



Thousands at the Macon County Airport dedication September 14 were thrilled by stunt fliers and air divers.

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"Up In The Air" Over Franklin

THE NEW 3800-foot runway of Macon County's new airport--a few miles north of Franklin off NC 28-- had a triple initiation last month, beginning Sept. 11 with the arrival of some 36 Ruby Rendezvous planes from Florida and Georgia, and climaxed on Sept. 14 by formal dedication of the new airstrip and presentation of the charter of the newly formed Macon Flight of the Civil Air Patrol, the first in this area of WNC.

Temporarily suspended during the past 3 years because of inadequate airport facilities for modern private planes, the 1969 Ruby Rendezvous marks a resumption of this popular annual event which began in 1958.

"This flight really constitutes a preliminary committee

to make plans for a bigger and better Ruby Rendezvous in 1970," said Vernon Burt, cruise director of the sponsoring Florida Air Pilots Association, and an initiator of the original Ruby Rendezvous.

FAPA members were joined by several pilots of the Florida Aero Club and about 15 of the Flying Rebels of Atlanta, whose flight leader was Jack MacFarren.

Their host in Franklin was the Smoky Mountain Flying Club--the only private flying club West of the Balsams--whose president, Phillip Hazazer, fell in love with this area when he flew in from Bradenton, Florida on the 1958 Ruby Rendezvous. He and his navigator (his wife Maysel) and family spent subsequent summers here, and six years ago moved to Franklin permanently. The developer of Echo Valley, where he now operates his own Plywood Clip Mfg. Co., Phil Hazazer was one of the five founding members of the Smoky Mt. Flying Club two years ago. The club now boasts 22 members from Franklin, Sylva, Cullowhee, Bryson City and Waynesville, and owns two planes.

Since Ruby Rendezvous-ers might appropriately be termed "flying rockhounds", their 1969 headquarters were naturally at

a rockhound's haven--Wood's Motor Court in Franklin, owned and operated since last April by rockhounds Glenn and Freda Burt.

It was in 1952 that the Burts first came to Franklin from Miami, and ever since it has been their second home--now permanent.

Glenn and Vernon Burt (who operates his own construction company in Miami) coordinated their efforts with the FAPA in Miami, and in Franklin with Sam Gibson, Bob Daniels, John Duncan, Merriman Doster and the Smoky Mt. Flying Club to reinstate the annual Ruby Rendezvous flights to coincide with the opening of the new airstrip at the Macon County Airport.

Smiles of all the participants attested to the success of the 4-day event, which included gem hunting at the ruby mines during the day and festivities in the

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