



NAVAL HELICOPTER HISTORICAL SOCIETY NEWSLETTER

Volume 1 Issue #2

October, 99

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PURPOSE:

The Naval Helicopter Historical Society was organized to "Gather, Preserve and Display the Legacy of the Naval Helicopter." This is to include past and present helicopter operations in the Navy, Marine Corps and Coast Guard. The timeliness of this effort was made apparent with the passing of some of the pioneers in naval helicopter operations. Action was necessary before the "corporate memory" was lost!

The collection of historically significant materials from donors will be used for educational presentations, displays, research and the eventual establishment of a museum. The initial Plank Owner startup funds will be used to acquire the myriad of items necessary to properly receive items for cataloguing and preservation.

Message from the President:

Dear Plank Owners and Members,

On September 14th, I attended a celebration marking the 60th Anniversary of the initial flight of the Sikorsky VS-300. The event was held in a large hangar at the Sikorsky Plant and several hundred people were there to witness this memorable event.

The dignitaries on the dais included Dean Borgman, President, Sikorsky Aircraft Corporation, Sergei Sikorsky, Connecticut Governor John Roland and Gussie Orkowski.

In his remarks, "Tales of the VS-300", Igor's eldest son described the years his father spent in developing the first practical helicopter. Nineteen configurations were tried before he was satisfied with the final design which, on September 14th, 1939, lifted 3 feet off the ground for 10 seconds. Rotary wing flight was a reality.

In all, the occasion was most memorable because of the two stars who were in attendance, the VS-300 and Gussie Orkowski, a Sikorsky employee for 57 years who has never missed a days work.

It seems to me that this is what NHHS is about. Helicopters and people. And not just the Igor Sikorsky's, but also the Gussie Orkowski's.

Midway Update:

NHHS has been invited to discuss its partnership with the San Diego Aircraft Carrier Museum (Midway Museum) during a mid-October meeting. Midway's EIR is expected to be completed in October with public hearings taking place in November. We're very pleased to announce that Roger McTighe has come aboard as our point man for liaison with the Midway group. It looks like full speed ahead in the year 2000.

Best Regards,
Chuck Smiley

MGEN Victor A. Armstrong joins the Flag Officers Advisory Board:

The NHHS Board of Directors is proud to announce the addition of MGEN Victor A. Armstrong, USMC (Ret) to its Flag Officers Advisory Board. MGEN Armstrong is a pioneer Naval Aviator whose Helicopter Designation Number 178 was awarded on 9 August 1949. On a personal note, "Vic" Armstrong served in Korea with Harry Nachlin, one of our Board Members. We will be featuring an article on MGEN Armstrong in a future Newsletter.

We Salute the NHAA:

The Navy Helicopter Alumni Association, an early veteran's organization, was formed in mid 60's by a group of shipmates from the Navy's first helicopter squadrons, VX-3, HU-1 and HU-2. They were the pioneers and remain a great source of Naval Helicopter History for us all. Today they number more than 500 active members derived from nearly every Navy Helicopter squadron that has descended since those early days. Their web site will give you much to enjoy: <http://www.navhelo.org>
You may contact their President:

Don Bellemare,
6001 Still Run Dr.
Greensboro, SC 27455.
Telephone: (336) 282-3212
E-mail dbellemare@worldnet.att.net

Welcome to new Plank Owners:

Since the last issue of the *Newsletter*, we gladly welcome aboard these new rotary-wing enthusiasts who made contributions of \$100 or more and joined the growing ranks of NHHS Plank Owners. Their contribution resulted in the issuance of a **Plank Owner Certificate** suitable for framing. NHHS Plank Owners currently number **159**.

Bob Ace; Victor A. Armstrong; Henry L. Cassani; Robert A. Close; Joseph P. Cosgrove; Wayne S. Densmore; Raymond L. Earl; Malone H. Farrar; Robert E. Felten; William R. Ford; Donald C. Henry; Jim Jowers; Mrs. Edward Kubicki; Donald R. Manuel; Steven W.

McDermaid; J. Maxwell Moore; Eugene H. Moyer; 'Jig Dog' Ramage; Roger Rich; John E. Ries; John W. Thornton and Mark T. Vanderberg.

For a limited time only, you too can become a NHHS Plank Owner by donating \$100 or more and complete the application form in another section of this *Newsletter*.

Additional Plank Owners are: Harry E. Asbury; Warren E. Aut; Gerald E. Balderson; Dale E. Barck; Robert E. Batterby; Earl R. Bergsma; Daniel R. Bilicki; Alan J. Billings; Melvin J. Box; Joseph G. Brady; Ian F. Brown; Lewis C. Brown; Richard A. Bruning; E.O. "Buck" Buchanan; Robert Bullard; George F. Cagle; Paul Caine; Reid P. Carleton; Tomas Carlos; Claude C. Coffey, Jr.; Lawrence E. "Bud" Cole; Jack E. Conner; Frank Coombs; William Joseph Cox; Ronald E. Crooker; John S. Daly; Dan Davey; Lee E. Davison; Robert M. DeGregorio; Joseph R. DeNigro; Richard L. Dick; Byron L. Dieckman; Jewell L. Dixon, Jr.; R."K" Doane; John E. Dobyms; Richard F. Dreher; John "Stealth" Dryden; Lloyd L. Duncan; Bryan R. Eagan; Robert "Pappy" Elerick; Howard Elwell; Alvin F. Emig; Ralph W. Fairbanks; Louis Fazio; Arnold K. Fieser; Jan C. Gaudio; Larry H. Gjerman; H. Glenzer; Rene Gonzalez; Harold R. Gordinier; Andrew A. Granuzzo; Donald G. "Don" Gregory; Daniel L. Hansen; Christopher Hayes; Donald J. Hayes; Margaret E. Hayes; Thomas Hayes; Brian W. Hickman; John J. Higginson; Edward H. Howard; Charles C. Jones; Donald S. Jones; Robert E. Jones; Hardy Kircher; L.S. Kollmorgan, Jr.; Richard G. Krueger; Edward Kubicki; Terry C. Lackey; B.C. Lamberth; Thomas C. Lawson, III; John P. Leach; Walter B. Lester; Dan Libertino; Bill Lloyd; Kenneth W. Lowe; In memory of George H. Lyter, Jr. (deceased); Jim MacArthur; Ken Marion; William H. Marten, III; David J. McCracken; Harrison R. McDonald; Joe McKeller; Anne M. McLinden; Hugh F. McLinden, Jr.; James A. McLinden; Willie McNeil; Steve Millikin; Alfred E. Monahan; Bill "Red Dog" Moss; Roger Murray; Harold Nachlin; Phillip W. Nicholas; Eric Oxendorf; Wade M. Page; Anne H. Parthemer; Lloyd L. Parthemer; Gene Pellerin; H. Vernon Pepper; William S. Personius; Carl M. Petersen, II; Duane Phillips; Tom Pocklington; W.D. "Bud" Pocklington; Mathew John Pohl; Phil Poisson; David L. Punzelt; William F. Quarg;

P.M. "Mike" Reber; Robert L. Redman; M.L. "Bud" Reynolds; Robert Ritzman; Matthias J. "Matt" Russ, II; Robert E. Schock; Ken A. Schroeder, Jr.; Joe Skrzypek; Charles B. Smiley; George E. Smith; Maribeth "Smitty" Smith; John E. Soto; Walter M. "Smokey" Staight; Elizabeth A. Stuyvesant; Frank M. Suzan; David A. Swan; William E. Terry; Steven J. Tomaszeski; Robert S. Vermilya; J.S. "Scotty" Walker; James D. Waring; Howard M. Whitfield; Paul F. Whitten, Sr.; John A. Willett; Robert W. "Bob" Womble and Harry J. Zinser

From the Archives:

Helio-type Flying Machine. Louis Blumenthal was born in 1861 in Libau, Latvia. He migrated to America in 1887, when he was 26 years old. He became a citizen of the United States in 1892.

As a young student in Europe, he attended a Gymnasium; a secondary school that prepared students for the universities.



In a 1905 New York State census, his occupation was listed as a tea merchant. He had a small shop where coffee and other condiments were sold. The family lived in rooms above the shop.

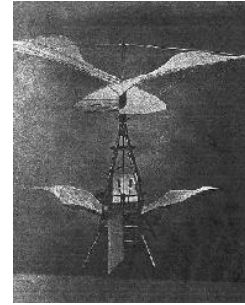
His first wife died in 1922. Together, they had seven children.

His granddaughter, Estelle Blumenthal Sherman, donated the artifacts to start the Louis Blumenthal Collection. Her earliest recollection of her grandfather, was visiting him in his home in Brooklyn as a young child, and being fascinated with the miniature replicas of his inventions. One, in particular, was a folding card table with chairs attached, which opened simultaneously in one operation. It was the size of dollhouse furniture built to perfect scale.

Estelle recalls that her grandfather was a stately gentleman with a dignified bearing and somewhat austere countenance that, to a small child, made him seem an imposing figure. He was a

creative genius who could design complex machinery as well as simple household items, giving equal concentration to each detail. His inventions were widely diversified from a "Siedlitz Powder" glass to an unsinkable ship in which the navy expressed interest.

One of his more memorable inventions was an early model of the helicopter, which was exhibited in Madison Square Garden as part of the Aeronautic Exposition of 1909. He called it a "Helio-type Flying Machine".



He was an inventor with more than 100 patents to his credit, including many other inventions that were not patented. When he died in 1943, many articles were written in the local newspaper about his inventions. Most notably was the helio-type flying machine.

The Brooklyn Eagle covering the story on October 1, 1909, reported:

"...It differs entirely from any aeronautic exhibit displayed in the Garden; in fact, being the only model involving the true idea of a helicopter – namely, rising direct from the ground.

At first glance, one's attention is attracted by the form of the upper spiral propeller, connected by a controlling lever to motor, the duty of which is to revolve at a speed sufficient to cause it to screw into the air, thus creating a current by which the machine rises. When it has risen to the height desired, the aviator then causes the machine to be propelled forward by a propeller in the rear, which is connected by a controlling lever to the central shaft, thence to the motor.

The wings or planes, which are collapsible (the transmitting motion, being the same mode of operation as a bird in flight) can be operated simultaneously with the upper propeller, or separately, to insure and maintain the equilibrium or stability of the machine. Should the motor become deranged while in the air, the supporting surfaces of the wings or planes and upper propeller would act as a parachute, thus

permitting the machine to make a gradual descent.”

From the Curator:

The NHHS Accession System is now operational and numerous individually donated artifact items and collections have been processed. The following donations are representative of memorabilia that have been added:

1. COMHSLWINGLANT donated collections of plaques, photo albums, command history & event albums, etc., from disestablished squadrons:
 - a. HSL-30 Collection
 - b. HSL-32 Collection
 - c. HSL-34 Collection
 - d. HSL-36 Scrap Book 1974-83
2. COMTRAWING donated a chronological list of designated Navy, Marine and Coast Guard helicopter pilots, 1946-1998.
3. Donated Books include:
 - a. “The Sea Devils” by Jim Jowers.
 - b. “Angels to the Rescue” 1948-77, Anderson/Meade donated by Jack King.
 - c. “SIKORSKY H-34 An Illustrated History” donated by Lennart Lundh
 - d. “H-34 Choctaw in action” donated by Lennart Lundh
4. Louis Blumenthal’s ‘Heliotype Flying Machine’ Collection donated by his granddaughter, Estelle Sherman.
5. NAS & NALF Imperial Beach and Piasecki publications donated by Lloyd Parthemer.
6. KAMAN Aircraft Corp. Collection donated by Jack L. King, Tech. Rep.
7. Gyrodyne Collection by Richard Reade, Jr.
8. ‘Operation Mercy’ Collection of photos, news articles, etc., of 1955 Hurricane Janet rescue effort in Tampico, Mexico, donated by J. Maxwell Moore.
9. Aircraft models of H-2, H-3 and H-46 donated by Bill Quarg.

This list includes only a few of the items we have received since May. You also may have historical significant items or a collection to donate, if so, please contact us through one of the communication methods listed on the first page of this *Newsletter*.

Letters to the Historian:

Dear NHHS,

In January 1952, I was a recalled LTJG/USNR in the USS CHARLES H. ROAN, DD 853 as its ASSTOPS/COMMO. I was a qualified “tin can sailor”.

The “Jolly Charlie” was sent to Key West, FL reporting to C/OPDEV4; an organization developing ASW and running the Sonar School. Our assignment (somewhat classified); work with airborne units (HELOS) in ASW operations. (All of this is from memory, I do not remember what HELO unit (s) were involved but they came out of NAS Key West or Boca Chica).

Talk about flying egg crates! Due to the weight of the conventional sonar the exterior of the HELO was removed. The pilot/copilot, AC and sonar tech just strapped themselves in, all wearing flotation gear and open to the wind and sky. In case of a ditching in shark and barracuda infested waters, huge balloon type inflatables were attached to the frames; theory being the whirlbird would remain afloat until rescued.

In due time, CHR went out each morning to join the fun and games. An ASW helo would arrive on station and take a position 2000 yds ahead and fly in a prescribed direction ahead of 853. At an estimated 4000 yds, the bird would hover, lower the sonar dome, and ping until 853 closed to 2000yds and radio to break hover and proceed to the next "dip" point. This went on mornings and afternoons.

Sounds great, simple, just make sure the 853 didn't get too close, as the antennae were higher than the bird when hovering. TO MAKE SURE THE COORDINATION WAS EXACT, THE 853 SENT ALONG A QUALIFIED OFFICER FOR EACH DAILY FLIGHT. He was "Mr. Safety". Guess who?

Sharks and barracuda gracefully swimming below as seen through the frames and balloons; no sweat! I thoroughly enjoyed this experience and the entire research/experiment operation was a huge success.

As time went on and techniques were developed, we added many provisions; e.g. two and then four helos to form ASW screens (just as DDs had been doing); then a sub was added, etc.

I like to think back to warm Florida winter of 1952 and the role the USS CHARLES H. ROAN DD 853 and the rest of us played in developing HELO ASW OPS, and what is being carried on with our fleet units. I had the pleasure of being a NATO Screen Commander in the Med. (my ACDUTRA) and to see how the AIR/SURFACE ops work made me a very happy "tin can sailor".

When we prepared to sail North to Norva, the HELO unit sponsored a wonderful "Happy Hour" for us. Each member of the ship received a wallet size ID that certified the bearer as a member of the "Rotating and Gyro Revolving Society of the U.S." (Or words to that affect). After 40 years of traveling I can't find my card.

I regret not having any pics of the flying frames but the JOLLY CHARLIE, although long gone (Turkish Navy) is still afloat in its Reunion Association. We meet every other year in a different city. I will write a note to our President and Editor of our newsletter and ask the members if any of them have any photos of the ASW "Birds" or cards that you could use in your archives.

I know this info is almost two years old but I just found the SHIFT COLORS, article about the NHHS; (Winter 1998). I hope this info can be of some use to your historian.

Best regards,
CAPT Joseph F. Trainor, USNR (Ret)
14 Enid Court, Potomac, MD 20854
(301) 299-4756/FAX -0040 or Email:
jftrainor@erols.com

* * *

Dear CAPT Trainor,

By January 1952 I had been driving that flying bedstead for about nine months. Removing the fabric, frames and tailfins allowed the addition of sonar gear, an aux fuel tank and a sonar trainee- about 740 pounds. Heat and humidity ate up our hovering capability.

Our assignment (somewhat classified) with C/OPDEV4 was to dip and ping in order to write the curves to keep the project on track. My position in Jan. 1952 was as Maintenance Officer and # 2, to LCDR John R. Thompson USN, O-in-C of the Sea Plane Base Helicopter Detachment of VX-1. (8 to 10 HRP-1 aircraft and personnel to keep them flying.) The detachment CO reported to the VX-1 OPS Officer and operated as a squadron.

I believe the hover to be at an approximate 4,000 yards from the ship with the ship closing at designated speeds. This provided the team in Boca Chica the opportunity to study dip coverage and "holidays".

The Happy Hour could have been at the Club or in the BOQ where our "Brits" resided and had Happy Hour every evening.

It was great to hear from you CAPT. Trainor. You triggered many memories and now I'm searching for my card.

Best regards,
Hugh McLinden Jr., CDR USN (Ret)
NHHS Historian

1999 Mark Starr Pioneer Award:

NHHS President, Chuck Smiley, announced the recipients of the 1999 Mark Starr Pioneer Award at the Naval Helicopter Association symposium in Jacksonville, FL on 21 April 1999. The award will be given to all Navy, Marine, and civilian personnel who served in support of naval helicopter operations in the Korean Conflict during the period 27 June 1950 to 27 July 1954. This includes pilots, crew chiefs, aircrew, corpsmen, maintenance and administrative personnel, civilian technical representatives, and other support personnel who were stationed in Korea, with 7th Fleet ships offshore and in maintenance and supply/support units in Japan.

Award certificates will be issued by the Naval Helicopter Historical Society to all qualifying recipients who submit information detailing their name as they wish it to appear on the certificate, dates served, command, unit, position, etc., to:

NHHS Secretary, P. O. Box 974, Bonita, CA 91908-0974.

Call for MIDWAY Helicopters & A/C Maintenance Volunteers:

A Memorandum of Understanding exists between NHHS and the San Diego Aircraft Carrier Museum. Both organizations are California non-profit corporations. Pursuant to this understanding, NHHS shall assist the Museum in two ways:

1. NHHS shall attempt to locate Naval Helicopters for potential acquisition by the S. D. Aircraft Carrier Museum.
2. NHHS shall attempt to recruit volunteers skilled in helicopter maintenance to restore and maintain any helicopters acquired by the Museum.

If you are aware of any helicopters available for acquisition by the Midway Museum or if you would like to volunteer to help restore and maintain helicopters acquired by the Midway, please provide your information to: **NHHS, P. O. Box 974, Bonita, CA 91908-0974.**

Membership:

Join with Pioneers and other rotary-wing enthusiasts to become a member and lend your support to the Naval Helicopter Historical Society.

By becoming a member you will be playing a vital role in amassing the ongoing legacy of the naval helicopter for the benefit of the public as well as preserving this major historical segment in aviation for all mankind. Rotary-wing aircraft have a significant role in any successful naval operation today and can only be expected to expand their utility and value in the future. There are less than four museums world wide specifically dedicated to preserving rotary-wing aircraft and their history.

Membership dues are tax deductible. All members receive a periodic *Newsletter*, membership card and decal.

Sustaining level members (Partner and above) shall receive the above membership benefits, plus a certificate suitable for framing, and be named on a Sustaining Member (Partner, Patron or Benefactor) plaque.

We currently offer **six levels of membership.** Your highest contribution will determine your membership level, which you will retain as long as you are a member, even if subsequent renewals are at a lower level:

Annual Memberships:

Student/Military	\$25
Individual	\$50
Friend	\$100

Sustaining (three year) Membership:

Partner	\$250
Patron	\$500
Benefactor	\$1,000

Please choose a level and do one of the following:

- a) Complete the form below and mail to NHHS, P. O. BOX 974 BONITA, CA 91908-0974 with your check or credit card details or,
 - b) Call NHHS at 619-435-7795 and leave a phone number and best time to reach you. We will return your call and take the details and credit card* information over the phone.
-

NHHS MEMBERSHIP

NAME _____
FIRST MI LAST

STREET ADDRESS _____

CITY _____ STATE _____ ZIP _____

Telephone _____ FAX _____ E-mail _____

Desired Membership Level _____ Amount Enclosed _____

CREDIT CARD

MC _____ Visa _____ Card Number _____ Exp. Date _____
(Check One)

SIGNATURE _____

*We gladly accept MC and VISA. Please mail and make checks payable to NHHS, P.O. BOX 974, BONITA, CA 91908-0974 or FAX 619-472-0315.

_____(Cut here to separate forms)_____

NHHS "PLANK OWNER" APPLICATION

In addition to memberships, original personalized Plank Owner Certificates (suitable for framing) are available for a limited time only with an additional donation of \$100 or more. If interested, please complete this application and send to: **NHHS, P. O. BOX 974, BONITA, CA 91908-0974**

Name _____
Please print, as you would like it to appear on the certificate

Address _____ Apt # _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Tel # _____ Email _____ FAX _____

Enclosed is my check in the amount of \$100.00 (or more) payable to NHHS or bill my bankcard: MCard ___ VISA ___

Card # _____ Expiration date _____

Signature _____

NAVAL HELICOPTER HISTORICAL SOCIETY
P. O. BOX 974
BONITA, CA 91908-0974

