



Bravo Zulu: My Search to Save Classic Warbirds

Jerry Yagen

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Bravo Zulu is a passionate collector's personalized and enthusiastic ode to military aviation history.

Vintage aircraft collector and museum founder Jerry Yagen's memoir-cum-museum guide *Bravo Zulu* concerns his decades-long effort to establish the Military Aviation Museum, a place dedicated to warplanes that focuses on collection, restoration, admiration, and education. Each exhibited plane, Yagen notes, is still flight worthy; each is displayed so that visitors can examine it up close.

The collection is bookended by contemplative essays written in an oratory tone; they convey Yagen's credibility on the subject, which derives from his lifetime of collected knowledge. They also pronounce the book's didactic intentions in clear terms. Indeed, throughout the text, Yagen works to instill a sense of admiration and respect for the planes that he covers, exploring the varied circumstances that prompted their construction and use. As a museum guidebook, *Bravo Zulu* excels at showing why each plane is important and how history was affected by its use.

Tracing the evolution of planes alongside explanations of their contributions to war efforts, this book covers the specific airplanes contained within the Military Aviation Museum in their historical context. Each entry is bolstered by Yagen's personal recollections of retrieving, restoring, and flying or riding in the plane in question. Further, Yagen reflects on personal events within each entry, including the birth of his daughter, that are used to embellish the tale of his infectious love of the central subject and that serve to humanize the study of history itself. Indeed, the most consistent draw of this historical collection is the fact that its pages are permeated with a sense of love for history and planes and by the desire to spread such interest to future generations.

The book moves through aviation history in a linear manner. The planes are organized by their eras and wars, including World War I and the Golden Age of Aviation. Historical summations of the creation of each plane further the book's educational work, as does the inclusion of standout information about each craft, including special configurations and mechanisms that differentiate them from each other. Color photographs show these majestic planes in flight or focus on close-ups of their notable elements. A concise table of relevant statistics is also included, with some of the book's more esoteric terms contextualized therein.

Designed to work in concert with the historical exhibits at the Military Aviation Museum, *Bravo Zulu* is a passionate collector's personalized, enthusiastic ode to military aviation history.

JOHN M. MURRAY (September 12, 2022)

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