

Two Days in WASHINGTON

An Account of the First National Gliding and Soaring Conference

by a Couple of Delegates

We heard that, for several days, it had been as balmy as spring, but when we arrived in Washington, on Friday, February 11th, the opening day of the two-day get together, the weather played the sort of trick that we have experienced in the past at soaring meets and contests. However, this time we were able to thumb our noses at the elements, as we walked into the shelter of the LaFayette Hotel.

After registering as members of the S.S.A., we were presented with large, impressive envelopes, on which was printed a schedule of the events. Inside of them we found a lot of interesting information: booklets about Army and Navy flying courses, a map of Washington, and a copy of SOARING. In addition, we got very fancy looking red, white and blue badges, printed with gold letters, which we proudly pinned on our lapels. Not being officers or directors of the S.S.A., we did not get in on the Annual Directors' Meeting. However, we heard that ten of the twenty directors were present, and that the chief business was the electing of new officers for 1938, and the two new directors elected each year by the other directors.

The first item of the program, which opened the First National Gliding and Soaring Conference, was an informal smoker and reception, given by the Aero Club of Washington and the Washington Air Derby Association, at the headquarters of the National Aeronautic Association, 8:30 that evening. We soon recognized certain outstanding figures in aviation, and had others pointed out and later introduced to us. These included Brigadier General H. H. Arnold, Assistant Chief of the United States Army Air Corps; Dr. George Lewis, Director of the N.A.C.A.; Mr. Richard Boutelle of the Bureau of Air Commerce; Captain Richardson of the Bureau of Aeronautics of the Navy; Mr. Paul Garber, Aeronautical Director of the Smithsonian Museum; Lt. Colonel Ira C. Eaker, who achieved fame some years ago by his first transcontinental non-stop "dawn to dusk" flight.

The proceedings were begun by Chet Warrington, well known sportsman pilot, and former president of the Aero Club of Washington, who was chairman of the Washington Committee on Arrangements for the Conference. After a brief and cordial welcome to us, he introduced Mr. John F. Victory, President of the Aero Club of Washington and Secretary of the N.A.C.A. Following him, Mr. Herbert Gookins, President of the Washington Air Derby Association, was introduced. His remarks added to those of Mr. Victory and Mr. Warrington made us feel that we really have a definite place in American aviation. Then Chet Warrington introduced our General Manager. Lewin got up and, on behalf of the members of the S.S.A., thanked our hosts in



Herald-Times Photo
Left to right: Dr. Jacobs, Dr. Lewis,
Lewin Barringer, Mr. Weick.

Washington for all they were doing for us, and said that, since he was sure that everyone was much more interested in seeing Richard duPont's color films of the Eighth Annual National Soaring Contest than hearing him talk, he would not take up any more time. The pictures made a great hit with everybody. Towards the end was an interesting view of Lewin's Minimoa, soaring over Chemung Valley, a picture Richard took while flying around him with a Fairchild 24. Following this, there was shown a film entitled "Clouds in Motion", which was procured for the Soaring Society by Ralph Barnaby. It is speeded up 60 times above normal to show graphically all types of clouds forming. The rest of the evening was devoted to sitting around and doing a lot of "hangar flying", with various interesting people.

The following morning, Saturday, February 12th, when we walked into the "Mirror Room" for the Conference Opening Session, at 9:30 a.m., we found a large gathering. Around the room were very attractive water colors of gliders and sailplanes painted by Eliot Noyes, of Boston, about whose exploits at Sleeping Bear we remember reading in the October issue of SOARING. Being a soaring pilot himself, he seems to have put into his pictures a real sense of the light, floating feeling of soaring flight.

At the head of the room was a map of the United States, covered with red and blue pins, showing the location of various glider clubs and associations. In front of this, three officers of the S.S.A. sat at a table. In the center, with a beautiful model of a Minimoa before him, was Charlie Gale, Editor of the "Sportsman Pilot", head of the Metropolitan Soaring Association of New York, and newly elected Vice-President of the S.S.A., who acted as chairman. At his left sat Larry Lawrence, who had just been re-elected as secretary, while Lewin Barringer, General Manager, was on his right.

Charlie introduced Larry, who made an announcement of the results of the election of officers the afternoon before. Next, Lewin read a message from Ralph Barnaby, former President of the S.S.A., who is now on a four year tour of duty with the Navy at Coco Solo, Canal Zone. Ralph mentioned his having been recently elected a Fellow in the Institute of the Aeronautical Sciences. Although two of our other directors had previously been accorded this honor, he was the first in the United States to be elected because of his gliding and soaring activities. He went on to say that he felt that this had been an