



Volume 9 - N° 6 - June 2004

EDITORIAL

May was, once again, filled with numerous and various events.

The saddest one was the death of our adorable Connie Sansing who was an extremely pleasing member of our Unit. She was the true picture of the spouse that any man can dream of. Sandy noticed this particularity when he met her during the war. Connie made him a happy man, which leads me to believe that Connie's life, as a Woman, was a huge success. Au revoir Connie, we will meet again soon...

News are so important this month, that I was forced to postpone the publication of the article written by John Roeder and Michel Perrin, "American Airplanes in French Colors", until next month. I wish to apologize for this, and I'm sure that our two friends will understand that I cannot increase the number of pages of this Newsletter indefinitely (Not that I don't want to, believe you me, but it would represent an amount of work and difficulties which would be insurmountable in the present conditions).

In order to celebrate the anniversary of the fall of Dien Bien Phu (Indochina), mister C. Langevin, a Corsair pilot during this event, was kind enough to tell us his story, an article which includes some nice French Corsair photographs.

Friends of the Spirit of Lewis, you can be happy! As you will read it on pages 10 and 11, our favorite plane got some nice and fresh colors, and it only waits for some brand new US-AAF insignia and decoration to really become a genuine Warbird.

Bernard

CONNIE SANSING HAS GONE WEST

THE DISAPPEARANCE OF CONNIE SANSING, WIFE SANDY, ON MAY 05, LEAVES A GAP THAT NOTHING WILL EVER BE ABLE TO FILL



Photo: Bernard Delfino

PHOTOGRAPHED HERE DURING THE REUNION OF SANDY WITH THE COIGNÉ FAMILY, IN MAY 1997, CONSTANCE "CONNIE" SANSING HAD, FOR OUR UNIT, A VERY SPECIAL AFFECTION. (Article on page 6)



Photo: Bernard Delfino

ON MAY 06, THE FRENCH WING LANDED IN NORMANDY!

THANKS TO THE GOOD PLANNING DONE BY COL. ERIC DUCREAU, THIS WEEK-END IN NORMANDY, FROM MAY 06 TO MAY 09, WAS A REAL SUCCESS (Article on pages 2 to 5)

BEWARE!... ABOUT TWENTY MEMBERS HAVEN'T PAID THEIR FRENCH WING ANNUAL DUES YET: THEY RUN THE RISK OF NOT RECEIVING OUR NEWSLETTER!...

VISIT TO NORMANDY



Thanks to the enormous work of preparation and organization done by colonel Eric Ducreau during the weeks that preceded this visit, the group of French Wing members spent an exciting week-end on the various historical sites of the June 6, 1944 Allied Landing.

Thursday 06 May should have included some flights over the beaches, aboard colonel Gilles Avenel's Jurca, but the weather did not agree with this plan: Strong winds and rain showers stopped this project, and the program was changed into a visit of the Bayeux Memorial, an interesting museum which is rich of many historical objects of all kinds, that any visitor must see.

The group was then composed of colonels Eric Ducreau, Didier Cardinal, Roger Gouzon, Claude De Marco, Michel Perrin, and Fumiko and Bernard Delfino.

In the evening, they were joined by colonels Gilles Avenel, Claude Requi, and two friends of the latter, who came over from Florida for this occasion: Mister Bob Wall and his charming spouse Donna.

This group was further increased on Saturday, by the arrival of colonel Cédric Malhaire, his companion Gaëlle, his mother, and his two kids, and also



by mister Jean Chatel, former CAF member who lives in this area of Normandy and has been actively spending his spare time looking for crashed airplanes and their crews for several years.

After a very friendly dinner and a good repairing night that made everyone for-

get the previous day fatigue, we got on the road to Caen where we toured the Memorial, a massive building dedicated to Peace, which explains the most tormented era of Humanity, from 1918 to the end of WWII.

There, the accent is put on every day's life of soldiers and civilians, thanks to numerous objects and sound and visual testimonies like movies describing the Battle of Britain, the Normandy Allied Landing, and the subsequent Battle of Normandy.

Recently, an extension dedicated to the Cold War was inaugurated, making of this building an extraordinary place for thinking and reflection.

The reason of the choice of the city of Caen for such a Memorial was the fact that 95% of the town was destroyed, as

one can see on the photograph below. The second part of the day was spent visiting the Anglo-Canadian beaches, and the Pegasus Bridge Memorial.

Thanks to the enthusiasm of the people looking after this Memorial, and especially the guide who looked after our group, mister Martin Jausseu, this visit was one of the peaks of our stay in Normandy.

Enthused by the object of this Memorial, our guide managed to make us relive the amazing exploit of these troops who landed their Horsa gliders, by night, without any visual reference other than the reflection of the moon on the surface



Bob et Donna Wall get acquainted with colonel Claude De Marco



of river Orne and the canal that runs parallel to it. Three gliders landed very close to these two bridges, the closest being only 49 yards from the bridge whose name was soon changed to Pegasus Bridge, an extraordinary accuracy when one considers the bad weather that prevailed during this historical night, and the numerous difficulties that these men had to face.

The taking of these bridges was paramount for the rest of the landing operation since it is through them that the amphibian troops that landed at Ouistreham and due to reinforce the paratroopers dropped during the night from the 5th to the 6th of June. Since the bridge was mined by the Germans, time was a major factor to stop them from blowing up the bridges.

Major John Howard's men took no time to accomplish this mission, and made this bridge the very first building to be liberated by the allied troops in continental Europe. They soon discovered that the explosive charges were not fitted, the enemy preferring to take them off for the night for unknown reasons but probably to stop the Resistance from stealing them.

Pegasus Bridge had been built in 1933. It was dismantled in 1993 because it started to show some fatigue, and it was replaced by a more modern and stronger one. In year 2000 the old bridge was set up in the gardens of this Memorial, next to the remains of a Horsa glider, and, very soon, an exact replica of this glider.

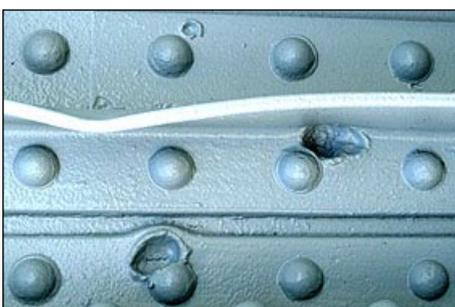
Above, left: The original Pegasus Bridge is on display in the gardens of the Pegasus Bridge Memorial. Above, right: The explanations given by our guide made us hold our breath as if we were there for real. Below: The Memorial whose roof reminds the wings of the Horsa gliders, with, in the back-ground, the new Pegasus Bridge in the raised position to let the river traffic go by.



Left: View of Pegasus Bridge and its nearby area the day after the attack. The bridge is located in the top left corner of the photo. The nearest glider is only 49 yards from the bridge. The other two are not far either! The glider in the center has broken in two, with the rear fuselage parallel to the right wing. The Pegasus Bridge Memorial is located, today, in the top right hand corner of the photo.

Below: Part of the group of visitors at the Pegasus Bridge Memorial. From left to right: Claude De Marco, Bob Wall, Claude Requi, our guide, Martin Jausseu, Eric Ducreau, Michel Perrin, Fumiko Delfino, Gilles Avenel, Roger Gouzon, and Didier Cardinal.

Below, left: The bridge still shows signs of the battle with metal beams bent and bullet impacts. The energy of the latter was so important that they made the temperature of the metal rise so high that it melted!





The visit of the Caen Memorial gave us an excellent surprise when we met a group of veterans, pilots of the Royal Canadian Air Force during WWII, on Hawker Typhoon.

We approached them and explained that we were members of the Commemorative Air Force, and describing the goals of our Organization that they knew about very well.

Their leader, mister Ken Hanna (Photographed above in company of his wife who was a nurse during WWII) listen kindly to us.

We warmly thanked these veterans for all the risks they took during the perilous missions they completed, mainly ground attacks, known for being the most dangerous and murderous ones.

Three of these pilots were kind enough to pose before the beautiful replica of



a Typhoon that hangs in the Memorial main hall. This surprize encounter happily concluded such a great visit to the Memorial. Everyone of us was honored to shake hands with these defenders of Freedom, and express his gratitude.



The Caen Memorial is rich of many moving vestiges of the Battle of Normandy. One of these unusual witnesses of the past was a modest piano, saved from destruction, and immortalized by the photo of a group of soldiers taking a rest and singing songs that probably reminded them of their country and their hometown.



Another memory of this rough period, displayed in this Memorial, and showing how badly the most elementary raw materials were needed: A beautiful dress that had been made using the silk of a parachute.

These objects, vestiges of military and civilian life in Normandy, are probably the best way to realize the importance of the extraordinary event that this battle of Normandy was.

All the movies and photographs that were largely displayed in this Memorial and all other museums in Normandy, certainly helped us realize how difficult life was during all these years of war and invasion by the enemy.

Saturday, May 08, started with the guided visit of the

Arromanches Museum, the oldest museum of the area, telling the story of the Normandy Landing. Of a modest size, it is, nevertheless, rich of many objects and large scale models which clearly explain the making of the artificial harbor created for the conveying, from England, of men and material. This museum has the unique advantage of a direct view over the remains of this port and jetties.

The title picture shows a general view of the town of arromanches when the tide was low, revealing the artificial dikes which were made of floating crates that were towed from England at a speed of less than 4 miles per hour, and sank once they were in the right position.

Walking on these beaches where were killed so many young soldiers of all nationalities is an experience that everyone ought to live once in their life time. All our members found, in this visit of Normandy, many occasions to gather their thoughts in the memory of the thousands of young soldiers who came, fought, and too often died on these beaches to liberate our country.

An excellent lunch was taken in the restaurant "Mulberry" in Arromanches and concluded this morning dedicated to history.

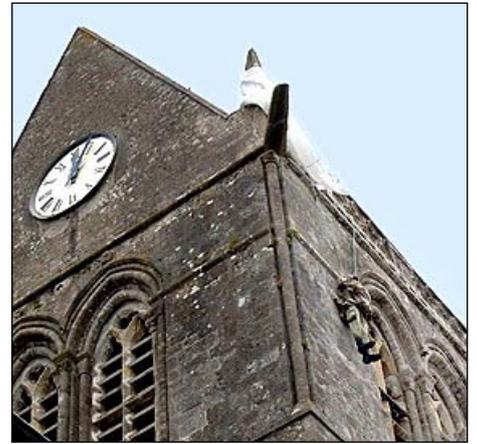
The afternoon was dedicated to the visit of the American cemetery of Colleville-Saint Laurent where were expecting us mister Jean Chatel, former leader of the group of French CAF colonels.





Claude De Marco and Jean Chatel quickly got acquainted.

Wounded, he pretended he was dead to avoid catching the Germans' attention. He was made almost deaf by the sound of the bells which signalled endlessly a fire that had broke out in a local house. The coincidence of these two dramatic events explains the importance of the number of civilian victims who had gathered, minutes before the attack, to help fighting the fire.



The vision of the thousands of crosses which reveal the violence of the fights which took place in Normandy on June 6, 1944, and during the following months, does not leave anyone indifferent. The bodies of 9386 soldiers rest in this cemetery, and one can feel the solemnity of this place deep inside one's heart. Not all the victims are there though, since many soldiers were never found and are simply missing in action, or they were repatriated to the USA, according to the choice made by their families.

Above right, soldier John Steele is represented by a dummy paratrooper, hanging from his parachute caught by the bell tower. Below, only a small part of the numerous crosses in the American cemetery of Colleville-Saint-Laurent.



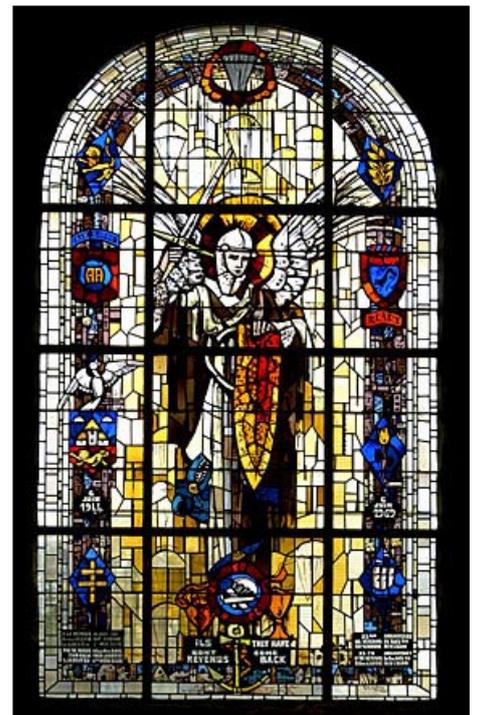
After these few hours spent in this sacred place, we moved on to the Pointe du Hoc, a cliff that is sadly known because too many Rangers lost their life during this attack. The top of the cliff which was pounded by artillery shells and bombs, reminded us irresistibly of the Verdun battle fields, where violence reached paroxysm.



The Pointe du Hoc where died so many Rangers

Those who had the curiosity to visit this church, discovered splendid stained glass windows dedicated to the soldiers who died for our Freedom. The one presented here is dedicated to the paratroopers.

We warmly thank colonel Eric Ducreau for the long and painstaking work he has done in organizing this tour in Normandy. A memorable visit! Thank you Eric!



Sunday, May 9, was spent visiting the town of Sainte-Mère-Eglise, famous for the combats the allied paratroopers fought. Many died because the enemy shot them even before they touched the ground.

of the Madeleine, sadly known, since the landing, as Utah Beach.

The most famous of these soldiers was, no doubt, John Steele, who stayed hanging for several hours from his parachute that had got caught by the church bell tower.

We then had lunch in a near-by restaurant. Decorated with numerous objects of this battle, his owner looks after the bunker that is next to the house.

There, was the German telephone center for Normandy. It became, soon after the landing was completed, the allied center of tele-communications.

CONNIE SANSING



Photo: Bernard Delfino

CONSTANCE "CONNIE" SANSING HAS GONE WEST

Although we knew about the problems that our dear Connie has, her disappearance will chock everyone who met her, either during her visit to France in 1997, or during our stays in Midland, San Marcos, or New Braunfels where the Sansing family resides.

Connie was sweetness in person. She dedicated her life to her husband and her children. She followed Sandy - a US Air Force fighter pilot - in many of his postings during his career. Her love for Sandy helped her supporting the multiple inconveniences of this unpredictable profession, which depended on the conflicts which took place since WWII.

The first one of these ordeals, and, without any doubt, the hardest of them all, happened in 1944, when she received a telegram that announced that Sandy was "Missing in Action". Several weeks of anguish went by before the authorities told her that Sandy was alive and well, and would soon be back home.

It was only when they were reunited that she heard about her husband's adventures: His aircraft, a Mustang P-51C, had been hit by flak during an attack on the train station at Château-Thierry.

Forced to bail out, he was protected by the Resistance and stayed for a few weeks

Left: Connie had the great pleasure to see the Centex P-39 named after her name.

Right: Sandy, Connie, and Fumiko, during a visit at the Sansing's in New Braunfels.

Below: A typical image of Connie - here in the company of Nancy Lux - caught by col. Eric Ducreau during the air show organized by the Centex in san Marcos, in 1997.

with the Coigné family in Fère en Tardenois, until the allied front moved forward sufficiently to free him and repatriate him to the USA.

The rest of the stories is well known by our members: We were lucky enough to locate this family, and we had the great satisfaction to organize a reunion of Sandy and the entire Coigné family, in May 1997, at the same place where he stayed in 1944.

This very moving ceremony was one of the greatest moments for the actors of this adventure, but above all, for Sandy's wife who warmly thanked all the members of this courageous family for protecting HER Sandy.



Photo: Eric Ducreau

Gifted with a great sensitivity, Connie also had a great sense of humour.

She liked to repeat that if she ever happened to disappear, she would like to come back to earth in the shape of a warbird, because she was certain that she would be taken care of by all these airplane-crazy people!



Photo: Bernard Delfino

This was simply a joke, of course, but, as it is often the case, this humour hid a courage, a patience, a generosity, and a will-power, simply outstanding. She proved these attributes all along her life, especially since she met Sandy.

That day, Sandy, a soldier, was hitchhiking. Connie's father happened to drive by and took him aboard. He invited him for a cup of coffee at home, where Sandy met Connie for the first time. Love did the rest, and Connie immediately showed that she had understood the secret of true happiness: Living for others and not for oneself.

So she dedicated her life to her husband and her children. Sandy was able to live his passion for aviation with a complete support from Connie, and he lived an admirable career which continues today within the CAF, the Central Texas Wing, and the French Wing of which he has been a member ever since 1997.

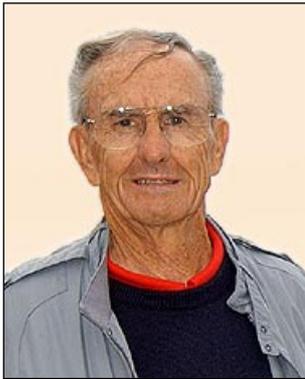
On behalf of all the members of our Unit, we send Sandy our sincere condolences.

Many of them knew Connie well for having met her in France or in Texas. All of them were immediately charmed by her kindness, and all are saddened by the terrible news of her disappearance. Au revoir Connie...

WELCOME BOB WALL

Bob Wall met the CAF French Wing when he took part, together with his charming wife Donna, in our long week-end spent in Normandy visiting the Allied Landing Sites.

A personal friend of col. Claude Requi, the latter asked if Bob et Donna could



join our group, which was, of course, immediately agreed.

Therefore, we were able to enjoy

their pleasant company and their friendship.

Charmed by this participation in this tour, but also by the fun that prevails in our Association, Bob suggested that he could be a member of the French Wing. Not being a CAF member, Bernard offered him to become a *Friend of the French Wing*, which will allow him to receive our Newsletter, and be perfectly aware of our activities.

Bob and Donna live in Florida, at Leeward Ranch, and they own a Piper Comanche and a T-6 which give them plenty of satisfaction. Bob is a confirmed pilot who did a nice career flying the C-47 then, many other more modern corporate aircraft like the Lear Jet and Cessna Citation.

Bob and Donna flew back to Florida on Sunday May 16, after spending a week in the South of France. We saw them away with great sadness but we hope to see them both again very soon.

MONTBÉLIARD FLY-IN AND RENNES 2004 AIRSHOW

You can still participate in these two events if you wish to do so. Send us an email or a letter. We will tell you all about the organization of your stay, what to do

if you want to fly our Piper Cub (If you wish to be part of the ferry flights or the local flights once on the sites), and the hotel accommodation. Thanks for reading the previous issue of our Newsletter.

COLONEL ROBERT MORGAN HAS GONE WEST

Colonel Robert Morgan, the famous B-17 "Memphis Belle" pilot, passed away in the evening of May 16.

Those of our readers who had the privilege to meet him and talk to him during Airsho, in Midland, know how kind he was. You may visit the following web site to know more about this legendary person:

< <http://www.memphis-belle.com> >

PUJAUDRAN CEREMONY 12 AUGUST 2004

The members of the French Wing who wish to participate in the ceremony for the inauguration of the monument erected to honor the American crew who flew a DH Mosquito and crashed at Pujaudran, in the Toulouse area, can contact colonel Michel Perrin who will give them all the necessary information about this event.

Col. Michel Perrin
email: < mmperrin@free.fr >
Tél: 05 61 09 45 52

The splendid monument which will be inaugurated, was made possible by 3 organizations: The authorities of Pujaudran, the Souvenir Français, and the French Wing of the Commemorative Air Force.

We invite all our members to be present during this ceremony which shows our Unit's faithfulness to the goals and objectives of the CAF.

MAGAZINES "VOLEZ - SPÉCIAL MEETINGS" AND "AIR FAN"

Our friend François Brévoit has published two very good articles that talk about the CAF and the French Wing.

We strongly recommend that you purchase these two May issues. You won't regret it!



CAF FRENCH WING ANNUAL DUES 2004 - 2005

List of members who have paid their annual dues for the financial year that runs from May 01, 2004, to April 30, 2005.

If your name does not appear on this list, we thank you for sending us your cheque as soon as possible (Colonels and Associate Members: 50 Euros, Friends of the French Wing: 40 Euros, Cadets: 20 Euros).

Gilles Avenel, Bob Ayars, Lilian Ayars, Christophe Bastide, Bunty Bateman, Dominique Baudrillard, Guy Bortolus, Henri Bourrassier, Merrill Butikof, Claude Cardinal, Didier Cardinal, Ernest Cartigny, Léon Collin, Daniel Costelle, William Davies, Jean-Christophe Debuissou, Bernard Delfino, Fumiko Delfino, Claude De Marco, Stéphane Duchemin, Eric Ducreau, Philippe Duflo, Marcel Francisci, Louis-Jean Gioux, Lucien Goubard, Roger Gouzon, Patrick Gremez, Roy Grinnell, Irene Grinnell, Barbara Hair, Aubrey Hair, Yves Houssin, Rick Hudlow, Louise Hudlow, Bill Katsones, Dave Kelly, Marcel Ledoux, Julien Lepelletier, Jacques Leroux, Isabelle Lesser, Elzéard Ligneul, George Lodge, Jim Lux, Cédric Malhaire, Guy Perrin, Michel Perrin, Patrick Pierre-Pierre, Frédéric Pollicella, Hervé Quefféléant, Guy Robert, John Roeder, Marcel Ruppert, Connie Sansing, Sandy Sansing, Semaan Soueid, Haruo Tanaka, Alphonse Thiry, Terran Tidwell, Christian Tournemine, Alexandre Trévisan, Gilles Troussart, Regis Urschler, Jean-Jacques Vaucher, Jean-Pierre Vésine, Bernard Violette, Bob Wall.

(This list was correct at the time of printing)

DIEN BIEN PHU 1954

By C. Langevin, Corsair pilot at Dien Bien Phu.



Corsair taxiing on the tarmac of Bach-Mai.

Saturday April 10, a date that brings 50 years old memories to my mind...

It was precisely on Saturday April 10, 1954 that, together with my friend Serge Petitfour, we are asked to report to the Commander of Flotilla 15F to hear that, from this day, we are posted to Flotilla 14F for an immediate departure for Indochina. The reason being the replacement of some pilots of this Unit.

By taking one pilot from the 12F, and six from the 15F, it was a total of 24 pilots, a quarter of which had little experience on the Corsair.

As for me, with 55 flying hours on this type, I have never used the weapons.

A training mission with bombs, rockets, and canons, have been programmed for April 13, but it was not carried out because of bad weather.

On April 15, after a delay of 24 hours, again due to bad weather, we board an SE2010 Armagnac for Saïgon, via Beyrouth, Karachi, Calcutta, and 26 hours of flight.

Officially, we have civil servant passports, in transit, to avoid betraying the neutrality of these countries during the stopovers.



Parked Corsair at Bach-Mai.

We arrived in Saigon on April 17, early in the morning. We were welcomed by the local authorities, and boarded a Bristol Freighter, a noisier plane, which drops us two hours and thirty minutes later on the base of Tourane (Danang).

Easter Sunday, April 18. The American aircraft carrier USS Saïpan arriving from Yokosuka (Japan), is in the bay of Tourane and launches the 25 aircraft that we are waiting for. Plenty of work for the mechanics and the armourers, but for them, F4U7 or AU-1, are both Corsairs!

April 22. At last a training flight for bombing and strafing!



Pilot doing his pre-flight inspection before taking off from Bach-Mai.

April 23. Thanks to their competency, the mechanics managed to send 16 Corsair to Hanoi-Bach-Mai. This formation is lead by Commandant L.V. Menettrier, and composed of four groups: N° 1: The "Boss", n° 2: O.E. Nicodemo, n° 3: E.V. Pioger, and n° 4: S.M. Vuillermoz. I'm in group 4.

Before we arrive at Hanoi, as we were flying between two layers of clouds, the Boss gives the order to climb above the top layer in order to prepare the gonio approach in groups. He gives us his heading and announces: Group 2, 10° left, group 4, 20° right, and group 3, 10° right. Finally, he gives us the TOP! for the climb.

Surprize!... At the end of this climb, we notice that groups 3 and 4 crossed their respective path in the clouds. Complete



The runway of Dien Bien Phu.

radio silence, and it's only a few days later that Second Maitre Thomas, the number 4 in our group, therefore, the lowest, admitted that he saw the crossing of the eight planes.



April 29. Serious business starts.

It's the first mission deep inside the country, near Sonla: Bombardment (To cut roads), then, reconnaissance

at low altitude along the main road 41. We are met by flak, and, immediately, the Boss orders to take position for the strafing.

May 1st. Mission on Dien Bien Phu with three planes. Bombardment of the 37mm flak positions. Armament: Four 500

pounds bombs and Canons. Not easy for a neophyte like me...

Using the 1/25000 scale map, we have to locate the target (Or, rather, its position, because the canons are not visible).

First difficulty, I have to dive twice, not using my weapons, just to locate the target.

On the third dive, I drop a first bomb. I am two rounds late compared to the other planes.

I start a dive for the fourth time when I hear "Violet 3 - (That's me) - drop every-

thing now, hurry up! (Or something like that)". Therefore, I dropped the three remaining bombs. At that very moment, I realized that this order did not come from the leader but from n° 2...

It's a fact that with the flak black clouds that appear around you, and thinking about it today, I understand that it was not the ideal place to do any "sightseeing", but, on the contrary, to escape as soon as possible.

The bombs we used were fitted with some special fuse that required dropping one bomb at a time!

Another mission to Dien Bien Phu, then near-by, and it falls on May 7th.

After that, the 14F carried on its activities in the Delta and on the main roads to it, until July 20, 1954.

July 26. We fly back to Saïgon, via Tourane.



Corsair loaded with bombs.

As I write these lines, I think about two pilots: O.E. Nicodemo, shot down on May 26, and S.M. Lestourgie, shot down on July 7, 1954.

The 25 AU-1's that were delivered to Tourane had been used in Korea (1952/1953) by VMA 212 and 323, and by VMF 225. After they were used by the 14F, from April to October 1954, six were destroyed, and 19 given back to the USA. On these 19 aircraft, 16 came back to France between 1957 and 1958, and only 4 remained in service until the end of the 14F, in September 1964.

S/N 129.367 is the one I flew for this first mission over Dien Bien Phu, then for a flight, in France, on April 18, 1963. My friend Jean-Claude Marion crashed in the sea, on the eastern coast of Sardinia, following an engine failure...



The French Corsairs were taken out of service in 1964.

SPIRIT OF LEWIS.....

SPIRIT OF LEWIS SPONSORS

FLYING SPONSORS

Gilles Avenel
Hervé Cherry
Bernard Delfino
Claude Gascon
Irene Grinnell
Roy Grinnell
Jean-Claude Miniggio
Patrick Pierre-Pierre
Claude Requi
Sandy Sansing
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RESTORATION SPONSORS

Didier Cardinal
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Cédric Malhaire

SUPPORTING SPONSORS

Bunty Bateman
Christophe Bastide
Henri Bourrassier
Michel Cahiez
William Davies
Claude De Marco
Fumiko Delfino
Louis-Jean Gioux
Patrick Gremez
Barbara Hair
Aubrey Hair
Yves Houssin
Elzéard Ligneul
Guy Perrin
John Røeder
Marcel Ruppert
Jean-Jacques Vaucher

PIPER CUB ACCESSORIES

Since our article, last month, concerning the search for WWII accessories, we have received the following items:

- Two U.S. Army jerrycans from col. Christophe Bastide.
- Two copies of WWII Michelin map showing the Normandy Landing and the Allies progression, from col. Bernard Delfino.

This is a promising start! We hope that other members will carry on with this quest. A big thank you to all our members!

THE SPIRIT OF LEWIS GETS A MAKE-UP



Photo: B. Delfino

The Spirit of Lewis got a brand new make-up on May 18 and 19. After the removal of its civilian markings, as you read in the previous issues of our Newsletter, the fuselage needed to be painted in order to give it a better look and create a good base for the painting of the USAAF markings during the weeks to come.

A good wash and drying of the skin got rid of the paint dust and other unavoidable dirt.

Then, long hours were necessary to cover the areas that could not be painted.

This operation is the hardest part of the painting, the most difficult by far, but also the most important, since the quality of the painting depends on this preparation.

Patience and hard work allowed our three friends to get our Piper Cub ready for the decisive following day which was dedicated to the actual painting of the entire fuselage.

Left, Eric Ducreau cleans our plane's Continental engine.

Below, Semaan Soueid sands the engine cooling air deflectors.



Photo: B. Delfino

On May 18, our friends Semaan Soueid, Eric Ducreau, and Bernard Delfino, proceeded with a good general sanding of the fabric so that the new paint would have a good grip on the old one. The exact color of the old paint was found by the paint vendor who did a spectrographic analysis on an access panel. This modern technology stopped any hesitation and saved a lot of time in finding the true color of our plane.

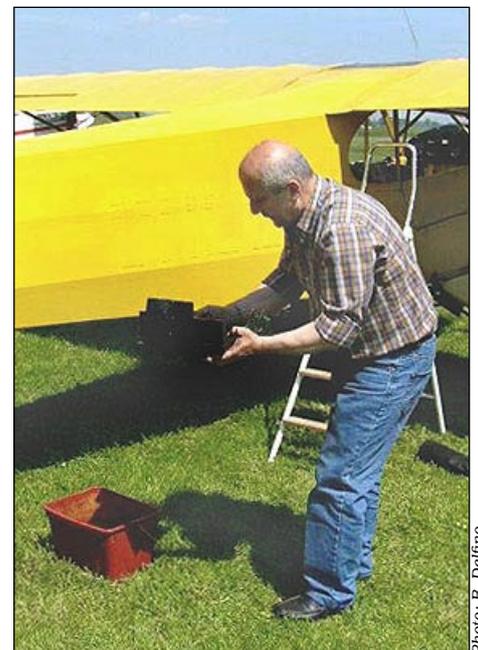


Photo: B. Delfino

Fortunately, the weather was fine. Since we did not have a hangar to do this painting indoors, we had to do it outside, and good weather was a must, dry, not too hot, and as little wind as possible.

The good star of the French Wing did miracles and made sure that these conditions were fulfilled.

The artist of the day, nick-named Michelangelo for the day, was Bernard who acquired sufficient experience while he was in the Fleet Air arm, overhauled Alouette II helicopters, and painted them all entirely (Photo below).

nard Delfino. Lunch help waiting for the drying of the paint, then a few touch-ups were done, since one always forget some hidden area, especially on the under surfaces.

The paper and tape was then removed so that no traces of glue were left on the hidden parts, the



Photo: Eric Ducreau

This task took about three hours, and was carried out without too many problems. The engine cowlings and access panels had been removed and were painted separately, after the fuselage, which gave the latter enough time to dry.

The team, on this May 19, was composed of Guy Perrin, Eric Ducreau, and Ber-



Photo: Eric Ducreau

Preparing the mixture of paint, hardener, flexidizer, and thinner, thanks to a precise weighing.

by colonel Didier Cardinal the following day.

This check was quite important and urgent since the plane had to go through a DGAC inspection on May 25, for the renewal of its Certificate of Airworthiness.

We were able to see the fantastic work done by Cédric, not only from a mechanical point of view, but from a paper-work point of view: The Maintenance Program that he studied



Photo: Eric Ducreau

Guy Perrin takes a nap in the shadow of the wing of the Spirit of Lewis...

windows especially. This gave back our Piper Cub a better look. It was really nice in its new bright yellow dress.

The two following days, col. Cédric Malhaire, who is in charge of our aircraft maintenance, came over from Brittany to carry out the 100 hours annual check, helped

and created is a real master-piece that many professionals would envy! We thank him and his companion Gaëlle very much. Gaëlle helped him by typing this 50 pages document on their computer. With so much talent and professionalism, our Spirit of Lewis is in very good hands!

Much work still needs to be done, and the painting of the national insignias and other decoration is not an easy task. This difficult work will be done after the air show of La Ferté Alais which will require all our attention and an enormous amount of hard work.



Photo: Bernard Delfino

Faith - one says - can lift mountains... At least, it allows two guys to lift a Piper Cub if we refer to the amused efforts of Eric and Semaan!

We thank these members for their good work and help that gave our 59 years old



Photo: Bernard Delfino

The FSS P.X.

The following articles are available against a payment by cheque to the **CAF French Wing**. (Note: **Postage is extra** unless stated otherwise).

- Official Wing patch: € 9,20.
- "Gioux" type patch: € 6,10.
- Pins epoxy, various: € 5,50.
- Pins cloisonné, various: € 7,60.
- Painting "Lloyd's Dream" 50x76cm: € 40,00.
- Painting "Lloyd's Dream" 50x76cm. framed: € 55,00.
- 100 sheets of paper with your letter head: € 8,00.
- Color Photos (B17, B25, etc...) 30x45cm: € 9,00.
- T shirt Piper CUB, 170 grams, L or XL € 16,00.
- T shirt cartoon P40, 170 grams, L or XL: € 16,00.
- T shirts: Other sizes available on order.
- T shirts illustrated with the picture of your choice (Maximum size A5): Send in your picture and we will make the Tshirt of your dreams (Warning! Only send pictures that are totally free from any copyrights): € 12,00.
- Color aircraft profiles 15 x 20 cm. pre-framed: *Various*: € 4,00 each.
- Warbird cards by painter Jean Bellis: € 4,00 each.
- Video cassette of sequences filmed in Midland (55mm) VHS PAL: € 16,00 ©
- Large format paintings by Col. Eric Besançon: F4U Corsair and Messerschmitt 262 night fighter: € 31,00 ©
- Poster of 36 WWII airplanes painted by Jean Bellis, 61x81cm: € 9,00 (Members) € 10,00 (Non Membres) ©
- Prints of the Roy Grinnell paintings - Normandie Niemen, Corsair F4U7, and B26 Marauder - Unsigned: € 40,00 + P&P € 10,00. Signed by veterans: € 60,00 + P&P € 10,00. ©
- Post Cards based on the same paintings (B26 Marauder, Corsair, and Neuneu): € 0,50 each ©
- CD Rom of 36 FSS Newsletters since January 2000, French and English, compatible PC and Macintosh, <.pdf> format readable with Adobe Acrobat Reader: € 10,00 P & P inclusive ©
- CD Rom of 200 warbird photos taken during Airsho in Midland, by B. Delfino: € 10,00 P & P inclusive ©.

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SAFETY.....



"ALUMINUM OVERCAST" DAMAGED DURING LANDING

The EAA B-17, "Aluminum Overcast" was damaged during landing and roll-out at Van Nuys (California), when the gear collapsed. A preliminary inspection showed that the damage could be considerable (Photo sent by Regis Urschler).

FRENCH WING ELECTIONS

The November General Assembly will see the election of our Unit's **Vice-President** and **Treasurer**.

It's not too early to think about your application to one of these 2 positions. The minimum conditions for applying are 6 months seniority as a CAF and French Wing Colonel, either Regular or Life Member.

Vice-President

He assists the President, and will act as such during his absence. His specific task, in addition to all the President's ones, includes a good knowledge of the CAF regulations and the law of the land, the procedures during meetings, social activities of the Unit, and the implementation of all the other tasks that may be requested by the President.

Treasurer

He is in charge of all the funds collected by the Unit, keeps an exact record of these funds, and he is responsible for the respect of all regulations and directives from the CAF concerning financial matters, as long as they are compatible with the law of the land. He will submit, in a timely manner, to the CAF HQ, all the necessary reports about the health of the Unit finances. His specific tasks include the good keeping of the members' files and the payment of their annual dues, as well as the payment of the Unit's expenses. He overlooks all Unit projects' finances for an annual audit during the annual general assembly, and liaise with the CAF Headquarters.

BE A SPONSOR OF THE "SPIRIT OF LEWIS" !

You always have had a definite interest for this plane. You can now become one of its Sponsors by choosing one of the three levels available, and add pleasure to usefulness by flying aboard this legendary WWII airplane. Here is the list of these levels and their price:

•••**FLYING SPONSOR**: 250 Euros per year and 25 Euros per hour.

•••**RESTORATION SPONSOR**: 125 Euros per year and 25 Euros per hour.

•••**SUPPORTING SPONSOR**: 50 Euros per year and 25 Euros per hour.

•••**NON-SPONSOR**: No annual premium and 80 Euros per hour.

A quick calculation shows that, for instance, for 50 hours per year, this system allows everyone to fly for a very modest hourly price:

- Flying Sponsor = 30 Euros,
- Restoration Sponsor = 42,50 Euros,
- Supporting Sponsor = 56 Euros,
- Non-Sponsor = 80 Euros.

This choice is wide enough to allow everyone of our members to find the level he wishes to adopt.