Now that we are entering a new year, I want to draw focus to all that we were able to achieve during the year that we all thought would never end.

As we move through our winter maintenance on the airplanes, we are looking forward to a busy 2021. Although the early 2021 events may have some COVID-19 restrictions, we are hoping that by late Spring the COVID-19 vaccine will have slowed the virus spread to the point we can resume normal event life! The ICAS convention was a virtual convention this year. While it made networking with the virtual participants difficult, we still managed to have a remarkably busy schedule planned for 2021. By the end of January, I hope to have all events confirmed and a schedule that we can post on the website. Calvin Peacock is wrapping up plans and agreements for a new joint venture with the National Capitol Wing of the Commemorative Air Force based in Culpeper, VA.

Max Hodges left Georgia for a few days and, along with a group of dedicated maintenance volunteers, helped make great progress on our aircraft maintenance. Ron Covais, Bob Ferguson, and Linda Price have been working on community events that will be outlined later in the newsletter. We really have a great core of volunteers but always welcome new volunteers to join our family.

Calvin and Jim Mandelblatt are working on a new password protected Volunteer only page on the Delaware Aviation Museum Foundation (DAMF) website. This will be a place for the DAMF volunteers to check the DAMF schedule of events, aircraft maintenance schedules, safety information and a host of other information.

The Collings Foundation crash of the B-17 has brought long overdue surveillance to LHFE operators. We welcome this oversight. We have a great team involved with every aspect of our Living History Flight Experience (LHFE) flight program. I stand enormously proud of all aspects of our operation. We received a FAA ramp check at an event last year in Sanford, FL. The FAA was complimentary of our operation.

Sabrina Kipp has had enough inquiries and bookings for the B-25 Flight Training Program that a fifth class has been scheduled in May. For more information on the B-25 Flight Training Program, go to https://www.delawareaviationmuseum.org/damf/flight_training.html.

Our flying season will begin in April at Culpeper, VA with our first joint event with the National Capital Wing of the CAF. This event will be followed by Panchito leading a four ship B-25 missing man formation flight over the burial of Dick Cole at Arlington Cemetery on April 16th. There will be a goblet turning ceremony on April 18th. The site has not yet been announced. After that, we will have our first SIC flight training class here at GED. We will miss 2021 Sun-n-Fun, but Dick Cole’s funeral is our highest priority.

Thanks to Calvin for taking on Editor and Publisher duties for our newsletter.

**DAMF TO HOST PANCAKE BREAKFAST & OPEN HOUSE ON MAY 8, 2021**

The museum plans to host their first annual open house and pancake breakfast on May 8, 2021 from 9am – 2pm. As many of you know May 8th is the 76th anniversary of VE day. It is also Mother’s Day weekend, so we encourage you to bring your Moms.

Breakfast will be by donation. The B-25 will be available for anyone to sign up for a flight adventure. Call 443-458-8926 to book your reservation. For information on the flight adventure, go to https://www.delawareaviationmuseum.org/damf/warbird_flt-adventures.html.

Tours of the museum will be provided. Larry Kelley will give a history of the B-25, as well as, The Doolittle Raid Over Tokyo. In addition, we are working on a plan for a Young Eagles flight brief and flights. There will be several warbirds and WWII trainers on display.

The event announcement is on AOPA at https://pic.aopa.org/events/item/50/3249. Spread the word and volunteers needed! Coordinator for the event is Bob Ferguson, bfergusondamf@gmail.com.
AROUND THE HANGAR
by Charlie Quandt

Have you been to the flight simulator lately? Ron Covias has cleaned up, reorganized the mezzanine and created a board/conference room area with a library. It will also function like a classroom for tour groups and STEM students after the COVID restrictions are relaxed.

In early October, we supported a transient Piper Cherokee headed back to New Jersey. Late on a Saturday afternoon the father and daughter flight crew of the Cherokee came to the DAMF hangar with a broken upper door latch. We couldn't fix it that day, but two days later they were back with a used, serviceable latch. We installed the latch and re-rigged the door. Our new best friends presented us with two homemade cakes they had brought for the occasion.

Next came a class of B-25 Second-in-Command (SIC) flight students. Then it was time to prepare Panchito for a road trip to Georgia and Florida for air shows. When Panchito returned from that trip, it was time for a quick oil change, and another SIC class. In between all that, the Bombers Baseball team from Berlin, MD posed in front of Panchito just like WWII crews seven decades ago.

While the hangar was empty, another transient aircraft dropped in. This time, it was a SeaRey amphibian with a balky Rotax engine. Everyone who examined this home-built aircraft found it very interesting. It even has a reversible pitch prop for maneuvering on the water. This aircraft spent a week in the hangar while the owner got his carburetor fit for flight again. He showed his appreciation for our help with a donation to the museum.

After Thanksgiving, another great crew of volunteers were giving Panchito a bath before winter maintenance. As the hoses were being wound up, an airplane appeared in the grass between runways 22 and 28 at KGED. Turns out, a pilot was bringing his Aeronca Champ to KGED for an annual inspection and got caught in a tailwind at landing. The right main gear was ripped off and the left main had snapped backwards. Fortunately, nobody was hurt. Under Larry's direction, the Saturday crew slid a trailer underneath the Aeronca and the wounded bird was carefully moved to a hangar to await a salvage crew from Wisconsin. The owner, grateful to all who pitched in on a Saturday afternoon when NO local services were available, made a generous contribution to the museum.

After the bath, Panchito was back in service for pilot qualification rides and another 6 passenger Living History Flight Experience (LHFE) ride. Three cheers to Bill Rozek for organizing these rides and Christina Hastings for providing her signature chili lunches for the passengers.

In between aircraft maintenance, some of the Ground Service Equipment (GSE) needed some tender loving care. Rick Garner stepped up, repairing the nose gear jack (and Larry's red pickup truck for good measure).

Panchito is presently undergoing winter maintenance. First up were gear swings. John Doran's hydraulic mule supplied the muscle to retract the gear. The output of the mule (which John based on an automobile floor lift) is well matched to the B-25's hydraulic system requirements. This is great news to those maintainers who are used to hand pumping the gear up and down. The mule worked so well that Panchito's other hydraulically operated systems were function checked and a few bugs corrected right on the spot. Next came compression checks on Panchito's engines. A few exhaust valves were found to be leaking. Max Hodges and Dave Linder led this project while other maintainers pitched in to change cylinders on both engines.

In addition to the Tiger Moth inspections, both the L-16 and the L-19 annual inspections are due. So come on over to the hangar! You never know who will drop in or what mechanical marvel you will witness.

FROM THE MARKETING DESK: Bill Rozek—"Janitor"

2020 started with a bang amid a lot of hopes and excitement for the coming airshow season and ended with a whimper.

The inactivity gave us extra time to pivot, think, and plan for 2021. Our new social media efforts are helping us focus on the local markets. We will be targeting the beach traffic from Ocean City, MD to Lewes, DE to give the local public a unique experience. Delaware Aviation Museum Foundation (DAMF) not only will be offering flight adventures in Panchito but is working with the FAA for approval to offer flight adventures in our Vietnam Era O-1 Bird Dog, L-17 Navion, and Korean War Era L-16.

As Larry mentioned in his article, DAMF has formed a joint venture with the National Capitol Wing of the Commemorative Air Force. The two organizations felt that our respective warbirds will complement each other at events where flight adventures will be sold and result in higher sales. Here's to a very busy 2021!
The year 2020 is now behind us after being the most challenging season for DAMF due to the world pandemic. Even though we lost most of our Air Show schedule we were still able to complete five B25 Second in Command classes with 17 graduates. Special congratulations go out to Bob Ferguson #54, DAMF's new volunteer, for completing his SIC training!

I would like to personally thank all the volunteers that made this year’s training so successful.

November’s SIC class welcomed 3 new pilots to the B25 Mitchell ranks, we congratulate Ronald Torgeson #51, Richard Krulik #52 and Phil Webb #53. Below is the November class photo.

Looking ahead for 2021, we have another five B25 SIC classes scheduled. Due to high interest, we recently added a May 14-16 class. For more information please visit http://www.delawareaviationmuseum.org/damf/flight_training.html

In addition to the new SIC training class we have also added a new Orientation Flight to our curriculum. We now offer a choice between a 30-minute and a 1-hour Orientation flight. The new 30-minute Orientation is designed for those that want to experience the feel and sounds of a WWII bomber at a lower price of $2000. For more information visit our flight training link above.

Due to rising costs, we will be changing our price structure for all B-25 training. The change will be effective June 1, 2021. Anyone enrolling in a course prior to June 2021 will be grandfathered in the current pricing. 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.

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**B25 FLIGHT TRAINING**

**Sabrina Kipp**

**Director of Flight Training**

**LIVING HISTORY FLIGHT EXPERIENCE COST INCREASE**

by Bob Ferguson, DO

Despite the increasing costs associated with flying our B-25J Panchito, the museum has been reluctant to raise the price of the Living History Flight Experience (LHFE). With the financial pressures associated with the global pandemic and the increasing costs of parts, we have no choice but to raise the price of a LHFE flight adventure to $450 per person in 2021. The 6% increase is designed to keep the flight as affordable as possible while helping the museum continue to cover its costs. The minimal increase aligns with DAMF’s goal of allowing as many people as possible to participate in the living history of flight experience while keeping the cost reasonable.

Gift certificates or flights purchased in 2020 are grandfathered under the old ($425) price. Going forward, volunteers should tell interested parties that seats will be $450.00 per person. Any questions or concerns can be directed to myself at bfergusonDAMF@gmail.com or our Director of Sales, Bill Rozek at rozekbill@gmail.com.

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**DAMF’S NEWEST PILOT VOLUNTEER—CHRIS HASTINGS**

DAMF is proud to announce our newest pilot volunteer! With the support of CFI Paul Nuwer, our own Chrissy Hastings purposely left the earth and safely returned SOLO on January 15, 2021 at Chorman airfield (D74) in N9657V, a 172. All of us at DAMF celebrate and commend her accomplishment.
I knew a lot about the SIC class-taught by the museum because I had served many times as ground crew helping get the plane on the ramp and put it away after the training flights. I saw all the smiles and enthusiasm as the students came back from their first time at the controls of a B-25. I wanted to experience that for myself and, hopefully, gain some copilot time in the future. I did not have a multi engine rating, a necessity to take the SIC class. I decided to take the plunge and get the rating. I signed up with a flight school and learned all the idiosyncrasies of flying a multi engine plane when only one engine is running. About 14 hours of flying time later, I was a newly minted multi engine pilot.

I signed up for the SIC class and wrote the check. Sabrina Kipp, DAMF Director of Flight Training, as she helped me prepare for the ground school portion of the class and to complete the needed paperwork. I read a lot about the systems of the plane, hydraulics, electric, flight controls and the important flight profiles for takeoff power settings, METO, cruise and landing airspeeds. The classroom portion of the training was interesting which included graphic depictions of the airplane systems and actual parts from the plane in “cutaway” view. The instructors were each experienced pilots on the B-25. They taught us what to expect during our actual flight training behind the controls. My class instructors were Sabrina, Paul Nuwer, Calvin Peacock, Larry Kelley and Syd Jones. Probably more than 10,000 hours of combined B25 pilot experience between them. My fellow students came from all over, including a U.K. 787 Dreamliner pilot.

The most fun part of the course is the actual flying of the plane. Paul Newer was my assigned instructor pilot. Although the class is for SIC (co-pilot) training, the FAA requirements are that the SIC demonstrate typical flight maneuvers such as steep turns, single engine operation, stalls and so forth. As a result, the student flies in the left seat as the instructor flies in the right seat.

My first ten feet of taxi in the plane proved that the brakes were as difficult to master as I was warned. No matter how hard I tried to gently apply the brakes, (and get some feedback), I was only rewarded with a lurch to one side or the other. Paul had to bail me out a few times when the brakes pointed me in an unintended direction. Directional control without brakes during taxi was a little better, and I managed to stay out of the grass.

Going from my Cessna to a large plane like the B25 worried me, but I was surprised to find the transition was better than I thought. I guess the sight picture was not too different, and other than a heavy feel of the controls during climb out, it wasn’t bad at all. Paul coached me thru the required maneuvers, and I actually enjoyed them! I was surprised that the plane was as responsive as it was during flight. You can’t help but admire the folks that designed the plane 20 years before I was born.

With Paul’s help, I did three takeoffs and landings. Immediately after takeoff, you must level the plane just above the runway to build critical airspeed in case of an engine failure before climbing. Landing seemed to require a nose higher than normal attitude in the flare. Thus, my coaching consisted of “NOSE DOWN” after takeoff, and “NOSE UP” during landings. It made sense after a few tries, and I got better at it.

Chrissie Hastings, a budding pilot and DAMF store manager, had set out a wonderful lunch before we returned to the hangar. After all the flying was over, and I had time to appreciate my accomplishment, I munched on my much-appreciated lunch and realized, “Hey, I just flew a B25”!

A few weeks later, the FAA sent my new pilot’s certificate with the B-25 SIC type rating. For most people that take the class, it marks the end of the journey. In my case, I hope it becomes a “license to continue learning”

**Great job to all for the class!!**

One of the goals of a Safety Management System is to provide a high level of safety for our customers and volunteers. One of the ways we maintain those safety goals is by continually evaluating trends, thereby modifying or creating new policies. DAMF management will hold quarterly meetings to assess our safety goals.

While working in the hangar please consider the hazard and risk involved in any assignment, wear appropriate safety protection gear including safety glasses. Volunteers working in the hangar are required to read and sign a
Rear Admiral Leroy Simpler’s story starts locally when he was born in Lewes, DE on June 19, 1905 and grew up in Milton, DE. After completing high school, LeRoy Simpler attended Goldey-Beacom College in Wilmington, DE before he was accepted to the U.S. Naval Academy (USNA). Ens. Simpler graduated from the USNA in the class of ‘29 and began his Naval flight training. Currently, the author has not been able to uncover any information from his USNA graduation to his assignment to the USS Macon.

A short history of the USS Macon (ZRS-5)... The USS Macon was a rigid airship built for the US Navy for scouting and was an aerial “aircraft carrier”. It was commissioned into service in 1933. It was the largest aircraft ever built in the United States. Larger than three 747s lined up nose to tail, weighing over 200 tons. The airship carried five single-engine, single-seat Curtis F9C Sparrowhawk aircraft used for scouting. These aircraft were hangered internally in the airship and lowered beneath the airship when about to be launched. On February 12, 1935 off the coast of Big Sur, California, the USS Macon ran into a severe storm system. The turbulence from the storm caused structural failure to the upper vertical fin. The upper vertical fin had been previously modified to provide better visibility of the stabilizers from the control car that resulted in decreasing the structural integrity of the upper vertical fin. In the post-crash report, this modification was a contributing factor to the crash. However, it was not the whole reason. The fin failure damaged 20% of the helium cells. Combined with the total loss of the upper vertical fin, the U.S.S. Macon rapidly climbed above its pressure height. This caused the automatic gas valves to open and release large quantities of helium, resulting in the USS Macon crashing into the ocean. Of the 83 crewmen on board, only two lost their lives. One of the surviving crewmen was Lt. jg. LeRoy Simpler.

Fast forward to 1939 when LeRoy Simpler, is stationed aboard a U.S.S. Navy cruiser flying a single-engine open cockpit scout float plane, probably a Curtis SOC Seagull, that is launched via catapult. The following is an anecdotal story related to the author by Adm. Simpler’s nephew to whom Adm. Simpler told. The cruiser had made port in China sometime in 1939. The Japanese had invaded China in the summer of 1937. Adm. Simpler (rank at the time unknown) had been assigned a scouting mission. He was in the aircraft on the catapult with the aircraft engine running at idle to warm the engine. During that time, he was reviewing his mission map on a clip board. The launch procedure, I am told, is that the pilot notifies the launch crew when he is ready. Apparently, one of the launch crew thought he was ready and hit the launch button while Adm. Simpler was reading his map. During the launch phase, the clip board and map immediately flew into his face causing him to lose all forward vision. He struggled to get the map off his face without losing the map, add full power to keep flying and fly the plane. Obviously, he succeeded all the tasks, but it does present an interesting visual.

Adm. Simpler’s nephew, Coard Simpler, related another story while his Uncle was in China. Sitting on a park bench in the port city, Adm. Simpler noted a couple of Japanese soldiers sitting on a nearby bench. One of the soldiers had his rifle apart cleaning it. After reassembling his rifle, he checked the action, chambered a round and aimed the rifle to check the rifle sight. To ensure the rifle’s accuracy, the soldier took a bead on the first Chinese he saw walking in the park, squeezed off a round and killed the Chinese citizen. Satisfied the rifle was accurate, he stowed his rifle. Adm. Simpler was horrified at what he had just witnessed. It was an example of what American soldiers would confront two years later.

Stay tuned for the next installment following Admiral Simpler to the aircraft carriers WASP, Saratoga and his combat experiences in the Battle of Guadalcanal.
From the Desk of the Museum Director—Ron Covais

We all know how challenging this past year, 2020, has been to our Nation and indeed to the World. Despite major loss of revenue to our Delaware Aviation Museum Foundation, I am proud to discuss some of our major accomplishments and how they will impact this coming year....2021.

The Generosity of Our Gift Giving: Through cash donations to the Museum from our aircraft flyovers, we purchased a large number of restaurant gift cards: First of all, the gift cards were purchased from local restaurant businesses in need of our support to survive. We donated these gift cards to First Responders and Medical Staff throughout Sussex County in recognition and appreciation for their selfless sacrifices on our behalf. The photo is Dr. Ismael, Chief of Cardiac Medicine at Beebe Hospital, expressing his appreciation for the donation along with the email note of appreciation from the Chief of Nursing Services at Seaford Hospital (see below). Delaware Aviation Museum Foundation (DAMF) provided hundreds of these gift cards.

Accomplishments of our Education and Training Flight: We brought on board our 4th Young Eagle, the program we support in concert with the Experimental Aircraft Association (EAA). This coming year we will continue to grow and train Young Eagles as part of our Science, Technology, Engineering and Math - Aviation and Space Studies Program (STEM - AS). Additionally, we have completed the first live ZOOM broadcast, one of 10 in a series, with a local school in Maryland, in concert with Southwest Airlines Adopt A Pilot Program. DAMF has brought on board our first Intern, Nick Nuwer, who will work with us for 3 college credit hours and provide 150 hours of his time and talent through a program with Salisbury University.

Upgrading Museum Facilities: We have been, and will continue to upgrade our Hangar Museum Facility and our outside Museum Artifacts and Library Facility. We are proud of our COVID-19 Compliance Program throughout our Museum facilities. More improvements will be forthcoming this Spring as the outside weather becomes more favorable.

Some of our local volunteers that deserve special recognition for all of the above accomplishments include: Linda Price, Bob Ferguson, Sabrina Kipp, John Masters and John Karr.

EMAIL:
From: Lauren Marvel <marvella@nanticoke.org>
To: "ronaldcovais@rocketmail.com" <ronaldcovais@rocketmail.com>
Sent: Friday, November 13, 2020, 10:49:03 AM EST
Subject: Thank you!

Good morning,

I would like to express thanks for your generous gift card donations during this troubling pandemic time. Your thoughtfulness and kindness truly means a lot to our staff!

Thank you again for your donation!

Lauren Marvel, RN
Emergency Dept.