

# PROP WASH

COMMEMORATIVE AIR FORCE  
Rocky Mountain Wing  
P.O. Box 4125 • Grand Junction, Colorado 81502

Gazette

March, 2017



HONORING AMERICAN MILITARY AVIATION THROUGH FLIGHT, EXHIBITION AND REMEMBRANCE

## An Honor and a Responsibility!

By Col David Shepard

The letter was short and very sweet: "We are pleased to announce the listing of TBM Avenger Aircraft N53503 in the Colorado State Registry of Historic Properties". That brief communication from State Historic Preservation Officer Dr. Holly Norton concluded over two years of work by members of the Rocky Mountain Wing and opened a new chapter in the Wing's efforts to preserve its piece of aviation history.

The listing bridged a gap between the historic preservation community in Colorado and the Commemorative Air Force. Incredibly, before the submission of the Rocky Mountain Wing's TBM, these two communities, both of whom care deeply about preserving history, had never talked.

The mission of the CAF is well-known its members; it strives to preserve in operating condition historic military aircraft, to keep alive the story of the machines, and people who built, flew and maintained these magnificent aircraft.

History Colorado may not be so well known. It is an agency of the State of Colorado, created in 1879, now



assigned to the Department of Higher Education. Its mission is to preserve Colorado History, through museums, educational programs, and historic preservation efforts.

A portion of state tax revenues is specifically assigned to History Colorado, and form the basis of a State Historical Fund, that awards grants to all sixty-four Colorado counties for historic preservation. Grant eligibility requires that the applicant be listed on the State or National Registry of Historic Properties.

In 2014 a member of the Rocky Mountain Wing had

the idea of nominating the Wing's TBM for inclusion on the State Registry. The idea was quickly embraced by then Wing-Leader Robert Caskey, and his successor, Col. Kent Taylor.

Caskey and Taylor did what leaders do best: they encouraged, delegated, and supported the effort, and let Wing members carry the ball forward. They also solicited and received the support of local political leaders.

The effort was an example of CAF volunteerism, where the Wing encourages individual members with different skills to contribute those skills. As one member observed, "I can't pick up a wrench without hurting myself, so it was great to find a way to give back to the Wing in another way."

The application process required breaking down a lot of barriers. Officials at History Colorado were understandably initially skeptical at the idea of listing an airplane on the State Registry. A typical application usually involves a building.

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COMMEMORATIVE AIR FORCE



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# RMW AIR SHOW SCHEDULE - 2017

MONTH	DAYS	LOCATION	SHOW	TBM	CUB	STATUS
May	20	Peru, IL	Avenger Gathering			CONFIRMED
Jul	4	Telluride, CO	July 4th Open House		?	CONFIRMED
	16	Cheyenne, WY	WYO Air Guard TB			Pending
	22-23	Idaho Falls, ID	Extreme Blue Thunder BA			Pending
	22-23	Great Falls, MT	Flight Over The Falls TB			Pending
Aug	19	Powell, WY	Wings and Wheels			CONFIRMED
Sep	2-3	Steamboat Springs	Wild West Air Fest			CONFIRMED
	9	Wendover, UT	Wendover Air Show			CONFIRMED
	16-17	Montrose	Tribute to Aviation			CONFIRMED
	23	Durango	Aviation Celebration GK			Pending
	23-24	Colorado Springs	Pikes Peak Air Show TB			Pending
	30-10/1	Grand Junction	Airport Open House TB			CONFIRMED
Oct	7	Prescott, AZ	Airport Open House			CONFIRMED
	6-8	Dallas, TX	CAF Airsho 2017			Doubtful
	21	Alamogordo, NM	Holloman AFB O/House			Pending

Lots of stuff going on besides Air Shows this year. Our announcement party for the TBM Historic Object Designation is just one.

Illinois in May?

Contact Col Thompson and VOLUNTEER!  
[rvtglt38@earthlink.net](mailto:rvtglt38@earthlink.net)

BA = Blue Angles  
 TB = Thunderbirds  
 GK = Golden Knights  
 RB = Red Birds

## QUICK VISIT - VALIANT AIR COMMAND, FLORIDA

By Col Tom Howe

While in Florida the middle of February, it was convenient for me to stop by Valiant Air Command's (VAC) Warbird Museum at the TICO airport just outside Titusville, FL.

VAC has a couple things in common with RMW in that VAC also has a TBM and a Link Trainer. I was curious to see if their TBM was planning to attend the Peru, IL Avenger gathering May 20th. I was greeted warmly and led back into their warbird hangar to see their TBM grounded because of a "mystery" (electrical?) problem causing the engine to reduce power after about 30 minutes of use. The "mystery" is perplexing and extremely frustrating to the VAC maintenance crew.

So, we will not see VAC's TBM in Peru. We certainly wish them well and hope their TBM problem is resolved

soon. Avengers need to do their thing in the air!

VAC also has a restored Link trainer on display in their museum foyer. Theirs is in pristine condition mounted on a pedestal right by the museum front entry.

I didn't have the opportunity to ask if the trainer was functional or if they had drawings, etc. that might add to the documentation for our "in restoration" Link Trainer.

If I recall correctly, when RMW sponsored a TBM training seminar here in Grand Junction a couple of the VAC members attended.

VAC is a great member of the warbird community and us both having TBM Avengers creates a tie between our organizations that could be expanded in the future.

I, for one, hope the sound of VAC's TBM is soon gracing the skies of the Space and Treasure coasts of Florida with that distinctive radial roar.





# An Honor and a Responsibility! (cont.)

*(Continued from Page 1)*

A door opened when both sides recognized that Colorado has an important railroad history, and historic railroad rolling stock is listed on the State Historic Registry. The door opened more fully when Colorado officials learned of the TBM's unique participation in World War II, and that after World War II a squadron of TBM's was assigned to Buckley Field outside Denver, the nation's highest Naval Air Station. Helpful also, was the prior listing of an east coast TBM on the National Registry.

History Colorado's Erika Warzel played the key role in guiding the wing through a very rigorous and detailed application process, involving multiple paperwork-intensive submissions. The Wing learned that precision in paperwork, and maintaining the fullest possible history of an aircraft is critical, to establish the provenance of the airplane's life history.

And what of the result? TBM N53503 is now proudly listed on the State Registry, with its location identified by GPS coordinates at the Rocky Mountain Wing headquarters.

The Wing is attending follow-up meetings with History Colorado, to learn better what resources may be brought to bear in executing its mission. Wing Leader Kent Taylor observed, "We are so very excited—the listing will help us get our message out to the larger community so that we can tell our story, and the story of this magnificent aircraft to a larger audience!"

The lesson from two years of work: good things happen when people with a common passion for our shared history talk to each other. People

who care about history may not know aviation history, but if we talk to them, they are likely to understand and support our mission.

*Ed. Note: RMW owes Col David Shepard a great big pat on the back for the two plus years David spent bringing this long, drawn out project to fruition.*

*The Wing will reap untold benefits from his work.*

**GIVE THAT COLONEL A PROMOTION - -**

**- - TO COLONEL?**

## Wing Leader Col Taylor's Review of 2/11 Staff Meeting

*By Col Kent Taylor*

Another super meeting - big turnout, lots of discussion, high energy, and some fantastic meatball sandwiches (a big thank you to Jay Jackson). We also welcomed a new guest and about to become member - Jodi Doney, Business Development Manager at the airport. She will be helping us with marketing, social media, and special events!

Went through the usual agenda. Your friendly Wing Leader reminded everyone of this year's focus on GROWTH, and objectives that include:

- retirement of restoration debt
- rebuilding of operational reserves



- 20 new members
- New annual sponsorships totaling \$100,000

**6 or more new (non-airshow) fund raising/recruiting events**

We have support for these objectives at the highest level (see attached photo).

The Staff agreed on a conservative income and expense budget that included the usual line items, plus new line items for promotions (branding and awareness-

building) and restoration debt repayment.

Col Toth provided the January Financial Status report that showed us with a positive cash flow, and adequate cash in the bank. As long as we manage to our budget, we should remain cash flow positive through the end of the year, while reducing (or eliminating) our debt burden.

Col Connor let everyone know that we can contribute painlessly to the CAF through Amazon Smile. Just choose Amazon Smile when

you go to the website, place your order, and Amazon will donate a percentage of your purchase to the CAF. He has also been working on the RMW website, and considering alternatives for a website makeover, and several members offered suggestions and caveats.

Col Thompson provided an air show update. Unfortunately, early March air shows at China Lake and Riverside have fallen off the schedule. On a positive note, an opportunity for a Fourth of July parade fly-over and TBM rides day materialized at Telluride (not yet finalized, but looking good). Another local possibility at Fremont County - a small one-day event. John Mummery is following up on both of these opportunities. *(Cont. on Page 5)*



**COMMEMORATIVE  
AIR FORCE  
ROCKY MOUNTAIN WING**

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**RMWCAF on the Web**  
[www.rmwcaf.org](http://www.rmwcaf.org)

**“Keep 'em Flying”**

**WING LEADER’S REPORT**

*By Col Kent Taylor  
Wing Leader*

What a Month! I’m more excited than a ferret on a triple espresso J.

We’ve made some amazing progress this year, details of which are scattered throughout this issue of the Propwash. Less visible, but just as noteworthy, is the growing level of attendance and energy at the monthly Staff meetings. I’m delighted that Members have jumped in to fill critical Deputy and Functional Officer positions. And the increased activity and participation on Wednesday and Saturday workdays is especially encouraging. I’m pleased to see how quickly things are coming together! All of the following occurred in the last three weeks.

The addition of our TBM to the Colorado Registry of Historic Properties was of course



the big news of the month. Conversations with Airport Management and the Airport Board quickly followed, with unanimous agreement to help us celebrate and publicize this honor. It was a special meeting, attended by City Council members and County Commissioners. Hopefully this exposure will help them to understand the value RMW can bring to the community.

Being on the registry also makes us eligible for a broad range of history- and education-related grants. RMW representatives attended a *History Colorado* Grants Roundtable in Montrose, and

**PHOTO OF THE MONTH**



Our TBM carries the aircraft markings of USS Bunker Hill shown here after two kamikaze hits in 30 seconds off Kyushu, May 11th, 1945.  
  
Dead-372.  
Wounded-264.

were completely blown away by what we learned. Hint: it rhymes with OPPORTUNITY!

RMW was also represented at a meeting of *Club 20*, which is the “Marketing Voice of the Western Slope.” Our new Deputy Curator gave the Airport Board presentation to about 70 movers and shakers from the region, which will no doubt open some new doors for us and expand our reach in the region.

I had the honor of participating in a 3-day planning meeting with the CAF General Staff. It was an amazing, high-energy meeting,

and I came away so excited that I could barely contain myself. This General Staff is fully engaged and ready, willing, and able to help the CAF rise to new heights. Several of the RMW staff are headed to the Wing Staff Conference March 2-5, and are looking forward to getting more details, and even more excited. There’s positive change in the air, and RMW will be on the leading edge.

As the TV News folks say: *Details at 10:00*. That’s 10:00 AM Saturday March 11 at the RMW Staff Meeting where we’ll share all the details and excitement! **DON’T MISS THIS ONE!**



**RMWCAF STAFF OFFICERS**

- Wing Leader Kent Taylor
- Executive Officer Rich Connor
- Finance Officer Robert Toth
- Adjutant Becca Walters
- Operations Officer Bob Thompson
- Maintenance Off. Dick Maddock
- Museum & Mess Sergeant Dorothy Dutton
- Safety Officer Robert Owen
- Judge Advocate Gerald Feather
- Marketing Officer Kathryn Bennett
- Public Information Officer Tom Dennis
- PX Officers Tom / Jay Jackson
- Newsletter Editor Tom Howe
- TBM Aircraft Coordinator Bob Thompson
- Cub Aircraft Coordinator Charlie Huff
- Ambulance Coordinator Byron Huffman
- Facilities Manager Kay Johnson
- Recruiting Officer Kieth Swinehart
- Grants Officer Dave Shepard



Col Kent Taylor - Leader, Seal Team "309"



**We (you)  
are Connected!**

**Login = RMWHANGAR  
Password = tbm309n53**

**WWII QUIZ**

**ANSWERS ON PAGE 6**

**The Air War**

What was the greatest number of enemy planes ever shot down in a single day by a U.S. pilot and name him

**Naval Operations & Sea Battles**

Name the hospital ship in Pearl Harbor that the Japanese fliers recognized and did not attack.

Thanks to author Timothy B. Bensford

**Staff Mtg. (cont. from Page 3)**

Col Thompson is arranging a TBM Pilot Ground School and Check Ride weekend in Heber City UT for our three new TBM pilot candidates. Hopefully we can get them all qualified before the end of March. Our first show will be at the Gathering of TBM Avengers in Peru IL in April.

Col Maddock reported that the Maintenance crew has been working feverishly to take care of last-minute maintenance and cosmetic items. They need some warm sunny days to paint the star and bar on the port wing. Bottom line: the TBM will be ready for the air show season!

Col Swinehart, our shiny new Recruiting Officer reported that he is ready to rock and roll with some fresh new recruiting ideas and is looking forward to working on a variety of recruiting campaigns, events and opportunities.

Col Owen reported that he completed the annual fire extinguisher inspection, and all required extinguishers in the museum, hangar, and airplane are up to date. He also announced that we would have Fire Extinguisher training for all Ground Crew members in March. The airport Fire Department will let us learn with real fire in their training area. Col Owen will also include dealing with aircraft fire emergencies in this year's Air Show participant training.

Col Bennett, our new Marketing

Officer shared ideas for events and awareness-building activities. She is working closely with Jodi Doney of the Airport staff, and other personal contacts to create mailing lists and identify marketing opportunities.

Old Business:

I met with Joe Dawkins (Mountain Aviation Enterprises) in Phoenix, to discuss payment terms for the work that his staff did on the TBM. He graciously offered to delay payments until we get back on our feet. I shared our financial situation and 2017 budget with him, and committed to quarterly payments that worked for both of us.

New business:

Great News! Our TBM has officially been added to the Colorado Register of Historic Properties! This honor has been noted by the Mesa County Commissioners and the GJ Airport Authority Board, who will work with us to create an appropriate celebration event. In addition to increasing awareness, our historic designation also opens the door for us to apply for listing on the National Historic Registry. And last but not least, we are now eligible to apply for grants from History Colorado. Cols Howe, Shepard, Peebles, and Taylor will attend a History Colorado Roundtable event in  
*(Continued on Page 7)*





# MAINTENANCE REPORT

*By Col Dick Maddock  
RMW Maintenance Officer*

WOW!! Since our last newsletter, many remarkable things have happened at the RMW. We have a new air show season, and the plane is listed on the Colorado State Register of Historic Properties. Now, we need our historic plane in the air SOON.

The folding hood has been replaced with a new curved piece of Lexan with no large gaps in the joints with the hood closed. Now a ride in the second seat will be almost air tight. With this completion, the plane is now airworthy.

Before the air show season, I would like to have the star and bar painted on the port wing. This is a big job! We need lots of participation!

We have finished rebuilding the cowl flaps, installed a new plug to charge the batteries easily from outside the plane and have chased down and repaired many hydraulic

seeps. [I think a lot of seals dried out in the two years the plane was in the heat in Mesa.]

Byron has all the intercom headsets working in fine order. We are going to install push-to-talk buttons on the three passenger headsets. We now have a working light in the bilge. We are working on installing new winches in the bomb bay for the steps. West Star inspected our spare wheel. We need to clean and paint the rim and mount the new tire before any out of town flights.

There will soon be many eyes on our historic TBM. We need to get her spit-shined and photo ready for the historic register dedication. [Sometime this spring or early summer.] The TBM is a big plane, so we can use all the "oil wipers" Colonels we can get on Wednesdays and Saturdays to make her shine.

Thank you all for your help.



**Top Right** - Colonel Byron Huffman Checking Radios.

**Center Right** - Colonel Kay Johnson looking for the correct tool. "I know it's in here somewhere..."

**Bottom Right** - New member Col Dick Jackson watching Col Dick Maddock "Wangle a Wrench" on "309".



## WWII QUIZ (SEE PAGE 5)

## ANSWERS

### The Air War

Nine Japanese planes were shot down on October 24, 1944 by US Navy pilot David McCampbell.

### Naval Operations & Sea Battles

The USS Solace, with its white hull and large red crosses was moored in East Lock.

**STAFF MEETING**  
CONT. FROM PAGE 5

Montrose Feb. 22 to identify grants that might apply to us, and to learn how to create winning applications.

And there is something that every RMW Member can do to help us win! *All members are encouraged/requested to keep track of the hours that they donate to CAF activities*, including time spent at meetings, working on the planes or equipment, airshow prep and participation, etc. Members' contributions of their time carries a lot of weight in the award decision process.

More good news. Member Mike Heiny has published a book of family friendly and humorous, Non-Fiction short stories. *"Sea Stories" as told by a Flyer - Diver - Submariner"*. And he has produced a documentary *"Wildcat - Thunder in the Sky"* and is in discussions with Rocky Mountain PBS. A great way for the wing to get publicity. He has offered us a consignment sale deal that we couldn't refuse. He will provide the books for us to sell in the PX at no up-front cost to us.

The highlight of the meeting was a showing of the videos that were produced by CAF Headquarters to honor two longstanding RMW members - Col Tom Dutton (deceased) and Col Bob Thompson (still kicking), who were inducted into the CAF Hall of Fame at last year's Wing Staff Conference. The videos recounted their 30+ years of adventures with the CAF, and provided some ooohs and ahhs, along with some laughs. It was a wonderful way to end the meeting.

More to follow ... stay tuned.



Shown in the table on the right are the **recorded** donation hours for 2016 submitted to the Rocky Mountain Wing (RMW) official "Time Keeper", Col Randy Swanson. This total is certainly just a **fraction** of the total time spent by our dedicated RMW members last year.

It is very important that members record this time - not because one Col is spending more time than another, but because it reflects how our members overall support and participate to help us accomplish our mission.

But even more important, now that our magnificent TBM has been designated a Colorado Historic Object doors have been opened for a completely new source of grant funds. Many grant providers look for and will accept hours donated by members as matching funds (donated hours are just like real money!)

Have you been to the hangar for a staff meeting? All the travel time and all the time spent in the meeting can be logged as donated hours. But the hours have to be recorded to count.

Have you helped at an air show or one of our open houses? Again, all your travel time and hours spent working the event can be logged as donated hours. But the hours have to be recorded to count.

How about those hours at home helping with a dish for a wing party. Yep, they all count - but have to

**Recorded Hours Donated by Members - 2016**

NAME	JAN-JUNE	JULY-DEC	TOTAL
ARMSTRONG, ANDREW	3		3
CASKEY, ROBERT	161	65	226
CASKEY, SANDRA (SANDI)	98	79	177
CASTLE, HENRY (HANK)	7	5	12
COLEMAN, DONALD	121	97	218
CONNOR, RICHARD		10	10
DENNIS, THOMAS JR.	15	14	29
DUTTON, DOROTHY	149	96	245
FORCE, BARRY	80	4	84
GILKERSON, ANDY	6	12	18
HOWE, TOM	137	147	284
HUFF, CHARLIE	7		7
HUFFMAN, BYRON	72	72	144
JACKSON, JAY		14	14
JACKSON, R. TOM		75	75
JOHNSON, KAY	22	12	34
JOHNSON, STEPHEN	3		3
MADDOCK, DICK	101	590	691
MARVEL, WILLIAM (BILL)	6	56	62
McDONOUGH, JERRY	21		21
McNAMARA, MATTHEW		500	500
OWEN, ROBERT	7	121	128
PEEBLES, RANDY	27		27
SHEPARD, DAVID		30	30
SUITS, FLOYD	54		54
SWANSON, RANDY	25	93	118
TAYLOR, KENT	88	161	249
THOMPSON, GEORGIA	94	88	182
THOMPSON, ROBERT (BOB)	184	262	446
TOTH, ROBERT (Gabe)	36	37	73
WALTERS, REBECCA	11	12	23
<b>2016 TOTAL</b>			<b>4187</b>

be recorded.

Col Randy Swanson is the Wing Time Keeper. He has a sheet posted on the wall in the museum kitchen - you just sign you hours in and Randy takes care of everything from there. Easy, eh?

Or if you work at home just keep track of your time and e-mail it once in a while to

Randy at this address:

[rmswanson@hotmail.com](mailto:rmswanson@hotmail.com)

Randy will then take care of making sure your efforts a properly recorded so the wing can make good use of your time.

**DON'T FORGET!!  
EVERY HOUR COUNTS!**

