Doolittle’s Tokyo Raiders Start Endowment Fund

Colonel Joseph W. Manske, CEO and president of Doolittle’s Tokyo Raiders, announced the donation of $10,000 to the Doolittle Library to establish the Doolittle Endowment Fund. The contribution was made to honor the memory of General James H. Doolittle by the men he led on their historic mission against Japan on April 18, 1942. It will be used to expand and organize the collection of books, articles, films, photos and documents on military aviation that was begun with the acquisition of Doolittle’s own collection of pilot log books, paintings, photos and letters after his death in 1993.

There are 34 survivors of the original 80 pilots and crew members who flew 16 land-based medium bombers off the deck of the U.S. Navy carrier Hornet, a feat considered impossible at the time. Seven men lost their lives as a direct result of the raid: two died swimming to shore, one died on the bailout, three were executed by a Japanese firing squad and one died in captivity from malnutrition; five were interned in Russia for 14 months before they escaped into Iran.

The surviving Raiders meet annually in cities that wish to honor them for their historic mission. The 1996 reunion was held in Sarasota, Florida in April.

Williams Collection Available for Study

The George H. Williams World War I Library, considered one of the most complete in the world, is available for researchers. Honored for his writing and contributions to World War I aviation history, Williams became interested in that field of research in 1928 at Rich Field, Waco, Texas when he met Charles G. Catto, a World War I ace, and washed his plane for the privilege of flying with him.

Williams served in the Signal Corps in Europe during World War II and began collecting WW I materials “seriously” afterward. In the years since, he has visited many museums and collected slides, motion picture films, log books, diaries, squadron combat records, and memoirs of American, British, French and German pilots and crew members. He recorded oral histories with 72 WW I aviation survivors, including George Vaughn, Ray Brooks and Douglas Campbell, the last three surviving aces. An excellent photographer, he has processed 30,000 negatives; his document collection, which he donated to the HAC in 1992, fills 164 acid-proof boxes. His personal contribution to the HAC includes over 700 books. The HAC World War I collection is actually 32 separate collections (434 boxes) received from donors since the HAC was established.

Williams organized the League of World War I Aviation Historians and founded Over the Front, a quarterly journal devoted to WW I aviation, in 1988. Now president emeritus, he was written a number of articles about that era. He is chairman of the Advisory Board of the History of Aviation Collection and has won a number of citations for his editorial excellence and diligence in preserving the history of World War I aviation.

Air America Association 1996 Reunion in Dallas

Former Air America personnel and their families will return to Dallas for their 1996 annual reunion from May 31 to June 2 at the Bristol Suites Hotel in north Dallas. Every five years the Air America Association schedules its reunion here to allow its members to visit the CAT/Air America Archives and Memorial Plaque in the Eugene McDermott Library on the campus of the University of Texas at Dallas. This year the History of Aviation Collection will host a reception and display on Saturday afternoon June 1st from 2 to 4pm in the Special Collections Department. Over 500 people are expected to attend this year’s reunion.
History of Aviation Collection Wins Writers’ Grant

The Aviation/Space Writers Foundation has awarded a grant of $5,000 to the History of Aviation Collection for the purpose of making the holdings of the library available on the World Wide Web for the benefit of aviation researchers and scholars. One of the first collections to be placed on the computer internet will be the Admiral Charles E. Rosendahl lighter-than-air collection. The George H. Williams extensive World War I collection will follow.

In announcing the approval of the grant, J. Philip Geddes, the foundation’s secretary/treasurer, stated, “Not only were the trustees unanimous in their approval of this grant, there was enthusiasm for the proposal and its significance to innumerable researchers for many years to come.”

Air America Association Seeks Commemorative Stamp

The Air America Association, whose members risked their lives in combat in Southeast Asia as civilians, are requesting the issuance of a U.S. Postal Service stamp honoring their service. In a formal request made to the Citizen’s Stamp Advisory Committee, the association stated: “At the time of the conflict in Southeast Asia, Air America personnel accepted all the hazards and risks of combat as civilians; consequently they were denied recognition for their sacrifices in furtherance of U.S. goals in the area.”

The request pointed out that the issuance of a stamp "would, in some measure, acknowledge these contributions and provide some solace to the families and friends of those killed or still numbered among the missing."

To substantiate the request, the text of a lecture delivered at UTD by Dr. William M. Leary in February 1992 as one of the Jalonick Memorial Distinguished Lectures was presented with appropriate photo exhibits and a detailed map. Dr. Leary’s lecture, titled “Air America: Myth and Reality,” pointed out that most Americans have a distorted view of Air America’s role in Southeast Asia because of the 1990 movie “Air America” that characterized the Central Intelligence Agency’s proprietary airline pilots as “a zany bunch, skilled at landing damaged airplanes, but basically a wildly unprofessional menagerie of party animals, with a few borderline psychotics thrown in for added humor.” Fortunately, as Leary points out, “It was an artistic flop.” A New York Times reviewer called it “one of the least attractive films to arrive in a long time.”

Dr. Leary concluded his presentation by saying that “no matter what future historians decide about the ultimate value of the struggle in Southeast Asia, I am confident that the reputation of Air America will grow with the passing years. Air America performed superbly in an extraordinarily difficult and demanding environment.” Senators Kay Bailey Hutchison, Sam Nunn, and Paul Coverdell and Representatives Sam Johnson and Richard K. Armey were asked to support the request.

Researchers who want to know the truth about what Air America, Civil Air Transport, Air Asia and Southern Air Transport employees did for their country can find the facts in the special collections at UTD. None of the files are classified.

The photographer caught Jimmy Doolittle telling a joke on himself.

A Doolittle Tale

General Jimmy Doolittle often told stories on himself and this one is typical:

“While I was stationed at Rockwell Field near San Diego as a new second lieutenant (during World War I), my wife Joe and I stayed at the famous Coronado Hotel. I tried to tell her that it was quite an extravagance to stay there on a lieutenant’s pay but we had just been married and she was persistent so I finally gave in. However I did lay down one strict rule: under no circumstances would we take our meals at the hotel. We could eat much less
expensively at a restaurant nearby.

"That seemed to work fine for a few days until I came home one afternoon and found Joe looking extremely guilty. I could tell she'd been up to something. 'Come on,' I said, 'what have you been up to?'

'Oh, Jim,' she said, 'I was so hungry at lunch time that I had lunch in the dining room.'

"'That's it,' I said, 'You remember that I told you we couldn't afford to eat here. I'm sorry but we're moving out of here right now.' Well, there were some tears but I was determined and, baggage in hand, I marched down to the reception desk and asked for the bill. The manager was there and asked if there was anything wrong. I told him the service was fine but we just couldn't afford to eat there on my salary.

"Imagine my embarrassment when he told me that all meals were included in the room charge!'

Missouri Town Named After Doolittle

A small town in the northern Ozarks that came into being during World War II wanted to honor the man who had led the famous raid against Japan in 1942. Located 100 miles south of St. Louis and five miles west of Rolla on old Highway 66, the unincorporated town of 220 inhabitants, formerly known as Centerville, was incorporated in 1944 and named after the famous flyer. Doolittle attended the dedication ceremonies held on October 12, 1946. He told reporters he was honored and had learned at least one baby boy and several kittens had been given his name, according to mail he received while overseas.

The local American Legion post was named the Gen. James H. Doolittle Memorial Post No. 780. The streets in Doolittle, Missouri are named after Presidents Roosevelt and Truman, and Generals Eisenhower, MacArthur and Bradley.

Doolittle Hall which is the headquarters for the Joint Warfare Center at Fort Monroe, Virginia. The Air Force Association also dedicated a full-length statue of Doolittle at its headquarters in Arlington, Virginia that month.

Flying Cadet Class 41-E Were First Contributors

There were 15 pilots who graduated in the USAAF Flying Cadet Class 41-E who later flew on the famous Doolittle raid against Japan in April 1942. In 1994, the class association members were the first of a group of contributors to donate to the Doolittle Library. They honored their leader and their deceased Tokyo Raiders by contributing the first $100.

More About Ormer Locklear

Ormer Locklear, one of the earliest barnstormers, is believed to be the first pilot to be arrested for "reckless aerial driving." He was charged in Los Angeles on April 7, 1920 with disturbing the peace and "tumultuous and offensive conduct by looping the loop a few feet above the trees in the downtown square."

Shortly afterward, a letter was published in a Los Angeles paper addressed to "Dear Lock." "This is a warning," the writer said, "If you don't quit flying so close to the pavement on Hollywood Boulevard thereby knocking off my Panama valued at twice its original cost, I'm going to sue you or tear a wing off your plane." It was signed "The Film Colonist."