

# WINGS



# NEWS

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## LIGHT AT THE END OF THE TUNNEL! Vaccinations – Lifting of Stay at Home Order – Outdoor Dining – Family Meetings – Haircuts!

A light was lit at the dark COVID-19 tunnel when the State lifted the Regional Stay Home Order and moved all counties back into the Blueprint for a Safer Economy color-coded tiers. Los Angeles County, along with the majority of the State, is in the most restrictive purple tier. The following is allowed with adherence to all of the sector-specific directives to ensure distancing, wearing of face coverings, and infection control: Private gatherings outdoors up to 3 households and up to a total of 15 people; Outdoor recreational activities are open; Personal care services open indoors at 25% capacity and Outdoor Dining.

Over 50% of our veterans have obtained at least one vaccination at the VA Medical Center in Los Angeles. Many other members have received vaccinations at other facilities.

Wings Over Wendy's members will be able to safely meet on Thursdays for lunch but **will not be allowed to sit at the same table**. On 1/28/21 LA County DPH updated the protocols for restaurants to reopen for outdoor dining as follows: Outdoor dining table seating must be limited to no more than 6 people per table, **all of whom must be from the same household**. Outdoor tables must be repositioned or removed so that **all tables are at least 8 feet apart**. Televisions or other screens that broadcast programming must remain off until further notice. (I was told this was added to prevent watching the Super Bowl and other sporting events.) **The light is somewhat lit!**

# January 2021

## Meetings

### January 4, 2021



## Grumman F6F Hellcat

On January 4, 2021, we watched a documentary on the Grumman F6F Hellcat. The Hellcat was a very capable fighter used in the second half of World War II. Beginning on December 7, 1941, when Pearl Harbor was attacked, all eight battleships in the US Navy's Pacific Fleet were taken out. The ships that remained were three aircraft carriers. Instead of waiting six to eight months for the battleships to be sent back into the sea, the three carriers went out on their own, with a different purpose.



Brewster F2A Buffalo

Before this, carriers used planes to protect battleships, but now they relied all on the fighters' muscle. Two fighter aircraft were in direct competition for top priority use: the Brewster F2A Buffalo and the Grumman F4F Wildcat. Grumman had to design three different versions of the F4F before it was finally better in performance than the Buffalo, and it was assigned for front-line use by the Navy.

The F4F Wildcat was sent out to battle the day after Pearl Harbor was attacked. Thirty-six Japanese bombers attacked Wake Island and destroyed the US bombers parked on the airstrip.

The Japanese returned with another invasion force four days later. Four Wildcats that survived the first attack took down two Japanese cruisers and a destroyer. Japan had to retreat.

Two weeks later, a full Japanese invasion force approached Wake Island flying the Mitsubishi A6M-0, which was superior to the Wildcat in every way. The four

remaining Wildcats were taken out, and the US surrendered Wake Island to Japan.



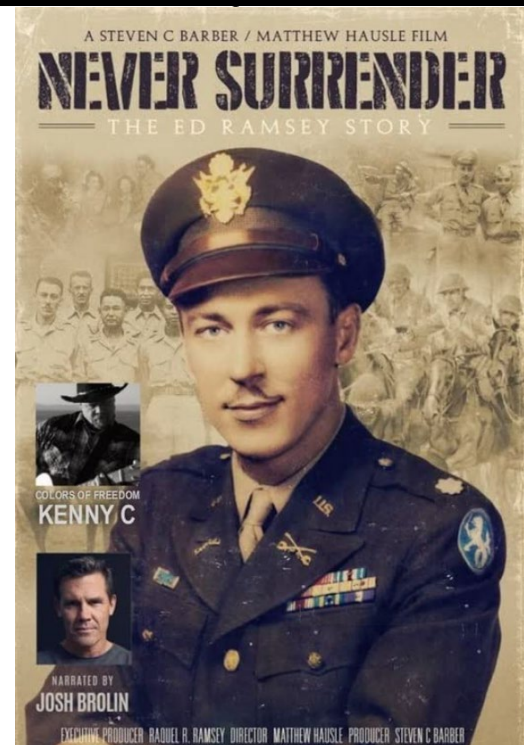
A6M-0 (Japanese Zero)

This sparked Grumman to go back to the drawing board and design a plane that is superior to the A6M-0. In 1942, a crash-landed A6M-0 was discovered in Alaskan territory. It was mostly intact, and the Navy studied it to discover flaws. They restored it to the point where they could take it on test-flights and find its weaknesses. New strategies to take advantage of these weaknesses were implemented at the Battle of Midway, resulting in a US Navy's success.

Grumman completed the design of his new F6F Hellcat in June of 1942. It was superior in every way to the A6M-0.

The F6F was implemented in front-line battles for the rest of the war. There are countless stories of the strength of the Hellcat. On one occasion, a single pilot and his wingman took out an entire fleet of A6M-0's in a Hellcat. The Grumman F6F Hellcat took part in the ultimate defeat of Japan and the end of the war.

## January 11, 2021



## Never Surrender - The Ed Ramsey Story

(Continued Page 3)

On January 11, 2021, we watched *Never Surrender – The Ed Ramsey Story*. The documentary told the life story of war hero Ed Ramsey. Ed was born in Carlisle, Illinois, on May 9, 1917. When he was 12, his father was arrested for domestic abuse. He later committed suicide in prison. The death of his father turned Ed into a troublemaker. He skipped school regularly to drink alcohol and spent lots of time at clubs dancing with women. His mother enlisted him in the Oklahoma Military Academy's cavalry unit to shape him up.

At the military academy, he learned discipline. His charisma allowed him to make friends easily, and he began to display qualities of leadership. He began to play polo as a hobby, as he enjoyed the sport's exhilarating and dangerous nature.

Following the academy, Ramsey enlisted in the army and joined the 11th Cavalry Unit, based in San Diego's mountains. Shortly after, he joined the 26th Cavalry Unit, based in the Philippines at Fort Stotsenburg in 1940. In the Philippines, he quickly became a successful officer while also spending time as a bachelor in Manila.

He woke up on December 7, 1941, with a hangover from partying the night before. At breakfast, there was more commotion than usual. He asked someone what was happening- and they responded that the US was officially at war. He was in disbelief at first, but he realized its reality and rushed to get ready for battle when hours after Pearl Harbor was bombed, a Japanese aerial attack reached the Philippines. There were hundreds of casualties within minutes, and the polo-playing bachelor immediately transformed into an officer in battle.

On January 16, 1942, the 24-year-old Ramsey traveled to Morong to help set up a defense line to slow the Japanese. He gathered 27 Filipino scouts that he had never met and led them to the abandoned village. Although they were significantly outnumbered, Ramsey led them into battle on their horses. It was the last known Calvery charge in the military. They charged 500 Japanese infantrymen that were surprised and didn't know how to defend against a Calvery charge.

Ramsey's scouts held their ground at Morong until the regular army showed up. This would become known as the Battle of Morong, and Ramsey would receive the silver star for his heroism.

In April of 1942, Ramsey volunteered to assist Joe Barker in commanding a guerrilla force. The guerrilla's took reference from Mao Tse-Tung's book *Guerrilla Warfare*. They gathered intelligence on the Japanese through civilian tips and planting devices in Japanese meeting spots and vehicles. They lived a harsh life in the mountains for three years. Ed received just about every disease you could get. He was hospitalized for over a year in total while battling dysentery, malaria, malnutrition, and more. He had his appendix removed without anesthetic on one occasion.

When his partner, Barker, was captured by communist guerrillas, Ramsey was left in charge of 10,000 men and women part of his force. At the end of the war, General MacArthur praised Ramsey for his work and gave him the Distinguished Service Cross. After he returned to the US, he continued to live a fulfilling life, starting a family and becoming a successful businessman. Ed Ramsey will go down in history, not only because of his accomplishments but because of his charismatic and compassionate character.

## January 18, 2021



Photo from Zoom

### Barbara Schultz

*A Legend in Her Own Time*



Florence Leontine Lowe  
July 22, 1901 – March 29, 1975

Photo from YouTube

On January 18, 2021, Barbara H. Schultz presented a slideshow about Florence Leontine Lowe, aka Pancho Barnes's life. Barbara is an author that published a biography of Pancho Barnes in 1996. She had spoken about her book *Pancho* on September 4, 2017, at a Wings Over Wendy's meeting at the Ventura Blvd. Wendy's restaurant. Her presentation on that date was limited to twenty minutes.

We invited her to return to speak longer and to remark on the differences in her research from the Computer Sciences Corp. *Pancho's Guest Ranch Hotel and Happy Bottom Riding Club* documentary we saw on December 28, 2020.

(Continued Page 4)



**January 25, 2021**

Pancho is known for the legendary gathering spot that she created, the Happy Bottom Riding Club. Pancho was born in 1901 and grew up in Pasadena. Her grandfather was Professor Thaddeus Lowe, who was known for turning the tide of the Civil War. Legend has it that he traveled up in an air balloon to spot the Confederate troops' location, which he telegraphed to the Union army.

Pancho was a very rebellious child due to her getting less attention than her older brother. She was sent off to private school, but the time she spent in three different schools didn't entirely fix her behavior. She even ran away from one of the schools she attended.

She graduated in 1919, and two years later, she married Reverend Rankin C. Barnes in 1921. This was not her only husband, but rather the first of four husbands. In 1923, her mother passed away, leaving her an inheritance now that would now be worth four million dollars. She began living an expensive lifestyle by building a mansion and traveling around the world.

Pancho was adventurous, and on a whim, she decided to go to flight school with her brother. Pancho became a very respected and skilled pilot and was admired for being one of the only woman pilots at the time. She became friends with famous aviators and celebrities and took up a career in stunt piloting. Pancho showcased her skill at the first National Air Race for Women in 1929 and set a speed record in August of 1930, cementing her a spot in the elite group of "Speed Queens."

In 1931, Pancho began hosting meetings for the Association of Motion Picture Pilots in her home and formed the Women's Air Reserve. She enjoyed being a hostess and bought a ranch in the Mojave desert known as Rancho Oro Verde. This ranch would house the Happy Bottom Riding Club, which you may remember from the documentary we watched in December. The ranch had horseback riding, a pool, and a bar and cafe. Famous figures in American culture and all kinds of aviators would stop and drink at the Happy Bottom Riding Club due to its proximity to Edwards Air Base.

Unfortunately, the ranch burned down in 1953 due to unknown causes. Some claim Pancho herself burned it down, while others say the government did it. Nonetheless, Pancho decided to restart. She had aspirations, such as opening a cafe in the Pentagon, but these never came to fruition. Her faulty marriage to her fourth husband and her battle with thyroid didn't help, and she would pass away in Boron, California, in 1975.



Photo from Zoom

## **Barbara Schultz**

### **Moye W. Stephens**

### **1906 - 1995**



Photo from Zoom

## **Flying Carpets, Flying Wings: The Biography of Moye W. Stephens**

Barbara Schultz returned on January 25, 2021, to give us a presentation on her book *Flying Carpets, Flying Wings: The Biography of Moye W. Stephens*.

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Moye W. Stephens. Moye was born in 1906 and grew up in western Los Angeles. He got his start in aviation young when he started refueling planes at small airports in high school. Moye used his earnings to pay for flight lessons and received his pilot's license in September 1924.



Thomas-Morse S-4C Scout

He soon bought his first personal airplane, a Thomas-Morse Scout. Moye took part in movies flying planes as a stunt-double.

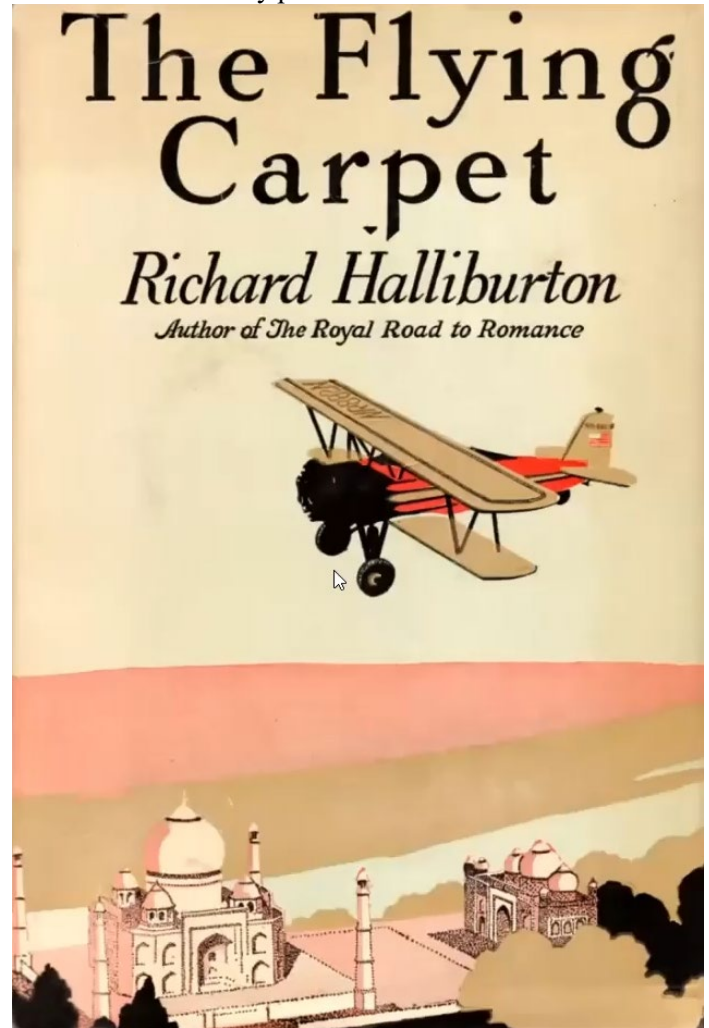


In 1927, Moye took a job as a Captain for Maddux Air Lines, a Southern California airline.



In December of 1930, he embarked on his biggest adventure: a flight around the world.

Moye and Richard Halliburton embarked in December of 1930. They landed in countries everywhere you can think of: Europe, Africa, the Middle East, Asia, you name it. Barbara showed many photos from the 18 month adventure.



Richard Halliburton published a book about the journey titled *The Flying Carpet* to earn money to repay for the expense of the trip.

In 1935, Moye was hired by Lockheed to be a salesman and pilot. He stayed with the company for about four years. In 1939, he worked with former co-worker Jack Northrop to create Northrop Aircraft Inc.



Under this company, he helped design the first flying wing aircraft. Moye was head prototype test pilot for the company. In 1983, he received the prestigious Honorary Fellow Title from the Society of Experimental Test Pilots in 1983.





## “Terror at 100 Feet!”

by Fred Blechman

It was May 8, 1950, and I was scheduled for my first flight in an inverted gull-wing F4U-4 Corsair, commonly known as the "Ensign Eliminator." Although I was not yet an Ensign, but just a lowly NavCad, this was still quite a jump from the SNJ trainer I had flown for over 200 hours in Navy basic flight training. I had "graduated" by making the required six arrested landings in the SNJ at Pensacola aboard the USS Cabot light carrier (CVL-28), and was now at Corpus Christi, Texas, for "advanced" training in Corsairs.

All our flight training up to that point had been in the two-seat 600-horsepower SNJ. We had an instructor on the dual controls for the first 20 flights before solo, and on all new types of flying – aerobatics, gunnery, formation, night flying, air combat maneuvering, cross-country navigation, and so forth.

Although I had many solo flights in the SNJ, flying the single-seat 2100-horsepower F4U-4 Corsair was going to be a strictly new experience – no instructor on dual controls. I read the manual and went through a blindfold cockpit check to be sure I knew where the various controls were located, and how to operate them; some went up and down, others forward and aft, and many rotated.



Now was the time. I climbed into the cockpit of F4U-4 Serial #81728 through the use of a wing walkway, steps, and handgrip on the right side of the airplane. Settling into the bucket seat where the parachute had been already put in place by the plane captain, I snapped the shoulder straps, seat belt, and parachute harness into the complex single-release restraint system.

Following a 19-step procedure, I started the 18-cylinder twin-row Pratt & Whitney R-2800-18W air-cooled engine and watched the giant four-bladed propeller churning in front of a nose that extended more than 15 feet ahead of the cockpit. The deep-throated harumph-harumph sound and vibration of the huge engine permeated the ground, air, and airframe. This was power!

After checking the instruments for normal readings, I gave the plane captain a "thumbs up" to remove the wheel chocks and I carefully taxied to the runup area near the runway as the engine was warming up. With the huge nose blocking out all forward vision (remember, this was a taildragger), I had to alternately turn left and right about 30 degrees, "S-turning," to see what was directly ahead.

I checked the engine oil and fuel pressures and magnetos at 2000 rpm and the supercharger at 1300 rpm, all with the propeller control set at "Take-off Rpm." Everything looked OK, so I completed the 25-step takeoff check-off list – things like making sure the prop pitch was set to full rpm, mixture full rich, flaps 20-degrees down, rudder tab 6-degrees right, aileron tab 6-degrees, right wing down, elevator tab 1-degree nose up, tail wheel locked, etc. This done, I taxied to the beginning of the runway and when I got my takeoff clearance on the radio, I slowly pushed the throttle all the way forward, keeping the tail down with full back stick.

It was immediately obvious that I needed right rudder to counter the left-pulling torque of this huge engine. As I quickly speeded up, I let the nose lower to a slightly-up position and the Corsair simply flew off the ground. Now it was wheels up, milk up the flaps 10-degrees at a time, reduce power, and crank the fishbowl canopy closed. I was in the process of doing all this at about 100 feet above the ground in a slow climb with the canopy closed, when it happened!

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I must interrupt at this point to relate an earlier life experience. I have an unexplained fear of things that crawl, slither and flutter around, such as spiders, moths, lizards, snakes and creepy-crawly things that seem to pervade the hot, moist climates of Corpus Christi and Pensacola, where Navy flight training was conducted in the early 1950s.

I recall a time in my youth one night when I got into a phone booth, closed the accordion doors, and the light automatically came on. Inside that phone booth, apparently laying in wait for a wimp like me was a rather large tan, powdery moth, with long antennae. It immediately proceeded to flutter around inside that phone booth. For some reason, the thought of that thing touching me, or LANDING ON ME, threw all my alarm systems to full blast! I was out of there in a flash (even though I had not completed taking off my outer garments to reveal my true identity as Superman).

Now that I've destroyed my macho image, let me get back to the story. So there I was at 100 feet on my first flight in this 2100 horsepower fighter plane, climbing out with my canopy closed, when, all of a sudden, from the innermost black depths of the Corsair's fuselage, a big, tan, powdery moth with long antennae (obviously a direct descendant of my phone booth companion) jumped into view and started fluttering around the tiny constraints of the cockpit! I was terrified. Just me and this giant moth inches away from my tender psyche while locked in a glass bowl traveling through space at a speed well over 100 miles an hour, and only about 100 feet over trees and swamps. Yech!



F4U-4 Corsair Cockpit

I had to make an immediate decision. There was no room for both of us in that cramped cockpit. I was certainly not supposed to have an uninvited copilot. Jump or stay? Of course, how could I possibly explain bailing out because I was attacked by a moth? I quickly found an alternative. I cranked open the canopy enough for a giant sucking sound, and created a vacuum that pulled that critter up and away!!

I don't remember anything else about that flight, but I must have survived. I had 250 more flights in Corsairs in flight training and the Fleet and that never happened again.

## "Paddle Paradox" or "Paddle Panic!"-

by Fred Blechman

This may seem absurd or unbelievable, but it's a true story – although I know of no documentation to back it up, and the details are from my recollection of a peculiar event over 45 years ago ...

Fighting Fourteen (VF-14) with our F4U-5 Corsairs was on a short LANTFLEX (Atlantic Fleet Exercise) cruise in the Caribbean. We were the only full squadron aboard the USS Kula Gulf (CVE-108), a jeep carrier that was one of several carriers participating in this annual wargame exercise. One of the other carriers was a British carrier with several squadrons aboard, including a Corsair squadron.



The Kula Gulf was cruising along that afternoon with a ready deck, flight operations on standby, trying to keep ahead of an approaching storm. I was one of the standby pilots in the ready room when the Duty Officer got a phone call that a flight of eight errant Corsairs – not from our carrier – were requesting permission to land. According to their radio transmissions, these were Royal Navy Corsairs whose ship was in the storm, and they needed to land somewhere, and they found us!

Since all our planes were parked forward on the straight-deck Kula Gulf, there was no reason we could not take them aboard. The LSO (Landing Signal Officer) hustled to his aft port station with his two landing signal flags ("paddles") while many of us went up to the "Vulture's Nest" observation platform on the ship's island near the bridge. We wanted to watch the Brits land those F4U-4 Corsairs, earlier lighter Corsairs than the -5 models we flew.

The British Corsairs, in two divisions of four each, made the standard upwind peel-off on the starboard side of the ship. Each established an interval as the pilot reduced rpm and manifold pressure, dropped the wheels and flaps, made a 180-degree turn to the downwind leg while losing some altitude, and then turned toward the ship while adjusting the nose attitude, airspeed, altitude, and bank to position the Corsair over the ramp with little or no straightaway. (Continued Page 8)



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## **In Other News**

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\*Mandatory

# ‘Guardians’ of the Galaxy: Space Force Members Get New Name

There were also advisory paddle signals for approach speed and lineup with the center of the deck. Based on the LSO's paddle signals, you adjusted your flight path accordingly. You had to trust his signals since he was on the ship and could best judge the roll and pitch of the landing area as the carrier plowed through uneven seas.

Space Force members will be known as “Guardians” from now on, Vice President Michael R. Pence announced Dec. 18.

We were wrong. Actually, these pilots were excellent carrier pilots – if they were following their own English "Batman" (their name for the LSO) signals. It turns out, from conversations with them after they landed (and after they stopped cussing "that bloody crazy Batman!") that British paddle signals for altitude were exactly the OPPOSITE of ours. To them the arms-up paddles signal meant "go higher" and arms-down paddles meant "go lower"! No wonder they were all over the sky until they figured it out.

As the Space Force turns 1 year old, abandoning the moniker of “Airman” is one of the most prominent moves made so far to distinguish space personnel from the Air Force they came from. An effort to crowdsource options brought in more than 500 responses earlier this year, including “sentinel” and “vanguard.”

The decision will shape the ranks issued to members as well, ditching terms like “senior airman” that use the old name. Officials have also stressed the importance of picking a gender-neutral name as they shape the Space Force’s unique culture to be more inclusive.

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“The opportunity to name a force is a momentous responsibility,” the Space Force said on Facebook. “Guardians is a name with a long history in space operations, tracing back to the original command motto of Air Force Space Command in 1983, ‘Guardians of the High Frontier.’”

“The name Guardians connects our proud heritage and culture to the important mission we execute 24/7, protecting the people and interest of the U.S. and its allies,” the service added.

The Space Force has rolled out multiple other features of its budding identity in the past several months, including a flag, a logo, a seal, and a motto: “Semper Supra,” or “Always Above.”

The new armed force was created last year under the Department of the Air Force to better focus on operating military satellites and radars, defend those assets from attack, and accompany NASA and the commercial sector on plans stretching to the moon and Mars. It’s slated to grow to around 16,000 employees as it begins transferring in members from the other military branches in the next few years.

“Our space professionals will be the ones fostering cutting-edge innovation that will protect our advantages across every domain in the decades ahead,” Acting Defense Secretary Christopher C. Miller said at the White House celebration.

In another birthday week event earlier in the day, Space Force Chief of Space Operations Gen. John W. “Jay” Raymond welcomed Col. Michael S. Hopkins, a NASA astronaut aboard the International Space Station, as the service’s newest transfer from the Air Force.

Pence also presided over a Dec. 9 ceremony to rename two historic Air Force installations as part of the Space Force: Cape Canaveral Space Force Station and Patrick Space Force Base, Fla. Those are the first two military facilities to receive the Space Force moniker.

“It’s imperative that we invest the resources and the personnel and the technology to defend our nation and defend our values in the outer reaches of space,” Pence said at the White House.

## Space Force to Adopt ‘Specialist,’ Other New Ranks Feb. 1

Jan. 29, 2021 | By Rachel S. Cohen

The Space Force will drop the rank system it inherited from the Air Force for a new set that combines Air Force and Army names, the service said in a Jan. 29 memo to Guardians.

A Space Force spokesman confirmed the authenticity of the memo, posted on a Facebook page popular with

Airmen. It’s the latest move to forge the new service’s own path forward as it tries to establish a culture separate from the Air Force it came from in December 2019.

GRADE	RANK	ABBREVIATION	TERMS OF ADDRESS
E1	Specialist 1	Spec1	Preferred term is Specialist but Spec1 or Specialist 1 are acceptable
E2	Specialist 2	Spec2	Preferred term is Specialist but Spec2 or Specialist 2 are acceptable
E3	Specialist 3	Spec3	Preferred term is Specialist but Spec3 or Specialist 3 are acceptable
E4	Specialist 4	Spec4	Preferred term is Specialist but Spec4 or Specialist 4 are acceptable
E5	Sergeant	Sgt	Sergeant
E6	Technical Sergeant	TSgt	Sergeant or Technical Sergeant or Tech Sergeant
E7	Master Sergeant	MSgt	Sergeant or Master Sergeant
E8	Senior Master Sergeant	SMSgt	Senior or Senior Master Sergeant
E9	Chief Master Sergeant	CMSgt	Chief or Chief Master Sergeant
E9	Chief Master Sergeant of the Space Force	CMSS	Chief or Chief Master Sergeant of the Space Force
O1	Second Lieutenant	2nd Lt	Second Lieutenant or Lieutenant
O2	First Lieutenant	1st Lt	First Lieutenant or Lieutenant
O3	Captain	Capt	Captain
O4	Major	Maj	Major
O5	Lieutenant Colonel	Lt Col	Lieutenant Colonel or Colonel
O6	Colonel	Col	Colonel
O7	Brigadier General	Brig Gen	Brigadier General or General
O8	Major General	Maj Gen	Major General or General
O9	Lieutenant General	Lt Gen	Lieutenant General or General
O10	General	Gen	General

Changes to the rank structure only affect enlisted troops, while officers will retain the same career ladder from second lieutenant to general.

Enlisted Guardians from E-1 to E-5 will be known as Specialist 1, Specialist 2, Specialist 3, Specialist 4, and Sergeant. That’s a switch from Airman Basic, Airman, Airman 1st Class, Senior Airman, and Staff Sergeant.

The Space Force said people should address troops in the first four ranks as “Specialist,” though abbreviations or the full title are also acceptable.

The enlisted system continues on to technical sergeant and then chief master sergeant. There is no command chief master sergeant on the list of new ranks. The top enlisted member will be known as Chief Master Sergeant of the Space Force (CMSSF).

While ranks will stay the same on the officer side, the Space Force has decided to call its top brass “Chief of Space Operations” and “Vice Chief of Space Operations” rather than Chief and Vice Chief of Staff as in the Air Force.

Guardians will continue wearing the same Air Force rank insignias, like the chevron patches, while the Space Force finalizes new designs “sometime in the coming months,” according to a Jan. 29 release. Troops will get to weigh in on their future insignias.

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Official military documentation like forms and websites will reflect the updates beginning Feb. 1, the Space Force said in the release, cautioning that “it may take time for all systems to reflect the change.”

“There are no changes to military benefits or entitlements,” according to the service’s memo, signed by Patricia Mulcahy, the Space Force’s deputy Chief of Space Operations for personnel.

The decision comes shortly after the Space Force’s first birthday, as well as a previous announcement that the service’s members will be known as “Guardians.” As it did when picking that name, the Space Force considered crowdsourced input from the field while mulling its options for new ranks.

Congress created the Space Force during the Trump administration after years of discussion about the best way to handle new forms of aggression on orbit, such as anti-satellite missiles and signal jamming. The new service is a separate branch under the Department of the Air Force that is now in charge of training troops, buying hardware and software, and providing those resources to military commanders around the world.

Space Force missions span ballistic missile warning, GPS guidance for personnel and weapons, satellite communications, and more that have been around for years under the Air Force. Proponents say those jobs will become increasingly important and difficult as countries jockey for free rein in space.

As they searched for gender-neutral terms with more combat ethos, some instead pushed the Defense Department to adopt naval ranks—including Rep. Dan Crenshaw (R-Texas), who ultimately dropped legislation that would have required it.

Naval ranks even earned the backing of a pop culture icon who is well-versed in (fictional) space operations.

“Why not borrow back from ‘Star Trek’ and adopt our ranks as well? We took them from the Navy for good reason, even though [show creator] Gene Roddenberry was a veteran of the U.S. Army Air Corps. They made better sense when talking about a (space) ship,” William Shatner, the Canadian-born actor who played Starfleet Capt. James T. Kirk in Star Trek, said in a recent op-ed. “You should adopt the Navy ranks as they are the ones the public is most used to being heroes.”

## **Lawmakers Urge Biden to Rethink USSPACECOM’s Move to Alabama**

Jan. 26, 2021 | By Rachel S. Cohen

Colorado’s congressional delegation is pushing President Joe Biden to review the Trump administration’s recent decision to move U.S. Space Command headquarters to Huntsville, Ala., in a Jan. 26 letter signed by all nine senators and representatives.

After searching for two years on behalf of the Defense Department, the Air Force said earlier this month that Huntsville is its top choice to host the HQ, based on factors like infrastructure, community, and costs. Huntsville, home to the Army’s Redstone Arsenal, has only to pass an environmental review to finalize the decision.

The Jan. 13 announcement that SPACECOM is likely leaving Colorado Springs, Colo., for “Rocket City” in the South sparked protest among local and federal officials who thought remaining in Colorado was a done deal. The Colorado Springs Gazette reported the same day that the announcement followed a White House visit by then-Air Force Secretary Barbara M. Barrett to tell former President Donald J. Trump that DOD would go with Colorado.

“Sources at the White House and the Air Force have confirmed the Air Force’s site selection team recommended the permanent headquarters be located at Peterson Air Force Base in Colorado Springs,” said Lisa Landes, a spokeswoman for the Colorado Springs Chamber of Commerce. “President Trump ignored their recommendation and selected Redstone Arsenal.”

Now, lawmakers want Biden to pause any work underway to relocate the projected 1,500-person SPACECOM headquarters until the review is done.

They argue the command, which oversees daily combat operations of satellites, radars, and other space assets, will be most successful in the longtime military space hub of Colorado Springs, Colo. The area already hosts satellite communications operations and parts of Space Force leadership at Peterson Air Force Base, the National Space Defense Center at Schriever Air Force Base, and missile-warning systems at Cheyenne Mountain Air Force Station, among other assets.

“Our national security should be the most important consideration for this critical basing decision,” lawmakers wrote. “This decision will uproot the service members and civilians currently conducting the mission in Colorado and remove them from the nexus of military and intelligence space operations. It will undermine our national security mission and our superiority in space.”

They worry many employees will decline to relocate to Alabama, and accused the Air Force of a faulty decision-making process with incomplete state data.

“This move undermines our ability to respond to the threats in space and is disruptive to the current mission,” the letter said. “Significant evidence exists that the process was neither fair nor impartial and that President Trump’s political considerations influenced the final decision.”



# Biden seen likely to keep Space Force

To the last moments of his presidency, Donald Trump trumpeted Space Force as a creation for the ages. And while President Joe Biden has quickly undone other Trump initiatives, the space-faring service seems likely to survive, even if the new administration pushes it lower on the list of defense priorities.

The reason Space Force is unlikely to go away is largely this: Elimination would require an act of Congress, where a bipartisan consensus holds that America's increasing reliance on space is a worrying vulnerability that is best addressed by a branch of the military focused exclusively on this problem.

The new service also is linked to an increasing U.S. wariness of China, which is developing capabilities to threaten U.S. satellites in space and which has become, in the minds of some, the singular national security challenge. Russia, too, stands accused by Washington of seeking to challenge American dominance in space.

"They're building capabilities to use space against us. We have to be able to respond to that," Gen. John Hyten, vice chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, told the National Security Space Association, an advocacy group, last week, referring to Russia and China.

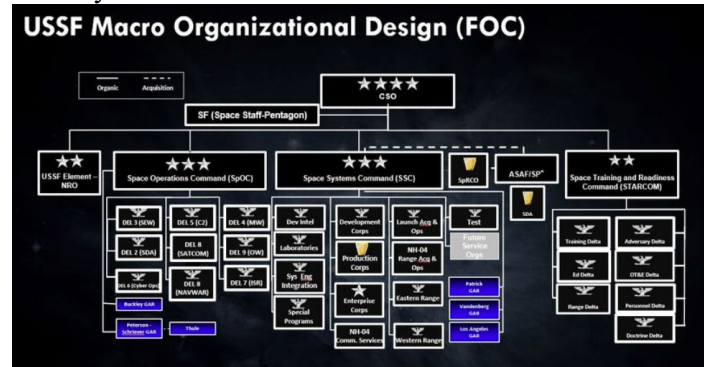
As a career space officer, Hyten says he often gets asked what will become of Space Force under Biden. And while he offered no prediction, he clearly believes Space Force should remain.

Biden has not publicly commented on his intentions with Space Force. His defense secretary, Lloyd Austin, has been noncommittal while stressing the strategic importance of space. The White House did not respond to a request for comment on Biden's view.

Although some see it as a Trump vanity project, Space Force is not the farcical force of the public imagination. In the military, it's seen soberly as an affirmation of the need to more effectively organize for the defense of U.S. interests in space — especially satellites used for civilian and military navigation, intelligence and communication.

While far smaller than any other branch of the military, Space Force is acquiring the standard trappings of a service, including an official flag, logo, seal and doctrine. It has launched commercials to attract recruits. After lengthy debate, it was decided last month that Space Force members

would be called guardians, although they don't yet have an official dress uniform. The force is planning to expand its ranks from 2,400 active-duty members to 6,400 by the end of this year.



Kaitlyn Johnson, an expert on space policy at the Center for Strategic and International Studies, says bipartisan congressional support for Space Force makes it likely that Biden will not push for its undoing.

"I think this is a good thing, as the Space Force has had barely a year to set itself up and get to work," she said. Adds her think-tank colleague, Todd Harrison, "The odds of it being repealed are close to zero."

Space Force was launched in December 2019 as the first new military service since establishment of the Air Force as an independent entity in 1947. Its leader, Gen. John W. "Jay" Raymond, has a seat at the table with the other Joint Chiefs, although Space Force operates as part of the Department of the Air Force, much like the Marine Corps is a separate service but is overseen by the Department of the Navy.

The push for more emphasis on space has gone beyond Space Force. A separate but related move in August 2019 reestablished U.S. Space Command; it is not a military service but a central command for military-wide space operations. Space Command had been dissolved in 2005 and absorbed by U.S. Strategic Command, a post-9/11 move aimed at freeing up resources to strengthen homeland defenses.

Trump also reconstituted the National Space Council, which coordinates policy in civil, commercial and national security space matters. It had been dormant since the administration of President Bill Clinton.

The push to create a military space service began well before Trump entered the White House. But his relentless advocacy dulled what remained of opposition inside the Pentagon, where some officials — especially in the Air Force — believed a separate service was unwarranted and duplicative. Gen. Charles Q. Brown, who became the Air Force chief of staff after Space Force was born, says it is time to stop debating and instead focus on making the best possible use of Space Force.

(Continued Page 12)

Biden has said little about the military's role in space, but he did bring with him to the Oval Office a symbol of his interest in space exploration — a moon rock brought home by Apollo 17 nearly half a century ago.

Austin, the new defense secretary, has been noncommittal on the question of keeping Space Force. Asked by the Senate Armed Services Committee prior to his confirmation hearing whether he thought creation of the new service was "warranted," Austin demurred. He noted dryly that Space Force emerged after years of study by Congress and other groups. He sounded unenthused.

Austin didn't suggest he would recommend scrapping it. He said he would study it, noting that space is a vital interest.

"Looking ahead, the DOD space enterprise is still not well-integrated with other services and terrestrial commands, and there are several other challenges that will need to be addressed, as would be expected when establishing a brand new military service," Austin wrote.

The nonpartisan Secure World Foundation, which advocates for the peaceful and sustainable use of outer space, has urged Biden to build on the space policy decisions of the Trump administration, including Space Force.

"Consistency across key national space efforts ... will help move the United States forward and demonstrate stability to international partners by avoiding the constant reset and lack of strategic direction that has happened in the past during presidential transitions," it said in a report last month.

## US intel community expands with Space Force unit



Chief of Space Operations at U.S. Space Force Gen. John Raymond speaks at a ceremony to commemorate the first birthday of the U.S. Space Force

Air Force Times, January 10, 2021

The Space Force Intelligence, Surveillance and Reconnaissance Enterprise became the 18th member of the intelligence apparatus. It has not been expanded since 2006

when the Drug Enforcement Administration's intelligence unit became a member.

This accession reaffirms our commitment to securing outer space as a safe and free domain for America's interests," National Intelligence Director John Ratcliffe said during an afternoon ceremony with Chief of Space Operations Gen. John W. "Jay" Raymond.

In December 2019, President Donald Trump celebrated the launch of Space Force — the first new military service in more than 70 years — saying that space is the "world's new war-fighting domain."

Making it a co-equal member of the intelligence community aims to improve the access and sharing of information across the nation's intelligence agencies and give it clout in advocating for intelligence funding to protect the U.S. in space.

For the military, Space Force answers a need to more effectively organize for the defense of U.S. interests in space — especially satellites used for navigation and communication. A Pentagon report asserted that China and Russia have embarked on major efforts to develop technologies that could allow them to disrupt or destroy American and allied satellites in a crisis or conflict. Space Force is not designed or intended to put combat troops in space.

## Agent Orange Exposure Doubles Risk of Developing Dementia, Study Finds



A U.S. Huey helicopter sprays Agent Orange over Vietnam. The U.S. military used at least 11 million gallons of Agent Orange in Vietnam from 1961 to 1972. Wikimedia Commons

26 Jan 2021

Military.com | By Patricia Kime

A new study of more than 300,000 Vietnam-era U.S. veterans has found that those who were exposed to Agent Orange are nearly twice as likely to develop dementia as those who were not.

(Continued Page 13)

The new finding, published in JAMA Neurology, is





South plans to continue wearing her mask outside the hospital as well.

Health experts say there are good reasons to follow her example.

“Masks and social distancing will need to continue into the foreseeable future — until we have some level of herd immunity,” said Dr. Preeti Malani, chief health officer at the University of Michigan. “Masks and distancing are here to stay.”

Malani and other health experts explained five reasons Americans should hold on to their masks:

## **1. No vaccine is 100% effective.**

Large clinical trials found that two doses of the Moderna and Pfizer-BioNTech vaccines prevented 95% of illnesses caused by the coronavirus. While those results are impressive, 1 in 20 people are left unprotected, said Dr. Tom Frieden, a former director of the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.

Malani notes that vaccines were tested in controlled clinical trials at top medical centers, under optimal conditions.

In the real world, vaccines are usually slightly less effective. Scientists use specific terms to describe the phenomenon. They refer to the protection offered by vaccines in clinical trials as “efficacy,” while the actual immunity seen in a vaccinated population is “effectiveness.”

The effectiveness of covid vaccines could be affected by the way they’re handled, Malani said. The genetic material used in mRNA vaccines — made with messenger RNA from the coronavirus — is so fragile that it has to be carefully stored and transported.

Any variation from the CDC’s strict guidance could influence how well vaccines work, Malani said.

## **2. Vaccines don’t provide immediate protection.**

No vaccine is effective right away, Malani said. It takes about two weeks for the immune system to make the antibodies that block viral infections.

Covid vaccines will take a little longer than other inoculations, such as the flu shot, because both the Moderna and Pfizer products require two doses. The Pfizer shots are given three weeks apart; the Moderna shots, four weeks apart.

In other words, full protection won’t arrive until five or six weeks after the first shot. So, a person vaccinated on New Year’s Day won’t be fully protected until Valentine’s Day.

## **3. Covid vaccines may not prevent you**

## **from spreading the virus.**

Vaccines can provide two levels of protection. The measles vaccine prevents viruses from causing infection, so vaccinated people don’t spread the infection or develop symptoms.

Most other vaccines — including flu shots — prevent people from becoming sick but not from becoming infected or passing the virus to others, said Dr. Paul Offit, who advises the National Institutes of Health and Food and Drug Administration on covid vaccines.

While covid vaccines clearly prevent illness, researchers need more time to figure out whether they prevent transmission, too, said Phoenix-based epidemiologist Saskia Popescu, an assistant professor in the biodefense program at George Mason University’s Schar School of Policy and Government.

“We don’t yet know if the vaccine protects against infection, or only against illness,” said Frieden, now CEO of Resolve to Save Lives, a global public health initiative. “In other words, a vaccinated person might still be able to spread the virus, even if they don’t feel sick.”

Until researchers can answer that question, Frieden said, wearing masks is the safest way for vaccinated people to protect those around them.

## **4. Masks protect people with compromised immune systems.**

People with cancer are at particular risk from covid. Studies show they’re more likely than others to become infected and die from the virus, but may not be protected by vaccines, said Dr. Gary Lyman, a professor at Fred Hutchinson Cancer Research Center.

Cancer patients are vulnerable in multiple ways. People with lung cancer are less able to fight off pneumonia, while those undergoing chemotherapy or radiation treatment have weakened immune systems. Leukemia and lymphoma attack immune cells directly, which makes it harder for patients to fight off the virus.

Doctors don’t know much about how people with cancer will respond to vaccines, because they were excluded from randomized trials, Lyman said. Only a handful of study participants were diagnosed with cancer after enrolling. Among those people, covid vaccines protected only 76%.

Although the vaccines appear safe, “prior studies with other vaccines raise concerns that immunosuppressed patients, including cancer patients, may not mount as great an immune response as healthy patients,” Lyman said. “For now, we should assume that patients with cancer may not experience the 95% efficacy.”

Some people aren’t able to be vaccinated.

(Continued Page 15)

While most people with allergies can receive covid vaccines safely, the CDC advises those who have had



severe allergic reactions to vaccine ingredients, including polyethylene glycol, to avoid vaccination. The agency also warns people who have had dangerous allergic reactions to a first vaccine dose to skip the second.

Lyman encourages people to continue wearing masks to protect those with cancer and others who won't be fully protected.

## 5. Masks protect against any strain of the coronavirus, in spite of genetic mutations.

Global health leaders are extremely concerned about new genetic variants of the coronavirus, which appear to be at least 50% more contagious than the original.

So far, studies suggest vaccines will still work against these new strains.

One thing is clear: Public health measures — such as avoiding crowds, physical distancing and masks — reduce the risk of contracting all strains of the coronavirus, as well as other respiratory diseases, Frieden said. For example, the number of flu cases worldwide has been dramatically lower since countries began asking citizens to stay home and wear masks. “Masks will remain effective,” Malani said. “But careful and consistent use will be essential.”

The best hope for ending the pandemic isn't to choose between masks, physical distancing and vaccines, Offit said, but to combine them. “The three approaches work best as a team,” he said

# Air Force Wants to Add a Toilet Curtain on the B-52 Bomber

Oriana Pawlyk, January 28, 2021,

The U.S. Air Force is looking to add privacy curtains to its B-52 Stratofortress bombers as more women join flight crews.

In January 2021, the service published a request for information from textile or apparel companies about bomber privacy screens.

"As the B-52 continues to fly long-duration missions, especially with mixed crews, there is a higher need for privacy during restroom activities," according to the solicitation posted on the government's acquisition and awards website.

The service's bombers, including the B-1 Lancer and B-2 Spirit, have been making a splash lately with multiple high-visibility flights around the world. Called *Bomber Task Force* missions, the short-notice flights are still a long

haul: A B-52 crew, for example, can stay airborne for up to 40 hours during a single mission and can fly 8,800 miles without refueling, according to the Air Force.

Many Air Force planes already have private bathroom compartments or partitioned spaces.

The C-130 Hercules has a urinal and toilet tucked back in the plane's cargo area, with a curtain airmen can close around them. C-17 Globemaster III transport aircraft and KC-46 Pegasus tankers have a full lavatory with sink, toilet, and lockable door. KC-135 Stratotanker, KC-10 Extender and C-5 Super Galaxy aircraft all have lockable doors as well, said Air Force Materiel Command spokesman Brian Brackens.

But those mobility aircraft are much more spacious on the inside, allowing for more comfortable latrine use than their bomber counterparts.

The B-1 bomber, for instance, has a small toilet behind the left front seat in the four-person cockpit, while the B-2 stealth bomber has "one stainless-steel bowl, no walls" behind the right seat of its two-pilot cockpit, according to Popular Mechanics.

In the B-52, a small urinal is located behind the offense compartment, according to photos featured on Popular Science. A B-52 typically has two pilots, a weapons officer and an electronic warfare officer, but can have up to five crew, according to the Air Force.

Crew members must use a bag to defecate and dispose of it when the bomber's mission is over, an Air Force spokesperson told Military.com.

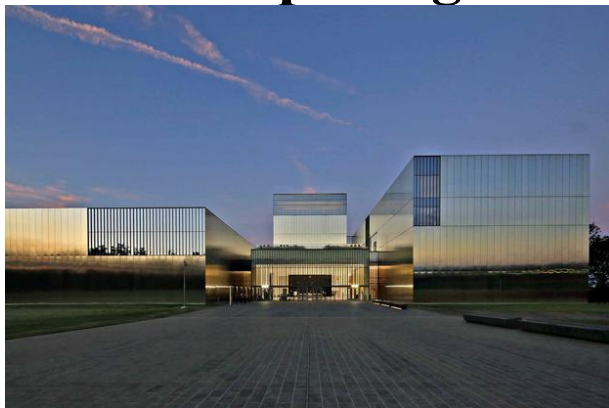
The latest initiative coincides with the service's overall effort to create a more inclusive culture and remove barriers -- some that can affect career longevity -- for women in the service.

The Air Force Life Cycle Management Center, part of Materiel Command, launched a project in 2019 focused on gathering female perspectives to deliver better uniforms, including maternity uniforms and flight suits.

Then-Air Force Chief of Staff Gen. David Goldfein prompted the mission to redesign female uniforms after many years of ill-fitting equipment. The effort has been supported by the Department of the Air Force's Barrier Analysis Working Group within the Women's Initiative Team, which has been instrumental in encouraging change for outdated or restrictive policies.

Air Force Global Strike Command did not immediately answer questions on how many women are in the B-52 bomber community. Despite its age, the venerable, Cold War-era Stratofortress is expected to fly into the 2050s.

# The National Museum of the US Army Finally Had an Opening Date



National Museum of the United States Army.  
Army photo by Duane Lempke

By [Richard Sisk](#)

The American soldier's story will finally have a home for the telling when the National Museum of the United States Army opened on Veterans Day.

Exhibits include Gen. Douglas MacArthur's famous cap; the "tinpot" helmet worn by World War I Medal of Honor recipient Sgt. Alvin York; and a WWII Sherman tank called the "Cobra King," which was the first to break through German lines to help besieged troops at Bastogne.

During a virtual Association of the U.S. Army event Oct. 15, Paul Morando, chief of exhibits, ran through a short list of the treasured artifacts that will be on display when the museum finally opened on Nov. 11, including a "Higgins" boat from the D-Day landings.

But he allowed that he has a favorite: the sword carried by Capt. John Berry in the War of 1812 against the British at the battle of Fort Mifflin near Baltimore. That battle inspired Francis Scott Key to write the "Star-Spangled Banner."

The museum, located about 20 miles south of Washington, D.C., on a publicly accessible area of Fort Belvoir, Virginia, will be opened to the public for the first time on Nov. 11.

Information on ticketing, directions, COVID-19 restrictions and other details are available at the museum's website.

"It's been a long time coming," Morando said of the long-delayed opening.

In 1814, Congress passed a bill directing the Army to preserve its history, he said, but planning for the museum began only in the past decade.

The opening was delayed several times, then scheduled for June 4 of this year. But that date had to be put off because of the pandemic.

Before the COVID-19 outbreak, the Army had

projected that the museum would attract about 750,000 visitors annually. The plan was to have it stay open seven days a week year-round, except for Christmas.

The museum's projected \$200 million cost was raised by private donations to the nonprofit Army Historical Foundation.

The 84-acre site at Fort Belvoir includes the 185,000-square-foot main building to house the Army Art Collection, artifacts, documents and images. It has a stainless steel entryway meant to portray Army strength. A parade ground, grandstand, amphitheater, memorial garden and an Army Trail are also on the site.

In a statement, Army Chief of Staff Gen. James McConville said the museum "is designed to tell the compelling and heroic stories of our people and take visitors on an exciting journey through the history of the U.S. Army as told through the American soldier's point of view."

If it could speak, the "Cobra King" would have a particularly compelling tale of Army resilience and against-all-odds grit.

The 38-ton Sherman tank with a V-8, 500-horsepower engine was first in combat in France in 1944 but was knocked out of action by German fire in November of that year. After repairs, the tank was back in action in December 1944 with a new crew -- commander 1st Lt. Charles Boggess, driver Pvt. Hubert Smith, co-driver Pvt. Harold Hafner, gunner Cpl. Milton Dickerman and loader Pvt. James Murphy.

The Cobra King was assigned to Company C, 37th Tank Battalion, 4th Armored Division, which was leading the way for Gen. George S. Patton's Third Army in the race to relieve the surrounded troops of the 101st Airborne Division in the Belgian town of Bastogne.

On Dec. 26, 1944, the tank blasted its way through the village of Assenois and then bulled past the German lines at Bastogne. At first, the Cobra King's crew was leery of the first troops in U.S. uniforms they saw. They had heard that the Germans had donned U.S. uniforms to aid their advance in the Battle of the Bulge, according to Army histories. Then, an American GI walked up alongside the tank and shouted, "Glad to see you," at Boggess.

Old black-and-white photos show the Cobra King with "First In Bastogne" written in chalk on its side.

The Cobra King was knocked out of action again on March 27, 1945, in a failed raid to free prisoners of war from a prison camp.

The battered tank was recovered from the battlefield and used as a "gate guard" display at several U.S. bases in Germany after the war until its history was discovered.

In 2009, the Cobra King was shipped back to the U.S. and put in storage at [Fort Benning](#), Georgia. It arrived at the museum site in August 2017 aboard a flat-bed trailer and was put in place before construction started. The museum was built around it.





## A horizontal line of 25 small airplane icons, all facing right, used as a section separator.

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