

The Cadet Flyer

*The Official Newsletter of the 63rd Preservation Society
and the World War Two Flight Training Museum*

Issue #1

Douglas, Georgia

2005

Who we are

From our mission statement ~

“The WWII Flight Training Museum is a non-profit organization that is entirely funded by donations, 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.”

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 worked and trained at the facility. Thus, the 63rd Preservation Society was formed, which in turn created the WWII Flight Training Museum. Our founding Board Officers include:

Vic Suttles, President
Jim Rimes, Treasurer
Alan Carter, Secretary
Todd Womack, Curator
Don Brooks, Director
Joey Hand, Director

Since our creation we have managed to almost fully restore one of the base’s 1941 barracks, begin the installation of display areas, create a massive new web site on the history of the base, successfully acquired our federal non-profit status, and slowly started to build our museum collections. In October 2004, we were proud to play host for the day to members of the real 63rd FTD cadets reunion group when they were on hand to see what we had accomplished so far.

In 2005, we will be finishing the museum building, continuing to gather acquisitions, and opening our doors to the general public. We are also starting our first membership/donation drive with this newsletter and that is where you come in.

We would like to extend membership in the WWII Flight Training Museum to anyone who is interested in our local heritage, WWII, and aviation. Basic membership benefits include free admission to the museum, a subscription to the newsletter, discounts to all of our special events like the annual Spring Hanger Party, the Historical Lecture Program, and our Fall Living History Day and Stearman Fly-In.

What we hope to accomplish

The non-profit WWII Flight Training Museum is run by a highly motivated Board of Directors and by a growing number of enthusiastic volunteers, to high professional standards, in an attractive and historic building. It will serve a wide range of visitors, who will come to us from all over the world and of course especially from the South Georgia area. No other museum tells the story of World War Two Flight Training on the site of a nearly intact period training airbase.

The Highway 441 corridor and the South Georgia region in which we are situated is a growing tourist attraction and leisure destination and as such, the Museum will serve as an introduction to the role and sacrifice of those young pilots for many who live in or visit our area.

We will have a growing educational role in partnership with local schools and other educational bodies, including a contribution to in-service teacher training, and we will regularly welcome school groups to the museum where our educational services will be available to them. Through our educational work, many of the community's children - and often their parents too - will become aware of the value and potential of aviation heritage.

We believe that the museum can make a great contribution to the preservation of our heritage in the future, and to the education of both children and the public in the area of our recent past.

Is it a future worth securing? We think so. We hope you do to. Please join today!

Membership Levels include:

Individual and Family Levels

Cadet Recruit- \$40

Basic Individual level includes free admission to the museum, the newsletter and all mailings, membership card, one free pass to the Living History Weekend and discounts on other 63rd Preservation Society sponsored events

Cadet Crew- \$75, Family level includes all of the above plus free admission for entire family of four to the Living History Weekend.

Sponsor Levels of Support (all noted on support level plaque)

Flight Instructor- \$125, Includes name/company logo of sponsor board and one ticket to the annual Hanger Canteen Dinner and Dance.

Flight Leader- \$225, includes same as the above, but with two tickets to the annual Hanger Canteen.

Squadron Leader- \$500, includes and table of six to the Hanger Canteen.

Group Leader- \$1000

Defender Circle- \$2000+

Individuals or businesses may also help the museum by giving a tax-deductible donation at any time to allow the museum to continue its educational work.

Museum Special Events will include:

The Spring Hanger Canteen- 1940's music, food, and fun. Remember to observe blackout conditions in case of an air raid. \$125 per seat included in sponsor membership. *Our first canteen was a great success, with over 300 in attendance.*

A WWII Living History Weekend and Stearman Fly-in-

See G.I's, cadets, and Wac's roaming the base, live fire demos, military vehicles, and dozens of vintage PT-17 Stearmans

The Museum Lecture Series- Hear noted historians and veterans speak

Not Just Money

A museum needs more than just money to survive. We also need you to search your family photo albums, attics, and closets for items that the museum desperately needs for historical interpretation. Good examples would be:

Postcards and other souvenirs from the airbase

Pictures of the base or of Douglas during the war

Letters or dairies concerning the base

Cadet or civilian base worker uniforms, insignia, headgear, photos

Cadet yearbooks, flyers, posters

Airbase fixtures and furniture (sold at public auction December 1944)

Photos of base during its use as a:

A 1950's Spring Training Baseball Camp for the Reds

A corset company factory

A public school in the 1970's

SGC Housing during the 1950-60's

We also have need for volunteers to be museum docents and help with schools groups and lecture programs and other special events.

Think how you could help out your community by a donation of money, artifacts, or just time!

For further Information, please contact:

The 63rd Preservation Society

WWII Flight Training Museum

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WE WOULD LIKE TO THANK CHANCEY HEATING AND COOLING AND THE FORMER 63RD FTD INSTRUCTORS FOR THEIR GENEROUS GIFTS OF SUPPORT

