Now that most of the boats have been pulled off the lake, and the leaves are losing their color, another fantastic summer season at the Curtiss Museum has come to an end. It has been an outstanding year of motorcycle shows, new exhibits, educational outreach activities, and special events. We are continually humbled and amazed by the love and support we receive from our community.

You make our success possible, and for that we THANK YOU!

We have some exciting things planned for next year, and I look forward to sharing them with you. All of us at the Curtiss Museum wish you and yours a wonderful rest of the year!

LETTER FROM THE DIRECTOR

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BENJAMIN JOHNSON
Executive Director
By September 1917, the United States had been at war for five months. As the U.S. and its allies desperately needed men and materials transported from North America, the German submarine fleet made sea transport hazardous. No ship was safe. Ironically, the shipping losses were especially damaging to the air effort in Europe, as planes were lost by the hundreds as their transports were sunk. Rear Admiral David W. Taylor, Chief of the Navy’s Bureau of Construction and Repair, thought that aircraft should be developed that could fly across the Atlantic and be ready for duty on arrival.

As the only experienced builder of large flying-boats in the United States, Glenn Curtiss was called to Washington D.C. He left Buffalo two hours after receiving the telegram, taking with him W.L. Gilmore and Henry Kleckler, both of his design staff. Admiral Taylor wanted a seaplane that could fly the Atlantic. The only specifications were that the aircraft must be able to fly over the ocean and be usable for combat upon arrival, primarily against submarines.

Curtiss returned to Buffalo to work on design. In a few days Curtiss was back in Washington with two versions of a short-hull flying boat. One design had five of the new 360hp Liberty engines, and the other had three. A remarkable innovation of both designs was the tail. In existing seaplanes the tail was attached to the hull. In the new design, the tail was held in place by booms from the hull. This permitted the use of smaller hulls, and decreased the ship’s total weight. The ships had a wingspan of 126 feet, and a length of 69 feet. As a joint Navy-Curtiss effort, the aircraft were subsequently christened “NC.”

Though the war ended in 1918, naval officials made plans to use the newly designed “Nancy” ships to attempt a trans-Atlantic crossing by air. After evaluating several options, a route to Europe via the Azores was chosen, and plans were soon set in motion for a flight by the three remaining airships in May 1919. NC-1, NC-3, and NC-4 would attempt the crossing, while NC-2 was used to repair the storm-damaged NC-1.

The flight would begin with a leg from Rockaway Naval Air Station in New York to Halifax, Nova Scotia then on to Horta in the Azores, and from there to Lisbon, Portugal. They would complete their journey by landing in Plymouth, England. This was no easy feat. Intense and detailed planning included dozens of U.S. Navy ships spread across the length of the journey to aid in navigation and provide respite should the crews encounter poor weather or mechanical problems. As the moon missions would be fifty years later, the flight of the NC ships was now a matter of national prestige, and the United States spared no expense to ensure success.

On May 8, 1919 the NCs left Rockaway. NC-1 and NC-3 made the 540 mile trip to Halifax in just over nine hours. Unfortunately NC-4 lost both of her center engines and was forced to land near Cape Cod. After taxing more than five hours to reach Naval Air Station Chatham, NC-4 was repaired and resumed her flight on May 10. Weather delays pushed the start of the next stage to May 16, when all three aircraft took off into the darkness with only rudimentary navigational instruments and a line of Navy ships to guide them.

The next leg to the Azores was fraught with difficulty. After separating during the night, NC-3 mistook a ship on the horizon for one of the destroyers marking their path, but found too late that it was not. Running low on fuel, and without a firm location from their navigator, NC-3 landed in high seas. The poor conditions resulted in severe damage to the aircraft. She would not fly again. NC-1 had similar problems, though their landing went far easier than that of her sister ship. Despite the easier landing, heavy waves ensured that the crew could not take off again. After more than 15 hours in the air the NC-4, though also lost in heavy fog, identified a radio signal from a destroyer below and caught sight of the island through a break in the clouds.

The crew of the NC-4 had no idea what had happened to her sister ships after getting separated. They quickly learned that the crew of NC-1 had been rescued by the Greek freighter Ionia shortly before she sank. NC-3, however, was still a mystery for nearly two days. Damaged by heavy waves and unable to transmit any radio signals, the crew of NC-3 “sailed” their crippled ship in the direction of the Azores. They were finally spotted on May 19, 1919 within sight of Ponta Delgada, but refused assistance. They had ‘sailed’ the damaged NC-3 more than 200 miles in reverse, and would complete the journey unaided.

For more than a week NC-4 remained in the Azores, undergoing repairs and waiting for the weather to improve. On May 27 she and her crew took off toward Portugal. By nightfall they crossed the coast and into history. They would not reach their final destination in Portsmouth for a few more days, but her crew knew they had successfully completed their mission. Though largely lost to history, the flight of the NC-4 and her sister ships remains one of the most important events in aviation history.

The museum has a special exhibit on display through March 2020 that details the crossing and tells the story through pictures and first-person accounts of this historic event. In addition, Makenzie Witter, the Public Programmer, created a booklet and educational program for area schools that brings the story alive in the classroom.

Educators interested in using the material or arranging a field trip to the museum are encouraged to contact Makenzie at Education@CurtissMuseum.org.
Sometimes looking into the background of a particular artifact in our collection can be a real eye-opener. Case in point is our 1938 Curtiss Aerocar. It was purchased by the museum back in 1998, and has been on display as a part of the many innovations produced by the master inventor Glenn H. Curtiss. Our placard listed it only as being originally owned by a Mr. and Mrs. W. T. Sampson Smith of Cooperstown, NY and Short Hills, NJ. It wasn’t until a visitor inquired about the Canandaigua Yacht Club Regatta sticker for 1939 in the window of the Curtiss Aerocar that prompted a deeper look into the old travel trailer’s background. Well, after doing a little old fashioned sleuthing into its history did the story become really intriguing. As it turns out, Mrs. W. T. Sampson Smith was none other than Dorothy Stokes Bostwick Smith, a skilled yachtswoman, but also an accomplished polo player and equestrian, philanthropist, a huge advocate of the women’s movement (hiring as many professional women over men as possible in many of her building and landscaping projects) and an avid aviation buff, being an admirer of Amelia Earhart and other aviatrix’s of the day. Her biggest aviation related fascination was with the Pitcairn Autogiro, a cross between an airplane and helicopter. The Standard Oil Co. owned two of these machines reportedly not far from her New Jersey estate. Family legend has it that she may have learned to fly one of them with the intentions of earning a helicopter pilots license, following in the footsteps of Earhart who was the first woman in the US to fly an Autogiro on December 19, 1935. During her long and colorful life, Dorothy would also become a successful painter, sculptor and poet, having been married twice in her life to successful men in their own rights. She passed away peacefully in 2001 at the age of 101.
ART WILDER’S
RESTORATION SHOP UPDATE

P-40 WARHAWK
The wings and fuselage are now re-connected with the internal support for the display mountings complete. Major parts for the pivot mounting are finished. Fabric covering of the elevators and rudder are complete including the spray filler and UV coatings.

Distinguished Visitor Joe Giuffre, World War II P-40 Pilot from Rochester, NY looks over our project in September.

1922 CURTISS GLIDER
Rudder and elevator hinges are in position. We are finalizing attachment fittings for struts, rear booms, and hull to wings parts. Wiring is next.

CURTISS RECOGNIZED BY THE ENGINEERING & SCIENCE HALL OF FAME

The Engineering & Science Hall of Fame is an international organization established to honor engineers and scientists who, using scientific and engineering principles, have made a significant contribution to human well-being. Glenn H. Curtiss was honored November 7, 2019 at the annual Induction meeting in Dayton Ohio.

“This medallion is awarded to each enshrinee. The intertwined E and S symbolize the relationship of Engineering and Science. They emphasize that both Engineering and Science contribute to benefiting humanity through the use of their principles.

The award of the medallion provides visible recognition that the enshrinee has, through use of Engineering or Scientific principles, brought tangible benefit to humanity.”

ESHALLOFFAME.ORG
SAHLENS OLD-SCHOOL MOTORCYCLE ON DISPLAY

Sahlen Packing Company is celebrating 150 years in business and commissioned Orange County Choppers to build this old-school bike for them. The company was founded in 1869 in Buffalo, New York by Joseph Sahlen. The bike was unveiled early February 2019 at the Buffalo Transportation Pierce-Arrow Museum and will be on loan to the Curtiss Museum for a few months this spring. The Hammondsport unveiling will be at the Wintercycle Therapy 2020.

FEBRUARY 22ND & 23RD
WINTERCYCLE THERAPY 2020

TO VEND OR SHOW:
Call Bob Harris at 585-610-8721 for more information about displaying a bike or vending opportunities.
CURTISSMUSEUM.ORG

Presented by:

WINTERCYCLE THERAPY

FEBRUARY 22 & 23

SAHLENS OLD-SCHOOL MOTORCYCLE ON DISPLAY

THANK YOU ALL FOR A WONDERFUL YEAR!

FUNDRAISING

MEMBERS you are the core of our support and help us fly every day!
DONORS your gifts make great things happen.
LEADERS for bringing people together and making special events possible.
BUSINESS OWNERS for donations of cash and prizes for raffles and other fun events.

If you would like to make a year-end gift to the museum please give on-line at CurtissMuseum.org/Giving.php or send in your check made out to the Glenn H. Curtiss Museum postmarked by December 31, 2019.
Amy Gush, Relationship and Development Officer, is available to assist you with transfer of assets such as stock, IRA distributions, or other appreciated assets and can be reached at Community@CurtissMuseum.org or 607-569-2160.

MEMBERShips can be initiated or renewed at CurtissMuseum.org/Membership.php

FUNDRAISING

WINGS & WHEELS
A GLORIOUS WEEKEND IN HAMMONDSPORT

After a cool and rainy start to Saturday’s activities, the weather cleared for a beautiful weekend. Thousands of visitors poured into the village, and enjoyed everything Hammondsport has to offer as a dozen aircraft and nearly eighty cars entertained the crowd both Saturday and Sunday. Thank you Hammondsport for supporting this fantastic event!

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WINTER 2019 - 2020 CALENDAR OF EVENTS:

All of December
FOOD PANTRY
Bring a non-perishable item to the museum and for every item donated you will get an admission for just $5.

February 22th & 23th
WINTERCYCLE THERAPY
See vintage motorcycles for a variety of private collections.

EXCITING NEW EXHIBIT, COMING SOON...
SNOOPY & THE RED BARON

SAHLENS OLD-SCHOOL MOTORCYCLE ON DISPLAY

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1. Make gifts of appreciated stock or property to avoid recognizing gains.
   How it works: It may be advantageous to gift to the museum appreciated stocks or property you no longer use. You forego paying capital gains taxes on the appreciation and at the same time the value of the charitable contribution may (if you itemize) decrease income taxes.

2. Use your IRA distribution - if you are at least 70 ½ years of age and have an IRA distribution to take this year it may be beneficial to direct some of the withdrawal to the Glenn H. Curtiss Museum, and other charities, you care about.
   How it works: Speak with your financial advisor to direct funds from your IRA to the Curtiss Museum. You can pay your membership annual gift this way, make gifts in honor of friends and family, or support your favorite program at the museum. The great thing about using your IRA funds is that you do not recognize the income and that can have a positive effect on your tax bill come January 2020. As with all potentially taxed advantaged gifts individual circumstances will affect the benefits and outcome for you. Always consult with your attorney and financial/tax advisor to learn specifics related to your situation.

3. Making a Gift in your Will
   Naming the Glenn H, Curtiss Museum as a beneficiary of your will or trust is easy! You can add the Museum to your will or trust with this simple phrase "I give the sum of _______dollars ($_________) or _______ percent of my estate to the Glenn H. Curtiss Museum, a nonprofit corporation for general purpose and use."*

* This is suggested language; always consult with your attorney on specifics of your estate plan.

To discuss the details of making a gift to the Museum contact:
Amy Gush, Relationship Officer, at 607-569-2160 or email her at community@curtissmuseum.org