



SCHAF Newsletter for January, 2020

Reminder: The next SCHAF Open House will take place on Saturday, Jan 11, 2020 from 10am-1pm at Hangar Y-1 Hamilton/Owens Airport.

Foundation Happenings

We hope everyone had a wonderful holiday season and a very Happy New Year! It is hard to believe that it is now 2020! Where does the time go?

Ron Skipper has been steadily working on the floor in the bombardier area. It is looking very nice! Pictured below is a test fit of the bombardier's bicycle seat used during the bombing run. All that is left to do is secure the middle piece and his hard work is complete! However, there is still LOTS to do in getting the skin back on the nose. Did you know that the floor is put on with screws and nut plates while the skin is riveted onto the plane? The floor uses screws so you can take up the floor to reach the back of the skin for placing the bucking bar during riveting. Once Ron finishes the last piece for the floor, he will need to remove the floor in order to attach the skin. We are hoping to have it all back together soon. It is very slow going when you hand make each part.



History of GF2

We are continuing to share some old Index-Journal newspaper articles that tell the history of GF2. Last month we left off at Aug 2, 1983. Below are some quotes from more articles written during the week the plane was brought back to the surface.

In the Index-Journal article written on Aug 3, 1983, several witnesses recount the day GF2 went into the water:

Workmen and residents around the Buzzard's Roost hydro-plant were going about their daily chores when several heard, and a few saw, a strange sight.....Witnesses say the noise was terrible, and it looked like the pilot did everything he could to get the plane back up....Frank Whiteford who was 14 years old at the time said the tail section hit the water first. "Then the rest of it came down hard and sent water a couple hundred feet in either direction. I was looking straight at it when it hit."

Mrs Anna Knox who has operated the Panorama Lodge restaurant on S.C. 34 for the past 46 years, also saw the plane go down. "It was early afternoon and several of us were in here working when we heard this terrible noise and we all ran outside to see what was going on. We saw the plane when it hit the water....It sat there rocking in the water and shining like silver in the hot sun. The boys climbed out and were standing on top of the plane....My husband ran to the house and got a small engine that hadn't been cranked in a long time and put it on one of the boats....He brought all five boys back at one time. By the time the boys were all in the boat the plane was nearly out of sight....There's been people looking for the plane ever since it went down. There's been all sorts of rumors circulated. There was even a rumor out at one time that a submarine landed at the dam and went up the lake and got the plane but anyone would know better than that."

Here are some more interesting facts from the Aug 4, 1983 Index-Journal article. There are some great pictures on this day. One picture shows the rudder of the plane starting to appear above the water. Not sure if you remember from a past article but Wood quoted below is Navy Cmdr Frank S Wood who was over the Navy divers bringing up GF2. Personally, I never knew the plane was resting on trees.

"Wood said the plane was originally about 37 feet down, resting on trees which had been cut down during lake construction and were lying on the bottom. He said the plane resting on the trees made the divers' job easier. According to Wood, changes made in the lift rigging Wednesday morning put them a little behind. He added that the plane appears to be in good structural condition. "

Donation to SCHAF:

We are thrilled to be the new owners of a collection of B-25 models. These 5 wooden models were built by Michael Buchkoski who served as a Master Sergeant with the 500th Bomb Squadron. These models were in a 345th Bomb Group exhibit at the EAA Aviation Museum in Oshkosh, Wisconsin. As many of you remember, the 345th BG trained here in Columbia at the Columbia Army Air Base. These small pictures do not do justice to these models. You need to come to an open house to see them in person.

The five airplanes depicted in these models are the “Tondelayo”, “Betty’s Dream”, “Lazy Daisy Mae”, “Lady Lil” and “Chow Hound Jr”.

This info about the Tondelayo is from the Pacific Wrecks website: On October 18, 1943 the Tondelayo took off from Dobodura on a bombing mission over Rabaul without fighter escort. One of its engines was shot out, and the bomber engaged in a seventy-five minute aerial battle with a reported 50 Japanese fighters as it returned to base. Both of the wingmen in the flight were shot down. The Tondelayo successfully returned to base with heavy damage.

Did you know that Betty’s Dream was one of two B-25s that served as escorts for the Japanese surrender delegation at the end of the war?

On January 9, 1945, Lazy Daisy Mae took off from Tacloban Airfield on a mission to support the allied landing at Lingayen Gulf on Luzon. Roughly an hour after liftoff, another pilot reported that the plane disappeared from formation at 7,000 feet into clouds over Sibuyan Island. There was a sudden flash of light shortly afterwards and the plane was never seen or heard from again until its wreckage was discovered in 1965.

Lady Lil was assigned to the 498th BS on January 13, 1945. She survived the war.

Chow Hound JR served as the group’s “Fat Cat” meaning it was stripped of its weapons and used to ferry food and drink from rear areas to the group’s bases.



Odds and Ends:

During the holiday season, we ate well at the hangar! John Chamberlain brought in some pecan tarts made by his wife, Dottie. Linda Skipper sent us some of her delicious pound cake. When Ron forgot to bring a knife, he made one out of some scrap sheet metal. You know you are part of a true B-25 restoration crew when you eat cake cut by sheet metal!



SCHAF would like to thank everyone who donated to our foundation in 2019. If it was not for each of you, we would not be able to preserve the rich aviation history of our state. We look forward to even more progress in 2020!

We encourage each of you to come to an open house in 2020 to see how your donation is used to help educate youth and preserve SC aviation history. Why don't you make a visit to SCHAF one of your New Year's resolutions?

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.

South Carolina Historic Aviation Foundation 803 731 3254
3100 Devine St, Columbia, SC 29205
www.schistoricaviation.org

