

La Chronique

50 years of the Alouette II : Philippe Boulay held a conference in Marignane.

Marignane, France, June 24, 2005. AAAF (Association Aeronautique et Astronautique de France) has organized a conference in Eurocopter's factory of Marignane in order to commemorate the 50th anniversary of the Alouette II maiden flight. The orator was Philippe BOULAY (1).

A large audience of prestigious guests who were actively linked with design, development and test of the Alouette family was present. Jean BOULET and Gerard HENRY, both Test Pilots, as well as René MOUILLE, Engineer, attended among other known people.

Philippe BOULAY presented a remarkable history of the Alouettes genesis replaced in the French post-war helicopter industry development context.

He also touched on a new idea related to the origin of the « Alouette » name that is different than what has been previously written by Charles MARCHETTI in his book (2). According to Philippe BOULAY, that name could come from the SE700 autogiro that could have been known as « Alouette ». The SE700 was a wooden autogiro equipped with a 240 HP six cylinder Bearn engine that was designed during German occupation in Marignane and that crashed on its first flight (3).

Jean BOULET intervened in the presentation to underline the major role played by Georges HEREIL ; Alouettes would probably never have entered into production without the support of that S.N.C.A.S.E.'s President.

Philippe BOULAY also told some anecdotes related to the use of the Alouettes notably that relative to the memorable travelling that was filmed from an Alouette II above Normandy beaches during the huge reconstitution of the Allies landing that took place for the movie « The D-Day ».

Conference ended then in a reunion and historical discussion ambiance.

Pierre GILLARD.

(1) Philippe BOULAY : author who is specialist of French helicopter industry, History and Heritage Representative to the *Groupement Francais de l'Helicoptere* and member on the Scientific Committee *Musee de l'ALAT et de l'Helicoptere*.

(2) Charles MARCHETTI, *L'envol des Alouette*, editions Fascination, ISBN 2-283-75-113-6, pages 16 and 17.

(3) Jean BOULET, *Histoire de l'helicoptere racontee par ses pionniers 1907-1956*, editions France-Empire, ISBN 2-7048-0676-4, page 72.

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