NSM

A Quarterly Journal
of the National Soaring Museum
Summer, 1985 Vol. 8, Number 1

From the Editor:

From the **EDITOR** . . . . . ? **THE EDITOR** . . . . . ?

That's a lot of great stories and pictures away from where I was last year at this time; working in the advertising department of a local newspaper.

Even during those thirty-odd number of working years, I must admit to interruptions in important meetings on advertising proposals, by such non-marketable thoughts as, Roscoe Turner and his pet lion Gilmore and making a flying model of the **BABY BOWLUS**.

Once started, the chain of reverie went on to when I was a kid in Buffalo, watching Al Williams fly his famous **GULF HAWK**. Then came the quick-fade into an air pantheon of greats from the 30's and 40's. There was Jimmy Doolittle in his **GEE BEE**, Amelia Earhart, "Speed" Hawks, "Wrong-Way" Corrigan, Richard du Pont, and his **BOWLUS DUPONT ALBATROSS**, the **D-O-X** flying boat, Captain Max Pruss and the magnificent, **HINDENBURG**. I think that I had seen almost every airplane movie Hollywood or J. Arthur Rank ever produced, from **WINGS** to **TORA, TORA, TORA,** and would probably even go to see Disney's **GOOFY'S GLIDER**.

I've been flying sailplanes since 1975, but my first glider ride was in a 1946 Army Air Force glider snatch demonstration, involving a wartime Waco CG-4A at Harris Hill. While the snatch operation itself was enough to evoke strong thoughts of the hereafter, the wing-over and high speed pass over the field made those thoughts seems much more imminent.

The flying virus lay semi-dormant for many years and only became active in the proximaty of airports, glider fields, and air museums. . . . . And how fortunate for me, the National Soaring Museum, with the largest exhibit of classic and contemporary sailplanes in the world, is practically in my own back yard!

When I started with the Museum last December, the job description included P.R., school and community services, volunteer services, and exhibits.

Exhibits! . . . . . That meant an opportunity to prowl through the archives to find different viewpoints on some of those obscure aviation, soaring, and gliding incidents you hear about, but never get resolved. It meant talking wth air historians and with aviation pioneers who actually knew Orville Wright, and who flew with Anthony Fokker, and Hawley Bowlus, and who remembered vividly the excitement of a bungee launch. And, it also meant the production of the NSM, the Quarterly Journal of the National Soaring Museum. Modern fighter pilots say that there are only three other jobs that can compare with theirs: an actor, a rock star, and the President of the U.S.

Well, I'm a lot older than they are, and I don't need the additional flush of adrenalin, so my vote is for museum work. There's some kind of low-torque vicarious thrill that comes from being close to kinetic antiquity. Maybe you've experienced it. Many of the Museum members I have talked to, have.

Maybe you'd like to see something in the NSM about some event that slipped through the continuum of glider or soaring history, unnoticed. If so, remind us here at the Museum, and perhaps we can resurrect and reconstruct it, and publish it in the NSM.

Meantime, I'll continue to ferret through the archives and share my findings with you.

Bill Gallagher

From the Director:

I asked Bill to leave me a little room to introduce him to you. After reading his copy . . . . need I say more? Aren't we lucky?

One of our goals this year is to catch up and remain current in the publishing of our quarterly Journal. With such enthusiasm, how can we miss?

We are having a busy season with a 30% increase in visitors. Our exhibit focus is being well received and our hourly video presentation of SSA's **JOY OF SOARING** appreciated.

Our secondary exhibit focus U.S. SOARING SITES & CLUBS is a surprise to most of our visitors. They aren't aware of the many opportunities there are to soar in the various parts of the country. Our lobby staff has been busy giving addresses of the different sites to our guests.

If your organization has not participated in helping to mount this exhibit please contact the Museum for information. We plan to create a permanent display and archive of this exhibit.

CALENDAR

Date	Event	Location
June 29	Dedication of 3rd National Landmark	Akron, OH
August 8	Twin Tier Pilots' Hangar Fest	Harris Hill Park
August 31 - Sept. 2	East Coast Sailplane Homebuilders' Association Workshop	NSM/Harris Hill
Oct. 4, 5, 6	Northeast Aero Historians Meeting	NSM
Oct. 5, 6 & 12, 13	Harris Hill Fall Foliage Weekends and Film Festival	Harris Hill/NSM
Oct. 6	Deadline for Gold Medal Design Contest entries	NSM
Nov. 9	Annual Ralph S. Barnaby Lecture (Speaker: Jack Laister) and NSM Trustee Meeting	St.Louis,MO
Nov. 29, 30	42nd Annual Snowbird Meet and Banquet	Harris Hill/NSM
Dec. 13	NSM luncheon honoring the Community Soaring Committee Volunteers	NSM
1986		
Feb. 28	NSM Trustee Winter Meeting Announcement of Winning Gold Medal Design	SSA Convention, Valley Forge, PA

THE THIRD NATIONAL LANDMARK IN AKRON, OHIO

The citizens of Akron, Ohio were honored June 29th by the National Soaring Museum, with the dedication of a National Landmark, commending them for their support of their area's soaring pioneers. In 1981, the NSM Trustees began a National Landmark Program to identify and memorialize sites, individuals or historic events related to the national history of motorless flight.

The first landmark installed by the Museum on June 13, 1981 commemorated Capt. Ralph S. Barnaby's 1929, 15 minute-6 second flight at Corn Hill, Truro, MA. This flight broke Orville Wright's 1911 motorless flight record of 9 minutes-45 seconds.

On July 10, 1982, the second National Landmark was dedicated at the brow of Harris Hill, Elmira, NY to honor 50 years of continuing support from the local community to soaring. The Landmark also recognized the late J. Thomas Rhodes and his family for their hospitality and help in establishing a soaring site at Harris Hill. The Rhodes Family has continued to be supportive of the local flying activity.

Attending the presentation at the Akron Fulton Airport were NSM Landmark Committee Chairman, Walter H. Setz, Philadelphia, PA, National Soaring Museum Director, Shirley Sliwa, and the Museum's Curator of Education, Bill Gallagher and his wife Peg, who graciously agreed to photograph the event. The plaque, to be erected at the airport site, was accepted by Akron's Deputy Mayor, Anthony O'Leary.

Midwestern soaring enthusiasts gravitated to Akron in the late 20's and 30's when a local woodworking company, Baker-McMillen, began producing gliders and sailplanes.

On Friday, June 28th, the National Soaring Museum conducted an Oral History video taping at Akron's Quaker Hilton, where about a dozen old-time pilots and designers recounted their experiences for the Museum archives.

There were recollections of triple tows behind blimps, glider drops from blimps and a singular Akron phenomenon, ridge and wave soaring off the famous Goodyear-Zeppelin Hangar. (Yes, wave! It was encountered on the lee side of the hangar, when a strong enough wind coming over the top of the hangar met the right convective force on the downwind side.)

To celebrate the Landmark dedication a special ceremonies June 29 marked the 50th anniversary of U.S. Mail Glider-tow from Akron to Columbus, Ohio, in a four-place glider, designed by Frank Gross. Following the plaque presentation, the historic flight was reenacted in a modern two-place Grob Acro sailplane, piloted by Gross' son, Bernard Gross, a Piedmont Airlines captain, with the elder Gross acting as co-pilot.

Like the original, this glider carried 2,500 cachets, (envelopes) with special postmarks commemorating the flight. (See, "Why Glider Mail," this issue). The Museum has 500 copies of these cachets for interested philatelists. The towing Cessna was piloted by Jim Short, accompanied by wife, Simine, the Museum's Philatelic Advisor, who made arrangements for the cachet with the U.S. Postal Service.

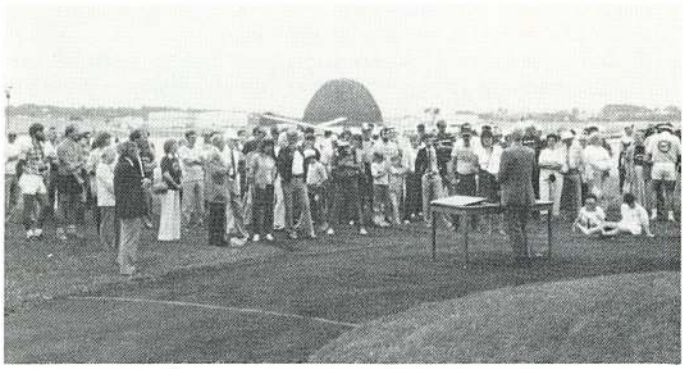
The 1935 flight was vividly recalled by the 4-place designer, Frank Gross, and co-pilot of the flight, Willis Sperry.

Bill Bodenlos, pilot, a Goodyear-Zeppelin corporation foreman at the time, discovered after he was airborne, that pre-flight planning hadn't allowed for the mismatched low glider speed and high tow plane speed.

At first, the tow plane couldn't build up enough speed, and almost ran into the Goodyear-Zeppelin dock. Then, it went too fast, and the glider's windshield came loose. Added to that were loud cracking noises emanating from the glider's tail section.

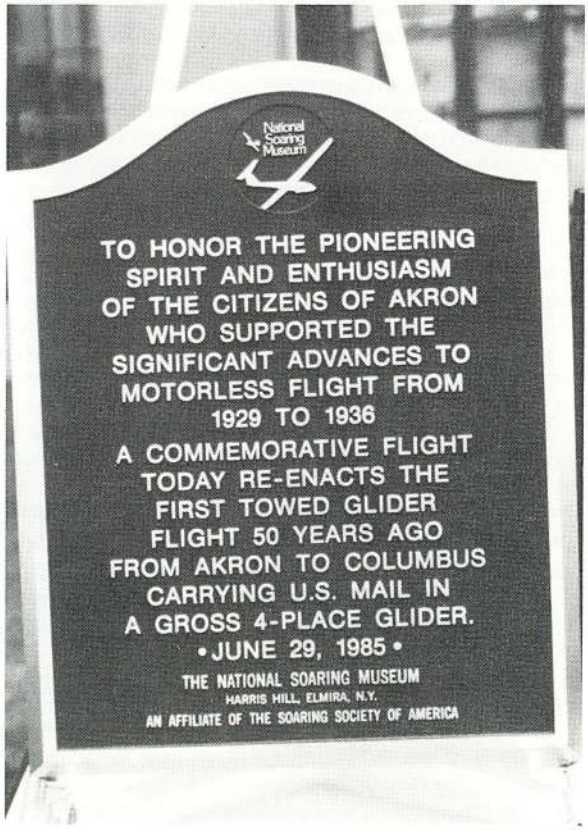
However, the doughty glider pioneers hung on and landed without further incident an hour and a half later in Columbus.

Early next morning, four Akron-bound homing pigeons were released from Columbus carrying this messge for Akron Mayor Myers and Akron's two newspapers: "Arrived OK 3:15 — Greeted by Postmaster McCoy and Attorney General Bricker, and a large delegation — Almost lost glider in flight."



Chairman Walter H. Setz hosting the National Landmark Dedication ceremonies at the Fulton Municipal Airport. Note the Zeppelin hangar in the background.

The Gross Family assembled from all parts of the country to celebrate the commemorative event.



Photos: Peg Gallagher

Why Glider Mail?

By Simine & Jim Short

(Reprinted from COMPEX '85 directory,
Chicago, Illinois)

Everyone who collects air mail knows of "Glider Mail," but so far there are not too many collectors who specialize in this particular field.

There are several reasons for this shortage of glider mail collectors. I would like to list just a few.

There is a lack of specialized catalogs and readily available literature. This makes it difficult for a collector to know how he or she is doing, and possibly what this collecting habit is worth.

Most people just do not know much about gliders in general. They know about airplanes, balloons, and Zeppelins, but they are in general unfamiliar with the glider history and the contributions of motorless aircraft to aviation development.

And last, but not least, many collectors are reluctant to collect material on this subject because they think it is purely philatelic, too narrow a field or has no future.

I do not agree that all "Glider Mail" is purely philatelic. It seems to me that philately has aided in the preservation of a very interesting aspect of aviation. Thus, I would like to convince you that most "Glider Mails" should be considered "Souvenir Historical Flights." They show technological achievements and the strivings of a dedicated band of aerial pioneers around the world.

Until the Wright Brothers attached an engine to their 1902 glider, the history of heavier-than-air aviation was, in fact, the history of gliding.

But as time went by, aviation pioneers like the Wrights, Glenn Curtiss, Bleriot, the Voisins, and others, experimented with gliders only to achieve their goal, the design of the ultimate flying machine.

In the early 20's, it was not quite clear yet, in which direction commercial aviation would go.

The Zeppelin airships had been improved tremendously. Their aerodynamic efficiency made it possible to have a regular flight schedule, carrying mail, freight, and passengers. But were the Zeppelins the way to go in the future? History now tells us that they were not.

Aeroplanes of the 20's showed the result of development during World War I, but their overall performance and reliability still left much to be desired. Could they be improved to make them more reliable for commercial aviation? Now history tells us that these flying machines were the correct way to go.

And gliders? No one in the 20's knew quite what they might be able to do.

Due to the restrictions upon powered aircraft of the Treaty of Versailles after World War I, aviators in Germany chose to fly gliders, not only to continue flying, but also to gain more experience and to further develop their aviation technology. Gliders were cheap to build and they were easy to fly and experiment with. It was known that they could soar and stay aloft without an engine for some period of time. However, it was not understood to what extent this "soaring" was possible or whether gliders could someday be used commercially.

To help support these beginning steps, frequently souvenir mail was carried in gliders.

A few covers illustrate the development of the glider up to the modern soaring machine and the space shuttle. The space shuttle as well as its lifting body forerunners make every landing as pure gliders.

The first known mail-carrying glider flight was attempted by Count James Douglas "Gugge" Hamilton in August of 1923 (Fig.1). A prize of 1,000 Danish Krona was set by a newspaper for a crossing of the Oeresund Channel with a flying machine without an engine. Hamilton learned to fly gliders in the spring of 1923. He tried several times to carry his bundle of 50 pieces in the glider, towed by a motor boat. On September 13, 1923, he gave up, and the mail was carried across by ferry. The card shown was written by the postmaster of Helsingborg to the Swedish Postmaster General, Dr. Julius Juhlin, who strongly supported any aviation oriented mail-carrying attempt.[1]

Fig. 1 First known mail-carrying glider flight attempt from Hälsingborg (Sweden) to Helsingör (Denmark) across the Öresund channel.

The first officially approved mail-carrying glider flight was supposed to take place late in August 1923 at the Wasserkuppe peak in Central Germany [2]. The then still current 5 Pfg. and 10 Pfg. air mail stamps were overprinted and were required vignettes for the flight. The postage had to be paid in cash, as run-away inflaton did not permit the use of stamps on these cards (Fig.2). It was a very patriotic gathering. 30,000 spectators watched four gliders crash to the ground during the flight demonstration in turbulent weather. It was then decided to cancel the mail flight. A messenger was sent to Gersfeld with the mail.

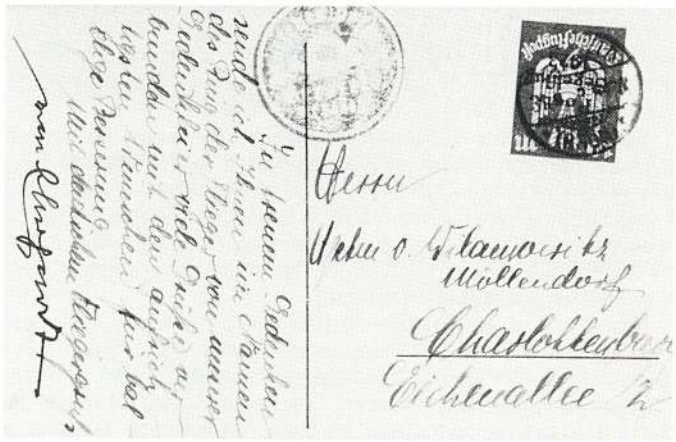


Fig. 2 First known officially approved mail-carrying glider flight, again unsuccessful, at the Wasserkuppe mountain in Central Germany.

In the years to come, gliders became more aerodynamically efficient and they were used more and more to see where they could be used commercially.

The United States received as reparation payment from Germany the Zeppelin airship LZ 126, which was later christened the "USS Los Angeles". In the late 20's and early 30's, the Navy tried to prove to Congress and the general public the benefit of having this huge lighter-than-air flying machine. One of the many ideas was to use its huge hull as an airplane "mothership" or "aircraft carrier" [3]. Several successful attempts were made to "land" an airplane underneath the hull on a trapeze and hook device, but the Navy employed a glider (Fig.3), attached to fittings on one of the frames, to experiment with the take-off. The first such launch was made by Lt. Ralph S. Barnaby on January 31, 1930. On the second launch, on May 31, 1930, Lt. T.G.W. "Tex"

Settle carried five Navy Station Lakehurst envelopes with him (Fig.4). The airship cruised over Washington, as part of the Curtiss Marine Trophy Race event. Settle and his glider were released from the airship with a standard bomb release, activated by Lt. Tyler. He landed safely about 10 minutes later at the Anacostia airport [4]. One of the covers carried is shown. It is addressed to Mr. Dietzmann, a civilian who was in charge of the shop which designed and installed the bomb release device on the airship and its counterpart on the "Pruefling" glider wing section [5]. In later years four to eight small scouting biplanes became standard equipment on the airships Akron and Macon.

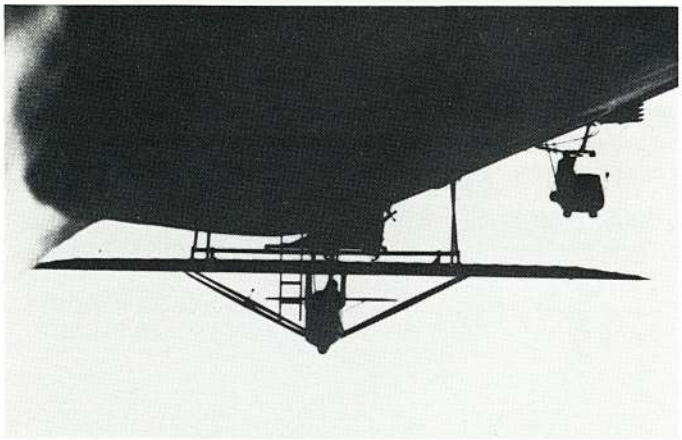


Fig. 3 Glider ready for launch from the USS Los Angeles during the Curtiss Marine Trophy Race over Washington, DC on May 31,1930.

Fig. 4 Souvenir mail carried on the second launch of a glider from an airship by Lt. Settle over Washington and Anacostia on May 31, 1930.

Switzerland issued "Bundesfeier" semi-postal cards with the proceeds from their sale going to charitable causes. In August 1930, mail-carrying aviation events were staged throughout Switzerland, including three official glider mail flights (Fig.5). The "Bundesfeier" cards were required on all these flights. Three different denominations were prepared, a 10 Rappen regular issue, and 25 to 40 Rappen air mail cards. Each came in two varieties, one showing a boy on a school bench, and the other showing three children around a camp fire. A total of 20,355 - 25 Rappen cards and 17,055 - 40 Rappen cards were sold. The glider mail flights were staged from the Bachtel mountain in Central Switzerland. All cards were collected by PTT at the Hinwil post office and were taken up the mountain. Fritz Mueller flew 2,000 cards to Auslikon, a distance of about 10 km; Hermann Zollinger flew 3,000 cards to Bubikon, a distance of about 6 km; and sailpane designer Jakob Spalinger flew 1,003 cards to Wetzikon, about 8 km. All mail was taken to the respective post offices near the landing sites and forwarded to its destination [6].

In the early 30's, the "glider train" or "sky train" idea was developed. Here, several gliders were attached to the same towing plane, taken aloft and released one by one at various points along a given route. These novel "commercial" exploits where mail and freight or even gasoline for the towing airplane

Fig. 5 Semi-postal "Bundesfeier" cards flown on the first mail-carrying glider flight in Switzerland. Take-off was from the Bachtel mountain. The cards shown were flown to Auslikon and Wetzikon.

was carried, were done in several locations around the world.

In the summer of 1934, Elias Lustig, owner of the Adam Hat Stores in New York City, was the financial supporter of the "Lustig Sky Train" [7]. An optimistic announcement in the "Newark Ledger" reads:

> "Nation-wide air mail service by glider train is presaged by opening of service between New York City and Washington. The "locomotive" plane will detach gliders bearing 200 pounds of mail and pilot at Philadelphia and Baltimore. Same system can be used for "way station" passengers, and building roofs in big cities can be used as landing places" (Fig.6).

Mayor LaGuardia was very interested in this commercial attempt which was to leave Floyd Bennett airport! He handed lead pilot and organizer Jack O'Meara the bags of mail which were then distributed according to their destination: Prof. R.E. Franklin, designer of the gliders used, went to Baltimore; Stanley W. Smith, the 1933 National Soaring Champion, went to Philadelphia (Fig.7); and Jack O'Meara flew to Washington and landed on the Ellipse near the White House. After landing, O'Meara explained to officials that this flight was an attempt to prove that a train of gliders could open an entirely new field in commercial aviation.

Later glider train flights carried mail between Miami and Havana, Cuba and between Vienna and Budapest. The illustrated cards (Fig.8), carried on a double-tow sky train from Vienna via Sopron and Gyoer to Budapest, had a flight cachet applied in the Vienna 1 Post Office where all mail was initially collected. Interestingly, this flight also dropped mail by parachute over the intermediate points of Sopron (950 pieces) and Gyoer (830 pieces) where receiving town cancels and the drop mail cachet were applied. The gliders landed with the remaining 1,795 pieces in Budapest. [8],[9].

Similar glider sky train flights are reported in England, Russia, and Roumania.

The glider train idea was used extensively during World War II where it was necessary to bring troops and supplies quietly to a given destination. The retrieve of the glider was frequently not necessary. It was dismantled and all its parts were used for other things.

During the war years, the aerodynamic efficiency of all airplanes increased immensely. The glider became a soaring machine. It could now gain altitude and not just glide down into the valley.

After World War II, it became obvious that there was no commercial value in gliders. Soaring became a challenging aeronautical sport.

(Continued on Page 6)

But aeronautical science even today seems to fall back on glider technology as can be seen in the newest developments. In the early 60's, the re-usable space shuttle idea was conceived.

Fig. 6 Newspaper clipping from the "Newark Ledger," announcing the upcoming "Lustig Sky Train" Experiment.

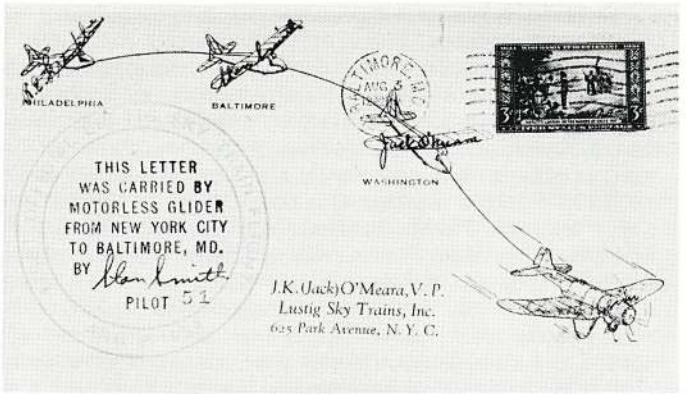


Fig. 7 Cover flown on the "Lustig Sky Train" by Stan Smith from New York to Baltimore, MD.

Fig. 8

A "lifting body," the M2-F1 was designed by a glider manufacturer, and built using glider technology. It was flown by glider pilots, towed by a car to prove its flying abilities, and then later towed by a C-47 (DC-3 transport plane) (Fig.9). And now, about twenty years later, the Space Shuttle lands as a glider every time [10],[11].

Fig. 9 The M2-F1 lifting body, towed behind a C-47 transport plane and a cover in commemoration of its first gliding flight back to earth.

The study of "Glider Mail" during its pioneering days in the early part of this century is still a very challenging subject. There are still many glider flights of which we do not yet know, and there are still many known flights where we do not know yet why they were done or even who flew them.

But research is rewarding. There is an endless potential for discovery and delight. The puzzle of the encyclopedia of glider aviation history still has many pieces missing.

Talking with the people who made the events happen in the 20's and 30's makes one highly aware that history was made in a very painstaking fashion. The covers which were carried are proof of those pioneering achievements.

Glider Mail, whether official, semi-official, or perhaps even purely philatelic has aided in the preservation of aviation history during the development of gliders into todays modern soaring machines and space shuttles. These covers are historical and are significant as "Souvenirs carried on important flights which contributed to the development of aviation" [12].

Glider Mail experiments can certainly be considered Souvenir Historical Flights!

FOOTNOTES:

[1] Luening, Orjan (1978). Luftpostens Historia i Norden, The History of Airmail in Scandanavia. Sveriges Filatelist-Foerbund Stockholm, Specialhandbook Nr.10

[2] Kronstein, Dr. Max (1933), Posten im Segelflug, Versuch einer Katalogisierung. Sieger-Post, Nr. 45-47 (Mai/Juli)

[3] Smith, Richard K. (1965). The Airships Akron and Macon, Flying Aircraft Carriers of the U.S. Navy. Annapolis, MD

[4] Marine Flyer Wins Curtiss Trophy. The New York Times, June 1, 1930

[5] Personal correspondence with Ralph S. Barnaby, Capt. US Navy Ret. (1980 through 1984), Robert Schoendorf (1984), Bob Said, Editor Soaring (1984), William F. Althoff (1984)

[6] Schweizerisches Luftpost-Handbuch (1984). Schweizerischer Aerophilatelisten-Verein, Zuerich

[7] Smith, Stanley W. (1980). America's First Sky Train, New York - Philadelphia - Baltimore - Washington. Bungee Cord, Vol.6, No.2, pp.3-5

[8] Kosel, Adolf (1948). Geschichte der oesterreichischen Luftpost. Austria Philatelist, Wien

[9] Schicha, Guenther (1984). Katalog der Sonderflugpost der ersten Republik Oesterreich. Aerophil, Booklet No.4, Stuttgart

[10] Cattani, Jim (1976). An Unofficial History of Lifting Body Rocket Planes from the M2-F1 Glider to the Rocket Powered X24B. Astrophile No.1, pp.11-16

[11] Baker, Barbara J. (1980). Frontiers of Space. The Airpost Journal, Vol.51, No.8, pp.256-259, Vol.51, No.12, pp.406-409

[12] Johnson, Jesse G. (1971). United States Souvenir Historical Flights. American Air Mail Catalog, Section 19, Pg. 54

SOARING MUSEUM EXHIBITS
FULL SCALE REPLICA WING SECTION
OF BOWLUS "PAPER WING"

The National Soaring Museum's 1985 exhibit, "William Hawley Bowlus: a man of many facets," includes in the display of Bowlus designed sailplanes, memorabilia and photographs, a full-scale replica of the legendary "paper wing" structure used on Bowlus' first true sailplane, the 1929 original **Albatross**, Model SP-1.

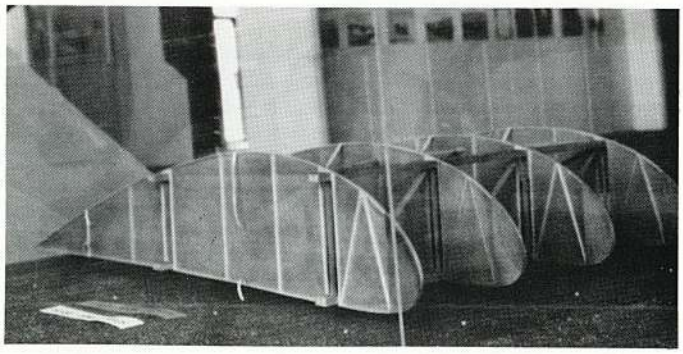
The project was headed by Richard Benbough, Spring Valley, CA, and constructed for the Museum by Frank Allen and Bob Greenaway, Life Members and volunteer restoration workers at the San Diego Aero-Space Museum. The reproduced wing section is exact in every detail. Ribs were made by gluing one-eighth by three-sixteenth inch spruce cap strips, softened in household ammonia and preformed to a U.S.A. 35-A airfoil section, to both sides of a craft paper web already marked to the same wing curve; hence the name "paper wing". Spruce compression members were added to each side of every third rib. Small wooden clamps were tacked in place to hold the structure while the glue was drying. Paper webs were varnished. Wing root ribs of five-foot chord weighed only five ounces.

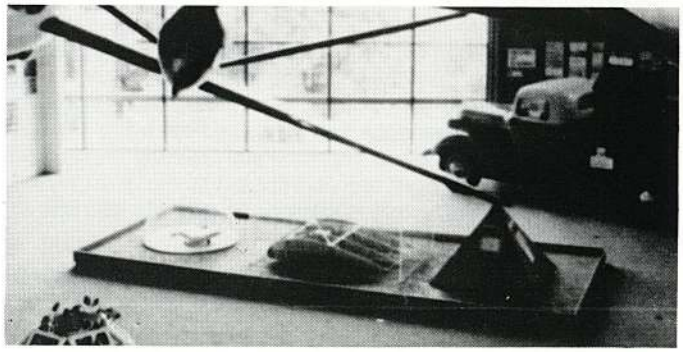
The spars were built-up Pratt trusses. Top and bottom chords were made up of two strips of three-quarter inch square spruce glued and nailed to each side of one-sixteenth by one inch vertical and diagonal members, the diagonal members in tension under flying load. The lower chord of the spars was slanted upward to give a slight dihedral to the lower surface.

The wing, with thin plywood leading edge and wire trailing edge, was extremely strong and rigid with little flexing noted in flight. The nineteen foot outer panel weighed only seventeen pounds.

Replica of the 1929 rib used on the Bowlus Model SP-1, "Paper Wing" sailplane. Trimming paper from the edge of wing rib after first side has been completed.

Photo from: Richard H. Benbough





Two views of the "Paper Wing" replica on the island display in the main exhibit hall.

Photos: Peg Gallagher

GUIDELINES FOR THE NATIONAL SOARING MUSEUM'S GOLD MEDAL DESIGN CONTEST

The National Soaring Museum has established a Gold Medal as its highest award. It will be awarded only upon due consideration of extraordinary justification by a two-thirds vote cast by the whole Board of Trustees. It is not considered in any way to be an annual award, and nominations will come from the Trustees.

The theme shall be interpreted by the artist from the National Soaring Museum's Philosophy of preserving the past and looking toward the future. (A copy of the Museum's Philosophy follows.) Entries:

- shall be color or black and white renderings, media choice by the artist,
- shall be mounted on poster board not to exceed 11″ x 14″.
- shall be received by the National Soaring Museum no later than October 6, 1985, and,
- shall become the property of the National Soaring Museum.

The produced medal will be three inches in diameter. The obverse side shall be the design with the reverse side to include the Museum's identification with space allowed for the recipient's name and date of the award.

The National Soaring Museum Board of Trustees shall act as the selection committee and vote on the winning designs, 1st, 2nd, and 3rd choice, at their Winter, 1986 Trustees' meeting. The entries shall be exhibited at The Soaring Society of America's Annual Soaring Convention, to be held in Valley Forge, PA February 25th to March 2nd, 1986.

If you are interested in participating in the National Soaring Museum's Gold Medal Design Contest, please contact the National Soaring Museum for an entrant's form.

PHILOSOPHY OF THE NATIONAL SOARING MUSEUM

(The National Soaring Museum was created in 1969 when the SSA Board of Directors authorized the Harris Hill Soaring Corporation to establish and operate the National Soaring Museum, Archives, and Library. In 1972, the National Soaring Museum was chartered by the New York State Education Department as an educational institution, and a separate non-profit corporation was set up at that time to conduct its activities. The activities of the Corporation are carried out by a Board of Trustees through a Director.)

The National Soaring Museum exists primarily to fulfill two major functions: (1) That of preserving the heritage of motorless flight in the United States, and (2) That of promoting a greater knowledge of gliding, soaring, and related aeronautics and physical sciences among the general public.

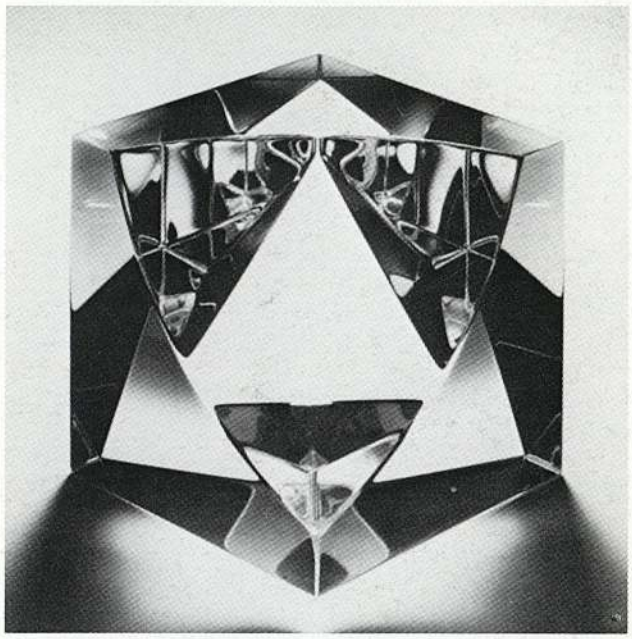
Motorless flight has played an important role in the realization of man's age old dream to fly. It can be said with assurance that man would not have taken to the air had it not been for the gliding experiments of many distinguished and inspired men. Over the years, aerodynamic and meteorological breakthroughs of major significance have come about through the efforts of men and women who were fascinated by the concept of using natural forces to fly. Gliding and soaring has grown increasingly sophisticated and performance has increased markedly since the days of the early pioneers. The National Soaring Museum will show that motorless flight has contributed to the overall history of man, and that this history is inspiring, instructive and one that needs telling.

The Trustees of the National Soaring Museum believe that the education of the general public in aeronautical subjects is a fundamental need in a technologically oriented society. In recognition of this, the Museum will provide educational programs that will emphasize the contribution that soaring and aeronautics have made to the whole society.

Scattered through the United States are masses of important material that need collecting, preserving and interpreting. The National Soaring Museum will provide the facilities and staff to bring this material together into a useful collection. The Trustees of the Museum are aware that they bear a heavy responsibility to the future for the preservation and transmission of this rich harvest of aeronautical lore.

The National Soaring Museum further believes that it has the duty of promoting a greater knowledge of motorless flight and related aeronautics among the general population, using whatever techniques seem appropriate to that end. The Museum intends to devote considerable effort to the task of trying to bring the general public into touch with the spirit as well as the more factual aspects of motorless flight.

The National Soaring Museum intends to become active in the life of the local community, as well as the nation as a whole. The NSM believes that it can provide valuable service and cultural enrichment to the many who visit the Museum.



The Steuben glass "Pyramid Block" has been donated, to be awarded to the 1st choice Gold Medal designer.
Photo: Steuben Glass, Corning Glass Works

ON THE COVER:

Left, Frank R. Gross, designer of the four-place "Sky Ghost" and Willis "Doc" Sperry, co-pilot of the historic 1935 towed glider-mail flight from Akron to Columbus, OH at the commemorative ceremony in Akron, June 29, 1985.
Photo: The Columbus Ohio Dispatch, Tim Revell

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.

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