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Oklahoma Aviator



Vol 19, No 9

Your window to Oklahoma Aviation...Past, Present, Future

September 2001

Oklahoma Aviation & Space Hall of Fame Announces 2001 Inductees

OKLAHOMA CITY - Six individuals and one organization have been selected for induction into the Oklahoma Aviation and Space Hall of Fame by Oklahoma's premier aerospace museum, the Air Space Museum at Omniplex. In addition, one person will receive the Clarence E. Page Memorial Trophy during the 22nd anniversary Hall of Fame induction ceremonies scheduled for Saturday, September 22, 2001.

Each year, photos and biographies of new honorees join those of nearly 150 past inductees who are permanently recognized in the Hall of Fame exhibit in the Air and Space Museum at Omniplex. In addition to the inductees, the Clarence E. Page Memorial Trophy is given to an individual who has shown dedication to the promotion and/or progress of the aerospace industry in Oklahoma.

Honorees at the September 22 ceremony will include the following:

Currently residing in Washington, D.C., inductee and U.S. Senator **Jim Inhofe** was born in Des Moines, Iowa in 1934. Growing up in Tulsa, Inhofe graduated



U.S. Senator James M. Inhofe.

from the University of Tulsa with a degree in economics. Active in aviation, Inhofe became the only member of Congress to fly an airplane around the world when he recreated Wiley Post's legendary trip around the globe in July 1991, along with Tom Quinn and Oklahoma Aviator founders Joe Cunningham and Mary Kelly. While serving in the U.S House of Representatives, Inhofe was a member of the Subcommittee on Aviation. He is a member of the Armed Services Committee, Environmental and Public Works Committee, Intelligence Committee and Indian Affairs Committee.



Harding Lawrence.

Born on July 15, 1920 in Perkins, **Harding Lawrence** was raised in Drumright, Oklahoma and Gladewater, Texas and now resides in St. Vincent, West Indies. Lawrence was Continental Airline's vice-president of traffic and sales for three years and in 1958 was appointed executive vice-president (the industry's youngest), a position that he held until his appointment as Braniff Airways president in 1965.

On November 17, 2000, Norman native **Robert**

Ragozzino and his bright-red-and-yellow Stearman biplane returned home from their jaunt around the world, which



Robert Ragozzino.

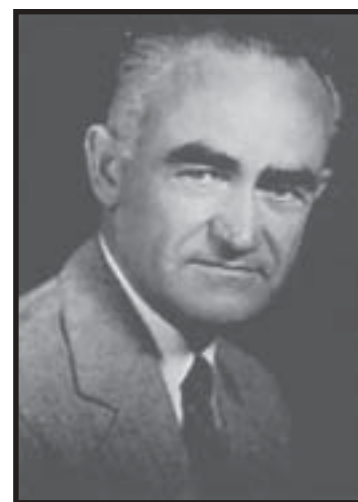
had begun June 1, 2000. Ragozzino's return marked a significant achievement in aviation-- a one-man flight around the world in an open-cockpit airplane. Defying the elements and skeptics to complete the record 23,200-mile in 170 days, Ragozzino beat the record that had been set in 1942 by the Douglas World Cruisers. Ragozzino's preparation for the milestone flight included nineteen years as a corporate and professional pilot, flying numerous types of aircraft and logging over 8,000 flight hours.

Nathan Sams of Muskogee received his initial



Nathan Sams.

flight training as part of the Civilian Flight Training Program just before the U.S. entered World War II. Sams was a flight instructor from 1942 through 1945, teaching in the world-famous Tuskegee Airmen squadron. Opening Sams Flying Service in Muskogee at Hatbox Field in 1947, Sams became the airport manager in the early 50s and the first African American in the country to manage a major municipal airport. A dealer for Beech and Cessna aircraft, Sams was also an FAA Designated Examiner and accident prevention specialist. Completing a fifty-year flying career, Sams accumulated in excess of 22,000 flying hours, averaging approximately 440 hours per year.



Robert Morris Stanley.

Robert Morris Stanley (1912-1977) was born in El Reno and attended school there before his family moved to Venice, CA. In 1940, Stanley became chief pilot and head of the flight research department of Bell Aircraft Corporation in Buffalo, New York. During World War II, he was credited with establishing the flight test operation of

the Boeing-designed B-29 bomber. In 1948, he founded the Stanley Aviation Corporation. The company's first contract was to develop highly sensitive seismometers used to detect the explosion of the first atomic bomb tested by the Russians. In the mid 1960s, Stanley invented the Yankee Escape System to facilitate aircrew escape at low altitudes and low and medium airspeeds. For the United States Navy and Air Force, Stanley Aviation manufactured more than 700 Yankee systems, which were credited with saving over 150 lives during the Vietnam conflict.

Chickasha native, **Dean E. Wooldridge** was born May 30, 1913. He attended public schools in Chickasha and studied physics at the University of Oklahoma, where he later earned a master's degree. In 1936, Wooldridge went to work for Bell Laboratories to conduct research on electronics, contributing to the group of Bell scientists that eventually developed the transistor. During World War II, he led a project to create the first airborne fire-control system. In 1953, Wooldridge and Sam Ramo established



Dean E. Wooldridge.

continued on p. 4.

From Mike...

MY LAST PARACHUTE JUMP

This year, in addition to the normal aviation-related displays and exhibits at Airshow Oklahoma, I am told there will be a new attraction-- a bungee jump! Dang, I have always wanted to do that!

After considering for days exactly how to phrase it, I casually mentioned my desire to Barbara the other day and got "that look"-- you know the one.

The one that does not attempt to dignify the suggestion with any more than the one raised eyebrow (she learned it from her mother).

The one that implies there are so many reasons to consider it a bad idea-- such as no life insurance, brittle 60-year-old bones, fat belly, etc, etc, etc.

The one that wordlessly closes the door on further discussion.

Sigh.

I mean, what could go wrong?? Don't thousands of people across the country enjoy the thrill of bungee jumping and live to tell about it?? Aww, gee, ma!

But then my mind wanders back about fifteen years to another adventure.

Bill DeSilva, Tom Quinn's Albacross-driver friend, says that one of the required elements for any activity to be referred to as an "adventure" is the profound conviction, at some point during the process, that there is an imminent probability of dying.

My adventure was of this sort.

The occasion was an invitation from my good buddy, the late John Reid, to join him in Tahlequah for my semi-annual parachute jump.

Now, mind you, my parachuting



career up to that point had not been illustrious. I had started sport parachuting in the early-70s at the Stroud Airport. There I was, a middle-class thirty-something showing up with a wife and two little children, feeling very much out of place among the throngs of cutoff-jean-clad hardbodies driving hippie vans with speakers blaring Elton John's "Rocket Man." (What DID they do in the back of those vans, anyway??)

But, determined as I was to partake of the heady wine of nylon canopies, shroud lines, and surplus combat boots, I braved their stares and snickers and meekly received my training.

In those days, of course, all new students jumped surplus military parachutes which had been modified to provide a modicum of directional control.

My first jump was on a 28-foot main chute. The ride up to altitude was sober-- very sober. At the appointed time, I put my feet out on the step of the Cessna 180 (man, an 80-knot breeze is stiff!), swung my pregnant-feeling body out, and hung by my arms on the strut as instructed. There I was, with no way back inside.

Buffeted by the airstream, I looked to my left, across the three-foot distance separating the jumpmaster and me-- an infinite, impassible gulf between two parallel universes. Smiling and waving from the safety of the cockpit, he shouted, "HAVE A GOOD TIME!" and I let go.

My instructions were to assume the standard arch position and count out loud from one to ten ("loud enough so I can hear you in the airplane"), waiting for the ripcord to be automatically pulled by the static line. I flunked that part of the jump-- with stomach in throat, my words came out only as tiny squeeks instead of shouts.

The opening shock flailed me around like a rag doll on the end of a rope, but when everything settled down, I was breathing hard and staring at the earth below between the toes of my shiny, new surplus combat boots, amazed at the silence and my perspective on the world.

The ride down was great! However, at my weight with the smallish 28-foot canopy, I was descending at about the same rate as a greased 50-lb anvil.

Approaching terra firma, I did as instructed: grab the harness above your head, get your elbows in, put your

knees together, tense your leg muscles, and look out at the horizon. Don't try to anticipate the landing-- just be prepared to perform your parachute landing fall (PLF) at the moment of impact (a very descriptive term).

Of course, despite the injunction, I did try to anticipate it. "I'm... gonna...hit....right...about...NOW!" I thought, tensing my legs.

Only thing was, I didn't, and the surprise produced a momentary relaxation of the old leg muscles. Of course, less than a millisecond later came the actual landing-- I crumpled into a pitiful ball on the ground, landing squarely on my tailbone. Oooo, that hurts!

For the next couple of jumps, I rode a 32-foot chute, and the landings became a little easier. However, the larger chute did not have as much forward speed capability as the 28-footer and, on my third jump, I had to turn into the wind to avoid missing the airport. Below and behind me, I could see a barb wire fence at the edge of the airport. "Am I going to hit it?...no, I'm gonna miss it...no, I'm gonna hit it!" It was that way all the way down.

I actually landed about a foot from the fence on the upwind side. The wind carried the canopy over the fence and it was trying to drag me through the barbs. Fortunately, there was an old weathered fence post directly in front of me. I grabbed it and locked my elbow, trying to get to the harness latches to release the canopy. However, the fence post broke and there I went, scooting through the sagebrush. All the hippies cheered, "Hey, man, cosmic!"

Those events caused me to reconsider my desire for sport parachuting. Over the next few years, I jumped only a few more times.

However, in the early 80s, I had the good fortune to meet John Reid, who became one of my best friends. John was a jumpmaster with thousands of jumps, flying a 1954 Cessna 182 out of his farm airstrip about five miles north of the Tahlequah Municipal Airport. John was a fun-loving guy and I spent a good bit of time at his place. One night over a "cool one," I told him about my less-than-satisfactory experiences with sport parachuting. John offered to transition me to the relatively new square parachute he rode.

After all, it was actually an airfoil that one "flew" like an airplane. Forward speed capability was good, allowing avoidance of things like barb wire fences. The landing, flared as in an airplane, was soft, often stand-up. Gone were the combat boots of old-- tennis shoes worked fine!

Over the next several years, John and I got into a pattern. About every six months, I would get a hankering to jump. Each time, he would put me back through the training and I would borrow his parachute.

It was working out great until a

fateful day in 1985. True to form, John put me back through the training and we were set to go. However, John's parachute was being packed, so he borrowed another one for me. Unlike John's, which had a D-ring ripcord on one of the chest straps, it had a pilot chute in a plastic tube at the waist. No problem, I thought.

And, at the last minute, John asked me if I would like to try a bat-wing jumpsuit with a large fabric web under each arm. "Sure, why not!"

At altitude, I exited the airplane easily, with John on my heels, and got into the standard arch position. My plan was to free fall about fifteen seconds to achieve opening velocity. However, after a few seconds, I suddenly flipped over on my back. Somehow, I turned myself back over, but then flipped again. The cycle may have occurred once more, but I don't remember-- things were starting to happen "right fast."

I decided whatever the situation was, it was time to pull! I reached, grabbed, and pulled and instantly felt the horror of realizing I'd done pulled the wrong thing! I had reached for the chest ripcord on John's parachute-- where on this parachute the main canopy release was located! I remember looking at the D-ring and the attached cable in my hand, having a very earnest desire to stuff it back up into its little housing to fix the problem. Fortunately, that delusion passed quickly and the only thing left was to go for the reserve. Bang!-- out it popped and I was never so glad to feel opening shock. At that point, I was perhaps 300-500 feet above the ground. John later said, looking on from above, he thought I had about four seconds to live when it finally opened.

A few swings later and I faced the next challenge: landing with the tiny 24-foot reserve canopy. But, since it was a modern low-porosity model, it was actually not too bad. Later, after I had bought the obligatory case of beer and arranged to pay for repacking the reserve, it was all over. I was fine until about four hours later, when reality started to sink in.

After that experience, I decided that even though parachuting was fun, the only wise thing was to own one's own equipment and do it often. So, I officially retired from the sport.

Which leads me back to the present and the bungee-jumping opportunity. Although I still have the boyish desire to experience it, the desire is now tempered. I like that word "tempered"-- it implies a toughness born from being in just the right amount of heat-- great if you can live through it.

So, Barbara, my darling, rest easy. At least for now, I'll be satisfied to watch the younger, more pliable folks pursue this adventure. Hopefully for them, as for me, wisdom will come, even though perhaps at the last minute.

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Up With Downs



Earl Downs

The Old Oak Tree

It was "that" time of year again--almost like a religious pilgrimage. You all must know that I am talking about the world's largest combination airshow and fly-in at Oshkosh Wisconsin. The Experimental Aircraft Association (EAA) now calls it "AirVenture," but I still like to call the whole experience "Oshkosh."

Like last year, I was there to help the Skystar Aircraft Company demonstrate and sell their Kitfox line of kitplanes. If you have been following my adventures, as described in the Oklahoma Aviator over the last several months, you are aware that I built a Kitfox Lite ultralight named "Ace." A couple of months ago I sent Ace off to

Skystar so they could use it as a demonstrator for this year's airshow season. The Oshkosh plan was for me to meet up with Ace and do all the demonstration flying at the ultralight demonstration field.

I flew to Oshkosh a day and a half before the official opening day with Pat Smith and his wife Linda in their V35 Bonanza. We arrived just ahead of some severe weather and spent the first few hours holding Ace on the ground. The Skystar folks had already unloaded the 300-pound plane from the transportation trailer and placed him in the display tent. Unfortunately, the tent set-up crews had not completed securing the tie-downs of our enclosure, or of the tents around us. As the winds whipped, all hands were hanging on to our tent and the one next to us. We had secured Ace firmly to the turf with the wings folded. Ace was not going anywhere but the portable structures were on the move. We hung on and everything got soaked but no damage was done. Welcome to Oshkosh!

Flying the ultralight pattern at Oshkosh is a thrill and a challenge. Last year it was mostly a challenge. The pattern must be precise. It is marked by a combination of trees, billboards, a highway service road, silos, dirt roads, parking lots, and most important, a lone, old oak tree. If you don't fly the pattern correctly, the ultralight field boss "meets" with you to discuss the error of your ways. He drives up on his little red motor scooter and flags you down. He does this in front of thousands of spectators who are watching. Last year I learned to fear that little red scooter. I could sense when it was approaching

and could even hear the sound of its motor over the sound of my own engine. The little red scooter would seem to sing to the crowd "follow me while I talk to this stupid pilot!"

This year I was determined to defeat the little red motor scooter man. I had two choices: learn the pattern or steal the little red scooter. After careful consideration and planning, I determined the scooter would not fit in the baggage compartment of Pat's Bonanza and I couldn't figure any other way to hide it. I was doomed! I would have to fly the pattern correctly.

The pilot briefing was about the same as last year. The only real difference was that this time I paid attention-- what a novel concept! I reviewed the videotape and strained to memorize the checkpoints. The billboard had been modified by the storm but I knew I could figure that out. It is the old oak tree that is the key to the landing approach. Last year I never figured out which of the hundreds of trees it was. The oak tree is the "rock your wings" point when signaling to land. It marks the turn to base leg. It lines you up on the dirt road for final approach. The oak tree makes you look good or bad. It makes you a hero or a fool. I suggested they set it on fire so I could find the smoke. I learned that the ultralight field boss has no sense of humor.

I developed a plan. First, I would make sure I was not number one in the pattern-- I would play follow the leader. Second, I planned to assume a disguise. My twin brother, Ed, always wears a red baseball cap when he flies. I would borrow his cap and assume his identity. Because Ed is the president of Skystar

Aircraft, he never gets enough sleep and is always tense. All I needed to do was to stay up all night before the flight and think about all the students who have tried to kill me. Everyone would think I am Ed and he would get blamed for my mistakes. I knew I could pull it off.

Dozens of little planes lined up to fly. I had stayed up all-night and tormented myself with thoughts of my children as teenagers (turns out those thoughts were more stressful than thinking about students). The red baseball cap was firmly in place. Then it happened! I found myself in the number one position for launch. The only thing to do was to yield this coveted position to another plane. I had assumed Ed's identity and was concerned that I would give myself away by being so courteous. Ed would never let another plane pass him. If asked, I could explain that I thought the other pilot was a potential Kitfox buyer. Ed will do anything for a sale-- I was still in character.

Once airborne, I followed the lead plane like I was glued to it. I started to find the checkpoints such as the damaged billboard and the grove of trees. Following the county road it was now time to turn towards the old oak tree. I knew it was out there and I watched the lead plane for his landing signal. Oh no! He was turning left, not right. This meant he was not going to land but was making a fly-by. Don't panic, I said to myself. I started tracing a line between my checkpoints knowing that the oak tree had to be there. I looked just to the left of the silo and there the oak tree appeared. It looked proud, almost like it was reaching for the sky. The morning sun made it glow. It beckoned to me and pointed to my final approach turning point. It showed me the way home. I was saved from the little red motor scooter.

After a flawless landing I quickly removed Ed's red cap. No reason he should get the credit, I figured. I saw the little red motor scooter headed for another plane as I taxied by the crowd. The old oak tree had made me a hero. I wondered for a moment what the pilot behind me had done wrong. Oh well, better him than me for a change. The old oak tree and I became friends. We waved at each other as I flew overhead during each circuit of the field. I was now free to frolic in the skies of Oshkosh because the old oak tree would bring me home. I am now an Oshkosh ultralight field survivor. I keep waiting for Barbara Walters to call me for my interview. Maybe she lost my phone number.

Questions or comments?
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Ahhh, New Books!!

By Dave Wilkerson



Pilot examiners often hear "What maneuvers do most applicants fail?" While we might answer with landings, whifferdills, or whatever, there is no answer to provide what some might want: a quicker, easier route to a pilot certificate. Only thorough training produces thorough pilots, and that takes study. Seekers of paid left-seats certainly need thorough training, but pilots all share the

same skies. We all need the same level of training and testing, and the Practical Test Standards series aims at assuring that. Each PTS refers pilots to FAA publications the knowledge of which makes a successful checkride much more certain.

Decades of students bemoaning the "dry reading" contained in these books underscored the need for revisions. The Federal Aviation Administration seems to have recognized this, or so it might appear when reviewing their new publications aimed at guiding students through their learning. Take for example, the venerable old Flight Training Handbook. An ancient staple, long called the "21 Manual" after its cryptic title of AC 61-21, the Flight Training Handbook is no more. The new version seems to have visited the weight-loss community before finding its way to student hands. Where the old 21 Manual was over 300 pages, the new Airplane Flying Handbook offers most of the same information in a more logical style using just 199 pages. It arrived in 1999, so by now all pilots should have it.

One of America's best resources for basic aeronautical knowledge was the perfectly named "Pilot's Handbook of

Aeronautical Knowledge," reworked into that same format now shared by all other knowledge handbooks. The book's content has changed somewhat, recognizing changes in technology, and its arrangement and expanded use of color is welcome because color enhances learning. Some pilots believe that the PHAK needs a few of the omitted details now found only in the superseded version, but the FAA obviously believes otherwise.

Similarly, for pilots seeking Instrument Ratings, the FAA has revamped its decades-old "Instrument Flying Handbook" with the 2001 edition called the "Instrument Flying Handbook." The title is the same, but the substance and reference number have changed appreciably. The old volume, called AC 61-27, and sometimes called (you guessed it!) the "27 Manual," is now superseded by the fashionably chic FAA-H-8083-15. This reference did not have so extreme a diet as the 21 Manual, shrinking to about 236 pages from just under 300. But what it might lack in brevity is far outweighed in use of color. Color-- in an FAA instrument flight training publication? Yes, my friends, and those of us that respond to learning through color will be impressed.

What, you ask, is the upshot of this

rambling about recent books that are "new" only in an historical context? It is this: those going for checkrides should be certain that only the most current publications, whether charts or books, have guided their training.

You can reach Dave Wilkerson by e-mail at dwilkrns@mail.gorilla.net

Hall of Fame Inductees, cont'd

continued from p. 1.

the Ramo-Wooldridge Corporation, to market defense systems to the military. By 1957, Ramo-Wooldridge Corporation grew to Thompson-Ramo-Wooldridge (TRW) and began working on process control systems for manufacturing plants, closely followed by the establishment of Space Technology Labs, Incorporated (STL). Under Wooldridge's direction, TRW and STL became major suppliers of hardware to American's growing space program.

This year, **Charles W. Harris** of Tulsa will be presented with the Clarence E. Page Trophy for his efforts in promoting aviation in Oklahoma. Born in Pawhuska, Harris attended the University of Tulsa. In Oklahoma's Green Country, Harris's name is synonymous with the Tulsa Regional Fly-In and the Biplane Expo. Now in its 43rd year, The Tulsa Regional Fly-In has been under the leadership of Harris as its senior-co-chairman for 17 years. In addition, he was one of the key figures in organizing the First Annual National Biplane Fly-In in Bartlesville, Oklahoma in 1987. The event evolved into the Na-



Charles W. Harris.

tional Biplane Convention and Exposition, sponsored by the National Biplane Association of which Harris is the co-founder. Harris is a lifetime member of the Experimental Aircraft Association (EAA) and of all its divisions. In addi-

tion, Harris initiated the contacts and furthered the discussions that resulted in the Phillips Petroleum Company's discounted fuel program nationally for EAA's Young Eagle flights. This program is designed to provide youngsters with an introduction to aviation through the free flight program.

The **Oklahoma City Air Logistics Center (ALC)** will also be recognized



The Tinker Field Air Logistic Center.

for its contributions to Oklahoma aviation. The largest organization housed on Tinker Air Force Base, the ALC is one of five depot repair centers in the Air Force Materiel Command. The ALC is the worldwide manager of a wide range of aircraft, engines, missiles and commodity items. Its inventory of 2,267 aircraft includes the B-1, B-2, KC-135, E-3, VC-25, VC-137, and 25 other Contractor Logistics Support aircraft. The center also manages an inventory of more than 13,724 engines ranging from Korean War vintage T-33 engines to state-of-the-art engines such as B-2. A diverse and unique air and space business entity, the ALC houses some of the most sophisticated technical repair and manufacturing processes in the world. Air Force wings and Navy squadron receive depot support from the ALC--an excellent example of the merger of operational and industrial defense missions. The ALC has been in operation for over 50 years.

Omniplex is located at 2100 NE 52nd Street in Oklahoma City. For more information about the Oklahoma Aviation and Space Hall of Fame or to receive an invitation to the event, please call (405) 602-3673 or visit our Web site at www.omniplex.org.

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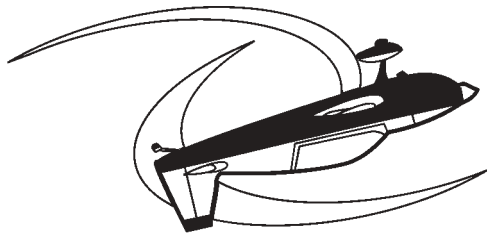
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One of airmen I am working with has Type II diabetes mellitus and has a current medical certificate issued by the FAA through its "special issuance" program. As you probably know, there are two types of diabetes: Type I, in which blood sugar levels can be controlled through diet alone; and Type II, where the patient is dependent on insulin to control blood sugar.

With proper testing and medical reports, airmen with both types can be issued FAA medical certificates. Type I diabetics are obviously the easiest--reports are required to be sent to the FAA, but after acceptance, I can issue a medical certificate without a special issuance by the FAA.

However, Type II diabetics do require a special issuance-- the first time through requires more reports and

tests, and is harder than subsequent follow-ups.

I am finding that, with some Type II diabetic airmen, once the initial evaluation is complete and they have the FAA medical certificate in hand, they are so happy they forget about some of the special reporting required to renew their medical on an annual basis.

Well before the airman's renewal date, we send him/her notice of the material required by the FAA. That material includes the report of an HbA1c (glycosylated hemoglobin) test done within the previous thirty days and a letter from the airman's primary physician. The letter states whether or not the patient has had any side effects, clinically-significant hypoglycemic episodes, and specifically, if there is any indication of neurological, renal, or ophthalmological disease.

On receipt of these materials, I can call the FAA and generally get an okay over the phone. Some aero-medical examiners refer such situations to the FAA, but that route generally takes several months for the final approval.

If you have questions about this or other topics, feel free to call me at my office- 918-437-7993.

Claremore Regional Airport to Host 2nd Annual Airshow Oct 6-7

[Editors Note: Last month, in our editorial zeal for catchy headlines, we erroneously referred to Airshow Oklahoma as the only airshow in the state this year. In fact, there are at least two other airshows, one at Claremore Regional Airport and at Fairview. While these events are smaller than the big shows, they have a nice easy character of their own and we encourage you to enjoy them also!]

On October 6-7, Claremore Regional Airport will host its second annual airshow. Highlighting this year's show will be Col. Frank Borman, former NASA astronaut, flying his P-51. A simulated dog-fight will ensue as Doug Jackson, flying a Japanese Zero, will "attack" Col. Borman.

Claremore's hometown favorite, Tom Klassen, will also perform in his orange and black Sukhoi 26. And Greg Shelton, a real crowd pleaser from last year's air show, will be back, flying a North American T-6.

Dave and Phil Dacy will perform announcing duties at the airshow and

will amaze the crowd with their Stearman wing-walking act. Vintage, warbird, and military aircraft will be on display; fly-ins are welcome.

Concessions will be available and children's activities are planned, to include a "nickel run" and a candy drop from radio-controlled aircraft. The gates will open at 10:00 am and close at 4:00 p.m. with the airshow performance beginning at 12:00 noon.

If you have questions about the air show, please call Claremore Regional Airport at 918-343-0931.

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Will Rogers Museum Fly-In

Oologah, Okla. - As a coy sun flirited with the lakeside pastureland of the Dog Iron Ranch Wednesday morning, a phalanx of vintage aircraft circled overhead, slowly dipping their wings in silent homage to the memory of Will Rogers and Wiley Post. Yellow planes and red planes, military planes and experimental planes, even a helicopter, took turns setting down on the grass landing strip that cuts through the 400-acre living history ranch where Will Rogers was born in 1879.

The sixth annual Will Rogers Fly-In, on the 66th anniversary of the day Will Rogers and Wiley Post were killed in an airplane crash in Alaska, attracted some 45 aircraft and a crowd of some 300 curious spectators. It was the largest turnout of aircraft since the anniversary observance switched from a fly-over to a fly-in in 1996.

Pilots began landing on the 2,000-foot runway just as dawn was breaking over the shores of Oologah Lake. One by one, a variety of open cockpit biplanes and World War II military planes touched down and taxied into stately position where they stood for inspection, wing to wing with modern aircraft and less sophisticated aircraft.

Kim Jones, curator of the Tulsa Air & Space Museum, was the featured speaker, focusing his remarks on the impact that Will Rogers and Wiley Post had on aviation. A chuckwagon breakfast, served in the shadows of the two-story white house where Will Rogers was born, followed the brief ceremonies.



Kem Rogers, Will Rogers' grandson, shares a story with Doris Meyer, Will Rogers' grandniece.

At the breakfast, two of Will Rogers' descendants swapped stories and greeted guests. Grandson Kem Rogers, son of Jim Rogers, was joined by Doris Meyer, Will Rogers' grandniece. Kem Rogers lives in Nashville, Tenn., and is a member of the Will Rogers Memorial Commission. Mrs. Meyer lives in Bartlesville, OK.

Across the way, as spectators bunched against the split-rail fence that borders the airstrip, the aircraft that elicited the most response were of the experimental variety.

Rex Niver of Tulsa piloted what could best be described as a go-cart with wings. The two-seater is called a "Breezy" and has no enclosed components. The pilot and passenger are perched at the front of the craft with nothing between them and the ground except a seatbelt.

Niver, an instructor at Tulsa Technology Center, purchased the craft two

years ago. It has a cruise air speed of 70 mph and Niver has taken it up to 7,000 feet.

"One thing about it, you can definitely predict the weather while you're flying," he said.



Rex Niver of Tulsa prepares for takeoff in his experimental "Breezy."

Earl Klebs of nearby Collinsville was a crowd favorite in the copper-colored, wooden bi-plane he built. A retired machinist, Klebs spent almost two years building the handsome craft. It is the fifth plane he has built. "Some people build a complex airplane," he said. "These are very simple. They're right basic. In fact, you look in it, there's no more instruments than what you just have to have. That's about as basic as you can get." As with most of the other planes parked in the pasture where horses and Texas Longhorns often graze, Klebs and his handcrafted flying machine attracted scores of spectators and photographers.

Pilots were winging in from all across Oklahoma, Arkansas and Texas. "This is a wonderful turnout; the best that we have had," said Michelle Lefebvre-Carter, director of Will Rogers Memorial Museums. "Each year as the word spreads about the Will Rogers Fly-In, the number of airplanes and pilots continues to grow," she said. "It is particularly pleasing to see so many people come out to the birthplace ranch where the legend began and pay their respects to Will Rogers and his friend, Wiley Post, a pair of Oklahoma icons."

Will Rogers, who became America's best-loved humorist and movie star, was the most quoted man of the first half of the 20th Century. Through his newspaper columns and radio broadcasts, his films and public appearances, he was the singular conscience of a nation. On a hilltop overlooking Claremore, the city he called home some 12 miles from his birthplace, Will Rogers is entombed in the family vault at the Will Rogers Memorial.



Open cockpit bi-planes stand in formation during the Will Rogers Fly-In.

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Okie Derby 2001 Results

by Phyllis Hensley

The 23rd Annual Okie Derby Proficiency Air Race, an Oklahoma Chapter 99s event held for the purpose of fun, flying and fundraising, was run on August 18, 2001.

The event gives aviators a chance to test their navigation, flight planning, and pilotage skills. The actual racecourse, consisting of three legs, is announced only during briefings the evening before the race. Prior to departure from Wiley Post Airport, Oklahoma City, each race team turns in estimates of time and fuel burn for the race. Along the racecourse, teams must identify several checkpoints.

This year's race saw 32 entrants, who came from all walks of life and from locations coast to coast, including Bill Ingraham from Redlands, CA, copilot Dianah Cumming from Florida, and copilot Sherry LeMasters from Nebraska. They all share in the unbridled joy of flight and the fabulous camaraderie that develops within a group when something difficult is accomplished. The combination of teammates reflects the variety of participation: husband/wife, wife/husband, son/ father, father/son, daughter/mother, women friends and men friends.

Weather for this year's Friday briefing provided some complications. One team turned back to Tulsa to await a thunderstorm passing and two teams waited in Shawnee.

Weather for the actual race on Saturday was great. Aircraft entered this year ranged from a Cessna 150 flown by Elaine Regier, to a Piper Twin Comanche piloted by Amy McCue. Collegiate teams from Spartan School of Aeronautics, OU, and OSU were among the entries.

The racecourse selected for this year took entrants from Wiley Post Airport to Seiling to Carnegie and back to Wiley Post, a total of 217 varied and interesting miles. Racers are scored on a combina-

tion of:

- Identifying checkpoints
- Matching predicted time (to the second)
- Matching predicted fuel used (to the tenth of a gallon)

This year's race was exceptionally exciting, with only seconds separating first, second, & third place times. The first, second and third place winners also tied in fuel burn by estimating their fuel perfectly.

This year's winners and their scores are:

- 1st: Phyllis & Bob Howard- 99.94
- 2nd: Gary Tears & Eric Pidek- 99.93
- 3rd: Mary Nethercutt & Ralph Canaday- 99.90
- 4th: John Fagan & Rick Pendergraph- 99.03
- 5th: Gary & Brian Rowland- 98.79
- 6th: Christa Waehler & Jay Dee Collins- 98.52
- 7th: Bill & David Hines- 98.40
- 8th: Bryan Cisneros & Brian Halseth- 98.39

Other awards included:

- Phyllis Howard- Best OPA Pilot and Best 99 Pilot
- Gary Rowland- Best First Time Racer
- Tommy George- Best Out of State Racer
- Randy Pickle- Racer With the Least Hours.
- Bryan Cisneros and Brian Halseth from Spartan School of Aeronautics- Best Collegiate Team.
- And, last but not least, the coveted "Tail End Tony" award for the last place finisher went to Larry Clymer and Richard Shaver, flying a Cessna 172.

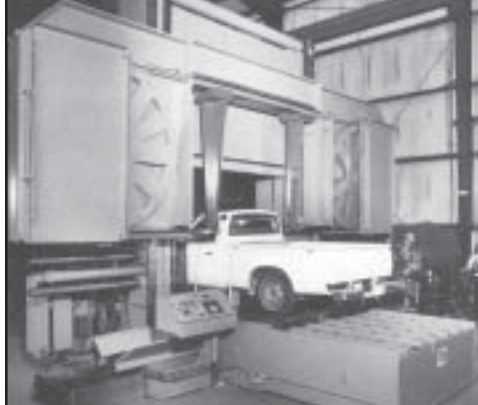
The theme for this year was "Rock-n-Roll" and many 99s showed up wearing full-circle felt poodle skirts for a colorful touch.

We're already gearing up for the 24th Annual Okie Derby and hope to see you all there!

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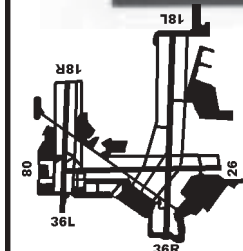
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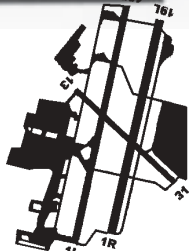
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Phyllis and Bob Howard, 1st Place Winners, the only repeat winners in the history of the event.

"Amelia Earhart" to Land at Muskogee's Airshow Oklahoma

MUSKOGEE - In 1928, Amelia Earhart completed a record-setting round-trip flight across America, landing on grass airstrips and small-town main streets in 23 cities along the way. One of those cities was Muskogee, OK, where she landed at the historic Hatbox Field on the afternoon of Wednesday, September 5, 1928. Apparently, her stop at Hatbox was unplanned, and rumor had it that she was actually lost.

Since nobody knew she was coming, only a few people on the airport witnessed her arrival at Hatbox that afternoon. Weary of publicity, Earhart welcomed the opportunity to avoid the public and the newspapermen who had come to follow her every move. The only woman on hand at the airport was a local resident, Mrs. John A. Hay. Hearing

of Earhart's desire to avoid publicity, she invited Earhart to spend the night at her house, and the invitation was accepted.

However, by evening, the word had spread. Newspapermen located Earhart and prevailed upon her for interviews. The next day, Earhart took off once more on the next leg of her journey, writing Hatbox Field into the pages of history.

Now, fast-forwarding to the present, Dr. Carlene Mendieta, a 47-year-old periodontist from Sonoma, CA is recreating Earhart's trip in a rare, fully-restored 1927 Avro Avian airplane-- the same airplane Earhart flew-- approximately 5,500 miles at an average speed of 82 mph, from New York to California and back. During the three-week trip, Mendieta will land in the exact same 23

cities Earhart landed, touching down on grass airstrips and even small-town main streets where possible. Mendieta will also replicate Earhart's clothing, accommodations, and meals.

"Amelia Earhart is a powerful inspiration for all of us-- not only for her accomplishments in aviation, but also for her role in challenging popular notions of a woman's place in society," said Mendieta. "I'm thrilled to be tracing Amelia's flight across America and along the way, sharing the story of a remarkable woman who deserves to be remembered for her life, not just her disappearance."

Mendieta is an experienced taildragger pilot who owns five vintage airplanes. Just like Earhart, Mendieta enjoys working on her airplanes, doing much of her own aircraft maintenance. Mendieta enjoys flying out of uncontrolled grass airports in California's Napa Valley.

Mendieta's landing in Muskogee is expected to occur on September 8. Although Hatbox Field is now officially closed, special permission has been granted for Mendieta to land there. After the "official" landing at Hatbox, Mendieta will "recreate the recreation," landing at Davis Field during Airshow Oklahoma.



Dr. Carlene Mendieta's restored 1927 Avro Avian, the same airplane Amelia Earhart flew on her 1928 cross-country U.S. trip.

Bob Richardson Gets Famous!

[Editors Note: Our own Mr. Robert E. Richardson, retired FAA employee, long-time aviator, and frequent contributor to the Oklahoma Aviator, was immortalized on real paper in the official 2001 AirVenture EAA program. Bob's article entitled "Oshkosh in Your Blood," which originally appeared in these pages, was reprinted as a full color page in the AirVenture program, including a picture of Bob and some

good words about the Oklahoma Aviator.

Incidentally, the "Manny" to whom Bob refers was in fact the late Manuel Lotero, a long-time fixture on the Tulsa aviation scene. At Oshkosh, Manuel could always be found with his store of precious and not-so-precious used airplane parts in the Fly Market.

The AirVenture program page is reprinted below. Congratulations, Bob!]

OSHKOSH IN YOUR BLOOD

By Bob Richardson
reprinted from Oklahoma Aviator, June 2000

"Oshkosh gets in your blood," remarked a friend, as if trying to justify his 10th visit to Oshkosh. He was, of course, talking about EAA AirVenture, the mother of all air show/fly-ins, put on annually by the Experimental Aircraft Association at Oshkosh, Wis., during the last week of July and first week in August.

That remark reminded me of a guy named Manny, who, after many years of playing his trade as an A&P mechanic in general aviation, finally decided he needed steady employment. He applied at the local McDonnell Douglas plant for a job.

One of Manny's close friends, who had some influence at the plant, arranged for him to have a meeting with one of the company's employment interviewers. At the appointed time, Manny trotted out his full resume. He was a war veteran, a Spartan School graduate via the World War II GI Bill program, and had done everything that general aviation A&Ps usually do.

His specialty had been buying wrecked aircraft and returning them to airworthy condition, then selling the restored airplane and making a profit. This went on during the years when financing was fairly easy, but by the early 1980s that financing was no longer readily available. To keep body and soul together, Manny had to humble himself, with hat in hand, before the manufacturer's personnel officer.

The interview went along very well. Company management was looking for people who had sheet metal experience and was glad to get someone of Manny's vast background. The pay was comparatively good and it was steady work, something Manny didn't always have throughout his years in the field of general aviation. The papers were completed and all that was left was for Manny to sign on the dotted line. But then, Manny hesitated.

"Can I have the McDonnell Douglas Company guarantee that I can have my vacation every year during the last week of July and the first week of August?" he asked.

The McDonnell Douglas man didn't know. At first the interviewer thought Manny was a little weird,

passing up a good job offer because of a concern for vacation time.

Manny explained, "I've got to be able to go to the big show at Oshkosh every year or I won't be able to take the job!"

The man gave an understanding nod, made some phone calls and worked things out. Manny signed up as a sheet metal worker assigned to the second shift in the fabrication department, where he spent the next few years happily building airplanes.

"Oshkosh" was definitely in Manny's blood, too!

A native of Butte, Montana, Bob spent five years in the USAF during WWII. After the war he was maintenance manager for a GI flight school for five years, and then became manager of a Beech distributorship for eight years.

Bob then joined FAA as an Aircraft Inspection Inspector in Ft. Worth and Houston, TX for the next sixteen years. Afterward, he spent five years as Chief of the General Aviation District Office (GADO) in Tulsa, OK before retiring to the 80s.

Bob currently is an FAA Designated Aircraftworthiness Representative (DAR), maintains his A&P IA, and PASSEL, teaches an aircraft preventive maintenance class, is an active charter member of the Tulsa Air and Space Center (museum and aviation education center), and is a frequent writer for The Oklahoma Aviator.

The Oklahoma Aviator is a monthly publication focused on general aviation news and events in Oklahoma and the surrounding areas. For more information contact:



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Carlene Mendieta at the controls of the her Avro Avian.



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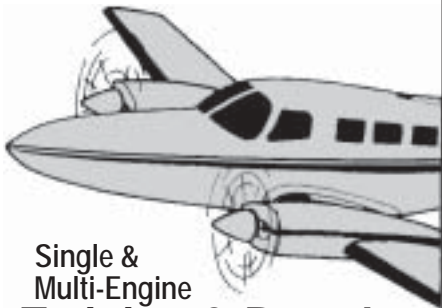


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A Message From Bob Jandebaur PREPARING FOR THE FUTURE OF OKLAHOMA'S GENERAL AVIATION AIRPORTS

Over the next few years, through the release of AIR-21 funds, Oklahoma's airports will be in the unique historical position of finally being able to consider improvements to prepare for the future. At the same time, because of increasing overburdening of the nation's air transportation system, Congress is becoming more favorable to facilitating the use of the existing nationwide aviation infrastructure of over 5400 general aviation airports.

However, the picture is not all rosy-- as we have discussed before, anti-airport forces are well-organized, active, and have been successful at closing or restricting activities at airports around the country.

What this means is that we had better "get our ducks in a row" where our airport needs are concerned. We need to be able to state exactly what our needs are, be able to rationally defend them, and be able to convince our local communities. A good place to start is the National Air Transportation Association's (NATA's) recently-released Community Relations Toolkit. The Toolkit resulted from an extensive, nationwide study commissioned by NATA to find out how communities really feel about their airports. More than a few brochures containing general platitudes, the Toolkit is a three-ring binder full of extremely practical information.

We at the Aeronautics Commission consider this of sufficient importance that we are encouraging Oklahoma airports and their business tenants to join the NATA. We have convinced NATA to reduce the \$290 associate membership dues by \$100, with the focus on Regional Business Airports. In addition, the OAC is considering underwriting a portion of the remaining membership fee. This idea has the support of the National Association of State Aviation Organizations (NASAO) and could become a model for other states to follow.

Before we can figure out where we want our airports to be in the future, we need to know where they are now. Therefore, the OAC also wants to implement an in-depth statewide inventory of airport facilities, assets, capabilities, and current limitations. A recent FAA memorandum supports gathering this information and the suggested program would cover the Commission's cost of doing so.

General aviation's future can be as bright as we want it to be-- all we have to do is prepare for it. Please feel free to email me about this or other topics at bob@jandebaur.com

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Calendar of Events

For a free listing of your event, email us at ok_aviator@mindspring.com or call 918-496-9424. To allow time for printing and publication, try to notify us at least two months prior to the event.

WHEN	WHAT	WHERE	CONTACT	DETAILS
1st Thursday	Dinner Meeting- Oklahoma Pilots Assoc dinner and meeting	Wiley Post Airport, Oklahoma City, OK	Helen Holbird- 405-942-6308	
1st Saturday 7:30AM-10:00AM	Fly-In Breakfast- Ponca City Aviation Boosters Club	Ponca City Airport, Ponca City, OK	Don Nuzum- nuzum@poncacity.net Bruce Eberle- 580-762-5735	Held rain or shine
2nd Wednesday 7:30PM	Meeting- Tulsa Cloud Dancers Balloon Club	Martin Library Tulsa, OK	Frank Capps	
2nd Thursday 7:00PM	Meeting- Oklahoma Windriders Balloon Club	Metro Tech Aviation Career Center, Oklahoma City, OK	Ron McKinney- 405-685-8180	For all balloon enthusiasts
3rd Saturday	Meeting- Green Country Ultralight Flyers Organization (GCUFO)	Call 918-632-6UFO for location and details	Bill Chilcoat- 918-827-6566	
3rd Sunday	Tulsa Cloud Dancers Balloon Flight	Contact Frank Capps for time/location	Franks Capps- 918-299-2979	
3rd Monday	Meeting- IAC Chapter 10	Contact Joe Masek for time/place	Joe Masek- 918-596-8860 RHR jem@yahoo.com	
3rd Monday 7:30PM	Meeting- EAA Chapter 10	Gundy's Airport, Owasso, OK	Bhrent Waddell- 918-371-5022 bwaddell@tulsa.oklahoma.net	
Saturday following 3rd Monday	Pancake Breakfast- EAA Chapter 10	Gundy's Airport, Owasso, OK	Bhrent Waddell- 918-371-5022 bwaddell@tulsa.oklahoma.net	
4th Tuesday 7:00PM	Tulsa Chapter 99s Meeting	Robertson Aviation, Jones/Riverside Airport, Tulsa*	Charlene- 918-838-7044 or Frances- flygrl7102@aol.com	*Unless otherwise planned. All women pilots including students are welcome to attend.
4th Thursday 7:30PM	Meeting- Vintage Airplane Association Chapter 10	South Regional Library, 71st & Memorial, Tulsa, OK	Charles Harris- 918-622-8400	
Sep 3-9	National Stearman Fly-In	Galesburg, IL		
Sep 8	Airfest, Tulsa Air and Space Museum (TASM)	Tulsa International Airport	918-834-9900	
Sep 8-9	Airshow Oklahoma	Davis Field, Muskogee, OK	Marlene Smith- 918-684-6363 x28	UASF Thunderbirds perform on the 8th
Sep 15	Golf Tournament Pre-Party Tulsa Air and Space Museum (TASM)		918-834-9900	
Sep 17	Golf Tournament Tulsa Air and Space Museum (TASM)		918-834-9900	
Sep 21-22	EAA Southwest Regional Fly-In	Abilene, TX		
Sep 21-23	Pioneer Days Balloon Festival	Cleveland, OK	Frank Capps- 918-299-2979	
Sep 28	Annual Bean Dinner	Airman Acres, Collinsville, OK		
Oct 5-6	Planes on the Prairie Fly-In Cessna 172/182 Club	Wiley Post Airport Oklahoma City	Debbie Jones- 405-495-8664	
Oct 6-7 10:00AM-4:00PM	2nd Annual Claremore Air Show	Claremore Regional Airport Claremore, OK	Sherry McKenzie- 918-343-0931	Airshow begins at noon. Tom Klassen, astronaut Frank Borman, Greg Shelton, wing walkers, children's activities, and more!
Oct 10	Annual Membership Meeting, Tulsa Air and Space Museum (TASM)		918-834-9900	
Oct 12	Annual Membership Dinner Tulsa Air and Space Museum (TASM)		918-834-9900	
Oct 13 9:00AM-3:00PM	Pioneer Day and Fly-In	Skiatook Municipal Airport- 12 mi at 300 degrees from TUL VOR	Chet Reychert- 918-396-1309	Lunch provided for pilots & crew. Awards for best EAA, warbird, and oldest airplane. Craft shows, antique cars, games, and more!
Nov 3	"Wind Beneath My Wings" Benefit Silent Auction			
Nov 3-4	EAA Sport Air Workshop	Shawnee Municipal Airport Shawnee, OK	EAA- 800-967-5746 www.sportair.com	Courses include Fabric Covering, Composite, Sheet Metal, Electrical Systems & Avionics, Test Flying Your Project, and Introduction to Aircraft Building
Nov 8-10	AOPA Expo	Ft. Lauderdale/Broward County Conv Ctr, Ft. Lauderdale, FL	Warren Morningstar- 301-695-2162 warren.morningstar@aopa.org	
Nov 10	50th Annual World's Oldest Free Fly-In & Airshow	Fairview Airport Fairview, OK	580-227-3788	Free breakfast to fly-ins 6-10AM, airshow 1:30PM
Dec 20	Open House Tulsa Air and Space Museum (TASM)		918-834-9900	

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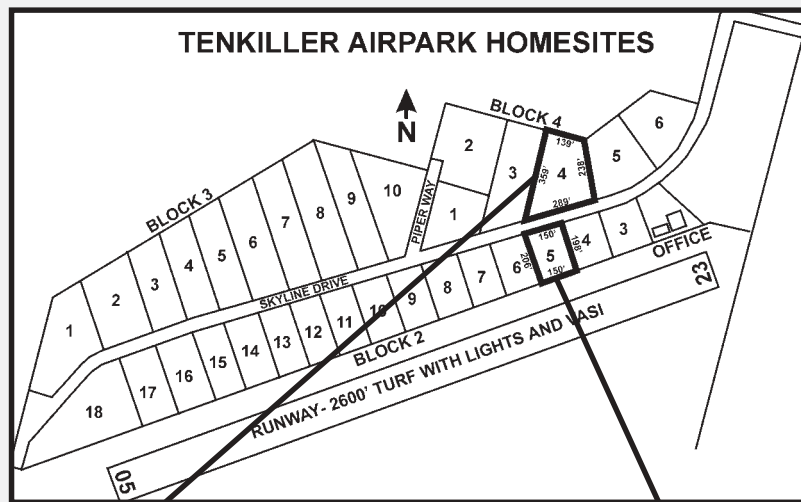
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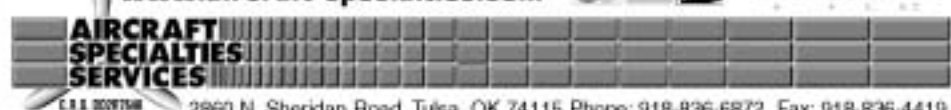


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