

John Dungan Jr.

by the promise of quick promotions, strikers from a wide variety of back-grounds applied for the new rating. In June of 1924 CQM John Dungan was converted to Caerog thus becoming the very first Chief Aerographer's Mate. The first CPO to rise through the ranks as an aerographer was Aerog 1/c Ralph P. Darr, selected on 10 Feb 1932.

Enlisted Pilots - On 13 March 1924 the AP, Aviation Pilot, rating was reestablished.

Aerog Cadre Become Airlines cadre - During the early days, up to about 1925, the branch accepted transfers of men having almost any rating, providing they were adaptable, trainable and had desirable personality traits. This was done to build up seniority in the rating structure. Thus; Al Francis, R.J. Brown and I (R.L. Welles) were converted MM 1/c (a) Aviation; Bob Currie was a CQM; Tommy Thomas a Signalman; E.M. Brown a Chief Yeoman; J.B. Chamberlain a BM 1/c and so on. These and others formed the nucleus of the branch as it developed. Perhaps a notation on later activities might be of interest. Francis left after 16 years to become Chief Meteorologist (later Chief Navigator) and then Night Operations Manager for PanAm Pacific, then became Operations Manager for China National. Bob Currie became Chief Meteorologist for American Airlines. R.J. Brown was Chief for PanAm South American Division, while Thomas became Chief for PanAm Atlantic Division. I was Chief of United Western Division and then Western Division Station Manager at Oakland. Being Fleet Reservists, all except Francis were recalled prior to WWII. So you can see that the NAVY had a lot to do with development of commercial air lines (weatherwise) not to mention pilots, which is another story." *The two previous paragraphs are excerpts from a May 1975 "Pappy" Welles letter to Neil O'Connor printed in an early 1980s Aerograph.

Aerographs become Routine - In mid April 1925 daily weather flight to an altitude of 10,000 feet were instituted to obtain weather data and to test upper air sounding equipment. Early in 1926 the schedul was expanded to include weekends and holidays and flight extended to 15,000 feet.

Weather School Moves - On 15 May 1924 the Aerological school was moved From NAS Pensacola FL to NAS Anacostia, D.C. Instructors at the school included Caerog R.J. Brown. Aerological support services continued to support the aviation commands at Pensacola.

Polar Front - In Jan 1925 the Navy began use of the Polar Front theory of air mass analysis.

Radiosondes - The routine use of radiosondes (or radio-meteorographs as they were then called) to obtain upper

atmosphere data was initiated at NAS Anacostia, D.C. in mid April 1925. By year's end USS California, BB-44, and USS Lexington, CV-2, were also outfitted to use radiosondes.

Caerogs As Pilots - In the mid 1920s LT Reichelderfer decided that every air station should have a Chief Aerographer who was also a pilot in order to make AEROGRAPH flights. Caerogs R.L. Welles, known as "Bob" or "Pappy", and Jerry Barber were selected to attend flight school. Upon graduation the two aviation pilot-aerographers were informed by BuAer directive that they would be Chief Aviation Pilots and be assigned to general aviation duty. Only the intercession of BuAer, RADM W.A. Moffet, a good friend of Aerology, brought Chief Welles back "into the fold" (this is another excerpt from a "Pappy" Welles letter to Neil O'Connor printed in part in an early 1980s Aerograph). Data in this paragraph may be in error & changed in the future to reflect that the CPOs may NOT have been pilots but rather men qualified to RIDE in an a/c & monitor an Aerograph Spounding.

More Pibals for BUAER - On 3 October 1925 BuAer requested that aircraft squadron flagships take twice a day upper air soundings when at sea in order to accumulate upper air data for improved weather forecasting.

Horizontal Weather Depiction - The Hydrographic Office of the Bureau of Navigation produced a surface analysis for Charles A. Lindbergh's solo trans-Atlantic flight. A brief description shows a low pressure system over the Canadian Maritimes with a high pressure ridge extending from Florida northeasterly to 50 Deg. North, then eastward to France. This chart is on display at the Naval Aviation Museum in Pensacola. The analyst is unknown.

In late 1927 USS Lexington and Saratoga, CVs 2 and 3 respectively, were commissioned. Their hulls were those of battle cruisers stricken to comply with an international pact on fleet strength.

Alma Mater Moves - On 1 Dec 1928 the Navy Aerography School relocated from NAS Anacostia, D.C. to NAS Lakehurst, N.J. Instructors were LT T.J. O'Brien, LT Thornton, Caerog John Dungan and Aerog 1/c Lyle. Aerology Class # One graduated 15 June 1929. Graduates in order of standing: 1. PVT A.B. Bowman USMC, 2. PVT M. Caruso USMC, 3. S 1/c J.W. Reams, 4. S 2/c N.D. Garrow, 5. S 2/c W.A. Robertson, 6. S 1/c T. J. Bliss, 7. PVT M.F. Brouillet USMC, 8. S 1/c G.R. Mills & non-graduate student S 1/c R.L. Chase

Willy Gruber, Aerog 1/c (AP) - a 1927 Primary school graduate with Class #5 was the first Aerographer's Mate graduate of Pensacola Flight training. William