



# THE CHINA LAKER

Vol. 20, No. 42

Newsletter of the China Lake Museum Foundation

Spring 2014

## The Day Japan Bombed Brookings, Oregon

By: Norm Goyer

September 9, 1942, the I-25 class Japanese submarine was cruising in an easterly direction raising its periscope occasionally as it neared the United States Coastline. Japan had attacked Pearl Harbor less than a year ago and the Captain of the attack submarine knew that Americans were watching their coast line for ships and aircraft that might attack our country. Dawn was approaching; the first rays of the sun were flickering off the periscopes lens. Their mission; attack the west coast with incendiary bombs in hopes of starting a devastating forest fire.

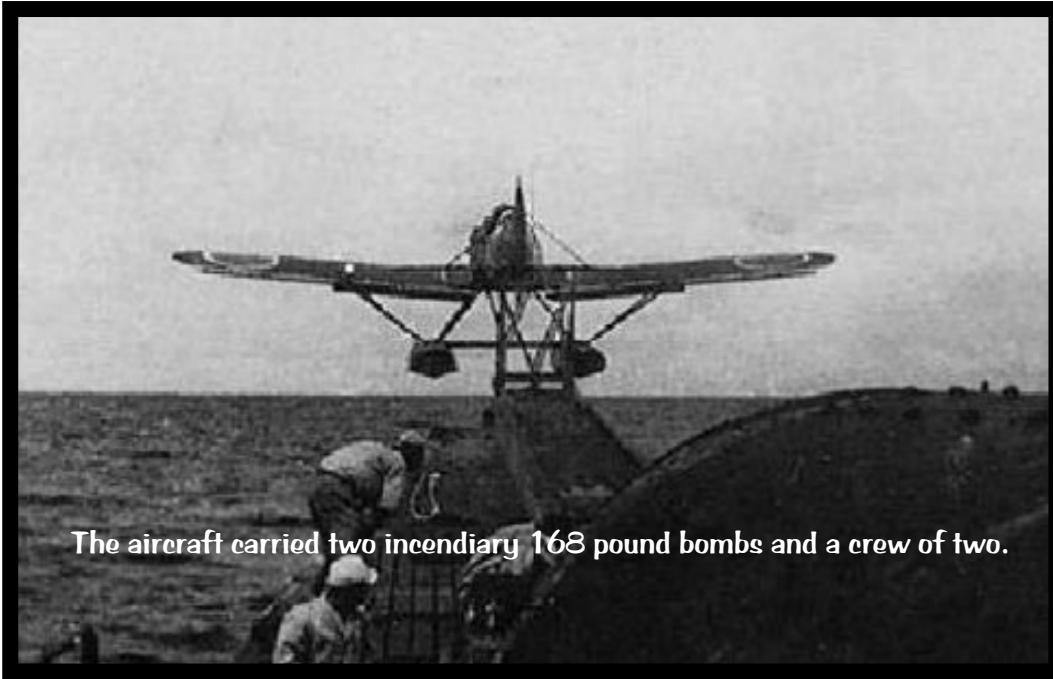
If this test run were successful, Japan had hopes of using their huge submarine fleet to attack the eastern end of the Panama Canal to slow down shipping from the Atlantic to the Pacific. The Japanese Navy had a large number of I-400 submarines under construction, each capable of carrying three aircraft. Pilot Chief Warrant Officer Nobuo Fujita and his crewman Petty Officer Shoji Okuda were making last minute checks of their charts making sure they matched those of the submarine's navigator.

September 9, 1942:  
Nebraska forestry student Keith V. Johnson was on duty atop a forest fire lookout tower between Gold's Beach and Brookings, Oregon. Keith had memorized the silhouettes of Japanese long distance bombers and those of our own aircraft. He felt confident that he could spot and identify, friend or foe, almost immediately. It was cold on the coast this September morning, and quiet. The residents of the area were still in bed or preparing to head for work. Lumber was a large part of the industry in Brookings, just a few miles north of the California-Oregon state lines.



The only plane ever to drop a bomb on the United States during WW-II was this submarine based Glen.

Aboard the submarine the Captain's voice boomed over the PA system, "Prepare to surface, aircrew report to your stations, wait for the open hatch signal." During training runs several subs were lost when hangar doors were opened too soon and sea water rushed into the hangars and sank the boat with all hands lost. You could hear



The aircraft carried two incendiary 168 pound bombs and a crew of two.

the change of sound as the bow of the I-25 broke from the depths, nosed over for its run on the surface. A loud bell signaled the "All Clear."

The crew assigned to the single engine Yokosuki E14Ys float equipped observation and light attack aircraft sprang into action. They rolled the plane out of its hangar built next to the conning tower. The wings and tail were unfolded, and two 168 pound incendiary bombs were attached to the hard points under the wings. This was a small two passenger float plane with a nine cylinder 340 hp radial engine.

It was full daylight when the Captain ordered the aircraft to be placed on the catapult. Warrant Officer Fujita started the engine, let it warm up, checked the magnetos and oil pressure. There was a slight breeze blowing and the seas were calm. A perfect day to attack the United States of America. When the gauges were in the green, the pilot signaled and the catapult launched the aircraft. After a short climb to altitude the pilot turned on a heading for the Oregon coast.

Johnson was sweeping the horizon but could see nothing. He went back to his duties as a forestry agent which was searching for any signs of a forest fire. The morning moved on. Every few minutes he would scan low, medium and high but nothing caught his eye.

The small Japanese float plane had climbed to several thousand feet of altitude for better visibility and to get above the coastal fog. The pilot had calculated land fall in a few minutes and right on schedule he could see the breakers flashing white as they hit the Oregon shores.

Johnson was about to put his binoculars down when something flashed in the sun just above the fog bank. It was unusual because in the past all air traffic had been flying up and down the coast, not aiming into the coast.

The pilot of the aircraft checked his course and alerted his observer to be on the lookout for a fire tower which was on the



The "Glen" was launched via catapult From a I-25 class Japanese submarine.

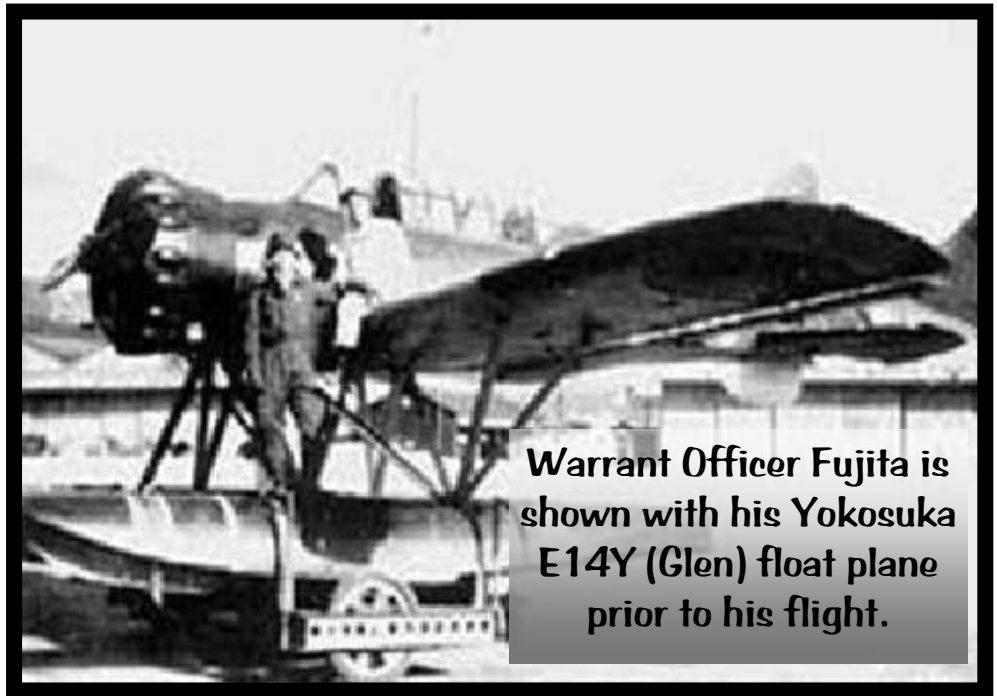
edge of the wooded area where they were supposed to drop their bombs. These airplanes carried very little fuel and all flights were in and out without any loitering. The plane reached the shore line and the pilot made a course correction 20 degrees to the north. The huge trees were easy to spot and certainly easy to hit with the bombs. The fog was very wispy by this time.

Johnson watched in awe as the small floatplane with a red meat ball on the wings flew overhead. The plane was not a bomber and there was no way that it could have flown across the Pacific. Johnson could not understand what was happening. He locked onto the plane and followed it as it headed inland.

The pilot activated the release locks so that when he could pickled the bombs they would release. His instructions were simple, fly at 500 feet, drop the bombs into the trees and circle once to see if they had started any fires and then head back to the submarine.



This Memorial Plaque is located in Brookings , Oregon at the site of the 1942 bombing.



Warrant Officer Fujita is shown with his Yokosuka E14Y (Glen) float plane prior to his flight.

Johnson could see the two bombs under the wing of the plane and knew that they would be dropped. He grabbed his communications radio and called the Forest Fire Headquarters informing them of what he was watching unfold.

The bombs tumbled from the small seaplane and impacted the forests. The pilot circled once and spotted fire around the impact point. He executed an 180 degree turn and headed back to the submarine. There was no air activity, and the skies were clear. The small float plane lined up with the surfaced submarine and landed gently on the ocean, then taxied to the sub. A long boom swung out from the stern. His crewman caught the cable and hooked it into the pickup attached to the roll over cage between the cockpits. The plane was swung onto the deck. The plane's crew folded the wings and tail, pushed it into its hangar and secured the water tight doors. The I-25 submerged and headed back to Japan.

This event, which caused no damage, marked the only time during World War II that an enemy plane had dropped bombs on the United States mainland. What the Japanese didn't count on was coastal fog, mist and heavy doses of rain, which made the forests so wet, they simply would not catch fire.

Fifty years later the Japanese pilot, who survived the war, would return to Oregon to help dedicate a historical plaque at the exact spot where his two bombs had impacted.

The elderly pilot then donated his ceremonial sword as a gesture of peace and closure of the bombing of Oregon in 1942.





# CHINA LAKE MUSEUM FOUNDATION

Saturday May 31 at 5:00pm  
Kerr McGee Center

## 14TH ANNUAL DINNER & AUCTION

### WANTED

THE FOUNDATION IS SEEKING  
AUCTION DONATIONS FOR ALL  
CATEGORIES:

LIVE, SILENT, AND RAFFLE.  
CONTACT THE MUSEUM OFFICE  
(760) 939-3530

**REWARD**

**\$30 PER TICKET**

**\$50 PER COUPLE**

**\$250 RESERVED SEATING FOR 2**

**\$1,000 FAMILY TABLE FOR 8**

**\$1,500 CORPORATE TABLE FOR 8**

**RECOGNITION IN PROGRAM**

**\$500 FULL PAGE**

**\$250 1/2 PAGE**

**\$150 1/4 PAGE**

**\$50 BUSINESS CARD**

**PURCHASE YOUR TICKETS AT THE GIFT SHOP (760) 939-3530  
OR CHAMBER OF COMMERCE.**



WESTERN THEME  
LIVE AND SILENT AUCTION  
RAFFLES (WINNERS MUST BE PRESENT)  
CASH BAR  
DINNER: FARRIS' CATERING



# Response to the SR-71 article by member Doug Turner

Doug Turner worked at China Lake on the angular rate bombing system among other projects before moving on to Lockheed Martin "Skunk Works".

I just read the article on the SR-71 fly by in The China Laker. I had pretty much the same thing happen to me in 1989. The Air Force had just decided to retire the SR-71 but also wanted to get as much PR out of the plane as possible before final grounding including one event was a record-breaking cross-country flight. The Skunk Works management asked the Air Force if they could do a fly by at Burbank airport (a heavily used commercial facility and we were still there at that time). This was to give the employees (many of whom had worked on the plane) a last chance to see it in flight. Especially they wanted it to be done in honor of Kelly Johnson. Kelly was still alive at that time but was very ill and suffering from Alzheimer's. The Air Force owed a lot to Kelly so they readily agreed. On the appointed day we were all standing as close to the flight line as possible. Kelly was there with close friends and a nurse



watching over him. The first indication of arrival was a stream of black exhaust smoke in the north east approaching the east-west runway. He was wobbling his wings slightly left and right. I remember thinking the plane was a bit difficult to control at low speeds. He came on down to the runway at maybe 150 to 200 feet flying slow. THEN.....he hit the afterburners. ....OMG!.....OMG! My insides were jelly. No words in English can describe the feeling. Just try to imagine it. Just in case no one noticed the first pass, he came around and did it again. I've always wondered what happened inside the terminal with the oblivious passengers awaiting flights as well as airport employees!

Here's a story about the SR which is supposed to be true although I doubt it. Still.... says something about the airplane.

Without identifying his aircraft type an SR pilot called regional air traffic control and requested permission to go to FL 60 (60,000 feet). The controller radioed back in a snotty voice, "Permission granted and just exactly how do you propose to get up to FL 60?" The SR replied, "Uhm....I'm actually requesting to descend to FL 60."(Flight Level). Only the sound of crickets from the controller.

Anyway....pass this on to anyone you think might appreciate it. The SR was certainly one-of-kind.



*"Sleeping with the  
Missiles"  
Girl Scout Troup 56!*



# From the CEO

## Annual Call for Auction Items

I recently completed my annual resorting of the garage to enable my wife to shelter her car from the relentless desert heat (my truck goes under a tree). Every year I encounter the same unopened box of tools I “had” to buy years ago, but never opened or used. I’m thinking there are a lot of garages in town with similar “treasures” that would be of great benefit to the live or silent auctions at this year’s 14<sup>th</sup> annual China Lake Museum Foundation’s Dinner and Auction. Give us a call at 760-939-3530 and we’ll pick up your “treasures.” Please join us for this grand event at the Kerr McGee Center on May 31.

## Phase I Plaza Construction

If all goes according to plan, grading of the museum’s leased Kern County lot (the corner of China Lake Boulevard and Las Flores Avenue) will commence in August. The first indication of the project will be the installation of temporary construction security fencing, followed by the excavation of the lot to a depth of four feet, and then followed by back filling and compaction of the lot. After utilities are installed, an A 6E Intruder aircraft will be anchored into place, likely in an aircraft carrier “catch” position. This year’s project will represent only twenty (20%) percent of the overall plaza design. For detailed information of the plaza project, please visit the plaza project table at the annual dinner and auction. Legacy opportunities will be offered for the plaza commencing with the dinner and auction event.

## Funding for the Commander-in-Chief Pavilion of the China Lake Museum

The design for the new museum is based on a Commander-in-Chief theme, highlighting the technology and armament provided by the work of China Lake to our nation’s Commanders-in-Chief in defense of the nation. An exclusive opportunity for the legacy rights to the museum was presented to President George W. Bush. Through numerous emails, it was clear President Bush himself reviewed our proposal, which was cradled in the works of Wallace Martin (Arming the Fleet) and Liz Babcock (Magnificent Mavericks). Unfortunately, President Bush very respectfully declined our offer. As such, our major fundraising efforts have moved on. Despite our efforts to fund the building program, as much as possible from major external donors, your contributions are equally important in funding the current plaza project and the ongoing operations of the museum.

Bruce Auld

CEO

# Volunteers!

**Front Desk Greeters  
Docents  
Gift Shop Assistants  
Exhibit Maintenance**

**Exhibit Development  
Grant Writing  
Light Cleaning  
(Dusting & Vacuuming)**

The Museum is open Monday through Saturday 10am–4pm. We are looking for help in all areas.

Front Desk Greeters: Welcome visitors at the lobby and assist them in getting started – sign in, help with getting videos running, answer questions, direct visitors to the Gift Shop if necessary, and make sure artifacts don't walk off or get damaged.

Gift Shop: If you have ever wanted to work in retail, this is a great opportunity. Provide friendly help to customers, run the cash register, keep the shelves stocked, help with barcoding merchandise, and come up with creative marketing and display ideas.



**Many hands make light work!**

**Alice Campbell**  
VP of Operations  
(760) 377-7074  
alicerbob@verizon.net

**Teri Raley**  
Office Manager  
(760) 939-3530 (Museum)  
chinalakemuseum@mediacombb.net

# President's Message by Bob Campbell

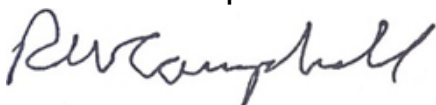
As Bruce mentioned in his note, we are busy with the final preparations for the May 31 auction. We hope to see all of you there, as the auction also serves as a social gathering of the collective team of military, civilian, community, and defense industry leaders that form the fabric of the accomplishments shared in the Museum.

The auction is our major source of funds that allow us to keep the doors open for the Museum, to improve our exhibits, provide education outreach activities such as the summer camps led by Dr. Bob Smith, and to fund our efforts to relocate and expand the Museum into the Community. All of these efforts provide a positive outreach to/for the community by providing a venue that helps preserve the China Lake History and Culture that can be shared with the public on a daily basis.

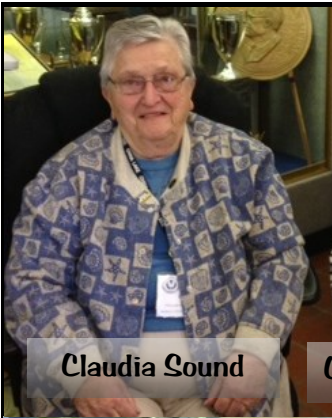
For the second time in two years, the Girl Scouts of Troop 56 arranged for a "Sleeping with the Missiles" event at the Museum on January 10th. For this second event, the Troop 56 Senior Girls working on their Silver Award hosted younger Scouts from Troop 2263. This involved meeting with advisors Craig Porter (Museum Director) and their Scout Leaders (Carrie Cope and Amy Pillars) to plan the event. The sleep-over was highlighted with educational activities that included a presentation by Bertha Ryan discussing "Women in 20<sup>th</sup> Century Aviation – the 21<sup>st</sup> Century is Yours to Seize". A highlight was when Bertha told the girls about her long-time friendship with Astronaut Neil Armstrong. CDR Matt Jackson USN (NAWS Executive Officer) presented "Carrier Operations" – all about carriers and how do you go about landing an F-18 on one (day, night, inclement weather, etc.) There were some great pictures and videos to go along with the talk. Capt. Leigh Erwin USMC MAD China Lake gave a talk on life in the Marine Corps. As a special treat, she brought night vision goggles for the girls to experiment with. What an amazing experience for the girls! Alice Campbell (Museum Director) gave a tour of the Museum. The event also involved building and flying gliders, a scavenger hunt, and tasting "space food". Based on the success of the first two "Sleeping with the Missiles" events, a third sleep-over is planned for May 9<sup>th</sup>.

Finally, I mentioned in my last message the importance of growing our exhibit base and the initiation of some efforts through the exhibit committee. Bruce, Alice and I met with Fred Weals, George Silberberg and John DiPol to discuss what they thought were important elements to be included in our planned exhibit on the Ranges. A picture of the three taken at the time of the discussion is included in this newsletter. We left with some good insights and a recording of the interview (to be transcribed by Jack Latimer). Their insight will serve as the building block for the exhibit.

Robert Campbell







Claudia Sound



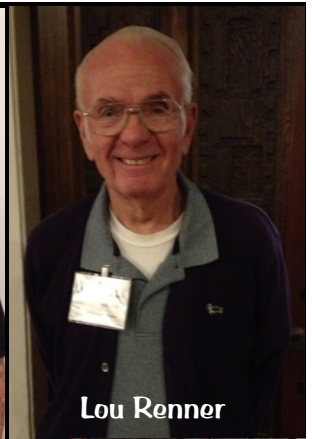
Chantal Andrews



Pat Doucette



Dee DiPol



Lou Renner



Lela Herigstad

These EXCELLENT Volunteers have been doing amazing things to make the Museum warm and exciting for visitors. The Docents are the people who bring life to the exhibits in the Museum for the visitors and are very special in our efforts to highlight the contributions of China Lake in support of preserving Peace. The Greeters are important and greet our visitors with a smile and make people feel welcome when they come to the Museum. All of these amazing volunteers also assist in the operations of the Museum when working with Teri and Bruce.



Forrest Lloyd



Bruce Bartels



Rex Randolph



Al Lopez



Coreen Singh



John Johnson



Scott Millett



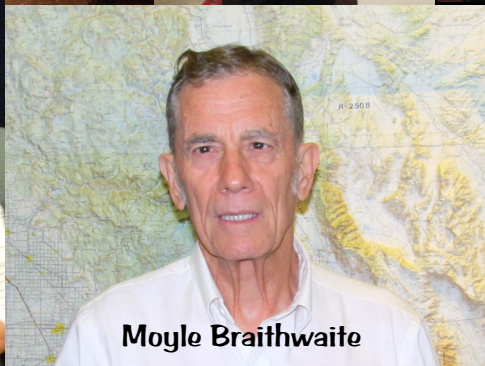
Dick DeMarco



Calvin Gifford



Rose Davis



Moyle Braithwaite



Bill Webster



Larry Lincicum

Not pictured: Jackie Renne



# Thank You!

You help put the pieces together!

February 5, 2014–April 23, 2014

## Special Contributions

Linda Miller

## New Memberships

Bob Solliday

## Museum Campaign Contributors

Howard and Barbara Auld  
John and Judith Ward

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### China Lake Museum Foundation

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Please put in the subject line "Electronic Newsletter."



# Gift Shop Excitement!



**New T-shirts are in!**

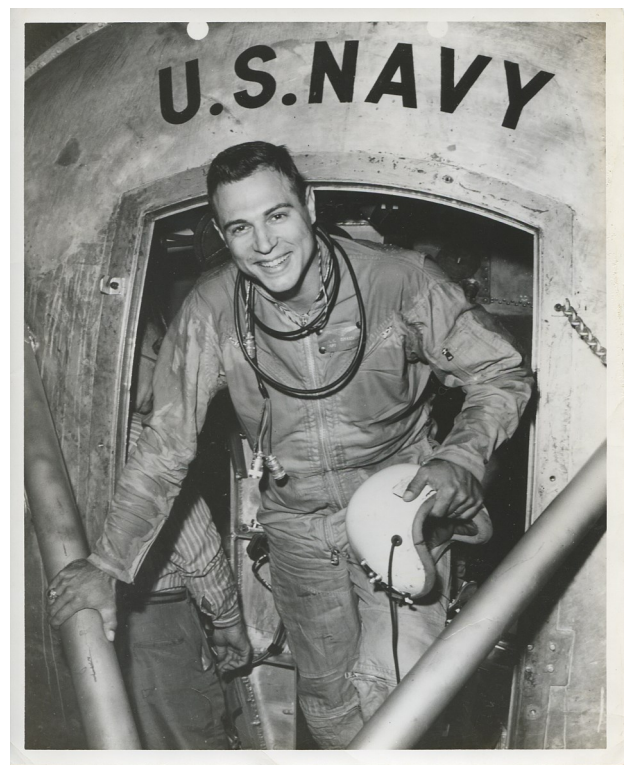
**Looking for a good sale? Come check out our 40% off shelves**



## Revisiting a Record Shot with Robert E. Solliday, Lt. Col. USMC Retired

*Robert E. Solliday came to the China Lake Museum in April of 2014. He enjoyed the museum immensely from the standpoint of being able to share with his son what the missiles looked like that he had launched in his career. The museum was able to help bring the stories alive that Bob Solliday had shared. Solliday shared with the staff at the museum a few stories and let us know that he holds a few records under his belt still. Now for a little bit of Solliday's life experiences.*

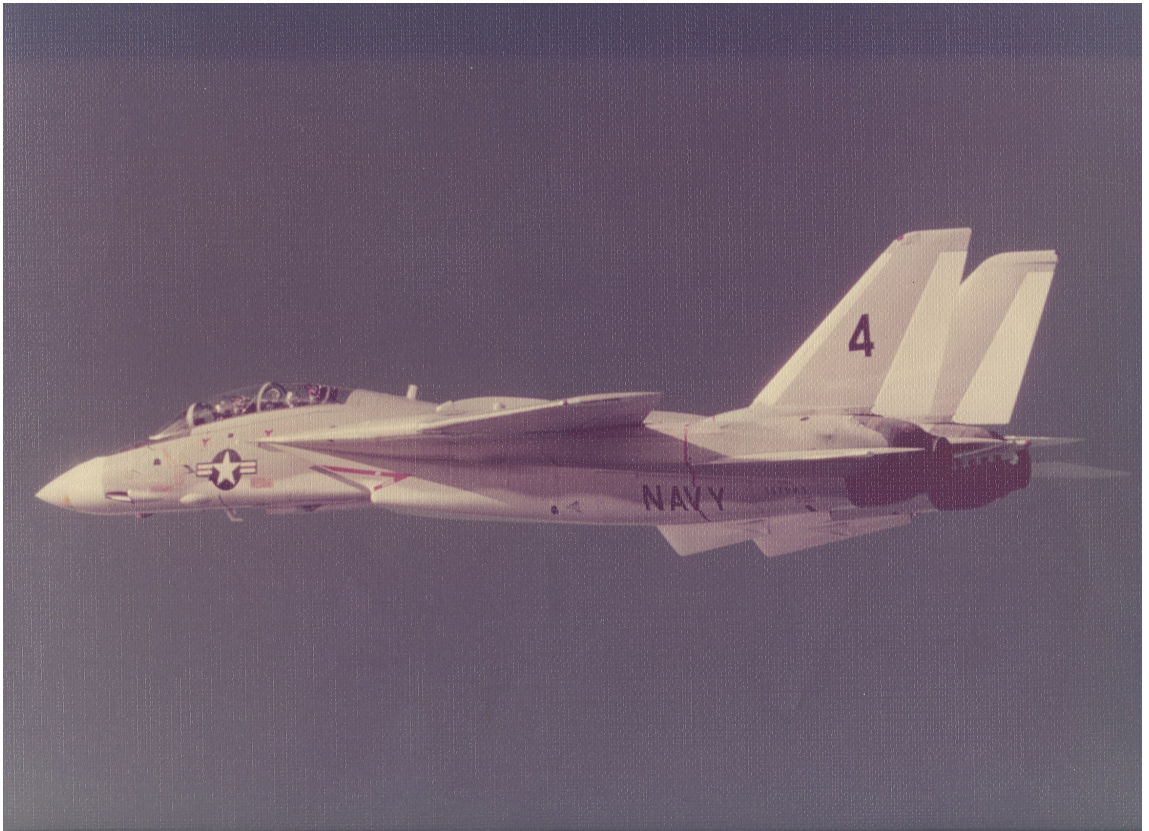
*Reading about famed aviator Charles Lindbergh inspired Solliday to take up flying lessons, and he earned his private airplane licence at age 17. For a time he worked at a flying school operated by the Flying Dutchman Air Service in nearby Bensalem*





*Township before joining the U.S. Navy to undertake flight training. He began his training in January 1952, completing it at NAS Pensacola, Florida in May 1953.*

*On 31 January 1972, Lt. Col. Solliday retired from the U.S. Marine Corps. As a civilian he took on several major projects as an experimental test pilot for the Hughes Aircraft Corporation,*



*based at the Naval Missile Center at Pt. Mugu, California. This included work on the F-14A/Phoenix long-range, air-to-air missile project. He believes he still holds the record for the longest distance for an air-to-air missile fired 126 miles over the Pacific Ocean off Pt. Mugu on 12 April 1973 (Mission #PP20, AIN-54A Phoenix at Mach 1.51 at 44,000 feet). He is also proud of the fact that he was once the recipient of the Navy's A-7 Man of the Year Award.*



*On 12 April 1973, Bob Solliday fired a Phoenix missile a record distance of 126 miles from an F-14A. The actual firing of the missile is shown in this photograph. (Photo courtesy of Robin Solliday Heyne).*

*After an illustrious 20-year career in the Marines as an experimental test pilot, Bob Solliday*



*retired and starting flying the F-14 for Hughes Aircraft Corporation at the Naval Missile Center, Pt. Mugu, California. At Pt. Mugu, he was responsible for working on the missile launch and pilot interface portion of the AIM-54A Phoenix long-range, air-to-air missile program. Two memorable missions during this period were the 'six-on-six' and 'the longest shot'. Bill Jessup, the other Hughes test pilot, chose the 'six-on-six' and Solliday did 'the longest shot' mission on 12 April 1973.*

*Mr. Solliday now resides with his wife of 56 years, Charlene, in Nashville, TN.*



*The Official language describing the mission and typed on the back of the attached photo commemorating the mission reads:*

***WORLD RECORD AIR-TO-AIR MISSILE LAUNCH 12 APRIL 1973.  
POINT MUGU, CA MISSION #PP20.  
BOB SOLLIDAY AND CARL GARRETT, F-14A TOMCAT  
AND AIM-54A PHOENIX, MACH 1.51 AT 44,000 FT.  
126 Statute Miles***



Researching important exhibits on the China Lake ranges for the new museum to come.

Pictured left to right: Bruce Auld, Fred Weals, Bob Campbell, George Silberberg, and John DiPol



Hey you, Need a base pass? Call Teri Raley (760) 939-3530

Pictured: Christian Raley in the Harpoon Penetration Test



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I want to help build a new Museum in Ridgecrest!

Please accept my payment of:

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