



THE *Flyer*

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Fall 2002

Jack Northrop this year's choice

By Tom Halfhill

The First Flight Society's Shrine Committee didn't have too much difficulty in choosing this year's person to be enshrined into our Paul E. Garber "Hall of Fame". As most of you know, the Society chooses persons that have made significant contributions to aviation that fit our yearly theme for our annual December 17 celebration. This year's theme is aeronautical engineers and designers and while we had an impressive list of names to choose from, we settled on John Knudsen Northrop. Jack, as he was known, was born at Newark, New Jersey on November 10, 1895. Many men have contributed to the progress of the modern airplane through the years shaping its performance and safety but Mr. Northrop's name always stands out.

Jack Northrop grew up in Santa Barbara, California near businesses involved in building aircraft. He was dedicated to the aeronautical sciences and in his early twenties, he started as a draftsman for the Loughhead brothers who were designing a flying boat in 1916. Helping in the designing and gaining valuable knowledge, after World War I he co-invented the revolutionary monocoque fuselage-forming process. Lockheed, like many others of the time, had difficulty selling airplanes and soon closed their doors. Northrop then joined the Douglas Aircraft Company and helped design the famous "World Cruisers". In 1926, the new Lockheed Aircraft Company was formed to build Jack Northrop's famous Vega monoplane.



John Knudsen Jack Northrop will be honored this December 17th by the First Flight Society.

During the next two years, he designs two more planes and in 1928 he resigns and forms the Northrop Aircraft Corporation. There he builds the low-wing Alpha followed by the Beta and

Gamma. Many famous aviation greats flew his planes including Amelia Earhart, Wiley Post and Art Goebel. We will have more on Jack Northrop in our fall newsletter.

Visitor Center Repairs Underway

To prepare the Wright Brothers National Memorial for the 2003 First Flight Celebration, a number of park development projects are underway. Visitors Center rehabilitation is one such project in progress to ensure that the park is ready for the centennial of flight.

The visitor center at the Wright Brothers National Memorial was con-



structed between March 1959 and June 1960 and was opened to the public July 15th 1960. Due to its unique architectural

design the building was recently designated a Historic Landmark Structure by the National Park Service.

The Visitor Center has been experiencing roof leaks for a number of years. Although repairs were made, over time the leaks became progressively worse, finally resulting in closure of the facility due to safety issues and concerns for the protection of exhibit items within the building.

The scope of work for the present renovation contract includes a total replacement. See Visitor Center on Page Two



Northrop (above) is associated with a remarkable series of World War II experimental Flying Wing airplanes. His early work on the Flying Wing led to the present B-2 Bomber in use today. (Photo courtesy of Northrop Grumman Corporation)

First Flight Events 2002

“To Preserve, Protect and Maintain: Seventy-five years of the First Flight Society”

Presented by the Outer Banks History Center at Roanoke Island Festival Park, this free exhibit will be on display 9 am to 5 pm Mon - Fri. through December. Phone 473-2655 for information

99th Anniversary of Powered Flight

- December 17—9:00 am at the Wright Brothers National Memorial. Fly-over begins at 10:35 am. Contact 252-441-4434 or www.nps.gov/wrb for information.

- 1:00 pm FFS Luncheon and Annual Meeting, Comfort Inn South, Nags Head For tickets mail \$25 per person, to FFS, P. O. Box 1903, Kitty Hawk, NC 27949.

- 7:00 pm—Wright Brothers' Anniversary Ball, Ramada Inn, Kill Devil Hills. For tickets mail \$125 per person, to FFS, P. O. Box 1903, Kitty Hawk, NC 27949.

Icarus International Art Exhibition and Competition

Throughout December—Glenn Eure's Ghost Fleet Gallery and Seaside Art Gallery in Nags Head. For information contact www.icarusinternational.com or phone 252-441-6584.

First Flight Society Membership Application

Members of the First Flight Society come from all walks (or flights) of life, but we all share a common bond: our love of aviation. The purpose of the society is to foster and promote a public awareness of, and widespread interest in, the origin, history and future of flight, in all its forms, and to memorialize Orville and Wilbur Wright, first in the world to successfully achieve powered flight in a heavier-than-air machine, December 17, 1903, near Kill Devil Hill, at Kitty Hawk, North Carolina. Join us by completing the information below and mailing your membership check made payable to the First Flight Society.

Name _____, Address _____, State _____, Zip _____

(Mail to The First Flight Society, P. O. Box 1903, Kitty Hawk, NC 27949)

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Update on 1903 Reproduction

By Tom Halfhill



Scenes from Ken Hyde's shop in Warrenton, Virginia taken in 1998. (photos by Lisa Holian)

Four experienced pilots are training to fly the reproduction of the 1903 Flyer next year. They will first use a simulator of the 1902 glider and then do trial flights in the 1902 reproduction that was built by the Wright Experience Company owned by Ken Hyde. It was announced at this year's EAA AirVenture in Oshkosh, Wisconsin that Scott Crossfield will be in charge of training the four candidates. They

are: Ken Hyde, Kevin Kochersberger, a glider instructor and a mechanical engineering professor, Terry Queijo, a commercial pilot and Chris Johnson, also a commercial pilot and on the Wright Experience team. They will be doing trial flights at the Outer Banks this Fall.

After gaining experience in the 1902 glider they will train on a simulator of the 1903 Flyer and eventually on the reproduction itself. Two

of the four aviators will be chosen to be "Pilots of the Century" for the honor of replicating the actual flights on December 17, 2003. The names will be announced at the EAA AirVenture 2003. Ken Hyde who has thousands of hours flying experience was quoted as saying that the Flyer is unstable but controllable and "The pilots in training will have to forget everything they have learned about modern flying."

The Flyer

a Newsletter of
The First Flight Society

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Visitor Center continued

ment of the roof system. All of the existing roofing will be removed, and a new Modified Bitumen Membrane roof system installed. An important aspect of the new roof system is the installation of additional drains to provide more efficient removal of rainwater from the flat roof surface. Restoration and repairs of deteriorated architectural concrete, on the exterior facade, and the replacement of the upper windows in the assembly room will also be performed. All work is being performed in a manner consistent with the Landmark status of the building. Preservation and restoration of original design features and architectural finishes are being given the

highest priority.

Once the new roofing work is completed and the building is dried-in, new carpeting will be installed. In addition to the carpet replacement, electrical repair work, and extensive painting will be done to restore the original colors used throughout the building prior to reopening the Visitor Center to the public. The National Park Service anticipates this work will be accomplished by late fall of this year.

PBS&J Construction Services is providing project management services for the National Park Service in support of this project.

Update on Icarus International Monument

Icarus, a local nonprofit group of artists recently announced their final plans for a "Monument To A Century of Flight". Previously reported here, it was to be sculptured in concrete and later in granite. Now it has decided that the pylons are to be made of stainless steel that will enable them to more replicate the shape of the original wings of the 1903 Flyer. Local artist, Glenn Eure and East Carolina University professors of sculpture Hanna

Jubran and Jodi Hollnagel are responsible for the designs of the \$1 million project that is to be completed next year in time for the 100th anniversary of powered flight. The monument will have 14 stainless steel pylons surrounding 6500 red bricks and a bronze medallion. The circumference of the monument will be 120 feet, the distance of the first successful flight. Bricks are still available for \$100. each with room for names, etc. Other more expensive items

are included in the design that will be located adjacent to the Aycock Brown Welcome Center in Kitty Hawk at the junction of Routes 158 and 12, Mile Post 1. Locally, order forms can be found at many locations including the Welcome Centers, Wright Memorial, libraries and many business establishments. Contributions are tax deductible. You may obtain order forms by contacting www.icarusinternational.com or by calling 252-441-6584.

Remembering Garber

by Lisa Holian

Each year during the commemoration of the first powered flight on December 17th, the First Flight Society honors an individual who has achieved a significant first in aviation. A portrait is commissioned and an artist is selected by Icarus International. The National Park Service displays the works of art in the Flight Room in the Visitors Center at the Wright Brothers' National Memorial in Kill Devil Hills. Collectively, these paintings are often referred to as the First Flight Shrine, but in actuality, the official name is the Paul E. Garber First Flight Shrine.

Who was this man? Although members of the First Flight Society are familiar with Garber, his name isn't exactly a household word. Yet, this lover of kites and Wrights, Paul Garber, was able to share his passion for aviation with countless millions.

Paul Edward Garber became the first Curator of the Smithsonian's Air & Space Museum in Washington, DC when it opened in 1976.

But his career at the Smithsonian began more than 50 years earlier when he was hired on a 3-month contract preparing displays. "But my heart was in aeronautics," he said. "Whenever I had finished an assigned job, I would go off on the making of something aeronautical."

Before his death in 1992, in an article by Valerie Govig, Garber told his story of how, when the 3-month job ended, he continued to work without pay. He decided to use Leonardo da Vinci's drawings to build a scale model of the inventor's ornithopter. As he was setting it up, an elderly man walked up and asked him about it. Garber went into a lengthy explanation and showed him how the model worked. Then he confided that he was out of work and had built the model as a volunteer. The old gentleman thanked him for his time and left.

Before Garber left the museum that day, the Chief Clerk, Harry Dorsey, came up to him and said, "Been working here without permission for several weeks, I understand."

Garber tells the story:

"I said, 'Oh, yes, Mr. Dorsey, but I'm leaving now, just leaving right now, Mr. Dorsey, I'm sorry.' I thought sure I was going to get fired or put in jail or something."

First Flight Events Planning Companies Begin Work

KILL DEVIL HILLS, NC -- Two North Carolina event planning, management and production companies -- Tribble Creative Group and JHE Production Group -- will officially begin work next week at Wright Brothers National Memorial (WBNM) in Kill Devil Hills where they will accelerate preparations for the First Flight Centennial celebration, slated for Dec. 13-17, 2003.

The First Flight Centennial Commission and the N.C. Department of Cultural Resources signed contracts with the two companies last week to manage, market and produce the five-day show that will serve as the culmination of a year-long national observance of flight.

"I am delighted to have these two groups onboard. I believe that their knowledge, experience and practical skills will enable the planning process to move forward quickly and help focus all of the different groups involved on implementing a successful and memorable event," said DCR Secretary Lisbeth C. Evans. "We will be celebrating a milestone event in the nation's history and we know that the eyes of the world will be turned to Kill Devil Hills," said DCR Secretary Lisbeth C. Evans.

The Charlotte-based Tribble Group, nationally recognized for its creative approach to event management, will be responsible for event marketing, including development of a

speaker's bureau, ticketing system, media center logistics; overall logistics and infrastructure; VIP management; transportation, including shuttles, parking and drop-off points; and recruiting and training volunteers. The company also will oversee catering and concessions at both WBNM and neighboring Centennial Park.

JHE Production Group of Concord is responsible for all activities that take place in the sky or on stage, including technical support, stage management, lighting, video, and coordination of entertainment acts. JHE is well known for producing spectacular entertainment packages nationwide. It is considered one of the premier producers of race entertainment around NASCAR and Indy Racing League events, and is the source for professional sports entertainment in Charlotte and the nation.

While in Kill Devil Hills on Tuesday and Wednesday, Mary Tribble of the Tribble Group and Jay Howard of JHE will meet with the National Park Service officials as well as county and state officials to step up development of a transportation plan and on-site programs for WBNM and Centennial Park.

First Flight Centennial celebrations will be kicked off December 17, 2002, and will continue in North Carolina and nationally through December 17, 2003.

"So he said, 'You sign up for the Civil Service examination for this position and you see the Treasurer, and he'll pay you, and meanwhile your temporary appointment is extended until you've taken the examination.'

"'You mean I can still work here, Mr. Dorsey? How in the world is that?' He answered, 'That's the Secretary's orders.'

'The Secretary? You mean the head of the Smithsonian Institution, Dr. Charles Doolittle Walcott?'

'Yes.'

'Goodness sakes, how did he ever hear of me?' the Chief Clerk answered, 'Well, he told me he'd been downstairs talking to you about Leonardo da Vinci for the last half hour.'

That story in a nutshell, illustrates Garber's intelligence, his love of aviation, his work ethic and his ability to laugh at himself. It took that kind of man to assemble the greatest collection of historic aircraft in the world.

This is the reason the First Flight Society honors Garber in its own effort to

preserve aviation history.

This December 17th at the 99th Commemoration of Powered Flight at the Wright Brothers National Memorial, Jack Northrop, a most significant aeronautical designer associated with the flying wing will be enshrined at the Paul E. Garber First Flight Shrine.

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The First Flight Society
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