

VIRGINIA EAGLES

Official Newsletter of the Virginia Aeronautical Historical Society



Virginia Aviation Hall of Fame 2011

Attending the event on November 12, 2011 were several members of the Virginia Aviation Hall of Fame.
front row (l to r) Capt. Walter Ohlrich (2006), Mrs. Gloria (Robert) Champine (1979), Kenneth Rowe (1994),
Ken Scott (2011), Dick Yenni (2011), Phil Brown (2009), Lee Person (2011) and Gene W. Hall (2004)
back row (l to r) A. M. (Steve) Stevens (2009), Neil November (1993), H. Ray Tyson (1998),
Albert M. Orgain IV (2010), Larry Waltrip (2001), and Norm Crabill (2008)
**Also attending, but not pictured: Mrs. Evelyn (Frank) Marshall (2003), Charlie Kulp (1997), RAdm Dewitt
Freeman (2003) and Paul Galanti (2005)**

VIRGINIA EAGLES
The official newsletter of the



VIRGINIA AERONAUTICAL HISTORICAL SOCIETY

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From The Left Seat

On Saturday, November 12, 2011 the VAHS membership gathered at the Virginia Aviation Museum to honor Ken Scott, Lee Person and Dick Yenni as this year's inductees to the Virginia Aviation Hall of Fame. The Society celebrated the accomplishments of these gentlemen by hosting our traditional reception and dinner followed by the presentation of their individual biographies highlighting the accomplishments each made to aviation and aerospace. If you were unable to attend I urge you to visit our website to view the individual biographies under "Hall of Fame".



Of special note at this year's Hall of Fame induction was a changing of the guard with regard to our live narrated video biographies. For many years we have enjoyed the unsurpassed talent of Lou Dean as he presented the stories of our inductees. It should be noted that Lou is a highly talented "professional voice", well known throughout Virginia, and that he donated his time and voice to the VAHS. Lou retired last year and, in a break with tradition that reserves the Hall of Fame evening for the inductees, the Society presented Lou with the Virginia Eagle trophy in recognition of his service.

With Lou's retirement we are fortunate to have past Chairman Al Orgain step forward and do a magnificent job of narrating this year's biographies. Al's passion for the Virginia Aviation Hall of Fame and his talent as an orator will serve us well as the Society continues to honor the Virginians who have advanced aviation.

The Virginia Aviation Hall of Fame is an integral part of the VAHS and it is an essential part of fulfilling the requirements of our mission statement. For a number of years I have been closely involved with the Virginia Aviation Hall of Fame and the com-

mon thread that runs through the process is the pleasure that comes from learning the amazing stories of our inductees. The significant accomplishments of the members of the Virginia Aviation Hall of Fame can be found from early aviation to space flight and the members represent all disciplines contained within the science and business of both.

To continue to properly recognize worthy individuals and satisfy the requirements of our mission statement it is essential that the membership continues to seek out individual candidates for the Virginia Aviation Hall of Fame. Criteria for selection can be found on our website or by calling Jen Melton in our office.

In addition to nominations, and just as important to the process, it is necessary that we have varied input in the selection process. This critical part of the Hall of Fame process requires new and additional members to serve on the selection committee. The committee's primary duty is the selection of qualified individuals from the nominations we receive and the presentation of same to the board of directors for approval. Please consider joining this committee so that the Society can continue recognizing the worthy individuals whose stories must be told and preserved.

On November 12 VAHS board member and long time supporter Mark Sternheimer presented a proposal to the board requesting funds to support the Virginia Commonwealth University Engineering School's Aeronautical Engineering department. Students of the Aeronautical Engineering School compete annually in a nationwide competition covering various aspects of leading edge science in aerospace and these funds would go directly to cover the costs of hardware and support for the com-

petition. We have been approached several times for support but on only one occasion did we feel the project worthy of our support. This year, however, the school's entry in the Unmanned Aerial Systems competition piqued our interest and, after much discussion, the board elected to fund the students in the amount of \$2000, to be matched in an equal amount by Mark Sternheimer, for a total of \$4000 from the VAHS. We will be receiving regular updates on the student's progress and members will be able to attend the competition which is held in Virginia. Details will be made available on our website and reports will be included in future issues of the Virginia Eagle newsletter.

It is important to keep in mind that as a history organization we should not always look to the past but should, when given the opportunity, support those that are making history as we believe the students at VCU's School of Engineering are. Consider, at some time in the future we may be inducting into the Virginia Aviation Hall of Fame a former VCU Aeronautical Engineering student for their contribution to aerospace.

We have a new Northern Virginia chapter of the VAHS forming and it is currently headed by Ron Gatewood. The first meeting was held in October in Warrenton, Virginia and was well attended for a new chapter. The Society was represented by President Van Crosby, Vice President Scott Gross, Hall of Fame member Ray Tyson and myself. The featured speaker for the evening, which included dinner, was the Honorable Orson Swindle. Orson's presentation was extremely interesting, especially so when he described his service in the USMC as an F-8 Crusader pilot during the Vietnam War. In 1966 Orson was shot down over North Vietnam and captured and held prisoner until 1973, part of this time in the infamous "Hanoi Hilton". As are all of former POWs Orson is a true hero and his story is inspiring.

If you live in the Northern Virginia area and are interested in being involved in the chapter please contact Ron Gatewood at (703) 534-1609 for fur-

ther information.

Please mark your calendars for our annual meeting followed on the same evening by our very popular spring party and auction on April 14, 2012. It is a great party and a fun way to support the VAHS.

Thank you for your continued support of the VAHS and our programs.

Tom Woodburn
Chairman

As the new year begins, there are some exciting new changes for the VAHS. Over the past year, the Society has purchased some new software that has hopefully made the newsletter a better publication, and a new accounting software that is much more user friendly.

At this point, I can confidently say that I have become somewhat proficient at both programs. With this year's renewals, I will be e-mailing the Membership Invoice to everyone that I have an e-mail for, and all the others will go by regular mail.

As far as the newsletter goes, I now have the capability to electronically mail them out. There are several advantages to this.... The biggest one being that it looks so much better in color. It will also save in printing and mailing costs. If you would prefer to have your newsletter mailed electronically, please send me an e-mail at vahsonline@gmail.com so that I can confirm I have the correct e-mail information for you.

I look forward to the new year. I hope everyone has a safe and Happy New Year.

Jennifer Melton
Virginia Eagles Newsletter Editor
VAHS Office Manager



Vectors from Van

You know what they say – time flies when you’re having fun! Well, that certainly appears to be true at the VAHS. It does not seem possible that I have served as President for 8 years. As the years go by, one clearly learns that wisdom comes through experience and there is no place I can think of where one can experience so much as at the VAHS. I have always gained the most knowledge from my elders and within the society those elders are admirals, generals, colonels, aviation directors, professional pilots, war heroes, attorneys, business professionals, philanthropists and more. They are the foundation and characters that make the VAHS so authentic. In many cases, we are not just about Virginia aviation history, we are Virginia aviation history.

I would like to encourage others to get involved and share their time and talents with the society, it is a most rewarding experience. These 8 years have been a gift to me and I leave office in the spring, wiser than when I came because of you!

Thank you,
Van Crosby
VAHS President



We Need Your Help!

Dan Rodgers in Winchester is planning to establish a roadside marker commemorating the first flight of an aircraft in Winchester on April 18, 1912. The Department of Historical Resources has opted not to support our solicitation for this effort yet this flight seems very significant to aviation history in the Shenandoah Valley.

Therefore Dan is going ahead with the effort as a community funded marker. To this end we are asking members of the VAHS to make a small contribution to this worthy aviation cause by sending whatever donation they feel appropriate to the VAHS office, c/o the Winchester Marker Fund. Since the VAHS is a 501(c)3 operation, those donations will be considered as a legal charity donation. Those folks out in the Valley should be particularly interested in seeing this marker established.

Dan plans a large celebration in conjunction with the markers unveiling on April 18, 2012 at the Winchester Airport, so this may well turn into a media event. You will all be welcome, particularly if you have shown financial support.

The mailing address for your contribution is: Virginia Aeronautical Historical Society, 5701 Huntsman Road, Richmond International Airport, Virginia, 23250, Attn: Winchester Marker Fund.

Respectfully,

Bill Schultz
Historical Marker Committee Chairman



Three New Members Inducted into the Virginia Aviation Hall of Fame

Another Hall of Fame Induction has come and gone with three noteworthy additions to the ranks of the Virginia Aviation Hall of Fame. Lee Person, Ken Scott, and Dick Yenni were added to the Hall of Fame wall after a cocktail party and dinner, attended by more than 180 family, friends, and guests. 2010 Hall of Fame Inductee Al Orgain was the narrator for the evening, and it truly was a special night for all the inductees. Lou Dean, who had narrated the event for many years, was honored with the VAHS eagle for being the voice of the Hall of Fame from 2002 – 2009. I hope you enjoy the following photographs from the evening. To view the rest of the photos from the evening, visit the VAHS website at www.vahsonline.org.







Chapter News



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Meetings are held the 3rd Thursday of each month at the Pilot House Restaurant in Topping, Virginia at 12:00 p.m.

Meetings are held the 3rd Wednesday of the month at 10:00 a.m. at the Williamsburg Airport.

Eagles Chapter Fall 2011

Submitted by: Jug Gerard

September 2011 – The Eagles Chapter of VAHS met at the regularly scheduled time and location, third Wednesday, September 21, in the conference room of the Williamsburg-Jamestown Airport (JGG). President Stan Williams led the traditional Pledge of Allegiance before introducing guest and immediately turning the program over to a past Chapter President Joe Kuppich for the scheduled presentation. Joe, a longtime Eagle Chapter member is a retired Infantry and Army Aviator Colonel. He logged over 950 hours of combat flying Huey and Cobra gunships in the Delta region of Vietnam

during 25 months in the country.

Joe began his presentation with notes, but soon proceeded in his typical often self-directed humorous vein, while reflecting an always positive outlook, to tell of *Flying Army Helicopters During the Vietnam Era and Beyond*. It was his story of a young man making the rapid transition from college campus, to infantry training, to helicopter training, to Vietnam while learning the survival actions and instincts to carry him through the war.

From Fargo, North Dakota, Joe grew up in *Free Spirit Times*, with sports, catholic education including alter-boy duties, and shoveling lots of snow to carry him until becoming a North Dakota State Uni-

versity *Bison*. Activities there were primarily sports again, fraternity and an initial major in engineering until calculus convinced him business economics and English would be better majors. He pursued Air Force ROTC for two years until coming up short on a flight physical and was confronted with a future in meteorology if he stuck with the AF to commissioning. Army ROTC and infantry seemed a better route to take. While attending the Army ROTC Summer Camp he did pass the aviation flight physical and obtained Cessna flight training his senior year. Joe graduated (marginally, he says), entered the Army 20 July, 1961 and was on his way to Ft. Benning, Georgia. He had a very limited view of the country, outside North Dakota and the surrounding states and Canadian province of Manitoba, so cross-country travel was to be an adventure. When his '49 Plymouth blew up en-route, he found he didn't understand southern drawl as he looked for assistance, and then the Georgia heat coupled with high humidity didn't help either to make it a good trip.

Next was flight school at Fort Wolters, Texas, in the H-23D *Raven*. Joe admits it was an initial struggle – as it has been for many – with normal approaches, steep approaches, normal takeoffs, max-performance takeoffs, running landings, autorotations, pinnacles, slope landings, confined areas, etc. The old Ravens were stressed due to the high frequency of helicopter engine failures. But, solo he did and moved on to Fort Rucker, Alabama, and advanced flight training in the H-19 Korean War leftover. He put that behind him and graduated #2 with 200 hours, but **no instrument** training. Assignment then was back to Fort Benning and the 2nd Infantry Division aviation company where a broad exposure to Army aviation was provided. Vietnam

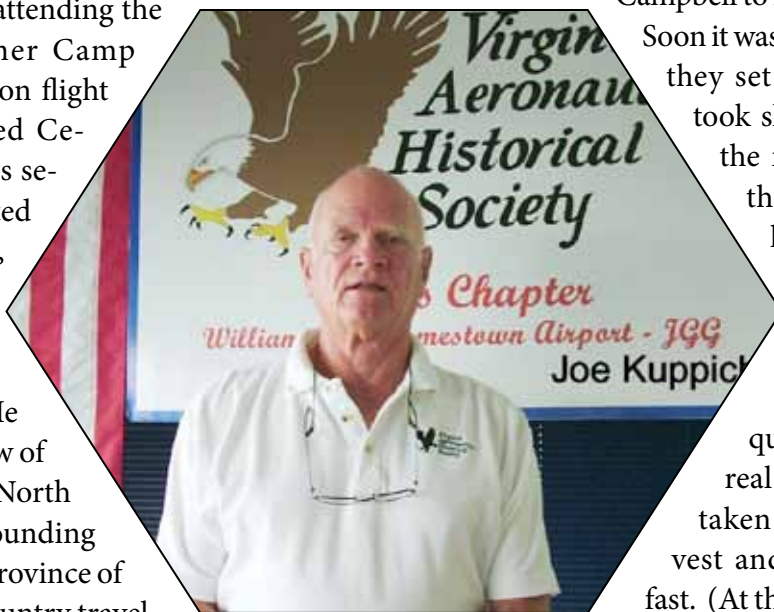
was beginning to loom as “everybody’s war”, and in late 1962 he volunteered for duty there.

That commitment took him to Fort Knox in February 1963, where the 114th Airmobile Company activated and transition training into the UH-1 (Huey) began in what was a “test bed” for “slick” and organic UH-1B gunships. Travel to Vietnam was from Fort Campbell to Hawaii to Ton San Nui.

Soon it was on to Vinh Long where they set up in a tent city and took showers in the street as the monsoon rains passed through. Their aircraft had not yet arrived and training began with in-country gunship Utility Tactical Transport Company – quickly training was for real! Within weeks Joe had taken shrapnel in the flack vest and events were coming fast. (At this point Joe’s telling-of-tales became pointed with a message

about learning and survival – hard to retell with his sense of intensity.)

His unit received their UH-1B aircraft in late May and by July were operating independently. The mission area of the 114th was the Mekong Delta area; 7th Infantry Division covering from the Mekong River northwest to Cambodia; the 9th Division from the Mekong River southeast to the South China Sea; and the 21st Infantry Division covering from Ba Sac River south to Ca Mau and west to Rach Gia and the Gulf of Siam. Mission briefings normally were the night before an operation with the charge, “Go to the sound of the guns”. Typical gun ship missions were to recon LZs, escort air-mobile and ground-support operations, medevac and resupply, and troop extractions. Routinely aircraft operated over-gross and often were out of CG limits. Technique demanded leaning to get airborne while bleeding-off from max rpm while transitioning to



flyable forward airspeed and the use of tail-stinger weights were incorporated to keep the aircraft level. The latter eventually overstressed and damaged tail booms. In fact, one tail boom fell off at about 800 feet when an aircraft climbed from an LZ. There was no IFR capability other than turn-and-bank / artificial horizon systems.

Three separate incidents are highlighted here, to tell some of the learning curve he progressed through:

(1) While flying as a copilot his aircraft was directed to run down and capture a VC on the ground involved in a firefight with friendly ground troops. The individual reluctantly came out of the bush and approached the aircraft, but would not raise his hands as directed by an interpreter. The pilot maneuvered the helicopter to keep the VC at a distance until he complied with the hands-in-the-air directive. He never did comply and the pilot directed the crew chief to “bust him”, which was done. Two explosions followed. The man had been carrying armed grenades under each arm, and if he were allowed to board the helicopter he would surely have destroyed the helicopter and likely killed all occupants. Then “Gunner Joe” enters the scene:

(2) A Brigadier General from Saigon began a practice of flying out to Joe’s unit in his personal 0-1 *Birdog* (L-19) to gain a little combat air time flying as a door gunner. Initially he complied with being just that – a door gunner. Eventually, however, he overstepped his bounds when he demanded a pilot pursue a suspected VC he had picked out in hiding on the ground. The pilot chose not to deviate from his primary mission and the BG became belligerent. Suddenly a stitch of rounds impacted the door divider between the pilot and the rear cabin alongside Joe’s head. After the flight, analysis showed the rounds were small-caliber and came from within the cabin of the helicopter. The culprit was probably Gunner Joe. Meanwhile Gunner Joe carried his complaint about not pursuing the suspect on the ground to the flight-platoon commander. Fortunately the commander stood by his pilots and Gunner Joe ceased

to be welcomed at the unit for any more door gunner time.

(3) A typically busy day started out as a briefed troop transport escort that soon responded to an enroute mission change to support a Special Forces camp under siege. They provided gunship support to the SF unit engaged in a firefight on the ground and attempted to surround and help trap the hostiles. A call to pick up a wounded SF soldier took Joe’s UH-1 into the compound to effect the evacuation. Once enroute he looked back in the cabin and recognized the medevac as an NCO who had been with the ROTC unit at North Dakota State. SFC Hoff had good words for Joe assuring him, “You done good.” (Although that evacuation was successful, the NCO did eventually succumb to the jungle diseases he encountered living in “the bush”). Once returned to the SF camp they watched a T-28, also providing air support, take damage and land in a nearby rice paddy. The U. S. pilot was picked up, but subjected to riding the rest of the mission as a passenger while Joe continued to provide gun support. All-in-all it was an action- packed day, not a whole lot different than many others.

Joe took combat wounds and to this day carries a slug in his lower back, which becomes more irritating with advanced age and associated arthritis. As time in country progressed he became more and more involved in the training of new-guys, while his own experiences contributed to being “the best he could be”. Eventually his major concern became how to get out of country. The initial personnel of the unit had a return date of May 5th, which came and went. The local personnel rumor was extended that their replacements died in an aircraft crash in the Philippines and they would be there indefinitely. Personal initiative with a phone call to Saigon personnel department killed that misconception and they were cleared out of country on May 21st – but had to find their own transportation. Joe grabbed a Caribou diversion on May 20, then a gunship trip across the Plain of Reeds, and eventually a flight out of Saigon on 21 May via Flying Tiger and 33-hours of air time.

He got back in time to get married on 1 June 1964. Then it was a 30-day, 8,000 mile trip across the U. S. to Fort Benning and the 11th Air Assault Division.

(At this point Joe's presentation time ran out, but when reviewing his prepared notes the indication is, there is much more to be told. Undoubtedly the rest of the story will unfold at a future date.)

October 2011 – The Eagles Chapter held the regular monthly meeting on the third Wednesday, the 19th, at the Williamsburg-Jamestown Airport, second floor conference room. Joe Kuppich presided and led the introductory Pledge of Allegiance before introducing guests, who included a threesome of former Navy flight surgeon, Navy pilot and USAF officer – we hope to see them in future as permanent members.

Chris Christensen then presented the speaker, Lieutenant General George G. Loving, USAF, Retired, a longtime Eagles Chapter member, whose presentation was titled after his recent book, *Bully Able Leader, The Story of a Fighter-Bomber Pilot in the Korean War*. (Mechanicsburg, PA, Stackpole Books, 2011). General Loving previously spoke to the group in 2004, when he covered his then new book, *Woodbine Red Leader: A P-51 Mustang Ace in the Mediterranean Theater* (New York: Ballantine Books, 2003). The following summary is excerpts drawn from both his presentation and the *Bully Able Leader* book.

After nineteen months of training he joined the 31st Fighter Group in Italy in October 1943 and flew 101 combat missions in Spitfire Mark V and Mark IX aircraft. Missions included patrols to protect U.S. Army and Allied ground forces fighting near Cassino and on the Anzio beachhead from attacks by German fighters and bombers. He also provided escort for light and medium bombers on missions to attack targets in northern Italy. After five months, the 31st took a different mission and a different airplane: the Air Force's most modern fighter, the P-51 *Mustang*, a long-range high-performance airplane. The new mission with the Fifteenth Air Force was to

participate in the strategic air offensive against German military, oil, manufacturing, and transportation targets across Europe, and escort to protect bombers against attacks by German fighter aircraft. During five months as a Mustang pilot he flew fifty combat missions and was designated an "ace" by shooting down five enemy airplanes and damaging two others in aerial combat. During that period he advanced from second lieutenant to captain, and just turned twenty-one when he departed for the states.

After the war, in September 1945, he applied for regular commission, which was a "big deal", for except for West Point cadets, no regular commissions had been granted during the war. He was elated to be among four selected from the many applicants at Shaw AFB. In August 1946, began a two-and-a-half year accompanied tour at Itazuke AB near Fukuoka, Japan, working first in personnel at staff level as the Air Force pared from 2,282,000 WW II personnel to 303,600 in May 1947. The last year at Itazuki he commanded as a captain, the 433rd P-51 Fighter Squadron, normally a lieutenant-colonel's position.

He was assigned in January 1949 to the Reserve Officers Training Center at Byrd Field in Richmond, with responsibility for the training program, before moving to the personnel section, Headquarters, Ninth Air Force, at Langley Air Force Base. That is where he was when President Truman responded to the North Korea Invasion of South Korea, June 25, 1950. By July 30th Captain Loving flew with the first F-51s (in 1948 the P-51 was designated the F-51) to arrive at Taegu, in southeast Korea. Under the Far East K-site designation for each airfield in Korea Taegu was K-2.

Five weeks into the war the tight little ring in the southeast of Korea, known as the Pusan perimeter, was the holding area for friendly forces. K-2 was within that ring, and feverishly being developed with new pierced-steel-planking, a hard surface runway. No jet-capable runway existed in Korea at the time. The 12th Fighter-Bomber Squadron, which he had joined, set up camp in pyramid tents and few facilities for personal comfort. By August

6th he had flown five close-air support missions in the F-51. As the Pusan situation deteriorated and the defensive ring tightened the squadron packed up and moved to Japan. K-2 would be used for refueling and arming for aircraft operating out of Japan. To his chagrin Loving learned he would be the base operations officer, one of two officers manning K-2 as a support base. He attributes his selection for the cadre as being the new guy in an established squadron, the “Philippine gang”. He operated in that capacity into the winter of 1950. He did manage one Armed Reconnaissance F-51 flight in September with an aircraft left at K-2 for battle damage repair.

With the U.S. Marines landing at Inchon September 15th, the face of the Korean War changed dramatically. Pressure in the south was relieved and major upgrading of K-2 began in earnest. Completion of the pierced-steel-planking at K-2 allowed seventy-five F-80 *Shooting Star* fighter-bombers to become the first jet aircraft to operate from a Korean base. Loving continued as the base operations officer for five months as K-2 expanded tremendously. With the entrance of the Chinese into the war in early winter 1950 and the reversal of the allied advance north, Loving was anxious to get back to flying the F-51. His appeal resulted in a surprise approval, but put him into the cockpit of the Lockheed F-80C *Shooting Star*. He joined the 9th Fighter-Bomber Squadron of the 49th Fighter-Bomber Group at K-2. Their squadron call sign was *Bully*.

The F-80 was the first U.S. Air Force jet to be employed in combat. Although almost equal in dimensions to the F-51 it was a world apart in performance, with a service ceiling of 46,800 feet and a maximum speed of 580 miles per hour. It was armed with six .50-caliber machine guns, could carry 5-inch rockets, two napalm tanks and two 500-pound bombs, or two 1,000-pound bombs. With a 265-gallon droppable fuel tank attached to each wingtip, the combat radius was more than 350 miles. The squadron’s F-80 flights were primarily flown in support of ground troops as close-air-support (CAS) and air-interdiction strikes, targeting supply and fuel dumps, bridges, railroads, locomotives, railcars, personnel

along supply routes, trucks, and all other means of moving supplies, including boats and ox carts, tanks and artillery pieces. The objective of their campaign was to limit the capability of the enemy to conduct major operations – at this the speaker felt they were very, very good.

General Loving’s presentation focused on five events or mission-types he experienced, to highlight the flying in which the squadron was involved. (1) An early air support mission concerned support to the 2nd Infantry Division’s 23rd Regimental Combat Team, located at the small village of Chip’yong-ni. The unit had become an isolated outpost under siege, cut off from its parent organization. Their defense perimeter measured about one and three-quarter miles by one and a quarter miles. The three-day battle involved almost constant fighting against a numerically superior enemy force – 1,500 American and French troops versus 8,000 to 10,000 Chinese soldiers. The Fifth Air Force gave the highest priority for air support. Ten flights of control airplanes were sent to the area each day to provide constant daylight patrols aloft and direct the fighter-bombers. Loving flew three flights into the area during the epic battle. Eventually the enemy retreated after suffering casualties numbering almost 5,000. UN casualties were 51 killed, 250 wounded, and 42 missing. The engagement was a major turning point in the Korean War. The 49th Fighter-Bomber Wing flew over 10,000 sorties in close support and unexpectedly received the Republic of Korea Presidential Unit Citation issued by President Syngman Rhee.

(2) In describing the intricacies of a successful attack on a bridge Loving points that the hazards of combat flying does not always come from the enemy. A member of one of his flights, determined to atone for less than outstanding performance on a similar earlier mission, was caught in “target fixation”. Determined to place his bombs squarely on the target – which he did – he carried his bomb release altitude below safe minimums and became the victim of his own bomb blast. His aircraft was crippled, caught on fire and slammed into a nearby hill, while still streaming flames. “A terrible sight: a

comrade meeting a sudden, violent end.”

In early 1951 Loving had the traditional Forward Air Control (FAC) tour with a ground unit, subsequently was promoted to major after six and a half years, and immediately became the squadron Operation Officer – considered the number three position of seniority and responsibility in the unit. During the first eight months of the war the 49th FBG lost twenty-four F-80s on combat missions. The rate of loss would accelerate as the enemy added anti-aircraft weapons and became more proficient in their use.

Major Loving next officially assumed command of the squadron on April 7th.

(3) North Korean rail lines and train traffic logically became a major attack focus. As interdiction improved train traffic became primarily a night movement with engines using railroad tunnels for hiding during the day. Loving describes the development of “tunnel busting” as anything but a routine maneuver. His one development effort is described in part: “I made a descending turn to get into position directly over the tracks at 3,500 feet about five miles from the entrance. At the initial point, I armed the bombs, selected “Both,” and set the throttle at 98 percent. I then initiated the descending turn that placed me over the tracks about five miles from the tunnel entrance at the correct height. From that point, I descended smoothly to twenty-five feet with the K-14 gunsight aligned on the left edge of the tunnel entrance. I wanted to get as close as I safely could, but I was moving at more than seven miles a minute, and judging the distance at that speed was difficult. It was like a game of chicken. When my brain screamed, “Now!” I punched the bomb-release button and initiated a sharp pull-up to the left. Exactly ten seconds later, two explosions occurred, one from within the tunnel – spitting out a dense cloud of dust and debris – and the other to the right of the entrance. Very lucky for a first timer, I thought. I knew I wouldn’t want to make a career of tunnel busting.” Pilots continued to develop skip

bombing as an effective attack against tunnels and other targets of opportunity.

(4) The MiG-15s flown by Chinese and Russian pilots, operating below the China-Korea border area, referred to as MiG Alley, was generally the concern of the F-86 fighters at higher altitude and not a major concern for the F-80s. In April Loving led a scheduled road reconnaissance flight beginning far to the north and running south. As his four F-80s worked over a ground target they spotted a flight of four approaching fast at 10,000 feet. When they were recognized as MiGs there was little choice but to drop their tip tanks and scoot. A call for F-86 help went unanswered. Loving’s two plane flight became the object of the four MiG-15s – his other two F-80s were able to leave the area as the attack began. His tactic was to watch for muzzle fire and immediately turn hard away from their attack, and then climb to gain altitude, which could be converted to speed when the MiGs set up for the next high angle attack. Three attacks were made and the F-80s were using fuel at an excessive rate in their low altitude, high speed maneuvering. No attempt was made by the MiGs to engage the F-80s in a dog fight. Apparently the MiGs, getting farther from their home, were also experiencing a fuel concern and eventually broke off the attacks. Loving attributed the MiGs lack of aggressiveness to probable lack of experience and maybe courage. He felt the well-trained U.S. pilots with a cool head can carry the day.

(5) Lastly was a strike labeled a counter-air mission. MiGs in the north became more aggressive attempting to hamper UN ground forces and airfields from the air. In the counter-air campaign the North Korean airfield that got the closest attention was located at Sinuiju, right jam-up against the North Korean border with China. It was receiving extensive build-up in early 1951, as the enemy felt it would be protected by fighters from Antung, just across the Yalu River in China, politically protected from UN aircraft entering Chinese airspace. The Fifth Air Force put together a sizable strike force to destroy the Sinuiju threat – a force to include a total

of 312 fighter aircraft.

The raid scheduled for May 9, 1951, was the largest counter-air strike up to that point in the war. Each of the three squadrons of F-80s from K-2 carried two 1,000-pound bombs and had to be assisted with two JATO bottles to provide additional thrust to get the heavily loaded planes into the air. Once airborne Loving inherited the lead for the strike when the Group commander had mechanical problems. The target was 360 miles to the north, but navigation was effortless with not a cloud in the sky. The initial attack was from 10,000 feet, with Loving's squadron intent on flack suppression. All forty-two of the 49th Group's Shooting Stars released their bombs within seconds of each other, on target and on time. F-84s followed two minutes later, with Marine Corsairs and Air Force Mustangs to follow them. The raid lasted about two hours. F-86s maintained air superiority as MiGs launched from Antung, but failed to engage. Destroyed on the ground were Red aircraft, buildings, weapons, aviation and supply dumps, and untold personnel. All American airplanes returned safely to base. Sinuiju was never used again.

Major Loving was relieved of command of the squadron on the day of his departure, July 29, 1951. He flew 112 combat missions in Korea.

His follow-on assignments eventually included taking command of U.S. Forces Japan and Fifth Air Force in June 1977. He was promoted to Lieutenant General September 1, 1975. General Loving's hometown is Lynchburg, Virginia.

November 2011 – The Eagles Chapter held the Wednesday, November 16, 2011, meeting in the conference room of the Williamsburg-Jamestown airport (JGG) at 10:00. Chapter president Stan Lewis led the traditional pledge of allegiance before turning the program over once more to chapter member Dale (Chris) Christensen, for his presentation titled *MIG Alley*. Chris provided his personal experiences and reflections on the Korean War, followed by a Smithsonian film on the war. (See his fine article *MIG Alley* elsewhere in this publication.)

The Smithsonian portion of the presentation is made up from film footage of the ground war – often grainy, and possibly taken by North Korean or Chinese cameras, which adds an authentic historic perspective. The air coverage is air maneuvering simulation; along with personal interviews and reflections by the U.S. Air Force participants – Robinson Risner and Ralph Parr – flying the North American F-86 *Sabre Jet* against Russian or Chinese piloted MiG-15s. The simulation is superb and gives the viewer an appreciative perspective of what was being experienced as air-to-air combat unfolds.

Re-fighting the air battles with words is ill-advised, but highlights brought forth from the screening can be mentioned:

-- The F-86 mission was to provide air superiority over the battlefield to prevent MiG disruption to UN forces on the ground and airfields. Air superiority was maintained throughout the Korean War.

-- MiG Alley was the first air-to-air combat for jets.

-- The first Sabre, the F-86A, had leading edge slats and conventional elevators on the horizontal stabilizer. The improved F-86E had slats removed and a "flying tail" which moved the whole stabilizer surface. Both changes improved turning radius, and, along with an upgraded engine, greatly enhanced F-86 effectiveness. For the first time the F-86E was probably equal to the MiG-15. The F-86 radar tracking .50 Cal gun sight was always considered a real plus.

-- Exchange pilots from the Navy and Marines flew tours with the Air Force in the F-86 and had combat kills.

-- The final kill ratio was 560 to 78 (7:1) in favor of the U.S. air forces.

A highlight of Risner's exploits was a nose-to-tail push of his damaged wingman's aircraft, which was rapidly losing fuel after battle damage, south from the Chinese border to a safe ejection location near Chò Do Island in the Korea Bay. The push was suc-

cessful in getting the wingman extended distance and within range of rescue aircraft and helicopters before he was forced to eject. Unfortunately, once in the water the pilot drowned.



The Warrenton Northern Virginia Chapter enjoyed an inspiring evening with The Honorable Orson Swindle. Orson flew 205 combat missions in Vietnam as a F8E Crusader Pilot. Orson was shot down near the DMZ and became a POW on 11 November 1966. He was released in the general prisoner release in 1973. He was awarded two Purple Hearts, two Silver Stars and two Bronze Stars for his service in Vietnam and for providing close air support to ground Marines, Army and allied soldiers.

Orson recounted his early days in the Marine Corps, earning his Naval Aviator wings and flying combat missions. He shared his personal message that commitment was the force that got him through the difficult times that life presents to all of us. Commitment got him through the challenging days of flight training and flying missions in combat. Commitment got him through the solitary life threatening days as a POW. Orson explained how we should examine how commitment will help us all, the young and old, with the daily events of living. The speech was an inspiring guide on how one can face the profound difficulties of life and, through commitment to the goal, excel and prosper.

Orson displayed a map of Vietnam and a picture of the F8E Crusader for those young people in the audience for which that period of history is now a story in history books.

After retiring from the U.S. Marine Corps, he continued to serve his country as the Director of the Farmers Home Loan Association. He moved to the national level as the Director of the Economic Development Agency, a part of the Department of Commerce. Orson served as the Executive director

of Ross Perot's "United We Stand".

The Honorable Orson Swindle served as a Federal Trade Commissioner. During the Reagan administration, he served as Assistant Secretary in the U.S. Department of Commerce.

As a volunteer to his fellow man, he served as the Executive director of KCAA, a group of preschools in Hawaii, and as the Associate Director of Empower America.

Several of his military and civilian colleagues travel from distant Virginia towns to hear and meet Orson once again. (Bill Shultz, Jim Strawn). One of the Warrenton Chapter members who came to the event especially to see Orson was Rear Admiral Robert Shumaker USN (Ret). The two former guests of the Hanoi Hilton (POWs) shared with the Chapter some of the unforgettable memories of their captivity. I learned how that inhumane prison got the name - "Hanoi Hilton". If you attend some of our future meeting you will learn that bit of history as well.

I want to thank VAHS leadership for attending all the way from Richmond and briefing the mission of the Society and the operation of the VAHS Museum. Thanks to Tom Woodburn, Chairman; Van Crosby, President; Scott Gross, Vice President; and Ray Tyson, Director.

Thanks for the Warrenton Northern Virginia members for their continuing support: Dr. Camellia Blackwell, Casey Gatewood, Rear Admiral Shumaker, Dr. Sherman Taffel, Col Frank Wickersham, Chick Urick, and Sam Jesselson.

A special thanks goes out to Paul Galanti and Bill Shultz for getting Mr. Orson Swindle to spend an evening with the Chapter and Kelli Gatewood, my daughter, for helping organize the meeting.

The McMahan's Irish Pub & Restaurant did an excellent job with the Guinness Steak and Thatch Cottage Pie entrées. As the Marine duty officer of the day would enter into the log, "Meal was of sufficient quantity and quality".

Schedule of events:

January 2012 – Next meeting will be the last Friday of the Month. Please mark your calendar and make plans to attend. The guest speaker for the January, 2012 meeting will be announced as soon as possible and aired by email to all members.

February 2012 – TBA

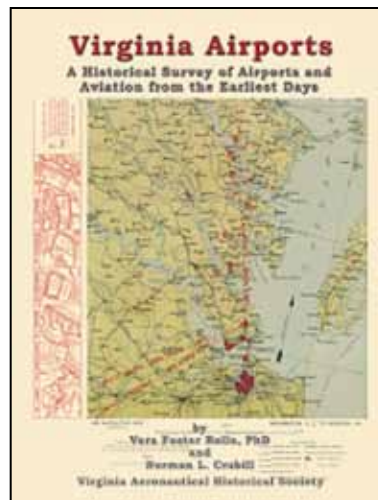
March 2012 – TBA

April 14, 2012 Annual Auction and Spring Party.
5:30PM to 9:30PM Museum RIC

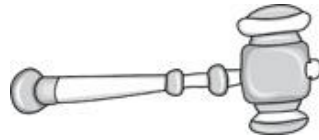
Ronald Gatewood

President, Warrenton Northern Virginia Chapter

Virginia Aviation Historical Society



VIRGINIA AIRPORTS Vera Foster Rollo & Norman L. Crabill. THE most in-depth historical survey of our Virginia airports, aeronautical events, and the people that make it happen, from the earliest days of aviation in the Old Dominion. Extensively researched and detailed with many never-before-seen aerial maps of airports from the beautiful Shenandoah Valley to the Tidewater area of Virginia. 8 1/2 by 11 paperback. 244 pages and is packed with b/w photos and illustrations. It can be purchased from the publisher for \$25 per copy (U.S.) which includes shipping and handling. Order at Virginia Aeronautical Historical Society, 5701 Huntsman Road, Richmond, Virginia 23250-2416 or call (804)222-8690 or email vahsonline@gmail.com.



Mark your calendar for April 14, 2012!

The Virginia Aeronautical Historical Society will again hold its Annual Spring Party and Fundraising Auction on Saturday evening April 14, 2012 from 5:30 – 9:00 p.m. at the Virginia Aviation Museum.

With your help and support this event has become the premiere aviation social event of the year. In 2011 over 200 members and guests enjoyed an evening filled with food and fun while providing much needed support for the programs of the VAHS. This event is open to everyone, not just VAHS members, so plan to bring a guest to enjoy the open bar, heavy hors d'oeuvres and some friendly bidding competition during our silent and live auctions. Again this year, for your enjoyment, we have the privilege of presenting "Fast Tongue Al", aviation's finest auctioneer, as he provides both entertainment and excitement during the voice auction portion of the evening. You do not want to miss this spectacle!

Tickets for the evening include the open bar and heavy hors d'oeuvres plus a raffle ticket for a chance to win several door prizes. Tickets are available from Jennifer Melton at the VAHS office 804-222-8690.

We are off to a great start with some fabulous items up for bid but we still need your help in soliciting or providing donations for the auction. Aviation related items are great but any type of item is welcome for our auction. Last year through your support we raised a record amount to support the VAHS in its mission to preserve Virginia's rich aviation history and we hope we can count on you this year for a donation.

Contacts for auction donations or questions are:

Scott Gross: j3cub@cox.net
Charlie Williams: cw4cjw2@aol.com
Tom Woodburn: wacoc5@verizon.net
Carl Fisher: carlf2@prodigy.net
VAHS office 804-222-8690, vahsonline@gmail.org

Give us a call if you need help transporting a donated item. We request that all donated items be at the museum by April 1, 2012. All donations are tax deductible. Receipts will be provided. Thank you for supporting The Virginia Aeronautical Historical Society.



Virginia Aeronautical Historical Society

Annual Auction and

Spring Party

Saturday, April 14, 2012

5:30-9:00 p.m.

Virginia Aviation Museum

Lots of wonderful Auction Items!

A Fun time!!!

Lots of Door Prizes!

Open Bar and Cocktail Reception

Mark your calendars now!

Calendar of Events

March 10, 2012

Annual FAA IA Renewal Seminar will take place in the hangar at the Virginia Department of Aviation's offices at Richmond International Airport. For additional information visit http://www.faa.gov/about/office_org/field_offices/fsdo/ric/

April 14, 2012

VAHS Annual Spring Party and Auction will take place at the Virginia Aviation Museum. Call Jen Melton for tickets at (804) 222-8690.

April 28-29, 2012

Virginia Regional Festival of Flight will take place Saturday (8 a.m. - 5:00 p.m.) and Sunday (8:00 a.m. - 4:00 p.m.). Two full days of airplanes and family fun from ultralights to multiengine. There will be aircraft of all types flying in and on display; a variety of workshops and seminars; a Youth Activities tent; an exhibitors display showcasing products, services, and souvenirs; a variety of foods available in the Food Court; as well as a pancake breakfast each morning.

April 28, 2012

2012 Virginia Aviation Ambassadors Awards Ceremony The 2012 Virginia Aviation Ambassadors Awards Ceremony will be held in front of the Department of Aviation's trailer at the Virginia Regional Festival of Flight at Suffolk Executive Airport on Saturday, April 28, 2012 beginning at 2:00 p.m. Please join us to be recognized yourself or to congratulate those who have completed the program. All Virginia Aviation Ambassadors are invited! Note: Department of Aviation staff will be available Saturday and Sunday to review passport books. Remember you can receive three stamps at the Fly-In: 1. Suffolk Executive Airport, 2. Aviation Safety Seminar, and 3. Virginia Regional Festival of Flight. We hope to see you there. If you have completed everything except the fly-in and wish to receive your jacket at the ceremony, please contact [Jessica Cowardin](#) or [Betty Wilson](#)

at the Department of Aviation by April 1st to arrange to have your passport signed off and your jacket ordered.

September 7-9, 2012

SkyFest AirShow, at New River Valley Airport, Dublin, VA will not only feature world renowned aerobatic performers, military tactical demonstrations, the most modern and advanced aircraft, Warbirds, and obsolete aircraft; there will be something for everyone, every age and gender. New River Valley Airport 50th Anniversary celebration is a weekend of family entertainment that offers as much fun on the ground as in the air, including flight simulators, Car Show, Wine Tasting, crafts, Kid Zone & games, motorcycle display, Business Expo, bands, dancers, prizes... Entertainment in the air will include aerobatics, simulated military attacks including pyrotechnics and explosions. There will be skydivers, wing-walkers, gliders, comedy, helicopters, jets and planes of all sizes and abilities. Friday evening, Sep 7, is a VIP Twilight Spectacular and private reception for sponsors and media guests. Gates are open to the public during the mini night show from 6-9 pm with limited ground activity (\$10 adults; 12 & under free - Fri only). Sat & Sun, September 8 & 9, 2012 – gates are open to the public 9 am – 6 pm for a full day of AirShow activity & entertainment at New River Valley Airport, Dublin, VA in celebration of the airport's 50th Anniversary. Admission \$15 (\$10 in advance); Seniors \$10; children (6-12) \$5; Ages 5 & under - free. www.nrvairstow.com E-mail: skyfestairshow@yahoo.com

Ongoing Events

Pancake Breakfast at Franklin Municipal Airport takes place the fourth Saturday of each month (from 8:00 - 10:30 a.m.). Sponsored by EAA Chapter 339 and Old Dominion Squadron CAF. For more

information call (757) 562-8764.

Fly-In 2010 at Twin County Airport (KHLX) will take place the second Saturday of every month April through October. Everyone is welcome for food, drinks, and fellowship. Food served from 8:00 a.m. - 1:00 p.m. All proceeds go to Local EAA Chapter 1426. For more information contact Brian Sutphin (276) 733-4198.

Pancake Breakfast at Mecklenburg-Brunswick Regional Airport takes place the first Saturday of each month (from 8:00-10:00 a.m.). Breakfast and social hour with regularly scheduled live presentations by FAA and/or NTSB. Sponsored by Mecklenburg-Brunswick Regional Airport and The Club/Lake Gaston Resort. For more information contact (434) 729-2591 or AVCAirport@buggs.net

Soup-on-Sunday at Campbell Field Airport (9VG) on the Eastern Shore of Virginia will take place each Sunday from noon-3:00 p.m. For more information visit the [website](#) or contact Gordon Campbell at (757) 442-7519.

Friends of the Petersburg Pilots Association holds a breakfast from 8:00-10:00 a.m. the third Saturday of each month at the Dinwiddie County Airport. For more information call (804) 861-9915.

Lonesome Pine EAA Chapter 1416 invites pilots and guests to attend free **“Hotdogs & Hangar Talk”** beginning at 11:00 a.m. the third Saturday of each month at Lonesome Pine Airport (follows the EAA Chapter Meeting at 10:00 a.m.). For more information contact Bob Spera, Director, Liberty Flying Service, (276) 328-5300 or liberty@mounet.com or visit www.libertyflyingservice.com.

Flying Circus Airshow (Open every Sunday, May through October) including precision aerobatic and formation flying, wing walking, hot air ballooning, skydiving, and antique open cockpit airplanes. Bi-plane rides are available before and after every show. Gates open at 11:00 a.m. Show starts at 2:30 p.m.

\$10.00 for adults and \$3.00 for kids. Group rates available. Concession stand, picnic grounds, gift shop. Picnic pavilion available for party rental. The Flying Circus Aerodrome is located at Rte. 17 and Rte. 644 (Richie Road) in Bealeton, Virginia. For more information visit www.flyingcircusairshow.com or call (540) 439-8661.

World War II Veterans Honor Flights via DCA Air Carriers take place each Saturday and Wednesday April-May and Sept.-Oct. from 9:30 a.m. to 6:00 p.m. at Ronald Reagan Washington National Airport Terminals A, B, & C. Sponsored by US Airways, AAL, Delta, and Air Tran. Between 100-450 WWII veterans are flown to DCA via charters from various east coast airports to visit the WWII Memorial on the Mall in Washington, DC. Numerous air carriers fly-in vets on chartered flights while other passengers warmly cheer and welcome them back to DCA. 7700+ WWII vets flew into DCA on 64 charter flights during 2009.

Regular Meetings:

Virginia Aeronautical Historical Society - Northern Neck-Middle Peninsula Chapter meets at the Pilot House, Hummel Field, in Topping, Virginia in the “Eagle’s Nest” at 12 Noon on the third Thursday of each month unless otherwise posted. Pilots can fly-in and park at the door of the restaurant. Visitors are welcome at these luncheon meetings. There is an interesting speaker from the field of aviation each month. Come visit the “Eagle’s Nest” at any time and see the collection of aviation art and other memorabilia.

Williamsburg Chapter of the Virginia Aeronautical Historical Society meets the 3rd Wednesday of each month at the Williamsburg-Jamestown Airport in the upstairs meeting room at 10:00 a.m. Call (757) 229-1597 or (757) 220-9115 for information.

Ninety-Nines - Hampton Roads Chapter meets the first Monday of each month at 7:00 p.m. alternating

between Newport News-Williamsburg Airport and Norfolk International Airport. For more information, contact Linda Mathias (757) 242-3491 or Edith Fischer (757) 877-4127..

Ninety-Nines - Shenandoah Chapter meets the third Sunday of each month at 2:00 p.m. at the Shenandoah Valley Regional Airport. All women pilots and student pilots are welcome. Contact Sara Fultz (540) 896-9842 or Jackie Estes (540) 347-5679, to confirm meeting date in the event of late changes.

Ninety-Nines - Virginia Chapter meets the third Saturday of each month at various airports around the state. All women pilots and student pilots are invited to attend. For more information call Betty Vinson (804) 541-0590 or (804) 720-1132. See the website at <http://VirginiaChapter99s.shutterfly.com>

Peninsula Airport Commission Meetings are held the third Thursday of every month beginning at 8:00 a.m. in the Commission Room at the Newport News-Williamsburg International Airport. The meeting is open to the public.

Wingnuts Flying Club meets on the first and third Tuesday of each month at 7:00 p.m. in the Chesterfield County Airport terminal building. See the web site at www.wingnutsflying.com.

Civil Air Patrol - The Newport News Composite Squadron of the Civil Air Patrol meets every Tuesday evening at 6:30 p.m. at 904 Bland Blvd on the grounds of the Newport News-Williamsburg International Airport. All aviation enthusiasts interested in search-and-rescue and young people ages 12-18 interested in the Cadet Program are invited to join. For details visit www.vawg.cap.gov/newportnews

Civil Air Patrol - Leesburg Composite Squadron of the Civil Air Patrol - Adult members meet the first and third Tuesday of the month and cadet members meet every Tuesday at 7pm at the Leesburg National Guard Armory. We welcome anyone interested in Search & Rescue and aviation. Details

and directions at: www.leesburgcap.org

Shenandoah Valley EAA Chapter 511 meets at 7:30 p.m. on the third Tuesday of each month at the Shenandoah Valley Regional Airport. For more information visit www.geocities.com/ea511va.

Experimental Aircraft Association (EAA) Chapter 231 meets at 7:00 p.m. on the second Wednesday of each month at the rear of the Virginia Aviation Museum (except for February which is designated for the Annual Dinner). For more information and to confirm meeting date and time visit www.eaa231.org.

Experimental Aircraft Association Chapter 1099 meets at 7:00 p.m. on the first Tuesday of each month at Dogwood Air Park. For more information go to www.eaa1099.org, e-mail info@eaa1099.org or call Lindy Kirkland at (540) 903-7580.

The Orange County Airport Boosters Association, Inc. (OCABA) holds its monthly organization meeting on the first Saturday of each month. Welcome to all supporters of Orange County Airport (KOMH). See <http://www.ocaba-omh.org> for more details.

CAF Old Dominion Squadron holds monthly meetings on the second Saturday of each month (except December) beginning at 10:00 a.m. at Franklin Municipal Airport in the Squadron's hangar or the airport's adjacent Base Operations building conference room (depending on weather). The meetings are open to the public. For more information view the [brochure](#) or visit www.OldDominionSquadron.org



Virginia Aviation History Project



The Jamestown Exposition

by Linda Burdette, Feature Article Editor

At the beginning of the 20th Century, the United States was doing very well. A period of progress was in full swing and in the midst of this, many cities hosted “World’s Fairs” or Expositions to showcase their accomplishments and to celebrate their status in the national and international communities. In 1907, Virginia chose to celebrate its past while looking optimistically to its future. Held at Sewell’s Point in Hampton Roads, Virginia, the Jamestown Exposition of 1907 was a celebration of the 300th anniversary of the founding of Jamestown, the first permanent English settlement in the United States. One of the early decisions was that the actual location of the Jamestown Settlement would not be adequate for the Exposition. It was an isolated area with no infrastructure for the types of crowds expected for a major exhibition; besides, experts opined that the actual site of the Jamestown fort had succumbed to the James River. The city of Norfolk began an intensive campaign to host the event and citizens were enthusiastic when 340 acres at Sewell’s Point was selected. But this location was also fairly remote, requiring the construction of roads and the extension of streetcar lines to the site before any buildings or other infrastructure could be erected. The area required a lot of work in clearing the land, constructing access roads, and building structures for the exhibits. However planners ran into problems almost immediately when unusually bad weather during the winter and early spring of

1907 hampered progress and the U.S. Government was late with financial assistance.

In 1906, during the planning phase, the Jamestown Exposition Company supported the appointment of an Aeronautical Committee, which included government officials, representatives from the Aero Club of America, noted scientists and prominent sportsmen. Officially called the Jamestown Aeronautical Congress, it was headed by Willis L. Moore, Chief of the U.S. Weather Bureau. They formed a partnership with the Aero Club of America (predecessor of the National Aeronautic Association) and during the Exposition, the ACA sponsored the Lahm cup for the longest continuous flight in the U.S., exceeding the record of 648 km (402.64 miles). In all, twenty-five races were planned during the exposition and there were competitions for balloons, flying machines, kites, and “allied devices.”

The Secretary of the Congress was Albert Francis Zahm, a well-known aerodynamicist. He was one of the few with experience in such expositions, having organized the first International Aeronautical Congress in 1883 in conjunction with the Chicago World’s Fair. The first professor of mechanical engineering at the University of Notre Dame, he had built one of the first wind-tunnels while pursuing his Master’s Degree at Cornell and was known at Notre Dame for launching manned glider flights from atop the university buildings.

The Jamestown Aeronautical Congress convinced the Jamestown Exposition Company to fund a special building for the aeronautical displays and to use as a sort of construction and hangar facility, the first building in the U.S. devoted solely to aeronautical pursuits and displays. The finished building had 8,000 square feet of space and its displays included the Langley models on loan from the Government and a German war balloon. It also included forum rooms in which Israel Ludlow

and other aviators gave presentations on basic aeronautics to the public and specialized instruction to aviation aficionados. The Jamestown Exposition also agreed to create an outside Aeronautical Concourse and to transport exhibits and displays free of charge to and from the exposition grounds. In return, the Aeronautical Congress would sponsor the exhibits and develop demonstrations and displays which would demonstrate the state of aeronautical research and development in the world. The program included balloon races, airship competitions, aircraft and kite contests, and flights of homing pigeons.

Opening day was April 26, the 300th anniversary of the date that the Jamestown settlers first stepped onto the site they named Cape Henry. But April 26, 1907, was not so fortunate for the Jamestown Exposition Company. The Exposition was woefully unprepared for visitors. Of the 38 principal buildings planned, only 14 had been completed and much of the area was still a muddy construction site. Scheduled to

run through November 30, 1907, the Exposition continued to grow and although it was constantly plagued by building delays, low attendance, and financial difficulties, some display areas became quite spectacular.



The Aeronautics Building at the Jamestown Exposition of 1907 was the first building in the United States dedicated to the construction, display, and preservation of aeronautical objects. Photo from the American Magazine of Aeronautics, July 1907.

Unfortunately on opening day, the Aeronautical Building was one of the numerous unfinished buildings. Additionally the aeronautical demonstrations depended on delivery of gas from a three-inch main running from the City of Norfolk to the Exposition grounds, a distance of seven and a half miles. Neither the building nor the gas line was operational until June which had a severe impact on the schedule of aeronautical demonstrations.

The Aeronautical Building was finally dedicated on June 8 at a ceremony presided over by Robert H. Sexton, Chief of the

Department of Congress and Special Events for the Jamestown Exposition; Augustus Post, Chairman of the Executive Committee of the Jamestown Aeronautical Congress; Harry St. George Tucker, President of the Jamestown Exposition; Admiral C.M. Chester of the U.S. Navy; and Israel Ludlow, director of the aeronautical exhibits for the Aeronautical Congress. Admiral Chester specifically advocated the airplane as an engine of warfare and said that he was certain the Jamestown Exposition and the presence of many inventors and their models and ideas would benefit the aeronautical community for years to come.

However, even though the displays and demonstrations were not ready at the April opening, the crowds were enthusiastically awaiting aviation events. Luckily the first aeronautical event didn't require gas. On May 9th, a clear day with a gentle southwest wind, 506 homing pigeons were released for a race to Washington, DC. Although some of the birds were not racers, all the birds circled the grandstand before

heading north toward Washington. Unfortunately since these birds included “amateurs”, there were a few glitches. As they circled the grandstand, some of the birds were flying so low that they flew under the roof and became disoriented. A few others were confused by the flight over the waters of the Chesapeake Bay and turned back. But the majority of the birds immediately set a direct course for their home base in Washington, D.C. At the conclusion of the race, the birds had traveled at a speed of almost forty-five miles per hour.

Ten days later, a second race for thoroughbred racing pigeons was a replica of the first, even down to the excellent weather. This time however, there were twenty-three hundred birds from New York and Philadel-

phia. When the race began, the handlers threw open the lids of the crates holding the pigeons and the officials noted that it took barely four seconds until the last bird departed the crates. The camera men chronicling the event employed cameras normally used at

horse races to record photo finishes. Even though these cameras could take still pictures of the legs of galloping race horses, the birds’ departure was so swift that the pictures only showed a blur of the moving wings of the birds. This set of pigeons did not circle the grandstand; they shot away toward their home bases and were gone before the spectators realized that the show was over. Traveling at a rate of over 59 miles per hour, the winning birds arrived in New York less than five hours after the start of the race.



The most advanced cameras in existence at that time could not get a still shot of the homing pigeons’ wings as they burst from their crates and flew away to their bases. At the end of the race, the fastest pigeons had flown from Hampton Roads to New York in about 5 hours.

The inclusion of the pigeons may have been intended to ensure some aeronautical displays before the Aeronautical Building and the gas lines were complete, but it might have arisen from Israel Ludlow’s interest in pigeons. While researching aerodynamics and designing his airplanes, Ludlow had spent numerous hours studying pigeons. He noted every stage of the pigeon’s life, paying particular attention to the position of their wings when soaring. He eventually altered the wings of his biplane after this study to better emulate the pigeon’s wings. So it is no surprise that as the director of the aeronautical displays and demonstrations, he chose to include pigeons as the initial aeronautical display.

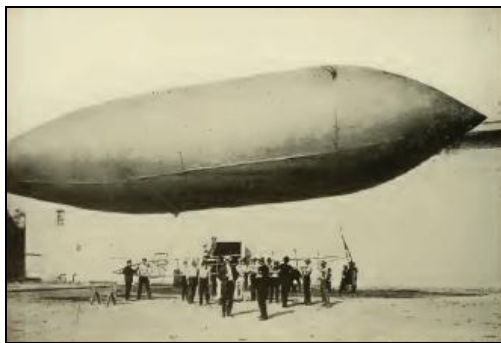
Balloons and dirigibles were a major attraction at the Exposition. Charles J. Stroebel, a well-known manager and owner of dirigibles, entered a contract with the Jamestown Exposition Company to provide regular dirigible exhibition flights with a requirement that each flight be at least 20 minutes. The Stroebel dirigibles were piloted by Lincoln Beachy, a professional aeronaut, who, with his brother Hillary, had been hired by Stroebel in 1906 to build and exhibit semi-rigid dirigibles. The dirigible

Beachy flew at the exposition had a rigid framework topped by a flexible balloon and could achieve speeds up to 15 miles per hour. In late May, the Exposition staged a number of aeronautic demonstrations. Beachy conducted a series of very successful flights in a dirigible balloon, including some difficult maneuvers around building turrets and trees. Beachy was so adept with the dirigible that he was able to turn it within its own length, handily flew over the Aeronautical Concourse, and landed on the Parade Ground. The ships in the harbor could clearly see the

dirigible balloon after it cleared the trees and when it was noticed, the sailors would crowd the decks to watch the flight.

Charles Stroebel also operated what is known as a “captive balloon concession”, using a hydrogen generating plant to fill the balloons. For \$1 a ride, a quarter of which was paid to the exposition, one could ride in one of two tethered balloons to a height of 700 to 1,000 feet. On clear days, riders could see Cape Henry, Cape Charles, Virginia Beach, Fort Monroe, and as far as the church spires of Norfolk, Portsmouth, and Newport News. Later in the year, if the riders were lucky enough to be aloft when airships were flying, Beachy and the other pilots would sometimes navigate skillfully around the balloons. The maneuverability of the airships caused the military observers to seriously consider whether they could be used as a new military capability and serious discussions ensued on the possibility of an airplane or other “heavier-than-air” machine being the airship of the future.

In June, Eugene Godet, a French dirigible pilot, arrived with the latest French airship. On June 7th, they hoped to fly the airship but first had to repair a broken shaft. Toward afternoon, the airship was moved out-



Eugene Godet brought the latest French-designed dirigible to Jamestown and thousands came out to see the maiden voyage of this aircraft, but a decision to fly in inclement weather brought the ship down.

a different story. A westerly wind had sprung up and was increasing, bringing heavy clouds and rain.



Lincoln Beachy was already well-known as a dirigible pilot when he conducted numerous demonstrations over the Jamestown Exposition. He amazed the crowds with the agility and maneuverability of the aircraft.

side and the engine tested. The morning had been beautiful with no wind to complicate a flight, but the afternoon was

Promised the spectacle of seeing the first flight of the new French airship, a crowd of several thousand was waiting and Godet was unwilling to disappoint them. So, against the advice of his assistants, he prepared to fly the airship. The wind was blowing at 10-12 mph when Godet instructed his assistants to release the airship. He rose slowly, turning the nose of the airship into the wind, until he reached a height of 100 feet. Then he reached the top of the protecting building and the wind caught him in earnest. The airship was pushed backward past the Aeronautical Concourse and over the grounds of the Exposition. He tried to maintain the airship’s nose into the wind, but drifted sideways. When he approached a tall windmill near the water front, he had no choice but to turn the airship and expose the side to the force of the wind, now blowing even harder. The wind caught the airship and pushed it into the branches of two tall pine trees, breaking the propeller in two and wrecking the rudder. Now uncontrollably drifting, he pulled the safety valve and dropped toward the water. He hit the water about 500 feet from shore, sank a few inches, and managed to get airborne to about 800 feet before hitting the water a second time. He hop-scotched across the water for about five miles toward Old Point Comfort and Fort Monroe, finally getting close to the battleships and navy launches anchored in Hampton Roads. The seamen in a Navy launch from the Battleship “Minnesota” managed

to grab the drag-rope, but the wind and the force of the airship were so strong that the airship dragged the launch until the airship struck the battleship "Alabama". By this time the airship was surrounded by six launches and was hauled onto the Alabama's deck where the gas envelope was deflated. The airship was returned to the Exposition, but was so wrecked that efforts to repair or replace it were abandoned.

The U.S. Army Signal Corps was becoming very seriously interested in balloons and dirigibles and had sent Leo Stevens of New York for training in launching and handling balloons. Stevens was generally considered one of the most technically competent in the country in the technical aspects of balloon maintenance and operation. In July 1907 Corporal Ward and First Class Private Joseph E. Barrett were detailed to the New York Balloon Factory owned by Stevens. After schooling in the basic tasks of fabric handling, stitching, the manufacture and uses of gasses and in balloon handling and use, they were detailed to Norfolk to assist with the Jamestown Exposition. They supported J.G. "Bud" Maas on his balloon demonstrations and Ludlow on his attempts to fly his gliders and kites.

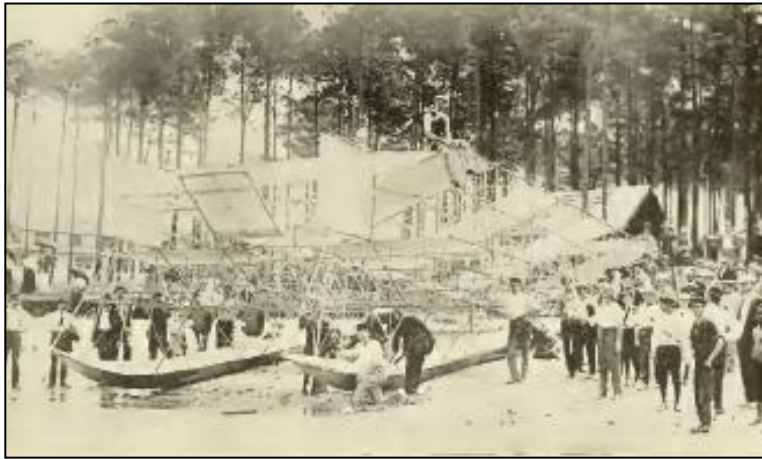
Barrett was unusual in that as a Private First Class, he was 29 years old and had already served eight years in the Navy prior to joining the Army. While at Norfolk, he apparently decided that the sea was better than the air, because he left the Army and his service records list him as a deserter. However, his Navy records show that he retired from the Navy after 20 years of honorable service. This left Corporal Ward as the only Army enlisted member assigned to duty as a balloonist or in aviation and has earned him the moniker as "the first enlisted airman." During the Exposition, Ward's team grew to include eight other enlisted men and after the Exposition was completed, they returned to Fort Myer, VA, where they launched and tested balloons.

The Jamestown Exposition Aeronautic Display was deficient in one major area – the Wright Brothers did not attend nor participate in any way. But Israel Ludlow attempted to fill the gap with an incredibly

interesting glider-type aircraft of his own design. Any discussion of aviation at this exposition requires some explanation about Israel Ludlow, the Superintendent of Aeronautics for the Exposition. Ludlow was an attorney from New York City who had never formally studied aerodynamics or engineering. However he was interested in aeronautics as a young man and apparently studied it extensively. He had a yard in New York where he experimented with aircraft and built a number of "flying machines." He described one of them in a newspaper interview. "The framework is of light bamboo, 1 ¼ inches in diameter, and the wings are covered with light canvas, treated with a preparation of linseed oil. The joints are bolted with three 16-inch bolts and bound with light yacht marlin. There are two groups of superimposed aeroplanes placed in pairs in tandem fashion." By 1904, with the advent of the automobile, he had the idea of towing his gliders behind cars and had some success with that. Unfortunately on April 14, 1906, he attempted to fly one of his aircraft in Atlantic Beach, Florida, but as he ascended, he lost control and wrecked. He survived but was seriously injured and confined to a wheelchair for the rest of his life. That would explain why he did not actively pilot any of the aviation demonstrations at the 1907 exposition, but it is very remarkable that in that era, he was able to be so active and engaged in his favorite interest.

For the exposition, he designed an "aeromarine craft" intended to launch by being pulled behind a boat. The unique aircraft with its plethora of kite-like wings was 40 feet by 25 feet in size and twice as large as any of Ludlow's previous aircraft. It was constructed at the Jamestown Aeronautical Building by ten soldiers loaned to Ludlow by the U.S. Government. Ludlow's plan was that he would test the aircraft as a glider, but after successful testing, he planned to install two gas engines and compete in the Scientific American contest on September 14. Following that, he planned for Captain T.T. Lovelace to attempt a long flight from the Exposition to Washington DC. Unfortunately the craft never completely took off.

On August 18, Ludlow's huge glider was assembled and on display at the aeronautics concourse at the Exposition. The plan was for a Navy tug to draw the glider until it had ascended to an acceptable height and able to maintain equilibrium on its own. After that successful test, Ludlow planned to install the



Israel Ludlow oversaw the aeronautical exhibits at the Jamestown Exposition, even though he had been severely injured a year before and was in a wheelchair. He designed the kite-like aircraft that was tested repeatedly during the Exposition, but was never able to install the gas engines to convert it from glider to powered airplane.

gasoline engines and fly it without assistance from the Navy boats. And so on August 19, Ludlow made an attempt to fly his aircraft but was delayed because the aircraft was not quite ready nor was the Navy tug detailed to assist with the launch available. It is somewhat disappointing that the colorful pilot tapped for the August 19 flight was not given the opportunity to fly that day, because he was none other than Captain J.T. Lovelace, an expert pilot and somewhat of a mystery person. Lovelace was 34 in 1907 and already known as an accomplished balloonist, having allegedly attained his rank through service in the U.S. Navy. Yet in news reports of the day, he is described as the "former commander-in-chief of the Panamanian Navy".

At any rate, on August 21, Ludlow was ready for his first attempt, but weather conditions were strongly unfavorable for a successful launch. The glider was to be pulled by a tugboat, the Potomac, which had

a top speed of twelve knots, but the tide was against the tug and although wind direction was favorable, it was not blowing more than four miles an hour and the tug could not manage more than eight knots. The team made three attempts to launch the aircraft, but in each case, the same thing happened. When it began to gain speed, the glider slued without following in the wake of the tug and the tug had to be stopped immediately to avoid damage to the reed frame of the glider. On the third attempt, the glider was waterlogged and partially wrecked.

Ludlow vowed to repair the boat and on September 9 made another attempt to fly it. This time his dreams crashed with his aircraft. During a test of the glider, the boat not only failed to fly, it dumped five men into the water. The aircraft was so large that it was resting on two twenty-seven foot naval cutters. To launch it, the U.S. torpedo boat Gwynn towed it out on the cutters and ten soldiers from the Army Signal Corps assisted with the towing and launching duties. J.G. Maas was piloting the aircraft while four soldiers sat in the cutters. The team carried two flags, one red and one blue. They were to wave the red flag if the aircraft was in trouble and the blue if the launch was



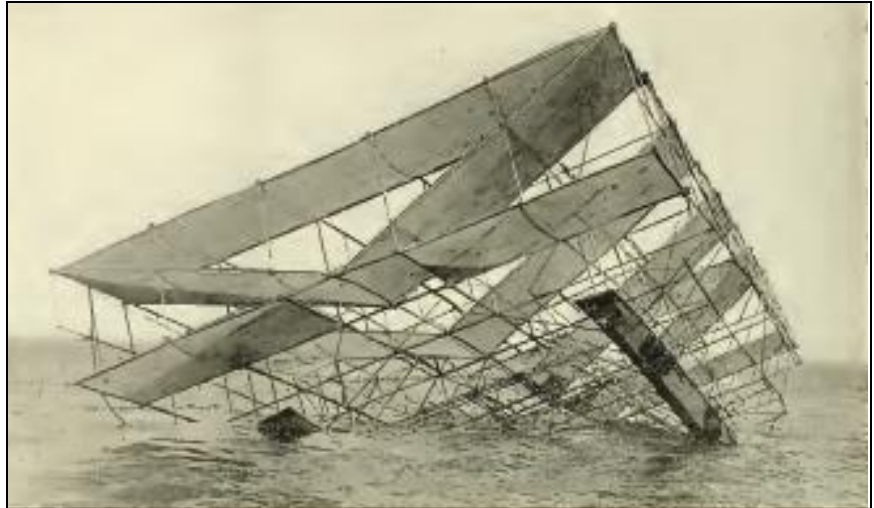
Israel Ludlow's aircraft was intended to be launched from the water while riding atop pontoons or ships. In the background is one of the battleships of the Great White Fleet anchored at Hampton Roads during the Exposition. This fleet, consisting of sixteen new battleships of the Atlantic Fleet was a huge draw for the exposition and following it, President Theodore Roosevelt ordered them on their historic fourteen-month tour of the world.

progressing properly. The crew quickly discovered that if the torpedo boat towed the aircraft at around 15 mph, the aircraft swamped. So the Navy towed the aircraft to a position where they could tow it into the wind to gain lift, with the thought that the added lift would allow the torpedo boat to achieve its full speed of 22 mph. But just when it appeared that the torpedo boat might be going fast enough to create sufficient air pressure against the kite-like wings, one side of the wing rose several feet but the other got hooked into the cutter. The cutter swamped and eventually, even though the crew was valiantly waving the blue flag, the aircraft began to sink. The blue flag could still be seen waving as the aircraft dipped below the water's surface. Maas and all four Signal Corps soldiers were thrown into the water.

S.K. Rosenberger was caught under the aircraft and observers were certain he had drowned. However he fought his way up and he and the others were handily rescued by the Navy vessels in the area. The Gwynn towed the aircraft back to the wharf, but no sooner had it been moored there than a storm struck and destroyed the aircraft. Ludlow announced that he planned to repair the aircraft and would make another attempt to fly it with the assistance of a torpedo boat. He further reported that the kite was so effective that an earlier attempt to launch it by being pulled with an automobile resulted in the car being lifted from the ground.

This accident occurred just five days before the Scientific American's heavier-than-air contest on September 14. Promising a thousand-dollar cup, expected contestants in addition to Ludlow were Bell, Hewitt, Herring, Whitehead, Gillespie, Holland, and Dufour. Unfortunately as an Aeronautics Day, September 14 was not a red-letter day. There were international contests scheduled to occur in St Louis in October; many of the possible exhibi-

tors or competitors were busy preparing for those competitions and simply didn't have time to attend



Ludlow's aircraft never passed the glider stage and the planned Scientific American competition for heavier-than-air aircraft fizzled since the potential competitors kept damaging their aircraft. While this photo does not note which accident this was, it is very possibly the last accident in which the pilot and four soldiers were thrown into the water.

the Exposition. With Ludlow out of the running, and a number of aeronautic no-shows, the October edition of the American Magazine of Aeronautics reported that the trials were not conducted but were postponed to a later undetermined date.

Even with their difficulties so far, Ludlow and J.G. Maas' crew of Army Signal Corps members were a stubborn bunch and next tried a different tact. They built a new airplane and decided to forgo the water launch. On November 1, they placed the aircraft on a gun carriage towed by six artillery horses via 200 feet of rope. On the first launch attempt, the rope broke. On the second and third attempts, the aircraft rose about 100 feet into the air, but the last attempt was the airplane's last flight as it swerved suddenly, crashed into the ground, and was destroyed. The aircraft was a complete wreck, with hundreds of broken wires and reeds. This accident was inexplicably attributed to a faulty attachment to the bridle of one of the horses.

Undeterred as ever, Ludlow was adamant that he

would continue with his original design, arguing that despite the set-backs, the practicability of his unique design had been demonstrated. After the Jamestown Exposition, Ludlow laid low for a few months, but the following spring, he was designing and inventing new aircrafts and he later partnered with Charles J. Stroebel to form the American Airship and Balloon Corporation in hopes of entering contracts with the government for lighter-than-air aircraft.

One major event of the Exposition ended up in New York, not at the Exposition grounds. All through the summer, the Jamestown International Aeronautical Congress heavily advertised for papers and treatises for a symposium to be held October 28-30, 1907, in the Hall of Congresses at the Jamestown Exposition. Papers were solicited from around the world, with an emphasis on papers stating results of actual experiments or presenting rigorous mathematical proof “because facts and positive knowledge are deemed more instructive than projects or vague theories.” Although much of the history has been lost to time, on October 28, the New York Times reported that the International Aeronautic Congress, which was to be held at the Jamestown Exposition, was at the last moment relocated to New York. The official reason was that New York was a better location because of the presence there of “distinguished foreign aeronauts” and because of the Aero Club Show at the Grand Central Palace. This Aeronautic Congress, the third held in the United States, featured such speakers as Professor Willis L. Moore, Chief of the United States Weather Bureau and the President of the International Aeronautic Congress; Admiral C.M. Chester of the United States Navy; and General James Allen, Chief Signal Officer. One notable absence was the Wright Brothers who were acknowledged as being far ahead of all others in aeronautic achievements, but had not yet published nor made public most of their work, much to the chagrin of the aeronautic community.

The Jamestown Exposition is considered, in some circles, to be one of the least successful expositions of this era. Beset with problems before opening, less than half completed at opening, and with some

displays which never were ready for viewing, the Exposition understandably suffered and the verified attendance was approximately half that anticipated. Two months after the closing, the Jamestown Exposition Company declared bankruptcy and the site fell into ruin for years until the start of World War I when it was incorporated into a new Naval base, now Norfolk Naval Base. But it did accomplish many of its purposes. And one of those was certainly to highlight the new area of aviation. Despite the running tally of wrecked gliders, the aviation demonstrations, as much as anything else happening during this time, promoted the notion of aviation as a military power, a fact we now know was crucial to the future development of aviation.

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MIG ALLEY

By: Dale “Chris” Christensen

For: The Williamsburg Eagles Chapter
of the Virginia Aeronautical Historical
Society

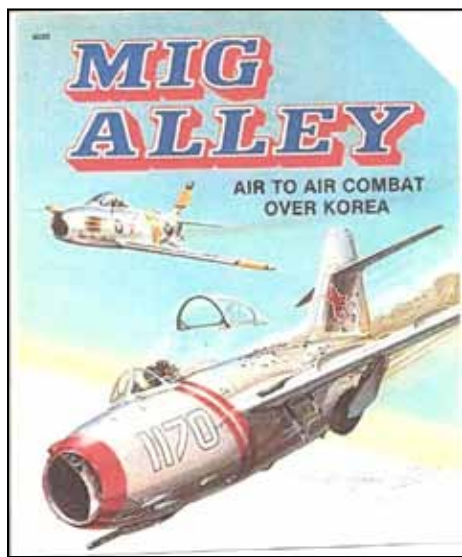
Let me start by saying that I am a Korean Vet, but I
was not there when MIG Alley was a concern. On
June 25th 1950, the North Koreans invaded South
Korea. Ten days later, I had completed all the testing
and had been accepted into the Aviation Cadet flying
training program. I was told to go home and wait.
So many people had applied for cadets, that there was
a huge backlog waiting for class assignments. After
several more delays, I was commissioned and earned
my pilot wings and I arrived at K-2, in Taegu, Korea,
but the shooting war had already ended. However, I
would like to tell you about three fighter pilots that
I knew who were there.

Initially the battle lines swung back and forth for the
entire length of the peninsula. For a time it looked
like the invaders were going to win. They moved
quickly all the way to the “Pusan Perimeter” with
UN forces backed to the sea holding only the lower
southeast corner of Korea. Then MacArthur coun-
terattacked with a massive amphibious landing at
Inchon and our forces recaptured South Korea and
rapidly moved north.

In August 1950, two months after the invasion, a
Soviet air division of 122 MIG-15 jet fighters arrived
in China and set up their headquarters at Antung
on the Yalu River, the border between Chinese
Manchuria and North Korea. Two months later, an
RB-29 reported 75 jets on the ramp at Antung. On
November 1st, a flight of F-51 Mustangs was attacked
by six MIGs with Chinese markings on the Korean
side of the Yalu. Well, that didn’t cause much alarm
because US intelligence thought there were only
a few MIGs and they were flown by Chinese and
Korean pilots. That turned out to be very wrong on
both counts.

MacArthur and his UN advisors actually thought the war was almost over and that they had won. The Far East Air Force (FEAF) believed that the North Korean Air Force was only a motley crew of obsolete Russian aircraft and in a matter of weeks would be wiped out by our Fifth Air Force.

FEAF had about 400 combat aircraft on bases in Japan, Okinawa, Guam and the Philippines. Its



MIG Alley Cover

best fighter was the F-80, the oldest jet in the Air Force, but plenty good against the cast off YAK-7 and YAK-11s. In addition, some propeller-driven F-51s had been pulled out of storage and sent to Korea where they could operate from short, unpaved runways. MacArthur, in a meeting on Wake Island on October 15th, said we'd be home by Thanksgiving and there was little to no chance of Chinese intervention. So, two of the five B-29 Bomb Groups operating in Korea were sent back to the states.

Everything went into full reverse in late November when a Chinese communist ground force of 300,000 men crossed the border to join the North Koreans. Together the two communist armies had almost twice as many troops as our UN force of 200,000, and half of ours were South Koreans. The communists had taken over the war and MacArthur retreated and did not stop till he was 60 miles southeast of Seoul, the South Korean capital.

The air war was also in reversal. The MIG-15 out-classed everything else in the theater. On November

8th, an F-80 shot down a MIG and the next day a B-29 gunner got one, but despite this, it was obvious to all that the swept wing fighter was the superior airplane by far. It was 100 mph faster than the F-80 and easily outran the Mustangs.

Fifth Air Force quickly caught on that the MIG pilots were not Chinese or Koreans. They were Russians. Some of them were actually seen and numerous radio transmissions were overheard by US intelligence sources. The Russians had been ordered to speak Chinese or Korean, but often, in the heat of battle, reverted to their own native language. Air forces of all three communist nations were controlled by the joint command center at Antung, but the Russians were clearly dominant.

It would be another 40 years before either Russia or the US publicly admitted the participation of Russian pilots in the Korean War. It was feared that public outrage might lead to a broader - and possibly nuclear - conflict with the Soviet Union.

The point in stopping the MIGs was not the fighter battle itself. If the communists had air superiority south of the Yalu, our B-29s would be unable to operate and UN ground forces and bases and supply lines would be under constant air attack. Fortunately, the US already had the only fighter in the world that could challenge the MIG in even battle. During its development, the North American F-86 Sabre had been switched from a straight wing design to swept wings which added 70 mph to its top speed. The F-86D was already being flown as an all weather air defense interceptor in the US. The Air Force rushed a wing of F-86s and wing of straight wing F-84 Thunderjets to Korea where they began combat missions in December 1950.

It wasn't long until the F-86s came out on top ! By the end of the year, they had shot down at least eight MIGs and had two more probable kills. Only one Sabre had been lost. However, as MacArthur's forces retreated into South Korea, Fifth Air Force lost its forward airfields and had to withdraw the Sabres back to Japan where they could no longer reach the

MIG stronghold across the Yalu. In February 1951, the enemy ruled the skies in a wedge shaped area between the Chongchon and the Yalu rivers that the Allied pilots called "MIG Alley."

Here are some facts about three of the heroes of MIG alley:

In June 1965, I was graduating from the Air Command and Staff College and our guest speaker at our graduation Dining-In was Lt Col Robinson Risner. He had been shot down while flying an F-105 in North Vietnam, was rescued and then sent back to the states on a kind of motivational temporary duty trip to visit the Academies and other schools like our ACSC. I sat near him at the Dining-In, so I was able to speak with him throughout much of the dinner. Robbie was born in Mammoth Spring, Arkansas in 1925 and graduated from Central High School in Tulsa, Oklahoma in 1942. He enlisted in the Army Air Corps in April 43 and attended flight training at Williams Field, Arizona in May 1944. He then flew P-38 and P-39 aircraft in Panama. In August of 46, he was relieved from active duty and became a member of the Oklahoma Air National Guard flying P-51s. Five years later he was recalled to active duty to fly RF-80 aircraft.

In May 1952 he joined the 4th Wing at Kimpo, Korea where he flew more than 100 combat missions in the F-86 and was credited with eight enemy aircraft destroyed, becoming the 20th jet ace during the Korean War. In August 1964 he became the commander of the 67th Tactical Fighter Squadron at Kadena AB, Okinawa flying F-105s. While on temporary duty at Korat AB in Thailand, he was shot down over North Vietnam in April 1965



MIG Alley and MIG ramp photo

and was rescued. Following this, he visited us at ACSC. Then in September, after returning to Korat, he was shot down again, but this time was captured. He spent seven years in the Hanoi Hilton and was repatriated in February 1973. Before retiring in August 1976 as a Brigadier General, he flew the F-4 and the F-111

Ralph Parr was a legend at Williams Air Force Base where I attended basic and advanced pilot training and he had once been an instructor there at Willie. I never had a chance to meet him, but I heard many stories about his flying abilities. He was born in Portsmouth, Virginia in 1924 and enlisted in the US Army reserve in November 1942. He entered the aviation cadet program and earned his wings and commission in February, 1944. He was the son of a navy pilot and flew his first combat missions as a P-38 fighter pilot in the Pacific Theater in the final weeks of the war with Japan. He witnessed the smoke still rising from Hiroshima. In 1948, he transitioned into jet aircraft and saw combat duty as an F-80 pilot during the opening days of the Korean War and then again as an F-86 pilot during the last seven weeks of that war, where he managed to shoot down ten enemy aircraft in aerial combat, being credited with the last aircraft shot down in the Korean War. It is said that he hit every aircraft he ever fired at. He became an Ace in just 11 days, finishing the war as the eleventh double ace. Later, he helped bring the F-4 into the USAF inventory and was one of its first instructor pilots. He served as an F-4 squadron commander and flew two combat tours in Southeast Asia where he earned both the Distinguished Service Cross and the Air Force Cross while Deputy Commander of the 12th Fighter Wing. Colonel Parr retired in 1976 with over 6000 hours in fighter aircraft and over 60 decorations.

The third hero I want to talk about is a Marine pilot named John P. Flynn. My first assignment in the states after Korea was at Bergstrom AFB, Texas and Major Flynn was my squadron operations officer. Flynn was a Native American from

South Dakota. He was a big guy, maybe 6-4 or 6-5, a very dear friend, a great guy with a fantastic sense of humor and a respected leader. We used



MIG Fight

to deploy by squadron to Matagorda Island off the Texas gulf coast for our weapons training, since we had no bombing range around Austin. There was no club there so after flying each day, the BOQ dayroom became our “bar.” In the early evening, after dark and after several beers, the Chief would grab a flashlight, a gunny sack and head out into the area just off the field. He would come back in an hour or two with the sack half full of diamondback rattlesnakes. He caught them barehanded with just a flashlight. He didn’t grow up on a reservation, but many in his family did, so he spent much time there and said they used to do that all the time back in South Dakota. He was one of the unsung heroes of the Korean War. Flying the F7F Tigercat , twin engine night tactical fighter, Capt Flynn was shot down about 11pm on May 14th 1952 while attacking ground targets near MIG Alley. He was captured and subjected to intensive interrogation by both North Korean and Chinese Communist Air Force personnel. He came under brutal pressure and treatment to admit the use of bacteriological warfare in an intensive effort to obtain a written confession from him. He suffered extreme torture and almost continuous solitary confinement when not being interrogated. Ultimately he faced a Chinese court, was convicted of being a war criminal and sentenced to 20 years hard labor. He was told he would never be repatriated and would be sent to China to serve

his sentence. Despite the severe treatment and threats, he was one of the few Americans who resisted the communists and never signed their requested admission statement. His story was the inspiration for one of the characters in the book “A Ride to Panmunjom” by fellow prisoner CPO Duane Thorin. The story had a positive influence on the DOD revised Code of Conduct for American POWs, published shortly after the prisoners returned from North Korean prison camps. Chief Flynn didn’t shoot down any MIGs, but his story certainly ranks among the heroes of MIG Alley. By the way, there are still over 8000 Americans still unaccounted for in Korea - M I A - bodies not identified/ bodies not recovered - 8176 to be exact.

The engagements in MIG Alley seemed distant from the war because the F-86s kept them that way. Had the enemy been able to deploy the MIGs and IL-28 bombers farther south, bringing airpower to bear on UN ground forces, the war might have had a very different outcome. As it was, UN forces were able to operate without much concern about enemy air attack.

It is remarkable that the F-86 pilots were able to prevail with a 7 - to - 1 kill ratio, - - if not even better, - - over the highly rated MIG15s, which outnumbered them by a wide margin. Moreover, the Sabres held air superiority over nearly all of Korea for the entire war. Not many air forces have done better than that.



Mystery Plane

Well, folks, lets first finish up some out-standing business. Back in the July-September 2011 issue I posted two aircraft photos and then had to admit that I lost the data sheets... those aircraft



New Mystery Plane #1

proved to be the Fiat 646-4A and the Fokker S-14 respectively. But the plot thickens – since I didn't use my usually trusty source material it now seems that those two aircraft are so rare that even the most common source files such as AeroFiles and Virtual Aircraft Museum do not list them and Google is no help. How is that for a rare find? Since no one came up with the answers anyway, it is “no harm, no foul.”

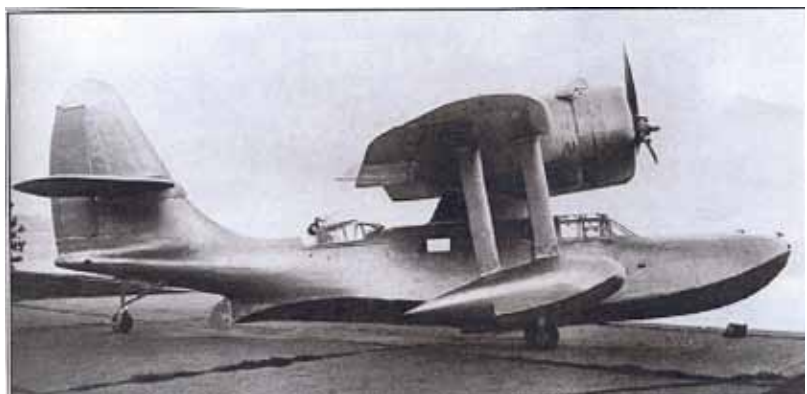
Last issue's photo was that of the Wright NW-2 built for the US Navy for racing

events. Stan Smith did come up with the answer and Jen will credit him with a year's free membership... assuming he hasn't won any time during 2011.

The aircraft offered this issue seem to be of typical fabrication for their respective time frame and yet may be hard to track down. The only clue I can offer is that neither was built in the US.

Good luck and good hunting.

You can reach me at 757-258-8875 by phone or at my e-mail wschultz5@cox.net.



New Mystery Plane #2

Bill Schultz
Mystery Plane Editor

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