

BAD NEWS FOR AIR SAFETY

- On May 31, the B-25 “Russel’s Raiders” suffered a right engine fire. The two pilots managed to belly land the plane and walk away from it, but the aircraft will probably be a write off.
- On June 15 a fire broke out in the B-17 “Liberty Belle” of the Liberty Foundation, and caused the loss of the airplane which burned completely after the crew landed it in a field without any casualty.
- On July 10, at the end of the Duxford air show, the P-51 “Big Beautiful Doll” and the Skyraider belonging to Amicale Jean-Baptiste Salis (F-AZDP) collided in flight. The P-51 pilot bailed out, and the pilot of the Skyraider managed to land with its right wing shortened by about 4 feet.
- On July 17, the T-6 F-AZIG crashed shortly after it took off from the airport of Lyon-Bron, unfortunately killing the pilot and his daughter.

Let us hope that this bad series of accidents will stop there because each one of them is another hit on classic aviation. Let’s also hope that the enquiry for each of these accidents will help avoiding similar ones in the future. It’s up to us all, actors of this activity, to do all we can to avoid these accidents by adopting a perfect professionalism and an infallible and always renewed prudence.

Of course this applies to adepts of general aviation which also suffered from too many tragic and fatal accidents during the past weeks.

Let the investigators do their job and find the exact causes of these accidents which are as many dramas for the families of the injured and the

deceased. But whatever these reasons are, it is certain that human factors will have played a big role in them.

By avoiding useless risks, excessive self-confidence, and by carrying out maintenance tasks within the most rigorous rules, we will put all the chances on our side.

And if anyone is not yet convinced, we invite them to read the numerous air accident reports published on the DGAC web site. They speak for themselves!...

FRENCH WING 2011 GENERAL ASSEMBLY

The French Wing General Assembly will take place on October 29, 2011, at Roger Gouzon’s house, in Ermenonville, from 2 P.M. to 6 P.M.

This meeting will be followed by a drink and a diner which we will organize ourselves as usual. If you wish to volunteer for this job, please make yourself known.

The rooms that our friend Roger Gouzon graciously provides for those traveling over long distances are currently all booked, which Roger will confirm if you call him on 03 44 60 11 47.

Unless someone cancels his participation, you will need to use hotel rooms which are available in the area for a reasonable price.

Here is Roger’s full address to get to the French Wing general assembly:

Roger Gouzon - 2 La Prairie Souville - 60950 - Ermenonville

Coming from Le Plessis-Belleville and/or the N2, follow the yellow path. The red square represents Roger’s house.

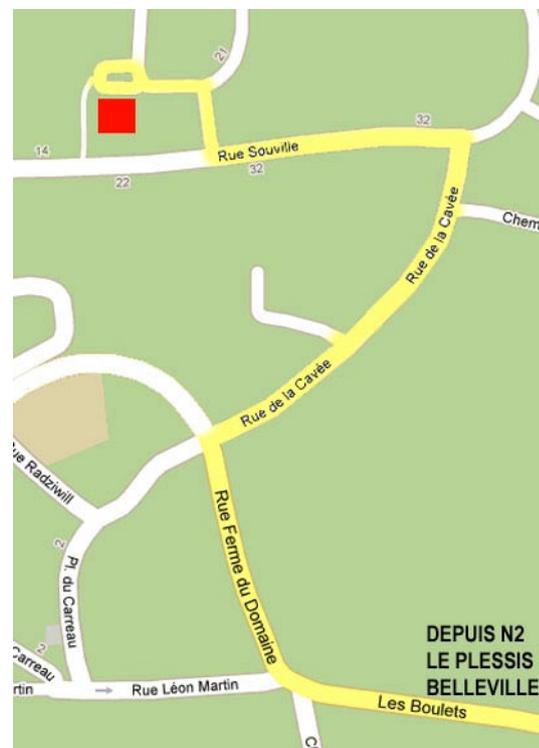
FRENCH WING EVENTS 2011

- **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.**

PIPER CLUB FRANCE EVENTS 2011

- **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.



CHIRAN PEACE MUSEUM

Article: Bernard Delfino - Research: Haruo Tanaka & Fumiko Delfino - Photos: Haruo Tanaka, Chiran Peace Museum, Hotaru Museum.



During the last few months of the Pacific war, the outcome of this conflict became more and more evident. American forces were at Okinawa, and in spite of that, the Army headquarters ordered to create groups of special attacks (*Tokkotai*), the **Kamikazes**.

Chiran, a town of the Kagoshima district, located in the south of the island of Kyushu, was the nearest to Okinawa. There, the Army had an air base from which took off hundreds of pilots who sacrificed their life for their country by willingly crashing their planes loaded with bombs on American ships.



It is most regrettable that, today, more than 65 years after these dramatic events, one can still read and hear erroneous assertions which are not based on any proof about these pilots.

Many still believe that these pilots were drugged or made drunk, that they were chained to their airplane, that the canopy was bolted closed, that the gas tanks were only half filled so that they could not turn back, that they were educated for that very purpose since they were little boys, etc.

These statements are entirely wrong and totally opposed to the very Kamikaze philosophy. They are the product of reporters or so-called historians who do not hesitate to change the reality in order to get some sensationalism which serves their own interests, or

simply to denigrate a philosophy that they are totally unable to understand.



Reality is completely different and a lot more simple. These special forces were made of young men ready to fight for their country in dignity and in direct line with their ancestors. They lived in an environment where

Photo: H. Tanaka



Above: Students wave cherry blossom branches at a Nakajima Ki 43 Hayabusa pilot as he leaves on a mission

preserving their family's dignity. But one must not believe that these young pilots, whose great majority was in their early twenties - the youngest ones being only 17 - were happy to leave for this ultimate mission. They were all volunteers, but they were, nevertheless, human beings with their strengths and their weaknesses, and the anguish to know that they only had so little

a strict discipline prevailed, which called for total obedience. Therefore, they were the subject of the highest pressures which conditioned them

and made them admit that their sacrifice would be useful to their country and to the fight against the evident American superiority, while

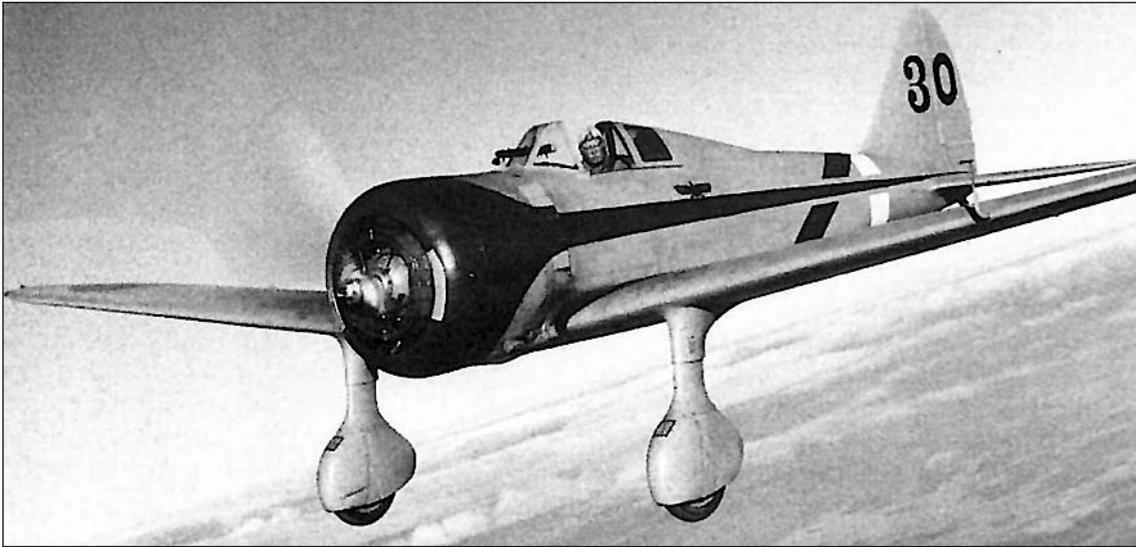
time to live tormented them very profoundly.

One of these pilots was mister **Tadamasa Itatsu** then aged 21. In May 1945, like several of his comrades, he took off from Chiran with a Nakajima Ki-27 to which was bolted a 1,000 lbs bomb for a raid on American ships. During the flight, his plane suffered some engine trouble and he was forced to make an emergency landing on Tokunoshima, one of the numerous islands they flew over on the way to Okinawa. The war stopped a little later without him being able to reiterate his attempt, which saved



Left: On the left, **Haruo Tanaka**, member of the French Wing, with **Tadamasa Itatsu** who is also at the top left corner of the above photo, standing next to **Tome Torihama**, the "Mother" of the Kamikaze pilots (See page 7 & 8).

Photo: H. Tanaka



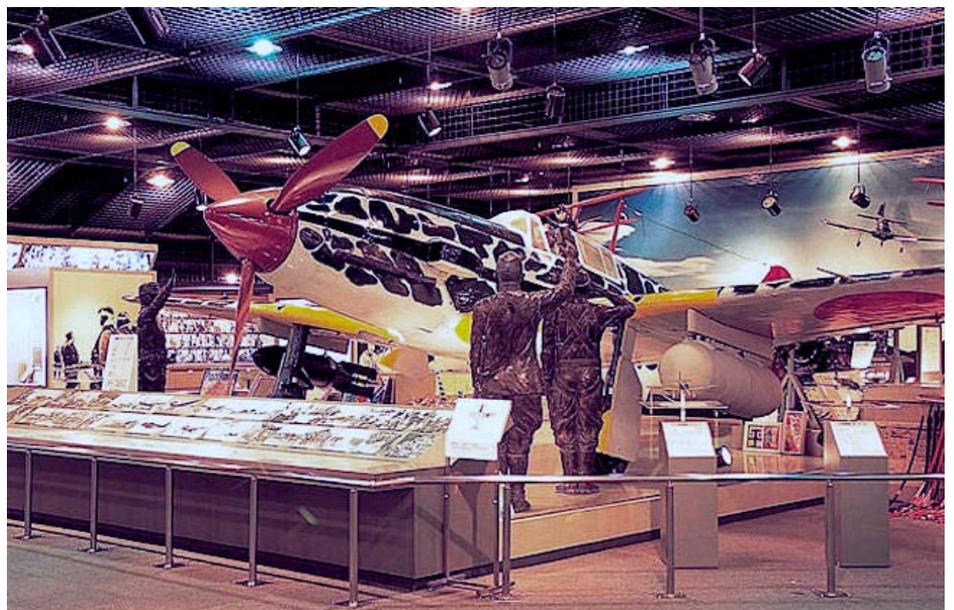
Left: It's aboard a Ki-27 like this one that **Tadamasa Itatsu** took-off from Chiran in May 1945.

An excellent fighter at the start of the hostilities, it was replaced by the Ki-43, Ki-44, and Ki-61 when they started to appear, and was relegated to home defense tasks, then advanced trainers. A limited number were used for Kamikaze attacks.

his life, but also left him with a strong feeling of humiliation, culpability, and dishonor, with respect to his country and his family, a feeling that was shared by all pilots who were forced to return to their base or to crash-land for some technical or meteorological reasons.

It was then that he made the decision that he should do something for his comrades who died when they completed their mission.

There was a tradition for these Kamikaze pilots to write a letter to their parents the day before their final mission. These letters often took the shape of a poem.



Above, a Kawazaki Ki-61 Hien, and below, a bronze statue of a Kamikaze pilot in Chiran

Mister Tadamasa Itatsu decided to collect all these letters in order to preserve them in a Memorial that he had the intention to create.

To do so, he had to contact all the families of the deceased Kamikazes, and get them to agree to give him these letters.



Example of a letter from a Kamikaze pilot to his daughter

He personally visited more than 600 families, a titanic task which took more than 10 years of his life to carry it out, but thanks to his patience, his courage, and his tenacity, he completed it and this museum opened its doors in 1975 on the same site as the Chiran air base.

Since then, the museum and its collection of artifacts have grown thanks to the addition of many historical



items, among which several very rare aircraft: A Nakajima Ki-84 Hayate, a Kawazaki Ki-61 Hien, a Mitsubishi Zero which was fished out of the sea in 1980 not far from Kagoshima, and a replica of a Nakajima Ki-43 Hayabusa which was used in the filming of the movie *Ore wa kimi no tame ni koso shini ni iku* (I will die just for you).



Above, the entrance to the Chiran Peace museum for Kamikaze pilots. Below, the Nakajima Ki 43 Hayabusa replica, and bottom, the Mitsubishi Zero fished out of the sea not far from Kagoshima.

in order to fulfil this museum's objectives which are:

“To commemorate those pilots and to expose the tragic loss of their lives so that we all might better understand the need for everlasting peace and hopefully to ensure such tragedies are never repeated”.

Uniforms, flight suits, flags, and other highly valuable historical items are part of the museum's collections. Also displayed are the portraits of the 1036 Army pilots who lost their life during these attacks around Okinawa from March 26, 1945, which equates to 40% of the total losses for the Army and Navy together (The reader must know that Japan had no specific Air Force. Ground based airplanes were directly controlled and commanded by the Army. The Navy was autonomous and independent).



Finally, main object of this Museum, its main hall is dedicated to the

display of the numerous letters written by pilots to their parents,



Each year a ceremony takes place in the Chiran Museum to honor the pilots who lost their life during these attacks. This year, no less than 48 Associations were represented during this important commemoration. Our member, **Haruo Tanaka** who was 14 years old at the time of these tragic events and was studying at the Fukuoka flight school, was there, with **Tadamasa Itatsu**. It's because of people like them, their constructive initiatives, and their positive support, that the Japanese people have learned to accept the reality of their history during WWII and can honor their dead soldiers with the highest dignity. For that, they deserve our sincere and warm gratitude.

TOME TORIHAMA “MOTHER” OF THE KAMIKAZES

In the town of Chiran, near the Army base, was the **Tomiya** restaurant which belonged to a woman named **Tome Torihama**.

Adept of the Buddhist religion, she often spoke with the pilots who liked to come and eat in her restaurant. She listened to them, comforted and encouraged them, and treated them as if they were her very own sons, so much that very solid links of affection existed between them, links so strong that they called her “Mother”. Her dedication had no limit, and when pilots asked her, she even wrote to their parents herself after their departure.

After the war, she continued to honor the dead pilots, and when some of

The plaque on this monument dedicated to Tome Torihama says what follows: “Young men of the Special Attack Corps, who lived to the fullest through their short youth and gave their lives, called Tome Torihama “mother” and loved her dearly. She as owner of Tomiya Restaurant was a Bodhisattva, who appear in this world from time to time to give relief to others”.



Above, Tome Torihama, her husband, and their two daughters.

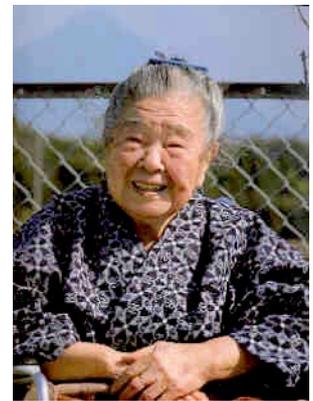
Right, top to bottom:

- The Hotaru (Firefly) museum which was Tome Torihama’s restaurant.

- Tome Torihama in 1990, 2 years before she died.

- Tome Torihama honoring the pilots.

their parents came to visit Chiran, she welcomed them and quite often she was able to give them a photo of their son since she had taken the habit of keeping a photo of each one of those who used to come to her restaurant.



Tome Torihama was decorated of the 6th Order of Merit by the Emperor in 1977 for her dedication during and after the war. In 2001, the Hotaru Museum was created in the very same building as her restaurant.



Several books about the story of Tome Torihama have been written, and several movies have been filmed about the same subject.

THE FIREFLY (*HOTARU*)

One of these stories is about a pilot, **Saburo Miyakawa**, who, the day before his mission, on this hot summer day of June 5, 1945, the day of his 20th birthday, told Tome Torihama that he would love to come back to her restaurant. She said: *"Of course, whenever you like, I will be waiting for you"*. They were then outside, in the dark because of the curfew, and many fireflies were flying around them. He then said: *"I will come back as a firefly, even if I die tomorrow. So if a firefly comes into your house, please don't make it fly away"*.



Saburo Miyakawa

The following day, Saburo Miyakawa took off from Chiran with his friend Enosuke Takimoto for their last mission. On the way to Okinawa, Takimoto told Miyakawa several times that they should return to base because the heavy rain and the thick clouds made the mission very difficult. Miyakawa told his friend to return to base and he carried on to Okinawa.

After he landed, Takimoto went to the restaurant, and at 9 in the evening

a firefly flew in through the opened doors of the restaurant, landed on a roof beam and lit up. Tome Torihama, her family, and the pilots knew he was back, and they cried together over the death of their friend.

MOONLIGHT SONATA (*GEKKU NO NATSU*)

In the town of Tosu, several miles away from the Army air base Metabaru (Saga Prefecture), was an elementary school which owned one of only two Hupfer grand pianos in Japan.

In the early days of this summer of 1945, two Kamikaze pilots did not hesitate to walk that long distance to play this piano a last time.

They asked the teacher **Utako Ueno** who was responsible for the precious instrument, if she would let them play the piano before they died: *"We are students of the music academy and we fly on a mission tomorrow. Could we please play your piano?"*.

The teacher agreed and one of them played Beethoven's *Moonlight Sonata* before the children and their teacher. Then they thanked their host with a few words and left without telling her who they were precisely.

In 1989, Utako Ueno heard that the school people wanted to get rid of this piano for which they had no more use.

She decided to tell this story, which she had kept secret, to the school management and the students' parents, and she succeeded in convincing them that it was worth preserving. Therefore, it was restored with the help of the owner of the second Hupfer piano in Japan, and it

was lent for two years to the Chiran Peace museum.

This story caught the attention of a movie director who tried to locate the two pilots to no avail. The movie (*Gekku no Natsu - Summer of the Moonlight Sonata*) was filmed in 1993 as a fiction but a reporter persevered and finally located one of the two pilots, named **Shinsuke Kazama**. At first, the latter refused to tell his story, but he finally changed his mind and told the reporter that he, and his friend Unno, had taken off from Chiran for Okinawa on June 7, 1945. Kazama's plane suffered some engine troubles which forced him to return to base. He survived the war, but Unno had carried on and died.



On the reporter's request, Shinsuke Kazama accepted to visit Tosu elementary school where he was reunited with the teacher and the students of that time, and, as he did 50 years before, he played once again the Moonlight Sonata before them.



Utako Ueno with Masaru Hamaguchi who donated his Hupfer piano to the Chiran museum when the original returned to Tosu.

THE LAST SHUTTLE FLIGHT

Article: B. Delfino - Photos: NASA



With the last flight of the Space Shuttle an important page of Aviation and Astronautics has been turned, a page which will have lasted 30 years made of joy, success, and dramas, but, above all, immense technical and scientific progress which serve humanity.

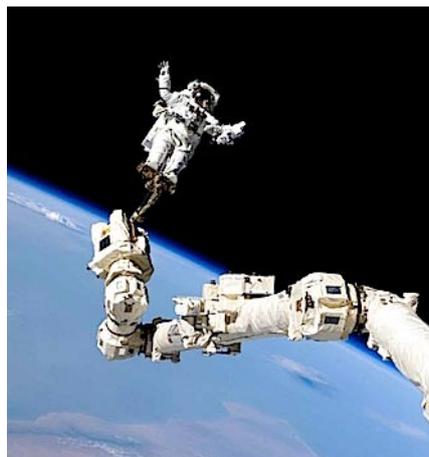
The Shuttle has stopped but the International Space Station carries on. Only the means of getting to it will change.

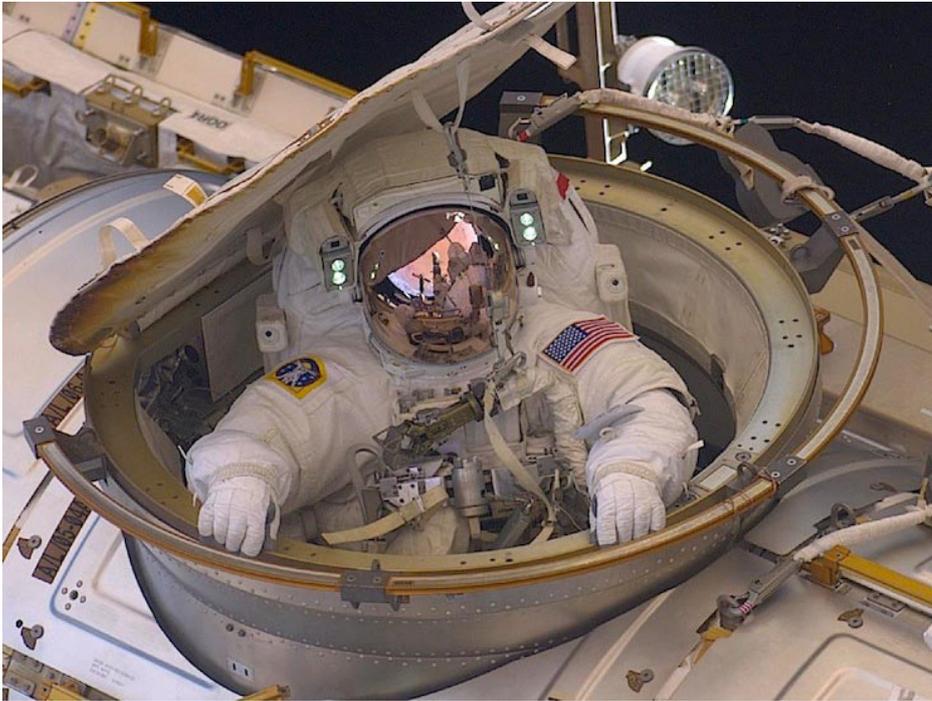
Those who like astronautics were able to connect to the NASA web site during the entire duration of Mission 135, and participate, 24 hours a day, to the life of the cosmonauts as if they were in orbit with them.

One of the most amazing moments of this mission, apart from the launch which is always spectacular, has been the space walk which lasted 6 hours and 31 minutes for Mike Fossum and Ron Garan to accomplish various tasks like the installation of a re-supply

robot kit, the replacement of a cooling fluid pump which had failed, and the installation of a scientific experiment related to various materials exposed in space.

One of the two “space walkers”, Mike Fossum, was attached at the end of the station robotic arm by his feet; he was then taken to where his presence was needed by his team mates who controlled the arm from the Station observation cupola.





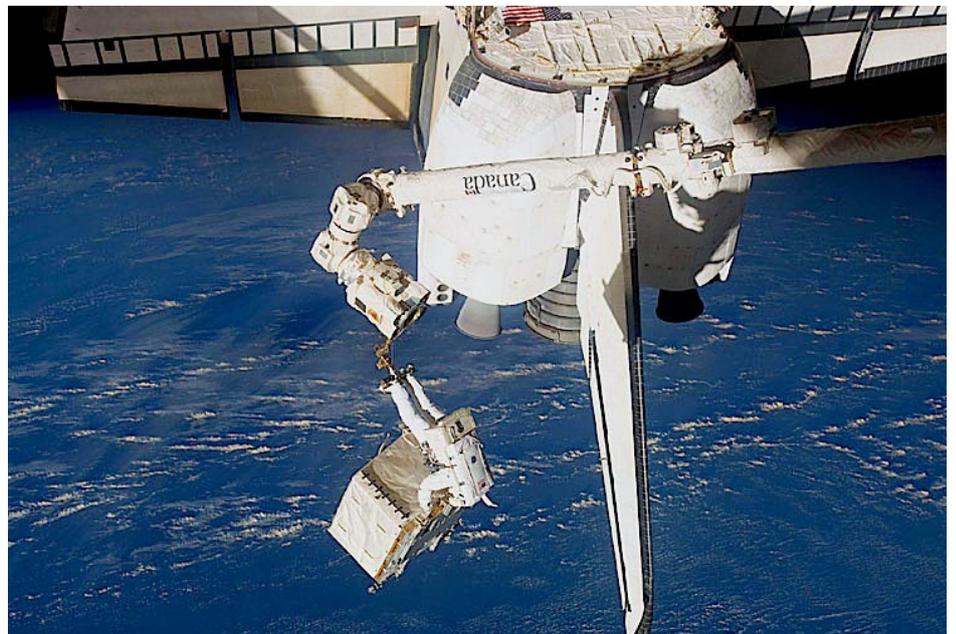
It shows a Soyuz vehicle at the extreme left, and the Shuttle's nose on the right. In the forefront is the Alpha Magnetic Spectrometer (AMS) installed during the previous mission. This equipment detects particles present in space, and looks for antimatter and other elements which will help us better understand the universe.

It is difficult, if one has never seen a Space Shuttle for real, to realize its size, and, consequently, the size of the International Space Station.

The Shuttle is 110 feet long and has a span of 72 feet.

If you were lucky enough to be connected to the NASA web site, you were able to watch, real time, the preparation of these two astronauts, their sortie through the air lock (*Above*), and all the tasks they accomplished during their long space walk. Among them was the removal of a cooling assembly which failed a year ago, its transfer by hand to the Shuttle, and its stowing in the cargo bay (*Right*).

Since this assembly weighs more than 1400 lbs, it was difficult to manipulate. If this weight is in-existent in orbit, its mass remains constant. Therefore it had to be moved with the utmost care.



The photo below was taken by Ron Garan during the space walk.

Its cargo bay has a length of 54 feet and a diameter of 14 feet, and, therefore, a volume of 2400 cubic feet.

It is because of this cargo capacity that the International Space Station has reached the size it is today: More than 300 feet long and approximately the size of two football fields!

Of course the inhabitable part of the station is a lot smaller since it's made of the pressurized center elements, but these are so vast that they many people can easily live in them.





These photos show the quality of the high definition TV transmission that NASA offered to its spectators.

The top picture is a screen shot taken while the space station was orbiting some 220 Miles above the Italian boot. In the top left hand corner one can see the tip of Sicily, and, on the right, is the Shuttle's left wing.

Below it, the "space mechanics" working hard with an electric driven tool-driver whose cost can hardly be imagined!...



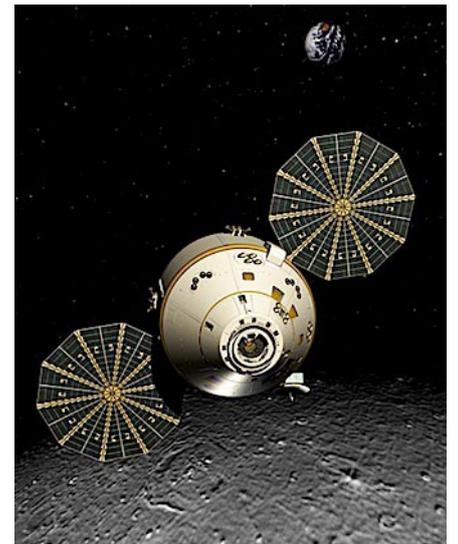
Below, during the mission, the ten astronauts (Seven Americans, two Russians, and one Japanese) replied to many questions during live interviews by journalists. Here the ten of them got together to answer these questions.



This view gives a good idea of the space they have available. The *Space Odyssey* is not too far. Well... it would be if budget restrictions had not hit NASA very hard not long ago, because the end of the Space Shuttle means that many years will be required before a new vehicle can take over.

The vehicle which is on the drawing boards today, named *Orion*, will be very much smaller than the Space Shuttle since this is a three seater capsule which is approximately the same size as the Apollo capsules.

Its purpose will be to get to the Space Station, or to go back to the Moon, or to go to Mars...



This policy change is rather sad, but it will probably be a chance for private companies to find some lucrative business in it...

In the mean time, we invite our readers to visit the NASA web site where they will find fantastic pictures of past missions and space, and many videos that will make them dream: <http://www.nasa.gov/>

Some readers may find that this article has little to do with warbirds and classic planes, but may be more than they think since, today, the Space Shuttle is part of History.

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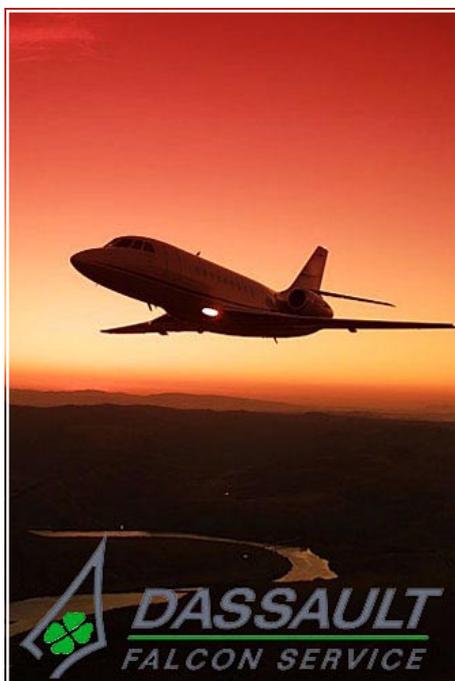
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LA FERTÉ-ALAIS 2011



CD Rom of 110 photos taken during the 2011 La Ferté-Alais air show. 1600 pixels jpeg images that make a nice screen saver/wall paper, or which can be printed for personal use only (10 € P&P incl, or 8€ for our members)

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Unit Leader: Col. Bernard DELFINO

Tél & Fax: 01 48 69 04 57 - Mobile : 0680361717
email: bdelfino26@free.fr

Executive Officer: Bertrand BROWN

Tél: 09 50 19 58 62 - Mobile: 06 16 97 55 06
email: webmaster@gaetanmarie.com

Finance Officer: Col. Claude GASCON

Tél: 03 29 86 71 00 - Mobile: 0675742596
email: claudegascon@free.fr

Adjutant: Noël BARANGE

Tél: 01 30 96 68 53 - Mobile : 06 84 92 90 08
email: noel.b1@club-internet.fr

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