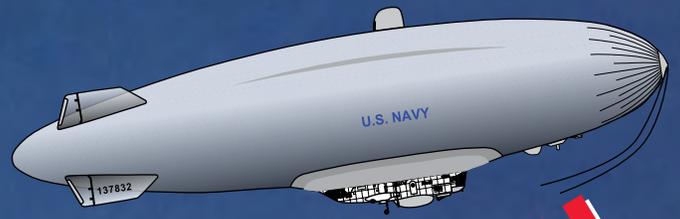


THE NOON



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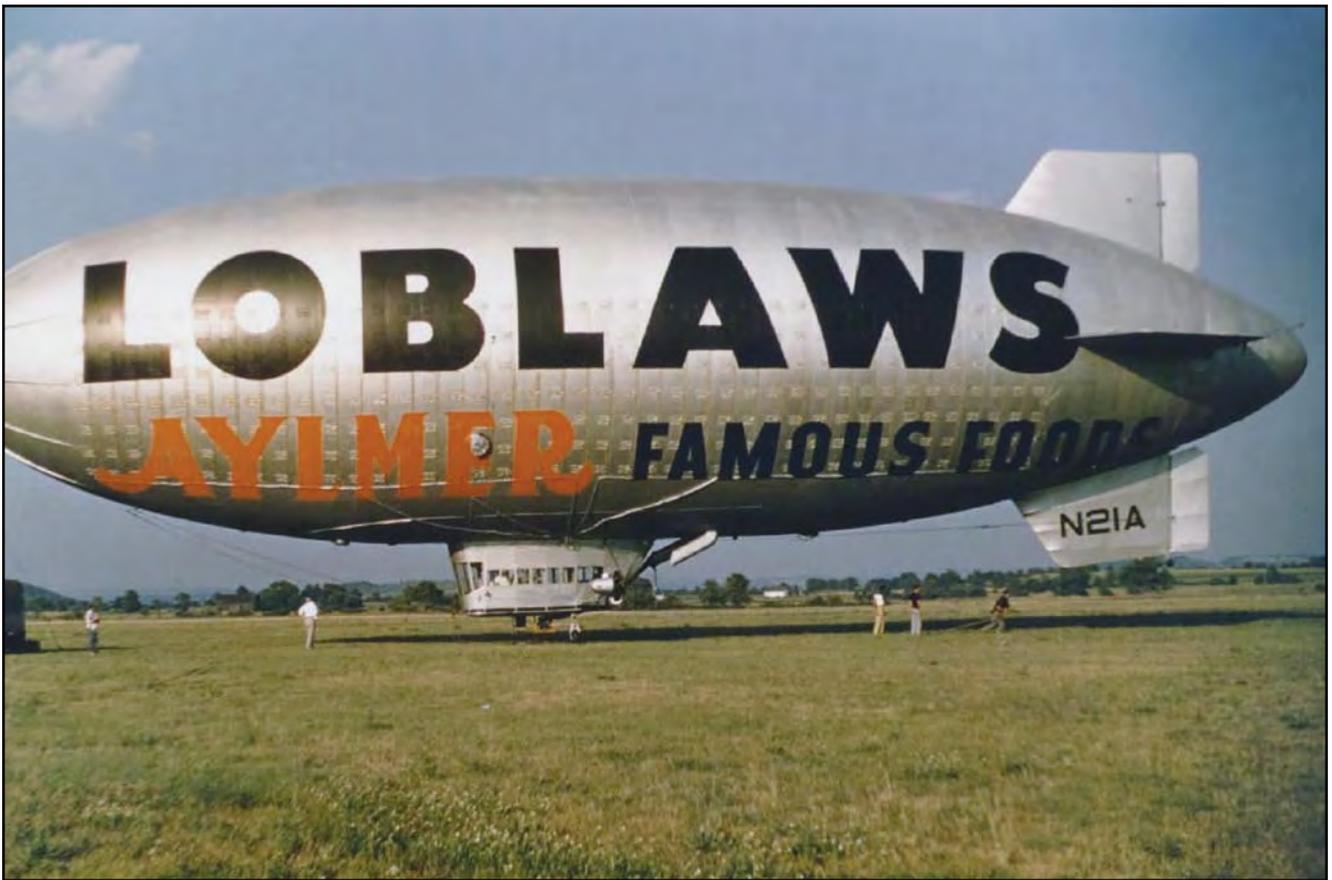
The Official Newsletter of THE NAVAL AIRSHIP ASSOCIATION, INC.

No. 78

Summer 2003



Instructor, Lakehurst



Loblaws N21A was one of 2 Navy L-Ships flown in Germany in the mid 1950's by International Sky Advertising Co. The Noon Balloon welcomes any details as to the post war career of this airship.



The former L-19 operated in Germany from 1955 to 1961 as the Underburg. In 1962 the former L-19 was transferred to Japan and operated until 1969 as the Flying Dragon, Japanese registration JA-1001. Total length of service in the U.S., Germany, Austria, Holland and Japan, 16 years.

THE NOON BALLOON

Official Publication of the Naval Airship Association, Inc.

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Probably during filming 'This Man's Navy' at NAS Moffett Field, CA, 1944, the L-ships made a mass flight with cameras rolling. Many still photos are similar to above, but this particular snapshot is the only known showing all ten managing to get into the photographing K-ship's frame at once. We'd bet this is the largest formation of airships in history – or is it just the largest group ever photographed? A *real* expert could pick out the storied L-8!

On the Cover of TNB #78: The G-1 and an L-ship make a pass while a masted L-ship is wheeled into position at NAS Lakehurst in 1942. Read the most interesting memoir **Dr. Roy Wicker** gave the Editor beginning on page 13.

Inside Front Cover: From CDR **Lou Prost's** scrapbook: two ex-Navy L-ships converted to advertising purposes. See more of his pictures and read Lou's letters in 'Pigeon Cote' beginning on page 7, then see page 20 to see how Lou has been honored.

Inside Back Cover: The restored L-8 in the LTA exhibit. See **Mort Eckhouse's** Pensacola Report, page 24.

Back Cover, top: The restored L-8 as she now appears in the National Naval Aviation Museum LTA exhibit. **Back, lower:** L-8 Restoration crew (L to R) **Dan Owczarczak**, **Ernie Brousseau**, and **Henry Brandt**.

All material contained in this newsletter represents the views of its authors and does not necessarily represent the official position of the Naval Airship Association, Inc., nor its officers or members.

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EDITORIAL

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Sometimes I wonder if anyone reads this page, then a bit of feedback arrives that shows that some of our content is worth comment. I was gently reminded NASA wasn't really throwing away four million cubic feet of helium with *each* scientific balloon, since that figure was inflated – literally. So, taxpayers weren't funding so much waste of an irreplaceable natural resource? Read the next press release: "NASA dodged prolonged foul weather over New Mexico Saturday, June 18, to successfully launch an innovative new "laboratory in the sky" -- one carrying unique atmospheric experiments designed and managed by student scientists from four American universities... The aluminum structure -- about the size of a standard passenger car -- was lifted to an altitude of 120,000 feet, or nearly 23 miles, by NASA's 40-million-cubic-foot scientific balloon. The engineering test flight was launched from Fort Sumner, N.M., a former U.S. Army airfield 160 miles southeast of Albuquerque, and lasted approximately 9 hours. It landed in a forest near Reserve, N.M., some 365 miles away." Unmanned, short duration, remote wilderness. Motto? "Consume Now – Before It's All Used up!"



(Above, Russian gas passers) Another first for NOON BALLOON readers is **Herman Van Dyk's** article on Russian LTA in WWII – so far as we know, the first time the subject has been in English language print. Herman topped it off with another one of his amazing drawings. Enjoy – and make note the Russians were actually operating airship tankers, a subject of discussion for some time in LTA circles.

I hope this is the last issue mentioning yet another previously undocumented '5K' accident (pg 7), but if you've been holding back, let's have it.

It's entirely fitting that this issue have an "L" ship theme, following last issue's K-ship remembrance, which fits neatly with our hard-working Pensacola team proudly finishing the storied L-8 car for the National Naval Aviation Museum's LTA exhibit. (Back Cover.)

In this issue you'll see a lot of previous NAA President **Lou Prost's** L-ship photos from his lifetime of LTA experiences. It's great to see one of our own get some long overdue recognition in the non-LTA world. Oddly enough, I have a conscious memory of seeing their "Wonder Ship," whose flashing-dots sign helped "build strong bodies 12 ways." Yet the record shows it was out of service before I was born. This memory must be from a recording played later, like so many people who swear they heard Herb Morrison on the radio the night of May 6th, 1937. We just passed that 71st anniversary, whose pieced-together fire footage and audio record became "public domain" – free – and therefore a permanent part of our culture. Too bad the wrong lessons were learned in that accident, and we are still suffering for it.

While those images damned airships, a few NAA members are cheeky enough to think they can buck that trend. We're trying to make a film about WWII if the R-101, ZRS-4, -5 and LZ-129 accidents had not happened – and the ZRCV was built about 1939. That's right, we want to make **Rowan Partridge's** novel "ZRS" into a movie. Below, NAA member pilot extraordinaire **Paul Adams** checks out one of our flying models, the "SBD-Z1." We've discussed a flying model of the novel's rigid carrier, the USS *Long Island* (ZRS-6) as **Herman Van Dyk** is drawing up blueprints. The project is like LTA in general, looking for sponsors, but if you'd like to help in some way, we'd love to have you aboard.

- R G Van Treuren



View From The Top: PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

The Executive Council met in March at the home of Richard and Debbie Van Treuren. Debbie entertained the ladies while the Council met, then she prepared a fabulous lunch.

The resignation of Margaret Hinrichsen was regretfully accepted. Margaret has been the Secretary almost since inception and I am glad to see her continue as an Honorary Member. Peter Brouwer was appointed Secretary/Treasurer pending Membership approval at the next General Meeting. Bob Ashford agreed to prepare the necessary changes for our by-laws.

Following the Council Meeting, Pete Brouwer, his wife, Betty, and I drove to Titusville to meet with Fred and Lorraine Morin, who were vacationing. Fred is doing an excellent job as the newly appointed Membership Chairman. We discussed plans to publish the membership/recruitment brochure which Fred had submitted to the Council for approval. (See Below.)

Shipmates will be glad to learn that former President **John Fahey** is recovering from a serious fall which caused permanent loss of sight in his left eye and loss of hearing to his left ear. As well, former Pres. **George Allen** was out of his sling in May following shoulder replacement.

Your Editor advises that member input to the TNB has reached a new high! All of you have interesting stories to relate. Keep up the good work!

- **Herm Spahr**

THE NOON BALLOON

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Publisher: **David R. Smith**

www.gyzep.com

MEMBERSHIP COMMITTEE

As the new chairman of the membership committee I would like to announce a new membership drive. The NAA is faced with many of the same issues as other military and historical societies. Don Shorts reported last year on his experience with a Navy destroyer veterans' group: As members got older and passed on, there were not enough new members to outpace the losses. We don't want that to happen with the NAA! To that end we are going to launch a couple of new initiatives to spread the word on the NAA's work, resources and future and to recruit new members from across a broad spectrum of areas. Our first effort is the introduction of a new NAA brochure. The brochure features a description of what the NAA is and what it does. The inside details a short history of the US Navy's involvement with airships from 1914 to the present day. There is also a convenient membership application that can be removed and mailed to the Sec./Tres.

Also we will be promoting the NAA and increasing our exposure through a number of new areas. We will be targeting mailing of info to specific colleges and universities suggesting they subscribe through membership to The Noon Balloon for their libraries, NROTC and History departments. The NAA has an incredible amount of technical and historic data on airships and their role in naval history. Sharing that data increases awareness of the unique role airships played in the US Navy. We will also be soliciting aviation and naval museums if not for a membership then at least to display our brochures prominently for their visitors.

Finally, we would like to establish an NAA presence at air shows. Last year Pete and Betty Brouwer attended a local air show with membership applications and copies of The Noon Balloon. Their presence was well received and generated some solid interest in the NAA. They will be doing the same at this year's event. We would like to be able to have an NAA information table at every air show, and Goodyear blimp non-sporting event appearance, that we can.

How are we going to do this? Every member of the NAA is a member of the membership committee. If everyone signed up one new member our membership would double. A nice thought, but in reality it won't happen. So what can you do? When you're done reading your copy of The Noon Balloon, pass it on. Donate it to your local library, senior center, high school, veterans' organization hall, even put it in your doctor or dentist's waiting room; it's certainly more interesting than a couple of month's old Time or People magazines. For those of you comfortable speaking in front of an audience, speak to local high school or college history classes about your airship and Navy experiences. Going to an air show? Take along some NAA brochures and if someone comments on your ZP or NAA hat, hand them a brochure and tell them about the NAA.

We will be recruiting some members in strategic geographical areas around the country to serve as local NAA Membership Committee members. We will publish their contact info for you to contact them for additional info. Until then, please do not hesitate to contact me for anything I can do to help you promote new memberships and to assist in any ideas you have.

- **Fred Morin, Membership Chair** (frmorin@comcast.net)

TREASURER'S STRONGBOX

Here we are again, nearing the end of summer. As we all know, the months and years just keep rolling along, a little faster than we would like.....

I would like to report to our N.A.A. membership that our financial status still remains strong. Expenses for the past year have been the cost of publishing and mailing "The Noon Balloon" quarterly, a new membership roster/directory, mailing of renewal letters, reminders and letters to honorary members, and other miscellaneous expenses. We still have managed to remain in clear skies. Due to the fact this information has been posted to our editor and publisher at an earlier date, much before the actual printing date, the up-to-date figures are not possible. Therefore, as of April 2008, our combined balances in the 'The Treasurer's Strongbox' in our local financial bank in Port St. Lucie is \$51,006.03.

If anyone has any questions or a change in address, e-mail, phone number, etc. please notify me. This will help to keep all our membership information correct. With this issue of the Noon Balloon, the mailing label will show the year your membership expires.

Example--- John R Smith 08
233 Anyplace Street
Your Town, PA 01331

WELCOME TO OUR NEWEST MEMBERS

Pope, Ralph E. Jr. --- Cumming, GA
Walker, William --- Vero Beach, FL
Hash, Roy L. --- Spokane, WA
Dangelo, Michele Fahey--- Boston, MA
Barre, Maureen Fahey --- Fairfield, CT
Fahey, Barbara J. --- Oshkosh, WI
Jones, Alvan R. --- Southborough, MA
Nickerson, Howard 'Nick'--- Melbourne, FL
Higy, Richard W. --- Fayetteville, NC
Embry-Riddle Aero Univ. --- Daytona Beach, FL
Anderson, Clifford O. --- Hermiston, OR

Corrone, Anthony L. --- Bethany, CT
Meyerowitz, Robert, Dr. --- Woodmere, NY
Peterson, Donald D. --- Red Hook, NY
Gamble, William K. --- Madison, WI

Again, we thank those members who have been generous with their donations.

DONATION LIST - MEMBERS OF THE N.A.A.

\$5 - \$49

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Laurence J. Karadin	Susan M. Colman
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Jane Omeara 'H'	Chuck Sapp
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Helen M. Horan "H"

\$500 - +

Bill Wissel

MANY THANKS FOR YOUR GENEROUS SUPPORT!!

- Peter F. Brouwer, Sec-Tres.

End of an Era

"Margaret Hinrichsen has been a long and faithful member of the NAA and the Executive Council, traveling on her own money across the country numerous times to attend EC meetings. At the last council meeting Margaret tendered her resignation as Secretary in a letter written to the EC in which she also proposed an amendment to our By-Laws to combine the offices of Secretary and Treasurer. Her reason for her resignation involves her declining health and other very personal issues. The Executive Council reluctantly accepted Margaret's resignation with warmest best wishes for her future. As a result of her resignation and proposal, the Executive Council has made several changes to the By-Laws of the Naval Airship Association, which will be published in TNB #79. These changes will be voted upon at the General Business Meeting during our next reunion now scheduled for Pensacola, FL, in May 2009 - about a year's time from the meeting."

- Bob Ashford

Pigeon Cote



Thea Jarvis e-mailed: “Jim Kielt [above] who flew airships during World War II, was recently presented with a model blimp crafted by his nine-year-old great-grandson Brendan Jarvis. [Below]



Based in Lakehurst, N.J. during the war, Lieut. Kielt now resides on St. Simons Island, just over the bridge from the Brunswick, Ga. naval air station site. He's long delighted in sharing memories of his flight days with friends and family and his handsome three-dimensional replica makes it easier to do so!” Thea Jarvis, theaj@mindspring.com **Ω**

Simon Beattie e-mailed: Here [Right] are the photos: Top row: Madsen, myself, Nickels, J B Earnest (known just as JB), and Jude. Pilot [left, kneeling] was Herb Biedbach [Past NAA President] and I can't remember the other two. This was one of our crews during the year of 43. We put in one hell of a lot of hours here at Eureka covering convoys going to San Francisco from Seattle. We would take them halfway or longer until we were relieved by a blimp from Moffett. We really had to watch our fuel as the

winds getting back to Eureka were horrible. Like what you are doing with the ‘Noon Balloon’ and hope it will be around for a long time. [*Ed. asks: Is that the flat-nosed, quick-sinking depth charge we see on the outboard rack there? They are mentioned as far back as 1942 but there is little evidence blimp squadrons were so equipped on a regular basis...*] **Ω**

Donald Budrejko wrote: “As I was surfing the Internet a few weeks ago, I happened to view the Spring 2007 issue of ‘The Noon Balloon.’ I enjoyed seeing two pictures of my uncle, LCDR **Casey Suchcicki**, in the publication. It brought back many fond memories of my visiting Uncle Casey at NAS Lakehurst. I always wanted to emulate Casey, and was very proud to have Casey pin me with his wings when I was designated a Naval Aviator in 1970. I flew S-2's, A-4's & S-3's and eventually retired as a Commander. But Casey Suchcicki's legacy lives on as I pinned Casey's wings on my son Thomas when he was designated a Naval Aviator in 1998. Tom is presently a Major in the USMC, flies the AH-1W Super Cobra, and is stationed with MAWTS-1 at MCAS Yuma. As an aside my daughter Catherine also followed in the Navy tradition and is a Meteorological Officer at Pearl Harbor. As we periodically go through old family photos, I will scan in and send any that I find of Casey.

Additional info - He passed away several years ago in Pensacola while undergoing Dialysis. His wife, my aunt Dorothy, also passed away. His daughter Diane still lives in the Pensacola area. I will consider membership and send in the application soon....” Donald Budrejko **Ω**



ZP-14 message traffic

Herm Spahr forwarded an e-mail, "My father, **Harry Fogel**, was with ZP-14. In 1996 or 1997, I attended a reunion of the NAA in Akron. I met a good number of my father's comrades. My wife and my mother also came with me. My mother really enjoyed seeing some of my father's old buddies. In 1995, while driving through North Carolina, I detoured to Elizabeth City and spent half a day in town and at the old base. It was quite an experience stepping back into history. **Walter Bjerre**, the captain my father served with, hosted the attendees at his home and went out of his way to make us welcome. **John Kane** was also a great host. I hope this letter finds you in good health and cheer. Warm regards, Lawrence Fogel, Mill Valley, Calif. Lonno66@aol.com

Don Kaiser [dkaiser1@san.rr.com] e-mailed: "I saw your website asking for participants. Since my uncle, William K. Kaiser, was a blimp pilot in squadron ZP-14 associated with this event: May 28-? 1944; K-123; South Weymouth, MA to Africa via NAS Argentina, Newfoundland; W.H. Ireland on crew; John Kane was navigator on first leg; LTJG Robert Kersey, pilot.

I have a question for all you ZP-14 experts. My records and research on ZP-14 indicate the following: Bronze star awarded to Commander Emmett J. Sullivan, squadron commander (Azores to Port Lyautey, K-130, in charge of flight). Air medals awarded to squadron operations officer and flight captains:

Lieutenant Ernest W. Steffen, Jr., Operations Officer (Argentina to Azores)
Lieutenant Homer B. Bly (Azores to Port Lyautey, K-123, K-134, K-112)
Lieutenant (jg) John J. Connery (South Weymouth to Argentina, in charge of flight)
Lieutenant (jg) Richard W. Goldstein (Argentina to Azores)
Lieutenant (jg) Robert L. Kersey (South Weymouth to Argentina, K-123)
Lieutenant (jg) Edward B. Russell (Azores to Port Lyautey, K-130)

Letters of commendation with authorization to wear commendation ribbon awarded to the copilots and navigators: Copilots:

Lieutenant Commander Julius J. Barefoot (Azores to Port Lyautey, K-130)
Lieutenant Arthur I. Morse USN (Argentina to Azores)
Lieutenant (jg) Dewey D. Crowder, Jr. (South Weymouth to Argentina)
Lieutenant (jg) Savo V. Gavriloff
Lieutenant (jg) Warren R. Ireland (Azores to Port Lyautey, K-123, K-134, K-112)

Lieutenant (jg) Leonard P. Tylenda (South Weymouth to Argentina)
Lieutenant (jg) Claire H. Wolfarth (South Weymouth to Argentina)
Ensign Adolph J. Furtek USN
Ensign Roland N. Garner USN (Argentina to Azores)
Ensign William K. Kaiser (Azores to Port Lyautey, K-123, K-134, K-112)
Ensign Robert J. Myers (South Weymouth to Argentina)
Ensign Eugene G. Titus
Navigators:
Lieutenant Richard G. Hill USN (Argentina to Azores)
Lieutenant (jg) Wilber F. Gasner USN (Azores to Port Lyautey, K-130)
Lieutenant (jg) John C. Kane USN (South Weymouth to Argentina, K-123)
Lieutenant (jg) Ben B. Levitt USN (South Weymouth to Argentina, K-130)
Lieutenant (jg) Fredrick W. Miede USN (Azores to Port Lyautey, K-123, K-134, K-112)
Lieutenant (jg) Andrew J. Papageorge USN (Argentina to Azores)

All officers were United States Naval Reserve (USNA) except those indicated as regular Navy personnel (USN)

My question is that I cannot find any photos or info about Adolph Furtek, Eugene Titus, or Savo Gavriloff. I am also not positive about which legs Richard Hill and Ben Levitt navigated. I always thought that my uncle flew all the way across the Atlantic but from my research it appears that nobody actually did this. It seems that different crews merely flew separate legs three times. Is that correct? Did anyone fly all the way across?

I also don't know much about the K-89 and the K-114 on the southern route in April 1945 but Andrew Papageorge told me that he and John Kane navigated the leg from Bermuda to the Azores. I am also trying to get a list of all the enlisted men on these blimp flights as well as which blimps they and the officers crewed in. I tried to indicate above the K-ships that I am pretty sure about. Thanks and kind regards, Don Kaiser San Diego 858-792-1720 Ω

Dave Smith adds: "Bill Kaiser was a good friend back in the days before NAA. I would visit with him each year at an organization call Northeast Aero Historians. Bill was the first and founding president of Cradle of Aviation Museum on Long Island. My last memory of Bill was his weaving in and out between airplanes on a mini bike at his first hangar and outdoor display at Roosevelt Field out near Nassau, Long Island. I still have the Cradle of Aviation Museum ball cap he gave me that day, over 20 years ago. A great guy." Ω



Joe Dymkowski sent in this photo from on the set of "This Man's Navy" and wrote, "The 'good' looking guy on the left is me. Going to the right that's Jimmy Gleason next to me, another pilot in the middle then Wallace Berry, and another pilot next to him. I was asked if I wanted to be in the movie, when I asked 'how much is the pay,' the conversation ended. Sailors were in the movie. The stars used our Ready Room, ate our food, and drank our coffee. After the filming the studio held a dinner for the sailors, did NOTHING for the officers.

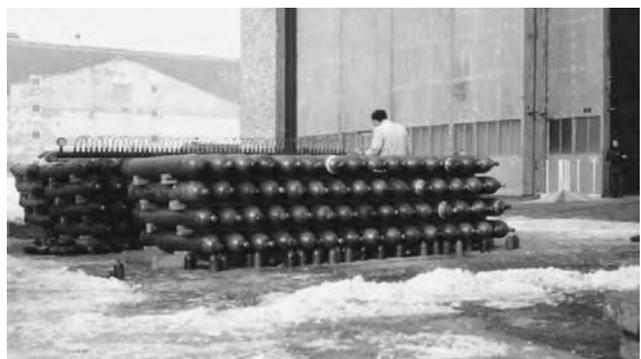
I flew a blimp to the outlying base at Del Mar. The base was configured like a jungle village; there were a couple of huts. While they were filming I spent the time in a hut. The extras were playing poker.

On the opening page of TNB it says "Filming 'This Man's Navy' at NAS Moffett Field, CA 1944." I believe this was in error, the movie was filmed at the NAS Santa Ana. The bio of the film has an error. It states the movie was filmed at the US Marine Corps Air Station (helicopter) Tustin, CA. The Marines used the base after the film was made and the blimps left. There was no city of Tustin, the entire area was called Santa Ana. Ω

Ed. replies: Sadly in a few more years that movie guide will be revised to read "was filmed at the Tustin Industrial Park and housing development!" Marines of the 90s who couldn't imagine a Santa Ana Navy blimp will try to tell young folks there used to be big hangars for Marine helicopters there. Time marches on, but one of these days if we can get MGM to release the movie on DVD with out-takes and deleted scenes we can see all the film that was exposed at Moffett, Santa Ana, Lakehurst, and Del Mar that did not make it into the final cut. The only out-takes the Navy owned from 'This Man's Navy' were used in the DVD "Airships Fight A Cold War." Ω

*Ed. Note: In an effort to encourage members to submit LTA oriented articles to the very heavily HTA oriented magazine of the NAMF, FOUNDATION, your editor re-formatted James Shock's L-ship material from his new (3rd) edition of US NAVY AIRSHIPS and added a few photos found by History Committee members at the NARA; we used the photo on the cover of this issue for the title page. Then, adding past NAA President CDR **Lou Probst's** L-ship scrapbook to the end, their Editors could not refuse. Still it was not perfect, as Lou Probst responds: "The article on the "Love Ships" has several major errors. Charlie Probst should be **Charlie Propst**. Charlie was never a Navy pilot, he was my student and I taught him to fly airships and obtain his LTA license. I met Charlie and **Kurt Selzer** in **Doug Leigh's** office in New York. (At the time I was working for General Development in Georgetown, DE. I was supervising the construction of the **Steven Douglas** high aspect fins for the 5K. The 5K was deflated during docking, the fins were never installed.) The story is that Charlie and Kurt had an enterprise going, towing banners and a helicopter with an advertising message on the heli-floats. They were in a bar in Frankfurt and while talking to some Pan Am pilots were told about Doug's airships flying over New York. Doug sent Charlie & Kurt to see me about overhauling fins, car & envelope that were stored in **Mae Rogers'** barn in Lakehurst. General Development was given the envelope contract. The envelope was refurbished in Georgetown and the car was my responsibility for the overhaul. I flew to Elkton, MD several times a week to check the progress on the car.*

Since Stugardt was in the American zone the airship was under the control of the FAA. Before the overhaul was completed they found out they were unable to get helium [due to the Helium Control Act still being enforced]. The decision was made to ship the airship to Germany and fly with hydrogen [below]. The FAA required changes in the airship for the use of hydrogen. I engineered the changes and they were approved by the FAA.



They shipped to Germany and arrived in Heilbron. At that time Charlie and Kurt called me to fly to Stuttgart and to supervise the erection. The hangar only had 40 foot high doors. To solve the problem, I hinged the lower fin and had short scoops to use temporarily. The FAA representative, who was in England licensing the Vickers *Viscount* came to Stuttgart and inspected the work inside the envelope.



During inflation the Govt. required the doors to be closed. I had great help from a German who was in charge of hydrogen for the *Graf Zeppelin* in South America. He told me the neoprene sleeve was a cause for disaster and furnished a plastic sleeve. During inflation one of the crewman asked me to feel the sleeve where it joined the hydrogen manifold. I was immediately zapped by static electricity! I called the German over and showed him what I thought was a problem. He laughed and said ‘yavol, but it is all on the outside.’



The US Army was across the field and were a great help to us. The FAA rep insisted on flying on the test flight and the Army came through with an additional parachute. On takeoff my mechanic who was in the aft compartment started screaming and I climbed so steeply that the engines were starved for fuel. I was trying to get enough altitude to bail out. When I leveled off, I asked Heintze what the commotion was; he said he was happy to see it fly!”

Ed. then asked Lou to detail what changes he engineered in the ship to convert to hydrogen, expertise that’s going to be in great demand as the skyrocketing price of helium eventually outpaces the cost to transport its expensive helium vacuum trailers with diesel running \$4/gal. Lou responded, “The L-ship catenarays are a series of loops with fiber sheaves insulating one loop from the next one. To make sure that there was no chance of a spark jumping from one loop to another I had a cable connected from loop to loop. I also had the electrical switch for the hydrogen valve removed.

I had scoops installed to allow fresh air circulate through the cabin. I had a cover installed over the battery in the rear compartment where the gas tanks are. I also had a red placard on the instrument which read nicht rauchen (no smoking).

A funny story involved what I wore on the test flight. I had purchased a dacron suit for my trip to Germany along with a white dacron shirt. That night when I undressed the shirt was loaded with static electricity, gave a bright glow and promptly stuck to the wall. Never wore it again when in the ship... I must have done a pretty good job, considering the number of hours logged with hydrogen.”

Ω



Ed. Note: Indeed Lou did, and that’s not mentioning the reinflation with hydrogen accomplished in the field, shades of the British in World War One. (See page 20.)



Charles McDougall e-mailed: "I enjoy reading stories from the golden days of LTA. (I dropped out of Caltech in 1942 to join the V5 program and returned post war to graduate in 1947). The Navy sent me to Civilian Pilot Training in New Mexico while waiting for orders to active duty. My first active duty, along with **Charlie Mills, Frank Hudner, and Si Miller**, was in the 8th battalion at Saint Mary's Preflight School. We selected LTA and got our wings at Moffett Field in May of 1943. Si and I were assigned to ZP14 at Weeksville, NC and became senior pilots in September. Both Si and I married our sweethearts from Pasadena, CA who came to Weeksville just weeks apart. In February of 1944 I and my crew were transferred, with a stopover in Key West for anti-submarine training, to a detachment of ZP-41 in Fortealeza, Brazil (Fortealeza in 1944 had a population of about 100,000-now about 1,500,000!). Si and the rest of ZP-14 were soon to be transferred to Morocco to patrol the Straits of Gibraltar.

After a couple of months in Fortealeza, we were transferred to a detachment of ZP-42 in Ipitanga, a suburb of Bahia. From Bahia we were often deployed to smaller detachments in Caravellas and Victoria. I became a command pilot in July of 1944. My crew did get a couple of weeks in Rio de Janeiro, where we took an airship for overhaul. The OINC in Rio was a grand old veteran of the days of rigid LTA. In January of 1945 we ferried an airship in need of overhaul, with many stops along the way, from Bahia to Richmond (Miami). I got some leave and went to Pasadena where I was introduced to our daughter who was eight months old. On the way back to Brazil we got as far as San Juan, PR where we got orders back to ZP-21 in Richmond, as the South American LTA operation was being phased out.

The rest of my duty in LTA was in ZP21 in Richmond, FL, where I had a couple of flights in M3, and at San Julian (on the western tip of Cuba with a 7000 foot runway-which had been a detachment of an Air Corps base at Batista field in Havana, used for B29 training), along with stints at NAS Banana River (Now Cape Kennedy), and a short stretch of temporary duty back at Weeksville, with ZP-23 which had replaced ZP-24 when ZP-14 went to North Africa. I was at San Julian in March of 1945, where I received orders to HTA. At that time I was one month beyond my 23rd birthday, and had 2402 LTA hours.

Going thru my files I found orders that have all the missing initials of my crew-and also discovered

that K-116 was the airship I took to Richmond from Brazil. I know there were other airships still in SA when I passed thru the various bases along the way. I also know that the K-116 never got back to Brazil. So I don't see how the K-116 could have been the last airship out of SA. My turnaround from San Juan to Richmond concluded at Richmond on the 13th of February 1945.

BLIMP SQUADRON, PORTY TWO

ZP42/F16-4/00/sh
Serial: 325

c/o Fleet Post Office,
New York, New York,
19 April 1945

From: Commanding Officer.
To: Lt. Comdr. Robert A. POWERS, #85589, (A4D), USNR.
Lieut. Charles E. SAYLES, #95779, (A4D), USNR.
Lieut. Clarence A. EATON, Jr., #97735, (A4D)E, USNR.
Lieut. Edgar L. McCARTNEY, Jr., #116620, (A2), USNR.
Lieut. Raffaele (n) LEONE, #125949, (A2), USNR.
Lieut. Paul E. SPENCER, #125667, (A2), USNR.
Lt(jg) William A. FACCI, #240749, (A2), USNR.
Lt(jg) John L. JOHNSON, #240767, (A2), USNR.
Lt(jg) William R. BRICKER, #263621, (A2), USNR.
Lt(jg) Robert (n) AUVE, #277911, (A2), USNR.
Lt(jg) Charles H. McDougall, #241281, (A2), USNR.
Lt(jg) James T. WALLS, Jr., #261296, (A2)L, USNR.
Lt(jg) Daniel (n) CAVALIER, #273617, (A2)L, USNR.
Lt(jg) Albert (n) UNETIC, #278671, (A2), USNR.
Lt(jg) David H. JACOBS, #290641, (A2), USNR.
Lt(jg) John V. MAHONEY, #291163, (A2), USNR.
Lt(jg) Donald H. WILKINSON, #291173, (A2), USNR.
Lt(jg) Forrest G. CARLSTAD, Jr., #291078, (A2)L, USNR.
Lt(jg) Howard E. WARRS, #301144, (A2), USNR.
Lt(jg) Robert W. KEENE, #323266, (A2), USNR.
Lt(jg) Richard C. KNOWLES, #323550, (A2)L, USNR.
Lt(jg) Charles A. PERKINS, #323557, (A2), USNR.
Lt(jg) Thomas S. SCRESPI, #323557, (A2)L, USNR.
Lt(jg) James A. FLENNER, #323557, (A2)L, USNR.
Lt(jg) John D. LEDFORD, #323557, (A2)L, USNR.
Lt(jg) Herlon N. HARVEY, #323557, (A2)L, USNR.
Lt(jg) Walter H. KRETZ, #323557, (A2)L, USNR.
Lt(jg) Robert G. PAGEL, #323557, (A2)L, USNR.
Ens. Phillip E. CLOUGH, #241163, (A2)L, USNR.
Ens. Irvin C. WILHELM, #241281, (A2)L, USNR.
Ens. Michael P. ROGERS, #229581, USN.
Ens. John "U" ANDERSON, #363266, (A2)L, USNR.
Ens. Robert W. ELLIS, #363266, (A2)L, USNR.
Ens. James R. FREEMAN, #363266, (A2)L, USNR.
Ens. Carl E. LINDQUIST, #363294, (A2)L, USNR.
Ens. Vernon S. GOSNELL, #363270, (A2)L, USNR.
Ens. Norval D. STISSON, #363299, (A2)L, USNR.
Ens. James W. STRICKLER, #363303, (A2)L, USNR.
Ens. Felix J. YANUZIS, #397142, (A4)L, USNR.

Subject: Change of Duty.

Reference: (s) CPASL spoltr ser 990 of 17 April 1945 with encl.

- You are hereby detached from Blimp Squadron PORTY-TWO and such other duty as you may have been assigned; you will proceed immediately to the port to which Blimp Squadron TWENTY-ONE may be, and upon arrival report to the Commanding Officer of Blimp Squadron TWENTY ONE for duty involving flying.
- No travel is necessary in the execution of these orders.
- Upon completion of this change of duty you will forward the original and one copy of these orders to the Chief of Naval Personnel for approval.

W.D. 10

Pilots in my own crew were not on that list and many others I knew were missing. My guess is that there were so many that other lists exist because they wanted to keep a single page to one order. I remember [narrator of "Blimp Goes To War...Again"] **Joe Lundy** very well, where don't recall... He may even remember me. I remember at Richmond in 1945 practicing with a very small torpedo which was supposed to home on the noise of a sub propeller. The idiotic protocol was- if covering a convoy- when a sub was detected - to order all the ships in the convoy to stop their engines, so the only noise the torpedo would hear would be the sub. I don't know if this was the secret one to which you refer. I was in LTA long enough to see the arrival in 1945 of reversing propellers

and power winches for hauling up rescuees. In all my pilot days in LTA I only had to go around again one time. My record as a landing party officer was to watch an academy graduate go around five times before we could haul him in. I was told he never made it the first time. I'm sure he had junior pilots who gritted their teeth. Reversible props made landing a lot easier. Looking more closely at my log book I see that I was in Key West June 17-18 1945 checking our air-sea rescue with "Chip Hughes." I think the winches appeared then. I haven't the slightest recollection of exactly when the little torpedo appeared, since it doesn't appear in my log. My memory isn't bad for an 86 year-old however.....according to my log I spent a lot of time in Key West in July on some short training (?) flights with **Ross Dempsey** (an old friend) and **Tuohy** and **Pledger**. What the hell we were doing eludes me. In the states landing parties were huge. In Caravellas we usually had six or eight folks, most of whom were Brazilians hired as cooks and gardeners. We always came in on the wheel and never dropped the long lines. The easy weather had a lot to do with it. Ask Joe Lundy if he recalls **Ben Shera**, **Jimmy Walls**, **Bob Morton** or **Greg Bautzer**, or the OINC at Ipitanga. In Richmond, near the end, I became acquainted with an LTA pilot named **Kalinin**. His grandfather was the president of the USSR, and every once in a while ONI and the FBI went around asking whether he had shown any communist tendencies.

After the [U-134] submarine debacle [LT Nelson] **Grills** was sent around to all the blimp bases on the east coast, and maybe elsewhere to describe to all pilots what happened and what went wrong. His talk and Q and A took over an hour and was repeated often enough so that all pilots got the message. I was at Weeksville in ZP-14, and took notes. Our squadron commander, **M. F. Delaney**, decided that all crews would practice proper depth charge release procedure in the hangar in ships rigged with sand bags replacing depth charges - we almost had another debacle when one crew got in the wrong ship and sent two torpex depth charges clanging to the hangar deck- this was a week or two after same model depth charges being carted at Norfolk NAS exploded spontaneously. One thing I can say is that he was a helluva swimmer.

In this picture-.Standing L to R -?? Dunlap (rigger); Pilot Jim Strickler, Command Pilot (me) Charles McDougall. Pilot Forrest Carlstead, Pilot Paul Hawley, Crew Chief Robert Baradel.. Kneeling left to right. Radioman John Astor Wilde, Mech, Laniewski, Mech, O.E. Vernia, Radioman, Edinger.. Jim Strickler is deceased. I am still in touch with Bob Baradel and Paul Hawley. This picture was taken at NAS Richmond, I believe.- I would love to hear from any of my old buddies. Charles McDougall, 439 Woodley Pl., Santa Rosa, CA95409 707-538-8926 chazzsr@sonic.net Ω



3rd from Left - Back Row

Joe Long e-mailed, "I work for the military history museum of South Carolina (www.crr.sc.gov). For our recent exhibit on our state's contribution to the First World War, we acquired some terrific artifacts from a sailor who served on Allied airships during that conflict. **Chief Quartermaster James F. Griffin** received the *Croix de Guerre* for an act of bravery aboard the French dirigible **AT-15**, and we have on display his leather flight helmet and some of the photos from the scrapbook he kept. (One photo is an aerial view of President Woodrow Wilson's ship on his way to France for the treaty signing. Others show an air base from overhead, and the inside of an airship hangar.)

I wanted your association to be aware of these available resources kept in the South Carolina Confederate Relic Room and Military Museum. I hope to soon publish a short article on Griffin and his career. I have also developed a "living history" WWI naval impression for use with school groups and others, and would like to expand the lighter-than-air aviation segment of my WWI programs - it's a subject that always attracts questions once it's introduced. Any firsthand accounts by naval airship or blimp crew members from that era would really help... In fact I'd greatly appreciate any suggestions you might have for further research on our WWI naval "lighter-than-air" aviators. The Museum will be happy to assist researchers in this aspect of history, to the best of our ability - please refer folks to us when appropriate! Joe Long, Curator of Education, SCCRRMM, Columbia, South Carolina. " Ω

*A forwarded message (lost its origin's return address) made a pretty strong case for identifying "Ol Swampy," Glynco's airship wreck no one seems interested in today. Jack wrote, "I was a student LTA pilot at Glynco from October 1957 to February 1958. My log book shows a "short flight" on December 10, 1957 aboard ZSG-4, Bu.No.131922 on a night navigational training flight. We had 3 students aboard, myself, Ens. **Herb Kolber**, and one other who remains a mystery. The instructor pilot was Lt. **Eastman**, an officer well known during that period. We were operating well inland from Glynco and were weighing-off the ship when the forward ballonet burst - suddenly we were nose up - way nose up! Naturally, it was feared that the catenary curtain would come loose and drop us into the swamp. Much credit must go to Mr. Eastman - he backed that ship down until the tail hit the swamp and the envelope could be ripped. Down we came with a crash! I remember looking out the window and seeing the port navigation light (on the side of the bag) blinking - the bag was suspended over the swamp by huge reeds that can still be seen in the picture. I was later "commended" for leading the crew out, much to the amusement of several of my student contemporaries. Incidentally, I carried a Marine Corps K-bar knife in a sheath by my ankle - I broke it off at the hilt cutting*

my way out of the wreck. We were all able to get on top of the bag and waited for the SAR helicopter to arrive - from there it was a textbook rescue by sling and back to base. There was a preliminary survey of the wreck the next day by helicopter but recovery was apparently abandoned when it was discovered that the bag was covered with thousands of snakes sunning themselves. My log shows I began flying 3 days later so I must assume that the medicinal brandy prescribed after we got back to Glynco was effective! I hope this sheds some identity of the wreck. Best regards, Jack"Ω

*Speaking of Glynco wrecks, noting **Lou Fry's** letter in TNB 77, "**Red**" Layton e-mailed: "I was a LT(jg) and Admin Officer in ZP2 Detachment 6 at Key West when the squadron was re-designated as ZX-11 (I designed the ZX-11 Patch). I was subsequently transferred to ZX-11 Det 1 at Glynco and reported in there day of Lou's crash. As I remember the story, the blimp took off from Key West in very heavy, pre-hurricane weather and was flying on auto-pilot when they broke the rudder shaft in the cockpit. (This was the first airship at Key West to have an auto-pilot). They returned to Key West and made a 'no rudder' landing using differential power for control. As I recall, one of the pilots was **George Richards**. After a long period during which they repaired the rudder shaft, they took off again with a new pilot crew and the same enlisted crew (who had been up for hours on the flight and the repair). The new pilot was CDR **Ray Wiggins**, ZX-11 Operations Officer. He did not want to use the autopilot because of the previous trouble, so he turned off the Inverter. Unfortunately, the Inverter also powered the Gyro Compass. After reporting that they were a couple of miles at sea southeast of Jacksonville, they broke out over NAS Cecil Field (west of Jacksonville) They headed to Jacksonville where it was planned to re-fuel the airship. LT **Ben Leavitt** of ZX-11 Det 1, with a couple of Petty Officers and a Barrett Coupling, drove to Jax, planning on using Station personnel to ground handle the airship. However, CDR Wiggins reported that he had enough gas to get to Glynco - and he almost did. I don't remember what happened to the car, but I believe that it was recovered and then scrapped. There was a lot of blimp cloth and I obtained a very large piece. I built a rack on a luggage trailer and covered it with the blimp cloth. It was still there when I sold the trailer in Monterey about 1975.*

Two items may be of interest:

1. A cartoon appeared in Naval Aviation News about the accident - the pilot trapped under the bag has Commander stripes.

2. I still have a small piece of the blimp cloth.

Best regards, Donald "Red" Layton 44 Seca Place,
Salinas, CA 93908 (831) 484-1593
Persafe@earthlink.net Ω

K-72 and K-14 case correspondence

Diana L Hughes e-mailed, "I am writing this for my Dad, James Hughes. He received the Spring 2008 issue of Noon Balloon, and was reading the article on p. 12 by Nancy Wenger, "Ferguson WWII vet still has questions about an encounter with the enemy."

He noticed in the 3rd paragraph, that the location is "off the coast of Norfolk, VA." A more accurate description is "off Cape Hatteras." I am attaching 2 documents [below]: one from the Coast Guard cutter Annapolis, and the other a teletype message from the K-72 blimp which give the coordinates. The History Committee should know this information--that Roberts and he were wrong originally--that the position was off Cape Hatteras, not Norfolk. Thanks, Diana Hughes hughe1dl@cmich.edu"

Naval Message - 18 April 1945 [from 10th Fleet, Nat'l Archives] VIA -F20-TELETYPE MY 182100 POSITION SHOULD READ 36-56 74-27 X AT 221552 K 72 MADE ATTACK ON POSITIVE CONTACT IN *VE AREA X EXPLOSION OBSERVED PBM REPORTS DISAPPEARING RADAR CONTACT AT 1910Z IN 36-17 73-48 X NEGATIVE RSB X EVALUATION DOUBTFUL X CONFIDENTIAL

Report from USS ANNAPOLIS (PF-15)

TESTIMONY GIVEN BY SIBLEY, MOTT S. (604-873), QM@ ON REPORTED SUBMARINE CONTACT 18 APRIL, 1945:

COMDR. GARFIELD: "In what capacity were you serving during General Quarters on 18 April, 1945?"

SIBLEY: "I was Quartermaster of the Watch, Sir."

COMDR. GARFIELD: Tell in your own words the chronicle of events of the attack made on the 18th of April, 1945.

SIBLEY: We were called to General Quarters at 1610, at 1612 we changed course to 110^ true. Speed was reduced to Standard, 140 RPM, and then at 1615 we changed course to 45^ True and dropped eleven (11) Mark & Depth Charges on Pattern Able.

At 1616 all engines at flank, 175 RPM. and then at 1617 we were ordered to cease dropping Depth Charges and one (1) minute later decreased speed to Standard. At 1620, the order was given to stand-by the Hedgehogs. Speed was decreased to two-thirds (2/3), 110 RPM., at 1622, we increased to Standard.

Then at 1623 we increased to full and then decreased to two-thirds (2/3) at the same time. We changed the course to 275^ True. At 1623 we changed course to 290^ . At 1624 we were ordered to Steer Gun Training Bearings which was 280^ True. At 1626, we fired twenty-four (24) Hedgehogs (7.2 projectiles). Then we were given left full rudder we increased to Standard. We then searched the area at various courses and speeds, which are part of the ship's log. At 1659 all engines stopped, we were lying to. The Navy blimps dropped a mile square pattern of sonar buoys in the vicinity of the first Depth Charge Contact between 260 and 275^ True.

At 1830 a concussion was felt throughout the entire ship, origin unknown. [Dad's insert: "Homing Torpedo detonated"] At 1845 all engines were ahead full preparing to drop Depth Charges at the request of the Navy Blimps. At 1848 all engines stopped while the Navy Blimps dropped the two (2) additional Sonar Buoys. Our Heading at the time being 300^ True.

COMDR. GARFIELD: Do you remember seeing any unusual amount of smoke in the vicinity of the buoys?

SIBLEY: Yes, one of the buoys on the port bow at about 3000 yards distance had an unusual amount of smoke.

COMDR. GARFIELD: What do you mean by an unusual amount of smoke? Could two of these smoke bombs have done the same thing?

SIBLEY: No sir, there was more smoke than two of them should have made.

COMDR. GARFIELD: Do you think the amount of smoke bombs the blimps dropped could have created that much smoke?

SIBLEY: I don't think I would be qualified to say. Ω

Fred Morin emailed in our continuing study of the K-14 case: "Unless something has changed, why aren't we more concerned with the infamous Bar Harbor Officers' Club menu? The survivors signed it that night and even bragged about being the first to get a "Boch" sub. Levine penned that and not only didn't deny writing it, he had a copy of the menu himself when we interviewed him. Apparently less than 24 hours after ending up in the water, they were talking about a U-boat. Then they get to the inquest in Boston and none recall a damn thing; Levine was making a cup of cocoa during the crash. I know that's what I'd be doing if we had just dropped 2 Depth Charges and were taking 50mm fire!"

Ed. notes, Most of us who've had any dealings with the justice system are familiar with "coached" testimony - if not outright threatened - witnesses seeming to read from a script prepared for them. Yet any conclusion could be reached by a board that has no problem with an intact blimp's stern suddenly falling off, and the car sinking so rapidly several men drowned, somehow working out to be "pilot error." However that board obviously had something to hide - since items 5 & 6 in their written opinion were deleted (see below).

OPINION

1. It is the opinion of the board that Lieutenants Carl W. Kluber, A-V(G), U. S. Naval Reserve; John V. Oudar, aviation machinist's mate second class, U. S. Navy, 224-81-75; John B. Fowles, aviation radioman second class, U. S. Navy, 258-35-87; Edward J. Drzewiacki, aviation metalsmith third class, U. S. Naval Reserve, 608-84-34; and Walter P. Ozesky, aviation electrician's mate third class, U. S. Naval Reserve, 653-22-93, lost their lives from drowning, and that their deaths occurred in the line of duty and were not due to their own misconduct.

2. That William H. Munro, aviation radioman third class, U. S. Naval Reserve, 607-95-29, is missing in the line of duty and not as the result of his own misconduct.

3. That the cause of the crash was personnel failure and not mechanical failure.

4. That the crash was not due to enemy action.

5.

6.

7. That although the invoice value of the K-14 was carried as one (1) dollar, the board is of the opinion that the loss was approximately the cost of the airship to the Government which is believed to be, in round numbers, three hundred thirty thousand dollars (\$330,000.00).

8. That the bolt fastening the forward escape door should be removed and replaced with a positive, quick-acting fastening on all similar airship cars.

We may never know what items 5 & 6 actually were, but defenders of the status quo ("They were just clearing the gun! Depth bombs wouldn't hurt the blimp when they detonated fifty feet away," etc.) will no doubt write in that it must have been something to do with secret MAD gear. 5 & 6 would not have been something the Roosevelt administration would have found embarrassing. Someone from ZP-11 out there care to speculate? Ω

COVER STORY/ LONG LINES

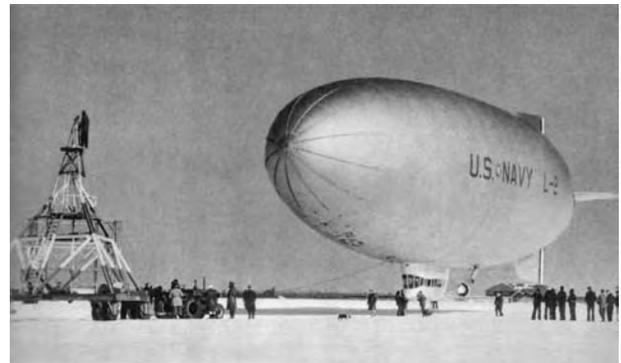


Instructor, Lakehurst

By Dr. Roy Wicker, as told to Editor

I entered the US Navy 2 JUN 41. My instructor's log for my "E" base training in NAS Atlanta shows us flying N3N-3s and NP-1s. My instructor was LTJG Max Leslie. Check Pilot was Lt. Dickey. I soloed an N3N in August of '41. (Leslie made LCDR in 1942 and led one of the SBD squadrons at Midway, when the Japanese carriers were sunk.) The skipper of NAS Atlanta was none other than CDR D. Ward Harrigan. He had been the CO of the F9C-2 Sparrowhawk HTA unit that saw service on the USS *Akron* and *Macon*.

When I arrived in Lakehurst we were housed in some CPO apartments; the *Hindenburg* had ended up about 200 yards away. About where the *Hindenburg* cinders were, there was a stick mast. The Navy had the K-1 moored there, sans engines. The LTA unit in Lakehurst had some old Army ships (TC-13 and TC-14) as well as some K-ships, including K-3, -4, -5; the older K-2 was a training ship. There was also parachute riggers school there. We took the riggers up in the K-2 to make their free-fall graduation jump. My training page for OCT 41 shows several flights in the G-1, L-1, -2 and -3; my instructor on the 24th was the former Goodyear pilot Furclow. While we were Aviation Cadets we did ground handling of blimps and free balloons, stood watches, etc. Another former Goodyear man, Stacey, gave me instruction in the L-2 on 2 DEC.



Ed. Caption: The Navy had purchased Goodyear's Ranger and christened it L-2.



Ed. Caption: Wicker's diploma bears the signature of hook-on legend D. Ward Harrigan.

I remember on December 7th we were double timed to the Armory, issued a 30-06, a bandoleer of cartridges and a shovel. We dug fox holes on the field. Trucks, etc. were parked on the HTA runways. At lunchtime they passed out cheese sandwiches. Only a few shots were fired – you know somebody had to see if the rifle worked.

As you might know the military had very little at the start of WWII. We were using the L-ships for patrol. (The G-1 and early L-ships were former Goodyear ships.) Many of the instructors were former Goodyear pilots; I had another, Vern Smith, on my first flight after the war started, on the 11th. Future Rear Admiral

and former Goodyear man Karl Lange was my instructor in the L-2 on 13 JAN 42. My log shows only four flights in the infamously cold winter of '41-42. The training ships had no provision for heating the car. We wore heavy flight suits; it was bitterly cold at times. It also wasn't unusual to have all the students sick at the same time. If the car was fouled up it would freeze, but that ship kept flying all day.



Ed. Caption: During the spring of 1942 the airships' designations were blotted out and the red-white-blue tail stripes were eliminated.

A former submariner, LCDR Andrews, was my instructor on March 2nd, in L-2. My first flight on a K-ship was with yet another Goodyear man, Lueders, taking the old original K-2, on March 7th. Usually the K-2 was used for navigation training. Frank Trotter, another Goodyear man who gave me instruction on the K-3, was killed shortly after my flight with him on the 11th, in the collision of the G-1 and L-2. My classmate Howey Fahey [past NAA Pres. John Fahey's cousin] was the only survivor.

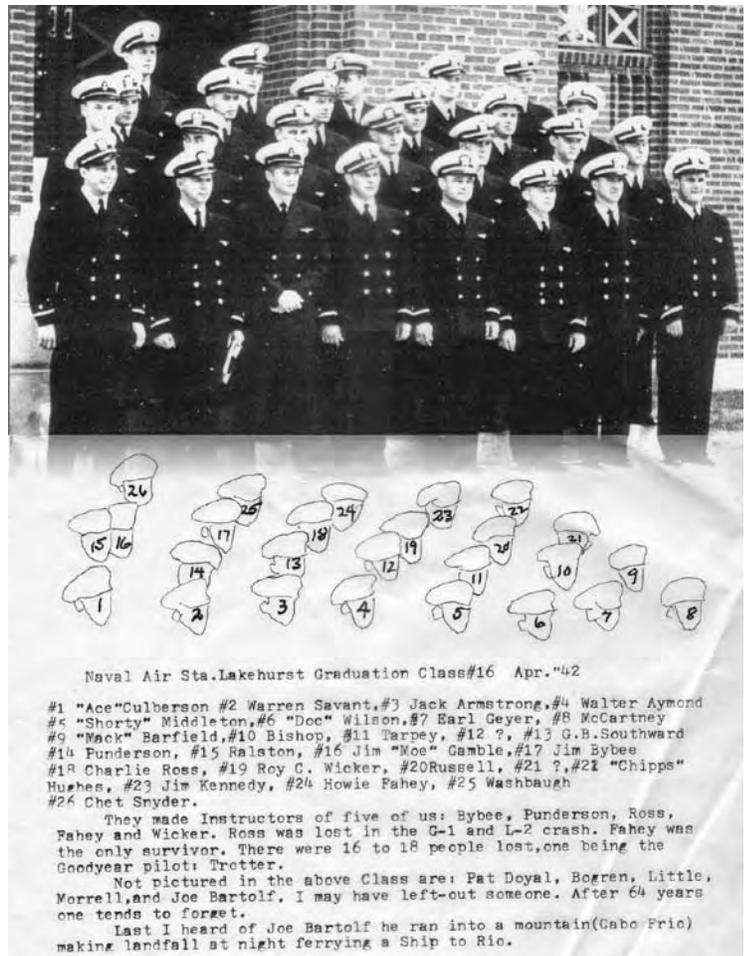
We were training pilots like mad. In fact, I did some instructing while still an AvCad. Future CO LCDR Rixey was my instructor aboard the K-5 on the 12th, the ship that was the first to test radar in the K's.

The Navy had commandeered all the Goodyear blimps as the words "Goodyear Lifeguard Tires" were painted out; I flew in the L-7, the former *Rainbow*, on the 21st. I soloed the free balloon on the 25th. I was made an Ensign and our LTA Class, #16, graduated in April of '42. They made five of us into instructors out of our

class. The HTA unit was busy doing experiments with a glide-bomb. It was "hush-hush" – they used a SBN (NAF issue of the SBA), also had some R5Ds (DC-5s) SBU's.

The Navy acquired the former Goodyear ship *Resolute*, which had been on patrol on the west coast sworn in as L-4, and I took it aloft on July 12th. Likewise the former *Enterprise* came to Lakehurst, christened the L-5, and we were using that one starting on the 17th. L-6, the former *Reliance*, rounded out the ex-Goodyear ships, with my taking it aloft on the 3rd of August '42.

On Memorial Day 1942 I was aboard the K-2 with Andrews flying the radio broadcasting folks for the "We The People" program. CAPT Rosendahl addressed the nation and I had a small, corny part in the broadcast.



During trips out to sea in early '42 between Cape May and New York one would see six to eight ships that had been sunk. [photo, right, from K-11] It was so shallow the masts would still be visible. Two days later there would be 10-12 ships in the same area. The beaches from New York to Miami were soaked with oil from sinkings. If one walked on the beach his feet would be caked with oil.

While I was instructing we would get the ships out of the hangar around 4 am and fly them all day, land every four hours and change crews – instructor, four students and mech. We'd gas-up without putting the ship on the mast. With shifting winds sometimes the ships would roll-over enough to splinter a prop. The L's used 145 hp Warners with wooden props. [see back cover photos, L-8] Usually the Chief Mech would send into the hangar for a new prop – bolt it on and go! (Nowadays if one has an engine stoppage due to ground strike, the engine must be completely overhauled.)

CHARACTER OF FLIGHTS

- A Training Regular Students
- B " Reserve "
- C Qualified Pilots Training
- D Reserve Flying
- E Familiarization & Practice
- F Gunnery
- G Bombing
- H Torpedo
- I Observation
- J Scouting
- K Tactical
- L Navigation
- M Transportation
- N Ferrying
- O Utility
- P Photo& Mapping
- Q Aerological
- R Test
- S Experimental
- T Administrative
- U Extended
- V Instrument
- W Emergency or relief work
- X Communication
- Y Night Flying
- Z Special

Flight logs were to include a code for the type of mission. This is their key.



Ed. Caption: Members of the History Committee conducting their own searches of the Nat'l Archives came upon this undated photo that has no corresponding entry in the ZP-12 history nor does the ship name cross to what U-boat set it ablaze. Can anyone help?

My log for SEP 42 shows a flight with classmate Punderson in the K-2, NASL CO Zimmerman in the L-4, and future Admiral "Tex" Settle coming up from Washington to fly on the L-7. Hydrogen balloon flights punctuated the regular instruction flights logged aboard the L's and the K-2. Former Goodyear man Vern Smith was the command pilot for the K-2 on a short flight on the first anniversary of Pearl Harbor. I gave 25 instruction flights in L-ships in the month of January 43 and another 21 in the short month of February. The log shows very few days off, with 25 flights in March before I was transferred to Weeksville on the 18th of March.

The ZP-14 Squadron CO was CDR "Art" Cockell, who'd signed my flight logs through SEP '42. He had been head of training at Lakehurst and was replaced there by Vern Smith of Goodyear. CDR Cockell was the best Naval Officer I ever knew! I understand he later commanded a Destroyer Division. I caught up with my classmate "Doc" Wilson for my first ZP-14 flight, in K-10, on March 27th. In contrast to the L-ship flight instruction with students for only a few hours at a time, the K-ship flights were ordinarily longer than 10 hours. My second ZP-14 flight was 16.2 hours in K-13. In April I flew the K-36, K-9, and K-18. Had a 19 hour flight in the K-13 in May amid a dozen others, including the K-28

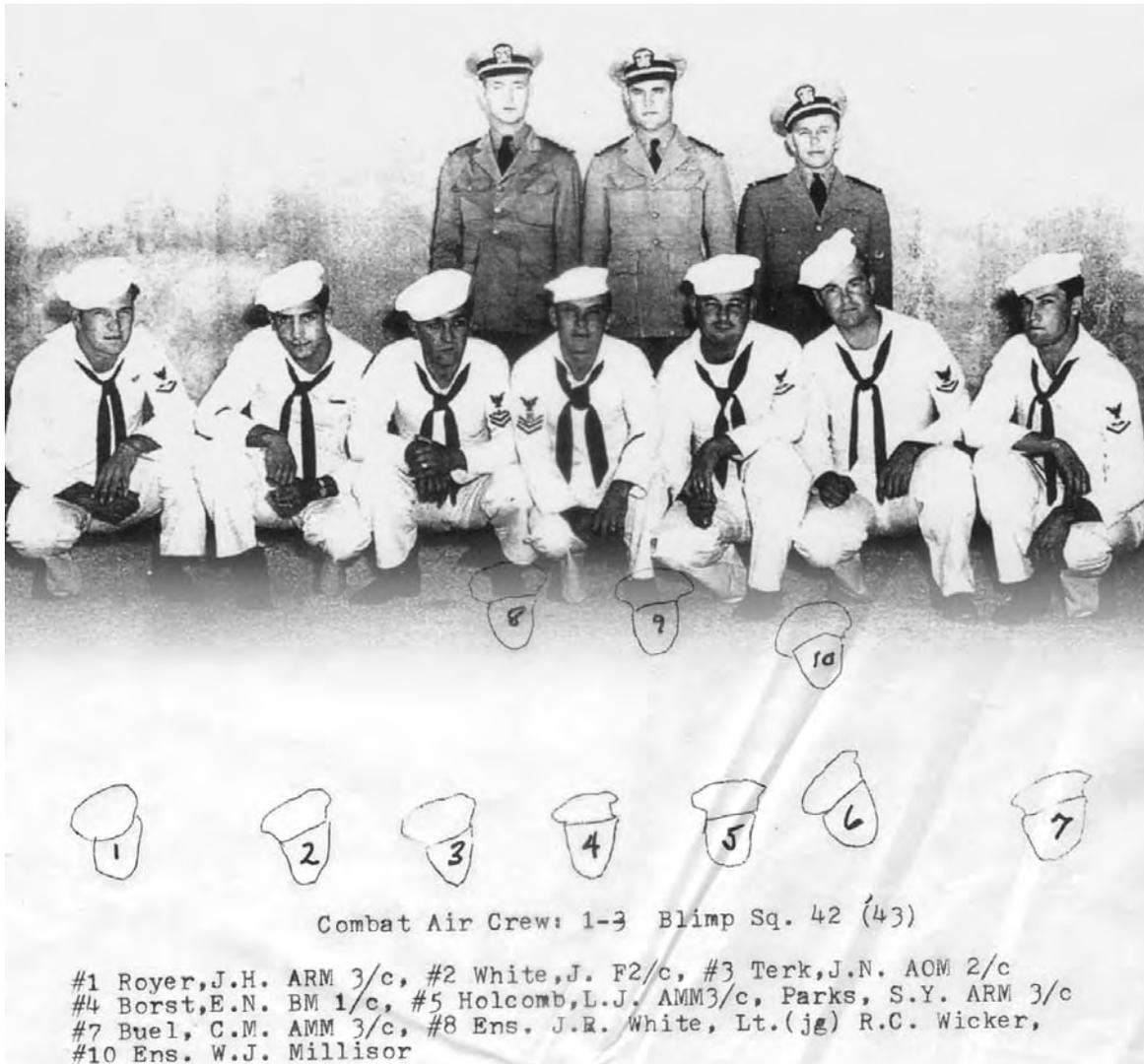
(which graced TNB 77 covers). In August and September I flew the K-28 almost exclusively.

After two flights in October, including the new K-82, I was sent down to Richmond to be part of the pool gearing up for deployment to South America. ZP-42 moved into Richmond on 12 OCT 43. Now attached to ZP-42 but still at Richmond I made a flight in the K-73. That ship was the first to depart for points south, beginning its ferry flight to Ipitanga, Brazil on 3 NOV 43. It arrived on the 12th and I made my first South American flight in it on the 13th. On 1 DEC I was designated K-ship command pilot. I had the usual experiences of a K-pilot, with K-73 being our only ship in the area through December. I noted a 16.5 hour overnight flight with **Bill Gamble** 22-23 DEC out of Bahia. We got the K-116 and started flying it in January 44. I started flying the K-110 on 29 MAR 44, it being "our" ship exclusively in April. I flew my first clamshell-

door ship, the K-125, on 17 MAY 44. My last station was at Santa Cruz (Rio). We shared the old *Graf Zeppelin* hangar with the Brazilian Air Force. I flew the K-49 a couple of times after being transferred to the Anti-Sub school in Key West.

At Key West we worked with two 1919 US subs and a couple of former French subs. We would exchange rides with the submarine boys. One of the 1919 subs sank coming up the channel – they didn't tell me that until after I had finished my underwater trip. I was there until I got orders back to HTA.

I'm sure if I could get with some of my old classmates we could think of many of the things that happened to us in the old days. I know of a few that are still around: **Bogren, Savant, Aymond, Gamble, Southward, Snider.** Ω



SUBMARINE SUNK BY BLIMP LOCATED AFTER 90 YEARS



Excerpted from article by authors
Paul McGee and Byron Watch **22/8/07**

H.M. Submarine D3 was commissioned on 30 AUG 1911. Of the class, eight were built. The design was a major leap forward, D class was the first to be driven by diesel engines and with twin screws, saddle tanks, radio transmitter and receiver and improved living conditions for the crew. Attached to the 8th Flotilla H.M.S Maidstone, Harwich, D 3's wartime role was to support the grand fleet and destroy German warships. Along with other D and E class submarines D3 fought in the battle of Heligond Bight on the 28th August 1914 and was mentioned in dispatches from Commodore Keyes on 17th October 1914.

At 14:20 on Tuesday the 12th March 1918 a French AT-0 airship commanded by Lieutenant Saint-Remy on coastal patrol to the N.W of Dieppe spotted an unidentified vessel to the N.E. As they headed towards the vessel it was recognized as a submarine running at speed to the west on the surface. As they neared, rockets began to appear, fired from the rear of the submarine and steadily getting closer to their airship. Lieutenant Remy took this as a direct attack on his airship and crew, with this his radio operator opened up with machine gun fire and the submarine began to dive. Lieutenant Remy positioned his aircraft for attack and dropped two

'F' bombs which landed 20 meters wide of the submarine and exploded; the sub had disappeared. The airship regained position and dropped four more "F" bombs just forward of where the submarine had submerged. Minutes later the conning tower was seen to break the surface. At this time Lieutenant Remy pulled away and attempted to radio in his attack on the submarine.

Through field glasses the crew of the airship could see four men in the water and no submarine. Lieutenant Remy immediately descended to within 20 meters of the surface and stopped his motors. He then thought he heard one man shout "you have got us" in English. Attempts were made to rescue the men but to no avail, live preservers were dropped into the water from the airship. Lieutenant Remy then went in search of ships to help in a rescue attempt, eventually finding the *Typhon* towing a schooner. Lieutenant Remy called out to her and she immediately cast off her tow and with the AT-0 directing her, headed off to the area of the submarine loss. At 7:25pm after a flight of 7 hours 48 minutes and a fruitless search for survivors Lieutenant Remy and his crew only just made it back to Le Harve after night fall.

A court of inquiry was held at Le Harve into the sinking of D3 on the 16th March 1918. No blame was attributed to Lieutenant Saint-Remy for her loss. Unfortunately, the grenade recognition

signals used by British submariners to British aircraft were not known to the French at the time, D3's commanding officer Lieutenant Maitland-Dougall would have been under the impression his submarine was under attack and therefore had no option to dive to escape. The loss of H.M Submarine D3 and 29 men became just another accident of war and were forgotten.

[Almost 90 years later] We had found the [contact] two years previously but due to typical diving related and external influences, this [2007] was the first opportunity we had to dive it. We left Brighton on M.V *Nauticat*, skippered by Steve Johnson. We arrived at the dive site 30 miles north of Fecamp in the Channel. One calm, clear and sunny Saturday afternoon we dropped off the back of *Nauticat* and drifted down the shot excited as to what shipwreck awaited us. The sea bed was a good 50mtrs+ below so when at 35mtrs a fully intact submarine came into view, it came as a bit of a surprise and not what we had been looking for. The visibility was a stunning 30mtrs+ and virtually the whole of the submarine could be seen, it was sitting on an even keel with a list to starboard. We knew immediately because of our position this could be an important find of a previously lost submarine. We landed between where the deck should have been and the port saddle tanks. Looking at the plating I could see no obvious signs of war damage. I arrived at the stern, a pair of three bladed propellers and debris strewn around the sea bed. Moving up, the very end of the sub consisted of a single torpedo tube missing its external cover. I stuck my arm across the hole to get a rough gauge of its diameter. With time ticking away I scooted forward on the port side up to the conning tower, I noted a bollard, pipes and a closed hatch. Moving passed the tower towards the bow there was no sign of a deck gun. At the remains of the forward hydroplanes a huge net completely covered the bow to the sea bed and an attached scallop dredger. The submarine looked remarkably intact. I could clearly see two periscopes, with the top of one retracted just a few inches below its tube.

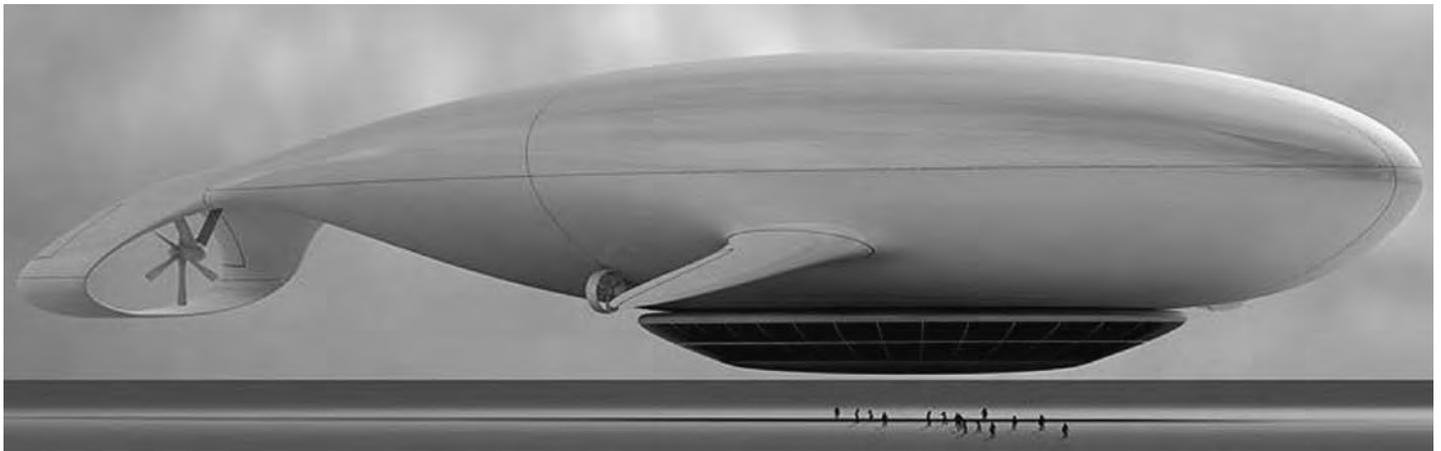
It would take another eight months, hours of research, on the internet, at libraries, visits and correspondence to maritime museums, numerous

dives being blown out and training in cold quarries over the winter to finally get another chance to dive the unknown sub with a plan to identify the wreck. Luck seemed to be on our side, it was a calm, clear and sunny day. Key features had been pointed out to Kevin and Teresa from plans and photos obtained by the club over the last eight months, with particular help from The Royal Navy Submarine Museum at Gosport. The most obvious feature of D3 was the bow. The torpedo tubes, being of a unique design of one on top of the other with a rotating end cap. We knew this was going to be difficult because of the netting, so to make the most of this dive we agreed that buddy teams would look for and at specific areas of the submarine. Divers headed to the stern and with a tape measure confirmed that the torpedo tube was 18 inches in diameter as shown by plans of D3. Also the rear closed hatch was 6 meters back from the conning tower. Recent damage was noted on the port side and port propeller. The rotating bow cap could clearly be seen and photographed. This rotating cap was a unique design to the D class and the most important identification feature. Cheering could clearly be heard from the RB divers around the entire wreck. The unknown submarine has been identified as H.M. D3, no longer lost on patrol! Back on board *Channel Diver* while conversations raged, the champagne was cracked to celebrate a successful dive on identifying D3, but we also paused for thought on the loss of all of the 29 crew members on the 12th March 1918.

Dive team members included: Byron Watch, Paul McGee, Anna Watch, Colin Fowler, Paul Harris, Neil Hallett, Chris Porter, John Maneely, Bob Lenham, Geoff Wade, guest, Mark Ellison. Videographers, Kevin Pickering and Teresa Tulus. Boat, *Channel Diver*, Skipper Steve Johnson. Ω

Ed. Note: Our thanks to DIRIGIBLE editor Giles Camplin for making the contacts so NOON BALLOON readers could hear this. Now if we could just get someone on this side of the Atlantic interested in locating the K-72's sub. As we see on page 12, the airship's co-ordinates when they dropped the 'Fido' were 36-56, 74-27. The torpedo's explosion was heard aboard K-72 and the CG cutter; did it miss? There is a U-boat wreck in that area, Navy divers stumbled on it looking for the USS Scorpion in 1968. What are we waiting for, until we have more time? More resources? Fewer members? Ω

TECHNICAL COMMITTEE



The initial article about this "concept ship" has gotten a lot of international repeats; more than thirty hits on GOOGLE. Responses mostly decried the idea of a flying luxury hotel for the super-rich or chortled about the PR-type's claim that they'll use Helium as fuel.

Apparently the designer has support from ONERA (*Office National d Etudes et de Recherche A rospatiale*). Most importantly, he has a reputation and credibility with important society movers and shakers. In the pre-regulatory world of the '20s and '30s, it'd be a shoo-in. Compared to the *Hindenburg*, except for the maximum speed, it's a truly modest set of requirements:

pounds per passenger per day (only 22 pounds per crewmember) for provisions and cooking water. Didn't identify empty weight dedicated to crew quarters. Didn't have to worry about environmental laws. Has anyone living ever flown in a large airship, let alone operated one? I assume that the MANNED CLOUD is a rigid (it'd be hard to push a soft-sack at those speeds). Hopefully, ONERA will start with the smallest possible rigid (or semi-rigid) perhaps a quarter-scale, as a training-demonstration proof of concept vehicle. They'll need it to educate the next generation of lawmakers, unions, regulators, insurers and operators.

While it's impossible to overestimate the willingness of the wealthy to self-indulge, it would be a lot easier to sell flying restaurants, or cross-

<u>'MANNED CLOUD'</u>	<u>HINDENBURG</u>	<u>CARGOLIFTER</u>	<u>PARAMETER</u>
(Twin envelopes)			
18,360,000	7,063,000	19,423,000	Volume (Cubic Feet)
688	804	853	Overall length (Feet)
269	135	213	Beam (Feet)
dnd	4 @1200 HP	8 Turbines	Primary power
106	84.4	dnd	Max speed (MPH)
72	109		Endurance (hours)
40	50	n/a	Passengers
15	50	dnd	Crew

Of course, Zeppelin had an enormous advantage, a large population of captains, crews, and artisans (selected by Eckener) thoroughly familiar with operating and maintaining giant rigid airships. Zeppelin just had to learn the hotel business, and a few international legalities. Eckener recorded - MY ZEPPELINS p215 - that *HINDENBURG*'s empty weight included roughly 13.2 tons of passenger quarters, and that load-outs included 24

channel ferries or sight-seeing craft, with minimal house-keeping and crew requirements. It's a much brighter prospect and a simpler technology insertion than the quantum leap to the WALRUS or a heavy lift airship. Hopefully, they won't have to build several and test them for years before they're allowed to place them in revenue service. **Ω**

- Al Robbins



**NAA Past President
Commander Louis William Prost
Enrolled in the Delaware
Aviation Hall of Fame**

The Delaware Aviation Hall of Fame (DAH.F.ORG) has named its only aeronaut awardee. The citation reads, "Louis William Prost of Wilmington piloted a Navy airship in World War II. Performing ocean surveillance, he and his crew kept Nazi submarines at bay from U.S. shores and Atlantic convoys.

Commander Prost, the first aeronaut to be inducted into the Delaware Aviation Hall of Fame, enlisted in the Navy in 1942. He took preflight training at the University of Georgia and practical training at Evansville University, Ind. After winning his airplane wings, he was selected for lighter-than-air training at Moffett Field in California and Lakehurst Naval Air Station, N.J. He flew anti-submarine patrols out of South Weymouth, Mass., to war's end. Though a small group, the 1,500 pilots and 3,000 men of America's fleet of about 125

Goodyear blimps escorted 89,000 Allied ships safely to Europe. They lost only one airship.

After the war, Prost instructed lighter-than-air pilots at Lakehurst, until discharge in 1947. He remained in the Naval Reserve until retirement in 1980. He was awarded the Air Medal for flying from Bermuda to the Azores—the longest wartime flight of an airship. He was co-pilot on a Navy [M] airship that broke the Russian record of 123 hours aloft; the U.S. ship went 170 hours.

Under contract with All American Engineering at Georgetown, Del., he developed aviation-related commercial products, and he set up and supervised lighter-than-air training programs abroad.

Commander Prost logged over 9,000 hours of airship time and 900 hours of fixed-wing time. He is past-president of the U.S. Naval Airship Association, headquartered in Pensacola, Fla. He and his wife Lillian, the parents of three sons and four daughters, have been residents of Stanton for more than 50 years." Ω



Ed. note: They did not even mention CDR Prost's experience taking the ex-L-19 to Germany, inflating it with hydrogen, and teaching a student pilot to fly it with the extra performance and flexibility enjoyed by early Navy LTA. (Pg 8) Sadly CDR Prost still bears scars today from terrible burns he suffered in the helium-filled Heli-Stat accident. Ω

NAA HYDROGEN DISCLAIMER

The Naval Airship Association in no way endorses the use of hydrogen as a lifting gas in airships. The Department of Defense, FAA, aviation regulators and insurance providers throughout the world will not consider any gas other than helium, safe for use in man rated airships.
NAA Publisher

MEDIA WATCH



The Unknown Aeronaut
By George C. Larson
(Photos Added) & Reprinted from
AIR & SPACE SMITHSONIAN

“LeMay and Navy Blimp Man Get Harmon Air Prize,” read the headline in the November 13, 1958 *New York Times*. The writer knew General Curtis LeMay was a household name. The Air Force vice chief of staff was a World War II hero. But few would recognize the name Jack Hunt, the Navy’s “blimp man.” In those days, the National Aeronautic Association awarded three Harmon Trophies each year, for outstanding aviator, aviatrix, and aeronaut (a balloon or dirigible pilot). Hunt, the unknown aeronaut, won it for setting a record that has never been surpassed. On March 4, 1957, he and a crew of 14 took off in a U.S. Navy blimp, the *Snow Bird*, from South Weymouth Naval Air Station, in Massachusetts, and flew across the Atlantic, then south along the coastal waters of Europe and Africa to the easterly trade winds, then back to a landing at NAS Key West, Florida, on the evening of March 15. The *Snow Bird* had been aloft for 264.2 hours without refueling and had flown 9,448 miles, breaking the existing marks for endurance and distance.

Like the German zeppelins under famed airship master Hugo Eckener, the *Snow Bird* flew the weather patterns and hunted for tailwinds. At

one point in its flight, headwinds on the southerly track that the blimp took to find the trade winds made the crew wonder whether there was enough fuel to complete the flight. By shutting down one engine, they saved enough fuel to ensure they’d reach Key West. The remarkably sophisticated *Snow Bird* was a ZPG-2 nonrigid airship, among the largest the Navy ever had built. ZPGs were designed for extended anti-submarine patrolling or as radar pickets stationed offshore to protect the U.S. eastern seaboard. A million cubic feet of helium buoyed each one, and a complex system of clutches allowed either engine to drive both propellers. ZPGs could refuel from fleet oilers (on its record trip, the *Snow Bird* didn’t) and dip down to scoop up seawater as ballast to replace the weight of burned-off fuel (which it did). The record flight was intended to show off the ZPGs’ capabilities. But the big airships were doomed.



In 1962, just five years after the historic flight, the Navy shut down its lighter-than-air operations forever. Jack Hunt took the Harmon Trophy presented to him by President Dwight Eisenhower and went to Daytona Beach, Florida, to become the founding president of Embry-Riddle Aeronautical University, where he will always be a household name. Since then, the Harmon Trophy has had a tumultuous history, and many years passed with no award presented. Today, the aviator and aviatrix trophies reside in the National Air and Space Museum. The original of the aeronaut trophy was lost in Germany but later found and returned to the Smithsonian. And since the late 1990s, the NAA [*Nat’l Aeronautic Ass’n*] has presented the sole remaining active Harmon award to an aeronaut.” Ω

“Blimp Goes To War... Again” narrator **Joe Lundy** brought by the June 2008 *Naval History*. The issue is devoted to the Battle of the Atlantic with but one mention of blimps. It errs: “Sonar operators on both blimps...” and no mention those airships dropped contact bombs. Sad. Ω

SHORT LINES



MAR 2008 issue of AEROSPACE TESTING INTERNATIONAL features a four page photo-rich article about the new Blackwater remotely piloted airship vehicle (RPAV, above), the Polar 400. The 140,000 cu ft airship is targeted to work 48-hour missions at 6-8,000 ft altitudes with a 2,600 lb. payload. It features a TCOM envelope and is being worked at Weeksville. The design features a new and unique spherical ballonnet that should prove easier to replace than conventional airbags.



A typical mission profile would carry 400 pounds of mission equipment and 2,200 pounds of petroleum (diesel) fuel, but more endurance can be accommodated. The car is described as "metal with composite skin" and is "attached directly to the helium envelope." During the flight test the airship will carry a pilot and flight engineer, but once certificated the crew will remain on the ground.



A single Thielert diesel engine, certified for general aviation, powers a hydraulic pump. Lightweight hydraulic motors are direct-coupled to vectoring propellers at the center equator and a twin unit on the stern. Blackwater's Alan Ram was quoted, "The pilot has power in all three axes all the time. No one has ever done that with a blimp before." The company expects to ground handle the ship with a crew of three people, greatly reducing the operating cost over other systems. Ω

From the Internet: "Floating a New Idea For Going Wireless," By Amol Sharma 20 FEB 08 Chandler, Ariz. -- Jerry Knoblach wants to bring wireless service to millions of rural Americans. His plan: Beam it down from balloons hovering at the edge of space. His company, Space Data Corp., already launches 10 balloons a day across the Southern U.S., providing specialized telecom services to truckers and oil companies. His balloons soar 20 miles into the stratosphere, each carrying a shoebox-size payload of electronics that acts like a mini cell-phone "tower" covering thousands of square miles below. Expanding rural telecom services is a priority for regulators. About 36% of rural Americans don't have Internet connections. The problem is that it's expensive to string cable or build cell-phone towers in areas with so few customers. Space Data says a single balloon can serve an area otherwise requiring 40 cell towers. Most of Space Data's balloons are filled with hydrogen, because it is cheaper than the helium used in toy balloons and modern blimps. Google believes balloons like these could radically change the economics of offering cell-phone and Internet services in out-of-the-way areas, according to people familiar with its thinking. The company is among the registered bidders for a big chunk of radio spectrum at a government auction currently under way in Washington. Ω

Our own **Paul Adams** reports: **Airship Surveillance Inc.** is pleased to announce the success of the launching of the *R&D 1* Airship. On March 11th the Company, with a crew of five, prepared the R&D Airship, performed detailed checks on the guidance system and released the airship into the air at approximately 6:00 AM. The airship performed better than planned. The airship was kept on a tether to stay within regulations regarding the testing of this type of unmanned vehicle. All maneuvers achieved using the company's proprietary thrust vectoring system and without the use of conventional controls. The Airship Surveillance Company is developing a series of advanced unmanned airships designed to fulfill a wide range of roles ranging from surveillance to environmental monitoring. The Company's airships are built to be robust, yet simple to operate with the twin goals of providing reliable airborne platforms at an affordable cost.

The [first] flight was successful and the Company confirms it is in discussions with several end-users that contract with military, Homeland Security and commercial users. Photos and video of the test are available on airshipsurveillance.com. Ω

Aerospace Engineering and Manufacturing reports Airbus has successfully flight-tested a fuel cell system in an A320 airliner. Working with Michelin and the DLR, Airbus flew the system at high g-loads as it generated 20 KW of electrical power for the backup hydraulic system. Airbus believes the system will significantly reduce the noise levels inside the airplane and around airports, and the only emissions during the test were about 10 liters of pure water. Ω

Aviation Week 28 Apr 08 verified the above report and says DLR's Electro-Chemical Energy Technology Institute hopes to have fuel cells perform four airplane functions with greater efficiency and less emissions. One of these is water generation, the fuel cell's exhaust being used to service onboard needs. Another is fuel-inerting systems, to prevent dangerous buildup of petroleum fuel vapors capable of destroying airliners, as in the TWA 800 accident.

“Moving along in parallel is an effort between DLR, Lange Aviation and the Germany ministry for economy and technology to build and fly a fuel cell [airplane] testbed... Long-term, the German research agency also sees a potential of combining fuel cells of this type with other energy sources, such as solar cells, to help power high-altitude, long-endurance vehicles.” Lange Aviation will build and operate the fuel cell testbed airplane, a modified Antares 20E powered glider. First flight may happen in time for our Winter issue of TNB. Ω

News from Friedrichshafen

Composed and submitted by Sig Geist

Fourth Zeppelin NT goes to USA

On May 07, 2008 **Airship Ventures, Inc.** in a press release announced it had closed its Series A Preferred Stock financing on Monday with investments from six individuals. Said Brian Hall, President of Airship Ventures "Achieving this significant milestone allows us complete our acquisition of the Zeppelin NT and to finalize preparations for commencing airship operations in the fall."

Then on May 09, 2008 **ZLT Zeppelin Luftschifftechnik** GmbH & Co in its press release said the fourth Zeppelin NT is going to the USA. ZLT and Airship Ventures signed the contract for the sale of a Zeppelin NT 07. The basis was the successful raising of Airship Ventures own capital in San Francisco. According to plan, the airship is supposed to be shipped to the US in September 2008.

Both announcements mention the amount of capital raised by six investors as eight million dollars. No other financial details were disclosed. The airship and part of her crew will be transported to the US aboard a dock ship, probably from Amsterdam. Once in the US, Airship Ventures plans to provide news about the airship flight route across the country. Airship FAA certification is on hand. Before then, helium inflation and 1st flight are to be accomplished before the end of May. Prior to its overseas departure, the airship will be operated in Europe. Exactly where cannot yet be announced as negotiations with partners and customers in the Benelux countries and Great Britain are in their final phase. At the same time, Airship Ventures is building up its operation in the San Francisco Bay area and at its recently announced move to historic Hangar 2 at Moffett Field. [see next page] Privately owned Airship Ventures was formed to bring Zeppelin NT airships to the USA for "flightseeing" tours, media and science mission operations. They have been hiring great people, among them ZLT's former chief pilot Scott Danneker, now in that position with Airship Ventures. Following a 70-year hiatus, a Zeppelin airship is returning to the US in September. Having it soar leisurely above the Golden Gate Bridge is a dream come true for the modern-day Zep builders from Friedrichshafen. Ω



SHORE ESTABLISHMENTS: MOFFETT

Airship Ventures, Inc., a corporation formed to bring Zeppelin NT airship operations to the USA, will be establishing its headquarters in temporary office accommodation at the Moffett research park pending an agreement with NASA that will see the company renovate and occupy part of historic building 20 on Shenandoah Plaza, the former Bachelor Officers Quarters. **Brian Hall**, President of Airship Ventures, commented, "One can't help but be inspired by the historic setting -- the past home to the *Macon* and fleets of Navy blimps -- and how appropriate for it to become the future home to modern high-tech airships on the eve of its 75th birthday." Airship Ventures plans to commence operations with a Zeppelin NT in the San Francisco area in the fall. This move marks their ramp up towards full time operations and the hiring of many key posts. Alexandra Hall, CEO of Airship Ventures, said, "The NASA Research Park is home to a very innovative group of tenants who all have synergies with NASA Ames. I'm particularly excited about the range of science and industry partnerships that our being on site here could enable." Airship Ventures has been seeking local endorsement of their plans to use Hangar 2 at Moffett Federal Airfield, and in November 2007, they obtained a resolution of support from Mountain View City Council, as well as letters of support from Senator Elaine Alquist and Assemblywoman Sally Lieber. NASA has yet to formally announce the outcome of its review on Airship Ventures' use of the historic wooden airship hangar, Hangar 2, and airfield. Ω

—**Ben DeBolt, MFHS, NAA**

PENSACOLA

Following a five-year plus effort by the Restoration Division, interrupted by two major hurricanes, the L-8 "Ghost Ship" has been completely restored to its WW II Navy configuration. [See color back cover photos] The ship now enhances and pretty much completes the major exhibits in the Lighter than Air section of the National Naval Aviation Museum. [Formerly NMNA] This ship, along with the completely restored K-47 to it's mid 1950's configuration, as well as the intact, originally configured cockpit of the ZPG-2 *Snow Goose*, plus numerous other LTA presentations speak proudly of the rich history of Naval Lighter than Air. Of course the aggregate restoration division supported the L-8's historically accurate rejuvenation.

However, primary responsibility for this successful accomplishment fell to three highly skilled craftsmen/researchers, [Back Cover] **Harry Brandt** and **Ernie Brousseau** for the interior-exterior of the car and **Dan Owczarczak** for the engines and engine accessories. [Wearing their NAA hats, we see!]

A quick review of the history of this particular airship may be in order. In WW II she was assigned to patrol the waters off the California coast. On 16 August 1942 she was on patrol near the Farallone Islands having taken off at 0603 from NAS Moffett Field. At 1115 the ship briefly touched down near Ft. Funston, CA and then finally crashed on Bellvue Avenue in Daly City. While the car was basically intact, the crew was not aboard and no trace of them was ever found. Hence the moniker, 'Ghost Ship.' Goodyear obtained the car for their airship advertising fleet and converted her to the modernized America. After Goodyear withdrew her from their service, thanks to the efforts of **Joe Hajcak**, our NAA representative to the NNAM, the car was donated to the NNMA to be turned back into the L-8.

A word about who pays/paid for this? Obviously the Navy has a rather large part in this. But, Navy funds are extremely limited and fenced. Donations from reunion associations such as ours, private citizens, corporations, etc. all have contributed to the Restoration of specific aircraft, i.e., PBY, SBD, L-8, etc. However, what is rarely brought to light is the roll the Naval Aviation Museum Foundation plays. It is common knowledge that they build the buildings and then turn them over to the Navy. What is less known is that they pay for a great many full time contract employees that are required over and above that which Navy funding can afford. In addition they support the restoration effort as well as the extensive volunteer program. We don't want to forget advertising to attract visitors. Recently, their Board of Directors has unanimously approved building additional Museum space of approximately 80,000 square feet to provide protection for the outside flight line aircraft while increasing the exhibit space. With the above in mind, I would hope and encourage all of our NAA members who are not already NAMF members to join and back their extensive and necessary support of OUR museum. You can print out a membership application from their web site: <http://www.navalaviationmuseum.org> . If you don't have that capability, why not give me a call at 850 - 932-5613 and I'll send you an application.

- **Mort Eckhouse**

LAKEHURST



I am nothing short of *moved* and *flabbergasted* by the package that arrived from Mrs. Georgia Mills Head.....daughter of Commodore George "Shorty" Mills, who flew on the USS *LOS ANGELES*, USS *AKRON*, survived the crash of the USS *MACON* and went on to become COMMANDER, FLEET AIRSHIPS ATLANTIC during World War II. In a beautiful package of pure "Treasure" Georgia has sent me some of her Father's most precious mementoes from his service in rigid airships: 1) The (tightly folded) lifejacket used by Lieutenant Commander George Henry Mills to escape the sinking *MACON* (signed by his shipmates in INK!!!) 2) Pieces of fabric from the *MACON* and the *LOS ANGELES*. 3) Girder section pieces from the *LOS ANGELES* (easily identifiable from pieces we already have because they used Valspar Marine Varnish to guard against corrosion following a 1925-1926 overhaul.) 4) Pictures of Commodore "Shorty" Mills himself... a well-loved officer (Gordon Vaeth insists to this day that "Shorty" treated him like a *son*) and examples of his marvelous 35-year-Navy career. It is a beautiful and treasured addition to the collection of the Navy Lakehurst Historical Society in Historic Hangar #1 and one that will truly "tug at the heart" of every devotee of Lighter Than Air in the United States Navy.

Saturday April 5th the Navy Lakehurst Historical Society hosted the USS *AKRON* / J3 75th Anniversary Commemoration with 120 guests in historic Hangar #1. Among the guests (*opposite photo*) we were honored to meet were Marie Wiley Ross (right) and her daughter, Katie Ross Bump. Marie's father, Lieutenant Commander Herbert V. Wiley, Executive Officer, was one of only three survivors from 76 men aboard the *AKRON* on her last flight. Marie brought along a scrapbook of photos and clippings from her father's career, which, in addition to service on the *AKRON*, also included command of the USS *LOS ANGELES* (ZR-3) 1929-1930 and the USS *MACON* (ZRS-5) in 1934-1935 as well as command of battleship USS *WEST VIRGINIA* (BB-48) in the Pacific during World War II. It was Marie's first visit back to Lakehurst in 75 years; her Mother had died in childbirth in 1930, her two older

brothers had been sent off to military school and she spent the first few years of her life with the family of *SHENANDOAH* survivor Roland and Mabel "Nan" Mayer. Her family was reunited in California when Wiley took command of the *MACON* (he later remarried.) After surviving the crashes of both the *AKRON* and *MACON*, Wiley had apparently "had enough" of LTA duty and opted to spend the rest of his career at sea. ("Considering what my father lived through, it's something of a miracle that he managed to die in a bed!" Marie observed.) A crowd of approximately 120 turned out for the USS *AKRON*/J3 Commemoration, which included Navy color guard, reading of the names of the victims/survivors and tolling of a brass bell for each name. The occasion was marked by an address from Captain Phillip Beachy, USN, Commanding Officer of NAES Lakehurst, a proclamation by the Ocean County Board of Chosen Freeholders marking USS *AKRON* DAY and the playing of The Navy Hymn ("Eternal Father Strong To Save") as well as "Taps." Children, grandchildren and relatives of several *AKRON* and J3 crew members came out, Some had vague childhood recollections of their loved ones, others had only faded snapshots of a father/grandfather they never knew. In addition to Commander Wiley's daughter, granddaughter and great granddaughter (coming from California and Montana) we had the children/grandchildren of *AKRON* victims LT George Calnan, LTJG Cyrus Clendenning, BM2c Ralph Stine, ACMM Lucius Rutan, CTM Elmer Fink, CS2c Harold Lamkin, AMM2c R. Fred Cooper, CAerog Leon Liles and the grandson of ACMM Pasquale Bettio, killed on



the J3. Also visiting were the younger sisters of the late John Lust, who at 94 was the last living *AKRON* crewmen when he died in Butler, NJ in December 2006. In accordance with John's final wishes his ashes were scattered at sea 27 miles East of Beach Haven so that he could join his *AKRON* shipmates in eternity. It was a simple and fitting tribute to the service and sacrifice of the Officers and enlisted "Sky Sailors" of three-quarters-of-a-century ago, truly the "Best and the Brightest" of their era and the elite of Naval Aviation as they sailed their magnificent dirigibles through the skies so long ago. Ω

- Rick Zitarosa, NLHS, NAA

HISTORY COMMITTEE

Soviet Blimps in WWII

By Herman Van Dyk



Airship Pobeda (Victory) supplies hydrogen to a barrage balloon; note fabric hose.

During the turn of the 20th century and the beginning of WW1 (1914), Imperial Russia designed and built several different airships and also acquired about a dozen from France, Germany and England. Homebuilt dirigibles included: Uchebniy; Golub; Yastreb; Kobchik; Sokol and Gigant. The imported ones were made by: Parseval (2); Clement-Bayart (2); Lebaudy; Zodiac (2); Astra and AW Coastal (4).

During the early years of WW1, a few attempts were made to bomb German military targets, but without any success. After the war, the Soviet revolution, and the following internal hostilities, interest in airships remained very high. Dirigibles at that time were still seen as the only practical method of communication over the vast distances of this great country, stretching from the Baltic Sea in the West to the Pacific Ocean in the East. However, development of airships in Russia had been seriously interrupted. Until 1926 only 3 small airships had been designed and constructed. An ambitious 5-year program, initiated in 1928, led to the development of several experimental blimps with volumes ranging from 7,000 to 23,000 cu. ft. Greatly impressed by the achievements of the *Graf Zeppelin* and the wish to accelerate the "state of the art" in the country, the Upper Soviet leadership decided to invite Umberto Nobile to settle in the country and take charge of all airship programs. Nobile, who had fallen out of grace in Italy because of the accident of the *Italia* in the Arctic, accepted and moved to Moscow in May 1932. Nobile was put in overall charge, but a few design groups remained independent. All airships were designed for the transportation of passengers; mail or cargo,

and a few featured individual cabins and even a smoking room and electric kitchen. During the mid 1930's, the Soviets suffered a series of airship accidents but didn't get discouraged. On Aug.10, 1934, two days after completion, the V-7 burned in it's hangar; the V-3 and the V-4, also moored in the shed, also went up in flames. A replacement for the V-7, the V-7bis, ran out of fuel on its second test flight. The pilot attempted an emergency landing, but the airship was blown against high-tension wires and burst into flames, killing a crew member. On Feb.6, 1938, the V-6 flew against a mountain, killing 13 crew members.



The performance of the V-8 (*above*) designed by Nobile, was below expectations and the ship was taken out of service. It's sistership, the V-9 was never completed. The V-10, flying too low, became entangled in high-tension wires. The pilot, trying to free his ship, released ballast, but the V-10 ascended too fast for the valves to release hydrogen; the envelope ripped and the airship crashed, killing the entire crew of six.



The СССР V-1 is made ready for its 1st flight.

Several airships, designed in the 30's, also played an important role in the 2nd World War by assisting to keep barrage balloons aloft. The most successful one, built at the Airship Works in Leningrad was the CCCP V-1. Making its first flight in April 1932. It had a volume of 106,000 cu ft and could lift a payload of 2500 lbs. The *Hindenburg* disaster in 1937 practically put an end to LTA activities in most countries, except the Soviet Union. In 1938, the V-1 was taken out of service for a major overhaul. Improved engines and a new hull were installed in time for the blimp to participate in the May-Day festivities in Moscow in 1939. It was now registered CCCP V-1 bis. Less than a year later, the airship was taken out of service, dismantled and stored, and then resurrected in April 1942 with the registration V-12 and named *Patriot*.



After WW1, many nations had done away with their balloon forces; exceptions included Germany, France and Russia. Russia had remained active developing improved versions, such as the KW-KN and KTW-KTN, with volumes of respectively 6000 and 7000 cu ft. They were designed by K. Godunow who had become well known in 1935 by setting the world record at 48,000 ft in his stratospheric balloon "CCCP." Another designer was W. Archanglski who was responsible for the models K6W and the BAZ-136. This last one had a volume of 17,300

cu ft. It was equipped with an explosive charge or anti-aircraft mine and could reach an altitude of 13,500 ft. It went into series production in 1942.

At the time of the German invasion of the Soviet Union on June 22, 1941, barrage balloon defenses were available for most of the large cities of the country, such as Moscow, Leningrad, Kiev, Odessa, Batum, Minsk and Stalingrad. Leningrad had 216 balloons available; Moscow had 273, later increased to 445.



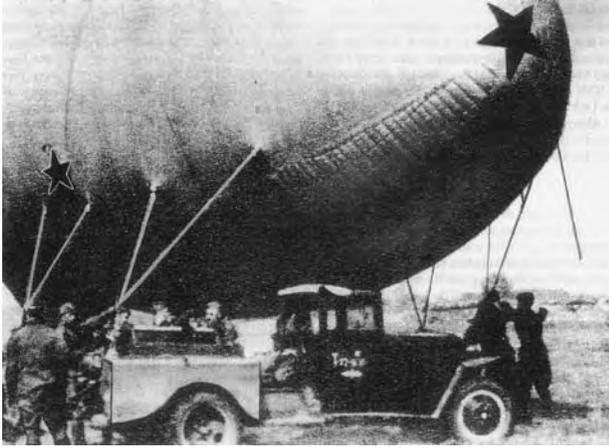
Note the elastic panel and the air intake for the fins on this barrage balloon being readied for launch.

Not only were they being used as a defense of large cities against enemy bombers, a large number were available for the training of paratroopers and to be used as observation platforms for long range artillery. Towards the end of the war, during the artillery bombardment of Berlin in May 1945, observation balloons were still active, 27 years after WWI! Balloon barrages around the big cities and important industrial centers had forced the Luftwaffe to attack from greater altitudes and had destroyed over 120 enemy aircraft in the process. Paratroops in training made over 500,000 practice jumps from tethered balloons during the four years of war. The total number of aerostats produced during that time exceeded 10,000 balloons. At the start of "Operation Barbarossa", the German invasion of the USSR, the crews of all balloon units consisted of men, but to make more men available

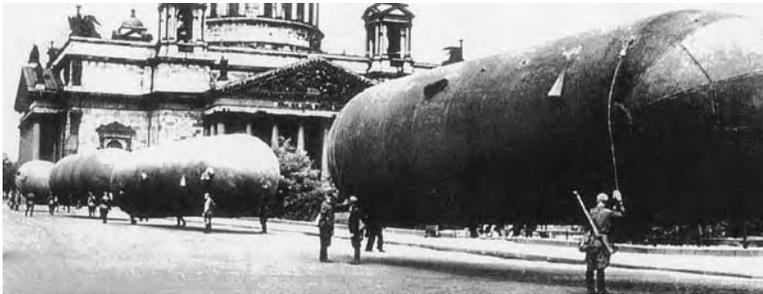


for front duties, they were gradually replaced by women, including the officers (*above*). From June 1941 until May 1945, observation balloons were in action on 19,980 occasions with their observers reporting the location of enemy artillery; tank formations and/or troop concentration, as well as directing fire from their own long range artillery. A total of 4617 German artillery batteries and 155 tank battalions had been discovered. A total of 1500 winches were produced. Most units were also

equipped with hydrogen generators. The continuously changing frontlines required frequent relocation of many balloon units, especially the observer groups. It was always difficult to relocate the heavy ground equipment and the raw materials for the hydrogen generator. All units were equipped with power winches, mounted on trucks or trailers

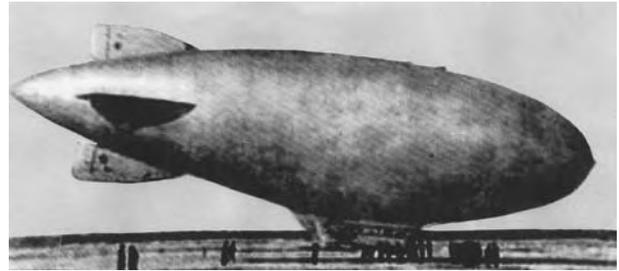


(here, with a Ford-like truck). From September to December, during the rainy season, those unpaved roads in Russia turned into quagmires of mud, practically impassable by truck or horse team. During the long and cold winter, the roads are just as bad because of the heavy snow and ice. If a balloon unit was located close to a city or town with functioning gas works, it was often possible to fill large fabric cylindrical gas containers with hydrogen and walk them to the balloon base where the gas could be transferred. (Below)



Although Russia is rich in Helium, the sources were not yet developed at that time. Hydrogen and coalgas were the only options. In cases when local hydrogen was not available or could not be generated, and it was very important to have an observer aloft, the Russians came up with a very novel way of supplying the required hydrogen - by using one of their few airships. The envelope of an airship would be filled with gas and ballast to capacity. The airship would then fly to its target and be moored next to the balloon needing hydrogen. The envelope would be connected to the balloon by a

fabric tube and the gas transferred. After that, the airship would release the extra ballast and return to its base to prepare for a next mission.



Airship CCCP-V-12 Patriot after landing at its base near Moscow, 1942.

Patriot successfully served during the remainder of the war, making 556 flights in 1943, 414 in 1944 and another 216 flights in 1945, all without any accidents. The new airship *Pobeda* (Victory) was specifically designed to transport cargo or hydrogen. It was designed and built in a period of 6 months, completed in 1944 and it immediately joined the *Patriot* flying urgently needed hydrogen and other supplies to the many balloon units in the field. During 1945, the *Pobeda* transported 596,700 cu ft of hydrogen from the electrolytic gasworks in Moscow to different balloon units, up to a distance of 300 miles from Moscow. Depending on the weather conditions, the *Pobeda* was able to transport approximately 32,000 cu ft of hydrogen on a single flight.

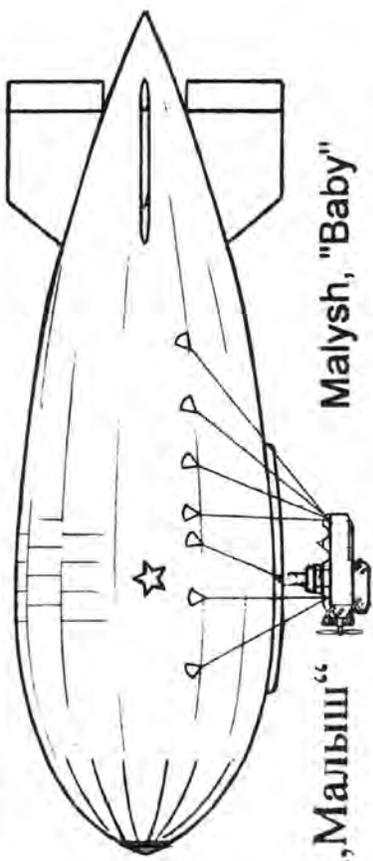
To solve the mooring problem without a mast, the Russians had developed a very interesting method. Some type of a noose would be draped over the forward quarter of the envelope and with both ends of the noose attached to 2 stakes in the ground, Very much like a dog tied to a tree with its leash. (Below)



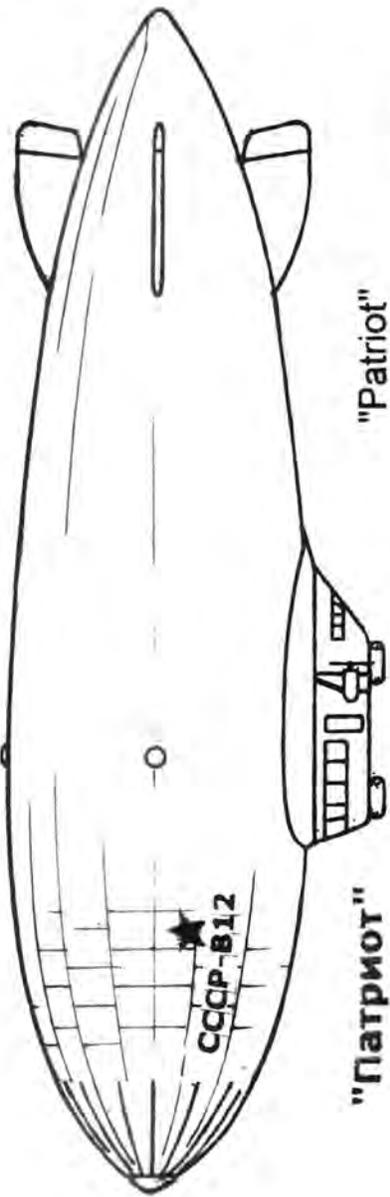
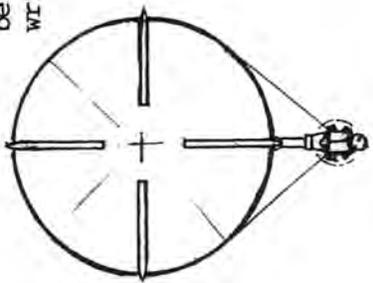
Three months after the capitulation of Germany, the *Pobeda* was flown to Sevastopol, where it was utilized to locate sunken ships and enemy mines in the Black Sea, under direction of the Soviet Navy. By the end of October, the airship had conducted 15 sorties and covered a distance of 1800 miles. (Continued on page 30)

Not drawn to the same scale.

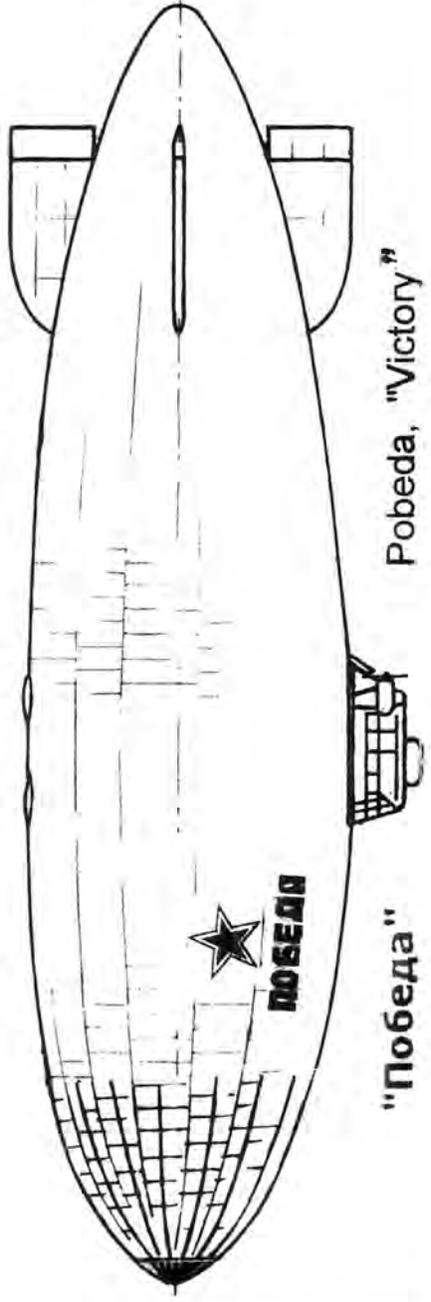
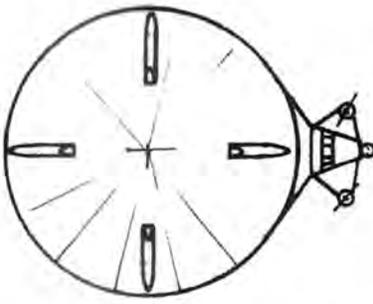
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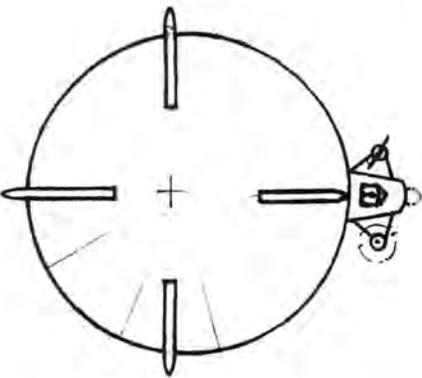
„Малыш“ Malysh, "Baby"



"Патриот" Patriot



"Победа" Pobeda, "Victory"



The smallest airship type used during WW2 was the *Mysha* (Baby) class. The technology applied to create this airship, seems to have been on the same level that was applied by the British to build the SS-class blimps in 1914-15. The car, including the engine, consisted of the front half of the fuselage of the well known PO-2, designed by Polikarpov in 1928. (It was a multipurpose bi-plane used in many creative roles, including as a low-level bomber over the German trenches at the frontlines. 13,000 of the PO-2's were in service in 1941; production continued until 1950 making over 30,000 airplanes, some even serving in Korea.)



The landing gear was removed (above) and replaced by a large air cushion which protected the propeller. Above the car, between the pilot and the engine was an air-blower, a fabric tube connected to the ballonets. The envelope was equipped with 4 solid fins, rudder and elevators. The *Mysha* fulfilled a multitude of roles; probably the most important one was to maintain communications with the tens of thousands of partisans engaged in guerilla warfare far behind enemy lines. How many *Mysha* blimps were produced is not known.

After the end of hostilities in Europe, the *Patriot* was used to inspect the endless woods in the far Northern parts of the country. In 1947, while being walked into its shed, a gust of wind forced it against the electrical wiring of a door and the *Patriot* burst into flames. No one was injured. Next, the *Pobeda* was also turned to more peaceful duties until it crashed on January 29, 1947 near Jurjew-Polski, killing its crew of three men. It had flown too low and became entangled in high-tension wires.

Soviet LTA activities came to a halt in the early 50's and it was not until 1968 that the first post-war blimp was built. In 1982 a small experimental blimp, Ural 3, was tested. Since the break-up of the Soviet Union, a few private companies were formed, such as the Augur Aeronautical Company and RosAero Systems. They built the PD-300 Patrol Airship. Ω



The Florida Aviation Historical Society's newsletter HAPPY LANDINGS, edited by Dr. Roy Brown, recently ran this rather astonishing map (above). As you see in the original caption, its reproduction was somewhat convoluted. Small wonder no similar maps for the rest of the United States have ever been published, as far as we know.

Younger members can't help but be curious as to how there could have been so little co-operation between the Army Air Forces and the Naval Air Force that airshipmen were told not to fly into Army-designated areas even when looking for enemy submarines. One would assume some "purple-suited" intra-service oversight command would have used the airships for long-endurance patrol and planes for strike. Ω

From the internet: Years before the Wright brothers demonstrated their aero-plane publicly, airshipmen had been thrilling fairgoers. Fatalities in these early hydrogen and city-gas-filled "Rubber Cows?" One, as far as we've found. The number of fatalities in aero-plane accidents BEFORE World War One? More than one thousand people! Ω

Black Blimp



Lloyd P. "Doc" Savage, 90, (*above*) passed on 29 MAR 08. Savage served in both the Atlantic and Pacific theatres in WWII. His passion for scholarship found expression in a career as an English teacher for thirty years, retiring in 1994. He is survived by his wife, Nancy. **Ω**

William Wishbow passed 28 DEC 07 at Cape May NJ following a 10 year battle with Alzheimer's disease. Wishbow volunteered for the USN flight program on 19 JAN 43 and attended preflight school at Athens, Ga. Next to Lakehurst for LTA Pilot training, upon graduation Ensign Wishbow was assigned as a qualified pilot to ZP-15 at Glynco, Georgia. He qualified as Command Pilot and was promoted to LTJG. His Combat Air Crew #705 won the squadron proficiency competition. In the spring of 1945 they were assigned to help the Army in the V-1 rocket testing program. The tests were to evaluate the feasibility of using the German V1 bombs for the assault planned for Japan. Upon leaving the Navy Wishbow and his brother established a successful auto parts business in Mountain Side, NJ. **Ω**

Philip Epstein, 86, passed on March 22, 2008. He is survived by his wife, Ginger. **Ω**

Ivor B. 'Joe' Morrison, 89, of Evansville, IN, passed on March 6, 2008. He is survived by his wife, Helena. **Ω**

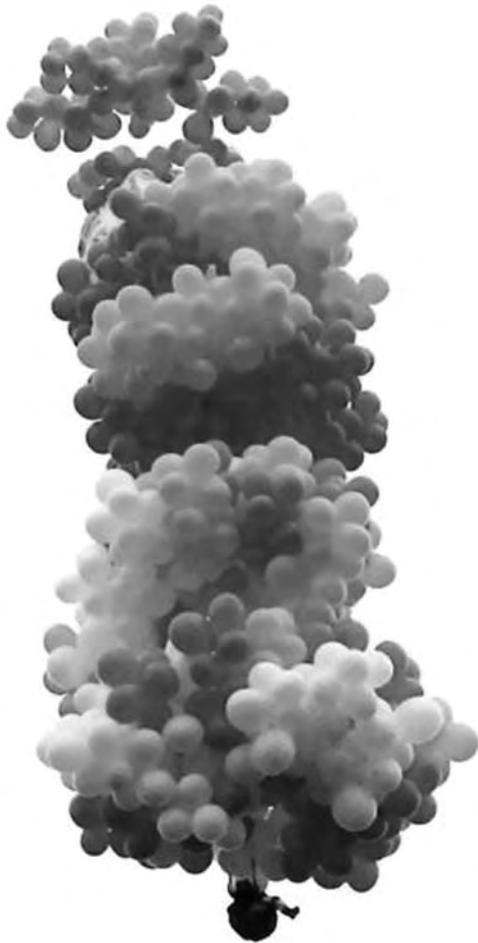


Charles J. Modzinski, 74, (*above*) passed on 16 FEB 08. He served in the US Navy for seven years. Receiving his MBA in 1975, he retired in 1993. Charles is survived by his wife of 50 years Dorothy, four children, and many grandchildren. **Ω**



A. C. 'Bud' Wartman (*above*), 82, passed 8 FEB 08. Kentuckian Wartman joined the Navy in '43 at 17 as a parachute rigger. Coming up through the ranks he got his wings in 1950. He flew blimps, seaplanes and jets, did four years in Viet Nam, was chief test pilot for NARF Coronado before retiring in 1971 from F-4 Phantoms as a LCDR. He is survived & deeply missed by his wife, Joanne. **Ω**

DRIFTING TOWARD THE LIGHTER SIDE OF LTA



People in Paranagua, Parana, Brazil, watched as a Roman Catholic Priest ascended toward heaven. No, really: Father Adelir Antonio de Carli filled 1,000 balloons with helium and, dressed in a helmet, thermal suit and a parachute, and carrying a GPS receiver and a satellite phone, headed skyward in an attempt to break the 19-hour record for staying aloft with party balloons. He was declared missing eight hours later when he failed to check in by phone, and was judged to be off course -- and 30 miles out to sea. A search found some of the balloons, but there has been no sign of the 41-year-old flying priest. "We are absolutely confident he will be found alive and well, floating somewhere in the ocean," said a spokeswoman for his parish. But the London Telegraph newspaper reported that "hopes are fading" for the priest. "The priest's death would make him an immediate contender for the annual Darwin Award," the paper said, "named in honor of Charles Darwin, the father of evolution, and 'commemorate those who improve our gene pool by removing themselves from it.'" (AP, London Telegraph) ...A hell of a thing to say about a guy who pledged celibacy. ☺

READY ROOM



October 2008 - 6th Airship Association (U.K.) International Conference, combined with LTA Convention: Celebrating the Centenary of Luftschiffbau-Zeppelin. The Convention is hosted by the DGLR, German Society for Aeronautics and Astronautics.

The Convention language will be English. The papers selected by the committee will be published in the conference Proceedings. Each author shall present the paper orally (20 minutes plus 10 minutes for discussion).

www.airshipconvention2008.org

NAA REUNION **4 thru 6 MAY 2009** **Pensacola, Florida**

All members please note that the Naval Airship Association will hold its 2009 reunion at the Clarion Inn in Pensacola starting Monday May 4 and concluding with a banquet dinner on Wednesday May 6. Reunion chairman Joe Hajcak is working out details now and will have reservation information in issue #79, the fall issue of The Noon Balloon later this year. Joe is working to keep the cost very affordable, practically the same as they were at our 2007 reunion at Tom's River.

Weather permitting we will have bleacher seats for a Tuesday air show presented by the Blue Angels. (Rain date for the Blue Angels is Wednesday). Tuesday and Wednesday will afford time to visit the National Museum of Naval Aviation. The naval airship display has been completely reworked with additions of the front portion of the Snow Bird car and the completed and restored L-8 car.

Trips to Pensacola Beach, the casino in Bolxie and a car caravan tour to Battleship Park in Mobile are possible options.



The L-8 car as it now appears on display at the National Museum of Naval Aviation in Pensacola. Bottom photo shows restoration crew member Ernie Brousseau peering out of the aft equipment compartment window.





Above, L type airship car (originally Goodyear car C-64) after being preserved back to its original 1940 L-8 configuration. Below, restoration and preservation crew (L to R) Dan Oweczarczak, Ernie Brousseau and Henry Brandt in front of their 5 year L-8 project.

