



The ThunderWord

Thunderbird Field EAA Chapter 1217 January, 2011

Scottsdale, Arizona

PRESIDENT'S CORNER

Greetings from my corner of the hangar! Way back in November of last year Jim Terpstra talked at our monthly meeting. Jim's talks are designed to give us some insight into the emerging navigation technologies that are now or will soon be available to us. It is amazing the nav capability most homebuilt planes have compared to an airliner. It is fairly common to see WAAS approach capable receivers in homebuilts. Jim helped us untangle some of the alphabet soup of WASS, LAAS, DGPS, RNAV and LNAY. It was a lot like drinking from a fire hose but there is a lot of navigation cool stuff out there. Thanks again to Bill Unternaehrer for setting up the program.

One of the principal reasons I joined the AOPA in 2001 was to learn more about these new nav systems, they are years ahead of the airliners I was flying. Jim Terpstra wrote a series of very informative articles that appeared in AOPA Pilot magazine. They are all available on the internet by searching the AOPA website. When Bill U said he was a friend of his, I was really happy that he could make himself available to talk to our Chapter twice now about what's going on in the world of black boxes.

After 22 years and 13,300 hours in type, I finally made my last Boeing 737 flight for US Airways/America West as the planes were being sent to the scrap pile. I spent more than 554 days or the equivalent of one and a half years aloft in the 737. It was a plane I had always wanted to fly since my Dad dragged our family out onto the front lawn of our south Seattle home to watch the prototype streak overhead on its first flight with T-33 and F-86 chase planes in tight

formation. It is now time to move on to the Airbus to fly the thirteen years I have left until retirement. So when Jack or Terry is standing in at a meeting or two in the next couple of months or you wonder why I am not at the hangar or fly-in its because its time to hit the books and learn a new bird.

Speaking of new birds I have written a story on the new plane in my hangar in this newsletter, if you are around DVT stop by and take a look!

I look forward to seeing everyone at the January meeting!

Curtis

JANUARY CHAPTER MEETING

The January meeting of Thunderbird Field EAA Chapter 1217 will be held on Thursday, January 19th in the Scottsdale Airport Terminal Building. The time is 7pm. This month's guest speaker will be Dr. Mike Pflieger who raced his AT-6 at the Reno National Air Races this year. He is going to talk about what goes into getting the plane and pilot ready, as well as his experiences in Reno. Thanks to Jordan Ross for getting this month's guest speaker. Guests are always welcome.

NEW MEMBER

Last month we had quite bit of new member activity. Neil Herman who belonged many moons ago rejoined. Neil is building a Zenith 701 STOL at Deer Valley. Johnny and Nancy Johnson also joined, they are building a GlasStar at Deer Valley and have built an RV-6A.

MEET THIS MONTH'S

GUEST SPEAKER

When you first meet Dr. Mike Pflieger, you are really impressed by what a nice guy he is and by his passion for flying. Mike is an ER Doctor at Scottsdale Emergency Associates. He completed medical school at the University of Cincinnati in 1998 and came to Arizona to complete his residency.

Mike learned to fly gliders in Oklahoma in his youth. He has owned a Schweizer 1-26 and a Ventus sailplane, as well as a Cessna 140 he owned prior to buying the AT-6. Mike is active in formation flying with EAA Warbird Squadron 20 and is type rated in the P-51 Mustang.

CACTUS FLY-IN

Remember to plan on attending this year's Cactus Fly-In at Casa Grande Airport. It will be Friday and Saturday March second and third. In the weeks ahead you will get lots of information on how you can volunteer and be part of this great aviation event. Volunteers get free admission, camping and VIP up front parking. They will also be provided with drinks and lunch as well. And best of all, the coveted Cactus Fly-In volunteer shirt that you can wear with pride throughout the year. It's going to be fun and in the next eighty days you will learn how to get involved in this great Arizona aviation tradition.

CHAPTER 1217 HOLIDAY PARTY

Bob Carter and his wife Kathy rolled out the red carpet in hosting the 2011 Chapter 1217 Holiday Party at their home. The event featured lots of food and wine some great desserts as well as live holiday music by the "Sonoran Horns". The Carter's house is the perfect venue for hosting a party and that's no accident since Bob is a contractor and know what he likes in a project. Throughout the night we had around seventy members, family and guests enjoy our EAA Chapter experience. If you see Bob be sure and extend a big thanks for allowing us to use his home.



CACTUS FLY-IN

MARCH 2 & 3, 2012
CASA GRANDE, ARIZONA



**Bob and Kathy Carter hosted
the Chapter 1217 Holiday Party**



**Gavagons, Pat Battle and McNaneys
at the Holiday Party**

SEAPLANE HAPPENINGS

Chapter seaplane pilot, Tod Dickey, reports that the November Splash-In at Lake Pleasant was wonderful. The day was forecast to be cool and breezy, and that was enough to keep the boaters away. The winds died down and the lake was as smooth as he had ever seen it. The restaurant folks were glad to see us, and friendly as always. Tod learned that they are mentioned in the Dillon's Restaurant at Scorpion Bay Marina video on U-tube. If you want to skip the intro, view the video at 2 min 45 seconds into the commercial. Hopefully it was because of the short notice, but only two seaplanes showed up. We decided to try a splash-in date at Lake Roosevelt to see if we would get any more participation.

Tod also reports that there is now a commercial operator flying an amphib float Caravan out of Scottsdale. They are doing scenic tours that include splashing down in Roosevelt Lake. The company also offers custom tours for up to nine passengers. Go to www.desertsplashadventures.com to check them out.

SO LONG OLD FRIEND

Without so much as a whimper, the last operational US Airways/America West Boeing 737 made its final journey home on November 29th. The aircraft tasked with this assignment, N305AW, touched down in Phoenix at 1:31 pm, operating as "Cactus 48" from Las Vegas, Nevada.

Among the passengers on the nearly empty flight was a retired America West Airlines captain who had begun his career with the airline on the day it commenced operations on August 1st, 1983; as well as a small contingent of other employees and aviation enthusiasts. After landing, the flight was cleared into gate A5, where it was met by a group of pilots and other US Airways personnel to commemorate the unceremonious event, and as the engines spooled down, another chapter of America West Airlines history came to a close.

N305AW, a Boeing 737-3G7, rolled off the factory floor in Renton, Washington on September 12th, 1988, and was delivered new to America West Airlines 29 days later on October 11th. After just over 23 years of service with America West and later US Airways, the aircraft has accumulated over 72,000 hours of flying time and logged over 47,000 takeoffs and landings. The future for aircraft 305 remains uncertain due to its age. A few of its sister ships who were withdrawn from service in the early half of 2011 have already met the scrapper's torch in Goodyear, Arizona. The unlikely possibility still exists for another carrier to step in and assume a new lease on the aircraft.

While US Airways still operates over 20 737-400s for the "East" acquired portion of the airline, they have remained relatively segregated to routes operated east of the Mississippi, marking this event as likely the last time that a US Airways 737 will be seen in Phoenix.

THE WICKHAM B

By Curtis Clark

Put your feet up and let me tell you a story of how I got to own a real piece of homebuilding history.

Way back in the day before ball bearing stewardesses and GPS was still a potato salad from Germany, a Seattle Boeing engineer decided he wanted an airplane that would offer a higher degree of safety when flying around the rocks and mountains of Washington than the four place plane he had designed and built. Jim Wickham envisioned a plane that would be strong, safe and very simple. Along with simplicity he wanted to keep the costs under control in the way EAA'ers did it back then. From 1957 through 1965 he designed every detail of the plane on paper. He used to say that by day he was an aerodynamicist and by night a structures engineer as he worked in his basement skunkworks. Because of the high level of engineering, it only took him three years to actually build the plane. It has over 10,000



Wickham B in Flight

driven rivets! I remember when I was a kid visiting his house and looking at this gigantic plane in his basement. Of course I was only four feet tall and it was indoors. In keeping with the simple/low cost approach to building he had a Krylon party when it was done and bought a case of spray bombs at the local Ernst Hardware and invited his EAA Chapter 26 buddies over to do the honors! It still has that paint on it today. Those were simpler times and there weren't aircraft paint shops!

The plane first flew in 1968 and had Lycoming O-290G (G for ground power unit) engines. The engines had some problems so he later switched to O-320, 150 horsepower engines that worked perfectly. Jim and his family flew the little five-place bird coast to coast on several occasions and visited the fly-in at Rockford and the first year at Oshkosh. After flying it for around 650 hours, Jim decided he needed space in the hangar for his next design and he donated it to the Museum of Flight where it took to the skies on a 22-year flight as it hung in the central display area. Serendipitously he took all the

logs, drawings and paperwork and put it away in his basement workshop where it sat for a quarter of a century! On many overnights for America West I would ride the bus down to the museum to have lunch and spent many hours looking at the Wickham B hanging from the ceiling.

Fast forward twenty two years and at the Museum of Flight it was time for a change. They gave the twin to South Seattle Community College. They took one of the engines off and pretty much gutted the interior. When they lost their hangar at Boeing Field, I had made an attempt to buy it but it was traded for a jet engine and it was dismantled and hauled off.

It turns out I wasn't the only one that had been following the plight of the Wickham B. Ross Mahon, a Seattle aeronautical engineer, and his Dad had both been friends with Jim Wickham and Ross always wanted to get his hands on the plane. After much finagling Ross bought it from The ME-262 Project in Everett Washington who had traded it for a

in



Wickham B Hanging in Museum of Flight

surplus jet engine that they had. Ross, being a local EAA Chapter president and all around nice guy, was able to track down the various parts and pieces that were scattered in many Seattle homebuilder's workshops and hangar walls. When people heard he was trying to put the plane back together it didn't take long for his hangar at Paine Field to be filled with parts, props, instruments and just about everything to put the plane back together except for the engines. The hangar was so full that the plane was actually outside in a plastic tent! The final icing on the cake was when Jim Wickham's son, Jim had passed away years ago, produced all the original plans, logbooks, and even a FAA bill of sale that was filled out but never given to the museum! It had sat in his Dad's workshop all those years! All that remained was to locate two very expensive Lycoming O-320's, one new and one overhauled, and the plane was back in the air!

Back in 2009 I was fortunate too be spending a lot of time in Seattle sailing my boat around on 32-hour layovers and when I heard that the Wickham B was back flying I wasted no time tracking down Ross and telling him "down the road when you want to sell it". Of course he was proud of his now flying one-of-a-kind plane and had no plans to sell it. Over the next three years when I would see Ross at fly-ins and airshows, I always introduced myself and gave him a card with my contact info. I had ran into him at AirVenture last

summer where he had the Geoduck flying boat on display, he was now the President of the company that made them. Ross recognized me and asked if I still had the same e-mail address, the gears started turning. After a bunch of e-mails and a quick trip to cold and rainy Seattle in October we started negotiating in earnest. We finally struck a deal just before Copperstate and Ross even volunteered to ferry the plane down to its new home at Deer Valley Airport. When it landed, Ross had put 125 hours on it since its reassembly and was able to live his childhood dream of owning the Wickham B. After seeing the Wickham's new hangar mates he knew it had gotten a good home and the heritage and vision of it designer and builder would be shared with people for years to come.

The big question is how does it fly. I have been able to share flying it with Jack Pollack, Brian Mitchell and Don Lindholm who were as intrigued by it as I am. It has very light balanced controls, short takeoff and landing, and climbs like a homesick angle. With no soundproofing it is really loud and it is not really very fast, cruising around 130 mph. Jim Wickham designed it to be simple. Fixed pitch metal props, fixed gear, no boost pumps or crossfeed valves, it is really simple. The plane is built like a baby Boeing but it is fairly light at 1700 lbs and a 935 lb useful load with full 50 gallon tanks. It seats five and has a huge baggage compartment that Brian Mitchell's daughter Hanna can actually stand up in! It is my hope to take the restoration to the next level with a new soundproofed interior as well as replacing the forty four year old Krylon paint job. I am going to try and not change anything that works for the sake of a few MPH. Plans are in the works to fly it to as many fly-ins as possible so people can enjoy seeing this one of a kind all metal homebuilt twin and I can have the chance to live out my childhood dream just a Ross did. Jim Wickham may have long since timed out but his design will be flying and be shared with aviation aficionados for many years to come.



Curtis and His Newly Acquired Wickham B



Jerry Lane's Schweizer 1-26 new paint job using Stewart Systems water based process. With no smell he said he could shoot it in his living room, luckily he didn't

ThunderAds

FOR SALE, ETC.

HENDRICKSON H78 A38 PUSHER 2 BLADE PROP

Reconditioned by Performance Propeller Fits Cont. C-85/ 0-200. \$800.00 Four inch extension \$100.00 Curtis 602 7120-4494 azskybum@aol.com

COMBINATION VHF/GPS ANTENNA

Comant Model CI 2480-201, Separate connectors for Comm and GPS. Never installed. See AS&S pg 616. Their price \$568.75, sell for \$280.00 Ron Kassik 480-948-0168 or ronkassik@cox.net

1956 CESSNA 172 TD CONVERSION

TT 2300, O-300B 350 SMOH. Imron, new interior, lots of STCs. Hangared DVT. Mike Straley 602-524-0333, rkaviationinc@netscape.net Asking \$53K or possible trade

PROJECTS FOR SALE

Protech, PT-2, folding wings & trailer, 82 hp Mosler engine. & Gere bi-plane, about 75% complete, built from magazine plans, circa 1932, completely rebuilt Model A engine. Pat Wall 928-851-2244.

THREE-BLADE PROP SHIPPING BOX

Previously used for a MT prop for a Velocity. Will fit most normal size 3-blade props. Available to anyone who needs to ship a prop. Matt Bucko mbuc310@cox.net

1979 CESSNA 182Q

Arizona Airplane on SDL Tie Down K-137, TT 3500 hrs, Engine 1262 hrs SOH, recent interior upgrades & wing tip replacement. Bill Maxey 602-820-5722 maxeybill@hughes.net

GRENGA GN-1 AIRCAMPER PROJECT

Biplane conversion but can be switched to a parasol. Fuselage covered and Elizado Tigre engine installed. \$6,000.⁰⁰ Estate sale. Lesley Morgan 480-834-4831 or e-mail Curtis at EAChapter1217@aol.com to receive a digital slideshow of the plane.

2009 LANCAIR 360

Superior IO-360 engine, TTAFE 20 hours, mineral oil, every thing new including paint, GPS, loaded must see. Fred 630-897-7706

PARTS

Fuel pump core, 23psi, Dukes Inc total time 18 hrs. Inline fuel filter, 3/8", Performance Mfg, tt 18 hrs. Slick magneto model 4771, tt18 hrs. Fred 630-897-7706

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**Dr.Mike Braeggens beautiful Waco UPF-7 flying on one of our 75 degree December Days
This is why we live in Arizona**

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