



# The Flyer

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

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On the Web at  
[HighSkyWing.org](http://HighSkyWing.org)

## Our Newest Plane — Fairchild PT-19A

After a great deal of research, the High Sky Wing decided to purchase a very-nicely restored Fairchild PT-19A from Col H.D. Butler. The majority of the funds to purchase the plane were from insurance on our two planes lost in accidents previously.

H.D. flew the plane to Midland on Friday before the Memorial Day weekend for our final inspection and a pre-purchase test flight. Cols Jim Moore and Rudy Silas greeted H.D. upon his arrival (below).



The PT-19 had a fresh annual inspection and a number of spare parts, including engines, which H.D. will be bringing to Midland in the next few weeks. The plane had been restored to excellent condition and is equipped with a good radio, transponder and inter-com system.

As our Maintenance Officer, Col Bill Coombes inspected the plane's logbooks and other paper work and by agreement with H.D. and his insurance, climbed into the front cockpit for a pre-purchase test flight. The PT-19 is equipped with an electric starter, so it only took turns of the prop before the engine was purring smoothly and Bill was adjusting his cap and getting familiar with the radio to call ground control.



It was at this moment that those of us watching noted a bit of hesitation on Bill's part, and he finally had to ask someone to read the plane's N-number off the rear of the fuselage, as it wasn't displayed in the cockpit. He is not the first pilot to have this happen but the picture above was too good not to publish.

Once properly identified, the rest of the test flight went smoothly, and after landing Bill had a big smile on his face and said something like "why don't all planes land as nicely as this one?" With all inspections completed, the plane was purchased and became the newest member of the Ghost Squadron. The next Tuesday, we filled out the required form to request assignment of the PT-19 to the High Sky Wing and this was approved in short order.

Col Coombes made the first flight in the new CAF plane and shortly thereafter, Col Randy Wilson got recurrent in the PT-19, also proclaiming it a very nicely restored aircraft. Col Dan Duewall, one of our newer members, was asked to check out in the PT-19 to give us another pilot, and after a check ride with Col Wilson, Dan became our newest Wing pilot, and after another familiarization flight, flew the PT-19 to the Snyder fly-in for the Wing. Come out to the Wing meeting this Thursday early and see our new plane and maybe get a ride!

## From the Back Office

by Col Ralph Gillette

Memorial Day has come and gone. Thanks to all those who helped make our burrito and hamburger sale a huge success. I understand we sold out and left some people hungry. I'm not surprised after seeing the crowd at the Memorial Gardens for the ceremony. It seems like it has grown each year. I think it must be the anticipation of the fly-by because it surly isn't the emcee. Anyway, good show all around by all concerned.

I just got back from a two week trip to the "North Country". Gillette, Wyoming and Denver, Colorado to be exact. Beautiful downtown Gillette is something I don't need again for a while. While in Denver, I thought I would drop in on the Mile High Wing and see how some of the other groups work. Surprise, I went out Saturday morning expecting to find someone around their headquarters and found out they don't meet unless their plane is in town, which it wasn't and they don't apparently have a hanger like we do. I guess I didn't realize how really lucky we are to have the facility and involvement we have here in Midland.

I understand the J2K is still giving us a problem. Check Ops and Maintenance for more details. I did watch as they tried to get into the air earlier this week and held my breath as the right wing dipped low and they pulled back power to set it back on the runway. Maybe next week.

Our next big activity, flying wise is the Snyder fly in. If all goes well I understand we will have three planes there, two SNJs and a PT. Should be a good chance to show off our new PT acquisition.

Have a good June and we will see all of you at our next wing meeting which will be Thursday night, June 26<sup>th</sup>. Be careful out there and remember, wear something CAF.

## Executive Views

by Col Gena Linebarger

Thank you, thank you, thank you to all the great members that turned out for the Memorial Day events! This High Sky Wing does know how to cook! Thanks to you the breakfast and lunch were a huge success. It's always rewarding when our efforts produce dollars that can be put in the bank to help support our planes.

The month of May brought new faces to the wing. Please welcome our newest members: Bruce and Susie Day, Dan Duewall, Lance Glover and son Cody, and

Robert Holten.

New HSW patches and decals are now available. Patches are \$3 each and decals are \$1 each or 6 for \$5. Hats are on order and will hopefully be here in time for Wing meeting. We also have a limited number of large Texas and American flags at a price of \$15 each.

Next wing meeting will be on Thursday, June 26<sup>th</sup>. While speakers are not yet firmed up, the program still promises to be one you don't want to miss. Come early to the meeting and let's fly! Airplanes will be ready to crank, pilots on board and passengers needed. As always, bring your favorite covered dish to the meeting to share with the troops.

## From the Flannel Wrench Locker

by Col Bill Coombes

Nirvana, besides being a mediocre rock group, is also a state of elevated pleasure and contentment, if you are a Hindu OR if you are the Maintenance Officer of a Wing with THREE in-commission airplanes! That is right, all of the Wing airplanes are flyable and are 99% squawk-free. Thanks to the efforts of Randy and Danny Duewall, the Tarbaby's trim problem should be solved, and that was the only issue I'm aware of that needs some immediate attention. Randy is checking Danny out in the SNJ and the PT-19, so we are gaining another pilot, and Jim and Rudy are finishing up the work on Wayne Bissett's Bellanca Scout, so the only thing that needs mechanical attention now is the newly-acquired tug.

This current pleasant state means that we can fly the fleet, something that we will be doing with some frequency, as is mentioned in other places in the newsletter. We flew the SNJs for Memorial Day, and are tasked with flying them at two locations on July 4<sup>th</sup> (for money, which is even better), and we are planning on a mass fly-out to Hobbs for their fly-in breakfast on 28 June. We've also been giving rides in the PT-19 and it is truly a fun experience. We plan on giving rides prior to the Wing meeting on the 26<sup>th</sup>, starting around 5, so if you want to come out and don helmet, goggles and white scarf, that is the time. Of course, we also like to fly on Saturday mornings....and then clean 'em and fuss with 'em. Why not come out?

Until then, righty-tighty, lefty-loosey.

A Special Note from "Tarbaby" herself....with apologies to Joel Chandler Harris and Uncle Remus:

*Lawsy mercy, has y'all seen my new painted colors?? I's lookin' as clean as a Safeway chitlin!*

*Y'all doz remember when Col Dan and Col Roy and Col Don brung me to da hangar backt in December o' 2000? I was a sight, in my raggedy tan and brown colors and my drippy engine what was runnin' on jes' tree cylinders, and my sticky broke brakes dat stuck me to da groun so's Jim Moore gots hisself a hernia tryin' to poosh me inside. Lawd, dat was funny to me! Den, all da High Sky Wing members gots together and decided to fix me up proper, like a lady should look, even tho it sho nuf practically bankrupted da treasury. Why, we even had to gets money from dat ole' Bob Hansen, we wuz dat hard-pressed!*

*An duz y'all remember when Col Rudy Silas done got hisself stuck tryin' to puts on my tail feathers, or when Col Bob Walker found hisself upside downwise tryin to figger out why my generator warn't generatin' no 'lectrons? An den' da first flyin' attempt, when Col Randy, what has flied almost all kinds of strange airbeasts, tooks off without the airspeed gage-thing workin' so's he knew how fast we was goin'? I was also heaby in da lef wing, what causes me to fly in a circle, but da smart pilots like Col Randy and Col Danny thinks dey done trimmed me out so I will sore like an eagle!*

*I jes want to say thank you for makin' da "Tarbaby" such a special member of de High Sky Wing.*



## As the Props Turn

by Col Randy Wilson

If you have read this far, you know we have been busy flying these last few weeks. This last weekend, both SNJs and the PT-19 attended the Snyder fly-in and received free fuel and were displayed center ramp and admired by the large crowd that came out.

As mentioned elsewhere, Col Dan Duewall is our newest Wing pilot, having checked out in the PT-19 and beginning to transition into the SNJ. Dan is a corporate pilot and A&P mechanic and also owns and flies a Starduster aerobatic biplane. The other weekend, Dan gave Ryan and Jeremy Linebarger their first aerobatic flights, and both came back grinning from ear to ear.

As for the J2K, a.k.a. *Tar-Baby*, well, we finally finished all of the required paperwork and have made three very short flights. That is the good news. The

other news is that we are still working on getting the rigging and trim correct on the plane, all the while other little minor problems are resolved, such as a major leak in the pitot system — which means on the first flight my airspeed never read over 60mph — this is now cured, we think. On the third hop into the air, I was accompanied by Col Bill Coombes (brave man!) who was to help check things like the airspeed, engine instruments, etc. as I was busy flying and checking on rigging changes.

On all three flights, the J2K was less than cooperative on takeoff, tending to wander oddly and drop the right wing upon lift off. While taxiing back in from the third attempt, the right brake began to lock up and we were just able to get back to the CAF ramp and cool the brake enough with water to take it back to the HSW hangar to see what caused the problem.

Once back at the hangar, we rebuilt the right brake, the left one having already been rebuilt, with the help of Jim Moore and Dan Duewall, but the new brake shoes will need to be sanded slightly to fit properly. Dan has volunteered to help get the brakes adjusted and working as they should as soon as he gets back from some business flying this week.

We are also corresponding with other Fairchild 24 owners to see if they can provide any advice or clues as to our plane's rigging issues. Once we get the brake issues resolved, we will make further trim and rigging adjustments and go out for another test flight. Hopefully, we will get this all sorted out in the next couple of weeks.

Now that we have all three of our assigned aircraft flyable, or nearly so, we continue to look for more pilots. As noted, Dan has checked out in the PT-19 and will also be checking out in the J2K and SNJ to help us fly those planes. Col H.D. Butler is of course one of our PT-19 pilots and will also be checking out in the SNJ in the next few weeks. H.D. will probably be in Midland for the 4<sup>th</sup> of July celebrations. Col Rusty Hall has also expressed an interest in checking out and helping us fly and maintain the SNJ.

So, hopefully, we will soon have enough pilots to operate all three High Sky Wing planes, plus Bill's personal SNJ in support of local CAF and Museum events. We do plan to offer rides in the new PT-19 to Wing members who show up early for this week's Wing meeting, beginning at 5pm, weather permitting. Rides will also be available on Saturdays, our usual work and fly day at the hangar. See you there!

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## Monthly Wing Meeting Change

As has been discussed for several months, we have voted to change the date of the monthly general Wing meetings to the 4<sup>th</sup> Thursday of each month.



Col Dan Duewall gives Cadet Jeremy Linebarger an aerobatic ride in his Starduster.

## High Sky Wing Elected Officers

Wing Leader: Ralph Gillette - 570-8093 ofc  
 Executive Officer: Gena Linebarger  
 Adjutant: Mary Alice Tidwell  
 Finance: Bob Stine  
 Operations: Randy Wilson - 352-4258 cell  
 Maintenance: Bill Coombes - 689-8359 home  
 Safety - David Linebarger  
 Hangar Phone: (432) 563-5112  
 all numbers are Area Code 432 unless indicated

## What's Happening & When

June 26- Wing meeting  
 July 3 - Wing staff meeting  
 July 4 - Fly-overs & other events  
 July 24 - Wing meeting  
 July 26 - Summer Advisory Board  
 Aug 7 - Wing staff meeting

**Next Wing Meeting is Thursday, June 26th at 7:00pm in the Hangar**