



PRESS RELEASE

50 Years of SELFRIDGE MILITARY AIR MUSEUM

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

“Half a Century of Flight, Heritage & Inspiration”

Michigan Air Guard Historical Association and Selfridge Military Air Museum Mark 50th Anniversary with State Tribute

Harrison Township, Mich. – December 17, 2025 — The Michigan Air Guard Historical Association (MAGHA) proudly marks 50 years of preserving Michigan’s military aviation heritage through the Selfridge Military Air Museum (SMAM), a landmark institution showcasing more than a century of flight at Selfridge Field, the nation’s second-oldest continually operating military air base.

In recognition of fifty years of dedication to history and community, State Senator Kevin Hertel (12th District) presented a Special Tribute from the Michigan Legislature at the Museum’s annual Volunteer Dinner, honoring both MAGHA and the Museum. The resolution applauds the organization’s volunteer-driven dedication to education, preservation, and community engagement, affirming its enduring impact on Michigan’s cultural and historical landscape. It states, “We are deeply grateful for their dedication to preserving the storied history of Selfridge for citizens across Macomb County, and all of Michigan.”

A Legacy of Flight and Education

Since its founding in 1975, the Selfridge Military Air Museum has upheld its mission to *“educate and inspire generations with over one hundred years of aviation experience and innovation.”* The Museum:

- Showcases historic aircraft, engines, cockpits, and memorabilia spanning from early aviation to modern military flight.
- Built a new 50-by-80-foot Aviation Education Center, integrating STEAM (Science, Technology, Engineering, Arts & Mathematics) learning and bringing aviation heritage into classrooms and virtual settings.
- Partners with schools, veterans, and families to bridge Michigan’s proud aerospace past with its next generation of innovators.

Why This Anniversary Matters

The 50th Anniversary is a reflection of the Museum’s living mission to:

- Honor the service and sacrifice of generations of aviators, crew members, and support personnel.
- Preserve Michigan’s unique contributions to U.S. air power and homeland defense.
- Inspire future pilots, engineers, and aviation professionals by connecting history, technology, and community.
- Strengthen ties between Selfridge Base, the Museum, and the region — ensuring that aviation history remains accessible and relevant to all.



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Invitation to the Community

“We invite everyone — residents, veterans, aviation fans, students, and families — to join us in celebrating this remarkable milestone,” said Steve Mrozek, the Museum’s Education Director. “Fifty years is a tremendous achievement, but our mission continues with renewed energy. Through preservation, education, and outreach, we’re ensuring that this legacy of flight carries forward for another fifty years and beyond.”

The Museum welcomes the public to visit the Selfridge Military Air Museum to explore Michigan’s unique role in aviation history and to see firsthand the ongoing restoration and education efforts that bring military aviation to life.

Supporting the Mission

As a non-federally funded institution, the Selfridge Military Air Museum depends on support from members, donors, and volunteers. Contributions sustain restoration work, expand educational programming, and preserve veterans’ stories for generations to come. **The Museum is currently seeking matching funds for a grant to upgrade facilities for year-round use**, ensuring continued accessibility to Michigan residents and visitors alike.

About the Selfridge Military Air Museum

Founded in 1975 by the Michigan Air Guard Historical Association, the Selfridge Military Air Museum preserves the heritage of military aviation with a focus on Michigan’s contributions to U.S. air defense and innovation. Located at Selfridge Air National Guard Base in Harrison Township, Michigan, the Museum features both indoor and outdoor exhibits ranging from early biplanes to modern jets.

The Museum operates on 11 a.m. - 5 p.m. weekends during its open season, April - October, and offers group tours by arrangement. For information on admission, base access, or events, visit www.selfridgeairmuseum.org.

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Enc: Photos; Text of Proclamation



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ATTACHMENT: Photo of Senator Kevin Hertel presenting Selfridge Military Air Museum with State of Michigan Special Tribute to Selfridge Military Air Museum



From left to right: Mike Viterna, President, MAGHA Board of Directors; Senator Kevin Hertel, 12th District; Paul Pochmara, Vice-President, MAGHA Board of Directors; Steve Mrozek, SMAM Executive Director

Photo Courtesy of Munnaf H. Joarder

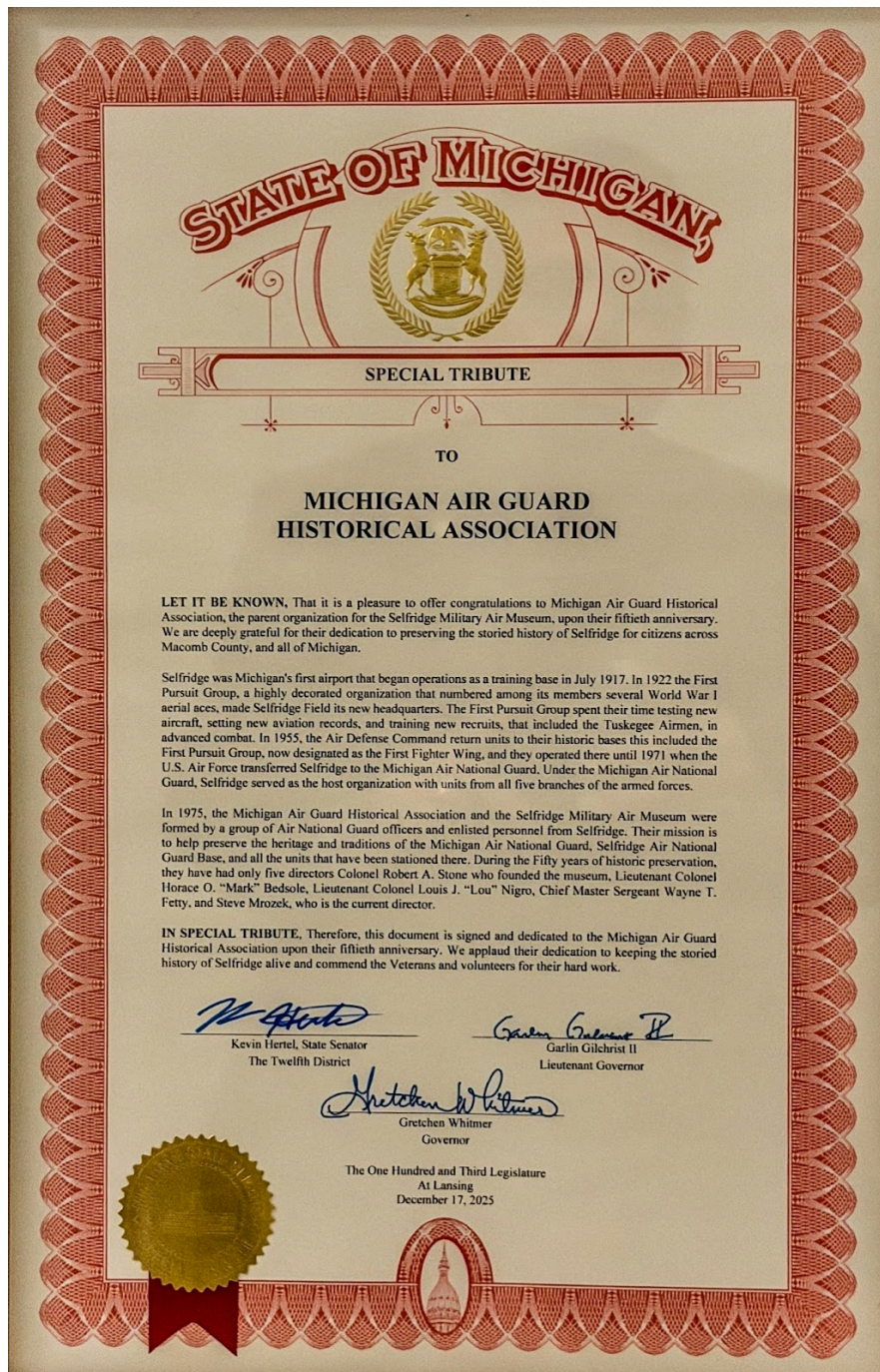


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ATTACHMENT: Photo of State of Michigan Tribute (text follows)

Photo Courtesy of Munnaf H. Joarder





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ATTACHMENT - Text of Proclamation

STATE OF MICHIGAN
SPECIAL TRIBUTE
TO MICHIGAN AIR GUARD HISTORICAL ASSOCIATION

LET IT BE KNOWN, That it is a pleasure to offer congratulations to Michigan Air Guard Historical Association, the parent organization for the Selfridge Military Air Museum, upon their fiftieth anniversary. We are deeply grateful for their dedication to preserving the storied history of Selfridge for citizens across Macomb County, and all of Michigan.

Selfridge was Michigan's first airport that began operations as a training base in July 1917. In 1922 the First Pursuit Group, a highly decorated organization that numbered among its members several World War I aerial aces, made Selfridge Field its new headquarters. The First Pursuit Group spent their time testing new aircraft, setting new aviation records, and training new recruits, that included the Tuskegee Airmen, in advanced combat. In 1955, the Air Defense Command return units to their historic bases this included the First Pursuit Group, now designated as the First Fighter Wing, and they operated there until 1971 when the U.S. Air Force transferred Selfridge to the Michigan Air National Guard. Under the Michigan Air National Guard, Selfridge served as the host organization with units from all five branches of the armed forces.

In 1975, the Michigan Air Guard Historical Association and the Selfridge Military Air Museum were formed by a group of Air National Guard officers and enlisted personnel from Selfridge. Their mission is to help preserve the heritage and traditions of the Michigan Air National Guard, Selfridge Air National Guard Base, and all the units that have been stationed there. During the Fifty years of historic preservation, they have had only five directors Colonel Robert A. Stone who founded the museum, Lieutenant Colonel Horace O. "Mark" Bedsole, Lieutenant Colonel Louis J. "Lou" Nigro, Chief Master Sergeant Wayne T. Fetty. and Steve Mrozek, who is the current director.

IN SPECIAL TRIBUTE, Therefore, this document is signed and dedicated to the Michigan Air Guard Historical Association upon their fiftieth anniversary. We applaud their dedication to keeping the storied history of Selfridge alive and commend the Veterans and volunteers for their hard work.

Kevin Hertel, State Senator, The Twelfth District

Garlin Gilchrist II, Lieutenant Governor

Gretchen Whitmer, Governor

The One Hundred and Third Legislature

At Lansing, December 17, 2025