



Southwest Soaring

Quarterly Newsletter of the U.S. Southwest Soaring Museum

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The Cherokee exhibit in the Anderson-Abruzzo Balloon Museum shown with (from left to right) Marilee Schmit-Nason, Curator of Collections, Mary and Steve Moskal, Barbara and Bob Leonard

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Cover: Stan Hall designed and sold plans for the Cherokee II. The one shown here was modified by Terry Miller and John Ree from a 23:1 glide ratio to 28:1 by increasing the wingspan to 44 ft. and modifying the airfoil. It is called the Cherokee RM.

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Editorial

by

Bob Alkov

Many of you heard about George's mishap in the museum last November. For those of you who hadn't heard, a heavy bookcase fell on him, crushing his left hip and breaking his right ankle. You will be happy to know that he is recovering nicely from his injuries and is getting about on his own two feet (with the help of a cane). His hip was pinned and is healing fine.

The Anderson-Abruzzo International Balloon Museum in Albuquerque requested the loan of a sailplane from the U.S. Southwest Soaring Museum for a new exhibit on soaring they are building. As part of the agreement, they will be loaning us a balloon for an exhibit in our museum (see photo).



Balloon Exhibit for Our Museum

On March 6th the Anderson-Abruzzo International Balloon Museum held a reception for the opening of their new exhibit on Sky Sailing (see Cover). In addition to the Cherokee RM they display a hang glider and a powered parasail. Our RM was built and donated to the USSSM by Ralph Schellenbaum. Several of Bob Talarczyk's outstanding photos of soaring activity are also exhibited.

Soaring Pioneers-Stan Hall 1915-2009

(The following article sent to us by Jan and Dan Armstrong is, with some modifications, from “The Collected Works of Stan Hall”)

Inside Stan Hall’s DNA chain is a gene called aviation. Inside that gene is a sub-gene called soaring. Together, they’ve been blueprinting a life dedicated to machines that fly, and that life began at age 4, when, sitting in his mother’s lap, he went aloft in a Curtiss JN-4 ‘Jenny’. Seventy seven years later he still recalled the name of that pilot. It was Seely Blythe.

But pilot Blythe’s influence was overshadowed by one Charles A. Lindbergh, the patron saint of all aviation. Stan was 12 that night in 1927 when Lindbergh hit the runway at Le Bourget. The following day Stan started putting together what he called a glider. Well, it wasn’t really a glider so much as a contraption which, thanks to alert parents, never got finished. Getting a real glider completed and into the air had to wait until 1931.

The ensuing four years saw three more gliders and it was crash and build, crash and build. A defining moment came in 1936 when it became apparent to Stan he needed more smarts if he was to get out of this discouraging cycle. That was the year fate intervened to prevent his attending college. That was the year Hitler set the world on fire.

In Los Angeles, North American Aviation was busily building up its engineering staff. Stan landed a job as an engineering draftsman. He had no engineering training. What got him the job was his experience as an ‘aircraft builder’ (read ‘gliders’) and the fact that he got top grades in high school drafting. From then on, his on-the-job engineering training came fast and furious. In the five years he worked at North American, he became involved in the design of the company’s AT-6 trainer, the B-25 bomber and the P-51 Mustang fighter. Under the pressure of wartime, and working under some brilliant if harried engineers, Stan soaked up technical know-how like a sponge. He picked their brains without letup.

Then the military gliders came, gliders capable of carrying up to 15 soldiers. Douglas Aircraft hired Stan away from North American to help design the XCG-8 and XCG-15 cargo gliders conceived by the great Hawley Bowlus.

Near completion of the glider program at Douglas, Stan left the company to join a new civilian contract flying school in Wickenburg, Arizona. He wanted to FLY for a change. Here, he taught young staff sergeants to fly training gliders preparatory to flying the huge cargo gliders Douglas and others were building. Later, as Flight Commander, he taught aviation cadets to fly the Stearman PT-17 airplane. It was here that he and his new bride, Doris, set up housekeeping, and it was here their son, Rogers was born. Eight years later, in Los Angeles, daughter Denise was to be born.

The war had to end sometime, and it did. The Hall family moved back to Los Angeles, where Stan took a position with Northrop as an engineering designer. With his flight experience he also served as an on-call, corporate pilot, flying a military twin-engine UC-78 bailed to a company and a company owned-Bellanca Skyrocket.

His engineering training was now going full throttle as he joined the legendary John K. Northrop in the design of the Northrop B-35 and the YB-49 Flying Wings. In those days, designers received special training by experts in stress analysis and other engineering disciplines. The order of the day was, then, that designers do their own first-order analysis, followed as necessary by more detailed analyses by the stress engineering group. Stan found this experience to be priceless, an experience he had been capitalizing on and adding to ever since.

He spent five years at Northrop, then was Manager of Experimental Design at the company’s Snark missile installation at Cape Canaveral, Florida. A few months after returning to home base in Hawthorne, California, Stan left to join the Lockheed Missiles and Space Division in Van Nuys, California. In 1957 the company moved to Sunnyvale, and Stan moved with them. He spent 20 years with Lockheed, managing technical programs. It was there that he supervised the design of the biologically-oriented payload on Discoverer 13, the first payload ever recovered from space. And it was here that Stan later conceived and had patented the Lockheed/Army YO-3A Quiet Reconnaissance airplane which saw outstanding service in Vietnam. Stan was Manager of Airframe Design on the YO-3A program and later, Manager of Engineering Flight Test.

In all, Stan served as an engineer for four major aircraft manufacturers over a period of 37 years. After retiring from Lockheed he was called back as a freelance engineering consultant. It was in this service that he did the conceptual design and stress analyses for the sailplane-like Solar HAPP, an unmanned solar powered, long endurance, high altitude reconnaissance aircraft. Working on his own drafting board at home, he also did conceptual designs and engineering analyses of remotely piloted aircraft for Lockheed's facility in Austin, Texas.

Since 1931, and during Stan's long tenure as a professional engineer, he found time to engage in more personal pursuits, such as design and construction of ten gliders (including the famous Cherokee II), direct the 1958 National Soaring Contest at Bishop, California, win an appointment to the prestigious SSA Hall of Fame, deliver the 1994 Ralph Stanton Barnaby Lecture, write Homebuilders Hall, a column devoted to gliding homebuilding which was voted by SSA's membership as the most popular column in SOARING magazine during the years it appeared, receive an Outstanding Achievement award from the Experimental Aircraft Association (EAA), earn a Commercial Pilot's certificate with single and multi-engine, instrument and glider ratings, and fly some 5000 hours as Pilot in Command. He also found time to act as a major influence in the formation of the Sailplane Homebuilders Association (now Experimental Soaring Association), of which he was an Honorary Life Member. Stan passed last year at age 93. He will be remembered and missed by all.

Editor's Notes:

We congratulate the Albuquerque Soaring Club on attaining their 50th anniversary since their founding in 1960.

We want to thank Bob Stephens of Argonia, Kansas for his generous gift of books, photos and memorabilia. For many years he kept clippings and publicity from NASA's Apollo project among others. His brother sent us a 500 pound crate of artifacts and books to be displayed in the museum.

We also want to acknowledge the Colorado Museum of Natural History who donated eight very large display cases to our museum. Bob Leonard and Deor Jensen drove up to Denver and returned with them in a rental truck and the hummingbird trailer. Thanks guys!

The White Sands Soaring Association

Last year the White Sands Soaring Association celebrated its 50th anniversary as documented in the October 2009 issue of *Soaring*. In completing our history of soaring in New Mexico, the following excerpt from WSSA's web site is offered here. Most of it was written by Art Davis. George Fish provided additional information.

On November 6th, 1958 eight people from Alamogordo and Holloman Air Force Base met to discuss forming a soaring club. In 1959 the charter members chipped in to buy a glider. Among the early members were Air Force Lieutenants Cliff McClure, Terry Grange, and Latiolais; Majors John Morse and Howard Ebersole; Lt. Colonel Scott Royce; Civilians Sam Whitten, Jim Pankey, Joe West, D. Gildenberg, Thom Tomascheski, Eddy Yung and Larry Edgar. It was decided to purchase a surplus WW-II Schweizer TG-3 trainer located in El Mirage. When the members came up short on cash, an interested non-member, Mr. Yacubian, loaned the club \$500 interest free. Members drove to California to pick up the TG-3.

After some searching for an airport from which the club could operate, they settled upon an airport west of Alamogordo. It was simply known as Alamogordo local. They used a Cessna 170 owned by member Joe West. Larry Edgar, working as a Senior Flight Test Engineer at Convair, had a commercial glider license dated May 24th, 1940 signed by Orville Wright. With his commercial glider rating he was qualified to be a glider instructor. In 1952 Larry flew a Pratt-Read glider from Bishop, California to an altitude of 44,255 feet MSL to set U.S. records for absolute altitude and altitude gain in a multi-place glider.

The FAA Rep in Albuquerque was not very encouraging about them starting a club. For example, even though he traveled to Alamogordo once a month, he insisted that they had to fly Joe West's 170 up to Albuquerque to demonstrate that the approved Schweizer tow hook they had installed could drop the rope.

On April 10th, 1959, this same FAA Rep was at the Alamogordo airport to watch a demo glider flight. He demanded to see Larry Edgar's glider instructor's license. In those days there was no such rating. A commercial glider pilot was permitted to instruct in gliders. When told of this, the FAA rep said, "Show me that in the regulations." They proceeded to show him. Later when club members were ready to take their

flight tests to get a glider rating, he would not ride in the glider but watched from the ground.

When the Alamogordo Municipal Airport opened across the road from the local field the club was using, they moved their operations to it. Continental Airlines started landing flights there. The FAA prohibited them from takeoffs and landings when a Continental flight was scheduled to land or takeoff. Due to the presence of strong thermals in the area there never were any conflicts.

On October 10th, 1959 the airport put on an air show. Larry Edgar flew the TG-3 in a demo with loops, stalls, and lazy eights. The FAA Rep came over and said, "You glider fellows seem to know what you are doing. The tow and all went well." After that, although he still wouldn't ride in a glider during flight tests for ratings, he started helping by running wings. They had won him over!

On September 13th, 1959 Sam Whitten and Larry Edgar flew Joe West's 170 to El Mirage and picked up a Timm primary trainer with a 220 Continental engine to tow the TG-3. The club paid about \$1,000 each for the glider and towplane. Lt. McClure owned his own Bergfalke two-place glider.

In 1960 the Timm suffered a mishap and was replaced by a PT-23 purchased by Howard Ebersole. He fitted it with a metal climb prop and Schweizer tow hook. In 1961 the Continental 220 in the PT-19 swallowed a valve and had to be replaced. He used the Timm engine that he bought from the club, recovered and painted the plane. In 1962 Howard left Alamogordo for duty in the Air Force in Alaska and let the club use the PT-23 as long as they paid the insurance and hangar fees. In 1964 he sold it to the club for \$2000. Later the club sold it for \$10,000. The same PT-23 sold recently for \$35,000.

In 1964 WSSA sold the TG-3 and bought a Schweizer 2-22 and a 1-26. The PT-23 continued to serve as towplane for many more years. Around 1975 a dust devil flipped the 2-22 on its back. A taxi mishap that collapsed the landing gear on the towplane at the same time resulted in a hiatus in operations for about 18 months. This was the only extended period of inactivity during WSSA's history. In 1984 the club sold the 2-22 and the 1-26 and purchased a Blanik L-13. The Blanik turned out to be very popular with club members for both training and

recreational flights. On April 13th, 1986 Jim Day set a New Mexico state record for altitude gain of 22,300 feet in an open class multi-place ship flying the club's L-13 from Alamogordo. Jim also flew the first certified 1,000 km out-and-return flight within the state of New Mexico in 1988 flying from Alamogordo in his Ventus to Fort Garland, Colorado.

The PT-23 was eventually replaced with a Bellanca Scout. After several mishaps and due to the lack of tail-dragger qualified tow pilots the Scout was replaced with a Cessna 182. In 1989 the WSSA built a hangar and clubhouse. They acquired a Ka-8 and a Twin Lark. Unfortunately a rope break and an off-field landing wrecked the Lark.

On February 5th, 1989, a member of WSSA, Rex Stage set several standard class altitude records for New Mexico having attained 31,650 ft. msl altitude, with an altitude gain of 24,650 ft. in his DG-300 in the Sacramento Mountains Wave Window.

Starting in the late '80s a small group from the Caprock Soaring Club from Littlefield, Texas traveled to Alamogordo during the Thanksgiving holiday to sample the soaring conditions there. Sponsored by the WSSA the event known as TurkeyFest became an annual affair. TurkeyFest attracted an enthusiastic crowd from the Albuquerque Soaring Club as well as from all over the country. A wave window was established in the nearby Sacramento Mountains with an agreement with the FAA and Holloman Air Force Base. This allowed many pilots to attain their diamond altitude badge. In 2000 the club purchased a Grob 103A Twin II Acro.

The USAF have trained many German pilots at Holloman AFB. Many of these pilots are soaring enthusiasts. One of them, Alwin Kroh, who had a CFIG, was responsible for recruiting around 75 new members to the club. He instructed 57 members to glider ratings. He negotiated the purchase of a Club Astir and the purchase of an L-23 Super Blanik following the loss of the Twin Grob. He also achieved a 1,000 km out-and-return flight with multiple out and back turn points.

Today the WSSA owns a Blanik L-13 and a L-23 as well as a Grob Club Astir. Although they've suffered several mishaps, over the years, they've never had a fatality.

Congratulations WSSA on your 50th anniversary!

CRITIC'S CORNER – *Amelia*

by: J. D. Huss

If you didn't see *Amelia* at the theater, it's now available on DVD at many stores and, by now, as a rental. If you did see *Amelia* at your local popcorn palace, you missed some of the best parts of the movie – because they were left on the cutting room floor. Authors Susan Butler – “*East to the Dawn*” and Mary S. Lovell – “*The Sound of Wings*” (the books that were the basis for the screenplay) were more interested in the details of the life and accomplishments of Amelia Earhart. As a consequence, the movie focuses more on Miss Earhart's personal life rather than the mystery and theories that surround her 1937 disappearance over the Pacific. If you are going to watch the movie for the plot, you'll be disappointed – you already know how it ends. What makes this a great movie is the simple fact it tells the true story of an intelligent, courageous, and talented woman.

While Hillary Swank is not as tall, or thin, as her character, she did an excellent job studying Amelia's voice, speech patterns, gait, and toothy smile – if the makeup artists had just given her a gap between her front teeth, she'd would have been a ringer. (Although it's not well publicized, Hilary started taking flying lessons but was told by the movie producers that she would not be permitted to solo – too big a risk to the production.)

Richard Gere is well cast as Amelia's publisher, press agent, lover, and finally husband, George Palmer Putnam, a man who was fascinated with his client and disgusted with her male counterpart – Charles Lindbergh. If he had let the make-up artists dye his hair dark brown or black and worn horn-rimmed glasses a little more often; he would have easily matched the New York publishing magnate in the newsreel clips.

While the main point of the film is Amelia's aviation career, a considerable amount of footage is spent on her private life. Unfortunately, two of these areas – the fiery divorce of George and Dorothy Putnam and Amelia's extra-marital affair with Civil Aeronautics Director Eugene Vidal, are severely edited in the final film. This is the advantage of watching the film on DVD – those deleted scenes are an addendum, as are copies of newsreel footage that were also edited out.

At the risk of appearing “sexist,” I'm going to mention this movie is a totally different definition of a “Chick Flick.” Yes, it is a film about: a woman, her marriage, her career, her extra-marital affair, and her quest. What's different is, the major players behind the cameras – producer, director, screenwriters, executive producer, casting, production designer, technical advisors and authors of the books on which the movie is based – are all ladies. Having said that, and knowing the technical advisors were all members of the 99s (the International Organization of Women Pilots, founded by Amelia and 98 other female aviators in 1929) – I believe all of them took extra care to insure this movie was an accurate portrayal of Amelia Earhart's life.

Amelia was filmed almost exclusively in South Africa. An extra on the DVD provides a look at the locations used and some reasons for the trip to the Cape of Good Hope. The most important reason seems to be – there are plenty of “Art Deco” styled airports reminiscent of the 1930s airports of the United States in South Africa. Another reason is the variation in geography. South Africa provided desert, tropical, and coastline backdrops for the filming of the flying sequences. Additionally, most of the shots of airplanes in flight are – actual airplanes in flight! Aviation purists will note the Lockheed is a model 12, not a 10E, and it's unlikely that Amelia ever flew a Bucker Jungmann emblazoned in the national colors of the Swiss Air Force. If you overlook those small departures from reality – this is a great aviation movie.

Directions to the Museum

Traveling East on Interstate 40, 35 miles from Albuquerque, bear right at exit 197 onto Old Highway 66 East Moriarty. We are the big building on your left. Traveling West go right at exit 197, entering Old Highway 66. See us on your left.

NOTE:

Don't forget to renew your membership. Due to rising costs delinquent members will no longer receive this newsletter. If we haven't heard from you in two years, you will be dropped from our mailing list. We will be sending the newsletter online to those who opt for that method of delivery.

Membership numbers and expiration dates are on your mailing labels.

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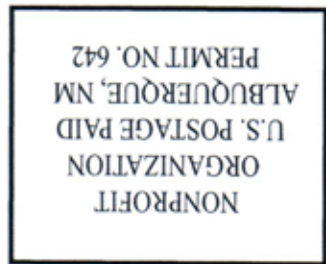
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