

April 2021

PROPWASH

A Newsletter of EAA Chapter 517, Inc.



Five Valleys Flwers



EAA Chapter 517, Inc.

From the Chapter President



Steve Rossiter

Here we are sneaking into April and finding all kinds of flying season weather everywhere we look. With good flying weather and COVID restrictions easing up, life is definitely looking up.

We had a wonderful March membership meeting featuring a great discussion with departing MSO Airport Director Cris Jensen and new Acting Director Brian Ellestad. At our last meeting with Cris, he indicated he was planning to stay at MSO until he retired. You know how those things go. Reno made him an offer he couldn't refuse. We are sorry to see him leave, but wish him well until such time as he finds his way back to Montana.

In the meantime, we look forward to working with Brian Ellestad and hope he is successful in formally becoming the MSO Airport Director. Brian briefed us on the progress of the new airport terminal building, and as of now, construction is under budget and ahead of schedule. It can't get much better than that, but wait, there's more. It seems the airlines and TSA can't seem to get their acts together, and the actual



opening of the new terminal building may not happen until March 2022 rather than the original target date of January 2022.

If you haven't noticed, the north side of the new terminal building now has glass installed and for the most part, the building is dried in. Having said that, the high tech, self-tinting glass for the east, south, and west sides has not yet been installed. Lastly, there has been no movement yet on the status of phase II of the project. That will be the removal of all the old buildings and construction

of a new baggage claim area, new car rental desks, and additional gates.

By the time you read this, you should have had an e-mail notice about an updated tour of the new terminal. We plan to get one in before Cris leaves. We will also plan a second tour for those that are not able to make the first one.

I hope we will see you at our April 3, 2021 Coffee & Donuts gathering.

Blue skies and tailwinds and keep the dirty side down.

Until next month,

Steve

Bless You My Son, You Are Now A Skymaster Pilot

By Steve Rossiter

I was fresh out of the Army and was working for a company called Sis-Q Flying Service in Santa Rosa, California, at the Sonoma County Airport (now called Charles Schultz Field). Here I learned that the civilian world was different than my Army experience.

In the U.S. Army, when a pilot gets checked out in a new aircraft (Army term is qualified), it normally entails a few days of ground school about aircraft systems, a thorough understanding about emergency procedures, and a minimum for 25 hours of dual flight instruction. To my extreme surprise, I learned this was not the way of the world for small civilian aviation company operations in 1974.

I arrived at work one day and our Chief Pilot, Peter Cranford, announced that the company needed me to be checked out in the Cessna 337 Skymaster, aka the “Push Me Pull You.” I thought cool, I get to fly another interesting airplane.

Mr. Cranford led me out to the airplane and showed me what to look for during pre-flight. So far, pretty routine. He then had me jump into the pilot’s seat, and he followed into the right seat. We used the Cessna checklist for the airplane, got it started and taxied out to the assigned runway. Still pretty routine. When cleared for takeoff, I taxied the airplane into position, and leading power with the rear engine, performed an otherwise routine Cessna takeoff.

Once we were airborne, Mr.



Cranford directed me to head for the Napa County Airport about 30 miles away. En-route we did a couple of stalls and simulated engine outs with both the front and rear engines. We landed at the Napa County Airport, and he had me taxi over to the local avionics shop. Before we left the Sonoma County Airport, I was not aware we had a second mission. Mr. Cranford was to pick up another airplane from the avionics shop.

Mr. Cranford shocked me when he announced I was now checked out in the company’s Cessna 337 Skymaster. Thus ended my formal training to become a “qualified” Skymaster pilot. I had a grand total of less than 30 minutes pilot in command flight time with one takeoff and one landing. Although I was not a civilian flight instructor, I had been an Instructor Pilot in the Army, so I later spent some time further exploring the flight envelope of this airplane.

Was this a bit on the cavalier side? Yes. Probably. In defense of the system, it taught me the military has unlimited funds and probably spends too much money with a “one-size-fits-all” method of training pilots. Simple aircraft don’t require the same degree of training as more complex aircraft. The Cessna 337 is simply a retractable landing gear, two engine version of the Cessna single engine airplanes. The takeoff and landing numbers of a Cessna 182, 206, 210 and 337 are virtually the same. And if you sit in the cockpit of one of those, unless you look behind you, you could be in any one of them.

I flew many more hours in that Cessna 337 and the military Oscar Duce (O-2) version of the airplane while with Sis-Q flying Service. I even spent some time flying Western Montana Aviation’s pressurized P-337 Skymaster out of the Stevensville Airport.

My aviation journey – So far

By C. Burt Caldwell

When I was about 5 years old a friend of my father's took us for a ride in his airplane. I remember it was a yellow plane and what I now know was a 2-seated tail-dragger – probably a Cub. Interestingly, I also remember that safety protocols were not what they are now as I was sitting in my father's lap for the entire ride. This is where I began my aviation journey.

Sometimes on the weekends we would go to the airport to watch the planes come in and depart (small town entertainment). The most fun was standing at the chain-link fence as the Southern Airways DC-2 or 3 started its engines only a few yards away. The roar was exciting but the most important part of the day was when the plane started to taxi. It turned toward the runway and the pilot gave it full throttle. I had to hold tightly to the fence to keep from being blown over by the prop wash. Every time we went through this, I had trouble going to sleep for a couple of days, reliving the experience.

My parents would, from time to time, put me on one of these flights from Tupelo, Mississippi to Memphis so I could spend a week with my aunt and uncle. I have never forgotten climbing into the plane and walking uphill to my seat. The seats

were two-wide and facing each other with a table between where they set our meals and drinks. Then, there was what we called air pockets. The first time a plane I was in suddenly dropped, it scared me and I thought I was about to die.

As I got older, I saved my money and got a few flights in the Cub but could never get the money to take lessons. In ensuing years, I restarted lessons several times but life kept getting in the way of completing them. I have always believed that aviation would be part of my future.

A long time passed before any real exposure to aviation came my way again. I had joined the U.S. Marines, taken a few tests and found myself in Pensacola, Florida for Naval Flight Training. Some family matters caused me to drop out of flight school but when they were resolved, I was sent to Navy electronics school – back in Memphis at the Millington Naval Air Station. From basic electronics classes, I was sent to flight simulation school to apply my new electronics training to aviation.

The Marines apparently needed my services at El Toro, California, where I began training on a Link Trainer to give reviews to Marine pilots on navigating by instruments. From the Link, I was transferred to an F9F Cougar trainer to transition pilots from reciprocal aircraft to jets. The Cougar is the swept-wing

version of the F9F Panther, which was the first jet to make a carrier landing. It had also been transitioned into a 2-seater for training. During my time attached to the F9, I also became reasonably proficient on the A4D Skyhawk and the F8U Crusader simulators. I was fortunate enough to get time to play with a decommissioned F4D Skyray simulator – a delta-winged aircraft, a KC-130 simulator and a helicopter simulator. Finally, I was transferred to the F4D Phantom simulator, which not only simulated the instruments in flight but had 3-axis motion. This meant I had to go to hydraulics and pneumatics schools in order to work on the simulator and learn more about the physics of flight to help ensure accuracy of the simulation.

The really great part of my life as a simulator instructor/technician was getting to schedule flights in the actual aircrafts so that I could get instrument readings during specific maneuvers and adjust the simulators to exactly match those readings while doing the same maneuver. I have many hours in the second seat of multiple jet fighters, including hands-on time, max performance vertical take-offs (Phantom), and breaking Mach 2 (Phantom).

I don't yet have a private pilot certificate but am, and always will be, an aviation enthusiast.



Air Force O-2 a modified and upgraded Cessna 337



By Steve Rossiter

During the Vietnam War the U.S. Air Force decided there was a need to replace the Korean War era O-1A (L-19) observation airplane. They let a contract for Cessna Aircraft Company to modify the civilian Cessna 337 Skymaster for the Air Force mission.

There were certain changes made in the basic C-337 to accommodate the Air Force requirements. The major changes were to add overhead windows and windows in the aircraft

entrance door to provide improved visibility. In the cabin, they installed military quality instrumentation and a complete, highly upgraded military avionics package. This included radio and navigation systems not in use in the civilian world. And of course, hard points were installed on both wings to accommodate armament.

The most unique addition was two skid rails on the bottom of the fuselage. The Cessna landing gear system on the single engine Cessnas and the Cessna 337 was known to be

a weak point with far more failures than with more conventional landing gear systems. The rails were installed on the bottom and positioned so that if the landing gear failed to extend, the pilot could shut down the front engine, position the prop, and a landing could be made with minimal damage to the fuselage. I know pilots that have taken advantage of that feature, and it works as advertised.

Cessna O-2A Hard points are visible as are the skid rails on the fuselage.

Everyone has a story - share yours

By Steve Rossiter

Everyone has a story worth telling. Your fellow EAA members would like to hear at least one of your stories. Whether it is why you made the decision to learn to fly or something else aviation related, EAA readers want to know!

Some of you have had flying experiences that could teach others an important lesson. This is a safe way to provide “a lessons learned” narrative and perhaps keep someone else from having a similar “adventure.” Remember, an experience is something you got when you were expecting something

else. If you say you have never had such an event, I’d suggest you need to examine your flying activities more closely. I’m just saying.

Most pilots have had a flying trip that was an excellent adventure and the rest of us would like to hear about it. You never know; this might very well stimulate someone else to embark on a similar trip. Sharing is a very good thing to do pilot to pilot.

There are other things you have an opportunity to share with us. Maybe you drove to someplace like an aviation museum that most people don’t know about. If so, please share it with us. Maybe you went to a museum everybody knows about, but

the experience blew you away, that is worth sharing too.

If you have a favorite air machine, please tell us why you like it. Educate us about it. PropWash readers want to know. Or if you have an aircraft you just hate, we want to know about that too.

Our goal is to make the Five Valleys Flyers PropWash the most interesting newsletter in all of the EAA world. You can help the Chapter reach that goal by simply telling us one of your stories. The more contributors we have, the more interesting each issue of the PropWash will be.

There I was – adventures with a covered pitot tube

By William Schertz

In 2009 I finally finished the construction of N343BS – a 4-place fiberglass airplane with a Mazda Rotary engine in it. Now I had to fly off the 40 hours in a test program through the entire weight and balance range, etc.

I was doing the flying out of Aurora, IL and it is a towered airport. I did a number of flights, gradually opening the flight envelope, getting climb data, gradually adding sandbags, etc.

The plane was always hangared, but one day I was doing some miscellaneous chores where I could raise some dust so I slipped a cardboard tube over the pitot tube to keep any contamination out. Several days later I went for another test

flight, and didn’t check and remove the pitot cover.

Now I had installed an Angle of Attack alarm in the airplane. It senses forward speed and pressure above and below the wing surface. Four inputs: above wing, below wing, pitot and static pressures.

I taxied to the end of the runway and applied power. I accelerated down the runway and as I lifted off the AOA sounded the warning, very loudly ANGLE ANGLE PUSH, ANGLE ANGLE PUSH over and over again. It was so loud that I could not hear the tower and, of course, I had no airspeed indication.

Since I was off the ground I fell back on “Aviate then Communicate,” so knew the plane would fly. I called the tower and said “N343BS needs to return to land

immediately, and I CANNOT hear the tower.” I entered a downwind pattern and kept repeating the message. I am sure the tower could also hear the AOA squawking ANGLE ANGLE PUSH. Since I knew the engine RPM for level flight and decent phase for landing, the return was uneventful but I heard later that the tower controller called for her supervisor to come up. He asked what plane was in trouble and she replied “The one that sounds like a lawn-mower. They did a nice job of clearing any other traffic from the arrival/departure.

After landing, the AOA got quiet and I discussed what happened with the tower, thanked them for their assistance, removed the pitot tube cover and continued the flight test. Then I filed a NASA report.

Ray Aviation Scholar update

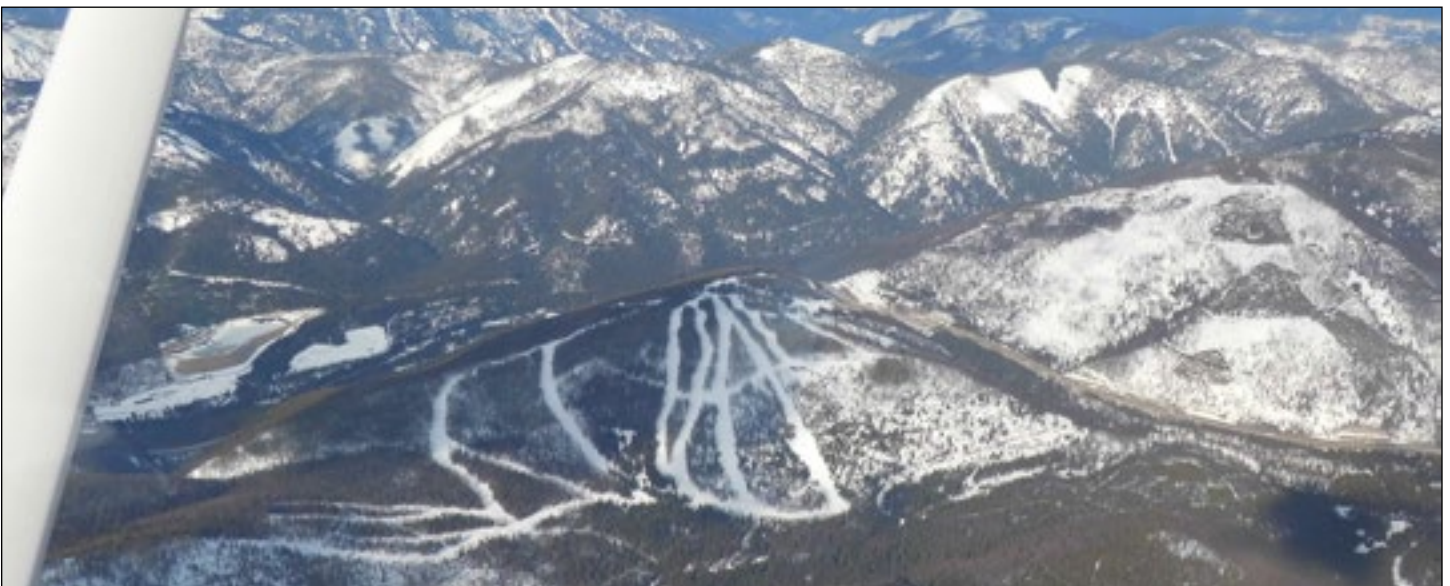


By Ray Aten

Denten Wulff completed his Cross Country requirement for his private pilot certificate with a trip to Kellogg, ID (Shoshone County Airport) where he met his ground support team

(grandma, mom, and sister) for late lunch before returning to Missoula. On his way to Kellogg he was briefly shadowed by Larry Waldman (Northstar CFI) and a friend in a Cessna 182. Larry photographed Denten (in Juliet Sierra) West of

Frenchtown with the Missions in the background. On the return trip Denten included Lookout Pass as one of his checkpoints. Clearly it was a great day for a cross country. If you get a chance ask, Denten for the long version.



A simple system for name tags

By Steve Rossiter

I'm sure you all have noticed our name tag board on the office door in the hangar. It is a simple system really. The name tags were placed there in alphabetical order. The plan is when a person removes his/her name tag for use, when done put it back in the same place it was found. That place was based on alphabetical order. You know A, B, C... X, Y, Z.

It is a lot easier to find a name tag if alphabetical order is maintained. So far the system seems to be failing. I sure hope we can do better!



Pay your dues!

It is time for members to pay their EAA 517 dues. Individual membership dues are \$20; family membership dues are \$30.

Mail to EAA Chapter 517, Inc., P.O. Box 18264, Missoula, MT 59808.

The more members who send in their dues now, the fewer members Luanne will have to send invoices to in January. Thank you.

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BUILDER'S REPORT

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RV-10 – 10%

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James "Cal" Geyman
RV-9A – 15%

Zenith
Duane Felstet
CH-750 – 75%

Builders, please send updates to the newsletter editor at cburson@gmail.com so this list can be kept current.



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