

THE FURY



**THE QUARTERLY NEWSLETTER OF
THE HICKORY AVIATION MUSEUM**

“It All Started With a Fury”

History In Your Hands!

Welcome to Volume 1, Number 1 of The Fury, Quarterly Newsletter of the Hickory Aviation Museum! Since the Museum opened in April 2007 we have made a lot of changes and a tremendous amount of progress. This has all been possible through the dedication and hard work of many people, most of whom you will meet over time in these pages.

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VA-37 On Deck

By Kyle Kirby

On Friday, June 4th, a group of former Naval Aviators will arrive at the Hickory Aviation Museum from Memphis. The reason they have chosen Hickory is that there is a cornerstone of their lives based here: An aircraft that used to take them into the skies over Vietnam. That great aircraft is our little A-7A that just continues to bring people together!

One of the group is John "Hondo" Johnson. Now a retired FedEx Captain, in 1972 he flew with the Bulls of VA-37, during the WestPac cruise of USS *Saratoga*, CV-60. After reading our article about our A-7's service with VA-82 in The Hook, Hondo *(continued on p2, "VA-37")*

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**Newton Native Charles McCorkle, Maj. Gen.,
USAF (Ret.)**

By Kyle Kirby

The first installment of Charles Milton McCorkle's history has arrived! "Sandy" McCorkle was born in Newton, NC on Jan. 29th, 1915. He passed away last August. McCorkle is a graduate of Newton High School and attended West Point (class of 1936). He received his wings at Kelly Field in October of 1936. Sandy served in the USAAF during World War II and was one of 17 American Spitfire aces, finishing the war with 11 aerial victories. He commanded the 54th FG in the Aleutians in 1942 and then the 31st FG in the MTO in 1943. Following WW II, he served in a variety of command and staff assignments. He was chief of flight test engineering at Wright-Patterson AFB, and Commander, Air Force Special Weapons *(continued on p6, "Charles McCorkle")*

History In Your Hands (cont.)

This Museum is about history, but history is all about people, and that is the theme of the Museum. An aircraft is nothing without the people who make it fly or worked to bring it into existence in the first place. Collecting the stories of those people as well as the artifacts of their work is the purpose of the Museum. You can see those artifacts on display at our Museum. Some of the stories will be in this Newsletter, but the very source of those stories can often be found at the Museum itself, where “hangar flying” in the time-honored tradition of aviation is at its best.

Our exhibits at present include the FJ Fury that started it all, “Felix 107,” the last flying F-14D Tomcat, the FedEx F-27 cargo plane, DeHavilland Vampire, A4 Skyhawk, our combat veteran A7A Corsair II, F4B Phantom II, Lockheed T33 jet trainer, Northrop F5E “Aggressor,” Republic F-105B Thunderchief and, by the time this goes to press, a Navy SH-3 Sea King helicopter. We have hopes for other acquisitions that include an EA-6B Prowler, S-3A Viking and possibly an F/A-18A Hornet.

Remember too that since history is in your hands that gives you an opportunity to make some history of your own. Volunteer now to work at the Museum! You don’t have to be a pilot or an A&P mechanic – a cheerful attitude and a willingness to work are far more important.

Come on out and visit! Museum Hours are Saturdays 10-5 and Sundays 1-5. Weekday tours by appointment.

VA-37 (continued from p1)

checked his log books and saw that he had flown our A-7A on that tour. I wasn't aware that any Alpha model A-7s even participated in combat during this period!! Shiny new A-7Es were filling the decks and supplementing the B and C models.

Hondo told me his squadron received E models but had major problems with the new TF-41 engines. After grounding the E models, they pulled old A models from reserve units.

Other former Bull pilots are being invited from Jacksonville, FL and other places including a former POW who flew our A-7 just two days before his shoot down. This will be a huge weekend for us

and HAM is proud to have a unique hand in helping make this event possible.



The Wild Bulls – (l to r) John Gurley, Chris Stoner, Bart Auer, Norm Green and John Johnson

MORGAN’S CORNER

By Robert S. Morgan

I have been honored by my cohorts with the mission to write this column. “Morgan’s Corner” will cover the Golden Days of Aviation, from the end of World War II to the beginning of the jet age of commercial flying. I was fortunate to be very involved in this era.

Father Time, a common acquaintance to us all, has upon occasion managed inadvertently to mess up the facts. It will be my mission in this inaugural and subsequent columns to correct these untruths with the assistance of my aviation buddies. This will be accomplished by telling “stories,” at which I am very adept. Many of these “stories” are humorous and some will be thought provoking. All will have one thing in common: TO SET THE RECORD STRAIGHT!

When those of us of the World War II generation get together we tell “stories.” We never know what we will discuss. Many speak little of their war days, but when we get together all traces of Father Time disappear due to a common bond, for as one of us stated, “When we get together we are twenty years old again.”

To start off, then, here’s a favorite story of mine. In the late 1970s I flew a charter flight from New *(continued on p. 3, “Morgan’s Corner”)*

(“Morgan’s Corner” cont. from p. 2)

York to Athens in a DC-8-63, a large four-engine jet with tremendous range. It was normal to carry 255 passengers and a crew of nine.

Most flights left the US East Coast for Europe in the late evening to arrive at their destination in the morning. The Atlantic crossing usually takes about six hours. Roughly two hours into this flight my senior flight attendant informed me we had an interesting group among the passengers: a reunion party of glider pilots who “hit the beach” at Normandy on June 6, 1944.

I had my flight attendant bring the leader of the group to the cockpit. The ex-glider pilot was slightly overwhelmed by the size of the aircraft but more so by the numerous dials and gauges on the instrument panels. Few of the glider pilots entered commercial aviation after World War II and were unfamiliar with the advances made since then. I instructed my cabin crew to leave the cockpit door open during the crossing and the former glider pilots were welcomed to the cockpit three at a time. The visits went smoothly, especially with the assistance of my flight engineer, who would have made a first-class public relations man and did a beautiful job answering questions. My First Officer and I chipped in when we had a break.

At the completion of the ocean crossing Oceanic Traffic Control instructed us to switch over to French traffic control at an entry point called “Cork.” Our flight route took us over northern France. The weather was sensational that morning, not a cloud in the sky. We flew at 33,000 feet and you could see forever. Off to the left of our course about fifty miles of the Normandy shoreline was clearly visible. I advised French traffic control who my passengers were and requested, if possible, to deviate left of course and drop to a lower altitude to make a few turns over the beach area. Traffic control cleared me to 18,000 feet and assigned us a new radio frequency so as not to interfere with other traffic.

Over the Normandy beaches I made two circles to the left and two to the right so that passengers on both sides of the aircraft had equal views. When I looked at some of the crew and the passengers in the cockpit during this over-flight all had tears running down their faces – including yours truly!

Then we asked Traffic Control to resume our course to Athens and for a higher cruising altitude of 37,000 feet. This request was granted. Jet aircraft operate more economically at higher altitudes, and because of our descent and course deviation, more fuel was consumed. The DC-8-63 goes through 2000 gallons an hour. Nonetheless we had the latest navigational equipment on board and so we were able to cut off mileage and time to arrive in Athens on schedule.

Some might question why passengers were allowed in the cockpit at all, but this was long before 9/11 and security was more lenient. Besides, it was during the Golden Days of Aviation when flying was pure pleasure.

(a version of this article appeared in the Lenoir News-Topic on June 5, 2010)

Aircraft Recognition

North American FJ-3 Fury. The first aircraft acquired by the Hickory Aviation Museum. The Fury was the navalised version of the F-86 Sabrejet. The development of the Fury dates to 1944, when both the US Navy and the Army Air Force contracted for a jet fighter with North American Aviation. This contract resulted in the FJ-1, a straight-wing jet fighter used only by the Navy. The FJ-1 Fury was the first jet aircraft to complete an operational tour with the US Navy and for a brief time was the fastest fighter in naval service. The Navy was not satisfied with the FJ-1 and ordered the FJ-2. The FJ-2 was developed from the famous F-86E Sabrejet of Korean War fame. Adaptation to naval use required stronger landing gear, folding wing tips, catapult hinges and arrestor gear. The Museum’s FJ-3 was developed from the FJ-2, distinguished mostly by incorporation of the more powerful Wright J-65-W-2 turbojet with 7800 pounds of thrust. This resulted in an aircraft with the following performance: top speed, 678 mph at sea level; service ceiling 54,600 feet; range with drop tanks, 835 miles; empty weight, 11,125 *(continued on p. 4)*

(“*Aircraft Recognition*” continued from p.3)
 pounds; max gross weight, 20,611 pounds.
 Armament consisted of 4 20-mm cannon with
 underwing hardpoints for bombs or rockets.



The Hickory Aviation Museum’s FJ-3 Fury – the plane that started it all

The Timeline

Here are some notable aviation “firsts” occurring between June 1 and August 31.

- 8-8-1908. Wilbur Wright demonstrates the latest Wright Flyer in Paris, France.
- 7-25-1909. Louis Bleriot becomes the first man to fly across the English Channel.
- 7-2-1919. British airship “R-34” makes first airship crossing of North Atlantic in 108 hours.
- 6-27-1923. US Army Air Service conducts first air-to-air refueling.
- 7-15-1933. Wiley Post, in his Lockheed Vega *Winnie Mae*, begins first round-the-world flight, finishing on 7-22-1933.
- 6-4-1935. Fred and Al Keys begin a 27-day endurance flight demonstrating a spill-free refueling system for in-flight refueling, a system similar to those in use today.
- 8-23-1937. First fully-automatic landing system demonstrated at Wright Field, Ohio.
- 8-27-1939. First flight of turbojet-powered aircraft, the German Heinkel HE-178. This was kept secret at the time. A motorjet-powered aircraft, the Caproni Campini N.1, flown 8-27-1940, was thus

for many years considered the first flying jet aircraft.

- 8-16-1940. William L. “Billy” Fiske, an American volunteer in the RAF, is the first American killed in action during the Battle of Britain from wounds sustained 8-15-1940.
- 7-4-1942. A-20 Havoc light bombers of the 15th Bomb Squadron fly first 8th Air Force mission of World War II.
- 8-17-1942. First 8th Air Force heavy bomber mission of 1942, 12 B-17Es of the 97th BG attack railroad yards at Rouen, France.
- 6-13-1944. First operational use of cruise missiles when Germany dispatches V-1 flying bombs against targets in Britain.
- 8-16-1944. First rocket-powered fighter, the ME-163B Komet, makes operational debut.
- 6-19-1947. World speed record of 623.61 mph set by USAAF Col. Albert Boyd in F-80 Shooting Star.
- 8-25-1947. World speed record of 650.78 set by USMC Maj. Marion Carl in Douglas D-558-I Skystreak.



P-80-R flown by Col. A. Boyd to world speed record in 1946. Now in National Museum of the USAF, Dayton, OH. Photo by Jim Rosamund

- 6-26-1948. Berlin Airlift begins.
- 6-20-1951. Bell X-5 flies, first aircraft with variable geometry wings.
- 6-30-1951. Robert White flies X-15A to record height of 136,500 feet.

Got a favorite aviation fact? Next issue covers years 1783 to present for the months September 1 through November 30.

On the Inside

The Museum is always adding something new on the inside.

Favorite exhibits among our visitors include the cutaway jet engine and the Vulcan 20-mm “Gatling” gun.

Of special significance is the Preddy Foundation exhibit, dedicated to George and William Preddy, of Greensboro, NC, USAAF pilots who gave their lives in World War II.

Other exhibits include a Norden bombsight, navigation equipment, scale models, uniforms from various eras and items related to the Museum’s aircraft on ramp display.

Volunteers and Projects

The Museum can always use new and willing volunteers!

You don’t need to be a pilot or an Airframe & Powerplant mechanic. You just have to love airplanes and aviation history and be willing to learn.

The Museum can always use more tour guides or people to man the Gift Shop. If you don’t want to do either of those things remember that there are also things to be done around any office or place of work that helps in presenting a professional appearance to the public. These include prosaic but necessary tasks such as vacuuming floors, dusting display cases, cleaning signs in front of the aircraft and restocking gift shop shelves. We are an all-volunteer organization. If someone doesn’t volunteer to do a task, the task does not get done!

If you want to become a tour guide, though, see Jim Malcolm or Chris Knollmeyer. These guys are around the Museum every weekend and can teach you what you need to know about our aircraft and ramp safety to become a first-class tour guide.

The Gift Shop produces much-needed income for the Museum. If you’re interested in working in the Gift Shop ask for John Kamstra or Mark or Ginger Spencer to schedule training.

The Museum is also open for tour groups during the week by appointment. This is one area where we could really use some help! Look under the column “Tours and Testimonials” and you’ll see why. The tour groups are possible only because Museum volunteers give up their time and money (in gas if nothing else) for them. If you look at the number of groups from schools, JROTC units and scout organizations (totaling 462 students, teachers and parents) you’ll see that the Museum makes an important contribution to education. That, really, is what we as a Museum are all about. Anyone wanting to help these folks should speak with Jim Malcolm or Linda Hill.

In Memoriam

Perry “Pete” Lail, b. Jan. 31, 1925, d. April 24, 2010. Pete, a native of Caldwell County, was one of our Eagles. He was the son of Mack D. and Minnie B.P. Lail and the husband of Sarah B. Lail, to whom he was married for 57 years. Pete served in the US Navy during World War II where he was in the crew of an LST that took troops to Normandy. Pete was a member of Dudley Shoals Baptist Church. He is survived by two sons, four grandchildren, three sisters, one brother and numerous nephews and nieces. Thanks, Pete. We miss you.

Prop Wash

A frequent question asked by visitors to the Museum is “When will you have your next air show?” Easy answer: when the Museum comes up with the money! About \$100,000 is a good start and probably more, depending on fuel prices and insurance. Just a hint: we’re always looking for donations and donors!

Wish list: A hangar of our own to house indoor exhibits. The Museum is not eligible to receive certain aircraft and other exhibits because it doesn’t have the indoor space to house them.

Prop wash: (1) wind turbulence behind a moving propeller; (2) article for washing propellers, usually sought for by aviation neophytes.

Charles McCorkle (*continued from p.1*)

Center at Kirtland AFB, New Mexico. He retired from the USAF in 1966 and served as a consultant for Fairchild Industries.

This first shipment includes photographs from Sandy’s time at West Point and at Kelly Field, including aircraft such as the DH4, Keystone bomber, and P-12 pursuit. There are various promotion documents, pictures of Generals with which Sandy served, a flight jacket, and a 60s-era orange flight suit with his Major General stars on it. Then there are the medals. Sandy served our country for over 25 years and during that time was awarded the Silver Star, DFC, Legion of Merit, Purple Heart, Campaign Medals, and the Air Medal with 22 oak-leaf clusters. This collection is priceless and is awesome for us to have!!

HAM owes thanks and a debt of gratitude to Sandy’s family and in particular his daughter Jane Kaufman for making this happen. Prior to his passing, Sandy told Jane that if the collection was to be kept together, he wanted it to come to the Hickory Aviation Museum!

Until HAM has everything ready for the display of these documents and artifacts, some of which, obviously, go back over 75 years, I have given Jane and the McCorkle family my word that the artifacts will be kept safe and sound. Until then, viewing this collection will be by appointment only, so see me if you’re interested. I want everyone to participate in making this a significant and attractive display!!

Upcoming Events

On the first Saturday of every month the Museum hosts a gathering of veterans from 11 a.m. to 2 p.m. Free coffee and donuts! Meeting dates from July through September are: July 3, August 7 and September 4. The Museum’s monthly membership meeting will follow the gathering of veterans, beginning at 2 p.m.

Tours and Testimonials

We are halfway through 2010. Linda J. Hill supplied the following information regarding special groups and tours the Museum has hosted:

January 14 (Thursday) – Newton-Conover H.S. JROTC, 29 cadets and teachers including Cdr. Curt Rogers who flew our F-5E. A reporter from the Hickory Daily Record covered the event. Later in the day Tiger Cub Pack #213 with 22 scouts and parents toured the Museum.

January 16 (Saturday) – Air Force commissioning ceremony for new 1st Lt. Amanda Parnowicz with 30 in attendance including a reporter from the Hickory Daily Record.

February 10 (Wednesday) – Hickory Christian Academy with 15 in attendance.

February 25 (Thursday) – Foothills Home School Group, 25 in attendance ranging in age from Pre-K to seniors.

March 6 (Saturday) – EAA Chapter 1114 from Raleigh-Apex Fly-In. 150 people and 17 airplanes in attendance.

March 18 (Thursday) – Tiger Cub Pack with 10 in attendance.

April 11 (Sunday) – Statesville Harley Owners Group.

April 14 (Wednesday) – Icard Elementary School Kindergarten students and teachers, 50 in attendance.

April 22 (Thursday) – S. Caldwell H.S., 60 students and teachers in attendance.

April 23 (Friday) – Johnston Elementary School, 15 students and teachers.

April 27 (Tuesday) – George Hildebran Elementary School, 30 students and teachers.

May 10 (Monday) – St. Stephens H.S. NJROTC with 84 cadets and teachers in attendance; Cub Scout Group with 25 in attendance.

May 20 (Thursday) – Granite Falls Middle School, 10 students, parents and teachers.

May 21 (Friday) – Conover School, 42 students and aides.

May 25 (Tuesday) – St. Stephens Lutheran School, 45 students (K-1) and teachers.

June 5 (Saturday) -- the Wild Bulls! See article on p. 1!



Members of EAA Ch. 1114 and Hickory Aviation Museum pose for a group shot during the EAA fly-in, March 6, 2010 – photo courtesy of Linda J. Hill

Good Reads

Read a good aviation book lately? Tell us a little about it! We’re looking for fiction and non-fiction alike.

--Salter, James. *The Hunters*. Great yarn by a writer who flew Sabres in Korea. American fighter pilot Capt. Cleve Connell fights MiG ace “Casey Jones” in the sky over the Yalu River.

--Yeates, V.M. *Winged Victory*. The author flew Sopwith Camels 1917-1918 on the Western Front during World War One. This is an account of his experiences. It is a frank and explicit memoir, apparently much sought-after by RAF fighter pilots preparing themselves for combat just before World War II.

--Kenney, George C. *General Kenney Reports*. General Kenney took charge of the 5th Air Force in New Guinea in 1942. In this book, Kenney charts the major events, personalities and thinking behind the subsequent air campaign that took MacArthur from Australia back to the Philippines.

--St.-Exupery, Antoine de. *Wind, Sand and Stars*. Possibly the quintessential novel capturing the spirit of aviation. St.-Exupery flew airmail in the 1920s and record flights in Africa and the Middle East in the 1930s. If you weren’t there this book might be as close as you can come to opening a window back in time to see what it was like.

--Korda, Michael. *With Wings Like Eagles: the Untold Story of the Battle of Britain*. A good short history of the battle and the steps preceding it, in particular the development of RAF Fighter Command in an era when the belief that “the bomber will always get through” meant little money for fighter development and less for means of controlling fighters in action. Interesting portrayal of behind-the-scenes politics as well.

--Fields, Kenny Wayne. *The Rescue of Streetcar 304*. Kenny Fields was shot down over Laos in the sister aircraft of our own A-7A, Streetcar 313, and spent three days on the run from the North Vietnamese. This book details his experiences. And it’s available in the Museum Gift Shop!

--Dorr, Robert F., and Jones, Thomas D. *Hell Hawks!* Chronicles combat experiences through personal reminiscence of members of the 365th Fighter Group, which flew 1241 missions from June 1944 through May 1945 in support of American troops against the German *Wehrmacht*. This book is also available in the Museum Gift Shop!

Contact Us!

Got an idea for an article? Did we get something wrong in one of our articles? Want to join the Museum? Best approach to contact: come to one of our monthly meetings, held on the first Saturday of every month at 2pm in the old Terminal Building of the Hickory Regional Airport. You’ll meet interesting people and best of all get to see the Museum! Otherwise write the editorial staff: Tom Burkhalter, pausert@embarqmail.com, or Kyle Kirby, owstoni7@aol.com. Or visit the Museum’s website at www.hickoryaviationmuseum.org.

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HICKORY AVIATION MUSEUM

MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION

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Please tell us a little about your interests in aviation:

The Hickory Aviation Museum is dedicated to PRESERVING our aviation history, HONORING those who serve or have served in the US Armed Forces, and EDUCATING the public concerning aviation-related issues and history.

Membership meetings are held on the first Saturday of each month at the terminal building of the Hickory Regional Airport. The Hickory Aviation Museum is a 501(c)(3) Tax Exempt organization.