

# CLIFF BALL WING NEWSLETTER

## APRIL 15, 2012



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## 2012 NATIONAL REUNION

The 57th National Reunion will be held in St. Louis, MO. The dates are Septemeber 20 to September 23, 2012. Plans are developing well for an exciting and informative event. There will be a visit to the Creve Couer Museum's hangers to view restored vintage OX5 powered airplanes.

Other activies available for free time are shopping, dining and entertainment at the Plaza.

A day trip is planned to tour St. Louis and visit the Arch. We will also board a paddle wheel boat for a sightseeing cruise on the Mississippi River.

The arrivial airport is the Lambert-St Louis International Airport. Free shuttle service is provided to the Comfort Inn-Westport which is only 8 miles from the airport. See the OX5.ORG website for more information.

REGISTER AND MAKE PLANS EARLY TO ATTEND

2012 Reunion SEPT 20 to 23, 2012

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SEPTEMBER 20<sup>TH</sup>-23<sup>RD</sup> 2012



# Progress Report #1

## Wanna Build an Airplane ?

By Harry Bochter

As you can see by the photos, the fabric covering is nearly completed. This turned out to be the most expensive part of the project. The dope was over \$75 a gallon and the lightweight Dacron glider cloth nearly \$300. The Dacron fabric is put on using the blanket method where the fabric is placed upon the part being covered and glued to the structure without stretching the fabric. Then a common household iron that is calibrated for shrinking the Dacron is used to shrink the fabric taut. This is followed by reinforcing tapes on sharp edges and 4 to 5 coats of dope.

At this point, a few decisions must be made. Are brakes necessary? No, up to 1940 brakes were an option on most light planes. If you have ever landed a tail dragger on grass, you know brakes are not a necessity. Since this is a grass field airplane, I decided to save weight by not installing brakes.

How about an engine? I narrowed it down to a Kawasaki 440 two-cycle engine or a ½ Volkswagen engine. Both put out 35-40 horsepower. The jury is still out on this one. I like the sound of the 4 cycle VW. It burns less gas per hour than the Kawasaki, but weighs twice as much. Weight is important. An ultralight airplane must weigh 254 pounds or less to be legal, so every pound is important. The entire airframe, wings, fuselage, tail, landing gear and wing struts come in at a total of 150 pounds, leaving 104 pounds for the engine, propeller and cowling. So that's where the project stands at the end of March 2012.

Harry Bochter-Owner, builder





Inside rear of structure, showing woodwork.



Side view of fuselage. 12' front to back.



## **The Republic RC-3 Seabee** **by Ivan D. Livi**

On November 22, 1945 the prototype RC-3 Seabee came off the assembly line at Republic's factory in Farmingdale, NY. In March 1946 the first production RC-3 was completed. The engine was the Franklin, 6 cylinder horizontally opposed engine, 215 hp at 2500 RPM.



During the period 1947-1951 I had the opportunity to work as an A&P mechanic at Sky Harbor Airport, Northbrook, IL, where there was a Republic Seabee dealer. During those years I performed all types of inspections, maintenance, and repairs on the Seabee.

A common repair was the replacement of the wing socket for the wing float. Unusually rough water or hitting debris in the water would push back the float causing the float strut to tear the socket out of the wing.

In one incident an owner landed on Lake Michigan in the area near the US Naval Training Station. On the landing the right wing float hit debris that caused the float to move backward far enough to allow the wing tip to hit the water. The wing began filling up with water causing the airplane to flip over and capsize, sinking into the water upside down.

The owner arranged for the Coast Guard to hoist the airplane out of the water, but, the Coast Guard attached the airplane in an upside down position, hoisted it out of the water and set it on the dock in an upside down position. In order to transport the airplane to our hangars, the crew assigned to the task had to cut the control cables in the wings in order to be able to remove them from the airplane. Then there was the dilemma of getting it right side up. Because of the shape of the airplane the decision was made to roll it over its rounded nose. The result was not favorable as it damaged the front structure, smashed the windshield, and caused major damage to the cabin structure.

The airplane was trucked to our hangar and I was assigned the job of rebuilding it. It was an extensive, daunting project, but, when I finally finished the job and the airplane took its place on the Seabee line there was a great, rewarding sense of satisfaction in having been able to restore the aircraft. The unique feature of a reversing propeller made it possible to taxi down the front of the Seabee line and back it into a parking spot just like parking an automobile.

# LOCAL HISTORY

Greater Pittsburgh Airport From the Robert Zorn collection 1992

Originally built on 1,600 acres (today over 11,000 acres) of farmland with \$6 million in funds from the U.S. Army, Greater Pittsburgh Airport began as a stopover airstrip used during World War II. After the war, the airfield was turned over to Allegheny County and plans were initiated to develop and expand the facility into one of the most modern airports in the world. Ground was broken for the terminal on July 18, 1946. The terminal was dedicated on May 31, 1952 at a cost of \$33 million.

In its first year of operation, 1,176,364 passengers utilized the new airport. In 1989, approximately 18 million passengers were recorded. The five airlines who then serviced Greater Pitt were: TransWorld, Capital (later absorbed by United), Northwest, All American (renamed Allegheny in 1953 and USAir in 1979) and Eastern. In addition to these airlines, the airport is served by American, British Airways, Canadian Partners, Continental, Delta, Midway, Pan Am, and several commuter lines.

The airport was renamed Greater Pittsburgh International Air-port in 1971 in celebration of the opening of the International Terminal. The facility handles approximately 130,000 passengers annually.

In providing for the future aviation needs of the region, Greater Pittsburgh International Airport has already provided more gate space at the existing terminal and is currently building a new mid-field terminal, to open in 1992.

The interim improvement added gates in the south dock con-course where the current capacity crunch was felt most. The midfield terminal with 100 gates will double the current gate capacity, in its ultimate phase, to accommodate forecasted demands and still be flexible enough, in design, to adjust to whatever course aviation takes.

## Dr. Hodge Smith Tries Out Pittsburgh Plane

PITTSBURGH, May 16.—The first cabin monoplane made in Pittsburgh behaved like a veteran of the air when given its test flight at Bettis Field yesterday by Dr. Hodge Smith.

This ship had waited two days after being ready for flight, for weather which would permit it to be taken up. The builders are Dimas Ybarra, Guy Miller and Robert Izaguirre. They constructed the ship in a Hays garage. They were exhilarated after yesterday's flight, but were unable to say what their future plans will be. A large crowd was at the field and the owners were congratulated.

Dr. Smith remained in the air about 25 minutes. He did not stunt the plane, but banked steeply, nosed it down at considerable speed and climbed it nearly vertically. The pilot was enthusiastic over the ease of the ship's control.

The plane is the first made in Pittsburgh that has been successful in the air. About a year ago a smaller one was put together, but cracked up on the first flight, and then was forgotten.

Canonsburg Daily Notes, May 16, 1929

The Washington Reporter - Sep 4, 1928 Brows

## Pittsburgh-Youngstown Airmail Route Reopened

PITTSBURGH, Sept. 4.—(U.P.)—Air mail between Pittsburgh and Youngstown, Ohio, was resumed yesterday when the Youngstown field was reported to have been reconditioned.

Air mail between Pittsburgh and Youngstown was suspended last January because of the dangerous condition of Lansdowne Field, Youngstown's airport.

Clippings submitted by Jim Herron, CBW member

## WOMAN

TOSSED BOMBS FROM AEROPLANE AT HARVARD MEET.

BALTIMORE AVIATOR WINS BOMB THROWING, GRAB-  
BLES THE SPEED.

By United Press.

Equantum Aviator Field, Mass., Aug. 26.—Howard W. GIL of Baltimore, was first to win an event at the Harvard aviation meet this afternoon, taking the bomb throwing contest with an average of seven-teen feet. His throw shot at the Julia eye, ten feet, two inches, was made at a height of 200 feet. Tom Sopwith, was second, with an average of 22 feet. He strided Miss Gwendolyn Leonard with him. She threw the bombs. This is the first time a woman has performed the feat.

Grubame-Win won the speed contest, covering the eight laps of one mile and a half each in 12 minutes, 5 1-5 seconds. Marcus B. Key, the only other competitor, made it in 3 minutes, 19 seconds. Tom Sopwith won the quick start-ling contest, getting his machine under way in 11 4-5 seconds. W. G. Deady was second with 12 1-5 seconds.

Times [Ohio] Daily News, Aug. 27, 1911

## NINETY-NINES Pennies-A-Pound Fundraiser May 19-20, 2012

The Eastern PA Chapter of The Ninety-Nines will hold their annual Pennies-a-Pound Fundraiser event on May 19 and May 20 at Pottstown Heritage Field Airport. Proceeds help provide aviation scholarships. The event will be held in conjunction with Heritage Community Day on May 19th. Airplane rides will be available over the entire weekend (weather permitting), at an incomparable price of just 15 cents/pound, based on passenger weight: minimum \$7, maximum \$25! (cash only, please). An annual, local tradition for close to 30 years, Pennies-A-Pound is an educational, informative, and just plain fun way for those of all ages to learn about aviation, right in their own back yard. Visit <http://www.epa99.org> for more information.

## IN MEMORIUM



Flora Balmer printed the application forms used at the first meeting of the group in Latrobe, PA that became the OX5 Club of America. From that time Flora served as the office manager until her retirement in 2007. Flora had worked with 28 National Presidents during her service to the OX5 organization. She served in all capacities including that of being editor of the OX5 News. Flora passed away on January 15, 2012 at the age of 87.

By Clifford Yerkey, Vice President-Cliff Ball Wing

## A NEW OX5 WING

George Jenkins, owner of the Eagles Mere Aviation Museum, is in the process of establishing a new OX5 Wing in eastern Pennsylvania. The museum will serve as the Wing headquarters and Steven Lindrooth is slated to be the Wing President. OX5 member enrollment is ongoing with the following being the initial group: George Jenkins Merritt Jenkins, Todd Smith, Lawrence Posey, Michael Posey, Juliet Lindrooth, Steven Lindrooth, and Chad Wilcox. The Wing will be known as the *Eagles Mere Wing*.

The museum has about twenty restored aircraft dating from a 1910 Bleriot to a 1944 Stearman PT13 and more than twenty-five vintage engines including some rare models such as the Hisso, Gnome, and LeRhone.

When you are in the area of Eagles Mere, Pa., do visit the Eagles Mere Aviation Museum. It will be a surprisingly delightful experience.

<http://www.eaglesmereairmuseum.org>

## TUSKEGEE AIRMEN

Happy 70<sup>th</sup> Anniversary to the Tuskegee Airmen from this area and all parts of our country. It was these P51 Mustang pilots who escorted the B17 bombers over Germany near the end of World War II. It was one of the war changing events. The **Commemorative Air Force Red Tail Event** is scheduled to take place at Allegheny County Airport in June and will feature a P51 Mustang fighter airplane.

The Tuskegee Airmen were a squadron of black pilots who were members of the 332<sup>nd</sup> Fighter Group of the Army Air Corp. A recent movie, "Red Tails", portrays the life and events of the Tuskegee Airmen who were trained at the Tuskegee Army Air Field, Tuskegee, Alabama. The Clifford Ball Wing of the OX5 Aviation Pioneers congratulates and thanks you.

Ivan D. Livi, President CBW

## THE DEADLINE FOR NATIONAL DUES WAS APRIL 1st

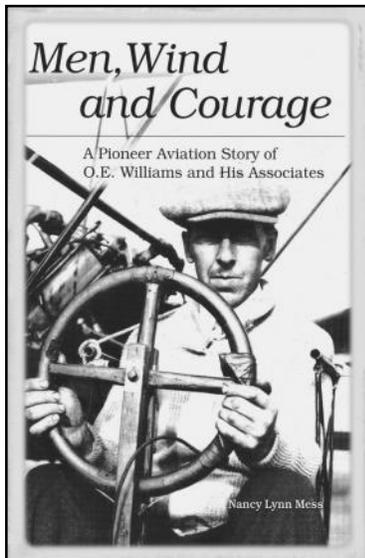
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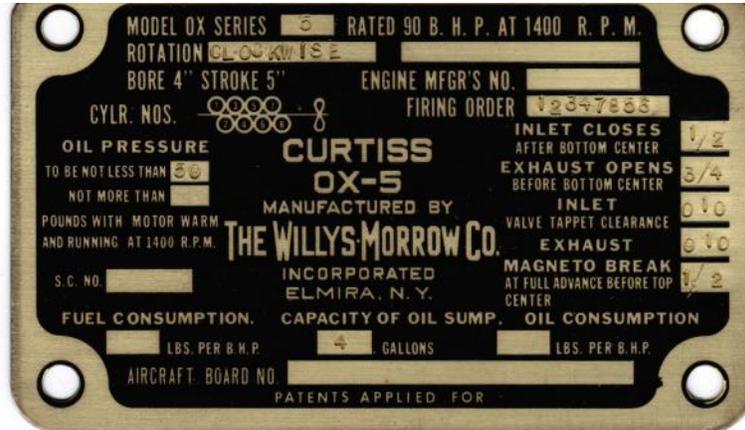
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# FOR SALE

## ORIGINAL OX5 ENGINE DATA PLATES

We have acquired a number of original OX5 engine data plates. They are new, complete with the exception of the engine serial number.

They are available from the Cliff Ball Wing.  
\$20.00 each for members and \$30.00 for non-members.



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