

Outlook on Lifestyle

Book review

Trophy for Eagles recalls the golden age of aviation

By TOM WEISSMAN

Only nine years and 364 days too late to win the \$25,000 Orteig Prize for the first solo flight across the Atlantic, Frank Bandfield woke up in the American embassy in Paris. It was May 10, 1937.

Surely this wasn't the room Lindberg had slept in, he thought. Memories flooded into Bandfield's head of that distant day on Roosevelt Field on Long Island on May 11, 1927, when aviators gathered to reach for the greatest trophy in all of aviation: to be the first to cross the Atlantic.

It is against the broad canvas of history that Walter J. Boyne assembles his work of fiction, *Trophy For Eagles* (Crown Publishers, 454 pages, \$19.95), about the golden age of aviation and the daring men and women who competed for prizes, jobs, glory and love. At the centre of this book is the fierce rivalry between two pilots in an America of a different age; the America between the world wars, an era that included Prohibition, the Great Depression and the crucible of the Spanish Civil War. It was a time when aviation was young and men and women could leap from obscurity to national prominence with a single feat of flying, breaking a speed record, crossing the oceans or streaking around a course in death-defying manoeuvres that kept millions of Americans enthralled at such events as the Cleveland National Air Races.

It is this era and ambiance and the gripping rivalry between two pilots, Frank Bandfield and Hugo Hafner, that captures the reader. And their lives and loves are also touched by such giants of the aviation world as the young Charles Lindberg, the enigmatic Howard Hughes and the reluctant aviatrix Emilia Erhart.

Both men are as different in personality as they are in background. And they are battling it out on the ground and in the air, from their first encounter for the Orteig Prize when Bandfield's plane is destroyed by fire (thus he misses a bid for the Atlantic flight), to subsequent encounters in the air and in business.

TEMPERAMENTAL RACING PLANES

They meet again and again, in flying competitions and in the shaky business of building aircraft for an infant aviation market. Bandfield, the engineer/pilot, wants to build airplanes for reliable air transport. But to survive in business, he has to build and fly temperamental racing planes with his gifted garage mechanic cum aircraft design partner.

Competition is fierce and ruthless. And in all his ventures, his rival is Hugo Hafner, a former First World War German flying ace, who has established himself in the U.S. plying the Mob, and anyone else who's interested, with armaments. He's not only an experienced and superb pilot, but also an astute businessman who is not averse to cutting a corner to make a deal.

Trophy for Eagles superbly captures the spirit of the times. And the author's intimate knowledge of aircraft and flying makes for some of the most gripping descriptions of dogfights, perilous test flights and the drama of high-stakes flying. And, too, there are the romantic alliances and dalliances of the antagonists, with Hafner being more than the mere playboy pilot.

In a bid for sales of their planes, Bandfield and Hafner participate in a "fly off" for the military in South America. The local officials, who are all fighter pilots, want to

see the planes in a dogfight before deciding which type to order. Hafner outmanoeuvres Bandfield, flying his machine inverted only a few inches above Bandfield's, who has no way out since they are both close to the ground. This forces Bandfield to land ignominiously and the contest goes to Hafner.

The drama shifts to the U.S. west coast and the early flights to Hawaii. Again the antagonists compete and clash. Their mutual distrust deepens. The mysterious disappearance over the Pacific of Bandfield's lover raises more suspicions.

FINAL CONFRONTATION

The final deadly confrontation takes place in a most unlikely place, when Bandfield joins a motley group of flyers to fight in the Spanish Civil War. It is here in the skies above a scarred Spain that Bandfield encounters Hafner, who is on the opposite side.

Walter Boyne, a former air force colonel and aviation museum director, is the author of 10 books on flight and his intimate knowledge transcends the pages of his latest work. His descriptions of the early air races are not only rich in drama and precise in fact, but realistic enough that any pilot reading this book will feel the bite of controls, the roar of radial engines, and the smell of hot oil from these powerful machines.

He superbly describes such events. Picture six single-seat machines capable of doing 250 or 270 m.p.h. lining up and then blasting into the air at the drop of the starter's flag. At full bore, they are heading for the first pylon turn. And all the flying at about four miles per minute is at 50 feet off the ground. There's no way of minimizing the danger, and the prize money seems hardly worth the risks. Yet, men and women fre-

quently had their last nickel in flying machines with which they hoped to capture money and glory. Propellers whirled inches away from the plane in front, their arcs delineating the tolerances between life and death. And total collisions were not unusual.

Trophy for Eagles is an absorbing read. It kept me coming back for more. It is not just a flying book with a lot of technical detail, but an accurate and dramatic story of the life and times of men and

machines. It is a portrait of a time of barnyard inventors and of wealthy adventurers who took to the air. Their passion and determination went beyond the glory of the day. They changed America and laid the foundation for world aviation as we know it today. Boyne has done a superb job with this book and has captured that unique era with authority.

Tom Weissman is a Toronto writer and former commercial pilot.

New books offer ideas for family fun

Martha Shirk and Nancy Klepper are battle-hardened family travelers. And their new book, *Super Family Vacations* (Harper & Row, 544 pages, \$12.95), takes advantage of their experience. They outline skiing, history, adventure, nature, cruise, resort and guest-ranch vacations.

A sub-directory by location makes this an easy guide to use.

Shirk and Klepper offer general hints on family harmony and sensible packing as a preface to their detailed accounts of more than 110 places to visit throughout the United States.

They describe each resort, city or region and provide price ranges for lodging and dining — as well as addresses and phone numbers.

Always focused on the family, they also offer information on children's activities, babysitting, special meal plans and other amenities.

Their travel advisory will suit all sorts of vacationing styles.

For the classic family vacation, try *Steve Birnbaum Brings You the Best of Walt Disney World* (edited by Steve Birnbaum and others, Houghton, 228 pages, \$9.95, paperback). Beyond the descriptions of every show and ride at the Florida resort, there are inside tips on avoiding lines. There are also tips on enjoying the extras — such as golf, tennis, sailing, fishing, horseback riding and dining. If you want to know how to breakfast with Mickey — or simply how to find good accommodations — this is the book to check.

Adrienne Popper Reports on Summer Camps and Teen Tours: Everything Parents and Kid Should Know (Pocket, 68 pages, \$6.95, paperback), contains general advice. It covers the camp experience, from

finding just the right place or program to handling the dirty socks when campers arrive home.

Popper does not list specific camps or tours, but offers insight on arranging and surviving the child's solo journey.

Milde Waterfall's and Sarah Grusin's *Where's the Me in Museum: Going to Museums with Children* (Vanderbilt, 129 pages, \$7.95, paperback) concentrates on practicalities. They suggest that parents take the time to see things as their children do (from the awesome edifice on, and to respect their feelings of wonder over the most seemingly commonplace item).

The authors also cite ways to help children appreciate the wonders of science, art and natural history museums.

Jeanne Cleaver's *Doing Children's Museums: A Guide to 225 Hands-On Museums* (Williamson, 224 pages, \$12.95, paperback) explains that "hands-on means minds-on." So, she supplies a state-by-state directory of museums that offer fun and enriching tactile and exploratory programs for children.

If you absolutely cannot get away, Marilyn Mehr's *Homeplaygrounds* (Camden, 143 pages, \$14.95, paperback) is a masterful manual on creating popular wood-structured play areas. This oversized paperback offers much more than wonderful patterns for creating forts, swinging bridges and sandboxes. Mohr explains how such features help a child to play and notes the positive value of such activity (beyond the obvious physical workout).

Hydro ready to handle pressures

Ontario Hydro is in a strong position to weather the cost pressures expected over the next four years, said Chairman and President Robert Franklin in releasing the corporation's 1988 annual report.

"I'm confident we'll be able to hold rate increases at or near the rate of inflation while bringing into service new equipment for generating and transmitting electricity and for protecting the environment," Mr. Franklin said.

Hydro finished fiscal 1988 with net income of \$626 million. That lowered its debt to equity ratio to .829, the lowest level in a dozen years.

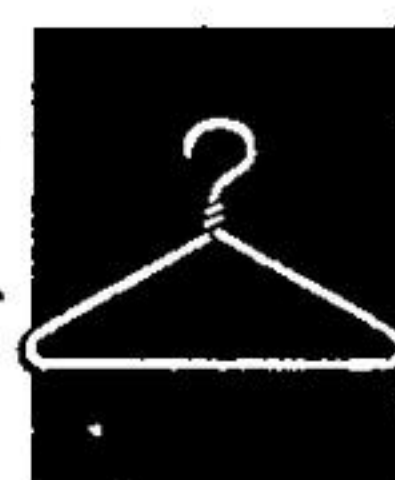
Mr. Franklin said net income was boosted by the upward trend of the Canadian dollar and stronger than forecast growth in the demand for electricity — almost five per cent a year for the fifth year in a row. He acknowledged that such strong growth is bad news as well as good for the utility.

"Given this high growth, it's essential that Hydro's energy efficiency programs succeed. Our target is to reduce growth in electricity demand by 4500 megawatts by the turn of the century — roughly equal to the peak electricity use of Metro Toronto.

"We will also be making more ef-

ficient use of existing generating equipment and developing remaining hydro-electric sites, such as the new plant being studied for the Niagara Falls area. And we will continue to encourage independent power developers. By the year 2000, we'll need them to provide at least 1000 megawatts more than they do now," Mr. Franklin said.

"We are conscious that Ontario Hydro must make the most efficient use of the generation equipment and natural resources available. All forms of electricity generation have an impact on the environment. So using resources well and without waste is the prime measure of our commitment to the environment," Mr. Franklin said.



fabric forum

Prepared by the International Fabricare Institute (IFI), the association of professional drycleaners & laundriers

Thanks For The Memory!

After your special day, it is important that you care for your wedding gown with expert cleaning and careful storage. First, remove shoulder pads and any other padding.



later appear yellow or brown if not removed. After the cleaning, wrap the dress in a protective white sheet or muslin covering and store flat.

Some padding materials may deteriorate and yellow with age, and stain the dress. Point out any stains to your drycleaner. The dress may contain invisible stains from food beverage, and perspiration. These will

Store your dress in a cool, dry, place or attic. Ask your IFI member professional drycleaner about his special preservation and packaging service for the very best care.



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