



The Flyer

March 2003
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High Sky Wing of the Commemorative Air Force
Midland, Texas - Hangar: 915-563-5112

On the Web at
HighSkyWing.org

Saturdays Are Work and Fun Days at the Hangar

All Wing members are welcome to join us at the HSW Hangar every Saturday, when we work on the planes, tug and anything else that needs fixing or cleaning. Generally someone will be there about 9:00am and we generally break for lunch about 11:30pm then work until everything is done or about 4:00pm

This last Saturday saw the J2K, a.k.a. Tar-Baby, (right) outside showing off her new paint and markings. Of course, being the Tar-Baby, the left mag was rough and the generator wasn't — so what's new!

Col Harry Susan (below) volunteered to help troubleshoot the generator problem, watched carefully by Cols Bob Walker and Ralph Gillette while Randy Wilson ran up the engine. We did not solve the problem but will continue to troubleshoot with the help of wiser gurus of electrons and such stuff.



Meanwhile, back at the SNJ (below), Maintenance Officer Bill Coombes and Col Bobby Meroney reinstall some of 101X's instruments that were overhauled as part of her annual inspection.



Hopefully, the SNJ will be airworthy again in another week or so — see Bill's column inside for details of the J2K's restoration. See you any Saturday!

From the Back Office

by Col Ralph Gillette

Greetings from the back office of the HSW hangar. We have just finished our second month of the new year. Our activities committee has again performed outstandingly with the Mardi Gras party on Saturday March 1st. If you missed it, you can see some of the things we did, courtesy of Lauri Skinner's video camera. She caught the more tranquil moments along with of the more absurd moments during the evening's events. I must admit, we have a few talented members and some, who will not be mentioned, that will not be invited back to the microphone. More in Laurie's column.

The Winter Staff meeting was held February 22nd and 23rd. A lot of good ideas were passed around. One problem that is bothering everybody is retention of members. The High Sky Wing is not the only group experiencing a rapid decline in membership due to non-renewals. We will be putting some of the ideas garnered from the Staff meeting into play in the coming months.

The High Sky Wing was awarded a Unit Letter of Commendation at the Staff meeting. It was for our outstanding service as dedicated supporters who have consistently provided outstanding service toward achieving the goals and objectives of the Commemorative Air Force. The award cites our continued support of headquarters events and the day-to-day operations of the American Air Power Museum as well as the work on restoration of the Fairchild F24.

Our next major activity will be support for Open Cockpit day at the main hangar. I'm sure they can use help as guides and we are planning to have hamburgers available for lunch which will require some cooking skills. After that is the big Memorial Day bash. More information will be available on these activities later.

In April, staff meetings will move back to 7:00pm on the first Thursday of the month due to air show season. This will last through October and in November, we will go back to the first Saturday at 10:00am for staff meetings.

Have a good March and we will see all of you at our next wing meeting which will be Thursday night, March 20th. Be careful out there.

Don't Forget!
Your 2003 Wing Dues Are Due



Wing Leader Ralph Gillette working his way through the piles on the desk in the back office. Bomb — what bomb?

Executive Views

by Col Gena Linebarger

The next Wing meeting promises to be a good one. The speaker for the evening will be Jeff Young. Jeff's program will be a presentation of his war experiences in Desert Storm.

As members of the HSW, let's strive to achieve two goals this year. First, and most important is to increase membership. Wing meetings are great opportunities to introduce prospective new members to the High Sky Wing and the CAF. Look around and see who you can bring to the meeting.

Our other goal this year should be to increase member participation in Wing projects and events. Let's make this place come alive by encouraging everyone to come out and have some fun. If you've missed someone's smiling face at the last few events, please pick up the phone and give them a call. See everyone soon.



From the Flannel Wrench Locker

by Col Bill Coombes

Spring has sprung, and a young man's fancy turns to ... air show season, of course, and we have several invitations to bring one or all of our airplanes out for public viewing. Of course, as good as this is in furthering the objectives of the CAF, etc, etc, it does mean that the airplanes have to be flyable, which, as of today, they are not.

The SNJ suffered significant setbacks during its annual inspection as two cylinders were found to be broken (so much so that they have been exchanged rather than overhauled) and two instruments needed to be replaced as well. The good news is that there were no corrosion issues, and the newly repaired tailwheel strut seems to be working well. It is a sad fact (one that those of us who have owned airplanes know only too well) that airplanes break and usually EXPENSIVELY. At this point Rodney believes that we are on the way back toward engine health for 101X.

The J2K-2 (a.k.a. Tarbaby) continues to remind us that she will not commit aviation without a few more curve balls being thrown our way. Leaky brakes were fixed the other day (thanks Randy, Bobby, Jim, Don, Ed) and the engine was started without difficulty. A mag problem manifested itself as did a generator problem, but we believe that they are minor in nature and will be fixed quickly.

Some radio installation work remains to be done and then the real challenge begins: PAPERWORK! It is axiomatic in the CAF that the amount of paperwork must equal the weight of the airplane (in troy ounces sometimes) before the airplane can actually fly. I hope to enlist Eric in this endeavor so that the process can go a bit more easily. In the meantime, Tarbaby basks in her new paint scheme. She is truly a stunner, handsome in the way that some airplanes have to turn heads, and we should all be proud of what she represents ... blood, sweat, tears and LOTS of money!

That last word, money, leads me to once again make a plea for more financial support from those of you in the Wing who are able. Many of us have made donations to offset the maintenance costs we've incurred, but it is obvious that much more is needed. The staff is looking into approaching Rusty Hall and H.D. Butler to see if they would like to become non-sponsor pilots for the SNJ, the idea being that they could then contribute to the airplane's maintenance.

Without bingo as a source of revenue for our projects we are facing some critical decisions. Please help if you can, and help us recruit more members.

See you at the meeting.



Not all work is on the planes. Col Don McCracken, helped by Col Jim Moore (off getting tools) is under the watchful eye of our Wing Leader trying to adjust the tug's brakes. Seems the tug has been too close to the *Tar-Baby*!

As the Props Turn

by Col Randy Wilson

If you have gotten this far, you probably know that everything we have with wings is broke, so we haven't been flying in some time. The good news is that the we think we see light at the end of the tunnel and should have the SNJ back flying in a week or so and hopefully, the J2K will fly in a few weeks.

We continue to look for new pilots of both the SNJ and the J2K, so if you have any potential candidates, please bring them out to a Wing meeting or drop by on a Saturday and let us get to know them. One of the big problems we are having is the requirement for recent tail-wheel time for both planes, plus the need for a significant amount of SNJ/AT-6/Harvard experience to be able to act as a Pilot-In-Command (PIC) in the SNJ.

It would also help to have a current Certified Flight Instructor (CFI) active in the Wing's planes to help serve as a CAF Instructor Pilot, a new position set up only in the last year or so. We would then be able to use our planes for tail-wheel recurrency and even transition training. Fly safe — see you at the hangar!

Mardi Gras Party a Blast!

Here are just a few photos from the Wing's Mardi Gras party last March 1st. Members and their families and friends seem to have a great time. See if you can guess who is behind some of the masks!



Names withheld to protect the innocent — and the silly!



High Sky Wing Membership Renewal - 2003

Colonel Number: _____

Name: _____

Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____

Home Phone: _____ Work Phone: _____

Cell/mobile Phone: _____ Fax: _____

E-Mail: _____

Copy or remove this form to renew your High Sky Wing dues for the year 2003. Please enclose a check for **\$50.00** made out to **High Sky Wing CAF**.

Please print all information clearly, especially your e-mail address. If your address and other information are currently correct on our lists, you can just fill in your Colonel Number and Name. Don't forget that if you can connect to the Internet, you can visit the Members Only section of our web site at <http://HighSkyWing.org> and update or correct any of your contact info.

Thanks to the following members who have paid their 2003 Wing dues!

Jim W Adams	Ryu Hatano	Ray Sharp
Rudolph L Arnold Jr.	Frank P Hawk	Jerry Shockey
Morris L Bassham	Tonya Houston	Travis Skinner
Ruby Bruns	William K. Johnson Jr.	Lauri J. Skinner
Becky Carter	John Keeseey	Randall A. Skinner
Tara Claussen	Thomas B Kingon	Robert M Stine
Ted Claussen	Charlotte M Larson	Phyllis A. Stine
Carol Claussen	David Linebarger	Ben Tamney
Kathryn Collier	Gena Linebarger	Haruo Tanaka
Richard Collier	Jeremy Linebarger	Mary Alice Tidwell
Bill Coombes	Leon Lloyd	James Trower
George W Coombes	Myles K Magness	Edd Vanden Bosch
Alice Coombes	Don McCracken	Bruce E Wallace
Blake Cowart	Ed McElrath	Erna Ward-Sass
Wallace H Craig	Thomas E McKown	Kenneth W Warrington
Charlotte Davis	Bobby Meroney	Carol Sue Warrington
Don Davis	Jim Moore	Pat Wilson
James R Fisher	Jimmy Parker	Randy Wilson
George W. Foster	Michael Lee Place	
William H Gates	Davy Roberts	
Ralph T Gillette	Joe Roome	

HIGH SKY WING - CAF
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Col Ed McElrath has taken on the job of managing the Wing lounge and keeping it stocked with your favorite cold beverages. He is also a regular at the hangar on Saturdays, helping with whatever needs doing. If you haven't met Ed, be sure to say hello at the next meeting or visit to the hangar.

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: (915) 563-5112

all numbers are Area Code 915 unless indicated

What's Happening & When

Mar 20 - Wing meeting
 Apr 3 - Staff meeting
 Apr 17 - Wing meeting
 Apr 19 - Open Cockpit Day
 Apr 26 - Seminar *The Authors Speak*
 May 1 - Staff meeting
 May 15- Wing meeting

Next Wing Meeting is Thursday, March 20th at 7:00pm in the Hangar