



SPEED'S NEWS



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CHAPTER 54 MEETING: MONDAY, FEBRUARY 14, 7:30p.m. SANBORN AVIATION

Dear Chapter 54 Members and Friends:

This is my last chance to remind you about the chapter banquet before February 19th, so I'm going to get it in here first thing. There are still openings for your reservations. Don't miss out on a good time! We will meet at 6:00 for happy hour at Flanagan's (formerly Sky Chef) which is located in the terminal building at Holman Field. For a reasonable fee, plus your choice of beer or wine, you can have yourself a fine meal, with lots of good friends. You might even meet new friends! Check your brochure from last month for details, or call me and let me convince you. See you there!

NOTES ON JANUARY MEETING: Thanks to Gerry Laundry, we had two films from MN/DOT. "Plane Sense" and "Super Shuttle: Mission to the Future" were good entertainment.

President Pat has the following bits of news to pass on to you: 1982 Chapter awards will be presented at the Feb. meeting. Officers, please try to be there.

Chapter 412 is trying to organize a Swap Meet and Father's Day Breakfast on June 19th. Any donations you'd like to make can be done through Pat.

A new edition of the "Sport Aircraft Builder" is now available, through EAA headquarters. Cost is \$6.95. (I'm going to try to get the new edition in the company bookstore.)

We received acknowledgement of our Chapter donation to the Foundation.

On Sat. Jan. 29, approximately 60 homebuilt a/c will depart Holman Field, 11-1, for a flight around the city in commemoration of the Bicentennial Year of Flight, in conjunction with the winter carnival. It's hoped that some TV coverage will be done, too.

BOOK REVIEW

by Rosemary Frank

SOURDOUGH SKY

by Stephen E Mills & James W Phillips

Ben Eielson, in 1924, flew the airmail flight from Fairbanks to McGrath which ended when his Dellaviland was wrecked. Russell Merrill, with R. J. Davis, in 1926, operated flights out of Seward in Aeromarie 40. In 1927 pilot Ed Young flew the first airmail from Anchorage to Nome. These intrepid early birds braved Alaskan skies and pioneered the way to present-day flight schedules. With a select dozen others they set the pace for the flash and flare detailed so dramatically in this aeronautic show streaming across the Northern Territory.

Take the ice-locked Kuskokwin River in 1932. Your old standard biplane was setting on the snow like a frozen duck with the temperature in the lodge house registering 61 below. You heated the engine with a firepot, got the oil gauge up, lifted the plane into the heavy, cold air and headed it toward Fairbanks with no radio and little else beside hope, and after 350 miles of nerve-wracking anxiety finally got it down through the ice-fog and landed right side up in a clearing.

You didn't do it. No, but Noel Wien did on a gusty gamble. He wonders now, as do the authors of this wonderful book, how the early birds of Alaska's aviation had the courage, the convictions, the command to fly under those primitive conditions .. or to turn to impatient, irate passengers or other airmen and say, "We just don't fly today."

But this book covers more than stories of those first flights. With a lush photo background, it details the development of commercial flying in the North, the work of missionaries, the military with Col. "Hap" Arnold and among the disasters, includes the death of Steve Mills, father of author Stephen Mills, ending with a salute to all Alaskan airmen of 1913-1943.

This book is in our own chapter library for enjoyable reading and was donated by Ron Voelker. Thanks, Ron!