

**Nowatka** – from page 1

At Councilman Nowatka’s generous suggestion, the event also served as a fundraiser for the Museum. Major sponsors included Continental Development Corporation, Van Lingen Towing, Inc., Exxon Mobil, Green Hills Memorial Park, La Caze Development Company, Supervisor Don Knabe, and the trustees of the Southern California Historic Aviation Foundation. Many thanks are owed to the participants, to Michelle Sprokkereef for donating her event planning services and to the volunteers of the Museum and the Torrance Civil Air Patrol for their efforts in creating and supporting a memorable and successful event.

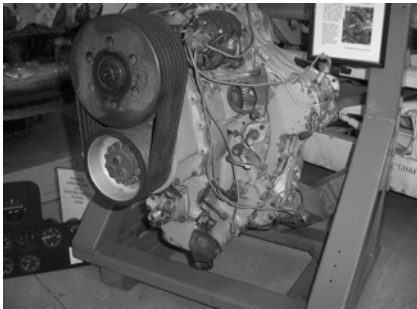


**What?... a Wankel?**

*Dave Bockelman*

The Western Museum of Flight has an unusual item in its power-plant inventory. The Wankel rotary aircraft engine, previously in storage, was recently cleaned up and put on display.

The Wankel rotary engine (not to be confused with rotary engines of the WWI era) is an internal combustion engine



which uses a rotor instead of reciprocating pistons to convert combustion pressure into a rotating motion. Its four-stroke cycle is normally generated in a space between the inside of an oval-like epitrochoid-shaped housing and a roughly triangular rotor. This design delivers smooth, high-rpm power from a compact, lightweight engine. Its superb power-to-weight ratio, reliability, and small frontal area make it particularly well suited to aircraft engine use.

The engine was invented by German engineer Felix Wankel who began development in the early 1950s before completing a working, running prototype in 1957. The concept was subsequently licensed to other companies who added more efforts and improvements in the 1950s and 1960s.

The first Wankel rotary-engine aircraft was the experimental Lockheed Q-Star civilian version of the United States Army’s reconnaissance QT-2, basically a powered Schweizer sailplane, in 1968 or 1969. It was powered by a 185 hp (138 kW) Curtiss-Wright RC2-60 Wankel rotary engine.

Aircraft Wankels have made a comeback in recent years, due to their advantages over other engines. They are increasingly being found in roles where their compact size and quiet operation is important, notably in drones or UAVs. Many companies and hobbyists adapt Mazda automobile rotary engines to aircraft use. Wankel engines are also becoming increasingly popular in homebuilt experimental aircraft.

Wankel rotary engines are installed in a variety of vehicles and devices such as automobiles and racing cars, aircraft (including ultra-lights), go-karts, personal water crafts, and auxiliary power units.

*What about our Western Museum of Flight Wankel rotary?* Its origin and historical data have been lost - any help from our readers would be appreciated! Contact the *Supercruiser* editor via our e-mail or phone.

**...and Thanks**



Two of our pro bono advisors attended the Torrance State of the City luncheon in May with the SCHAF Board of trustees. Attorney Brian Kramer is legal advisor to the Board, and Janice Olson provides graphics design services via her Integrated Communications company, Olson-Kotowsky, Inc. Both have been tremendously helpful to our cause.

**Membership Renewal**

Check your address label. If there’s a date after your name, it represents your membership expiration date. Please renew!