



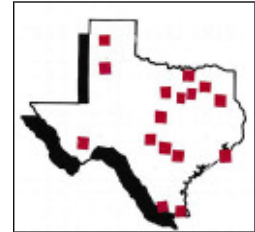
OX5 AVIATION PIONEERS TEXAS WING NEWSLETTER

George Vose, Editor/Secretary
PO Box 908, Alpine, Texas 79831
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From the Editor/Secretary George Vose



The 2016 reunion in Amarillo? Why so far away? The original OX5 National by-laws advised that all Wings should hold a meeting with its members at least twice a year. This creates difficulties for such large-area Wings as Alaska and Texas, but it's not a real problem for smaller-area Wings, such as Delaware and Ohio.



The map on the right shows where Texas reunions have been held in recent years – Arlington, Fort Worth, Wichita Falls, Mineral Wells, Eastland, Tyler, Galveston, Seguin, Kerrville, McAllen, Brownsville, Alpine and Lubbock. (National OX5 Reunions have been held in Grapevine and twice in San Antonio). Texas spreads across a large area, but it has good highway and airline access. Your attendance at Wing meetings, even from afar, is needed.

The map suggests three open reunion areas -- Midland/Odessa, El Paso, and perhaps the Bryan/College Station-Brenham area. These should be considered for future reunion sites.

All the best, George Vose

This newsletter was completed by George. He wanted the reunion to be a success.

From the Wing President Colton Woodward



Where have the past nine months gone? Plans are already being made for our 2016 annual reunion in Amarillo. Wing members Penni and Robert Clark have been working hard searching for a good hotel with a reasonable rate. The selected hotel is the Holiday Inn West Medical Center on 8231 West Amarillo Boulevard.

For many decades our reunions have started on a Thursday evening, then we have departed on the following Sunday morning. But this year we have a complication. Because of the on-going Quarter Horse Convention in Amarillo, all good hotels are booked solidly through Thursday. But the reward for the delay is a price reduction

Friday through Monday from the usual \$165 down to a \$99 rate. This rate includes a full restaurant breakfast– not the usual “Continental breakfast”. So the room rate is effectively reduced to about \$89.

With this newsletter, an accompanying page provides the directions for making your reservations, things we plan to do, and a map of our hotel location.

Please join us in the panhandle City of Amarillo. It will be enjoyable and OX5-constructive.

sincerely, Colton Woodward Email: Woodwardcolton@yahoo.com

OFFICERS, 2015-2016 -----	Colton Woodward, President	Cade Woodward, Vice President	George Vose, Secretary
	Michelle Lawrence, Treasurer	Hazel Fehmel, Historian	
GOVERNORS	Robert Clark (2016)	Barbara Kraemer (2016)	Jack Nelson (2016)
	Mike Lawrence (2017)	“Susie” Brouse (2017)	John McCrory (2017)
	[Gov. Term-expiration dates in parentheses]		

This issue's "Mystery" airplane



By the mid-1930s air passenger traffic was increasing rapidly. New airlines needed twin-engine airplanes capable of carrying eight or more passengers to remote destinations. This brought the need for the development of adequate twin-engine multi-passenger airplanes. The Industry heard them.

[The airplane on the left is a](#)

- A** Lockheed Electra 10A **B** Beech 18A **C** Boeing 247 **D** Northrop "Delta" 1-D

(Answer and information on page 4)

Norman Armbrust, 2015 inductee into the OX5 Hall of Fame

Within a week after the Pearl Harbor attack, Norman Armbrust, at age 20, enlisted in the Army Air Force. He had already soloed in an OX5 Waco 10 that he owned with his older brother. He received primary and basic Army Air Force flying in California, then to advanced training at Luke Field in Phoenix where he received his pilot wings on January 4th, 1943. Next, he was assigned to Pyote Army Air Field in west Texas for training in the B-17 "Flying Fortress" bomber. (The Pyote base was also well known as "The Rattle Snake Bomber Base" because so many rattlesnakes were uncovered during its construction and during its wartime use). Norman said that he had hoped to fly a smaller single engine plane. "I had never seen a B-17 before", he said. (At the time he was not aware that the B-17 would be the last Army Air Force plane he would fly).



Norman and his Waco 10



After finishing B-17 training at Pyote Army Airfield he was assigned to the 306th Bomb Group at the Thurleigh Army Air Force Base in England, about ten miles north of London. Thurleigh was one of 28 fields in England used by the United States 8th Air Force. Formerly used by the RAF, in order to accommodate heavier U. S. bombers, its runways were lengthened and increased in thickness. By VJ-Day in April, 1945, a total of 9,614 sorties over Germany would be flown from Thurleigh.

A Thurleigh B17 with "Triangle A" code

After Norman Armbrust's assignment to the 306th Bomb Group, by the summer of 1943, he completed eleven missions over Germany, but mission twelve would be his last. On July 25, 1943, Norman was in command of a B-17 that had the target of Hanover, Germany. "We were flying off the left wing of the lead plane. Normally we flew at 27,500 feet on a bomb run, but the lead plane was a thousand feet lower because of a faulty supercharger as we approached Hanover. At that altitude all of the planes in our group were easier targets of flack and German fighters".

Norman heard two things at almost the same instant. Over Hanover he heard through his intercom, "Bombs away" from the navigator and the sound of a direct flack hit, spraying hot shrapnel through his plane. Three crewmen were injured at once by flack, and Norman said that all his instruments were knocked out by the damage. And then the engines began to fail. "First, engine one went out, then number two, then number three", he said. The crippled plane, limping along at about 18,000 feet on a single engine, was nearly a third of the way out of Germany. That's when the last engine caught fire. He gave the order to bail out. As the last man to parachute out, he landed in a field where German civilians were armed with Lugers. Norman spent the next two years of his life in Stalag Luft 3-A as a POW.



Norman Armbrust tells his story

(Thanks to Dennis Yerkey's *National Web Page*, the 2007 book *OX5 Aviation Pioneers* and the *2015 Dayton Reunion Program* for providing much of the information in this article)

From the Texas Wing Newsletter Ten Years Ago

A decade ago we asked Texas Wing member George Chandler, a former Braniff Airways Captain, to write a bit about his flights from Miami to Havana, Cuba, and on to South America. The flights he described below occurred immediately after the Fidel Castro take-over.

By George Chandler

(written in 2006)



Current news items about the political conditions in Cuba remind me of our first flight into Havana after the overthrow of the Batista dictatorship. Last week's fiesta-like jubilation in Miami among the Cuban exiles brought back memories of the jubilation in Havana right after Castro took over. I flew for Braniff Airways that served Havana as part of the South American operation. Service had been suspended during the revolution, but shortly after the fighting ceased we were told that flights into Havana had been resumed.

We took off from Miami and in a few minutes were over Havana. The Josi Marti tower told us to circle the field while oil drums were being rolled off the runway. After a low pass to check if the runway had been cleared, we landed. Music was blaring in the terminal. People were laughing, singing and dancing in exhilaration. Dictator Batista was gone. Soldiers were everywhere, some in uniform, some in parts of uniform and some in regular clothing.

Routinely, for the continuation flight to Brazil, passengers were loaded on the left rear entrance of the DC-7C and there was a cockpit door on the right side. After shut down, steps were rolled up to both doors so the crew and ground personnel could have easier access. For this flight an Army officer came up the back stairs, followed by a line of soldiers. He walked slowly up the aisle, looking at each petrified passenger, with soldiers right behind him. It was obvious that they had never before seen the inside of an airliner, looking at everything in wide-eyed amazement.

Armed to the teeth with every small arm known to man, we knew that someone or something was going to be shot. Weapons were WWI Springfields, Uzis, etc. One guy had a double barrel shotgun! Transfixed, we watched them parade up the back stairs, through the cabin and out the cockpit door. The airplane was finally cleared and we departed southbound an hour and one-half late.

Flights to Havana became more and more difficult. The military checked every passenger thoroughly, even the through passengers to South America. There was almost no local traffic. One morning we landed in Havana en route back to Miami. Fortun, our Cuban mechanic, was there as usual to service our airplane. He whispered to us, "I've got to go today". We put him in the mail bin behind the radio rack, covered him with mail sacks, and looked at each other. Visions of a Cuban jail or a firing squad shone brightly. The guard came in and looked around, stared at us with contempt and left. We breathed again.

The next morning Futon was working the ramp at Miami International Airport. His wife and children somehow had earlier managed to leave Cuba. How, I do not know. The jubilation was soon over, and so was U. S. airline service to Havana.

We thank these members for their recent newsletter donations:

Robert L. Taylor (Chairman, Antique Airplane Association) and John McCrory, (Texas Wing Governor).

[Our 2016 reunion to be held in Amarillo](#) [A side trip will include the famed Palo Duro Canyon show](#)

One of the most difficult parts of selecting sites for our reunions is the seeking of members in the selected areas who are willing to help. We were fortunate during our 2015 reunion to have Panhandle members Robert and Penni Clark make most of the arrangements for the successful reunion in Lubbock. They have volunteered to help us again with the July 2016 reunion in Amarillo near their Miami, Texas, home (only 60 miles away).

Last year's reunion in Lubbock, lasting only two days, was perhaps too short for the completion of all business needs and planned events. This year the 2016 reunion will be held over three days and will include the famous Palo Duro Canyon Show on one of the evenings. Penni and Robert are working on the hotel arrangements and other activities including the Palo Duro Show. Instructions will be mailed to all Texas Wing members by early June. Make your July calendar flexible. We hope that many of our members and their guests will join us.



Penni and Robert Clark of Miami, Texas

[The Palo Duro Canyon Show: a "Broadway" show in west Texas](#)



Program introduction: *"A lone horseman, carrying the flag of the State of Texas appears atop a 600-foot cliff, signaling the beginning of the most spectacular outdoor musical drama in the world. With a moving swell of music, the horseman gallops away. Suddenly a cast of more than 60 actors, singers and dancers takes the stage to kick off the show that millions of fans from all over the world have come to see".*

"Carved out of and nestled into a natural basin in the Palo Duro Canyon – the nature's second largest – comes alive once again this summer with the 50th anniversary season of the play of the State of Texas".

[Answer The "Mystery Airplane" Page 2](#)

The twin-engine multi-passenger airplane on page 2 is a

Beech Model 18



The Beech model 18 was an all-metal low wing monoplane with seating normally arranged for six passengers and a crew of two pilots. (The later military version C-45 was arranged for nine passengers and two pilots). By June, 1936, Beech Aircraft was already hinting to potential customers that their new "twin" would soon be available and would be able to operate from small pasture-type airports. The Beech 18 was finally produced on January 15, 1937. As powered by two seven-cylinder Wright R-70-E2 engines of 320 h.p. each, it performed "with plenty of power in reserve". Some specifications and performance data are: wing span 47' 8", total wing area 347 sq. ft., empty wt 4100 lbs, gross wgt 6500 lbs, max speed 202 mph, cruise 167 mph at sea level with 75% power, landing 55 mph, price \$37,500 at factory.

Photo and information from Joseph Juptner, U. S. Civil Aircraft Series, Aero Publishers, 1978

Proposed Texas airline routes in 1928 (That did not pan out)

Quite a bit has been written about airline attempts (and failures) to serve semi-remote places in Texas. Most of them were in the 1940s-1960s. Some of us recall the days when Trans Texas Airways served Brewster and Presidio Counties with Douglas DC-3s, operating out of the vacated WWII Marfa Army Air Field.

We have discovered, using newspaper items and clippings, an even earlier airline attempt in long ago 1928. (This was even before the Lindbergh flight). In those days scheduled passenger transportation service was only a dream, although scheduled airmail service was doing well.

San Antonio business man A. R. Barrett had a long-time interest in aviation starting, perhaps, when he was a young man who sold part of his land to the U. S. government that later became Kelly Field. Later, as president of several electric companies in Texas, New Mexico and Arizona, he purchased the controlling interest in Texas Air Transport (TAT), an aviation company that had an airmail contract using 200 h.p. Pitcairn Mail Wing Aircraft.



T. A. T. Air mail plane in Fort Worth



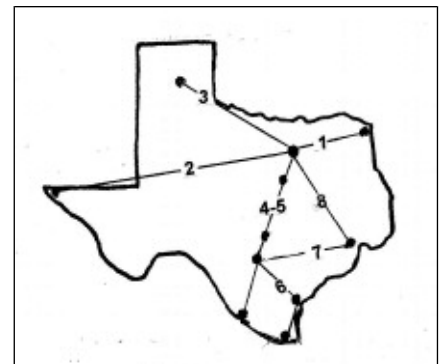
Left: TEXAS AIR TRANSPORT OFFICIALS

(Left to right): Silliman Evans (News Rep), R Smith (News Rep), J G Barrett (Gen. Manager), Tom Hardin (Chief pilot), A R Barrett (Controlling Interest T.A.T.)

In March, 1928, TAT reported that within the next six months passenger airplane lines would be commenced over the routes mapped below right: (1) Texarkana to Dallas and Fort Worth; (2) Dallas and Fort Worth to El Paso; (3) Dallas and Fort Worth to Amarillo; (4) Dallas and Fort Worth to San Antonio and Laredo; (5) Dallas and Fort Worth to San Antonio; (6) San Antonio to Corpus Christi and Brownsville; (7) San Antonio to Houston; (8) Houston to Dallas and Fort Worth.

They reported that the South Texas lines leaving Dallas and Fort Worth "will go via Waco, and the line to San Antonio will go via Austin". Altogether, with the airmail lines, TAT would be operating ten separate airlines in Texas. TAT announced: "Exclusive of air mail the passenger carrying ships will travel 5,130 miles a day". Although news conferences were held daily, no schedules, ETDs or ETAs were ever reported, nor was the aircraft type to be used.

What happened next? Probably we will never know. TAT just faded away. The only present aviation company (year 2016) with a similar name and now in operation is an FBO in Coleman, Texas - [Texas Air Transport, Inc.](#) - quite unrelated to the ambitious 1928 TAT.



(Map assembled for this newsletter is from TAT history information)

Early “airliners”, 1920s-1930s (T.A.T. may have considered some of these)

By the end of the 1920s the aircraft industry became aware of the need for larger and faster airplanes that would carry multiple passengers on scheduled air routes, and the few beginning airlines were in the market for airplanes that would meet their needs.

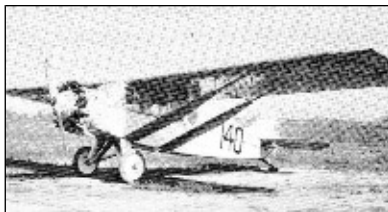
The ambitious 1928 company, Texas Air Transport (TAT), did not divulge the type of airplanes that would be flown on their eight routes in Texas. Their plan may have been for only one-or-two passenger occupancy (improbable), or perhaps they planned for four-to-six passengers on each flight. Below are some of the airplanes that they may have considered:



Stinson “Detroit” SM-1 (Pilot plus 4 passengers)
Engine – Wright “Whirlwind” J5 220 h.p.
Cruise - 105 mph
Price - \$12,000-\$12,500



Douglas Transport C-1 (Two pilots, 6-8 passengers)
Engine - “Liberty 12” 400-420 h.p.
Cruise – 95-105 mph
Price - \$16,000
(Note open pilot cockpit)



Bellanca CH-200 (Pilot plus 5 passenger)
Engine – Wright “Whirlwind” J5 220 h.p.
Cruise –106 mph
Price - \$14,050



Buhl “Air Sedan” CA-5A (5-7 place)
Engine – Pratt & Whitney “Hornett” 525 h.p.
Cruise – 118 mph
Price - \$19,500



Fokker “Universal” (Pilot plus 5 passengers)
Engine- Wright “Whirlwind” J5 220 h.p.
Cruise -100-105 mph
Price - \$16,650
(Pilot in open cockpit)

Beginning in the early 1930s, scheduled airline service started its expansion, even though the number of passengers they carried was relatively small. Among the beginning airlines, (such as the “Tulsa-Oklahoma City Airline”, “Western Air Express” and “Standard Airlines”), none of them provided substantial airline usage.

These aviation pioneers would never visualize a future time when more than 300 passengers could be seated in jet airplanes, each costing three hundred million dollars and flying at nearly 600 mph to points all over the world. Indeed, in the past 96 years unbelievable air traveling has happened.

GEORGE PARLIN VOSE



George P. Vose, ninety three, died on March 7, 2016, at the Fort Stockton Living and Rehabilitation Center. Born May 3, 1922, in Machias, Maine, to John Pierce and Rebecca Parlin Vose, he graduated from Machias High School. He graduated from Pennsylvania State University with a degree in Geology. While at Penn State he earned his pilot's license then became a licensed Flight Instructor. Having logged less than seventy hours, he began training United States Army Air Corps cadets in the civilian flight instructor program. At the end of the Civilian Pilot Training program he entered the U. S. Army Air Corps, "for the duration", as an instructor in both Link Trainers and Fixed Gunnery. After WWII, he returned to his job in the bone density research laboratory at Penn State. He later followed his mentor to a position at Texas Women's University in Denton, Texas. He then earned a MS degree from Southern Methodist University and did further studies at Texas A & M. He elected to not complete the PhD program because his laboratory team would have been broken up in his absence and he did not want to lose them. He had become a research professor at TWU, participating in the NASA Astronaut

research and was on board aircraft carriers to evaluate the effects of weightlessness on bone density when the Gemini astronauts were recovered. He developed the basics of the techniques being used in bone density evaluations today.

In 1977, after TWU had abandoned the idea of adding a School of Medicine, George decided it was time to retire and move to the Big Bend of Texas. There he bought a couple of sections of desert and developed Taurus Mesa Air Ranch, consisting of three runways, in addition to another one leading to his self-built adobe house.

As an FAA Designated Flight Examiner, and by his count, he issued over 2400 pilot licenses. He was the flight instructor to hundreds of students, many of whom went on to earn their living as commercial pilots, and he re-certified countless others over his long flight career. From Alpine he helped conduct research on west Texas wildlife with tracking telemetry from his own small aircraft. His adventures were the basis of a book by author Alan Tennant, On the Wing. He was Past National President of the OX5 Pioneers, originally a club of individuals who maintained or flew planes of the WWI era that were powered by OX5 engines. He was serving as secretary and newsletter writer for the Texas Wing of OX5.

He accumulated more than 23,000 flight hours and in recognition of having a "clean record" of more than fifty years with the FAA, he was honored with the FAA Master Pilot Award in 2005.

He is survived by his sister, Irene Vose Robertson of Inverness, Florida and nephews, John (Barbara) Robertson of Skaneateles, New York, and Kenneth (Carole) Robertson of Valley View, Texas, and grand nephews, Scott Robertson, Jason Robertson, Jacob Robertson, Jeremy Robertson, and grand niece, Anne McKenzie and families.

As per his wishes, there were no services, but his friends expect that a "fly-in" might be scheduled to honor his memory.