



PENNSYLVANIA PILOT

Vol 21 No 3, Fall 2010

Published quarterly by the Aero Club of Pennsylvania for those interested in aviation in the Greater Delaware Valley

Aero Club Highlights

Scholarship Dinner...

62 guests attended the Annual Scholarship Dinner on June 17 at Wings Field sponsored by the Aero Club of Pennsylvania Memorial Scholarship Fund, the Bob Shannon Memorial Fund and the Eastern PA Chapter of 99's. The Aero Club awarded eight scholarships in all, while the Shannon Fund awarded one, and the Ninety-Nines awarded three. Together, the groups awarded an impressive \$21,000. Our speaker was Judy Cadmus, a local pilot and a software engineer working at Boeing on Chinook Helicopters. See more photos on Page 6.



2010 Scholarship Recipients

Fly Market... The Aero Club will hold an aviation sale at Wings Field on Sept 11 at the Wings & Wheels Day. The sale raises funds for the Aero Club of PA Memorial Scholarship Fund. Donations of aviation-related items are being accepted for the event. See details, page 3.

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Improvements at Wings Field taking shape...

Progress at Wings Field...

Wings Field (KLOM) is one the older airports in the Philadelphia area and many of the buildings date to the airport's inception in 1930. But new things are happening! A utility building to house the snow

keeping noise and fumes on the airport and away from the houses that have been built across the street over the last two decades.

After that, an application will be made for a building permit to

replace two older hangar buildings with new, insulated, heated box hangars and T-hangars. These will be flexible enough to house almost any kind of general aviation plane that can land at KLOM. If all goes as planned with aviation grants and customer do their part, the hangars will be a reality in 2011.

Highlight: Eagles Mere Air Museum



This 1930 CH-400 Bellanca Skyrocket is one of the many rare birds in the private aircraft collection at Eagles Mere Air Museum. The rest of the collection can be seen at eaglesmereairmuseum.org.

Eagles Mere visit...

The Aero Club made a private visit to the Eagles Mere Air Museum

in early August just as this issue was being printed. The museum and private airstrip houses a collection of 20 actively flown antique airplanes. A number of aircraft were expected to fly up to the airport located northeast of Williamsport, near the village of Eagles Mere, PA. The collection includes a 1928 Curtiss Robin, 1929 Pitcairn Mailwing, 1930 Bellanca Skyrocket and a 1932 Bird CK once owned

by Wiley Post. The museum also has a number of antique aircraft engines including a Gnome and an OX-5.

plow equipment is nearing completion. A few years ago, Wings acquired snow plows and an industrial strength snow blower that threw last winter's heavy snows 100 feet off the runway. This winter, that equipment will have a new home.

We have heard that Wings is in the final stage of working with the Pennsylvania Bureau of Aviation for paving of a new transient apron. Once completed, the new ramp will be larger and closer to the runway. No more climbing the hill to fuel! This has the added benefit of



New equipment building at Wings

by Wiley Post. The museum also has a number of antique aircraft engines including a Gnome and an OX-5.



AERO CLUB OF PENNSYLVANIA



ORGANIZED: Dec 17, 1909; CHARTERED: May 10, 1910

PO Box 748
Blue Bell, PA 19422

www.aeroclubpa.org
AeroClubPA@aol.com

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Membership dues waived for \$100 scholarship donation.

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610-909-4467

Published Quarterly: February, May, August, November

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Robert Dant

GA Across the Pond

This past April, friends and I travelled on a volcano-extended European vacation that included some interesting aviation related stops.

First, we ventured to Friedrichshafen, Germany on the shores of the Bodensee for Europe's largest annual General Aviation trade show. Things started out well. Parking was just 2 Euros and we were pleasantly surprised to discover that the 15 Euro fee was waived for holders of EAA membership cards.

By the number of exhibits and the large crowds, it would certainly seem that GA is alive and well in Europe, albeit in a slightly different form. The concentration of exhibits were spread out over six very large hangars on the north side of the runway at "Flughafen Friedrichshafen" and included mostly light sport aircraft, gliders, and small helicopters. The weekend also featured airshows that included, to our surprise, a Eurocopter of some kind doing rolls and loops! The other unique sound and view over the skies of Friedrichshafen was the new semi-rigid airship from the new Zeppelin Company. The 12 passenger craft was giving sightseeing rides at a show price of 155 Euros for a 20-minute ride. It was very enticing, though we did not ride. We visited the show just this one day and finished the evening drinking "weiss" beer, eating German Pretzels and watching the Zeppelin launch into the sky.

"It would certainly seem that GA is alive and well in Europe"

The Dornier and Zeppelin Museums are also located in Friedrichshafen and are both well worth the modest entrance fees. We visited both the next day.

The trip continued with a drive through the Swiss Alps on the way to "Lario", Lake Como, Italy, for some seaplane flying. As cheap as Friedrichshafen was for us, a couple hours of dual sightseeing flying really ate up the savings. The seaplane base at Como is surprisingly active, being one of the few places one can fly seaplanes in Europe. Our instructor, Francesco spoke fluent English and provided excellent instruction and an appreciation for the local landmarks. We even ventured across the border, proud to say that we flew a seaplane into Switzerland, a country where all lakes are actually closed to seaplane operations.

Back in Bavaria, waiting for the Icelandic volcano to settle down, we visited the Deutsches Museum at Oberschleissheim Airfield just northwest of Munich. The airfield dates back to 1912 when it was home to the Royal Bavarian Flying Corps. The field was home to airline service in the 1920's, a Nazi flying school in the 1930's and 1940's, and a U.S. Army Air Base from 1945 to 1968. The field is still used to launch Zeppelins that fly sightseers over the city of Munich. The museum itself holds a nice collection of general aviation and military aircraft, including such examples as a Fokker D VII, a C-47, a Heinkel He 111, a Bücker Bü 181 Luftwaffe training plane, and the impressive Donier 3-engine Do 24 T-3 Flying Boat. Above the original command station, one can venture to the top of the old control tower overlooking the airfield. We finished the visit at the little outside café, drinking more "weiss" beer, eating German Pretzels and once again watching the Zeppelin launch passengers into the skies over Germany.

Another aviation-related activity involved flying down the Autobahn at 200 kph in our rented BMW 3-series. Honestly, I found that people drive quite reasonable here with most traffic cruising along at about 120 kph (75 mph) and smartly getting out of the way of the 10% of those who wanted to go a lot faster.

2011 RENEWAL NOTICE

Your \$25.00 membership renewal is due this fall using the attached form. If the form is missing, see page 2 for the mailing address. Your timely renewal saves us postage on reminders.

Better yet, go to www.aeroclubpa.org and pay online via credit card. This saves postage and time. The payment is through PayPal, though you do not need a PayPal account to make the payment.

If you wish to contribute to the Scholarship Fund, your donation will be used to promote aviation. Contributions are tax deductible, and if you contribute \$100 or more to the scholarship fund, your membership dues are waived and **100% of your donation will go to fund scholarships for young men and women.**

**RENEW ONLINE at
www.aeroclubpa.org**

Aero Club Fly Market

September 11, 2010, Wings Airport

The Aero Club of PA will hold its annual Fly Market at the Wings n' Wheels Day, this year at Wings Airport. We are accepting donations of interesting aviation items to sell in order to raise money for our scholarship fund. For information, contact Deb Harding at airvenhab@earthlink.net or at 610-827-7208.

BOARD OF DIRECTORS REPORT

Nancy Kyle, Secretary

The Aero Club Board of Directors met at PACC at Wings Field on July 22. President Rob Dant opened the meeting.

Nancy Kyle presented the minutes from the last BOD meeting. Then the group discussed financials, membership and newsletter details. Mary Wunder reported by e-mail that we have 172 paid members of the club.

Deb Harding, also reporting to the board by email on the successful completion of our 2010 Scholarship campaign and dinner. She stressed the importance of raising more awareness of the scholarship program in order to get a bigger pool of applicants in future years.

Discussion ensued on Special Events, including the August trip to Eagles Mere Aviation Museum. Walt Ellis also discussed other ideas, including possible trips to the Mid-Atlantic Air Museum in Reading, the Air Victory Museum in New Jersey, the Air Mobility Museum at Dover, and the Udvar-Hazy museum.

The group talked about the upcoming Fly Market and about possible speakers for the Wright Brothers Dinner.

The meeting adjourned for dinner and a presentation by Rob Dant on his trip with friends to Germany, Switzerland, and Italy, including aviation related stops along the way.

AVIATION CALENDAR

August

25 (Wed) "Thunder over the Boardwalk" Free Airshow, Atlantic City

September

9-12 37th Annual International Seaplane Fly-In, Greenville, Me
11 20th Annual Wings and Wheels Day, Wings Field (LOM)
11 New Garden (N57) EAA Fly In. Breakfast
12 EAA #287 Breakfast, Woodbine, NJ (1N4)
12 Pottstown-Limerick (PTW). Fly-in Breakfast
11-12 EAA #70 Grass Roots Fly-in, Braden Airpark (N43)
18 Ocean City, NJ Air Festival (26N)
18 EAA #643 Fly In, Sky Manor Airport, NJ (N40)

October

2 Alloway Fall Fest Fly-in (NJ02), Alloway, NJ
2 Kiwanis Fly-In Breakfast, Queen City Airport (XLL)
9 1st Annual First State Fly-In, Wilmington, DE (ILG)

November

12-14 39th Annual Waterfowl Festival, Easton, Maryland (ESN)
<http://www.waterfowlfestival.org/>

Aero Club Events

Sep 11 Aero Club Fly Market, Wings & Wheels Day.
Oct 21 Board of Directors Mtg, Thursday, 6PM, PACC
Dec 17 Wright Brothers Dinner, Friday, Desmond Hotel

Highlight

Presentation, October 21, 2010

Wings Field, Philadelphia Aviation Country Club

Paul Heintz will provide us with photos and stories about his and his wife's recent trip around the U.S.A. in his Cessna 210. They spent most of the month of May circumnavigating the continental U.S.A., with nearly perfect weather, stopping over at many well known points of interest and a few not so well known.

Join us for dinner (optional) at 7PM and a 1-hour presentation at around 8PM. Contact Rob Dant (rdant@mindspring.com) for reservations. Dinner is \$40 per person plus drinks. Attire at PACC is business casual.

Delaware Valley Regional Planning Commission Meeting Report

AIRPORT NEWS

June, 2010

By Elaine Farashian



PHILADELPHIA INTERNATIONAL [PHL]

Phase 2 of Terminal A East is 90% complete. Runway 9R rehab has begun.

NORTHEAST PHILADELPHIA [PNE]

Repavement of taxiway Lima has begun.

BRANDYWINE [OQN]

A new airport beacon is being installed near the current weather station. Taxiway safety improvements project will commence after approval by Conservation District and Township. Due to cost, the apron expansion plan has been adjusted to now only include doing the repair of the existing collapsed drainage system between the hangars.

CAMDEN COUNTY [19N]

Apron rehab, security fence and fuel farm only require final inspection in order to be completed. The owner is considering a grant offer for runway widening and lighting design.

CECIL COUNTY [58M]

The taxiway extension is almost complete. The new terminal will open soon and the old terminal will be demolished about the same time. The 1,000 ft. runway extension plan is awaiting county and MAA approval.

CROSS KEYS [17N]

The Township and Conservation District need to approve plans for threshold relocation and lighting design which includes runway and taxiway lighting, vault and PAPIs. The fuel tank is operational.

DOYLESTOWN [DYL]

Phase 2 of stormwater management project and the demolition of Hughes/Overholt properties are complete. Out for bid is rehab to aprons, taxiway and airfield.

NEW CASTLE [1LG]

Runway 1/19 is currently closed due

to EMAS project and will be so approximately 6 months.

NEW GARDEN [N57]

Bids will be out by July or August for taxiway A work which includes paving and marking.

PERKIOMEN VALLEY [N10]

The airport has received a tentative grant for phase 2 obstruction removal. The airport hazard zoning ordinance passed in December.

QUAKERTOWN [UKT]

Construction is complete for both runway 11/29 and hangar door modifications/trench projects. Runway 29 obstruction removal is 80% finished.

SPITFIRE [7N7]

A fuel tank is planned. Hangar spaces are to be designed.

VAN SANT [9N1]

The work area will be reseeded now that the runway regrading is done.

WINGS [LOM]

The foundations and floor of the snow removal equipment building were finished in June and the steel building has been erected.

FLIGHT SAFETY By Al Schnur

Preparing for takeoff and avoiding "surface deviations"



Ready for some more changes at your favorite towered airport? Starting sometime after

September 30, 2010 you will be asked to line up and wait. That's something that we've all learned how to do when at the local food market, movie theaters etc.

So why the change to "line up and wait?". Apparently many non-native English speakers get confused by the terminology taxi into "position and hold" and end up mixing that up with phrases like "position and roll," "hold position," and others. To try to eliminate this basic misinterpretation,

ICAO will replace this ambiguity with "line up and wait."

All this and other changes that have been recently put into place are designed to minimize "Surface Deviations". Again we are coming into compliance with the ICAO definition that states that "A surface deviation is any occurrence at an aerodrome involving the incorrect presence of an aircraft, vehicle, or person on the protected area of a surface designated for the landing and takeoff of aircraft." Briefly,



surface deviations are further categorized A through D. "A" being the most serious, in which a collision was narrowly avoided.

The bottom line is to be aware of what's going on around you and establish a list of Best Practices as indicated in the AIM to keep from becoming part of a Surface (Runway) Incursion.

Memories of Bellanca Airfield By Elaine Farashian

Just west of the lovely village of New Castle (on the banks of the Delaware River) sits the home of the Friends of Bellanca Museum, housed in a hangar on the National Register of Historic Places. The hangar itself is interesting because it was constructed in 1936 and its woodwork is in very good condition. Frank Ianni, a former Major General in the National Guard, explained the history of the Museum with slides and follow-up information to a group of Aero Club attendees on Saturday, May 8.

Giuseppe Mario Bellanca, born in Sicily in 1886, came to the U.S. in 1911 after aeronautical training in Milan. A year

later he built and flew the first Bellanca monoplane in Mineola, Long Island. He gave flying lessons to Fiorello LaGuardia who became an ace fighter pilot in WWI and later Mayor of New York City. In 1913, Bellanca built an airplane which became standard in that the propeller was in front, the wing in the middle and the rudder in the back. Other planes at the time had the rudder in front of the wing and the propellers pushing from behind.



Bellanca WBII, Columbia, 1927

Bellanca's successively constructed airplanes were noted for many of their first-time features and designs. His planes were regarded as efficient, fast and capable of lifting heavy cargo. In 1922, he had built the first cabin monoplane in the U.S. In 1924 he teamed up with Wright Aeronautical to form Wright-Bellanca Corp. and designed the WBII, later known as the Columbia. This plane, which set a world endurance record by circling Long Island over fifty one

hours, was Lindbergh's preference for his transatlantic flight; however, Charles Levine, Bellanca's new partner, bought WBII from Wright Aeronautical and turned down Lindbergh because he wanted the plane for his own attempt at the NY-Paris flight. Two weeks later, the WBII, now the Columbia piloted by Clarence Chamberlin, flew non-stop from Roosevelt Field, NY to Eisleben, Germany, a new world distance record of 3,911 miles. For his accomplishments, Bellanca was honored by Time Magazine by placing him on the July 4, 1927 cover.

In 1928, Henry du Pont and other local leaders invited Bellanca to continue his

work in a three-part aviation complex that occupied 360 acres of a du Pont Spring Garden Farm. The complex consisted of corporate offices, a factory and an airfield with 1,100 foot frontage on the Delaware River. This airfield provided a highly needed general aviation facility in Delaware. The first plane built at this site was the CH200, a descendant of the Columbia. The CH series, producing many record-setting flights, was followed by a Bellanca Skyrocket named Miss Veedol which made the first non-stop transpacific flight in 1931.

Bellanca Aircraft Complex grew to employ 3,000 employees who, not only built aircraft, but produced sub-assemblies and aircraft components for other aircraft companies during WWII. In 1954, Giuseppe Bellanca sold the corporation and retired to Galena, MD. He was inducted into the National Aviation Hall of Fame in 1959 and died the following year. His CF airplane was donated by his family, restored by NASA and is presently displayed at the Air and Space Museum near Dulles Airport.

More information is available at: <http://friendsofbellanca.org>

100th Anniversary of Flugplatz Konstanz

By Rob Dant

Travelling by way of the auto ferry across beautiful Lake Constance, we came across "Flugplatz Konstanz" on the eve of that grass airfield's 100th anniversary. As we approached we witnessed a lone Cessna 182 depart. It was getting dark as we drove up and the proprietors were closing up the hangars. But, the man and his wife were kind enough to chat for awhile and provide recommendations for dinner inside the old city walls of Konstanz.

They also told us of the upcoming anniversary and invited us to return in June. The opening festivities would feature the women's choir and aviator's ball with dancing and an aviation dress theme. The week-long celebration would also include an address by the Bürgermeister, aerobatics displays, a hot-air balloon launch, fly-ins by sport aircraft, helicopters and ultralights, a paper-aircraft championship, and an antique auto auction. Alas, we arrived two months too soon.



Aero Club, Bob Shannon, and 99's award 12 scholarships...

The Aero Club of Pennsylvania awards scholarships to young men and women interested in pursuing careers in aviation. This year, the Aero Club awarded 8 scholarships of \$1000 to \$3000 for a total of \$15,500. Included in this was a special award in honor of Michael Dunn, a past recipient who passed away this year. Michael's family donated \$2,500 in his memory.

The Eastern PA Chapter of the 99's, part of the international Ninety-Nines organization of women pilots, awards scholarships to woman interested in starting or furthering their interest in aviation. This year, the Ninety-Nines gave away two \$1000 scholarships and one \$2000 award.

Bob Shannon Scholarships are awarded in honor of Bob Shannon, who operated West Chester Airport (Brandywine) and then Downtingtown Airport (Shannon Airport) in the 1960's and 1970's. This year, the Shannon Fund gave away one \$1500 scholarship.

Philadelphia Aviation Country Club

For over 80 years, many members of the Aero Club of Pennsylvania have also been members of the Philadelphia Aviation



Country Club. We hold our board meetings here, and each June, P.A.C.C. hosts our annual scholarship dinner. Thanks to General Manager Joe Case and his staff for their wonderful accommodation and service to the Aero Club.

The Philadelphia Aviation Country Club was founded in March 1931 by a group of local residents all of whom were prominent in aviation circles. The original club house, which is still in use, was converted from an old farm dwelling and became the home of the P.A.C.C. when Wings Corporation of Camden, New Jersey, purchased the entire farm which is now Wings Field. Undoubtedly, the most noteworthy event to occur here was the founding of the Aircraft Owners and Pilots Association (AOPA) in 1939 by members of P.A.C.C. who were also part of the board of the Aero Club of Pennsylvania.

2010 Aero Club and Shannon Scholarships



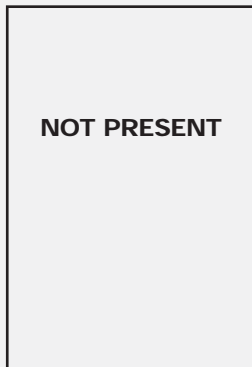
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MATTHEW KERR



RICHARD VETICK, JR



JEFFREY AUSTIN DANIEL



DORA AMOAH-BUDU



ABEL CASTILLO



ZACH GERBNER



KEITH STOVER
MICHAEL DUNN AWARD



JOHN CORTESE III
BOB SHANNON AWARD

99's Scholarships



LISA RAND
THERESA DELLAQUILA AWARD



CHERYL BENISH
MAYSIE HENROTIN AWARD



COURTNEY BAMFORD
CONNIE WOLF/LOUIS SACCHI

When flying machines were all the rage

By Robert F. O'Neill

A half-century and more ago, Delaware County, PA was dotted with airfields. This article, slightly updated here, first appeared in the Philadelphia Inquirer in 1992. Sadly, many of our aviation friends who remembered how things were then have gone west since this article was written.

Even before Charles Lindbergh soloed the Atlantic in 1927, and long before Silvio "Babe" Dignazio buzzed the Media courthouse during World War II in a B-24

bomber, planes and airfields were part of the local scene.

As early as 1912, the Aero Club of Pennsylvania helped establish **Eagle**

Field, in the town of Manoa, along West Chester Pike, just outside of the Philadelphia city limits. They constructed a nice concrete hangar and made daily flights from there over the next couple years. A Wright Model B Flyer owned by Grover Cleveland Bergdoll was based at the field. That same aircraft now hangs in the Franklin Institute.

The county seat, too, had a licensed landing field as far back as 1924. It is said to have been the setting for one of the nation's earliest air shows and numerous visits by barnstorming pilots. Other fields included **Buckman Airport** in Chester's west end and **Benedict Airport** in rural Booths Corner, Bethel Township, which boasted 20 hangars in a building near Foulk and Kirk Roads. All three were out of business by the 1950s, sold for residential development or, in the case of Benedict, an oil tank farm. Smaller back-yard runways that dotted the countryside from the Linville farm in Middletown to Bishop Road in Springfield have also disappeared.

The oldest landing "field" in the county isn't on land, and is still in business. It's the **Philadelphia Seaplane Base** in Essington, started in 1915 by Col.

Robert Glendinning, a wealthy Philadelphian who owned a Curtiss Flying Boat. For most of its history, the base was owned and operated by **Frank Mills** and later his son **Bob Mills**. Frank was Glendinning's chief pilot, instructor and mechanic before he purchased the facility, which included 10 acres of land in 1936. Frank Mills died in 1940. (Editor's note: although in some disrepair in 2010, the seaplane base is still officially open and

now owned by Tinicum Township. Members of the Aero Club of Pennsylvania are still involved in its operation - www.phillyseaplanebase.com).

"A half-century and more ago, Delaware County was dotted with airfields, and planes that might swoop along a street."

The **Media Flying Field** was just outside the borough limits in Nether Providence Township. Leased and operated by the Media Business Men's Association, it was on 50 acres on the south side of Baltimore Pike between Beatty and Turner Roads. Media lawyer **Hugh Bonner**, recalled that the field consisted of no more than a 2,500-foot dirt landing strip, a small building and a windsock on a pole. But it was "home" to a number of flying enthusiasts, instructors and a glider club that he helped to organize. The inspiration for the field, according to records in the Media Historic Archives, is credited to **C. Frank Williamson**, president of the businessmen's group in 1924, and **T. Elwood Allison**, a member who operated a local drugstore chain. Williamson apparently saw the promotional value of having airplanes, which then attracted great public interest, take off and land in the vicinity of the retail district. Allison owned the field and lived in a castle-like mansion that stood nearby on Plush Mill Road. **Dick Wolff**, of Lima, who piloted bombers during World War II, remembers the day in 1947 that he flew Santa Claus to the Media field in his two-passenger Aeronca. Children who had gathered to greet Santa became so

excited, he recalled, that they almost swamped the plane.

Even greater excitement gripped Media residents one summer afternoon in 1944 when, as local businessman **I. Frank Lees** recounted it, "the most god-awful roar I ever heard chased workers out of their stores and offices." **"Babe" Dignazio**, owner of the Towne House Restaurant in Media and an Air Force captain during the war, flew a huge four-engine B-24 Liberator down State Street en route to an airfield in Washington. Dignazio later recounted that the escapade brought him before a court-martial, which ultimately cleared him. He said he was transporting the bomber from England to the United States when he "flew a little off course."

Buckman Airport was laid out in the early 1930s on the west side of Highland Avenue in Chester, overlapping what is now Interstate 95. It was built and operated by **Norman Smith** and was designated as an airport because, unlike Media, it had a bona fide hangar and a maintenance facility. **Alfred Graeber** of Springfield, whose father owned a Piper Cub J-3, recalled visits to Buckman, where the county's earliest airmail pickups took place. Graeber said children would gather just to witness the novel system. "Post office people strung the mail bag on a special line between two poles, and the airmail plane would swoop down, hook the line and zoom away with the bag bouncing in the air," he said.

Graeber said his father, Alfred Sr., also maintained a private landing strip behind the family residence at 228 S. Bishop Rd., Springfield, until 1941, when the outbreak of war forced its closing. "The government required all licensed airstrips to have 24-hour security, and my father couldn't afford the cost, so he closed down and moved his plane to Buckman Field," Graeber explained.

Paul Nelson, a pilot from West Chester, said he helped build Buckman's hangar using materials reclaimed

Continued next page...

(From Page 7...) from a trolley barn at Fifth and Penn Streets in Chester. "I was pretty young then, and I did it for flying time rather than money," he said. He recalled that the airmail service was operated by All-American Aviation, a company founded by Wilmington flyer **Richard Dupont**.

Dick Wolff, who operated Red Maple Nurseries, flew 28 bomber missions over Germany during World War II. He was the first president of the Delaware County Aviation Association in 1946, and for a time leased **Benedict Airport** with a partner.

"We made money on airplane rides, flying instruction, plane rentals, gas and maintenance, and did a booming business on weekends," he recalled.

"The war created a tremendous interest in flying, and lots of veterans used their GI Bill to take lessons." Wolff said rides costs \$6 per person and lessons were \$12 per hour. In those days, it took a minimum of 35 hours to obtain a flying license. **Paul Nelson** remembered that the Army captured a German helicopter during the war and shipped it to Benedict because the field was so remote. "It was a big attraction, watching them test it, because it was supposed to be secret," he said.

By the 1960's, all the early fields were gone, and Delaware County was left without a public use, general aviation airport. Interest started to grow to establish a new general avia-

tion airport in the county and the **Delaware County Airport Authority** was established to look for a site and promote the idea of an industrial airport. Members of the Aero Club of Pennsylvania, including later President **Jack Schrefler** were involved in the effort. By 1969, the Authority had chosen a 700 acre site in Concord, PA, near the intersection of Route 202 and Baltimore Pike. Unfortunately, opposition from civic groups and by **U.S. Rep. Robert Watkins** eventually derailed the effort and the airport was never established.



Washington Aeronautical Chart, 1947

In 2010, the history of aviation in Delaware County is largely forgotten except by those few remaining from the generation that grew up when airfields were common in the county. Aviation activity in the area today primarily consists of commercial aircraft flying out of Philadelphia International. There are helicopter operations at the Boeing Helicopter facility at Ridley Park, and one can still witness an occasional seaplane operation on the Delaware River. Times have changed.

Robert F. O'Neill is a retired reporter living in Springfield, Pennsylvania. He covered the Delaware County waterfront for the Philadelphia "Bulletin" and later wrote for the Philadelphia Inquirer. This article as one of 124 fascinating original history pieces that he wrote for the Inquirer.

WWW.AEROCUBPA.ORG

Return Service Requested

P.O. BOX 748, BLUE BELL, PA 19422
AERO CLUB OF PENNSYLVANIA

Organized December 17, 1909; Chartered May 10, 1910



FIRST CLASS
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