Annual Meeting Recognizes Woman Warrior

Portlander Hazel Ying Lee was a WASP during World War II. Tragically killed in a P-63 crash at Great Falls, Montana, she is now remembered in a new PBS biographical film, "A Brief Flight: Hazel Ying Lee and the Women Who Flew Pursuit." It will premiere at Portland State University on Saturday, April 26 and the Society's annual meeting will be held in conjunction with this special event. Come join us for a special afternoon of history!

A BRIEF FLIGHT: HAZEL YING LEE AND THE WOMEN WHO FLEW PURSUIT

Narrated by "ER" actress Ming-Na, this film will be seen on PBS stations, around the country, beginning May 1st.

A new documentary that tells the inspiring true story of Hazel Ying Lee, the first Chinese-American woman to fly for the United States military.

An untold story of service and sacrifice for country that unfolds through original film footage, home movies, and rare photographs, interviews with Hazel’s family and female flying buddies showcases a moving portrait of a woman whose love of flying allowed her to serve her country during the difficult years of World War II.

Hazel Ying Lee, a native of Portland, Oregon took her first flight in 1932, at age 19. In the same year, she received her pilot's license at a time when less than 1% of American pilots were women. A pioneer in women's aviation during the 1930's, after Pearl Harbor, Hazel was one of the 1,000 American women who put their civilian lives on hold, and joined the Women Airforce Service Pilots program. The "WASP" was created in an effort to sustain the war effort and overcome the shortage of male pilots at home.

In 1944, Hazel went on to join the elite group of women pilots who flew Fighter planes for the United States military. Hazel and the other women transported thousands of Fighters (also called "Pursuit" aircraft) as they poured out of American factories. Over 70 different kinds of aircraft were flown by the women pilots, including P-39's, P-63's, P-47's and P-51's.

Finally, the inspiring true story of Hazel Ying Lee and The Women Who Flew Pursuit, A Lawas Films Production.

Further information and interesting links can be found at the following web site:
http://www.geocities.com/profile77/asianamericanveterans.html

The location for both OAHs annual meeting and program is: Portland State University, Hoffmann Hall, 1833 SW 11th, Portland, starting at 1:30 Saturday, April 26th. Parking is available at street meters or PSU parking structure #3, 1631 SW 12th. Co-producers Hom and Rosenberg will be on hand to introduce the film and discuss the project. The screening is free. A special dinner will follow at 5:30 at the Mandarin Cove restaurant, 111 SW Columbia, Portland. OAHs members are invited and need to RSVP to one of the board members no later than April 19th. Per person cost is $20, plus gratuity.
RANDOM FLIGHT

BY ROGER STARR

One year ago in this column, I attempted to impart my enthusiasm for the program to be presented by John Patton at our April annual membership meeting. I followed that up with an "I told you so" in the September Newsletter. Well, this is a repeat of that urging for our 2003 annual meeting program. As you can see from the article, our program will be a major departure from what we have offered in the past.

OAHS's involvement in the Hazel Ying Lee documentary film project had its genesis over three years ago when I received a call from Alan Rosenberg, the film's co-producer and director. Mind you, Alan was calling from Southern California. Does Hollywood resonate! Well, Alan is not from that fabled film fantasyland. Thank goodness. But he is close by. He asked me about material we may have relating to a WASP named Hazel Ying Lee, Portland's Chinese flying club of the 1930's, Allen Greenwood, etc. I had to admit that he had me stumped on two out the three. But we were able to provide some interesting photos, film clips and information to satisfy Alan's request.

It is very exciting to see archived material used by professionals in a manner you could not imagine. Seeing the final product helps to spur you on and see more clearly the value in the preservation of such collections. Without such collections, a program of this importance would not be possible to produce.

The generous support of our members and donors allows us to perform the essential tasks of collecting and preserving the treasures from the past. The process also reveals how much we may have lost. The larger our membership base, the more we can do. Get the hint? Why not invite a guest to the annual meeting. What better way to show others the reason OAHS exists.

I have never had the opportunity to attend a premiere screening and am very excited to be involved in this event. Remember, this will be the first time the public has had an opportunity to view the documentary prior to airings nationwide on local public broadcast television stations. OAHS is very fortunate to be an underwriter and contributor to the filming project as well as a sponsor of the premiere showing and celebration dinner.

As I noted one year ago, I would encourage you to make a special effort to be on hand April 26th to enjoy this once-in-a-lifetime opportunity. And, we would really like to have you join us that evening for dinner. Simply call one of our board members by April 19th with the number in your party.

JOIN THE OAHS!

If you're reading this, you have an interest in Oregon's rich aviation past. If you're not yet a member, please join the Society in its efforts to preserve and celebrate Oregon Aviation History. Fill in the blocks below and return to: Oregon Aviation Historical Society, PO Box 553, Cottage Grove, OR 97424.

Contributor - $100 Sustaining - $50 Family - $35 Associate - $25

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Skills and Interests________________________

Newsletter Editor: William Villani. The OAHS Newsletter is published by the Society (PO Box 553, Cottage Grove, OR 97424) for the benefit of its members. Member contributions are welcome but should relate to Oregon aviation history. Contents © 2003 OAHS.
We are not surprised by the lack of guesses received in identifying the January 2003 mystery ship. There was apparently only one produced. Powered by a supercharged Cirrus engine, it was built by the Pacific School of Engineering in Portland to participate in the 1930 All-America Flying Derby. PS of E was a predecessor to Benson Polytechnic Institute, now Benson High School. B. B. Smith was the designer. The picture of the aircraft appeared in the September 1930 issue of Aero Digest as part of the then coverage of that year’s Derby. The airplane is referred to as the PS of E racer. The racers started at Detroit and ended in the same city after completing a 5,541 mile course that took them south to Texas and west to California. For reasons yet unknown to us, our plane did not complete the cross-country race.

Dick Geist apparently purchased the airplane while living in the Seattle area as a Boeing employee. He took it with him to Texas and finally Oklahoma, where it was located by Tim Talen. Interestingly, Tim last saw the little racer 40 years ago while visiting Dick in Tacoma. It now resides at our History Center awaiting restoration. We certainly have an enviable record of bringing Oregon artifacts back home. This is the third airplane that we have brought back to roost where it belongs.

While in the Portland area for the annual meeting, why not stop by the Lenhardt Interpretive Center located at the Lenhardt Airpark (above photo) just east of Hubbard? You may remember that Jack Lenhardt has been very generous in allowing OAHS to display two airplanes and other artifacts in one of his large hangars along with several of his restored helicopters. Several pictures and other items have recently been placed on display. Also, for those members in the local area, we can always use some help improving the displays. We owe a big thank you to Jack for his support of our efforts to bring Oregon aviation history to people in the northern part of our state.

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Small Riding Mower
Variable-speed Bandsaw
Infocus-type Projector
Digital Camera
DVD Player
Metal Shelving Units
Office-size Paper Cutter

The above items are still needed by the Society. Give now for a good feeling and a tax deduction!
FROM THE ARCHIVES

By Carol Skinner

Authors Walt and Ann Bohrer, brother and sister, both started flying in the Portland area. Walt began play "hookey" from Benson Polytechnic High School in 1925 to begin flying with Tex Rankin and soloed in a Curtiss Jenny in 1926. He continued flying lessons and became Assistant Public Relations Director for Rankin Flying Service. When Tex established the Rankin Aeronautical Academy in Tulare, California under contract to train U.S. pilots, Walt became Director of Public Relations and Editor-in-Chief of the USAF cadet magazine "Rank 'n File". He continued writing, cartooning and public relations work throughout his working days. Walt died in Tigard in 1998 at the age of 89.

Ann Bohrer was the second woman to learn to fly in Portland in 1927 and first woman in the northwest to make a parachute jump in 1928. She was also the first woman to fly a U.S. Navy fighter plane from take-off to landing. Besides co-authoring books with her brother, Ann was a feature writer for WESTERN FLYING and SPORTSMAN PILOT, and wrote a weekly column for the U.S. Department of the Interior newsletter. She was employed in the Portland office of the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service for 30 years until her retirement in 1976. Ann passed away in Portland at the age of 89 in 1993.

The Oregon Aviation Historical Society is fortunate to have received the collections of these two pioneer Oregon pilots and authors. The collections are in the process of being archived and will be available to the public for research and viewing in the near future.

The first book Walt and Ann co-authored, 'TWENTY SMILING EAGLES' was written to relate some hilarious and closely guarded episodes in the flying adventures of 20 noted flyers. Among the pilots whose exploits are told are Tex Rankin, Danny Grecco, Gen. James Doolittle, Arthur Godfrey and Eddie Rickenbacker. When the book was published in 1962, Gen. Doolittle arranged for the book's official debut to be made at the U.S. Air Force-Aerospace Convention in Las Vegas, Nevada.

Shown in the picture (from left to right) are Walt Bohrer; racing pilot Col. Roscoe Turner; 2nd place winner of the Dole Air Race from Oakland, CA to Honolulu in 1927, Martin Jensen; Ann Bohrer; Gen. James Doolittle; movie stunt pilot, Paul Mantz; and the recently-deceased Joe Foss, World War II fighter ace and former governor of South Dakota.

BOARD MEMBER HONORED

The Oregon State Aviation Board honored our longtime board member Ray Costello at their November 2002 meeting with the first-ever Aviation Award of Excellence. The award is intended to recognize contributions to aviation by Oregonians. Ray was recognized for service as a United States Air Force combat veteran in World War II, Korea and Viet Nam; his role as creator of the first Oregon Aviation System Plan; and as Pacific Northwest Regional Representative for the Aircraft Owners and Pilots Association. We are proud to have Ray serve on our board and concur that is recognition is well deserved. Congratulations, Ray!
57 Years Ago: P-51 Crashes in Tigard

By William Villani

On February 14, 1946, 1st Lt. John W. Heaney of the 432nd AAF Base Unit took off in P-51H 44-64431 from the Portland fighter base. It was a routine flight to check the compass. The plane had only 42 hours and 48 minutes on the clock since manufacture.

Over Tigard, Heaney encountered engine failure. He attempted to bail out at 100-150 feet, but this was too low for the parachute to open successfully. Sadly, Lt. Heaney was killed. The 26-year-old pilot, from Tacoma, Ohio, was a veteran flier with 220 hours of combat time in the just-completed world conflict.

The lightweight "H" model was something of a rarity among Mustangs, only 555 having been built. (USAF photo)


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GREAT LAKES N315Y: A REVIEW AND UPDATE

By Ron Bartley

It was nearly 70 years ago when Dorothy (Hester) Hofer sold her special Great Lakes, N315Y. Three years later, Tex Rankin acquired N315Y and had it modified for high-stress aerobatics, plus a Menasco engine by Wally Timm of Glendale, California.

Dorothy, Tex and Wally Timm would truly be amazed to know that N315Y is being rebuilt 70 years later. And it will be restored with the same modifications Tex requested, i.e., twice as many wing ribs, redesigned ailerons, and a Menasco engine. Approximately 90% of the original steel wing and center section fittings have been used in the restoration.

Currently, the leading-edge aluminum (donated by Addison Pemberton) is being attached to the wing ribs. The special Rankin ailerons are being built, as are the wing tip covers. The rebuilt Menasco engine is ready to be installed, and the engine mount is being built. We hope a new landing gear can be built soon.

Many thanks to everyone who has contributed their time, money and materials to the project. A special thanks goes to member Mike Brown, who has donated time and expenses for welding, and for aileron and wing parts.

And yes, we still need donations to complete the project.

R.C.B.

2/18/2003
**Scorpion on Guard**

F-89 Scorpion 54-322 was once at Portland. Today it is on display at Hill AFB in Utah. Oregon once had several F-89's on display. Sadly, they are all gone now. Reportedly, there are some remains from ex-Oregon ANG Scorpions in New Mexico.

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