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Cover photo: *Long Beach Telegram* supplement photo of a Schweizer 2-22 (top) and 1-23 (bottom) taken over Torrey Pines, CA; probably 1950s. NSM Archive.



Cornell Aero Club float, Spring Day, 1910. NSM Archive.

John Byrd, Leonard Niemi and Gunter Voltz Inducted into U.S. Soaring Hall of Fame

In existence since 1954, the United States Soaring Hall of Fame annually recognizes individuals who "achieve in a noteworthy manner in soaring or who have made noteworthy contributions to the sport of soaring." John Byrd of Delray Beach, Florida, Gunter Voltz of Whitefish Bay, Wisconsin and the historical selectee, the late Leonard Niemi of Greenville, South Carolina, now share the half-century-old honor. Induction ceremonies were held last February following a reception and banquet at the Ontario, California, Doubletree Inn.

After welcoming attendees, NSM President Bob Gaines turned to Museum director Peter Smith for introductions. Smith called on Burt Compton to speak on behalf of John MacIntosh Byrd, who was unable to attend.

JOHN MACINTOSH BYRD



*John MacIntosh
Byrd circa 1975*

"We called him Johnny Mac," Compton said. "He was a wood shop teacher and while recovering from his various back problems, he built airplane models from old 1930 Air Progress magazines, then flew them." Compton said that Johnny Mac had been on many US world competition teams as a pilot "and if he wasn't a pilot that year he would go crew for someone else, like Ben Greene."

Among the many Johnny Mac stories that abound, Compton mentioned this one: In the early spring of the year soaring contests are held at Chester, South Carolina. John was a schoolteacher and every year he would tell the school principal that his grandmother had passed away and he needed a few days off. Then he would go up to Chester and fly in the contest. This went on for a few years until finally the principal called him in and asked, "Byrd, how come you have five different grandmothers and they all consistently expire in the springtime?" John got money for these contests by building sailplane trailers for people. "He was always there to lend a helping hand." Ken Sorenson read an acceptance letter from Byrd. In it he expressed thanks for the Hall of Fame honor and wrote, "Thinking back on my soaring adventures, the most meaningful memories for me are the people that I have met, admired, respected and know as friends." He said

that 40 years ago with his first lesson, he knew that he had begun a sport that would be a life-long influence. Byrd discovered the joy of crewing for fellow pilots in the 1970 World Championships while working with Thor Johanssen. "Learning at that level prepared me in an indefinable way for my world team experiences. I thank them all... Klaus Holighaus, Ben [Greene], Eric [Mozer], Kilo Mike [Ken Sorenson], John Brittingham, Paul Bikle, and Jim Payne," he said. He extended deepest thanks to wife Ann and sons John and Bill.

LEONARD NIEMI



Leonard Niemi (left) and George Coder work on fitting the prototype Sisu canopy. Terry White, NSM Archive.

NSM Director Peter Smith said that there were those who knew Len Niemi better and longer than he did. "But no one knew him earlier. That fact might be more interesting and informative if only my acquaintance with him didn't predate my conscious memory. I was a toddler when Len was one of several young soaring enthusiasts who hung around my parents' home." (His father was Stan Smith, soaring champion of the 1930-50s, sailplane designer/builder, a 1957 Hall of Famer and aeronautical engineer.)

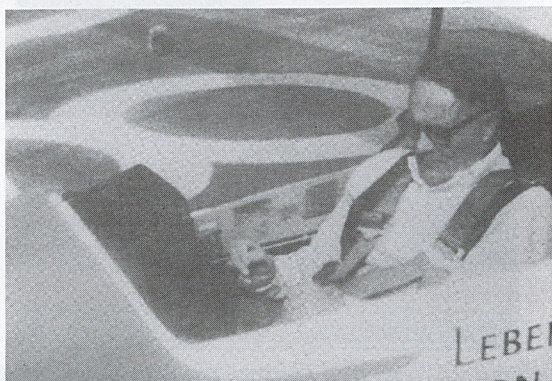
He said that there is a Smith family tale that Peter once got his head caught in a picket fence and that Len got him out without injuring his ears. "Inasmuch as I've spent most of my life in the music business, rescuing my ears was not nothing," Smith quipped. When Peter spoke to Len's daughter recently, she said that she had heard the same story too, and there may be some truth to it.

The NSM Director traced the career of Len Niemi from his days at Curtiss Aircraft and Bell Aircraft where Stan Smith was an engineer, to his designing and building the performance breakthrough Sisu sailplane. For the full story of the Sisu, attendees were urged to read last year's Barnaby Lecture by Russell Lee, Curator of Sports Aviation at the National Air and Space Museum. It appeared in the most recent National Soaring Museum Historical Journal, mailed

to NSM members and available to new members on request. Among Niemi's other designs are a powered sailplane and several formula racers. Around 1980 he worked with A.J. Smith (no relation) on a power plane that dominated the speed/efficiency class at Oshkosh for six years. He even built a miniature railroad that he operated as home entertainment. "Along with Dick Johnson's RJ-5, the Sisu represents the culmination of American high-performance laminar-flow design," Peter Smith said, adding that "the introduction of composite materials made it possible for sailplane performance to be further improved."

Smith said that Niemi's election to the U.S. Soaring Hall of Fame was long overdue, and added, "I'm one of many people, including members of his family with whom I've had the pleasure of speaking recently, who are delighted to finally see him receive the recognition he is due."

GUNTER VOLTZ



Gunter Voltz at the World Gliding Championships, 1982. Photo by Gottfried Voltz.

Fred Voltz said that it was his great pleasure to intro-

duce his father to the U.S. Soaring Hall of Fame. He found it incredible that Gunter is still flying gliders and instructing at 89 years of age. "You may not be as good as you once were, but you're just as enthusiastic." He added that Voltz has spent a lifetime trying to interest other people in the sport of soaring. "It's what he's done for the rest of us for which he's being recognized tonight," he said.

During his career Voltz has soloed over 400 students and issued more than 700 "A", "B" and "C" badges as well as numerous Bronze pins. He is an SSA instructor and has been an FAA Aviation Safety Counselor for the last 25 years.

Voltz is a life member of the Soaring Society of America, and spent many years as SSA State Governor for Wisconsin. As an SSA director, he achieved top sales for memberships in the US. In 1969, he received the SSA Certificate of Appreciation for his dedicated work with youth in soaring.

Over the years, Voltz has owned three towplanes and at least 10 sailplanes. He has logged well over 6,000 soaring hours and held several Wisconsin state records. Voltz organized and managed numerous regional and local soaring contests, including the Junior Nationals. He founded and was president of five soaring clubs.

While serving on the SSA Youth Committee, to which he was appointed in 1962, the percentage of SSA youth members reached an all-time high. In the 1960s and well into the '70s, Voltz and his partners ran an Air Explorer Post that produced a remarkable number of young glider pilots and encouraged them to stretch their cross-country wings to win advanced soaring badges. Voltz still teaches soaring, fulfilling what he believes is the high calling to spread the gift of soaring to youth. Gunter Voltz said that he was very honored to be selected to the US Soaring Hall of Fame.



Left to right: Dick Johnson (1956), Sterling Starr (1979), Ray Gimmey (2000), Carl Herold (1996), Bertha Ryan (1972), Hannes Linke (1998), Paul MacCready (1954), Bernald Smith (1984), Gunter Voltz (2004), Bob Semans (2003), E. Gene Hammond (1986), Henry Combs (1988), George Applebay (1999). Photo by Peter Smith.

2005 Community Soaring Luncheon Opens the National Soaring Museum's Second Annual Soaring History Symposium, May 13 & 14

Reflecting on 75 years of soaring in the county, Chemung County Historian J. Arthur Kieffer was the keynote speaker at the National Soaring Museum's annual Community Soaring Luncheon, held during the museum's Second Annual Soaring History Symposium May 13-14.

Introduced by NSM Director Peter Smith, Kieffer spoke on the relationship between Chemung County and the soaring community, a partnership which led to Elmira's designation as the Soaring Capital of America. About 120 people attended the luncheon held annually as a way of thanking area residents for their ongoing efforts and support.

Kieffer, former County Superintendent of Buildings and Grounds, focused on early efforts of the Chemung County Chamber of Commerce in developing the Elmira area as the early mecca of soaring. Then known as the Association of Commerce, the organization was an outgrowth of several economic and development groups that brought new business and industry and expanded transportation facilities to the area. "But the Chamber also had a willing ear for new ideas, and soaring in its infancy was one of those interests," Kieffer said.

The county connection goes back to 1898 when business leader Matthias Arnot, with the help of experts, built a glider that became the oldest existing glider in the United States. It was destroyed in January 1977 in a fire that leveled the Harris Hill Administration Building, original quarters for the National Soaring Museum.

With the loss of the building, Museum Trustee and Former Elmira Mayor Edward A. Mooers said, "You can safely say that through its portals passed all those who shaped sailplane progress: champions, designers, builders, meteorologists and military leaders." Among them were Dr. Wolfgang Klemperer, Igor Sikorsky, and Generals "Hap" Arnold and Carl Spaatz.

Kieffer traced the development of soaring from the time that Dr. Klemperer suggested Chemung County for the first organized national glider contest in the United States. The event was held September 21 to October 5, 1930, with Caton Avenue Airport as the base of operations. South Mountain and East Hill were launching sites.

Warren Eaton, a decorated World War I pilot and Franklin K. Iszard, a Chamber member who chaired the Aeronautical Committee, were instrumental in developing plans for the first meet. Iszard placed third in the contest.

Kieffer also praised members of the Board of Su-



Chemung County Historian J. Arthur Kieffer speaks at the Community Soaring Luncheon.

pervisors, calling them "men of great vision," who in the depths of the Depression pushed ahead to develop roads to the Harris Hill Park and the new airport in Big Flats. In 1934 Warren Eaton obtained leases for a new glider-launching site that is now Harris Hill. "From this point on, with the help of the WPA (Works Progress Administration) the County was in the recreation and gliding business," he said.

The Aviation Ground School was established in 1936 by Earl R. Southee, followed by the development of the Elmira Area Soaring Corporation in 1937. The EASC (now the Harris Hill Soaring Corporation) has remained active, supplying gliders for training and use by members, and becoming a tourist attraction by providing rides for the public and educational programs.

In 1939, attorney Robert McDowell invited the Schweizer brothers to relocate and build sailplanes in Elmira. Starting in the old knitting mill in Elmira Heights, the company was moved in 1943 to its present location adjacent to the Elmira-Corning Regional Airport. It now builds helicopters and reconnaissance aircraft.

At the 1941 National Meet, Gen. Arnold visited to announce that the Army Air Corps would use Harris Hill and the Elmira flight school for glider pilot training. Post-war growth brought expansion of the airfield and a widely developed recreational area that included a new outing center, picnic areas, a golf course and a new water system. The National Soaring Museum, placed in the former Merrill house after the loss of the administration building, was opened in its new building in 1978.

Kieffer praised the many people involved in the development of Harris Hill, particularly Paul A. Schweizer. "The Museum is the result of his dedication and his love of soaring. Because of him, future generations will never lose the history of gliding and soaring," Kieffer said.

The Howard Blossom Story

Jack Laister

Following the Community Soaring Luncheon, attention was focused on the Museum's "C" Hall that was to be renamed and dedicated to the memory of Howard C. Blossom (1909-1997). Trailblazing sailplane builder and war-time cargo glider manufacturer Jack Laister sent his regrets that he was unable to attend, but wrote the following tribute to his longtime friend:

"Howard first tasted motorless flight in the early thirties when he was a student at California Tech in Pasadena. He had a ride in a two-place glider down the gradually sloping hills just north of the Palos Verde cliffs along the Pacific Ocean in Southern California.

"Mr. Blossom was a very gracious and considerate man but if needed he had a firm hand in a velvet glove. He was a schoolteacher at a prestigious school in St Louis before WWII and returned to teach at that school after the war.

"I first heard of Howard when he and Parker Leonard wrote to me in the late thirties about purchasing a copy of the 'Yankee Doodle,' with a larger cockpit. They were both big men and needed such. They had been flying a primary glider on floats off Cape Cod Bay. Now they were ready to move ahead. The turbulence of war clouds collided with thoughts about 'Yankee Doodle' and the war clouds won, but only after a new German Wolf ended up at Number One Fordice Lane, the Blossom home in Ladue, Missouri.

"Next came a call from Howard for persons interested in forming a St. Louis Soaring Association, and for those interested to join him at his home in early

January 1942. I was at this first meeting. The Association was formed and it held together throughout WWII, even without gliders to fly. There existed quite a number of privately owned gliders that the government acquired but none of those gliders met the Army Air Corps requirements for glider pilot training and most of them were subsequently destroyed.

"In October 1941, he joined the Laister-Kauffman Aircraft Company as Chief of Quality Control and Chief of Glider Testing. He was the first to fly the XTG-4 trainer, also the XCG-10 cargo glider, in company with Randall Chapman. The St. Louis Car Company had him test fly their XCG-5. I understand that only his one flight was all that was ever made with that glider when the Air Corps decided not to fly it.

"The St. Louis Soaring Association now operates very actively from their Blossom Glider Airport near Highlands, Illinois. That Association today is on a solid financial condition and is able to invest monies not only to improve their facilities but their net worth and cash position, thanks to Howard Blossom. About six gliders and sailplanes are privately owned. The Association has two tow planes.

"I feel confident that if Howard knew this gallery now existed, he would be extremely happy and appreciative of the NSM. It would be most difficult for him to contain his glee and joy. He would extend many thanks to the management here.

"The Howard C. Blossom Gallery at the National Soaring Museum has now been dedicated ... I wish to thank the National Soaring Museum for this honor they have given me today."



Howard C. Blossom. NSM Archive.

The Philadelphia Glider Council, Inc.

Lewis Hull

"All glider councils in the country can trace their roots to Elmira and Harris Hill," Lewis W. Hull of Southampton, PA, said at the National Soaring Museum's Second Annual Soaring History Symposium, May 13th. "That's certainly true of the Philadelphia Glider Council," said Hull whose sprightly demeanor belies his 88 years.

Hull discovered gliding in 1934, as a student at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology and a member of MIT's glider club. He remembers driving to Elmira in his \$15 Chevrolet, trailing a glider. "We didn't win contests and we didn't get much sleep but we had fun and got lots of training," he said.

He recalled organizing the Philadelphia Glider Council in 1941, at a meeting with Ralph Barnaby and Wally Setz in the boarding house where they were staying. The club was originally incorporated in New Jersey because of the low \$3 fee, then transferred to Pennsylvania. They flew some of the early ships such as Barnaby's Prüfling and a Franklin. "We had a primary that was pretty fragile, called the 'Swoose,' and we made hundreds, if not thousands of flights

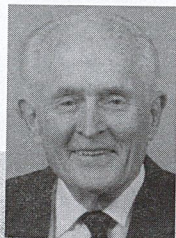
in it,” he said. The club flew at about a dozen different airports and sites, moving as air traffic increased and clubs were having difficulty finding suitable sites. With the advent of WWII, the government closed all airports within 100 miles of the East Coast, including Bucks County Airport, about 30 miles north of Philadelphia.

Hull said they heard that the Pottstown (PA) Snyder Farm where members were flying was up for auction at a sheriff’s sale. They missed the sale but were able to purchase the 125-acre-plus field for \$10,000. The club grew over the years and continued its trips to Elmira. The club now has 110 members, including many 14-and-15 year olds.

Wally Setz, father of Lisa Setz, now a National Soaring Museum Trustee, was the first vice president. Having enlarged the field by 50 or 60 acres, the club does winch launching and has two tow planes. The club used Schweizer sailplanes, then three years ago moved into glass ships with three Grob 103’s for training, as well as two Grob 102’s.

“We are indebted to Elmira on all counts, to the Schweizers and to many other friends of soaring who have helped us along the way,” Hull said.

Right: Lew Hull. Below: Hangar used by the Philadelphia Glider Council. From Soaring, Nov.-Dec. 1944.



Finding and Restoring Vintage Gliders

Bob Gaines

“Where do we find these things? They’re out there,” Gaines said. You could actually see some in his symposium audience ease to the edge of their chairs with anticipation. He mentioned several: Trade-A-Plane (“probably not”), Bungee Cord, web sites, Wings and Wheels, “and from a lot of people like myself.” Jeff Byard (who Gaines said jokingly “won’t sell anything”), Jan Scott who hasn’t anything for sale, but knows a lot of people who do; VGC magazine, whose readers are sometimes those “who want to sell grudgingly,” and Steve Leonard, out in Wichita, Kansas—all good sources. Other leads include sailplane meets where there always seems to be someone who heard about that talismanic glider in a Nebraska hayloft. Vintage sailplaner Jim Stoia is in a buying and selling mode. “Bring your checkbook and

you’ll go home with a glider,” Gaines said.

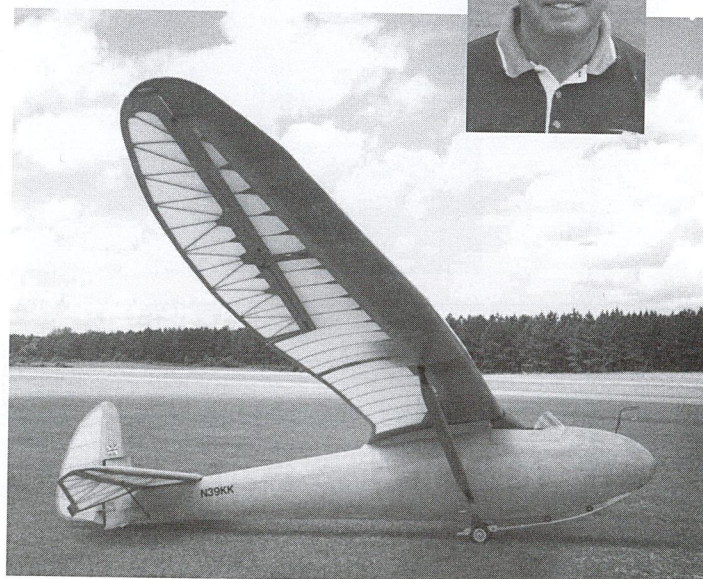
In the parallel universe of vintage sailplanes, it is important to decide on what you want: single seat or two-place. The arch-restorationist counseled, “and if you don’t opt for a two-place, you won’t have very many friends for very long.” If the ship is to be used commercially, it has to be type-certificated. The paper work becomes very complicated, especially if the glider is imported from the UK or Germany. “It’s best to have someone on the ground in Germany. Their inspections are much more serious than ours, and the friend can give you a report.” And to the layman, the stream of printouts and questionnaires, domestic and foreign, seems to propagate from there.

Phase II of Gaines’s talk was on finding parts and restoration. He said that anybody who has built model airplanes should not have a problem. “The only difference between us and a professional is that it’s going to take us twice as long. We have to sit and think about it—a pro doesn’t.”

You need room, possibly more than the length of a garage. The area must be well illuminated, as well as being well ventilated, in order to discharge lacquer and other potentially toxic substances. Gaines said that good parts may be found from magazines like Sport Aviation. He mentioned a German company, Sibert, that stocks spruce. “They speak English, but keep it simple.” He recommended the book, “Restoring Museum Aircraft” by Robert Mikesch for all phases of restoration. Gaines said that Mikesch takes it to a different level than vintage glider restorers do, because he is not trying to make Oskosh-type airplanes.

Gaines discussed many subjects that restorers should be acquainted with and some of the problems that they would run into: techniques of working with various types of woods, seat belts, paint brushes and rollers, paints and lacquers, fabrics, stitching, sanders, cables, tapes and taping.

Right: Bob Gaines. Below: 1939 Slingsby Kirby Kite, restored by Gaines in 2002.



He said that you want to dress the part, so you really need an apron; he suggested going to the Goodwill store where you can buy an old shirt for a buck. You'll be dealing with some nasty and sometimes toxic stuff, so you'll want to be protected.

With his audience mentally in the shop right next to him, Gaines's boffo closing was "How much time does it take to do one of these things? You can figure roughly 1,000 hours for a wooden airplane, and a glass ship, roughly 700-750 hours. It's going to take you at least that much time but look, it's cheaper than a psychiatrist, and you have something to show for it."

The Life and Times of a TG-2

Jeff Byard

Jeff Byard learned all about the design and construction of the TG-2 the hard way: he restored one. Byard, of Atascadero, CA, traced the genesis of a Schweizer-built U.S. Army Air Force-designated TG-2 that he discovered in a pile of junk, half buried in sand for 15 years in the California sun. An airline captain professionally, he found the TG-2 on an overnight stop at Bishop, CA, while flying for a small west coast airline.

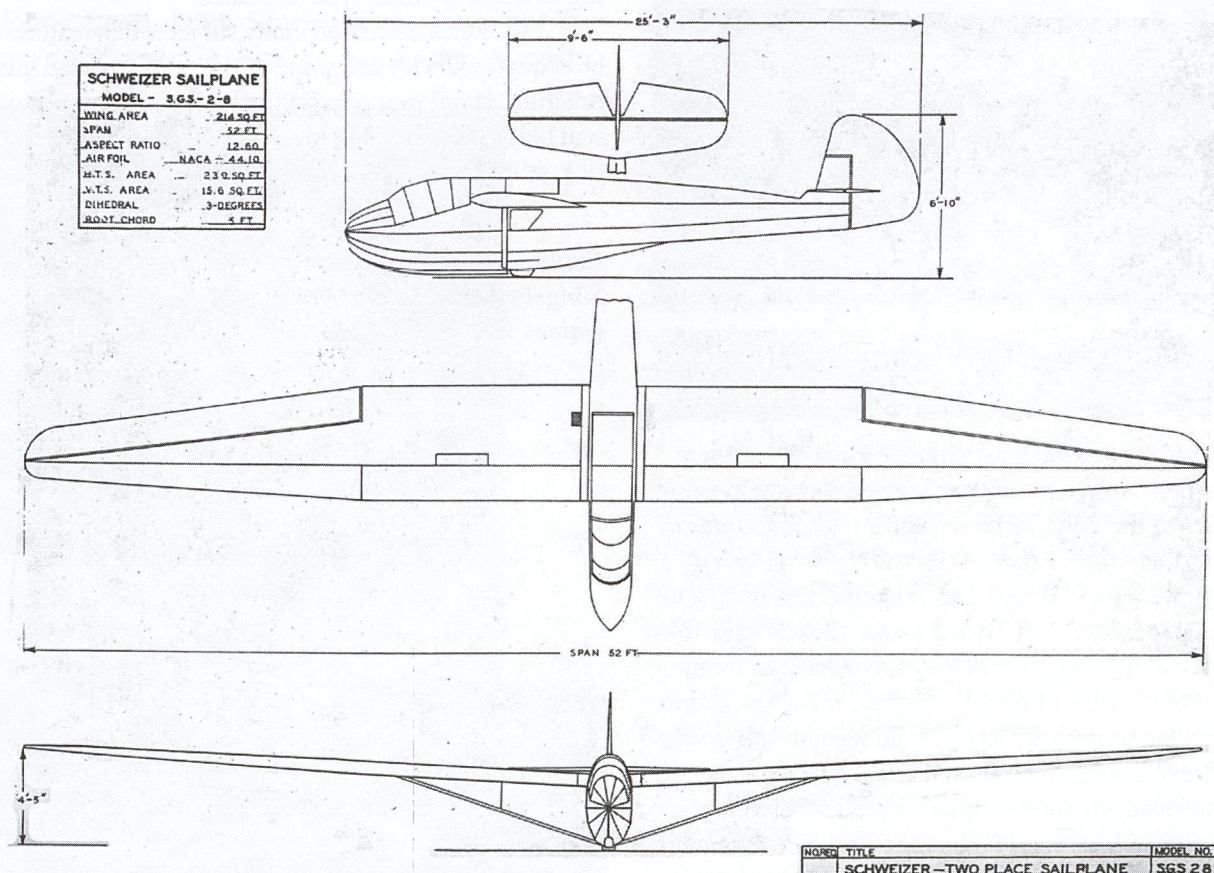
"There it was, on the outskirts of town, surrounded by rusty engine blocks, old truck tires and other junk," said Byard, a National Soaring Museum trustee and former president, and president of the Vintage Sailplane Association.

The TG-2's owner told him he could have it "when you get that thing off my property." Moved to his hangar at San Luis Obispo, CA, the desert-whipped TG-2 #54 became an 8-and-a-half-year restoration project, the veteran aircraft restorer said.

The TG-2 was the World War II version of the Schweizer SGS 2-8, one of the "All-American" designs from the late 1930s. Conceived as a trainer and high performance plane, it was the world's first all-metal factory sailplane. The first 2-8 was built in the Schweizers' Peekskill, NY, barn and delivered in 1938 to the Long Island Metropolitan Airhoppers Glider Club. The second was completed in 1940 for the Soaring Society of America, and the third 2-8 was built for a group of Bell Aircraft employees in Buffalo, NY.

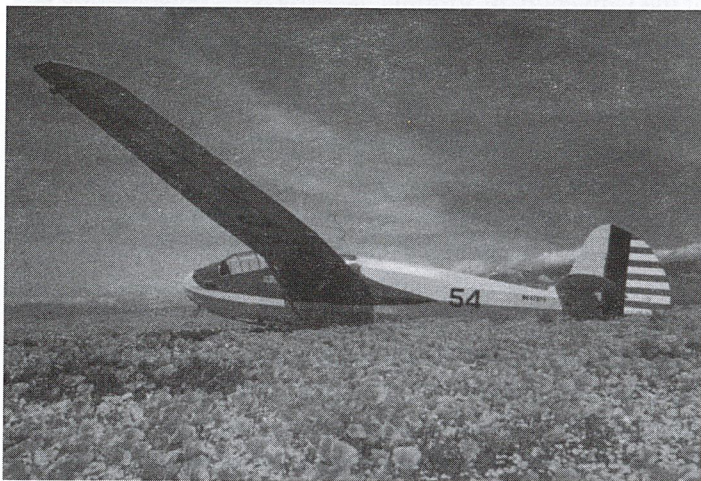
At the urging of the Elmira, NY, Chamber of Commerce, the Schweizers relocated to Elmira Heights and continued construction of the 2-8. The first twelve were assembled for clubs and individuals nationwide. They became immediate record-breakers and competition favorites. At the 10th National Soaring Contest in 1939, Lewin Barringer set both distance and altitude records for two-place sailplanes (6560 feet and 101 miles respectively), then in 1940 soared to an unofficial two-place world record of 14,960 feet.

That same year Robert Stanley and Ernie Schweizer flew one from Elmira 216 miles to Washington, DC. In 1946, Dick Johnson and Bob Sparling used a surplus TG-2 to set a multi-place distance record of 314 miles that stood for the next 20 years.



From Jeff Byard's "The Life and Times of a TG-2."

The 2-8 was used for training at military bases from 1941 until 1943 when it was deemed unsuitable for training assault glider pilots. Then on Dec. 17, 1977, Byard's TG-2 #54 reverted to civilian life when it was purchased by a private owner in Mesa, AZ, for \$512. An accident and reconstruction started it on an odyssey that took it through three owners in Arizona and six more owners in Southern California. By the late 1960's, the TG-2 had accumulated more than 1,400 hours and again needed work. But interest faded and it was left sitting outdoors uncovered on its trailer for the next fifteen years.



Byard's TG-2. NSM Archive.

Byard said when he trundled the glider home, he found rust and corrosion of the metal parts and deterioration of the wooden parts. When the restoration was completed, he estimated that he had put in over 2,000 man-hours. On May 23, 1990, Byard flew #54 on its first flight since it had been taken out of service 23 years earlier.

"All of the vintage aircraft being flown today are living examples of technology frozen in time," Byard said. Flying the TG-2 with its now antiquated flight characteristics will give any modern pilot an appreciation of how far sailplane design has come, he added.

"Even with its lackluster performance and handling, it's still great fun to fly and I've had many unforgettable flights in #54," he said.

The Historical Researcher: Sources, Tools and Craft *Raul Blacksten*

Methods for conducting historical research and avoiding the pitfalls of using incorrect information were outlined by Raul Blacksten of Maywood, CA, in a presentation at the Soaring Museum's Second Annual Soaring History Symposium last May.

Blacksten also read a paper by Norb Wethington of Fremont, OH, on The History of the No. 2 Prototype Pratt Read World War II Training Glider. Wethington was unable to attend.

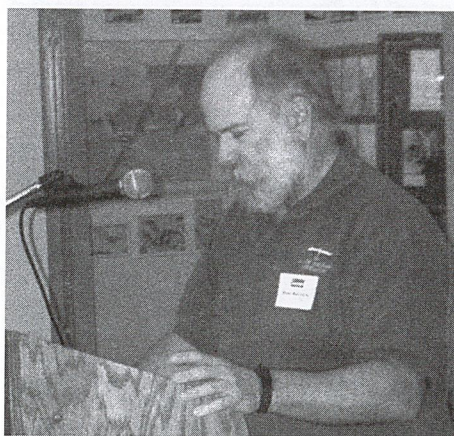
Blacksten said his own research explorations began in the 11th grade when his English teacher assigned a project each semester. They turned out to be "marvelous experiences" that introduced him to a useful research source matrix that can be effectively used by anyone seeking information.

While the advent of personal computers has broadened methods for any search, he said, one question remains constant: "Where the heck do I start?" Historians always start by asking a narrow question. As a hypothetical example, Blacksten used: "What role did the Franklin PS-2 play in the 1930 Nationals?" Before the search, he said it is important to know that you will be looking for two kinds of sources, primary (first hand accounts in newspapers and memoirs) and secondary (second-hand sources such as books, encyclopedias and biographies).

Local city or college libraries, with computerized information, are good starting spots. Check gliders, aviation, soaring and Franklin PS-2, he advised. Next, head for the library's Reference section, the Encyclopedia Britannica and the Reader's Guide to Periodical Literature. He said researchers will want to know who Roswell E. and Wallace Franklin were. Who's Who in America and Who Was Who provide biographical sketches of prominent people.

Researchers will discover more specific books as they proceed, he said. Among the secondary sources are scanning The Book of Gliders by Edward Teale, Sailing the Skies by Malcolm Ross and Wings Like Eagles by Paul Schweizer.

Oral histories can provide some of the best—and worst—information since memories fade and the mind unconsciously alters things, he said. Interviewing people who are still alive and were at the 1930 meet may turn up information not obtainable from any other source, he said, adding that it is paramount that researchers do their backgrounding beforehand.



Blacksten delivers his lecture on the sources, tools and craft of historical research.

The internet is another great source that is "both correct and incorrect," he said, suggesting the site www.newspaperarchive.com. Warning that some sources may be wrong, he stressed, "Verify, verify, verify." He suggested a guide to accuracy would be finding three primary sources that agree on a point. But, he said, always be prepared for surprises that can completely change the direction of your research.

The Story of the Albatross

Paul A. Schweizer, presented by Peter Smith

The first thing that you see when you enter the National Soaring Museum is the Albatross hanging from the trusses of the exhibit hall and facing the lobby. This is the most historic sailplane in the NSM's collection and its position in the museum is justified. The Albatross line of sailplanes and how this Albatross I was obtained for the NSM sailplane collection are interesting stories.

The Albatross I is the outstanding ship of a group of four Bowlus-duPont sailplanes called "Senior Albatrosses." They were designed and built by the Bowlus-duPont Sailplane Company in San Fernando, CA. Some other Bowlus sailplanes were called "Albatross." This was the case with the legendary "paperwing" Bowlus that had the Albatross logo on its rudder. In the late 1930s Bowlus came out with a "Super Albatross," the BS-100, which was a long mid-wing version of the of the "Baby Albatross."

The details and the model numbers, sequence of construction and location of the four "Senior" Albatrosses are as follows:

- 1st – Albatross I 1-S-2000
at the National Soaring Museum
- 2nd – Albatross Dragonfly 2-PS-2000
never restored after crash
- 3rd – Albatross Falcon PS-2100
at the National Air & Space Museum
- 4th – Albatross II 1-S-2100
being restored by the Blacksten Group

William Hawley Bowlus was Chief Instructor of the training division at the Curtiss-Wright Technical Institute in Glendale, CA. This followed many pioneering years in aircraft and sailplane designing and manufacturing, including working on Lindbergh's "Spirit of St. Louis." He had just returned from the East where he had worked on some soaring projects with Wolf Hirth and then with the D-W Group, near Rochester, NY, where he checked out Stan Smith and others to get their ratings.

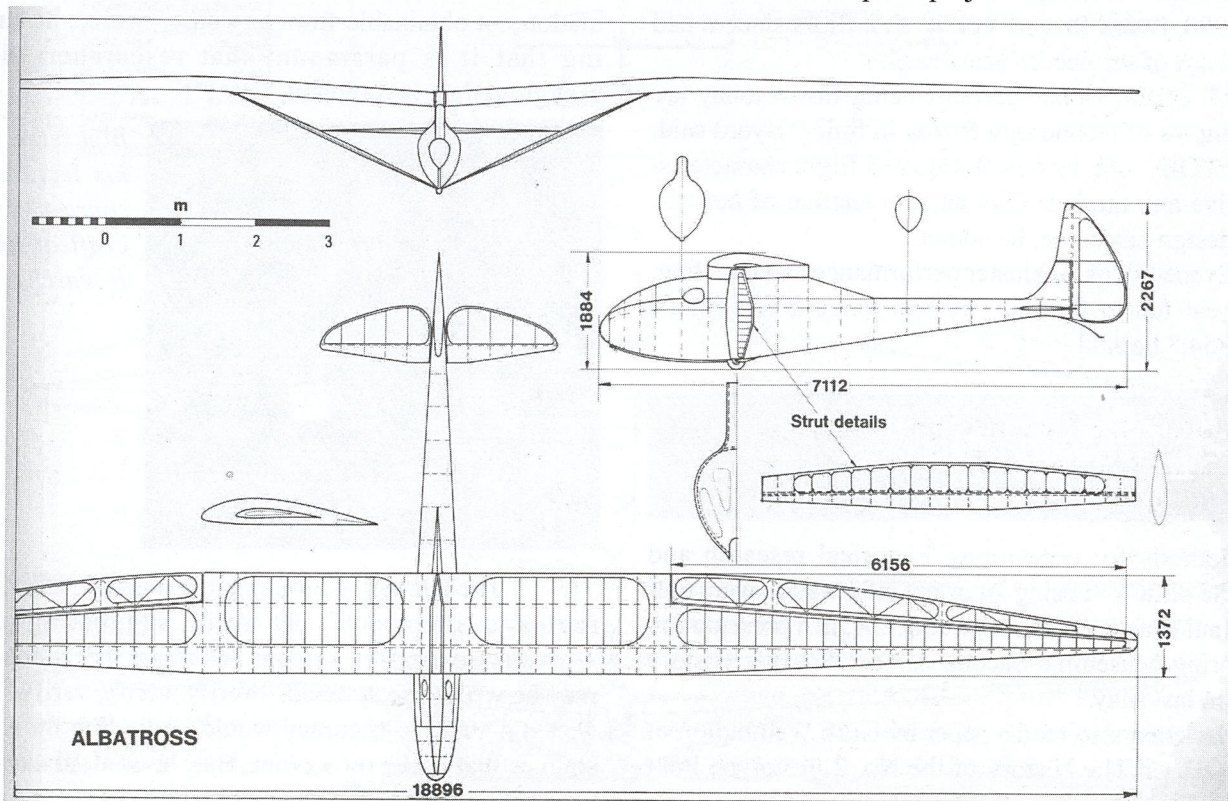
Richard C. duPont learned about gliding and soaring activities during a visit to the Cape Cod area. A student at the University of Virginia, he earned his power rating and formed a glider club there. He apparently wanted to get deeper into aviation, and entered the Curtiss-Wright Institute where Hawley Bowlus was on the staff.

While at C-WTI early in 1932, Bowlus started another sailplane project called the "Type 100" or "Super Sailplane" with the assistance of students. It was the prototype for what later became the Albatross line of sailplanes.

Soon after Bowlus started the project, Martin Schempp and Rudy Setz came west to help with the sailplane. Schempp influenced the design with many German details that made the "100" different from earlier Bowlus designs.

The prototype was completed in August 1932, and test flown by both Bowlus and Schempp. That October, an unexpected wind shift caused Schempp on a test flight to ditch the "100" in the Pacific Ocean. It could not be repaired so Bowlus started to build a replacement.

By 1933, duPont, then enrolled at C-WTI, became involved in the sailplane project and soon formed the Bowlus-



From *The World's Vintage Sailplanes 1908-45* by Martin Simons.

duPont Sailplane Company to develop a new line of sailplanes. Bowlus provided the sailplane design and manufacturing experience, and duPont provided the finance and enthusiasm. Details are scant but duPont's correspondence with his father helps explain some of his activity with the company.

Soon after, Bowlus left C-WTI to work full time with the new company. DuPont wrote his father that they were building a new ship that was a modification of the one Hawley was finishing (the Albatross I). This was to become the two-place Dragonfly, the first Bowlus to utilize the boom tail concept.

DuPont took the Albatross I and the Dragonfly to the 1933 Nationals at Elmira. The contest was conducted from site #6, the Rhodes farm where only shock cord launches were possible. Dick first flew the Dragonfly with his father as passenger. Unfortunately, owing to the tail dorsal fin, the steepness of the slope, and probably a weak tow, Dick was unable to get a high enough angle of attack on the wings to get the Dragonfly to fly. The result was a crash into the trees and brush at the edge of the ridge. Neither was hurt, but Dick immediately launched in the Albatross I and soared to the greatest altitude reached in that contest.

The following year's contest was not very successful since there were few ridge winds and the only way to get launched was with a shock cord. Stan Smith was the winner with eight points, while duPont was second with seven points.

That fall duPont went on an expedition to the Blue Ridge Mountains where he made a flight of 122 miles from Waynesboro, VA, to Frederick, MD, in the Albatross I, a new United States distance record.

Following his father's advice, Dick closed down the Bowlus-duPont Sailplane Company. At that time they were working on another two-place Dragonfly and developing a utility glider that they hoped to sell to the Navy to replace the Franklin utilities used in Barnaby's Navy training program.

DuPont returned to Delaware and continued work on the utility glider. He hired Heath McDowell to oversee the construction and Stan Smith to assist in completing its design. The utility was tested and taken to Elmira in 1935 and again in 1936. The Navy project was cancelled and so there was no production of the Utility. The Bowlus-duPont Sailplane Company was disbanded in September 1936.

DuPont took the Albatross I and II and Eaton his Falcon to the 1934 Nationals, where duPont flew the Albatross I and Lewin Barringer the Albatross II. Eaton's Albatross Falcon was the same basic Albatross, but was "skinned" with mahogany plywood instead of the spruce plywood used on the other two, and it had split flaps like Barringer's Albatross II. Eaton did not compete. The first day duPont flew the Albatross I from Elmira to Basking Ridge, NJ, a new world distance record (controversial, as to whether it was official, since it did not exceed the previous record by a

sufficient margin). Within a month four German sailplaners had bested duPont's record at the fifteenth Wasserkuppe contest. Barringer made the second longest flight in the II and finished in second place.

Barringer made several distance attempts, and on the last one he was blown to the backside of a ridge and crashed when a strong gust flipped him over as he was landing. Barringer was to go on an expedition overseas and the damaged Albatross II was sold to Jack O'Meara who took it to Bowlus for repair. On completion Bowlus flew it in a 1939 glider mailflight from Arvin, CA to the Bakersfield, CA post office. In 1941 O'Meara was killed in a powerplane test flight so he never got to fly the Albatross II. It remained in storage for many years until the Blacksten Group began to restore it.

Before finding its berth at the National Soaring Museum, Albatross I battled in many a contest and brought championship glory to a number of pilots. Soaring great Chet Decker bought the Albatross I, and won the 1936 National Contest. It was the third championship for the Albatross I. In 1937, Decker won second place in the plane. Then Decker sold it to Warren Merboth for \$1,550. Since he only made partial payment, the ship remained under both names in FAA records. Warren Merboth flew it to a sixth-place finish in the 1938 nationals and in the 1939 Nationals made a flight to Roosevelt Field, Long Island which won him a Bendix Trophy and a third-place finish.

Sometime after, developers of the National Soaring Museum decided that one of the gliders they wanted to display was a Bowlus-duPont Albatross. They received word in 1969 that "a long-winged sailplane" was hanging from trusses in the Auburn-Lewiston Airport in Maine. Allan MacNicol knew of the National Soaring Museum's interest in an Albatross sailplane and he advised them of its location.

About this time, unknown to the NSM, there were others interested in getting the Albatross. In September 1965, Stan Smith, who had flown the Albatross II in Wilmington, DE, wrote Charles Kerr, a sailplane pilot who lived near the Maine airport where the ship was discovered. Smith said that it had occurred to some members of the All American Engineering Soaring Club that they would like to acquire the Albatross as a keepsake and memento of Dick duPont who founded AAE, for his many contributions to soaring. Stan told Kerr that they would come up sometime to look at the plane, but for reasons unknown it didn't happen.

In July of 1970, Kerr received a letter from the Connecticut Aeronautical Association evidencing interest in getting the Albatross for the Bradley Museum. This was right after MacNicol had contacted the NSM by letter about the Albatross for the NSM. Apparently Kerr did nothing further with the Bradley overture due to the NSM's interest. He said there was some confusion about ownership but FAA records listed it as still belonging to Decker and Merboth.

With news of the find, Paul and Ginny Schweizer visited New England in September 1970 and found the prized plane hanging in rafters with torn fabric and covered with



The NSM's Senior Albatross. NSM Archive.

dust. They contacted Decker who was happy to learn that the Albatross had been located and said he would be willing to restore it for the NSM.

Decker picked up the Albatross in March of 1972 and took it to his home in New Jersey where he set it up in his back yard. After a close inspection, Decker felt that the repair work necessary was more than he and his son could do. So two retired Schweizer Aircraft employees did the restoration work in Big Flats, NY. El Pullen was an expert woodworker, and Dick Dassance had been the plant finishing foreman and did the fabric work. Chet Decker covered the restoration costs that brought the Bowlus duPont Albatross to the National Soaring Museum to be exhibited as a proud icon of American soaring history.



The Centennial Celebration of Soaring Flight: Aptos, California - March 19, 2005

Richard Huppertz

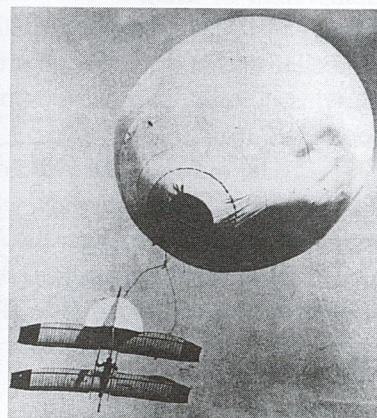


The year is 1905, the month is March. John J. Montgomery, a physics professor from Santa Clara College, has been experimenting with a new glider design, a tandem wing machine with a 24 foot span. Years of testing with scale models preceded this full-scale flying machine.

The Wright Brothers had made numerous low-altitude glider and powered flights by 1905 but the public was unaware of what they had achieved. Secrecy shrouded all the Wrights' flying; no public demonstrations of their capabilities had occurred by 1905. The Wrights wanted to protect their ideas until fully patented.

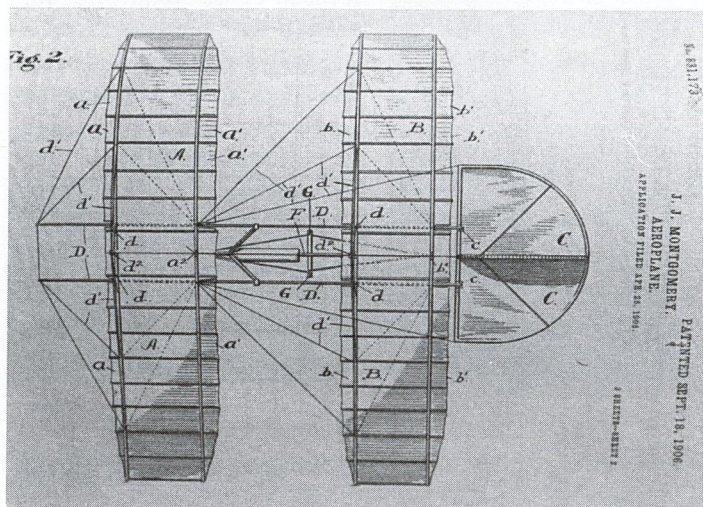
Montgomery was going to try a daring flight with his new glider, but felt that at his age he was not up to the physical demands of flight to be a competent pilot. He trained an agile young aeronaut, Daniel Maloney, to fly the new glider. An "aeronaut" in those days was a professional aerial performer who appeared at county fairs doing feats like balloon ascensions and parachute jumping, dressed as a circus trapeze artist.

Under Montgomery's guidance, Daniel Maloney had made a number of short, slope-launched flights in the tandem wing glider. He now felt ready to try the most ambitious flight, a launch from a hot air balloon.



Left, Professor John J. Montgomery, ca. 1905-6; Right, balloon launch of the "Santa Clara" in 1905.

In the little community of Aptos, California, just south of Santa Cruz, Montgomery was provided a flight test site by local ranch owner and aviation enthusiast John Leonard. The glider, with Maloney aboard, was attached to the balloon and lifted to a height of several hundred feet. A number of successful gliding flights were made from a series of low-level ascensions.



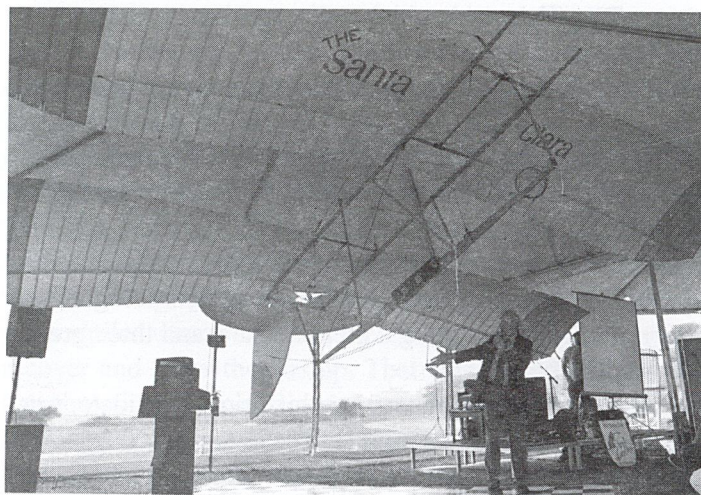
1906 patent drawing of the Montgomery tandem wing glider flown at Aptos in March 1905.

Gradually the height was increased, and by March 20, 1905, a launch from 3000 feet had been achieved—the highest altitude flight of a heavier-than-air craft in history. The longest flight was about 18 minutes. Maloney was able to perform a number of controlled maneuvers including right and left full circles, spirals and horizontal eights, usually landing in a predetermined area. On this flight he appeared to maintain altitude during some circles, apparently making use of lift.

But unlike the Wright Brothers, secrecy was not an issue in Montgomery's flight tests. Local and national journalists were invited to the March 20th demonstration along with the general public. Accounts of the controlled flights of Daniel Maloney in the Montgomery machine appeared in newspapers across the country, and even in the European press. Since little if anything was known of the Wrights' accomplishments, it appeared that Montgomery had finally mastered the long-sought-after goal of "aerial navigation" (or control) of a heavier-than-air flying machine.

Flash forward to March 19, 2005, at Aptos, California's Seascape Park, where a group of early flight enthusiasts, including some Montgomery relatives and local residents were present to commemorate the 100th Anniversary of what Montgomery had achieved. The Aptos Chamber of Commerce called it the "Centennial of Soaring Flight." The once open fields of the Leonard Ranch were now covered with housing developments, but the area where the original flights took place was now a nearby village green space.

The hope of the Centennial organizers was to lift a full-scale replica of the tandem wing glider, christened the



Professor Mark Ardema of Santa Clara University lectures on tandem wing design before a full-scale replica of the 'Santa Clara' glider used in the March 1905 flights.

"Santa Clara," by tethered hot air balloon, to an altitude of about 100 feet. The glider replica was provided by the Hiller Aircraft Museum of San Carlos, California, and assembled at the site by volunteers. But the wet, windy weather that had plagued California since the start of the year made that demonstration impossible. The hot air balloon could not be launched in winds greater than 10 mph, and that wind speed was exceeded greatly on March 19th. However the rain did abate, almost on cue, for the duration of the celebration.

The glider replica was hung inside a tent to protect it from the wind and threatening rain. Mechanical engineering professor Mark Ardema, of Santa Clara University, delivered a lecture on "John Montgomery, the Man and His Flying Machines." Music from the early 1900s was played by a local band, and some spectators were dressed in period clothing.

Although the replica glider remained in the tent, a contemporary powered hang glider, piloted by Ken Brown, made a flight from 3000 feet to recreate the original flight path and maneuvers of Daniel Maloney's March 20th, 1905, high-altitude flight.



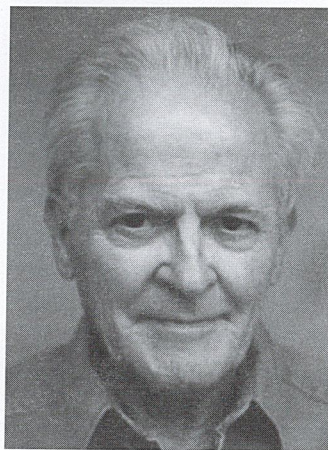
Members of the CAP Montgomery squadron with great-great nephew James Montgomery holding the Resolution from the California Legislature acknowledging the 1905 flights.

The flight centennial was very capably hosted by John Hibble, an Aptos resident, local historian, and head of the Aptos Chamber of Commerce. At the conclusion of the ceremony all attendees were asked to proceed to a field about two blocks inland where a monument had been erected at the exact location of the 1905 flights. The monument incorporated a bronze plaque dedicated to Montgomery and the historic events that had occurred there. Resolutions from local elected representatives were received by Montgomery family members, including a great-nephew and three great-great-nephews.

John J. Montgomery, as a historical candidate, was inducted into the U.S. Soaring Hall of Fame in 2002. Montgomery has been recognized by the Smithsonian Institution as being the first person to fly a heavier-than-air craft in the Western Hemisphere. This was for Montgomery's 1883-4 flights in his "Gull" glider at his family's ranch near San Diego. He has often been overlooked by aviation historians for his early glider design and flight achievements. He always focused on motorless flight and as early as 1884 had

developed a glider with controllable aileron-like wing flaps.

John Montgomery was truly a motorless flight pioneer, and this flight centennial was a fitting tribute to the man and his machines. The host, John Hibble, invited all to attend the bicentennial of soaring flight there in 2105!



Richard (Dick) Huppertz is a licensed commercial pilot for land, sea and gliders. He has been in soaring for 50 years and holds US Diamond "C" (756). Huppertz created titles for many feature films, including *Casino*, *Cape Fear*, and *The Age of Innocence*. He also wrote and narrated "Operation Sailplane," and wrote, filmed and produced "Sky Sailing" and "The 1-26 Regatta."



Interesting Glider Anomalies

The 1920s and '30s were times of flamboyant innovations. There were pole-sitters, flying batmen, wing walkers, six-day bike races, dance marathons, transatlantic steamship races for the cherished Blue Riband—even a transatlantic glider tow attempt. (see *NSM Historical Journal*, Spring 1991-Vol.13-No 3.) And then there was a unique motorless flight project that came out of Stalinist Russia:

A Rubber Glider That Could Be Folded In A Suitcase

In 1935, at Moscow's Central Airdrome a test flight was made in a collapsible inflated rubber glider, designed by a well-known Soviet inventor, P.I. Grokhovsky. The glider weighed about 93 pounds and could be rolled up in a bundle like a bag. The fuselage and wings of the glider were made of a specialized rubberized aviation fabric called "bertel".

The glider could be inflated in fifteen minutes using a simple pump. It had a wingspan of nine and a half meters (approx. 32 ft.) and was eight meters (approx 26 1/2 ft.) long. The glider, an amphibian was reported to be very stable and easily controlled in the air.

During the 1950s the Goodyear Tire and Rubber Company came up with a scheme to build a rubber air-inflated power plane equipped with a compact engine. Ted Nelson (U.S. Soaring Hall of Fame 1985) designed the four cylinder, two stroke, 45hp. gasoline motor specifically for use in this project. The idea was for the packaged combination with fuel and compressed air canister to be dropped behind the enemy lines to a downed American pilot as a means of escape back to friendly territory. The Goodyear rubber power plane was never deployed as emergency equipment

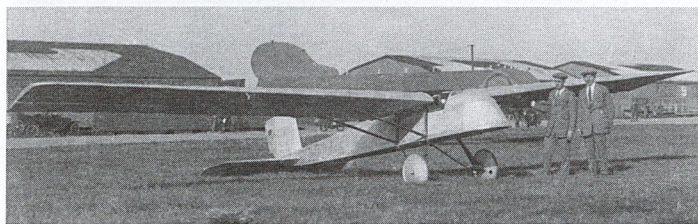


Left, the Grokhovsky rubber glider; Right, folding up the deflated glider after a test flight. NSM Archive.

by the Air Force and was discarded. However, the engine, with proven reliability, was later used by Ted Nelson to power the Nelson Hummingbird, the first American production motor glider.

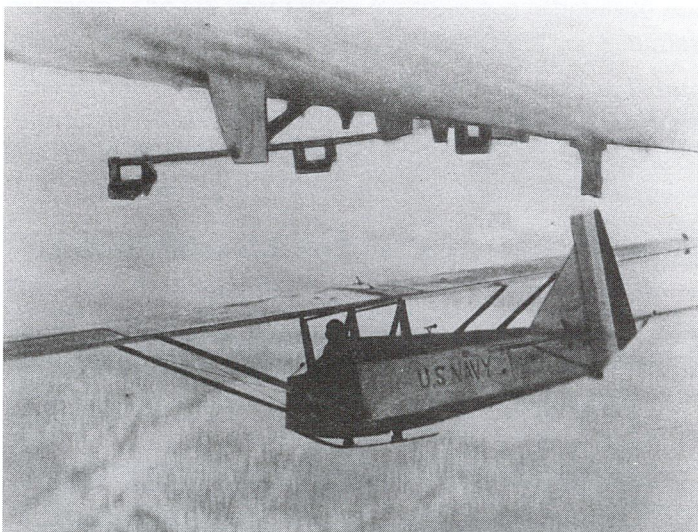
The Aerial Lifeboat

Another fascinating application of the utility of gliders was their proposed use as aerial lifeboats for airborne escape from stricken dirigibles (hydrogen or helium gas filled rigid or semi-rigid airships). The undated newspaper photo below (ca. 1920s) turned up among the vast aviation memorabilia found in the collection of the late Paul A. Schweizer.



It shows H. J. Norman and A.O. Heinrich, designer and pilot respectively, and the glider used in the dirigible lifeboat experiment. "The tests were undertaken to prove that gliders could be used as lifeboats on dirigibles in distress. The test glider was in tow behind a speeding motorcycle and released when it attained the necessary height. The first test proved successful."

Far out? Not if you recall the post World War I international dirigible-building frenzy.



Barnaby dropped from the Los Angeles. NSM Archive.

In 1930 a somewhat similar maneuver was executed by Navy Lt. Ralph S. Barnaby for a different reason; not to vacate a stricken airship but to direct a mooring party in an emergency at an unprepared location. But first he had to prove the feasibility of a glider drop from a dirigible. He successfully launched a German-made Prüfling glider 3,000 ft. over the Lakehurst, NJ Naval Air Station from the airship *Los Angeles*.

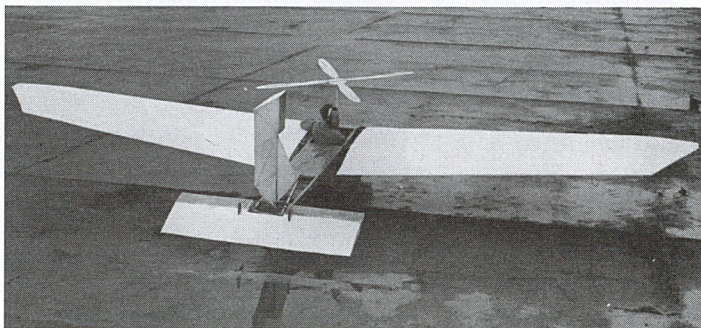
Admiral William A. Moffett, Chief of the Navy's Bureau of Aeronautics, was looking for a solution for the

Navy's serious problem of how to land huge dirigibles such as the 656-foot-long *Los Angeles* (former German LZ 126/ZR 3) in an emergency off-base without an experienced landing party being available. The U.S. Congress had already okayed funds to build two more rigid airships, the *U.S.S. Akron* and later the *U.S.S. Macon*. Adm. Moffett's idea was to have a landing officer dropped from the mother ship 10 miles or so before the dirigible reached the proposed landing site. The glider would land at an airport and the landing officer/pilot would organize a crew of locals right away to recover and moor the airship. That was the official reason that the admiral gave. Several years ago during a National Soaring Museum oral history session, Capt. Barnaby (USN ret.) said that he suspected that there was another motive. It was Adm. Moffett's veiled experiment to test the feasibility of launching Navy fighter planes from dirigibles. The reason that a Navy fighter plane couldn't be launched from the *Los Angeles* was that in the War Reparations Clause of the 1919 Versailles Peace Treaty (under which the *Los Angeles* was acquired from Germany), there was a stipulation that such aircraft never be used for war or warlike maneuvers as they had been in the 1914-1918 conflict. Adm. Moffett wanted to observe the technicality of the agreement, if not its intent.¹

During World War I, hydrogen-filled rigid airships (dirigibles or Zeppelins) were used extensively by the Germans on bombing raids over England on the Western and Eastern Fronts, and in one sensational round-trip ammunition and medical re-supply flight from Turkey (the Ottoman Empire) to German East Africa (present-day Tanzania/Uganda). L-59, "The African Ship," covered 4225 miles for 95 continuous hours. It was probably the greatest Zeppelin feat of WWI. After the war dirigibles were used as naval scouts, for exploration, and for passenger service through the 1920s and '30s. The dirigible era ended with the destruction of Germany's *Hindenberg* (LZ 129) in June 1937. *Graf Zeppelin II* (LZ 130) was dismantled in 1940; LZ 132 was never completed.²

References

- 1) Toland, John. *Ships of the Sky: The Story of the Great Dirigibles*, (New York: Henry Holt & Co., 1957) pp. 54-56.
- 2) Jane's Pocket Book of Airships, by Lord Ventry and Eugene Kolesnik, p. 87.



An imaginative glider pilot looks for an auxiliary source of lift. Germany, 1930s. Wide World Photos.

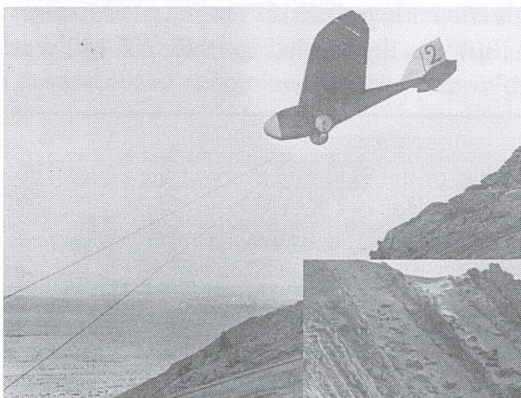


Unusual Launches - More Glider Anomalies



One of the more unusual launches recorded in photographic form—launch by dogsled. NSM Archive.

The cutline in the first of these three 1923 Kadel and Herbert photos below reads, "New Gliding Records Made in the Desert. The world's records for duration, height and distance have been made by French pilots at Biskra, Algeria. They took advantage of air currents from the desert sands, although sandstorms were a continual source of inconvenience." The photo shows M.Desacamps taking off on a flight in which he set an altitude record of 1,790 feet in February, 1923. NSM Archive.



National Landmark of Soaring No.14 Mount Washington, NH.

By Simine Short

8 October 2005, Mount Washington, NH — Soaring enthusiasts and friends of the sport came for a reunion and the dedication of the 14th National Landmark of Soaring at the Mount Washington Resort in Bretton Woods, NH.

Meteorological conditions produced by winds and these mountains have drawn glider pilots to the skies above the Presidential Range since 1938. Much of what is known about mountain winds and turbulence was first discovered in gliders. Flights to over 30,000 feet above sea level have been made in the atmospheric waves generated by Mount Washington and the surrounding peaks. This marker is dedicated to the pioneering pilots whose spirit of exploration made these achievements possible (see Fig. 1).

The dedication ceremony was held in one of the oldest and most historic resort hotels on the east coast, the Mount Washington Hotel. Columbus Day weekend is normally the height of the tourist season with the fall colors being the brightest. Due to a steady rain however, starting the day before, tourists came to visit the inside of the hotel instead. An unofficial account by hotel management estimated about 1,000+ people looking not only at their historic hotel, but also with amazement at three sailplanes (Genesis, Russia and a Silent2) on display in the grand ballroom. The US Post Office supplied two officials to sell stamps and to apply a special postmark (Fig 2) on Saturday afternoon.

Several display panels showing drawings, text, and photos of past and current wave camps, gave a graphic overview of the sport in the Mount Washington area. All afternoon, Bill Batesole, the creator of these panels, was available to answer questions from the general public passing through, and from current pilots.

The dedication event began at noon with Petey Becker singing “America the Beautiful” and the unveiling of the NLS No. 14 bronze plaque by Peter Smith, NSM director, and Rick Sheppe, Region 1 SSA director. It was an

emotional beginning, setting the tone for the remainder of the day. After lunch, Dennis Wright, SSA Executive Director, held an SSA Town Hall meeting. At 3:30 p.m., more than fifty oldtime and current pilots shared their stories and memories about flying the wave with its rotors. About 120 pilots, spouses and friends from near and far attended the evening dinner. Dr. Walter Cannon was the featured speaker, reminiscing about his early wave flying experiences in the Mount Washington area where he grew up, and also about flying the wave on the west coast, where he lives now.

The constant rain may have spoiled some of the outside activities, but it did not dampen the enthusiasm inside. Now there was even more opportunity to renew friendships.



Fig. 3. Attendees at the landmark dedication event.

Most attendees honoring this event (Fig. 3) were members of the gliding clubs in the surrounding area: Post Mills Soaring Club, Greater Boston Soaring Club, Massachusetts Institute of Technology Soaring Association, Nutmeg Soaring Club, and the New England Soaring Association, including participants of this year's Wave Camp. There were numerous out-of-town visitors: Bob Ball (NSM Trustee and Landmark Program member) and Nell; Lewin Barringer (the son of the pilot who made the 1938 wave soaring flight) and Lydia; Robert Buck (aviation writer), his son Rob and their family; Walter Cannon (1966 Wave Camp participant) and Irene; Samuel Francis (Region 1 SSA Director at the time of the first Landmark Dedication in 1981); Peter Smith (NSM Director) and Lynn; Jim Short (SSA Foundation Chairman) and Simine; Albert Ulster (VSA); Heinz Weissenbuehler (1974 Wave Camp participant) and Elsbeth; and Dennis Wright (SSA Executive Director).

Here is some background information on the history of soaring in the Mt. Washington area:

Eliot Noyes, an architecture graduate student at Harvard University, met Lewin Barringer on an air reconnaissance archeological expedition in the mountainous region of Persia in 1936/7. As most glider pilots are known

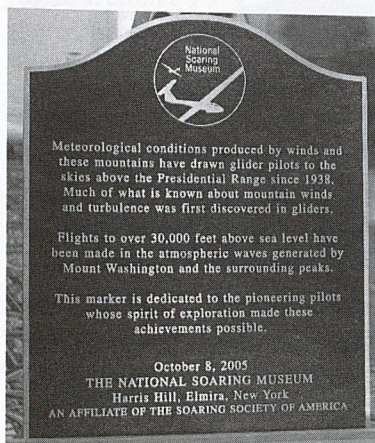
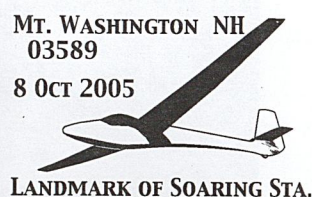


Fig 1. The Landmark Plaque.



Top: Fig 2. Bottom: Fig 4.

to do, Barringer told fascinating stories about this wonderful sport (Fig 4). Noyes became interested in giving it a try.

Back home, Noyes whose family owned a summer home near Intervale, NH, learned to fly gliders. During the 1937 Midwest Contest in Frankfort, MI, he not only earned his "C" license, but a few days later also his "Silver C." A year later, on 8 October 1938, he invited Barringer, now a good friend and the General Manager of the SSA and Editor of *SOARING* magazine, to see if soaring was possible in the area around Mount Washington. Funding was obtained from the Chamber of Commerce, and Barringer came back with the *Ibis* sailplane. He "experienced the thrill of soaring over the almost unbelievable colors of the autumn foliage" (Fig 5). On 25 October 1938, Lewin Barringer made what many believe to be the first wave soaring flight in the United States, taking off from the North Conway airfield and reaching an altitude of 9,500 feet (see Fig 11a) by "climbing in the holes between the clouds."

Noyes decided to introduce this summer sport to his fellow ski club members, mostly fellow Harvard colleagues. First the Schussverein Soaring Club, then the Altosaurus Soaring Club were formed in 1938/9 and a real sailplane, a Schweizer 1-7, the *Pteradactulus*, was bought for \$595. Now the only person who knew how to fly gliders taught everyone else (Fig 6). World War II put everything to a halt, as Noyes joined the military just like many of the other members.



Fig. 5. The Barringers. Fig. 6. The *Pteradactulus*.

In 1966, organized wave soaring was introduced to the area by Allan MacNicol (Fig 7), who staged an annual wave camp at the North Conway, NH, airfield. Now it was possible for pilots in the eastern part of the United States and Canada to climb to a Diamond "C" or an "Eastern Diamond" altitude, without having to go out west. Several of the wave campers from the 1960s and 1970s were on hand sharing their stories. One of these pilots was Heinz Weissenbuehler from Elmira, NY, flying his homebuilt HP-14, who — on one day in October 1974 — made two altitude climbs. He was not sure if the first one qualified because he only got to 21,000 feet after getting very low, so

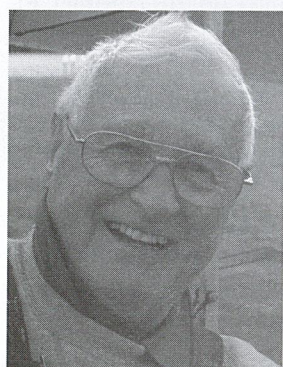


Fig. 7. Allan MacNicol.

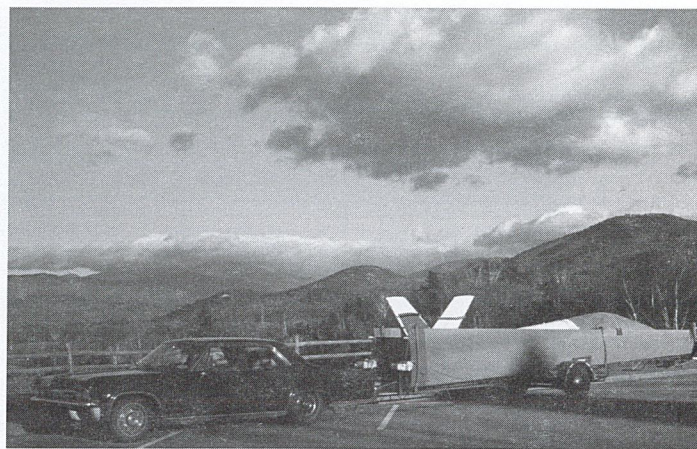


Fig. 8. Saying goodbye.

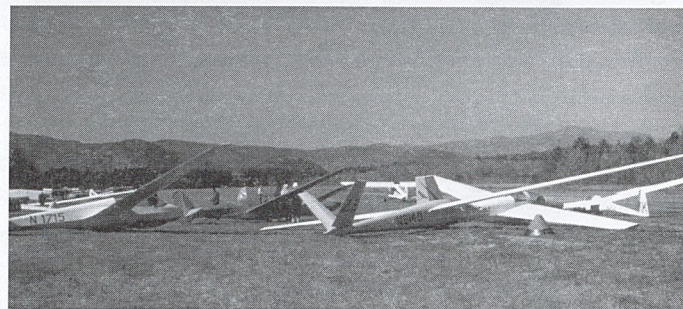


Fig. 9. Gliders at North Conway Airport.

he took off right away again and quickly reached 26,000 feet (see Fig 11b). Success! On the way home, the picture shown in Fig 8 was taken, saying goodbye and thank you for his "Eastern Diamond."

North Conway (Fig 9) airport, only 35 miles southeast of Mount Washington, was sold to a developer and aviation operations were closed. Other airfields in the vicinity (Glen, Gorham and Fryeburg, MA) were tried by local glider pilots. Some proved good, while other fields presented problems with the distance to be towed to connect with the wave. Today the Gorham, NH, airfield is host to the Annual Wave Camp (Fig 10) in October. Rick Roelke, a member of the Greater Boston Soaring Club, made his Diamond and first Lennie flight in October 2001 to 25,500 ft (see Fig 11c), flying a Glasflügel 304cz.

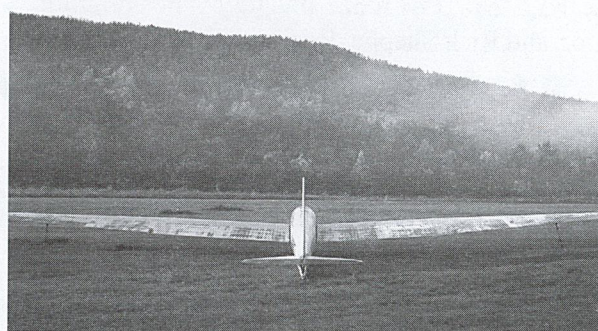


Fig. 10. A Schweizer 1-23 at Gorham.

Pilots continued to come to the Mount Washington area to further pursue and develop this unique activity known as wave soaring. As announced at the Landmark banquet, the tradition of flying the wave will continue with the reactivated Mount Washington Soaring Association. It is

fascinating to see that today's pilots are not only interested in the altitude climb, but also to use the wave formations for spectacular cross-country flying over some inhospitable, wooded and rocky territory.

What makes this Landmark special is how circumstances of the past sixty-seven years are interwoven: Eliot Noyes who started the soaring movement in the area in 1938, designed our National Soaring Museum in the mid 1970s; the Schweizer SGS 1-7 bought by Noyes and the Altosaurus Club in 1939, was restored and flown by Walter Cannon in 1999/2000. It is now on display at the NSM. And, coincidentally, the son of Lewin Barringer, the sailplane pilot, and the son of Wylie Apte, the owner and operator of North Conway Airport just happened to share the same table at the evening festivity.

A special "thank you" goes to the local implementation committee, Kevin Brooker, Rick Sheppe, Rick Roelke, Bill Batesole and Jim David and to the NSM's Landmark of Soaring Committee, Janice Armstrong, Bob Ball and Bill Batesole, with Peter Smith and Bob Gaines always available for input and advice.

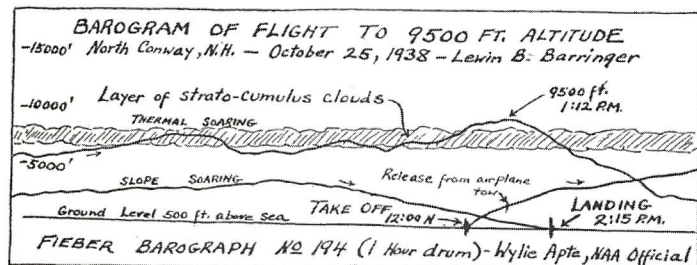


Fig. 11a. Barogram of Barringer's wave soaring flight.

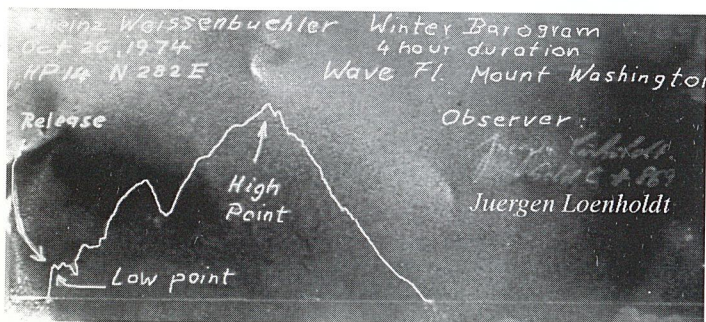


Fig. 11b. Barogram of Heinz Weissenbuehler's wave camp flight, October 1974.

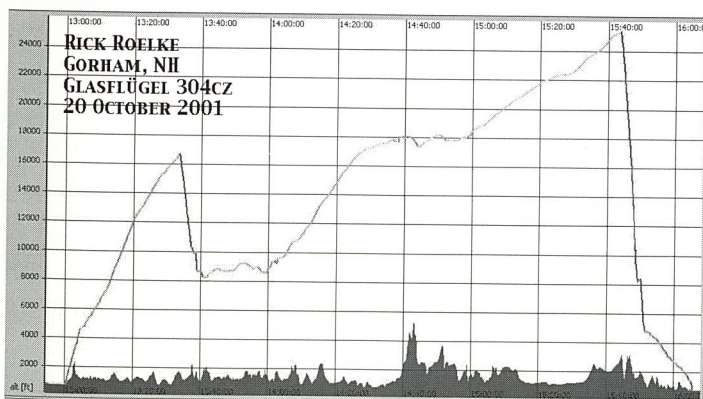


Fig. 11c. Rick Roelke's Diamond and first Lennie flight, October 2001.

As background information, the National Soaring Museum initiated the Landmark of Soaring program in 1979. The purpose of this outreach program is *to identify and memorialize sites, individuals, or historic events related to the national history of motorless flight; and in the process collect, preserve and interpret documents and materials related to each approved landmark.*

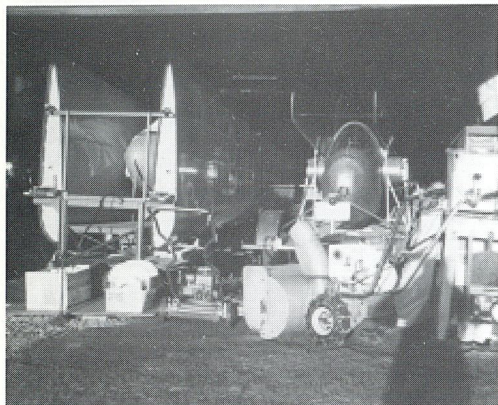
Simine Short is an aviation historian and Chair of the National Soaring Museum's National Landmark of Soaring Program. She has written more than 100 papers on the history of motorless flight, which have been published in the United States and Europe.

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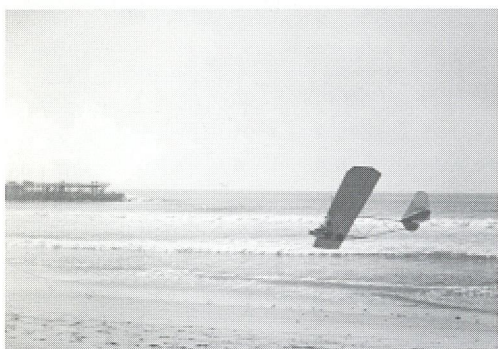
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From the Archives



Snowblower? Check. Lawnmower? Check. Two sailplanes? Check. Now where do you put the car? Dana Darling photo.



A Waco Primary skims the surf, probably early 1930s. Can anyone provide location, pilot or specific date? From the NSM Multimedia Collection.



Every little bit helps. Crew member places foam rubber in vulnerable places. Uveges photo.



From one of a series of syndicated newspaper panels drawn by Les Marshall in the 1930s.

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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 the NSM. Material that is to be returned must be accompanied by a self-addressed stamped envelope. No compensation other than credit will be given.

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