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AIRSHOW

CAF FRENCH WING - BULLETIN MENSUEL - MONTHLY NEWSLETTER

Volume 16 - N° 6 - June 2011

EDITORIAL

The intense activities of these past three weeks are the reason for the delay brought to the publication of this issue of our Newsletter. Thank you for your understanding.

The end of our planes' maintenance and their certification were soon followed by the preparation of the three week-ends dedicated to the French Wing Fly-in, the celebration of our Unit's 15th anniversary, and, finally, the air show in La Ferté-Alais, the report of which will be in the July issue.

The amount of work linked to these events was enormous and unsuspected by any one who was not directly involved. Today, tiredness is there, and those who made sure that these events went as smooth as silk, now appreciate a well-deserved rest. The aerial activities will start again in September for the Pontoise air show which will be followed by our annual General Assembly whose date has been brought forward following numerous requests by our members. It will take place on the last week-end of October, on Saturday 29 to be precise. Please do book this Saturday for your participation to this General Assembly.

The celebration of our Unit's 15th anniversary was brought to a stop when a CR-100 crashed soon after it took-off, a crash that was fatal to the two occupants of the plane. A common enquiry by the Gendarmerie and the DGAC Bureau Enquête et Analyse is being done to determine the exact reasons of this accident. Please read on page 2 the details related to this drama which has hit general aviation and the Air Museum.

This accident reminds us all in a very cruel way that aviation is an activity which requires the utmost seriousness and rigour, be it for maintenance or flying. Please be very vigilant at all times! Your safety and that of the occupants of the plane must permanently remain the rule number 1!

Bernard



Photo: B. Delfino

SPECIAL FRENCH WING FLY-IN AND 15th ANNIVERSARY



Photo: Marie-Françoise Le Cornic

FANTASTIC "SHADOOGUY"!

**THE FRENCH WING GENERAL ASSEMBLY WILL TAKE PLACE ON
OCTOBER 29, 2011, IN ERMENONVILLE**

TRAGIC DEATH OF XAVIER MASSÉ AND HIS FATHER IN LE PLESSIS-BELLEVILLE

It was on Saturday June 4th that **Xavier Massé** and his father were killed in the crash of the CR-100 they were flying, immediately after take-off from the runway of Le Plessis-Belleville.

An enquiry has been started to find out the exact cause(s) of this dramatic accident that took place around 16:15, when the French Wing was celebrating its anniversary. Needless to say, this accident brought an immediate stop to our festivities.



Photo: Coll. X. Massé

Xavier Massé was an exceptional man full of enthusiasm and energy. We worked with him on several occasions, the most recent one being the visit of the Museum's reserves which he had organized for two of our Japanese friends, one of them being **Tadao Nomura** who since became a member of the French Wing.



Photo: M.A.E.

Author of several books about General Aviation and Concorde, Xavier Massé was deputy curator of the Air Museum, but also a professional pilot with more than 6000 hours of flying. His kindness and permanent good mood will be missed by those who knew him.

Above, Xavier Massé photographed in Concorde in the Musée de l'Air et de l'Espace.

Left, Didier Blouzard and his Yak 18T during the Air Museum Fly-in, with Xavier Massé as co-pilot.

AN EXTRAORDINARY GIFT FROM LÉON MANOUKIANS

Although our friend Léon Manoukians passed away 18 months ago, he found a way to help our Unit thanks to his children who recently decided to donate his numerous books and plastic models to the French Wing.

They allowed us to keep whatever we want and to sell the rest in order to help the French Wing financially. Therefore, we will save the large 1/18 scale models for the decoration of our rooms, and we started selling a few books and unassembled plastic models during the La Ferté-Alais air show. Should any of our members wish to buy part of these kits, some of which are really rare, they may ask us for their complete list.



FRENCH WING 2011/2012 ANNUAL DUES

We wish to remind our members that the French Wing annual dues (50€) have to be paid no later than MARCH 31 each year.

Are up to date with their dues :

Jim Adams, Hugh Alexander III, Gilles Avenel, Noël Barange, Michel Baloche, Christophe Bastide, Jean Barbaud, Buntly Bateman, Eric Bellebon, François Bergeon, Didier Blouzard, Guy Bortolus, Didier Bourrassier, Henri Bourrassier, Bertrand Brown, Merrill Butikofer, Jean-Yves Cercy, Claude Cardinal, Didier Cardinal, Cédric Chanu, Jacqueline Clerc, Daniel Costelle, Gaël Darquet, Jean-Christophe Debuissou, Bernard Delfino, Fumiko Delfino, Claude De Marco, Stéphane Duchemin, Danielle Dufflot, Michel Fleury, Guy Fourdrain, Claude Gascon, Louis-Jean Gioux, Maurice Girard, Roger Gouzon, Irene Grinnell, Roy Grinnell, Catherine Gritte, Philippe Gritte, Barbara Hair, Aubrey Hair, Joël Hardy, Louise Hudlow, Rick Hudlow, Éric Janssonne, Jean-Luc Jentel, Marie-Françoise Le Cornec, Marcel Ledoux, Kevin Leonard-Keller, Jacques Leroux, Isabelle Lesser, Jim Lux, Cédric Malhaire, Georges Marcelin, Olivier Marque, Christine Melkonian, Sebastien Michel, Marc Miglior, Jean-Claude Miniggio, Camille Montaigu, Tadao Nomura, Philippe Nonat, Benoît Paquet, Guy Perrin, Patrick Pierre-Pierre, Hervé Quefféléant, Claude Requi, John Roeder, Antoine Roels, Marcel Ruppert, Sandy Sansing, Harlan Short, Haruo Tanaka, Stéphane Tanguy, Leon Z. Thomas, Christian Tournemine, Regis Urschler, Jean-Pierre Vésine, William Voltz, Orlan Wich-

man, Ron Wright. NEW CELL PHONE NUMBER FOR CLAUDE GASCON

Our Finance Officer, Claude's cell phone number, has changed. To contact him now, please dial :

06 77 69 01 75

FRENCH WING 2011 GENERAL ASSEMBLY

Following a massive request from our members, the French Wing General Assembly will take place a month sooner than before, which will be on **October 29, 2011, in Roger Gouzon's house, in Ermenonville.**

Please reserve that date for this important meeting right now!

AIRSHO IS LOSING ITS MAIN ATTRACTION

The CAF has been hit again by its own leaders: Airsho will not include the extraordinary show, the "American Airpower Demonstration" which made this air show so special. No more reenactment of the main air battles of WWII, no more Tora! Tora! Tora!, no more massive flight of all trainers which will be grounded as static displays, and so on...

Instead of this show which made all the charm of Airsho, the spectators will only be able to see fly-byes performed by warbirds, followed by their modern equivalents, which is precisely what all air shows of the world already offer!...

One wonders who, in this economy crisis, will be able to afford a several thousand miles trip to watch what will be, after all, an extremely com-

FRENCH WING EVENTS 2011

The season started well with the Carrefour de l'Air event in the Musée de l'Air at Le Bourget on March 26 & 27.

Here is a list of our planned events :

- **Gathering of the Piper Club France in Nancy on June 17, 18, & 19.**
- **Fly-in in Compiègne organized by Association "Le Cercle Des Machines Volantes" on June 19, starting at 10 AM.**
- **Pontoise air show on September 4th.**
- **Aéropuces du Musée de l'Air in Le Bourget on October 22 and 23, 2011.**
- **French Wing General Assembly on October 29, 2011. It will take place in Roger Gouzon's house as usual, that is to say in Ermenonville.**



mon air show?...

PIPER CLUB FRANCE EVENTS 2011

- **Annual gathering of the Piper Club France in Nancy on June 17, 18, & 19.**
- **Escapade in Nuits Saint Georges on September 24 & 25.**

Note: The Annual Gathering in 2012 will take place in Chambéry on June 15, 16, & 17.

2011 FRENCH WING FLY-IN

Article: B. Delfino - Photos: Laurent Cluzel & B. Delfino

The second Fly-in of the French Wing took place on Saturday May 28, 2011. Gorgeous weather, beautiful airplanes, and numerous members and friends turned this day into a great success.

The French Wing had prepared a first class meal and decided to offer it to our guests. About 60 meals were served perfectly thanks to the experience gained last year.

The airplanes present were:

- Piper J-2 that came from Le Tréport, flown by Vincent Masson.
- Piper L-4 that came from Saint Cyr l'École, flown by Bastien Poirier.
- Piper J-3 of the French Wing which flew all day thanks to our pilots Jean-Yves Cercy, Claude Gascon, Gilles Avenel, and Michel Baloche.
- NC 856 Norvigie which could not fly because of a radio problem.
- Cédric Chanu's MS 733.
- Michel Baloche's Taurus.
- Éric Bellebon's Boeing Stearman.
- Didier Blouzard's Yak 18T.
- Gilles Avenel 's Jurca Scirocco who took to the air after a lengthy maintenance period.
- Van's flown by the Regional President of the RSA (Home-built planes Federation) Michèle Delsol.
- Mister Vital's Beechcraft Staggerwing from Persan.
- Frédéric Collinot's Ménéstrel that came from Compiègne.
- Michel Baloche's Cessna 195 and the two Me 208 being restored by Pierre Cavassilas were on jacks but they still took part in this Fly-in because visitors were invited to tour the hangars and they got explanations from their respective owners.



Alas, a technical incident stopped **Patrick Guerne** from coming from Switzerland with his Bücker because one of the plane's wings had been damaged during the previous week.

The day went much too fast as it is the case when aviation lovers and friends get together and tell each other their own little anecdotes. The guests who were not accustomed to this community were very interested

by all these flying machines whose great majority were several dozens of years old, and their owners had to give everyone lots of technical or historical explanations.

Flights went on all day, especially for the French Wing's Piper Cub *Spirit of Lewis* and Éric Bellebon's Boeing Stearman.

Since I was busy all day with the numerous tasks linked to the organization of this Fly-in, I was unable to take as many pictures as I wanted. Fortunately, our new friend **Laurent Cluzel**, who is the Technical Director of Cirrus in Le Plessis-Belleville, revealed himself as a first class photographer. I thank him for letting me publish several of his wonderful pictures in this article.

But let us watch these photos which will give you a much better idea about this Fly-in and our Association. And see you all for the 2012 Fly-in!

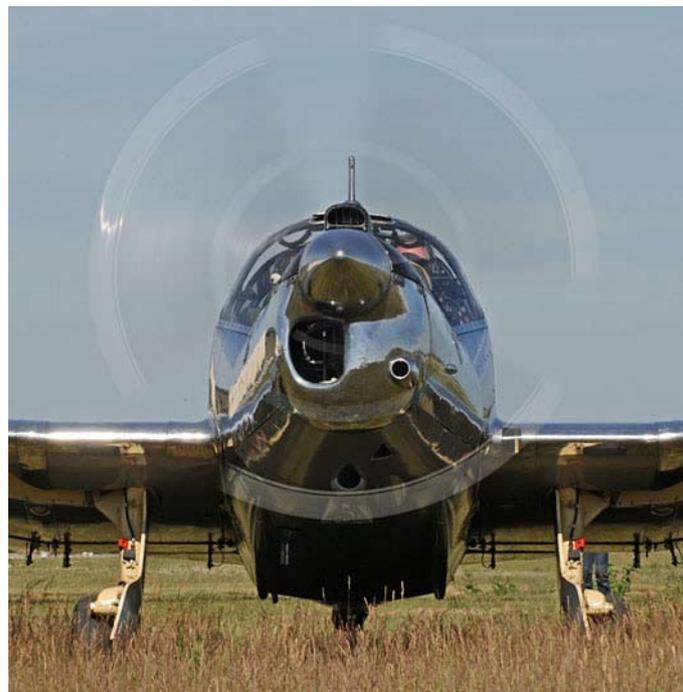




Photo: B. Delfino

© Laurent CLUZEL - 2011



Photo: B. Delfino



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From left to right, and top to bottom :

Didier Blouzard's Yak 18T taking off from Le Plessis-Belleville to get back to Meaux where the plane is based - Unusual view of Éric Bellebon's Stearman during taxi - Didier Blouzard and Cédric Chanu aboard the MS 733, ready for a local flight - Éric dressed like in the "good ol'days" - Bastien Poirier with Didier in the front seat, in the Piper J-3 from Saint Cyr l'École - M. Vital's splendid Staggerwing based in Persan-Beaumont - Kiss-landing by Vincent Masson from Le Tréport with this rare J-2.



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Photo: B. Delfino



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Photo: B. Delfino



Photo: B. Delfino

From left to right, and top to bottom :

Photo pass of Éric Bellebon's Boeing Stearman - Another landing of Vincent Masson's J-2 - Claude Gascon at the controls of the J-3 from Saint Cyr l'École, followed by the J-2 - Gilles Avenel flew his Jurca Scirocco for the first time after a long period of maintenance - The Van's during taxi while the Stearman lands - Michel landing the Spirit of Lewis watched by an Air Fly school helicopter - Another very nice shot of the Spirit of Lewis, the NC 856, and the MS 733, taken by Laurent Cluzel.



© Laurent CLUZEL - 2011

15 YEARS ALREADY ?...

Article & photos : B. Delfino

It doesn't seem possible but it's a true fact. Our Association was officially born when its creation was published in the Official Journal exactly 15 years ago.

Comprising, at the time, about twenty members, it soon progressed thanks to everyone's enthusiasm and good work, to reach, today, one hundred members.

Alas, on the way, we lost too many good friends whom we regret a lot, like, just to quote one, **Lewis Bateman** who was a man totally dedicated to the existence of our Unit. We honored him by naming the French Wing's Piper Cub after his name: "**Spirit of Lewis**". His

loss was never compensated, but we are sure that, from wherever he is today, he looks after our group.

Of the most senior members who were there from the beginning, only a small group remains of enthusiastic members like **Jean Roeder**, **Louis-Jean Gioux**, **Henri Bourrassier**, **Roger Vaucamp**, **Fumiko Delfino**, and **Bernard Delfino**.

Thanks to the publication of articles and photos in various magazines like **Aviasport** and **Le Fana**

de l'Aviation, and thanks to our presence on various air shows each year, like the one in La Ferté-Alais, numerous new members joined us since.

Projects adopted to develop our Unit were legion: Trips to Midland to take part in the CAF annual air show, purchase of equipment to better present



The superb - and excellen - cake that allowed us all to celebrate this anniversary.

our Association to the public (Tent, tables, display cases, etc), visits of historical places in France and Europe, publication of our Newsletter, publication of articles and photos in various magazines, etc.



The discovery of pieces of a B-17 which was shot down during a raid on the Toulouse-Francazal air base was the occasion to show what our Unit was able to do.

Thanks to the group of members residing in the Toulouse area, we were able to welcome two of the crew members, as well as the sister of the Bombardier who was the only victim of this accident. This project, named **Mission 441** was the occasion for 8 days of ceremonies and festivities topped by the renting of the B-17 "Pink Lady", and the donation to the AAHM in Midland of the largest piece of the B-17 wing. Six months of very hard work were necessary to

ensure the success of this project!

Another major project was born when **Sandy Sansing** asked our leader if we could prospect and find members of the French Resistance who protected him when he was shot down during a strafing raid on trains which were full of German troops, in the Château-Thierry train station. The search for these Resistants was long and difficult, but we were efficiently helped by veterans organizations and the local towns. This work was materialized by the reunion of Sandy and



SHADOOGUY, with, from left to right: Christian Graf (Rhythm guitar), André Dubarle (Bass guitar), et Patrice Lapersonne (Lead guitar), and, on the left: Guy Bourdonnais (Percussions).



everyone who took part in his protection at the risk of their own lives.

Then the need to acquire and operate a WWII airplane became

more and more evident in order to increased our means of respecting and honoring those who fought during this major conflict to defend our Freedom. This task was, without any doubt, the most difficult to accomplish because of the amount of money involved, the cheapest of those historical aircraft being one of the L-bird types like the Piper Cub, Stinson L-5, Aeronca, and others, costing around 30.000 euros at the time.

We had to work hard and save as much money as we could for four and a half years to finally collect such an important amount. Thanks to the willpower and tenacity of the great majority of our members, came the day when we were finally able to envisage this purchase. After studying the market our choice fell on the Piper Cub which, today, is our members' pride.

Thanks to an adequate annual budget, based on our members' generosity, we can fly this plane each year and fulfill the goals of our Association. This budget also allowed us to support the cost of repairing small technical problems which appeared along the life of the *Spirit of Lewis*, problems which are inevitable with any mechanical machine, and to improve it progressively, thanks to the replacement of some major components.

The help we received from **Jean-Luc Jentel** during all these years played a major role in our apprenticeship of the maintenance of classic airplanes. His experience and his inexhaustible knowledge of piston



In a very aeronautical environment, here is a small part of the assembly.



The help we got from the youngest ones to blow the 15 years candles was highly appreciated! They may be those who will carry on the work that we started in 1996?...

engines, airframes, and legislation, but, above all, his kindness, allowed us to learn and progress safely and acquire the necessary expertise to keep this kind of historical plane in airworthy conditions.

Today, there is much work to do to restore this aircraft and keep it in the best possible shape. The French Wing has enough mechanics and

apprentice mechanics, perfectly able to accomplish the necessary tasks. We thank them very sincerely for that.

Parallel to the acquisition and operation of this piece of aviation history, several owners of other historical planes soon joined the French Wing and kindly offered to use their aircraft to help our

Association's goals, which soon increased the good reputation of our Unit:

Jean-Claude Miniggio with his MS 315 and his PA 19, **Gilles Avenel** and his Jurca Sirocco, **Cédric Chanu** and his MS 733, the **Groupe Norvigie** and its NC 856, **Michel Baloche** and its Cessna 195 and also his Taurus, **Didier Blouzard** and his Yak 18T, and **Éric Bellebon** and his Boeing Stearman.

Thanks to the mutual help of all these members, these planes frequently fly to represent the French Wing and make aviation lovers and the general public aware of its goals and objectives.

One of the particularities of the French Wing is to include many members who reside in other countries. This was another important event which started with our acquaintance with **Sandy Sansing**, which, in turn, caused many others to join, the list of whom is too long to print here. However, let's men-



tion the very special links we have with **Roy Grinnell** whose kindness and generosity materialized into a profound and ever-lasting friendship. Also, the arrival of our official Representative in the USA **Barbara Hair** and her husband **Aubrey**, was a major step in the good reputation of the French Wing amongst the CAF and in the USA in general.

All these events put together make sure that our Unit carries on along the path set up by the founder of the CAF, **Lloyd Nolen**, despite the changes that the current leaders of the CAF want to dictate, using, to that purpose, means which are unacceptable, shameful, and kill the very spirit of this organization which was the best in the world until this change of management.

Refusing to subject itself to such an injunction, the French Wing continues to follow its noble goals and fight against this adversity that no one could ever imagine that it could be possible only 4 years ago.

This is why we were so proud to celebrate our Unit's 15 years of existence. We will see you all for the celebration of our 20th Anniversary in 2016, and we hope that these 5 years will allow us to retrieve the CAF that we all love so much. It would be the very best accomplishment we could all dream of!

To celebrate this anniversary, the French Wing did its very best: Barbecue offered to over 50 members and friends, the Shadooguy band who amazed the assembly by the professionalism of its musicians, a superb anniversary cake, and, to perfect the whole thing, a very friendly feeling among beautiful historical airplanes.

Several members received a special distinction for their exceptional accomplishments during the past

15 years. Here is their list, starting with the Ladies :

Jacqueline Clerc for her courage, her tenacity, and her excellent work of liaison with the Association AJBS in La Ferté-Alais.

Marie-Françoise Le Cornec for her permanent and efficient hard work, her generosity, and the organization of a tour of Luxemburg.

Fumiko Delfino for her very efficient work with the PX gift shop and the help she always gave to her husband and Unit Leader.

Jean Roeder, Michel Perrin, and Jacques Leroux, for their excellent work for the success of Mission 441.

Roger Gouzon for his professionalism, his generosity, and his hard work in the aircraft maintenance.

Jean-Yves Cercy for his permanent help in the aircraft maintenance, his kindness, and his team spirit.

Bertrand Brown for his professionalism, his artistic and technical gifts, and for his exceptional enthusiasm.

Noël Barange for his professional capacities, his generosity, his kindness, and his enthusiasm.

And, among our members who reside in other countries and were unable to join us :

Roy & Irene Grinnell, Barbara & Aubrey Hair, and Sandy Sansing, for their generous and permanent help to the French Wing, for the way they welcome our group of members every time we visit Texas, and for the amazing hard work they have accomplished for our Unit ever since they joined the French Wing.

We would have loved to reward all our members, but it was materially impossible.

We will conclude this report by thanking all our members who took an active part in the organization of the Fly-in and the Anniversary, with a very special mention for **Philippe Gritte** and **Stéphane Duchemin** who were perfect cooks during these two events.

Shadooguy



Christian Graf: Rhythm guitar



Guy Bourdonnais: Percussions



André Dubarle: Bass guitar



Patrice Lapersonne: Lead guitar



THESE TWO PHOTOS WERE TAKEN 45 YEARS APART

The presence during the French Wing's anniversary celebration of the **Shadooguy** band, specialized in the music played by the Shadows, can be explained by the fact that our leader, **Bernard Delfino** (*At the extreme right on the top photo*), and **Christian Graf** (*Second from the left on the same picture*), had created a similar band during their military career from 1962 till 1966. then life took them apart, and it's only 45 years later, thanks to the Internet, that Christian and Bernard got re-united.

Christian who never stopped playing the guitar, gave Bernard the taste of playing the guitar again, and after two months of hard work he got some of his former knowledge back (*Guitar is not like riding bicycles. Everything must be learned again and the flexibility of the wrists has to be re-gained*). Therefore, he was invited by the members of Shadooguy to play with them, and, to his own amazement, his performance was acceptable.

The bottom photo shows Christian and Bernard during the interpretation of Apache, a piece of music they played for the first time in public during the Saint Éloi festivities in the French Navy mechanics school in 1962...

WHY DOESN'T THE PIPER CUB "SPIRIT OF LEWIS" TRAVEL MORE FREQUENTLY TO THE PROVINCES?

Here is a question which is often asked by members who are not familiar with the constraints occasioned technically and from a crew availability point of view (Which also apply, by the way, to the airplanes that are owned by some of our members).

The answer can be summarized in three words: Time, money and risks.

Time because this plane flies very slowly: 80 Miles per hour at the very best, which is quite noticeable when the plane is over-taken by cars that move swiftly on the highways.

Money because the price of aviation gasoline (100LL) is \$ 10.00 per Gallon (2,04 €/litre on our latest bills). Although the 65 HP Continental engine only uses 16 litres (4,6 Gallons) per hour, a round trip of 1000 Miles (1600 km) costs more than 650 euros (\$910.00)! Fortunately, the oil consumption is minimal, but it's not the case for other planes (For information, a gallon of engine oil costs about \$40.00 per Gallon (8€ per litre) at best). Add to this the various landing taxes on each airfield where the plane has to stop for refuelling, and you will reach a total that few people can afford.

Risks are a fact of life and can take the shape of bad weather which grounds the plane and forces its crew to wait for

an improvement (Unexpected hotel room costs and meals), or returning to base by other costly means (Airline tickets, train, or car rental) which will need to be doubled to go back and pick up the plane. The risks of a technical problem have the same effect as bad weather with, in addition, the cost of a local mechanic, or bringing our own mechanics who will need some proper lodging and feeding.

A Classic airplane requires about 10 hours of maintenance per flight hour because their mechanical parts are 50 or 60 years old (Sometimes more), and they are as fragile and as subject to failures as they were when these airplanes were in service. But at the time, the tax-payers used to support all these costs... ☺

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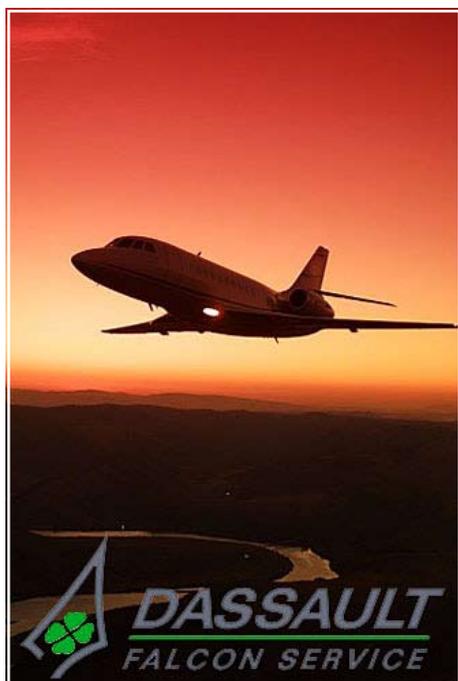
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FRENCH WING PX



Print of the Spirit of Lewis flying over Le Plessis-Belleville, from the painting made by Roy Grinnell.

300 grammes, non-acid, high quality paper, size 30 x 40 cm.

The price for this lithograph is 10 euros for Wing members (+ 6€ P & P), and 15euros for the public (+ 6€ de port).

Our members residing in the USA may order from Irene & Roy Grinnell in order to avoid excessive P & P (buywrbons@aol.com).

The CAF French Wing is a non-profit Association ruled by the 1901 law, and registered under number 2473 of the Journal Officiel dated 10 July 1996.

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