MESSAGE FROM THE DIRECTOR

To the Members of the Southern Museum of Flight’s Constituency

It is my honor and privilege to serve as a member of the Southern Museum of Flight’s leadership team. It is my sincerest wish that your involvement with the museum will be rewarding and enjoyable.

In all we do, we investigate, preserve, and promote the rich stories of Southern Aviation and provide enjoyable, experiential, and educational programming for people of all ages. Through our collaborative partnerships within the community, we provide a continuum of exhibitions, displays, and educational services with a sincere devotion to cultural and historical literacy. We support skillful, reflective professionals who improve the quality of aviation education within the museum setting, and we accomplish our mission within the confines of Research and Development, Educational Programming, Tourism, and Aircraft Restoration. This along with our Core Values – Education, Preservation, and Dedication, should be our compass by which all actions are measured. Additionally, our staff’s contributions and unwavering commitment is essential to our success. Our Core Values guide us in our approach. While committed to these values, I am equally committed to lead by example, and provide a positive work environment to meet our mission demands. Everyone is important and valued as a member of our team, and museum success requires unity of effort.

Education - Ambassadors of Education. The museum is dependent upon the educational services that we deliver. There are no bystanders within the realm of education. Everyone takes ownership of this responsibility, and embrace education as the heart and soul of our organization.

Preservation - Preserving the Legacy. We honor the legacy of the men and women who contributed to our history, and we respect the aircraft and artifacts that help us tell the rich stories of aviation. Everyone has a role with regard to this, as we maintain the integrity of the exhibitions and programs.

Dedication - Commitment to Excellence. The museum is dependent upon our excellent staff to fulfill their duties and responsibilities. They are entrusted with this great responsibility, and their decisions have significant implications.

The general public can and will formulate an opinion of the entire organization based on the perceptions gained from their visit and interactions. We strive to make the Southern Museum of Flight a better organization and will always have fun in doing the great things we do!

Best regards,

Brian J. Barsanti, Ph.D.
Welcome
To The Future Home of the Southern Museum of Flight!

Located off Interstate 20 in the Grand River area near the Barber’s Motorsport’s Park is the 24-acre site of the proposed expanded Southern Museum of Flight. It was important for the museum to stay in Birmingham and this site presented that opportunity. It is hoped that the move would help spur future development in northeast Birmingham as well as enhancing the opportunity for our museum to further chronical the history of aviation and expand the educational programming opportunities that the museum is firmly committed to.

A marketing plan for the total technology and industrial site is still being developed. But the goal is to attract high-tech companies in the medical and engineering fields, automotive suppliers and some corporate headquarters for companies of varying sizes.

The scope of the Grand River Technology Park could create more than 1,200 jobs and generate an economic impact of more than $85 million in the Greater Birmingham area, according to information from the Alabama Dept. of Labor. The technology park represents a multi-phase opportunity to reclaim and transform approximately 105 acres of undeveloped land surrounding and including many pre-1977 abandoned coal mine lands in east Jefferson County into a regional nexus for research and development, tourism, and manufacturing.

Stay tuned for all the upcoming and exciting developments as your museum begins an amazing transformation.

75th Anniversary of D-Day!

In commemoration of the 75th Anniversary of D-Day, the C-47, That’s All Brother (see related story on Page 7), will be in Birmingham April 9th-14th, 2019. As part of this experience, the Southern Museum of Flight is offering an outreach and tour program that instructs students about WWII, D-Day and its aircraft that launched the largest invasion in history!

**Outreach Program:** Students will get excited about history through our educators as they visit their school and learn about a battle that changed the course of mankind.

**Tour Program:** Students will visit the Southern Museum of Flight’s WWII exhibits and visit That’s All, Brother! Join us for this fun, interactive, hands-on program prior to and during That’s All, Brother’s visit!

**Outreach Program**
Length: 1 hour, Cost: Free

**Tour Program**
Length: 2.5 hrs, Cost: $3 per student

For more information or to schedule our educators, contact Melissa Morgan, 205-833-8226 or email: mmorgan@southernmuseumofflight.org

Keeping The Restoration Team Busy!

The “Tuskegee” B-25 is commanding much attention from the Restoration Team. Having received a grant from Alabama Power-Birmingham Division to renovate this historic B-25 and include it with the existing Tuskegee Airman diorama will help add another impressive chapter to the story being presented with the museum’s Tuskegee exhibit.

Currently on display is the forward fuselage section of the bomber, while restoration is completed on the remainder of the aircraft. The museum is fortunate to have dedicated staff and volunteer talent to completing this demanding effort given that restoring a World War II aircraft to its former glory takes time and great attention to detail. This expertise is clearly visible on a section of the elevator control surface shown here. Installing fabric coating over an airframe is a skill that is rarely experienced in constructing today’s airframes.

Within a year, the museum will proudly display a restored B-25 that will take its place along with the other three training aircraft currently on display as part of the Tuskegee Airman diorama.
The Artwork Of
Bob Bales
and
The Air Force
Art Program

George Carson “Bob” Bales was a C-46 and B-24 pilot during World War 2, nephew to Ernie Pyle, an Air Force advisor to Hollywood, but most important to him; he was an artist!

After World War 2, Bales was an illustrator for Walt Disney Studios from 1945 to 1947 and worked on film classics such as Song of the South and Wind in the Willows. But the Air Force needed Bales more than Disney, and Bales was recalled to active duty in 1947. He served three years in a classified mapping project in the Pacific and got pulled into the Korean War. “There was not a newsman there,” and he thought, “Somebody needs to record this.” Having brought his paints and brushes with him, Bales began painting the scenes in the time he could spare from his duties.

During his time in Korea, Bales completed 31 paintings. These paintings not only captured the lives of the Koreans going about their daily lives, but provided an important historical record as well. Bales’ painting, The Gates of Suwon (shown above), depict the massive eighteenth century city gate surrounded by the varied buildings of the town, which were, with the exception only of the gate itself, razed by the communist offensive in the winter of 1951. While the photographer captures what he can see, the artist captures what he can feel. His acute observation and his background in drafting, as well as his bold use of color, resulted in beautiful and true paintings that capture the Korean War as photographs could not.

Following his time in Korea, Bales worked at the Pentagon under General Hoyt Vandenberg, the Air Force Chief of Staff. Bales’ talent was not only with the brush, and when General Vandenberg learned of Bales’ abilities, he personally tapped Bales to collect Air Force art and establish a program to manage it. During an early meeting with Bales, General Vanderberg was quoted as stating, “Major Bales, I’m going to give you an unusual assignment. Someday the Air Force will have its own Academy and I want you to start collecting the finest historical art collection you can get, as a documentation of Air Force history. A lot of our history is buried in the Army archives, some even in the Navy archives and much of it is in attics and footlockers and stored away. I would like for you to initiate a program not only to collect and preserve our past history, but to document our current operations for the sake of posterity. Bales served as the Director of the Art Program Branch until 1963. After he retired as Lieutenant Colonel in the Air Force, he became one of the founding members of Pepperdine University and helped establish its Malibu campus. He was senior vice president for Pepperdine for 23 years. He earned a MBA from Pepperdine and a PhD from UCLA.

Bob Bales wrote several books during his later life as well, including; Jet Aces of the Korean Conflict (1957), Ernie Pyle: A Hoosier Childhood (2002), and Ernie Pyle’s Southwest (2003).

In May 1960, Air Force Chief of Staff, General Curtis LeMay described the Air Force Art Program in a National Geographic article. He stated “To posterity, these paintings will furnish a priceless pictorial history of our Air Force in a brilliant era. Future Americans, accustomed to split-second travel through measureless space, may find these scenes as antiquated as covered wagons seem today. Yet they record a chapter in the life of our Air Force as vital as Kitty Hawk”.

Since 1954, the number of paintings in the Air Force Art Program has grown from about 800 to more than 10,000!

The Southern Museum of Flight is honored and extremely proud to have received some very significant artifacts and memorabilia of Bob Bales that will help preserve the historic achievements of this great artist and individual.

“He lived life to the fullest like no one I ever knew,” related his widow, Peggy Bales of Mountain Brook, AL.
The Women of Aviation Worldwide Week is an annual global event that takes place during the week of March 8 and is an aviation awareness week for girls of all ages observed to mark the anniversary of the world’s first female pilot license (March 8, 1910). The awareness week managed by the Institute for Women Of Aviation Worldwide celebrates past and present contributions to the betterment of the air and space industry by women and promotes industry opportunities to women.

Women Of Aviation Worldwide Week’s activities have been organized in 47 countries on 5 continents. 256,000 individuals have directly participated in the week’s activities. 51,538 women have been introduced to flight in a small aircraft in response to The Week’s Fly It Forward® call to action.

This year, the global event will take place from March 4-10.

Following this event, the Women in Aviation Annual Conference will be held in Long Beach, CA from March 14-16 and will feature many seminars and speakers focused on careers in aviation for women.

Nearly 20 companies will be attending and involved in 45-minute hiring briefings. These group information sessions will give the attendee the most up-to-date information on their hiring practices, requirements, and trends plus an opportunity to ask questions directly.

March is Women In Aviation History Month

The Civil Aeronautics Administration (CAA) first required licensing of aircraft mechanics in 1927. Ruth Nichols [1901-1960] and Phoebe Omlie [1902-1975] both passed their exams for an aircraft and engine (A&E) license on July 22, 1927, and submitted their paperwork for processing by a CAA clerk. Whether by chance or in alphabetical order, License No. 421 was issued to Nichols and License No. 422 was issued to Omlie.

America’s first female aviators were required to maintain and fly their aircraft. Harriet Quimby [1875-1912] became America’s first licensed female pilot through the Aero Club of America, as well as became the 37th person in the world to be licensed by the Federale Aviation Internationale (FAI) on Aug. 1, 1911.

Matilde Moisant [1878-1964] became the second licensed female aviator in the U.S. on Sept. 17, 1911, earning FAL License No. 44. Quimby encouraged women to learn how to maintain and drive their own automobiles, and once said that ladies could accomplish about the same results as the opposite sex.

The First Alabama Woman To Fly Military Aircraft

Flying was a passion of Nancy Batson Crews. She learned to fly through the Civilian Pilot Training Program at the University of Alabama. In the fall of 1942, she was one of twenty-eight professional women pilots accepted for the experimental Women’s Auxiliary Ferrying Squadron (WAFS). She served from October 1942-December 1944.

Nancy Batson accumulated about 900 hours of flight time ferrying more than 25 types of military aircraft including; L-4, PT-19, AT-6, C-60, P-38, P-39, P-40, P-47, P-51, and A-20s. During this time she received an Army Air Corps instrument rating.

When the WASP (Women Airforce Service Pilots - as the WAFS became known after August 1943) formed a post-war organization in the early 1970’s, Nancy was elected their first president and drafted the by-laws by which the organization is run.

In September 1999, at age 79, Nancy flew 80 hours as co-pilot in a King Air turboprop. Her last flight was not long after her 80th birthday, shortly before she was grounded by a terminal illness that claimed her life. At that time, her total log book flight time was over 4,000 hours.

Nancy Batson Crews is a member of the 1989 Alabama Aviation Hall of Fame.
WASP - Women Pilots of World War II
Women Airforce Service Pilots (WASP)

In the United States, women pilots were trained to fly non-combat missions in order to free male pilots for combat missions. They ferried planes from the manufacturing plants to military bases, and ended up doing much more including flying new aircraft such as the B-29, to prove to male pilots that these were not as difficult to fly as the men thought!

Well before World War II became imminent, women had made their mark as pilots. Amelia Earhart, Jacqueline Cochran, Nancy Harkness Love, Bessie Coleman and Harriet Quimby were only a few of the women record-holders in aviation.

In 1939, women were allowed to be part of the Civilian Pilot Training Program, a program designed to train college students to fly, with an eye to national defense. But women were limited by quota to one woman for every ten men in the program.

Jackie Cochran and Nancy Harkness Love separately proposed the use by the military of women. Cochran lobbied Eleanor Roosevelt, writing a 1940 letter urging that a women's division of the Air Force be established especially to ferry planes from manufacturing plants to military bases.

With no such American program supporting the Allies in their war effort, Cochran and 25 other American women pilots joined the British Air Transportation Auxiliary. Shortly after, Nancy Harkness Love was successful in getting the Women's Auxiliary Ferrying Squadron (WAFS) established, and a few women were hired. Jackie Cochran returned to establish the Women's Flying Training Detachment (WFTD).

On August 5, 1943, these two efforts — WAFS and WFTD — merged to become the Women Airforce Service Pilots (WASP), with Cochran as director. More than 25,000 women applied — with requirements including a pilot's license and many hours experience. The first class graduated on December 17, 1943. The women had to pay their own way to the training program in Texas. A total of 1830 were accepted into training and 1074 women graduated from WASP training during its existence, plus 28 WAFS. The women were trained “the Army way” and their graduation rate was similar to that for male military pilots.

The WASP was never militarized, and those who served as WASP were considered civil service employees. There was considerable opposition to the WASP program in the press and in Congress. General Henry “Hap” Arnold, US Army Air Force commander, first supported the program, then disbanded it. The WASP was deactivated December 20, 1944, having flown about 60 million miles in operations. Thirty-eight WASP were killed, including some during training.

Records of WASP were classified and sealed, so historians minimized or ignored the women pilots. In 1977 — the same year the Air Force graduated its first post-WASP women pilots — Congress granted veteran status to those who had served as WASP, and in 1979 issued official honorable discharges.

Lewis, Jone Johnson. “WASP - Women Pilots of World War II.” ThoughtCo, Jun. 14, 2018

"This is not a time when women should be patient. We are in a war and we need to fight it with all our ability and every weapon possible. Women pilots, in this particular case, are a weapon waiting to be used."

Eleanor Roosevelt, 1942

"If the nation ever again needs them, American women will respond. Never again will they have to prove they can do any flying job the military has. Not as an experiment. Not to fill in for men. They will fly as commissioned officers in the future Air Force of the United States with equal pay - hospitalization - insurance - veterans' benefits. THE WASP HAVE EARNED IT FOR THESE WOMEN OF THE FUTURE"

Byrd Howell Granger, WASP 43-W-1
Also attributed to: Jacqueline Cochran, WASP Director
On the morning of June 6, 1944, the first Douglas C-47 Skytrain crossed the coastline of Normandy, France, and let loose the paratroopers that began the invasion of Europe. And in late evening the night before, a group of Pathfinders from the 101st Airborne Division were tasked with marking the drop zones. They were to place lights and radar beacons so that more than 13,000 jumpers who would immediately follow in the all-out airborne assault could find their way to bridges and road crossings designated as strategic targets.

The popular story had always been that Col. John M. Donalson, an Alabama native, piloted the lead aircraft of the invasion force—True! ...and that Donalson was piloting the C-47A named, "Belle of Birmingham" - False! In fact, he was piloting "That's All... Brother", the plane that led over 800 C-47s that dropped over 13,000 paratroopers into a battle that changed the course of history and mankind.

In 2006, Matt Scales, a member of the Alabama Air National Guard’s 106th Air Refueling Squadron became fascinated with the history of his squadron, especially the period in World War II when it flew B-25s in the South Pacific. One day he heard that a member of the 106th had flown the lead C-47 on D-Day. “I didn’t understand how this was possible, as, on June 6, 1944, my squadron was about as far away from Normandy as humanly possible,” says Scales.

Scales spent a couple of months at the Air Force Historical Research Agency and researched both Donalson and the aircraft flown on D-Day. He found the aircraft tail number, 42-92847, which had been registered as N88874 and, in 2007, was owned by someone in Mesa, Arizona. At first, Scales thought he had uncovered the Belle of Birmingham, the C-47 that Donalson, who was especially chosen to lead the squadron on D-Day, ordinarily flew while abroad. But he learned that Donalson chose another C-47 as the lead because Belle of Birmingham was his pride and joy and he didn’t want it scarred by the installation of equipment that was used to follow the pathfinder’s signals. Col. Donalson named this aircraft as a message to Hitler that his plans were done with the invasion. In other words, That’s all, brother. Scales also learned the Belle of Birmingham had been scrapped in Mexico during the 1970s. Col. Donalson died in 1987.

That’s All... Brother survived the war and was sold as surplus. It was restored as a variant of a C-47 used in Vietnam by an Arizona buyer. A few years later, Scales found out the C-47 had been sold to an outfit in Oshkosh, WI. Plans were to convert the aircraft to a twin-engine turboprop.

The Commemorative Air Force, an organization based in Dallas that collects and restores historical aircraft for flight, bought "That’s All... Brother" in 2015 and began a restoration with help from the technicians at Basler Turbo Conversions. (Basler was the “bone yard” where the plane had been found.)

The hope is to get the job done in time so “That's All... Brother" is able to fly over Normandy on June 6, 2019 for the 75th anniversary of the D-Day invasion.

Matt Scales in the cockpit of That's All... Brother
MEMBERSHIP

When It Comes to Southern Aviation History …
Just Ace It!

*With a Southern Museum of Flight Membership*

Yes, I would like to become a member of the Southern Museum of Flight.
Your membership will help the museum continue its work in preserving southern aviation history, restoring historic aircraft and inspiring students to excel in science and technology.

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