

# 50 YEARS LATER...

In 1953, as in 1903, the only machines in the air at Kitty Hawk were flown by glider pilots

by LT. COL. FLOYD SWEET



Below . . .  
The SSA Team with the 1910 pusher built by Billy Parker. Left to right are Nathan Frank, Harold Fawcett, Col. Floyd Sweet, Nick Goodhart, and Billy Parker.



Brig. Gen. F. P. Lahm unfurls the SSA Flag.

Sailplane soaring at right of monument.



Above . . .  
Col. Sweet viewing the SSA Flag.



Above . . .  
Col. Sweet and Cmdr. Nick Goodhart. (R. N.)



Photos by H. Fawcett  
Mr. Aycock Brown, Brig. Gen. D. S. Campbell and Brig. Gen. F. P. Lahm, U. S. Army (Ret.), first military pilot.

Just 50 years after Wilbur and Orville Wright taught themselves the art of flight in gliders they had invented and constructed, a Soaring Society team braved the same elements that confronted the Wrights to commemorate the anniversary of their achievement.

Monday the 14th of December, at Kitty Hawk, North Carolina, was windy and gusty but the glider was launched on schedule at 11:30 a.m. to participate in the dedication of the reconstructed site of the first successful flight. The winds were so strong that the powered aircraft part of the show was cancelled, and the weather in the area was such that no military aircraft participated.

At 3 p.m. a motorcade went to the site of the 1900-1901 Wright Brothers' glider experiments, where a wreath was laid at the base of the flag-pole by Lt. Col. Floyd Sweet representing the Soaring Society of America. The new SSA flag, designed and furnished by Millard Wells, was then unfurled in the strong breeze by Brigadier General Frank P. Lahm who was taught to fly by the Wright Brothers as the first Military pilot, and who now is the Chairman of the Kill Devil Hill Memorial Society. Among those who witnessed the ceremony was Mrs. H. H. "Hap" Arnold, widow of the Commander of the United States Air Force in World War II.

On the Tuesday the SSA team again participated in the program with a glider salute during the Industry Day celebration, but the weather permitted only a limited participation by aircraft.

Much credit for the success of the glider operation goes to the skillful tow-plane pilot, Alan Schmid, who flew the Philadelphia Glider Council's Stearman, and Mid-Atlantic Soaring Association's Harold Fawcett (who took many excellent pictures), Nathan Frank, a hard working crew-man, and Nick Goodhart and Floyd Sweet who piloted the glider.