The Spirit of Carnauba

The story of the S.C. Johnson Replica Sikorsky S-38

Photo: Jim Koopnick
Building the Replica

It all began with HF Johnson, President of the S.C. Johnson Wax Company of Racine, Wisconsin. It was his idea to make an aerial tour of the regions in Brazil that were home to the canauba palm trees, the source of wax, obtained by beating it out of the palm fronds. In 1935 he bought an S-38 from Sikorsky, and made his idea reality. The trip was very successful, and he said to his son Sam “I hope you will be able to make the same trip some day”.

In 1997 Sam and family members spent time in the Pacific looking for the remains of that machine sold to Shell Oil, and subsequently lost in an accident but without success. In 1998, Sam had Born Again Replicas of Racine WI build an S-38 replica.

The idea of a replica started one day when R.W. “Buzz” Kaplan, retired CEO of Owatonna Tool Company and Sam Johnson were trading stories about their flights. Sam mentioned that he was planning to fly to Brazil from Racine Wisconsin following the same route, as his father. To cut a long story short, Born Again Replicas embarked on construction, with the help of numerous enthusiasts, and Sikorsky Aircraft. Sergei Sikorsky and his brothers Nikolai and Igor Jr., pitched in to locate drawings and information as did Graham Tuke and others in Sikorsky Customer service, and Phil Spalla of Engineering. It made a maiden flight on August 13 1998, and landed on water for the first time at the end of that month.

The following year, along with his son Fisk Johnson, they retraced the route of the original tour as closely as possible, accompanied by the S. C. Johnson S-76.

The assistance of EAA in the preparation of this Issue of Heritage is acknowledged
The Finished Product

The Born Again Replicas Johnson S-38

All photos this page: Jim Koepnick

Unattributed photos from S.C. Johnson files.
The Voyage to South America

Photo: Jim Koepnick
The Igor I. Sikorsky Historical Archives Inc. Board of Directors met in July and elected a new Board of Directors, and new Trustees. Those elected are as follows:

**Officers**
- President: Ronald Schlegel
- Director: Harry Hleva
- Assistant Director: Harry Pember
- Secretary/Treasurer: Thomas Lawrence
- Membership Chairman: Thomas Lawrence

**Board of Directors**
- Harry Pember
- Caroline Morrisey
- Harry Hleva
- Joe Keogan
- Ronald Schlegel
- Carl MacDonald
- Thomas Lawrence
- Paul Martin
- Sergei Sikorsky
- John Daniell
- Igor Sikorsky Jr.
- Robert Brady
- Andy White
- Nikolai Sikorsky
- Sergei Sikorsky Jr.
- Jim Bohan
- Arthur Linden

**Trustees**
- Ray Altieri
- Frank Hunter
- Frank Delear
- William Paul
- Igor Sikorsky III
- Louis Knapp
- Peter Savo
- Bruce Vander Mark
- Aly Dobbins
- Marie Aspinwall
- George Sikorsky
- Carl Bobrow
- Tanya von York

Items discussed during the meeting:
- The board is planning to reprint the Igor Sikorsky autobiography *The Story of the Winged S.*
- Tom Lawrence is arranging a “Brown Bag” lecture series to be held in a Sikorsky Engineering Conference Room during lunch-hour.
- The Archives will be videotaping interviews with past company presidents and other retirees.
- Joe Keogan has finished a new painting featuring the S-42 over the Stratford lighthouse during the record breaking flight of August 1, 1934.
- The Archives was able to provide assistance in the form of videotapes to the company Legal department concerning a recent lawsuit.
- The “Sikorsky Heritage” newsletter is now distributed within the company by the Communications department.

The Archives can now be contacted direct at iisha@snet.net

Join the Archives today and help preserve the heritage of Igor I. Sikorsky.
We are pleased to welcome the following new members who will help make the history of Igor Sikorsky and his achievements available to future generations:

Ronald E. Crooker  Amy Curtin
Peter Wright  John S. Foster, Jr.
Ron Pavluvcik  Tami Tyler Slowey
Santoisam Agostino  Harold G. Murray
Colin Green  M. P. ”Spike” Spigener
Wesley Thompson  Jesse Thompson

JOIN THE ARCHIVES

Igor I. Sikorsky Historical Archives
MS S 578A
6900 Main Street
Stratford, CT 06615-9129

Life Membership $125
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Please send a check or money order (do not send cash) payable to The Igor I. Sikorsky Historical Archives, Inc.

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