

HOFSTRA CULTURAL CENTER

presents

From Autogiro to Gyroplane: *The Past, Present, and Future of an Aviation Industry*

Friday and Saturday

April 25 and 26, 2003

Cooperating Institutions: National Air and Space Museum - Smithsonian Institution, Experimental Aircraft Association (EAA), Popular Rotorcraft Association (PRA), American Helicopter Museum and Education Center and the Cradle of Aviation Museum

From its initial flight in Madrid, Spain, in January 1923, the world's first successful rotary-wing aircraft, Juan de la Cierva's *Autogiro*, captured the imagination of the public. Brought to America by Harold F. Pitcairn in 1928, Autogiros became a common sight above major cities, landed on the White House lawn in April 1931 and were flown by such leading pilots as Amelia Earhart. Yet by the early 1940s the Autogiro had all but disappeared with the arrival of the helicopter, a flying machine built upon the patents and principles first developed in the Autogiro and the names of American pioneers Pitcairn, Kellett, Wilford and their associates forgotten. While all attempts to revive this aviation technology seemed to fail in the middle of the 20th century, it was



saved by the most ungainly of flying machines, Igor Benson's Gyrocopter, to reemerge as the "Gyroplane," with new innovations and developing market niches.

On the 100th anniversary of the Wright Brothers' conquest of the air at Kitty Hawk, North Carolina, Hofstra University celebrates the 80th anniversary of the autogiro and the 75th anniversary of Harold F. Pitcairn's first American flight, while looking forward to the future of this amazing aviation technology.

We invite expressions of interest for the presentation of papers, special addresses and discussions from all sectors of the academic, general and aviation communities on the past, present and future of this aviation industry.

Participants will include Wing Commander Ken Wallis, RAF (Ret.) who will be awarded a Hofstra Honorary Degree recognizing his life's achievement as a gyroplane pilot, designer and world record holder.

In your expression of interest, please briefly describe the topic you wish to present.

Following are examples of subjects related to the conference theme:

- Cierva and Pitcairn: Rivals, Collaborators or both?
- Pitcairn Autogiros and Amelia Earhart: A Critical Reappraisal
- The Autogiro Goes to War: A Critical Look at French, Japanese, Russian, German and English Uses of the Autogiro in WWII.
- Did the U.S. Military Fairly Evaluate the Autogiro?
- To What Extent Did Focke's Experience Building Cierva Autogiros Advance the Invention of the Helicopter?
- A Reappraisal of the Life and Contributions of Igor Bensen
- Why the McCulloch J-2, Avian 2/180 and Umbaugh 18-A Failed to Revive Gyroplane Technology in the Mid-20th Century.
- Ken Brock's Presidency of the Popular Rotorcraft Association (1972-1987): Evolution or Revolution?
- The Fairey Rotodyne: An Idea Whose Time Has Come - Again?
- The Legacy of James Bond's "Little Nellie": The Contributions of Wing Commander Ken Wallis RAF (Ret.).
- Gyroplane Development in Europe: Tervamäki, Montgomerie and Magni.
- David Gittens and the Development of the *Ikenga 530Z*.
- Forty Years of the PRA: 1962-2002.
- From Arliss Riggs to the Groen Brothers' Hawk 6T: Preserving Juan de la Cierva's *Tractor Autogiro Configuration*.
- Groen Brothers Aviation Hawk 4T and Beyond: New Market Evolution of the Gyroplane.
- The CarterCopter and the Heliplane: 21st Century High-Tech Gyroplanes
- Martin Hollmann and the Ultralight Gyrocopter Revolution

We welcome topics on all aspects of the past, present and future of Autogiro, autogyro, gyrocopter/gyroplane development, including the rediscovery of forgotten industry pioneers; the influence of this aviation technology on and reflections in popular culture, including advertising imagery, movies and literature; the means by which it was preserved and analysis of those business decisions that almost destroyed it; and innovative visions of its emerging future.

A letter of intent, along with a one-page abstract (in duplicate) and resume or C.V. is requested by November 1, 2002.

The deadline for submission of completed papers (in duplicate) is January 25, 2003.

The papers submitted should be substantially new material and not previously published. Presentation time for scholarly papers will be limited to 25 minutes (14-16 typed, double-spaced pages, excluding notes and bibliography).

Selected papers will be published.

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HEMPSTEAD, NEW YORK 11549

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Pitcairn PCA-2 autogiro "Miss Champion" flown by Stephen Pitcairn



CarterCopter high-tech gyroplane

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Website: www.hofstra.edu/autogiro-conference

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