tuck Lee Pang of Engine 6 was fatally wounded by gunfire from an attacking plane. Kealoha and Hoseman Moses Kalilikane were also critically wounded, along with another three firemen. The fire companies dispatched to Hickam Field did not return to their stations until sometime after midnight.

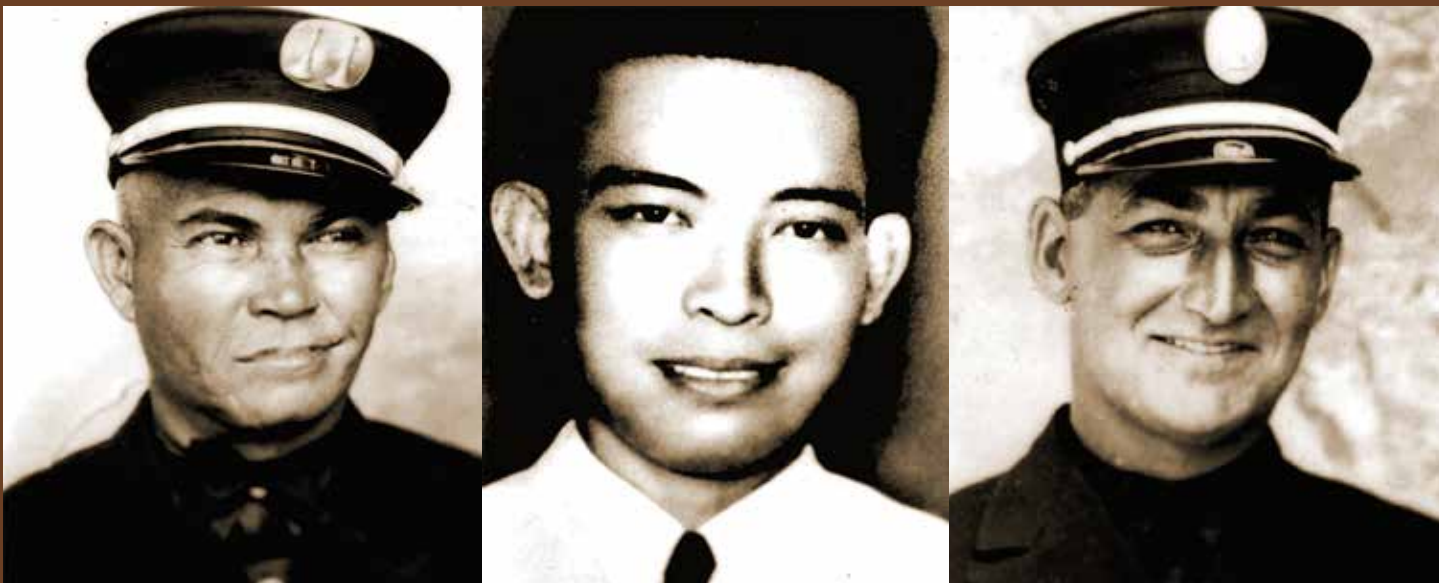
RESPONDING FOR 48 HOURS WITHOUT A BREAK

All off-duty firemen were called into work. HFD was so deluged with calls, that Mayor William Blaisdell declared that only phone alarms with actual addresses would be answered. Nine commercial trucks along with a number of civilian volunteers were put into auxiliary use to help relief efforts. All of this was done under the direction of a fireman. HFD responded to emergencies caused by the attack through the following Tuesday morning without a break. Firefighters were then given four hours of rest.

Lieutenant Frederick Kealoha and Hosemen George Carrea, John A. Gilman, Moses Kalilikane, Patrick J. McCabe, and Soomon H. Naauao Jr. were awarded the Purple Heart by Lieutenant General Robert C. Richardson. The three firefighters who perished received their Purple Hearts posthumously on Dec. 7, 1984, at a ceremony at the USS Arizona Memorial. They were the only civilian firefighters to receive this honor.

Throughout Sunday, Dec. 7, 1941, and the days that followed, HFD exhibited extraordinary courage, heroism, and fortitude in the most perilous circumstances on a day like no other.

Special thanks to the Honolulu Fire Department for their help in composing this story.



Honolulu Fire Dept. Captain Thomas Macy, Hoseman Harry Tuck Lee Pang and Captain John Carreira (from left) died at Hickam Field on December 7, 1941.



The Honolulu Fire Department fought flames at Hickam Field on December 7, 1941. Photo Credit: Honolulu Fire Department.



Honolulu Fire Dept. pumper with suction hose draws water from bomb crater. Damage to the Fire Station at Hickam Field after the December 7, 1941 attack.

Photos courtesy of the Honolulu Fire Department.

SI ROBIN HONORED WITH SPIRIT OF AVIATION AWARD

By Greg Waskul, National Development Director and Elissa Lines, National Campaign



Pearl Harbor Aviation Museum is thrilled to recognize Si Robin as this year's recipient of the Spirit of Aviation Award, honoring his personal, professional, and global impact, which was presented at the Museum's *For Love of Country* Gala on December 7th.

As an aviation innovator, industry visionary and leader, mentor, and philanthropist, Si has led the industry, advanced safety and technology, changed the lives of countless aspiring aviators and helped inspire the next generation.

A LIVING LEGEND OF AVIATION

A Living Legend of Aviation, Si earned dozens of patents for his pioneering work in aircraft antennas and other sensors that have flown on the vast majority of the world's aircraft. The company he helped build with his wife Betty Bazar Robin, Sensor Systems, became the premier supplier of innovative electronic systems to general, commercial and military aviation throughout the free world.

The Spirit of Aviation Award is presented annually to recognize and honor a person who, through their personal leadership, actions, and impact, inspires unparalleled achievement and advancement of theory, practice and personal growth, opening the doors to the fulfillment of dreams and the limitless reaches of human potential.

REMARKABLE SUPPORT FOR THE MUSEUM

Here are just four of the many impactful things Si has funded over more than a decade of remarkable support for Pearl Harbor Aviation Museum:

- Funded the painting of the iconic Ford Island Control Tower.
- Provided the key funding required to repair the badly deteriorating roof of the Museum's Hangar 79.
- Announced multiple \$100,000 challenge grants to spur additional support for the Museum's education program at the Museum's annual *For Love of Country* galas.
- Made a transformational \$5 million challenge grant to help the Museum fully restore Hangar 79.

REMEMBERING THE SPIRIT OF PEARL HARBOR

Si Remembers Pearl Harbor, clearly understanding that Pearl Harbor represents the resilience of the human spirit, the capability of mankind to come together and, with unity of purpose, achieve the impossible.

Pearl Harbor Aviation Museum is thrilled to present the Spirit of Aviation Award to our hero and our friend, the great Si Robin.



Genius at work: Si Robin with one of his legendary antenna designs. Si earned dozens of patents for his inventions.



Si with Elissa Lines, who leads the Museum's National Campaign.



Si with Chris Rushing, daughter Lori Vreeke and Clay Lacy.



Si with Admiral Ronald J. Hays, at the For Love of Country Gala.



Si and his daughter Lori support aviation throughout the nation.

WINGS OF OPPORTUNITY: HOW SCHOLARSHIPS CHANGE LIVES

By Cherry Kan, 2024 For Love of Country Scholarship Recipient



Cherry Kan soars the skies around Chicago and Wisconsin to build on her flying time required for her multi-engine rating.

The 2024 For Love of Country Scholarship has been a blessing on my path to becoming a professional pilot. Mid-way through my instrument training, I faced unexpected delays as financial priorities made progress slower than I'd hoped. There were days when my dream of becoming an airline pilot felt distant.

CHASING AIRPLANE SHADOWS IN HONG KONG

My interest in aviation began as a child, chasing airplane shadows near Hong Kong's Kai Tak International Airport, where my family resided. The roar of engines filled the air daily, and the smell of jet fuel mingled with the city's familiar smog. I wandered around the city's streets sighting many overnighting crewmembers from around the world, leading lives that seemed so boundless and inspiring. These childhood memories left a deep impression on me.

When I had the opportunity to come to the U.S. for university, I decided to study aviation management. During those years, I earned my private pilot license but had to put flying on hold for a long hiatus due to immigration and financial constraints. In 2022, a coworker, who is a fellow full-time working mother training to become a professional pilot, inspired and encouraged me to rekindle my own pilot journey.

When I received the scholarship acceptance notification in May, I was overjoyed and knew it would make a significant impact on my training progress. With this financial support, I completed my instrument rating in July 2024. The scholarship then helped me toward my commercial certification, which

I earned in September 2024. Most recently, I completed my commercial multi-engine add-on rating, fully funded by the For Love of Country Scholarship. Accomplishing three ratings in four months would not have been possible without this incredible gift. The timing was perfect; with the long summer days in Michigan, I was able to fly nearly every day and made great progress.

HOPING TO ADVISE OTHER MICHIGAN PILOTS

Since the fall, I have volunteered to become the Scholarship Chair of the Michigan Ninety-Nines Chapter. Based on my experience as a scholarship recipient, I hope to advise other Michigan pilots and help them find scholarships so they too can reach their aviation career goals. Currently, I'm working towards my CFI rating, a step that feels achievable thanks to Pearl Harbor Aviation Museum's continued support. This experience has renewed my gratitude for the journey I'm on, and I'm forever grateful to the scholarship committee for believing in me.

APPLY TODAY!

Pearl Harbor Aviation Museum is now accepting 2025 scholarship applications. The Museum offers six incredible scholarships designed to make aviation education and training accessible to dedicated future aviators and engineers. The deadline to submit your application is February 1, 2025. Scan the QR code or visit bit.ly/PHAMscholarships to apply online today!



SCAN ME

CARING FOR PEARL HARBOR AVIATION MUSEUM'S ARCHIVES

By Amanda Sheley, Collections Manager/Registrar

Bringing new archival material into our collection is an intricate process. Throughout the years, we have received thousands of donations from generous donors eager to preserve a little piece of history. Few get the opportunity to understand the steps taken and the responsibility of archivists to get it right. Join us as we dive into the world of archives.

STEP 1: INQUIRY

After receiving a donation inquiry, Pearl Harbor Aviation Museum must discuss as a team whether the donation meets certain criteria. To follow best practices in Collection Management, we follow the 11 guidelines set forth by G. Ellis Burcaw, author of *Introduction to Museum Work*, one of the leading texts in museology. These guidelines are as listed: scope, legal title, documentation, safety and security, ability to care for, potential use, duplication, condition, public relation, relevance, and special circumstances. This is a lot to consider! It's imperative that each of these factors are evaluated during the decision-making process.



STEP 2: PROCESSING

Once it is decided that the donation is in the collection's best interest, we make moves for acquisition. After transferring ownership, a digital file is completed and updated with correspondence, documentation, and details regarding the past, present, and future of the object. This digital file houses all important details and information about the donation and helps the Museum keep track of each item long into the future. We also must find a suitable home for each item, which often includes polypropylene sleeves, acid-free boxes, and detailed labeling. Once the new location is updated in its digital file, we can proceed to the maintenance stage of care.



STEP 3: MAINTENANCE

To keep a collection relevant, constant maintenance and environmental monitoring of our artifacts is a must. Pearl Harbor Aviation Museum houses an extensive collection, making inventory an ongoing process. We focus on one category at a time, updating locations, condition reports, and storage materials. Simultaneously, we evaluate environmental factors; humidity, temperature, and pest challenges. Problem-solving may include traps for pests, improving HVAC systems, or even moving entire collections for safety. By conducting inventories and maintenance, we have the opportunity to reconnect with our collection. With over 17,000 items in our archive and over 10,000 library books, it can be difficult for staff members to know exactly what we have.

WORTH THE EFFORT!

Working in the archives is a rewarding experience. The team carries a huge responsibility to keep our collections in pristine condition and maintain thorough documentation, ensuring their relevance for decades to come. Our donors, patrons, and fellow staff members count on us to provide access to these primary sources, so we can educate the public reliably and consistently.

If you are interested in visiting The Emil Buehler Perpetual Trust Library and Archive, we welcome you to make an appointment by scanning the QR code or visiting bit.ly/PHAMArchives. We look forward to welcoming those who are interested in expanding their knowledge of WWII and aviation history in the Pacific.



SCAN ME

A TRIBUTE TO AILEEN BLANC

By Helen Soeda and Lt Col Linda Bruckner, USAF (Ret.), Friends of Aileen Blanc



Aileen Bradley Blanc

It is with heavy hearts that we share the passing of our dear friend and cherished supporter of Pearl Harbor Aviation Museum, Aileen Bradley Blanc, on August 12, 2024. Aileen's vibrant spirit, infectious sense of humor, and unwavering loyalty touched everyone who knew her.

Born and raised in Pennsylvania, Aileen's warm, outgoing personality eventually led her to Washington, DC, where she worked in retail sales. But she yearned for something more, something adventurous. In 1971, she took a leap of faith and moved to the sunny shores of Hawaii, where she met the love of her life, Richard J. Blanc (Dick), a Colonel and jet pilot in the Marine Corps.

They married on Aileen's birthday in 1974, and she embraced the life of a Marine wife with grace and devotion. Aileen supported Dick through assignments in Washington, DC, Okinawa, Japan, Naval Air Station Alameda in California, and finally back to Hawaii, where he retired after a distinguished career.

When Aileen lost Dick in 1997, it was a profound heartbreak, but true to her resilient nature, she carried on. Later, she was blessed with another chapter of love and happiness, finding companionship with Timothy Hudson, a retired Marine, with whom she shared many joyful years.

To honor her late husband's memory and service to his country, Aileen became involved with the Museum in 1999.

She participated in an informational briefing about the vision of the Museum, representing her late husband, a member of the Marine Corps Aviation Association.

Aileen's professional expertise and military connections provided vital resources to the fledgling organization, leading to her swift invitation to join the Board of Directors. Working alongside the early Board members, Aileen played a key role in shaping the Museum's design, organizing operational logistics, acquiring aircraft for display, and building foundational support.

Throughout the years, Aileen remained deeply involved in numerous aspects of the Museum's growth. She contributed to the success of the annual gala, special events, and a range of public programs. However, the experience Aileen valued most was the time spent with fellow volunteers, military veterans, and special guests—people who came together, at various moments, to contribute to the mission and vision of the Museum.

After suffering a debilitating stroke on June 3, 2021, Aileen became paralyzed on the left side, requiring round-the-clock care. Despite this incredible challenge, she did not become bitter or depressed but faced her hardship with grace.

In recognition of her decades of support, Aileen was appointed Board Member Emeritus in 2022, sustaining her participation and input. It has been a great honor to have had her support and commitment throughout the years. Aileen's presence will be deeply missed, but the warmth, humor, and love she brought into the world will live on in the memories of all who had the privilege of knowing her.



Aileen Blanc (in red) with her fellow 2016 Pearl Harbor Aviation Museum Board Members.

A TRIBUTE TO DR. CHARLES SEHE, USS NEVADA VETERAN

By Dr. Linda Miller, Pearl Harbor Aviation Museum Friend and Supporter



Charles Sehe in 1944 (left). Dr. Sehe in 2010 (center). Dr. Sehe lays a wreath on March 11, 2016 at USS Nevada Memorial (right).

On November 3, 2024, Dr. Charles Sehe passed away at his home in Mankato, Minnesota. Dr. Charles Sehe was a Seaman First Class (Sea1c) aboard the USS *Nevada* during the Japanese attack on December 7, 1941. As the last surviving USS *Nevada* veteran who witnessed the attack, his passing marks the end of an era.

I had the pleasure of meeting Dr. Sehe at the USS *Nevada* Centennial Ceremony in Carson City, Nevada on March 11, 2016. While at this ceremony, Governor Brian Sandoval spoke and proclaimed Dr. Charles Sehe, an adopted son of the State of Nevada.

Just one month earlier, in February, I attended a special reunion for the surviving USS *Nevada* veterans at the Nevada State Museum in Las Vegas. Although Dr. Sehe was unable to join that event, I had the privilege of meeting many other veterans who served on the battleship. This experience ignited a deep desire to do something extraordinary for these remarkable heroes. Inspired by these encounters, I decided to coordinate a trip to Hawaii for surviving *Nevada* veterans for the 75th commemoration of the attack on Pearl Harbor. Although Dr. Sehe was unable to attend, he supported my efforts and commented in a letter dated August 1, 2016:

"Your efforts to bring attention to the 75th anniversary of the Japanese aerial attack on US Military installations in Hawaii and your encouragement for all living shipmates of the USS Nevada to attend is commendable."

Eager to share his story for future generations to understand the impact of World War II, Dr. Sehe wrote to me about his

experience at Pearl Harbor for my book which covers historical events in Las Vegas and Hawaii. Dr. Sehe further recounted his vivid experiences of the Pearl Harbor attack during a conference at the Atomic Museum in Las Vegas. He was joined by his daughter Isabel Sehe, as well as fellow shipmate Richard J. "Dick" Ramsey, who was one of the only other surviving USS *Nevada* veterans. Both Ramsey and Sehe reflected on their experiences aboard the *Nevada* during the invasion of Normandy, Okinawa, Iwo Jima, Cherbourg, and Toulon.

Director of the Naval History and Heritage Command, Rear Admiral Sam Cox (Ret.), delivered a powerful speech at the remembrance ceremony, where a special brick was unveiled to honor the 80th anniversary of the attack on Pearl Harbor. John Galloway, head of the USS *Nevada* Remembrance Project, designed the brick which is now located on the History Walk outside the Atomic Museum.

Dr. Sehe was awarded the rank of Captain USN, by Senatorial Recognition on September 10, 2010, for his assistance in creating a lasting collection of primary source materials regarding the USS *Nevada*. He was also awarded with France's highest distinction, the French Legion of Honor Medal, on September 30, 2020, for his contribution to the liberation of France.

On November 7, 2024, his celebration of life took place in Mankato, Minnesota, with full military honors. It has been a true honor to call Dr. Sehe a friend over the years. My heart goes out to his family, and to all who had the privilege of knowing him.

WAR AND REMEMBRANCE: CAPTAIN JIM DANIELS

By Daniel Martinez, Pearl Harbor Aviation Museum Historian

In the fall of 1987, in my second year of employment with the National Park Service, I met Captain Jim Daniels. While giving a talk for the Rotary Club, he spoke of his aviator experiences on the night of December 7, 1941. His talk was spellbinding and tragic.

After Daniels became a volunteer for the National Park Service, we became fast friends. I was invited to his home to have dinner with him and his wife, Helen, at their beautiful residence in Kailua, where, as the sun glistened off the Koolau Mountains, they shared their memories of World War II. He fondly shared stories of the ship he loved, the USS *Enterprise*, and the adventures of being a Navy fighter pilot during those perilous years of war.



Captain Jim Daniels in the cockpit of his F4F Wilcat fighter.

As a Pearl Harbor historian, I wanted to know more about his experience on December 7, 1941. He described the night of horror when he and five other F4F Wildcat fighters flown by his fellow aviators were targeted by friendly fire. One Wildcat was shot up but the pilot bailed out and survived. As the sixth Wildcat in the group, Jim flew out of danger, made a rapid descent, and landed on the runway of Naval Air Station Pearl Harbor.

On one of my visits with Jim, he brought out a plaque that he had made to commemorate that defining moment. He sat down on his sofa chair and read to me from the back of the plaque. As he did, I could see him stepping back into time. His eyes moistened with tears of memory as he recounted the horror of seeing his fellow aviators being killed by friendly fire. He said he wanted me to have it and later, a year before he passed, I was given this treasured memento.



F4F Wilcat fighter prepares for takeoff aboard USS Enterprise.

The Fighting Squadron Six

Plaque Caption written by Captain Jim Daniels

VF-6 was commissioned as a member of Air Group 6 and assigned to the USS *Enterprise* (CV-6) when it was commissioned in 1935. During the period prior to World War II, intensive training prepared it for the shock of Pearl Harbor, and it later served with distinction throughout World War II. The symbol of the blazing star leaving its mark in the skies of the world was proven most prophetic and has since been copied many times by other air units.

At Pearl Harbor, after being ordered to escort attacking planes hunting for the Japanese Fleet, a flight of six VF-6 Wildcats (F4F3A) was diverted from the ship to Pearl Harbor after dark, where five of the six planes were destroyed by friendly fire,

being mistaken for the Japanese. Three pilots were killed—Lt. (jg) Fritz Hebel, Ens. Herb Menges, Ens. Eric Allen. Others in the flight were Ens. Gayle Hermann, later killed, Ens. Dave Flynn, and Ens. Jim Daniels. Commanding Officer 1939—1941: Lcdr. H. L. Young, USN, now Rear Admiral, (Ret.), Deceased.



A CALL FOR HERO STORIES

Do you have a special story to share about a remarkable individual in your life?

Pearl Harbor Aviation Museum is collecting stories of unsung Heroes on our online tribute board to ensure their legacy serves as inspiration for future generations. We invite you to post a personal story as a meaningful way to honor a friend, family member, or an extraordinary person who has made a difference in your life.



DR. KAJ L. NIELSEN

Kaj L. Nielsen was born in Nyker, Bornholm, Denmark on December 3, 1914. He immigrated to America with his mother and brother when he was a teenager. Not knowing any English, Kaj excelled in mathematics - after all 2+2 is 4 in any language. Kaj graduated from Roger City High School (Michigan) and went on to the University of Michigan, graduating Phi Beta Kappa, with a degree in Mathematics. ...



BOB LEMON

This is a story about how an Indiana farm boy undertook a secret mission during World War II and thereby participated in one of the most famous raids in war time history. This is how Bob LeMon met Jimmy Doolittle. ...



RICHARD T SPOFFORD

On the morning of Sunday, 7 December 1941, aircraft roaring over his home interrupted Richard T. Spofford's preparation for church. He lived in a home located in the hills off the Pali with a clear view of Pearl Harbor. A 1919 graduate of the Naval Academy and a Lieutenant Commander at the time, he quickly ascertained the situation; and he knew his ship, USS OGLALA, a first world war minelayer, was in trouble.. ...

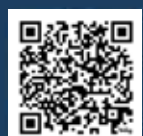


KEN SEDERQUIST

The attacks on Pearl Harbor occurred when Squadron VP-71 was patrolling in PBY-5's (seaplanes) for Nazi U-boats between Newfoundland and England during the Battle of the Atlantic. It was 7:48 a.m. Hawaiian Standard Time, and about 4:00 p.m. over the North Atlantic Ocean. VP-71 certainly headed back to base when they got the news. ...

Submit your Hero's story today! Let's remember their courage, celebrate their impact, and keep their spirit alive for years to come.

Go to bit.ly/herotributeboard or scan the QR code to post your story.





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IN HONOR OF
LOUIS S. ZAMPERINI
USAAF - WWII

Sample Gold plaque with inscription