

# AMERICAN SOARING HANDBOOK

by HARNER SELVIDGE

Over 3,000 new members have joined SSA since the November-December, 1956, issue of *Soaring* carried the announcement that "the Directors approved a program to prepare and publish a gliding and soaring manual." Many of the newer members may not know about this project, and Lee Smith has suggested an up-to-date summary would be worthwhile in bringing this publication to the attention of those who may not be aware of it.

The whole thing started with a letter from Jim Redway to Dr. Les Bryan, when they both were on the

SSA Youth Air Education Committee back in 1956. Les asked Tom Page to help, and various starting plans were laid, but it was not until the winter SSA Directors' meeting of 1958 that it really got underway. It was decided to call it the *American Soaring Handbook*, and its primary purpose was to promote the safety of soaring by making available to all pilots the best possible information on all phases of the sport.

A small financial grant from the Link Foundation was obtained to help get it started, but it was realized from the beginning that it would have to be done without paid help, except for the editor, who would get a token payment and reimbursement for out-of-pocket expenses. It was recognized that because of the necessity of relying on unpaid part-time help, publication would be subject to many long delays, so in the interest of getting as much out as soon as possible, it was decided to publish the ASH in separate chapters as soon as each was finished.

The wisdom of that decision has been amply illustrated by subsequent events, with only four chapters published up until now. No decision has been made as to whether to bring out the entire ASH as a single bound volume when all the chapters are finished. Probably a lot of them will need revision by then. In the meantime, you can buy the individual chapters as they come out. Each one is complete in itself. We expect to have a loose-leaf type of binder available by the end of the year which will serve to keep the chapters together.

Editor for the ASH is Mrs. Alice S. Fuchs, well-known aviation writer, soaring pilot and instrument flight instructor, assisted by her husband, Lt. Col. William R. Fuchs, USAF, as Associate Editor. Editorial Advisor is Tom Page, and the book design and layout is by Lee Smith. Various other SSA members prepare illustrations and photographs. As Chairman of the SSA Publications Committee, I function as publisher, and the printing has been done by Pasadena Lithographers, whose owner, Frank Severy, is not only a soaring pilot, but also seems to come up with the lowest bids.

The following paragraphs list the chapters by title and author, together with some hopeful publication dates.

**Chapter 1. HISTORY**—The history of soaring in the USA and the part SSA has played, has been written by Capt. Ralph Barnaby, USN (Ret.), Honorary Vice President of SSA, and one of the real old-timers. Photos are now being assembled, and this chapter is expected to be on sale by the end of 1963.

**Chapter 2. TRAINING**—This was deemed to be the most important of all the chapters. It outlined the "ABC" program of instruction and set forth standards which is hoped will lead to better and safer pilots. Bill Fuchs was the author, but more than any other chapter, it was the work of many contributors. It was published in 1962 and is already in its second printing.

**Chapter 3. AUTO AND WINCH LAUNCH**—This has been started by Tom Page, with publication expected in the summer of 1964.

**Chapter 4. AERO TOW**—Written by Tom Page, this was the first ASH chapter published, appearing in 1959. A second edition was issued a year later and it is now in its third printing.

**Chapter 5. METEOROLOGY**—This eagerly-awaited chapter is being prepared by the well-known soaring meteorologist, Harold Kleiforth, but publication will probably not be until late 1964.

**Chapter 6. CROSS-COUNTRY AND WAVE SOARING**—Those two undoubted pundits, Dick Johnson and Bill Ivans, were the authors of this very popular chapter which sold out within a few months after its publication in 1962. It is now in its third printing.

**Chapter 7. EQUIPMENT I: INSTRUMENTS AND OXYGEN**—Now I understand why my authors take so long. It took me two years to get this one out, finally being published in the spring of 1963.

**Chapter 8. EQUIPMENT II: RADIO, ROPE AND WIRE**—By John Ryan and Harold Drew, this second of the equipment chapters is expected to be out in the spring of 1964.

**Chapter 9. AERODYNAMICS**—Fred Matteson has already finished the first draft of this chapter, and it will perhaps be in print by the fall of 1964.

## Chapter 7 of the



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