



Oregon Aviation Historical Society

Newsletter

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IAC Recognizes Oregon Pilot Dorothy Hester Inducted

by Carol Skinner,
OAHS Archivist

The late Dorothy Hester, a native of Milwaukie, Oregon was inducted into the International Aerobatic Club (IAC) Hall of Fame at the Experimental Aircraft Association Museum Eagle Hangar in Oshkosh, Wisconsin on November 5. She and former world aerobatic champion Betty Stewart were the only ones honored for 2004.



Hester learned aerobatics in the late 1920s from Tex Rankin, also an IAC Hall of Fame member, at the Rankin School of Flying at Portland's Swan Island. In the early 1930s she set aerobatic records, some of which are still unbroken.



Her aerobatic performance at the 1931 Cleveland Air Races was the first there by a woman.

IAC Hall of Fame chairman Dave Lammers said Hester's first nomination came from Elrey Jeppeson, the developer of the Jeppeson Charts used by pilots today. He soloed her in

1928 while an instructor for the Rankin School of Flying. Lammers said her file of recommendations had grown over the years as many people added their names in support of her induction.

OAHS RECIEVES GRANTS Money will enhance archiving ability

By Roger Starr, OAHS President

Your Society was notified on November 17 that it had been awarded a \$2,400 grant from the Douglas Wagner Fund of the Oregon Community Foundation. These funds will be used to purchase metal shelving in our archival storage room, cataloging software and a digital camera. All of the items will enable OAHS to better serve the needs of those wishing to do research as well as enhance our ability to accept artifacts for permanent storage.

The Oregon Community Foundation continues to be a valued partner with OAHS in providing grants over the past several years. The foundation was established in 1973 to manage charitable funds donated by individuals, families, and businesses to enhance and support the quality of life in their communities. Today, the foundation's endowment consists of more than 800 funds with combined assets of \$400 million. The foundation makes grants through an application process that involves local citizens in the review and evaluation of requests for funds. If you are interested in further information regarding the Oregon Community Foundation, please let us know.

A representative of the foundation is scheduled to meet at the History Center with the Society's Executive Council on December 11 to present our award.

We were honored earlier this year with the awarding of a \$1,000 grant from Lane County. This Tourism Special Projects Grant was uti-

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www.oregonaviation.org

Random Flight

by Roger Starr

We often hear that it must be OK if no one says anything. Well I did not hear anything about that less-than-flattering picture alongside this column in the August Newsletter, and it was not OK by my standards. On the other hand, how do you know it was really I? I made it easy; just compare it to the new one! If you do not like this one, I will try, try again until you are satisfied!



Similarly, the hard working volunteers think they are doing a good job of carrying out the goals of the Society. But we are always receptive to different opinions and comments. So do not hesitate to communicate with us. Come to a meeting, call on the phone or see how easy it is to contact us via our new web site. We are always trying, and your thoughts are appreciated.

This is a good time to again remind everyone to consider a gift membership this holiday season (or any appropriate time during the year). You can use the membership form included in the newsletter or just drop us a note with the recipient's information. We will take care of providing a welcome letter, membership card and, if you wish, include who the gift giver is.

Speaking of attending a meeting, as soon as you receive your new calendar for Christmas be sure to highlight April 23, 2005. Our annual members' meeting will be held on that Saturday. Based upon the plans so far, this will be the most significant event since we dedicated our History Center in 1999. I do not want to divulge the news just yet. You will have to renew your membership for next year to ensure that you receive the April Newsletter that will contain all the details. It will be great!!

Join the OAHS!

If you're not yet a member, we invite you to join the Society in its efforts to preserve and celebrate Oregon Aviation History. Fill in the blanks and return to: Oregon Aviation Historical Society
PO Box 553
Cottage Grove, OR 97424

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

Name _____ Date _____

Address _____ Home Phone (____)____-_____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Current/Former Occupation _____

I am Interested in Volunteering _____

Skills and Interests _____

Building Activity

TOWER — Director Wilbur Heath, along with past director Doug Yarbrough, has been hard at work on the airway beacon tower. And what an amount of work there was to do. In the last issue of the newsletter, the picture of the base portion indicated significant progress toward erecting the structure. Now, the rest of the tower



been wired, a trap door built by Walt Dunden has been installed, and identifier lights as well as the beacon light itself put into place. Engineering has been completed as a contribution by GEOMAX Engineering, ensuring the tower meets new Federal earthquake and wind shear standards as required by Lane County. Currently we are awaiting the County use permit that will allow us to add those remaining sections to the base. What a wonderful focal point for people driving down Jim Wright Way or along Row River Road!

STORAGE BINS — It seems as just one major project at a time is not enough to keep Director Rex Hume happy.



He is single-handedly restoring the Museum's Stinson SR-5E, and still makes time available to continue work at the History Center. Rex has completed two new sixteen foot double deck bins in the mezzanine. They allow for an orderly placement of those bulk items that we have had piled upstairs.

Hester, continued from Page 1

Accepting the award on behalf of Hester's family was Carol Skinner and her husband, Hal. The Skinners became acquainted with Hester when she was the Guest of Honor at the 1984 Creswell Air Fair, and their friendship continued until Hester's death in 1991.

Hester was a supporter of the Oregon Antique and Classic Aircraft Club, having spoken at one of their meetings and a contributing member of OAHS.

At the request of her daughter, Sabine Ladd of Fossil, Oregon, the IAC Hall of Fame trophy will be displayed at the Aviation History Center, in Cottage Grove, Oregon. It will stand alongside the Hall of Fame award of another Oregon pilot, Tex Rankin.

Grants, continued from Page 1

lized to help launch our web site, oregonaviation.org, and produce the tourism brochure included with this newsletter issue.

OAHS is very appreciative of the funding received from grant makers such as these. They provide a very important part of our budget for specific project needs. Often times there is a matching requirement for such grants. This is where you as member can be of great assistance. Please consider OAHS in you charitable giving plans. We are a fully qualified 501(c)(3) tax-exempt corporation. Contributions of both cash and non-cash items are fully deductible to the extent allowed by IRS code. Our thanks to all who have helped in the past. Let us know how we can be of assistance now and in the future.

From the Archives

by Carol Skinner

Ted Barber

There were only 32 airplanes in the entire state of Oregon when Ted Barber established himself as the first fixed base operator and barnstormer in the central part of Oregon. Approximately 28 of those were located west of the Cascades. At the time Ted began operation as the only commercial flying service in Central Oregon, his was the only airplane in a 50,000 square mile area. Mid-air collisions were not a problem.

Ted was born in Wendling, a Lane County sawmill town east of Eugene, Oregon, in 1908. In 1910, shortly after Ted's father built a house for the family, a forest fire got out of control and burned all the houses in the town.

At an early age, Ted developed a strong desire to fly. One day in 1920, an airplane from Eugene flew over and dropped leaflets as an advertising stunt. Ted didn't know it at the time, but he had just seen his first OX5 powered Curtiss Jenny. Before leaving Wendling, he read all the aviation books in the Eugene Library and began designing, building and flying kites. After moving to Bend in 1923, Ted and his friends designed and built a tri-plane glider with cane fishing poles

that could be purchased at the hardware store for 25 cents each. The covering of bleached muslin, which cost seven cents a square yard, was hand sewn around the poles. Later, the glider was changed to two wings and the fabric treated with calcimine to make it airtight. Ted could run into a light wind, jump up, and become airborne for a short distance. Now he was ready to make a flight behind a tow car. He had his father's four cylinder Star, but none of the three friends knew

how to drive, so he gave the oldest boy a quick driving lesson. With one boy on the running board to tell the driver to slow down after Ted became airborne, the car started moving with Ted running after it. However, the driver continued to go too fast for him to keep up so he adjusted his hold and the nose of the glider came up and headed for the sky.

When the boys in the car saw Ted about 75' in the air and still climbing steeply, they were afraid to slow and just kept going. It was a thrill for Ted to be that high but more than he bargained for. Ted's next problem was

to decide when to start moving his weight to prepare for landing. As the ground got closer, the right wing dropped at a steep angle and hit the ground. Next, Ted's feet hit and he was able to hold up the rest of the craft to keep it from being damaged further. He spent two weeks rebuilding the glider but the lessons he learned



from that flight taught him what he needed to do to control it in future flights. Ted had a taste of flying and knew he would never be satisfied without doing more.

After seeing the National Air Races in Spokane, Washington, Ted decided the best thing for him to do was to learn to fly at a regular flying school. In the spring of 1928 he rode his motorcycle from Bend to Portland, signed up at Tex Rankins' flying school, took the home study course with him and went back to Bend to work and save money to complete the course. Ted had met Tex when he came to Bend on a barnstorming tour in 1924. A sign on the side of Tex's airplane said "Curtis Oreole 150 H.P. 115 M.P.H. This pilot has carried 5,000 passengers." That was the first airplane Ted had ever seen in Central Oregon. The 'ship' as Tex called it, was built for two passengers and the pilot but because the field was small, the elevation 3,600' and the ground sandy, Tex didn't know how many passengers he could take still clearing the trees at the field's end. Ted asked if he could do some work in exchange for a ride and Tex said he could ride for free the next morning to see how much of a load he could get off the field with.

At 0530 the next day, Ted's father took him to the field and after Tex and his assistant cleaned the plugs, and oiled the motor, the helper got into the rear cockpit and Tex pulled the propeller through. The engine started on the first pull after choking it a few times, so Tex warmed it up, took off and made three circles, then dove for the field and landed. It was the most beautiful flight Ted had ever seen. He and the assistant got into the front cockpit and with Ted's first airplane ride he had found what he wanted to do with his life. The assistant that day was Glen Hoover who, with his brother Bob, founded the Bend Portland Bus Line which later became Trailways Bus Line.

Late in 1928, Ted went to Portland to begin

flight training at the Rankin School of Flying. His instructors were Tex, Dick and Dud Rankin, Art Walters and Morris King. When he finished training he had a total of 55 hours flight time and an Oregon State pilot's license.

A sign on the side of Tex's airplane said "Curtis Oreole 150 H.P. 115 M.P.H. This pilot has carried 5,000 passengers."

In the meantime, he found an OX5 Waco 9 for sale at Corvallis for \$1,600, so he hopped a freight train back to Bend and spent a few days organizing a flying club. Sixteen members contributed \$100. each and Ted had the funds to buy the Waco. With a license and plane he took off from Rankin Field on August 15, 1929 and headed up the Columbia River Gorge for Bend. Dick Rankin is said to have remarked to those near him, "Well, there goes Ted Barber. If he is still alive next spring, he will be a damn good pilot".

Ted soon realized his learning days were not over, but after that first flight to Bend, he enjoyed a long honeymoon period with flying, doing what seemed like a continuous paid vacation. Beside instructing at Knott Field, he also had a small group of students at Sisters where he taught one day each week. In 1932 he purchased a Waco 10 and was selling a complete flying course for \$275. In addition to instructing in Bend and Sisters, Ted had students in Redmond, Prineville, Madras and on the Warm Springs Indian Reservation.

As expected with flying in the 1920s, Ted had several close calls and crashes but never anything very serious. One day, while headed on a barnstorming tour to Shaniko with his brother Cordis, a sparkplug wire came off and the engine began missing. Figuring that people would be reluctant to buy rides if he flew over town on seven cylinders, Ted decided to try to put the wire back on the plug while flying. With Cordis at the controls, Ted climbed out of the cockpit and succeeded in getting the wire back in place.

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Barber, continued from previous page

Eventually the flying club incorporated as Bend Flying Service, Inc., with Ted as president, for \$10,000 and considered selling stock to raise money to start an airline in central Oregon. However, the Board of Directors couldn't decide between establishing an airline or setting up a flying service in the Las Vegas area where Hoover Dam was being built. So, they sold the Waco to Ted and he started out on his own as a barnstormer.

As with other Oregon State licensed pilots at that time, the federal aeronautics inspectors considered them 'outlaws' because they weren't licensed under federal aviation laws. Federal laws also required a parachute jumper to have a second 'chute in case the first didn't open. Oregon laws had no such requirements. While flying a woman parachutist for a jump over Bend, the string that held the parachute caught under the wing where she dangled unable to climb back in the airplane. By putting the plane in a dive, and pulling on the mouth of the bag, it opened and the jump was completed successfully. However, in the process, Ted had ruptured himself and was hospitalized for a hernia repair. While recuperating, a federal aeronautics inspector came to Bend, inspected Ted's airplane, pronounced it unsafe to fly and reported his decision to the state inspector. Ted and three members of the State Board of Aeronautics met in a hotel room and had a friendly discussion. Although they couldn't find where Ted was violating any laws, because of pressure from the federal inspector the state had to do something. So, they grounded Ted for 30 days which happened to be the length of time the doctor told him he should not fly. Ted agreed to that and the matter was settled.

Ted married in 1932 and, like many people at the time, was in desperate need of money. Two friends convinced him they could make money corralling and selling wild horses with the help of an airplane. This was the beginning of an occupation that provided many adventures and not much money. The storm clouds of war were

hovering over Europe and the U.S. government required all flight instructors to take a re-rating course at government expense. Ted went to Seattle to take the course and later returned to the Washington Aircraft Company as a flight Instructor. During this time, he designed a trainer for students to practice rudder and aileron control coordination and a mechanism that would automatically apply carburetor heat every time the throttle was closed, and return to cold air as the throttle was opened. Lacking money, Ted's inventions never got off the ground.

By the age of 78 Ted had accumulated 25,000 hours of flying and more adventures than can be told here. In 1987 Barber Industries published Ted's autobiography titled "THE BARNSTORMING MUSTANGER". The contents of this article came from that book which is no longer in print. A copy is available for research at the OAHS library located in the Oregon Aviation History Center, Jim Wright Field, Cottage Grove, Oregon.

MEMBER MUSINGS

Included in this mailing is the renewal for your membership. Please take time to complete and mail it right away. We also ask that you consider raising your level of membership and make an additional contribution of funds. If you wish, that donation may be designated for a specific purpose or project. Exciting things are happening almost daily and you will want to be a part of the action. Of course, without you, there is no Society. Remember to invite prospective new members to join with us in preserving Oregon aviation history, and, if you do know of someone who would make an active board member, make your recommendation to any officer.

Additionally, you may remember OAHS in any future bequests.

OAHS — Before the People

Pursuant to Society policy of displaying artifacts and information in other localities, here is a listing of some of the current ones.

a. OAHS has provided a photograph of Sumner Parker to be permanently placed in the office at “Sumner Parker Field,” the Ashland Municipal Airport. The Society is well credited with the picture.

b. A major display of aviation memorabilia has been in place in the Southern Oregon Historical Society, Medford, Oregon. The eight month showing closes in December, but included an airway beacon light and George Yates geodetic fuselage loaned from OAHS.



c. The Twin Bonanza has been shown throughout the Oregon. It was flown to Oregon Antique and Classic Aircraft Club and OAHS functions at Cottage Grove, on static display in Eugene at The Oregon Air and Space Museum, at Hubbard in the Portland area on Lenhardt Field, and at the Tillamook Air Museum. Now, OAHS has transferred the aircraft to the Bonanza – Baron Museum in Tennessee. If you are in the area of Tullahoma, be sure to stop in as see this great airplane donated by Floyd Felt of Roseburg.



d. December 12, Carol Skinner, OAHS archivist will speak to the Lane County Historical Society at its general meeting. Her presentation will be Oregon aviation history in general and

our Oregon Aviation Historical Society in particular. At the same time, OAHS artifacts of early Lane County aviation will be on display at their museum. The



Lane County Historical Society is located at the Fairgrounds, 740 West 13th Ave., Eugene. Be sure to visit this fine facility.

What's New?

NEW STREET ADDRESS — No, we didn't move the building, but the Cottage Grove City Council approved changing the name of the street in front of the History Center to Jim Wright Way. Now when you tell your friends to visit, remember to say that the address is 2475 Jim Wright Way!



NEW ADVERTISING BROCHURE — Here it is! After way too long we've developed an advertising flyer to be placed in motels, restaurants and other places of interest for travelers. The purpose is to tell both tourists and locals more about us. Well, not just us but more specifically about the Oregon Aviation History Center located on Jim Wright Field, Cottage Grove. The new brochure, as well as our web site, was financed in part by a Lane County Special Projects Grant and produced by WalkingMan Designs of Springfield, Oregon. We've included a copy for you to enjoy and hope that you will identify firms in your area where they can be made available.

The Society is in Need of These Items

Please remember OAHS if you have a surplus of any items on this list. You may notice that some of them are no longer here. Well, guess what? Here is a story of just why that happens.

One November day, a package arrived for the OAHS. It contained a speaker system and CD player. There was also a note explaining the contribution. Lorin L Wilkinson, a Society member from Collinsville, Oklahoma, asked us to accept it in memory of his wife Mary Regalbutto-Wilkinson. Mary was a W.A.S.P., class of 44-9, an engineering test pilot on the BT-13, BT-15 and AT-6. She flew with Paula Loop, who was lost in weather in Southern Oregon. The OAHS salvaged Loop's BT-13 remains and currently have it at the History Center. Lorin Wilkinson has a grand champion Hatz that is currently for sale, and he and his wife owned a Great Lakes 2T-1A, just two serial numbers lower than Dorothy Hester's ship that is now being restored by OAHS in various places throughout the state.

So, please read the list, there are new items and some, like the CD player have been removed.

DVD Player
Scroll Saw
Mannequins
Jig Saw
In-Focus Projector
Milling Machine (sm)

Easels
Belt/Disc Sander Combo
Metal Brake/Shear
Die Grinder
English Wheel
Variable Speed Band Saw

Solvent
Spray Gun
6' Rollaway Toolbox
Drop Work Lights
maybe other stuff, too.

Oregon Aviation Historical Society
PO Box 553
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