



The Flyer

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

On the Web at
HighSkyWing.org

Let's Have a Picnic!

From the Back Office

by Col Gena Linebarger

Let's have a "Picnic"! Join us for the July 27th Wing meeting and our summer picnic. Don't worry about the ants, we'll be in the HSW hangar. The Wing will be cooking hot dogs and furnish watermelon. Members can bring side dishes or desserts. The dinner bell will ring at 7:00 p.m. but please come early for social time and airplane rides, as always, weather permitting. You'll want to be there to for the debut of our newest addition to the HSW fleet, the Stinson 105.

As AIRSHO time is steadily gaining on us, I hope you've marked your calendars for the event. The HSW Cantina will begin on Wed. Oct. 4th and run through Fri. Oct. 6th. It takes a lot of folks to pull off this event successfully so I hope you're setting aside the time to help out. I'd like to see the Wing make this fund-raiser a most profitable one. If you have ideas or suggestions on how to improve any aspect of the Cantina please pass them on to Staff.

In the months prior to AIRSHO, let's make every effort to clean and tidy up the hangar. Vehicle crew chiefs, please check to see that your vehicle is serviced and running.

We are also changing back to the first Thursday evening for Wing staff meetings for the rest of the summer, start with the next meeting on August 3rd at 7:00 p.m.

Tuck Tucks In!

by Col H.A. Tuck

"...and Tuck, you'll be riding in the back seat of Tarbaby," Col Bill Coombes declared toward the end of a briefing for pilots and passengers, whose mission was to attend the June 23 Fly-In at Hobbs, NM. In a postscript a few minutes later, Coombes added, "This will be first time anyone's ridden in Tarbaby's back seat since it was restored."



What an honor, I decided. For most of my life, my slight stature had frequently relegated me to the back seat of tiny autos or to the middle seat when three folks fit into the back seat. At least I wouldn't have to share the cramped space with anyone else.

Col Lance Sommers was pilot-in-command for "Tarbaby," the High Sky Wing's Fairchild 24 or J2K, a four-place aircraft. Col Sam Strahan, an experienced private pilot, was in the right seat. We were instructed to leave first since we were the two slowest of the six aircraft headed to the event. We were to be accompanied by the Wing's "convertible," a Fairchild PT-19. Pilot was Col James Martin with Col Lauri Skinner his back-seat passenger.

Getting in the rear seat required a bit of agility. I thought it was interesting that the metal step has a logo which seems to be Pegasus, the mythical flying horse. Since my father operated a Mobil "Flying Red Horse" service station when I learned to fly in 1946 and later a Mobil Consignee agency, I felt it was a good omen. The two planes taxied out on schedule, lining up as a "flight of two" and took off headed for Hobbs.

With Tarbaby's windows rolled down, it was a beautiful morning to fly, still cool and smooth. Ample windows provided for both viewing and some photog-

raphy, including a few pictures of the PT-19 and, as we approached the Seminole-Hobbs area, some real "crop circles."

Snuggled nicely together, our twosome overflowed the Hobbs airport, then peeled off crisply (at least for the type aircraft) for slick landings. The marshallers thoughtfully parked us in the shade of the World War II hangar that serves as the CAF headquarters in Hobbs.

Quickly, Col Randy Wilson in HSW's SNJ and Col Bill Coombes in his Swift, dubbed "Pumpkin," arrived. Then two of the Wing's civilian auxiliary aircraft showed up, a Cessna 182 owned and flown by Col Dan Linebarger and a Beech Baron co-owned by Col Steven Bolin. The Wing's 17 member contingent made quite an impact on the hosts and others attending the event. "Tarbaby" got a lot of attention, enhanced by the fact sheets attached to both windows. The interior finish drew many compliments.

The New Mexico Wing at Hobbs had a nice display of war birds, civilian aircraft, including five homebuilts, and a group of antique and classic vehicles.

As on the way outbound, Tarbaby and the PT-19 left together. Thermals created a few small bounces, but nothing alarming. Our 95-mph speed even allowed us to overtake a few land vehicles. Col Strahan got stick time both going and coming. He pronounced it good!

As for the back seat, the visibility was good. Earplugs worked fairly well, a helmet/headset loaned by Col Bolin was better. However, the backseat intercom system wasn't operating well, but Col Sommers said that deficiency would be added to the plane's checklist during its July annual.

Ventilation was great, controlled somewhat by asking that windows be rolled up slightly. Even most of the instrument panel was visible. An unusual aspect was that there is only one loooong seatbelt for the back seat. Could the builders have been thinking about more togetherness for those passengers?

As for leg room, it was really cramped and uncomfortable after only ten minutes, so I'm not sure anyone else will really want to ride in Tarbaby's back seat.

I'm just kidding! I had about four inches of clearance between my knees and the back of the co-pilot's seat. There would have been an extra inch for someone riding behind the pilot. The seat was comfortable for the 50-minute flight each direction. During annual

inspection, I might ask if we could just label the seat belt "Reserved for Tuck and guest." Then I could begin to search for someone to share the belt for future flights.

[We encourage any of our members to write up their own adventures flying in or working on our planes. If you don't feel comfortable writing your own story, I'm sure Col Tuck would be happy to help "ghost write" with you. Ed.]



Just part of the High Sky Wing crew that made the flight to the Hobbs fly-in.

From the Flannel Wrench Locker

by Col Bill Coombes

Well, I'm pleased to report that, thanks to the diligent efforts of the "ASMO," Col Lance Sommers, both the Fairchilds came through the annual inspection process with a minimum of fuss and bother. The Tarbaby has a cylinder we need to watch closely over the next year, but otherwise was in fine shape. The PT-19 had a leak around the fuel selector valve (which is located in a most inaccessible place,) but Lance is young and flexible and was able to bend around and work on it. Eric came out and helped, as did Jim Moore (what would we do without Jim?), as did Randy, James Martin, and several others, so ALL the Wing airplanes are UP and flying. Please give Lance a special "attaboy" as he is doing a fantastic job with our maintenance needs.

Special kudos to Steve Bolin for being our "Bingo guy" and handling all of that. So far bingo is proving to be an outstanding source of revenue for the Wing.

TxDOT has the plans for the new Commemorative Center, and I feel very confident that the bid, when let in September, will come in at an amount that we can accept. Construction should start right around Airsho. More later, but begin to visualize "moving up" to a really neat new facility.

The fly-outs in June were a real treat. We had 17 High Sky Wing members fly to Hobbs, a record for the most folks to ever go somewhere as a group. There is a fly-in to Pecos on July 30 (the Cantaloupe Festival) and something at Monahans in August, so opportunities exist for more trips. Talk with Randy if you want to go as a passenger.

New pilots are coming into the Wing, and we appreciate their efforts. I believe that Lance, Steve, and James all share the same sense of history and love of the airplanes that Randy and I do, so rest assured that the fleet is in good hands.

Finally, Airsho looms on the not-too-distant horizon. I hope you all are getting revved up to help put on the greatest warbird Airsho in the country. I know I'm ready, and I appreciate that many, many of you are ready to help out too.

In the meantime, lefty-loosey, righty-tighty.



A Stinson in our Future?

by Col Bill Coombes

That was the title of an article I wrote in March about the Stinson 105 donated to the CAF by the late Col Bob Reiss. Many of you saw the cute little white airplane, and a number of you pledged sponsorships so we could get the airplane assigned to the Wing.

Frankly, I held out little hope that the Aircraft Assignment Committee would agree, but, in a rather bizarre meeting held in conjunction with the Summer Advisory/General Staff weekend, we were assigned the airplane.

HUGE thanks go to the Wing, Steve Bolin, Ted Claussen, Bobby Meroney, Dan Linebarger, Mary Alice Tidwell, Wayne Bissitt, and Lance Sommers for pledging to become full flying sponsors, and to Blake Cowart, Lyle Thornton, Morris Bassham, Laurie Skinner, Ed McElreath, Chris Trowbridge, and Jim Moore for pledging support sponsorships. Randy (who already sponsors our SNJ), James Martin, and I will also get into the sponsorship business soon.

Thank you one and all. When you see the airplane in a month or so, all decked out in its CAP markings, you will see another award-winner to complement the Tarbaby.

As the Props Turn

by Col Randy Wilson

As Bill has said, we are doing a lot more flying these last couple of months and it is really great to have some of the newer and younger pilots active in the Wing. Currently, I'm flying with Col Lance Sommers in the SNJ and should have him rated in that plane in the near future. Lance has also been promoted to a CAF Instructor Pilot (IP) in both the J2K/Tarbaby and the PT-19 and will probably be checking Col James Martin out in the J2K soon.

My next task is to fly our new Stinson S-105 to familiarize myself with it and then check Lance out so he can be an IP in it, too. First, we have to fix a minor problem with it having no brakes but this looks like a simple problem to overcome, as it had brakes when I last moved it.

We hope that the S-105 will be a pleasant and relatively economical tail-wheel aircraft to fly, which will make it attractive to new pilots wanting to join the CAF but lacking current tail-wheel time or training. With both an Instructor Pilot (Lance) and check pilot (myself) we are in a great position to help the CAF qualify new pilots or bring back some pilots to active duty who just need to get recurrent. Y'all fly safe.

Last Issue's Mystery

by Col Randy Wilson

McDonnell's XP-67 was to be a single-seat long-range fighter powered by two Continental XI-1430 turbosupercharged 12-cylinder inverted-vee liquid-cooled engines producing up to 1,600 horsepower each.

The prototype first flew on 6 January 1944 but experienced engine and stability problems that delayed testing. An engine fire resulted in the prototype being badly damaged on 6 September 1944. Continued problems with the Continental engines and the success or expected success of other long-range designs such as the North American P-51H and P-82 resulted in the P-67 project's cancellation before the end of 1944.

Don't Forget!
Your 2006 Wing Dues Are Now Overdue

Keep 'Em Flying!

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

Tar-Baby's First Sponsor!

by Col Randy Wilson

To celebrate Bob and Phyllis Stine's move to Abilene, the Wing hosted a going away party at the Linebarger residence and presented Bob with a Flying Sponsorship on the Tar-Baby. He was thrilled.



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

July 27 - Wing meeting (7pm)

Aug 3 - Wing Staff meeting (7pm)

Note the above is a change!

Aug 24 - Wing meeting (7pm)

Sep 7 - Wing Staff meeting (7pm)

Next Wing Meeting is Thursday July 27th 7:00 pm at the Hangar