

Sunday, April 13, 2008

SOME WEBSITES ON AIRPLANES

Naturally, many of these sites have **links** to many other sites of interest that may not be very immediately obvious by doing just a Google search.

Also, many of these sites in essence offer a type of "**virtual tour,**" if you cannot go to actually see them. Certainly, the many fine pictures and descriptive material can prepare you before you go.

WWW.GLENNCURTISSMUSEUM.ORG – Phone – 607-5692160

A GREAT MUSEUM AND WEBSITE. THEY ARE VERY COOPERATIVE ABOUT USING THEIR MATERIAL ON YOUR WEBSITE. THEIR WORK IS WELL DOCUMENTED BY THEIR MUSEUM CURATOR.

Glenn Curtiss never received the recognition he was due for all that he did for aviation for some reason. You can explore this controversy and make a judgment yourself, especially with respect to the Wright Brothers.

Certainly his "**Jenny**" of the WW I and barnstorming era was an incredible machine. It is one of my favorites! I have many books as you can see from my lists in other areas of this website.

I visited the museum mostly in the 1970's and 1980's during my many trips to the NY wine country around Hammondsport, NY. I became friends with the curator at that time and he helped me a great deal in my interests in Curtiss and the "Jenny."

At that time the museum was in the municipal building downtown. It was relocated to an incredibly large and nicely built wine warehouse of Gold Seal, when the wineries experienced a major adjustment around the middle 1980's. This provided an incredible resource for the museum to expand and do an even better job at promoting Glenn Curtiss. Besides aircraft and related items, at least at that time, there was an incredible number of aircraft and other **engines** displayed. Naturally, motorcycles were also displayed, since Curtiss was heavily involved with them.

Because of my changing career and the wine industry, I have not had the chance to get back to that area in many years.

There are many attractions in that area to add to reasons why to make a visit.

Glenn Curtiss fits nicely into my STS research in many ways. He started with the "seat of the pants" era where you could just know what would work. However, he was

mature enough to know when his time had passed and he turned the company over to more professional people as his company became so large and significant.

As time permits, I plan to do some articles and books on what I have accumulated and learned about him and the "Jenny" in order to further illustrate some of the many aspects of my STS research.

Airplanes certainly dramatically changed warfare and our society in general in so many profound ways. It is ripe for such STS exploration.

WWW.OLDRHINEBECK.ORG. – Phone – 845-752-3200

Another great resource on airplanes, especially of the WW I era. I have not been back for many years after most of my relatives have died off from the Troy, NY area.

However, they were a regularly scheduled stop on my way back from my original home area going back to Pennsylvania, where I have lived for the past 30 + years.

They are in the Rhinebeck, NY area just off the NY State Thruway, South of The Troy, Albany, Schenectady area, but be prepared to go thru some country roads in the Rhinebeck area to reach the museum and aerodrome, unless they have changed things since I was there.

When **Cole Palen** was alive, the original founder of this facility and organization, the weekend airplane shows and "skits" were absolutely fantastic! You felt you were **actually living in that era – seeing, hearing and smelling the planes as they took off, performed and landed.** You just have to be there to try to fully experience what it was like – a living and active museum in the sky! I will have to dig out my many pictures that I took.

I have lost touch for many years, as noted above. But I highly encourage you to experience this site and facility. Their web site indicates that they maintain an extensive collection of planes from this and other eras.

There are many attractions in that area to add to reasons why to make a visit.

They are even considerate enough to have a special connection for those of us who still have dialup and not DSL like we have since we live in such a rural area.

They are starting their **49th Season** of air shows in 2008 from Father's Day to October. They seem very well organized.

Mid-Atlantic Air Museum [MAAM] is a fantastic organization that puts on usually 2 shows per year – Spring and Fall – further information is contained elsewhere on my website. They are a “**must see**” at least once in your life. I was able to attend several and it is obvious a “class act” and an “act of love” by many!

WWW.MAAM.ORG/AIRCRAFT.HTM - phone - 610 – 372-7333

22 MILITARY AIRCRAFT & 43 CIVILIAN – STARTING **VIRTUAL TOURS** – MANY STILL “WORKS IN PROGRESS” – LIST AVAILABLE – ONE PROJECT THAT IS UNUSUAL IS THE P-61 BLACK WIDOW PLANE – WHEN I WAS THERE A NUMBER OF YEARS AGO, THEY HAD DRAMATIC PICTURES OF HOW IT WAS FOUND IN A JUNGLE AND BROUGHT OUT.

Near Reading, PA Their **North American B-25J Mitchell bomber** is of the book “**Catch 22**” fame! Great to see it up close and restored so well! Helps to make many aspects of the book more vivid. It is part of their “virtual tour!” One of only 3 restored to this level of completeness and authenticity – all done locally and not by an outside contractor!

They are right next to the Reading Regional Airport, PA – you can see the planes taking off while you are there – both ways! So if you are ever flying into this airport and have a layover, you might be able to just walk across to the museum or even get a short ride by airport taxi.

www.en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Mid-Atlantic_Air_Museum provides a very good overview of this site, along with a list of the museum inventory.

PIPER CUB MUSEUM LOCK HAVEN, PA – IN CENTRAL PA – NEAR WILLIAMSPORT, PA HOME OF THE LITTLE LEAGUE WORLD SERIES

WWW.PIPERMUSEUM.COM – PHONE – 570-893-4200

WWW.WIKIPEDIA.ORG/WIKI/THE_NEW_PIPER_AIRCRAFT - is a good site on the general aspects and development of the Piper airplanes, past and present. It is a very good example for my STS research how sci / tech develops so rapidly and society interests affect it so dramatically. But many times, humans can manage it and still come out of it “ok!” – not great, but ok, not defeated.

Their June “fly in” [“Sentimental Journey”] is fantastic! So many different Pipers are there, along with many other planes. Low key and very simple, but an incredible experience. Planes and events always happening. You get so absorbed time just flies – I even got a good sunburn on my exposed arms due to the heat and sun at their June event. Many just sleep under the cover of the wings of their planes in the fields that they are parked in. There are the expected facilities to accommodate many with many different ways of participating.

A standard bright yellow Piper Cub is included in the few pictures I have on this web site. I believe the manufacturing plate on the inside of the cabin to the left of the head of the pilot indicated it was built in **1941** – it is as old as I am, but in much better shape – meticulously restored and maintained – and it flew into the event! It was just one of many different models that flew in for the event.

Certainly, Piper airplanes have had an incredible military and civilian history so important in so many ways.

Their museum was still under development when I was there several years ago, but it was very informative and sophisticated in many ways. However, there is just so much to be done to try to preserve this era, that it will probably be some time before anyone could hope to near completion of such an extraordinary endeavor.

1941 HISTORICAL AIRCRAFT GROUP MUSEUM – at **Genesee, NY** – concentrates on **WW II and Korean War planes** – founded in 1994 – phone – 585-243-2100

Some planes of particular interest to some – C47A Dakota [“Gooney Bird!”], L-16, & L-21.

This year in 2008 they are commemorating the 70th anniversary of the Curtiss P-40 Warhawk.

NATIONAL MUSEUM OF THE UNITED STATES AIR FORCE AT WRIGHT-PATTERSON AIR FORCE BASE IN OHIO

WWW.WPAFB.AF.MIL/MUSEUM - phone - **937-255-3286**

Obviously one that is a **“must see”** if you are serious about airplanes. I was there many years ago on one of my many trips on wine related business. It is just fantastic! To see the bombers and other large planes housed in a building that can easily display them, is just breathtaking! Again, you just have to be there to better appreciate these planes!

A Substantial book they publish on much of their collection is a treasure!

It is their **85th anniversary in 2008**. An 8 page downloadable list of their aircraft, serial number, gallery location and web page is also available to help plan your trip and for any research you are doing.

SMITHSONIAN NATIONAL AIR AND SPACE MUSEUM – what can be said?

Obviously, **“the” museum to see** – I went several times, especially when I did my graduate work in Washington, DC and on some later visits for professional conferences. Depending on how intense you are about airplanes, you could easily spend several days touring this museum. I remember that their bookstore was just incredible! Only your finances could limit all that you might buy.

WWW.NASM.SI.EDU

AMERICAN HELICOPTER MUSEUM – West Chester, PA – near Philadelphia, PA

WWW.HELICOPTERMUSEUM.ORG/ARICRAFT.ASP - over 35 helicopters – nations largest collection - relatively new museum

OWLS HEAD TRANSPORTATION MUSEUM IN OWLS HEAD, MAINE –

WWW.OHTM.ORG – PHONE – 207-594-4418

If you get to Southern Maine, do plan to go – it is fantastic, as might be expected!

The museum is “meticulous” and beyond!

A **Curtiss “Jenny”** [JN-4D] in immaculate condition is on display! It is one of 28 examples of aircraft from 1804 to 1946.

Gnome rotary engine – first successful one – 1907-1908 – used in WW I Nieuport biplanes – for those who do not know, the propeller and the whole crankcase rotate – only the crankshaft is stationary! Quite a feat! If you see one in operation like at Rhinebeck, you will be impressed about how it operates – a lot of force / torque / momentum!

Clerget rotary engine of 1911 – famously used in the Sopwith Camel – made it notoriously difficult to fly until you got use to it.

WW I Hall-Scott Engine of Curtiss fame – 1908 – water cooled – 6 cylinder in line – some V8's

Also a **1939 Packard Town Car** – custom bodied – fine example of American coach builder's art!

Their pictures and descriptions are excellent, if you cannot visit right now.

WWW.EN.WIKIPENDIA.ORG.WIKI/OWLS_HEAD_MAINE - gives a good overview of the area – the lighthouse is an 87 foot tall granite building built in 1826 for the Southern entrance of the Rockland Harbour – population is only about 1600.