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FIGHTER COVER: SPECTACULAR COLLECTION OF WARBIRO CLASSICS HIGHLIGHT GATHERING AT EAA AIRVENTURE 2009

EAA AVIATION CENTER, OSHKOSH, Wis. — (June 23, 2009) — A collection of warbird fighter aircraft not seen in one place for years will highlight the huge annual reunion of warbird aircraft and associated activities at EAA AirVenture Oshkosh 2009 at Wittman Regional Airport in Oshkosh. The 57th annual edition of EAA AirVenture, “The World’s Greatest Aviation Celebration,” will be held July 27-August 2.

Among the legendary World War II fighter aircraft scheduled to participate include restored Japanese Zero and German Messerschmitt 109, as well as British Hurricane and Spitfire, plus Hellcat, Wildcat, P-38, P-40, P-47, and always-popular P-51s from the American side.

“Warbirds enthusiasts know that EAA AirVenture is the place to see an unmatched gathering of these magnificent and rare restored aircraft,” said Tom Poberezny, EAA president and AirVenture chairman. “This year, however, is extra special with a collection of fighter aircraft that we have not seen at Oshkosh in many years and may not see again.”

The annual warbird activities include six air show performances during the week (every day except Thursday, July 30), with a 60-minute demonstration on Tuesday, July 28, and the “Warbird Spectaculars” on Friday, July 31, and Saturday, August 1. There is also a newly added 15-minute air display on Sunday, August 2. In addition, a full schedule of the popular “Warbirds in Review” programs with World War II veterans, current aircraft owners and other warbird authorities will take place throughout the week.

The hundreds of warbirds expected at Oshkosh include an all-star roster of the best-known World War II-era bombers such as the B-17 “Flying Fortress” and B-25 “Mitchell.” Some of the world’s top aviation museums and collections, such as the Commemorative Air Force, Lone Star Flight Museum and Cavanaugh Flight Museum, will participate.

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Several vintage warbirds from Canada are expected to help celebrate that country's 100th anniversary of flight. The Canadian Warplane Heritage Museum will bring its Avro Lancaster bomber (one of two still flying) and the Westland Lysander, which following a lengthy restoration made its first flight in 60 years on June 9. Vintage Wings Canada will bring a P-51 Mustang, Corsair, P-40 Tomahawk, and a Hurricane.

The schedule of guests at the Warbirds in Review programs held in AirVenture's warbirds area is also an unmatched gathering. Such legendary pilots as Bob Hoover, Bud Anderson, Paul Poberezny and others are among the presenters at these informal and intimate sessions held each day at 10 a.m. and 1 p.m. Among some of the special presentations will be German World War II ace Gunther Rall speaking next to the Messerschmitt fighter on Thursday, July 30, and recognition of the 60th anniversary of the T-28 trainer.

Other warbird-related highlights include:

- Top warbird aviators are featured in the regular AirVenture forum series and at the special EAA AirVenture Museum "Speakers' Showcase" throughout the week. The complete schedule of speakers is available in the "Attractions" area of the www.airventure.org website;
- The Warbird Spectacular air show performances on July 31 and August 1 feature the full pyrotechnics and recreations that are popular visual treats for AirVenture attendees;
- World War II re-enactors with military vehicles present on the grounds, who also participate in the Warbird Spectacular air show segments;
- The anticipated return of the restored "Red Tail" P-51, which honors the Tuskegee Airmen and their pioneering accomplishments during World War II;
- At non-air show times, the warbirds area is open for visitors to view the aircraft and talk to the owners and pilots of these airplanes, which are among the few remaining airworthy examples of these historic aircraft. The warbird public areas are cleared 15 minutes prior to engine start-up for each day's air show for safety considerations, re-opening after all warbird aircraft have returned and shut down.

EAA AIRVENTURE OSHKOSH is The World's Greatest Aviation Celebration and EAA's yearly membership convention. Additional EAA AirVenture information, including advance ticket purchase, is available online at www.airventure.org. EAA members receive lowest prices on admission rates. For more information on EAA and its programs, call 1-800-JOIN-EAA (1-800-564-6322) or visit www.eaa.org. For instant news updates, go to <http://twitter.com/EAAupdate>.

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EDITOR'S NOTE: High-resolution photos of warbirds at EAA AirVenture, as well as other highlights, are available at http://www.airventure.org/news/2009/090623_warbird_photos.html (you may have to copy and paste the link in your browser for your connection).