



Summer
2014

NSM NEWS

The National Soaring Museum preserves and presents the heritage of motorless flight, and promotes through education, a greater knowledge of soaring, aeronautics, and related physical sciences for everyone.

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Closed Thanksgiving, Christmas Eve and Day, and New Years Eve and Day

NSM News is a quarterly publication by the National Soaring Museum for all Members and Friends of the Museum.

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Education Services Coordinator Kaye Norton and Col. Eileen Collins at the Eileen Collins Aerospace Camp. Photo courtesy of Mikki Norton.

“Fantastic! So many beautiful machines!”
- Daniel of Flanders, NJ

22nd Annual Community Soaring Day

More than 650 visitors gathered at the National Soaring Museum for the annual Community Soaring Day on September 13. Every year, the Museum offers free admission to its visitors and brings in local organizations from across the Southern Tier to enhance the experience.

Throughout the day, children were entertained by the appearance of the Grinch and the Cat in the Hat and won prizes for answering Dr. Seuss trivia questions correctly. Volunteers from the Family Reading Partnership of Chemung Valley read stories out loud and collected 150 donated books. Giggly Girls helped brighten up the rainy day with colorful face painting, as did magician Tim Cleary with imaginative balloon animals. Dr. Phillip Chaing and Sharon Chaing returned for their tenth Community Soaring Day to help guests craft paper airplanes.

There was plenty to see and do for guests of all ages. With the assistance of volunteers from the Harris Hill Soaring Corp., visitors enjoyed flying, and occasionally crashing, on flight simulators.



The Cat in the Hat and The Grinch meet Craig Flint and Kellie Meyer of WENY-TV.



Tanya Lewis of Hawk Creek Wildlife Center with a golden eagle. Photo courtesy of Bob Norton.

The N-Track Train Club displayed their models, and the Piecemaker Quilters of Elmira sold raffle tickets for a beautiful homemade quilt. Other organizations present included WENY-TV, the Big Flats Fire Department, and Stoney Acres Alpacas. Outside, the Finger Lakes Military Vehicle Preservation Society exhibited World War II era jeeps and a general's car. Hawk Creek Wildlife Center of Buffalo, NY, brought several of their birds of prey for two exciting and educational presentations in the afternoon.

Community Soaring Day is a true family event that reminds visitors of the importance of Harris Hill and the National Soaring Museum.

Events at the National Soaring Museum will continue through the winter. Another family event, Cookie Time with Mrs. Claus will return on December 7, in time for Christmas. Children are invited to decorate cookies with Santa and Mrs. Claus. On February 21, the museum will offer an afternoon of wine tasting with A Soaring Taste of Wine and Chocolate. ■

Summer Education Wrap-Up

Summer may be over, but the NSM's education programs have kept us busy. The Eileen Collins Aerospace Camp began its eighteenth year this July. The camp was kicked off to a great start with a visit from Col. Eileen Collins herself. On Monday morning, she visited camp to speak with the students. She told the story of how she became an astronaut and answered their questions about what it was like to live and work in space. The camp ran for two weeks, one for young men and one for young women. For many campers, the highlight of camp was their aviation experiences. Each student soared in a glider and flew over Painted Post in a Cessna. Kate Matthews, returning to camp for her fourth year, said, "I like riding a glider because I feel like an eagle in the sky. The trips to the museums are always fun, but the glider rides are my favorite part."

The campers enjoyed a number of trips and museum visits, returning to the Challenger Learning Center in Rochester, NY, the Glenn H. Curtiss Museum in Hammondsport, NY, and the Eileen Collins Observatory at Corning Community College. When they weren't on the road or in the air, the campers kept busy building and launching rockets, testing their piloting skills on flight simulators, and building kites and wing ribs, among other activities.



Col. Eileen Collins visited on the first day of camp to talk about life in space.



Campers Lewis Wightman and Braydon Sinclair stargaze at the Eileen Collins Observatory in Corning.

For the first time, students attempted to bring planes safely to their destinations using pre-algebra with "Sector 33", an air traffic control simulator designed by NASA. Of course, the most exciting addition to camp this year was the Makerbot Replicator 2, the Museum's 3D printer. Students learned how to use simple 3D software to design their own objects, and then printed them using the Makerbot. They printed dice, houses, medallions, and even small gliders of their own to take home.

After the Eileen Collins Aerospace Camp drew to a close, the National Soaring Museum once again partnered with the Greater Southern Tier Board of Cooperative Educational Services (GST BOCES) to offer "An Introduction to Summer Soaring" as part of the Summer of Innovation. During the Summer of Innovation, organizations across the Southern Tier host summer academies to encourage youth to become involved in the fields of science, technology, engineering and mathematics, otherwise known as "STEM".

(...continued on page 6)

75th Schweizer Anniversary



The Schweizer Family

December of this year officially marks the 75th anniversary of the founding of Schweizer Aircraft Corporation. The founding Schweizer Brothers' commitment to soaring led them to build the most important American business in the sport, and to become leaders of the Elmira community.

Owing much to Ernie, Paul and Bill, as well as their families, the National Soaring Museum joined with the Harris Hill Soaring Corporation and the legacy company of Schweizer Aircraft, K&L Soaring, to commemorate the founding of the company with a three-day celebration in late June. It was our way of once again returning the spotlight to the work the three brothers have done for our sport and our community.

On Thursday evening, June 26, more than 100 business and community leaders gathered in the National Soaring Museum Moore's Community Room for a catered banquet highlighted by comments and memories from Bill Schweizer, who at 96 is the last of the brothers remaining. Three of their children, Stuart, Paul H., and Les Schweizer, led by Mistress of Ceremonies Bonnie Schweizer, Les' wife, spoke as well. Several members of the extended Schweizer family traveled to Elmira to attend.

Phil Palmesano, a member of the New York State Assembly representing a part of Chemung County, read a resolution that had been passed by both houses of the New York State Legislature in honor of the event.

In part, the resolution reads:

WHEREAS, It is with great pleasure that this Legislative Body acknowledges the Schweizer Aircraft Corporation's accomplishments, recognizes its many contributions to the local and State economies, and extends its highest commendation to the corporation and its employees, fully confident that, in its future, it will enjoy the same success which has so characterized its past; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED, That this Legislative Body pause in its deliberations to commemorate the 75th Anniversary of the establishment of the Schweizer Aircraft Corporation in Chemung County;

The next day, about 250 people, many of them former employees of Schweizer Aircraft, gathered at the Harris Hill Youth Camp for an evening picnic. The picnic was sponsored by the United Auto Workers, the bargaining unit that had represented the Schweizer Aircraft Corporation's assembly workers. Bill and other members of the family attended. K & L Soaring hosted a reception the following night in Cayuta, NY, where they operate their business repairing and renovating Schweizer gliders and making parts.

(...continued on page 6)

International Vintage Sailplane Meet 2016



IVSM 2016 Poster

Over the summer, we announced that we are starting to plan the 2016 International Vintage Sailplane Meet under the chairmanship of Jim Short and the co-sponsorship of the Vintage Sailplane Association, Harris Hill Soaring Corporation, and the Museum. The IVSM will be held at Harris Hill from July 9 to July 16, 2016, in what we intend to be a long series of quadrennial celebrations of vintage sailplanes. Already, interest levels are rising in our community, nationally and internationally, inspiring us to dream large dreams of several or many pilots from overseas visiting the "Soaring Capital of America". As always, our aim is to show more people, particularly young people, our excellent sport and its history. There are twenty-two months ahead of us before the event itself, yet we know that twenty-two months is no great surplus of time and that we will be busy every week of the way.

At the end of October, a meeting for local business leaders will be held at the Elmira Country Club, a venue not unfamiliar with gliders and their pilots.

Jim Short, the chairman of IVSM, and Jan van den Blink, pilot, former secretary-treasurer and trustee to the Museum, a leader of our local business community will lead the meeting. Together, they will tell other business leaders what the IVSM is all about and how supporting it will benefit our community. Our plan is to organize these leaders into a committee of welcome for the pilots invited to travel great distances from their overseas homes to Elmira—in other words, to help make it easy for them to take these long trips.

We will, of course, ask them to give money to the effort, not only in gifts but in advertising campaigns, and will ask them to urge their employees and friends to get involved. We want this to be a job the whole Chemung Valley helps to create.

Each newsletter from now on will tell you more about what we are doing. We will, of course, ask you what you think needs to be done to make IVSM-2016 the biggest and best since the first one, held twenty years ago, here atop our Hill. ■



Bill Schweizer at IVSM 2012

Education Wrap-Up



A camper prepares for his sailplane ride.

(...continued from page 3)

The Introduction to Summer Soaring was one such academy which provided students with a unique opportunity to learn about aviation with hands-on projects. This year, every slot in the program was filled by enthusiastic students from eight to twelve years old. Favorite activities included building and testing model gliders made from a variety of materials and meteorology experiments. The week was highlighted by the sailplane rides every student got to take.

Come late summer we always look back with thanks to those people and groups who gave so generously to support campers who would not be able to take part without a gift of a scholarship. This year, we thank:

Eileen Collins
Peter and Joyce Daniel
Chemung County Sunrise Rotary
Elmira Rotary Club
Elmira Savings Bank
Hardinge/ Anderson-Evans Foundation
Horseheads Women's Club
Kiwanis Kidettes
Women Soaring Pilots Association, and the
Zonta Club of Elmira

The only danger in saying "thanks" this way is that we may have forgotten to list someone. If we have we're sorry and if you will let us know we will fix it next time. ■

Schweizer Homecoming

(...continued from page 4)

For the Museum and the community, a highlight of this commemoration was the restoration to its intended motion of Ernie Schweizer's sculpture of soaring birds located on a Riverside Park in downtown Elmira. The 30-foot tall sculpture had stopped rotating some time ago and had been obscured by the growth of branches from the neighboring pines. With financial support from the Elmira Rotary Club and Bill Schweizer, the City of Elmira trimmed the branches and removed an encroaching tree. New parts were also purchased for the mechanism that drives the sculpture's revolving motion ("thermalling") and restored it to operation, with quite a bit of attention from the local news media.

In the end the event returned some minor financial benefit to the museum itself, but also testified to the community's respect from one of the greatest names in its manufacturing history. ■



The Schweizer Sculpture

Save the Date! Upcoming Events at the National Soaring Museum

Cookie Time with Mrs. Claus

December 4

A Soaring Taste of Wine and
Chocolate

February 21

Piecemaker Quilters Quilt Show

April 24 - 26

Community Soaring Luncheon

May 1

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