We’re Thinking Outside the Hangar!

The Museum’s COVID-19 reopening featured a new outdoor museum concept.

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C. A. H. A.

C.A.H.A. owns and operates the New England Air Museum, which is located at Bradley International Airport, 36 Perimeter Road, Windsor Locks, CT 06096. Corporate headquarters for the organization is located at the Museum and can be reached by phone at (860) 623-3305 during business hours. Visit our website at: www.neam.org.

Membership in C.A.H.A. is open to anyone with an interest in aviation. Benefits include free admission to the museum during regular hours of operation, discounts on gift shop purchases and on fees for special events and programs, receipt of the NEAM news, the monthly e-blast and voting privileges at organizational meetings.

Contributions of original articles, news items and/or photographs, in addition to suggestions for the improvement of NEAM news are solicited and welcome. Design and layout of NEAM news is provided by Tom Bittel.

Please direct membership problems which might include errors or changes of address to Debbie Reed, Executive Director at the Museum. The NEAM Research Library is open by appointment only. The research staff can be reached at Library@neam.org for online queries.

Our Mission

The New England Air Museum is committed to presenting the story of aviation, the human genius that made it possible, and the profound effects that is has had on the way in which we live. We achieve this by preserving and presenting historically significant aircraft and related artifacts engaging our visitors through high-quality exhibits that help them understand aviation technology, history, and the stories of the men and women who built, flew, and made history with these famous machines inspiring students through our innovative and hands-on education programs that allow them to discover and reflect on aviation history and its ties to social studies, science, geography, and technological advancements.

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From the Executive Director

The museum closed its doors to the public on Friday, March 13th for the safety of our staff and volunteers. The following Tuesday, the full and part-time staff came into the museum to “deep clean” the exhibit hangars. In the 30 plus years I have been here, the exhibit hangars and displays have never been this clean. At the time of our closing, we assumed that we had to close the museum and quarantine for two weeks. By the end of March, we realized that this was a much bigger issue. It was time to re-think our next step. By the end of March, we added NEAMathome to our website with educational and other resources for the public and we created a daily social media program. We wanted to stay connected to you, our members, and the public. March also brought the departure of Nick, our curator, a Captain with the Rhode Island National Guard. I had to make the hard decision to furlough the part-time staff.

By April, COVID-19 took over our lives, not knowing what the next news cycle would bring. The full-time staff began working from home, but a couple of us came into the museum to “keep an eye” on the facility. One staff member took the time to paint some public areas, something on the bucket list we never had time to do. We applied for the PPP grant to keep the full-time staff together. Amanda continued to add content to the education portion of NEAMathome and was even challenged by a school to provide a virtual tour (see page 5). With iPhone in hand, Amanda and Erin created a virtual tour. The museum was dark, but the staff was providing what the public wanted. We began having Zoom meetings with the part-time staff and volunteers, keeping them updated and “checking in” with them.

Early May, Governor Lamont announced Phase 1 that would allow outdoor museums and zoos to open. This is where the staff kicked into high gear, ready at the white board to draw up the plan. We have always wanted to bring attention to the outdoor exhibit area, so how could we make this work? For three weeks we discussed different scenarios on how to create an outdoor experience for our visitors. The more we discussed this, we became excited about what we CAN do rather than what we could not do. We began to reach out to the volunteers who would be interested in coming back, and I was able to bring back some of the furloughed staff. All the while we kept positive, saying we can make this work! On May 22nd, we officially reopened to the public with the outdoor exhibit area, open exhibit and storage hangar doors for visitors to peek inside, as well as outdoor activities for children. Volunteers were willing to come in and share their experiences with the visitors. Given the financial challenges faced by members of our local communities, our reopening weekend was by donation. We had 300 visitors that Memorial Day weekend with a great response from our members. We continued this outdoor only operation for almost a month Thursday-Sunday at a discounted admission, and the visitors kept coming. Meanwhile, our Restoration volunteers slowly began to come back as they were anxious to get back to the projects that were abandoned months before. Another workday was added to restoration so the crews could work in small groups and social distance where needed. The museum was beginning to look “normal” again.

In early June Governor Lamont announced a date for Phase 2. We wasted no time and immediately began to strategize how we were going to safely reopen our exhibit hangars. Using all we had learned from our outdoor reopening, we went back to the drawing board for what this phase could look like, and within a week we had our next plan: the New England “Open Air” Museum. We made the decision to turn off the hangar air conditioning and open the exhibit hangar doors to let the fresh air in during operating hours. With 90,000 square feet for social distancing, we opened on June 19th with a sigh of relief and a hope for normalcy. Following the State of Connecticut regulations regarding face coverings, social distancing, and hand sanitizer stations, the visitors are still coming, and they are excited and grateful that we are here.

It is now late summer, and those visitors are still coming from around New England and New York. Children are being entertained with drawing on the floor and the programs the Education Department provides, and the adult visitors are learning about our collection from our wonderful docents. Our attendance numbers continue to rise, and visitor feedback continues to be universally positive.

In addition to our focus on reopening, we have also remained busy planning for the future. Some of you participated in the survey about the updates we will be making to the Kaman exhibit. The exhibit is now in production with a tentative opening date before the end of 2020. We continue to work on the New England Women in Aviation exhibit, the connector is now carpeted, and the first set of lights have been installed. Another project we continue to work on is the Kosciusko exhibit that was removed a few years ago to make room for the elevator to the mezzanine in the civil hangar. Along with museum staff and representatives from CCSU this story will be updated telling the story of this Polish 303rd Squadron in a new updated exhibit.

Continued on page 14
From the President

Most of the notes I write for this newsletter highlight our accomplishments and recognize our wonderful staff, volunteers, and donors who make such great things happen at the museum. This note will be no different. Except, of course, in 2020 everything is different.

At the beginning of 2020, we had strong tailwinds. The Board had ambitious plans for fundraising, we were anticipating a calendar full of our signature events, new exhibits were taking shape, and the staff was brimming with excitement for the next 12 months.

By March however, right after a great Women Take Flight event, we had to make the difficult decision to shut down the museum for several months, an unthinkable occurrence just a few weeks prior that of course derailed what was going to be an exceptional 2020.

However, just because we closed the doors doesn’t mean we went dark. In fact, it was the opposite. The staff, volunteers, and board all leaned in to ensure that we continued to accomplish our mission to Preserve, Engage, and Inspire. And Inspiring it was.

In the face of uncertainty, the staff went to work changing how we deliver our education programs, how we engage with visitors, and along with the board, we modified our programs to the reality of a “virtual world”. Our Aerospace Business After Hours events were exceptionally well attended, with noted analysts and CEOs giving their perspective on the rapidly changing aviation industry. Our wonderful volunteers came right back as soon as they could to continue our amazing restoration projects. And as soon as we could open, the volunteers and staff made sure that our visitors could come back, and could so safely.

The last few months stand out as some of our finest moments since the tornado in 1979 and I really want to recognize the staff, led by Debbie, for their hard work and creativity in working through this crisis.

The biggest impact affecting us in the short term is the impact on our fundraising. Our fundraising events, rentals, and special events that were cancelled for this year means that our revenue was severely impacted this year. Please consider making your annual contribution earlier than usual this year. This year corporate matching grants are very important too. And with the stock market recovering most of the losses from earlier this year, a gift of appreciated securities is a great option to support the Museum.

Scott E. Ashton
President, C.A.H.A.

Philanthropy at the New England Air Museum During COVID-19

The New England Air Museum sincerely appreciates the support of our friends and members who continue to support our efforts to serve the aviation community during this challenging time. Even while we were required to close due to COVID-19, so many individuals, families and companies continued to support us by renewing memberships and donating to our annual fund. We truly appreciate everyone who helped. Here are two stories of true generosity this year that deserve a little extra recognition:

Early this year, the museum received a call from the family of Fred Parasch, a long-time museum volunteer who passed away last year. They knew how much Fred enjoyed the time he spent at the museum, talking with our visitors and sharing stories of the aircraft. They wanted a tribute to him — something visible so that visitors in the years to come would know that Fred Parasch was a man who cared about the New England Air Museum, and that the museum cared about Fred. After talking to some of his fellow docents, we realized that Fred particularly enjoyed spending time in the B-29 hangar and sharing stories about the exhibit there. His family agreed, and made a donation to place a new bench in that space, with a plaque bearing Fred’s name. We thank them both for their generosity as well as for this opportunity to honor Fred.

But perhaps the most inspiring story this year (so far) comes from six year old Arlan Troughton, who loves airplanes and wants to be a Navy fighter pilot when he grows up, and his father Howard. Howard explained to his son that the air museum needed help because we were closed and not earning any money. He then offered to match any donation that Arlan made to the museum 10 to 1, so $10 for every dollar that Arlan donated. Arlan gave this careful consideration and decided he would donate $50 — quite a significant amount for a child of six. This was incredibly generous in two ways; first, Arlan deserves so much admiration for understanding that he has the power to make a difference, and second, Howard did a splendid job of teaching empathy and philanthropy at an early age. We have so much appreciation for both of them, and we are proud to have them as members of the New England Air Museum.

Leaving a memorial gift or supporting our Annual Fund are great ways to make sure that the museum can continue to preserve historic aircraft, inspire and educate youth, and share the history of aviation with enthusiasts of all ages, long into the future. If you would like to make a gift please visit our website or call or email me today.

Ron Katz, Director of Advancement and External Affairs
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Education Department News

On March 13, 2020, right around the time NEAM decided to voluntarily close its doors in light of the COVID-19 crisis, there were a total of ten visitors in the museum. Those visitors were students and teachers from a local school who, after discussing their concerns with me the day before, decided to carry on with their scheduled field trip as planned. The students had been looking forward to it all year, their teacher said, so if the museum allowed them to come, they would come. Despite not being able to climb into cockpits or participate in a hands-on lesson due to the virus, these students nevertheless had a wonderful time at the museum. As their teacher said in her post-visit survey, “We’re so grateful you allowed us to visit today. Your staff and volunteers made our students feel special. With everything going on right now that means so much to us. Thank you!”

Although those students were the last to visit the museum this spring, during NEAM’s two month closure the Education Department continued to create opportunities for people to engage, learn, and discover the history and science of aviation. Here is an overview of what my team and I were up to during the closure:

• We launched the Aerospace Education Resource Portal, home to hundreds of lesson plans, activities, and multimedia, to support educators as they pivoted to remote learning in addition to providing weekly updates and check-ins to over one hundred local teachers.

• We piloted NEAM’s very first virtual field trips, providing live, remote educational programs to local schools at no cost thanks to generous private donations. One teacher had this to say of her experience: “Although we were unsure about what to expect from a virtual field trip, this was EXCELLENT! Definitely one of the best field trips we’ve ever done!”

• When the museum’s closure forced the cancellation of our spring scout workshops and overnights, we immediately began planning for the resumption of scouting in the fall developing virtual versions of our Aviation Merit Badge Workshops for Scouts BSA and Aviation Adventures Girl Scout Workshops. We are also planning small, private evening events for scouts as potential replacements for our hugely popular Overnight programs this fall.

• We developed at home versions of our hands-on Build and Fly Challenges for families, and we shifted our spring Homeschool Day families to a new date in the fall. Although our annual SPACE EXPO event was cancelled, we are already planning for next year and look forward to welcoming visitors back to the museum for this event in August 2021.

• Despite the cancellation of the spring Member Travel Program trip to Lowell National Historic Park, both the August Finger Lakes trip and the September Hampton Roads trip are still running as scheduled, and I am planning a full slate of local and regional member trips for 2021.

When the museum reopened as an outdoor experience in late May, the Education Department shifted to providing critical operational support as well as take home versions of our children’s activities. We also led outdoor games and developed new QR code scavenger hunts for visitors to engage with our collections. Once the interior exhibits reopened in late June, we began offering new social distanced versions of our interactive programs in addition to continuing our take home activities.

In addition to working with the public this summer, the Education Department has also been preparing for the upcoming school year. We are reorienting our classroom spaces to allow for social distanced onsite field trips, and thanks to generous donors, we are also upgrading our technology and working with a professional videographer to offer high quality virtual programs for schools, scouts, and youth groups. We are also working with educators to shift our longstanding SOAR for STEM and Inspiring Future Aviators programs to hybrid and/or virtual formats to meet their school’s needs, and we are developing new self-guided interpretation for visitors that utilize QR codes and other forms of technology.

None of this mission-fulfilling work would be possible without the men and women of the NEAM Education Department, and so it is with heartfelt gratitude that I thank my staff for the hard work, dedication, and collaborative spirit they have showed during these difficult times. I consider myself very fortunate to call them my colleagues.

There is no denying that the past six months have been challenging for NEAM. However, this is not the first time we have faced unprecedented challenges. In 1979, when the tornado leveled our museum to the ground, many thought it was the end of our organization. Instead, we came together as a community and worked to adapt and overcome those challenges. We have continued in that tradition during COVID-19, and as we look ahead to the “new normal,” one thing remains certain: the New England Air Museum will continue fulfilling its mission to preserve, interpret, and inspire, just as we have for the past sixty years.

Amanda Goodheart Parks, Ph.D.
Director of Education
Work in our restoration facility resumed in May in limited fashion consistent with the State of Connecticut guidelines, which include working in small groups, increased ventilation, use of masks and social distancing.

**Starboard Engine Cowlings**
With the starboard engine accessory cow!lings completed and installed we were ready to begin the final painting of the right side of the aircraft, starting with the engine cowlings. This involved a number of sequential steps including applying a coat of primer to the accessory cowlings, fine sanding the primer, masking the cowlings to extend the area of blue to match the port engine, applying the blue finish paint and again masking the cowling for the application of the remaining silver finish paint. As mentioned in earlier narratives, many hours of preparation is required for each hour of actual painting.

**Fuselage Painting**
While the top and underside of the fuselage had already been painted in the finish coat of silver, the sides still needed final painting. The left side of the aircraft was masked off. The primer coat was fine sanded and then painted in its finish coat of silver. This process was then repeated for the right side. At long last the painting of the entire fuselage in its predominant colors of silver, blue and red was completed marking a huge milestone in the restoration effort.

The next steps will include applying
the details and insignia to the fuselage. We will be working from a few rare color photographs to approximate the size and colors of these details.

**Twin Boom Tail – Aerodynamic Detail**

In the photo above there are bullet-shaped aerodynamic features mounted where the vertical and horizontal stabilizers join. These features were missing from the aircraft when acquired by the museum. A review of our photo archive reveals that the CBY-3 flew without these features in its early years. In the late 1950’s the features appeared, probably to smooth the turbulent airflow created by the 90 degree angles at these junctions. As we begin to apply the final details to the completed fuselage volunteer Tom Palshaw has taken on the task of fabricating the features from fiberglass. Tom has made great progress on this and is in the process of starting to fit his designs to the tail.

**Cockpit**

As detailed in earlier narratives, the restoration of the cockpit presented our volunteer crew with a number of challenges including widespread corrosion, preexisting damage and a great many

*Continued next page*
missing parts and assemblies. The very limited space in the cockpit allowed only one or two of our crew to work there at any given time, resulting in a lengthy restoration effort. While additional work is still required, we have reached a significant and symbolic milestone in this effort with the installation of the main instrument panel in early June.

Our next steps will be to install the cockpit windscreens, seats, pilot controls pedestal, overhead panel and yoke wheels.

Propellers
With the final assembly of the twin propellers completed, they have now been primed and painted. The next steps will be to apply the detail painting which includes yellow blade tips and technical data, along with Hamilton-Standard logo decals.

The completed propeller assemblies will remain in storage to facilitate the final detailing of the aircraft and will be installed at a later date.

Wings
With the completion of the major painting of the fuselage we will now begin the final painting of the wings. In preparation for this we have removed the right wing from its upright storage trolley and placed it flat on a movable cradle. One side of the wing has been prepared for final painting in its silver finish. When the paint has cured we will then flip the wing over and repeat the process for the other surface. We will then move on to the left wing.

In the very early stages of the CBY-3 restoration we encountered great difficulty in removing the wings from the fuselage due to rust and corrosion in the wing mounts. Several of the eight one inch diameter wing mounting pins had to be drilled out and none of them could be reused. Our machinists have fabricated new mounting pins out of stainless steel and have prepared the fittings for wing installation.

Landing Gear Wheel Wells
After many hours of work since the start of the restoration, the final details are underway in the landing gear wheel wells with the fabrication and installation of the remaining hydraulic and fuel lines that run through these areas. Below is a composite photo comparison of the tail gear and wheel well showing the condition of the gear at three points in the CBY-3’s 75 year history.

For more pictures and previous updates on the restoration of the Burnelli, visit our website: www.neam.org.

Harry Newman,
Restoration Crew Chief

After several thousand hours of cockpit restoration by a number of our volunteers, the cockpit is nearing completion with the installation of the main instrument panel.
The Burnelli CBY-3 Loadmaster fuselage as it looks now (June 25, 2020) compared to how it looked just prior to the start of its restoration in October 2012. (Composite image created by Doug Davis.)

The Burnelli CBY-3 Restoration Team - left to right: Al Steinmetz, Wayne Dow, O’Neil Langley, Carl Prince, Tom Palshaw, Ken Stino, Jim Bennett, Doug Davis, Harry Newman (crew chief), Dick Phillips, Jim Godin, Silas Smith, Rick Centore, Bob Vozzola, John Bednarz, and Jerry Abbatello. There have been some 40 volunteers over the 7+ years.
Outdoor Exhibit Opening

Preparing the aircraft and hangars for visitor viewing, with some repositioning and cleaning.
On May 22, 2020 we opened the outdoor exhibit space.

Clockwise from top-left: Welcome Tent; Room to roam; Learning more about the outdoor aircraft; Open Space; Outdoor chalk drawing.
On June 19, 2020 the “Open Air” exhibit hangars opened.
Social distanced activities for youth and families.
Member Trip

This summer Director of Education Amanda Goodheart Parks, Ph.D. led a small group of members on a social distanced Member Travel Program trip to New York’s Finger Lakes region. The group enjoyed a behind-the-scenes tour of the Glenn H. Curtiss Museum as well as a visit to the Corning Museum of Glass, a tasting at a local winery, and self-guided exploration of Corning’s historic Gaffer District. A highlight of the trip was the Curtiss Museum’s P-40 currently undergoing restoration. Can you see the smiles behind those masks?

From the Executive Director

Continued from page 3

Meanwhile our Education Department is preparing to shift our programs for schools, scouts, and youth groups to hybrid and virtual models, and we continue to make investments in our museum infrastructure and visitor experience.

It was sad seeing the exhibit hangars dark, with no visitors or the excitement of children seeing aircraft for the first time or being able to provide the public with all our special events. Yet, upon further reflection, COVID-19 created a new NEAM. A staff that pulled together through the hardest time any of us could have imagined. Creating new ideas, changing the “way we’ve always done it”, but most of all thinking outside the box. I am proud of my staff, the volunteers and board for what we have accomplished together. And thank you, our members, for your continued support.

We may have been dark, but we were still working behind the scenes continuing to fulfill our mission preserve, interpret and inspire.

On July 23, 2020 we celebrated the Burnelli CBY-3’s 75th birthday!
Comments from Our Visitors

One thing I will never forget from our reopening weekend was the overwhelming sense of gratitude expressed by our visitors. Nearly everyone who visited the museum that weekend thanked us for providing them a safe place to enjoy themselves after so many months of stay at home advisories. One young couple said their visit to NEAM was their first outing as a family since their newborn baby came from the hospital just a few months earlier. As a staff we had planned for every possible scenario that weekend, but the one thing we didn’t plan for was that outpour of gratitude from visitors. That weekend I was reminded why I chose museum work as a profession.

Amanda Goodheart Parks, Ph.D.
Director of Education

What really stands out to me are the comments from visitors as they are checking in and when they are leaving. Some that have hit home with me are:

“This is the safest place we could go and explore together" from a young couple with three small-ish children

“We are so happy to have you open again, we need this break from the craziness going on in the world” from a family who are members

“Even with all of this going on, you still manage to do something for the kids. Well done” from a first-time visitor with his family.

Jeanie Rozbora
Visitor Services Manager

Social Media Remarks

• My wife and I went for the first time today. We weren’t allowed in the hanger due to Covid rules. Let me say don’t let this keep you from going. Hanger doors were open with very knowledgeable gentlemen. Make it a point to ask questions otherwise you’re going to miss out on some great information. The young gentleman by the A-10, I would like to thank you for your time.

• Nice variety of planes and helicopters. First time going and would like to visit again. With COVID restrictions they still made the visit worth going. All three hangars are open, so we were able to see most of the exhibits without an issue.

• Me and my husband visited here for the first time. We went after Covid 19 re-opening. The facility was well sanitized. Also, the volunteers are very informative. It takes around 1.5-2 hours to complete the whole tour. Even kids can enjoy the tour.

• Really nice exhibits tons of space to walk around. Lots of different aircrafts and the volunteers are amazing. Great museum. Worth it every time. Great for kids and adults.

• Awesome place to visit, great exhibits, great for kids too!

• Wonderful piece of history and technology. Heroes guide you through. Kids and adults will love it.

• Interesting to see these vintage aircraft up close and find out their significance.

Reverend Charles W. Gelbach

Reverend Charles W. Gelbach, 82, formerly of West Hartford, Conn., died on July 3, 2020. Charlie received his Master of Divinity degree from Lancaster Theological Seminary. He played the trombone in the Air National Guard Band and for many years volunteered in the museum’s library. He is survived by two daughters and their families.

Ruth L. Hartwell

Ruth L. Hartwell, 86, of Suffield, Conn. died on April 11, 2020. A resident of Suffield for over 40 years, Ruth was a longtime volunteer in our gift shop. She is survived by her husband Paul, their daughter and family.

Justin I. Winthrop

Justin “Jud” Winthrop, 99, of Dedham, Mass. died on May 21, 2020. After completing ROTC in college, he entered WWII as an officer and pilot. After the war, Jud worked for the Hartford Insurance Company for 35 years as a corporate officer. Upon retiring, his love of aviation brought him to the museum where he spent over 20 years conducting tours for hundreds of children. He is survived by his three children and their families.

Richard P. Jensen

Richard “Rich” Jensen, 76, of Manchester, Conn. died on August 26, 2020. After receiving his bachelor's degree in industrial engineering at RPI, and his MBA from UCONN, Rich worked at Pratt & Whitney. With a young family to support, and the unpredictable aerospace field at the time, Rich took a job at Aetna until his retirement in 2011. With his engineering background and his interest in aviation, Rich became a docent at the museum in 2012 until his passing. He is survived by his wife Pat, two sons and their families.
Thank you for all your support!