

80 Years of Fatal Fun...

By Derek Nelson

Fill in the date.

Choices are: 1912, 1920, 1943, 1951, 1957, 1966, 1970, 1980, 1985, 1992

July-August 1995

_____ A NavCad died in a crash after making several low passes over a beach in an F9F-5. His “own automobile, parked 75 feet to the right of the wreckage path and 716 feet from the point of impact, was severely damaged when struck by the aircraft’s tailpipe and tailpipe shroud.”

_____ “Hedge-hopping will not be tolerated... No spins on back or tail slides will be indulged in as they unnecessarily strain the machines.” [*Regulations for Operation of Aircraft*]

_____ A P-3 overseas served as platform for skydivers during a holiday celebration in April; the pilot then took the aircraft on a “low-altitude island tour,” descended to 300 feet without clearance, hit a cableway wire and crashed, killing all six crewmembers and two civilians on the ground.

_____ This year, flat-hatting caused three fatal accidents. In each one, the pilot was trying to attract the attention of friends or relatives on the ground. One occurred with a stone’s throw of the pilot’s house.

_____ Frank McClean flew his biplane through the Tower Bridge over the Thames River in London. He soon crashed into the river, but survived.

_____ Before taking off on a cross-country, an OV-10A pilot told his wife he was going to fly over his uncle’s farm. He circled the farm, did aileron rolls, hit some 50-foot trees and crashed, destroying the aircraft and killing himself.

_____ “Four British officers and airmen were court-martialed for flying their planes unnecessarily low over the countryside...one officer flew so low that



he collided with a motor car on a highway.” [*Royal Air Force Journal*]

_____ Headline in the Norfolk *Virginian-Pilot*: “Pilot killed in crash told parents to watch flight.” Two Air Force captains from Barksdale AFB were flying a T-37.

_____ Both members of an A-6 aircrew were killed when they demonstrated a low-altitude roll over a farm in South Dakota belonging to the pilot’s family who were watching the airshow. Neither aviator tried to eject; one man’s body was cut in half and was found by his uncle.

_____ On a day cross-country, an A-1 pilot flew over his parents home to drop a message. He made two tries, then hit some trees, lost control of the aircraft and crashed into the ground.



July-August 1995

A-1 pilot flew over his parents home [1966]
OV-10A pilot told his wife [1970]
A P-3 overseas served as platform for skydivers [1980]
A-6 aircrew in South Dakota [1985]
Headline in the Norfolk *Virginian-Pilot* [1992]

Frank McClean flew his biplane through the Tower Bridge [1912]
“Hedge-hopping will not be tolerated” [1920]
“Four British officers and airmen were court-martialed” [1943]
One occurred within a stone’s throw of the pilot’s home [1951]
A NavCad died in a crash [1957]