



AERO MUSEUM NEWSLETTER



Gus Miskell working on a customer's Howard DGA

Port Townsend Aero Museum Summer Newsletter 2023

Mornings of brilliant sunshine or mornings of low-level marine layer can only mean one thing at the **Port Townsend Aero Museum**.... Summertime has once again returned to the Pacific Northwest. This June marks the twenty-second anniversary of the Port Townsend Aero Museum. Located at the Jefferson County International Airport in Port Townsend Washington, our museum display building now features over 18,000 square feet of vintage aircraft, artwork, and aviation memorabilia from years gone by. In this latest edition of our newsletter, I will update you on what is going on at the Port Townsend Aero Museum.

For the first-time reader, here is a little background information on the aero museum. The Port Townsend Aero Museum was founded in 2001 by **Jerry and Peggy Thuotte**, both retired

from United Airlines, as a publicly owned 501 (c) 3 non-profit corporation with the goal of providing education opportunities and mentorship to our local teenage population through the restoration, maintenance, and operation of antique and classic aircraft. Twenty-two years later, and that is exactly what we are still offering to the young people involved in the program at the Port Townsend Aero Museum. Currently we have seventeen teenagers between the ages of thirteen and eighteen volunteering at the museum, all of whom are involved in our private pilot flight training program, working to earn their pilot's license at no cost to them or their families.

If you happen to live on the peninsula and frequent Highway 19 on your way to Port Townsend, you may have noticed that the

**Michael Payne, Director
Port Townsend Aero Museum**

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Jefferson County
International Airport
Port Townsend, Washington



The museum's beautiful 1946 Globe Swift GC-1A



Brody and Noah hang PTAM sign on new expansion.



Payton flying the museum's Piper J3 Cub with the doors wide open!



The PTAM crew laying new sod in front of the addition.



CFI Seth Mulhausen with PTAM private pilot Olivia Nodolf



CFI Carl Nepute with new private pilot Gabriel Minor

museum building has recently expanded to the south. After several years of planning, negotiating, and construction, our south addition is finally finished! This expansion, made possible by a grant from the **Hanson Family Foundation** in the memory of **Harold Hanson**, adds nearly 6,000 sq ft of new floor space for the display of both aircraft and aviation artwork. For the last couple of years, this project has been a major focus of work for our youth volunteers as they have helped, as allowed by the contractor, in the construction and completion of this expansion, gaining valuable work experience while helping to keep costs down in the process. Finally, on the morning of July 27th after one last building inspection, we were granted a Conditional Occupancy Permit! The following day we started moving aircraft into the new south "wing" of the Port Townsend Aero Museum. Our current permit is "conditional" pending a number of outdoor plantings we need to do to satisfy a wetlands buffer zone mitigation requirement. This fall we will complete the plantings and have our permanent Occupancy Permit.

We are extremely fortunate that nearly all the antique and classic aircraft on display at the Port Townsend Aero Museum are fully operational, something that is becoming less common at aviation museums around the country. Keeping this many aircraft in flying condition can only be accomplished with help from our teenage volunteers and

donors. In addition to the museum's display building that is open to the public, the Port Townsend Aero Museum has a large restoration building with a separate paint and fabric building. It's inside maintenance and fabric buildings that you can find myself and **Kevin Vogel**, the museum shop manager, working with teenage volunteers on aircraft restoration and repair projects. Over the years, the **Port Townsend Aero Museum** has gained a good reputation for the selection of our museum display aircraft, and for the quality of restoration and paint work we do in our shop. It's only through the help of our volunteers and donors that we are able to maintain this high standard of museum excellence.

When our young volunteers are not helping in the maintenance shop or busy with running the retail side of the Port Townsend Aero Museum, they are involved in our flight training program. In the last six months we have had four of our teenage volunteers earn their Private Pilot License! This last January, seventeen-year-old identical twins, **Gavin and Gabriel Minor** both passed their private pilot check ride on the same day, something their FAA examiner said he could not ever remember happening before. Both twins have since received tail-wheel endorsements and are currently getting checked out in several of the antique aircraft we have in our collection. In June, eighteen-year-old **Amelia Sinopole** passed her FAA Private Pilot check ride and is now a licensed



Airplane moving day! The museum's Fairchild 24 going into the addition.

Private Pilot! Amelia is now working on getting her tail-wheel endorsement. Our latest Port Townsend Aero Museum teenage volunteer to earn a private pilot license is eighteen-year-old **Noah Kaser**, who on July 4th passed his FAA check ride. These new pilots are exceptional young individuals with unlimited potential!

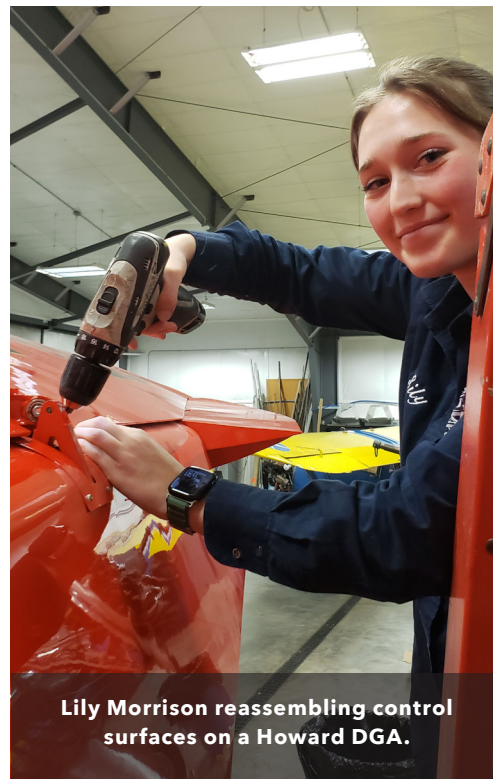
Each Fall we say goodbye to our teenage senior volunteers who leave us as they begin the next chapter in their lives, college and career. Among those leaving this year will be **Lily Morrison**, our longest serving youth volunteer. Lily will be heading to the University of Southern California where she will be pursuing a degree in engineering. **Noah Kaser**, will be moving to Seattle where he will attend Shoreline Community College before transferring to the University of Washington as he works towards a degree in aeronautical engineering. Finally, **Amelia Sinopole** will be leaving us as she enters the



Gavin and Gabriel Miner proudly displaying their new private pilot licenses!

University of Washington where she's been accepted into their engineering program. The leadership of these young adults will be missed. But just as one door closes, another opens, and our volunteer waitlist will allow some of these students to join the Port Townsend Aero Museum program.

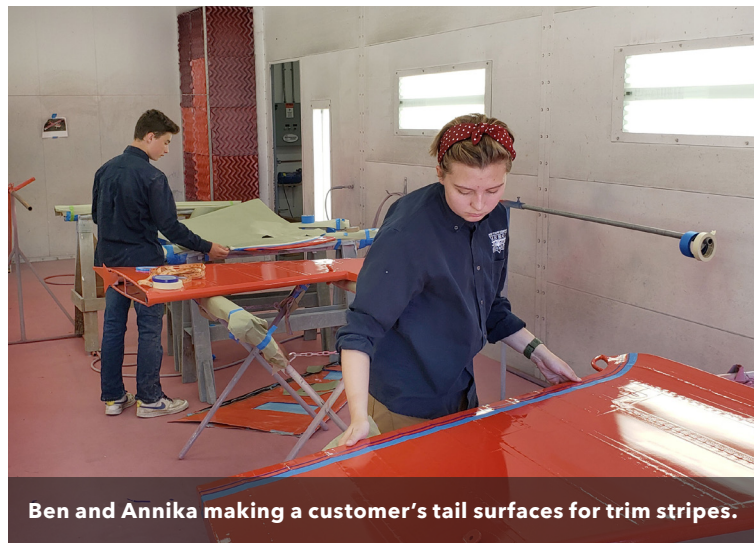
Every so often I get the questions "What ever happened to?", or "Have you heard from and what are they up to?" Of course, these questions are referring to past volunteers, now young adults with careers of their very own. This list is long, but some of our most recent "shooting stars" include **Maria Morrison**, who after graduating Duke University with honors in 2022 spent this last year earning her master's degree at Cambridge University in the UK. This fall Maria will be working on a second master's degree in Israel, before leaving for Harvard Law School in the fall of 2024. **Jacob Kirschbaum** graduated from the University of North Dakota's aviation program in 2022 and for the past year he's been flying twin engine aircraft for an aerial surveying company. Having earned the required experience, Jake recently applied with Net Jets, and knowing his skill as a pilot, he'll be flying for them as soon as they open his application! **Christoph Webber** also graduated the University of North Dakota in 2022 and for the last year he had been flying high performance aerobatic aircraft in Las Vegas for a company called Sky Combat Ace before taking a job last



Lily Morrison reassembling control surfaces on a Howard DGA.

month as a corporate Gulfstream (very expensive jet) pilot. **Harrison Shinohara** graduated from Washington State University this spring with his Mechanical Engineering degree and is currently exploring his engineering employment options and offers. **Seth Mulhausen**, who graduated from our program prior to Jake and Christoph's entering, has been flying freight for Atlas Air, the world's largest operator of Boeing 747 freighter aircraft. Finally, **Ross Patton**, one of our early volunteers, is now a successful Edward Jones investment advisor. Ross is now managing two endowment accounts for the Port Townsend Aero Museum, helping to ensure a healthy financial future for our youth program and the museum. Each of the amazing individuals mentioned above still finds time to volunteer their very valuable time at the Port Townsend Aero Museum, when possible, where they mentor our current cadre of young volunteers, showing them what is truly possible when one is willing to work towards their goal.

The Port Townsend Aero Museum's aircraft collection grew by one this June, and for us, it's a big one. Made possible by a grant from the **Hanson Family Foundation**, we were able to purchase a beautiful 1951 Cessna



Ben and Annika making a customer's tail surfaces for trim stripes.



Diamond Point Summer 2022



Brody, Lily, Noah, and Seth after setting up our new and very heavy display cabinets



Maria and Lily Morrison laying out the stripes on a customers Citabria restoration.



Peter up front flying the museum's Travel Air biplane.

195 aircraft. This Cessna had been owned by the same gentleman for the last thirty-eight years, and although this airplane was not on the market, we were able to obtain it with the help of John Gourley, a friend of the owner and a supporter of the aero museum. When Bill Sleeper, our Board of Trustees President, and I finally met with the owner to discuss the purchase of this aircraft, I quickly realized he was interviewing the museum as a possible home for his aircraft as much as we were questioning him about the history of his aircraft. By the time our meeting ended, Bill and I were convinced it would be a perfect addition to the museum collection and the seller was convinced the Port Townsend Aero Museum was the perfect home! With the construction of our expansion finished, our youth volunteers have returned to work on the restoration of our 1946 Ercoupe, an airplane that was donated to us by the **Museum of Flight in Seattle**. They are currently learning the Poly-Fiber aircraft fabric covering process as they install new fabric covering on the Ercoupe

wings. If you would like to learn more about and see more of our aircraft collection, please visit the Museum's website at www.ptaeromuseum.com.

A question I get asked quite often by first time visitors to the Port Townsend Aero Museum after they have gone through the facility is "Where do you get the money to support an operation like this?". This question is usually followed by, "Do you get any Government or State money?". The look of surprise is almost always the same when I tell them that the Port Townsend Aero Museum has never accepted Federal, State, or local government funding as a means of supporting the operation. Indeed, from the very start of this museum back in 2001, the funding necessary to maintain and grow this business has been provided by private donors and **not** tax dollars.

As you might have guessed, it takes a sizeable amount of funding to keep this program running throughout the year. The Port Townsend Aero Museum, a





Jeff Omera from Stratolaunch talking about advances in Space Age materials.



Ben, Gus, and Peter getting the museum's Aeronca C3 ready to hang.

publicly owned non-profit 501(c)3, is only as successful as it is because of the hard work of our staff and volunteers, and because of the support and funding we receive from very generous individuals who support our efforts to make a positive difference in the lives of the teenagers in our program, and in our local aviation community. The program we have created depends heavily upon your support. No donation should be considered too small or too large. Every dollar donated will go a long way to ensure the Port Townsend Aero Museum can continue working to provide a brighter future for the young people in our program for generations to come.

I've mentioned it in past newsletters, but it bears repeating as it has been brought to my attention by several supporters that the Port Townsend Aero Museum should be considered an option for those faced with mounting federal taxes on an RMD (required minimum distribution) from your retirement account. For those of you in the

position to make the choice, selecting the Port Townsend Aero Museum as the recipient of your RMD will not only eliminate your need to pay the tax, but will contribute much needed funding to the Aero Museum. You'll pay less in taxes, and in return, your donation will play a big role in helping to elevate the kids in our program into the leaders of tomorrow.

If you would like to set up a Port Townsend Aero Museum bequest in your will or living trust, please give me a call and I'll put you in touch with someone who specializes in this form of giving. Your gift will continue to give for generations to come. Our progress can only continue with your support. All donations, whether material or monetary, are tax deductible.

Thank you for your continued support and have a wonderful summer!

Mike



Olivia Nodolf returning to PTAM as a licensed private pilot after a successful FAA check ride as she is greeted by future a pilot named Grace.



Retired United Airlines Captain and PTAM Vice President Terry O'Brien going over the details with PTAM pilots Harrison, Jake, and Henry.





Be sure to visit our new
expansion, made possible by the
Hanson Family Foundation



PTAM was well represented at
the Diamond Point Fly-In with
Annika, Amelia, and Addisyn.

Learn more about **PTAM** at ptaeromuseum.com

Open 9-4 Wednesday through Sunday.

Closed Thanksgiving & Christmas Day

Membership Program

| | |
|------------|---------------------------------|
| Individual | \$35.00 (annual) |
| Family | \$50.00 (annual) |
| Supporter | \$250.00 (annual) |
| Sponsor | \$500.00 (annual) |
| Patron | \$1000.00 (lifetime membership) |
| Visionary | \$5000.00 (lifetime membership) |

Thanks for
your donation!



Membership Form

Name: _____

Address: _____

Phone Number: _____ Email: _____

Individual ☐ Family ☐ Supporter ☐ Sponsor ☐ Patron ☐ Visionary ☐

Please return this form to:

PT Aero Museum, 105 Airport Road, Port Townsend, WA 98368