



The Flyer

August 2005
Vol. Thirteen, No. 8

High Sky Wing of the Commemorative Air Force
Midland, Texas - Hangar: 432-563-5112

On the Web at
HighSkyWing.org



Cols Bill Coombes and Ralph Gillette took the *Tar-Baby* to the Pecos fly-in breakfast where she was admired by all! Thanks to Col Dan Linebarger for this photo.

From the Back Office

by Col Gena Linebarger

How time flies. Here we are into the middle of August with another AIRSHO on the horizon. Put your running shoes on and let's gear up for an exciting event. There will be many opportunities for the High Sky Wing to come together to support our fund-raisers.

The HSW Cantina is that next opportunity. The lunch Cantina will operate Wed., Thurs., and Fri., of AIRSHO week from 11:00 to 2:00 serving hamburgers and hotdogs. Many volunteers are needed in all areas to ensure our success. Let us know what area and hours you can work. Needed areas are: purchase groceries, prep food, organize serving area, servers for food and drinks, money takers, cooks, etc. Help... Help... Help... we need you!

Also, as part of our AIRSHO hospitality, the High Sky Wing will once again be hosting "Friday Night in the O'Club" serving pizza to CAF members and aircrews, beginning at 6:00 p.m. Last year the event was a huge success. The HSW will venture into the raffle ticket business to cover the expense of the pizza. The raffle prize will be "1 Reserved Table in the

Colonel's O'Club" for Sat. & Sun. of AIRSHO. Drawing to be held Fri. evening Sept. 30th. Ticket prices are \$2 each or 3 for \$5. Please contact Gena Linebarger to pick up your tickets and begin selling! Funds raised above the cost of the pizza will profit the Wing. I can't stop here without giving you one more opportunity. If any member would like to financially offset the cost of pizza, either partially or fully, your donation will be graciously accepted and appreciated.

SHIRT ORDER - At this time we are taking orders for HSW Member shirts. Please get your orders into Gena by Sept. 1st. Blue or Khaki; sizes: S, M, L, XL, XXL.

From time to time various Wing property has been borrowed by members. In an effort to keep track of and to make sure items (i.e. tables) are not needed at the same time by the Wing, a new procedure will be implemented. Please advise Staff of your request, including length of time to borrow, via e-mail or phone. Then be sure and write down the items you've borrowed on the "Board" next to the Ops Office.

Now through AIRSHO it will be an extremely busy time for all High Sky Wing members. I know that your enthusiasm, teamwork and can-do attitudes will shine strong as we enjoy yet another profitable and fun AIRSHO.

Executive Views

by Col Ted Claussen

[This article was for the July newsletter but that month we didn't publish a newsletter. Ed.]

Our Memorial Day event was good. We made a little money and had some fun. Everything always goes well when our great volunteers are at work. Thanks to Lyle & Theresa Thornton, Blake Cowart, Elise Coombes, David Linebarger, James Bissett, Haley Houston, Ed McElrath, Becky Carter, Jim Moore, Sue Becraft, H. A. Tuck, Tom Kingon, Penny & Dan Duewall, Miles & Debie Magnus, Mary Alice Tidwell, and Ted & Carol Claussen. Thanks to ALL who were there to help support the wing. Don't forget our August 25th meeting.

From the Flannel Wrench Locker

by Col Bill Coombes

Many things to touch on this month, some being beyond the scope of the maintenance report, so they might be referenced in other columns, but none the less, I shall press on with them here.

First of all, the airplanes are all up and flyable. Ralph and I took the Tarbaby to a fly-in breakfast in Pecos, and she made a significant impression on those at the airport. She ran like a clock...a very slow-moving clock! That was her longest cross-country to date, with each leg being about 60 minutes. It was fun, and Ralph and I both were not so cramped up that we couldn't get out of the airplane and move without pain after a few minutes.

The PT-19 passed its inspection, but is in need of a little bitty pin in some fuel selector valve linkage before Eric will let us fly her. The SNJ's both passed their emergency wing attach angle inspections, and are now in service. I flew #24 over two events for the 4th, with the Wing benefiting with some cash. And speaking of cash, I arranged for the sale of some surplus PT-19 parts, raising more than \$800. I am trying to figure a good way of selling some of our other surplus parts at Airsho. If someone wants to take on this task (essentially monitoring a silent auction arrangement) during Airsho weekend, please let me know. We have perhaps \$2000 in surplus BT-13 and AT-6 parts that we could sell.

Thanks to all the people who works so hard to clean the hangar on the Saturday after the Wing meeting. Jim Moore, Ed McElreath, H. A. Tuck, Lyle Thornton, Ralph Gillette, Tom Kingon, Tabor White, Steve Bolin, Gena Linebarger, David Linebarger, and several other folks have the building looking much, much better. If we can hit it again right before Airsho, we shall be in good shape.

Airsho is coming, and I know that many of you have key roles to play in making it run smoothly. We will be cooking hamburgers for the Volunteer BBQ now scheduled for September 13 or 15. I hope to see all of you out there to be recognized as the grease that makes the whole deal work.

All for now...Lefty, loosey, Righty, tighy.

Keep 'Em Flying!

Commemorative Center Update

by Col Bill Coombes

As many of you know, August 10 was the bid letting date for the new Commemorative Center, our new home. Sadly, and completely unexpectedly, the lowest bid was \$1.7 million dollars more than our maximum budget. We are, to overuse a phrase, going back to the drawing board to redesign the building for resubmission to TxDOT. We HAVE NOT LOST anything but time. The grant is still ours, all the additional funds are still ours, so all we must do is re-submit. This will be done on Jan 11. I am confident that we will be successful in working out a new plan that fits our budget.

More later.

Lest We Forget

Safety Is No Accident!

by Col Lyle Thornton

I would like to invite everyone to attend a safety program on Saturday, August 27th at 10:00 AM in the High Sky Hanger. Fite Fire & Safety will assist with the program.

Our federal government has, for the last several years tried to mandate safety programs in the automotive, aircraft, and oil industries to protect us from ourselves. Some of these programs have worked fairly well and others have not. The problem is that each person's view of safety is different. These views go from complete indifference to a paranoid fear of everything. I would hope that we can operate somewhere in between these two extremes to protect our members and visitors as well as our aircraft and facilities from harm. My goal is to raise the awareness of safety issues for the Wing and comply with federal guidelines to provide a safe environment for our members.

Everyone is now gearing up for our Airsho 2005. I would like to ask everyone to be extra aware of all that is going on. In the haste to get our work done, we sometimes don't pay enough attention to some possible hazards that might exist. This is just not for us, but for our many visitors. To have a good Airsho, we must all be SAFE.

As the Props Turn

by Col Randy Wilson

It is good be to home again, but not to have come back from my extended stay in California with a sinus infection! Fortunately, I seem to be about past all of that and trying to get caught up on Wing and other duties again.

Pat and I want to thank all of our friends in the High Sky Wing who helped us these last couple of months as we travelled back and forth to help with her Dad's illness. When he did pass away, we were able to bury him with full military honors, with an Air Force honor guard from March AFB, Calif. We would also like to thank those who made donations in his name to help in the fight against cancer.

Welcome New Members!

Thanks to Col H. A. Tuck, we can present photos of five new High Sky Wing members this month. Please be sure to say hello and visit with each of these folks the next time you see them.



Col Steve Bolin is a recent CAF member and new HSW member. Steve may be familiar to some, as he is not only a pilot but also an air traffic controller in the MAF tower. Welcome, Steve!



Col Cody Furlow may be a new HSW member but has been a CAF life member and Blastard for a long time. Welcome, Cody!



New to both the CAF and HSW is Col Kelly Stout. Welcome, Kelly!





New Colonels and HSW members Rance Phillips (top) and Taber White (bottom) were attracted by the vehicles under restoration in our Motor Pool. Welcome, Rance and Taber!



The Duster Is Here!

by Col Randy Wilson

As many of you know, the AAH Museum has been trying to finalize the loan of an M-42 *Duster* self-propelled twin-40mm antiaircraft gun for some time and the *Duster* has finally arrived in Midland.



The M-42 Duster on the ramp at the CAF.



Built by the Cadillac Division of General Motors in the early 1950s, M-42s saw action in Korea and later in Vietnam. Based on the chassis of the M-41 light tank, the M-42 mounted a pair of 40mm automatic cannons, built originally for the U.S. Navy.

For more detailed information about the *Duster*, you need to visit with Col Myles Magness, who served with M-42s in Vietnam and was instrumental in getting the *Duster* to Midland.

Last Issue's Mystery

by Col Randy Wilson

While we are talking about armored vehicles, the mystery vehicle in the June newsletter was one of the specially modified tanks designed by the Allies to solve problems in the Invasion of Europe on D-Day and also in later campaigns in Europe.

Often called "funnies" due to their odd shape and appearance, these vehicles were assigned to the 79th

Armored Division and included our mystery vehicle, which was a Churchill A.V.R.E. (Armored Vehicle Royal Engineers) Carpet-Layer. Reconnaissance of the D-Day beaches had found areas that could easily bog down wheeled vehicles, thus the need for the carpet laying tanks.

The large roll or “bobbin” was lowered in front of the A.V.R.E which then drove over the poor ground on the carpet, which unrolled from the bobbin. Other vehicles followed, driving over the carpet until engineers could install a more permanent road bed of perforated steel plating (PSP).

For more information about the unusual vehicles of the 79th, you might try *The funnies: A history, with scale plans, of the 79th Armoured Division* by Geoffrey W. Futter.

A Quick Check on FiFi

by Col Randy Wilson

As most of you know, the CAF B-29, *FiFi*, has been undergoing some major maintenance this year in the big hangar. The good news is that things seem to be going back together now, as shown by these three pictures taken just this last weekend.

Most of the sheet metal work around the cockpit area is nearing completion, as shown below, as is the work in the bomb bay areas. The rudder was re-hung last week and the tail gunner’s has yet to be refitted.

The plane was pulled out of the hangar a week or so ago and the engines run up, which is another good sign of progress. One last major project is to finish rebuilding the left outer wing panel, show to the left and below. This needs a number of ribs replaced before it can be re-skinned and reattached.



The nose section of *FiFi* comes back together.

Col Gary Austin and his crew continue to work almost round the clock to get *FiFi* back into the air in time for Airsho 2005 and other events this year. If you have some free time and want to offer your help, please check with Gary and see if you have any talents that they can put to work.

Keep in mind that all of the real structural work has to be done by or closely supervised by appropriately licenced and experienced folks.



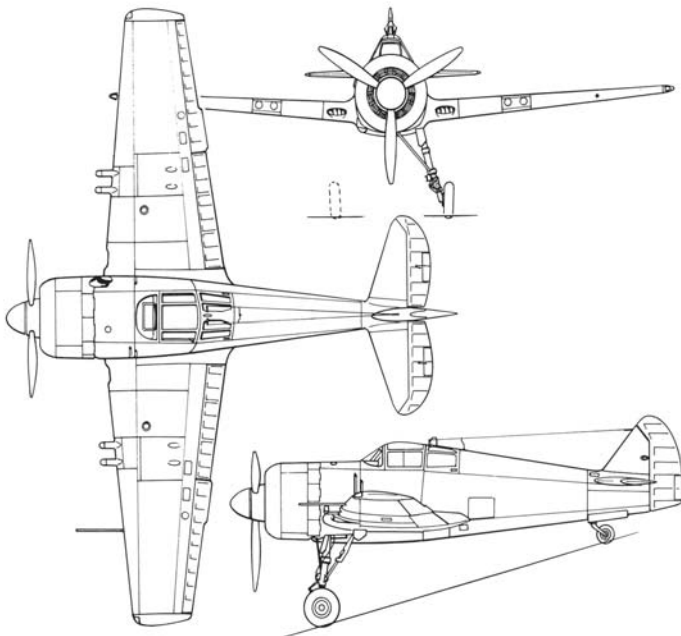
Above, the rudder is back on and below, the left outer wing panel that still has to be finished.



HIGH SKY WING - CAF
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This Month's Mystery

Can you ID this WWII fighter? Answer at the next Wing meeting.



High Sky Wing Elected Officers

Wing Leader: Gena Linebarger - 528-0997 cell

Executive Officer: Ted Claussen

Adjutant: Mary Alice Tidwell

Finance: Bob Stine

Operations: Randy Wilson - 352-4258 cell

Maintenance: Bill Coombes - 689-8359 home

Safety - Lyle Thornton

Hangar Phone: (432) 563-5112

all numbers are Area Code 432 unless indicated

What's Happening & When

Aug 25 - Wing meeting (7pm)

Sep 7 - Wing staff meeting (7pm)

Sep 22 - Wing meeting (7pm)

Sep 30 - Friday Nite O'Club (6pm)

Oct 1-2 - Airsho 2005

Oct 5 - Wing staff meeting (7pm)

Next Wing Meeting is Thursday, August 25th at 7:00pm in the Hangar