

# DIRIGO FLYER

PROPERTY OF  
EAA 87

Vol. V, No. 9 September 1997

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

## Hands Across the Atlantic The "L'Oiseau Blanc" Search Continues

By Jim Chichetto

On Saturday August 16th, members of the MAHS and guests met at the parking lot behind the Ellsworth MacDonald's. MAHS members going on the hike were: Leo Boyle, Oscar Blue, Ed and Bill Armstrong, Jim and Irene Rivers, Bill Haeefe and Jim Chichetto. Joining us were William L. Nungesser from Riverhead, NY, grandcousin of Charles, and Laure Leveziel from Saint Mande, France. Bill is the US connection of the Nungesser family and has spent years researching the fate of his famous relative. His cousin, Roland Nungesser, is the French connection. He lives very close to Laure Leveziel near Paris. Laure Leveziel is the attaché to the Mayor of Saint Mande and she is also the town archivist. Her other duties include being the curator of all Charles Nungesser information in the museum at Saint Mande, France.

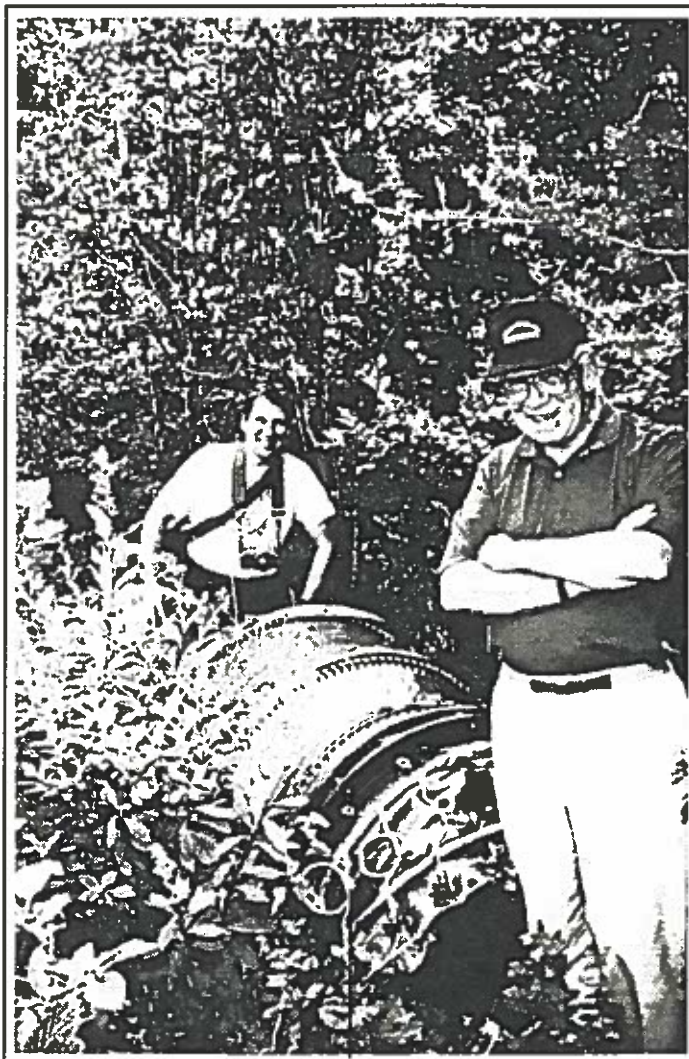
We doubled up into four vehicles and headed down the road. We arrived at the dirt road we use to drive into the search area about 25 minutes later. We left the autos there and took Oscar's Jeep and Jim Rivers' truck up a logging road to the base site. Once there we brought out the maps, photos, drawings and other data to explain what we were looking at and why we think this site has good potential. Then Jim Rivers walked everyone over the

ledges and explained what he and Jim Millet and Ed Armstrong had done in the past. We explained what steps we have undertaken at this time to use 1997 technology and have it applied to this site. We are in hopes to have some good news on that front this fall. On the way back out of the woods we interrupted a large hawk who was trying to hunt above the tote

road. He kept flying ahead of us until he realized we had scared off his lunch by our passage. For Laure, who lives in a city, the woods and birds were an interesting change of scenery.

It was decided to go somewhere for lunch so all of us headed down to a lobster place in Hancock to ensure that Laure had a chance to see and eat a Maine lobster "in the rough." Ruth and Wimpy's was chosen and three tables outside were taken over for our lunch. While waiting for lunch to be served more photos, maps and information was exchanged. Laure was also introduced to live lobsters and had a chance to see firsthand how they are

"Hands," continued on page 2



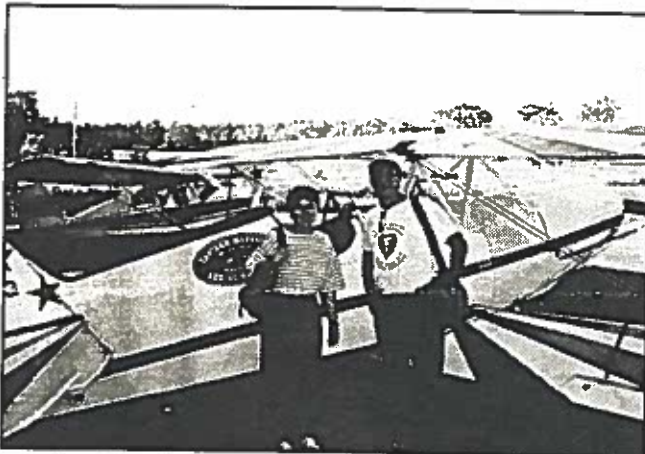
### A Milestone for MAHS!

This is what President Jim Chichetto says as he captures Bill Nungesser and Leo Boyle beside the P&W engine at the F-101B crash site in Dedham. "We finally got Leo to an actual crash site!" (Jim Chichetto Photo)

"Hands," continued from page 1

cooked and processed. Bill Nungesser showed us some of his 12,000 pictures of his famous grand-cousin. They were from early years, WW I, his barnstorming and movie days and his wedding. Also, there was a complete set of photos of the "White Bird" as it was being built and tested before the trans-Atlantic flight.

After we all had eaten, the group broke up and headed in different directions homeward. Since Leo, Bill and Laure were staying in a Bangor hotel for the night, Leo decided to take John Miller's offer of a tour of his airstrip and collection in Newburgh. I met them over there and we all had fun looking at John's artifacts and memorabilia. John was hosting the Young Eagles program so the airport was busy. As we sat and watched the various take-offs and landings, Laure had a chance to see a different type of flying. She declined invitations to fly, but Bill



Laure Leveziel from France and Bill Nungesser, cousin of Charles Nungesser, pilot of "L'Oiseau Blanc," in front of John Miller's Skybolt in Carmel. The sun finally came out! (Leo Boyle Photo)

Nungesser was quick to take up John's offer of an early evening flight around the local area.

On Sunday, another hike was taken. Bill, Leo and Laure were heading back South after lunch so they wanted an easy hike to a known site. Neither one had ever seen an aircraft crash site in the wild so I took them and other MAHS members up to the F-101B site near Bald Mountain.

I called Dwayne Smith, the land owner, and told him we were coming up. We stopped by and spoke with him on the way into the crash site. The party on Sunday included Leo Boyle, Bill Townsend, Carroll Leland, Sue Chichetto, Jules Arel, Bill Nungesser, Laure Leveziel and myself.

After parking at the end of the trail, we started the walk into the wing site. The going wasn't too hard and we all reached it in a short time. I explained to them how these two large parts of the Voodoo ended up resting here on the lower hill side. After photos and inspection of the airframe we headed up the hill to the memorial site. Once up the hill I took the group through the



"White Bird" search team (l to r): Oscar Blue, Bill Haefele, Jim Chichetto, Laure Leveziel from St. Mande, France, Bill Nungesser from New York, Ed and Bill Armstrong and Jimmie Rivers, our guide. (Leo Boyle Photo)

area and pointed out what happened and the time frame, conditions, etc. of that fateful last flight. After everyone had their photos and were ready to come back down to the main road, we slowly worked our way along the woods and back to the wing section. From there we hiked over to the resting spot of the remaining Pratt and Whitney J57-P-55 engine. Both engines had torn free on impact and thundered over the snow covered hill top and down the frozen hill bashing their way from tree to tree until they came out a few hundred yards from the Johnson's house. One was salvaged for scrap years ago, but the other sits silently resting, stainless steel still bright as the day it was built, beside a garden high up on a quiet hill side, a silent sentinel to the now-forgotten cold war and the cost of freedom which was paid by those who fought it.

Bill and Laure made it safely back to New York. She was going to do some more traveling in the US before flying home on the 23rd. This was her first trip to Maine, and I hope she will be back many times in the future. MAHS will be hiking the site again this fall, after the leaves go.



Jim Chichetto, Ed Armstrong and Jimmie Rivers, our intrepid leaders. (Leo Boyle Photo)

# Behind the Scenes with the "White Bird" Search Team



Bill Nungesser adds F-101B crash parts to his memorabilia, until we find "L'Oiseau Blanc." (Leo Boyle Photo)



Laure Leveziel enjoys her first Maine lobster, ably guided by Ed Armstrong at Wimpy & Ruth's in Hancock after the "White Bird" hike. (Leo Boyle Photo)



Jimmie Rivers explains to Bill Nungesser where we are going and why. (Leo Boyle Photo)



Bill Nungesser "shoots" Laure Leveziel at the F-101B crash site in Dedham. (Leo Boyle Photo)

### *We did NOT forget!*

The Maine Air Museum update and the "White Bird" search pre-empted Part II of "Three Men in a Plane" and also "A Visit to the Maine Air National Guard." They will appear in the October *Dirigo Flyer*.



## Aerobat Aviation Gallery

LAWRENCE E. NICKERSON  
2107 CARMEL ROAD NORTH  
NEWBURGH, MAINE 04444

TEL. 207-234-7125  
E-MAIL: aerobatflyer@uninet.net

NEW ENGLAND

### *Wing Waxers*

RFD 4 Box 5735  
Winthrop, ME 04364



*Cynthia A & Marc E. McDonnell*  
Owner/Operators

- \* Aircraft Detailing
- \* Mobile Services
- \* Teflon Coating

Local (207) 377-6639  
Phone (888) 929-9464  
Call for info or appt.

## Maine Air Museum Update

On August 22nd, 1997, members of the Air Museum Committee held a meeting in the FAA Building adjacent to the General Aviation Terminal at BIA. The turn out was good and the group discussed the on-going efforts to locate our museum on a site at BIA. Jules Arel brought in the City of Bangor's latest proposal. They are offering the MAHS a site along the soon to be relocated Maine Ave. This site allows direct access and includes part of the taxi-way used by general aviation and the Maine U.S. Army Guard. The land will have excellent frontage on the new Maine Ave. With the use of the photo provided by the city which shows the route of the road after reconstruction, and a larger photo of BIA to show everyone present how our site would fit into the overall BIA picture, it was agreed by those members present to accept the city's offer.

This 4.5 acre site has everything we need to start and run a successful air museum. It will be a challenge for all of us to now support the Museum Committee's choice. We are now sending out letters to our members who have the special skills we need to accomplish this next step. It will take a team effort from many people to bring this project forward. We will work to keep everyone informed and try to get each of you involved in some way. It's not every day you can get involved in the start-up of a museum which will become the standard by which others will be judged. We are now in the process of planning the long range 5 and 10 year plans. We are also looking at our priority list for aircraft and the costs of those assets and their management. To that end, building design and costs were discussed. We are looking at a new steel building to house the museum. It will be designed so we can expand it later as needed. We are also working on the hardest part now, the money to make this happen. We will be using a professional fund raiser to help us reach the target goal. If the plan works as well as it has to date, we plan on ground breaking in the spring of 1998. A more complete picture of what we are doing and what areas we need to focus on will be presented at the September 13th meeting. It will be held in Bangor so that everyone present can tour the proposed site and see for themselves where our new home will be located.

### Welcome, New Members!

- |      |   |                |
|------|---|----------------|
| 211. | <b>Laure Leveziel</b> ( <i>"L'Oiseau Blanc"</i> )<br>7 Rue Emile Zola<br>94130 Nogent Sur Marne, France | 01.48.73.46.42 |
| 212. | <b>Dan Namowitz</b> ( <i>Aviation Writer</i> )<br>30 Thornton Road<br>Bangor, Maine                     | 207-947-6185   |
| 213. | <b>Jeff Barnes</b> ( <i>Navigation</i> )<br>134 Main Street, Apt. 511W<br>Bangor ME 04401               | 207-945-9326   |
| 214. | <b>Hugh T. Rogers</b> ( <i>Old Town Pilot</i> )<br>P.O. Box 748<br>Seabrook, NH 03874                   | 603-474-7651   |

There will be many jobs, committees and working groups which will be set up during this fall and winter. Please think of where your talents lie and what you would like to do as a museum volunteer. Once the actual construction begins we expect a building up in less than four months. Once the major construction work is done, all sorts of skills will be needed to build the exhibits, set up a shop, a library, store, offices and floor displays. Add to that list outside ground work, ramp work and security and you start to understand why we will have a job for each of you to do. You wanted it and we are bringing it into being to meet that need. We now need you to come forward and support our efforts.

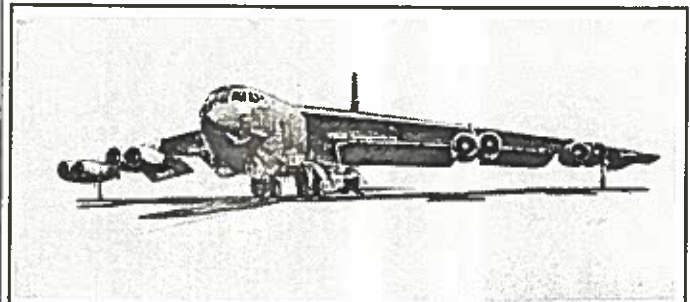
Thanks to everyone who has helped and supported our efforts to establish this museum. A special thanks goes out to Jules Arel for his tireless efforts to secure a home for the museum. Without Jules' efforts, we would still be talking about a site, not negotiating a lease with the city.

### Mystery Photos for July/August

We still have no answers for the Curtiss type bi-plane in the Calais area which appeared in the July and August issues. No one won the prize for the August mystery photo. The plane is the British DeHavilland D.H.80 Puss Moth G-ABXY and named "The Heart's Content." Flown by James A. Mollison, the Puss Moth took off from a beach in Ireland to become the first solo flight from east to west across the Atlantic. Arriving over Halifax 24 hours later, he headed for New York. Lost in the fog, he landed six hours later in a field at Pennfield Ridge in New Brunswick, just across the border from Maine. Two days later, he flew on to New York City.

### Raffle

This beautiful B-52 print (B&W), donated to MAHS by Larry Nickerson of Aerobat Aviation Gallery (see ad), will be auctioned off to benefit the MAHS. Tickets, limited to 600, are 3 for \$1.00 and are available by mail, at our booth at Greenville or at the September meeting in Bangor.



Bid early and often for this beautiful print and a great cause!

## Upcoming MAHS Meetings and Calendar of Events

September 6-7 .....	All Day .....	International Seaplane Fly-In, Greenville, Maine*
September 13 .....	9 a.m. ....	MAHS Meeting, General Aviation Terminal, Bangor International Airport.
September 20-21 .....	10 a.m. ....	Antique Aeroplane Show, Owls Head Transportation Museum
October 5 .....	10 a.m. ....	Antique Aeroplane Show, Owls Head Transportation Museum
October 11 .....	9 a.m. ....	MAHS Meeting, TBA
October 26 .....	10 a.m. ....	Great Fall Auction, Owls Head Transportation Museum. Free admission.
November 8 .....	9 a.m. ....	MAHS Meeting, TBA
December 13 .....	9 a.m. ....	MAHS Meeting, TBA

The meeting sites can be flexible. We are looking for suggestions on locations for many of these meetings. The same goes for the weekend hikes — let us know. We are also looking for guest speakers, slide shows, etc. Call Leo at 207-854-9972 or Jim at 207-269-3281 if you have any ideas or can be of help.

In addition, we will be scheduling hikes to aircraft wrecks from spring until fall. PLEASE: When you go to the sites of aircraft wrecks, sponsored by MAHS or not, please respect the site. Small souvenirs or remembrances taken are all right, but no wholesale carrying off of parts. Landowners become upset when truckloads disappear. They own the wreckage, and we may all lose our privilege to visit these sites if wholesale looting continues.

\* We will have booths at these events. Volunteers needed.

## An Unexpected Adventure

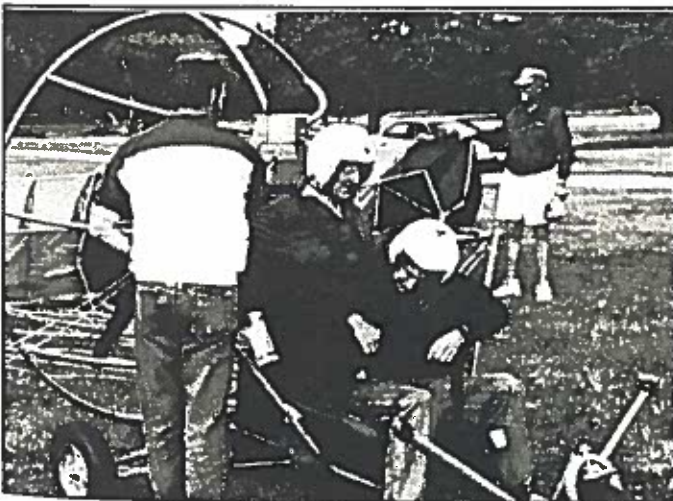
By Leo Boyle

On a recent Friday afternoon, Harvey Warren called your editor to drop over to Phineas Sprague's airstrip in Cape Elizabeth and see a demonstration of the Skye Ryder Aerochute that evening. Harvey Gregoire of Irasburg, VT would be piloting the machine and showing what it could do.

Upon arrival, I watched the Skye Ryder take off, and was immediately helped into a jumpsuit and helmet, being told, "You're next!" What fun! With a maximum speed of 26 mph, we lifted off, climbed to a couple of hundred feet and turned into the wind. Proceeding ahead at about 15 mph, we cruised the shore, returned to the airstrip for a high speed (?) pass over

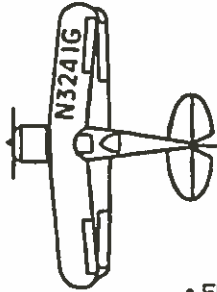
the crowd, circled around and came in for a gentle landing on the grass. Anyone into ultra-lights or fun flying should look into the Skye Ryder Aerochute.

My thanks to Harvey for inviting me, Mr. and Mrs. Phineas Sprague, our gracious hosts, and Harv Gregoire, the pilot.



Not exactly a trans-Atlantic take-off, but here we go headed for the open water in the Skye Ryder Aerochute. (Leo Boyle Photo)

Phineas Sprague of Cape Elizabeth waits as pilot Harv Gregoire straps into the Skye Ryder Aerochute for his flight to Ram Island Farm. (Leo Boyle Photo)



93 North Road  
Newburgh, Maine 04444  
Tel/Fax: (207) 234-2777

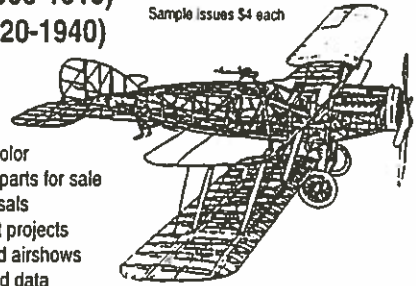
**VINTAGE WINGS  
MILLERS FIELD**

- Flight Instruction - Basic, Tailwheel, Skis, Aerobatics
- Photography - Aerial Oblique, Air to Air
- Aircraft and Parts - Bought and Sold
- Aviation Art, Books, Artifacts

JOHN M. MILLER

**WWI AERO (1900-1919)  
SKYWAYS (1920-1940)**

Sample issues \$4 each



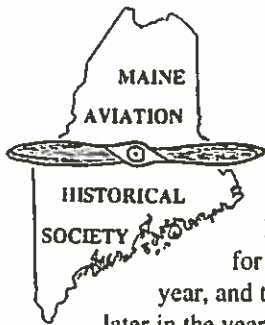
- historical research
- workshop notes
- information on paint/color
- aeroplanes, engines, parts for sale
- your wants and disposals
- information on current projects
- news of museums and airshows
- technical drawings and data
- photographs
- scale modelling material
- news of current publications

**BUILD ONE! A REAL ONE!**

Sole distributors for P3V, a computer program to generate a 3-view from a photograph.

Published by: **WORLD WAR I Aeroplanes, INC.**

15 Crescent Road, Poughkeepsie, NY 12601 USA (914) 473-3679



1997

**JOIN THE MAINE AVIATION HISTORICAL SOCIETY TODAY  
AND HELP ENSURE OUR LEGACY FOR TOMORROW**

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

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

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

Membership	Dues	Benefits
Regular	\$20 annual	Newsletter
Corporate	\$50 annual	Newsletter, Calendar
Supporting	\$100 annual	Newsletter, Calendar
Lifetime	\$500	Newsletter, Calendar, Lifetime Membership Number (2 annual \$250 payments)

Dues will be for the calendar year, and those joining later in the year will receive all newsletters retroactive to January of that year. All renewal of dues shall be due on January 1st.

Annual membership includes *12 monthly newsletters!* Mail payment to: MAHS  
101 Monroe Avenue, Westbrook, ME  
04092-4020

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



Camille Cyr # 61  
7 Algonquin Lane  
Brunswick ME 04011

**Greenville  
Seaplane Fly-In**  
Folsom's Seaplane Base  
Sat. & Sun., Sept. 6 & 7  
All Day

**COME JOIN US!**  
Saturday, Sept. 13, 1997  
9 a.m.  
General Aviation Terminal  
Bangor International Airport