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August & September 2011  
Volume 2, Issue 5

*The Magazine*



- ✈️ Steven F. Udvar-Hazy Center visit
- ✈️ Airpower over Hampton Roads, Langley AFB
- ✈️ Andrews AFB Air Show
- ✈️ Fleetweek New York City 2011
- ✈️ MISSION: Air-2-Air refuel with F-15E Strike Eagles
- ✈️ NATO Tiger-Meet 2011 and so much more!

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Cover: F-15E Strike Eagle being refueled in the air from a KC-135R from 916 ARW 911 ARS, photo by Laszlo Nyary.





## Behind the Lens & to the point

By Laszlo

Welcome to our **Free** August-September on-line issue of *The Magazine* by [www.AirShowsReview.com](http://www.AirShowsReview.com).

To say "that we have been busy" would be an understatement as the air show season is heating up. We covered not only air shows, but we were invited to fly with the USAF, we covered the NATO Tiger-Meet exercise and the 100th Anniversary of Turkish Air Force too. We also obtained media pass from NASA to cover the last space shuttle launch, at Cape Kennedy, Florida, which we will feature along with the Turkish Anniversary in our next issue.

*The Magazine* is recognized by more and more events and organizations, and I would say NASA and the USAF are the top tier. Progressive organizations and their Public Affairs personnel, air show directors and their media gurus recognize our efforts and are working with us, as they reap the benefits of added exposure and publicity! Unfortunately some airshow media people and directors too, still think that the print media is the way to go and give preference when it comes to access at their events! By that, they are missing out on the publicity and to be in front our growing readership of 140,000 worldwide! E-media is the future, print media is just about dead!

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**IMPORTANT NOTE:** *The Magazine* is interactive with invisible hot-links, by hovering over some of the images and advertisements, the cursor changes into a pointing hand and a small window will highlight the destination path to the web site that the reader can visit for further information.

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## Inside the cockpit

By Coop

Over the last twenty-five years of flying helicopters I have been asked many times if it is more difficult to fly helicopters (rotary wing) than it is to fly planes (fixed wing). Although it may seem like a simple answer it's really not.

The large differences in how the two aircraft fly and how they are controlled is what makes them different to operate. With a fixed wing aircraft the flying surface is fixed or stationary. This surface can be manufactured in such a way as to create some inherent stability. This means that most planes will fly relatively straight and level for a short period of time. A helicopter has no inherent stability in it what so ever. Unlike a fixed wing if you let go of the controls of a rotary wing it will usually slowly roll over until it goes completely out of control. Therefore you cannot let go of the controls for even a moment. This requirement means that handling charts or approach plates etc is more difficult.

Another aspect that is different is that the three controls that you use in a helicopter all affect each other. There is the collective which controls the pitch on the main blades "collectively" or at the

same time, the cyclic that controls the pitch on the main blades as they travel around or through the cycle, and the tail rotor or "anti torque" pedals that control the pitch on the tail rotor blades. If you make a change with one control it always affects one other control and sometimes affects both of the other control surfaces. A change in the collective input which is like increasing or decreasing power, will affect the yaw which is controlled by the anti-torque pedals which control the tail rotor and will also affect pitch which is controlled by the cyclic control.

Given a long enough runway a plane will take-off eventually and given a long enough runway landing a plane is easier. There is no easy take-off or landing in a helicopter. By design there are hundreds of parts moving in opposite directions. Landing and take-offs require constant input into all three controls at the same time. It is kind of like standing on a rubber ball while you pat your head with one hand and rub your stomach with the other.

To say it is more difficult to fly helicopters would not be fair, but flying helicopters like playing a piano does require a little practice.



Coop with his Bell 222B photo by Laszlo



# Steven F. Udvar-Hazy Center

Article and photography by Laszlo Nyary

I had been looking forward to my visit to the Steven F. Udvar-Hazy Center for several years. On my way back from Seymour Johnson AFB, I stopped by to visit this interesting aviation facility located next to the Washington Dulles International Airport in Chantilly, Virginia.

The Steven F. Udvar-Hazy Center near Washington Dulles International Airport is the companion facility to the Smithsonian National Air and Space Museum on the National Mall in Washington, D.C.

The Center was made possible by a \$65 million gift in October 1999 to the Smithsonian Institution by my fellow immigrant from Hungary, Steven F. Udvar-Hazy, the co-founder of the International Lease Finance Corporation. The building opened in December, 2003.

According to the Smithsonian website, "The two sites together showcase the largest collection of aviation and space artifacts in the world." Perhaps the largest collection, but not necessarily the largest on display, and I will leave it at that!



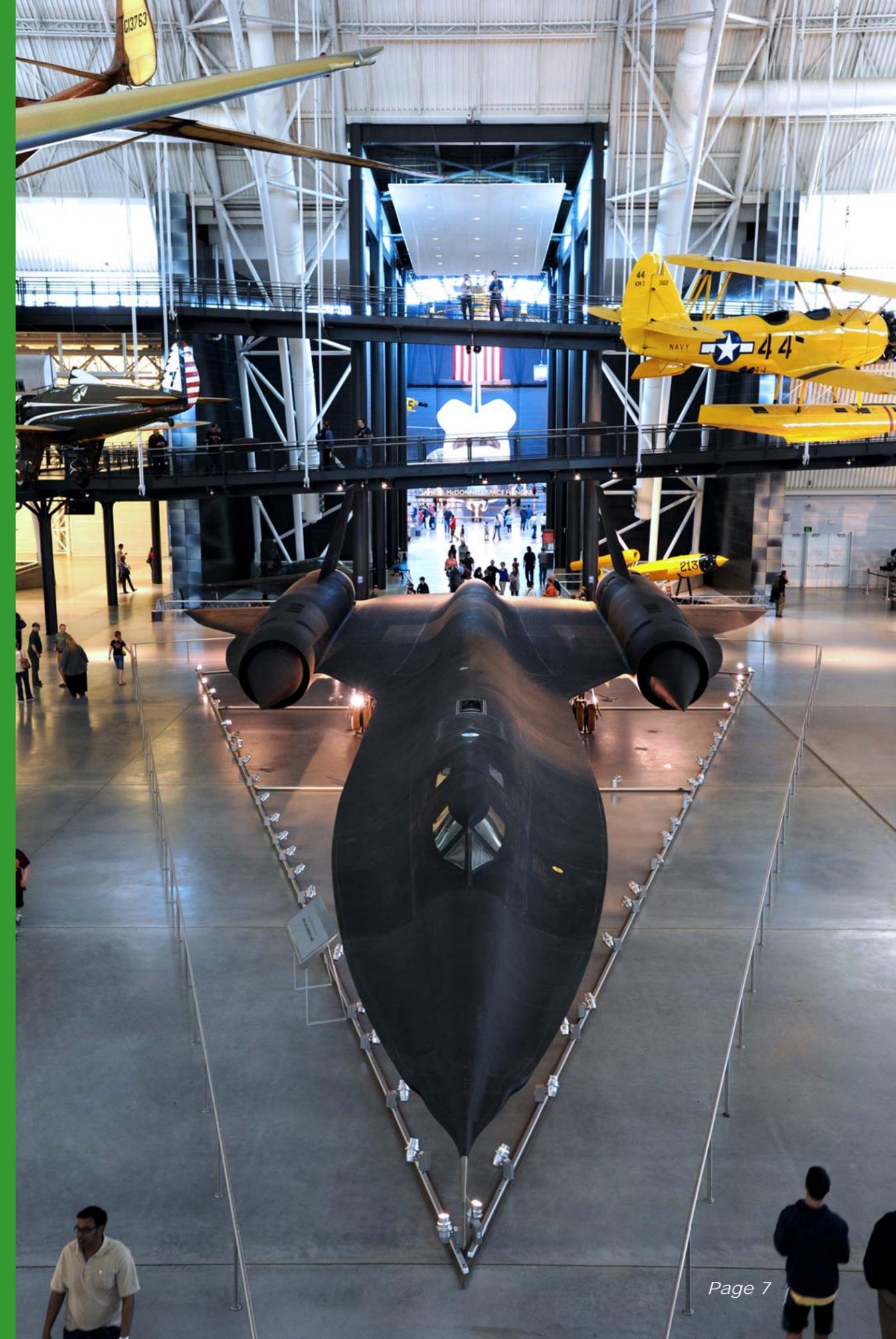
As in other Smithsonian museums, admission is free. However, there is an expensive parking fee, currently \$15 per vehicle at Udvar-Hazy because of its close proximity to Dulles Airport. There is no direct mass transit to the museum. Thus, one must drive and pay the absurdly high rate demanded by the Metropolitan Washington Airports Authority, to discourage the possibility of travelers taking advantage of lower-cost parking at a non-airport location!

The aircraft, as well as engines and missiles, are displayed behind barriers or are hanging from the arched ceiling on three levels inside the Boeing Aviation Hangar, as well as in the James S. McDonnell Space Hangar where space related gear, including the space shuttle Enterprise, currently resides. [For an up-to-date listing of what is on display, click here.](#)

For me the Boeing B-29 Superfortress "Enola Gay", the only surviving Arado Ar 234 B Blitz (Lightning), and Dornier Do 335A-1 Pfeil (Arrow), the Concorde, the Boeing 307 Stratoliner Clipper Flying Cloud and the reconnaissance Lockheed SR-71 Blackbird were among my favourites. There is the Paul E. Garber Preservation, Restoration, and Storage Facility now located at the West wing of the museum where visitors can look down from the overlook. There is also an IMAX theater, and one can visit the Donald D. Engen Tower, that provides a 360 degree bird's-eye view of Washington Dulles International Airport and the surrounding area. Visitors can watch planes land and take off from the nearby airport tower beside the entrance.

Photography is allowed (although no tripods), a flash is very useful, or if one has a camera with great high ISO performance, 1600 ISO or more is required without flash.

Over all the Steven F. Udvar-Hazy Center is well worth the visit, even with the outrageous parking fee.





The only surviving Dornier Do 335A-1 Pfeil (Arrow) with the Focke-Achgelis Fa 330A-1 Bachstelze (Water Wagtail) rotorkite that a U-boat could tow aloft to search for targets, on top. Arado Ar 234 B Blitz (Lightning) in the middle and a beautiful wall mural dedicated to flight.

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In 1916, the US Army established an aviation experimental station and proving grounds in Hampton Roads, Virginia. A year later it became Langley Field, named after aviation pioneer Samuel Pierpont Langley. It is the oldest active air force base in the world and it is the first American military base built specifically for airpower.

Today it is the home of the 633d Air Base Wing, which is the host of the base, since early 2010. Langley Air Force base is also the home of the 1<sup>st</sup> Fighter Wing, which was the base host unit from 1975 to 2010. The well-known 94<sup>th</sup> Fighter Squadron (Hat in the Ring) is part of the 1<sup>st</sup> Fighter Wing and it can trace its roots to World War I ace Eddie Rickenbacker. In early 2010 Langley Air Force Base became Joint Base Langley-Eustis (JBLE). The 27<sup>th</sup> Fighter Squadron is also part of the 1<sup>st</sup> Fighter Wing. Both squadrons fly the F-22 Raptor.

Air Power of Hampton Roads is a bi-annual airshow that takes place at Langley Air Force Base. Besides the usual Saturday and Sunday schedule, it also opens its gates to the general public on Friday late afternoon for the night time show.

This year spectators saw aerial performances by Bill Leff in his T-6, Randy Ball flying the Mig-17, Otto the Helicopter, flown by Roger Buis, John Mohr flew his Stearman P-17, P-51C from the Commemorative Air Force, Dan Friedkin's Double Trouble Two P-51D and F8F Bearcat (which flew only on Sunday). There were also team performances which included the Trojan Horsemen with 6 T-28s, the F-4 Phantom Demo team flying a QF-4E with South East Asia camouflage, the A-10 East Coast Demo team, Geico Skytypers flew their T-6s. The B-25 Panchito also flew representing DAV (Disabled American Veterans). The highlight of the airshow air displays was the USAF Thunderbirds and the USAF Heritage flight with the F-4E, A-10C and P-51 flying in formation. Two parachute teams performed this weekend, the US Army Golden Knights and the Misty Blues All Woman Skydiving Team. Absent to the air display lineup was the F-22. The Raptor was scheduled to fly all 3 days, but because of problems with onboard oxygen generation system (OBOGS) the entire F-22 fleet has been grounded since May 3.



John Mohr in his Stearman P-17

The static lineup was impressive. The star of the static display was the B-29 FIFI from the Commemorative Air Force. Some of the aircraft that were displayed were: B-1, B-25, C-5, E-2C, B-52, CH-47, E-3 AWACS, RC-135 River Joint, F-22, T-38, F-21 Kfir, Hawker Hunter, B-52, F-15C, F-15E, F-16, T-38.

The weather forecast called for rain all 3 days of the show, but thankfully they were wrong. It only rained at the show on Friday late afternoon. There were sufficient bathroom facilities and food vendors for the people who attended the air show.

I would like to thank the 633rd Air Base Wing Public Affairs Office for their assistance. It was a good air show.



The Misty Blues all woman Skydiving Team, below, the A-10 East Demo pulling some vapour, in the middle, and the US Army Golden Knights to the right.



# AIRPOWER OVER HAMPTON ROADS LANGLEY AFB



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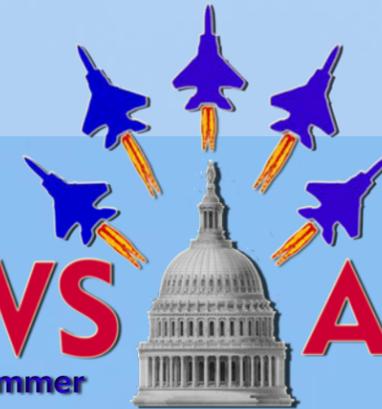
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# ANDREWS AIR SHOW

Report by Ricardo von Puttkammer

Photography as noted



The first public appearance of a F-35C flying was at Andrews Joint Open House. ©2011 Joe Osciak



The Air Force Heritage Flight flying the A-10C, F-15E and P-51D above, and the US Navy Legacy Flight flying the F-4U Corsair and F-18C top right. The U-2S Dragonlady is a rare static sight, mid right, just as rare is the Russian Antonov An-124-100 bottom right. All images ©2011 Joe Osciak.

Joint Base Andrews (JBA) is a joint military airbase of the USAF and US Navy. It is located 8 miles east of Washington DC. It was originally known as Camp Springs Army Airfield when it became operational in 1943. In 1945 it was renamed Andrews Field to honor Lt. Gen. Frank M. Andrews, one of the Air Force founding fathers. In 1947 after the birth of the United States Air Force it became Andrews Air Force Base. The latest change in the name of the base happened in 2009 when, along with Naval Air Facility Washington, it became Joint Base Andrews.

JBA is home of the 89<sup>th</sup> Airlift Wing which is responsible for the air transportation of the President of the United States in the Air Force One. This 3-day show is held annually in mid-May. Friday is for Department of Defense members and school groups. Saturday and Sunday is open to the general public. This year the 50-year old 9,300 feet long west runway was under a yearlong 81million dollars repair contract that made photographing the air show very challenging since aircraft was taking off , landing and performing over the east runway which is farther away from the crowd line. This condition required lens in the 300 to 600 mm range to get decent images.





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The highlight for this year was when the F-35C CF-2 flew over the air show grounds on Saturday. Making its first public appearance piloted by US Navy Lt. Cdr. Eric Buus from NAS Patuxent River, Maryland. Unfortunately the F-35 did not fly over on Sunday.

The Open House draws large crowds, 150-200,000 is not uncommon for the weekend. On Saturday a crowd of more than 65,000 people gathered to watch aerobatic demonstrations and synchronized skydiving by service members and veterans. They were also able to inspect a wide array of warbirds with some civilian aircraft on display such as the An-124-100 cargo from Russia.

Aerobatic performers this weekend included the always amazing Sean Tucker – Team Oracle with his Challenger III biplane, Greg Poe with his ethanol-powered Fagen MX2, John Klatt flying the Air National Guard sponsored Panzl S330 in a smart blue, red and white livery. This was a good weekend for warbirds. Chris Baranaskas flew the P-51D Glamorous Gal, Korean War veteran F4U-4 Corsair flown by Jim Tobul, a FM-2 Wildcat also flew in formation with the only air worthy SB2C Helldiver from the Commemorative Air Force and North American SNJ-2s flown by the Geico Skytypers. Skydiving teams were represented by the U.S. Army Golden Knights and the E-Team Skydivers carrying a very large U.S. flag. On the ground people saw powerful and noisy, with lots of smoke, performances by the Smoke-N-Thunder Jet Car and Neal Darnell's Jet Truck.

Fast jets in the flying program were the F-15E Demo Team from Seymour Johnson AFB, A-10 East Demo Team and F/A-18C from VFA-106 Gladiators. There were flights by the Air Force Heritage Flight flying the A-10C, F-15E and P-51D and the US Navy Legacy Flight flying the F-4U Corsair and F-18C. The Aero L-29 and BAC Strikemaster Red Star and The Dragon team performed their East versus West routine to the delight of the public. The United States Air Force demonstration team, The Thunderbirds, performed all 3 days on their last U.S. air show before flying to Europe for performance there in June and July. Two of the F-16s flying with the Thunderbirds this weekend were burning bio-fuel instead of JP-8 fuel. They flew with Cameline-based hydro treated renewable jet fuel. They are the first Department of Defense aerial performance team to fly on the alternative fuel.



# ANDREWS AIR SHOW



F-15E Strike Eagle Demo in a high speed pass top left. USAF Thunderbirds in a cross over pass above. BAC Strikemaster with a fantasy dragon head paint scheme, mid left. A Boeing EA-18G Growler in retro paint scheme looked fabulous., bottom left.

The highlights of the static display were the Boeing B-29 Fifi, Lockheed U-2S Dragonlady and several naval aircraft wearing retro paint scheme to commemorate 100 years of Naval Aviation.

It was a hot and steamy weekend. The base provided 25-400 gals water buffaloes dispersed throughout the grounds. There were sufficient bathroom facilities. There were areas for children to play and designated spaces for people to smoke, away from the aircraft. Food vendors were plenty with the usual air show high prices, cheeseburgers \$7 and water bottles at \$3.

Access to the base for the 2 public days was provided by buses from a subway station and from a large parking lot at nearby Fedex Field, a sports arena. Security check is very strict. They do not allow, among other things, backpacks. A very small camera bag is allowed, which means that it is best to travel light if at all possible.

Over all it was a good show, despite the distance between the performers and the public due to runway construction. Next year this will not be a problem.



# FLEETWEEK NEW YORK CITY 2011



Article and photography by Ricardo von Puttkammer, unless otherwise noted.

For nearly every year since 1984, New York City hosts Fleet Week where thousands of Sailors, Marines and Coast Guardsmen from the U.S. Navy and U.S. Coast Guard ships are in town for the week, thus giving the opportunity for the people from New York City and surrounding areas to meet with them and be exposed to the latest in technology and capabilities.

This year celebration started on May 25 with the Review of the Parade of Ships along the Hudson River. Leading the parade was the amphibious assault ship USS New York (LPD21), her bow stern contains more than 7 tones of steel recovered from the twin towers at the World Trade Center. Other vessels that followed the USS New York were the USCG Willow (WLB 22), USS Kauffman (FFG59), USCG Tampa (WMEC 902), USS John L. Hall (FFG32), , USCG Katherine Walker (WLM 552), USS Carr (FFG52) and the USS Iwo Jima (LHD7). The deck of the Intrepid Sea, Air & Space Museum was the perfect location to watch the parade and the fly-overs. First two U.S. Navy F/A-18Fs Super Hornets from VFA-32 flew over the Hudson River from the south, followed by two U.S. Marine Corps V-22 Ospreys from VMM-365, one U.S. Coast Guard HU-25 from USCG Air Station Cape Cod and two U.S. Marine Corps F/A-18Cs from VMFA-312. The U.S. Secretary of the Navy Ray Mabus was present to view the Parade over the Hudson River.





Two U.S. Marine Corps V-22 Ospreys from VMM-365, above.

The U.S. Secretary of the Navy Ray Mabus, talking with the media covering the event, below.



Starting on the following day the ships were open for public tours including the 844-foot long, Wasp-class amphibious assault ship, USS Iwo Jima which was moored in Manhattan at Pier 88 next to the USS Intrepid. Beginning just after 8 AM groups of 20 people were allowed to enter the vessel for the tour. On the deck there were two CH-56 Sea Stallion, one AV-8B Harrier II, one MV-22B Osprey, a Bell AH-1W SuperCobra and a MH-60S Seahawk in retro scheme for this year's Centennial Of Naval Aviation celebration.

From time to time throughout the week there were Ospreys, Seaknights and Hueys flying up and down the Hudson River. Demonstrations from the U.S. Marine Corps Marine Air Ground Task Force were performed at different locations in the area (Queens, Long Island, Staten Island). Aircraft included in these demonstrations were the V-22, AH-1W and CH-46. On Sunday morning the Marine Air Ground Task Force Demonstration took place at Corona Park in Queens New York with the Marines from the 24<sup>th</sup> Marine Expeditionary Unit (MEU). The aircraft involved were the UH-1Y Venom from HMLA-167 Warriors, the MV-22B from VMM-365 Blue Knights and the CH-46 from HMM-774 Wild Goose. There was also an AH-1W Supercobra.

Many other events related to the Navy, Marine Corps and Coast Guard were scheduled during the week making Fleet Week interesting for just about anyone. Great value as all the events are free.

Fleet Week has become start of summer tradition in New York City.

# Thunder of Niagara

Niagara Falls Air Show

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**Thunderbirds**

1. USAF Thunderbirds
2. US NAVY F-18 Super Hornet
3. Manfred Radius Aerobatic Glider
4. US Marine Corps MV-22 Osprey
5. Red Bull Air Force Wing Suit Sky Dive Team
6. Flying Ace Kent Pietsch
7. John Klatt's ANG Panzl S330
8. Mark Kirsh Strongman C-130 Pull
9. Randy Bell Fighter Jets MIG-17F
10. Disabled American Veterans B-25
11. Wounded Warrior L-39
12. Wounded Warrior PT-17 Stearman
13. Wounded Warrior P-51
14. Rick Volker's Sukhoi SU-26M

# 9/10 & 11 / 2011



Report and photography by Dan Adams



Ah, the sounds of summer. Birds frolicking in park fountains. Children chasing each other across the playground. The hypnotic music of an ice cream truck. A US Marine Corps MV-22B Osprey blasting into a landing zone? The rattle of combat gear as Marines assault and secure a field? While the latter sounds may not be what you would normally associate with summer, they have become an integral part of a New York City summer kick-off tradition. Starting the Wednesday before, and leading up to, Memorial Day, the greater New York City area comes alive with the sights and sounds of the visiting ships, sailors and Marines of NYC Fleet Week. One of the most dramatic events of the week is certainly the Marine Air Ground Task Force (MAGTF) demonstration. Performed in various venues across the five boroughs of New York City, Westchester County and Long Island, the demonstrations are an experience not to be missed.

Like something out of the famous scene in *Apocalypse Now*, the quiet of an idyllic spring day is shattered by the unmistakable thump-thump of rotor blades. Suddenly, an AH-1W Cobra races across the tree tops and banks sharply over the field, with a UH-1N Huey right behind it. Before the "ooohs" and "ahhhhs" of the crowd have subsided an MV-22B Osprey along with a CH-46 Sea Knight appear overhead and land to disgorge their cargo. Marines of the 24th Marine Expeditionary Unit (MEU) race out the back of the Osprey and Sea Knight, in full "battle rattle" with M-16A2s, M-4s and M248 machine guns at the ready. To say it is an impressive sight is a massive understatement.

Once the Marines have "secured" the park, the area is opened to the public (all are kept at a safe distance during



and departure from the landing zone since the Osprey alone creates hurricane force downwash from its massive rotors). Each aircraft is made available for a closer look and the CH-46 and MV-22B opened for walk-through tours. The Marines of the 24<sup>th</sup> MEU are readily available for questions, to pose for pictures, or to keep careful watch as onlookers young and old alike (including this correspondent) try on the Marines' gear and take turns holding their weapons.

After approximately 2 hours on the ground, NYPD officers politely but firmly usher the crowd a safe distance from the departing aircraft. The first to start up are the Huey and the Cobra, followed by the extremely smoky engine start of the Osprey and finally the Sea Knight. With the rotors of all four aircraft rotating at once, one cannot help but be awestruck. The first clue that the Osprey's take off would be a windy affair was (well, should have been) that the Marines remaining in the crowd turned their backs to the field and ducked their heads. Those too enthralled to look away were treated to a 150 MPH swirl of dirt, pebbles and leaves as the Osprey lifted off. The Osprey, Huey and Cobra then made an impressive formation pass over the field before the CH-46 finally took off to join them.

This spectacle is repeated across the area throughout Fleet Week, albeit in varying sizes depending on the size of the area available, and is highly recommended. A special thanks to the Marines of the 24th MEU, along with the aircrew of HMLA-167 "Warriors," HMM-774 "Wild Goose" and VMM-365 "Blue Knights" for the amazing demonstration of their capabilities and for being great ambassadors for the United States armed services.





**6<sup>TH</sup> Annual WINGS & WHEELS Heritage Festival**  **Downsview Park Toronto**  
Report and photography by Laszlo Nyary

The event is held jointly on the grounds of the Downsview Park and Toronto Aero Space Museum aka The Canadian Air & Space Museum.

This year the event was hampered by inclement weather during the weekend. Rain, and chilly temperatures to dark clouds to a bit sun shine, now and then. On Friday it rained early on the morning for media day, with grey overcast skies it was difficult to take good images. The weather also forced some cancellations or late arrivals of some of the aircraft. The event is quite small in scale, but all the museum staff and volunteers are friendly and helpful.

The event is not truly an air show, per say, as there are no in the air displays over the runway, it is more of a fly-in and park the aircraft for static display. A notable feature is that one can see a full scale replica of the Avro Arrow at the museum, on the grounds of the former aircraft factory where it was built. There are other interesting displays at the museum, including a Lancaster bomber that was formerly displayed in a city park near the shores of Lake Ontario, and now is being rebuilt.

The highlight of the event was the F-86 Golden Hawk, flown in by Dan Dempsey from Vintage Wings of Canada, and the Canadian Forces CF-188B Hornet, better known as CF-18B. Not to be confused with the CF-18A, which is a one seater. The aircraft came from the 425 Tactical Fighter Squadron, CFB Bagotville, Quebec. This is the only place in Greater Toronto Area, (GTA) to see the CF-18 up close. There were several older cars from 1940's to 1970's on display, both inside the hangar as well outside the parking lot.

Over all Wings & Wheels is a good value and a must see for any aviation enthusiast in the Greater Toronto Area, just do not expect to see any aircraft performing in the air. Not counting the pay for a ride in the Harvard.



# MILLVILLE WINGS & WHEELS AIRSHOW

Photo report by Joe Osciak.

Visit [www.AirShowsReview](http://www.AirShowsReview) for a full report of the event at Millville Airport, NJ.





# AMERICAN AIRPOWER MUSEUM MEMORIAL DAY WEEKEND 2011

Report and photography by Ricardo von Puttkammer.



Memorial Day is an American holiday for remembering those who died while serving in the U.S. military. It falls on the last Monday of every May. The New York City area is a great place to be during the week of Memorial Day. There is Fleet Week in Manhattan, airshow at Jones Beach and a four-day event at the American Airpower Museum in Farmingdale, Long Island, located at Republic Airport.

Aircraft participating at the nearby Jones Beach airshow take-off from and land at the Republic Airport, thus giving the public an opportunity to see these aircraft up close. The main attraction of the weekend was the Boeing B-29 Fifi from the Commemorative Air Force, visiting the New York area for the first time since it became airworthy again in 2010.

At the American Airpower Museum the action is non-stop during these four days. Friday is practice day for aircraft performing at the weekend air show at the beach. Some of the aircraft on static display and for the airshow also arrive that day.

During Saturday and Sunday the pace picks up with all the movements at the airport because of the airshow. On Monday there are opportunities to see some aircraft departing and some of the museum aircraft performing flybys for the pleasure of the visiting public.

This year's theme was Legends of Airpower – The Great American Bombers of World War II. The CAF B-29 Fifi, B-17G Yankee Lady from the Yankee Air Museum and the American Airpower Museum's own B-25 Miss Hap making up a trio of great bombers. The CAF B-24 Ol'927 appearance at the event was cancelled. The B-17 and B-29 were also giving rides for paying passengers. Some of the other aircraft taking off and landing in the runway next to the museum and on static display were two F/A-18Fs, three A-10s, two EA-18G Growlers, one EA-6B Prowler, one F-18C, F4U Corsair, P-47 Thunderbolt, two L-39 Albatross, P-51 Mustang and a T-6 Texan. There was also a M4 Sherman tank moving around the grounds. From time to time the crowd had to be moved in and around the hangar to allow larger aircraft to depart and arrive at the ramp.

On Saturday evening the museum hosted the "Save the Catalina Hangar Party", with a limited number of tickets sold to the general public. The sold out event offered big band music entertainment, food, drinks and more importantly the chance to see warbirds flying at dusk. The evening also allowed the public to get near to some of the performers and dignitaries attending the gala. With so much history always present this is a great event for the entire family.

I would like to thank Bob Stiehl, Nancy Epstein and Fred Miller for all their assistance during this Memorial Day weekend.



# DOWNSIDEUP by Jacquie Warda



© 2010 Laszlo Nyary

***“It was a dark and stormy night..... There I was at 37,000 feet, running low on gas and oxygen and wondering which one would run out first. The fog was as thick as pea soup as I wrestled with the controls. Then I realized that my guns had jammed and I couldn’t shoot back.” I’ve always wanted to start a story out like that!***

It didn't really matter, I was just daydreaming anyway. When you fly a single seat Pitts not only cross country but across the country, your mind tends to wander. A rule learned, you're always supposed to be looking for a spot on which to land because you never know when the engine's going to quit, but sometimes you just can't help it. It saved my life one time a few years ago. And actually, I could never get that high, 37,000 feet, I have only an hour's worth of fuel and then I land. To make it from California to the East Coast I have to stop about 16 times. Try doing that in two and a half days. The Pitts I fly, is a single place S1-T.

Flying a single place Pitts across the country is no piece of cake but it can be done. Flying from one air show to another is actually quite a lot of fun. The few things I need for my trip across the country mostly fit in all the pockets of my flight suit, including food and snacks. Girls are good at adapting to difficult situations. I learned in the first two years of air show flying what I needed to take: clothes, a full set of tools; a couple quarts of oil; water; hand held radio; video camera; charts; flight guides; laptop; a jacket and a couple of survival type items.

Space the size of my husband's truck glove box holds the video camera and things I don't need for a particular leg. "Packing efficiently" is a tool bag behind my right foot on the floor, oil under my seat along with rags and cleaning supplies, a leather bag of clothes on the floor between my feet/under the fuel tank, charts and flight guides are tucked on the side near the throttle, water and food are in the leg pockets of my flight suit. An extra jacket is tucked behind my head just above my parachute and seat back cushion. And if it is really, really cold, a blanket covers my lap extending down each leg. Why don't I turn the heater on you ask? I laugh! I don't think Curtis had cross country in mind when he built his wonderful Pitts way back when. No heater. I do a series of hand exercises when my fingers go numb occasionally. Several pair of gloves comes in handy also. Those are packed in a separate flight suit pocket for easy access.

I chose to forgo the music option via the intercom set up in my plane too, to avoid distractions; another good rule. You may remember reading about my prop breaking and my subsequent landing in an Oklahoma cow pasture. When I fly, I listen in to hear local weather info, and to people's accents and slang that helps pass the time. I also make mental note of the commercial traffic call signs in case I need help and I have learned Air to air communication is the easiest way to get help.

Another important rule in flying: Not flying over water any farther out than you can safely glide to dry land. Well, I chose to buck the odds for that one day in Florida. I took off out of Panama City, headed straight east to Cross City, my next fuel stop. Well, a straight line would take me out over the water and it was about 40 miles or so across to land. I was of course too far from land to glide, but thought I would be okay. Off I go. At exactly the mid-point over the water, one of my flying wires broke!

The noise of course scared me momentarily as I'm scanning to see what is wrong. A broken flying wire isn't going to bring my plane down, but it sure was a wake-up call about being over water and too far from shore to glide safely to land! Of course I made it to Cross City, but learned my lesson for sure. And the best part of this story is that a guy on the ramp overheard me telling my conversation with my husband and after I hung the phone up, he told me to follow him down to his hangar. He had a full set of flying/landing wires and one of them was the exact same size as the one I had broken! He put it on for me, would not let me pay him, and sent me on my way in about 1 hour. I have spent a lot of money on flight instructors over the last 20 plus years, and they taught me good stuff. And so far, they have all been right about what they told me to do and not to do!

So, again, remembering what I was taught, I try to fly over or near highways or any roads. The Midwest is great for that as there are a million roads and houses and farms everywhere. That would be like the barnstorming days. Nice soft-field landing and walk to the nearest farmhouse in time for dinner. If I ever need to jump, I am an experienced skydiver so the transition to depart my plane would be an easy one. And if that ever happens, I want to have my cell phone in one of my flight suit pockets as well as money and credit cards. Attached to my parachute is a small pouch which has survival gear in it. It doesn't take much to turn a bad situation into a very survivable one. Every air show pilot I know can probably say there is one specific question they get asked without fail all the time. It will be different for all of us, and we tend to laugh at the absurdity of them until we remember who is doing the asking. I have never flown to an air show that I wasn't asked "did you fly that thing here?" Never fails. And the BEST one was from a man who ASSUMED that I put the airplane on a truck to get it around to different shows. It's amazing to me just how much we teach the people we touch, and not just about flying. We put thoughts and concepts in their minds that never occurred to them. "Living the dream" has different meaning for all of us, but we are living and passing it on to those we touch. People only need to see that is it possible and the seeds are planted! Wayne Handley told me once I would meet the nicest people in the most unlikely places! And I'm happy to say I've landed in some of those "unlikely places." Did you know that Dorothy's house (from the Wizard of Oz) is right across the street from the only decent hotel in Liberal, Kansas? I've walked through it and on the Yellow Brick Road. Liberal is the town Dorothy is from in the story.

When I made that emergency landing in Oklahoma, the farmer who came out to the field to help me took me to his farm as we talked how to get my plane either to his barn or the airport. While I had my hands full landing in the cow pasture, his daughter was in that same barn watching her dog have puppies. I believe she had about 6 while I was working on a fix for my situation, and one of the dogs was named Jackie in my honor. She was too excited about the puppies being born to leave and come over to see my airplane. Well, her father Neal, is still someone I keep in touch with and I have a home there if I ever need one. There are some tremendously nice people out there, who help simply because it's the thing to do.

One time, I landed in Crawfordsville, Indiana for fuel on my way to Dayton. There were construction workers all over and it was difficult figuring out how to taxi to the fuel pumps. I was afraid there was no fuel because of all the work. Well, there was fuel and plenty of it. I got out of the airplane, and as I took my helmet off, a young man walked up to me and said "are you Jacquie B"? I looked around rather stunned (I've never been to Crawfordsville) and said "Yes, I was." He said he had seen my website recently and recognized the airplane. As I fueled the airplane, we spoke. He knew quite a bit about me and the plane. He had flown aerobatics and competition years prior and was now busy running his FBO. After I was done fueling, I asked him if he took American Express. He said "no", so I said okay, I have a Visa card but his reply was "we don't take Visa either" so okay, I have cash. He said they didn't take cash and I was not going pay for my fuel that day. "It was "on the house"!! I can't say that was the most unusual thing that has happened to me, but it definitely ranks right up there near the top! Remember that "nicest people in the most unlikely places"??? This is one of those. Do I love it? You bet I do! All I ever wanted to do was fly and there are few things I'd rather do than fly. The adventure of it all makes the flying part even more exciting and rewarding. I find myself in places and situations that teach me much, remind me how stupid and human I am, or force me to face my fears in order to press on. I will never have "get there-it is" because nothing is worth dying for. If I make it, great. If I don't, the show will go on without me. I'd hate someone to have to tell my husband – "we regret to inform you your wife is dead because she was stupid"! I'm too old to pretend I don't know better. Getting old does have some advantages! Not many, but some! And I want nothing more than to be able to fly until I'm 101 years old! "Downsideup" of course!!!!



REPORT BY WOLFGANG JARISCH, PETER THIVESSEN  
PHOTOGRAPHY AS NOTED



Mirage 2000 –F5 above and the Czech Air Force JAS-39C Gripen 211 Sq. from Cáslav to the left; all ©2011 Peter Thivessen

We're in France, Cambrai, at Base aérienne 103 Cambrai-Épinoy. At the home base of Escadron de Chasse 01.012., to cover the 2011 Tiger Meet.

This year was the 50th anniversary of the NATO Tigers. The first NATO Tiger Meet was held in July 19-20, 1961 in Woodbridge, UK. Participating units were the USAF 79TFS, based at RAF Woodbridge with F-100, the 74(F) SQN from RAF Leuchars with Lightning F Mk1, and the EC 1/12 FAF from Cambrai with Super Mystère B2. This small gathering was the beginning of the now world famous NATO Tigers. If you're interested about the history of the NATO Tigers, you will find all information in the incredibly illustrated limited anniversary book "NATO Tigers Fifty Years", from the NATO Tigers association.

NATO Tiger meet 2011, was to be the biggest tiger meet ever. Unfortunately, due to the political situation in Libya, there were several cancellations. We missed the Hungarian HuAF 59/1 Puma Sqn 2 x JAS-39C Gripen, from France the FAF EC 05/330 3 x Rafale B/C, from Belgium the BAF 31 Smd 5 x F-16 MLU, from the Netherlands the RNLAf 313 Sqn 5 x F-16 MLU, from Norway the NoAF 338 Sqn 5 x F-16 MLU and at last from the United Kingdom the RAF 230 Sqn 2x Puma. In total we missed these 22 aircrafts very much from this year's spectacle of Tigers.

Nevertheless, the Tiger Meet went on to celebrate the 50th anniversary with many special painted aircrafts on the base. At the start of the Meet the promotion of 335 Mira, to FULL Membership status made news.

The Tiger Meet 2011, was extremely well organized, with one media day and three spotter days with excellent locations for the photographers.

The next NATO Tiger Meet will be in 2012 in Portugal, at Monte Real hosted by the Esquadra 301 from 28/05/2012 to 08/06/2012. We will be there!



The winner of the best paint scheme for 2011 the Tornado IDS from AG 51 of the Luftwaffe above, and the Saab JAS 39C Gripen 211 Sq. from Čáslav below; both ©2011 Peter Thivessen



Panavia Tornado IDS of the Luftwaffe above ©2011 Wolfgang Jarisch



Dassault Mirage 2000C 103-LI Armée de l'Air from the Tiger Meet host squadron ©2011 Wolfgang Jarisch



A very smokey MiG-29UBS from the Slovak Air Force above, ©2011 Wolfgang Jarisch



F-16AM Fighting Falcon FA-87 of the Belgium Air Force to the right ©2011 Peter Thivessen



(2) Mil Mi-35 Hind of the Czech Air Force ©2011 Peter Thivessen



McDonnell Douglas F/A-18C Hornet J-5011 of the Swiss Air Force ©2011 Peter Thivessen



General Dynamics F-16C Block 52+ Fighting Falcon of the Polish Air Force ©2011 Peter Thivessen

**TIGER MEET**  **2011**



Eurocopter EC-665 Tiger ©2011 Peter Thivessen



(2) Dassault Mirage F.1M of the Spanish Air Force ©2011 Peter Thivessen



Panavia Tornado ECR of the Luftwaffe ©2011 Peter Thivessen

# Meeting-Aerien 2011

Co-written by Laszlo Nyary & Wolfgang Jarisch photography by Wolfgang Jarisch

Meeting-Aerien was held on May 15th 2011. This gathering of aircraft is a one day air show, featuring some of the NATO Tiger aircraft from the nearby AFB, as well as other French Teams. The event was organized by the Aero Club Cambrai-Niergnies at the Aerodrome de Cambrai, which is about 15 minutes from the Base Aérienne 103 Cambrai-Épinoy. It is an old base from WWII, and now is used by the aero club.

When the event opened to the general public one had to be in a hurry to take images of the static aircraft on display as after 10:00 am, the area was closed to allow the movement of aircraft that flew during the event. This was not usual, However, to take pictures from the outside of the closed off area of taxiing aircraft, a telephoto lens with a min. of 300mm focal length was required. Taking photos of flying aircraft was hampered at first, by the fact the photographers faced towards the sun, not exactly an ideal situation, and there was no way to go to the other side of the field, to have the sun from behind then as the day progressed to darker and darker sky.

The flying display started with a Piper J3 Tiger followed by SAR demonstration from the Italian Air Force / 21 Gruppo with two AB 212 ICO. At the end of the display, one of the crew members could be seen with his tiger mask waving to the crowds below them. Smaller aircraft from the aero club followed, such as the Diamond DA 42, Mudry Cap 10, then the Patrouille MD Flamant (one 311 and one 312 Flamant). Three different versions (311, 312 and 315) were built of this aircraft with a total number of 325 between 1947 and 1950.



In the grey skies over Cambrai, the Morane Saulnier D-3801 (interesting aircraft built by the Swiss under license as the MS406) was the next with a nice sounding Hispano-Suiza 12Y-31 engine. The first flight of the Morane was in 1935. This was followed by two Mirage 2000. The Breitling Wingwalkers who usually fly with up to five Boeing Stearman at Cambrai, only flew with two Boeings. The performance was dazzling, despite flying with only two aircraft.

One of the highlights of the event was the "Défilé des Tigres", a formation of different kinds of aircraft participating in the NTM-2011, all painted in Tiger scheme. Another formation consisted with one Mirage 2000 in front of the Patrouille de France. The Tiger formation flew two fly-by passes, unfortunately, at the same time the sky changed to dark grey, limiting the possibilities for any good photos. A historical flight from the beginning of the Tiger-Meet consisting of two aircraft flew by: North American F-86A "Sabre" in tiger scheme, and a Swiss license built De Havilland Vampire. Both aircrafts were in pristine condition. The Austrian Air Force presented also the wonderful tiger painted Saab 105OE in a solo display. Additional aircraft from the early jet age era, a Fouga Magister flew by showing the aircraft's maneuverability in a wonderful display. The fabulously restored Hawker Sea Fury FB.11 flown by Patrice Marchasson was next with fast passes that demonstrated the power of this aircraft. This Sea Fury was completely restored by the Sea Fury specialist Sanders Aviation in California, and since 2010 it is based out of France by his owner Christophe Jacquard, who can be very proud of his aircraft. A bit of pyrotechnics lit up the dark skies, with sirens whaling a simulated bomb attack by a Messerschmitt Me 208 (which really is a Nord 1101 Noralpha) to be chased away by two T-6. It was not a really historically re-enactment, but most attendees did not care.

The French Security Civil with their Eurocopter-Kawasaki EC-145 also performed a SAR-Mission. Slightly more impressive demo was by the Czech helicopter Mil Mi-35, with its distinctive rotor and turbine acoustical assault on the ears. This is the newer version of the Mil Mi-24 Hind. The Czech crew and their huge attack helicopter impressed the visitors of the show. The Mil Mi-35 is always a welcomed guest at any air show. After the Armée del Air formation Cartouche Doreé, who were flying the Socata TB30 Epsilon in a very tight three ship formation, the Swiss F-18 "Hornet" display dazzled all. This had to be the best F-18 display I've seen to date. I'm looking forward to see Captain Ralph "Deasy" Knittel, from the Fliegerstaffel 17, at the Airpower 2011 in Austria. Congratulations for the best display of the event! The "smoking glory" of the Slovak Air Force Mig-29 did magically beautiful black exhaust clouds in the skies over Cambrai-Niergnies.

The show closed with the Patrouille de France. Despite the dark clouds, the audience stayed put, no one left the field before the Patrouille de France. The organizers planned well and it was an exciting flight program with a good mix with jet planes, formations, historic aircrafts and small planes. They also did a good job with traffic to and from the airfield: NO traffic jams at all—just perfect!



Eurocopter EC Tiger HAP



FFA Vampire FB6



Patrouille de France

North American F-86 Sabre



Breitling Wing-walkers

# Meeting-Aerien 2011



Hawker Sea Fury FB11



The Swiss F/A-18C

# THE MALTA INTERNATIONAL AIRSHOW



## 2011



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**MISSION:** AIR-2-AIR REFUEL WITH F-16 STRIKE EAGLES

ARTICLE AND PHOTOGRAPHY BY LASZLO NYARY



Flying in any airplane is fun if you enjoy flying. Flying with a friend who is a pilot in his own aircraft is even more fun. Being invited to fly with the biggest and the best air force, the USAF, is not only exciting, it is a real privilege!

For this article: Road trip: \$1000; Camera equipment: \$12,000; flying in a KC-135R while performing air-to-air refueling of the F-15E Strike Eagles: PRICELESS!

OK, so I sound a bit excited, but let's face it, just how many times do opportunities like the above come along? For most, never, but it is nice to dream and have something to aim for. And sometimes, we get lucky: Our dreams do come true! It is more than just being lucky and being at the right place at the right time. For some, like myself who enjoys photography not just as a hobby – but as a passion, it is a privilege earned the hard way.

We are up around 21,500 feet altitude give or take a few, at about 315 knots streaking across the sky above Pamlico Sound, NC, to meet up with several Seymour Johnson Strike Eagles from the "Red Lancers" of the 333 FS. The F-15Es had taken off earlier while we were boarding a Boeing KC-135R tanker from the 916 ARW 911 ARS, based at SJ AFB. There are two tankers in the air off the coast of Jacksonville, NC, over the Whiskey area (military airspace). We are to follow the first KC-135R so we can see several of the F-15Es receiving fuel from the tanker in front of us, and then have the other F-15Es receive fuel from ours. Of course, theory vs. reality is usually two different items, rarely working as planned.

We have been flying now for about 1 hr, which seemed like an eternity to us, the photographers, and no Eagles had shown up yet. We, the photographers in the second KCR-135R are getting anxious, when suddenly one F-15E shows up to receive fuel from the first tanker. Most of us miss it, due to the fact that the only way to take photos of this event is from the cockpit, which is of course, used by the pilots and the boom operator, it a vey confined space. By the time some of us hear about it, it is too late to shoot. Flying in the KC-135R is a bit noisy too. To hear anything is very difficult due to the noise generated by the powerful CFM International CFM56 (U.S. military designation F108) turbofans, each generating 22,000 lbs. of thrust. On the KC-135R it is very necessary to wear earplugs! The only consolation is that they were quite a distance from us, a telephoto zoom lens of 80-200mm (on a full frame body) was certainly not long enough to take a decent photo. I only had a chance to take about a half dozen when it was just about over, and none were acceptable in quality.

The KC-135R is not really a 'photo plane,' it has a total of four, two on each side, small windows about the size of letter sized paper, 8.5x11 inches. Shooting from the cockpit forward is not exactly easy either, due to vibration of the aircraft, and focusing on a distant object through the windows. If accidentally the lens touches the window, the images will become blurry too, due to vibration of the airframe. The best photos one can take is lying down next to the boom operator, and in my case it was Sgt JR Bravo, from the right side. With about 8 or 9 photographers aboard, we rotated positions two photographers at a time; one to left and the other to the right of the boom operator who was in the middle.



Even with the 4 remaining F-15Es to be tanked, air-to-air refueling does not take a long time. Thus, in many ways, it was just a matter of luck in our rotation to get good quality images. I managed to get a few, the ones I really wanted. According to Sgt JR Bravo we refueled two F-15E Strike Eagles with 9,000 pounds of fuel, and the other two F-15Es only did "dry contacts plug them with no fuel transfer", usually done during training sorties. Sgt. JR Bravo did one refueling and one dry contact and then it was Sgt. Sena Alfaro's turn to do one wet and one dry combo, with the two remaining Strike Eagles.

Once it was over the F-15Es flew along the wing tips of the KC-135R for us to take photos of them escorting us, and then they banked off sharply. We banked gracefully and returned to the base, with a landing that was very smooth. . We had the opportunity to take images of a couple of the F-15Es landing, couple among them were the ones who have participated with us.

Over all it was a great and memorable ride for all of us! It was great to see how air-to-air refueling is actually done in reality.

I would like to thank Maj. Shannon Mann, USAF AFRC 916 ARW/PAO, Donna Lea, USAF AFRC 916 ARW/PA, the crew of the KC-135R; our pilot LtCol. Albert Croom, USAF AFRC 916 OSS/OSO, our copilot LtCol. Nicholas Hayes, USAFR AFRC 77 ARS/DOT, Sgt. Sena Alfaro, and Sgt. JR Bravo, from "The Totin' Tigers – 77th ARS" and all the countless number of personnel of the USAF who were involved and made this ride unforgettable!







Pilot - Captain Michael Emerson, Evaluator Pilot and Operations Flight Commander (333 FS/S-3/CC), WSO - 1st Lt Gregory Jackson, Student WSO, on the left and above.



The crew of the KC-135R; Sgt. Sena Alfaro 77<sup>th</sup> ARS, our pilot LtCol. Albert Croom USAF AFRC 916 OSS/OSO, Sgt. JR Bravo 77<sup>th</sup> ARS, our co-pilot LtCol. Nicholas Hayes, USAFR AFRC 77 ARS/DOT, of the USAF.



# F-15E STRIKE EAGLE





Canadian Harvard Aerobatic Team taking off, above and the Vintage Wings' FG-1D Corsair with Paul Kissman over the air show in Hamilton, below.

This was the first air show in a decade at the Hamilton International Airport, at Mt. Hope, Ontario. In many ways, it was a preview and a "dry run" of what is to come next year hosted by the Canadian Warplane Heritage Museum to celebrate the upcoming 40th anniversary of the museum in 2012.

It wasn't the typical air show one sees at most events; there was only one civilian performer, Bill Carter, in his Pitts S2S. The remainder were all vintage aircraft, apart from the Hamilton Sport Parachute Club skydivers who opened the event. No jets in the air, unless the departing CF-18B counts as one, on Sunday.

It was a good spectacle to see rare aircraft flying, many of them owned by the CWHM itself with others from the Military Aviation Museum, Vintage Wings of Canada, The Great War Flying Museum, and the 1941 Historical Aircraft Group from Geneseo, NY. There were several static aircraft from the museum's collection as well static aircraft from the Canadian Forces.

The Corsair from Vintage Wings piloted by Paul Kissman, who put in the best solo performance of the day, and the thrilling display by the Canadian Harvard Aerobatic Team. There also was a short mock battle between WWI replicas. There were several formations flying: WWII bombers (2) B-17s with a B-25 Mitchell, (8) Harvards, and for the closing act, the Lancaster with P-40N Warhawk, FG-1D Corsair, P-51D Mustang, Spitfire Mk XVI, and a Hurricane Mk IV.

Over all it was a good dry run for next year, and to correct some of the small short comings for next year's big anniversary event. For a complete review [click here to see our review.](#)



B-25J Mitchell



Sopwith 1 1/2 Strutter



HAMILTON 2011  
**AIRSHOW**  
CANADIAN AIRPLANE HERITAGE  
Photography by Laszlo Nyary



Fokker DR.1 "Red Baron"

Visiting from Geneseo, NY, the B-17 Memphis Belle, in retro look.



Page 62 Grumman CS2F-2 Tracker



McDonnell CF-101B Voodoo and Lockheed CF-104 Starfighter in Tiger marking.

The CF-18 Demo lit up the sky during the "Hour of Power"



Capt. Andrew Faith CF-18 pilot by his aircraft.



The Great Lakes International Air Show was held at St. Thomas, Ontario on June 24-26. If anything the weather was the main disappointing factor which forced some cancellation due to low ceiling. Yet at the same time, it gave interesting photographic opportunities especially during the "Hour of Power". For a detailed review of the event visit our site by clicking here.

The combined CAF demo was very interesting, a bit of more pyrotechnics would have made it even more!



A-10 from Maryland



A rare sight at any air show: the CF-18 being stopped by a cable and arrester hook!



The Green Mountain Boys came low and fast in their F-16 Vipers!





ANG from Tulsa flew low fast and loud in their F-16 Vipers!



The C-130 Hercules in St. Thomas



The SB2C Helldiver

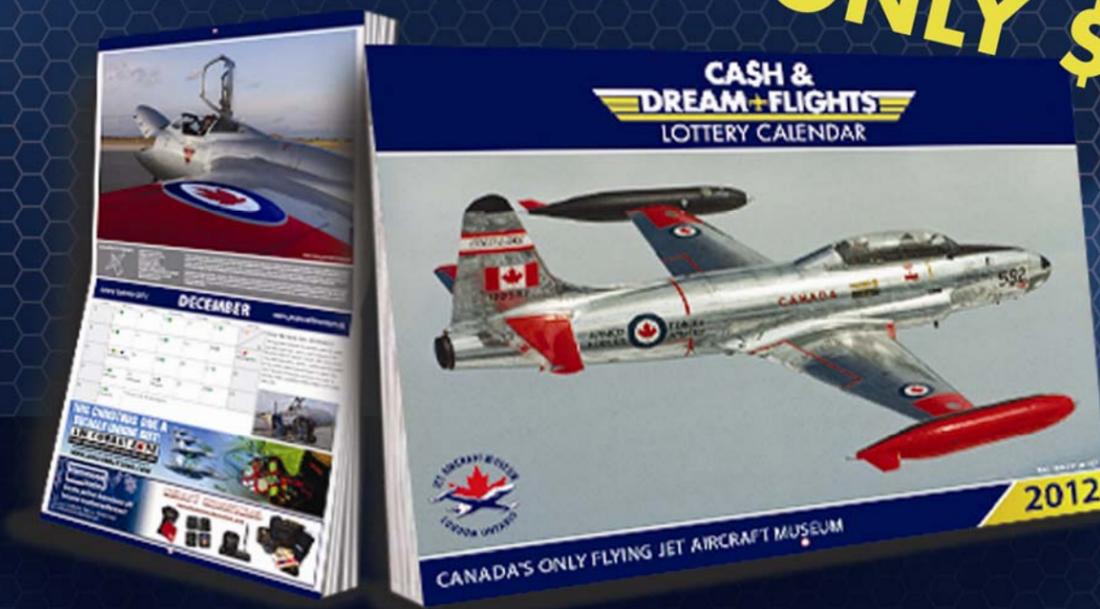
Above: ENS Kelly Altschul with ENS Martin Sterling from VT-10 Wildcats, from Pensacola, FL., and the T-33 Mako Shark from London, Ontario.



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# Without Equal: The Black Daggers

## The US Army Special Operations Command's Parachute Demonstration Team

Interview and photography by Dan Adams



You've undoubtedly seen them in the skies above an air show at one time or another. They start as tiny dots high up in the air that you can barely see. As those little blurs resolve themselves into clearer images, you can make out the shape of a person hurtling through the sky at 120 miles per hour. Then, a bright red and black canopy blossoms out and suddenly you are watching a thrilling display of aerobic agility. Trailing brightly colored smoke they perform twirling maneuvers, fly in formation and land precisely on a specific point. There is nothing that seems beyond the reach of these amazing demonstrators. While the performances of the fast jets and aerobatic aircraft are a big part of an air show lineup, it is hard to deny that there is something about watching a skilled parachutist that is simply, awe inspiring.

The US Army Special Operations Command's (USASOC) Parachute Demonstration Team, better known as the Black Daggers, performs year round at air shows throughout the United States. I had the privilege of spending time with one of the team's demonstrators, Staff SGT Travis Weathers at the 2011 Rhode Island National Guard Open House Air Show:

### How long have you been with the Black Daggers?

Actually, I joined the team about three days before last year's Rhode Island Air Show, so this marks my one year anniversary with the team.

### How long does a demonstrator remain with the Black Daggers on the air show circuit?

We're generally with the team for a 36-month period. During that time, we are away from our operational units and devote all our time and efforts to the Black Daggers' schedule. In any given year, we are on the road for over 260 days.

### What are the requirements to be considered for the Black Daggers? Did you have parachuting experience prior to joining the team?

Only members of the Army's Special Operations Command can apply to the team. Prior experience with the type of jumping that the Black Daggers demonstrate is not necessarily required. For instance, prior to joining the Black Daggers, I had a communications background and was the radio operator for the commanding general of USASOC. I had made static line jumps (where the parachute deploys immediately after exiting an aircraft), but no HALO (High Altitude Low Opening) or sport skydives.

### What are the major differences between static line jumping and freefall parachuting? How was your first experience skydiving?

With static line jumping, you hook your main parachute on to a line in the aircraft and when you jump, the parachute is deployed right away. With freefall parachuting, you use your hands, arms, and legs as flight controls while falling through the sky at speeds in excess of 120 mph before manually deploying your main parachute at a predetermined altitude. My first time? Well, let's just say I did a few unintentional back loops. Now it's my preferred method of exiting an aircraft!

### What's the difference, if any, between the parachute systems used by the Black Daggers and those used by operational USASOC units?

The canopy the team uses is a civilian model that is designed specifically for sport accuracy. This is better suited for the demonstration purposes of the Black Daggers and is how we are able to perform the maneuvers you'll see during an air show demonstration.

HALO parachutes are designed to bear more weight. This is necessary for all the extra gear (weapon, rucksack, oxygen) that put the jumper's exit weight well above 300lbs.

### What is the mission of the Black Daggers?

The Black Daggers exist to promote the work and efforts of all those who serve under the USASOC. The Command's motto, and that of the Black Daggers, is "Sine Pari," which means "without equal," and we hold ourselves to the highest of standards in all that we do. That's because every day throughout the world there are USASOC personnel serving and fighting in challenging and dangerous environments. Through our demonstrations and interactions with the crowds at air shows, we strive to promote the mission of those men and women of USASOC who serve. We also highlight the often unsung sacrifices made by the families of USASOC members.

### Is there anyone who exemplifies the spirit of Sine Pari?

Absolutely. USASOC and the Black Daggers are proud to represent and honor soldiers like Sgt. 1st Class Leroy Petry of Company D, 2nd Ranger Battalion, 75th Ranger Regiment. In July, SFC Petry will become one of only two living service members to be awarded the Congressional Medal of Honor, which as you know, is the highest military decoration awarded by the United States. While engaging the enemy in Afghanistan, SFC Petry was wounded in both legs, yet continued to lead other soldiers in action against the threat. When an insurgent threw a grenade at SFC Petry and several other Rangers, he instinctively and selflessly risked his own life to move and secure the live grenade and throw it away from his fellow Rangers. While saving the lives of those around him, the explosion unfortunately caused the loss of SFC Petry's right hand. His actions show that the members of USASOC are truly deserving of the "without equal" motto.

### How can people find out more about the Black Daggers?

It's easy to visit us at [www.facebook.com/blackdaggers](http://www.facebook.com/blackdaggers) or via the Special Operations Command's website at [www.soc.mil](http://www.soc.mil).

A special thank you to SSG Weathers for taking time out of his busy schedule to speak with me, Chief of the Community Relations Division Bonita Riddley for her invaluable assistance and SSG Kevin Haddon for his help and support. "In the air" photo courtesy of the Black Daggers.





The Black Daggers at RI., from left to right are: SGT Kelly Becker, SGT Anthony Galusha, SGT Jeff Inman, SFC Greg Couch, SSG Noah Watts, SSG Travis Weathers and SSG Kevin Haddon.

## Saint-Dizier Air Force Base air show 2011, France

Report and photography by Peter Thivessen



The charity air show by the "la Fondation des Oeuvres Sociales de l'Air" was held at the Saint Dizier Air Force Base in June 18-19. The AFB is located close to St Dizier (100 km north-east to Reims and 100 km west to Nancy, France).

More than 50,000 visitors attended over the two days, this great aeronautical festival which coincided with the 60th anniversary of the base and the 30,000th flight-hour of the Rafale with the operational units of the French Air Force.

For the photographers and spectators, it was an excellent show due to the way the main runway is laid out. The runway is west-east orientated; the only taxiway is south of the main runway. Throughout the day, the sun was behind the spectator's backs (just perfect for photography) and the crowds were very close to the taxiing aircraft. The show was continuous from ten in the morning till six in the evening. It included flight demonstrations from vintage aircraft, helicopters, to the newest generation of combat and transport aircraft in the service of the French. Also were several visiting foreign armed forces, as well as national and private aerobatic teams including the "Patrouille de France."

The highlight was the solo display of the French Rafale. Two Rafales with the numbers 118 (113-IW) and 121 (113-IZ) were painted in an outstanding black-gray scheme, dazzling the spectators on their own home turf, as they operate from the St. Dizier AFB. The weather was an interesting mixture from sunny to cloudy, with a few thunderstorms, lightning, and hailstones thrown in for the fun of it!

AirShowsReview would like to thank Monsieur CDT Philippe Chaillet from the French Press Office in Paris (SIRPA) and Madame Marlene Gaudin-Aspis of the French Air Force Public Affairs located at St. Dizier AFB, for their generous cooperation, hospitality and friendliness!



Su-22UM of the Polish Air Force



TA-4SU Skyhawk of the Singapore Air Force

## Links & Classified:

The official DVD of the Windsor International Air Show 2010 is now available! The DVD, which has just been released, features all of the aerial highlights of the air show including the incredible Brazilian Smoke Squadron display and amazing aerobatics of the Snowbirds

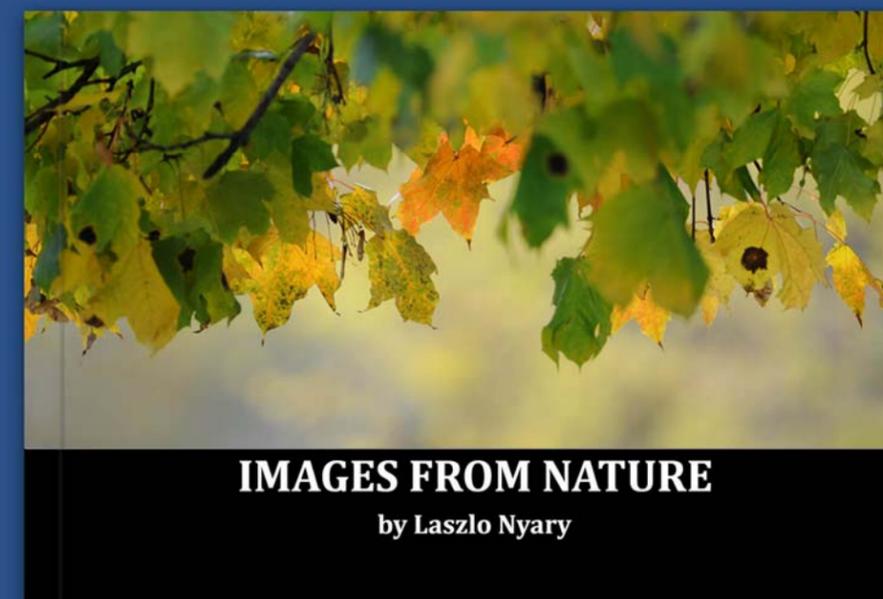


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