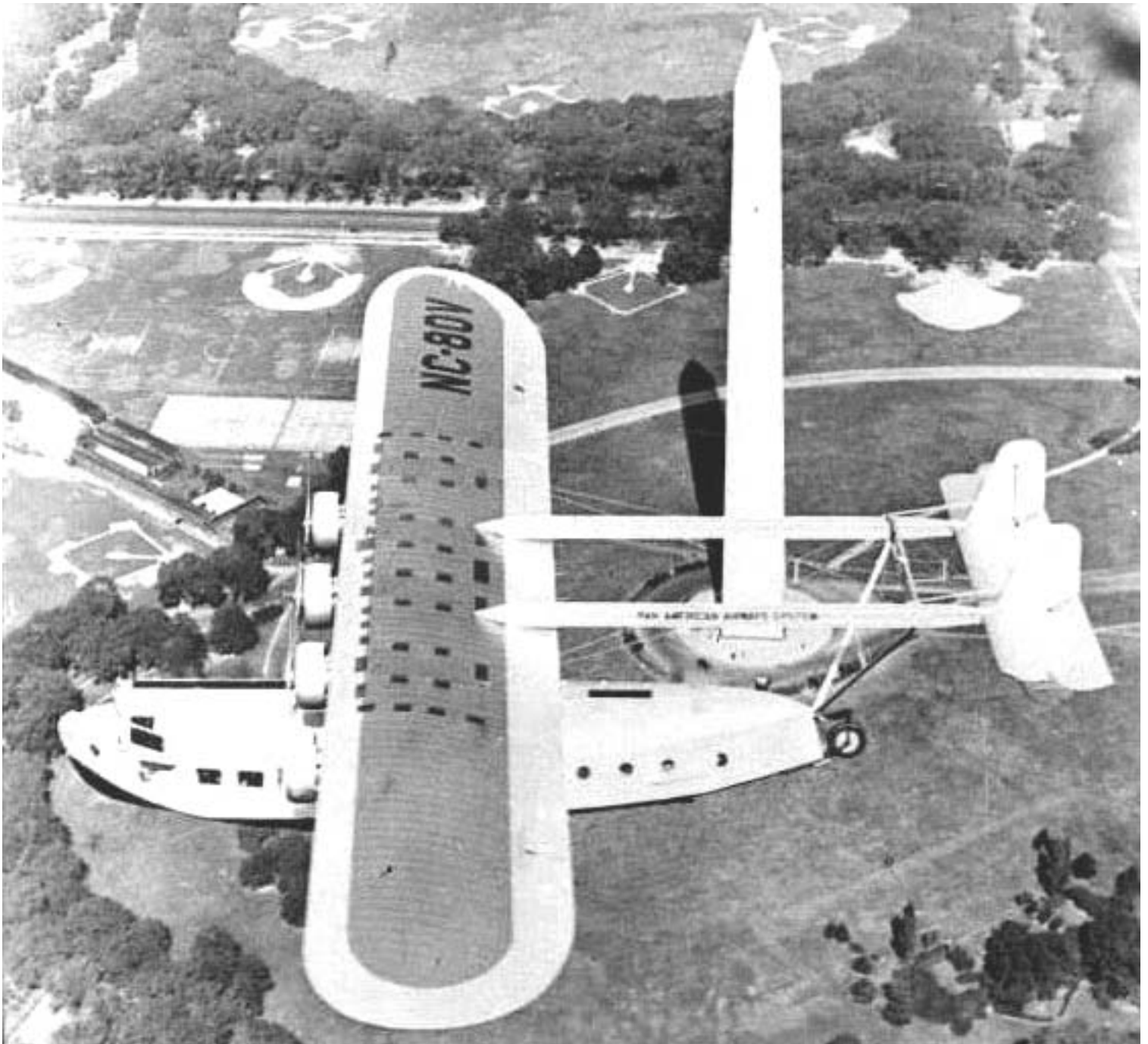


Sikorsky Archives News

Published by the Igor I. Sikorsky Historical Archives, Inc. M/S S578A, 6900 Main St., Stratford CT 06615



PanAm Sikorsky S-40 at the Washington Monument (circa 1931)



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April 2005

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From the President

Dear Members,

Your response to our January Newsletter was very favorable especially the article on “The Story of the Winged S.” We hope that you will find this Newsletter and future releases equally interesting.

This year marks 10 years since the incorporation of the Archives under section 501 (c) (3) of the Internal Revenue Code. Much progress has been made and much remains to be done.

It is probably appropriate at this point to restate our Mission Statement in order for our members to be fully aware of our guiding objectives. This appears below.

Volunteers are the key to accomplishing our objectives. Currently there are 19 active volunteers who meet weekly on Tuesday and Thursday assisting in a variety of projects such as the cataloging of the thousands of pieces of memorabilia into a computer for ease of location, the reorganization of the files and the expansion of some files to the Administration Building across from the Barrett House, and the review of early 1920 and 1930 velum drawings for preservation and much more.

During the past several months we have expanded our participation in Community projects. Joe Keogan has assisted in setting up a pictorial display of the history of Sikorsky at the Bridgeport Discovery Museum. Lee Jacobson gave a video presentation and question and answer period to members of the Jewish Home for the Aged in New Haven. Art Linden and John Daniell continue their video interview sessions with former key Sikorsky retirees, such as past Presidents, Sikorsky Family Members and a full range of early employees who witnessed the start of the helicopter industry.

An area that is expanding rapidly involves e-mail questions to the Archives from literally all over the world. The range of questions asked is interesting: The queries go from very technical to filling in gaps in family history of former Sikorsky employees.

The growing range of activities is very interesting and gratifying. Without your support as a member we could not continue to preserve and make available the “Legacy of Igor I. Sikorsky.”

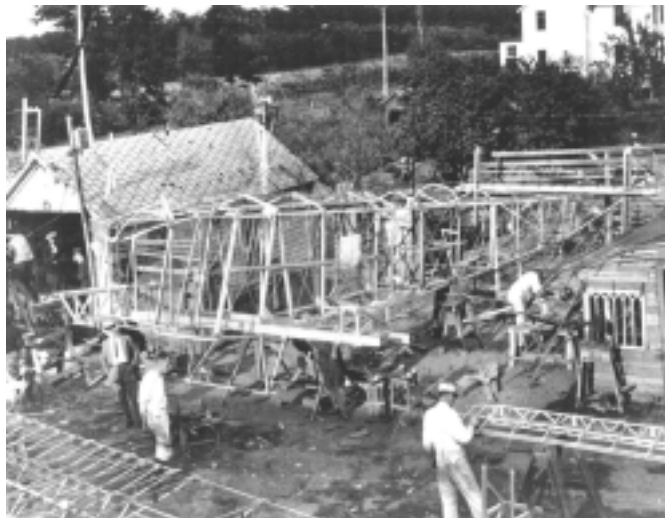
Thank you again.

MISSION STATEMENT

“The mission of the Igor I. Sikorsky Historical Archives is to acquire, manage, protect, and make accessible to qualified persons for research and educational purposes, historical documents and memorabilia associated with Igor I. Sikorsky, his life and his careers in aviation, and the Sikorsky Aircraft Corporation, as well as related predecessor companies. This includes the full history of aircraft design, manufacture, sales and operational use, as well as film and video materials, models, and other memorabilia relating to Igor I. Sikorsky.”

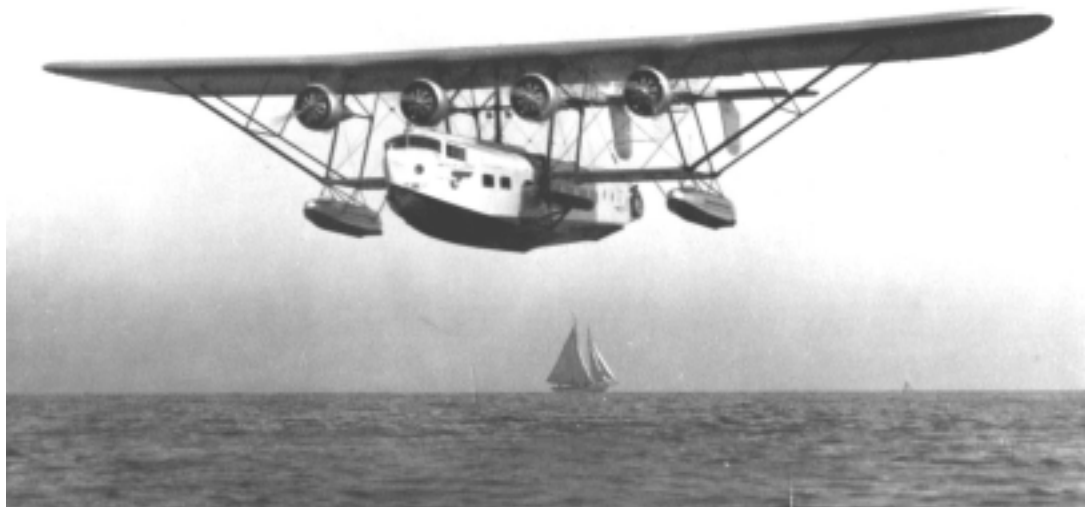
Sikorsky Aero Engineering Corporation - Incorporated in May 1923

S-29A in construction. Twenty ninth Sikorsky Design, the "A" stood for America. Sold to Howard Hughes, used in the movie "Hells Angels".



The highly successful S-38, seen here in US Navy dress.

Mood study of the S-40 over Long Island sound.



Sikorsky Aircraft Division of United Aircraft - July 1929



Above L-R: Passengers boarding an S-44A. One of the same aircraft silhouetted against a cloud background.



S-43. One example is still flying today.

CONNECTICUT POST®

Sunday, January 16, 2005

FORUM

Igor Sikorsky is looking down and smiling

By **HARRY PEMBER**

As we watch the continued news coverage of the relief efforts under way in Southeast Asia and now California, one fact becomes obvious. Only the helicopter is making these wonderful efforts possible.

Many of the helicopters seen daily on the news are Sikorsky Seahawks, Blackhawks and CH-53E Super Stallions being operated by the talented flight crews of the U.S. Armed Services.

As the following excerpt from the "Story of the VS300" reveals, Russian immigrant Igor I. Sikorsky, realized the life saving potential of the helicopter even before he had conceived the world's first practical helicopter in 1938.

"During the 1920s and 1930s, Igor Sikorsky and his small but talented team had built several very successful flying boats and amphibians. Flown by Pan American Airlines, Sikorsky 'Flying Clippers' pioneered mail and passenger service to South America, Europe and Asia. However, by 1938, all orders had been completed and the future outlook of the Sikorsky Aviation Corp. looked bleak at best. The management at the United Aircraft Corp., of which Sikorsky was a part, concluded that it would be impossible to maintain operations of the Sikorsky plant in Stratford. The unpleasant task of informing Igor Sikorsky of the impending plant closure fell to UAC's vice president Eugene Wilson, a retired U.S. Naval officer who had flown on the Navy's first aircraft carrier, the USS Langley.

Wilson had a great deal of respect for Sikorsky and his dedicated group. During the emotional discussions among management leading up to the decision to close the Sikorsky facility, a colleague advised Wilson "Somewhere in that Russian oyster down in Stratford is a pearl. It is up to you to dive for it!"

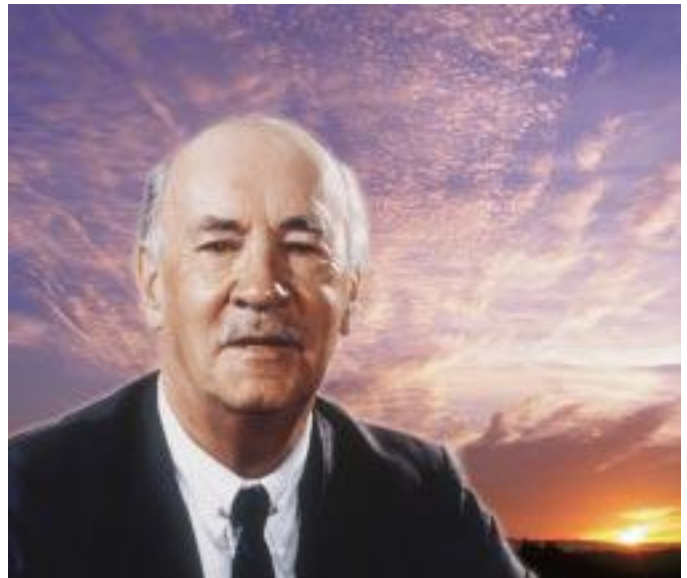
Wilson later recalled that conversation as he invited Igor Sikorsky to join him in his office for the much-dreaded meeting. In his predictable fashion, Sikorsky bowed his head and listened intently and respectfully as Wilson explained the situation. Sikorsky understood the reasons behind the decision and could offer no convincing argument against it. Wilson suggested that the corporation would entertain allowing Sikorsky to undertake a new research project if it was within financial means. Sikorsky's response was compelling. "With your kind permission," Sikorsky continued with his speech retaining more than a hint of Russian accent, "I would like to make a few observations of a purely personal nature. I am deeply honored by your expression of confidence in myself, a feeling that is reciprocated. However, whatever contribution the Sikorsky Company may have made to aviation is the product of many personalities. You will, therefore, appreciate why I cannot accept responsibility for new research without being assured that my little group will remain with me. Furthermore, I would seriously recommend, as the subject of our research, the return to my first love, the helicopter. This project will demand our most serious efforts, but we must not look for the answers in 'reason' alone. It will demand innovative engineering and creative faith. For this, there is no column on the balance sheet of the corporation under the heading of capital assets."

At this juncture, Sikorsky gave a flick of his hands as if dismissing the relative importance of such corporate yardsticks as "profit" and "cash flow". He then continued; "So important is this development to the future of society that it becomes our responsibility to undertake it. While admittedly radical and potentially impossible, the helicopter is wholly rational. Like no other vehicle, it will operate without regard to prepared surfaces. Thus, it will free us of the serious handicap to progress imposed by fixed wing aircraft-airport limitations! It is not competitive with the airplane but complimentary to it. If the Sikorsky Aviation Corporation does not create this craft of the future, another company will. By training and experience, we are best equipped to do it. And, finally," he paused for the clinching stroke, "unlike the airplane, the helicopter will be used, not to destroy lives, but to save them."

Sikorsky estimated that the research would cost approximately \$30,000. Wilson, by now knowing well that the foregoing plea had been well choreographed, was compelled to approve the required funding. In his heart, he knew that he had found "the pearl in the Russian oyster."

Those of us that had the pleasure of meeting Sikorsky before his death in 1972 know that somewhere he is now looking down and smiling.

Harry Pember is with the Igor I. Sikorsky Archives Inc. in Stratford and is the author of the "The Story Of The VS-300".



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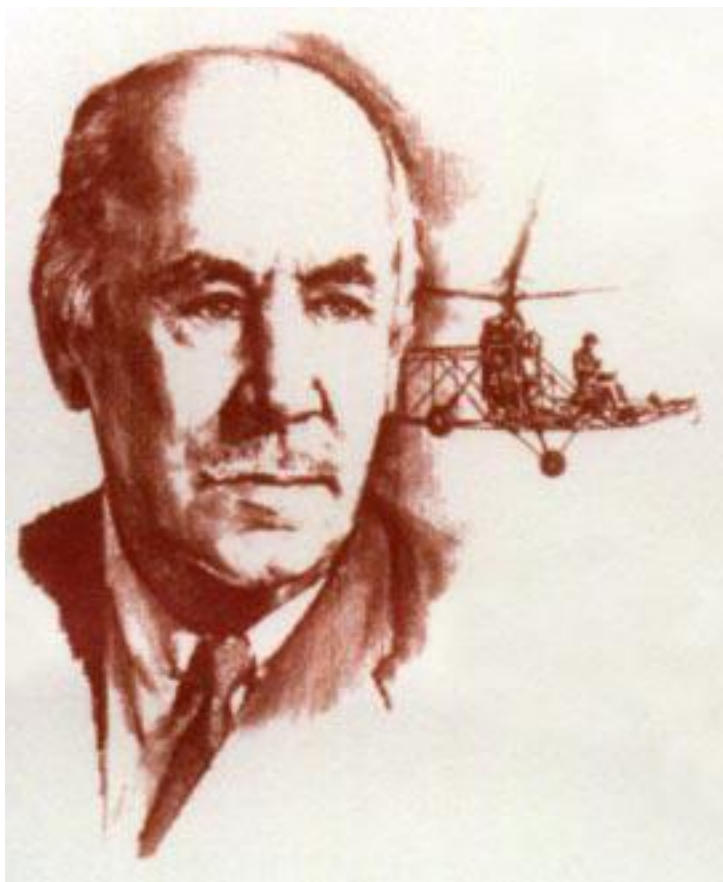
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