

# AEROTECH NEWS



Journal of Aerospace, Defense Industry and Veteran News

and Review

## 'RUTAN FIELD' is now listed on aeronautical charts

by Cathy Hansen  
special to Aerotech News

The push to name Mojave Airport "Rutan Field" began in August 2018 when then-General Manager/CEO Karina Drees received a letter requesting to address the Mojave Air and Space Port Board of Directors.

Cory Bird, now president of Scaled Composites, was the first person to make a presentation requesting that the historic airport be named "Rutan Field" noting all Burt Rutan's achievements since he first located Rutan Aircraft Factory at Mojave Airport in 1974.

Zach Reeder said, "It wouldn't be a spaceport if it hadn't been for Burt Rutan!" Reeder was a test pilot and project engineer at Scaled Composites and later, at Stratolaunch. At Scaled, Reeder flew the Firebird Demonstrator, Proteus and Task Van-

Board include: Jim Balentine, William Deaver, Diane Barney, Chuck Coleman, and Robert Morgan. Barney was elected to serve as the new board president.

According to the staff report, "Adding the Rutan name to the facility would recognize aerospace designer Burt Rutan and record-setting brother Dick. Their aviation achievements have played a key role in the evolution of the aerospace industry and the success of the Mojave Air and Space Port organization.

"Many thanks to Lindner for working with the FAA (Federal Aviation Administration) to accomplish the mission of putting 'Rutan Field' on the Aeronautical Chart with the Mojave Air and Space Port name."

### History of adding Rutan name

Requests were presented four years ago to add the Rutan name to Mo-



Courtesy image

Los Angeles Sectional Aeronautical chart showing Mojave Air and Space Port 'Rutan Field.'



Photograph by Cathy Hansen

Cory Bird and Burt Rutan.

tage in addition to a Baron, Duchess, Extra 300, and L-39. He also restored Burt Rutan's record setting Catbird aircraft in 2011 and still flies it today.

### Name change finally approved

At the first 2022 Mojave Air and Space Port board meeting on Jan. 18, directors voted unanimously to approve a resolution officially changing the name of the airport by adding the Rutan name. During discussions at the meeting, it was said that introduction of the new name will be done gradually. General Manager/CEO Todd Lindner said, "The plan is to start with the items most visible to the public, such as the monument signs at the entrances of the airport." The five directors for the MASP

jave Airport and in previous board meetings and discussions, Dick Rutan and others even emphasized the importance of how the Rutan name must be recognized by the FAA, giving the examples of Burbank's Bob Hope Airport and Orange County's John Wayne Airport.

In 2019, at the January board meeting Drees announced a request for a discussion item to be brought before the MASP Board. She stated she had been approached by Cory Bird, who then served as vice president (and now serves as president and CEO) and was a 28-year veteran of Scaled Composites, as well as other members of the airport community about adding "Rutan Field" to the Mojave Air and Space Port name.

The 2019 Board President Andrew Parker said that everyone could discuss this subject at the meeting, but due to the Brown Act no action could be taken, since it was not an action

item on the agenda.

Burt Rutan came to Mojave in the mid-1970s looking for a location he could afford for his innovative Rutan Aircraft Company, known to home-

builders as RAF.

Two of Rutan's first employees were Mike and Sally Melvill. Decades ago, they bought a set of Rutan's Vari-Viggen plans out of his trunk at the Oshkosh Air Show for \$51. They built the plane, flew it to Mojave from Indiana, and were both hired that day. The Melvills worked for Rutan for 29 years before retiring in 2007.

Sally Melvill attended the 2019 board meeting and said, "I don't think anybody needs convincing that Burt's name needs to be here. I don't think that's what it's about. I think it's more about where and how we can do that. Literally, the name 'space port' would not be there if it was not for Burt. The recognition is what's needed."

This reporter was also at the meeting and she explained that people who met Rutan followed him to Mojave to work for him. "Burt's the one who has brought the billionaires here. We have 2,500 people working at Mojave Air and Space Port. And I dare say the majority of the 2,500 are



Photograph by Cathy Hansen

Mike and Sally Melvill.

See RUTAN, Page 3





# SOAR High School Student Wins NASA Armstrong Scholarship



NASA photograph by Josh Fisher

The Employee Exchange Council at NASA's Armstrong Flight Research Center in Edwards, Calif., recently awarded its 2022 scholarship to Katelyn Perez. Perez accepts the scholarship from Acting NASA Armstrong Center Director Brad Flick. From left are Annamarie Perez, John Perez, Carlos Perez, Katelyn Perez and Flick.

by Jay Levine  
NASA Armstrong

The NASA Armstrong Employee Exchange Council presented the 2022 John W. Russell Memorial Scholarship Award to Katelyn Perez.

Perez is a 2022 graduate of Students on Academic Rise (SOAR) High School in Lancaster, Calif., who plans to major this fall in English at the University of California, Irvine. She earned a 4.57 grade-point average and ranked 36 academically at her high school out of a class of 114 students.

The scholarship provides \$2,000 per year for up to four years for attendance at a four-year college or university, provided the recipient maintains a minimum grade-point average of 3.0 or higher. Applicants for the annual scholarship must be high school seniors with a parent working at NASA Armstrong.

Perez was surprised when she learned of her selection.

"I could not believe it," Perez said. "This is the first scholarship I have won and I'm excited!"

She is the daughter of Carlos and Annamarie Perez of Lancaster, Calif. Carlos Perez is the NASA Armstrong X-59 lead quality assurance specialist.

"It was great news for our family," her

father said.

Katelyn Perez wants to be a community college or university English professor, share her love for literature, and inspire students. She credits her work ethic to her parents and her love of literature and enthusiasm for teaching to her mother, who is an English professor at Antelope Valley College.

"My mom raised three kids and sometimes worked two jobs," Perez said. "I was inspired. I had some great teachers and my mother's example of what I want to do. Any great teacher wants to inspire, and I want to be like them and do that."

Annamarie Perez is proud of her daughter, who she taught in sophomore year of high school, and supports her career choice.

"Katelyn will help future generations to get ahead and succeed in college," she said. "Education is the best tool to change the world because it opens doors and provides access to opportunities."

To prepare for her future, Perez completed the Antelope Valley College Honors Program while attending high school. She excelled in advanced placement and honors classes, earned the California State Seal of Bilingual Proficiency, received the National Honor Society Medal, and graduated as a member of the California Scholarship Federation.

At SOAR, she was vice president of the Christian club, and was treasurer for the National Honors Society, the California Scholarship Federation, and for the school's journalism program. She published articles in the school's monthly newspaper, and was lead anchor on the school's news broadcasts, both called the SOARce. Perez participated in student government, mentored new students, was a member of the Hispanic and LatinX Heritage Club, the Key Club, a tutor, and active in her church.

NASA Armstrong Exchange Council scholarships are named for five former Armstrong employees, with honorees selected on a rotating basis. Russell, who is named on the current scholarship, was the original crew chief for Chuck Yeager on the X-1 program that resulted in achieving speeds above Mach 1. Russell later flew as one of the panel operators when the X-15 rocket plane launched from the NASA B-52 and reached the edge of space.

In addition to Russell, the other four people are Thomas Finch, a center engineer who specialized in stability and control; Joseph Vensel, a former director of Flight Operations; Harold Walker, a former chief of the Aerodynamics Branch; and Joseph Walker, a chief test pilot. Scholarship funds are raised from council activities.

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## RUTAN, from 1

here because of the thread that leads back to the genius that is Burt Rutan," she said.

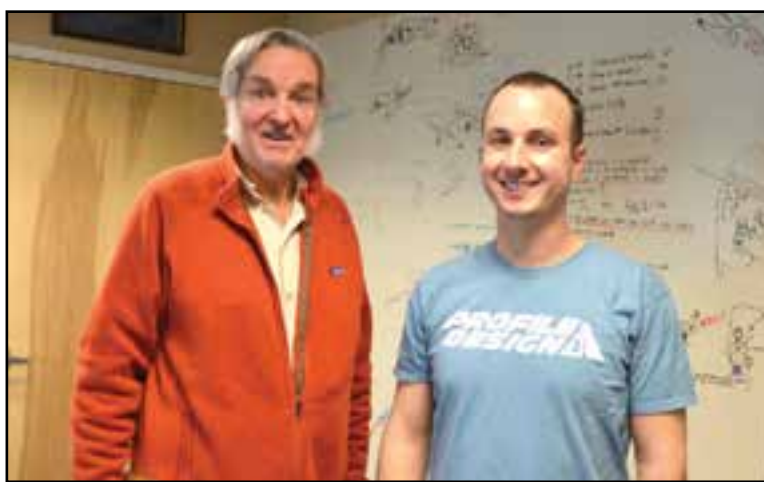
Ben Diachun, who served as president of Scaled Composites in 2019, presented a couple of points concerning adding the Rutan name to Mojave Air and Space Port. "I believe 'Rutan Field' would be an excellent name or just inserting the name 'Rutan' after Mojave and that would also be an excellent addition."

Diachun continued by explaining what the company has experienced by co-branding with the "Rutan" name.

"For many years the company was known just as Burt's place or Burt's company," Diachun said. "No one knew the name, Scaled Composites."

"By elevating the name Rutan, you would create an awareness to a bigger population who already know Burt, but perhaps doesn't know the name Mojave Air and Space Port," said Diachun.

MASP Board President Parker said, "I don't think there is any argu-



Photograph by Cathy Hansen

Burt Rutan and Ben Diachun.

the ground to try to remember some roots while some of the people who were here at the beginning are still around to remind us."

"Some of the first generation is still here, but if you go do anything with

Reeder reiterated that people have come here for that "nugget of vision" that has been cultivated through the years and that they run the risk of losing agility if they don't keep promoting the rarity that attracts creative industrial anomalies, and it is up to the board to decide what they want to leave behind for the next generation and what it means to the community.

Chuck Coleman, Bob Morgan and Diane Barney were instrumental with the name change, as well. They ran for a seat on the airport district board especially to ensure that the Rutan Brothers be significantly recognized.

Coleman often said, "What would the Mojave Airport look like now if Burt had decided NOT to set up his base with RAF, then Scaled?"

During SpaceShipOne flight tests and the Ansari X-Prize flights, Coleman piloted his Extra 300, which was one of the official chase planes.

Coleman is an air show performer and a certified flight instructor with more than 3,000 hours in the Extra 300 series aircraft. Chuck is also an Airframe and Power Plant (A&P) mechanic with Inspection Authorization (IA) credentials. He has performed in hundreds of air shows and given 2,500-plus rides in air show aircraft and has deployed around the world in aircraft used for scientific research. Chuck has a Mechanical/Aerospace Engineering degree from the University of Michigan and has built and restored multiple aircraft as well as provided maintenance and test pilot support to the aviation community.

Bob Morgan has worked with Burt Rutan for decades as an aeronautical design engineer. He was lead engineer for White Knight Two.

Diane Barney, always a fan of Burt Rutan, worked at Scaled Composites when she first came to Mojave in 2015, and now serves as president of MASP Board of Directors. She is an aircraft owner, general aviation private and commercial pilot; aerospace flight test engineer, U.S. Air Force veteran who recently earned her MBA; and has her own engineering consulting business.

CEO/General Manager Lindner gave the final push and worked diligently with the FAA to get "Rutan Field" on the aeronautical charts. "It took another six months after the board had approved the change, but it's completed now," he said.

### Seeing 'Rutan Field' listed on Aeronautical Charts

After such a long wait this is a welcome sight for all who have worked with and admired the accomplishments of the Rutans around the world.

In an email, Sylvia Jutila, Voyager Volunteer said "Seeing 'Rutan Field' listed on the aeronautical charts is well deserved recognition for Dick and Burt Rutan, and George and I are

Ansari \$10-million X-Prize on October 4, 2004 with Paul G. Allen's SpaceShipOne.

Rutan's latest project at Mojave Air and Space Port is StratoLaunch, again funded by Paul G. Allen. Rutan's Scaled Composites designed, constructed and conducted flight tests on the first SpaceShipTwo for Virgin Galactic.

Burt Rutan retired from Scaled Composites in 2011. Burt and his



Photograph by Jim Mumaw

Stratolaunch in flight.



Photograph by Cathy Hansen

Zach Reeder with Catbird aircraft.

ment about the contributions, I think we just need to find the right fit for the Rutan name. So, we will all take that under advisement and ask that you keep your emails and suggestions coming. That is definitely something we will think about."

Reeder, who was flying test and served as project engineer at Scaled Composites StratoLaunch that year, said "The benefit of changing the name is to remind ourselves what we're doing here, especially as the airport has grown. Having a stake in

any of the schools in the area in Mojave or down in Lancaster, none of those kids have heard of the Voyager and none of them have even heard of SpaceShipOne, believe it or not," said Reeder. "I think that the risk that a few more years go by, and the local community starts to forget what happened here. It's an important duty to the group that is here now to make a monument and I don't mean that in a physical stone sense, but leave a tribute that some pretty incredible, unlikely things happened here."



Photograph by Mike Massee

SpaceShipOne with Chuck Coleman flying the Extra 300 chase plane.

grateful to see it happen while both brothers are still living." Dr. George Jutila was the Voyager Flight Surgeon.

### Rutan established his business at Mojave in 1974

Rutan Aircraft Factory began business at Mojave Airport in 1974, developing the Vari-Eze aircraft. Later Burt Rutan's designs made first flights at Mojave Airport, including the Quickie, Defiant and Long-EZ prototypes and the one and only Voyager aircraft. The Voyager was piloted by Dick Rutan and Jeana Yeager. It made the epic flight around the world in 9 days, 3 minutes, 44 seconds, beginning on Dec. 14, 1986, and ending on Dec. 23, 1986.

Burt Rutan established Scaled Composites in 1982 and is now best known for the first privately funded manned space flight, with Mike Melvill and Brian Binnie, winning the

wife, Tonya, along with Dick and his wife, Kris now all reside in Coeur d'Alene, Idaho.

"In the unlikely setting of the desolate High Desert of Southern California, the Mojave Airport would become an oasis which was destined to attract some of aviation's most talented innovators and test pilots," said Dick Rutan. "Its open skies, remote location, freedom from bureaucracy and supportive management policies made it the perfect venue for creativity and innovation. If you had an idea, you were encouraged to come test it. It wasn't considered a crime to fail, however, it was considered a crime not to try. In that environment, technology advanced, long-range records were set, and civilian astronauts were created.

"It is an honor to see the Rutan name on the new aero charts, and I am thankful to all who worked relentlessly to bring that to fruition."



Courtesy photograph

SpaceShipOne and Voyager model in Legacy Park at the Mojave Air and Space Port.



# History of the Boom: Edwards Air Show revisits the history of supersonic flight

by Katherine Franco  
Edwards AFB, Calif.

Edwards Air Force Base in Southern California's High Desert has staged test flights for generations of the Air Force's most advanced aircraft.

While it has been testing U.S. military aircraft since the mid-1940s, the Bell X-1's supersonic flight in the Mojave Desert made Edwards famous and paved the way for decades of flying experiments.

In 1944, researchers for the National Advisory Committee on Aeronautics (the precursor to NASA) met with representatives of the Navy and Army to discuss breaking the sound barrier. At the time, the Army rejected the idea, but continued to advocate for such an effort.

On Oct. 14, 1947, the sound barrier was officially broken, and the phenomenon known as the "sonic boom" was first heard. The risky mission by the Bell X-1 team to achieve supersonic flight proved Edwards' value for flight testing experimental aircraft. Using the unique airspace above and around the field, in less than 15 years, Air Force experimental aircraft would approach speeds of Mach 6 over Edwards.

Conditions suited for supersonic flight testing to break the sound barrier in 1947 still exist at Edwards today. This allows Edwards to be one of the

only over-land areas aircraft can legally surpass speeds in excess of Mach 1, primarily due to the impact of sonic booms. For this reason, the R-2508 complex remains a critical asset in the skies above for the United States and its allies.

NASA, a key partner at Edwards, is currently working to reduce sonic

booms to a "sonic thump" with the X-59 Quesst aircraft. Anticipated to take flight in the near future, the research aircraft will eventually fly across the United States, with the data potentially paving a way forward for supersonic flight over land. Until that time arrives, Edwards will remain one of the only spots hu-

mans can experience the thunderous occurrence.

Thanks to the accomplishments of the Bell X-1 team, modern fighter jets can easily reach supersonic speeds. To commemorate the 75th anniversary of supersonic flight, Edwards will host the 2022 Aerospace Valley Air

Show & STEM Expo, Oct. 15-16. The weekend will kick-off with a closed ceremony dedicated to the future of supersonic flight, with several sonic booms planned throughout the weekend.

For more information on the Edwards Air Show, click visit <https://avairshow.com/>.



Air Force photograph

Then Capt. Charles "Chuck" Yeager pilots a Bell X-1 on final approach above Edwards Air Force Base, Calif.



Air Force photograph by Giancarlo Casem

An F-22 Raptor from the 411th Flight Test Squadron, 412th Test Wing, takes off from Edwards Air Force Base, Calif., to conduct a flyover to kick off the 2022 MLB All-Star Game at Dodger Stadium in Los Angeles, July 19, 2022.



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# A salute to emergency services, first responders

The Aug. 20, 2022, Plane Crazy Saturday at the Mojave Air and Space Port will feature a special “Salute to Emergency Services and First Responders.”

The event runs 10 a.m. to 2 p.m.

Mojave Air and Space Port Fire Chief Damian Farrar will give a presentation in the MASP Board Room at 11 a.m. on using fire extinguishers in the cockpit during flight and how to extinguish aircraft fires on ground.

The presentation begins at 11 a.m. Seating is limited, so please R.S.V.P. to [info@mojavemuseum.org](mailto:info@mojavemuseum.org). While the presentation is free, a donation is requested.

Additionally, Kern County Fire Aerial Operations will be bringing their UH-1H “Super Huey” to the event.

There will also be historic aircraft on display, and the Voyager Restaurant opens at 8 a.m.

Historic aircraft forms will be signed during the event. Attendees are reminded that the only animals allowed on the flight line are service animals, and the flight line is a no-smoking area.

The Museum would like to thank the sponsors of this event: the Mojave Air and Space Port, Aerotech News and Review, The Loop Community Newspaper, Scaled Composites, Comfort Inn & Suites, Golden Queen Mining Company, The Rosamond News, Mission Bank, Karl’s Hardware—Mojave, Rosamond and Boron, Thom Lapworth—CivMil support, and Voyager Restaurant.

For more information, visit [www.mojavemuseum.org](http://www.mojavemuseum.org).

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# Plane Crazy Saturday!

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# Edwards AFB STEM completes PRIME algebra pilot test flight

by Giancarlo Casem  
Edwards AFB, Calif.

Edwards Air Force Base STEM recently hosted 27 students in a first-ever pre-algebra summer program for local students at Blackbird Airpark in Palmdale, Calif.

The program is called Promoting Relevance and Interest in Mathematics Experiences, or PRIME. It was designed to prepare students for high school algebra. Edwards AFB STEM coordinator Helida Vanhoy said it is a pilot program that she hopes will take off and land at other bases.

“What we’re doing with this pilot program is we took three pretests and posttests this and we’re going to measure the delta (change),” Vanhoy said. “We want to see if there truly is a delta, meaning that the students do feel like math is more important after going

PRIME had its share of challenges that Vanhoy and her staff of volunteers worked to overcome. Vanhoy explained that they had originally planned to conduct the program exclusively on Edwards. However, due to its distance to the nearby cities of Palmdale and Lancaster, only one student was able to attend the first day.

“We said ‘okay, let’s postpone the start for a week then the start the following Monday and give people an opportunity to sign up.’ We then again sent out information to the local school districts,” Vanhoy explained.

The Air Force Flight Test Historical Foundation stepped in to provide a classroom for PRIME at Blackbird Airpark and it was a gamechanger.

“Ultimately, that worked out really well. We ended up with a cohort of 27 students that showed up the whole time,” she said. “I was very impressed



Air Force photographs by Carol Otero

PRIME students pose for photo with a jet engine during a visit to the 412th Maintenance Squadron Propulsion Flight on Edwards Air Force Base, Calif., June 27, 2022. The tour helped kids understand the correlation between math and STEM careers on base.



PRIME students watch a jet engine test during a visit to the 412th Maintenance Squadron Propulsion Flight on Edwards Air Force Base, Calif., June 27, 2022. The tour helped kids understand the correlation between math and STEM careers on base.

staff wondered if that would be a factor in students’ engagement or attention in the program.

As it turns out, it was not.

Perhaps the biggest contributing factor to the attitudinal improvement towards math could be attributed to showcasing advanced mathematics at work in a real-world setting at Edwards AFB. During the program, students were able to receive guided tours of base facilities and hear from subject matter experts on how they use STEM in their careers every day. One such trip was to the 412th Maintenance Squadron’s Propulsion Flight where specialized technicians maintain and test jet engines.

“We included the field trip opportunities here on base so that the kids can see how math is used here on every day for research and the cool things that are being done here,” Vanhoy added.



PRIME students watch a jet engine test during a visit to the 412th Maintenance Squadron Propulsion Flight on Edwards Air Force Base, Calif., June 27, 2022. Promoting Relevance and Interest in Mathematics Experiences, or PRIME, is a pilot program designed to prepare students for high school algebra.

through the program and if they have a better understanding of the math concepts.”

Vanhoy said math is a vital part of STEM and really is the key. And PRIME’s approach to the subject is what sets it apart from other programs.

“The more I look around at all the programs that are out there, none of them really addresses the math specifically and the math is the core of every one of the sciences,” Vanhoy explained. “If we don’t address it ... things are not working, kids are not getting better. We’re not getting as many people interested in the sciences when we keep doing the same thing over and over.”

Vanhoy said the early results are promising and is excited to share her data with Air Force K-12 STEM. One of the early lessons learned about the pilot PRIME program is location.

Just like other test programs,

with everybody that worked on it, because we were able to quickly figure out what happened and how do we fix it to make it work. Just changing the location may have made all the difference for the parents to be able to take their kids and pick them up, drop them off and pick them up every day. So that was great to know.”

Another factor of the program’s early success is that being a summer program, the students could focus on one subject for the whole class session.

“They don’t have other classes to worry about, those days; their focus was on math,” Vanhoy said. “It’s a true testament to how well this program works that the kids ended up staying and going through the program.”

With the program running one week shorter and with longer class sessions due to its protracted start, the PRIME



Greg Peria, 412th Maintenance Squadron Propulsion Flight Chief, describes a jet engine to a group of PRIME students during a visit to Edwards Air Force Base, Calif., June 27, 2022. Promoting Relevance and Interest in Mathematics Experiences, or PRIME, is a pilot program designed to prepare students for high school algebra.

Vanhoy believes math is the gateway to STEM and the STEM career fields and hopes that with her data and results, PRIME will be replicated throughout the Air Force.

“The reason why we focus on math is because research shows that less than 1% of the student population pursues math, and so this is very concerning,” she said. “When you look at the state scores for math, they’re at 38%, which is really sad. We need to do something to address the math issues. And when you talk to the kids, they don’t like it, they don’t care for it, or they don’t think it’s relevant. So we’re trying to change that because the better understanding that the students have, then the better they’re going to do, not only in their math classes, but in the future.”



## On this date...

**Aug. 6, 1947:** Capt. Chuck Yeager completed the Air Force's first unpowered glide flight in the Bell X-1.



**Aug. 7, 1963:** The Lockheed YF-12 interceptor, with Lockheed test pilot James D. Eastham in the cockpit, made its first flight. Three YF-12A prototypes were built.



**Aug. 10, 1961:** U.S. Navy Cmdr. Forrest S. Peterson took X-15 No. 1 on its first flight with the XLR99 engine, reaching Mach 4.1 in the skies over Edwards Air Force Base, Calif.

**Aug. 7, 1951:** The rocket powered Douglas D-558-2 Skyrocket, with Douglas Aircraft Company test pilot William B. Bridgeman at the controls flew to a record speed of Mach 1.88 at Edwards Air Force Base, Calif. The D-558-2 was airdropped at 34,000 feet from a Navy P2B-1S Superfortress that had been transferred to the Navy and heavily modified as a drop ship) flown by another Douglas test pilot, George Jansen.



**Aug. 9, 1976:** The Boeing YC-14 — a twinjet short take-off and landing tactical military transport aircraft — made its first flight. It was Boeing's entry into the U.S. Air Force's Advanced Medium STOL Transport competition, which aimed to replace the Lockheed C-130 Hercules.



**Aug. 12, 1977:** With Gordon Fullerton and Fred Haise at the controls, Rockwell's OV-101 Space Shuttle Enterprise was released from a specially-configured Boeing 747 Space Shuttle Carrier Aircraft and made its first unpowered free flight to the Rogers Dry Lake bed. The Enterprise was a prototype, non-orbiting model of the spacecraft, built for Approach and Landing Tests.

# TIMES CHANGE — TRUTH DOES NOT



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# An unlikely hero in a doghouse

by Bob Alvis  
special to Aerotech News

There is a generational gap in how military history is understood, and the respect and commemoration for past wars is increasingly difficult to find.

How do we balance reality and fantasy with perceived notions of the evils of war as the world searches for peace? What young people today are taught about past conflicts can easily exceed their capacity to comprehend if those teaching or telling the story fail to realize that the young mind can take a complex subject matter and overfeed it with details.

In 1965, when I was an 11-year-old boy, a comic book series available on newsstands and a CBS Halloween special would ease this young person and thousands of others like me into a very strange relationship between a children's fanta-



That was a lot to ask of cartoon characters we didn't want to get too preachy. After all, this was a fantasy kids' world that needed to be funny and entertaining.

However, the great Charles Shultz

love was of course Snoopy. Little did we know that our favorite pup would become the reason that for a couple generations we would not forget the Great War, later known as World War I.

When Snoopy took to the skies on his doghouse and tangled with the infamous Red Baron, Charles Shultz was using his childhood and World War II service to make sure

dramatic understanding of a world at war.

Using the Halloween costume search for the Peanuts gang we find Snoopy opting for the World War I fighter pilot garb of a helmet, goggles and the scarf, and it's not long before the dream sequence, like many Hollywood movies of the day, had our hero in the skies facing life or death moments with the deadliest enemy of the time, Manfred Von Richthofen — aka the Red Baron.

For a kid's cartoon, the bullets flying and machine guns blaring away seemed a bit out of place especially when our hero Snoopy fell victim and ended up with a smoking, bullet-riddled doghouse crashing into what was called the no-man's land between the American and German lines. Making his way across the battlefields, that showed the devastation and the sounds of conflict all around him, our hero managed to make it back to the safety of his own lines.

The fantasy then returned to the reality of Halloween night and the joyous activities until at the party,

made for kids.

Through the imagery of his comic strips and the haunting sequences of *The Great Pumpkin*, Charles Schulz made sure that America's Great War would not easily be forgotten.

Obscured by the fog of passing time and the numbing effect of subsequent conflicts, the Great War has largely receded from American memory and popular culture — with the improbable exception of an animated beagle dressed as an aviator, in eternal pursuit of the Red Baron.

Charles Shultz, who served in combat, took his own experiences after landing in France in February 1945 and serving in Germany and Austria. The cartoonist later recalled his first glimpse of war-torn Germany: "Everything was bombed out, crushed, every building shot up; bullet holes were every place." Schulz's memories seem to haunt Snoopy's journey through France, made visible by bullet holes and gutted villages, and audible in the ghastly sounds of combat.

Of all Charles Shultz works, his one constant companion in reality

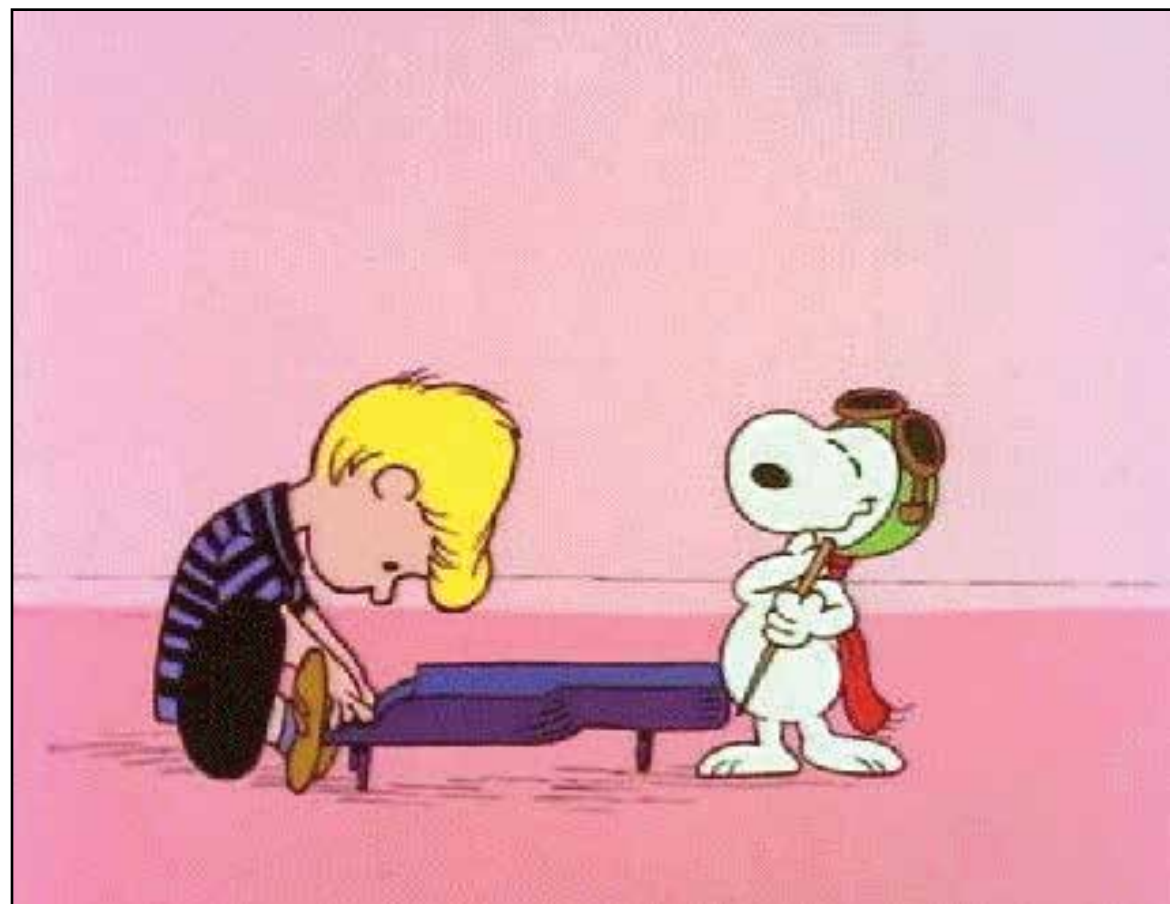


sy and the realities of a world at war.

We all know and love the Peanuts characters. Charlie Brown and his crew of colorful personalities do a great job paralleling real-life experiences and how to deal with them in a positive way. Much like Lucy and her "doctorly" advice, there was always some bit of wit shared to help one cope with everyday challenges.

was the brain behind the Peanuts gang, and he needed a way to share some history in a fun manner. He wanted to expose the reality of uncomfortable subjects so they could be processed by young minds, creating a lasting impression.

A song from 1966 spoke of a hero, a funny looking dog with a big black nose, and that dog we all came to



Courtesy photograph

Peanuts creator Charles Shultz.

that future generations would not forget the world of his youth, and later his Army service. All those like him who grew up in the shadows of World War I and the Great Depression, and unselfishly gave of themselves were also going to be part of the lesson when the world would find itself at war again in the 1940s.

When *It's the Great Pumpkin*, *Charlie Brown* first aired on CBS, most did not realize there were two story lines, one a fantasy, and fun excursion into the joys of the Halloween season, and the second a

Snoopy found himself with Schroeder at the piano and before long he was joining in with chorus after chorus of songs that became standards during World War I for the fighting troops but also for the youth of the next generation that grew up singing and humming those songs.

Snoopy's emotions ran from celebration to camaraderie, to excruciating grief as Schroeder hammered out the songs on his little piano. As this scene played out many wondered what in the world this doing in a Halloween TV special

and fantasy will always be Snoopy, as far as I can tell. He used Snoopy as his best communicator, for when it came to remembering the importance of the past to the veterans that have served this country, none would serve that role any better, than that funny looking dog with the big black nose that never would speak a word but communicated his creators' messages in a manner that would endear him to generations.

Keep 'em flying Snoopy and until next time, Bob out





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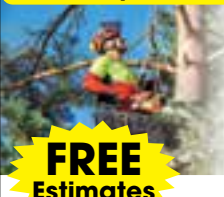




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