



DNAS Museum News - August, 2017

★ *In Memory of All Who Served* ★

U.S. NAVY ENSIGN BOB BARKER



DeLAND NAS WWII PILOT
June-July, 1945

DeLAND, FLORIDA

DeLand Naval Air Station WWII History



DeLand Naval Air Station Volunteers are continually researching and preserving the history of the DeLand Naval Air Base during WWII. Gathering recollections of military and civilian personnel who were assigned in DeLand from 1942-1946 have been the key resource in piecing together a puzzle of interesting and heart warming stories of service to our country, and our home front effort to protect our freedom. When we learned that popular Television Host Bob Barker was assigned to DNAS, we reached out to him and asked about his experiences during WWII training as a Navy pilot in DeLand, Florida.



Per his autobiography, Robert William Baker reported for active duty on June 9, 1943, and was commissioned as an Ensign in the United States Navy.

Bob trained at eight bases on eight different airplanes, including the legendary Corsair. In addition to his assignment in DeLand, Florida, his Navy training stations included:

William Jewell College - Liberty, Missouri: 6th Battalion Cadet ground school and athletic training.

Ames, Iowa—Iowa State University: Taylorcraft flight training.

University of Georgia: Preflight School and Navy Basketball Team.



Millington Naval Air Station- Memphis, Tennessee: Stearman Biplane Training.

Corpus Christi, Texas Naval Air Station: Completed flight training and received Commission as a Navy Ensign.

Cabaniss Field Texas: BT-13 Training.

Beeville, Texas: SNJ flight training.

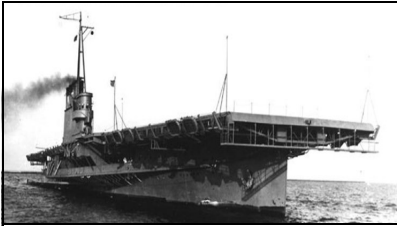
DeLand Naval Air Station—DeLand, Florida: FM2 flight training.

Great Lakes Naval Air Station—Lake Michigan: Carrier landing qualification on the Wolverine.

Banana River Naval Air Station: Gunnery runs on US Navy Mariner aircraft to test their crew.

Goose Island Michigan: F4U Corsairs training.

Upon receiving his final commission he reported for Operational Training at the Naval Air Base in DeLand Florida. In DeLand, Bob trained in the FM-2 Fighter which included formation flying, night flying, and dog-fighting. Operational training also included gunnery flights, firing live ammunition at a sleeve towed by one of the pilots in flight and field carrier landings.



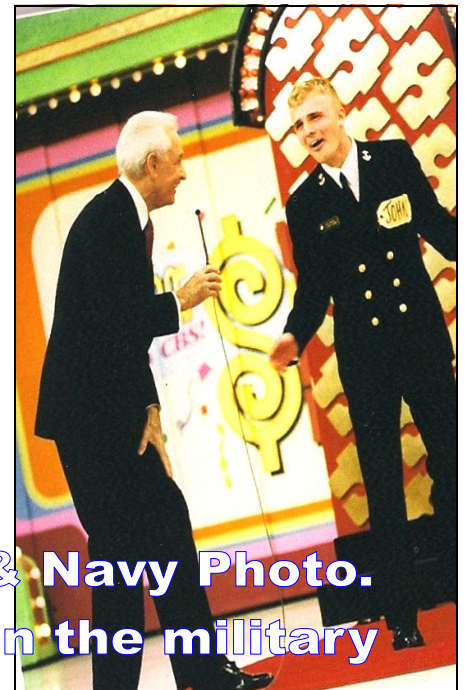
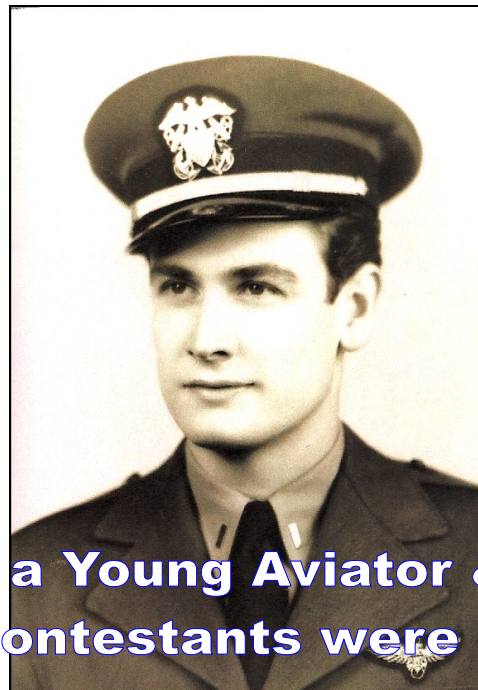
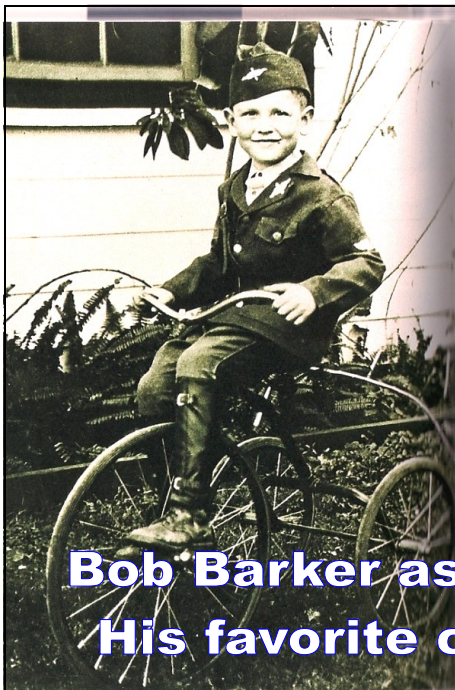
The USS Wolverine had side paddle wheel propulsion, using coal rather than oil to feed the boiler.

After his assignment in DeLand, Bob was sent to the Great Lakes Naval Air Station for carrier landing training on the USS Wolverine. He was one of those who received a grade of superior. He continued on to train at the Banana River Naval Air Station, expecting to be assigned to a carrier squadron. Instead, Bob was one of seven pilots with the sole responsibility of flying over the beautiful Atlantic and make gunnery runs on US Navy Mariner aircraft to test their crew. His final assignment was F4U Corsairs flight training in Goose Isle, Michigan just as WWII was coming to end.

Bob Barker recalled his WWII assignment in DeLand Florida in June & July, 1945 as follows:

"I reported for operational training at the Naval Air Station in DeLand, Florida. At DeLand, I flew the FM-2 fighter, which I described as an improved version of the much acclaimed F4F Wildcat. We were commissioned officers now, proudly wearing our hard-earned || flags of gold, and we concentrated on flying and more flying. There was no more physical training or ground school. We were full-fledged Naval Aviators, and our next stop would be the fleet. As fighter pilots, our principal responsibility would be to shoot down enemy airplanes, with some strafing of enemy ground targets and ships thrown in. In operational training we did more of all the things we had learned along the way."

As Bob once said "I was a Naval Aviator, a Fighter Pilot. I completed all facets of my training, including my qualifying landings on a carrier. I was all ready to go, and when the enemy heard that I was headed for the Pacific, they surrendered. That was the end of World War II."



**Bob Barker as a Young Aviator & Navy Photo.
His favorite contestants were in the military**

After our contact with Bob Barker, age 93, we were thrilled to receive in the mail an 8X10 photo of Bob as a WWII Navy Pilot and a handwritten note from him on 7/1/2017. The photo and note will become a part of our museum memorabilia display, with his book "Priceless Memories".



BOB BARKER

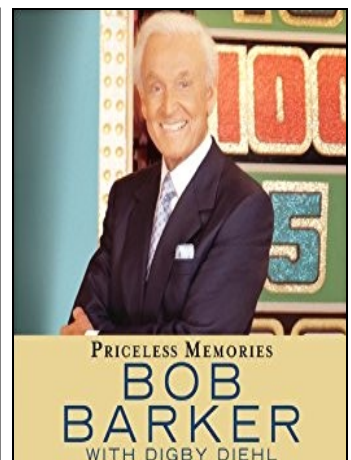
*I HAD A WONDERFUL
TIME AT DELAND NAVAL
AIR STATION!
IT WAS MY HONEYMOON!
NEED I SAY MORE?*

Bob Barker

Growing up, Bob Barker experienced the Great Depression and the Dust Bowl. He married his high-school sweetheart Dorothy Jo Gideon on January 12, 1945. They remained married for 36 years until her death on October 19, 1981. Bob has had a very successful career in television and movies. He was the host of The Price Is Right, Truth or Consequences, Miss USA, Miss Universe, The Rose Parade and many other series and specials until his retirement. His support of animal rights has always been a central part of his life.



In our thank you letter to Bob Barker the DNASM Volunteers invited Bob to DeLand, Florida with his famous saying "COME ON DOWN"! THANK YOU MR. BOB BARKER FOR SHARING YOUR WWII CONNECTION WITH DeLAND, FLORIDA.



A few of our DNASM Board Members posed for a photo with the note, book and photo of Bob Barker to include with our thank you letter.



**THANK YOU MR. BOB BARKER!
YOU ARE A PART OF OUR "PRICELESS MEMORIES"
AT THE DeLAND NAVAL AIR STATION MUSEUM**

EL Pegram Returns As DNASM Board Director



Happy Birthday EL!

The DeLand Naval Air Station Museum Board of Directors welcomes WWII Veteran EL Pegram back as a Board Director.

El is also a Board Director and member of the PTF3 Restoration Project. He has been a key volunteer for DNAS Museum for many years serving as Treasurer and assisting with special events and fundraisers.

El recently celebrated his birthday with family.

COMMUNITY OUTREACH

DNAS MUSEUM YOUTH HISTORY LESSONS



COMMUNITY OUTREACH: DNASM Historian/Curator Harold Bradeen visited The Florida Sheriffs Operation Purple Youth Camp again this year with a military history lesson.

The annual youth camp provides a wholesome atmosphere and positive camp experience for boys and girls between the ages of 9 and 17, and honors the youth of military families.

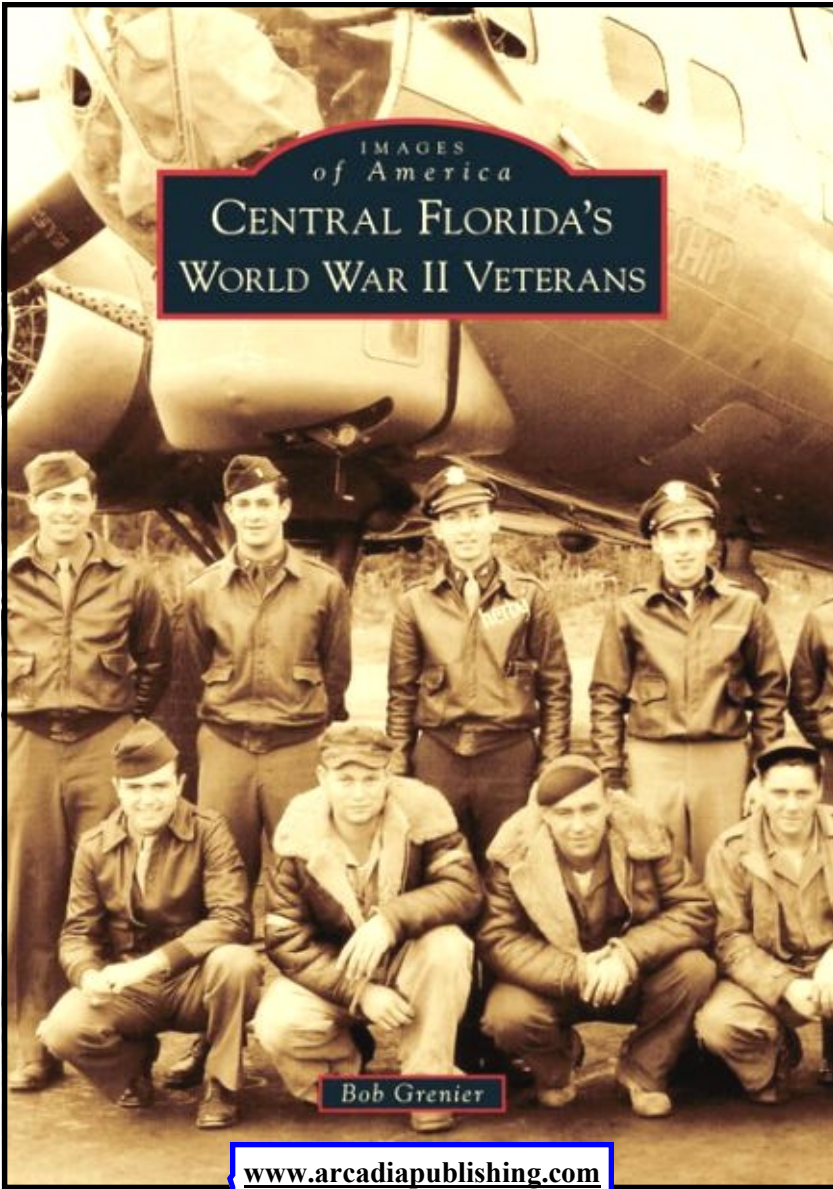
The program contains a healthy balance of activities and services that offer valuable lessons for maturing youth.

See more at: www.militaryfamily.org/kidsoperation-purple/camps/



City of DeLand Public Services Director Keith Riger and Mark LeGreca recently toured the DeLand Naval Air Station Museum with Commander Charles Williams of the DeLand American Legion Orange Baker Post 187. Post 187 was awarded a \$100,000 state grant to assist with reconstruction to repair 2004 storm damage to their historic building. Located at 415 West Voorhis Avenue in DeLand, Florida, the renewal of the historic landmark will provide space for military memorabilia and community meetings. Named after a local citizen, Orange Baker, Post 187 was first established in 1948.

Author Bob Grenier Visits DNAS Museum



DeLand Naval Air Station Museum Veterans and Volunteers welcomed Author Bob Grenier, who visited the museum in July. Bob Grenier is a Tavares City Council member and the Curator for the Lake County Historical Museum. He is Co-Author with Robert Redd, Executive Director for the New Smyrna Museum of History, of the Images of America "Central Florida's World War II Veterans". DNAS Museum Veterans had previously been interviewed for the book which is now available for purchase.

The Volusia County section features WWII Veterans Gene Storz, El Pegrarn and the late Ken Torbett, Chuck Downey, Jack Fortes, Jack Jarvis, Charles Bailey and many others. We thank Bob for donating copies of the book for the DNASM library.

A book on the Korean War is the next project in the book series and Central Florida Veterans who served in this era are asked to contact Bob Grenier at (352) 363-4832 or Robert Redd at (386) 478-0052 to share their military experiences for the book.

www.arcadiapublishing.com

WWII Veterans:

(Left) the late Ken Torbett,
 (Middle), Gene Storz, the late Chuck Downey and
 El Pegrarn,
 (Right) the late Jack Fortes (2nd on left)
 the late Charles Bailey Bust at DNASM
 (Far Right) the late Jack & Edith Larweth Jarvis



Bruce Banta Visits DNAS Museum



*Lt. Robert Banta
WWII Veteran*



Bruce Banta



WWII Veteran

Gene Storz

TBF Restoration Crew



*WWII Grumman
TBF Avenger*



7/28/2017: DeLand Naval Air Station Museum Veterans and Volunteers welcomed Bruce Banta. Bruce is the son of Lt. Robert Banta, the WWII Veteran who was the pilot of the restored DNASM Grumman TBF Avenger on display inside the Ronald N. Herman Restoration Building. Bruce, who lives in Atlanta, stopped by the museum after a visit with his father, age 96. He also donated additional WWII memorabilia from Lt. Bob Banta's military collection to the museum.

Bruce Banta was given a full tour of DNAS Museum including a close up view of his father's restored TBF Avenger. Curator and Historian Harold Bradeen, WWII Veteran Gene Storz, Mike Schendel and Scott Storz joined Bruce on the tour.



*WWII Veteran Gene Storz
Explains Details of
the TBF Restoration*



TBF Torpedo

WWII Ends August 14, 1945

August 14, 1945—V-J Day (Victory over Japan) marked the end of WWII.



Worldwide Celebrations



*WWII Veterans
Returning Home*

On the day that World War II ended, Sgt. Ralph Lewis Jr. wrote this letter to his parents. He was stationed at Brooksville, Texas after returning from his WWII overseas service.

V-J Day—August 14, 1945

"Well, the day for which the world has been waiting these many dreary years is now here with startling suddenness. I could not let it go by without at least a few lines to express the joy and thankfulness that overflow my heart at this moment.

"At precisely 6 p.m. this evening, two air raid sirens on the field began wailing long and loud to proclaim that Japan had accepted the surrender terms. Almost at once, soldiers began streaming from their barracks, shouting, smiling, laughing, dancing and slapping each other on the back.

"There were cries of 'Hey, guys – the war is over!' 'We'll be going' home now – tell Mom to dust off my civilian clothes'. 'My soldier days are over!' 'The next day we're waiting' on is V-H Day – home!'

"Yet despite the atmosphere of joy and gaiety, I couldn't help but notice the grim, unsmiling faces of many overseas veterans. I, too, felt rather sad.

While this day means personal happiness for us all, in that we'll be going back to our homes and loved ones, we couldn't help but think of the guys 'over there' – our buddies, the ones who will never know the joys of this day or realize how much they gave to make it all possible.

"These boys who sleep now in many foreign lands are the ones to whom the world should turn and be eternally grateful. They, too, dreamed of their homes, wives and sweethearts and longed for the day when they could go back. Today, the world must remember them – and tomorrow, the next day and forever! The day the world forgets, they will truly have died in vain."

"I, for one, will never forget them. In my heart, I will always see the row and rows of little white crosses I saw so many times in Africa and Italy. 'They died that others might live.' 'How very fitting and true!'

"So, folks it's up to you and me and the rest of us to remember how much was given to bring peace to the world. We must never betray these boys that wanted life so very much and who had so much to live for, but died so that future generations might be entitled the right to freedom and happiness."

Remembering Billy Thomas

Members of the PTF3 Boat Restoration Project and the DeLand Naval Air Station Museum are saddened to hear about the death of Billy Thomas, who passed away on May 2, 2017. Billy Thomas served in the U.S. Merchant Marines and was a member of the PTF3 Vietnam Era Patrol Boat Restoration Project from the beginning. (www.ptf3restoration.com) His dedication, hard work and skillful repairs to PTF3 will always be a permanent part of the history of this boat as we strive to educate current and future generations about the sacrifices made by Veterans to protect our freedom. "In Memory of All Who served"



Final Farewell To Jack Fortes

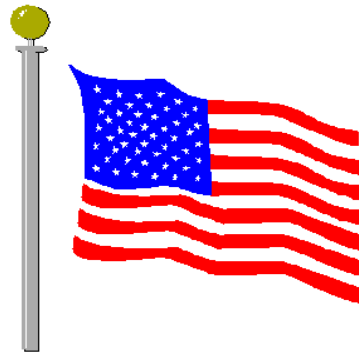


On July 7, 2017 family and friends gathered to celebrate the life of Jack Fortes. The First United Methodist Church of DeLand was filled with music, tears and laughter as Reverend Owen Stricklin and Reverend Dr. Bob Mulkey followed the exact program planned by Jack himself, with great stories about Jack shared by his family and friends.

The DeLand Naval Air Station Museum Volunteers greatly appreciate the donations that have been made in memory of Jack to the museum he loved so much. We will continue to honor his legacy for future generations.



We Will Miss Jack at the
2017 Big Band Dance
But He Will Allways
Be There in Spirit !



"In Memory of All Who Served"

2017 ANNUAL BIG BAND DANCE PLEASE

RESERVE TABLES SOON

IF YOU HAVE NOT ALREADY RESERVED YOUR TABLE, AND WANT TO HOLD A TABLE FOR THE 26TH ANNUAL BIG BAND DANCE, PLEASE LET US KNOW VERY SOON.

FRIDAY, NOVEMBER 10TH, 2017.

7:00 P.M.—10:30 P.M.

DeLAND NATIONAL GUARD ARMORY

401 South Alabama Avenue

DeLand, Florida

CALL (386) 717-1492 OR

EMAIL: dnas.museum.org@gmail.com

SPONSORS NEEDED
EVENT UNDERWRITING
OPPORTUNITIES

- Swing Band Expense
- Table/Chair Rental
- Venue Rental
- Food and Drink
- Raffle/Auction Items

All proceeds benefit the educational programs and restoration projects at the all volunteer DNAS Museum.

www.delandnavalairmuseum.org

26th Annual Big Band
Dance -November 10, 2017

RAFFLE, SILENT AUCTION AND
DOOR PRIZES NEEDED:

If you can donate an item or gift certificate please let us know. Items such as artwork, wine, candles and coupons for food or services are greatly appreciated.

CALL (386) 717-1492 OR
EMAIL: dnas.museum.org@gmail.com



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FRIDAY, NOVEMBER 10, 2017
7:00 PM - 10:30 PM

Location: DELAND NATIONAL GUARD ARMORY
401 SOUTH ALABAMA AVENUE
DELAND, FLORIDA 32724

Tickets: \$25.00 EACH (RESERVED TABLES OF 8 OR 10 AVAILABLE)
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Hours of Operation: 12 Noon—4 p.m.

Wednesday through Sunday

Call to Schedule Group Tours for Adult & Youth Groups



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Thank You Museum Volunteers !!

