

The Upwind Flyer

Your *Scentinel* for Chapter Happenings

February 2020



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New EAA Chapter in Willis to be Named "Flying Stinkers"

By Eric Gettel

This is news to me. Some of you may remember that it was also news to the aviation world in the spring and summer of 1969. Since joining this chapter a few years ago, I've occasionally wondered what the motivation was for settling on "Flying Stinkers" as a nickname. You'll discover here if you don't already know the story, that the nickname has some history and fame behind it.

The original copies of the board meeting minutes and newsletters from 1969 and have allowed me to piece together some of the events leading up to the adoption of that name:

- The chapter was formed 51 years ago at a meeting on February 9, 1969 held at the home of Betty and Don Frankman who owned a grass airstrip named *Frankman Rancho* just south of Willis Michigan. Don Frankman is elected President and the

"Various proposed chapter emblem designs will be on display [at the next meeting]. Come and vote for your choice."

Chapter 333 Newsletter April 1969



rest of the board is also filled out. The club adopts *Rancho* as its name. The landing strip still exists and is identified as a private airstrip 86MI - Downwind Acres.

- The next day Betty Frankman writes a letter to Paul Poberezney (longtime EAA President) informing him of the meeting, that it will be a serious chapter focused on building aircraft, asks for a charter, and for a triplet chapter number, "...such as '444', for example?"
- Sometime before the May 11, 1969 board meeting, the *Chapt. 333 Newsletter* (Vol. 1 No. 1) is published and mentions that a number of different emblem designs will be presented at the May meeting and that a vote

for the favorite will be conducted. The newsletter also solicits members to come up with

"WANTED - A NAME! A Name for the Chapter 333 Newsletter. Put on your thinking caps and submit your suggestions at the next meeting. We need an original name."

Chapter 333 Newsletter April 1969

an original name for the newsletter.

- At the May 11, 1969 meeting, no mention of a vote for the emblem design is recorded in the minutes. The minutes do note that Larry Jones, who stepped up to publish a monthly newsletter, solicited ideas for a name and received just murmurs.
- Sometime before the June 8, 1969 board meeting Vol. 1 No. 2 of the *Chapt. 333 Newsletter* is published containing a repeat of the newsletter name wanted advertisement.

- At the June 8, 1969, meeting President Don Frankman presented what is now the familiar logo including "The Flying Stinkers" text, which was unanimously approved. No attribution for the creator of the artwork is given.

- Sometime before the August 10, 1969 board meeting Vol. 1 No. 3 of the chapter newsletter is published as *The Scentinel* without any explanation for the new name. In later editions, *The Scentinel* title is handwritten in big red letters. The tagline of *The Upwind Flyer* is derived from this bit of history.

Still, none of this formality reveals how The Flying Stinkers name came to be. As it turns out it didn't have to be written down because at the time everybody knew who Betty Frankman was and she was rather accomplished indeed.



Betty piloting the Little Stinker. (Smithsonian - fair use).

Betty Frankman was famously known as Betty Skelton who, among many other exploits, flew *the original* Pitts Special to aerobatic championships in late '40 and early '50s. She named that plane *Little Stinker*.

In 1977, 8 years after chapter 333 took on the Flying Stinkers moniker, Betty published a book, *Betty Skelton's "Little Stinker"*. The cover has a photo of Betty, the Pitts Special in flight, and a logo very similar to the Flying Stinkers logo. Autographed copies of the paperback book are offered on Amazon for \$300 ea.

In 1973 a faithful scaled replica was built for and put on display in the Smithsonian. By 1985 Betty and Don repurchased the original and donated it to the Smithsonian, which now has it on display at the Udvar-Hazy Center. Furthermore, a children's book, *Daredevil: The Daring Life of Betty Skelton* by Meghan McCarthy was published in 2013.

Chapter 333, The Flying Stinkers, is named after the original Pitts Special and was co-founded by the plane's champion pilot. □

For more information:

[amazon.com](https://www.amazon.com) A search for Betty Skelton

[Smithsonian](https://www.smithsonian.com) Betty Skelton's page

[Motorsports HOF](https://www.motorsports.com) Betty Skelton's page

[meghan-mccarthy.com](https://www.meghan-mccarthy.com) More about Betty

Sources for this article include: chapter 333 meeting minutes and newsletters, a 1973 newspaper clipping presumably from a Winter Haven, FL newspaper, Smithsonian National Air and Space Museum website, Motorsports Hall of Fame website, Meghan-McCarthy.com, the AOPA flight planner, Google Maps, Ann Arbor District Library online book catalog, Amazon.com, and of course, Betty Skelton's page in Wikipedia.

The Unscented

by Eric Gettel

There once was a calculated thinker.
With fabric, dope, nuts and bolts he'd tinker.
On a confounding day
found a chapter in AA
And became an admirable Flying Stinker.

Calendar of Events

For 2020, the chapter has realigned its meetings schedule to fall consistently on the second, third, and fourth Tuesday evenings of most months.

- Feb 11 Chapter Gathering, 7pm
AA Terminal Basement
- Feb 18 Business (Board) Meeting, 7pm
EAA Welcome Center
- Feb 22 Michigan Aviation Safety Forum
EMU Student Center 8am to 6pm
[Website for more information](#)
- Feb 25 IMC Club Meeting, 7pm
AA Terminal Basement

Apr ___ A2GA2 Adopt-A-Road Cleanup

Jun 14 Pancake Breakfast

Jun 20 Young Eagles Rally #1
Tentative yet probable date.

Jul ___ A2GA2 Adopt-A-Road Cleanup

Jul 20-26 EAA AirVenture 2020

Aug 29-30 Thunder over Michigan

Sep ___ A2GA2 Adopt-A-Road Cleanup

Dec 8 Holiday Party

Annual Chapter 333 Membership Renewal

This is a reminder that annual chapter membership dues are due in January. Your Board of Directors voted to increase annual dues to **\$30** in order to meet chapter operating expenses and to **offer each member a personalized nametag** for in 2020! You may have seen these on other folks at Oshkosh or at other chapter gatherings, now you can have your own EAA Chapter 333 nametag.

Mail your payment to Renaud Guibert at the following address:

EAA Chapter 333
c/o Renaud Guibert
1905 Landmark Court
Ann Arbor, MI 48103

President's Log

By Eric Gettel

Last month I acknowledged something to the effect of feeling less deeply knowledgeable about the history of this chapter than I ought to be. So I set out on a quest to learn how the name *The Flying Stinkers* came about. After all, knowing absolutely zero about its origins left me with furrowed brows hopelessly trying to imagine its story.

The research project was fairly simple: dig through some of the preserved-through-the-ages original minutes and newsletters. I was hoping to find a tidbit of something to write about for this newsletter. I had no idea that a few pages of material contained such a whopper of a revelation: that someone with a seriously impressive resume helped form this chapter. I was so geeked that I was up until 2am writing the draft of this issue's lead article.

I'm still trying to understand why learning the

Motorsports Hall of Fame

Founded in 1989, the Motorsports Hall of Fame was located in Novi, Michigan. In 2015, it announced it's move to the Daytona International Speedway, home to the famed Daytona 500 and the Rolex 24 hour races.

It always seemed like a strange move to me, a factoid that gave me pause if only for a moment, because I've always associated Novi with Indianapolis. After all, Novi is the namesake of the Novi engine one of the most powerful and popular engines (with the fans) to race at Indy in its day. The Novi Public Library even has Bobby Unser's 1963 Novi Special racecar on display.

Betty Skelton was inducted into the Motorsports Hall of Fame in 2008 due to her aviation and automotive exploits. At some point she became friends with Bill France the founder of NASCAR and developer of the first superspeedway in Daytona.

Perhaps now I'll be a little less puzzled.

origin story of the Flying Stinkers excites me. After all, this is our chapter here and now. It is in our hands to mold, shape and sculpt. Being in awe of one of the founders does not solve any of the issues we face today. And yet it seems appropriate to pay some form of homage. Perhaps the lead article in this issue is homage enough.

Just a couple of years after the chapter's founding the Frankman's, as evidenced by the white-out over "Frankman Ranchero" (Sentinel Vol. 3 No. 8), sold their land and moved to Florida in 1971.

"As most of you know. Don and Betty have sold the Ranchero and moved to sunny Florida. Don and Betty will certainly be missed here as they are the ram-rods that started 333 almost three years ago."

Chapter 333 Newsletter February 1971

The chapter continued to meet for another year at the same airstrip, and yet seemed heartbroken as evidenced by formerly robust minutes and newsletters becoming thinner. Interest in the chapter waned and membership bottomed out at 10 in this period after the sale. Finally, chapter 333 held its first meeting at the Ann Arbor Airport in June of 1972 and chapter membership rebounded to 16 by the end of 1972.

It is interesting to observe the sale of the Frankman's property coinciding with the decline in chapter membership. Is this due to the strength of their leadership and the fact that they were the driving force behind the formation of the chapter just a few years before? Are there lessons we should take away from this story?

For one thing, it is great to have charismatic leaders. Yet, a sudden departure of a charismatic leader can leave a leadership vacuum putting any organization, especially volunteer organizations, at risk of decline.

This is where I think EAA gets it right. Their advice is for current leadership to actively seek out those in the membership to take on leadership roles. There are a number of reasons for this that I won't detail here. Having been in a number of organizations over the years, I'll say it just works. □

Introducing the 2020 Board of Directors



Eric Gettel, President
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Lifetimes ago I worked in the jet engine industry and was always fascinated by aircraft. Back in those nearly penniless days I found racing sports cars to be a more accessible pursuit and by the mid 1990's racing's adrenaline rush was deeply infused in my blood. Yet one fine day when my new brother-in-law took me up in a tired 172 rental here at ARB I instantly became hooked on flying. My wife and I then moved to Boston and in those 7 years she earned a graduate degree while I earned a private pilot license. We found our way back to Ann Arbor, which was good because both sets of our parents had somehow become grandparents. I have been an EAA member since the early

2000's and associated with chapter 333 since 2016. I am presently building an RV-9A and am halfway through the wing sub-kit. I rent 172s and 182s from Michigan Flyers where I maintain currency and strive for that ever-elusive sense of proficiency.



Beth Wichterman, Vice President
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When I joined the Ann Arbor Flyers in 1998, I was asked, "What was your most memorable flight?" There were 2 then: taking the controls of an aircraft for the first time in a 99's Pinch Hitter course, and being a passenger on the VFR arrival into OSH during the big EAA convention (WOW)! I wanted to get my license from the moment I took the controls back in 1998. There have been many memorable flights now, lots of camaraderie and aircraft ownership. Retiring from materials engineering work has left more time for aviation including a long trip out west with my husband. Flying to OSH from ARB

last summer in my RANS S-6 LSA and parking in Homebuilts was quite memorable! While I am not building myself, I have helped hot wire molds and layup and vacuum bag components for my husband's fiberglass bird. I have been a member of EAA for many years and active most recently with EAA333 since the fall of 2016.



Renaud Guibert, Treasurer
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I was one of those kids who loved models and could not hear a rumble in the sky without rushing to spot the aircraft who caused it. My first flight was at the age of ten, in a De Havilland Dragon Rapide and I soloed in a glider on the eve of my 20th birthday. A few years later, while living in South-East Asia, I flew a Piper J3 and became part owner of a PA18 Super Cub. Island hopping and bush flying were a lot of fun. Some 40 years later, I reconnected with flying and decided to build a model large enough to sit in. Visitors are welcome to see the all-metal two-seater Waix that I am building in the KARB EAA hangar.



Larry Sissom, Secretary
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Larry grew up in the Wayne - Westland area near the old National Airport where he used to ride his bicycle to watch aircraft take off and land. Now retired, he worked for Ford Motor Company for 45 years as an engineer in truck manufacturing. Larry is married to Ginger, who works part time as a Pilates instructor at the Chelsea Wellness Center, and has one daughter (Halley) who is a financial analyst at the University of Michigan. Larry has been flying since 1992 and is currently building a RV-7A at his home in Chelsea, Michigan. Larry has been an EAA member since 1997.



Rob Peterson, Director at Large
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I started flying in high school, and graduated from the Univ. of Dubuque with a double major in Flight Operations and Aviation Management as a CFIAIM. I taught at the University for three years after graduation and became the Assistant Chief Flight Instructor before getting hired at Mesaba Airlines in 1998. At Mesaba, I flew the Saab 340 for 10 years and the CRJ-900 for six years, becoming an instructor pilot on both planes. In 2014, I began flying the Airbus A319/320/321 for Delta Airlines. As a hobby, I design and build toy pedal planes for kids, and enjoy travel photography.



Mark Powell, Director at Large
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I've loved airplanes ever since I can remember. When I was young, I would fly with my pilot dad and build and fly U-Control model airplanes. My first Oshkosh was 1974 and after that I dreamed of building a real airplane.

I earned my private pilot license right after graduating from college in the early-80s, and fulfilled my dream of building an airplane as I built a Kitfox 1987-1992. I built the wings in the living room of my apartment in Jackson Hole, WY and finished the rest in a one car garage after buying a house. I flew it until around 2012, when I bought a 1963 Cessna 172. I also owned ½ share of a Steen Skybolt (open cockpit bi-plane) for 2 years (2010 & 2011).

I donated the Kitfox to the Kalamazoo Air Zoo where it is currently displayed in their lobby. They use it to promote the museum (they can take it to parades because of the custom trailer and folding wings).

I've been an EAA member since 1984, and was the founder of the Jackson Hole EAA Chapter 1049. I am currently the Young Eagle Coordinator for EAA Chapter 333 and am passionate about getting the next generation interested in aviation.

I have Bachelor degrees in both Accounting and Computer Science, am a CPA, and spent my career in Accounting Software. My job brought me to Michigan in 2003. I retired at the end of 2018. I am married (Pam) and have 2 grown daughters 24 and 22 years old (Madisen & Malley).



Chris Gordon, Director at Large
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I was born into a flying family, my father owned Gordon Aviation (a Piper dealer and FBO) at the Ann Arbor Airport where I spent most of my weekends since as long as I can remember. My first paying job was mowing the runway at Shamrock Field in Brooklyn, and I also did a stint as a lineman with J&J Aviation during high school, where the current EAA 333 hangars are located. I remember being absolutely awestruck watching a thundering F-14 Tomcat taking off in full afterburner at Oshkosh one summer as a kid, and I think that set the hook long before the movie Top Gun came out - what bigger challenge for a pilot than landing on an aircraft carrier? So after earning my private license in high school (with dad and my Northwest Airlines pilot uncle as flight instructors) and four years of Naval ROTC and Aerospace Engineering at the University of Michigan, I was fortunate enough to reach my goal and enjoyed a 21 year career as an F-14 pilot and a few other wonderful gigs in the US Navy. I shared this exciting journey with my wife of 29 years and 4 kids we collected along the way, and we finally landed in Dexter near our families in 2009. I now run a workshop back at U-M Engineering where students build all manner of projects from concrete canoes to solar powered cars - this would be an amazing place to build an airplane, but I'm more of a flyer than a builder so I share an off-the-shelf Cessna 172RG with 2 other retired Naval Aviators. I enjoyed being EAA 333 President since 2012 and am proud of all the things we were able to accomplish with the hangar complex, and I am looking forward to seeing how our chapter can grow with some new ideas at the helm!

2020 Ray Aviation Scholarship

Chapter 333 has found an Administrator/Coordinator

The Ray Aviation Scholarship Fund is a scholarship program that is supported by the Ray Foundation, managed by EAA, and administered through the EAA Chapter network. Through the generous support of the Ray Foundation, EAA will provide up to \$10,000 to deserving youths for their flight training expenses.

Since active chapter involvement in mentorship, support and administration of the scholarship is a key success factor, the chapter must affirm its ability to perform by reapplying for the scholar-

ship on an annual basis. Chapter 333 applied to for a scholarship in 2019 and was not selected. To try again in 2020 we are required to identify a Scholarship Coordinator.

A coordinator has been identified and the application form will be submitted by the Jan 31st deadline.

Breaking News

The March membership gathering, tentatively planned for the 10th, will be a guided tour of the Delta maintenance hangar at Detroit Metro.

Space is limited and preference will be given to EAA members who have paid chapter dues. More details will be forthcoming.

Classifieds

BEARKAWK LSA WING PROJECT- FOR SALE

Includes factory spars, aluminum sheet sufficient to complete, plans. DVDs, print outs, form blocks, master form block, etc. Nose ribs blanked and routed and some small parts completed. Bearhawk publications and a dimensioned wing table drawing. Lost interest and my flying days are over. A steal at \$1,500.00.

JD Woods. jdvespa@yahoo.com. Or 734 439-7717, leave message.

WANTED: Newsletter editor. What you see is what you get. ea333president@gmail.com