

# DIRIGO FLYER

Vol. XII, No. 5 May 2004

Newsletter of the Maine Aviation Historical Society  
P.O. Box 2641, Bangor, Maine 04402 • 207-941-6757 • 1-877-280-MAHS (in state)  
We're on the Internet! Visit our new web site at [www.maineairmuseum.org](http://www.maineairmuseum.org)

## The Mole Hole — Part 3

\* Excerpted from Hank's longer study of his Air Force life titled: *Twenty Years of Flying ... and Boy Are My Arms Tired!*

By Henry L. Marois Jr., Lt. Col., USAF, Retired

Once a crew had been determined combat ready, they would be scheduled to perform either ground or airborne alert duty. This involved real targets and real weapons.

When scheduled for ground or airborne "chrome dome" alert we had to report to the Training and Briefing Building. This was a heavily guarded structure near the Wing Headquarters. Representatives from the Emergency War Operations staff, Bomb-Navigation Department, Air and Ground Intelligence and Penetrations Aids would brief our crew on the specific line we were to attack if launched. The entire crew had to undergo extensive training on that particular route, the targets and the recovery bases available. After the briefings the crew would split up and each would go to a flight simulator and "fly" the mission. Each had to prove his proficiency. It was after all of this that the crew would be certified for a specific line. Each time you went on ground alert they would attempt to schedule crews on lines they had been previously been qualified to fly.

Each crew would spend seven days on alert duty. At Loring there were two areas where this was done: the "Mole Hole" was an underground building on the flight line in which usually five aircrews and associated ground crews would stay. The second building was above ground and about a half mile away from the flight line and up to 15 more B-52 crews would be here.

At that time the 42nd Bombardment Wing had three B-52 squadrons and a KC-135 tanker squadron. Each of the squadrons would have crews on alert duty. In addition there was an F-106 fighter interceptor squadron and Army Nike surface-to-air missiles and a helicopter detachment.

On the day you went on alert you showed up in full flying attire with enough of everything to last you a week. When Mary kissed me good-bye, she could never be sure if this might be the last time we would ever see each other. This was very true during the Cuban Missile Crisis. All of the crews going on alert duty would receive a detailed weather briefing of what could be expected to and from the target areas. We would drop our bags off and go to the aircraft where we would meet the

crew we were relieving. They would remove their gear and we would climb aboard and check out the aircraft. Our Aircraft Commander would then sign for the aircraft and from then on to when we were relieved a week later we were responsible for the aircraft and the mission it was relegated to strike if we were launched. This was basically the same procedure which was taken when we flew the airborne alert missions.

SAC had three waves of attacking B-52s. The first were the airborne alert aircraft; second were the ground alert aircraft; and third were the follow-on forces, everything left.

This was very serious business. The aircraft was "cocked," that is, everything was made ready for an immediate take off. My helmet was next to my seat and the oxygen and headsets were plugged in and ready to go. Once the klaxon sounded we had a maximum of ten minutes to get all of our aircraft in the air.

The responsibility and seriousness of our mission never ceased to impress me each time I would enter the bomb bays and see the thermonuclear weapons. Our aircraft would carry more explosive fire power than all of the bombs used in WW II.

Practice exercises were conducted on a continual basis, day and night, and in good and bad weather. You could be sound asleep, the klaxon would sound, you got dressed, zipped up your boots and ran up the ramp to your "bird." The rest of your crew was doing the same thing and the ground crew would already have the ground power units running. A radio message would be broadcast to us informing us if we were to launch or do other types of exercises. Sometimes we would immediately shut down the engines while at other times we would actually taxi out and go down the runway and taxi back to our parking stub.

While we were on alert duty we accomplished most of our ground training. Every day we would get up at 6:30 AM, eat and then go out to inspect our aircraft. On returning to the building we would have the latest weather briefings and updates on the international situation. The daily routine was well entrenched.

Keeping these many men locked up for a week can produce some strange events ...

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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 Maine Air Museum Monthly Meeting • 10 April 2004

The meeting was called to order by Vice-President Shaw at 10 a.m. at the Maine Air Museum. Sixteen members and guests were present.

**Update:** March 2004 showed a net income of -\$137.71 and the year-to-date shows a net income of -\$1061.91. Minutes were accepted as published in the *Dirigo Flyer*.

**New Business:** Current activity is slow. Some work has been done on the Loring AFB history project as part of the setting up of the 42nd Bomb Wing display in Bay 1. Don Godfrey donated a framed picture of his grandfather and the America Eagle aircraft taken at the old Godfrey Field about 1935. A variety of Northeast Airline items have been obtained. Houle also discussed the origins of some of the smaller auxiliary airports surrounding Dow AFB such as Winterport and Deblois.

**Communications:** The new web page and the *Dirigo Flyer* web pages are up and running. We need to change all literature to reflect the new web address. We also need to change our listing in the Bangor Convention Visitors Bureau to list us as the Maine Air Museum instead of the Maine Aviation Historical Society. It was decided to purchase the PastPerfect museum cataloging software for the museum. Norm Houle commented on the *Dirigo Flyer*. Leo needs help in gathering stories. There is also concern about maintaining the mailing list. We should have a list of all members by number at the museum so we can keep track of past and present members.

**Physical Plant:** There is still a little more duct work to be installed. The new overhead door is ready to be installed in Bay 2. A list of materials that we might need for the gift shop will be presented at the May meeting. The Spring order for memorial bricks will be sent in shortly and there is still time to order more.

The meeting was adjourned at 10:45 a.m.

*William Townsend, Recording Secretary*

#### Board of Directors Meeting • 10 April 2004

The meeting was called to order at 11:10 a.m. at the Maine Air Museum. Present: Cornett, Townsend, Shaw, Sederquist, Cormier, Gopan, Quinn, Johnson. Absent: Armstrong, Noddin, Boyle.

**Approved:** It was moved "that we purchase the PastPerfect museum cataloging software package." Seconded. Passed. Rick Alexander has volunteered to be the program chairman. He will be assisted by Scott Grant.

**Discussion Topics:** There was a general discussion of what we need to do in preparation for grant writing and cataloging. We also need to produce some organizational charts for inclusion with applications for grants. There was a brief discussion of the upcoming Aviation Exposition planned by the Eastern Maine Vocational School. The museum will be represented. There was a brief but continued discussion of finding a chairman for fundraising.

**Communication:** We need to have someone learn from Leo the techniques that he uses to produce the *Dirigo Flyer*. The argument continued concerning conducting board business via e-mail or in person. It is now generally felt that we should accept doing it via e-mail when the need arises.

**Acquisitions:** Joe Gopan will check with Noddin to finalize the deaccessioning of the can of engine parts. We also need to get rid of all the old video display shelves in Bay 2. The Aerosport is going up for bid on eBay within the month. The aviation memorabilia that were in the Oronoka Restaurant are in estate settlement limbo but attempts are still underway to obtain them.

**Librarian:** The volunteer librarian will be resuming in May. We are still looking for a color picture of Albert Stevens for the Hall of Fame.

The meeting was adjourned at 12:22 p.m.

*William Townsend, Recording Secretary*

## The Coastal Lights are Dimmed

Written by Richard A. Stevens Cdr. USNR (Ret), Tucson, AZ  
Contributed by Norm Houle

Northeast Airlines was flying Lockheed Electra 10A's on their routes from Boston to Montreal, Boston to Presque Isle, ME, and Moncton, New Brunswick. Once in a great while riding from my base in Bangor, Maine, I was allowed to ride in the co-pilot's seat. It was a real thrill for me to sit here at night as the little town's lights appeared and fell back behind us at 170 miles per hour.

The summer of 1941, Northeast put two new DC-3's on these routes. They had jump seats between the pilots; a few friendly pilots would let me ride nearly all the way to Boston. From that uncomfortable seat, I first saw the lights at Waterville, then Augusta, Lewiston-Auburn, and Portland. Portland was really beautiful. The harbor drive was like a lighted ring of pearls around the dark waters of the bay. Not many minutes away the lights of Boston were on the horizon.

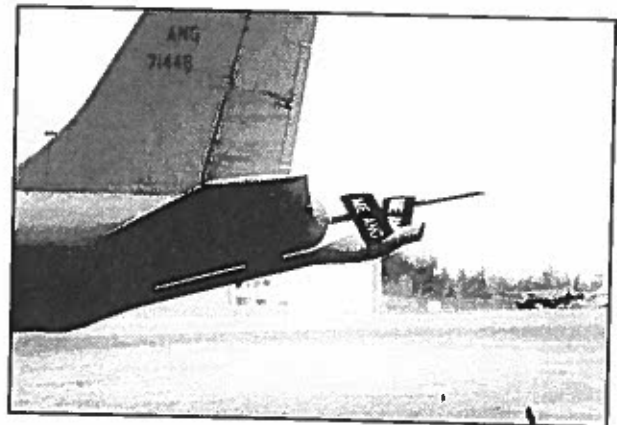
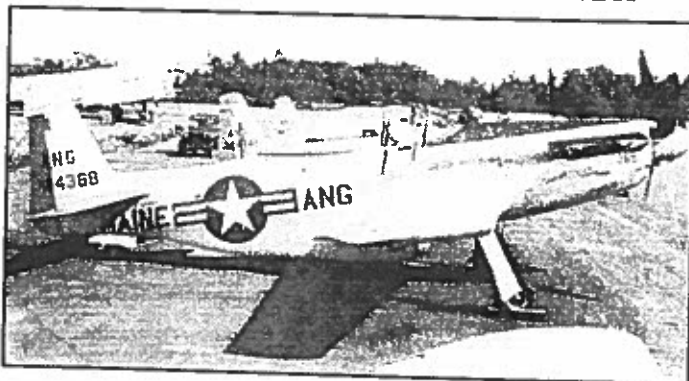
Very shortly after this flight, the United States Government passed an emergency act that asked all homeowners, shop-

keepers on the coastal areas, and anyone with lights and windows facing seaward to pull down curtains and eliminate outside lights.

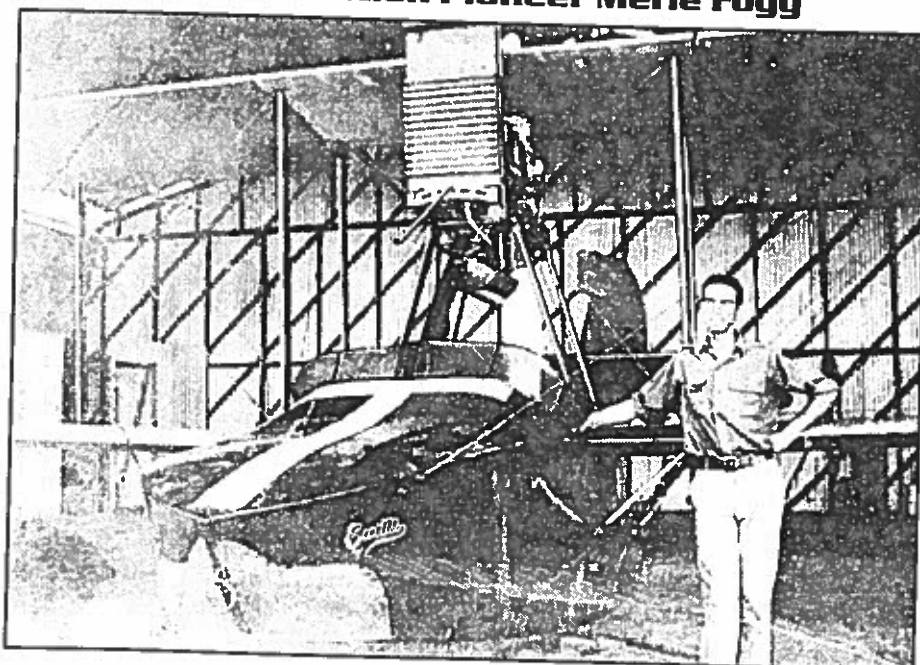
December 7, 1941, the whole scene changed. All lights along the seaboard, and for fifty miles inland, were blacked out. All aircraft, except military and airline, were banned from this area. Flight training schools were moved inland. Seldom did we see the lights of another aircraft. Cars below on the roads were even hard to see as the upper half of their headlights were taped over. The United States was at war. German "U" boats were using the background of coastal lights to spot and sink coastwise ships. Gone were the lights there for the duration.

Those ground lights which were so beautiful, so warm, so friendly to us in the night sky were no more. Those points of light that couldn't be dimmed except by clouds were still there; those billions of stars still friendly, still serving as beacons for us to navigate by; those ever-shining beacons all revolving around Polaris, the North Star.

### The Maine ANG, Then and Now



### Maine Aviation Pioneer Merle Fogg



(above left) Maine Air National Guard North American P-51H Mustangs at Dow Field after World War II. Note the C-47 in the background. (Photo from Switzerland, sent to your editor by friends)

(above) Markings on the refueling boom of a Maine Air Guard KC-135. (Mike Cornett Photo)

This photo is of Merle Fogg of Howland, one of our earliest licensed pilots with his Curtiss MF Flying Boat around 1920. He later moved to Florida where he was killed in a crash. He is buried in Bangor. (From Paper Talk via Norm Houle)

"Mole Hole," con't from page 1

When we first started to use the underground "Mole Hole" for alert duty, all of the double fencing around the building and the aircraft had not been installed. To compensate for this the Air Police had extra guards and dogs on duty to protect the area. We were cautioned not to go outside at night to smoke because of the dogs. Something could and should be done with this, and it was.

One evening we were told that the Wing Commander would be bringing some politicians in for a tour of the facility. Mid-way through the tour an aircrew member came staggering into the building with a large gash on one arm and blood all over the place moaning that the dogs had attacked him. Sheer panic among the visiting delegation. It was all a massive hoax! It was all stage make-up and there was no injury — except the panic among the visitors. The next day we were all severely chastised over the prank.

The Alert Force Commander, a West Point man, decided that the building should be kept in inspection order at all times. He didn't stand a chance. One problem was that crews would go down to the Mess Hall in the building, get cups of coffee, and leave the cups all over the building. The Mess Hall crew had to go all over the building to recover the missing cups every morning. The crews were ordered to return the cups to the Mess Hall. It didn't work. The next step was to appoint a crew each day to go all over the building to recover cups. The KC-135 tanker crews rose to the occasion. Each day they performed a formal "Changing of the Guard" ceremony, which the Buckingham Palace guards would envy, in front of the Alert Force Commander's office. They had gilded brooms and dust pans and really put on a show for us every day. The edict appointing crews to pick up cups was rescinded. We also brought our cups back to the Mess Hall.

In theory, when we got off alert duty we were to have three and a half days off. The scheduling people tried to make this time off over a weekend.

For a crew to receive crew training credit or to be on either air or ground alert there could only be a maximum of one substitute on the six-man crew. Even though we were highly trained and standardized, this was the rule. You could take a different crew member from each of six bases, put them together, and they could successfully fly a mission.

The airborne alert missions were somewhat like the ground alert type but you were airborne circling over the polar regions with the same mission as the ground alert crews. They would try to have an extra pilot aboard for these missions. As with the ground alert missions, the crews had to be certified to fly the "line" they were on. We would take off from Loring, tie up with a tanker over Greenland and then fly out to a polar orbit area. Tankers would go out and meet you part way and inflight refuel each orbiting B-52. If war were to start, the airborne B-52s would immediately fly their pre-designated routes and strike their targets. Meanwhile the B-52s on ground alert would also be on their way. Each crew had to follow a standard plan once airborne. During all inflight refuelings everyone had to be in his ejection seat and on oxygen.

Our crew kept the cabin at a fairly cool temperature because we wore our heavy winter flying gear all the time we were airborne. We decided that if we had to bail out over the Arctic our survival chances would be increased if we dressed warmly. Some crews flew in their summer flight gear and the cabin temperature was 70° — not for us.

There were electric ovens on the aircraft and we could heat government issued TV-type dinners. Our crew carried its own 20-cup coffee maker so we could have fresh coffee onboard. These missions would last from 24 to 30 hours so a lot of food was brought aboard.

The two downstairs, navigator and radar bombardier, would take turns sleeping. The pilots would do the same on the top deck. After takeoff and the first inflight refueling, the pilot would crawl into the tunnel and go to sleep on a stretcher which was hung there. He had to sleep with his oxygen mask on. Our co-pilot would move into the pilot's seat and I would move up to the co-pilot's seat. If a third pilot was on board, I would stay in my own crew position. We never really slept because we had to monitor all three radios at all times. I was put in charge of this. When certain messages would be transmitted to us, three of the officers had to copy and decode the message.

It is very eerie flying at 40,000' over the Arctic and there are no lights to be seen on the ground. When our time was up we would be relieved by another B-52 which would take over our mission. The flight home seemed to take forever. After landing and the engines were shut down there was an endless stream of paperwork to be completed.

— To be concluded in next issue

### May Mystery Photo



In 1927, James Hobbs of Maple Street in Bangor posed with his homebuilt plane. He later sold it to someone in the Bangor area. Can you tell us who, and if it was ever completed and flown?

(Photo from the Norm Houle Collection)

## In Memoriam

### Col. Edward B. Sleeper

*November 15, 1936 - April 9, 2004*

Colonel Edward Bradlee Sleeper, USAF Retired, 67, died Friday, April 9, 2004, at Maine Medical Center in Portland soon after being diagnosed with leukemia.

He entered the United States Air Force, attending Aviation Cadet Training in Harlingen, Texas. After serving at various U.S. Air Force installations, flying B-66s in Japan and B-52s in Massachusetts and Florida as a navigator, he entered pilot training at Valdosta, Georgia. From 1964 to 1968, while based in Okinawa as a C130 pilot, Col. Sleeper flew many missions in the Far East under heavy combat fire; many times returning with wounded soldiers.

The Colonel's next assignment was at Lockbourne Air Force Base in Columbus, Ohio, where he served as a pilot instructor/flight scheduler and flew many missions into South America. For the next five years, he served as advisor to the New Hampshire Air National Guard at Pease Air Force Base.

During his 30-plus years he received medals, citations and service awards, including the Defense Superior Service medal and the Distinguished Flying Cross. While in Zaire he also earned "jumpwings" with the Zairian Army. After retirement in 1988 he worked as a consultant with General Dynamics in Brussels and Finland for four years.

Mrs. Sleeper said of her husband, "He lived to fly!"

In that vein, he served more than eight years as president of the Knox County Flying Club and was re-elected to that office. He also worked for Maine Atlantic Aviation at Knox County Regional Airport. He set three world flight records in December and often flew or loaned his plane for medical missions with Angel Flight. He worked with Telford Aviation as a check pilot and also flew passengers and cargo to Penobscot Bay islands. Sleeper's work as a private flight instructor brought him great satisfaction and, due to his military clearance, he enjoyed continuing association as a pilot with government agencies.

*From The Free Press via Member Ed Umberger Sr.*

## In Memoriam

### Bart Gould

*Aviation Historian Par Excellence*

Our good friend and one of the founding members of the Massachusetts Aviation Historical Society has passed on. He died on April 12, 2004 at 6 a.m. at the Port Nursing Home in Newburyport, Massachusetts.

Bart was 91 and a writer and aero historian par excellence, chronicler of the Burgess Company story and of the North Shore's rich aviation history. He was a good and gentle man and we will miss his insights into the pioneering days of aviation. He wrote many magazine articles and newspaper stories on a wide range of topics from science to astronomy, and shared his knowledge, his sources and his experience with all who asked.

I met him in the late 1980s when he had his aviation book service. Books that were reasonably priced and with insightful (and at times humorous) descriptions: you always knew what you were buying and knew that he had also read it before he sold it to you. He also had a series running in WWI Aero that was very enjoyable to read entitled: Books Worth Reading Twice — the reviews of vintage aviation books from all eras, delightfully profiled and titles you know you wanted to find and read in the future.

We will miss Bart.

*Bill Deane, Massachusetts Aviation Historical Society*

\* \* \*

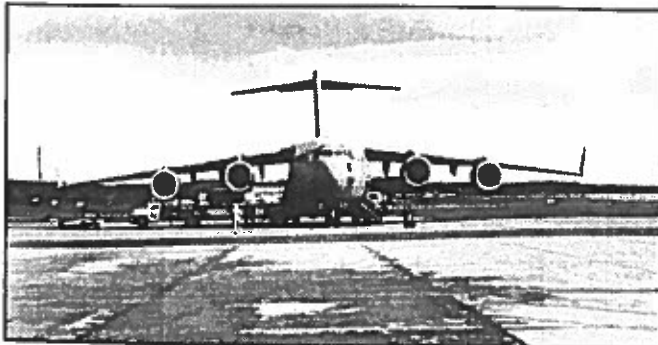
*Editor's Note: I also first met Bart and Peg through his book service. Later we became good friends through the Northeast Aero Historians and I learned so much about how to research and write aviation history from Bart. He will be sadly missed and fondly remembered in Maine as well as Massachusetts.*

\* \* \*

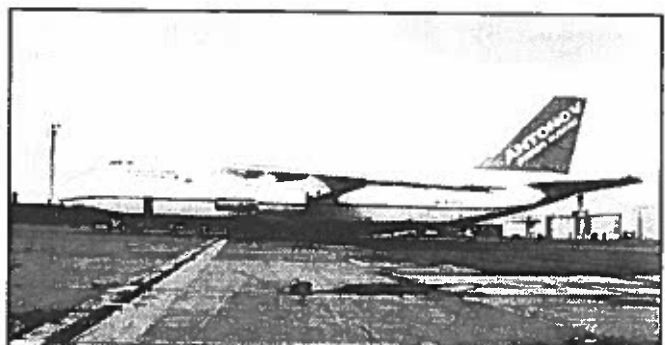
### Lenore Closson

Our sympathies also go out to member Larry Closson of Bernard on the loss of his wife, Lenore, in April. She will be missed by all, and we wish Larry well.

## Room with a View at the Maine Air Museum. . .



AC-117 at Bangor in April 2004. (Mike Cornett Photo)



Russian Antonov cargo transporter at Bangor in April. (Mike Cornett Photo)

## 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:*

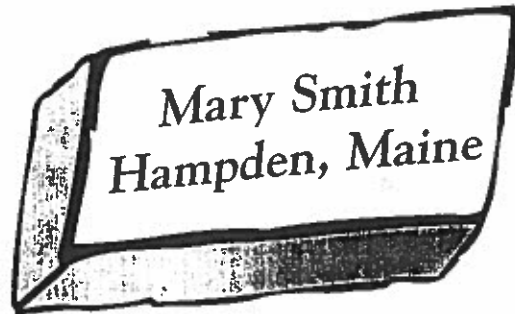
To successfully carry out and reach the museum vision, and to refurbish building 98, the Maine Air Museum needs the financial support of business and public community leaders and individual private citizens. Your interest in preserving the rich Maine aviation history will require funding presently not 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

Entitles the gift giver to a two-year membership and three-year museum pass, copy of The United States Air Force in Maine, 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.



*See Order Form on Page 7*

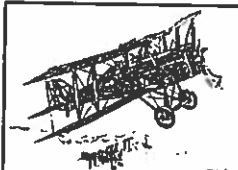
### ★ Altocumulus Member (Ac) — \$250 Donation

Entitles the gift giver to a five-year membership and five-year museum pass and a benefactor's engraved 4"x8"x2.5" pearl gray marble 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.

### ★ 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.

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## Upcoming MAHS Meetings and Events



- May 8 ..... 10 a.m. .... MAHS Meeting, Maine Air Museum, Bangor, Maine.
- May 29 ..... 10 a.m. .... Re-opening for 2004, Maine Air Museum, Bangor, Maine.
- July 3-4 ..... All Day ..... Antique Aeroplane Show, Owls Head Transportation Museum, Owls Head, Maine.
- August 7-8 ..... All Day ..... Acrobatic Spectacular, Owls Head Transportation Museum, Owls Head, Maine.

### Got Ideas?

MAHS meeting sites are flexible and we're always looking for guest speakers and new program ideas. If you have any ideas or if you can be of help, call Les Shaw at 1-877-280-MAHS.

### Got E-Mail?

Don't forget to send us your e-mail address if you want it listed in the *Dirigo Flyer*. It's a great way to keep in touch with other members, share information quickly and stay current on aviation issues and happenings.

### 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.

To volunteer, call 1-877-280-MAHS. To check the dates on which we need help, link to:  
[MaineAirMuseumvolunteerschedule.org](http://MaineAirMuseumvolunteerschedule.org)

## ✈ ✈ ✈ COME JOIN US and CATCH THE EXCITEMENT ✈ ✈ ✈

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 Help Preserve Maine's Aviation History for Tomorrow  
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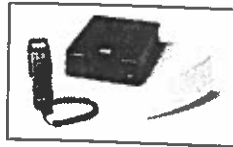
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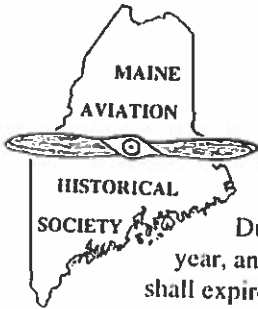
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Dues are for one year, and membership shall expire in the month you joined.

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

E-mail  
Phone \_\_\_\_\_

Membership	Dues	Benefits
Regular	\$25 annual	Newsletter, Decal, Museum Admission
Family	\$35 annual	Newsletter, Decal, Museum Admission
Corporate	\$100 annual	Newsletter, Decal, Museum Admission
Supporting	\$100 annual	Newsletter, Decal, Museum Admission, 4 Free Passes
Lifetime	\$500*	Newsletter, Decal, Lifetime Membership Number, Museum Admission, 10 Free Passes
* (2 annual \$250 payments)		

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

**May Meeting**

May 8, 2004

10 a.m.

Maine Air Museum  
Bangor, Maine