



The Flyer

May 2004
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On the Web at
HighSkyWing.org

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

Memorial Day Activities

by Col Randy Wilson

You will hear more about our plans for Memorial Day elsewhere in this issue and at the next Wing meeting, which is next Thursday evening. We will be cooking and selling hamburgers and hot dogs after the ceremonies at our hangar, so we do need some volunteers to help man the kitchen and serving lines.

We will have two special guests at the ceremonies, Medal of Honor recipients George H. O'Brien and Fred E. Ferguson, and I'm sure all of us look forward to meeting and visiting with them.

On a sad note, we will also be remembering a very recent visitor, Colonel Robert Morgan, pilot of the *Memphis Belle*, who was our guest and speaker at a seminar dinner and program just last March. Col Morgan passed away earlier this month from complications from a fall in April. We were lucky to have had the chance to visit with him. Our sympathies to his wife and family.

Lest we forget!

Around the Circuit

by Col David Linebarger

The Blastards took to the field at the Central Texas Air-Show in Temple the weekend of May 1-2. Among them were several High Sky Wing members; David and Gena Linebarger, Dan Linebarger, Bruce and Susie Day, Davy Roberts, Randy and Lauri Skinner, Linda Gisolo, Mary Ann Drennan, Gregg Ulvested, and Clyde "Doc" Watson. They were meet on Saturday with cold and wet weather and several had to retreat to the local army surplus store to get winter clothing. Sound like a typical air show?

By noon on Saturday the skys dried up and we were able to take to the field and put together a small pyro show for the planes that started flying at 1330. On Sunday the skys cleared and we had sun shining with an abundance of explosives that had to be used up. The show turned out to be a good one! The High Sky Wing members were impressed to see our very own 101 fly in a show without the help of the local mechanics. All thought it was good to see OUR plane doing what we work so hard to get it to do. A good time was had by all who made the trip.

Commemorative Center News

The Commemorative Center Committee will be meeting in our hangar this Wednesday evening, May 26th, to review what we hope are the final draft plans for the new building, so the architects can begin to draft the complete plans that have to be submitted to TXDot in the next few months.

The next day, Thursday, May 27th, is our regular Wing meeting night and the plans and other information about the new building and our new Wing home will be the major topic of the meeting. We will also have a report on the fund raising for the project. Please try and make the meeting and don't forget to bring a covered dish or other item for dinner, and also, come early if you want a ride in one of our planes.

See you Thursday!



Col Bill Coombes (right) and one of six new CAF Cadets he has recruited in the last few months, Ethan Edwards, after Ethan's first ride in a CAF plane, our PT-19. High Sky Wing Leader Col Ralph Gillette (left) congratulates both intrepid airmen. By the way, Ralph is now officially retired!

From the Back Office

by Col Ralph Gillette

Our May staff meeting was held Thursday, May 6th. We are back on the first Thursday staff meeting schedule since we are into the air show season and Saturdays could get hectic.

Most of our staff meeting was taken up with discussions of the Commemorative Center layout with Ashley and Debbie Coco. The way it now looks is very good and we will have plans at the May meeting to share with everybody. All our wing members need to make our next meeting, Thursday, May 27th to see the results of our input to the layout of our new facilities. I think everyone will be quite pleased.

The "First" Annual Iron Eagle Clay Shoot is rapidly approaching. Gena Linebarger reported to the staff on the progress, Jeremy was at work and couldn't make the meeting. Things are coming together nicely. The Wing really needs to get behind this fund raising effort. We will need people to help with the shoot (the scouts will be happy to tell you what to do). We will be talking more about this at our meeting this month.

Several people have asked about shirts. We have some small ones and some very big ones. We will take orders at the Wing meeting so we can get everybody suitably attired.

Everybody has suffered through the buzz and poor acoustics of our sound system during meetings. It would appear that we need a new mike, a new mike cord, some good speakers and new wiring to hook everything together. David Linebarger was tasked with the job of getting costs together and reporting back to staff on the cost. Randy Skinnner has already looked at some of our needs and has been talking with David.

Memorial Day is fast approaching and the Wing will do lunch (for a fee) for the people that come out to the Memorial Gardens for our observance. The Wing will also do a fly-by, assuming planes are available. Everybody should make plans to attend and come help cook and serve if you can.

Remember, our next Wing meeting is Thursday, May 27th at 7:00PM. Come early and take a ride in one of our planes (weather permitting). So, until next Saturday at work day or at Thursday's meeting, stay safe and remember to wear something CAF.

Don't Forget!
Your 2004 Wing Dues Are OverDue

Executive Views

by Col Ted Claussen

Since this month's meeting involves passing along information and discussing matters of interest to Wing members, we will not have a speaker. Please plan on attending, however, as there will be several things you will want to know about.

Thanks to all wing members and others who helped make our dinner with the "aces" an enjoyable event.

From the Flannel Wrench Locker

by Col Bill Coombes

Spring, and a young man's fancy turns to thoughts of...well, since most of us aren't "young men" any more, we can all focus on the important things of life, like the Iron Eagle Clay Shoot on June 12th (best fundraising idea I've heard of in a long time), the Memorial Day events (including the High Sky Wing's hamburger sales to the crowd at the ceremony), and, of course, the annual inspections due on both the Fairchilds. Thanks to the generosity of Wing member Harold Davis, the annual inspection for the SNJ was ridiculously cheap, as opposed to all the other years we've had the airplane. I believe that there will be no major squawks with either the J2K or the PT-19, so life on the maintenance front is good!

Our plan for "doing" the PT should begin on the weekend of June 5. H.D. Butler has agreed to come up from Austin to help with "his baby" so we should expect that process to go rather quickly. I'm proposing to take the Tarbaby over to Darren at Airpark to have him do the annual: I think it is important that for its first annual inspection that a different set of eyes go over the airplane. Darren learned at the knee of Ken Shugart and has the necessary skills to handle the job. It will cost us more money, but I think it is the prudent way to go for this first inspection.

Elsewhere you probably have read about Rusty's travails with the SNJ. He is learning, and he is putting money into the airplane, and the airplane is visible on the airshow circuit, and those are good things. The airplane will be back here for the Memorial Day ceremony, and I think we will keep it around for awhile.

Lastly, we will be giving rides to members in the airplanes prior to our meeting on May 27th. If you've been hankering for a ride, come out early and we'll get

you airborne. This would be a good opportunity for you to bring a guest so that they can see what we do and maybe entice them into at least an associate's membership. I'm concerned with the declining membership in our Wing, especially as we prepare for the big construction project of our new home in the Commemorative Center. WE NEED YOU! Come out on Saturdays, help with the hangar maintenance, help with the truck project, wipe down an airplane or two, and enjoy some quality fellowship: it's what the CAF is all about!

Remember, left-loosey, righty-tighty.

As the Props Turn

by Col Randy Wilson

Col Rusty Hall, our newest Wing SNJ pilot had a lesson in strong crosswind landing and less-than-great brakes in 101X a few weeks ago, while landing at Burnet. Rusty clipped a taxiway sign with the center flap but damage was limited to the flap and Rusty's ego and wallet. Rusty purchased another serviceable flap and had the repairs done in short order, at no cost to the Wing, and the SNJ is once again flying.

Col Hall is to be commended for stepping up and taking responsibility for the incident and the cost of the repairs, and he will bring 101 back home on Memorial Day weekend to participate in the ceremonies on Monday. You may note that the new flap is silver and not yellow but this too will be remedied after the plane returns home.

The incident was reported promptly, as required by CAF regulations, and the CAF Flight Safety Board agreed to allow Rusty to continue flying pending his appearance before that board to review the incident in a few weeks.

Col Dan Duewall took our PT-19 to the NAS Kingsville air show this last weekend and made the front page of the Corpus Christi newspaper, we understand, by giving a ride to a lady in the PT. We will have more details on that from Dan at the Wing meeting.

As many of you know and have commented on, it is good to see our own SNJ flying in air shows throughout Texas, and hopefully it will even make its first aerial appearance in the annual AIRSHO this year. Rusty did say that we may need to have the carburetor checked, as it is burning more fuel than normal, and we plan on getting this done after 101 returns home.

The PT-19 will be back in time to give rides at the meeting next Thursday, as will the J2K, a.k.a. Tar-Baby. If you haven't had a chance to ride in one of our Wing aircraft or haven't in a while, plan on coming out early on the 27th and flying, weather and old pilots permitting, of course.

We are hoping to have enough compatible aircraft and formation rated pilots to do a full missing man for Memorial Day. We currently plan on a short formation refresher ground school and a bit of flying on Sunday, with whatever aircraft we have available.

Signals from the Civil War to WWII

by Col Sue Becraft

Sue is our Wing librarian and stumbled across this slightly offbeat story based on information in the archives of the Delta Queen.

U.S. Civil War Sends a Signal to WWII Germany

During WWII, the German photo-feature magazine, *Signal*, enjoyed the widest circulation of any periodical in the world, even surpassing America's *Life* magazine. Published in many languages, *Signal* was distributed in all the conquered countries of the Third Reich and was renown for its extensive use of color and photography.

When the war began, the magazine's articles and photos featured victorious German troops conquering much of Europe. However, as the tide of battle began to turn against Germany, the content broadened to include the arts, older historical events and entertainment. These "feel good" articles had only one purpose - to distract their readers from the increasing military disasters in the lands that Hitler and his armies sought to conquer and hold.

Oddly enough, in 1944 *Signal's* cover story featured Gen. U. S. Grant and the American Civil War, including an extensive analysis of his military prowess, plus maps and vintage photos. Fortunately for history, German leaders refused to recognize that a non-German could develop and successfully use superior military strategy, and unlike Grant, the Third Reich was soundly defeated.

While the Allies learned from history, the Nazis did not. This was a tumultuous time in history but by being willing to learn from the past, including Grant's strategy and tactics, the Allies were victorious over Hitler and the Third Reich.

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Mystery Plane

by Col Randy Wilson

It has been quite a while since we tried your aircraft recognition skills with a Mystery Plane, so why not now? This one shouldn't be too hard.

For the answer, you will have to wait until the Wing meeting next Thursday, or the next newsletter. E-mail me at randy@rwebs.net with your guess.

High Sky Wing Elected Officers

Wing Leader: Ralph Gillette - 570-8093 ofc
Executive Officer: Ted Claussen
Adjutant: Mary Alice Tidwell
Finance: Bob Stine
Operations: Randy Wilson - 352-4258 cell
Maintenance: Bill Coombes - 689-8359 home
Safety - Don McCracken

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all numbers are Area Code 432 unless indicated

What's Happening & When

May 27 - Wing meeting (7pm)
May 31 - Memorial day events
June 3 - Staff meeting (7pm)
June 12 - Iron Eagle Clay Shoot
June 24 - Wing meeting (7pm)

Next Wing Meeting is Thursday, May 27th at 7:00pm in the Hangar
