



The Flyer

June 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



Col Steve Bolin flew our PT-19 to the Big Spring fly-in on his first official mission in the plane. You will see Steve piloting the PT at many future events.

From the Back Office

by Col Gena Linebarger

For those of you that attended, Memorial Day at the CAF was an outstanding event. Where else but in our own West Texas backyard, can you start the noon ceremony with a 4 ship fly-over by our very own PT-19 and J2K along with a Stearman & PT-26 from Desert Squadron. Closing consisted of bag pipes followed with a fly-by from the Cobra and Huey helicopters that landed in the back of the big hangar.

Those helicopters were a perfect backdrop for the High Sky Wing's lunch grill. Our grilling efforts brought out a number of HSW members that assisted in the hamburger and hotdog sales. Thank you to the 30 plus volunteers for making this a record-breaking event. We needed each and every one of your talents. The public attendance for the Memorial Day Ceremony and Seminar Series was more than had been anticipated. After moving to Plan B on the cooking and sending people to the store for more food, we finally fed the hungry masses. This proved to be our best grilling fund-raiser ever. Thank you for helping!

Just a reminder, but not to panic anyone, AIRSHO is only 3 months away. Start thinking about what areas you want to help with at the hangar. More important, I hope some of you will consider coordinating different

areas of the Cantina Grill for Wed., Thurs., and Fri. of AIRSHO week. No job is too large or too small. If there's a job you want, you've got it! There is so much to prepare for and coordinate and you are the very members who can make this fundraiser run smoothly and bring in a profit for the Wing. If you have any new ideas for AIRSHO fund-raisers or procedures, please don't hesitate to contact me.

Summer Advisory is scheduled for July 14 & 15 at the MCM Grande Fun Dome in Odessa. Registration is \$45. Please consider attending. I'm looking forward to seeing you at Wing meeting on Thursday, June 22nd.



All three of the High Sky Wing planes attended the air show at Snyder last Saturday, along with Col Bill Coombes' own bright orange Swift. See the Operations article for more on recent flights.

Executive Views

by Col Ted Claussen

We had a good crowd attend the Memorial Day event and many stayed for food and the afternoon session. If you were not there, you really missed an enjoyable presentation complete with helicopters. Our cantina was located in the big hangar for the first time and it turned out to be a good move since it proved to be a financial success. I realize that summer is here and many are out of town, but if you are still here, please don't forget the wing meeting on June 22nd.

There will be the usual dinner arrangement and then a presentation/review of ground safety, marshaling, tug usage, etc. to sharpen our skills and enhance our safety around the hangar. Hope everyone is playing BINGO and having some fun while increasing funds to keep out planes flying.



Cols Randy Wilson and Lyle Thornton manned the Wing's SNJ for the flight to Big Spring.

As the Props Turn

by Col Randy Wilson

The last few weeks have been busier than usual for aircraft operations, as we have rated some new pilots and flown the High Sky Wing's fleet of CAF planes to a couple of local fly-ins and air shows.

Col James Martin is our newest PT-19 pilot, while Col Lance Sommers is now qualified on both the PT-19 and J2K (a.k.a. *Tar-Baby*). Lance should be also rated as a CAF Instructor Pilot (IP) in the next couple of weeks and can then help transition other Wing pilots into the various planes. Lance will also be starting to check out in the SNJ as soon as I get some paperwork finished.

Having enough pilots to fly all three Wing planes plus let Col Bill Coombes fly his own newly-acquired Swift (a.k.a. *Hooters One*), we flew over to Big Spring two Saturdays ago for their fly-in breakfast and to represent the CAF. Last Saturday we went to Snyder for their fly-in and air show. The photos of all of these events come from Deb Magness, Ralph Gillette and H.A. Tuck.



Col Bill Coombes flew his Swift to Big Spring with "copilot" Jim Moore - see below for the rest of the story!

Next Saturday we plan to launch for the fly-in breakfast at Hobbs, NM. We will share the details on that flight with you at the next Wing meeting, this Thursday. As always, if you want to ride along in one of the planes, don't be bashful but let us know as early as possible. We try to take those members who regularly help out with both the planes and other Wing projects and events but everyone is welcome. We only have room for a single passenger in most of the planes, although the J2K can carry a second passenger in the rear seat provided he or she is relatively small, lightweight and happy in cramped spaces!

Col Steve Bolin may be able to take the Beech Baron that he flies to Hobbs, which would allow more Wing members to ride along — again, more news on that at the Wing meeting. Also, Col James Martin's newly acquired Cessna 195 should be flying in the not too distant future and he has expressed an interest in also carrying Wing members in it to some events.

All of our planes are running well but we will need to do the annual inspection on the two Fairchild's shortly, probably starting in July, just in time for some nice 100+ days in the hangar! I look forward to seeing you all next Thursday at the Wing meeting. Don't forget to bring a covered dish to share with everyone for dinner. Fly safe!



The High Sky Wing gang registering inside the terminal at Big Spring. A bit later, there was an award for the oldest aircraft that flew in with the oldest pilot and the winner was Col Coombes' Swift (60 years old) and "copilot" Jim Moore (75 years young)! Next time Jim is going with me!

Being Safe!

by Col Lyle Thornton

Short and simple — it is very hot, so be sure to drink plenty of water and have a good supply of sun screen applied whenever you are out on the ramp or working outside anywhere.



The two Fairchilds running up and ready to launch very early last Saturday for Snyder, with Cols Jim Moore and Tom Kingon as marshalls and fire guards. Col James Martin flew his first official mission in the PT-19 with his wife Sarah enjoying her first ride in an open cockpit aircraft. Col Lance Sommers commands the J2K (a.k.a. *Tar-Baby*) with Col Ralph Gillette as his crew.



Cols Bill Coombes and Ed McElrath ready to launch in *Hooters One* with Cols Randy Wilson and Roger Wells in the SNJ for Snyder. This was Col Wells' first trip in one of the Wing aircraft and he seemed to have a great time.

From the Flannel Wrench Locker

by Col Bill Coombes

The annual on the SNJ was completed without any nasty surprises or expenses — thanks to all who helped make that happen, especially our Assistant Maintenance Officer, Col Lance Sommers and his faithful helper Col James Martin, plus all the others who helped take apart and put together the myriad of panels and parts that have to come off and go back on the SNJ each year.

The annual inspections for the two Fairchilds will be due by the end of July but we hope to start on them during July, while there are not as many fly-ins or air shows in the area due to the heat.

See you at the Wing meeting, remember, lefty loosey, and righty tighty....

Keep 'Em Flying!

Last Issue's Mystery

by Col Randy Wilson

Last month's mystery plane was the North American Model 21 (later Model 39), XB-21 Dragon. First flight of the NA-21 was on Dec. 22nd, 1936. Designed as a high-altitude bomber, the final NA-39 modification was powered by two Pratt & Whitney R-2180 engines of 1200 horsepower, had a top speed of 220 mph and a service ceiling of 25,000 feet. Only one was built and it was used for research after finally being purchased by the USAAC in 1939.

Congratulations to, of course, Col Bruce Day for correctly identifying the plane, as well as Col Steve Hanson. See Page 4 of this issue for a non-bomber mystery plane. Have fun!

Lest We Forget

The historic combat aircraft of the Commemorative Air Force are aircraft which defended our Nation and won the skies on every battlefield in World War II. They are living monuments to the thousands of men and women who built, serviced and flew them.

Some rose to fight at Pearl Harbor —

They fought in the Coral Sea — The Battle of Midway — The Solomons — Guadalcanal — Bougainville, Rabaul and Burma —

Across North Africa, Ploesti, Sicily, into Italy — Salerno, Anzio —

They bombed and fought in daylight raids over Europe — Frankfurt, Cologne, Schweinfurt, Hamburg — They fought over the heads of Allied soldiers from Normandy to Berlin —

They fought from the Sahara Desert to the Aleutians —

They won the skies and blasted the Islands of New Guinea, Ulithi, Saipan, Leyte, Luzon, Iwo Jima, Okinawa — and on to Japan — To final victory over the Rising Sun and the Swastika.

These aircraft, the *Ghost Squadron of the CAF*, are being preserved for future generations of Americans to see in action as they were flown, in the defence of our nation, more than sixty years ago.

THEY SHALL NOT BE DESTROYED

[Reproduced, with slight editing for dates and name, from the Official Program of the Confederate Air Force AIRSHO 1984. It seems to be a simple answer to the question, why do we keep 'em flying. Ed.]

HIGH SKY WING - CAF
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This Month's Mystery

by Col Randy Wilson

This month we offer a fighter design as our mystery plane. Answers at the next Wing meeting and in the next newsletter.



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

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

June 22 - Wing meeting (7pm)

July 1 - Wing Staff meeting (10am)

July 15 - Summer Advisory Board

July 27 - Wing meeting (7pm)

Aug 5 - Wing Staff meeting (10am)

Next Wing Meeting is Thursday June 22nd 7:00 pm at the Hangar
