



OX5 AVIATION PIONEERS TEXAS WING NEWSLETTER

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George Vose, Editor/Secretary

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Message from the Editor/Secretary



The 1950s and the 1960s were the “golden decades” of the OX5 Aviation Pioneers. There were several thousand active members then, all of whom had flown or maintained OX5 airplanes. The picture was taken at the 1959 national banquet at the William Penn Hotel in Pittsburgh. Even from a larger picture I lost count after 320 faces. It is doubtful that we will ever be that large again.



Only a handful of current members have flown or maintained an OX5 airplane. This is not important. Of real importance is that our current national membership of around one thousand is truly dedicated to maintaining the memories and values of the great OX5 aviation era. We will keep going.

This issue’s “Mystery” Plane

In the development of a new line of sport airplanes in 1930-1931, one company abandoned the standard biplane configuration, and patterned a new craft in the increasingly popular “parasol” monoplane form.



The airplane on the right is a

A. Rearwin “Junior”

B. Fairchild 22

C. Kinner “Sportster”

D. Heath “Parasol”

(Correct answer on page 2)



2011 National Reunion in Hammondsport

The annual reunion in Hammondsport, NY went well, but the Texas Wing was represented by only one member, Ed Paulovske, accompanied by his wife “Pat”. Both Wing President George Chandler and Wing Secretary/Editor George Vose were unable to travel that week, and National First VP Mike Lawrence had another business calling in Kansas City. The November 2011 OX5 NEWS that you have received, reported the meeting details very well.

The Texas Wing full-page welcoming ad (shown on the left) greeted all of the attendees. Members enjoyed tours of the famous Glenn H. Curtiss Museum and

TEXAS WING OFFICERS: George Chandler, President
Michelle Lawrence, Treasurer

Robert Clark, 1st Vice President
Hazel Fehmel, Historian

George Vose, Sec/Editor

GOVERNORS: Jack Brouse 2013, Barbara Kraemer 2013, Susie Brouse 2012, Cade Woodward 2012, George Chandler 2011

the Corning Museum of Glass. During the Governor's meeting it was nominated, seconded, and unanimously voted that the current national officers will serve again for the year 2011-2012. They are Dennis Yerkey, President; Ivan Livi, Secretary; and Thomas Barruso, Treasurer. The OX5 By-laws state that the National President may serve for a second year. These officers have done an excellent job in stabilizing the OX5 program during the past year.

Mike Lawrence, Texas Wing member and National 1st Vice President, received the President's Citation for recovering the amount of \$13,000 from a prior non-voted expenditure.

Postage for the quarterly OX5 NEWS is a major expense. For some time the National newsletter has been mailed to about 500 members who are delinquent on their national dues. The Governors voted to remove the 500 names from the current data base. So, TEXAS WING MEMBERS, if your national dues are unpaid, do not expect any further copies of the OX5 NEWS or the Texas Wing Newsletter.

The location of next year's OX5 reunion is undecided. Possibly it will be held at Ottumwa, Iowa, the home of the Antique Airplane Association and more easily reachable from Texas. This would be an interesting and centrally-located possibility. Watch the OX5 NEWS for the final selection.

Texas Wing donors for the national program

These Texas Wing members donated toward the success of the national reunion in the gold, silver and bronze categories. **Note:** We tried to make this list complete from information provided by National HQ. If your name is missing, let us know and it will be added in the next newsletter).

William T. Barbee, George A. Chandler, George P. Vose, Roberta M. Brouse, Jerry L. Eoff, Tom R. Neyland, Howard B.. Benninghoff, Hazel Slagle Fehmel, Howard Benham, Martha A. Benham, Henry Clay Lynn, Clifford M. Pleggenkuhle, Kellee Pleggenkuhle, David C. Sanderson, Steve Howard, Michael G. Lawrence, Michelle C. Lawrence, Robert L. Taylor, Cade Woodward, Colton Woodward, John E. Jenista, Barbara S. Kraemer, Steven R. Nagel, Lee E. Wilkinson.

Thank you for your donations!

The "Mystery Airplane" (Page 1)

The "mystery airplane" on the front page is a Fairchild 22, Model C-7-B. The Fairchild 22 was an open cockpit parasol-type monoplane for the seating of two in tandem. This version of the Fairchild 22 was developed by Kreider-Reisner (Later the Fairchild company) to meet the demands of advanced pilots, yet it met the needs of amateur pilots as well. The model produced the slender lines made possible by the "inline" engine.



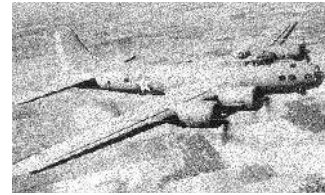
The "Twenty Two" was powered with a 125 h.p. Menasco "Pirate" engine, with an empty weight of 1010 pounds and a useful load of 590 pounds. Max speed 125 mph, cruising speed 106, landing speed 45. Price \$3450 at factory

If the Fairchild 22 was available today, it would qualify as an ideal LSA (light sport airplane).

Photo and information from Joseph P. Juptner, US Civil Aircraft Series, Vol 3, McGraw Hill, 1964

If at first you don't succeed ... A venture by Lt. Col. Harry J. Whitman

An earlier issue of this newsletter reported that Texas Wing member Harry J. Whitman moved from Wyoming to Tyler, Texas. He and his wife, Virginia, presently reside in Tyler at 5724 Nicholson Drive. Previously he had been a member of the Big Sky Wing, but later became active in the Texas Wing. Harry started flying in an OX5 Eaglerock in Riverton, Wyoming, and retired from the U. S. Air Force as a Lt. Colonel in 1966, having flown sixteen different military aircraft – propeller and jet. He has not flown in a number of years because “My eyes don't quite cut it anymore”.



Harry's introduction to flying began in February 1935 when he bought ten minutes of “instruction” from an itinerant barnstormer. He said, “Once I laid my hands on the stick and throttle I experienced the feeling that draws most aviators – I was hooked for life”. Being a bit short of cash, he satisfied his urges by whatever means he could – “A few minutes of stick time here, and a few minutes there in whatever type of heavier than air device was available”.

Harry continued, “Since Wyoming had no laws, regulations or organization governing aviation, and the nearest CAA authorities were in Denver and Salt Lake City, this boiled down mostly to the use of unlicensed aircraft. Most of them were VERY unlicensed, as were many of the pilots”.

He had a friend who purchased an OX5 Eaglerock and since his friend had accumulated about ten hours of flying time, he agreed to pass his knowledge on by giving Harry some flight instruction. One day his friend abruptly climbed out of the cockpit and said, “You're on your way. Go”. That was Harry's solo. Years later when he asked his friend WHY he had soloed him, he replied, “You scared the hell out of me and I was sure we were going to crash sooner or later. I saw no reason why both of us should be killed, so I got out”.

Harry's story continues: “Later I, and a couple other aspiring pilots, purchased an OX5 Waco 10 for the vast sum of \$150. Years later I look back and decided the airplane was on its last legs on the way to the bone yard. This carefree approach to aviation resulted in an accident when I had about four hours of solo time. Shortly after take off the engine began to shake, cut out and in. I looked ahead and saw only rough gullies, so I turned back to the airport. I had no idea of my airspeed and am not sure what it would have meant to me if I had known. I was losing altitude rapidly so I tightened the turn to try to make the field. The airplane shuddered, flipped around, and the nose dropped. The sage brush began to spin in circles. Having no idea of what was happening, or what to do about it, I just rode along. After the impact and the dust had settled, I found that I had gone into a spin – a totally foreign maneuver not included in my ‘training’. I am sure there are others who have spun in and lived to tell about it, but I believe we are a small group”.

“My civilian flying continued in a variety of aircraft including an OX5 Curtis Robin, and I owned a Challenger Eaglerock for a while. I entered the Army Air Force in 1942 and flew a tour over Europe as a B-17 pilot.

I converted to fighter aircraft and flew P-51s, P-47s, T-33s, and became combat qualified in the F-86. I have had some interesting adventures in my military career, but some of my most memorable were in my OX5 days when airplanes with two wings were still in vogue”.



Thanks, Harry Whitman, for this good story.

From the Wing President, George Chandler



I was looking through a magazine and saw a cartoon. It showed two men standing at an airport watching a jet-liner being towed away, and in the background was a DC-3 taking off. One man said to the other, "That's the last of the jets, but the DC-3s are still flying". How true, there are DC-3s flying all over the world. It reminded me of my DC-3 days as a new co-pilot for Braniff.

Ground school was non-existent and the flight manual was loose leaf, held together between two sheets of fiber and an adjustable metal band. It was about one-half inch thick. By contrast, the flight manuals I carried on the B-747 were two and one-half inches thick and weighed a ton. I used a "wheely cart" to carry my flight bag.

The DC-3 "check ride" consisted of taxi to the runway (not bad as I had some multiengine time), three take-offs and landings (not good but I didn't hurt anything) and taxi to the gate for the next flight.

The check pilot was Captain Malvern Sellmeyer, one of Braniff's most senior pilots. Mal started flying for Braniff in the 1930s on Lockheed Vegas. We later became close friends and he was a long time member of the OX5 Texas Wing.

The first month 'on the line' a new pilot was assigned to a senior captain. Advancement on the airline was slow, so all of the captains were highly experienced. Good friend and fellow Braniff pilot, Len Morgan, wrote for Flying Magazine for years. He wrote an article about going to work for Braniff and stated that we were supposed to "learn by osmosis". Len learned to fly in the Royal Canadian Air Force and was used to more rigid training.



The most junior trip on the airline was South Texas, aka "The South End". From Love Field we served Fort Worth, Waco, Austin, San Antonio, Houston, Galveston, Corpus Christi and Brownsville. We were gone for six days, and never left Texas and never got back to Love Field. As an example, the trip left Love Field on Monday and returned to Love Field on Saturday. We had Sunday and maybe Monday off and then did it again. Wives were not thrilled by the arrangement. A union contract was worked out when we were paid the minimum for 'time away from base'. Our working conditions improved. There are many memories of flying the "Gooney Bird". It was a really fun time.



The original Braniff logo showed the Vega

More on the Douglas DC-3 ("Gooney Bird", "Skytrain", "Dakota", etc)

In 1936 a brand new Douglas DC-3 cost \$75,500 – far less than a current two-place light sport airplane. But, of course, times and dollar values have changed.

The DC-3 was an out growth of the DC-2 that first flew for TWA in 1934. That same year American Airlines decided that it needed a transport that could fly non-stop from New York to Chicago with the roominess of

its current but slow Curtiss Condors, and they approached Douglas about building such an airplane. Douglas agreed to build the DC-3, and 20 were ordered, ten "sleeper" versions and ten "daylight" versions. Scheduled non-stop New York-Chicago service was started in June 1936



By the end of 1939, ninety percent of the world's airline traffic was being carried by Douglas DC-3s. The plane used all of the latest technology of its time. It was a low-wing cantilever all-metal monoplane with trailing edge flaps, single elevator and rudder, and retractable landing gear. The maximum range was 1500 miles, but added fuel tanks extended the range. Its wing span was 95 ft. Length 64 ft 5 in., height 16 ft 4 in. Maximum gross weight 28,000 pounds, cruise speed 170 mph. The controls included an auto pilot and two sets of instruments. The original power configuration was two Wright R-1820 Cyclone, 9-cylinder air-cooled engines, followed later by P&W engines.

Both the Army Air Forces and the U. S. Navy used large numbers of the designated C-47 and the R4D. Some variants participated in a variety of support roles in Sicily, New Guinea, Normandy, and France. Those used by Britain and other Commonwealth Air Forces were known as "Dakotas", and the U. S. Skytrain was nicknamed "Gooney Bird" because of its awkward appearance.

After WWII a large number of the ten thousand C-47s became surplus and joined the commercial air fleet, seeing use by almost every airline and many militaries around the world. In this year of 2011, more than seven decades after it was introduced, hundreds of DC-3s are still flying.

Information sources: Rene J. Facillon, McDonnell Douglas Aircraft since 1920, London: Putnam, 1979

Bill Gunston, Illustrated Encyclopedia of Propeller Airliners, Exeter Books, 1980

Bill Yenne, Legends of Flight, Publications International Ltd, Lincolnwood, Ill

More Texas Wing scrap book pictures



Is Benny Benninghoff (retired AA) giving Barbara Kraemer some instruction on side slips? (Galveston, 2004).



Barbara Kreamer and Bob Johnson (retired AA) enjoying brats at Old Kingsbury Aerodrome, 2006.



Here is the OX5 tent at our 2009 Wing reunion in Gainesville. Don Marek's Waco 10 is parked nearby. (Please do not remind us that "hanger" is mis-spelled).



Don Marek's beautiful Waco 10 now has a new home in an air museum in Oregon.



Jack Brouse explains the mechanics of his chromium plated OX5 cylinder.



It was too hot to hold our business meeting in this hanger. So we moved to the air conditioned lounge.

It's still not too late, if ...

If you like to receive the National OX5 NEWS and the TEXAS WING NEWSLETTER and have not paid your 2012 dues, the remedy is easy. Just mail your check in the amount of \$30 to OX5, PO Box 18533, Pittsburgh, PA 15236-0533. Give your name – HQ will look up your number and notify you of renewed membership.

Stay with OX5. Your membership is important.

George Vose, Secretary Texas Wing.