

## SCHAF Newsletter for November 2013

Greetings to all members and friends of the South Carolina Historic Aviation Foundation. October turned out to be a really busy month and in a moment we'll get around to all of the activities SCHAF has been in involved with, but first an explanation regarding last month's newsletter.

One of the great things about doing this newsletter is hearing from everyone when I do something right and also when I do something wrong. Last month I sent out two mailings because the first one was too big of a file for some folk's mailboxes which necessitated doing a resend of a smaller file. I've made an effort to correct the problem and will work at using smaller files for pictures in the future. Thanks to Ron Shelton for helping me correct some things and also to Billy Rawl who pointed out how I could make some improvements in putting the newsletter together. Thanks guys.

### Foundation Happenings-

The Board of Directors of the South Carolina Historic Aviation Foundation met on Thursday, October 17<sup>th</sup>, 2013 in hangar Y-1 in Hamilton/Owens Airport. Members present were Cantzon Foster, president of SCHAF along with Ron Shelton, Ken Berry, Xen Motsinger, Larry Yon, Richard Hill, Niall McLaughlin, Mary McIntosh and myself. Among the items discussed: improving the monthly open house, both for the enjoyment of visitors and their safety. Cantzon also mentioned that he has been talking with a couple of metalworkers who have agreed to make replica machine guns to be mounted on GF-2 as part of the process of restoration. Niall McLaughlin will be working at securing documentation regarding the armaments for the plane. More plans for restoration are in the works. We'll keep everyone posted. Also there was discussion about coming up with a SCHAF logo that can be used on tee shirts and patches and the like. Also discussion about the need for more people to get involved in SCHAF activities such the monthly open house and also going to events and meetings around the state to share the story of SCHAF. There was also discussion about the December open house which is going to be really special, more about that below. Now is a good time to get involved. A lot has been accomplished in the past year and a lot of good things are in the works.



EAA Chapter 242 brought a historic Ford Tri-Motor to Hamilton/Owens Airport on the last weekend of October. A number of people had the thrill of flying in a truly historic aircraft. Saturday, October 26<sup>th</sup> SCHAF also rolled out GF-2 and the tugs and gave folks a chance to learn more about the work and goals of the foundation. SCHAF members who were there included Ron Shelton, Ron Skipper, Rachel Haynie, Tom Savage, Ken Berry, Xen Motsinger, Scott Linaberry, Bob Lineberger, Mary McIntosh and myself. Bob brought out his radio controlled P-47 model and spent the day explaining it to folks including interested kids. Below is a picture of GF-2, a tug, Bob's P-47 and the Ford Tri-Motor. Other picture shows the interior of the tri-motor.



By the way this weekend is the last weekend this particular Ford Tri-Motor will be flying. It will go back up to Michigan for restoration and preparation for a new life as a static display. So Hamilton/Owens Airport had the honor of hosting this historic bird for its last weekend of flying. Also Ken Berry's nephew A.J. had his first airplane flight on the Ford Tri-Motor that Saturday morning and Ken says he had the time of his life. Glad you had fun A.J.



A.J. Berry

From 1942 through 1945 the skies over the green fields of East Anglia in England thundered with the roar of a mighty air armada winging its way toward occupied Europe on mission to strike a blow of retribution against the Nazi overlords. Aircrews comprised of young, eager but frightened young men piloted planes such as the B-24 Liberator and B-17 Flying Fortress on the dangerous missions. On Saturday, October 5<sup>th</sup> and Sunday, October 6<sup>th</sup> the Liberty Foundation brought one of those veterans to Hamilton/Owens Airport in Columbia. Large crowds turned out to see the B-17F known as the "Movie Memphis Belle." The original "Memphis Belle" is undergoing restoration in Ohio. The plane that came to Columbia portrayed the "Belle" in the 1990 movie *Memphis Belle*. There's a South Carolina connection to the story of the original Memphis Belle. Robert K. Morgan, who piloted the original Belle in World War II did part of his training as an aviation cadet at Woodward Field in Camden.



SCHAF also opened up its hangar so that visitors could also make the acquaintance of GF-2, the foundation's B-25 and become familiar with the work of SCHAF. Among the

SCHAF members present were Cantzon Foster, Ron Shelton, Ron Skipper, Ken Berry, Niall McLaughlin, Bruce Cotner, Anna Amick, Mary McIntosh, and myself. It was a chance to meet a lot of nice folks who seemed interested in the South Carolina Historic Aviation Foundation. SCHAF member Anna Amick was among those who flew in the "Movie Memphis Belle" and the word is she's still smiling.

In the past month GF-2 was part of a couple of photo shoots. Two separate wedding parties came to the Curtiss-Wright Hangar at Hamilton/Owens Airport for pictures. One wedding party included the groom who is an F-16 pilot. It's nice that GF-2 will be part of good memories through the years for some happy couples.

Saturday October 12<sup>th</sup> SCHAF members Ron Shelton and Xen Motsinger took part of the Young Eagles program of Experimental Aircraft Association Chapter 242 with a group from St. Peter's Lutheran Church in Lexington. Thirty young people and some adults enjoyed airplane flights.

The next SCHAF open house at Hamilton/Owens Airport will take place Saturday, November 9<sup>th</sup>. Oh, and by the way, we'd love to get more members involved in helping with the open houses each month. They are a lot of fun. You get to meet a lot of nice people and share the story of GF-2 and SCHAF. It really is a great way to spend a Saturday morning. If you want to get involved let me or one of the board members know or just show up. Time to step up and be part of the good things happening with the foundation; it's worth it.

Speaking of SCHAF's open house on Saturday mornings, mark your calendars because the December open house is shaping up to be something special. As a way of getting into the spirit of the season and providing a Christmas gift for all of our veterans we plan to have a Saturday morning honoring America's veterans and a general membership meeting. Would love to have a lot of "vets" show up and share their stories. Plans are for a sort of brunch. We'll need some volunteers to help with the food; preparation and set-up. We're hoping to have a special guest or two. It will be a great way to start off the yuletide season. Come on, get involved. This one will be a great open house. It will take place December 14<sup>th</sup>, 2013.

We'd like to welcome some new members of SCHAF: Herbert Plott, Alexander Birnie, Jr., Wayne Fritz and Jimmy Knight. Glad to have all of you on board.

## **Historical Notes-**

When I was a kid one of the best parts of going to the beach was a visit to the Florence Air and Missile Museum in Florence, S.C. My parents would always stop there so I could look at the airplanes and wonder about the stories they could have told if they had been able to speak. Sadly, in the 1990's the Museum closed when Florence Airport expanded and it was decided the area was needed for additional parking. Some pictures below from when the museum was open. Ahhh, the good memories. Many of the planes would end up in the Carolinas Aviation Museum in Charlotte, North Carolina, as well as other museums. A quick aside, remember one of the missions of SCHAF is to make sure that our state's aviation heritage is not poached by other states. Below are some pictures from the Florence Air and Missile Museum in its heyday.

Here's an interesting link about the upcoming final toast reunion of the Doolittle Raiders at the National Museum of the U.S. Air Force. It takes place November 9<sup>th</sup>. Here's the link: <http://www.af.mil/News/ArticleDisplay/tabid/223/Article/467365/public-activities-part-of-doolittle-raiders-final-toast-weekend-at-national-mus.aspx>



Postcard from Florence Air Museum



Northrop F-89 Scorpion



Douglas C-124C Globemaster



Lockheed EC-121

Earlier this year in one of our newsletters SCHAF member Bob Lineberger provided information about his brother in law Robert Rast; a B-17 pilot in World War II who was shot down over Italy and would become a POW. Recently Bob sent some more material concerning Rast. Below a photo of Rast and some of his crew as well as the report about the mission where Rast was shot down. Thought everyone would be interested. Thanks Bob.



1<sup>st</sup>. Lt. Robert Rast(center 2<sup>nd</sup>. Row)

#150 Capodichino A/D, Naples, Italy. 1 Aug. 1943  
Heavy, moderate, and accurate flak. Most bomb hits confined to A/D resulting in very good coverage. Approximately 36 E/A visible on ground, several of which received direct hits. Approximately 8 to 10 ME-109s attacked formation from rear just after bombing, resulting in 2 E/A destroyed. An unlucky burst of flak, immediately after bombs away, took off left wing of B-17 at the #1 engine. 5 parachutes were reported as A/C went down in flat spin over target area. The missing personnel are: (414th) 1Lt Robert H. Rast Jr, P; 2Lt Alexander Alvarado, CP; 1Lt Seymore J. Pommon, N; 2Lt Frank M. Bigelow, B; SSgt William D. Dibble, RO; TSgt William J. Shea, Eng; SSgt John L. Anderson, R/W/G; Sgt Robert J. Nichols, L/W/G; Sgt George B. Smith, B/T/G; Sgt James R. Mathews, TG. Five other aircraft suffered minor flak damage.

#151 Crossroads At Messina, Sicily. 5 Aug. 1943  
Flak heavy, moderate, and accurate over target. 16 A/C received minor flak damage. Excellent pin-point bombing. Target area completely devastated.

Report of mission Rast was shot down

**Good Reads-** [Freedom Flyers- The Tuskegee Airmen of World War II](#) by J. Todd Moyer. A truly great read about the African-American pilots who became a legend and opened the door toward racial equality in America's armed forces and would blaze a path that would lead to a better society as well as forming a cadre of men who would go on to memorable careers in the armed forces and the civilian world. Well-written, balanced; it deals with both myths and truths regarding the Tuskegee airmen. To read it is to gain even more respect for the men who fought battles at home and in the skies. Only complaints; not enough mention given to the time the Tuskegee airmen spent in Walterboro, South Carolina for advanced fighter training and only passing mention of Dr. Leroy Bowman (who was at SCHAF's September open house), a South Carolinian who was one of the "Red Tails." Those are minor criticisms, though. This is another one that belongs on your bookshelf.

## Odds and Ends-

(I used this in last month's newsletter but had to delete when I had to resend it because the file was too big for some folks mailboxes so I'm putting it back so no one will miss it)

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 now*



*Curtiss mansion then*

Here's a link to the Curtiss Mansion website:

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



By the way, speaking of the CW Hangar project, restoration of the hangar will be a positive addition to the aviation community of the Palmetto State and the midlands in general. This is truly an important part of South Carolina's aviation heritage and a project well worth supporting. Here's a link to the CW Hangar Partners website: <http://columbia-hangar.com/>. SCHAF member Scott Linaberry is one of the main movers and shakers in making this project work. It deserves everyone's support.



Earlier this year marked the 70<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the famous "dams raid" by 617 Squadron. To mark the occasion the BBC aired a special program including ceremonies at RAF Scampton. As always a first class job by one of the world's leading broadcast organizations. Here's a link to the program:

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=gzq11zz1HLA> .

Here's an interesting piece Ken Berry sent along; it's about the recovery of a World War II German bomber in a French cave. What's it doing in a cave? Read on:  
<http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/magazine-24159975>

Last month I shared the picture of an interesting looking airliner and wanted to know if anyone could identify it. It was a three-tailed plane, but no, it was not from Lockheed. I even gave a hint; it was built by Douglas. Here's the answer; it's a DC-4E. Doesn't look like any DC-4 you've seen? Well, before World War II Douglas developed the plane for United Airlines as the DC-4. It would prove too complex to operate and never went into production. After the war Douglas would use the experience gained to develop the DC-4 we all know as a mainstay of airline travel and the workhorse of the Berlin Airlift in its military variant the C-54. Douglas would add the "E" (for experimental) to the name to make sure it was not confused with the real DC-4. The one example built was sold to Imperial Japanese Airways before World War II and the Japanese would claim that it crashed into Tokyo Bay. However the Nakajima G5N bomber bore a striking similarity to the Douglas built plane and some think the crash story was a cover for a reverse engineering operation. That's the story.

Here's our trivia question for next month: the 325<sup>th</sup> Fighter Group of the USAAF fought in the Mediterranean Theatre of Operations during World War II and became famous as "the Checkertail Clan." The tails of their planes were painted with a black and yellow checkered pattern. Who first called them "the Checkertail Clan?" The answer may surprise you. We'll have it 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. **Oh, and by the way, if you have not renewed your membership, 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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**Happy Thanksgiving to everyone from the folks at SCHAF**

