



The Flyer

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High Sky Wing of the Commemorative Air Force
Midland, Texas - Hangar: 915-563-5112

On the Web at
HighSkyWing.org

Planning a New Wing Home

We had a very good turnout on Saturday, January 5th, at the Wing Staff meeting to discuss the various options for a new home for the High Sky Wing. Basically two options are being studied, and in each case, we are assuming that much of the interior finish-out and some other work will be done by our members.

One point we should keep in mind is that we must be in our new home and out of the existing hangar by the end of this year. At the meeting, a tentative date to break ground on the new structure was set for 1 July, 2002. To do this, we would need to give a contractor the final details and design of the structure by early June. Thus, 1 June was agreed upon as the date to review the amount of funds available for our new home and make a final decision on the type of structure to build.

Two concepts or options were discussed for our new home. Each has its pros and cons, which we will be discussing in the weeks and months ahead. However, the final deciding factor will be how much money we can raise for the construction of the structure between now and June. The two concepts are described below but please understand that these are subject to changes and revisions as we get more detailed information on each:

Option 1 — A Hangar

This option would give us basically what we have with the existing hangar, a place to meet, socialize, keep and work on our Wing aircraft. The building would need to be about 100' x 100' (10,000 square feet) to allow space for the planes, a kitchen, lounge, offices and storage. It would be located to the southwest of the main CAF hangar. The exact location of the new hangar would depend on the outcome of discussions with the airport regarding relocation of security fencing and other matters. Some significant improvements would also need to be made to the ramp area in front of and leading to the new hangar.

Option 2 — A Meeting Facility

This would be a separate building or addition to the southwest of the main CAF hangar, with 12-foot walls designed as a "people" building, with a large meeting area, kitchen, lounge, offices, etc. The building would need to be 5,000 square feet in size or larger. The Wing's aircraft would be kept in the main CAF hangar.

Whether this building would be separate from or an extension onto the main CAF hangar will depend on funds available and other factors yet to be determined. If a separate building, it would face onto the ramp and need to have some type of connection to the main hangar, to allow easy access for our members and visitors.

At the meeting, it was noted that if we decide on a meeting facility for our new home, this would not prevent us from building a separate hangar for the Wing's planes later. We would just need to raise new funds for that second phase of the home.

In the next few weeks, you will be receiving a form in the mail to express your opinions on the type of new home we will build. It will also have information on how to pledge a donation towards the cost of the new facilities.

Cost and Funding for a New Home

As we get more details on the costs and practicality of the various type of structures we are considering, we will share this with you in the monthly general and staff meetings, as well as here in the newsletter.

We plan on approaching some of the local foundations to ask for matching grants to help build our new facility. If you have any contacts with the staff or members of any of these foundations, please let us know.

If you have any questions or suggestions about any of these options, please ask any of the Wing staff. We welcome and need your input on our new home.

From the Back Office

by Col Blake Cowart

I'd like to thank all the Wing members who took time to attend the Wing staff meeting earlier this month to discuss the various plans for a new home for the Wing. We have outlined the two basic possible options for a new home elsewhere in this newsletter and will keep you informed as we get further information and estimates on the costs of each plan.

I have asked Cols David Linebarger, Don McCracken, Ted Claussen and Jim Moore to act as an informal New Home Construction Committee and be the point of contact for members on plans and other details for our new home. If you have a question, suggestion or possible source for a donation of materials, labor, etc. these are the folks you should contact.

On a positive note, I'm happy to report that the Midland City Council approved the extension of the lease on our existing hangar until the end of 2002 at a rate of \$359 per month. However, this extension is based on our moving to a new home on the CAF lease by the end of the year.

Later this month we will be mailing a membership renewal packet to all Wing members and this will include a questionnaire about what type of new home to build, as well as a pledge form to help fund it. Please return your questionnaire and dues as soon as possible.

Don't forget the Awards Banquet on Saturday, January 26th at the Midland Hilton beginning at 6:00pm. The price for dinner is \$25 per person and you should make your reservations with Gena Linebarger at (915) 528-0997. See you there!



Quite a number of Wing members braved the cool temperatures to attend the special staff meeting to discuss the various plans and options for a new home.

Executive Views

by Col Ralph Gillette

This is being written as I watch a few very small snowflakes waft gently to the ground. It came as a little surprise as we went out side on New Years eve to bang the drums and toot the whistles in celebration of what we all pray will be a very good new year and found all the white stuff starting to gather on the grass. After spending Christmas in the noisy sunshine of Southern California, it was really very nice to step out into the crisp clean smelling air of a West Texas snow. It was also very nice not to have to travel in the aftermath of the wet cold that very well could have ended up in the dreaded black ice the news media were warning us about.

Vick Brockman was our speaker in December. For those of you that were not there, you missed a very interesting tale of survival. Vic flew B-17s out of Italy. He was shot down twice (I asked him if he was a slow learner) and the last time, spent over a month walking back to allied lines. Vic said he didn't really expect to get into flying, since he didn't have a college degree and they were only taking those that did into the officers candidate school to become pilots. He made it through a plan called the "Flying Sergeants", which was short lived and not too well known.

We will break in January for our annual awards party, which is covered elsewhere in this issue, so there will be no speaker. William S. Vanderland, Supervisory Senior Resident Agent, Midland Resident Agency; Federal Bureau of Investigation will be our February speaker.

Check Us Out!

by Col Sue Becraft

Our Wing library has many books, pictures, tapes and other memorabilia — but what it needs now is more visitors and readers. All High Sky Wing members and their family can check out any of the books or other articles.

If I'm in the library, I'll be happy to help you check out, however, if I'm not there, just use the check out list, in the box on the table. Remember, the Wing's library is an excellent resource for information on military history and the men and women who made this such a great and free country.

Don't forget that we always welcome donations of books or other materials on aviation and military history. Come in and check us out.

From the Flannel Wrench Locker

by Col Bill Coombes

Although the weather outside has been frightful, members of the HSW pitched in to begin the process of the annual inspection on the Wing-assigned SNJ. Under the supervision of Harold Davis, a new Colonel and CAF member, Randy Wilson, Jim Moore, Ted Claussen, Ken Sass, Don McCracken, Bill Coombes, Bruce Wallace, David Linebarger, Blake Cowart, and a new Wing member, Dave Morgan, all worked all day Saturday in "exposing" the most intimate parts of 101X as well as my airplane, ole' 24. Compression checks and gear swings were done, and airframe inspection began, but then the sun hit the yardarm at 5 bells, bringing work to a stop. Although two low cylinders were discovered on 101, the consensus is that another hot compression check will reveal a different story. My thanks to these guys for coming out on a cold Saturday and for helping with my airplane as well. Both should be signed off and ready to fly later this month. FYI: combined the two airplanes only flew 23 hours in 2001. Again, the loss of our comrades is felt...

On a lighter note, while working near the F-24, I uncovered Chapter Two of the Saga of the CAF Tarbaby....written in the style once again of Joel Chandler Harris.

Burrrrrr, I swears dat it be much colder her in Texas dan it eber wuz in Califruitia! Prhaps sum o dat chill cum from not havin no tail feathers on, as dey seem to has been removed by folks what duz suspect dat dey is not airworthy. A nice jolly man name o Dennis cum wid a DE-vice to inspect my coverin' and he done punched a hole clear through my elebator! After dat, some o those nice High Spry men cum an dey cuss and strain and pull off my tail! Dey promise dey will puts it back on, oncet Dennis and his friends fix dem wit new Stits fabric what is guar-ON-teed to last and last and last.

My rolly-wheeler for my rear end wuz fixted by a nice kindly gentleman in Tennessee, for jus a few Yankee dollars, and soon I be sittin pretty on all tree of my rolly-wheels. Den, Colonel Bill and Harol' Dabis wants to run my putter-putt motor engine, jus to see what hoppens when dey compellor goes roundy-round and dat ole' exhaust bellers out its Ranger sound. Den dey is chattin' 'bout "having to do the wings" but I dinks dat is a ways away, what wit' dey need'n moneys for to spend on a new home for all dem good people in

da High Spry Wing.

Uncle Remus' version of nineteenth century eBonics is once again is accurate, in that the tailwheel is back and ready to be installed, and Dennis Givens and the volunteers from the college are busy redoing the tail. It does look, however, as though the wings will have to be recovered. We will see how far we go on the existing funds we have. Anyone wishing to donate to the F-24 fund is encouraged!

Elsewhere you will read of the latest on the search for a new home for the Wing. Suffice for me to say right now that I am in favor of whatever we have money to afford to build come 1 June, 2002, be it a people building or a hangar. As the Tarbaby might say, "dem dat has da gol can makes da rules....and da building."

Remember, lefty loosey and righty tighly!



**Don't Forget!
Your 2002 Wing Dues**



The Tar-Baby now has a new tailwheel and strut assembly. While work continues on the rest of the tail, plans call for a possible engine test run in the near future.



We are fortunate to have Harold Davis (right) as both a new Wing member and our new aircraft fixer-upper. Harold and his helper Frank Rodriguez (left) have been busy with the annual inspection of the SNJ as well as working to get the Tar-Baby back on its wheels. Be sure to say hello to Harold and Frank the next time you see them in the hangar.

High Sky Wing Elected Officers

Wing Leader: Blake Cowart - 528-1344 cell
Executive Officer: Ralph Gillette
Adjutant: Mary Alice Tidwell
Finance: Bob Stine
Operations: Randy Wilson - 352-4258 cell
Maintenance: Bill Coombes - 689-8359 home
Safety - David Linebarger
Hangar Phone: (915) 563-5112
all numbers are Area Code 915 unless indicated

What's Happening & When

Jan 26 - Awards Banquet
Feb 2 - Staff meeting
Feb 21 - Wing meeting
Feb 22-24 - CAF Wing Staff Conference
Mar 2 - Staff meeting
Mar 21 - Wing meeting
Mar 30 - Open Cockpit Day

Next Wing Meeting is Thursday, February 21 at 7:00pm in the Hangar

HIGH SKY WING - CAF
Post Office Box 61064
Midland, Texas 79711-1064