



In Search of El dorado

A daily journal of my travels and adventures in my.....Search for Eldorado

Hello to Family & Friends

Saturday, February 27th 2021 Day 41



As I drove past the air museum this morning I noticed the 'closed' sign was still on the door. I turned around in the cul-de-sac and as I came back past there was a man taking down the closed sign and putting up an open sign. How's that for perfect timing.

Right – Well Gpops, it looks like you have your work cut out for you next year on number 100.

This turned out to be a pretty good sized hangar that the museum occupied. I thought it would just be about the history of Stinson Field, but it covered from before the Wright Brothers to modern times. Unfortunately, it had a lot, LOT of old photos and typed information.....

Col. Charles McGee, USAF (Ret), 100th Birthday

Col. McGee, one of the oldest living Tuskegee Airmen flew a Cirrus Vision Jet from Fredrick, Maryland to Dover AFB, Del to celebrate his 100th Birthday.

Col. McGee flew more than 400 combat missions during WWII, Korea, and Viet Nam.

A true legend among Fighter Pilots!





.....way more than I had time or the inclination to read. A lot of mannequins in uniforms, models, display cases, memorabilia, and so on. I did find some items of interest, such as the real Medal of Honor below. I include my hand to show the size of this huge medal.

The Medal of Honor is the highest award for heroism in military action which this Nation can bestow on a member of its Armed Forces. The first Medal of Honor won by an airman was awarded to Captain Edward V. Rickenbacker for aerial combat in 1918.



1950 International Fire Truck

This Truck served
Stinson Field from
1950 until 1980



1915

Mr. Claude J. Marty, Sr. bought this airplane from Katherine Stinson. The price was one city lot, one Chalmers automobile, and an unknown amount of cash.

Alright, then we got to the good stuff.



CURTISS MODEL D

This aircraft was the result of U.S. Signal Corps authorization by Congress to appropriate aircraft for the Army. Designated S.C.2, the Curtiss Model D entered testing at Ft. Sam Houston, Texas in April 1911. G.E.M. Kelly flew the trials on the morning of April 10. He took it up and shortly came in for a landing, hit the ground hard, and bounced back in the air. Climbing slowly, Kelly banked the airplane away from the tent area, suddenly lost control, and plummeted to his death. The S.C.2 was repaired and served as a trainer until being removed from service in 1914.

Curtiss Pushers were also used by some of Poncho Villa's mercenary pilots.





Old Barracks Area (1918)
Mitchell Road & Growden
Kelly Field No. 2

I passed these yesterday and thought they must be old barracks.



1928 WACO 10 WITH OX-6 ENGINE. USED FOR BARNSTORMING

If you've never seen the movie *The Great Waldo Pepper* it's worthwhile. Robert Redford for the ladies and great aerial footage for the guys.





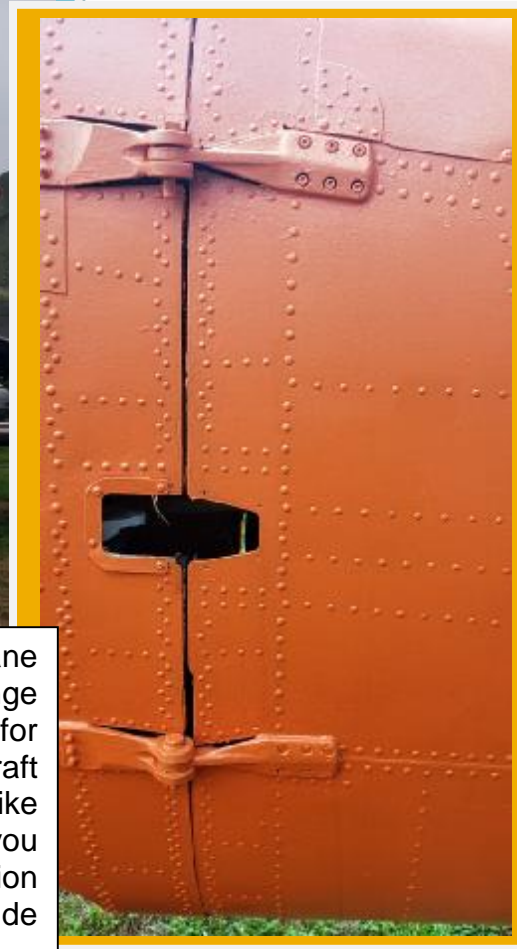
I bit of whimsy here.



I'm not sure what model this is as there are no info plaques on any of these planes out in the yard.



In May, 1912 a young woman, who was to play in important role in San Antonio Aviation, began her flying career at Cicero Field in Chicago. Katherine Stinson had convinced Max Lillie to teach her to fly in his Wright "B". (#3) After soloing on July 13, (picture #4) she rapidly became more involved in the aviation field.



In the background of the airplane photo above you can see the orange helicopter, with rotors folded for storage, most likely on an aircraft carrier. This tail section also folds like a door to help make it smaller. Do you realize that the entire tail rotor section is held on by 12 bolts? The other side is just a latch to secure it.

NEW
SEE/HEAR JFK'S
SPEECH AT BROOKS
AFB DAY BEFORE
HE WAS KILLED
(ASK DOCENT)

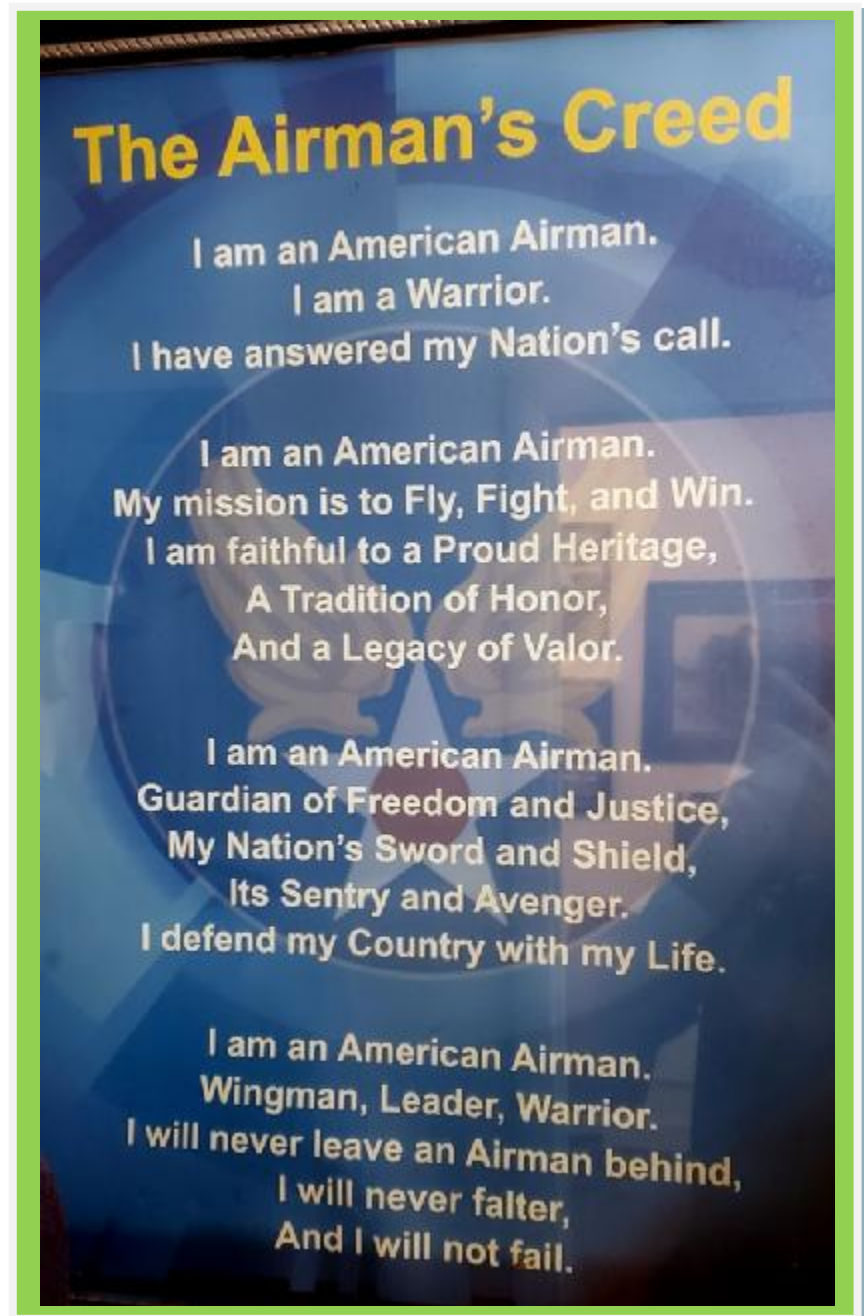
Interesting. I didn't watch the entire speech, but it made me want to find out who wrote Kennedy's speeches. Ted Sorenson wrote an autobiography in 2008 in which he also admitted ghost writing most of *Profiles in Courage* for Kennedy.



WWII U.S. Army Issue
Boxer Shorts

This museum covered things in such minute detail, they even had a pair of men's boxers from WWII.

A longer drive took me up to Garden Ridge and the SAMRA model train show. Pretty much a bust from my point of view. Eight bucks to get in (I forgot my dollar off coupon) to a average sized meeting room in a community center with one HO scale layout and one Z scale. I was done in fifteen minutes.

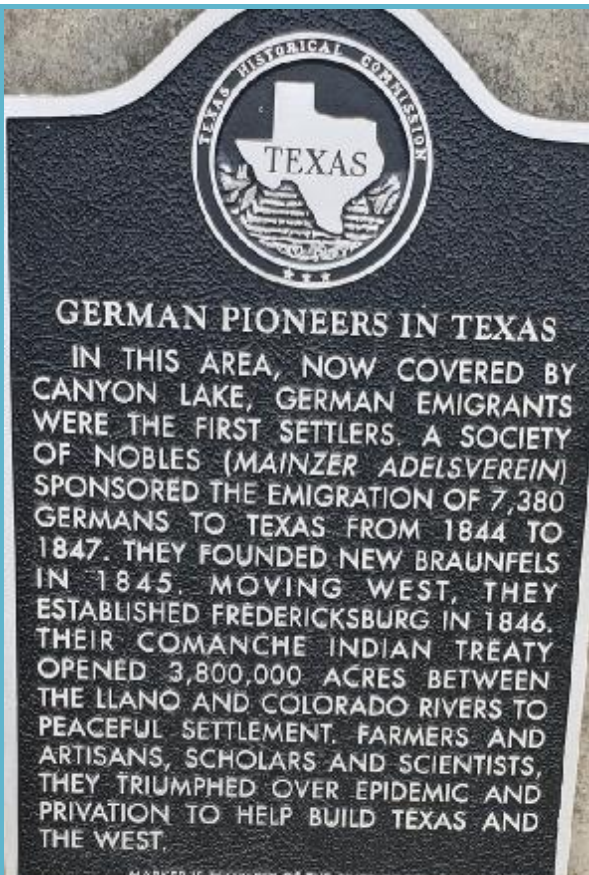


JAY F. FEIBELMAN
**GARDEN RIDGE
COMMUNITY CENTER**

I had high hopes too since they advertised it as the '45th annual' 'largest in San Antonio' model train show. Granted, Covid kept them from having some of the layouts on display, but San Antonio metro area is 2.4 million. Milwaukee metro is about 800k and their train show is huge, one of the largest in the country. Needless to say it was very disappointing. I did however, like the scene below on the HO layout.



Looking for something else to do I found Canyon Lake and Canyon Overlook Park. A canyon? I know I am getting into the Texas Hill Country, but, a canyon? The road there actually took me through some rock cuts and hills that were scenic and interesting. There are also Canyon Lake Gorge tours. Gorge tours? There's a gorge nearby? Now I am interested and research on the net followed. I will get to that a little later on.



I think they need some work on what they call an overlook. From the plaque to the left a path led downhill to a chain link fence which ran along the steep hillside. Trees grow on that hillside and all you can see is a little blue of water between the branches. I did hike down to near the water to get the photo below. Back to the top I followed the fence to try and find the gorge. I mean, a gorge is something fairly large, don't you think so?

The bottom photo is the Canyon Lake Dam. It's nice that they have a trail, a good wide one, along the entire top of the dam. It was quite a busy today.





I did find a break in the trees to get this photo of the spillway. All will be explained below.

2002 FLOOD EVENT ~ THE FACTS ~

July 6th - flood waters crested at 7 feet over the spillway at 67,000 cfs
Water continued to flow over the spillway for 6 weeks.

34 inches of rain was officially recorded in one week, which is as much rain as is normally recorded in a year in this area.

Enough water entered the lake to completely fill it 1.5 times.

Below Canyon Lake Dam, subdivisions flooded, property was damaged and roads washed out, but there was no loss of life.

CANYON LAKE GORGE ~ THE GEOLOGY ~

Well this sounds pretty cool right? Fossils, dinosaur tracks, waterfalls, pools, millions of years of geology revealed. I was looking forward to hiking this gorge. The pictures on the web look pretty nice. Then I read further down on the info board - Below

The Canyon Lake Gorge was created by the 2002 flood event and was eroded to depths up to 40 feet below the pre-flood terrain. A real example of extreme erosion!

For the protection of the Gorge and public safety, The Canyon Lake Gorge is open for *Guided Tours Only*.

The next guided tour is not until Monday.



From the canyon I followed River Rd, which was the highpoint of the day. It followed the winding Guadalupe River, crossing over several times. It was very reminiscent of driving along the rivers through the Appalachians in North Carolina, Tennessee and Virginia. No stops, a nice leisurely, winding, downhill road with very small towns, men in waders fishing the streams, signs for tubing, campsites along the river. Very enjoyable.

River Rd took me into New Braunfels. In Landa Park they have some hiking and another miniature train ride. But guess what, the park is closed.

Ok, enough. Time to find a spot to park. Most of the Walmarts in the area do not allow overnights. A Sam's Club is too far back south towards San Antonio. Buc-ees does not allow overnights. I found a Harvest Host site in New Braunfels, a winery I believe. Sorry, they already have someone for tonight. How about the Pilot truck stop? Believe you me, I have never had such a difficult time trying to find my way into the truck area of a truck stop. I wound up going two miles down the frontage road before I could turn around, then only found my way in by flowing a semi ahead of me.

As I sat there I was not impressed with their parking area, so I drove up to the auto portion of Pilot (a good ¼ mile drive) and here I sit. I will move when it's time for bed. Unless the pickup truck on one side and the sprinter van on the other side, both occupied, stay here for the night. Darn, I will have to move anyways, unless I want to sleep on the couch. Hmmmm....maybe tonight I'll sleep in the upper bunk. I only have to move some coats and my chair.

As I was stopped in New Braunfels to find a parking spot for the night I saw the black-tailed deer above. There are nine of them and I'm not sure they realize that seven are on one side of the fence and two are on the other side. I guess they will eventually.

Time for dinner. Bacon wrapped steak tonight. Mmm Mmm Good!

In the two hours I have been sitting here writing the newsletter, two ambulances, two firetrucks and four squads have come by with sirens blaring. Not all at one time but on three separate occasions. It could be a noisy night.

Until next time.....