



Dirigo Flyer

Newsletter of the Maine Aviation Historical Society
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The following article is based on information from the Maine State Museum and was published in one of their newsletters in 1999. I was written by Craig Day. Permission to use this info and the photo was received from the Museum 5/13/09.

1911 Cooper Glider

The glider, probably made in 1911, was built by Harold Cooper, a graduate from Edward Little High School. Cooper was born in Auburn, August 2, 1893. He created a glider that would successfully soar some 30 feet in the air with an 11-year-old boy. His father, Arthur, was a shoe manufacturer and part owner of the Wise and Cooper Co. After young Harold graduated from Edward Little in 1911 he enrolled at the University of Maine's School of Mechanical Engineering. Before he went to school that fall he would use his mechanical interest and build the glider. Though Cooper was too large for the glider to get off the ground he was able to get young Philip Tarr, who was light enough for the glider to support.

Harold first started with model airplanes, one of which was on display at the Wells Sporting Goods Store in Auburn, owned by B.F. Wells, Jr. His model plane was a smaller version of the Bleriot monoplane, about three feet wide. This would also have a successful flight after being launched from a roof top. Harold then moved on to create a plane that could hold a person in flight. The result would be a 20 foot glider made of pine stock, music wire, and linen, all held together with carpet tacks and carriage bolts.

The design of the glider came from pictures that Harold had seen in magazine of the day. Many magazines at the time had designs that could be constructed by young boys. Even the *Lewiston Evening Journal's* weekly magazine had a design for a model plane. The title of that article read, "A Model Aeroplane That Any Boy Can Make," which appeared around 1912. Model aeroplane clubs were also prominent during this time, one that was mentioned in the paper was at the Houlton YMCA.

News involving aeroplane was mentioned almost daily in the local papers in 1922 and 1912. Famous pilots such as Harry Atwood, Jules Vedrines, and Lincoln Beachy were household names in aviation. Vedrines was



France's most famous aviator of the day, while Atwood, well known in the United States, was breaking distance and speed records. As for Beachy, he was famous for being the first to soar across Niagara Falls. Atwood and Beachy made appearances in Maine, both performing at the Maine State Fair. In the 1911 Maine State Fair, aviation was the main attraction. Several planes were set up and exhibition of aerial stunts, or aviators just flying over the fair grounds attracted many.

Cooper graduated from the University of Maine in 1915 with a Mechanical Engineering degree. After graduating, he went to work for his father's company from 1915 to 1927, also serving in World War I during this time. After leaving his father's company he became an executive for the Ault-Williamson Shoe Company until 1940. In 1941 he purchased the Woodworth's Machine Shoe Company in Lewiston. Harold married Ester Tarr, sister of Philip, and together they would have four children. Only two would live. Cooper died Dec. 22, 1953 in Auburn.

In 1953, Charles Kerr of Auburn acquired the glider and wrote an article about it in the magazine, *Soaring*, which described how Harold Cooper constructed it. Connie Cooper Landers, Harold's daughter, gave Kerr a photo and blueprint of the glider which along with glider itself are now at the Maine State Museum.

The Maine State Museum plans to display the glider. The 87-year-old glider (when this article was first written in 1999) needs restoration as time has not been kind to its condition.

(As of this issue of the *Dirigo Flyer* it is not known if the glider is on display in Augusta)

President's Message

There wasn't a member meeting in September but we had a good turnout for the October meeting; in September some of our members manned our display at the Greenville Fly-In, the 36th year for the event. In addition to routine business matters Peter Noddin presented the most recent artifact to come to the museum, the intact and amazingly preserved parachute that was jettisoned by the crew of the C-45 Expeditor that was struggling to stay airborne back in 1956 but ultimately went down in the Millinocket area. The parachute remained in its resting place all these years until being discovered this year after being investigated by the State Police and contact with the USAF, the State Police turned it over to us. Interestingly, it was last October when we received an artifact from the WWII era C-54 Skymaster that crashed on Fort Mountain, northwest of Mt. Katahdin. The parachute will make a unique display item and provides a strange but interesting storyline. The meeting and the season's end was concluded with a tasty mix of pot luck fare, and the museum was officially closed until next spring.

Again, in order to further control operating costs, the museum will not be heated except for the office area and utility/rest room.

Winter will already have its grasp on us by the time you get this issue, which also means it is time to post a slate of candidates to guide the organization and museum through another year. Nominees have been reviewed and confirmed at the November meeting and are listed in the enclosed ballot. Write-ins are also accepted, as long as you have verified the person you nominate is willing to serve. In the recent past there haven't been many new faces willing to help out as an officer or director, so I again encourage other members to come forward and assist in shaping the future of this organization and fulfilling its important mission. You all have talents and ideas to contribute in a capacity beyond that of the general membership, so it's never too late to hear from you.

Finally, the off season meetings will take place around the state as in the past. For November our member meeting is being hosted by the *Maine Military Museum* located in South Portland, a new and unique collection by one veteran, Lee Humiston, owner and curator. December's meeting will be back in Bangor, the location not yet confirmed. Please check the MAM website for meeting locations and other details throughout the winter months. Remember, all are welcome to attend including guests; these meetings have been interesting, and offer a chance to hear other presenters, but most important, affords you the opportunity to inform the rest of us about your area of the state.

Happy Thanksgiving to all.....*Bob Umberger*

Letters to the Editor

Dear Sir:

My name is Don Iorio, I am a life member and would like to comment on the last issue of the DIRIGO FLYER. It is my opinion that issue was by far the best one I've seen. I would like to compliment the staff. I was 8 years old when Dave Lennen went through that experience. They were truly the greatest generation for sure. On rare occasions I have the honor of meeting a person who served during WWII. When I do, the first thing I is to thank them for allowing me to enjoy the freedom they fought so hard for. I am sorry I never had the honor of meeting Lt. Lennen. Thank you for the good job on the FLYER.

Editor's note: Because of the passing of so many WWII veterans there is now considerable interest in their stories. We are starting to run a bit short of material for the newsletter and it would be nice if some of our members would collect stories from Maine residents who were there and lived these now popular experiences. We will certainly run some of these unique stories in future issues.

Great Stocking Stuffers. And Help the Museum with Your Purchase:

Memoirs: With an Angel By My Side by member Alfred Cormier.

His flying life as told by Al and available exclusively from the Maine Air Museum.

\$16.00 at the museum, \$20.00 via mail. To order, call or email the museum.

"...a great story by a member of the Greatest Generation. Exceptionally good reading, riveting to the end."

Bill Townsend Teacher-in-Space, STS-51.

*The United States Air Force
in Maine*



*Progeny of the Cold War
John C. Garbinski*

The United States Air Force in Maine, Progeny of the Cold War

by John Garbinski.

Another exclusive book from the Maine Aviation Historical Society. Softbound, 134 pages, 151 illustrations.

\$20.00 (plus \$3.00 postage and handling). To order, call or email

Museum News and Collection Update

Our collection keeps growing and this year was exceptional. Here are the main acquisitions added recently:

CRASH TRUCK. The 1945 crash truck that was used by Dow Army Air Field was loaned to the museum by the Cole Land Transportation Museum. It's a beauty and it runs!

VP-8 AIRCRAFT MAINTENANCE BOARD. Show the squadron's last flight out of NAS Brunswick. A historical item and it is BIG.

P-47N (PLYWOOD) PARADE FLOAT. Caused all of the confusion in June when some thought it was the real thing. It is 12' long and is painted in the colors of the 49th Fighter Squadron when it was part of the Maine Air National Guard. If you always wanted to "fly" a Jug, here is your chance.

TAXIWAY MARKER. Historic artifact from Bangor International Airport. Designated taxiway "Lima" for many years for arriving and departing pilots.

KIDS AIRFIELD. Did you ever want to taxi and take off at the controls of your own airplane from Bangor International Airport? Here is your chance but kids are first in line. It is a 4' x 8' replica of the airfield complete with main runway, taxiways, parking aprons and toy airplanes. Something for the kids to enjoy.

COLD WAR PARACHUTE: The USAD does not want the parachute found in the Hopkins Academy Grant forest land. It was in the custody of the Maine State Police and the Troop Commander has agreed to remove it from evidence and turn it over to the Museum.

Status of the LEO BOYLE COLLECTION.

About one-third of the material we received from the Leo Boyle family has been sorted out –but not inventoried yet.

Non-aviation items have been returned to the family and/or deaccessioned. Material has been sorted, as of now, into 27 different categories.

Maine airports, so far 57 are listed.

Non-Maine airplane pictures.

Maine airplane pictures.

Non-Maine aviation post cards.

Maine aviation post cards.

Aviation stickers.

Maine aviation folders.

Maine aviation stories, well over 50 so far.

Maine aviation accidents.

Individual in Maine aviation, a lot of material.

When all is done we will then inventory it, and with active volunteers this should be fairly easy.

New Members

We would like to welcome some new members to the Maine Aviation Historical Society/Maine Air Museum family:

Jerry Duncan, Holden, ME #508

Wayne Bateman, Wells, ME #509

James Grant, Portland, ME #510

Joe Belding, Howland, ME #511

Terry Stephens, Winterport, ME #512

Gary Chandler, Bangor, ME #513

Dana & Karen Parry, Moody, ME #514

Editor's Note:

The following details paraphrase information presented in an article by the Air Force Association Magazine, 2009, Vol. 92, No. 11 regarding retirement of the last Boeing KC-135E:

The last 1950's era KC-135E entered retirement September 23rd when a Maine Air National Guard flight crew flew the tanker No. 56-3630 from Bangor, home of the 101st Air Refueling Wing, to the "Boneyard", Davis-Monthan air base, Arizona. The article indicates this 50+ year old aircraft will be parted out in support of younger models that will still be flying for years to come.

Interestingly, tanker No. 56-3630 was assigned to the Maine Air Guard for 20 years, and the article highlights some of its history. For one," it set a speed record, Flying from New York to London and back in just twelve hours", and with a "delivery to the Air Force back in 1958 saw service throughout the Cold War period, some support for the Vietnam War, right up to present conflicts."

The earliest KC-135E's "built between 1956 and 1961 began entering retirement in 2004", and the magazine reports "seventy-four E models will remain in storage, while others such as No.56-3630 will be or have been stripped, as needed, and ten airframes are earmarked for static display; three more will be ground instructional trainers."

Upcoming:

The **December meeting** will be held back in Bangor December 12th (10:00 AM), probably at the airport General Aviation terminal.

Some pictures from the Leo Boyle Collection.

This series of pictures originated with the Old Orchard Beach Historical Society. They show the Sikorsky S-36 belonging to Frances Grayson, a New York lady who purchased the aircraft with the purpose of being the first woman to fly across the Atlantic. On one of her first attempts she flew to Old Orchard Beach in late September 1927. Waiting for good weather an attempt was made to head for Newfoundland in early October but was thwarted by a northeast storm that threatened to wreck the aircraft when it returned to the beach. These photos

show the christening of the Dawn by the wife of Senator Owen Brewster of Maine with Ms Grayson looking on, views of the Dawn in Harry Jones' hanger at Old Orchard, and the Dawn in the surf during the storm. On Dec. 23, 1927 the Dawn crewed by a pilot, navigator, radio operator and Grayson left New York for Newfoundland but they vanished and were never seen again.



Web site: www.maineairmuseum.org email: mam@maineairmuseum.org

1-877-280-MAHS toll free in Maine. 207-941-6757

The Maine Air Museum is located at the 98 Maine Avenue adjacent to the Bangor International Airport.
44° 48' 2.10" North 68° 48' 36.02" West



Maine Aviation Historical Society Maine Air Museum * Membership Form

Name: _____

Address: _____

City, State, Zip: _____

Special Interests: _____

Phone: _____ Email: _____

Dues are for one year, and membership will expire in the month you joined.

Annual membership includes six newsletters!

Mail payment to:
Maine Aviation
Historical Society
PO Box 2641
Bangor, ME 04402-2641

Membership	Dues	Benefits
Regular	\$25 annual	Newsletter, Museum Admission
Family	\$35 annual	Newsletter, Museum Admission
Corporate	\$100 annual	Newsletter, Museum Admission
Supporting	\$100 annual	Newsletter, Museum Admission, .
Lifetime	\$500*	Newsletter, Lifetime Membership Number, Museum Admission,
	* 2 annual \$250 payments	

We need volunteers-docents, mechanics, maintenance, librarians and exhibit specialists, etc.

Please call me. I want to be active in the organization.

I cannot join now, but would like to help. I am enclosing a check for \$_____.

Contributions over \$20 are tax deductible within the limits of the law.

I wish to support and obtain membership by purchasing a memorial brick.

DIRIGO FLYER

MAINE AVIATION HISTORICAL SOCIETY

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