



Volume 9 - N° 8 - August 2004

EDITORIAL

The prevalent yellow color of this issue is not surprising since it is mainly dedicated to the adventures of our beloved Spirit of Lewis.

I hope that the pictures and the story which tell this trip to Montbéliard will allow you to feel that you were there too, or almost.

Should this give you ideas for the future, let me tell you that you will have many more chances to participate in the life of our aircraft, during the airshows of Falaise and Rennes, and, in-between, during the days of local flights organized at Persan-Beaumont.

The joy of being able to reach the supreme CAF goal - to operate a WWII aircraft and honor those who fought in aviation for our Freedom - does not grow on trees! It requires many personal sacrifices, like those made by the French Wing participants in the Montbéliard Fly-in, who, all together, travelled more than 6000 Miles to take part in this event! They came from London, La Rochelle, the Paris area, and the Lyon area. I wish to personally thank them for such an exceptional effort, which proves, once again, that distance is not an insurmountable obstacle to a participation in the French Wing activities.

The reward for these sacrifices is simply extraordinary. It is made of the pleasure to be united with good friends, the immense happiness to be able to honor the WWII aviators, and the contact with a very enthusiastic public, today looking for noble values.

Bernard

THE "SPIRIT OF LEWIS" HAS FLOWN ITS FIRST IMPORTANT "RAID"!



Photo: Bernard Delfino

TAKING ADVANTAGE OF ITS PARTICIPATION IN THE FLY-IN ORGANIZED BY COLONEL JEAN-CLAUDE MINIGGIO, THE SPIRIT OF LEWIS INAUGURATED ITS NEW LIVERY AND FLEW THE DISTANCE BETWEEN PERSAN-BEAUMONT AND MONTBÉLIARD WITH NO PARTICULAR PROBLEM.

THIS 7 HOURS LONG ROUND-TRIP, TO WHICH MUST BE ADDED THE FLIGHTS FLOWN LOCALLY, REVEALED THAT EVEN AN AIRCRAFT OF SUCH A MODEST SIZE REQUIRES THE BEST POSSIBLE ORGANIZATION.

TO LEARN MORE ABOUT THIS RAID, PLEASE TURN THE PAGE...



Photo: Bernard Delfino

RAID ON MONTBÉLIARD...

Article by our special reporter D. Onifled, photos by col. B. Delfino



The offer we were made of participating in the Montbéliard Fly-In, located in the East of France, by colonel Jean-Claude Miniggio, President of the Association "The Old Propellers of the Area of Montbéliard", was a real challenge for the CAF French Wing, and an experience of an invaluable benefit for the future trips of our Warbird.

Although the few weeks available before this event seemed too short to prepare the *Spirit of Lewis*, we heartily accepted this invitation and did everything possible to get the plane to the same standard as the other aircraft that would be there.

We doubled the speed and the painting of our airplane in USAAF colors was completed the day before it left for Montbéliard!...

With its new livery, and a brand new radio and navigation equipment, our valiant little Cub took to the air from the runway of Persan-Beaumont, in the morning of Saturday, third of July, with colonel Gilles Avenel at the controls, and his passenger, colonel Fumiko Delfino.

The two hours range, plus the indispensable thirty minutes safety margin, seemed very short, and forced our friends to stop twice for gas, and also for the "natural draining" of the occupants.

Many clouds were pushed by a strong westerly wind. The help they were given

by this wind noticeably shortened the flight time and three hours and five minutes were enough to cover the distance of this first, historical raid.

On the road, our friends cols. Roger Gouzon and Bernard Delfino were kept informed about



the flight by numerous phone calls made by Gilles and Fumiko. They had to admit it: Despite its relative slow speed, the courageous little Cub was going much faster than their car.

As a precaution, Roger and Bernard had taken along a twenty litres drum of aviation gasoline, an excellent initiative that would soon reveal itself as very useful.

PERSAN-BEAUMONT - MONTBÉLIARD

The *Spirit of Lewis* stopped the first time at Sézanne, its previous base, where we hopped to meet its former owner, Jean Nicole, who would have seen it again with great pleasure.

Unfortunately, he was absent on this day. The plane was refuelled, and our friends took off to

reach Langres where another fuel stop was possible. When they got there, they realized that there was not a soul on the airfield, and various phone calls remained fruitless. Gilles and Fumiko's last hope was to call their "escort" who had just stopped for lunch in a restaurant near Troyes.

Roger and Bernard forgot their lunch, quickly bought four sandwiches, and got back on the road to reach Langres, a drive of about one sixty miles.

Driving was not easy on this day which marked the first day of the Summer holidays, and it took them ninety minutes to get to Langres airfield.

The refuelling of our plane was done the "old way", with a drum and a funnel, and the four sandwiches were highly appreciated by the hungry participants!

The crew got back on board the Piper Cub, Bernard spinned the propeller, and the two vehicles started off again towards Montbéliard that the *Spirit of Lewis* reached an hour later, while Roger and Bernard took another hour and a half.

THE STAY AT MONTBÉLIARD

The arrival at Montbéliard was one of the best moments of this long day. We had the great pleasure to be reunited with





Gilles and Philippe jumped on board the Spirit of Lewis, and Jean-Claude and Bernard on board Jean-Claude's PA-19.

After a grouped take-off, the two planes flew to an isolated area where they flew large circles so that Bernard could collect as many pictures

as possible. Half an hour later, the two airplanes landed on the grass runway of Montbéliard, mission accomplished, with, as a premium, four friends very happy of their flight.

Other friends were there too, like Eric Janssonne, and many others who we met during various previous airshows. Numerous planes had already arrived, and the week-end was looking good.

One must say that our aircraft has a specific photogenic look which draws everyone's attention, either in the air or on the ground.

This is why a news reporter of the local newspaper chose our plane as the subject of the article that was published the following day. Bernard took this opportunity to tell her everything about the Commemorative Air Force and its French Wing, which materialized in this article, very well written for a person who knew very little about aviation.



Jean-Claude immediately took great care of us. He drove us to the excellent hotel he had chosen for our short stay, so that we could check in and have a quick wash, then we went back to the airport where serious matters were about to start.

Knowing that we needed to get some pictures of our Piper Cub in its natural element, Jean-Claude immediately organized a formation flight.

Jean-Claude flew a couple more flights, including one with his magnificent Morane-Saulnier 315, currently the most beautiful aircraft of this type in our country (Photo below). The spectators watched the arrival of other airplanes, some of which flew from Switzerland,



Top left: Flight over the area of Montbéliard by Gilles and Philippe, and above: Philippe & Danièle Dufлот.

like these beautiful and colorful Bucker Jungman's (Below), three other Piper Cub's, a Stampe, an NC 856A, and many others. The planes were finally parked for the night, and the day was concluded by an excellent meal that was taken in the meeting room of the Montbéliard aero-Club, served by volunteers whom we thank very much for their good care and hard work.



SUNDAY JULY 4

A good night sleep and a copious breakfast allowed everyone to get some strength and be ready for a day made of flights and friendship. At 10 in the morning, we were back at the airfield of Montbéliard-Courcelles.

Some had already flown and enjoyed the beautiful weather that the meteo had not expected... Gilles, who, regretfully, had to go back to Paris on the 13:00 train, managed to fly our Piper Cub twice, with John and Philippe as



happy passengers. The Spirit of Lewis flew in loose formation with the NC 856A (Above), a strange looking aircraft with undeniable flying abilities.

On board was a professional movie maker who filmed numerous sequences of our airplane which played his role as a movie Star quite easily.

Our group set up a simplified PX which, despite its reduced size, drew some unexpected customers who spent a few dozen Euros which will help our plane's budget.

The lunch and the volunteers who served it, were of the same quality as the previous day barbecue, which gave every guest plenty of energy for the flights to come in the afternoon, under a very bright sun shine.



The Dassault 315 Flamand took off and greeted us with a few spectacular passes that all our friends highly appreciated (Above).

The Bücker's flew non-stop, and one of them (Below) gave us a smooth aerobatics display which revealed the abil-



flight. In exchange, he took up the owners of this Bücker in his Morane-Saulnier 315.

As he came back from the second flight, Jean-Claude signalled Bernard to jump on board his Morane, a surprise invitation that our Unit Leader immediately accepted (Those who know Bernard's passion for the planes of the immediate pre-war period will understand the pleasure and the emotion he felt when he climbed on board this highly historical aircraft!). Here's what he says about this flight...

"With my heart beating at high pace, I climbed on board the MS315 and sat in the front seat. I instantly got the same very strong feelings I had experienced during my first flight in this plane, during last year's airshow of Haguenau.

Cherry on the cake, this flight's purpose was to fly alongside two Bücker's who were returning to Switzerland before the night.

The formation was quickly set, and several minutes of formation flying allowed everyone to take pictures of the planes.

Since this type of mission is really my favourite, Jean-Claude was giving me a chance to raise my happiness to limits I rarely met before!

These sensations were greatly amplified by the open-cockpit which efficiently helps to go back in time to the far remote thirties, when this type of plane was the Master of the French skies.

I had not taken my main camera, in order to fully appreciate this flight, but I was still able to take a few shots using the

ity of this aircraft and the pleasure that its pilot had to demonstrate these qualities.

Jean-Claude took this opportunity to do some aerobatics with the bright red Bücker. He was delighted and grateful for this unusual

small size digital camera I always carry in my pocket.

This is how I was able to take a portrait of Jean-Claude flying his Morane (Below). A First I believe?...

These too short moments spent in this Morane 315 will stay, for me, one of the greatest moments of this week-end. A big Thank You Jean-Claude! Your kindness and your friendship allowed me to feel strong emotions that will stay in my memory and my heart for ever."



The day was such a success that none of the participants noticed the speed at which time was flying away, and far too soon, came the time to say good-bye.

Philippe and Danièle were the first to leave for Paris, then John and Cécile for Lentilly.

Bernard and Fumiko were the last ones to leave our hosts and get back to Paris in the middle of the night, so that they would be ready to greet Patrick and Roger who were about to fly from Montbéliard to Persan the day after.



Patrick was definitely the Wing member who surprised us most during this week-end: Because of his professional occupations, he was unable to be in Montbéliard on Saturday July 3. Nevertheless, he still decided to travel across France, by train, on the following day, from La Rochelle to Montbéliard. He arrived there at 10:30 PM, just in time to get a night rest,



and jumped in the Spirit of Lewis to ferry it from Montbéliard to Persan the next day.

We thank him very sincerely for his team spirit and his generosity, which honor our Wing and the entire Commemorative Air Force. Patrick tells us about his flight here below...



MONTBÉLIARD - PERSAN-BEAUMONT

"Arrived in Montbéliard, thanks to the railway company SNCF, I was welcomed by Jean-Claude Miniggio, a Colonel who is always there when required (Thank you Jean-Claude for patiently waiting for me under the mosquitoes attacks!...).

After a good night, we picked up Roger at his hotel, and went to the airport.

As a good professional, the tower agent printed a meteo map for the whole trip - Thank you Madam for your kindness - The forecast are Cavok over Luxeuil, with, here and there, some CB hidden in the mass of clouds. The map shows a fair amount of clouds along the entire route.

The wind is head-on and up to 25 knots on runway 26, it rains, and the horizon is blocked in the direction of our departure route. I'm pessimistic about our possibilities to take-off before noon.

Suddenly, a miracle! The weather opens up and the menacing clouds disappear towards the East. I decide to leave.

The J-3 is in the paratroopers' hangar. I had not seen it since April 25. It is magnificent in its new warrior colors. Bravo to the whole team!

Pre-flight check done, all is well. After a briefing, the crew take their seats, Roger at the front, and me behind, and we do the usual check list before starting the engine.

Chocks in position, ignition off, the prop is spinned by the club's mechanic, three injections, contact! At the first blade the engine starts. I let it warm up until the temperature pointer is in the green sector.

The wind has calmed down, but I taxi carefully. After the last checks at the runway holding point, we take-off from the concrete runway 26.

Gilles had told me that the average fuel consumption was 18

litres (I had expected 15). In addition, the head wind makes our ground speed go down to 50 knots (92 km/h), therefore, I decide to do a first technical stop in Vesoul.

After flying through the R45D zone, with the agreement of Luxeuil Approach, Vesoul shows up straight ahead.

Vertical fly-by and I get into the circuit where there is no other airplane. Power reduced, carburettor heating on, final approach, and then... \$?&\$#%\$!... the engine stops after touch-down!

Since we needed some exercise, eight hundred meters pushing the plane does the job!

First refuelling and a new meteo, thanks to the Instructor of the Vesoul aero-club who delayed an aerobatics lesson with a CAP 10 to print the met map from the Internet (Thanks to him and to the secretary!). Apparently, the wind has calmed down.

Roger sits in the plane, I put the chocks on, turn a few prop blades backwards, put a little bit of throttle, and spin the propeller. The engine starts at the fifth attempt. I remove the chocks, Roger holds the stick backwards and he keeps his feet on the brakes while I get in my seat. Another take-off, and good-bye Vesoul. The next stop is Troyes. The navigation is very quiet (One must say that at the speed we fly, we have time to watch the scenery and the cars on the highway. They overtake us easily!).



The headwind of about 10 to 15 knots slows us down. The fuel gauge rod is pessimistic, and, therefore, I am too. I don't think I can land in Troyes with a sufficient safety margin, in case this airfield has to close before we arrive there, forcing me to land somewhere else.

I decide to change our route and to land in Juvancourt.

I know, by reading the supplement to the local air maps that zone R 5 B1 is inactive in July and August, but I try over the radio to get in touch with them. No one replies, it's normal! It's a holiday period for those who use this area four days per month the rest of the year to test radio-controlled pilotless aircraft, in other words, drones.





Reconnaissance of the airfield, choice of a QFU, circuit, then, landing.

Since we diverted, I don't have the airfield map and its precious information like the phone numbers which would allow me to call the appropriate person to get some gasoline.



Top to bottom: "Head-on attack" by Jean-Claude flying his splendid Morane Saulnier 315 - Jean-Claude in his plane, ready for one of the numerous flights he flew with his MS 315 - Col. John Francis and Cécile, his charming wife, whom we met for the first time. With an overwhelming kindness, they strongly impressed all our members - Engine run on the bright red and gold Bücker.

Fortunately, the people in charge of the Juvancourt airfield aero-club displayed these phone numbers on the door of the club house. I call the President who tells me that a pilot should come to the airfield very shortly to do a flight, and he will sell me some gas.

A few moments later, the pilot arrives and helps us with the refuelling.

President Brisson, calls me back to check that everything is going fine. Thanks to him and the pilot whose name I can't remember.

Good-bye Juvancourt where we may come back for a future airshow?... Next, Coulommiers, which is in our range.

Unbelievable! We reach the speed of 65 knots. Exciting!... In Coulommiers, on the self-information frequency, I can hear that the runway in use is the 27. I decide to go for the grass runway 27 R and I taxi to the fuel station. The airport, ran by Aéroport de Paris, is very large and it takes us some time to reach the fuel pump, and, of course, it's not the right one!

An ADP agent I meet turns down my proposal to pay the landing fee straight away. What a nice man! But it's only to hear that he has a meeting and cannot deal with us: "Don't worry, the landing fee will be sent to you in Persan". Of course I'm not worried at all.



More exercise to push the plane to the right pump, but this time over 50 meters only. The club sells us the gasoline, and we can even have a drink at the bar.

Another take-off to reach Le Plessis-Belleville. The regulations limit our altitude to 1500 feet.

We fly at the height of 1200. We can see two airliners which are on final for Roissy CDG about 1000 feet higher than us. It's normal, their lowest allowed height is 1500 feet in this area.

We carry on and fly between the Paris TMA and the Creil zone which is active, and here is Persan. We land on runway 28 after a total of 4 hours and 4 legs,

which required a total of 73 litres of gasoline, and an average of 18,3 litres.

Colonels Fumiko and Bernard Delfino welcome us with friendly signs and indicate that we should taxi to the fuel station where we fill up the tank.

We then start washing the plane. With the four of us, it's quite quick, and we remove the hundreds of mosquitoes and other bugs which are stuck to the wing leading edge, the struts, the engine cowling, and the wind shield.

To conclude this day, Roger invites us for a delicious diner at the "Gardens of Spring" chinese restaurant in Tremblay, followed by a well-deserved good night sleep.

I learned a lot during this trip, and I loved flying it."

CONCLUSION

The participation of our Wing and our airplane first seemed very difficult.

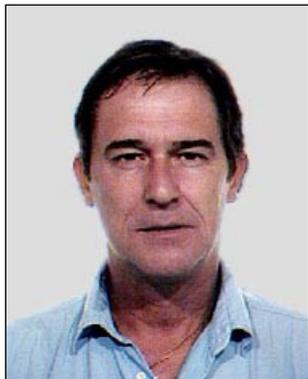
But the solidarity and the efforts of several members who did not hesitate to work hard and travel, all together, more than 6000 miles, changed this jump in the unknown into a sum of experience and new knowledge which will be very useful for the future.

We hope to see you all at the airshows of Falaise and Rennes where our courageous Spirit of Lewis will be!



WELCOME PATRICK FERRÉ

We could not find a better way to introduce Colonel Patrick Ferré than the con-



clusion he wrote at the end of his résumé.

What he wrote to describe his love for aviation is precisely what

many members can feel but cannot express with the necessary sensitivity: *"The sacrifices that these men consented to make for a safer Aviation, for a better world (not always evident...), and for the memory of each one of them, it is important to keep a trace of them. Maintaining these beautiful machines of the past, keeping them flying, and honoring these men who used them in often dramatic moments... This is why the CAF is legendary. Because it perpetuates a part of the memory of people who, with what was available at the time and their respective talent, resisted and were able to say "No" to the unbearable when it was time to react".*

Here is a beautiful praise that our members in the entire world will, no doubt, appreciate. Thank you Patrick.

Introducing Patrick is no easy task since his life is so rich with events and adventures. Born in March 1950, he is the son of a pilot whose career is made of 50 years of aviation and 28000 hours of flying. This was enough to give him the virus!... Patrick likes more than anything else the sight of these "big bags of metal", especially if he is at the controls!

He started to fly the DC-4 in Cambodia, in 1974. He then worked in France and Germany for Air Fret and Saturn Airways. Stays in Florida, Texas, and Ivory Coast as a perfect *Bush Pilot*. Italy, Sicily, and seasonal jobs which made him meet Didier Dorat and Consuelo de St. Exupéry, his parents' personal friend.

He started flying the Caravelle in Egypt, flew pulling banners in Fréjus, the Middle-East, an ATPL course in Fort Worth, and Gabon Air Transport. IFR training in Perpignan, then Air Provence where he flew the Grumman G1 for taxi flights (DHL). He stayed in the Seychelles where he flew the Beechcraft Volpar BE-18S for fishermen, then St. Martin for daily flights to Pointe-à-Pitre and Puerto Rico (Britten Norman Islander Mk III trimotor).

Finally, his last activity, he was admitted at Airbus on a training course to become an instructor on the Airbus 320. Unfortunately, Patrick was forced to resign just before the end of his course because of serious family problems, associated with his mother's health who suffered from the Alzheimer disease.

As for the enthusiasm, Patrick has more than enough. He owes his love for aviation to his father, an exceptional man whose picture taken in his SBD Dauntless, when he was a pilot with the French Navy. His Dad, among many other things, took part in the liberation of the Pointe de Graves. Patrick is a lot like him, and it's a godsend for our Unit and for the entire CAF!

Welcome to the CAF and the French Wing Patrick!

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FRENCH WING ANNUAL DINNER IN MIDLAND

Like every year, the French Wing will hold its annual dinner in Midland during Airsho. The restaurant **Taste of China** and its buffet has been chosen - the same as last year - because it gave complete satisfaction to all participants. This dinner will take place on **Thursday September 30, at 7:30 PM.**

We thank all our members who will be at Airsho to tell us if they wish to join us or not.



FRENCH WING ANNUAL DUES - YEAR 2004-2005

At the end of July, three members were still missing. They have been taken off the list of our addressees and will receive the Newsletter when they pay their annual dues.

To all the others, a big Thank You for the support you give to the CAF and the French Wing.

ANNIVERSAIREY OF THE LIBERATION OF PERSAN

On Sunday **September 26, 2004** will be celebrated the 60th anniversary of the Liberation of the town of Persan and its airfield. The local authorities will be present, as well as many officials.

The planes that have a direct link with this period will be on display, and a few flights will no doubt be organized, even though this event is not a public one.

The airport authorities have specifically asked us to display our aircraft and make sure that members will be there to explain its history and describe our Association.

This is a unique opportunity to make ourselves better known and get acquainted with people who may well help us in the future.

Therefore, we ask our members who reside in the Paris area, and those who can come from the provinces, to make themselves available for this great day, and help us represent our organization and our Wing.

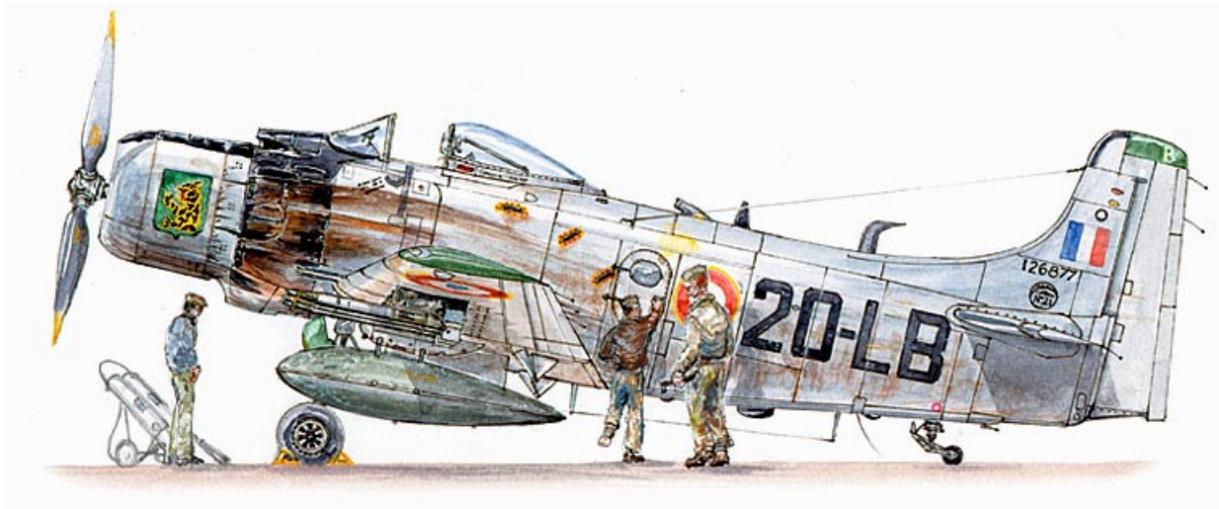
If you think you can participate, please make yourself known as soon as possible by mail, email, or fax.



DOUGLAS SKYRAIDER



By Colonels John P. Roeder, Michel Perrin, and F. Baudin - Painting by Jean Bellis



In mid 1941 the US Navy gave Douglas a contract to build two prototypes of an advanced two-seat scout bomber.

Its basic design, as it had been already the case for the SBD and the SB2C, was that of a scouting plane first, with the mission of dive bombing secondary.

The specification required the use of the 2,300 hp Wright R-3350 engine, a nose-wheel type landing gear, upper and lower remotely controlled .50 cal gun turrets, wing and tail surfaces de-icing systems, slotted flaps, an internal bomb bay etc.

When it was first flown in April 1943, the XSB2D-1, as it was designated, was 2,500 lb (1.134 kg) overweight, its engine failed to provide the required power and cost assessments indicated that the airplane would be prohibitively expensive.

The program was cancelled and to save the project Douglas partially redesigned



Photo: J. Borne

teristics than its forerunner and as its performance was not judged negatively by the Navy, Douglas was awarded a production contract for 358 articles.

By 1944 however, the nature of the war at sea had changed, and the US Navy was keen to get an attack plane incorporating all the lessons

the plane to comply with the new single seat Bomber-Torpedo category as BTD-1. Defensive armament was deleted, fuel capacity increased and internal storage of a 2.137 lb (970 kg) torpedo provided for. The BTD-1 was first flown in April 1943. It had much better flight charac-

it meanwhile had learned from the fighting.

What it now wanted was a single-seat plane with a big ordnance load carried externally to enable an unrestricted choice of weapons, while reducing complexity with simple and easy maintainable systems. Among others Martin had been working on such a plane with promising performance, which became the AM-1 Mauler. The USN had ordered two prototypes in May 1944.



Photo: Douglas Aircraft Co.

In June discussions between the Navy's Bureau of Aeronautics (BuAer) and Douglas on the BTD at

Washington were going around in endless circles. Clearly the Navy was no longer keen about the type, so that Douglas felt that there was no great future for its airplane. In a final meeting they requested BuAer to cancel the existing contract for the BTD and instead asked permission to use the remaining funds to build an entirely new aircraft. The Navy gave them until the following day to present a design.

At 0900 that day they were ready and BuAer, after some internal debate, accepted the Douglas proposal.

The new airplane made its first flight in March 1945, nine months after the Washington meeting. It was the first of a batch of 25 bearing the XBT2D designation, that had been ordered by the USN.

Flight testing rapidly showed that this airplane was a winner. In April the Navy ordered 548 production aircraft under the designation AD-1 "Skyraider" in the new "attack" category.

During its design great emphasis had been placed on incorporating the lessons learned in combat flight operations in the Pacific.

Experience had for instance shown that vertical dives were no longer a necessity, so that zero-lift capability disappeared as a requirement.

In agreement with BuAer the aircraft had been designed for seventy degree dives, which significantly reduced the size and the weight of the dive brake.

A major innovation was also the installation of an electrically activated explo-



Photo: Douglas Aircraft Co.

sive charge, replacing the classical fork type bomb release system. By the end of WWII the AD-1 had become a formidable



Photo: Douglas Aircraft Co.

airborne arsenal; the ordnance carried being in no way short of that of the B-17 "Flying Fortress".

At the end of WWII the production contract was cut back to 277 aircraft, with deliveries beginning in December 1946.

Airframe failures during service trials in 1947 required however a major overhaul and rework program of the wing and fuselage structure.

Production was lingering on at a rate of four airplanes a week, when in June 1950 the North Korean communists invaded South Korea.

The Skyraider had been too late to participate in WWII, but now it was ready to show what it could do in combat.

Three days after the beginning of the aggression, Navy Skyraiders were in action over Korea and demand rapidly became such that production had to be stepped up significantly.

Up to the end of the war in June 1953 the AD was seldom out of Korean skies.

Due to its powerful four 20 mm cannons and its ability to carry bombs, napalm containers, rockets, torpedoes, mines and depth charges it could be used against almost any target. One of its inherent advantages over the jets was that it could stay long hours on station.

The Skyraider was without any doubt one of the most destructive weapons used in the Korean fighting.

During the conflict 23 Navy squadrons were using AD's, flying from 11 different carriers. In addition three Marine squadrons were operating the aircraft from land bases.

By September 1954 the Navy increased the number of its Skyraider squadrons to 29 which were maintained until mid-1957.

Marine Corps maximum strength of 13 squadrons was reached already in 1954 where it remained until 1956 when phasing out began. From 1958 ADs began to be available as surplus.

In total 3,180 Skyraiders of some 20 different versions had been built until production ceased in February 1957. In September 1962 Skyraiders still in service were re-designated in the A series.

As A-1 the type became operational also with the USMC and as A-1E/A-1H with the USAF.

Among the other major users of the Skyraider was the French Armée de l'Air. Its Thunderbolts operating in Algeria, were beginning to reach the end of their operational life from 1958.

The only adequate replacement aircraft available at the time was the AD. Thus the French Government bought 113 surplus Skyraiders, which were assembled and modified to Armée de l'Air requirements by SFERMA at Bordeaux. Most of these aircraft appear to have been AD-4Ns with two seats installed in the



Photo: Douglas Aircraft Co.

center fuselage, while the others were AD-4s. All had their dive-brakes deactivated, arrestor hooks deleted, radar equipment suppressed and French operational equipment installed.

The first Skyraider was accepted by the Armée de l'Air in February 1960.

The French Skyraiders finally became operational from July 1960.

As close ground attack or logistic support aircraft they played their role magnificently until the cease-fire in Algeria in March 1962. In that month six AD-4s were dispatched to Djibouti and ten to Madagascar in 1963.

There was however no longer room for the AD in the Armée de l'Air.

The squadrons were gradually disbanded, but in September 1964 it still had 69 aircraft in its inventory.

On the other side of the globe the US had meanwhile slipped into the Vietnam war.

On August 2nd and 4th of 1964 North Vietnamese torpedo boats had attacked without warning two US destroyers in international waters.

The US retaliated with a strike against North Vietnamese torpedo boat bases by Skyraiders launched from the carriers "Ticonderoga" and "Constellation".

At the time there remained only 12 active Skyraider squadrons in the Navy, and as



Photo: Bernard Defjino

already in Korea these were to do an excellent job. The USN finally withdrew the type from operations against the Viet Cong in 1967, and the year after still useable aircraft were turned over to the USAF.



Madagascar 1968

Photo: A. Janet

The USAF and the Vietnamese Air Force (VNAF) became other important users of the Skyraider.

VNAF personnel had been trained in the States by the USAF, which had been supplied with stored ADs for this purpose.

The US in fact had been supporting the Republic of South Vietnam against the increasingly aggressive communist North.

Thus among others the VNAF was built up with massive USAF help.

In 1962 the first full VNAF Skyraider squadron was formed, and buildup accelerated as the conflict developed.

Already before the torpedo boat incidents USAF pilots had flown not only as advisers, but also as strike leaders with VNAF units.

As the USN had learned years ago, the USAF now quickly realized that the Skyraider was the best close air support aircraft that could be used for the kind of war that was being fought in Vietnam.

By 1965 strikes of VNAF and USAF Skyraiders had become a daily routine.

The need for ADs beyond those that could be taken out of storage rapidly became evident.

As a result the US Government tried to re-purchase aircraft sold to other nations, including France. General de Gaulle however refused the request and on his initiative the French donated 10 Skyraiders to communist supported Cambodia. No need to comment how this was perceived in the US.

France also sold Skyraiders to Gabon and the Tchad.

Finally about 10 remained in storage at the Châteaudun

depot.

Note: The authors of this report would be pleased if one or the other of our readers could help to find out what they became.

Data Table

DOUGLAS AD-4N SKYRAIDER

Description:

Single-seat attack bomber.

Propulsion:

One 2700 HP Wright R-3350

Span: 15,24 m (50 ft)

Maximum weight: 10886 kg (24000 lb)

Maximum speed: 740 km/h (460 mph)

Cruise speed: 345 km/h (213 mph)

Range (Combat): 1770 km (1100 mls)

Service ceiling: 10973 m (36000 ft)

Armament: Four fixed 20 mm cannons

Ordnance load: Up to 3629 kg (8000 lb) of bombs and rockets externally.



Photo: A. Janet

SPIRIT OF LEWIS.....

SPONSORS DU SPIRIT OF LEWIS

FLYING SPONSORS

Gilles Avenel
Hervé Cherry
Bernard Delfino
Fumiko Delfino
Marcel Fransisci
Claude Gascon
Roger Gouzou
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Roy Grinnell
Jean-Claude Miniggio
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SUPPORTING SPONSORS

Bunty Bateman
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Frédéric Baudin
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Claude De Marco
Louis-Jean Gioux
Patrick Gremez
Barbara Hair
Aubrey Hair
Yves Houssin
Rick Hudlow
Elzéard Ligneul
Guy Perrin
John Røeder
Marcel Ruppert
Jean-Jacques Vaucher

PIPER CUB ACCESSORIES

The list of WWII items is growing! We own, today, the following items:

- A pack of band-aid and a map of Normandy, donated by Patrick Pierre-Pierre.
- Two US Army jerrycans donated by Christophe Bastide.
- Two maps of Normandy and a WWII brass extinguisher, with its stand, donated by Bernard Delfino.



Photo: B. Delfino

Last month, as we completed the article about our warbird, the decoration of the *Spirit of Lewis* was going fine.

It was finished the day before we left for Montbéliard, which allowed us to collect some nice comments from our members and from the public during this Fly-In, but also during the technical stops.

However, plenty of work remains to be done to give this airplane the best possible look, and the same goes for its mechanical state.

Drawing a complete list of these tasks here would be far too long. Therefore, we will only print a selection that will, we hope, be an incentive for some of you, to help us as much as possible:

- Draw and paint a Nose-Art for the *Spirit of Lewis* (This task has been adopted by Bernard who uses up his spare time (!) to draw, paint, and get printed, this Nose-Art. This will soon be completed, and this drawing should please every member, starting with his widow, Bunty Bateman, who will be sent a copy of this painting).

- Change the two main wheel tubes.
- Replace the cylinder head covers with chromed types, including the screws.
- Get labels made for the various controls in the cockpit (Cabin Heating, Priming, etc...) and fit them.
- Replace the fuel tank cap/gauge assembly.
- Polish or replace the left hand sliding window.
- Change the oil cap seal.
- Replace the eight (8) spark plugs with new ones (REM40E).

- Locate and acquire original Piper Cub instruments, duly checked and certified (These instruments have a white front face and include the cute little drawing of the Cub, the famous logo of the Piper Cub).
- Replace the ignition harness.
- etc...

The other tasks on that long list are details that will only require time and work from those who will complete them, preferably members residing in the Paris area.

Those living in the provinces can easily help our airplane by looking for the above instruments.

As it is today, the *Spirit of Lewis* is quite acceptable, and the numerous compliments that we received from people show that we are on the right tracks.

But we must keep on working because this Piper Cub is the true Ambassador of our Wing, and it must be as perfect as possible.

Be assured that there will be enough work for every member of our Unit, even if you live far away from Paris, and we will often call for your help.



Photo: B. Delfino

The FW 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 N°1 of WWII airplanes and N°2 of post-war era, painted by artist Jean Bellis, 61x81cm: € 9,00 (Members) € 10,00 (Non Members) ©
- 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.....

TO AVOID RUNNING OUT OF FUEL

The Piper J-3 is fitted with a modest size fuel tank which gives the plane a range of 2 hours and 20 minutes. This requires the utmost care when flying over long distances. The French Air Safety Board (BEA), has a web site where we found some recommendations which should avoid running out of fuel:

Flight preparation: Study the route, the flight time, the possibility of refueling en route, the meteo file, the Notams, calculate the fuel often, and consider the possible diversion airfields.

Knowledge of the plane: Know its performances, its fuel consumption, the particulars of the refuelling, of the useable quantity, and the selectors when they are fitted.

Up to date information, pre-flight check: Latest meteo, quantity of fuel remaining, quantity of fuel added, total quantity of fuel on board, compare the data found in the log book, visually check the quantity, indications of the fuel gauges.

Flight management, fuel monitoring: Precise time already flown, fuel tank selection if there is more than one.

Change in flight route: Choce of the diversion airports, new fuel quantity estimation.

In case of a critical situation: Decision to stop the flight before running out of fuel, precautionary landing.

FRENCH WING ELECTIONS

The November 20, 2004, General Assembly will see the election of our Unit's **Vice-President** and **Treasurer**. The candidates should apply in writing (Mail, fax, or email) before October 15, 2004 at midnight. 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 40 Euros per hour.

••• **SUPPORTING SPONSOR:** 50 Euros per year and 55 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 each one of our members to find the level he wishes to adopt.