

"TO HAVE SERVED AS PRESIDENT"

By JON D. CARSEY
*Immediate Past President
Soaring Society of America*

Four years ago I wrote, "To have been elected," now it can be written "To have served as president." So many things have occurred, soaring-wise, during those years to make me hesitate to write of them for fear I would omit some of the most important, or more seriously, some one of the hundreds of persons who made the success of the years possible. The urge cannot be resisted though, as the records show considerable gains and they should be discussed briefly, even if it is without the names of those who did the thinking and gave the thousands of hours necessary to make them possible.

With the fear of omission still present I will endeavor in the following paragraphs to mention our accomplishments as members of the Society, as a sort of progress report, for consideration for the future, with additions and omissions of your choice.

I must say first, however, that it may appear that the implication is that some of the efforts were this administration's exclusively. While a few of them may have been revived, very few if any at all, were entirely new to the Society's long list of activities. They were just worked at a little harder by your Officers, Directors, Governors, Committees, and yourselves.

It is probably natural to think first of the vast increase of interest in gliding and soaring as reflected by increased Society membership. The first of the subject years saw little progress as compared to the latter three which increased Soaring memberships of all kinds more than 100 per cent.

This occurred as a result of many things, one of which was the removal of SOARING Magazine's editorial office to a greater center of soaring activity and material source, enabling more regular publication and greater coverage of news of motorless flight activities.

Another important contributing factor has been encouragement of the

organization of new local clubs. 1950 records will show about 20 active soaring groups.

By supplying names and addresses from the membership and subscription lists of all persons in an area who might be interested, to a would-be organizer, along with suggestions, instructions, literature, films and by-laws forms, it has been possible to increase the list to fifty clubs.

Pointing out the value of dissemination of news —providing the information needed by a would-be active club membership, increased club bulletins and news letters from three or four in 1950 to twenty in 1954.

Encouraging the free exchange of these bulletins, one club with another, and publication of interesting items from each in SOARING has helped to integrate all clubs and all individual members into a real co-operative national group.

Preparation of a complete list of gliders and sailplanes in each state by the SSA Governors and publishing a copy of each of them under one cover for distribution to enthusiasts served many purposes in 1951. A second and more complete survey with published results have proved to be of even greater value.

Compilation of the SOARING DIRECTORY, and its publication in 1953, proved to be one of the greatest services the Society has rendered for its members. Almost every item of information that can be needed by a member or any interested person, regarding all phases of the Society's bership, was covered. The Directory is still of value although nearly two years old.

A competition among members to create a Soaring Society membership insignia or emblem resulted in great interest among artistic members who submitted more than a hundred designs which produced not only a device with which to identify ourselves

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INTERESTING GLIDERS

By PETER M. BOWERS

The Curtiss flying-boat glider shown here is one of the first attempts to produce a sporting glider in America in the years immediately following World War I. At that time, the only really serious glider movement was in Germany, and what little there was in the United States was the work of isolated individuals who built and flew their own craft.

Glenn Curtiss saw possibility in the marriage of flying and boating as a sport, and produced this early version of a "Pod-and boom" design in 1923. It was not intended to be a soaring machine as were the contemporary German designs but was supposed to be towed behind a fast motorboat, sort of an aerial equivalent of an aquaplane or water skis. The technique was to tow off, release and land, and then hook up and be towed off again.



Figures are not available as to glide angle, but considering the drag of the biplane wings, plus the wood veneer hull, wingtip floats, and the booms and wires, the L/D or glide ratio must have been somewhere in the neighborhood of six or seven to one. Actually, for the type of flying that was to be done with the machine, the glide wasn't too important. It would be interesting, after taking a look at the knife-edge airfoil section shown in the photo, to guess what the stall characteristics must have been like, especially on a wing with no washout!

Even though it was built by a major aircraft manufacturer, the little Curtiss boat did not catch on, and only one was built. Perhaps, if it had been introduced ten years later in a more refined form, it might have been popular. Other flying boat gliders have been developed since, but none have ever gone into production, either in this country or in Europe. While

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