

DELAWARE AVIATION MUSEUM FOUNDATION

NOTAM

1ST QUARTER 2021 NEWSLETTER



LETTER FROM THE LEFT SEAT by Larry Kelly

EXPANDING OPERATIONS—Happy First Quarter 2021! We, at Delaware Aviation Museum Foundation (DAMF), hope this quarter has been much better for our readers than one year ago by bringing you vaccination shots for COVID and far less isolation. DAMF is delighted to announce that most of our volunteers have either completed the full regimen of vaccinations or at least received their first shot.

DAMF began this year with a full schedule of operations, starting with our partnership with the Capital Wing of the Commemorative Air Force in Culpeper, Virginia. Last December, the CAF in Culpeper offered a proposal in which DAMF adds "Panchito" to their Warbird Showcase at several venues throughout the season. After several consultations, we agreed the synergy is there for a successful season for both organizations jointly offering the public flight experiences in the CAF TBM, L-5, PT-17 Stearman and DAMF's B-25 "Panchito". Our first Warbird Showcase was scheduled for April 10, 2021 was cancelled due to weather. We were disappointed but pleased with the public response in the flight adventure reservations we received. The CAF Assistant Adjutant, Peter Ballard, has been excellent in promoting the Warbird Showcase for both organizations. A special mention also goes to our webmaster, Jim Mandelblatt, who developed our online website reservation system. For more information on the Warbird Showcase venues, go to our website, www.delawareaviationmuseum.org and click on the "Events" tab.

DAMF is hosting a Pancake Breakfast and Open House fundraising event at the hangar and museum on May 8, 2021 from 9 am to 2 pm. The public is invited to fly or drive in for a pancake breakfast by donation and learn about the history of the B-25, Doolittle Raid over Tokyo, and several of the museum artifacts. The fundraising will help DAMF cover expenses incurred in 2020 as a result of cancelled operations due to COVID. Flight Adventures in the B-25, L-16 and L-19 will be offered. For Flight Adventure reservations go to: <https://www.delawareaviationmuseum.org/damf/lhfe/rides.html>

DAMF is proud to announce a new marketing initiative: Beaches, Bays and Bombers. This initiative is designed to bring our warbird flight adventures to the vacationers at the Maryland and Delaware Beaches and bay resorts. In addition to the flight adventures being offered in our B-25 "Panchito", DAMF will be offering flight adventures in our L-16 nicknamed "Spot" and our L-19 Bird Dog. DAMF has recently received FAA approval to offer to the public a chance to experience flights in these vintage aircraft that were used in the Korean War and Vietnam War, respectively. DAMF will be offering these aircraft at various venues initially in a three-state area, in addition to our home base, Delaware Coastal Airport, Georgetown, DE.

DAMF is located close to the Delaware and Maryland beaches. This year, we have instituted a flight adventures marketing program aimed at the beach resorts. In the first round of marketing where brochures were distributed, we received particularly good feedback from real estate rental agencies and property management companies who will be helping us to spread the word among the vacationers. Our new offering is being seen as something incredibly unique and exciting in the area.

We will give you an update on how our projects are progressing in the second quarter newsletter. 'Til then, please visit us at our museum/hangar or any of our venues. Stay safe and healthy!



A lot of great submissions were received for the **Name Our Newsletter** contest! The ultimate decision maker (Larry Kelley) had a tough time deciding on several of them, but felt that Notices To Airmen aka NOTAM "just seemed to fit our idea of getting out notices of what we are doing."

Congratulations to Syd Jones for the winning entry!

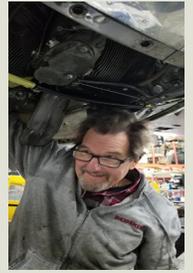


B25 FLIGHT TRAINING

by Sabrina Kipp
Director of Flight Training

AROUND THE HANGAR

by Charlie Quandt



Spring has sprung and DAMF is preparing for another active season providing flight training in the B25. Three of five scheduled classes are already full, vacancies are available for the May 14-16 and November 12-14 classes.

DAMF provides B25 training through an Exemption granted from the FAA. Pre-enrollment required for all courses. For enrollment information contact: flighttraining@delawareaviationmuseum.org. For more information on our Flight Training please visit: http://www.delawareaviationmuseum.org/damf/flight_training.html

Due to rising costs, we will be changing our price structure for all B25 training. This change will occur starting June 01, 2021. Anyone enrolling in a course prior to June 01, 2021 will be grandfathered into the current pricing including enrolling in classes for 2022. The new course prices will be posted on our website later this year.

Again, I would like to thank everyone for their contributions to a successful year. Please stay safe, keep the shiny side up,

Blue Skies,

Sabrina Kipp

Panchito has a new panel and Mike (no fumes) Moore put the finishing touches on it. Max Hodges achieved a personal best for most cylinders swapped out in one road trip. He is generous with his knowledge, a lot of us gained insights into radial engines that weekend.

The L-17/Navion (Wee Willie) is at MQS for a paint job. Special thanks to Dave Barret for repairing Willie's nose cowl "teeth". His paper plate award is for pulling our butts out of the fire many times.

During the L-19's (Bird Dog) Annual inspection, Chrissy Hastings earned a paper plate award for getting into the tailcone and securing the elevator cables. A couple of weekends later a working party put this a/c on the museum's scales and recorded current weights for an up-to-date weight and balance report.

Tiger Moth 2 Tie Rod project - Willie's departure for the paint shop freed up a work area to complete this work during the annual condition check. Dave Linder gets a paper plate award for best original idea (using this space for the TM2 Tie Rod project).

For the chandelier and fan contraption he installed over the conference room table, Rich Applebaum earns a paper plate award for best interior light designer. Just a couple of weeks ago, the annual LHF refresher training was conducted under these very lights.

Visitors // Kyle Takakjian from Cape Cod wins a paper plate award for longest distance traveled to swing a compass. Eric Mason gets a second for bringing a laser powered compass alignment tool from ILG (Wilmington).

If you like to read about the technical details of warbirds, see Johnny Masters. He's been out in the museum trailer restoring the library.

Looking at the pattern, the TM2 Tie Rod project has turned final and the Twin Comanche annual has entered downwind.



DAMF Instructor Syd Jones (2nd from left) with students (L to R) Phil Webb, Richard Krulik and Ronald Torgeson.



HISTORY & HERITAGE by Calvin Peacock



Leroy Coard Simpler USNA – Class of 1929 Stories of His Early Flying Days by Linwood Coard Simpler

Editor's note: In the previous issue of the DAMF Newsletter, the next installment on the Navy career of Rear Admiral Simpler was going to include his participation in Guadalcanal and his involvement with the Navy's Blue Angels. In the intervening time, the following excerpt was received from his nephew, Linwood "Coardy" Simpler, relating the Admiral's early days in Delaware and aboard the USS Macon after his graduation from the US Naval Academy in Annapolis, MD. The newsletter staff thought you might enjoy the following excerpt from the "Stories of His Early Flying Days".

Leroy Coard Simpler was born June 19, 1905 to Roy Davis Simpler and Carrie Coard Warrington Simpler at his family's farm on Oyster Rocks Road in Milton, Delaware. His early education began at a country school located approximately a mile or so further west on the same road. He completed his public education in Lewes, Delaware while living with his grandparents there. As a youngster, he was not only engaged in chores on the farm, he also helped his father, who as a part-time bricklayer, built steps and fireplaces in the Lewes area.

He initially applied for admission to the USNA and although turned down, was designated as an alternate. He then applied to Goldey Beacom College in Wilmington, De. During his first year, one of the Midshipmen enrolled at the Academy became ill and withdrew, creating an opening; thereby enrolling my Uncle. He graduated from the Naval Academy in the Class of 1929.

His flying career began with training at Pensacola Naval Air Station. During his early flying days, his plane developed engine trouble, I believe somewhere over Alabama, which forced him to abandon his plane in mid-air. As he climbed out of the cockpit, he caught his foot on the edge of the plane pulling his shoe off. He parachuted safely to the ground and walked to a nearby farmhouse. The farm owners welcomed him into their home and while there, curious residents of the community, visited to meet the pilot. During the commotion a gentleman appeared at the door holding his missing shoe. The gentleman had been walking on a nearby road and saw my Uncle parachute from the plane when a shoe landed near him. In his initial shock he began to run to my Uncle, then realized the shoe must be his so he ran back and retrieved it and brought it to my Uncle at the farmhouse, much to my Uncle's surprise.

As a Lt. j.g. (junior grade) he was assigned to the USS Macon (ZRS-5), a dirigible measuring 784 ft. in length, as a pilot in a group of four observation planes (F9C-2 Sparrowhawks). Each dirigible was assigned five planes. It carried four in a hangar-type compartment inside the dirigible and would rotate one off for periodic maintenance. The Sparrowhawk was a single seat open cockpit biplane armed with two 30 cal. machine guns. These planes were carried on a rotating frame with trapeze bars and a catch and release hook mounted to the top of the plane. The design enabled the crew to lower one plane at a time beneath the dirigible to a safe enough distance where the pilot could startup its engine and reach up and pull on a lever to release the plane and begin flying their observation patrol. The recovery docking process was executed in reverse with two signal men helping the pilot close the gap. When a pilot returned to the airship, they would gradually climb to a point where they could align a guide bar, oriented fore and aft, bump into the trapeze and pull forward until the hook locked and secured the plane to the ship. The pilot would then turn the engine off and be hoisted up into the hangar.

My Uncle shared with me one particular troubling experience. A cloud cover moved in as he was returning to the Macon. Visibility was minimal and could only see the shadow of the Macon overhead as he flew below the ship. He was unable to determine the exact location of the hangar opening so he made an educated guess and gradually climbed to meet the trapeze. His estimated target was slightly off and only the tip of the guide bar went over the trapeze; therefore, the plane was not completely secured by the hook assembly. The crew could not safely winch the plane onboard so at that point he had to turn the engine off and quickly climb out of the plane, up the trapeze apparatus, to safety onboard. It's understandable why Sparrowhawk pilots were known as "the men on the flying trapeze."

The Macon also carried a "spy basket" that was used as an observation tool. It was essentially a basket with a seat and a rudder that only gave the pilot control to guide the basket left and right. It was lowered from the airship on a cable with a microphone for communication. My Uncle told me that it was fun to "fly" and provided moments of calm; alone and high over the Pacific.

The Macon suffered a catastrophic structural failure during a storm while off the coast of Point Sur. Strong winds caused a part of the frame – which had only a temporary repair caused by damage from a previous storm – to puncture several of the aft gas bags, causing the helium to escape. This in turn caused the ship to nose up and then begin settling to the ocean. The crew, in an attempt to save the ship, threw ballast off, but was unable to jettison the four Sparrowhawks. As the ship continued to nose upward, i.e., become more vertical, the engines seized, and it lost power. My Uncle told me that the engines seized because the lubrication system on these powerful Maybach engines was not hydraulic (pressurized) but was one based on dippers, basically small spoons, attached to the crankshaft that splashed oil around the crankcase onto the moving parts. As the ship became more vertical, all of the oil settled in the back of each crankcase and the engines seized.

My Uncle in a taped interview of June 1983, he describes the crash. True to his nature, his sweet tooth got the best of him and as he was making his way off the ship, he passed the galley where he noticed a freshly baked pie. Assuming that he would not have anything to eat for a while, he grabbed a slice and headed towards an exit. Once outside, he was able to grab a mooring line ("like you would lead a mule with" and lowered himself down to the control cabin. From there, he continued to lower himself down further, despite getting tangled up in the line at least once. He told me that he kept his shoes on in order to prevent rope burns on his feet. We still don't know if he ate the piece of pie.

Two men were lost from a crew of 76. One crew member underestimated his height above the water and jumped prematurely and another swam back to the ship to retrieve personal items and became trapped. The survivors were picked up hours later. (My cousin Jan has an original photograph of my Uncle standing in a puddle of water on the deck of the recovery ship.)

The loss of the Macon signaled the end of the dirigible era as an aircraft carrier of the sky. My Uncle said he often wondered if Pearl Harbor would have occurred if airship patrols had continued.

SAFETY IS NO ACCIDENT!

First quarter of 2021 is now behind us, as well as DAMFs Safety Assessment audits. Safety Performance Assessment is an effective method to measure the how well DAMF is meeting its safety objectives and expectations. The audit includes all operations within the organization with the final report sent to DAMF management.

Safety Promotion is a key element to DAMF's Safety Management System. A bulletin board dedicated to the SMS has been installed to display safety information. Information will include instructions for filing a safety report, policies and safety reminders.

Everyone is encouraged to keep safety as their Number 1 priority. If you have a concern regarding safety or hazards, please contact the Safety Officer asap. My email is: safety.damf@gmail.com



Stay Healthy,
Sabrina Kipp
Safety Officer



I'LL TAKE DRONE HISTORY FOR \$500!

Unmanned Aircraft Systems go back before World War I with balloons and kites carrying both bombs, or camera equipment, but real Remote Control flight started with target practice for the Airforce/Army.

Based off a model of the De Havilland **Tiger Moth 1930**, DH created a straight flying Gunnery Target Drone later referred to as the "Queen Bee". In 1935, the DH.82 Queen Bee, a pilotless, radio-controlled variant of the Tiger Moth appeared, for use in training anti-aircraft gunners. Usage of the word drone, as a generic term for pilotless aircraft, apparently originated from the name and role of the Queen Bee Plane. Queen Bees retained a normal front cockpit for test-flying or ferry flights, but had a radio-control system in the rear cockpit that operated the controls using pneumatically driven servos, operated by a pilot using RC controlled unit on the ground. A total of 400 were built by De Havilland at Hatfield England, and a further 70 by Scottish Aviation.^[2] There were nearly 300 in service at the start of the Second World War."



pictured at left—DAMF's DH-82C Tiger Moth, donated in 2019 by Dr. John Burson.

WHERE'S PANCHITO?



- April 23—25 B-25 Second-in-Command flight training class
- May 8—Pancake Breakfast and Open House @ home base
- June 4—6 Mid Atlantic Air Museum WWII Weekend, Reading, PA
- June 18—20 Ocean City Air Show, Ocean City, MD
- July 3—4 Warbird Showcase, Culpeper, VA
- July 17—18 Warbird Showcase, Ashland, VA
- July 26—Aug 1 EAA AirVenture, Oshkosh, WI
- Aug 6—8 Thunder Over Michigan Air Show, Ypsilanti, MI
- Aug 13—15 B-25 Second-in-Command flight training class
- Aug 27—29 New York International Air Show, Orange County Airport, NY
- Sep 11—Warbird Showcase, Hagerstown, MD
- Oct 8—10 B-25 Second-in-Command flight training class



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