

Atterbury-Bakalar Air Museum, Inc.

The Wing Script

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

Museum Membership Newsletter February 2014 published by the Museum Volunteers.

The publication name, "The Wing Script" is taken from the former air base newspaper

Museum Expansion Ground Breaking



Columbus Mayor Kristen Brown, Museum Board President Jim Sellars, Museum Founding Members Tom Vickers and John Walter along with Columbus Municipal Airport Director Brian Payne do the honors for the official museum expansion project Ceremonial ground breaking hosted by the museum volunteers on July 20, 2013.

From A Dream To Reality The Museum Expansion Artist Concept



Expanded Museum Opening Spring 2014



The museum was expanded to double the size of the original museum building and triple the size for display gallery floor space. The expanded building includes a new conference room, library and archivist room. New energy efficient heating and air-condition units and energy saving lighting was installed.

Museum Expansion Project New Gallery Displays In The Works



John Walter a Museum Founding Member stands next to one of the new display artifacts. A WWII Army Air Field rotating beacon was refurbished and mounted on a tower. The tower was designed by John, a retired Cummins Engineer and WWII B-17 Bomber Pilot. The model in the foreground was built by John as well as the engineering design plans for the tower section.



WWII Home Front Manufacturing

During WWII Noblitt-Sparks, later Arvin converted to war time production of military products in support of the all-out war effort. Some of those donated items have been refurbished by museum volunteers and will become a permanent gallery display.

What Else Is New



71st SOS Gunship Mural

This photo mural of a Bakalar Air Force Base AC-119G Gunship in Vietnam during 1969 will cover a wall in the new museum conference room. The 71st Special Operations Squadron was activated at Bakalar Air Force Base in 1968 and then deployed to South Vietnam. They were the only Air Force Reserve unit to serve in combat in Vietnam. This highly decorated unit returned to Bakalar Air Force Base Columbus, Indiana on June 6, 1969.

Building T-50 Barracks Section



Museum Volunteers Gordon Lake, Pete Jenkins and Jim Porter work on a replica of an Atterbury Army Air Field/Bakalar Air Force Base barracks display.



Build in 1942, Barracks T-50 was located west of the current Building T-48, the Jeanne Lewellen Norbeck Memorial Chapel, the only barracks style building remaining on the airport.

New Museum Library



Brian Blavat Museum Volunteer is putting stain on the new library book shelves. The library was in the chapel building but is being moved to the new library room in the museum expansion to be more accessible to museum volunteers and members. The books are of military and aviation and mostly of the 1940's-1970's era

A Quick Look Back



Museum Volunteer Wendell Ross now retired airport director holds the model of the F-4 Phantom Jet static display site being built during 1988.

A big thank you to the Columbus Aviation Board of Commissioners, Airport Director, Mayor Brown & the City of Columbus, the financial donors large and small who made the Atterbury-Bakalar Air Museum expansion project possible. Without their help it would not have been completed.

Last Days Of The Original Wooden Tower



In this 1953 photo donated to the museum by **James Landrum** pictured on the left in the snapshot, of Bloomington, IN shows the construction of the "new" steel control tower, building 89 with the 1942 wooden control tower in operation. This is the only photo the museum has of both towers together. The April 1956 Bakalar Air Force Base Schedule of Existing Facilities listed the "new" tower as built in '53 with a usable life expectancy until '63. The original wood tower was building T-89 or only a temporary structure. The Air Force tower is still in use today.

Jeanne Lewellen Norbeck Memorial Chapel



The 72 year old Chapel building T-48 takes a lot of special tender loving care from the museum volunteers. Building T-48 was built in 1942 to only last for about five years. The building started its life as a barracks style building Day Room. It was converted to a chapel during the Korean War as the base had no Chapel. The Church services were held in the base theater prior to the conversion of the Day Room to Chapel.



In this somewhat out of focus 1953 snapshot of the Base Chapel you can see the base rotating beacon tower on the far right of the picture in the motor pool area.



Historical Atterbury Army Air Field/Bakalar AFB photo

of the original rotating beacon that was located in the base motor pool at the corner of Andrews Street and 6th Street.

The Man Who Built The Base



Captain Stratton O. Hammon, Army Corps of Engineers and Base Commander seated with his Secretary Mrs. Audri H. Allred.

Captain Hammon was ordered to acquire the land, build the air base and have it operational in five months. He accomplished his mission from August to December 1942.



Atterbury-Bakalar Air Museum, Inc.
4742 Ray Boll Boulevard
Columbus, Indiana 47203
Phone 812.372.4356
atterburybakalarairmuseum.org