



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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**Legendary Boeing B-17E Flying Fortress
a.k.a. "Swamp Ghost" Arrived Today, April 10
At Pacific Aviation Museum Pearl Harbor**

Honolulu, HI – One of the most talked about artifacts of American aviation history--the Boeing B-17E Flying Fortress bomber #41-2446 "Swamp Ghost"—arrived at Pacific Aviation Museum Pearl Harbor, today, Wednesday, April 10, 2013. The Matson shipment trucks began arriving at 9am. Matson shipped the aircraft, in pieces, from California to the Museum.

The remarkable story of this WWII aircraft has been featured in numerous media, including *National Geographic*, *New York Times*, *Washington Post*, *L.A. Daily News*, and *Smithsonian* magazine.

B-17E 41-2446 was one of the bombers in the Kangaroo Squadron stationed in Townsville, Australia. It was to have been one of the B-17s in the flight that made it to Hickam Army Air Field during the December 7, 1941 attack. It was delayed due to engine problems but flew to Hickam on December 17 and then leapfrogged its way to Townsville, Australia. On the night of February 22, 1942, five B-17s took off from Townsville with the mission of attacking ships at Rabaul, a harbor of Japanese-held New Britain. The mission was the first American heavy bomber offensive raid of World War II.

Unfortunately, this B-17 never made it back. Having sustained damage from enemy fire causing the aircraft to run out of fuel, it crash-landed in the remote primitive Agaimbo swamp on the north coast of Papua New Guinea. Over the next several days, the nine-member crew battled malaria, fatigue, and heat exhaustion, while they hacked their way through razor-sharp swamp grass to safety. Amazingly, all nine men made it back to the base alive.

Having crash-landed in one of the most remote locations on Earth, the aircraft virtually “disappeared” and slipped into an oblivion that lasted almost three decades, until Australian soldiers on routine maneuvers spotted the aircraft in 1972, still partially submerged in the swamp and nicknamed it Swamp Ghost. To the soldiers’ amazement, it was found to be in remarkable condition and fully intact; the machine guns were in place, fully loaded and, in the cabin, there was a thermos with what used to be coffee. It soon became obvious that this plane would become the best-preserved example of a combat B-17 in existence.

The amazing story of this aircraft doesn’t end there. Over the next 30 plus years, Alfred Hagen of Aero Archaeology attempted to recover the bomber. Finally, after years of negotiations, John Tallichet, Alfred Hagen, and the Swamp Ghost Salvage Team were cleared to return this amazing artifact to the United States in 2010. In 2011, Pacific Aviation Museum Pearl Harbor began negotiations to receive the aircraft.

“We are absolutely thrilled that this national treasure will call Pacific Aviation Museum Pearl Harbor home,” said Kenneth DeHoff, Museum Executive Director. “The B-17E ‘Swamp Ghost’ will be one of the crown jewels in our aircraft collection. While we restore these aircraft to static display standards of aviation museums globally, this one will take us several years to raise the funds to do so. We expect it to cost \$5 million dollars,” said Mr. DeHoff.

When funds are received and restoration is complete, the B-17E Flying Fortress will join other aircraft in Hangar 79, telling the rest of the story of the war in the Pacific. For now, it is planned to be on display in an exhibit resembling the Papua New Guinea swamp in

which it was found, the perfect backdrop for this historic artifact. Donors are invited to purchase a brick for a loved one or WWII pilot, in the garden setting of the exhibit, and help restore the aircraft. The Museum invites donations of historic aircraft and aviation memorabilia. Donated artifacts are professionally cared for and enjoyed by millions of visitors from all over the world. The Museum also invites monetary donations for its restoration and education programs, as it is a nonprofit, private Museum, which depends on members and donors. To support the Museum, call 808-441-1006 or donate online at www.PacificAviationMuseum.org.

Pacific Aviation Museum Pearl Harbor is a 501(c)3 non-profit organization. Its mission is to develop and maintain an internationally recognized aviation museum on historic Ford Island that educates young and old alike, honors aviators and their support personnel who defended freedom in the Pacific Region, and to preserve Pacific aviation history.

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