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# Cadet Flyer

FALL • 2015



THE OFFICIAL NEWSLETTER OF THE 63RD PRESERVATION SOCIETY AND THE WWII FLIGHT TRAINING MUSEUM • DOUGLAS, GEORGIA

## Welcome Back Cadets!

THE 63RD FLIGHT TRAINING DETACHMENT REUNION

11-15 October 2015



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The WWII Flight Training Museum and City of Douglas welcome back the cadets that learned to fly here. We look forward to your return and to the fun we are going to have. Many activities and events have been planned to honor those that served their country during WWII.

[www.wiiflighttraining.org](http://www.wiiflighttraining.org)

# Jim Rimes - Our Dedicated Volunteer



Year after year, no job is too big or too small for **Jim Rimes**, who volunteers to help keep the Museum running smoothly. Nearly from the beginning of the Museum's existence, Jim aided in the restoration of Barracks 7 into the Museum and the creation of exhibits. This effort continues to this day, with continuous repairs and maintenance, both inside and outside the Museum.



For over 10 years, he has been on the Douglas 63rd Preservation Society board as treasurer and has kept a careful eye on all expenditures of the Museum,

organized the annual fundraiser, and actively solicited donations as part of the fundraiser (including visiting many businesses in the Douglas area). Not only does he assist in hiring new docents, he does the payroll and orders items to be sold in the Museum store.

He appreciates our cadets and does whatever he can to give them the attention they deserve. He copied and filed all of the cadet photos and documents into notebooks, one for each of the classes, which have served as our primary source for information on cadets. Jim is also everywhere at the annual cadet reunion. He follows the cadets in every function during the reunion including



the Stearman rides, the hangar lunch, and welcome with the Mayor.

A big “thank you” goes to Jim for all his years of volunteering at the Museum.



▲ Jim Rimes and Don Brooks at the annual cadet reunion.

## “Baby” – The Lion of the Douglas 63rd

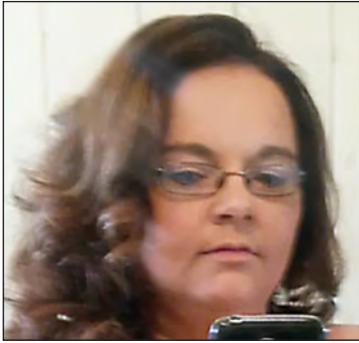
Victor Sponsler was an instructor at the base from August 1941 to October 1942. He left to go to the Central Instructor School at Maxwell Field and then to Ft Meyers gunnery school. He was commissioned and went to N. Africa and the C.B.I. Theater.

However, while in Florida, Sponsler obtained a baby lion from a girl whose father raised lions for Ringling Bros. When the lion grew big enough to be a burden, Sponsler

sent the lion to instructor Arthur S. Cunningham at the Douglas 63rd base. The lion was named “Baby” and lived off the scraps from the mess hall since rationing was so tight. The lion was said to have gone everywhere the pilots did. After the War, the lion ended up on a farm in Douglas with the girlfriend of former instructor Caesar Miles. If any of you out there remember the lion, let us know!

*This story from former instructor, Arthur C. Cunningham.*

# Welcome Our New Docent, Kelli King



The Museum has a new docent, Kelli King. Our previous docent, Kelly Hoopes, had to move when her husband was transferred.

Kelli has only been working a couple of weeks, but already she has found that

she loves the Museum. "The people are awesome!" she says. "One visitor was a pilot who was a descendant of a World War II veteran. He was so interesting."

Kelli also has a connection to the base and Douglas. Her grandfather was a mechanic at the base during the War. She grew up in Douglas, obtained her bachelor's degree in computer science from Valdosta State University, and worked for six years as the head medical assistant and electronic records manager at a local doctor's office. She has a 4-year old son.



Welcome, Kelli!

## Summer Contest for Children - A Big Success!

A summer contest for children ages 5 through 12 has concluded with 66 children participating. The children completed an activity guide called the Jr. Cadet Flight Activity Passport. The activity guide consisted of a scavenger hunt through the museum. In each room children were asked to find specific artifacts and the answers to questions hidden in the museum exhibits.

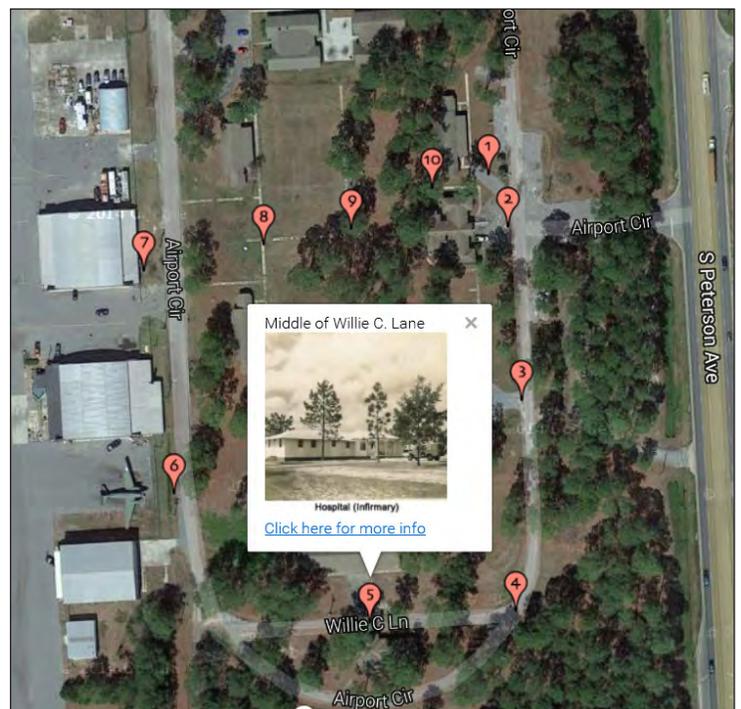
During their visit, children were also able to make and take home a World War II themed paper airplane.

Two of the children who completed the Passport were randomly selected and will be recognized at the annual Douglas 63rd cadet reunion luncheon. Their prize is a ride in a vintage Beechcraft T-34B "Mentor."

## New: Smartphone Tour of the Base

A new smartphone tour of the base has been added to our website! The tour follows the same route as our current paper walking tour brochure. But walkers can see their location on a Google map and pull up pictures and more extensive text than the paper brochure. The smartphone tour also allows the visitor to hear the tour: each stop provides an option for the visitor to have the text read to them. As part of the read text, some sound effects, such as the sound of a PT-17, have been added.

To access the tour, you will need to turn on your phone's data access (mobile data) to view the website. Then enter [http://wwiiflighttraining.org/?page\\_id=1167](http://wwiiflighttraining.org/?page_id=1167) into your web browser. If your device has a GPS receiver and you have activated the location option or standalone GPS function (allowing your location to be used in applications), you will see a yellow star at your location, which will move with you as you walk. The tour can also be accessed from a regular PC connected to the Internet.



# MISSION STATEMENT

The WWII Flight Training Museum is a non-profit organization that is entirely funded by donation, grants and contributions. It is dedicated to sharing the story of the courage and spirit of the American men and women who became pilots during the Second World War. Our primary mission is to preserve, protect, develop and advance the understanding of our nation's aviation training heritage through collections, research, exhibits and interpretation of the 63rd Flight Training Detachment. Our secondary mission is to try to maintain the heritage and as much of the historical integrity of the Raymond-Richardson Aviation School as possible.

The WWII Flight Training Museum  
3 Airport Circle, Douglas, GA 31535 • 912-383-9111  
www.wwiiflighttraining.org  
email: douglas63rd@windstream.net

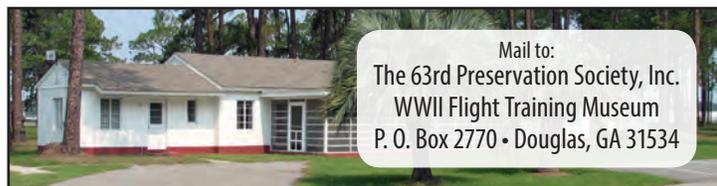
The WWII Flight Training Museum  
3 Airport Circle  
Douglas, GA 31535

**RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED**

## YOU CAN HELP!



In December of 2003, a small group of local citizens interested in history, aviation and heritage preservation gathered together to both protect the site of the Raymond-Richardson Aviation School in Douglas, Georgia, and to create and operate a historical museum that would tell the story of not only our community's role in WWII, but also share the lives of the men and women who lived, worked and trained at the facility. Thus, the 63rd Preservation Society was formed.



Mail to:  
The 63rd Preservation Society, Inc.  
WWII Flight Training Museum  
P. O. Box 2770 • Douglas, GA 31534

The WWII Flight Training Museum is operated by this non-profit organization and is entirely funded by donations, gifts and grants. We believe that the museum can make a great contribution to the preservation of our heritage and to the education of both children and the public in general.

Is it a future worth securing? We think so. We hope you do, too. Become a friend of the museum through membership and help us preserve WWII aviation's beginnings.

cut along dotted lines

### 2015 63rd PRESERVATION SOCIETY MEMBERSHIP

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

City: \_\_\_\_\_ State: \_\_\_\_\_ Zip: \_\_\_\_\_

Email: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone number: \_\_\_\_\_

### \$50 ANNUAL MEMBERSHIP BENEFITS

- WWII Flight Training Museum card
- Quarterly museum newsletter
- Free visits to the museum for your family and guests
- Opportunity to help restore and maintain vintage aircraft
- Honoring our veterans with your commitment
- 10% discount on museum merchandise
- Participation in special museum events

The 63rd Preservation Society is a 501c3 non-profit educational foundation.  
(Proceeds go toward museum maintenance)