



# TUNISON FOUNDATION

Wings to Remember. Honor. Inspire.





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06478, USA

## General Information

The Tunison Foundation, a 501(C)(3) nonprofit organization, operates its WWII, C-47 Placid Lassie to remind and educate people about WWII. We do this in two ways: (1) By appearing at air show events across the nation; (2) By leading flights that commemorate significant episodes of WWII history, such as our commemorative flight to Normandy to honor the 75th Anniversary of D-day in 2019.

### Our Name:

Ed Tunison was the Radio Operator on our C-47, Placid Lassie, during World War II. In 2014, we discovered that Ed was the only surviving member of her wartime crew. Ed had not seen Placid Lassie since the crew flew her back to Florida from Europe in 1945.

When Placid Lassie was in the U.K. for the 70th Anniversary of D-Day celebration, we brought Ed and his son to the event. Ed flew with us on our commemorative missions, and we even gave him a turn flying the aircraft.

Ed passed in 2016. When seeking a name for our nonprofit foundation, we thought of Ed, and the Tunison Foundation was created in 2017.

### **The Journal**

Editorial team:  
Dixon Kenner

### **Contributors & Assistance:**

Stephen Dybas  
Olivia Fuller  
Sherry Fuller  
Gary Houghton  
Dixon Kenner  
Ben Smith  
Roy Williams

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**Submissions:** Articles and photographs may be submitted to the Editor, or via post to the Foundation address. Please include photographer's name, captions, identifications of people and aircraft

**Deadlines:** Submissions to the Newsletter must be received by the 1st of every quarter for inclusion in that quarter's newsletter.

**Editorial Policy:** The Editor of the newsletter reserves the right to edit any submitted material for space and content considerations. Articles, statements and opinions appearing in the newsletter do not necessarily reflect the position of the officers, board of directors, members of the Foundation or its sponsors or advertisers. Where specific data regarding operation, safety, repairs or legislation are concerned, you are advised to obtain an independent verification. The Foundation, officers and contributors can accept no responsibilities for the result of errors or omissions given in this newsletter or by any other means.

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### **Online**

<http://www.TunisonFoundation.org>

Cover Photo: A member of the 101AB Div. 501PIR HQ company S-2(the intelligence gathering unit) re-enactment group stands by Placid Lassie, explaining what gear paratroopers would be carrying.

Greetings,

What a difference Q2 was from Q1. For all of Q1 Placid Lassie was sitting in the hangar with work in progress for the phase checks. Other activities were receiving loads from our Florida hangar and organizing.

Q2 was return to flight operations. We had the mad dash in April to finish up the phase checks so that Placid Lassie could fly. And then immediately took off for the PeeWee's 102nd Memorial Jumpfest (3rd annual) in Xenia, OH with W&R Vets. Jim "Pee Wee" Martin (G/506 PIR/101st Airborne) passed last fall, so this year it was a memorial. We conducted two days of parachute operations and were the only aircraft. Placid Lassie is the only aircraft to participate in all three Jumpfests.

Back to POU from Xenia at the start of May and a week later was a trip to the Westfield Airshow in Massachusetts. Since this was a more local show, we had lots of volunteers with 25 people representing Placid Lassie. Sadly high winds caused the jumps to be cancelled on Friday and Saturday, however, we dropped jumpers from the Liberty Jump Team on Sunday. After POU Placid Lassie was flown to Goodspeed Airport to be static display for my 50th Birthday party.

June continued the operational tempo with the Mid Atlantic Air Museum's World War II Days Airshow in Reading, PA. This is the largest gathering of World War II airplanes outside of EAA Airventure (Oshkosh). Placid Lassie was one of four C-47s present. We were the jump airplane dropping the Airborne Demonstration Team (ADT). Another was selling passenger rides and two others were on static display only. The following weekend Placid Lassie was at the Wings and Wheels event for Hangar 743. The Airshow was Placid Lassie flying in formation with two T-6s and dropping ADT.

Q2 also saw two people join the Tunison Board of Directors: Ed Bakos and Roy Williams. Roy is an aviation enthusiast and is one of Placid Lassie's Crew Chiefs. He is the son of an US Army Air Corps pilot and volunteers to restore historic airplanes. In the real world he is a tool and tie engineer and the Director of Quality for a manufacturing company. Ed is an architect and CEO of Champalimaud Design. His firm designs luxury hotels, resorts and residences. Ed has a SR-22 and is a commercial, multi engine pilot with instrument rating.

I am happy to report that we have finally abandoned our position in Florida and stopped paying rent there. The two remaining trailers were moved to a repair facility and were fixed. They are now just waiting on registrations to be hauled north. The bigger news is that the PBY-5A Catalina fuselage was safely transported to POU and is now sitting next to the hangar waiting to be moved inside.

After mid June things slowed down and we took a tactical pause for a month. We are catching up on a few maintenance items.

Q3 looks busy with scheduled airshows in Duluth, MN; Land-O-Lakes, WI; Oshkosh; and Conneaut, OH.

I would be remiss if I didn't thank all of our volunteers. It is their blood, sweat and tears as well as their weekends and vacation days that keep Placid Lassie flying. Without your efforts we'd just be five guys and airplane, flying a lot less, and doing far less outreach to the public.

Long story short, thank you.  
Eric





# Hanger Days and Facilities

April 8<sup>th</sup> was the first Hangar Day of the Spring season. While Clara and Steve focused on Annual related items with Lassie, including a gear swing, the rest of us focused on re-organizing the pile of parts that we moved north.

Some more pallet racks were ordered, assembled in the gallery over the doors to the main hangar. We then loaded long items (such as PBY leading edges, PBY rudders and ailerons) into the pallet racks.

Another team broke down 5 or 6 large crates of items (approx 4' x 4' x 8') and distributed them onto pallets. These were then moved to the south east corner of the hangar. The PBY wing sections were moved from in front of Lassie to the back/east wall.

A third crew carried many of the ancillary components (fuel pumps, magnetos, starters, generators) up to the parts area. The boat from one of the Tradewind staff

was moved outside. We have cleared almost all of the cargo out of the North East corner where we need to store four S-76 helicopters that are being dismantled. We also moved all of the items that were in front of Lassie to behind, so now she can get out of the hangar again.

Subsequently, more pallet racks were ordered for the south east corner which allowed for the PBY bubbles, and many pallets to go up onto shelves and free up most of the floor space in that area.

Unfortunately, some of the other, organised hangar days did not happen for a variety of operational reasons, though Lassie was busy. But that is not the end of Spring initiatives.

In June, a message went up on Facebook, in a Land-Rover group, that there would be some pallet racking available for free at a warehouse near New Haven Conn. As some of the volunteers are also active in

that community, we knew the poster, a fellow Land Rover owner. He is best friend's with the owner of a warehouse that was changing tenants. With a few delays in timing, and a number of emails exchanged, the owner of the warehouse gifted to Tunison some pallet racking.

Let me correct that. A lot of pallet racking. OK, all of the remaining pallet racking. More than we, and probably Tradewind, could use. We just had to come and fetch. Oh, and it was still all together, standing assembled in the warehouse, and was bolted to the concrete pad.

A group led by Mark Simmons arrived at the warehouse. It was disassembled, the cross pieces and wire shelves loaded onto Mark's trailer and sent to POU. The next day, Mark was there to finish more of the disassembly and stack all of the uprights for a Tradewind team to come and fetch the remaining pieces.





# Hanger Day

From this ...



To this ...





# Placid Lassie's Annual is Finished!

Previously, we were gated by jacks. The jacks for Placid Lassie which had come north from Florida in a race-car trailer and delivered to Westerly, RI were picked up by Bob Creter and delivered to the POU hangar. Bob made the jacks functional by installing new pumps. The annual could continue!

This let us move forward with the phase check. Dick Osbourne, our Inspection Authority arrived to look over everyone's work.

The MX team of Clara, Steve Kelly, Garrett and Barry Ennis continued work on Placid Lassie. The gear was swung and a compensating cylinder leak found and the cylinder sent out for overhaul. The magneto timing was set. Spark plugs removed, cleaned and installed (all 54!). The airframe and engine phase 2 and 3 checks were almost done and now we are down to focusing on the squawk list.

After the previous rush with all of the helping hands, the next week was a bit

quieter. The focus was on getting Placid Lassie through maintenance. The big item was getting Lassie outside and running the engines. There were no major oil leaks and the oil leaks on the props was much less than the first run. This convinced the team that the props are ok and didn't need to be sent back. Various engine items were checked and hoses secured. Other than two small fixes the cowls could go back on the engines.

Another hold up was Aeroshell 6 grease. We were finally able to get some. It came in a gallon can. The lube check has been completed. The pitot/static and avionics check followed.

It got down to the big outstanding item was the landing gear compensating cylinder that was leaking. It was sent out for overhaul and after some delays returned. Happily, we had identified alternatives

There was a light at the end of the MX tunnel!

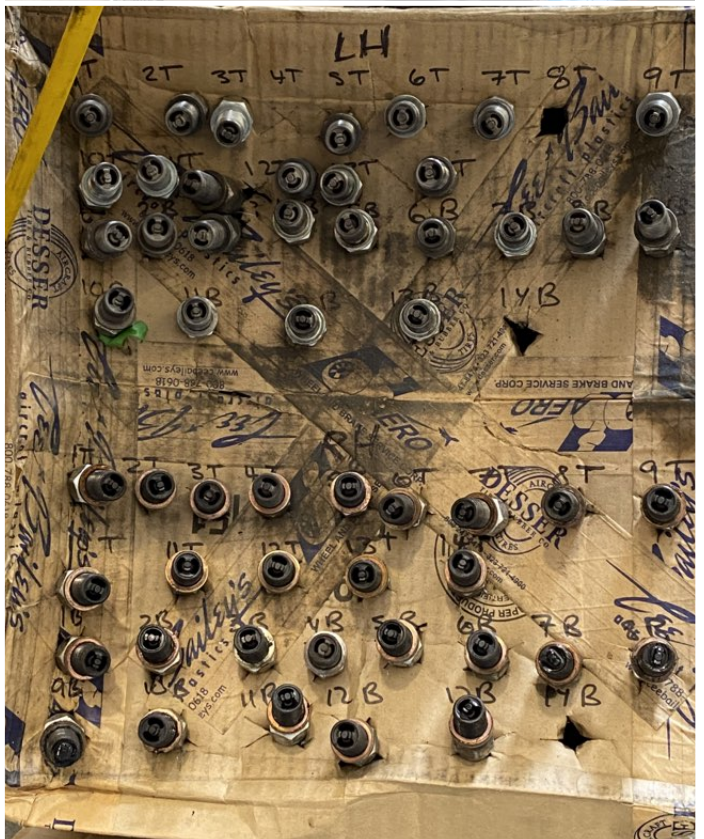
As the end approached, Clara lead the team with Garrett, Jake, Robert and Alan working on Lassie. They cleaned up items, put the cowls back on. Installed the newly returned compensating cylinder—which leaked again. They got some assistance from guru Joe Garcia and re-installed. Clara typed up all of the applicable paperwork from Dick Osborne's review. All that was left was the airframe and engine checks is test runs and test flight.

It finally ended with a photo finish. The Clara and the MX team worked madly to get the Phase 2 and 3 checks completed before Xenia. The Avionics and pitot static system checks were completed. After the engine run it was determined that there was an issue with the left generator. It was replaced but did not resolve the issue. The reverse current relay was replaced, which did fix the issue. A test flight and Lassie was back in business by late Thursday, a day late, but ready for the flight to Ohio!





# Placid Lassie's Annual





# The Move

When we left the move in the last newsletter truck number six has been loaded and was on its way to Poughkeepsie. Well, truck #6 arrived at POU on April Fool's Day.

A team of volunteers was waiting for its arrival and was unloaded by a team of volunteers that including Gary Smith, Ed Bakos, Barry Ennis, Bob Creter, Werner, Carl Smith, Meg Smith, Gary Houton, Ben Smith & Sherry Fuller.

Afterwards we uncrated two of the large crates and stored the items in the gallery pallet racks

Friday Ben and Dixon moved about half of the truck cargo that was on the main hangar floor along the north side to the south east corner. The camping trailer was towed away for the summer

Towards the end of April Ben drove up with more pallet racks to install in the South East corner. Roy Williams, Gary Houghton, Ed Bakos and Robert Cuitkovic

gathered at the hangar and assembled the racks. These racks were installed in an L with two bays along the wall and two into the floor. Including the floor there are four levels so that we could place 32 pallets. With that loaded the remainder of palletted items was placed in the SE

Of course, there is the last item from New Smyrna. The PBY fuselage itself. After a number of delays with the transporter, they arrived on a Monday and lifted the PBY onto the transporter for the journey north.

While we expected to hear from Sherry about the progress, we found that Facebook was even faster that the driver sending progress reports. A thread arose on one of the trucker groups, where one driver spotted it just after it left New Smyrna.

From there, there were a series of photos in various locations recording its progress northwards, and the obvious discussions on which PBY it was, and how cool it

looked. After a couple days, it arrived at the hangar, were a crane was waiting.

Thursday the PBY arrived at POU. Bob Creter and Ben were onsite working with the driver and crane company to off load the PBY. Lowering the wheels manually was accomplished and the crane gently placed the fuselage on the ground.

The fuselage is now on her wheels on the south side of the hangar. Once the four helicopters in our hangar move out in a few weeks we can get the PC-12s moved and then move the PBY inside.

From there, things slowed. The last two Tunison trailers remained at the storage location until May, when they were picked up and assessed at a trailer repair depot for suitability to bring north. In the end, weighing all of the various costs and options, it was decided to put the trailers into the queue and have them repairs and hauled north. As of this newsletter, the trailers are ready to come north and only await the renewal of their registration.

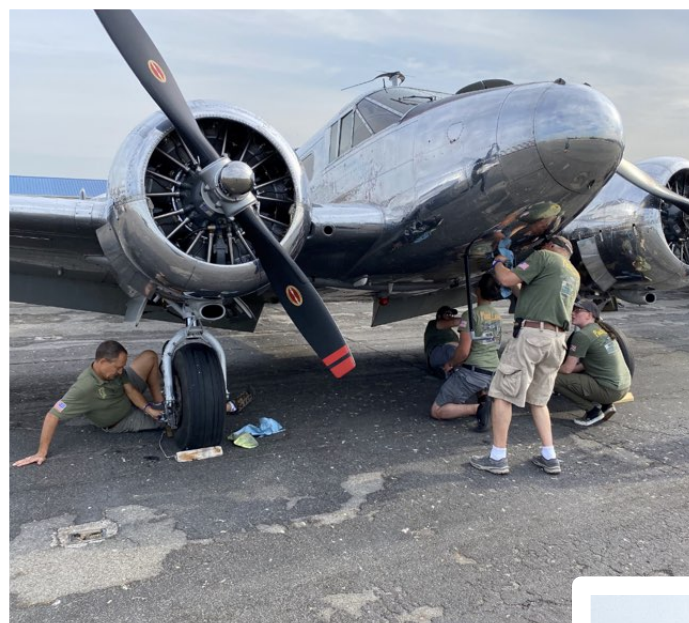




# Photos from the Move











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# PeeWee Martin's Drop, Xenia Ohio, April 28<sup>th</sup>

Friday the crew was up and launched for Xenia Ohio. Failure in both Garmin 430Ws and transponders knocked out all radio comms, so the crew made a precautionary landing at Marion Ohio (KMNN) which 60 nm NE of Xenia. After a couple of phone calls, Lassie proceeded to I19.

When we arrived, we found the paratroopers all chuted up and ready to go. A quick unload and Lassie started engines 40 minutes after shutdown with the first jump lift. 20 jumpers in the first lift, then 17 in the second lift, and Lassie could return to I19 for the night shutting down as darkness fell at 7:58pm.



fall jumpers went out the door. Then Lassie spiralled down and landed at 70A7 (the DZ) on their grass strip with our full load of static line jumpers. They were happy with the ride. We partied with the jumpers at a local dive bar.

Sunday Lassie was relocated from 70A7, refuelled, and loaded. We headed until we hit weather. That was just east of Pittsburg, so landed at KFWQ, just south of Pittsburg. Monday morning there was a brief hole in the clouds that we exploited to climb over the weather and make it KPOU.

Saturday the crew was up and ready for the jumpers. The first lift of the morning was 15 jumpers followed by the second lift of 16 jumpers. The second lift included a special passenger, Ed Cottrecc, a 101-year-old P-47 pilot and WWII veteran.

Then a long wait until the 2nd drop as they packed chutes and waited for the wind to drop. The last lift was at seven o'clock with 14 static line jumpers and 6 free fall jumpers. Sadly, the winds were too strong and with a lack of ground communications, the static line jump master decided to abort (ground also signalled abort due to high wind). Lassie climbed to 7,000 feet and the free

It was a great weekend with 7 lifts dropping 68 static line jumpers and 6 freefall.

Aircraft Started: Poughkeepsie NY  
 Aircraft Ended: KPOU  
 Crew attending:  
 PICs: Richard Osborne  
 SICs: Ben Smith, Justin Zgoda  
 Crew Chiefs: Dixon Kenner, Roy Williams  
 Volunteers: Gary Houghton





# Photos from PeeWee





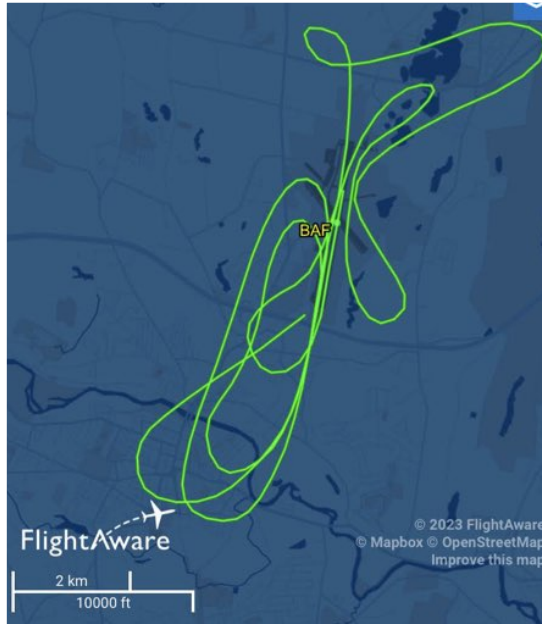
# Westfield, May 12 - 14<sup>th</sup>

Placid Lassie was at the Westfield Airshow in Massachusetts over the weekend of May 12<sup>th</sup> through the 14<sup>th</sup>. She was planned to carry members of the Liberty Jump Team and drop them on the airfield for the crowd. Placid Lassie flew up Thursday evening so she and the crew were ready for the 8am pilots briefing.

While she launched for a practice parachute drops on Friday and again on Saturday, but the drops were cancelled in the air due to winds higher than safety limits. Lassie returned to the airfield with the jumpers.

The drop on Sunday was successful dropping two sticks of paratroopers on the airfield. As there was sufficient slack in the schedule and the air boss was running ahead of schedule, he invited Placid Lassie to make a couple passes down the runway at 200 - 300 feet for the crowd before landing.

While the intent was to have Lassie available for tours, and we did have sufficient volunteers there to act as docents, changes in plans turned the ramp that Lassie was parked on into a hot ramp for much of the day and she was not available for visits.



However, Tunison had an enviable set-up in front of one of the hangars. The Placid Lassie pop up tent was up, with tables and a lovely assortment of merchandise available. Sherry rotated volunteers through the front of the table and gave lessons on the use of the Square device for credit card processing. Hats were available as a new item (see page XX). Merchandise reports brisk sales.

Lassie returned to POU Sunday in the late afternoon.

All in all we had 25 people at the airshow representing Placid Lassie.

Crew attending:

PICs: Richard Osborne

SICs: Ben Smith, Justin Zgoda

Crew Chiefs: Dixon Kenner, Roy Williams

Volunteers: Clara McGee, Andreea Ionescu, Gary Houton, Bob Creter, Billy Janus, Gene Ott, Ron Rafone, Ed Bakos, Bruno Villasenor, Jake Cuitkovic, Isiah Gershon, Dan O'Donnell, Alan Wilk, Gary Gershon, Luc Zipkin, John Schneider, Stephen Dybas, Luke Hedlin and Sherry Fuller.





# Photos from Westfield





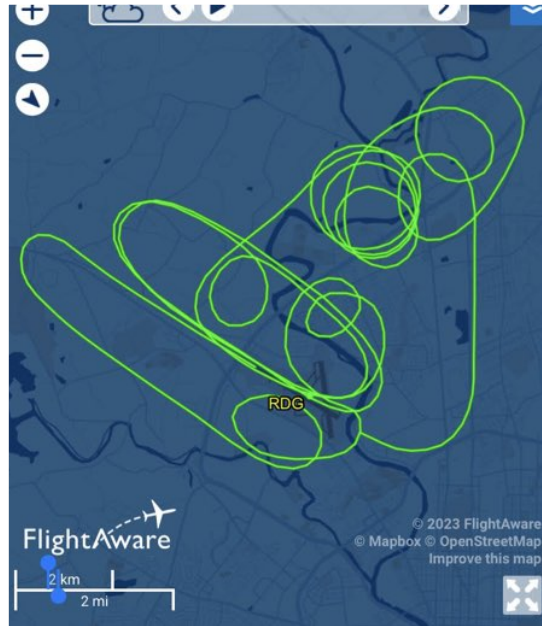
# Reading Pennsylvania, June 2<sup>nd</sup> - 4<sup>th</sup>

Another one of Lassie's big missions was the Mid Atlantic Air Museum's 32nd Annual World War II Weekend (<https://www.maam.org/maamwwii.html>) at Reading, PA (KRDG) Friday, Saturday, and Sunday.

Eric flew up in his BE-18. Since this was a fairly local mission we brought a lot of people and a few drove up. Placid Lassie arrived Thursday night at dusk.

Back at the airport at 0715 Friday morning we were towed into our place in the display area and set up. Other aircraft present were C-47s Beach City Baby, Luck of the Irish and Hairless Joe. Hairless Joe was selling seats for rides with the other two as static display. Other planes flying ride includes Fifi (B-29), Panchito (B-25), a P-51 and a SBD dive bomber. They flew all day until dark. The CAF B-24 had issues and showed up Saturday evening.

Friday we were scheduled to do a parachute drop with ADT. We loaded up and were tugged out, but then a thunderstorm hit while on the ramp before engine start. Back at the mech area we had people holding onto our



10x10s so they didn't blow away. A C-172 was blown across the ramp. A T-6 started being blown until better chocks were installed and a scissor lift with lights and speaker was blown over, but fortunately fell away from the crowd. In the end Lassie's mission was scrubbed so that the aerobatic performers could get their practice runs in during the TFR window.

Saturday and Sunday were much better

days for us. Placid Lassie did successful drops on both days. She also flew in the airshow both days in the Bomber/Transport section. After the show Placid Lassie and Eric's BE-18 flew as a two ship formation with Lassie as lead to Albany airport to position for the next show. From Albany it was the BE-18 and a T-6 in formation back to Oxford-Waterbury Airport.

Placid Lassie got some great exposure and was a centerpiece for the 512 PIR re-enactment group and the ADT team when they came over, all kitted out for a photo opportunity. That attracted some crowds of people with cameras. Thanks to the volunteers that helped out at Reading:

Mission Crew:

PICs: Garrett & Eric

SICs: Mark Simons

Crew Chiefs: Clara McGee, Will Miton,  
Justin Zgoda and Dixon  
Kenner

Docents and merchandise:

Bob Creter., Gary Houghton, Alan W., Neil H., Stephen Dybas Issiah Gershon., Luc Zipkin, Maria M. Ben Smith., and Rob F. And as always Sherry.





# Photos from Reading



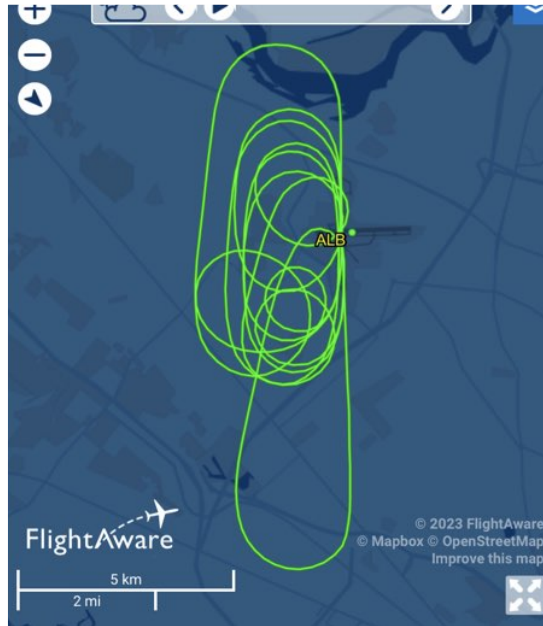


# Wings and Wheels, Albany NY, June 10<sup>th</sup>

June 10<sup>th</sup> was the Wings and Wheels event at Hangar 743 at Albany Airport. Various collector cars were on display along with a few airplanes. Helicopter rides were available for purchase. The airshow was Placid Lassie dropping the ADT parachute team with two T-6s in formation off the wings.

Overall, Albany event was a great event and had a very large turnout, 2 jumps, great stand placement on the floor, and a great time for everyone who was attending. There was raffles, a few local vendors, and hangar 743 stand providing the raffles and merchandise.

The Lassie crew had a decent turnout and worked very fluid to setup, break down, and sell merchandise/docent as best we could w/o the plane. Jumpers were a great hit, and it made the local news. There was a decent amount of people who came to the show throughout the day.



The “wheels” aspect of wings and wheels was a great hit, many vintage, muscle, and modern cars showed up. Attendees had the option to vote on categories for their favourite car. Lassie took up a group of

people, which filled the plane, to fly around the capital region area and did a fly over of the field with a break over the end of the runway, a great show for all on the ground and in the sky.

While they cleaned up and checked the runway for debris, Placid Lassie and the T-6s did a few passes along the runway.

After the show Placid Lassie returned to Poughkeepsie.

Thanks to the volunteers that helped out at Albany.

#### Mission Crew:

PIC: Garrett Fleishman,  
SIC: Ben Smith  
Crew Chief: Roy Williams.

#### Docents & merchandise:

Bob Creter, Gary Houghton, Alan W., Stephen Dybas, Steve Conklin, Kevin Oldenburg, Gary Gershon, Issiah Gershon, and Anne Albrecht-Smith





# Photos from Albany





## New Merchandise

### Placid Lassie Hats

Your editor is not a marketing person. In fact, he is noted for his lack of fashion sense. Yet, even he noticed one thing that people keep asking about are Placid Lassie hats.

Sherry also took note of this and started the long slow process to identify a supplier that might be able to supply us with some nifty hats. Not just any sort of ball cap, but ones that were noticeable as Placid Lassie's.

With that effort, Tunison is expanding our store to now include a few new products, such as squadron caps. This trucker hat inspired silhouette cap features a full colour embroidery of Placid Lassie, as well as her name in gold. On the visor of the cap there are alternating black and white stripes, known as invasion stripes.

As background, Invasion stripes are bands painted on the wings and fuselages of Allied aircraft during WWII, to decrease the chances of friendly fire during and after the Normandy Landings. These three white and two black stripes were approved on May 17th, 1944, by Air Chief Marshal Sir Trafford Leigh-Mallory. There were a few small scale test runs of this design in order to familiarize its look to crews, but wasn't issued widely until early June, for security reasons.

These hats are now available and this will be one of the items available on the merchandise table when Lassie is on a mission, whether dropping paratroops, or in static display.

For purchase through the Tunison Foundations contact our merchandise supervisor, Gary Houghton.

\$25.00 each.

Email:

