



# DIRIGO FLYER

Vol. II, No. 7 August 1994

## August Meeting Notes

On August 13th, 1994 summer caught up with our meetings, but a dozen hardy souls showed up at the Jetport. Ed Goldman had material and a picture of John Robert Ayer, a Bangor, Maine native who flew with the Eagle Squadron of the Royal Air Force in World War I and was lost over the English Channel. Member Norm Houle is researching Mr. Ayer and trying to fill in all the details.

Member Cliff Haines from Augusta is off to the Farnborough Air Show in England, and we hope to have a first-hand report at a future meeting.

## Air Tech On the Move

Air-Tech, Inc., the only full time FAA Certified Aviation Maintenance Technicians School in Maine, is changing its location from Limerick to Sanford Municipal Airport. The school purchased the former Structure & Design buildings at a bank auction this past winter. The entire staff is working diligently to prepare one of the buildings for the fall class which begins on September 19th. The buildings will allow Air-Tech to expand the total enrollment in the A&P program from 32 to 100 students.

The new facility in Sanford will allow Air-Tech to obtain a small jet plane for maintenance training as the Sanford runway is much longer than Limerick's. As a private, non-profit, educational institution, Air-Tech is able to receive donations from aviation enthusiasts and this has greatly aided in the development of the entire aviation maintenance program over the years. Air-Tech provides the kind of technological training that is just now being recognized at the national level as the key to America's future in the global economy.

### Calling All Aviation & Education Enthusiasts! Support Air-Tech Dollar Daze, a Scholarship and Technical Equipment Fund

Have you got a dollar or maybe two? Why not send one to the Air-Tech Fund today? 100% of each and every dollar goes into the Fund. Fifty cents of each dollar will go to student scholarships and fifty cents will go to technical training equipment. Air-Tech has been training aviation maintenance technicians for 23 years.

Air-Tech is 501 (c) (3) approved. All donations are tax deductible. Send SASE for receipt. Send donations to: Air-Tech Fund, RR 1 Box 170, Limerick, ME 04048. For more information, call 207-793-8020.

## A New Home for MAHS?

We have been approached by Dana and Pat Smith of Air-Tech about their current facility in Limerick. They are willing to work with us toward the use of these buildings as a future home for the Maine Aviation Historical Society. This consists of two buildings, 60' by 72', joined by an office building, 36' by 40'. There is a separate detached welding building. A 2000' by 100' airstrip with a seaplane landing facility and a 50' by 64' hangar are adjacent to the other buildings. The Smiths live next door and are very interested in seeing this remain an aviation-related operation with an airstrip rather than a commercial or residential development.

A project of this magnitude will involve major fund-raising and a great deal of work. As a result, a committee was appointed consisting of Leo Boyle (854-9972), Ed Rohr (729-4226), Clay Carkin (729-5976), Jim Chichetto (269-3281) and Norm Houle (603-664-5631). It was also decided to check out other possibilities such as, but not limited to, the WWII control tower at Sanford, a WWII hangar at Lewiston-Auburn, and the availability of something at Bangor. Please communicate any ideas or possibilities to the committee members above as soon as possible. Volunteer help will be needed and please let us know if you can work with us on this exciting project.

## FYI · FYI · FYI · FYI · FYI · FYI

✓ In this issue is a notice about World War II Aeroplanes. I would highly recommend either or both of these journals to the members. *World War I Aero* covers the period 1900-1919 in great detail, as does *Skyways* for the period 1920-40.

✓ The 1995 *Flying Down East* calendar is now available and will be appearing in bookstores as I write. Members may purchase one for \$6.50, including tax and postage. It's the perfect birthday or Christmas present, so do your shopping early.

✓ We will have a table at the Greenville Fly-In on September 10 & 11. Please stop by, and volunteers are welcome.

✓ Due to the urgent business before us, the next meeting will be held at 9 AM, September 17, at the Conference Room at the Portland Jetport. Please make a special effort to attend and add your ideas to the discussion of our future home.

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# When Pan-Am Flew to Rockland

*Reprinted here from the 8/23/94 Rockland Courier Gazette is a fine article by David Grima about when Pan-Am flew to Rockland.*

**ROCKLAND** — The first regularly scheduled airline service in Maine opened August 1, 1931, with Rockland as a stop on a route between Boston and Halifax, N.S.

These were the days before there was an airfield at Owls Head, and at first the new air service used Rockland Airport. This was on Holmes Street at a spot now occupied by South School. Unfortunately there seem to be no photographs of Rockland Airport.

The service was organized by the Boston and Maine Railroad Company and Maine Central Railroad in association with Pan-American. It was a seasonal route.

Pan-Am used airplanes that it operated on its winter routes between Miami, the Caribbean, and South America.

The new route was from Boston, via Portland, Rockland, Bangor, Calais, and thence to Halifax, and back, in a Fokker F-10 airplane. This machine had wheels and was therefore rigged to operate from a conventional airfield.

But the landing field at Holmes Street proved unsuitable for this heavy machine, and it looked as though the service might end after only a few days.

The Rockland Chamber of Commerce was unwilling to see the city cut out of the route because of this difficulty. Members held a meeting and promised to rebuild the runway if necessary.

But such a large project, although desirable, was not even slightly practical in the short space of time allotted. The air service was only supposed to run for two or three months.

Instead, Pan-Am switched to a Sikorsky S-41 seaplane and abandoned Rockland Airport, which does not seem to have been used again for anything other than light airplanes.

The seaplane base was established at Tillson Avenue, on a float owned by Maine Air Transport, a local flying service.

The MAT manager was Kermit White, and among his duties was the responsibility of sending off a telegram to Bangor or Portland, as soon as the Pan-Am airplane departed Rockland, to advise the next base of the likely time of arrival.

Among the passengers who flew via Rockland for that short season of scheduled airline trips was one Franklin D. Roosevelt, governor of New York.

According to the Maine Aviation Historical Society of Westbrook, one of the airplanes used on Pan-Am's Maine route that summer came to grief.

A Sikorsky S-41B seaplane airliner crashed into the Gulf of Maine off Gloucester, Mass., August 27, 1931. One passenger died in this wreck.

There is a postscript to this story that underlines the facts of competition in the transportation industry.

It was not surprising that a railroad company should get involved in the airline business, although the Maine route was said to be probably the first such arrangement in this country, possibly the world.

But the railroads had a tradition of diversifying in order to get the maximum amount of income from the travel business.

For example, the Maine Central Railroad once owned a steamship wharf on Mechanic Street in Rockland, and in 1925 set up a subsidiary to own the Samoset and other resorts, as well as trucks and busses.

But in the end it all ended. In January 1947, Maine Central Railroad ran a large advertisement in this newspaper, complaining bitterly about how the government subsidized airports to the railroad's disadvantage.

By then Owl's Head airfield, built as a military air base, was operating as a civilian airport.

Finally, it should be noted that, by coincidence, the Pan-Am service at Rockland began the day after the Rockland-Thomaston and Camden Streetcar Company ceased operating in the Midcoast. As one mode of transportation folded, another opened up.

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## New Member News

We are happy to welcome three new members:

- 75. Sherman L. Tinkham** (Aviation History)  
1406 E. Lotus Path • Clearwater, FL 34616  
813-442-4610
- 76. Carl M. Richardson** (WWII Warbirds, P-51D)  
99 Oakland Avenue • Westbrook, ME 04092  
207-854-4157
- 77. L. Everett Hawkes**  
7 Orchard Road • Windham, ME 04062

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## Mark Your Calendars - Again!

Enclosed is a registration, program and motel information for the 30th Annual Northeast Aero Historians meeting. This will be hosted by the New England Air Museum on October 7, 8 & 9 at the museum. I strongly recommend attending — it looks like a great program and lots of interesting aviation people will be there. Contact Leo Boyle (854-9972) for more details or if you are going. Car pooling and room sharing are possibilities.

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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

Sept. 10, 11	9 a.m.	Greenville Fly-In, Greenville (see info enclosed)
September 17	9 a.m.	Conference Room, Portland International Jetport
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

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

### 1995 Flying Down East Maine Aviation Historical Calendar

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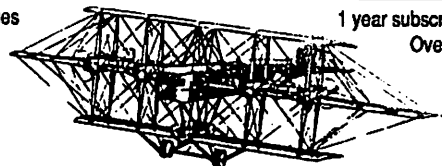
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## MAINE AVIATION HISTORICAL SOCIETY MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION

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

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For more information, call 207-854-9972.

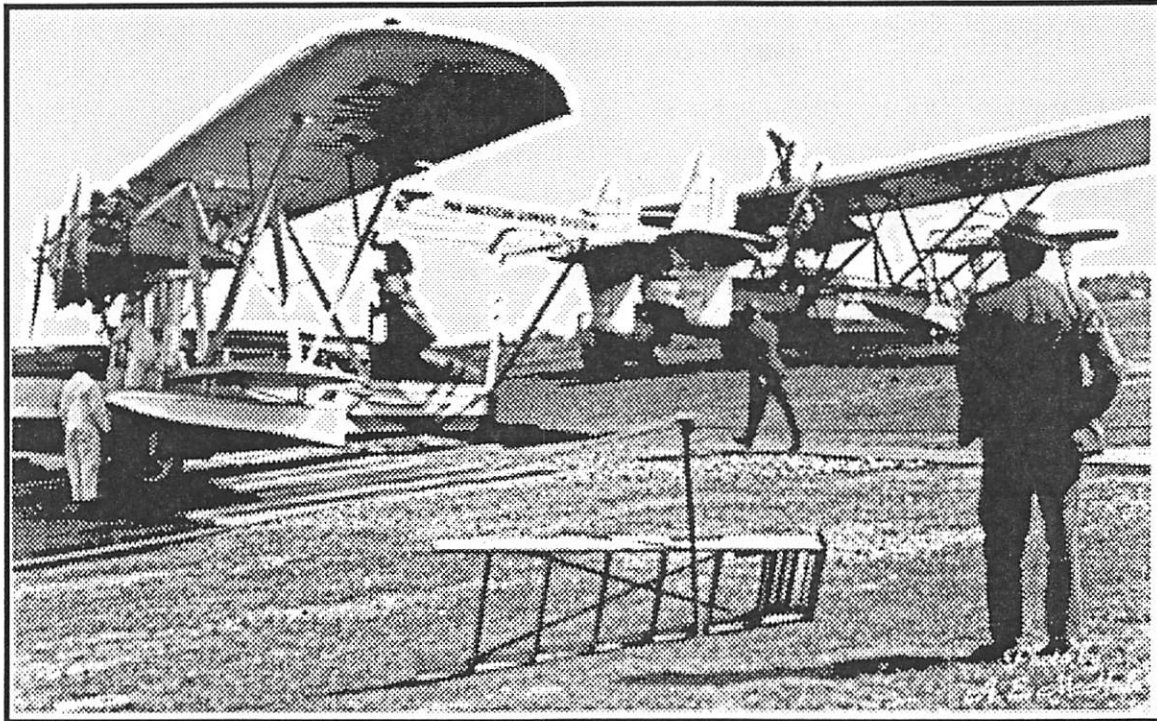


Photo: Norm Houle

A rare photograph taken at Bangor, Maine in September 1931. In the foreground is Pan-Am Sikorsky S-38B NC-9107, serial # 114-6 which replaces Sikorsky S-41 NC-41V, serial #1100X which crashed in Mass. Bay on 8/27/31. In the rear is Sikorsky S-41 NC784Y, serial #1105. The two planes are crossing on the Boston-Halifax route which Pan-Am flew from July until September 1931.

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

**SEE YOU AT THE  
GREENVILLE  
SEAPLANE FLY-IN  
SEPTEMBER 10 & 11**

**NEXT MEETING:**  
Sat., September 17th — 9 a.m.  
Portland International Jetport  
Conference Room