



AERO MUSEUM NEWSLETTER

Gabriel Miner assembling a customer's N3N biplane.



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

Board of Trustees

William Sleeper
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David Wilkinson
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Mailing Address:

105 Airport Road
Port Townsend, WA 98368

Phone: 360-379-5244

www.ptaeromuseum.com

**Jefferson County
International Airport**
Port Townsend, Washington

Port Townsend Aero Museum Summer Newsletter 2024

The parting of winter clouds and the clearing of spring showers means it is time for another edition of the **Port Townsend Aero Museum** summer newsletter. In this edition I'll bring you up to date on the Aero Museum collection of aircraft and artwork, what we have been working on in our restoration shop and introduce you to some of the teenage volunteers helping to run this operation as they mature into responsible young adults, several of whom are now fully licensed Private Pilots!

This June marked the twenty-third-year anniversary of the Port Townsend Aero Museum here at the Jefferson County International Airport. Founded by **Jerry and Peggy Thuotte**, both retired from United Airlines, we are a publicly owned 501 (c) 3 non-profit corporation with a mission of providing education opportunities and mentorship to our local teenage population

through the restoration, maintenance, and operation of antique and classic aircraft. This September it will be one year since we received our occupancy permit for the new South Wing expansion of our display building, an expansion that was made possible by a grant from the **Hanson Family Foundation**. This expansion has provided us with much-needed display space and ample walkways for our guests, along with natural south lighting. If you haven't been to visit during the past year, I highly recommend you stop in during your next trip to Port Townsend. You'll be pleasantly surprised with the changes here at the Port Townsend Aero Museum.

In keeping with the museum's mission of restoration, preservation and operation of classic and antique aircraft through the involvement of our teenage volunteers, this last February we added another flying aircraft to our collection. When



EAA Chapters 430 and 406 flew to PTAM for a group tour last fall!



A special thanks to the David Clark headset company who for many years has repaired our PTAM DC headsets for No Charge!



This beautiful Skybolt was donated to PTAM this spring by a long time supporter.

Sally Joy, the long-time owner of a beautiful 1947 Beech Bonanza, lost her husband Thomas Joy, she decided to donate their beloved Bonanza to the Port Townsend Aero Museum. Knowing it would be kept in excellent flying condition while being flown by young pilots working with instructors to gain flight experience was the reason Sally knew the Port Townsend Aero Museum would be the perfect home for her aircraft. She was right! It has only been a couple of months and already **Gavin Miner**, **Gabriel Miner**, and **Brody Anderson**, three teenage volunteers here at the museum who earned their Private Pilots Licenses through our program, are all working with museum flight instructors to earn their complex and high-performance endorsements in this 1947 Beech Bonanza.

To many of our guests, the Beech Bonanza looks like a “modern” aircraft when sitting next to the many beautiful “tube and fabric” antique aircraft we have on display alongside the Bonanza. As history would have it, the “new” 1947 Beech 35 Bonanza was the first post World War II designed aircraft to leave the Beech factory. At that time, and up until 1949, a person walking into a Beech Aircraft dealership and looking to purchase a new aircraft would have the choice between the Beech Staggerwing, a tube and fabric complex biplane with a 450 hp radial engine that was cutting edge technology in its time of design, or, the new Beech Bonanza, a newly designed all metal retractable gear aircraft with an innovative V-tail, and

boasting performance that matched the Staggerwing in many aspects. The Bonanza is a “modern” aircraft, but only because it was designed and built by engineers and craftsman seventy-seven years ago who were looking towards the future as they were living in a world of antiques.

There is good news in the museum restoration and maintenance shop! After eight years of doing an exceptional job as the museum’s shop manager and Airframe and Powerplant (A&P) mechanic, **Kevin Vogel** has taken the next step in the aircraft repair certification process and earned his Inspection Authorization (IA) license from the FAA. Having Kevin as a second IA will be a wonderful benefit to the aero museum and to our service customers. In our restoration shop we are currently working on two large customer restoration projects. One is the fabric replacement and complete refinish on a customer’s Naval Aircraft Factory N3N biplane, and the other is fitting new sheet metal to a customer’s Waco UPF-7 biplane. Once properly fitted, the UPF-7 Waco fuselage will be ready for the installation of new fabric covering and then painting. Both the N3N and UPF-7 are big jobs, and it is only with the help of our young volunteers that we can get jobs like this completed while still running a world class aviation museum.

From the beginning the youth volunteer program at the Port Townsend Aero Museum has been a central focus of the

work we do here at the museum. Currently we have seventeen young volunteers between the ages of thirteen years and eighteen years of age, each of whom has agreed to volunteer a minimum of one day a week here at the museum. On any given day these volunteers can be found: Running the front entry desk where they become the face of our entire operation; Assisting with maintenance of both museum and customer aircraft in our maintenance hangar; Helping to replace the fabric covering on both museum and customer aircraft in our paint and fabric hangar; Maintaining the extensive landscaping and grounds around the outside of the museum’s three large buildings; Sitting through a Private Pilot ground school class in our library/classroom with instructor Tom Lemanski, a retired FAA employee, pilot, and long time PTAM volunteer; Taking a flight lesson in the museum’s Cessna 172 with our chief flight instructor **Jeff Beres**. With such a diverse operation there is seldom a time when our volunteers are lacking for meaningful museum work.

This last June, longtime museum volunteer **Brody Anderson**, passed his Private Pilot check ride and became a licensed pilot at the age of seventeen! His check ride did not come easily having to schedule his exam around the unpredictable NW spring weather no less than six times. A huge thank you is owed to **Summer Martell**, our local FAA DPE (Designated Pilot Examiner) for working with Brody on scheduling and



Port Director Eron Berg watches as museum staff recover an owner's Navion whose engine stopped on takeoff.



A customer owned Navy N3N biplane getting disassembled in the museum shop.

rescheduling the exam. Brody is currently working on his tail-wheel and complex endorsements. I'll tell you, because Brody would never mention it, but on the same day he passed his check ride, later that evening, Brody learned he was Valedictorian and the top math student at Sequim High School Class of 2024. It was a pretty good day for him, and I'm happy knowing that the aero museum played a part.

In the world of aviation all licensed pilots at one point began their flying careers as student pilots. Currently the Port Townsend Aero Museum has fourteen student pilots and three licensed pilots in our volunteer flight program. Of our student pilots, both **Ben Mellow** and **Ian Eisenman** soloed in the museum's Cessna 172 shortly after turning sixteen years of age, or in Ben's case, on the day of his sixteenth birthday. Now that Ben and Ian are soloed, they can complete a portion of their flight training towards their pilot's license without having to have a flight instructor onboard the aircraft. Just imagine, a teenager at sixteen years of age, taking up a hundred-thousand-dollar aircraft that they have not

paid a fee to rent, no family relation to, are flying by themselves as directed by a flight instructor, and then returning safely, all on their own. That is a huge accomplishment for any adult, and for a teenager it can be a life-changing event in terms of the confidence it builds. This is what the Port Townsend Aero Museum is about, helping young people find confidence in their abilities by offering experiences designed to help them become successful adults.

Speaking of Successful young adults, the following is a brief update on what a few of our recent aero museum graduates are doing in their young adult lives: **Henry Brown** will be a Junior this fall at Central Washington University where he is enrolled in their aviation department working toward his bachelor's degree in aviation, holds an instrument rating with 250 hours, and will

soon have his commercial can CFI ratings on his way becoming a professional pilot.

Noah Kaser will be starting his second year at Shoreline Community College this fall before transferring to the University of Washington where he plans on earning a degree in aeronautical engineering. **Jacob Kurshbaum** has left his job at Sol Aerial Surveys and is now flying as a First Officer for Net Jets. He also volunteers at the aero museum as a certified flight instructor whenever he is available. **Lily Morrison** will be starting her sophomore year at USC this fall where she is working towards her degree in engineering. Lily recently told me that the mechanical knowledge and experience she gained as a volunteer in the Port Townsend Aero Museum restoration shop has given her an advantage over many of her fellow USC engineering classmates.

Maria Morrison, after finishing her second Master's Degree in Israel this last year, will be starting her first year at Harvard Law School.

Seth Mulhausen graduated from Rocky Mountain College in 2019 and has been flying freight for Atlas Air in Boeing 737s with his goal to move up to their



PTAM's 1928 Travel Air 2000.



Brody, Ian, Ben, Allisyn, and Myles working together stitcing fabric on an N3N biplane wing.



PTAM's 1938 Cessna Airmaster on display!

747s. **Olivia Nodolf** has taken her Private Pilot License to the University of Arizona where she will be starting her Junior year studying to be a speech pathologist. **Ross Patton** and his wife are raising a young family while working as an Edwards Jones Investment manager in Kingston Washington. Ross is the aero museum's official and only investment manager. **Amelia Sinopole** will be a sophomore this year at the University of Washington where she is enrolled in their engineering program. **Harrison Shinohara** is currently working full-time in the restoration shop at the Port Townsend Aero Museum where his degree in mechanical engineering has proven to be invaluable. And finally, **Christoph Webber** has given up getting paid to haul thrill seekers around upside down over the Nevada desert and replaced it with getting paid to fly a corporate Gulfstream jet all over the world. Every one of the young people listed above are exceptional young adults, and every one of them had, and still have, a connection to the Port Townsend Aero Museum.

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. At the top of our senior volunteer short time list are **Gavin Minor** and his twin brother **Gabriel Miner**. Both Gavin and Gabriel have been volunteering at the aero museum since they turned thirteen years old. They are now eighteen years old and will both be leaving the museum

to start at the University of Washington where they will be working towards engineering degrees. Right under G&G on our senior volunteer short time list is **Brody Anderson**. Brody will be heading to Central Washington University this fall to pursue a degree in Zoology. And finally, **Payton Mcphail** will be leaving the aero museum to pursue his dream of flying professionally by enrolling at a local flight school. The leadership of these young adults will surely be missed. But just as one door closes, another opens, and our volunteer waitlist will allow some new students to join the Port Townsend Aero Museum program.

This year the museum Board of Trustees voted on and approved a \$15,000 **Port Townsend Aero Museum college scholarship** for the top three graduating students in our program! It was our greatest pleasure to present Gavin Miner, Gabriel Miner, and Brody Anderson aero museum checks in the amount of \$5,000 each to be used to help them and their families with their college expenses. I have no doubt, just as this scholarship money will make a difference in the lives of these young students, one day in the not-too-distant future that these young people will make a difference in the future for all of us.

A short note on up-coming summer events involving the aero museum.... If you are planning a trip to Port Townsend this summer to visit the Port Townsend



New tire time! Gus and Sebastian getting the new N3N tires ready to mount.



16 year old Ben Mello getting flight time in Bill Sleeper's 1944 Beech Staggerwing.



Ivan Miller replacing SCAT tubing on the Bonanza.



Sally and Thomas Joy's beautiful 1947 Bonanza and 1949 Studebaker are now part of PTAM's permanent collection.



A special event becomes extra special in the Aero Museum!

Aero Museum, you might want to consider August 3rd 2024 for your date. On August 3rd the aero museum will be co-hosting the **"Jefferson County Airport Day"** along with the Port of Port Townsend. The event will run from 10:00 AM until 3:00 PM. This will be the 100th year anniversary for the Port of Port Townsend, and Airport Day will include antique and modern aircraft on display to the public, a classic car show on the infield, hot air balloon rides, helicopter rides, food, live music, and much more. So be sure to mark it on your calendar! On October 26th the Port Townsend Aero Museum will host our **annual dinner auction** fundraising event. This year our caterer, GBF Catering, will be returning to a sit-down style dinner rather than hors d'oeuvres as we have done the last few years. This is an invitation only event with limited seating and we'll be sending out invitations this September.

With all this newsletter information about airplanes, displays, kids, scholarships, and events, you are probably wondering how it is we stay in business financially year after year. 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 is a publicly owned non-profit 501(c)3 that only has three full-time employees and a handful of part time employees. The museum is only as successful as it is because of the hard work of our staff, our invaluable 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 our teenage volunteers. 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 and for the generations of young people yet to come. It should also be noted that 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.

The Port Townsend Aero Museum can also be considered as 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 this 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 part in helping to elevate the kids in our program today into the leaders of tomorrow. Our progress can only continue with your support. All donations, whether material or monetary, are one hundred percent tax deductible.

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

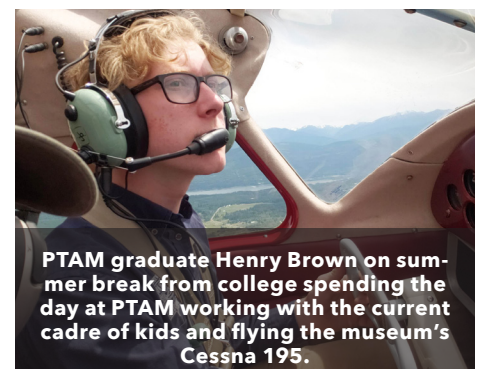
Mike



Sebastain ready for takeoff!



Ben, Abby, and Sebastian hanging display propellers.

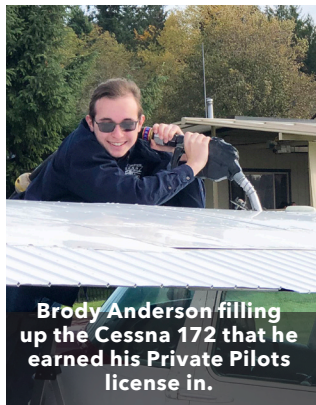


PTAM graduate Henry Brown on summer break from college spending the day at PTAM working with the current cadre of kids and flying the museum's Cessna 195.



Gavin Miner, Gabriel Miner and Brody Anderson were each awarded a \$5,000 PTAM Board of Trustees Scholarship this year

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



Brody Anderson filling up the Cessna 172 that he earned his Private Pilots license in.



Gavin Miner was all smiles after flying with Steve Craig in his RV8.

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

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Please return this form to:

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