

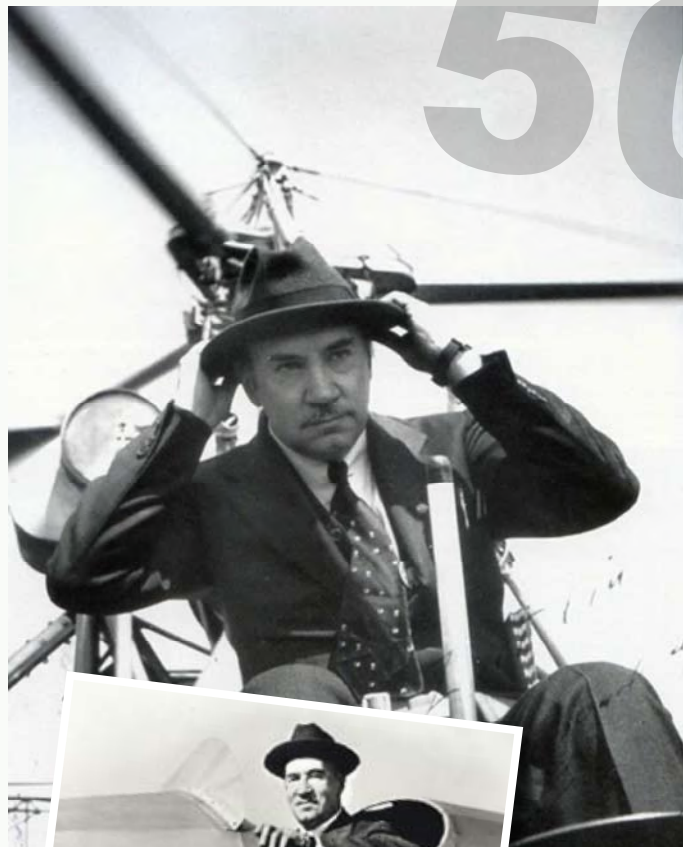


Sikorsky Archives News

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IGOR SIKORSKY, THE ADVENTUROUS HUMBLE GENIUS, STARTS A NEW ADVENTURE AT THE AGE OF 50.

50

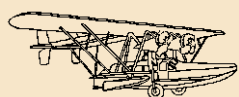


The legend of **IGOR SIKORSKY'S FEDORA**

Igor Sikorsky wore his famous fedora all through the development of the VS-300. During the Korean War in 1950, the helicopter proved itself a life saving aircraft, as the inventor had envisioned. During this period word spread by the Marines, that if a pilot wore the fedora for a few seconds, he could never be hurt while flying a helicopter. Marine Corps pilots would visit Sikorsky and ask if they could wear his famous fedora

for a few seconds. Igor Sikorsky made certain that the fedora would be readily available to provide its legendary safety protection. The fedora is displayed in Igor Sikorsky's office, and the legend continues.

IGOR I. SIKORSKY HISTORICAL ARCHIVES, INC.



July, 2008

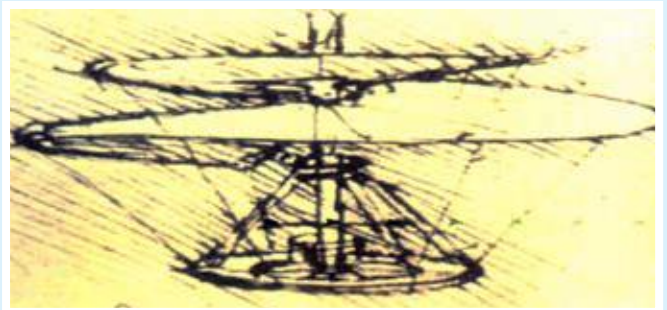
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Igor Sikorsky's education and early formative years in Russia was filled with science and exposure to the aviation pioneers in France and Germany. He was fascinated with the science fiction creations of Leonardo DaVinci and the writings of Jules Verne.



Jules Verne's Lifting Propellers Airship



Leonardo DaVinci's Helix Lift Aircraft

After two unsuccessful attempts to develop a helicopter in Russia, Igor Sikorsky, at the age of 20 in 1910, turned his inventive genius to the airplane designing and building the S-1 through the S-6 on his own, and the S-7 through the S-27 as Chief Engineer of the Aviation Division of the Baltic Motor Car Company in St. Petersburg, Russia.



Sikorsky H-2 Coaxial Rotor Helicopter

RUSSIAN ERA from 1910 to 1918 Created Models S-1 to S-27

S-1



S-2



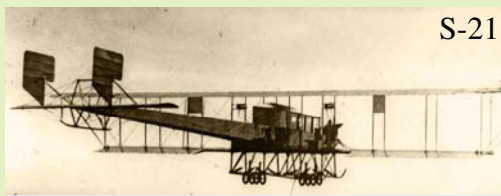
S-5



S-16



S-21



S-27



SIKORSKY STARTS AIRCRAFT DESIGN AND DEVELOPMENT in America in 1923

S-29-A



S-38



S-40



S-42



S-43



VS-44



First Tethered Flight



First Free Flight



THE HELICOPTER ADVENTURE RESUMES IN AMERICA

During the 1930s with the VS-300

Igor Sikorsky's impressions during his first flights in the VS-300 were recorded during an interview in 1946, and was provided by Elfan AP Rees, Director of the Helicopter Museum at Weston-Super-Mare in Great Britain.

The VS-300, of course, was the first helicopter I had flown. When I embarked on my aviation career back in 1909, however, the first two aircraft I built were helicopters. Neither flew, but they furnished what in that day was called "scientific information," not only to be utilized in the immediate years that followed in designing fixed-wing aircraft, but easily usable when we set to work almost thirty years later on the VS-300.

Just as it had been necessary to teach myself to fly the first fixed-wing airplane of my design back in 1910, so with the helicopter I had no rules, no established procedure to follow. There was no helicopter flight experience in the Western world up to the time the VS-300 was built.

Of course, these two initial flights were not quite the same because when I taught myself to fly my first successful airplane, I had no knowledge of what might be expected to happen under certain sets of conditions. On my first helicopter flight, on the other hand, I took with me nearly thirty years of practical experience as a pilot. Nevertheless the whole theory of the helicopter was so revolutionary and so at variance with anything that I had done before that the first flight was fully as thrilling as any I have ever experienced.

The fundamental goal of any airplane pilot is to attain rapid enough ground motion to be airborne. Then the original ground speed accelerates. Speed and flight, to the airplane pilot, are completely inseparable. But no such primary "sense" of coalition is true of the helicopter pilot. On my first helicopter flights, I got into the air just a few inches, then a few feet. The ground did not race past me. Landmarks held their distance. The VS-300 was motionless, although it was airborne, except for unexpected and minor shifting of the craft in some direction- often a direction that occasioned my total surprise.

I was aloft but I wasn't going any place. If you have had thirty years of fixed-wing flying behind you, the sensation in your first helicopter flight, then, is pretty novel. My years of experience was telling me, "Why aren't we moving? We are airborne, certainly". Then the engineer seemed to reply, "Don't be absurd. You are doing precisely what you set out to do. Remember hovering is one the characteristics you sought in this aircraft". Presently the craft would veer slightly. It was not easy to determine whether this was caused by a too difficult control arrangement or by total lack of experience piloting a helicopter.

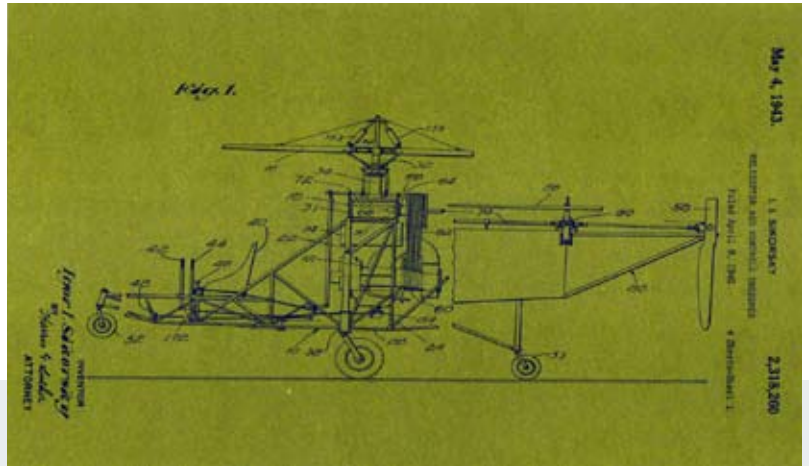
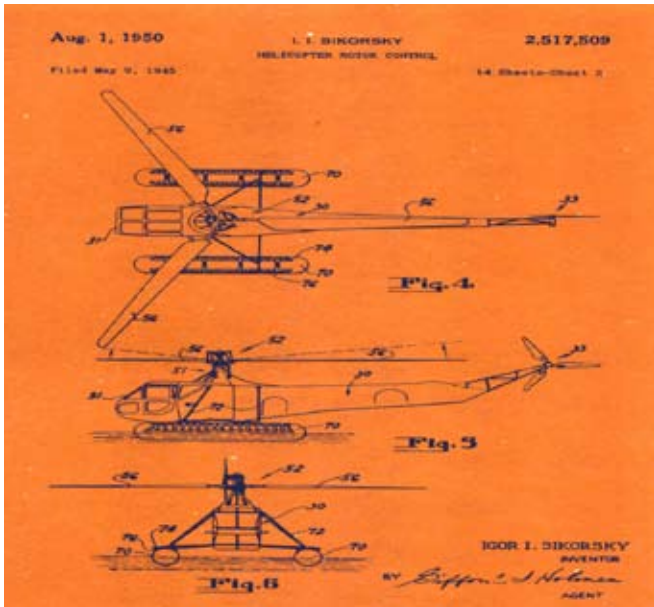


The first flights in the VS-300 lasted a few seconds each and when between the end of November, 1939 and May 1940 our second pilot Serge Gluhareff, and I succeeded in remaining in the air for about two minutes, we felt that we had achieved a very long flight indeed. Probably a hundred changes in the control arrangement were introduced. Six months later, on a craft looking considerably different from the original one, I succeeded in staying in the air for 15 minutes and came down, not when the flight had been interrupted for some other reason as was usual before, but when I decided to do it! From that time on we had a flying craft which we continued to improve and refine.

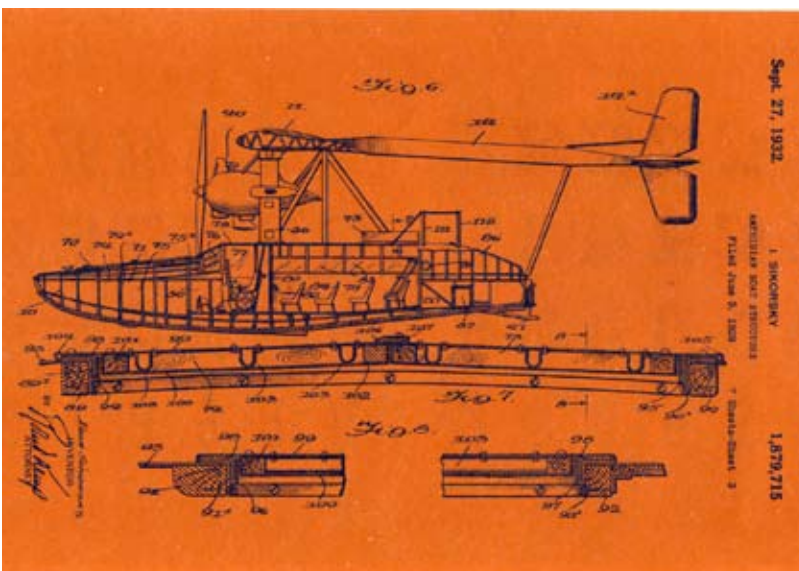
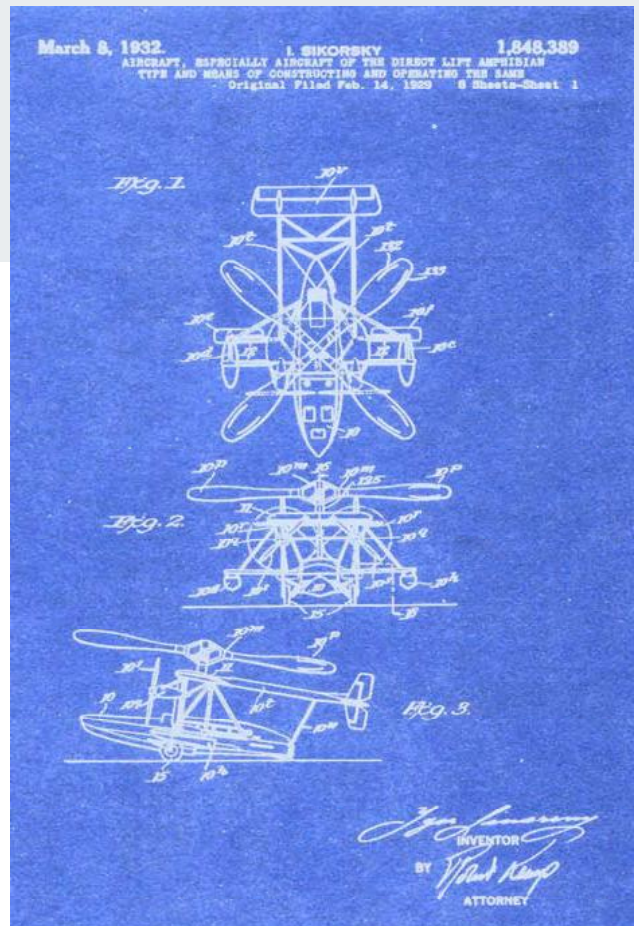
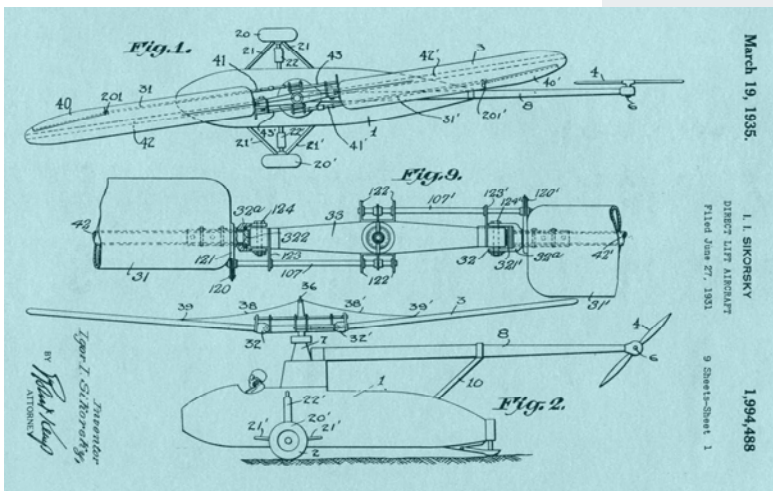
Late in 1940, the VS-300 could fly reasonably well in nearly all directions except straight forward, in which direction we still had difficulty which usually started in the bracket between 15 and 25 miles an hour. This trouble was so definite that a very competent and wise observer could detect it even in the many movies we took. So when our Mr. Eugene Wilson (vice chairman of United Aircraft Corporation) once asked me why we did not make movies of the ship flying forward, I had to reply that this was one of the secondary engineering problems on which we are still working. Early in 1941, we had the complete solution and were able to fly the helicopter forward freely up to its top speed, then about 70 miles per hour. From that point on, the development went further and faster.

Soon the need for military production made it necessary to relinquish personal test flying while I concentrated on the engineering problems of larger, more powerful designs. But no matter how large, how changed in conformation, how different in power plant, or in the application of that power our helicopter of the future may be, those first few seconds of flight in the VS-300 will always have a place among my most cherished recollections.

Igor I. Sikorsky



Igor Sikorsky is credited with many significant achievements in aircraft design and development. He was awarded 66 design patents in the United States. Five of his original design patent drawings shown demonstrate his creativity and genius.





Exploring the pyramids in Egypt

Igor Sikorsky's curiosity and adventurous spirit searched for truths beyond airplanes and helicopters. His quest for knowledge led him to exploring ancient civilizations in Egypt, Peru and Mexico.



Camel riding in Egypt



Examining skulls in Peru



Exploring Temples in Egypt

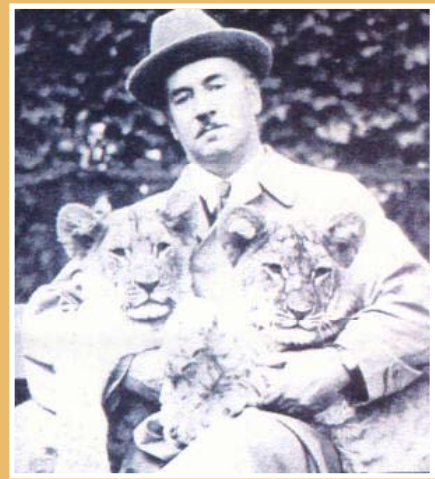


Volcano watching in Mexico

Igor Sikorsky enjoyed lighter moments in Disneyland and cuddling baby lions



Disneyland Maritime Explorer



Taming wild animals

THE ADVENTUROUS HUMBLE GENIUS SIDE OF IGOR SIKORSKY IS EVIDENT IN HIS OFFICE MEMORABILIA

Igor Sikorsky's office contains memorabilia that was significant to him. He received over 100 awards and honors for his achievements. These do not take priority on his walls. The wall hangings represent his aviation adventures and accomplishments, and mainly recognition by the operators of the Sikorsky aircraft who forwarded their thanks for the successful aircraft he was responsible for creating.

COL Chris Miller, PEO RW of the U.S. Special Operations Command at MacDill AFB, Tampa, Florida recently visited Sikorsky's office, and provided his unit's recognition coin, suggesting that all military personnel who visit Igor Sikorsky's office should leave their unit's coin to thank and honor

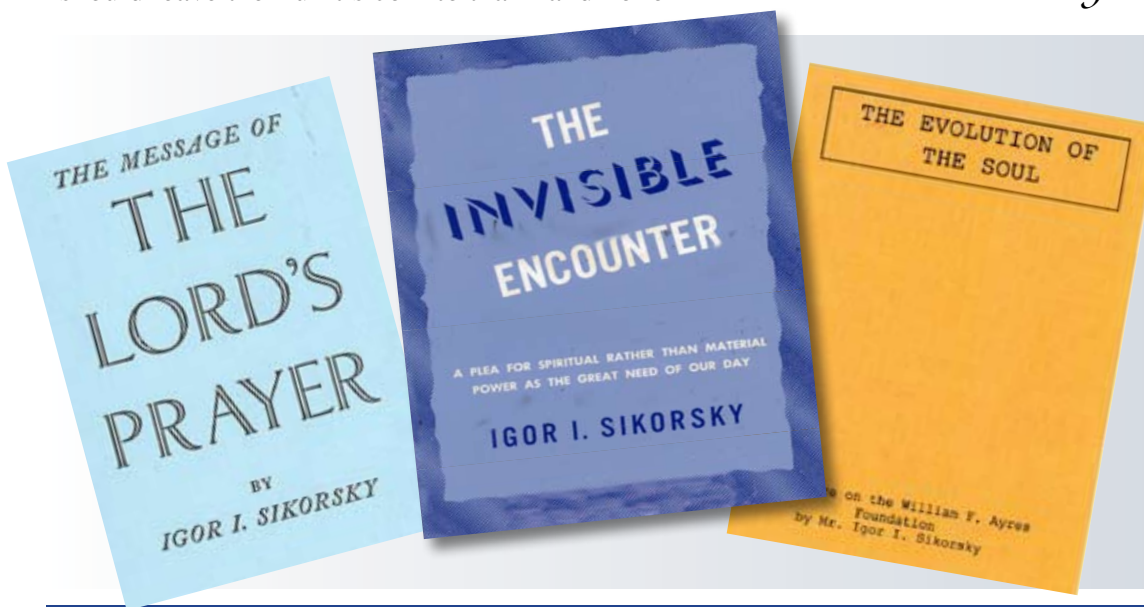


the inventor of the first practical and successful helicopter in the world. Implementation plans for COL Miller's suggestion are in process.

This honor would be consistent with Igor Sikorsky's legacy as reflected in the last letter that he prepared and signed prior to his passing on October 26, 1972 where he stated, "I always believed that the helicopter would be an outstanding vehicle for the greatest variety of

life-saving missions and now, near the close of my life, I have the satisfaction of knowing that this proved to be true".

Igor I. Sikorsky

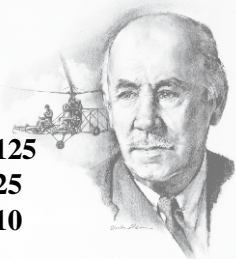


Mr. Sikorsky's office illustrates the importance that religion and philosophy played in his daily life. His desk top contains four versions of the New Testament, an ancient Greek version, World Bibles and religious books, and the three philosophical religious books he authored.

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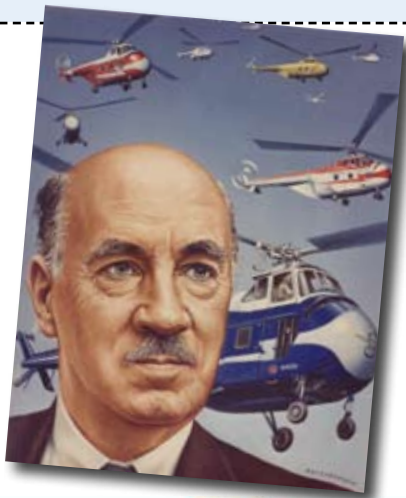
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Newsletter designed and edited by Lee Jacobson and Edgar Guzman.



Igor Sikorsky's headstone inscription reveals the man:

“Rare is the man of vision whose dreams become reality. Rarer still is one whose vision brings a better life to others while fulfilling his own. Such a man was Igor I. Sikorsky, aeronautical pioneer, “father of the helicopter”, inventor and philosopher.”

