

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.

NATIONAL AIR & SPACE MUSEUM PROGRESS

Louis S. Casey, Assistant Director of the Aeronautics Section of NASM sent a report from which we have excerpted a portion of the remarks made by the Director, Michael Collins, before the Board of Regents in September 1971.

The most valuable contribution which NASM can make to the Bicentennial is to open our new building on the Mall by 1976.

The location between 4th and 7th Streets and Independence and Jefferson Drives has been approved by Congress and other appropriate agencies. In the current fiscal year 1972 we received \$1.9 million for planning, redesign and architecture fees. This amount is ample (for) designing a new building which will be considerably smaller and more graceful than the 1966 design. The exhibit area will only be reduced by approx. 15-20%.

A new addition is that of the planetarium chamber. Using the most modern audio-visual techniques we will be able to take the visitor away from the surface of the earth out into space. In addition to the advances in aerospace science we must also explain the new technology. We must also include a library, vastly expanded and converted into a bonafide Historical Research Center which could legitimately serve as a solid base for scholars, researchers, and hopefully, teachers from the local community.

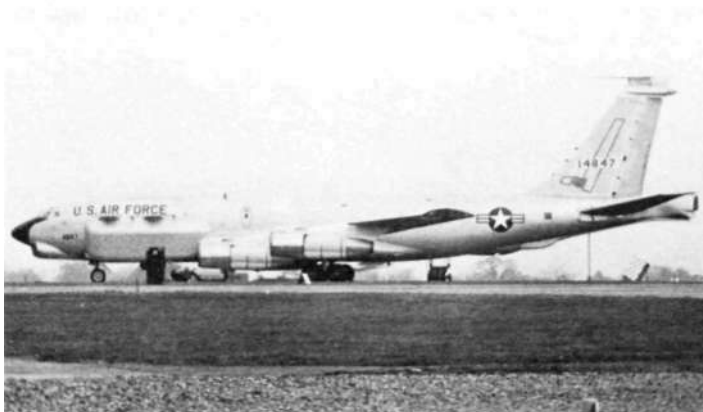
In order for all these things to happen in time for the Bicentennial we must have ample financial support in the near future. Timing is critical. We must have construction funds in FY 1973 in order that we may begin moving exhibits into the building in 1975 to prepare for an opening on July 4, 1976.

ERRATA

Joseph Kovel, who participated in the building and flying of the first gas models with Charles H. Grant affixes the date (on page 210 of J-AAHS, Fall, 1971) of the first flight of the K.G. He advises that it occurred immediately after the National Model Airplane Contest at Roosevelt Field in 1933. The model was shipped there directly from Mr. Grant's home in Peru, Vt., and

RC-135U at Mildenhall. Oct. 1971

(Robert Archer)



the original engine, a Gill, never operated in it and was replaced by a Brown, Jr. engine. Soon thereafter the K.G. began its successful career.

Author Ken Molson ("First International Air Race — August, 1919 -- New York - Toronto," JAAHS Winter 1971, page 263-272) calls our attention to some errors in captions and text made in editing and not part of his original manuscript. Photos of the S.E.5a on Page 266 would have been better reversed in position, and "Buffalo" is correct instead of "Bubalo." The real blooper, though, is on Page 264, 265, and 272. Your editor got carried away by some independent research and used Capt. F.G. Quigley on Page 264 instead of H.S. Quigley as shown on Page 265, and hung himself by carefully explaining on Page 272 that Capt. F.G. Quigley died of influenza in October 1918. Thushow could he be flying the Snipe in August 1919?

HOLLEY'S IDEAS & WEAPONS

Robin Higham, Editor, Aerospace Historian, Kansas State Univ.

Mr. Casari's review of the reprint of L.B. Holley's *Ideas and Weapons* calls for some comments. What your reviewer failed to realize was that the book was written just after World War II when a lot of material was not available; therefore, sources to which access could be obtained had to be used. More than this, all historians will use legislative materials because a great deal of information, especially in the United States, is available from such sources, but at the same time, we all recognize that such sources have their limitations.

The book was reprinted since it is regarded as a classic in the field. It is true that some of the detailed information may have been replaced by fresher works with access to more detailed documentation, but the test of the book is its overall thesis, which still stands.

U FOR ULTIMATE

Robert Archer, Sudbury, Suffolk, England

The photo of the RC-135U, a modified RC-135C is the highest variant seen to date, thus probably following perhaps twenty-one other suffix letters. However, since multiple roles are performed a number of prefix letters bring the total to somewhere near forty.

DC-2, nee PH-FOK, as I-EROS, c. 1937

(Gianvanni Paolo)



For example, the KC-135A has been redesignated EC-135A, JKC-135A, NC-135A, NKC-135A, as well as the original C-135 when used by MATS. A summary of the pre- and suffix variants would be desirable to have, especially since this writer lives close by Mildenhall. One weekend last November no fewer than eight different types of the C-135 were seen there, (SAC) KC-135A, RC-135C, RC-135D; (USAFE) EC-135H, (AFSC) NKC-135A, EC-135N; (TAC) VC-135A, and (MAC) WC-135B. The VC-135A specification is presumed, as the airplane was in VIP trim.

FOKKER PW-7 AEROBATIC TESTS

Jesse D. Thompson, Clarksville, Arkansas

An enquiry was recently made concerning the Fokker PW-7 used by Lt. James Doolittle (the Jimmy Doolittle) in aerobatic and acceleration tests at McCook Field, c. 1924-25. The airplane was P-326, A.S.68580, and the complete report was published as N.A.C.A. Report No. 203.

NEGATIVE LENDING LIBRARY

The Tuscar Metals Tailless Airplane, NX 20399, is pictured here in a photograph forwarded by Joseph Kovel. It came from a negative made by a Mr. Dave Shapier somewhere between 1936 and 1938. (See J-AAHS, Summer, 1971 page 143 and Fall, 1971, page 220.) Although the airplane has been identified, little else is known of its success or failure and eventual disposition. The negative, however, has been donated to the AAHS Negative Film Lending Library, supplementing the more than 7,500 now available for loan to Members of the Society. Details of operation of this service to Members are contained in the Quarterly NEWSLETTERS.

As we sent this issue of the Journal to press the following letter was received which should be included:

ITALIAN END OF PH-FOK

Gianvanni Paolo, Pisa, Italy

The "knowledgeable" people at Fokker works in Schiphol are right about the Italian end of PH-FOK (see J-AAHS, Winter 1971, John Underwood, "Another DC-2," page 288), but it is a pity to state it was reproduced in wood as the Fiat G-18. The Fiat airplane was certainly a case of crib, ("borrowed design" -Edit.) but it maintained the all-metal structure of its ancestor.

PH-FOK received the Italian registration I-EROS as shown here, and served with Ala Littoria S.A. As one can see in the photo the fuselage tricolour band and nose fascies are noteworthy.

Tuscar Metals Tailless, NX20399, c. 1936-38. (Courtesy of Joseph Kovel)



THE FOKKER CORPORATE TANGLE

Gert P.M. Blum, Delft, The Netherlands

Peter Bowers' fourth article on the American Fokker's (JAAHS, Fall 1971) leaves the Fokker corporate story more complex than realized before. Although the description of the planes seems correct and complete, the history of the corporate tangle involved, is not fully satisfactory.

The company names appearing are:

- Atlantic Aircraft Corporation (AAC)
- Fokker Aircraft Corporation (FAC)
- Fokker Aircraft Corporation of America (FACoA)
- General Aviation Corporation (GAC)
- General Aviation Manufacturing Corporation (GAMC).

Another source mentions a Fokker Airtrust of America. The problem arises over what kind of relation existed between those companies.

The following solution is given without being sure it is the right one. Perhaps other members can amend or confirm this short and schematic design.

AAC was formed in December 1923 to produce airplanes of the Fokker design in the U.S.A. On September 16, 1925, FAC took over AAC, but continued to use the name of AAC as its subsidiary. FAC was a sales and promotion organization and was the license holder for the Fokker patents in the U.S.A. It was formed at the same time as the AAC, December 1923, which was taken over by it in 1925.

When, in December 1927, a reorganization took place, the FACoA came into being. It seems the the factory in Hasbrouck Heights which was used for experimental work, service and repair, continued to be known as AAC, while the production facilities at Passiac, N.J. and Wheeling, W.Va., came under the FAC label.

Then, in May 1930, the name of FACoA was changed to GAC and the General Motors-controlled GAC became the holding company of both AAC and FAC. Afterwards, the name of AAC does not appear anymore and a "new" FAC was formed and incorporated in the same month of May 1930. In the opinion of this writer both the "old" FAC and AAC emerged as "new" FAC and GAMC, although which became what remains the question.

In October 1931, the name of the "new" FAC was deleted and all GAC manufacturing activities were combined in GAMC. GAC also owned several other companies which ultimately came under the GAMC label, viz. Dornier and Thaden. GAMC was enforced further with Berliner/Joyce and the Pilgrim design staff. The story of the transfer into North American Aviation, Inc. is quite correct as being told in Bowers.

Anyone who has additions on that AAA/FAC/FACoA/GAC/GAMC-story (Pfffffft!) is invited to write.

An L.V.G. C.VI at Mayer Field, 1920. (Kenneth M. Sumney Collection)



THE MAYER L.V.G.

Robert B. Casari, Chillicothe, Ohio

The photo of the L.V.G. "C.V*" is actually a C.VI (unbalanced ailerons, no vertical radiator in front of center section, upper wing cutout shape, etc.) The two L.V.G.'s to which the Air Force Museum refers are undoubtedly the two shipped to the U.S. in 1919 as war "booty." These and many other machines were sent over to provide information on German technology and, in some cases, were set up and flown though many were never assembled. The Air Service used them as needed and eventually scrapped them when they no longer served any useful purpose. It seems doubtful that more than one or two reached civilian hands in repairable condition; how Mr. Mayer obtained the C.VI illustrated is unknown.

Records of L.V.G.'s in Air Service hands are vague and the designations given in surviving lists are sometimes unreliable, thus the Models given here may be in error. Two L.V.G. CVs and nine C.VI's were shipped to the U.S. so it seems unlikely that more than eleven were ever in this country in A.S. possession. A list of aircraft on hand, presumably all flyable, prepared in mid-1919 contains no L.V.G.'s, implying they were not assembled at the time.

Later, in December 1919, the Airplane Distribution Board lists one C.V at the Fairfield Supply Depot and another at an undesignated location, matching the two known to be shipped to the U.S. The same report lists a C.VI at McCook Field, three at Fairfield, and twelve at other locations, totalling sixteen. But it is suspected that some of these were actually L.W.F. V-1's. Still later, on July 31, 1920, there were two L.V.G. C.V's on hand and eight C.VI's, checking very well with the number sent from Europe.

A.S.94047 was an L.V.G. and though A.S.94088 was assigned to an L.V.G. this was probably dropped, because this number is definitely known in a block assigned to S.E.5a's, which were built and flown. Probably the balance of the L.V.G.'s were not assembled and may not even have been complete. The usual disposition was to burn the derelicts.

Kenneth M. Sumney, Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania

The Air Force Museum had advised this writer that there were two, one at Dayton and the other in Georgia. The one shown here is no doubt the one from McCook. (See Page 69). It was photographed at Mayer Field. Bridgeville, Pa. in late 1919 or 1920.

BIAFRAN C-97's

Rhodes Arnold, Tucson, Arizona*

During the past two years several items pertaining to the Biafran C-97's have appeared in the *JOURNAL*. Richard Braun of Switzerland and Robert Archer of England have provided much information.

In the Spring of 1971 the nine airplanes which had been received by the Military Aircraft Storage & Disposition Center at Davis-Monthan AFB were examined. They had arrived with the F-102A, FAA N300, ex-57-0835, c. 1970 (NASA, courtesy of R. Abrams)

registrations listed below. All nameplates were checked and serials determined. One of these, a C-97G, 52-2626, which had been flown by Balair of Switzerland for the International Red Cross as HB-ILY, has been preserved for display in the Pima County Air Museum, while the remainder have been disposed of at DM (scrapped).

To complement the display of HB-ILY, the Museum is much interested in obtaining the names of all pilots and crewmen who served in the Biafran Airlift, and such other information about these airplanes and the operation as can be found. Members are requested to forward data to the Museum.

USAF s/n	U.S. Regist.	Swiss Reg.
52-857		HB-ILZ
52-876	N52876	HB-ILH
52-915	N52915	HB-ILF
52-925		HB-ILX
52-931	N52600	HB-ILL
52-2626		HB-ILY
52-2631	N52631	HB-ILK
52-2676	N52676	Reported lost in action
52-2679	N52679	Reported lost in action
52-2727	N52727	HB-ILG
52-2734		HB-ILW

* Rhodes Arnold is Chairman of the Acquisition Committee of the Pima County Air Museum, Pima County Admin. Bldg., 131 W. Congress St., Tucson, Ariz.

F-102A USED FOR SST TEST PROGRAM

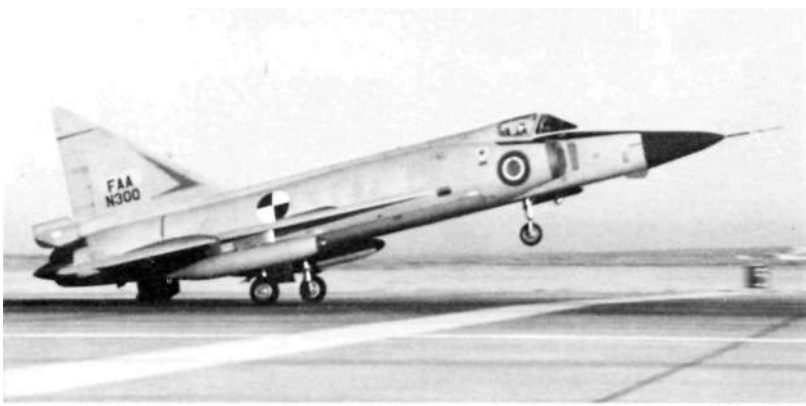
Richard Abrams, Arlington, Virginia

The F-102A shown on page 184 of the *Journal*, Fall 1971, was used by the FAA in a flight research program at the Air Force Flight Test Center, Edwards AFB, California from June through December 1970. The purpose of this program was to provide information for the development of takeoff airworthiness standards for Supersonic Transport (SST) aircraft. Tests were directed at low speed performance characteristics for the primary purpose of determining a suitable performance base-line that could be used in lieu of a stall speed for the SST because, delta-wing aircraft do not exhibit the same pronounced stall characteristics as straight and swept-wing aircraft.

The Convair F-102A N300 (ex USAF S/N 57-0835) was provided to the FAA by the USAF for the program. It was piloted by FAA test pilot Robert F. LeSuer. The airplane was geometry-limited with a wooden tail skid to restrict takeoff rotation attitude to that of proposed SST designs. Takeoff and climb thrust were also limited to simulate normal thrust/weight ratios of SST aircraft. In addition, the landing gear remained extended during tests to simulate the performance characteristics of typical SST designs. Speed brakes then were used to create landing gear drag. As a result of this program, it was determined that zero-rate-of-climb speed (where thrust required equals thrust available) was the best criteria, in lieu of a well defined stall, for a performance base-line. The use of a zero-rate-of-climb speed is a departure from present commercial aviation practice where performance speeds, such as rotation, lift-off and initial climb, are based on airspeed increments above stall speed.

USAF Museum building, dedicated 1971

(Robert H. George)



At the completion of the test program, special test installations were removed, and the airplane was ferried to Davis-Monthan AFB where it was returned to the USAF inventory.

With regard to its reported use for sonic boom demonstrations, the airplane was restricted to flight at subsonic speeds because of the tail skid and to prevent damaging special flight test instrumentation.

* Richard Abrams was Project Engineer on the test program, officially named Supersonic Transport Airworthiness Standards — F-102 Flight Research program.

AMERICAN FLYING CLUB, 1919

J.J. Smith, Los Angeles, California

In reply to your enquiry about the American Flying Club of 1919 there seems to be no document which indicates an organization had actually been founded. We do have a list of guests invited to a dinner on Nov. 11, 1919 at the Hotel Commodore in New York City, sponsored by "The American Flying Club." Although the list numbers about 540 persons, there was no report of the attendance figure, nor the address of the American Flying Club headquarters.

The only other reference to the name "The American Flying Club" is contained in a letter (a form of bulletin) sent to former members of the 94th Aero Squadron and possibly to some of the veterans of the 1st Pursuit Group. Mr. George Zacharias lived in Los Angeles and he had kept some of the letters which were mailed by former comrades, each of whom had been elected to act as correspondence secretary.

The Number One bulletin was missing (sent out in March 1921). The last bulletin was dated April 5, 1926, edited by Dudley M. Outcault, wherein he mentions the "now defunct American Flying Club."*

Most of these bulletins were hand written. I typed the contents onto a few sheets in place of individual letters and returned the originals to Mr. Zacharias. He died in 1966.

* Outcault became a Judge in Cincinnati, died c. 1958.

CALIFORNIA HOSPITAL AVIATION STATION

J.J. Smith, Los Angeles, California

Joseph A. Whybark asked "Where Was This?", in a picture shown in the J-AAHS, Spring 1970, page 59. The picture shows a horse-drawn ambulance, the driver, several aides, and a number of women nurses and is captioned, "It is believed to have been made in the Los Angeles area."

Another photograph of what appears to be the identical building, taken from the opposite side of the ambulance, exists. It shows the same scene and is captioned, "The nation's first air show was held in 1910 at Dominguez Rancho, south of Compton, and on hand to give aid and comfort to any injured aviator or spectator was this world's first aero-medical contingent from California Hospital."

The California Hospital is still active at 1414 S. Hope St., Los Angeles, CA 90015. Information about the original picture may be obtained by contact with the superintendent of the hospital.

Flying Fortress at USAF Museum, June 1971

(Robert H. George)



SUPERSTITIONS OF THE SIDE NUMBER

Hideki Yamauchi, Toyonaka, Osaka, Japan

In "USN AND USMC Intruder Markings," Kurt H. Miska wrote, "For reasons not stated, probably superstition, many squadrons will not use an aircraft with a '13' side number, though VA-65 had an A-6A, camouflaged, with '13' at NAS LEMOORE at one time." One has to admit that there is a tendency to avoid a side number of '13' among many squadrons, but flyers of fully computerized A-6's have not been affected by such superstitions at least, for there are many A-6's with side number '13' in this writer's photo files as shown below:

Sqn.	Wing	Carrier	Code/ Side No.	Type	Bu.No.	Year
VA-196	CVW-2	CVA-61	NE-513	A-6A	155599	1970
VA-196	CVW-2	CVA-61	NE-513	A-6C	155660	1971
VA-75	CVW-3	CVA-60	AC-513	A-6A	155461	1969
VA-115	CVW-5	CVA-41	NF-513	A-6A	154170	1971
VA-85	CVW-6	CVA-66	AE-513	A-6A	154132	1968
VA-35	CVW-9	CVAN-65	NG-513	A-6A	152939	1968
VA-75	CVW-11	CVA-63	NH-513	A-6A	152924	1968
VA-52	CVW-11	CVA-63	NH-513	A-6A	155629	1971
VA-196	CVW-14	CVA-64	NK-413	A-6A	152618	1967
VA-196	CVW-14	CVA-64	NK-413	A-6A	154156	1968
VA-85	CVW-14	CVA-64	NK-513	A-6A	155618	1969
VA-65	CVW-15	CVA-64	—413	A-6A	151815	1966

As a resident of Japan, it is difficult to collect information of the Atlantic Fleet A-6 squadrons. Perhaps some members may be able to add the "Atlantic 13's" to these examples. And of course, there are many squadrons flying other type of aircraft with side number of '13.'

Noteworthy is that the recent absence of '8' and '9' from side numbers. The reason is not stated officially, but it is said that pronunciation of 8 and 9 is confused with other numbers such as 18 and 80 on radio communication, and that misrecognition at a glance is caused by the similarity in shape of 5 and 6 with 8 and 9. The side number system without 8 and 9 was adopted by Air Pac units around 1966 and all units followed by the end of 1967. Not only carrier based units but also some patrol squadrons eliminated 8 and 9 from side numbers and reassigned 10 and 11 instead. As an anomaly some carrier-based aircraft do carry 8 and 9 as side numbers while they are "grounded": Not for flight operation but for paper works aboard.

LAST TIME OUT

Robert H. George & William G. Holder. Dayton, Ohio

On 5 June 1971 the Air Force Museum opened the gates of Wright-Patterson AFB for the general public to photograph a line-up of over 40 historic aircraft. The aircraft were displayed on the flight line at the site of the new multi-million dollar Air Force Museum, to be opened later in the summer. Many of the aircraft were of WWII vintage and all were very historic. Included were two Presidential airplanes, the INDEPENDENCE and the COLUMBINE, and the only XB-70. Over 7,000 persons turned out for the affair, the last opportunity to photograph these relics in an outdoor setting; they were later to be moved into permanent indoor display in the huge arch-roofed USAF Museum building financed entirely by private contributions.

USAF Harrier VTOL at USAF Museum, June 1971.

(Robert H. George)

