

## Atterbury-Bakalar Air Museum, Inc.

# The Wing Script

Atterbury Army Air Base - Bakalar Air Force Base - Columbus, Indiana

Museum Membership Newsletter **February 2018** is published by the Museum Volunteers.  
The publication name, "The Wing Script" is taken from the former air base newspaper

### Museum Expansion



With the generosity of our members and benefactors the museum was able to raise \$180,000 for our new annex building. This building will be used as a workshop and as a storage area for artifacts that aren't currently on display.



A ground breaking ceremony for the new building was held on August 27, 2017. The building site was then leveled and prepped for construction.



Construction of the new building will begin as soon as weather permits. The building should be completed sometime in the late spring of 2018.

### President's Remarks



**Board President – Nick Firestone**

As you can tell from the articles and pictures in this edition of The Wing Script, our museum was very busy last year.

Thanks to generous support from the public and local charitable institutions, we conducted a successful campaign to raise funds to build an annex behind the museum to house our shop and artifact storage. Our groundbreaking ceremony was in August and we expect to have the building, an adjoining patio and sculpture honoring the 434<sup>th</sup> Hoosier Wing (formerly stationed here and now at Grissom Air Reserve Base) completed by late this spring, with interior work to follow.

We're looking forward to adding more displays later this year and to utilize our new patio for special outdoor events. We're also promoting the museum as an educational resource to encourage group tours from local schools.

A project to make the museum more identifiable is in the works and is expected to be implemented in the next few months.

We hope you can visit us after we reopen for the season on Tuesday, March 6.

Nick

The Atterbury-Bakalar Air Museum complex consists of the museum and William "Bruce" Dalton Media Center, the Jeanne Lewellen Norbeck Memorial Chapel and the Historical Markers on Bakalar Green. Bakalar Green is the preserved green area between the F-4 Phantom Jet static display and the airport rotating beacon.

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In June the airport hosted an Aviation Day. On that one day approximately 900 visitors toured the museum.

## Tour Groups

Walk-in visitors account for about half of the museum's attendance. Other sources include:



Organized tours from both public and home schools.



Veterans groups renew friendships and retell old stories.



Bus tours from Indiana, Illinois, and Ohio often arrange for a tour of the museum when they visit Columbus.

## Off Site Activities

Museum volunteers travel to events around Columbus to bring the airbase history to more people.



The museum's jeep was displayed at a convention of Jeep collectors.



Every year the museum sets up a display at the Bartholomew County Library for their "Steps Through Time" exhibition.



Some museum artifacts were put on temporary display in the library of a New Albany, IN school.

## Jeanne Lewellen Norbeck Memorial Chapel



The 75 year old chapel was given a new roof this year.



A group of Cummins volunteers did repairs on the chapel.



Gordon Lake and Jim Reid remodeled a neglected storage room in the chapel. This comfortable lounge is now known as the "Marty Wvall Room". Marty Wvall was a Woman Airforce Service Pilot (WASP) during WW2.

## Digital Upgrades

The museum is making use of new technology to make visits to the museum more interesting.



**Media center upgrade** - Visitors can now select from 12 videos. The new system can also be used to display slideshows and PowerPoint presentations.



**Digital Photo Frames** – The museum has installed 11 frames as part of our displays. These frames can show video clips or a slide show of 15-25 photographs.

**Facebook Page** – The museums Facebook page has existed for only 18 months. It is a good way to monitor special events that happen at the museum. The Facebook page has 150 followers.

<https://www.facebook.com/atterburybakalarairmuseum/>

**Web site** – The museum web site has a wealth of information about the museum and airbase history. In 2017 the web site had 33,000 visitors.

<http://www.atterburybakalarairmuseum.org/>

## In Memory



**John C. Walter**

February 19, 1921 – December 12, 2017  
Born in Washington, Indiana

He enlisted in the U.S. Army Air Force in 1942, graduated from pilot training in January, 1944 and was assigned to the 95th Bomb Group of the 8th Air Force in England in August of 1944. He flew thirty-five combat missions over Germany as a B-17 Flying Fortress pilot.



John graduated from the University of Southern California with a degree in Mechanical Engineering in 1949 and joined Cummins Engine Company where he held positions in Product and Manufacturing Engineering, Production, Research and International divisions.

John was an extremely active volunteer at the Atterbury-Bakalar Air Museum since 1983.



**Sgt. Jonathon M. Hunter** was killed in Afghanistan on August 2, 2017 while guarding a truck convoy. About 300 people were at the Columbus Municipal Airport on August 22 to meet the airplane that was transporting his remains. Thousands more lined the route of the motorcade procession as it drove through Columbus.

The photograph of the museum volunteers saluting was one of the photographs that were printed on the front page of The Republic Newspaper.



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