

EAA Chapter 55



Mason, MI

CHAPTER 55 EXPERIMENTAL AIRCRAFT ASSOCIATION MARCH 2004

**Membership Meetings are the 2nd Saturday of each Month at the Hangar
Chapter 55 Hangar - Mason Jewett Field (TEW)
Breakfast at 0800 Meeting at 0930**

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

Climb and Maintain Flight Level 55

Last month on the Monday following our chapter meeting a long time chapter member left this world to fly with the angels.

Rick Duckworth passed the ultimate flight test. Rick had many friends at Chapter 55 and many more in EAA; He will be missed by all.

I would like to welcome a new member, Robert Beck. I understand another new person join at the last meeting also, I have yet to receive the information on him, but we welcome you anyway. Just a reminder if you have forgotten to send your check for dues, please send them to Gregg Cornell and make the check out to "EAA Chapter 55". Memberships are to be paid on January 1 of every year.

We have found out who has been cleaning out the chapter hangar. The guilty person is none other than Rick Farrell. He has cleaned up, moved things around and just made the place look real nice. Rick said it was for a personal reasons, "Just didn't like the snow on my airplane." Thanks Rick Great Job.

Speaking of great jobs, there have been some sightings of a fine looking Super Glasair IIS doing taxi tests at Mason Jewett airport. Gregg Cornell has fired up the Glasair and is taxiing around the airport and some time soon I suspect we should be seeing it flying. Congratulations Gregg for a fine job on your airplane.

If you have not checked out our website do take a look at it. Craig Tucker is working on it all the time and many changes have been made. It is rapidly becoming one of the best sites around.

Warren is in Florida for the next few months. Renee is filling in as newsletter editor so you may notice some changes.

Remember if you go flying take a chapter member with you.

Mike

Breakfast crews for next month are:
Dan Beckett, Pete Chestnut, Grant Emfield, George Haley, Steve Meyer, Ray Pruett, Jim Smith, Doug Uptegraft and Greg Hover.

Board of Directors' Meeting

Wednesday, March 10, 2004

7:00 pm at Hangar

Chapter 55 Meeting

Saturday, March 13, 2004

8-9:00 am Breakfast

9:30 am Chapter Meeting

Teams for March

Chris Bayley
Bill Campeau
Chuck Hacker
Sharron Hacker
Steve Houghton
Ted Lakin
Gilbert McKess
Joe Pirch
Bart Smith
Craig Tucker

EAA Board of Directors Meeting

February 11, 2004

The meeting was called to order at 7:05 pm. → Attendees were President Mike Arntz, Vice President Tom Botsford, Renee Arntz, Dave Groh, Debbie Groh, Doug Koons, Bill Puroskey, Gregg Cornell and Drew Seguin. → The Treasurer's report was approved. → The minutes from the previous meeting were approved. → Doug Koons updated on the Hangar door project and there will be no need to get a structural engineer. Discussion on how the door will be installed and the savings of having the chapter members installing the door. → Discussion on two events for 2004, a steak fry in the fall and possibly a breakfast fly-in in the summer, the dates were set. → Renee

is planning at least two Young Eagles events, June and July 10th after the meetings. → The meeting was adjourned at 8:35.

Membership Meeting

February 14, 2004

The meeting was called to order at 9:30 am by Tom Botsford since Mike Arntz could not be present because he had to work. → There were 45 members and guests present. → The dates for the Dawn Patrol Breakfast will be June 13th and the Steak Fry Fly in will be on Sunday August 15th. → Minutes from the previous meeting were approved. → Gregg Cornell gave the Treasurers report. It was approved → Renee Arntz gave out the rest of the certificates from headquarters. → The Mini-Max was sold. → Still looking for a new refrigerator to be donated. → Bill Puroskey gave a report on The Great Lakes International Aviation Conference. It was a big hit and getting bigger every year. → Terry talked about having a movie night and it was suggested on having it on February 20th at 7:00 PM. → Renee Arntz wanted everyone to know just how hard Craig Tucker has been working on the website. He has put in many hours and it is looking better everyday. → Terry Lutz will have a program on TCAS after the meeting. It was very informative and interesting. The meeting was adjourned at 10:25 am.

Notes From Cape Juby

by Terry Lutz

We've had some pretty good weather lately, and it sparked a flurry of flying activity. As luck would have it, winds were light and in a favorable direction,

which is actually quite unusual for this time of year. The old expression of “In like a lion and out like a lamb” usually holds true. The winds of spring are usually stronger and more violent than the winds of fall, which tend to be predictable and friendly. The reason is simple: Spring winds contain higher temperature air with more moisture, both of which contribute to the energy within a weather system.

March 1st 2004 came in like a lion. I happened to be flying a trip from Indianapolis to Memphis, and had to go right down the line of an advancing cold front. It was a turbulent ride. We knew there would be some turbulence at altitude, but to cruise efficiently, we climbed to FL330, listening to comments from other flights as we went. On level off at FL330, we had a mostly smooth ride, and the seat belt sign was turned off. Ahead was a layer of clouds, but we couldn't tell whether or not we were high enough to get above it. We couldn't, and it got rather turbulent in those intensely white clouds. The seat belt sign went back on, and we asked for a lower altitude. For the next 200 miles, as we descended from FL330 all the way down to 3000 feet on approach to Memphis, the turbulence continued. There wasn't much actual weather in terms of clouds and rain, just continuous light to moderate chop. Your typical spring weather.

Last month, I mentioned the cold weather we had in January, telling the story of Wilkins and Eilson as they flew over the North Pole to the island of Spitsbergen. I noticed in the paper recently that a Russian research station on the polar ice cap had been severely damaged when the ice began

to break up. Although several structures were lost, the Russian scientists working there were safe, and plans were being made to rescue them. The Russians were planning aircraft and helicopter support for the rescue, which will be staged from Spitsbergen. Which goes to show the place really does exist, and that aircraft are an essential part of arctic exploration.

It was so cold last month, that we decided to hold the first of which I hope will be an annual film festival. This year's feature film was “Twelve O'Clock High”, featuring Gregory Peck. The opening scene of “Who Framed Roger Rabbit” was the selected short subject that allowed us to settle into our seats and get started on the popcorn. Those of you who remember this film will recall that it begins with Dean Jagger stopping by an antique shop in London and buying a Toby mug that the 918th used in their officer's club to signal when a mission would be flown the next day. If Toby faced the club, the bar was open. If the ops officer came in and turned Toby to the wall, they would fly the next day.

Tom Botsford surprised us all by showing up with a Toby mug that looked eerily like the one in the movie. He said that he was way up in Calumet, Michigan one day, searching around in a little antique shop and came across the mug that you see in picture attached to these notes. On the bottom of the mug it reads: “Property of the 918th Bomb Group”. Ya gotta believe!!

Minus about 75 members, the entire chapter showed up for the movie. Ted Lakin was there to fire up the popcorn machine, and we had the

tables set up like seating in a fine theater. As it turns out, with Russ Hilding and Bart Smith in attendance, we learned a lot more about the history behind the movie than you could imagine. They both brought articles with them, different articles, that told the story of the real 918th. Which, it turns out, wasn't the 918th at all, but the 306th (one third the number), and Bart was a member of that unit!!

When the Eighth Air Force was established in England in 1942, a group of seven officers were involved. Led by General Ira Eaker, the group included Bernie Lay, Jr. Lay had been a screenwriter in Hollywood when asked by Eaker to join him as the unit's public relations aide and official historian. Another officer involved, Sy Bartlett, accompanied Eaker and King George VI on a tour of Eighth Air Force bases in England, early in 1942. When they arrived at the 306th, there was no one there to greet them, and military discipline was in shambles. As a result, the commander at the time, Colonel Charles B. "Chip" Overacker, was relieved of duty and replaced by Colonel Frank Armstrong. This was dramatized in the movie, and the replacement on screen became General Frank Savage, played by Gregory Peck (and later Robert Lansing in the TV version).

Another officer, Major Sy Bartlett, was working in operations research and analysis for General Tooley Spaatz, who was commanding general of all U.S. forces in the European Theater. Bartlett was a promoter, and after Spaatz left for North Africa, he managed to bootleg a night bombing flight with the RAF. During the flight, he persuaded the

bombardier to let him toggle off the bombs. The next morning, Bartlett held a news conference and announced that he had become the first American to bomb Berlin. The RAF announced at General Eaker's staff meeting that the U.S. Army Air Forces had bombed Berlin all right, escorted by 1,000 RAF bombers. Eaker was not amused and issued Bartlett a stern reprimand.

Frank Armstrong had earlier replaced the commander of the 97th Bomb Group. A natural pilot, Armstrong insisted on rigorous training for formation, gunnery, and bombing, practicing whenever the weather allowed. On August 17th, 1942 he led the 97th on the first American heavy bombing raid of the war, over railroad marshalling yards near Rouen, France. He then took over the 306th, and after only 4 weeks of intense training, led the first American heavy bombing raid over Germany, hitting the submarine pens in Wilhelmshaven. After promotion to General, Armstrong took command of the 315th Bombardment wing, a B-29 unit, in the Pacific.

Bernie Lay himself was in the thick of the war. On August 17th, 1943, he climbed aboard the "Picadilly Lilly" (made famous in the movie), as copilot of a B-17 on a mission to hit the Messerschmitt factory at Regensburg. The Eighth lost 60 bombers that day, and more than 600 airmen were killed or taken prisoner. His depiction of that day was later published as "I Saw Regensburg Destroyed", in the *Saturday Evening Post*. Lay was later assigned to command a B-24 unit, the 487th Bomb Group, based in Lavenham, England. On a mission to Chaumont, France on May 11th, 1944, the group was badly shot up, mainly

due to a gross navigation error. Lay was in the lead ship, one of three shot down. There were 16 killed, and 11 held as POWs, but after bailing out, Lay and his co-pilot managed to contact the French Resistance. They spent 3 months avoiding capture before being repatriated on August 13, 1944.

After the war, Lay and Bartlett returned to California, and collaborated on a book about the war. "*Twelve O'Clock High*" was published as a novel in 1948 and made into a movie which debuted December 25, 1949. It was nominated for 4 Academy Awards, and won 2, for Best Sound Production, and to Dean Jagger as Best Supporting Actor. Although the book is a mosaic of people and events of the war, it is told by those who saw it first hand, and is regarded today by the Air Force as "a classic and accurate portrayal of the problems of leadership in a combat situation".

All of this history I never would have known, if Bart Smith and Russ Hilding had not provided the background. Now *you* know the full story. Thanks, guys.

On my last airline trip, I also had the chance to visit the Western Canada Aviation Museum in Winnipeg, Manitoba, Canada. I've been there before, and often want to go back, just see and remember the airplanes they have. When I went through this time, I noticed a man and a woman rib stitching the wing strut panels for a huge old Bellanca. You might have seen this airplane on a Christmas card or similar painted scene. The airplane has huge, gull shaped wing struts that are actually airfoil surfaces. To do the job of rib stitching, you have to probe

along with the needle while the person opposite spots for you. When the needle is in the right position, you poke it through the fabric. I asked the woman if the one on the other side was her husband (and my thought here was: they are both taking orders from each other; might be tough for husband and wife). She said, "No, he's in the shop area".

So I had the chance to talk to him and get a tour of the shop. He is a retired airline pilot, and told me about the really old days of flying in northern Canada. I asked him all about skis, and preheating, and all that winter time stuff. He recalled a time when he was flying Fairchild and Stinsons in the far north, and of making the decision to move back south for an airline job. One day his boss was up in Frobisher Bay, and he told the boss his thoughts. To which the guy said, "Don't do anything until we talk again". In a few days, he got a call to come back to Winnipeg and get checked out in the DC-3. Finally, he thought, a move south and to more professional and less stressful flying. Once checked out, the company announced DC-3 service to the far north and back he went! Such is frontier justice in northern Canada.

I did see one airplane in the restoration shop that was truly unique and beautiful. It is a Fairchild "Super 71", a high wing, all metal cargo airplane on floats. The cargo/passenger compartment is ahead of the pilot, who has an open cockpit. The pilot can access the cockpit either by crawling through the aft cabin, or by steps up the side. It is truly a "one of a kind", that you would not see elsewhere in the world, and they are doing a great

job on the restoration. Sadly, the one person I really wanted to tell about this airplane was Rick Duckworth. As many of you know, he passed away a few weeks ago. Rick was a good friend, excellent mechanic, and knew more about old airplanes than anyone I know.

Finally, for those of you out there that are homebuilders, I have learned recently of two brake failures that fortunately occurred in the chocks. One was caused by a defective brake valve. The other was by a problem with a flared brake line. In both cases, one brake pedal went all the way to the floor. And in both cases, the airplanes are designed to use brakes for primary directional control. If you have an airplane configured like this, perhaps now is the time to do two things: spend a little more time ground handling with aerodynamic controls only. Then if a brake fails, you are at least confident you can keep it going straight while you think of options on how to stop. And second, take a good look at your brake system, and look for any obvious signs of leakage. Spring is a really good time to take a close look at things that can hurt you, so take a good look. And as always, don't forget to lend a hand to your fellow pilot when they need it.

CAUGHT IN THE "55" WEB

If you haven't had an opportunity to log on to the Chapter 55 web site at www.eaa55.org - I encourage you to do so. The updates, changes, and additions completed by Craig Tucker are outstanding.

Our web site was built with a great foundation but was sorely in need of some tender loving care. Craig has concentrated on getting the information up to date and organized in an efficient manner for easy member access.

The home page will continue to highlight "late breaking" news and noteworthy items. Be sure to check out the *SITE HIGHLIGHTS* section which has a link to the *2004 Program Teams* to learn the month you are assigned to serve. Our calendar will be amended to include events as they unfold.

Our next areas of concentration will be Member Profiles, our Veterans page, and Projects. We have been working out some kinks within the "online profile form" and hope that is now resolved. If I don't hear from you - you may hear from me as I work to do a file on each member!!

This is your web site. We definitely want to know what you like, don't like, want to see, or could care less about!!

- Vickie Vandenberg
email: kv_vand@core.com

EAA Affirms Commitment to Young Eagles Program – Announces Harrison Ford as New Chairman

March 8, 2004 - Harrison Ford, best known as a renowned actor in more than three dozen films but also an extremely active pilot and **member** of the Experimental Aircraft Association (EAA), was introduced today as the new Chairman of the EAA Young Eagles Program, which has flown more than 1 million young people since 1992.

During a welcoming program at Van Nuys, Calif., with EAA President Tom Poberezny, Ford accepted the chairmanship of the program, saying, "It's daunting to step into General Yeager's shoes, but aviation is about learning new skills and the satisfaction that comes with practicing them and doing better."

Brig. Gen. Chuck Yeager, who has served as Young Eagles Chairman since 1994, has been named the program's Chairman Emeritus and will continue to participate as one of more than 35,000 volunteer pilots who have been involved since Young Eagles was founded.

"Harrison Ford's passion for flight has grown through the years, as he has achieved several pilot certificates and ratings, and made aviation a major part of his life," Poberezny said. "He discovered Young Eagles on his own several years ago and quietly started flying young people. He now has flown 81 Young Eagles. He is a natural fit to help lead us to even greater achievements as EAA members prepare the next generation of aviators."

The new Chairman is the third in the history of the Young Eagles Program. Academy Award-winning actor Cliff Robertson served as Chairman from the program's founding in July 1992 through 1994, with Gen. Yeager serving 1995-2003. Under these two Chairmen, EAA's Young Eagles has grown into the largest youth aviation education program ever created.

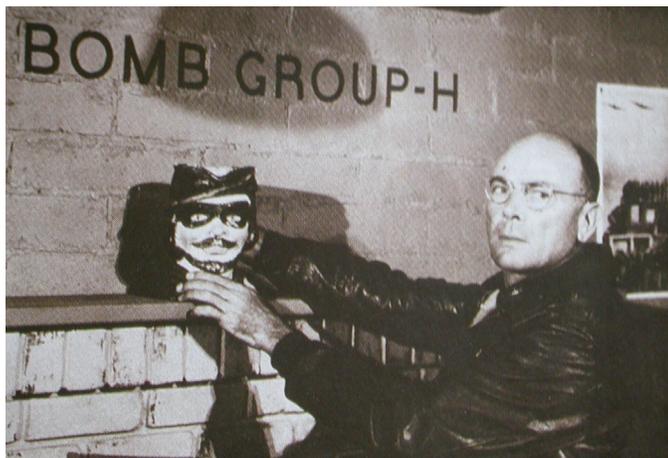
I thought this partial article from the EAA National site would interest you. For the complete article visit:

http://www.eaa.org/communications/eaanews/pr/040308_harrison_ford.html - Renee Arntz

Col. Terry Fobbs

Col. Terry Fobbs was deployed on February 14th for six to nine months to Kosovo. We have not heard yet from him but will keep you posted. In January Col. Fobbs visited Kosovo and stated it wasn't as bad as Iraq but he would not want to live there. Many friends and relatives said our farewells to him on Friday, February 13th. Stay safe Col. Fobbs.

-Renee Arntz



Movie night Tom, Ernie, Russ, Ted and Karen

