



# Oregon Aviation Historical Society

*Newsletter*

Vol. 16 No. 1

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

April 2007

## Annual Meeting and Program Scheduled For April 21st

The annual meeting of the Oregon Aviation Historical Society will be held in Cottage Grove, Saturday, April 21, 2007 at 11:30 am across the street from the Aviation History Center in the Cascadia Room of the newly remodeled Village Green Resort. Attendees will gather for a luncheon, short business meeting and program. The Aviation History Center will be open following the meeting for visitors. OAHS President Roger Starr will report on the Society's activities during 2006 and board members will be elected. Marilyn Husser, Independence, and Dan Cathey, Cottage Grove, have been nominated for election to the OAHS Board and Gretchen Bencene, Al Grell, Wilbur Heath, Hal Skinner, Tom Urban and Lloyd Williams have agreed to serve for additional four-year terms.

The cost for the no-host luncheon is \$13.00 and that includes both beverage and gratuity. The extensive gardens at the Village Green can be seen from large windows in the comfort of the Cascadia Room. Members are encouraged to attend to learn what their Society has accomplished during the past year.

The program will consist of the showing of the documentary, 'HAZEL YING LEE AND THE WOMEN WHO FLEW PURSUIT.' Hazel was an Asian-American who learned to fly in Portland where members of her family still reside. She went to China when the Japanese invaded that country and tried to enlist as a fighter pilot. When she was turned down because she was a woman, she returned to the United States and was accepted as a member of the Women

Airforce Service Pilots (WASP). Hazel was the 38th and last WASP to die in the line of duty when another airplane landed on top of her at Great Falls, Montana on November 23rd, 1944.



*Hazel Ying Lee*

## DID YOU KNOW.....

...T. Claude Ryan, whose company built the "Spirit of St. Louis" in which Charles Lindbergh became the first to fly across the Atlantic Ocean, studied mechanical engineering at OREGON STATE...

...Evelyn Burleson of ALBANY, OREGON was the first woman in the United States to be designated a CAA Flight Examiner...



## Board of Directors

**Roger Starr, President**  
Canby (503) 266-4282

**Wilbur Heath, Vice-President**  
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**Tom Bedell, Secretary**  
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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 welcome but should relate to Oregon aviation history. Contents © 2006 OAHS.*

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## RANDOM FLIGHT

*By Roger Starr*



You may recognize the tall fellow in the accompanying picture as that of your Vice-President, Wil Heath. Wil is the chair of our recently formed building committee. Other members include Rex Hume, Doug Kindred, Hal Skinner and Tom Urban. The purpose of the committee is to determine the feasibility of the project including the development of plans and funding sources for a new museum building to be located just west of the current Oregon Aviation History Center at the Cottage Grove Airport. The committee has been meeting weekly for nearly three months. They are well along in determining the basic design and costs of such a facility. This includes exhibits as well as the building itself.



The attractive person with Wil is Jody Rolnick of Eugene. Jody has been hired as a consultant to work with the committee, prepare grant requests and develop fund raising efforts should we decide to proceed with this project.

If you have visited the History Center lately, you can appreciate the need for a larger facility to house and display our growing collection. This will be a major leap forward for OAHS. We see the need and hope that you will agree to help support this project when asked. As always, your comments and thoughts are most welcome.

For the first time in several years we will not be holding our annual meeting at the History Center. Instead we are meeting across the street at the newly refurbished Village Green. I am really excited to be meeting there again. If you plan to stay overnight in Cottage Grove, contact the Village Green and mention that you are with the Society.

In case you have not already returned your ballot for directors, why not bring it to the meeting on the 21st and present it in person! Hope to see you then.

## RECENT VISITORS

*By Hal Skinner*

George W. Bodley and his son, Tom, of Eugene recently visited the Oregon Aviation History Center. They were searching for a vintage airplane called the “Springfield Cadet” and had originally stopped by the Creswell Museum, and the Creswell Airport, before being directed to the History Center in Cottage Grove.

George is 94 years young and was the second person to fly the aircraft. But, let’s not get too far ahead of ourselves. At Creswell, George produced his flight logbook and immediately was surrounded by the local pilots interested in seeing all the entries. FBO Shelly Humble had standing room only in the airport office, and George commanded the spotlight. His log recorded flights beginning in 1930 and continuing for six years, ended by the need to earn living wages. George earned his transport pilot rating, flew commercial, test flights and crop dusting.

He flew about 35 different aircraft of approximately 20 types. He accumulated 443 hours of mostly ten and fifteen minute flight durations. A partial list includes the Springfield Cadet, the Hester/Rankin Great Lakes, Student Prince, Curtiss Robin, Monocoupe, Travel-Air, American Eagle, Eaglerock, Arrow Sport, Kari-Keen, Folker Universal, Fleet, Nicholas Beazley, Stearman and more.

George and Tom were finally able to break away and travel to Jim Wright Field and the History Center where they were met by OAHS members. Again, George was persuaded to share his incredible logbook with his admirers. But for George, the highlight of the day was his re-union with the MacManiman Springfield Cadet. His sharp eye immediately pointed out the conversions of the 1950’s when the plane was rebuilt

and now had wing tanks, brakes, a tail wheel and elevator trim. The A-40 continental had also been upgraded to the current Continental A-65. Even so, more resembling the later name of Baby Fleet that it was given, it really was the Springfield Cadet that he flew in 1931!

Now, back to the story of his flying the plane. In 1931 Jim MacManiman wanted to build a plane he had scaled down from a Fleet biplane. Money was short, but he recruited two helpers to construct it. They were Johnny Wilmont and George Bodley. It certainly didn’t hurt that George’s father was able to put up about five hundred dollars toward the project. That amounted to about one half of the cost in 1931. George’s assignment was to build all the ribs, no small project in itself. After completing all the construction, Jim test flew his plane and pronounced it ‘OK’. So, how did George become the second pilot to take ‘er up? Well, the two other builders decided that the flip of a coin should determine who went first. George won, flew second and Johnny flew third. August 9, 1931 was a pretty successful first day of flying for the brand new ship.

Jim MacManiman continued designing and building. He constructed the JM2-P, a two place trainer and a Kinner powered three place semi-cabin model. Together with Lee Inman, MacManiman started a flying school at an east-west dirt strip near where the Guistina Lumber Co. mill was located. That’s where George made his first flight after seeing an airplane inside McArthur Court and wanting to go up. Later Lee and Herman Hobi had a strip in Springfield where the Cadet was built and tested. The plan was to build the single place for sale, but only the one was done. It was sold to C. R. Saville, past owner of Walker Airport, and the OAHS purchased it from there. It is currently under restoration at the History Center and you are invited to stop by and see the progress.



*George Bodley and the Springfield Cadet*

## The Society is in Need of These Items

Paint spray equipment including gun, mask, etc.  
Project Funds, Easels, Solvent, Variable Speed Band  
Saw, Sandblast tank, Belt/Disc Sander Combo,  
English wheel, Mannequins, Metal Brake/Shear,  
6' Rollaway Toolbox, Die Grinder, Drop Work Lights,  
Milling Machine (sm)

WE NEED PEOPLE TO VOLUNTEER THEIR  
TIME AND TALENT. WE'VE SEVERAL OP-  
TIONS FOR YOU TO REALLY BE A PART OF  
THE PRESERVATION OF OREGON AVIATION  
HISTORY.

Consider becoming personally involved while joining  
us for great lunches at the same time!! What do I do?  
Just phone the center at (541) 767-0244 and leave a  
message or access our website at [www.oregonaviation.org](http://www.oregonaviation.org). and click on 'contact us'. You will be glad  
you did!

### NOTICE OF DIRECTOR ELECTIONS

Notice is given that the following persons have  
been nominated for the board of directors of the  
Oregon Aviation Historical Society for a  
four-year term.

Dan Cathey  
Marilyn Husser

Notice is also given that the following directors of  
the board whose terms expire  
In 2007 will stand for re-election.

Gretchen Bencene  
Al Grell  
Wilbur Heath  
Hal Skinner  
Tom Urban  
Lloyd Williams

Ballots have been mailed to all current members.  
Votes will be counted and the results announced  
at the April annual meeting. You may return  
the ballots in the mail, or bring them  
to the meeting April 21, 2007.

Roger Starr, President of the Board of Directors

## GEORGE PALMER PUTNAM

*By Carol Skinner*

You may wonder why the OAHS newsletter  
would have an article on the husband of  
Amelia Earhart. And, what is his connection to  
Oregon?

G.P. Putnam arrived in Bend in 1909 and soon  
became involved in business, politics, local  
government and social circles. In 1912, at  
the age of 22, he began serving the first of two



Dick and Marge Bong, Shirley and Tex Rankin



Dick, Dud and Tex: the Three Rankin brothers



Willard, Tex and Dale Rankin



Tex with children

terms as the mayor of Bend. From 1914 to 1917 he served as the private secretary to Oregon Governor George Withycombe. Putnam had married Dorothy Binney, whose father was the inventor of Crayola crayons, in Connecticut in 1911, so the couple was financially comfortable. The Putnam's first child, David Binney Putnam, was born in Bend in May, 1913. The family lived at 606 Congress Street in Bend.

G.P., as he would be called by Amelia, joined the staff of the Bend Bulletin and a

short time later purchased half interest in the newspaper. He was the editor until 1914, publisher until 1916, and the principal owner until 1919. It was while G.P. was the editor, in December 1916, that the Bulletin, which had been established as a weekly newspaper in 1903, became a daily newspaper. He also served as a correspondent for the Oregon Journal and wrote a novel set in central Oregon, "The Smiting of the Rock".

## From the Tex Rankin Photo Collection



Wilma and Dale work on the Ryan STA



A few of the trophies (Los Angeles, 1937 or 38)



Dorothy Hester and Tex pose in front of the Great Lakes



Drawing of Tex's Great Lakes by Walt Borher



Tex and his "Rankin Indurance Ship" (1932)



Tex and the "Black Cat"

## RESTORATION ACTIVITY

Big news for this report! Volunteer Al Sherman has begun work on the Springfield Cadet/Baby Fleet at the Aviation History Center. Al has done extensive aircraft building. His history includes the construction of an EAA Biplane, three Hatz Bi-planes and a scratch-built and enlarged replica of a Bucker which he is currently flying. Al was a part of the 'team' responsible for Jim Wright's "Hughes Racer" that was built on the airport at Cottage Grove. He began his flying career in Livermore, California.



Al Sherman and the "Springfield Cadet"



Controls in the birdcage area

As you can see, the aircraft has been disassembled, with the fuselage stripped of fabric, stringers and formers. Cleaning and sanding has been completed and a fresh coat of primer applied. You are invited to stop by and see the progress.

Next, look at these photos and be amazed! The Ragwood Refactory has been hard at work bringing the OAHS Great Lakes back to its former glory.



Seat and rudder pedals all in place



Trim mechanism and turtledeck

All four wing panels are covered and through the first coat of silver. Re-sanding is happening and additional silver is being applied. The ailerons, stabilizer, elevator panels and rudder have received the same treatment. The fuselage has had controls, cables, instrument panels

and hundreds of small pieces constructed and installed. Then it was all taken apart, the fuselage sandblasted and painted. Now its back together and ready for cover to begin!

The next photo is of ribs that are being constructed for the Wimpy by director Bill Austin. As some of you know, Bill is currently building his own strength back after quadruple bypass surgery. The rib construction is on hold for a time, but you can see that decisions have been made as to the wing airfoil and some are completed.



"Wimpy" wing ribs looking good

## AVIATION ACTIVITIES SCHEDULED FOR OAHS HISTORY CENTER

April 7 Short-Wing Piper Club meeting - 1300hrs  
Contact: Dan Cathey 541.942-2286  
coldaniel@peoplepc.com

April 21 Oregon Aviation Historical Society  
– Annual Meeting at the Village Green Resort  
(across the street) – 1130hrs No-host luncheon  
followed by the short business meeting. The  
program will be a documentary presentation of  
Hazel Ying Lee, a Portland native and WWII Wasp.

July 20 & 21 Oregon Antique & Classic Aircraft  
Club Bi-ennial Fly In, Contact Jon Husser  
503.838-4493  
jhusser@yahoo.com

August Jim Wright Memorial Stearman Fly-In  
3rd thru 5th Contact Larry Tobin 509.466-8867  
cell 509.999-7436  
LTOBIN253@comcast.net

August Luscombe Fly-In  
10 thru 12 Contact Brent Burgess  
541.343-0760  
brent.a.burgess@fritolay.com

## OAHS DVD SHOWN TO GROUPS

The OAHS DVD has been shown to two groups recently; one in Oregon and one in California. Reports from both showings are that the film was well received.

Lifetime OAHS member Terry Weathers showed the DVD to a combined group of EAA members in northern California. Some of the pilots have participated in Oregon Air Tours sponsored by the Oregon Antique & Classic Aircraft Club in the past.

OAHS member Al Stockstad arranged for the DVD to be shown in Eugene at the monthly meeting of Retired Military Officers of America Association. The presentation was made to approximately 60 people by OAHS Archivist, Carol Skinner, and Hal Skinner, OAHS Director. The group is planning a convention at the Village Green Resort, across the street from the Aviation History Center in October, and they look forward to visiting the History Center. An invitation was also extended to have a display at their convention site.

Members who are affiliated with groups who might be interested in learning about the history of aviation in Oregon, are encouraged to go to the OAHS website, [www.oregonaviation.org](http://www.oregonaviation.org), click on "Contact Us" and make arrangements for a showing of the DVD.

## Student-Built Plane Tested

Editors Note: The following article is taken from the December 1929 issue of the PACIFIC AVIATION NEWS without any changes. The Adcox Aviation School was a Portland based institution.

First flights of airplanes are usually interesting. And in definite proof of that statement which seems to be generally accepted, the official test flight of the three-place biplane, built entirely by students at the Adcox Aviation School, was a highlight of aviation in Portland last month.

The ceremony of christening the plane on

Swan Island airport, with the speeches by Acting Mayor Bigelow, William P. Merry, of the Chamber of Commerce, and Luther Lawrence Adcox of the school, was a colorful and well-ordered prelude to the first flight. And Miss Lurene Tuttle, delightful star and leading lady with the Duffy players here, contributed no little color to that ceremony. She broke the bottle of ale, in lieu of the customary champagne, with a good deal of vigor, on the blunt nose of the ship. Spray of the sizzling liquid flew here and there, the crowd cheered, executives of the company looked pleased, Miss Tuttle enjoyed it, city officials smiled, and everyone got a wham out of the whole thing.

Then aeronautics took the foreground in the place of oratory and breaking bottles. Lieutenant R.E. Gilliam, head instructor and test pilot of the school, opened the throttle for the taxi down the field and for the first hop into the air. He pulled her around over the grass plot which is more like a golf green than an airport so smooth is it, and settled her down to earth. That's briefly what happened in the ceremony program.

The plane registered a high speed of 120 miles an hour, a cruising speed of 95 to 100 miles an hour and a landing speed of 40 miles an hour, shaving close to Lieutenant Gilliam's forecasts of what the ship would do.

This ship, which will be used for a tour of the state next spring, is the first of a series of various types of planes to be constructed by students in the school in Portland, rated one of the outstanding ground schools on the Pacific Coast. Next the students will build a model of the "Student Prince", two-place training and sport plane, then an amphibian, and last a flying boat. They'll all be put together by students with the exception of a few parts, as was the case of this first three-place job.

The modified Stearman Number Two wing, the adjustable motor mounting and the sturdy construction of the fuselage are the three outstanding things about the new ship which is of conventional design in the other parts. Lieutenant Gilliam designed the wing curve,

said to give greater lift and speed, and the motor mount, which permits changing the type of motor by changing the cowling.

Despite the fact that double bracing was used throughout the plane during construction, it weighs only 1728 pounds or approximately 150 less than the usual weight for three-place jobs.

All the doping and welding was done by students in the Adcox shop with the special equipment installed for that work. The new dope room with modern machines for spraying it on the wings and fuselage was used for the first time when this ship was built. Jigs for the construction of other parts and cowling machinery for that phase were installed to make the conditions in the shop as near as possible to those in an airplane factory

**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

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Contributor - \$100 Sustaining - \$50 Family - \$35 Associate - \$25

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