

WHEN WAR CAME TO DORR



*The Japanese
Fu-Go Campaign*

EXHIBIT FUNDRAISING CAMPAIGN

by the Byron Center Historical Society (BCHS)



Exhibit Synopsis

On February 23, 1945, three curious boys followed a large mysterious floating object to a corn field in rural Dorr, Michigan, just north of Kalamazoo, where they watched it settle to the ground. Soon Federal agents arrived and confiscated the object with no explanation. Months later the boys learned they had found a Fu-Go balloon, a new weapon developed by the Japanese to wreak havoc on America during world War II, and the only balloon to have traveled so far eastward beyond its intended destination along the Pacific Coast.

That same balloon, one of last remaining Fu-Go balloons in the world—from among some 9300 launched from Japan—has now been returned to Michigan. Its display provides an opportunity to explore the roots of this fascinating military campaign of retaliation, the science behind their operation, the manufacture of the paper balloons by school girls, the landings of some 300 balloons in North America, six fatalities caused by a Fu-Go, and the American government's attempt to hide this campaign from its citizens. The exhibit also showcases a scientifically inventive weapon that relied on the principals of kinetic energy, and utilized the jet stream to cross the Pacific, a phenomenon first understood by the Japanese. Remarkably, Fu-Go balloons were the world's first intercontinental bombs.

Significance

Due to a generous donation of \$10,000 from an anonymous donor, BCHS now holds one of only a few intact Fu-Go balloons in the country/world. While some eight museums have partial or complete Fu-Go chandeliers on display in small exhibits, only one authentic balloon has been exhibited: In the 1960s at the Smithsonian (now in storage). BCHS is planning to create **the most comprehensive exhibit in the country to interpret the Fu-Go campaign.**

Seeking
\$137,000
to develop exhibit

Exhibit Curatorial, Design, and Fabrication

BCHS has selected Lafferty van Heest & Associates of Holland, Michigan, (laffertyvanheest.com) to develop this exhibit. The firm is local and has a keen interest in maritime, aviation, and World War II topics. Under the leadership of Valerie van Heest, the firm has recently completed an exhibit on a related World War II topic: "Lake Michigan Answers the Call to Duty," now on display at the Michigan Maritime Museum in South Haven, and developed all exhibits at the new Port of Ludington Maritime Museum, as well as exhibits for smaller historical societies, including the Zeeland Historical Society and the Historic Ottawa Beach Society.



Partnership to Display Exhibit

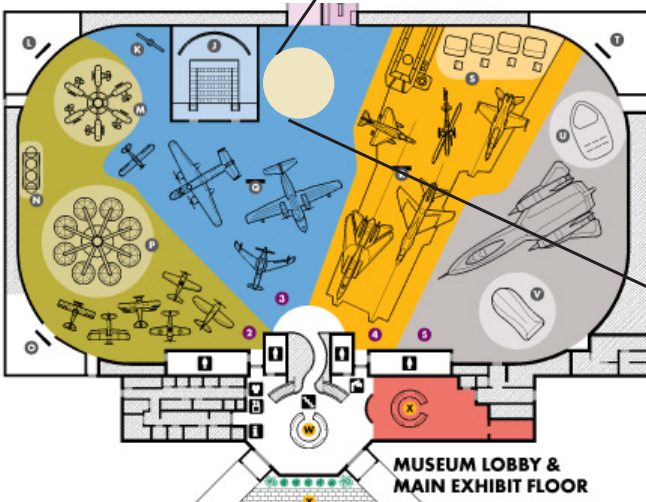
Limited ceiling height at the Byron Center Historical Museum precludes inflating the balloon, thereby reducing the interpretive value of having the most intact Fu-Go balloon in existence. Additionally, limited visitation numbers there may not warrant a major exhibition. Consequently, BCHS has partnered with the nearby Air Zoo in Kalamazoo, which has high ceilings, annual visitation of 150,000, and a focus on aviation. BCHS will curate, design, and fabricate the exhibit, and the Air Zoo will market and host the exhibit, and develop and conduct educational programs for school groups that will explore the science and avionics behind the Fu-Go program. There exists the potential that after its run at the Air Zoo, a scaled down exhibit could be displayed at the Byron Center Historical Museum or could go on tour to other institutions in Michigan or beyond.

Exhibit Description

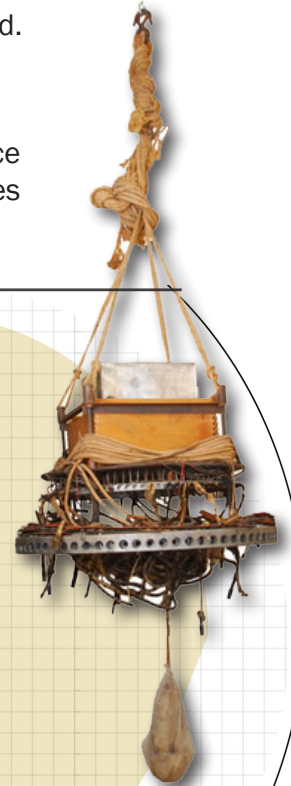
The Fu-Go balloon, with a full-size replica chandelier (at right) nearby, will serve as the centerpiece of this exhibit. Exhibit graphics, text panels, digital presentations, and hands on learning activities will engage visitors of all ages.

This exhibit, featuring the most intact Fu-Go "envelope," will explore:

World War II History/Local Connection
Balloon Manufacturing and Aviation
Jet Stream discovery
Science of thermodynamics/gas laws



AIR ZOO
Aerospace & Science Experience



BALLOON
MOUNTED
AS IF IT IS
LANDING IN
FIELD



KIOSK 2



KIOSK 3

BALLOON
TRAVEL
INTERACTIVE

REPLICA
CHANDELIER
CHANDELIER DISPLAY
BALLOON
LANDING
INTERACTIVE

CHARLES LAW
INTERACTIVE



KIOSK 1

PAPER
MAKING
STATION



KIOSK 4

DONOR
RECOGNITION

INTRODUCTION

SCHEMATIC EXHIBIT LAYOUT

Exhibit Content

KIOSK 1: RETALIATION

Four months after Japan's December 7, 1941 attack on Pearl Harbor, America retaliated with Doolittle's Raid, the first air operation to strike the Japanese homeland. Japan's

military leaders immediately tasked its scientists to develop a weapon that could strike back by reaching North America. Within two years, Japan had ready its Fu-Go campaign: paper balloons filled with hydrogen, each with a suspended "chandelier," containing altitude mechanisms, batteries, sandbags, and bombs that would ride the jet stream across the Pacific to deliver the world's first intercontinental bombs.



This section will explore:

- ♦ Military events leading to development of the Fu-Go campaign.
- ♦ Design of the weapon.
- ♦ Fabrication of paper to make the balloons.

Artifacts: Japanese flag.

Film: Historic footage of balloon manufacturing in Japan.

Hands on: Craft station to make paper.

KIOSK 2: ACROSS THE PACIFIC

In the fall of 1944, the Japanese military began unleashing over a 6-month period some 9300

Fu-Go balloons making use of the newly discovered jet stream. They expected about 10 percent to successfully reach North America, discharge incendiary bombs to start fires, kill people, wreak havoc, and leave Americans frightened and bewildered. The campaign was brilliant, but would it be successful?



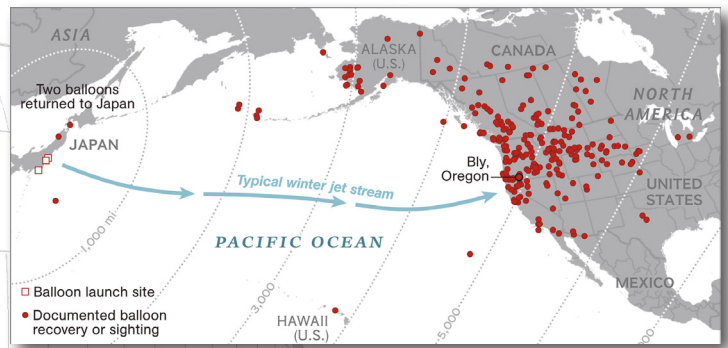
This section will explore:

- ♦ The discovery of the jet stream.
- ♦ Charles law/the law of gas volume as it pertained to the Fu-Gos.
- ♦ In-flight events across the Pacific.

Artifacts: Replica chandelier.

Film: Excerpts from *On A Wind and a Prayer* film.

Hands on: Touch screen interactive to simulate balloon crossing.



KIOSK 3: REACHING NORTH AMERICA

In early November 1944, two balloons were recovered off Hawaii and California. The government only became curious weeks later after multiple explosions and "parachute" sightings in western states. Later analysis of bomb fragments and balloons found in Wyoming and Montana in December, led the FBI to conclude these were weapons launched from Japan. After one newspaper released a story, the FBI insisted on media silence to avoid hysteria in America and keep the Japanese uninformed. But when six people were killed by a Fu-Go device in May 1945, it was time to inform the country.

This section will explore:

- ♦ Difficulties determining balloons' origin.
- ♦ Sites and conditions of device discoveries and recoveries.
- ♦ Program of media censorship.
- ♦ Fu-Go related deaths in Bly, Oregon.

Artifacts: *Time* and *Newsweek* magazines, 1945 newspapers.

Film: Excerpts from US government film of its study of Fu-Gos.

Hands on: Charles Law: gas volume interactive.

KIOSK 4: WAR COMES TO DORR

Since the FBI was successful in keeping word of the Fu-Go campaign from the public, the three boys who saw a balloon drifting down toward a corn field in Dorr, Michigan, on February 23, 1945, had no idea what it was. They balled it up, took it home and showed their parents. Soon Federal agents confiscated it, leaving them curious.

This section will explore:

- ♦ Fu-Go discovery by Bob and Ken Fein, and Larry Bailey.
- ♦ Transfer to Naval Technical Air Intelligence Center for analysis.
- ♦ Acquisition of balloon by Don Piccard.
- ♦ Piccard's use of the balloon to make historic hot air flight.
- ♦ Fu-Go balloon coming back to Michigan.

Artifacts: Dorr Fu-Go Balloon, Don Piccard's Flight Suit

Film: WZZM newscast by Brent Ashcroft with discovery reenactment.

Hands on: Digital interactive of landing sites in US.

Fu-Go Fundraising Campaign

The Byron Center Historical Society is undertaking our biggest fundraising campaign to develop the exhibit **When War Came to Dorr: The Fu-Go Campaign**. The campaign kicks off 73 years after the balloon landed in Dorr. It is anticipated that the exhibit will open 12-15 months after funding in hand.

TOTAL BUDGETED EXHIBIT COSTS

\$137,000

EXHIBIT NAMING OPPORTUNITIES*

*Your name will appear prominently displayed on the donor panel and within the exhibit at the element that you are funding. *We understand that some contributors may wish to remain anonymous.*

\$137,000 Your name will appear in the title of the exhibit

\$12,000	Curatorial and Design Services
\$10,000	Balloon conservation:
\$12,000	Balloon mounting system:
\$12,000	Replica chandelier:
\$5,000	Kiosk 1
\$5,000	Kiosk 2
\$5,000	Kiosk 3
\$5,000	Kiosk 4
\$4,000	Paper making station
\$28,000	Balloon Travel Digital Interactive
\$22,000	Balloon Landing Digital Interactive
\$5,000	Charles Law/Gas Interactive

The Air Zoo will be working with LvH on curatorial development, and in addition, will underwrite the costs to develop and conduct educational programming for school groups as well as exhibit marketing.

GENERAL DONATIONS

General donations will be directed toward the exhibit curatorial and design services as well as exhibit fabrication if naming opportunities not covered in full. All donors will be recognized on the donor panel.

Gold	\$2500
Silver	\$1000
Bronze	\$500
Other	Any amount appreciated

INCENTIVES

Beside recognition in the exhibit, all donors above the Bronze level will be special guests at the ribbon cutting ceremony where they will be among the first to see the Fu-Go exhibit on display.

Checks can be made out to:

Byron Museum Go Fu-Go | Box 20 | Byron Center, Michigan 49315 | Call Theresa Kiel to discuss 616-878-1846

