Our Mission

The Oregon Aviation Historical Society was incorporated 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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Have you moved?
Make sure we have your current mailing address!

Write us at OAHS
2475 Jim Wright Way
Cottage Grove, OR 97424

or send us an email at
oregonaviation.org@gmail.com

Story Special #1 returns to Oregon!

After a recent generous donation from the Payne family of Spokane, WA, OAHS is now home to the Story Special #1, designed & built by Oregonian Tom Story prior to WWII. This donation also included a Mark 7, another Tom Story home built aircraft.

In the late 1920’s and early 30’s Les Long, of Cornelius, OR, was trying to perfect a light weight, low horsepower, home built aircraft. Through his experimenting, Long found that a low-wing design worked best. This eventually led to his creation of the Wimpy; a low wing, home built aircraft, built by Ed Ball and Swede Ralston. It was flown by many Oregon notables such as Myron Buswell, who also owned the Wimpy for a period in the late 1930’s. It was quite a fixture at Bernard’s field throughout this heyday of homebuilding in Oregon. This was also the aircraft that inspired Tom Story to build a flying machine of his very own.

Story built his first aircraft based on the Wimpy in the late 1930’s. Though flown often, it was later purchased by George Bogardus, who renamed it the “Little Gee Bee.” This is the aircraft in which George made his several famous cross country flights to Washington, D.C., to encourage the federal government to establish the experimental/amateur class of aviation.

In the late 1940’s Story was approached by his good friend Dick Andrus who had an interest in building an aircraft. A deal soon was struck to build two more aircraft. Dick would provide the materials and Tom would provide the labor. In order to save money on materials, metal tubing was scavenged from the wreckage of several J-3 cubs.

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A Year in Review  By Cassandra Barrong

Several years ago when I moved to Cottage Grove, my now husband began telling me crazy stories about Oregon’s outlaw pilots of the 1930’s and aircraft engines made from motorcycles. Stories about Jim Wright and the H1, the pilots who had worked with him, and how some are still flying out of Cottage Grove. He would talk about the restoration of a “Great Lakes,” flown by Dot and Tex! He always seemed so enthusiastic about it, so I would nod and smile. I heard his words, but never really understood what he meant.

October 8th will be my one year anniversary with the society, and already, I cannot imagine doing anything else. Except maybe flying. Over the last year I have discovered that the stories my husband had been trying to tell me are not only true, but that they are connected far deeper than I could have imagined. Not a day has gone by that I haven’t learned something new.

I have found passion and purpose within the world of aviation, and I truly believe in the mission here at OAHS. The mission of collecting and preserving Oregon’s rich aviation heritage for future generations. The collection in this museum are not only pieces of Oregon’s aviation history, but of America’s aviation history. Without Oregon, the world of aviation would look very different than it does today.

Through our efforts over the last year we have been able to expand the collection here at the museum. Recently adding two new motorcycle conversion engines on loan, the Long-Harlequin and the Henderson Heath Kit. As well as the generous donation of the Story Special #1, accompanied by a Mark 7, also designed by Tom Story.

In order to promote this mission further we have worked diligently over the last year to increase our public visibility. We have done this by becoming more active in our local community, participating in local parades, attending festivals and events, as well as putting on pancake breakfasts right here in the hangar!

We have also become more active in our aviation community by attending other regional fly-ins such as the Independence Fly-In, The Hood River Fly-In, and the Benton Air Fair. By reaching out to our communities OAHS has seen a 10% increase in membership since October of last year. OAHS has also had the opportunity to work with McMenamins and the opening of their Cedar Hills pub located on the land that was known as Bernard’s field in the 1930’s. Because of this working relationship we have been able to present at the Hotel Oregon History Pub, and will be presenting again Oct 30th in Portland at the Kennedy School History Pub. We also now post and promote semi monthly videos discussing everything from the Yates Geodetic to the Boeing 40, the wreckage that was located and retrieved by OAHS members in the early 90’s. You can check out those videos at Oregonaviation.org.

Over the coming year I hope to see a continued increase in our membership as well as increased attendance to the fly-ins. I also hope to see a continued increase in our daily museum patronage. Broadening our hours to four days a week plus Saturdays throughout the summer has had a positive impact. The addition of the Welcome Center to our field has also brought added air traffic as well as visibility for the museum.

I am grateful to work in a place full of such incredible history, as well as under the OAHS Board of Directors who truly believe in the mission of this organization. I am excited for the coming year and hope that you are inspired to become more involved with this great organization as well. The door is always open, and the coffee is always on!
**Story Returns, Cont.**

Dick would cut down the fuselages and haul them home in the trunk of his car. Powered by A65 engines, these aircraft would be known as the Story Special #1/N1337N owned by Tom, and the Story Special #2/N1338N owned by Dick. Story Special #2 would go on to be co-owned by Pete Bowers and provide the inspiration for the Bowers Fly-Baby. The Fly-Baby was the winner of EAA’s 1962 aircraft design contest. The plans for the Fly-baby were published over a series of 14 articles in EAA’s Sport Aviation, and nearly 500 of these aircraft have been built since its publication. These articles as well as copies of the Fly-Baby plans are still available today.

The two original aircraft were bought and sold several times over the years, though always remaining in the Pacific Northwest. They were also featured together in an air to air shot on the first color edition of EAA’s Sport Aviation in 1960. The Story Special #2, still in flying condition, has been housed at OAHS over the past few years by the Story Flying Club— one of the oldest remaining flying clubs in the Pacific Northwest. As mentioned, Story #1 has recently returned to its Oregon roots. Currently unassembled, this aircraft will be maintained until it is moved to the OAHS restoration hangar. We at OAHS are honored to be curators of such important pieces of Oregon’s homebuilt lineage and look forward to seeing this new addition come back to life, potentially to grace the cover of Sport Aviation once again, but that’s, another story.

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**Restoration Corner:**

**Numbers, numbers, numbers!**

The Springfield Cadet, AKA the Baby Fleet has received its N# on the bottom wing. With bright red, cleanly applied numbers, this little biplane is getting closer to assembly. Next on the task list will be the construction of new flying wires. After double checking old photographs it was discovered that there should be 12 flying wires vs. the 6 originally thought. After the construction of new cables and completion of a few more details, the aircraft will be ready for full assembly and display here in the museum hangar.
Fly-In Pancake Breakfast!

At the Oregon Aviation History Center
Cottage Grove, OR
61S Jim Wright Field!

8–11am Saturday, October 7
“Beaverton Outlaw” Video presentation @ 10am

$5 - Pancakes, sausage, OJ & Coffee
Kids under 12 FREE
All proceeds benefit OAHS and the preservation of Oregon’s rich Aviation History