

# EAA Chapter 1410

## High River, Alberta



November  
2023  
Newsletter

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### President's Message

By Donavon Bentz

Hello fellow members I hope you are all able to attend our next meeting this Thursday November 2, 2023 and benefit from the experience of our EAA 1410 member John Melnick, a private Pilot since 1971 with Single and Multi Engine, IFR, Float and Aerobatic Endorsements. He has over 5000 hours on floats, wheels and skis covering most of Canada west of the Quebec border, the western arctic, Yukon, Alaska and with the exception the NE portion the rest of the contiguous United States.

He has flown aircraft from the Piper J3 Cub, PA 11 Cub Special, PA 18 Super Cub, to the turbo charged twin engine Seneca however not partial to flying only Piper aircraft he has flown the Cessna 150, 172, and 208 along with the Beech C23 Sundowner, a 7DC Aeronca Champ, and aerobatic aircraft such as the 7GCBC Citabria and the Steen Skybolt. In addition to flying aircraft John has built or rebuilt a Piper J3 Clone, a PA11 Clone, a Super Cub, the 7DC Aeronca Champ and the Steen Skybolt which he continues to own and fly along with his Super Cub, Seneca and a venerable Cessna 150.

John worked as a corporate employed engineer for twenty-three years followed by founding and owning a consultancy specializing in industrial risk management which he ran for twenty-eight years. He is now semi-retired which allows him more time to fly and now he hopes to help us as pilots manage risk.

## President's Message (cont.)

John will be presenting on the nuances of navigating weather as a single engine VFR pilot with discussion to follow. The intent is that we all end up being wiser and safer pilots. Continuing VFR into IFR remains a big reason general aviation pilots continue to kill themselves and their passengers in both Controlled Flight into Terrain (CFIT) and Uncontrolled flight into Terrain (UFIT) accidents. So, besides coming to our meeting for the food and companionship, consider your attendance as an investment in prolonging both you and your passengers' longevity.



John Melnick

Looking further forward to our December meeting our member Brian Vasseur who has begun a second career as a dispatcher at Westjet has agreed to present. He will further build on John's presentation by specifically focusing on all the preflight consideration's pilots need to take into account prior launching their flight.

Donavon

## **November Fly-ins**

Here are a few of the regular monthly Fly-ins. I am not sure how many of these continue through the fall and winter months. We will get an update from Dennis Fox during our meeting

**CEN3 Three Hills AB** Coffee from 9 till noon first Saturday each month.

**CYXH Medicine Hat AB** Fly-in Breakfast 8:00 to 12:00 second Saturday each month.

**CEK6 Killam Sedgewick AB** Coffee and Treats by Shelly third Saturday each month.

**CEX3 Wetaskiwin AB** Coffee 9:00 to 12:00 fourth Saturday each month.

## **Jack Dueck's Luscombe Silvaire story continued..**

In last month's newsletter, we featured an article that marked the end of an era in Jack Dueck's ownership of his Luscombe Silvaire C-FLCD and the exciting journey of ferrying the aircraft to its new home near Ottawa. Serendipitously its proud new owner Mark Briggs, a member of EAA Chapter 245 was putting pen to paper to express his delight on the arrival and receipt of his new aircraft. Mark tells the story of his search, his complimentary experience of dealing with a true gentleman (Jack Dueck), ferrying of the aircraft by John Mader and the joy of becoming FLCD new owner. I hope you enjoy Mark's story.

## **Time Travel:**

Mark Briggs (EAA Chapter 245 Vice-President)  
(Reprinted with permission from Mark Briggs and EAA Chapter 245)

Over the past few years, particularly under the influences of the COVID pandemic, I've felt my development as a pilot has been stagnant. As the old saying goes, if you aren't moving ahead, you're falling behind. With this in mind I innocently began a search for an aircraft which would allow me to further develop my pilot skills. It seemed a classic taildragger would likely be a good place to start, and, maybe, a taildragger that could also become a float plane, knocking out two birds with a single proverbial stone. I've always had a soft spot for the Luscombe Model 8. I don't know why, perhaps because it just looks so perky on its long gear legs, or perhaps because it has a reputation as being a "challenging" taildragger.

My search for an aircraft wasn't exhaustive, not by any stretch. A simple "wanted" post on a Facebook group returned two very quick replies. It seems Alberta was home to two Luscombes, one a lovingly maintained 8A model with no electrics and a recently overhauled A65 engine, the other a much more... complex machine. It was the "other" airplane which caught my attention. You see, it walked like a duck, quacked like a duck but was anything but a duck. While outwardly it looks like a Luscombe 8E it is, in fact, registered as an amateur-built aircraft. How could I refuse the opportunity to own a Luscombe that is also an amateur-built aircraft?

The seller proved very easy to deal with; we quite literally struck a gentleman's agreement over the phone, and we concluded the arrangements without ever having a formal contract in place. Yes, there still are some true gentlemen in this wonderful aviation world and I count myself fortunate to have had the enjoyable experience of dealing with this gentleman.

Then came the next challenge... How on earth was I going to get a sub-100 mph airplane from Calgary to Ottawa in the middle of a summer with record forest fires and "IFR in smoke" weather? Fortunately, the seller "knew a guy" who proved to be very enthusiastic about taking on the task of ferrying the airplane to its new home. But first the airplane had to be made serviceable. An annual inspection was performed and as expected, a few little things came to light. Getting the necessary altimetry and ELT checks performed consumed several weeks, pushing us very near to the edge of the window of the ferry pilot's availability.

And then came the insurance company... oh the blessed insurance company.

The ferry pilot, John, is an experienced pilot with an ATPL license and is an active flight instructor in an equally active flight training unit in the Calgary area. As qualified as John is to teach in a tailwheel aircraft, by decree of the insurance company he was declared unqualified to fly the aircraft solo! Now we were faced with a chicken-and-egg situation which was resolved only when John convinced a fellow flight instructor to fold himself into a pretzel and "instruct" John in the Luscombe. I mention the pretzel folding because this

gentleman is 6'7" tall and the Luscombe is not known for having a cockpit which accommodates tall pilots. So, there we had it, two flight instructors crammed in a small airplane, each taking turns "instructing" the other. By the end of a couple of hours of flying the necessary logbook endorsements were entered and John was, by the miraculous stroke of an instructor's pen, finally "qualified" to fly the Luscombe home to me. What a wacky world the insurers must live in!

Over the course of three days John winged his way across the prairies, over the hump of Lake Superior, across the hostile Canadian Shield and safely to the Arnprior airport. My "new" airplane, C-FLCD, was finally "home".



The Lovely Luscombe, C-FLCD, had some mechanical "challenges" on her way to Ottawa; the first was thirst - she had a prodigious appetite for fuel. The first leg from Calgary saw her gulping down nearly 8 gallons per hour when a C85 engine should consume closer to 5GPH. I was able to coach John in making a minor tweak to the carb's mixture setting but he (wisely) wasn't willing to go very far down that path. He had an airplane that was running well, and, above all, that is what he needed most as he crossed the big stretch of "rocks and trees" - I couldn't fault his logic. By the time John left Thunder Bay we had managed to get the fuel burn down to about 6.5GPH. After his arrival in Arnprior, with a judicious twist of the mixture screw I managed to find just the right setting; subsequent monitoring confirms fuel consumption is as one would expect for this engine.

Another mechanical challenge encountered by John as he winged his way eastward was a rapidly fatiguing tailwheel spring. It went from "oh that's suspicious" in Alberta to "wow, that's really bad and the airplane is grounded"



after a few hours of training flights here in Ontario. A new tailwheel spring has since fixed the problem, but while it was bent LCD effectively didn't have tailwheel steering... and that leads to the topic of receiving training in a "new to me" aircraft with its third wheel mounted on the wrong end.

John was a tired lad by the time he got here but a good home-cooked meal seemed to restore his energies for the challenge which lay ahead... An evening flight with a novice tailwheel pilot who also was an excited new airplane owner. Suffice it to say that our first flight together, John, LCD, and me, was an excellent learning adventure and, to my great relief, an adventure from which LCD emerged none the worse for my ham-fisted handling. The next day, despite the high temperatures, we managed to go round and round the patch quite a few times. By the end of these sessions, I was managing 3-pointers reliably and was beginning to get wheel landings to "stick". Another session in the evening had my confidence rapidly building but the hot weather also meant very little wind was available to test my skills in a crosswind. Maybe just as well as the tailwheel spring, by this time, was too far gone to permit further flight.

In the week before Oshkosh, with a new tailwheel spring installed I convinced our intrepid freelance instructor, Mike, to join me for a trip or two around the patch. I have no idea what possessed him (perhaps a strong sense of self-preservation?) but Mike eagerly hopped out of the airplane, signed my logbook, and then ran off, never to be heard from again. The skies around Arnprior have since been whipped to a froth by LCD's propeller. The runways of several local airports have likewise been called upon to receive the pounding that only my poor pilot skills can deliver on landing. Despite my best efforts, LCD soldiers on. I'm often left wondering how many novice tailwheel pilots this old girl has taught to fly. After a life spanning 83 years that number of pilots surely is not insignificant.

Speaking of the trials suffered by local airports, my first real adventure on grass was a trip to Carleton Place for their fly-in lunch. The grass was beautifully manicured, and LCD looked perfectly at home there. Of course, taildraggers look good on grass but I think

LCD looks particularly good on this grass. OK, I might be a little biased.



I'm sure by now inquiring minds want to know just where in heck a "new" airplane might find a place to tuck away from the weather. Well, the photos which follow will tell some of that story. Things in the hangar are a bit tight, but workable. Three airplanes, a car, a tractor, and a canoe. Yup, that sounds like a full house!



So, there we have it, the story of an airplane which left the New Jersey Luscombe factory in September 1940 and has, after 83 years, come to Arnprior where she patiently has been teaching an old dog how to fly with his feet. She is a joy to fly, a true time machine. I find it impossible to avoid an ear-to-ear grin after managing a smooth three-pointer. Of course, there's also the inevitable "this feels so much like the '40's" feeling of taxiing along with the

window open and one's elbow hanging out in the breeze, all set to the satisfying "plunka plunka plunka" soundtrack of a trusty Continental engine. The art-deco swoopy instrument panel only adds to the timeless beauty of this machine.



I'm a very fortunate fellow indeed to be LCD's new caretaker.  
Mark.

## Schedule of Upcoming Events

Nov 2	Weather Considerations - John Melnick High River Air Cadet Hangar Time 18:30
Dec 7	Pre-Flight Considerations - Brian Vasseur Officer Nominations and Elections High River Air Cadet Hangar Time 18:30
Jan 4	Regular Monthly Meeting - TBD High River Air Cadet Hangar Time 18:30
Feb 1	Regular Monthly Meeting - TBD High River Air Cadet Hangar Time 18:30

## Smile!

### Forced Approaches

A private pilot was flying with his friend, who had never flown before. As they took off, the friend nervously asked, "What happens if the engine fails?"

The pilot calmly replied, "Don't worry, we have plenty of altitude to glide safely to the nearest airport."

A few minutes later, the engine sputtered and stopped. The friend turned pale and asked, "What now?"

The pilot grimaced and said, "Now we pray that the nearest airport is directly below us."

### At the Bar the other night..

An elderly looking gentleman, (mid-nineties) very well dressed, hair well-groomed, great looking suit, flower in his lapel, smelling slightly of a good aftershave, presenting a well-looked-after image, walks into an upscale cocktail lounge.

Seated at the bar is an elegant elderly looking lady.

The gentleman walks over, sits alongside her, orders a drink, takes a sip, turns to her, and says, "So tell me, do I come here often?"

### Just in case you have forgotten the rules for a safe and Happy Halloween!

1. When it appears that you have killed the monster, NEVER check to see if it's really dead.
2. Do not search the basement, especially if the power has gone out.
3. When you have the benefit of numbers, NEVER pair off and go it alone.
4. If you're searching for something which causes a loud noise and you find out that it's just the cat, GET THE HELL OUT!
5. If you find a town which looks deserted, there's probably a good reason for it. Don't stop and look around.
6. If your companions suddenly begin to exhibit uncharacteristic behaviour such as hissing, fascination for blood, glowing eyes, increasing hairiness, and so on, kill them immediately.
7. Never stand in, on, or above a grave, tomb, or crypt. This would apply to any other house of the dead as well.
8. As a general rule, don't solve puzzles that open portals to Hell.
9. If appliances start operating by themselves, do not check for short circuits; just get out!
10. Do not take ANYTHING from the dead.

# Chapter Classified Ads

Contact Kelvin Downs if you wish to have an Advertisement in the Newsletter

## Who we are!

We are an enthusiastic group of like minded individuals from various backgrounds who share a passion for recreational aviation in Southern Alberta and we offer a chance to meet others who combine fun with learning.

Join us for our monthly meetings held the first Thursday of the month at the Cadet Hangar located at the High River Airport

**For more information visit our Website**

[Chapter 1410 High River, Alberta](#)

## How to Join Our Chapter

Attend our next meeting. Meetings are held on the first Thursday of the month at the Air Cadet Hangar at the High River Airport. Ask anyone and they will be pleased to help. All the required forms will be made available for you to fill out. You must be a current member of EAA International, you may complete your registration prior to the meeting or someone will assist at the meeting.

For registration forms, contact the Treasurer from the Executive list below.



## Members Action List

### Newsletter Input

We are always looking for input and content for the Newsletter including any project updates, classifieds etc. It doesn't have to be a long detailed article, a photo and description is often enough. For any ideas or suggestions for Newsletter content please contact: Kelvin Downs [downskelvin@gmail.com](mailto:downskelvin@gmail.com)

### Meeting Presenters\Ideas

If anyone is interested in presenting or has a great idea for a meeting topic please contact Donavon or Kelvin.

### Website Input

For any changes or updates to members profiles or website content please contact: Carl Forman [webmaster@eaahighriver.org](mailto:webmaster@eaahighriver.org)

### Chapter Dues Reminder

Chapter 1410 fees of \$40 will be due soon. Please make payments via e-transfer, cheque or cash to Vance Lucas. E-transfers are preferred emailed to [vlucas@live.ca](mailto:vlucas@live.ca).

### EAA 1410 2022 Executive

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President	Donavon Bentz	<a href="mailto:president@highriver.org">president@highriver.org</a>
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