

AEROGGRAM

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Membership Coordinator



Testing the AEA Glider - Winter 1908

In late December of 1907 the newly formed Aerial Experiment Association moved its center of operations from the Alexander Graham Bell estate in Baddeck, Nova Scotia to Hammondsport, New York. The move was made to accommodate the construction of experimental "aerodromes" (aircraft) at the site of the Glenn H. Curtiss motorcycle plant in Hammondsport.

The construction and testing of a bi-plane glider was the first step by the AEA into building aircraft that were not based on tetrahedral kite construction. Previous work in Baddeck in the fall of 1907 had focused on testing the flight and man-lifting capability of the mammoth Cygnet kite created by Dr. Alexander Graham Bell. In Hammondsport, a Chanute-type a glider was constructed to provide experience in constructing and flying an aerial device that would be similar to some of the emerging designs of other aeronautical pioneers pursuing the quest for controlled powered flight.

On January 13, 1908 the members of the AEA began flights with the glider on the hillsides just outside the village of Hammondsport. *(on the hillside, directly opposite the museum – editor's note.)*

Approximately fifty gliding flights were taken over two months. The initial flight was only a few feet long as the pilots struggled to find the balance point in the fledgling craft. By mid-March 1908 when they concluded work with the glider their flights were reaching the one hundred yard mark. The flights were mostly carried out by F.W. Casey Baldwin and Douglas McCurdy who stated that this experience served a very useful purpose by giving them a 'feel of the air' and how to balance a craft when it was airborne.



Prior to the glider flight test period, the members of the AEA had already determined that they would have to design a succession of machines, learning as they went, until they would be able to master all of the factors necessary to build, power, and manage the flight of an aerodrome. They decided that each member would be in charge of the design and construction of one machine. Early in January, as they finished work on the glider, they had already started the design of their initial aerodrome, the Red Wing. The aerodromes that followed were named: White Wing, June Bug, and Silver Dart.

The above photo is personal favourite from my kite library. To me it communicates a sense of enthusiasm, determination, and excitement as the AEA forged ahead with their quest "...to get into the air"!

.....reprinted from an article by Canadian museum member, Bob White

KITE HISTORY TOUR VISITS THE CURTISS MUSEUM



A group of fifteen expert kite builders and flyers gathered together in Hammondsport on April 20, 2013 to study the life and work of Glenn H. Curtiss. The group was comprised of members from three Ontario and two New York State kite clubs who often fly together at various events in Canada and the United States. All of the people who gathered for the history trek have a strong interest in the history of kites and how they influenced early aviation.

The group's interest in the Curtiss story stems from their long-time study of Alexander Graham Bell and his kites. Bell and his wife, Mabel, formed the Aerial Experiment Association in late 1907 in Baddeck, Nova Scotia, with the avowed goal of getting a man into the air in a controlled, powered aircraft.

All members of the kite history group have been to the A.G. Bell National Historic Site in Baddeck where the Bell archives relating to kites and early aviation are on display. Some of the group have actually flown kites on the 'Kite Field' located on the Bell estate on Cape Breton Island. So, it was natural that they would complete their study of the AEA in Hammondsport, home to Curtiss and the site of construction of the four winged aircraft of the Association during 1908 and early 1909.

Curtiss is significant to kilters since he developed the engines used by Bell in his attempt to fly his gigantic tetrahedral kite known as the *Cygnets II*. The *June Bug*, with Curtiss as lead designer and pilot, has real significance in the story of the AEA since the craft won the Scientific American Trophy with its July 4, 1908 flight in Pleasant Valley. The fourth airplane, the *Silver Dart*, has great importance to Canadian aviation as the first aircraft to fly in Canada. Flying off the ice at the Bell estate in Baddeck on February 23, 1909, the *Silver Dart* was piloted by Douglas McCurdy and was powered by a 40 hp, water cooled Curtiss engine. Curtiss was present in Nova Scotia for this flight as he had been earlier in 1907 for tests with Bell's giant kites.

The group visit was led by Bob White, a kite historian from Port Colborne, ON. A morning tour of the museum was followed by a visit to each of the historic stops on the Curtiss-Hammondsport History Trail. Lively discussions and sharing of photos filled the late evening after a group dinner at Snug Harbor. Since their return to their homes in Ontario and New York state, members of the group have been sharing their stories and images on Facebook. All of this will likely pique the interest of many more kilters and encourage them to visit the Curtiss Museum and the Hammondsport area.

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Kevin House

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John & Carol Sawin

Contributing

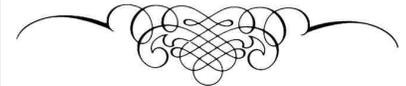
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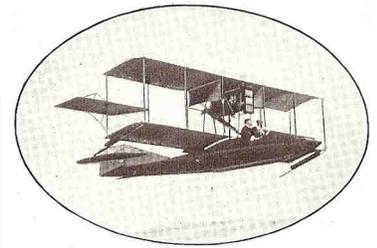
New trophy case built by Ray Poehlein and on exhibit in the seaplane area.

FROM THE DIRECTOR - *Trafford L-M. Doherty*

Happy spring, everyone – it was long in coming! We really never had much of a winter last year, but this year we got the real thing. Of course, we Keuka Lake folk really shouldn't complain. We're far enough to the south to miss out on lake effect snow and far enough to the northwest to be clear of the nor'easters. And we got a real break this year for our February weekend motorcycle event that saw over 1000 visitors. That would be a blockbuster weekend in July, but in February it's truly amazing. Our success in this endeavor is due to the energy and vision of Robert "Old Dog" Harris of Belfast, NY. Bob is our local motorcycle "guru" with a large following – we definitely "rode his coat tails" on this one and we will continue to do so in the future.

When you come back to see us this year you may note that we have four new park benches in front of the museum. A concern that I have had for quite a while involved the original concrete benches that were located in a several places in front of the museum. A solid sideways push would cause them to topple, and, in one case (last summer) this actually happened – thankfully without injury. Last year, we lost museum member, William W. Gilmore. Bill was a longtime Restoration Shop volunteer and docent. Recently, I was contacted by his son, David, with the request that the family be allowed to underwrite the cost of something that could be dedicated in Bill's memory. As a result, we are indebted to them for our new benches and they will each have a plaque dedicating them to the memory of William W. Gilmore. And, by the way - many thanks to the Restoration Shop (AKA Maintenance Dept.) for assembling and bolting them down in their assigned locations. It turned out to be quite a job!

Speaking of the Restoration Shop, I normally tend to give a general thank you for their services rendered – to avoid leaving anyone out. But, I'm about to make an exception. We have two cast iron historical markers about Glenn Curtiss, one dating to the 30's and the other, to the 50's. The years have not been kind and they were both way overdue for refinishing. This was a project that we all knew about, but no one seemed overly enthusiastic about taking it on and I could see why – it was bound to be a really unpleasant and tedious job. I am pleased to relate that Restoration Shop volunteer, Jim Mitchell, decided that he was equal to the task and proceeded to do an excellent job. This was an extended process that required wire brushing off all of the old paint and accumulated rust. He then spray painted on a blue base color and went on to paint by brush all of the raised lettering in yellow. It took him a while, but the results are very gratifying. Check them out next time you stop by.



CALENDAR OF EVENTS

March 2 – Sept. 3, 2013

**Gettysburg!
Civil War Exhibit**

June 1, 2013
Indoor Yard Sale 9-4

July 13, 2013
**Curtiss Museum Gala
Reservations Required**

August 3, 2013
**Curtiss Classic
Motorcycle Day**

August 19, 2013
**Curtiss Museum
Golf Classic**

Sept. 13 - Nov. 4, 2013
Quilt Exhibit

September 14, 2013
Seaplane Homecoming

Nov.16, 2013-Feb.17, 2014
**23rd Annual Dollhouse
and Miniatures Exhibit**

November 30, 2013
**18th Annual Dollhouse &
Miniatures Vendor Show
and Sale**



Model E - 1912

From the Education Department - Don Rumsey

Welcome to spring! Things here at the museum are getting busy with schools and tour companies are filling up the calendar quickly. I believe it's going to be a busy and exciting year.

We will also have a lot of In-Flight groups coming to the museum in the next couple months. This is an excellent program done by members of F.L.A.P.S. out of Geneva, NY. Bill Birkett and Scotty Orr have been running this program for some years now. I would like to welcome to our group of In-Flight volunteers, Brad Stevens and Jack Roberts. These guys have an amazing program that they do with the kids and are loved by everyone. I want to thank them for all that they do for the museum!

I would also like to welcome back all of our docents from sunny Florida. I look forward to seeing you all in the next few months. I hope all is well and that you had safe travels back to New York.

Hope everyone has a safe and wonderful summer! See you soon!

REMEMBERING MARCIA COON

Curtiss Museum past board of trustees president, Marcia Meade Coon, died in Florida on April 13, 2013.

Marcia was born in Bath, NY and was the daughter of Joe and Helen Meade. She was a graduate of Hammondsport Central School and the School of Architecture at Syracuse University. She was a local architect in Hammondsport, NY, and designed the Fred and Harriett Taylor Memorial Library, the current Glenn H. Curtiss Museum interior, and several homes and businesses on Keuka Lake and surrounding areas. She also spent several years in Washington, DC, working on the Dulles Airport and other large projects.

Marcia enjoyed traveling, entertaining, modern art and architecture. She loved being on her dock and boat at Keuka Lake and spending time with her children and grandchildren. She was a generous, caring and giving person who would go above and beyond to help others. She will be deeply missed by all who knew her.



NEW MEMBERS

Sponsor

Rod Pedersen

Contributor

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Linda & Jerry Haley
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John Heil
Albert Mack
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Candy & Bob Dietrich
Teodoro Mariano
Brian & Katie MacIntyre
Doug & Jennifer DeCroix
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Basic

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Donna Bowman Bratton
John Burger
Jeremiah Langen
Robert & Ruth Cuffney
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Matt Hayduk
Richard Figiel
Andrew & Susan Derby
Brandon Brown
Bill White
Michael Kraus
Roger McGraw
Sandra Maceyka
Dotti Wilkinson
Al Gantert
Fred Rister
Peter Holbus
Jennifer Bower
Ronald & Ann Woodhead
John R. Williams

MUSEUM YARD SALE

Saturday, June 1
8 - 4

CURATOR'S CORNER - RICK LEISENRING

The NEW YORK..... *GETTYSBURG!* exhibit is up and well received, thank you all for submitting names and making suggestions. The exhibit was opened with our annual indoor encampment featuring drill, cannon and musket demonstrations by local Civil War re-enactors. Our guest speaker, Professor Emeritus Wayne Mahood of Geneseo State College, presented a very compelling story of Morris Brown, Jr., a Hammondsport son and recipient of the Medal of Honor at Gettysburg, to kick off the summer long exhibit. Mr. Mahood has just published a book on Brown's service in the war entitled *Fight All Day, March All Night: A Medal of Honor Recipient's Story* which is currently available in our museum gift shop. To continue the commemoration of the 150th Anniversary we will have another guest speaker on July 4th here at the museum at 2 PM. Author and historian Mark Dunkelman will present a fascinating story entitled "Sgt. Amos Humiston, Gettysburg's Unknown Soldier".

As an early reminder, the Quilt Exhibit will open on September 13th. Always a crowd pleaser and a great way to usher in the fall season! So, don't forget to put it on your calendar!

Here is an update to our continuing project of upgrading and creating new displays and exhibits – Recently Ray Poehlein completed a beautiful display cabinet as an addition to the Curtiss Family in Florida exhibit and perfectly matches the two originally built as part of the exhibit. This has allowed me to bring out and put on permanent display, many Curtiss family artifacts that have been in storage for years. Lou Fell and Norm Brush are upgrading the wiring in the exhibit.



Phase Two is to have local artist Brett Steeves reconstruct the exhibit's fireplace to match the original found in the recently restored Curtiss Mansion. If you haven't seen what has been done to the Curtiss Mansion, check out the website www.curtissmansion.com. It's absolutely breathtaking! Ray's next project was to build a trophy case for the Seaplane exhibit to house the Curtiss awards and other trophies we have in the collection. This has also been completed. Stay tuned for more updates as we have a lot more in the works! Thanks again to the Kelch Charitable trust and the Peckham family for making all of this possible.

This summer is promising to be extremely busy. So join us in the fun and don't be a stranger!



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Charles "Bud" Shaw
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Trustee Emeritus

Restoration Shop - Art Wilder

Our Restoration Shop has been at a high level of activity this winter. We continue to make progress on the Fledgling wings and main float. The overhaul of the Wright J-6-7 engine has started. The Curtiss Challenger engine, the other standard Fledgling engine, is re-assembled and will be run on a test stand later on. Our objective is to have this large bi-plane ready to display at our September 14th Seaplane event in an uncovered condition.

The Travel Air 2000 landing gear upper assembly which was initially not with the project has been fabricated and temporarily installed. More has been done to prep the fuselage for fabric covering.

The P-40 is progressing with the tail end of the fuselage frame complete, tail wheel doors installed and the bottom of the plane in this area temporarily in place. We made a swap with friends at San Diego North Island for several key parts we needed for the main gear and cockpit. This group is restoring a P-40 for the WWII Museum in New Orleans. We are disassembling several rusted landing gear parts from our inventory and making them look virtually new by cleaning and sand blasting, then filling the pits with fiberglass putty, then priming. We fabricated a new baggage door which was missing.

A 1942 Jeep was given to us by the late Ralph Brewer of Bath. This Jeep is Ford-built with a Willis frame and is in drivable condition. It now sports new tires and has original shovel, axe, gas can and carrier. These parts are a gift of Douglas Lotten. We have discovered quite a group of Jeep enthusiasts and restorers.

The Airships Incorporated boat, personally owned by Glenn Curtiss, is looking real good – finishing will start soon.

In the Odd Jobs Department, the Florida Room lighting has been re-done, and both of the New York State historical signs noting Curtiss's history have been re-furbished and re-installed on the museum grounds.

Wright J-6-7



Travel Air progress



Norm Brush with Jeep

Duncan Springstead
working on Glenn's boat

MEMORIALS

In Memory of Marcia Meade Coon

Jill & Brian Flynn
Tom & Elizabeth Tranter
Wilma Storm & Don Bates
John & Bev Webster
Dick & Jennifer Honeyman
Betty Reagan
Julie Sprague
Janet Thomas
Lee & Julie Wortham
Jim & Janet Hallahan

In Memory of Bob Wilder

Joe & Ann Fitzgibbons
Ray & Wilma Poehlein

In Memory of Larry Murray

Don & Donna McIntire

In Memory of Jean Davis

Jim & Janet Hallahan

In Memory of Donna Hehnrich

Jim & Janice White

In Memory of Bill Gilmore

Charles & Marygrace Gillmore

In Memory of Hope Hereford

Leanna Landsmann &
Chip Block
Richard & Janet McCandless
Millie Barclay

In Memory of Janice White

Jim & Janet Hallahan
Teri L. Beers
Marge Beers



MARKETING COMMITTEE REPORT

So far, 2013 is off to a good start. The Civil War Exhibits and a March Motorcycle Event had very good attendance and positive reviews. We continue to expand our efforts in communicating to potential visitors not only through previous/conventional means but also with the more current communication links. New links about the museum are much more frequent as are posts to our website and Facebook pages.

On a strong note, word of mouth continues to be one of the best generators of new visitors, so we ask everyone to help keep the word moving.

We have a new billboard located on SR 54 North of Bath. Due to changed sign laws in the community, it is possible that the billboard opposite the Museum on State Route 54 will have to be removed, but we feel the new placement in Bath will be an effective replacement.



The marketing team and other resources are working together to take a closer look at visitor data not only for the Curtiss Museum but also for other attractions in a fairly large area in Steuben County and surrounding areas. It is planned that this information will help us better understand where and (perhaps) how our potential visitors can be better informed on the Curtiss Museum. More on this activity will be shared as we progress through the project.

Again, thank you for your support and stay in contact with our website for current and future events information. As stated above, your word of mouth and influence is our strongest tie to repeat and new visitors.

Dennis Carlson

Marketing Committee Chairman

REMEMBERING JANICE WHITE

Longtime Curtiss Museum front desk volunteer, Janice M. White, 79, died on May 7 after an extended illness. Before starting her volunteer stint at the Curtiss Museum, Janice had worked as a secretary at the Pentagon in Wash., D.C., for Mercury Aircraft here in Hammondsport and as an aide in the Reading Room at Hammondsport Central School.

Janice's husband, Jim, also worked at the Curtiss Museum as Collections Registrar for many years before his retirement.

Janice is survived by her husband, Jim, three children: Jill, John & Julie, two grandchildren: Mitchell and Christopher White, a sister, Gail James, and several nieces and nephews.



Jim and Janice

Interment was in the Bath National Cemetery.



Tramp Art Chest
on loan from Pat Monahan
& Maureen Fisher

MEMBERSHIP DONATIONS

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Web: www.glennhcurtissmuseum.org



SPRING 2013

MUSEUM HOURS

WINTER

Nov.1-Apr. 30
Mon.-Sun. 10-4

SUMMER

May 1-Oct.31
Mon.-Sat. 9-5
Sunday 10-5

Museum closed on the following holidays:

New Year's Day
Easter Sunday
Thanksgiving Day
Christmas Eve
Christmas Day

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CURTISS MUSEUM MEMBERSHIP FORM

Please check the membership category of your choice and return to:

The Glenn H. Curtiss Museum, 8419 State Route 54, Hammondsport, NY 14840

Basic \$35 Sponsor \$125 Patron \$50
 Contributing \$50 Donor \$250 Sustaining \$750
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Signature _____

Additional tax-deductible donations will be used for museum improvements including up-grading facilities, restoration shop and new exhibits.

My additional donation _____

Membership Benefits:

Unlimited free admission • Invitations to exhibit openings and receptions • Guest passes
Subscription to the museum newsletter • Volunteer opportunities
Discounts on museum programs and events • Discounts in the museum shop