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**BUSINESS**

## Flight museum faces cloudy future

JOHN STARK

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BELLINGHAM - After about seven years in a "temporary" location in a Bellingham International Airport hangar, the Heritage Flight Museum has lost its lease and is moving into a more cramped hangar space next door.

Program Director Kate Simmons said she hopes the privately funded museum can still offer monthly public displays of its warplanes and other mementoes in the new space, but it's going to be a challenge.

"We're trying at the moment to make that our public area, but it's probably less than half the size of the big hangar," Simmons said.

The museum's troubles started when the privately owned hangar the museum had leased on a month-to-month basis changed hands, and the new owner wanted to use the space for an airplane. The hangar sits on real estate leased from the Port of Bellingham.

Art Choat, Port of Bellingham aviation director, said there's no other suitable space available for the museum at the airport.

"We've got a waiting list of 37 people that want a hangar," Choat said.

Simmons said she and the museum board would like to see the museum installed in a permanent home, and fundraising efforts are under way. But building a new museum would be a multi-million-dollar endeavor.

The collection includes World War II and Korean War aircraft, among them a P-51 Mustang, Douglas Skyraider, North American T-6, Fairchild PT-19, Boeing Stearman, L-13 Grasshopper, North American SNJ and others.

The museum is taking online contributions on its Web site, [www.heritageflight.org](http://www.heritageflight.org), or by mail c/o Heritage Flight Museum, 2000 Bakerview Road, Bellingham, WA 98226.

"We need as much support as we can get," Simmons said. "We'd like to know that we are still wanted here ... We're still really hoping that we stay in Bellingham."

Reach JOHN STARK at [john.stark@bellinghamherald.com](mailto:john.stark@bellinghamherald.com) or call 715-2274.