



# Oregon Aviation Historical Society

Newsletter

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• P.O. Box 553 • Cottage Grove, OR 97424 •

October 2007

## Our Mission:

The Oregon Aviation Historical Society was incorporated as the Oregon Aviation Museum in June 1983 through the efforts of a group of aviation enthusiasts who recognized the need to preserve Oregon's rich aviation heritage for the benefit and enjoyment of future generations.

Its purposes are to collect, preserve, restore and exhibit aviation artifacts; to develop facilities for the restoration and preservation of artifacts, public viewing and exhibition of the collection; to establish and maintain an Oregon Aviation Hall of Fame; establish a resource center for Oregon aviation historical research and to disseminate information about Oregon aviation history.

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## OAHS LOSES A BOARD MEMBER

### Bill Austin Loses Fight to Cancer

By Carol Skinner

There was standing room only at a memorial service for OAHS Board Member Bill Austin held at Roseburg's Felt Field on September 23, 2007. Bill succumbed to cancer on September 9. Several speakers related Bill's many contributions to aviation in Oregon.

William Merl Austin was born in Roseburg at the family's home on January 26, 1933. He is survived by his wife Dorothy, daughter Susan, son Bruce, and grandchildren, Nick, Jodi, Mark and Eric, and many friends and fellow aviators. He will be greatly missed.

Bill earned his pilot's license and bought his first Luscombe in 1952. He was a founding member of EAA Chapter 495 in Roseburg and past president, director and active member of the Oregon Antique & Classic Aircraft Club. He and Dorothy participated in several OACAC sponsored Oregon Air Tours where he was the unofficial photographer. At the time of his death he was building wing ribs for the restoration of the "Wimpy", an historically significant Oregon aircraft designed and built by Les Long at Cornelius, Oregon in 1935. The Wimpy was returned to Oregon in 2004 after being donated to OAHS by the previous owner, Roy Olson of San Diego, CA. Bill also spent many hours transferring the oral histories of Oregon aviation pioneers contained in OAHS' John Patton Collection to archival DVDs, thus insuring that these priceless pieces of history will remain for future generations.

Until his health forced him to retire, Bill managed the family farm, raising cattle and hay. He had strong feelings about preserving prime farmland and worked with the Oregon Farm Bureau on the local and state level to accomplish his goal. He was also a member of the Douglas County Livestock Association and the Small Woodlands group.



Dorothy and Bill Austin



1949 Luscombe 8F

But Bill's passion during his lifetime was flying. When he was no longer able to fly, he and Dorothy, with the help of OAHS directors, arranged for the sale of their '49 Luscombe and donated the proceeds to the Historical Society. It was just one more example of the Austin's generosity and desire to continue the work of preserving Oregon aviation history. THANK YOU BILL AND DOROTHY, and Godspeed, BILL.



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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 encouraged but should relate to Oregon aviation history. Contents © 2007 OAHS.*

[www.oregonaviation.org](http://www.oregonaviation.org)

**RANDOM FLIGHT**

By Roger Starr



It has only been a little over three years ago in this column that I welcomed Bill Austin to our board of directors. Bill's involvement began over two years prior to agreeing to become a member of the board when he, like all presidents of the Oregon Antique and Classic Aircraft Club, was invited to participate in our meetings. It did not take long before Bill became engrossed in a project that took many months and a lot of perseverance. That was the scanning of a collection of nearly 2,500 slides onto electronic media. This led him to prepare and present a very nice program of early Oregon aviation history, using primarily those same images. He more recently had been working on building the wing ribs for our Wimpy project.

We lost Bill last month to cancer. Even though he was not able to regularly attend recent meetings, Bill made it clear that he wished to remain on the board. There was never any other thought in my mind. Bill Austin brought to the group a dedication and drive delivered via his quiet and thoughtful approach. He was always an asset to our board. We have been blessed to have Bill in our midst and send our condolences to the family.

I invite you to take a look at our website, [oregonaviation.org](http://oregonaviation.org). Several pages have a new look and all the material has been updated. We are fortunate to have the services of Milo Skinner as our Web Master. Should you have suggestions or comments to make your web experience even better, please let us know. There has been an increasing number of "hits" to our site over the past year. Some of them result in inquiries about specific subjects or information related to Oregon's aviation history. Not unusual, as recently experienced, we receive offers of the donation of artifacts. The latest involved a logbook for our Great Lakes aircraft covering a period in the mid to late 1930's. What a great addition to our growing collection of Great Lakes memorabilia and those who owned it. Obviously it is beneficial to take advantage of the latest technology. Thanks Milo.

**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 \_\_\_\_\_

## Summer Activities of the Oregon Aviation Historical Society



John G. Rankin, namesake of Oregon Aviation Hall of Fame member Tex Rankin, made his first visit to the Aviation History Center this summer.



Former OAHS Director Jack Coshow recently donated the tools he used as a mechanic at United Airlines for our aircraft restoration work.



Volunteer Al Sherman continues the restoration of the Springfield Cadet with new fabric on the fuselage and tail feathers.



Rex Hume rolled out the Society's Stinson SR5-E at the Grants Pass meeting of the Oregon Antique & Classic Aircraft Club. This restoration has mostly been completed by Rex working alone. **<please see page 8>**



Tex Rankin performed inverted aerobatic maneuvers in his act, so the lettering on the right side of the Great Lakes was painted upside-down. **<please see page 8>**



One of the events hosted by OAHS is the annual Jim Wright Memorial Stearman Fly-In. A model constructed by Bob Brown was raffled and raised \$450.00 for the Stinson restoration.



# A GREAT DAY



**1924 Bristol Cherub Engine**



**Model of Flying Flea and Cherub Engine**

Perfect weather and plenty of visitors made the combined exhibit by your Society and the Oregon Antique and Aircraft Club at the Northwest Antique Airplane Association August 17-19 Fly-in a memorable event.

The Society has had an exhibit featuring Oregon aviation history each year since the NWAAC fly-in moved to the McMinnville venue.

This years exhibit featured three historic engines from Oregon's early days.



**Long Harlequin Engine**



**Manual for the Harlequin**

# IN McMINNVILLE



Ranging from 30 to 40hp, they represent the struggle homebuilders faced in trying to secure a reasonably priced, lightweight and dependable engine for their creations. Interesting to note that the Bristol Cherub and the Salmson are of English and French production respectively. Compare them to the Long Harlequin which was manufactured by Les Long of Cornelius from Harley Davidson motorcycle cylinders mated to a crankcase and crankshaft made by Long.

The Bristol Cherub was used on the Flying Flea. Built by Bud Lockwood and Frank Easton in about 1938. The Flea was a very unusual design with two wings and no ailerons.

The Salmson was mounted on Walt Rupert's 1931 modified Heath single place high wing aircraft in which he set altitude records in the 1930's.

We are not sure how many Harequin engines Les Long made, but a full set of blue prints was available for \$5. Les claimed that with the exception of the crankcase and crankshaft, every part was available anywhere in the word. Les would supply the cast aluminum case for \$18 crated!

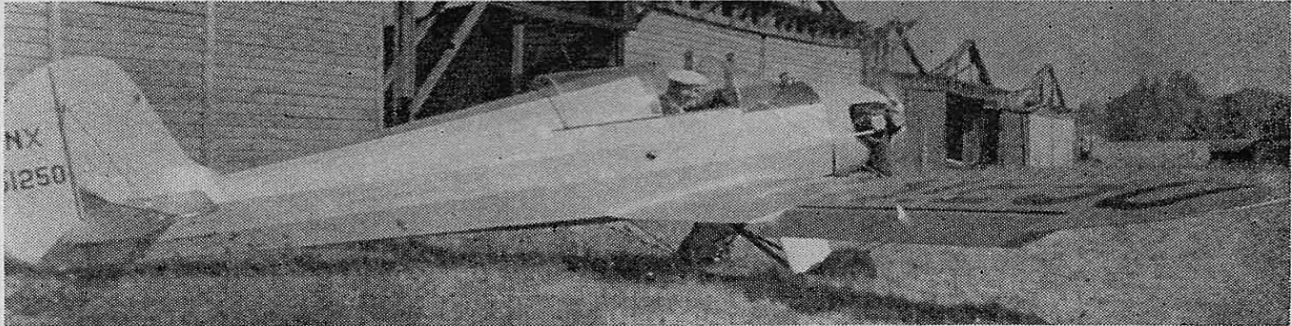


**Salmson 40hp Engine mounted on the Rupert Special after approximately 60 years apart!**

OAHS is grateful to the following for allowing us to bring these significant artifacts to the fly-in to be viewed by the public:

- Paul Dickman
- The Lockwood family
- Stan VanGrunsven





## BLUEPRINTS AVAILABLE

May 1st, 1952

**\$5.00 to Members — \$6.50 to Non-members**

Non-members purchasing prints automatically become members.

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Span 29½ ft. — Empty weight 485 — Stalling speed 40 m. p. h.  
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## AMERICAN AIRMEN'S ASS'N.

Troutdale, Oregon



EDITORS NOTE: The following article appeared in the CORVALLIS GAZETTE TIMES June 3, 1929

## EDDIE GARBUTT IS STAR OF AIRSHOW STUNTING IS EXCELLENT

Corvallis Legion Air Derby Succeeds; Crowds are as Large as One Year Ago

Eddie Garbutt of Portland had the fastest plane in the second annual Corvallis American Legion air derby yesterday, winning the 45-mile race for OX-5 motored planes in 31 minutes, 18 seconds. Eddie also zoomed in first in the 20 mile closed course race for the same motored planes, but allowed a 27 second handicap on his plane and was beaten by one second by Don S. Phillip in a Challenger plane, with a time of 15 minutes, 9 seconds.

In the stunting contest for planes with 100 hp motors or less, Tex Rankin made a perfect score for first place.

Eddie Garbutt and F.S. McArthur proved the fastest pair in the relay race, each plane once around the course, and won this event in 5 minutes, 10 seconds. Rankin and Phillips were second with 5 minutes, 46 seconds and Woodruff and Parmenter third with 5 minutes, 58 seconds.

In the 45-mile race, Tex Rankin came in second with a time of 32 minute, 17 seconds; Phillips third 32:36; Gordon Mounce fourth 33:05; McArthur fifth 32:07; Parmenter sixth, 32:20.

Dick Rankin placed third in the in the 20-mile event 15:14; McArthur fourth, 15:19; Mounce fifth, 15:32; and Forbes sixth, 16:58. Elbert Parmenter dropped out of this race on the fifth lap.

### Stunting Contest Good

The stunting contest furnished one of the features of the afternoon with Tex Rankin winning, Case second, Garbutt third, Phillips fourth and Parmenter fifth.

Major Akerson gave a demonstration of flying upside down and at one time flew two miles with his feet to the sky and his head toward the earth. Johnny West gave a demonstration of wing walking, hanging by a ladder suspended from a plane, and doing acrobatic stunts thereon. Sky High Thompson dropped in a parachute from a fast-moving plane. It is estimated 20,000 people witnessed the show. Corvallis American Legion post announced the events through an audition system covering the entire field.

“While we are sorry for some of the unavoidable delays at the show, I have nothing but praise for the

visiting aviators, and the entire show in general. The committees of the Legion deserve nothing but praise,” said V.W. Arpke, chairman of Legion committees.

Tex Rankin won the Portland to Corvallis air race Saturday afternoon driving against a south wind in the fast time of 51 minutes, 54 seconds. Close behind Rankin came Phillips in 53:21; then McArthur, 58:7; Garbutt, 58:19. Forbes was forced down between Portland and Salem.

### These undated photos are of the Grant Street Corvallis airfield



Two planes taking off in a cloud of dust



Hangars on the South end of Grant St Field



### THE SOCIETY IS IN NEED

*You can assist in the purchase of major items for these projects*



The next items that are necessary to bring the Stinson project to an airworthy status is to replace the wheels, tires and brakes. The cost of those items is \$3,600.00, and we are trying to raise that amount from individual contributions. For any amount that you would like to help in that endeavor, just make a check out to the OAHS and indicate “Stinson Project”.



NX315Y needs to have a new wooden propeller. The cost from Sensenich is approximately \$2,000.00. It will take some lead-time to actually get it here, but it should be ordered next in line. If you care to help offset that cost, just send a check to OAHS and indicate “Great Lakes Project”. THANK YOU very much for considering each of these restoration requests.

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**Cottage Grove, OR 97424**

**ADDRESS SERVICE REQUESTED**

