

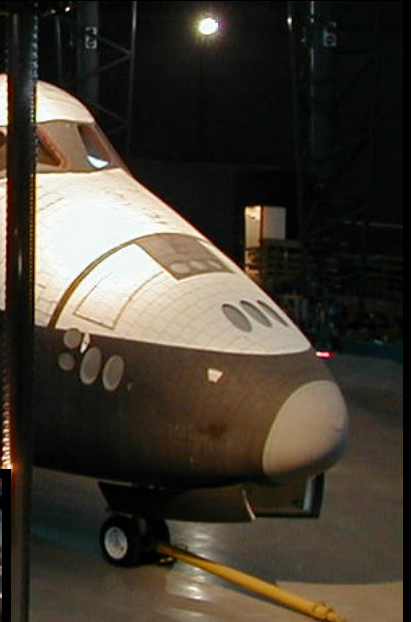
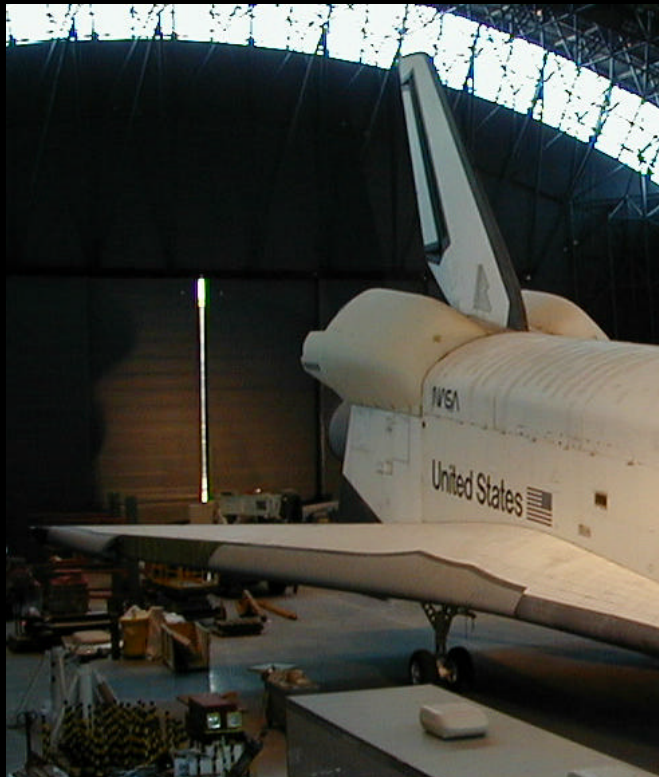
THE WRIGHT STUFF



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Publisher J.R. Fisher
Editors Jane Fisher
John Troan



CONTENTS

A VIEW FROM THE CATBIRD SEAT	3
J.R. Fisher	
SECURITY REPORT	4
Spring Brooks	
ENGINEERING REPORT	5
Brad McDonald	
COMPUTER OPERATIONS REPORT	6
John Troan	
MORE PICTURES FROM SMITHSONIAN'S UDVAR-HAZY CENTER	7
Taken by John Troan	
UPCOMING EVENTS	8

TOOL BOX: Pentium IV-2.0GHz; HP LaserJet 1200 & DeskJet 722C; Lotus WordPro; Adobe Acrobat.

IMAGES - Title Banner

Wright Flyer from NASA/Ames PAO photo archive; *U.S.S. Kitty Hawk* (USN CV-63) from navicp.navy.mil; *Constitution* class cruiser from gwu.edu/~rljones/khawk.

IMAGES - Featured Front Page

A collection of photos taken by John Troan at the Smithsonian's Steven F. Udvar-Hazy Center near Dulles Airport. From top: a Lockheed SR-71 Blackbird spy plane; space shuttle *Enterprise*; and an Air France Concorde, a Boeing 307 Stratoliner, & the left wing of a Boeing 367-80 (prototype of the 707).



A View From the Catbird Seat

By J.R. Fisher



Welcome to the new year and the new voyages of the *U.S.S. Kitty Hawk*!

I was very pleased that so many of you were able to make it to the dinner at the Kanki on the seventeenth. While the arrangements did not work out as well as planned, everyone seemed to have a good time and enjoy the food, the show, and the company. Our thanks again to our host, Tom Mukoyama.

For those of you who like to attend cons, there is a Far Point at the Hunt Valley in Maryland on the weekend of February 14th. What a nice Valentine's day gift! There seem to be many upcoming cons this winter and spring, so go on-line and see if there is anything special you want to attend.

As for the *Kitty Hawk*, the next big event is UNC-TV's Festival! This year we were able to secure two dates

to help answer phones: March 6th from 6 p.m. until 11 p.m. and March 27th from 6 p.m. until 11 p.m. March 6th is already our regular meeting day so we will simply troop over there after the meeting. Rather than tie up successive weekends with *Kitty Hawk* activities, I wish to have the April meeting on March 27th, so that we can again leave from the meeting and go to the telethon. We can decide at the upcoming February meeting if we wish to wear uniforms or shirts. We need at least twenty people for each Saturday, so please call me and sign up for one or both dates, or at the February meeting. Let's have another good showing!

Several people have already asked about away trips this spring and a number of good suggestions: overnight trip to New Bern, N.C.; long weekend to Charleston, S.C.; day or overnight to Wilmington, N.C.; day trip to C.S.S. Neuse; weekend trip to Norfolk, VA area; weekend trip to Washington, D.C. to see new Air and

Space Museum. All of these are doable but we need to decide dates and make arrangements early so as many people as possible can attend.

Also, we need to look at our civic activity which has fallen off the last few years. Something we can all get behind and enjoy doing.

Unfortunately, it is that time of year again when I have to remind everyone to renew in STARFLEET and that your dues on the *Kitty Hawk* are due. They remain the same as in past years: \$24.00 per household. Please pay at your earliest convenience.

If you cannot make it to the February meeting, please find the time to give me a call and let me know your feelings on our activities for the first half of the year. Your input is necessary to us if we are going to please the majority of the membership.

Esse Quam Videri



Security Report

By Spring Brooks

The Farmer's Almanac

Under the guiding hand of its first editor, Robert B. Thomas, the premier issue of *The Old Farmer's Almanac* was published in 1792 during George Washington's second term as president. Although many other almanacs were being published at that time, Thomas's upstart almanac became an immediate success. Back then the Almanac cost only six pence (about nine cents).

An almanac, by definition, records and predicts astronomical events (the rising and setting of the Sun, for instance), tides, weather, and other phenomena with respect to time. So what made *The Old Farmer's Almanac* different from the others? Since his format wasn't novel, we can only surmise that Thomas's astronomical and weather predictions were more accurate, the advice more useful, and the features more entertaining.

Based on his observations, Thomas used a complex series of natural cycles to devise a secret weather forecasting formula, which brought uncannily accurate results, traditionally said to be 80 percent accurate. (Even today, his formula is kept safely tucked away in a black tin box at the *Almanac* offices in Dublin, New Hampshire.)

Thomas's last edition, in 1846, was not much different from his first, over 50 years earlier. However, in that time he established *The Old Farmer's Almanac* as America's leading periodical by outselling and outlasting the competition. He died in 1846 at the age of 80, supposedly reading page proofs for the 1847 edition.

In 1848, *Old* was permanently and officially added to the title of the *Almanac*. By 1900, it began to orient toward a more general audience by replacing the scientific agriculture articles with general features on nature and modern life. In 1938 a new editor dropped the weather forecasts. In their place were

substituted temperature and precipitation averages. The public outcry was so great that the forecasts were in the next year's edition.

Robb Sagendorph knew a good deal when he saw one, and in 1939 he bought *The Old Farmer's Almanac* and became editor. Sagendorph, who had moved his family to tiny Dublin, New Hampshire, four years earlier to start *Yankee Magazine*.

In 1942 a German spy was apprehended by the FBI after being landed on Long Island, New York, by a U-boat the night before. The impact of this event was felt all the way to Dublin, New Hampshire, because *The Old Farmer's Almanac* was found in his coat pocket. The U.S. government speculated that the Germans were using the Almanac for weather forecasts, which meant that the book was indirectly supplying information to the enemy. Fortunately, Sagendorph managed to get the government to agree that there would be no violation of the "Code of Wartime Practices for the American Press" if the *Almanac* featured weather indications rather than forecasts. It was a close call that almost ruined the *Almanac's* perfect record of continuous publication.

The story since World War II has been one of growth and expanded range. The *Almanac* passed the four million circulation mark in the early 1990s. Robb Sagendorph died in 1970, after 30 years as editor, and his nephew, Judson Hale, took over. In 2001, Janice Stillman became the 13th (and first female) editor of *The Old Farmer's Almanac*. She maintains the style established by her predecessors.

The Old Farmer's Almanac's weather forecasts continue to be regarded with a mixture of humor and respect. Skeptics can laugh, but there have been several miraculous predictions, including the July snow of 1816, which was forecast in a few errant copies; the 1953 Worcester Tornado, foreseen with the phrase, "Heavy squall and that's not all"; and the near-perfect prediction of Hurricane Andrew which hit southern Florida in 1992. Since the beginning of this century, the National Weather Service has maintained accurate

records of the nation's weather, and the *Almanac's* accuracy can be checked -- tradition has held it consistently at 80 percent. *The Old Farmer's Almanac* has never missed a single year of publication.

Jan. 2004, Forecasts for Region 4: Piedmont & Southeast Coast

- Average Temperature: 39° (3° below avg.);
- Precipitation: 5" (0.5" below avg; 2" above southeast)
- January 1-2: Rain; snow north
- January 3-6: Sunny, cold
- January 7-10: Warm, then rain turning to snow
- January 11-13: Sunny, very cold
- January 14-16: Rain, mild
- January 17-21: Sunny, cold, then warm
- January 22-25: Rain, mild
- January 26-31: Cold, then rain

Feb. 2004, Forecasts for Region 4: Piedmont & Southeast Coast

- Average Temperature: 46° (2° above avg.);
- Precipitation: 5.5" (avg. north; 4" above south)
- February 1-9: Rain, mild
- February 10-16: Sunny, cold
- February 17-27: Showers
- February 28-29: Heavy rain

THERE WILL BE four eclipses in 2004, two of the Sun and two of the Moon.

1. Partial eclipse of the Sun, April 19. This eclipse will not be visible in the United States or Canada.
2. Total eclipse of the Moon, May 4. This eclipse will not be visible from most of the United States or Canada.
3. Partial eclipse of the Sun, October 13. Visible from Alaska and Hawaii. In both Alaska and Hawaii, the eclipse will begin about 6:00 p.m. local time and end about sunset.
4. Total eclipse of the Moon, October 27-28. The beginning of the umbral phase will be visible in North America except in the extreme Northwest. The end of the eclipse will be visible throughout North America.

Engineering Report

By Brad McDonald

Happy New Year! It's already off to a great start, we're back in space and on Mars! We just celebrated the 100th anniversary of First Flight and, on a more personal note, my wife marked five years cancer free. It's a major milestone for cancer survivors and we plan a major celebration!

First Flight Centennial was great! The only bad thing was the absence of JR. Yes, our fearless leader caught the flu bug and missed the trip, I'll let him elaborate. The event was well organized and well attended. Some people made a big deal of the duplicate flyer's inability to get off the ground, but they missed the point. We were gathered to celebrate the original event. After all, what were the chances that the exact same circumstances would occur one hundred years later. It was fun and we saw a lot interesting displays, people and aircraft. There were many flyovers and we had some wonderful entertainment too. On one really bad weather day, we skipped the scheduled events and headed for the Hatteras lighthouse. My friend from New York had heard so much about the move and wanted to see it. Of course, it's closed, but the new visitor's center was opened and we walked the old site and chatted with some of the other visitors. It was a good trip and we saw the rebuilt road and the lingering damage from Isabel. It's still pretty bad out there, there were a lot of damaged businesses and homes. Several of the public beach houses were completely gone.

While I was at First Flight, the Air and Space Museum Annex at Dulles Airport opened. See John's report as he actually went to it. I've just been reading reviews, all good except for the *Enola Gay*. It seems some people are offended by the public display of the plane which dropped the first atomic bomb. Here we go again.

Also in D.C., this Memorial Day will witness the dedication of the new

World War II Memorial. Scheduled for May 27-30, it's expected to be the last, great gathering of the veterans of that war as most are now in their 80's. I'd love to go, anybody else want to go?

Our annual dinner, postponed to January 17 due to First Flight, had quite a turnout! There was a mix-up though. It seems Tom (Kanki manager and fellow Kitty Hawker) had called me to confirm our final head count, but he used my cell phone number and I had left it at home. When I arrived, Tom was holding two tables for us, which was very unusual as Kanki doesn't take Saturday night reservations, and at that point there was already a two-hour wait. We filled the two tables quickly and so the Kanki crew swung into action and cleared a table quickly, working everyone else from Kitty Hawk in ahead of the two hour wait crowd. Thanks Tom! I know this was a difficult night for the Kanki folks as they started the night with one table out of commission. I've always had good experiences at Kanki, but they're 'family' where I work. It's nice to know that this translates to the extended family we call *Kitty Hawk*.

President Bush's ambitious space program is already drawing much criticism from many sources. Most center on the big issues of cost, risk, and why go. Since I have a space-oriented license plate on my car and wear T-shirts and caps emblazoned with space oriented themes, I'm always asked these questions. "Well, I'm not a NASA official, but I'll try." is my usual reply. See what you think and if you have any additions, let me know.

First of all is cost, which isn't as much as most people believe. The actual budget is currently about 1% of the total federal budget. All we have to do to pay for a lot of what Bush is suggesting is eliminate the waste, or pork as it's referred to. Pet congressional projects like building bridges in the middle of nowhere and

studying the mating habits of mosquitoes and such and we have a more than adequate space budget. In any case, the NASA budget is small, comparatively speaking.

As for why, If you have to ask, then you left your imagination, curiosity and sense of wonderment in grade school. If Columbus and his many peers had the same attitude 500 years ago, we wouldn't be having this discussion. It's basic human nature to wonder what's over the next hill, on the other side of the river or further out, into space. Cost and risks, how can you put a price on discovery whether dollars or life? Sure you must minimize the risk and it's not going to be cheap, but the idea of just sitting around and doing nothing is much more disturbing to me. Any astronaut knows the risks. After *Apollo 1*, others still went, after *Challenger*, they still went and after *Columbia*, they still want to go.

I suppose the easiest means of financing is by sharing the cost with other nations. China and Japan seem to be leading the way now. Russia is in debt to just about everyone, so unless their fortunes change, their input will be limited to expertise and manpower. Perhaps a United Nations Space Agency is needed, but let's not say no simply because of cost.

Speaking of space, the current shuttle fleet will be retired by 2020. That date is fixed, based on airframe fatigue and structural stresses. Still, there is no replacement near or even in the planning stages. Perhaps NASA should turn it over to the Air Force. The old X-craft program of the late 40's, 50's and 60's was carried out jointly by NASA (NACA) and the Air Force. It may be time to return to this partnership. After all, the Air Force has a much longer history of aircraft development, research, testing and procurement.

Well, I'm running out of space and time, so see you at the next meeting!

Computer Operations Report

By John Troan

It's been a busy couple of months for Computer Ops -- or at least for me.

The highlight was definitely the trip some of my family took to the Smithsonian's Steven F. Udvar-Hazy Center next to Dulles airport, just outside Washington, D.C. The trip almost didn't get off the ground -- literally -- when my brother found a bad nick in the prop during the preflight inspection. Fortunately, the mechanic at the airport was only a phone call away. After a little repair work to smooth-out the prop edge, we were loading up for the half-day trip to D.C.

Sitting up front on the way up, I was able to see the Center from the air, positioned just off the south end of one of the north-south runways. (For the curious, it's just southwest of the far end of 1L.) Even from the air, the Center looks impressive -- and *big*.

After getting a car and directions from the place we left the plane, we ventured over to the Center. It did cost \$12 to park the car at the Center's lot, but it's free to get into the exhibit hall itself. We got there right before lunch, so we made a direct beeline directly to the food. (There was a temporary eatery set up with decent box lunches at one end of the floor, but the food court is supposed to open sometime in March.) With lunch out of the way, it was time to see the planes...

The main exhibit hall is shaped like the stereotypical round-roofed hanger, but with three levels of walking area and plane elevations. All of the big planes were on the ground and the smaller ones were suspended at the level of the top catwalk & at about half that height.

Everything's primarily organized into ten groups, based on the type of aircraft or artifact it is. The only exceptions were that some of the big planes "encroached" into areas they didn't belong in. The Boeing 307 Stratoliner (pictured on the front cover

next to the Concorde) is definitely not part of "Sport Aviation" is located in, but I'm just nit-picking. (The 307 was the first commercial aircraft with a pressurized cabin.)

The one plane that cannot be missed from the distance is the Concorde, visible from halfway down the length of the hall -- and possibly from the opposite end if there weren't two other big planes blocking the direct line-of-sight. An interesting note is that Air France agreed to donate one of their Concordes to the Smithsonian when it was retired -- and the agreement was made over ten years before the fleet was retired.

Located across the main hall from the entrance is the access to the James S. McDonnell Space Hanger. The only thing in it -- for now -- is space shuttle *Enterprise*. Based on the photos I'd seen before my trip, I thought the only view I'd get is from the front. Fortunately, my family was heading down the one of the mid-level catwalks toward the shuttle and insisted that I go over there, too. I was rewarded with an outstanding angle to see *Enterprise*, as seen in the main picture on the front cover. (Reports I've run across mention that the space hanger will open in July.)

Some of the other interesting planes include:

- A Piper Cub. (My brother commented that no collection of planes is complete without a yellow Cub.)
- An Aichi M6A1 Seiran, designed and built by the Japanese during WWII to be based from a submarine. The note on the one at the Center is that it's the only one now in existence anywhere.
- A Junkers Ju 52/3m, a German plane based on the Ford Tristar -- including the three engines.
- A Northrop N-1M flying wing, precursor to today's B-2 bomber.
- An XV-15 Tilt Rotor (donated by NASA) that looks a lot like the Osprey current in testing.

- FedEx's first jet, based on the design for a small passenger jet, with modifications to accommodate cargo.
- A Boeing 367-80 (or "Dash 80") that was the prototype for the Boeing 707.
- Two MiG models, including the 1960's-era MiG-21.
- The U.S. Marines version of the new Joint Strike Fighter. (The "STOVL" lettering on the tails indicated it was for the Marines.)
- *The* quarantine facility used for Apollo 11. (Currently with the other space objects near the Concorde, which will all probably be moved to the space hanger.)
- One of the Spacelabs that flew, this one on nine different missions from 1983 (Spacelab I) to 1997 (microgravity research).
- A collection of engines -- props and jets -- that show several different designs and design hybrids, including a couple that have a gun barrel in the middle of the prop shaft.

In total, there are easily well over a hundred planes and related objects that cover the range from early aviation through mid-20th century craft & modern aviation and into spaceflight.

Also on-site are an IMAX theater, the museum store (no surprise), and the Donald D. Engen Observation Tower. The Tower, which doesn't require an additional charge, is supposed to give a good view of the flight activity at Dulles International and also includes an exhibit on air traffic control.

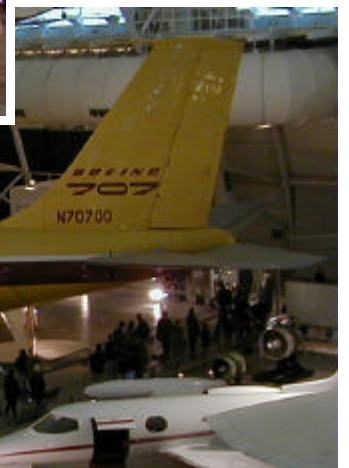
If you're in the Washington, D.C., area for any reasonable length of time, I highly recommend a trip out to the Udvar-Hazy Center for a short day. (According to the information I have, there is bus service from the National Mall to the Center for \$7 round-trip. My guess is that the Mall end of the trip is the Air & Space Museum.)



Air France Concorde



Boeing 307 Stratoliner



**Boeing 367-80
(707 Prototype)**

**Joint Strike Fighter
(STOVL version)**



Upcoming Events

Jan.	27	<i>Star Trek IV</i> Special Edition DVD Released
Feb.	7	4 p.m. Ship Meeting, Fisher Home
	24	<i>Voyager</i> (Season 1) DVDs Released
Mar.	6	4 p.m. Ship Meeting, Fisher Home 6 - 11 p.m. UNC-TV Festival!
	27	4 p.m. Ship Meeting, Fisher Home (Apr meeting) 6 - 11 p.m. UNC-TV Festival!

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