

ECHOES OF THE BELLRINGER

Recent Donors/Certificate Holders

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 Jim and Barb Romine Mentone
 Frank and Alice Hardesty Mentone
 Dr. John Davis Winona Lake
 Mabel Easton Indianapolis
 Savina Kralis Warsaw

Certificates of Membership were awarded this year for in kind services to:

*Aaron L. Largent of Rolls Royce Corp. Indianapolis for the donation of a Rolls Royce turbine engine.
 *Arlene Casner for donating a dress form.
 *Brenda Clemans for shipping many Bell Model 47 parts to us at a discount from Benton, Kansas.
 *James Seidel for his uniform display.
 * Jerry White for his uniform display, pictures, posters and helicopter information.
 *Bill and Sherri Winn Warsaw



L-R Cathy and Tim Whetstone, Jerry and Mary Lou White, Elvira and Gerald Romine

Annual Meeting

The 32nd annual meeting of the Lawrence D. Bell Museum Inc. was held on June 17 th, at the Museum. Project reports were presented. Sue Pyle and Lois Miller were reinstated as directors for three more years. Acquisition of parts for helicopters was discussed as well as sheet metal work and painting on the model 47-H and 47-G helicopters. A grant was received from KREMC Operation Round-up. One of our oil paintings was cleaned and restored with this grant. The Kosciusko County Convention and Visitors Bureau awarded us a grant to be put toward printing costs for a new flyer.

PRA Volunteers

A hardy hand shake and a pat on the back for those who volunteered to help at the recent PRA Convention:

Lois Miller, Linda Cochran, Mary Boggs
 Gerald Romine, Royal Baum,
 Ron Scott, Marsha Scott
 Jeremy Epplemann, Forrest Kantner
 Robert Flenar, Terry Menzie
 Billy and Carole Steele
 Vickie Swihart , Eileen Bowser
 Jerry and Mary Lou White
 Orabelle Meredith



Lowell Berentsen and Gerald Romine

A big thankyou to Assistant Professor Lowell Berentsen and the school of Aviation Technologies at Southern Illinois University, Carbondale, for the gift of helicopter parts. President Gerald and Tim made the round trip to Carbondale and returned with parts for our on going restorations.

Greater Fort Wayne Aviation Museum Annual Meeting

Since its dedication in July 1984, the Greater Fort Wayne Aviation Museum has been a source of aeronautical history enjoyed by thousands of visitors each year. President Dave Holbrock welcomed our MUSEUM directors pictured to the left.

The featured speakers were Marge Stahl and her brother Lt. Colonel Gail Scarbrough. Lt. Colonel Scarbrough flew 175 F4 combat missions during the Viet Nam War. His Air Force career also included a tour as solo pilot with the USAF Thunderbirds Flight Demonstration Team, assignments as commander of F-16 operations for the Top Gun Fighter Weapons School and chief of weapons and tactics for Tactical Air Command.

American Huey 369



Johnny Walker Visits

John and Alan Walker (brothers and business partners) of Peru, Indiana, are the founders of AMERICAN HUEY "369" and are committed to remembering our Veterans and the Huey aircraft they depended on while in Vietnam. John was a Marine Corp helicopter pilot and Captain who flew the Huey and other helicopters while in the service. Johnny was a recent visitor and is pictured to the right.

Flying Dutchmen

The Nappanee Flying Dutchmen Radio Controlled Aircraft Club presented flying demonstrations and static displays at the Museum on August 30th. Many of the aircraft were built by members of the club. Some were battery powered, some by model airplane fuel. The Museum was open and welcomed many new visitors. The Club members were enthused by the activities of the day and plan to return next year.



helicopter demonstration by Flying Dutchmen RC Club



L to R Johnny Walker, Jerry White, Phil McClure, Gerald Romine

Jerry White Newest Board Member

Jerrell R. "Jerry" White of Rochester, IN was born in Lebanon, IN. Raised in Indianapolis, he graduated from Arsenal Technical High School in 1956. After graduation, he joined the Air National Guard at Hulman Field in Terre Haute, IN, where his father Robert B. S. White formerly served. His job with the Guard was that of aircraft/engine mechanic. In 1960 Jerry transferred to the Air Force Reserve at Bakalar AFB, IN where he served as flight engineer on C119G/J aircraft. During his time at Bakalar he amassed 1500 hours of flying time. In 1970 his unit moved from Bakalar AFB to Grissom AFB, IN. At Grissom he served as an aircraft/engine mechanic on A-37 aircraft. After a brief break in service, Jerry rejoined the US Air Force Reserve as an aerial refueling technician (commonly called *boom operator*) at Mather AFB, CA. Soon after completing his training, he transferred back to Grissom AFB and worked as a boom operator on KC-135 aircraft from 1978 to 1981, accumulating another 1500 hours of flying time. During Jerry's Guard and Reserve military career he also worked private sector positions as described below. However, in 1981 he became a full time AF Reserve employee in the Air Reserve Technician program. As an engine mechanic in the 434th Tactical Fighter Wing, he served as both a civil service employee and an AF Reservist. From that position he was promoted first to base engine manager and then of production control and diagnostician. When the A-10 unit was deactivated in November 1994, MSgt White retired from the Air Force Reserve and entered a civilian position working for the 434 Air Refueling Wing in their Base Operations function. He was later promoted to base operations supervisor and then to airfield manager, the position he held when he retired from civil service February 1, 2001. For a few months after his civil service retirement he worked for, Satellite Services Inc., a civilian contractor who took over a number of functions formerly performed by AF Reserve civilians. As the airfield manager for that company he was not only responsible for the airfield and base operations, but also the transient maintenance and weather functions. Jerry resigned from SSI and permanently retired in Oct 2001. As a private sector employee during the first three decades of MSgt White's Guard and Reserve career he worked in a variety of occupations in IN, KY, AZ, and CA. He worked as an engineering trainee in paint spray equipment, an apprentice tool and die maker, a draftsman, a publications detailer, an assistant manager for an architectural scale model company, a publications production specialist, and office manager for a microfilm company, a research associate, the manager of publications services, an engineering administrator and manager of a printing company.



Our Prime-Mover was donated by Mr. Wakula in memory of his son. Ruben Conley transported this wheelbarrow from California.

It's A Bell!

In late 1945 the Burlington, Vermont division of Bell, headed by Julius J. Domonkos won a contract from Kaiser-Fraser's Graham-Paige Motors Corporation. The contract was for eighty thousand 5- horsepower engines and transmissions for rototillers. Because of a strike, Graham-Paige cancelled the contract. Larry ended up with a lot of Kaiser-Fraser stock and a lot of engines/transmissions. Commercial business appealed to Larry. At a meeting in his office he asked for ideas for a product they could develop. "Well," he said, "we're going to put a small engine on something, even if it's a wheelbarrow!" (the Prime-Mover)

Home-O-Nize was conceived in a backyard in Iowa on a Sunday afternoon in 1943 by C. Maxwell Stanley and Clement T. Hanson. Their idea was to build a successful company that would provide work for returning veterans. After finding a suitable plant location in Muscatine, Iowa, hiring workers, investing in the necessary machinery, and securing a contract from Stampings Inc., the Home-O-Nize

company manufactured its first product in April 1947; an aluminum hood used in installing commercial gas at farms, residences, and businesses. A steel shortage in 1947 and 1948 prevented the company from ever realizing its original plans; as the founders waited out the shortage, they took on contract work that eventually would lead them into the office supply business. Sales from the products made from scrap in 1947 amounted to almost \$20,000. With the help of a contract for farm equipment from John Deere's Harvester Works, 1948 became Home-O-Nize's first profitable year. The company was still under-financed, however, and sought additional contracts to keep its manufacturing plant busy. In 1949, Home-O-Nize signed a contract worth \$450,000 with Associated Manufacturers, Inc. to produce a newly designed corn picker that attached directly to the front of a tractor. What seemed like a promising job, however, turned into "the greatest fiasco in the history of Home-O-Nize," according to Stanley. Home-O-Nize produced the corn picker, with designs provided by Associated that proved full of bugs; at its first field test, the corn picker failed after just one pass. Months of costly redesign ensued, for which, as it turned out, Associated was unable to pay. Litigation ensued, and Associated eventually defaulted on the contract, entering into bankruptcy. As a result, Home-O-Nize was forced to reduce costs and that meant making some considerable staff reductions. The company salvaged what they could from inventory and wrote off a loss of \$52,541 on the corn pickers. Moreover, with additional write-offs from their unrealized kitchen cabinet project, Home-O-Nize's cash position diminished by more than \$100,000 during 1949. The company's financial position was at the worst level

ever experienced.

The company survived, though, through loans, stock purchases, and a contract with the **Bell Aircraft Company**. On March 2, 1950, Home-O-Nize bought Bell's manufacturing rights to the Prime-Mover, an engine-powered wheelbarrow with a capacity of 1,000 pounds, and incorporated its subsidiary as The Prime-Mover Co. This purchase meant steady income and ultimately saved the company. The combined sales of Home-O-Nize and Prime-Mover totaled more than \$600,000 at year-end 1950. By 1953, total consolidated sales passed the \$1 million milestone and two years later exceeded \$2 million. Profitability resumed in 1952, to start more than four decades of uninterrupted profits. In the mid-1950s, the company strove for a greater market penetration through expanding sales of its office products and Prime-Movers, while raising productivity, improving the quality of products, and strengthening its financial position. The result was a decade of explosive growth. Annual sales passed \$5 million in 1961 and surpassed \$10 million in 1965. By 1969, net sales were \$25 million. Office products were becoming the chief product line for Home-O-Nize during this time. By 1987, under the leadership of chairman and president Stanley Howe, HON had become known as the most efficient producer in the industry worldwide, capable of producing a desk every minute, a file every 40 seconds, and a chair every 20 seconds. Company sales reached \$555 million that year, which also marked HON's 40th year in operation. After a difficult decision, HON sold Prime-Mover to BT Industries, a worldwide materials handling equipment company. In 2004 the company changes its name to HNI Corporation. Sales in 2004 exceeded \$2 billion.



Restoration

Mentone's Bell Aircraft Museum received a \$750 Kosciusko County REMC Round-Up grant to apply toward the restoration of an oil portrait of Lawrence D. Bell. The work was done by Monica Radecki, South Bend. She is pictured with the painting that will be displayed in the Museum.



Two aircraft during factory demonstration time at the PRA convention.



Jerry White's Display Case



Pfc. Verl E. Roose used this foot locker, wore the hat and jacket during his service in the United States Army. Roose served during World War II from April 1941 to November 1945.

LAWRENCE D. BELL *Aircraft* MUSEUM, INC.

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ECHOES OF THE BELLRINGER is published by the Lawrence D. Bell Aircraft Museum, Inc. The Museum is a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization. Story suggestions, submissions and comments are always welcome.

www.bellaircraftmuseum.org



LAWRENCE D. BELL *Aircraft* MUSEUM, INC. Presents:

Carl Hurley & Jeanne Robertson

Joining them is baritone Jim Rittenhouse at the Paramount Theatre in Anderson.

Monday April 20, 2009

Cost per Person:

\$77.00 Call Linda 574-353-7296

