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First Non-Stop Aerial Crossing of the Atlantic

Captain John Alcock and Lieutenant Arthur Whitten Brown, in a modified Vimy IV, made the first non-stop aerial crossing of the Atlantic. They took off from Lester's Field, near St. John's, Newfoundland on June 14, 1919. They landed June 15, 1919 at Clifden in Ireland. The time for the crossing was sixteen hours and twenty seven minutes.

The news of the adventure spread like wildfire and the two men were received as heroes in London. For their accomplishment they were presented with Lord Northcliffe's Daily Mail prize of £10,000 by Winston Churchill who was then

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Biplane Successfully Recreates Historic Atlantic Crossing

Ottawa - Two pilots in a replica WWI biplane successfully repeated a historic transatlantic crossing Sunday, July 3rd touching down in western Ireland, just over 20 hours after departing eastern Canada.

Steve Fossett, 60, who in March became the first person to fly around the world alone in a plane without stopping or refuelling, and United Airlines pilot Mark Rebholz, 52, touched down at a golf course in Clifden, Co. Galway at 5:04 p.m. (1604 GMT).

They had departed from St. John's in the Canadian maritime province of Newfoundland Saturday night.

Fossett and Rebholz were recreating the trip by Britons John Alcock and Arthur Brown, who set a world record when they departed from Newfoundland on June 14, 1919 in their Vickers Vimy biplane, arrived in Clifden, Ireland

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Chairman's Corner

By Fred Adams



"THE FUTURE OF AVIATION IS NOW" is the theme selected for the 2006 Upper Midwest Aviation Symposium. Thanks to the council members for other very good ideas to choose from. There are many challenges that need our input to

promote aviation in North Dakota, the Upper Midwest, and nationally.

The Aviation Trust Fund which includes funding, modernization, and staffing of the Air Traffic Control System should be of concern to us all. How general aviation security in the post 9-11 era is handled is another important concern. Let us not forget the Special Use Airspace within the State of North Dakota when listing a few items going

on.

Within North Dakota, there is work being done to promote aviation for flight instruction at smaller airports that do not have a full service FBO or flight instructor at the airport. This is a joint project by the North Dakota Aeronautics Commission, the ND Pilots Association, and hopefully other member groups as well as the Aviation Council itself. We tried to stimulate new pilots at the bigger

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Chairman from page 1

airports with a program called the "ND Aviation Wannabee Program." When we looked at how to promote new student starts at smaller airports, this program was not designed for that. We have had several different ideas on how to promote new starts. The short story, as we work on this new program, is to offer to defray the cost (maybe fuel costs only) of getting the instructors and their airplane to the students. Many of the details are being worked on this summer. If you have ideas, please call or e-mail one of the council members.

At the end of last month, all the FAA Part 135 operators came to Bismarck for a meeting regarding the status of "Point to Point Airways" plan to start a new type of Part 135 service in the state and

region. The ND Aeronautics Commission hosted this with the City of Bismarck, giving their overview and a lengthy question and answer session between the operators and the City of Bismarck. I am going to assume that others will talk about this at length, so I will move on.

The state is losing its FSDO Manager. Mr. Bob Jensen will be retiring next month. Do not be surprised if six months to a year goes by before the FAA will have a new manager in Fargo. Thanks, Bob, for your work and enjoy your retirement.

On the other end of this spectrum is the note that the FAA has issued two emergency revocations within the last month within the state, one for a pilot and another for a mechanic. I do not have the complete story from either side, but I always like to think that action is

reserved for the most serious of safety or other reasons. If these two occurrences are of that magnitude, then the aviation community is safe and well served.

I do know for a fact that an inspection took place early one afternoon last month and before that same afternoon was done, a debriefing was conducted and statements by the FAA were made to this individual that there MIGHT be a case of fraud. My goodness, that will send most any one involved into a tailspin. Within a couple of days after that debriefing, that changed to only require part of re-ride. Are we going back to a "shoot first and ask questions later" type of overview from the FSDO?

Lots of things are happening and our future in aviation starts now. Come and join us. Enjoy your summer.



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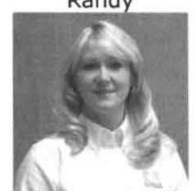
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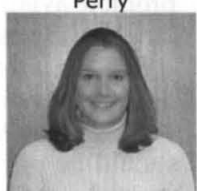
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FROM THE DIRECTOR'S CHAIR

By Gary Ness,
Director,
North Dakota
Aeronautics
Commission



Most of the ND General Aviation community is aware of a program that the Aeronautics Commission has been developing for GA Airports. The program is called "General Aviation Airport Crisis Communication." The planning effort was developed to assist the management of the 82 GA airports in the state to better understand their vulnerabilities and how to handle the communications that are related to a crisis event on the airport. The Aeronautics Commission contracted with Marketing and Management Solutions, Inc. (M-Squared) to develop this program for the airports and the aviation community. A vulnerability assessment tool based on the Transportation Security Administration (TSA) guidelines was developed and applied. A vulnerability study was developed for all 82 airports

through the collection of data from both airports and local emergency responders. This data presentation will be written into a format for inclusion in a final report. The M-Squared team held 5 regional meetings across the state to help implement the program. A communication plan for each airport will be developed and presented to the local airport management for their use. This plan will give each airport a snapshot picture of the vulnerabilities as the airport sees them and the same from the emergency responders' view. The first responders in each community were a valuable asset in this effort and the Commission gives thanks and extends to them appreciation to those volunteers that are so important to the rural areas of North Dakota. The plan also gave each airport management team a template for the dissemination of information if an emergency event should happen on the airport. Communication

protocols have been established, and outlined in the plan, with local law enforcement, local emergency management, State Radio, TSA, NTSB and FAA to help the airport management with who, what, when, where, why and how to deal with an event.

I know that the ND aviation community is aware there are concerns with GA security and safety related to 9-11 that will not go away; and to prepare ourselves for any event is a wise thing to do. The general aviation airports, in response to Governor John Hoeven's request in October 2001, we're the nation's first state system to provide a local security plan to the Governor and the Commission. The Commission hopes that this communication program, which will be in the mail soon, will help in the management of all general aviation airports and we thank them for their dedications to the cause of aviation safety and economic development in the state.

Say Goodbye to Hundreds of NDB Approaches

216 NDB approaches will be decommissioned. Although the FAA has yet to actually switch them off the air, the decommissioned NDB stations will no longer be flight-checked, maintained, approved for use or shown on updated charts, according to AOPA. "The FAA decommissioned them after careful coordination with AOPA and the aviation community," said Randy Kenagy, AOPA director of advanced technology. This means that the FAA "can stop spending money on something few use and will have more funds for GPS-WAAS approaches to general aviation airports," he added. The FAA has proposed decommissioning a total of 479 NDB procedures, with the final set of procedures scheduled to be eliminated in September. AOPA told the agency that 60 NDB approaches should be saved because they provided the lowest minimums. However, the FAA retained just 35 of the 60, according to AOPA.

NDEAA

By Darrel Pittman



Can you believe the weather we've had? It makes flying miserable. There have been many fly-ins and Young Eagle events scheduled and the weather just keeps getting in the way. Let's hope it starts getting better soon before our airplanes get contrary and go away.

Minot EAA Chapter has had a couple of cookouts at the Flying "S" but it has been pretty chilly. Bismarck/Mandan had a meeting planned to go to Linton and visit Mike Gunia and that didn't work out. Judging from e-mails I get from Bob Miller, they are having a tough time on that side of the state also.

Well, keep your chins up – we've got more summer coming, I hope. There are many events scheduled this year. Some of them are soon. Don't forget the North Dakota State Fair, July 23-30; Kent Pietsch will be presenting an air show at the Minot Airport on the 23rd. Northern Neighbors Day at Minot AFB on August 14th, and then the Luscombe drawing at the Minot Dakota Territory Museum on August 21st. Warren Pietsch's fly-in at Sawyer will be on September 17th, and the always-great Turtle Lake breakfast fly-in on September 18th.

We also have some Young Eagle events planned for the summer. Contact your Young Eagle coordinator and volunteer to help. We've got lots of kids and we need pilots.

So, you see we have a lot going on this summer, come and join in the fun. CLEARED TO LAND.

First Crossing from page 1

Britain's Secretary of State. A few days later both men were knighted at Buckingham Palace by King George V for recognition of their pioneering achievement.

The Journey Begins

John Alcock and Arthur Whitten-Brown pushed their way through an excited crowd



Vickers Vimy being assembled at St. John's, Newfoundland, 1919.

which had gathered at the entrance of the London Royal Aero Club. Alcock carried a small linen bag in his hand, and after greeting General Holden, Vice-President of the Club, he handed over the bundle of 197 letters that Dr. Robinson, Postmaster in Newfoundland, had entrusted to the fliers. These were then rushed to the nearest post office, where they were franked and forwarded (airmail stamps not yet having been invented). The letters had made the long journey from Lester's Field near St. John's, Newfoundland, to London in record time

At Lester's Field, Alcock and Brown had climbed into their "Vimy" flying crate to prove, as Alcock put it, that "there are possibilities of flying non-stop from the New World to the Old." Like Kohl, Fitzmaurice, and von Hunefeld, who were to fly in the opposite direction nine years later, Alcock and Brown had wanted to take off on a Friday, the 13th. But the two Englishmen actually set out in their converted World War I Vickers bomber on June 14.

After three weeks of exhaustive preparation, they

had finally made their start. Some of their efforts had been spent in attempting to find a smoother takeoff point than Lester's Field, but after a week of combing the rough terrain, they gave up the search.

The sky was overcast, even though the latest meteorological report from United States Lieutenant Clements had forecast good weather conditions. It was 1:40

p.m. as the "Vimy," with the throttle wide open, and both engines at full power, taxied over the bumpy ground at Lester's Field. Alcock headed his aircraft into the west wind. "Depressingly slowly the 'Vimy' taxied toward a dark pine forest at the end of the airfield," Brown reported. "The echo of the roaring motors must have struck quite hard against the hills around St. John's. Almost at the last second Alcock gained height. We were only inches above the top of the trees." Alcock's recollections were rather more brief: "At 1:45 PM we were airborne," he said.

1,890 nautical miles of open sea and sixteen hours of flying time lay ahead of the Englishmen. Only fifteen and a half years after the Wright brothers powered flight, they had now set off on what turned out to be one of the most breathtaking flights in the history of aviation. The sirens of vessels in St. John's Harbor blew a final farewell as the "Vimy" passed overhead at a height of 1,083 ft. Alcock turned the aircraft eastwards, in the direction of Ireland. The biplane gained height, and the

coast of Newfoundland was left behind. The altimeter soon read 1,300 ft.

For four hours, the "Vimy" flew peacefully in the open sky, and the difficult takeoff was forgotten. For Alcock and Brown it was just one more of the 1,001 takeoffs they had made as Flying Corps pilots. Already anticipating his arrival in England, Brown remarked, "Great Scott, what a banquet we'll have in London. Roast duck, I can just imagine it, green peas. . ."

As the "Vimy" flew over the Atlantic, the conversation of the two men seated in the open cockpit turned to the friends who had helped them at Lester's Field: Bob Lyon, Maxwell Muller, Montague and Harry Couch. And they recalled the various attempts that others had made to cross the waste of water between the old and new worlds. Five years earlier a British company, Martin and Handasyde Ltd., had set about building a transatlantic aircraft. The scheme had been financed by Edgar MacKay. As with the "White Bird," in which Nungesser and Coli later undertook their ill-fated attempt to fly the Atlantic, the undercarriage of the aircraft was to be released shortly after takeoff. The fuselage was built like a boat. Misfortune seemed to hang over the undertaking. Shortly before the aircraft's completion, Gustav Hamel, the appointed pilot, failed to return from a routine flight in his Morane-Saulnier over the English Channel.

Alcock and Brown's ambition was to fly the Atlantic non-stop. Although they would not be the first to make the crossing, they aimed at being the first to do so without intermediate stops.

At 5 p.m. fog banks suddenly appeared on the horizon, stretching without a break from north to south. "We've got no choice," Alcock said. "We've got to go in!" Brown made another calculation of their position and recorded the wind speed as zero. The "Vimy" disappeared into the fog. It was so thick that neither man could make out

the blades of the propellers. Even the comforting roar of the Rolls-Royce "Eagle" engines was muffled, and Alcock and Brown continued to fly virtually soundless and blind.

Time went slowly. Brown glanced at his wristwatch. It was six o'clock. "Won't this ruddy fog ever end?" he grumbled. Instead of replying, Alcock slowly took the "Vimy" higher, hoping to find good visibility above the fog bank. Before dark Brown might once more be able to take his position by the sun; but after nightfall it was questionable whether the stars would be bright enough to guide the fliers reliably on their course.

Suddenly a terrifying noise broke the silence; the right-hand engine sounded like a machine gun blazing. The two men were scared stiff. The exhaust pipe of the cylinder facing inwards had split, and the engine was shooting naked flames into the slip-stream. Alcock and Brown remained helpless as the metal turned red hot, melted away and finally started striking the controls in white-hot globules.

On top of this nerve-shattering clatter, a further discomfort developed. The heating in the men's leather flying suits stopped working. The batteries had run out. "We froze like young puppies," Alcock said later, "and in the narrow cockpit we had no room to move about. At any rate," he added somewhat ruefully, "Brown did manage to get some movement later. . ."

Flying above the fog brought them no luck. They had barely broken through the upper level of the bank when they discovered clouds above them, and not a sign of the hoped-for sun. And directly ahead lay mountains of clouds which were too near to be avoided. The "Vimy" plunged straight into them, and was thrown like a leaf. The experience that today's supersonic pilots, astronauts and acrobatic and fighter pilots, with their advanced equipment and controls barely notice, presented severe

physical discomfort to Alcock and Brown: the up and down of their stomachs caused by the plane's bucking response to controls and gusts of wind. Again and again, they had the feeling that the "Vimy" stood motionless before plunging down.

Alcock, who had been pressed down into his seat by the violent movement of the plane, glanced at the altimeter. The reading was 4,000 ft. The pointer began to jump about as the instrument recorded 3,200 ft., then 2,900 and down to 1,000 ft. The plane was descending in a spiral. But it occurred to neither pilot nor navigator that their end might have come. Their one thought, according to Alcock, was, "However shall we get back on our original course and avoid being lost in the endless waste of the Atlantic?"

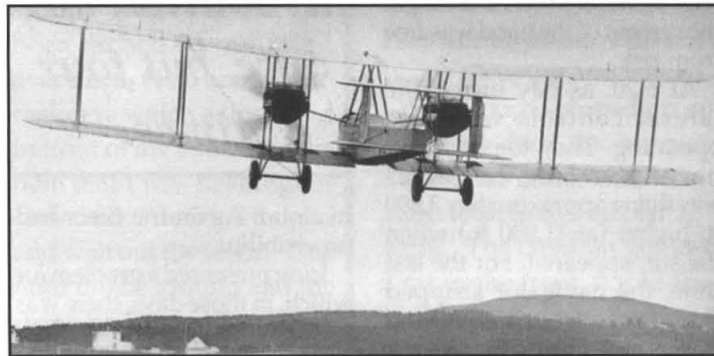
The altimeter, at that moment the most important instrument, showed 100 ft. Their chances of survival narrowed, when suddenly, at a mere 65 ft. above the waves, Alcock managed miraculously to regain control of the "Vimy." The weather had begun to change. When Brown was later asked how he and his captain reacted to their worst ordeal, he replied, "We grinned!"

Alcock had opened the throttle to the full. He swung the plane through 180 deg. onto its old course, pulled back the joy stick and climbed slowly to a height of 7,200 ft. There was now more to it than just grinning: both men suddenly realized that they felt very hungry. Alcock made his feelings known by pointing his left hand at his mouth while he closed and opened it. Brown got the message. He reached behind him for their frugal meal of sandwiches which had been prepared for them by Miss Agnes Dooley at St. John's. They had also brought some whisky on board as well as a bottle of beer which they emptied and finally threw overboard.

The long-distance flight routine continued. Checks were made regularly on

the revolution rate of both engines, on the cooling system temperature, on the oil pressure, and on the fuel consumption as they switched from an empty tank to the next full one. This gave Brown a task for which he was thankful: it made him warm. Before the tanks which directly fed the engines were empty, they had to be refilled by vigorous pumping from the main tank in the fuselage.

All these experiences and five hours of flying were behind them when they again saw the sun. It was now directly behind them. Brown knelt on



At 1:45 pm, we were airborne.

his seat, grasped the sextant and calculated their position. It was a small triumph for them that they were only a few miles south of their planned route. Then once again they were swallowed up by clouds. They continued to fly with no visibility, chilled and deafened by the noise of the right-hand engine, until 9 p.m.

Then Brown wrote on a page in the log book: "Can you get above the clouds by 9:30? We need stars as soon as possible." He held up the scribbled lines and focused a pocket flashlight on the page. Alcock nodded his head rather indecisively. They were now flying at 5,400 ft., and climbed even higher, but found no way through the cloud.

Midnight came and went. It was now June 15, but there was no relief for the fliers. At 12:05 a.m., Brown wrote to Alcock: "Must see stars now." Their altitude was 6,500 ft. and they were surrounded by clouds and darkness. The only illumination was the green glow of the control panel

lighting and the bursts of flame from the starboard engine. Alcock pulled the joy stick back lightly and opened the throttle. The clouds went on without end.

At 12:15 a.m., Alcock dug his fingers into Brown's shoulder, and pointed above his head. There was the moon, Vega, and the Pole Star, Polaris! Like a shot, Brown was up on his seat, operating the sextant with his numbed fingers. In the frozen cockpit, Brown placed the open log book on his knee, spread out the navigation tables on the right-hand side,

held them with his elbow and calculated the "Vimy's" position by the dim light of the flashlight which he held in his left hand.

Meanwhile, in the newsroom of London's "Daily Mail" discussions about the "Vimy" and its crew were gloomy. A cable from St. John's had announced the takeoff; since then, there had been no news either from Newfoundland or from the fliers. The newspaper staff knew that the "Vimy" carried a radio transmitter, but after three hours' flight it had gone dead, a fact neither Alcock nor Brown knew at the time. If all went well, the competitors for the £10,000 prize should reach the Irish coast at 9 a.m., but there was no sign of life from the "Vimy." Dispatches piled up on the news editor's table, but not one of them was from Alcock and Brown.

At 3 a.m. the fliers thought they saw the first signs of dawn. Suddenly they also saw something else: a new mountain of cumulus clouds ahead,

again too close to circumvent. A sudden turbulence seized the machine and flung it out of control. Alcock and Brown felt themselves being pressed down into their seats. They were drenched by rain, which turned into hail. The swirling journey went on and on. At 90 knots the speedometer jammed. Alcock struggled to regain control and ended up more by luck than by good judgment in the safety of a nose dive. He cut off the gas and relied heavily on his experience as a night bomber pilot. The plane plummeted from 4,000 ft. to 1000 ft. and, just above the surface of the water, Alcock gained control of the "Vimy." For a fraction of a second he could not believe his eyes—he saw the sea lying vertically, and then with a quick automatic reflex action he straightened out the "Vimy" and opened the throttles to the full.

"The salty taste we noted later on our tongues was foam," Alcock reported. "In any case the altimeter wasn't working at that low height and I think that we were not more than 16 to 20 ft. above the water." Brown's only comment was: "I kept thinking about Lieutenant Clement's weather report." Specifically, he had failed to forecast the snowstorm into which they had flown immediately after their recent narrow escape.

Like a shroud, snow covered the wings, fuselage, the struts, even the engines. Ice formed on the engine parts and Alcock needed all his strength to move the rudder. Unless something drastic was done, the men knew that the engine would stop and all the controls would go out of action. Once again, at an altitude of 8,500 ft., the non-stop fliers fought their way forward. Snow piled up in the cockpit, and both men crouched behind the windshield for protection from the icy wind. Snow on the carburetor air filters made both the engines run irregularly. Brown knelt on his seat and took off his goggles so that he could see more clearly. Ice now began

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to form on the engine intake connection; at the same time a layer of it was spreading over the inspection windows through which the fuel supply could be observed.

As far as Brown was concerned, the only possible way of avoiding a crash was to make a trip out onto the wings. He grabbed a knife and swung his legs out onto the nose. Seeing what he had in mind, Alcock stood up from his seat and tried to hold his companion back. Brown jerked himself free, and, in the blinding snow, he wriggled forward from strut to strut and from cable to cable, holding on with one hand. His left leg caused him difficulty because it was still stiff from wounds he had received in the war.

The limping lieutenant gradually removed the ice from the inlet connections and cautiously cleaned the inspection window of the fuel intake. The slip-stream tugged at him, and frost nibbled at the flesh on his hands. Brown

cleared the air filters of snow—then he had to go back again, back and over the nose to the other wing and the other engine.

Meanwhile, Alcock had more than enough to do to keep the plane as steady as he could—flying at 8,000 ft. over the Atlantic in a snowstorm! One false move and Brown would have been plunged to his death, and his own number would undoubtedly have been up soon afterwards.

With astonishing bravery, Brown repeated his acrobatics, not once, but four times. Not a single step or a single movement of the hand was free from risk.

At 6:20, as day broke, the lateral controls were not operating. They too had iced up. An hour later, the "Vimy" was flying approximately 3,800 ft. higher (at 11,800 ft.) when the sun appeared. For the last time, the navigator stripped the gloves from his aching fingers and took up the sextant. His calculations showed that they were still on course. But

it was obvious that the plane had to be lowered into warmer air if the elevator and other controls were to be prevented from freezing. Alcock moved the joy stick forward; the plane descended and was engulfed

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in cloud. Again the fliers had no visibility.

Icing presented a problem for which, in those days, there was virtually no practical answer. Even during this latest descent of the "Vimy" there was a distinct danger of the elevator's icing up. They were now only 30 minutes away from their longed-for goal. Alcock kept his eyes glued to the altimeter as the plane descended from 9,800 ft. to 6,800 ft. With the reduced throttle settings, the cutout engines were running perceptibly quieter. Then at 3,200 ft. Brown suddenly shouted: "It's melting! The ice is breaking up!"

Both men were soon sitting in a puddle; in the cockpit, too, the snow was melting. At 1,000 ft. above the ominously rough ocean, Alcock reopened the throttles, and the engines responded; both ran smoothly. Twenty minutes later the men were triumphant: they had sighted land. Brown searched on his map. It was not Galway for which they had been heading, yet Brown knew that the land must be Ireland. Then he saw the top of Connemara, identified the town of Clifden, and scribbled his observations into the log book which he held up for Alcock to read.

After flying toward the small town at a low height,

Alcock circled over the streets and looked for an outlying meadow on which to land. He made a slow curve, found nothing suitable, then headed towards the Clifden radio-station and circled round it. Beyond the transmitter's tower, he noticed an invitingly green meadow. The men in the transmitter building waved and gesticulated in vain. Below the deceptive green covering lay the extremely dangerous swamp, Derrygimla Moor. Alcock thought that the people in the tower were waving a welcome, and he brought the "Vimy" down—into the swamp. The plane ploughed a short, deep four-track furrow and buried its nose far into the mud. After 1,890 miles and 15 hours, 57 minutes of flying time, the heroes had landed in a bog. They had to remain seated, held fast by their safety belts.

The men who had watched the "Vimy" land rushed toward the plane, jumping from one grass tuft to another through the swamp. A man by the name of Taylor was the first to reach the fliers and he asked breathlessly:

"Anybody hurt?"

"No."

"Where are you from?"

"America."

The news of the adventure spread like wildfire, and there followed for Captain John Alcock and Lieutenant Arthur Whitten-Brown a hectic round of greetings, receptions, speeches, galas, and banquets. Brown made his shortest speech in Clifford Street, London. When he appeared with Alcock on the Aero Club balcony he stopped the cheering and said: "No speech now. You wanted us. Here we are!" At the banquet which followed the officers were greeted with an unforgettable menu unlikely to be found anywhere else. It consisted of: Oeufs Poches Alcock, Supreme de Sole a la Brown, Poulet de Printemps a la Vickers Vimy, Salade Clifden, Surprise Britannia, Gateau Grand Success.

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TRIM TAB

By Bob Simmers



As I am trying to decide what to write about this month, a very large and vigorous early morning thunder storm has just rushed through. Sounds like summer weather would be a good topic. As you recall from your early days of weather training, thunderstorms demand great respect, but they do not impose the same delays as other weather seasons. Thunderstorms build rapidly, move swiftly, and dissipate about as fast, unlike stale spring and fall weather that comes with some stalled low pressure system. Those systems can become stagnant, lay around for weeks and hide the sun for days at a time. Thunderstorms this time of year are usually very isolated with good weather close by. There is rarely any buildup that cannot be circumnavigated. The exception is a fast-moving cold front. A fast-moving cold front is the result of cold air pushing under warm air and causing all kinds of turbulence. There is normally a low level roller cloud that if entered would be unsurvivable. When navigating around thunderstorms, give them plenty of room. There are times when the draw into those storms can be very violent. I had an event years ago when, even though 20

miles away from the storm, caused a 2000 foot per minute rate of climb, a 60 knot increase in airspeed, and a 30 degree pitch down, just to maintain altitude and get further away from the storm. An event that has been etched in my mind ever since. I had another occasion to watch a line build in front of me and when the hole that I was heading for closed up, I decided to land and wait out the storm. One hour on the ground and the front had passed and we were on our way again. Hail is another consideration in the vicinity of a thunderstorm. Another reason to give summers weather systems a wide berth.

Thunder storms are easily recognizable and with the right decision avoidable. Summer flying can be some of the most scenic and enjoyable, but remember, thunderstorms are not as bad on the inside as they look from the outside, they are worse. Avoid at all costs.

Please contact me with topics that you would like to have discussed.

Till the next edition, keep your wings level and your tank full.

Happy Flying

Bob Simmers
E-mail: bobs@c-ram.net

A FLIGHT OF FIRSTS

By Owen Blickensderfer

A friend of mine took his three kids to the airport. He told them that there might be an airplane that they could look at. The little boys got all excited when they heard that. They had never before been close enough to a small airplane to get a good look. I "happened" to be there when they arrived, and the plane was in front of the hangar. The eldest, a girl, was tall enough to see in the back window. Their father had to hold the boys up to see in. You cannot see much from the back window of a Cherokee 140 I said, "I know the man that flies this airplane. I do not think he would mind if you got up on the wing and looked in the door."

So the kids stepped up on the wing of the Piper. Through the open door, the instrument panel fascinated the youngsters. The father said to me, "Do you think it would be all right to sit in this airplane?" I was pretty sure it would be all right. The children got in the back seat and my friend and I sat in the front. I told the kids that everyone has to put a seat belt on when they sit in an airplane, so I helped them buckle up. Then I "noticed" that the key was in the ignition switch.

Continued on page 13

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CALENDAR OF EVENTS

JULY

Fly-In/Open House

July 23, 2005
Vince Field (4V4)
Northwood, ND
Northwood Flying Club,
7:00 am - 10:30 am
701-587-5171
/6014/5400/5370

Planes on the Plains

July 23, 2005
EAA Chapter 317
Casselton Rgnl (5N8)
Casselton, ND
Bob Miller 701-347-5519

ND State Fair Airshow

July 23, 2005
Minot, ND

AUGUST

New Runway/Facilities Dedication

August 7, 2005
Hamry Field Rgnl (K74)
Kindred, ND
FAR 215/8.7
701-428-3159/3457/3344

Annual Fly-in

August 14, 2005
Theodore Roosevelt
Rgnl (DIK)
Dickinson, ND

Northern Neighbors Day

August 14, 2005
Minot Airforce Base
Minot, ND
9:00 am
701-723-6212

Fly-in Breakfast

August 21, 2005
Annual Aircraft
Sweepstakes Giveaway
Dakota Territory Air
Museum
Minot, ND
8:00 am

Army Golden Knights

August 27-28, 2005
Duluth, MN (DLH)

SEPTEMBER

Peace Garden with Canadian Pilots Group - Labor Day

September 5, 2005
Dunseith, ND (S28)
10:00 am - 4:00 pm
Larry Taborsky
701-220-2569

NDPA Barbeque

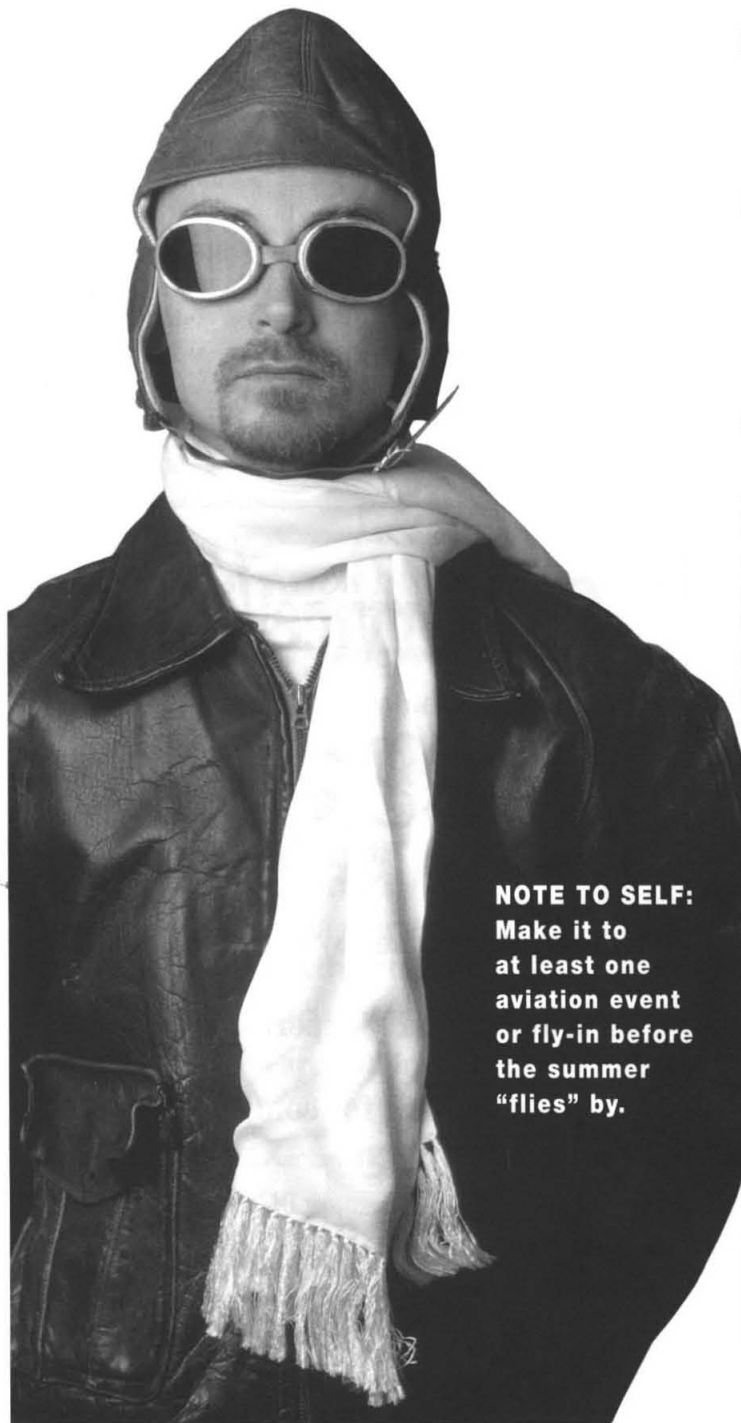
September 10, 2005
Minot, ND
11:00 am - 3:00 pm
Don Larson
701-833-6837

Open House Fly-In Breakfast

September 11, 2005
Edgeley Muni (51D)
Edgeley, ND
8:00 am - noon
Jim Johnson 701-493-2168

Annual Fly-In

September 18, 2005
Turtle Lake Muni (91N),
Turtle Lake, ND
Ray Herr
701-448-2253/2252



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NDPA

By Paul Hanson and Larry Taborsky

WHO ARE YOU?

The North Dakota Pilots Association has members across the state and even outside the boundaries. With few opportunities to get together as a group, it was time to get to know each other. A survey was sent to the 308 addresses of new and recent past members, inviting them to renew their membership and tell us about themselves. 22% responded, 50 members rejoined the group, and the following information was gleaned:

We are members of the NDPA for one of four reasons, in surprisingly equal numbers:

- 1) to get together socially
- 2) to stay informed about aviation
- 3) to help and support general aviation
- 4) the love of flying and all that goes along with it.

Half of the survey respondents were also members of the Airplane Owners and Pilots Association (AOPA). More than half of us are private, commercial, instrument rated, and far fewer were multi-engine, ATP, or CFI. Logically, seminars requested for the symposium in Bismarck in March were greatly in favor

of single-engine, single-pilot operations, with a large interest in GPS and IFR training.

One third of us fly mostly for business, 1/3 mostly for pleasure, and 1/3 do an equal amount of both.

The "average" North Dakota pilot has flown 4974 hours, 149 last year, and has 26 years of flying experience. Half of the respondents had 15-30 years flying, 1000-4000 hours of flying, and flew 20-150 hours a year. The top three

of them a coffee and chat with them for a while, will you?

The choice of the primary means of navigation is equally shared by visual means and GPS, with VOR sliding in priority to being used half as much as the other two, and ADF just about disappearing from the survey. The last time this survey was done, in 1996, ADF was listed as the major service used, with second place shared by GPS, LORAN, and VOR (in that

The "average" North Dakota pilot has flown 4974 hours, 149 last year, and has 26 years of flying experience. Half of the respondents had 15-30 years flying, 1000-4000 hours of flying, and flew 20-150 hours a year. The top three aviators had 50, 50, and 55 years of flying, 25,000, 28,000, and 40,000 hours total time, and flew 600, 800, and 1000 hours last year. It amazes me how much experience we have out there!

aviators had 50, 50, and 55 years of flying, 25,000, 28,000, and 40,000 hours total time, and flew 600, 800, and 1000 hours last year. It amazes me how much experience we have out there!

Money and time were the major reasons for not flying more, you said. If you happen to meet the pilot who doesn't fly because "there's no place to go", buy

survey, visual was not given as a choice.)

What do you like to do? The same things pilots have liked to do since 1996, said the responses: fly-ins, air shows, and hangar flying. The new-comer to the group of favorite things is safety seminars. Fargo FSDO: here's to your people who are providing friendly and helpful information to our states' pilots!

The ND Aviation Quarterly favorite sections, for the top five listed, were:

- 1) all of it
- 2) flying events and information
- 3) the Director's Chair
- 4) Bob Simmer's articles
- 5) Association columns

To the one respondent who said, "Nothing," please pass it on to someone else who might enjoy reading it.

Pressing issues that the NDPA wants to stay involved with include the use of the military airspace over North Dakota, and the plan to provide financial assistance to help CFI's train pilots at smaller airports. One third of the surveys said that they did not have a CFI available to them at their airfield, and a hand full said that such a program would benefit them. Not everyone even commented on the military airspace initiative, but of those who did, 26 were in favor as long as some monitoring and guidelines were established, and 14 thought it would be asking for trouble to approve such a plan.

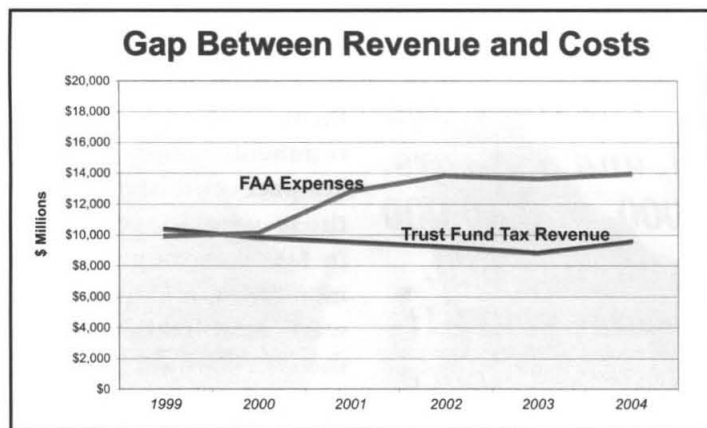
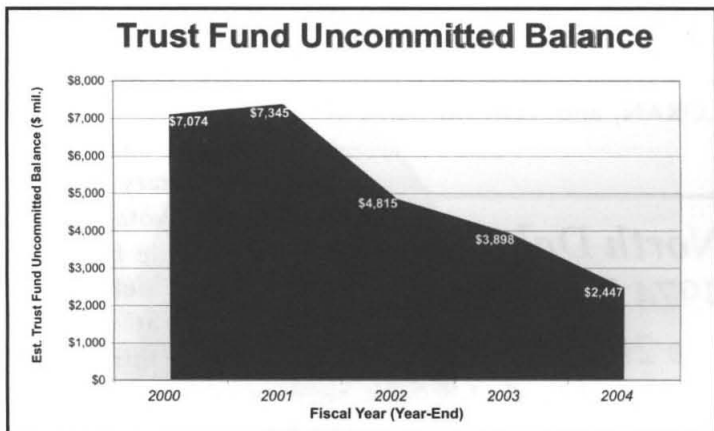
Thanks for your responses. The symposium agenda and the efforts of the officers you elected will reflect your wishes.

TRUST FUND TAXES SET TO EXPIRE IN 2007

THE FAA NEEDS A STABLE REVENUE STREAM FOR THE FUTURE

There is a problem with the aviation Trust Fund.

- The Trust Fund pays a large share of the bills for the FAA to operate the national airspace system.
- A troubling gap has grown between the revenue that comes in and what it costs to run the FAA.
- This has sharply driven down the Trust Fund's uncommitted balance.



The taxes and fees that support the Trust Fund expire in 2007.

- During the last reauthorization of the tax structure in the mid-90's, the debate lasted nearly two years. The taxes and fees expired and cost the aviation system roughly \$5 billion, which was never recovered.
- Today, there's little cushion. You would have to go all the way back to 1983 to find a lower balance in a year when taxing authority did not expire.
- Because we no longer have significant reserves in the Trust Fund and today's higher appropriation levels, the expiration of the taxes without replacement would mean that the Fund's balance would soon go below zero.
- We can't allow that to happen.

What is causing the problem?

- The aviation industry has changed dramatically.
- In prior years, relatively higher ticket prices helped keep the Trust Fund solvent, enabling the FAA to make investments for the future while operating the world's safest transportation system.
- Low-cost carriers now are the most significant driver of industry pricing. Because over half of Trust Fund receipts come from the 7.5 percent tax on airline tickets, these lower fares decrease Trust Fund revenue — without any corresponding reduction in FAA workload.
- The airlines are taking many more deliveries of smaller aircraft. By 2008, the U.S. regional jet fleet will be four times the size it was in 2000.
- The U.S. business jet fleet will be approximately 50 percent larger than its 2000 levels.
- This means more aircraft but decreased revenue per aircraft using the air traffic control system.

Without a solution, certification of new airlines and products will be delayed.

- To date, there are 16 airlines waiting in the queue for certification, which will mean increased duties for the inspectors, who also must oversee the additional pilots, planes and crew.
- To keep the system as safe as it is, the FAA cannot afford to take on new projects at the expense of those we currently oversee.
- The increased workload is further compounded by the next generation of UAVs and very light jets.

Without a solution, we cannot move to a more cost-efficient Next Generation Air Transportation System.

- The safe but aging aviation infrastructure carries replacement costs of \$32 billion and this doesn't address the looming need to develop the Next Generation System with more capacity and lower unit costs.
- Last December, Secretary Mineta launched the plan for America's next Generation Air Transportation System. It aligns the resources and plans of seven government agencies to develop the aviation system for 2025. The Trust Fund as it is cannot pay to make the capital investments needed for the future.

The FAA must become more efficient.

- The FAA is embracing a variety of aggressive cost-control measures. But, cost-cutting alone will not enable us to close the existing gap between the revenue stream into the Trust Fund and FAA costs.
- A long-term solution is the only real fix.
- However, we have taken dramatic steps to cut costs at the FAA:

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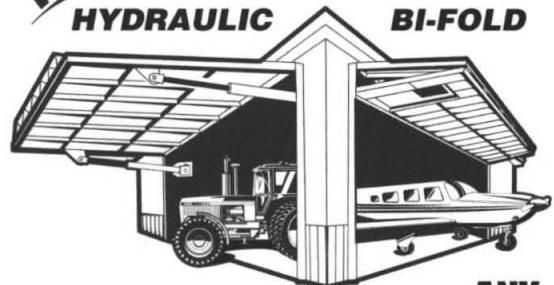
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AAND

By Erling Rolfson

Airport Association of North Dakota is having a busy summer, construction projects and dedications of new terminals. I attended the dedication of the new airport terminal in Devils Lake on July 8th. Governor Hoeven and Senator Dorgan, among many others, attended. Clinton Torp, new airport manager, did an outstanding job. Hats off to Kenny Koehn for his many years of service. The Bismarck Terminal was also dedicated early this spring and Grand Forks will be next for a new terminal.

New Rockford Airport Authority accepted bids and will be reconstructing the runway at the end of July. The reason I bring this up is to explain how non-federally funded airports arrange the money.

The runway was built in 1985 and was due for an overlay or reconstruction. The better choice was an overlay. The cracks will reappear quicker and new construction will last much longer. The runway has been maintained properly, but costs for repairs have been increasing.

The Aero Commission approved matching funds of \$140,000; as you know, we have to come up with 50%. We have around \$35,000 in the bank. The County Commissioner approved a 4 mill levy for 4 years that will bring in \$110,000. The city will borrow \$100,000 on the pledge and our Economic Development Committee will loan us the rest. The contractor bid was \$272,000 and engineer costs will be around \$33,000. This is a total price tag of \$305,000. The finishing dirt work, painting, etc., will come later as funds come in.

This is a combined effort with county, city, economic development and airport authority, all playing an important role. Non-federally funded airports are important to North Dakota and the communities they serve. The investment in our communities is important to maintaining our infrastructure and insuring the growth of cities like New Rockford.

The length and width will remain the same at 3600 feet long and 60 feet wide. We also remodeled our hangar last year which was in need of repair. We have two new hangars going up next year, that would not have been built without the new runway. If you have any question about how we accomplished this, feel free to contact me:

Erling Rolfson
(701) 947-2417
Airport Manager

Adventurers from page 1

16 hours and 22 minutes later.

The pair had to postpone their flight a week because of a faulty alternator on their Vickers Vimy replica biplane.

The pilots had earlier planned to take off on June 14, the 86th anniversary of their predecessors' flight, but had to postpone that attempt due to bad weather.

The plane, which is made of wood and sail cloth, has an open cockpit and no heater. The pilots took only a compass and a sextant to navigate, the same equipment Alcock and Brown used.

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- We consolidated human resource management and accounting functions.
- We reduced 1,300 staff in our air traffic control operations ATO alone.
- We contracted out the network of automated flight service stations for a projected savings of \$2.2 billion.

The Department of Transportation is pushing hard to be ready.

- Transportation Secretary Norman Mineta and FAA Administrator Marion Blakey convened a forum on the Trust Fund in April 2005.
- More than 150 leaders from government, the industry, and Wall Street gathered to discuss the issues and make recommendations.
- While the proposals on how to solve the matter varied, the group agreed that the issue needs to be addressed.
- We recognize that whatever system is put in place, it must be fair and there must be equitable treatment of all stakeholders.

What happens if we maintain the status quo?

We simply cannot afford to. There is a significant gap between costs and revenues, and aviation is too important to the American economy to allow it to decline. However, if we don't act, there is an unattractive list of options:

- Cutting services, such as air traffic control, certification, and inspection.
- Retaining and maintaining the aging infrastructure, instead of buying new equipment when we need it.

There are those who say there isn't a problem.

- They say our revenues will increase as passengers make their way through the turnstiles more than ever before, or that the general fund can contribute more.
- But unfortunately, the funding gap is very real and the FAA's recent revenue forecasts have been too optimistic.
- Given the deficit and the other national and international demands competing for the general fund resources, we can't plan that a greater slice of that pie will solve our problems.
- The Administration supports the use of the general fund for part of the system costs—and has so consistently over the last several years. However, this is not the solution to our long-term funding needs.

What's the answer?

- We don't know yet. However, we do know that the FAA needs a consistent, stable revenue stream that is not tied to the price of an airline ticket, but rather reflects our actual cost to provide service.
- The FAA is not at this point endorsing new taxes or user fees, but we must address the gap that exists between our costs and our revenues.
- We are looking for an equitable solution, and we are reaching out to all of our stakeholders for their input.

"Hmmm," I mused to nobody in particular. "I wonder if we could figure out how to run the engine."

"It would not hurt to try," my friend said as he started to run through the "engine start" checklist. Then he said, "I always wanted to see if I could start the engine on one of these things." The boys in the back seat sat up and paid close attention now. The kids did not know that I am a flight instructor and had flown with their father a couple of times. He was progressing very well with operating the aircraft.

As the engine cranked, the boys in the back seat started to shout, "Daddy made the motor go on the airplane!" They got quiet as we taxied to the runway. I wish I had had a camera right then. Someone told me that there are sixty-four muscles in the human face. Or maybe it was forty-six muscles. I always forget. Either way, when I looked at the boys in the back seat, every muscle in their faces was holding their mouth and eyes as wide open as they could possibly go. If I had two tennis balls, I could have put one in each mouth with room left over. The girl was more apprehensive. She knew that driving around in someone's airplane without permission is wrong.

When we got to the end of the runway, I turned in my seat and said, "Your daddy is driving the airplane!"

All the boys could do was shout, "Yeaaaaaaah!"

In a loud voice, so the kids could hear, I asked the father if he thought he could make the airplane fly. "I don't know," he said. "I have always wanted to try." Then he turned and winked at the kids in the back seat. The boys still had their eyes and mouths wide open. Excited shouting broke forth as we left the earth and climbed skyward. By now the ten-year-old daughter had figured out that I was a pilot, and that it really was OK for us to be flying in the airplane. The boys still thought their father borrowed some poor man's aircraft without asking.

I turned to the young passengers and said, "Your daddy is flying the airplane!" To say that they were excited would be an understatement. They knew their Daddy could do anything, but it had not occurred to them that he could also fly an airplane.

"Daddy is flying the airplane!" they kept telling each other. The girl was much more reserved, but no less excited. "This is so cool," she kept saying.

I get a kick out of giving people their first ride in a small airplane. That particular flight was one of the best.



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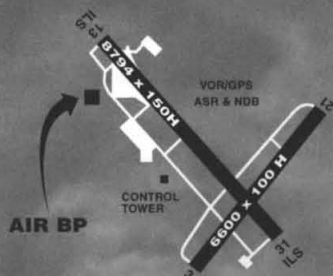
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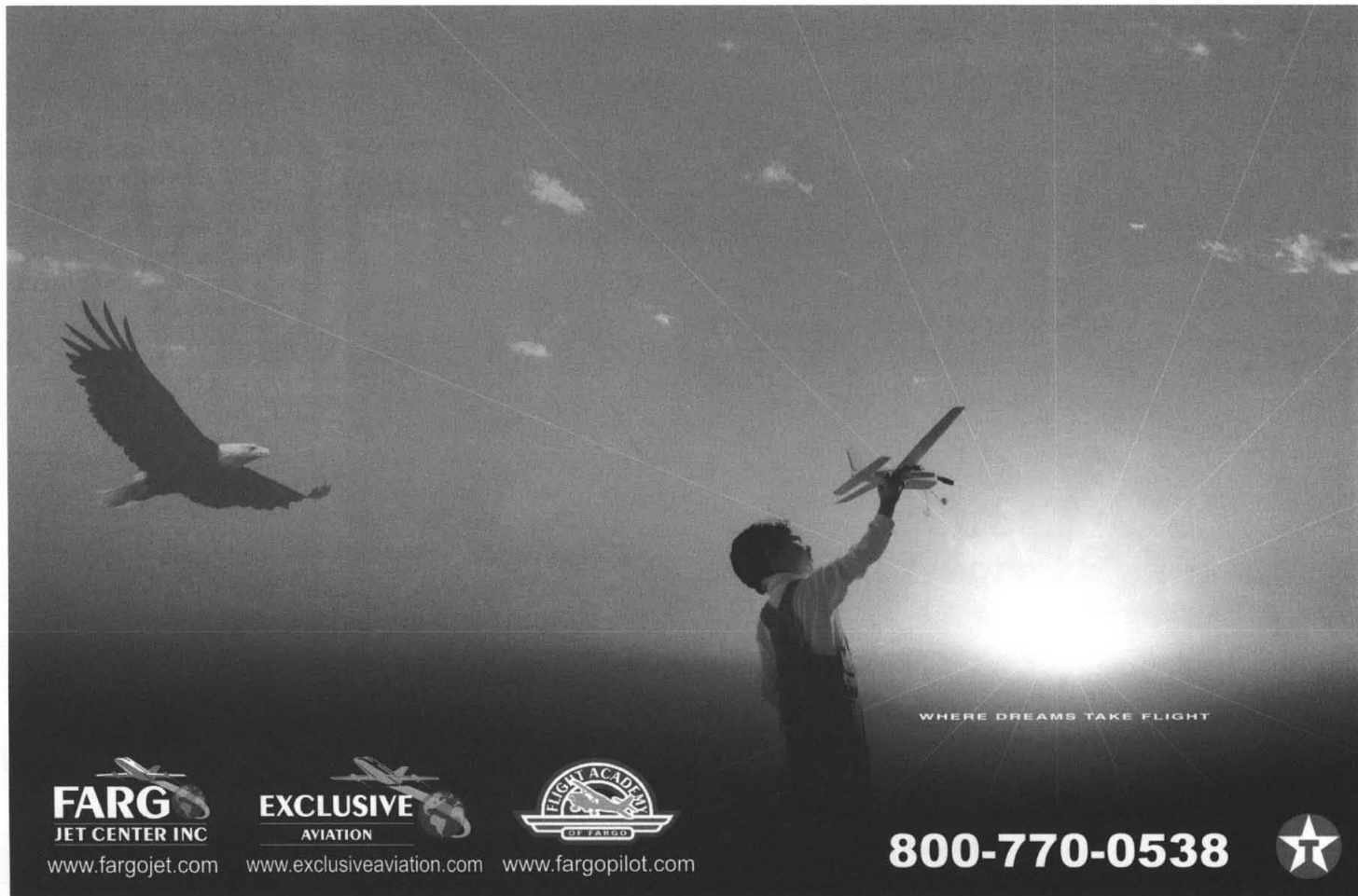
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Senator Byron Dorgan addresses a large crowd at the ribbon cutting ceremony of the Devils Lake Airline Terminal. He praised past airport manager Kenny Koehn for his many years of hard work and diligence, and referred to the terminal as a gateway to the rest of the world. Among the people listening behind the senator is Governor Hoveen, Mayor Fred Bott, Aeronautics Director Gary Ness, new airport manager Clinton Torp.

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