

EDITORIAL By George A. Hardie, Jr., President, A.A.H.S. (1961-62)

A "GRASS ROOTS" PROGRAM FOR AAHS

"Great oaks from little acorns grow" is a familiar quotation with obvious truth. Now in its seventh year, the present stage of growth of the American Aviation Historical Society can be likened to that of a young sapling. The direction of growth and the ultimate size of our Society will depend upon how we tend our "tree" in these critical years. To achieve the success for which we strive, it is important that we all agree upon a program to further our ideals and goals, and then work vigorously to carry it forward.

It is becoming increasingly evident that our most important immediate objective is to preserve the raw material from which history is written. This includes the personal papers, memoirs and collections of all who participated in the development of aviation, as well as the records and data now stored in the files of government and other institutions and private companies. In the face of urgent need for action to save and preserve as much of this raw material as is humanly possible, how can we best organize our resources to concentrate our efforts most efficiently? This is the basic question we have attempted to answer with our "Administrative Organization for AAHS" program as presented in the Spring 1962 Journal.

The success of this program depends heavily upon a complete understanding of its purpose and the whole-hearted support of the entire AAHS membership. We must depend upon the membership to assume some responsibility for a part of the work necessary to advance our Society. That is why we chose to seek establishment of separate local groups affiliated with a national AAHS organization, rather than to set up a system of chapters. The ultimate result is the same, and the administrative workload is reduced considerably. In addition, each group is free to formulate a program stressing the particular phases of activity which meet their local needs and are best adapted to their own circumstances.

This program has been devised to provide the means whereby AAHS members living near one another can com-

bine their efforts to promote a local program, and at the same time participate in a national program through affiliation with AAHS. These local groups will be able to seek out and preserve the aviation history material in their own areas, coordinating their efforts with the national program. This will become the true "grass roots" program designed to preserve the aviation heritage of our country before it is lost forever. It will require the vision and enthusiastic support of all members to make this program work, but the system has already succeeded in other organizations and there is no reason why it cannot work in ours.

A local group does not require a large number of members to get started. The important factors are enthusiasm and a willingness to work. Bearing in mind the basic purpose of forming a local group - to seek out and preserve the aviation history of the local area - members participating will find they have a rich field before them and will be rewarded with many unusual and educational experiences. Every part of our country has some aviation history to record - some more than others, it is true, but there is enough for all. Local groups in a state can associate to form a state group in order to consolidate their efforts. The Connecticut Aeronautical Historical Association is demonstrating the success of such an approach. State historical societies can offer valuable assistance and guidance. The possibilities are limitless if we will but recognize our opportunities.

We are presently working on a booklet to serve as a guide for leaders of these local groups, entitled "A Development Program for AAHS", it includes chapters on basic organization of AAHS, how to form a local group, details of affiliation with AAHS, and a description of the national program. It is expected that this booklet will be available soon. Meanwhile I will be very interested in receiving your suggestions and ideas on this program. We will need the support and constructive criticism of all interested members if we are to achieve our greatest success. Your help is earnestly solicited.

Errata

Reference was made on Page 12 of The Flying Minute Men. It was published by Duell, Sloan and Pearce, New York, 1948. Mayborn had forwarded this information but we failed to include it with his article, "The S-39".

And now to catch up on some more necessary corrections. Jesse Davidson has called attention to an error on Page 263 of the Winter 1961 JOURNAL in which it was stated that Floyd Bennett flew a distance of 15,596 miles in July 1933, etc., etc. However Floyd Bennett died in April 1928 after contracting pneumonia during the rescue attempt of the ill-fated Bremen which landed on Greenley Island in Canada. Bennett died at Murray Bay, Canada, and therefore probably could not have been around to make a long distance flight in 1933.

Further corrections in Volume 6: Harvey Lippincott wrote in to say that the caption on the photo on Page 255 (Winter 1961) should read - "Lawrence's J-3 engine which ...", and not the J-1.

On Page 148 of the Summer 1961 issue we gave a description of the photo on Page 83 as one showing Curtiss SOC-1's. Actually, the foreground airplane has SOC-3 right there on the rudder. Then, on Page 130 of the same issue, the captions for photos Nos. 14 and 15 were reversed. We know a PT-17 is a biplane!

In our pasteup process we omitted the leading phrase of a piece concerning Ed Sterne and the Lincoln Beachey Story. On Page 130 of Volume 6, No. 2 (Summer 1961) the headline, LINCOLN BEACHEY MOMENTOS, should have been followed by "Ed Sterne recalled a poster in his bookstore and took it down from the ----- etc."

Then Peter Bowers wrote in regarding captions on the photos on Page 230 of Volume 6, No. 4. He says, "... bottom right. The F4F-3 is not with PREWAR tail stripes. These were adopted in January 1942, after Pearl Harbor. And on Page 236, the picture of the factory interior could not possibly have been taken in 1943. The tail stripes on Navy Airplanes were abolished in June 1942 and the type of British markings shown was changed in March or April 1942."

25th Aero Sqdn. (Purs. - S.E.5a)

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faster, so that now at 10,000 feet my S.E. flew over 120 miles per hour."

For a short while McCudden was mounted on a Martinsyde machine No. B/35 of which he states; "was very fast, I soon found out.". Little mention is made of the Martinsyde machine for McCudden was shortly remounted on A/4891. The preceding accounts are ample testimony to the design and performance of the S.E.5.

In the final portion of this History of the 25th Aero Squadron we will take up the careers of some of the men not yet heard from. Several had very interesting experiences with other service outfits during the war, some of which have been obscured because they did not fit into the general pattern of organization tables.

Also, concerning the S.E.5a, we have an excellent account of the American-built machines, prepared by Bergen Hardesty.