

Historic WWII Artifact Exchange Between USS Hornet Museum and Doolittle Raid Memorial Hall in China

The USS Hornet Museum proudly announces a significant international cultural exchange with the Doolittle Raid Memorial Hall in Quzhou City, China,

ALAMEDA, CA, UNITED STATES, April 21, 2025 /EINPresswire.com/ -- The [USS Hornet Museum](https://www.uss-hornetmuseum.com/) proudly announces a significant international cultural exchange with the Doolittle Raid Memorial Hall in Quzhou City, China, commemorating the 80th anniversary of victory in the Chinese People's War of Resistance Against Japanese Aggression and the World Anti-Fascist War.



Picture of exchange of artifacts

As part of this historic exchange, USS Hornet Museum volunteer and documentary filmmaker George Retelas (Sundown to Eleven) will deliver a rare original 16mm film reel depicting the Doolittle Raiders' training at Eglin Field in March 1942. In return, the Doolittle Raid Memorial Hall will present the museum with a powerful artifact: a fragment from aircraft No. 9, Whirling Dervish—one of the sixteen B-25 bombers launched from the USS Hornet (CV-8) during the daring Doolittle Raid. The rear fuselage piece was recovered from the crash site in eastern Jiangxi Province, roughly 300 kilometers from Quzhou.

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*Museum Executive Director
Laura Fies.*

On April 18, 1942, after successfully striking military and

industrial production targets in Japan, the crew of Whirling Dervish bailed out over China and were rescued by local Chinese civilians, exemplifying the heroic cooperation between the U.S. and China during World War II.

The B-25 artifact has arrived in the United States, where it will become the centerpiece of the USS Hornet Museum's Doolittle Raiders exhibit. "This remarkable addition will allow guests to connect directly with the mission's legacy and the bravery of those who flew it—serving as a powerful symbol of international cooperation and remembrance," said Museum Executive Director Laura Fies.

Led by Lt. Col. James "Jimmy" Doolittle, the 1942 raid marked the first U.S. air strike against the Japanese homeland following Pearl Harbor. Sixteen B-25B Mitchell bombers, each with a five-man crew and no fighter escort, were launched from the USS Hornet to target military and industrial facilities in Tokyo and beyond. Though the material damage was limited, the psychological impact was profound: morale soared in the United States while fear and doubt spread through the Japanese leadership. In retaliation, the Japanese military launched the brutal Zhejiang-Jiangxi campaign, resulting in the deaths of an estimated 250,000 Chinese civilians who had aided the downed American airmen.

George Retelas, known for his dedication to preserving veterans' stories, participated in the official cultural exchange ceremony hosted by the Quzhou Doolittle Raid Historical Research Association on April 18, 2025, the anniversary of that fateful mission.

"It was incredibly special to be part of this," said Retelas. "When the USS Hornet docked in Alameda, my grandfather and his fellow sailors actually helped load the bombs for the Doolittle Raid. Now, to return with a piece of one of those bombers back to the U.S. and aboard the Hornet is an unbelievable, full-circle moment."

For more information about the Doolittle Raid and the USS Hornet Museum's continuing educational programs, please visit USS-Hornet.org. To view footage of the 16mm film that features the Doolittle Raiders training at Eglin Field, please visit the USS Hornet [YouTube](#) page. Please consider a [donation](#) to assist in our ongoing exhibit acquisition and care.

Russell Moore
USS Hornet Museum
+1 5105994272

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