

SUNDAY, MARCH 17, 2024
SANTA MONICA

THE MUSEUM OF FLYING TOUR

By JIM DAVIDSON

Photos by GARY CARR & RON VERSCHOOR

Southern California Region members took to the skies for our March tour by visiting the Museum of Flying in Santa Monica. A rich history that affected civilian and military air travel the world over can be found right here in our Region near the site of the former headquarters of Douglas Aircraft.

Donald Douglas, Sr., founded the company in 1921 and it quickly became a dominant player in the aviation arena. In 1924, the United States Army commissioned Douglas to build a plane to circumnavigate the globe. The Douglas World Cruiser (DWC) met the challenge and to ensure success, Douglas had the foresight to stash extra parts — including engines — at airports along the route. An interesting side note, the fuel system was designed by an early Douglas Aircraft employee named Jack Northrup. Northrup would go on to found Northrup Aviation, another key player and aviation icon here in Southern California. >



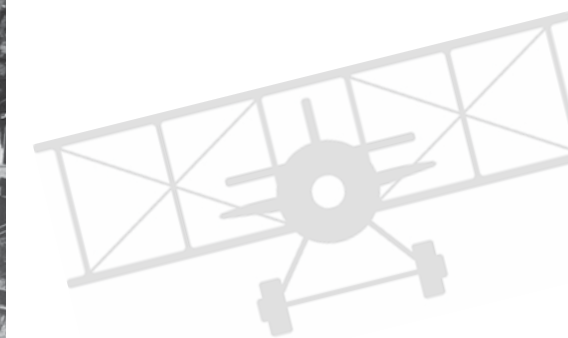
Photos clockwise from top left:
Welcome to the Museum of Flying!
Regional Director Gary Carr's 1941
Cadillac 62 Coupe; John Milliken's "new"
1941 Cadillac 62 Convertible Coupe.





Photos this page clockwise from top left: Replica of the Wright Brothers first attempt at aviation; The Trautmann "RoadAir" flying car; Douglas A-4 Skyhawk; Allison J33-A-23 engine.

Photos opposite page from top: Believe it or not, this is a camouflage cover over the neighborhood near the Santa Monica airport, a World War II security measure; 1937 Buick Century (nc) owned by Mr. Douglas.



interesting displays was a model of how the Douglas factory, surrounding buildings and airstrip were camouflaged and hidden from adversaries that might have attempted to bomb this critical supplier to the war effort. After all, Douglas produced 30,000 planes during that time and was a major employer, with its workforce swelling to 160,000 with the planes largely built by woman.

For those who were not on the tour, to see how the elaborate camouflage scheme was executed, along with much more memorabilia including the Clan Douglas bagpipes, you will have to visit the Museum of Aviation yourself. It is a well worth the visit and vital testament to the rich history of aviation in Southern California.

Director Gary Carr drove his 1941 Cadillac 62 Coupe from Pasadena and making its maiden voyage (and test run) from Westlake Village was John Milliken's 1941 Cadillac 62 Series Convertible Coupe. Even with the traffic congestion caused by the Los Angeles Marathon that day (and the accompanying road closures), the 55-mile journey was completed without incident.

After the tour, our group of about 25 walked the short distance to the nearby Cloverfield restaurant for an enjoyable meal. ●



Through the years Douglas Commercial (DC) airliners would be familiar names in the civilian aircraft industry. The DC-3 introduced in 1936 made passenger air travel possible and affordable; in 1953 the DC-7 was introduced and brought international travel within reach of the average citizen.

Museum Director Steve Benesch provided a guided tour for our group starting with a replica of the Wright Brothers first plane to the bi-plane of the infamous Red Baron from World War I and a P-51 Mustang, which helped secure Allied Forces air superiority in World War II. Mentioning World War II, one of the most

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