



Oregon Aviation Historical Society

N e w s l e t t e r

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OAHS ANNUAL MEETING SET FOR APRIL 22, 2006

Members, guests and interested visitors are invited to a joint meeting and program of the Oregon Aviation Historical Society and the Oregon Antique & Classic Aircraft Club at the Oregon Aviation History Center, Jim Wright Field, Cottage Grove, Oregon.

SCHEDULE: No host luncheon beginning at 11:30 am

OAHS Annual Meeting at 1:00 p.m.

PROGRAM: "Some Firsts in Aviation History and Homebuilding"

presented by Bill Austin, OAHS Board Member

OACAC Quarterly Meeting to Follow

Have you ever wondered what Oregon contributed to the history of aviation?

OR

What did a young man from Cornelius, Oregon who built and sold his first household radio in 1920, have to do with aviation?

OR

Who made possible the founding of the Experimental Aircraft Association by Paul Poberezny in 1953

AND

What significance does the "Little Gee Bee" have in national aviation history?

Come and hear the answers to these questions and much more information as Bill Austin presents what promises to be a most interesting program.



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The OAHS Newsletter is published by the Society (PO Box 553, Cottage Grove, OR 97424) and edited by Hal Skinner for the benefit of the members. Member contributions are welcome but should relate to Oregon aviation history. Contents © 2005 OAHS.

www.oregonaviation.org

Random Flight

by Roger Starr



First on my list is a heartfelt thank you to those who have renewed their OAHS membership for 2006. For those that have not committed their support for another year, it is not too late. Please use the renewal form sent with the December newsletter or the form printed in this one. Second, is a very big thank you to those who not only renewed their membership, but added something extra in their remittance. Some were for specific projects and others unrestricted. No matter the amount or purpose, I can assure you it is always very gratifying to receive such donations. With so many worthwhile organizations vying for donations, we are most grateful you chose to include the Society in your gift giving. We think that we are providing a valuable service and your vote of confidence is sincerely appreciated.

It has been very interesting to watch one of our newest board members become more and more involved in the activities of your Society. Bill Austin did not hesitate for an instant when asked to serve. His only comment was that he really did not know anything about the history of aviation in Oregon. Well, he did not wait to attend a non-existent course on the subject. He took the proverbial bull by the horns and volunteered to scan the nearly 2,000 slide pictures in our Patton Collection to computer disks for better long-term storage. It was easy to see that his enthusiasm and knowledge was coming right along with that monumental task.

Bill recently asked permission to use material from the Patton Collection, and other sources, to prepare a program for his local Experimental Aircraft Association chapter. Since the purpose of our efforts in collecting and preserving such resources is to be able to share them, we were more than thrilled to see Bill dig in. As he admits, the original purpose of his program has evolved and "will likely never be absolutely complete". In fact when responding to a request for information on the presentation to be included in this newsletter, Bill used two different titles for the program. Perhaps by the time he is front and center on April 22nd, the title will change again! No matter what he calls it, I can assure you the content will be worth taking in. So please make every effort to join us on April 22nd for our Annual Meeting and Bill's presentation.

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: OR 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 _____



THE FIRST OF OREGON'S HOMEBUILTS

by Tim Talen

The Oregon Aviation Historical Society now has six of Oregon's pioneer homebuilt aircraft – and it is without a doubt the most significant part of the Society's collection. These aircraft represent a broad spectrum of designs by five different designers that have added to the rich heritage that was Oregon's homebuilt movement during the 1930's. Let's look at these aircraft, their designers and the influence each of these had on future generations of aircraft designs.



1930 Anzani Longster

The 1930 Anzani Longster was Leslie Long's first design to be widely recognized when plans were published in the nationally syndicated Flying and Glider Manual. He followed up with his Henderson Longster design and numerous articles on the Oregon homebuilding movement which established him as the leading authority on small practical designs which emphasized simple-to-build methods and techniques. Though the Anzani Longster was not a great aeronautical wonder, it flew well and was considered a successful design. Our Longster is a replica that was built from the original plans by an aircraft construction class at Lane Community College in 1985-86. It is currently at the History Center on display.

The 1931 Springfield Cadet was designed and built by Jim McManiman. Little is known about this builder, but it is believed that several different aircraft were built, possibly with the hope of getting the diminutive biplane into production. We do know that other similar

designs that followed did get produced. The Rose Parakeet was certified and put into limited production using the same



1931 Springfield Cadet

30 horsepower Continental engine that the Springfield Cadet used. And we shouldn't forget that the first of Curtis Pitts' famous biplanes was of similar dimensions and first flew on only 55 horsepower. C.R. Saville of Eugene owned this aircraft for many years and it came to be known as the Baby Fleet. The most important document that came with the aircraft was the Airworthiness Certificate that was issued by the Oregon Aeronautics Board. It is the only extant copy we have ever seen and is carefully archived and preserved at the History Center. This aircraft is also on display at the History Center.



1930 PSE Racer

The 1930 Pacific School of Engineering Racer represents another facet of Oregon's early homebuilt aircraft. Designed by Basil B. Smith of Portland, it was the "professional" design of an aeronautical engineer and embodied a number of refinements in the area of drag reduction—all for the purpose of competing in the 1930 All American Derby sponsored by the Cirrus engine manufacturer. B.B. Smith was able to use the design and construction of the aircraft as a classroom project at the engineering school, which was later to become the current Benson High School. Mr. Smith was also the designer of Oregon's first federally licensed and commercially produced

continued on next page

aircraft, the Student Prince. The Racer has not been restored but is currently on display at the History Center and is a wonderful opportunity to see the “insides” of an early design.



1933 Rupert Special

The 1933 Rupert Special was built by Walt Rupert, a Beaverton based builder who created a very nice high-wing ‘parasol’ design originally powered by a Henderson motorcycle engine

of 26 horsepower!! When later refitted with a 45 hp Salmson radial engine, it became a great little flying machine and was used to set various records for homebuilts. It was said to have climbed to 10,000 feet in less than ten minutes – an admirable feat for any aircraft of that era. This tiny craft is notable for the high quality of workmanship and the detail to which Mr. Rupert applied to his design. It is currently under restoration and hopefully will join the growing fleet at the History Center soon.



Yates Geodetic

The Yates geodetic is our best example of design innovation and experimentation. George Yates was an engineer who integrated the structural basket weave construction method into some very pleasing and efficient designs. He was certainly America’s leading proponent of this method of construction and built a number of them at Beaverton throughout the 1930’s. He also wrote several technical articles on the process, but unfortunately it was a victim of World War II and the more common factory

methods of all metal construction. It should be noted that the current methods of fiberglass construction embody similar engineering principles as geodetic construction. Our Yates geodetic is on display at the History Center and one can truly appreciate the aesthetic qualities of this building method.



1935 Wimpy

The 1935 Les Long “Wimpy” design can be considered as Oregon’s most significant and historically pivotal aircraft. Not only was it the first popular homebuilt low-wing aircraft, but it was probably the most copied design of any from that era. It also begat the most famous Oregon homebuilt – the “Little Gee Bee”. This aircraft was built by Portlander Tom Story who went on to build a whole series of Story Specials all patterned after the “Wimpy” design. The initial aircraft was purchased and modified by George Bogardus who flew it to Washington, D.C. to persuade the federal government to adopt regulations allowing amateur-built aircraft to be built and flown. The modern homebuilt era as we know it today can trace it’s roots directly to George Bogardus and his refined Wimpy, the “Little Gee Bee” We are fortunate indeed, through the generosity of Mr. Roy Olson of Grenada Hills, California, to have the “Wimpy”. It is currently in the initial phases of restoration, and is on display at the History Center. ■

VERN GORST AND THE PACIFIC AIR TRANSPORT STORY

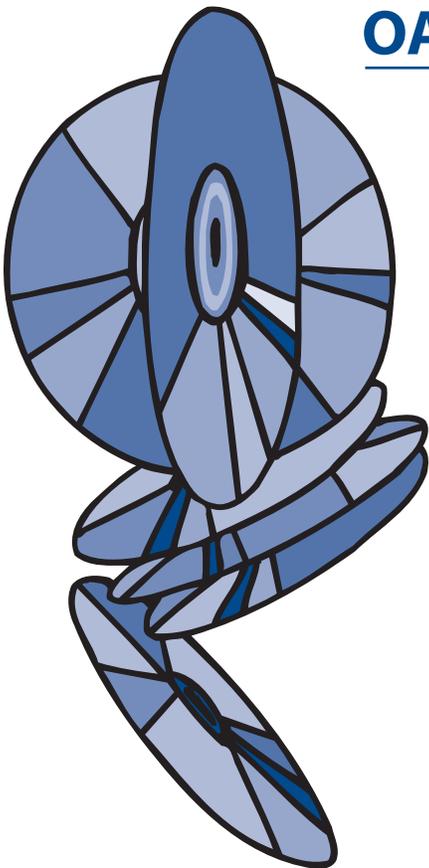
OAHS member Ron Bartley has completed writing a book about Vern Gorst, the founder of Pacific Air Transport Company. It will be available for sale at the OAHS History Center soon.

There are many interesting subjects in Oregon Aviation history that are not widely known. An example is Vern Gorst, who along with his family, lived in Oregon for many years.

In 1897, and at 20 years of age, Vern headed to the Klondike gold fields where he was one of the relatively few successful miners. He returned in 1902 with both a supply of gold, and a new wife! He developed several auto stage lines here and then, in 1913, purchased a Martin hydroplane and flew it at Coos Bay on the Oregon coast. During his lifetime, he established transportation on water, ground and in the air!

Be sure to watch for Ron's book on the career of an amazing Oregon pioneer and the beginning of what ultimately became the United Air Lines.

OAHS DVD COMPLETED



After nine months of planning and gathering information, a nineteen minute DVD about OAHS and some of Oregon's aviation history is complete. The DVD was produced by Walkingman Designs with direction from a committee appointed by OAHS President Roger Starr.

The object in producing a short documentary was to develop a method of making presentations to any group across Oregon that is interested in learning more about OAHS and the mission of collecting, preserving and making available to the public artifacts, photos, letters, newspaper articles and other memorabilia that tell the story of Oregon's rich aviation history.

Hopefully, the film will also encourage anyone who has artifacts or records that further the purpose of OAHS and are looking for a place where they will be preserved and made available for public viewing, will donate or loan them to OAHS.

The DVD will only be shown by a member of the OAHS Board of Directors or the Archivist, it is not available for sale. Any group interested in viewing the film should contact OAHS through the website, www.oregonaviation.org, or write Archivist, Oregon Aviation Historical Society, P.O. Box 553, Cottage Grove, OR 97424.

The Society is in Need of These Items

- Easels
 - Solvent
 - Variable Speed Band Saw
 - Spray Gun
 - Belt/Disc Sander Combo
 - In-Focus Projector
 - Mannequins
 - Metal Brake/Shear
 - 6' Rollaway Toolbox
 - Die Grinder
 - Drop Work Lights
 - Milling Machine (sm)
 - English Wheel
-

We really need people to volunteer their time and talent. We have several options for you to really be a part of the preservation of Oregon Aviation History.

Consider becoming personally involved while joining us for great lunches at the same time!

What do I do? Just phone the center at (541) 767-0244 and leave a message or access our website at www.oregonaviation.org. and click on 'contact us'. *You will be glad you did!*

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ADDRESS SERVICE REQUESTED

