



Aero Club visits the site of Hindenburg crash

On Saturday, April 23, fifteen Aero Club members visited the Naval Air Station Lakehurst in New Jersey, nearly 85 years to the day the Hindenburg disaster occurred here in 1937. Most participants drove to the event, while one aircraft flew into Flying W Airport nearby. Lakehurst, now known as Lakehurst Maxfield Field, became home to a Navy airship station in 1921. NAS Lakehurst was the Navy's primary center for airship development and is home to a number of large airship hangars. A modest ground memorial marks the spot where the gondola of the Zeppelin Hindenburg hit the ground.



Historical Marker from the air

The tour, offered by the Navy Lakehurst Historical Society, began at the "Cathedral

of the Air," a military chapel near the base that serves military personnel at Joint Base McGuire-Dix-Lakehurst. James Larsen, our docent, guided us around the chapel, followed by the Hin-



Aero Club at Historical Marker at Lakehurst

denburg crash site and the historic Hangar One that once held the record for being the largest single room in the world. It was the only hangar large enough to house the Hindenburg. The group also visited the "Heritage Center," the "Ready Room," and gift shop. Carris Kocher recounted the day:

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Gas Ballooning

Photos from a box bring back fond memories of gas ballooning in S.E. Pennsylvania

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Common folk in space

A study designed to determine whether 'normal' people can handle space flight

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President's Message

Greetings, fellow aviators and aviation enthusiasts! As we transition from Spring to Summer, we are looking forward to the Aero Club of PA Scholarship Awards Dinner to be held in person, once again, at the Philadelphia Aviation Country Club at Wings Field. Considering one of the purposes of the Club is "To encourage and advance the art and science of aviation in every possible way," our scholarship program is one of the tools to accomplish this, and I look forward to seeing many of you.

Summer brings the thoughts of aviation summer camps, balloon rides, soaring, great fly-ins and tours. Speaking of tours, club members were able to visit the Cathedral of the Air at Joint Base Lakehurst and tour the *(Continued next page...)*

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"The Lakehurst Tour encompassed so much more than I ever anticipated. The tour guides were outstanding! They had a wealth of knowledge not just about the Hindenburg tragedy itself, but about many related matters as well. The aeronautical milestones, the people, and the events represented in the stained glass windows of the Cathedral of the Air tell a remarkable story – a story worth knowing. To be able to visit the museum, the field and the hangar, to see the mooring tower, was a moving experience."

As the tour came to a conclusion, we learned that our guide, Jim Larsen, had survived the attack on the World Trade Center on September 11, 2001. It was 65 flights of stairs down to safety. He has a YouTube tour of the World Trade Center Memorial and he also narrated a video about the tragedy at Lakehurst, titled "The Hindenburg – Final Voyage."

www.youtube.com/watch?v=95XL4nDWCuA
www.youtube.com/watch?v=oQJq0MXu57k



Tour inside Hangar One.

See more photos on Page 4.

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

ERIK KOCHER

(Continued prev page...)

Hindenburg crash site and museum. There is a nice article about the tour, courtesy of our editor, in this newsletter (Pages 1 and 4). Be sure to keep an eye on the website for notice of future events.

Over the last couple of years, I have read and heard many discussions on the decline of the "trades." One trade, especially for those interested in aviation, is an airframe and powerplant (A&P) license. For those mechanically inclined, an A&P license can open many wonderful opportunities. General aviation is one of the defining characteristics of the United States.

We received the sad news that two of our members, Dr. Jack Schreffler (former President) and Al Beerley (former Director), have passed away. Our sincere condolences to their families and loved ones. See Page 7.

A parting thought... In many ways, general aviation reflects our enjoyment and love of independence and freedom. GA pilots are able to experience the world in a way that others are not. The airborne perspective offers a view of the variety and magnificence of this country that is more expansive than travel by road or rail.

Wishing everyone fair winds and clear skies,

Erik Kocher

"However beautiful the strategy, you should occasionally look at the results." - Winston Churchill



Aero Club of Pennsylvania
Promoting aviation in
the Greater Delaware Valley

1399 Narcissa Rd, Blue Bell, PA 19422

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

PENNSYLVANIA PILOT

EDITOR/LAYOUT: Robert Dant [610 909 4467]

CONTRIBUTORS: Carris Kocher
Nancy Kyle
Sarah Wolfe

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www.aeroclubpa.org
mailbox@aeroclubpa.org
www.facebook.com/AeroClubOfPa



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R. Anderson "Andy" Pew (AOPA)



As great spring flying weather returned to the region, the 2022 scholarship program went into full swing. With the application window now closed, we are happy to say we received many high caliber applications from aviators all over the greater Delaware Valley area. Although this makes the committees job especially difficult, it is great to see that the next generation of pilots are highly motivated and talented. The need for pilots over the next several years is immense, and these pilots will make great contributions to the field.

The scholarship committee is happy to welcome our newest member, whose name should sound very familiar to everyone. Sarah Wolfe is a previous recipient and is currently a corporate pilot for Fly Advanced in Wilmington,

DE. Her recent experience in the flight training world gives her insight into students that is invaluable to the committee. It's great to see another past recipient giving back to the club, and we hope to see more of that in the future!

Speaking of the scholarship committee, we have been hard at work reviewing this year's many applicants. We received a total of 18 completed applications with experience levels from 3 to 250 hours flight time. There was a noticeable uptick in aviation mainte-

nance applications primarily from the Aviation Institute of Maintenance in Philadelphia. Our initial review is complete, and the invites have been sent out for the next round of interviews. We are excited to be back to in person interviews, which allows us to get to know the applicants on a deeper level than via a zoom interview. After they are complete, we will be faced with the hard task of doling out the funds to the deserving applicants.

As always, thanks to everyone who donates to the scholarship funds. Without you, none of this would be possible. It seems like every year we are giving out record amounts, and it would be great to see that trend continue. The impact on applicants is immense, and truly helps propel aspiring aviators to success.

80 Years since Doolittle Raid

By James Kilduff

For young people, it may be hard to appreciate. For older folks, it's hard to fathom that it was so long ago.

Eighty years ago, on April 18th, the Doolittle's Raiders bombed Tokyo. The mission was conceived by FDR in late December '41. It was a way of answering Pearl Harbor. It was not tactically significant as the damage was minor. But strategically, it was crucial. The shocked Japanese military decided to extend the defensive perimeter, attacked Midway Island and lost 4 aircraft carriers. They were on the defensive for the remainder of the war. The airplanes were B-25's. The raid was led by Col. James Doolittle.

I was lucky to have attended three of the Doolittle reunions and the final toast at the Air Force Museum. The idea of the reunions was that the last two survivors would open a bottle of cognac and toast their fallen fellows. Here are some photos.

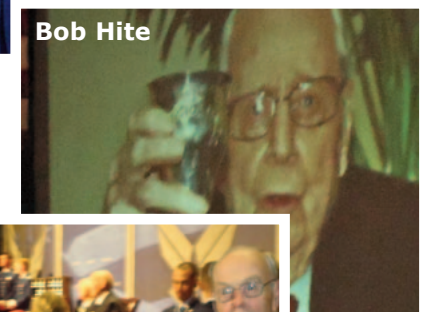
At the final toast in 2013, the three surviving

raiders were David Thatcher, Dick Cole and Bob Hite. The latter was too ill to attend but toasted the others from his home by video link. The video was put on the big screen. Hite was on the plane that figured in the book *30 Seconds Over Tokyo*.

Hite was one of four survivors of a Japanese prison camp. Four others were killed or died there. A daring rescue mission in the last two days before the official surrender was mounted by 7 OSS soldiers who persuaded the commander of the prison camp to safeguard his prisoners, among them Bob Hite. At a cocktail party a few years later, I met a lady who told me about her husband. A book had just been written about him. I bought the book and discovered that he was one of the 7 that rescued Bob Hite in 1945. Talk about coincidences.



Dick Cole



Bob Hite



David Thatcher - Background



PHILADELPHIA INTL [PHL]

Taxiway J, a critical one, especially since deicing affects how aircraft queue, will require complete reconstruction. Taxiway J Pavement Repair will utilize Envision Sustainable Infrastructure framework, a rating system that helps project teams identify sustainable, resilient and equitable approaches to projects. AFCO (Aviation Facilities Company Management) and PHL are partnering with the development of expanding air cargo and providing an airport support facility on 9 acres of former PHL economy parking lot. Ground breaking is expected in the coming months. The 70,000 sq. ft. structure, located near runway 17/35 and terminal E, will provide airport business efficient space and direct access to the airfield. Several current tenants of building C2 will relocate to the new facility. The project creates over 100 construction jobs. PHL was awarded a certificate of appreciation by Shaw Contract for recycling 45 tons of carpet in 2021.

NORTHEAST PHILADELPHIA [PNE]

Based at this airport are 4 flight schools. Tailwinds opened in 2018, the most recent to open. According to Tailwind's creator, Howard Cooper, 70-80% who take up flight training stop, making retention of students difficult. He set up a program for students at Frankford High School's Frankford Aviation Academy in order to move them from the classroom into actual airplanes.

BRANDYWINE [OQN]

The airport is in negotiations with adjacent property owners to obtain consent and land acquisitions to clear the way for the runway widening project. The tree obstruction removal project is ongoing and will help to re-establish nighttime instrument approach procedures.

HERITAGE FIELD [PTW]

The airport's Multi Modal Grant Corporate Hangar Development Project to construct 13 hangars is currently in land development and is expected to go to bid this summer with a projected ground breaking in the Fall of 2022. Two new companies have moved on to the airfield. Penn Air Repair provides aircraft maintenance and PennJet provides aircraft management, the latter to offer charter service in the future. Scheduled is a Hangar Dance Saturday, May 7 with live music sponsored by Pottstown Aircraft Owners and Pilots Assn.

NEW GARDEN [N57]

The airport is preparing to bid a terminal improvement project,

which will offer a remodeling of bathroom facilities. Recently, a deal was signed with Redbird Flight Simulations for one of their full motion flight simulators. This amazing aviation training tool will be used to create a sustainable scholarship fund for the future of the Future Aviators Summer Camp and After the Bell Program. The Future Aviators Summer Camp schedules are June 20-24, July 11-15 and August 8-12. The EAA Chapter will be hosting its famous pancake breakfasts starting April 23rd. The airport is still working with Secret Service to get a date to hold its Air Show, but due to recurring TFRs, no date is set yet.

TRENTON-MERCER [TTN]

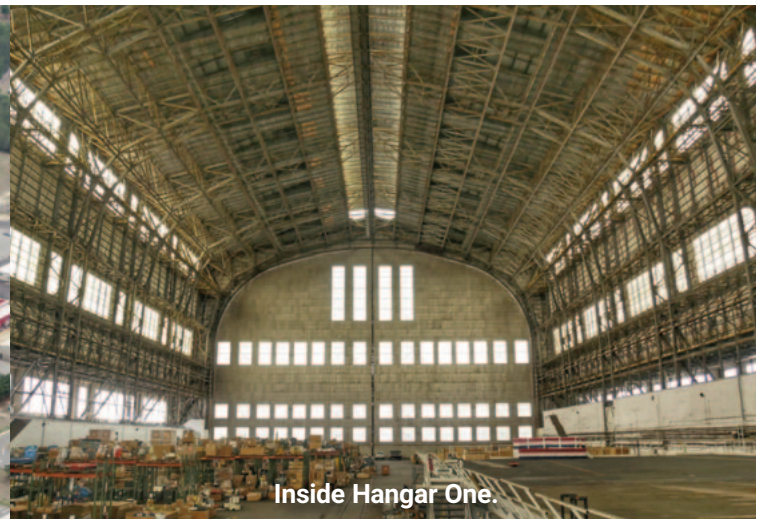
The airport will undergo a major expansion with a new parking garage and expanded terminal allowing passengers to board without stepping on the tarmac. Security lanes will be increased. Baggage claim and passenger waiting areas are to be expanded. FAA forecasts a 51% increase in flights from Mercer County by 2035. Changes to runway lengths, runway alignments, instrument procedures and navigational equipment are not expected. New Jersey environmental requirements to protect against groundwater contamination from PFAS chemicals will be met. The project should begin mid 2023 and completed in 2025.

WINGS [LOM]

Both fuel and delivery cost increases have occurred with virtually every new delivery. Construction of a new West Itinerant Apron is scheduled to commence in the Fall once DEP approves a wetlands permit which is expected very soon. The airport is awaiting insurance settlement for hangar damage done in a past microburst storm. FlyGateway, the flight school, received delivery of 3 new Piper 100i trainers. 3 more are to arrive in June. Two new Cirrus SR-22s have been added to Fly-Advanced charter fleet.



Lakehurst Naval Air Station's Historic Hangar One



A series of remarkable photographs found in a box. A memory of so long ago. A photograph of a beautiful woman looking downward from a balloon filled with 80,000 cu.ft. of cooking gas. Photographs of Wings Field Airport in August 1970, taken from the wicker basket of a balloon in flight. A photograph of the home of Abby and Connie Wolf which is adjacent to the airport.

The house, the barn, the apple orchard and the air-plane of Abby. An interview with Connie Wolf as published in the Bucks County News. The article "Balloonists Land in Area Backyard," detailed the particulars of the balloon flight. The publication date, August 27, 1970.

To quote from the Bucks County News, "Mrs. Wolf said that Saturday's flight was not only a salute to National Aviation Day but also a salute to John Story Smith, owner of Wings Field."

For me the flight was a return to ballooning. I had been absent from the activities of the Balloon Club of America for four years having served in the US Army. For this flight Ted Stecher would join me in the basket. Ted and I served together in the Army in Germany. Tony Fairbanks the pilot. The beautiful woman who was our passenger is Susan Sharpless Abatte. She is the daughter of Laurence P. Sharpless, a founding member of AOPA.

Historical notes of interest: Originally called, "Wings Port," Wings Field was founded by John Story Smith and Jack Bartow in May 1930. In 1939, five men gathered to plan what would become

the Aircraft Owners and Pilots Association - AOPA. Laurence P. and Philip T. Sharpless, Townsend Ludington, Alfred Wolf and John Story Smith.

The 80 sandbags required to inflate a large gas balloon were filled by Mike, Ted and Eleanor Vadala. Twenty sandbags would be carried in the basket to be used as ballast. Eleanor was an early

My logbook documented the balloon flight from Wings Field Airport to Hatboro, PA. 80,000 cu.ft balloon filled with cooking gas. Registered N9071H. An unremarkable but pleasant flight in light winds of three hours duration.

Connie Wolf is responsible for the invitation for the Balloon Club of America to fly gas balloons from Wings Field.

Our previous location was Valley Forge Airport which became a golf course and a field near Doylestown that I can no longer locate. Connie arranged for the Philadelphia Electric Company to fill the balloons with cooking gas from a public street next to the airport. The gas valve to be turned is located under street level and reached by opening a manhole cover.

Connie Wolf (2015), Tony Fairbanks (2010), and Eleanor Vadala (2019) would in the future be inducted into the US Ballooning Hall of Fame, National Balloon Museum, Indianola, Iowa.

It was a routine gas balloon flight and gathering of friends, appreciated better when looking back over time and recognizing the connection to history. Connie Wolf, Eleanor Vadala, Tony Fairbanks.

Three individuals who contributed greatly to the continuation of ballooning in the USA.

Michael Fairbanks, a longtime balloonist is one of four children to Mary Louise and Tony Fairbanks. Mike's father Tony was the first civilian designated balloon pilot examiner in the U.S. Tony was pilot of La Coquette balloon, star of the 1955 movie "Around the World in 80 Days."

<http://www.tonyfairbanks.org>



member of the Balloon Club of America. Her first balloon flight was in January 1954. She obtained her pilot's certificate for free balloons in July 1963. Eleanor was interviewed at the landing. A quote in the newspaper, "She explained the only control a free balloon has is up or down. Ballast (sand) must be thrown out gradually, she noted."

Think you are not interested in flying into space? Won't happen in my lifetime? No way? Think again.

In October 2021, a member of the 99s sent around an email about a research project being conducted by the University of Texas Medical Branch. Funded by the FAA, the study was designed to determine whether 'normal' people, i.e. non-astronauts, could successfully handle space flight. They were seeking volunteers, with and without medical issues, to participate. The study was to occur at the National Aerospace Training and Research Center (NASTAR) in Southampton, PA. Hmmm, close enough...I can do this. It took me about a New York minute to decide that I would apply.

The application process was very detailed. Applicants needed to provide an extensive medical history, show evidence that they were under medical supervision, have their primary care physician complete a questionnaire, provide photo ID, a recent EKG, and sign waivers.

The flight surgeon and study investigator in charge, Dr. Rebecca Blue, with her team of aerospace physicians, selected about 360 people over the course of nearly a decade. I was accepted into the last phase of 60 participants, and selected a late March date, which turned out to be the next-to-last day. They could accommodate four participants per day.

During the full day study, participants were to fly in an FAA-approved High Performance Human Centrifuge. We

received instructions on how to prepare, which involved advice that one

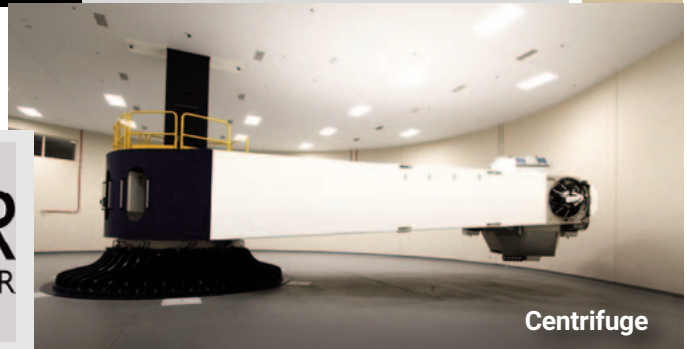


would expect: stay well hydrated the day before the study, avoid heavy alcohol, get a good night's sleep (Really? With all the pre-flight excitement?), eat breakfast in the morning, and take all of your normal medications.

Dr. Blue said, "The valuable research and knowledge from the study will help us improve future suborbital spaceflight training and simulation protocols. This will help us better understand how individuals with certain medical conditions may tolerate spaceflight and how to best prepare them for the experience."

Upon arriving at the facility, we were introduced to the team of 5 physicians, who wasted no time getting started. After a short presentation which outlined the day's activities, we lined up to get telemetry leads and a glucose monitoring device applied, were given training for the centrifuge-based simulator, and on techniques used to deal with the physiological effects of G-forces. Then we 'flew' five simulations. In-between flights, we could watch our fellow astronauts on camera. And there were some surprise cognitive tests mixed in throughout the day.

The runs simulated flights in a winged craft, a capsule launch, a capsule



Centrifuge

return, another winged craft, and an aborted launch escape. They were intense, but fun! During each flight, our vitals were continuously monitored. We were on multiple manned cameras, in constant voice communication with the physicians and facility director, and after each mission, we had to pass a post-flight neurovestibular examination (hopping 3 times on one foot with your eyes closed was a killer) and answer questions about our physical reactions to the flights. We were given every opportunity to immediately stop each flight at any time, or discontinue participation altogether. None of my team did. The emphasis on safety and efficiency was impressive; the facility and equipment were remarkable. Who knew we had something like this in the Philadelphia area?

At one point, I remarked to one of the physicians that we would never see space flight as a common event in our lifetimes. His stunning reply? "Oh, but you will!"

Preliminary results of this study? Normal people do just fine with space flight. When the real trips become affordable, I'm in.

Sic itur ad astra!



Simulator



Simulator

Scholarship Awards Dinner

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

Thursday, June 16, 2022

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



6PM: Cash Bar, 6:30PM: Dinner, 7:30 Awards
\$49.00 per person

RESERVE online at aeroclubpa.org
We can't accept phone reservations or walk-ins

Reserve ONLINE or send this form with payment by **June 9** to:
Aero Club PA Scholarship Fund, 1399 Narcissa Road, Blue Bell, PA 19422

NAME: _____ Number Attending: _____ x \$49 = \$ _____
 PHONE: _____ Sponsor a Recipient: _____ x \$49 = \$ _____
 E-Mail: _____ Scholarship Contribution: \$ _____
 Total Enclosed: \$ _____

Please list names of attendees...

ATTENDEES: _____,
 _____,

Dr. Jack Schreffler, 1931-2022



Dr. Jack Schreffler soloed his first airplane at age 15 and owned 9 different airplanes over his lifetime. Jack demonstrated a lifetime commitment to local aviation, especially his role in helping to establish and steward the Bob Shannon Memorial Scholarship Fund for over 40 years. Jack Schreffler was the

Aero Club President in the early 1970's and was also a generous donor to the Aero Club of Pennsylvania Memorial Scholarship Fund. He received the Aero Club Wright Brothers Award in 2019 in recognition of his lifetime commitment to scholarships for men and women seeking a career in the airlines.

Al Beerley, 1950-2022



Al Beerley, a former Aero Club board member, passed away at age 71. Having graduated from Penn State, he initially worked as an ironworker, but with a dream of a career in aviation. He earned his private pilot's license and became a flight instructor to build his hours and ratings. He began his aviation career working as a pilot for Wings Airways in Blue Bell, PA, then Bar Harbor Airlines, Piedmont Airlines, and eventually for US Airways. He flew as captain for US Airways for the next 30 years and later earned his helicopter license. He loved his work as a pilot and took great pride in it.

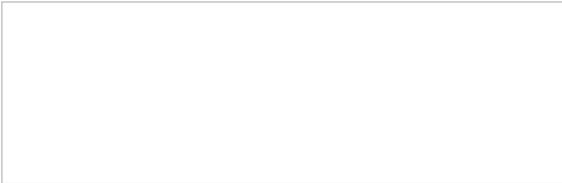


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AVIATION EVENT CALENDAR

Aero Club

June 16 Annual Aero Club Scholarship Dinner
July 20 Board of Directors Meeting

Local

May 14 Chile Fiesta Fly-in, Massey (MD1)
May 21-22 Dover AFB Open House & Airshow
June 3-5 Reading WWII Weekend (KRDG)
June 10-12 Greenwood Lake Air Show
June 11 Antique Fly-in, Massey Aerodrome (MD1)
June 11-12 Ocean City Maryland Air Show (T-birds)
June 20-24 Future Aviator Camp, New Garden Airport
July 11-15 Future Aviator Camp, New Garden Airport
July 29-31 NJ Festival of Ballooning, Solberg, NJ
Aug 8-12 Future Aviator Camp, New Garden Airport
Aug 24 Atlantic City Airshow (Wednesday T-Birds)
Aug 27-28 Wilkes-Barre Airshow (Thunderbirds)
Aug 30 (Tue) New Garden Airshow (N57)
Sep 9-11 Chester County Balloon Festival (Willowdale)

National

July 6-10 Ninety-Nines Intl Conference (Charleston)
July 25-31 Airventure Oshkosh
Sept 3-5 Cleveland National Air Show
Sept 19-25 Triple Tree Aerodrome Fly-in, Woodruff, SC
Sept 8-11 International Seaplane Fly-In Greenville, ME
Oct 1-9 Albuquerque Intl Balloon Fiesta



Board of Directors Report

By Carris Kocher

The regular meeting of the Board of Directors was held on April 20, 2022 at the Philadelphia Aviation Country Club. President Erik Kocher called the meeting to order shortly after 6 p.m. A quorum was present in person.

Reports of finances, scholarship program, membership and communication ensued. Our membership stands around 150 when counting complimentary memberships to scholarship applicants. We have one new lifetime member. The board discussed the 2022 Scholarship Dinner planning, expected to be in-person at Wings Field in June.

Mike Dunleavy reported for the Special Events Committee on the trip to Lakehurst. He also reported about a gentleman who spoke earlier that day at the Union League Aero Club's luncheon. Mike recommended the speaker be invited to speak to the Aero Club.

The group discussed many possible field trips that could be planned, including some of the many aviation museums in the mid-Atlantic region.

The meeting officially adjourned and was followed by dinner.