



The Flyer



May 2011 Issue, Vol. Nineteen, No. 5
High Sky Wing of the Commemorative Air Force
On the Web at HighSkyWing.org
Midland, Texas - Hangar: 432-561-5581

Next Wing Meeting, Thursday May 26th at 7:00 p.m. in the ComCtr

Loose Formation

by Col Mike Hedrick, HSW Leader

To the casual observer, the day-to-day activities of the High Sky Wing might appear to be as relaxed as a duck casually swimming across the glassy surface of a slow moving stream. Ho-hum...no worries...NOT! What you are not seeing is the blur of the duck's feet under the water, paddling away against the current just to reach the other side.

The winter months are the time of the year when our aircraft are serviced and prepared for the flying season to come. Engines are overhauled, airframes "annualled" to establish their airworthiness for yet another year, and forms and insurance are filed to make it all legal. The Ops officer and his assistant are busy contacting the hosts of air shows and fly-ins and making arrangements for fuel and accommodations. The pilots are occupied with practicing, maintaining their "currency" in the airplanes that they have been flying, and training to meet the requirements of the Wing as new ships join our fleet.

The Maintenance and Operations Officers join the rest of the administrative staff in planning for the financial needs of our stable of flying machines. Old airplanes require regular care and feeding, and the Wing Leader, Adjutant, Exec, Safety and Finance Officers lead teams of volunteers who work at hospitality and money-raising activities to keep the fuel, spit and polish well supplied.

The evidence of success is all around you. Witness five operational HSW aircraft: the Stinson 105, the Fairchild PT-19, the Fairchild J2K, the North American L-17 and the North American SNJ. Observe the optimism of the future in the North American T-28, waiting yet another "two weeks" for its rebuilt radial engine. Our care and feeding also includes the member-owned Beech SNB and the two Swifts. If that isn't enough, the future also may bring a member-owned

Japanese "Kate" replica, you might know it as one of the "Tora" planes, which is currently residing in the Main Hangar while a lease agreement is written to allow the HSW to operate and fly it, with new HSW member Don Hoffman's blessing and parts support (thanks for considering us, Don).

May I encourage you to come out and visit the aircraft and the Commemorative Center that you support? Join us at our monthly Wing Meeting on Thursday evening, May 26th, when all of the HSW aircraft will be present, and on Memorial Day, May 30th, when we show off our inventory of operational historical artifacts and honor the veterans that have kept our nation free.

Upcoming Events

- May 26th - Monthly Wing Meeting, Commemorative Center, speaker will be Matt Espenshade with the local office of the FBI (see Rick Peterson's "Executive Offerings" for details);
- May 28th - Annual WASP Homecoming Fly-In, Avenger Field, Sweetwater, HSW will be flying in support of this event. Watch for details of aircraft attending and open seats;
- May 30th - Memorial Day Celebration at the CAF in Midland, see the attached flyer for information, contact Mike Hedrick or Patti Collins to volunteer for the many positions we have available supporting this important public relations event and fund raiser for the Wing;
- June 2nd - HSW Staff Meeting, Thursday evening, 6:30PM in the Ready Room, all members are welcome;
- June 4th - Slaton Fly-In
- June 17-19th - Denton Air Show
- June 23rd - CAF Airpower Museum seminar, featuring Bob Cardin, Flight Operations Director of Lewis Aeronautical and Lewis Air Legends, and Project Manager of the

Greenland Expedition Society, which rescued the P-38 "Glacier Girl" from the Greenland icecap. At the Midland Petroleum Club at 11:30AM. To join us for lunch and the program, please R.S.V.P. to me or Jeff Wood. Cost for lunch is \$20.

Aluminum Can Recycling

A volunteer is needed to take over the aluminum can recycling from Bill Stella who has asked for a replacement. This is an important job that has generated \$300-\$400 per year for the Wing, the equivalent of the profit from one of our cookouts. For details contact Mike Hedrick.

Gate Badges

Any member wanting a gate badge for access to the Commemorative Center may contact the Wing Leader, Mike Hedrick, to find out how to apply. The badges are issued by the Midland Airport and a fee and security background check is involved.

Articles and Announcements for the Flyer

Anyone wishing to write an article for the Flyer newsletter, or wanting to include an announcement, must have their news submitted to the Wing Leader, Mike Hedrick, by the deadline which is the second weekend of each month.

HSW Flyover of Memorial Gathering

The High Sky Wing performed a flyover Monday, May 16th, for a memorial gathering following the death of Midland resident Roger Clendenen, a WWII B-17 and B-24 bombardier, awarded numerous commendations, including the Distinguished Flying Cross, and on one of the first air crews to arrive in North Africa.

Trailer Mounted Kitchen with BBQ Cooker Donated by ExxonMobil

HSW member John Echols has once again come through for the Wing by securing the donation of a trailer-mounted kitchen and BBQ cooker from ExxonMobil. The unit had not been used for some time and was located at their Pegasus yard. ExxonMobil has fitted new tires and will be turning over the keys on Tuesday, May 24th, when it will be towed back to the hangar. Thank you ExxonMobil and John Echols!

HSW Memorial in the Museum Garden

Blake Cowart, David Linebarger and Bill Coombes have been heading up an effort to design

and construct a High Sky Wing plinth in the Museum Memorial Garden that will display memorial plaques for distinguished members who have "gone west". So far we have donations totaling approximately \$1,700 for memorials to Ray Sharp, Bruce Wallace, Wendall Strahan, Alice Coombes, Myles Magness and Bob Stine. Construction should begin in the next 30 days at a cost of \$2,600, plus the cost of the plaques. The initial phase is estimated to cost between \$5,000 and \$6,000. Please consider making a donation to honor these and others who served our country and the High Sky Wing.



Turn and Bank

by Col Steve Bolin

Time to catch everyone up on how the Wing's finances have been doing this year. Bingo has brought in \$33,717 so far this year already. Other notable income items, \$1.100 from monthly meeting donations, \$3.126 towards the Paid the Rent Club, \$7.167 in additional funds to the T-28 project, and \$655 was donated to the Kyle and Amanda Franklin fund.

Expenses have been mostly normal monthly utilities and rent. The SNJ's annual required \$1.872 in parts and supplies, and the yearly Airmeet insurance for all the aircraft was \$4.540. We expect to spend at least \$3.000 on the High Sky Memorial Plinth. (Ask the History teacher flying the orange and red Swifts) The Memorial Day Ceremonies have raised over \$508 and have expended \$497 so far. So every lunch sold is a profit for the Wing to operate.

As of May 14th, the Wing has over \$64,000 in the Bank to operate. \$21,000 is dedicated to specific projects, which leaves \$43,000 to take care of business. In addition to those monies, the Aircraft accounts have money in all of them to help maintain those aircraft. The T-28 has \$13,800, the PT-19 has \$4,647, and the Stinson has \$1,396. The other 3 aircraft have less than \$1,000 each in their accounts. We drew reimbursements from those aircraft accounts last year, repaying the Wing for maintenance dollars spent.

Once again I've detailed some of the large number incomes, but we really appreciate every thing that comes in. Without the aluminum can donations, and the coffee and dinner donations, we could be nicked and dimed to the poorhouse. So thanks to all of our members for all of the contributions you make. Dollars or time spent cleaning the dishes after dinner, our members are our greatest resource and asset.

Executive Offerings

by Col Rick Peterson

Joining us as guest speaker for our May 2011 meeting will be Matt Espenshade, Supervisory Senior Resident Agent for the FBI. As he discussed back in 2009 at our April meeting, Matt will be speaking on the activities and operations of the FBI in West Texas and their efforts to secure the region from potential threats.

Matt began his work with the FBI in 1995, assigned to the New York office as a member of the Regional/Emerging Drug Trafficking Squad. This squad was tasked with the investigation of violent drug traffickers operating throughout New York City.

Later, in 1998, Matt responded to the bombings of the United States embassies in Nairobi, Kenya and Dar Es Salaam, Tanzania.

Then, in 2003, he participated in a deployment to Afghanistan during which he conducted operations with Afghan government entities, the United States military, and other United States government agencies.

Prior to employment with the FBI, Matt was a U.S. Army Intelligence Officer. Next month, Matt will be moving on to a new posting, no longer in Midland, and he will probably discuss this change at the meeting.

As your XO, I always gladly consider any suggestions for future speakers at upcoming Wing meetings, so let me know if you have someone you would like to invite. Please join us at the May Wing meeting and remember to bring a covered dish. See you then.

From the Flannel Wrench Locker

by Col Bill Coombes

Well, Spring has sprung, and my students and I are all suffering from “spring fever,” a condition in which they think summer has already begun and I tend to agree with them! After forty plus years of teaching school, it seems like the condition has affected me more this year than any previous. I’d much prefer to be at the hangar, although there is lots of work to be done there. And it is that work that is the subject of the column.

First, the status of the fleet: I’m pleased to say that all the airplanes are “up,” with the exception of the T-28. Thanks to many for all the work involved in the annual on the SNJ, the continued routine maintenance on the PT, Navion, Stinson, and Tarbaby. You know who they are, the usual cast of dependable wrench-twisters. We had a new one rejoin us over the last

month or so, Mr. Paul Latham, who was a member back in the late 90’s. Paul is more than competent, earning praise from our resident curmudgeon, Bob Keating as a hard-working sort, not like the WPA gang Bob usually sees at the hangar.

Work has slowed down lately, since all the airplanes are in service, and we still await an engine for the T-28. The situation is most difficult, as it involves lots of players and there are lots of delays built into the transaction that is supposed to result in the High Sky Wing receiving a newly overhauled R-1300 engine. Rest assured I’m pushing people as hard as I can, and also realize that the HSW has not put any money into this engine deal to this point, so we are out “time” but not “money.”

The L-17 will be heading to the paint shop for some repainting of the trim colors. The staff believed that all that work making it shine like a new dime was hindered a bit by the scruffy trim paint. She did turn some heads when Drew Diggins and Bob Keating took her to the Burnet air show (in company with Tarbaby and the twin Beech), and we expect a similar reaction when we take the fleet to the Hondo air show on May 20/21.

Thanks to John Echols, we have another vehicle in the HSW motor pool, this one being a 1942 Dodge Command Car. You may recall that a former HSW Wing member, Tony McCarthy, had a gray command car that I used as the official AIRSHO chairman’s vehicle. Several years ago Tony and the car moved to Borger, so we have been without a suitably “daunting” looking car. Thanks to John we are back in business. It needs lots of cosmetic attention, but it runs nicely, and looks, in its faded OD paint, very authentic.

A longer-term project awaits us (for those who wish to volunteer) and that is to restore to static condition the AT-11 out on the hill. The Museum and CAF HQ came to James Martin and made a pitch that he felt was reasonable. There is money available for this project (which can take several years to finish), but there is a lack of man-power. I’ve suggested to my boss at Trinity School that the kids there use this as a community service project (they are required to do community service), and several have suggested the JROTC kids. Our Cadet Crew is another resource, but we are really in need of adults. (Chris Rutter, when you read this, contact me. I have a deal for you that might be hard to resist.) Anyway, this will commence during the summer, in the main hangar, and I’d like to

have some other folks from the Wing step up to join in.

In another part of this newsletter I'm sure you will read about Memorial Day and all that the Wing has going on. Please volunteer to help out. Better still, volunteer to head up one of the various activities going on that day. We need leaders as well as followers!

Finally, you all have now seen the QGC-1B and the YGC-1B (also known as the Pumpkin and the Tomato) sitting in the hangar. Both Swifts are, at least for a few months, mine. I know you are asking what anybody would do with two Swifts: a fair question and one that I don't have an answer for! Take some time to scope out the "military history" of the birds: it rivals the "true story" of the P-38 nose on display in the hangar! Oh, and besides James' real SNB (twin Beech) with actual service history, Robin Donnelly's beautiful LC-126 Cessna is on display in the big hangar. Congratulations Robin, it is a gorgeous airplane.

All for now. Lefty-loosey and righty-tighty.

Lest We Forget

On the Flightline

by Col Brad Bond

Well folks, May is here and the flying season is in full swing. Thanks to the pilots and crews who have been out flying and attending shows thus far. We have been rather unfortunate with the windy weather the past few weeks so the flying has been rather limited, but we have managed to get out and stretch the legs on most of the airplanes lately. There is definitely more flying to come so be sure and get out and take advantage of those empty seats.

Back in March, we announced that there would be a sign up sheet available in the Ready Room for anyone to come out and get their name on a sheet to attend any one of our outings for air shows and fly-ins. I think we all knew this was going to be a learning process, and well, we learned that we needed some more changes. Therefore, the sign-up sheet is no longer going to be posted in the Ready Room for immediate access, but rather be maintained off-site by the Operations department. This will allow us to have a better control of scheduling changes and a more immediate response to questions that may come up. So if you now wish to attend one of our shows, we ask that you get with one of the Ops team and let us know which shows you want to attend and we will add your name

to our list. You can alert me (bradleybond21177@gmail.com), James Martin (james.a.martin@me.com), or Drew Diggins (ddiggins@pinnaclecng.com) of your interests. Once we have confirmed the availability of pilots and planes for a particular show, we will then know how many seats we have to offer. These seats will be offered to those requesting on a first-come, first-served basis. Please bear with us as we try iron out the wrinkles and be flexible in your plans. We are striving to give all our members an equal opportunity to fly, as well as streamline our process of dispatching the planes and pilots to the various shows. Thank you for your understanding as we move along. We hope to see each and every member of the HSW get a chance to be a part of the flying that we do to support our cause. It is a lot of fun and incredibly rewarding! See you all on the Flightline!

Membership Connections

by Col Patti Reakes-Collins

Membership dues are being paid. Yes, if you haven't already done so, please pay your dues. Third notices will be going out soon. If you mistakenly receive a third notice, bear with me, I'm new at this and still getting my feet wet. I joined a group of HSW Members last month at the Carswell NAS air show. We had a great time showing off James Martin's Twin Beech 18. The Blastards did a great job as usual and it was wonderful to talk with so many interested attendees about the CAF and the best Wing around.... The High Sky Wing!

In order to join in as Crew to an air show, your dues must be current. So it is only fitting for me to remind you to please make sure your dues are up to date. If you are unsure, feel free to call me, 432-631-7072. In addition, the HSW will be holding a fundraiser on Memorial Day by serving chopped brisket sandwiches. We have been busy smoking the brisket in preparation for the event. There are ways you can still help out..., donate \$20 and/or call Brent (413-2001) or Patti (631-7072) to volunteer for the celebration on Monday, May 30. Volunteers will be needed starting at 8:00AM. Either way is fine. Thanks and I am anticipating all of us having a great time.

Don't Forget!
Your 2011 Wing Dues Are Now Overdue

Fredricksburg & Hondo Trip

by Col Randy Wilson

Here are a few images from James Martin of the trip to the Hondo show via Fredricksburg last weekend. Below is Bill's new "Super" Swift *YIPPEE*.



Bob Keating flew the L-17 from Midland and Drew Diggins flew it home. It was a big hit on the ramp. Below, we found out who the pool shark was in the O'Club at the hotel. That's our own Jerry Perales cleaning up the table. Jerry also knows his classic cars!



Chris Aycock flew the Stinson 105, and this is the ramp directly in front of the Hangar Hotel, where we stayed. Below, we enjoyed a couple of fun meals on the trip.



Some great breakfasts at the dinner next to the hotel. Below, Randy Wilson flies the SNJ off the wing of James Martin's SNB with Bill Coombes in his "Super" Swift.



The HSW and members' fleet on display in the early morning sunlight on the ramp at the Hangar Hotel.



HIGH SKY WING - CAF
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This is the replica Nakajima B5N2 "Kate" that Don Hoffman recently purchased for operation by the CAF. Once all the details are worked out, the High Sky Wing will be operating the Kate and helping to maintain it, with financial support from Col Hoffman. This will be a very interesting addition to the Midland-based CAF fleet.

High Sky Wing Elected Officers

Wing Leader: Mike Hedrick - 638-6552 cell
 Executive Officer: Rick Peterson
 Adjutant: Patti Reakes-Collins
 Finance: Steve Bolin
 Operations: Brad Bond
 Maintenance: Bill Coombes
 Safety - Bobby Meroney

HSW Hangar Phone: (432) 561-5581

all numbers are Area Code 432 unless indicated

What's Happening & When

May 26 - Wing Meeting (6pm)
 May 28 - WASP Fly-In, Avenger Field
 May 30 - CAF Memorial Day
 June 2 - Wing Staff Meeting (6:30pm)
 June 4 - Slaton Fly-In
 June 17-19 - Denton Air Show
 June 23 - Seminar Series featuring Bob Cardin
 and the *Glacier Girl* story.

Next Wing Meeting, Thursday May 26th at 7:00 p.m. in the ComCtr