



Volume 10 - N° 1 - January 2005

EDITORIAL

The vote that has just taken place within the French Wing has decided, with the election of our friends Philippe Duflot and Eric Ducreau, of the future of our Unit for years 2005, 2006, and 2007. Their arrival is an event that comes together with other very important changes that I shall let you read about in the article printed on pages 2 and 3 of this issue.

The new team will have a lot of work because our Association is, today, bigger than it has ever been.

I have known Eric, Philippe, and Didier, for a long time, and I can assure you that they are all excellent elements: Hard-working and resourceful, they are always available when one needs a hand. Generous and dedicated, they can take initiatives, and they do it very discreetly, with only one thing in mind: The interest of the CAF and the French Wing.

As for Claude and Bertrand, I can assure them that the fact they haven't been chosen is not dishonorable. The French Wing activities are numerous and varied enough to give them, and all our members, a multitude of occasions to dedicate themselves to our Unit and to the CAF, which was the unique and true purpose of this double election.

I wish you all, your families, and your friends, a very happy new year 2005.

I also wish our Wing a lot of continuous success for a year that already promises to be exciting and very rich in various events.

Bernard

CAF FRENCH WING 2004 ELECTIONS



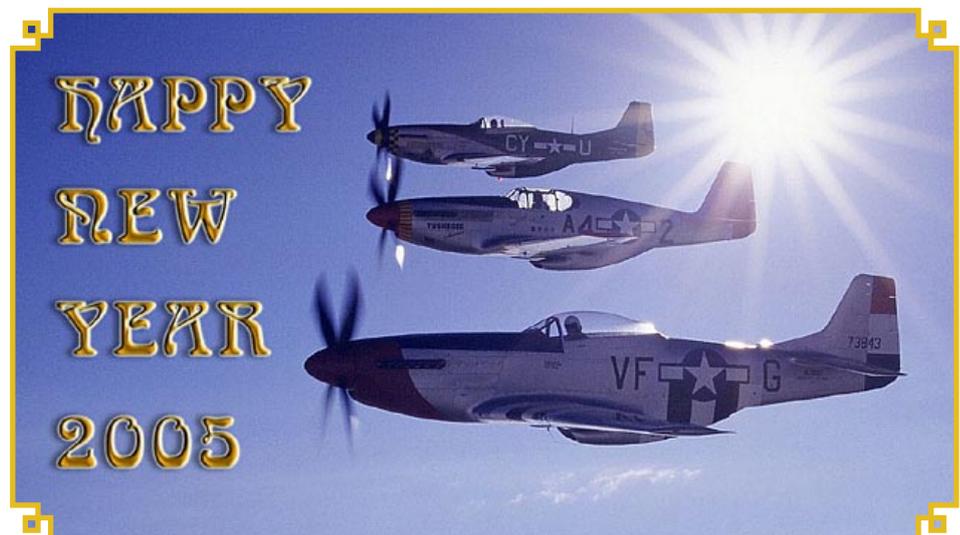
Éric DUCREAU



Philippe DUFLOT

COLS. ERIC DUCREAU AND PHILIPPE DUFLOT HAVE RESPECTIVELY BEEN ELECTED TO THE JOBS OF EXECUTIVE OFFICER AND FINANCE OFFICER OF THE FRENCH WING FOR THE THREE YEARS TO COME (See pages 2 & 3).

• AIRSHO 2005 : IMPORTANT MESSAGE ON PAGE 4 !



BOARD OF ADMINISTRATION.....

FRENCH WING ELECTIONS

The 2004 French Wing elections took place without any particular problems, with either the direct vote that took place during our General Assembly or during the vote by mail that followed.

The ballots were counted on December 14 by colonels Didier Cardinal, Fumiko Delfino, and Roger Gouzon, with colonels Bernard Delfino and Eric Ducreau as observers who made sure that this operation was legal at all times.

The results of these elections are as follows:

Eligible: 77

Voting: 57 (74,03 %)

Annulled: 4 (No respect of the procedures)

Executive Officer Election

Eric DUCREAU: 32 votes (60,38 %)

Claude REQUI: 21 votes (39,62 %)

Finance Officer Election

Philippe DUFLOT: 34 votes (64,15 %)

Bertrand BOUSSERT: 19 votes (35,85 %)

Colonels **Éric Ducreau** and **Philippe Duflot** are, therefore, respectively elected to the positions of **Executive Officer** and **Finance Officer**. Our sincere congratulations to both of them!

We hope that Bertrand and Claude will not be too disappointed. They will have many opportunities to show their support to the CAF and to the French Wing during the months and the years to come. It's a fact that it is not necessary to have an official position to be efficient and dedicated.

WHO WILL BE THE FRENCH WING ADJUTANT OFFICER?

Since no member at all cannot accumulate two positions within our Unit's Board of Administration, the election of colonel Eric Ducreau to the job of Executive Officer automatically deprived us of a Secretary, a position that was filled by Eric since he was elected to it a year ago.

APPOINTMENT TO THE FRENCH WING ADJUTANT OFFICER POSITION

The Board of Administration's primary task was to designate a replacement of the Adjutant by co-optation as it is detailed in our Statutes: *"In case of a vacancy, the Board of Administration will co-opt temporary members by any legal means"*.

The Board of Administration discussed this problem and came to the unanimous conclusion that colonel **Didier Cardinal** would be the best possible replacement.

Didier will, therefore, fill this position until the date at which the Adjutant Officer he is replacing would have ended his term in office, that is to say, until the end of year 2006.

The reasons that led the Board of Administration to the choice of colonel **Didier CARDINAL** are based on his experience within the Board of Administration, his dedication to our Organization and to our Unit, his residence close to the other members of the Board of Administration, his obligingness, and his availability that always make him say *"There!"* when our Wing needs help.

Didier (*Below*), outgoing Finance Officer, was very honored by this request and immediately accepted this position of Adjutant Officer with great enthusiasm.



FIRST MEETING OF THE BOARD OF ADMINISTRATION

The brand new Board of Administration held its first meeting on January 02, 2005, during which the temporary Adjutant Officer was selected. Then its members examined the numerous points that will be their "daily bread" for the months and years to come:

- Organisation and distribution of precise tasks within the Board of Administration.
- Study of the CAF rules and manuals.
- Finalization, publication, and distribution of the French Wing Internal Rules.
- Setup of a 2005 Meetings Agenda for the Board of Administration.
- Integration of the Maintenance Officer and Operations Officer in these meetings, and installation of a monthly technical and financial report.
- Creation of monthly articles in the Newsletter, from every member of the Board of Administration, as well as from the Maintenance and Operations Officers.
- Designation of a Honorary President (The Wise Man of our Association), a difficult choice that does not present any aspect of urgency and will take quite some time.
- Discussion about the importance and priority of the various current and future projects, as they were described during the last General Assembly (French Wing Patches and pins, PX, Spirit of Lewis, meetings, hangar & Stearman, etc...etc...).
- Increase in the quest for external Sponsors, and changes in the leaflet that is sent to potential Sponsors.
- Development and intensification of the recruitment program for 2005.
- Estimate of the French Wing assets (Equipment, PX articles, etc...).

WHAT CHANGES ?

The election of our friends Philippe and Eric, and the designation of Didier are about to bring some notable changes in the way our French Wing functions. Here is a non-exhaustive list of these changes to which some other innovations will be added, and which will be announced in due time:

1- All the cheques that you will send to pay your annual dues, sponsorship, PX purchases, participation to meetings, meals, days out, etc... will need to be sent, from January 01, 2005, to our Finance Officer's personal address:

Col. Philippe DUFLOT
8 Rue Fernand Segouin
95400 ARNOUVILLE
FRANCE

Telephone: 01 34 07 86 34

Fax: 01 34 07 85 98

email: < skyrunner@wanadoo.fr >

2- These cheques will imperatively be drawn up to the name of the **CAF FRENCH WING**, and not to the Finance Officer, Unit Leader, or anyone else's personal name.

3- All expenses have to be done with the Board of Administration's agreement beforehand, and, mainly, the Finance Officer's one, and they will only be reimbursed if you can produce, together with your claim, a bill which is dated, stamped, and/or signed by the provider.

4- Any CAF or French Wing membership problem (Or renewal of membership) will be dealt with by the common efforts of the Finance Officer and the Adjutant Officer: The latter will keep an accurate record of all memberships, and will advise the Finance Officer of any change. Together, they will take the best decision to help you solve your problem, or will give you the advice you need.

5- The Executive Officer will work in cooperation with the Unit Leader, and according to the latter's directives. This task is not unknown by our new Executive Officer since Eric participated very actively in the birth of our Unit from its earliest hours, solving with our Unit Leader and colonel Michel Cahiez who recently disappeared, the innumerable difficulties that we met at each step, and since he already held this position in the past. The Unit Leader will delegate

some of the tasks, and, together, they will do their best to solve the problems of a general nature, and they will make useful contacts with external persons or organizations.

Finally, the Executive Officer will replace the Unit Leader while he is not available.

6- The Unit Leader will continue the work he has been performing since our Unit was born. Therefore, he will be responsible for the general running of the French Wing, and he will receive your general or personal calls, as he always did in the past.

Also, he will remain our PIO (*Public Information Officer*), a task that includes, among others, the external relations, the Press Releases, and the design and publication of our Newsletter. Therefore, it is to him that you will need to send the articles that you will suggest for a publication in our monthly bulletin.

7- The CAF French Wing head office address remains unchanged:

CAF FRENCH WING
19 Rue de Cannes
93600 AULNAY SOUS BOIS
FRANCE

Tel/Fax: 01 48 69 04 57
email: < bdelfino26@aol.com >



MESSAGE FROM THE EXECUTIVE OFFICER

"I am very honored by the confidence you have shown me, but the hardest is still to come, and we will have plenty of work to do.

There will be many problems to solve in the years to come: Great projects, but also a host of small worries that we will need to eradicate in a way that will satisfy everyone.

I shall be listening to all of you, and I shall do my best to ensure that, together, we drive our Association towards the goal that we adopted, the best possible way.

I wish you a very happy New Year 2005, happiness and good health. These are simple words, but they are very sincere! And I wish that all the French Wing projects succeed, and even more.

Thank you everyone.

Eric Ducreau"

MESSAGE FROM THE FINANCE OFFICER

"I wish to thank all those members who voted for Bertrand or for me. The number of participants proves that our Association is alive and well.

I assure all our members that I shall do my very best; and they must not hesitate to contact me by email or by mail for any question related to the French Wing's finances.

Thanks again and happy holidays to you all!

Philippe Dufлот"

MESSAGE FROM THE ADJUTANT OFFICER

"Dear friends of the French Wing,

I wish you all a happy Xmas and a very happy new year 2005, hoping that all our projects enjoy a happy and successful ending.

I wish to take this opportunity to thank the members of the Board of Administration for renewing their confidence and designating me for the job of Adjutant Officer in replacement of colonel Eric Ducreau, newly elected to the position of Executive Officer.

My very best regards to you all.

Didier Cardinal"

RECRUITMENT OF NEW CAF MEMBERS

We wish to remind you that Operation **Code Name Bravo** which allows the recruitment of new colonels for the amount of **100.00 Dollars the first year**, remains active until December 31, 2005.

If you know any potential new colonels, we thank you for giving them these great news, and for giving us their address so that we can send them a commission file. If you prefer, we will send you this file to your personal address so that you can help them fill it in.

FRENCH AIRPLANES OF WWII AND BEFORE...

Colonel Louis-Jean Gioux recently offered to write a series of articles that would depict aircraft that, from the end of WWI, were very modern indeed.

War and political events that followed the signature of the 1918 Armistice, helped the fast evolution of civilian and military aviation.

Louis-Jean suggested to go back in time through articles which will be illustrated by himself, which exactly fits the wishes of our friend colonel Michel Cahiez.

We let you discover the talents of Louis-Jean as an artist who uses a pen to produce fantastic drawings, or, rather, paintings, revealed by the very first article on page 6 of this issue.



Col. Louis-Jean Gioux's talent is really unusual,

full of originality and daintiness, a talent that will surprise you!

We wish to congratulate and warmly thank colonel Louis-Jean Gioux for his never ending enthusiasm for the CAF and our Unit.

STILL WANTED BY THE FRENCH WING...

Reactions to our call, last month, are coming in slowly...

- Colonel Gioux's help, above, is very positive and reassuring because it fills the enormous gap that was left by the loss of colonel Michel Cahiez, and, consequently, the loss of his articles about French airplanes of WWII.

- Safety: Anecdotes about aircraft incidents or accidents are only coming at a very slow rate. Far too slow: We only received two stories that came from the same enthusiastic member, colonel William Davies.

This is quite surprising if one considers that about 60% of our members have a life which is in direct relation with aviation, either military, transport, or general, and must have been the witnesses or the actors of incidents or accidents, either on the ground, or in flight.

We understand that it is probably very difficult to tell the story of these incidents, especially when one is an actor, or even the source of the error that was made. In the latter case, the anonymity will be totally respected, and you do not have any reason not to tell us about these experiences.

One can only learn from the mistakes that one makes. This is why we believe that you should tell us about it, so that everyone can get something from it and avoid doing the same mistakes.

- Finally, we still need to create a team of 4 to 6 members who will deal with the celebration of the 10th anniversary of the birth of our Unit.

June 2006 may seem very far away to everyone, but time flies very fast, and the organization of this event will require the accomplishment of a multitude of various and important tasks.

It's never too early to start preparing this celebration, to distribute the main tasks, to do everything possible to make this feast a real success, and to find the funds that will ensure that this anniversary will be a success.

We thank you in advance for taking an active part in all these projects.

SPONSORS OF THE SPIRIT OF LEWIS

A few Sponsors of the Spirit of Lewis haven't renewed their sponsorship for 2005, although it's due on December 31, each year.

If you are part of the Sponsors who, in 2004, have supported our airplane, we beg you to check the last page of this issue, and see if your name is on the list of Sponsors who are up to date with their Sponsorship:

- If your name is not on the list, we thank you for sending us a your contribution as soon as possible.

- If you do not wish to renew your sponsorship, please do write to us as soon as possible, so that we know exactly who we can rely on, in 2005.

- If you were not a Sponsor in 2004, but wish to become one in 2005, all you need to do is send us a cheque of the amount for the level you have chosen (*Flying Sponsor, Restoration Sponsor, or Supporting Sponsor*). This cheque must be drawn up to the "CAF FRENCH WING".

2005 TRIP TO MIDLAND !!! TOP URGENT !!!

Col. Philippe Dufлот has just received the following offer from American Airlines, about airline tickets for a group of 10 persons minimum:

PARIS - MIDLAND - PARIS

517 Euros without taxes + around 107 Euros for the latter, and a total of 624 Euros.

(Note: In comparison, Air France is offering the same price for a trip PARIS - HOUSTON - PARIS, to which one must add the flights HOUSTON - MIDLAND - HOUSTON, which will raise the total cost by, at least, 25%).

BEWARE! The flights Dallas - Midland - Dallas are operated by small capacity airplanes (About 40 seats), therefore, it is necessary that you make your reservations as soon as possible!

You must reply imperatively before January 15, 2005. Please contact our Finance Officer Philippe Dufлот by mail, email, or telephone, as follows:

Col. Philippe DUFLOT
8 Rue Fernand Segouin
95400 ARNOUVILLE
Tél: 01 34 07 86 34
Fax: 01 34 07 85 98
email: < skyrunner@wanadoo.fr >



Photo: Bernard Delfino

ATTENTION ALL! GEORGE MARCELIN HAS DONE IT AGAIN!

Our friend George Marcelin has, evidently, stricken very hard when he wrote this poem that he dedicates to all French Wing members. We thank him very much for these verses that describe so well our activities and "combat" to make these dreams come true. What a nice Xmas present!

AN UNCOMMON DISCOVERY...

Col. Eric Ducreau has made an unusual discovery which may well become an indispensable tool for our Unit: Designed, manufactured, and used by a car collector, this "vehicle" was used to move the cars around this gentleman's garage.



This object, whose remarkable aesthetics would normally designate it to be displayed in the Smithsonian Museum (!), is fitted with an accelerator, a Forward/Reverse switch, and a brake, which make it the exact reproduction of the idea we had of an aircraft electrical towbar for the hangar in Persan-Beaumont!

A few minor modifications, the fitting of three rubber, low pressure, wheels, and a battery, will be enough to make this invention totally operational. Cherry on the cake, colonel Eric Ducreau has donated this original vehicle to the French Wing. A very big Thank You Eric!

QUEST FOR SPONSORS

One of the main tasks for our Wing to complete its projects, will be the quest for Sponsors or Patrons among the firms of all sorts.

In fact, this quest has already started several months ago, and the generosity of the SKY RUNNER company allowed us to lay the first stone of this edifice.

The EPSON company, through its recent generous donation of 17 ink cartridges of a value of \$ 1500.00, allowed us to carry on the same way.

All our members may participate in this operation, and, to help them, we have designed a file which is available on request from the head office of our Association. Depending on the "target",

this file will need to be sent together with a personalized introduction letter.

But beware! This is only the first step! And one would be quite naïve to believe that money would start flowing in with this letter alone.

The only effective and irreplaceable way to ask for the generosity of these potential donors is a direct personal contact, which will allow you to discuss with these people and explain to them the sincerity and authenticity of the goals that drive us all.

This is the one and only way to make people understand how important is the **Duty of Memory** towards those who sacrificed themselves for our Free-

CAF / FRENCH WING

*Some honest citizens, enraged when they were born
To get some old aircraft airborne!
Deeply possessed by the "Duty of Memory",
And willing to preserve a page of history,
These crazy guys, carried by faithful dreams,
Went away to find war-time machines!
As one gets nothing for nothing on this earth!
They looked for money, raking up here and there,
Gathering some Euros,
Better than any casino!
They managed to buy an old « Piper »
And got it back in the air, thanks to the hard labour,
That those who were expert
Carried out with some luck!
They are all proud of it. Yellow, they painted it,
It's their flag, looked after like no one!
And now, in their eyes, a dream appears,
A « Stearman » for which they will nurse,
All donations that will fall in their purse.
This hope drives them, and pushes them further.
Sponsors! To your pockets! Do a good deed!
Of generosity don't be scarce. Indeed!
With a « Piper cub », one can fly on one wing,
But a Stearman would give'em the one they're missing.
As many as you can, find these feathers,
For these preachers, for these dreamers!
Since the combat they're fighting is also my own,
They're my friends, and that's a treasure I own!*

Col. Georges Marcelin
Member of the French Wing

Adapted (with difficulty) by B. Delfino

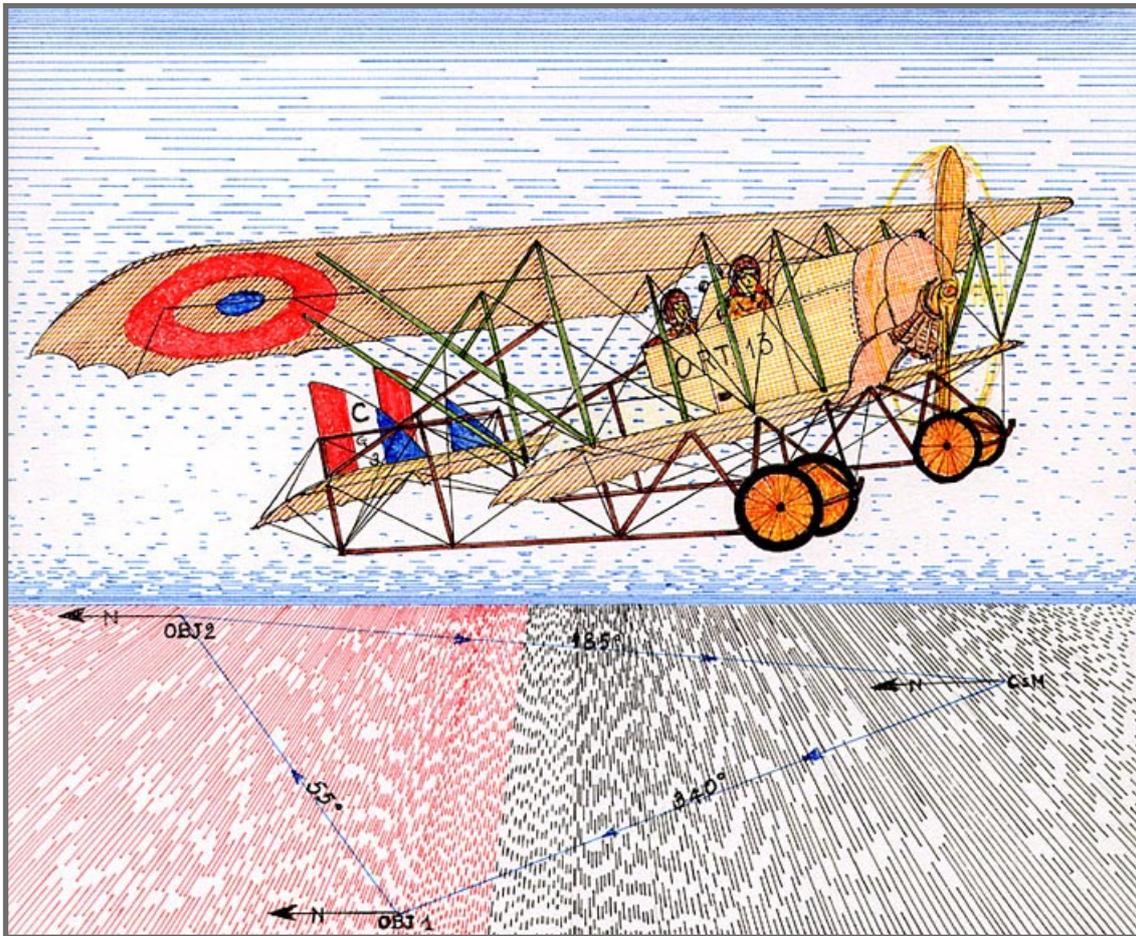
dom. It will, in particular, allow you to explain that keeping WWII aircraft air-worthy is, in reality, nothing else than a tool which, just like monuments erected in memory of these unfortunate soldiers, is a material representation of the permanent homage that we give them on every possible occasion.

This is what makes our Association so different from all those whose members restore similar airplanes with the only goal of having fun, which is not reprehensible, but far from having the same meaning or the same moral value.

This quest for Sponsors is a long painstaking task which will require a lot of time, long and numerous drives, and plenty of energy. But what a satisfaction when you manage to obtain a significant donation!



Article and painting by col. Louis-Jean Gioux



Painting: Col. Louis-Jean Gioux ©



The Caudron brothers, Gaston and René, respectively born in 1882 and 1884, were both barrel-makers. In 1908 they decided to start building a bi-plane for which they never found any engine. It was in 1909, helped by a local carpenter, that they built another bi-plane fitted with an Anzani engine, and managed to do several flights, some of which over a distance of 7 miles.

This was the starting point of a long line of aircraft, civilian and military, among which the Caudron G3, a reconnaissance

bi-plane, also used for artillery monitoring and aerial photography, which appeared on the front line as early as 1914. This unarmed airplane - except for the personal weapons carried on board by the crew - was built by the hundreds and adopted by several countries like Britain, Italy, and Russia.

But the years went by, and improvements came in fast, on the allied side as well as the enemy side. This forced the makers to think about new aircraft types, better fitted to the new style of combats.

The Caudron G3, single engine plane with two tandem wheels under-carriage, was, therefore, replaced progressively

from 1916, by the twin engine G4 version, the G3 remaining in service as a trainer in the flight schools.

In 1915, on December 10, Gaston was killed in an accident while testing the new twin engine R4. René carried on and moved to Guyancourt in 1928. In 1932, the Caudron firm merged with Renault and took an active part in the manufacture of many various planes. René died on September 27, 1959.



OPERATIONS.....

I asked our Operation Officer, colonel **Gilles Avenel**, to write a short article that I wish to become monthly, which could underline the important points of the year's events program, safety, organisation of flights with our Warbird, in a few words, a monthly article of one column approximately. What a surprise to receive a long article, very interesting and often humorous, a complete story of two of the missions Gilles accomplished during the 2004 season. I finally decided to publish this article in its entirety because it will allow all of our members who did not take part in these raids, to realize their difficulties, but also the great pleasure they gave to those who participated one way or another. Bernard

A FEW MEMORIES OF THE 2004 OPERATIONS...

MONTBÉLIARD

Friday July 02, in the evening. Tomorrow is "D" day... The first long range flight for our J-3, and its very first participation in an airshow. Excitement is on a peak in the hangar. One feverishly applies the last touches of the paint-work, the Unit Leader sprays some clear varnish on the wings like one would spray some hair spray on a pretty lady's hair, everyone checks, tightens, cleans, in a few words, wants to be part of this historic event. OK! See you all on the airfield tomorrow at 08:30, and take-off at 10:00.

In the evening, in the quiet house of Bernard and Fumiko who are kind enough to lodge me for the night, I work on tomorrow's navigation. Sacrebleu! We did not pick up a next door event for this first ferry flight: Persan to Montbéliard is a long trip! About 270 miles.

Let's see... with a cruise speed of 75 mph (I don't want to use knots because it would give me the impression that we are static!) this makes three and one half hour in flight. OK but the J-3's range is one hour and forty five minutes plus the reserve fuel, or 130 miles.

Therefore, unless we find an airfield located exactly halfway along the route (But even then it's risky and does not leave any leeway for possible errors), we must stop twice for refuelling.

This is the tricky bit. Finding airfields is no problem, but finding airfields that can provide us with gasoline on a Saturday or a Sunday, that's another story! Either the field is ran by the local Chamber of Commerce, and, of course, the servant is not working during the week-end... Or it belongs to an aero-club, and the times the person responsible is present is unpredict-

able. In the first case, there won't be any gas, in the second one, we don't know. Travelling is not easy...

Because I experienced this situation in the past, I suggest to our Leader that he carries a 20 litre drum of gasoline (A bit more than one hour of flight), so that he can rescue us, should we be stuck somewhere.

The met confirms nice weather along our route. Let's go! With the great honor to be the pilot for this first raid, and, an even greater honor, to have colonel Fumiko Delfino as a navigator.

As expected, for many very good reasons, we take off at 11:00 instead of the planned 10:00. We fly around the Paris area, with the airport of Plessis-Belleville as a turning

because it's 12:00, and our arrival was scheduled for 11:00. We are lucky...

We take-off again and head for Langres. It's the airfield that appeared to me as the best suited for our trip. I tried to phone them yesterday with no luck to find out if there would be someone to sell us some gas when we arrive. We'll see...

The westerly wing gets stronger, so that our ground speed increases significantly. According to my calculations (well... those from our GPS), we are flying at a speed of 88 mph. We are over Langres after an hour. I am tempted to carry on without refuelling, but, no, it's too short. I would be on the reserve fuel, and if the wind changes, and if I get lost a little, and if I'm asked to hold when we get to Montbéliard, and if... Let's not be stupid, we land!

The airfield of Langres is very nice. Surrounded by woods and heather, the site is wild and absolutely deserted. After a few minutes waiting near the fuel dispense, Fumiko and I realize that nobody will come before some time. This is part of the things that one can feel when landing on a field. Some are well alive, even if no one is readily visible, others are dead. The latter case is the one.



point, and we head for Sézanne, our first stop. For our J-3, it's a trip back through time since this is the place where it was based for many years when we bought it. This flight allows me to observe a strange phenomenon: Every time I point out a significant "way point" to my navigator, on the right hand side, she never fails to look on the left, and vice versa. Is it due to the intercom?...

This small difficulty does not stop us from getting there safely. We stop near the fuel dispenser, but the airfield of Sézanne is like a desert. However, our Leader phoned yesterday, and there should have been someone to sell us some gas. Finally, we find someone who was about to drive away

We switch on our mobile phones to contact our Leader and tell him that : 1/ We are in Langres, there is no one there, we need gas to fly to Montbéliard, and we need his emergency gas drum, 2/ The crew is hungry and thirsty. Our Leader discuss the situation with colonel Roger Gouzon who is travelling with him, tell us that he is one hour away from Langres, and that he will bring food for everyone.

It was almost one hour forty five minutes, rather than the expected one hour, before Bernard and Roger arrived. Fumiko and I had problems understanding how his car, which travelled at 80 mph, took so much longer than the airplane which travelled at 75 mph... We even wondered if they did

not stop on the way to have a good meal. But we kept it to ourselves, first because one does not accuse our Leader lightly, second because it would have been inappropriate to pick on our rescuers.

A sandwich and 20 litres of gas later (Well... actually 18 because I spilled a good 2 litres under the very eyes of our Leader who wiped off furiously the cowlings, but try to handle a 20 kilograms drum and try and pour the fluid into a very small funnel, standing on a wheel...).

We take-off again. Optimism rules the plane. I try to test my navigator, colonel Fumiko Delfino, again, but I get no reaction from her. I wonder if the intercom is playing funny again, but I can hear some kind of humming noise which, although superimposed on the engine sound does not seem to come from it. I understand that the navigator is fast asleep, and the fact that her head moves from left to right or right to left has nothing to do with my comments.

The wind gets stronger. We are now moving at a ground speed of 95 mph! Fifty minutes, and we arrive at Montbéliard. A "kiss landing" (Yes, for a change!) and we stop on the tarmac where several other J-3 and L-4 are already parked. But ours is the most beautiful one. Really! The French Wing of the Commemorative Air Force is well represented. Colonel Jean-Claude Minnigio welcomes us very warmly. Let the feast begin !...

RENNES

Thanks to colonel Cédric Malhaire, the French Wing is asked to come with its airplane to the airshow in Rennes. This is really something! We are surrounded by several Mustang, Bearcat, or Corsair, whose company confirms that our J-3 is also a real warbird. A small one, but we're part of the family.

Colonel Patrick Pierre-Pierre ferried the plane from Persan. His flight was eventful. He was mistreated by the bad weather which forced him to stop at Pontoise, and then forced him to night stop in Alençon (That's what Patrick says. One must say though that he had a lovely passenger on board. But enough of that...).

He was s delayed again by the strong head wind the following morning (One of Patrick specialities !), so that the crew was well



Photo: Bernard Delfino

exhausted when they got to Rennes. All bad jokes aside, it's in bad weather that one can see the good pilots, and colonel Patrick Pierre-Pierre proved that he is an excellent PIC (Pilot in Command) by accomplishing his mission with great care and determination.

As soon as I arrived on the airfield of Rennes on Sunday morning, our Leader drags me with colonel Patrick Pierre-Pierre, to the crew briefing, in preparation for the airshow air display: flight orders, display sequences, safety procedures, etc. From the planning, we are the first ones to take-off for a formation flight with an L-4.

Our slot is from 09 h 34 (take-off) to 09 h 46 (landing). The briefing ends at 09 h 15, and we get to the hangar to discover that our plane is at the very end of it, and several planes are parked in front, including a big twin-engine that weighs several tons, that we need to roll out to get the "Spirit of Lewis" outside.

It's already 09 h 35 when the J-3 is outside, and we still need to do the pre-flight check, fit the radio, at least 10 minutes before we can be ready.

Everyone works fast, and I'm stressed. I have just the time to discuss the formation with the other pilot: Who's doing what, what kind of display, where do we meet, etc...

He starts his engine while we are still fitting the radio. I don't have time to do my checks the way I like it. I don't have a good

feeling, and I know, by experience, that all the conditions to have a problem are there.

I decide not to fly. Our Leader's face gets longer, but with his usual wisdom (Hurray for the Boss!), he accepts my decision : "As you like, Safety first...". Well, it's no fun, but reassured by the Leader's calm attitude, I start thinking... After all, the slot time has been largely exceeded, and rather than panic, let's go on with the starting of the engine and let's finish our checks. We'll then see if the organizers accept our take-off or if they switched to

the next display.

In fact, there's no problem. The tower gives us the OK to taxi for our presentation. We do the engine run, switch to the flight frequency, and take-off in formation.

I'm a bit rough on the controls, but it's OK : Not too tight, just as it should be. The other plane flies away and lets me do my solo presentation. Well, let's be modest. This has nothing to do with the display of a Mirage flown by famous Jean-Marie Saget.

My display is very bad: Very brutal, I don't show the airplane's characteristics, and I can feel that the plane doesn't like it. And to top it off, I realize that I did most of my presentation at the runway threshold, too far from the public. I'm bad. I could kick myself.

The colonels confirm very diplomatically and very friendly that it could have been better. The lesson is clear : One must learn, and presenting an aircraft in flight before the public, even a modest Piper J-3, must also be learned. I promise myself to be better the next time.



Photo: Bernard Delfino



Photo: Bernard Defjino

The met forecast expects bad weather for tomorrow, Monday, the day we planned to fly back to Persan with colonel Roger Gouzon.

Roger and I discuss this problem with our Leader, and we decide to shorten our stay and fly back in the afternoon, in order to avoid the same difficulties as the ones experienced by colonel Patrick Pierre-Pierre on the way in. In addition, I have nothing against the physical appearance of Roger, but I would very much prefer a lovely lady passenger...

Colonel Cédric Malhaire, who knows all the mysteries of this airport, sends us the fuel bowser to top up the gas tank, and efficiently negotiates some engine oil with the organizers since we did not use the full gasoline allocation.

I get a slot time from Operations despite the intense activities of the afternoon flight display, watched by more than 20000 spectators. I plan my navigation on a rickety table in the open. Lifted by the gusting wind, the maps tend to fly away every minute. I get nervous. On top of it, I cannot program the GPS, and I'm constantly asked by members of the public who are impressed by my CAF flight suit and ask me various questions that I can't or don't want to answer (*How many combat aircraft in the French forces? Is it difficult to fly a fighter?...*) Decidedly, regarding organization, it's not my day!

15:53. It's our slot time. Roger and I are in the plane, buckled up, radio "on", ready to start for the 2.5 hours expected between Rennes and Persan.

Our Leader and colonel Didier Cardinal are ready for the engine start. We're advised to start engine when the Tigercat lands, so

that we can taxi during the Thunderbolt display, and take-off as soon as the latter lands.

I can assure you that when you hear these instructions over the radio, you feel another man than the average modest pilot that one usually is!...

Here we go! We slowly gain altitude in the Rennes zone while we head on for L'Aigle, where we will refuel. The ATC controller asks me what our cruising altitude will be. I reply "3 500 feet". "*How long do you think you will stay established at 3 500 feet?*" asks the Controller. And I can only reply piteously: "*Well... to be honest, I don't know if we can reach 3 500 feet*". This answer makes him laugh and confirms that he is a nice guy, which I felt during our previous radio conversations. So we call out: "*Rennes, from Lima Québec, thank you for your welcome, and see you soon*". "*Lima Québec, bravo for your airplane, and have a good flight!*". And thank you Cédric for the excellent organization of our stay!



Photo: Bernard Defjino

Let's get to serious stuff. Roger, imperturbable, looks after the front cockpit. I have to twist my neck a little to see the compass which disappears between his shoulders. It forces me to take a reference spot on the horizon so that I can keep a heading. This is how one starts to navigate. The J-3 is excellent to make you loose your bad habits. And, as usual, we have a strong tail wind pushing us towards our destination and we have a ground speed of 95 mph. We arrive at L'Aigle in one hour and twenty minutes.

I cannot stop sneering about Patrick who had such a bad time on the way in. During

the approach, I imagine some clever (?) jokes about it. I get well punished for my bad thoughts when I miss my landing, just before the airfield club-house, so that no one can miss it. Because Roger often flew with me, he is used to it. He remains very quiet, with, nevertheless some light coughing, that tells a lot about his thoughts when one knows him...

Once we have refuelled, we start again on our way to Persan. As we fly along the Evreux zone, I try to contact them by radio. No reply. Of course! It's Sunday, the zone is probably not active. However, another plane contacts them and they reply. Obviously they can't hear me. Strange... Since we are at the extreme south limit of the zone, they may not be able to hear me because we are too low and too far?... Let's carry on.

Here is the Paris area. Mantes, the river Seine. The visibility is superb. The tail wind is still strong, and our ground speed is still about 90 mph. This radio problem bothers me. There is something definitely wrong: When I switch on the *transponder*, the radio dies. And it is now time to contact Pontoise. No surprize, they can't read me. I check the map to find a way to get to Persan without a radio, and without getting inside the controlled zones. Not easy in the Paris area, but we finally get there. At least, we arrived at Persan with no particular problem, and both enchanted by our flight.

Roger phones our Leader to inform him about our arrival and the radio problem.

After verification, it will appear that the difficulty simply came from the battery which had given all it had. No surprize: It was the same battery that was

used for the first leg of this trip, and it was never changed or recharged. This is how the haste before the air display caught us. We should have changed it during the pre-flight check, but since we were late, no one thought about it.

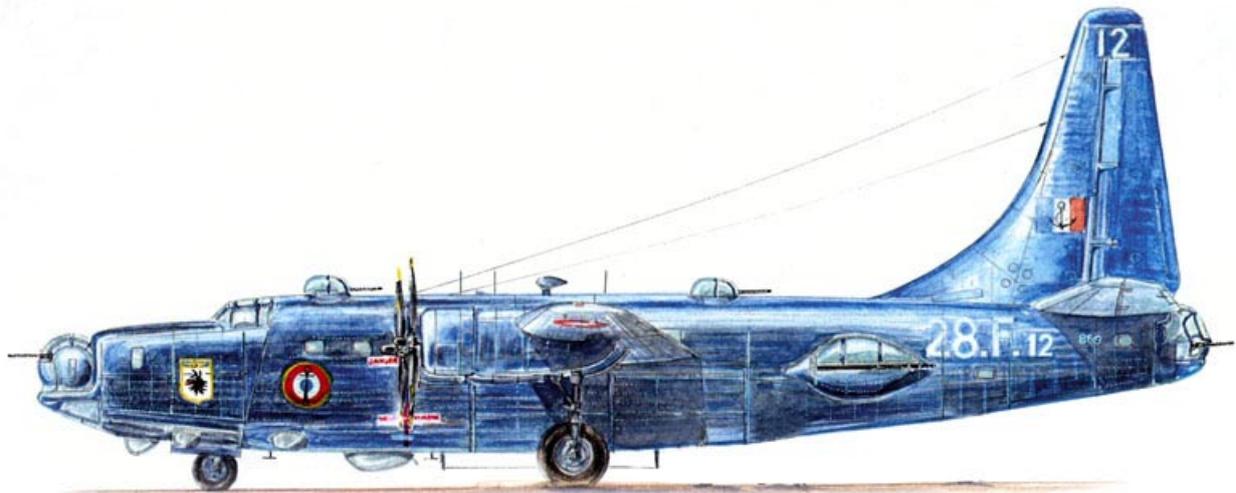
The consequence could have meant stopping along our route for the night, and what if the weather had been bad during the flight? This omission could have jeopardized safety. The entire *Spirit of Lewis* team remembered the lesson... Today, on the check-list, one can read: "*Battery: Charge checked*". One learns on every occasion. And on top of it, it was such a nice flight!



CONSOLIDATED PB4Y-2 PRIVATEER



By Colonels John P. Roeder and Michel Perrin - Painting by Jean Bellis - Photos Marine Nationale



In May 1943 the US Navy placed a contract with Convair to allocate three B-24D Liberators for conversion into a long-range patrol bomber as a replacement for PB4Y-1, which was a straight forward derivation of the B-24.

The first aircraft made its initial flight in September of 1943 and production deliveries took place in the March 1944 to October 1945 period.

Named the " Privateer " the PB4Y-2 had a lengthened fuselage with a large waist blister on each side behind the wing, a completely new interior arrangement, a radically changed defensive armament and new engine nacelles with hot-air



de-icing. It was powered by four Pratt & Whitney R-1830-94s without turbo-

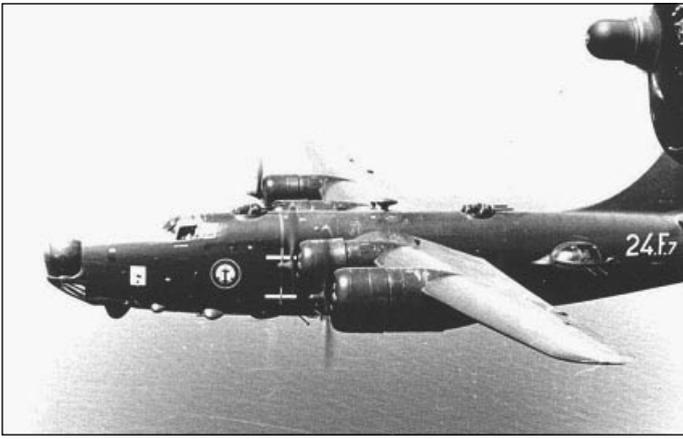
superchargers, as patrol flights were mostly carried out at relatively low altitudes.



Because of the bigger and heavier air-frame, its larger drag emphasized on low-level flying, performances of the PB4Y-2 were generally inferior to those of the Liberator in spite of more powerful engines.

When production was cancelled in October 1945, 739 Privateers had been built. Although little operational use was made of the type during WWII, five or six squadrons were progressively equipped with PB4Y-2s, which served the Navy for several years after the war.

The decision of the US-administration to provide military aid to France in



these surrendered in May 1954.

Four Privateers seem to have been lost in operations over Indo-China including two at Dien Bien Phu.

Six were restituted to the Americans in early 1955 at Manila and a number of them were

Indo-China in 1950 led among others to the delivery of 24 PB4Y-2s to the French from November of 1950.

Re-designated the P4Y-2 it replaced the PB5Y-5A Catalinas of Aéronavale flotilla 8F, which became 28F in 1953.

In addition, flotilla 24F used it for some months in 1954. After the type



had become operational it participated in all great battles particularly as an all weather and night bomber.



At Na-San Aéronavale Privateers flew 62 night strikes with good results, they massively bombed Viet-Minh positions in the Plain of the Yarres and finally from Cat-Bi they supported French ground troops by night attacks in the perimeter of Dien Bien Phu, until

dispatched to Algeria.

There, they were used briefly for strikes along the Tunisian border across which most of the supplies needed by the Algerian rebels were smuggled and a stream of guerillas were trying to join their ranks.

In 1960 the Privateer ended its career with the French forces. Its use in particular in Indo-China calls however for some comments.

The twenty four aircraft accepted by the French were supplied on request of the Aéronavale. For the US Navy this was a good

deal, as it had no longer any use for the type.

What the French expected from this airplane is however not quite clear.

What they really needed in Indo-China were attack bombers which were to become available with

the Douglas B-26 Invader only a few



months later. These however were destined to the Armée de l'Air.

There is no doubt that the Privateer as a relatively low-level all weather horizontal heavy bomber did useful work in Indo-China.

The question is however: did the effort required to operate this aircraft in such kind of a conflict justifies the achievable effect, or did the Aéronavale for no matter what reason just wanted a replacement for its PB5Y Catalina?

Caractéristiques / Data Table

LOCKHEED PV-1 VENTURA

Description

Bombardier Patrouilleur avec 11 membres d'équipage
Patrol Bomber with crew of 11

Propulsion

4 Pratt & Whitney R-1830-94 de 1350 CV
Four 1350 hp Pratt & Whitney R-1830-94

Envergure / Wing Span

33,50 m (110 ft)

Masse max. / Maximum weight

29483 kg (65000 lb)

Vitesse maximale / Maximum Speed

381 km/h (237 mph)

Vitesse de croisière / Cruise Speed

225 km/h (140 mph)

Distance franchissable / Range

4505 km (2800 mls)

Plafond utile / Service Ceiling

6310 m (20700 ft)

Armement / Armament

Douze mitrailleuses de 12,7 (.50 cal) dans quatre tourelles et deux bulles latérales

2725 kg de bombes

Twelve .50 cal (12,7 mm) guns in four turrets and two waist mounts

6000 lb (227 kg) bombs

Photo: Bernard 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 Airshow in Midland, by B. Delfino: € 10,00 P & P inclusive ©.

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SAFETY.....



SOLUTION TO LAST MONTH ENIGMA...

The two aircraft that landed simultaneously in San Francisco because of an emergency in this Lufthansa Boeing 747-400, are separated by a distance of **225 meters**, the distance between the two parallel runways they used. Not much you may say, but when there is an emergency... Unfortunately, none of our readers got close enough to this answer, the distances quoted varying from 1 meter to 100 meters...

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