



## Tora, Tora, Tora - A Living History Museum

**Information Source:** <http://www.toratoratora.com/ourstory.html>

**Media Kit including B-roll:** <http://www.toratoratora.com/media.html>

Many people have the opportunity to travel to visit a museum but rarely does the museum come to visit you. Attending an airshow where Tora, Tora, Tora is performing is like having a 3-D Museum come to visit you.

"Tora, Tora, Tora" is the Commemorative Air Force's recreation of the Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor that signaled the beginning of the American involvement in World War II. Designed as a living history lesson, "Tora, Tora, Tora" is intended as a memorial to all the soldiers on both sides who gave their lives for their countries.

Tora, Tora, Tora began in 1972, when six replica Japanese aircraft used in the movie of the same name were donated to the CAF. The Gulf Coast Wing requested assignment of the aircraft and began developing an act for presentation at air shows. The act debuted at the Galveston Air Show on June 25, 1972. By 1977, Tora had gained national exposure. By 1978, Tora began to make international appearances in Canada and Mexico. In 1991 Tora participated extensively in the 50th anniversary year commemorations of Pearl Harbor and in 1992, Tora tackled the challenge of sending two replica Zeros to Alaska to participate in the 50th anniversary commemoration of the raid on Dutch Harbor. Throughout the 90s, Tora has been in demand at air shows throughout the country and as recently as the Spring of 2000, Tora aircraft and pilots participated in the filming of a new movie on the Pearl Harbor attack being filmed for release by Disney. As of the 2005 air show season, the men and women of Tora have been performing as a professional air show act for 33 years.

The motto of the Commemorative Air Force and the "Tora" act is "Lest We Forget." "Tora, Tora, Tora", as other Commemorative Air Force flying history recreations, is not intended to promote nationalism or glorify war. The intent of the Tora group is to help generations of individuals throughout the world born after World War II understand that war does not discriminate in the pain it causes and that courageous individuals on both sides lose their lives. In furtherance of this mission, the Tora group has participated in the making of numerous documentaries produced by Japanese filmmakers and Japanese historians.

The pilots and crew of "Tora, Tora, Tora" are proud of the reputation they have developed with veterans of the Japanese military as an accurate lesson on the history of the time and as a tribute to themselves

and their comrades. Over the years, "Tora, Tora, Tora" has brought both American and Japanese veterans together to celebrate the spirit of cooperation our two nations have enjoyed for more than 50 years. At air shows throughout the country, Japanese veterans living, working, and visiting in this country have had an opportunity to meet with the Tora gang and join with American veterans in a spirit of brotherhood and friendship that only former servicemen can experience.

During the average year, Tora participates in 12 to 16 air shows with 8 to 10 Tora aircraft participating in each show. In addition, each performance includes approximately 61 pyrotechnic effects. The average Tora show requires the coordinated effort of a minimum of 20 to 26 individuals both in the air and on the ground. As one air show industry publication noted, "Flying and working with a keen sense of spirit and camaraderie, the men and women of Tora set themselves apart from other air show acts by exhibiting a professionalism that over the years has earned them the distinction as one of the best acts in the industry." This excellence was recognized formally in December 2001 when Tora was presented with the Art Scholl Award for Showmanship. This award is one of the two highest distinctions awarded by ICAS, the premiere air show industry trade association.

This level of achievement is truly extraordinary when one considers that Tora is comprised entirely of volunteers. Every single person associated with Tora has volunteered his/her time, skills and financial resources to accomplish one simple feat; the telling of a true story, a piece of history. In this respect, Tora is more than just another air show act. Tora is a team of volunteers dedicated to an air show act that can best be described as a living history museum.

For over 35 years, 12 to 16 shows each year, the men and women of Tora have been performing essentially the same act for crowds throughout the western hemisphere. The story never changes, yet every show is as fresh and exciting as the first. Every performance is presented with the same spirited presentation, sense of emotion, and commitment to safety as those first performances in 1972.

As the pilots taxi for takeoff, Tora ground crew and Tora Bomb Squad members can frequently be seen saluting the pilots in the traditional Japanese fashion of a bow. From that moment in the air show until the final notes of Kate Smith's rendition of "God Bless America" are heard as the smoke and fires from Tora finally fade away, the men and women of Tora are dedicated to one simple, yet powerful task... the telling of the story... "lest we forget". Dedication...Selflessness...Commitment... these terms are synonymous with the men and women of Tora, Tora, Tora.

As one airshow promoter so aptly phrased it... "An airshow without TORA or the TORA Bomb Squad is just another fly in." Treat yourself to a day at the museum, the multi-sensory, 3-D, living history museum known as TORA, TORA, TORA.

by the Late Elliott "Doc" Pood, Former TORA Public Information Officer