



Volume 9 - N° 12 - December 2004

## EDITORIAL

*Our Annual General Assembly went as smoothly as possible, and I wish to thank all the members who attended this meeting for their kindness and for their active participation to the discussions that took place.*

*Some suggestions may have surprised the assembly, but they were all approved, even though some suggestions were made, suggestions that were dully noted and that we will take into account.*

*This positive and constructive attitude is a proof of the confidence that our members have in the future of our Wing.*

*Welcoming a new member is always a great pleasure, but when this registration is done during a General Assembly, it becomes an extraordinary event! I invite you to read the report made of this meeting, you will soon understand what I mean...*

*The CAF Headquarters have approved the new French Wing logo designed by Roy Grinnell, and our members also approved it during this 2004 General Assembly. Therefore, this logo becomes the official trademark of our Unit. I wish to thank Roy once again for his immense talent and the amount of time he spends to help our Unit.*

*Xmas and New Year are approaching fast. I wish all our members and their families a very happy Xmas!*

*This past year had its share of dramas and sadness. May this Xmas bring everyone who suffered from these, some peace, happiness, and comfort.*

Bernard

## FRENCH WING 2004 GENERAL ASSEMBLY



Photo: Eric Ducreau

**HONORED BY THE PRESENCE OF HENRI BOURRASSIER, PILOT OF THE GROUPE BRETAGNE, AND GEORGES MARCELIN, NORMANDIE-NIEMEN MECHANIC, THIS MEETING WAS AN HOMAGE TO ALL THE VETERANS WHOSE COURAGE ALLOWS US, TODAY, TO ENJOY A FREEDOM THAT WAS VERY DEARLY PAID FOR.**



# 2004 GENERAL ASSEMBLY.....

Version 2004 of the French Wing General Assembly was special on many various points, and those who were fortunate enough to attend this meeting were happy about the way it went on and its contents.

This report, necessarily concise, is meant to allow our members who did not take part in this event, to learn about the subjects that were discussed and the decisions that were taken during the afternoon of this November 20, 2004.

Our Unit Leader had prepared a video presentation that he ran using his computer and a video projector. This modern way of communicating revealed itself as a lot more efficient and striking than a simple litany of facts, figures, and boring statistics. The projected pictures were, for many of them, embellished by some Alberto Vargas pin-up girls like the one printed here.

This one had a great success, to such a point that some members even asked for the lady's phone number!... Presenting the Wing's finances was, therefore, a lot more interesting than it was in the past meetings, and the number of sleeping members went down to an absolute zero! Let us thank dear old Alberto Vargas for his outstanding help to our Unit.

The beginning of the meeting allowed us to see a few well known pictures taken during WWII (*Below*), which, if required, reminded precisely everyone why our Unit and the Commemorative Air Force exist.

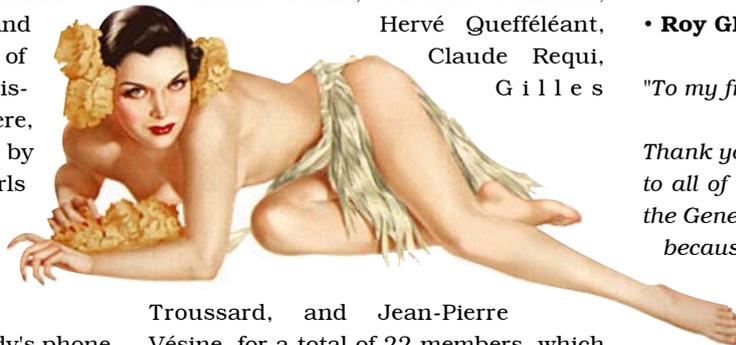


Photo: USAF

Bernard then presented the Agenda, and he invited everyone present to introduce himself so that we all knew each other perfectly.

## PRESENTATIONS

The members present were: Gilles avenel, Damien Bourgaux, Henri Bourrassier with his friend Janine Dumas, Bertrand Boussert, Claude Cardinal, Didier Cardinal, William Davies, Claude De Marco, Bernard Delfino, Fumiko Delfino, Eric Ducreau, Philippe Duflot, John Francis with his wife Cécile, Claude Gascon, Roger Gouzon, Guy Perrin, Michel Perrin, Frédéric Pollicella, Hervé Quefféléant, Claude Requi, G i l l e s



Troussard, and Jean-Pierre Vésine, for a total of 22 members, which allowed us to exceed the legal minimum total of 1/10 of the membership to hold this Annual General Assembly.

Portraits of the four members who have gone west during the past year appeared on the screen: Jacques Pérangolo, Herb Wilson, Connie Sansing, and Michel Cahiez.

Then, in a silence that said a lot about the deep sadness felt by all, appeared the picture of all the members who disappeared since the birth of our Unit, a list which is already far too long.

The meeting went on with the reading of sympathetic messages sent by many of the members who, despite their efforts, could not be with us all for this annual meeting.

Here are a few examples:

### • Christian TOURNEMINE :

*"I'd like to say to the assembly that I am proud of the way the French Wing is run, the performance of the Spirit of Lewis, and all the work that was accomplished by the volunteers, mechanics and pilots.*

*I am proud of our friends in Toulouse and the Pujaudran ceremony which warms up our hearts, and all the work that they produced for the success of this project.*

*Our friendship and our attachment to the CAF are way above all the #@\*%&# politics heard and seen these past few weeks. Heart ties are the most important!"*

### • Roy GRINNELL :

*"To my friends of the French Wing,*

*Thank you for the opportunity to say hello to all of you and thank you for being at the General Assembly. You are here today because you have an interest in working toward a goal of preserving aircraft and flying aircraft of the CAF. But, beyond this goal, there is a greater goal of uniting our two countries by the bond of events and aircraft in WWII.*

*I think I can speak freely, because you all are my friends, and I feel a deep bond between us. I have a growing concern that in these days and those of our future, that we possibly can loose the young people of future generations in the interests of our aviation history and it's importance as a specific place in that history. The young people must never forget and be able to appreciate the sacrifice that our families have made in the past.*

*We, of the French Wing, are interested in preserving the aviation aspects of WWII. This is a huge task, since there are forces trying to get us to forget the battles and struggles of the past. I feel that the baton has been passed to us. Now, I think it is our responsibility in the CAF, to educate and preserve for our children of the future, a true picture of the role of aviation in our history. Developing an interest, to perpetuate the common bonds between our countries. Let's keep it alive.*

It was great to see the attendance and participation of the French Wing in Midland this year. The French Wing is well respected in the CAF and will continue because of your enthusiasm, dedication and hard work.

I will close with a motto from a famous ETO bomber unit motto.... "WE LEAD, THAT OTHERS MAY FOLLOW".

• **Barbara HAIR:**

"Dear members of the French Wing,

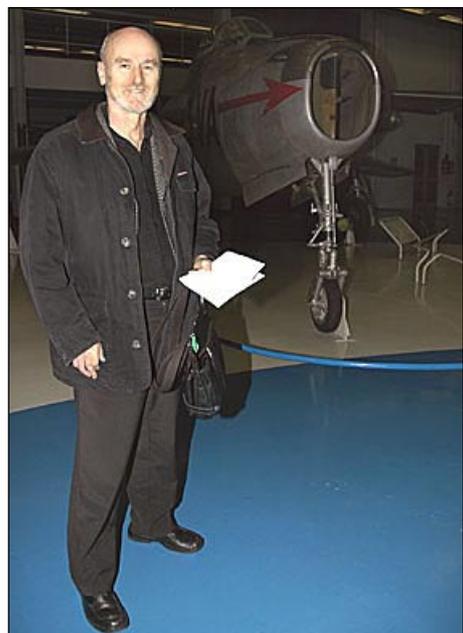
I wish to express my most sincere appreciation and gratitude for my nomination for a CAF "Silver Magnolia Blossom Award". When I heard my name, I was very surprised!

I thank you all a thousand times, and please be sure that your friendship is very precious. We wish the J-3 Cub an excellent year, and we eagerly wait to have the joy and pleasure to carry on working all together for the success of future projects.

Warm regards - Barbara Hair".

## MORAL SITUATION

Our Leader then gave a detailed description of our Association's moral situation, after all excellent since the participation is still exceptionally good in all activities, whether they concern the Piper Cub, the organization of airshows, the Wing booth, the Newsletter articles, the quest for sponsors, the Pujaudran monument, or our relationship with the



In the Air Museum, colonel Claude De Marco found the plane that changed his whole life.

Commemorative Air Force and its Units.

Some improvements are, nevertheless, necessary, like the strict respect of some of our project time lines, which tend to be exceeded, and the recruitment of new colonels.

Thanks to the extension of Operation **Code Name Bravo** until

December 31, 2005, this recruitment should be more efficient than it was in 2004, and our Leader solemnly asked all our members to increase their efforts in that direction. This 50% reduction of the first year membership was very productive in the past, and there is no reason why it should be different in the future.



More members mean more income, more individual or group opportunities, more imagination, more relations with the public, more visitors to Midland for Airsho, and more weight.

The inconvenience created by a heavier administration and a relative risk augmentation, are largely compensated by these advantages. Therefore, the buzz word for 2005 is:

## RECRUITMENT!

Should every French Wing member manage to recruit one single new colonel during 2005, we would double our membership. This mathematical evidence will be easily put in practice if everyone puts enough will, time, and energy, into it, which we will verify next year at the same date...

The President suggested that we should limit the number of Friends of the French Wing to 10% of the total membership. This would require the introduction of a time limit which would allow to keep this status for a maximum of 2 years, after which, if these persons have enough



Colonel Gilles Troussard and his charming wife Véronique.

Photo: Bernard Delfino

financial possibilities, they will need to upgrade to a status of Associate Member or Colonel.

This suggestion will be examined by the new Board of Administration who will amend our Internal Rules according to the decision that will be taken.

(Note: An alternative would be the creation of another Association made especially for these Friends, and managed by a Board of Administration of 3 or 4 members who would need to attend the necessary administrative formalities in the Prefecture, and would work in close relation with the French Wing. Any volunteers?..).

## FINANCES

Then, our Finance Officer colonel Didier Cardinal, described the state of our finances.

The balance of our operations for 2004 is positive, like our bank account and savings account.

We invite our members to contact colonel Didier Cardinal should they wish to receive a detailed report which is far too long for a publication in these pages.

One will notice, in particular, the good results of the P.X. during the past year, and the Piper Cub budget which was adopted in 2003.

(Note: The latter has a dedicated session in the Agenda to clearly demonstrate the legitimacy of the adopted system. Our readers will read about it later in these pages).

Finally, the future Finance Officer who will be elected and who will start his job

on January 01, 2005, will have to give first priority to the task of estimating the value of all the French Wing assets like the airplane, the office equipment, the tools, and all the P.X. articles which we still have in stock.

A more detailed P.X. description was then made, with mention of the new orientation which was given to it during the past summer, following the requests from airshow organizers: To only sell articles which are in direct relation with the CAF and the French Wing.

This new arrangement will avoid any competition with the professional shops during airshows and other events. Also, it will greatly simplify the management of the P.X, which was too "heavy" and complicated.

## COMPLETED PROJECTS

The projects completed in 2004 were then examined: These include the preparation of the Piper J-3 Cub, the renewal of its Airworthiness Certificate, the airshows, the implementation of the J-3 budget, the tour in Normandy and the visit of the Landing sites, the Pujaudran monument, the visit of our members in Midland for Airsho'04, and the creation of a new logo for the French Wing.

The latter, already presented in last month Newsletter, has just been officially accepted by the CAF. It was also unanimously adopted by the assembly when this particular point was discussed. Patches and pins will be manufactured as soon as the new Board of Administration will start working and will allocated the necessary funds to this project.



The other completed projects for 2004 include: Roy Grinnell's visit in April 2004, the making of the Corsair and Piper Cub prints based on Roy's paintings, the continuity in the publication of our Newsletter and its high level of quality, and the result of a contract signed between Roy Grinnell and the

Commander of the Dugny/Le Bourget French Navy base.

During his visit, last April, col. Roy Grinnell received an order for a painting representing the Morane-Saulnier 760 *Paris*, a typical airplane of this Aéronavale base. This order is part of the 50th anniversary of the birth of this establishment.

Roy has completed this painting of the highest quality. It will soon be reproduced as prints on the initiative of the Base Commander, just as we did with other paintings made by Roy.

Willing to get some positive after-effects for our Unit, Roy asked the Commander to include in their contract the delivery to the French Wing of 25 prints signed by as many former Commanders as possible, including, we hope, Admiral Philippe De Gaulle, son of the famous General.

These prints will soon be available, and they will be sold at a reasonable price to our members.

## CURRENT PROJECTS

Our Leader came back to the Newsletter subject and pointed out that we are still looking for a volunteer to carry on the work started by colonel Michel Cahiez who died last month, author of numerous articles about **French Aircraft of WWII**.

This author will need to be able to write these articles, have a detailed documentation, and make sure that the pictures he will use are free from any copyrights or that they will come with their author's written permission to use them for our Newsletter.

The French Veterans Heritage Book needs an energetic boost. Colonel Eric Ducreau offered to go and interview colonel Henri Bourrassier after the Xmas and New Year festivities, and get the full story of his life in the Air Force. A first step which, we hope, will bring some new blood to this great and well advanced project.

The **French Wing Web Site** is also in need of a good push so that our Unit has a Web Site that its activities and reputation deserve.

Our Cadet Julien Lepelletier is, at the moment, very busy with his school program, and he cannot do it all on his own. Therefore, we are considering



Painting : Roy Grinnell

various possibilities which will lead to the re-opening of this Web Site.

**The creation of a DVD and VHS tape** is still on the cards, and the DVD that was made by colonel Damien Bourgaux after his visit to Airsho'03 is very promising. Keep it up Damien...

**The French Wing Ford Transit van**, graciously lent to our Unit by Bernard and Fumiko Delfino, needs some attention, inside for the insulation, and outside for the paint work.

We are asking for volunteers who could do these tasks. They will need to adopt a time frame and finish this job before the 2005 season, as far as possible.

**The manufacturing of an electric tow-bar/tractor** to help moving our airplane (and others) in and out of the hangar, would be a useful accessory, and would not cost too much if we make use of second hand materials. Its use would be a plus and would greatly improve security during the manoeuvres in the hangar.

**The Wing Internal Rules**, which has been on the bench for nearly 2 years now, is almost complete.

The new Board of Administration will have, as task n° 1 to finalize it, print it, and dispatch it to all our members and to the Prefecture.

Finally, the **Safety Program** will need to be completed as soon as possible and for a date which should not exceed January 31, a reasonable limit for a first draft.

## SAFETY

The President insisted strongly on the subject of Safety and reminded everyone of their responsibilities on this crucial point.

He illustrated his words with photos that had a very high impact on the assembly, and made everyone conscious of the importance of this matter.

The creation of a training program for all our members, starting with those who often work on and around our airplane or in the hangar where it is stationed, has an undeniable need for urgency: Fire, engine start, toxic fluids and compounds, hand signals, pre-flight checks, methods of work, flying, taxiing, etc. are some of the subjects that will need to include this program.

The work already produced by colonels Frédéric Pollicella and Didier Cardinal is very promising. We must now finalize and put it into practise this program which is indispensable to the Unit's operations.

## FUTURE PROJECTS

Our Leader then listed a series of possible and desirable projects for next year and the years to come :

- **Recruitment** has the top priority, of course, and everyone now needs to be involved with the personal target of recruiting one new colonel during the coming year. Recruitment files are available at the Wing's Head office on request.

- **The commemoration of our Unit's 10th anniversary**, in June 2006, will be the sole task of a group of 4 or 5 members whose task will be to design and organize a ceremony and a celebration as original as possible, that this event deserves. These members will need to show some real good imagination and organize this celebration so that it is in direct relation with the CAF and the French Wing's goals and objectives.

- **Probable visit to France of several members from the USA during next Spring** (Roy and Irene Grinnell, Sandy Sansing, Jim and Nancy Lux): Although their visit will be totally private, an Extraordinary General Assembly will need to be organized to welcome these friends. It could be organized in the hangar and include flights in the Piper Cub, especially for Sandy who dreams of flying the *Spirit of Lewis* of which he is one of the most active and generous sponsors.

- **The quest for external Sponsors** has also a great importance if we want to go ahead. The indefatigable colonel Philippe Dufлот has made some good progress in this direction, and if the results are still rather modest, we have good hopes for some positive results.

Bernard took this opportunity to explain that, following a request he made a few weeks ago to the EPSON company, he received, last month, 17 ink cartridges for a total value of 1275 Euros (About \$ 1000,00)! Thank you EPSON!



Colonels Gilles Avenel, Claude Gascon, and Hervé Quefféléant.

- **The acquisition of a hangar** is becoming more and more urgent. It would allow us to rent parking spaces to other aircraft owners, to create our own Maintenance Unit, to create our Museum, to run our meetings, and to organize holiday stays for our members who could then work on the airplane, fly at their leisure, and have some good time for a few days, any time during the year.

- The last point of this subject surprized more than one member!... The suggestion of a project to **purchase an airplane of the Boeing Stearman type** for which a few members have already made some specific donations for a total of more than 500 Euros.



Photo: Bernard Delfino

This long term and very ambitious project is indispensable for the vitality of our Unit. Far from being unreasonable, it was judged very favourably by the great majority of the members, and none of them was fundamentally opposed to it.

The President insisted on the fact that the money that will be put into this project will only be made of specific donations to this project from members who want to be part of it. The French Wing general budget will in no way be used to purchase this plane, at least for the few years to come.

At this point of the discussion, the idea of a common project, **Hangar and Stearman**, appeared as the most logical, and it was decided that the acquisition of a hangar would be done

simultaneously with the one of the Stearman, but would take precedence over the latter.

## SPIRIT OF LEWIS

Our Leader quickly gave the assembly an overview of the activities linked to this plane, during the past year: The preparation for airshows, the members' attendance, the public appreciation, the pleasure flights (Internal and external), and the number of flight hours done during the year. Then he asked our Operation Officer, Gilles Avenel, to speak.

Colonel Gilles Avenel replaced colonel Cédric Malhaire - our Maintenance Officer - who had a last minute problem that stopped him from joining us.

Cédric, nevertheless, managed to fax a highly detailed (and funny, but very professional!) report that Gilles had the pleasure to read to the assembly.

It contained details about our plane's good health, the paint, decoration, and maintenance work that were carried out during the year, but also the two incidents that showed us how safety is important: The loss of a brake pedal fitting bolt, and the exhaustion of the battery that resulted in the loss of the radio communication and the transponder during the trip from Rennes to Persan. Two incidents which are now solved by better procedures and the replacement of the missing bolt, and are an excellent lesson for the future.

Gilles carried on with his speech by the subject that he is responsible for: the aircraft operation.

He spoke about the qualification flights, the leisure flights, and the raids on Montbéliard, Falaise, and Rennes. The absence of colonel Patrick Pierre-Pierre



Photo: Bernard Delfino

A nice group of six French Wing members! Left to right: Claude De Marco, Guy Perrin, Claude Cardinal, Henri Bourrassier, George Marcelin, and Michel Perrin.

who was the most solicited pilot during the year, was regretted by everyone. Sent on a professional surprise mission, he could not be with us, and colonel Gilles Avenel gave him a well-deserved homage. However, he pointed out that Patrick's flights had an annoying tendency to last twice as long as those flown by himself, which gave the occasion of a few good jokes...

In conclusion, Gilles stated that this plane is a good purchase and that its behaviour is excellent. Long flights give us a problem with the refuelling because aero-clubs cannot deliver gasoline during the week-ends, a problem that will be solved by the fitting of one or two extra fuel tanks in the wings, when we re-do the fabric.

### 2003/2004 J-3 BUDGET

Our Leader took over to describe the results of the Piper Cub budget that was adopted during our General Assembly in 2003.

He reminded everyone that this budget was based on a total of 50 hours per year, and listed the expenses that were made necessary along the whole year: The insurance, the renting of the hangar, the Certificate of Navigability renewal, the radio licence, the fuel, the engine oil, and the spare parts.

The total of the flight hours being approximately half of what we expected, one could fear about a negative result. Not so, and for a first year

of operation, with the exception of 545 Euros, we can conclude that the budget of the airplane is self-sustaining, and that it would have been profitable had the total number of hours been closer to the planned total.

The President pointed out the fact that the fixed costs (Hangar, insurance, CDN, and radio) are covered by the sponsorship, and the variable costs (Maintenance, damage provision, fuel, oil, and landing fees) are covered by the hourly rate applied to each of the aircraft occupants, depending on the type of sponsorship they adhered to (See article on last page).

This completed year of operation shows that this type of financing is simply ideal.

The year to come will need to make use of this experience, and the application of this budget will need to be even more rigorous, especially on the subject of the number of hours flown. The following decisions were then adopted by the entire assembly:



Photo: Bernard Delfino

Four other members have a friendly chat: Damien Bourgaux (Well... his back), Bertrand Boussert, Claude Gascon, and Eric Ducreau.

- Fly the planned 50 hours.
- Better participation of all the pilots who have to dedicate at least two of their week-ends to this activity.
- Renewal of all sponsorship before December 31, 2004, and addition of new sponsors if possible.
- Participation to several airshows, as near as possible to the aircraft base.
- Flying days during the visit of our American friends during Spring.
- Organization of flying week-ends at least once a month for all our members and friends.
- Recruiting a pilot residing in the Paris area (Colonel and Flying Sponsor).

This subject was closed by the presentation of the presents received from colonels **Barbara et Aubrey Hair** during the French Wing diner in Midland: Four magnificent rocker-box covers that they got chromed for us, together with new seals and new screws, that will give our airplane an incomparable striking look.

The financial donations made by colonels **Sandy Sansing & Regis Urschler** in Midland were also presented to the assembly.

The rounds of applause that resulted from these presents were such that our Texas friends must have been able to hear them, despite the distance between France and Texas!... A big THANK YOU to all these members!

### 2003/2004 ELECTIONS

This year's election was for the renewal of two positions of the Board of Administration: Vice-President (Executive Officer), and Treasurer (Finance Officer), for the three years to come.

The President reminded everyone of the basic rules of this election, as they are described in the Law of the Land and in the Statutes of our Association, then he invited the candidates to give the assembly a short speech. Each of these candidates was given a few minutes to tell the assembly the reasons why they applied for these positions.

Colonels Claude Requi and Eric Ducreau explained why they want to become the Vice-President, and colonels Bertrand Boussert and Philippe Dufлот why they want to be the Unit's Treasurer.

In conclusion, the President pointed out that choosing between two friends is sometimes difficult, but the law being the law, he asked everyone to vote according to their personal opinion and with a complete objectivity, for the sole interest of the CAF and the French Wing.

The meeting ended with the most pleasant part of this kind of event: The French Wing Awards for the year...

## 2004 AWARDS

The happy nominees for this year are:

**John ROEDER**  
**Jacques LEROUX**  
**Frédéric BAUDIN**

All three for the success of the Pujaudran project, its ceremony and its monument.

**Philippe DUFLOT**  
**Gilles TROUSSARD**

For the important sponsoring of the French Wing done by their courier company SKY RUNNER, and their strong participation to our activities in 2004.

**Sandy SANSING**  
**Regis URSCHLER**

For their very important financial and moral support to our Unit and its activities.

**Henri BOURRASSIER**

Elected "Best salesman of the year" for he is the originator of a great part of our P.X. sales during the 2004 La Ferté Alais airshow. His Award included a special picture that we are re-printing here below.



**Georges MARCELIN**

A Normandie-Niemen aircraft mechanic of the first hour, and honorary guest of the French Wing General Assembly, for his participation in the defence of Freedom during WWII.

The meeting ended around 18:30 by the presentation of two gifts to the CAF French Wing. One, an original billboard of the movie "The Longest Day", given by our Cadet **Julien Lepelletier** (Thank you Julien!), and the other one, a complete collection of the 72 issues of magazine "Newspapers of the War" given by colonel **Hervé Cherry** whom we warmly thank!

This publication includes, in each issue, faithful reproductions of the main newspapers of this era, and is an extraordinary source of information.

Everyone was then able to take some rest and a refreshment, before the annual diner of our Unit...

## 2004 ANNUAL DINER

The Hôtel Acadie in Gonesse, slightly smaller than the one in Tremblay, had the advantage of being more intimate.

Everyone felt at home, thanks to the kindness of its personnel and the high quality of its *cuisine*.

The meal was punctuated by speeches given to our veterans Henri Bourrassier and Georges Marcelin, and adventures and anecdotes told by the latter.

Georges' vitality is such that many did not believe the reality of his 84 years of age! He took the opportunity of the short speech he gave us, to thank colonel Eric Ducreau, whom he met in Moscow during a Normandie-Niemen commemoration, for getting him to meet our group.

Then, Georges made us discover his talents as a writer when he told us two of the poems that he usually writes in the



Photo: Bernard Delfino  
Philippe Duflot, John Francis, and Gilles Troussard, 3 of the members recruited during the past year, and 3 very active members of the French Wing.

morning, when he wakes up: One was dedicated to the Normandie-Niemen, and the other to General Charles De Gaulle.

(Note: You will read the beautiful poem dedicated to the Normandie-Niemen on the following page, but we keep the few others for a future publication...).

As we expected, Georges and Henri became friends as soon as they met. These brothers in arms, both amazingly young, have in common the Second World War, and they lived so many adventures that we would need a full book to tell them all.

Georges Marcelin was so surprised of the warm welcome that the French Wing gave him, that he decided to make a substantial gift to our Association, a gift that he transformed, on our advice, into a CAF and French Wing membership.

Chief-Adjutant Georges Marcelin was, consequently, promoted to the grade of CAF Colonel, and we are very honored to count him as a member of the CAF French Wing, just like our other heroes



Photo: Bernard Delfino  
George Marcelin, mechanic of the NeuNeu seems to say "turn the page!", which we invite you to do to learn more about this veteran and poet...

Louis-Jean Gioux, Henri Bourrassier, Alphonse Thiry, and Lucien Goubard.

George Marcelin, and always young colonel Henri Bourrassier, represented such a sum of courage and History, that our diner floated outside time, and joined all these soldiers who, 62 years ago, gave their blood and soul to defend the Freedom that we enjoy today, even though we do not realize it, this dear **Freedom** whose true value we don't understand until we loose it.

The anecdotes that these two men told us during this entire week-end were fascinating, sometimes funny, but often dramatic. Silence came when people listened religiously to these two marvellous tellers who never try to transform reality, and, on the contrary, show a modesty typical of genuine heroes.

## GEORGES MARCELIN

Georges was born in February 1921 in Cairo where his parents worked. He was there when the war broke out, and he enrolled in the Free French Air Forces on January 06, 1942.

Sent to Rayack (Lebanon) as a trainee aircraft mechanic, he came out Major of his course, and was promote to Chief-Corporal on September 01, 1942, the date he was assigned to the fighter group G.C.III "Normandie" following a request of Commandant Pouliquen. George Marcelin participated in the first campaign of this Regiment.

Mechanic of Ace Roland De Lapoype, he worked in inhuman temperatures as low as -35°C, on rough airfields which were always close to the front line because of the Yak short range.

In October 1943, the French mechanics were replaced by Russian ones.



### THE BALLAD OF NORMANDIE NIEMEN (To all those who were there)

*A long time ago sixty brave men went  
To faraway Russia, saddened by the war.  
A cruel conqueror ravaged the country,  
It was the very same one that one day they had escaped.  
Pilots, mechanics, and radio-men,  
Chased from their country with a heavy heart.  
They went over there with their hearts full of hope,  
Because they wanted to see again the sky of France.  
Their group took a name, the name they chose,  
An evocative name: G.C.3 «NORMANDIE»,  
A region occupied, plunged in misfortune!  
A child from the region, LEFEVRE, was one of them.  
They arrived there, thrown into the unknown,  
They were welcomed as lost children.*

*It was in the heart of winter, in the snow and cold,  
That began for them this terrible combat.  
Fearless, they fought with abandon,  
Forcing the admiration of all the Russians even.  
This merciless conflict tempered their will,  
Transcending their courage and their skill.  
They fought, suffered and even were afraid sometimes,  
But they never bent because they kept the faith!  
From battle to combat, each time better armed,  
In that tormented sky, they prevailed.  
To sell for a dear price their skin: this was their sacred oath.  
They sold theirs for an exorbitant price,  
Because, for forty-two who didn't come back,  
Enemies met their deaths by the hundreds.*

*Following their crusade regardless of the seasons,  
Without ceasing they flew, pushing back the horizon,  
Forcing the enemy back to their lair,  
And the name of «NIEMEN» was their badge of honor!  
THEIR DEAD FRIENDS MARK THE PATH,  
They all kept a quiet sadness.  
Finally came the day where hell stopped,  
Where the vanquished enemy had laid down their arms.  
The noise of combat was replaced by silence,  
Finished forever the infernal cadence!  
To return to France they had fought,  
They had survived deadly duels.  
They felt then, an inexpressible joy,  
And each could say to himself: «I AM GOING TO GO HOME!»*

*You, NORMANDIE-NIEMEN, have covered your name with glory,  
Your battles and your deaths wrote your story.  
Of all your proud children many have left us,  
But in our memory all their names remained,  
This «Duty of Memory», we must shout it,  
So that your name of all names will not be forgotten !  
A flaming torch you lit a long time ago,  
Passed from hand to hand to each of your sons,  
Who are today your worthy descendants,  
Keepers of your legend which will survive time!*

Georges MARCELIN

English translation by Mme. Colette Berger McAlester and col. Barbara Hair

Georges went back to Rayack, and was assigned to fighter group G.C. III/3 "Ardennes" in North Africa.

There, he worked on P-40 and P-47. He came back to France in October 1944, in Salon de Provence, then Lyon-Bron, Ambérieu, Luxueil, and finally Colmar when the war ended.

He carried on his career in the Air Force where he got a diploma in office machinery, specialized in physical training, and finally obtained a licence as a physical therapist, a profession which he kept after he left the Air Force on June 10, 1959, and until he retired in 1986.

George received many distinctions, either by the French government or by the Russian one.

Mechanic of Roland De Lapoype during the war, destiny decided that these two men would meet again in peace time, since Georges lives in the south of France, in Antibes, the town where Roland De Lapoype created and still runs the famous *Marineland*, an aquatic amusement park.

Then, on November 21, 2004, Georges was promoted from the grade of Chief-Adjutant to the one of... CAF Colonel!

Congratulations Georges, and welcome to our organization. What a great recruit for our Wing!



Colonels Georges Marcelin and Eric Ducreau at Le Bourget Air Museum.

Photo: Bernard Delfino

## **WANTED BY THE FRENCH WING...**

Following the death of our great friend colonel Michel Cahiez, we are looking for a member who is keen on WWII French aircraft, so that he can continue the series of articles that Michel had started for our Newsletter.

This member needs to be well documented and, as far as possible, send in one article every month, with illustrations which are free of any copyrights or with a written authorisation to use them from their owners.

The compliments that we received on many occasions about these articles prove that the interest of our readers for this part of Aviation History is indeed very strong.

A big thank you to these potential writers!

## **WANTED BY THE FRENCH WING... (BIS)**

If some of our readers remember anecdotes related to aviation safety (civilian, military, or general), to accidents or incidents that they either witnessed or took part in, we would be happy to receive them, if possible together with photographs.

Safety is now objective number one in the CAF, and we think that our Unit can play an important role in the creation of a permanent safety program within our organization.

Many of our members have a profession linked to aviation or have something to do in general aviation. It would therefore be surprising if, in their career or their pass time, everyone of them did not get involved, at least once, in an accident or an incident, as a victim or as an actor!

Thanks for telling us about your experiences. It is sometimes difficult to admit that we have made a mistake, even if everything went fine and had no consequences for the airplane or its occupants. Therefore, your reports will be modified to keep them anonymous.

Talking about safety, many of our members who have an Internet connection will find some very useful information on the excellent web sites of the DGAC and the BEA, two linked organizations that are very well documented about aviation incidents or accidents from which they extract lessons that all of us can learn from, even the most experienced ones.

In addition, visiting the DGAC web site will give you a host of other data that are very useful and often unexpected.

The British CAA and the American FAA, equivalent of the DGAC, also have very interesting web sites with a lot of data.

Of course, speaking English is preferable, but even those who are not fully fluent will enjoy these sites. Reading is not dependent on time, and you can always select, copy, and paste as a text format, and read these documents off line.

## **WANTED BY THE FRENCH WING... (TER)**

Following our Annual General Assembly on November 20, we are looking for volunteers who would take on the responsibility for the organization of the great celebration of our Unit's 10th anniversary, in June 2006.

A team of 4 to 6 motivated, available, imaginative, hard-working, and energetic members, will need to find the most original way of celebrating this anniversary, and put their ideas into practice, with, as priority number 1, to respect the goals of our Association.

This eliminates the usual cotillions, confettis, and other accessories reserved to the little local parties. They will also need to keep in mind the cost of this event.

The place could ideally be our hangar, if we buy it before then, otherwise, the present hangar might be OK.

We thank these future volunteers for calling us and telling us their ideas on this subject, for the next 18 months. Living near Paris is not indispensable but it will be a plus.

## **BOOK YOUR COPY OF THE MORANE 760 "PARIS" PAINTING BY ROY GRINNELL TODAY!**

The members of the French Wing who wish to book a copy of the prints that will be made of Roy Grinnell's painting to celebrate the 50th anniversary of the Navy base of Dugny-Le Bourget, and the Morane-Saulnier 760 *Paris* are kindly requested to make themselves known as soon as possible.

We will tell you about the size and the price of each print as soon as we know them.

These prints will be signed by as many Dugny Commanders as possible, including, we hope, Admiral Philippe De Gaulle, son of the famous General and President of France.



## **SPIRIT OF LEWIS SPONSORS**

The year is ending fast, and it's time to renew your sponsorship to our dear *Spirit of Lewis*, or, if you were not a sponsor last year, to become one with the level of your choice.

Please turn to the last page of this Newsletter to see which level is best suited for you, and once you have made up your mind, send us a cheque of the correct amount for the level you chose.

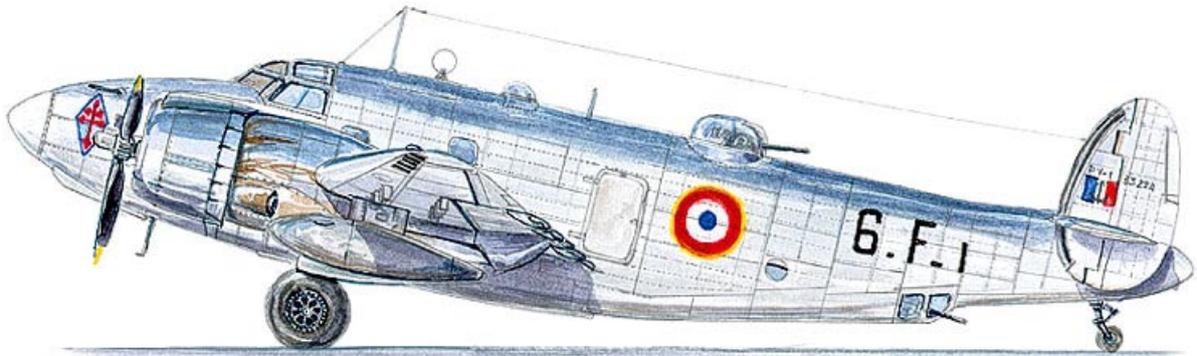
These sponsorships are made to cover the fixed costs of our little warbird. Without a group of sponsors of the right size, our plane will not be able to operate normally, and the hourly rate will need to be increased. We thank all 2004 Sponsors for renewing their sponsorship, and we will welcome any new Sponsor. Thanks in advance!



# LOCKHEED PV-1 VENTURA



*By Colonels John P. Roeder and Michel Perrin - Painting by Jean Bellis - Photos coll. Lucien Morareau*



The Lockheed Model 37 had been developed from the Lodestar transport to a RAF specification for a light day bomber. In June of 1940 Vega Aircraft (a subsidiary of Lockheed), which had taken over the program, was awarded a production contract by the British for 675 aircraft of the type.

The "Ventura", as it was named by the British, used the wing and the tail assembly of the Lodestar, but it had a slightly lengthened aft fuselage with a glazed ventral gun position in the rear bottom section.

Also the 1,200 hp R-1820 engines of the Lodestar had been replaced by 2,000 hp R-2800s. Logically it was heavier than the Lodestar, but it was considerably faster. Its range had been reduced from 1,600 miles (2,574 km) to 1,000 miles (1,609 km) which was judged sufficient for a light day bomber for the European theater.

The first Ventura made its initial flight in the summer of 1941. When Lend-Lease came into effect after America's entry



into the war, the type was given the US Army designation B-34 for procurement purposes.

The US Army retained a quantity of Venturas originally purchased by the British, as well as a number of lend-lease aircraft originally earmarked for the RAF.

Deliveries to the British commenced in the summer of 1942. Venturas participated in a number of daylight raids flown by RAF Bomber Command in the November 1942 to May 1943 period.

Coastal Command which used them for general reconnaissance and meteorological duties.

Unwanted machines were absorbed by the USAAF which had already retained a number of aircraft purchased by the British as well as part of a batch to be supplied through Lend-Lease.

Named the Lexington, 200 B-34s and 18 B-37s (the latter with somewhat less powerful engines), served with the AAF, but none of them was ever used in combat.



These showed however, that the type was not particularly well suited for the role that it had been acquired for. Consequently, deliveries were cancelled with the 394th aircraft, and the available Venturas transferred to

This was not so for the Navy which since 1942 had a pressing need for a land based patrol bomber, less vulnerable to Japanese fighters than its flying boats.

After delicate negotiations, it obtained the transfer of certain AAF types then in production to its ownership. In return, it handed over its plant at Renton (WA) to the Air Force, which this urgently needed for B-29 production. The agreement covered among others the B-34, which



after a number of changes, including an increase of range from 950 to 1,660 miles (1.529 to 2.671 km) was adopted as PV-1 by the Navy.

PV-3 was the designation for 27 aircraft which had been requisitioned in September 1942 from a British lend-lease batch for training and familiarization

From December 1942 all manufacturing of the type was for the Navy, which received a total of 1,600 PV-1s until production ceased in May 1944.

Three hundred and eighty eight of these went to the British on Lend-Lease very likely for the Commonwealth Air Forces of Australia, Canada, South Africa and New Zealand.

The French also received 34 PV-1s from November 1944 as replacements for the PBY-5A Catalinas of Aéronavale air flotilla 6F.

With their new mounts, the unit continued to operate from Agadir in a maritime surveillance and anti-submarine role. As

by then enemy air opposition over the Atlantic had become nil, they had all defensive armament removed, but they were fitted with four rocket launchers under each wing.

The French PV-1s did their job properly, but their operational career was rather uneventful.



Occasional intrusions into Spanish Air Space over the Canaries to look for U-boats being re-supplied there provoked the reaction of the local flak.

At times, French crews reacted by flying low level high speed dashes which are said to have caused some damage to Spanish property and casualties among their military. A Spanish complaint to the US embassy in Madrid resulted in



a severe reprimand to the 6F by the US command.

Venturas of the 6F also flew a number of rocket attacks against German armor in the South of France.

Their planned use for bombing targets within the Atlantic pockets was however cancelled on short notice.

The last Aéronavale unit flying the PV-1 was squadron 11S based at Les Mureaux, where the type was finally phased out in 1952.

### Caractéristiques / Data Table

#### **LOCKHEED PV-1 VENTURA**

##### Description

Bombardier Patrouilleur avec 4/5 membres d'équipage  
Patrol Bomber with crew of 4 to 5

##### Propulsion

Deux Pratt & Whitney R-2800 de 2000 CV  
Two 2000 hp Pratt & Whitney R-2800s

##### Envergure / Wing Span

19,96 m (65 ft 6 in.)

##### Masse max. / Maximum weight

14096 kg (31077 lb)

##### Vitesse maximale / Maximum Speed

502 km/h (312 mph)

##### Vitesse de croisière / Cruise Speed

264 km/h (164 mph)

##### Distance franchissable / Range

2671 km (1660 mls)

##### Plafond utile / Service Ceiling

6 492 m (21 300 ft)

##### Armement / Armament

Deux mitrailleuses jumelées de 12,7 (.50 cal) dans le nez et en tourelle dorsale, plus une mitrailleuse jumelée de 7,62 (.30 tcal) en position ventrale  
6 bombes de 227 kg ou une torpille en interne, et jusqu'à 2 bombes de 454 kg sous la voilure

Twin .50 cal (12,7 mm) guns each in nose and dorsal turret plus .30 cal (7,6 mm) twin in ventral position  
Six 500 lb (227 kg) bombs or one torpedo internal and up to two 1,000 lb (454 kg) bombs under wing.

Nota : Les PV-1 Français avaient leur armement défensif déposé.

Note: French PV-1s had their defensive armament removed.

## 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.....



## A SMALL GAME TO FINISH OFF THE YEAR...

OK! This little game to complete this year and test your visual abilities... This untouched photo was taken at San Francisco during an emergency landing of a Lufthansa Boeing 747, following an engine problem. The question is: What is, in your opinion, the exact distance, in meters, between the two aircraft, taking for reference the longitudinal axis of the two planes? The answer will be given next month...

## SPIRIT OF LEWIS SPONSORS UP TO DATE FOR 2005

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*We invite the following 2004 Sponsors to renew their sponsorship for next year: Hervé Cherry, Marcel Fransisci, Claude Gascon, Roger Gouzou, Jean-Claude Miniggio, Patrick Pierre-Pierre, Claude Requi, Didier Cardinal, Cédric Malhaire, Christophe Bastide, Frédéric Baudin, Claude De Marco, Louis-Jean Gioux, Patrick Gremez, Yves Houssin, Rick Hudlow, Elzéard Ligneul, Guy Perrin, John Roeder, Marcel Ruppert, and Jean-Jacques Vaucher. We hope that many more will be added to this list. Many thanks to you all in advance!*

## 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.