



For more information, Contact:

Scott Tims ♦ 214-378-7970

WingsOverHoustonPR@thepointgroup.com

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#WOHAirshow

Meet Doolittle Raider Lt. Col. Dick Cole, Ace Pilots, and other Distinguished Veterans and Astronauts at the CAF Wings Over Houston Airshow

HOUSTON (October 8, 2018) – Ace pilots, a Medal of Honor recipient, and other distinguished military veterans, including the last surviving member of the famous Doolittle Raiders of World War II, will make appearances at the [34th Annual Commemorative Air Force \(CAF\) Wings Over Houston Airshow](#), which will be held Saturday and Sunday, Oct. 20-21, at Ellington Airport. Fans attending the airshow can have their show programs autographed free in the **Legends & Heroes Autograph Tent** before the world-famous U.S. Navy Blue Angels take the air.

“We fly to give to honor our veterans, express thanks for our freedom, and bring history to life,” said **Airshow Director Bill Roach**. “We are grateful to these veterans, astronauts, and other distinguished guests who support our show and come to meet the fans. This is a rare opportunity to meet true heroes in every sense of the word.”

Some of the show’s guests making appearances will be:

Lt. Col. Dick Cole, who recently celebrated his 103rd birthday, is the last surviving member of the famous **Doolittle Raiders**. The Doolittle Raiders were a group of 80 volunteer airmen from the U.S. Army Air Corps who, on April 18, 1942, flew 16 B-25 Mitchell airplanes from the deck of the USS Hornet on a daring mission to bomb Japan. For his action, Lt. Col. Cole received the Distinguished Flying Cross, the Air Medal, and many other decorations.

Col. Dean Caswell joined the U.S. Marine Corps in 1942 after which he was assigned to Marine Fighter Squadron 221 aboard the USS Bunker Hill for combat in the Pacific, Japanese homeland islands, Iwo Jima, Honshu and Kyushu with major action against the Kamikaze. He piloted the F4U Corsair and was credited with seven kills and three probable. Caswell served two tours in the Korean War as an AII-Weather Fighter Pilot.

Col. Charles McGee was a pilot and member of the Tuskegee Airmen. In February 1944, he was flying missions in Italy with the 302nd Fighter Squadron of the 332d Fighter Group. He served in World War II, Korea, and Vietnam. In 2007, President George Bush awarded him and the surviving Tuskegee Airmen the Congressional Gold Medal, the nation's highest civilian award, and in 2011, he was inducted into the National Aviation Hall of Fame in Dayton, Ohio.

Col. Joe McPhail, USMC, flew with the most successful Marine Fighting squadron of 1945, VMF-323, known as the Death Rattlers. In a just a few weeks, the squadron shot down 124.5 Japanese planes and counted a dozen aces. On April 12, 1945, while on patrol flying a Corsair, Joe McPhail shot down a lone Ki-27 Nate.

Capt. Mike Trahan flew the AC-47 "Spooky" Gunship in Vietnam as a pilot in the 4th Special Operations Squadron. He also flew the AC-47 for eight months and when the Air Force turned that mission over to the Vietnam Air Force, he was reassigned to the EC-47 "Electronic Countermeasures" aircraft. He was assigned to the 362nd Electronic Warfare Squadron in Pleiku, Vietnam. After retiring from the Air Force in 1970, he was a pilot for Delta Air Lines for 32 years.

Tech. Sgt. Raul Baldit was a combat infantryman of the 87th Division of the Third Army. In 1944, his unit entered combat in France's Alsace-Lorraine. Following heavy fighting, his division crossed the German border in the Saar Region in December 1944. On Christmas Day, his unit took part in the historic counterattack in the Battle of the Bulge, with his division attacking the German Panzer Lehr Division near Bastogne. Sgt. Baldit also participated in the Breaching of the Siegfried Line, Moselle River Crossing, Capture of Koblenz and the Rhine Crossing.

Pfc. Birney T. “Chic” Havey served in the Army in the 42nd Rainbow Division during World War II. His division fought in three major battles, Battle of Northern France, Battle of the Bulge, and Battle of Germany after which his division helped liberate the Dachau Concentration Camp. He was wounded in the Battle of Germany on March 1, 1945, earning the Purple Heart. Havey also earned a Bronze Star with an Oak Leaf Cluster for Meritorious Achievement against the enemy and the Silver Star for Valor in combat.

Celeste Graves was a dispatcher for the Civilian Pilot Training Program (CPT) for Aviation Enterprises at Municipal Airport, now named Hobby Airport, in Houston. A contract was awarded the company to train women pilots to free up men for combat. Graves stayed on as dispatcher. The Women Air Force Service Pilots (WASP) program began in Houston as the Army Air Force Women Flight Training Detachment (AAFWFTD). Later, the combined Army Air Force programs were officially named WASP.

Maj. Terry Pappas piloted the fastest airplane ever built, the SR-71 Blackbird. His aviation experience spans 36 years in 37 military and civil aircraft, including four years as an operational SR-71 pilot flying day and night all-weather reconnaissance missions, worldwide. Pappas held many titles during his career including project manager for DOD-FAA airspace tracking system, executive officer to the Air Force Flight Test Center Commander and Chief of aircrew training and instructor pilot for B-52 operations. He also flew aircraft for NASA.

Lt. Col. John R. Pardo, a pilot during the Vietnam War, is perhaps best known for a mission in 1967 during which the F-4 Phantom IIs he and his wingman, Capt. Earl Aman, were flying were both hit by anti-aircraft fire near Hanoi. With Aman’s ship rapidly losing fuel with no tanker nearby to save him, Pardo used Aman’s tailhook as a contact point to push the plane. They both reached Laotian airspace where they ejected and were safely recovered. Initially reprimanded for not saving his own aircraft, Pardo and Aman were bestowed Silver Stars after the case was reexamined two decades later.

Maj. Lew Jennings is a retired Army officer, former airline pilot and business executive. He flew 726 Air Cavalry Cobra helicopter gunship combat missions in Vietnam, receiving over 50 combat decorations including three Distinguished Flying Crosses for Valor and 36 Air Medals. He is a Life Member of the Vietnam Helicopter Pilots Association, the Distinguished Flying Cross Society, the

Disabled American Veterans, and an active member in the Experimental Aircraft Association, Old Bold Pilots and Quiet Birdmen.

Master Sgt. Wes Fields is a 24-year decorated U.S. Air Force combat veteran, having served as an aerial gunner on the AC-130 gunship. He participated in numerous special operation missions throughout the world. His military career included supporting coalition forces during the first Iraqi offensive in the Gulf War of 1991 to the Bosnian War of 1995, NATO's biggest combat undertaking and the largest air operation in Europe since World War II.

Chief Warrant Officer Daniel Flores, a Houston native, flew the AH-64 Apache helicopter. He was activated in 2005 for deployment to Afghanistan for Operation Enduring Freedom and, during his one-year tour, was witness to the resurgence of the Taliban. Daniel participated in some of the fiercest fighting in the Hindu Kush Mountains.

Spc. Clarence Sasser, who served as a combat medic in Vietnam, is a Medal of Honor recipient. On a mission in the Mekong Delta in 1968, Sasser's undermanned company, flying in on a dozen helicopters, was ambushed by gun and rocket fire. Engaged in a fierce ground battle, 30 American soldiers were quickly cut down. While aiding the wounded, mortar fire stuck Sasser; he extracted the shrapnel from his own body and continued to aid others. Sasser was then hit in both legs by automatic weapon fire, but he used his arms to move through 100 yards of mud to help another wounded soldier. Although suffering blood loss and agonizing pain, Sasser continued to treat the wounded. Sasser was recognized for his valor with the Medal of Honor.

George W.S. Abbe, appearing Saturday only, is a former director of the Johnson Space Center (JSC) and Fellow in Space Policy at the Baker Institute of Rice University. He had more influence on human spaceflight than almost anyone in history. Abbey oversaw the selection of every astronaut class from 1978 to 1987, deciding who got to fly and when. He was with the Apollo 1 astronauts the night before the fatal fire in January 1967. He was in mission control the night of the Apollo 13 accident and organized the recovery effort. Abbey also led NASA's recruitment of women and minorities as space shuttle astronauts and was responsible for hiring Sally Ride.

Alfred Worden was a NASA astronaut. As the command module pilot for the Apollo 15 mission to the moon in 1971, Al Worden flew on what is widely regarded as the greatest exploration mission that humans have ever attempted. He spent six days orbiting the moon, including three days completely alone, the most isolated human in existence. During the return from the moon to Earth he also conducted the first spacewalk in deep space, becoming the first human ever to see both the entire Earth and moon simply by turning his head. The Apollo 15 flight capped an already-impressive career as an astronaut, including important work on the pioneering Apollo 9 and Apollo 12 missions, as well as the perilous flight of Apollo 13.

Brig. Gen. Jean-Loup Chrétien is a French astronaut and was the first person from Western Europe to go into space, aboard a Soviet flight to the Salyut 7 space station in June 1982. Chrétien flew a second Soviet mission to space station Mir in 1988 and then returned to Mir as a U.S.-trained astronaut aboard NASA's space shuttle in 1997.

Franklin Chang Díaz, Ph.D., appearing Saturday only, is a native of Costa Rica who is a mechanical engineer, physicist and former NASA Astronaut. He is the founder and CEO of Ad Astra Rocket Company. Chang Díaz became an American citizen in 1977. He is a veteran of seven Space Shuttle missions, making him the record holder as of 2018 for the most spaceflights (a record he shares with Jerry L. Ross). Chang Díaz was the first Latin-American immigrant NASA astronaut selected to go into space and is a member of the NASA Astronaut Hall of Fame.

Christina Olds is the author of the bestseller book about her father, *Fighter Pilot; The Memoirs of Legendary Ace Robin Olds*. Christina is now working on a screenplay based upon the book, and is writing a second book about her grandfather, Maj. Gen. Robert Olds, who was an instrumental leader in the development of early air power and the U.S. Air Force. A Vassar College graduate, Christina is a sought-after speaker at Air Force and NATO bases, aviation museums and air shows, both nationally and abroad, and is dedicated to furthering her father's legacy to inspire today's active duty fighter pilots around the world.

Tickets can be purchased by visiting www.wingsoverhouston.com or calling 888-4-FLYSHOW.

About Commemorative Air Force (CAF) Wings Over Houston Airshow

The [Commemorative Air Force \(CAF\) Wings Over Houston Airshow](#) is a non-profit 501(c)(3) community event produced by a volunteer effort of the Gulf Coast Wing, Houston Wing, and Tora! Tora! Tora! of the Commemorative Air Force, with support from the Lone Star Flight Museum in Galveston, Texas Legends Flying Museum, Vietnam War Flight Museum, Lewis Air Legends and Collings Foundation West. The Airshow is dedicated to showcasing vintage World War II aircraft, along with the thrills of modern aviation. One of the top air shows in the United States in its category, the CAF Wings Over Houston Airshow attracts more than 90,000 festival goers throughout Houston as well as from around the globe. The 2018 Airshow benefits the CAF Wings Over Houston Airshow Scholarship Program, Exchange Club of Sugar Land, military recruiting efforts, and the Commemorative Air Force aircraft restoration and flying historical programs, in addition to numerous other nonprofit participating organizations.

About the Commemorative Air Force

The Commemorative Air Force is a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization based in Dallas, and the recognized leader of the Warbird Movement—the effort to preserve and honor American military aviation history. Since it was founded in 1957, the CAF has accrued 170 historic aircraft—the largest collection of vintage military aircraft in the world. Educational outreach programs impact an estimated 20 million Americans each year thanks to over 12,000 volunteers who support the CAF nationally and overseas. The Commemorative Air Force honors the men and women who built, maintained, and flew in American airplanes during World War II. The organization believes that is best accomplished by maintaining the airplanes in flying condition; taking the airplanes to the people, allowing them to experience the sight and sound of the aircraft in flight. For more information, visit www.commemorativeairforce.org.