Wingtips

Experimental Aircraft Association
Chapter 55
November 2001

Meetings are the 2nd Saturday of each Month at the Hangar, Mason Jewett Field, Breakfast at 0800, Meeting at 0900.

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MORE OF THE STORY Another chapter of the story of one of our WWII Veterans was offered at last month's meeting. Russ Hilding has given good account of his experiences flying B-17s over Europe. Now we also know about the training and preparation that led up to it. Not only was Russ's story interesting, but also studying the charts and manuals from that era was equally enjoyable – the radio navigation system and beacons depicted are also now part of history. Thanks for sharing some more of your story, Russ. Also, thanks to Bob Smith for an excellent breakfast.

GLASS COCKPITS This is the mark of a "modern" aircraft; conventional instruments almost completely replaced by a couple of video panel displays that depict aircraft and flight information. It's nothing new to homebuilders, however. Using a compact readout produced by Grand Rapids Technologies, instrument panels of thousands of homebuilts have been flying with some of this technology for years. At this month's meeting, we'll meet the founder and owner of the company from just up the road that has been offering this technology for many years. This is coming to us courtesy of the November Program Team:

Jack Toman
Ted Forringer
Dave Groh
Joe Whitesides
Ray Fink
Bill Bezdek
Peter Greenfield
Warren Miller
Bill Hollenbeck
Gordon Hempstone

Board of Directors' Meeting

Wednesday, **November 7**
7:00 pm at Hangar

Chapter 55 Meeting

Saturday, **November 10**
8-9:30 am Breakfast
9:30 am Chapter Meeting

FIELD TRIP To make this coming Saturday a total aviation day, we are also invited to an open house at AEROSKY, the new FBO at the Hasting airport. This is long-time Chapter member Brent Andrews' new venture in his aviation career. Following the regular meeting, weather permitting; this will be a good opportunity for an informal Chapter fly-out. There will be a free lunch from noon to 4. Those of us who always go IFR can organize a caravan and take the low route. This will be a chance to visit another airport and see Brent's new business as well.

A FEW GOOD PERSONS Joe Pirch and Tom Botsford volunteered to serve as the nominating committee to recruit candidates for the upcoming Chapter officer election. The positions of President, Vice-President, Secretary, Treasurer, and Newsletter Editor are open for a two-year term. Hopefully, they will be able to report a full slate of candidates for the positions and we'll have a rousing campaign leading up to the elections at the December meeting. An essential ingredient for continued success of the Chapter is a good leadership team. If

you are interested in running for a Chapter office, be sure to let them know. If there is someone else you feel would make a good Chapter leader, encourage him or her to run.

A PRESSING MATTER One of the Chapter's tools is a NicoPress tool. It is used to fabricate control cables for our airplanes. Or, it would be if it could be found. It normally resides in the red Chapter toolbox, but has been missing for several months and was not signed out. It is perfectly OK to borrow Chapter tools, they are there for all members to use. However, they should be signed out and they should be returned. "Nuff said?"

BOARD AGENDA ~ 11/7/01 ~ 7:00 pm

- Nomination process
- Chapter Recognition
- LCC Visit
- Chapter Business Video review

Bill Hanna, President

Top Cat

The Top Cat is Back. Several years ago, Ivan Rowell's son Mike won this pedal plane for his kids, in a Chapter raffle. The little plane was shipped all over the U.S. as Mike, who was in the Air Force moved to various air bases.

Mike sent the Top Cat back to Chapter 55 to be enjoyed by the kids who ride in her. Seen in this picture are Joe Whitesides' granddaughters having fun.

EAA Board of Directors Meeting

Board of Directors Meeting – October 10, 2001

Attendees: Mike Arntz, Tom Botsford, Bill Hanna, Greg Hover, Ernie Lutz, Drew Seguin ✈ Minutes from previous meeting were approved. ✈ Treasurer's report was approved. ✈ Motion was made and approved to buy a small gas grill to facilitate cooking for the smaller events we sponsor from time to time. Greg Hover will make the purchase. ✈ 224 Young Eagles flown to date. Ted Lakin would like us to get the word out that he will fly a few kids after each of the next chapter meetings, weather permitting. Two Young Eagles have expressed interest in participating in the Air Academy. ✈

EAA Chapter 55 Business Meeting

General Membership Meeting – October 13, 2001

There were 31 people in attendance, including members and guests. ✈ Meeting minutes of September 8, 2001, were approved ✈ The Treasurer's Report was approved. ✈ Mason Aviation Day was a success even though in the aftermath of September 11. There were no fly-in planes, though member planes were brought out and we accepted donations to the September 11 fund in lieu of the regular breakfast ticket sales. $905.00 was taken in and we will be donating $600.00 to the fund. Joe Pirch thanked all members who participated for their support. ✈ Nominations for chapter officers will be received through November. Elections will be held at the December meeting. Tom Botsford and Joe Pirch agreed to canvas the membership for candidates. ✈ The Chapter Christmas party will be held on December 8, 2001, the same day as the chapter meeting. It will be catered as it was last year. We need volunteers to decorate the room for the event. ✈ Aero-Genesis will be sponsoring an aviation safety seminar on October 17 ✈ Terry Lutz gave an update on what is going on with the FAA and other government agencies for security in the aftermath of September 11. ✈ Russ Hilding gave a presentation on learning to fly and how he got involved with the Army Air Corps.

Drew Seguin, Secretary

George Moore's "Therapy"

George Moore began building his KIS TR-1 in 1995. Five years and four months later, after countless hours of intensive and loving labor, the piles of parts evolved into a beautiful airplane. The little ship, thoughtfully named Therapy, is painted white with blue stripping. Featuring a Subaru Legacy engine of 135 hp, it cruises at 180 mph.

At the chapter meeting, George described his first flight which took place on Oct. 8, 2001, as very exciting and everything worked beautifully as planned. George said the plane rolled down the runway with ease and he was in the air so smoothly, he could hardly believe he was finally flying. He did admit ever so humbly that he was scared on this first flight, but only his laundry man will ever know.

George went on to give his thanks to chapter members who helped him with small suggestions on improvements during the project and especially to technical advisors, Terry Lutz and Tim Martinson who inspected and approved the aircraft ready for flight and assisted him in the ground training and preparation he needed for the successful flight that followed. George was one happy guy.

Warren Miller

Notes from Cape Juby

By Terry L. Lutz, Chapter 55 Flight Advisor

At our last chapter meeting, the really big news was that George Moore had made the first flight of his homebuilt airplane, a beautiful example of the all fiberglass KIS. George built his airplane carefully, paid close attention to details, and patiently worked through a series of small problems until it was ready to fly. He also worked diligently to get himself ready to fly. This meant getting some time with an instructor (our own Brent Andrews), and then flying an airplane that was as close to the KIS as one could find around Mason. This turned out to be Tim Martinson's RV-6. About the same weight, the same horsepower, the same eye-height, and it's equipped with a control stick.

As the Chapter Flight Advisor, I worked closely with George to cover all the bases necessary to make his first flight completely successful. The weight and balance was done, and George added some ballast in the tail. We sat in the cockpit and designed both a normal checklist, and an emergency checklist, tailored to the systems, instruments, and switches in the airplane. We took a ride in my airplane, and discussed potential emergency landing sites near the airport. Finally, we worked out a first flight test plan that would focus on engine parameters and basic handling, both at cruise and in the landing configuration. As we all hoped, the first flight was successful, and more importantly, uneventful.

One of the things we discussed was the concept that even though the airplane had made a successful first flight, the KIS project was now entering a development phase. Things that can loosen up under the cowl get loose. Things that can leak under the cowl will start to leak. Clamps that you tightened just a week ago will feel a little loose. The inspection interval to look religiously at specific things would start short, and get longer once some confidence is achieved as the airplane accumulates hours.

At our November meeting, the really interesting news will be that George made a successful emergency landing off the airport when the engine quit. I'll let George fill everyone in on the details at the meeting. While an event did happen that we wish had not, a few other things happened that were the direct result of good planning. George was prepared as a pilot for the landing, and he selected a landing field that was identified and discussed in advance.

In today's world, we hear very few reports of airplanes that make emergency landings off the airport. Part of the reasons are that we take good care of our airplanes and operate them conservatively. There was a time in aviation when the machines were unreliable, and operations were something less than conservative. For airmail pilots like Charles Lindberg, the question wasn't if they would have a forced landing, it was how many they would have in a season. Pilots trained after World War II were taught to be constantly alert for emergency landing fields, and into the 1970s, the Air Force still required forced landing proficiency in the T-41 program.

Perhaps it's time for us all to consider our own skills, and form a good plan to handle a landing off the airport. The first step is having a good set of emergency procedures. You would hate to put an airplane into a muddy field only to realize that if you had switched fuel tanks, the engine would have started making noise again. The second step is locating a suitable field. Anyone reading this that thinks they will be saved by GPS is still on Cloud 9 after MSU beat Michigan last Saturday. Sure, GPS will give you bearing and distance to the nearest airfield in the database, but it will not tell you how to plan the approach, the surface winds, or when to configure the airplane for landing. All of that takes practice.

It is more difficult today to practice emergency landings than it was in the past, and there are several reasons why. We used to fly all of our traffic patterns with idle power

from the downwind when abeam the landing point. Essentially, every landing was planned as if the engine had quit. If you watch landings today, the pilot carries some power all the way to touchdown. To follow an ILS or VASI glide slope, this is nearly always the case. These are nice, safe approaches, but what is lost is the proficiency to plan the landing without engine power.

Another reason why there is less practice today on emergency landings is that a lot of accidents have happened while simply practicing them. Pilots have gotten too low and hit wires or fences. They have mishandled the engine, and either picked up carburetor ice, or jammed the throttle in too fast, and there were real engine failures while executing the go-around.

The best place to practice emergency landings is at a real airport. Pick one with very light traffic, announce your intentions, and keep your eyeballs out for other traffic. There are lots of techniques that we have all been taught, but start simple. The power off approach from the 180 degrees abeam the runway is a good start. Work on getting the airplane to the runway at the proper speed and in position to land just beyond the numbers. The touchdown and roll out should be planned as a short field landing. Do a series of these landings, and make fine corrections on each pattern to adjust for wind conditions and thermal activity.

In days gone by, we did many power-off landings with a Cessna 120 at McEnnan Airport, just south of Ypsilanti. The farmer to the south of the airport had dragged an old bathtub out into a field to use as a water tank for his cows. It was the perfect base turn reference when landing to the west. Plus, if you kept tabs on the cows, you always knew the wind direction (their, um, backsides are usually pointed into the wind). Landing practice was great fun, and we burned up hours of 80 octane around that old bathtub. The airport is gone now, but I'll bet the bathtub is still there. Since bathtubs are not used as lawn ornaments today, all of this takes a little more imagination.

Finally, I attended a dinner in Detroit last Friday, where Neal Loving was posthumously named to the Wayne State University School of Engineering Hall of Fame. Neal, as you may recall, was the black aviator who built the elegant, gull-winged racer "Loving's Love." In attendance was Carl Barnett, brother of Neal's wife, Clare. Neal taught Carl to fly, and Carl has for many years run a very successful flight school in Kingston, Jamaica. Carl and I traded notes about flying for a long time Friday night (Carl, it turns out, has incurable aviation disease, just like the rest of us), and cooked up a plan to take him for an RV-8 ride. He must have enjoyed it, because my neck is a little sore from scanning for traffic while he did aerobatics!!

As always, fly safe out there, and remember to give your fellow pilot a hand when they need it.