

MINNESOTA ANG MUSEUM NEWS

Minnesota Aviation History - Learn of the Past
Fall 2018



The Stratofreighter is getting a face lift!

by Russ Jensen and Karen Wolf



The C-97 “Stratofreighter” is a worthy asset of the museum. It is the property of the museum, having been acquired privately from a forest fire fighting company, Hawkins and Powers in Greybull, Wyoming. The Air Guard mission changed in January of 1960 when the city of Minneapolis succeeded in getting rid of the noisy F-89s. The C-97 flew with the 109th Airlift Squadron for 10 years during its mission of world cargo transport. It has enjoyed a long and rich history as one of the many aircraft flown by the

Stratofreighter story continues on page 4

Also inside:

- Thank you, Jim Atwell
- Amelia Earhart connection
- more C-97 highlights



Northwest Airlines Stratocruisers — Finest . . . Largest

The museum’s C-97 enjoys a spot between hangars of the Minnesota Air National Guard base in St. Paul, Minn. on Oct. 17, 2018.

photo by Mark Moss

2018 Photo Phantom season ends well

by Ray Pittman

Another great Photo Phantom (PP) season ended as we finished up our last appearance at the Bloomington Heritage Days on September 15. The PP will now be inspected and any cosmetic or mechanical issues that need to be attended to will be done over the winter months. Some of the projects that are being considered are getting the canopy lifts operational again and also putting lighting behind the instrument panels, which would greatly enhance the visual appeal of the cockpit.

The events we attended over the summer months varied in theme and made it interesting for all the volunteers who came out to help. The PP made three trips to Delano, Minnesota alone this summer, which consisted of a Sci-tech Fair at the Delano High School, a Motorcycle Rally at the Crow River Harley Davidson Store, and the PP was part of the July 4th Delano Parade, which claims to be the largest parade in the State. After the parade the PP was parked at the Delano City Carnival and the public was able to sit in the F-4 cockpit.

Photo Phantom story continues on page 4

Our volunteers: Jim Atwell

story and photo by Terry Morris

Describing retired Chief Master Sgt. Jim Atwell's career as anything but admirable would be an understatement!

The San Diego native joined the Air Force in 1967 and trained as an egress specialist. His first assignments were at Nellis AFB supporting F-100's and Keflavik NAS supporting F-102's. In 1971 he decided to make the Air Force a career and began a long list of assignments including: March AFB, Utapao AB, Anderson AFB, Kirkland AFB, Cannon AFB, Edwards AFB and HQ USAF in Germany. These assignments required him to manage egress and later maintenance systems for a variety of aircraft platforms including: B-52, T-38, F-4, F-111, F-16, F-15, WB-57F and a 'black project' aircraft at Edwards. Each assignment provided Jim with the opportunity to demonstrate his exceptional leadership skills and eventually advance to Command Chief Master Sergeant for the 52nd Fighter Wing in Europe.

After retiring from the USAF in 1997, Jim moved into the civilian phase of his career by accepting a district manager position with Airborne Express (later DHL) in Sioux Falls S. D. He eventually relocated to Minneapolis to become a DHL area manager for aircraft operations covering 40 airports in the Midwest. In 2011, he finally decided to begin 'true' retirement after working for a pharmaceutical company in quality control management.

Jim became a MNANGHF volunteer in 2008 after seeing the tail of the museum's C-130 from the highway. While initially being a supplemental docent for F-4 tours, Jim quickly became a key contributor to the



museum's operations and began editing our newsletter. In 2015 he was elected to the MNANGHF Board of Directors and became the museum's Operations Director in 2017. During his tenure, museum operations were safely streamlined, major progress was made to archive the museum's 2D and 3D collections, and the Photo Phantom was renovated for participation in numerous off-site fund raising events.

This July, Jim regrettably informed the board that he would be moving to Syracuse NY to start the next chapter in his life and thus be resigning from the board. It goes without saying that he will be sorely missed (and particularly by me) as he leaves the museum! When asked what he liked most about being a volunteer, Jim immediately answered, "The camaraderie of the volunteers."

Best wishes to Jim and Sheila!

BTW: Jim's favorite airplane is the F-4.



If you were with us last October as we dedicated the John Dolny display you would have noticed that there were some items missing in the diorama below the display. Now, a few months later, we have models of the 3 different



aircraft that Maj. Gen. Dolny flew during World War II — the A-36, P-40, and P-47. These models for the Maj. Gen. John Dolny display have been beautifully made by museum volunteers, John Wagers and Steve Shaffer. The amount of detail in each model is extraordinary. With the background of the Italian countryside, you almost feel that engines are running and you are making that bombing run. You need to come out to the museum to see for yourself.

photos by Karen Wolf

Mission Statement

The mission of the Minnesota Air National Guard Historical Foundation is to preserve the heritage and traditions of the Minnesota Air National Guard.

Board Members

Chairman: Brian Wyneken
Vice Chairman: Karen Wolf
Secretary: Terry Morris
Executive Dir./Dir. of Operations: Mike Drews
Operations Assistant: Anja Drescher
Treasurer: Tom Simonet
Members: Rick Dow, Brig. Gen. Greg Haase, Rick Heinecke, Herb Ketcham, Ray Pittman, Lowell Ueland
Wing Advisor: Col. Dan Gabrielli
Legal Counsel: Kelly & Lemmons, P.A., Joe Kelly and Kevin Beck

Newsletter Editor: Pete Backlund
Assistant editors: Sharon Drews and Mark Moss

Past Newsletters can be accessed on the museum website at: <http://mnangmuseum.org>

Museum Hours and Access

Tours can be arranged by emailing: toursmnangmuseum@gmail.com or by calling Stan Christianson at 612-713-2523. Special events, such as a birthday party, can be arranged through Nancy Wilson (nanc.mn.ang.museum@gmail.com) or call 612-458-8012.

Address all correspondence to:
Minnesota Air Guard Museum
P.O. Box 11598
St. Paul, MN 55111-0598

(The Minnesota Air National Guard Historical Foundation, Inc. is a 501(c) (3) non-profit organization and not affiliated with the Dept. of Defense, Minnesota Air National Guard, or the 133rd Airlift Wing.)



Comments from the Board Chair

Congratulations to the volunteers and members for their successes with another season of museum operations. With the end of this season came the departure of our museum director, Jim Atwell, as he heads to a new residence in New York. Fortunately, Mike Drews has agreed to fill that role once again and Anja Drescher will stay on as assistant director. The leadership provided by Mike, Jim, and Anja has been outstanding. A crucial part of Jim's legacy to the organization is the ease with which we can execute these transitions. I am confident in our future.

Board members have been particularly busy with committee work for the Minnesota ANG's 100th anniversary. Throughout the next two to three years, expect this event planning to drive some key priorities for the museum operations. At the same time, however, we are keeping the museum focus on the existing goals of artifact inventory, storage, displays, and infrastructure upgrades. The board voted in September to approve a replacement tow vehicle.

Upcoming will be elections for board members and for officer positions (Chair, Vice, Treasurer, Secretary, Museum Executive Director). We are looking for members who are interested in serving on the board and/or as an officer. As a reminder, board membership is for three-year terms, and officer positions are open for election every year. There should be an election every year for about one-third of the board positions. Board work consists primarily of reviewing committee reports, working on strategic direction, forming policy, and monitoring the integrity of operations and our non-profit status. The board meets every other month.

Anyone interested in or curious about board membership should contact me (I'm the nominations committee chair this year) at wynekenb@gmail.com and provide your phone number. Our present nomination deadline date (for January 2019 elections) is November 1, 2018.

Also, this autumn we will be sending out our solicitations for memberships – please encourage anyone else you know who may be interested to become a member. With the 100th anniversary coming soon, it should be an exciting time.

Thank you again to all the volunteers.

Your Board Chair,
Brian Wyneken

Photo Phantom story continued from page 1

Other events we attended included air shows, such as the Rush City Airport Breakfast Fly-in, the Burnett County Airshow/Breakfast Fly-in, the Flying Cloud Airport Air Expo and the Wings & Wheels Event at Osceola Airport in Wisconsin. We also took the PP to two Military themed events during the summer: The Red Bull Military Expo in North Branch and the Vets Fest held for the second year at the Oakdale City Park.

It will be determined prior to next year's season whether or not some of the events we attended will be put on the schedule again. Factors we consider when scheduling events are the distance and time involved, if the event is profitable for the museum, and if we have enough volunteers. We also do public relations events when possible.

I would like to ask all museum members to please consider attending one or more of the fun events we go to during the summer. We have a large membership but only a small percentage of our members participate in museum functions. The museum greatly appreciates every single member because without your generous donations we would not be able to continue providing the history and aircraft exhibits we have.

Our current volunteers contribute much to the museum, but there are simply not enough volunteers to handle the numerous projects and work that needs to be done. If you or someone you know has an interest in working on aircraft or has an aviation interest in general, please consider giving a Saturday or a weekday to help out. You can find a volunteer application form on our website or call us at 612-713-2523 Tuesday through Saturday for more information.

Stratofreighter story continued from page 1

Minnesota Air Guard, and it should be preserved.

The museum is planning to refurbish the aircraft by 2021 when the Wing celebrates the 100th anniversary of the Minnesota Air Guard. This will include reworking the inside and the outside, as well as painting the aircraft in the color scheme it had when we flew it. We are also working on partnering with Delta Airlines to paint the side of the aircraft facing the airport in the old Northwest Airlines paint scheme.

The immediate hurdles facing us are lack of volunteers and funding. We are hoping to recruit volunteers from the 133rd AW to devote time and skill to the project. There will be plenty to do because we're hoping to dress up the cockpit, too—the cockpit is the place where all the little folks can set the throttles, raise the gear and flaps, and fly in their plane to faraway fantasy lands. How successful we will be depends largely on the number of skilled volunteers who help us.

We are developing a funding plan at this time. Each element of this project will be defined and will then be assigned a cost. We know this project will require a large budget and we will be using every avenue available to fund the refurbishment including grants and donations (both monetary and equipment).

Please include in your plans some time to help us. We will be including progress reports on our website, www.mnangmuseum.org.

A USAF C-97 sports an early paint scheme.
submitted photo

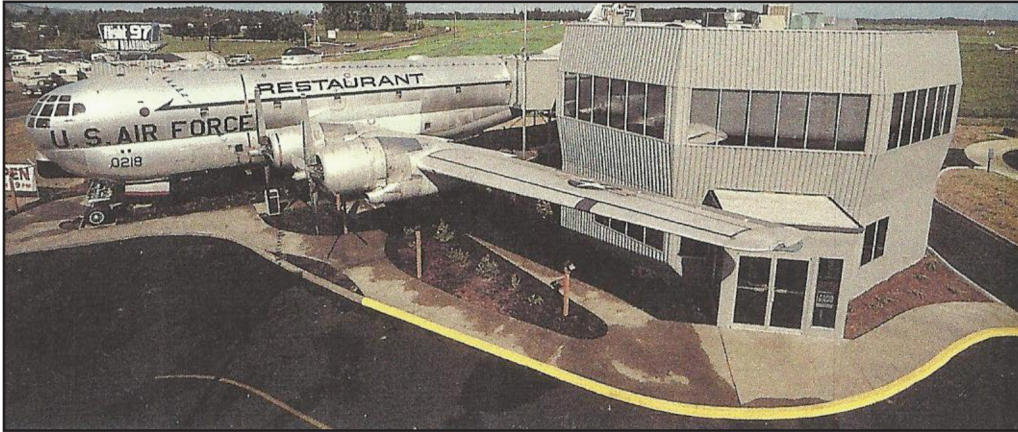


Boeing C-97G “Stratofreighter”, USAF Serial #53-0218

by Greg Bastyr

The C-97 “Stratofreighter” is a long range heavy military cargo aircraft based on the B-29 bomber. The prototype first flight was in 1944. A total of 888 C-97s were built; 816 of them built as KC-97 tankers (aerial refuelers). The KC-97L aircraft had two additional J47 jet engines mounted under the wing pylons. The museum aircraft was built as a KC-97L; however, all the in-flight refueling equipment has been removed to depict a C-97 aircraft. C-97 aircraft served in the Berlin Airlift and in the Korean and Vietnam wars.

All C-97 and KC-97 aircraft were retired by 1978. A civilian airliner version of this aircraft was known as the Boeing 377 “Stratocruiser” with some of these aircraft having been modified as “Supper Guppies” used to carry oversized cargo loads. This aircraft was the first mass produced air transport to feature cabin pressurization. The C-97 could carry cargo, 96 troops or 69 stretchers or a combination of all three.



Interesting Facts: This aircraft entered service in 1955 and ended its USAF mission serving with the Utah Air National Guard. It was sold as surplus on 15 November 1983 for \$8,500. Following its military career, this aircraft was converted to “The Flight 97 Restaurant” in McMinnville, Oregon. If you look closely at the tail you can still make out a hamburger that was painted on it. Also, if you look at

Above - The museum’s C-97 was once a restaurant in McMinnville, Oregon.

Right - A NASA Super Guppy

On the cover - A Northwest Airlines Boeing 377
all submitted photos

CREW: 5

COST NEW: \$1,205,000

**CAPACITY: 96 TROOPS, OR 69 STRETCHERS,
OR A COMBINATION WITH CARGO INCLUDED**

LENGTH: 110 FEET, 4 INCHES

WINGSPAN: 141 FEET, 3 INCHES

HEIGHT: 38 FEET 3 INCHES

**ENGINES: 4 X PRATT & WHITNEY, 28
CYLINDERS, R4360 WASP MAJOR RADIAL**

ENGINES @ 3,500 HP

MAX SPEED: 375 MPH

RANGE: 4,949 MILES

SERVICE CEILING: 35,000 FEET

PAYLOAD: 35,000 POUNDS



the upper fuselage you can still see where the word RESTAURANT was once painted and then removed.

This aircraft was then acquired by Hawkins and Powers of Greybull, Wyoming where it sat for many years until the Minnesota Air Guard Museum received it in a trade for a C-123 aircraft the museum owned. On 3 November 2000 this aircraft made a one-time flight from Greybull, Wyoming to where it now resides at the Air Guard Museum. One C-97 aircraft is still flyable, S/N 52/2718, named “Angel of Deliverance.” It is operated as a privately owned warbird with the Berlin Airlift Historical Foundation as a flying museum.

Museum Winter projects planned

by Mike Drews

The museum's summer season has ended, and the volunteers will now begin working on winter projects, which include enhancing the museum's appearance and the experience of those visiting the museum. The museum acquired glass display cases, some of which have been put in the museum's entrance area for display of the Guard's history. Other display cases will need some work and once restored will be used to display items that have been archived. One of the cases will also display the new, exciting Amelia Earhart exhibit, curated by our volunteer Ray Pittman.

In preparation for the 133rd Airlift Wing's 100th anniversary in 2021, we will be featuring a museum display at the Stillwater City Historical Museum.

We will also be making some repairs on the planes in our museum's air park in preparation for the anniversary celebration. The Guard has been repairing the museum hangars that now have a fresh new coat of paint and a new roof.

In preparation of next year's offsite air show season we will be doing some touch-up work on the F-4 Phantom cockpit. The museum's truck that is used to pull the trailer carrying the F-4 has done its best to get us to events over the past few years, but we are now in need of a newer used truck and have begun the search process for a better truck.

from the photo archives:



Two nurses assigned to duty Camp Ripley (first ones) 1933-34.

submitted photo from Kirk Ransom

Amelia Earhart exhibit

by Ray Pittman



If you visit the Minnesota Air National Guard Museum in the near future, you will notice a new display featuring Amelia Earhart. You may ask, "What connection did she have with the Twin Cities?" Most people don't realize that Amelia Earhart spent a portion of her life in the Twin Cities area. She lived with her parents in a little house at 825 Fairmount Avenue in St. Paul, Minnesota. She attended Central High School and left at the end of the 1914 school year. Her fellow students regarded her as a very bright girl and above average in her studies. She was only 16 at the time. Her father was a lawyer for a railroad which is what brought them to the Twin Cities. The exhibit will have newspaper articles, photos, dolls, and other items commemorating the aviatrix's life. When you are at the museum, please take a minute to stop and look at the items displayed in the Amelia Earhart exhibit.

Join our amazing volunteer team during exciting times at the museum!

by Anja Drescher

The year 2021 marks the 100th anniversary of the 133rd Airlift Wing and we are thrilled to be part of such a historical event. Coordinating and executing such activities requires a lot of preparation and effort. During the winter months we are working on many projects to enhance the museum's appearance and experience and also prepare for our museum road show in 2019. There is a lot to do and we need YOUR help! If you are an aviation enthusiast, this is the place to be. No aviation knowledge required.

Volunteers at the museum engage in a variety of opportunities to apply diverse skills, learn new skills and meet great people in the process.

Ongoing Museum ONSITE volunteer positions

Visitor engagement

- Docent (tour guide)
- Gift shop coordination & sales
- Onsite special event planning
- Onsite event executions

Museum Operations

- Volunteer coordination support
- Membership coordination support
- Data entry
- Marketing & communication
- Research & archiving
- Collections archivist support

Museum Displays & Artifacts

- Museum maintenance
- Artifact restoration & preservation
- Exhibit development & construction

Be part of a GREAT historical celebration!
133rd Airlift Wing Centennial volunteer opportunities:

History and Outreach

- Military and/or aviation historian
- Story writer
- Editor
- Speaker

Logistics

- Marketing & communication
- Website development
- Grant writing
- Fundraising
- Project management

Displays

- Exhibit development & construction
- Aircraft restoration

Volunteer positions are open to all individuals with an interest and commitment of service to the museum who are at least 18 years of age, is a U.S. citizen, has a valid enhanced driver's license, or a regular driver's license and a current (not expired) U.S. passport, or military identification and is able to perform defined duties. Volunteers work independently with other volunteers and with the permanent museum staff. There is no minimum commitment.

If you have skills or just a passion that could help bring the Minnesota Air National Guard's rich history to others, please consider contacting us at 612-713-2523, or fill out the volunteer form at <http://www.mnangmuseum.org/about/volunteer/> and email it to mnangmuseum1@gmail.com or mail it to Minnesota Air National Guard Museum, PO Box 11598, St. Paul, MN 55111.



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Museum participants at the Gandy Dancer Fly-in pause in front of the Photo Phantom on July 21, 2018 at the Burnett County, Wisconsin airport.
Left to right: Ray Pittman, Terry Morris, Sheila Atwell, Jim Atwell, Sharon Drews, Mike Drews, Anja Drescher, Kirk Ransom
photo by Bre McGee

