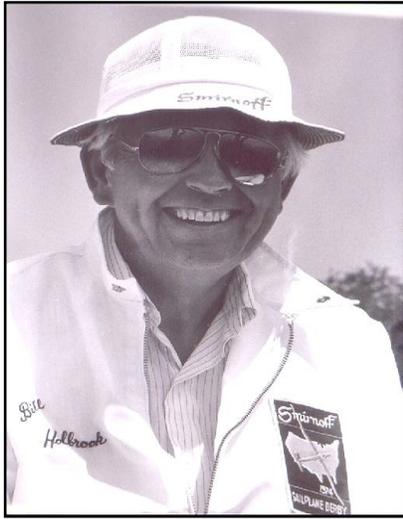


WILLIAM C. HOLBROOK (1974) (1921 -)



Bill Holbrook loves soaring competition so much that he wants to share it with others. In 1969 he joined with Ed Byars to develop and present the very popular and successful series on *Competition Soaring and Cross-Country Soaring*. These seminars were presented at SSA Conventions and elsewhere. They were published in book form and also as audio tapes. To quote Bill – “We fly a flag when we do certain things, and it says, 'Dedicated to making good pilots better.'”

He flew in and won the Smirnoff Derby in 1974 – a coast to coast competition from west to east consisting of a series of goal flights and sponsored by Heublein. He also flew all three major classes of national competition – with his best placing in Standard class at Chester, SC in 1973 where he was tenth in a field of 56.

It all started in 1921 when he was born in Akron, OH. He volunteered for the military in the early days of WW II, applied for and was accepted into the Aviation Cadet Program. Perhaps a sign of the future, his basic training was at the Army Airfield in Marfa, TX. He qualified in Air Sea Rescue Training flying a PB5Y-5A and served in an Emergency Rescue Squadron in the Pacific Theater until the end of the war. His squadron rescued over seven hundred men during their first year overseas.



Bill's A-2 Flight jacket

When he returned from the war, Bill became a corporate pilot first for Goodyear in Akron and then to his long time home in Cumberland, MD as chief pilot for Kelly Springfield Tire Company. It was there that he took up flying sailplanes in the late 1950s.

In May of 1972 he set a world goal and return record of 1,260.44 km (783.2 mi.) flying his Glasflügel H-301 from Lock Haven, PA to Hansonville, VA and return.

Bill Holbrook's badges are Silver #345 earned in 1959, Gold #197 earned in 1964 and Diamond # 251 (Intl #1235) completed in 1973. He made his 1000K Diploma #7 (Intl #10) in 1973.

His Smirnoff Derby win was against strong competition including three national champions and five world record achievers – Danny Pierson, Hannes Linke, Ken and Ross Briegleb, Karl Striedieck and Dick Schreder.



KELLY SPRINGFIELD TIME CO.

Bill Holbrook and his winning sailplane

Bill Holbrook was awarded the SSA Exceptional Achievement Award in 1973 for his world record flight.

He published several articles in *Soaring* magazine mostly about his goal of interesting fellow pilots in safe and fun competition and cross-country soaring through the Symposia he developed and presented with Ed Byars. In addition to the Proceedings of the Symposia, they published the book *Soaring Cross Country*. The book and especially the Symposia were credited with very much improving both the techniques of competition and cross country soaring but also the safety. Bill and Ed each received an SSA Exceptional Service award in 1974.



Symposium producers Bill Holbrook (left) and Ed Byars (right) compare notes on a Jantar brochure at the Techtra display.