



Wings of Freedom

The Official Newsletter of the Delaware Valley Historical Aircraft Association

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Kurt Wecker, DVHAA newsletter editor
kurtwecker@comcast.net

FROM THE COCKPIT of Ron Nelson

I want to thank all who have contributed to making 2003/04 banner years for the growth of the Delaware Valley Historical Aircraft Association.

On behalf of the Board of Directors, as your President, I would like to summarize the significant accomplishments that have occurred during these two years.

The Harold F. Pitcairn "Wings of Freedom" Aviation Museum building was completed in 2003. Before it was officially opened to the public, on July 24, 2004, many tasks had to be accomplished by the membership. Aircraft were moved and positioned, cabinets purchased and filled with artifacts, and other items of interest secured and put on display. The fence was realigned so that the public would have immediate access to the museum without the requirement of going through the main gate security check. All of this was accomplished in record time due to hard work by the Board of Directors, members of the Restoration Team, Museum Staff, Docents, many additional volunteers, and the supportive cooperation of the Joint Reserve Base Commanding Officers and their staffs.

The official opening for the public on July 24, 2004 was a resounding success and attendance at the affair by people who can support us in the future was heartwarming. The most exciting event of the day was Steve Pitcairn's arrival in his Autogiro. The



Steve Pitcairn arrives in his Autogiro at the Museum opening July, 2004.

Restoration Team did a great job of setting up for the event and the cleanup afterwards. Supplementing our efforts was the outstanding support of JRB Willow Grove Staff, most notably Ms. Sherri Jones, the Public Affairs Officer.

The Board of Directors and I thank all who helped make this historical event a success.

The DVHAA Board sponsored a trip to the newly opened Smithsonian National Air and Space Museum near the Dulles Airport for our members on March 13, 2004, which was well attended and enjoyed by all.

Reservations have already been made for a trip this year, scheduled for May 7, to visit the Aircraft Carrier U. S. S. Intrepid, berthed in New York.

The DVHAA had our first Annual Golf Outing and Pig Roast at the Horsham Valley Golf Club on September 13, 2004, which hosted 45 golfers. This by all standards, for a first time effort, was a notable success. The organization raised four thousand dollars from this event which provided us with much needed operating funds. We have arranged for another outing at the Horsham Valley Golf Club on September 12, 2005. This time we are hoping to draw 120 golfers or more. We will need your help in securing sponsors and golfers to make this a reality.

The Board of Directors held a breakfast at the museum building on January 14, 2005 to introduce the Wings of Freedom Aviation Museum to our local Federal and State Senators and Representatives; County Commissioners from Bucks and Montgomery Counties; a Senior Vice President of Wachovia Securities; and a strong supporter of the DVHAA from Keystone Strategies, who was instrumental in assisting DVHAA secure a matching fund grant of \$6,000,000 in the 2004 Pennsylvania State Budget.

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Visit our website at www.dvhaa.org

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Following the breakfast and a briefing on the past history and a look into the future, the Commanding Officer of the Base, Captain Harry Myers, commented that he totally supports the DVHAA vision of expanding into a Aviation Museum. All attendees at the breakfast expressed their admiration at the progress made by the organization and pledged their support to help make it even better in the future.

The Board is pleased to report that through the efforts of Senator Arlen Specter we were once again given a grant of \$75,000 dollars towards our operation.

On the agenda for 2005 the Board is planning a banquet that we hope will be well attended by its members. The tentative date is early fall of this year.

The Air Show at Willow Grove this year is planned for Memorial Day weekend, which includes May 26th, 27th, 28th, and 29th. The Blue Angels will perform and there will be a concert and fireworks Thursday night and a special Friday night performance by the Blue Angels—details to follow later.

The Restoration Team has done a magnificent job in restoring the P-80 jet fighter. It is expected to be completed before the Air Show. The Restoration Team is to be complimented for their splendid work which was accomplished under extremely difficult working conditions. Captain Harry Myers expressed admiration for their work and is trying to find a more suitable, environmentally friendly working area on the base for our hard working team. The Base Commander is a real friend and staunch supporter of the DVHAA.

Now on display in the museum building is the Bell H-13, a Korean era helicopter. Thanks to Frank Carson and his Helicopter organization for taking the lead and supplying much of the time and materials to complete this museum class restoration.

Our library under the direction of Sandy Greenberg and his staff has succeeded in creating a wonderful aviation reference library which now houses over 5000 volumes and is expanding it's collection. The library needs to be relocated to make it more accessible to the members, area schools

and the public. Plans are underway for this to happen; more on these plans will be reported in a future newsletter.

The operation of the museum building, under its director Gary Campbell, his docent volunteers, and workers from the restoration team is the bellwether of DVHAA's future. Through their efforts public attendance to the museum is growing. The museum is now open three days a week, on Wednesday, Saturday and Sunday from. The average attendance per month is well over 1000 and is increasing. We need additional docent volunteers in order to add additional days to the schedule.

The Board of Directors and I thank the members of the museum staff and the restoration volunteers for a job well done. The Administrative staff of the DVHAA which oversees the day to day operation of the organization, the membership, dues drive, recruiting, newsletter distribution, and communications has done an outstanding job of maintaining the office and are now in the process of contacting members to renew their memberships which expired in January. We hope that everyone will renew their memberships and continue to support our efforts. There are exciting times ahead and we want you to remain an integral part of the program.

The Board realizes the need to continue with the newsletter and has recently appointed a board member to fill the vacancy left by our editor, Susan Halteman, who is taking time off for the birth of her baby. Board Member Kurt Wecker has taken on the assignment and is aggressively addressing the newsletter design. We wish Susan good health and happiness and thank her for the valued support she has provided the membership. Susan plans to return when time permits.

The board has added four new members, Tom Lamaine, Paul Mallon, Robert Fischer and Kurt Wecker. We assure you that each brings a wealth of experience to the Board.

Plans are being considered for the expansion of the existing museum building by adding 1800 square feet to the south side of the current museum. This space will provide for a much needed restroom, library, and office space plus a classroom. It is expected to cost between \$80,000 and \$100,000. As you know, our long term goal is to create a World Class Aviation Museum complex.

As your President I want to thank the Board members and everyone associated with the DVHAA who has made my tenure in office an easy job. I hope to continue to help our organization make progress towards our attainable goal of a World Class Aviation Museum complex in the Delaware Valley.



P-80 in it's current state of restoration



H-13 Sioux on display

WINGS OF FREEDOM MUSEUM CORNER

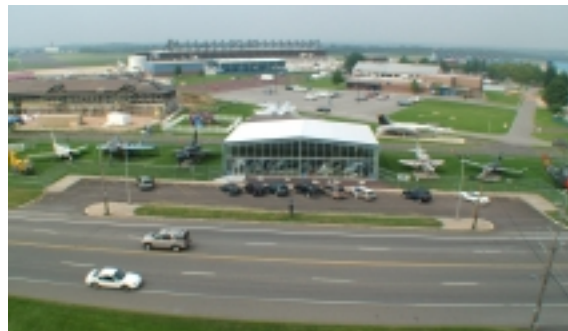
by Gary Campbell



It's been quite some time since we have been able to update things concerning the Wings of Freedom Museum and a lot has happened since I last wrote. While I have never been a big fan of statistics, I believe sharing a few here might help illustrate the tremendous growth we have experienced in the past 14 months. As of the time of this writing we have had over 12,150 visitors through the museum facility. The Museum Staff has worked over 5000 hours in the last year! It is a constant source of surprise when we review the many visitors addresses in our log book, with guests from all the corners of the globe. One gentleman flew in from England just to photograph our Me-262! Member Joe Meyers and I picked him up at the train station and drove him to the Museum. We now feature about 39 historical display cases and 13 life size mannequins in actual vintage flight gear. We are in the process of cataloging the extensive collection of artifacts and models, a huge job that will take quite some time to complete. We have been receiving a good number of donated artifacts and are actually running out of display space and storage space. Please be aware we are not currently accepting dress uniforms, but are always looking for combat-flown flight gear. We have assembled a fine collection of 5 restored historic ejection seats with the most recent coming from our F-80C Shooting Star, beautifully restored by the 111th Air Guard's Egress Shop. Other recent additions include a WW II flight compass from a Spitfire and the wooden crewmen's seat from a WW II Waco Glider. Col. Lap's wingman, Maj. Hooper, donated a beautiful wooden propeller and a framed photo of Willow Grove based Cougar fighters overflying North Philly. Robert Gledhill, owner of Hatboro Lumber, donated several hundred scale model kits to help out gift shop sales. Member G.M. Bell of Lockheed Martin has loaned us several incredibly rare WW II mannequins, the most recent in Luftwaffe flight gear. He has also taken over the website and is beginning to make some revisions with plans for more. New member Eric Jordan has donated and installed our security system and Earl Johnston continues to help us with our Corgi connection.



New Sign outside of museum on Rt. 611



Overhead view of the Wings of Freedom Museum

The Navy has inspected our on-site inert display Ordinance and found it to be in compliance. Many thanks to member John Spencer for overseeing this program. While I'm at it, I want to thank all our volunteers for making our first year so successful. The past few years have been filled with change for the DVHAA. We have seen some major realignment in the staffing structure and operations, and it took some creative thinking to shuffle the workloads in a manner that best suited our tasks. We remain mission focused and committed to creating the area's premier historical aviation facility. We stand now at a crossroads that will take us into the coming century. We are facing another period of great change. Over the course of the next decade everything that is associated with our young museum will change. This change will encompass our plans to expand our collections as well as our facilities. The one thing that will not change are the long term challenges we

have faced. We have lost some wonderful volunteers this year and I find myself thinking of them often. Our new H-13 Sioux is dedicated to John Beaty and our newest display case depicting Carrier Aviation will be dedicated to Tony Devine. We want to thank Frank Carson and his staff for the wonderful support we continue to enjoy on rotary wing restoration projects.

Our gift shop has become a major asset in building funds for our expansion and our visitors have been generous with donations. Members Walt Boutcher and Bryan Painter will be overseeing gift shop ops this year. We have just completed a detailed inventory of our gift shop wares. We will soon be enabled to utilize credit card sales and are hoping to add a sales capacity to the website. On the horizon, the Navy and the legislature seem poised to assist us in becoming a tangible asset to the community. Indeed, with the help of the local press and radio, it seems the public finally knows we are here. 2005 marks my 20th year with DVHAA and promises to be filled with challenges and rewards. The best way to help us is to get the word out to as many enthusiasts as you can find. Brochures and word of mouth go a long way toward drawing new visitors. Please encourage school and scout groups to take advantage of our tour opportunities. Today's youth will forge tomorrow's history, it is our job, to tell them of the sacrifices of those who came before them and the reasons why.

Gary Campbell museum curator can be contacted via email at garyscooter69@aol.com or call the W.O.F. museum.

Visit our website at www.dvhaa.org

AIRFEST 2005

The Air Show at Willow Grove this year is planned for the Memorial Day weekend, May 26, 27, 28, and 29.

Featuring the Blue Angels!



Final Flight

Henry "Buddy" Murphy
DVHAA Member since 1997
&
Walter J. Hughes Jr.
DVHAA Member since 2000

IMPORTANT NUMBERS

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215-443-6039

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215-675-4005

Wings of Freedom Museum:

1155 Easton Rd
Horsham, PA 19044
215-672-2277

Museum Hours

Wednesday: 10:30am to 3:00pm
5:00pm to 8:00pm
Saturday: 10:30am to 4:00pm
Sunday: 10:30am to 4:00pm

WELCOME NEW MEMBERS

Peter Boericke	Barbara Herrman
Samuel Noble	Jeff Harrison
Robert Harris	Robert Burnley
Barry Cassaboon	Ted Kolankiewicz
Jason Baldwin	Richard Schutt
John Lamon	Richard Schiffer
David Campolongo	Richard Simpson
Andrew Porter	Wayne Fitzgerald
Jerome Smith	F.T. Blanchard
Rich Hellings	Patrick Conway
James Fries	Doris Carr
Donnie Lummus	Tom Goodman
Gordon Lefever	Lawrence White
Robert York	Karl Becker
Johnathan Bean	Robert Briggs
Steve Cohen	Edwin Boerner
Robert Gordon	Michael Weisser
Nicholas Mumenthaler	Lynne Miller
Helen Berezovsky	Harry Miller
Joesph Ruchala	Thomas McManus
William Rumph	Joesph F. Shemanski
Watson Lapp	Joesph J. Shemanski
Larry Allen	Kurt Hummel
Jacob Pennegar	Bruce Bostock
James Fegan	Robert Fischer
John Bechtel	Lloyd Raines
Jodie Belka	Seth Pollack
Walter Denny	John Esposito
James Waibel	Kerry Fritz
Louis Penner	Joesph Vattilana
John Good	Mr. & Mrs. James Klotz
Wally Stronski	Mr. & Mrs. William Rosson
David Winans	Frank Siftar
Larry Biddle	Roseann Bonanni
Eric Jordan	Stephen Morgan
David Gilmore	Gerald Steele
Matt Engelhart	Charles Wilson
Johnathan Sherman	David Kelch

INTREPID

SEA, AIR & SPACE MUSEUM

Adventures in Heroism



The DVHAA is going to the Intrepid
May 7th, 2005

Departure - 7:30am / Return - 8:30pm

\$35.00 for members and immediate family

\$45.00 for non-members

Space is limited so hurry

Send your check to the DVHAA office by March 31st.

CHECK THE WEBSITE FOR THE NEW ONLINE NEWSLETTER IN FULL COLOR



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