



DOOLITTLE TOKYO RAIDERS PRESS RELEASE

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PUNTA GORDA, FL. The 31st Annual Florida International Air Show (Mar 25-26) will be hosting a historic reunion between three surviving Doolittle Tokyo Raiders and special guests representing the People's Republic of China.

On April 18th 1942, sixteen North American B-25B twin engine bombers and eighty U.S. Army Air Corps airmen, took off from an aircraft carrier (USS Hornet) in the Pacific, with a top secret mission to bomb military and industrial installations in and around Tokyo. This was the very first strike on the Empire of Japan, one hundred and thirty three days after the attack on Pearl Harbor, December 7, 1941.

Although no planes were lost over Japan, fifteen planes made it safely over China, fuel loss and bad weather forced all crews to crash land or bail out. One plane made it to USSR and landed. Three Raiders were killed on bail out, eight were captured by the pursuing Japanese Army and sixty four crew members were saved by National Chinese who risked their lives moving the Raiders to safety throughout territories occupied by the Japanese militia. The Chinese people including many soldiers of the National Chinese militia paid the ultimate sacrifice for aiding these crew members. It was estimated that over 250,000 men women and children were slaughtered by the pursuing Japanese Army for their valiant efforts to protect and save the American fliers from being taken prisoner or being killed.

For the first time in sixty nine years, three Doolittle Tokyo Raiders -- Lt. Col. Richard E. Cole, plane number one and Doolittle's co-pilot, Major Thomas C. Griffin the navigator on plane number nine and S/Sgt David J. Thatcher, engineer/gunner on plane number seven (featured in the book and movie of the same name " 30 Seconds Over Tokyo",) will be reunited with members of a Chinese delegation sent by the Ambassador of the Chinese Embassy in Washington, D.C. to represent the Chinese Government and the people of China. For the Raiders, this reunion will demonstrate the ongoing respect and lasting friendship they hold for people of China for their bravery and the sacrifices they made saving the lives of sixty four Raider crew members.

The Chinese people have always praised the Doolittle Tokyo Raiders for their timely mission to help destroy their common enemy at that time, the Empire of Japan.

About the Florida International Air Show:

The Florida International Air Show (FIAS) organization is a Florida "not for profit" corporation and staffed entirely by volunteers. Their mission is to present a yearly Air Show focused on providing wholesome family entertainment, is educational for all attendees in the areas of aviation and space, presents a forum for military and commercial flight demonstrations, and offers a friendly environment for military recruiting. Income from gate receipts, sponsors and other income generating events contribute to producing each

annual Air Show. Monies in excess of this requirement are distributed to local working charities. www.FloridaAirShow.com. The bomber that was made famous on the Doolittle Tokyo Raid, the North American B-25 affectionately known as the "Mitchell" will be performing and on display.

About the Doolittle Tokyo Raiders:

Seventy nine young American aviators and their leader Lt. Colonel, James H. Doolittle took part in the historic and dangerous mission. Today, there are five surviving Raiders, including the last surviving Raider of eight who were captured by the Japanese. These men continue to attend special events including their annual reunion held every April in a major City. This year they will be guests of the City of Omaha, April 14th through the 18th. See Doolittle official website for more information. www.DoolittleTokyoRaiders.com & www.doolittleraider.com

FOR MORE INFORMATION ON THE DOOLITTLE TOKYO RAIDERS

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FOR MORE INFORMATION ON THE FLORIDA INTERNATIONAL AIR SHOW AND REUNION ACTIVITIES

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