



DIRIGO FLYER

Vol. III, No. 4 April 1995

Newsletter of the Maine Aviation Historical Society • 101 Monroe Avenue, Westbrook, Maine 04092 • 207-854-9972

March Meeting News and Views

The March meeting was held on April 8 at the Congregational Church in Pittsfield. It was great fun to have a meeting somewhere other than Portland and see lots of different faces. Our thanks to Butch Beaver of Pittsfield for arranging the meeting place for us. Attendees included Oscar Blue, Jim and James Chichetto, Rob Rohr, Brian Wood, Mike Dolan, Larry Closson, Jim Hodges, Don Littlefield, Bob Beaver, Grant Powers and Leo Boyle. Harris Mathews spent too much of the morning waiting for Norm Houle, but was most welcome when he did arrive. Also present was Jim Davis of the *Waterville Sentinel*.

MEETING HIGHLIGHTS

After the usual business session, Jim Chichetto told us he is waiting on the arrival of spring to get together with Keith Strange and recon the site of the *Sea Fury* crash in Staceyville. He also spoke of a supposed P-40 crash site on Turner Mountain. Butch Beaver spoke of Steve Alex's F-104 behind the garage by the 10-4 Diner in Thorndike. Rob Rohr brought us up-to-date on the Great State O' Maine Air Show at the Brunswick Naval Air Station on July 22nd and 23rd. In addition to the Thunderbirds, he says they have confirmed Patty Wagstaff, the Red Baron Team, the Pepsi Team and a B-1 Bomber. It looks like a great event shaping up, and we'll be there with a table and display. Volunteers are needed to help man the table. If you can't help, be sure and stop by and visit for a while.

The Civil Air Patrol is holding an Open House at the old terminal in Portland on April 20th from 6:30-9:00 p.m. We will also have a small table there, and you're invited to drop by. They will also have one in Augusta later. Brian Wood (207-985-6479) is leading a hike to the C-54 crash on Fort Mountain the weekend of May 27th. Call him if you are interested in going on this hike. He is also going to Mount Success in New Hampshire to the Northeast Airlines DC-3 crash later. Larry Closson, among others, brought some great photos which were enjoyed by all. Harris Mathews brought some photos of the Brewer Airport which were really great, as was his story of buzzing Norm Houle off the hanger roof back in 1959.

BIG SPRUCE MOUNTAIN EXPEDITION

Oscar Blue then filled us in on the coming expedition to Big Spruce Mountain. Back in 1942, a Royal Canadian Air Force Avro Anson crashed in the Katahdin Iron Works area. The U.S. Army Air Corps sent up a search plane from Dow Field. They spotted a "weathered white" plane crash on Big Spruce Mountain and reported it to the search team that was organizing at the Iron Works. In the meantime, the lone survivor appeared. However, he came out on the other side of town and the searchers realized that the crash had occurred on Saddleback Mountain. The search aircraft then found both wrecks. Because the Saddleback crash was the correct one, the Big Spruce Mountain one was never investigated further.

On May 8, 1927, Charles Nungesser and Francis Coli had left France on an attempted flight to New York. They were seen passing over the Irish coast, and there were several reports that they had been seen or heard over Newfoundland and in the Machias, Maine area. No evidence has ever been found of them or of their plane. Coli, the navigator, had an alternate plan if they made a landfall and were short of fuel to reach New York. This plan was to alter course and fly to Montreal. If they were really heard in the Machias area and decided to head to Montreal, they would pass right over the Big Spruce Mtn. area.

The man-made appearing object which we photographed last year on three flights over the area appears to be a the 2700' level of this 3100' mountain. It also shows in the 1955 photo taken by the James W. Sewall Co. Harris Mathews confirms that the early morning sunlight glints off something on the mountain. (He also tells us that there is an accessible crash site on Borestone Mountain in Elliotsville — possibly a World War II cargo plane about three-quarters of the way up.) We feel that it's about time that someone tried to find out what is on Big Spruce Mountain.

After the snow goes, the roads become passable, and before the foliage (and black flies) come out, we are planning to mount an expedition to reach this site and find out what is there. Jim Chichetto and Leo Boyle are going to overfly the area and keep tabs on when we will be able to go. The underbrush is very thick up there and we will probably have to follow moose trails to get close to the site.

We have numerous volunteers who want to participate and we trust we will have a good crew to go in when the time comes. We need experienced woods people, first aid and survival equipment, two-way radios, portable magnetic detection equipment and hand-held GPS equipment. Bill Nungesser of New York and Des McGrath from Newfoundland are both very interested and hope that they will be able to participate. As this is a speculative venture at the present time, publicity should be kept to a bare minimum, and any news media inquiries should be directed to Leo Boyle (207-854-9972). Win or lose, we look forward to an exciting expedition.

CORRECTION

The 1955 photo of Big Spruce Mountain which Clark Thompson of the James W. Sewall Co. donated to our search mission were taken from an altitude of 10,890', not 1320' as stated in the last newsletter. The scale is 1320' to one inch. (The editor's mistake.)

DON'T MISS THE JOINT MAY MEETING AT AIRPORT FLY MARKET

The May meeting should also be a fun outing. It will be held at Mike Hart's Hampton, NH Airport on Route 1 in Hampton, NH. Mike is getting ready to celebrate the 50th anniversary of the airport and this is the 19th Annual Fly Market. All types of antique and classic aircraft fly in for this event and you can see lots of great planes as well as meet great people. The restaurant is going to be open under new management, so good food will be available, too.

The New Hampshire and Massachusetts Aviation Historical Societies will be meeting with us and we will be discussing where we are all going and the best ways to get there, individually and collectively. Be sure and bring your piggy bank so you can buy some of the great things that Houle will be selling there.

NHAHS NEWS

Norm Houle, Leo Boyle, T.K. Dudley and Dexter Baum attended the April 15th meeting of the New Hampshire Aviation Historical Society at the Air Guard Facility at Pease International Tradeport. They've got a great group of people and they should have a very successful organization. Lt. Rick Swanson gave us a brief rundown on the history of the New Hampshire Air Guard with lots of great pictures of the P-47s, P-51s, F-86s, C-130s, C-124s, C-97s and KC-97s they have used through the years. He then bussed us all out to the ramp and we had a guided tour of a KC-97 from the cockpit to the refueling operator's position in the rear belly of the plane.

We want to extend our sincere thanks to Lt. Swanson for hosting the meeting and arranging the tour. I'm sure it was appreciated by all. By the way, dues are \$20.00 a year and anyone interested in joining should contact Norm Houle (603-664-5631).

THE VOTES ARE IN — MPA'S WIND SOCK FORMAT STAYS

The results of the Maine Pilot's Association recent survey are in and it has been decided to keep their magazine, the *Wind Sock*, in the magazine format rather than a tabloid newspaper form. This is good news for all of our members, and we can help to make it a success. If you have news for the magazine, let Clay Carkin know (207-729-5976). I'm sure they would also be interested in receiving any great stories (Maine-related) from all you would-be authors. Dexter Baum took notes and T.K. Dudley took pictures at the New Hampshire KC-97 tour and I'm sure you can look forward to an article on this in a future issue. Better yet, join the new Maine Pilots Association and be sure of your copy. Call Dexter Baum at 207-646-4877.

WELCOME NEW MEMBERS

- We welcome three new members with this issue:
101. William Townsend (Aviation History, Crashes)
12 Spring St., Bar Harbor, ME 04609
207-288-5654 (B) 207-288-4075 (H)
 102. Frank Powers (XR60-1, XC-99, CAP)
P.O. Box 5253, Augusta, ME 04332
207-623-0136
 103. Richard D. Bleakney (Old Aviation, GeeBees)
99 Clinton St., Suite 206, Concord, NH 03301-2279
603-225-0779

THANKS AGAIN!

We want to thank Butch Beaver of Pittsfield for the 1928 book *The Prehistory of Flight* and also for the box of goodies for everyone to pore through at the last meeting.

And thanks to Andy Stinson for the picture of a Curtiss JN4 with the number 3 on the rudder. We now have pictures of numbers 1, 3, 4 and 5 in these early Maine registrations, but no more knowledge of when they were issued nor how many. HELP!!

Thanks also to Harris Mathews for the c.1959 Brewer Airport photos, one of which is reproduced below.



Upcoming MAHS Meetings

May 20, 21	All Day	Hampton (NH) Airport Flea Market *
June 10	9 a.m.	TBA
July 1, 2	9 a.m.	Military Air Show, Owls Head Transportation Museum *
July 22, 23	9 a.m.	Great State o' Maine Air Show, Brunswick Naval Air Station *
August 12	9 a.m.	TBA
September 9, 10	9 a.m.	Greenville Seaplane Fly-In, Greenville, Maine *
October 19	9 a.m.	TBA
November 11	9 a.m.	TBA
December 9	9 a.m.	TBA

* Indicates that we will have a table and display at these events.

All these upcoming Maine Aviation Historical Society meetings are tentative and subject to change. The definite ones are July 1 & 2 at Owls Head, July 22 & 23 at Brunswick, and September 9 & 10 at Greenville.

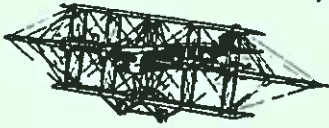
Calendar of Events

April 29		Alton Bay Flying Club Fly-In, Laconia, NH
May 20		Walter J. Boyne Lecture, New England Air Museum
May 20-21		Hampton Flea Market, Hampton (NH) Airport - ME, MA, NHAHS Joint Meeting
May 28	10 a.m.	Air Show and Ford Festival, Owls Head
June 3-4		Mid-Atlantic Air Museum WWII Weekend, Gabreski and Morgan
June 4	10 a.m.	Air Show, Convertible and Custom Show, Owls Head
June 10		1st MPA Fly-In, Belfast Airport
June 10-11		Hanscom AFB Open House, Thunderbirds, Bedford, MA
June 17-18	10 a.m.	Maine State Soap Box Derby, Owls Head
July 1-2	10 a.m.	Military Air Show, Owls Head
July 9	10 a.m.	Air Show and 50s-60s, Owls Head
July 22-23	9 a.m.	Great State o' Maine Air Show, Brunswick Naval Air Station, Thunderbirds
July 22-23	10 a.m.	Air Show and Truck and Tractor Meet, Owls Head
July 27-Aug. 2		EAA Fly-In Convention, Oshkosh, WI
August 5-6	10 a.m.	Aerobatic Show and Transportation Rally, Owls Head
August 10-13		Sentimental Journey, Lock Haven, PA
August 12		Waterville, N.S. Fly-In
August 18-20		Great Falls Balloon Festival, Lewiston-Auburn, ME
August 18-20		Wings of Eagles Air Show, Batavia, NY
September 9-10		Greenville, ME Seaplane Fly-In
October 8		Fall Flying Finale, Owls Head
October 13-15		31st Northeast Aero Historians Convention, Ottawa, Ontario, Canada
October 22		Great Fall Auction, Owls Head

As we get dates, other events will be added. Let us know what you know.

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Former CAP Members Sought

As assistant historian for Maine Wing, Civil Air Patrol, I am trying to make contact with former CAP members who served in Maine from the period of 1941 to 1951. I would like to interview these former members as well as obtain photos, clippings and uniform items.

Any information would be appreciated. Thanks.

Max C. Calderwood, Sgt., CAP
P.O. Box 657
Gorham, ME 04038-0657

(207) 727-4207 (evenings)

MAINE AVIATION HISTORICAL SOCIETY MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION

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NEXT MEETING:
Sat-Sun., May 20-21
Hampton Airport Fly Market
Route 1
Hampton, NH