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AIRSHOW

CAF FRENCH WING - BULLETIN MENSUEL - MONTHLY NEWSLETTER
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EDITORIAL

For the French Wing, the highlight of the month of May was our annual fly-in, which was a success despite poor weather. There were nearly 100 guests for lunch, and everyone enjoyed the event in the hangar while it was pouring rain outside. Later on, when the weather cleared up, our guests were able to enjoy the classic aircraft and cars that were present.

The enthusiasm of our followers and supporters can be measured by the number of new members who signed up during the event, and this entails us to keep up our efforts.

In early June, we were invited by Hugues Duval and French Wing member Cédric Malhaire to fly our J-3 and present it during the Ile de France airshow in Pontoise. Once again, the sky was very grey, but we were spared the rain. The aircraft collection was quite impressive and the public showed up in large numbers in the afternoon. Jean-Yves made a brilliant display of the J-3, flying in formation with a Chipmunk. There were a few novelties at the airshow, such as the new Yankee Delta Stearman. We thanks Hugues and Cédric for their welcome.

The French Wing was also present at the traditional Pentecost airshow in La Ferté-Alais. While Saturday was a bright, shiny day, there were heavy storms during the night which flooded the airfield and we were compelled to pack and leave on Sunday morning. It was impossible for

us to receive visitors in such conditions.

I would like to invite those of you who still haven't paid their annual dues to the French Wing to do so, and also to renew or subscribe to their J-3 sponsorships

Stéphane Duchemin



Photo: Jean-Pierre Touzeau



Photo: Laurent Chazel

**PHOTOSCOPES: FLY-IN FRENCH WING,
PONTOISE, LA FERTÉ-ALAIS**



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CAF DIXIE WING RESTORING A P-63 KINGCOBRA



The Commemorative Air Force's Dixie Wing is currently restoring a Bell P-63A Kingcobra. This aircraft, which carries the serial number 42-68941, hasn't flown since 1975 and previously wore French air force colours.



Its restoration was initially planned by the Missouri Wing but was abandoned after a flood destroyed part of the Wing's hangar and damaged the P-63. The Dixie Wing was assigned the aircraft in 1996, with actual restoration work beginning in 1999. To this day, only five P-63 are airworthy, all in the USA. en état de vol. One of these airworthy examples is that of the Commemorative Air Force CenTex Wing. ■



HELP THE ROCKY MOUNTAIN WING REPAIR ITS TBM AVENGER



In last month's issue of Airshow, we presented the Rocky Mountain Wing, whose most famous aircraft is the TBM Avenger. This splendid aircraft was damaged in an accident on when its left main landing gear failed during landing.

Although there were no victims, the damage was extensive and the RMW will need to find \$110,000 to bring it back to airworthiness. The engine and propeller need to be replaced, and structural repairs must be made on the wing, bomb bay and forward fuselage. Although the work will be done by RMW volunteers, the insurance will only cover part of the costs for material and the unit has launched a fund-raising campaign to gather the necessary funds.

You can help get Avenger 309 back to flight by donating to the RMW and by spreading the word concerning the campaign. To donate, please go to [the dedicated TBM Avenger Fundrazr page](#). Gifts will be given to donators by the RMW, depending on the amount of the donation. Thank you in advance for your generosity and help! ■

HELPT THE NATIONAL CAPITOL SQUADRON REPAIR ITS BT-13



Accidents tend to happen in series, and the National Capitol Squadron was also the victim of an incident affecting its Vultee BT-13 Valiant in March. Once again, there were no victims as the pilot managed to practically dead-stick land the BT-13, but the engine will need a complete overhaul at a cost of \$78,000. The NCS has also [created a Fundrazt page](#), from which you can donate to assist in the repairs. ■

SOLIDARITY

Solidarity and friendship with other Commemorative Air Force units being one of the goals of the French Wing, we have decided to donate \$100 to both the Rocky Mountain Wing and National Capitol Squadron. This is of course a very modest contribution, which we nevertheless thought was necessary as solidarity should go beyond words.

We hope that French Wing members will also donate in addition to what has been given by the unit on behalf of its members. If you wish to donate, please go to the indicated pages, or contact our Finance Officer Jean-Yves Cercy.

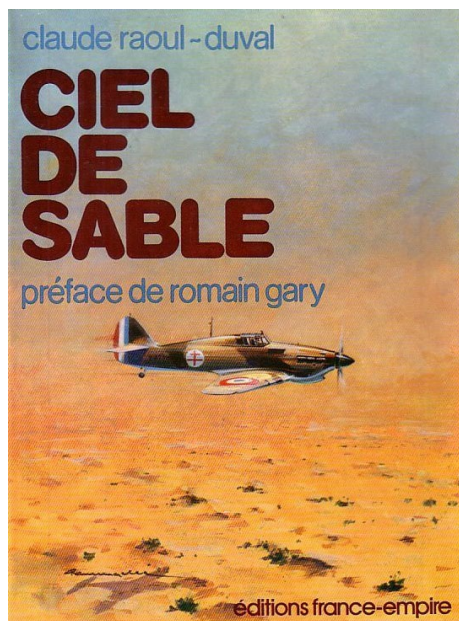
Thank you in advance for your help and solidarity with the other units of the Commemorative Air Force! ■

CAF French Wing partners



Readings: "Ciel de Sable"

By Guillaume Hirsch



We are introducing a new section to the newsletter and will be trying as much as possible, to make you discover or rediscover interesting books about aviation. These might range from books depicting aerial operations to monographs dedicated to a specific aircraft type or pilot memoirs. One of the goals of the CAF is to honour and preserve the memory of our veterans, we therefore hope to honour the men and women who brought glory to our wings.

The first episode will concern "Ciel de Sable" (Sand Sky) by Claude Raoul-Duval. Born in Paris in 1919, he joined the air force in 1939. Refusing defeat in 1940, he was among the first to join the Free French in England. Like all foreign personnel in RAF service, he was compelled to start over from scratch, studying and then being trained as any British pilot would be. He finally obtained his pilot's wings in 1941 and volunteered for the Alsace fighter group that year. This newly-formed unit was stationed in the Middle-East and fought Marshall Rommel's forces alongside the British Expeditionary Force. It is this story which Claude Raoul-Duval tells in his book. Lyautey said in 1890 that only in the army could one be ex-

pected to do everything with nothing. The full meaning of this is apparent in the book. One discovers that pilots were trained with ill-assorted aircraft, very poor living conditions and little cohesion between pilots of various backgrounds and origins. Condemned to death by the Vichy government, their families threatened back home, they struggled to find a place and recognition among Allied ranks, where they were often considered as a bunch of mercenaries.

The group eventually became a true unit but was initially assigned secondary mission such as airfield protection or aircraft ferrying. Matters did not improve when the group converted to old Hurricane Mk I fighters in early 1942. It was assigned to defend Alexandria and its shipping lanes, with long, uneventful missions during which the enemy was rarely encountered.

Claude Raoul-Duval describes in a plain and simple way the life of pilots longing for dogfights, as well as that of mechanics struggling against the sand and weather to keep their tired in operational condition. One can also discover the story of major Free French historical events such as the creation of the "Normandie" 3rd fighter group. Many of the Alsace pilots volunteered for this new unit hoping to see some action. This played a heavy role on the morale of

the group's personnel. Things became worse during the second Libya campaign when British Command refused to let French pilots support their countrymen in Bir-Hakeim.

In spite of its numerical and material inferiority, the group fought pugnaciously in June 1942, losing five Hurricanes. It was then sent away from the front and back to Alexandria while waiting to be sent back to the UK. This is where Claude Raoul-Duval's book ends, although the author kept flying until the end of the war, logging in over 160 operational missions and 220 hours of operational flight time.

Returning to civilian life after the war, he worked in trade in Africa and South America, and in the banking industry. He finally retired in 1995. Claude Raoul-Duval is Commandeur de la Légion d'Honneur, Compagnon de la Libération and received many foreign decorations such as the British Distinguished Flying Cross anglaise and the American Air Medal.

Ciel de Sable was published by France Empire in 1978. It is foreworded by the writer and former Free French pilot Romain Gary. It contains 245 pages and includes 16 pages of black and white photos. ■



Claude Raoul-Duval in the cockpit of a Hurricane.

PIPER J-3

SPONSORSHIPS

Sponsors make it us possible for us to keep our Piper Cub flying. To thank sponsors for their generosity, free flight time is included with the sponsorships:

- **Flying Sponsor** : 250€ or (\$250) annual fee, with 60 minutes of flight time.
- **Restoration Sponsor** : 125€ or (\$125), with 30 of flight time.
- **Supporting Sponsor** : 50€ (or \$50), with 15 minutes of flight time.

MEMBERS ONLY

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NEW PX ITEMS

Gaël Darquet is now in charge of the PX, and several new items are now available. These include some high-quality French Wing key rings (3€) and French Wing mugs (15€). These new items look very good and have enjoyed some success at the airshow in La Ferté-Alais. Please contact Gaël Darquet if you're interested in purchasing them.

2014 CAF French Wing Fly-In



Article: Bertrand Brown. Photos: Jean-Pierre Touzeau, Laurent Cluzel, Stéphane Duchemin.

The 2014 edition of the French Wing's annual fly-in was quite a success. Despite the rain and gusty wind, nearly half of the 28 expected aircraft made it to Le Plessis-Belleville.

On this day we inaugurated a commemorative plate in memory of Bernard Delfino, in the presence of Fumiko and their daughter Yuri-Alice, along with Stéphane Duchemin (II) and their children. This plate will be fixed to the mezzanine, the creation of which was one of Bernard's last projects, and to which he committed great energy and determination.



After this emotional inauguration, our guests - who numbered nearly a hundred - were able to have some drinks and enjoy lunch in the hangar.

In addition to the aircraft which were present, the Mustang Club d'Ermenonville came in with several classic Ford Mustangs which added some "vintage" colours to the event.

Despite the small and inevi-

table mistakes, the day was a great success and our guests were very pleased. We would like to thank them for their kindness and presence. Even bigger thanks are due to the French Wing members who worked hard to prepare and host the event, making it a very pleasant day for all present.

You can find more pictures of the fly-in on our Facebook page. ■



Left: the Portefield Turner F-AYRJ, which is now based in Le Plessis-Belleville.

Below: the T-6 Texan "Gentle Mule", which carries an unusual but very elegant livery.

On top: Eric Bellebon's Stearman.





Above: the Beech D17S Staggywing NC18028 flew in from London in poor weather, but finally reached Le Plessis in the afternoon.

Left: Christophe Collin's DHC.1 Chipmunk.

Below: Didier Blouzard's Yak-18T.





Above: grey skies but beautiful light. Despite the numerous cancellations, many aircraft were present.

Right: Hervé Da Silva's Auster F-PHSJ.

Below: muscle cars, classic aircraft and good company. What more can one ask for?





"Meeting d'Île de France" in Pontoise

aeropassion.com

Article: Stéphane Duchemin, photos: Laurent Casa (www.aeropassion.com).

When the Piper J-3 that was expected at the Ile de France meeting cancelled due to mechanical problems, Hugues Duval and FW member Cédric Malhaire invited us to fill in as a replacement with the "Spirit of Lewis"

Jean-Yves Cercy and Stéphane Duchemin hence flew the J-3 to Pontoise where they were joined by Noël Barange.

The skies remained grey during the entire show, but the program went on: a Spitfire and Sea Fury from Dijon were present, the famous "navette bretonne", the 3/4-scale Mosquito flown by Jack Krine, a T-6 patrol re-enacting "Tora! Tora! Tora!", an aerobatics demonstration by Catherine Maunoury in an Extras 300, the new Yankee Delta Stearman flown by Jérôme Joulain, a Ju 52, a DC-3, a Zlin, and a patrol composed of our Cub and a Chipmunk, followed by the Fougas of the Patrouille Tranchant and of course the Patrouille de France. ■



La Ferté-Alais 2014



Article: Bertrand Brown. Photos: Laurent Cluzel.

The French Wing was present at the meeting "Le Temps de Hélices" which is held every year in La Ferté-Alais during the Pentecost weekend. We arrived Friday afternoon to set up our tent, which was relocated several times as the premises were muddy and unsuitable. Saturday, the first day of the show, went very well: we made some good sales at the PX and the weather was fine.

There were a few novelties in addition to the usual aircraft and displays: a Swiss patrol composed of a shiny Swissair DC-3 and two Beech 18 made quite an impression with their tight formation and manoeuvres, rarely seen on classic twin-engine cargos. Another very pleasant surprise was the Hawker patrol: a Sea Fury and Hunter flying in formation. Despite the differences in speed and handling between the two aircraft, their display was both fluid and dynamic. I had a chance to talk with the Sea Fury's pilot the fol-

lowing day and was surprised to learn not only that this was the first time they'd ever executed their display but also that the Sea Fury was not evolving at full power, nor was the Hunter at fully reduced throttle.

Gaël Darquet, who is now in charge of the PX in addition to his staff duties, had set up a very nice stand with several new items (mugs, key rings, flyers...) which sold quite well. As we indicated earlier, three new members joined us during the event.

Although only twelve of us were expected for dinner, we ended up being more than double that figure, and yet still had plenty of leftovers!

Sunday was not as much of a success, however. Three of our members slept under the tent and weren't particularly bothered by the rainstorms of the night. Nor was our unit leader, who "crashed" and went to sleep in his Peugeot RCZ, a medium-sized sports car). However, we woke up to find

ourselves surrounded with water and mud. The stand and its surroundings being impracticable, we decided to pack up and leave. The few meters that separated us from our vehicles were so muddy that it took us several hours to put everything back in the vehicles. Gaël and myself stayed for a few hours and got a chance to exchange with people before returning for Le Plessis, where we unloaded and cleaned everything in preparation for this weekend's airshow in Compiègne.

Although the event ended on a negative note, it was still a success. Many visitors showed genuine interest in the French Wing and we are hoping for several new adhesions in the days and weeks to come.

A big thank you to Laurent Cluzel for sharing his superb photos with us. Your humble servant also tried taking some pictures at La Ferté-Alais, but good equipment does not make up for lack of talent, so you won't be seeing any of his photos in these columns! ■



Top: making its first appearance in France was Frédéric Akary's P-51D Mustang "Moonbeam McSwine", which made a very impressive display.



Left: the pilot of this DFS Habicht E replica treated the public to a splendid demonstration of aerobatics.

Below: the Fieseler Fi 156 Storch, whose STOL and slow-flying capabilities are always impressive.





Above: Sir Stephen Grey's F8F Bearcat display was somewhat special this year. It was the last public display of this British collector and pilot, who has decided to retire at the young age of 76!

Right: one of the Manhattan Dolls, a swing music trio from New York.

Below: jet aficionados who deplored the Patrouille de France's absence got a consolation price with the Breitling team and its Aero L-39 Albatros.



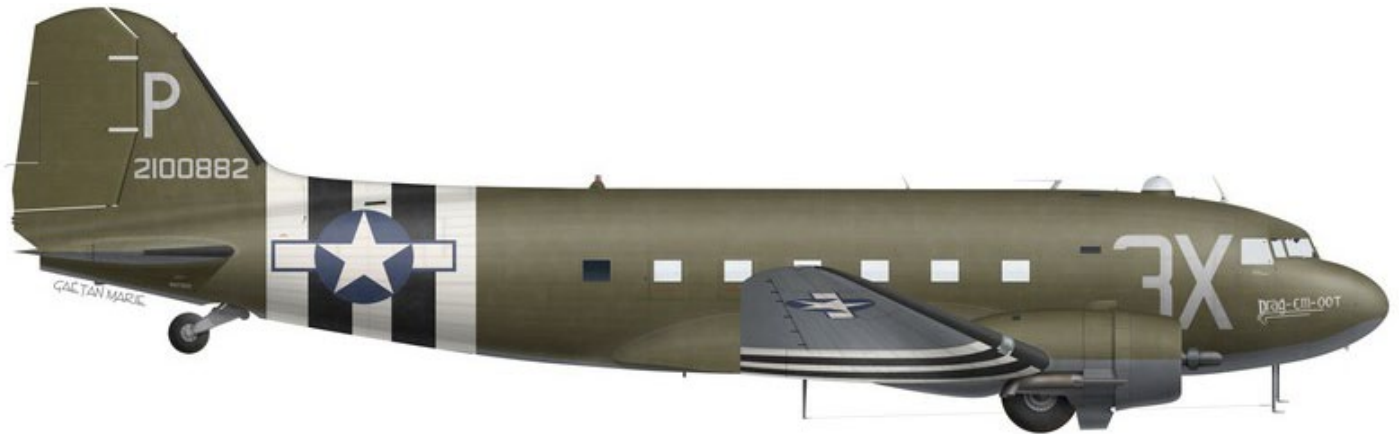
Battle colours: Invasion stripes

Profil: Bertrand Brown (aka Gaëtan Marie)

www.bravobravoaviation.com



The Royal Air Force's No 248 Squadron was one of the users of the rare Mosquito FB.XVIII "Tsetse", thus nicknamed because of its 57 mm Mollins cannon. During Operation Overlord, the squadron flew in support of the Allied ships. On June 6, 1944, Mosquitos of 248 Squadron damaged the German submarine U-212, then sank U-821 in collaboration with a 206 squadron Liberator on June 10. They also damaged U-155 near Lorient on June 23.



C-47 "Drag'Em Out" still flies nowadays and is a genuine Normandy campaign veteran which flew with the 87th Troop Carrier Squadron, 438th Troop Carrier Group, based in Greenham Common. During the night of 5/6 June 1944, it dropped paratroopers of the 2nd Battalion, 502nd Parachute Infantry Regiment, 101st Airborne on Drop Zone A.



On 20 June 1944, Lt. "Sandy" Sansing was shot down in his P-51B-10-NA Mustang near Château-Thierry and bailed out, landing near Puisieux en Retz. He met a woman who accepted to help him, and was hidden in various places, avoiding capture for two weeks. As the risks of capture increased, he was taken to Fère en Tardenois with the Coigné family. Half a century later, Sandy Sansing and the French men and women who had sheltered and protected him in 1944 were reunited thanks to members of the French Wing of the Commemorative Air Force.



Illustration by Howard Chandler Christy

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