



SCHAF Newsletter for October 2013

Greetings to members and friends of the South Carolina Historic Aviation Foundation. The summer has been a busy one and fall is shaping up to be just as busy. It's fair to say that the foundation is making progress in a number of areas. Now is a good time to get involved with SCHAF. Let's see what's been going on over the past month or so.

Foundation Happenings-

The South Carolina Historic Aviation Foundation held its September open house at Hamilton/Owens Airport in Columbia and was pleased to welcome Boy Scouts and Cub Scouts from Fort Jackson and tell them about our B-25 and the rich and exciting history of aviation in the Palmetto State. SCHAF was also honored to welcome members of the Spann Watson chapter of the Tuskegee Airmen including Dr. LeRoy Bowman, the last surviving Tuskegee Airmen in South Carolina. Dr. Bowman enthralled everyone with his recollections of flying P-51 Mustangs and being a member of a group that made an important contribution to freedom during the war and in America. Dr. Bowman, thank you for your service to America. It was also great to meet the scouts and their parents. It was great to meet some really smart and enthusiastic kids and some great parents, many of whom seemed interested in becoming involved with SCHAF; all in all a successful open house. The members present were SCHAF president Cantzon Foster, Mary McIntosh, Ron Shelton, Ron Skipper and myself.



Cantzon telling folks about GF-2



Dr. LeRoy Bowman and Vivian Glover



(l-r) Tom Roberts, Murray Price, Cantzon Foster, and Roger Booco with Dr. LeRoy Bowman



Dr. LeRoy Bowman and young friend

SCHAF member Ron Skipper recently purchased a 1941 Chevrolet truck and has painted to look like a truck used on an Army Air Base in the early 40's and he surprised everyone during the open house by bringing it by and parking in front of the hangar. It really is a very nice looking set of wheels. He intends to bring the truck to most of our gatherings and events. Thanks Ron for bringing it to the open house.



October 5th and 6th the Liberty Foundation will be bringing their B-17 Flying Fortress the "Movie Memphis Belle" to Hamilton/Owens Airport for public flights and grounds tours. The original "Memphis Belle" is undergoing restoration by the USAF. The movie "Memphis Belle" is the plane used in the 1990 movie about the historic plane that was the first plane and crew in the 8th Air Force to complete 25 missions and earn their way home after completing a full combat tour. Rides and tours of the "Movie Memphis Belle" will be available. This is absolutely something you don't want to miss. Come find out about one of the planes that carried the fight to those who would attempt to enslave others. If you would like to know more about the Liberty Foundation and the "Movie Memphis Belle" here's a link to the Liberty Foundation website: <http://www.libertyfoundation.org/index.html> .



Also on October 4th and 5th some of the members of SCHAF will be taking part in the Fall gathering of the Chapter 3 Vintage Fly-In at Woodward Field in Camden.

The next SCHAF open house will take place Saturday, October 12th. Hope to see a lot of you there. Also, remember at Hamilton/Owens Airport Thursday, October 24th through Sunday, October 27th. EAA Chapter 242 is bringing an airworthy Ford Tri-Motor to Columbia for display and rides. A number of vintage Ford automobiles will also be on display. Mark your calendars.



Historical Notes-

On December 7th, 1941 America found itself hurled into World War II when the forces of Imperial Japan launched a devastating sneak attack on Pearl Harbor in Hawaii. The first the nation knew of the attack was when the signal "Air raid. Pearl Harbor. This is no drill," was sent. The man who sent that signal was a South Carolinian, Rear Admiral Patrick Bellinger, Senior Naval Air Commander at Pearl Harbor that fateful morning. Patrick Bellinger was born in 1885 in Cheraw, South Carolina and graduated from the United States Naval Academy at Annapolis in 1907. He was part of the first group of naval aviators to be trained and was rated as Naval Aviator #4. In 1914 during the American occupation of Vera Cruz in Mexico Bellinger became the first American to come under enemy fire while piloting an airplane. He was recommended for the Medal of Honor. The year before Bellinger set the world altitude record when he flew a Curtis seaplane to the then astonishing height of 6200 feet. In 1919 Bellinger would command the squadron of seaplanes that made the first trans-Atlantic flight. After Pearl Harbor he would become commander of all navy patrol wings in the Pacific and would later become Chief of Staff for Admiral Ernest J. King, the Chief of Naval Operations. He retired at the rank of Vice-Admiral in 1947. Admiral Patrick Bellinger, another South Carolinian who made his mark on aviation history.



Patrick Bellinger



December 7th, 1941

One of the South Carolinians who joined the fight against Nazi Germany before the United States entered World War II was Charles P. "Chuck" Lesesne from Sumter. He joined the RCAF and became a bomber pilot. Lesesne was of French Hueguenot heritage and graduated from the University of South Carolina. Before joining the RCAF he was a newspaper reporter for the Charlotte Observer and The Sumter Daily Item, writing a syndicated aviation column for newspapers around the country. Lesesne joined the Royal Canadian Air Force in February of 1941. Lesesne would serve in 425 "Alouette" Squadron, one of the French speaking units of the RCAF. In March of 1945, just before Easter he was killed when the Handley-Page Halifax he was piloting was shot down over Hamburg. He was able to parachute from his stricken aircraft but died on the ground in the arms of his air-gunner. Survivors of the crash would later say that he had been beaten during his capture and that the Germans denied Lesesne medical treatment resulting in his death. Here's a link to an article about Chuck Lesesne: <http://www.bombercommandmuseum.ca/s,charleslesesne.html> .



Charles P. Lesesne



Handley-Page Halifax

Feedback-

Heard recently from Dr. Frank Young, a member of SCHAF. Frank says when he was “a lad of twelve” he recalls seeing crews recover the Corsair that crashed in a pond near McEntire when it was a Marine Corps air station. He says that the pilot had either been killed in the crash or drowned and that the body had been removed. He says the aircraft was intact when a Caterpillar tractor pulled it out of the pond but that one wing had been torn away. Thanks for the info and glad you like the newsletter.

In last month’s newsletter I included some pictures from SCHAF member Niall McLaughlin from an air show in Hamilton, Ontario. Here are some more pictures, one of a later mark Supermarine Spitfire and one of a Hawker Hurricane and also a De Havilland Mosquito. Again, thanks Niall for the pix. They are really great.



Supermarine Spitfire



Hawker Hurricane



De Havilland Mosquito

Good Reads-

[Boyd- The Fighter Pilot Who Changed the Art of Warfare](#) by Robert Coram. Fascinating story of Col. John Boyd, who would revolutionize fighter tactics and aircraft design through his innovative theories. At the Fighter Weapons School at Nellis Air Force Base he would become known as “forty second Boyd” because in 40 seconds he could be on

the tail of any pilot in position for the kill. If you've heard of the OODA loop (observe, orient, decide, act), it was Boyd who came up with the theory. He would play an important role in the development of the F-15 Eagle and as the head of the so-called "fighter mafia" in the air force he would be the man behind the F-16 Fighting Falcon, one of the greatest aircraft to ever take to the skies. His impact on tactics, especially in the Marine Corps is felt to this day. If you're interested in tactics and how things really work in the military, this one's for you.

Odds and Ends-

Here's an interesting site I ran across recently. Given that SCHAF member Scott Linaberry is actively involved in the project to restore the Curtiss-Wright Hangar at Hamilton/Owens, I thought I would pass it along. After making a fortune in aviation it seems that Glenn Curtiss would then go on to make another fortune in real estate in Florida. In the process he would build a mansion near Miami. It was in what was called Pueblo Revival style and was part of a larger property that was developed by Curtiss. After his death it would fall into disrepair but in the early part of this century work started on restoration and by all accounts it has gone well.



Curtiss mansion then



Curtiss mansion now

Here's a link to the Curtiss Mansion website:

<http://www.curtissmansionblog.com/>

A couple of interesting color pictures below. The first is of a B-25 production line at the North American Aviation plant in Inglewood, Calif. The second is of a B-25 production line in Kansas City, Kansas. If memory serves our B-25, GF-2 came from Inglewood.



Last month's trivia question: which fighter group in the USAAF was known as "the Wolfpack?" The answer; the 56th Fighter Group led by Hubert "Hub" Zemke was known as "Zemke's Wolfpack." General Jimmy Doolittle would call Zemke his "greatest group commander." During the war Zemke would develop innovative fighter tactics that would help sweep the Luftwaffe from the skies over Europe. In late October of 1944 Zemke was forced to parachute from his damaged P-51 Mustang, captured and was sent to Stalug Luft I. Zemke would retire from the United States Air Force in 1966. He passed away in 1994.



Hubert "Hub" Zemke

Congratulations to Col. Dan Rossman who had the correct answer. Col. Rossman, who is a member of SCHAF, was also the left-seat student pilot of the foundation's bomber GF-2 on June 6th, 1944 when she was forced to ditch in Lake Greenwood. Thank you, Col. Rossman for staying in touch. Also, thank you for your service to our country. By the way, June 2014 will mark not only the 70th anniversary of GF-2's "bath" but also the 70th anniversary of D-Day or "Operation Overlord" when Allied forces stormed the beaches of Normandy and launched the liberation of occupied Europe.



Now here's our trivia question for this month. Do you recognize the airliner pictured above? Hmmmm. Has a triple-tail but no it's not a Lockheed aircraft. I'll give you a hint. It was built by Douglas. Doesn't look like any Douglas airliner you're familiar with though, does it? Look closely, this one has United Airlines markings. Send in your answers. I'll fill you in next month.

In Closing-

Well, that wraps up this month's SCHAF newsletter. If you have something you would like to share please [e-mail](#) me or any of the board members for inclusion in future newsletters. Also, get involved with the foundation. **A reminder, if you have not renewed your membership- please do so at your earliest convenience. [Go to the SCHAF membership page on the foundation's website.](#)** Your support of SCHAF is greatly appreciated

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