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Albin K. Longren with his "Longren Flyer," a scratch-built copy of the Curtiss Pusher. (Photo from the author's collection)

100th Anniversary of Kansas Aviation by Richard Harris

September 2011 marked the 100th anniversary of Kansas aviation. On September 2, 1911, the first generally recognized Kansas-built airplane flew, in Topeka, Kansas, -- piloted by Albin

Kasper Longren, a self-educated Topeka machinist and engineer, who -- with his brother and a buddy -- had built the plane from scratch, imitating the popular Curtiss Pusher design.

Longren repeated his flights several times over the next few days, soundly outperforming most of the first-time flyers of the day.

Over the next few years, Longren would go on to produce a number of aircraft, becoming one of the nation's first aircraft manufacturers. During, and immediately after, WWI, Longren served as an aviation craftsman for the military, eventually becoming the Chief Inspector for the Army's aircraft-research headquarters at McCook Field, Dayton, Ohio, (home to the Wright Brothers).

Following military service, Longren returned to Topeka, and resumed production of aircraft. Financial challenges led to the dissolution of his business in 1924, much of which was sold

off to the Alexander family in Denver who started their Alexander Aircraft Co. with a Longren Flyer design, ultimately becoming (briefly) the nation's leading plane-maker.

Longren's own company workforce spawned an ever-branching tree of aviation-minded alumni -- who started or shaped several plane makers in the Kansas City area -- from American Eagle, to Porterfield, to Consolidated, to Rearwin, to Luscombe. Kansas City area aviation, in turn, spawned key WWII factories of North American Aviation (the nation's main B-25 bomber factory) and a General Motors factory producing Allison engines that powered many U.S. fighters.

This center of aviation industry, revolving around Fairfax Airport, Kansas City, Kan., would eventually become the global operating base of what was at one time the world's largest airline -- originally Transcontinental & Western

Highlights of What's Inside

- 100th Anniversary of Kansas Aviation
- John Underwood Hall of Fame Inductee
- Canadian Air & Space Museum in Survival Fight
- 1st Production Boeing Dreamliner Delivered
- AAA/APM 2011 Fly-In
- EAA AirVenture 2011
- AAHS Photo Archives Update

Regular Sections

- President's Message
- Book Reviews
- New Members
- Wants & Disposals



Longren's Topeka factory. (From the author's collection)



Interior shop of Longren's Topeka factory. (From the author's collection)

Air -- ultimately just "TWA" - Trans-World Airlines.

Longren, himself, personally contributed much more to world aviation, including the invention of America's first composite-shell aircraft (the Longren Fibre AK) -- so far ahead of its time that it would ultimately be vindicated by the fact that its core distinguishing design concept is now THE "emerging" construction technique for today's modern airplanes!

More influentially, Longren also invented essential machinery and techniques for the complex forming of sheet-metal into airplanes, using a process known as "stretch-forming."

In the late 1930s/early 1940s, Longren moved his business to Torrance, Calif., in the middle of the Southern California region where most major airplane makers were developing the latest technologies. A WWII newspaper clipping credits Longren's technology as being used by the leading aircraft manufacturers of the time (Boeing, Douglas, Lockheed, etc.). Independent evaluators described Longren's methods for shaping sheet metal into aircraft as decisively more efficient than the methods previously used. No doubt, America's massive production of aircraft for WWII was at least partly facilitated by the inventions and ideas of Albin K. Longren.

In the 1940s "shakeout" of general aviation, expertise with sheet-metal forming would be a key advantage for Kansas general aviation plane makers over their rivals nationwide (most of whom soon collapsed). Along the way, Longren would become vice president of Cessna, at about the time that Cessna made its critical and decisive break with the past that put Cessna ahead of most general aviation competitors: -- the switch from old-fashioned, fabric-skinned, steel-framed airplanes, to sleek, light, modern, aluminum-shell airplanes -- after acquiring technology developed by none other than Albin K. Longren.

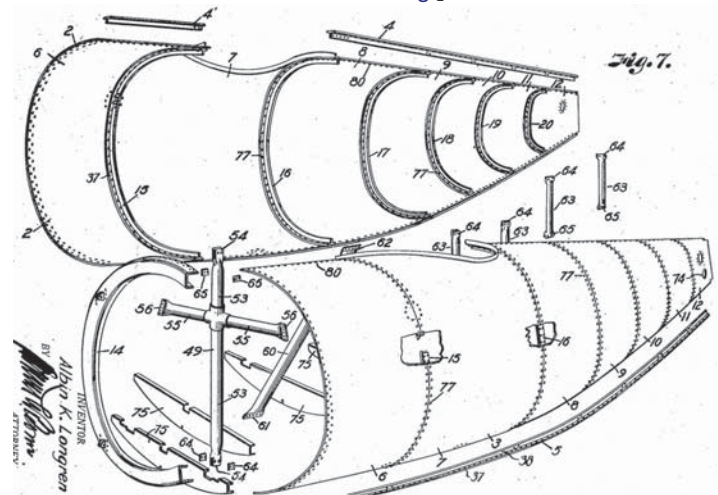
At that point, Cessna and Beech, with their sleek, modern aluminum-shell planes clearly began outdistancing all other competitors, soon becoming the world's highest-volume producers of airplanes, a role which Cessna retains to this day.

Kansas aviation history includes: over 275,000 aircraft built, perhaps the most of any state including one of every nine aircraft built in WWII. Over 50 historic manufacturers: Boeing, Bombardier/Learjet, North American, Cessna, Beechcraft/

Raytheon/Hawker-Beechcraft, Mooney, Longren, E.M. Laird, Swallow, Travel Air, American Eagle, Stearman, Stearman-Northrop, Culver, Luscombe, Porterfield, Inland Sport, Funk, Rearwin/Commonwealth, Helio, Alon, Piaggio, Republic, Rawdon and others.

Today, the state produces one-fifth of U.S. civil aircraft, hosting Boeing and its main subcontractor Spirit Aerospace, Cessna Aircraft Co., Hawker-Beechcraft, Bombardier/Learjet Div., Bombardier Flight Test Center, Airbus-North America Engineering Div., ultralight/sportplane makers RANS and Belite, hundreds of aerospace subcontractors (including avionics leaders Bendix/King and Garmin). The state is also host to McConnell AFB, two international airports and over 50 others, the National Institute for Aviation Research, the National Center for Aviation Training and several other major aviation schools and four large aerospace museums. It is estimated that there are over 40,000 aerospace industry workers currently employed in the state.

[Editor's Note: Additional information Kansas Aviation Centennial at www.ks100aviation.org]



A drawing from the 1931 U.S. Patent (2006268) in which Longren describes both the construction of a metal semi-monocoque aircraft fuselage and the method of stretch forming the skins. (U.S. Patent Office)

John Underwood Hall of Fame Inductee

Long time AAHS member John Underwood will be honored by the EAA as one of five new members to the EAA Sport Aviation Hall of Fame on October 29, 2011.

Underwood of Glendale, Calif., has authored a number of aviation books, written numerous aviation history articles, and made numerous contributions to the AAHS over the years. Growing up in the Los Angeles basin, and with an interest in aviation dating back to when he was a seven year old, John has personally experienced the development of the aviation industry. His professional career as an aviation technical writer, along with being strategically located in one of aviation's most active locations allowed him access to numerous aviation luminaries. Included in these contacts are individuals like Kelly Johnson, test pilot Tony LeVier, air racing and test pilot Gordon Israel, Alden Brown (designer of the Brown racer) and even Douglas "Wrong Way" Corrigan. An example of his extensive photo collection can be found in his recent book on *Grand Central Air Terminal; Images of Aviation Series* that illustrates the history of this famous airport.

Underwood has amassed an extensive collection of aviation material and thousands of photographs documenting aviation development. His dedication to "getting history right" can be found throughout the *AAHS Journals* with comments in the "News & Comments" as well as a number of articles.

Our congratulations go to John Underwood for a well deserved honor and to the EAA for recognizing his contribution to preserving American aviation history.

Canadian Air & Space Museum in Survival Fight

On September 22, 2011, the Parc Downsview Park, Inc., (PDP) issued an eviction notice to the Canadian Air & Space Museum (CASM) to vacate their historic location within six months (by March 31, 2012). While having struggled in the past, the CASM has in the last year experienced a turn around and had been meeting its lease obligations – obviously bad news to the PDP management that desires to tear down the former de Havilland Canada building to build ice skating rinks. The building is the original 1929 home of the de Havilland Aircraft of Canada Ltd., (one of Canada's most successful aircraft manufacturers) and also the original home of Canada's leading space technology company best known as SPAR.

Additional information can be found on the CASM website (www.casmuseum.org). Canadian aviation and history enthusiasts should act quickly in order to have a chance to help save this priceless location and collection. Even if the museum is forced to move, six months is a totally inadequate time line to locate an adequate new facility and move the existing collection to it.

An idea that might generate interest to save CASM is for a U.S. organization to submit a bid to acquire the museum's assets, forcing Canadians to face the potential of a complete loss of much of their aviation heritage – a historic building torn down for ice rinks and the moving of a collection to the United States.



Boeing delivered the first 787 Dreamliner to ANA on September 26 (inset; seen touching down at Tokyo Haneda airport on September 27) after receiving FAA and EASA certification on August 26. The prototype Dreamliner (N787BA) is seen departing EAA AirVenture on July 29, 2011. (ANA photo by Boeing, prototype photo by Hayden Hamilton)

Life Begins at 40; The AAA/APM 2011 Invitational Fly-In



In September 1971 the first Antique Aircraft Association/Airpower Museum (AAA/APM) Invitational Fly-In was held at Antique Airfield near Blakesburg, Iowa. Antique Airfield had only existed for a little over a year at this time after moving from the Ottumwa Industrial Airport. The move had been

a busy and exciting time, fraught with challenges and resistance from various quarters thus setting the stage for the first AAA/APM Fly-In at Antique Airfield. Despite the minimal facilities the fly-in was a success and set in motion four decades of fly-ins at Antique Airfield that continue to the present day. It is fitting, therefore, that the theme of this year's fly-in was Life Begins at Forty celebrating 40 years of AAA/APM fly-ins. The featured aircraft at this year's fly-in was the Monocoupe with over a dozen examples covering numerous models.

This year's event was well attended with over 300 antique, vintage and classic aircraft present.

While this is a members-only event, it is well worth the annual membership fee to have the opportunity of seeing antique aircraft operating from a grass field just as they did early in their careers.



ABOVE: 1939 Bellanca 14-9, N25310. (All photos by Charles E. Stewart)

BELOW: Cessna 195, N1571D, Neo-Classic 1946-1956 Sweepstakes winner.



Grand Champion Awards

Antique Pre-1936

Grand Champion	Rearwin 6000 Speedster	NC15865	Eric Rearwin, San Pablo, Calif.
Sweepstakes	Monocoupe 110	NC114V	Warren Pietsch, Minot, N.D.

Classic 1936-1941

Grand Champion	Monocoupe 90A	NC18056	Brian Meuser, Santa Rosa, Calif.
Sweepstakes	Rearwin 8090 Cloudster	NC25404	Don Pellegreno, Rhome, Tex.

Warbirds 1941-1945

Grand Champion	Ryan PT-22	N49049	Mike Wilson, Cedar Rapids, Iowa
Sweepstakes	Stearman N2S3	N49295	Daryl Fisher, Reno, Nev.

Neo-Classic 1946-1956

Grand Champion	Mooney M-18 Mite	N4068	Forrest Lovley, Jordan, Minn.
Sweepstakes	Cessna 195	N1571D	Stan Sweikar, Dameron, Md.

Homebuilt

Grand Champion	P&W Mullicoupe	NX274Y	Mark Holliday, Lake Elmo, Minn.
Sweepstakes	Wittman Tailwind	N1066Y	Mike Logback, McPherson, Kan.

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A Few of this Year's Fly-In Attendees

1. 1931 Curtiss-Wright CW-1 Junior, N10962, c/n 1140.
2. 1929 Fleet Model 1, N8616, c/n 28.
3. 1946 Luscombe 8A, N71600, c/n 3027.
4. 1941 Meyers OTW, N26489, c/n 42.
5. 1941 Monocoupe 90AL-115, N38905, c/n 828.
6. 1929 Monocoupe 113, NC8934, c/n 304.
7. 1937 Monocoupe 90A, NC18056, c/n A-765.
Classic 1936-1941 Grand Champion winner.
8. 1932 Monocoupe 110, NC114V, c/n 6W23.
Pre-1936 Antique Sweepstakes winner.



Some Additional Fly-In Participants

9. 1946 Piper J3C-65 Cub, NC70895, c/n 17970.

10. 1940 Porterfield LP-65, NC32417, c/n 847.

11. 1936 Rearwin 6000 Sportster, NC15865, c/n 302. Pre-1936 Antique Grand Champion.

12. 1931 Stearman C-3R, NC799H, c/n 5037.

13. 1938 Howard DGA-11, NC18207, c/n 206. This aircraft started life as a DGA-9 with a 285-hp Jacobs L-5 engine, but with the switch to a P&W R-985 becomes a DGA-11.

14. 1931 Stinson SM-6000-B, NC11153, c/n 5021.

15. 1933 Waco UBF, NC11274, c/n 3690.

16. Stinson Model O, NC12817, c/n 10.



EAA AirVenture 2011, Oshkosh, Wis.



This Beech Starship, N514RS, was part of a special tribute to Burt Rutan, who retired from Scaled Composites this year, with a number of his designs on display. (Photo by Robert Burns)

In this day of heightened security around airports, it is often difficult to get easy access for photography or other purposes. The Experiment Aircraft Association's annual AirVenture turns all of this on its head. For a week every summer for the past 59 years, an annual pilgrimage proceeds to Oshkosh, Wis., where young and old can live, breathe and enjoy aviation in an easy, casual environment. Whether you come for a day or stay the entire week, there is something for everyone's interest in aviation. This year was no exception.

Imagine over 2,500 exhibit aircraft (not counting 10,000-plus other aircraft that attend) and 800-plus vendors. This year there were 367 warbirds, some restored to conditions better than they were when they rolled off the factory floor. Add to this 975 homebuilts of every shape and size including over 75 Burt Rutan-based designs. The International Aerobatic Club (IAC) corral brought together 38 different aerobatic aircraft, with the Dall-Air Snap, a light-sport aircraft, making its debut. Interested in vintage and antique aircraft? The Vintage Aircraft Association registered 700 antique, classic and contemporary aircraft, including 22 past grand champions who returned. Not to forget the ultralights that were represented by 112 ultralights and light planes, including trikes, powered parachutes and numerous rotorcraft.

Attention was given to special attendees such as the 100th Anniversary of Naval Aviation represented by F/A-18s, CAF's

Boeing B-29 that is back in the air this year after undergoing an extensive overhaul and Boeing's 787 Dreamliner that was on display for one day during the event. All around the show line were other special displays – Lockheed 12s recognizing the design's 75th anniversary, a tribute to early airmail, a display of various Burt Rutan designs and several other special interest displays.

Even the AirVenture Museum and Pioneer Airport are right on the grounds with free shuttle buses to take you over and back. The museum has one of the largest collections of Golden Age air racers, all beautifully displayed. The hangars on Pioneer Airport house a wonderful collection of vintage and antique aircraft.

Ample opportunities existed for great photos along the show line and within the exhibit/parking areas. Like to camp? Imagine an RV camp capable of handling thousands of campers –well managed and cleanly maintained for the duration. AirVenture is one of the few events you can attend where you'll find a family oriented environment and one of the cleanest show areas ever.

Haven't made a pilgrimage to Oshkosh? A visit to AirVenture definitely needs to be added to your "Bucket List." The 2012 event will celebrate the 75th anniversary of the ubiquitous Piper Cub and will be held July 23-29; so mark your calendars and start planning now.



It's important to start the love of aviation at a young age, then it never gets old. (Photo by Robert Burns)



EAA's 1929 Ford 4-AT-E Trimotor, NC8407, c/n 69, was in constant use giving rides to those wishing to experience Golden Age airline travel. (Photo by Hayden Hamilton)



The EAA helped celebrate the 100th anniversary of Naval Aviation. Daily displays by this USMC F/A-18E-53 Super Hornet, BuNo 165677, were given. Its special paint scheme is in current Corps camouflage colors that should drive scale modelers absolutely bonkers trying to replicate. (Photo by Hayden Hamilton)



Grumman TBM-3E, BuNo 85828, NL81865, prepares to taxi out of the warbirds parking area. (Photo by Robert Burns)



The USMC also brought a McDonnell Douglas AV-8B, BuNo 164143, VMA 311. (Photo by Robert Burns)



This Fairchild FC-2-W2, NC3569, c/n 35 was part of the EAA Vintage Aircraft Association's display of early airmail services. (Photo by Robert Burns)



Ted Smith's Aerostar 601P, N31TT, is outfitted with P&W 615 jet engines. Rumors are that it could be put back in production if sufficient interest develops. (Photo by Robert Burns)



A 1939 Grumman J2F-4 Duck, NL63850, performs a "dirty" fly-by. It was one of over 350 warbirds that participated in AirVenture 2011. (Photo by Hayden Hamilton)



Molt Taylor's Aerocar One, N102D, owned by Ed Sweeny, Jr., of Colorado Springs, Colo., is the only remaining actively flown example of this unusual design. (Photo by Robert Burns)

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

This year has come and is almost gone. It seems like only yesterday that the Society was moving into our new facilities and now we are coming up on our first anniversary. This is also the time of the year that we begin to encourage you to renew your membership for 2012.

With November fast approaching we want each of you to take a second and look at the mailing label on the envelope containing the *Journal*. If "2011" appears on the line above your name, your membership expires at the end of the year. Please help us all by sending in your renewal promptly, or by going online to renew.

We have had a good response from a number of you relative to volunteering. If you have volunteered, please be patient as we are sorting through the various tasks and will get back to you directly. Remember that while we encourage Southern California members to volunteer in the office, you don't have to live in SoCal to participate. Have a computer and MS Excel? Interested in cataloging images from the photo archives? Let us know. We currently have a number of members supporting this effort, but can use more. The side benefit is that you'll get to keep for your collection the digital images we send for identification. Remember that the office is open every Wednesday and all are welcome to drop in and visit.

Membership is an ever recurring theme. The larger we can grow the Society, the lower the individual costs become – a benefit to all. This year is the first in more than five that our membership roll has stabilized – read "not declined." BUT, we need to effectively double our membership in order to begin to see real economies of scale. In surveying new members, we find that "Referred by a friend" is still the most dominant way new members find the AAHS. That means you, as a member, are still the most effective resource we have for growing the Society. And, therefore, we are asking you to do even more. Take every opportunity you have to promote the Society. Reach out to the younger generations. Consider giving a gift membership to a child, grandchild, niece or nephew. You never know when such a gift may stimulate an interest in aviation. Another idea is to donate a gift membership as a prize or raffle item to an organization such as Junior CAP, Boy Scouts, EAA chapter, modeling club, etc. By doing such simple things, you can help the Society grow.

Many of us are of the age where estate planning is an important concern. We would like to encourage you to consider including the AAHS in this activity. By doing so, you help ensure that future generations will have the opportunities you enjoyed in learning about our American aviation heritage. If you need help in doing this, please contact the AAHS office.

And, don't be hesitant about contributing to the *Journal* and *FLIGHTLINE*. We are constantly looking for articles, even if they are nothing more than a small vignette about an aviation-related experience you had.

Donations are always welcome. We can add books and magazines to our collection and you are always welcome to visit us with questions or stories.

This will be my last "President's Message." After five years at the helm of the Society, I will be stepping down from the Presidency. The decision to step aside is for personal reasons and because I believe it is appropriate for periodic changes in leadership. It has been a pleasure and a privilege to work with such a great group of people -- on the staff and in the membership.

Bob Brockmeier
President

AAHS FLIGHTLINE Sign-Up Reminder

For those that want to be notified by email when the next issue of the AAHS *FLIGHTLINE* is posted, please register your email address online. You can do this by going to the AAHS website "home page." At the bottom of this Web page is a link and instructions that will allow you to register your email address. This is an "opt in" program. Only those that request notification will receive one. The AAHS will not use your email address registered here for any other purpose than to notify you of a *FLIGHTLINE* posting. You have control and may remove or change your email address at any time. Remember that the electronic version of the AAHS *FLIGHTLINE* is in color.

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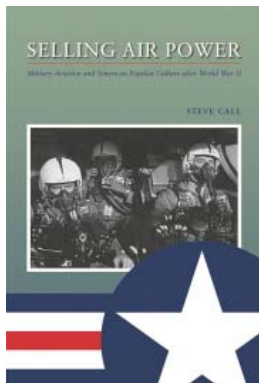
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Book Reviews

Selling Air Power; Military Aviation and American Popular Culture after WWII, by Steve Call.



Williams-Ford Texas A&M University Military History Series, Texas A&M University Press, College Station, Tex., www.tamu.edu/upress. March 2009. ISBN: 160344100X, paperback, 8.8" x 6," 240 pages, \$24.95.

Air Power had well-known advocates prior to WWII. Billy Mitchell was an early American air power supporter who was court-martialed for insubordination, but nevertheless held to his views that war from the air could win battles without the loss of ground troops. Other officers in the U.S. Army were also of like mind prior to 1940 and their combined efforts managed to convince President Roosevelt that air power, and specifically strategic bombing, was key to preserving the safety of United States in view of developments in Europe and Japan. When the United States was drawn into war by the Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor, the strategic bomber force was small and inadequate to carry air power to the enemy. However, the industrial might of the United States combined with the training of thousands of airmen resulted in air forces that took the fight to the enemy and helped achieve unconditional defeat.

The United States emerged from WWII with a large fleet of bombers waiting for the next mission. The 1947 formation of the U.S. Air Force as an independent branch of the military services was a crowning achievement for those who held that air power was the key to any future war. The ensuing Cold War rapidly developed into the notion that Russia was engaged in world domination by conquest. The American public needed protection from this new threat.

This book investigates the selling of air power in this environment. One method used the popular magazines of the time such as *Newsweek*, *Time*, *Life*, *Collier's*, etc., to keep the public up-to-date on the new capabilities of the Air Force. Strategic bombing was the ultimate expression of air power and Strategic Air Command (SAC) led by Curtis LeMay was advertised as the means to strike the enemy before they had a chance to harm the United States. At the same time, it was assumed that Russia was developing similar capability and this threat was used to expand and maintain SAC. Ultimately, the Air Force had to admit that some of the enemy bombers might get airborne and thus the Early Warning System was developed. Without thinking too deeply of the consequences, battles would be fought with nuclear weapons.

While the popular press was a good vehicle for advocating air power, the movies were even better. The "SAC Trilogy" movies: *Strategic Air Command*, *Bombers B-52* and *A Gathering of Eagles* advertised the capability of SAC airplanes and crews. These productions were amply supported by the U.S. Air Force. They boosted recruitment and retention of dedicated Air Force personnel and assured that Americans of all ages received the air power message. To add to this "right" approach, the movie *The Court Martial of Billy Mitchell* was

released in 1955 to stress the revolutionary nature of air power.

By the 1960s, some of the unbridled enthusiasm for air power was starting to receive words of restraint. John Hersey's book *Hiroshima*, published in 1946, examined the effects of nuclear war but was not strongly linked with air power. The 1956 novel *Roll Back the Sky* by Ward Taylor describes the problems of a B-29 crew who participated in firebombing raids on Tokyo. It is an indictment of strategic bombing. Nevil Shute's novel *On the Beach* and the subsequent movie by the same name dealt with the results of nuclear war delivered by mass bombing and the bleak outlook for the survivors. It is thus more anti-nuclear than against strategic bombing but the two are strongly associated. The most graphic depiction of air power's negative effect is Stanley Kubrick's *Dr. Strangelove* released in 1964. The image of Major "King" Kong riding a nuclear bomb to his own destruction became world famous.

This book is an adaptation of an academic thesis, complete with source notes. It is not often that one encounters the words "eschatological" or "technological messianism" in popular literature. The author conveys not so much the history of American air power as the history of the devices used to make and keep air power in the forefront of the American public. Much of the consequence of the nuclear war is kept in the background. Further, the development of ballistic missiles and the change of threat perception associated with the launch of Sputnik are largely ignored. The result is a book that appeals more to those interested in the influence of the media rather than the history of aviation.

Adrian Ryneveld

Piper Aircraft, by Roger W. Peperell. Air Britain Historians, Ltd, England, 2006. ISBN: 0851303781, hardback, 8.5" x 11," 640 pages, numerous color and b&w photos and drawings, \$90.00 from the AAHS.



On March 17, 2003, a Piper Cub was the first airplane to be delivered to the new Udvar-Hazy Center of the Smithsonian Air and Space Museum. This tiny airplane in its classic yellow finish was placed in the middle of the floor, dwarfed by the massive size of the Center. Eventually, it would be suspended from the rafters in its place of honor, surrounded by many other historic aircraft.

The venerable Cub was flown by hundreds of thousands of pilots and represents the pervasiveness of American aviation during the past half century. This book describes not only the legendary Piper Company, its business and commercial history, the key people in its development but also gives an illustrated total catalogue of the many aircraft associated with the name Piper.

In accordance with a formal agreement dated November 20, 1933, William T. Piper and Gilbert Taylor each owned 50 percent of the Taylor Aircraft Co. to build and sell the Taylor Cub. With their very different styles of management constantly causing friction, Piper bought out Taylor's shares and formed the Piper Aircraft Corp. in 1937. At the beginning of 1939,

President Roosevelt established the Civilian Pilot Training Program (CPTP) to stimulate private flying and civil aviation. His real purpose was to establish a reserve of qualified pilots for the U.S. Armed Forces. This followed the lead of Germany, Italy and Japan, already seen as the potential enemies in the likely war.

During WWII, the Piper factory produced thousands of L-4s, the military version of the J-3 Cub. Like the rest of the industry, its real challenges came postwar. The Piper Aircraft Co., a public company but controlled by a Board filled by many Piper family members met the future by expanding the product lines and the use of mass production techniques. There were setbacks such as financial difficulties, floods and hurricanes but this book attests to the perseverance of the company (with variations of name while retaining Piper in the title) and the extent of many aircraft products up to the book's 2006 publication.

Roger Peperell is the official historian of 'The New Piper Aircraft Inc.' company. This book is a fully revised version of his 1996 book: *Piper Aircraft – The Development and History of Piper Designs*. The compilation of data on prototypes, production histories, specifications, performance details, company brochures and advertising is a massive task that must rate as a labor of love and represents over 40 years of research. It is probably no exaggeration to rate Roger as a world-class primary historian for Piper aircraft.

At 640 pages this is a larger format book of considerable weight. Its 8½ x11-inch page format permits a double column text and room for clear photographs and drawings. Data tables are spread throughout. A complete Index facilitates finding the particulars on any model very easy.

This is the first go-to reference for anything related to Piper Aircraft. Recommended!

Adrian Ryneveld

Aviator of Fortune: Lowell Yerex and the Anglo-American Commercial Rivalry, 1931-1946, by Erik Benson.

Texas A&M University Press, College Station, Tex., www.tamu.edu/upress. 2006, ISBN-13: 978-1-68644-500-4. Hardbound, 264 pages, b&w photos, maps, notes, sources and index. \$45.00.

Anyone who has been in a large International airline terminal in the recent past, such as Miami, may have casually noticed two airlines that fly south of the USA, namely, TACA and BWIA. Lowell Yerex played a founding role in both, at a time between the two world wars when commercial airlines began their tumultuous and competitive beginnings. He was a contemporary of Juan Trippe (Pan Am) and Howard Hughes (TWA) with the same drive, sense of entrepreneurship and vision, but in the end, was a man without a country – a flyer with no place to land, yet he made his mark. This book presents his quest, successes and failures in Central and South America.

Lowell Yerex was born in 1895 in New Zealand and by birthright was a British imperial subject. His upbringing, however, was in the U.S., although he never became a U.S.

citizen, which added another complication to his visionary aviation plans. His father admired all things American and worked in the United States. Yerex attended Valparaiso University in Indiana and at the beginning of WWI he joined the Canadian Royal Flying Corps, was shot down behind enemy lines, captured, escaped and again recaptured. After the war he joined a "flying circus," then opened a Packard car dealership. When the Depression hit, and with his business failing, he headed for Mexico to escape. This began his long residency in Central America where he started a one airplane company in Honduras with an air mail contract called Transportes Aereos Centro Americanos (TACA) in 1931. These contracts expanded to Nicaragua, El Salvador and Guatemala. He bought his competitors out and as he became more successful he eventually faced the stiff competitive tactics of Pan Am. Yet his business grew in numbers of aircraft (mostly Ford Trimotors), pilots, passengers, freight, mail and ground facilities – all in dangerous flying conditions of jungle and mountains. He flew dictators, peasants, poor and rich anywhere, with no fatal accidents between 1936 and 1943. In 1941 he formed British West Indian Airways (BWIA).

His vision of an international airline connecting the Americas and even with the British met with obstacles, mainly due to his being neither a U.S. nor a British citizen. He sought help from both but was not considered "of the establishment" in either camp. The book traces his efforts through negotiations with the U.S. State Department and the British Foreign Ministry and Colonial Office, Pan Am, BOAC, the Civil Aeronautics Board (CAB) and the British Air Ministry. WWII presented additional challenges, failed deals for aircraft, ruthless competition, the distrust between the U.S. and Great Britain, despite their being wartime allies. Yerex's loyalties were questioned. He was caught in the middle. By 1946 he was out of both of his airlines and moved down to Buenos Aires to start a construction business, after making his fortune, and died there in 1968.

Today, Pan Am is gone. TWA is gone. BOAC is gone (now British Airways). BWIA is now Caribbean Airlines. Yet TACA International continues to this day – an accomplishment that Lowell Yerex would look upon with pride given an era of airline mergers, bankruptcies and governmental intervention that he faced daily. This is not only a book about an individual in the early days of commercial aviation but also one that historically highlights the interwar and post-WWII years where the industry was sorting itself out on landing rights, "open skies" policies, new air routes, degree of state control of airlines and nationalization, buyouts and complex share sales for financing.

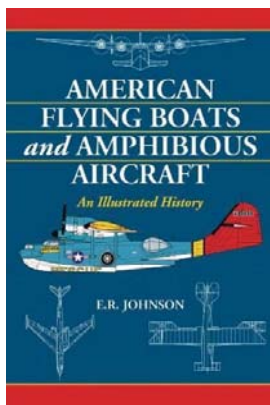
Lowell Yerex was a pioneer who went from rags to riches and ironically his first venture – TACA – still operates today, 80 years later, between the U.S. and Latin America. The author Erik Benson did a lot of research in an area where little is written about Yerex himself. This is a book well worth reading for its contribution to commercial airline history and clearly depicts the difficulties one must persistently surmount politically, diplomatically and financially. Long gone are the days of individual aviation giants as seen pre-WWII. They have been replaced by the corporations and airline alliances. Lowell Yerex deserves his place in the sun as one of these visionary giants. His airline survived. Well worth reading!

Dot Prose

Book Reviews (continued on page 12)

www.aaahs-online.org

American Flying Boats and Amphibious Aircraft: An Illustrated History, by E.R. Johnson. McFarland & Co., Inc., North Carolina, 2009 (www.mcfarlandpub.com). ISBN: 0786439742, 10"x7," paperback, 384 pages. Numerous 3-views and drawings. \$49.95 (electronic version \$24.95).



This is a comprehensive and well-illustrated history of the many flying boats and amphibious aircraft conceived, designed and built in the United States during the past 100 years.

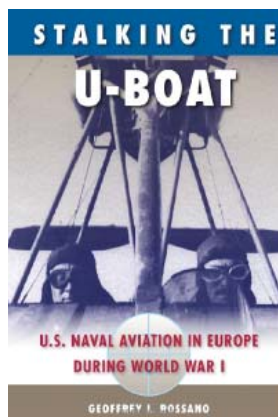
It is divided into three parts and chronicles attempts from 1912 through present day to bring a successful water-based vehicle to production and utilization. It ranges from Glenn Curtiss' 1912 designs to some of the more recent revolutionary efforts to produce an economical and effective water-borne aircraft that could be used by private citizens as well as meeting the needs of the military. If there is one phrase that epitomizes the work of the many ambitious, visionary and excited individuals who have worked in this section of aeronautical design and production it would be the quote of Thomas A. Edison at the beginning of the Historical Overview: "Our greatest weakness lies in giving up. The most certain way to succeed is always to try just one more time."

From the time of Glenn Curtiss' first attempt with the Loon in 1908 to the conceptual idea for a turboprop-powered, twin-hulled, twin-cockpit flying boat offered by Leader Industries 100 years later we are introduced to and told the stories (with extensive three-views and photographs) of men full of ingenuity and the perseverance it takes to bring about new ways of doing old things.

Included within this scope are extensive, but succinct, descriptions of some of the first starts by Boeing, Curtiss and Sikorsky, progressing to the glory days when Consolidated, Douglas, Fairchild, Grumman and Martin brought many successful designs to fruition for the private citizen, the military and the growing commercial airliner fleets of the 1930s and 1940s. After WWII, other "famous" aircraft companies tried their hands at getting in on the successful development of planes that could operate from the water. Some of these included such stalwarts as those mentioned above, as well as Convair, Hughes and Republic. As the book winds down to an exciting, but somewhat (reflective of the subject matter) disappointing ending, we see major companies presenting schemes and ideas that range from airliners that would carry as many passengers as a Boeing 747, to a sea-based supersonic attack aircraft. Exciting, but too exotic to be able to be produced and accepted into the commercial and military world that evolved with the creation of many large airports, with long runways, and the eventual production of highly efficient jet engines.

Tom Butz

Stalking the U-Boat; U.S. Naval Aviation in Europe during World War I, by Geoffrey L. Rossano. University Press of Florida, (November 2010). ISBN: 0813034884, hardback, 9.5"x6.25," 496 pages.



The foreword of his book claims: "...until the publication of this volume there has been no book-length examination of U.S. Navy aviation during World War I." The author has relied on extensive references to correct this gap. His notes and bibliography will enable those who want to consult original sources to explore the topic further.

The United States lagged behind the world in the development of naval aviation from its founding in 1911 to well into WWI. This

state of affairs was not surprising as France and Britain had to meet the German threat to their ports from the outbreak of war in 1914 whereas the United States did not enter the fray until 1917. At this time, aviation was in its infancy and the mindset of the U.S. Army as well as the greater contingent of the U.S. Navy did not consider the airplane as much of a weapon.

Nevertheless, in these early years the Navy did make progress in many areas: aircraft were launched from warships by catapult, dirigibles and kite balloons were ordered, and in 1917 the Navy bought 14 airships of an improved design. Enlisted men began receiving flight training. A small number of new aircraft were tested and purchased. In 1916, \$3.5 million was allocated for aviation and the Naval Flying Corps as well as a Naval Reserve Flying Corps were authorized.

By April 1917 the U.S. Navy began the process of sending aeronautical forces to Europe to support Britain and France. The British thought that the United States could provide preliminary pilot training of British pilots and also manufacture engines and airplanes. The French Ministry of Marine requested American personnel to help their antisubmarine campaign. Thus 100 men were sent to France for training. Lt. Kenneth Whiting was given command of this group with instructions to gather sufficient sailors and supplies as quickly as possible. Its real mission was to provide a visible token of military commitment.

Whiting was one of the most aggressive and energetic officers in the U.S. Navy. He was given vague orders: "in connection with aeronautics at such places in France as may be necessary in connection with the oral instructions you have received." The young lieutenant proceeded to work with the French to develop policy, establish separate U.S. Navy bases and negotiate other agreements well beyond Washington's expectations. This effort resulted in the building and manning of 17 bases along the English Channel and Bay of Biscay. The French Ministry of Marine agreed to provide land, materials and labor to build these facilities but delivered little. Ultimately, once a location had been selected, much of the rest was dependent on U.S. resources; the French had over-promised and could not deliver. The result was that the U.S. Navy quickly learned to support the Allies with shipments of materials and men.

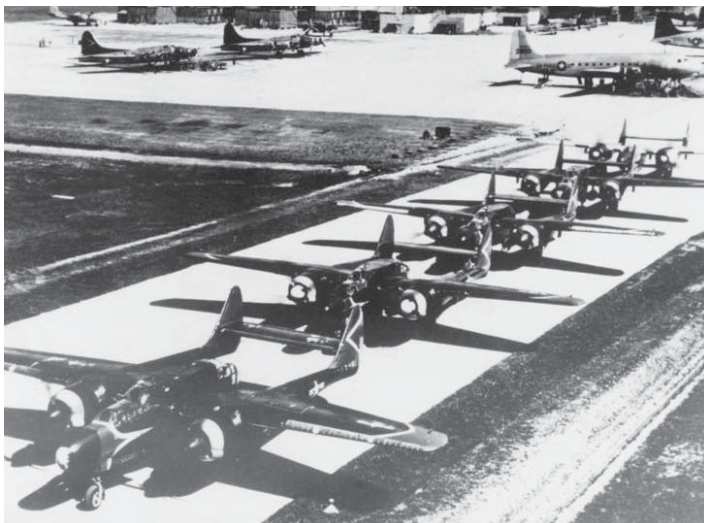
The book goes into extensive detail about the establishment of each base in France, Britain and Italy. It also covers the infighting at command and control levels (who is in charge?). Much effort had to be devoted to training, building hangars, etc., as well as the assembly of aircraft and airships to perform the mission. The results were that most of the time was spent in 'working up' to combat status and casualties were due to training

Book Reviews (continued page 13)

Wants & Disposals

WANTED: I am looking for a *quality* copy of the P-61 line-up of the photo shown. I have been looking for it for years but all I come up with is a poor print or a disastrous and totally useless 72 dpi Internet copy. For my Northrop project I would appreciate the loan of a well defined and processed copy to scan, or a 600 dpi scan of a good print.

Any help would be appreciated.



Gerald Balzer
3615 E. Churchill St.
Springfield, MO 65809
(417) 869-9488
gbalzer626@sbcglobal.net

DISPOSAL: The following aviation books are available:

- *ABOVE THE PACIFIC*, 1966, 1st Ed. by Wm. J. Horvat, @ \$15.00.
- *SEA WINGS*, by Jablonski, 1972, 1st Ed., @ \$15.00.
- *JACKRABBITS TO JETS*, by Elretta Sudsbury, 1967, 1st Ed. @ \$20.00.
- *AIR WAR AT NIGHT SINCE 1915*, by R. Jackson, 2000, 1st Ed., @ \$14.00.
- *THE LAFAYETTE ESCADRILLE*, by Herbert Molloy Mason, Jr. 1964, 1st Ed., @ \$15.00.
- *FLIGHT TO EVERYWHERE, (HISTORY OF ATC IN WW II)*, 1944, 1st Ed., by Ivan Dmitri, @ \$15.00.
- *U.S. NAVAL AVIATION IN THE PACIFIC*, Issued by the Office of the Chief of Naval Operation, USN, 1947. (Prepared by air combat intelligent officers WWII) @ \$18.00.

Postage extra via U.S. Postal Service Media Mail.

C.D. Perrotti
P.O. Box 1161
Londonderry, NH 03053
Tel: (603) 437-1181

Book Reviews (continued)

and bad weather. In fact, except for German bombardment the only real experience in combat conditions was obtained by those few Navy men who served in the services of the Allies.

In the end, the U.S. Navy did not sink any U-boats (although some had been reported). However, the presence of aircraft kept U-boats from surface patrols and hampered their effectiveness. The ultimate benefit to the United States was to expose them to real combat conditions and in association with their Allies develop aircraft and tactics that would serve them well in the then unexpected WWII. For the U.S. Navy, the groundwork was laid to establish an effective aviation arm that took another decade to develop.

This book is not a quick or easy read. The organization of the material gives one the sense of reading multiple reports and hence duplication. The overview of the combined efforts in three countries is minimal and gives the impression that the U.S. Navy command in Washington did not understand how to run a naval aviation war. Nevertheless, for a reader willing to persevere and reach his own conclusions, there is a wealth of information on this important development of United States naval aviation.

Adrian Ryneveld

AAHS Photo Archives Update

Work on the photo archives continues with numerous volunteers helping out. A couple of members, like Steven Miller, are contributing their collections in both physical and digital format. Our volunteers are working to keep pace with the in-flow, but additional help is always welcome.

The team has completed scanning more than 1,000 glass lantern slides (roughly 4x5) and are working on identifying them. Not much is known about this collection other than it appears to have come from Wright-Patterson AFB. Based on the coverage, the set appears to have been made in the mid-to-late 1940s and was probably used as some form of teaching tool. We hope to have thumbnails of these online by the end of the year.

Hopefully, beginning early next year we want to start scanning and cataloging the slide library. This collection has an estimated 80,000 slides and will take time and effort to complete.



American Aviation Historical Society

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Looking for back issues of the AAHS Journal? You can now order them online from APT Collectibles. Just point your browser to:

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AAHS Photo Archive CDs Series

The Society has recently started development of a series of photo CDs. These CDs contain high-resolution scans of negative, slides and prints from the AAHS Image Library. The resolution of these scanned images is sufficient to make an 8"x10" photographic quality print. Each CD focuses on a particular aspect of American aviation history - be that a particular manufacturer, type or class of aircraft.

As of this date, the following CDs are available. Each CD contains between 70 and 140 images depending on content.

- 1001 Douglas Propeller-Driven Commercial Transports
- 1006 Lockheed Constellations, Part I
- 1007 Lockheed Connies in Color
- 1009 Lockheed P-38/F-5
- 1011 Curtiss Transports
- 1021 Boeing Propeller-Driven Commercial Transports
- 1031 Golden Age Commercial Flying Boats



These CDs are available to members for a donation of \$19.95 (\$29.95 non-members) each plus shipping (\$2.50 U.S., \$5.00 International - add \$1.00 for each additional CD). Donation forms are available online and on request, but a note along with your donation specifying your particular interest is sufficient.

Proceeds go to support the preservation of the photo archives. Do you have a particular interest or suggestion for a CD in this series? Drop us a line or email the webmaster (webmaster@aahs-online.org). We are currently researching the possibilities of offerings covering the following areas: Connies Part II, Connies in Color, XP-56, Northrop X-4, Bell Aircraft, and Early Lockheeds.

AAHS Print Service

The AAHS Print Service allows members to obtain photographs from the AAHS collection to support individual research projects and to expand personal collections. Images are made from negatives, slides or scans of high quality prints contained in the AAHS collection.

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