Those early years of aviation

By Pam Farris

The early years of Oregon aviation were exciting ones. Few rules or regulations existed. Flying was "seat of the pants" without instruments, weather briefings, maps, and sometimes even without gas gauges. Flying during those early years required courage, risks, and a certain amount of daring. It also required publicity and promotion to get people to fly and keep them flying.

No one knew this fact better than Tex Rankin who operated a flying school on Swan Island. In 1928, he hired a newly soloed young woman as his secretary, switchboard operator, and most important, publicity person.

Ann Bohrer, a petite lady of 86, not only set some aviation "firsts," she also tirelessly promoted flying to the public. She was the first woman pilot to solo off of Swan Island, the first woman to land on both Swan Island and Portland International Airports, the first woman to land a float plane at Portland's seaplane base, and the first woman to make a parachute jump.

Although she was a capable pilot, Ann never flew professionally. She flew for enjoyment and turned her talent to telling the public about the excitement and pleasure of flying.

Ann explained that as Rankin's publicity person, she "...would try to drum up business.

Ann Bohrer, Aviation Writer and Publicist

Everybody liked to keep their feet on the ground. Nobody wanted to fly and you had to get out and tell the public what you were doing and how safe it was...really sell yourself in those days.

"Every morning I would call the various newspapers if I had any news." She called pilots and airports, gathered the news and her brother, Walt Bohrer, wrote it.

"Each newspaper had an aviation editor," she continued.

"We'd call them, and they'd come down and see what was going on; we'd take them up for a flight...if something unusual happened we'd call them immediately so they could get it in the paper.

"We had to have a lot of publicity in those days to get people to fly."

The Rankin Flying School had its own monthly publication called Tale Spins, which began in 1926. In 1929, Ann and Walt took over publication of the magazine, thus beginning a lifelong career in aviation writing.

Tale Spins promoted aviation by looking at its lighter side. The Continued on page 4
Director's letter

By Cynthia Bounds

With the start of a new decade I always find myself reflecting on the past. Asking myself if I did do all that I wanted to accomplish. Where did I go wrong and what did I do right? I pick out special reflections of the past and work to make them permanent, unforgettable memories. I found starting the new year and the new decade that I was applying the same process to my efforts with the Oregon Aviation Museum. I realized that the last decade for the museum was filled with "firsts." It will be a lasting memory of our beginning.

1983 was the year the Oregon Aviation Museum, Inc. become incorporated in Oregon as a non-profit public supported entity. This was the year four members of the Antique and Classic Aircraft Club moved ahead with their goal of creating a museum that would collect, preserve, restore, and exhibit for public viewing Oregon aviation artifacts, including flight exhibitions. It was also to be established as a resource center for Oregon aviation historical research.

Terms of the incorporation required the establishment of a board of trustees. Their job would then be one of governing the public trust by setting policy and guiding the museum's direction for development. The first board of trustees was then established. The years between 1983 and 1989 were years of dedicated work. The kind of work many people would not like because it receives so little recognition for the many hours of hard work. But the relentless work by the board of trustees paid off. This group of thirteen laid a foundation that will hold solid for many years to come.

Time was spent searching for a suitable site for the museum. Unfortunately there weren't any existing locations in Oregon that met all points of the location criteria used in the search, so the decision had to be made to build a facility. The first acquisitions of aircraft and aviation artifacts took place. The first By-laws were created. The first membership categories and definitions were created and most important, initial fund raising began.

A membership category that deserves special recognition is the museum's Lifetime members. This group of people worked alongside the board of trustees, providing solutions to some of the problems encountered by the trustees. Very boldly the lifetime members stepped forward with funding when funding was scarce. This membership category was discontinued as of December 31, 1989, but the group remains as a very special and important part of the museum's growth and future.

What have we done right? We as a group are still learning but we are on the right track and moving forward.

Where are we going? We are going to build a new exciting tourist center of the highest quality in Cottage Grove, Ore. With the continued dedication and support of our membership, the Oregon Aeronautics Division, the State of Oregon and the City of Cottage Grove we will succeed.

The conclusion that I ended with after my recount of the 80's for the Oregon Aviation Museum was a positive one. The 80's set the stage for implementation in the 90's of new goals, new achievements and maybe, a few more firsts. A big thank you to everyone that helped with our success in the 80's. We couldn't have come this far without your support. As we move into the 90's and our vision of the future challenges us to grow and change, it is with pride that everyone can reflect on our accomplishments.

The O. A. M. Newsletter is published by the Oregon Aviation Museum administrative and membership office. Typesetting and design by the Cottage Grove Sentinel. Please send any comments to the Oregon Aviation Museum, 78833 Airport Rd., Cottage Grove, OR 97424. (503) 942-9129.
Engine and aircraft

Museum receives new displays

It is no accident that a quality museum program will garner quality display items and this engine and aircraft which have recently been donated to the museum are excellent examples. No museum display can be complete until a World War 1 era engine of the “rotary” type design can be displayed. This LeRhone M-60 is a prime example of the developmental stages which aero-engines passed through from the crude 12 horsepower engine of the Wright brothers to the awe-inspiring blast of current rocket engines sending astronauts to space.

The rotary engine powered numerous WWI fighter aircraft and will forever be remembered for their smell of exhausted castor oil, the sound of the “blip” switch cutting the ignition off and on as the crude “slide” carburetor metered one setting—full throttle. Our particular LeRhone has added significance to Oregonians as it was found in a barn near Salem and then eventually donated to the museum by Mr. Bud Jury of LaPine, Oregon. With the engine came a 17” X 24” oil painting of the aircraft which used the LeRhone engine — the Farman “Sport.” Our thanks to Mr. Jury for his splendid donation.

The 1933 Rupert Special is a diminutive single place aircraft built by Mr. Walter Rupert of Portland. This amateur-built craft was licensed and operated under the rules established by the State of Oregon. Undoubtedly the most colorful period of our state’s aviation history was during the 1930’s when Oregon was the last bastion of freedom for state licensed amateur builder/pilots. The Rupert Special is the epitome of superb craftsmanship, ingenuity, and design excellence which is a living tribute to Oregonians who built their own aircraft and especially Mr. Rupert, who’s handiwork is so well displayed. The museum is most fortunate to have acquired this particular aircraft. And fortunate to have both still photos and a movie clip of the Rupert Special taken about 1940 at Bernard Field in Beaverton.

The Rupert Special was picked up by museum members and trustees at Evergreen Field in Vancouver, Washington in late January. Also present was Mr.

LeRhone M-60 engine

Rupert himself, now 83 years old. Mr Rupert was able to identify his airplane (he hadn’t seen it for over 40 years), and chat with reporters from Channel 6 News, Channel 12 News of Portland and the Oregonian Newspaper. The Rupert Special will undergo a complete restoration bringing it back to its original configuration for museum display. If you would like to help with this endeavor, contributions of both money and time will be needed. Please call the Oregon Aviation Museum office at 942-9129 and become a part of this worthy and significant project.

Last chance for Entertainment '90 books

OAM is selling “Entertainment '90” discount books as a fundraising project. Cost is $27 per book of which $5.50 is retained by OAM. If you eat out, travel, or attend sporting events anywhere in western Oregon this book will pay for itself very quickly. Discounts are also included for hotels and motels on the mainland and Hawaii, admission to the San Diego Zoo, Knots Berry Farm, the Omnidome, Seattle Aquarium and many more attractions. Books are available at the Cottage Grove Airport office or may be obtained by calling the Museum office, 942-9129.

Congratulations!

Congratulations to Patrick Henry, a museum member from Jacksonville, Ore. His Fokker tri-plane recently appeared on the cover of Trade-A-Plane magazine.
Early years, continued from page 1

magazine included anecdotes, cartoons, humorous stories and personal experiences. Ann had her own column "Wing Overs" which contained news about people and "...crazy things that happened to individuals."

The magazine eventually achieved national and international recognition and became the first magazine for passengers carried on all domestic airlines and four European airlines. Admiral Byrd even took issues to the North and South Poles for his men to read.

While working and writing for Rankin, Ann wrote a monthly column for Western Flying, a national magazine out of Los Angeles. She covered aviation events and pilot experiences in Oregon and Washington. She also wrote feature stories and news items for Popular Aviation, Sportsman Pilot and In Flight.

When she wasn't writing, Ann worked at promotional events put on by Rankin. She served as secretary-treasurer for the Oregon Air Tour, organized by Rankin and some Portland businessmen as another way to promote aviation. This weeklong tour of Oregon cities included a hundred planes and as many as two hundred people.

The pilots in the tour put on demonstrations and gave passengers rides. Ann brought in the passengers. Later, she collected 10 percent of the pilots' revenue to help with the tour expenses.

Weekends were often spent barnstorming in the Northwest with Rankin and his instructors. Different groups would fly to the beach, small towns and even to Seattle to put on airshows and give people rides. Again, Ann was at the forefront to publicize the event, sell tickets and bring in passengers.

She rarely missed an opportunity to promote aviation and never lacked material for her columns and feature articles. She admits that she "spent more time at the airport than at home."

After her job with the Rankin School ended, Ann became the office manager for an airplane builder at Salem Municipal Airport. During that time, she read about Eleanor Smith who was one of the first official hostesses at an East Coast airport. She showed the item to her boss who agreed it would be a good idea for the Salem Airport to have a hostess. Business was picking up with more planes flying in everyday.

The city approved the idea, and Ann became Salem airport's official hostess complete with a uniform patterned after the Army uniform. "If they were newcomers, I'd welcome them to Salem, and it lent a little prestige to the company to have an airport hostess." Her job also included greeting dignitaries who came to Salem and once included a fan dancer who came to perform in the city.

An additional requirement of the job was primary and advanced first aid training so Ann could assist passengers who were sick on arrival. Most of the illnesses, she felt, were due to fright and lack of pressurized cabins.

Ann quit flying in 1941 when she went to work for the U.S. Government. However, she continued writing columns and feature articles for aviation magazines. She also co-authored three books with her brother and is currently working on a sequel to one of those books.

Sitting in her small office, decorated with photographs of herself and some of aviation's famous, she reflected on her 60 year love affair with aviation. "A lot happened in the last half century — 50 years, that's a long time. We're still in it, we're still writing...we have never gotten out of it."

First foundation grant received

The Oregon Aviation Museum is very pleased to announce that they have received their first foundation grant from the Woodard Family Foundation. Notification came to the museum in December of the Woodard Foundation grant and in the letter accompanying their pledge the Foundation expressed that they "liked the concept and feel it will be a real plus for Cottage Grove and Lane County."

The grant will be applied toward the museum's Pioneer Capital Campaign. The goal of the Capital Campaign is to raise a minimum of seven million dollars for construction of the museum on property located at the Cottage Grove Airport. Pledges are payable over a period of up to five years.

Everyone at the Oregon Aviation Museum is very grateful to the Woodard Family Foundation's foresight in seeing the significant benefits to our project and their willingness to make a financial commitment in support of our efforts.
The guiding light

Remember back to last summer, July 22, 1989? This was the day the airway beacon tower was moved from Creswell butte to its new home on the property of the Oregon Aviation Museum. This was a very exciting day for all of us, but its lasting impression moved one of our museum members to write a poem about beacons. The Oregon Aviation Museum newsletter is very proud to be able to bring this poem to print.

THE BEACON

The Beacon that warm golden light flashing in the distance, bring us home, guide us through the night.

The cold hard and numbing, the wind a demon of the Arctic’s best, the Beacon in the distance means safety, love, warmth, and rest.

Stumbling through the darkness, falling through the black night, deep fearful tremors, eyes straining for that light.

The drone of the engine, like the beat of his heart, pulling at his harness for the Beacon to do its part.

To fly in face of danger, down the corridor of life, the Beacon’s there to guide you, a light burning through the strife.

In search of the Beacon, we push on through the night, with wings of silver, souls wrapped in leather, both covered with ice.

The fuel is almost empty, there is no place left to go, fly on in the darkness, waiting for the Beacon’s warming glow.

And then in the distance for an instant is it real? Is it true? Wait a long moment, in the haze the Beacon comes sweeping through.

Ah, the Beacon, the Beacon, standing all alone, sending out your golden light, to bring mere mortals home.

Oh the Beacon, the Beacon, sentinel of the past, we honor you and take time to thank you at long last!

VP-2 airplane

Homebuilt aircraft gift

The Oregon Aviation Museum is most fortunate to have received the gift of this VP-2 airplane into its collection from Roy and Virginia Collier of Ashland, Ore. The VP-2 is shown here flying in Hawaii, the island of Oahu, Kolakole Pass at 3500 feet, October, 1978.

Some facts about the airplane:
   Designed by W. S. Evans
   Serial # - 1070
   Built by Roy W. Collier
   Powered by — 2100cc Revmaster conversion of VW auto engine
   First flight - October 23, 1977
   This aircraft is also published as a representative of its type in Jane’s All the World’s Airplanes.

A big thank you to Roy and Virginia Collier for their gift. It is a wonderful example of a “homebuilt” aircraft.

Calendar

The Oregon Aviation Museum has some great one day events scheduled for April and May.
Check our next newsletter for details or call the museum office 942-9129
**New members**

**Renewals and contributors**

Membership renewal statements were mailed to members whose dues expired December 31, 1989. So far, some 40 percent of the members are renewing at a higher level of support than the previous classification. Statements are being mailed as dues are due and newsletter mailing labels also show membership expiration dates.

**LIFETIME**
Willamette Valley 99s
Jan Hedberg, Corvallis
David Urban, Monroe
Guy Urban, Monroe
*Christopher Griffin, Tangent
*John Lorence, Independence
*Verda Giustina, Eugene
Klamath Falls EAA Chapter 411
*John Lorence, Independence
*John Shafer, Dallas
*Lloyd Williams, Cottage Grove
George Zoller, Cottage Grove

**BENEFACTORS**
Bill Barrett, Eugene
*Paul & Lola Skirvin, Philomath

**CORPORATE**
Bohemia, Inc., Eugene
Heath Logging, Inc., Cottage Grove
Siuslaw Valley Bank, Eugene

**SUSTAINING**
Eric Pearson, Eugene
Jim Dwyer, Eugene
*Royce Beatty, Myrtle Creek
*Merle Mills, Ashland
*Larry Munson, Beaverton

**FAMILY**
Clifford Schrock & Carol Bell, Portland
William & Catherine Kelly, Petaluma, CA
Clarence McIntosh, Newberg
Linda Katzen, Ashland
Robert Moffitt, MD, Springfield
*Geri Nyman, Casa Grande, AZ

**INDIVIDUAL**
Tony Rasmussen, Springfield
George Genevro, Salem
Iris Byrd, Estacada
Don Generaux, Vancouver, WA
Gene Hymph, Eugene
Patty Vial, Eugene
Thomas, Egan, Eugene
George Poling, Salem
Dan Frese, Eugene
Herb Hobi, Roseburg
Bob Wolf, Cottage Grove
Arthur Acques, Eugene
*Lloyd Amacher, Walla Walla, WA
Allen Rose, Lebanon
Claymore Needham, Roseburg
Sara McCracken, Anchorage, AK
Roy Niederer, LaGrande
Robert Wilson, North Bend
*Elgieon Johnson, Dexter
*Al Slinker, Enterprise
*Bob Hollowell, Corvallis
*Aron Faegre, Portland

**CONTRIBUTORS**
Jim & Nora Beck, Tigard
George Zoller, Cottage Grove
Ben Deatherage, Cottage Grove
Randy Stout, Eugene
Leroy Schell, Klamath Falls
Don Abraham, Springfield
Truman Jones, Portland
Dick Hopkins, Menlo Park, CA
William Trumm, Canby
Dorothy Collier, Klamath Falls
Hank Bullock, Hillsboro
Bob & Mary Rider, Roseburg

**PIONEER CAPITAL CAMPAIGN**
Harold Thompson, Roseburg
Verda Giustina, Eugene
Ray & Flo Costello, Corvallis
Hal & Carol Skinner, Springfield
Woodard Family Foundation, Cottage Grove
Wilbur & Catherine Heath, Cottage Grove
Kay & Allen Alsing, Ashland
Malcolm Buffum, Portland
Elwood & Betty Hedberg, Portland

*Indicates renewing members
Museum merchandise for sale

Have you wondered where you can get the Oregon Aviation Museum's merchandise during the winter months? It's simple. Just give the museum office a call (503)942-9129 or write 78833 Airport Road, Cottage Grove, OR 97424. We will be happy to mail you any of the items listed below. Please allow 2 to 3 weeks delivery.

PUDDLE JUMPERS—A great toy for the young and the old. They are made of hard wood for durability and they come with their own technical flight manual for $2.50.

T SHIRTS—Available in white, gray or navy blue. In sizes small, medium, large and extra-large, also available in children sizes 6-8, and 14-16. $8.00 for Adults and $6 for children.

HATS—They are a very nice gray corduroy adjustable hat with the museum logo in blue and white on the front. Hats are $7.00.

AVIATION PRINTS—Hand drawn ink prints by aviation Artist Doug Kinsley of a Mig-21F and a KC-135A. Prints are signed and numbered by the artist. They are sold unframed for $18.00.

TOBE BAGS—An off white canvas bag 15" X 12" with canvas straps. The museum logo in royal blue appears on one side. A very durable bag for $12.00.

FLIGHT JACKETS—These are tailor-made, aviator-style, leather flight jackets. Each jacket is made from hand-selected matched European leathers and can be designed just the way you want it. Price for the Aviator jacket is $225. You may also add original hand painted nose art to your jacket for an additional $120. Call the museum office for more information.

Don't forget to include $1.50 per item for mailing. Be sure to include your telephone number in case we have a question.

Fly with the Aviation Pioneers!
Become a member of the Oregon Aviation Museum

Name of member
Mailing Address Phone

Annual membership dues:

$10 Annual Associate □ $500 Corporate Sponsor □ $50 Annual Sustaining □
$100 Benefactor □ $25 Annual Family □ $500 and up Patron □

Clip and Send to: Oregon Aviation Museum, Inc., 78833 Airport Road, Cottage Grove, OR 97424
Gifts in excess of your basic dues are tax deductible within the stipulation of the law.
Fourth biennial Oregon Air Tour

Cottage Grove, Oregon — The fourth biennial Oregon Air Tour, sponsored this year by The Oregon Antique and Classic Aircraft Club (OACAC), and the Oregon Aviation Museum (OAM) will include over 850 miles of flying, camping, and adventure during the first seven days of July. Starting at Cottage Grove with the OACAC annual meeting/camp-out on Saturday June 30, TOUR 90 winds up in Ashland with the EAA annual meeting on July 7-8.

Revisiting the historic Oregon Air Tours of the 1930's, the club provides those who join the flight for only one or two days, or for the complete tour, a chance to use a pilot skills, see interesting parts of the state, tell communities about general aviation, and this year help promote the Oregon Aviation Museum.

Museum staff and Trustees will join the tour this year to present the OAM story at stops in Florence, Tillamook, Astoria, Vancouver and Camas WA, Hood River, Hermiston, John Day,

Canyon City, Prineville, Sisters, Prospect, Montague CA, and Ashland.

TOUR 90 information flyers will be out soon, but if you just can't wait, or need to make plans now for that July vacation, contact Tour Boss Elwood Hedberg, 7903 SW Ruby Terrace, Portland, Ore. 97219 or telephone (503) 246-7611 and his machine will take the message.