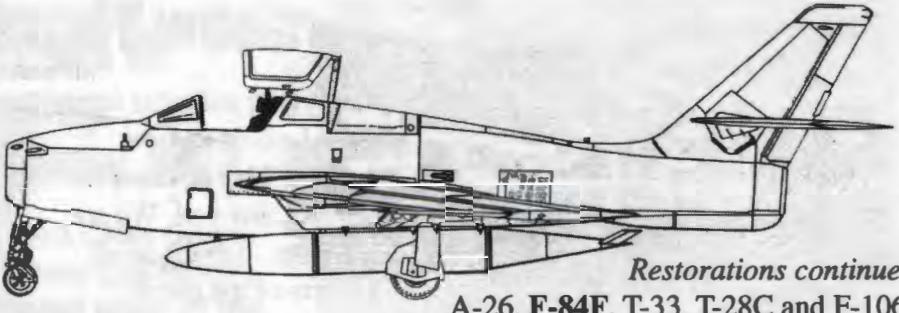


Straight Scoop



Restorations continue

A-26, F-84F, T-33, T-28C and F-106

PACIFIC COAST AIR MUSEUM

To promote the acquisition, restoration, safe operation, and display of historical aircraft.

Volume IX Number 2

February 2004

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Fifty Years of Duty

Frank Way

It is hard to imagine fifty plus years of devoted military service. From Aviation Electronics Technician to Rated Pilot. From the Pacific (San Francisco) to the Atlantic (Charleston), and back again. From flying the PBM to the PBY to the PB1G (B-17). From Petty Officer Seaman to Rear (two-star) Admiral.

Now that is a full career by any measure, and still counting.

Our guest speaker on February 18th will be RAdm. Bennett S. Sparks (USCG Ret). Some of you will recognize that name as the man who helped PCAM dedicate our HU-16 Albatross now painted in San Francisco USCG colors. Such a lengthy career is unusual enough but when you realize that rising to such a position from that of an enlisted man to Flag Rank (known in Navy parlance as a Mustang) is most remarkable, indeed.

Enlisting in the Coast Guard Reserve only one week after Pearl Harbor Bennett Sparks served as a Combat Aircrewman flying both anti-submarine and Air-Sea Rescue missions. In 1957 he received a field promotion to the rank of Ensign. From 1966 through 1989 he held nine consecutive command positions. Along this career path he was nominated by President Reagan and confirmed by the Senate in 1985 to the unusual rank of Commodore (one-star). Then in 1987 came his second star and later his first retirement in 1989.

Admiral Sparks became involved with many different advisory positions (NATO, Reserve Officers Association), and was recalled to active duty and later retiring once again in 1993. Recipient of numerous awards and decorations (Distinguished Public Service Medal twice) he also served as the Chairman of the California Veterans Board.

So our next meeting will be of interest to those who would like to know more of Coast Guard history during World War II up to and including the current War On Terrorism. Come along and meet a fine gentleman and exceptional military veteran.

The Pacific Coast Air Museum
is located on Charles M. Schulz -
Sonoma County Airport,
just north of Santa Rosa, CA.

Museum hours:

Santa Rosa Facility

Tues./Thurs. 10:00-2:00

Sat./Sun. 10:00-4:00

A selected aircraft is available
to "Climb Aboard" on the
third weekend of each month
(weather permitting)

Healdsburg Facility

Open by prearrangement only

Call **707•575•7900**

for details and information, or
fax us at 707•545•2813.

Meetings are typically held at
Sonoma County Office of
Education, located near the
airport on Skylane Blvd., on
the third Wednesday of each
month at 7:00 P.M.

"Straight Scoop" the museum's
newsletter is published monthly.
Members are encouraged to
submit articles for possible
publication - due by the 20th
of the month prior to publication.
All articles in this newsletter
are copyrighted. If you wish to use
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Sebastopol, CA 95472
707•823•6714 or email:
barnstorming@comcast.net

**Address corrections and
Membership Renewals**
(\$24.00 per year/\$36.00 for a
family) should be sent to:
PCAM, 2330 Airport Blvd.
Santa Rosa, CA 95403

Airshow Thanks & Preparations

Mark your calendar for
the **Airshow dates**

August 21st & 22nd for
the best one yet! We are
planning to upgrade all
aspects of the event.

Now is the time to make
your input a part of the
show. We need several
key people to make this
happen. The best jobs
are offered now.

Director Assistant -

A go getter position that
covers many areas of the
show by providing
follow through activities completion for the airshow chairmen.



**Steve Hoxie presents Civil Air Patrol
cadets a \$1500 thank you for their
service at the 2003 Airshow -
Well appreciated on both sides.**

Airshow Secretary - A clerical duty that will ensure the airshow office will stay current with the demands of correspondence. (No monetary bookkeeping involved).

Property Manager - A control and inspection requirement that will monitor the equipment and rentals in, during and out of the show.

PCAM Refreshments Booth Coordinator - To control sales of beverages at two PCAM sales booths.

Raffle Coordinator - A person who can set up, ticket, promote and hold a drawing for prizes at the show. (Does not require prize solicitations).

Parking & Traffic Coordinator Trainees - Learn first hand how we get the airshow crowd in and out of the show with the help of the BSA, CHP and Sonoma County Transit.

These positions and others are available NOW, but they will be filled soon. If you are interested and need more complete job descriptions, please call. Also, if you have other skills that we could use, then let us know ASAP. Together we can make 04 the best Airshow that PCAM has ever produced.

The next airshow meeting will be at 6 pm, prior to the regular PCAM meeting on February 18th at Sonoma County Office of Education.

Steve Hoxie

[REDACTED]

PCAM Benefit Dinner Dance

Saturday, February 28, 2004 at the Santa Rosa Hilton

Social Hour at 6:00 pm

Dinner at 7:00 pm

**The menu includes an organic Sonoma salad,
Artisan breads, fresh vegetables,
a broad selection of desserts
and your choice of entrée:**

**Grilled Atlantic Salmon
With Ginger infused Cream Sauce
And Mandarin Oranges**

or

**Herb Marinated Chicken & Mushrooms
Breast of Chicken in a Sherry Cream Sauce**

or

**Slow roasted Prime Rib
served with Au Jus and Baked Potato**

Tickets are \$50 per person

A No-Host Bar will be available

Please Submit Reservation & Payment by February 10th, 2004

Name _____

Address _____

Phone: _____

Email: _____

Entrée Selection: Salmon _____

Chicken _____

Prime Rib _____

Number of Members & Guests _____ **x \$50 = \$** _____

All members, relatives and friends
are invited to join us for an evening
of fine dining and dancing to
Live Music
by Michael Brandeberg
and band.

This reservation form
should be returned to
PCAM together with
your check to
2330 Airport Blvd,
Santa Rosa, CA 95403.
We will acknowledge
your reservation by mail
or email and
hold your tickets for
pick up at the door on
the 28th of February.

Gone and Forgotten - Almost

Ray Anderson

It was 55 years ago, on February 5, 1949, that 5-star General of the Air Force Henry H. "Hap" Arnold came out of retirement from his ranch near Sonoma to participate in dedication ceremonies of a World War II **P-61 Black Widow** night fighter given to the local Air Scouts Squadron of the Santa Rosa District Boy Scouts. He had been instrumental in cutting through the red tape to have the obsolete aircraft declared military surplus and given to the newly formed (1947) "Hap Arnold Air Scouts" squadron. The twin engine \$400,000 airplane (most WW II fighters cost about \$50,000) was flown to the "new" Sonoma County Airport from storage at the Fourth Air Force headquarters at Hamilton Field.

The photo at right was provided by PCAMer Russ Etchell - who obtained it years ago from an anonymous source. (It was recently published in the Jan/Feb issue of *Warbirds International* magazine - submitted by aviation photographer/historian Bill Larkins - who had an e-mailed, pre-release from me.)

The donated airplane was presented to the Air Scouts squadron for use in their ground school training in aviation and was accepted by 18-year-old high school senior Larry Smothers - senior officer of the squadron. It was anchored on a hard surface pad on the airport, just off the left side of the entrance road (now Aviation Blvd). PCAMer Harrison Rued, a member of the formative Air Scouts Squadron, recalls them meeting in a nearby old Army Air Field building. I have been unable to contact any other squadron members, but from a newspaper listing (PD Feb 3, 1949) several Air Force Reserve Officers serving as aviation advisors/instructors to the squadron were: Capt. Russ Beal - flying and use of flight instruments; Capt. Charles Ackley - liaison with the Air Force and aerial photography; Major Sid Pout; Capt. Russell Johnson; Lt. Lee Briton and Verne Hassell (radio engineer at KSRO) former signal corps inspector.

However, the early enthusiasm and interest of the squadron waned and the airplane was not properly maintained. General Arnold passed away at his Sonoma ranch on Jan 15, 1950. The loss of their sponsor probably contributed to the demise of the program. The last documented evidence I turned up re the Air Scouts P-61 on the Sonoma County Airport was the PCAMer Doug Olson photo taken on Dec 9, 1951. Note the white inscription "Hap Arnold Boy Scouts" on the nose and the remaining, but unused, Army Air Field control tower in the background. The identifying inscription was significant when the photo was compared to one by Harisson Rued of Oct, 1951



Dedication speakers l to r: Gen. Hap Arnold; Major Gen. John Upston - commander of the 4th AF; unidentified aide; Santa Rosa Mayor J. W. Daw; and a representative for the Air Scouts (probably Larry Cook, president of the Kiwanis Club (co-sponsor of the Air Scouts along with General Arnold).

with no inscription - indicating that the squadron was asserting responsibility for the craft at this late date. A similar photo was published in the Nov/Dec issue of *Warbirds International* magazine with a request for identity of this special bird.

The public exposure of the unsecured craft resulted in increasing vandalism and theft. Access to the inside of the airplane was simple via the rear hatch and there was no restriction to "helping yourself", as reported

by PCAM member Frank Scott who ventured inside with a friend. Then one day it was gone - all the memory of old timers revealed. Several people simply assumed it was scrapped! By who or when is still a mystery. Hopefully someone in the warbirds magazine or this newsletter's audience will shed some light on the disappearance of this treasure - restored today worth over a million dollars, but at that time just a piece of "war junk."

In the mid 50s the Air Scouts membership dwindled and by 1957 the squadron was also gone.

P.S. We do have the names of all the squadron members dating from from it's inception until dissolution.

If you have any leads on this story, pictures, contacts or where this P-61 ended up, please give me a call at [REDACTED]. Let's complete this story!



Final known photo of the Hap Arnold Air Scouts Northrop P-61 Black Widow

Membership - Renewal & Orientation

PCAM wishes to welcome its newest members: **Phil & Toni Hartlaub; Rick Ryal; Tim, Janice, Alex & Zach March of Santa Rosa. Tom, Lynne & Justin Young of Corte Madera. Donald, Joella & Tyler Olsen; and Nicole Vantine of Windsor.** Nicole says she can weld and loves metal and getting dirty! Sounds good to me. **Ashley Chown** has joined as a junior member (12 to 18 year olds for only \$5/yr!) so she can work on the T-28 restoration project. **Mike Tunick, Pam Pepper and Evan & Blake Pepper-Tunick** of Rohnert Park. **Bud & Vicki DeCastro** of Penngrove. Bud is an ex-USAFAF and United mechanic who can come in handy in the T-33 Shooting Star restoration.

Now we haven't made a big deal about our members who have regularly renewed their memberships, but be assured we count on their continued support and involvement in the museum. Re-up soon, if you haven't already, so you will continue getting the newsletter and know what we are up to. If the address

label on your newsletter has a pink stripe on it, it means that this is your last one as PCAM has not yet received your dues for 2004. Annual dues are still only \$24 for individuals, \$36 for couples and families. Please make your check out to PCAM and send it to 2330 Airport Blvd, Santa Rosa, CA 95403

The new member orientation meeting held in January was a big success with about forty members in attendance - ten of whom were new members! Obviously this program is a big hit with returning members as well. The program, long overdue, was an idea brought to fruition by **Tom Whitson**, and was complete with a tour of the PCAM hangar which few normally have a chance to see. It inspired several members to sign up for the ongoing restoration work where there is always room for more. (*See some restoration activity pics on the next two pages.*)

The next Orientation Meeting will be on February 21st (and every 3rd Saturday until further notice.)

Volunteerism Opening Doors

Seth Dempsey



Some high schools in the area have a graduation requirement of their seniors - that they perform forty hours of public service with an organization of their choice. The intention is to expose their students to worthy community causes and develop good citizens in the process.

Windsor High School (unfortunately, below the northern approach to our airport) is one of these schools. And **Elizabeth Ferreira** is one of those seniors preparing for full participation in the real world.

Last October, Elizabeth decided to volunteer the required forty hours at the Pacific Coast Air Museum. She is the director of the student newsletter in the ROP program at Windsor High, but when she saw the work being done on the museum's A-26 Invader, she knew that is how she wanted to spend her volunteer time. Her dad is a diesel mechanic, so her choice to wrench on the hardware is perhaps not so surprising. The jobs on Invader project are varied, if not endless. Elizabeth enjoyed learning to rivet. The forty hours flew by - it's an air museum after all. When the T-28 restoration project got underway, Elizabeth joined that crew as well and she now puts in time two days each week. She has over eighty hours thus far and has no plans of calling it quits even though she has over twice the time required by her school. She loves the people at PCAM and obviously has developed a thing for round engine aircraft. When a museum member, Russ Etchel, heard of her continued dedication beyond the requirement, he knew she deserved a little something special. So he offered to take her up in one of his planes and give her a little stick-time.

As the wing tip fuel tanks of the T-33 are such a distinguishing feature of the aircraft, the crew thought they should look their best (the tip tanks took a terrible beating on their trip up from Tucson). Robert Ramirez put his professional skills to work smoothing them out.



Elizabeth in her 'ralls and safety glasses next to the A-26 above, and drilling out bad nut plates with fellow crew member, Sarah Kerkhof, below.



Now that she has gotten inside the fence at the local airport, she entertains ideas of getting into the aviation program at SRJC and maybe even some time with the USAF. You can feel proud to support an organization that opens doors to possibilities like this for our young people.



Restoration work for the young, and not so young; guys and gals; pros and novices; you?



T-28 Crew Chief, Bryan Lee details wheel wells of the Trojan before the wing is mated to the fuselage in this complete restoration to flying status.



Mark Fajardin leads his crew in remounting the stabilator and swept tail on the Republic F-84F.



Construction of two tiny BD-5s continues indoors.



George Johnston has been set to the task of milling an upper attach point for the main gear actuator so the gear can be installed before the delta wings are re-attached to the F-106 fuselage.

Bang . . . Grind . . . Mix . . . Fill . . . Shape . . . Sand. Dents and dings be gone!

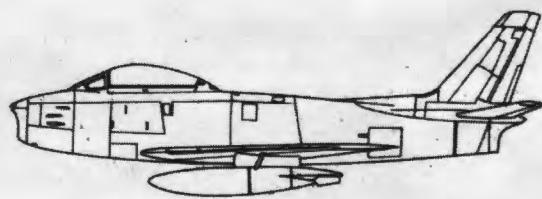




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**Climb Aboard
RF-86F Recon Sabre
February 21st & 22nd**

34000341376 03

Dick & Karma Detra

[REDACTED]

*If your address label is hi-lighted,
please write your new address on the label and mail with your membership renewal.



Make it a Family Affair

www.PacificCoastAirMuseum.org

Dates to Remember . . .

Feb 18th 6pm Airshow Planning Mtg
7pm General Meeting

50 Years of USCG Duty
RAdm Bennet Sparks (USCG ret)
both at S.C.O.E.

Feb 21 11am New Member Orientation
*learn the ins and outs
of your air museum's operations and programs*

Feb 28th PCAM Benefit Dinner Dance
Santa Rosa Hilton
*Lose your coveralls and ball caps
for an evening of fine food and dancing*

Mar 7th 6pm Airshow Planning Mtg
7pm General Meeting
General George Eade (USAF Ret.)
of the Strategic Air Command.