

history.

As it turned out, the aircraft was the C-47 that 1st Lt. O.H. "Bill" Allin had flown.

Allin and "Drag 'em Oot" probably hadn't seen each other since August 1944.

- Monday, Bill and Gary Allin flew Bill's Beechcraft Sierra from Olympia, Wash., to Great Falls to meet the plane on its way to England.

Tuesday afternoon, they stood on the tarmac at Holman Aviation waiting and watching.

When he heard that the plane was approaching, Bill Allin donned his hat, wings and ribbon.

"Pretty sharp, huh?" he said.

Fighter jets blew past, rattling chests.

The plane came in from the south. It appeared as a thin silver line against the dark gray clouds.

When the bulky silver machine flew overhead, Allin smiled and waved.

It crossed the sky slowly, the aircraft that had helped win the war more than 60 years ago. Its trip from Tucson to Great Falls had taken more than six hours.

"That was state-of-the-art in its day," Gary Allin said.




The plane landed, its two props spinning. Green, its new owner, leaned out the door. The tall man smiled when he saw Bill Allin.

"This is a rare honor. A rare honor indeed," Green said. "Welcome to your airplane. Has it changed any?"

Allin climbed up the short ladder and settled into the pilot's seat. Green squeezed into the cockpit beside him. Later, Allin would take his old "Drag 'em Oot" for a spin. For a while, though, the men just talked and talked.

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Originally published May 25, 2005

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