

FARM Newsletter

AMA Charter 1654

December 2017

SECRETARY'S CORNER

Jeff Killen



This installment of Birdman continues the story thru the central portion of the year 1911. Sorry, but we are not going to get to the big event in 1912; maybe next time !

Chapter 24 in the book covers what I thought was a revealing look into what was happening in 1911 between the Wrights, Glenn Curtiss, and some new names who appeared on the aviation seen.

In the spring of that year, a blow out airshow was planned for the summer to be held around Chicago on the banks of Lake Michigan. Harold McCormick (son of Cyrus) was the sponsor of the event. Three big name teams would be there: Wright, Curtiss, and Moisant. Total prizes of \$80K would be awarded; prize money was provided by William Hurst, the newspaper giant.

All of us know who the Wrights and Curtiss were, but not so much for the Moisant group. They hailed from Europe, and were run by a guy named Alfred. At one point, Alfred had a flight school in Garden City, CA. Maybe the most notable point for these folks is that they were the first to train women to fly. Two of these were Matilde and also

Harriet Quimby, who seemed to always wear a purple flying suit.

Both the Wrights and Curtiss had their notable flyers. For the Wrights, two wonderboys were Cal Rodgers and Harry Atwood. Cal was trained by Orville. Cal sought to win a \$50K prize (before the Lake Michigan event) by flying across country in 30 days or less. But such a feat was hard to do, due to costs and frequent breakdowns of these primitive airplanes. The other flyer (Harry Atwood) flew from St. Louis to New York (1266 miles) in eleven days. He also flew from Boston to Washington, DC in a Wright Flyer and landed his plane on the White House lawn.

Glenn Curtiss had a surprising flyer named Lincoln Beachey. Beachey had flown for Curtiss in December 1910 in Los Angeles, and again in January 1911 in San Francisco. He also crashed on March 1 in Tampa and was almost killed. Somehow, the reports of this crash say he walked away, which is amazing ! Later he flew a dirigible around the Capitol building in Washington, DC. When he landed at the Capitol, he answered questions from Congressmen. Someone described Beachey as "one of the pluckiest little aviators which the profession has produced." Two days later, he flew a Curtiss plane around the Capitol building.

There was a contest between a plane flown by Beachey and a car. Beachey won the contest. President Taft saw the contest, and said it was very exciting to him.

Another stunt by Beachey was his flying around Niagra Falls. He flew around the Falls, under a bridge and landed on the Canadian side. 150K people saw this stunt, which brought a lot of fame to him.

Finally, in mid-August 1911 the Lake Michigan event occurred. It lasted 9 days, and was a media circus. There were 25 planes flying over Chicago the first day. Tickets were sold for folks to sit in grandstands. Beachey won a 20 mile biplane race, while the Wright aviator came in last.

There were no mishaps until the 4th day. A novice aviator (Billy Badger) tried to dive his plane toward the ground but pulled up too late. His mistake cost him his life. Then, just two hours later, St. Croix Johnstone dumped his plane in the lake, but could not get out, costing him his life.

There were legal issues with the meet, between the Wrights and McCormick. The Wrights got nothing for their efforts, as they were going up against guys with much money and ability to dodge any legal issues.

The meet ended on August 20, 1911. Notable mentions are:

- Tom Sopwith (of the camel fame) was the leading prize money winner, taking home \$14,020
- Cal Rodgers, flying for the Wrights, ended with 3rd place prize money
- Lincoln Beachey, flying for Curtiss, achieved a new altitude record (around 11,642 feet)

In the end, Orville Wright and Glenn Curtiss agreed on one thing (a rare event). They both thought that Mr. Beachey was the best aviator they had ever seen.

End of year stuff: Nov. 1911, the Wrights test a Curtiss plane, and find it inferior (what a surprise !) Airshows began to have bomb dropping contests, a harbinger of future uses of aircraft for wars. In 1911 the Wrights had one training school, while Glenn Curtiss had two (one for regular aircraft, and the second for hydroaeroplanes, as Curtiss called them). As Jan 1912 began, patent wars were in full swing.

Jeff Killen



EDITOR'S NOTES – Upcoming Events

Jeff Killen

1. Club Meeting, at Warrenton Community Center, 7:00 PM, 1/23/2018

SECRETARY'S REPORT

Jeff Killen

The November club meeting was held on November 21 at the Warrenton Community Center. Seven members were present. We held the meeting outside of the building as the place was locked up.

Rent for the Center has been paid for next year.

We discussed some preliminary calendar items for 2018, namely:

- 4/1/18 – judging seminar
- 5/19-20/18 – pattern contest
- 6/23/18 – Float Fly #1
- 8/25-26 – CMB Pattern contest
- 9/22/18 – Float Fly #2

For the float flys in 2018, we will charge as follows;

- Spring, pay the entry fee, but lunch is included
- Fall, pay both the entry fee and for lunch

Eighteen members have renewed so far for 2018.

Next year, Fun Flys will be changed to training days. We will do a cook out with each, start later in the day.

We discussed providing your FARM membership card via email and decided against this.

We received a letter of thanks from the Fauquier County Food Bank. We gave them canned food, and leftovers from the last Float Fly this year.

At the Christmas party this year we will bring food in categories by first letter of last name. Also, we will not do a raffle, as too few donations were offered up.

We have about \$1300 in the bank now, and if everyone renews for 2018, we will be about \$261 ahead for the year.

There is a new hire at the flying field/Rhynalds property. His name is Bobby. He is doing much to clean up the area, so please support him in any way you can while at the field.

We discussed a possible change to the web site regarding joining the CMB and FARM sites under one name. While there are some minimal cost savings, we decided it is better to leave the sites separate for now.

The Warrenton Hobby Shop has moved (location is in old Thrift Store across from post office downtown). There is more room in this location than before.

Presentation

Duane Beck was going to do a presentation on vacuum bagging, but due to being locked out, we could not see this.

Show and Tell

Dave Rothbart – A picture of his dad in a WW2 aircraft. We were trying to decide which plane was in the picture.

Kirby Nelson – Showed us a flying wing design he is building. He had a question about the c/g. Duane Beck said to use 25% of the mean aerodynamic chord of the wing.



2018 BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Jeff Killen

As determined by votes tallied at the Christmas party (and post vote discussion by the elected members), here is the 2018 FARM Board of Directors:

1. President - Dave Rothbart
2. Vice President - Bill Towne
3. Treasurer - Nic Burhans
4. Secretary – Jeff Killen
5. Safety Officer – Keith Crabill
6. Field Marshall – Ernie Padgette
7. Member-at-Large – Charlie Koustenis



CHRISTMAS PARTY

Jeff Killen

Here are a few pictures from the Christmas Party.



FARM OFFICERS for 2017

President	Dave Rothbart	703-327-0476
Vice President	Bill Towne	540-428-1053
Secretary	Jeff Killen	703-369-0807
Treasurer	Nic Burhans	540-349-2733
Field Marshall	Ernie Padgett	540-439-6085
Safety Officer	Keith Crabill	703-929-5602
Member at Large.....	Charlie Koustenis	703-378-6214

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The last gift on the table at the gift scramble. Not too bad though, it was a Home Depot card for \$25.

