



Montgomery Flight – 1904



Moffett Field – 1933



China Clipper – 1936



Hiller XH-44 – 1944



NASA Ames Research Center – 1981

# Northern Wings

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The Aero Club of Northern California  
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## C.E. 'Bud' Anderson to receive Crystal Eagle

### Aero Club to honor World War II ace

C. E. "Bud" Anderson, a triple ace who scored 16.25 aerial victories over German Luftwaffe aircraft while flying the P-51 Mustang "Old Crow" in the World War II skies of Europe, will be the 29th recipient of the Crystal Eagle Award.

The award is presented annually by the Aero Club of Northern California to honor those whose achievements are among the highest in aviation.

The San Jose-based Aero Club will hold the awards dinner at 6:30 p.m. Saturday, Oct. 22, at the Hiller Aviation Museum in San Carlos. The club is the regional affiliate of the National Aeronautic Association.

The Aero Club also will award National Aeronautic Association Certificates to Bob Overby,

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C. E. "Bud" Anderson at Auburn Municipal Airport

-- Northern Wings photo

## Anderson recounts air-to-air combat over Europe

In an interview at Auburn Municipal Airport and at his home nearby, World War II triple ace C.E. "Bud" Anderson talked about aerial combat in Europe. Flying P-51B and P-51D fighters he named "Old Crow," he shot down 16 enemy fighters, shared in the kill of a Luftwaffe bomber and destroyed one aircraft on the ground.

### Why did you become a pilot?

"I think it was a childhood passion. As far back as I can remember I wanted to fly. Aviation was in its infancy. It just seemed like an exciting thing to do."

### What qualities make a good fighter pilot, an ace?

"You've got to know your airplane,

you got to know your tactics enough so you that fly instinctively. You know your enemy, you know the enemy's tactics, you know his airplanes. You need to be a good



Bud Anderson  
...in P-51B Mustang cockpit

gunner, have good eyes -- we didn't have radar to point out the enemy, you had to find them with your eyeballs. You had to be a good formation pilot. There are so many of those things that are indivisible. You need all of them.

"What makes the difference between a good fighter pilot and a great fighter pilot? In my own mind it's something inside, you call it a fighting spirit, motivation. One guy wants it more than the other guy. I knew I wanted to do it. You had to want to fly combat.

"I think most of the aces I knew had a little better knack of picking up the

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# Crystal Eagle Dinner set Oct. 22 at Hiller Museum

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managing director of Jeppesen Data Plan in San Jose, and longtime Hayward FBO Mike Coutes, for their life-long contributions to the advancement of flight.

Anderson, now 89, was born in Oakland. He enlisted in the U.S. Army as an aviation cadet in 1942. After earning his wings and commission as a second lieutenant, he flew two combat tours against the Luftwaffe in Europe.

Assigned to the 363<sup>rd</sup> Fighter Squadron of the 357<sup>th</sup> Fighter Group at RAF Leiston, England, he became the group's third leading ace. In his P-51 Mustang, he flew 116 missions without being hit by fire from enemy aircraft and without turning back from any mission.

In his 30 years of military service, Anderson flew more than 100 types of aircraft, logging more than 7,000 hours flight time. He was a test pilot and chief of fighter operations at Wright Field, chief of flight test operations and deputy director of flight test at Edwards Air Force Base, and served two tours at the Pentagon.

Anderson commanded three fighter organizations including in 1970 the 355<sup>th</sup> Tactical Fighter Wing in Vietnam. He retired as a colonel in 1972, then managed the McDonnell



**Bud Anderson**  
...with P-51D "Old Crow"

Aircraft Company's flight test facility at Edwards AFB until 1984.

Anderson co-authored the book "To Fly & Fight -- Memoirs of a Triple Ace" in 1990. In 2008, he was inducted into the National Aviation Hall of Fame.

The Crystal Eagle Award was first presented by the Aero Club in 1983 to legendary aviator Jimmy Doolittle. Past recipients include Chuck Yeager, Stanley Hiller Jr., Jim Nissen,

## Crystal Eagle Dinner

**Date:** Saturday, October 22, 2011

**Reception:** 6:30 p.m.

**Dinner:** 7:30 p.m.

**Location:** Hiller Aviation Museum, 601 Skyway Road at San Carlos Airport.

**Cost:** \$60 for Aero Club members, \$75 for non-members, including museum admission.

**Reservations:** (408) 646-7139

## Crystal Eagle Recipients

1983 – James "Jimmy" Doolittle  
1984 – Charles E. "Chuck" Yeager  
1985 – Stanley Hiller Jr.  
1986 – William "Bill" Lear  
1987 – James M. "Jim" Nissen  
1988 – Anthony W. "Tony" LeVier  
1989 – Elbert "Burt" L. Rutan  
1990 – George S. Cooper  
1991 – Allen E. Paulson  
1992 – Jeana Yeager  
1993 – Robert T. Jones  
1994 – Frank L. Christensen  
1995 – James S. Ricklefs  
1996 – Darryl G. Greenamyre  
1997 – Robert L. "Hoot" Gibson

1998 – Donald D. Engen  
1999 – Paul H. Poberezny  
2000 – Wayne Handley  
2001 – Igor I. Sikorsky  
2002 – A. Scott Crossfield  
2003 – Clay Lacy  
2004 – Elgen Long  
2005 – Eileen Collins  
2006 – Sean D. Tucker  
2007 – Steve Fossett  
2008 – Phil Boyer  
2009 – Mike Melvill  
2010 – Brian Shul  
2011 -- C.E. "Bud" Anderson

Burt Rutan, George Cooper, Jeana Yeager, James S. Ricklefs, Darryl Greenamyre, Paul Poberezny, Wayne Handley, A. Scott Crossfield, Clay Lacy, Elgen Long, Eileen Collins, Sean D. Tucker, Steve Fossett, Phil Boyer, Mike Melvill and Brian Shul.

Dinner tickets, including museum admission, are \$60 each for Aero Club members and \$75 for non-members. Reservations are required. Tickets will not be sold at the door. For additional information, contact the Aero Club at (408) 646-7139, or check its website at [www.aeroclubnorcal.org](http://www.aeroclubnorcal.org).

The Hiller Aviation Institute & Museum, the venue for the 2011 dinner, was founded in 1998 by helicopter pioneer Stanley Hiller Jr., the recipient of the 1985 Crystal Eagle Award.

Dedicated to the dreams of flight, the museum exhibits chronicle a century of aviation history in two large display areas – the Atrium and the Main Gallery. Vintage and futuristic aircraft, prototypes, photographic displays, and models are on display.

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# An interview with WWII triple ace 'Bud' Anderson

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enemy – we all had 20-20 (vision) but mine tested down to 20-15 in one eye and 20-10 in the other. Some of the other aces had eyesight better than normal.

## Tell us about your most memorable combat victory.

On May 27, 1944, Anderson's flight of four P-51B Mustangs was at about 28,000 feet escorting B-17 bombers en route to Germany when they were attacked by four Luftwaffe Me-109 fighters. "But we turned the table on them and shot three of them down."

The German fighters came down "in a string formation – one, two, three, four. We saw them in plenty of time so we just reversed the whole formation hard, turn into them. It's a defensive maneuver. I thought they would keep on going, attack the bombers and leave, but they were attacking us.

"I looked back and see they're coming around so we turned. They had lost their advantage now. When they were diving they were going faster, but when they turned they lost their speed so now we got full throttle picking up speed."

## Tail Chase

"So we go around this circle a couple of times and I'm creeping up on them. Each time we go around I'm getting closer to getting on their tail. And they saw that. They rolled out and flew back toward Germany at level flight."

The Mustangs gave chase. The tail-end Me-109 started climbing, so Anderson sent two of his flight after that aircraft, while he and his wingman chased the other three.

"I simply drove up behind the last guy, 6 o'clock, right up his tail, closed in to 300 yards, and fired a burst" with his four wing-mounted .50-caliber machine guns. "It hit all over him, he started smoking, and he did something I could just not understand. He rolls over and flies inverted. What the heck's he doing? It didn't matter, I



**"Old Crow," Bud Anderson's P-51B Mustang at base in Europe**

was flying right side up very comfortably, and put some more shells into him and he really got it. Now he's smoking badly and he's out of control and he's gone."

One of the remaining Me-109s "makes a very hard climbing turn to the left, while the other guy rolls over and runs." Anderson goes after the climbing German fighter, but realizes that with his speed he probably cannot turn behind his enemy in the situation so he overshoots, climbing steeply to get above him and make his next move. The German reverses his climbing turn and goes after Anderson from below, but can't match the climbing P-51B to lead his target with his 20mm cannon and fire.

## Evasive Action

"He lost energy here. Then I saw him move over; he's trying to get my wingman so I told him to take evasive action, then I would cover him. I think my wingman thought maybe I was using him as bait. He went down and the German went down and I went right on his tail. He saw that right away and comes around in this hard turn again. I'm up against the same situation as at the beginning."

Again Anderson cut across the Me-109's path and climbed. "Sure enough he reversed his turn, and now he's coming after me, so I gave it everything I had." Now the German was on Anderson's tail, both climbing steeply at full power. But to shoot, the German has to climb more steeply.

"He's got to point his nose ahead of me" to lead his moving target. All of

a sudden I see him start to mush, and he's going to stall." The Me-109 falls back and dives, with Anderson dropping back on his tail "and down we go again."

Again the German makes a hard climbing turn left. But this time Anderson is farther back and is able to turn on his opponent's tail. The enemy pilot reverses his turn and tries to out-climb the Mustang.

## Opponent's Mistake

"He screwed up. He's already lost his airspeed. So I just pulled inside of him and he started to turn. I fired a burst, and I saw a tracer go off to the right side. I give it a little bit of left rudder, and got him right in the middle of the airplane, got hits all over and the smoke comes out."

As the stricken Me-109 slowed in its climb, "I came right up to him, and his prop was wind-milling and the coolant was coming out and pretty soon black smoke."

Just as Anderson climbed even with him, "he starts rolling and just went down, and I went down, straight down from 28, 29 thousand feet, just absolutely straight down. I went through 20,000 feet faster than I ever been in my life. I thought this is too fast, came back on the power and I watched him. He was leaving black smoke that must have been two, three miles long."

Anderson pulled out of his dive into a big spiral. "It was a bright sunny day, and here's his shadow going down and pretty soon he and his shadow came together, right straight into the ground, and there was this tremendous explosion."

## Why did you name your airplane "Old Crow?"

"Now I tell my nondrinking friends that it's named after the most intelligent bird that flies in the sky. But my drinking buddies all know it's named after that old Kentucky straight bourbon whiskey."

# History Corner: Moffett Field's Pogo Airplane

In 1999, during an air show at Moffett Field, the late Amelia Reid looked inside cavernous Hangar One and remarked, "I think I could do my whole air show routine in here."

Anyone who saw Reid's low and slow aerobatics in a Cessna 150 Aerobat would not consider that much of a stretch. After all, more than a half century ago, an airplane did fly inside Hangar One numerous times.

It wasn't the huge airship USS Macon, for which the hangar was built in the 1930s, although technically the dirigible was in the air even when moored inside.

The Convair XFY-1 Pogo was one of many attempts made after World War II to devise a practical Vertical Take-Off and Landing (VTOL) combat aircraft.

The XFY-1 could take off and land vertically, and transition to horizontal flight and back.

It was impractical to assign an aircraft carrier task force to protect every supply convoy or operation, so strategists looked at stationing VTOL interceptors aboard destroyers, fleet oilers and transports, according to the National Air and Space Museum.

In 1951, the Navy awarded contracts to Convair and Lockheed to develop VTOL fighters. Convair built one



**Convair XFY-1 Pogo -- vertical takeoff**

XFY-1 Pogo, while Lockheed developed the XFV-1.

The Lockheed plane never made a vertical takeoff and landing because the Navy gave to Convair the only powerplant rated for both vertical and horizontal flight – the 5,850 horsepower YT-40 turbine engine spinning two 16-foot counter-rotating propellers.

On the ground, the Pogo sat vertically atop the trailing edges of its two wings and dorsal and ventral fins,

on which were fitted struts and small wheels. The struts compressed several feet, like a child's pogostick, on touchdown.

In April 1954, the project was moved to Moffett Field for a series of tethered flight tests inside Hangar One. On April 29, test pilot James "Skeets" Coleman made the first tethered flight of the Pogo.

Convair removed the propeller spinner to attach a tether to a fitting in the nose. Safety lines also were attached to the wingtips. The motorized tether operator could grab the Pogo upright if the pilot lost control and started to tilt over.

Coleman logged more than 60 hours of dangerous tethered flights inside Hangar One. The huge propellers churned up powerful, turbulent airflow that washed against the hangar's inside.

In August, Coleman completed several free flights outdoors, soaring as high as 150 feet. But shortly afterwards, Convair moved the Pogo to Brown Field near San Diego, where Coleman transitioned to horizontal flight. However, the plane's giant gearbox needed a major overhaul, and the Navy ended the program in 1956.

The Pogo was transferred to the Air and Space Museum in 1973.

## The Aero Club of Northern California

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Chartered in 1981 as chapter of the National Aeronautic Association.



-- To keep the public informed of the importance of aviation and space flight to the nation's economic progress, its security and to international understanding.  
-- To support a vigorous aviation and space education program for students at all levels of learning.  
-- To recognize and honor those who make outstanding contributions to the advancement of aviation and space flight.