



FLAGSHIP *Detroit*


A NON-PROFIT ORGANIZATION DEDICATED TO PRESERVING THE LEGACY OF
A SIGNIFICANT ERA IN AMERICAN AVIATION


Preflight


Welcome Flagship Detroit Members to the beginning of another flying season!



Some Numbers

 The Foundation is grateful to have 1160 members with 51 of those people on the pilot seniority list.

 In 2007 the Detroit was displayed at 47 different venues.

 Over 500 new members experienced a ride back in history on Detroit in 2007.



We would like to take a quick moment to thank all those folks that have participated in past and present events. Add a special thanks to the spouses for their continued support. Without their understanding, the Flagship Detroit might never get off the ground.

Please don't forget that it is your hard work that keeps this historic airplane alive. It is your hard work that preserves the heritage. And it is your hard work that puts the smile on people's faces.

A great example of one of those smiles and the people we touch was Earl Harris. Earl Harris was a World II veteran and DC-3 pilot. He was in his late eighties when an American Airlines agent brought him to the Detroit during our visit to Philadelphia last year. Not only was he given an opportunity to be aboard the Detroit on a heritage flight, but he was given an opportunity to fly. There were no words to describe the elation on his face. Unfortunately, Earl has flown West. But before he passed on, Earl took the time to send us a letter of appreciation thanking our membership for the memories we left him. [[Earl's Letter](#)]

With the countless commitments that our daily lives demand, it is gratifying to know that we can make a difference in someone's life by giving of ourselves. Perhaps you will reflect upon this thought when considering whether to participate in a Detroit event. Just writing a check to renew your membership can make a difference.



Please welcome our latest pilot recruits; Bob Gross, Mike Cuminsky, and Frank Walley and Gene Christian.





Before Takeoff

✈ Although the 2008 schedule is reduced because of last year's hectic pace and other factors, there are still events that need your help. Take a moment to review the calendar on the website. Come join us!

✈ As many of you are aware, the economy is not quite flourishing. The sky is falling once again in the airline industry. Just when we thought the pain at the gas pump was about to subside, it got worse. Needless to say, flying a 70-year-old airplane has become much more expensive. Although The Foundation is actively pursuing major funding, every little bit helps. At the risk of sounding like the Sunday sermon that you heard last Sunday, please renew your membership if you haven't done so already. Consider an extra donation if your finances allow. Thanks.



Cruise

✈ Kansas City(MCI) was the home of Detroit this past winter . Thanks to Preston Jones, numerous MCI volunteers, and the usual suspects (you know who you are...), the airplane underwent an extensive inspection. In addition, some repairs were completed. Also, please accept our gratitude for the volunteers and crew at Alliance (AFW) in preparing Detroit for its first air show of the season.

✈ Miami(MIA) was the venue for our first event and station visit of the season. Everyone from the station manager to the ground personnel were invaluable with their assistance. Please accept our special thanks to Mitch Segermeister and Jana Sinn. They fulfilled many of our never-ending requests.

✈ After the Miami visit, the airplane flew a quick trip north to Opa Locka for a private event. Captain Ron Tallent, Captain George Dennis, Captain John Heilman, and Pilot Meradeth Guthrie participated. Gary Boyce was also recruited due to the absence of members affected by AA's Super 80 cancellations. We appreciate the hard work of all involved, especially for taking up the slack when Captain Dennis was taken down by an uncooperative back.



✈ In Miami, Captain Ron displayed his usual dedication to the cause. He focused his efforts on installing a new ignition harness in time for the Scottsboro, Alabama airshow on May 7th,. The crew for Scottsboro was Captain Ron, Captain John Thatcher, Pilot Dave Buffington, Jeff Selby, and new pilot member Gene Christian.

✈ Although only one heritage flight was flown, the majority of the public was given the opportunity to visit the airplane and its history through the static display. A great time was shared by everyone involved. The Detroit made new friends along with a little funding to keep the blue side up.

GROUND SCHOOL IN SHELBYVILLE

On May 20th, approximately 18 people attended DC-3 ground school in Shelbyville(SYD), Tennessee. Captain John Heilman's replacement, Gene Christian, taught class for the first time. His expertise made the ground school a great experience. Welcome to the party Gene!

In addition, several people were trained either as new first officers or as re-qualification pilots on the airplane. A second Spring ground school will be offered at SYI on June 26th.





Landing

About three years ago, for the first time, I had the distinct pleasure of meeting the active members involved with the Flagship Detroit Foundation at the Fort Lauderdale Air & Sea Show. As the contributing editor for the Jumpseat column in FLYING MAGAZINE, I was there to write a story about the Flagship Detroit Foundation. The thought never crossed my mind that I would become involved enough to participate in Detroit events, let alone add a DC-3 type rating to my pilot license. *(Nor did I imagine that my checkbook balance would decrease at such a rapid pace.)*

And now George Dennis, the founder of the organization, has asked me to write the newsletter as a function of my new title as communications director. (It seems that no one quite knows what that title really means...) I consider it an honor and a privilege to be associated with such quality people.

For those not familiar with my background, I am currently a 767 check airman for American Airlines. I have been employed by the company for almost 24 years. I enjoy the opportunity to fly all types of general aviation airplanes including gliders and seaplanes. I have also been fortunate enough to pursue my other passion of professional writing. You might say that I am a pilot with a bad writing habit.

My wife, Carol, and I reside half the year in Connecticut and half the year in the Florida Keys. Carol is happy to participate in Detroit events when the "other girls" are also in attendance.

Once again, we'd like to thank you for your participation in the Flagship Detroit Foundation. Please don't hesitate to call on us with any questions. And if you haven't already, consider asking friends and family to become involved in this fun and worthwhile organization.

All the best,

Les Abend

**Communications Director
Flagship Detroit Foundation**



Calendar

July 19 McChord AFB

Tacoma, Washington

July 23 Cheyenne ANGB

Cheyenne, Wyoming

Aug 14 O'Hare AA Station

Chicago, Illinois **(Canceled)**

Contributors



Communications Director and active AA 767 Captain

LES ABEND



Executive Director and founder, Flagship Detroit Foundation

GEORGE DENNIS

Photos courtesy of many Foundation members