

Illinois Valley Beacon

October 1995

Volume 2 Issue 10

Breakfast

Saturday, October 7th at *Doc's Mt. Hawley Inn*, 8412 N. Knoxville Avenue, just East of Mt. Hawley Airport, beginning around 8:00 AM. See you there!

October

This month we will meet at Leisure Acres Club House on Wednesday, the 11th at 7:30 p.m. Our guest speaker will be Chapter member Joe Fox, who will wax poetic on his flying trip to Alaska, the Last Frontier, in his trusty Cessna 180.

Come with your questions ready. I understand there is no such thing as VFR on top in Canada, and those mountains are pretty tall! See you there.

Last Month

Our Annual Chapter 563 Picnic was held on Saturday, September 9th at Mt. Hawley Airport. There were approximately 30 members and guests present.

Again this year many bees were on had to crash the party! As we all know, aerodynamically bees are incapable of flight. Apparently no one ever bothered to tell them. Despite their intrusion, no wounds were suffered and a fun time was had by all.

"High Flight"

By Sam Sisk

On January 28, 1986, I had been glued to the TV most of the day. President Reagan was delivering a dignified tribute to those courageous people who perished in the space shuttle accident earlier that day. He finished off by saying, "We will never forget them, nor the last time we saw them this morning as they prepared for their journey and waved goodbye and slipped the surly bonds of earth to touch the face of God."

I perked up at the end of his quote. The source was unmistakable, a favorite poem known to most aviators, called "High Flight," written by John Gillespie McGee. I wanted to know more about this obscure poet and why he wrote this because it seemed so appropriate for the circumstances that day in January, almost like it was written for those brave seven astronauts. This is what I found:

John Gillespie McGee, Jr., was born in Shanghai China, the eldest son of missionaries. His mother was English, his father an American Episcopalian minister. John was schooled in some of the most prestigious institutions in England and the United States. He was a very bright child. His teachers were aware of his "Soaring mind always aiming for the stars." He started writing poetry at the age of 12 and continued to promote his poetic prowess at Rugby School (from which the game was named), under the guidance of Headmaster Hugh Lyons, himself a renowned poet. Cultivating his poetry at Rugby, he won the noted Rugby poetry prize at the age of 16.

John had won a top scholarship to Yale, where his father had gone to school. Against his own wishes, John was attending Avon School near Hartford, Connecticut, a prep school for Yale students, but he didn't fit in with his English mannerisms. He was a boy who could quote Plato and Aristotle and could easily read Virgil and Cicero in Latin.

Homesick for England, he

wrote his mother, "I shall never be happy here. I'm convinced that my place is in England and if I ever

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(Continued from page 1) **"High Flight"**
get the opportunity, I'm coming back!"

When he was 18 years old, John gave up the opportunity to attend Yale and went to Canada to join the Royal Canadian Air Force, only to be turned down for being 16 pounds underweight. Grossly overeating and avoiding exercise, he reached his goal and became a pilot trainee.

John apparently didn't fit into the military discipline either; after soloing in only six hours, he thought he had "Found his place in the sun," as he had written to a former teacher.

His youthful spontaneity continued to get him into trouble. He got lost on a training flight, ran out of gas, and had to crash land. Another time, his unrestrained high spirits steered him into a mock aerial dogfight, only to learn that his enemy was one of his superior officers from his unit. Subsequently, charges were filed against him for unauthorized aerial combat. On yet another occasion, John misjudged a night landing and crashed, destroying his aircraft.

In spite of himself, he graduated and received his wings, finishing second in his class. John finally made it to England later that year, where he was assigned to a fighter squadron. To qualify in a particular fighter, he was supposed to make a high altitude flight into the stratosphere.

This is where and when he composed the famous sonnet, "High Flight." Starting at 30,000 feet, he graphically described the impact of that great emotional experience of flight that seemed so appropriate to eulogize the astronauts.

While still in training, John had talked of death in a letter to his brother. He wondered what would happen if he were killed. Would the world make him a starry-eyed poet-warrior? "Perhaps," he asked, "that is why I want to die in circumstances violently heroic, so they'll never know..."

John Gillespie McGee, Jr.'s life ended not in the blaze of heroic glory he envisioned, but through the most routine of flying errors; a mid-air collision with another airplane while on a normal training flight.

John was buried in Scopwick in Lincolnshire, close to where he fell. The headstone bears the 1st and last lines of the 14-line poem:

"Oh, I have slipped the surly bonds of earth,
Put out my hand and touched the face of
God."

John Gillespie McGee, Jr. was a young 19 1/2 when he died at the beginning of World War II, December 11, 1941.

Note: Most of this information came from Canadian magazines.

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Nomination of Officers

The following list of individuals to serve as Chapter Officers in 1996 has been submitted by the nominating committee:

For President, Morrie Caudill; For Vice President, Sam Sisk; For Treasurer, Al Phipps; For Secretary, Scot Decker; For Newsletter Editor, Dennis Mellen; For Technical Advisor, Al Lurie; For Young Eagles Coordinator, Brian Briggerman; For At Large Board Members, Bill Mathis and Joe Fox; and For Flight Advisors, Jim Hannemann, Sam Sisk and Ron Wright.

Most of these individuals are known to the membership and have previously served the Chapter in some capacity over the years. However, we are always on the look out for new talent, ideas and enthusiasm.

If you have the urge to contribute to the local Chapter by serving as an officer, or you would be willing to become involved in a special project, please volunteer.

The Committee's nominations will be accepted at the October Chapter meeting and the election of officers will be held in November. Nominations from the floor will be accepted at the November meeting.

Christmas Luncheon

Our Annual Chapter Christmas Luncheon will be held at noon Saturday, December 2, 1995 at Cater Inn. Tentatively air show performer Duane Cole, who was originally from the Peoria area, has agreed to be our guest speaker. We are awaiting his confirmation. Further details concerning the luncheon will appear in the November newsletter.

Membership Renewal

Look for your Chapter membership renewal

form in the November newsletter. Dues for next year will remain at \$15.00 and everyone who renews before January 1 will receive a 1996 EAA Calendar.

Medical Self-Certification

Due to the efforts of the EAA members who called or wrote to their Congressmen, the FAA, and the Department of Transportation, the FAA has published a proposed rule change to allow Self-certification of medical condition for Recreational pilots. FAA Administrator David Hinson announced the publication of a Notice of Proposed Rule Making (NPRM) that will allow for medical self-certification of Recreational pilots and the removal of the 50 mile limitation. He made this announcement during his "Meet the Administrator" program at EAA Oshkosh '95.

The significant points of the proposal are as follows:

- The proposed rule will allow for the self certification of medical condition for those exercising the privileges of the recreational pilots license.
- The proposal will remove the 50 mile restriction from the current recreational pilots license.
- **Current** private pilots can exercise the privileges of a recreational license without performing any retesting, notification, or any other contact with the FAA or a CFI.
- Private pilots with expired medicals could fly as a recreational pilot by making a statement of medical fitness and obtaining a Biennial Flight Review.
- The public has until **December 11**, to respond to the proposed rule.
- Any person may obtain a copy of this NPRM by submitting a request to the Federal

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Aviation Administration, Office of Public Affairs, Attention: Public Inquire Center, APA-220, 800 Independence Avenue, SW., Washington, DC 20591, or by calling (202) 267-3484. Requests should be identified by the NPRM number or docket number (Docket No. 25910; Notice No. 95-11).

- Comments on the proposals may be delivered or mailed in triplicate to: Federal Aviation Administration, Office of the Chief Counsel, Attention: Rules Docket (AGC-10), Docket 25910, 800 Independence Ave S.W., Washington D.C. 20591. FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: John Lynch, Certification Branch, AFS-840, telephone (202)267-3844.

Every EAA member should write the FAA in support of the **Recreational pilot** proposals.

You should state your personal views on how it would:

- Help reduce the cost of processing third-class medicals for the FAA
- Reduce the cost of sport aviation for the public
- Reduce the regulatory burden of sport aviation

State that the proposal will:

- Not effect the safety of sport aviation
- Heklp revitalize the depressed industry of sport aviation

In your response make clear that you are only responding the the portion of the proposed rule that deals with Recreational pilots. There are many other provisions in the proposed rule that deals with other subjects and it must be clear to those reviewing the comments that you are responding only to the Recreational pilot changes.

The proposed rule is not intended to allow those not medically fit to fly to do so. With

medical self-certification comes the responsibility to ground ourselves if we are not medically fit, or the FAA will be forced to do it for us.

When replying to the proposal you can send anything from a handwritten note on a post card to a typed letter. It is also advised that you send a copy of your letter to your local US Congressmen and ask for their support. Comments will be accepted until December 11, 1995.

The Recreational pilot certificate allows the pilot to fly fixed gear, single-engine aircraft that is certified for no more than four occupants and has no more than a 180 HP engine. The Recreational pilot is further limited to day VFR in airspace not requiring communication with ATC and can carry only one passenger.

Nirvana in Oshkosh

by C. Leslie Swanson

The symphonic roar of three ancient radial engines cascaded through the open classroom door to drown the voice of Mrs. Zaro, our teacher. The din reflected from corner to wall and back again, then faded as the resurrected Ford Tri-Motor airliner lifted from Pioneer Airport. It carried a happy group of EAA Air Museum visitors; experiencing, firsthand, the exhilaration of flight in an example of the first viable U.S. commercial airliner. Mrs. Zaro and we students turned to savor the scene. She returned to teaching; only to be interrupted again as a replica of Charles Lindberg's airplane, The Spirit of St. Louis, traced the runway, passing two-hundred feet from the open doors of her makeshift classroom. The replica aircraft, like the original (the first airplane to fly non-stop from New York to Paris), soars on wings clad in fabric. It seemed most fitting that the "Spirit" made low passes as we studied the fine points of covering aircraft with fabric in a hangar bearing the painted logo of Ryan Airlines Company. After all, Ryan built Lindberg's Spirit of St. Louis.

We, the class, were an unlikely collection. Some were professionals. Some were contractors.

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Some were retired. One was, perhaps, a housewife. Another was an aircraft mechanic (he said that airframe mechanic courses no longer teach aircraft recovering). Our common bond was a love of aircraft. Some students were reconditioning classic aircraft. Others were building new aircraft with wooden or steel tubing frameworks. All were dedicated to learning the almost-lost art of applying fabric to airplanes.

And so we came together on a crisp blue-skied September weekend to transform a pair of modified DC-3 aileron frames into pseudo fabric-covered wings. We slapped rosy-hued primer on the frames, padded hard edges with soft anti-chafe tape, and glued pristine ivory Dacron fabric over it all. We learned to heat shrink the fabric to almost drum-head tightness and to form it smoothly around sensuously curved edges. We laid out and sewed the many strands that wed fabric to each wing rib, securing each with the intricate, and often maligned, modified seine knot. We applied reinforcing tapes, finishing tapes, and reinforcement rings. At various times we applied vinyl fabric sealant, silver coats, and bright color coats. When we were finished, wonder of all wonders, the two originally-unkempt aileron structures had undergone the same kind of magical transformation my wife undergoes daily between her earliest yawn and her first public appearance. However, instead of appearing as Cinderella, the ailerons assumed a different beauty. They appeared, indeed, as two small aircraft wings!

How better could an "airplane-o-file" spend two days. I thoroughly enjoyed the fabric covering workshop that was sponsored by Alexander Aeroplane Company and the Experimental Aircraft Association at Oshkosh, September 9 and 10, 1995.

Airworthiness Alerts

Submitted by Al Lurie

Aeronca Model 7AC Champ, Fuel Gascolator

After an accident caused by fuel starvation, an investigation determined the glass gascolator bowl had failed.

Although the glass bowl was broken, the safety

wire and bail were still attached to the assembly. Champion Aircraft Corporation "Service Hint #15" recommends the glass gascolator bowl be replaced with a metal unit. Previous failures, caused by vibration and/or over torquing of the adjustment clamp, prompted the issue of this document. This condition may also affect the many other aircraft using a glass gascolator bowl. Part total time — 4,399 hours.

Cessna Model 172N Skyhawk, Alternator Failure

The instructor pilot reported smelling smoke and hearing a noise which appeared to originate at the alternator.

A visual inspection gave no indication of trouble; however, when the drive belt tension was checked by hand, the front half of the alternator moved away from the rear half. The case bolt and safety wire were still intact and (at first look) appeared to be all right. A further inspection disclosed the case bolts had broken at the point where they thread into the rear case half and were held in place only by the safety wire.

For Rent Aircraft sheltered Tie-Down/ Storage space is available at Orwigs' RLA, near Delavan. Contact: Ron Wright, 694-1527, for details.

Glasstar Proposal

Fellow Chapter member Steve Bonfoey would like to set up a Glasstar study group. He is interested in investigating the costs of building one or more Glasstars, and then setting up a partnership to build, own and operate those aircraft.

The Glasstar is the new high wing Glasair aircraft which is receiving so much attention. Steve recently attended the Oshkosh test pilots seminar where the Glasstar was highly rated for performance, stability and friendliness at both high and low airspeeds. If you would like to participate, phone Steve at 346-0111.

CHAPTER 563 OFFICERS

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inside...

**“High Flight”
Medical Self-Certification
“Nirvana in Oshkosh”**