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Photographs by Chris Rose

Rare Warbirds to Depart Edwards Ranch

by Dave Hirschman

(Reprinted courtesy of the AOPA)

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Hang around aircraft restorers and you'll inevitably hear tales of priceless historical relics hidden in barns, buried in shrink wrap, or otherwise stuck in time awaiting discovery. These stories are almost always wild exaggerations or outright fiction. But if you've ever heard of the cache of iconic warbirds at Wilson Connell "Connie" Edwards' west Texas ranch, it's absolutely real.

The irascible former movie pilot who made a fortune in the oil business has added to his vast inventory of mostly WWII-era fighters, seaplanes and surplus parts for more than a half century. Now, he's decided to sell many of them — but only on his own nonnegotiable terms.

"People can either pay my price or go to hell, I really don't care which," says Edwards, 80, who is perhaps best known for choreographing and flying many of the aerial scenes in *Battle of Britain*, a 1969 movie that starred Michael Caine and Sir Lawrence Olivier and featured

more than a dozen Messerschmitt Bf 109s (technically Spanish-built HA-1112 Buchons), Heinkel He 111 (CASA 2.111) bombers — and, of course, British Spitfires and Hurricanes. "I know the value of what I've got, and I don't haggle. Pay my price, or don't waste my time," Edwards says.

A Spitfire that actually flew in the real Battle of Britain is the jewel of Edwards' fleet, as well as a half-dozen Buchons (including a rare two-seat model) that he took in partial payment for his work on the film. There's also a P-51 Mustang that looks exactly as it did when imported from Guatemala in the early 1970s, and two PBY Catalinas. Edwards flew one of the PBYs to England and back in 1986, and a second — known as the *Green Turtle* — has a Calypso paint scheme and plush yacht-like interior. (There are also two shipping containers full of surplus PBY parts and specialized tools.)

A recently polished Grumman

Blue colored text have links to relevant information.



Mallard is tied down outside. So are several Piaggio Gull airframes and parts for many more.

The impetus for the sale is the tragic 2013 death of Edwards' son Wilson Connell "Tex" Edwards Jr., an accomplished warbird and agricultural pilot. Tex was killed in a car accident near the family's ranch about 60 miles east of Midland/Odessa. He's buried in a family plot on the ranch, which is located in the arid cotton-growing portion of the state.

"I was going to give it all to Tex," Edwards says. "He was a fantastic pilot and absolutely excelled at everything he did in aviation. But now that he's gone, there's no sense keeping it."

In the 1980s Edwards donated two highly coveted aircraft to the Experimental Aircraft Association — a P-38 Lightning and an F4U Corsair — and both are on display at the EAA museum in Oshkosh. He also helped found the Commemorative Air Force (then the Confederate Air Force) but has split with the Texas-based organization. He has been an AOPA member for more than 50 years.

Edwards says he doesn't regard his many airplanes as a "collection," just unrelated objects he bought or traded for because they interested him. Logistically, the ongoing acquisitions required building an ever-expanding hangar complex (more than 100,000 square feet) in which to store them. He's never offered public tours, and his out-of-the-way runway, hangars, and castle-themed home are strictly private.

"I'm not interested in hearing other pilots' war stories or telling them mine," says Edwards, who soloed when he was 16 years old and later flew throughout Central America and the Caribbean in his twenties for a series of shadowy firms he prefers not to discuss. "I'm really not in the airplane business at all. I'm in the oil, ranching, and stone business. I only own airplanes for fun."

Edwards' favorite airplane is a blue-and-white Piper Super Cub with an oversized 180-hp engine that isn't part of the sale. He's unsentimental about the rest. Many of his aircraft haven't flown in years, and the hangars and their contents are constantly subject to the region's unrelenting wind, heat and dust.

Tall shelves are piled with seemingly forgotten tools, parts, hardware and solvents. The airplanes sit just as they were at the conclusion of their last flights, sometimes with headsets on glare shields, long-expired aeronautical charts unfolded on the seats, and empty cups and beverage cans in cabins.

An entire hangar is filled with a treasure trove of warbird engines. Two never-used, right- and left-turning Allisons for a P-38 are bolted on stands; dozens of Rolls-Royce Merlins are in various states; and an overhauled Pratt & Whitney R-985 is wrapped in plastic sheeting.

Aircraft aren't the only motorized vehicles in the hangars. There are cars, too, including a 1964 Corvette, a 1958 Cadillac El Dorado Brougham, an original VW Thing, a police Harley-Davidson motorcycle and a half-dozen aged mini-bikes

Edwards says he really doesn't care what happens to the airplanes after they leave — although he assumes that anyone willing to pay premium prices for them likely will restore them to flying condition. But if not, that's the new owners' concern, not his.

"If they can afford to buy them, they probably have enough money to restore them," he said. "If not, they're better off not even trying."

Edwards has been exceptionally successful in business, and he attributes his wins to "dumb luck" and being in the right place at the right time. His family's vast land holdings sit atop huge amounts of oil and natural gas, and new drilling techniques have dramatically increased their output at a time of high commodity prices. Another mineral discovery here, Texas stone, is in demand among high-end home builders. (Edwards is a self-taught stone carver whose grounds are decorated with





elaborate stone artwork of his own creation.)

A fly-in guest to the Edwards ranch in the late 1970s came to hunt quail and became a family friend. That was Sam Walton, founder of Walmart, and Edwards was an early investor in what became the world's biggest retail chain.

Edwards once owned more than a dozen P-51 Mustangs, many of them bought from military boneyards. He says he never paid more than \$15,000 for a Mustang, and now such aircraft sell for \$1.5 million or more.

Edwards has long been a controversial figure in historical aircraft circles, and he is full of contradictions. He's at once flamboyant and reclusive, worldly and profane.

Terry Adams, a T-6 pilot and restorer who was a close friend of Tex, is preparing Edwards' exotic aircraft for sale. Adams is a retired Snap-On Tools executive, and he lives in San Antonio and comes to the Edwards ranch for days at a time to help get things inventoried and organized.

While Adams is at the hangar complex, Edwards stops by each morning in a Ford pickup with his dog Hunter, a miniature Australian shepherd, to plan the day's activities. He swings by in the evenings, too, to barbeque and drink Texas-brewed Shiner Bock beer from long-neck bottles.

He's especially scornful of politicians with Democratic presidents Carter, Clinton and Obama drawing venomous ridicule, and not-conservative-enough Republicans don't fare much better. Provocative bumper stickers; torn-out tabloid covers; photocopied political cartoons; and scrawled,

handwritten messages are posted on hangar walls and metal lockers.

Edwards can be charming, engaging, and funny when telling stories of the times he spent flying with English, Spanish and German pilots in Europe filming *Battle of Britain*. He also is one of the few pilots on the planet who can authoritatively compare the flight characteristics of some of history's most renowned aircraft.

These Spanish aircraft were painted in German colors for the *Battle of Britain* movie. They are equipped with Rolls-Royce Merlin engines.

With many hundreds of hours in both the P-51 and Bf 109/Buchon, for example, he says the German-designed aircraft is far and away the more nimble fighter. "It's not even a close contest," he says. "In the hands of a similarly trained and experienced pilot, the 109 wins hands-down." Edwards recounts a truism by Luftwaffe fighter ace Adolf Galland: "Most pilots expect their airplanes to perform. The Me 109 expects its pilot to perform."

Among seaplanes, he says the Grumman Albatross is head and shoulders above the Consolidated PB4Y, although there's a great deal of variation in quality, performance and flying characteristics of individual PB4Ys.

Edwards also inspires lifelong loyalty from some of the people who know him best. A foreman who has worked on the family ranch more than 40 years says the Edwards family's steadfastness makes him want to stay forever.





Connie Edwards with his dual-control two-place Bf 109/HA-1112.

And Edwards' generous actions do not always align with his incendiary words. For example, Adams recently sought to acquire a rare 1932 Ford Coupe that had been sitting idle in one of the Edwards hangars for decades.

"They said Connie would never sell that car because it belonged to his [late] brother [William Prior "Budo" Edwards]," Adams recalled. "So I asked Connie if he'd ever let it go, and he said he would, for the right price. I told him that I wanted to buy it, and I'd pay anything he asked. I'd write him a check on the spot."

Then Edwards surprised Adams by turning down what could have been a tidy profit. "Connie just looked at me, smiled, and said 'Merry Christmas, Terry. The car's all yours,'" Adams said. "He wouldn't take a cent for it."

Email dave.hirschman@aopa.org

AAHS Headquarters - More Hands Needed for a Better Organization

The small office, stuffed with filing cabinets bulging with famous and obscure aircraft manufacturers' names, neat photo trays lined with rows and rows of negative envelopes, periodicals stacked in corners, and library shelves arrayed with all manner of aviation books is what the casual observer would see at the AAHS Headquarters. A visitor, too, would also see the stack of books on the "To Be Reviewed" shelf, and cardboard boxes of incoming materials piled inside the door. There are a few dedicated historians that give their time every week to keep the AAHS office/library working, but we are inexorably falling behind as needed duties go undone.

Coming in the front door at 15211 Springdale Street, Huntington Beach, Tom Butz, AAHS Treasurer, would be the first person you'd meet. His desk is just inside the front door. This proximity to the door does cause Tom grief regularly, as members and visitors who come in the front door many times don't get farther than Tom's desk before aviation stories are flying around (pardon the pun!) thicker than C-47s over Normandy on D-Day. Tom has to shoo them into the back

library room so he can get back to recording membership payments and paying AAHS bills. Keeping the accounting system accurate, recording receipts and answering membership billing questions keeps Tom fully occupied a couple of days a week. Tom also does Post Office and banking errands.

The next person you're likely to see is Joe Rando, AAHS Membership Coordinator, who handles the update of the AAHS member database, and sits next to Tom Butz. Joe answers questions and calls that come into the office regarding membership, writes response letters, and keeps member's status accurate. Joe can be seen weekly thumbing through older AAHS membership records, answering a question about a member status, or responding to a caller's query.

Around the corner Paul Butler, AAHS Director of Collections, stays busy recording material donations from members and elsewhere. Paul inventories incoming materials, and provides a *Deed of Gift* to the donor. Paul also categorizes photos and negatives for the photo archives. Yet another job Paul stays on top of is managing the equipment in the office - to



Treasurer Tom Butz, unofficial greeter.



Joe Rando working on updating the membership database.

Save the date!

AAHS ANNUAL GATHERING SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 7, 2015

**At Historic Flabob Airport
Rubidoux, California**

**In partnership with the Antique Aircraft Association and the
International Stinson Club.**

**Enjoy a day of history, Stinson Restoration Workshop, aircraft
fly-in and more.**

Additional information at www.aahs-online.org or email info@aahs-online.org





Paul Butler (far left) working on the photo archives, while Paul Minert sorts duplicate periodicals in the library..

ensuring the PCs are running and making sure the network and phones keep running.

Bob Palazzola is heading up the library cataloging, identifying all the AAHS books electronically in a database, and shelving them according to the AAHS categorization scheme. The AAHS library, with some 6,000 books, gets additions regularly through donations, and labeling and categorization of these had fallen woefully behind in the last several years. There have been so many books not yet classified into the library that Bob Palazzola and member Bob Brockmeier acquired a small storage facility and built shelving to hold boxed books that haven't yet been cataloged. With a new software program, we are documenting key features about each book to make future searches of AAHS library more user-friendly. AAHS Member Robert Littlefield volunteers weekly on this momentous task, but many other volunteer hours are needed to get this done.

Paul Minert volunteers his time to review the incoming donations for duplicates, which are then sold to support AAHS, or provided to other organizations, such as FBOs, flight training schools, libraries and local senior centers. Paul also does various sorting duties and provides photos for the AAHS photo archive.

AAHS Webmaster and Journal Editor Hayden Hamilton comes in on Wednesdays to collect material for the *Journal* and coordinate AAHS merchandise/membership sales with Tom (the sales are processed through the website, but need recording via Tom's accounting system). Hayden often spends extra, unplanned hours on the *Journal* content to prepare articles for publication.

Several other AAHS members, both local and remote, give hours weekly to get needed chores done. Jeff Erickson, in California, works with authors to prepare articles, Job Conger, in Illinois, helps to answer questions as 'the Answer Man,' Chuck Stewart regularly provides high-resolution photos, and along with others give help in the cataloging efforts for the photo archives. Another group of individuals provides editorial review of the *Journal* and *FlightLine* newsletter to help maintain the high quality we strive for in these publications.

There are many vital tasks that AAHS is not doing, however, because of the lack of volunteer hours. Much of the information that AAHS could be using to support research queries is not yet cataloged, and thus unavailable for member research and review. Many office functions, such as coordinators for volunteers, outreach and fundraising are not currently filled, as well as online tasks of updating our Facebook page, and maintaining our advertising. AAHS could be doing much more to partner with other organizations and grow, but time is needed to put into this effort as well. All of these efforts help drive membership, which in turn can lead to lower annual membership rates.

Now would be a great time for you to step in, share your love of aviation history and support the AAHS office and *Journal* with a few hours of your time! See other pages in this *FlightLine* for descriptions of tasks that take only a small part of your week, but would greatly help support your favorite aviation historical organization. Contact the AAHS office at 714-549-4818 or at prez@aahs-online.org for more information. →



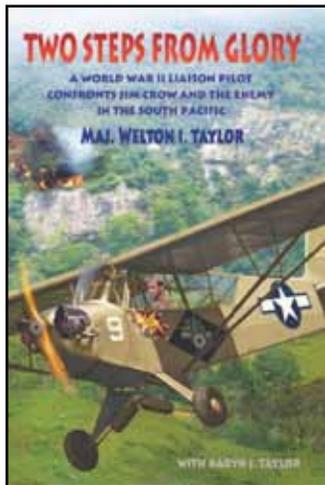
Managing Editor and Webmaster, Hayden Hamilton, working on the next AAHS FlightLine issue.



Robert Littlefield cataloging some new additions to the AAHS Library.

Book Reviews

Two Steps From Glory – A World War II Liaison Pilot Confronts Jim Crow and The Enemy in the South Pacific



by Major Welton I. Taylor. Winning Strategy Press, 1200 West 35th Street #255, Chicago, IL 60609. ISBN-978-0-9838677-1-5, paperback, 9"x6," 385 pages. \$28.95

Author Major Taylor gives the reader an absorbing, precise account of a college-educated colored officer's career in the US Army, during WWII. Major Taylor writes with comprehensive insight into his experiences, providing historical context for the

regulations, norms and culture of racial segregation during his military aviation training in the Mojave Desert, in the Midwest at Fort Sill, and during his combat duty in the South Pacific. He provides many anecdotes illustrating the pervasiveness of a racially divided military culture, unused or yet unwilling to view Negroes in the same light as white soldiers.

Readers will most enjoy Taylor's flying experiences in his liaison aircraft (L-4s, and L-5s), that usually get short shrift in many tomes of aviation military history. Taylor's combat observation sorties although few (mostly as a result of segregation), were performed along with many other unusual flying duties that nonetheless provided Taylor with many adventurous flight hours, including landing on mountainsides, delivering chickens to remote villagers, and crashing behind enemy lines, then hiking out through enemy held territory.

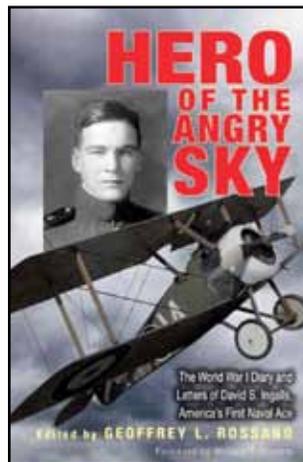
Negro officers, even those who appeared Caucasian, were subtly and overtly treated less than equal to white officers, many who had earned lower ranks or credentials. Taylor illustrates, though, how through intelligence and a lifelong mantra handed down from his father to 'play the cards you're dealt,' he maintained a professional demeanor that supported his many lifelong achievements.

Major Taylor provides footnotes and a comprehensive index in his book, allowing further exploration of the events, individuals and places discussed within the chapters.

Jerri Bergen

Hero of the Angry Sky: The World War I Diary and Letters of David S. Ingalls, America's First Naval Ace, edited by Geoffrey L. Rossano. Ohio University Press, February 2013. ISBN: 0821420186, Hardcover, 9"x6," 350 pages, 50-plus images, extensive footnotes, Table of Contents, Index. \$28.95

While numerous works exist on the exploits of American pilots flying with the RAF and Lafayette Escadrille during WWI, almost nothing has been published regarding the efforts of the U.S. Navy's aviation activities during this war. This book takes a giant step in correcting this oversight. While primarily



focused on the experiences of David S. Ingalls, the U.S. Navy's only ace in this conflict, the reader also learns about other naval aviators, their training and experiences.

David S. Ingalls grew up in Cleveland, Ohio. Like many U.S. WWI aviators, his family was part of that city's affluent, socially prominent society. His father was vice president and general manager of operations west of Buffalo, N.Y., for New York Central Railroad.

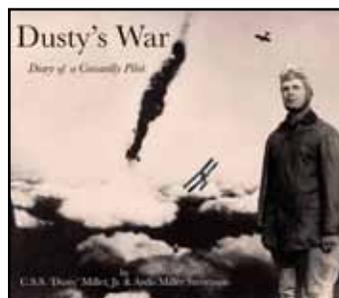
David Ingalls was also a cousin to William Howard Taft. In 1916-1917, Ingalls, along with about two dozen Yale students and recent alumni, created an aerial defense squadron known as the First Yale Unit. As the U.S. was evermore drawn into the war, this group enlisted in the U.S. Navy, and would form the nucleus of naval aviation during WWI. Ingalls became naval aviator #85 shortly after his 18th birthday, and most of his contemporaries from this group would hold licenses in the 80s and 90s. Many would go on to serve not only in combat, but also as adjutants to the naval commanders running U.S. Navy operations during WWI.

The book is unique in that it is primarily written in the first person – David Ingalls telling his own story. Editor Rossano has done a masterful job of combining diary entries with letters home to create an interesting story that in many ways typifies military life – "Hurry up and wait." The reader also gains insight into life beyond the combat role – how these aviators spent their idle time when weather, equipment or leaves took them away from the action. The book yields a good perspective on training provided and the various training phases that these aviators passed through on their way to the front.

This is an excellent book for those interested in WWI aviation history from the perspectives of the U.S. aviators involved to operational aspects of the war. Rossano had footnoted the work extensively to help readers understand the who, what and where of section introduced by Ingalls in relating his experiences. An excellent read for even those only casually interested in this period of aviation history.

Hayden Hamilton

Dusty's War, Diary of a Cowardly Pilot, by C.S. "Dusty" Miller & Ardis Miller Stevenson. AMS Publishing, 2013. ISBN: 978-0-9840259-4-7 (epub), paperback, 9"x6," 200 pages with photos. \$14.95



America's entry into WWI required a rapid buildup of men and equipment, even more so for the fledgling United States Army Air Service. It was so rapid that men often did not have complete uniforms, and the equipment — well, that was something else.

Dusty's War gives the reader a unique view of those chaotic times as Miller trained to be a pilot, his frustrations of trying to get his wings, his commission, to Europe and into aerial combat before the war ended. Along his journey he shares the dangers of flying Jennys and other aircraft used.

Dusty's frustrations began when he tried to join the Aviation Section of the U.S. Army Signal Corps. He was turned down because he wasn't a college graduate. Not willing to accept that response, he contacted the CO of the Culver Military Academy that he had attended. He also contacted a former employer, who had contacts with Chicago politicians. All his efforts led him to Captain Christie in the Quartermaster's department of the Aviation Section of the Signal Corps. On May 31, 1917, he was enlisted.

His first day in the Army began on June 13, when he took a train from Chicago to Ashburn Field #1 a short distance Southwest of Chicago. After getting off the train he had to carry his suitcase and tools almost two miles to the flying field that had been created on a cut-over cornfield. That night, tired and wet, he walked back to the train station for what became his daily commute.

One of his first assignments was to help man-handle large crates off boxcars and then assemble a new trainer called the Standard J-1. There was no instruction manual how to do it, nor was there anyone trained that could show his crew how to do it. He was either assembling new aircraft or repairing damaged ones until his outfit was transferred to Chanute Field in Rantoul, Illinois. He felt that Chanute Field was the more like the real army. At least he didn't have to commute daily to and from work.

It was while at Chanute that he finally got to fly. It was interesting to note that throughout his training flying time was recorded in minutes, not hours, as is the practice today. He felt he was an experienced pilot when he had accumulated 500 minutes flying time. Hardly a day went by that there wasn't some kind of flying accident or the need for an emergency landing due to mechanical problems.

Throughout his journey Dusty shares stories about pilots he met along the way. One example was a story about R.J. "Fish" Hassel and Major "Shorty" Cramer that took off from Rockford, Ill., in 1928 to make a record-setting flight over the North Pole to Stockholm, Sweden. The flight ended with a forced landing on the Greenland ice cap.

Dusty served a tour of duty as an instructor in Texas before he was finally sent to France. He finally arrived in France ready for assignment to a combat squadron only to find that he had to go through another training school first, this time with the type aircraft that had been used and those currently being used in aerial combat. Along the way Dusty noted the dangers in flying these fragile aircraft. Of course, parachutes were not used, which meant your chances of surviving a burning or damaged aircraft would be problematic.

For the historian, this book gives an insight into the pilot training program in the U.S. from the time we entered the war and how it had evolved in Europe near the end of the war. It also gives insight into the hardships, problems and dangers WWI pilots faced flying early trainers and with combat aircraft. For this reason it is a good read.

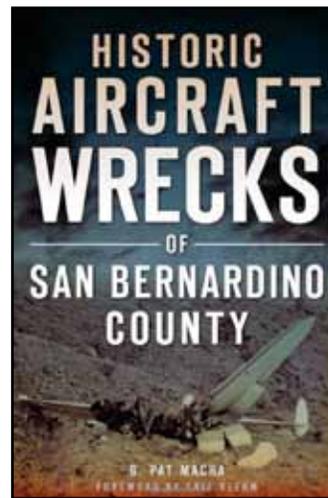
C.S. "Dusty" Miller had a lifelong habit of keeping a diary and it was through his diaries and his conversations with his daughter Ardis Miller Stevenson that this book came to life.

I would be remiss to not mention that this is obviously a self-published book, so don't expect to see page numbers, table of contents or other common components that a published book should have. It appears the book was created for e-publication and printed as a softbound book without any reformatting.

It is important to note that the subtitle, *Diary of a Cowardly Pilot*, doesn't mean what it implies. Quite the opposite, it is an inside joke that the author shares with the reader.

Larry Bledsoe

Historic Aircraft Wrecks of San Bernardino County, by G.



Pat Macha. The History Press, September 2013. ISBN: 1626190127, paperback, 6" x 9," 128 pages, 75+ images and illustrations, index, bibliography, glossary. \$19.95

This is the latest book in the excellent aircraft archaeology series by author Pat Macha. In it he tells the stories of over 425 aircraft wrecks that have occurred in California's San Bernardino County (east of Los Angeles). This area is the largest county in the lower 48 states, and stretches from barren deserts to towering mountain peaks. It is also the home of many past and present military bases and test ranges. Because of these factors, this area has been a fertile ground for aircraft accidents, and this book tells the story of many of them.

The book begins with coverage of the early days of flight in the county, both civil and military, up through WWII and the beginning of flight operations with jet aircraft. Many different types of aircraft were involved. These ranged from small single-engine private planes and military trainers to multi-engine bombers and transport aircraft. Some examples were the Consolidated B-24 and the Douglas C-47. Experimental flight operations operating out of Edwards AFB have also added to many wreck sites in the county. One of the most famous of these accidents was caused by the mid-air collision of a USAF XB-70A Valkarie supersonic bomber and a Lockheed F-104 chase plane while on a photographic mission over the county. This crash and other well-known accidents are also well documented and described. The final section covers missing aircraft. These were aircraft that have disappeared while flying in the county area. Some of these aircraft have been located, while many have not been seen again.

The book is very well written and the author's style leads the reader from one story to the next in a seamless manner that makes for an enjoyable and informative read. Due to the extensive amount of data and the author's interesting presentation, the book will appeal to the history buff as well as the person reading for entertainment. The book is highly recommended for these audiences.

Paul Butler

AAHS Supports Disney's Restoration of Glendale's Grand Central Air Terminal

While manning a booth at the Chino Air Show last May, AAHS President Jerri Bergen was introduced to Dan Beaumont, Technical Director of Walt Disney Parks & Resorts, who was attending the show with his grandson. After learning of AAHS, Dan asked if AAHS might help him and his team find more historic information about the now-defunct Glendale Grand Central Air Terminal (GCAT) building, which had been purchased by Disney, and is now in restoration. The property that used to comprise Grand Central Airport is nearly all owned by the Disney Corporation and it houses many of its creative offices right across the street from the historic GCAT building.

Disney's restoration of GCAT building has been underway for some months. Disney plans to restore the building to much of its former glory, and has found exciting remnants of its aviation past within its walls. The GCAT Restoration team had already worked extensively with AAHS member John Underwood, who has written a book and articles about the airport and the Grand Central Air Terminal. AAHS historian Rayburn Ray, of New Mexico, has also supported the research project with finds regarding the many manufacturing companies that began at Grand Central Airport and were housed at GCAT, such as the Kinner Corp., Vultee, a Beech 18 conversion company, the Timm Corp., and many others.

AAHS member Paul Minert helped Dan and his team research possible aircraft that Disney could acquire for displays to front the Grand Central Air Terminal. Dan and his creative team took a field trip with AAHS members Paul Minert and Jerri Bergen to Cable Airport, Rialto Airport and Chino Airport, in Southern California, to see a 1935 Kinner C-5 (built at Glendale Airport), an AT-11, and other vintage aircraft. Dan and his team also got to see an aircraft restoration facility in action at AAHS member Carl Scholl's Aerotrader, at Chino, as well as many pristine restored aircraft at Yanks Museum. There's no word yet on what Disney will finally end up with as aircraft displays.

The terminal restoration will be completed in the fall of 2015. Dan has promised us that a tour of the restored building

is doable for AAHS in 2016. Disney will operate the building as a private facility, while opening a small visitor center inside for scheduled public and educational events. An overview of the restoration and architectural sketches of the restored site can be found at:

http://la.curbed.com/archives/2013/04/disney_making_over_terminal_at_las_first_commercial_airport.php



Two views of the current state of construction of the Grand Central Air Terminal. (Photos by John Hazlet)

Want to help your Society?

How about reviewing a book? Just let Hayden Hamilton (webmaster@aahs-online.org) know and he'll send you a book. The only catch is that you have to write a short book review (as shown in this *FlightLine*) and send it back to us. Hayden will let you know what titles are available.

Or, if you have read a good book lately, let other members know about it by writing a short book review of it. Again, contact Hayden for details and titles - don't want to have you writing a review of a book that has already been reviewed.

AAHS FlightLine Sign-Up Reminder

For those that want to be notified by email when the next issue of the *AAHS FlightLine* is posted, please register your email address online. You can do this by going to the AAHS website "home page." At the bottom of this Web page is a link and instructions that will allow you to register your email address. This is an "opt in" program. Only those that request notification will receive one. The AAHS will not use your email address registered here for any other purpose than to notify you of a *FlightLine* posting. You have control and may remove or change your email address at any time. Remember that the electronic version of the *AAHS FlightLine* is in color.

Geraldine “Jerrie” Mock

Geraldine Mock passed away September 30, 2014, at the age of 88.

Who is Geraldine Mock and why are we reporting this “flight west”? While almost all of us remember Amelia Earhart’s attempt to become the first woman to fly around the world, few of us recall that this feat was actually accomplished a little over 50 years ago by a young Ohio housewife flying solo in a Cessna 180 called the “Spirit of Columbus” (Ohio) – Geraldine “Jerrie” Mock. Her plane is now displayed in the Udvar-Hazy facility of the National Air and Space Museum in Washington, D.C. She not only laid claim to this record, but went on to set a number of others as well.

Born too late to fly in WWII, Jerrie learned to fly in a Piper Tri-Pacer, and she and her husband had owned a 1953 Luscombe before buying a half-ownership in the Cessna 180. In 1964, she was still a relatively inexperienced pilot with the ink on her instrument rating barely dry before setting out on her globe-straddling adventure. In fact, she didn’t initially set out to break any records; just to see the world, from which her airplane seemed like a good way to do it. It wasn’t until researching routes and requirements for the flight that she learned no woman had ever done it.

Growing up, Mock took her first airplane ride at the age of seven in a Ford Trimotor. “I got out of the plane and told my parents that when I grew up, I was going to be a pilot,” she related to an editor. She was 11-years old when her childhood heroine Amelia Earhart began her ill-fated attempt in 1937. She told all her friends that she was going to fly her own plane around the world when she was old enough.

She attended Ohio State University for a couple of years as an engineering major, but part-time school made this difficult to pursue. Marriage and soon two children ended her college career, but not her love for flying and all those faraway places that she yearned to see.

When she was 30, Jerrie and her husband had both learned to fly and purchased a Luscombe to service this interest. They sold the Luscombe in 1962 and bought a half interest in a 1953 Cessna 180 in partnership with a friend – a friend who had no idea how very little time he would ever get to spend in it. It was about this time that Jerrie found herself with time on her hands. Her two teenage kids were pretty much able to take care of themselves and her two-year-old could be handled by a baby-sitter. Bored and restless, Mock was tired of flying around Ohio and she said she thought her husband was tired of hearing her complain about it. “So one day, he said, ‘Well, why don’t you fly somewhere then?’ I said, ‘Like where?’ To which he replied, ‘Oh, I don’t know. Why don’t you fly around the world?’”

What may have been a joke hit a sweet spot with Jerrie – it was something she had always yearned to do. She only had about 500 hours logged at the time, but she now had an airplane capable to doing a global flight. It was only after she began researching what such a trip would take that she discovered that no other woman had ever done it. On telling her husband – a professional

public relations man – he enthusiastically joined the team.

This discovery soon transformed her trip from a sightseeing adventure to something far more focused and serious. Sponsors were lined up. A need for secrecy presented itself as there were any number of other women pilots from WWII who had the skills, planes and financial resources to do the flight.

In preparation, Mock got an instructor and discreetly obtained her instrument rating, all the while plotting out each leg of her trip, calling or visiting the consulate of every nation she might need to fly over or land in if she had a problem in order to get the appropriate visas and permissions.

The Cessna was modified with custom fuel tanks to service several legs of the trip lasting 12 hours or more. Additional navigation and radio equipment was installed including dual ADF receivers, an HF radio, and a Richter carburetor gauge (newly invented). No GPS, no LORAN and only limited VOR service was available to her on her route. Continental completely overhauled her stock O-470J 225-hp engine. All her preparation work paid off as Mock experienced only three mechanical problems during the flight: A starter motor failure, a burned HF antenna motor (from inadvertently leaving the motor on) and a clogged carburetor from flying through a sandstorm.

The preparation work took almost 18 months to complete. During this period Mock continued to stay in close contact with the National Aeronautic Association (representative of the FAI sanctioning body for record flights). They assured her that there were no other inquiries from women for a world flight – until January 1964 when they notified her of an inquiry. Because the rules permit only one officially sanctioned attempt at a time from the NAA/FAI and the sanction could only be held for two to three months, Mock now had to move fast to lock in her attempt, which she was successful in.

Though she could no longer get the official record, Mock’s competitor, Joan Merriam Smith, decided to pursue a world flight, for which she could get public credit if she beat Jerrie. What had started as a quest to see the world had now become not only a record attempt but a race, as well.

Smith departed on March 17, 1964, following the same course that Earhart had followed. Mock departed from Columbus, Ohio, two days later on a more direct route, but



Jerrie Mock and the Spirit of Columbus shortly before departing on their globe-straddling flight.



Moments before she took off from the Port of Columbus Airport on her 1964 flight, Mock posed in front of Three-Eight Charlie, also known as the Spirit of Columbus. According to her memoir, Mock wore her “blue, drip-dry outfit” throughout the flight. (Sheldon Ross / Columbus Dispatch)

with longer North Atlantic legs. On the leg between Bermuda and the Azores, she not only experienced her first solo IFR conditions but also her first encounter with icing and having to descend to below 100 feet to get below the clouds in order to get into Santa Maria Island. From there she continued to Casablanca and points beyond.

What Mock was to quickly discover was that the flying was the easy part of the trip. Dealing with the bureaucracy and IFR/VFR flight limitations, along with local weather conditions, in many countries had her regularly having to adjust her flight legs and landing destinations. Her thorough planning helped smooth these “bumps in the road” as she had sought and obtained appropriate permissions and visas, even for countries she had no original plans to stop in. Every stop had some combination of problems with language, bureaucracy (or small-minded officials), hostile cultures, militaristic regimes, lack of local currency with traveler’s checks not being honored, and the basic problems of trying to get reliable weather information, food, transport, and enough sleep to pursue the next leg.

Even then, the flight was not without some adventure (or misadventure) like when she inadvertently landed at a Cairo military base and was sequestered for a time before being allowed to continue. Her longest leg of the journey was the almost 18 hours required to fly from Honolulu to Oakland, California.

She completed her world circumnavigation 29 days, 11 hours, 59 minutes and 38 seconds after she had departed Columbus, Ohio, on March 19. The time gave her not only



Spirit of Columbus, N1538C, is currently on display at the National Air and Space Museum’s Udair-Hazy Center. (Photo by Richard Harris)

the distinction of being the first woman to fly solo around the world, but also a new world speed record. The records came at the price of little or no time to do any sightseeing. This would come later in 1969 when she ferried a Cessna 206 to New Guinea and then continued on around the world – again. Mock would go on to set 20 records or “firsts” - five more than Amelia Earhart, but she remains almost unnoticed in history. Still, quite an accomplishment of an everyday Ohio housewife.

“Even when things went wrong, I was having fun, because it was an experience,” she said. “I always had confidence that it was going to work out okay. And all those experiences changed my life, in all kinds of ways. I can relate to so many other things in the world, because of all I experienced on that flight.”→

References

- “Jerrie Mock; An unlikely Record-setting Globe-Circling Adventure,” by Lane Wallace. *Sport Aviation*, March 2014. pp: 56-63.
- Three-Eight Charlie*, by Jerrie Mock. Lippincott; First Edition (January 1, 1970).



President Johnson presented Jerrie with an FAA Gold Medal for Exceptional Service in a White House ceremony after her flight. Her copy of this photo is signed: “To Jerrie Mock - whose hand has rocked the cradle and girdled the globe. Lyndon B. Johnson.”

Hopeless Hints for JN-4 Drivers

(excerpted from a 1921 aviation magazine)



Curtiss JN-4D, 2900, executes a steep take-off climb. (AAHS-P002528)

1. Never attempt to fly a Jenny with its motor missing. It is always better in the long run to delay a flight until the motor can be found and placed back in the ship where it belongs.
2. All Jennys should be equipped with booster magnetos, as the plane can often be boosted over low fences, small dogs, and neighboring flower beds with this equipment.
3. The simplest, safest way to get a Jenny out of a small field is with a good dray and a team of mules.
4. When dirt collects in the wheel spokes, an easy method of removal is to land cross-wind in a stout gale. This should wipe the wheels free of dirt. In fact, this usually wipes out the entire landing gear.



Curtiss JN-4, following an off-field training accident. (AAHS-P002557)

5. The best way to elevate a Jenny several hundred feet is by using the elevator. When the elevator stops, the machine should be held in this position by the prop. As soon as the engine is sufficiently warm, the prop can be knocked away, and the ensuing dive will result in enough speed to clear low fences, small dogs, and neighboring flower beds, barring any adverse winds.
6. If you are forced to land in a dense forest, a knowledge of pancake landings is handy. Although some think the extra weight of carrying enough pancakes for an emergency landing would decrease the performance prohibitively, I have found in my more than four hours in the air that the feeling of

safety in knowing you are prepared more than offsets that loss of performance.

7. I should mention here that when flying in Iowa during the harvest season, it is wise to double up on your shock absorbers, as in landing on an oat field, where the shocks are most profuse, I found that single units do not fare well in coping with these. I was once unable to absorb the oat shocks as I ran into them on landing with the final result that when I hit the twelfth one, my propeller caught a quantity of oats and blew them into the radiator, where heat and moisture caused them to swell profusely into an oatmeal-like consistency, completely filling the air passages and making it necessary for me to discard the engine and install an air-cooled one.
8. A "Three-Point Landing" specifically refers to two wheels and a tailskid and not, as many seem to assume, two wing tips and a propeller.
9. A good, reliable compass should be in every ship, for in any cross-country flying, especially passing through clouds or fog, it is very easy to lose one's bearings. This was forcibly brought to my notice during my recent flight to China, which I foolishly attempted without a compass. When well out over the Pacific, I encountered fog and, within the space of a few minutes, had completely lost my bearings. Not only my main bearings, but my crankshaft, as well. I did not notice this at the time and kept going until I arrived in China a few days later. You can imagine, after I stopped to take on gas, my dismay when I tried cranking the motor and found the crankshaft was missing. Well, an engine is no good without a crankshaft, so, in order to get on with my trip, I had to have the ship towed by some local oxen to the top of a hill. As I gained speed in the descent, I engaged the landing gear with the timing gear, and the ship took off in a spectacular manner. In fact, it took off two chimneys, plus a Chinaman's queue, which I could not dodge as it was standing straight up, no doubt from fright. Ever since I have made a point of using a compass.



One of only a handful of airworthy Curtiss Jennys seen here at the Antique Airplane Association flyin in Blakesburg, Iowa, in 2009. (Photo by Charles E. Stewart, AAHS-P001260)

President's Message

I stop in occasionally to Yanks Air Museum at nearby Chino Airport, visiting with restoration manager Frank Wright, while I do research on vintage aircraft paint schemes for an upcoming aviation poster, and marvel at the steady progress I see on their various aircraft restoration projects, such as their Stinson L-5E Sentinel. Eight months ago it stood on blocks, engine out for rebuild, the tubing sandblasted but not yet painted, empty of seats, instruments, and the immense wooden wings sitting vertically in jigs nearby. Recently, I complimented Frank and his team on all their progress, the L-5 now on its wheels, rebuilt and recovered, painted, the engine finely tuned and instruments cleaned, installed and wired with careful precision to original specs.



The Yanks Museum's Stinson L-5, 42-14986, nears completion of its restoration.

Many times big changes happen gradually, imperceptible to a daily review, but over time, are considerable. Over the year, AAHS has converted more than 200 articles to electronic format and posted them to the website, created an online aviation e-book library, added an additional 6,000 photos to the digital photo archive, cataloged hundreds of books to the AAHS collection, reviewed 22 books, and replied to dozens of aviation-related inquiries, in addition to managing daily tasks of *Journal* and *FlightLine* publishing and membership updates.

We gnash our teeth with the pace of change, anxious to achieve our final objective, yet we can also appreciate that we're a good ways along from where we started. In reading many AAHS articles, I see members have had similar experiences, such as Al Stix, who outlines a lengthy, meticulous restoration of the last Monosport in the Summer 2014 *Journal*, where an arduous process, fraught with frustration, costs and delays, ultimately turned out a final product that was well worth the wait.

Our first annual meeting in 30 years was held this year, February 1, is one of those things, where, as an event, it might not seem like much, but for AAHS, in the infant stages of doing regular outreach, is a true milestone that we can be proud to have accomplished. We are planning our next AAHS Annual Gathering on Saturday, February 7, 2015, at Flabob Airport, Rubidoux, California. We had great fun at our first event, and our upcoming AAHS Annual Gathering looks to be even more enjoyable, with a great speaker, Jonna Doolittle Hoppes, granddaughter of Jimmy Doolittle, partnered with a Stinson fly-in. Frank Wright may even fly their newly restored Stinson L-5E from Yanks Air Museum to Flabob for us to check out its restoration first hand.

Heaven knows we have a long road ahead of us to meet many of AAHS' important milestones, with our preservation efforts and membership drive, but I do want to thank each and every one of our volunteers, authors, photographers and members for having a little patience and taking this journey with us to a worthwhile outcome.

We have published in recent *Journals* and *FlightLineS* the interest in helping members preserve the history they've collected, in photos or stories and writings. AAHS Member Paul Munkasy had recently passed, and his daughter, Lauren Minor, called to ask if AAHS would help preserve her father's aviation photo and library collection. We have since acquired Paul Munkasy's lifetime collection of 20,000-plus aviation slides and 80 boxes of books, which we will be cataloging and making available to AAHS members. AAHS Directors Carl Scholl and Bob Brockmeier donated time and funds to help ship this collection from Florida to AAHS Headquarters here in Southern California.

Other AAHS members, too, are working with AAHS to preserve their aviation collections, for the benefit of future aviation enthusiasts. Herb Gifford, of Pennsylvania, is shipping small segments of his extensive aviation book collection to AAHS. We are grateful that we can be a part of this preservation effort.

You can also support the preservation of aviation history through recognition of AAHS in your estate planning. Donations of funds and/or aviation collections can be allocated directly to AAHS as a non-profit institution. Contact the AAHS office for more information.

Jerri Bergen
President

New Members

Editor's Note: Due to search engines extracting and indexing personal information, the AAHS will no longer publish detailed addresses. Please contact the office if you wish to contact a member.

Dale Bartels
Travelers Rest, SC 29690

Simon Eccleston
Preston, Lancashire, PR4 1BY
United Kingdom

Arnold Swanberg
Seattle, WA 98115

James Grube
Leawood, KS 66209

Tom Mills
Shakopee, MN 55379

Steve Ruffin
Virginia Beach, VA 23456

Gary James
Princeton, IL 61356

Robert L. Littlefield
Anaheim, CA

Alan Achor
Sunnyvale, CA 94086-8648

James Ballantyne
San Diego, CA 92108

Timothy Crowley
Anchorage, AK 99501-3356

Lawrence Karson
Houston, TX 77069

Kim Clawson
Northbrook, IL 60062-4504

Thomas Marino
Queens Village, NY 11427-2425

Matt Brimer
Florissant, MO 63031

Todd Epp
Harrisburg, SD 57032

Thomas Leonard
Westminster, CA 92683

John A. Marshall
Saint Louis, MO 63124

Paul Orosco
Fairfield, CA 94533

David Baker
Brede, Nr Rye,
East Sussex TN316BT
United Kingdom

Milford Wayne Donaldson
Fair Oaks, CA 95628

Milton McWilliams
Bellevue, NE 68123

Dirkjan Rozema
1338 KW Almere,
Netherlands

Donald Sparbel
Huntington Beach, CA 92647

Todd Butler
Lake Havasu City, AZ 86404

Barbara Ganschow
Sparks, NV 89434

Brig. Gen. Ernest Adelman
St. Louis, MO 63122-1321

Karl D. Engelskirger
Valley City, OH 44280

Crystal Huff
Beaumont, TX 77713

James Lockridge
Reno, NV 89511

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Make sure you send the AAHS office a change of address so you will not miss any issues of your Journals.

Wants & Disposals

DISPOSAL: A collection of airline magazines and photos (estate property) that I would like to sell. The collection includes *Airliners*: 1970s, 1980s, 1990s and 2000; *Airliners International*: 1973 and 1974; and *Airways*: most 1990s issues.

Also, a collection of around 100 photos, most in color, of various sizes and of various airlines - past and present. All items are of excellent quality and condition. A detailed list is available on request by mail.

Thank you.

Tom Lindholm
email: tindholm@avci.net

NEW MEMBER DRIVE

The AAHS is in its sixth decade of operation and continues to face the challenge of sustaining its membership.

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As of this date, the following CDs are available. Each CD contains between 70 and 140 images depending on content.

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- 1031 Golden Age Commercial Flying Boats



These CDs are available to members for \$19.95 (\$29.95 non-members) each plus shipping (\$2.50 U.S., \$10.00 International - add \$1.00 for each additional CD). Order forms are available online and on request, but a note along with your donation specifying your particular interest is sufficient.

Proceeds go to support the preservation of the photo archives. Do you have a particular interest or suggestion for a CD in this series? Drop us a line or email the webmaster (webmaster@aahs-online.org). We are currently researching the possibilities of offerings covering the following areas: Connies Part II, XP-56, Northrop X-4, Bell Aircraft, and Early Lockheeds.