Cultural Memory and the Need for Exemplars

By Greg Anders, Executive Director

“Honoring Veterans and Keeping History Alive.” That is our mission. Why is that important?

Current events tend to shine big in our minds with news anchors quick to throw out the “historic” moniker for almost any event. As a quick example, let’s use Hurricane Sally. Of course you remember Sally, right? With News Anchors in rain jackets getting their hair mussed by gusty winds, it was described in the media several times as “historic.” But how many people currently remember it? If you were a resident of Gulf Shores, Mississippi on the 16th of September, 2020 when this “historic” Category 2 hurricane hit, you probably do remember. Yes, it was probably “historic” for you. It happened less than two months ago at the time of this writing and I venture to say it is mostly forgotten. When we start stacking up Hurricanes, I don’t expect Sally will even make the top 100.

The dynamic quality of current events will always outshine the static quality of historical events. In the moment, it just feels SO historic! But our cultural memory soon tempers the history of an event and we start to develop real perspective on the true significance of the event. Or we just forget it and enjoy the “historic” nature of the new dynamic moment we are in as we bask in misplaced conception of our own temporal significance.

History provides us a cultural memory with a somewhat static perspective that helps us to put into context our current events. I do understand that “static” is a disappointingly non-static term. The history of the United States as presented by Howard Zinn’s A People’s History of the United States, is a very different tone than Larry Schweikart’s and Michael Allen’s A Patriot’s History of the United States. Both books tell of the same history, each tells that history with fundamentally different premises, and a parallel reading of the two can be an interesting experience.

While our aircraft and museum tell many stories, our museum is primarily focused on one event: mankind’s first trip around the Moon. Apollo 8 represented an historic achievement of all mankind that is primarily remembered through one picture: Earthrise. Now that IS historic.

One of our two founders took that picture. He will tell you “I was only in the right place at the right time. I didn’t do anything special.” I tend to remind him that he had spent years of doing very special things so that he could be the one in the right place at the right time who actually got the picture that most would have missed.

While we do tell the stories of other heroes within our museum, Bill and Valerie Anders are amazing exemplars of a young couple who chose to live a challenging life and put every ounce of effort into it. As an example, when Bill was a young fighter pilot, he and Valerie knew that flight time was the real mark of seniority within the squadron. So Bill flew every chance he got, and Valerie knew that flight time was the real mark of seniority within the squadron. She supported him so much that Bill was notified in his jet while flying intercepts over California that his first child Alan had been born. Both Valerie and Alan were healthy and happy,
Cultural Memory and the Need for Exemplars Continued

so Bill finished the intercept before heading home.

These are different times, but the fundamental commitment and sacrifices that Bill & Valerie made to build the lives that allow us to have the Heritage Flight Museum are worth studying, and especially in examples of principle, worth emulating. Their focus on achievement and their drive to not let any opportunity pass, are exemplary qualities we could all stand to profit from through study and reflection back into our own lives.

Our current challenging times seem historic. Even I feel that they are. Time will temper where “now” stands in the annals of history. Time can never temper the principles of our founders, nor the courage and principles of the other Heroes we honor at the Heritage Flight Museum. And even “historic” times can be seen more clearly if we study a few exemplars of principles and courage. Look for our Newsletter’s “Exemplars of Courage Corner” starting in this issue with the story of our good friend “Rev” Allender.

- Greg Anders

Volunteer Spotlight

Ed Hammond

This edition of Volunteer Spotlight is a salute to Ed Hammond, volunteer since 2014, who recently passed away at age 78. All of us at HFM are sad to see him go and offer our condolences to his family.


He participated in arming the first airstrikes against the North Vietnamese in the Gulf of Tonkin. He also taught conventional weapons loading for the A3B Skywarrior and the A6A Intruder and helped write the first conventional weapons loading checklist for the A-6.

Ed married Darlene Roberts in 1967. Three years later, he shipped to Vietnam aboard the U.S.S. Enterprise. He was on the carrier when the accidental detonation of a Zuni Rocket aboard an F-4 Phantom II caused a chain reaction of explosions and fires.

After leaving the Navy, he lived in Oak Harbor, worked as a surveyor and joined the Naval Reserves (VP-69). He flew as an aircrewmman in the SP2H Neptune and flew over 350 hours in the P-2 and over 2500 hours in the P3A/B Orion. He retired in January of 1990, a senior chief petty officer with over 28 years of service.

Ed’s interests included family, faith, history and classic cars. He was a three-term president of the Whidbey Cruzers and proud owner of the “Ed Sled,” a 19-foot, bright yellow 1967 Buick Electra 225 convertible. He was curator of the PBY Memorial Foundation Historical Museum at the Naval Sea Plane base in Oak Harbor and belonged to numerous civic and professional organizations.

We were delighted to have him as a volunteer at Heritage Flight Museum. Volunteer coordinator Grant Reefer describes Ed as a great supporter of the museum and its purpose. He brought stories from his time in the Navy to enhance our visitors’ experience. He was a dedicated and knowlegable docent, always friendly, full of insight about the aircraft, first to volunteer for anything that needed doing and universally liked.
Exemplars of Courage: Rev Allender

By Trent Hendricks

As long as he can remember, Rev Allender has been fascinated by birds and the freedom of flight. His first ride in a J-3 Cub set him on the path to flight training when he was in High School. It was not an easy task; he recalled, “in order to get to the airport, I had to hitchhike 50 miles both ways”. In 1948, Rev had graduated high school and earned his civil pilot’s license. He graduated from UW as an aeronautical engineer and worked as a flight test engineer in stability and control.

Rev joined the Air Force in 1958. He earned his wings in a T-33 and gained an appreciation for the precision required in military aviation. Early in his career, he was moved to Hamilton Air Force Base in California to learn to fly the F-104 Starfighter. His first checkout flight was a memorable experience.

The aircraft malfunctioned during takeoff and lost all electrical power. Rev and his instructor stayed airborne to lose some fuel before landing, but when the engine flamed out, they were forced to eject. Rev recalled a loud bang and the next thing he remembered was being under the parachute. He landed in the water just off the end of the runway. Fortunately, an amphibious rescue aircraft picked them up after being in the water for only five minutes.

About four months later, he found himself inside a cockpit full of smoke, falling behind during a formation flight. He activated the ejection system once again; this time, it seemed to happen in slow motion. He saw the cockpit stow, ejection hatch release, seat come off the rails, and the parachute opening, which in real time all happened in less than a half of a second. He landed in a hunting preserve.

The two bailouts proved to be a blessing in disguise for Rev. After twice having to fill out accident paperwork with a secretary at the flight surgeon’s office, he invited her to fly with him. He and Carol are still married to this day, and the F-104 is still Rev’s favorite out of the 30 or so aircraft he has flown.

Rev was able to use his background in stability and control when he was assigned to the SR-71 as a flight test engineer. He acquired a few hours of flight time, securing a place in the Mach Three Plus Club. As he explained, the F-104 was straight up and down yank and bank aircraft, whereas the SR-71 was very level steady climbs, you hit speed and altitude just about right.

During the Vietnam War, Rev flew the 0-2 Skymaster as a forward air controller. The FAC’s job was to fly in before the bombing runs and mark enemy positions to avoid any chance of friendly fire. The first pass was easier, as the enemy would hold their fire to avoid giving their position away. After the bombs were dropped, the FAC made a damage assessment pass that was a lot more dangerous.

Rev received the Distinguished Flying Cross award while flying an 0-2 Skymaster on a FAC mission. It’s an interesting coincidence that he had trained in an 0-2 at Hurlburt Field, Florida, before going to Vietnam. The tail number of that aircraft is a match to the 0-2 on display here at Heritage Flight Museum, so we know a bit more about the history of our Skymaster, thanks to Rev.

Over his life, Rev Allender has gotten the chance to fly many different civil and military airplanes. His service to this country has not been forgotten and we at HFM are proud to count him as one of our friends. He is a prime example of a real hero, someone who has risked his life in the service of this country.

Who’s Who at HFM

Bill and Valerie Anders - Founders
Greg Anders - Executive Director
Alan Anders - Maintenance/Operations Director
Julie Shelby - Chief of Staff
Karen Hicks - Events Manager
Grant Reefer - Volunteer Coordinator
Cassidy Moore - Chief Mechanic
Tiffany Hamilton - Collections & Exhibits
Marne Cohen-Vance - Visual Media
Neal Padbury - Building Maintenance
Heritage Flight Museum Welcomes “BUFF BABy”

By Greg Anders, Executive Director

In my opinion, the Beech 18 is one of the most iconic aircraft of all time. It has always tugged at my heart strings. The AT-11 is one of the very unique expressions of that airframe. The one that now lives at the Heritage Flight Museum (HFM) is one of the more interesting examples of that unique expression: it was one of the very few that was not converted to an “Executive Bomber” by remaining an AT-11 on the outside, while being modified to “Executive Transport” on the inside. Thus, it is one of the very few still flying with bomb racks and the Crocker-Wheeler Gun Turret on board.

“BUFF BABy” arrived at the museum in the Fall of 2019, flying in from Texas. She had not been flying since 2002 and she suffered the plague of working out many of the expected bugs before she safely returns to the Skagit Valley skies on a regular basis. A very well-written review of her early history (included later in this publication) by famed aviation photographer and magazine publisher Michael O’Leary covers her past, but was written before fate set her on the path that would eventually bring her to the Pacific Northwest.

What Mr. O’Leary could not predict was the impact of hurricane Ike making landfall on 13 September, 2008, at Galveston, Texas where the AT-11 was based with the Lone Star Flight Museum (LSFM). Ike did not pay admission but entered that museum with three feet of seawater that damaged or destroyed many aircraft and displays at the museum. Besides destroying a display dedicated to our Founder, William Anders, Ike threw a Bamboo Bomber and an N3N into the AT-11, causing damage to the left wing and the empennage. Even though LSFM staff and volunteers quickly moved to salvage aircraft and minimize damage, the AT-11 was totaled out by the insurance company.

Eventually it would end up in the hangar of HFM and LSFM friend Charles “Tuna” Hainline, a fighter pilot and aircraft mechanic that had restored several aircraft before taking on the AT-11. Tuna is also one of my teammates on the Air Force’s Heritage Flight Demonstration Team. And so the stage was set for a social evening in Tuna’s Texas hangar/home, culminating with Tuna and I reaching an agreement for me to purchase the AT-11 after it had been restored to flight.

I like aircraft that have some form of ties to my history. In the case of the AT-11, I could tie my 9 years of B-52 flying to THE aircraft type that trained ninety percent of the Bombardiers of World War II. So, using the colloquial term of endearment for the B-52 (the Big Ugly Fat……Fellow) and the AT-11’s history of training brand new Bombardiers, “BUFF Baby” was the name that was the first to gain traction in my mind. Add to the story the fact that my place of birth, Albuquerque New Mexico, was home to Kirtland Army Airfield which was one of the WWII bases for the AT-11, and traction is gained. Lastly, adding my fighter pilot callsign of “B.A.” into the mix and the deal was sealed: and the AT-11 became “BUFF BABy”. The nose art includes the academic “Bombing Triangle” that was the cornerstone graphic of Bombardier training manuals.

In October of 2019, HFM Chief Mechanic Cassidy Moore and I flew to Friendswood, Texas to help with final restoration wrap-up and to bring “BUFF BABy” home. After flight training and working out some bugs that cropped up, we got out of Friendswood a little later than hoped on our first day. Rain made it unsafe for us to continue to our intended stop of Las Cruces, New Mexico to visit a friend of mine, so we landed in El Paso, Texas where rain had us grounded for two nights. Do you know how many days it rains in El Paso? Yep, not many. But we were stuck watching it rain in El Paso.

Weather finally cleared and we got out, having to sneak in between some thunderstorms over west New Mexico and made it to Palm Springs just before...
sunset. An early start the next morning and we arrived at our first interim destination: Stockton, California to spend some time with Beech-18 Guru Taigh Ramey. He helped me understand the nuances of flying the AT-11, and he helped Cassidy understand the nuances of maintaining the AT-11.

After making some needed repairs, we got back on the road the next day only to start fighting the typical October Pacific Northwest weather. We were hoping to make it to Hillsboro, Oregon but weather moved in and the safe call was to go to Redmond, Oregon. An early and very chilly start the next morning had both Cassidy and I regretting our failure to pack warmer clothes, but we got on our way with rain in the Seattle area dampening our hopes of reaching home that day.

The Cascade Mountains were socked in. With Snoqualmie pass not an option, we flew the Columbia River Gorge, thinking we would not make it past Kelso but at least we’d be over the mountains. As we approached Kelso, the weather opened up enough to safely continue with expectation to land at Chehalis. As we approached Chehalis, I could see the falling rain moving off of Olympia, so on we pressed to Olympia. As we approached Olympia, the Space Needle began to come in to view so we pressed on, thinking Boeing Field would work. Heck, we could leave the plane, rent a car and drive home!! Yippee!! But approaching Seattle, Paine Field emerged from the rain. Even better!! And as we approached the south end of Whidbey island, it happened: the rain that had been pummeling Skagit Airport wiggled north and left us with a clear view of Skagit!

On we pressed, and completely clear of any rain, with ceilings around 2,500 feet, we did our “Victory” low approach down runway 04. As we pulled up and began to maneuver for a left base to runway 11, we got to the edge of the rain that was moving south again but we were still able to land in the clear. We taxied in and shut down only to have it start raining again before we could get out of the aircraft!! Somehow, we had pleased the weather gods and they opened what was no more than a 20-minute window for us to get in safely!! As I commonly say: I’ll take luck over skill any day!

Besides never being taken out of her original configuration, another interesting facet of “BUFF Baby” is that she has less than 800 hours total time on her airframe. We believe she is the lowest time Beech 18 that is still flying in the world. So as we start to open the museum back up following the whole year being pandemified, come out and give this aircraft a good look over. Besides enjoying her fine lines, that massive gun turret, and that beautiful glass nose, look for the one difference between the nose art on the cowls and the nose art on the tails. She is a special bird and we look forward to flying her for you soon!

The nose art includes the academic “Bombing Triangle” that was the cornerstone graphic of Bombardier training manuals.

**Engine:** Two 450hp Pratt & Whitney R-985s  
**Max Speed:** 215 mph  
**Cruising Speed:** 150 mph  
**Range:** 745 miles  
**Service Ceiling:** 20,000 feet  
**Wingspan:** 47’ 7 ¾”  
**Length:** 34’ 1 ¾”  
**Height:** 9’ 7 ¾”  
**Weight:** 9,300 lbs maximum
Batista’s Bomber

By Michael O’Leary

The aircraft that would become known as the Beech AT-11 came about in a most interesting manner. During 1940, China was desperate for all types of military material in order to stem Japanese aggression. A Chinese delegation visited the Beech factory in Wichita, Kansas, to discuss a modification of the company’s model 18 that would turn the transport into a light bomber. Initial planning and sketches resulted in a February 1940 contract for $750,000 to pay for six new aircraft that would carry the designation of Beechcraft M18R.

In 1941, the Air Corps placed its first orders for the AT-7, which was a C-45 modified as a navigation trainer. The aircraft’s fuselage was fitted with individual chart tables and instruments for three students while a rotating astrodome was added immediately behind the cockpit. Examining this aircraft while also looking at the specifications for the Chinese M18R resulted in the Air Corps placing a further order for a new machine that would be designated AT-11.

Slotted for the gunnery and bombing training role, the AT-11 had the center section of the fuselage modified to carry up to 1000 lbs of bombs while the nose section was completely remodeled to house a bombardier with a Norden bombsight and a flexible .30-cal weapon in a large plexiglass bubble. Another similar weapon was mounted in a dorsal position.

Deliveries of the AT-11 Kansan, powered by two Pratt & Whitney R-985-AN-1 radials, started in December 1941 and aircraft were immediately assigned to training units across the country. The student bombardiers dropped 100-lb bombs which were filled with sand. In 1943, AAF command established a minimum proficiency standard of 22 percent hits on target for the trainees. Combat training missions were flown taking continuous evasive action within a ten-mile radius of the target and final target approaches had to be straight and level and no longer than 60 seconds. After 30 September 1963, these missions were generally flown using the Norden bombsight and the C-1 automatic pilot, the AT-11 being guided by the student bombardier during the bombing run.

The AT-11 was a success in its mission and the USAAF would procure...
1582 Kansans along with a further 24 examples taken over from a Dutch order after that nation surrendered to the Axis. Of that total, three dozen aircraft were modified to AT-11-A-BH configuration for use in aerial photography and navigational training missions. It is estimated that 90 percent of over 45,000 USAAF bombardiers took their training in AT-11s.

The Navy was not far behind the USAAF and in 1942 placed orders for the SNB-1, which was basically the same as the AT-11. However, the SNB-1 featured an electrically operated Beech and Crocker-Wheeler dorsal turret fitted with .30-cal Browning machine guns. The Navy would acquire 320 SNB-1s and started taking deliveries in August 1942. The Navy used the SNB-1 to train crews for patrol bombers and the addition of the turret was particularly helpful in this mission.

With the end of the war, many AT-11s and SNB-1s were sold surplus but the military also kept quite a few and had them converted to C-45 configuration. Surplus AT-11s led a hard life and many were used as bug and fire bombers or as high-altitude mapping aircraft. Also, many foreign nations were supplied with AT-11s and these included Argentina (30 aircraft), Brazil (22), Colombia (5), Cuba (2), Dominican Republic (2), Guatemala (2), Mexico (24), Peru (5), Portugal (2), Salvador (3), Turkey (10), Uruguay (10), and Venezuela (6).

During April 1991, the Lone Star Flight Museum, Galveston, Texas, acquired a rather bedraggled AT-11. This particular machine had been surplus from the military in 1957 and is thought to have been registered N7341C and it travelled to California where it went through a couple of owners. It then went to a new owner in Illinois who had it from 1958 to 1986 when he sold it to well-known Warbird parts dealer Jay Wisler. In the late 1980s, it was acquired by aircraft collector Fred Nelson who, in turn, sold it to the museum.

The aircraft was trucked to R.C. Langlois of Gulf Aero Service, Winnie, Texas, who restored the Beech from the ground up. After restoration, the aircraft was signed off on 10 April 1994. At this time, the AT-11 had a total time of just 718.5 hrs. Soon after, the Kansan was flown by Rayborne Thompson to Galveston. Next stop was P&J Aircraft Painting at Hooks Field north of Houston for a new paint scheme.

The final scheme was something of a surprise. LSFM settled on a most unusual finish—that of an AT-11 operated by Fuerza Aereas Ejercito de Cuba. With the end of the Second World War, the United States instigated the American Republics Project, which was an attempt to standardize air forces in the Western hemisphere with surplus American equipment. Cuba started receiving limited numbers of aircraft such as Catalinas, Mitchells and Gooney Birds starting in 1946. In 1947, the Cubans received two AT-7s, one UC-45F and two AT-11s. The Kansans received the serials 160 and 161 and operated in the training and utility role.

During the 1950s, there was a mounting movement to replace the corrupt Batista regime and Cuba attempted to gather more aircraft to combat the growing power of Fidel Castro. It is not known if the AT-11s participated in any actions against the rebels. When the Batista regime collapsed on 1 January 1959, the majority of the air force was complete and taken over by the Castro forces. However, time has blurred the final fate of the two AT-11s.

Since being acquired (by LSFM), the AT-11 has been flown only ten hours and made its last flight in April 2002, although it is maintained in airworthy condition. The aircraft is in superb condition and is fitted with all-original military equipment which really fills up the interior of the fuselage.
Welcome to the Attic
By Willow Loy

Aircraft Spotter Wheel

This edition of Welcome to the Attic was written by guest columnist Willow Loy, HFM’s Collections Intern.

This artifact is a World War II Identification of Warplanes spotter wheel from 1942. It is about 12 inches in diameter with a smaller eight-inch circle in the center of the wheel on each side. Along the edges of each side are aircraft seen from two different angles, bottom and side view.

The center wheel illustrates four wing configurations: high-wing, mid-wing, low-wing and parasol monoplane. The cutout window displays characteristics that help to identify each aircraft, including the number of engines, the wing shape, and the type of nose, tail and rudder. This is also where the aircraft is named. The wheel lists U.S. warplanes on one side and planes of U.S. Allies on the other. There were similar types of wheels that only included enemy warplanes.

Aircraft identification tools like this one helped soldiers and pilots to be more accurate when attacking enemy planes. Planes were first used in military actions starting in WWI, and there was not much in the way of training to identify aircraft. However, during the start of WWII the training for aircraft identification was focused on the bottom, front, and side view of the plane. This is also called the WEFT system (Wing, Engine, Fuselage, and Tail). Soon after a study conducted by a psychologist at Ohio State University named Samuel Renshaw, found that when subjects were shown the different planes at a high speed, rather than a slow one, they were able to identify planes more accurately with a higher retention rate. The Renshaw or Flash system became common practice in 1942 in the Navy and the Air Corps adopted a modified version in 1943. A more common type of warplane identification would be in the form of a booklet or slides for practice. Meanwhile, the wheel would have served as a quicker way to identify planes, possibly even while in combat.

Heritage Flight Museum has been closed to public visitation since last March, and yes, we miss you too. Our identity as a unique flying museum makes it harder to function within the COVID-19 restrictions that more static museums are able to surmount. With aircraft coming, going, moving around the hangars, flying and under maintenance, it is difficult to implement the necessary reopening protocols.

Despite the closure, we have a couple of exciting developments coming up in 2021. We have been working on some new exhibits that will greet you when the museum reopens. Look for our updated Women Airforce Service Pilots (WASP) exhibit, additions to the Founders Room and a new display on the Vietnam-era Operation Igloo White. We are also in the process of setting up an online store through our website so that everyone will be able to easily score a Val Halla or Proud American T-shirt or an HFM hat.

A huge thank you to Skagit County for your support during this trying year. As we wrap up 2020 and look ahead to better times, we hope to see you all at our Fly Days and tours, as we continue honoring veterans and keeping history alive. Stay well, happy holidays and we hope to see you soon.
Give your Event a Touch of History

NOSTALGIC – This is what the Heritage Flight Museum is all about. I come to work every day and just smile. “Why?” I hear you ask. As I walk through the hangars to get to my office, I just smile at the opportunity I have been given to be the Events Manager here at the Heritage Flight Museum.

I coordinate all events (with the invaluable help of our volunteers) from the museum’s monthly Fly Days to your private event. HFM has two hangars available; you can rent both at the same time if you wish. We provide tables, chairs and audio/visual equipment. But wait, did I mention all of the wonderful backdrops we house: the A-1 Skyraider, AT-11 “BUFF BAby,” and the P-51 Mustang “Val-Halla” to name just a few?

As 2021 is just around the corner, reserve your spot: call me to find out more about hosting your event at the Heritage Flight Museum.

360-424-5151 ext. 107
events@heritageflight.org

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Here’s an official HFM thank you to people who contribute to the museum in so many different ways. Our “shout out” this quarter goes to the following much-appreciated helpers:

**Forklift repair:**
Carl Hendricks

**Library:**
Diane Danielson, Chris Alker, Del Chasteen, Grant Reefer

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Chris Parmeter, Deane Crilley, Ben Ingold, Cassidy Moore, Karen Hicks

**Artifact donation/loan:**
Michael Myers, Kitty Smith, William Hartel, Pat Fitzpatrick, Paul Meyers, Jink Bender, Norm Banta, Dave Bargelt, Fred Smyth, Geri Silveira

**Exemplars video interviews:**
Rev and Carol Allender, Debra Johnstone, Trent Hendricks

**Exhibits:**
Ralph Peterson

**Newsletter:**
Trent Hendricks, Fred Smyth

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Ben Ingold took this photo of a 4-ship formation at the Tri Cities Water Follies “Over the River” Airshow last summer. Pilots are LtCol Greg “B.A.” Anders in the P-51 (USAF Ret); Maj Garrett “Toro” Schmitz in the F-16; Capt Kristin “Beo” Wolfe in the F-35; Major Cody “ShIV” Wilton in the A-10.