



Sikorsky Archives News

January 2016

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Trumbull Connecticut Honored Igor Sikorsky With A Permanent Memorial Ceremony On September 24, 2015



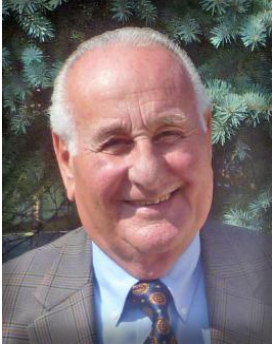
Guest speaker Sergei Sikorsky and his wife Elena are shown admiring the three sided memorial showing the aviation careers of his father Igor Sikorsky during his years in Russia and the United States.

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Dear Members,



As our organization enters its third decade of incorporation, it is again a great pleasure for me to have the opportunity to wish all our members and volunteers a Very Happy and Healthy 2016!

Unfortunately, we closed out 2015 on a sad note, having lost our most senior advisor, Harry Hleva in October at 96 years old. He was one of the founding members of the organization, a past director and proudly spanned a nearly 75 year association with the Sikorsky Company and archives. He will be missed and never forgotten. More details on Harry are covered elsewhere in this issue.

Last year was another very interesting and active period as we continued the preservation, digitization and cataloguing of the huge amount of artifacts and data, and to facilitate the data retrieval system for the archivists. The latter point is very critical as we continue to receive an increasing number of historical questions that require in-depth research and timely responses.

The request for presentations to community and senior organizations continued in 2015 at our annual average rate of 12 per year. We already have two reserved dates for 2016. One major activity last year was the culmination of a one year collaboration with the Town of Trumbull, Connecticut to create a memorial to Igor Sikorsky's life in Connecticut. The historical archives are very proud to have played a major role in developing the theme and providing all the historical information to create the memorial shown at the right.

Of course, the most notable event of the year was the sale of Sikorsky to the Lockheed Martin Corporation on November 6, 2015. The ceremony took place at Sikorsky headquarter's in Stratford, Connecticut in a very professional, upbeat and positive atmosphere for the future.

Best Wishes for a Happy New Year,

Dan Liberto, President



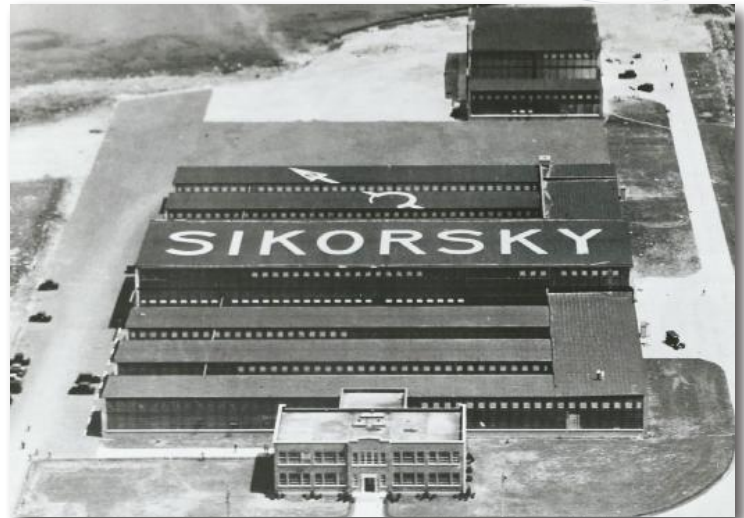
Igor Sikorsky Memorial



Attendees at Trumbull Igor Sikorsky Memorial Ceremony

Sikorsky Aircraft Moved From College Point, New York To Stratford, Connecticut In 1929

Sikorsky purchased land bordering the Housatonic River in Stratford, Connecticut and built the plant shown in the photo on the right. The production of the S-38 was transferred from College Point, New York to the new facility, and was the design and manufacturing location for all the amphibian and flying boat aircraft from the S-38 up to the last VS-44.



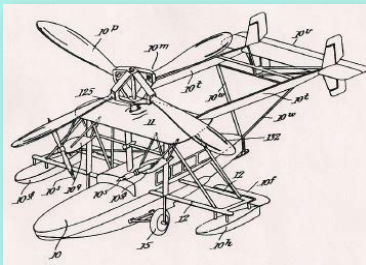
First Sikorsky Aircraft Plant in Stratford, Connecticut

It is interesting to note that Igor Sikorsky's desire to build a lifting rotor aircraft during his early years in Russia continued in America. During the period of relocating his S-38 manufacturing facility to Stratford, Connecticut, Igor Sikorsky was awarded a patent on February 14, 1929 for an S-38 autogyro shown below. The S-38 autogyro did not become a reality.



First flight of VS-300 was September 14, 1939

He pursued his dream and created the concept of the first practical helicopter configuration in the world. The VS-300 versions shown in the photos on the right were Sikorsky's first configurations built for evaluation.



However, he pursued his vertical lift dream and created the first practical helicopter configuration in the world in his new facility in Connecticut. The VS-300 versions shown in the photos on the right were Sikorsky's flight test configurations. They were comprised of single main and single vertical tail rotors; single main and multiple horizontal tail rotors; plus variations in structural configurations shown in the photos on the right.

Flight tests proved that his first configuration comprised of a single main and single tail rotor was the best. Sikorsky's creation based on his intuitive judgement has become the standard for the majority of helicopters produced in the world today, This fact justifies recognizing Igor Sikorsky as the inventor of the first practical helicopter in the world.



Final Version of VS-300 Resides at The Ford Museum In Dearborn, Michigan

For historical purposes, the aviation accomplishments of Igor Sikorsky in Connecticut are presented in relation to his family residence for the period shown.



1929 To 1930 Lordship, Stratford, CT. Photo shows Igor's son Nickolai Sikorsky in front of the family house as it is today.



S-38 twin engine amphibian. (111) were built.



S-39 single engine derivative of the S-38. (21) were built.



S-40 "The American Clipper" started as a four engine amphibian type aircraft. Three were built and in 1935, they were modified to flying boats when the landing gear was removed to save weight.



1930 to 1934 Nichols, Trumbull, CT



S-41 was a larger twin engine derivative of the S-38. Seven were built.



S-43 Baby Clipper was a twin engine amphibian that could carry 15 passengers. They were used in military and commercial service. 53 were built.



The four engine S-42 could carry 35 passengers and was the largest flying boat at the time. Ten were built.

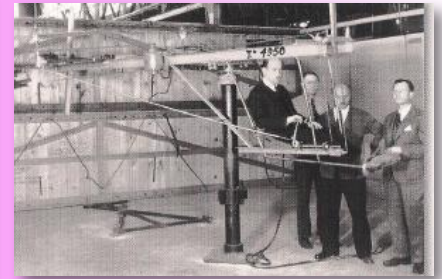
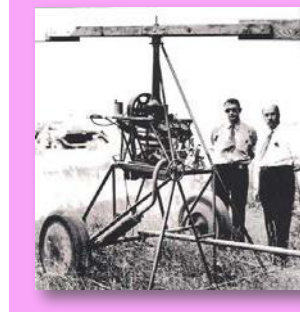


The four engine VS-44 was the most advanced flying boat at the time. Three were built. The story of the last remaining one is discussed on page 7 of this newsletter.



1934 to 1946 Longhill, Trumbull, CT

During the waning years of the amphibian and flying boat business, Igor Sikorsky turned his thoughts and energies toward his fist love, the helicopter. Aircraft designs were created and tests were conducted to evaluate rotors, drive and flight control systems on ground test facilities as shown in the photos on the upper right. During this period, Sikorsky started the helicopter industry with the single engine models shown on the right.



S-51 was a derivative of the R-5 and was the first helicopter in the world to perform the first naval and civil rescues. Sikorsky built 214 units and British licensee Westland Aircraft built 137 units..



During a storm On November 29, 1945, the R-5 piloted by Sikorsky Chief Test Pilot Jimmy Viner made the first recorded civil rescue by helicopter.



1946 to 1948 Nichols/Trumbull, CT



The U.S. Marines and U.S. Coast Guard employed the S-52 for medevac and utility missions. 97 aircraft were built.



1948 to 1951 Nichols, Connecticut



S-55 (H-19)



S-55 (H-19) VIP

The S-55 was designed and flown in less than one year, and was successfully operated by the U.S. and foreign military and commercial operations. **A total of 1,281 aircraft were built in the United States** and 477 were built under contract in England, France, and Japan.



S-56 (CH-37)



S-58 (CH-34)



S-61 (SH-3)



S-61R (CH-3)



1951 to 1972 Easton, CT.

Photo of Nikolai Sikorsky and current owners.



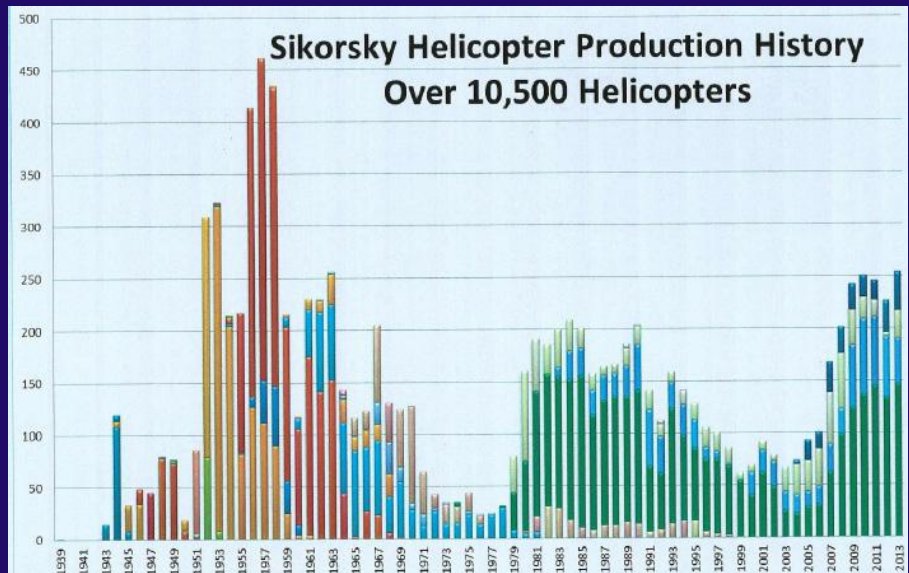
S-62 (HH-52)



S-64 (CH-54)



S-65 (CH-53)



In 1957 Sikorsky Aircraft had its highest production with over 450 helicopters delivered. New model helicopter deliveries since 1957 have never exceeded a maximum of 250 per year.

Harry Hleva's career and retirement association with Sikorsky Aircraft has covered over 75 years.

Harry started his career with Vought Sikorsky Aircraft in 1940 as an aircraft mechanic working on the flying boats. Young Harry is shown in the photo on right checking out the landing gear and tires of the VS-44.



Harry joined the United States Army in 1943 during World War II, and was wounded in action earning a Purple Heart Medal. He returned to Sikorsky Aircraft and became the Crew Chief for the S-51 company demonstrator. He subsequently joined the Sikorsky Field Service Department, and was eventually promoted to the Eastern Area Field Service Supervisor responsible for customer support in the areas.



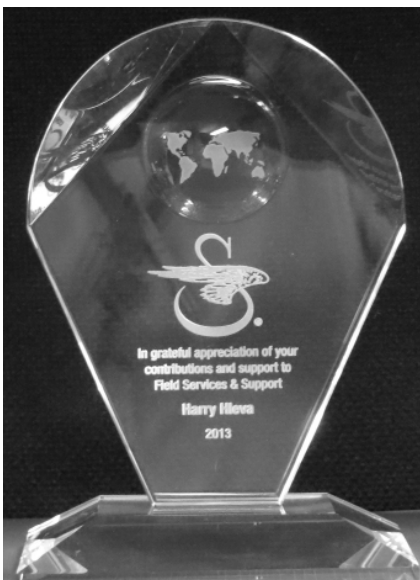
He retired from Sikorsky in 1977 and eventually accepted Sikorsky president Gene Buckley's offer to head up the project to restore the VS-44A Escambian flying boat. The aircraft was owned by the actress Maureen O'Hara and her husband, noted pioneering pilot Charles Blair. During a take off not piloted by Blair, the aircraft was damaged and lay idle for a long period slowly deteriorating as shown in the photos on the right.



Harry led a team of retirees to restore the VS-44A Escambian back to life as shown below. The aircraft is now displayed in all its glory at the New England Air Museum at Bradley Field, CT. Harry continued his association with the Sikorsky Historical Archives, providing guidance and information to all members and visitors.



VS-44 at the New England Air Museum



The Harry Hleva Award

“The Harry Hleva Award” was created by the Sikorsky Field Service (FSR) Organization in 2013 to honor him for his 37 year career service to Sikorsky Aircraft. The award will be given annually to the FSR who has demonstrated superior performance in supporting the customer, and representing Sikorsky with a high degree of professionalism and integrity. Harry Hleva and Dan Libertino were the first Sikorskyites honored with the award for their lifetime careers in Field Service.

Help Us Preserve the Igor Sikorsky Heritage

Igor I. Sikorsky Historical Archives
 MS S578A
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Life Membership	\$250
3 Year Membership	\$50
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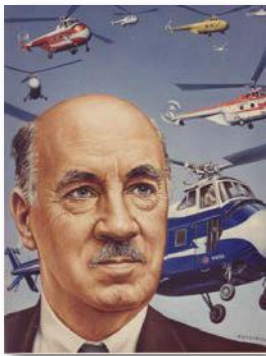


Harry M. Hleva

June 10, 1919 - October 12, 2015

After a long career with Sikorsky Aircraft Harry became the Director of the Sikorsky Historical Archives.

Newsletter designed and edited by Lee Jacobson and archive members with graphic art assistance by Jodi Buckley.



Harry Hleva shared the same honorable human characteristic with Igor Sikorsky that is best epitomized by the following quote written by an unknown author:

“That Man is a Success who strives quietly to make his corner of the world a little bit better.”



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