

TWENTY YEARS AGO

From the January and February, 1938, Issues of SOARING

by E. J. REEVES

The January, 1938, issue - Vol. 2 No. 1 - marked the first anniversary of this new periodical. Editor Lew Barringer headed his editorial in this issue "First Anniversary." And we quote in part from this editorial of twenty years ago.

"It is our intention to make SOARING not only an interesting and colorful magazine of motorless flying news, but also a source of scientific information valuable to everyone making a thorough study of the development of this most interesting of all forms of human flight. Technical articles on new sailplane design will help the builder. Descriptions of conditions encountered at various sites and on soaring flights will help the meteorologist. Stories on the techniques of using instruments and handling sailplanes will help the pilots."

We think it is interesting to note that the intentions and ambitions of this early editor, which were carried out so effectively by him, continue to be the primary aim of the modern day editors.

We think Barringer, du Pont and others of the creators and contributors would look with favor upon the issues of this magazine that have followed. Their original concepts have been and are being carried forward. And in so doing, it cannot be denied that this periodical has perhaps been the most vital factor in the successful ongoing of SSA. Furthermore, it would seem to have played a major part in encouraging most needed financial assistance as has just been demonstrated by the magnificent contribution of the Chichester du Pont Foundation.

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"Cross Country Soaring," by the veteran German pilot Ernest Gunther Haase, was a most interesting article in the January, 1938, issue, through a translation by Wally Setz. (Note to Setz: If your prowess as a translator has not diminished - which I imagine it hasn't - we would welcome now, as much as then, a contribution.)

Haase poses several questions and makes certain observations - all interesting - but some perhaps controversial. "Should I fly so that I can cover the greatest possible distance

or so that I can reach my goal? I must fly as fast as possible and, second, be careful not to become stranded. The main thing is to gain altitude quickly. It is not enough merely to climb, the strongest thermals must be found. One must also observe where the good thermals were, after leaving them, so that it is possible to get back to them if necessary. This is usually not easy to do after flying a distance away from them. A zig-zag course should be followed to pick up thermals. More often than the novice pilot realizes, thermals can be detected by observation. Birds of prey, butterflies, and even swallows and forming clouds, are reliable indications. Caution should be exercised with large clouds. Occasionally, just at the moment of reaching a cloud, it breaks up and the resulting down-draft is far from helpful."

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The Habicht Aerobatic Sailplane was another translation from the German, this time by Dr. Karl O. Lange. The text, photographs and drawings came from the Research Institute for Sailplanes at Darmstadt. This very pretty gull-winged design, now familiar to many American soaring people, was shown to be a sturdy machine with exceptionally good handling characteristics and better than average soaring performance.

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Random bits: A new sailplane was being built in San Diego by Robert Stanley of the VT Squadron Two-B of the Fleet Air Detachment of the U. S. Navy. Doc Klemperer told of some activity at Palos Verdes. Jay Buxton wrote about his visit to the Torrey Pines Mesa. Harvey Stephens had difficulty on landing at Redondo when some automobiles drove onto the strip just as he was on final. He went into the rough shattering the front end of the fuselage of the RS-1 (Zanonia). Woody Brown, President of the Associated Glider Clubs of Southern California, reported that Club's acquisition of a lease on 25 acres for a glider field on the cliffs at Torrey Pines Mesa. Lew Barringer flew to Miami, Florida, in a new Army Douglas O-46A to give a talk on soaring before the National Association of State Aviation Officials. Vic Saudek, an undergraduate at

Carnegie Tech at Pittsburg, Pa., had contributed an article to that institution's publication "The Carnegie Technical." Also told was news of the Tech Glider Club and the completion of repairs to their sailplane the "Flying Anvil."

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Articles of perhaps the greatest import to the American soaring fraternity appeared in these issues of January and February, 1938, through the translation from the Russian magazine SAMOLET.

Two of the articles were pilot accounts of World Class Record distance flights. One was by the Russian pilot Victor Rastorgoueff on his soaring flight from a Moscow airport in a southerly direction to Iarygenskaya, 405 miles in 8 hours 18 minutes. Another was V. M. Llochenko's relation of his and passenger Emerick's 253 miles, 7 hour 41 minute flight, also from Moscow in a southerly direction. The single-seater sailplane was a KIM-3. Both flights were launched via aero tow. Rastorgoueff reported releasing at 2,750 feet with best altitude 6,900 feet at cloud base; he seldom entered clouds. Llochenko told of releasing at 2,600 feet and never mentioned altitudes of over 6,200 feet. He speaks of cruising steadily at 56 and at times up to 80 mph and of the conditions as being no better than average.

It is not said but we assume Alexis Dawydoff was the translator of these articles from SAMOLET. In an accompanying article, Alexis makes interesting comments. He tells much, in his description of the weather and terrain of what would be encountered on these flights. Mr. Dawydoff, now a famous soaring and aviation personality in this country, was born a Russian nobleman. Having spent his early life in Russia, he knows well the country, its language, people and customs.

From this we think the U. S. might well have given perhaps more serious thought to these articles in SOARING twenty years ago. They would seem to have given some indication as to the Russian's abilities along scientific lines, especially in so far as flying and things of the air were concerned. Having done so we should not have any astonishment at "Sputniks" and such. Now it appears that those of the 1958 U. S. Soaring Team will be competing with some of Russia's men and sailplanes this summer in the World Championships to be held in Poland. That should be interesting to all parties concerned.