



The Flyer

August 2006
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High Sky Wing of the Commemorative Air Force
Midland, Texas - Hangar: 432-563-5112

On the Web at
HighSkyWing.org

From the Back Office

by Col Gena Linebarger

Have you seen the Wing's airplanes in the Midland sky lately? At last month's Wing meeting we had the opportunity to give rides to several members. The weather was perfect, the pilots were willing and between the Stinson, Tarbaby, and PT-19 ten flights were taken. I believe that to be a record flying day for the High Sky Wing!

AIRSHO is just around the corner and the Wing is gearing up for a profitable, yet fun filled event. Your help is needed in all areas. Please let me know what task you would like to help with. Remember the Cantina requires many bodies to run smoothly. Jobs... I mean, opportunities available are: cooking, cashiers, food and drink servers, food prep, etc. Experience not required, resumes not necessary. We can find a place for you whether you need to sit or stand. The High Sky Wing hangar will be the happening place at AIRSHO and you'll want to be there for the excitement. Check your tennis shoes and make sure you have enough tread to make it through that week. At the next Wing meeting we'll go into more details about the Cantina and the Friday night AIRSHO reception. AIRSHO posters and brochures will also be available.

Wing meeting will be Thursday, August 24th. Come out and listen to the tales of Oshkosh 2006 from Ed McElrath and Dan Linebarger as they relive their experience. Bring a covered dish and we'll see you at 7:00.

Next Staff meeting will be Thursday, September 7th, 7:00 p.m.



The flight to Pecos started very early and we started moving planes out of the hangar while it was DARK!



Col Steve Hanson snapped this shot of Col Steve Bolin in the front cockpit of the PT-19 headed to the Pecos fly-in. Note the very dependable and easy to read navigation aide (concrete compass) available to the pilot on this flight!

Executive Views

by Col Ted Claussen

It is good for our planes to be seen by others and recently our planes have been flying to events in the area. It has been an enjoyment to all those involved. Bingo is also being enjoyed by many and it is doing well. The next big event for us is, of course, the AIRSHO. We will again be providing pizza for the Friday night get-together at the O Club, but before Friday night comes the first part of the week. Wednesday thru Friday the High Sky Wing will be operating the cantina for hungry workers preparing for the AIRSHO.

We are, as usual, asking for help with the preparing and cooking of the food, the serving and clean-up as well as all those little things we forget to mention. If you can help for just a few minutes please let us know. Other areas of need will be mentioned at the monthly Wing meeting on August 24th. Come join us for good food, good conversations and a really good report from Dan Linebarger and Ed McElrath about their trip to Oshkosh.

From the Flannel Wrench Locker

by Col Bill Coombes

Well, school is now in session, so my free time to wander around the airport during the week has disappeared. The nice thing about the school business (besides the three month vacation) is that there is “youthful enthusiasm” all around you when you return to the campus. Young people make old people think and feel (to a degree) younger: I truly enjoy that aspect of being a teacher.

That “youthful enthusiasm” is now part of the High Sky Wing, as we welcome new (and younger) members to the ranks. Certainly Lance Sommers has provided much needed positive energy, as has Steve Bolin and James Martin. For the CAF to continue, we simply must have “young blood:” fortunately for us, in those men, and Wayne Bissett and Sam Strahan among others, we have that.

That youthful enthusiasm inspired me to look back on the last four years of August maintenance columns that I had written for the newsletter. Two years ago in August I flew the Tarbaby for the first time (after Randy had generously handed over test piloting duties!)...I mentioned in that column that Ground Control cleared me to taxi out “behind the coyote using taxiway Poppa.” I’m pleased to report that the coyote is still in residence at the airport, most recently causing a regional jet to go around!

Three years ago in August I wrote about the work that Rodney Jackson was doing on the left wing of Tarbaby, and the help we had in cleaning the aileron in preparation for covering. Mary Alice, Bob Stine, Bruce Wallace, even Ernie Webb, were out there putting in some time on the airplane. Rodney’s contribution to the airplane was far beyond what we paid him: he did a beautiful job, and he is missed by many.

Four years ago we were looking for an airplane to buy with the insurance money from the tragic loss of our BT-13 and PT-19. I was promoting a FW-149 (a German Navion-ish airplane with a nose wheel) or a Tiger Moth biplane. Fortunately, H.D. Butler decided that selling his PT-19 to us was in his best interests as well as ours, so a deal was consummated for it. Surely our PT-19 is one of the cleanest examples flying today, and, judging by the expressions on many of our members faces when they return from a ride, it was a popular choice. And, FYI, next time you are at the hangar take a look at the right side of the airplane. My “Krylon creativity” kicked into high gear, and I took it

upon myself to provide some new verbiage on the PT. Our own “colonel colonel,” Bruce Wallace, is now listed as “Staff Sergeant Wallace, USAAC” underneath the rear cockpit. He was mighty touched to see that....

Today, we have all four of our Wing-assigned airplanes up and flying, and we’ve been taking them to fly-ins all over the area. This is what we are supposed to do with them, showing the flag for the CAF. A tip of the oil-stained cap to all those who have contributed in various ways to the Wing so that we can do just that: fly these airplanes as memorials to all those who flew them when the skies weren’t so friendly and the needs of our country were much much greater.

See you at the Wing meeting, and get ready for AIRSHO 2006!



As the Props Turn

by Col Randy Wilson

This last month or so has been a busy one for the planes and pilots of the High Sky Wing, as we checked out pilots in various planes and then flew our four planes to a number of area fly-ins, to represent the CAF and pass out AIRSHO posters and info.

Our new Stinson 105 now has a couple of new pilots, Cols Bill Coombes and Steve Bolin, and we expect Col James Martin to join the ranks in the near future. We are very fortunate to have Col Lance Sommers as our CAF Instructor Pilot in our three lighter planes and Lance is now an SNJ pilot, and a good one at that!

Plans to mark the new Stinson as a WWII CAP patrol plane are underway, and you can see the first of these markings on the next page. By the way, Col Mary Alice Tidwell found that with just a little bit of help, she can get into the Stinson and I had the pleasure of having her as my copilot when we flew to the Pecos fly-in a couple of weeks ago.

As I write this, the HSW fleet is enroute to Brownfield for a fly-in breakfast and since we had enough pilots, especially some of the younger type, I decided to stay home and do the newsletter.

Don’t forget that our next Wing meeting is Thursday, August 24th. See you there and fly safe!

Some Photos of the Last Flights

The following were shot by Cols Steve Hanson, H.A. Tuck and others. Enjoy!



Col Mary Alice Tidwell got back to flying as the copilot of our new Stinson 105 on the Pecos trip, aided by Col Randy Wilson. Note the first of the new CAP markings.



CAP planes such as our Stinson did actually carry small bombs or depth charges, however, this technique is probably not one used! We are investigating getting a lightweight dummy bomb for display with the plane.



Having now advanced to flying the SNJ, Col Lance Sommers shows his heels to the slower planes of the HSW fleet as we returned to Midland from Pecos.



Work continues getting all our ground vehicles running and ready for AIRSHO. Here the VW Think/Kubelwagen gets some much needed maintenance and fresh oil from crew chief Steve Hanson.



Col Steve Hanson caught the Stinson inflight enroute to Pecos. It was a very smooth flight.



Col H.A. Tuck seems to have found permanent employment attacking the old paint, rust and who knows what else on various parts of the big truck, using the Wing's bead blaster.

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After enjoying a very nice breakfast and some great cantaloupes at Pecos, we pushed the Stinson in front of the crowd to save some steps for Mary Alice.

We departed before the cantaloupe bombing contest started but heard later that Col James Martin, flying a Luscombe, made a perfect bulls-eye!

High Sky Wing Elected Officers

Wing Leader: Gena Linebarger - 528-0997 cell

Executive Officer: Ted Claussen

Adjutant: Mary Alice Tidwell

Finance: Steve Bolin

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 24 - Wing meeting (7pm)

Sep 7 - Wing Staff meeting (7pm)

Sep 28 - Wing meeting (7pm)

Oct 5 - Wing Staff meeting (7pm)

Note: the above may change

Oct 7-8 - AIRSHO 2006

Next Wing Meeting is Thursday August 24th 7:00 pm at the Hangar