



DIRIGO FLYER

Newsletter of the Maine Aviation Historical Society

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July – September 2015

THE PARIS VISIT TO MAM ABOUT THE WHITE BIRD DISAPPEARANCE (By MAM President Chuck Byrum)

On July 5, 2015, the MAM had the great pleasure of a visit from Bernard Decré, President of the LA RECERCHE DE L'OISEAU BLANC from Boulogne, France and his photographer, Pierre Le Normand from the same place. We found in the MAM archives a white box full of information on the White Bird, material in it which we shared with Mr. Decré and Mr. Le Normand. They came to our house in Bangor and spent about 3 hours with me and my wife, Deanna. The documents that they did not have were photographed by Mr. Le Normand for their records:

- One of the documents was in French and was honoring the pilot Charles Nungesser of the White Bird and was signed by family and friends.
- There were newspaper articles and other documents reviewed by him.
- He took pictures of the Spruce Mountains search in 1994 among the pictures we had.
- A 12/13/1997, article in the Ellsworth American, "Stalking the White Bird, Mainer's quest continues for clues, answers to French biplane's 1927 disappearance."
- A newspaper article dated 03/26/1994, for a search of the White Bird at Gull Pond in Newfoundland's southern shore.
- A story in the Dirigo Flyer about the White Bird dated 04/12/1999.
- The last reports came from people living in Downeast Maine.
- An article out of Airspace Magazine dated 09/20/2010 about the White Bird, checking out its missing person file.
- A newspaper article dated 11/05/1995 in the BDN titled "On the trail of legends lost at Spruce Mountain." The climbers never found the wreckage.



Bernard, Deanna, and Chuck at the Byrum's

We spent several hours together talking and discussing some of the stories about the White Bird, but most were disclaimed as not credible. He shared a document with us on the White Bird about how it crashed in the water and how the wings dropped off and the gas tank was empty and has drifted with the tides.

Mr. Decré offered to buy us lunch at a restaurant of our choice. We had lunch together at the Ground Round and had more discussions about the White Bird.

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The Maine Air Museum is located at
98 Maine Avenue adjacent to
Bangor International Airport



Deanna and Pierre

Editor's Note:

For background information on Bernard Decré and his search for the remains of the French biplane that French pilots, Charles Nungesser and Francois Coli, had attempted to fly across the Atlantic from Paris to NYC on 5/8/1927, just 12 days before Charles Lindbergh's successful flight from NYC to Paris, your editor suggests you google the 6/24/2013 New York Times' article "Resuming the Search for a Pioneering Plane Off a Remote Island" by Scott Sayare. For Bernard Decré's conclusions on the fate of the White Bird after his trip to Maine this summer, go to his blog by googling his name together with the name Pierre Le Normand. The following photo of Pierre Le Normand at the MAM is taken from Bernard's blog.



ALBERT STEVENS BALLOON DISPLAY



Bob Umberger, MAM Director, has remodeled our Albert Stevens display (pictured above) to make it more informative and attractive. Albert William Stevens was born in Belfast Maine, March 13, 1886, and during his lifetime set numerous world high altitude balloon records. Of particular note:

- He was the first to photograph the lateral curvature of the Earth's surface;
- He was the first to photograph the Moon's shadow on Earth during a solar eclipse; and
- In November of 1935, he reached a world altitude record of 72,295 feet in a balloon.

The museum is fortunate to have a remnant of the outer shell of the actual balloon that set the record as a backdrop to the display. To see the updated display and read much more about this impressive Mainer, visit the MAM.



Close-up of the photo, featured in the display, depicts the capsule used by Albert Stevens while setting the altitude record in 1935.

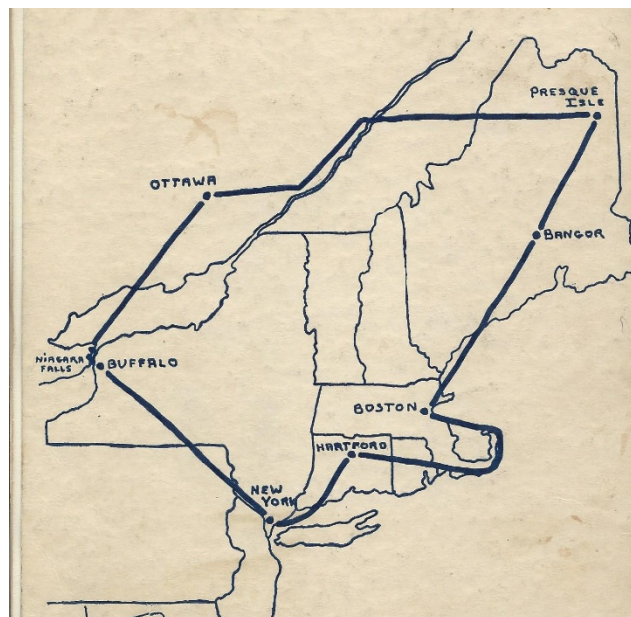
ADDED TO THE ARCHIVE**CLASSROOM-IN-THE-AIR**

In late May of 1951, the Northeast Airlines DC-4 pictured below was specially chartered to fly fifty-five Orono High students on a two-day, whirlwind, educational tour that would take them over seven states and part of Canada.



One of these students, J. Ted Luebbers, has given to the Maine Air Museum his handwritten, picture-filled journal of this tour. This personal diary with many interesting photos may be viewed in the MAM archive.

The following map shows the proposed route.



A few points of interest from Ted Luebbers journal include:

- After taking off from the Old Town Airport, many students saw their homes from the air for the first time. The plane then flew low along the coast of Maine so that Maine coastal cities could be seen.
- After landing at Logan Airport, the plane flew at low altitude over Cape Cod.
- After landing in Hartford, CT, the students toured the Pratt & Whitney plant where the students saw where jet engines were being built, tested and shipped.
- After touring the plant, there was a banquet in their honor and an overnight at the Y.M.C.A. The next morning they flew on to Buffalo, NY to clear customs. Flying from Buffalo on the way to Ottawa, the pilot flew low enough over Niagara Falls for the students to get a good look at the Maid of the Mist.
- In Ottawa, there was a tour of the Parliament building and a shopping trip!

The Bangor Daily News printed this story of the forthcoming trip, complete with a list of those participating.



The students returned with memories that would last them a lifetime. Thank you Ted Luebbers.

FUN AT THE MUSEUM FOR FUTURE PILOTS?

These 4 year-old twin boys love the ejection seat that they tried out at the museum on a recent Saturday morning. Tracy Pinkham, mother of Aden and Isaiah, stated that her 4 year-olds love planes. The boys reportedly love driving by the airport and seeing planes land. Furthermore Ms. Pinkham said "I am going to homeschool these boys, so I am sure that the Maine Air Museum will be a great resource for us to explore and learn more about aviation in the future."



Bangor ACE Camp Tours MAM

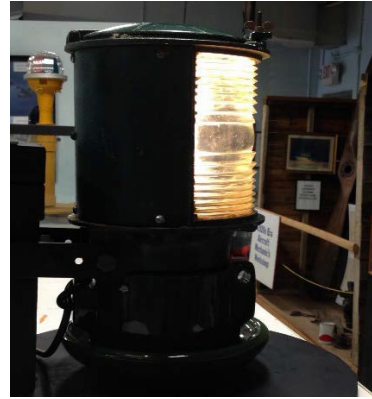
The Bangor ACE (Aviation Career Education) camp is an overnight camp for students ages 13-17 who have a strong desire to learn about aviation and possible aviation careers. This national program is sponsored by the Federal Aviation Administration and the U.S. Military. Here in Maine, the camp is supported by several Maine aviation oriented groups, and hosted by the Katahdin Area Council (Boy Scouts of America) at Camp Roosevelt in Eddington, Maine.

This year's ACE camp, which ran from July 26 to August 1, 2015, toured the Maine Aviation Museum. Below are a few pictures of some of the students on tour.



RECENT ADDITIONS TO THE MUSEUM

RUNWAY LIGHT



This white-lensed light, donated to the Maine Air Museum and now on display, was one of the many used to illuminate the runway at the Sanford, Maine airport. It was manufactured by Crouse-Hines during the late 1940's. Amber colored lens were used in the last 2000 feet at the ends of the runway to warn pilots they were about out of runway.

NEW MUSEUM "RESTING AREA"



A new "resting area" has been added to the museum for the convenience of our visitors. It is a good place for visitors to read museum materials while giving their legs a rest. See the area being put to good use by the ACE camp tour group on page 7.

272 k/s RETIRES to MAM

MAM has a new display, thanks to the generosity of the Old Town airport, DeWitt Field, which donated its retired ADF (Automatic Direction Finder) or Non-Directional Beacon equipment.



272kcs RETIRES

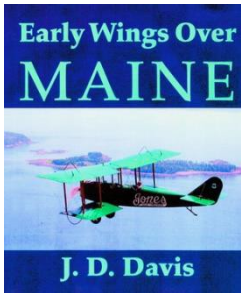
This radio beacon was used for many years at Dewitt Field, the Old Town airport, by pilots making instrument approaches to the airport in marginal weather using Automatic Direction Finding (ADF) equipment from the 1940's to the present. 272 kilocycles was the transmitter radio frequency. Modern GPS (Global Positioning System) receivers have rendered the ADF system obsolete.

The Maine Air Museum wishes to thank the
management of Dewitt Field for the
donation of this historic piece
of electronic navigation

PROJECTS IN THE WORKS AT MAM

- Viewing Platform – waiting for City of Bangor to approve plans to build
- Lindbergh Aircraft crate – waiting for delivery
- Saab Nose section – ready for pickup, waiting for delivery
- Huey helicopter – waiting for delivery notification
- Bay 3 – removing clutter from this work area
- Museum displays will be video-taped
- Visit to site of the Lockheed Super Star Constellation renovation in Auburn, Maine
- As always – additional gate volunteers are needed for Saturdays and Sundays

BOOKS FOR SALE



Early wings over Maine by John Davis
 Price \$24.95 (includes sales tax)
 Shipping \$6.00
 In stock and ready for delivery

Send check payable to MAHS to
 MAHS
 P.O. Box 2641
 Bangor, ME 04402-2641

Also available through the museum:

Memoirs: With an Angel By My Side by member Alfred Cormier.

His flying life as told by Al and available exclusively from the Maine Air Museum.

\$16.00 at the museum, \$22.00 via mail. To order, call or email the museum.

"...a great story by a member of the Greatest Generation."

The United States Air Force in Maine, Progeny of the Cold War by John Garbinski.

Another exclusive book from the Maine Aviation Historical Society. Softbound, 134 pages, 151 illustrations.

~~\$20.00~~ Now only \$5.00 (plus \$6.00 postage and handling). To order, call or email the museum.



Maine Air

Museum

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Invisible Intelligence



Maine Aviation Historical Society Maine Air Museum * Membership Form

All dues expire on June 30th of each year. If joining mid-year, pay \$2.00 for each remaining month

Name: _____
 Address: _____
 City, State, Zip: _____
 Special Interests: _____
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Annual membership includes six newsletters!

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Membership	Dues	Benefits
Regular	\$25 annual	Newsletter, Museum Admission
Family	\$35 annual	Newsletter, Museum Admission
Corporate	\$100 annual	Newsletter, Museum Admission
Supporting	\$100 annual	Newsletter, Museum Admission, -
Lifetime	\$500*	Newsletter, Lifetime Membership Number, Museum Admission,
* 2 annual \$250 payments		

- We need volunteers-docents, mechanics, maintenance, librarians and exhibit specialists, etc.
- Please call me. I want to be active in the organization.
- I cannot join now, but would like to help. I am enclosing a check for \$ _____.
 Contributions over \$20 are tax deductible within the limits of the law.
- I wish to support and obtain membership by purchasing a memorial brick.

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