

Maine Powerchute Association

Newsletter

August 2005

"If it's in the Newsletter, it must be true"

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www.maine-powerchutes.org

It is with great sadness that we announce the passing of a long time friend of the Maine Powerchute Association, Art Willard. More on his life and struggle with cancer below.

This year's adventure, Chute Across Maine is shaping up – looks like we'll have a large number of MPA members participating for at least part of the trip.

Lot of things happening in the thick of the flying season, so let's go and try to cover some of them!

Art Willard loses battle with cancer

A good friend and mentor to many of us, Art Willard passed away on July 20th after a lengthy bout with lung cancer. He is survived by his wife of 47 years, Dorothy (Dot). Art was 67 years old. He was born and raised in Laconia, and lived in nearby Gilmanton, NH.

Art and a few of his friends were the first ones to start playing with powered parachutes in the region, not too long after they were introduced onto the market by Paraplane corporation of New Jersey. At that time, of course, there were no two-seater units made, so your first flight in one was also your first solo. Art and his partner Steve Reep were the only ones who gave lessons, that is they talked you through your first solo.

Art became quite good at knowing what to say to the new student and what NOT to say. Obviously, there was a whole lot of nervousness at these events, both on the part of the student and on the part of the ground crew. Art's steady, reassuring tone, words, and knowledge saved many a situation where the student was about to lose it and stop listening as panic (slowly or rapidly) gained the edge over reason.

After a couple of close calls with less than stellar students, Art gave up the single-seat instruction business. Luckily, that was about the time the two-seaters came out. He switched the primary focus of

his business to selling and repairing PPC aircraft, and became one of the biggest dealers for Buckeye.

Several months ago, his many friends held a testimonial fly-in in his honor. The outpouring of affection, friendship, admiration, and respect for him was truly impressive – Art touched the lives of many, many people in a very positive way.

Art's wife Dot was an integral part of both his daily life and his business. She had become as knowledgeable about PPCs as he was, and she was the brains behind many aspects of the business. Her warmth, ready smile, and encouraging words always made your day.

Thanks for all you've done for us, Art. We will miss you.

Chute Across Maine ready to go

The planning is pretty much complete (by MPA standards, anyway), so we should be able to pull off another MPA adventure if the weather cooperates at all.

We've written up the news release that has gone to a number of newspapers throughout Maine, as well as to some TV stations. You never know what captures the public's fancy – they might think this is a fun and newsworthy event, or they might just totally ignore us. Of course, we're used to that – in

fact, we often prefer it. Anyway, look for the announcement in your local papers.

Last reminder for those who are participating (at last count, 8 for the whole trip and another 4 for various parts of it), we will get together and set up all day Saturday (8/13) at Bethel airport (right off Rt. 2 in Bethel), stay there that night, and take off for Auburn/Lewiston at 6 AM on Sunday.

Hampden fly-in gets lucky with weather

In spite of dire forecasts that kept many of our members away, we ended up with quite a bit of decent flying weather at the annual EAA gathering in Hampden. Since only a couple of fixed winged aircraft showed up, we had a lot of room to our PPCs (and PPG, since Scott the Fan Man Adair also made it).

Thanks to Jeremy Williams and his lovely wife Sheila for once again hosting this wonderful social event – they had a cook out for lunch, dinner, and Sunday breakfast for us all. In addition, Jeremy led an interesting discussion on the sports pilot and LSA certification issues – it shed much light on a murky topic.

As usual, we had the big bonfire Saturday night. It didn't match last year's for size, as that one sort of reminded you of the picture of the Great Chicago fire of many decades ago, but it was still pretty spectacular.

The group camping over at Hampden met up with the group from Searsmont over the Bucksport bridge, and proceeded to wake up all the good citizens of that town as well. Nice little cross country trip all around, and at least one of us (who shall remain nameless so the feds will have a harder

time tracking him down) did actually make it under the famous bridge.



Some people shouldn't drink – take a look at the changes in Scott after a few beers by the bonfire

St. Dominick's Aviation Camp

The MPA was invited to be the grand finale of this week long aviation camp at Auburn Lewiston airport, performing our less than spectacular air show of take-offs, landings, turns, climbs, and descents. If your standards are low enough, I guess that makes it an air show.

The idea was that as these kids learned about all forms of aviation all week, on Friday they would actually see some real airplanes fly right in front of them. With the various contests throughout the week, the winners would get a ride in a powered parachute (first place, 10 minute ride, second place 20 minute ride).

As it turned out, some serious fog enveloped the airport most of Friday morning. Besides the PPCs, only two other aircraft showed up – a very well restored Russian Yak, and an old Cub. Neither of them could fly, of course.

Well, by 11 AM or so, the fog lifted to about 50 feet, which was good enough for at least one intrepid PPC pilot (other adjectives besides "intrepid" can be used here). So off we went, giving their first ride to the two 12 year old girls who were selected by the campers as their best (or who were judged to be the least likely to make anything of their lives and therefore were the most expendable).

Flying on the edge of a fog bank of course is like flying in a rain cloud, and chute, clothes, and



Paris, France Paris, Kentucky

As a public service announcement, here's this month's MPA fashion update

everything else got soaked pretty quickly. So St. Dom's got to end their week with an impromptu and unintended wet-T-shirt contest, much to the delight of all the horny teen and pre-teen boys who were present. And a few dirty old men as well.

Anyway, we can add one more public relations success to the MPA archives.

Treasurer's report

Once again, Bonnie Micure who continues to be our treasurer/secretary extraordinaire reports on the state of our club finances as follows:

After collecting the 2005-2006 dues from all but 11 people, we have \$1,214 in our account. Expected to be paid from that in the near future are:

\$75 for Top Gun porta-potty
 \$50 to Eastport Airfield
 \$50 donation Art Willard's charity
 \$100 for web-site domain registration
 \$50 donation to Wayne for using his field
 \$75 for misc. Top Gun & Newsletter expenses
 \$40 donation to William's fly-in in Hampden

With total anticipated expenses of \$440 at this point, that leaves us about \$760 for various other events during the year, including subsidizing part of our annual Christmas party (more on that later).



Jerry S. checks out the engine on Ed's new machine, while the other perverts check out Jerry's scrawny butt.

Oh, OK, one last chance...

Because we're such nice guys, we decided to give one more chance to those 11 of our regular members who either experienced a moment of sanity, or who just plain forgot (yes, old age is setting in for most of us!) to pay their dues, which was due 6/30/05.

So, this your last Newsletter for the following nearly-ex MPA members – we still love you, we just won't let you know all the cool stuff we're going to do and all the stupid stuff we've done in the Newsletters.

So boys, contact Bonnie with your \$20 and we'll pretend nothing happened: Wes Dagget, Al Davis, Bob Ellis, Matt Flaherty & Amanda Peckham, Dave Lindahl, Jerry Parlin, Mark Rideout, David Smith, Staurt Smith, Gordon Sukeforth, and Carroll & Susanne Werrin.

Women's Corner

One day, when a seamstress was sewing while sitting close to a river, her thimble fell into the river. When she cried out, the Lord appeared and asked, "My dear child, why are you crying?"

The seamstress replied that her thimble had fallen into the water, and that she needed it to help her husband in making a living for their family.

The Lord dipped His hand into the water and pulled up a golden thimble set with pearls. "Is this your thimble?" the Lord asked.

The seamstress replied, "No."

The Lord again dipped into the river. He held out a silver thimble ringed with sapphires. "Is this your thimble?" the Lord asked.

Again, the seamstress replied, "No."

The Lord reached down again and came up with a leather thimble. "Is this your thimble?" the Lord asked.

The seamstress replied, "Yes."

The Lord was pleased with the woman's honesty and gave her all three thimbles to keep, and the seamstress went home happy.

Some years later, the seamstress was walking with her husband along the riverbank, and her husband fell into the river and disappeared under the water. When she cried out, the Lord again appeared and asked her, "Why are you crying?" "Oh Lord, my husband has fallen into the river!"

The Lord went down into the water and came up with Brad Pitt. "Is this your husband?" the Lord asked.

"Yes!" cried the seamstress.

The Lord was furious. "Liar! That is an untruth!"

The seamstress replied, "Oh, forgive me, my Lord. It is a misunderstanding. You see, if I had said 'no' to Brad Pitt, you would have come up with George Clooney. Then, if I had said 'no' to him, you would have come up with my husband. Had I then said 'yes,' you would have given me all three. Lord, I'm not in the best of health and would not be able to take care of all three husbands, so THAT'S why I said 'yes' to Brad Pitt."
And so the Lord let her keep him.

The moral of this story is: Unlike men, whenever a woman lies, it's for a good and honorable reason, and in the best interest of others.



Navy destroyer at Eastport – awful tempting to fly over it and take a REAL close look...

Eastport 4th of July event a big success

One again, many elements came together just at the right time, and we had a wonderful 4th of July weekend at Eastport – lots of flying, lots of MPA members, and lots of sight seeing – some we did, and some where we were the objects of sight seeing.

Thanks once again to Ed Nadeau and his lovely wife Carolyn for coordinating and hosting this popular event. Ed and Carolyn also work the famous pancake breakfast line, which generally raises enough money to run the airport for a year. During this public breakfast (which boasts a larger turnout than is the total population of Eastport), the MPA provided the entertainment by flying over the site over and over, waving to the nice folks trying to enjoy a quiet Sunday breakfast (OK, it was on Monday). In general, a little of that goes a long way, but new people kept arriving, so of course we were obligated to entertain them as well.

It's not the best thing about Eastport, but it's close to the top – if you haven't done so, you must visit Raye's mustard manufacturing facility. In addition to the interesting tour explaining the process, their large variety of mustards is the best in the world. And that's it for the annual MPA mustard report.

We had a large turnout of about 20 MPA types – large enough so our annual meeting and elections were for real! More on that later.

As usual, the Navy sent one of its destroyers to the Eastport port – and of course, we couldn't fly within about 500 yards of it. Their guns were loaded (we presumed). It does add another element to our flying, where knowing where you are is not just a nice thing to do, but sort of matter of life and death. We had several philosophical discussions on whether our Navy would actually shoot down an unarmed powered parachute if it invaded their airspace. It was tempting to test the idea, but nobody was willing to get drunk enough to try it. So, another mystery remains...

While we had several nice flights, the most exciting part took place Monday morning. It was provided for our viewing pleasure by Dunbar – see details below.

Dunbar's pyrotechniques show

It had a good ending, but it could have been disastrous. Right after takeoff, Dunbar's plane developed a fire right near his fuel pump. As about 4 or 5 of were watching his takeoff, we noticed the flames as he went by us. Too late for us to get his attention, so we all rushed to start up our radios to notify him.

Luckily, the fire burned some ignition wires so that his engine lost power on takeoff, and Dunbar immediately landed on an adjoining runway. And with the engine out, the fuel supply was stopped, and the fire went out. It burned up the plastic case he had behind the seat, and did some other damage to the wiring.

Of course, any kind of fire on an aircraft is extremely dangerous. The flames themselves were just inches away from the main fuel lines and also from his main gas tank, so the possibility of a catastrophic explosion was very real. On the Kitty Hawk trip in 2003, Dunbar used up a few years worth of his good luck when he was able to make a deadstick landing in an incredibly tight spot. He

now used up the new batch of good luck he got for the next couple of years as well.

Jerry Sukeforth's subsequent examination of what happened showed that most likely, a couple of electrical wires that have been giving Dunbar a series of miscellaneous electrical problems rubbed together and had worn off the insulation so that finally a short developed and overheated the wires. These started burning, which ignited some other flammable materials nearby, but luckily, did not get to the fuel lines in time.

So, we dodge another bullet. And live to fly another day. Not much we can do to prevent such an event, except of course to check the wires on your preflight, although it could be real tough to spot a problem like that. Also, if you're having electrical problems, as those always have the potential to be dangerous, get it resolved before continuing flying.

MPA Philosopher's corner

"If a woman has to choose between catching a fly ball and saving an infant's life, she will choose to save the infant's life without even considering if there is a man on base."

Mom said she learned how to swim when someone took her out in the lake and threw her off the boat. I said, 'Mom, they weren't trying to teach you how to swim.'"

"Why does Sea World have a seafood restaurant?? I'm halfway through my fish burger and I realize, Oh my God.... I could be eating a slow learner."

MPA meeting held – new (old) officers elected

Taking advantage of the opportunity at Eastport, we were able to have our second annual general meeting with a larger than usual turnout. Not that the meeting was any more exciting, but we had a captive audience and it was too windy to fly at that time.

So, here are agenda and the minutes:

1. Treasurer's report – see page 3.
2. Update on Chute Across Maine – reviewed all aspects of it, reviewed schedule, and confirmed attendees.
3. Discussed Christmas party – noted changes – see article later.

4. Safety – Dunbar spoke about checklists
5. Sports pilot stuff – Jeremy Williams spoke about the steps necessary in the near future, with several members adding their knowledge of this process. Jeremy also spoke about a new group he is forming for aviation sport enthusiasts throughout Maine, apart from the EAA which has drifted away from our type of aviation. More to follow on that.
6. Next events – we reviewed Greenland, Top Gun, Norridgewock, and Knox County make-up fly-in.
7. MPA expenditures – the membership approved spending on donations to Top Gun related expenses, Chute Across Maine donation to charity, Williams field, and Eastport field.
8. Annual elections – this being the last item on the agenda, the membership by this time must have been pretty much asleep or semi-conscious, as they elected the existing slate of officers for one more year. The warning was, "We'll give you guys one more chance to get it right, but that's it!"



Robin takes a short nap while enjoying the peace and quiet of a beautiful evening flight at the Hampden fly-in

Anyway, here is the newly elected slate of officers for the 2005/2006 fiscal year:

Public Relations Officer – **Ed Nadeau**
Safety Officer – **Jim Holloway**
Treasurer/Secretary – **Bonnie Micue**
President – **John Gobel**

Next events

Coming up over the next several weeks will be the Norridgewock fly-in, which most of the time is a good event for us, on August 6 & 7; the Chute Across Maine (CAM) 8/13-21; Lewiston Balloon Festival, 8/19-21; Bowman on 8/27-28; and the Greenville fly-in on Sept. 9-11.

Since last year the Bowman fly-in was a very unpleasant experience for us (just a bunch of rude people, no flight control so we couldn't take off, being made to park in the mud, etc), a number of us are debating having the Knox County make-up fly-in during that weekend instead. More on that to follow.

Top Gun misfires

What is ordinarily the biggest event on our flying calendar, the Top Gun competition sort of fizzled out this year as the winds were just too persistent throughout the weekend. We still did have the usual large turnout, and snuck in a few flights Friday night, but other than that, socialization was the main activity. Which, of course, is almost as good – some say better!

So anyway, in spite of marginal winds, we decided to go ahead with the contest. Three of the four of us took off for the first flight of the competition on Saturday evening, while the fourth of us (who shall remain nameless, right Herb?) pattered around getting his plane JUST right. In the meanwhile, hanging on for dear life between 100 and 600 feet (that altitude fluctuated between those extremes every few seconds in seemed!), the rest of us are cruising around waiting for the runway to clear so we can start.

As is tradition, last year's Top Gun winner Mike O'Donnell was scheduled to go first. He finally got fed up waiting, made his bomb drop approach, and dropped his bean bag. Watching his performance, ground control decided that it was too windy for safety, and called it off. So our fourth contestant never made it into the air, which was probably the smarter thing to do anyway.



Soccer is NOT a sissy sport!!!

So, we have no winner for 2005 so far. We will reschedule it at the next possible venue – most likely on one of the legs of the CAM, since the original contestants will all be there. If not, at a fly-in later in Deblois, or Knox County.

Other than that, the rest of the Top Gun fly-in was wonderful, with great weather, a nice breeze to keep the bugs away, and lots of good company. Thanks again to Wayne for letting us use his fields again, and thanks to Mike and Dunbar for doing the mowing.

Christmas party set (again)

We were going to be real smart this year and not wait until the last minute to schedule a facility for our annual Christmas event, so we did it in February at Miller's restaurant in Bangor. Unfortunately, a few months later, Miller was sold to become a racino facility, and all engagements there were cancelled.

But, not to let a little thing like that deter us, we pressed forward, and rescheduled another facility for the same date and pretty close to the original locations. And it's only August – we are proactive!

So, the event is on Sunday, December 18th at Jeff's Catering at 3:30 PM to about 6 or 6:30 PM. Direction will follow, but it's right off the highway in Bangor. That location seemed to be popular with most of our members, since it is a reasonable drive for the downeast folks as well as the central and western parts.

Procrastinators' Club announcement

The Procrastinators' Club wanted to reserve some space for an announcement, but they did not get the message in on time.

