

NSM

A Quarterly Journal
of the National Soaring Museum
Spring, 1983 Vol. 5, Number 4



From the Editor:

A major effort by Robert Blaine, Howard Burr, and Museum Historian Vic Saudek helped to mount this year's exhibit focus. You see, The Soaring Society of America was planning to ship another box of photos to their official repository here at the National Soaring Museum, but before it left California these three gentlemen got into the box and catalogued every print. The box was taken to The SSA Convention in Reno, NV and then from there, brought to the Museum by Jim and Simine Short, Findlay, OH.

However, another important source of support came from members of the National World War II Military Glider Pilots' Assoc. In early Spring we sent a letter to this group requesting help to mount this exhibit. The response was rewarding, from the Assoc. members who sought us out to leave items for exhibit — to the mailings of patches, pins, photos, paintings, personal stories and records; some on loan and some donated to the Museum's archives. Of course, we had a good start with the outstanding scrapbooks and records already in the Museum's care.

The seasonal Exhibit Opening coincided with the reception for attendees to the United States Soaring Hall of Fame weekend festivities, an annual event at the National Soaring Museum which always brings motorless flight history to life.



The Harris Hill Soaring Corporation hosted an informal commemorative gathering to honor Stanley W. Smith at the Memorial Wing Pylon at the brow of Harris Hill Sunday morning May 15th.

Above and below are scenes from this very moving occasion.

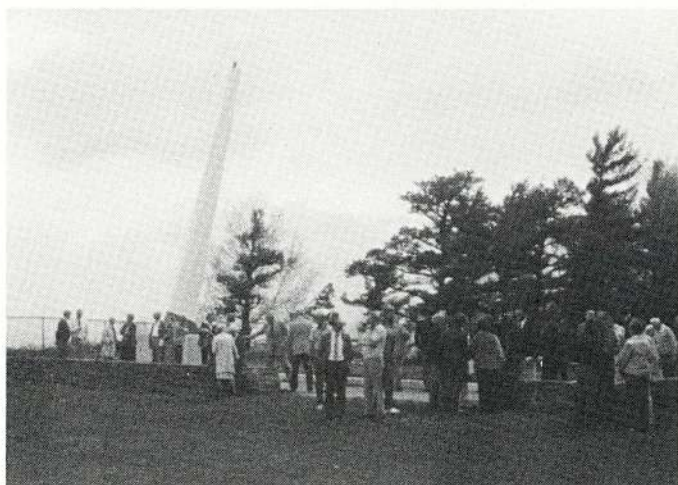
ON THE COVER:

A CG-4A on tow. Photo by the U.S. Army Air Corps.

NSM is a publication of the National Soaring Museum, Harris Hill, RD3, Elmira, New York 14903. Anyone is invited to contribute material and pictures with identification about historical soaring activities, renovation of old sailplanes, soaring pioneers, unusual uses of sailplanes, etc. Manuscripts are subject to whatever revisions, additions or deletions are necessary to make the material conform to the space limitations and standards of NSM. Material that is to be returned must be accompanied by a stamped, self addressed envelope. No compensation other than credit will be made.

Publisher — National Soaring Museum

Director/Editor — Shirley Sliwa



CALENDAR

Date	Event	Location
May 13, 1983	Evening Open House — Exhibit Opening "World War II Military Gliders"	NSM
May 14	NSM Board of Trustees' Annual Meeting U.S. Soaring Hall of Fame Banquet (Speaker: Paul A. Schweizer)	NSM
May 28, 29, 30	Vintage Sailplane Regatta	Harris Hill/NSM
July 30	World War II Military Gliders Symposium (Chairman: Floyd J. Sweet)	NSM
Nov. 5	10th Annual Ralph S. Barnaby Lecture and NSM Board of Trustees' Fall Meeting (Speaker: Ralph S. Barnaby)	Princeton, NJ
Dec. 16	Community Soaring Committee Luncheon (Honoring: John Gill, J. Arthur Kieffer and Frank Hurtt)	NSM

United States Soaring Hall of Fame, 1983



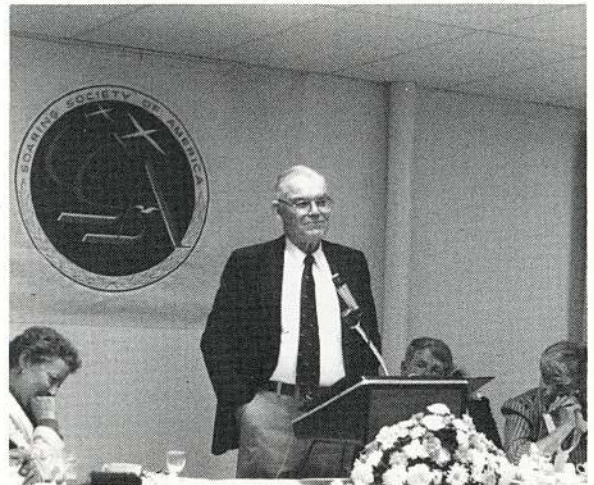
SSA Awards Chairman Floyd J. Sweet introduces Helen Southee, widow of U.S. Hall of Fame inductee Earl R. Southee.



Inductee Emil A. Lehecka voices his thanks to The Soaring Society of America.



New Hall of Famer Lloyd M. Licher reminisces about his days on Harris Hill.



Featured speaker Paul A. Schweizer tells anecdotes about the three new members. Left to Right, Museum Director Sliwa, NSM President Lee L. Robbins, and Vivian Robbins.

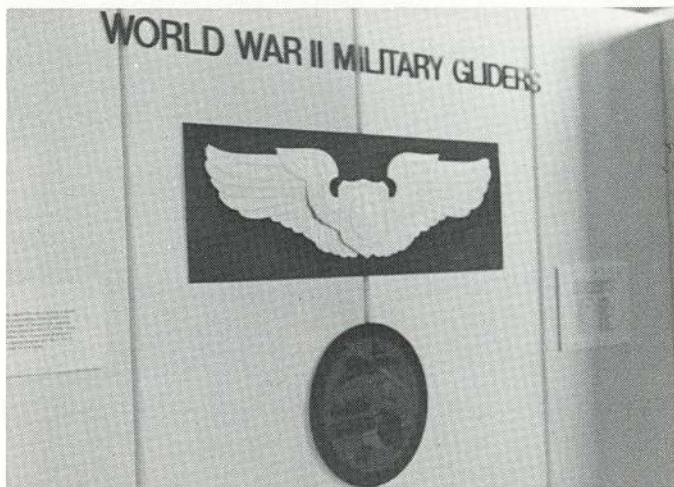


Hall of Famers attending the ceremony. Left to Right: Standing, Victor M. Saudek, Stephen M. Bennis, William H. Coverdale, Jr., Virginia M. Schweizer, Paul A. Schweizer, Helen Southee, Chester J. Decker, and Floyd J. Sweet. Seated, Lloyd M. Licher, Ralph S. Barnaby, and Emil A. Lehecka.



Left to Right, Emil and Libby Lehecka and Virginia Schweizer.

The 1983 Exhibit Focus:



Main theme panel, executed by Museum's Artistic Advisor Frank Hurtt, denotes the purpose for this focus and credits for the exhibit.

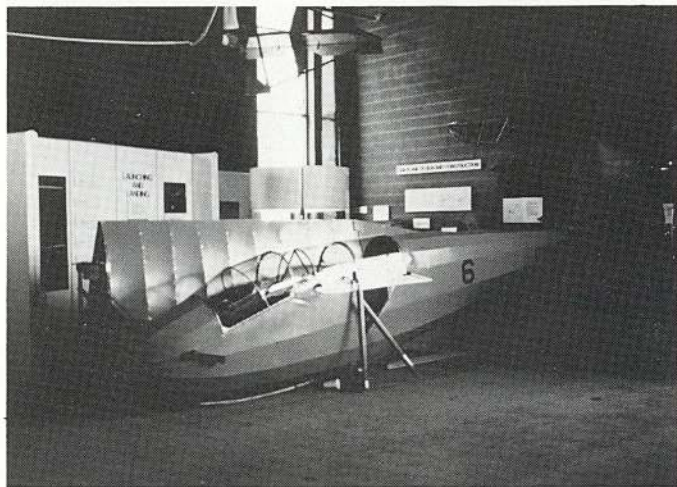


Panoramic view of the theme area.

Photo: Peter Selinger

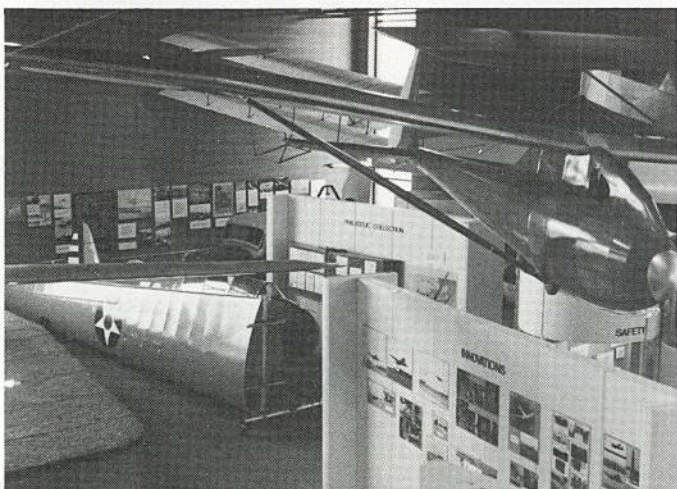


Stan Corcoran's TG-1A on loan from the Smithsonian's National Air & Space Museum. (Note the student and instructor — they're in uniform).



The Navy's LNS-1 (Schweizer TG-2) on loan from Robert Storck, Tudor, MD.

Photo: Peter Selinger

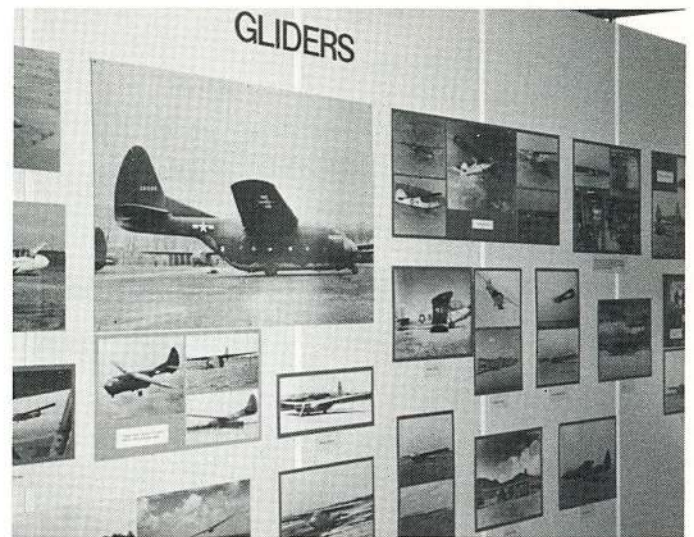


Paul Schweizer designed the NSM's prototype sailplane exhibit/storage rack holding the LK-10A on loan from Gil Fitzhugh, Morristown, NJ.



Rear panoramic view of the life size diorama. Suspended overhead is a Pratt Read, on loan from Jan Scott, Lovettsville, VA. (Note the uniform wing runner on the TG-1A). Foreground: TG-3 model by Carl Groom.

Photo: Peter Selinger



The panels give a pictorial account of military Gliders, Tactical Use, glider Training, Innovations, and Personalities of the W.W.II Glider Program.



The end panels exhibit 6 water color prints of the military glider activity donated by Dale Oliver, No. Hollywood, CA.



Our newest friend from Aero Club Albatrošs, "Otto" Lilienthal who hangs from the Herring Arnot Glider, made and donated by Gus Schuerer, Toms River, NJ. Brian Young designed and executed "Otto".

AS I RECALL IT

By Vic Saudek

A chance to look through the SSA's files of old photos afforded one startling glimpse into the almost forgotten interior of a huge war glider. I had moments of terror during a flight test of this monster.

Those not around in March, 1944, or those unaware of the U.S. Troop Carrier Command Glider Program, will need a little background:

Thousands of war gliders were used by the various armies in World War II. When we were loin-girding for the invasions of Europe they were a "true cause" for many of us pre-war soaring types.

One nifty idea that was well developed was to put properly sized "pick-up units" into various kinds of airplanes which would allow at least one type (size) of airplane to fly by and to snatch either loaded or empty war gliders of a suitable type, from small unprepared fields. This scheme worked extremely well.

Of the various American troop, jeep and artillery-carrier gliders used, one of the bigger ones was the **Waco** designed/Ford-built CG-13A, (Fig. 1). It was a 32 place strut-braced monster which weighed about 8500 pounds empty and 16,000 pounds gross. **All American Aviation, Inc.** was chosen to convert and prove out a B-17 "Flying Fortress" bomber (Fig. 2), to be a pick-up plane capable of swooping down, hooking into a loop in a towline tied to the nose of the CG-13A and yanking the glider into the air with a rush.

During that test program I was, as an employee of All American, either in the B-17 bomb bay to see that the pick-up gear worked, (Fig. 3), or, on other occasions, to ride in the co-pilot's seat of

the glider and observe operations from that point of view. When the day arrived to snatch the CG-13A at full gross weight **and** at a fast 180 mph (vs a more normal 160 mph) approach and contact speed, I was assigned to the glider. About 3½ tons or so of sand bags had been roped to tiedown rings on the floor of the cargo deck behind us. This is a predictable avalanche if things go bad.

The test day was miserable: snow showers alternated with dim sun. The surface temperature was just about freezing at the Wilmington, Ohio (Clinton County) Airport when the CG-13A was jeep-towed into position. The crew got out the 2½ inch diameter nylon leader, hooked it up to the nose of the CG-13A and laid it out for about 200 feet to a nylon rope loop. This loop was spread open by engaging it in spring clips at the tops of two 12 foot (long) poles stuck into holes in the ground spaced 20 feet apart. The rest of the loop hung down inside and alongside, and lay on the ground where it was joined to the leader.

To effect a pick-up, the B-17 put a hook into the loop as it flew by. This stretched the nylon and thus provided a considerable part of the resilient energy required to get the B-17 mounted "winch" drum up to rotation speed from rest. As soon as this "reverse winch" got up to speed, its brakes were applied, causing the Fortress to slow some more. The glider was thus accelerated to the airplane's tow speed as soon as the winch drum stopped paying out some 1000 feet of cable as towline.

By the time we in the CG-13A were ready to go, the 'Fortress' was airborne. Then it again began to snow. We became chilled and the morning passed slowly as the sky cleared and darkened alternately, and out-of-phase with operations.

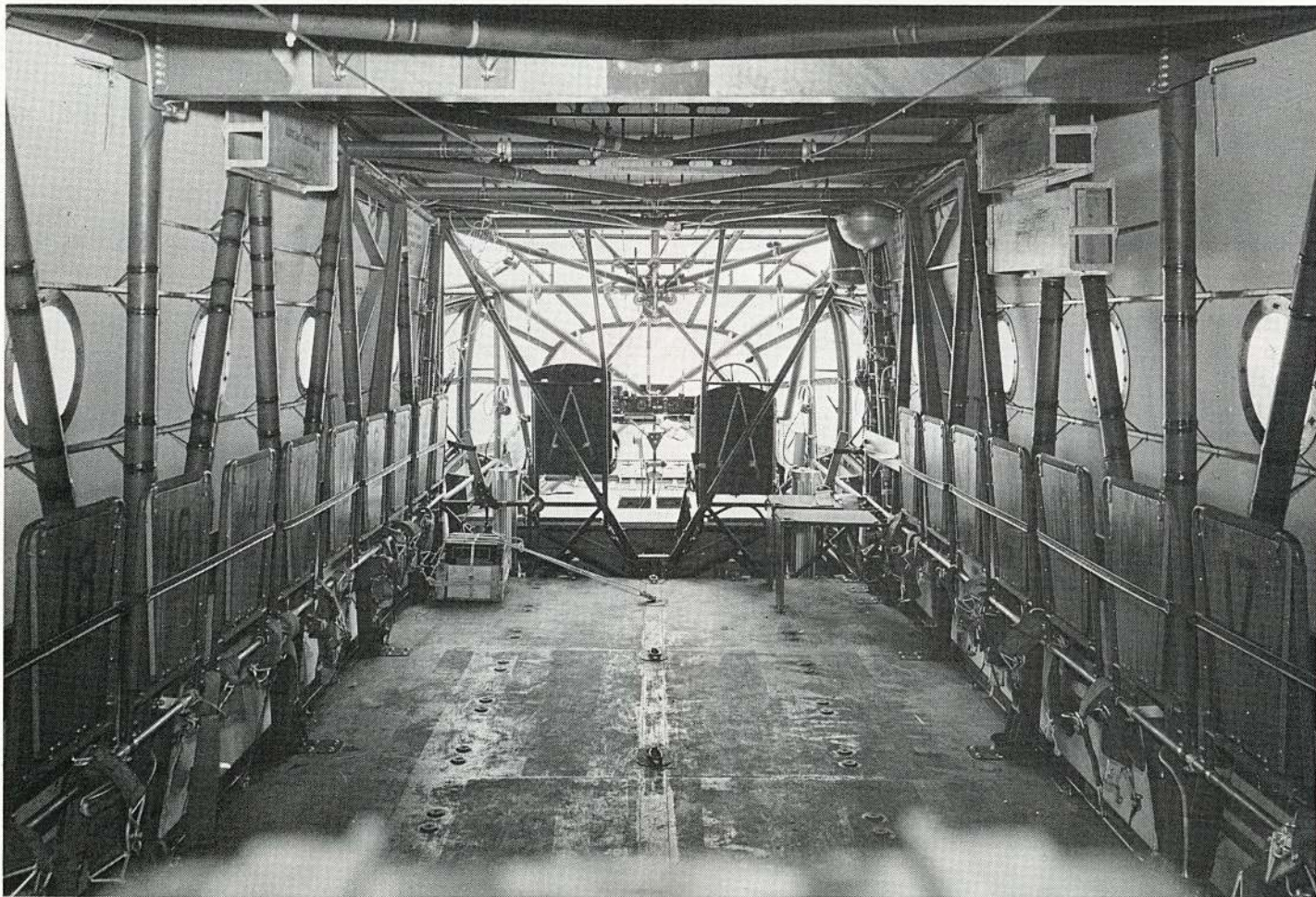


Fig. 1) Here is a view of the interior of the giant Army glider, taken from the rear and looking up through the plastiglass nose. Note seats folded up on sides, which makes extra room for freight. Glider's full complement is 30 men and crew.



Fig. 2) Very little of the pick-up installation is visible. The winch cable was guided through a "hawse pipe" which exited the fuselage under the left side gunner's window and through two "fleet angle pulleys" under the left stabilizer. A wooden pick-up arm lies snug against and below the fuselage left side. A special door under the left elevator allowed the hook at the end of the cable to be attached to a spring clip on the end of the arm. The arm was lowered to position the hook about 20 feet below the fuselage for pick-up.

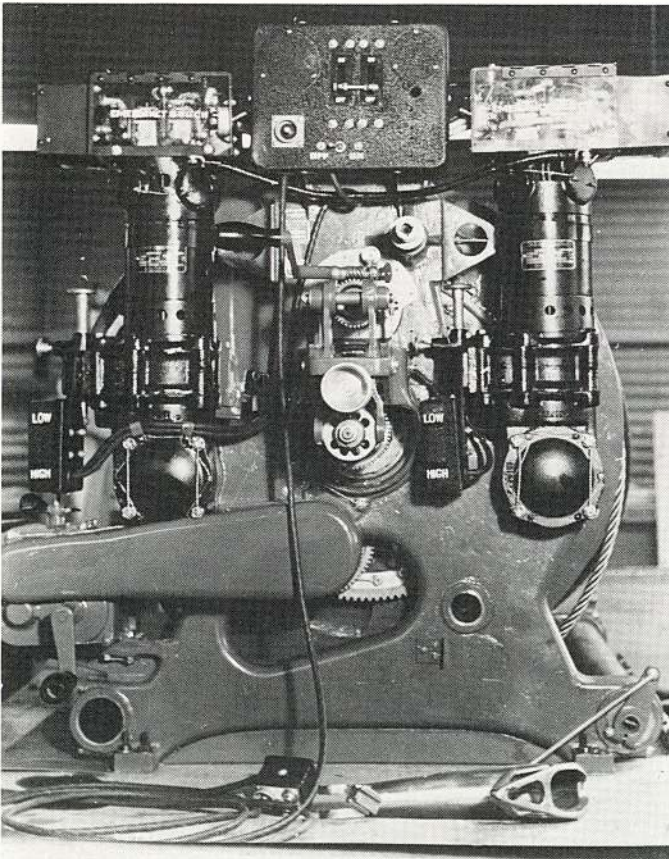


Fig. 3) This pick-up unit had 1350 feet of 9/16 inch dia plow steel cable wound on it. It was mounted in the forward end of the left bomb bay.

When the sound of four engines came from behind us, we got ready. I put my hand on the recording accelerometer start switch and, as the B-17F flashed by, snapped it on. The usual "BANG" of hardware as the loop was snagged, we felt the rush of acceleration, then, surprisingly, **utter darkness!**

In 8 seconds the glider was at its high tow-speed of 160 mph, but the entire windshield, side-to-side and top to bottom, was opaque with slush and mud! I shut off the accelerometer and looked over at the pilot. He looked at me and moved nothing. In a fabric-covered bird of these proportions and rough-hewn shape, the wind noise at 160 is deafening, as if one were inside a drum being rolled. Some muck dropped off the lowest part of the windshield (see Fig. 1). I opened my safety belt and squeezed under the instrument panel. The first impression was that the towline was exactly vertical. So were the second and subsequent impressions. Far, **far** below us the B-17 seemed to be wading among the trees. That too was the case. We were holding his tail up and he could barely keep over the high places. Catching the glider pilot's eyes I held my left hand, fingers forward, directly above my right hand, fingers forward, my arms widely space. He opened the spoilers and, in proportion to the relative positions of the two craft, I raised my right hand and moved my left aft and down — until the "17" could no longer be seen due to the dirt on the nose. About then, small patches of the windshield cleared and the pilot could see the tug. The future was noticeably brighter, as was the cockpit. Release and landing some minutes later were almost normal.

In retrospect, a number of items had escaped our attention:

1. Ice and snow had accumulated on the wings during the long wait and this fact alone could have wiped us out. I suspect that the 3/4 g acceleration sloughed it off.
2. The fat rope had lain for hours in slush and muck. When it was snapped taut it produced a "cylinder of goop" that, since we could only follow the line, was collected on the plexiglas nose with great efficiency. Some of this probably froze there as we gained altitude.
3. Since we were way out of position in tow, the pick-up pilot could have blown his shaped charge (of high explosive) and cut the cable. Fortunately, he did not.

All things considered, we were simply immersed in deep, rich luck.

DONOR RECOGNITION POLICY

During 1982 and completed in 1983 the Trustees of the National Soaring Museum approved a Donor Recognition policy and set standards for the method of recognition. A summary of this action follows.

A plaque entitled FRIENDS OF THE MUSEUM will be installed with the following separate categories listed, (categories determined by value of contribution), MUSEUM PARTNERS, MUSEUM GUARANTORS, and MUSEUM COLLEAGUES. The Plaque is a living Plaque and will recognize all donors living or deceased and will represent the total accumulated value donated by that donor, be it in the form of archives, artifacts, or money of high value.

The Museum is now charged to maintain a donor's **accumulative** record of giving, be it membership, designated contributions, artifacts, or objects.

Upon achieving the level of \$10,000, the donor will be recognized on the FRIENDS OF THE MUSEUM plaque and will be elevated in categories as the contributions escalate.

In the instance of a major contribution sufficient to build a building, addition to the present building, or a major portion thereof, or endow a Chair, then the name of the donor may be placed on the building, addition, or Chair and the name also placed on the FRIENDS OF THE MUSEUM plaque. This action prepares for the future and for the Ralph Stanton and Margaret Barnaby Archive Chair.

In a separate action the Trustees resolved that special recognition is due to Mr. Joseph C. Lincoln and to Mr. Philip J. Baugh. The Memorial and Exhibits Committees are in the process of developing the proposed exhibit to suitably honor these gentlemen.



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