

April 2008

Hangar Talk

*News from Experimental Aircraft Association
Chapter 211, serving airplane builders, restorers,
pilots, and airplane lovers in western Michigan*



EAA Chapter 211

MEETING FRIDAY APRIL 4TH OUR OWN VISIT TO SUN 'N FUN

The EAA Chapter 211 meeting will be Friday, April 4th at the clubhouse at the Grand Haven Municipal Airport. Since many of the Chapter members are traveling to Florida the program will be a taste of Sun 'n Fun; video from Sun 'n Fun of years past.

Roster

The 2008 Chapter 211 Roster is done. You will either get the Roster with your paper newsletter or as an email attachment. The Roster was printed a bit early and this year all the pages are in the correct order!

As always let the editor know if any errors crept into my data as I updated the listings. There will be extra printed copies of the roster available at the meeting.

Photos of Chapter Aircraft from the Early Days

The board continues to collect photos of some of the planes built in the early

days of the Chapter. We got a few at the last meeting that have been scanned. If you have old photos from the Chapter we would like to borrow them, scan them, and catalog some of the Chapter history. We plan to make them available to the Chapter in a CD or DVD collection.

If you have old photos of Chapter planes or West Michigan aviation events please loan them, along with a brief written description of the plane, the builder, and its history to a board member. They will get them scanned and return them. We are able to scan prints, negatives, or slides.



Jack Brewer provided this photo of the prize at a Muskegon Dawn Patrol in 1958, a Continental engine!

News from Chapter 211	1
Prez Sez	2
Editors Notebook	2
Chapter 211 Officers	2
March Minutes	3
Chapter Calendar	4
Mystery Plane	5
For Sale	5

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Contributing this month

Prez Sez

I would like to compliment Lee Helmink on his vivid recall of events that happened more than 60 years ago. It was very interesting to me, and I am quite sure to everyone there as well, to hear to experiences of flying the "hump" during the 2nd World War. I am sure that some of the things that seem to be humorous now was a very serious business back then. Thanks Lee for a great program.

The flying season is here and it is time to get the rust off our flying skills. I flew for the first time since late November (had my plane apart) and was surprised by the little things I had to think about that were just automatic a few months ago. Be careful out there.

I received a letter from EAA regarding week-end work parties to clean up the grounds at Oshkosh for AirVenture. There are several dates available: May 17-18, May 31-June 1, June 21-22, June 28-29, July 12-13, and July 19-20. On May 31, June 21, and July 12 there will be an evening program. If anyone is interested in participating, see me at the next meeting.

Be Safe

Paul Overbeek

President - EAA 211



Editors Notebook

April

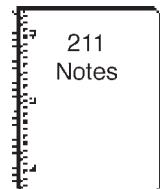
As I write this the calendar says spring and the snow falling says something else. I suspect that many Chapter 211 members will be away at Sun 'n Fun enjoying warmer weather. No problem, we will have our own Sun 'n Fun preview at the meeting.

The Chapter Roster is printed for another year. This is where I go over my data, update it, and have a chance to make new errors. Let me know if any errors have crept in to your listing in my database. My records show 71 members, that is about the same total as last year.

All you folks traveling to Sun 'n Fun are invited to share your stories and photos with the Chapter in future newsletters. Email them to me.

I have received some photos and slides of Chapter planes from the past. You will find one of them as this months Mystery plane. Send in your photos, I will scan them, use some of them in the newsletter, and collect them for an eventual CD or DVD of Chapter and West Michigan planes and pilots.

George



Chapter 211 Minutes March 7, 2008

President Paul Overbeek gave the call to order at 7:30 followed by the Pledge of Allegiance The Financial Report was read. It and the published Minutes were approved.

Flight Advisor Ken Dannenberg gave the statistics on last month's flying accidents and deaths by category. Then he shared an experience that underscores the importance of Pre Flight Checks and vigilance. His last flight and landing in his Cougar was normal and uneventful. He hangered it as usual. This day he started pulling the plane out the hanger. Then to his surprise, as the tail wheel crossed that last bump at the hanger door, the whole tail wheel assembly dropped off and fell over on the apron, completely. It had not given the slightest hint of a problem, nor was it visible. That last little tug going out the hanger door did it. He said it made him wonder how he had landed safely at all that last time. He's rebuilding it with longer bolts.

Librarian Vic Matthews gave away old not needed issues and gave a call for specific volumns. (See Hanger Talk, March, p.1).

Chet Uncapher, tour director gave a summary of this year's September 12-14 Michigan Air Tour published in a recent issue of Sport Aviation magazine. This year's motto is "To Boldly Go Where No Tour Has Gone Before". One recent concern is to enliven our ageing Airports. An example is nearby Park Township. They have had calls for this tour to visit numerous small airports. The deciding factor is that the runway must be 3,000 ft. in length to safely accommodate the multiple passenger and speedster craft. He gave a call to support one leg of the tour or the Banquet should you not be able to fly the whole tour. It's a great social event. Over 40 planes took part last year. Questions may be directed to the Uncapher's at 616-748-1013 or at prosperity@uncapher.com. Call the above number to have information mailed to you. Register at www.miaaviation.org before August 25, 2008 to get a \$75 special rate.

Young Eagles leader Chet Uncapher gave recognition to Chapter Pilots who flew Young Eagles and earned credits to

send a child to either the EAA Camp or to the Air Academy.

Clyde Buckley's Ultralight Pietenpol, recently purchased, was given a thorough going over to ascertain how it complies in that category. Consensus: "It's a bit fat," - - - at least for now.

Tech Advisor Jack Brewer gave advice about Inspectors, basically saying that the older ones most often are more thorough from experience than the newer ones just getting a start "out in the field", and sometimes you get to pick who inspects your aircraft. Peace of mind is important.

A discussion was held about our video equipment.

Lin Light presented to the club a hand made Plaque he designed to house and artfully show off several historical items certified to be photos of and a sizeable chunk of a beam that came out of Wilber and Orville Wright's First



Airplane Company, Building #5, which was in operation from 1917 thru 1919. Nice work Lin.

Paul Dannenberg gave a Show-N-Tell demonstration of an idea so he can watch what he is doing while applying Proseal inside a fuel tank. He borrowed Scott's new Borescope, fixed a small brush below the light source, taped a hose alongside it with a fitting that screws into a small hand pump above. The plan is to insert the camera lens



into the empty tank, locate the suspected spot or corner, pump a bit out the end and brush the Proseal on the designated place. Paul can connect the camera to his computer to save the images and record them in his Log Book. Necessity is the mother of invention, isn't it?

President Paul announced Herb Kelley's death on Feb. 8th. He was 90 and a Charter member. of 211. This sparked a membership discussion. We currently have 4 Charter member still living. Only a couple are still active. And Clyde Buckley just made a sizeable donation to the Chapter. We started in 1964. A question was asked, "What would it take to put our Chapter Charter Member's names on 'the Wall' at Oshkosh?" Also a motion was made and passed by the membership to honor the officers.

The Break

Lee Helmink volunteered for the Army Air Corps in 1943. He trained then applied to pilot the C 46 Heavy Hauler. In 1944 he was assigned one with 4 hours on it. He and others got the job to first fly them to Africa on the way to the Asian theater. They flew 100 at a time, 50 in a group and in pairs while over the Atlantic. They flew down to South America, then turned left and used the Ascension Islands to hop over to Africa taking about 15 days, he said. From there



they flew to their assignments. His was in Burma, then later Rangoon. On the way over they had 17 on board including crew chiefs to do any maintenance

Chapter 211 Minutes

necessary at each fuel stop. Twenty-one 50 gallon barrels of Gasoline was normal cargo. The most important crewman was the Navigator who manually plotted their course with 1940's radio and technology while they flew in all kinds of weather mostly at night. Flying "over the hump" conditions were damp and cool with lots of fog. He said you had to put your socks in your shoes or they would mildew overnight. Flying included encountering ice, several inches in just a few minutes, the de-icers took care of that, and lightening strikes.



Lightening would shimmer along the wings and exhibit a steady glow at the propeller tips until they ran out of it. He said over 400 missions were flown into Burma round the clock. They supplied the Flying Tigers and airfields with machinery, vehicles, equipment, and fuel, etc., as examples. Many airfields were in the process of being built, literally by hand, stone by stone, using a huge peasant work force just so his plane and other front runners could fly in. Several loads were so large they actually had to be shoe horned into and out taking hours for each: to load, then unload. One load was two large stone wheels which the peasant workers assembled with a beam, then pulled with ropes to pack the small stones into a level runway. Just prior to another memorable flight he had been hauling loads of sheet aluminum for buildings and runways. The crew had marked a line on the bulkhead that represented their weight limit, now routine. On a later flight, loaded in the same manner, his plane could hardly get off the ground, climbing so poorly he clipped the trees at the end of the runway. He constantly had to nurse it, but it flew better when they reached the colder upper altitude air. Bringing it back down he kept more power on to counter the plane wanting to drop more rapidly. At touchdown, throttle back resulted in a kawthump as the plane met the runway.

EAA Chapter 211 Calendar

April 4.....	Meeting
April 8-13	Sun'n Fun
May 2.....	Meeting
June 6.....	Meeting
July 11.....	Meeting
July 28-August 3.....	Oshkosh
August ?	Picnic
September 5.....	Meeting

He said he could barely keep it moving to taxi, then almost didn't get to turn around even under full rpm! He said some had blown a tire, but this? Unloading revealed the cargo to be steel plate stacked to the height calculated for aluminum! And flights continued. He said more planes were lost to weather conditions than any other factor, and was thankful for the Hurricane escorts that flew cover for them. Mission preservation was a way of life. Should a drum of gasoline begin to leak it was sorted out and exited the aircraft in flight to get rid of the fumes and hazard. In retrospect, Lee said that the most memorable characteristic of flying the C 46 was "you always knew which quadrant of switches you had your hands on without looking. The groupings each had different shapes." Notably giving him lots of confidence during those hours of night flying. Flying the hump over there is not too unlike flying over the Tetons out West. The supercharger would kick in at 10 thousand feet. We would go up 15 or 17 thousand ft. depending on the peaks. Some were flown at 12 and one time we even went up to 20 thousand feet. We always wore oxygen masks to preserve our eyesight.

To get back down to the "Deck" was a near nosedive experience then to level off at treetop height to dodge enemy. Many planes landed with leaves and such in their landing gears. One series of missions had to be done into a box canyon with 30 seconds flying time on either side. We did it all the time, and at night. Another night mission was to fly our troops behind the Japanese lines. We had the aid of a beacon to fly between mountain ranges. The rest was up to our crew and navigator. We always wore parachutes. At the end of the war, the planes and equipment were blown up. We came home by boat.

Afterward, Lee said he flew turboprops from Florida, flew a B 25 and other types, then flew the Lear jet. He flew 3 years in New Zealand, bringing his flight time close to 3,500 hours altogether, and he thinks there are a couple C 46's still flying in Alaska.

What an insight this gives us into the lives of our fighting men and women of WWII, and yet his story is such a little piece of that history. Thru this small window we begin to understand the sacrifices our Veterans, like Lee made. and what they put themselves thru to preserve our right to the Freedoms we hold so dear in America today.

What a tribute to all who fought for us to win World War II !
Alfred A Smith , Secretary Treasurer



Mystery Aircraft



A proud young fellow with a 120....



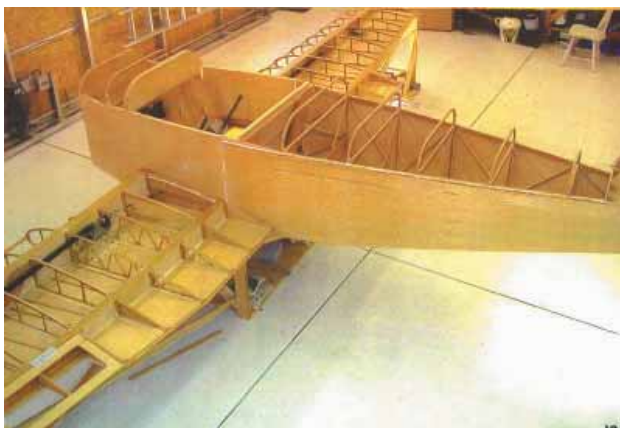
Last months mystery was a V-8 with speed reduction unit at Bill Vandermolens' shop

For Sale

Sid Jongsma is selling his airplane and project. The plane is a Grumman AA1 Yankee. The plane was formerly owned by Darrel Lawrence and was based in the clubhouse hangar for many years. The plane has 2512 hours on it. It runs and flies well. The plane is priced at \$17,000

Sid's project is a CVJETKOVIC CA-65 Skyfly. It is a wooden low wing monoplane with a retractable gear.

Contact Sid at (616) 772-6278 or sidnorm@chartermi.net



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