

Newsletter – first quarter 2006

Introduction

Beginning in 2006 we will publish a quarterly newsletter to all those interested in our effort to relive the early days of aviation, particularly the BARNSTORMING era of the 1920's and 1930's. Your editor is none other than "Old Waldo", senior aviator for the service, otherwise known as Bob Lock.

Civilian aviation was moving ahead rapidly after Charles Lindbergh flew nonstop across the Atlantic Ocean in the Ryan monoplane "Spirit of St. Louis" in 1927. There were closed course and cross-country air races that caused a rapid increase in the speed of the airplane. There were air tours to demonstrate reliability of the airplane as a transportation tool. Our two New Standard D-25 aircraft are remnants of those glory days of early aviation that we call the Golden Age of the airplane.

Who's Waldo?

Waldo Wright's Flying Service was borne with the objective to restore a previously purchased 1929 New Standard D-25 biplane. The airplane, disassembled and abused after many years of storage, was located near Portland, Oregon, stuffed into a large truck trailer at an airstrip near Oregon City. The owner agreed to sell the

airplane and we were quite surprised when the seller produced two sets of paperwork, meaning the pile of parts could produce 2 airplanes! The remains were hauled by trailer to be stored in Reedley, California for the next 5-years. The airplane, when completed would be used to give rides to relive the Golden Age of Aviation, the Barnstorming era.

The name of the company was carefully chosen to blend with the theme of reliving the Golden Age of Aviation. WALDO from the Universal Pictures 1975 movie "The Great Waldo Pepper" and WRIGHT from the manufacturer of the engine that powers the New Standard.

As a side note, if you can find the VHS movie called "The Great Waldo Pepper" either buy it or rent it. The movie relates to the time of the barnstormer and is patterned after the Gates Flying Circus, which operated from 1922 through 1928.

Having chosen the name and secured the airplane, restoration began in 1995 and was completed in 2000. NC9756 was the first airplane we restored. We started flying commercially in July of 2000 and have been at it ever since. The company operated from Powell, OH, flying at weekend air shows

throughout Ohio, Indiana, Illinois, Michigan and Kentucky.

By the way here is a picture of Sandy and me with one of our favorite friends, NC9756.



The Waldo Family

Waldo Wright's Flying Service is a family operation. Owner of the company is my son Rob Lock. As pilot/mechanic I am charged with all maintenance on the airplanes to keep them airworthy. Mother Sandy Lock coordinates the ground operation to include scheduling, tent operations and record keeping. Just this year we extended our family and welcomed Sarah Wilson, Stearman pilot and Flight Instructor, into our Waldo Clan.

Biography of Rob Lock

Rob was born in Hanford, California, the second child of Bob and Sandy Lock. The Lock's moved to Reedley, a small farming town 35 miles East of Hanford in 1968 when Bob accepted a position at Reedley College in the Aeronautics Department. Rob attended schools in Reedley, graduating from Reedley High School in 1984. Rob had his first biplane ride at age 11 in a 1940 Waco UPF-7 owned by Pete Rovero who lived in the Los Angeles area. He flew with Rovero from Reedley to Torrance, a two-hour flight at an altitude of 6,500 feet.



He later began flying lessons in my 1946 Aeronca Champ. Rob and I flew together for 15 hours. We would fly from Reedley to Woodlake for breakfast or lunch at the Woodlake Outpost, a small diner located on the airport. Sonny Sundstrom, an FAA certificated flight instructor put the finishing touches on Rob's flight instruction and promptly soloed him.



Rob logged 50 hours in the Champ before graduating from Reedley High School in 1984. A talented and highly recruited basketball player, Rob signed to attend the University of

Kentucky in Lexington, KY. This put a damper on his flying, being able to fly only during the summer months, however entering the Lock stable of airplanes was a 1942 Boeing Stearman PT-17. I completed the restoration and test flew the airplane in 1992. So it was a graduation from the 75 h.p Aeronca to the 220 h.p Boeing for young Rob.

Upon graduating from U.K in 1988 he was drafted into the National Basketball Association by the Los Angeles Clippers. However he opted to play professionally in Europe, specifically in Italy, retiring from the sport in 1996.

Waldo Wright's Flying Service was born next to the swimming pool in 1995 and plans were made to restore a single New Standard D-25 biplane for the purpose of giving rides. Below, one of the New Standard fuselage frames ready for restoration.



Craftsman's Corner

All too often we forget those who applied their skills to bring an old neglected airplane back to life. So here are the main players in the restoration of our New Standards. Keep in mind that these special skills are learned over a lifetime of working on airplanes. Meet the two individuals who restored all components except the wood structure. Below is Craig Sinclair, (L) owner of Sinclair Aircraft in North Hampton, NH,

shown with owner Rob Lock. Sinclair worked closely with the FAA to assure certification when the airplanes were completed. FAA inspector David Pepple provided guidance and issued the Airworthiness Certificates.



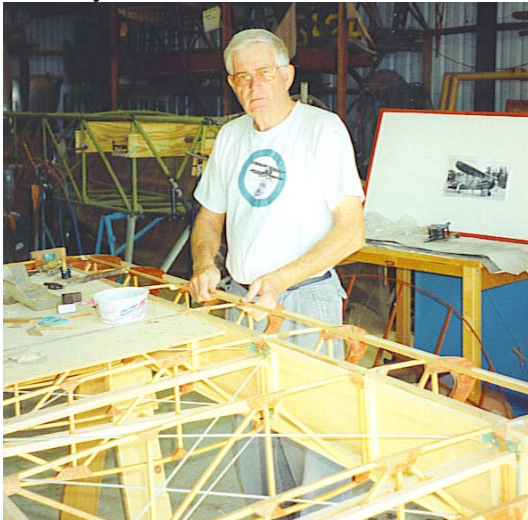
The craftsman who built most of the fuselage and associated components is Frank Cote. Frank is an excellent sheetmetal man and machinist. Below meet Frank Cote at work repairing the aluminum fuselage frame.



Now for the craftsmen who were responsible for restoring the wood structure. First is Dick Hansen from Fresno, CA. Dick fabricated all wood components needed for restoration, assembled the lower wings and horizontal stabilizer. As is with most restoration work on old airplanes, most of the wood structure has to be replaced. Such was the case with our airplanes. It takes great skill and patience to fabricate all fixtures necessary to build all the components for each structure. Below meet Dick Hansen busy as usual in his home shop.



And finally the Lock boys. Below is a photo of me assembling one of the large upper wings in my shop in Reedley, CA.



And finally the owner of Waldo Wright's Rob Lock, shown below covering the large upper right wing with a synthetic process called Poly Fiber.



The completed wood structure was loaded on my trailer for transportation to Sinclair Aircraft. It's a long trip from Reedley, CA to North

Hampton, NH, from the Pacific to the Atlantic Oceans. Below, all wood structure loaded on my special trailer with framing for aluminum skin to protect the wings from the elements.



Below, Sandy and me on our trip to New Hampshire via I-15 and approaching Denver, CO. Note the altitude of the Eisenhower tunnel, 11,158 feet above sea level.



Our trip took 6-days and was over 3,000 miles of slow travel. The wings survived with no damage and were eventually mated with the rest of the structure at Sinclair Aircraft.

Of Interest to Young People

I have spent the past 50 years of my life in aviation, both as a pilot and mechanic. I taught Airframe and Powerplant Mechanics at a community college in central California for 31 years, therefore have specific knowledge of various careers in aviation. I would say that most young people who choose aviation as a career are influenced by a relative or close friend who is associated with aviation. When I was young, both my uncles were in aviation, one as a

pilot/mechanic and the other as an aeronautical engineer. So I knew at a very young age I wanted to be associated with aviation in some way, most likely as a pilot. Therefore, my mother's brother (my uncle George) had a large influence on my eventual career. He owned a crop dusting business in Hanford, California and I can recall a hangar full of airplanes, particularly biplanes. He had 4 Boeing Stearman airplanes modified for dispersal of pesticides on the crops grown in the central valley of California. There was a Waco UPF-7 that belonged to a local farmer sitting in a dark corner of the hangar, painted black fuselage with orange wings and tail and completely covered with dust. I used to sit in that airplane and pretend I was flying. I was maybe 10-years old at the time. I knew I wanted to be an ag pilot and fly a 450 horsepower Stearman. So here I am some 56-years later still flying biplanes.

A good point to make here is don't be afraid to dream! If you look up every time an airplane flies overhead then you may be a candidate for a career in aviation. I wanted to fly Stearman agricultural airplanes, but pilots were plentiful and I did not have enough flying time and a commercial license at that time, so I decided to become a mechanic in order to work my way into a seat in an airplane. However as I gained experience as an Airframe and Powerplant Mechanic, my skills in maintenance, repair and fabrication were more valuable to an employer, so I was never offered a seat in a Stearman.

I am a firm believer in being a "mentor." A great example of a mentoring program is the Experimental Aircraft Association's Young Eagle activities. If you haven't taken part in this program, look into it (with parental

permission of course). Those of us who have flown for many years really enjoy "passing the torch" to a younger generation. Whenever possible, if a young person indicates interest in aviation I try to let them sit in the seat of my airplane. It's very important for we "senior" aviators to plant a seed for the future of aviation.

In the near future look for some new programs at Fantasy of Flight dedicated to all young visitors. These activities will include many "hands-on" experiments and learning experiences for young people.

Waldo's Spring Activity Schedule

Flying daily at Fantasy of Flight in Polk City, FL until May 31, 2006

April 4-9 Sun N' Fun, Lakeland FL
Come barnstorm with Waldo in the New Standard D-25 during Sun n' Fun 2006. Special airshow pricing! Just look for the Waldo tent on the "Flightline".

July 15-30 American Barnstormers



Our next newsletter will have expanded coverage of the upcoming American Barnstormers Tour. Be sure to visit our Event Schedule Page on www.waldowrights.com to check if we'll be coming to a town near you.