

Pilot Briefing

Volume 3 Issue xl

December 2011



Upcoming Events– December

5th -Regular meeting– 7 PM PUMC

19th Board Meeting– 7 PM PUMC

Officers:

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Vic Horton

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President's Corner

Hi Members,

It is hard to believe another year has gone by so quickly. MHRCS has had another stellar year. Looking back MHRCS had some good events this year. The 3 summer field meetings went very well and there was the fun fly that was a lot of fun and a big success. Many members also participated in the Work Parties at the Old Rhinebeck Aerodrome. I would like to thank all members that volunteered to run these successful activities this year. I very much appreciate your help.

From the many conversations I have had with members though out the year I think it was a very good year for lots of flying and club camaraderie. While a very busy year for me as President and Jamboree Contest Director I enjoyed working and flying with every MHRCS member. It truly was a very good year, and I am looking for the spring already to do it all over again.

There are a few things coming up on the calendar that I would like to remind members about.

Dec 5th Regular meeting
Jan 7th Frost fly
Jan 9th 2012 Budget / Dues review vote.
Jan 13th Holiday Party
Jan 28 Building Seminar

As you can see, Jan 2011 is full of activities to start out the new year, I hope you can come out and join us at some or all of these activities.

Old Rhinebeck Aerodrome

I have included some pictures of the recent Old Rhinebeck Aerodrome parking lot work party. Ron will post them at the end of the newsletter. I first would like to thank all MHRCS members that have participated in these work parties. The Aerodrome has greatly appreciated the efforts of MHRCS members and other Modelers that made a lot of repairs and have made a positive impact on our communication with the Aerodrome. I

have to say that we put in many hard hours of work but we also have a lot of fun. At any given moment in time you never know Who or What will show up at the Aerodrome. This last work party we had the Treat of actually touching and drooling all over a brand new amphibious Carbon-fiber Piper Cub copy aircraft that landed at the airfield Sat 9am that morning. Forgive me as I do not know the exact name. But let me tell you this plane was a jewel of workmanship. My only regret was that I had no camera to take some pictures. We all stopped working for about 20 minutes to talk to the pilot and again I say “drooling” all over this plane. The pilot was ferrying this plane from Boston to Florida for a customer. His father worked and flew with Cole Palen for 10 years thru the late 80’s and early 90’s and had some good stories for us.

Yes it is true that we work hard at these work parties but I can also tell you we all have lots of fun. And when the opportunities like the new Cub arise we all ditch our tools and take time to enjoy what we all go to the Aerodrome for. AIRPLANES, yes AIRPLANES, that is why most of us are there. If you enjoy being around the Airplanes and Airplane stories from who ever may visit the Aerodrome, I encourage you to attend one of the work parties. WE have fun, and most importantly we are giving back something to the one thing we love, Aviation. WE are very fortunate to have this World renowned airfield in our Back yard.

I will sign off by wishing everyone a Happy Holidays and a happy New year.

Warren Batson
MHRCS President



Nick and Warren Batson raking bush and loading on to the trailer.



Left to right, Peter Jagich on the left and Rob Schulze



Looking South towards the parking lot main entrance.



30 Ft of parking reclaimed from mother. This is looking into the parking lot from the entrance



The work crew L-R Peter Jagich, Jer Milosek, Stan Kulesa (WRAM Club Member), Warren Batson, Nick Batson Lloyd Quick, Rob Schulze
Also attending but not in the photo were Rick Rizza, Patrick and Forest Mc Guire (Aerodrome Staff), Tom Polapink (photographer and worker)



Here is a picture of the carbon fiber cub except the one we saw was on floats.

The Lure and Lore of Rhinebeck - by Ron Revelle

President Warren Batson's leadership and wisdom with regard to cementing and even stronger bond between the Olde Rhinebeck Aerodrome and the Mid-Hudson Radio Control Society is so laudable. The two groups are of a kindred spirit. Our working relationship over numerous decades has been truly unique. Perhaps it is partly because we have both in our own individual ways seen the importance of protecting and preserving a history that might too easily be forgotten. A history of true heroes and early flying machines and the era in which they evolved.

Among some newspaper clippings saved by my late grandmother, there is an article about my paternal grandfather's service in the aviation service during World War I in France and some of his observations made during duty there. And having been raised by a World War II pilot father, airplanes were always part of my life. In growing up, our family room in my parents home was decorated as a WWI Aerodrome. There were even replicas of aircraft markings torn from "downed German aircraft" hanging on the walls. Occupying two long shelves were dozens of plastic models of every WWI plane ever built! Each was hand painted and assembled by my dad. So at an early age, I was indoctrinated with the stories about the pilots of Lafayette Escadrille, Hat in the Ring, as well as aircraft types. Among the model planes on the shelf, I had my favorites. One of these was an avion de chasse or pursuit airplane known as a Nieuport. Even among the models, it was relatively small but had rather unique and stylish appearance.

So much later, I was totally "captured" by the RC aspect of our hobby at the first Rhinebeck Jamboree when a scale WWI biplane flew over my head as I walked through the parking area. Even today I can point out the exact location of the event! It was a miniature version of the planes I had grown up hearing about and loving. It was hard to believe what I was seeing, but it brought me into the IBM R/C Club and under the most capable flying lessons from Maj. Frank Jepson, an Air Force F-105 pilot and the help of many other club members. While I gained my RC wings, I attempted to entice my dad into the hobby. He attended a club meeting with me and also during recuperation from a serious illness, he put together a 1/6 scale Fokker D-7 kit that I gave him as a gift.



My Dad pointing out his Fokker D-7- with checker board painting to observers at Rhinebeck 1969.

Sadly, my dad never got to fly his D-7 as he passed away early in 1970. Shortly after, I moved from the area and formed a club in upstate NY. But having WWI planes and flying in the blood, I purchased a VK Nieuport 17 kit and put it together. Photo below. If you look at the airfoil of the wings and the shape of the forward cabane struts, you will get an idea of the scale nature of the kit.



In September of 1975 along with some members of my new club I returned to the Aerodrome with the Nieuport 17. This time I had the thrill and satisfaction of flying a WWI miniature aircraft from the Rhinebeck Aerodrome in a Mid-Hudson Radio Control Club Rhinebeck Jamboree. It is that lure and lore of Rhinebeck that brings pilots from Florida, Canada, Minnesota, and many more locations. Where else can you have such an experience? It should be high on every WWI Aircraft enthusiast's bucket list!

A small tribute to big hero : A Man and His "Machine"- James R. McConnell by R. Revelle



I have taken the liberty of referring to Sgt. James McConnell as Jim since after reading so many of his letters it is as if I have gotten to know him personally.

A monument erected to McConnell in Carthage bears an inscription reading in part, "He fought for Humanity, Liberty and Democracy, lighted the way for his countrymen and showed all men how to dare nobly and to die gloriously."

At the base of a statue in his honor on the grounds of the University of Virginia- these words "Soaring like an eagle into new heavens of valor and devotion ."

Lately, I have been absorbed in reading and doing some building. The reading has been all centered on WWI flying. In the last newsletter a couple of titles were suggested for reading on the topic. This month I discovered a gem titled, Flying for France with the American Escadrille at Verdun by James R. McConnell. Jim was born in Chicago and later attended the University of Virginia. There he studied law and founded an “aero club”. In college he engaged in numerous college pranks, and was elected “King of Hot Foot” and later painted a red foot on the side of his plane in France. Only a few months after the outbreak of WWI he left the United state for France to drive an ambulance. As a driver, he was cited numerous times for “conspicuous bravery in saving wounded under fire. Wanting to do more for the cause, he transferred to the American Escadrille and earned his wings.

Jim, to the best of my knowledge, never became an ace. But his portrayal of the life of a WWI pilot is by far one of the most detailed I have read. Much of this book was written from the hospital where he was recovering from a bad landing. Some of it is taken from letters that he sent home. Obviously, some of this book provided material for the motion picture, Flyboys. There are a few words which will be offensive, but overall the content and personal observations are not to be missed.

The photo of Jim with his plane on the previous page shows his marking on the plane of a “hot foot”. From the photo you will notice that he was flying a Nieuport. A youtube presentation on Jim can be viewed at <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=S5NZiw0WEi4>

Please take a few minutes to view the presentation. You will see what I mean about material from Flyboys coming from Jim and see why he is a pilot to be remembered and highly respected. He was one of the seven original members of the American Escadrille. FYI, the last letter left by Reed Cassidy after his death in the movie Flyboys, is in reality almost word for word the last letter left by Jim McConnell the last American Pilot to die before the United States entered the war.

Jim’s book was a free download from Amazon.



The American Escadrille.....Jim is third from the right.

CAVU till the next time and Merry Christmas,
Happy Hanukkah and Happy New Year! May you
hear Snoopy vs. the Red Barron at least once dur-
ing the Holiday Season!

Ron