

EAA 297 – KITTYHAWKERS NEWSLETTER



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MAY 2nd MEETING CANCELLED BLAME THE COVID-19 VIRUS AGAIN

PRESIDENT MESSAGE (“Has-been” cook.)

The enthusiasm of EAA Chapter 297 continues to grow with the new Legend Cub ready to fly. Everyone in the Chapter now has the opportunity to fly in a tail-dragger. Of course, you must be qualified to solo. Cost to fly will be exceptionally low. This benefit alone is worth the membership fee of joining EAA 297. Shucks, even old Helicopter pilots want to get in on this action. For more information, and to schedule a flight in the new Legend Cub, contact Phil Ellison.

Special Events coordinator, Vice President Allan Bobbe is busy planning the upcoming Spring Fly-in. We will have the fly-in on Saturday, June 13th, and there will be lots of action and good times for all. Due to the pent-up demand we expect a great crowd of folks and a significant number of aircraft. Along with the Aircraft, Gary Henderson is working on a great turnout of Antique Cars to wow our guest who enjoy old cars. Under the auspices of Tommy Gore, the chapter will be serving up a gourmet lunch which will be available for a small donation. In addition, many other activities are being planned so that all who attend will enjoy an atmosphere of good times, good food, old friends, and big smiles. Final planning details will be confirmed at our monthly chapter meeting on Saturday, June 6th.

As we all know, the success of a fly-in is the result of good weather, great marketing, and a little work. I would like to encourage everyone to reach out to the

aviation community and invite them to make the fly-in. It is a family event so bring the whole gang for lots of fun, good food, entertainment and patriotic music. Please pass along our fly-in flyer by forwarding it digitally or printing it, posting it, and passing it along. The flyer has all the information needed.

And just for the fun of it, share our fun and bring a friend to our June Meeting.

Blue Skies, Tail Winds, and Good Rotor RPM,
Ken

MARCH MEETING MINUTES

Well we have good news, and bad news. The bad news is we were unable to hold our monthly meeting last month.... The good news is, you will not have to plow through a laborious recitation of the topics that were discussed. I know that you are all sincerely disappointed....

LEGEND CUB BACK IN THE AIR

On Monday, April 27th, the Legend Cub climbed back into the air. The ceiling and visibility on Monday were “unlimited” even if it was a bit windy. The ground crew of Bob McGowan, Allan Bobbe, Tommy Gore, Aubrey Thompson, and Mark Thoman assisted our Post Maintenance Check Pilot, Phil Ellison in the preparation of the airplane. She was pushed out of the hangar, thoroughly inspected, serviced, and refueled. Aubrey also mounted a digital camera to

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the aircraft frame behind the cockpit. The intention was to capture the vast array of cockpit indications for later recording and calculation.



Tommy Gore installed the windows and safety wired the hinge pins while Phil gave the windscreen a good wash.



Bob McGowan diligently cleaned the remains of a mud daubers nest that had been found in the flight control cavity of the right aileron.



Allan Bobbe helped service the hydraulic brake reservoir.



I don't think that airplane has ever had a closer inspection. The crew was intentionally "fiddling" because the "pilot" was waiting for the winds to subside.

With some extra time still available, the same ground crew, with the additional help of Leon Sandstrom, successfully hung the wings on PATROL. But that is another story....

With the wind slowing down the group refocused their attention on the Legend Cub's flight. But first Phil Ellison was equipped with a very important piece of safety gear that we all were sure that he would not have to use. It was a very old, war surplus, parachute that Aubrey purchased from an estate sale. The parachute looked like it was "only slightly used." We all were convinced that it had been purloined from the safety equipment locker aboard a Piedmont YS-11.



Phil climbed aboard and started the Continental engine. The engine ran smoothly and all the indications were "in the green". Phil taxied into position, completed his run up, takeoff checklist, and easily rolled into the air. It was a beautiful sight to see the aircraft lift smoothly into the air. Allan Bobbe followed the Legend Cub into the air as a chase plane. Phil circled for a few minutes generally staying within sight of the airfield. We were all surprised at the speed of the Legend Cub. Phil later stated that he was reading 105 knots indicated. Allan could not keep up with him in his J-3. Phil gave us a couple of reports on the radio and then came across the airfield with a low pass. He turned to downwind and came back in to land. His approach was smooth and well controlled and he made a really nice wheels landing. The first flight was fortunately, uneventful. Phil reported that the rigging of the aircraft seemed balanced but that the engine tachometer was not working accurately. That will need to be "repaired" before we can do some more advanced flight performance testing.



Well done to Phil and all the ground crew who continue to support the effort!

PATROL'S PROJECT REPORT

On Friday, April 10th, PATROL made her last major move while trapped on the ground. It is my hope that her next major move will be in the air!

A good friend, Tom Wright, has supported all of PATROL's ground moves since the start of my restoration project. Tom has successfully restored a nationally recognized, award winning, 1930's Rolls Royce. And he has a large trailer that he hauls his antique auto from show to show. For the last several years he has graciously volunteered to transport PATROL around eastern North Carolina. But, he was regrettably unavailable for this particular move. So, I turned to some alternate means. After conferring with Phil Ellison, who used the same method to move his Stinson, I decided to rent a 26-foot, U-Haul, enclosed truck, to transport PATROL.

The first step was to select a truck that was readily available. I chose the 26-foot, U-Haul truck, based on web research, because the truck bed was certainly long enough, and it is "only" three feet off of the ground. It was the lowest cargo bed of the available rental trucks. But I had to solve two significant problems. First, how was I going to get the airplane up into the truck. And second, once aboard, how was I going to tie it down. After a visit to U-Haul, and a close inspection of the truck, I determined that I could fashion some ramps that could rest on the very strong step of the steel bumper. The surface of the ramp would then be even with the surface of the truck deck. I was disappointed to find that the truck had no tie-down rings in the deck. But it does have side rails that are used to fasten furniture and moving boxes. So, I had to adjust my "tie-down plan."

My next concern was simply, how long do the ramps need to be to avoid dragging the belly of the aircraft over the trailing edge of the truck deck. After some detailed measuring of PATROL, and the truck, I used my very rusty knowledge of trigonometry to calculate both the angles and the length of the ramps. I determined that the ramps needed to be at least twelve feet long and that the lower ends needed to rest on a pair of "stools" that were a minimum of twelve inches high. To drag PATROL safely up the ramp I needed a winch, battery, and then a means to attach the winch to the forward interior wall of the truck. Off to Harbor Freight and Home Depot to purchase the required equipment and materials. The next, entire, day was spent constructing the ramps and stools. (That day also included several more trips to Home Depot.) I used a typical two-by-twelve plank for the ramps, and screwed a two-by-four support to the lower side for structural support. As I built, my

worst nightmare was a "ramp failure" while the fuselage was half way to the truck. I shuddered at the thought of the fuselage falling on its side. I fashioned a "shelf" that the winch could be mounted to and determined that I could lash the shelf to the side loading rails of the truck. The battery could rest on the deck of the truck, next to the winch.



Chris Short, a close family friend, and his daughter, volunteered to join my "moving team." Chris is retired Army and his daughter Roseellen, "Ellie," is a high school junior and has flown with me, in PATROL. Chris, who is a reluctant flyer, took one look at the tubular skeleton of PATROL during the restoration process and vowed that he, "sure as heck



wasn't leaving the ground in that thing." But the pair made an excellent moving crew.

Early the next morning I arrived at the "restoration facility" (my garage) and we configured the ramps and mounted the winch. The moment of truth came as the fuselage was maneuvered into position and pulled up the ramps. The winch worked marvelously and the angles that I had calculated proved to be accurate. (Will wonders never cease.) The belly of the aircraft cleared the truck edge with inches to spare. I may have been acting very "cool" on the outside, but on the inside, I was "dancing with relief." We secured the aircraft to the truck and the ramps were loaded aboard.



The drive to Stag Air Park was uneventful and then we reversed the loading process to offload the fuselage. Phil Ellison has generously allowed me to use his hangar to reassemble PATROL. PATROL's fuselage was pushed into the hangar and the trip back

to Jacksonville got under way. The loading of the wings and the flight controls, both in wheeled "racks," was smoothly completed. After another drive south to Stag, they were offloaded and stored in Phil's hangar. It was along, ten-hour day, but all of the major pieces were in position for the "final assembly."



Since that Friday, with the help of Vernon Pitts, Mike Corn, Bob McGowan, and Leon Sandstrom, and other "Stag airport bums," I have been slowly putting PATROL back together. All of the "tail feathers" have been re-attached, and the flight control cables have been connected. With the help of the Legend Cub



crew the wings were successfully hung on the airplane and I spent the entire next day adjusting the “washout” of the wings and then torquing all of the connecting hardware.

As you can probably guess, I am really getting excited about piloting PATROL back into the North Carolina skies.

AIRPORT HAPPENINGS

(This is a blast from the past. I remember when John Jefferies used to include an article about Stag Air Park in our monthly newsletter. It was entitled “AIRPORT HAPPENINGS.”)

On the night of Thursday, April 17th, we all witnessed the passage of a very serious frontal system that created high winds, heavy rain, and spawned some tornados. For the first time in twenty-six years, Nancy and I got prepared to shelter in our laundry room because the weather folks were reporting a tornado that was headed directly at us. They were watching the reflection of “airborne debris” on radar and the center of the tornado was traveling across the ground at seventy miles per hour!

Well the tornado missed us by less than a mile, but I learned, later the next day, that Stag Air Park was not so lucky. Following the trail of debris, you could see where a tornado touched down just south of the runway. It destroyed more than thirty of the trees that line the southern edge of the runway. The storm, travelling northeast, jumped over the hangars and then destroyed one of the giant trees between the hangar and Stag Park Road. Then it crossed the road and demolished a tin storage shed and several more trees. Luckily the storm missed our hangar, and left the brand-new tractor, that was stored in the tin shed, completely unscratched.

Over the next several days, a very hard-working crew including; Mike Corn, Vernon Pitts, Garry Brown, Bob McGowan, Drew Holbrook, Ken McGee, and Tommy Gore (I am hoping that I didn’t miss anyone.) cut down the damaged trees and hauled away the debris. Bob McGowan kept track and counted over forty trailer loads were hauled to the “burn site” at the western end of the runway. (That burn pile will make a very exciting fire.) There was minor damage to the grass on the runway, but it has been repaired and there have been several, successful “test flights” since.

This was a dangerous storm, that caused both deaths and destruction as it crossed our nation. It came close to us, and caused some mischief, but we all recognized how very lucky we were. The damage could have been far worse....

And that is how it is at Stag Air Park.

FLYOVER

Our President Ken McGee was approached about staging a fly-over of the New Hanover Medical Center in recognition of the medical folks who have been in the “front lines” of our battle against the COVID-19 virus. Ken is hoping to include both military and general aviation aircraft and he is contacting the 2nd Marine Aircraft Wing to request their support. He is also hoping that pilots from our chapter might like to be involved. The date of the possible fly-over has not been fixed. The intention is some time during the end of May and the beginning of June. There is a great deal of coordination and communication that must first be accomplished, but if you are interested in participating, please let Ken know.

SUN ‘N FUN

Much to our collective disappointment, this years Sun ‘n Fun has been cancelled. And, closer to home, so has the Burgaw Blueberry Festival. My wife Nancy, and my daughter Julie are very unhappy that their annual, day long, visit to the Blueberry Festival has been cancelled.

COMBAT PILOTS

Tommy Gore sent me both of these links. They are short movies about American pilots flying in combat during World War II. One involves the European theater and the other the Pacific. They are both worth watching. (Editor’s Note: Please stay safe by sterilizing your keyboard and not allowing any other viewers to get closer than six feet from the monitor. I am sure that those actions will completely protect you from the virus.)

Click the link to watch:

[American Spitfire Pilot in WWII](https://www.youtube.com/embed/6q_8IY12hEM?rel=0)

https://www.youtube.com/embed/6q_8IY12hEM?rel=0

JUNE’S LUNCH MENU

From our new Master Chef and Culinary Coordinator – June’s lunch will be Wade’s extraordinary BBQ. Come hungry, or don’t come at all!!

FUTURE EVENTS

CAUTION: Individual events may have been cancelled or rescheduled. Please preflight your intended destination prior to departure.

May 2020

Saturday 2nd ~~EAA 297 – Chapter Meeting, 10:00 AM in the clubhouse. Lunch in the No Whining Saloon 12:00 PM~~ CANCELLED DUE TO THE COVID-19 VIRUS

Tuesday 5th thru
Sunday 10th ~~Proposed Sun n Fun, Lakeland Florida~~ CANCELLED DUE TO THE COVID-19 VIRUS

Thursday 14th thru
Sunday 17th ~~EAA B 17 and B 25 Tour Stop, Cape Fear Regional Jetport, (KSUT)~~ CANCELLED DUE TO THE COVID-19 VIRUS

Friday 15th thru
Saturday 16th ~~Warbirds Over the Beach Airshow, Virginia Beach Airport, (42VA)~~ CANCELLED DUE TO THE COVID-19 VIRUS

June 2020

Saturday 6th **EAA 297 - Chapter Meeting,** 10:00 AM in the clubhouse. Lunch in the No Whining Saloon 12:00 PM

Saturday 13th **EAA 297 – Spring Fly-In and Antique Car Show,** 10:00 AM to 2:00 PM, Stag Air Park (7NC1)

CLASSIFIED

FOR FREE – Ramps and stools designed to lift major aircraft components onto a U-Haul, 26 Foot Moving Truck. Currently located at Stag Air Park. Contact Mark Thoman at (910) 577-5446 or mnthoman@embarqmail.com.

POLISH MOOSE HUNT

Two Polish hunters named Stosh and Thad, hired a pilot to fly them into the Canadian wilderness. There they managed to bag two, big bull moose. As they were loading for their return, the pilot said that the airplane could carry the hunters, and their gear, but only one moose.

The hunters objected, insisting that, "Last year we shot two moose, and the pilot let us take both of them.....and he had exactly the same airplane as

yours."

Reluctantly the pilot, not wanting to be outdone by another bush pilot, gave in and all the equipment and moose were loaded.

However, even under full power, the airplane couldn't handle the load, and ceased flying shortly after liftoff, abruptly crashing into the wooded wilderness. Miraculously, surrounded by the moose, clothing and sleeping bags, Stosh and Thad survived the crash.

After climbing out of the wreckage, and a bit dazed, Thad asked, "Where are we?"

Stosh replied, "I think we're pretty close to where we crashed last year."

Submitted by Tommy Gore

