



Dirigo Flyer

Newsletter of the Maine Aviation Historical Society
PO Box 2641, Bangor, Maine 04402 • 207-941-6757 • 1-877-280-MAHS (in state)
www.maineairmuseum.org mam@maineairmuseum.org

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We have just received several new articles. Due to the busy period at mid summer the editor is going to take the easy way out and “sort-of” recycle an article for this issue. The lead article appeared on the Flyer web page which, by-the-way, is currently offline.

Lt. Valentine’s Maine Adventure

When American joined in WWI it had no front line aircraft to speak of. The quick answer was to borrow a proven design from our allies and produce it under license in the United States. One of those chosen was the de Havilland DH-4.

This aircraft was a two seater used for observation and light bombing. The first airframe arrived in the United States in August of 1917. The aircraft was fitted with a U.S. made 400 hp Liberty engine. It was up and flying by the end of October. Once production methods had been developed, it was produced in Patterson, NJ, Dayton, Ohio, and Cleveland, Ohio. By the time the war ended 4,846 aircraft had been completed. Some 1,213 of these aircraft actually made it to Europe and Americans flew missions with some of them. By this time, these aircraft totally obsolete as front line combat aircraft. A redesign was called for and a new DH-9A was chosen as the best model. A relocated fuel tank, a change in the landing gear, and one piece plywood body sections were incorporated. Only 13 of these improved aircraft were made before the war ended and production was halted.



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The Army, rather than ship back these aircraft, stacked them and then burned them after the war was over. Those aircraft still in the U.S. were used for form the Army’s air arm. While some were sold out of the service

or given to the Postal Service, others kept flying for the Army up until 1931. During its service years there were 35 variants built from the DH-4 design.

In 1919 the Golden Age of Flight was about to happen in America. Surplus Jennys were sold still packed in their crates and pilots who had been Army trained used their skills to make money. Barnstorming was born and soon the nations looked to the sky for its heroes. The Army, quick to pick up on the public's mood, soon started a series of daring flights, most of which were total failures. In 1919 they could not fly safely from Rockland, Maine to Bangor, Maine, let alone around the world. One flight of interest to people in the Bangor area was made in Sept. of 1922.

Lt. F.B. Valentine had some leave coming to him so he decided to fly to Bangor, Maine. The reasons were not clear in the newspaper reports, perhaps he had friends or family up there. For whatever reason, Lt. Valentine and his mechanic, Lt. C. Litness decided to fly their DH-4 to Bangor on Sept. 3, 1922. I guess the Army allowed pilots to fly their aircraft, even while on leave back then. The two men took off from Long Island, N.Y. and flew a coastal route up towards Maine. As they over flew Boston they could see some clouds building up ahead but they pressed onward. By the time they reached Old Orchard Beach, the clouds were solid and no breaks could be seen. Lt. Valentine decided they should try an inland route in hopes of running out of the clouds. Keeping a constant airspeed and using a compass and watch, the pilot flew from Old Orchard to Bangor.

The clouds persisted and the crew saw no ground nor sun on this leg of the flight. After the proper amount of time had been flown, Lt. Valentine started to bring the aircraft earthward. Slowly circling, they broke out of the clouds over a large hayfield at about 4:30 pm. Below they could see the Penobscot River and the railroad tracks that followed its course. Under them was a hayfield bordered by a road. Across the road and south of the hayfield was the Mount Hope Cemetery. Trolley tracks ran beside the roadway. After a low pass to check out the conditions, the pilot banked around and set up a landing approach. The aircraft touched down on the damp ground and was rolling along smoothly when the main gear hit a small drainage ditch which ran across the field. The grass had hidden this obstruction until it was too late. The wheels caught in the ditch and the aircraft flipped up and over. The flight was over.

Both crewmen unstrapped and crawled out from under the aircraft. Neither one was hurt, just shaken up a bit. The aircraft was another story. Number 65348 would fly no more. The fuselage had cracked on impact and the motor was ripped almost free by the sudden stop. The wings were a pile of broken spars and ripped fabric. Leaving Lt. Litness to guard the wreckage, Lt. Valentine head towards the farmhouse to find out where they had crashed and where the nearest telephone was located.

Word soon spread about the crash. By the time Lt. Valentine had made his calls and returned, a crowd was gathering. This worked out well, since the Lt.'s instructions were clear. Borrowing a wagon and team from John Skinner, in whose field he had crashed, he and Lt. Litness, with help from the onlookers finished removing the engine from the aircraft. It was loaded onto the wagon along with those instruments still intact, tools, and flight gear. The people in the crowd helped out and the aircraft was soon stripped of anything worth saving, some of the salvaged items even made it onto the wagon. It was dusk as their work was finished, and to the delight of all, the Lt. announced he was going to burn the wreckage per order of the Army. The doped fabric and wood caught and quickly blazed into a bright fire. As the two officers rode the wagon into Bangor, their last view of their aircraft was a bonfire in a rural Maine hayfield.

The engine was loaded into a freight car at the train station in Bangor. The other "good" parts were boxed up and sent with it, back to the factory for future use. By 8:00 that night both officers had boarded the train and were heading south, back to N.Y. The entire flight, crash, and clean-up had covered about 400 miles and taken about 14 hours, from start to finish. Except for that drainage ditch, this was a super flight. Using a watch, compass, and airspeed indicator, flying the last 135 miles in total cloud cover. This was quite a feat of piloting in 1922.

From the Sept. 22, 1922 Bangor paper (abridged): ...John P. Skinner of Veazie, who happened to be standing near the scene of the accident and who was an eye witness gives the following graphic account of the accident. "When the plane came down, which it did at a terrific rate of speed the wheels broke through the grass of the hay field which had become softened by the recent rains, and the plane turned turtle, with a terrific crash. I had started to run back to the house to telephone to Bangor for a doctor and an ambulance. Just then I

heard a yell and turned just in time to see a hooded and helmeted figure crawl out from under the debris and shortly afterward his companion followed him.” “Where are we anyway?” the aviator inquired of me, as he squatted on the ground and started to consult his map as if nothing had happened, and acting as cool as a cucumber. The only damage either of them seemed to have suffered was a few bruises and one of them had a black eye. I guess they were so calm and cool because of several other crashes they had had. On one occasion their plane dropped into New York Harbor and they had a narrow escape from drowning.”

Shortly after the accident and all day Sunday, a large number of people gathered about the wreck intent on carrying away a souvenir. Some of the souvenirs were the substantial variety including a ten gallon can of high test gas. The engine of the big plane, a 400 h.p. Liberty motor and valued at \$4,000 will be shipped back to Mitchell Field for the aviators are responsible for this part of the plane. The plane was valued at about \$14,000.

PRESIDENT’S REPORT

We are seeing an increasing number of visitors to the Museum this summer. Bay 2 is now open and displays are being rearranged to make use of it. **What we need most is volunteers.** The same three are working every weekend again this year and will soon burn out. They do need a break, so please come over and help us out if you can work a day. You may contact me (les@maine.edu) or leave a message at the Museum at 941-6757 or toll-free (in Maine) at 877-289-6247. Any help will be appreciated.

We had a couple of articles in the local paper and a short segment on TV about the display that a member put together. We hope that will draw attention to the Museum and draw more visitors. Please stop by and see what has changed in the past month.

Books available through the Maine Air 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 at the museum, \$20 via mail order. To order, visit, call, or email the museum.

The United State 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, visit, call, or email the museum.

WHAT’S NEW AT THE MUSEUM.



Sixty years ago Maine had an exceptionally dry month of June and a series of tragic forest fires broke out in Southern Maine and Mount Desert Island. As a reminder of these events, Maine Air Museum Director and volunteer Robert Umberger has created a display which includes little seen photographs as well as fire fighting equipment used to battle the flames. Members of local fire departments, the National Park Service, military personnel from Dow Field as well as the Maine National Guard were used to battle the flames as well as help with the evacuation of endangered residents. The Army Air Force flew in needed supplies to the airfield in Augusta, sometimes with tragic results. Come in and see this display.

Buy a Brick and Support the Maine Air Museum

The Maine Air Museum is proud to announce the new Memorial Pathway Program. To successfully carry out and reach the museum vision, and to help refurbish Building 98, the Maine Air Museum needs the financial support of businesses and public community leaders and individual private citizens. To this end, the museum board has established a means for receiving your monetary donation and recognizing your gift permanently in the museum pathway and wall of honor. These donations are fully deductible.

Details available on our web site: www.maineairmuseum.org or from the museum by request.

KENNETH INGALLS, USAF



During WWII, on July 25, 1942, Kenneth enlisted in the United States Army Air Corps. He had just completed his first year of college and now the Army Air Corps was accepting cadets without a college degree. He was in aviation training from July 1942 to December 5, 1943 when he received his pilot's rating and was commissioned a 2nd Lieutenant. His first assignment, May 1944, was in England where he was attached to the 711th Squadron, 447th Bomb Group, 8th Air Force. Kenneth served as both pilot and co-pilot on a B-17 flying missions over France and Germany. On May 12, 1944 on their eight mission, his plane was shot down over Friedberg, Germany. Kenneth bailed out and was captured by a farmer holding a pitch fork. The farmer turned him over to the German military where he spent seven days in solitary confinement. He was then taken to Stalag Luft 3 prison camp in Sagan, Germany. He was held a prisoner of war until he was liberated April 29,

1945 by the 14th Armored Division of Patton's Third Army.

On October 16, 1944 Ken was awarded the Air Medal which was presented to his parents, Mr. Mrs. Guy Inglass of LaGrange, Maine. He also received the European African Middle Eastern Theater campaign ribbon and one Battle Star (Air Offensive Europe) in 1945.

After his return to the States he was released from active duty on September 27, 1945. Ken never lost his love of flying and in the summer of 1949 joined the Air National Guard at Dow Air Force Base. He was now part of the 132nd Fighter Interceptor Squadron. The guard had just acquired jet fighters and Ken was anxious to start flying them. He was one of six pilots to check out the F-80 Shooting Star at Dow in Bangor. He also became qualified to pilot the T-33 and the C-47.

During the Korean War, Ken was put on active duty as of February 1, 1951. He remained with his Squadron and continued to fly at Dow. On Feb. 5, 1953 Ken was sent to the Bitburg Air Base in Bitburg, Germany and became a fighter pilot for the 53rd Fighter Bomber Squadron of the 12th Air Force. Ken was now flying F-84s and F-86s.

In January 1954 Ken was participating in a six-week gunnery training at Wheelus Field, Tripoli, North Africa. When returning home to Bitburg on March 4 on a C-47, he and 19 others including the pilot and co-pilot were killed when the plane crashed into the Alps near St. Etienne in southern France. Ken had just recently been promoted to Captain, United States Air Force, effective February 10, 1954.

Kenneth was married to Carolyn A. Dixon and has two sons, Jeffrey Eugene and Kenneth Earl, Jr.

ON FINAL

"A couple of TAC pilots were flying F-16s in escort with a B-52 bomber and were chinning with the pilot of the bomber to pass the time. Talk fell to the subject of the relative merits of their respective aircraft with the fighter pilots holding that their planes made for more interesting flying because of their maneuverability, acceleration, and the like.

The B-52 pilot replied, "Yeah? Well this old girl can do a few tricks you guys can't even touch." Naturally he was challenged to demonstrate. "Watch," he tells them.

After several minutes the bomber pilot returns to the air and says, "There! How was that?" Not having seen anything, the fighter pilots say, "What are you talking about?" Reply, "Well, I went for a little stroll, got a cup of coffee and went downstairs for a chat with the navigator."



Left: Part of the Maine Seaplane exhibit currently at the Museum. Right: Our gift shop which is very popular with visitors.

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Web site: www.maineairmuseum.org email: mam@maineairmuseum.org
1-877-280-MAHS toll free in Maine. 207-941-6757

Association Officers

President Les Shaw, Brewer, Maine 04413 les_shaw@umit.maine.edu
Vice President: Norm Houle, Barrington, NH 03825-0563 Livefreeandfly@aol.com
Secretary: William Townsend, Bar Harbor, ME 04609-1330 townsend10@verizon.net
Treasurer: Joe Quinn, Levant, ME 04456, jwquinn@adelphia.net

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



September 15-16, 2007

NEXT MEETING:

The next meeting of the Maine Aviation Historical Society will be held at the Maine Air Museum, Bangor International Airport, on August 11, 2007 at 10 a.m. Stop by and visit the museum.



**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, Decal, Museum Admission
Family	\$35 annual	Newsletter, Decal, Museum Admission
Corporate	\$100 annual	Newsletter, Decal, Museum Admission
Supporting	\$100 annual	Newsletter, Decal, Museum Admission, 4 free passes
Lifetime	\$500*	Newsletter, Decal, Lifetime Membership
	* 2 annual \$250 payments	Number, Museum Admission, 10 free passes

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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MAINE AVIATION HISTORICAL SOCIETY
PO BOX 2641
BANGOR, ME 04402-2641**