The annual Chester County Balloon Festival will be hosted this year by the New Garden Flying Field, on June 19-21. The 3-day festival will feature food and activities, including airplane and helicopter rides, a fire truck parade, fireworks, and a “Kid Zone” run by the Future Aviators Camp. Additionally, the local EAA Chapter has agreed to hold another of their famous pancake fly-in breakfasts that weekend. Over 20 balloonists will participate in morning and evening launches, and there will be a “special shapes” inflation and a “night glow.” More information will be available at ccballoonfest.com & newgardenflyingfield.com.

Also speaking, Eric Walden, grandson of Flight Safety founder Al Ueltshci, spoke about his grandfather and his flying career.

We honored Paul Heintz with a Lifetime Service Award and John Stubbs with the Wright Brothers Award for his long service on the scholarship interview committee. The silent auction and dinner raised over $6,000 for the scholarship fund.

A host of new aviation scholarships are being established. A $5,500 aviation maintenance training award in honor of the late Alex Sheves is being funded by donations from his estate and fundraisers at Chester County and Brandywine Airports. Next, the family of Bob Mills, longtime operator of the Philadelphia Seaplane Base, is establishing a fund to provide ongoing awards in Bob’s honor, once a funding level of $25,000 is achieved. Next, we hope to award a new Captain John Lewis (Doolittle) Tailwheel Endorsement Award. Aero Club member John Lewis will donate his expertise and his J3 Cub for ten lessons at Downtown Airport (28N) in NJ. We also continue to receive donations for awards in honor of Terry Hatcher, Steven Najarian and Peter Wood. Read more about scholarships on pg 3.
The mission of the Aero Club of Pennsylvania (ACPA) is to promote aviation in the Greater Delaware Valley. Everything we do uses that overriding mission as our focus. Our field trips highlight not only aviation history in the United States of America, but showcase the visionary aspects of aviation into the future. Our scholarship programs are, by design, intended to give a helping hand to not only the aspiring aviator, but to the folks that design and maintain these marvelous machines, and our brothers and sisters that help to ensure a safe flying environment for all. Aviation, by its inherent nature, is a team effort. It is truly a symbiotic relationship forged through a crucible of shared passions and dreams.

We, the ACPA, are proud to proclaim that every dollar donated to our scholarship programs goes to the awardees. We believe that we attract many contributors due to this effort on our part. As with any effort there are often unintended consequences. Because we make it so enticing for new and existing members to sign up and or renew by donating to the scholarship funds it frankly has a huge impact on the operating costs of the ACPA. In this newsletter (page 7), I have asked our Treasurer to include our 2014 cash flow statement and balance sheet. I do this because you, the members, have every right to see how YOUR Aero Club is run and managed. If not for the generous donations made by our members and directors, the operating costs of the ACPA would not be met. This information is presented not to alarm; this is normal for organizations such as the Aero Club.

A recent article in FLYING magazine touched on the aspects of aircraft ownership and the current pilot population. That article pointed to a declining pilot population and the exponential increase in cost of aircraft ownership due to liability and litigation costs. To this I say, we, as aviators have led the way since the dawn of aviation. We are forward thinkers. Get involved in local aviation matters. This country has always been spurred with what happens at the local (grassroots) level. Take a vacation; put Sun-n-Fun or Air Venture at Oshkosh on your calendar; come out to our field trips, come to an ACPA quarterly Board / Dinner meeting, go to a local EAA meeting and for heaven’s sake...if you happen to own an aircraft or maybe you are renting one to fly locally one sunny weekend day and you see that kid peering through the fence with a look of amazement in their eyes...take them around the pattern. I have no doubt the experience will last forever, it will change them...and or renew by donating to the scholarship funds it frankly has a huge impact on the operating costs of the ACPA. In this newsletter (page 7), I have asked our Treasurer to include our 2014 cash flow statement and balance sheet. I do this because you, the members, have every right to see how YOUR Aero Club is run and managed. If not for the generous donations made by our members and directors, the operating costs of the ACPA would not be met. This information is presented not to alarm; this is normal for organizations such as the Aero Club.

Aviation, by its inherent nature, is a team effort. Well folks, without that risk the pilot population trend will continue. Be a positive force and share the excitement and pleasure of flight. Give that kid the experience to "slip the surely bonds and dance the skies on laughter-silvered wings" as written by John Gillespie Magee Jr.

The Aero Club Board of Directors met at the Desmond Hotel in Malvern on January 22. President Bruce Thompson presided over the meeting.

The group discussed the minutes from the October and December meetings, followed by financials, newsletter and membership. Paid membership stands at just under 100, though the club is still in the midst of its membership renewal period.

The group discussed changes to the Aero Club bylaws A key discussion point was around the subject of term limits for officers. The board also spent time talking about ideas for future field trips. The meeting adjourned for dinner and a presentation by Corporal Adam Davies, a Flight Medic for the Maryland State Police. The Corporal talked about the mission of the Maryland State Police Aviation Command which recently acquired state-of-the-art Augusta Westland helicopters.
Eric Walden, grandson of the founder of Flight Safety, Al Ueltschi flew his TBM 850 from Virginia so that he and his mother could attend the Wright Brothers Dinner this year. Eric just recently started his own 135 Charter business, Little Hawk Logistics. Best wishes for much success, Eric!

At the dinner, Eric shared with us how his grandfather started a small hamburger stand called “Little Hawk” near his high school, where he quickly became successful and attracted the attention of a local banker. Every day that banker came to buy a hamburger and Al would regale him with tales of his aspirations to fly. That banker saw something in Al that inspired confidence and loaned him the money to buy his first plane. With his purchase of Waco OX-5, his adventure of learning to fly and teaching others to fly began. He became a career aviator, first barnstorming across the region. He then went on to become a commercial pilot at Queen City Flying Service in Cincinnati and later joined Pan Am. These experiences are what lead him to create Flight Safety. But that first step up was made possible by the faith of that banker taking a chance on that young man that could so well articulate his passion for aviation and how he would be successful.

The members of the Aero Club of Pennsylvania, through the Memorial Scholarship Fund, get to be that banker and to help stimulate new enthusiasm in aviation. Our club has made it part of its mission since 1938 to give out these awards. I encourage all members to take advantage of this relationship in order to pay forward their passion for aviation, through donations, ideas, and by referring good scholarship applicants.

This year, I am happy to relay from our treasurer that your donations, our fundraisers, and a portion of our investment income will provide a significant awards level again this year. From my experience on the Scholarship committee it just seems the more we give the more we get! Thank you all!

The applications can be found on the Aero Club website. This is the second year for electronic submissions and the first year that we will only accept electronic applications. If you want to post availability in your local FBO, high schools, rotary clubs, a bulletin board announcement can be printed from our website. Hopefully, in future Newsletters and at our dinners, we will hear new stories like Al’s and Eric’s coming from our scholarship recipients!

Members get to be that banker and to help stimulate new enthusiasm in aviation.

www.aeroclubpa.org/scholarships

2015 Scholarships available

The Aero Club of Pennsylvania Memorial Scholarship Fund and the Eastern PA Chapter of the Ninety-Nines are accepting applications for scholarships to be awarded at the scholarship dinner on June 18. Last year, the combined organizations awarded over $44,000 in scholarships and this year’s awards are expected to be at least as generous. Applications are available online at the Aero Club and Ninety-Nines web sites and are due in April. (www.aeroclubpa.org and www.epa99s.org)

Each organization offers unique scholarship opportunities. The Ninety-Nines offer scholarships to women who reside, attend school, or are employed in the Greater Delaware Valley, or who are members of the Eastern Pennsylvania Chapter of the Ninety-Nines. The scholarship awards may be used for any aviation purpose.

The Aero Club of Pennsylvania Memorial Scholarship Fund offers awards to men and women who reside in the Greater Delaware Valley. Scholarships are available to pre- and post-solo flight students and to those seeking careers in other aviation-related fields.

Warbird Membership Ride

As part of our annual membership drive, one current 2015 member of the Aero Club of Pennsylvania as of January 31 was chosen to take a warbird ride in the B-29 at the Reading WWII Weekend in June. That member will be contacted soon and their name will be announced in a future newsletter. “Fifi”, based in Addison, Texas, is operated by the Commemorative Air Force and the only flying B-29 in existence. It tours the USA and Canada each year. The ride was donated by an Aero Club member to help promote membership in the club. Last year, one of our members took a ride in a B-24, also at the Reading show.
For a few years in the early 1970’s, Downtown Airlines provided seaplane passenger and parcel service from Penns Landing to the East River in Manhattan. They operated two Piper Aztecs, officially called PA-23-250 Nomads. They were converted to straight floats by STC by someone in the Northwest. You can still buy one today from http://aztecnomad.com. When Downtown airlines bought them, they flew them across the country on straight floats. It must have been quite an adventure.

Robert Anderson was the sole owner of Downtown Airlines. He had previously been in the business of flying construction supplies to the DEW line in C46s. They also had a contract flying the Wall Street Journal from New York to distribution points every morning. He started the operation mostly to prove the concept.

The Aztecs were troublesome operating in rough water. That was always a problem in New York harbor due to the large swells created by the tug boat traffic. The pilots would try to find smooth water if possible, but sometimes it wasn’t enough and the wing skins got wrinkled. Later, the company got a Twin Otter on straight floats. It was a great airplane in all kinds of conditions. We could carry two pilots and 19 passengers. We operated out of Penn’s Landing right at the foot of Walnut St. in Philadelphia and landed in New York at Wall Street near the heliport. We had our own barge just up the east river from the heliport. At Penns Landing, I rebuilt the dock with two new sections that made docking a piece of cake. Once you pulled into the slip, you could shut down the engines and get out without any dock help.

The daily schedule was Monday to Friday, five round trips starting about 8:00 AM. There were usually quite a few passengers and a lot of parcels, many law firms sent things in both directions. It was a neat operation; a messenger would bring the parcel to our dock usually at the last minute. When the airplane arrived at the destination another messenger on a bike or motorcycle would pick it up and speed off with it.

At the end of every day we cleaned the airplane, took care of any squawks, did a post flight inspection and washed the airplane. The wash was required because the water in New York is salt. Some days the whole airplane was white with salt.

Saturday was a maintenance day and Sunday in nice weather we hopped passengers. The passenger hop fare was eight bucks! We advertised a 20 minute ride. It took about 5 minutes to taxi out, we took off in whatever was the best direction for the wind, flew a big figure 8 around the Art Museum, back across the river to the Garden State race track and back to the river to land, with 5 minutes to taxi back. All the passengers loved it. The whole trip took 20 minutes and put 10 minutes on the airplane, usually with a full load. We took in $152 for 10 minutes flying time, over $900.00/hour. They made more per hour on passenger hops than flying the regular schedule.

Bob Mills was the chief pilot for a time, but he asked to be replaced since he was unable to fly every day and keep up with the seaplane base. They hired a Dutch national named Karl Heckman who had Twin Otter and MES ratings. There were some younger guys, too -- Dave Dickson, Ron Grey and another whose name I can’t remember who flew as copilot and helped with everything else. Later Dave did a lot of flying as captain.

The primary maintenance person was Bill Brady who had been working with Bob Anderson on the other C46 ventures. Bill was a real company man. He kept the aircraft going with duct tape, bailing wire and magic -- whatever needed to be done. One day, we were working on the Otter on the water in early December. The wind blew a large inspection plate off our work float and it sunk in the river. I was able to locate it on the bottom with a long boat hook but couldn’t get it hooked to pull it up. Bill put on some old clothes and dove into the river about 12 feet deep and retrieved the plate.

Remember, December -- a real company man!
When we had the Aztecs we had a fork lift with a boom on it that we could pull the airplanes out, but only when absolutely necessary. When we got the Otter, we did everything on the water except once. An ITT harness went bad in one engine and we had to essentially take it apart like we were doing a hot section. We rented a crane to pull it out of the water very early in the morning. We worked all day splitting the engine, replacing the part and reassembling it. The crane operator stayed there all day and we put it back in the water late in the evening.

The operation worked year round.
After I left, they got a route to Washington approved and flew a couple trips a day to the Potomac -- I think they landed between DCA and downtown. I think the Washington trips were alternated with the New York runs. But, the business started to fall off and one year, the river really filled up with ice. They switched the Otter to wheels and Bob Mills took it to Puerto Rico and flew it there for the winter. They never restarted the Philly to New York service.

While I was there, all operations were VFR. Later they got an RNAV approach approved to the New York Harbor. In Philadelphia they would do the ILS at PHL and fly VFR up the river. I think this turned out to more trouble than it was worth. I imagine that today with GPS IFR operations could be done with a lot less trouble.

It was an interesting job when the weather was good, but not good when it was really cold and windy. I was always a little nervous when I was all alone, at night, climbing on top of a slippery airplane that is rocking from tug boat swells and the wind is blowing in the winter. Anyway I did survive and it is a neat story. I left the job when I got an offer where I did not have to work outside in all kinds of weather.

I always thought the idea was a good one -- most cities have a river near downtown. I think the operation might work in most weather conditions with today’s GPS navigation and a proper place from which to operate. And, I guess many of issues could be solved with amphibious floats.

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### Regional Airport News

**Delaware Valley Regional Planning Commission Report**

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Affiliation</th>
<th>Status</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>DECEMBER 18, 2014</td>
<td>ELAINE FARASHIAN</td>
<td>No Report</td>
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<td></td>
<td>PHILADELPHIA INTERNATIONAL</td>
<td>No Report</td>
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<td>PHILADELPHIA NORTHEAST [PNE]</td>
<td>No Report</td>
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<td></td>
<td>PHILLY SEAPLANE BASE [9N2]</td>
<td>2015 is the 100th anniversary of seaplane operations at the base. Modest plans are underway to host a seaplane “splash-in” on Saturday, June 13, 2015 in concert with the annual township flea market.</td>
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<td>BRANDYWINE [OQN]</td>
<td>The Airport is progressing with tree removal on its runway approaches and getting property owner cooperation. Widening of RW 9-27 is in Preliminary Design Feasibility Study. A design meeting was held with the BOA on August 18th. A Work Authorization was approved by the BOA for a LPV Approach Feasibility Study. The airport participated in the annual PA Bureau of Aviation Planning Session on October 22nd.</td>
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<td>CROSS KEYS [17N]</td>
<td>The airport does not have the funds to complete planned projects which include runway displacement and extension, airfield lighting and taxiway lights, beacon and PAPIs.</td>
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<td>DOYLESTOWN [DYL]</td>
<td>Runway 23 approach obstruction removal project is out for bid. The Airport Authority is currently working to acquire 6 more easements for Runway 5 and will be removing tree obstructions there in fall 2015. Anticipating grants to construct bypass taxiways on R/W 5 and 23 emds.</td>
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<td>NEW GARDEN FLYING FIELD [NS7]</td>
<td>The runway widening and reconstruction is awaiting final allocation from the Airport Block Grant Program with bidding in the Spring of 2015. The airport applied to the Multimodal Transportation Fund for hangar development (70% State funding) for site preparation including drainage, taxiway/apron paving, stormwater management, and the construction of seven individual t-hangars and two box hangars.</td>
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**Pottstown Municipal Airport reopens with new FBO**

After two months of runway and taxiway rehabilitation, Pottstown Muni Airport has reopened. Some work is left to be done in the spring to finalize the runway project. The new FBO is flyElite which provides flight instruction, aircraft rental, private jet charter, vehicle rental through Hertz and Uhaul, Avgas and Jet A fuel, and tie down and hangar service. The Airport is also home to Witmer’s Aircraft Services, providing routine maintenance, custom repairs and rebuilding of vintage aircraft. In addition, the U.S. Hot Air Balloon team hosts a launch site and offers hot air balloon tours of southeastern Pennsylvania. To learn more about the airport contact flyELITE at 610-495-6366 or email at flyELITE47@yahoo.com.
1922 Letter to the Aero Club

Dear Aero Club of Pennsylvania,

I bought the attached envelope in an auction recently and hope you can enlighten me as to its contents.

It was written in Seattle, presumably by a member of the Amundsen Northeast Passage Expedition and posted on the 3rd June 1922 to the club. As I understand it, the expedition, having completed the voyage from Norway to Alaska, Amundsen went to Seattle and bought a Curtis Oriole plane with the intention of flying from Point Barrow, Alaska to Spitsbergen. Unfortunately the weather was unfavourable and the attempt abandoned.

I am trying to find out, if possible, who wrote the letter and why. Neither Amundsen nor his pilot, Oscar Omdahl, appear to have any connection with the club.

I am hoping that you have an archive of important historical documents and the letter may still be in your possession. If the letter is still in existence, I would be grateful if you could e-mail me a copy as it would add greatly to the story.

Best wishes,
Richard A. Hindle,
Sheffield, England.

Dear Mr. Hindle,

We believe Rodman Wanamaker, an Aero Club member underwrote Byrd in a failed polar expedition just weeks before Admunsen’s crossing. Perhaps, it was from Byrd to the club. We recall there being some related newspaper clippings that were kept by a club member and now housed at the Pennsylvania Historical Society in Philadelphia. We hope to visit the Historical Society here on your behalf to find more information.

Aero Club History
By Rob Dant

The Aero Club recently got an email from a gentleman who acquired a couple of great early photos from the Aviation Exposition at Rock Island Exposition Park, Illinois. He was hoping we could help date them and identify the pilot and mechanic.

It is clear that the aircraft is a Bleriot and given the dates of the event (May 18,19), perhaps the year was 1912, a year when those dates fell on a weekend. It is difficult to identify the characters for sure, but the pilot bears resemblance to one of the Bergdoll brothers. Note the Aero Club banner on the fuselage.

Louis Bergdoll and his younger brother Grover were sons of a wealthy Philadelphia industrialist. Both were interested in aviation. Louis was a member of the Aero Club of Pennsylvania who bought a Bleriot XI from the Wannamakers of Philadelphia in 1910. Next year, in 1911, he gave the aeroplane to Grover. The pilot with the dashing mustache looks like Grover but with a longer mustache. Would Grover or Louis have been at an Illinois Exhibition at that time with the Bleriot? Grover, the famous WWI draft dodger was better known for flying his Wright Model B, which he purchased in 1912 for $5,000. Later that year, he passed his FAI license and started performing exhibitions.

We will continue to investigate.
In December, I had the unique opportunity to visit the National Air and Space Museum in Washington DC. Bill Mcdevitt who is working on the restoration of a Lockheed Vega 5C in John Desmond’s Heritage Aircraft restoration facility, was having some difficulty determining exactly how the cowling fasteners worked. Bill said it would be very helpful if he could see the cowling on Amelia Earhart’s aircraft in the National Air and Space Museum as that aircraft should have a similar cowl installation. I contacted ACPA member Jim Kilduff and told him about the problem. Jim contacted his friend Ken Hyde at the museum who put us in touch with Dorothy Cochrane, the Curator of General Aviation. Dorothy made arrangements for us to visit the museum before regular hours when we could go “behind the ropes” for a close up look at the items Bill wanted to see. I traveled to the museum early in the morning with Bill Mcdevitt and Frank Sandstrom. We met Dorothy who took us to Amelia’s Vega. We were able to crawl around under the aircraft and take any photos and measurements Bill wanted. We also got to see the Winnie May, Wiley Post’s record breaking Vega.

Now for the small world part of this story. We were almost completed with our work, Bill and Frank were finishing up. I gave Dorothy some copies of “The Pennsylvania Pilot”. I pass these out whenever I can to get out the word about the ACPA. Dorothy was looking at the Winter 2014/2015 issue and asked about the article about the Philadelphia Seaplane Base. I told her, it is now owned by the Township and what their plans are, then I remembered something else I thought she might be interested in. Back around 2000 the Mills family sold the property and Bob was planning to move to Florida. I went into the museum with Bob Mills Jr. to watch what they were doing. They were picking things up and looking at them, some they put back and some were put in boxes. We asked what they were doing and were told they would like to take some items that would be put in their archives and used for research, they did not plan to display them though. Bob and I decided we would have liked to see everything displayed somewhere so people could see the history of the Philadelphia Seaplane Base. Bob told the “Smithsonian” people that we had another group that would take the entire collection and display it together. The Smithsonian people said that was fine, put back what they had taken and left. We later contacted the MIlville Army Airfield Museum and ultimately they offered to take the entire collection and display it. You can see the collection at the museum on the airport at MIV. After I related the story Dorothy said she was one of the Smithsonian representatives there that day, “small world”.

### The ACPA of Pennsylvania (2013, 2014)

**Income:**
- Dues: 2310, 1930
- Sale items: 60
- Events: 350
- Sponsorships: 731

**Expenses:**
- Newsletter: 2586, 2618
- Postage: 723, 578
- Computer/Web: 731
- PayPal Fees: 38, 42
- Post Office Box: 124, 128
- Misc: 130, 160

**Net (Deficit):**
- 2013: ($1291), 2014: ($1186)

**Final Cash:**
- 2013: $3808, 2014: $2622

### The Scholarship Fund (2013, 2014)

**Contributions & Investments:**
- Contributions: 2013: 5000, 2014: 6000
- Memberships: 2013: 4000, 2014: 14000
- Sponsorships: 2013: 12500, 2014: 4000
- WB Dinner: 2013: 2500, 2014: 3000
- Investments: 2013: 25000, 2014: 14000

**Scholarships Awarded:**
- Awards: 2013: 24000, 2014: 33000

**Net Surplus:**
- 2013: $25000, 2014: $8000

**Final Balance:**
- 2013: $184000, 2014: $192000
The Aero Club of Pennsylvania will hold its next quarterly Board Meeting on April 30 at the Philadelphia Aviation Country Club at Wings Field. Following the board meeting at 6PM, we will have dinner and a presentation. Members and guests are welcome to attend our presentations.

Dinner (optional) begins at 7PM and the presentation begins around 8PM. A very nice dinner is available at around $40 per person, not including drinks. Attire at PACC is business casual.

Please RSVP at mailbox@aeroclubpa.org and let us know if you’d like to have dinner or would prefer to just attend the presentation. See you there!