

Doolittle Museum fundraising effort hits first \$1 million

TRAVIS AIR FORCE BASE — The effort to raise enough money to build the Jimmy Doolittle Air & Space Museum has reached the \$1 million mark, the museum's education foundation announced.

The fundraisers have also enlisted the help of actor Tom Hanks, Jimmy Doolittle Education Foundation Chairman Phil Lancaster told a gathering of museum supporters Monday night.

“He is allowing us to use his name,” Lancaster said.

The group has also garnered the support of Doolittle's son, retired Air Force Col. John Doolittle.

The group is trying to raise \$12.5 million to break ground in time for the 70th anniversary of Doolittle's daring air raid on Tokyo during the early days of World War II.

Doolittle led a flight of 16 B-25 Mitchell bombers that took off from the carrier USS Hornet to strike several cities in Japan on April 18, 1942.

Monday's event was supposed to have World War II triple-ace and P-51 fighter pilot Clarence Anderson speak about his experiences, but Anderson failed to show.

The event also marked the 69th anniversary of the raid and Lancaster said that the Education Foundation plans is planning to break ground on the facility at this time next year.

In place of Anderson's talk, Lancaster and others gave the audience at the present museum facilities an expanded update on where the project.

Once built, the new museum will be located next to Travis' hospital gate — in a location more accessible to the public. It will house improved exhibits and historic aircraft.

The Wings of Valor Capitol Campaign kicked off in January with co-chairmen Herman Rowland, Sr., chairman of Jelly Belly Candy Company, and Jay Adair, chief executive officer of Copart.

“Every day, I am thinking of this museum. This museum is important for Solano County, this state and the country,” Rowland said.

Museum Curator Terry Juran showed the audience a virtual tour of the museum he stated will be much more interactive and offer classroom facilities for teachers to bring students to learn about military aviation.

He pointed out it will also include an interactive theater and a dedicated library and research center.

Further fundraising plans include a presence at the Travis Air Expo on July 30 and 31, as well as at the museum's Third Annual Mustang Days Wings and Wheels event at the Nut Tree Airport in October.

Members of the public can make contributions and buy a personalized brick for the entrance to the museum at either event.

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