



REFLECTIONS



Dedicated to preserving the history of a great airline and its people.

Northwest Airlines 1926-2010



RCAF Lt. Norm Midthun, right, with Crown Prince Olav of Norway, during World War 2.
Photo courtesy Norm Midthun.

ALT FOR NORGE

ONE OF FLYING'S MOST STORIED CAREERS:
SOME MEMORABLE MOMENTS WITH RETIRED
NORTHWEST CAPTAIN NORM MIDTHUN.

By Bob Johnson

Norm Midthun's 39-year career with Northwest Airlines began in a rather inauspicious manner: he signed on as a co-pilot on a Friday in December, 1945. There was an airmail contract dispute with the government at the time, however. So, he was laid off the very next day!

So Midthun (pron. Mid-toon) took other Northwest jobs, first as a station wagon driver, shuttling company mail among the airline's six Twin Cities locations ("at \$105 a month, \$87 take-home pay," he remembers.) then as a Reservations Agent ("Night shift. Two or three of us answered the telephones all night long.") Then as an airport ticket agent ("We wrote out all the tickets by hand.") Then a brief time at the company headquarters at 1885 University Ave. in St. Paul, with budding Northwest VP/Treasurer Don Hardesty.

At about this time, Northwest was setting up its Orient Region operation preparatory to the beginning of passenger flights on July 15, 1947. NWA had also contracted with the Cal-Tex Oil Company to fly some of its personnel from the Orient back to New York City. Norm and Benny Carlson became Flight Purser on those early flights, the first such to be hired by Northwest Airlines! One NWA DC-4 Cal-Tex charter flight crashed on Mt. Sanford, near Anchorage, Alaska, killing all onboard, including Purser Bob Bader. "I traded that flight with Bob," Norm recalls. "Otherwise it would have been me." (ed: this crash of NW4442 on March 12, 1948, is the subject of the recent book **Flight of Gold**, by Kevin A. McGregor. See Bruce Kitt's review in REFLECTIONS, December 2013.)

Finally, Norm became a co-pilot when NWA began its trans-Pacific passenger service, "for five years," Norm says. "Fifty-four round-trips in DC-4s. Each Twin Cities/Seattle-Anchorage-Shemya Island-Tokyo round-trip, with layovers, took up to 18 days. Can you imagine doing that now?"

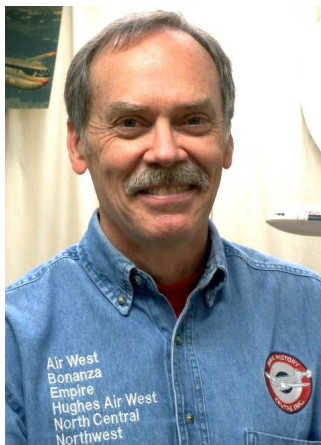
As incredible as Norm's Northwest career has been, his pre-NWA flying exploits properly belong in a Hollywood movie.

Norm attended Roosevelt High School in Minneapolis. One of his early mentors was a Norwegian-born instructor, Ben Eggen, who taught a Norwegian language class. True to his heritage, Norm enrolled. Graduating in January 1942, Norm

went to the US Navy recruitment office and said he wanted to be a pilot. "'You're only 17,' the Navy recruiter said. 'Come back next year.' So I went to the Norwegian Consulate in Minneapolis and told them I wanted to fly for Norway in its battle against the Nazis," Norm recalls. (ed: *Germany invaded Norway on April 9, 1940*). "I told them I knew the language and that I was 19, and as far as I know, they never checked."

Norm was posted to the wartime Royal Norwegian Air Force (RCAF) training base, called "Little Norway", at the Toronto Island Airport (ed: *Norway surrendered to German forces on June 10, 1940. Three days earlier, King Haakon VII, Crown Prince Olav, others in the royal family, Prime Minister Johan Nygaardsvold, and other officials were evacuated to London, where they formed the Norwegian Government in Exile. At their request, aviator and RCAF airman Bernt Balchen [who held dual US/Norwegian citizenship] negotiated with the Canadian government to organize the training facility for escaped Norwegian pilots and Norwegian expatriates in Toronto*). For Norm, training was a tough seven months. "I didn't leave the base, not once in all that time. All the instruction was in Norwegian. You can guess that my understanding of the language was rudimentary. At first, to study, I had to translate everything. I spent as much time on the language as I did learning to fly. Eventually I was thinking in Norwegian and then speaking it." Midthun became the first American to earn

cont. p 3



Bruce Kitt Photo: Joe Callaci

AN IMPORTANT MESSAGE from the Executive Director

In mid-November our landlord exercised his 180-day lease termination option. **The NWA History Centre's last day at 8101 - 34th Ave. South will be Saturday, April 25, 2015.**

First and foremost, the Board is unanimous in its decision: the NWAHC is not dissolving - we are only moving.

We had hoped our recently signed lease would keep us in our present location until AirSpaceMN (ASM) was built and our future more secure, but now we must deal with this move. We are work-

ing with a commercial real estate agent to help us find a new location and have been on several site tours already.

I don't want to minimize the challenge the museum now faces. The Board believes that ASM represents our best opportunity for a permanent home, but that home is still years away. This interim period is going to test us. We are looking at every option available, from a "Santa-please" list of retail space with public visibility - both car and foot traffic - to a "Scrooge-ish" warehouse setting; from everything in one location to split locations as we have now. We remain optimistic but realize that wish lists come with a cost. The museum's survival is the primary objective and every effort will be directed to that end. The Board is equally concerned that we get out of what has now become an annual event---moving. Last year it was storage space, this year museum space. Constantly relocating is not a healthy indicator of stability and one we must avoid, both to keep faith with you and to insure we uphold the public's trust in the NWAHC as a museum that adheres to museum best practices.

We ask for your patience and support as we gear up for our move. At a date-to-be-decided in mid-February you may see a reduction in our hours as the museum begins to pack up. We will be hiring professional movers and will have to allow time for both our departure and our arrival and set-up in our new location. We will keep you informed of our search, move, and re-opening plans. In the meantime, we're still at 8101 - 34th Avenue South and look forward to your visit over the upcoming Christmas and New Year holidays (our gift shop has nice Christmas and holiday gifts for that special someone on your list). We wish the best for you in 2015 and are looking forward to finally changing our gallery displays (we just didn't expect it to be so drastic!).

Peace on Earth and CAVU. →

NWA History Centre Visitor Information

Open M-F 11am-5pm, Sa 9am-1pm.
Closed Sundays and major holidays.
Admission FREE (special events may incur a charge).
Donations always welcomed and appreciated.

Advance reservations preferred for visits by groups of 8 or more.
Please call 952.698.4478.

🚗 FREE parking 🚇 Metro: LRT Blue Line American Boulevard



AirSpace MINNESOTA

The NWA History Centre
Founder **Henry V. "Pete" Patzke**
1925-2012

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Collection Manager **Bruce Kitt**

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Norwegian Air Force wings during World War 2.

But it almost did not happen. "After the first week or so, Base Commander Ole Reistad came to me and said 'Maybe you shouldn't be here. You're an American and we have no control over you.' He was soured, I think, because of a couple of Americans who had shown up, taken all the flight training, and disappeared."

Norm convinced him otherwise, however, and he stayed. "When I graduated, he asked me to stay on for a couple of classes to help new lads with their English. 'I helped you and now you can help me', he said, and I did."

Eventually, Norm was stationed at British Royal Air Force (RAF) bases in Scotland and Northern Ireland, assigned to RAF Squadron 333, as a co-pilot in a crew under the command of legendary aviator-explorer, the Norwegian-born Bernt Balchen, their missions including photo reconnaissance and the ferrying of supplies and personnel in support of the Norwegian Resistance, whose rallying motto, chosen by the King, was **"Alt for Norge"**--Everything for Norway. Norm remembers sadly that about 40% of his Canadian flight class was killed on similar missions. "The Norwegians never gave up. They fought the Nazis tooth and nail, in spite of the tragic reprisals which followed. They were never conquered." Bernt Balchen was an incredibly gifted instrument pilot, Norm remembers, and Norm would use much of what he learned from Balchen when he became a flight instructor at Northwest Airlines.



(ed: RAF Squadrons 300-352 were "Allied Manned Squadrons", rostered by pilots and support crew from occupied countries—Poland, Czechoslovakia, Holland, France, Norway, Greece, Belgium and Yugoslavia. They received logistical assistance from the RAF and operated, with varying degrees of autonomy, within the overall RAF strategic and tactical command structure during the war.)

At war's end, Norm found himself piloting a PBY Catalina as the transport aircraft for Crown Prince Olav. Postwar Norway was impoverished and devastated, and the Norwegian royal family wanted to conduct an on-site assessment of the war's damage to the country, assess the needs of the population, and give the citizenry a morale boost by visiting as many towns and villages as possible.

Prince Olav was crowned King in 1952, and Norm and the King remained friends and in touch for many years. Norm was also given the opportunity to be a pilot for the newly-launched Scandinavian Airlines System in 1946, but chose instead to return to Minnesota. (author's note: Could you have done it--going from hobnobbing with European royalty to driving a station wagon for Northwest Airlines?)

(ed: Below is a beautiful computer-generated image of the PBY Catalina used on the July 1945 royal tour, two months after the end of the European war. For the tour, the small Norwegian flags on the fuselage were replaced by much larger ones. Image created by Jens-Ole Kjølberg, and printed here by kind permission. To see this image in full-color, see the digital edition of this issue.)



After five years with Northwest spent flying the Asian routes, Norm began racking up flying hours "back home" out of the Twin Cities, while continuing his education at St. Olaf College in Northfield, Minn., where he met his wife Jean. October 30th marked their 60th wedding anniversary.

Norm and Jean have three children, sons David and Tom, and daughter Ann. Grandson Erik is a cadet at the United States Air Force Academy in Colorado Springs. cont. p4



Jean and Norm Midthun. Photo: Joe Callaci.



An NRAF PBY Catalina flying boat, "Vingtor", during winter operations. Norm Midthun flew Catalinas and other aircraft types during the war.

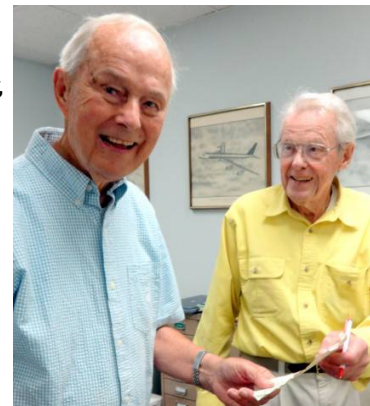
cont. from p 3

As with most veteran pilots, Norm Midthun has his favorite airplanes: the Lockheed L-188 Electra and Douglas DC-10. "The 747 is a great one, too, no doubt about it," he says. "Probably most of us will say the 747 is a favorite. Of course, it's the heaviest, too, so you get paid more. This could be a factor," he adds with a smile. "The DC-10 was a very advanced plane for its day. Gentle controls, a wonderful autopilot system. A pleasure to fly. The Electra was a fine plane too, after it got straightened out." (*ed.: Midthun refers to the early catastrophic problems, requiring strengthening of the engine mounts.*) Planes aside, Norm feels strongly that Northwest Airlines was home to some of the best people, ever, in commercial aviation. "Way back to our founder, Col. Lewis H. Brittin, Pres. Donald Nyrop, perhaps the best airline executive ever. And Capt. Paul Soderlind, Flight Standards Director, honored throughout the industry for his

pioneering contributions to airline safety, to name three."

So what's Norm doing for excitement these days? Among other things, he's keeping busy, playing tennis three times a week in a local competitive senior league. Tennis? Only three times a week? That's all. You see, Norm Midthun is 90 years old. ➔

Right: Norm Midthun with Bob Johnson, the author of this article.
Photo: Robert DuBert



SELECTED SHORT SUBJECTS—HISTORICAL VIGNETTES by Bob Johnson

A MAIL DRIVER IN THE FAST LANE

An episode from Norm Midthun's tenure as an NWA mail driver:

"As I was leaving the Minneapolis city ticket office, a friendly, nicely-dressed gentleman came over to me," Norm recalls. "'You're on your way to the General Office,' he said. 'Care if I ride along?' He seemed genuinely interested as I described the nuances of driving the company station wagon through traffic towards Northwest's G.O. on University Ave. in St. Paul's Midway district. On arrival, he said 'Come on in for a caramel roll and a cup of coffee.'"

The cafeteria was in the basement next to the mail room. "As we sat down, I asked him where he worked. 'Upstairs,' he said. During our repast, I noticed Ernie Yoris, Northwest's Director of Security, staring at us, wide-eyed, from behind the mail room door. When my anonymous friend took leave, Ernie pounced on me. 'What did you talk about?' Ernie demanded. 'What did he say?' I told him about driving the mail, I said. I don't know who he is, I've never seen him before. What's the big deal?" "You don't know him, you've never seen him before," Ernie mimicked. "He's just Croil Hunter, the president of our company!"

The story continues: Several months later, Norm, now a pilot, was invited by Mrs. Ed Floan, wife of NWA's corporate secretary, to her daughter's house on lower Portland Ave. in St. Paul, to discuss their participation in an upcoming Woman's City Club luncheon meeting, to raise money for Norwegian Relief. Mrs. Floan's daughter, Helen, turned out to be Mrs. Croil Hunter. As the three talked, the door opened and a smiling Croil Hunter walked in. "I want you to meet my son-in-law", Mrs. Floan said. Norm continued, "As Croil and I shook hands, I turned to Mrs. Floan. I know your son-in-law, I said. I believe we've met before."

1947: NORTHWEST'S LAST DAYS IN SHANGHAI

Shanghai, China, a major port on Northwest's early trans-Pacific flights, was once known as "The Paris of the Orient." Norm Midthun first viewed this exciting and exotic city in 1947, when hyperinflation and the Communists were in the process of destroying Chiang Kai-Shek's government and changing the social fabric of the entire country.

Norm recalls a dinner with Shanghai Station Manager Paul Benscoter one evening in the city's Palace Hotel Grill Room. The hotel menu offered Tomato Juice Cocktail, Cream a la Regence, Fillet of Whiting Meuniere, Roast Rack of Pork with Cauliflower Saute and New Potatoes, Baba au Rhum and Demi-Tasse, all for a mere \$28,000 CNC (Chinese National Currency). Plus 15% tax. Schnitzel, peas, and potatoes, only \$16,000 CNC. "Walking after dinner, we crossed a bridge over a modest river. Paul said, 'You see bodies floating down now and then, but don't ever try to rescue one. If you do, you're required to take care of it. You had better secure your wallet too.' Some of the local lads were pretty adept with a knife, stealthily slitting your pockets and walking away with the goods."

Actually, at the time, 28,000 Chinese dollars was a cheap price to pay for almost anything. Soon, one US dollar was worth a couple of million CNC. "As the Communists were enveloping Shanghai, just before we (NWA) made our hasty exit, Northwest employees were carrying their pay home in gunny sacks, Paul later told me. Chinese currency was worthless, and was used for fuel. Being there, even at the beginning, those are days you always remember. Days you never forget."



Norm with worthless CNC dollars.
Photo: Bob Johnson.

BERNT BALCHEN

The achievements of a legendary Norwegian explorer, aviator, and mentor for young airman Norm Midthun.

Born in 1899 in Tveit, Norway.

Served with the French Foreign Legion and the Norwegian Army during World War 1.

Seriously wounded while serving in the White Guards Cavalry in the 1918 Finnish Civil War.

Test pilot for the Norwegian Naval Air Service, and for aircraft designer/manufacturer Anthony Fokker.

First man to fly an airplane over both the North and South Poles, the latter in 1929 with US Adm. Richard E. Byrd.

First to pilot a flight carrying airmail from the USA to France, shortly after the 1927 Lindbergh flight.

Technical advisor to Amelia Earhart. Became a US citizen in 1931.

Served in Britain's RAF following the German invasion of Norway.

In 1941, joined the US Army Air Corps, at the rank of colonel, at the invitation of Gen. Henry "Hap" Arnold.

Built, organized and commanded the Greenland airbase Bluie West Eight. Flew clandestine operations during the war.

Assisted in the founding of SAS, the Scandinavian Airline System, in 1946.

Technical advisor for the design and operation of the USAF Strategic Air Command base in Thule, Greenland.

Received the Harmon Trophy for Aviation Excellence, presented by Pres. Eisenhower in 1953.

Died in Mt. Kisco, NY in 1973. Inducted into the National Aviation Hall of Fame (USAF Museum, Dayton) in 1973, and the Canadian Aviation Hall of Fame in 1974.

The US government awarded Balchen several medals, including the Distinguished Flying Cross, the Air Medal, and the Legion of Merit. He was decorated by the kings of Norway, Sweden and Denmark. He retired from the USAF in 1956, but continued to serve as a consultant for government and industry. An accomplished sketcher and watercolorist of Arctic landscapes, his works were exhibited on three occasions at the Grand Central Art Galleries in New York City.

Of Bernt Balchen, Eddie Rickenbacker (World War 1 flying ace and former president of Eastern Air Lines) once said, "There was no better man in the field of flight."



Bernt Balchen with an SAS DC-6, in 1957.

MORE ABOUT NORWAY DURING WORLD WAR 2

The Norway Campaign and occupation, 1940: <http://www.war-experience.org/history/keyaspects/norway1940/>

Norway and Canada during WW2: http://www.emb-norway.ca/norway_and_canada/Historical-ties/Norway-in-Canada-during-World-War-2/Norway-and-Canada-during-World-War-2/#.VFIf3fnFgAs

The RAF Norwegian Catalina Squadrons in WW2: <http://napoleon130.tripod.com/thebycatalina/id34.html>

A film shot at Toronto Island's Little Norway during WW2: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=xLJwzHVpFqI>

**DID WOODY HAVE A FRIEND IN COURT?**

Ward "Woody" Woodwick capped his 36-year career with Northwest Airlines as Plant Maintenance Chief in Grand Rapids, Mich. He retired in 1993. "Our Plant Maintenance Division—we did ground equipment," Woody says. "Anything that didn't fly, we worked on it."

During a recent visit to the NWAHC, Woody recalled this experience, from that era of touchy labor negotiations over 50 years ago: "I was laid off during a strike, so I took a temporary job as a gas station attendant at Hiawatha and 46th Street in Minneapolis. You know, in those days we pumped your gas, cleaned your windshield, and would check your oil and tires if you asked us to."

"And guess who drove in one day, all by himself? Donald W. Nyrop! Did he know me? There was that old saying about Mr. Nyrop—he knew everybody and went everywhere. He must have known me by face because he asked me why I was still here (at the gas station); the contract had been settled two days ago. I said I hadn't heard anything from anybody."



Photo: Bob Johnson.

"Early the next morning, I get a call. It's my boss. He says 'Get back to work today. Right now!' Did Mr. Nyrop intervene on my behalf? He was known to do little things like that. I don't know. I never heard. You be the judge."



The NWA History Centre ACTIVITY LOGBOOK

SEPTEMBER 2014

03 SEP Geoff Jones of Cardiff, Wales, paid a return visit to the HC, as part of a tour of aviation museums in the midwest. Jones is a pilot, and has been a journalist and photographer in the civil aviation field for over 40 years. He used the archives of the NWAHC in the research for his 2005 book *Northwest Airlines - The First Eighty Years*, published by Arcadia Publishing. His other titles include a book about Delta Air Lines, also in the Arcadia "Images of America" series, and books about Northwest and Delta in the "ABC Airliners" series for Ian Allan of the UK. Both Arcadia titles are available in the HC Gift Shop. The ABC books are out of print, but used copies are available at amazon.com. His latest book, about the DC-3, is slated for release in the US in April 2015.

Photos: Robert DuBert.



The HC received a copy of **Hsin-Chih (Derek) Yen's** 79-page Master's Thesis, *The Political and Economic Influence on Northwest Airlines' Route Network in East Asia*. Yen used the archives of the NWAHC as part of his graduate research, spending several visits with us. His extensive reference list includes numerous governmental sources in the Asia

and the USA, and correspondence with a former Northwest executive. The thesis performs a valuable service in telling the story of Northwest Airlines service to Asia from the perspective of a country which was a Northwest "customer." Yen graduated from National Taiwan Normal University in June and currently serves in the Armed Forces of the Republic of China. He will seek a career in airline management.

Photos courtesy Hsin-Chih Yen.



Ed: Your editor was contacted in September by a PhD candidate at Yale University in New Haven, Conn., with questions about an article he read in REFLECTIONS (our online reach is worldwide!). This and the above underscores the important function of the NWA History Centre as a resource for writers and for academic research. We've got historical archives of substance that no one else has, and our mission remains to cherish, preserve and share them with others.

18 SEP Bruce Kitt, NWAHC Executive Director and Collections Manager, was guest speaker at the annual convention of the **American Association for State and Local History**, a Nashville-based association whose mission is to support institutions and individuals in the field of history. In session at the Crowne Plaza in St. Paul during Sept. 17-20, Kitt's presentation to the Corporate History Affinity Group was part of a series entitled "How to make your Archives and Museum invaluable to the Parent Organization", and dealt with how to re-invent and maintain a museum when the parent organization is sold or disappears. Radio celebrity Garrison Keillor was scheduled to address the convention later that day.



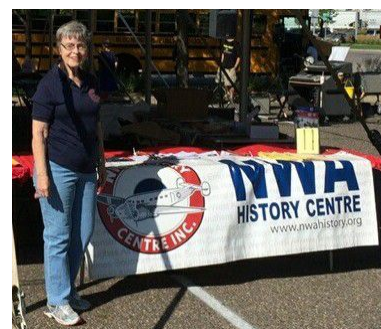
AASLH
American Association
for State and Local History



20 SEP As part of our efforts toward greater visibility with the general public, HC volunteers **Bruce Kitt** and **Susan Rostkoski** staffed a table at the **Bloomington Heritage Days Festival**, an annual event whose goal is to promote the city's celebrations, educational programs, citizen volunteerism and community preservation efforts.

Right: Susan Rostkoski.

Photos: Bruce Kitt.



STATUS REPORT: Our History Centre membership statistics, as of Sept. 2014:

Active members: 395, including 58 Life members. Newsletter subscribers: Print edition--249. Digital edition--228.

OCTOBER 2014

18 OCT The annual **Minneapolis Airline Show, Sale and Get-Together** was held at the Best Western Plus Hotel in Bloomington. Organized by **Bill Rosenbloom** and **Bill Marchessault** in consultation with **Bruce Kitt**, and staffed by HC volunteers, shoppers and collectors chose from a wide range of airline collectibles on offer. Proceeds from admission fees benefit the NWAHC. Mark your calendars now for next year's show, Saturday Oct. 10, 2015, same location, with more vendors and a guest speaker!

Many thanks to these HC volunteers--this is a *very* labor-intensive event and we couldn't operate this show and sale without you! **Flora Dreyer** and **Gail Diercks**, Volunteer Coordinators. **Alice Bernhard**, **Joe Callaci**, **Bev Carlson**, **Dave DeBace**, **Bob DuBert**, **Sandy Elliott**, **Kay Ferrell**, **Joanie Gibson**, **Art Gorgen**, **Elaine Hernke**, **Judy Jurgensen**, **Anne Kerr**, **Fay Kulenkamp**, **Darlene Lemke**, **Vicky Pritchett**, **Vince Rodriguez**, **Uli Taylor**, **Gary Thompson**.

Photos: Joe Callaci and Robert DuBert.

L: The Sales Floor, just before the doors opened.

R: Some of the Admissions table staff: Joanie Gibson, Sandy Elliott, Anne Kerr, Art Gorgen, Darlene Lemke. Not shown: Judy Jurgensen, Uli Taylor, Elaine Hernke, Bev Carlson.



L: Vendors Donny Swanson, Don Swanson, Judy Swanson and Kay Ferrell.

C: Vendors Steve Mazanek and Chuck Donley. Mazanek is also the organizer for the annual airline and railroad collectible shows in Chicago.

R: What it's all about: Attendees Raul Flores and son Michael show off their purchases.



30 OCT Joe Callaci reports: **The Edina Community Foundation**, in conjunction with Northwest Airlines Alumni and Centennial Lakes Park, held an informational meeting and fund raiser at Pinstripes Restaurant in Edina, Minn. The gathering was organized by **John Horn**, former president of Northwest Airlines. Sculptor **Nicholas Legeros** was on hand to explain **The Northwest Airlines/Donald Nyrop Memorial Project**, which will erect three original sculptures in Centennial Lakes Park.



John Horn, left, and Nicholas Legeros.

Mr. Legeros showed participants scale models of the sculptures, answered questions and shared his ideas about the concept. In attendance were many friends of NWA, with the NWAHC represented by Executive Director **Bruce Kitt**, Director **Fay Kulenkamp** and several HC volunteers. Also attending were numerous retired NWA employees, art lovers and other people interested in this endeavor. Drinks and a light buffet was provided for all in attendance. Photos: Joe Callaci.

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L-R: HC volunteers Karen Jensen and Flora Dreyer, John Horn, Constance Christie.



L-R: HC volunteers Fay Kulenkamp and Darlene Lemke, unknown, sculptor Nicholas Legero, with models of the proposed sculptures.

The sculptures will portray the magic of flight and celebrate how the availability of convenient and affordable air travel has helped to bring families together and changed forever how we live. A very fitting tribute to the life and career of Donald Nyrop!



The sculptures.

Sculptures have been commissioned to be designed by renowned local sculptor, Nicholas Legeros. Mr. Legeros is a graduate of Gustavus Adolphus College where he was mentored by the celebrated Paul Granlund. He also holds an MFA degree from the University of Minnesota and has placed numerous and very recognizable sculptures throughout the Twin Cities area.

Currently, Mr. Legeros is working on two designs: one depicts a girl and a boy whimsically playing with and dreaming about airplanes; the second will devote particular emphasis toward remembering Donald Nyrop, his contributions to the industry, and to the women and men who made Northwest Airlines.



Here's how you can help bring this project to fruition: Consider making a contribution to the Northwest Airlines/Donald Nyrop Memorial: you can donate online at edinacommunityfoundation.org (Contributions→Donate Now→Donald Nyrop Memorial Centennial Fund), or send your check, payable to **ECF/Donald Nyrop Centennial Fund**, to: Edina Community Foundation, 5280 Grandview Square, Edina MN 55436.

NOVEMBER 2014

05 NOV NWAHC Operation Director **Wayne Snyder** spoke about the history of Northwest Airlines at the Southwest Senior Center of Minneapolis, a facility operated by Volunteers of America which offers a wide variety of educational, healthcare, social and dining programs and services for adults over the age of 50. While the HC is a popular venue for visits by senior groups, this is the first time a representative from the HC has made a house call!

Photos courtesy Wayne Snyder.



08 NOV The NWAHC was the site of the annual board meeting of the **National Gay Pilots Association** (NGPA). The NGPA is an international organization of gay, lesbian, bisexual and transgender pilots and other aviation enthusiasts, whose educational and outreach missions are: to encourage members of the LGBT community to pursue piloting careers, to foster equal rights and treatment for LGBT pilots, to create and provide an affirming social and professional network, and to promote aviation safety. The NGPA also sponsors a scholarship program for aspiring young aviators interested in pursuing a career as a pilot. Info: http://www.ngpa.org/content.aspx?page_id=0&club_id=189069

Clockwise, from left: Michelle Yates (ExpressJet Airlines), Chris Hoss (Flight Safety International), Kyle Morgan, Dave Gosnell (Southwest Airlines), Kevin Sperl, Gregg Smith (Smith, Powell and Associates), Scott Shatzer (Flexjet LLC), David Pettet (Hawaiian Airlines), David Jensen, name not available.



Photo: Robert DuBert.

08 NOV AirSpace Minnesota, of which the NWAHC is a component, held an Open House “Hangar Raising” at the Downtown St. Paul Airport. The site includes 3 hangars recently acquired by ASM, which will be the temporary location of a planned **Aviation Learning Center** (ALC) modeled after a similar facility at the Museum of Flight (MOF) in Seattle. In partnership with the MOF, ASM plans to build an Air & Space Learning campus featuring the ALC and a Challenge Space Science Center, which will use aviation to teach science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (STEM) classes. Long-term plans also call for the construction of an Interpretive Center museum in the Ft. Snelling area, which would include, and become, the new home of the NWAHC. Featured speakers at the Open House included NW/DL **Capt. Anne Simpson**, one of the first three female pilots hired by Northwest Airlines and an MOF board member, and retired **Capt. Woody Fountain**, the first African-American pilot hired by NWA. Also at the site is a former Federal Express 727-200, called **The Learning Jet**, now owned and operated by the **Minnesota Association of Women in Aviation** (MnAWA). It has been converted into a classroom, and will be used as a teaching facility for a STEM curriculum to be developed by the St. Paul Public Schools.

For more about the Vision of AirSpace Minnesota: <http://www.airspacemn.org/vision>

About the Learning Jet and the MnAWA: <http://www.ladyskywriter.com/2014/11/the-learning-jet.html>



Above left: Doug Hall, Carol Hall, Bruce Kitt, unknown. Photo: Joe Callaci.

Above right: Capt. Anne Simpson, Capt. Woody Fountain. Photo: Joe Callaci.

Left: HC volunteers Karen Jensen and Gail Diercks onboard the Learning Jet. Photo: Anne Kerr.

Right: Karen Jensen at the controls of the Learning Jet. Photo: Anne Kerr.



25 NOV At a special Monday morning meeting of HC volunteers, Executive Director **Bruce Kitt** announced the early termination of our lease, the April 25, 2015 deadline for vacating our current location, and explained the process by which the Board is seeking replacement space for the HC (see the Executive Director's message on p. 2). The HC now occupies the gallery and office spaces at 8101 34th Ave S, plus two storage units. Our major goal is to consolidate into one location, at a rent we can afford. Stay tuned for further developments!

On a happier note, Bruce announced that the HC has been awarded a \$49,000 **Minnesota Historical & Cultural Heritage Grant** by the Minnesota Historical Society, which will provide for the full-time services of a professional archivist next year. That person's duties will include curating, classifying, cataloging and archiving items in the vast HC collection, to create a comprehensive inventory in the HC's *Past Perfect* museum database. These duties are currently performed by Bruce and volunteer Elaine Hernke, who have faced an overwhelming backlog.

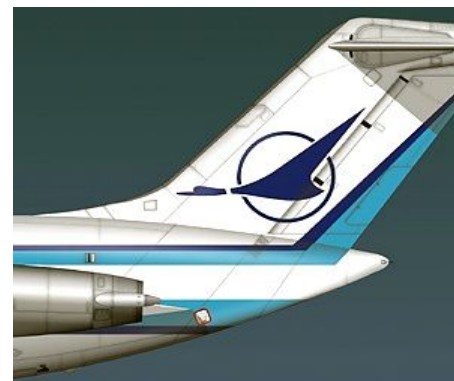


Photo: Robert DuBert.

CALLING ALL REPUBLIC ALUMNI—DUCK REUNION ANNOUNCEMENT



The **Winter Duck Reunion** will be a fabulous brunch on March 1, 2015 at Pelican Pointe Golf & Country Club in Venice, Fla. More details in the December issue of *Clear & Sixty* or call Barb Ike – 941-475-7818. The **Summer Duck Reunion** is rescheduled for Sept. 17, 2015 (the third Thursday of the month). Details to follow.

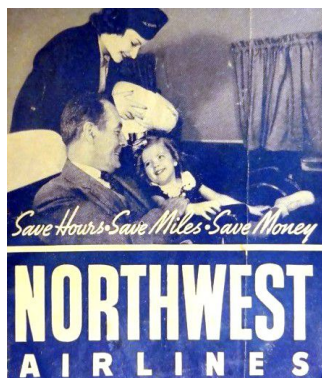


INFORMATION, PLEASE

HC Director Wayne Snyder received an inquiry from Timothy Blotz, whose grandfather Phil was a Northwest mechanic who worked in the NWA Bomber Modification Center during WW2. He asks if anyone knows the history or provenance of the wing and propeller-design pins which were among the items in Phil Glotz's uniform pieces. If you can provide any information, please contact: timothyblotz@gmail.com.

A REMINDER:

All back issues of this newsletter, **HISTORY MATTERS** and **REFLECTIONS**, are available in the newsletter section of the NWAHC website: nwahistory.org/newsletter.htm



HISTORY MATTERS
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MUSEUM NEWS

"A great Christmas stocking stuffer"

WITHOUT A DOUBT, the best buy in town is the new cookbook now in production and printing. It will be available about November 1st and will be sold at just \$18.00 per copy. The book includes some 350 recipes from a great cross section of our volunteers and friends of the History Centre. Copies can be picked up at the History Centre or ordered through our web site at www.nwahistory.org. On mail orders we have to ask for an additional \$2.00 per copy to cover the cost of packaging and mailing. Your cookbook purchase and membership generously provide funds for the History Centre's programs and exhibits.

OUR NEW SIGNATURE EXHIBIT

Recently the History Centre made its first major archive purchase. We established across the 1/36 scale model of the Airbus A-300, decked out in NWA colors. The model was built about eleven years ago by A.M.J. Phelps for Airbus Industries, where it was used as a demonstration and sales tool. The model is of the series prototype, which had the 90-degree vertical wings of the original pre-production design. This (one of a kind) archive now graces the museum. It is a great addition. With our other one of a kind cut away models of the Stratocruiser and Lockheed Electra, we have a most unique display.

**THE SAGA OF UN-99:
A MISSING CHAPTER OF THE KOREAN WAR**

Remember the Korean War? — Thirty-seven months, June 25, 1950 to July 27, 1953. — Military casualties included 900,000 Chinese, 520,000 North Koreans, 270,000 from the Republic of Korea, 34,000 American dead and another 102,000 wounded. Bitter, indeed. — The defense of South Korea was a United Nations venture. Seventeen countries participated, although the U.S. ran the show. The Korean War is often called the "Forgotten War", except for those who were in it. And also, virtually forgotten in the small but significant part played by Northwest Airlines.

Reflections
Dedicated to preserving the history of a great airline.

Remember our "Mod Squad"? It was 1948...

Related Story:
Harry Chin, Page 5

Also Inside:
"No Rules" photos, Page 6
History Centre Hosts
Retired Sales Group, Page 7
All About Bob
(Grandson) photos, Page 8
Holiday Gifts, Page 10

Special Assignment
The Army wanted to know if NWA could create a huge bomber modification plant in St. Paul.

Continued on page 2

THE WORLD of NORTHWEST AIRLINES on facebook

Do you miss NWA? Lost touch with the folks you used to work with everyday? Ever wonder what happened to one of your friends who transferred to a different job classification or location? One of the best ways to connect with people is **facebook**, and the best **facebook** site for Northwest Airlines is the **Always A Redtail** page, whose 7000 members enjoy a brisk online camaraderie. Many post photos from their personal collections, retrieved from long-overlooked boxes and albums, showing scenes of aircraft, airports, employees, memorabilia and treasured keepsakes. If you post a photo or comment, you're sure to hear from people you know, some you don't, and you'll enjoy the back and forth banter, guaranteed! For Republic alumni, there are two **facebook** groups, with about 500 members total.



For the latest news about your NWA History Centre, be sure to "like" and follow our NWAHC **facebook** page!

Sign Up

It's free and always will be.

First name Last name

Email or mobile number

Re-enter email or mobile number

New password

Birthday

Month Day Year Why do I need to provide my birthday?

☐ Female ☐ Male

By clicking Sign Up, you agree to our Terms and that you have read our Data Use Policy, including our Cookie Use.

Sign Up

Signing up for **facebook** is easy: type "facebook" in your search engine, and the screen on the left will appear. Enter your name, email address or cellphone number, your birthday, create a password and you're in!

Below are two photos recently posted, showing Bulls-Eye, aka **Nikki**, the dog who is the corporate mascot of Target. Nikki lives with her owner/trainer **David McMillan**, at the ranch headquarters of **Worldwide Movie Animals** in Santa Clarita, Calif. Nikki flew NWA often for her appearances at Target headquarters in the Twin Cities. She and McMillan always flew in First Class, but Nikki's makeup artist flew in Economy.

For more photos posted by NWA alumni on **facebook**, see p. 12 of the digital edition.

Photos posted by Chris Tryon, below, and Kay McAuley, right.



Digital Edition Exclusive Extras
More photos posted by NWA alumni on Facebook

Posted by, clockwise from upper left: Suzi Sprecher, Velma Kitka Todd, Tom Grapski, Charles Nichols.

