

Fitchburg Pilots Association EAA Chapter 1454 Newsletter



President's Corner

November 2019

Inside This Issue

- FPA / EAA 1454 Officers, Committee Members, and Key Contributors
- FPA VMC & IMC Clubs
- Flight Log – Decisions...
- Flight Simulator Corner
- Next FPA Meeting is:
Tuesday Nov 12th, 7:00PM/6:00PM food

Key Organization Links

www.fitchburgpilots.org
www.meetup.com/fitchburgpilots
www.facebook.com/fitchburgpilots/
www.fitchburgairport.com
www.eaa.org
www.aopa.org
www.massdot.state.ma.us/Aeronautics

Key Weather Links

www.windy.com
www.aviationweather.gov
www.usairnet.com

Key Reference Links

www.fltplan.com
www.airnav.com
www.flightaware.com
www.pilotgeek.com
www.skyvector.com
www.aopa.org/aopalive/



Let's go fly and have some fun!

Glen Reinhardt - President, Fitchburg Pilots Association EAA Chapter 1454

Fly Safe – Fly Often

Glen Reinhardt, President Fitchburg Pilot's Association, EAA 1454

President's Corner - November 2019

I earned my Private Pilot certificate in 1995. But I started my initial training in 1983 at Washington Dulles International Airport. They actually had a flying club and school at the airport back then. Dulles wasn't very busy in 1983. It was deemed too far out in the Virginia countryside and most people opted for Washington National right across the river from D.C.



My first taxi during my intro flight was behind a 747 with my instructor telling me to keep it tight behind the jet so our C-152 didn't wind up in the big planes jet blast. I think we waited 5 minutes after the 747

departed before we were allowed to taxi onto the runway. With my instructor guiding me, I applied throttle, sort of kept it near the centerline, and rotated. I was flying. My instructor announced our intentions to the tower and we received no response. I turned and flew west as my instructor tried to raise the tower. Nothing. We had a complete radio failure. The instructor tried circuit breakers, switches, maybe even divine guidance – nothing worked. I had flown westward for about 10 miles.



My instructor then played with a box I now know as the transponder. He dialed in 7600; and we headed back toward Dulles. With landing light on, my instructor had me fly toward the tower. Immediately we

saw a solid red light. I flew in a circle several times until my instructor saw a flashing green light from the tower. At that point we had seen other aircraft landing on runway 1R, so we lined up for a straight in on 1R and received a solid green. With a lot of assistance from my instructor, the plane touched down; and we taxied to the grass strip between taxiways that the flight school used as their parking area.

I was ignorant enough to not even understand that this could have been a bad situation. My instructor never appeared nervous or worried. There were a fair amount of big, heavy, fast airplanes around us; but the instructor placed us in an area where we wouldn't conflict with the normal flow. It was my first lesson and my first and only time looking for light guns from a control tower.

After that I took a 12-year break from flying lessons. But not because of fear from that first flight, more due to economics. The passion was always there, I just needed the purse to catch up. Fortunately, I found the right instructor at FCA in Fitchburg who pushed me when I needed it and slowed me down when overconfidence outpaced ability. Except for my BFR in July, I haven't flown a plane since February. I will be going back to FCA for some refresher training as the opportunity approaches to get more air time. I'm also available for IFR and VFR safety pilot if anyone is in need.

Fly safe, Fly often,

Glen Reinhardt – President Fitchburg Pilot's Association, EAA 1454.

!! New Members !!

Joining Meetup this month:

Carl Good – Carl is a student pilot looking to learn more about aviation and meet fellow pilots

George Saleh – George is a private pilot working on his instrument

Bishop – Bishop is a private pilot who just bought into a plane and is also building an RV-10

Good news! If you are looking to join the Fitchburg Pilot's Association this time of year, your \$50 dues counts toward the remaining part of this year as well as 2020.

You can mail a check made out to "FPA" or "Fitchburg Pilot's Association" to 563 Crawford St Fitchburg, MA 01420. You can also visit Fitchburgpilots.org and click on "Dues and Donations" and pay by credit card or PayPal.

The dues of \$50 is used to pay our land rent, our city real estate taxes, our utilities and our mortgage on the hangar. Our aircraft hangar rent goes toward the same expenses. Even so, we still need to fund raise a bit more to cover all of our expenses. That is why we ask, if you can, to donate an additional \$40 along with your dues. Our biggest fund raising activity, providing food for the Early Ford V8 car show, pretty much completes the fundraising effort and gets us to a break even for the year. If you have already paid your dues – THANK YOU! If not, please take the time to write a check or go to Fitchburgpilots.org and pay by Paypal. Checks can be mailed to:

Fitchburg Pilot's Association, 563 Crawford Street, Fitchburg, MA 01420

FPA / EAA 1454 Officers, Committee Members, and Key Contributors

Please note: Any member can be emailed through the Members Section of our FPA Meetup Site

Officers	Names	Committee Chair and Members	Names
President	Glen Reinhardt	Fund Raising	Chris Lund
Vice President	Dave Babineau		
Treasurer	Gary Daugherty	Food	Glen Reinhardt
Secretary	Chris Lund		Dave Dion
			Dave Babineau
			Chris Lund
			Gary Daugherty
			Dick Maki
		Scholarship	Jim Bisson
			Dick Maki
			Mark Estabrook
			Ed Murphy
		Safety	Dave Dion
			Gary Daugherty
			Dick Maki
		Airport Commission Rep	Richard Gersh

AMAZON SMILES AT FPA!



When shopping at Amazon (actually, AmazonSmile), you can raise money for FPA! FPA is a registered charity with AmazonSmile, so a percentage of the purchase price of eligible products is donated to FPA when you designate FPA as your charity of choice! FPA is listed as

“Fitchburg Pilots Association, EAA Chapter 1454”, so that’s the name you should look for. When asked to search for your charity, use “Fitchburg Pilots Association” and it should find our charity.

So, if you shop at Amazon, shop at smile.amazon.com and help support FPA!

Fitchburg VMC & IMC Clubs

By Dave Dion



What we do: watch EAA provided video scenarios and participate in group discussion to create “Hangar Talk” - that’s valuable, practical knowledge gained from the group’s discussion of the flying scenario issues and problems encountered



- Videos: actual in-flight scenarios (problems, equipment failures, weather, etc) - **what would you do ??**
- IMC Club includes IMC / IFR situations
- VMC Club is under visual flight rules
- Pilot Workshops materials: for additional / supporting “refresher” training reinforcement

Your Takeaway: you and the attending pilots are able to share knowledge and experiences, network, promote safety, and build proficiency in instrument flying (IMC Club) or under visual flight rules (VMC Club)

When: **IMC Club** (3rd Thursday @ 6pm) and
VMC Club (3rd Saturday @ 9:30am); both scheduled via FPA Meetups

IMC Club - Thursday, November 21, 6PM

VMC Club - Saturday, November 23, 9AM

Flight Log

By Jeff Scorse

It's been a fun and challenging month to keep current and flying. Early in the month, my neighbor mentioned that he was taking a ride on a B-17 out of Worcester. I jumped at the chance to fly him and his wife down from KFIT. He's a pretty big guy, so I had to offload some fuel for the trip. It was an uneventful flight down on a clear sunny late afternoon. It was wonderful to watch his excitement, and see such a majestic warbird come and go. Tragically, that very same plane came to a terrible end the following weekend down in Connecticut.



Later in the month I found a pancake breakfast at Crow Island on a super clear VFR day. No IMC practice, but short field operations and pancakes awaited. While we chatted and eat great food, we were treated to an unusual landing by a



floated

trike on the little water runway carved into the airport grounds. Many of our planes are currently grounded, but I did find two follow FPA pilots had visited the event from the ground, so it wasn't a total stranger group to me. This was likely the last outdoor breakfast of the year, so I was thankful for the opportunity to fly in. Thank you, Kent, who provided a nice video of my short/soft field departure.

Keep on flying folks!

Later, I was able to get a *real* IMC flight in, with help from Kent Christman to Barnes and back. Not too many photos taken on that flight, but the feeling of awe when we broke out from the ceiling at 5000' was wonderful. IFR flying is so much more fun without the visor on! 😊



Log Book

By Ed Littlejohn

A Harrowing Tale of Dead Reckoning and Pilotage

This story is true although some details have been changed to protect the guilty.

Time: Latter half of the 1960s

Place: Ft. Stewart, GA

Event: Night cross country tactical navigation, US Army Flight School

During the sixties the Viet Nam War was a rather frequent subject on the evening news. The draft was operating full steam and the US Army had evolved tactics over the long duration of the war to depend on vertical lift (i.e. helicopters). These ungainly machines required pilots – lots of them – and a constant pipeline, as both the machines and the pilots tended to be perishable items. All these factors resulted in compressed training and perhaps too great an emphasis on pushing the “cannon fodder” through the system quickly. After all, I graduated.

It was the tactical phase of training. We had all soloed at Ft Wolters, TX, and were now at Ft Stewart GA flying UH-1 Hueys. Each aircraft was operated by two students. One would fly while the other worked the systems and navigated. That night’s mission was to fly to three separate LZ’s (landing zones).



The first LZ would be lighted by bean bags – small battery powered lights, weighted down and deployed in the form of a Y. The second would be lighted by headlights from a truck. The third LZ would be marked by a bonfire. Routes were planned around suspected enemy locations and, as part of the training, simulated documents were to be exchanged at each location.

In the sixties there were no night vision goggles and no GPS, but there were two non-directional beacons (NDBs) about 30NM apart. Given the low altitudes and ranges, these would probably be undetectable by onboard ADF and the #1 needle on the RMI would be useless. A waning moon reflected off streams and ponds, but there were very few lights. It was all dead reckoning and pilotage: time, heading, track, airspeed and map reading. Fortunately, there wasn’t much wind at 200’ ft AGL.



The subject crew made it to the first LZ with relative ease. They had only encountered one hot spot where the enemy had fired on them (simulated by flashing beams of light). It’s difficult to hit a blacked out airborne target traveling low overhead at 120 kts when all the gunner can cue on is the whop-whop-whop sound. The dim bean bag lights became visible when the Huey overflew, right on time, and circled to land. Even though the red cockpit lights were set at their dimmest, night vision was strained by the effort to clear obstacles as the aircraft descended into the small clearing.

The second LZ was more challenging. The stream that curved around the NW side was hidden by heavy foliage and it took several circuits to determine the crew was about a klick (kilometer) too far south. ATA was seven minutes late and the enemy was closing rapidly after the document transfer. The truck shut off its headlights and disappeared into the swampy woods. The Huey skimmed the tree tops climbing out. A branch was still in the skids on shutdown.

There was tension in the cockpit and an urgent need to make up for lost time to get to the last LZ. Twice enroute they took simulated enemy fire. Evasive maneuvers put them further behind. The third LZ was named Betty and was on the east side of a relatively large field. According to the tactical map there should be some buildings on the north edge of

the field and a small road running north to south on the east. Suddenly, right on time, there was the bonfire. No time to confirm with a recon. The tactical situation demanded quick action.

The pilot (flying the right seat) banked hard to the right and began to slow the aircraft. The co-pilot quickly ran through the pre-landing check, excluding landing light – on, and began scanning for hazards. The approach would be from the south but they would have to cross over the road before turning final. Telephone wires at night can be very hard to spot. Where was that road?

The pilot continued to slow and descend as he reached an appropriate approach angle. The plan was to land short of the fire to facilitate a quick transfer. About two hundred yards from touchdown things on the ground became more discernable. Had the enemy already arrived? Why were there bodies running around? The site is compromised! Abort! Abort! Now at about 50 yards out and maybe 30 ft AGL the pilot applied power, accelerated and starting climbing. - Note: the UH-1 has a pretty strong downdraft. On climb out sparks from the fire flew, smoke billowed and people scattered in all directions.

Wow! That was close! “We nearly bought the farm that time” thought the crew. They were elated to have avoided all those un-friendlies: capture was not an option. They were also struck by the size of the crowd staged to support their training – very realistic!!

The return to home base was uneventful and TAC X looked welcoming to the young, inexperienced guys trying to earn their wings. The flight commander calmly reviewed the tallies from each of the multiple routes and LZs scattered throughout the swamps of coastal Georgia. The crew anxiously awaited the assessment of the overrun LZ. Suddenly, the flight commander sternly exclaimed, “Which of you idiot crews blew away the church bonfire at Mt. Olive?” He already knew the answer.



Oops. Somehow the crew still graduated and got their wings. They even survived Viet Nam.

PS. It wasn't me.

The end of the story but the beginning of a love affair with aviation.

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