

Wright "B" Flyer, Inc.

WRIGHT LANDINGS



Issue 2, 2013

Dayton, Ohio

Spring 2013

WRIGHT "B" WELCOMES A NEIGHBOR

Wright "B" Inc. was well represented at the grand opening of the new Kroger store in Austin Landing. Inaugural customers to the slick, 90,000 sq. ft.



supermarket passed between lines of veterans recruited by the Wright B Museum.

Once inside, they could view up close the 1/2 scale Flyer and our Model T staff car.

Museum volunteers

and Wright descendent Steve Wright were on hand to chat and answer questions.

Phil Beaudoin and Steve Wright accepted a \$2500 donation from the Kroger Co. to continue our efforts at keeping the Wright Brothers history alive and current.



BUDGET CUTS HANGAR YELLOW BIRD

The Wright "B" Museum's other plane, the so-called Yellow Bird which in recent years has been part of the National Park Service's program at Huffman Prairie, will not be displayed there this summer.

Like most government agencies, the Park Service has had to absorb substantial reductions in its budget this year. One of the activities which reluctantly had to go was the rollout of the Yellow Bird at the Huffman Prairie site where it added so much to the realism of the visitors' experience.

It's hoped that the NPS will be able to reinstate this cooperative venture in the future. Meanwhile, the Yellow Bird will be displayed at the WBf hangar starting in July 2013.

BROWN BIRD--MAJOR REHAB



Volunteers Steve Sturm, Syl Kerstanski, and Jim Stoutemyer at work.

The Annual maintenance and FAA inspection program for the Brown Bird is progressing well with taxi and preflight tests

scheduled

for early May. Through the winter, the airplane has undergone an extensive maintenance program with work being done in the following areas:

The under carriage received a major redesign, remanufacture, and strengthening. New front nose steering wheels and modernized steering system were installed, and the main wheels were replaced. The complete fabric covering of the airplane was repaired, washed, treated, and re-painted. The propellers were completely refurbished and refinished. The chain guides were rebuilt.



Syl (top) and Jim putting the Brown Bird together.

Prior to taxi and flight tests, the airplane will undergo a complete weight and balance program. This winter maintenance and inspection program is the most intensive under taken in several years and should ensure ongoing flight status well into the future.

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Wright Landings is published quarterly for the information of members and volunteers of the Wright B Flyer, Inc., a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization.

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2013 FLY-OVERS

The Fly-Over Schedule for this season is evolving, but here's the line up as of April 1:

- 26 May, 7 pm: Dayton Philharmonic Orchestra Memorial Day Concert, Carillon Park.
- 22-23 June: Dayton Air Show, Dayton International Airport
- 4 July, 10 am: Americana Parade, Centerville
- 9 Aug, 6-10 pm: Dayton Wright Brothers Airport Runway Fest
- 2 Sept, 9:55 am: Holiday @ Home Parade, Kettering
- 21 Sept, 11:30-Noon: Air Force Marathon, Wright Patterson AFB

NON-FLYING EVENTS

Scheduled or possible in next three months

- 10-12 May: RV Travel Club
- 16 May, 9-10 am: Tour - Model Railroad Association
- 1 June: WBF Program Speaker
- 20 June: Air Camp
- 25 June: T-Bird Convention @ Hangar



CHAIRMAN'S CORNER

We're finally getting some Spring weather which means the WBF calendar will be coming to life with fly-overs and honorary membership rides in the Brown Bird. It is always a joy to see a family witness one of their own experiencing a flight in our "B" Flyer. One can just imagine how the person flying is excited to be



John Bosch

having the same thrill of flight that the Wright Brothers had when they invented the airplane right here in Dayton, Ohio.

It's always a pleasure for me to walk next door and see the WBF volunteers engaged in a broad range of activities that make the organization so successful. We at Commander Aero appreciate having such a wonderful team next door. Aside from being good neighbors we really have an informal partnership resulting from the events we work on together. Mike Williams from Commander Aero and Phil Beaudoin are continually meeting to plan future events that involve cooperation between the two organizations. With their creative talents put to work they come up with award winning events.

Your board of trustees has been having discussions regarding our long range plan as well as how we can contribute more to the success of the WBF team. I am pleased to report that Ed Mechenbier has volunteered to lead us through a 5-year strategic planning process and committee chair positions are being filled by Jay Jabour - Volunteer Recruitment, Membership - Pete Britton / Tim Gaffney, and Development (fund raising) - George Forest. Other board members will be invited to serve on these committees which will help to make the WBF a stronger organization.



To express appreciation to the WBF team Commander Aero held a "Celebration of Volunteerism" luncheon on March 28th. With food, beverages, and desserts provided by Kroger's and with Mike Williams acting as host everyone had a good time. We are now expecting to have an outstanding WBF flying season in 2013.

WRIGHT “B” FLYER INC. IS A PROUD PARTNER OF NAHA.

Fine, you say; what’s NAHA?

Amidst all the aviation heritage in the Dayton area, NAHA is one of its best-kept secrets. NAHA is the National Aviation Heritage Area—one of 49 congressionally designated National Heritage Areas across the United States in a program administered by the National Park Service. Our Heritage Area encompasses nationally important aviation heritage sites within eight counties surrounding Dayton.

In creating the Heritage Area, Congress designated a not-for-profit corporation as its management entity—the National Aviation Heritage Alliance (NAHA). NAHA’s board of trustees includes representatives from the Dayton Aviation Heritage National Historical Park, the National Museum of the U.S. Air Force, and numerous nonprofit heritage groups—including Wright “B” Flyer.

NAHA’s mission is to leverage and enhance the resources and assets of the National Aviation Heritage Area, in part by fostering collaboration among its partners to promote aviation heritage tourism. Wright “B” Flyer has collaborated closely with NAHA and has benefitted measurably as a result.

For example, in 2010 we deployed our Brown Bird and the Valentine Bird with a dozen volunteers to San Antonio, Texas, to participate in the centennial celebration of the first military flight at Fort Sam Houston—a major effort. NAHA funded the travel expenses for a volunteer publicist and photographer. As a result, we were able to generate national news coverage in newspapers and aviation magazines.

Now we’re collaborating with NAHA to promote our “Leader in Flight” special Ohio license plate program. In this program, the state registration fee for your Leader in Flight license plates includes a \$15 donation to Wright “B” Flyer. For several years, it’s been our biggest single revenue source.

By collaborating with NAHA, Wright “B” Flyer will continue to receive all of the revenue up to an



Yellow Bird at Ft Sam Houston. AF photo, SSgt. Bennie J. Davis III

amount equal to our past receipts. Revenues above that amount we will split with NAHA. In return, NAHA will contribute resources to help publicize the plates across Ohio, something we never attempted. The outcome should be greater income for us and new income for NAHA, necessary to draw matching federal funds.

As a part of this effort, NAHA has created a special

page where you can learn about the program and download a registration form. If you don’t already have Leader in Flight plates, go to LeaderInFlight.com or LeaderInFlight.org and grab the order form.

Be a leader in flight—show your pride in Ohio’s aerospace leadership and support our aviation heritage!



As soon as they became volunteers, your editors—one of whom was a B-52 navigator—got their own Leader In Flight plates.

SPREAD THE WORD

The Wright “B” Flyer museum is possibly one of Dayton’s best kept secrets. Other than air shows and community holiday functions we depend on walk-ins and word of mouth to attract our visitors.

To remove us from this obscure status in 2011, we launched a public relations program for presentation to schools and civic clubs with a slideshow tailored to fit from 15 minutes to one hour. It provides the audience with some history of the Wright brothers, as well as a



visual display of what transpires at Wright B Flyer Museum. We learned that middle school youngsters could understand the display and civic clubs were pleased with the show. These presentations can also recruit new volunteers. The profile of John Callander on the next page affirms this.

We have reworked the slides and movie portion and are now ready to present our updated version. If any of you have a group that you think might be interested in seeing a presentation to learn more about the Wright “B” story, please have them contact the hangar (937-885-2327).

VOLUNTEERS

Wright “B” Flyer is an all-volunteer organization and we’re always looking for new people. If you are interested, contact Phil Beaudoin or Bill Simpson at the hangar (937-885-2327).

FROM THE WRIGHT SEAT

By Rich Stepler, WBF Chief Pilot

When we took the Wright B Flyer to San Antonio, Texas, to reenact the first flight of a military aircraft (the Wright A Flyer) flown by a military pilot (Lt Benjamin Foulois) from a military base (Ft. Sam Houston) we all had many notable moments that will remain fond memories forever. There was another event that was for me both exhilarating and humbling. I hope that I can tell the story in a way that captures the emotions, not just the facts.



Wright "B" Flyer at Ft. Sam Houston

We flew the WBF from Stinson Air Field, about seven miles south of Ft. Sam because the parade field that Lt. Foulois used as a runway in 1910 is now bordered by trees and buildings. We successfully timed our flight to be in the airspace over Ft. Sam 100 years to the minute after the famous event. We returned to Stinson and drove back to Ft Sam to join the crowd for lunch at the club. Most people had finished their meal as we sat



Lt. Col. Dick Cole

down to eat. I was handed a note that read "Please see me after you have eaten; I want to meet you and talk about the airplane." I finished my lunch and found the author of the note, an older man, sitting with his daughter at a table in what was now a nearly empty ball room. We introduced ourselves and, as expected, he asked about the flight and the airplane. I answered his questions and added information I thought would be interesting. Phil Beaudoin saw me at the table; approached, and said with obvious relief, "I thought I had missed you, I am so glad that you are here to talk with Col. Dick Cole; he was Jimmy Doolittle's copilot." The juxtaposition of the moment was startling and disorientating!

In my mind's eye I saw the newsreel footage of the first B-25s taking off from the USS Hornet on the raid to bomb Tokyo. I am sitting at a table dressed in a WWI uniform (really a costume) reenacting the role of a hero of WWI and across from me is a real hero of WWII. The realization of who he is and what he had done at once awed and embarrassed me. I could not imagine why he had waited to talk to me; his exploits are the subject of books and movies. I was painfully aware that I had kept him waiting while I ate lunch. I am not sure if he sensed my discomfort but he graciously dismissed my apology as unnecessary and accepted my offer for a ride in the WBF the next time he was in Dayton and had some time off from his other obligations.

One of the benefits of volunteering in the WBF is the people we meet. Meeting and talking to Dick Cole is an honor that I will remember forever; keeping him waiting is an embarrassment I am trying to forget.



Richard Holt. Richard Holt is a Dayton native who's lived here all his life. His training after high school included a variety of trade schools and the police academy. He worked in police and fire departments and industry, as well as serving six years in the active and reserve Air Force. He came



to the Flyer organization through his interest in working with handicapped visitors, and now volunteers as the facilities manager and in the office. His additional interests are NASCAR and shooting. He and Goldie have been married for 44 years and have a son and daughter.



John Callander. John is a relatively new volunteer who works on the aircraft. Although born in Delaware, Ohio, he spent much of his working life elsewhere, only returning to Dayton eight years before retirement. The Navy sent him to diesel mechanics school in 1949 at the beginning of his seven years service active and reserve. Following his sea duty, he worked in debt collection for 34 years, rising to middle management. He spent seven of those years in South America. He was in New York when he was transferred to Dayton (after requesting Sacramento, Calif.). A presentation by volunteer Walt Hoy to his Rotary Club four years ago recruited him into the Flyer family. In addition, he uses his mechanical and woodworking skills in neighborhood household maintenance and projects. He and Beverly have been married 13 years, with four children and eight grandchildren.