In many ways, 2020 was the year that wasn’t. No summer motorcycle shows, no Wings & Wheels, no summer educational groups or activities, and no fun parties or events this fall. From March 17 through June 25, the Curtiss Museum experienced the longest prolonged closure in our organization’s nearly 60 years of operations. For months we listened to the creaks and groans of an empty building which are usually muffled by the daily sounds of excited patrons as they toured through our beautiful collection. Most of our days were spent trying to plan for a future nobody could describe with any certainty. Our staff and Board evaluated all possible contingencies as we settled in for a prolonged siege. As reopening appeared on the horizon, our state and local health authorities provided guidance and support. We communicated frequently with museums from across the county, using our collective experiences and resources to help each other reopen slowly and safely. Since June 26, we have been overwhelmed by the positivity and flexibility of our patrons as they donned their masks, sanitized their hands, and enjoyed everything we had to offer during a shortened and profoundly strange summer season.

The American Alliance of Museums predicts that nearly 20% of U.S. museums will not survive the next 18 months. Though the Curtiss Museum experienced its fair share of economic disruptions in 2020, we survived and thrived with the help of our amazing staff, Trustees, volunteers and community. You, our Curtiss Family, stepped up when we needed you most. Through membership renewals, donations, and other in-kind help, you kept us going and for that we profoundly grateful. THANK YOU! 2021 marks the 60th anniversary of our provisional charter from the State of New York and we cannot wait to celebrate with you. We have some tremendous projects in the works and look forward to sharing everything in the coming months.

Thank you again, and see you in 2021!

BENJAMIN JOHNSON
Executive Director
In the spring of 1902, his third machine, a tandem, proved extremely successful, which led him to build an entirely new machine. Inquisitive about the outcome, Curtiss, his first sale and an order from a New Jersey customer, Curtiss formed the G.H. Curtiss Manufacturing Co. and opened a second shop in Corning, NY. He offered for sale both a complete motorcycle and engine separately under the Hercules brand. This success and a need to get back into competitive sports prompted Glenn to try his hand at racing motocycles. He garnered the notice of the racing community in Brooklyn on Sep. 1st by winning a third-place medal and a second-place Splifdorf Cup on his one-cylinder Hercules.

In 1903 Curtiss was now totally absorbed in motorcycles, the届时 dropped bicycles completely as well as his retail shops). Issuing his first catalog, exhibiting at the New York Auto Show and extensive advertising soon brought in orders from as far as California and New Zealand with twenty cycles and an unknown number of engines being shipped in the first five months. This forced the addition to the plant behind his home. As a result of what Glenn considered a poor showing in his first racing event, he set out to make a more powerful engine. Glenn’s new creation, the V-Twin or 2-cylinder, 5 hp engine was the first of its kind in America. It made its debut at the New York Motorcycle Club’s Riversdale Hill Climb on May 30th, taking first place out of 20 entrants. Heading directly to Yonkers, Glenn took first place medals for both the one-mile and five-mile races at the Empire City race track. To Glenn’s embarrassment, he was hailed as a hero with a parade and presented a cut glass bowl by Hammondspota citizens on his return.

Glenn’s V-Twin immediately became the focus of the industry with other companies looking to add his engines to their cycles or develop their own. (Indian publicly offered facilities to produce the Erie Motorcycle and MECO, from Buffalo to Hammondsport (MECO), from Buffalo to Hammondsport) in 1904, Curtiss headed to Ormond Beach, FL, train by train with his V-Twin motorcycles to enter the new speed trials there. Undaunted by the competition, Glenn won the mile race in 59.5 seconds and the 10-mile race in 8:54 minutes breaking all previous American records. He would next revisit the New York Hill Climb that May. Finding his 5 hp V-Twin barred by the new 3 ½ hp limit, he took second place with a one-cylinder Hercules machine while hampered with fuel mixture problems. While continuing to race, Curtiss again expanded the plant to meet increased demand. A significant change also came that year - another company holding the rights to the Hercules brand name forced Glenn to re-brand his machines as Curtiss.

Curtiss spent much of his time in 1905 traveling to exhibitions and races. More trophies and speed records increased the demand for his machines forcing another expansion and an increase in the work force as well as additions to the product line. 1906 would find Hammondsport quickly becoming the center of American aviation experimentation thanks to Curtiss. Inventors came seeking his help looking for the perfect engine. Thomas Scott Baldwin would move his dirigible company to Hammondsport at the same time another balloonist, Charles Oliver Jones, Glenn designed the first V-8 engine. At this time Leonard “Tank” Waters, a childhood friend of Glenn’s relocated his company, the Motorcycle Equipment Company (MECO), from Buffalo to Hammondspota to be connected to the Curtiss Co. using the facilities to produce the Eri Motorcycle and the MECO brand motorcycles.
was a regular golfer at the Lake Salubria Golf Course in Bath. He gave demonstrations at the Hammondsport and Bath schools for the public and family. According to C. Thurston Carlson and other locals, Howard would also boys hunting, fishing and archery at the scout house as a favor to the Curtiss summers after that, Hill came to Hammondsport for the summer to teach young Hollywood producers. Shortly after Glenn's death in 1930, and for several Brisbane, a prominent newspaperman, who in turn introduced Howard to "Modern Day Robin Hood." At this point Glenn included an 18-hole archery golf course. In 1927 he met a young Native American named Howard Hill who was an up and coming champion archer. By 1929, Hill was a nationally known champion archer receiving the title of a wind tunnel. developing a broad tipped hunting arrow using a Curtiss Aeroplane & Motor Co. became close friends and hunting companions. The two even worked together in developing a broad tipped hunting arrow using a Curtiss Aeroplane & Motor Co. wind tunnel. By 1929, Hill was a nationally known champion archer receiving the title of a "Modern Day Robin Hood." At this point Glenn introduced Howard to Arthur Brinson, a prominent newspaperman, who in turn introduced Howard to Hollywood producers. Shortly after Glenn's death in 1930, and for several summers after that, Hill came to Hammondsport for the summer to teach young boys hunting, fishing and archery at the scout house as a favor to the Curtiss family. According to C. Thurston Carlson and other locals, Howard would also give demonstrations at the Hammondsport and Bath schools for the public and was a regular golfer at the Lake Salubria Golf Course in Bath.

Around 1932, Howard moved to Hollywood, working on, or appearing in, fourteen major motion picture films (including The Adventures of Robin Hood and They Died with Their Boots On) as well as twenty documentaries. He also taught several iconic Hollywood stars to shoot a bow and arrow, including Errol Flynn whom he would become a fast friend and confidant. Sadly, the sport in Opa-Locka waned after Hill left. The course was annexed into the Naval Air Station next door in 1938. The pro-shop that Howard had managed for roughly six years became the Officers Club for the base.

Always admiring and never forgetting his close friend Glenn H. Curtiss, Hill gave full credit for his success to the man who he always referred to as "G.H." saying of him "he was an archer, a gentleman, and a true sportsman." We can certainly see how Glenn's enthusiasm to try new things and his interest in helping others brought the "World's Greatest Archer" to Hammondsport.

In 1904, Captain Thomas Baldwin ordered a two cylinder engine from a Curtiss Manufacturing Company catalog to attach to his latest dirigible, the 'California Arrow.' Captain Baldwin was no stranger to aviation. In fact, by 1885, he was one of the most distinguished individuals in the field of aeronautics for performing stunts like aerial trapeze from a hot air balloon and making the world's first successful parachute jump from a balloon from 1,000 ft in the air at Golden Gate Park in 1887.

His main goal in 1903, however, was to develop a balloon powered by an engine. His main problem was finding a suitable, light-weight engine, and he was hoping that problem would be solved with the lightweight and powerful Curtiss engines he'd heard of from the motorcycle racing world. On July 29, 1904, the 'California Arrow' became the first successful dirigible to fly in the United States with the help of a Curtiss engine.

Captain Baldwin relocated to Hammondsport to work with Glenn Curtiss full time, and the small rural town soon was in the forefront of American aeronautics. Because Captain Baldwin was so well known in the field of aviation, others within the field began traveling to Hammondsport as well, including those interested in aircraft, balloons, helicopters, ornithopters, kites, and such. Glenn, while intrigued with helping these visitors create the perfect engines for their unique machines, had no interest in going in the air. In fact, he privately believed the visiting aviators to be foolish. In 1907, however, his curiosity got the best of him, and he decided to take one of the dirigibles in the air. By the time he landed, he understood the aviators' love of flying, and it was rumored he said, "I think I can make it go faster." This image is of Glenn's first flight on June 28, 1907, at Kingsley Flats in Hammondsport, which is where the Hammondsport Central School District stands today.
In 1910 the first Curtiss School of Aviation opened in the late fall. Tom Gunn received his training there and later became a member of the Aero Club of Pennsylvania and decided to explore building his own aircraft. While living in Philadelphia, he enrolled in the Curtiss School of Aviation Class of 1912 and attended the winter camp in San Diego, CA. He completed the course for his diploma in March to which he also earned pilot's license no. 105 to become not only the first African-American aviator but also the first African-American licensed pilot in the United States. Beginning his career as an aviator in 1914, Emory acquired his first airplane powered by a Curtiss engine. After assembling it by himself, he flew a demonstration over Selinsgrove, PA, “to the wonderment of all” as one newspaper quoted.

Throughout the teens and twenties, Malik flew in exhibitions and sold rides. He later flew for various companies in the Philippines area including Aero Service Corp., Dallen Aerial Surveys and the Flying Dutchman Air Service as a flight instructor, aerial photographer and giving passenger flights. Early in 1924, Emory Malik branched out on his own and obtained a WACO Curtiss OX5 (powered aircraft) and made a flight from San Francisco to Manila. He became a champion motorcycle racer as well and quickly rose to prominence as President of the local motorcycle club. In fact, Chadeayne and Curtiss would often compete in a race.

His trip was plagued with many adventures and mishaps including four major accidents, bad roads, stuck in snow drifts and nearly freezing to death while crossing the mountains, washed out bridges, gas and oil shortages, poor directions, food poisoning and nearly being run down by a train. Interestingly enough the Auto-Bi Plane Builder

Emory Conrad Malik, First African-American Licensed Pilot, Plane Builder

Emory C. Malik was born in Seven Points, PA on Dec. 29, 1913. A skilled carpenter and master tile-later by trade, Emory took an interest in aviation in 1910 and experimented with gliders. While living in Philadelphia, he enrolled in the Curtiss School of Aviation Class of 1912 and attended the winter camp in San Diego, CA. He completed the course for his diploma in March to which he also earned pilot’s license no. 105 to become not only the first African-American aviator but also the first African-American licensed pilot in the United States. Beginning his career as an aviator in 1914, Emory acquired his first airplane powered by a Curtiss engine. After assembling it by himself, he flew a demonstration over Selinsgrove, PA, “to the wonderment of all” as one newspaper quoted.

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This year was different, not just due to Covid, also due to the loss of our advocate, long time board member, and golf tournament enthusiast, Dick Rahill. Dick's passing has been felt throughout the community. He was a champion of Keuka Lake and the entire Southern Tier. Many organizations, indeed entire communities, are indebted to Dick's efforts to strengthen and improve our corner of the world. The Curtiss was lucky to have benefited from his leadership as a museum trustee and his generous support. We admit much will be different going forward, but we will go on, and carry forward his legacy of doing good.

MEMBER NOTES: Keep up with Curtiss Museum news and member events via our monthly e-newsletter. Share your email and name with us at Community@CurtissMuseum.org to be added to the distribution list.

DICK RAHILL: OUR COMMUNITY CHAMPION

Early in September we discovered that the C-46 (the large plane outside the museum) windscreen had fallen out of alignment and a small leak had developed. Weather was obviously getting into the cockpit. We had hoped to re-seat the windscreen, however on closer inspection we realized that a new frame was in order. On September 28, the able volunteers (some of which are retired airplane mechanics and fabricators) spent 10 hours hand-fabricating an entirely new windscreen and fitting it into the Commando. We had to do it in one day because we needed a power lift to access the area safely. Ten hours and all done!

STEUBEN COUNTY TRUCK

We are grateful for the support we receive from our friends in county government. For a few years the County Public Works Department truck have featured signs that promote unique features in Steuben communities. Keep your eyes open for the “Curtiss Museum truck.”

MEMBER NOTES: Keep up with Curtiss Museum news and member events via our monthly e-newsletter. Share your email and name with us at Community@CurtissMuseum.org to be added to the distribution list.
PLANNED GIVING
CREATE A LASTING LEGACY

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.”*

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