



## **SOUTH CAROLINA HISTORIC AVIATION FOUNDATION**

*"Saving the past for the Future"*



### **Newsletter for May 2013**

#### **Greetings to all SCHAF members-**

The last few weeks have been busy ones for SCHAF and the coming ones promise to be active ones, too. Also, I'll remind everyone again at the end of the newsletter but if you haven't renewed your membership in SCHAF please do so as soon as you can. Here's some of what's been happening recently.

#### **SCHAF Board Meeting-**

The board of the South Carolina Historic Aviation Foundation met at the Foster Law Offices in Columbia on Thursday, April 18, 2013. The decision was made to have a show and tell of the foundation's B-25 on the second Saturday of each month starting May 11<sup>nd</sup>, 2013. This will be on the same day each month that Young Eagles Day takes place at Hamilton/Owens Airport in Columbia. There are also plans to create some sort of banner to put outside the Curtis-Wright Hangar on those days to inform the public. Hours for the show and tell will be 11am to 2pm the second Saturday of each month. If you'd like to help out let us know. The more people who get involved the better.

There are plans for an addition to the foundation's website featuring tributes to aviators who have made significant and long term contributions to South Carolina's aviation legacy. The goal is to have the first of the tributes on the site sometime this month.

The board also talked about identifying immediate and long term needs regarding the care and maintenance of our B-25 as well as identifying and implementing longer term upgrades. An immediate need is to come up with a treatment plan to stabilize the interior portion of the plane against corrosion and further deterioration as well as make repairs and upgrades to the plane's exterior appearance and stability. A long term goal is to upgrade the nose and cockpit area. In the coming weeks a plan and cost analysis will be developed.

Cantzon Foster, SCHAF president and board member Ken Berry are planning later this year to attend a workshop for B-25 care and maintenance offered by the Vintage Flying Museum and Greatest Generation Aircraft organization in Fort Worth, Texas.

Board members were also informed that Armies Through Time at Historic Camden which had been scheduled for the first weekend in May has been canceled for this year though there are plans to hold the event in 2014. SCHAF was to have taken part. We look forward to taking part when Armies Through Time takes place in future years.

#### **Foundation Happenings-**

The Earl Yerrick Static Air Display took place on Saturday, April 6<sup>th</sup> at Hamilton/Owens Airport in Columbia. Good crowd and good turnout by SCHAF members. Among the members present were Ron Shelton, Ken Berry, Gary Byrd, Bob Lineberger, Ron Skipper, Scott Linaberry, Anna Amick and myself. Also, thanks to Bob Lineberger for the picture of Ken and Ron (below). Met a lot of nice people who seemed interested in SCHAF and what we're all trying to accomplish. A number of people said they

were interested in joining up. Also great to see Barry Avent's C-47 along with an AT-6. The fly-bys were especially impressive. A good day.



*SCHAF's B-25*



*Gary Byrd and young visitor Barry Avent's C-47 and AT-6*



*Ken Berry and Ron Shelton*

The South Carolina Historic Aviation Foundation was at the 2013 Sparkleberry Country Fair in Richland Northeast on Saturday, April 27<sup>th</sup>. Among the SCHAF members who were there to tell the foundation's story to fair goers were Cantzon Foster, Ken Berry, Xen Motsinger, A bit of a drizzle early on but otherwise the weather cooperated though it was chillier than expected. Scott Linaberry and myself. Met a lot of nice people who seemed interested. Scott had a display regarding plans for the restoration of the Curtis-Wright Hangar at Hamilton/Owens Airport for use as a restaurant and venue for various events. The plans look very impressive. I'm sure Scott would love to share the vision with anyone who is interested.



*Xen, Cantzon and Ken*



*Scott and Cantzon*

Ken Berry reports that both of the foundation's aircraft tugs have recently undergone refurbishment. The tugs were manufactured by Clarktor and made in 1952. One of them was made for the U.S. Navy and was used for years at naval air stations and possibly on aircraft carriers. It may have also seen some use at civilian facilities after being declared surplus by the navy. SCHAF acquired the tug from the Celebrate Freedom Foundation.



*Before*



*After*

The tug has been painted in regulation olive-drab with a white star and a Greenville Army Air Base stencil on the cowling. Ken has checked several sources and says the tug's appearance is relatively close to what a tug would have looked like during World War II pulling planes such as the foundation's B-25. BTW, Ken's brother Ashley sanded and painted the tug and fabricated the engine covers and performed other repairs. Thanks guys, ya'll did a great job.

The foundation has a second tug which was recently donated by Victory Aviation Services in Aiken. Ken says the second tug was painted to look as if it were at Columbia Army Air Base. Again, thanks for a great job. Both tugs were at Hamilton/Owens Field in April for the Earl Yerrick Static Air Display.

Keep in mind there are other projects in the works and the coming months will be a great time for SCHAF members to get involved. Ken says his next project is the construction of a bomb rack that could then be loaded with dummy bombs. With the tugs and the bomb rack the goal is to have a static display when we roll out the B-25 that makes it look like it's being serviced in preparation for a mission. Just tell any of the board members or me how you want to become involved. We've got plenty of things to do and are always on the lookout for helping hands.

### **Big News for Palmetto State-**

All of you have no doubt already heard the news in April when Boeing announced a new \$1 billion investment in their plant in North Charleston where 787 Dreamliners are built. It could double employment at the South Carolina plant and bring in additional aviation related industries. State Senator Hugh Leatherman of Florence says it could help turn the Palmetto State into an aerospace hub in the southeast. In their announcement Boeing said they plan to add 2,000 jobs by the year 2020. Big news for South Carolina and I'm sure everyone hopes what is only the first in what will be more announcements regarding a growing aerospace sector in our state.

### **In Memoriam-**

In March someone who was active in aviation in the Palmetto State and served his country in the U.S. Air Force in a time of war passed away. Dolphin Dunnaha Overton III- known as "Dolph"- was born on April 2, 1927 and passed away on March 25<sup>th</sup>, 2013. Overton was a graduate of the U.S. Military

Academy at West Point and served two tours during the Korean War. In 1952 he flew 102 interdiction missions in a Republic F-84 and in 1953 he flew a North American F-86 Sabre. He became an ace in four days after shooting down five MiG-15 fighters. He may have shot down more but he crossed the Yalu River into airspace of the People's Republic of China and was observed by a UN mission. The USAF in an attempt to defuse a diplomatic incident retracted some of his victories. That action was later corrected by the Air Force. His decorations include the Distinguished Service Cross, the Distinguished Flying Cross with four oak leaf clusters, four Silver Stars, and a number of other awards. He would continue to be involved with airplanes and aviation for the rest of his life and was especially interested in the preservation of vintage aircraft including a number of Ford Tri-Motors. Funeral services took place March 29<sup>th</sup> at Prince George Winyah Episcopal Church in Georgetown, South Carolina. Friends describe him as "an extraordinary military airman, industrialist and vintage airplane collector." Mr. Overton, thank you for all of your contributions through the years.



*Dolph Overton III*

## **Upcoming Events-**

Later this month Ron Shelton will be presenting the program 100 Years of South Carolina Aviation to the cadets and leaders of the Columbia Composite Squadron of the Civil Air Patrol. The meeting takes place at 6:30pm on May 20<sup>th</sup> in the conference room of Hamilton/Owens Airport.

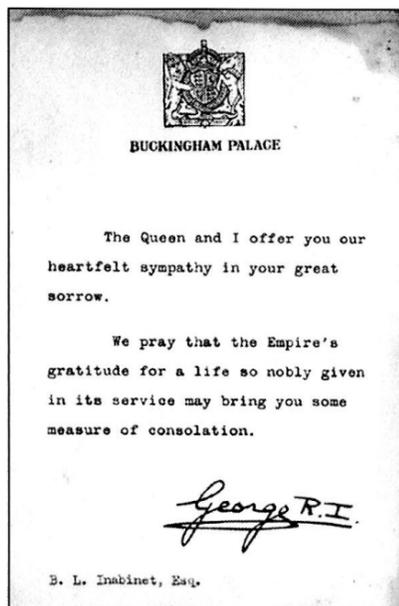
On May 7<sup>th</sup> I'll be presenting a program on the South Carolina Historic Aviation Foundation to the members of the Camden Kiwanis Club as the guest of Tim Hopkins, who is also a member of SCHAFF. Looking forward to meeting with all of the Camden Kiwanis members.

On May 17<sup>th</sup> the Sumter Daedalian Society will visit Hamilton/Owens Airport to see the foundation's B-25 and also visit the South Carolina Aviation Hall of Fame. The Daedalians are the organization of active and retired military pilots and aviators. Volunteers are needed to help with the event.

A group of The Citizens in the Remembrance of Columbia Army Air Base will conduct a dedication ceremony on Wednesday, May 22<sup>nd</sup> at 5:30pm at the CAAB Flagpole Plaza (Biloxi Square) at Columbia Metropolitan Airport. The ceremony is to show the addition of the memorial granite stones that were produced to remember and honor the more than 230 Army Air Corps service personnel who lost their lives in aircraft training accidents associated with Columbia Army Air Base from 1942 to 1945.

## **Historical notes-**

Recently I found out something interesting that I thought I'd share with everyone. The first Clemson alumni to die in World War II flew for the Royal Air Force as a member of one of the Eagle Squadrons. William Burness Inabinet was born in Bishopville, South Carolina. He left, what was then, Clemson College after his sophomore year and joined the Army Air Corps. Before the United States became involved in the Second World War Inabinet joined the RAF as a member of 71 Squadron, one of the three Eagle Squadrons comprised of Americans who had decided to fight and fly for the British in their battle against the Nazis. William Inabinet flew out of RAF Martlesham Heath in Surrey. He was killed in January of 1942. He is buried in Brookwood Military Cemetery in Surrey, England. When he died he was flying a Supermarine Spitfire. Below, his picture as a cadet at Clemson (when it was a military school), a letter to his family from King George VI, and his gravestone in England, and the squadron crest for 71 Squadron RAF. Something I felt everyone would be interested in.



## Recent events-

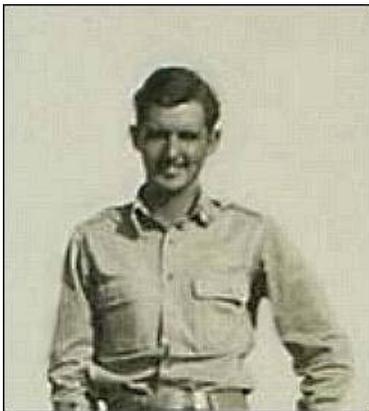
On Saturday, March 30<sup>th</sup>, Bruce Cotner, long-time SCHAF member, along with a number of other military re-enactors took part in a ceremony in Lugoff honoring the memory of World War II members of the 505<sup>th</sup> Parachute Infantry Regiment, 82<sup>nd</sup> Airborne. A wreath laying ceremony took place at the monument to the 505<sup>th</sup> at the Invista (formally DuPont) plant in Kershaw County. In 1943 a massive training drop involving the 505<sup>th</sup> took place in Lugoff. A number of paratroopers were killed during the exercise. A few months later the men of the 82<sup>nd</sup> were in combat as part of the invasion of Sicily. The

monument In front of the Invista plant is a very worthwhile memorial to the men of the “All-American” division who fought for freedom in the Second World War.

A date we should always remember. April 18<sup>th</sup> was the 71<sup>st</sup> anniversary of the Doolittle Raid on Tokyo. There are only four raiders left with us now. One of the important missions of SCHAF is to make sure future generations remember the sacrifices of earlier generations and to also highlight South Carolina’s role in historic events such as the Doolittle Raid.

### **Feedback-**

Heard from SCHAF member Bob Lineberger, glad you still like the newsletter. Bob passes along some interesting information; his brother-in-law Robert Rast, who before the war was the assistant manager of the Five Points Theatre, during the war would serve as a B-17 pilot and experience a lifetime’s worth of adventure. Rast enlisted in the Army Air Corps when the United States became involved in World War II. He was shot down over Naples, Italy on his 49<sup>th</sup> mission. He was a POW in Italy and at one point was in a cattle car in a rail yard which was under attack by his own unit. The attack would kill half of the 8,000 POW’s in the rail yard. Rast would escape but was later recaptured by the Germans and sent to Stalag Luff III. He was freed at the end of the war.



*1<sup>st</sup>. Lt. Robert Rast II*

*Rast’s B-17 “Nut Cracker” after being hit over Naples*

The picture is Rast’s plane after it was hit by anti-aircraft fire was taken by the lead plane in the Flying Fortress. One .88mm shell took off a wing and another killed four men in the back of the plane. After coming back to Columbia Rast would re-enlist in the USAF and fly with SAC and would retire as a Lt. Col. Bob thanks for passing all of this along. Here’s a link to a web page with more about Robert Rast.

[http://www.reddog1944.com/RAST\\_97th%20BG%20414th%20BS.htm](http://www.reddog1944.com/RAST_97th%20BG%20414th%20BS.htm)

A side note, Robert’s brother was the late Mike Rast, a name familiar to many Columbians. Mike or “Doc” as he was known to listeners was associated for many years with WCOS Radio in Columbia.

If anyone has any stories or pictures to share about a relative in any of the wars America has fought in defense of freedom please let me know and I’ll try to include them in a future newsletter. Not just World War II but also Korea, Viet-Nam, the Gulf War and the Iraq War, if it’s an aviation story we’re interested.

## Good reads –

A couple of good books about the Berlin Airlift; the first is [The Candy Bombers](#) by Andrei Cherny. More than just the tale of the airlift, it's the story of the political situation in post-war Europe, the challenges of keeping West Berlin alive, a young pilot who felt sympathy for the children of Berlin, a general who fought behind a desk, another who was an air logistics genius who never got the recognition he deserved and a member of Truman's cabinet who was slowly unraveling mentally as well as former allies who felt that deceit and brutality would achieve their goals. A truly gripping read. Read it and become familiar with a world living on the knife edge.

The second book about the airlift is [Daring Young Men](#) by the noted journalist and historian Richard Reeves. Focuses more on the airlift portion of the story without as much emphasis on the politics as does Cherny's book. Well-written and a memorial to the pilots who took on astounding odds, faced danger every flight and possibly changed the world in the process. A side note, one of the pilots mentioned in Reeves book is a gentleman by the name of Lou Wagner who now lives in Camden and is still involved in aviation matters. Everyone knows him as "Captain Lou." Both books should be on your shelf.

## Odds and Ends-

Through June 16<sup>th</sup> the Spartanburg County Public Library is hosting a Smithsonian Traveling Exhibit at the Headquarters Library in downtown Spartanburg called *Black Wings: American Dreams of Flight*. It chronicles the story of African-Americans who, despite facing racial barriers, attained great achievement in the world of aviation. The exhibit is located on the lower level of the Headquarters Library at 151 S. Church St. in Spartanburg. Among the people featured in the exhibit is Bessie Colman, the first female African-American pilot and the first African-American to hold an International Pilot's License. She started her as a stunt pilot at an event honoring the all-black 369<sup>th</sup> Infantry Regiment which fought in World War I and had connections to Spartanburg. It sounds like a great exhibit.

In our previous newsletter we mentioned Dan Ford's book on [The Flying Tigers](#). It made me recall the 1942 John Wayne movie [Flying Tigers](#). I remember seeing it on late night TV back when I was in high school (don't ask how long ago that was). To call it a fanciful telling of the story of the AVG is an understatement. As far as historical accuracy let's just say its Hollywood and they never let facts or the truth get in the way of the story. But it's still entertaining. Here's the question though: some scenes feature probably one of the oddest airplanes you've ever seen. When I first saw the movie I didn't have the faintest idea what it was; in fact I thought it was some sort of mock up made just for the film. Only years later did I learn that it was a real airplane. Here's a picture.



Can you name it? Send in your guesses. Answer next month.

## In Closing-

**This is very important; everyone please check and make sure you've renewed your membership in SCHAF since the year began. If you haven't, take a moment and re-up. Don't put it off. It would be appreciated.**

That's all for now. As always if you have news of upcoming events, items of interest, ideas, thoughts or suggestions, or just want to say 'hello,' please [e-mail](#) me or any of the board members for inclusion in future newsletters. Send in comments, kudos and criticisms. If you like we'll include them in sort of a "letters" section. If you know of an interesting fact or item involving aviation history and the Palmetto State, please, pass it on and we'll share with everyone. It's great to hear from everyone. As they used to say in what was known as radio's golden age, "keep those cards and letters coming."

Till next time

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