Not long after the deafening roar of the final Schneider Trophy race echoed away, the state of the art in aeronautics was once again being advanced faster and farther. This time, the catalyst was war, not peace – authoritarian governments gained power in Europe and Asia, and across the world nations began to rearm once more. The value of air power had been established indisputably in World War I, and in the ensuing decades advancements made in air racing and also with long range flights such as Lindbergh’s crossing of the Atlantic in 1927 demonstrated that control of the air would be an essential prerequisite for success in future conflicts.

Despite much isolationist sentiment, the United States sought better aircraft for defense in the late 1930s as well, and thanks in part to the racing era was in a far stronger position to innovate than two decades earlier. In 1937, as the Luftwaffe reinvented aerial warfare in the skies over Spain and the airmen of Japan did their emperor’s bidding high above China, three particularly talented American engineers combined their efforts to conceive an all-new design.

The project, internally named Model 7A, was led by the Douglas Aircraft Corporation. Conceived by legendary designers Jack Northrop, Ed Heinemann, and Donald Douglas himself, the goal was to build a high speed bomber able to fly in contested airspace. The initial design featured twin engines, a shoulder-mounted wing, and wing planform with a distinct reverse sweep along the trailing edge. While projected performance was impressive compared to contemporary US bombers such as the Martin B-10, the engines available at the time could not make the aircraft competitive with newly emerging threats such as the Messerschmitt Bf 109 then making a devastating debut in combat.

Before long, the powerful Pratt & Whitney R-1830 Twin Wasp engine became available for the aircraft, more than doubling available horsepower. Now led by Ed Heinemann, the Douglas team created an improved Model 7B and submitted it as part of a US Army tender for a new attack
plane. The Douglas team lost out to North American Aviation, which went on to build the B-25. However, the competition had been observed with great interest by French representatives. In short order the French Air Force placed an order for the new airplane redesignated DB-7, or Douglas Bomber 7. Production began just as France entered World War II. Only threescore aircraft had been delivered when the German invasion of France began in earnest in 1940, and while they

“Many DB-7s remained to be delivered when France surrendered to Germany in 1940.”

were among the most sophisticated bombers available to the French, they and the rest of the Armee de l’Air were overwhelmed as the French Army retreated before the German blitzkrieg.

Many DB-7s remained to be delivered when France surrendered to Germany in 1940. Those deliveries were diverted to Great Britain, where they saw service as the Boston I and Boston II. The Royal Air Force had a substantial stable of medium

bombers available during the conflict, and employed its Bostons largely in night fighting and ground attack roles. One of the most unique variants was the Turbinlite modification, which essentially turned the aircraft into an enormous flying flashlight for use in illuminating German bombers at night.

Great Britain purchased many additional DB-7s during the war, as did other Allied

nations. The United States ultimately adopted the type as well, designating it the A-20 Havoc. Used as a bomber, intruder and night fighter, the A-20 contributed to the war effort on behalf of many nations in theaters all around the globe.

Even as the A-20 went to war, a small group of Douglas engineers conceived of a role for the aircraft in the coming time of peace. Working after hours under the leadership of Douglas engineer Ted Smith, this scratch team designed a smaller airplane sharing many of the A-20’s distinctive design features. The Aero Design and Engineering Company was formed specifically to build the airplane and bring it to market. The prototype flew in 1948, and the first production model – the Aero Commander 520 – was built in 1951.

Originally designed as a small airliner for use serving secondary airports, the Aero Commander quickly found favor as a corporate transport. Able to carry up to seven passengers at 200 mph across distances of 1,000 miles per more, the Aero Commander was an ideal vehicle for executives and small business owners. The Aero Commander’s military heritage also helped it achieve excellent performance when operating out of short airfields – a quality that led to one of its most remarkable “corporate” assignments. In 1955 the United States Air Force ordered a small force of Aero Commanders (designated U-4B in USAF service) for use as Presidential transports. Ideal for transporting President Eisenhower in and out of a small airstrip near his farm retreat at Gettysburg, Pennsylvania, the Aero Commander was the smallest airplane to serve as Air Force One – though the now-distinctive call sign was not introduced until 1959, shortly before the retirement of both President Eisenhower and the U-4B.

The Aero Commander also gained fame as the favored steed of one of the nation’s most celebrated pilots. From 1979 to 1999, test pilot Bob Hoover piloted an Aero Commander 500U through an airshow routine that would be remarkable for any aircraft. Hoover’s performances culminated in an exceptional display of airmanship. Hoover would shut down both engines in flight and complete a loop, roll, approach and dead stick (unpowered) landing, often rolling back along the runway or ramp to show centerline. The last Aero Commander was produced in 1986, but Hoover continued to fly his performances until 1999.

“The last Aero Commander was produced in 1986.”

In October 2018 the Hiller Aviation Museum welcomed a 1968 Aero Commander 500U to its collection. Generously donated by Paul Seipp, this aircraft displays many of the same design features engineered into the original, larger Douglas A-20 in 1937. Opened to the public November 21, the Hiller Aviation Museum’s Aero Commander ably demonstrates the remarkable features of an airframe first conceived more than 80 years ago.

“President Eisenhower and the U-4B”

“Hiller Aviation Museum’s Aero Commander”

Resources
https://airandspace.si.edu/collection-objects/north-american-rockwell-shrike-commander-500s,
Downloaded 31 Oct 2018
Forever Flying, Bob Hoover, 1997
O ur annual fundraising event, “Bold Dreams, New Frontiers” celebrating the museum’s 20th anniversary was held in October and thanks to the hard work of the museum Board, volunteers, our MC Sandhya Patel, guest speaker Ivar Satero and our own Rebecca Duran, Vice President of Development, the event was one of our most successful ever.

We’re pleased to display a new aircraft in the museum, a twin engine Airo Commander 500-U, generously donated by Paul Seipp, which will primarily be used in our education programs providing youth the opportunity to manipulate the controls of a complex airplane. The aircraft is on permanent display outside as part of our runway observation area.

Also, in the gallery’s “Working World of Aviation” section, a new display called “Forces of Flight” is taking shape. In images, text and video we’ll answer the question, “How do airplanes fly?” Particular attention will be paid to that seemingly mysterious property of flight called “lift.” We dispense with erroneously, often over-simplified, explanations and show how air acts as a fluid that can be “turned” by wings moving through the air.

Finally, we wish to welcome a new member to our museum’s Board of Directors, Kirsten Komoroske. She is the Executive Director of the Walt Disney Family Museum and we look forward to her participation in bringing a fresh and inspiring perspective and governance to our organization. Welcome aboard, Kirsten!

A heartfelt “thank you” goes to all of the many contributors, visitors and museum Members for supporting us and making the museum part of your lives. There are great things coming and we look forward to seeing you this winter at the Hiller Aviation Museum.
SANTA CLAUS ARRIVES BY HELICOPTER
SATURDAY DECEMBER 1, 10 AM – 12PM
RAIN OR SHINE. DOORS OPEN AT 9:30.
Join the West Bay Community Band and sing Christmas Carols while the kids line up to tell Santa their Christmas gift list. No Museum admission fee required for this event!

SR-71 PILOT BRIAN SHUL, SATURDAY DECEMBER 29, 11AM
Brian Shul is one of the most popular and dynamic aviation speakers in America today. As an Air Force fighter pilot, Brian was shot down in the Vietnam War and severely burned in the ensuing crash. Initially given up for dead, he was rescued and spent one year in hospitals, endured 15 surgeries and was told his flying days were over. Amazingly, Brian returned to active duty flying, became an Airshow Demonstration pilot in the A-10, went on to become a TOPGUN instructor, and culminated his Air Force career by flying the top secret spy plane, the SR-71. Flying the world’s fastest and highest flying aircraft required an astronaut physical and Brian made Air Force history when he passed with no waivers.

Annual Membership Application
Or join online at www.hiller.org/member

I want to be a member of Hiller Aviation Museum in the following category:

- Senior (65+) $50
- Individual $65
- Family $90
- Pioneer $125
- Pilot $275
- Barnstormer $550
- Adventurer $1,000
- Explorer $2,500
- Navigator $5,000
- Aviator $10,000

Primary Adult Member: ____________________________
Second Adult Member: ____________________________
Third Adult Member: ____________________________

Address: ____________________________ City: ____________________________
State: _____ Zip: ___________ Daytime Phone: ____________________________
Email: ____________________________
This is a gift membership from: ____________________________
Payment Amount: ____________ □ VISA □ MC □ AMEX
Card #: ____________________________ Exp. Date: ____________________________
CSC: ______ Print Name on Card: ____________________________
Signature ____________________________

Thank you for your support.

Please make checks payable to
Hiller Aviation Museum
601 Skyway Rd, San Carlos, CA 94070
You're invited to attend the “Noon” Years Eve Party on Monday, December 31 at the Hiller Aviation Museum. This annual event is designed especially for kids. Join us for these exciting activities:

- Count Down to 12:00 Noon (“Noon” Years) Balloon Drop in two separate rooms this year
- Slides and Jumpers
- Face Painting, Games and Fun
- Dance Shows, Magic and more!

Event runs 10am-1pm Monday, December 31 at the Hiller Aviation Museum. Event included with museum admission.

Who isn’t fascinated with sitting in the cockpit of a modern airliner or a jet? The Hiller Aviation Museum is unique in regularly providing visitors access to real aircraft cockpits like an A-4 jet trainer, a Hiller H-12 helicopter and our Boeing 747. On this special day, we swing open additional cockpits including the Grumman HU-16 Albatross, Boeing 737 airliners and the Cessna 177 Cardinal. From general aviation piston aircraft to commercial airliners, you will get a real “hands-on” experience and unique perspective on flying from real pilots and airline captains. Event included with museum admission.

Join the excitement of the Super Bowl as the Hiller Aviation Museum explores the junction of football and flight in a family-friendly extravaganza! See a helicopter football drop, watch a puppy bowl, check out the Drone Bowl combat demonstrations, experiment with aerodynamics of footballs and more! Event included with museum admission.

The Bay Area Garden Railroad Society’s waist-high track features live steam locomotives. These railroad engines are designed to be run in anyone’s backyard garden. Live steam locomotives have a butane-fueled fire that boils water., The resultant steam is then used to power the pistons. This is the same technique full-sized locomotives have used for 175 years. Many examples of old-time model steam locomotives will be seen running on the track, all the while puffing wonderful plumes of steam.

Enjoy a free glass of wine or beer and light hors d’oeuvres. See the museum after hours in a whole new light! Activities! Raffle Prizes! Live music! Members are free. Members may bring guests . for $5 per person
WINTER PROGRAMS

Family Sunday Programs

Join the excitement select Sundays at the Hiller Aviation Museum! Each event features hands-on activities just for kids, ranging from drone flights and flight simulation to design challenges and construction projects. Visit www.hiller.org for more information on each event.

**AERO WORKSHOP • AGES 10+**
December 16, February 24
1:30 & 3:00 PM (75 minute sessions)

**DRONE MEET • AGES 8+**
December 30, January 27
1:30 – 4:00 PM (30 minute sessions)

**FLIGHT SIMULATOR RALLY • AGES 8+**
December 2, January 6, February 3
2:00 – 4:00 PM (30 minute sessions)

**KIDS’ CARNIVAL – INDOOR WINTER FUN!**
ALL AGES
December 9, January 13, February 17
10:00 AM – 12:00 PM

**STARLAB SKY SHOW – INCLUDED WITH ADMISSION! • AGES 5+ (3+ AT 10:30 AM)**
December 22 (Saturday) January 20, February 17
10:30 & 11:30 AM, 12:30 PM

Winter Aviation Camps

**SPECIAL HOLIDAY PROGRAMS**
December 2018 – February 2019
9 AM—4 PM (Extended Hours Available)

**EXTREME FLIGHT • December 19-20**

**AERO BOT INVENTORS (K-5) & FIGHTER ACES (5-8) • December 26-28**

**WINGS & FLYING THINGS (K-5) & INVENTION CONVENTION (5-8) • January 2-4**

**DRONE ZONE • January 7**

**X-PLANE PILOT • February 18-22**

Visit www.hiller.org for complete program descriptions, registration forms and additional information. We’ll see you there!

**AVIATION CAMP**

**SUMMER 2019**
Dates and topics available online
January 7, 2019
Register early for best selection!
www.hiller.org
OPEN COCKPIT DAY
Explore Aircraft Interiors: Wednesday, November 21 & Saturday, January 5, 11 AM—12 PM
Discover the world of a pilot as never before on Open Cockpit Days! Providing unparalleled access to the Hiller Aviation Museum’s collection of historic aircraft, Open Cockpit Days allow visitors to climb aboard historic airplanes and helicopters and settle in at the pilot’s controls. Featured aircraft include the Boeing 737 and 747, Aero L-39, Grumman HU-16 Albatross, Scorpion and Bell 47 helicopters, Cessna Cardinal and the Museum’s new Aero Commander!

PERFECT PAPER PLANES
Featuring Paper Airplane Champion John Collins
Wednesday, December 26 • 11 AM—12 PM
Join a unique exhibition of paperlight flight! Author and master paper airplane builder John Collins leads an interactive 45-minute session investigating the science of making things fly and the notebook-scale engineering required to fold and fly record-breaking paper gliders. Come prepared to try your hand building and flying your own paper aircraft!

HAPPY BIRDS
Parrots, Macaws and Cockatoos
Wednesday, January 2 • 11 AM—12 PM
Many birds migrate south for the winter, but not the Happy Birds! Returning to the Hiller Aviation Museum for a special holiday engagement, this talented team of precocious parrots gives a remarkable demonstration of feathered flight. Marvel at their antics as they fly, walk, talk and even sing through a wide range of amazing behaviors that will entertain your whole family!

SUPPORT THE MUSEUM!
Donate Your Car, Truck, RV, Boat, Airplane or Helicopter
Call Toll Free 1-800-677-1744
tax-deductible gift
SPECIAL HOLIDAY SHOPPING

Friday Nov 23 through Monday Dec 31

MUSEUM MEMBERS RECEIVE A 25% DISCOUNT IN THE GIFT SHOP FRIDAY, NOVEMBER 23 THROUGH MONDAY, DECEMBER 31 ONLY

Become a Museum Member and take advantage of this great holiday offer!

An Aviator’s Paradise,
Shop on line: www.hiller.org, Gift Certificates available!