Forward Momentum

The previous newsletter reflected on the history of the OAHS from inception through 1989, a time of planning, growth, and solidification. The next decade brought new challenges and great opportunities to the society.

The Oregon Aviation Museum was accepted as an Affiliate of the Oregon Historical Society in 1990. This status, which continues to this day, provides recognition of the organization as a viable and established historical aviation museum for Oregon and the Northwest. Being accepted as an Affiliate to its home state’s official historical society of record is a major milestone for any museum or historical society, and it moved us one step closer to fully realizing our mission.

In May of that year, the museum had two fantastic events: a reunion of Bernard Field pilots and a book and art signing by Barrett Tillman and Bill Phillips. Both events drew large crowds and were hugely successful in introducing the museum to the aviation-interested public.

1990 also saw the proposed merger of the Oregon Aviation Museum with the Oregon Air & Space Museum (currently located in Eugene). The intent behind the merger was to strengthen the museum by combining the skills, talent, and resources of both organizations. In anticipation of the merger, the Oregon Aviation Museum changed its name to the Oregon Aviation & Space Museum, Inc. and created a new logo to go with the new name.
Call for Photos

As we go through the records, newsletters, and archives looking for story ideas, it becomes clear that we could use more photographs of these events. If you attended the Bernard Field Reunion, for example, and have good photos you are willing to share (we can scan them and return them to you) please let us know. Sometimes we have photos but they don’t work well for the newsletter or online sharing, and photos tell the story in ways that words cannot. We are especially in need of well-documented photos (names, dates, etc. attached to the photos).

We have plenty of usable photos of the construction of the History Center, but fly-ins, Air Tours, Hall of Fame inductions, off-site events (air shows, etc.) are all good candidates for photo sharing. We’d love to show off your photos!

Renewal Reminder

To those of you who have already renewed your membership: Thank You! If you have not renewed your membership yet, you should find a renewal form and return envelope tucked inside this newsletter. As a reminder, only those individuals who hold current memberships are eligible to vote for Directors in April’s election. If you need info on how to renew via PayPal, just email DJ at oregonaviation.org@gmail.com and she’ll get you all set up.

On a sad note, it is our duty to inform you that Treasurer Gretchen Bencene has stepped down from her role on the Board of Directors due to health concerns. She has been an invaluable asset to the Board and the society, and her presence at the meetings will be sorely missed.

This leaves an opening on the Board and the need for a new Treasurer. If interested, please contact a member of the Board for more information.

Random Flight
By President Doug Kindred

Happy New Year!

Just a short note to kick off the next chapter of our organization. The new year looks promising with progress on several of our restoration projects. As soon as the weather warms up Fridays will be pretty busy here. The Tex Rankin Great Lakes, Springfield Cadet and Wimpy should show signs of progress. I’m really looking forward to the planning and preparation of the Second Annual Wings N’ Wheels in June. We hope to make it bigger and better this year. With fuel prices down there should be more activity here at the airport and also tourists this summer. Keep watching our newsletter and web page for the status of upcoming events. As we move to the e-version of the newsletter, we will be sending hard copies out only to members on a regular basis. Non-members who wish to receive every issue are advised to subscribe to the electronic version.

Doug
Unfortunately the merger didn’t work out as hoped, and the two entities went their separate ways in late 1993. In 1994 the name of the museum for all publications reverted to the *Oregon Aviation Museum* as it was more reflective of the museum’s mission (although the OASM name was retained on corporation documents).

Once the merger was off, the hunt for a building site was renewed. A location to permanently house the growing collection was needed, and a site was very thoroughly and thoughtfully sought. Creswell, Albany, Roseburg, and Salem were considered, but eventually the current location was deemed viable and, most importantly, available. It took several years to work out all the kinks, but in 1998 we finally broke ground on the Oregon Aviation History Center. We’ll go into more detail in a later newsletter, but for now let’s review some of the other things that were going on during this time period.

Like the donation of the Bonanza Super V, the recovery of the Boeing 40 and the purchase of the Great Lakes. In 1991, Floyd Felt, on behalf of the Felt family, donated his Bonanza Super V to the museum. During the merger period the aircraft was housed at Mahlon Sweet, but eventually it was sold to the Bonanza/Baron Museum, Staggerwing Museum Foundation in Tennessee where it could be better displayed.

In 1928, a Pacific Air Transport mail plane, flying from Medford to Portland, crashed on the summit of Canyon Mountain near Canyonville. The pilot survived but his passenger perished in the crash. In 1994, Ron Bartley, Tim Talen, Ron Englund and Al Alsing recovered the fuselage and smaller remains of this historic aircraft. In 2000 we sold it to Addison Pemberton, who fully restored the aircraft, returning it to flying condition.

On May 21, 1997, Wilbur and Catherine Heath traveled to Pennsylvania to pick up the Great Lakes aircraft previously owned by Dorothy Hester and Tex Rankin, who flew this historic aircraft throughout the country at air shows, in air races, and in theatrical films. The top left photo shows Dorothy in the aircraft, and the bottom left photo shows Wilbur and Catherine bringing it back to Oregon in “the world’s smallest aircraft carrier.” The plane was sold by a collector back east to founding member Tim Talen, who then sold the aircraft to the museum. Tim stored the aircraft at his hangar until the History Center was completed, where it sits today. These acquisitions all helped to move the museum forward in its mission to “collect, preserve, restore, and exhibit aviation artifacts.”
Work on the Great Lakes Progresses

The Tex Rankin Great Lakes continues to make progress, with our goal for completion set for the spring of 2016. Much work needs to be accomplished and some new parts still need to be acquired. At the top of the list is a new propeller. Also needed is a new set of 8.00 x 4 tires and tubes. There are also some instruments that need to be overhauled. The major portion of the work left to complete includes finishing all the cockpit coaming and side panels, all the engine cowling, and engine controls and instrumentation hookups. Once those are completed the wings can be installed and the flight controls can be readied for flight. The completion of this very significant artifact will be a momentous event and your help can make history come alive.

To help with the work on the Great Lakes, or any of the other restoration projects, please contact Tim Talen via the OAHS at oregonaviation.org@gmail.com. Every Friday is a restoration project work day at the OAHS, and there are plenty of tasks for all interested parties. Of course, if you aren’t a “hands-on” person, dedicated gifts to the projects are always welcome.

Join the OAHS!
If you’re not 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 _____________
Occupation________________________ Email __________________________
I am Interested in Volunteering _________________________________________
Skills and Interests ______________________________________________________

If you are already a member and you aren’t sure whether or not you’ve paid your annual membership dues, email us at oregonaviation.org@gmail.com. We’ll check the records and let you know before you send out a potential duplicate payment.