CASTLE AIR MUSEUM

# NEWSLETTER

58-0793 restored as an F-106A painted as 0-72456, the commander's plane of the 456th Fighter Intercept Squadron.
Photo by: Marcin Rogowski

## UPCOMING EVENTS

- **45th Anniversary Celebration - June 20th**
  Join us a we celebrate 45 years of Castle Air Museum Foundation with free Museum admission for Merced County residents, free food, and cool aircraft!

- **Flicks of Flight - June 20th**
  Featured Film: FLYBOYS
  Bust out your lawn chairs and blankets then join us for a special featured film out among the airplanes.

## CASTLE'S MOST WANTED

This is the section of the newsletter where we post the job most in need of a special volunteer. Hence, our most wanted! If you have the desire and ability to fill this need or know someone who can, please contact our Volunteer Coordinator to start a journey to help make Castle the most desired destination in Central California!

**Special Events Coordinator**
We have an opening for a paid, part-time Special Events Coordinator. Bob Scoble is retiring as the man pulling these events together. We would like a volunteer but have the funds available to pay a part time worker to organize our vendors, logistics, and special event volunteers.

## FROM THE BOARD CHAIRMAN

**MAJ GEN CLAY GARRISON USAF (RET)**

Thank you to everyone who visited during Open Cockpit Day. It was another success, with 2500 paid visitors. We also had a great turnout of volunteers and opened more airplanes than I've seen since I joined the museum board. The weather was pleasant, the B-52 looked stunning, and feedback from visitors was outstanding. Thank you to all our volunteers and staff who made the day possible. And special thanks to Bob Scoble!

The pavilion project is moving along but is slightly slowed by sewer and power. We recently hired a specialized contractor to map our sewer system, but this is taking more effort than expected. And the plan to bury our electric service and remove all overhead lines will take some additional time for approvals. But no worry, the slight delays are worth it to save money and get us exactly what we want.

And it is our 45th Anniversary! The museum came into formal existence on June 20, 1981. The board of directors decided to commemorate the event with a special Community Appreciation Day. Local residents will get free entrance to the museum and the possibility to win limited edition anniversary apparel and souvenirs. If you are local, it will be a great time to visit the museum and support us by shopping at the gift shop for Father's Day. If you missed Open Cockpit Day, come see the B-52. Until next month...

# RESTORATION HANGAR

**GREG STATHATOS, RESTORATION MANAGER**

May has been an extremely busy month in Restoration. With Open Cockpit Day approaching at "Mach speed" and the B-52 serving as this year's featured aircraft, the pressure was on to complete several major projects in time for the event.

Of course, Mother Nature had other plans. With the sanding work completed weeks ahead of Open Cockpit Day — thanks in large part to Craig and our friends from Amazon — Restoration was finally ready for paint. Amazon volunteers came out in force and helped sand the majority of the B-52's upper left wing, allowing the team to move into final preparation and painting.

All we needed was about 12 hours without wind to spray the three coats of black paint. Unfortunately, the "airplane gods" were not interested in cooperating. Every time painting began, the wind picked up. Still, the team pushed forward and refused to let the weather stop the project from being completed on time.

After multiple 18-hour days and nights, the Restoration team finished the B-52 with only 20 minutes to spare before the gates opened for Open Cockpit Day. Nothing like cutting it close.

Our newly restored B-52 Stratosphere

A second group of Amazon volunteers traveled from Stockton to assist with sanding and prepping the F-104 for paint. Unlike the B-52 crew, they somehow managed to avoid the wind entirely. Over the course of four Wednesdays, 20–30 Amazon volunteers worked on sanding and painting the aircraft in its camouflage paint scheme.

Rusty was able to trace the museum's "mix-and-match" aircraft back to its original serial number, and with Frank's help, the correct camouflage pattern was mapped out before painting began. Restoration will complete the final finish coats before applying the aircraft markings.

Inside the hangar, progress continues on the A-7 project. This Friday, the vertical stabilizer will be lifted into place, installed, and welded. Before the end of the month, the wing box — transported from China Lake — will be removed from its transport cradle and mounted onto the fuselage. The team remains on schedule to have the A-7 ready for Air Fest on October 17. Bill Walls has also taken on the task of sanding the TF-102 and expects to have the fuselage ready for primer by the end of the month. Once complete, attention will shift to the wings. Bill is truly a man on a mission.

Meanwhile, Pat "Mr. Pickles" continues making major progress on structural repairs. With John away until the fall, Pat has become a one-man wrecking crew, steadily repairing one damaged section at a time. Only a few patch areas remain.

The Restoration Department continues looking for new ways to improve efficiency and increase safety for all volunteers. Anyone interested in helping with aircraft restoration or artifact projects is encouraged to join the team. Whether you can volunteer a few hours a month or several days a week, there is always meaningful work to be done

Finally, thank you to the entire museum staff for ensuring Restoration had everything needed to complete the B-52 project on time. It has been a long time since the museum came together so completely as one team to accomplish a shared goal.

Special thanks also go to Executive Director Jared, whose support, leadership, deliveries, and resourcefulness helped make the project possible from start to finish.

ONE TEAM... ONE FIGHT

## CURATOR'S CORNER

**RUSTY WYNN, CURATOR**

The National Museum of the U.S. Air Force inventory project is now complete. Work is currently underway with the National Naval Aviation Museum to help consolidate their inventory system and make it more streamlined and manageable.
With both inventory projects largely behind me, my focus has shifted back to entering Castle Air Museum's aircraft into the PastPerfect database. Work will also continue on completing the technical manual library.

In the coming months, attention will turn toward organizing and improving the filing system for museum artifacts, particularly those related to the aircraft collection. It promises to be a very busy spring season.

I would also like to introduce a new feature on the Castle Air Museum website called "Castle Air Museum's LOG BOOK." This new segment will be located under the Education section of the website and will feature educational and historical content related to the museum and aviation history.

Included with this newsletter is an introduction to the new feature, along with the debut of Airman CAM, the official host of Castle Air Museum's LOG BOOK.

Hello, My name is Airman CAM. I am the host of Castle Air Museum's LOGBOOK. I am sure you will enjoy reading these short, informative as well as educational logbook entries. Each entry is filled with interesting facts and information, some photographs along with activities for you to complete and, oh yeah, I almost forgot, a joke can also be found at the bottom of each entry.

Why did we call these pages LOGBOOK? Good question. Every pilot keeps a logbook. Each page is an entry, a detailed record of a pilot's flight experience, documenting historical data such as flight dates, aircraft type and a pilot's progress in his/her aviation journey. Castle Air Museum's LOGBOOK is very similar; each page is a new entry of historical data, many dates, and interesting types of aircraft.

So, let's strap in and learn together about Castle Air Museum; its history, aircraft, artifacts, aspects of aviation and even a little about the U.S. military. Thank you for joining me.

With the 171 Fighter Intercept Squadron, Michigan ANG. Photographer Unknown

## VOLUNTEER SERVICES

**BOB SCOBLE, VOLUNTEER COORDINATOR**

For volunteers, the month of May centered around two major events: Scout Troop 500's annual camping trip and Open Cockpit Day on May 23.

Scout Troop 500 from Sonora had been planning their weekend at Castle for several months and arrived on May 1 at 1800 hours. The troop set up camp near the Canberra and spent the weekend working on Merit Badge activities while also completing several community service projects around the museum.

One of their largest projects involved painting the underside structure of the C-119 access stand, which had suffered significant rust damage from years of weather exposure. Their efforts helped complete the final assembly of the C-119 rear access stand in time for the aircraft to be opened during Open Cockpit Day — something that had not been possible for quite some time.

The Scouts also completed painting several 500-pound bombs that were later displayed during the B-52 commemoration ceremony held at Open Cockpit Day. Their work helped ensure the display was ready in time for the event.

Between these two major activities, much of the month was devoted to preparations for Open Cockpit Day. Final arrangements included confirming food vendor attendance, collecting required health permits for the Castle Event Organizer application, and coordinating vendor placement throughout the grounds.

Additional preparation involved working with Crew Chiefs to confirm aircraft availability, cleaning schedules, and presentation plans for the event. Several new Crew Chiefs also continued their qualification training on assigned aircraft. At the same time, several new volunteers joined the Special Projects team and were ready to support operations during Open Cockpit Day.

# AIRCRAFT OF THE MONTH

RUSTY WYNN, CURATOR

### Aircraft of the Month: F-106A Delta Dart, 558-0793

This May, the F-106 Association gathered in Reno, Nevada, and Castle Air Museum proudly supported the event through participation in the association's "Black Box Project." In conjunction with this effort, the museum unveiled a new display featuring the Hughes MA-1 fire-control system and the legendary F-106 Delta Dart.

The F-106 Delta Dart was an all-weather interceptor often referred to by aviation historians as the "ultimate interceptor." Known simply as "The Six" by its pilots and ground crews, the aircraft was purpose-built for Cold War air defense missions.

Originally designed without an internal gun or bomb capability, the F-106 carried its weapons internally: one AIR-2A Genie nuclear air-to-air missile and four AIM-4 Falcon missiles.

What truly set the aircraft apart was its Hughes MA-1 fire-control system, which was integrated into the Semi-Automatic Ground Environment (SAGE) defense network. This system allowed ground stations to direct the aircraft toward threats anywhere within the United States. Once a target was identified, onboard computers could guide and launch either Falcon or Genie missiles. For its time, the F-106 represented one of the most advanced interceptor systems ever developed, though it never saw combat service.

Mount Rushmore, SD.
Photographer: SSgt Bill Thompson

1975, at Selfridge ANGB, Mount Clemens, MI.
Picture by: Paul Goddard

In 1968, 58-0793 transferred to the 71st Fighter Interceptor Squadron at Osan Air Base in South Korea. Shortly afterward, the aircraft returned to the 94th Fighter Interceptor Squadron during Operation Combat Fox, part of the United States' continued military response following the USS Pueblo incident and the shoot-down of EC-121 "Deep Sea 129" in 1969. During this period, the aircraft served as a deterrent against North Korean aggression while helping strengthen South Korea's air defenses.

Following its overseas assignment, 58-0793 returned to the United States and continued service with several interceptor units, including assignments at Wurtsmith Air Force Base, the Michigan Air National Guard, Atlantic City International Airport, Castle Air Force Base, and Minot Air Force Base.

In the early 1970s, several F-106A aircraft were modified under "Project Six Shooter," replacing the Genie missile with an M61 Vulcan 20mm cannon carrying 650 rounds of ammunition. However, many operational units retained the aircraft's original nuclear missile capability.

Castle Air Museum's F-106 was built by Convair in San Diego, California, in November 1959 as an F-106A-100-CO and became the 155th F-106 produced. Accepted into Air Force service as serial number 58-0793, the aircraft first served with the 27th Fighter Interceptor Squadron at Loring Air Force Base, Maine, before transferring to the 94th Fighter Interceptor Squadron "Hat in the Ring" at Selfridge Air Force Base, Michigan.

## AIRCRAFT OF THE MONTH

**RUSTY WYNN, CURATOR**

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After retiring from active service in 1985, the aircraft was placed into storage at the Military Aircraft Storage and Disposition Center (MASDC). In 1993, it was selected for conversion into a QF-106A target drone under the Pacer Six Program. Fortunately, the aircraft was never expended during drone operations.

In 2002, the aircraft was transferred through the National Museum of the United States Air Force loan program and arrived at Castle Air Museum from Davis-Monthan Air Force Base in Arizona.

Once at Castle Air Museum, QF-106A 58-0793 was restored back to its F-106A configuration and painted as aircraft 0-72456, the commander's aircraft of the 456th Fighter Interceptor Squadron once stationed at Castle Air Force Base. Ironically, the original 0-72456 was itself converted into a drone and later destroyed during testing operations.

As QF-106A Drone
Photographer: Paul Seymour

Photographer: Phillip Dawe

## MEMBERSHIP SERVICES

**JANIE SUNDGREN – MEMBERSHIP COMMITTEE**

**Renewals:** Go online to complete the form or contact Janie Sundgren at: membership@castleairmuseum.org

**Membership Credentials:** Stop by or contact the Gift Shop at 209-723-2182

**Legacy Giving**: Make the museum a part of your estate or reduce your current taxable income with an RMD from your IRA directly to the museum. Contact: membership@castleairmuseum.org

## GIFT SHOP

**LUCY SILVA, RETAIL SALES MANAGER**

The gift shop is the central hub for anyone making contact with the museum. Membership credentials, tours, RV park reservations, mail, phone inquiries, donations…They do it all! And they sell tickets, greet guests, and keep the gift shop clean and ready, too. They are the face of the museum and a vital part of the operation. Come by and meet the team.