

# Executive Summary



## “Vision for the Future”

May 2011

### Mission Statement

*The Chico Air Museum was founded to collect, preserve, document and display artifacts significant to the rich aviation and aerospace history of Chico Army Air Field and the North Valley. Our primary purpose is to educate and inspire people of all ages, while honoring the creativity, dedication and sacrifices of the men and women who contributed to the remarkable aviation heritage in the Northern Sacramento Valley.*

### Museum History

The Chico Air Museum (CAM) was founded in 2004 by a dedicated group of local individuals who knew of the rich aviation history that was being lost to time. CAM received its 501c3 non-profit status that year and accepted its first two aircraft donations, an original Lockheed P-2V Neptune Navy anti-submarine aircraft and the largest production biplane ever built, the Antonov AN-2 Colt.

Since the CAM Grand Opening and dedication ceremony in 2004, CAM has acquired a total of 10 aircraft including, among others, an F-15C Eagle jet fighter, a vintage Lockheed T-33A Jet, an L-29 Delphin Jet, and a Formula 1 Reno Air Racer.

Additionally, the indoor museum building was acquired to display the many artifacts that were beginning to be donated. Many individuals who worked at the Chico Army Air Field (CAAF) during the war years came out to tell their stories and donate pictures, uniforms, books, etc. The indoor museum is currently housed in an original CAAF building that was an important administration office from 1942 to 1945. The indoor museum has been renovated and improved to accommodate the ever increasing number of artifacts. The CAM Aviation Library is also quite impressive with all books categorized and available to read. The centerpiece of the library is the beautiful oak desk used by famed aviator General Jimmy Doolittle. A small gift shop is located in the building as well.

CAM has held many successful fundraising events. CAM continues to organize the incredible Aviation History Forum Speaker Series which was open to the public. Past speakers include: Astronaut Brian Binnie, SR-71 Pilot Brian Schul, WWII Triple Ace Bud Anderson, Blue Angel solo pilot Vance Parker. CAM has been equally proud to provide the Aviation History Forum venue to our *local* aviation heroes from WWII to tell their riveting stories.

Most recently, the CAM Board and dedicated volunteers worked together to qualify for Federal, California State and NASA Surplus Programs. These coveted certifications are difficult to acquire and are based on meeting a myriad of requirements set forth by the agencies. These certifications are significant since they open the door to immediate acquisition of interesting aircraft as they are deemed surplus by the relevant agencies. At present, the Air Force has awarded CAM a magnificent McDonnell Douglas F-

15 Eagle jet fighter aircraft. Additionally NASA has recently awarded CAM over 7 million dollars worth of space flown artifacts.

With the growth of CAM, there has been a steady increase of visitors throughout each year. Many of the local schools have arranged field trips to the museum, ranging from elementary school, to high school and college age students. Many retirement home coordinators bring their guests out to visit the Museum as well. However, the CAM facilities have reached their limit of display capability. Many donated artifacts cannot be displayed because the floor space of the indoor facility is at maximum capacity. In addition, we lack a much needed handicap access into the indoor museum, as well as access to the restroom. Presently, the outdoor facility space will be maximized with the arrival of the F-15 Eagle. Since aircraft are exposed to the elements, many donors, including the surplus agencies, are reluctant, *or restricted*, from donating their aircraft. Restoration and maintenance work on the aircraft is made much more difficult with the aircraft located outdoors.

## The Opportunity



165 Ryan (known as Hangar 1499 during WWII)

With the sudden departure of Aero Union Corp as a tenant of six major flight line hangar facilities, the once unattainable vintage hangar facility located at 165 Ryan Avenue is now up for lease. The hangar was built in 1942 as the newly designated Chico Army Air Field began performing engine changes on the venerable BT-13 aircraft and eventually on P-38's P-63 and P-39's operated by the 433<sup>rd</sup> Combat Crew

Training Station. The hangar is in terrific condition, and is classically constructed with a steel truss dome roof with upper wall windows. The main structure consists of steel girders with an exterior dimension of 120' x 80'. The hangar doors are fully operational and are on rolling tracks for the full 120' span. The interior is perfectly configured for museum use, with offices, meeting space, shop areas and kitchen facilities. Additionally, the adjacent land to the East (approximately 1 acre) could serve as an area of expansion for large aircraft displays. The ramp area to the West could be utilized for future expansion for large aircraft as well. The potential is great.

## The Potential

This facility represents an incredible opportunity for CAM and the community. Many aircraft museums require that a facility be constructed to accommodate growth. Not only is the hangar at 165 Ryan an original CAAF historic building, it is immediately available for lease by the City of Chico. In April, representatives of CAM met with the Chico City Management Office expressing our interest in leasing the property.

Since the hangar and the in-building structures are perfectly configured to accommodate our existing artifact displays, gift shop, library and aircraft, the proposal included an estimate of 30 to 60 days for the museum to be open and operating.

However, it was noted by the City that other parties have expressed interest in leasing the facility as well. Certainly, *time is of the essence* if CAM is to utilize this perfect opportunity to develop a First Class Air Museum.



Interior of 165 Ryan showing in-buildings and steel trussed ceiling

## The Vision

The vision for creating the new Museum can be seen in the Organizational Chart and Business Plan prepared by the Board. It includes appointing two key personnel, an Executive Director and a Finance Administrator.

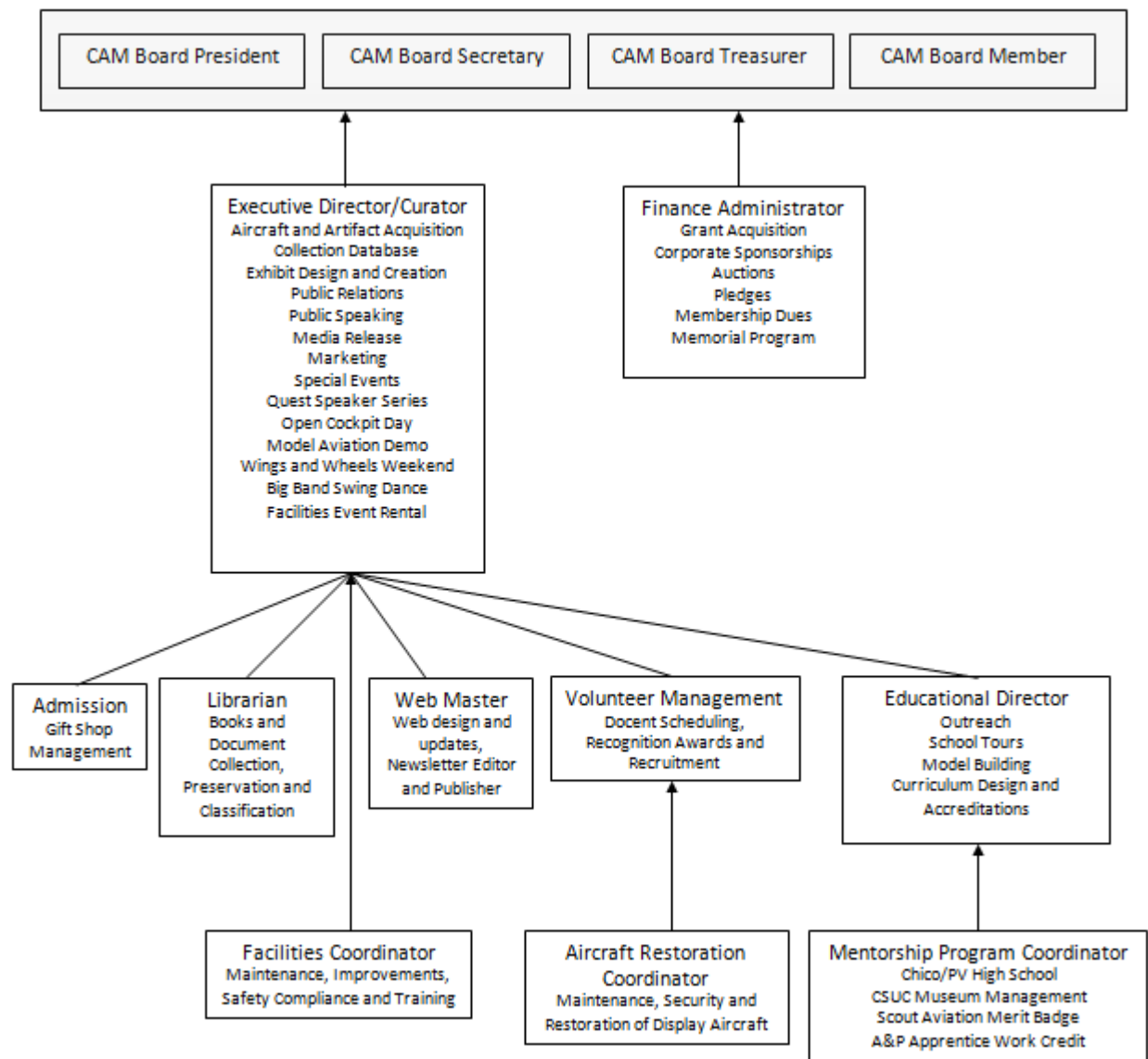
The Executive Director would be responsible for implementing all aspects of the initial design and setup of the museum, as well as the long term strategies associated with continued growth and success. We envision this as a paid position.

The Finance Administrator would be responsible for financial management of the Endowment Fund as well as grant acquisition, fundraising, soliciting corporate sponsorships, membership drives etc. We envision this as a paid position as well.

These two positions would be reactive to the Boards wishes. Volunteer members would constitute the bulk of the personnel required to perform the duties required.

A closer look at the Organizational Chart and Business Plan, the vision for the new Museum includes; initiating mentorship accreditation, community outreach to schools and retirement homes, collection and restoration programs, model aviation workshops, improved aircraft display design, special event marketing, gift shop management and website administration.





## Decision to Move Forward

With his great opportunity and obvious potential, the CAM Board is confident that their dedicated staff of volunteers could provide the manpower and expertise to relocate to the new facility within the 60 day timeframe. After careful consideration, the logistics of the relocation revealed no insurmountable issues.

As with any worthwhile endeavor, the commitment is based on a sound business plan backed by solid financial investment. In order to move forward, the single largest obstacle will be securing that financial commitment.

Being a non-profit museum organization, the financial strategy is based on leveraging its 501c3 status. Since the building was suddenly and unexpectedly made available, CAM does not have the luxury of an extended period to conduct a planned giving campaign. As we have learned with our communications with the City of Chico, the facility may not be available to CAM without quick action. A benefactor, or group of benefactors, needs to be found very soon if this opportunity is to become a reality.

In May of 2011 CAM Board Members voted to create the Chico Air Museum Trust Fund. The purpose of Trust Fund is to provide an interest generating financial vehicle that would provide a yearly interest return large enough to cover the fixed expenses of the building (lease, insurance, taxes). At current rates, and without touching the principle monies, a target of 1.4 million dollars is needed within the Trust Fund before a commitment can be made to the building. Certainly, any Trust Fund contributions are 100% tax-deductible.

If this threshold can be met, the plan to move forward could be implemented immediately. Certainly, large contributing benefactors would be honored with dedication namesakes, possibly naming the entire museum after the requested family or individual name.

With the existing enthusiasm and capabilities now proven by CAM and its volunteers, it is our collective hope to share the passion for aviation with all visitors, young and old. With regard to our younger generation, we can spark their curiosity toward aviation and reveal the history, science and beauty of flight. For the older generation we can provide a proud Hall of Honor for those who have contributed to the rich history of aviation here in the North Valley. With financial help from members of the community, we are confident the Chico Air Museum can become an incomparable educational asset, an inspirational jewel, and a respectful tribute to those who have gone before us.

Vic Alvistur  
CAM Board President  
(530)966-3326  
alvistur@sbcglobal.net

Norm Rosene D.D.S.  
CAM Board Member  
(530)342-4354  
odysseywinery@aol.com

Noel Wheeler  
CAM Board Member  
(530)894-1006  
ngwheeler@comcast.net

Brian Baldrige  
CAM Board Member  
(530)514-6624  
bcbaldrige@aol.com

