

November 2007

Experimental Aircraft Association Chapter 33

A monthly publication of the Dr. Alexander M. Lippisch Chapter of the Experimental Aircraft Association, Cedar Rapids, Iowa.

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## North Carolina Trip Report

By Mark Navratil

While I was building my RV, I made a list of all the places I wanted to fly it when it was finished. It's a long list but the top three were Oshkosh, First Flight Airport at Kill Devil Hills and JAARS Townsend field (N52) in Waxhaw, NC. Everybody's heard of the first two places, but what's in Waxhaw, North Carolina? Well it's about as close to "home" for me as any place on earth. It is the headquarters of the mission aviation organization JAARS that my parents joined in the early '70's, and that's where they were living when I was born in nearby Charlotte. While most of my childhood was spent in the Amazon region of Brazil, we spent a lot of time at the JAARS center whenever we were back here in the States. Got my first car there, started dating a pretty blond named Kathleen, and made lots of other great memories over the years. My parents now live right off the end of runway 22 and it's only a four hour flight from KCID. So you wouldn't think it would take me a year and a half to get around making this trip, but I wanted to spend some time with the whole family, not just make a quick round-trip flight. And the RV only has two seats. Sooo...



We decided to have an air race. Delta Airlines vs. November Two Delta. I booked Kathleen and the girls on the most direct connection available, with a quick 50 min layover in Cincinnati. Labor Day weekend we all got in the minivan and drove to the airport where we dropped the girls off at the terminal and helped them check in. Then Skyler and I drove over to our hangar, loaded up the airplane and pulled it out on the ramp. While we were getting strapped in, the girls took off in the CRJ-200. We took off about 10 minutes later, climbed up to 9.5k' and settled in for a pleasant flight. It was blue sky and sunshine all the way until we got to the



Asheville area where we ran into towering cumulus and thick haze. The Appalachians were barely visible and it was a bit dicey trying to weave our way down between the clouds and mountains without being able to see very far. Finally we emerged unscathed and leveled off under the clouds, cruising along just beneath the outer ring of Charlotte's class B airspace. We landed at the JAARS field with 1.4 hours of fuel still on board and were on the ground before Delta touched down in Charlotte. Of course the girls still had baggage claim and a 45 min drive to get to my parents house, so we had lots of time to chat with the locals, wipe the bugs off the airplane and tie it down. For me, it was in many ways even better than landing at Oshkosh. A dream come true.

After spending the weekend with family and friends, I set my sights on KFFA. For all the years we've spent in North Carolina, no one in our family has ever visited the Outer Banks where the Wright Brothers first flew in 1903. Sounds crazy but if you look at the map, NC is a long skinny state and there aren't any direct roads from the Charlotte area, so it makes for an 8 hour drive.



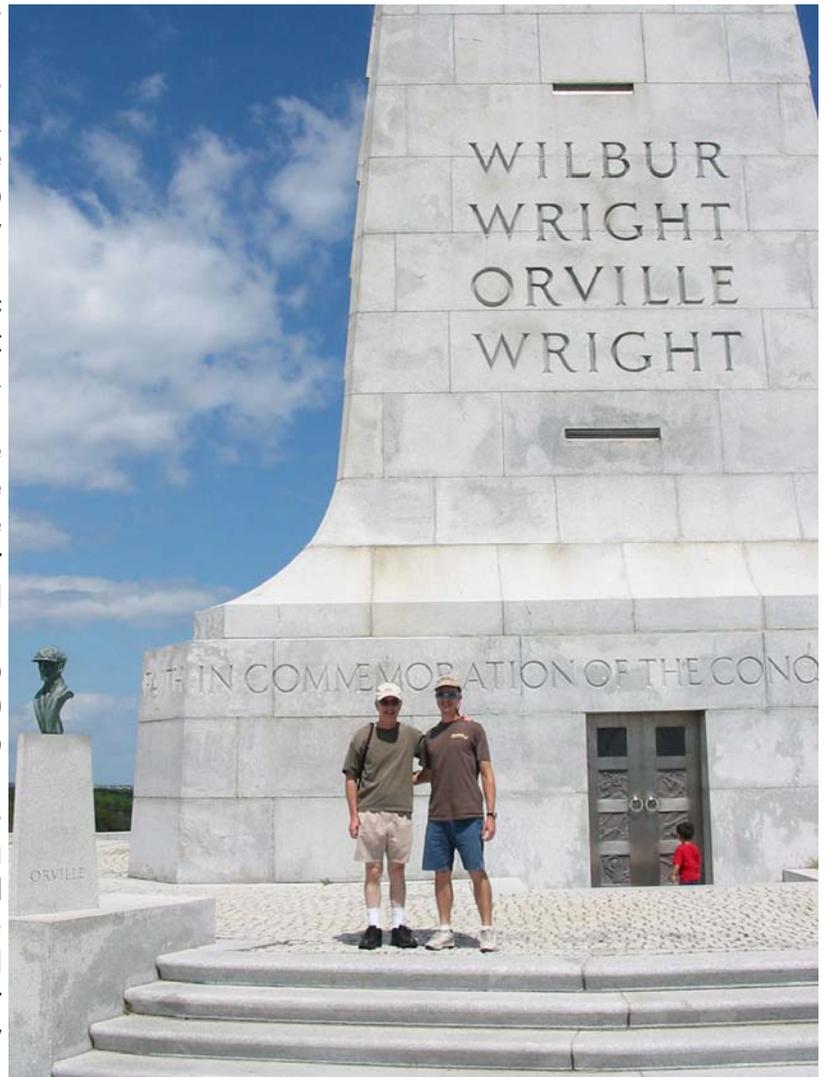
But when you have a fast airplane, the trip is reduced to 1.5 hours of pleasant cross country. I twisted my dad's arm into coming with me and so we set off on a father-son flight of fancy to the birthplace of aviation. I had been warned that the coast could be extremely hazy but on this fine September day it turned out that the visibility improved steadily as we got closer to the ocean, and we were rewarded with crystal clear weather and mild winds when we arrived at First Flight Airport. We parked the airplane on the ramp with half a dozen like-minded birds and strolled



around the area for a few hours. There's a big monument, a small museum, a full-size replica of the Flyer, and some markers on the ground where the actual first flights occurred. I found it amazing to reflect on the fact that just over a century ago, flight was only a dream for mankind. Now air travel is so routine that most people don't even want a window seat. But the best thing is that we still have the freedom to do just what Orville and Wilbur did...assemble a flying machine in our shop and take to the skies to experience the art, science, beauty and adventure that is unique to aviation. It was nostalgic to be there in the airplane I built and to share it with my dad. After taking it all in we walked over

to a nearby restaurant and ate lunch. Then we headed back to the airplane and took off for an equally enjoyable return trip. Chock up another dream come true...

During the rest of the week (which included a few days at Myrtle Beach with the whole family) I also had the opportunity to give my mom, my brother and a couple other friends their first rides in the RV. Then it was time to head back to Iowa. Fortunately the air race had only been a one way affair...on the return trip, Skyler and I decided to take the scenic route, so we weren't in any hurry to beat Delta. Part of the scenery included a line of thunderstorms that extended from Texas to the Great Lakes. I checked the wx prior to departure and it looked like we might be able to work through the front along our route of flight. After crossing the Appalachians I thought I'd give Flightwatch a call to get an update. The lady said our best bet would be to head north of our course by about 150 nm, so we turned north and landed to refuel and check weather in Cynthiana, Kentucky. Great fuel prices but the computers were down due to a lightning strike, so no graphical weather. I called Flight Service and the guy on the phone gives me a different direction to head into the front. So we take off and fly for a while. Passing Indianapolis, I ask Indy



Approach about the weather ahead and he says, "Oh no, you don't want to go *that* way...!" and gives me a new heading to fly. We kept going until we were down at the minimum safe altitude for obstacle clearance and the visibility deteriorated into exactly 3.0 miles. Peering through the greyness outside I could see that just ahead the visibility was down to 2.9 miles, and since I insist on being VFR legal at all times, I cranked the autopilot heading around 180 degrees and decided to call it a day. We landed at Indy Metro airport



where a very nice lady at the FBO helped us get a reasonably priced hotel for the night. The next day we flew home in CAVU conditions and arrived safely back in Cedar Rapids. Good thing we weren't racing Delta since the girls got home the day before us, and anyway, we got a much better adventure out of the deal!

Some afterthoughts: this trip gave me new appreciation for the merits of having a good autopilot in the airplane. The Experimental category autopilots like my Trutrak are relatively cheap, perform very well and reduce the workload immensely, especially when weather conditions deteriorate. If you don't have one, put it high on your priority list of things to add to your airplane. The other thing this trip did is provide incentive to replace my old Garmin 195 with a new 496. The 195 has a good moving map display and great navigation capabilities, but it doesn't have the terrain or obstacle features of the 496 which I really wished for when descending through the haze around mountainous terrain and during low level flying (a.k.a. scud running). I also believe that the XM weather capability of the 496 would have gotten me home the same day on our return trip. After landing at Indy Metro I checked the weather and realized that if I had stayed on my original course (instead of getting vectored all over the place by other people) I probably could have safely worked my way through the front. There's just no substitute for having real-time graphical weather in the cockpit to make your own decisions, so....my new 496 arrived last week and installation is underway using the nifty AirGizmos panel mount. Lastly, I have started taking ground school for an instrument rating, although I'm undecided at this point whether it makes sense to equip my airplane for IFR. I will probably have a hard time staying proficient enough to feel safe, and on a trip like this one (with embedded thunderstorms) it would not have helped me anyway. I'm taking it one step at a time and we'll see how it goes.



# Last Meeting - Operation Red Flag

For our October meeting we took advantage of Cedar Rapids' Science Station Imax theater and saw the movie: "Fighter Pilot: Operation Red Flag". The movie follows a pilot as he goes through the Air Force's "Red Flag" training exercise. We had quite a turn out of about 30 people and everyone had an enjoyable evening. I want to thank the staff at the Science Station who were kind enough to hold a special late showing for our Chapter. If you have not been to the Science Station I would encourage you stop by some time, it is a wonderful place.



## Next Meeting – Key Historical Advances in the Theory of Flight

On Wednesday November 7, 6:30pm we will meet at the Cedar Rapids Library' Beems Auditorium. Chapter Member and UI Professor of Physics, Don Gurnett will give a presentation "Key Historical Advances in the Theory of Flight". This lecture was previously given to the Physics Department on the one-hundredth anniversary of the Wright Brothers first flight. Don's presentations are always quite informative and entertaining. You won't want to miss this one.

## December Banquet

For our Holiday banquet, John Anderson has once again secured the Coe College, Clark Alumni House. The banquet will be Thursday Dec 13th. 6pm cash bar, 6:30pm dinner starts. Our own Marv Hoppenworth will give a presentation about the early history of Chapter 33 and share some slides from that era.

# Officer Elections

Once again it is time for our Chapter to elect our leaders. The positions of President and Vice President will again be up for a vote. The election will take place at the November meeting. Nominations will be accepted any time before then and volunteers are always welcome. In the words of Charles D. Gill *"There are many wonderful things that will never be done if you don't do them."*

## Fly Market

**FOR SALE** GOLD WING aircraft in flying condition - Ken Dodson 319-629-4669



**FOR SALE** Wing & tail parts for UltraLite type airplane. Any Offer - John Banes 319-846-2033

**FOR SALE** Mustang II 1st flight was December 2004. ~145 hours total time on airframe ~145 hours total time on zero timed rebuilt engine, O360 A1F6 180hp Lycoming Engine rebuilt by Aerosport Power w/ new cylinders, new counter-weighted crank, new alt., new starter, new mags. Installed Rieff whole engine heater (can be left plugged in all the time.) ~20 hours total time on brand new Hartzell CS scimitar prop. 42 gallon fuel capacity. 3 axis electric trim. IFR equipped with standard gauges. AS, AH, ALT, electric T&B, DG, VS, 3" G-meter Audio Panel with Marker beacon Terra by Trimble coms (2) Terra by Trimble NAV/ILS w/digital ILS display Terra by Trimble Transponder with Altitude Encoding. Nave 121 VOR ADF DME Rocky Mountain Instruments microMonitor engine display with all sensors. Built in AM/FM Stereo CD player (works really cool) Lowrance 1000 GPS mounted and powered by the aircraft Tru-Trak two axis autopilot w/ vertical speed control (nice) wired in to track with GPS. One Bose headset X and a Marv Golden headset modified with noise reduction. 180 knots true at 6500' with 24x24 power settings. Very nice cross county machine Gross weight set at 1800 lbs. Empty weight 1175 lbs. CG is perfect for maximum loading. \$85,000 firm. She's still a bargain even at that and I'm not budging a penny. So if you don't want to pay that much don't bother to call. - Tom Meeker [tommeeker@msn.com](mailto:tommeeker@msn.com) 319-899-0037



**FOR SALE** P-38 Lightning ultralight for sale. - Dan Knoll at 848-4406 for details.

**FOR SALE** 2000 Phantom X1 Ultralight, 125 total hours, Rotax 447 engine, BRS 750 parachute, 10 gal tank, Great Flying Aerobatic Airplane, More info available at [www.phantomaeronautics.com](http://www.phantomaeronautics.com) \$7000 or make an offer, - Jerry Maxwell Phone (319) 393-8560

## Chapter 33 Calendar

**Nov 7, 6:30pm** Chapter Meeting, Don Gurnett "Key Historical Advances in the Theory of Flight". Cedar Rapids Library' Beems Auditorium.

**Nov 15 7pm** FAA safety seminar "Takeoffs and Landings - The Good, The Bad, and the Ugly!" Iowa City Airport in the Jet Air hangar

**Dec 13 6pm** Chapter 33 Holiday Banquet, Marv hoppenworth, Early Chapter 33 history, Coe College, Clark Alumni House.

**Jan 26 11:30am-2:30pm** 11th Annual Chili Fly-In, Greenfield Municipal Airport



Boo!

In The November 2007 Issue...

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