

SSA NEWS

RECORD ALTITUDE CONFIRMED

Betsy Woodward has garnered two world records for the U. S. The Society has been informed by Mr. C. S. Logsdon, Director, Contest Division, NAA, that the FAI has homologated Betsy's record claim for a flight at Bishop, California, on April 4, 1955.

The records are the Feminine World "Class" Single-place Absolute Altitude of 39,994 feet and Feminine World "Class" Altitude Gained After Release, 27,994.4 feet.

Our sincere congratulations, Betsy!

ANC-5 DOCUMENT REVISED

The home designer and do-it-yourself constructors are advised that there have been major revisions made to ANC-5, "Strength of Metal Aircraft Elements."

The March 1955 edition with amendments is available from the Superintendent of Documents, Washington 25, D. C. Price \$1.75 per copy.

1956 WORLD MEET

The Society has received a letter from the Secretary-General of the Aero Club of France inquiring as to our intent to enter the 1956 World Championships. The letter indicates that the probable site of the meet will be at Saint-Yan and the dates will be announced in the near future.

The inquiry has been answered to the effect that the U. S. intends to enter two single place gliders and one two-place glider and that we will furnish our own gliders.

France is the host nation in 1956, having won the single place category in the last world contest in England. There is some controversy as to the dates since there is an attempt to include it as a part of the Air Festival of Poitiers which would include parachute and model aircraft contests, which from our past experience would be undesirable.

The Society is well underway in the seeding of pilots and hopes to announce the team members early in 1956.

BENSEN GYRO-GLIDER

On July 25, 1955, CAA published Aviation Safety Release No. 396 covering the operation and certification of Gyro-gliders sold in kit form by the Bensen Aircraft Corporation or built from Bensen plans.

The term Gyro-Glider is the proprietary name for the product of the Bensen Company and should not be confused with fixed wing gliders. This vehicle may be operated as a large kite provided the requirements of Part 48 of CAR are made. It may be flown on a tow line from the ground only. Towing by powered aircraft is prohibited as the free flight characteristics of the Gyro-Glider are unknown.

Company specifications show the glide ratio as 4 to 1, minimum sink at 15 feet per second and tow line pull at 25 mph in level towed flight as 120 pounds. Is this a glider?

CAA has assured the Society that this vehicle will not be included in their list of glider accidents statistics.

EUROPEAN VISIT

SSA President, Floyd J. Sweet, made a trip to Europe early in September. The first stop was the Surrey Gliding Club at Lasham near London where a pleasant day was spent. There were 12 gliders in operation including ab initio training and soaring by advanced pilots.

There were one auto tow, two winches and one aero tow in use throughout the day. The high point of the day was a flight in a T-21B with Derek Piggott, chief instructor of the Surrey Club.

The next stop was Brussels where Col. Sweet visited the Royal Belgium Aero Club. Time did not permit visiting the National Center of Motorless Flight. The State supported schools in Belgium are used to screen fledglings for their aptitude. Those most apt are selected for further schooling in military aircraft or as pilots with Sabena, the national airline. The remainder are encouraged to continue soaring for sport.

The last stop was Paris where a pleasant day was spent at a French soaring school, Persan-Beaumont at Bernes (Oise). At this site, there were 13 gliders in operation, two tow-

ing airplanes and a winch. The winch had two spools which permitted the launching of two gliders in quick succession. Both cables were retrieved by a single car.

The morning hours were devoted to training primarily with the winch using C-800 two-seaters. Soaring improved in the afternoon and Col. Sweet saw Paris from a sailplane during a 35 minute soaring flight.

A visit was also made to FAI Headquarters and the Aero Club of France in Paris where matters of interest to the Society were discussed.

The language barrier proved no problem because of the splendid assistance of Walt Pratt who speaks French and English fluently. Walt is a French Silver C pilot and flies regularly at Persan-Beaumont. His wife, Yvonne, recently qualified for her C.

Col. Sweet was on official business for the Air Force and took advantage of the weekends to become acquainted with soaring activities in Europe.

IN MEMORIUM

With the Oct. 6, 1955 crash in Wyoming of a United Airlines DC-4, our soaring movement lost one of its strongest devotees. Ralph Salisbury, Jr., known to most of the West Coast membership as a self sacrificing enthusiast and one time West Coast Soaring Champion, and to the Eastern seaboard as one of the early members of the Purdue Glider Club, was the co-pilot of the ill-fated ship.

Ralph was an instigator in the formation of, and an active charter member in the Ames Soaring Club. With his acquisition and operation of the Warm Springs Airport, his efforts alone practically carried the soaring movement in the Northern California area for several years. He and his wife Betty, together won the West Coast Championships at El Mirage in 1949. Though not active in soaring in recent years, Ralph's interest never lagged and his plans for the future were known to include the return of his TG-3 to the skies.

His interest and self-sacrifice towards our soaring movement will not be forgotten. Resurging memories of many wonderful soaring years spent at his Warm Springs site will always return him to our thoughts again; willingly helping others in the activity which he loved most.