



# THE GOOSE *Lives!*

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**COMING BACK AFTER A VERY DIFFICULT TIME PERIOD, THE EVERGREEN AVIATION & SPACE MUSEUM HAS BIG PLANS FOR THE FUTURE**

"We have had a lot of people visit, call, or email us worried that the museum had shut down and was no longer in operation. Well, we are alive and well and moving forward on a number of important fronts." Speaking was Terry Juran, recently appointed curator of the Evergreen Aviation & Space Museum in McMinnville, Oregon. Terry and I have a bit of a history going back to the Travis AFB museum where Terry

was curator and responsible for getting the museum really whipped into shape. Terry was also responsible for saving the last flying Douglas C-133 Cargomaster and this was no easy task. Located in Alaska, the aircraft had been flying large, high priority cargo and had not flown in a number of years. Through a complex plan, Terry worked out a deal that would see this aircraft saved — the C-133 was important to the history of Travis since



The Hercules dominates the main aviation hall.



Terry finding Howard Hughes' thermos holder in deep storage.



There is a storage area called "the barn" well behind the museum and it hold tons of fascinating objects. While looking through the items we came across an odd thermos and cup holder. Taking the object back to the research room, the volunteers got busy and found a 1947 photo of the cabin area showing the holder. Richard Martinez, director of restorations (left), and Terry Juran put it in place and it immediately lined up with the holes. This is all part of the plan to bring the interior of the aircraft back to its 1947 first-flight condition.

the type operated from the field during its USAF life. Terry had invited us to bring the B-25 up to Travis and then intercept the C-133 as it rumbled down south on its final flight. Meeting another aircraft flown by pilots you have never met in the air is not a particularly easy undertaking but we managed to pull it off and get photos and video of the aerial behemoth before it was parked forever at Travis.

Although way too complex to get into at this point, the collapse of Evergreen Airlines and other enterprises owned by Del Smith suddenly put the future of the museum in doubt. It was not a good place to be in and numerous bankruptcy claims were filed and the complex dealings drew national attention. In the end, a number of significant aircraft will be departing the museum including the Flying Fortress, Corsair, Mustang, Lightning, etc. Some individ-

ual aircraft like the Ford Tri-Motor have already gone to other buyers.

Many, many aircraft and exhibits remain at the museum, which is housed in two splendid, world-class buildings. To many aviation enthusiasts, perhaps the most important aircraft housed in the museum is the Hughes HK-1 Hercules flying boat — often known simply as the "Spruce Goose." Up until his death in 1976, Howard Hughes had funded the upkeep and modification of the aircraft in its hangar/dock at Terminal Island, California. Through Clay Lacy, who was making plans to fly the HK-1 to a new location (something that was eminently feasible since the plane was in fully airworthy condition) I was able to visit the aircraft — an eerie experience in the dark hangar. Howard Hughes' office was still as it was in the 1950s, complete with magazines from the time period on his coffee table.

Unfortunately, the airplane did not fly out, but instead it was barged to a new location next to the the *Queen Mary* in Long Beach Harbor. A huge protective dome was erected for the aircraft and it became an instant tourist attraction. By this time, the HK-1 was owned by the Aero Club of Southern California. In 1988, the Walt Disney Company acquired both attractions and the valuable real estate. They intended to create something called Port Disney, but the project collapsed and Disney told the Aero Club to move the Hercules.

The immense problem of finding a home for the Hercules came to a happy end when Evergreen agreed to take on the giant. The aircraft was disassembled (unfortunately, some damage occurred) and it was then taken by barge, train, and truck to McMinnville in a journey that took 138-days. The