



AMERICAN AIRPOWER MUSEUM AT REPUBLIC AIRPORT (KFRG)

This year we celebrate the 75th anniversary of the end of WWII. It is difficult for us today to fully appreciate what the people of this country experienced during those trying years. Following the surprise attack on the US Naval Station at Pearl Harbor, Hawaii on 7 December 1941, over sixteen million Americans put on the uniforms of our Armed Forces. Of those, more than four hundred thousand gave their last measure of devotion to their country. We memorialize our dead in National Cemeteries both at home and abroad.

It is the living that we honor every day. Those of "The Greatest Generation", who are still with us today are a special breed that is becoming increasingly rare. These are the men and boys and women who left their homes, their families, their jobs and educations, to travel to far off lands, lands that they only knew of from books and magazines, to take arms against an enemy that threatened the way of life that they had come to take for granted. With the dropping of the first bomb at Pearl Harbor, the freedoms that they had been accustomed to living with were no longer guaranteed. A threat had arisen from the west, more immediate than the National Socialist threat devouring Europe. In a typically American fashion, there was a need, and that need was met. Four long years would pass before Allied victory would be claimed. Our soldiers came home, put their uniforms away in closets and attics around the country and picked up their lives as best they could. And their best was exceptional. They gave us a period of growth and prosperity never experienced before. And they gave us the "Baby Boom". Most put their war years behind them, focusing instead on raising a family and their work.

And now, here we are nearly eight decades later. Most of the Greatest Generation are gone. Yet we still feel indebted to them. We owe them so much. The American Airpower Museum at Republic Airport is dedicated to preserving their legacy for future generations. Our aircraft and exhibits are tangible examples of their accomplishments and exploits. It is our way of giving back. Honor Flight of Long Island shares the same mission as the American Airpower Museum. They make it possible for not only WWII veterans, but Korean and Vietnam Veterans to travel to our nation's capital to visit the war memorials that have been erected in their honor. As many near the end of their lives, it is important to us that they know how much they are appreciated. We have been working together with HFLI for over five years bringing what we hope is peace and contentment to our most valuable and respected citizens.

For the 75th anniversary of the end of WWII, HFLI is about to undertake one of its most ambitious projects, Mission Margraten 75. They hope to take a number of WWII veterans to visit the American Cemetery at Margraten, Netherlands for the planned anniversary ceremonies. The American Airpower Museum supports their initiative and urges others to contribute to make this trip a reality for our "boys".

Jeffrey Clyman

President / Founder
American Airpower Museum