



# *Southwest Soaring*

Quarterly Newsletter of the U.S. Southwest Soaring Museum  
A 501 (c)(3) tax-exempt organization  
Winter 2009



Robert Talarczyk, All Rights Reserved, 2009

Schweizer 1-26A

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Cover: The 1-26 depicted here was donated to us by Bob Von Hellens. (Photo by Robert Talarczyk).

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## Museum Musings

George Applebay

One of my chief goals for the Museum is to honor the many Western soaring pioneers. Toward this goal, Pete Pankuch, at my request, has designed and built several 8 foot long display cases. The first two are dedicated to Al Santilli and Dick Johnson. We have artifacts from others whose families have contributed large amounts of personal life histories. Pete and I will arrange their artifacts and memorabilia in these cabinets. The next display will be dedicated to my friend, Jack Laister. We first met in 1957 when he spoke to our Wichita Soaring Association. Your suggestions for honoring worthy personalities will be welcome for future displays.

### Editorial

Bob Alkov

In this issue (see page 3) we are presenting a history of the Hobbs Soaring Society (HSS) located in Hobbs, New Mexico. The article was submitted by the Treasurer of the HSS, Jo Shaw. She writes, "Soaring Club histories can be dates and events but Hobbs Soaring Society is more about people, their visions and aspirations." She goes on to say "Regrettably, the details of the very first soaring activity around Hobbs have been lost with the deaths of the earliest soaring pilots, before the advent of Hobbs Soaring Society in 1969." She informs us that the history from HSS's club archives below is submitted without date or authorship.

If you want to see your club's history in these pages please send your manuscript to Robert Alkov at P.O. Box 234, Cedar Crest, New Mexico 87008-0234 with an assignment of publication rights to the USSSM. We will credit authorship to the submitter(s). We reserve the right to edit your history.

We are happy to announce that a gas-heated furnace has been installed in the Route 66 building to provide heat to the entrance and gift shop just in time for the winter. Thanks to Deor Jensen for taking charge of this project. Earlier ventilating fans had been installed to help cooling for the summer months. Thanks to Dave Johnson for honchoing the installation of the three large fans on the west side of the building near the ceiling.

## The Hobbs Soaring Society Story

Late in 1967 Larry Brow, a student at New Mexico State University at Las Cruces and a former resident of Hobbs, put on a slide show of a soaring contest held in Marfa, Texas. The films were shown in the New Mexico Bank and Trust's public meeting room in Hobbs. The audience was composed of a large group of adults of both sexes and high school students. One member of the audience, Jack Gomez, had his interest aroused by the presentation and on a subsequent trip to Dallas he stopped at every airport that had gliders and inquired about possible Schweizer 2-22's for sale.

In Big Spring, Texas, Orville Shapland mentioned to Jack Gomez that Curtis Erwin and Richard Daily of Midland, Texas, were negotiating with a Mr. Hendricks of Perryton, Texas, to buy his Schweizer 2-22 and 1-26. Hendricks wanted to sell them both as a package. Erwin and Daily didn't really want the 2-22. Gomez called Daily and made arrangements to meet him in Midland. Daily confirmed that he and Erwin wanted to buy the 1-26, but didn't want the 2-22. A deal was made for Gomez to purchase the 2-22.

Meanwhile Fred A. Heaton of Hobbs had been taking glider training in a 2-22 from Roy Schlemeyer in Odessa. When Jack Gomez learned that Fred Heaton had checked out in the 2-22 he arranged for a meeting with him on January 1, 1968. Heaton agreed to purchase the 2-22, Serial No. 81, and listed it as an asset of his company, Heaton Construction. The reason for this arrangement was that the Hobbs Soaring Association was just organizing and hadn't time to incorporate yet. Later on September 23, 1968 he bought 1-26 No. 236 from Rockwall, Texas. The original club members included Joe Brazo and his wife Vonnie, both whom had soloed in a 2-22, but with no power experience. Paul Webb an early member of the club had power experience, but with no license. He soloed the 2-22 in short time. Doctors Dampeer and Johnson of Kermit, Texas, joined for a short time. Dr. Dampeer transitioned to the 1-26 and Dr. Johnson soloed the 2-22. Another early member of the club was Larry Kopchek, an engineer with Continental Airlines, who had no power experience. He soloed in the 2-22 then transitioned into the 1-26. Vince Hinds, with previous glider experience, came from upstate New York and soon soloed both ships.

Don Yarbo and Jack Gomez both with no prior experience soloed both gliders. Other early members were L. Dickson Griffith, A.C. Holder and his daughter Betty from Lovington, Texas, Dick Marshall, Hilliard Moore and Dr. Rex Quiqley from Hobbs. Dick Marshall instructed early on, but Roy Schlemeyer from Odessa did most of the instructing.

The Hobbs Soaring Society was chartered on May 3<sup>rd</sup>, 1969. Dick Marshall was named President, Fred Heaton, Vice-President and Jack Gomez, Secretary-Treasurer. Charter members listed alphabetically were Gomez, Griffith, Heaton, Hinds, Holder, Koch, Moore, Quigley and Yarrow. Other members who joined later in 1969 were Gerald Bowman, Mike Levy and Bill Peavey.

A motion was passed at the charter meeting to secure a loan of \$9,400 to purchase the equipment from Fred Heaton. Don Yarbo later said, " [this] had the advantage of an incentive, that we were on the note and we needed some help to pay it off."

Normal attrition took place when Joe and Vonnie Brazo and Paul Webb moved to Pecos just prior to incorporation. Drs. Dampeer and Johnson also dropped out before incorporation. Fred Heaton moved shortly after incorporation.

The club thrived, according to Don Yarbo, until an individual moved to town in 1970 and attempted to convert the old air base (Hobbs International Airport-HIAP) to an international air center for flying in bonded goods from overseas, putting them through customs and distributing them nationwide. The club was evicted from the base and had to move to Lovington, New Mexico. However, the lack of a tow plane there and short runways put the club in a bind and eventually they had to sell their equipment and disband.

After about a year later, Don Yarbo wrote, the individual left town in the middle of the night leaving investors holding the bag. The club reorganized, moved back to HIAP, built a hangar, bought another 2-22, acquired a winch and resumed operations.

In 1970 HSS hosted the North American 1-26 Championships. This was the first of many outstand -

ing soaring competitions held in Hobbs, either solely hosted by HSS or held in conjunction with the National Soaring Foundation, chartered in 1976.



The Hobbs Soaring Society "Milk Truck" Winch  
Built by Roy Schlemeyer

Hobbs Soaring Society members were instrumental in helping stage the 1983 World Championships, hosted by the National Soaring Foundation and numerous other national and regional contests over the years.

Contributing to HSS's growth over time were the inestimable contributions of the time and talents of Doug Stogner, winch-operator extraordinaire and instructor Ralph Douthit. Currently members hold 14 of the 29 New Mexico General Category single place distance soaring records including the State Open Free Distance record held by Joann B. Shaw.



Doug Stogner

A one thousand kilometer Diplome was earned flying from Hobbs by HSS member Joann B. Shaw. HSS member Larry Pardue earned current state Standard Class Free Distance to a Goal of 367.77 statute miles in a 1-26. HSS member Charles Shaw earned current state Standard Class Free Distance of 405.55 Statute miles in a 1-26. Thirteen 1-26 flights exceeding 311 miles have been made by HSS members Paul Elliott, Jr., Larry Pardue, Charles W. Shaw and Joann B. Shaw flying from Hobbs.

(The following data on records held by HSS members is taken from SSA's web page [www.ssa.org](http://www.ssa.org) Records Soaring Achievement Tab on home page- US & State Records)

Current

Open Class – NM State Record

Free distance – Joann B. Shaw  
Free Out/Return Distance – Joann B. Shaw  
Free 3 Turn Point Distance – Joann B. Shaw  
St Distance to Goal – Joann B. Shaw

15 Meter NM State Record

Free Distance – Paul Elliott  
St. Distance to Goal – Larry Pardue (in 1-26)

Standard Class – NM State Record

Free Distance - Charles Shaw (in 1-26)  
St. Distance to Goal – Larry Pardue (in 1-26)

Sports - NM State Record

Free distance – Charles Shaw  
Free Out and Return Distance – Joann B. Shaw  
Free 3 Turn Point Distance – Charles Shaw  
St. Distance to Goal – Joann B. Shaw  
Out and Return Distance - Joann B. Shaw  
Triangle Distance – Joann B. Shaw

NM Feminine

16 Current Feminine records held by Joann B. Shaw  
(4 Current National Feminine Records from Hobbs held by Joann B. Shaw)

Superseded

World Feminine 100 KM Speed – Joann B. Shaw  
World Feminine Distance to Goal – Joann B. Shaw

Other Achievements

FAI 3 Diamonds (in a 1-26) Larry Purdue  
Diamond Altitude Over Hobbs- Paul Elliott



Hobbs Soaring Society has never owned a towplane. Launches have only been made by winch or truck/tow. In 2009 two-thirds of these launches contacted lift and allowed the pilot to climb out on the first try. The club has managed to grow and increase financially while keeping some of the lowest dues and fees. The fee to join the club is \$75.00 with dues at \$10.00 per month. The Schweizer 2-33 rents for \$7.80 an hour and the 1-26 rents for \$6.00 an hour. Truck tow launches are \$6.00 each.

Ed. Note: I was privileged to be a tow pilot during two different contests in Hobbs. The Albuquerque Soaring Club had volunteered our second Pawnee towplane for tow duty in Hobbs. I volunteered to fly down there and help out. The members of the Hobbs Soaring Society were very helpful, friendly and hospitable. Bob and Joann Dittert ran the contests I was towing for and they were outstanding contest directors. It was during these contests that I was privileged to meet Charlie Spratt, Charlie Minner, Karl Striedieck and many other notables.



Thanks to Craig Angus for this century old Christmas card of Santa flying an ultra light ....



The editor in Albuquerque Soaring Clubs' Pawnee

**NOTE:**

Due to increasing costs and more stringent requirements from the Post Office for large mailings such as ours we are would like to gradually transition to online mailings. Besides the pictures viewed online are so much nicer in color. Those of you who have email addresses listed with your membership application will be notified when the newsletter is posted online. If you haven't listed your email address with us, please send it before our spring mailing in March 2010. You will continue to receive the newsletter by snail mail unless you notify us that you would rather read it online. Newsletters are also available for viewing on our website at: [www.swsoaring\\_museum.org](http://www.swsoaring_museum.org)



and this ad from 1909

## Preserve a piece of Living History, Support the Glider Restoration Fund

The USSWSM Foundation Board is announcing its plans to promote the Museum in 2010. The Foundation is establishing a glider restoration fund to assist the museum with its mission of preservation and restoration of significant gliders.

The gliders that are donated to the Museum often arrive in need of basic maintenance and varying degrees of repair. George Applebay and experienced museum volunteers evaluate each donation to determine what needs to be done to prepare the glider for eventual display. Each glider's history is documented and researched. Our first restoration project will be Harland Ross's R-6, which is in need of a lot of repair.

### How You Can Help

Your donation to the Glider Restoration Fund will purchase the materials necessary to refurbish the gliders. Museum members and others volunteer their time and effort to effect the repairs. Students from the Aviation Department at CNMCC have also worked with the museum on restoration.

Please send your donation to the USSWSM Foundation, and indicate on the memo line Glider Restoration Fund. Our address is: P. O. Box 1225, Los Alamos, NM 87544.

### Boy Scout Recognition Day

Scouts who have received Aviation Badges will be honored on Scout Recognition Day at the Museum. Scouts will have the opportunity to work on and complete the activities required to get their Aviation Badge. If you have been a Scout or a volunteer with the BSA, we invite you to assist us in this project.

Please call or email Mary Moskal for more information on how you can participate in this important day. We will be contacting the local BSA council to determine the best available dates.

## Arrange a VIP Tour With Your Organization

Many organizations, clubs, senior centers and church groups would appreciate the opportunity to view the wonderful gliders at the museum and the displays featuring the contributions and awards of pilots significant in soaring, and many interesting historical artifacts. Groups will be able to view a presentation about the history of the museum, and take a tour of the facilities. Tour plans may include lunch or refreshments at area restaurants. We would be happy to visit your organization with information about the Museum. To arrange a presentation or a tour for your organization, please contact Steve and Mary Moskal.

“It is the goal of the Southwest Soaring Museum Foundation to provide future financial stability for the Museum so that the history of this piece of aviation can be preserved in order to provide knowledge and inspiration to future generations”

For further information about the Foundation, please contact **Steve Moskal**, [cometkid46@Q.com](mailto:cometkid46@Q.com) or **Mary Moskal**, Co-Chairman [wonderwoman45@Q.com](mailto:wonderwoman45@Q.com) 505-298-7563.

Look for foundation news online...web page coming soon!



Poster Created by **Bob Talarczyk** of **Darkhorse Design**

Bob has donated this handsome poster to the museum's gift shop. It is available for \$10.00 in the museum.

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