



Dirigo Flyer

Newsletter of the Maine Aviation Historical Society

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Here we go, the 20th year of the Dirigo Flyer. Spring is here although it seemed like summer just a couple of days ago. With the unusually warm winter the museum heating bills were reduced, snow removal was minimal, and...bottom line: expenses were reduced. This is, of course, good news when one is a nonprofit organization. It is time to start getting ready for the summer season so check the website for opening dates and most of all, consider volunteering to assist us with the operation. The history of Maine aviation continues to be created every day and research keeps bringing (an oxymoron follows) new history to light.

Portland International Jetport...Then and Now

The following is excerpted partially from J.D. Davis book *Early Wings Over Maine*, and from a variety of Maine Aviation Historical Society notes. We have not had a story featuring the Portland Airport since 2008.

In June 1919 Harry Jones used his Curtiss JN-4D airplane to deliver the Portland Newspapers to Old Orchard, cutting the usual railroad delivery time in half. Inasmuch as Portland had no airport, Jones utilized what was sometimes called Richardson Field, the local open flat area near the Oaks and now occupied by Hadlock Field and Fitzpatrick Stadium. A few months later, October 23, 1919, Jones obtained special authorization and flew the mail from Portland to Augusta's Muster Field at Camp Keyes, picked up the southbound mail and flew it to Portland again landing at Richardson Field. In a subsequent incident a traveling airplane show called Uncle Sam's Flying Circus attempted to put on a show in Portland and ended up landing at an area known as the Larrabee Farm in Scarborough and several of the aircraft were damaged during landings. In another instance two US Army aircraft on a flight to Bangor were forced to land in a field off Evans St. in South Portland and suffered serious damages when attempting to take off. All of these incidents underscored the lack of and the serious need for an acceptable municipal airport in the Portland area.

The first individual in the Portland area to obtain a surplus military JN4D "Jenny" was dentist Dr. Clifford Strange. He was not alone in this venture as his brother-in-law Dr. Albert Johnson was also an aviation enthusiast. Together they obtained ownership of a fairly extensive amount of relatively level acreage to the west of the Fore River in the Stroudwater section of Portland. Dr. Strange brought his Jenny to this unimproved plot of land in May 1925. Unquestionably this was the first plane to land at what would become Portland's airport. Clearing and leveling work went on and by the summer of 1927 a runway had been cleared, leveled and extended to reach the entire distance between the Fore River and Westbrook Street. At this point it became recognized as an airport and was called the Stroudwater Flying Field.

An important step took place in 1927 when Stroudwater Field was recognized by the US Department of Commerce as a standard and approved air travel destination and was listed in the National Airport Directory.

This recognition reflected the installation of permanent fueling facilities that allowed planes heading for other destinations to plan on using the field as a regular refueling stop.

Photographs of Stroudwater in the late 1920s and early 1930s show a mixed grass and gravel surface that underlay runways and tie-down areas. Obviously, spring thaws led to a mud season that seriously restricted use of the field. With the advent of the Roosevelt Administration in 1933, things began to change. Federal funds became available for facility improvements including airfields. However, Stroudwater was privately owned jointly by doctors Strange and Johnson and was not eligible for any federal funds.

A solution was quickly developed. The city of Portland negotiated an arrangement with the good doctors whereby the city leased the land on which the runways stood and the city could apply for federal grants. Over the next two years the runways were upgraded and lengthened, a diagonal runway added and all runways were macadamized. In reflection of the times and improvements, the name was changed to Portland City Airport.

It was determined that additional grants required that the facility had to be owned by the applicant community, the city of Portland. Extensive negotiations followed with doctors Strange and Johnson and eventually the city obtained full title by exercising its eminent domain rights. Today the facility is known as The Portland Jetport.

The current airport started to take shape in the 1950s to the 60s. Runway 11/29 was built in 1957 and terminal was opened in 1968 when



jet service began.

Boston-Maine Airways had a monopoly on passenger travel out of Portland which continued until the airline was renamed Northeast Airlines. In 1962 another airline emerged when Atlantic Airways began service between Portland and Boston's Logan Airport. This competition was short lived and Northeast would be alone for another eight years when in 1970 another regional carrier, Aroostook Airways began service between Presque Isle and Portland with stops in Bangor and Augusta. This airline lasted until 1972.

monopoly on passenger travel out of Portland

In 1972 Northeast was bought out by Delta Air Lines who remain until today. Air New England also began service in that year with routes to Bangor and Boston.

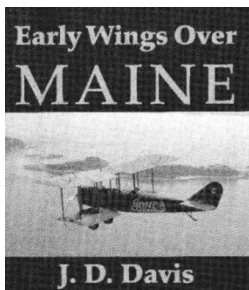
In 1981 deregulation began, Air New England ceased operations. It was followed by Air Vermont that served a route between Portland and Burlington, Vermont but went out of business around 1984. In 1983 PEOPLE Express Airlines operated between Portland and Newark, NJ. PEOPLE was bought out by Continental Airlines in 1987 and still operated.

Airline	Year(s)	Notes
<u>Boston-Maine Airways</u>	1931-1941	
<u>Northeast Airlines</u>	1941-1972	Boston-Maine Airways rebranded as Northeast Airlines
<u>Atlantic Airways</u>	1962	
<u>Aroostook Airways</u>	1970	
<u>Air New England</u>	1970-1981	
<u>Bar Harbor Airlines</u>	1972-1990	Part of <u>Eastern Express</u>
<u>Delta Air Lines</u>	1972-Present	
<u>Northeast Express Regional Airlines</u>	1974-1995	<u>Northeast Express Regional Airlines</u> was bought by <u>Northwest Airlines</u>
<u>Air Vermont</u>	1982-1985	
<u>People Express</u>	1983-1987	Bought by <u>Continental Airlines</u>
<u>Ransome Airlines</u>	1984-unknown	Operated as <u>Delta Connection</u>
<u>United Airlines</u>	1984-Present	

<u>Presidential Airways</u>	1986	Bought by <u>Continental Airlines</u>
<u>US Airways</u>	1986-Present	
<u>Continental Airlines</u>	1987-2011	Merged with United to form United Airlines
<u>Business Express</u>	1987-2000	Became part of <u>Delta Connection</u>
<u>Canadian Airlines International</u>	1989-unknown	Operated by <u>Air Atlantic</u>
<u>Trans World Express</u>	1989-1993	Operated by Metro Airlines Northeast
<u>Northwest Airlines</u>	1999-2010	Merged with <u>Delta Air Lines</u>
<u>American Airlines</u>	1999-2002	
<u>TWA</u>	1999-2001	Bought by <u>American Airlines</u>
<u>Air Nova</u>	1999-2001	Became <u>Air Canada Jazz</u>
<u>Independence Air</u>	2004-2006	Ceased operations
<u>JetBlue Airways</u>	2006-Present	
<u>AirTran Airways</u>	2007-Present	Acquired by <u>Southwest Airlines</u> , operations eventually to be converted to Southwest
<u>New England Air Transport</u>	2008-2009	
<u>Starlink Aviation</u>	2009	
<u>Twin Cities Air Service</u>	2010-Present	
<u>Air Canada</u>	2010-Present	Operated by <u>Air Georgian</u>



Portland International Jetport 2010



Early wings over Maine by John Davis

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MAHS

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Bangor, Maine 04402-2641

Also available through the museum:

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.

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 \$4.00 postage and handling). To order, call or email the museum.

Beech Hill Pond Fly-in 2012

On the right is a 1947 Piper PA-12 owned by the Naples Seaplane Service of Naples, Maine.



To the left is the 1957 Piper PA-18A belonging to Allen Caruso.

JAMES SODERMARK

Longtime member James Sodermark passed away on Feb. 9, 2012. Born in East Corinth Dec. 3, 1927 the son of Halvard and Florence Sodermark. Jim attended schools in Corinth. He was a U.S. Army veteran of the Korean War. Her was married to Ginger Pullen in 1951. Jim owned his own auto sales and service business in Levant and later in Kenduskeag. He taught mechanics at MDTA, Bangor, and Lee Academy. He loved airplanes, aviation and especially enjoyed NASCAR racing. He raced at Unity and Exeter Raceways, Speedway 95, and in the early days of NASCAR at Weaverville Raceway n Ashville, NC. He was a member of the Kenduskeag Union Church and the Maine Aviation Historical Society. He is survived by his wife Ginger, four daughters, his sister, six grandchildren, and five great-grandchildren.

Further information on last month’s picture of a Brazilian P-3

It turns out that the scruffy looking P-3AM photographed in Bangor had just spent 10 years in the Arizona boneyard. It was en route to Spain for an upgrade but needed repairs prior to crossing the Atlantic. The repairs could only be done at the old Brunswick Naval Air Station (now Brunswick Landing). The aircraft made a stop in Bangor on the way to Brunswick. (Scott Grant)



BREWER AIRPORT STILL FOR SALE

The 75 acre tract of land features an office building, two airplane hangers, a storage building and two runways is being listed through a Bangor real estate agency.

The airport, originally was called Doan Field after being built in the late 1930s by George and Gordon Doan and officially opened to the public in December 1944. It was owned by the Doans until the early 1950s.

It is currently owned by Wesley and Sara leighton of Punta Gordon, Florida. Wesley is a former United Airlines pilot and has owned the property since the mid 1970s. It has been for sale for two years now and an option on behalf of a private party has broken down and no further negotiations have resulted.

The City of Brewer currently assesses the property at \$147,300 with an exemption of \$38,700 for being an airstrip. "Any different use of the property that meets the rules, regulations and requirements of the city and that is appropriate would be welcome. If it could remain an airport it would still be an asset to the city but an industrial or a residential subdivision or a business park would be great" states Brewer's deputy economic development director.

The two runways measure 1,730 by 30 feet and the facility which accommodates six aircraft, five single-engine planes and one ultralight aircraft has been operated by the Brewer Airport Association, an organization of local flying enthusiasts since 1995.

The runway was paved in the mid-1970s and field lights were maintained as late as the 1980s but no longer are usable. The runways reverted from paved to turf surfaces in 1995.

Asking price: \$400,000.



Museum Want List 2012

The Maine Air Museum has big plans for our season starting at the end of May. The following is a list of items the museum needs in order to continue to serve our extended community. These items need not be new. (The following list was submitted by Hank Marois)

1. Classroom in which Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics programs may be conducted.
2. Overhead track lighting for the main exhibit rooms, new or used.
3. Audio amplifier with outputs for at least three sets of speakers. New or used.
4. Storage building minimum size 6' x 8' New or used.
5. Drill press. New or used
6. Stuffed moose head.

We have lots of new features to unveil within the next few months including a video viewing booth and a wind tunnel.

MEETING

14 April.....the monthly meeting of the Maine Aviation Historical Society. 10 a.m. at the museum.

Maine Air Museum staffing

As always, volunteers are needed. Can you spare a few hours to help us out? If so, drop me a note via email mam@maineairmuseum.org or call the museum and leave a message. We do need your help.

Association Officers

President: Scott Grant targete2007@yahoo.com
Vice President: John Miller, Newburgh, ME vintagewings@cs.com
Recording Secretary: Les Shaw les989@yahoo.com
Corresponding Secretary: Al Cormier acormier3@roadrunner.com
Treasurer: Joe Quinn, Levant, ME, 1966corvair@gmail.com

. 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: _____

**All dues expire on
June 30th of each year.
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remaining month**

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Bangor, ME 04402-
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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* * 2 annual \$250 payments	Newsletter, Lifetime Membership Number, Museum Admission,

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.

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