

Fighter Sweep Flight Experience introduced at the American Airpower Museum at Republic Airport



The American Airpower Museum at Republic Airport, Farmingdale, New York, (FRG) is introducing their "Fighter Sweep" program this year, allowing visitors who have donated \$600 to become museum members the opportunity to fly a "fighter sweep" formation with World War II era aircraft.

Museum vice president Jim Vocell explains, "Every World War II fighter was a single seat high performance scrapper. It is still no place for the novice, but we can provide a flight experience that gives you the sight, smell and exhilaration of what it must have been like. By putting you in the back seat of T-6 and having you look over your wing and see two of our fighters in the air, you become immersed in the era and the experience."

Put into period flight gear, provided with a typical mission briefing on targets of opportunity, the probable location of enemy flak and your rendezvous point with other fighters, the faux WW II fighter jockey gets far more than a plane ride. He or she travels in a time machine.

"These were high performance two seat trainers – the last aircraft the trainee flew before graduating to the Allied fighters of World War II. These Texans taught an American generation how to fly and fight and now its your turn," continued Vocell.

The object is not to induct air sickness but to provide a flight experience that allows the "co-pilot" to become immersed in what it must have been like to look over their wing and see a P-47 Thunderbolt flying in formation, scanning the skies for "bogies" and "bandits."

The museum also offers an "Airborne flight experience" program where a \$300 donation places you in airborne gear, surrounded by reenactors and placed aboard a C-47 that put paratroop soldiers on the ground the morning of D-Day. The museum notes that the experience is so real "the only thing missing is the command to jump." What is particularly sobering is when the flight experience is over, your sergeant tells you whether your identity survived D-Day, and approximately half of the 12 people who fly find they did not.

For more information on the museum's flight experience programs contact 212 843-8010 or through their web site, www.americanairpowermuseum.com