



SCHAF Newsletter for February, 2022

Reminder: The next SCHAF Open House will take place Saturday, February 12, 2022 from 10am-1pm at Hangar Y-1 Jim Hamilton/LB Owens Airport.

Foundation Happenings

The open house in January was cold but steady with visitors. We are always happy to see visitors from Young Eagles. Be sure to come to our February open house where we will have a celebration of Black History Month.

SCHAF would like to thank each of you for your membership in 2021. We are proud to say that 100% of your contribution is used for preserving SC aviation history and restoring GF2 back to her glory days. We are looking forward to an exciting 2022.

GF2 Progress

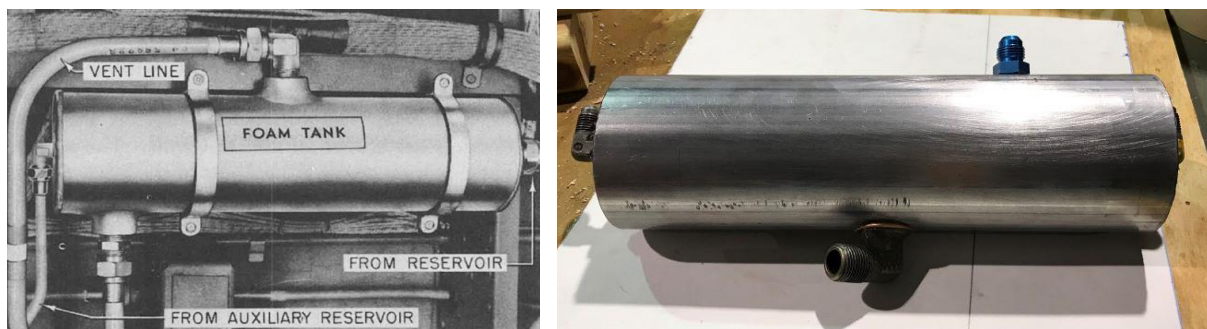
The skin under the plane near the front hatch is still progressing along well. We should be ready to begin riveting very soon. As was mentioned in a previous newsletter, we uncovered some original skin that was damaged. After reviewing more pictures of GF2 after she was brought up out of the lake, we are starting to believe this damage may have occurred after she was placed on the frame and trailer for transporting away from the lake. We will never know for sure but looking at pictures of GF2 helps us learn more and more about her life. To repair the damage to the bottom of the plane, strong angle aluminum is riveted in place of the damaged stringers. With these repair pieces, the damaged skin is straightened back into place. In the wheel well of the nose gear, there are access holes to be able to reach in and replace the stringers.



Besides making sure the aluminum forms correctly to the curve of the fuselage, there are also several access holes that need to be cut into the skin. We never seem to think about the small parts on an airplane until holes need to be cut for each and every one of them. The latch to open the cockpit hatch is original to GF2. It was removed, cleaned and straightened. The skin around the latch had to be carefully cut to expose the latch. While the drift meter sits high up in the navigator's area, the lens extends thru the bottom of GF2. The skin also had to be carefully cut to allow the drift meter lens to be put in place. These pictures show the hatch and drift meter lens. To really appreciate the totality of the work on the skin, you need to come to an open house to see it in person.



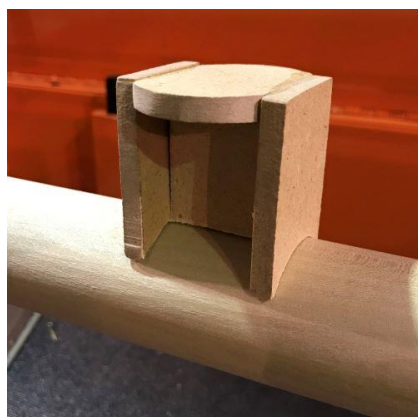
The fabricating skills of the restoration team is improving. Since some of the more uncommon parts are extremely rare, the team has learned to use common everyday items in making a B-25 part. For instance, in the navigator's area, there was a hydraulic foam tank. The brackets were still in GF2 but the tank was long gone. The diameter of the tank is the same as an exhaust pipe of a car. This donated scrap piece was cut to the correct length, plugged at both ends, drilled to install fittings and behold – a foam tank! This is not a good picture but there are fittings on each end, the top and the bottom of the fabricated tank. This will be painted and installed in the navigator's area. The picture on the left is from the B25C&D Maintenance Manual. We will include more pictures once this is completed and installed.



A crawl space is located above the bomb bay section. While in flight, this is the only way to get from the back to the front of the plane. Along the entire roof of the tunnel ran a handrail which extended into the navigator's area. While sitting at his table, the navigator could reach up to the handrail to assist in standing. In addition, the handrail was used to hold the astrocompass in position. The astrocompass would swing out from the wall across the roof of the navigator's area. The other end of the stand would clamp onto the handrail. In looking thru specs for the B-25, it was determined the handrail was made of wood. Brackets were attached to each rib along the ceiling to hold the handrail in place. We were able to locate pictures of the bracket in a maintenance manual as well as finding a picture of one on-line. This picture was found on the website for the National Museum of the United States Air Force. They have an amazing collection of Cockpit 360 tours of different airplanes in their museum. Be sure to check out their website. You will get hooked on their amazing pictures. This one below is a zoomed in picture of the navigator's area shown on their website. You can see the original bracket. There is a strap around the handrail that is bolted to the bracket to hold it in place.



Dan Desko, from the B-25 History Project, was kind enough to send us schematic drawings of the brackets. We were able to take the measurement from the specs and make a wooden template for a new bracket. Wooden poles were recently acquired to use as the handrails. One of the restoration volunteers is going to take this bracket template and 3-D print us twenty brackets! The handrail was 10 feet long with 10 brackets for each rail. These two pictures show the wooden bracket template and the bracket sitting on one of the new handrails.



Tuskegee Airmen

While most people think of the Tuskegee Airmen as the “Red Tails” who flew the famed P-51 Mustang, did you know there was also a group who flew the B-25? A B-25 group, the 477th Bombardment Group was forming in the U.S but was not able to complete its training in time to see action. The 99th Fighter Squadron after its return to the states became part of the 477th, redesignated the 477th Composite Group.

Pilots of the 332nd Fighter Group earned 96 Distinguished Flying Crosses Their missions took them over Italy and enemy occupied parts of central and southern Europe. Their operational aircraft were the Curtis P-40 Warhawk, Bell P-39 Airacobra, Republic P-47 Thunderbolt and North American P-51 Mustang fighter aircraft.

At our open house in February, we will be showing the movie, Red Tails. If you can't make the open house, be sure to check out the movie.

Canadian Warplane Heritage Museum

This year our friends at the Canadian Warplane Heritage Museum will be celebrating their 50th Anniversary! This year they will have lots of events to commemorate their 50th anniversary. In addition, they have a special edition book which chronicles the museum's 50 year history. Be sure to check it out and order a copy. Also, be sure to follow them on Facebook or on their website, www.warplane.com. We wish them ALL the best this year! Still looking good at 50!

Wrap Up

If you have something you would like to share in a future newsletter or if you have any questions, please send an email directly to SCHAF at info.schaf@gmail.com.

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