



# The Flyer

March 2006  
Vol. Fourteen, No. 3

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

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

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## CAF 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary & Convention in Las Vegas, Summer 2007

### CAF National Convention

Plans are underway for a major gathering of all CAF members, their families and friends in Las Vegas, Nev. next summer. This event would not only be a way to get a lot of CAF members together for a bit of entertainment and fun but also help to spread the word to potential members and sponsors about the CAF.

More information about the event will be available on the CAF web site very soon and we will also have more info at our March 23<sup>rd</sup> Wing meeting.

### From the Back Office

by Col Gena Linebarger

Next year marks a significant milestone for the Commemorative Air Force. In 2007, we will celebrate our 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary. Headquarters is in the process of putting together a CAF National Convention in Las Vegas to celebrate this anniversary. As noted above, more information, including a form to reserve your reservations for the event will be available in the next few days, both online and at our next Wing meeting.

Remember that High Sky Wing membership dues of \$50 were due on Jan. 1, 2006. If you have not yet mailed your dues in, please take a moment to do so. If you have a question regarding your dues, please contact Lauri Skinner at [pyroblonde@grandecom.net](mailto:pyroblonde@grandecom.net) or 432-694-5136.

There are many upcoming events in the hangar over the next few months, many of which will be fundraising opportunities. Mark your calendar for Saturday, April 15 for Open Cockpit Day. As in the past, the HSW will cook and sale hamburgers and hotdogs in the big hangar for this event. There will be more details discussed at the next Wing meeting on March 23<sup>rd</sup>. Hope to see everyone there.

### Executive Views

by Col Ted Claussen

Spring is here and it's clean up time! We need your help on Saturday, March 18<sup>th</sup> to help clean for some upcoming events. We will be hosting the lecture seminars on March 25<sup>th</sup> and again on April 22<sup>nd</sup>. May 25<sup>th</sup> will be our usual Memorial Day cookout and we also have some upcoming hangar rentals. Please come out and join us March 18<sup>th</sup> for SPRING CLEAN and be there March 23<sup>rd</sup> for Wing Meeting dinner and program.

[Due to various issues, you may not get this newsletter until after the clean up. Sorry. *Ed.*]

### Being Safe!

by Col Lyle Thornton

The Wing Safety Committee has now been formed. At this time, Bobby Meroney and Ed McElarth have joined me to form the safety committee. I would like to encourage anyone who has any suggestions on how to make the Wing safe for our members and our aircraft to contact myself or any of the committee members or the Wing Staff members. I have been in contact with Lyn Fite, who is the Ground Safety Coordinator for the CAF, and I hope the we can get together soon to formulate a plan for our Wing that conforms to the CAF requirements. Safety is sometimes perceived as numbers, statistics, government or company requirements, but really it comes down to a basic safe attitude. We can do the paperwork and technically meet all of the requirements, but if we don't think and act safe, all the paperwork in the world won't make us safe. The High Sky Wing Safety Committee is committed to making the hangar and wing facilities safe for our members and aircraft and I encourage all of our members to join us in this endeavor. Thank you and PLEASE BE SAFE.

## From the Flannel Wrench Locker

by Col Bill Coombes

Ah, Spring time, and a young man's fancy turns to...annual inspections???! Well, we all know what young men think about when the grass turns green, but for the older gentlemen of the High Sky Wing, now is the time that we gird our loins (some Biblical language here and there) for doing the annuals on the Wing assigned airplanes. Starting with the SNJ in May, then the two Fairchild in July, we have plenty to do for all you wrench-turners and bolt-twisters. Will I see you at the hangar to help?

The first weekend in May will be the date as 101X gets her yearly check. I'll see if we can get Lance Sommers, our newly "selected" assistant Maintenance Officer, to provide the young muscle, the technical skill, and the oversight to smooth the process for the rest of us. It is a big job, but, done in small bites and with lots of hands, it isn't too bad. I know that many of you come out expecting to work on something, and since the airplanes have all been "up" you've had nothing to do. That is all fixing to change, so come on out!

Among other doings, we are going to host the next three museum Seminar Series programs in our hangar, beginning with a program on March 25<sup>th</sup> about the Marianas Turkey Shoot, the largest air battle of the Pacific War. Noted author Barrett Tillman will be here, along with four veterans of the battle, each with a really good story to tell. Additionally, this will be a "Lunch and Lecture" deal, with hamburgers provided by Outback, so patrons can come out at noon for the lunch and stay for the program at 2 pm. The CAF Zero and Helldiver will be in our hangar as large visual aids, so there will be lots of activity! This all means that we need to do our annual Spring Cleaning of the hangar on Saturday, March 18<sup>th</sup>. David and the cooking crew will provide hamburgers for lunch for all who come out to work on that day, so please volunteer your time. These three programs represent a fund-raising opportunity for the Wing, so we need to present our best appearance for our guests. I hope all of you plan on attending as well.

Finally, I believe we are going to be going to the Burnet Airshow on April 8<sup>th</sup>. It would be really neat if the HSW had some significant presence there besides our Wing members who are also part of the Blastards. At this point we will take the two Fairchild and there is a possibility of taking the SNJ as well. If you are

interested in flying down, talk with me or Randy at the Wing meeting. I hope we have other invitations from other places so more folks can go along. It is a good way for us to "show the flag," as well as show off some beautiful airplanes. And that will be a good segue to my other article in the newsletter: be sure and read it.

All for now....lefty-loosey, righty-tighty

## A Stinson in our Future?

by Col Bill Coombes

Those of you who were at the February Wing meeting saw a new airplane in our hangar. The late Col Bob Reiss, from San Diego, who was a tremendous philanthropic asset to the whole CAF, donated his Stinson S-105 to the CAF and it is now up for assignment. The S-105 is a two-place high wing tube and fabric "bug smasher" that was first produced in 1939. It was widely used during the war by the CAP as a coastal patrol craft and, when drafted into the USAAF, as a liaison aircraft. Mr. Reiss's example was completely redone in 2000-2002 and, as I mentioned in the February newsletter, it would be a nice addition to the High Sky Wing.

Apparently a number of other folks, upon seeing the airplane, agreed with me. HUGE thanks go to Steve Bolin, Ted Claussen, Bobby Meroney, Dan Linebarger, Mary Alice Tidwell, and the team of Blake Cowart and Wayne Bissitt who joined with me to pledge money for full flying sponsorships, and to Lyle Thornton, Morris Bassham, Laurie and Randy Skinner, Ed McElreath, and the High Sky Wing for pledging support sponsorships. This means that we have significant financial support for our petition to get the airplane assigned to the "Liaison Support Detachment" within the High Sky Wing. We won't know anything until the General Staff meeting in April, but I am hopeful that we will have another airplane in our hangar.

## As the Props Turn

by Col Randy Wilson

Congratulations to our newest CAF Wing pilot, Col Lance Sommers, who completed his checkout in the PT-19 last Saturday, while the temperatures and winds cooperated (well, at least the temps). Lance's next challenge is to master the infamous *Tar-Baby!*

I also had the pleasure of making the first transition flight with Col Steve Bolin in the PT-19 the same

day and Steve did a very nice job, showing very good “tail-wheelmanship” if that’s a word. Hopefully we’ll have a chance to fly more in the next week or so and get Steve checked out in the “convertible”.

I’d like to encourage everyone to plan on attending the museum seminar program about the Mariannas Turkey Shoot, Saturday, March 25<sup>th</sup> in our hangar. I’d plan on making the lunch at noon, to have more time to visit with our guests. It looks like a great chance to meet an interesting mixture of veterans and historians.

We have a bit of work to do on the tail-wheel strut on the SNJ but otherwise, all of the High Sky Wing fleet are airworthy and should be flyable as weather permits.

As Bill has noted in his column, we hope to take some or all of our planes to a number of local air shows in the next couple of months, and the best way to get involved is to come out on Saturdays and help your fellow members with the normal maintenance and “stuff” that old planes seem to constantly demand.

See you at the hangar and let’s all fly safe!

## Keep ‘Em Flying!



### Last Month’s Mystery

by Col Randy Wilson

Last month’s mystery photo was of a Grumman AF-2S Guardian, the strike version of a post-WWII pair of submarine hunter-killer designs. The second of the pair, the AF-2W, carried an airborne radar, while the AF-2S carried antisubmarine weapons for attack.



A pair of Grumman Guardians, the radar-equipped AF-2W in front with the weapons-carrying AF-2S behind.

### Chrysler’s Bombers

by Col Randy Wilson

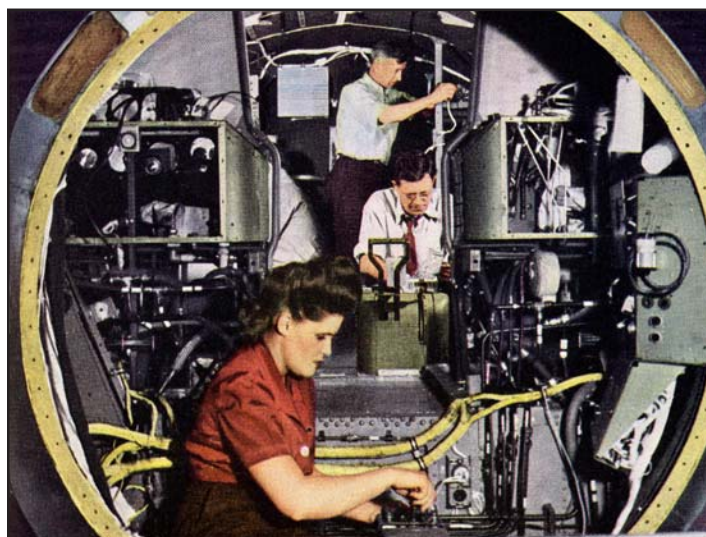
Many folks don’t know that a significant percentage of aircraft of all kinds were built by automobile companies in World War II. One of these companies was Chrysler, which published a number of booklets telling the history of its wartime production, including one in the editor’s collection titled *Great Engines and Great Planes*.

Chrysler’s first contract was for production of the Martin-designed B-26 Marauder, with construction beginning at the DeSoto-Warren plant before Pearl Harbor.

Once America had been thrust into the war, Chrysler took on the production of Boeing’s B-29 Superfortress as well as its Wright R-3350 engines.



Three air force chiefs, Arnold of the USA, Belyaev of USSR and Evill of Great Britain, with Chrysler officials inspect B-26 construction progress.



Final wiring and instrument and armor plate installation in the B-29 nose section.

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## Another Mystery?

Only a couple of prototypes of this design were built and flown, so it may be a bit of a challenge to those of you who like this sort of thing. To submit your answer or learn the identity of this “mystery” just show up at the March Wing meeting.



**Don't Forget!**  
**Your 2006 Wing Dues Are**  
**Now Due**

## 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

Mar 23 - Wing meeting (7pm)

Mar 25 - Mariannas Turkey Shoot (tba)

Apr 1 - Wing staff meeting (10am)

Apr 15 - Open Cockpit Day

Apr 27 - Wing meeting (7pm)

**Next Wing Meeting is Thursday March 23<sup>rd</sup> 7:00 pm at the Hangar**