



THE *Flyer*

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Tony Jannus, American Flyer

By: Tom Reilly



Tony Jannus

The Honoree for the Paul Garber Shrine in 2006 will be Tony Jannus. Pioneering American aviator Antony Habersack Jannus was born in 1889 in Washington, DC. Tony Jannus was just twenty-one years old when he taught himself to fly and soloed in a Rexford Smith biplane at College Park, Maryland. Quickly becoming a skilled aviator, Jannus moved to St. Louis in 1911 to serve as the chief pilot for the Benoist Aircraft Company.

On March 1, 1912, Jannus and his passenger, Albert Berry, did something that had never been done. Although Berry was a parachutist, experienced in jumping from balloons, no one had ever jumped from a moving airplane.

With Jannus at the controls, Berry dropped from the airplane at an altitude of fifteen hundred feet. His history-making jump was perfect. Later that year Jannus received worldwide newspaper coverage for his record-setting, 1,973-mile flight from Omaha, Nebraska, to New Orleans, Louisiana. In the process, the flight provided thousands of people with their first exposure to aviation.

On January 1, 1914, with the inauguration of the St. Petersburg-Tampa Airboat Line, Tony Jannus entered history books as the world's first airline pilot. Three thousand people crowded St. Petersburg's waterfront in anticipation of the big event. With a high bid of \$400, former St. Petersburg mayor Abe Pheil won the honor of being the first passenger to travel from St. Petersburg to Tampa by air.

At exactly 10 A.M. Tony Jannus, the airline's chief pilot, gave the flying boat full throttle. Soon the flying boat was fifteen feet above Tampa Bay, headed toward Tampa. Twenty-three minutes after their departure, Tony Jannus landed the flying boat on the Hillsborough River and slowly taxied toward a hastily constructed platform near the Tampa Electric Company. Several thousand Tampa residents cheered the arrival of Jannus and his passenger.

Six days a week, the St. Petersburg-Tampa Airboat Line scheduled two trips between St. Petersburg and Tampa. During a three-month period, the airline's

two flying boats logged a total of 11,000 miles and carried hundreds of pounds of cargo as well as 1,205 passengers. In accordance with the terms of its contract with the city, the airline ceased operation on March 31, 1914. Tony Jannus and the St. Petersburg-Tampa Airboat Line had shown the world that passengers could be carried on a scheduled basis and that a demand for such service existed. Jannus had proven the dependability, practicality, and safety of scheduled air service.

After the airline ceased operation, Tony and his brother Roger designed and constructed the Jannus flying boat for their own company, Jannus Brothers Aviation. Just months later Tony Jannus was in Canada, employed as a test pilot at Curtiss Aeroplanes and Motors, Ltd. With the Great War raging overseas, the Curtiss Company was producing hundreds of airplanes for use in the European conflict. In October 1915, Tony Jannus traveled to Russia to test fly and assist with the delivery of approximately fifty Model K Curtiss flying boats that had been sold to the Russian Imperial Navy.

On October 12, 1916, the veteran test pilot lost his life when the Curtiss H-7 flying boat that he was flying crashed into Russia's Black Sea. In a career that spanned less than a decade, Tony Jannus had accomplished more than many aviators do in an entire lifetime. His achievements left a lasting mark on the world of commercial aviation.

FIRST FLIGHT SOCIETY BLACK & WHITE MASKED GALA FUNDRAISER

6:30 P.M. till Midnight • October 28th, 2006

Hilton Garden Inn • Kitty Hawk, NC



- Master of Ceremonies: Mike Smith
- Live & Silent Auctions
- Lifesaver Couple from Chicamacomico:
James Charlet & Linda Molloy
- "Society's Best" for Dancing

For information on becoming a Sponsor for this event or for individual tickets call: 252-441-1903 or email at firstflight@earthlink.org. Deadline for Sponsorships is September 1. Individual tickets will go on sale on September 2.

SPONSORSHIP PACKAGE

- Sponsors will receive 10 tickets for their special table at the Gala on October 28, 2006
- Sponsors will be mentioned in all advertising done for the Gala and for the December 17th, 2006 event at the Wright Brothers Memorial National Park and Luncheon, including space in the programs, news articles and any other areas of advertising. (Early sponsorships will be in The Flyer, the First Flight Society Newsletter and put on the website as their sponsorship is received.)
- Sponsors will have a certificate on their table in a frame for hanging indicating their sponsorship of the First Flight Society.
- Sponsors will be given a *print* of an original Glen Eure woodcut highlighting the First Flight Society. The woodcut will be auctioned on the night of October 28th, 2006
- Sponsors will be given one (1) room at the Hilton Garden Inn for the night of October 28th.
- Sponsors will be given two tickets the luncheon on December 17th at Comfort Inn South.
(The First Flight Society is a 501-3C non profit organization and all donations are tax deductible.)

Sponsorship RSVP

Thank you for your Sponsorship donation to the FLIGHT SOCIETY

(Sponsorship) \$2000.00 _____

NAME OR COMPANY _____

ADDRESS (if possible, include business card)

Name as you would like to see it on the plaque at your table and in all advertising

Contact Person _____

Phone number _____

() Check to FIRST FLIGHT SOCIETY

() Credit Card # _____ exp. Date _____

Paid on (date) _____

With check () cash () credit card ()

This event is a fundraiser for the First Flight Society. Funds will be used to underwrite the activities of the First Flight Society and the events at the Wright Brothers National Park that the Society co-sponsors such as, the Wright's birthdays on April 16 and August 29 and the December 17th event...

Return this form with payment for Sponsorship to: P. O. Box 1903, Kitty Hawk, NC 27949

Fortieth Anniversary of the Paul Garber Shrine, Orville Wright's Birthday and National Aviation Day

(Excerpts from "In Honor of Paul Garber by Kent Priestley, Visions Magazine)



Paul Garber

Garber? If it is less than a household name for all but the most dedicated "propeller heads," it is perhaps excusable. Paul E. Garber worked behind the scenes at the Smithsonian Institution through seven decades, beginning as a temporary display and model maker in 1920. Over the next two decades, Garber helped change the face of aviation at the Institution by becoming the first aviation curator of the National Air and space Museum. By the time he passed away in 1992 at the age of 93, Garber had helped finesse the acquisition of more than half of the 352 aircraft in the Smithsonian collection. Today, his legacy is on display at both NASM and the restoration facility that bears his name in the capital suburb of Suitland, Maryland. In 1952, as plans were gathering form for a museum in Kill Devil Hills to honor flight's golden anniversary, Garber was there, as a member of the Kill Devil Hill Memorial Society' museum committee. Outer Banks historian David Stick, a fellow committee member was also on hand. In 1966, the same year that the Kill Devil Hills Memorial Society renamed itself the First Flight Society, the organization

unveiled the first portraits in the First Flight Shrine, established to honor those who accomplished outstanding firsts in aviation. The first honorees were, of course, the Wright Brothers. Aviation's great achievers would be added to the shrine each year, with committees in North Carolina and Washington, D. C. choosing the candidates. Paul Garber was consulted each year to provide research and advice on potential inductees until his death in 1992. . In more recent years, Dr. Tom Crouch, has been the resource for the honoree. Dr. Crouch along with Paul Garber's son and family will be on hand on Saturday, August 19 to speak during the celebration.

As a part of this years events, children will be asked to write a short essay on their favorite pioneers. These will be submitted to the Park Personnel and displayed on a rotating basis at the Shrine entrance. Some of these essays will be published in future editions of the Flyer.

We hope you will plan to attend August 19th at the Wright Brothers National Monument and meet the people that have had such a big part in the establishment of the Shrine.

First Flight Society Membership Application

Members of the First Flight Society come from all walks (or flights) of life, but we all share a common bond: our love of aviation. The purpose of the society is to foster and promote a public awareness of, and widespread interest in, the origin, history and future of flight, in all its forms, and to memorialize Orville and Wilbur Wright, first in the world to successfully achieve powered flight in a heavier-than-air machine, December 17, 1903, near Kill Devil Hill, at Kitty Hawk, North Carolina. Join us by completing the information below and mailing your membership check made payable to the First Flight Society.

Name _____, Address _____,

City, _____, State _____, Zip _____ Phone _____, E-mail _____

(Mail to The First Flight Society, P. O. Box 1903, Kitty Hawk, NC 27949)

\$35.00 Renewal \$35.00 New Member \$50.00 Family \$200.00 Business \$350.00 Lifetime Members

Thank you for supporting the First Flight Society:

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MELISSA WATKINS

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(Don't you want to see your name
here next issue? -- See page 2)

The Flyer is the Newsletter of
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