

NSM NEWS

SPRING/SUMMER
2024

Official Newsletter of the National Soaring Museum

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Hanging the *Yankee Doodle*

Another sailplane model-hanging adventure occurred this month when a beautiful 1/3 scale model of the original *Yankee Doodle* was successfully hung in the museum's Blossom Gallery.

The original sailplane was designed by Jack Laister in 1938 and competed in the National Soaring Contest at Harris Hill that same year. It did well and was enjoyed by all who flew it. Unfortunately, in 1939 it was lost in a crash that happened during an international sailplane aerobatic competition in France. The pilot was injured but later recovered.

This model was built by Doc Walker from Sioux Falls, SD, and donated to our museum by Jerry Wenger, who brought it along when he came east for our recent International Vintage Sailplane Meet.



Director, Traff Doherty, constructed the harness and Don Rumsey, museum facilities manager, physically held the model in place with an attached yellow tow rope until Traff fastened the harness with cable clamps to a cable previously hung from the ceiling girders. This was the same procedure that would be used on a full-size glider, but all in miniature. Quite a project!



Harvest Host RV Visits

A few years ago we accepted a request from Harvest Hosts RV Club to allow their campers to park overnight at the Museum. It has been a great partnership! There is no charge for camping, but the members agree to visit the museum, pay admission and hopefully, make a purchase in the gift shop. Often, the campers also take a sailplane ride, which is offered during suitable weather by Harris Hill Soaring Corporation. Here are some of the many reviews we get:



Paul K. - "WOW, lived in NY on and off for over 25 years now and never knew this existed! Loved the location, Museum video at the beginning of the tour was amazing, and to see the gliders soaring around on our way up to the top and many more take offs and landings the rest of the afternoon was so cool! Thanks - we will be back - it was awesome."

John J. - "We visited in late September of 2021. This was our best Harvest Host experience ever! This is a fantastic place to visit, especially if you have a love for aviation or are a pilot, as I am. The museum has beautiful displays of historic and notable sailplanes and you will learn a wealth of knowledge about the interesting history of glider flying.

Although not really related to aviation, my wife enjoyed the room full of amazing doll houses. I have to admit that the remarkable detail of the miniature rooms of furniture/accessories was fascinating. Parking right next to the runway was a real treat.

We had perfect weather during our stay and the gliders were flying! Watching them being towed aloft, soaring quietly above, and landing close to us was a lot of fun. Traff and Don are very gracious hosts. They allowed us to stay a second night to enjoy the scenic airport area. The views from the top of Harris Hill, both during the day and at night are awesome! The highlight of my visit here was being able to assist Traff, Don and Chad (he was the donor of the glider) with the assembly of a restored Midwest Utility Glider MU-1 (1930's era). Luckily, this sailplane just happened to arrive at the museum while we were there. We can't wait to visit again at some time in the future."

Danalynn D. - "A must visit location! This was only our second Harvest Host trip and we feel so blessed to have happened upon this gem! The view was amazing and just what we needed after a long drive. The hosts were incredible and I personally learned so much about the history of soaring. I loved it!! They also have a miniature doll house exhibit which is so beautifully crafted! Can't wait to come back again and actually get to soar! We didn't have the weather for it this time around but we will be back!"

Kent K. - "Museum director, Trafford Doherty, treated us like VIPs, and allowed us to stay parked alongside the airstrip for three nights. What a beautiful location high above the surrounding countryside. As an aviator (and spouse), we were so impressed with the quality of the soaring museum's aircrafts and artifacts, as well the presentation of the highest order. The highlight for me was a bucket list check off.....an extended soaring flight at the associated sailplane club, where I was given the flight controls for the majority of my half hour soar! It was the thrill of a lifetime. A visit to the Corning Glass Museum, just half an hour away was icing on the cake."



Sharon B. - "We stayed there on Nov 9, 2021 and visited the museum. Don was the person in the museum store. He was very helpful and very friendly. Parking next to the runway was great. Gliders are not taking off in November, but we lucked out and two gliders were practicing, so we saw two take off and land. We totally enjoyed the museum, what a great set-up. Thanks!"

Steven G. - "The soaring museum is an awesome place to visit. You can sit and look out over the mountains and feel the refreshing cool air. Stop in and see their museum and the collection of doll houses that they have on display. It's very quiet and a beautiful place to be. This is our second stay. We have yet to be lucky enough to see the glider flights, but have been told they are awesome. Maybe the next time when we're here we'll be able to see one. But do come and enjoy the beautiful mountains."

IVSM 2024

Here at the National Soaring Museum, we are still enjoying the euphoria of a very successful International Vintage Sailplane Meet. The week went by so fast, reminding us of the old phrase, "Time flies when you're having fun!"

The following excellent summation of the week was borrowed from the VSA website:

"2024 marked the 8th International Vintage Sailplane Meet (IVSM) and the Vintage Sailplane Association's 50th anniversary. The IVSM is the premier vintage sailplane meet in the United States. Since 1995 it has featured the largest number of vintage sailplanes on display and flying at one spot on the North American continent.

This year over 2 dozen vintage gliders made it to Harris Hill for the event. Several of them were trailered in from the west coast. Some 40 pilots registered to participate and an estimated 140 participants and visitors enjoyed the flying and events. The international community was well-represented with groups from the United Kingdom, Germany, The Netherlands, Switzerland, and Canada. Mornings featured a "sailplane of the day" and talks about a wide variety of glider history topics. Other than two weather days (one rainy and one windy), afternoons saw the skies over Harris Hill filled with vintage (and a few modern) gliders. Flying conditions were great and many pilots enjoyed long flights over the hills and valleys of New York State. Local food trucks added some great variety at lunch time. Evening festivities included an "International Evening" with food and drink from around the world, our traditional "Low Country Boil" with food created by Mary and Jim Stoia, a tour and dinner at K&L Soaring, and the Friday night Awards Dinner and Banquet at the National Soaring Museum.

The International Vintage Sailplane Meet was made possible through the collaboration of the Harris Hill Soaring Corporation (HHSC) the National Soaring Museum (NSM) and the Vintage Sailplane Association (VSA). The National Soaring Museum provided its elegant museum facilities atop Harris Hill and handled registration, information, meeting venues, gathering spaces and weeklong activities. The HHSC provided flying operations, tows, check rides and introductory flights for visitors, from its home on the scenic, world-famous Harris Hill Gliderport. The VSA marshalled its members to acquire, restore, refurbish and fly their gliders during the meet and organized a fascinating slate of speakers and displays."



Vintage gliders from the 1930s - clockwise from the top: Petrel, Minimoa and Kirby Kite - all in the air at the same time over Harris Hill



IVSM 2024

In case you were wondering what a low country boil is - here's a closer look! This event is always a big hit at IVSM. It is held at the Youth Camp dining hall here on the Harris Hill campus. Yum!



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Youth Camp Dining Hall



Jim Shafer from Kunkletown, PA brought his Schleicher Ka-4



Gerry Wild from Lehighton, PA brought his Schweizer 1-19

Doug Fronius's Robin, Josh Knerr's PS-2, Rusty Lowry's Kirby Gull



Vern Fueston's Schweizer 1-23



Pilot Guy Byars heading home early in the morning with the Chemung Valley's typical morning fog at its best!



In Memoriam

George B. Moffat, Jr.

1927 - 2024 U. S. Soaring Hall of Fame 1963



George Moffat died peacefully at his home in Marion, MA on June 20, 2024. He was 97.

George was an American author, twice world champion glider pilot, and a member of the U.S. Soaring Hall of Fame. He began flying airplanes in 1953, gliders in 1959, entered his first national soaring competition in 1962, and was still an active competition pilot as of 2008. Before competing in sailplanes, he compiled a winning record in International 14-ft. dinghy racing and was an active sailor.

Moffat was the first pilot ever to win the Open Class title twice in the World Gliding Championships, has won five U.S. National championships, and is one of only two pilots to have won the U.S. national title in all three glider competition classes (Open, Standard and

15-meter). A holder of the Lillienthal Medal, the highest award in gliding, he has flown competitively in over eight countries. He won the world soaring title in 1970 and 1974.

Wikipedia will tell you that he was a world champion glider pilot, and a skilled sailor, competing on the world's stage in both sports. It will tell you that he wrote two books on gliding, embracing his calling as a teacher to further the sport he loved. It will also tell you that he had compiled a winning record competing at the highest levels of sailboat racing and that he wrote many articles on the subject for *Yachting* and *Popular Science*. It will also tell you that for many years, he was head of the English Department at the Pingry School. But it won't tell you that George was so beloved that he received many letters from former students and sailing and soaring friends from all over the world, right up until his death. His teaching made a huge impact on so many in the worlds of soaring, sailing, and writing. His long list of competitive accomplishments might make one think that he was unapproachable, but in fact, he was a generous and gifted teacher, much admired by those he taught. He coached the US Soaring team and taught many the finer points of sailboat racing. His stories about soaring and sailing were endlessly fascinating, as they afforded one a glimpse into the excitement of competing in the International 14.

In the introduction to *Winning II*, Michael Bird wrote this about George: "surely he must be the Great White Shark of soaring, with a presence to match? In reality when I first met him I found a shy, quiet, almost diffident man." George was a man of few words – instead, his *modus operandi* was quietly embracing the self-discipline necessary to achieve excellence in everything he did. Philip Wells said it best in the introduction to George's book, *Winning*: "so we come to the underlying theme of the book: self-discipline; and self-discipline of this order is a form of genius." As George himself was heard to say: "flashes of brilliance punctuated by periods of inattention never won anything in any sport."

When he wasn't flying gliders, he enjoyed summer-long cruises on his 42' wooden sloop, *Wild Goose*. Later in life, when he moved to Massachusetts, he and his partner, Peggy Francis, acquired *Swan Song*, an "H Class" Doughdish built by Edey & Duff. In true George fashion, he heartily embraced the H Class one-design racing on Buzzards Bay and wrote the tuning guide that is still in use. He won the H-Class National Championship several times.

George was predeceased by his partner of many years, Margaret Francis. He leaves behind three daughters: Virginia Moffat, Susan Moffat, and Barbara Moffat.



IN MEMORIAM

David Hudnut
C. Joseph & Holly Schaus
Helga Gertsen
Jake Dvornicky
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Deborah Hudson

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Trinity Rose

In Memoriam

Donald Alfred Gurnett

1940 - 2022



We just learned of the death of Don Gurnett, long time member of the National Soaring Museum. Don was born on April 11, 1940, in Cedar Rapids, Iowa, the son of Alfred and Velma Gurnett. He grew up on a farm near Walford, Iowa. In 1957 he graduated from St Patrick's School in Fairfax. As an undergrad Don studied electrical engineering at the University of Iowa and received a PhD in Physics and Astronomy in 1965. His career at the University of Iowa spanned 65 years, with the exception of year-long sabbaticals at Stanford University, Max Planck Institute Germany, and UCLA. Don led or was involved in more than 30 spacecraft projects, most notably, the Voyager 1 and 2 flights to the outer planets, the Galileo mission to Jupiter, and the Cassini mission to Saturn. He was a member of the National Academy of Sciences among many national and international distinctions. As a professor he taught Astronomy to innumerable undergraduate students and mentored 64 M.S. and Ph.D.

students. He continued working until the last week of his life as an emeritus professor, responding to emails, recording an upcoming talk, and completing interviews.

Don enjoyed telling stories, skiing, watching animals in nature, giving talks about the origin of life, questioning how things work, building model airplanes, flying and working on his WWII airplane, competing in national glider contests, and his daily walks. One thing we will all remember is desire to teach and learn from everyone he met. Don is survived by his wife, Marie, two daughters; several grandchildren and extended family members.

Jim Marske

1935 - 2024



John James Marske died on June 26, 2024. An avid pilot, pioneer, and innovator in sailplane design, particularly the flying wing. Jim's groundbreaking achievements earned recognition and respect worldwide. Jim was not only a devoted family man but also a dedicated mentor, sharing his wisdom and knowledge generously with others.

A man of unwavering integrity, kindness, and generosity, Jim touched the hearts and minds of all who crossed his path. His life was a beautiful tapestry woven with threads of faith, family, and the boundless skies. Even in retirement, Jim continued to

inspire with his innovative spirit, dedicating his time to refining his creations and sharing his knowledge. He authored several successful books including "The Wing and I" and various technical manuals.

Jim's presence in the soaring community was not only deeply respected but also warmly cherished. His legacy will live on to inspire future generations.

In 1992 he relocated from Indiana to Marion, OH and in 2018 he moved to Chandler, AZ near most of his family. Jim was also the grandfather of ten and great-grandfather of six, leaving a lasting impact on each generation.

Though Jim may have bid farewell to this earthly realm, his spirit of adventure and his legacy of innovation will continue to inspire and uplift all those who were fortunate enough to have known him. He will be profoundly missed but forever remembered with love and gratitude.

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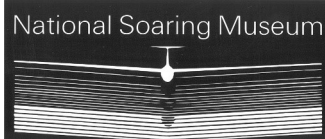
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**Spring/Summer
2024**



MUSEUM HOURS

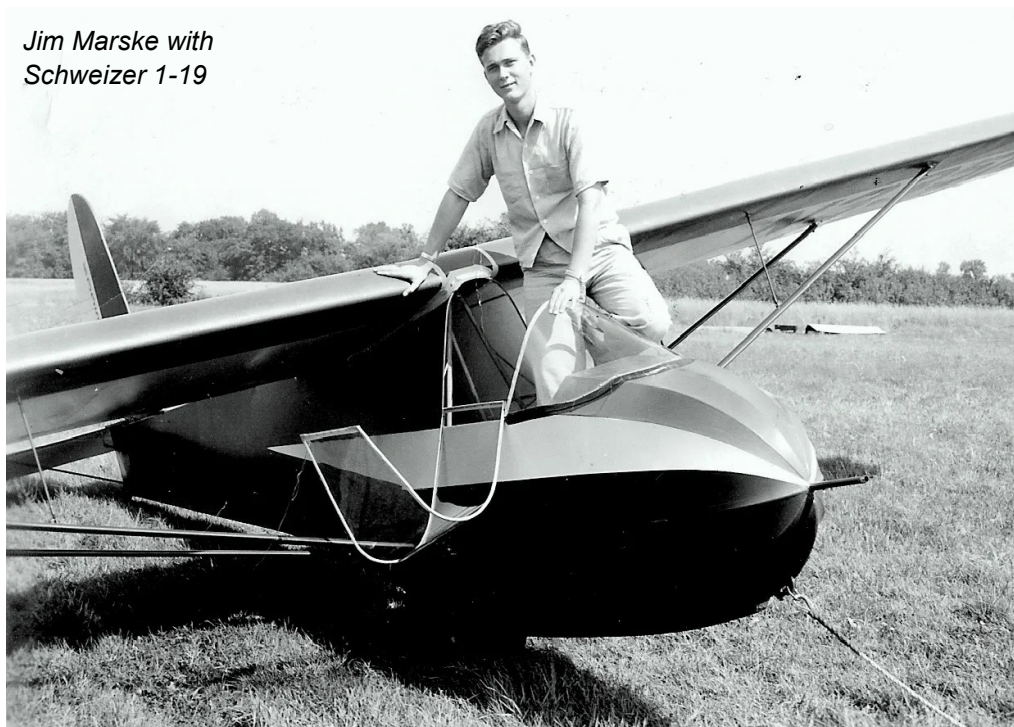
April 1 - Oct. 31
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Nov. 1 - Mar. 31
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Museum closed on the following holidays:

New Year's Day
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*Jim Marske with
Schweizer 1-19*



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