



SCHAF Newsletter for July 2025

Reminder: The next SCHAF Open House will take place Saturday, July 12, 2025, from 10am-1pm at Hangar Y-1 Jim Hamilton/LB Owens Airport.

Foundation Happenings

Our July open house fell on Flag Day so we handed out small US flags to all of the visitors. We took a group picture of some of the visitors. We were thrilled to have Ken Allman visit. He pointed to the picture of GF2 being loaded on the trailer to come to Columbia and said "that's me". He was one of the SC National Guardsmen who helped transport GF2 from Greenwood to Columbia. He brought a photo album of pictures from that day in September 1984. We saw pictures we have never seen of GF2. It was so wonderful to see the pictures and learn more about GF2. We hope Ken will return again.



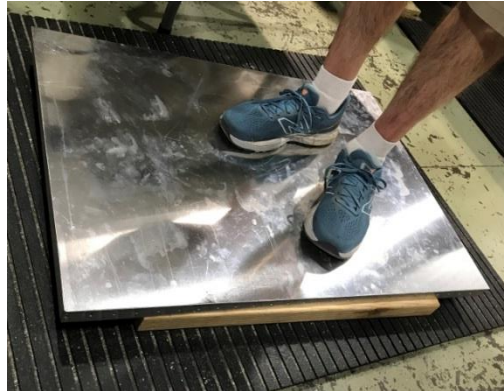
In honor of the 250th birthday of the Army, Logan and Tate portrayed WWII aviators. It is always wonderful to see the young generation talking to the younger generation about aviation.



Restoration Progress

John and West have been steadily working on the 500 pound bomb replica. The final touches of the rings of yellow paint are being painted. As many of you know, the yellow paint signifies a live bomb and blue paint signifies a practice bomb. The last thing to be painted is the writing on the bomb.

Lots of progress has been made on the radio operator's area. The new wall is installed and currently being riveted in place. David and others have been working on the floor for the radio area. The support under the floor is shown below. The floor was placed on the brace then David stepped on the floor. It held him! The floor needs to be riveted to the brace then it is ready for installing in GF2!



Visitors to SCHAF

SCHAF was honored to host the Battle of the Bulge Association's meeting this month. In attendance were four WWII veterans aged 99, 100, 102 and 103! One was in the Battle of the Bulge. One was a B-17 ball turret gunner. One was a B-25 tail gunner and one was a B-26 pilot. What an honor to have all of them at the hangar. Sean O'Dwyer from the 8th Air Force Museum in Pooler, GA gave a very interesting presentation on three 8th Air Force crew members and their crews. If you ever have a chance to visit the 8th Air Force Museum, it is definitely worth the trip!



Article from Marty Steiner

Marty Steiner sent in the following article regarding a plane crash on the 4th of July in 1944:

It was the Fourth of July in an America at war. Patriotism was obvious everywhere, not just at military facilities in South Carolina, like Columbia Army Air Base or Shaw Field near Sumter. Excitement was felt for the various parades and other special events.

Lt. Harry Thomas having only recently in May received his pilot's wings and officer commission, had caught a ride home to Virginia with WASP ferry pilot Susan Parker Clarke. Clarke was ferrying a Vultee BT-13 north to Virginia. Thomas had joined up with Clarke in Atlanta in order to spend leave time with his wife and young son in Pulaski, Virginia. They were flying in a Vultee BT-13 Valiant, the standard Basic Training aircraft, a type that Thomas certainly had flown during his training. The BT had stopped at Columbia Army Air Base (CAAB) to refuel.

Clarke, from Cooperstown, New York, was one of the WASPs assigned to the Ferrying Command, delivering aircraft from the factories or moving them from place to place as needed.

Witnesses varied in describing the accident. Some believed they saw a large bird involved, others saw a B-25 close by and others simply saw the Valiant fall from the sky. All agreed the plane fell with its left wing down at a nearly forty-five degree angle with the ground and engine "roaring". It cartwheeled across the ground on impact, leaving a trail of debris and parts before bursting into fire from the full fuel load. No official cause was ever determined.

Lt. Thomas body was recovered, shipped home to Virginia with a military escort, flag for his military coffin and official notice from the Army Air Forces. Clarke, as a WASP, was a civilian employee. No official notice, no coffin, flag or escort. A collection was taken up to provide the basics and shipment of her body. Someone took his holiday leave to escort her to Cooperstown. She was buried next to a brother who had died in combat only a few months earlier.

A similar WASP casualty took place at Shaw Field when Jeanne Norbeck lost her life just before Christmas of 1944.

Donation to SCHAF

SCHAF member, West Jenkins, donated this beautiful picture to SCHAF. He had it framed just for SCHAF. We love all B-25 pictures.



We Love Jeeps Too

While we love planes the best, we also think WWII jeeps are really cool! SCHAF member, Gay Suber, brought his 1942 WWII jeep to the Battle of the Bulge Association event. Gay has been restoring the jeep and it is looking really nice!



Wrap Up

If you have something you would like to share in a future newsletter or if you have any questions, please send an email directly to SCHAF at info.schaf@gmail.com.

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