

NEWS & COMMENT

The NEWS and COMMENT section is open to all Members of the Society for statements on any aspect of aviation history or for expressions regarding the affairs of the Society. The chief purpose is to bring forth the facts, including the airing of controversies. It serves to

present information in brief form which Members might not feel moved to contribute as complete articles. Opinions are welcomed but such opinions, and the accuracy of the information contained therein, are the responsibility solely of the contributor.

DESIRE TO PLAY AIRPLANE DRIVER

Bill Martin, Ft. Worth, Texas.

As a safe place for display of the B-36 at Ft. Worth, the present location could hardly be better, since it is on a concrete display stand, near the main terminal building of the Greater Southwest International Airport. This airport will be absorbed into the Dallas-Ft. Worth International Airport, with something like 18,000 acres. I would call this a pretty good display facility.

The desire of some people to play airplane driver is overcoming their good sense. Since it is presently located exactly between Dallas and Ft. Worth, on a major airport, near three main traffic arteries, and a few miles north of "Six Flags Over Texas," one of the larger tourist attractions in the U.S., it is certainly easily available to the public.

IDENTIFICATION FOUND

John M. Davis, Air Britain, Wichita, Kansas.

NX20399 shown on page 143 of the JOURNAL, Summer 1971, was the Management & Research Co. Model H-70-71, serial No. 1, built in December, 1937 and had a Menasco B-4 engine.

Sherwood H. Brown, Manhattan Beach, California

... was built by the Tuscar Metals Co. and tested by Jimmy Taylor. The airfoil was "upside down" to reduce Center of Pressure travel. Apparently the four vertical fins mounted inboard and outboard near the trailing edge of the wing were all movable...

Robert Finlayson, Hamilton, Ontario, Canada

A photo of NX20399 appears in *Air Progress Annual*, 1953/1954, page 68 (as being built by) Tuscar Metals, a two place flying wing powered by a 95 hp Menasco engine.

Wallace Forman, St. Paul, Minnesota.

... It did fly, was made by Tuscar Metals. Was it successful? Perhaps some other reader has that answer.

ASH TRAYS FROM JOHN RODGERS' AIRPLANE

Max Schwartz, Wynadotte, Michigan.

Back in the days of the early carriers, ash trays made from old pistons were quite the thing. Every desk and ready room had some. In July 1933 one hundred and seventy R.O.T.C. students from three different universities visited the Fleet Air Base at Pearl Harbor. They were quite taken by these ash trays and many of them were given old pistons so they could make their own. A note in the Bureau of Aeronautics Newsletter of 1 August 1933 states that, "It is now estimated that there are now over 1,273 proud owners of piston ash trays from John Rodgers' plane."

DOUGLAS DC-2 IDENTITIES

Ken M. Molson, Islington, Ontario, Canada.

The "Douglas DC-2" listing (by Joseph Justin)* in the JOURNAL, Summer 1971, does not check with Canadian records in regard to c/n 1414 as CF-BPP. C/n 1411 is correct. Also, Colgate Darden's c/n 1404, NC39165, is now at the Wings and Wheels Museum in Santee, S.C.

*Author Justin concurs, "C/n 1414 should not be listed with CF-BPP. This information was doubtful, but is now cleared up."

AIRCRAFT NOMENCLATURE

Kurt H. Miska, East Meadow, New York.

Members might be interested in adding the following newly assigned nomenclature to their notebooks. As may be already known, experimental designations, e.g. XF-00A, are no longer used and have been replaced by a rather loose system which may be an acronym (AWACS) or a modified X-designation such as A-X. Only the X-series of aircraft retains the X-prefix, such as in X-22A. Several of these experimental designations have now been assigned more definite nomenclature. Recent ones follow:

- AV-8A Hawker-Siddeley "Harrier." In service with U.S. Marine Corps. VMFA-513 is first squadron to operate this aircraft.
- A-9A Attack Experimental (A-X) prototype under construction by Northrop for U.S. Air Force.
- A-10A Attack Experimental (A-X) prototype under construction by Fairchild Hiller for U.S. Air Force.
- E-3A Formerly AWACS, Airborne Warning and Control System, a Boeing 707-320 re-engined with 8 General Electric TF-34 engines.
- F-14A Formerly VFX. Navy fighter now under flight test at Grumman.
- F-15A Formerly FX. Air Force fighter now under construction at McDonnell/Douglas.
- QF-16A Probable designation for Remotely Piloted Vehicle (RPV), contract to be let by U.S. Air Force before end of 1971.
- T-43A Formerly TX. Air Force version of Boeing 737 built as a navigation trainer.

FG-1D's of NAS South Weymouth, 1955. "Z" Code was formerly assigned to NAS Squantum. See Page 169. (Leo J. Kohn)



FURTHER ON WILLIS NYE

Following the news of the passing of Willis L. Nye, one of the founders of A.A.H.S., we received a number of letters which throw additional light on his background. Warren J. Oberhaus, of San Francisco, wrote:

"Willis's first Universal Model Airplane News plan was the Seimens-Halske D.IV Pursuit, for the May, 1933 issue, Page 6, followed by the Boeing PW-9 of June 1934, the TS Fighter in August, and Curtiss PW-8 in September. He was torn between love of ships and airplanes, but he did other types as well — at least one railroad drawing — of the then-new Key System Bay Bridge cars, published in *The Model Craftsman* in the late 1930's. As usual, he made them from field measurements of the cars after they had arrived on the West Coast.

"His first drawings were done for M.A.N.'s Charles H. Grant as a result of an objection to the quality of drawings then appearing. He was told, bluntly and succinctly, 'If you can do better, do them and I'll publish them.' Thus started an association that lasted thirty-eight years. Strangely, he never kept his tracings, nor copies; all were sent to the publisher.

"Willis had foibles (as we do), but; sincerity — always; fairness — unquestioned; devotion to aviation and friends — without parallel."

Harold E. Morehouse, the Historian of the Early Birds, wrote, "...A wonderful person, and so sincerely dedicated to our common historical interests that I am prompted to write to extend my sympathy and sincere regret to all on the staff of the Society organization."

Walter L. Schroeder, President of Air Age, Inc. (M.A.N.) said, "I shall miss him personally, and the readers will miss him as he was a giant in our field."

Anticipating that the Society would want to mark, in some manner, the works of Nye, Member E.P. Chandler of Nashville, Tennessee sent the following:

"... Saddened to see the announcement ... in the recent Newsletter. Are you thinking of having a W.L. Nye Award? I am enclosing \$10.00 to start something along this line. I still have some autographed copies of his engineering books that I received from him in 1938."

INSIGNIA — WHEELER FIELD, T.H., c.1934

William P. Lavin, Glenside, Pennsylvania

The winged skull insignia captioned, "Luke Field, T.H. Insignia???" was that of the 5th Bombardment Group which was stationed at Luke Field from 1919 to 1939. It is shown in *Air Force Combat Units of World War II* by Dr. Maurer



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Maurer. A photo of the insignia is also shown on a B-52 at Travis AFB in *Boeing Plane Talk* of 5 August 1965. By then the unit had been redesignated 5th Bomb Wing.

The insignia captioned "75th Service Sqdn, 1934" is that of the 18th Air Base Sqdn in Insignia and Decorations of the U.S. Armed Forces by the National Geographic Society, revised edition, 1944. The 18th Wing, which included the 5th Bomb Group and the 18th Pursuit Group, served in Hawaii in the 1930's.

DOUBTS CAST ON BYRD ARCTIC FLIGHT

Leslie N. Forden, Alameda, California

By now you will have discovered the error in date of the Byrd flight in the *JOURNAL*, Summer 1971, i.e., the North Pole flight occurred in 1926, not 1925.*

Re: the current book that says Byrd could not have flown over the Pole on that flight as the Fokker lacked the range (necessary).** The writer quotes the skepticism expressed by Floyd Bennett and by Berndt Balchen, long with other opinions that the rather meager charts supplied (to) the National Geographic Society could have received only a superficial examination by them.

It seems that the A.A.H.S. might clear up this mystery, or at least comment on it.

The Fokker, JOSEPHINE FORD, is listed in the first Ford Reliability Tour of September-October 1925, with an empty weight of 5,060 pounds, and gross weight of 8,800 pounds. In that first tour no great emphasis was put on load carrying ability. It averaged 98.5 mph for the 1,775 mile tour, undoubtedly as close to full throttle as pilot Bert Lott dared push the three Wright J4 engines, in an effort to beat the rival Liberty-engined Ford Stout, which, incidentally averaged 101.5 mph.

There are no doubt avenues of research that should be checked out. If it will help, the writer has been in contact with Lott, and with another great and knowledgeable person who knows something of the history, Ken Boedecker, of Wright Aeronautical Corp.***

Editor's note:

*Yup, 1926. Typo. **See Aviation Literature section, this issue.

***Author Forden (*The Glory Gamblers*) can be contacted at 1448 Page St., Alameda, CA 94501.

B-36 DECAL ON CONCORDE!

Meyers K. Jacobsen, San Diego, California

Brian G. Watts, a Member of AAHS, and flight engineer on the Concorde SST (002 prototype), though testing the latest in commercial airliners, is an avid enthusiast of the Peacemaker Foundation B-36 restoration project. He recently placed the B-36 decal on his flight engineer station panel for good luck — he hopes to see the B-36 fly again.

AERIAL ADVERTISER

Joseph Kovel, Woodhaven, New York

The aerial advertiser was often seen flying over the New York area in the late 1930's, much of the time at night, flashing its message to the people below. When found in its "nest" at Roosevelt Field, I couldn't resist taking this picture of NC-222W.

Note: Courtesy of William T. Larkins, we have the identification. It is a Stinson SM-7A, c/n M-3004, manufactured in 1930, with a Wright 330 hp engine. Registered in January 1932 to Fred H. Taylor of Watertown, N.Y., and in 1939 to Link Aeronautical Corp., Binghamton, N.Y.

WHAT HAPPENED TO JULIA LUCKENBACH?

Robert B. Casari, Chillicothe, Ohio.

In order to trace several shipments of aircraft from the United States to Europe during WWI, assistance is needed in tracing two ships of this period. Can anyone advise how to determine whether the JULIA LUCKENBACH ever sailed from the Chesapeake Bay area for Europe in April or May, 1918, and what happened to her on that trip? Could she have been torpedoed off the Azores?

Also, when, where and how was the steamer AMERICUS sunk in 1918 off the Atlantic Coast? Are there any official sources for such information?

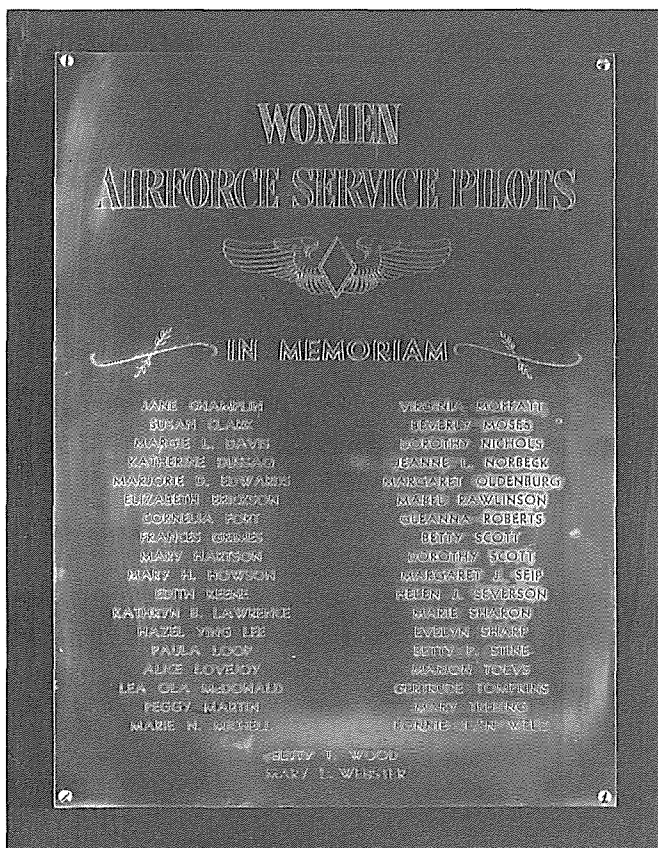
Note: Mr. Casari's address is 6 Applewood Lane, Chillicothe, OH 45601.

A copy of Mr. Casari's letter was forwarded to the Nautical Research Guild. Now in its 18th year of publication, the *Nautical Research Journal* covers the entire field of sea transportation by articles contributed by the members, photographs, drawings, book reviews, and letters. A letter to the Secretary (and Editor), Mr. Norman N. Rubin, 10012 Portland Place, Silver Spring, MD 20901, will bring membership information and possibly answers to those nautical questions.

SYKES AND MILLER FLYING BACKWARD?

H.L. Elman, Glastonbury, Connecticut

Referring to the fine painting on the rear cover of the *JOURNAL* of Fall, 1969, there is a serious error. Many photos of the 1st Aero Sqdn in the A.E.F. always show the American flag trailing aft, regardless of which side of the aircraft the insignie is on. For example, see Page 213 of the same issue. . . It is conceivable that the painting is right . . . but show proof and I'll stand you to a fifth of booze.



WOMEN AIRFORCE SERVICE PILOTS LOSSES

Victor K. Chun, Los Angeles, California

After some considerable search for the names of the WASP's who lost their lives in the line of duty the following photograph of a memorial tablet came to light. It lists the names of the 38 mentioned in Vol. 14 (Chun, "The Origin of the WASP," Page 259):

Jane Champlin	Beverly Moses
Susan Clark	Dorothy Nichols
Margie L. Davis	Jeanne L. Norbeck
Katherine Dussaq	Margaret Oldenburg
Marjorie D. Edwards	Mabel Rawlinson
Elizabeth Brickson	Gleanna Roberts
Cornelia Fort	Betty Scott
Frances Grimes	Margaret J. Seip
Mary Hartson	Helen J. Severson
Mary H. Howson	Marie Sharon
Edith Kenne	Evelyn Sharp
Kathryn B. Lawrence	Betty P. Stine
Hazel Ying Lee	Marion Toevs
Paula Loop	Gertrude Tompkins
Alice Lovejoy	Mary Trebling
Lea Ola McDonald	Bonnie Jean Welz
Marie N. Michell	Betty T. Wood
Virginia Moffatt	Mary L. Webster

A VERY FINE GENTLEMAN PASSES

Max R. Schwartz, Wyandotte, Michigan.

The *Detroit News*, on July 14th, carried the news of the death of a very fine gentleman, Adm. James Joseph "Jocko" Clark. I remember him as the most kindly officer that I met in my four years of service. He always thought of his men. He did away with the daily dungaree and weekly dress blues inspection, this with the promise of inspection every day if we ever let him down at an Admiral's.

When he was transferred from VF-2, he threw a party for the squadron, holding it on the Silver Strand, with plenty of beer and food and baseball games. At this time he presented a silver loving cup with the squadron insignia to the highest scoring pilot in aerial gunnery in VF-2. Jack Wilson, CAP, was the highest that year. Jocko had made arrangements with VF-5 to take over our watches for the weekend. The party was on Friday, and at the conclusion we were all off on liberty until 0800 on Monday. Jocko was all for his men. He also had our loyalty.

DUKE CITY COIN STILL AVAILABLE

Paul L. Stephenson, Albuquerque, New Mexico

Medals commemorating the 40th Anniversary of commercial aviation in Albuquerque, the Duke City, were struck in 1969 by the ten Optimist Clubs there. Can still be obtained as collectors items at \$1.75 each, in bronze, from P.O. Box 3727, Albuquerque, NM 87112.





LEAVE NO GARAGE UNSNOOPED

Patricia T. Groves, Sunnyvale, California

Recently we recovered from storage the engine of the Lockheed S-1. (See Galloway, C.E., "The Loughhead S-1 Sport Biplane, JOURNAL, Vol. 15, No. 4, page 239). After thirty years of casual storage in northern California, and even longer since it was last run, the engine is in remarkably good shape; nothing is frozen and the propeller shaft turns. It will be restored and shipped to the National Air & Space Museum.

To think of how close this piece of Lockheed history came to being thrown into the garbage dump, we break out in a cold sweat. The carburetor was gone, but the NASM staff are on the hunt for a similar carburetor and may have the magnetos rebuilt. We took the engine to Tony Stadlman the next weekend, and he went with us that day to the San Francisco Civic Center to photograph my husband's 1/6th scale R/C model in the same setting as the original S-1 was when photographed in 1920. Tony was out in the street checking camera angles. (We gathered quite a crowd, but we had a "certified Czech" with us to cover bail in case of need.)

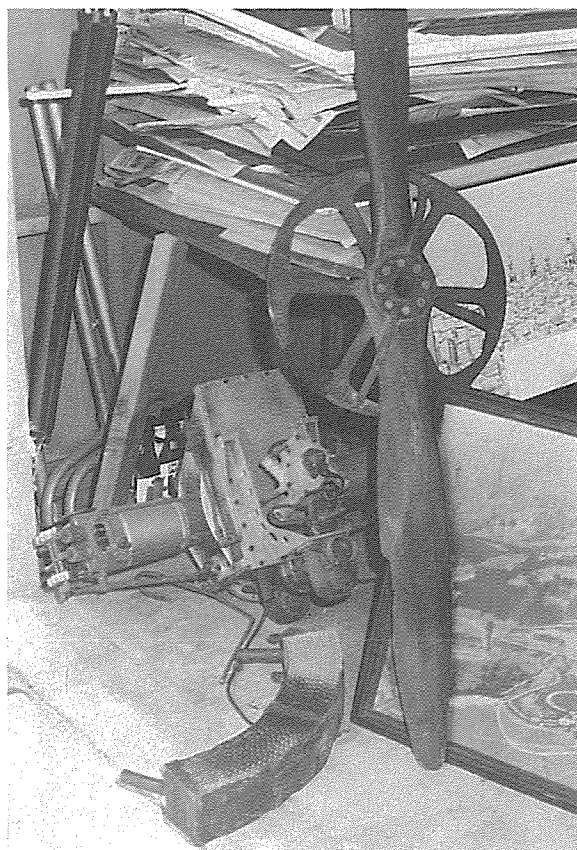


SAMUEL P. LANGLEY AND ACADEMICS

Mauno A. Salo, Garden Grove, California

In this day of the degree mania, perhaps it may be of some interest to review the background of Professor Langley, who most certainly had a direct hand in early aeronautics in this country, as described in *FLY Magazine* of Sept. 1909.

Samuel Pierpont Langley was born in 1834 at Roxbury, Mass. and educated in the public schools of Boston where he developed an early liking for mathematics and Latin. He chose to be an architect and civil engineer at which he practised, but devoted himself to the study of astronomy.



In 1864 he abandoned his profession and along with his brother built a telescope. The following year was spent in Europe where he acquired the proficiency of several languages. Upon his return he was invited to assist at the Harvard Observatory, and thus at the age of 30 he launched upon the career in which he established his fame.

In 1866 as Assistant Professor of Mathematics, he organized the Observatory at Annapolis, Maryland. A year later he went to Western University of Pennsylvania as Professor of Astronomy and Physics and Director of the Allegheny Observatory. It was here that he won international scientific recognition which brought about his appointment at a later date as secretary of the Smithsonian Institution.

We owe to Langley the Standardization of Time in the U.S. and other countries via electronic time signals from observatories. His efforts to popularize science placed him among men of such rank as Darwin, Wallace, Huxley and Tyndell.

In 1886 Langley joined the Smithsonian Institution and in 1887 became its Secretary. Here he became interested in the subject of flying machines, a science which he denominated "aerodynamics," firstly in a brief note to the Academy of Sciences of France (1890) then in a publication of the Smithsonian Contributions to Knowledge and thirdly in a written article to the *CENTURY Magazine* on the possibility of mechanical flight.

After many failures in constructing a steam-driven airplane, success came in 1896 when Professor Langley's steam-driven aerodrome actually flew $\frac{3}{4}$ -mile or more over the Potomac River. This remarkable feat received world-wide recognition and Langley's own written story appeared in *McClures Magazine*. He admitted that as a boy in New England he would lie in a pasture watching hawks soaring in the blue without any motion of their wings. "Nature," he said, "Had solved the problem, why not man?"

During the Spanish-American War he undertook to build a man-carrying machine under an allotment from the Board of Ordnance and Fortification, U.S. Army. An attempt was made to purchase an engine or to find a contractor to construct one. A construction contract was accepted by a Mechanical Engineer, but after 2 years of failure to deliver in accordance with the agreement, the engine was built at the Smithsonian.

Trials of the test model proved successful, but attempts to launch the large machine proved a failure. Newspapers joined in a chorus of ridicule and attack that came to the attention of the National Legislature: this attitude of the Press broke his spirit.

On the personal side, Langley was a very reserved and lonely man. Although it was difficult to become acquainted with him, his hunger for real friendship and affection was pathetic. During his lifetime he was the recipient of many honors, and his academic accomplishments included: D.C.L. from Oxford, D.Sc. from Cambridge, and among others, L.L.D. from the Universities of Harvard, Princeton, Michigan and Wisconsin.

Among his awards were the Henry Draper Medal by National Academy of Sciences; the Rumford Medal by Royal Society of London and by the American Academy of Arts and Sciences; the Janssen Medal from the Institute of France, and the medal of the Astronomical Society of France.

He held a number of very significant memberships; in the Royal Society of London, the Royal Institute of London, as a Fellow of the Astronomical Society of London, a Correspondent of the Institute of France, and member of the Academia dei Lincei of Rome and National Academy of Sciences.

ERRATA

John W. Davis, Air Britain, Wichita, Kansas

In regard to the photograph on Page 123 of the JOURNAL, Summer 1971, the crash of Catalina PK-AKC happened on 2 December 1949 at Muntok Bay, not in 1947. Six people were killed.

IS BEETLE PILOT STILL AROUND?

H.J. Maier and I.A. Thurow, Bremen, Germany.

The photographs here of the Thunderbolt were taken after its emergency landing at Lille, France, in 1943. The circumstances of its capture are unknown. Could the inscription below the cockpit be "Agnes"? Perhaps the pilot of BEETLE is still around, in which case, please forward these photos to him with our compliments.

Note: Close inspection of the photo indicates the word could be "Agnes." The information was forwarded to Garry L. Fry, author of *The Debden Eagles: 4th Fighter Group in WWII*, (Whittier, Cal.: Walker-Smith Printing, Inc., 1971) for review. The nose art looks in the same style as used on the nose of the P-47's of the 4th F.G., although the squadron code does not show.

