
Pittsburgh-Butler Region Experimental Aircraft Association - Chapter 857

EAA 857 NEWSLETTER



EAA 857 September Fly-in!

An early morning crowd gathered on the 12th for a pancake breakfast and Young Eagle flights. The chapters third event for the year concluded successfully on a beautiful, somewhat windy, late summer afternoon at Pittsburgh-Butler Regional Airport near Butler, PA.

Presidents Message

EAA 857 Members,

We will meet for our September chapter meeting in the KBTP conference room on Tuesday 9/21 at 7pm. Please arrive / log in early as we will also conduct this via a Google Meet live stream for those of you who may not wish to attend in person at the airport. I will send you the meeting link to use prior to the meeting.

I wish to thank everyone who turned out and made our third event of the summer a great success today. We have held our first two Fly-ins since 2019 and had a good number of customers at our pancake breakfast. Thanks again to Phil and Robin Kriley for getting our grille out and prepared for the event, including shopping for supplies, and to Robin, Marsha Hood, and Margot Lynn McGeary who ran our kitchen. We had a Young Eagle, Leah Martin, who volunteered to help in the kitchen and at the flight line assist us at this event. She had attended GirlVenture at this years show in Oshkosh in July. Thanks as always go to all who helped set up and clean up.

This event also featured Young Eagles rides and I believe we flew about 28 rides, 19 had pre-registered for the event and there was one no-show. Thanks to Chris McGeary at the registration desk, and to Chuck Warren, Mike Neuman, Frankie Szczerba and Dan Hood for marshaling kids and aircraft. Of course, thanks also to Frank Szczerba, Dave von Kaenel, Bill Banks, and Mark Beighey as our pilots! We also thank Ellie Gall from EAA 842 in Fairmont, WV who flew up in her Citabria to fly several Young Eagles around Lake Arthur.

At the conclusion of this program year 2021, I will have completed my fourth year as President of our chapter after previously serving as VP for a year. As we approach nominations for 2022 officers, please consider volunteering your contribution to the success of EAA Chapter 857 in a leadership role. We have had successes including achieving our IRS 501C(3) status. There have also been difficulties as all organizations have from time to time; the virus pandemic certainly played a role in upsetting plans for many organizations including the chapter and the EAA. Thank you to all who stood with us and continued to participate through these travails.

The Board of Directors has begun to look at an opportunity to participate in the Ray Aviation Scholarship program that provides funding (\$10,000) for training to youth to achieve their private, light sport, or glider pilot's certificate. This demands an active, quality chapter for identifying and mentoring of a selected candidate and is a one year program from selection through, solo, written test and pilot check ride. The chapter application and selection process begins early in 2022 and candidate application and selection follows in the March time frame.

Take care, and once again my thanks to all of you for your help at our meetings and events; and this includes Chris and Margot McGeary for their article in this months newsletter!

Ted Merklin,

President, EAA Chapter 857





Pittsburgh-Butler Region Experimental Aircraft Association–Chapter 857 Minutes of August 17, 2021 Regular Chapter Meeting

Opening: President Ted Merklin called the meeting to order at 07:01 P.M. and led the members in the Pledge of Allegiance.

Meeting attendees: 12 members were present. 2 members were viewing from live stream on a Google Meet.

Previous Meeting Minutes: The minutes of the prior meeting are in the newsletter. Motion put forward by Phil Kriley to accept, seconded and approved by all.

Treasurer's Report: Fly in income was \$526.25. Actual income after expenses \$346.86.

Newsletter: The newsletter will be distributed and uploaded to the chapter website.

Website: Enter <https://chapters.eaa.org/ea857> in your browser to view the site.

Tech Advisor: No report

Young Eagles: Double credit still in effect. [for June, July, August only]

Air Academy: Cancelled for 2021. Candidate Zach Jordan is no longer attending.

Business: The following items were discussed:

For our next Event; Young Eagles and Fly In September 12th:

- Received insurance certificate.
- We filed for chapter blast.
- Paper products were purchased for High Flight due to lack of porta potty availability during event.
- We are moving forward with preparations for September 12th event with left over supplies (unexpired) from last event.

Boy Scouts plan for a camporee at the airport; -no new information- October 9th,10th, and 11th.

Membership: stands at 36 members.

Chapter Nominations: fast approaching think about who we want to see in leadership roles.

IMC meeting: Tomorrow night 7pm.

September 21st meeting: President will not be present.

Ray Aviation Scholarship: Research is taking place to be discussed during the next board meeting.

Closing: The meeting was adjourned at 08:25 P.M.

Program: Slideshow of AirVenture Photos from several members

Respectfully submitted:

Josselyn Slagle, Secretary EAA 857

Luray & Ocracoke

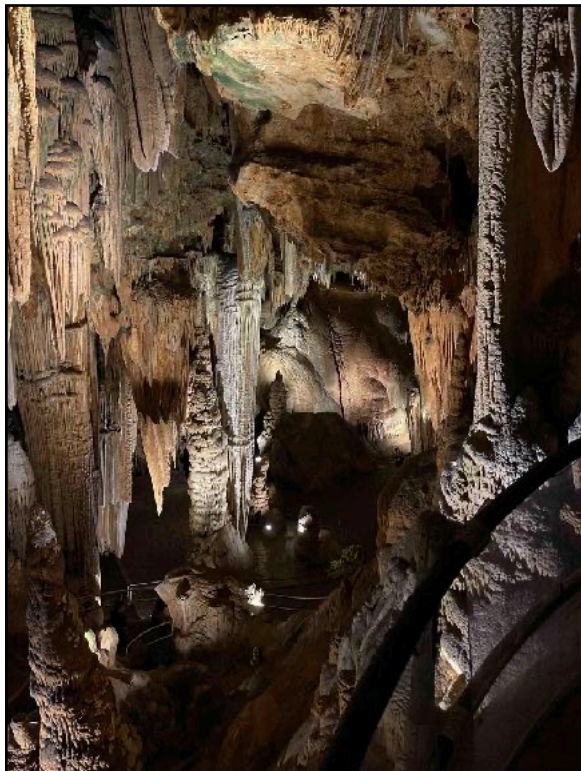
A sunny weekend getaway....

Margot had never been to Luray Caverns, and it had been awhile for me, too, ...plus we wanted a bit of sun and sand, so...

We got underway Saturday morning around 0930, as soon as the low level haze burned off at Butler, compass bearing 113 deg sends you right to Luray. It was a bit bumpy under PIT's Class Bravo airspace and the low cloud layer, but as we drew opposite Latrobe, we were able to find a nice long hole in the rapidly disbursing clouds to let us climb above them, leveling out at 7500 ft, with the added benefit of a slight tailwind. It's 143 nautical miles down to Luray, with nice scenery as you cross the mountain ridges.



Be careful coming over the last ridge. It's 2800 ft high, and the pattern altitude at Luray (KLUA) is down at 2000 MSL. Also, be sure to listen to the CTAF on the way in, too, as runway 22 has a right hand pattern to keep you from overflying the caverns themselves. We landed on 04, and as we were taxiing to the ramp, Danny was on the Comm asking if we wanted fuel or a ride to the caverns. We replied "Both", and he met us with an old crew car just as we shut down.



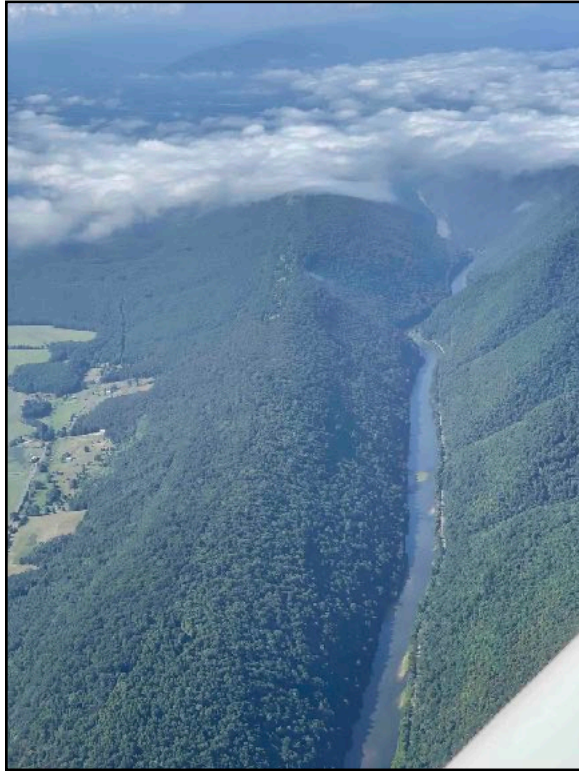
The caverns are only about a mile from the airport, so the ride over only takes a couple minutes. The cavern entry has recently been completely renovated. There are no longer any steps, and the entire cavern tour can be done in a wheelchair. The renovation did require a long, looping outdoor covered ramp to get down to the new entrance, where they have a double door system to form a sort of air lock. We were glad to get there when we did. When we arrived, the parking lot was maybe ¼ full, but by the time we got back out, the lot was overflowing and there was a long line to get in.

The caverns themselves are some of the prettiest in the eastern US, with an easily strolled path and excellent lighting. They even had the Great Stalacpipe Organ working in player piano mode, playing a gospel hymn. It's about a 90 minute walk through the cavern. It's a cool 54 degrees year round, but the air is still, and we found that a long sleeved shirt worked fine with shorts and sandals.

There are a couple of small museums in the complex: a toy museum which held a few items we remembered from our youth (I played with that!), and a very interesting car museum with carriages and cars from the early twentieth century. At this point, it was about 1:30PM, and starting to get pretty warm. We walked back to the airport, settled up with Danny for the fuel, and got on our way.



By this time, the winds had died, and we were able to head out 22, for a long cruise climb down the valley. The clouds to the east were setting very close to the ridge, and we didn't see any gaps, so we climbed to 11,500 to get over them. Once over the cloud line, we had clear skies across Virginia to just south of Richmond, where two lines of high, converging clouds caused us to change course to the south and get down to 3000 ft to get below the cloud base. Then we were dodging showers from pop-ups as we headed for Pamlico Sound.



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We flew right over Swan Quarter, NC, where the ferry boats leave the mainland heading for Ocracoke. It's a 20 mile flight across Pamlico Sound, and we stayed low due to low ceilings and a nasty looking thunderhead about 30 miles south. Ocracoke Island airstrip (W95) parallels the beach, about 700 ft inland. No gas, but it does have tiedown rings, port-a-potties (with combination locks, squawk VFR) and a pilots lounge with AC (but no furniture, it got flooded by the hurricane that hit in 2020, and much of the town is still recovering).

We tied the plane down thoroughly (with regular glances toward that thunderhead to the south) and called Blackbeard's Lodge, the hotel where we had booked the last

available room. A few minutes later, an old fellow with an equally old pickup showed up to give us a ride. The edge of town is about 1/2 mile walk from the airport, if you want to fly in for the beach and some lunch. Blackbeard's Lodge is a bit over a mile from the airport.



Blackbeard's Lodge has been in Ocracoke since 1936, and is the oldest operating hotel in town. If you like modern styling and efficiency, then this is not the place for you. But, if you like history and colorful local characters, we've got your spot right here. Like many other businesses, they are finally recovering from the hurricane; they had 5 feet of water in the lobby, and we noticed new roofs and porches all over town. We rented a couple bikes and grabbed an early dinner of fresh seafood at the Ocracoke Oyster Company. Very tasty, but their raw oysters are rather small. We think the oyster beds offshore in Pamlico Sound got trashed by the hurricane and haven't recovered yet either.



Then we grabbed towels & a blanket, and headed back to the beach. The thunderhead was still sitting there about 20 miles to the south. It hadn't moved, and was predicted to stay there



for the next 18 hours or so.



We stayed on the beach until dusk. There was an onshore breeze that kept the mosquitos off the beach so that we didn't turn into diner de jour for the bugs. Riding back to the lodge, we were suddenly surrounded by dragonflies the size of hummingbirds! There were at least a dozen around each of us. I guess we were good bug bait. Back to the lodge to change, then across the street to the Back Porch restaurant for sticky toffee pudding for dessert. Yummy!

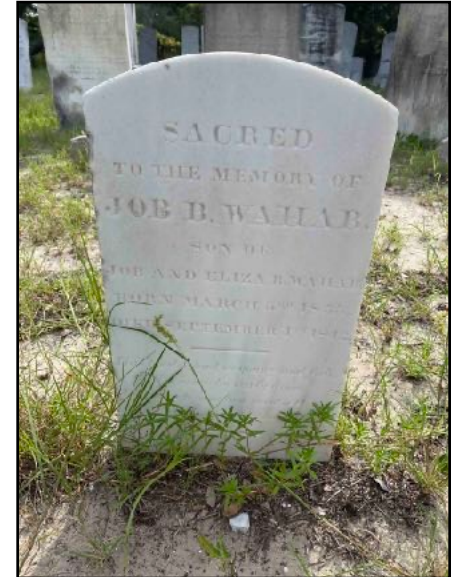
After a good rest on a surprising comfortable mattress, we were up the next morning before dawn to watch the sun come up on the beach. Then it was off to look for breakfast...which turned out to be a problem. Most property rentals seem to be Sunday to Saturday, and the restaurants that used to serve a great Sunday breakfast have cut back. After asking around, we found a food truck serving delicious breakfast burritos. We packed up and put our bags in the lobby, then biked

around, checked out the old British cemetery (where some people seem to have died before they were born!), the lighthouse and the various cottages.

We headed back out to the beach again, and ran into three fellows who had arrived in a Diamond DA40 to check out the swimming. They mentioned that Billy Mitchell (KHSE) is also right on the ocean, if you want another "will fly for salt & sand" destination.

After an hour or so, we noticed that clouds were starting to build both in the east and southwest, so we headed back to the lodge to return the bikes and see about a ride back to the airport. Arriving at the plane, we started removing tiedowns when the gust front came through. The Diamond was already warmed up; they taxied out and took off, heading back north. Since we had another ten minutes to go before we were ready to fly, we decided to head back to the pilots lounge and wait it out what looked like was going to be a big blow. ...but it didn't happen. The winds settled a bit, and the rain didn't come.

After waiting twenty minutes or so, we went ahead and untied the plane, warmed it up and took off.



We climbed out to the northwest, deciding to chance the western edge of the PAMLICO B MOA in order to get above the clouds. We finally cleared the cloud line while still climbing (slowly) at about 13,500 ft, then dropped down to 12,500 and heading for Orange County (KOMH) for fuel.

Orange County was running almost continuous parachute ops, so it was "interesting" to make sure we avoided the chutes. Fortunately, by pattern altitude, the jumpers have all pulled, and the chutes are easy to see. We flew a very wide downwind to give them plenty of maneuvering/landing room and squeezed in between the jump planes. A not-so-quick refuel (the card reader was acting up) and a bathroom stop and we were on our way home.

Back up to 8500 ft to stay above the clouds over the mountains, then down to 3500 over Mt Pleasant to stay under Class Bravo. The pattern at Butler was quite busy as usual, with a couple of High Flight trainers & a helicopter in the pattern and someone who decided to join the downwind for 26 by overflying mid field at 2300 MSL. Surprise! But, since everyone was announcing, we all got sequenced and on the ground safely. It was a busy 34 hours...

...til next trip.

September 12 Fly-In

Presented here are a few of the aircraft attending our late summer Pancake Breakfast Fly-in at KBTP last weekend.



This nicely finished Zenith CH750 Cruzer

Here we have a Steens Skybolt based nearby at Butler Farm Show airport.



This Citabria from Fairmont WV was piloted by Ellie Gall and flew several Young Eagles for us at this event.



There were a pair of RV-12s that flew into our event.



This Aeronca L-16 is the aircraft our Chuck Potts and Dan Pappert have been restoring after an engine-out incident and rough field landing in July of 2019. You may recall the recovery operation documented by Bob Santolla in that months chapter newsletter.

2021 Cleveland National Airshow

My only prior experience with the Cleveland National Airshow was back 10 years or so ago and it was a soggy one. A very wet cold labor day at that event. This 2021 edition threatened to be the same. The drive from Pittsburgh to Cleveland up the turnpike was foggy, drizzling, low ceiling and very gray. Never the kind of weather I like for aviation photography.



This first image of the Marines' Boeing T-45 Goshawk trainer on static display shows the overcast skies shortly after arriving in Cleveland. It had stopped raining, but low clouds and gray persisted over the city.

However out over the lake the skies were clearing in this view of Bill Stein's Zivko Edge 540 aerobatics aircraft that performed several times during the airshow.



One of the flying displays included this Lockheed C130 Hercules cargo turboprop.

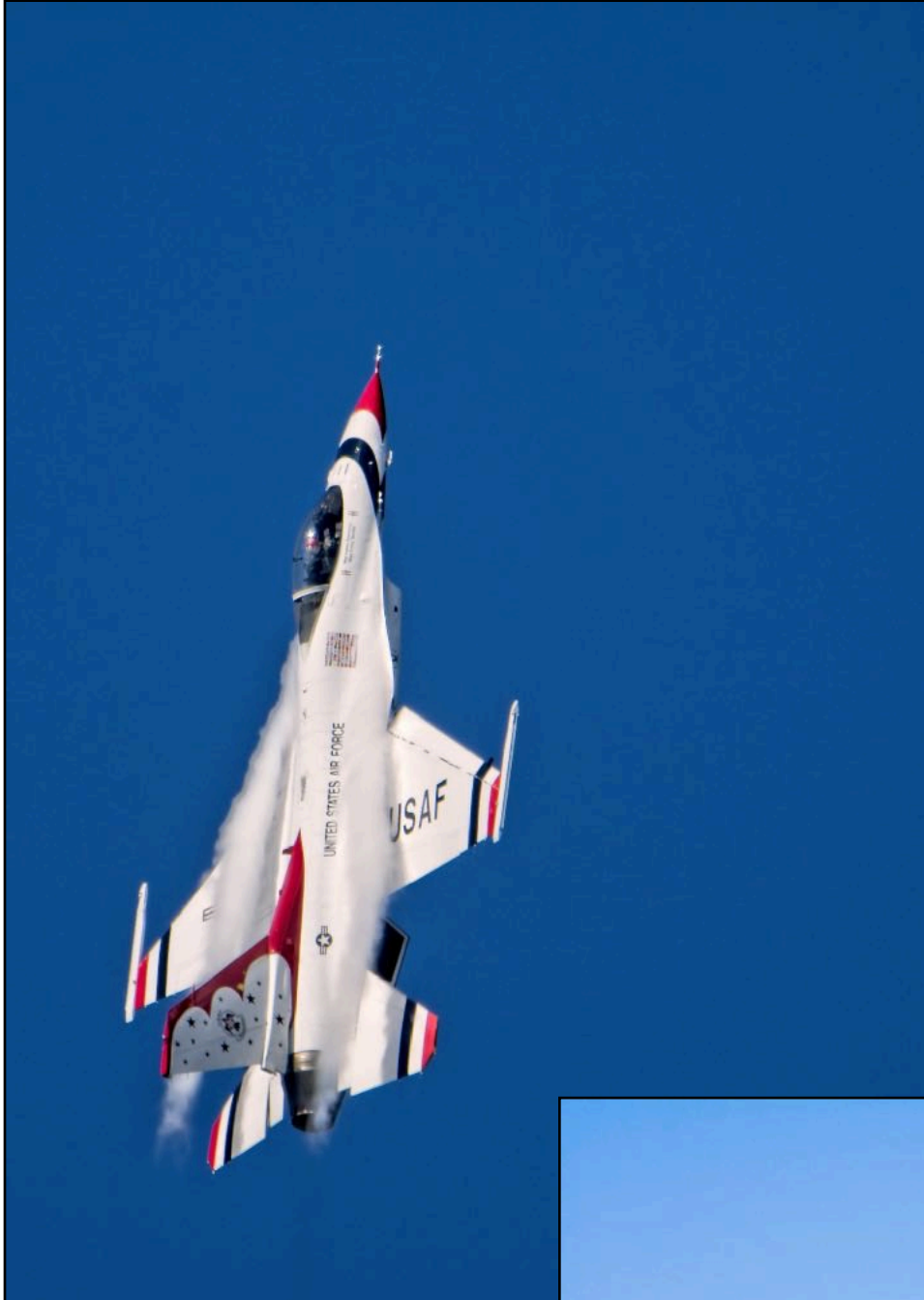


The US Coast Guard detail from Detroit demonstrated a water rescue deployment and recovery using their wish on this Eurocopter MH-65D Dolphin search and rescue helicopter. Look at the sunny blue skies now!

I did not know that our local Air Heritage Museum had a Douglas C-47B Skytrain out at the Beaver County Airport, but here it was flying in the airshow. This is the “Luck of the Irish”. Check out this [link](#).



The featured performers for this year at Cleveland were the USAF Thunderbirds demonstration team which among many maneuvers included this solo high alpha pass.



Here we have the vapor we always like to see flowing off the strakes of the solo F-16 Fighting Falcon in its near vertical climb over Lake Erie, and Burke Lakefront Airport in Cleveland.

Near the end of their routine the solo aircraft have joined with the lead and other team members to form the Thunderbird's Delta formation photo pass across show center.





EAA 857 - Chapter Meetings and Events for 2021

Meetings are held on the third Tuesday of the month at 7:00 PM in the Conference Room at the Pittsburgh-Butler Regional Airport.

Chapter Meetings	Tuesdays	January 19 February 16 March 16 April 20 May 18 June 15 July 20 August 17 September 21 October 19 November 16
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IMC Club -	3rd Wednesdays, Cancelled until further notice.	
EAA 857 Chili Cook Off -	Cancelled	
International Young Eagles Day -	Saturday,	June 12
EAA 857 Fly-In and YE -	Sunday,	August 15
EAA 857 Fly-In and YE -	Saturday,	September 12

2021 National Events

Sun 'n Fun -	April 13-18
Sentimental Journey -	June 22 - 26
AirVenture Oshkosh 2020 -	July 26 - August 1

EAA 857 Chapter Officers for 2021

Use contact@eaa857.org to email the Chapter President. Your request will be forwarded to the appropriate individual.

President	Ted Merklin
Vice President	Phil Kriley
Treasurer	Frank Szczerba
Secretary	Josselyn Slagle
Board Members	Gary Marsico 2021
	Dan Hood 2021-2022
	Mark Beighey 2021-2023
Newsletter	Ted Merklin
Website	Ted Merklin