

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

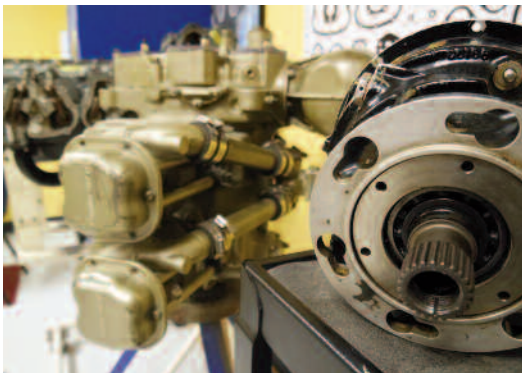
Aero Club visits facilities, plans more tours



Lockheed Vega at Desmond



Wing assemblies at Desmond



Classroom at A.I.M.



Jet Engine at A.I.M.

Tour of Desmond restoration facility

45 members and friends of the Aero Club visited the Heritage Aircraft Restoration facility owned by the late John Desmond. The off airport facility is located in Chalfont, PA. The crew that John employed are continuing their projects in anticipation of eventual shutdown and sale of the aircraft and parts. The big project is the Lockheed Vega, which is being rebuilt from the ground up, back to its original flying condition and Shell Oil Company colors. The facility houses many other aircraft, some recognizable and some in storage. The shop includes an impressive collection of parts, including wing assemblies, fuselages, cylinders, and crates containing complete engines.

Visit to Aviation Institute of Maintenance in Philly

A small contingent from the Aero Club visited AIM at the Philadelphia Northeast Airport on March 26. The school trains men and women in the field of aviation maintenance and avionics. Graduating students will have their A&P license and, optionally, an Avionics certification. We

visited classrooms and two hangars. One large hangar houses a number of aircraft, jet engines and maintenance setups that students use as part of their class projects. The other hangar houses a number of working reciprocating engines that are used to practice actual teardown, overhaul and reassembly projects. The school has about 450 students at any time. The A&P programs lasts 18 months, while the avionics certification extends that by six months.

More field trips planned

The Aero Club is planning more field trips to local aviation facilities. On Saturday, May 30, the club will visit the American Helicopter Museum at Brandywine Airport for a custom tour and a presentation by Fred Piasecki, son of the late Frank Piasecki. On Thursday, July 9, the club will make a special visit to the Augusta-Westland Facility at Philadelphia Northeast Airport. The evening will include a board meeting, dinner and a tour of the facility. Augusta is gearing up to manufacture the first civilian tilt-rotor aircraft. See page 8 for the calendar and details on events.

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PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Bruce Thompson

The By Laws of the Aero Club of PA cover the area of memberships and the categories therein. One of the categories rarely used is that of the honorary member. The criteria we employ for an honorary membership is that an individual or group has made a considerable impact on aviation locally or globally.

This April, I, along with seven friends, had the distinct honor of sharing our evening meal with Robert (Bob) Hoover. At 93 he still possess a sharp mind, is the consummate gentleman and is truly "the aviators aviator". The next day in the USAF museum at Wright Patterson AFB, former F100 Super Sabre pilots their families and friends (that would be me) were treated to the documentary of Bob Hoover, "Flying the Feathered Edge". As I watched this documentary of Bob Hoover I couldn't help but reminisce going to the Reading Airshow many times as teenager and watching in awe as Bob Hoover flew his Shrike Commander. The light bulb went off in my head. Bob Hoover is the perfect candidate to be an honorary member of the ACP. Bob Hoover served his country in WWII flying for the Army Air Corps. He spent time as a POW in Germany eventually escaping in a German FW 190. After the war Mr. Hoover flew as military test pilot for a period of time and eventually worked for Rockwell where many of us remember with much fondness the engine out performance he would do at low level with all the grace and poise of an accomplished performer. I can't begin to calculate how many lives Bob Hoover has touched over the years and how many of

those folks found their way into aviation on account of Bob Hoover's performances. For these reasons and more, the Board of Directors soundly voted to install Mr. Robert A. Hoover, as an honorary member of the Aero Club of PA.

2015 is shaping up to be a very productive year. The Board of Directors voted on updated By Laws after a year of review. Our scholarship interviews are around the corner and we once again have more applications than we can interview.

Like last year, the ACPMSF will award over \$30,000 in aviation scholarships. By the time you receive this newsletter our April Board Meeting will have come and gone. Our speaker at that meeting was a representative from Agape Avionics where a presentation on ADS-B was given. This is the current technology of the future for aviation, but it is problematic for some in regards to a cost vs. value of the aircraft. Couple this with the current "discussions" in Washington DC regarding pilot's third class medicals and we are fortunate to have organizations like AOPA and EAA leading the charge for sensible implementation of these matters. You can help by contacting your Senator or representative.

2015 is shaping up to be a very productive year.

Summer is upon us. Fly safe, get a good weather briefing and flight plan well before you slip the surely bonds.

Board of Directors Report

Elaine Farashian

The Board of Directors met at Wings Field on April 30. President Bruce Thompson presided.

The group approved the minutes from the January meeting, which was held at the Desmond Hotel.

Discussion continued about financials, newsletter and membership. The scholarship committee reported on the 2015 Scholarship application and selection proceedings. 30 applications were received. 17 applicants were chosen for interviews.

Interviews will be held on May 16 and awards will be granted on June 18.

The group discussed adding a family membership. Paid membership stands at around 150.

Dinner adjourned and the group joined a larger crowd to participate in an Aero Club sponsored presentation by AGAPE Avionics about the various ADS-B installation options for general aviation aircraft owners. 35 were in attendance at the event.



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Organized December 17, 1909 to promote aviation in the Greater Delaware Valley. We are a social and civic organization which plans field trips, holds an annual dinner, sponsors presentations, awards scholarships, and produces this newsletter.

PENNSYLVANIA PILOT

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Printed by: Graphic Impressions

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Published Quarterly: February, May, August, November

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This year, our Scholarship Review Board consisted of Tim Fields, Dan Kurkjian, John Stubbs and Bob Smith, along with two new members, Alicia Sikes and Stacy Culton. We had 30 scholarship applicants, 17 of whom were chosen for an in-person interview on May 16. As in previous years, the high caliber of candidates makes these decisions considerable. We do hope that those who were not selected become more resolute in their career pursuits and find encouragement from the application process.

It is very rewarding that we are able to give these scholarships to career-oriented aviators and mechanics. And, we are inspired that our membership is so united in the pursuit to inspire and recruit young new aviators. This

is more important than ever, as according to one local airline pilot, about 450 pilots are retiring each year. That, along with the change in regulation, will result in about 60 to 100 pilots being hired each month for the foreseeable future.

Please mark your calendars with this year's scholarship dinner. We welcome as a speaker one of our prior scholarship recipients who is now working in the airline industry. Note a new option when signing up - you may now sponsor a recipient's dinner to defray the cost of the ceremony. This most appreciated gesture keeps the larger objective of the Aero Cub of PA aligned with its mission of using 100% of contributions for actual scholarships. See you June 18th!

Although the cause of an accident at Brandywine Airport has not been determined, it is a humbling reminder of the need for a thorough pre-flight after a long period of aircraft inactivity or extensive maintenance or inspection.

Now that the long, cold winter and cool spring is behind us, a lot of aircraft will be departing local runways after a long hiatus. It seems obvious, but key items to look for include damage from animals, leaking fluid lines, contaminated fuel, condition of brakes, tires and struts and proper operation of flight controls. If the oil has been sitting over the winter, it's a good time to service with fresh lubricant and get a good look under the hood.

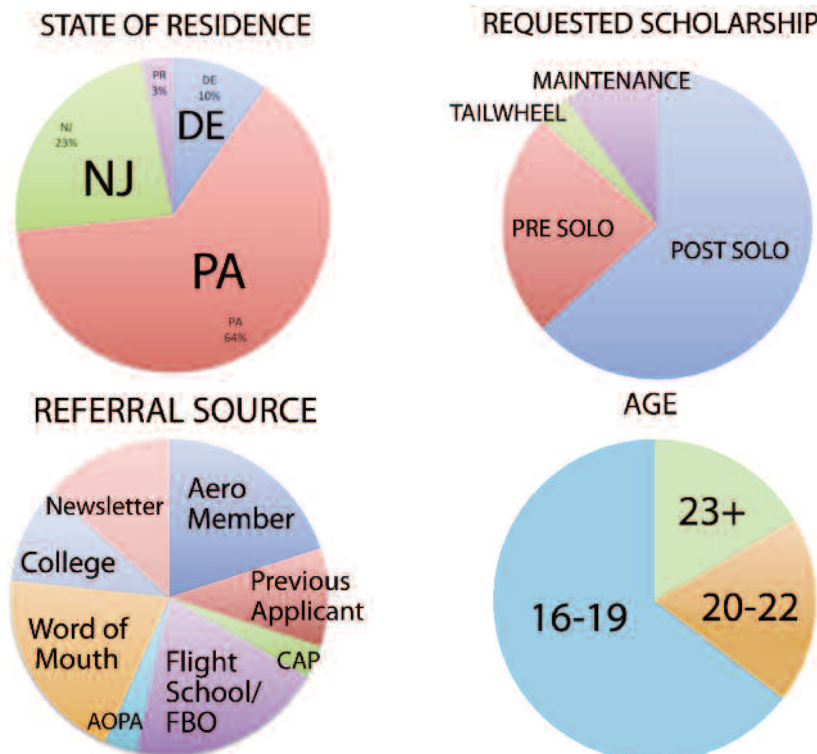
The regulations require a test flight only in the case that repairs or maintenance have an appreciable effect on the flight characteristics of the aircraft. However, if the ship has not been flown for awhile, it is prudent to take it around the patch before filling the seats.

On the way to the runway, the next opportunity to discover issues is during a good pre-takeoff check. Flight controls should be operating smoothly and with the correct deflection, fuel and oil pressure should come up normally, and the mag operation and spark plugs should indicate normal.

When ready for takeoff, it is smart to note the altimeter setting and make a mental note about the altitude below which we have no choice but to fly straight ahead in the case of a power failure. By considering our plan before takeoff, we will reduce our reaction time when something goes wrong.

After applying smooth, full power and checking the gauges, if all looks and sounds well, the aeroplane will reliably lift us up again into the wild blue yonder.

Tim Fields produced these interesting charts about our applicants



Member wins warbird ride

As part of our annual membership drive, we chose a current 2015 member of the Aero Club of Pennsylvania to take a warbird ride in the B-29 at the Reading WWII Weekend in June. That member is **Dr. William Gerhard** of Lancaster, Pennsylvania.



Seaplane Base: WALKING THE TRACK

Bob Mills, Jr

I'm pretty certain that anybody reading this article who earned their seaplane rating at Philadelphia Seaplane Base, knows that the J-3 Cub or C-140 that they flew was launched and recovered much like a trailer-able boat. The plane—on its wheeled dolly—was simply pushed down an earthen ramp into the water until it floated off. Recovery was merely reversing this process.

But this was not always the case. During my time growing up at the Base (9N2) in the 1960s and 70s, the earthen ramp was only used for amphibious aircraft. We had a Grumman Widgeon, several Republic Seabees, and a couple beautiful Cessna's on amphib floats based there at the time. For "straight-float" planes, my dad, C. Robert "Bob" Mills, used an ingenious system that dated from an even earlier time (built in 1916).

The Base hangars were laid out as two parallel rows facing each other. Between these rows was a wide green lawn that stretched down to the bank of the Delaware River. Embedded in this lawn were steel tracks, like a small railroad, about 3 feet wide. A spur track ran out of each hangar to the main track, which stretched the length of the lawn to the water's edge.

The planes were hanged on dollies that were fitted with railroad-style steel wheels that fit precisely on to the steel track. The plane was pushed (by man or kid-power) out of the hangar, along the spur to a steel turntable at the main track. The plane was then heaved around 90° until the turntable lined up exactly with the main track. Now the plane could be pushed down toward the river.

So far, so good...unless you made the mistake of not lining the turntable up precisely with the track! The dolly, with the plane onboard, would roll off into the grass. Then out came crowbars, jacks, or usually all onlookers; to provide leverage to lift the whole rig back on to the track. Under my Dad's tutelage, this mistake was NOT usually repeated.

Once the airplane was at the water's edge, the plane, still on its dolly, was rolled slowly on to a ramp just past the end of the railroad track. We then manually lifted the plane's tail,

and pulled the dolly out back on to the track. Now the plane's pontoons were sitting directly on the steel platform of the launching ramp. The fun was about to begin!

This launching ramp consisted of a steel framework covered by wooden beams. The steel platform noted above was mounted in the center of the ramp. The ramp was mounted on two steel tracks--like a continuation of the system I described to get the airplanes to the water, but much larger. These steel tracks were built upon wooden supports that were driven into the river bottom, and the track extended on a gentle downward slope about 150 feet out from the river-bank. Launching was accomplished by a combination of gravity, the plane's propeller thrust, & usually a crowbar for that final bit of leverage to get the ramp rolling. The ramp was sent down the tracks until it was submerged, and the plane eased gently into the river, under control of the pilot. At least it worked that way most of the time...



Piper Cub on the launching ramp, facing the river, ready to go.



Part of the original rail system, now overgrown with grass.

This procedure was done many, many times, day after day, year after year, without incident...but there were some lessons to be learned, and occasionally an expensive one.

During launching, the pilot had to be careful not to gun the engine too much, lest he launch himself prematurely off the ramp, dropping 4 feet into the river mud! The ground crewman had to position himself properly so that he stayed on shore, and did not inadvertently ride the ramp down into the water after that shove with the crowbar. Also, after getting the ramp in motion, he had to immediately move to the winch brake to control

the speed of the ramp as it descended. Having the ramp jump off the track was NOT an option.

Recovering the plane on to the ramp was the most challenging operation. As the plane approached the partially submerged ramp, the pilot had to apply enough power to get the plane firmly on to the ramp, but not so much as to keep going and fall off the other end! A system of wire rope (cable) and pulleys connected the ramp to a winch on shore. An electric motor powered the winch for recovery.

Unfortunately, I once observed a C-170 pilot with very little experience with our ramp apply too much power. Not only

did the plane overshoot the ramp, it came to rest with pontoons straddling the steel track. Ouch! I don't know which was worse, the damage to the plane or the dressing-down that pilot took from my Dad (his mantra was that a seaplane pilot operates under less than ideal conditions at all times, and should be prepared for them). Still, I have to say that ramp was a challenge for anybody's skills.

And, as if the ramp was not challenging enough, up to now, we have assumed that a helper was available to control the ramp, either by the brake or the electric winch. But on many occasions, there was no help ("solo" does not apply only to flying). Now, after a harrowing, but successful taxi on to the ramp, you find yourself sitting 150 feet out into the river wondering how you are going to get yourself, your plane, and that ramp back to shore.

The solution is staring right at you, as you see that narrow ribbon of steel track extending all the way to shore. You have now become, in addition to an airman, a tightrope walker! The perils are present, but not deadly. You could lose your balance, and end up with that steel track firmly between your legs. Or, more likely, you fall off and are covered with mud due to the low tide. Hey, at least you didn't drown or swallow any of the Delaware's well-known water. And you didn't spend hours waiting in vain for help to arrive.

In fact, you have achieved a rite-of-passage by "walking the track" to get to the winch house. Now, before you bask in the glory of your success, remember, don't let that ramp hit the seawall too hard as you winch it back home. And by the way, you still have to put the airplane back in the hangar—without help!

New Scholarship established to honor Robert C. Mills, Sr.

In accordance with the mission of the Memorial Scholarship Fund, the Aero Club of Pennsylvania is proud to announce a newly formed scholarship award in honor of Bob Mills Sr. When making this year's contributions, please consider supporting future aviators by honoring those that helped pave the way. You may specify funds "in honor of" Bob Mills when you make donations online or with a check in the mail.

Regional Airport Report *Elaine Farashian*

PHILADELPHIA INTERNATIONAL
Baggage claim T-F is approximately 98% enclosed with the opening expected in 2016. The 1st package of the Capacity Enhancement Project, which is for soil stabilization and fuel line relocation, will be bid in April. The security bollards project was rebid and the notice to proceed is for March 23rd.

PHILADELPHIA NORTHEAST [PNE]
90% of design drawings for the electrical substation replacement project have been received. Emergency paving repairs will be performed on runway 6/24 and taxiways L and M.

BRANDYWINE [OQN]
85 trees have been trimmed or cut down, mostly west of the airport. Trees east and north of runway 27 will be trimmed this spring. A study is being funded by BOA (Bureau of Aviation) to evaluate the requirements and potential for runway a 9/27 vertically guided approach. Grants are anticipated for mitigating approach obstructions of runway 9/27.

DOYLESTOWN [DYL]
The airport authority is working to acquire six more easements for runway 5 and will be removing tree obstructions there in fall, 2015. The airport is purchasing an adjacent property within its runway protection zone to remove approach obstructions. A grant is also expected for construction of bypass taxiways on runway 5/23 ends.

NEW GARDEN [N57]
The Chester County Balloon Festival and Fly-in will take place at the airport June 19-21. The airport is preparing to bid on phase 2 of runway widening and reconstruction. In October, the airport was awarded 70% state funding for site prep, including drainage, taxiway/apron paving, stormwater management and

construction of seven T-hangars and two box hangars.

The Future Aviators Summer Camp has increased attendance 30% each year since it began. The 2015 dates are July 6-10 and August 10-14. The airport will also host the Festival of Flight Airshow August 22 & 23 and the Giant Scale RC event Sept. 11-13.

QUAKERTOWN [UKT]
Work on the tree obstruction removal on the runway 11/29 primary surface and runway 11 approach should begin by the end of March. A second project will follow in the fall and a third in the spring.

The authority purchased adjacent property and will be reimbursed with Capital Budget money. The authority has 5 more easements for runway 11 and 18 for runway 29.

SOUTH JERSEY REGIONAL [VAY]
The airport is awaiting final approval from Trenton for its master plan. Funding for the main tiedown apron rehab will come from an FAA grant.

Environmental determination for obstruction removal will be starting since weather has improved. Obstruction removal of four telephone poles involves talks with the utilities and these have begun.

TRENTON MERCER [TTN]
Phase 1 construction of taxiways B, F, and H rehab is due for completion within 30 days. Phase 2 and 3 are in the design stage. The bid specification for security fence improvements is being rewritten.

WINGS FIELD [LOM]
A grant amendment to include phase 1 final design and bidding of GA terminal apron rehab was approved in January. March 28 is the date for advertising the project and bids are due on April 28.

100th Anniversary, Philly Seaplane Base Saturday, June 13, 10AM-1PM

In 1915, members of the Aero Club of Pennsylvania helped establish a seaplane base at Essington. In 2015, the Aero Club will commemorate that by hosting a small seaplane "splash-in" in concert with the annual township community day and flea market. The community event will take place in Governor

Printz Park, two blocks west of the seaplane base and will feature a car show, food, and a flea market. The seaplane base is located behind the fire department at 99 Wannamaker Avenue (420) in Essington.

web: www.phillyseaplanebase.com
email: mailbox@phillyseaplanebase.com

28 January, 2015

Dear all,

Thank you for your reply and apologies for the delay in responding, but I have been ill and now trying to cope with catching up on work and a plethora of letters.

I hope the weather is not too bad your way. We were getting reports of an intended snow storm, which fortunately for you failed to materialize, but it looks as though it is rather cold in Pennsylvania.

I found the answer to my question quite by accident through another source, but as it is most interesting, I believe you and your fellow aviation historians will be proud of your former President, Major Joseph A. Steinmetz.

I attach scans of the items as I'm not sure if they have been distributed to all concerned.

Somewhere in this process, Amundsen met Major Joseph A. Steinmetz of Philadelphia, Pennsylvania. Steinmetz was one of the pioneers in the area of aero philately (the study of aeronautical related stamps and postal history). It was undoubtedly Steinmetz who suggested Amundsen carry mail on the airplanes to offset some of the cost of a Trans-Polar flight.

Steinmetz was a mechanical engineer in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania. Judging from his title of "Major", it is probably safe to assume that he was in the Army in the First World War. He was also active in his profession and was the Chairman of the Aeronautic Division of the American Society of Mechanical Engineers.

The "Assistance Seals" were printed in green, red, purple and brown with AMUNDSEN / NORTH POLAR / EXPEDITION / AIR MAIL, which allowed sufficient space within the box to affix a stamp. The colours were chosen to match the 1 cent, 2 cent, 3 cent and 4 cent definitive stamps. It is believed the seals were prepared by Steinmetz. The appropriate postage was needed on each cover sent to the expedition. In addition, the letter was also required to have at least one of the Assistance Seals as proof it had paid to be carried on the flight. The labels were printed in blocks of 9 (3 x 3). The centre label in each sheet contains the error "ARI MAIL" instead of "AIR MAIL".

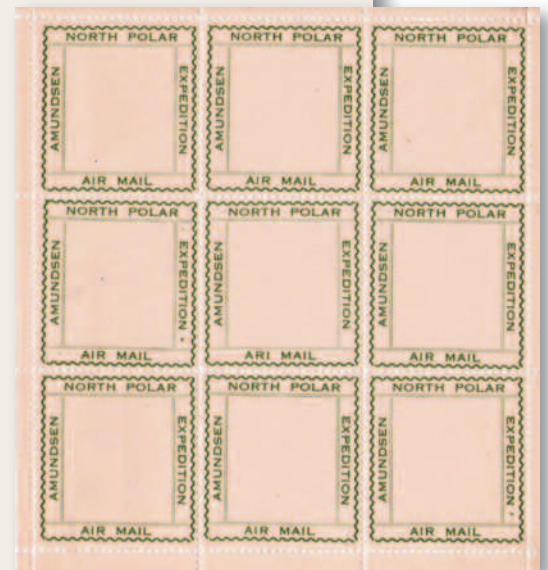
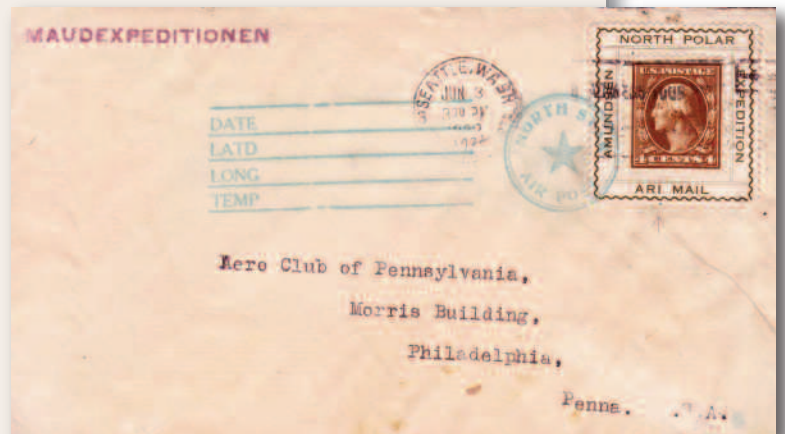
The covers are relatively scarce and are known posted from Seattle and Nome, Alaska in 1922. The envelopes have MAUDEXPEDITIONEN in the top left hand corner. Also there is a double ring NORTH STAR AIR POST with spaces to the left to record the date, latitude, longitude and temperature. The 1 cent and 2 cent stamps are the most commonly seen. Those with 3 cent & 4 cent stamps are rare. (The envelope attached shows the 4 cent stamp with the error on the Assistance Label. Since envelopes with the 4 cent stamp are rare, it could be that the envelope is unique.)

All the covers are philatelic. They were prepared by philatelists for philatelists. Indications are that they were, in fact, there in Alaska with Amundsen and the other members of the expedition. Without Major Joseph A. Steinmetz's efforts, for this part of the Maud expedition, it would be impossible to illustrate the story.

If you have any queries, please do not hesitate to contact me. Once again, thank you for your help.

Best wishes,

Richard A. Hindle,
Sheffield,
S8 9RT
England





Scholarship Awards Dinner

*Presented by the Aero Club of Pennsylvania Memorial Scholarship Fund
and the Eastern Pennsylvania Chapter of the Ninety Nines*

Thursday, June 18, 2015

Philadelphia Aviation Country Club
Wings Field, Blue Bell, PA.

6 PM: Cash Bar, 7 PM: Dinner
\$45.00 per person

Note that a portion of your payment will help provide complimentary dinners for our scholarship recipients.

As always, seating is limited at PACC, so get your reservations in early.

Guest Speaker

Heidi Laird Clinton, First Officer, Wisconsin Airlines

Heidi began flying lessons after from college and earned her private pilot's license in 2005 at Perkiomen Valley Airport. She was a 2006 recipient of an Aero Club Scholarship and used it toward completion of her instrument rating. She continued her training at Wings Field and was hired there as a flight instructor in 2008. In 2011 she began working at Air Wisconsin Airlines, a USAirways Express regional airline. Currently she is an ATP-rated First Officer based in DCA looking forward to upgrading. When not working she enjoys spending time with her husband and playing in her church orchestra.

Heidi Laird Clinton



RESERVE ONLINE

at www.aeroclubpa.org or use form below.

Please send check to arrive by June 12.

We regret that we cannot accept phone reservations or walk-ins.

Reserve ONLINE, or send this form with payment by June 12 to:
Aero Club PA Scholarship Fund, PO Box 748; Blue Bell, PA 19422

NAME: _____ Number Attending: _____ x \$45 = \$ _____
 ADDRESS: _____ Sponsor a Recipient: _____ x \$45 = \$ _____
 CITY/STATE: _____ Scholarship Contribution: \$ _____
 PHONE: _____ Total Enclosed: \$ _____
 E-Mail: _____

Please list names of attendees...

ATTENDEES: _____,
 _____,



Organized December 17, 1909; Chartered May 10, 1910

AERO CLUB OF PENNSYLVANIA

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AVIATION EVENT CALENDAR

MAY

- 16** FlyIn Footlong Hotdog Day, Sugar Hill, DE (17DE)
- 16-17** Ninety-Nines Pennies-a-Pound, Pottstown Muni (N47)
- 17** EAA 240 Pancake Breakfast, New Garden (N57)
- 30** **American Helicopter Museum**, Saturday, 10AM
- 30** EAA 240 Pancake Breakfast, New Garden (N57)
- 30** EAA 540 Pancake Breakfast, Smoketown (S37)

JUNE

- 5-7** Reading WWII Weekend, Reading, PA (RDG)
- 6-7** EAA 216 Pancake Breakfast, Cross Keys (17N)
- 13** 100th Anniversary, Philly Seaplane Base (9N2)
- 18** **Annual Scholarship Dinner**, Thursday, 6PM
- 19-21** Chester County Balloon Fest, ccbaloontfest.com (N57)
- 20** EAA 240 Pancake Breakfast, New Garden (N57)

JULY

- 09** **Board of Directors Mtg**, Thursday, 6PM
- 09** **AugustaWestland Tour**, Thursday, 7PM
- 05-10** Ninety-Nines, 2014 Intl. Conference, Munich
- 11-12** Wings & Wheels, Big Band Event, Grimes (8N1)
- 11** EAA 240 Pancake Breakfast, New Garden (N57)
- 20-26** EAA AirVenture; Oshkosh, WI

Saturday, May 30, 10AM

Tour of American Helicopter Museum

The Aero Club of Pennsylvania will visit the American Helicopter Museum at Brandywine Airport for a custom tour and presentation by Fred Piasecki, son of the late Frank Piasecki. The tour costs \$15 per person, which includes entry to the museum. Aero members may also purchase a museum membership at a discounted rate. Send queries to mailbox@aeroclubpa.org for more information.

Thursday, July 9, 7PM

Dinner and Tour of AugustaWestland

The Aero Club will be the guests of AugustaWestland for a dinner and private tour of this helicopter manufacturing facility at the Philadelphia Northeast Airport. A Board Meeting will be held beforehand. Members and guests are welcome to attend (U.S. citizens only). Dinner begins at 7:30PM. The tour and dinner costs \$25 per person. Fly in traffic is allowed if we get your aircraft type and N-number. Please RSVP to mailbox@aeroclubpa.org.