

DIRIGO FLYER

Vol. X, No. 3 March 2002

Newsletter of the Maine Aviation Historical Society
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Northeast Airlines, New England Pioneer

The following story, submitted by member John Miller, is reprinted from Douglas Airview, a publication of the

Douglas Aircraft Company. It was featured in the May 1941 issue.
 — Leo Boyle, Editor

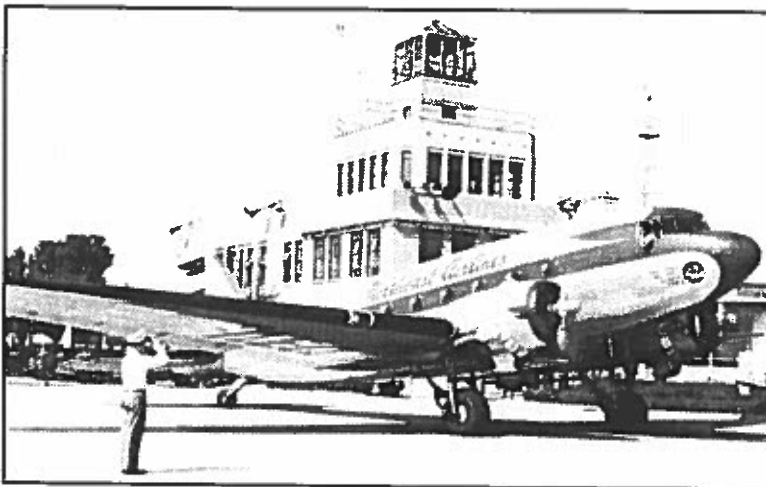
Northeast Airlines won its place in aviation's hall of fame as the pioneer line in northern New England and the adjoining districts of Canada.

It was back in 1933 when the Boston and Maine Railroad—a road with a reputation of being progressive and alert, cast its eye on the transportation of passengers by air and decided to enlarge its offerings to the public into a complete transportation system—rail, bus and air. (See Note #1 at end of article.)

Its management sought out men who knew the air transportation business and, on August 11, 1933, Boston-Maine Airways (a composite name derived from the Boston and Maine Railroad and the Maine Central Railroad, the two roads sponsoring the line) started operations between Boston, Portland, Waterville, Rockland and Bangor, Maine.

President of the line was Paul F. Collins (now chairman of Northeast Airlines, the new name of the line) vice presidents were the late Amelia Earhart and Samuel Solomon; and chief pilot was Milton H. Anderson, now vice president of Northeast Airlines. Other officers and members of the directorate were officers of the two railroads, and the traffic and ticket-selling forces were composed of railroad personnel. You can still buy tickets on Northeast Airlines, and also for any connecting airline, at any Boston and Maine or Maine Central Railroad ticket office in New England.

In selecting Paul Collins as president of its airline, with Miss Earhart and Solomon as vice presidents, the railroads also secured partners in the new air enterprise and both Collins and Solomon are heavy stockholders in the line today, as well as



One of three new Douglas DC-3 transports purchased by Northeast Airline in June 1940.

(Photo via Norm Houle)

being the persons who, with Lawrence F. Whittemore, assistant to the president of the Boston and Maine and the Maine Central, now actively direct the activities of the line.

Paul Collins has been "playing" with airplanes since 1916 when he became interested in model-plane flying. Came 1917 and Collins entered the service of the United States Army and for more than a year he flew combat planes over France and Germany with a record that he will not talk about but which his associates are pleased to boast about. On return from overseas Collins went with the Curtiss company as test pilot and later was connected with the Aircraft Proving Company in a similar capacity.

With the advent of air mail he started flying for the government once more and he carried the first night air mail out of New York City. Back into commercial flying, he was for two years vice president in charge of operations for the old Ludington line and then went with Boston-Maine as its president.

Samuel J. Solomon is known all over the country in the air industry, having been manager of the Washington Airport

"Northeast," continued on page 4

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Monthly meetings
 are held at 10 a.m.
 on the second Saturday
 of each month
 at various locations.

See calendar for details.

Maine Aviation Historical Society

President's Report • February 9, 2002

Good progress is being made to meet our opening date of Memorial Day. I appreciate all the work that everyone has done to get us where we are today. A lot remains to be done so we need all the help we can get. Some real encouraging things are happening as well. A \$5000.00 donation for displays should get us ready for opening. The sale of the Gamma Goat will give us working capital for the spring. Displays are being designed and a layout of the museum is being worked on. We are working on acquiring an ejection seat from the F89 at the base. Work within the building is on schedule. A couple of special projects have been started. The VooDoo board and the Scorpion Helicopter. People are coming forward to make this happen. Join in, all help will be appreciated and needed. Together we can accomplish great things. In Mike Cornett's words: "Make the Air Museum Fly."

— *Les Shaw, President, MAHS*



The Gamma Goat is Gone!
 Leo Boyle (r) accepting \$2500
 from Bob Rubino (l) paying for
 the Gamma Goat. See next
 page for a full report of the
 February meeting and more
 great pictures.

March Meeting Reminder

The March meeting of the MAHS will be held Saturday, March 9, 2002 at 10:00 a.m. at the museum. If it is too cold, a sign will be posted and we will meet at Snowman Printing, just off Exit 44 of Route 95. This will be a busy and important meeting as we will be developing our plans for our Memorial Day opening and allocating duties to those who volunteer. All of the fenced-in area will be utilized for the opening. Use of the area by the back gate and adjacent taxiway will be dependent on our conversations with the Airport Director. We would like to have a KC-135, P-3C, C-130 and other visiting aircraft parked there. There will be no tours of these aircraft, they will just be there for background. We hope to have a representative from the Owls Head Museum, the Dakota Museum's DC-3 and any other vintage aircraft and members' aircraft there too.

Inside the fenced area would be the Huey, the Scorpion and the Luscombe. Visitors will park on the grass and across the road for the opening. The time will be half to one hour after the end of the parade. A color guard and parking attendants will be needed. The guests will be as discussed under last month's meeting notes. A press kit should go out no later than March 25th to assure newspaper and television coverage of this event. Invitations for the guests also need to go out next month, and we will need new stationary for these. With the ribbon-cutting and speeches, there will be a brunch-type meal for the guests. We will be open to the general public about an hour after the ribbon-cutting. We don't have the time to wait on these issues and the construction of the displays.

We will need the help of as many members as possible. Every member should plan to attend this meeting and show their support. There are lots of things to do beforehand to get the museum ready, and lots of things to do before and at the Grand Opening. We need help, so please step forward and volunteer for whatever you can do. This can't be done by five or ten volunteers * WE NEED YOU * and your help, so please step forward and get an assignment. See you there.

February Meeting Notes

The February meeting of the MAHS at the Museum was called to order at 10 a.m. by President Shaw. There were over twenty members and guests present. Joe Quinn, Treasurer, reported that the financial records of the Society were being put into a Quickbook program on the computer. The financial report was presented by Mr. Quinn. The recording secretary reported on the web page responses for the month, and the membership secretary reported that renewals were coming in slowly and that we had four new members.

Mike Cornett reported on the work being done to the physical plant. Holes are being filled in the walls preparatory to painting them. The extreme cold weather has slowed this progress. Al Cormier reported that the furnace had been installed, and arrangements made for cutting the holes in the walls, prior to installing the duct work. The only information on the hikes are on the B-25 hike planned for early spring. Others are being planned for the summer.

The site inspection by Trancom should be completed by April, at which time the Huey can be moved to its pad. President Shaw's report is printed above. Under old business, a buyer has been found by Joel Gopan for the Gamma Goat military vehicle, and subject to his inspection, he will pick it up in Gorham where it is located. (This was done on February 21, 2002, and it was sold and delivered for \$2500.00, now in the bank.) Ed Armstrong reported on the "gifts in kind" seminar held at the Jackson Laboratory in Bar Harbor which he and Jules Arel attended. The Navy has offered us two J-57 engines and it was decided to get the one with the afterburner, as we already have the J-57 from the Air Guard. (The paperwork has been started and it will have to be picked up in Norfolk, VA.)

Under new business, Ed Armstrong reported that the roof has been repaired excellently, and he was completing the

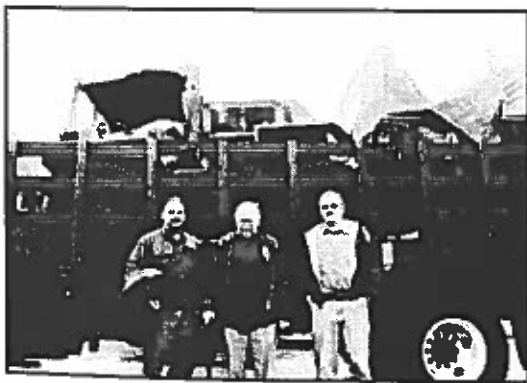
paperwork with the city of Bangor. As to displays, Jim Chichetto reported that we are at the stage where we need to purchase the oak and lexan

materials to construct the displays (some already done), and that we have an offer of a shop to use for the construction. We are still planning for a Memorial Day 2002 opening and tentative plans are being made for this day. We need to contact the Airport Director and the FAA regarding displays. We would like to have a KC-135 and a P-3 on display, and the Air Guard and the Navy need to be contacted regarding our wishes. Members with personal aircraft need to be contacted as well as other museums regarding their presence. Guests should include the governor, state senators and representatives, the mayor and members of the city council, military and Naval commanders, and others, and a press kit needs to be put together. Good progress is being made to meet our opening date of Memorial Day. I appreciate all the work that everyone has done to get us where we are today. A lot remains to be done so we need all the help we can get. Some real encouraging things are happening.

It was voted to renew our membership in the Bangor Chamber of Commerce and not to renew the Hull insurance on the Luscombe. We decided not to paint the ceilings of the museum. The meeting was adjourned at 11:15 a.m., and John Garbinski showed a film on the Strategic Air Command.

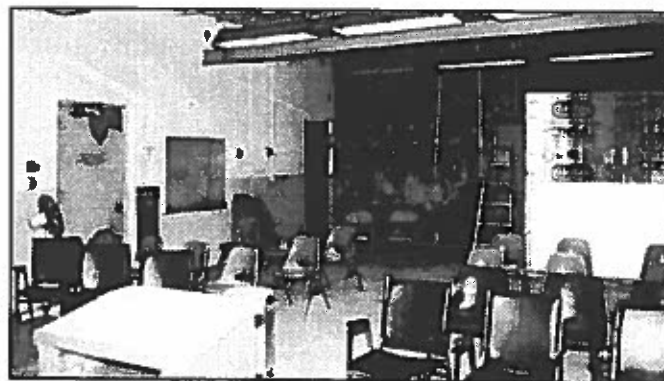


Jim "Shorty" Evans tells another of his amusing tales.



Bob Rubino, Leo Boyle and Les Shaw (assisted by Mike Cornett) loaded the Gamma Goat into the truck for PA. Special thanks to Phil Hall, who donated it to MAHS and loaned us his wrecker to make the job easier.

Ed Armstrong, Chairman of the Board, enthuses about the planned Memorial Day opening of the museum.
(Mike Cornett Photos)



The meeting room walls are being refinished in preparation for our Grand Opening.

"Northeast," continued from page 1

for eight years and especially active in the affairs of Northeast Airlines since 1933. Solomon was just recently elected president to succeed Paul Collins, who resigned because of ill health but will serve as chairman.

When Boston-Maine commenced flying in northern New England in 1933 there were no airports north of Boston in the light of what is defined as an airport today. There were no hard surface runways; no passenger stations; no communications; no weather service; no lighted airways; no lighted fields — in other words there was not a single aviation facility north of Boston in the states of Massachusetts, Maine, New Hampshire and Vermont that today would be recognized as such by the CAA.

There were months of winter-time flying in a country where snow comes early and stays late; where ships were landed on fields in runways barely more than wide enough to allow the wings of the Stinson tri-motored ships to move over the piled up plowings. Yet, in the first year Boston-Maine Airways flew approximately 250,000 miles without an accident. During that time Concord, N.H., and Montpelier, Vt., were added to the company's fields of call and this started the nucleus of what is today the northern division of Northeast Airlines, serving from Boston to Manchester, N.H., Concord, N.H., Montpelier-Barre and Burlington, Vt., and to Montreal. Rockland was dropped in the fall of 1933 (for operating and traffic reasons) and in the following year, Augusta, Me. was added to what is now the eastern division Maine line serving from Boston to Portland, Lewiston-Auburn, Augusta, Waterville and Bangor, Me. Bar Harbor was served by the line for a short time in summer service but was later eliminated from the route.

In September 1936, Lockheed Electra 10-passenger planes replaced the Stinsons and the flying time was reduced one-third. A second round-trip carrying mail, passenger and express was added on the so-called "Maine" line in 1938 and extension of the New Hampshire-Vermont line to Montreal came in July, 1937.

In August of the same year, a branch line was added from Bangor, Me. to Millinocket, Houlton, Presque Isle, and Caribou in Aroostook County, and the Stinsons, which could land on the then available airports in Aroostook County were flown on this route.

Airport development in the company's territory during this period was satisfactory. Federal government agencies furnished the major portion of the cost of labor and material for this work on municipally owned airports. The communities themselves



Northeast Airlines representatives flew east on delivery flights of the line's first Douglas airplanes, three DC-3s. Shown above are Win Sargent, Douglas pilot; F.E. Nagle, Northeast's superintendent of communications; A.V.R. Marsh, Northeast pilot; and W.A. Spencer, Douglas service department. (Photo via Douglas Airview)

voting and furnishing the sponsor's share which generally amounted to approximately one-third of the cost of the project. This method was pursued at Bangor, Augusta, and Lewiston-Auburn.

Portland and Waterville presented a difficult problem as the airports were privately owned and therefore ineligible for the expenditure of federal funds on them.

It is interesting to note that a procedure was initiated at Portland which overcame this obstacle and was later used on many airports over the United States. The actual runway area was deeded by the owners to the city free and clear. As this was the only area where federal funds were used, it came within the law and also assured the airport of permanency. Waterville later developed its port along the same general lines. Boston-Maine Airways in many instances contributed to the limit of its financial ability in the development of airports. As an example of this, they contributed a goodly portion of the sponsor's share in the form of gravel on the Portland Airport.

Boston-Maine Airways inaugurated an advanced flying training for all its flying personnel using a Link Trainer and supplementary training airplane. This necessitated all pilots spending every fourth day in intensive training and practice. This produced results in increased performance and the line

"Northeast," continued on page 5

12/02



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"Northeast," continued from page 4

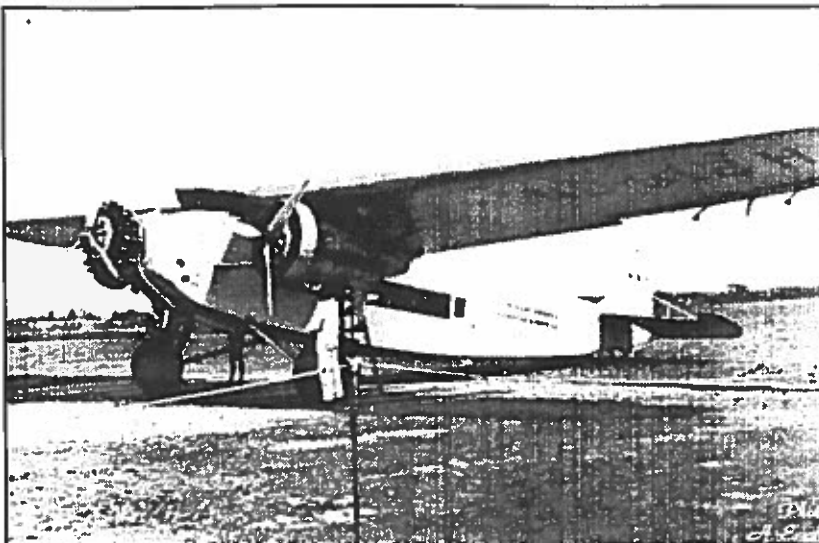
today has a record of never having been in any sort of accident involving injury to a passenger.

The WPA and the CAA has provided range stations at Bangor, Augusta and Portland and has installed weather bureau service at Bangor, Augusta, Caribou, Concord and Burlington. Airport development is continuing at Caribou, Houlton, Millinocket, Presque Isle, Augusta, Lewiston, Waterville and Portland at the present time, and the Millinocket Airport is also serving Trans-Canada Airlines with weather and radio beams. This Canadian government owned and operated line flies from coast to coast, Vancouver to Moncton, and passes over the state of Maine between Montreal and Moncton in the region of Moosehead Lake and Millinocket but makes no stops there.

In November 1940 — to make its name more emblematic of the territory it serves and hopes to serve — the name of the line was changed from Boston-Maine Airways to Northeast Airlines with no change in capital structure, official personnel or policy. In 1910 the line enjoyed an increase of 50 per cent in the number of passengers carried — approximately 20,000 in 1939 against over 30,000 in 1940. The load factor in those years was increased from 38.87 to 46.48.

Northeast Airlines has applications pending before the CAA for two additional routes, one from Portland, Me. to Lawrence and Worcester, Mass., Hartford and Meriden, Conn. and New York, and from Boston to New York direct. It is, perhaps, interesting to note here that on the proposed Portland-New York route there are more people not now served, within a radius of 10 miles of the airports at which the line is intended to stop, than it is possible to serve on any one airline operation in the United States over a mileage of 268 miles.

On February 10, 1941, a cross-country instructor's school was organized and initiated by Northeast Airlines — the trainees of which were supplied by the civilian pilot training group of the CAA. The instructors were sent to Northeast Airlines from every state in the union and upon completion of the course will return to their own bases and initiate similar schools for trainees sent them by the CPT group in Washington.



Fokker F-10A NC-812H, serial #1051, operated by Pan American Airways for Boston-Maine Airways at Godfrey Field, Bangor in August 1931.

(Photo via Norm Houle)

Northeast Airlines feels that this is a very definite contribution toward the national defense of the country in the training of these instructors.

This month Northeast Airlines will join the parade of other great airlines the world over by inaugurating its first Douglas equipment — DC-3s, today's standard in air transportation. (See Note #2 below.)

Note 1: Boston-Maine Airways actually started operations on August 1, 1931. They contracted with Pan American Airways to fly the Boston-Bangor route with Fokker F-10s and Pan American flew Bangor to Halifax with Sikorsky S-38s and S-41s. This service ended in September 1931 when Pan American withdrew.

Note 2: Northeast did not keep these Douglas DC-3s very long. They went into service on June 27, 1941 and Northeast traded them to TWA on April 16, 1942 for three smaller Douglas DC-2s. The DC-3s proved to be too large for their passenger volume in 1941.



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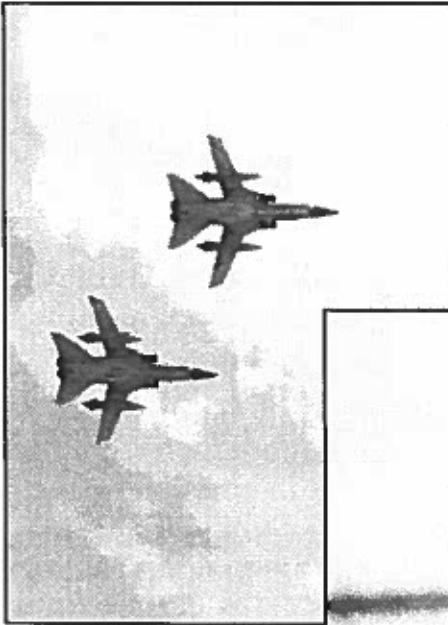
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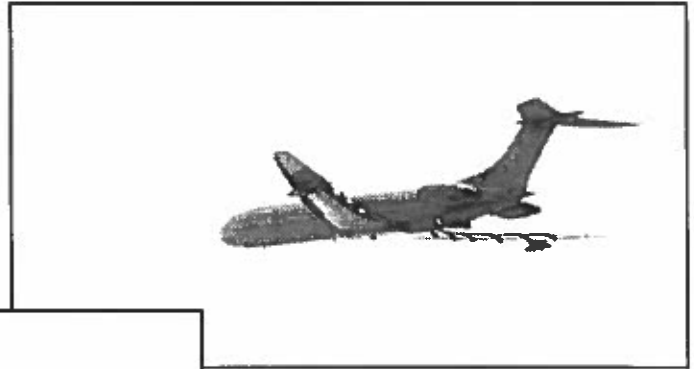
What's Flying By the Museum on February 16th? Blimey, It's the British Royal Air Force!



Two Tornados — they're closer than they look!



A Tornado flying low down the runway — note fence.
(Mike Cornett Photos)



An RAF Vickers VC-10 Tanker

Information, Please . . .



This picture of Henry Dingley's Waco UBF-2 (NC-13419) was taken by Norm Houle about 1940 in a hangar at Auburn-Lewiston Airport. Can anyone give us more information about the color scheme of this plane? The consensus seems to be that the fuselage, fin and rudder were red. The wings and horizontal tail were cream or silver. The fuselage stripe was black (?) with cream or silver piping (?). Was there a (red?) sunburst design on the top of the wing and tailplane? Please let Leo Boyle (854-9972) (e-mail: pshaw@maine.rr.com) know if you can clear up any of these details. As Dingley owned this airplane from 1934 to 1955, it may have had more than one color scheme. It was flown by Bob St. Jock for aerobatic displays at air shows as well.

Upcoming MAHS Meetings

✈ ✈ ✈ 2002 — 2002 — 2002 — 2002 — 2002 ✈ ✈ ✈

March 9 10 a.m. MAHS Meeting, Maine Air Museum, Bangor, Maine
 April 13 10 a.m. MAHS Meeting, Maine Air Museum, Bangor, Maine
 May 11 10 a.m. MAHS Meeting, Maine Air Museum, Bangor, Maine
 May 27, 30, 6/1 .. All Day GRAND OPENING, Maine Air Museum, Bangor, Maine
 July 6-7 10 a.m. '50s and '60s Meet and Antique Aeroplane Show, Owls Head Transportation Museum, Maine
 July 13 10 a.m. MAHS Meeting, Maine Air Museum, Bangor, Maine
 August 10 10 a.m. MAHS Meeting, Maine Air Museum, Bangor, Maine
 August 10-11 10 a.m. Transportation Spectacular and Aerobatic Air Show, Owls Head Transportation Museum
 Sept. 13, 14, 15 .. All Day International Seaplane Fly-In, Greenville, Maine
 Sept. 14 10 a.m. MAHS Meeting, Maine Air Museum, Bangor, Maine

*MAHS meeting sites are flexible and we're always looking for guest speakers and new program ideas.
 Call Scott Grant at 207-824-8617 if you have any ideas or if you can be of help.*

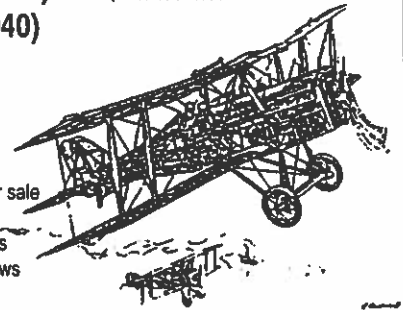
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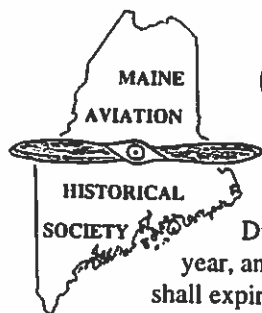
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Maine Aviation Historical Society
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March Meeting

Saturday, March 9, 2002

10 a.m.

Maine Air Museum
Bangor, Maine