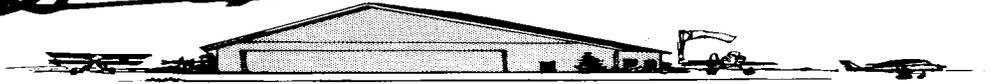


CHAPTER 55 EXPERIMENTAL AIRCRAFT ASSOCIATION

JANUARY 2004

Wingtips



Meetings are the 2nd Saturday of each Month

Chapter 55 Hangar - Mason Jewett Field

Pres: Mike Arntz 694-4601 Vice Pres: Tom Botsford 663-1318 Treas: Gregg Cornell 351-1338
Sec: Drew Seguin 332-2601 Editor: Warren Miller 393-9385

Climb and Maintain Flight Level 55

Happy New Year everyone! I hope you all had a safe holiday season. Did Santa bring you what you wanted? Me neither -- maybe next year.

First, I would like to correct an oversight. We had a gentleman join the Chapter in September. Since then he wasn't recognized in any way, so at this time I would like to apologize to Phil Tartalone and as well as welcome him. Phil works for MDOT and is involved with the Great Lakes International Aviation Conference. When he comes to the meeting we can find out more about him. Other new members who joined last month were Debbie Groh, Connie Kowalk and Jim McFarland. If I have missed anyone else, PLEASE let me know.

The Christmas party was a blast. Debbie and Dave Groh, Bob and Christine Smith along with Debbie's sister, Denise Droscha from Grand Ledge and their friends Joe and Fran Szymanowicz from Pennsylvania did a marvelous job setting up the hall. We gave away a mixture of door prizes, some of which Gregg Cornell and I picked up on the trip to Kitty Hawk. I even got to stay for some of the fun before I had to leave to go to work.

The election for Chapter officers was held at the December meeting the results are as follows:

President - Michael Arntz
Vice President - Thomas Botsford
Secretary - Drew Seguin
Treasurer - Gregg Cornell

I would like to thank all candidates who ran for office. They have some great ideas for the Chapter and we plan to incorporate them in the coming year. Also, I want to thank Terry Lutz and George Moore who for the second time for elections counted and tallied the votes.

I received a call from Leslie MacDonald. As you recall, he purchased the Chapter's Mini Max last year and spent the summer entertaining some of us at the airport (all but Connie Kowalk). The sad news is Leslie will be moving out east and will not be able to take the Mini Max with him, so he is offering

it for sale at a very reasonable price. If you are interested, you can get in touch with him at the meeting or thru me. This is your chance to purchase a very nice little aircraft for a song.

Remember to take a Chapter member with you when you go flying.

Mike Arntz

JANUARY SCHEDULE

Board of Directors' Meeting

Wednesday, January 7, 2004

Chapter 55 Meeting

Saturday, January 10, 2004

8 - 9 Breakfast / 9:30 Chapter Meeting

MEMBERSHIP DUES

Membership dues are should be paid to Gregg Cornell by January 31, 2004. Please make check payable to:

EAA Chapter 55

Gregg Cornell
639 Orchard Court
East Lansing, MI 48823



President Mike Arntz honors Dave Groh as member of the year and adds his name to the awards plaque for his work in getting the north-south runway included in the master plan for Mason-Jewett airport.

Membership teams have not been formed for the coming year yet, so if you would like to volunteer to cook or locate a guest speaker, please contact Mike Arntz before this Saturday's meeting.



December's Cooks: Greg Hover, Bob Noelp & Doug Koons

EAA Board of Directors Meeting

Board of Directors Meeting – December 10, 2003

The meeting was called to order at 7:05 on December 10, 2003. → Attendees were President Mike Arntz, Vice President Gary Long, Treasurer Greg Cornell, Secretary Drew Seguin, Renee Arntz, Tom Botsford, Dave Groh, Debbie Groh, Doug Koons, Ted Lakin, and Ernie Lutz. The Treasurer's report was presented and approved. Greg noted cash is down due to the donation of \$2500 to LCC for the Newberry Scholarship. On the Hangar Door. We are waiting for the engineering on the truss requirements. Doug Koons and Drew Seguin are working on getting the information necessary to move forward. The plan is to approve the project in the February meeting in order to get the door in place in early spring. It was finally determined that the best solution for the water heater is to put a 20 gallon unit in the existing location. Tom Botsford will install it. → The Chapter Christmas dinner will be held on Saturday, December 13. We expect to have 70 members and guests in attendance. → Ted Lakin offered to sell the Chapter two commercial grills he had purchased for his cost of \$400. Motion was made and carried to do so. A follow up motion was made and carried to sell the two old grills for \$50.00 with buyer to take both and move them out. → A motion was made and carried to require all purchases over \$100 to be approved by the board before commitment. Purchases of less than \$100 will require approval of the chapter treasurer. → The Board then went into closed session with all officers and board members except Bill Purosky in attendance. → In the following open session the motion was made and carried to spend \$287.00 for Christmas party decorations, etc. → The meeting was adjourned at 9:00 PM.

EAA Chapter 55 Business Meeting

Membership Meeting – December 13, 2003

The meeting was called to order at 9:30 am. There were 55 members and guests present. → President Mike Arntz announced that this would be the "2003 Annual Meeting for Chapter 55. → **Dave Groh was honored as Member of the Year.** Mike noted Dave's leadership and tireless efforts in

getting the North-South runway approved and on the master plan. → Minutes of the previous meeting were approved. → The Treasurer's report was approved. Greg reported that he had looked into placing some of our reserves in a CD. He indicated that with the current low rates it is not justified. → There was general discussion of the Newberry Scholarship and a motion made and carried to continue with a \$2500 contribution for 2004. → Mike introduced 4 new members: Connie Kowalk, Debbie Groh, Jim McFarland, and Robert Harter. Welcome to Chapter 55 → Renee Arntz, Young Eagles Coordinator, recognized all of those who participated in the Young Eagles effort. This included pilots and especially the ground crew. → We have shirts left over from the Centennial of Flight Celebration. See Renee. → Ted Lakin gave a special recognition to Jim Palmer for his longstanding support and contribution to Chapter 55 success. → Bill Bezdek indicated that he has tried the surplus epoxy paint that we have and it seems to work just fine. → Officer Elections. Each candidate made a brief statement to the group, followed by elections. The winning candidates were:

President - Mike Arntz **Treasurer - Greg Cornell**
Vice President - Tom Botsford **Secretary - Drew Seguin**

→ The meeting was adjourned at 10:30 AM. Greg Cornell followed the meeting with a slide presentation the trip he and Mike Arntz made to Kitty Hawk with the Michigan submittal to the EAA Fifty Flags Over Kitty Hawk.

Notes from Cape Juby

By Terry L. Lutz, Chapter 55 Flight Advisor

In 1958, a young Hungarian man came to United States in search of a better life for himself and his family. He was lucky to escape the tyranny brought about by the Russian occupation of Eastern Europe. While still a student at UCLA, he formed his own company to provide information to airline companies on how to optimize their route structure. Today, he is CEO of the largest commercial aircraft leasing company in the world, International Flight Leasing Corporation. His name is Stephen F. Udvar-Hazy.

On December 11th, 2003, the Smithsonian Institution dedicated the new National Air and Space Museum adjacent to the Dulles International Airport. It is named the Stephen F. Udvar-Hazy Center because Mr. Udvar-Hazy donated \$60 million of the estimated \$350 million construction cost. It was his way of repaying our country for the opportunity to pursue the American Dream. In doing so, he has created a dream for all of us in the tremendous facility he helped to build.

Chapter 55 members Rick Duckworth and Terry Lutz attended the dedication ceremony, mainly because Rick contributed to the museum fund and received two tickets, and because I could get us there. It was a lot of fun introducing Rick to my friends as a "major contributor" to the museum. They must have thought he donated many thousands of dollars to the museum. We'd best not tell Rosie about this.

For those of you who aren't aware, the Chancellor of the Smithsonian is the Chief Justice of the Supreme Court, William Rehnquist. The Vice President of the United States, Dick Cheney is on the Board of Regents. Both were there, and both

spoke at the ceremony. As you might expect, security was tight. After passing through the temporary security checkpoint, we went downstairs, and walked down a narrow corridor toward the south end of the building. The right side of the corridor was covered by tall drapery material to hide the airplanes in the museum.

While we were walking down the corridor, we noticed an older guy slowly making his way to the seating area, and holding onto the wall. I went over and asked if he'd like to hang on to a person instead of the wall. So he grabbed my arm and we made our way through the crowd of people. He handed me his card and it turns out he is Tex Hill, one of the few remaining pilots that flew P-40s for Claire Chennault in the American Volunteer Group. About the time we arrived at the entrance to where the seats were, along came Bob Hoover, who said hello to us, and was as chipper as I have ever seen him. We had already spoken with Scott Crossfield, and if you think this day couldn't get any better, it did. We sat next to the architect who designed the building, and not far away was Jeanna Yeager.

Suspended from the ceiling was an exact replica of the original Wright flyer, which would play an important part in the ceremony. Following comments by General John R. Dailey, Director of the NASM and Sheila Burke, Under Secretary of the Smithsonian, we heard brief addresses by Chief Justice Rehnquist and Vice President Cheney. Mr. Udvar-Hazy then gave a brief address, and expressed his hope that the aviation history displayed there would inspire others to achieve new success in aerospace.

Then John Travolta was introduced, and it was sort of funny because he was introduced as "An accomplished jet pilot and actor". I guess that means he flies pretty well. I'm not sure about the actor part. Mr. Travolta then introduced a number of honored guests, including Bob Hoover, Scott Crossfield, Sean Tucker, Betty Skelton, Patty Wagstaff, Dr. Bertrand Piccard, Burt Rutan, Paul Tibbets, Neil Armstrong, and John Glenn, just to name a few. When all were introduced, our attention was focused on a screen, where we received a live greeting from astronauts in the international space station. At the end of their message, they cued the Wright Flyer, which was released to travel slowly overhead and stop smoothly to the right of the stage. At that moment, the curtains were dropped and we had full view of all the airplanes in the museum. It was spectacular.

Any trip to Washington should include the Udvar-Hazy Center. The airplanes are as historic as they are beautiful. Right in the center is the SR-71 that set a world record flying from Los Angeles to Washington. The fully assembled B-29 "Enola Gay" is on display, along with numerous other original WW II aircraft. Bob Hoover's Shrike Commander is there, and so is Burt Rutan's first Vari Eze, N2EZ. Unlike other museums, this facility has walkways above the airplanes so you can see them from many different angles. And we found that it's possible to get a picture of each airplane from one particular angle, where few other airplanes are seen in the background.



As the crowd thinned out, we found Mr. Udvar-Hazy and his family giving themselves a private tour of the museum. You can't tell from the picture here, but they were simply beside themselves with joy.



When we went to leave, we had some trouble finding a cab back to the airport and ended up sharing it with Burt Rutan and his wife. We talked briefly about what's going on out at Mojave, and in particular with Space Ship One. In case you missed it, on December 17th, Brian Binnie lit the rocket and flew supersonic for the first time. The first homebuilt to go supersonic!

All the flights out of Dulles that day were delayed due to high winds. Over in Terminal B, we noticed an older guy trying to use his phone card to call home. If offered him my cell phone instead. It was Paul Tibbets, commander of the unit that trained to drop the first atomic weapons, and pilot of the Enola Gay. We had the opportunity to speak with him for about an hour. Mostly, we listened.

Paul Tibbets told us how he started his military career as commander of an A-20 Havoc unit in North Africa. He said it was tough being a young guy in the early years of the war, because all the commanders were older officers, and their tactics were somewhat outdated. But he was eager to try new things, and "as long as nobody said they couldn't do it, they did it." One day he called his pilots into the briefing room and told they were going on an "attack" mission. They had never heard the term before, and were used to going on "bombing" missions. He briefed that they were going to attack a coastal port

controlled by the Germans that was supplying Rommel's Troops in Africa. The port was defended by an Me-109 unit at an airfield on a bluff overlooking the port along the Mediterranean.



Rick Duckworth with Paul Tibbets

Tibbets ordered each airplane to attack a different part of the port and the airfield in nearly simultaneous strikes. They flew the mission and left both the port and the airfield in flames. Years after the war ended, Colonel Tibbets was assigned to NATO headquarters in Belgium, and was asked to integrate the German military into NATO. When he met his German counterpart, the German said, "I know you. You were the commander that destroyed our port and airfield in North Africa". Tibbets asked how he knew about the attack. "In the German military, we made it a point to know who our adversaries were. We watched all your missions to see what tactics you were using." The German officer went on to say that the attack dealt a severe blow to the base. All the ships and supplies in the port were destroyed, and the best fighter squadron in North Africa was wiped out. "You attacked at noon and hit the officer's mess. All the pilots were at lunch, and everyone was killed."

Tibbets was recalled from Africa to get into the B-29 program and straighten out some of the problems they were having. One of them was a problem with the engines overheating. Before they could taxi out and get airborne, the top 3 cylinders in the back row the engines would go above 300 degrees, and the pilots would not takeoff, fearing multiple engine failures. This was a big problem at the base in Alamogordo, NM and they weren't doing much flying. So Tibbets went to Alamogordo and learned that there were some WASP pilots stationed there. The girls were billeted with the nurses, so he went over to their barracks and asked if there were any pilots there that would volunteer to fly the B-29. Two girls raised their hands.

He took them to Birmingham, AL for training. They asked what they would do if the airplane had engine problems, to which Paul said "This is a depot for the B-29. If one breaks, we'll check out another one and keep going". They wanted to get their rating in the airplane, so Tibbets arranged for a CAA pilot to ride along and give them a check. On the way to the aux field for pattern work, one engine caught fire and the cockpit filled with smoke. The women calmly accomplished the emergency procedures, secured the engine, and briefed the evacuation after

the airplane stopped. They all met in front of the airplane and the CAA man said, "Let me see your logbooks. You girls passed!"

He eventually trained the women to takeoff, and as soon as the gear was up, they would feather #1 and #2 in sequence as fast they could, and climb out with two running on one side. When they could do that perfectly, Tibbets gave them an airplane and they flew back to Alamogordo. After landing, they took off again with two of the assigned pilots and demonstrated that the airplane would fly easily on two engines. As you might imagine, the sortie rate climbed dramatically, and they started to get some good training on the airplane.

In 1948, Paul Tibbets delivered the Enola Gay to a depot called "The Orchard" in Chicago. He gave a stack of documents to a representative of the Smithsonian to officially transfer the airplane to the museum. He retained a copy of the original transfer document. When the Korean War broke out, the ORD facility needed space, so the dismantled Enola Gay went to a base in Indiana, and eventually to Andrews Air Force Base near Washington. Tibbets saw it again years later sitting in the weeds behind a hangar, with the windows smashed out and home for a lot of birds. He mentioned this to his contacts at the Smithsonian, and it was eventually transferred to the museum facilities at Silver Hill.

In 1993, Mr. Tibbets received a package from the Smithsonian about display of the restored nose section of the Enola Gay for the 50th anniversary of the atomic bomb at Hiroshima. The package was a big stack of paperwork, which outlined how it would be placed in the museum, and what information would be displayed. He went to the end of the stack and found a photo of one of his pilots, with the caption "I wonder if they were all as crazy as this guy." It turned out that the particular pilot mentioned had some emotional problems in his past, and the Army Air Corps wanted him removed from the atomic program. Tibbets, however, knew he was a good pilot and kept him in the unit.

Since he was not pleased with the display idea, it forced a meeting between the Smithsonian and several Congressmen. After discussing it without agreement, the Director of the Smithsonian finally said "We just won't put it on display." To which the Congressmen replied, "If you don't, we'll pull your funding." So the Director went to a museum curator in Connecticut and asked if he would take on the project. The reply was that he would with two conditions. First, his boss will have to approve the leave of absence, and second, he would be free to call all the shots. As a result, the nose section was displayed at NASM on the Mall, with very few adverse comments.

When the idea and funding for the museum at Dulles became a reality, Donald Engen (then Director of the Smithsonian) called Paul Tibbets and told him that he wanted the Enola Gay fully restored for display in the new facility. However, Donald Engen was killed in a glider accident about a year later. The new Director called Mr. Tibbets and said they still planned to display the Enola Gay, but funding appeared to be a problem. It turns out that one of Tibbet's pilots from that B-29 unit in WW II was now on the Board at the Smithsonian. He contacted an

anonymous donor, who then asked the new Director how much it would cost to restore and display the historic B-29. The answer was \$5 million. So the donor sat down right there and wrote a check for \$5.5 million. It was this “dedicated” funding that made restoration and display of the Enola Gay possible.

Paul Tibbets was thrilled at the effort that went into the restoration of his airplane. He plans to include photos of the restored airplane in the next printing of his book, which should be out this year. He also took the time to meet all the people who worked on and assembled the airplane (about 40 people). He had his picture taken with all of them in front of the Enola Gay, and they will all have their picture and names in the book.

All of this history was told to us, and we stored it in our short-term memory until the flight home. Then, I wrote as Rick remembered what was said. We still can't believe we were able to speak with Mr. Tibbets, a living witness to history.

Less than a week later, on December 17th, the aviation community focused on Kitty Hawk and the hope of recreating the first flight of the Wright Flyer. Funded in part by Ford Motor Company, Ken Hyde, Scott Crossfield, and a team of very dedicated volunteers built an exact replica of the 1903 Flyer, and days before the event managed to duplicate the first flight. But on December 17th, between the rain and the lack of wind, it wasn't possible. I don't look upon this as a failure. History does not occur “on demand”, and neither does a re-creation of the single event that shaped man's progress in the 20th Century.



You may have heard that a couple of Mason area pilots managed to recreate the first flight at exactly 10:35 am on December 17th.

A local photographer recorded the event. We heard that on the same day, they were going to try and re-create Lindbergh's flight across the Atlantic by flying from Mason to Milwaukee, but the weather was too bad. Fly safely out there, and always remember to give your fellow pilot a hand when they need it.



A Sunny Day at Kitty Hawk

Christmas Party

The annual Chapter Christmas party was held this year at Vevay Township. Past years the party has been held in the Chapter meeting room at the hangar and guests typically had to dress warm due to the cold floor and drafty windows. The hall was very comfortable and warm which made the ladies happy to say the least. Attire was festive and all attending had a good time. The food was excellent and many guests won a door prize. The hall was reserved for next year's festivities.

Special thanks to Bill and Marilynn Bezdek who assembled and donated the very special Christmas centerpieces, which were, included in the door prize drawings.



Bill and Marilynn Bezdek or is it Rudolph and Girlfriend?



Tom Sheehan and friend Barbara (left) enjoyed their Christmas meal across from Warren and Bonnie Miller.



Chapter members and wives have fun at the Christmas party.