



WORLD WAR II MILITARY GLIDER PROGRAM,

was our exhibit focus and program theme during 1983. It was a popular focal point and contributed to our 10% increase in visitors to the National Soaring Museum.

As 1983 draws to a close, I wish to review the year's highlights for you, pending the arrival of your copies of the Museum's membership Journal, the NSM, will all of the details, hopefully at the end of the month.

A life-size diorama exhibited Stan Corcoran's TG-1A on loan from the Smithsonian's National Air & Space Museum. Suspended overhead was a Pratt-Read training glider on loan from Jan Scott, Lovettsville, VA. Beside the diorama was an LNS-1 (Navy designation of the Schweizer TG-2), on loan from Robert Storck, Tudor, MD, and an LK-10A, (Laister Kauffman TG-4) on loan from Gil Fitzhugh, Morristown, NJ. The LK rested on a new prototype rack designed by Paul Schweizer which will enable the Museum to store and yet easily exhibit our growing collection of significant sailplanes. The restoration of our CG-4A forward fuselage section was completed and we exhibited it with the cockpit raised and a military jeep embarking from the nose, to demonstrate the incredible cargo capability of these gliders. The photographic exhibits included examples of military gliders, training, tactical use, and personalities. An exhibit case was devoted to patches, equipment, post cards, and newsletters.

Our exhibit opening, May 14th, celebrated the 1983 Soaring Hall of Fame induction ceremonies. The Soaring Society of American inductees were Emil A. Lehecka, Deerfield Beach, FL, Lloyd M. Licher, Novato, CA, and Earl R. Southee (posthumously). Paul Schweizer was the featured speaker and he told anecdotes about the new Hall of Fame members. It was exciting to see the Leheckas, Lloyd, and a Southee family contingent back on Harris Hill again. On Sunday, May 15th, the Harris Hill Soaring Corporation held a memorial ceremony for Stan Smith at the Memorial Wing Pylon at the brow of the Hill.

At the end of July, the Museum hosted a symposium on Military Gliders and most of the attendees were members of the National World War II Military Glider Pilots' Assoc. They were an enthusiastic group and were delighted to share their experiences and to learn of the beginning of the military glider program here on Harris Hill. At their National Convention the Directors of the GPA voted to award the National Soaring Museum a grant of \$500 toward our exhibit and archival efforts for this part of motorless flight history.

Lloyd Sweet, McLean VA chaired this activity and spoke on Rigid Soaring. Don Hamilton, Daytona Beach, FL spoke on Pilot Training. Paul Schweizer, Elmira, NY, Nelson Shapter, McLean, VA and Floyd spoke on Training Gliders. Dr. Milton Dank, Wyncote, Pa, author of THE GLIDER GANG, spoke on Operation Varsity: The

Rhine Crossing and Joe Hann, Wurtsboro, NY told the Glider Mechanics Story. The Film Historian of the GPA, Doug Wilmer, Dunwoody, GA told of the filming of the Military Glider Story and brought historic video tape footage for preview along with the Museum's collection of video tapes. Several tables were set up to enable the attendees to share memorabilia. The weekend closed with a meeting at the Memorial Wing Pylon, a tour of the Schweizer Aircraft plant, and then an invitation to attend the Elmira/Corning Airshow at the airport in Chemung Valley.

On November 5th, the Soaring Society of Princeton University hosted the National Soaring Museum's 10th annual Ralph S. Barnaby Lecture; and the speaker was non-other than Ralph Barnaby himself. He held the attendees in the palm of his hand and reminisced about other pioneers and his early days in soaring. It was an informal gathering and cries from the audience, "Barney, tell about the time when..." kept prompting his memory so often, that we had to call a halt or we would have been there all night, at least.

On December 16th, the Museum's Community Soaring Committee will have a luncheon to honor three exceptional local volunteers; J. Arthur Kieffer, retiring Chemung County Superintendent of Buildings and Grounds, Frank Hurtt, the Museum's Artistic Advisor, and John Gill, a member of the Harris Hill Soaring Corporation. These three gentlemen have been dynamos in helping the National Soaring Museum with facility planning and major exhibit changes.

The Officers of the National Soaring Museum Board of Trustees for 1984 are:

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Our exhibit focus for 1984 is "Birds of a Feather - Soaring Birds and Sailplanes". One of the focal points will be a display of life-size Condor sculptures by Erwin Hauer, Yale University. There will also be a six sculpture exhibit by artist R.E. Barber, Arvada, CO. His golden eagle sculpture cast in bronze, "Solar High", was presented to the winner and World Champion of each class of the 18th World Soaring Championships held in Hobbs, NM. He presented one additional copy to the Museum's collection and it will be included in his exhibit. We are working with Hawk Mountain, Eagle Ridge, PA personnel, the Ornithology Dept. at Cornell University, and local Audubon Society members to round out the exhibit.

The problem of developing an exhibit showing the relationship of sailplane designs and bird flight aerodynamics is still being developed but it is proving to be very exciting. The audio/visual materials being collected to enhance this theme are outstanding. I hope that you will have the opportunity to visit the Museum during 1984 and see the end result. We will be planning a thematic symposium to be held at the end of July.

In closing, I wish to take this opportunity to thank our Museum members, volunteers, Trustees and Advisors for their tremendous support. The National Soaring Museum is an Institution which you can take pride and the future holds even more promise, - and more rewards.

Best wishes for happy holidays!

Shirley Sliwa, Director
National Soaring Museum