

# DIRIGO FLYER

Vol. II, No. 6 July 1994

## June Meeting Notes

A great meeting was held at the Military Aviation Show at the Owls Head Transportation Museum on July 2-3. Over half our members made an appearance and many volunteered to man our large display. Jim Chichetto had four large panels on which were mounted various pictures and articles. Many people picked up our new membership brochure and copies of the *Dirigo Flyer*. Clay Carkin had parts from the B-52 crash on Elephant Mountain, and Jim had F-101 and F-86 parts as well as photo documentation. Our new banner was up along with our usual material. As always, the painting of Nungesser and Coli brought forth a lot of comment.

It was great to see so many members and to meet and talk with some whom we don't see too often. To mention just a few, we had a nice talk with Ken Cianchette and we hope to go flying with him soon. Andy Stinson gave us a lot of information on crashed aircraft up north which are visible from the air. Lloyd Gates was there from Norway and is still working on his Sperry Messenger reproduction. Sophie and John Byrne flew in with their L-17. We had a great talk with Larry Closson from Bernard. (Ask him what the tailgunner in an SBD did - he was there!) Clay Carkin and T.K. Dudley rode in the SNT's to take photos of the C-47 in the air thanks to Charlie Chiarchiaro of Owls Head. It was nice to meet Paul Strout, Scott Grant and Jim Hodges, new members. Oscar Blue from Hancock was there with his "White Bird" pictures, and the search goes on. I was also happy to see Dr. Jim Sparaca of Machias, who spotted me by my TIGHAR T-shirt.

It was great to see you all, and thanks for your help. Special thanks need to go to Jack Denison of Rochester, NH, who was there both days and was of invaluable help manning the table.

## New Member News

We are happy to welcome six new members:

- 69. Donald G. Strout (Maine Aviation History)  
13 Gilbert St. • Orono, ME 04473 • 207-866-4153
- 70. Scott F. Grant (Maine Aviation History)  
112 Tolman St. • Westbrook, ME 04092 • 207-854-3309
- 71. James P. Hodges (World War II)  
P.O. Box 246 • Hampden, ME 04444 • 207-862-3086

## Projects on the Runway

➔ Jim Chichetto and Leo Boyle have been working with the Bar Harbor Historical Society. Thanks to Gladys O'Neil, we have recently unearthed quite a bit of information on A.V. Wilson, a relatively unknown Maine aviation pioneer and contemporary of the Wright brothers.

➔ Jim has written an interesting article on the destruction of the Blimp K-14 in World War II there. The Navy says it crashed, but local people say they saw bullet holes in the gas-bag from a German submarine. If anyone has any further information on either of these subjects, please let us know.

➔ At Owls Head, we also met Richard Cain (RR2, Box 392, Clinton, ME 04927). He is interested in early barnstorming photographs, particularly in Maine, and knows first-hand about one of the Royal Navy Corsair collisions in Clinton. Contact him with questions, comments or to share photos.

## FYI • FYI • FYI • FYI • FYI • FYI

✓ Our thanks to Paul Karłowicz, Lewiston-Auburn Airport Manager, for letting us set up a small, un-manned display for their Fly-In and Open House on Saturday, July 16th.

✓ Are you a World War I buff? Walter Kudlick is trying to establish a New England Chapter of the League of World War I Aviation Historians in Massachusetts. They are also helping in an all-day seminar to be held at the Harvard Club in Boston on Saturday, November 12, 1994. From 10:20 to 11 a.m., Leo Opdycke, editor of *World War I Aero*, will speak on "Historiography of World War I Aviation," and from 2:30 to 3:15 p.m. Paul Hare, author of *The Royal Aircraft Factory* (Putnam) will speak on "Aerial Reconnaissance and the B.E.2c." Contact Leo Boyle who has a limited number of notices of both. Seminar cost is \$25, plus \$20 or \$25 if you want lunch. Some rooms are available on a first come, first served basis.

- 72. Stuart B. Downing (Piston Liners & War Planes)  
Box 337 • No. Reading, MA 01864-0337 • 508-664-2491
- 73. Reid Campbell (Maine ANG Fighter Squadron)  
P.O. Box 81 • Dexter, ME 04930 • 207-924-5021
- 74. Frank Trask (Harry Atwood)  
P.O. Box 99 • E. Vassalboro, ME 04935 • 207-923-3421



## John Domenjoz

John Domenjoz, famous early Swiss aviator, had quite an impact on early Maine aviation. Born in Geneva in 1886, John Domenjoz began his flight training at the Bleriot School in Pau in the spring of 1910. He soloed in May and in February 1911 was awarded the 33rd FAI Certificate awarded by Belgium. He remained at Pau as an instructor, his most famous student being Pegoud, the famous early loopster.

In 1914, in company with Pegoud and Perreyon, he toured Europe throughout the summer, gaining a reputation as one of the Continent's most successful stunt pilots. He took delivery of a new Bleriot in 1914 and had it packed and shipped it to South America. In his exhibitions there, he thrilled the crowds, flying inverted for as long as one minute and twenty seconds. He thus became known as "Upside Down Domenjoz."

In the fall of 1915, he arrived in New York where he was contracted to give exhibition flights at the Sheepshead Bay racetrack. He left in December on an exhibition tour that carried him as far south as Havana, Cuba and then returned to New York. In the summer of 1916, he toured the Midwest with Baxter Adams, another exhibition pilot. He returned to France late in 1916 to work as a test pilot on SPAD's, but was back in the United States in the summer of 1917 for another exhibition tour. He became a civilian instructor in Memphis, Tennessee for the Signal Corps until 1919.

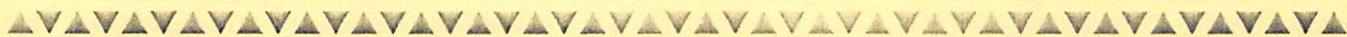
In 1919, he made one final exhibition tour in his beloved Bleriot, and here the mystery deepens. Supposedly, he put the Bleriot in storage in a Long Island, NY barn and returned to France. Early in 1950, Paul Garber, curator of the National Air Museum, purchased this aircraft and other planes and engines from a museum at Roosevelt Field, NY. In 1978, restoration on this machine was begun by the Smithsonian, and was completed in 1979, going on exhibit at the new National Air & Space Museum.

In 1929, Mr. Domenjoz was the President of Domenjoz Sail Plane, Inc. He had invented a new type of airplane, the prototype of which was being developed as a glider. The sole propulsion of this glider consisted of a mainsail and a jib sail as used on many sailing boats. The controls of the aircraft as well as the sails were both handled by the pilot. The design of the airframe was based on his beloved Bleriot; as a matter of fact, it could be called a Bleriot without an engine, with sails, and a shorter landing gear because there was no propeller.

In a special dispatch to the *Portland Press Herald* published in the April 30, 1929 issue, it is stated that at the present time, he had a plane in storage there. This seems to confirm that the Bleriot was at Houlton in 1929 and was still there in 1932, not at a farm in Long Island, New York. It was eventually sold to an aviation museum at Roosevelt Field, Mineola, Long Island, NY and remained there until it was purchased for the Smithsonian in 1950.

Returning to his Sail Plane, Mr. Domenjoz had been planning to take his glider to Florida for tests. However, in a conversation with Count Cesare Sabelli, commander of the unsuccessful attempt of the "Roma," a Bellanca sesquiplane, to fly to Rome in 1928 from Old Orchard Beach, Maine, he decided to come to Maine for his tests. He contacted Harry Jones, another pioneer aviator, and received his permission to use his hangar to assemble his glider. It was necessary to have a breeze of at least 25 miles per hour to lift the glider, and between April and June it had achieved 200 feet of altitude towed behind an automobile. In late June of 1929, Domenjoz returned to New York because the prospect of favorable breezes was slight throughout the summer. He had, however, been present for the flight of the "Yellowbird" to Comilles, Spain and Williams' and Yancy's attempt in the "Green Flash."

Once again, he abandoned his sailing glider in a crate stored on the property of Jane Lake of Old Orchard Beach. In 1965, this crate was transferred to the Owls Head Transportation Museum, where it was restored and is on exhibit today.



### MAINE AVIATION HISTORICAL SOCIETY MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

City, State, Zip \_\_\_\_\_

Special Interests \_\_\_\_\_ Phone \_\_\_\_\_

Annual Membership Dues are \$20.00. (\$10.00 for balance of 1994)

Please mail payment to: **Maine Aviation Historical Society**  
101 Monroe Avenue  
Westbrook, ME 04092-4020

- New
- Renewal

For more information, call 207-854-9972.

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## Listen Up! Read Up! Sign Up!

☞ We have joined the Maine Education Council for Aviation and Aerospace. We will keep you posted on their meetings and activities.

☞ Some of us met with Clay Carkin, who is the editor of *Windsock*, the publication of the Maine Pilots Association. This magazine is published six times a year and gets better with each issue. The spring double issue had articles by members Jim Chichetto (F-84's at Bangor and Air Freight in Maine), Brian Wood (his balloon flight), and Clay Carkin (interviews with aerobatic pilot Michael Goulian and WWII ace Gabby Gabreski). The May/June issue has a long piece by Myles Murphy on his experiences with "Blue Max" aircraft, the continuation of the Michael Goulian interview by Clay Carkin, and his piece on Charles J. Loring, Korean Medal of Honor winner. Send \$23 to Clay Carkin, *Windsock* Editor, RFD 5, Box 2321D, Brunswick, ME 04011 (payable to Maine Pilots Association). In addition to the magazine, you become a member of MPA.

☞ Many thanks to Larry Webster of the Quonset Air Museum for the latest update of the Maine listing of all the incidents in Maine to date. You too can join the Quonset Air Museum — individual membership is \$20 (plus a \$10 initiation fee) and their address is P.O. Box 1571, No. Kingston, RI 02852. They do great work, having restored the F6F-5 now in the New England Air Museum, and they recovered and are restoring the TBF from the Maine woods.

☞ Member Jim Keough (P.O. Box 870, Brunswick, ME 04011) has just published another of his Our Town Picture Histories. This one is entitled Trains, Planes and All-Mobiles, and is well worth the \$3.95 price at your local bookstore or newsstand. There is an article by member Neil Strange on the Portland Airport at Stroudwater, and pictures by members Neil and Norm Houle and others, eighteen in all — a good buy.

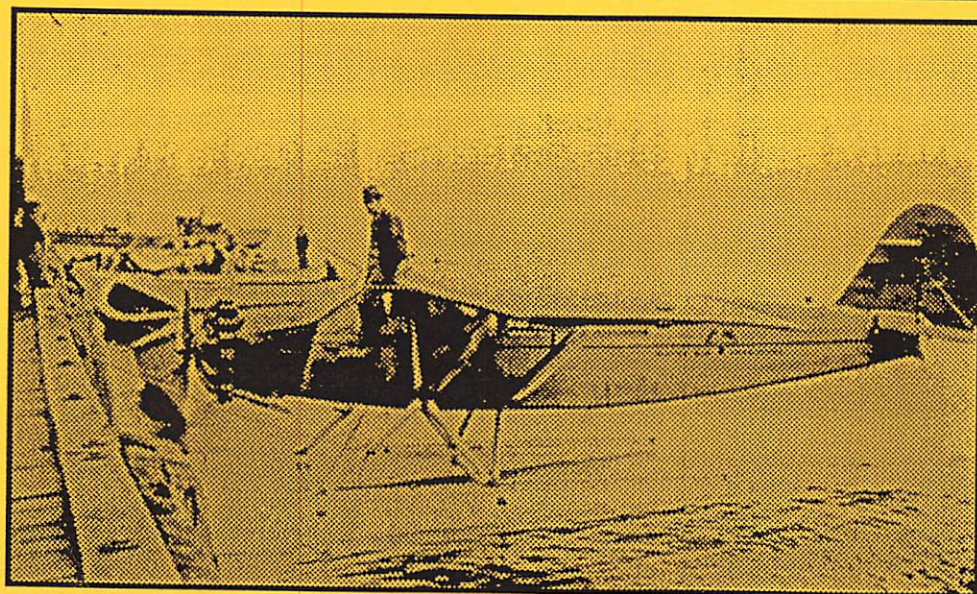
☞ We seem to be recommending lots of other groups and papers in this issue. One of our functions is to keep you informed of what is going on and what is available. We work with and help other groups and they help us. One of the best of all is the Owls Head Transportation Museum (P.O. Box 277, Owls Head, ME 04854). We have received great help from them and we try to help them in every way we can. If you are not a member, please consider helping them out in the great work they do. Call Colleen at 207-594-4418 and she'll tell you the bargain prices for joining.

### Mark Those Calendars . . .

■ Our next meeting will be held at 9 a.m. on Saturday, August 13th in the Conference Room of the Portland International Jetport Terminal. We hope to have a special pioneer speaker for this meeting if we can arrange it. The 1995 *Flying Down East* calendar is now at the printer's. This year it will be on glossy paper for better reproduction of the photographs. The price is \$6.95, so let us know how many you need for yourself, gifts, friends and Christmas presents. (Members' price is \$5 plus tax and postage.)

■ We will also have a limited number of the 1995 "Ghosts" calendar. This large 20"x14" full-color calendar features color photos of World War II aircraft. The calendar retails for \$14.95, but will be available to members while they last for \$10.60, tax included (add \$1.60 postage if you want it mailed). Send your check right away to reserve your copy and help the MAHS treasury as well.

■ We look forward to seeing you in Portland on August 13th. It's going to be a great meeting, and we'll go to Bangor when they're finished filming the Stephen King picture at the airport.



### Photo Quiz

A Maine Air Transport Travel Air SA-600A on EDO floats and powered by a 450HP P&W Wasp. Photo was taken in Rockland (?) or Bangor-Brewer (?) in the early 1930s. Can anyone help us with where and when and the N number?

P.S. The pilot is *not* Howard Hughes!

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Please let us know what we can do to help you, or things you would like us to plan. We are your society, and we need your ideas. For further information, please contact the Maine Aviation Historical Society, 101 Monroe Avenue, Westbrook, ME 04092-4020 or call (207) 854-9972.

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### Upcoming MAHS Meetings

August 13	9 a.m.	Conference Room, Portland International Jetport Terminal
Sept. 10, 11	9 a.m.	Greenville Fly-In, Greenville. (Jim, host) We hope to have a table and display there.
October 15	9 a.m.	Oxford Aviation, Oxford. (Lloyd Gates, host) Tour of Oxford Aviation.
November 12	9 a.m.	Lewiston/Auburn Airport. Possible tour of 1649s.
December 10	9 a.m.	Conference Room, Portland Jetport

### Calendar of Events

Aug. 19-21	Batavia, NY - Year of the "Cat"
August 21	Antique, Classic Auto Auction, Owls Head Transportation Museum
August 27, 28	Bowman Field Fly-In, East Livermore, ME
Aug. 27, 28	Westover AFB Snowbirds
Sept. 4	Motorcycle Meet and Air Show, Owls Head Transportation Museum
Sept. 10, 11	Seaplane Fly-In, Greenville, Maine
Sept. 11	Convertible Meet and Air Show, Owls Head Transportation Museum
Sept. 17, 18	Shearwater, Nova Scotia, International Air Show
Sept. 24, 25	New England Escadrille Air Show, Pease AFB, New Hampshire
Sept. 24, 25	25th Annual Gadabout Gaddis Air Show, Bingham, ME
October 2	Foreign Festival and Fall Flying Finale, Owls Head Transportation Museum
October 7, 8, 9	30th Northeast Aero Historians meeting, New England Air Museum, Bradley Field, CT
October 23	Great Fall Auction, Owls Head Transportation Museum

Maine Aviation Historical Society  
101 Monroe Avenue  
Westbrook, ME 04092-4020

**NEXT MEETING:**  
9 a.m. - Sat., August 13, 1994  
Portland International Jetport  
Conference Room