

Albert Whitted Airport *Flyer*



Albert Whitted Airport Preservation Society

June 2009

Mission: To Preserve and Enhance Albert Whitted Airport

VOLUNTEERS, WE THANK YOU !!!!

Since the formation of Albert Whitted Airport Preservation Society in May, 2005, volunteers have formed the backbone of this non-profit organization, working tirelessly and giving of their valuable time, energy and resources to further the mission of preserving and enhancing Albert Whitted Airport.

Volunteers have given airport tours, stuffed goodie bags, manned concession stands, directed air shows, designed newsletters, talked to community groups, put up tents, flipped burgers, griddled and served up pancakes, bacon and eggs, taken down tents, sold t-shirts, made phone calls, attended to office details, staffed First Friday, Grand Prix, Santa luncheon, Young Eagles and lots of other events (and cleaned up afterwards), given free airplane rides, contributed funds and technological support and voiced their enthusiasm for Albert Whitted Airport throughout the community and the country. And that's just a sampling of all that volunteers do.

Because of volunteers' commitment, dedication, perseverance, loyalty and elbow grease, AWAPS has accomplished many objectives, among them:

- Preserving Hangar One as an historic landmark
- Establishing a development fund for an aviation museum
- Maintaining a building in which to base AWAPS' operations and welcome visitors
- Providing two observation areas (through matching grant funds) in Albert Whitted Park
- Designing and constructing ten historic markers in Albert Whitted Park
- Designing and constructing Phase I of Albert Whitted Playground (the only aviation-themed playground in the United States) in Albert Whitted Park
- Developing the campaign of Bricks in Albert Whitted Park for Phase II of the Albert Whitted Playground
- Supporting the development of Albert Whitted Terminal and the new control tower
- Allowing the community to experience aviation and all that Albert Whitted Airport has to offer



The AWAPS board of directors dedicates this newsletter to thank all the AWAPS volunteers who have contributed thousands of hours of service to Albert Whitted Airport.

AWAPS Contacts

Albert Whitted Preservation Society, Inc.
451 8th Ave. S.E.
St. Petersburg, FL 33701
Phone: (727) 822-1532
Fax: (727) 820-0303
www.awaps.org

The Albert Whitted Airport Preservation Society is a 501c3 non-profit corporation.
Your contribution is tax deductible.

Officers:

President..... Terri Griner
Vice President(Needed)
Secretary/TreasurerDr. Richard Byron

Board Members:

Bill McKenna, Don Morris, David Oliver,
Bob Legters, Pete Privitera,
Dr. Eric Whitted

Airport Contacts

Rich Lesniak - Airport Manager

(727) 893-7657
richard.lesniak@stpete.org

Ron Methot - FBO

(727) 822-4217

Jack Tunstill - Advisory Committee

(727) 415-3357

Terri Griner - EAA Young Eagles

(727) 822-1532

George Siladie - Flying Start Program

(727) 867-3392

Gene Olson - Civil Air Patrol

(727) 522-0593

David Oliver - EAA Chapter 47

(727) 439-3825

Mike Ettinger - FAHS

(727)397-1221

Join AWAPS Now!

Join AWAPS and receive every issue of the **Albert Whitted Airport Flyer** by mail or email. It's easy to stay updated on upcoming events and current news, just use the enclosed membership envelope to join, or visit www.awaps.org and click the membership button.

Membership Dues:

Single\$25/yr. - 1 member
Family\$35/yr. - 2 members
5 Year Single\$100/5 yrs. - 1 member
5 Year Family\$150/5 yrs. - 2 members
Lifetime Single.....\$250/Lifetime - 1 member
Lifetime Family\$350/Lifetime - 2 members

AWAPS BRICK CAMPAIGN PRESERVES AND ENHANCES ALBERT WHITTED AIRPORT



Some of the renovations and enhancements of Albert Whitted Airport include a museum dedicated to National Airlines and historic Albert Whitted Airport, Albert Whitted Park and an aviation themed playground in Albert Whitted Park. The contribution of a commemorative brick supports the development of an historic mini aviation museum in the AWAPS building at 451 8th Avenue S.E. or Phase II of Albert Whitted Playground. Create a memorial for yourself, your family, or a loved one by purchasing a Commemorative Brick

supporting one of these foundation projects.

Bricks purchased for the museum and building development will be placed along the walkways of the AWAPS buildings or the Wall of History. The funds from these bricks will support the on-going development of the Albert Whitted Airport Preservation Society aviation museum, featuring National Airlines and Albert Whitted Airport aviation history.

Bricks purchased for the Albert Whitted Playground will be placed in the entrance of one of the observation areas in Albert Whitted Park. The funds from these bricks will support Phase II of Albert Whitted Playground.



Please visit www.awaps.org to design your brick online or call AWAPS office @ 727-822-1532 for additional details.

SOME OF 2009 HONDA GRAND PRIX OF ST PETERSBURG AWAPS VOLUNTEERS



ALBERT WHITTED AIRPORT NEEDS AWAPS MEMBERS

The Albert Whitted Airport Preservation Society Board appreciates the dedicated members and supporters who have contributed to the mission of preserving and enhancing Albert Whitted Airport. We wish to continue working to fulfill AWAPS' mission, goals and objectives. Membership is a vital key to the success of AWAPS' mission. Membership renewal and new membership allows AWAPS to continue to strive, allowing everyone an opportunity to be part of Albert Whitted Airport, St. Petersburg's community airport.



Please take a few minutes to fill out the enclosed membership envelope and send it to the AWAPS office.

If you have any questions or comments contact our membership chair Steve Lange at 727 823-7868 or Terri Griner at 727 822-1532.

CELEBRATE JULY 4TH WITH AWAPS



AWAPS members are invited to sizzle, sparkle and pop on the 4th of July at Albert Whitted (THE best place in town to watch the city's fireworks). All the traditional picnic fare-burgers, hot dogs, salads, beans, desserts, games, music and the very best parking and viewing for fireworks are FREE to AWAPS members. This is your invitation to come AND JOIN AWAPS if you have not already done so. The festivities begin at 6:30pm. Bring chairs, sunhat and a dessert or salad to share. All other picnic food and beverages will be provided by AWAPS. The Events committee requests your RSVP by July 3rd at 822-1532.

VOLUNTEER SPOTLIGHT

Two Pioneers of the Field: Bill Buxton & Dean Kelso

If the airport has a memory, a good bit of it resides in the mind of AWAPS volunteer Bill Buxton. Bill has been around Albert Whitted Airport since his days with the Squirrel Squadron, when he flew his Porterfield alongside Cubs and Champs, wings flashing over the skies of St. Petersburg and beyond. Bill remembers when the AWAPS building housed the Sunshine Flying Club. So he knows more than most about the history of Albert Whitted. Bill is instrumental in preserving that history, and the history of aviation in general, as a valuable member of the Florida Aviation Historical Society, whose Benoist Airboat replica and other memorabilia can be seen at the St. Petersburg Museum of History on the Pier.

Retired from a career with GTE, Bill does not take retirement sitting down. He is often seen at Sun n' Fun or Albert Whitted air shows, riding his motorcycle around and making himself useful. And he is ever present at AWAPS events, doing whatever he can to help out, and enlightening anyone who is interested about the history of Albert Whitted and general aviation. This stellar volunteer really helps AWAPS fulfill its mission to preserve Albert Whitted Airport and keep the memories growing.

Dean Kelso is another retiree with no desire to sit and watch grass grow. Dean was recently reunited with his fully reassembled Piper Seneca and is enjoying his passion, flying the Florida skies. Dean once piloted DC-3's in the Cayman Islands, ferrying passengers between islands for Red Carpet Airlines and the Caymans government, and was also an electrician with Honeywell.

When he's back on the ground, Dean can be found frying up his famous Southwest style hash browns at monthly AWAPS pancake breakfasts, as well as making sure the griddles have electricity. It's not unusual to find Dean on the scene at daybreak (or earlier) for AWAPS events, and you'll most likely find him still there at noon, flipping burgers to order for AWAPS Grand Prix volunteers or hungry Young Eagles attendees. Dean doesn't let back problems keep him homebound. This A-1 gold-star volunteer can always be depended upon to lend a hand.

Kudos and thanks, Bill and Dean, for being pillars of our organization. AWAPS couldn't keep going without you and all the other volunteers like you.



Mark Your Calendar!

Meetings

Albert Whitted Airport Advisory Committee

Wednesdays, 8:00 am
(June, July, August)

AWAPS Board Meeting

Wednesdays, 6:30 pm
(June 24, July 22, August 26)

EAA Chapter 47

Mondays, 7:00 pm
(June 15, July 20, August 17)

Florida Aviation Historical Society

Wednesdays, 7:30 pm
(June 6, July 4, August 1)

Events

AWAPS Pancake Breakfast

Saturdays, 8:30 am - 11:30 am
(June 6, July 4, August 1)

First Friday

June 5th - 6:00 pm - 11:00 pm

International Young Eagles Day

10:00 am - 2:00 pm
Saturday, June 13

July 4th

AWAPS Picnic 6:30PM

75th Anniversary National Airlines Alumni Association

October 17th - 12:00 noon

Volunteers Needed: All Events

Contact office @ (727) 822-1532

AOPA Aviation Summit

November 5-8

Airport Businesses

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PilotMall.com, Inc

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St Petersburg Flying Service

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(727)209-0180

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skyway1001@aol.com
(727)895-5385

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www.WFHelicopters.com
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Supporters

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(727)823-7868

THE STORY OF THE "KID COPTER" AND ITS PILOT, JEFF ABRAMS



Jeff Abrams is an accomplished aviator, to say the least, but one of his most rewarding accomplishments has been his 200-plus missions for Young Eagles, flying youngsters in his "Kid Copter" at airports from Florida to Colorado, including (of course) Albert Whitted. "All of the kids have always left with a big smile on their face," says Jeff. "Young Eagles is one of the greatest volunteer programs in aviation, and I know that many people that have flown as a Young Eagle will one day become licensed as a pilot."

The Florida native's flying experience began with training at age 12, a private license by age 16, and a commercial license by age 18. His 38-year professional aviation career began with a job as a flight instructor in Hollywood, Florida. He has an ATP license, CFI single, multi and instrument licenses, several turbojet-type ratings and a flight engineer turbojet license, and he has accumulated over 21,000 flying hours (1,000 in helicopters). He flew Learjets by age 21, ferrying the likes of Peter Frampton, Jimmy Carter, Evil Kneivel, Howard Hughes and some of the Rolling Stones. He has flown for

both Frontier Airlines and Continental Airlines, as well as winning first-place trophies flying his Pitts Special S2-A in air shows and aerobatic competitions in Denver, Colorado (no mean feat in 90-degree temperatures with density altitudes over 10,000 feet.)

Jeff currently works for United Parcel Service, commuting regularly from his home at the Leeward Air Ranch in Ocala (a fly-in community) to Denver. In his spare time, he loves flying his Robinson R-22 Beta II helicopter--dubbed the "Kid Copter"--at speeds up to 100 mph and at a safe, comfortable altitude of 500 feet. He likes to cruise around without doors in the warm Florida weather. One of his favorite Young Eagles passengers was a very nervous 14-year-old that Jeff had to ease into the flying experience, first flying him 3 feet off the ground, then moving a little sideways and backward, then flying a few miles to look at his house, his school and his church, and spotting a coyote on the way back. After that, the boy lost his fear of flying and even expressed a desire to be a professional pilot some day.

Jeff has two sons who are both pilots (one is a Young Eagles flight leader), and a daughter who likes flying and has a pilot boyfriend. So there hopefully will be many generations of Abramses introducing young folks to the wonders of aviation and performing a great service to the communities that are lucky enough to have Young Eagles events, especially Albert Whitted.

CELEBRATE INTERNATIONAL YOUNG EAGLES DAY IN ALBERT WHITTED PARK SATURDAY JUNE 13, 2009 10:00AM - 2:00PM

International Young Eagles Day on June 13th. It's part of EAA's on-going program to introduce young people to aviation. Local **EAA Chapter 47** is part of an international effort to make dreams of flight come true for young people. Since the program was launched in 1992, more than 1.4 million young people have taken a **free** airplane flight.

Although the Young Eagles program is operated on a year-round basis, International Young Eagles Day has annually been celebrated on the second Saturday of June since 1994. During last year's International Young Eagles Day, nearly 5,000 children took flight on five continents (North and South America, Australia, Asia and Europe).

During each flight, the pilots demonstrate how airplanes fly and the proper preparations for a safe flight. **EAA's mission** is to provide a **meaningful flight experience free of charge** - in a general aviation aircraft for young people between the ages of 8-17. Each Young Eagle receives a certificate signed by the pilot and current Young Eagle Chairman Harrison Ford commemorating the event.



In addition to the certificate, each Young Eagle is entered into the World's Largest Logbook housed within the EAA Adventure Museum in Oshkosh, Wisconsin. The logbook records the Young Eagle, the pilot, the date of the flight and aircraft used.

For more info. about the event, contact Terri Griner (727) 822-1532. A parent or guardian must sign the permission

forms. Visit awaps.org or eaa47.org For more information on the program, www.youneagles.org



LOOK, LISTEN AND LEARN IN ALBERT WHITTED PARK

Come watch airplanes fly in Albert Whitted Park. The park opened Sunday, February 12, 2008. Albert Whitted Park has a little something for everyone. If you haven't strolled along the walkways or sat in one of the observation areas to watch airplanes fly you should stop by soon. As you're looking for aircraft, listen to the control tower/pilot communications coming from the sound system within each observation area. In Albert Whitted Playground you'll see children experiencing aviation and exercise in a playground designed with aviation play features resembling the aircraft on Albert Whitted field of today or years ago. Listen as children communicate to each other through the underground talk tubes, pretending they are the pilots of Bayflite Helicopter or in command at the control tower. The sidewalks of the playground were designed in the same configuration as Albert Whitted runways. Local EAA Chapter 47 members are constructing airplane pedal pushers designed for our young aviators to taxi and maneuver on the playground runways during special events in the park. The park is located at 480-Bay Shore Blvd. S.E. Visit www.awap.org for additional details or a map.



50 YEARS AT WHITTED

Local EAA Chapter 47, formed in the 50's by Ed Hoffman, celebrates 50 years at Whitted. There are over 2000 chapters in the United States, Whitted was one of the first 50 established. The local chapter meets monthly to attend education presentations, review ongoing member projects, assist others with an interest in aircraft building, plan fly-out events to other airports and coordinate education and youth events such as the Young Eagles Program. The chapter offers events free to the public with time and resources provided by chapter members, pilots, and members of the aviation community. The next Young Eagles flight will be held on International Young Eagles Day, June 13, 2009, from 10:00am-2:00pm in Albert Whitted Park. Children ages 8-17 will have an opportunity to take a free airplane flight.



Membership is available and volunteers appreciated. To find out more visit: www.eaa47.org

PANCAKES ARE FLYIN' AT AWAPS

AWAPS is in its 3rd year of serving a variety of pancakes to members, fly-in aviators and the local community. The event has become the monthly watering hole for some folks.



AWAPS All You Can Eat Pancake Breakfast Buffet helps defray AWAPS operating costs and is held the first Saturday of each month from 8:30 AM to 11:30 AM at the AWAPS office. Enjoy “all you can eat” pancakes, eggs, bacon, hash browns, grits, orange juice and coffee. Pancake Breakfast Cards are available for a free breakfast on your 7th visit.

Become a member on breakfast day or sign-up a new member and breakfast is free that month.

For details about the next breakfast visit www.awaps.org or call the office at 727 822-1532.

Your support is greatly appreciated!

NEW AVIATION MEDICAL EXAM REQUIREMENTS

Due to pressure from the ECAC, several changes were made to the FAA requirements for pilots seeking a 1st, 2nd or 3rd class certificate. Below are the changes:

1. First-class medical certificates for pilots under 40 years of age only need an annual examination. Prior limits were for 6 months. An EKG is still in effect at 35 years of age and is good until age 40. Pilots age 40 and older require an annual EKG.
2. Second-class is still annual. No changes.
3. Third-class medical certificates for pilots under the age of 40 were previously required to be renewed every 36 months. Those pilots now have 60 months, or five years, to review their certificates. No EKG is required.
4. Under the agreement with the ECAC a change was issued with regards to the mandatory retirement age of airline pilots. The age was changed from age 60 to age 65.
5. Visual requirements for all three classes are as follows:

Medical Class Pilot Type	First-Class Airline Transport Pilot	Second-Class Commercial Pilot	Third-Class Private Pilot
DISTANT VISION	20/20 or better in each eye separately, with or without correction.		20/40 or better in each eye separately, with or without correction.
NEAR VISION	20/40 or better in each eye separately (Snellen equivalent), with or without correction, as measured at 16 inches.		
INTERMEDIATE VISION	20/40 or better in each eye separately (Snellen equivalent), with or without correction at age 50 and over, as measured at 32 inches.		No requirement.
COLOR VISION	Ability to perceive those colors necessary for safe performance of airmen duties.		

**If you have questions, please confer with: Thomas F. Beaman, Senior Aviation Medical Examiner
(727) 573-3356**

Remember Whitted When...


FIRST ST. PETERSBURG PILOT FLEW OFF WHITTED'S HALLOWED GROUND IN 1912

Written by Dr. Warren Brown

On February 17, 1912, Noel A. Mitchell, St. Petersburg, Florida real estate promoter and Showman, sponsored an air show at the Bayboro Harbor, site of today's Albert Whitted Airport. The lone airman was Leonard W. Bonney, who advertised himself as the Dare Devil Pilot. His 80 hp Curtiss biplane was direct from the Sloane Flying School at Hazelhurst, Long Island. The airport was a bit of sand jutting out in the harbor and the hangar was a tent. The plane had arrived by train and was assembled the night prior to the big event. He would go down in history as the first man to fly in St. Petersburg, Florida.

Bonney advertised he would do the loop-the-loop and tricks, but when the show opened, the spectators hesitated in paying the 15-cents for children and 25-cents for adults; when all they had to do was back-off and see the show for nothing. Bonney counted the money-\$186.75, barely one-fifth of his expenses in coming to St. Petersburg. With 5,000 of St. Petersburg's 8,000 inhabitants watching, Bonney reluctantly took the plane into the air, but there were no tricks and no loops, and the crowd was disappointed. Mitchell, who had offices on Central Avenue, made up the deficit.

Bonney would go to the beach and study seagulls; he experimented with captured birds applying weights to their feet and was able to determine that these creatures could actually lift twice their weight in flight. He developed an idea to build a plane shaped like a sea gull, with retractable wings, and constructed a scale model with a curved breast and a bird-like



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tail. The wings were in two sections with an end tip that could be moved up and down 20 degrees. The wings folded back allowing the plane to be pulled or driven in traffic, like an automobile. The cockpit was enclosed in plastic and had two seats abreast with upholstered interior.

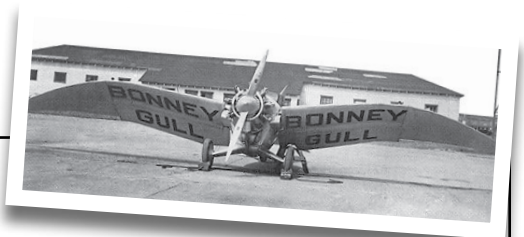
After testing the model in a wind tunnel, he hired a design engineer, Charlie Kirkham, who operated a machine shop in Garden City, Long Island, to build his plane. Not many pilots at Long Island's Curtiss Field had much heart for testing the "Bonney Gull" except for pioneer pilot Bert Acosta, who had piloted Admiral Richard Byrd on his 1927 transatlantic flight. Acosta, it was said, would fly anything-and usually under the influence when he did!

The plane, which cost \$83,000, was finally finished in the fall of 1927. Kirkham told Bonney, "If you try to fly this thing you're going to get killed. It is too dangerous!" On May 3, 1928 at Curtiss Field, the word

got out "Bonney's going to fly the Gull the next day." The message spread and spectators soon crowded the area. All other flying stopped because this flight was considered dangerous. The plane started from the NE corner of the field. Bonney got into the air and climbed quickly to 50 feet at a rather steep angle. Then suddenly the plane lost lift and nosed over and went straight into the ground; his plane crashed into a nearby golf course.

At age 42, Bonney died shortly after being transported to the Nassau County Hospital.

George Smith, a pilot spectator who was on the scene that tragic day, said, "People felt the Bonney Gull was a bad design and maybe it was. But, when you look at some of the planes you see today, you wonder if it wasn't ahead of its time."



Leonard Warden Bonney

- Born 1884 in Wellington, Ohio. After attending Oberlin College, he flew for the Wright Exhibition Teams in 1910-1911, and became the 47th licensed pilot in the U.S.
- In 1912, he worked for the Sloan Airplane Company at Curtiss Reid in Long Island; and in 1913, he became a test pilot for the Amas Airplane Company, in Washington, D.C.
- In 1914-1915, he flew 16 months for the Mexican Carranze government, dropping bombs on the bandit Pancho Villa.
- During WWI, he instructed Army pilots at Garden City, NY and Naval students at Smith's Point, NY.
- In 1925, Bonney began designing and constructing a novel plane with gull-like wings; and this was also the year when he married his third wife, Aora MacDonald. His wife was at Curtiss field when his plane crashed in 1928; and she lived until 1967.