## The Right Stuff

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## Edwards Air Force Bases' Flight Test Museum is Getting Off the Ground

A 75,000 sq. ft. foundation for the building is already poured. The new Flight Test Museum, Bob Hoover Library, and STEM center will make the history of U.S. aviation accessible. reimaging itself.

By Laurie Hanson

"The area has seen milestones like testing America's first jet, the breaking of the sound barrier, rocket plane flights to the edge of space and the first



Yeager being the first man to break the sound barrier. And Edward's Air Force Base is opening its gates for the first time since 2009 to host the Aerospace Valley Air Show on Oct. 15 and 16 in part to celthe ebrate this monumental first in aviation history where U.S. Air Force Thunderbirds are scheduled to perform. "The skill and spirit of all those who participated in this incredible body of work shaped both the modern world and

been with the museum since 2012.

for all the same reasons," she added.

the American persona," Sheldon Brown Yeager, Gen. Bob Cardenas, Col. Pete said. "Much of this historic work is not Knight and a wide variety of local politiknown to the world, and much of what cians, industry representatives, and foris known is surrounded by myth and leg- mer base personnel. end because of the secret nature of the work."

"The new Flight Test Museum, Bob Hoover Library, and STEM center will tests at Edwards Air Force Base, NASA make that history accessible by liter- Armstrong Flight Research Center, Plant ally bringing it outside the Edwards Air 42, and the Aerospace Valley. Force Gate," she added.

The Flight Test Museum Foundation was established in 1983 by Carol Odg- lished in 1990. Today, its collection iners (wife of Gen. Odgers), Gen. Chuck

AMERICAN HERO - foreground is Chuck Yeager with actor Sam Shepard, from the movie, "The Right Stuff," with the model of Glamorous Glennis, the Bell X-1 Yeager flew to break the sound barrier at Edwards on Oct.14, 1947.



According to Sheldon Brown, its mission is to preserve, display, and educate the public about the history of flight

In neighboring Palmdale, California, the Blackbird Airpark was estabcludes a SR-71, a U-2, the wind tunnel model of a SR-71, a D-21 drone, and the very first A-12 ever developed known as "Oxcart."

In 2000, the current Flight Test Museum was gifted to Edwards Air Force Base and is located onsite there. At that time, it was open to the public, but a year later after 9-11, the security perimmuseum, making it only accessible then this open-access, interactive, eLearning and now to those with permission to be program. on base.

Palmdale Airport are open to anyone, according to Sheldon Brown.

aircraft, is worth the effort.

"Exhibits inside include such diverse subjects as the formation of the ancient lake beds, early homesteading in the area, the first military use of Edwards, breaking the sound barrier, and flight test from World War II to the present," Sheldon Brown said.

Patrons can view artifacts such as aircraft propulsion systems, missiles, hardware, life support equipment, technical drawings, test reports, personal memorabilia, photographs, and wind tunnel models.

Lunar Landing Research Vehicle (nicknamed the Flying Bedstead), used by astronauts in training and test pilots to study and analyze piloting techniques needed to fly and land the Apollo Lunar Module in the Moon's low gravity environment," she said.

"We [also] have three SR-71s, reconnaissance aircraft that operated at high speeds and altitudes (Mach 3.2 and 85,000 feet, 25,900 meters), allowing it to outrace and fly above the range of

Though the pandemic affected the entirely online. Typically, their sum- seum.org. mer program hosts 200 to 300 students

eter was extended one mile out from the

But Blackbird Airpark and the Joe Davies' Heritage Airpark located at

If you can get on base, the inventory of the Air Force Flight Test Museum which includes more than 80 historic

missiles."

schedule and run from mid-June through The Junior Test Pilot School is open and accessible to anyone online at www.

jtps.edu20.org. It is designed to instruct elementary school-aged children on science, technology, engineering, and math (STEM).

Air Force Base which is the center of complete the building. Air Force developmental flight test," Sheldon Brown said. "Any student from across the globe can learn about Edwards and STEM in action by attending

"Education programs at Blackbird Airpark provide educational tours and activities on the principles of Science, Technology, Engineering, and Math (STEM)," she added. "In flight test and aerospace research [is designed] to expand knowledge, inspire, and motivate future generations using examples of the advancements in aerospace in our col-

The Flight Test Museum also coordinates onsite career and STEM days at schools to bring their programs directly to young students. They are in the process of developing an educational app that will offer STEM lessons based on a specific aircraft and provide tours of their Blackbird Airpark and Joe Davies Heritage Park next door as well.

The museum foundation hopes to raise enough money through active fundraising to build a new museum and STEM Center outside the security gates surviving LLRV, the Bell AeroSystems at Edwards Air Force Base. They have enlisted Gensler to develop capital campaign assets to help in their efforts.

> According to Sheldon Brown, a multi-disciplinary team of experts in brand design, architecture, and museum design has been brought together to create the ultimate vision of the future for

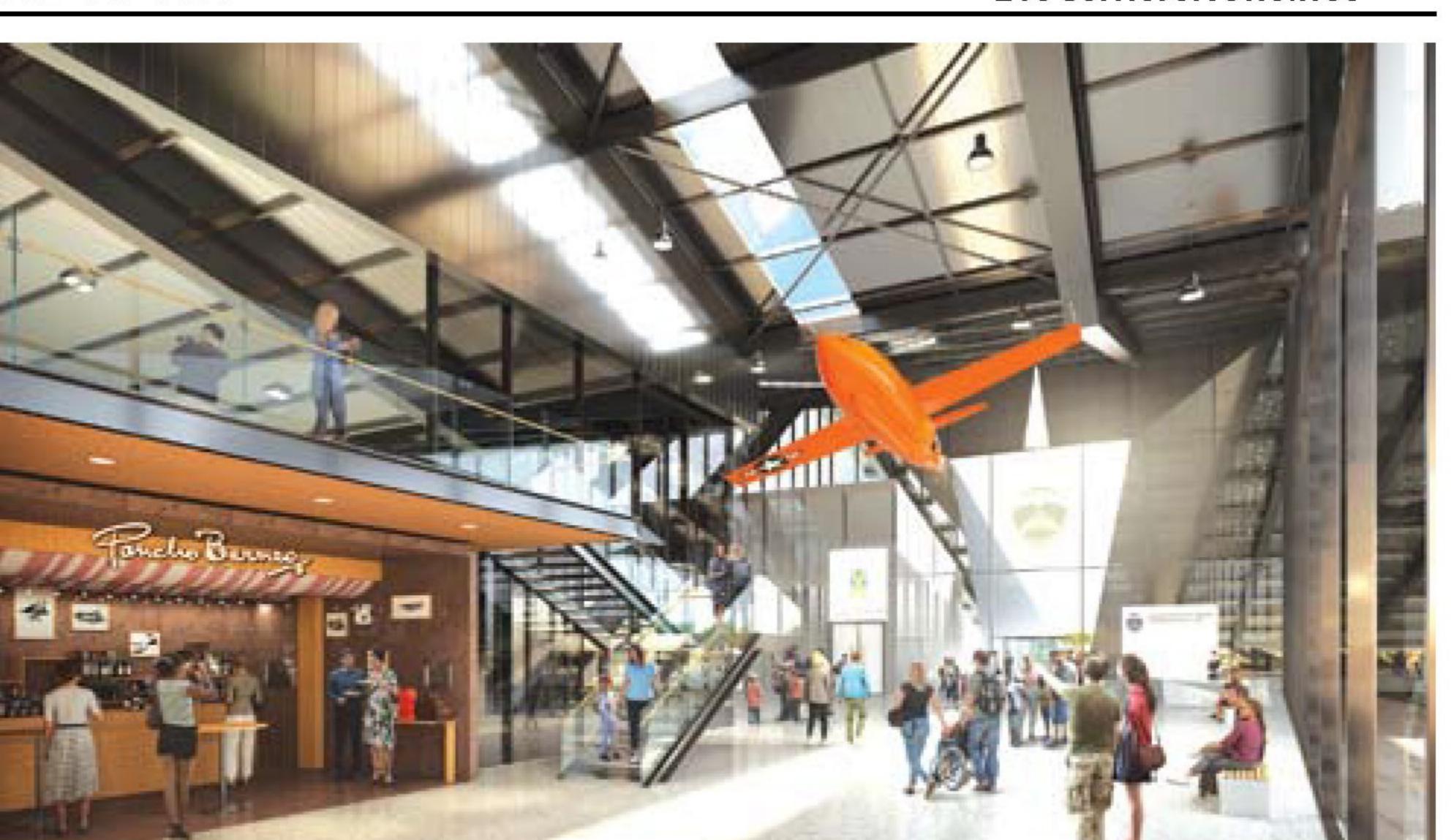
The Flight Test Museum is now open Tuesday-Thursday from 9:30 a.m. to 3 p.m. at Edwards Air Force Base.

The Blackbird Airpark and Joe Davies' Heritage Airpark are open on Saturdays and Sundays from 9 a.m. to 3 Flight Test Museum's educational out- p.m. in Palmdale. Both are open free of reach, including the Junior Test Pilot charge. Teachers or school coordinators Program, they were able to reach more can call the museum at 661-277-8050 than 500 students from around the world or send an email at info@flighttestmu-

The Flight Test Museum Foundation



THE CENTURY CIRCLE in front of the gates at Edwards Air Force Base, the future home of the Air Force Flight Test Museum.



"It demonstrates the importance of ARTIST'S RENDERING of the future STEM and exhibit area of the Flight Test these subjects to aircraft development, Museum at Edward's Air Force Base. Currently, they have a 75,000 sq ft foundation flight test, and aerospace at Edwards for the building is already poured and the foundation is actively seeking donations to

is a private, nonprofit 501(c)3 organiza- sq ft foundation for the building already tion and exists to support and fund the poured and are actively seeking donapreservation of these historic aircraft in tions to complete the building. the museum's collection, develop and run the education programs, and the exhibits in the collection as well as future exhibits. Currently, they have a 75,000

To learn more about the new museum, please visit online at flighttestmuseum.org/new-museum/.



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