

Experimental Aircraft Association



Chapter 23



Salt Lake City, Utah

JUNE 2008 NEWSLETTER

Minutes of Last Meeting

9th May the chapter meeting was held at 7:00 pm in the CAP building as usual. We saw the details of the building of a replica of an early French airplane, followed by pictures and details of B-17's and their damage survival.

Next Meeting

13th June the chapter meeting will be at 7:00 pm in the CAP building, 2nd Floor, 640 N. 2360 W. Salt Lake City International Airport.

Upcoming Events

General Interest:

June 6th - 8th, **Golden West Regional Flyin and Airshow**
1364 Sky Harbor Drive, Olivehurst, CA 95961, (530)852-0321

June 27th - 29th, **Rocky Mountain Regional Fly-In**

July 9th - 13th, **Arlington Fly-In**
4700 188th Street NE Suite H, Arlington, WA 98223, (360) 435-5857.

June 28th 9:00am Saturday **Fly-in Breakfast**

Wendover, NV Airport, EAA Chapter 407 will join us.

July 28th- Aug 3, **EAA AirVenture**, Oshkosh, WI.

October 23rd-26th, **COPPERSTATE Regional EAA Fly-In**

Young Eagles:

June 28th, Saturday at Wendover. Wendover will be helping with fuel for Young Eagle pilots.

July 5th, Saturday at Bountiful Skypark starting about 8:30 am.

If you are available, call or email Mike Guarino (H) 801-571-8498 or (C) 232-3430 mikeguhills@earthlink.net.

Articles

In my off hours by Jeffrey Klug

This past Saturday (May 31st), I volunteered as part of my EAA (Experimental Aircraft Association) Chapter 23 based in Salt Lake City, to help with the EAA's B17 tour stop in Ogden, Utah.

You can learn more about the history of this fantastic aircraft, "Aluminum Overcast", and the Boeing B17 in general at <http://www.b17.org>. Here is a shot of the front - note the great view the bombardier and nose-gunners have! (They're in the big glass bubble in the front of the plane.)



And another picture from the back - note the opening in the top of the mid-fuselage - that will be featured later.



The plane was in Utah to promote the local EAA chapter, the EAA in general, and historic aircraft and general aviation most of all. Five flights (9 seats each) were sold to the public - each ride was about 20 minutes long. Also that day were Young Eagles flights and a breakfast fly-in sponsored by the local EAA chapter from Ogden.

As it was my first time doing this, I did not know what to expect - apparently we had a very good turnout. Considering

the current economic situation and especially the high fuel prices (aviation gas was \$5.64/gal at Ogden, I will not mention jet fuel prices), we had quite a few fly-in visitors as well. Our chapter was out in force on Saturday – our hideous fluorescent lime green T’s could be seen all over the ramp, helping with various aspects of the B17 stop including crowd control, merchandising, aircraft marshalling, and my personal favorite – aviation conversation facilitator.



Most of my 7 hour shift consisted of walking around and chit-chatting with other pilots, but I also had to shoo a few people away from the B17 during critical phases of the flight prep. Inevitably, upon greeting an unfamiliar pilot for the first time, one of the first questions posed was either “Whacha flyin’?” or, if the person was an EAA member (and possible homebuilt aircraft enthusiast) “Whacha buildin’?” There were a few WWII veterans there who added a special feeling to the day – those guys are always a blast. Seems that every one of them is very much like the unabashed and uncensored Robert Duval character in Secondhand Lions (a must see movie, IMO.)

There were several interesting homebuilt aircraft present that day, including our EAA 23 chapter president’s newly completed RV-9A.



He is flying off the initial 40 hours of test flight time, so the ink on his airworthiness certificate is still very wet. It’s a beautiful plane, and a fine example of what someone can do with some skill, patience and a few extra dollars. The RV-9A is an all-metal 2-seat experimental aircraft. You can read more about the Vans line at <http://www.vansaircraft.com>.

Another unconventional and very cool looking plane was this Dragonfly, a 2-seat experimental, primarily carbon-fiber composite aircraft.



My penultimate favorite plane of the day (the B17 took the top honor) was this little single-seat homebuilt Rans S-9.

Although this plane typically does have a full-bubble canopy on it, the pilot has it temporarily removed. His greeting when walking up to me was, “Yes, it’s as fun as it looks!” The

S-9 is a fully-aerobatic plane and definitely looks like it would be a rush to fly.



One of the more notable things about the aviation scene is how it brings people together, and how well everyone gets along. I was talking with lawyers, engineers, farmers, retired military, active military, and many other pilots whose vocations were irrelevant and unmentioned. It was a good turnout.



About three or four aircraft were taking up kids and families on Young Eagles flights. The Young Eagles program (its national chairman for the past several years is none other than Harrison Ford) is sponsored by the EAA in order to help light the fire and passion of aviation in kids. I’m quite sure that some of them were bitten that day by the aviation bug and will someday be wearing a hideous fluorescent lime-green shirt helping out at an airport on a beautiful Saturday in the spring.

After the first three flights, the B17 crew took a lunch break and we had a bit of down time to, well, continue chit-chatting with all of the other pilots. One of our chapter officers, Glen, came up to me and asked me if I’d ever been up in the B17. “Unfortunately, no,” I answered. Not a cheap ride, the B17 experience is currently \$385 for EAA members and \$425 for non-members (which includes a 1-year EAA membership normally \$40). I had always wanted to do it in the past, but just couldn’t afford it. Any aviation “fun money” like that is earmarked for aircraft building supplies now. Glen brought me over to Dave (the chapter officer organizing the B17 rides) and told him, “One of those four ‘comp’ seats on the last flight belongs to Jeff.” I was stunned! I couldn’t believe it! I was going up on the B17 for free!

I immediately called my wife and told her the good news, then called my brother... and another couple pilot friends. The thrill of the expectation, though, was far exceeded by the exhilaration of the actual flight (but more on that in a bit.) After signing the If I Die My Family Won’t Sue You indemnity waiver, I went back and thanked Glen and Dave. I shared with them my WWII connection – my Dad had flown B24 Liberator bombers against Germany and was shot down after his sixth mission and remained a POW until the war ended seven months later. Although the B17 wasn’t the B24, the spirit and feeling were the same. Some old timers used to joke that the B24 was the box that the B17 came in, since the payload and range of the B24 was enormous.

Two flights later, Aluminum Overcast taxied into the marshalling area to prepare for flight six, my flight!



Apparently, this last flight was going to be special in a couple of ways. Besides allowing free seats for the sponsoring chapter, an EAA cameraman was going to be in the bombardier's seat taking special video for an upcoming EAA presentation about our B17. Of course, to that end, the flying would have to be a bit more spectacular! And it was! During our preflight briefing – the crew chief gave us the emergency exit briefing, instructed us in the use of our seatbelts (which, if you didn't know, are used to help keep the bodies in the same general location should a crash occur,) and finally mentioned that the pilots get very angry if we grab the control cables. We would be allowed to move around the plane shortly after takeoff, and except for the tail-gunner's position and the belly turret, all areas of the plane were open to us. Sweet! After a few minutes, we boarded and I took my position in the waist gunner's seat. For a split second, I thought about the Swiss Army knife in my pocket with its two big blades, screwdrivers, and all sorts of potentially damaging gadgets therein.

I realized that this wasn't going to be a security-conscious flight as I looked up and saw the two 50-cal machine guns a few feet away.



The four 1200hp engines started up, and belched generous clouds of smoke as the oil collecting in the bottom cylinders quickly burned off (picture from a previous flight).



It's a good thing that I believe that the whole man-made global warming thing is a total crock. These planes burn about 200 gallons an hour. That's almost \$1200 per hour at the current fuel prices, not counting maintenance which far exceeds the fuel cost. No wonder the rides are so expensive and short! These engines also bleed oil like a stuck Texan.

The engines were quieter than I had expected during taxi. Looking above me, I could see the control cables moving fore and aft and remembered with a smile the preflight warning. I sat in the back with three other guys, members of the B17 ground crew, and with the engines at taxi speed, we could still carry on a relatively normal conversation.



We rolled out onto runway 16 and the pilots fed the hungry radials a modest 40" of manifold pressure. The quietness was immediately blasted away by an ear-splitting

roar when the propeller tips went supersonic. The plane moved quickly, fuselage cavitating, and tail wagging a bit as we accelerated down the runway. It took an inordinately long time for the tail to lift, and I realized they probably should have had the fat guys sit a little farther forward. Regardless, we were soon in the air and climbing away.

It was a bit disorienting for me to be sitting sideways in an airplane, with no window directly in front, and I thought about the possibility of getting queasy. However, as soon as the air chief gave us the signal that we could move around, my belt was off and I made a dash forward towards the mid-fuselage, stepping over and around the belly turret.

How do you make three 30-something guys (an accountant(?), an airline captain, and an engineer) become 10-years-old again? Stick them mid-deck in an open-fuselage B17 doing low-level



banks and turns around mountains – true canyon flying in a vintage WWII bomber!

We were all laughing and smiling, taking turns standing up in the airstream and photographing



each other. The experience was straight out of any thrilling flying movie, but far better than I could possibly



have imagined. We were going fast – maybe around 160-170mph – and we were low – no more than 2000’ above the ground over the city, and maybe 750’ to 1000’ in the mountains. I mentioned earlier that this was a special footage flight, and we got the ultimate treat. Low and fast! Being mid-fuselage was definitely my favorite part of the flight – feeling the wind rushing by,

hearing the four fire-breathing radials clawing through the air, barely able to hang onto my camera as I blindly snapped pictures forward.



The view was awesome from the radio operator’s window, to be sure.



But I needed more. I blew all my air out and pulled my 22” thick frame sideways through the 18”- wide opening just past the bomb-bay (you can see the left edge of the eeny weeny passage ahead of the bombs).

... and realized that the view from the executive office isn’t bad either



(“turn right at the next canyon!”).

But I knew that the best view by far must be from the nose bubble. For this, I dropped down below from behind the main flight deck and crawled on my hands and knees

towards the front. This is where the EAA cameraman sat and got the ultimate ride.

After a few minutes while hanging out up front watching the amazing scenery roll past, our flight departed the canyons and headed back



over the city toward the airport. We got the shout that we needed to head back to our seats so I crawled my way back to the flight deck, and then jammed myself through the bomb bay opening again, and ducked down past the middeck.

Just as I was going to make my way back past the belly turret, I caught one of the crew members in a kid moment...



Bogeys at 3 o’clock!!!

Classifieds (usually run for 2 newsletters)

May Ads

LSA Repairman/Inspection Course Offering

Those interested in attending a Standard EAA LSA Repairman/Inspection course, which is being planned for the near future, should contact Kevin Angus at kangus@da2a.com.

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