

# DIRIGO FLYER

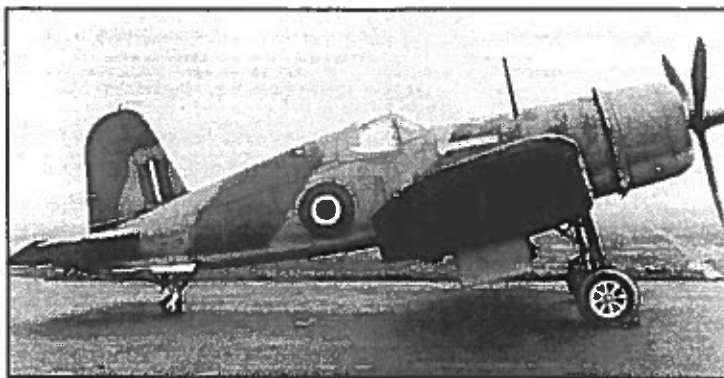
Vol. XI, No. 7 July 2003

*Newsletter of the Maine Aviation Historical Society*  
P.O. Box 2641, Bangor, Maine 04402 • 207-941-6757 • 1-877-280-MAHS (in state)  
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## Corsairs in Sebago Lake

By now you have probably all read of the attempt to recover the two Vought Corsair fighters from the Brunswick Naval Air Station that crashed in Sebago Lake in 1944. These Corsairs, piloted by Sub. Lt. Raymond Laurence Knott and Sub. Lt. Vaughan Reginald Gill, crashed into Sebago Lake while on a low-level training mission on May 16, 1944. Neither the bodies of the pilots nor the aircraft were ever recovered. These sites are considered war graves by the British government and should be respected as such and not disturbed.

Peter Noddin, as President of the Maine Aviation Historical Society and an aviation archaeology expert, met on June 25, 2003 in Augusta with representatives of the Maine Historic Preservation Commission, the Attorney Generals' office, the Maine State Museum, the University of Maine, and the Brunswick Naval Air Station's Public Relations office to update everyone on what was being done to handle this matter. Overall, Peter Noddin is comfortable that the situation is under control, and he has issued the following opinion.



A Fleet Air Arm Corsair similar to the ones that crashed in Sebago Lake in 1944.  
(Photo: Ray Sturtivant)

With regard to the proposed commercial recovery of the two Royal Navy Corsair I fighters from Sebago Lake, and the associated potential disturbance/removal of the remains of Sub-Lieutenants Knott and Gill, RNVR, the Maine Aviation Historical Society states the following opinion:

1. The legal discussions about "ownership" of these wrecks is moot in light of the moral and patriotic issues surrounding the disturbance of WW II British Commonwealth war graves.
2. Great Britain extensively protects their war graves, even those in water, which was often the final resting place of then naval aviators. MAHS strongly supports Great Britain's diplomatic efforts to protect the graves of these men who died in a foreign land, serving their country, during a time of great national crisis.
3. These war graves should be treated no differently than those in the Portsmouth Navy Shipyard Cemetery or those of British Commonwealth airmen buried at several town cemeteries in Maine.
4. There are other military aircraft wrecks in Maine that had no fatalities associated with them, including several U.S. and Royal Navy Corsairs of the same vintage in water, and multitudes of such aircraft abroad that are candidates for recovery without disturbance of war graves. We support such recovery, restoration and historic display with respect for existing laws and regulations.
5. We support exploration, filming, documentation and potential placement of a memorial plaque on the bottom of the lake, but oppose raising these particular wrecks. There are no significant historical "mysteries" about the cause of this mishap or the identity of those killed in the mishap.

— Peter Noddin, President, MAHS

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Michael Cornett (2004) #321L  
 Ed Armstrong (2004) #166L  
 Peter Noddin (2003) #295  
 William Townsend (2003) #101L  
 Leslie Shaw (2003) #331L  
 Leo Boyle (2005) #2L  
 Carl Sederquist (2005) #218L  
 Alfred Cormier (2005) #196  
 Joel Gopan (2005) #402

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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 Monthly Meeting Updates June 14, 2003

### MAM Board of Directors Meeting

**Call to Order:** The MAM Board of Directors met at the Main eAir Museum at 10:20 a.m. on 14 June 2003. Eight members were present.

**Fundraising:** There was discussion concerning 1) a new brochure that would include the memorial brick program; 2) mailing lists; 3) searching for a professional fundraiser. Carl Sederquist, Ed Armstrong, and William Townsend will gather information on obtaining mailing lists and possible fundraisers.

**Web Page:** It was requested that the memorial brick information on the web page be changed to the following response address: MAM Memorial Brick Fund, c/o Carl Sederquist, 19 Lincoln Lane, Surry, ME 04684.

**Museum Display:** The 42nd Bomb Wing display is being constructed. It will be 16 ft. long and consist of three panels. It was suggested that it be placed in the room with the jet engine.

**Museum in General:** We still need volunteers to work weekends. We should start having paid advertisements. The presentation plaques have been produced both for the Hall of Fame itself and for surviving family members. The present design of both types of plaques was reviewed and considered satisfactory. These designs will be continued for future nominees.

**Adjournment:** The meeting was adjourned at 11:22 a.m.

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### MAHS Monthly Membership Meeting

**Call to Order:** The June meeting of the Maine Aviation Historical Society was called to order at the Maine Air Museum in Bangor, Maine. There were sixteen members and guests present. The meeting commenced with introductory remarks by President Noddin. A summary of the current status of the memorial brick program was presented.

#### Agenda for the Afternoon's Events:

- 1 p.m. Raising of colors with honors for Jim Chichetto and Charlie Brantner.
- 2 p.m. Naming of the office for Jim Chichetto.  
 Induction into the Maine Aviation Hall of Fame.
- 3 p.m. Short presentations by Leo Boyle, Peter Noddin, Ed Armstrong, Bill Townsend.
- 4 p.m. Closing and lowering of the colors.

**Secretary's Report:** Web site update, e-mail update, Maine Memory Network report, 42nd Bomb Wing Display Report

**Crash Report:** The F-84 site in Amherst has been located and the landowner's permission has been received to erect a memorial. This activity is planned for early summer. An October outing is planned in conjunction with the Lee Historical Society to place a memorial at the B-18 crash site.

**Museum Report:** Sederquist presented updated information on the Warden Service display and also has a possible speaker on tap. Oscar Blue is getting a lot of response to the Labor Day Ford gathering at the museum. The connection is with the Ford aviation business in WWII. There is also a possibility that the Pratt & Whitney Company might have a display; this is also in connection with Ford which was a subcontractor to Pratt in WWII. A volunteer is needed to represent the MAHS at the Sikorsky weekend at Ashland. Thanks to Mike Cornett, Les Shaw and Scott Grant for putting together Opening Day events and their work in prepping the museum.

**Adjournment:** The meeting was adjourned at 9:55 a.m.

*William Townsend, Secretary*

## Opening Day

The Maine Air Museum has opened for the summer. Opening ceremonies, the establishment of the Maine Aviation Hall of Fame, and an Open House were held on Saturday, June 14, 2003.

Presided over by Maine Aviation Historical Society president Peter Noddin, the inductees to the newly established Maine Aviation Hall of Fame were announced as their portraits and plaques which listed their achievements were unveiled.

In addition to the Open House, visitors were treated to a series of short talks concerning past, present and future aviation interests in Maine. Leo Boyle spoke on the history of aviation and the founding of the Historical Society. Ed Armstrong spoke on the current status of the search for the *White Bird*, Maine's most famous aircraft, and of world-wide interest. Peter Noddin, who operates the Maine Aviation Archaeological web site, spoke of aviation crashes and the Society's placement of memorial plaques at many of the military sites. Bill Townsend, NASA representative to the Teacher in Space Project, spoke of the on-going, but often delayed, plans for an educational presence at the International Space Station.

### MUSEUM HOURS

**Saturdays** 10 a.m. to 4 p.m.  
**Sundays** 12 noon to 4 p.m.

### MUSEUM ADMISSION

**Adults** \$2.00  
**Children Under 12** \$1.00  
**Families** \$5.00

### We Still Need Volunteers

We still need volunteers to work in the museum! We need people to work on our engine displays, touch up and production of historical displays, office work, computer filing, and, of course, yard work. We also need a serious model builder to assist in repairing, cleaning and constructing models, dioramas and other displays.



### Call Today!

To volunteer, call 1-877-280-MAHS. Link to the following site to view the volunteer schedule and to check for dates on which we need help: [MaineAirMuseumvolunteerschedule.org](http://MaineAirMuseumvolunteerschedule.org)

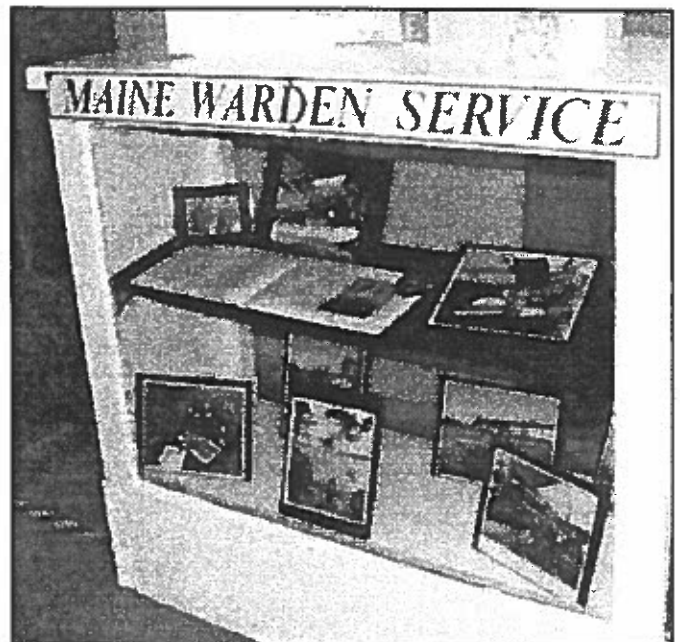
### Next Meeting

The July 12th meeting will be held on that Saturday at 10:00 a.m. at the Maine Air Museum in Bangor. After the general meeting, member Hank Marois, B-52 veteran from Loring AFB and Dow AFB, will detail his experiences in the "mole hole," on ready during the Cold War. We are trying to get clearance to visit the site of the Dow Field "mole hole." It should be a great experience to hear his tales of a life most of us cannot imagine.

### MAINE AVIATION HALL OF FAME



### Various Exhibits of the Maine Air Museum on Opening Day 2003





## Charles B. Brantner: 1924-2003

### Two Killed in Pittsfield Plane Wreck

PITTSFIELD - The crash of a Cessna 150 airplane Thursday morning took the lives of Pittsfield Municipal Airport's fixed base operator, Ronald Curtis, 44, of Pittsfield, and his student pilot, Charles Brantner, 79, of Winterport. The small plane was owned by Brantner, and police said he was piloting the craft when the crash took place.

Witnesses said the pair had been practicing "patterns" or landings and takeoffs all morning, and it was during one of those takeoffs that the plane's engine appeared to quit.

Pittsfield public works employee Herb Whitley was about 200 yards away, patching the airport apron with blacktop. "He taxied down the runway and paused, like he was waiting for instructions," said Whitley. "I was standing here, watching the plane, and it had gotten just about tree level ... when the engine sputtered."

Whitley said the pilot must have realized there was a problem because he had turned the plane around to land when Whitley heard the engine quit. "The plane just spiraled down, right into the ground."

The plane crashed nose first into an unused runway, bursting into flame on impact.

—Bangor Daily News

### Labor Day Weekend at the MAM

2003 is the 100th anniversary for the Ford Motor Company, and Ford is going all out to celebrate, but to our knowledge, nothing is happening in Maine. So Oscar Blue (MAHS #3) says, let's have our own 100th birthday party for the Ford Motor Company and bring public attention to our own new Maine Air Museum by having a display of antique Fords and telling the story of Ford's involvement in aviation on Labor Day weekend at the museum.

Members and friends will be allowed to display their antique Ford Motor Company vehicles (25 years old or older) inside the compound for the whole weekend. The public can be invited to bring their antique Fords on Sunday. We will be arranging a display of Ford's involvement in aviation for inside the museum. This involves the Ford Tri-Motors, the Ford Flivver and their production of B-24s and Pratt & Whitney engines in World War II.

We would welcome anyone who wants to volunteer for this display.

WINTERPORT - Charles "Charlie" Brantner, husband, father, CPA, aviator, gardener, 78, died June 12, 2003 when his plane crashed at the Pittsfield Municipal Airport.

A veteran, he served as a Lieutenant and pilot in the U.S. Navy from 1942-1945 and in the U.S. Naval Reserve until 1961. Following his service in World War II, he graduated from the University of Maryland in 1949, majoring in accounting. He later partnered with Gerald Thibodeau to form the firm of Brantner Thibodeau and Associates, where he practiced until his retirement in 1992. Over this time he was deeply involved in the Bangor business community, where he was well known to all as "Charlie" and was a longtime member of the Bangor Rotary Club.

He was an active member of Penobscot Valley Chapter 827 of the Experimental Aircraft Association, including involvement with the Young Eagles program for children, and was an early member of the Maine Aviation Historical Society, working to establish the Maine Air Museum. He happily donated his financial expertise to local organizations such as the Kings Daughters Home for Women and the Winterport Free Library.

He is survived by his wife of 55 years, Virginia (Livingston) Brantner, of Winterport and their four children.

—Bangor Daily News

*Editor's Note: Charlie was a good friend. In addition to his service to MAHS and the museum, he served as our treasurer for three years. He was an aggressive guardian of our finances, and he fought hard to improve our financial condition.*

*We will miss his fine counsel, but most of all, we will miss Charlie.*

—Leo Boyle

### Sikorsky Weekend

Once again, MAHS member Igor Sikorsky III is having his aviation seminar at his Bradford Camps on Munsungan Lake, Maine on July 11-13. Last year, Peter Noddin gave a very interesting talk on Maine military aviation and crash sites.

Igor is again asking us to send a guest who will speak on a segment of Maine's aviation history. If you are interested, please contact Leo Boyle at 207-854-9972 or pshaw@maine.rr.com.

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## Northeast Nostalgia



*In 1949, Northeast Airlines bought six Convair 240s, their first new post-war airliners. Regrettably, three crashed that same year, the third in Portland on August 11, 1949. They leased, then bought four more from Pan American.*

*In this article, member Jim McCarthy relates to us his remembrance of the first Convair into Bangor.*

*At left, One of Northeast Airlines Convair 240s in 1958 at LaGuardia. (Photo: Dolzall Collection)*

By Member Jim McCarthy

The picture of Northeast's first CV-240 into Bangor, like H.G. Wells' Time Machine, takes me instantly back more than 50 years. I remember the small group of the curious, gaping at what was expected to be the replacement for the DC-3, bring Northeast a modern day transport, the first pressurized aircraft in the fleet.

I remember the aircraft's interior decor, strictly American Airlines, mostly in shades of maroon or something close to that color. The four Convairs that came to Northeast at that time were destined for American but diverted to Northeast. I don't remember, if I ever knew, how that came about. I do seem to remember that the CEO of Convair, the manufacturer, and particularly his wife, Jacqueline Cochrane, had some kind of relationship with Northeast.

The CV-240s were structurally, mechanically and operationally good airplanes. There were a few problems. Those four that Northeast fell heir to were delivered with Curtiss Electric propellers. Those propellers resulted in several reversals in flight, one on approach to Portland, a rather embarrassing situation, to say the least.

I shiver, still, in recollection of the cold winter nights that Frank Manza and I spent on a low workstand, huddled over those propeller hubs with portable magna-flux equipment.

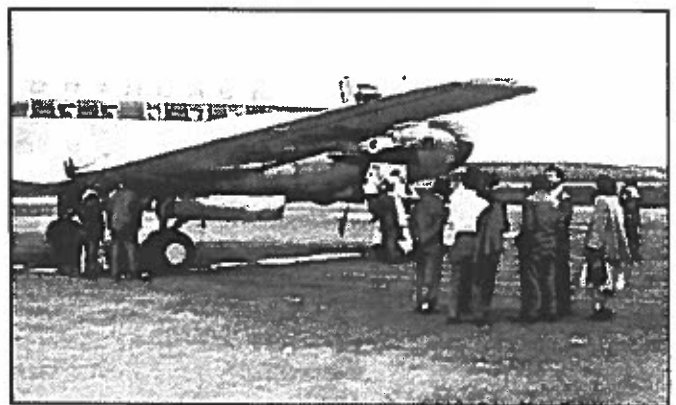


*The first Convair flies in Bangor. (Bangor photos by Jim McCarthy)*

In reference to that first flight into Bangor another memory relates to the passenger door, stairs and the portion of the aircraft skin that became its canopy when in use. We stood around that day watching the loading and unloading of the courtesy flights that Northeast offered. It was mentioned to the Convair Service Representative, who accompanied the airplane, how disastrous it could be if the canopy were to collapse during those times. In great detail, he pointed out the safety latches and other measures that precluded such a happening. He assured us it was not only improbable but impossible.

Following the next flight, the impossible happened. The canopy came crashing down, seriously distorting the stair rails, just as it seemed to be fully open. Nobody had started to deplane. There were no injuries, but it caused us all to think about the probability of the impossible.

Everything said, the CV-240 was a super airplane for Northeast.



*Member Stephen Haas, 8 Winchester Street, Presque Isle, ME 04769 learned to fly in 1939 at the Lincoln Flying School. He piloted B-26s and B-24s in World War II. He would like to know how many B-26 pilots are alive in Maine today, and he would be delighted to hear from any of them.*

## Buy a Brick and Support the Maine Air Museum

The Maine Air Museum is proud to announce the new Memorial Pathway Program. Here's how it works:

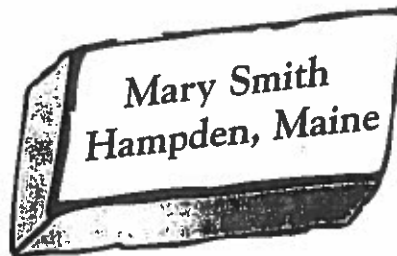
To successfully carry out and reach the museum vision, and to refurbish building 98, the Maine Air Museum needs the financial support of business and public community leaders and individual private citizens. Your interest in preserving the rich Maine aviation history will require funding presently not available to the museum effort. To this end, the museum board has established the following contribution plan for receiving your monetary donation and recognizing your gift permanently in the museum pathway and wall of honor. Remember: your donation is fully deductible.

★ **Stratocumulus Member (Sc) — \$100 Donation**

Entitles the gift giver to a one-year membership and two-year museum pass and a benefactor's engraved 4"x8"x2.5" red clay brick with up to two lines (14 characters/line, .65" high) of commemorative text in the name of the gift giver or his/her memorial to others. Brick to be installed on the museum grounds, walkway or building facade.

★ **Altostratus Member (As) — \$150 Donation**

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See Order Form on Page 7

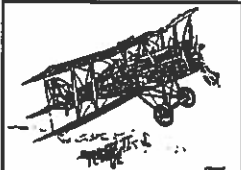
★ **Altocumulus Member (Ac) — \$250 Donation**

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★ **Cirrus Member (Cj) — \$2500 Donation**


Entitles the gift giver to life membership status and a benefactor's engraved three foot white marble setting bench with one line (27 characters/line, 2" high) of commemorative text in the name of the gift giver or his/her memorial to others. Bench to be installed in the museum building or on the museum grounds.

*The Maine Air Museum is wholly owned and operated by the Maine Aviation Historical Society.*

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## Upcoming MAHS Meetings

✈ ✈ ✈ 2003 — 2003 — 2003 — 2003 — 2003 ✈ ✈ ✈

- July 5-6 ..... 10 a.m. .... Antique Aeroplane Show, Owls Head Transportation Museum, Owls Head, Maine  
 July 12 ..... 10 a.m. .... MAHS Meeting, Maine Air Museum, Bangor, Maine  
 August 9 ..... 10 a.m. .... MAHS Meeting, TBA  
 Aug. 15-16-17 ..... All Day ..... Centennial Celebration, Skyhaven Airport, Rochester, NH (www.ossipeeaviation.com)  
 Aug. 30-31-Sept. 1 ... 10 a.m. .... Labor Day Gathering of Fords; the 100th Anniversary of Ford Motor Co.  
 Sept. 4-7 ..... All Day ..... Greenville International Seaplane Fly-In, Greenville, Maine  
 Sept. 13 ..... 10 a.m. .... MAHS Meeting, TBA

MAHS meeting sites and programs are flexible. Call Les Shaw at 1-877-280-MAHS if you have any ideas or if you can help.

### Welcome, New Members

- 447F. **Peter Ness (USAF Security)**  
 21 Forest Hills Drive skycap1991@aol.com  
 Levant, ME 04456 207-884-3076
- 448C. **Douglas H. Grant (dba Ability Woodworking)**  
 32 Pleasant Street  
 Goffstown, NH 03045
449. **Jean-Guy Paquet (Helicopters)**  
 64 Green St., Apt. 13 jgp31@juno.com  
 Augusta, ME 04330-5400 207-626-7631446

#### CORRECTION:

446. Diane H. Parker's phone number is 207-799-6342

### Arriving Next Month ...



Stu Chipman of Massachusetts sent us photos his father took at Old Orchard Beach in July 1927 when Charles Lindbergh landed there on his nationwide tour. We'll present them next month along with a couple of "Old Glory" at the beach.

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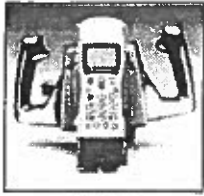
Please submit this information with your tax-deductible 501(c)3 contribution to MAM Memorial Brick Fund c/o Carl Sederquist, 19 Lincoln Lane, Surry, Maine (ME) 04684. You will be mailed an acknowledgement and a copy of the engraving text proof.

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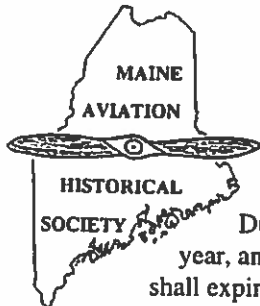
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 Newsletter, Decal, Lifetime Membership Number,  
 Museum Admission, 10 Free Passes

Maine Aviation Historical Society  
P.O. Box 2641  
Bangor, ME 04402

### July Meeting

July 12, 2003  
10 a.m.

Board Meeting, 9 a.m.  
Maine Air Museum  
Bangor, Maine