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SPECIAL EDITION

CHAPTER 918—NORFOLK

MEETING

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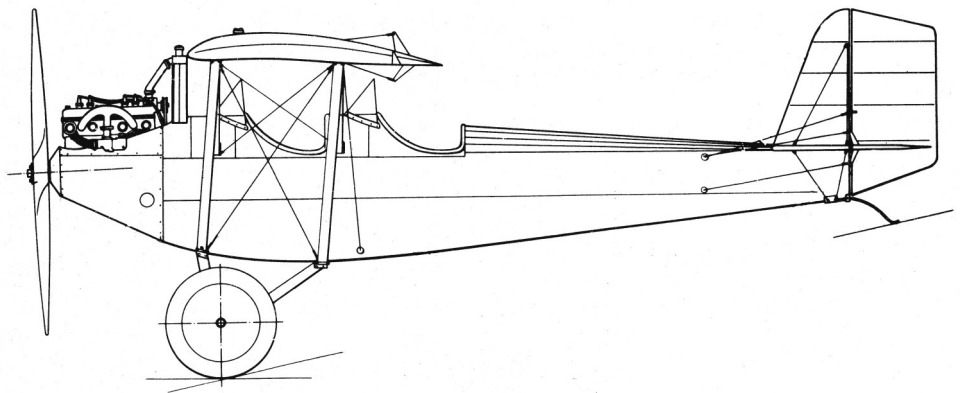
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AUGUST 2021—SPECIAL

EDITOR'S MEMO. . .by John H. Linke

On the morning of 22 July 2021 I climbed aboard Mark and Matt Berger's Pietenpol Aircamper and pointed the nose east for Brodhead, WI and the annual Pietenpol Reunion. The 2020 event, like so many others, was canceled and many were looking forward to the gathering. The visibility was 5 to 6 miles as I made my way across Nebraska and Iowa. With the sun angle low, the forward visibility was somewhat less than that.

In a machine like the Ford powered Pietenpol, fuel stops rather close together become a necessity, and selection must consider wind direction more than most any other airplane, simply because this old machine is brake-less and tail wheel-less. Grass is preferred but not a lot of them around. The fuel stops also serve to stretch and flex joints, as the seating in the ship is quite hard, even with foam cushions. So what is a Pietenpol Air Camper? Here's a side view



drawing done by James Triggs in the 1960's. Pete Bowers (of Fly Baby fame) has this to say from an article in the May 1982 issue of AOPA Pilot magazine...

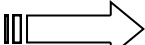
"The Pietenpol Air Camper's antiquity is largely responsible for the home-built's popularity today. You have to go back a long way to find such structural simplicity, low cost and docile, reliable performance in a two seater. If you can approach the 1928 design with a 1928 frame of mind and accept low speed, limited climb, short range, spartan simplicity and downright discomfort as the price for getting airborne, you can have a wonderful time with an Air Camper."

Bernard Pietenpol of Spring Valley, MN designed the original in 1928 as a response to the high cost of new airplanes, and the limited supply of reliable used ones in the market place. The design has weathered the test of time and there are more flying today than at any time in its history. Let's take a trip to Brodhead, WI and see what the annual trek is all about...

A PIETENPOL PHOTO ESSAY. . .



Here's the view over the nose heading east out of Norfolk. With the sun angle low, and haze/smoke obscuring the horizon, horizontal visibility directly ahead was limited. The trusty "antique" Garmin 196 on the left strut guided me truly all the way.

The view looking north toward Ida Grove, IA. As you can see, there really was pretty good visibility. And a nice tail wind. I made 77 knots average ground speed for the 362 miles between Norfolk and Brodhead. 



Left downwind for runway 27 at Brodhead. Look at all that grass! Pietenpol heaven for sure!!

Mark and Matt's machine on the left at the end of the parking row. Below, taxiing out for take-off in Continental powered Air Camper.



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**BRODHEAD
PIETENPOL REUNION
COVERAGE SPECIAL
EDITION**



A pretty little 1946 Aeronca Champ, Cessna 180, homebuilt Super Cruiser and yellow and blue Navion in the transient parking area.

Below, a 1934 Aeronca C-3 and next to it a 1939 Aeronca Chief.

To the left below a beautiful Beechcraft Staggerwing visited for a few hours. A stirring low approach climaxed his visit appropriately. Just lovely!!



Richard Rollers from Olathe, KS taxies out in his Ford powered Air Camper. If you look carefully, you can see the engine is a bit farther forward in this machine. Richard and the previous owner/builder Ken Perkins are both fair sized fellows so to achieve proper weight and balance, engine mount is lengthened. Makes it look sleeker, huh?



This Stearman really caught my eye. I have more photos of this particular airplane than any other. It was a beauty, and reminded me of the photo I have of my dad standing on the wing of a similar machine in 1945 or so, all decked out in period flying regalia. Something about a well done Stearman...



Just a sampling of the creative fuselage art found on the venerable Pietenpol Air Camper.



Suiting up to come home. Sunday morning, beautiful sky, light winds and the promise of a good day flying.

I hope you have enjoyed this picture-fest of the Brod-head event. The weekend before AirVenture...see you there.