

# Iowa All Over: Iowa Aviation Heritage Museum showcases state's military, aviation history

Grounded, but still flying



A one fifth scale B-29, left, and B-17 models hang from the ceiling at the Iowa Military Aviation Museum in Ankeny on Monday, March 30, 2015. The radio-controlled model bombers are powered by industrial chain-saw engines, though museum President Roger Pointer says they are too valuable to fly anymore. (Cliff Jette/The Gazette)

**Kiran Sood, The Gazette**

APRIL 6, 2015 | 7:00 AM

ANKENY — Twenty-five years ago, Roger Pointer had an idea. He envisioned a place that would house memorabilia honoring both the state's military aviation and general aviation history.

Pointer is a member of the Commemorative Air Force, based in Texas. It was founded to “acquire, restore and preserve in flying condition a complete collection of combat aircraft which were flown by all military services of the United States,” according to its website.

Pointer wanted a place closer to home, in Iowa, that could house and showcase the state's military

aviation history.

Inside the museum in Ankeny, model planes hang from the ceiling. Artifacts are displayed in nearly every corner and open space. Memorabilia competes for viewing.

Visitors can view an array of one-fifth scale flying models, engine cutaways, books, photos and paintings.

“Our motto is, it came to Iowa, it's going to stay in Iowa,” Pointer said. “A lot of World War II vets came home and they brought stuff with them. Families, they didn't know what to do with it. Well, now, they know what to do with it.”

One of the most impressive pieces is a huge cutaway 36-cylinder radial engine of the type used in the Convair B-36 Peacemaker.

Toward the back of the museum, a sliding door opens up to reveal planes standing on the runway. One of them is a Republic F-84F Thunderstreak, a fighter bomber from the 1950s. The plane was brought to the museum slung under a CH-47 Chinook.



Museum President Roger Pointer discusses a display set up for his friend Leo Griffieon, who flew B-29s during World War II in the Pacific Theatre, at the Iowa Military Aviation Museum in Ankeny on Monday, March 30, 2015. Griffieon, who died in 2007, flew one of the last combat missions of the war on August 15, 1945, the day Japan surrendered. (Cliff Jette/The Gazette)

Each item in the museum has a story. To take a tour and hear Pointer tell each story is an equal part of the experience. He has made it his mission to keep Iowa's military history in the public mind by recording, preserving and sharing the history of each and every artifact inside the museum.

Today, many in Ankeny aren't aware of the museum, Pointer said.

“Ankeny on the whole is a younger generation moved in here,” he said. “You just see all the new houses. They're really not interested in history. Sad, and they're all not nuts like I am. I want to keep

**G Iowa All Over: Iowa Aviation Herita...**

Q Search...



---

The museum brings in groups of children to talk to them about World War II and give them an opportunity to see and touch pieces of history, Pointer said. The Aviation Museum attracts some 10,000 visitors annually.

The venue also hosts air and car shows that attract visitors from across the state, he added. Aviation is part of the neighborhood.

The Iowa Aviation Heritage Museum is located on Convenience Boulevard in Ankeny. Also on Convenience Boulevard is Exec 1 Aviation, Iowa's general aviation hub.

The Des Moines Flight Standards District Office, part of the Federal Aviation Authority, is on the north end of the field.

The Ankeny Regional Airport has a 5,500-foot long runway, Pointer said. The airport is used frequently for corporate flights.

**More stories from Kiran Sood**



Symposium to feature Chinese photojournalist Wang Wenlan





### Iowa All Over: Grinnell's jewel box bank shines bright

Casey's has its headquarters just a stone's throw away on SE Convenience Boulevard. The airport brings in passengers doing business with Casey's and John Deere, which also has a plant in Ankeny, he said.

## More on Ankeny

Ankeny, in Polk County, has a population of 51,567, according to the 2013 U.S. Census Bureau. Some of the major employers in Ankeny are Casey's, Deere and Co. and Tone's Spices, according to Roger Pointer, president of the Iowa Aviation Heritage Museum.

## If you go

**What:** Iowa Aviation Heritage Museum

**Where:** 3704 SE Convenience Blvd., Ankeny

**Hours:** 10 a.m. to 2 p.m., Tuesdays and Thursdays, and 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. on Saturdays, or by appointment, from April 1 to Nov. 1.

**Contact:** Call (515) 964-4515 or go to [iowaaviationheritagemuseum.webs.com](http://iowaaviationheritagemuseum.webs.com).

## You Might Also Like

---



### The must-visit cheap all-inclusive resorts everyone is talking about

TripCurator



### The Top 10 Trips To Take In Your Lifetime

Lost Waldo



### Things Foreigners Are Constantly Surprised by in America

Destination Tips



### Don't Go There: The 13 Worst Countries to Visit

Travel Versed



### Why You Should Never Pay for Premium Seats on a Plane

ULIVE



### Juana Maria Endured 18 Years Alone On San Nicolas

Destination Tips

## More From the Gazette

---

[Frustration boils over for Badgers | TheGazette](#) (The Gazette)

[Podcast: 'On Iowa' breaks down spring football, wraps up hoops | TheGazette](#) (The Gazette)

[Cedar Rapids man cited and released after shot fired - TheGazette](#) (The Gazette)

[UI student dies after fall while studying in Rome - TheGazette](#) (The Gazette)

[Worker accused of stealing more than \\$54K from Iowa store](#) (KCRG)

[Coach who had sex with student gets year in halfway house](#) (KCRG)

## From Around the Web

---

[8 Dream Retirement Cities With Favorable Taxes And Great Weather](#) (Fisher Investments)

[Upscale RV Resorts At Florida's Top Beaches](#) (Visit Pensacola)

[6 Amazing US Destinations Most People Don't Know About](#) (AARP)

[Sweatpants You Have to Try Not to Wear Everyday](#) (Refinery29)

[13 Stupid Ways to Try and Save Money On Your Vacation](#) (Travel Versed)

[9 Ways to Get the Most out of Your Airline Ticket](#) (AARP)



**Have you found an error or omission in our reporting? Is there other feedback and/or ideas you want to share with us? Tell us [here](#).**

## **The Gazette**

[About Us](#)

[Advertise with Us](#)

[Subscribe](#)

[Order Back Issues](#)

[Customer Care](#)

[Newsroom Staff](#)

[Newspapers in Education](#)

## **Gazette Content**

[Email Newsletters](#)

[RSS Feeds](#)

[Apps](#)

[Archives](#)

[Green Gazette](#)

[Puzzle answers](#)

[Policies](#)

## **Our Local Sites**

[Iowa Prep Sports](#)

[Hoopla Now](#)

[Fusionfarm](#)

[KCRG Autos](#)

[We Create Here](#)

## **Our Online Products**

[Corridor Careers](#)

[The Gazette Classifieds](#)

[Here's the Deal](#)

[Directory](#)

[KCRG A-list](#)

[Photo Store](#)

**Iowa SourceMedia Group**

[KCRG-TV9](#)

[The Gazette](#)

[Color Web Printers](#)

[Penny Saver](#)

Copyright © 2015