



WWII Warbirds Arrive for Flyovers During the 75th Commemoration of the End of WWII

(Honolulu, HI, Aug. 11, 2020) – Fourteen WWII Warbirds, transported from San Diego aboard a Navy amphibious assault ship, arrived at Pearl Harbor, HI on Monday. Carefully being offloaded, they will be prepared for their participation in the events surrounding the 75th Commemoration of the End of WWII.

The theme of the Commemoration in Hawaii is “*Salute Their Service, Honor Their Hope*” in recognition of the veterans and civilians who participated in WWII and contributed to the actions that led to the end of the war. This is the last opportunity for us to honor and recognize our WWII veterans in a commemoration which many will attend. While most of the events planned for the commemoration were modified, cancelled or moved to virtual viewing, the flyovers may be enjoyed by both residents and the veterans in attendance, many of whom were present as some of these aircraft flew over the deck of the Missouri on September 2, 1945 as the Instrument of Surrender that ended WWII was signed. Others around the country and the world will be able to view this tribute virtually. The vintage aircraft will be flown in three Legacy of Peace Aerial Parades: Around Oahu on August 29, Connecting the Military Bases on August 30 and Fly Over the Battleship Missouri Memorial, Pearl Harbor to Waikiki as part of the 75th WWII Commemoration Ceremony on September 2. Updated flight plans will be available on the official website soon.

Enormous efforts by multiple civilian and military organizations were needed to coordinate, manage and transport the Warbirds to Hawaii. The DoD, the U.S. Navy along with the owners, pilots and crews of the aircraft have made this extraordinary project possible through Opportune Lift — transported on a ship that had been scheduled to be in Hawaii at this time. The Commemoration at large is supported in part by the generosity of sponsors including the national presenting sponsor, Linda Hope who represents the Bob Hope Legacy as part of the Bob & Dolores Hope Foundation.

“For the WWII veterans who will be with us in person or virtually, the flight of these Warbirds in Hawaii over the very deck of the USS Missouri, will rekindle the excitement they all felt knowing that war was coming to an end. It is a tribute that will live on in their hearts and in the hearts of all who see it,” stated Elissa Lines, Executive Director of Pearl Harbor Aviation Museum.

The 75th Commemoration events, scheduled from August 29 through September 2, will be attended by a limited number of guests. Strict measures will be implemented to ensure the safety of WWII veterans and their guardians; Warbird crews; Hawaii, U.S. and Foreign dignitaries; media; and the community.

Images and more information about the aircraft, owners and pilots will be available on the commemoration [website](#) and in a special section of [DVIDS](#).

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The Warbirds participating in the 3 Legacy of Peace Aerial Parades:

A **North American SNJ/AT- 6 Texan** which was the most widely used advanced training aircraft in the allied inventory and will be piloted by John Johnson. Four **AT-6 Texans** will be piloted by Kim Middleton, Jason Karlin, Joe Fisher, and Bruce Graham.

A **North American B-25 Mitchell** owned by David Prescott, represents a medium bomber used by almost all allied air forces. B-25 bombers were used in the famous Doolittle Raid on Tokyo.

Michael Polley will pilot a **Grumman FM2 Wildcat** that was a carrier and land-based fighter flown by the U.S. Navy and Marines in battles such as Guadalcanal, the Coral Sea, Midway and the Solomons.

A **Grumman F8F Bearcat**, owned by John O'Connor was the next generation of Grumman, and is still considered one of the foremost piston-engine fighter designs of the WWII era.

A **Boeing-Stearman Model 75** was the type of aircraft most widely used primary training aircraft in WWII. More than 10,000 units were built. Later, many civilians purchased them to use them for crop dusting and aerobatic demonstrators. Dustin Mosher will fly the Stearman.

Grumman TBM Avenger, brought into service in 1942, Avengers were the primary US Navy torpedo bombers in WWII and were used for the first time Battle of Midway is provided by Bruce Graham.

Kendall Wagner will fly a **North American P-51 Mustang** which excelled as a long-range, high altitude bomber escort. The Mustang became well-known for escorting the bombers over Europe and was one of the first escorts over Berlin. It was also the favored fighter of the 332nd Fighter Group of the famed Tuskegee Airmen.

Two **Consolidated/Boeing Canada PBY Catalina**, made possible by Cory Pfaff and John O'Connor were primarily used for long range patrol and reconnaissance missions, anti-submarine warfare, as well as search and rescue. 33 of these aircraft were destroyed during the attack on Pearl Harbor, leaving only 6 serviceable aircraft by the end of Dec. 7.

A new type of trainer emerged following WWII, as our air technology exploded. A piston engine aircraft used by the U.S. Air Force and the U.S. Navy beginning in the 1950s, a **North American T-28 Trojan** was used as a trainer and has continued in civilian use as an aerobatics and warbird performer. Dan Hill will pilot the T-28.

