



OX5 AVIATION PIONEERS TEXAS WING NEWSLETTER

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Message from the Editor/Secretary



The Mystery airplane featured in our last Texas Wing Newsletter was a Kreider-Riesner KR-31. The photo was obtained from Joseph Juptner's US Civil Aircraft Series.

A short time later we heard from Robert L. Taylor, President of the Iowa based Antique Airplane Association who volunteered that he had taken that same picture of KR-31 N838E in Mapleton, Iowa in 1956. He wrote: "The photo of the KR-31 on your front page took me back to June 13, 1956 when I took that picture (and a full roll of film) at Mapleton, Iowa. I had a Fairchild PT-26

and we flew up to Mapleton where I took photos of N838E, originally NC838E. Since I helped the late Joe Juptner with his ATC books, I likely sent him this photo of the KR-31".

Robert Taylor (of Iowa) added that he recalled when Texas member Bill Haddock of San Antonio flew his KR-31 to an early AAA Fly-in.

Indeed we have learned that several of Robert Taylor's pictures of this KR-31 have been exhibited elsewhere. (NOTE: This is a different Robert Taylor -- not the Colorado Robert Taylor). He is the long-time President of the Antique Airplane Association and he is also a member of the OX5 Aviation Pioneers. Because there is no active OX5 Wing in Iowa at this time, AAA Robert Taylor is presently affiliated with the Texas Wing.



This issue's "Mystery" Airplane

This two-place low wing monoplane was far-advanced when compared with OX5 powered airplanes of the 1920s and early 1930s, but according to today's standards it is still an "antique" airplane. It was manufactured in the years 1936-1937. It has been said about this model that "engineers have their dreams, and that such dreams sponsored this airplane ahead of its time".

What sporty aircraft is the low wing monoplane on the right?

- A. Arrow Sport F B. Kinner Sportwing
- C. Aeronca Model LC D. Ryan Model SC



(Aircraft description and information on page 6)

TEXAS WING OFFICERS AND GOVERNORS 2011

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A story by Texas Wing President George Chandler

We asked George Chandler for his quarterly message and he sent this clever article. As you know, George is a retired Braniff airline captain.

George writes:

In the late 1940s with the explosion of air travel that occurs after a major war, Braniff was given a new route, from Lima, Peru across the Andes to Sao Paulo and Rio de Janeiro, Brazil. It was flown with the “queen of the skies” at that time, the Douglas DC-6. We had a four-man crew: Captain, First Officer (co-pilot), Second Officer (flight engineer), and a radio operator.



Fuel was critical, so as soon as we reached cruising altitude we went to “long range cruise”. Navigational aids were primitive or non-existent. Non-directional beacons were few – only one between the eastern foothills of the Andes and the east coast. The beacon at a Brazilian military base at Campo Grande would allow us to get a bearing and adjust course. There was no one to talk to and no air traffic control, so the radio operator gave our position reports using Morse code and the key. We didn’t know if they were received or not. Every flight was operated under visual flight rules because the DC-6 could not climb enough to clear the peaks of the Andes. We went around them.

I was with Captain Dick Lowery, our senior pilot in South America. Dick was flying Ford Tri-Motors when I was in grade school. He was a tall slim man with a permanent smile. On our flight Dick took off and flew to cruise altitude. (He hand flew the airplane a lot). The DC-6 had the first autopilot that was reliable. It could hold heading, altitude, climb and descend. It was a new toy and Dick engaged it. He watched it, looked at the instrument panel, checked its operation and made a few turns as we picked our way through the Andes. This lasted about twenty to thirty minutes. Then he said, “I have a check coming up and need a little practice” and he turned off the auto-pilot. His smile became wider as he hand flew the DC-6 to Sao Paulo. He did not need the practice. He was smooth as glass.

Dick loved to fly. As we flew along he said, “George, one day there will be a glass cage in the cockpit with a pilot inside and a sign saying ‘Break glass in case of an emergency’ “. We all laughed and that saying has gone around the world.

I wonder what Dick would do with today’s glass cockpit. He would adjust to it, then turn the auto-pilot off, take the controls and smile.

A great story George. Some day soon perhaps a 19-year old computer whiz will fly the airliner remotely from a ground station in Flagstaff, Arizona. (But they had better have a real pilot on standby).



One of Braniff’s first Douglas DC-6s

I remember Edna Gardner Whyte, famed Texas pilot-instructor

By George Vose

Edna Gardner Whyte (1902-1992) was a early member of the Texas OX5 Wing (#552). She was awarded the Pioneer Woman's honor in 1967 and she was inducted into the OX5 Hall of Fame in 1975. She was a past president of the 99s, the woman's pilot group organized by Amelia Earhart.



Edna was not born in Texas (she was born in Garden City, Minnesota) but, as is said in Texas, "She got here as soon as she could". She became a licensed pilot in 1928 and then received her commercial (transport) and flight instructor certificates. At the start of World War II she was sent to train pilots at Meacham Field in Fort Worth. After the war was over she started "Aero Enterprise Flight School" on Meacham Field, a flight school to train civilian flying students. At age 44 Edna fell in love with and married George Whyte, one of her flight instructors, and together they ran the operation into the 1970s.

After George's death in 1972 she opened the Aero Valley Airport in nearby Roanoke. She selected the appropriate name of "Aero Valley" and that picturesque name lasted during her flying operations until she flew west in 1992. Under new ownership the unique airport name was changed to the non-descript "Northwest Regional Airport". The Texas Wing held a summer "brat fest"-reunion there in 2004.

Edna Gardner Whyte and George Vose became acquainted 50 years ago in the late 1960s. Edna was training pilots at her Aero Valley Airport and George Vose operated a flight school and was a designated pilot examiner at Hartlee Field in Denton about 20 miles northeast of Aero Valley.

Now, in George's words, "I was truly amazed at Edna's energy and her dedication to the training of pilots. As a pilot examiner I tested many of Edna's students for private and commercial certificates. I don't recall of any of her students failing the flight test. In 1970 I decided to recommend Edna for the FAA award of Flight Instructor of the Year. Frequently I visited Edna at her airport and we had interesting talks, and I reviewed



some of the scrapbooks she had compiled about her aviation achievements. I found that, as a woman pilot, she had to overcome many hurdles in her early flying days. Perhaps the first hurdle was her insisting on a private pilot flight test in 1928 from an FAA (CAA then) examiner who told her that he had never licensed a woman pilot and did not want to start. He had taken Edna outside the hangar for a private discussion. Edna insisted that they proceed with the test. They did that and she became the examiner's first woman pilot".

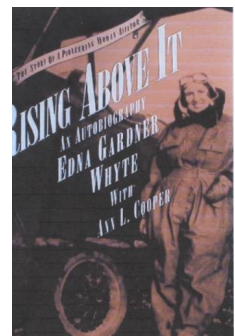
During our talks I was impressed by the shelves of 127 trophies she had won in cross-country air racing and acrobatic competition. Edna was a registered nurse and told of times that she had to administer arm injections to patients while she flew them to hospitals. I recall the time when she was featured on Charles Kuralt's "On the Road" TV series. At age 83 she did aileron rolls and spins with Kuralt in the passenger seat. In 1970 I felt, and still do, that Edna was qualified to be the FAA Flight Instructor of the Year.

The application forms were completed and submitted to the FAA. But one day someone from the FAA called and informed me that the application for Edna had to be rejected. It seems that there was one black mark on her long aviation career. It was: On the final leg of one of her air races that she won, in exhilaration she "buzzed" the Seattle control tower to mark her arrival time. Not a bad record – only one time in 30,000-plus flying hours. Her autobiography, "Rising Above It", has been published (right).



In flight instruction Edna was not daring, but very conservative. In the flight tests that I remember, all of her students flew at minimum power settings and one applicant, when checking the flat Cessna 150 oil stick, said "Edna taught me to wipe only the lettered side of the stick to save oil".

Edna Marvel Gardner Whyte was one aviator of a kind. Her instructional methods were unique and they worked. Hundreds of her former students will attest this.



The earliest post-Jenny airplane – the Swallow

NOTE: In the next few newsletters we will briefly report the progression of OX5-powered airplanes from the classic Jenny of the First World War period (1917-1919) into the OX5 golden years of the 1930s. The Curtiss Jenny DH-4 (and the Canada “Canuck”) have been quite well discussed. Next in line would be the Laird Swallow. We thank Dennis Parks of the Seattle Museum of Flight for his work, “The OX5 Era”. Also the Antique Airplane Association, and the McGraw-Hill series of Joseph Juptner’s “Civil Aircraft Series” for some of the information to be presented in our articles.

The Swallow Airplane Manufacturing Company of Wichita, Kansas manufactured the first airplane to replace the depleting Jennys of World War I vintage. E. M. “Matty” Laird was invited to Wichita from Chicago in early 1924 to start post-WWI aircraft production. Very soon he produced the OX5 “Laird Swallow”, an airplane much better than the earlier Jennys and Standards.



Later that same year Laird moved back to Chicago and the business was taken over by Jake Mollendick, one of the original financial backers, who continued the business with Lloyd Stearman as engineer. Stearman designed a new airplane known as the “New Swallow” which was produced in late 1924. This was an entirely new airplane. The OX5 engine was enclosed in a neat cowling destined to become standard for all OX5 subsequent designs. The use of only one bay of wing struts in place of two (as in the Jenny and the first Laird Swallow -- above left) gave the New Swallow a more attractive look. The Swallow airplane became very successful with nearly 600 produced through 1929.



OX5 powered 1926 Super Swallow

NEXT: How **Swallow** became **Travel Air** with the entry of Walter Beech and Clyde Cessna.

ANOTHER Editor’s note : Many OX5 members remember Ray Hegy, the long-time pilot, ‘20s-‘30s parachutist, and propeller maker of Marfa. Ray once told me this when the topic of Swallow was mentioned: “Oh yes, the Swallow. I had my **first crash** in a Swallow”. Ray flew west at age 98. How many other crashes could he have survived? I wish I had asked him.

The Antique Airplane Association and the OX5 Aviation Pioneers



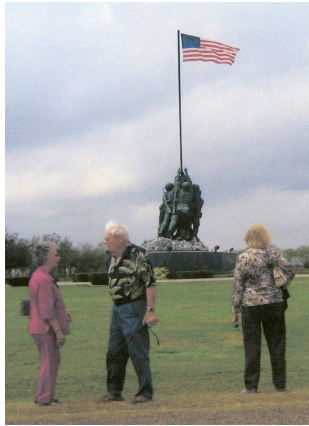
The Texas Wing is pleased that the OX5 organization has restored our once-good relationship with the Antique Airplane Association based at Antique Airfield, Ottumwa, Iowa.

There are a number of people named ROBERT TAYLOR. This Robert Taylor is the long-time president of the AAA. Presently there is no active OX5 Wing in Iowa, so Robert is affiliated with the Texas Wing.

Our “sister” organization has published a great 80-page album on OX5 airplanes. It contains rare photos, specs, 3-views, and historical data on airplanes and pilots of the OX5 era. It is available by first class mail for \$12.95 from Antique Aircraft Press, P.O. Box 127, Blakesburg, Iowa 52536.

A Texas Wing OX5 SCRAPBOOK Pictures from some recent reunions

The following 1-1/2 pages of photos will take many of us back with good recollections. All photos were made during the past decade. Some OX5ers that you will see have flown west and we remember them fondly. We have had some great reunions – let's keep going!



Marine Academy, Harlingen 2006



Los Ebanos Rio Grande crossing, Edinburg reunion 2000



Roanoke 2004, Thurmond Elliot cooking brats



Old Kingsbury Aerodrome , November 2005



Grapevine, Texas 2009



Gainesville 2007 OX5 / Antique Airplane Association



Alpine 2002 Visit to McDonald Observatory



Dinner at Friedenheim's
Fredericksburg October 2010



Steak and Ale Restaurant Fort Worth 1999
(Start of the merger of the two Texas Wings)

The mystery airplane Page 1

This time the "Mystery Plane" is the 1937 Aeronca Model LC. This low wing cabin monoplane seemed unusual coming from a factory that had built only small high wing airplanes. But Aeronca engineers produced this airplane well ahead of its time. The model LC was powered by a Warner Scarab Jr of 90 h.p. In mid-1938 the manufacturing rights were offered for sale, but no sale was reported. Max speed was 123 mph, cruise speed 108 mph, landing speed with drag flaps 48 mph. Price \$3275 at factory. Seaplane \$4325.



OX5 member/military pilot flew west

LT. COL. JOSEPH FAULKNER, U. S. Air Force (Retired) Joe Faulkner, Texas Wing OX5 22381 flew west on October 29, 2010. He was born on January 2, 1929 in Pineville, Kentucky. His recent Texas residence was 416 Fenwick Drive, San Antonio, 78239. During his piloting career Joe flew 57 different airplane types and was assigned to the Test Flight Section at Vandenberg AFB. He was later assigned to Air Support for the Air Transport Command. His military career spanned from World War II to Vietnam, including most of the significant airlift events from the Berlin Airlift to the command of a C-7 Caribou squadron in Vietnam. Joe retired in 1973 after 32 years in the Air Force. The OX5 member who submitted this notice to us added: "He was a swell guy, and will be missed".

