

PLANE CRAZY SATURDAY

After Action Report

June 18, 2011

The Mojave Transportation Museum Foundation was pleased to give a Salute to Veterans at Plane Crazy Saturday this month. A short ceremony was conducted with a special recognition to the Veterans from the William J. "Pete" Knight Veterans Home in Lancaster, CA. and sincere welcome to all of the military aircraft on display, especially the impeccably restored P-51D Mustang one of World War II's



finest fighter aircraft. The Mustang is owned by well-known actor Tom Cruise and was flown to Mojave Air & Spaceport by WWII aircraft restorer and air race pilot Matt Jackson.

Rebecca Amber/*Aerotech News* gathered everyone together from the Veterans Home for a great photo with "Kiss Me Kate." Thank you to Rachel Wilson, activities director, for setting up this special fieldtrip up for the veterans!

Museum board member Alan Radecki captured this photo of Dick Rutan's Berkut next to the Mustang.

Note the 'invasion stripes' on the P-51 - All airplanes used by the Allied Forces for Operation Overlord on D-Day, June 6, 1944, had Invasion Stripes painted on the wings and fuselage, so ground forces would know not to shoot at them. There were five stripes, alternating three white and two black. Each stripe was about two-feet wide, and the stripes were painted on the top and bottom of the wings and the bottom of the fuselage, so they were impossible to



miss. (“D-Day” was the first day of any military operation during the war. The expression “D-Day” has come to mean the greatest single Allied operation of World War II, the invasion of Normandy, France.)

Thank you Kern County Second District Supervisor Zack Scrivner for speaking at our short ceremony and saluting our Veterans! Also, we appreciate Christina Scrivner singing the National Anthem with dignity and grace.



Mark Street couldn't resist pulling his sweet little Pitts Special over near the powerful warbird for a photo opportunity.

Each month more people come out for Plane Crazy Saturday! The weather was perfect, the June wind whipped up around Noon, but everyone seemed to have a good time.

We appreciate all of the good press coverage from our local newspapers and this month aviation magazine writer/photographer Frank Mormillo was on hand to cover the event.

I feel like one of the luckiest girls in the world, as Matt offered to take me up so Frank could get some shots of the

Mustang in the air!

I know one thing for sure – there is no substitute for horsepower! Matt built this Mustang from the ground up and she responds beautifully to him. He is obviously a proficient instructor, speaking out loud as he goes through his checklist before start and while flying, he repeats power settings, flap settings and gear extension before landing. Needless to say, I was thoroughly impressed. Never felt the wheels touch the ground on landing, totally smooth and skillful.

A Mustang feels good, smells good and sounds powerful when inside the cockpit, but the sound of this fighter plane when you are on the ground and it flies past with lots of power, is electrifying! Nothing else sounds like a Mustang!

Allsion Gatlin (*Antelope Valley Press*) interviewed Rachel Wilson from the Veterans Home while standing in front of Dave VanHoy's North American AT-6, a World War II advanced trainer. This is the airplane all fighter pilots learned to fly before flying



the P-51.

Alan Radecki gave tram loads of people tours of the Mojave Air & Spaceport flightline telling about the history of Mojave Airport, while pointing out interesting aircraft along the way. He always tells the exciting story of one of the



airliners stored in the Mojave Airport boneyard; the Air Canada Boeing 767, Gimli Glider, and how it survived one of the most amazing dead-stick landings ever attempted.

The Model A Ford Club from Visalia, CA drove in to help give a salute to America's veterans and displayed their beautifully restored cars on the east side of the administration building at Mojave Airport. Dave and Karen Bockman planned this special trip and came a day early to tour Cal Portland Cement Co. The whole group stayed at the

Mariah Country Inn for two nights and called in their lunch order to Stokins Donuts and he delivered the sandwiches to them at Plane Crazy!



On their way home after leaving Plane Crazy, they headed up Oak Creek Road for another look at the windmills at the entrance of Cal Portland Cement Co.!

Many thanks to Bart York, and Gern for the great briefing and tour last Friday!

There were planes and helicopters from all over Southern California at PCS this month!

Voyager Restaurant was so busy that some people left to go elsewhere because the staff couldn't wait on the tables fast enough! The view of the

aircraft parked on the ramp seemed to keep most people happy while they waited.

Mojave Airport staff is always so accommodating and supportive. Thank you Erika Westowski and Stu Witt for being on hand to help.

Photo: Bill Deaver

Thank you to Ron Langford for always carrying the tables and chairs for the



various booths that set up each month. This month he brought extra tables and chairs to give our veterans a place to sit.

A special thank you to Chris and Riitta Martin, Wen Painter, Bill Deaver, Alan Radecki and Rebecca Amber! They are stalwart MTM board members who always show up and give their all. I was out of steam and running on only about three cylinders on Saturday. Felt behind the power curve all day, but thankfully, everyone else pitched in and made it all a success!

Rob Loughlin is a big help each month and I appreciate his enthusiasm – thanks Rob! You are the greatest! Many thanks to Doug Burdick and Sean Cooper for setting up the MTM booth each month.

Doug Castleman, aviation artist; Maggie Geimke, Usborne Books At Home; and Rick Hall, airplane decals are faithful to come each month and set up their booths. A huge thank you to each of them!

The Douglas A-26 unfortunately had a large fuel leak and couldn't make it this month. Matt said that Mr. Keck was so disappointed and wanted to come to Mojave for Plane Crazy, so he promised to fly it in for next month's PCS – July 16th!

Hope to see everyone in July.