



# The Flyer



## Has Mustang Stampede become a tradition already?

The first museum-sponsored Mustang Stampede was a huge success with more than 500 paying customers entering through the front door on Saturday, August 25th. Plaques were awarded in eighteen different categories: from the original 1964 1/2 Mustang up to and including the newest 2013 versions of the iconic pony car.

In addition, new member **Ray Hofman** generously provided a number of automobiles from his personal collection for display purposes. He has raced his cars in various parts of the world, and I was surprised to learn that he was a leader at LeMans in one of his GT 40's, until he lost an engine. (I have it on good authority that that engine is capable of producing 1000 bhp which is probably more than all of the HSW aircraft put together!)

The HSW did its usual excellent job serving lunch. The crowd was large and hungry, going through the potato salad pretty quickly, but the

crew came through, and no one went away hungry.

**Jay Burns** put his considerable photographic skills to use and



produced pictures for at least fifty enthusiasts. Most were of their Ford Mustang with a P-51, but some individuals just wanted their photo taken with a War Bird, and forked over \$30 for the privilege.

The Cavanaugh Museum P-51, *The Brat III*, sold several rides, but the darling of the show had to be *Boo-Man Choo*, owned by **Ray Hofman**.

Many thanks to all of you who helped make this a success, including

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Autumn Hicks and her museum staff. A special thanks goes to **Bill Coombes** who was the inspiration behind the event. There is talk now of having this again next year, and possibly adding a Muscle Car Stampede and/or a Corvette Stampede. Time will tell.

(See more photos on page two.)



Photos by Greg Gutting

**BOO-MAN CHOO IS THE HIT OF THE MUSTANG STAMPEDE**

(top row, l to r) **Bill Coombes'** Boss 302 stands out from the crowd; HSW members joined the seminar; Coombes and triple-ace Bud Anderson enjoy a laugh during the seminar. (2nd row) **Ray Hofman** admires Bud's autograph of Boo-Man Choo; a large crowd listened to the seminar; Bud Anderson autographs a poster for a fan; (3rd row) A good crowd turned out for the show; **Don Hoffman** receives his second award of the day from The Bombshells; the HSW crew did an excellent job serving lunch.



*Photos by Greg Gutting*

RECRUITMENT IS EVERYONE'S JOB.  
WHAT HAVE YOU DONE TO KEEP OUR WING GROWING?  
It only takes a little time to mention to your friends, relatives, fellow employees, or even strangers, what a great organization we have. It doesn't take a hard sell, just exhibiting your enthusiasm is about all you need to do.



**THE KNUCKLEBUSTERS CORNER BY STEVE CLINTON**



As maintenance officer it is fantastic to have some really dedicated folks in the maintenance hangar when crunch time hits. In August we performed two annuals that

involved considerable extra work, but thanks to the crew we accomplished our goals for August plus some. We keep getting some valuable additions to our merry little band. **Bill Lippon**, a talented mechanic, was persuaded by **Bob Keating** to join, and has been instrumental in Hoffman’s T-28 annual. **Ray Hofman** has also joined the wing and along with his son, Justin, has added a lot of labor time.

We are just a month away from Airsho 2012 and we have begun the formidable task of cleaning up the High Sky hangar. A big dent was accomplished this last weekend thanks to **Michael Clinton** and **John Meyer**. Also a big thanks to all of you who took the time and effort to clean and organize the storage room. There is a lot more to get done but the main thing all of us need to do is day-to-day cleanup of our different areas. We picked up two trash cans full of drink cups, cans and

full bottles of water left sitting un-drunk. The wing wants to keep water and cold drinks available to the maintenance guys, but we don’t need to be wasteful.

Our fleet is in good overall condition and we should be well prepared for training flights leading up to Traron and the Airsho next month. With everyone’s contributions we can “Keep Um Flyin”



**SAFETY REPORT BY PAUL COOPER**



Ever mindful of safety, **Paul Cooper** demonstrates to **Drew Diggins**, during a recent outing at the coast, the proper “shark” hand-signal, prior to entering the surf.

*Photos courtesy of Drew Diggins*



**POTATO PATCH ATTACK (PART DEUX) BY BILL COOMBES**

As you may recall, during our first installment, our hero, Ensign George Coombes, recently returned from a whirlwind marriage and honeymoon, was trying to catch up on his rocket training in the Mojave desert...

For practice delivering rockets at the range on the Salton Sea, VF-15 usually sent divisions of four Grumman fighters. However, because Coombes was still in the



Photo from [chinalakealumni.org](http://chinalakealumni.org)

“catch up mode,” on this, the last day of the squadron’s det to Holtville, he was flying in a section of two planes. Lt. Don “Shorty” Gonya, a first tour veteran, was the section leader. Standard Operating Procedure on the range called for each pilot to roll in on the target from approximately 8000 feet, establish the appropriate

dive angle, center the needle and ball, put the piper on the target and fire one rocket. As the Hellcat carried six rockets this meant that each pilot would make six passes. A range officer, located in a reinforced log hut near the target and undoubtedly bemoaning the day he joined the Navy, would score each hit.

At this point it is necessary to explain that the Navy, ever mindful of accidents, included in the Hellcat’s Pilot’s Operating Handbook a passage that stated that the “Master-Arm” switch and the “Rocket-Select” switch in the cockpit would be located in the off position until the dive commenced. Aviators were also admonished to return the switch to the off position when pulling out from the dive. All of this “switchology” seemed rather pointless and needlessly complicated to the fighter jocks of -15, thereby setting the stage for the inevitable...

Coombes pulled out of his fifth attack on the lightly defended (See *Potato Patch* on page 5)

**XO REPORT BY GREG GUTTING**



As I am sure you can tell from the photos on page 2, the museum-sponsored Mustang Stampede was a huge success. Approximately 500 + customers came through the front door. This event has set a precedent of community interest that other events will aspire to achieve.

Wing elections will be coming up in November, and the process of appointing a nominating committee is in the works.

Our next BIG event is Airsho, coming up on October 13-14.

HSW participation kicks off with Cantina on October 10, to feed all those performers and volunteers getting everything ready. **Gena Linebarger** is working hard to make sure everything runs as smoothly this year as it always does. Volunteers are still needed so contact her if you can help. 432-528-0097; [iblast4fun@grandecom.net](mailto:iblast4fun@grandecom.net)

We have scheduled two hangar clean-up days, Sep 29th and Oct 6th. We will be cleaning up, inside



and out, and we need everybody to pitch in. Our wing represents the CAF to our community, and to all those who come in for Airsho, so we need to have it looking great.

All volunteers are encouraged to come out on Tuesday, Sep 25th for the Airsho meeting and cookout at 6:00 p.m. Help will be needed to prepare and serve. Again, this is an opportunity to strut our stuff and show off for the community.

And...don’t forget to register for Airsho early. It sure helps the whole system run more smoothly..

October 13-14, 2012  
Get your tickets online at [www.airsho.org](http://www.airsho.org)



(*Potato Patch*, from page 4) painted-on-the-ground bullseye, steely-eyes aglitter, a flicker of a grin gracing his countenance. With good speed and interval, Coombes's blue fighter began to close the distance for a perfect join-up with Gonya's. "Aha," he said to himself as the gap between airplanes narrowed, "Lead has a hung rocket!" This was not an unusual occurrence. Maintaining a climbing left turn, and disdaining the radio, Coombes attempted to get Gonya's attention with a wing-waggle, then, when that failed, a hand gesture with his left hand. The sun, setting in the West, at this moment caused a reflection off the Hellcat's canopy and Coombes switched hands on the stick in order to combat the glare. A fumbling grasp, an errant finger, and, with a "whoosh!" and "Oh, S---!" a rocket sailed off.

A now thoroughly alert Coombes quickly noted two things: one being that Lt. Gonya was now also fully alert as the rocket's white trail crossed in front of his Hellcat, and two, that a 3.5 inch rocket was now heading toward the sleepy town of Holtville and its strategically valuable potato fields.

The two Hellcats, now bereft of all their rockets save the hung one on Gonya's airplane, quickly headed back to the air station. Coombes, mindful that the squadron was leaving that day to return to Los Alamitos and anxious to avoid a chat with the skipper that might result in being confined to quarters, adopted an early version of the Bart Simpson defense. "I wasn't there, I don't know anything, that's my story and I'm sticking to it!" Displaying sympathy for a new husband who might be deprived of a happy homecoming, Gonya maintained his silence and the entire sordid episode was forgotten. Forgotten, that is, until...

[The exciting conclusion of the *Potato Patch Attack* will be in your next issue.]



### MISCELLANEOUS MISCHIEF

#### Ten years ago in *The Flyer*:

"As the Props Turn  
by Col Randy Wilson"

"The CAF was requested to help celebrate the kickoff of football season in the new Midland sports complex, and the mission was flown by the High Sky Wing. On Friday night, I flew our SNJ 101X over the opening ceremonies and Saturday, we flew both SNJs, as Col Bill Coombes was not occupied with his own school's game that evening. The flyover was well received and helped to get a lot of publicity for

AIRSHO but there was some major confusion as to the name of our Wing in the announcements, as reported by a number of our members who were there."

"This bring up a point that we need to do a better job of promoting the High Sky Wing within our own community, so that more folks realize that the CAF has an active, local unit right here in Midland. After AIRSHO is past, I suggest that we talk about ways to better advertise ourselves to potential members and others right here at home."

#### Present Day:

The more things change, the more they stay the same. **Bill Coombes** has reacquired SNJ 24 and we are still trying to increase our membership and enhance our image in the community.



*Photo by Greg Gutting*

#### DID YOU KNOW?

September 1, 1939 Hitler's forces, utilizing Blitzkrieg tactics, invaded Poland, igniting WW II. On September 4, FDR declared that the US would remain neutral, despite the sinking on September 3 of the British liner, *Athenia*, which killed 28 Americans who were aboard.

--From *The Almanac of American History*, Arthur M. Schlesinger, Jr., General Editor, pg 477

# High Sky Wing Newsletter

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## *UPCOMING EVENTS*

*Sep 25*

Airsho Meeting and volunteer  
cook-out

*Sep 27*

Monthly Wing Meeting

*Sep 29 & Oct 6*

Hangar Clean-up Days

*Oct 4*

Wing Staff Meeting

*Oct 10-12*

Cantina

*Oct 13-14*

AIRSHO

*Oct/Nov/Dec*

Wing Meeting Date to be  
determined

Check the Events tab on the  
web page for the most current  
information.

<http://highskywing.org>

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