

NSM



A Quarterly Journal
of the National Soaring Museum
Summer 1986 Vol. 9, Number 1

From the Editor:

The kids are back in school, and the quaint Chemung Trolley Car that carted visitors up to the NSM and to other points of interest made the season's last run; so it looks like we're pre-fighting Fall. We hope that you were among the thousands that saw the Wright 1911 Glider #5 exhibit. If you didn't, the #5 along with highlights of the 1985 Wm. Hawley Bowlus exhibit will be continued thru the early Spring of 1987.

Since Memorial Day Hall of Fame Weekend, visitors filled over 52 pages in the NSM Guest Book with such comments as, "Thanks for preserving this", "Excellent display", "Good History lesson", "Exhibits very thorough", "Can't wait to come back", "The Flight Stuff". Mr. Kazuo Yaitabashi of Fukaya, Japan, called it, "Sexy". Of course not all the comments were positive. "T-Shirts cost too much (\$8.50)", "Need Propellers", "You need A Bigger Building", "Need more for young kids". Then there are several entries written in foreign languages. Whenever we have a chance to match people with the language we try to find out whether the remarks are good or bad . . . almost 100% good so far.

The Museum hosted many interesting groups, and this year the Seven Lakes Girl Scout Council Summer Fun Day and Aerospace Badge Program was held here.

The Museum also visited 25 area schools, playgrounds and parks with a special Children's Summer Cohesion Program on "The Dynamics and Aerodynamics of Paper Airplanes". The kids (and their leaders) had a lot of fun, but I had the most fun. The guy driving the 18 wheel rig along Interstate 17 couldn't help but honk his horn when he saw 26, 2nd and 3rd graders launch a blizzard of paper gliders as he passed. We had competitions, to see who was going to be that day's "Ace of Darts", for distance flights and "the Ace of Space", for duration flights. Some of these 8 and 9 year olds made better paper gliders than the NSM instructor. I still can't figure out whether they were

just lucky, or knew more about elementary aerodynamics than I did; the latter probably.

Russell Lee, Curatorial Assistant for Aircraft at the National Air and Space Museum stopped by for a day of browsing, meeting with Director Shirley Sliwa, and a sailplane ride . . . "A superb museum" he said. We had a group of Royal Canadian Air Cadets who were in the area undergoing training at the Schweizer Soaring School. At the end of their instruction, they toured the NSM and donated an RCAC patch to the Museum's Insignia Kiosk.

The Labor Day Weekend workshop of the East Coast Sailplane Homebuilders Association positioned many examples of innovative sailplane designs on the Museums' front lawn for public viewing. Thermalling weather enabled the Homebuilders to get in some good flying before heading home. The summer's activities more or less closed with the spectacular Chemung County Sesquicentennial Air Show. There were static displays of everything from a wartime Ryan PT-20 to a 3/4 scale JU 87 Stuka: And the flying! simulated dog fights, F4U's, P-51's, a Korean vintage Panther Jet, The Black Hawks Aerobatic Team, a C-5A and a triple sailplane fly-by, ballast drop and peel off.

An exciting wind up to an exciting season.

Bill Gallagher

You can help in preserving our soaring heritage.

If you have historic memorabilia and excess or duplicate publications, send them to the National Soaring Museum for cataloging and archiving.

Share your collection of soaring artifacts and reminiscences with interested succeeding generations.

Address: Shirley Sliwa, Director
National Soaring Museum
RD #3 Harris Hill, Elmira, NY 14903

CALENDAR

Date	Event	Location
July thru August	Children's Summer Cohesion Program-Dynamics & Aerodynamics of Paper Airplanes	25 Area Schools Playgrounds & Parks
Aug. 14	Twin Tier Pilots "Hangarfest" Outing	Harris Hill Park
Aug. 29-30-31, Sept. 1	East Coast Sailplane Homebuilders Association Workshop	NSM/Harris Hill
Sept. 6-7	Chemung County Sesquicentennial Air Show sponsored by Joint Aviation Council of the Greater Corning Chamber of Commerce and the Chemung County Chamber of Commerce	Elmira/Corning Regional Airport
Oct. 4-5	Harris Hill Fall Foliage Weekends	NSM/Harris Hill
Oct. 11-12	Film Festival	NSM/Harris Hill
Oct. 11	NSM Ses-KITE-nnial - Kite Fly	NSM/Harris Hill
Oct. 24	75th Anniversary Celebration of Orville Wright's Record Soaring Flight	NSM/Harris Hill
Oct. 25	13th Annual Ralph S. Barnaby Lecture by Paul E. Garber, Historian Emeritus, Smithsonian's National Air and Space Museum	NSM
Nov. 28-29	43rd Annual Snowbird Sailplane Regatta and Banquet	NSM/Harris Hill
Dec. 19	Community Soaring Committee Luncheon	NSM

THE GREAT TEXAS SOARING MARATHON

THE 1947, 14TH ANNUAL NATIONAL SOARING CONTEST



That's what over 100 competing pilots called the 14th Nationals, held at Wichita Falls, Texas.

Starting July 4, 1947, contestants blazed away for 13 straight days, and covered 40,921 cross country miles.

This was the first national held in the West; the first to be held in level country, and only the second to be held since World War II, when contests were cancelled for the duration. The '46 and '41 were hosted by Elmira, NY.

Bob Blaine, Contest Manager, reported in the July-August '47 Soaring, "The move to the Great Southern plains proved that we had what record-breaking took. The weather was nothing short of tailor-made to soaring's specifications. Thermals were generally everywhere and there was even an obliging front with a thunderhead that came close enough for one of the boys to catch it as he soared over Oklahoma's fields."

The new 1948 president of SSA, E.J. Reeves recalled that this was a time when pilots were just learning about thermal soaring.

One contestant commented on the terrain, "Wonderful! It invited you on and on. I just never thought about where I might land until I could see the treetops even with the cockpit, and Texas trees aren't tall like its stories, either."

Wichita Falls' Sheppard Field facilities were Texas sized too, with huge hangars that housed wartime Waco CG-4A's, 13's and 15's. Wags commented that the runways were so long that some of the pilots never did see both ends at close range.

And the ships... Probably the widest assembly of motorless aircraft ever seen. There were utilities, high performance ships, home built, and two-place wartime trainers. The names of the sailplanes and their pilots read like a soaring honor roll. One pilot remarked that if he were to stop the next ten people who passed you, add the number of years that they had been soaring, you couldn't get less than 100 years.

Here are some of the ships that made soaring history: Schweizer TG-2 & 3 both ex-military; Schweizer 1-21, the first American ship that was designed to carry water ballast, and the Schweizer 1-20 Trainer; Laister-Kauffmann TG-4; Pratt-Read LNE-1; The Culver & Nugent Screamin Weiner, and Rigid Midget; Schemp & Hirth Minimioa, Bowlus Super Albatross; Lawrence Excess Two; Kirby Kite; French Air 100 and SO-P1; DFS Olympia and RS-1 Zanonla. A Lockheed P-38 belly tank showed up, sprouting wings, canopy and a V-tail, all surrounding pilot, Harold Huber, who flew it on respectable flights of over 100 miles. Designer Irving Prue called it the Prue 160. The Rigid Midget is now on display in the Main Hall of the NSM.

They were all mixed on the starting grid for one really open contest. The task was startlingly simple: You checked the wind

and sealed your barograph, picked your direction or goal, towed off, and kept going until you couldn't go any farther, or you made your goal. When you landed, you trekked to the nearest phone, whistled up your retrieval crew, drove most of the night back to Wichita Falls and started all over again the next morning.

This went on for 13 days!

Grand opener was on the 4th of July, with Gen. Hoyt S. Vandenberg, (later Vice Chief of the newly autonomous Air Force) addressing the assemblage. No cross country points were awarded, but five flights were made in which more than 10,000 feet of altitude was gained.

Then the cross-country marathon began. Saturday, July 5th, 12 pilots exceeded 100 miles. Myron Wells in his Bowlus Super Albatross won \$100 when he zipped upwind to Olney, Texas. That jaunt gave others pause for reflection on which way the wind might blow and what to do about it. That day, 12 ships went up on triple, double and single tows, and rendezvoused at 7,000 feet over Wichita Falls. They released, and with perfect timing, moved into an elegant formation, and majestically spiralled their silent way to Sheppard Field. Floyd Sweet arranged the briefing of participating pilots, who had never before flown in a dual formation, let alone a formation of 12. The most startling aspect of this stunt was that these pilots were flying ships of notably different performance characteristics. They relied on spoilers to keep in position on the formation's last man, not the first.

The cross-country shake-out was in full evidence during the next two days, with George Tabery, Fritz Compton, Don Polard, Paul MacReady, Paul Tuntland, and Ray Parker at the top. (Tabery's son, Ronald is currently ranked in today's soaring competition). Raw novices with mostly, "ridge time" landed 80, 100, 150 miles from home.

Karl Lange and Ben Shupack waded into the daily grind of processing from 50 (on a light day) to 70 barograph charts each night, and working sometimes til dawn.

On July 8th Virginia Bennis Schweizer went 52 miles in her Kirby Kite, to set a new Women's National Single Place Goal flight record. On the 17th Ginny came back with a 7,200 ft. altitude gain to set a new Single Place Women's International Altitude Record.

MacCready in Screamin' Weiner, and Trager in a Laister-Kauffmann TG-4A, topped 200 miles. July 13th Dick Comey in his new Schweizer 1-21 hit 300 miles. Eugart Yerian made a goal flight of 200 miles, with a passenger, in the heavy Schweizer TG-3A.

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Eric Nessler, former French National Champion, celebrated Bastille Day, July 14th, a French national Holiday, by going 319 miles in his sleek Air 100. Teammate Paul Lepanse added to the celebration with a flight of over 200 miles.

By the 16th the effects of the heat and the Southwest's expanded geography began to show on pilots and their crews. "There were murmurs of an attempt to bribe the weatherman to fix a good thick overcast and a tight inversion at about 150 feet," says Blaine in his Soaring magazine report. It didn't happen, of course, and the Texas sun scorched on.

E.J. Reeves tells of the Russian Air Force Colonel that the Soviets sent to observe the contest. . . . "It was hotter than hell's hinges, and I was to escort him. He showed up in a beautifully tailored uniform . . . made of wool. To make matters worse the uniform had a choker collar! First thing I did was to try and get him to take the damn thing off. No chance. So we took him to a Mexican restaurant where, as you know, they serve really hot food. Well he ate that stuff and he looked like he loved it. The rest of us were dying, but he never got out of that uniform, medals and all."

Blaine, in "Soaring" said that the next day's tally showed MacCreedy back at Wichita Falls, just a few yards over the fence, for "what will surely prove to be a new international goal and return single place record of 239 miles."

Next day Kemp Trager caught a cum-nim over Oklahoma that jostled him up to a 17,600 foot gain, the contest's best. He got cold, bounced around, iced up, and started to lose the applied numbers on his Laister-Kauffmann. He had oxygen, but was holding his breath for the airspeed to come down to a tolerable number.

The following day, July 19th, John Robinson took to air in his Zanonias, and eight and a half hours later landed in Pecos, Texas, very near the Mexican border. He was 333 miles from home where a new national single place distance record awaited him. What a day! . . . Four pilots soared over 200 miles; Robinson, Comey, Nessler and Lepanse.

The last day, Sunday, no contest points were awarded, but the contestants flew anyway for a final aerobatic fling. Right over the field, and all in one thermal, 14 planes demonstrated soaring techniques to the spectators. As usual everyone was turning in the wrong direction, except one but the thermal's occupants were too tired to check up on the violator. As Blaine said, "It made it more thrilling."

This was the place for the bizarre, with John Nowak in a Schweizer 1-19, clawing his way, sluggishly skyward, launching behind a couple of Texas cow ponies! Not to be outdone, Steve Bennis launched behind a car, waiting on the towline while it turned around, climbed again as the car picked up the slack, then went back down the runway in the opposite direction.

Field Operations under John Nowak and his assistants, Joe Steinhauer, Gus Scheurer, Stan Corcoran, Bill Putnam, along with timer Hawley Bowlus, managed 60 to 70 take-offs daily, one every minute and three quarters. This endeavor was mixed in with landings, goal announcements, passenger names, and take-off cards, all directed from their 15 foot high mobile operations tower atop an Army surplus recon. truck.

The fabulous runways at Sheppard allowed from four to six towplanes to operate constantly. They landed with towropes still attached. (In previous contests towplanes dropped their lines over the field before landing.) Towplanes taxied, ropes still in place, to the front of the launch line, paused while one or two ships took off, then taxied to the grass edge of the runway where they waited for take-off positioning. Then up, away and around again. The absence of rope dropping made for speed and safety.

It was a remarkably safe contest, with only three ships involved in mishaps, out of a total of approximately 1,200 launchings. For those with stamina, the evenings were memorable. There were Texas-sized feeds, music and square dancing. Blaine reports in Soaring. . . . "Must have been the heat,

because cases of empties were stacked higher than the operations truck. This was a super colossal event, the 14th was." Here is Bob Blaine's summary, again from Soaring magazine.

Certificates earned — 11 Gold "C"s, 25 Silver "C"s (including Rolf Buhler, Switzerland and Charles Wingfield, England)

Altitude gain — 2,551,811 ft.

Duration — 1,743 hours, 19 minutes

Distance flown — 40,921 miles

Oldest contestants — 58, youngest 21, average 33.36 years

Official standings — first 10

Pilot	Points	Award	Ship
Comey	4606	138.18	Schweizer I-21
MacReady	4160	124.80	Screamin' Weiner
Parker	3992	119.76	Rigid Midget
Robinson	3782	113.46	Zanonias
Valette(France)	3779	113.37	Air 100
Yerian	3171	95.13	Schweizer TG-3
Stiglmeier	3163	94.89	LNE-1 Pratt Read
Nessler(France)	3129	93.87	Air-100
Pollard	3086	92.58	Laister-Kauffmann TG-4
Wingfield	2998	89.94	Olympia Eon

Flights in excess of 300 miles

Pilot	Points	Award	Ship
Comey	4606	138.18	Schweizer I-21
Robinson	3782	113.46	Zanonias
Nessler	3129	93.87	Air-100

300.25 July 13 333 mi. July 19 319 mi. July 14



Top: Welcoming Rear Admiral A. F. Sprague, USN, Commander of the Corpus Christi Naval Air Station, from the left: Bob Blaine, Contest Director; E. J. Reeves, newly elected president of SSA for 1948; Captain Ralph S. Barnaby, USN, 1947 president of SSA; (next two, unidentified aids to the Admiral) Admiral Sprague; and Charles King, Co-Director.

Above left: Photographers and onlookers having a field day at the Fourteenth Annual National Soaring Contest, Sheppard Field, Wichita Falls, TX.

Far left: General Hoyt S. Vandenberg, (of the then U.S. Army Air Corps, later Vice Chief of the newly autonomous Air Force) hears Herman Stiglmeier explain Irving Prue's, Prue 160. Harold Huber flew it during the contest. (Photos from, "Soaring Pictorial in Texas," by; MAX, Dallas, E. J. Reeves, Dallas, CAUDILL, Wichita Falls.)

There were 22 flights between 200 and 300 miles; 37 flights between 100 and 200 miles, and 10 flights gaining more than 10,000 feet. The foreign ships caught everyone's attention, early on. The French team's beautiful Air 100 was an 18 meter formula design, with a span of 18 meters, area 18 square meters, an aspect ratio of 18, and a claimed minimum sink of 1.7 feet per second. This ship was said to be a development of the German Weihe. The all metal drooping gull-winged SO-P1, with its roomy cockpit was flown by Frenchman Paul Lepanse on two flights of over 200 miles. In one of the carefully prepared British Olympia Eons, Charles Wingfield took home a new British distance record of 216 miles, a goal and return of 147 miles, and the No. 2 British Gold "C".

However, the 14th's outstanding ship was the winning Schweizer 1-21 of Dick Comey. Author Blaine commented at the time, "We sincerely hope that many more of these fine sailplanes will be built."

Screamin' Weiner and Rigid Midget were also standouts. With a minimum sink of around 3.3 feet per second, their ability to circle tightly, and stay in small thermals seemed to make up for that minimum sink disadvantage.

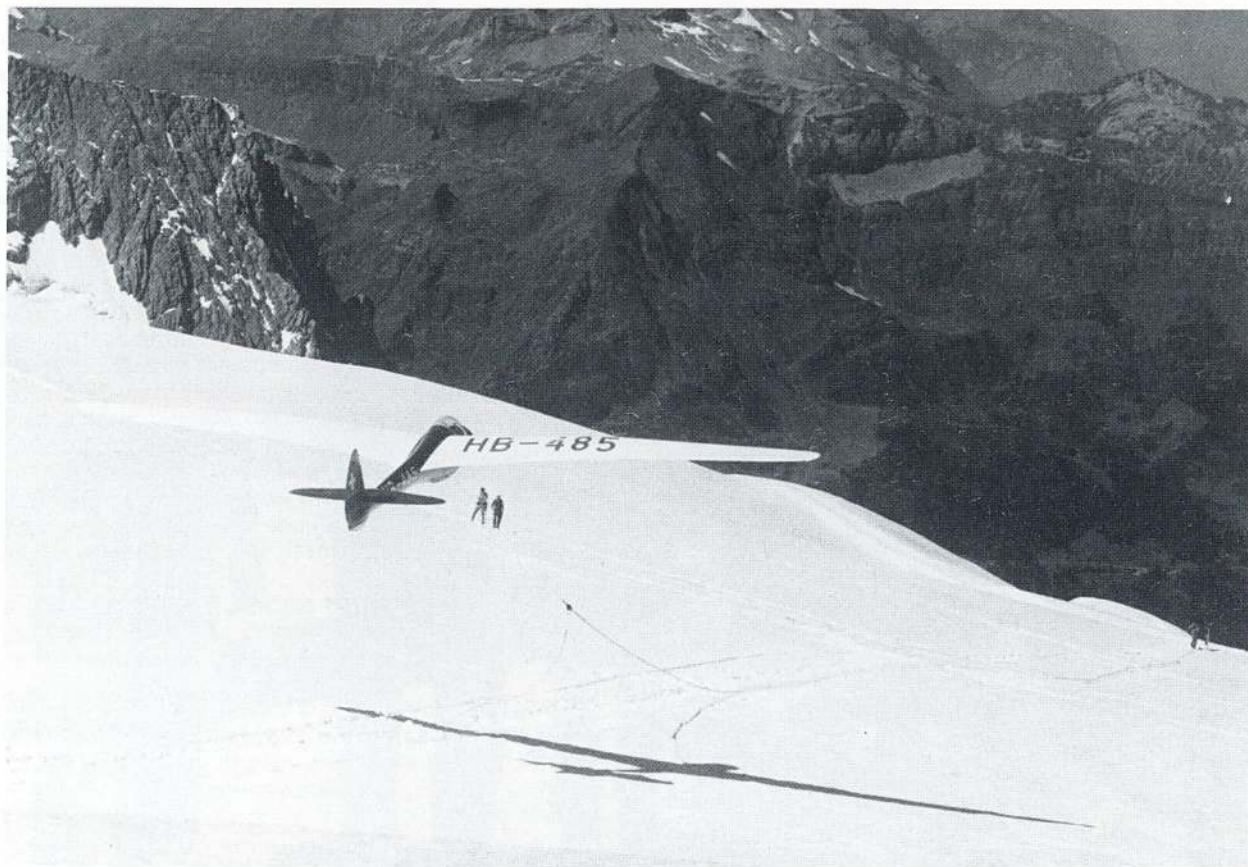
Ten year old Zanonias, piloted by John Robinson, proved to be still in the running. Harland Ross planned to build five more Zanonias in 1947.

The Bowlus Super Albatrosses proved that they were in strong contention, with Myron Wells beating out some of the better ships and pilots. It was reported that Hawley planned to build five Supers in kit form, and to try to keep the price under \$1,000.

Stan Smith's 207 mile goal flight in the old Yellow Peril (Excess Too) stayed right up there with the leaders.

There were a few squeaks about the contest's inadequate budget. The point award fund was so small that checks in the teens went to some of the country's top pilots. The champion's was only slightly over \$100.

Blaine, in his Soaring report, summarized it like this, "One brag we can conscientiously put in our notebook; we showed up mighty well against some of Europe's best, for Nessler is the equal of any in Europe." . . . He ought to know, he was the Contest Director.



A Mowsey III launching from Switzerland's Jungfrauoch, Sept., 1985. (Photo by Jan Scott)

REPORT TO THE NATIONAL SOARING MUSEUM, ELMIRA, NY

1] Reenactment of the First International Glider Camp at the Jungfrauoch, Switzerland (2-Sep-85)

2] Representing the NSM with a paper and a slide talk at LUPO '85 (International Stamp Show) in Lucerne, Switzerland. (6 and 7-Sep-85)

by Simine Short

We arrived in Zurich on 2-Sep-85 and picked up the rental car. This seemed to be the most convenient way of travelling, especially with all the luggage. Also, the places we intended to visit were not the easiest to reach by train.

The weather report predicted a beautiful day for Monday, September 2. But all we knew was the fact that September 2, 1985 was "Press Day" at the Jungfrauoch. All the major flying activities were supposed to happen on this day. But this is all we knew after talking with Jan Scott from the Vintage Sailplane Association, (and Vice President of the National Soaring Museum).

After a good night's sleep, we got an early start. Traffic in down-town Zurich was manageable and soon we were on the highway to Berne. It seemed like a long way around, but it was the fastest way to go. After just two hours we arrived at the railroad station Interlaken-Ost where the train was to leave for the Jungfrauoch. Here, no one knew anything about the glider camp. We finally did get the address of the main office, drove there and again tried to find out some details. We were lucky, one of the secretaries was going to help, though not very willingly. She gave us the needed information. After taking the name and address of the NSM she gave us one complimentary ticket. The second ticket we had to buy. This was better than nothing.

Now we had to hurry, the next train was going to leave at 10:40 AM. If we missed this one, we would have to wait for one hour. Quickly, the car was parked, we pulled out some warm clothes and ran to the station. It was kind of exciting to go through the forest up the mountains to the first stop. In Lauterbach we had to change trains; the mountain was getting

steeper, a cog wheel was now needed.

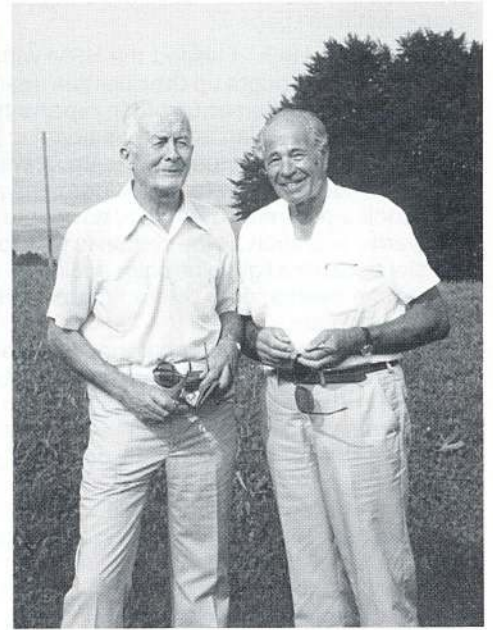
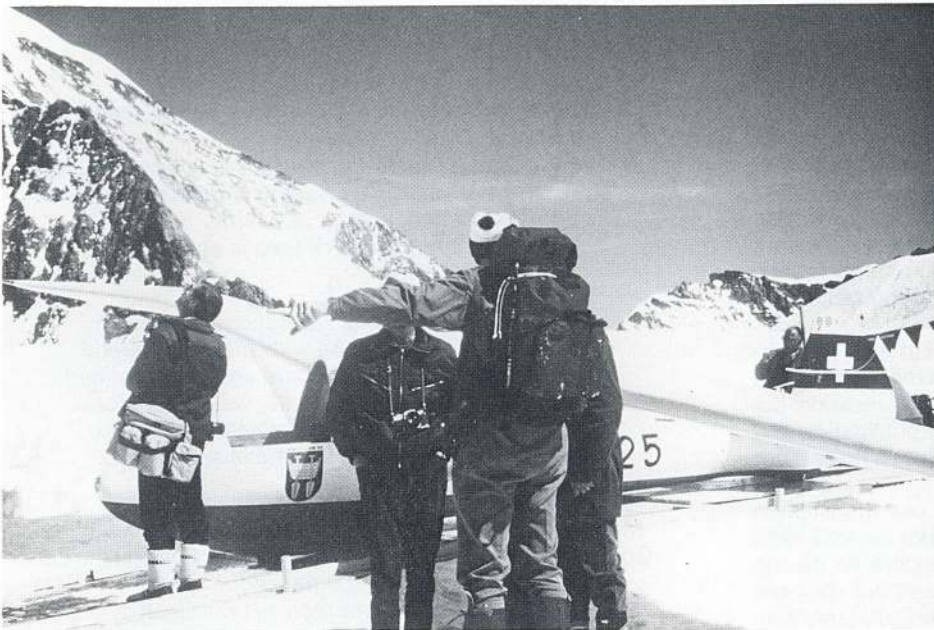
The weather was just beautiful, a bright blue sky. The windows in the train were open when we suddenly heard the humming noise of a helicopter lifting another sailplane in a specially designed cradle up to the Jungfrauoch plateau, to an altitude of about 13,500 ft. This was not the way they did it in 1935!

At the Eigergletscher we changed trains for the last time. In 1935, the gliders had to be pulled up on a sled from here. The railroad goes through a narrow tunnel to the final station. This railroad, by the way, was built in 1897, a major technological achievement for those days, and it is still very impressive.

At the Jungfrauoch Station one can find the highest altitude post office in the world. We had to buy stamps and get our cards franked and cancelled. Then we were ready for whatever might come.

We had to climb a bit more inside the mountain and suddenly we were standing on the glacier. It was white and bright and just breathtaking. We walked out further, very carefully, and saw the Glider Camp. Jim and I just looked at each other and at our feet, and started wondering. To get to the camp we had to walk along a rope down a steep hill and up again. Jim was wearing leather walking shoes, I was wearing boat shoes.

Someone had closed off the small path to the Glider Camp and a big sign read: "Do Not Trespass". But we had to get there! There was a guard making sure that no one would go through. We approached him. First answer: "NO". I tried to bargain with him and told him that we came from the U.S.A., especially for this event. I guess he believed us, and told us to go very carefully (after he also looked at our shoes). Crazy Americans.



So, we did; people were yelling at us from above. They did not agree with us walking down there. This brought the attention of some of the Glider Camp personnel, who told us very strongly to get back. Needless to say, now we were so close, we were not about to do so! He spoke a very fast Swiss German which I had some trouble understanding, and I repeated my statement in high German and hoped for the best. I mentioned the names of the only two people I knew. However, I was not sure at all, if they would know who we are. But it helped, he finally let us through.

It was quite a set-up. There were five sailplanes, all assembled, ready to go. There was a band, including a piano and a bass cello. They were playing like mad, and it sounded really neat. But best of all, they had just opened the line for a catered lunch. We were hungry. I finally found the P.R. man of the Jungfraubahn organization, Mr. Wenger. He could remember only vaguely who I was. But he suggested that we get in line for food also before it was all gone! They had everything there from chicken, beef, cold cuts, salads, coffee, tea, and glow-vine. It was really something.

By now we started looking around if there is possibly someone we might know. Jim met right away Christopher Wills. He was happy to have someone to speak English with. He told us right away that he did not understand why Jan Scott is not up yet though he was scheduled to be launched.

Then Jim recognized NSM member Ary Celen and his wife Riet from the Netherlands. They are publishing a small magazine called "Planeur," both are very interested in aviation. But Ary also collects Glider Mail. No more comments necessary.

Suddenly, the atmosphere did get tense and quiet. One could hear only the slushing sound of a sailplane being pulled through the snow. A Spalinger "S-19" was prepared for launch. Imagine a wooden ramp, not much wider than the sailplane fuselage with snow piled on lightly to make the take-off a bit slipperier. A winch with a rope was attached to the tail section of the glider, a shock cord consisting of three sets of ropes was attached to the hook. Everything turned quiet, really quiet. Everybody held their breath and checked for the white flag and the signal for take off.

Werner Roth, pilot of the "S-19", had received the shock cord training, just like all other participants of this glider camp at the Thun airport. But there was a definite difference between being launched on a flat field, and here at the Jungfraujoch. There was nothing at the end of the ramp, just a very deep drop off the glacier. And far down underneath the clouds was Interlaken. Across the mountains was the Thun airport, the destination of every flight.

Above left: 1938 Spalinger S-19, Werner Roth, pilot, on the 120 foot runway at Jungfraujoch, September, 1985. (Photo by Jan Scott)

Above right: Peter Riedel, left, and Willy Baur both of whom flew off the Jungfraujoch in 1935, and again during the 1985 meet. (photo: August 1985, Scheidegg Zurcher Oberland, by W. Baur)

After what seemed almost an eternity, the signal was given for take-off. The sailplane was sliding with a speed of about 45 mph over the wooden ramp into the clear blue air. The sailplane looked so graceful and beautiful and so bright. It was very spectacular.

The next sailplane was being readied. Everyone was chatting again; we met Peter Riedel who was launched in 1935 from here. He had his flight already a few days ago and enjoyed it tremendously.

Another old-time soaring pioneer was Willy Baur. He carried "official glider mail" in 1935 from the Jungfraujoch to Zollbrück. He was scheduled to fly again, fifty years later. His first launch in the Ka 2 "Bazillus" was not a good one. And he was scheduled for another launch later on.

The next sailplane to be launched was a Spalinger "S-18". Again the same tension. It seemed that everyone stopped breathing. Again a beautiful launch.

The third sailplane, a "Ka 8", was piloted by Martha Brochmann, a young woman working for Swissair. She probably made the best take-off. It was very exciting and spectacular.

The last take-off was then again the heavy "Bazillus" with Willy Baur. Lots of snow was now piled on the ramp. The wind had picked up a bit more from the side and from behind. It was probably not an ideal take-off condition. Everyone was now full of tension, it was the last glider to take off. The wind increased and stopped at random. But then suddenly it was quiet. The take-off command was given, and just as Willy Baur took off from the ramp the wind starting blowing again, pushing the sailplane down. He stopped about 50 ft. ahead of the drop-off without doing any damage. Everyone still present really wished that he could have been launched. But it was not to happen.

By now it was after 4 PM. The sun was starting to go down. It was getting a bit chilly. Both of us suddenly realized that we had cold feet. We headed back through the slushy ice to the railroad station. While waiting there, Peter Selinger walked by,

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and said hello. He had visited the NSM with Jan Scott some-time ago. That brought up the question again, what happened to Jan? Why was he not up? (Jan reports that his "flight was simply cancelled.") Jan left for his home in Norway the same day. The weather was turning bad anyways, therefore chances to continue flying were just about zero.

We took a different route back down into the valley. Here it was warm, and soon all the coldness was forgotten. The dark blue sky became a light blue color again. We constantly looked back to the overhanging cliff, up there at the Jungfrauoch. It was like a dream.

We decided to have dinner at the restaurant at the Thun Airport where everyone was scheduled to meet in the evening. We stopped in the office of the Jungfraubahn Organization the next morning and requested some photos for publication and possibly a slide or two for my talk on Friday. But so far, we got very little.

Soon it started to rain. We still wanted to see the Bachtel mountain near Hinwil where they staged a glider meet in 1930 which included three mail flights. After considerable driving around we did find an airport, however, this was not the right one. Up the mountain we went again when Jim suddenly saw another "Do Not Enter" sign. This belonged to the flying field of the model glider group, Hinwil. Well it was Tuesday, foggy, raining etc., we neglected to see the sign. A few days later, we heard that this was the right field. In 1930, the longest flight was almost 7 miles. Fritz Muller set a new Swiss distance and duration record with his flight to Auslikon. It might sound strange, this hill could be anywhere, Harris Hill (Rhodes Farm), the Wasserkuppe, they all seem to look alike. A gentle grassy slope, nothing dangerous in sight, just in case things are not going the way they should.

On Wednesday afternoon, we drove to Lucerne, the stamp exhibit "Glider Mail 1923 - 1946" had to be set-up.

Thursday was opening ceremony with all the important people.

And then came Friday. I was a bit nervous. It was the first time that I had to give the talk at an international philatelic event. Also there was a question/discussion concerning which language to use, English or German. I preferred English, but we were in Switzerland. Here one speaks German . . . My attitude was, let us wait and see. Jim got cleared on how to run the projector, and how to dim the lights in this very fancy auditorium. The walls were painted as a mural by Hans Erni, famous Swiss Artist and stamp designer (!) showing all sorts of flying gods. It was very impressive.

After a very nice introduction by the President of F.I.S.A., I asked who would prefer to hear the talk in English or in German. With my luck, it was 50/50. So, I did it. Jim turned off the lights and up we went. No problems. The following 50 minutes went by so fast. And there were not too many people leaving. Jim counted 40 people. The man following me talked about British Air Mail. He also did it in two languages.

I was glad it was over. But one of the men sitting in the auditorium was Jakob Spalinger, designer of the "S" sailplanes, and also pilot of one of the glider mail flights in 1930. We took him out to lunch later, and he gave us a tour through "his" transportation museum. It was really nice.

The next morning was the F.I.S.A. congress where I was asked to participate. And then in the afternoon the "Pioneer Aviator Honoring". It was a large crowd. Afterwards, we also met and talked with the president of the Swiss Vintage Glider Association.

All the NSM brochures were now gone, and we hope that at least 50% of the people did not throw them away. Who knows, maybe you will hear from people next year that they got the brochure in Switzerland.

Simine Short
Aerophilatelic Coordinator — NSM

FRIGATES

I

Two hundred years ago, I sat above the beach
And saw a growing sail with the wind behind.
It was a graceful frigate, so delicate and lacy defined.
It closely passed me by, nearly within my reach.
From whence it came or whither it went,
I shall not know till time is spent.

II

Again today, with joy I sat above the beach
And saw a winged shape with the wind behind.
It was a frigate bird, so delicate and lacy defined.
It closely passed me by, nearly within my reach.
From whence it came or whither it went,
I shall not know till time is spent.

III

Man made the ship a thing of beauty, but it did not last.
God made the bird a thing of beauty, which through the eons
has safely passed.

But now I hope that man will not destroy
The bird that soars so high with flights of joy.

G. Bradford, October, 1985

ON THE COVER:

The National Soaring Museum's American Great Bald Eagle, symbol of power, endurance and soaring prowess, stands vigil over the lobby entrance. Almost without exception, visiting children stare at the great bird and reflexively ask two questions; one voiced the other unspoken. "Is it real?" This is followed by an accusing glance that asks, "Why did you kill it?" We didn't kill it, of course.

Our Bald Eagle is an exact replica, made by Majestic Animal Reproductions, and donated to the Museum by Dr. & Mrs. William C. Feldbaumer, of Warrington, PA. Dr. Feldbaumer is a former Museum Trustee.

The lobby sentinel is a life-like, life-sized reproduction that has more than 2,000 hand cut and dyed feathers, imported from all over the world. Each feather was individually glued and sewn onto a pattern which was glued to a high density polyurethane body. The Eagle was then mounted on an imitation rock.

Its dimensions are; Wingspan, 50 inches; Wingtip to base, 44 inches; and beak to tail 31 inches.

NSM is a publication of the National Soaring Museum, Harris Hill, RD3, Elmira, New York 14903. Phone (607) 734-3128. 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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