

# TEXASAAA



TEXAS CHAPTER • ANTIQUE AIRPLANE ASSOCIATION • NEWSLETTER • AUGUST 2015

## PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE...

Brunch was started after the prayer by Lee Truitt at 0915 on July 18, 2015. Thirty-one members and guests were on hand in Al Hilton's hangar at Clark Field. Several members were at Oshkosh. Thanks so much for the use of your beautiful hangar, Al. We had a great brunch, thanks to all the wonderful food.

The treasure report was read by Joetta Reetz, then approved by all. Under old business, I reminded all to find and bring your hangar "stuff" to sell at our fly-in at Gainesville in October. Under new business, I asked everyone on the "Committees and Chairpersons" list for the fly-in to provide me with an update on their progress by our next member meeting in August.

Our next meeting will be August 15 at 0900 at Northwest Regional Airport in Jim Austin's hangar-for a pancake breakfast. Hope to see everyone there!

Have a great month. Be safe up there.

Keep 'em fly'n,  
Lee Truitt



# SW AVIATION TOUR

My wife Lorraine and I were off on another aviation related adventure. With the remnants of Tropical Storm Bill bearing down on us we prepared for our departure at DFW Airport. Bill tried to disrupt our trip but was largely unsuccessful. He was able to delay our arrival in San Diego a couple of hours. We awoke the next morning to the sound of a nearby passenger train. In San Diego we were in a perfect spot to begin our adventure. We had several objectives: aviation museums, monuments, memorials, and a road trip through the mountains and deserts. Museums visited include: San Diego Air and Space Museum, Planes of Fame, Palme Springs Aviation Museum, and the Pima Air Museum. However, our main object was to learn more about the previous owner of our Beech 18, Jaqueline Cochran. We wanted to visit her home, her community, and her airport. More on that later.

The "Greatest Generation Walk" was within a stone's through of our hotel. From there we were able to walk to the various World War II memorials. We saw the USS Midway with its aircraft ranging from WWII to the Gulf War. The walk also includes the 25' sculpture "Unconditional Surrender" of the 1945 photo by Alfred Eisenstaedt of a sailor kissing a nurse in Times Square in celebration of V-J Day. Moving through the walk we came across a memorial to Bob Hope and his USO service spanning conflicts from WWII to the Gulf War. A recording of one of his performances played as his bronze sculpture looked on to other bronze sculptures including a sailor, pilot, mechanic, nurse, and soldiers from most of those conflicts.



The next item on our list was the San Diego Air and Space museum. We arrived before opening and found ourselves surrounded by a field trip of school children. Fortunately patrons not associated with that group were shepherded into the museum first. They cram a lot into a small space. For me some of the more memorable items are from Pre-WWII aviation. There was an impressive collection of engines including a polished

Curtiss OX-5 engine. We saw a functional WWI interrupter gear powered by an electric motor. It was used to synchronize the machine guns with the propeller. Numerous aircraft, replicas, and models dating back to pre-1903 gliders. Some of the pre-WWII aircraft that caught my attention were the Ryan mono-planes including a replica of the Spirit of St. Louis, the Gee Bee Racer, and the Lockheed Vega. The museum published a video <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=OsPB-0QPLDI> of their replica 1903 Charles Taylor engine in operation. Charles Taylor was the Wright Brother's mechanic who built the engine, and the namesake of the Charles Taylor Master Mechanic Award. The museum was very well kept and the aircraft impressive, but they were all static and pristine. The restorations take place out of sight.

The Planes of Fame museum in Chino, CA was from another species all together. They have beautifully restored aircraft,



and a large collection that resembles a junk yard. It is one of the best places to see living aircraft and what it takes to bring one back from the dead. One of my favorite experiences during our trip was visiting

the restoration shops. They have sensitive areas roped off but you can wander in and out and see restorations of very rare aircraft in work. We watched as work progressed on several unique aircraft. The Planes of Fame

collection is perhaps one of largest private collections of one of a kind aircraft. Their collection includes a Bell P-59A, HE 162A Volksjager, Raiden (Jack), Horten Flying Wing, Northrup Flying Wing, and too many more to list. Founder Ed Maloney said "you go to a museum...if it doesn't have the aroma of oil or fuel, then it's a dead museum. Not just static."

From Chino we made our way to Palm Springs, CA. We were lucky enough to have a personal tour guide; my wife's mother who also is known as Jackie lives in the area. Three stops in the Palm Springs area would satisfy our primary objective. We planned to visit the Jaqueline Cochran Airport, Jackie Cochran's former home at the Indian Palms Country Club, and the Palm Springs Air Museum.

Our first stop in the area was the airport. Jacqueline Cochran Regional Airport KTRM is located near Palm Springs, CA. It was the low season so the airport appeared sleepy.

One look at the thermometer explained the lack of activity; it was 116° F that day. Our initial entry into the airport did not give the feeling the visit would be productive. We spotted local FBO Landmark Aviation set in a temporary albeit very nice office. Construction was obviously underway to build new office and hangar space. We entered the FBO and happily discovered a small display honoring the airport's namesake. There were photos and artifacts from Jackie Cochran's life. Items on display include her War Correspondent uniform, three trophies, a chart binder, and a kneeboard with an E6B computer. On the wall behind the display are a number of photographs depicting Mrs. Cochran in various aircraft and with various people important to her career and to aviation in general. Some of the people identifiable are Amelia Earhart, Dwight Eisenhower, and Chuck Yeager.

A discussion with the FBO staff revealed plans to include a museum or tribute to Jackie Cochran on the airport. General Manager Peni Nelson is a driving force behind the planned tribute. This is fitting considering the airport's namesake. The airport was established during World War II. It was used in a support role for the US Army and Navy during the war. It was named after the local community of Thermal. Located 115" feet below sea level, the base was known for its high summertime

temperatures. The airport was turned over to the local community after the war. It has since served General Aviation and Corporate aviation. The airport was very close to Jackie Cochran's home. The log books of our Beach 18 (E18S-9700 BA-31 N13JC) indicate she operated it from the field. A log entry from 4-4-1971 indicates a three hour flight from Albuquerque, NM (ABQ) to Thermal (TRM). The airport retains its FAA identifier TRM, but was renamed Jacqueline Cochran Regional in 2004.

The next stop was the Indian Palms Country Club. It is a gated community with a golf course, pro-shop, restaurant, pool, and a clubhouse that Jackie Cochran once called home. You can stay for a weekend or purchase anything from a bungalow to a full sized house in this golfing community. If you wish to visit, the golf course and the restaurant are open to the public. You must first pass through security and request a permit. The clubhouse is used by the community as a meeting place. The staff was gracious enough to allow us a visit. Jackie Cochran reportedly had visitors such as Amelia Earhart, Dwight Eisenhower, and Chuck Yeager as visitors. There is some stuff about entertainment celebrities visiting as well, but I am more impressed with the people who influenced aviation. Amelia Earhart reportedly spent time with



Jackie Cochran at the ranch before she departed on her around the world flight.

This must have been an exciting time. In 1937 the depression was only a few years old. The attack on Pearl Harbor was four years in the future. Lindberg's flight to Paris was ten years prior. Things were moving along in civil aviation. Amelia Earhart's around the world flight must have seemed like a monumental goal. As I walked around Jackie Cochran's house I couldn't help but wonder what the walls would tell me about Amelia Earhart's final visit before her flight. Cochran said she and Earhart became very close in the two years before her flight. We know Cochran and Earhart reviewed the flight plan and finalized details. Jackie Cochran reportedly had concerns about the flight after Earhart's first attempt ended in an accident. I can imagine technical discussion, notes, chart plotting, and maybe even some disagreement. As close friends they likely had private conversations we will never know about.

The current staff at the Indian Palms Country Club said information passed to them had Amelia Earhart staying in a bungalow behind the Cochran house. A black and white photograph shows the pair sitting on the diving board over the pool with the house in the

background. I have no corroborating information but the staff also said Earhart spent about two months with Cochran before her fatal flight. Amelia Earhart departed Oakland, CA May 20, 1937 and disappeared July 2nd. Jackie Cochran stated "During the last year of her life, I was closer to Amelia than anyone else, even her husband, George Putnam."

Amelia Earhart was one the notable visitors to the ranch but there were many more. Chuck Yeager



and Dwight D Eisenhower were included in that group. Cochran also took an interest in the Mercury program. Thirteen women trained as astronauts for the Mercury program. In true form, Jackie Cochran welcomed Jan and her sister Marion Dietrich to her ranch. They enjoyed the pool and relaxed as they prepared for rigorous testing in the Mercury program. Unfortunately, the women's space program was canceled before it came to fruition. Consequently, Valentina Tereshkova of the Soviet Union became the first woman into space. It would be another twenty years before Sally Ride would become the first American woman in space.

Jackie Cochran was an accomplished pilot and businesswoman who held more records at the time of her death than anyone else. She was the first woman to fly beyond the speed of sound and twice the speed of sound. She was an accomplished racer, held distance, altitude, and speed records. However, she will always be remembered as the leader and organizer of

the W.A.S.P.s (Women Airforce Service Pilots). In my opinion Jackie Cochran and the W.A.S.P.s organization had more influence on women in aviation than any other single factor.

**Darrell Irby** □

## CLASSIFIED

**FOR SALE:** 1 Jacobs R-755-9 245 Hp 165 Hr smoh, 1 Stearman 220 Cont. motor mount, 1 Leise Nevill 50 amp gen, 1946 Cessna 120 airframe. Contact at (940) 367-4480 Bob Landrum 1/15

**FOR SALE:** 1941 Fairchild 24, 15 hours on a 185 Warner, with an Airomantic or Curtis Reed prop. Beautiful airplane, good fabric. Asking 65K with 185 Warner. Also low time Ranger engines with some accessories. Contact Ken at (314) 324-1804 1/15

**T HANGER FOR RENT:** At Clark Airport, Justin, TX. \$75.00 per month. Contact Al Hilton 972-741-4520 1/15

**FOR SALE:** G35 Bonanza \$23,500 OBO. Pat Pockrus 940-325-5971 hillier@mesh.net. 3/15

□

***Classified ads are free to members only. Please submit ads to Terry at wallacete@cs.com***

*Death is just nature's way of telling you to watch your airspeed.*

## TEXAS CHAPTER ANTIQUE AIRPLANE ASSOCIATION Membership Application - Renewal Form

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Spouse: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

City: \_\_\_\_\_ State: \_\_\_\_\_ ZIP: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_ Email: \_\_\_\_\_

Aircraft Type: \_\_\_\_\_ National AAA No. \_\_\_\_\_

(Ownership of an aircraft is not required)

To start or renew membership in the Texas Chapter of the Antique Airplane Association please furnish the above information and send it with \$25.00 (payable to Texas AAA) to: Treasurer, Texas Antique Airplane Association, 5209 Glen Canyon Rd., Ft. Worth, TX 76137

# CALENDAR OF EVENTS 2015

## AUGUST MEETING 2015

The August Meeting will be August 15, 2015 at Northwest Regional Airport (52F.) Terry Wallace will be our host for a 9AM pancake breakfast, just bring your appetite or other breakfast items if you prefer. Jim Austin has graciously offered the use of his hangar as Terry's hangar is full. Jim Austin's hangar is on the north west side of the runway. Follow the signs to aircraft parking.

**For Flyers:** Northwest Regional (52F) is about 3 miles Northwest of Roanoke, Texas. 33-02-59.44 N /097-13-56.05 W. Runway 17/35 is 3500 X 40 ft Asphalt in fair condition. Use 122.9 for advisories.

**For Drivers:** From IH 35W take Hwy 1171 exit and go East on 1171 to Cleveland- Gibbs Road. Turn South (right) on Cleveland- Gibbs Rd. The Austin's hangar is at 100 Stinson Way. As you come into the Airport on Cleveland-Gibbs Rd. take a right at the stop sign and go north to the dead end. Turn left and their hangar is the sixth one. Terry's cell phone # is 817-706-3173

### Remaining Monthly Meetings

**September 19th:** Bowie Municipal Airport, Bowie, TX. Mark and Megan Breeding's hangar. 12:00

**October 9th and 10th:** AAA 52nd Annual Fly In, Gainesville Municipal Airport, Gainesville, TX.

**November 21st:** Fairview Airport, Rhome, TX. Ken & Linda Robbins hangar. 12:00 Bert Mahon Annual Chili Cook Off

**December 19th:** TBA

### Fly-Ins of Interest 2015:

**September 3 - 7:** National AAA Fly-In, Blakesburg, IA.

**October 9 - 10:** "Fall Festival of Flight" TXAAA Annual Fly-In, Gainesville, TX.

**October 21 - 24:** Flying M Ranch, Reklaw, TX.



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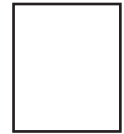
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2417 Stonegate Dr. N.  
Bedford, TX 76021



*“KEEP THE ANTIQUES FLYING”*

## MEMBERSHIP AND DUES

### OWNERSHIP OF AN AIRPLANE IS NOT REQUIRED.

The only Requirement is a Love of Airplanes and the Fellowship of those who share that Passion.

Membership and Dues for the Texas Chapter of the Antique Airplane Association are \$25.00 per year. Visit our Web site at [www.texasantiqueairplane.org](http://www.texasantiqueairplane.org) or [www.txaaa.org](http://www.txaaa.org) for details and a printable Application Form. New Members Dues are PRO RATED, contact an Officer for correct amount.

**NOTE: Membership expires on September 30 each year. Send dues and address changes to TXAAA Treasurer, 5209 Glen Canyon Rd., Ft. Worth, TX 76137.**

The Texas Chapter supports and encourages membership in the National Antique Airplane Association.

For Information about joining the National AAA, Visit their Web site at [www.antiqueairfield.com](http://www.antiqueairfield.com) or E-mail [antiqueairfield@sirisonline.com](mailto:antiqueairfield@sirisonline.com) or you may write:

Antique Airplane Association, Antique Airfield,  
22001 Bluegrass Road, Ottumwa, IA 52501-8569

**See a color newsletter on our web site at [www.txaaa.org](http://www.txaaa.org)**



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OPEN

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