The Queen of the Sky

Restoration of the VS-44A Flying Boat

IGOR I. SIKORSKY HISTORICAL ARCHIVES INC.

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The Saga

Saga of the Queen of the Sky
There is not room to tell the full story of the VS-44A here. A book has been written by Harry Pember and a very good video (“The Queen of the Sky”) has been made by TV Station WGBY in Massachusetts which tells the full story of the aircraft and of the involvement of people like Charles Blair and his wife Maureen O’Hara Blair, Dick Probert, and many, many others. The book and video may be purchased at the Sikorsky Store, and at the New England Aircraft Museum Store.

The people who steered the final course to the New England Aircraft Museum were Eugene Buckley, Tony Ravino (Chairman, VS-44A Restoration), and Harry Hleva, who with the assistance of Sikorsky Aircraft, and many volunteers from the ranks of Sikorsky and Avco-Lycoming retirees and others, restored the aircraft to the condition and placed it where it can be seen by the public of today and for many generations to come. This Edition of Heritage is dedicated to all these players in the VS-44A story.

Timeline

Nov. 4 1987: Restoration Opening ceremonies
1994: Engine restoration begins. Engines obtained from the Marines Corps Museum (1), Long Island School of Aviation (2), and New England Air Museum (1).
1995: Interior work begins on flight deck and passenger areas. Most are restored to original condition from donated and purchased materials.
Winter/Spring 1997: Center wing section moved to Windsor Locks for mounting ad other finishing work. Interior restoration complete. Preparations to move hull to same location.
June 18 1997: VS-44 Hull is transported to the museum. Center section installed. Volunteers are shuttled to the museum to continue restoration.
Summer 1998: The aircraft is painted in the original colors of American Export Lines and moved into it’s final home at the Museum.
Nov 19, 1998: Recommissioning ceremony held at the New England Air Museum

Heritage Editor John Daniell (jdaniell@madriver.com)
It took many volunteers, only a few of whom are shown, to reverse years of neglect.
Finishing the Job

Above and right: Instrument panel, Engines and Radio Operators station after restoration.

Engine installation at the Museum

Below and right: Finishing off the Job.

Join the Sikorsky Historical Archives today!
They were There
An Evening of Remembrance
with Reeve Lindbergh and Sergei Sikorsky

The I.I. Sikorsky Historical Archives together with American Helicopter Association International held an evening of reminiscence at the Bridgeport Holiday Inn during October 2001. Talks were featured by Reeve Lindbergh and Sergei Sikorsky. During the evening three framed copies of a new painting by Joe Keogan, celebrating the day in August 1934 when an S-42 flying boat flown by Boris Sergieevsky broke eight world records, were presented to Reeve, Sergei, and The New England Air Museum. The painting depicts the aircraft passing the Stratford Point Light at the end of the record breaking flight.

See us on the web at sikorskyarchives.com
Welcome to New Members

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The Archives welcomes the following new members who contribute to the preservation of the History of Igor I. Sikorsky and his genius:

James Cycon
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