

NSM NEWS

FALL/WINTER
2023-2024

Official Newsletter of the National Soaring Museum

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From the Director - Traff Doherty

As I'm writing this, we are just entering the third month of winter and again I am reminded of just how fortunate we are to be located in the Southern Tier of New York State. Elmira is just far enough south to miss out on the lake effect snow that we associate with such "Winter Wonderlands" as Buffalo, Rochester and Oswego. There they measure snow in feet; we measure it in inches! Also, our location is far enough west to put us on the fringes of the big "nor'easters" that clobber New York City, Boston and New England. (note: I see that certain parts of California have recently faced snowfall predictions of up to 12 feet – I can't imagine that!) It's not that I'm down on winter - it just makes running a museum (on the top of a steep hill) a lot more challenging. It has been a good winter in terms of visitors; I continue to be amazed by visitors who are willing to brave some very unpleasant driving conditions to come up and see us!

We have reached a bit of a milestone in that our Restoration Shop is seeing the completion of, what I believe to be our first major restoration. Five years ago, HHSC members, Rob Whitcomb and Dave Corcoran entered into a partnership to purchase a 1965 1-26 - s/n 320. After flying it a bit, they decided to address some areas that needed attention and they approached me about using our Shop. I was delighted. Heretofore, it was merely *posing* as a restoration shop – as an exhibit area that visitors could peruse, but not get to see any actual work being done. Rob and Dave's 1-26 project was perfect for that purpose. Now the shop would serve as a "living part" of the museum. And that's exactly what was to happen for next four and a half years. I'm especially thankful to Rob and Dave for being so willing to answer the myriad of questions that came their way from our visitors. For me, this was not a new experience; the same phenomenon occurred daily at my former directorship at the Curtiss Museum. Here at NSM, a wonderful job was done on their 1-26 – Dave on the mechanicals and Rob on the covering and finishing. K&L played a role in this, too – there were some structural issues that required their expertise. Rob worked very hard to master the "Stewart System" (his first aircraft covering experience) and the results are beautiful. Another area that he took on was putting together a very sophisticated instrument panel (at least by my 1960s standards). This ship is slated to be in the air this spring – and we will be seeking another project for our shop (we do not charge rent).





Rob Whitcomb in the cockpit of his nearly-completed Schweizer 1-26 in the NSM restoration shop.



The Pat II on Keuka Lake with Rob at the helm



It turns out that Rob is a bit of a *Renaissance person*. He is a “Blue Water Sailor” who holds a US Coast Guard 100 Ton/Master License and is currently one of a select group of individuals who captain The **Pat II** - a 1924 39’ wooden launch, operating as a tour boat on Keuka Lake under the auspices of the *Finger Lakes Boating Museum*. The Finger Lakes Boating Museum, located in some of the former *Taylor Wine Company* buildings (about 2 miles south of Hammondsport), is a must-see for anyone who enjoys wooden boats – of all sizes and descriptions – from a 7’ dingy to the 39’ Pat II.

Rob was part of a group of volunteers who spent 6 years performing a major restoration on the Pat II and he is currently working at the Boating Museum on his personal project – a 16’ wooden K class sailboat. This is a 1941 16’ wooden sailboat designed and built by Murray Wright of Dundee, NY.

Rob likes to keep busy!

← Rob’s 16’ K-boat restoration

IVSM 2024

It's not too early to begin making plans to attend IVSM next year. In addition to the usual IVSM activities, the Vintage Sailplane Association will be celebrating its 50th anniversary.

Jerry Wenger's beautiful Minimoa was the basis for our poster, created by world-famous aviation artist, Ted Williams. Examples of Ted's precision aviation art is currently on display in the National Soaring Museum.

Online registration on the NSM website for IVSM 2024 now open!



IVSM Pre-Sale

IVSM tees, caps and mugs are now available!

Mugs \$15

Caps & Tees \$25

(tax included)



Old Harris Hill swimming pool, before the paved runway and flight center



Down Memory's Runway - Gala Contributors

Jim & Simine Short

John Schweizer

Les & Bonnie Schweizer

Guerry & Alberta Howard

Mark Margeson

Lillian Elwood

Guy Bennett

Moe & Sophie Acee

Mariah Ossit

Joe & Nancy May

Rex Wells

Bruce Bottoms

Leslie Baldwin

Dick & Susan Rogers

Wick Wilkinson

Greg Lincoln

Lindsey & Kay Chew

Stephen & Connie Bowen

Jeff Streater & Barb Yunis

Carl & Sharon Osojnak

Tom King

Mary Flaspaler

Paul Esser

Don & Vanessa Rumsey

Ruth Bruning

Linda & Andrew Evenski

Rob Buck

Stu & Lucy Schweizer

NATIONAL SOARING MUSEUM YARD SALE

Saturday and
Sunday
May 18-19

Call Jean at the
museum to volunteer
607-734-3128. Bring
donations any time.



**Start Spring Cleaning now and bring your donations to the museum!
Volunteer help will be needed the week before for marking and on sale
days. Sale will be held indoors in the Mooers Room 10-5 each day.**

MUSEUM OFFICERS

William Batesole
President

Rusty Lowry
Vice-President

Dr. William G. Howard
Secretary / Treasurer

Trafford L-M. Doherty
Executive Director

TRUSTEES

Aaron Alsheimer
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Josh Knerr
Michael Koerner
Ann Lafford
Steve Leonard
Mark Margeson
Neal Pfeiffer
Karin Schlosser
W. Stuart Schweizer
Jan van den Blink
Dr. Richard Welles
Phil Westcott

New Custodian at the Museum

We have been so pleased to welcome Ron Stokes on board as our new custodian.

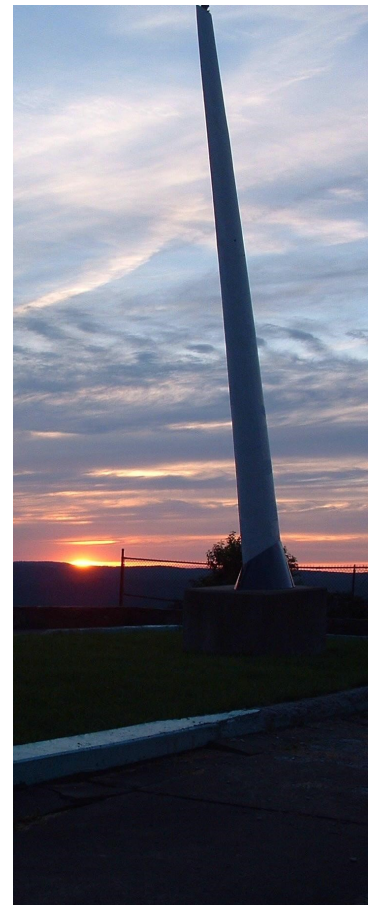
The museum has never been so clean! - or smelled so good! All the glass is sparkling clean at all times, the floors are always looking their best and there are no dust bunnies to be found anywhere. Ron has even found things to clean that no one knew needed cleaning. And to top it off, he loves Beagles!

Winter is a particularly difficult time to keep the floors and rugs free of tracked-in salt - so Ron has had plenty of work to keep him busy.

In his spare time, Ron likes hunting and gardening and he and his wife, Sandy do a lot of canning. We have all enjoyed some of the fabulous canned delicacies he has brought in to share.



Ron Stokes - Our Hero!



NEW EXHIBIT ON MEDALS, TROPHIES AND BADGES

Soaring medals, trophies, badges and pins come in all shapes and sizes and the museum has no shortage of examples to display.

While SSA and FAI badges have remained very uniform over the years, soaring trophies can be very artistic and creative. We now have on exhibit some of the best one-of-a-kind soaring trophies ever created.

Established in 1905 in Paris for the regulation of the sport of flying, Federation Aeronautique Internationale ("FAI") established a soaring badge program in the early 1930s. Working with the SSA, which was established in 1932, this badge program continues to this day. Badges acknowledge internationally-recognized levels of soaring achievement.

In this new case we currently have Johnny Robinson's 3-Lennie pin and world diamond #1 and Stan Smith's silver C and Diamond C.

Stop in and take a look!



Diamond C



Silver C



Year-End Donations

Jan & Clare van den Blink
Guerry & Alberta Howard
Dick & Sarah Butler
Rex Wells
Alice C. Johnson
Ruth Bruning
Ron & Betty Schwartz
Carl & Sharon Osojnak
John & Rose Sherwood
Ira & Sue Blieden
Mark & Sandra Margeson
Doug & Mae Fronius
Joe & Nancy May
Les & Bonnie Schweizer
Kyle & Patricia Busque
Bernald S. Smith

Walter & Irene Cannon
Stu & Lucy Schweizer
Phil Umphres
Mary Lou Hammond
John Good
Robert & Carol Gibbons
Mike & Fran Koerner
Mary Flaspahler
Dick & Susan Rogers
Duke & Wendy Carroll
Peter & Lynn Smith
William M. Foley
Roger & Libby Jones
Tom King
Jeff & Denise Stringer
Curran & Barb Sekella

Paul Esser & Edith Van Breems
Bill Batesole & Anne Nordstrom
Jeff Byard
Jay & Robin McDaniel
Jerry Wenger
Dean Gradwell
Stephen Auburn
Dr. Richard & Dr. Linda Welles
Chemung Canal Trust Company
Tom & Eileen Henion
Steve Leonard
Dave Nadler
Ron & Gabriele Martin
Daniel Gross
Lanier Frantz
Bruce G. Bottoms

In Memoriam

H. Ray Gimme

U.S. Soaring Hall of Fame 2000

1933 - 2023



Ray was born in Oklahoma City, OK and graduated from high school in Illinois. After high school he enlisted in the Air Force and served as an aircraft mechanic in Korea. After his discharge in 1955, he attended Southern Illinois University, studying industrial science. He graduated in 1959 and joined American Airlines. After working for a few years, Ray went on to earn an MBA at UC Berkeley

Ray took his first glider ride at Calistoga in April 1964 in a Schweizer 2-22. Two years later he earned his private pilot's license (glider) and commercial license. Three years after this first

flight he founded the Chico Soaring Association and became its president. He began giving flying lessons to members and continued teaching through 1969. He also served as a tow pilot. He flew his first competition, Region 11, in 1967. In 1968 he flew the 1-26 Nationals at Pearblossom, CA. In 1970 he flew the first FAI Open Class Nationals, placing 15 with an SHK1.

Ray qualified for the World Gliding Team eleven times from 1981 to 2001 but chose not to take part in 1997. He was National Champion in four classes of competition - Open (1972, 1984, 1986, 1991, 1995, 1997), 15-M (1981, 1994, 2006, 2014), Standard (1976, 1988) and Sports (1989, 2010).

In addition to all the Nationals he has flown, he also flew by invitation in the 1973 Smirnoff Derby and the three Masters of Soaring (1986 at Minden, NV, 1987 at Estrella, AZ, 1988 at Winterhaven, FL)

Ray Gimme earned the du Pont Trophy in 1972, 1984, 1986, 1991, 1995, 1997; Standard Class Trophy in 1976, 1988; Schreder 15-Meter Trophy in 1981, 1994, 2006, 2014; Lattimore Trophy in 2010; Stroukoff Trophy in 1984, 1986, 1991, 2012; Giltner in 1990, 1997; Hatcher Trophy in 1997; and Sports 1998. He holds Silver #1232 earned in 1967, Gold #417 in 1968, Diamond #142 (Intl # 859) in 1970.

"Ray won numerous nationals and represented the US in world competition, but perhaps he is best remembered for winning the Open Nationals in 1973. The hot ship of the day was the ASW-12 and several were at Minden and so was the new guy, Ray Gimme, flying a standard class 201 Libelle. On the last day of the competition conditions were weak and most contestants were slogging their way around a difficult task, but Ray held back, waiting for better conditions. About 4 PM, CU's started popping and Ray made his move! He won the last day and the contest!"

– John Sinclair



IN MEMORIAM

Helga Gertsen
Jake Dvornicky
Jon Van DerHoof
Barry Van Wickevoort Crommelin

MEMORIAL DONATIONS

In Memory of

Scott Daniel & Peter Daniel
by
Joyce Daniel

In Memory of

Helen & Graham Thompson
by
Rex Wells

In Memory of

Bill Schweizer
by
Frederick Genung

In Memory of

Floyd Sweet
by
Ray & Kittie Alexander

NEW MEMBERS

Individual

Colleen Van Gelder
Anne Steninger

Family

Jim & Barb Bennett
Robert Walty
Michael Robertson
Nathanael & Andrea Conway
Weiyu Zhang & Zhenzhen Zhai

Bronze

James & Linda Morzillo
Charles & Nancy Bauder

HHSC Senior

John Booth, III
Brenda Plate
J. Rankin Tippins
Brent Pryslopski
Brian Jones

HHSC Junior

Marloe Laughlin
Carter VanPatten

In Memoriam

Thomas L. Knauff

U.S. Soaring Hall of Fame 1997

1938 - 2024



It is with great sadness that we share the news that Tom Knauff passed away on Wednesday, February 21, 2024 at Mt. Nittany Medical Centre, State College, PA. Tom's contributions to the art of soaring, both locally and internationally, were extraordinary. As co-owner and operator of Ridge Soaring Gliderport, he elevated the professionalism and safety of the sport. He set high standards as a flight instructor, authored numerous flight training books, hosted safety seminars, and was an FAA Designated Pilot Examiner.

Tom was an early pioneer of ridge soaring in the Appalachians in the early 1960s, ultimately setting five world records flying gliders there. He was the stunt pilot in the 1999 film, [*The Thomas Crown Affair*](#).



In 1975, he and wife and partner, Doris Grove (also an accomplished soaring pilot and Hall of Fame member), established a commercial operation and catalog store at Ridge Soaring Gliderport in Pennsylvania located at the base of the Bald Eagle Ridge.

Tom was the first glider pilot to fly 750 km and 1000 km triangle course flights in the United States, and was the first to fly 1000 km with a passenger. His 1,647 km (1,023 mi) out-and-return flight in 1983 was the world's longest glider flight at the time, stood as a world record for nearly 20 years, and is still a U.S. national record. He has set more than 50 other U.S. National soaring records.

His glider flight training manuals, *Glider Basics from First Flight to Solo* and *Glider Basics from Solo to License* are the most popular in the U.S., and he was one of the most respected glider flight instructors in the world. He was one of the few FAA designated pilot examiners authorized to issue initial flight instructor certificates.

Tom was a frequent speaker at soaring events and has published many articles in Soaring magazine from 1978 to the present. He has also utilized the excellent soaring ridge to set many records, has participated in enumerable national competitions often placing in the top ten including a win in the 1989 National Open Class and has competed on the world level.



Tom and Doris

ARTIFACT DONATIONS

Bruce Bottoms
Luke Orrin
Thomas Cropper

MEMBER CONTRIBUTIONS

Ron & Gabriele Martin
Maureen & David Watson
Steve & Nancy Sliwa
Robert Hurni
Dr. Neal Snebold
Stu & Lucy Schweizer
Roger Hess

MEMBERSHIP UPGRADE

Family

Al & Rhonda Tyler
Richard & Debra Swan
Victor Nippert
John & Lorie Molumphy

Bronze

Linda & Andrew Evenski
Ron & Gabriele Martin
Chris & Lianne Groshel
Robert Wister
Charlie & Nancy Bauder
Paul & Nancy Middlebrook
Michael & Nancy Opitz

Silver

Elizabeth Pataki
Egbert Woelk
Very Rev. John DeSocio

Gold

Rocky Peters

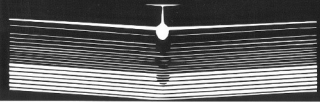
Diamond

Ken & Michelle Sorenson
Elise Eaton

SPONSOR A GLIDER

Gross Family
Hank Nixon
Dianne Black-Nixon
Jan van den Blink
Gregory Lincoln
J. R. Daniel
Dr. Norbert Wethington
Dr. Walter Cannon
Stu & Lucy Schweizer

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**FALL/WINTER
2023-2024**



MUSEUM HOURS

April 1 - Oct. 31
Open daily 10-5

Nov. 1 - Mar. 31
Open daily 10-4

**Museum closed on the
following holidays:**

- New Year's Day
- Easter Sunday
- Thanksgiving Day
- Christmas Eve
- Christmas Day



NSM Membership Form

Please check the membership category of your choice and return to:

The National Soaring Museum, 51 Soaring Hill Dr., Elmira, NY 14903

Basic \$35
 Family \$50
 Bronze \$100
 Silver \$250
 Gold \$500
 Diamond \$1000
 Cayley Society \$2500

My name(s) _____
as it is to appear in printed matter :

Address _____ City _____

State _____ Zip _____ Home phone _____

e-mail address _____

My check is enclosed

Please bill my Credit Card# _____ exp. date _____

(MasterCard-Visa-Discover-American Express) V-code _____

Signature _____

**Additional tax-deductible donations will be used for museum improvements, including
upgrading facilities, restoration shop and new exhibits.**

My additional donation _____

Membership Benefits: Unlimited free admission • Invitations to exhibit openings and receptions
Guest passes • Subscription to the museum newsletter & journal • Volunteer opportunities
Discounts on museum programs and events • Discounts in the museum shop