



STRAIGHT SCOOP

Volume XVI Number 3 March 2010

To promote the acquisition, restoration, safe operation, and display of historical aircraft
and provide an educational venue for the community



The Sikorsky H-34 Choctaw

Also known as the S-58, was a military helicopter originally designed by American aircraft manufacturer Sikorsky for the United States Navy for service in Anti-Submarine Warfare (ASW) role.

Sikorsky H-34's have served on every continent with the armed forces of twenty-five countries - from combat in Algeria, the Dominican Republic, Nicaragua, and throughout southeast Asia, to saving flood victims, recovering astronauts, fighting fires, and carrying presidents.

Pictured above is the H-34 with U.S. Army Insignia. The U.S. Navy referred to the H-34 as the Seabat and the U.S. Marine Corps called it the Seahorse.

See and climb aboard this legendary helicopter on March 20th and 21st at our Pacific Coast Air Museum. Plan to look and touch all of the aircraft displayed for your enjoyment.

www.pacificcoastairmuseum.org

(707) 575-7900

The Pacific Coast Air Museum

Location: At the Charles M. Schulz-Sonoma County Airport, North of Santa Rosa, West of Highway 101, at 2230 Becker Blvd, off North Laughlin Road.

Hours: Tuesday, Thursday, Saturday and Sunday. 10:00am—4:00pm.

“Climb Aboard”: A selected aircraft is available to “Climb Aboard” the third weekend of each month (weather permitting). Please visit our web site at www.pacificcoastairmuseum.org or call 707-575-7900 for details or further Information.

Member Meetings: Normally held on the third Wednesday of each month, 7:00pm, at the Sonoma County Office of Education, near the airport at the intersection of Airport and Skylane Boulevards. Interesting speakers are featured at each meeting.

“Straight Scoop”

The museum newsletter, “Straight Scoop” is published monthly and is available on line on the museum’s web site. Members are highly encouraged to submit articles for possible publication. The deadline is the 26th of the month prior to publication. All articles in the newsletter are covered by copyright. If you wish to submit articles or use any of the content, please contact:

Chris Tart, Editor
1064 Maple Drive
Windsor, Ca 95492
707-836-9226
sctartusaf@yahoo.com

Membership Renewals:

\$30 per year individual; \$45 per year for families. Send renewals to the museum at the address below.

Address Corrections:

Please send to:
Pacific Coast Air Museum
2230 Becker Boulevard
Santa Rosa, Ca 95403

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“Where’s Hattie?”



*Can YOU find Hattie in the picture?
Like Waldo, she is wearing a striped shirt.....*

Well, the plans were made, the invitations went out, the stage was set, the crowd gathered, and..... the “star” of the evening wasn’t there!

On Wednesday, February 17th, we had a larger-than-usual crowd for the PCAM member meeting. Maybe it had something to do with the killer assortment of desserts, or the promise of a great speakerbut I’d like to think it was because so many people love our sweet Hattie Stone, and came to help honor her for her contributions to the museum building fund!

The one thing we couldn’t plan for was Hattie not being there! Unfortunately, Hattie wasn’t feeling well, and after the Air Show meeting, she felt like she’d better drive herself home before she felt any worse.....and so she did!

If you were there, you know what a lovely honor we had planned for Hattie, and thanks to the many contributions made in her honor, we raised close to \$2000 to add to the fund! Thanks to all those who gave, and we will extend the special “Hattie Gifts” period to the next member meeting to allow more of you to step up to help build the fund!

Hattie Redux.....

We will complete the celebration of Hattie’s significant support of the building fund at the *March 17th* member meeting. So, please come out again.....and please consider making a gift of *any amount* to the building fund between now and March 17th. Gifts of \$100 or more will earn the special heart pin.

Charley has lined up another great speaker, and I may even make another cheesecake! So join us in celebrating the creation of the “Hattie Stone Museum Building Fund”..... and this time we will make sure Hattie is there to say thank you!

Thanks to the “Hattie Fund” donors (to date): Beedon, Brown, Carpentier, Conz, Cook, Coppock, Delaney, Greene, Hagen, Hunt, Kerkhof Family, Morgan, Morton, Pinsky, Stephens, Taylor, Thomson & Voorhees.

By Barbara Beedon

NEW MEMBERS

John Elbert Family – Petaluma
Kelly & Debby Hendershot – Windsor
Matt Smith – Fresno
Lynn Peterson – Sebastopol
Skidmore Family - Sebastopol

DONATIONS SINCE THE PREVIOUS NEWSLETTER

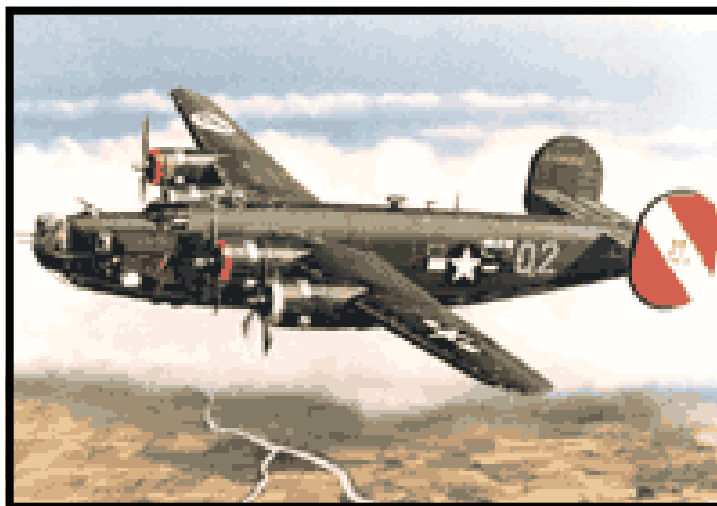
Dean Winslor Family
Henry Jaillet

March Guest Speaker

B-24 Liberators at Guadalcanal

On Wednesday evening, March 17, 2010, Mr. Art Cader, Pacific Coast Air Museum member and life time resident of Petaluma will be our guest speaker to share his WWII experiences in the U.S. Army Air Corps.

Art piloted B-24 Liberators in the Pacific while assigned to the 5th Bombardment Group. He flew 46 combat missions including Guadalcanal. His longest bombing mission was 15+ hours on which he and his crew provided cover air cover for the lead bomber after it was shot down. For that mission, Art was awarded the Distinguished Flying Cross at a ceremony at Travis Air Force Base about two years ago.



HATTIE STONE BUILDING FUND**VALENTINE'S DAY DONORS**

At the member meeting held February 17th the renamed Hattie Stone Building Fund was announced and to celebrate Valentine's Day, heart pins were handed out to donors of at least \$100.00 to the building fund. The donors: Jim Cook, Bill Carpentier, C. J. Stephens, Lynn Hunt, Betty Pinsky, Duane Coppock, Charley Taylor, Phyllis Morton, The Kerkhof Family, Bill Greene, Barbara Beedon, John Thomson, Allan Morgan, and Tim Delaney.

EDUCATION DEPARTMENT UPDATE

In the past few months considerable growth has taken place in the Education Department.

Boy Scout Troop 74 has scheduled two Merit Badge Classes on the 1st two Saturdays of March, representing a total of 18 Scouts. And in March, we already have 8 tours scheduled.

The Explorer Scout program is fully staffed with Roger Olson as Post Advisor, Bob Archibald Committee Chair, Robin Dotti Membership Chair, Allan Olson Institutional Chair & Maggi Heck Financial Officer. At this time, several young persons have enrolled in the program and more are expected at their next meeting, March 2. Kudos to the Explorer staff!!!

The Education Team is very proud to announce 5 more Docents to assist with tours, classes & birthday parties. These individuals bring a welcome variety of experience and expertise to the team. Emily Dryer is an engineering student at SRJC, Mary Jo Johnson is a retired Educator holding an Ed.D, Roy Peterson is a pilot, FAA Examiner & serves on the Sonoma County Board of Education, Mark Potter, a local Attorney whose son was in our Summer School Class last year, and Bob Matreci retired from the Research & Development division at Agilent. What a great team.

The Summer Aviation School bulletins are printed and ready to be distributed to the local schools. This June, two 1- week courses will be offered. Course 1 will highlight the Forces & History of Flight and aircraft safety. The 2nd course will center on the principles of navigation, flight planning & aviation careers. Several guest speakers will address specific topics. In addition, each course will feature a trip to the control tower, piloting our simulator and a graduation flight from one of our pilots.

2010 is off to a great start for the Education Department thanks to all the support & efforts from many Pacific Coast Air Museum members. A big *thank you* to all who helped.

Allan Morgan, Education. Director

“Kid Scoop”

Kawana Elementary School

Bellevue District

Teacher: Bernadette Prunetti

We have recently connected with the publisher of a youth-oriented newspaper called “Kid Scoop”. Kid Scoop is distributed directly to children through their schools, and kids take them home to share with their parents. Vicki Whiting, publisher, participated in one of the Educational Program school tours on February 25th at PCAM. She was very pleased and is excited to tell our story through her publication. She will be doing a feature article about the museum, the educational program and tours, and the upcoming Air Show.

Additionally, she will list our Climb-Aboard weekends in the monthly calendar, and will look for other opportunities to give us space. In exchange, we will make sure to include Kid Scoop in our public relations program, as another way to inform parents about the many things we have to offer families and young people.

Vicki shared with us that Kid Scoop is delivered to 90 elementary schools in Sonoma County, with more signing up every day. Most of the orders are for grades 2 - 6, although they receive orders from classes from pre-school through High School. The majority go to grades 3 and 4.

Barbara Beedon

U.S. Military aid to Haiti.

Washington (CNN) -- With the first of its flights touching down in earthquake-devastated Haiti late Wednesday afternoon, the U.S. began deploying military planes, ships and ground troops to the Caribbean nation.

One of two planes carrying a 30-person assessment team arrived at Port-au-Prince airport about 5:30 p.m. Wednesday. The team will assess what Haiti needs to cope with the immediate aftermath of the disaster. One of the team's first jobs is to get the airport working to a point where it can handle all the flights coming in from around the world filled with people and supplies to help the victims of the quake.

The U.S. Southern Command is leading the Department of Defense's response. Gen. P.K. Keen, deputy commander of the Southern Command, was in Haiti when the quake struck and saw the situation at the airport.

"He says the runway is functional, but the tower doesn't have communications capability. The passenger terminal ... has structural damage to it, so we don't know what the status of it is, " said Gen. Douglas Fraser, head of U.S. Southern Command. "So we have a group going in to make sure we can gain and secure the airfield and operate from it, because that's one of those locations we think we're going to have a lot of the immediate effort -- from an international basis -- going into."

The group includes a unit of U.S. Air Force Special Operations Forces that departed Hurlburt Field in Florida on Wednesday afternoon. They include airmen and equipment to set up temporary air traffic control systems as well as search-and-rescue experts.

Fraser also has ordered the aircraft carrier USS Carl Vinson to steam toward Haiti. The ship was at sea near Virginia when the [quake](#) hit and as it sails south, it will stop at Mayport, Florida, Naval Station for supplies.

The Carl Vinson "had a very small complement of aircraft on it when it was at sea," Fraser told reporters at the Pentagon on Wednesday. "As ... it passes through or by Mayport, we're going to provision it with as much capability as we can, primarily looking at helicopter capacity ... because we need to be able to get around the country."

The carrier is able to provide needed helicopters for lifting aid from the ship into the country as well as moving construction equipment to places where the machines are needed to clear rubble.

The U.S. Navy also activated the hospital ship USNS Comfort, based in Baltimore, Maryland, on Wednesday. While the Southern Command has not officially asked for the ship, the Navy activated it proactively expecting it will be requested.

The ship takes up to five days to prepare after being notified. It could be ready at the latest by Monday. The ship is staffed by 64 crew and 560 hospital personnel, and when ready it will sail toward Haiti in case it is requested.

Southern Command has ordered a unit of about 2,000 Marines to head to Haiti. The Marines will deploy aboard a large deck amphibious ship, which would give the military more helicopters to work with in Haiti. It also has a large medical facility that could help with treating the injured. Its medical facilities are comparable to the facilities aboard the Comfort, and it is possible only one of the two ships would be sent.

FRED WISEMAN CENTENNIAL FLIGHT COMMITTEE

Hop on board and join our friends in Petaluma who have been working on a celebration. Come to a meeting on March 13, 2010 at the museum annex. For more information, contact Bill Hammerman at b.hammerman@comcast.net or M.J. Brown at 566-9032

The First Air Mail Flight EVER

On a damp February morning in 1911 (the 17th to be exact), a young 36 year old pilot in Sonoma County flew the first air mail flight in the United States and the entire world.

His name was Fred Wiseman and he flew an airplane designed and built by himself from Petaluma to Santa Rosa carrying United States Mail for the first time in history.

This flight was generated because of the rapidly burgeoning attention to aviation throughout the country and was also stimulated by a strong interest in actual air mail possibilities by the United States Postmaster General, General Frank H. Hitchcock. He had previously approved an experimental mail flight from a steamship, but bad weather had aborted the flight. However, Hitchcock had also formally authorized all local postmasters to send mail by air as long as there was no cost to the government and the Santa Rosa Postmaster, Hiram L. Tripp took the authorization to heart and gave the OK to Fred to make the flight.

FRED TAKES OFF FROM PETALUMA

The homebuilt that Fred used for this flight has been described by him as “a combination Curtiss-Wright-Wiseman aircraft”. He had been inspired to build the aircraft following a visit to Dayton where he had personally seen the Wright aircraft on display. With the help of friends and a \$10,000 “seed” from a Santa Rosa butcher, Ben Noonan, he became an aircraft manufacturer.

So, at Kennilworth Park in Petaluma that February morning he loaded his plane (this was the second one that he had built) with U.S. Mail (three letters), 50 copies of the Santa Rosa Press Democrat and a sack of coffee. The pusher prop was pulled through, the engine fired up and he taxied down the track became airborne and was on his way at 12:30 P.M.

His cruise speed was about 70 mph and he was headed North toward the Santa Rosa Fairgrounds where he intended to land and deliver the mail. However, about four and a half miles into the trip he had a magneto failure and had to come down in a soggy field near the Denman Dairy. His wheels dug into the soft turf, breaking a landing skid in the process and he was stuck solid. Members of his chase car saw the accident, arrived on scene, dug the aircraft out of the mud, repaired the magneto and the skid and by 6:00 P.M. were ready for another takeoff. A strong wind cancelled that idea so they covered the aircraft with a large canvas tarp and postponed the trip until the following day.

THE SECOND DAY

On the morning of the 18th, the canvas tarp was spread in front of the plane as a runway and at 9:05, he took off again headed for Santa Rosa. On the way, flying at an altitude of from 100 to 300 feet, he threw out some of the newspapers he carried to people on the ground– hoping they were subscribers. About a mile South of Santa Rosa, while climbing to clear some trees a guy wire broke on the wing and wrapped around the prop breaking the crankshaft and the engine stopped immediately. He made a dead stick landing once again near a dairy farm-(the Enz Dairy). Since this second landing was almost within the city limits, the flight was considered a success and he was given a celebration when he arrived in Santa Rosa by automobile, of course, with the mail..

OFFICIAL CONFIRMATION

On May 15, 1947, the Smithsonian Institution confirmed Wiseman's feat as the world's first official Air Mail flight. The main reason for the confirmation came because one of the letters carried on that flight was from the Petaluma Postmaster, John E. Olmstead to the Santa Rosa Postmaster. It read in part, "Speed the day when the U.S. Mail between our sister cities, of which this letter is the pioneer, may all leave by the air route with speed and safety".

The restoration of the Wiseman aircraft, (not an exact copy of the one in which he flew the mail) was completed by the Garber Facility at the Smithsonian in 1985. It is now on display at the Postal Museum Branch of the Smithsonian in Washington D.C.

Historical Material: The Stan Stout Collection

Text by: Bill Carpentier



Wiseman-Cooke aircraft on display at the Smithsonian Postal Museum



“Climb Aboard”

March 20-21st

H-34 “Choctaw”

Helicopter

REMEMBER THESE DATES

March 3rd	@	8:30 am	Board of Directors Meeting at the Museum
March 9th	@	12:00 pm	Executive Director’s Staff Meeting at the Museum
March 17th	@	6:00 pm	Air Show Planning Meeting
	@	7:00 pm	Monthly Membership Meeting at SCOE

PACIFIC COAST AIR MUSEUM

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