

MINNESOTA AIR NATIONAL GUARD HISTORICAL FOUNDATION  
**MINNESOTA ANG MUSEUM NEWS**

*Minnesota Aviation History - Learn of the Past  
Fall 2019*



## **We are on the right course – An update of the Minnesota Air National Guard Centennial Celebration in the making**

*by Anja Drescher*

In the Spring 2019 newsletter, we announced the 100th anniversary celebration of the MNANG, the centennial of the first federally recognized flying unit of the National Guard.

Over the past month, the growing Centennial Committee – led by members of the The Minnesota Air National Guard Historical Foundation [MNANGHF], volunteers and the 133rd Airlift Wing – has made great progress planning all the pieces of the celebration.

The committee's goal, in collaboration with its history partners, such as the National Guard Bureau, the National Museum of the US Air Force, Minneapolis-St. Paul International Airport Foundation, Joint Force Headquarters of the MN National Guard, Minnesota Historical Society, Mall of America and others, is to educate the public and to ensure appropriate recognition and celebration of this landmark milestone, through various initiatives and engagements.

Starting in September 2020, each month will bring different stories, exhibits and events that highlight the MNANG's contributions to aviation in the state of Minnesota, the nation and the world since that first 1,600-mile flight 100 years ago. It all culminates in July 2021 with an air expo of spectacular dimensions, to which all of Minnesota is invited.

*Centennial story continues on page 6*

## **2019 Off-Base Events**

*by Mike Drews*

Earlier in 2019 the Event Committee decided to limit the museum's off-base events to Rush City Airport Fly-In, Red Bull Military Appreciation Day in North Branch, Wings of the North Air Expo at Flying Cloud Airport, Gandy Dancer Fly-in/Drive-in at Burnett County Airport in Siren, Wisc., Vets Fest in Oakdale, and Osceola, Wisc. Wheels & Wings so that more time could be spent making plans for the Air Guard's 100th anniversary in 2021.

*Events story continues on page 4*



The Photo Phantom is enjoyed by crowds at Vets Fest in Oakdale, Minn. on July 27, 2019.  
*photo by Ray Pittman*

### **Also inside:**

- **Russ Jensen obituary**
- **C-45 was early transport**
- **guess which cockpit is which!**



## Our volunteers: Steve Schaaf

story and photo by Terry Morris



Though Steve Schaaf is new to the museum, he has a long history with the Minnesota Air National Guard and commercial aviation. The St. Paul native joined the USAF in 1974, serving as a weapon's mechanic for F-4 and F-111 aircraft. After completing his four-year service commitment, he obtained his A&P license and began a 37 year civilian career in commercial aviation with Eastern, Piedmont, Northwest, and finally Delta Airlines, retiring from Delta in 2017. Even though he had successfully transitioned back to civilian life, Steve still felt a deep connection with the military. So in 1984 he joined the Minnesota Air National Guard's 133rd Air Wing where he served as a flight engineer on the Wing's C-130E/H aircraft for the majority of his career. His career included in-theater deployments to fly missions during the Desert Storm and Bosnia conflicts. He retired from the Minnesota Air National Guard in 2002.

Steve first heard about the museum in the winter of 2019 after reading a short article written by Bruce Graham in the 133rd retiree newsletter. The article highlighted contributions being made by museum volunteers in support of the upcoming Minnesota Air Guard's Centennial celebration. After seeing an opportunity to continue to use his extensive skills, he decided to become a museum volunteer that spring. Since joining, he has focused on sheet metal repair of the museum's C-97 which had sustained damage due to lawn mower incidents. With that work nearly complete, his next project is to repair one of the C-97's tires that no longer holds air.

When asked what he enjoys most about being a volunteer, Steve replied it was the opportunity to work on military airplanes at his own pace and the ability to work with other volunteers who share his passion. His favorite airplane.....The C-130!

## AmazonSmile Donations

by Mike Drews

There is now another way you can help support the Minnesota Air National Guard Museum through the AmazonSmile website: [smile.amazon.com](https://www.amazon.com/amazonsmile).

The AmazonSmile Foundation will donate .05 % of your eligible purchases to the museum when you choose the museum as the charity you wish to support, at no additional cost to you. On the AmazonSmile website charity list, the museum is listed as the Minnesota Air National Guard Historical Foundation, Inc. You will see eligible products marked "Eligible for AmazonSmile donation" on the product detail pages. Your donations help us to strengthen our programs and develop new, innovative projects to serve the community.

You shop. Amazon donates.  
**amazonsmile**

## C-97 project update

by Mike Drews

Work began this past summer to repair the C-97 for the 100th anniversary celebration of the Minnesota Air National Guard. So far, an eight-foot dent and tear in the lower fuselage has been repaired with a sheet metal scab patch. The right hand inboard main landing gear tire and wheel were removed because the tire would not hold air.

We will now use an inner tube to keep the tire inflated this winter. Parts will be made to screen all the engine cowlings to keep birds out. In the spring, work will start on the inside of the aircraft, sealing windows and cleaning and painting.



## 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, Greg Haase, Rick Heinecke, Herb Ketcham, Ray Pittman, Lowell Ueland

Wing Advisor: Lt. Col. Jamie Lindeman

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 sending an email request to [toursmnangmuseum@gmail.com](mailto:toursmnangmuseum@gmail.com). Special events, such as a birthday party, can be arranged through Nancy Wilson ([nanc.mn.ang.museum@gmail.com](mailto: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

In the Spring newsletter I commented that we hope the 2020-2021 Centennial will offer opportunities to develop a vision and plan for future museum operations. In mid-October board vice chair Karen Wolf and I had an opportunity to meet with the new 133rd Airlift Wing Commander, Col. James Cleet, and the Vice Wing Commander, Lt Col. Jamie Lindman, to discuss the present status of and the future of the museum operations on the 133rd Airlift Wing Base.

Near-term and longer-term changes to the base will affect museum and air park operations. Around the time the Centennial events conclude in 2021, the 133AW plans to undertake construction on a new entry route to a new main gate which will be at approximately the current air park location. Air park aircraft will need to be moved, and we will be working with the Wing on a plan for that. In addition, the 133AW presently exceeds its allowable finished building space and must plan for future reductions. The Wing has an Installation Development Plan to guide the Wing in meeting those goals. Although timelines are not yet firmly established, this development plan will require the Foundation to begin work on planning for transition to an alternative museum site from building 670.

Our meeting with the Wing leadership left me confident that the 133AW supports and appreciates the mission of the MNANGHF. As members of the foundation you should expect the board to continue preparation for the Centennial, to continue obtaining grant support of the archive and catalog work, and more vigorous efforts on the transition plans for our physical space. Creative thinking is welcome, so I will renew my encouragement for members to consider seeking board membership and/or to convey their thoughts and ideas to the existing board members.

Once again, thank you to our volunteers for yet another successful season.

Sincerely - your Foundation Board Chair,  
Brian Wyneken



Col. James D. Cleet became the commander of the 133rd Airlift Wing, Minnesota Air National Guard, St. Paul, Minn. on Aug. 16, 2019. He is a command pilot with more than 3,800 flying hours in the C-130 and F-16 and has flown more than 200 combat sorties, totaling more than 760 combat hours.

*left photo by Tech. Sgt. Amy Lovgren  
right photo submitted*







**Events story from on page 1**

Even with fewer off-base events and cancellations due to bad weather, the events were profitable for the museum. We were able to utilize the museum’s new used truck that we purchased earlier this year. The truck was reliable and efficient when pulling the F-4 Photo Phantom, and we were able to pack all of our gift shop items in the covered truck bed with room to spare.

Thanks go to museum volunteers who helped with manning the Photo Phantom when both kids and adults sat in the cockpit, and thanks to the volunteers who helped with the gift shop sales. Volunteers will now be busy getting the museum aircraft in the air park ready for another Minnesota winter.

Top photos: Wings of the North Air Expo at Flying Cloud airport, Eden Prairie, Minn. on July 14, 2019.  
 Bottom photos: Osceola Wheels & Wings on Sept. 7, 2019.  
 all photos by Ray Pittman



**What cockpits are these? F-4, F-16, F-51, F-89, F-94, F-101, or F-102? (Answers on page 7.)**  
 submitted by Kirk Ransom

**#1**

**#2**

**#3**





# Obituary for Colonel Russ Jensen

Col. Russell Jensen, 88, 109th AS (ret.), May 21, 1931- September 20, 2019

Russ was a respected, well-known St. Paul lawyer and long-time Summit Avenue resident. He was a pilot, served in the Minnesota Air National Guard for 31 years, was courageous, enduring, had humor and a smile, and he lost his battle with life.

Russ started his pilot training at Laredo AFB in Texas in 1958. He was a USAF Veteran of the Korean and Vietnam Wars and he flew many missions to Southeast Asia, Europe, and South America. He qualified for single and multi-engine propeller and jet aircraft and flew the TR-33, F-89 (his favorite), C-97, C-130 and the DC-3. He was a command pilot, multi-engine commercial pilot, and a certified flight instructor. During the 1970s, Russ was the Commander of the 109th Tactical Airlift Squadron, held national level offices in flying organizations, and organized pilots distributing Christmas gifts to greater Minnesota. During the 1980's he was the pilot for George Latimer's campaign for governor, on the board of the Minn. Aviation Hall of Fame and a member of Quiet Birdman.

With lawyer Richard Grayson, Russ wrote scripts for skits performed by the Ramsey County Judges at the annual Ramsey County Bar Association. Russ had an eye for taking pictures, designed unique cards, was a gourmet cook, and restored several houses in the Summit/ Crocus Hill area. He also wrote an unpublished book, *The F.E.B.*, which was about his military career.

Russ wrote many articles on MNANG history. He was a long time Board member and a dedicated volunteer of the MNANG Museum. At the museum he honored visiting Tuskegee Pilot Col. Kenneth Wofford, assisted in building four replica airplanes, was Chairman of the MN ANG Historical Foundation for nine years, and was instrumental in securing a C-123 and C-97 for the museum.

Russ had humor, a ready smile, enthusiasm for life, a positive attitude, and he was compassionate and kind. He was known for his cigars, flying, and classy neckties. Ahead of his time, he was the first lawyer to convert to computer use. He was awarded the FAA Master Pilot Award for over 50 years of safe, licensed flying, and at the St. Thomas Academy he received the Veteran Fleming Award.

His survivors include his loving, faithful, and caring wife Julia Eszlinger Jensen; sisters-in-law Jean Jensen, Shirley Eszlinger, Mary Eszlinger; children Laurie, Jamie, Charles (Kitty), Kathleen, Betsy (Kevin Creamer), Kelly (Tory), Lisa (Larry Fasching); 11 grandchildren, and three great-grandchildren.



Russ Jensen at the ANG Museum.  
*photo by Pete Backlund*

## Recent visit by retired Brig. Gen. Dolny *by Bruce Graham*

Retired Maj. Gen. John Dolny, 98, 133rd Airlift Wing Commander for 26 years, was at the Air Guard Museum Sept. 13, 2019. Retired Brig. Gen. Greg Haase interviewed him about his career for the history file.

There was a nice piece on WCCO TV news about Dolny's Museum visit and his WWII experiences and as the 2nd Wing Commander from 1951 to 1977. Dolny also attended the opening ceremony for family day and Col. Dan Gabrielli's promotion to Brigadier General on Sept 14. The Museum provided a nice golf cart with a 2-star license plate to transport Dolny around the air park and the Guard base.

The story can be viewed by following this hyperlink:

<https://minnesota.cbslocal.com/2019/09/13/the-history-behind-minnesotas-133rd-airlift-wing/>

*Centennial story continued from page 1*

Through an amazing group effort, we have compiled a comprehensive history of the Minnesota Air National Guard from 1921 to present. This will not only provide an excellent baseline for our exhibits and storytelling but will also be available to the public via different mediums.

We are in the process of developing a traveling exhibit, displaying a timeline in multiple pop-up panels representing all the eras of MN Air National Guard History.

An additional exhibit will be displayed at Minneapolis-St Paul International Airport, starting mid-year 2020. Designed to honor the lineage of the MN Air National Guard and the Minneapolis IAP, it will feature the dedication ceremony of Wold Chamberlain Airfield, hosted by Major Miller, from the MSP speedway (AKA MSP airfield) and display the 100 years of service to state and nation.

Our efforts will also focus on numerous firsts that will include the C-130 flight that witnessed the third plane crash into the Pentagon, the first airdrop into Pakistan for earthquake relief, and more.

The history of the MNANG is not only about the various airplanes assigned to the Wing and the missions MNANG has accomplished, but the stories like those that come from the airmen who took care of the plane or did maintenance on the engines or medical technicians assigned to the Aeromedical Evacuation Squadron picking up our injured from the Middle East, caring for them as they are transported to more capable hospitals. Those personal and institutional accounts need to be told, providing a peek into what an organization that has been around for 100 years can accomplish.

If you would like to share your stories and experiences relating to the MN Air National Guard and your engagement, please contact us at <http://mnangmuseum.org/contact/email-us/>



The Centennial Committee at the Mall of America offices on Oct. 24, 2019. At far left, Lt. Col. Anna Long, Terry Morris, Lowell Ueland, retired Lt. Col., Sara Durhman, Mall of America, Anja Drescher, Karen Wolf, retired Lt. Col., Mike Drews, Ray Pittman, Meri Pearson, Mall of America, Bruce Graham, retired Command Chief Master Sgt., Greg Haase, retired Brig. Gen., Lt. Col. Jamie Lindeman, Herb Ketcham, Staff Sgt. Taylor Nielsen, Tom Simonet, retired Col., Tech. Sgt. Amy Lovgren, and, taking the photo, retired Senior Master Sgt. Mark Moss.

## **Can you help us celebrate the MNANG 100th anniversary?**

*by Pete Backlund*

We could use your help. The 100th anniversary of the Minnesota Air National Guard in 2021 is just around the corner. You can help make it an especially rewarding experience. No doubt many former Air Guard members have interesting stories to tell about their service experiences.

There must be dozens of stories that are funny, exciting, adventurous, heartwarming, even scary, and more.

We'd appreciate it if you would share them with us and those who read the newsletter, and for those who come to the celebration. Also, if you have any memorabilia you could temporarily loan us that we could put on display we would appreciate it. Any loaned items will be cared for and promptly returned to the owner.

If interested, contact Pete Backlund at 651-702-4612 or call the museum at 612-713-2523.



# BEECHCRAFT C-45 "EXPEDITOR" U.S. NAVY BUREAU NUMBER 51338 FAA REGISTRATION NUMBER N5766

by Greg Bastyr



The C-45, also nicknamed the "Twin Beech," was assigned to the 133rd Air base group in the late 1940s. The C-45 served as a utility transport and remained in the inventory until 1960. Most of the C-45 mission was to support the Minnesota National Guard State Headquarters staff. The C-45 and the civilian equivalent Beechcraft Model 18 is a 6-11 passenger, twin-engine, low-wing, conventional-gear aircraft that was manufactured by the Beech Aircraft Corporation of Wichita, Kan. The first flight was on 15 January 1937; more than 9,000 of 32 variants were built. This model saw service during and after WW-II. The C-45 flew in the USAF until 1963.

Cost: \$78,000

Crew: 2 Pilots

Capacity: 6 Passengers

Length: 34 Feet, 2 Inches

Wingspan: 47 Feet, 8 Inches

Height: 9 Feet, 8 Inches

Engines: 2 Pratt & Whitney R-985-AN-1

"Wasp Junior" radial engines, 450 HP each

Maximum Speed: 225 MPH

Range: 1,200 Miles at 160 MPH

Service Ceiling: 26,000 Feet

Above and on the cover - The museum's C-45 "Expeditor" on display.

Below - an AT-11 Kansan.  
*all submitted photos*



Interesting Facts: The museum C-45 is actually a U.S. Navy UC-45J. The U.S. Army Air Corps also had a version of this aircraft they used for bombing and gunnery training; this aircraft was designated the AT-11 "Kansan." The fuselage of this aircraft had small circular cabin windows, bombardier position in the nose and a bomb bay. The aircraft was also fitted with two machine guns, one in the nose and one in a dorsal gun turret. C-45s are a common sight at airshows, there is also one that performs aerobatic displays.

***What cockpits are these? Answers: #1 is F-51, #2 is F-89, #3 is F-102.***

Minnesota Air National  
Guard Museum  
P. O. Box 11598  
St. Paul, MN 55111-0598

Non-Profit  
Organization  
U.S. POSTAGE  
PAID  
Twin Cities, MN  
Permit No. 7911

## USO shows and the 109th Squadron in World War Two



The Bob Hope USO tour shows did not begin officially until 1942 in Alaska but he had entertained troops as early as May of 1941 at March Field in California.

When in England, the 67th Recon Group, which included the 109th was entertained by Tony Romano, Bob Hope, Frances Langford and Jack Pepper on July 9, 1943.

While in England, Bob Hope and Frances Langford were driven around by Chester Petrie of the 109th.

Jerry Colona was not on the England tour, but he frequently appeared with Frances Langford on their many tour appearances around the world.  
*(from an article written by Dave Petrie, son of Chester Petrie)*

Bob Hope, Frances Langford, and Jerry Colona entertained the 109th while they were stationed in Louisiana.  
*submitted photo*