

# HANGAR ECHOES

EXPERIMENTAL AIRCRAFT ASSOCIATION  
CHAPTER 168 DALLAS TEXAS

**Note: Next Meeting on March 10th, Second Tuesday,  
at Cavanaugh Flight Museum, See the Thunder Mustang**

## Kolb FireFly

By Jerry Bidle

We have a new first flight in the chapter. Gary Hansen and myself, Jerry Bidle have finished our Kolb FireFly. Gary had the honor of making the first flight on 14<sup>th</sup> of December 1997 at Aero Country airport. The second flight was made by Gary the following Tuesday with myself taking a crack at it on 27 December. (Aero Country is a sport airport located about 7 miles West of McKinney. Stop in if you happen to be in the area. There are many projects under way on the field, plus often a good aerobatics show to view.)

The FireFly is Klob's smaller brother of the FireStar with only 22 foot of wing span. It was designed to meet the UL category with a 447 Rotax. The engine break-in was completed the 6<sup>th</sup> of December.

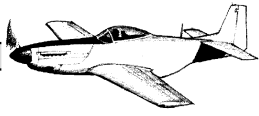
Minor adjustment to the prop pitch and carb setting were found necessary. We were surprised when the engine almost started for the first time on the first pull, the second one did it. While doing some slow speed taxi testing it became apparent brakes were essential to overcome the thrust produced even when at idle.

The first flight consisted of two takeoffs and landings to the North. There was little wind and the flight went well

with nothing out of the ordinary. It was exciting to see our effort fly and watch it climb. Suddenly the pattern was full of airplanes. Gary did a wonderful job, considering he had to comprehend the unfamiliar characteristics of a high wing-mounted, pusher engine configuration and the sudden heavy traffic in the pattern. Following the flight it was

concluded we needed to increase the up elevator deflection to improve its initial lift off during takeoff.





I originally purchased the kit at the 1995 Oshkosh fly-in. Soon after its receipt, late fall and winter of 95, I was assigned overseas. In the spring of 96 the kit was sold to Lynn Welsch. It seems her husband had taken a liking to the FireFly and was intending to order a kit soon. Apparently Phil had been hanging around the house too much lately and was driving her crazy. So to get him out of the house, Lynn decided to buy him a kit for his birthday but wanted one quickly. (Sorry guys, Phil intends to keep her around.) As it goes, upon my return to the states, Gary picked me up at the airport. We went to my house, loaded up the kit, took it to the airport and put it in Phil's hangar yet that night. Then Lynn had to made an excuse for them to go to the airport. Let's just say Phil, like most spouses, when there's a hidden agenda doesn't cooperate with the plan at first.

In the meantime, I decided not to pursue replacing the FireFly kit. Instead I ordered an Earthstar ThunderGull, another UL which had been considered the first time. Once Phil had the kit he tore into it with great enthusiasm. Over the course of many months, working just weekends, he built all the tail feathers, wings, and fitted the boom tube. We were close by keeping an on eye on the progress and noting Phil's excellent workmanship. It was early spring 97, Phil's interest in the project began to fade. His "172" needed some attention, plus he was facing the task of drilling the critical wing attachment holes and the covering process. Note, unlike many ultralights, Kolb's use the Stits covering process. This led him to develop an interest in another kit utilizing Dacron slip-covers. At this point I approached Phil and asked if he was considering selling it and if I could have the first opportunity of buying it back. The deal was concluded over the phone as the airport shuttle bus pulled up to take me to the airport for his next overseas trip.

The Kit was moved over to our hanger where it sat for the next couple of months until, my return. It was then that we decided to partner-up on the ownership and complete it together, as there was still plenty that needed to be done.

Credit for completion goes to Gary for being the main drive behind it. He assumed the "foreman" leadership role determining the task and setting the priorities. While I was gone, Gary developed a schedule of working on Tuesday and Thursday evenings in addition to Saturdays and Sundays. His wife became an airport widow for many months during the process. Her support and patience was greatly appreciated by both. While I was gone, Gary kept me informed of the recent airport activities and progress via e-mail. While I was in town, Gary worked me hard. Gary single-handedly took on the main task of covering and painting. I handled the instrument panel, electrical, misc. parts, manufacture and assembly.

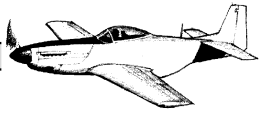
After the seat was installed, I found it difficult to get in and out. Recalling the factory's demonstrator, I couldn't recall it being that difficult. Suddenly it dawned on me that he had opted for the larger 6-inch wheels versus the standard 5-inch. Since I am sort of short, this raised it just enough that I couldn't have one foot on the ground and the other on the floorboard and still straddle the side rail. If I wanted to fly it,

we were obviously going to have to devise something to assist me. After all it would be embarrassing to have to call for the air stair truck when you landed at an airport. A cement block seemed to be just right. But, if they couldn't find room for a radio, where would they put a block. Naturally he got may "helpful" suggestions from his airport friends. Thinking about it, I came up with the idea of a stirrup made out of seat belt material. It could be thrown over the side and pulled in when ready to fly.

The first few flights were made with standard short windscreen. To help contend with the wind, a helmet with full-face shield was worn. However, neither of us liked the cold wind this time of year brings. It wasn't long before Gary pushed to start installing the full enclosure. By the time you read this it should have made its first flight since a full enclosure has been added. Like any project, there are always a few things remaining to be done. These include devising a mount for a radio, so long as space can be found where we can reach and see it, and adding storage compartments under the seat.

We both are happy the project is finished. It's been a challenge but it feels good when you see it fly. Many thanks to my partner Gary for his dedication and sacrificing his time to complete the project. And to Dina, his wife, a Big Thanks for her patience and understanding. They're both terrific people. Will there be another project? Yes, the ThunderGull. Unexpectedly buying back the FireFly delayed starting the ThunderGull but now that we are done, we will start on the Gull. But it will be completed at a slower pace. We both have our eyes on the Flying K SkyRaider. Who knows what might happen! For now it's time for a break and to get some flying in once and while. See you all at the airport.

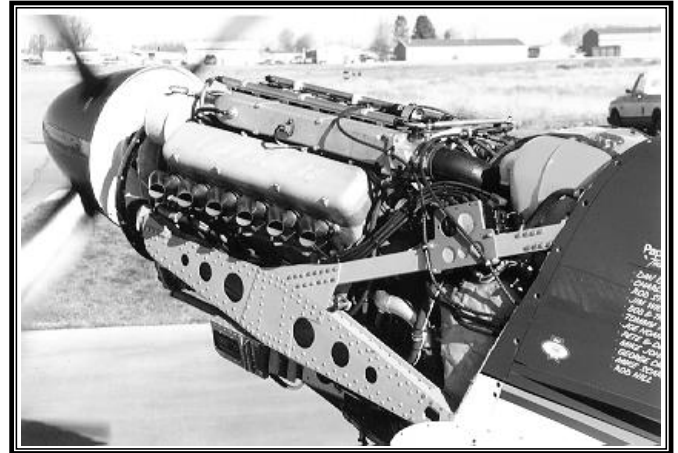
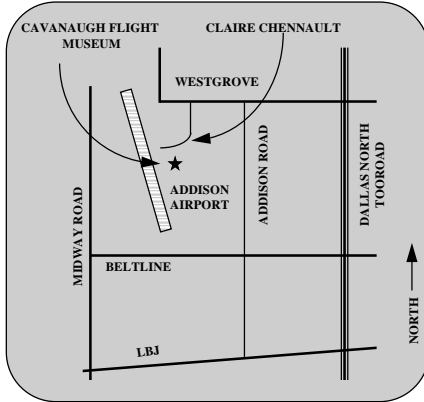
By Jerry Bidle



## March 10th Chapter Meeting

Our March 10th (second Tuesday) Meeting will be held at the Cavanaugh Flight Museum, located on the Addison Airport. Check the map. Doors will open at 6:30 p.m. with the meeting shortly thereafter. Please plan now to attend!

As announced in the last issue of Hangar Echoes, Pete Quortrup invited Dan Denney, developer of the Thunder Mustang, and pilot Dale Clarke to be speakers at our March meeting. Plans call for their arrival sometime on Monday after spending the previous weekend celebrating the Planes of Fame 41st anniversary in Chino, California. Invite your friends and come out to see and hear about this noteworthy airplane.



The Falconer V-12

## March 7th Fly-In / Drive-In

The March Fly-In will be at Aero Country. Our host will be Brad and Kathy Mitchell at the North end of the airport. We will start sometime around 10:30 AM. See map below.

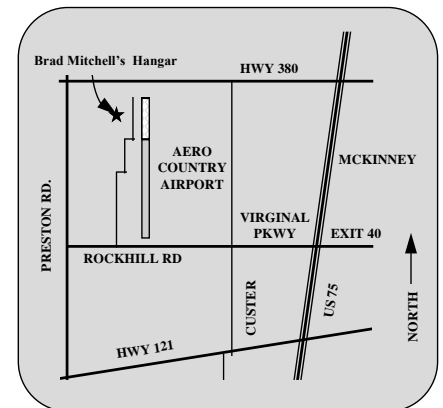


## Thunder Mustang at Meeting

### Calendar of Events

April 4	Conroe, Tx Ch 302 Fly-In 281 376-1630
April 11/12	Burnet, Tx Bluebonnet CAF Airshow
April 18/19	Nacogdoches, Tx Cabin Fever Fly-In
April 19/25	Lakeland, Fl 24th Sun n Fun
April 25	Sherman Muni Grand Re-Opening
March 21/22	Denton TX EAA Sport Workshop 800-967-5746
June 5/6	Bartlesville, Ok Biplane Expo 98
Jul 29 - Aug 4	46th EAA Fly-In Oshkosh

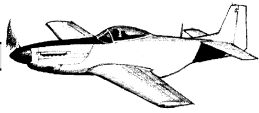
March 1998



## March 12th Director's Meeting

The March Director's Meeting will be on the 12th from 7:00 - 8:45 PM at the Farmers Branch Library. The following is a report by Tom Emerson from the February meeting.

1. Dan Denney, creator of the Thunder Mustang will be our guest speaker at the March chapter meeting, hosted by the Cavanaugh Flight Museum on March 10. The Thunder Mustang will be present (weather permitting) for all of us to examine up close. This promises to be an exciting evening for all. Don't miss it.
2. Elections for this years Chapter Board of Directors is also on the schedule for the March meeting, be sure to attend so you can cast your vote for the candidate of your choice.



3. Aero Country airport was selected as the location for the March fly-in. Marvin Brott will check with Brad Mitchell to see if he would like to host the event at his hangar. We plan on having the trailer at the March fly-in. Tom Emerson will check the chapter trailer to determine what it will take to bring it out. It has been mothballed for the winter.

4. Bill Signs was the guest speaker at the board meeting. For years 92, 93, 95 and 96, Bill has been making note-worthy "Friendship Flights. Last year you may well remember his Lindbergh commemorative flight non-stop New York to Paris in 22 hours 27 minutes. A big reason behind these Friendship Flights is to enhance interest among elementary school age children in science and mathematics through aviation related activities. He is seeking interest among the Chapter 168

membership to support this effort by coordinating activities with local schools. . Jim Quinn and Marvin Brott volunteered to help out. More news on this in the future.

5. Tom Moe gave a report on his research into the legal status of Chapter 168. We are currently considered to be in a non active status as a nonprofit organization with the State of Texas. Plans are being made to remedy this situation.

### **March 31st Newsletter Assembly**

The April issue of Hangar Echoes will be assembled at Pat and Marvin Brott's home March 31st starting at 7:00 PM. The address is 1317 Seminole Drive, Richardson Texas, 75080. Phone 972 235-5552.

## **A Message From the President Jerry Mrazek**

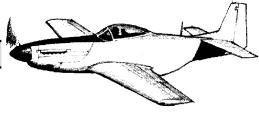
I have talked to a number of people since I have been in this office about the participation of chapter members in the chapter activities. At first I was moved to see if I could be clever enough to get people who have not participated before in all of the activities to do so. After giving it some thought though, I have decided that it's all right if some members just like to attend the meetings and others just like to participate in the fly-ins and other just like to get and read the news letters. It's OK if your interest is limited to a given area and I don't criticize you for that. I would like you to think about something however. If no one volunteered to see to it that there is a program at the chapter meetings, and no one volunteered to organize a fly-in and no one volunteered to put together a newsletter, you wouldn't have any enjoyment from the chapter. My point is, you should appreciate the volunteers that have stepped up to those tasks. Because they are volunteers, it is possible to abuse them by taking them for granted. This chapter and any chapter will not function if it doesn't have volunteers. If you are inclined to say "Oh, I'm not interested in functioning as a board member or a news letter editor or an officer of the chapter", please consider how the things that you presently enjoy get done. They don't happen by magic. Think of it as paying back to the chapter for the enjoyment you have derived for these many years and get involved.



I have also been thinking about what our purpose is as an EAA chapter. When I applied for the airworthiness certificate for my RANS S-14 recently, I said that I built this airplane for my own education and recreation. That statement is absolutely true. I believe that this is the fundamental goal of the EAA, i.e., education and recreation as related to aviation. Tom Moe called me recently about a discussion we had in the last board meeting. I suggested that we invest a part of our financial assets in investment instruments that will yield higher earnings than we are presently making ( currently about 1.75%). Tom asked the very appropriate question, "Why should we be interested in earning more money unless we have some plan for using it?". He is right. We have a little capital in our treasury that gives us the opportunity to be able to fund some small activities. I think this money could best be used to educate some of our members in a way that allows them to educate the rest of us. I believe that this is exactly in line with what the goals of the EAA are all about. It seems to me that what ever we do with our money, it should be beneficial to the chapter and to aviation. I make no excuse for the fact that I feel that the most important activity of the EAA is the encouragement of home built aircraft. This is what got the EAA started. In the future, I would like to see education programs that promote better, smarter, and safer homebuilt aircraft endeavors in our chapter. If you agree, or have opposing views, please let us know. I am going to suggest to Marvin Brott, our current newsletter editor ( tell him thanks for his efforts, by the way) that we have a "letters to the editor" column in which you can express your views.

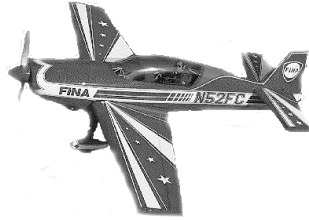
Finally, I have submitted the necessary paper work to the FAA in my application for an airworthiness certificate for my airplane. I am now waiting for their response. I hope to be flying in weeks.

Happy Flying Jerry



### Jan Collmer at February Meeting

Our February meeting had Jan Collmer as our featured speaker. As always, he provided a great program by bringing us up to date on the airshow activities. He made the point that it is the really little things that can significantly change your life or set you on a new direction. For him, it was a short Navy film in high school that caused him to get interested in aviation and join the Navy. Therefore, he urged all of us to take the kids flying because, you will probably never know for sure, but one small ride could change a kids life forever. In the short time he has had the Extra 300L, Jan has given more than 200 rides. Thanks, Jan, for an excellent meeting.



### Voting for Chapter 168 Directors for 1998.

The election of seven Chapter Directors for 1998 will be held at this month's (March) membership meeting. You are urged to carefully review the candidates listed below and be prepared to vote for your choices. We are very pleased to have such an outstanding group of members who are willing to participate this year. Each of them deserves your serious consideration. Good luck, thanks to all! You're all winners!

- |                 |                 |
|-----------------|-----------------|
| Ann Asberry     | "Bo" Bauereis   |
| Sam Cooper      | Dave Davidson   |
| A.D. Donald     | Dick Flunker    |
| John Ivy Jr.    | Joe Matthews    |
| Monroe McDonald | Tom Moe         |
| Frank Prokop    | Richard Robbins |

Please note that Earl Browning has found it necessary to withdraw his nomination because of the seriousness of his motorcycle accident this past month. See article on his status.

### Earl Browning Status Up-Date

By Clair Button

We reported in last month's newsletter that our former Chapter Vice President, Earl Browning, had been seriously injured in a motorcycle accident. We are pleased to report that he has now been allowed to return home. Earl spent two weeks in Parkland Hospital where they operated to repair the broken left hip (lots of stainless plates and screws), and the two broken bones in his right leg. One break was just below his artificial right knee and the other at the top of his ankle.

After leaving Parkland, Earl was transferred to the Plano Rehabilitation Center where he spent the next two weeks going through some very intensive therapy. He was scheduled to be there three weeks, but he worked very hard at the therapy sessions and was able to go home a week early. Actually,

having to spend all day in a hospital bed watching daytime TV is enough motivation for anyone to work hard to get out of there early! When I visited Earl at the Rehab Center, I was surprised to see that the surgeon, rather than having made two incisions on his leg at the breaks, had made only one. Unfortunately it ran from his knee all the way down to his ankle. Earl's a good friend of mine, so I can say this, I won't say it looked bad, but the stitching, with heavy black thread, looked a lot like my very 1st attempt at aircraft wing rib stitching, not a pretty sight!

Because of the break just below his artificial knee, Earl will have to take it very slow for quite some time, no driving (or flying). We wish him a continued speedy recovery. I'm sure he would welcome your calls, (972) 758-0582.

Earl would like to thank all the chapter members who signed his get-well card at last month's meeting.

Oh yes, his Honda motorcycle has now been repaired and will soon be up for sale!

### Young Eagles by Jim Quinn

Our chapter along with others participated in a Boy Scouts/Young Eagles activity at the Alliance Airport on 24 January. The people that helped with this event were:

- Carol Morris with her award winning 1966 Alon AirCoupe - EAA 34
- Husband, Gene Morris, retired American Airlines Captain and his Bonanza - EAA 34
- Retired American Airlines Captain Jess Shryack and his 415D Ercoupe

Chapter 168 participants included:

- |                   |                 |
|-------------------|-----------------|
| Jerry Mrazek      | Monroe McDonald |
| Brad Mitchell     | Doug Cheek      |
| and me, Jim Quinn |                 |

We flew a total of 19 Boy Scouts and they also received a tour of the first class tower and a tour of the Alliance FBO, the gracious hosts for this event.

ps: I would be remiss if I didn't mention that for this event the score was: AirCoupes 3, RVs 0

...(PS from ed) - RV Statistical Score as of 2/3/98

More than 10,000 people have purchased RV Plans

More than 7,000 tail kits have been started

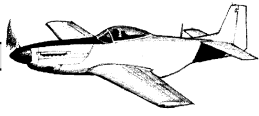
In < than 2 years, 638 people have started building RV-8s

199 Quickbuild kits have been started

1,795 flying RV's

### Ninety-Nines by "Ann E. Koenig

The Dallas Chapter of the Ninety-Nines, International Organization of Women Pilots invites you to participate in their Spring Poker Run on March 21st, rain date April 4th. We



start at Terrell (TRL) between 9 and 11 A.M. For more information, or for go/no-go decision on event day if weather is questionable, call Chris Swain at (972) 285-8286.

Each poker hand costs \$10.00. All proceeds will go to a scholarship for flight instruction for a student active in the Skyline High School (Dallas) private pilot ground school program. We have thirty-six (36) decks of cards. Your hand(s) will be drawn from the deck(s) number that you select. If you have not participated in a poker run, please let me run through the procedure. You will start at Terrell and pick a card (sealed in an envelope) from the museum is by donation. The Wurst Wagon will be on the field to supply your food needs. Prizes will be awarded at 4:00. The best poker hand wins \$100. There will be the deck(s) you selected. You will then fly to three other airports, Athens (F44), Mineola Wisner (3F9), Greenville Majors (GVT), IN ANY ORDER, and back to Terrell (TRL). One card will be drawn from your designated deck(s) at each airport. You will have a five-card poker hand after returning to Terrell. Your hand must be turned in by 3:30 PM. While waiting for your award you may choose to visit the Silent Wings Museum adjacent to the Terrell Airport. Admission to door prizes and awards for 2nd and 3rd place poker hands, first pair of red 99s, oldest airplane, youngest pilot, and oldest pilot. Event sponsors include AOPA, Phyllis Moses, Classic Air, Air Nostalgia and the Wurtz Wagon. NOTE: Proof of insurance must be available upon request for each participating aircraft. Blue Skies and Tail winds to all!

### **Fort Worth Museum of Science and History**

**Flight Where Adventures Take Off**, a national traveling exhibit, made its Texas debut at the Fort Worth Museum of Science and History in February. This aviation exhibit combines real aircraft, simulators, historical figures and interactive science into a unique flying experience sure to delight and inform visitors. Flight will present an opportunity to pilot a Bell 47D helicopter, captain a Boeing 727 from an actual cockpit, or barnstorm through the Museum in a Boeing PT-17 Stearman.

To enhance visitor experience in the exhibit area, volunteers are needed to serve as Exhibit Explainers and to present informal hands-on demonstrations dealing with flight. They need volunteers with experience like we have in this chapter. If interested, call 817 732-1631 or look on [www.starttext.net/home/fwmslh](http://www.starttext.net/home/fwmslh).

### **4th Annual EAA Chapter Book and Video Sale**

This chapter book and video sale will be in effect from March 2 through April 30. The books and video are many and the prices have been significantly cut. Example, Basic Aircraft Painting was \$24.99, now \$13.99. The list of items and prices along with order form will be at the next chapter meeting. Check with Jerry.

### **In Addition to Disseminating Information, Newsletters Assure Us of a Stable Future**

*By Paul Poberezny*

I just finished reading *Antique Airways*, a newsletter of EAA Antique Classic Chapter No. 3. The chapter was started some 30 years ago by Jack and Golda Cox when they were still in North Carolina. Jack and Golda just celebrated 28 years in Oshkosh, heading up EAA's editorial department and its five monthly publications. Ray Bottom has been Chapter 3's newsletter editor for many years, carrying the word of the Carolinas and Virginia.

After reading several newsletters today, it occurred to me how valuable they are to aviation. Their reporting of activities, safety items, and local, state or federal proposals are items that most likely never would have been brought to the attention of the aviation public.

EAA alone has more than 900 chapters. Most have a newsletter and many have flying clubs. Aviation businesses and groups also have their own publications.

Few of us are fortunate enough to be on the receiving end of so many of these publications. They offer us an educational view of aviation activities, not only in our own country but throughout the world. It gives one the feeling that aviation is strong and continues to have a stable future.

There are many who want to see their name, their airplane or a photo in a publication, but for the editor trying to compile the information, it is not as easy a task as it would seem.

Aviation is richer because of their work.

### **Our Chapter 168 Newsletter**

*By Marvin Brott*

As a follow up to Paul's message, I want to thank all of you who have submitted articles for this newsletter. It has made my job very easy when all I have to do is the final lay out of the newsletter. I do need your help in tracking down good local news. If you have news, please send it via e-mail to [m-brott@ti.com](mailto:m-brott@ti.com) either as a message or as an attachment in WORD.

One of the biggest challenges has been getting a good job done on the printing of the newsletter. I believe the newsletter last month was one of the best with respect to articles, pictures and layout. Unfortunately it was one of our worst when it came to the final printing. The pictures were terrible. We tried a new printer in Plano but it didn't work out. Our most consistently good quality material has come from the Sir Speedy on Jupiter Road in Garland. So, lets stick with the people who have done the best. P.S., all of the pictures from last month have been included in this newsletter somewhere, including Greg's Velocity.



## Greg Otto's Velocity at McKinney

### Hangar Tales

by Tandy Allen

With a lot of help from the members of EAA 168, I hope to make this a regular feature of each issue of "Hangar Echoes". Everyone of you have something to share with the rest of the members and this can be your forum. The focus will be on personal experiences, good or bad. Hopefully, we will be able to relate some humorous stories that will illuminate how aviation touches our lives. These tales should be true, or mostly true, or you believe them to be true. No out and out fabrications.

For the first tale in this series, there is the one that I call "Perfect Timing".

Picture, if you will, a family group returning from Colorado in a Cessna 210 to a busy airport in Oklahoma. Mom and daughter are in the back seat with Dad and the boyfriend in the front. Weather is not ideal and ATC is vectoring the plane around traffic and in and out of clouds. They are being bounced around a good bit as they get closer to the ground. Definitely more than a light chop.

Just as the pilot is about to turn final, lower the gear and reset the prop, the boyfriend speaks up to ask, "I have been meaning to ask you. Is it all right for me to ask your daughter to marry me?". The pilot whose attention was definitely elsewhere mumbled something about "OK. I guess" and concentrated on keeping the airplane right side up while landing.

Everything did work out. The couple is engaged to be married next spring when they graduate from OSU.

### Now for Some Comments

If helicopters are so safe, how come there are no vintage/classic helicopter fly-ins?

Jim Tavenner

[When asked why he was referred to as 'Ace']: Because during World War Two I was responsible for the destruction of six aircraft, fortunately three were enemy.

March 1998

Captain Ray Lancaster, USAAF.

You know they invented wheelbarrows to teach FAA inspectors to walk on their hind legs.

Marty Caidin

Arguing with a pilot is like wrestling with a pig in the mud, after a while you begin to think the pig likes it.

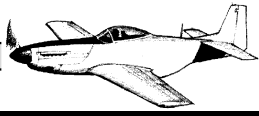
Seen on a General Dynamics bulletin board

In response to how he checked the weather, "I just whip out my blue card with a hole in it and read what it says: 'When color of card matches color of sky, FLY!'"

Gordon Baxter

If Beethoven had been killed in a plane crash at the age of 22, it would have changed the history of music... and of aviation.

Tom Stoppard



## JOE NELSEN AND THE FIRST C172

*EAA Chapter 323 Sherman, Texas and Marvin Brott*

There are a lot of Cessna 172s in this world and we in the Dallas area have the very first one at Aero Country (across from A.D Donald's hangar). Joe and his wife Patty the owners of this rare bird, live in nearby McKinney. Joe works for GE Medical Systems, where he works on Xray products as a field engineer.



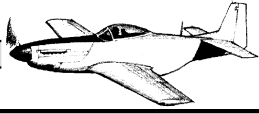
This is an official 1956 model that made its first flight during August 1955. After a couple hundred hours, Cessna sold the airplane in March 1956 to its first owner. While Cessna converted a couple of 170s to tri-gear configuration for proof-of-concept testing, Joe's airplane is the first proof-of-production 172. Later they built the second 172 which was proof-of-tooling. This first 172 has a serial number of 28000.

The airplane now has about 3700 hours total time and has gone through about 12 owners, including a couple of flying schools. Joe received a Private certificate in June 1984. Joe says "I finally got tired of renting and through a friend and fellow pilot at work found N5000A at Luck Field, in south Fort Worth. It was ferried to McKinney Municipal where it was relicensed after being gone over with a really good A&P (who would choose a bad one?). Several thousand dollars and many months of work later, he again flew 00A in late January 1989." It has its original Continual O-330A engine so, as they say, all the numbers match. After much work, he took it to Oshkosh in 1994 and 1996. During the 1994 fly-in, Joe and his airplane became famous with a major article in the daily show newspaper.

After having assisted on nine annuals and numerous incidental repairs, Joe says the innards of 00A sure seem familiar, and he does like to assist with the work. "I have learned much working with A&P Larry Shellenberger over the years, and someday, when time permits, look forward in getting an A&P ticket, too."







## Fly the Pattern

by Ryan Seals

The other day I went to an aviation safety meeting. The subject was flying in the Pattern. The main presentation was a movie made by the AOPA supported by a handout covering the same points. I found myself taking issue with a large part of what they were "selling".

As many of you know I learned to fly at a time when few airplanes had radios and few airports were equipped with transmitters. In those days the pattern "was" the "communication" of what was being done. When one is forced to pay attention to his own pattern and the patterns of those around him it becomes well ingrained as very important and very informative. It also becomes clear that looking for other traffic and paying attention to where one is going is the only way to stay alive.

My biggest complaint regarding the AOPA presentation was excessive dependance on radio announcements and radio monitoring.

There are two serious traps in dependence on radio.

1. It lulls pilots into thinking that their announcement and the absence of other broadcasts means that they have clear right of way to proceed with the landing (or take off) without further careful lookout.

2. There are still planes in the air today without radios and there are pilots who do not use the radio unless forced to by regulations. (I rarely use the radio when operating at uncontrolled fields) All of this is legal and common.

Thus, my complaint. Promotion of dependence on the radio increases the hazards in the air by causing some pilots to charge along without paying close attention to the other occupants of the air around them.

Another item missed in the AOPA presentation was the recommendation for visits to the airport for an on the ground observation of traffic practice at the airport of intended use. While it is not always practical to visit every airport that one may go to, it is always possible to obtain information from someone who has actually been on the ground at the airport. That same AOPA publishes a manual which lists the phone numbers of virtually every airport in the United States. Use it.

The rule of flight should be; abide by the traffic pattern recommendations from the FAR and from the pattern recommendations established at the airport you intend to use.

As I promoted in the last piece on this topic, safety practice dictates that patterns should be kept close to the airport. This important factor was generally omitted

from the safety considerations covered in the presentation. Make it a habit.

The use of tower control, the increasing traffic, the mixture of IFR traffic (practice and actual) and the influence of airline type approaches has served to cause many to extend patterns to ridiculous lengths.

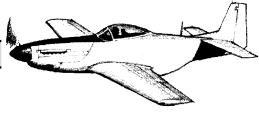
During my training we always assumed that the engine might quit at any moment. Thus, one always stayed close enough to glide to the runway. The practice of power off landings generally began with engine to idle as you passed the end of the runway on down wind. From there you glided to touch down. This gliding practice also led to practice in "spot" landings and to having the plane touch down at the precise intended location. The practice also kept the pattern "close". This procedure, like spins, has generally been deleted from most flight training curricula.

It turns out that with proper planning and instruction a beginning pilot can acquire practice and skill in virtually all aircraft control and maneuvering characteristics of a training type plane, in the pattern. He can practice; cruise speed flight, slow flight, gliding flight, turns, climbs, descent and even stalls (in stall type landings). The ability to fly an airplane well in the pattern is one of the most important skills needed for safe and proper operation of an airplane.

And to make it all the more important being comfortable and confident in the pattern is a necessary first step to a smooth and successful landing. If you do not fly the pattern well it is likely that the landing will not be very good. It will turn out; too fast, too slow, bounced or perhaps, hard to keep between the runway lights.

One of my other pet peeves relating to patterns and landings, is the white line down the runway. It has little to do with flying. When the wind is across the runway, it is a good idea to use whatever space the width of the runway offers to angle into the wind and take a few degrees off the cross wind. In small airplanes it can help a lot.

Find yourself a good old-time pilot and get some instruction in these things before changing your habits. But, be aware that safe operation in the pattern is important and is not an exercise in either elocution or radio operation.



## **Alfred W. Lawson His Unacknowledged Contributions to Early Aviation**

*By Ryan Seals Copyright 1997*

Who is Lawson? A few years ago I asked that same question when I spotted an elaborate "Lawson" Booth at the Oshkosh gathering. I stopped, listened to the pitch by some dedicated Lawson promoters and bought a book. "Lawson, Aircraft Industry Builder" published by the Humanity Publishing Company of Detroit, Michigan. (which is the source for most of this information) The next year as I was flying to Oshkosh via Milwaukee I came upon an extensive "museum like display" promoting Lawson in the Milwaukee Municipal airport.

It turns out that Alfred W. Lawson was a prolific contributor to early aviation and one who seems to have gotten very little long term recognition. Among his accomplishments is, offering, in 1919, what must be the first sleeping compartment airliner service. He was attracted into the aviation business at the very beginning (1906) and in 1908 established FLY, the first aviation magazine to be published.

His adherents claim that he coined many of the words we now use to describe the aviation business. Such as, Aeronautics, Airliner, Aircraft and several others.

In the National Business Review (Magazine) of June 1926 the editor wrote - "Alfred W. Lawson has stood high in Aeronautics for the past 20 years. The entire development of heavier than air craft during that time is studded with Lawson inventions . . . . No one has done more for the upbuilding of aviation than he . . .".

What puzzles me is the absence of any reports of his activities in the current popular aviation literature. I have been reading airplane books, magazines and newspapers diligently since about 1931. I have haunted museums, airports and aviation shows persistently for all that time. With all that exposure and searching I had never heard of Alfred W. Lawson. And I still find no reports of his activities in any recent publications.

Aviation "History" really takes on a life in 1908. That year Wilbur Wright made his public flights in France. Orvil did the demonstration flights for the Army at Ft. Meyers, Virginia and the Curtis group gave demonstrations at a number of places.

Lawson published the first issue of his "FLY" magazine in October of 1908. He used the magazine as a

platform to promote aviation and "his" ideas of how it should be developed. A number of the early flying machine "inventors" gave credit to his magazine for inspiration and motivation. He almost immediately began pushing the idea that large passenger carrying planes should be built and could compete with the railroads. He visualized and wrote about a "System of Air Transportation". In 1909 he built the first "Airliner Fuselage" to demonstrate his idea of how it could be done.

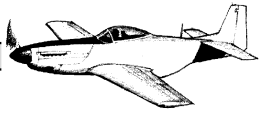
In the November 1908 issue of FLY he discussed a proposal which had been made; to make it necessary to have a license to fly. He concluded that since Air is free - Since No one controls the air - it would be unconstitutional, unAmerican and unreasonable to require such a license. He said "the air is free to breathe and must be free to navigate". (FAA - Congress - are you listening?)

In 1910 he expanded and renamed the magazine. Now called "Aircraft" (a word which he copyrighted) the magazine vigorously promoted the commercial use of airplanes. His publishing office was located in lower Manhattan. By 1913 He had learned to fly, bought a seaplane and used it to commute to work from his home, at Seidlers Beach, New Jersey to the pier at the lower end of Manhattan. Making him one of the earliest aerial commuters. Lawson had started learning to fly in 1910 when less than 15 people in the world had flown. Only such as Wilbur and Orvil Wright, Glen Curtis, John Moisant and Lincoln Beachey and a very few others were capable of piloting an airplane at that time.

In the March 1912 issue of "Aircraft" he proposed that an association of aviators should be formed. He believed that the association was needed to "watch the Lawmakers". He believed that "Pilots must organize to protect their own interests against the schemes of the politicians." At about the same time he organized and became president of "The Aeronautical Manufacturers Association".

As World War I was brewing in Europe Lawson testified before Congress warning that the US was 13th in the world in ownership of airplanes, behind such minor countries as Bulgaria, Spain and Greece. Germany was number one and France number two. He pleaded for the US to invest in production of a reasonable air army. He correctly predicted the Zeppelin Bombing of London, the aerial dog fights between fighter planes and the use of planes for observation. The US Army did not listen.

He moved to Green Bay, Wisconsin and set up an airplane factory. There he designed and manufactured a primary trainer designated as the MT-1. The plane first



flew September 10, 1917. He did obtain contracts to build them for the military and quite a few were delivered. By May 18, 1918 he had designed, built and flew the MT-2 and advanced trainer. These too were purchased and used by the Army. It appears that many were sent to Europe and used there as well. He designed and built one other war plane. The "Lawson Armored Battler". This plane had armor plating around the crew, the engine and the fuel, it carried 6 machine guns, some firing down for strafing some firing forward for attack and two on an aft firing swivel for defense. The military did not purchase this concept.

The problem of delivering planes (and other war material) to Europe was hindering support for our allies. Lawson worked out and proposed a carrier type design and the stationing of these ships at 50 mile intervals across the Atlantic. The system would allow land planes to be flown to Europe in large numbers. The military dawdled over implementing the system so long that the war was concluded without trying it.

As soon as hostilities ended Lawson was ready to begin his airline. He found supporters, moved to Milwaukee, Wisconsin and set up factories to build an eighteen passenger airliner. The two engine biplane was finished and flown August 19, 1919. The plane was 50 feet long had a wing span of 95 feet, stood 14 feet high, cruised at 100 MPH, seated 18 passengers in upholstered seats, allowed them to walk erect from end to end of the cabin, had two pilots seated in a separate compartment, had rest room facilities and the capacity to carry mail and other baggage. As soon as the plane had been test flown he took off on a round robin flight from Milwaukee to Chicago to Cleveland to Toledo to Dayton to Indianapolis to Buffalo to Syracuse to New York to Washington to Collinsville back to Chicago and finally back to Milwaukee. Nearly 2000 miles and several hundred passenger hops. There are many glowing reports in the newspapers of the visited cities.

He immediately started plans for a larger plane and started planning the route structure for his nationwide airline. The routes he laid out for the system are remarkably similar to the routes used by the 1997 airlines. New York - Chicago - Atlanta New Orleans - Denver - Dallas - San Francisco - Los Angeles - San Diego all across the country just like today. The new plane was called the "Night Airliner" and was slated to fly New York to San Francisco in 36 hours.

The new plane carried 26 passengers in daytime seating and was configured to be quickly converted for sleeping accommodations. It had two 400 HP engines, a wingspan of 100 feet and cruised at 120 MPH. The cabin

height was 7 feet and the design provided for radio entertainment to be furnished to the passengers.

Lawson set up his service from New York to Chicago and was doing test route flights for the other cities he planned to serve. In 1920 the USGPO awarded him the first ever air mail transportation contract and it looked like he was in the airline business. The inability to raise the necessary capital caused him to withdraw from the mail contract.

Unwilling to give up his dream he persisted and designed and built another "Super Plane". This one, a 3 engine 34 passenger model, provided even more elegant accommodations. Various models of these three planes were built in Milwaukee and in Europe and were used by other airlines in both countries.

Lawson's eagerness to compete with the railroads led him to try to reduce the per passenger cost by designing a two tier seating arrangement. His last design was a 125 passenger machine with 6 engines. The load carrying ability of the plane attracted the military and they ordered 10 units. Once again Lawson was unable to raise enough capital to get production going and the factory was taken over by others.

In the process he had received patents for the stacked seating design in several countries and with these royalties he abandoned the airplane business and started promoting socio-political causes.

He established "Lawsonomy" a philosophy based on his own interpretation of the laws of physics and a strong belief in GOD. He had a theory of economics based on what he called "Direct Credits" which seemed to promote a communal sharing of everything. His theme was "the procedure, the continuity and the continuity of Gods processes". He formed groups all across the country and held revival like meetings converting large numbers of people to the philosophy.

I am totally baffled by what he was trying to accomplish and I suspect many others were also baffled. The real puzzle is why the things he did in aviation are so completely ignored in the histories I have read.

I looked for "Lawson" in the search engines and found nothing. Maybe some out there know some more about this mystery man.