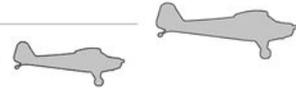




# AIRSHOW



CAF FRENCH WING - MONTHLY NEWSLETTER - BULLETIN MENSUEL

Volume 13 - N° 4 - April 2008

## EDITORIAL

**P**lenty of work again this coming month on our airplanes! Too bad that the number of volunteers is so small compared with the high quantity of tasks to be performed!... I'm asking all our members who live in the Paris area to find one or several days in their spare time so that they can spend them with our planes. There is enough work to keep busy an army of volunteers, be it on the planes themselves, on the equipment, or on the tooling! Whatever is their competence, they will always be welcome!

**T**o all our members! It is of primary importance that you tell us about your intention to participate in the events of the on-coming season (*See the list on page 11*). Time flies, and we must know who are the members we can count on to fly our planes as pilots or passengers, but also, and above all: Transport the equipment, build our tent, dismantle it, sort out the PX, and organize the various possible meals. Please contact us at once!

**A**nd three! Col John Roeder has done it again with part three of his article which describes with great exactness the Battle of the Bulge. Let us thank John for being able to summarize, in a few pages which include an enormous amount of exact and precise information, a subject which is so complex that it would take normally hundreds of pages! Let us also thank his wife, Anne, who was an exceptional supporter in that project.

**I**t is obvious that we won't be able to carry on flying the Piper Cub if the number of Sponsors does not increase significantly. I thank all 2007 Sponsors for continuing their support to this legendary plane. And if you have never been a Sponsor, why not become one? It will only cost you 50 euros...

**D**o not forget that your annual dues must all be paid at the end of April! The good health of our Association as well as the one of our new Finance Officer, Claude Gascon, depend on it. I thank you in advance for taking immediate action.

Bernard

## CAF WINTER STAFF CONFERENCE: THE COMPLETE REPORT BY COL BARBARA HAIR (Pages 2 à 4)



**ON A WING AND  
A PRAYER...  
A VERY RISKY  
ATTACK ON  
DIEN BIEN PHU  
TOLD BY OUR  
FRIEND MICHEL  
COUTHURES (P. 7 & 8)**



**THE BATTLE OF THE  
BULGE :  
THIRD AND LAST PART OF THE  
STORY OF THIS BATTLE OF THE  
LAST CHANCE (Pages 9, 10, & 11).**

**TOP URGENT!... PLEASE READ THE LIST OF  
EVENTS PLANNED FOR THE ON-COMING  
SEASON ON PAGE 12, AND TELL US, ASAP, WHAT  
YOUR INTENTIONS TO PARTICIPATE ARE, BE IT  
AS A PILOT, PASSENGER, OF HELP TO THE PX!**

**YESTERDAY SPONSORS (OR BEFORE!...) THE "SPIRIT OF LEWIS" NEEDS YOU! (Page 12)**

# CAF WINTER STAFF CONFERENCE

Article and photos: Col Barbara Hair

Excitement ran high as more than 200 unit officers and representatives from CAF Units across the U.S.A. and internationally gathered to meet, most for the first time, our new President, **Stephan Brown**.



Left to right: Donna Blalack, Steve Brown, and Alyson Trevino

We were all eager to hear his plans and ideas for our organization and to get a sense of our new directions.

The meeting began with roll call which traditionally involves units answering the roll with slogans and mottoes, frequently amusing, which distinguish units by their interests or geography.

The new Chief of Staff, Col **Bill Coombes** introduced the General Staff: Cols **Steve Barber**, **Doug Rozendaahl**, **Mark Novak**, **Ted Short**, **Tom Rush**, **George Lodge**, **Floyd Howdyshell**, **Graham Robertson** and **Joe Cowan**. These gentlemen were all attired in the new smart-looking dark navy blue cotton long-sleeved shirt with the CAF Wings emblazoned on the left side and the name embroidered on the right side of the shirt. With the shirts are worn khaki slacks of the member's own choosing. This new look has been chosen as the outfit to be worn at CAF meetings, air shows and various venues where our members wish to present a homogeneous appearance which is simple, comfortable, dignified and easily recognized by others. These shirts are

now available in the CAF Gift Shop in both a long-sleeved and short-sleeved version. (Ladies: this same shirt is available in Ladies' Sizes though it does tend to run small and I would advise you to order one size larger than usual or wait until you visit AIRSHO and try it on before purchase.)

**AIRSHO 2008** will be held **September 20-21, 2008**, with the following acts planned: the Golden Knights Military Parachute Team, an aerobatic team, a Military Aircraft Demonstration Team-either of F-15s or F-16s, and the Inland Empire's all CAF parachute team jumping from their C-53. This means we shall all be witness to actual CAF Colonels jumping out of a perfectly good airplane! I know that I shall watch this demonstration with great interest and some trepidation. Of course, the CAF Wing airplanes shall all be participating as well.



Col George Lodge.



Left to right: Barbara Hair, Ron Wright, and Kim & Philip Pardon

The **ACAHO**F (*American Combat Airman Hall of Fame*) **Dinner** will be held on Thursday evening September 18 at our new **Commemorative Center** to honor selected heroes of WWII, the Korean War and the Vietnam War.

A special event this year is the opening of the Commemorative Center with an anticipated finish to construction in April and full access to all facilities to our members at AIRSHO. This building is an impressive structure with a large open space on the ground floor to be used for big events and which is to eventually include additional Museum exhibits. The upper floor houses the O'Club for which we have all waited impatiently. The bar area will be called "*The Gunfighter Pub*" and there will be comfortable seating in front of large windows and a viewing balcony all of which overlook the airport.

Cols **Lynn Fite** and **Gordon Stevenson** discussed the imminent move of the **B-29/B-24 Squadron** to the **Cavanaugh Flight Museum** at Addison Airport in Addison Texas. Col **Doug Jeanes** presented a donation from Col **Jim Cavanaugh** for 1.2 million dollars to the CAF to begin the process of restoration for *B-29 Fift*.

This money will first be used to re-engine the B-29. This work has already begun and is going well with plans to recommence flying in 2009. The City Council of Addison is very excited about this new development and has pledged additional grant



Left to right: Tami O'Banion and Alyson Trevino

money for facilities important to the restoration. The B-24, formerly known as "Diamond Lil" has now been restored to a very original-type condition and was selected as a Judges Choice for Bombers at Oshkosh and has been featured in *Air Classics* and *Warbird Digest* recently. We were all delighted by this extremely generous donation from Jim Cavanaugh and we thank him for it. The CFM and the B-29/B-24 Squadron are a good fit for each other and both can benefit from their mutual co-operation.

The lovely **Tammi O'Banion** and **Jeff Ward** of the AAHM (*American Airpower Heritage Museum*) shared their plans to grow and improve the museum. They were pleased to inform us that the AAHM is one of only two aviation museums in the U.S. which have received accreditation from the Smithsonian Institute in Washington D.C. !

We have the largest collection anywhere of original aviation nose



Left to right: Jake Tryon (Of the Dixie Wing and number 1 recruiter for the year), and wife and husband Toni and Gordon Stevenson.

trench warfare with aerial dogfights displayed overhead, then in 2009 a **WWII Bomber Mission** and a P.O.W. experiential display, and in 2011 an **Atomic Age gallery** will be shown.

A new CAF Website is being designed which will feature more information for visitors and members and which will provide accurate and timely information to all. Further, the Museum Gift Shop will be enhanced with a new design featuring more open space and merchandise.

Creative Director **Alyson Trevino** revealed the welcome news that **Dispatch** is to become a magazine arriving monthly to all members and will be comparable in style and features to other top aviation magazines.

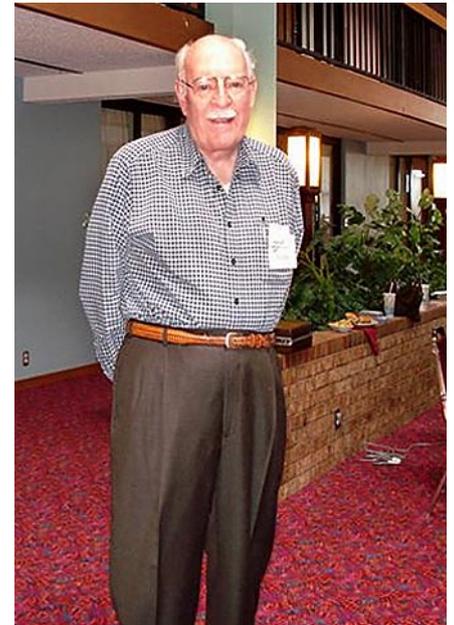
There will be a "Letters to the Editor" section and all members are invited to submit matters of interest or questions concerning content for possible publication.

President **Stephan Brown** gave the keynote address in which he announced some exciting new goals and directions :

- Of great interest was the decision to send 9 CAF Aircraft to "Sun-N-Fun" EAA Airshow in Florida next month where staff and members will man a Press Tent to tell our story to those who may not know it.
- This will be followed by participation with aircraft and personnel at **AirVenture EAA Airshow in Oshkosh** (Wisconsin) this summer. Hundreds of thousands of aviation enthusiasts attend these shows and we will now be a presence there.

art which is now 100% preserved. Plans call for a new annex to be built between the present museum and the Commemorative Center which will contain "Total Immersion" exhibits beginning with the **WWI Gallery** featuring

- The goal continues to be recruitment of members with their retention both paramount. There will be new rewards for members who recruit, with a prize given to the member who recruits even one individual. Ideas for retention include matching new members with established ones both geographically and by like interests and skills and mentoring these individuals to assure that they feel welcome and are able to find their place in the organization more easily.



Col Rick Hudlow, meritorious leader of the SH Group which restores a beautiful A-26 Invader.

President Brown is a dynamic man with great energy and enthusiasm for his new job. He possesses natural leadership qualities and has a naturally warm and engaging personality. We all had opportunity to introduce ourselves and he showed strong interest in hearing about our units. He has invited everyone of us who have ideas, questions or concerns to either write or e-mail those to him and he will answer in detail. President Brown's address was followed by informative breakout sessions according to our special interest.

The Awards Dinner was held Saturday evening with Captain **David Sanders** as the after-dinner speaker (*see photo with Stephan Brown*). He related the absolutely riveting story of having been the Captain of Fedex Flight 705 which was hijacked soon after takeoff by a psychopathic maniac.

Captain Sanders and his 1<sup>st</sup> Officer and Flight Engineer survived this horror by a combination of sheer courage

and unbelievable feats of airmanship to save their lives and aircraft from certain destruction though they were all gravely wounded.

A movie and a book has been written about their awesome story. He described the moment to moment events as we all set transfixed with not a sound in the room save his own voice. When one sees this man, one sees the face of courage and heroism. He talked with many of us at the conclusion of the program.



Left to right: Captain David Sanders and Steve Brown.

Throughout the conference I was approached by many members from everywhere who wanted to know more about the French Wing and to relate how they recognize what a distance you come to participate and how much you contribute in time and effort to our organization.

I heard wonderful descriptions of how so many of you had impressed people with your great enthusiasm for aviation and for the world-wide mission and goals of the Commemorative Air Force.

It is always my delight to tell your story and I am honored that you have allowed me the great privilege to represent you in this manner.

I am most grateful for the opportunity and look forward to seeing you again in September as we continue building and growing this great organization.

Sincerely,

*Col Barbara Hair*

**SINCE THE ACA-HOF BANQUET WILL TAKE PLACE ON THURSDAY 17 SEPTEMBER IN THE COMMEMORATIVE CENTER, THE FRENCH WING DINNER DATE IS CHANGED TO FRIDAY 18 SEPTEMBER IN THE EVENING!**

## THE FRENCH WING AND THE CAF UNIFORM

Wearing the CAF khaki uniform will be tolerated during the events of the on-coming season, but the sooner everyone will order his dark blue T-shirt with the CAF wings embroidered on the left side, the better. It is important that we show the public a common image so that it knows who to talk to. The pilots flying a mission will wear a flight suit, and the mechanics a pair of overalls while they work in the hangar (These overalls can, by the way, be an old CAF uniform). Otherwise, it is recommended that all our members wear the blue T-shirt bleu marine and beige slacks (*See photos in Barbara's report.*)

## THE COMMEMORATIVE CENTER IN MIDLAND

Col Jim Adams, aka as "007", has just sent us some nice pictures of the Commemorative Center, showing the progress made in this building that Barbara describes in her report on the CAF Winter Staff Conference.

On the right Jim stands on the balcony of the Officers' Club (Admire the Midland sky in February!...). This balcony will, no doubt, be a favorite place for those who will want to see AIRSHO in excellent conditions. Let us bet that room will be expensive and will belong to those who wake up early!



Left, the rear side of the new hangar is the Commemorative Center which includes, on the ground floor, a large meeting hall or other events. Above it is the O'Club.



Col Jim Adams, with cols. Courtney Clark on the left, and Jim Nelson on the right. Together, they give a good idea of this ground floor hall. AIRSHO 2008 will see its grand opening...

# THE ALBATROSS' ANEMOMETER

Article : Col Patrick Pierre-Pierre

This story begins in 1917, one day when French Ace Georges Guynemer presented mister Charpentier, one of his mechanics, with the anemometer he took from the *Albatros* (*Below*) that he had just shot down. On January 8, 2008, 91 years later, I was holding this instrument in my hands.



In December 2007, as I was reading a private pilots forum on the web, I saw pictures of an instrument which was identified as an anemometer from an *Albatros*, a german WWI airplane. The author of this announcement was a certain mister Alan Saubesty.

In 1950, the widow of mister Charpentier, wishing that this object be given to someone who likes aviation, gave this anemometer to a neighbour of hers, a young man whose destiny would be a brilliant career in naval aviation. This young man was mister Michel Couthures that the readers of our Newsletter know very well, thanks to the wonderful articles he wrote for it. Actor of the war in Indo-China, he carried on in Algeria, and concluded it in France in 1983. Wishing to transmit this valuable relic to future generations, he contacted, in 2001, the commander of the "Guynemer" Air Force base in Dijon, but the latter did not seem interested...

It was in September 2007 that madame Couthures met an old school friend. This lady was no one else than Alan Saubesty's mother. They soon realized that their respective husbands shared the same passion, and they decided to get them together. This is how Alan's father, Jean-Paul, became a friend of Michel Couthures who gave him a tour of the Naval Aviation (Aéronavale) Museum in Rochefort. Jean-Paul, charmed by the spirit that prevailed within this ANAMAN Association

(Association Nationale des Amis du Musée de l'Aéro), decided to become a member. After dealing with the archives, Jean-Paul Saubesty took part in the restoration of a Dassault *Flamand* displayed statically. The two men ended up talking about the anemometer which became the center of a discussion on a web forum in order to identify it clearly and find a place where it would be enhanced.

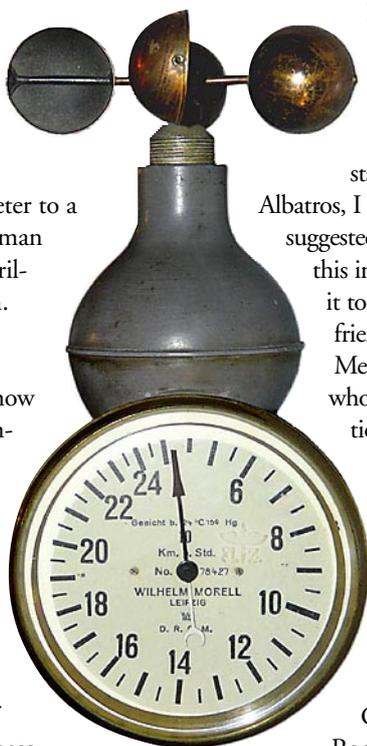


he is particularly excited by the fact that this instrument will be fitted, 91 years later (!), on the same type of aircraft and will see some active service too! The only conditions that he has put on this instrument (Serial Number 78427), is that it never becomes the object of a financial or commercial transaction, and that it will be given, at the end of its "second active career", to the Musée de l'Air et de l'Espace in Le Bourget, to be displayed in a place which will reflect its story and Georges Guynemer, the true initiator of this adventure.

It was on January 8, 2008, in Rochefort, that took place the moving ceremony of the instrument transmission, in the presence of Michel Couthures, Michel Poupard, Jean Paul Saubesty, Jacques Camescasse President of the ANAMAN, and myself (*Above*).

On February 9, in the presence of Bernard Delfino, Roger Gouzon, Alain Guay, and many members of Memorial Flight, I donated this historical object to Alain Vallet, President this Association (*Below*).

Like all actors of this adventure, I hope to soon see the Memorial Flight Albatross fly again, with this anemometer fitted to it.



Knowing Memorial Flight, this association of wonderful magicians in aircraft restoration, and knowing that its members had started the restoration of an Albatros, I told Alan about it, and suggested that the person who had this instrument could donate it to Memorial Flight. My friend Alain Guay, member of Memorial Flight and an artist who paints all aircraft decorations for the Association and many other planes of the Air Museum in Le Bourget, was enthused like all members of Memorial Flight.

This is how I had the pleasure to meet Michel Couthures who lives in La Rochelle, like me, and that we discovered a common relation, mister Michel Poupard, a former member of the Aéronavale and Civil Safety, flying the Catalina, and a member of the ANAMAN in Rochefort.

Michel Couthures is, today, relieved, since he knows that this historical heritage is in good hands, and



## FRENCH WING ANNUAL DUES - YEAR 2008 - 2009

To all our members who haven't sent their participation, we ask them to do this as soon as possible, and before the end of **April 2008**. Those who are up to date with these dues are:

Jim Adams, Gilles Avenel, Lil Ayars, Bunty Bateman, Meril Butikofer, Didier Cardinal, Jean-Yves Cercy, Daniel Costelle, William Davies, Jean-Christophe Debuissou, Bernard & Fumiko Delfino, Danielle Dufлот, Ken Fields, Michel Fleury, Marcel Francisci, Roy & Irene Grinnell, Aubrey & Barbara Hair, Jean-Luc Jentel, Marie-Françoise Le Cornec, David Ledrich, Jacques Leroux, Isabelle Lesser, Léon Manoukians, Christian Monier, Kim Pardon, Patrick Pierre-Pierre, Sandy Sansing, Haruo Tanaka, Emmanuel Tonarelli, Gilles Troussard, Regis Urschler, and Stella Wilkes.

Important: Those of our members who had paid 15 euros in advance for the French Wing dinner in Midland, and/or 20 euros for the French Wing General Assembly in Pont du Château, and who haven't got this money back, most subtract them from their 50 euros dues.

Thank you for sending your checks to the French Wing head office, in Aulnay sous Bois, before April 30, 2008. Our members who reside in the USA need to send a \$ 50.00 check made to Roy and Irene Grinnell, to their address.

## THANK YOU!

- Thanks to col **Claude De Marco** who renewed his Supporting Sponsorship to the Spirit of Lewis!
- Thanks to **Bunty Bateman** who donated 100 euros to the French Wing projects!

## DISPATCH

In case some members didn't notice, the CAF monthly Newsletter, *Contrails*, and the quarterly magazine, *Dispatch*, have been replaced by a single monthly magazine in color, named **Dispatch**.

This change is part of the initiatives intended to improve communication between the CAF HQ and its members.

The first issue was published early in March. Congratulations to **Alyson Trevino** who managed to transform this magazine by including very interesting articles and news from our members and Units, neatly and with variety. **Dispatch** is now on the same level as any magazine that one can find in newsstands!

## NEW ADDRESSES

- Col **Bernard Delfino** has changed his email address: < [bdelfino26@free.fr](mailto:bdelfino26@free.fr) >.
- Col **Eric Janssonne** has changed his phone number: < 03 88 93 36 85 >, and his email address: < [eric.janssonne@orange.fr](mailto:eric.janssonne@orange.fr) >.

## PLEASE NOTE

Please note that the term "Colonel" of the CAF being purely honorific, and in order that it's not mistaken for the military term and its acronym, the CAF title must be written "col" or "cols" and not "col." or "cols."

## ROY GRINNELL HONORED BY A GRAND PRIZE IN DALLAS

It was during the 15<sup>th</sup> annual art display and competition *Horizons of Flight Aviation Art Exhibition and Competition*, organized by *CAE Simuflite* (Dallas-Fort Worth Airport) and *Flying* magazine, that Roy Grinnell received the grand prize thanks to his painting *The Struggle Begins* (Top right), the most beautiful painting of a Hurricane ever produced by an artist. The exhibition linked to this competition started on February 4, and will end on May 2, 2008. On the photo on the left, Roy is seen receiving this reward from the hands of Mike Wimmer, one of the competition judges. Bravo Roy! You did it again!

Right, our readers have the privilege of discovering the very latest painting produced by Roy Grinnell, depicting **Ace Darrell Welch** shooting down an 109 as he flew his P-38 *Lightning*.

## THE NEW CAF ANNUAL DUES

As everyone knows today, and since March 1st, the CAF annual dues have changed. Here is a summary:

- **Colonel**: \$ 200.00 (About 145 €).
- **Life Member** (Membre à vie): \$ 2400.00 (About 1700 €), may be paid in one single payment or 12 monthly payments of \$ 200.00.
- **Cadet**: \$ 45.00 (About 32,00 €).
- **Supporting Member**, formerly Associate Member (Membre Bienfaiteur): \$ 55.00 (About 40 €).

*Note: These prices include the subscription to the CAF monthly bulletin, Dispatch).*



# ON A WING AND A PRAYER...

Article and photos: Capitaine de Vaisseau Michel Couthures

This is the story of a ground support mission flown by one of my combat comrades, **Second Maitre Pierre Goizet** (†).

The flotillas of the Arromanches had just been based ashore for imperious operational reasons: Dien-Bien-Phu had started its long ordeal under a shower of shells, a shower that was becoming more and more intense, and that would last for weeks, very long weeks.

The 3.F, with its Helldiver, was based at Bach-Maï (Hanoi), and the 11.F with its Hellcat at Cat-Bi (Hai Phong). These bases, closer to the combat zones, were saving precious minutes, and allowed the planes to stay longer over the operations zone.

Usually, the Arromanches would hang around, waiting for the return of its planes. But now, the aircraft-carrier had a mission of "collection", and awaited a possible rerouting and landing caused, for example, by a congestion of the busy runway in Cat-Bi.

Sometimes the landing on the ship became very delicate because of the serious difficulties caused by the season's weather conditions: heavy rain showers, sticky mist that would obscure the wind shields, packs of fog low on the water that would hide some of the rocks in the bay of Along. The low ceiling and the very bad visibility may be the reason for the accident on March 13, 1954, when a Hellcat which belonged to the 11.F hit one of the rocks in the bay.



In Cat-Bi, like in Bach-Maï, and on the other bases located at short distance (Do-Son near the mouth of the Hai-Phong river), or the far



*A patrol in the valley of Dien Bien Phu.*

ones (Tourane), at the beginning of the Annam, or even at Saïgon-Tan-Son-Nhut, in the extreme South of Vietnam, in Cochinchina, the status of alert had become permanent.

For our flotillas which could only operate by day, it started just before sun rise and ended just after sun set.

On this April 9, two patrols made of four Hellcat of the 11.F, loaded with four bombs each, and their six .50 machine-guns with a full load of ammunition, took off for Dien Bien Phu.



*Attack by three Hellcat*

The weather was not so nice, as often in this season: Fog, showers... A layer of clouds, thick and dark, that one must fly through to reach the clear sky at 9000 feet.

In close formation, wing into wing, sometimes the wing men see the whole plane of their leader, and sometimes they can only see the wing tip. Very tiring. So, as soon as they emerge from the clouds, the flight becomes a lot less stressing, the pilots can relax a bit while watching their instruments and the sky to be ready to avoid any collision with other planes and detect "strange" planes...

Far away, one can see those who are coming back: Dakota or Packett who follow another route. They just dropped some

supplies to the "prisoners of the valley of Dien": Food, ammunition, and even, until the very last day, some volunteers who jump for the first time in very dangerous conditions after a brief training on the ground.

The flight must be done as low as possible and stabilized for the drop, at a relatively slow speed. This makes the planes very vulnerable: First class targets for the Viet flak and all weapons of its infantry. The flak becomes more and more precise and aggressive. On the ground it's turned into hell. Day and night, the Viets shoot the main strategic positions which have been named after ladies: Béatrice, Eliane, Dominique, Isabelle, Huguette.



*Helldiver flying over the Arromanches*

The runway has become inaccessible, bombarded from the top of the surrounding hills. The flak is made of guns of 20, 37, and 40 millimeters that are revealed by trails of light and brief smoke, and smaller calibers from machine-guns.

The patrol code-named "Savart" followed by a color to distinguish its members, approaches the valley. Torri-Red (The code name for the commanding post in the camp) send them over to the "gonio" which will help them to fly through the clouds. Above it's the quiet air, the blue sky,



*Hellcat of the Aéronavale fitted with a radar on its right wing.*

serenity ! As they start down, the wing men follow their leader's wing tip.

Below, they spread out to prepare for the dive on the objective that will be given to them, and to avoid the easy target of aircraft flying in formation for the flak.

As they get through the clouds, Torri designates the targets : Some artillery and mortar positions in the middle of a very dense vegetation area, or some more obvious trenches that the green soldiers dig during the night, and that they will clear during the next, moving underneath the barbed-wires, up to the runway. Trenches and underground galleries that will be used for the final assault on the camp.

Everyone's shooting at them. The planes dive, drop their bombs, two at a time, then they strafe the trenches and anything that can be used as a shelter. Bullets fly all around the planes. After they dropped their bombs, the planes are much more manoeuvrable.

Torri ask the Savart to go and help a position which is particularly threatened by an assault. The planes dive together, keeping a safety distance between themselves so that don't shoot each other.

The four Savart have done several passes. Second Maître **Pierre Goizet**, *Savart Blue 2*, wig man of Ulysse (The Commander of the Flottilla, Lieutenant de Vaisseau **de Castelbajac**), after what would be his last pass, instead of turning left during his climb as usual, turns right (He could never tell why), and at the moment he banks the plane, he feels a shock on his left. A rather violent shock.

Stupefied, he sees that the middle part of its left wing is wide open, with the skin of the wing torn off. Deciding that a closer examination could wait, he feels that the plane remains controllable. The



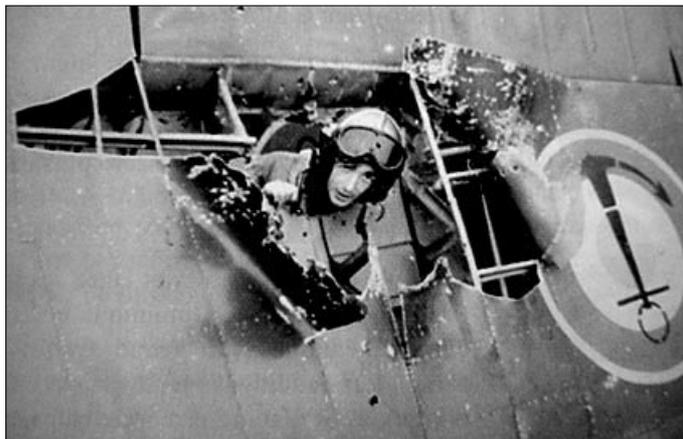
*Congratulations for Second Maître Pierre Goizet after landing.*

engine runs fine, so he decides to fly East, towards the Delta.

He tells his leader, and Torri who is listening, about the problem. The mission stops there and the Savart planes are free to return to their base. There was not many bullets remaining in the ammunition boxes any way.

The sick plane is escorted by his comrades to Hai-Phong. The weather has improved, so Blue 2 gets some altitude in order to test his plane.

On the ground, the control tower, and in flight his leader, advise him to bail out. The wing is really badly damaged.



*Pierre Goizet gives an idea of the size of the hole in the wing of his Hellcat.*

Already a veteran, and a fine pilot, and more confident in his damaged plane than in the parachute he is sitting on, Pierre Goizet decides to test his plane's ability to fly and re-calculate the approach and landing parameters.

Gear down : It's OK!... Some flaps: A little... some more... a bit more... Enough! A stall test to find out the safety speed he can use until the wheels touch the runway : OK! He decides to land.

At the runway threshold, firemen and ambulance are waiting, ready to escort him.

A good speed, a flat approach, contact with the runway at its very beginning... The wheels kiss the ground delicately. The plane and its pilot are safe. Phew!

On the parking area, Pierrot is warmly welcomed and congratulated by the witnesses and everyone who hears about his adventure.

What would have happened if he had turned left as usual? All factors considered, it's almost certain that the shell would have hit the fuselage.

What would have happened if the, he attempted a bail out? The story proved it : He would have been caught by the plane as he exited the cockpit. The mechanic found that the parachute canopy was out of its bag...

Second-Maître Pierre Goizet's instinct saved him that day !

On September 17, 1963, my friend Pierrot disappeared in the sea during his catapulting, as he was flying an Etendard IV-M on aircraft-carrier Clémenceau.

*In Memoriam*

# THE BATTLE OF THE BULGE (3)

Article: Col. John P. Roeder.

This is the last of a three-part account on the Ardennes battle. It is the story of the Allies counter-offensive which led to the collapse of the Bulge in January 1945. Much space has again been dedicated to the Air Battle, which should be of special interest to our CAF group.

By the end of December 1944 the Allied front on the northern flank of the Bulge was well stabilized. Montgomery had been placed in command of all Allied forces in that sector on 20 Dec. These now included the Ninth US Army (Simpson) and the First US Army (Hodges). The latter, which was to bear the brunt of the fighting, was faced by six German Panzer and one Volksgr. Division. Due to uninterrupted air attacks on their traffic routes and supply dumps these had been suffering heavily, but they defended themselves skilfully with mobile tactics, resisting by day in chosen positions, while

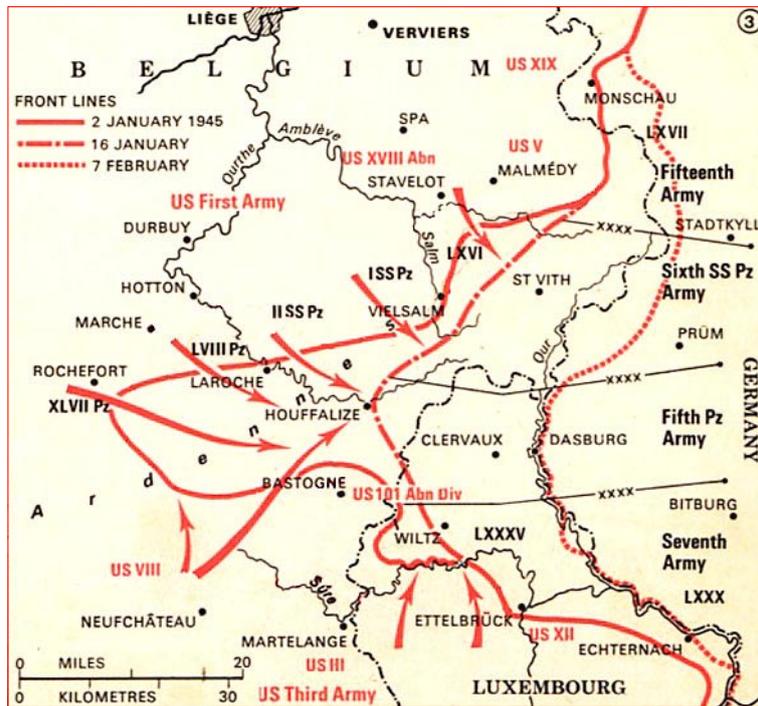
movements were made at night to evade the fighter-bombers. On the 28<sup>th</sup> Ike and Monty had agreed a major counteroffensive to be launched by the First US Army on Jan. 3d. The objective was to meet Patton's Third Army at Houffalize, which if achieved quick enough would seal off all German forces in the head of the salient.

On the southern flank Patton had been gradually widening the narrow corridor to Bastogne and was preparing to attack towards Houffalize from a region some 12 km SW of Bastogne with the newly arrived 27<sup>th</sup> Infantry and 11<sup>th</sup> Armored.

Further east, after murderous fighting in which two of its regiments were practically wiped out the 26<sup>th</sup> US Inf. (Yankee) Div. had reached Café Schumann on the important supply road from Ettelbrück to Bastogne, which was vigorously defended



American armor assembling near Bastogne.



The squeezing out of the bulge. The small salient SW of Wiltz is the little bulge.

by the Germans. Further east Esch s. Sûre and Ettelbrück had been taken by the 80<sup>th</sup> Infantry. From Ettelbrück to the east the front remained essentially static until mid January.

While for the Allies the capture of Houffalize had become the priority, Hitler had no intention to leave Bastogne in the hands of his enemies.

The past week's fighting had left a little bulge or pocket SE of Bastogne (well visible on the map) with its 12 km wide base running from near Café Schumann on its southern shoulder north-westward to around Mageret, 4 km W of Bastogne.

While the Wehrmacht attacked in the direction of Bastogne from the west, north and east, its major effort was launched from this little bulge, where four German and

four US divisions confronted one another on a hardly 18 km long curving front. Only about 2 km from the main US supply route from Arlon to Bastogne the 1<sup>st</sup> SS Panzer could be stopped by the 35 US Inf.

On the opposite side the Panzer-Lehr and the 27<sup>th</sup> Volksgr. Div. while moving to attack the corridor from the west, ran into the 87<sup>th</sup> US Infantry and the 11<sup>th</sup> Armored which Patton had launched towards Houffalize on 30 Dec. Confusion was total and Patton lost precious time on his way to Houffalize. The northern sector of the front around Bastogne was held by the 101<sup>st</sup> Airborne, which could be gradually reinforced by of the 9<sup>th</sup> and the 6<sup>th</sup> US Armored.

On Jan. 3d Monty began his offensive along the northern flank of the Bulge. The main effort was launched in the center of the front, where the First US Army on a 40 km wide stretch attacked in the direction of Houffalize to meet Patton's Third Army



Café Schumann (L) after the battle.

moving up from Bastogne. The objective was to cut off the German forces in the western head of the Bulge which Hitler had condemned at this stage of the battle to stay where they were.

Due to fog, ice, snow, the lack of air support and stiff German resistance, progress was however slow and casualties high. In the afternoon a massive German attack from the N towards Bastogne virtually halted Patton in the south. In the SE as well a 26<sup>th</sup> US Infantry attack towards Wiltz had again been stopped at Height 490 just NE of Café Schumann.

Jan. 4<sup>th</sup> was another unhappy day for the Allies. Due to bad weather and stubborn German resistance Monty's advances were scanty, while Patton was even slower.



*Me109 of JG 11 starting their attack on Asch airfield (B) on 1 Jan.*

On the whole front around Bastogne the Wehrmacht attacked vigorously. Even though no breakthroughs were achieved the Allies found themselves in a crisis. Concerned about their high losses, Churchill who had visited the front on Jan. 6<sup>th</sup>, enquired with Stalin when he would start his planned overall offensive in the east. Stalin answered promptly: no later than the second half of January, but he had understood the message.



*FW-190D-9 of JG 26 bellied near Liège (B) on 1 Jan.*

On the same day Patton resumed his drive toward Houffalize. Since 30 Dec. he had barely covered 9 km. The day after, on 8 Jan., Hitler authorized limited withdrawal to the line behind the Bastogne-Liège highway with the 6<sup>th</sup> Panzer Army to establish a tactical reserve.

Already on the 9<sup>th</sup> the Allies began to feel the effect of the German withdrawal. Although slowly the First and the Third US Armies advanced now steadily towards Houffalize, while in the SE the 90<sup>th</sup> US Infantry attacking through the totally exhausted 26<sup>th</sup> took Height 490 at Café Schumann. From there Patton directed the 90<sup>th</sup> to the NW while his 6<sup>th</sup> Armored and the 35 Infantry were launched from near Bastogne to the SE. Thus the little Bulge was sealed off near the Luxembourg-Belgian border on Jan. 12<sup>th</sup> with the German 5<sup>th</sup> Airb. Div. caught in the pocket, in which it was destroyed. Jan. 12<sup>th</sup> marked the end of the Battle for Bastogne. On this day the Russians prematurely also launched their big offensive.

Now even Hitler had to admit that the Ardennes battle was lost and he permitted general retreat on the 13<sup>th</sup>.

It was however not until the 16<sup>th</sup> that the First and Third US Armies met at Houffalize, which gave the Germans enough time for a relatively controlled orderly retreat.

### **THE AIR BATTLE FOR THE ARDENNES IN JANUARY 1945**

*With the German offensive essentially contained on Dec. 27<sup>th</sup>, the weather worsened the last four days of December 1944. By the end of the month Allied air had however broken down the Wehrmacht communication, stopped the Luftwaffe from assisting its ground units and smashed its forward forces even as it launched new breakthrough attacks.*

*To help the Ninth AF in protecting its fighter-bombers, two Eight AF P-51 escort groups (some 150 aircraft) had been placed under the control of the Ninth and moved from Britain to Asch (B) on 23 Dec. resp. St. Dizier (F) on the 25<sup>th</sup>.*

*One hope that remained to the Germans was the elimination of the Allied fighters and bombers based close to the fighting lines. Thus German units and supply routes could be freed from devastating air attacks and a measure of air parity be regained for the Luftwaffe.*

*A massive air attack on Allied continental airfields by all available Luftwaffe aircraft had in fact been envisaged already for the opening phase of the offensive. It was not however until the end of December that the forces assembled and the weather conditions were such that the attack could be launched.*

*Operation "Bodenplatte" as it was coded was ordered for 1 January 1945. Thus the New Year began with a German surprise attack by some 900 fighters/fighter-bombers on at least 12 Allied airfields in Belgium, 5 in the Netherlands and one in Northern France. When the German aircraft began to appear over their targets at around 9:00 am quite a number of the American and British planes had however already taken off for their daily sorties, and the Allies anti-aircraft defenses reacted quicker than the Luftwaffe pilots had expected.*



*B-26's of the 387<sup>th</sup> BG being readied for their next mission at Perron (F).*

*Nevertheless 467 to 477 Allied aircraft were destroyed and 114 damaged according to official Luftwaffe sources, while 304 of the German fighters failed to return to their bases. About 100 of the latter were downed by the German flak defenses of the V-1 launching sites in particular along the Dutch coast, which for whatever reason had not been informed of the operation.*

*Some of these numbers may be arguable, but it remains an undeniable fact, that the Luftwaffe within the few hours that "Bodenplatte" lasted, had lost 169 pilots (dead or missing) and another 69 had been made prisoners by the Allies.*



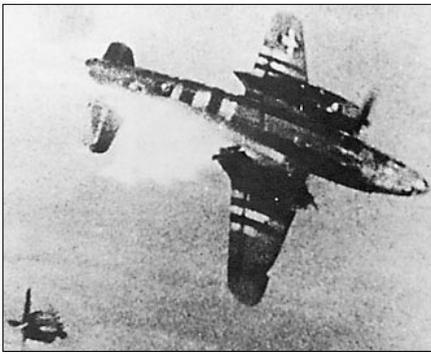
*Eight Air Force B-24's en route to their target in the Rhein-Mosel-Eifel sector.*

*Compared to these Allied personnel losses were negligible and destroyed aircraft could be replaced quickly. The Luftwaffe though was unable to ever replace its human and material losses. Also except for the Metz-Frescaty base none of the numerous Ninth AF airfields in France had been hit, so that much of its fighter-bomber force and virtually the total of its medium and light bombers, except 21 Marauders destroyed at Le Culot (B) remained intact. If the Allied air forces on the Continent were paralyzed for about a week after 1 January, this would have been the case also without "Bodenplatte", as bad weather prevented nearly all air operations over the Bulge until around Jan. 10<sup>th</sup>.*

*For the Luftwaffe "Bodenplatte" was a disaster. It subsequently nearly disappeared as a factor on the Western front. Only on 16 Jan. it put up a noteworthy action to assist the Wehrmacht's withdrawal and the movement of its forces.*

*For the Ninth AF's flyers German flak remained however a most dangerous opponent. Numerically well equipped with excellent guns, manned by experienced crews it took a heavy toll in particular of the fighter-bombers.*

*Ninth AF however continued attacking bridges and bottlenecks whenever weather conditions at its*



B-26 of 323<sup>rd</sup> BG after flak hit blasted off left engine over Wülich (Eifel).

bases and in the target areas allowed. Until the 21<sup>st</sup> of Jan. these attacks, although disturbing to the enemy, never completely closed any of his key lines of communication for more than a very short period.

Then came Jan. 22<sup>nd</sup>. In the morning an enormous number of vehicles of the 6<sup>th</sup> Panzer Army, heading east were discovered in the Prüm (D) area. 304 medium and light bombers of the Ninth AF were by then heading for six communication targets in the Eifel sector. One of them was the road bridge over the Our river at Dasburg (D) to which two B-26 groups had been assigned. At 12:02 the first wave of 27 aircraft dropped 108 1000 lb General Purpose bombs from 12,000 ft through an overcast which masked the bridge. A second wave of 22 aircraft followed 10 minutes later.

The bridge was wiped out and to its west on Luxembourg soil some 1500 German vehicles



P-47 of 362<sup>nd</sup> FG, stationed at Etain (F), downed by flak at Wiltz (L) on 22 Jan. (Photo: Ben Gillig)

of all types began to pile up bumper to bumper. An L-plane rapidly spotted the massive concentration and brought artillery fire to bear on the vehicles. Before long also fighter-bombers appeared on the scene, taking their share of the toll. Nearly half of the vehicles were either destroyed or damaged.

For the four days beginning with the Prüm sighting and destruction of the Dasburg bridge Ninth AF fighter bombers destroyed (damaged): 3627 (2991) soft vehicles, 61 (98) tanks, 125 (112) armored vehicles, 149 (39) gun positions, 35 (12) locos, 1157 (1070) rail cars.

Losses of the Ninth AF in January were 107 fighter-bombers and 13 bombers which obviously does not include those destroyed on the ground during the "Bodenplatte" raid.

As to the Eight AF it had been able to raise the number of its sorties to well over the 1000 mark during the last days of December. On the 31<sup>st</sup> it resumed strategic bombing of industrial targets in Germany, but its interdiction bombing campaign by disrupting communications, hitting rail yards, transportation bottlenecks, bridges (from the 29<sup>th</sup> also those across the Rhine) etc. remained its priority.

Bridges were however difficult targets for a bomber at 20,000 ft even in ideal conditions. The Remagen bridge for instance was attacked five times by in total 201 heavies. Luckily for the Allies it was never hit.



Ground crew preparing a P-38 for morning mission at Florennes A/F (B).

The interdiction bombings of the Eight AF ended around mid January, although a limited number of missions was flown again towards the end of the month. From Jan. 1<sup>st</sup> to 13<sup>th</sup> on nine days in average some 870 B-17/B-24 participated in the attacks.

Occasionally the heavies also turned to targets closer to the battle area like St. Vith, Dasburg and a few others, but this was not the rule.

Escorting fighters after being released from their primary task on their return flew extensive and very effective area sweeps against targets of opportunity.

On the ground again: after the Bastogne-Houffalize sector had been cleared, Patton immediately ordered 6<sup>th</sup> Armored, 90<sup>th</sup> and 26<sup>th</sup> Infantry to start moving eastward. In the southern flank he launched an offensive on

January 18<sup>th</sup> across the Sûre river with from east to west the 4<sup>th</sup>, 5<sup>th</sup> and 80<sup>th</sup> Infantry Divisions to cut the German salient at its base. The 4<sup>th</sup> failed to get to Vianden, which was vehemently defended by the Germans, as its bridge was the last remaining Our crossing after the Dasburg raid by Ninth AF bombers.

The 5<sup>th</sup> Infantry crossed the Sûre at six points east of Ettelbrück. It took Diekirch on the 19<sup>th</sup> from where it proceeded towards Hoscheid on "Skydrive", which it was to reach on the 24<sup>th</sup>. Hoscheiderdickt and the surrounding area 4 to 5 km further north were cleared until the 26<sup>th</sup>.

The 80<sup>th</sup> Inf. attacked NW of Ettelbrück towards Hosingen, a few km north of Hoscheiderdickt. Just before getting there it was relieved by the 17<sup>th</sup> Airborne which entered the village on the night of Jan. 27<sup>th</sup>.

On the western side of the remaining salient the Wehrmacht left Wiltz on the 21<sup>st</sup>, the 6<sup>th</sup> US Cavalry entered Clervaux on the 24<sup>th</sup>, and the 90<sup>th</sup> Infantry after fending off heavy counter-attacks by the 1<sup>st</sup> SS Panzer pushed towards Heinerscheid. Finally the 6<sup>th</sup> Armored took Troisvierges and

Weiswampach on the 26<sup>th</sup>.

In the north the 7<sup>th</sup> Armored of Hodges First US Army had recaptured St. Vith (B) already on 23 Jan, while three Infantry and the 82<sup>nd</sup> Airborne were clearing the region towards the German border.

At the end of January 1945, six weeks after the beginning of the battle, the Wehrmacht was back to where it had started from. Only at Vianden (L) there remained a German bridgehead, which was eliminated during February with the Third Army's push into the Reich.



Dasburg bridge rebuilt after the battle.

# OPERATIONS & MAINTENANCE

## OPERATIONS 2008

The list of air shows and other events that the French Wing will attend this year has been established as follows (*Green dots means events are confirmed, orange ones that they are still to be confirmed*):

- **La Ferté-Alais 5 April:** GA of the Piper Club France (Patrick Pierre-Pierre and Roger Gouzon, and by car Bernard Delfino and any other volunteers).
- **La Ferté-Alais 30 May till 1<sup>st</sup> June:** Annual air show (With the Piper Cub and the PX).
- **Le Mans 7 & 8 June:** Air show (With the PX).
- **Moret sur Loing 13 to 15 June:** Weekend Piper Club France (Local flights La Ferté-Alais, Moret sur Loing, Nangis, Moret sur Loing). No PX.
- **Cambrai Niergnies 21 & 22 June:** Piper Cub Fly-in (Mini PX).
- **Le Plessis-Belleville 5 & 6 Juillet:** French Wing Fly-in (With the PX).
- **Avord 12 & 13 Juillet:** National air show (With the PX).
- **Albert Bray 2 & 3 August:** Air show (With the PX).
- **Raid "Far West" with the Piper Cub 19 to 28 August:** Le Plessis-Belleville - Dax - Saint Girons, and back, with some local flights.
- **Saint Quentin 6 & 7 September:** Air show (With the PX).
- **Meaux 13 & 14 September:** Fly-in and static display (With mini PX).

**Potential pilots and passengers are kindly requested to make themselves known to cols Patrick Pierre-Pierre and Bernard Delfino, giving them your exact preferences in terms of dates and trips.**

## AIRCRAFT MAINTENANCE

### PIPER CUB "SPIRIT OF LEWIS"

The annual on the Piper Cub is finished! It wasn't easy, especially because of the cold weather which drastically slowed down the work, but also because of the important number of tasks that had to be performed.

A very BIG thank you to **Roger Gouzon, Jean-Yves Cercy, Jean-Christophe De-buisson, and Bernard & Fumiko Delfino** who were the only members courageous enough to face the bad and bitterly cold

weather which lengthen the planned work by three whole weeks more than expected, mainly because of these low temperatures and some health problems that they occasioned for some of them.



Jean-Yves does the post annual engine run.

### NC 856 "NORVIGIE"

The annual check of the 250 hours type check has started. It is time to contact us if you wish to participate and put your enthusiasm into practice. This check must be finished on April 30 so that the plane can be presented to the DGAC for the renewal of its certificate.

Members who will participate to this aircraft's maintenance in an assiduous and frequent way will be considered as "crew members" and will be able to fly this plane, even though they are not members of the co-owners group. Their help will be put on paper so that, if and when necessary, we can prove the exactness of these facts.



Double magneto on the NC 856 Norvigie

### REARWIN "SPORTSTER"

The restoration of the Rearwin Sportster will follow the annual on the Norvigie. There again, volunteers will be very welcome. The sanding of the fuselage, the repair of one of the fuselage tubes, and the sanding of the primary flying controls, will make the core of this work which will take place in col Roger Gouzon's work shop in Villepinte as soon as the annuals are over on the Piper Cub and NC 856.

## THE FRENCH WING PIPER CUB SPONSORING SYSTEM

The annual premiums and cost per hour are split as follows:

- **Flying Sponsors:** 250 Euros per year and 25 Euros per hour (Average cost per hour, over 10 hours: 50,00 €).

- **Restoration Sponsors:** 125 Euros and 40 Euros per hour (Average cost per hour, over 10 hours: 52,50 €).

- **Supporting Sponsors:** 50 Euros and 55 Euros per hour (Average cost per hour, over 10 hours: 60,00 €).

- **Non-Sponsors:** No annual premium and 80 Euros per hour.

This system, which is based on 50 flight hours for the whole year, asks for a sufficient number of Sponsors to cover the annual fixed costs of \$6800.00.

**QUESTION:** Can you buy your own Piper Cub and pay all the expenses related to such an ownership?... No?... Well, for a modest amount of money, you can have the pleasure to fly as much as you want on a legendary J-3, without the worries inherent to such an ownership. How?...

## BECOME A SPONSOR!



Peinture: Roy Grinnell

## SPONSORS 2008

The list of Piper Cub Sponsors for year 2008 is growing slowly, but many Sponsors of the previous years have not renewed their sponsorship yet. It isn't an obligation of course, but their help to this legendary plane will be highly appreciated. **At this time, we must collect another 550 euros to close this budget of the fixed costs, but it's definitely not a limit of course!**

## FRENCH WING P.X.

The following articles are available with a payment by cheque to the CAF French Wing. (+ P & P).

- Wing patch: € 9,00.
- Norvigie patch: € 6,00.
- French Wing pin: € 10,00.
- Various pins "cloisonné": € 5,00.
- 100 A4 sheets with the Wing logo and your personal address: € 10,00.
- Warbirds photographs 30x45cm: € 10,00.
- T shirt Piper CUB, 170 grammes, Hanes, L or XL: € 15,00.
- T shirt cartoon P40, 170 grammes, Hanes, L or XL: € 15,00.
- T shirts other sizes on order.
- T shirt illustrated with the picture of your choice (Maximum size A5 - Warning! Only send pictures that are free from any copyrights!): € 15,00.
- Aircraft profiles 15 cm x 20 cm ready for framing: Various types: € 4,00 chaque.
- Vidéo filmed in Midland (55mn) VHS PAL: € 16,00 ©.
- Eric Besançon large size paintings: F4U Corsair and Messerschmitt 262 night fighter: € 30,00 P & P included ©.
- Poster N°1 Avions de la seconde guerre mondiale peint by Jean Bellis, 61x81cm: € 9,00 (FW Members), € 10,00 (Non Members) © + P & P.
- Greeting cards with Jean Bellis' profiles: € 4,00 each (P & P according to quantity) ©.
- Roy Grinnell prints - Normandie Niemen, F4U7, and B26 Marauder - Unsigned: € 30,00 + P & P € 10,00. Signed by veterans: € 50,00 + P & P € 10,00 ©.
- Roy Grinnell print of the Piper Cub: € 10 + P & P (FW Members), € 15 + P & P (Non members).
- Post Cards based on the same paintings (B26 Marauder and Neuneu): € 0,50 each (P & P according to quantity) ©.
- CD Rom of all FW Newsletters since January 2000, French and English, and 200 photos of warbirds taken during Airsho in Midland, by B. Delfino: € 10,00 P & P included ©.

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# WING PROJECTS

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	€
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	14000
	12000
	10000
	8000
	6000
	4000
	2000
	0
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Marcel FRANCISCI	100,00
Dominique DEUDON	200,00
John ROEDER	250,00
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Léon MANOUKIANS	100,00
Aviation Club de France	3750,00
Georges MARCELIN	615,00
Activités French Wing	115,00
Avoir précédent	856,96
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>15769,91</b>

Note: These figures are the gifts made to the French Wing since the purchase of the Piper Cub in May 2003, and not the current status of our Unit's bank accounts.