



The Dispatch



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March 2021

Education through living history.

Keep 'em flying.

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From the Left Seat Col Jim Buckley, Airbase Georgia Leader

Spring is finally here and things are definitely picking up. The *Corsair* is still on duty for the movie industry in south east Georgia, earning some well needed revenue. The *Mustang* is being readied for duty at Eglin Air Force Base for Test Pilot school training and the other aircraft are available for rides and shows.



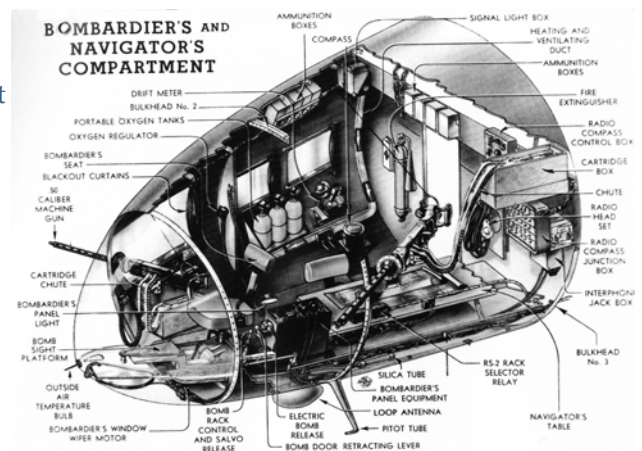
Most all of the annual inspections are complete, with the exception of the LT-6. A mini formation clinic was held on the weekend of March 19-21 and several pilots got recertified for the upcoming season. The same weekend, Col Robert Harris and I attended the SECAS Summit (Southeast Council of Air shows). This is only the second year of its rebirth. The Rome Georgia venue was fairly well attended and was the first in-person attended event since the Covid-19 shutdown. We networked with customers and competitors and learned a great deal of updated information -- a very worthwhile event. Looking forward to getting all of our pilots current and ready for backlash of requests for outdoor in-person events. ➔

Blue Skies to all,

Jim Buckley

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Rides Update

Col Steve Hoofnagle

Rides Officer



We have resumed Rides in all aircraft, with the exception of the P-51!!!

We will be scheduling a Rides Program Member Training day in the near future, so stay tuned if you are interested in helping with the Rides program.

Remember that Airbase GA members get a 20% discount on Rides. Contact me for details if you are interested.

Contact Information:

rides@dixiewing.org
770-309-5584 (new DW Business cell number)

Please feel free to contact me if you have any questions, comments, or suggestions. ➔

Hoofer

RECRUITING * ORIENTATION * RETENTION

Col Jim Dalton, Recruiting Officer



Are you recently retired and your significant other would appreciate some space? Come to the Airbase Georgia Hangar at Falcon Field three days a week and meet new and interesting people!

You can help preserve airplanes that are older than you! ➔

Semper Fidelis!

Development Officer Update

Col Chris Madrid

As Development Officer, one of my priorities is to support member engagement and project success by assisting members in building plans and teams to implement and sustain their individual projects. Together we can demonstrate to the business, civic and education communities that the CAF Airbase Georgia is a resource that impacts the quality of life in Fayette County and throughout Georgia. Establishing a positive reputation, track record and relationship building is key to all future fundraising success.



BLUE SKIES AHEAD?

As weather has improved, so have prospects for reopening CAF Airbase Georgia to regular membership activities and, ultimately the public. On March 6th, the staff voted to host a live membership meeting, the first in nearly a year. The decision to host a live meeting was based on the improved COVID-19 situation in February and the desire to bring the members together so that we can share progress we have made over the last year and ideas and plans for 2021 and beyond. We anticipate a large turnout and, as a result, we will provide social distancing and require all members to wear a mask during the membership meeting. Most importantly, we strongly encourage all members to first consider their individual and family health circumstances when making a decision to attend.

CAF AIRBASE GEORGIA TRANSITION UPDATE: LOGO, SIGNS & SHIRTS

The staff continues to work through details associated with our new designation and name change. New signs will be installed in the next few weeks. If you would like to update your CAF Dixie Wing shirt, our local vendor Uniforms for America can sew "Airbase Georgia" and your name onto your shirt. Uniforms for America is located at 135 Huddleston Road, Peachtree City. Phone: 770-632-0253. Orders placed by March 27th may be completed in time for the April 10th Membership Meeting. CAF Airbase Georgia logo concepts have been developed and will be shared at the April 10th Membership Meeting. All active CAF Airbase Georgia members will be invited to vote on the logo for Airbase Georgia during the May 2021 membership meeting. Our goal is to announce and introduce the logo beginning in May.

As I shared in my February Dispatch, community from the local community, education, tourism, and business has been positive. Below is a list of a few organizations and/or individuals that have congratulated us on our Airbase designation.

- | | |
|--|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fayette County Chamber of Commerce • Georgia Department of Economic Development • Museum of Aviation • Georgia Historical Society • National Infantry Museum • Central Education Center | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Educators, Fayette County Public Schools • Civil Service employee, USAF • Atlanta Regional Airport-Falcon Field • Kennesaw State University • Currahee Military Museum, Stephen County Historical Society, Inc. |
|--|---|



Development Officer Update (cont.)

COVID-19 CAUTION CONTINUES - Effective December 9th, 2020, the CAF Airbase Georgia hangar is open only to members performing maintenance and aircraft operations activities. We have recently hosted special projects at the hangar with our COVID-19 precautions, but we are essentially closed to the public. The staff continues to monitor COVID-19 with an eye to reopening to the public late Spring/early summer. In the meantime, members working at the hangar are expected to social distance and/or wear masks out of respect for the health of fellow members and our ongoing mission to restore and fly historic aircraft.

COMMUNITY OUTREACH

- Recruiting & Retention – We have so far recruited 17 new members in 2021, progress which complements our 44 new members recruited in 2020. Our next Virtual Recruiting Open House is scheduled for May 10th, 7pm. If you know a potential recruit, please contact Jim Dalton (lawdalton@aol.com) or Dave Serafin (dserafin58@comcast.net).
- Georgia World War Heritage Trail - The CAF Airbase Georgia is an affiliate member of the new trail that was announced on Feb 16th. The trail will be promoted throughout Georgia, increasing awareness, visitors, donations, and aircraft rides sales when we fully reopen to the public. The trail partners include the National Museum of the Mighty Eighth Air Force, Museum of Aviation, National Infantry Museum and WWII Home Front Museum.
- Hangar Tours – Effective Dec 9, 2020, the hangar is closed to the public until further notice. Please refer visitors to the wing website to schedule a tour.
- CAF Aircraft Walkaround Series – We have struck a partnership with Central Education Center (CEC), a College & Career Academy located in Newnan, GA, to create an aircraft walk-around segments by working with one of Georgia's most respected college and career academies Broadcast Video Production Classes. The segments will be professionally produced and available for our use on an ongoing basis, i.e., posted on our website for distribution to high school aviation students, JRTOC, etc. The program kick-off has been delayed until the 2021-2022 school year due to COVID-19.

EDUCATION & MUSEUM OUTREACH

- Museum Refresh – Education Officer Rick Kaczor has assembled a team to reorganize the museum exhibit displays around themes that link our aircraft to state curriculum objectives. Team members include Rick, Willard Womack, Mike Wewers, Jeff Johnson, and new member Deon Winston. Key tasks include cleaning the display cases and updating exhibit descriptions. If necessary, we will apply for grants to cover potential costs, but the first step is to develop a project plan. If you are interested in assisting, please contact Rick at richard.kaczor@und.edu
- Website - We have added a new Education tab on www.airbasegeorgia.org. The tab includes info for scheduling a tour, requesting access to the WWII Home Front lesson plan program and the Living Aviation History Day guest speaker series.



Development Officer Update (cont.)

- University Partnerships - On March 25th, CAF Airbase Georgia will become an education resource for the University of West Georgia when 11 student teachers tour the hangar, maintenance shop and museum with the goal of learning how to work with museums in creating K-12 lesson plans. On March 26th, the Museum of History and Holocaust Education (MHHE) at Kennesaw State University, in partnership with CAF Airbase Georgia, will host a free, live, virtual event called *Rosie the Riveter: Still Flexing Her Muscles* on Friday, March 26 at 1 p.m. The program will include a 20-minute segment featuring CAF Airbase Georgia Robyn Rosenzweig, Jim Arnold and the P-63. KSU MHHE is also planning to create a video tour of the hangar, aircraft, workshop, and museum for Fall 2021. We are also exploring with Georgia State University the possibility of creating an internship with the Public History Graduate program.
- Fayette County Schools - Utilized the CAF Airbase Georgia WWII Home Front lesson plan module and WWII Home Front Resource Trunk in November and December. On February 8 CAF Airbase Georgia co-sponsored a zoom meeting between Fayette County 5th Graders and Holocaust survivor Irene Butters. Our goal is to make the lesson plans and similar programs available to 50 public-school educators across the State of Georgia by the end of 2021. In addition, CAF Airbase Georgia Fayette Aviation, Medicine & Technology Career Exploration is assisting Fayette County Public Schools in connecting educators and their students with employers, experiences, and information to support preparing Georgia students for success in learning, career, and life. The program series included zoom meetings with the United States Air Force, (September), Piedmont Fayette and Children's Healthcare of Atlanta (October), Military Medicine (January), Air Force Association CyberPatriot Program (March). The final program "Women in Technology will be hosted March 30/31. Plans are underway to expand the program in 2021-2022 to include Central Education Center, Coweta County's College and Career Academy. Both programs are helpful in connecting with foundations and employers that might support our restoration mission.
- Docent Program – A visit to the hangar is a powerful recruiting tool and introduction to potential donors. Airbase Arizona has shared their docent guidelines with CAF Airbase Georgia. Rick Kaczor is working with Willard Womack to review the guidelines and determine how we might repurpose the info for our use in the future. If you are interested in volunteering as a docent, please contact Education Officer Rick at richard.kaczor@und.edu.

FUNDRAISING

- CAF Development Team – Members interested in assisting in fundraising are invited to join the CAF Airbase Georgia Development Team Kick-Off Zoom Meeting on Wed, April 7 @ 7pm. Jane Simpson, Steve Forsyth, Philip Beegle, and Jim van den Heuval have so far joined the effort. Jane and I meet with a grant writer in February who has offered to coach us regarding the requirements necessary to submit and compete for federal and foundation grants. We are also working on grants from the Georgia Humanities Council and Explore Georgia. Please contact me if you are interested in joining the Development Team, chris.madrid@airbasegeorgia.org
- Aircraft Rides – Effective March 6th, Aircraft rides are reopened for business, with the exception of Red Nose. The upcoming Atlanta Airshow will provide opportunities for the public to purchase a ride in a CAF Airbase Georgia warbird. Following the airshow, May 24-27, B-17 Texas Raiders and CAF Airbase Georgia are planning to produce a Warbird Rides & Tours May 24-27 at Atlanta Regional Airport-Falcon Field. If you are interested in assisting, please contact me at chris.madrid@airbasegeorgia.org. In the meantime, Rides Officer Steve Hoofnagle has many previously purchased rides to fulfill.



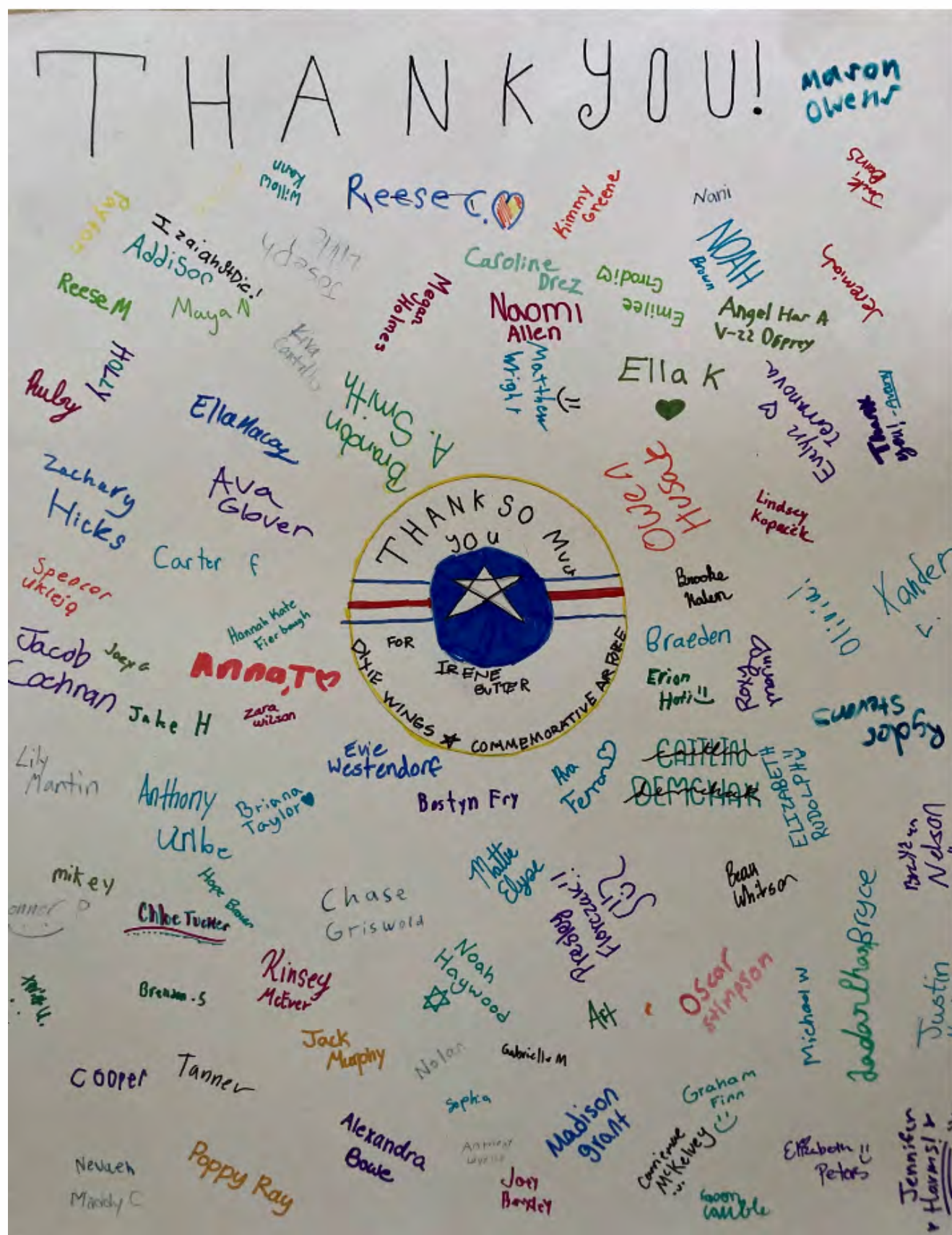
Development Officer Update (cont.)

- Hangar Rental – Dave Riesselmann is our Hangar Rental Officer. Please pass on leads to Dave at facilityrentals@airbasegeorgia.org.
- Airshow Sales – COVID-19 has resulted in the cancellation of numerous Spring and Summer shows. We are hopeful the 2H2021 will bring a return of airshows.
- WWII Heritage Days (October 9) and 1940s Hangar Dance Fundraiser (September 11) – Pre-planning for both events is underway. The 2021 WWIHD theme will combine a Stearman Fly-in with a Tribute to Rosie the Riveter. At this point, we are planning to announce WWIHD on April 12 and the dance on June 7, however our Go-No-Go decisions will be determined by COVID-19 status. In the meantime, the team is meeting every other week and we are soliciting input from past participants.

PROGRAM COORDINATION

- Dispatch - The Dispatch is the primary communications tool for keeping members up to date. All members are encouraged to read the Dispatch. Dispatch Editor Frank Kalinowski is seeking articles from members.
- Marketing & Fundraising Ops Team - The mission of the team is to coordinate plans for promoting the wing fundraising and education outreach programs and look for ways to encourage other members to participate in wing projects. The April monthly meeting is scheduled for April 5th, 7pm EST.
- Planning - Explore Georgia has projected that local, outdoor events will lead the Georgia tourism recovery beginning in 2021. We are tentatively planning to kick-off our outreach with our participation in the Atlanta Airshow. The final schedule is contingent on COVID-19, volunteer participation and budgeting. If you are interested in assisting in any of the projects below, please contact me.

Marketing Operations Calendar 2021	
Marketing Ops Team Zoom Meeting (7pm)	5-Apr
Development Team Zoom Meeting (7pm)	7-Apr
Membership Meeting	10-Apr
Marketing Ops Zoom Meeting (7pm)	12-Apr
Dispatch articles due	10-Apr
Fayette County Chamber of Commerce Community Expo	14-May
Atlanta Airshow	22-23 May
B-17 Texas Raiders & CAF Airbase Georgia Rides	24-27 May
Vintage Days (Peach State Aerodrome)	5-Jun
Hangar Dance	11-Sep
WWII Heritage Days/Stearman Fly-in	9-Oct
Future Pilots of America (Warm Springs)	Oct
Warbird Formation (TRARON) Clinic (Fall)	11-14 Nov
80 th Anniversary Pearl Harbor Remembrance Day	5-Dec



Fayette County 5th Graders thank you note for meeting Holocaust Survivor Irene Butters on Feb 8, 2021.

NATIONAL MUSEUM OF THE MIGHTY EIGHTH AIR FORCE



Our friends at the National Museum of the Mighty Eighth Air Force are honoring and remembering the 26,000 airmen of the Eighth Air Force in World War II who never returned home with *Flags for the Fallen: 26,000 flags | One Mission*.

This unique memorial flag garden of remembrance includes a 48-star American flag for each of the 26,000 men lost. The men of the Eighth in WWII served, and many are buried, under this flag.

The public is invited to experience the garden beginning Thursday, May 27 through Monday, May 31, Memorial Day.

The mission of the National Museum of the Mighty Eighth Air Force is to preserve and share the stories of the heroes of the Eighth; each of these flags represents a hero who made the ultimate sacrifice.

To see the full details of how you can participate, plus an inspiring video, go to:
<https://www.mightyeighth.org/flagsforthefallen>

Be sure to share this information on your social media sites.



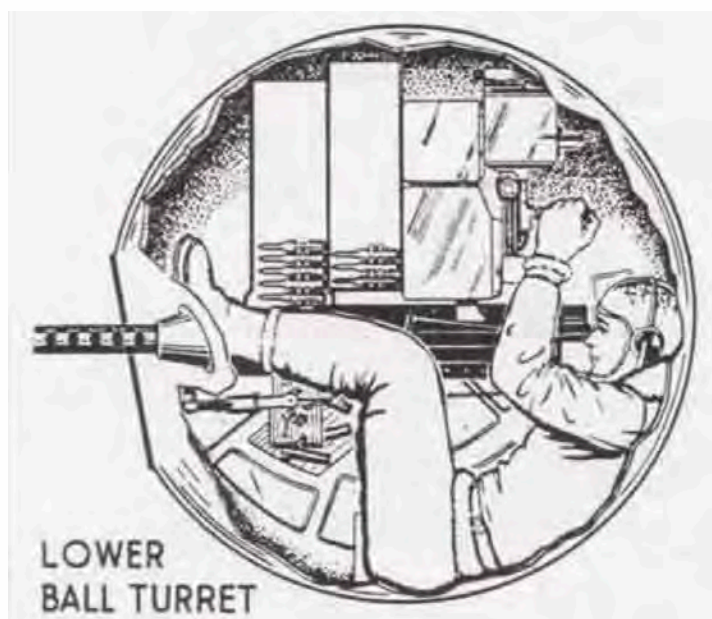
Crewing The Ball Turret

By Kevin “K5” Michaels

As published in the CAF Gulf Coast Wing *Flight Briefing*, March 2021

With the 113th “E” model of the B-17, Boeing began installing the brand-new Sperry-designed ball turret to replace the deeply flawed Sperry remote turret. This time Sperry got it right. The ball was an engineering marvel and a game – changer. For the first time, bomber crews had an effective, full hemispherical defensive coverage for the bottom of their aircraft. No aircraft deployed by any other WWII combatant aircraft had such effective Ventral defensive capabilities.

The ball turret was very cramped. It was best inhabited by particularly small crewmen, but there was no regulation for it. The “rule of thumb” was that at up to about 5'8" you were “relatively” comfortable. Our own George Waters crewed the ball and he was well over 6'0", so clearly height was only one factor. The drawing shows a cross-section of the ball turret complete with the gunner.



Pay particular attention to the angle of his legs. This indicates a very short crewman. If you've ever been in the ball, you probably remember your

knees in your stomach. And you were likely not in the thick, heavy high-altitude gear that WWII crew- men were required to wear. Remember that the next time someone asks you, “did they have room for a parachute in there?” The answer is yes, the ball was technically designed for the crewman to wear a modified B-8 parachute, but in practice this only worked if the crewman was a skinny guy of about 5'2". In combat, ~98% of gunners did not wear a parachute while in the Ball Turret. If they ever needed to bail out, they quickly egressed into the fuselage, fastened a parachute to their harness, and then jumped out of the stricken aircraft.

The ball was simultaneously more dangerous and safer than other crew positions on the plane. German fighters tended to specifically target certain gunners on first passes. Their favorites were tail & ball gunners, since taking out these crewmen left gaping holes in defensive crossfire. Against antiaircraft fire however, the ball turret has more metal surrounding the crewman than other positions in the aircraft. This made no difference in a direct hit but near misses with flying shrapnel had a higher propensity to bounce off the turret than the thin skin of the airplane, which of course did nothing to protect other crewmen. Therefore, early in the war when German fighters were responsible for most B-17 losses, the ball gunners took a disproportionately high percentage of the casualties. Later in the war when flak was by far the largest danger, ball gunners took a disproportionately low percentage of the casualties. There is a famous set of data showing that the ball turret gunner is the safest position in the plane. This dataset was collected in June-August 1944 when 86% of casualties were caused by flak and just 14% were caused by the Luftwaffe. Naturally, ball turret gunners survived better than other crewmen during this period. If the data had been collected in June-August 1943, the data would show a different story entirely.

There is a well-ingrained myth about how



Crewing The Ball Turret (cont.)

dangerous the ball turret was in the event the landing gear wouldn't come down. This is a significant departure from the truth. Whereas it is true that if a B-17 had a belly landing with the gunner in the Ball he would get crushed, the fact is such an event almost never occurred. There were just too many safeguards to prevent it.

First, it was a court-martial offense to be in the ball for takeoff or landing, so it just wasn't done. Second, to be trapped in the ball required that the electro-hydraulic system fail, the inside manual cranks fail, and the outside manual cranks fail. If any of the three worked, the ball gunner egressed

no problem. Also, each main landing gear was powered by a separate electrical system. If either or both failed, there was a manual crank backup system. If only one main landing gear failed to go down during landing the ball turret was unscathed. The bottom line is that in order for a ball turret gunner to get crushed on landing it would require seven simultaneous failures, including four backup systems. If any one of those seven systems still functioned, the gunner walked away without a scratch. Of the 101 ways a ball turret gunner could die, this was not one they worried about. ➔



Ball turret on B-17G *Texas Raiders*,
CAF Gulf Coast Wing



New signs for the building and the grounds. Thanks to Col Jim van den Heuval. Photos by Col Charles Burcher.





ON THE HORIZON

- | | |
|-----------|---|
| April 10 | 10am Staff Meeting; 1pm Airbase members meeting |
| April 10 | <i>Stearman</i> Project Team Meeting, immediately following the members meeting |
| May 1 | 10am Staff Meeting; Airbase members meeting |
| May 22-23 | Atlanta Air Show, Falcon Field |



PLANE CRAZY



Little known and long forgotten is Convair's "flipped wing" version of the B-36, just a failed attempt to keep the enemy guessing whether it was coming or going.