



EAA Chapter 690

NAV-COM



Meetings on the 2nd Friday of the month
8 pm Stone Mountain Airport

May 1992

Calendar of Events

May

8 - Chapter 690 monthly meeting, 8 pm, Operations Hut of Stone Mountain Airport. Speaker: Jim Buckley of the American Meteorological Society. Mr. Buckley is the Senior Meteorologist for the Fernbank Science Center (20 years on the job!). Topic: **THUNDERSTORMS:** their prediction, development, and associated dangers!! Quite a timely topic for the Spring.

9 - Chapter 690 Pancake Breakfast - First of the Year. PLUS the Black/Sharp wedding reception!!

15-17 - 2nd Annual May Fly-In, Palmetto Sport Aviation/EAA Chapter 242, Columbia Owens Downtown Airport (CUB), Owens Field, Columbia, SC. All category judging, awards and trophies, vendors, forums, concessions, hangar flying, SC Breakfast Club on Sunday, Awards banquet on the field on Saturday. See NOTAMS and airport directory for noise abatement procedures PLEASE. Contact: (803) 779-6562; 657-5864; 796-2400; 796-5808 for accommodations, ground transport, and information.

16 - Griffin, GA. Grand opening of Alexander Aeroplane Co.'s "Aeroplane Store". Workshops, DC-3 tour, fly market, aviation displays. (404)229-2329.

16 - Chattanooga, TN: Airshow '92; William Schmitt, 615-267-1985.

16-17 - 2nd Annual Kitfox Fly-In, "The Gathering of the Foxes" at Wadsworth-Muni Airport, Wadsworth, OH (EAA #846). Technical talks, fly market, precision landings, bomb drops, rides, prizes, Breakfast and Lunch. (216) 722-5791.

23-24 - EAA Chapter 941, Decatur, AL; Decatur/Athens Aero Service 4th Annual Reunion/Fly-In.

June

3 - Myrtle Beach, SC: Myrtle Beach AFB Open House; LtCol. Krick, AV 748-7218.

6 - Smithfield, NC. EAA Chapter 506 Annual Breakfast/Lunch Fly-In. 191/446-7075.

6 - Williamson, GA. EAA Chapter 6 Fly-In. 404/253-1070.

7 - Lebanon, TN. EAA Chapter 863 3rd Annual Fly-In/Drive-In. 615/452-1205.

12 - Chapter 690 monthly meeting, 8 pm, Operations Hut of Stone Mountain Airport.

July

3-5 Gainesville, GA. 24th Annual Cracker Fly-In; Antiques, Homebuilts, Warbirds. 404/532-7119, 967-2144.

5 - Knoxville, TN: McGhee Tyson ANGB Open House; 615-985-3331.

10 - Chapter 690 monthly meeting, 8 pm, Operations Hut of Stone Mountain Airport.

18 - Pensacola Beach Fla: Pensacola Beach Air Show; Ed Hinkle, 904-435-1604.

19 - Havelock NC: MCAS Cherry Point Open House; 919-466-2343.

25-26 - Marietta, GA: NAS Atlanta Air Show; 404-421-5358/5498.

July 31-August 2 - Brodhead Expo '92, 17th Annual Pietenpol Fly-In; Brodhead, WI.

Wedding Reception & Pancake Breakfast!

Sheryl Black and Ken Sharp have set the date to get married (to each other), on May 9th at Stone Mountain Airport at 8:30 am. It just happens that an EAA Chapter 690 Pancake Breakfast is that morning! This will be the wedding reception!! (Does this mean Ken *won't* be the chef??)

All are invited, and please dress casually. Following the reception, the newly-weds will depart from Stone Mountain in their Cessna 150 for a brief honeymoon to Kitty Hawk, N.C.

August

July 31-August 6 - 40th Annual EAA Fly-In Convention; Oshkosh, WI.

8 - Chapter 690 post Oshkosh picnic and monthly meeting.

21-22 - 50th Anniversary of Dare County Regional Airport (5 mi. SW of Kitty Hawk) Airshow - Fly In - Antiques - Classics - Warbirds - Homebuilts - Biplanes - Judging on the 21st - Information and registration (919) 473-5011.

September

5-7 - Aerodrome 92, Guntersville, AL. This looks to be a BIG event. Planned activities center around World War I aircraft and memorabilia. Several Chapter 690 members plan on going. Let's hope the 140 is done by then...

11 - Chapter 690 monthly meeting, 8 pm, Operations Hut of Stone Mountain Airport.

12 - Nashville, TN: Tennessee Aviation Days; Bob Elliot, 615-355-1097.

19-20 - 2nd Annual Van's RV - Bushby Mustang Fly-In, Wadsworth-Muni Airport, EAA Chapter 846. Fly market, trophy for greatest distance flown, seminars. Sandwiches, snacks on Saturday, breakfast on Sunday. (216) 722-5791.

26-27 - EAA East Coast Fall Festival of Flight, "Milestones in Aviation" theme, New Castle County Airport, Wilmington, Delaware. Expect 800 A/C. Award judging, forums, parade of flight, fly-bys, exhibits, vendors, aviation celebrities, pancake b'fast, Saturday dinner. Mode C waiver and NORAD procedure. For info packet, contact EAA East Coast Fly-In Corp., 2002 Elnora St., Wheaton, MD 20902-2706. Ph. 301-942-3309.

The Aeroplane Store

Alexander Aeroplane Co. announces the grand opening celebration of "The Aeroplane Store", a walk-in sales outlet, May 16th 8:30 am to 5:00 pm. Included are: Flea market of discounted items, construction technique demonstrations, tours of the AAC DC-3 project, displays by the Griffin Aviation community, and finally, a 40¢/gal. discount on fuel for your return trip! (404)229-2329.

Monthly Fly-Ins (with thanks to Tom Crowder):

Winchester, TN	Breakfast	1 st Sat.	(615) 967-0143
Rome, GA	Breakfast	2 nd Sat.	(404) 234-7419
McMinville, TN	Breakfast	2 nd Sat.	(615) 668-4806
Peach St. Airpt.	Lunch	3 rd Sat.	(404) 227-8282
Collegedale, TN	Breakfast	3 rd Sat.	(615) 236-4340
Guntersville, AL	Fly-In	4 th Sun.	(205) 586-1580

October

3-4 - Kissimmee, Fla: Florida State Air Fair; Bill Whitehead, 407-847-8846.

9 - Chapter 690 monthly meeting, 8 pm, Operations Hut of Stone Mountain Airport.

10 - Chapter 690 Air Fair!! - Our first Autumn shindig went so well that we are trying a repeat. Begin thinking RIGHT NOW about fun things you'd like for this year's event. Last year, in the final analysis, a relative few did the thinking and sweating. There's a LOT of talent/knowledge in this group, but it's like manure - no good unless it's spread around! So, if you have any manure, call Steve Ashby.

11 - Sebring, Fla: Sebring Air Festival; Linda Duncan, 813-382-1157.

17 - Cocoa, Fla: Patrick AFB Open House; LtCol Joseph Ferrante, 407-494-7474.

18 - N. Charleston, SC: Charleston AFB Open House; John Yurosko, 813-493-3352.

24 - Hickory, NC: Catawba County Sesquicentennial Air Show; Jim Carr, 704-464-7880.

24-25 - Warner Robins, GA: Robins AFB Open House; Col Lawrence Stone, 912-926-2177.

31 - November 1 - Jacksonville, Fla: NAS Jacksonville, Cmdr Glen Akins, 904-772-2234.

November

7 - (tentative) Chapter 690 Air Adventure Day.

8 - Valparaiso, Fla: Eglin AFB Open House, LtCol Lloyd McGrady, AV 872-8666.

13 - Chapter 690 monthly meeting, 8 pm, Operations Hut of Stone Mountain Airport.

CHILI COOK-OFF

by Margaret Wilcox

The day was beautiful, the chili hot and filling, the crowd larger than usual (about 50), the hanger talk and inspection interesting, the deserts yummy, the kids full of energy, the location appropriate, the conversation friendly - for what more could we ask? It was a very successful chili cook-off. After tasting, smelling, cogitating and discussing the judges, Charlie Sego, Mary Ann Wilson and Theresa Coleman awarded prizes as follows:

Old fashioned wooden spoons to stir the Antique chili to John and Marjorie Richie;

Measuring spoons to Joel Levine for his Homebuilt chili so he can carefully measure ingredients in future creations; Henry Warner was given a wire whisk to cool his "hot", prize winning Warbird creation;

Margaret Wilcox received a rubber spatula to scrape every bit of the Classic chili out of the pot.

John Ritchie and his young son who arrived in their Piper Tri-pacer were the only members to fly in to Lenora Field. There was a great deal of interest in the SMARTIE project - rebuilding the Cessna 140 and in Duane Huff's Aeronca Chief restoration project. The status of the proposed EAA building was the topic of much conversation. The women exchanged recipes and gardening tips and took turns playing grandmother to baby Caroline Ritchie. There were many compliments for the new sun room the Wilcoxs have added to their house. Those of you who could not be present were missed, but there is always next year when there will be a repeat performance of this annual Chapter 690 event. ☺

THE BUILDING COLUMN

by Frank Wilcox

The DeKalb County Fire Marshall remains adamant in requiring "fire hydrant water" within 500 feet of our building site before signing-off on a building permit. The proposal of an on-site fire suppression system such as sprinklers mentioned in the April NAV-COM as a substitute for the "hydrant" was flatly rejected. Steve Ashby reported at the April monthly meeting that there was no hope of building on our current site unless we complied with this financially impossible requirement.

With the presently approved chapter building program unlikely to be completed, the chapter Building Committee met April 14th to determine where we go from here. The consensus was that we should continue toward finding a suitable "home" for Chapter 690 based on the enthusiastic support for this project during the past year. Also to preclude the loss of the non-refundable down payment on our presently contracted building, plans should include

this building if at all practical and the building site should be located at an airport. With this in mind subcommittees were appointed to determine the feasibility of constructing the building at:

- Stone Mountain Airport (in Gwinnett)
- Lenora Airstrip
- Gwinnett Co./Briscoe Field (L'ville)
- Peachtree-DeKalb County Airport

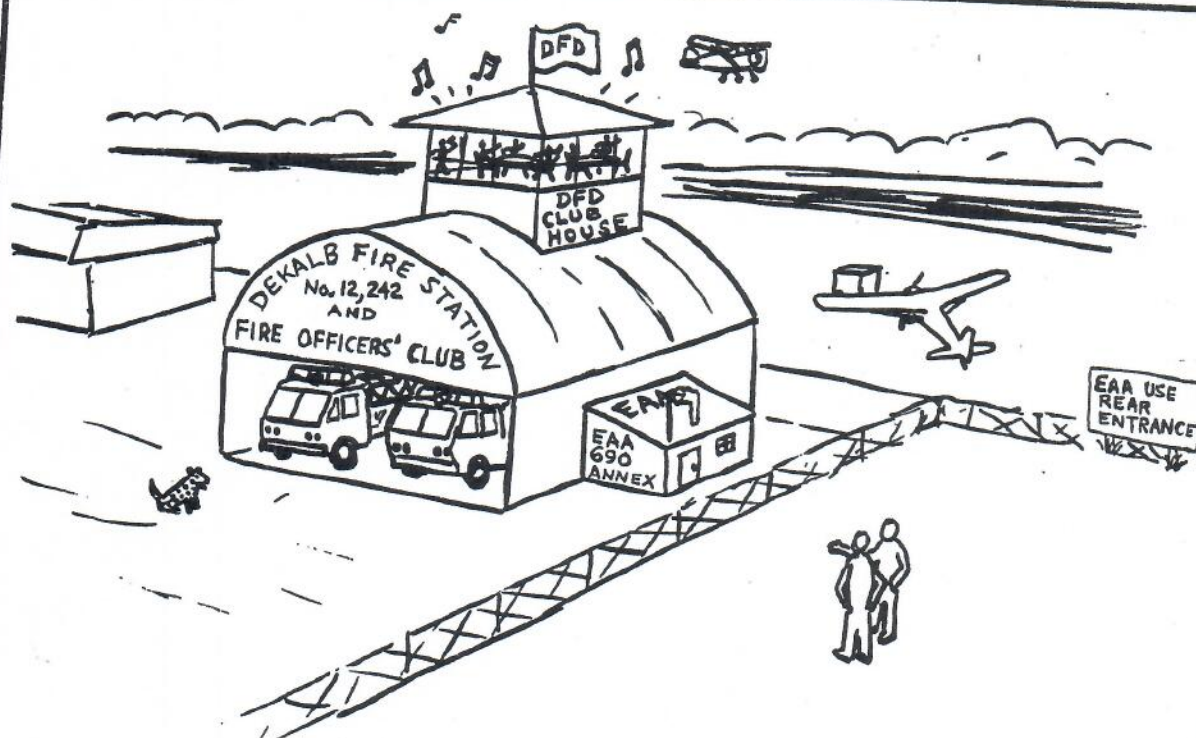
An additional possibility to be investigated is the renovation of the "barn" off the entrance road to Stone Mountain Airport.

The next meeting of the Building Committee is scheduled for April 28, 1992. At this time the site studies/information will be reviewed and the planning process continued. It is hoped that several plans can be eventually developed for presentation to the chapter membership for review. Chapter members are encouraged to contact members of the Building

Committee with ideas and discussion concerning this project. Building Committee members and home phone numbers are:

- Frank Wilcox, Chmn. - 978-2403
- Andy Anderson - 449-1896
- Steve Ashby - 469-0786
- John Connelly - 294-4050
- Duane Huff - 921-4423
- Bernie Jager - 564-8538
- Ben Jeffrey - 925-2852
- Mike North - 925-9552
- Ed Pancake - 469-3338
- John Popps - 939-6610
- John Ritchie - 476-4952
- Charlie Sego - 923-9549
- Harold Stalcup - 921-9468
- Roy Stoutenburg - 981-6041

Work will continue on the construction of the retaining walls and ramp repair started at the previous building site. This is necessary for the restoration of that area to full usefulness by the airport. Please help with this restoration as work sessions are scheduled.



... IT'S THE ONLY WAY WE COULD GET THE FIRE MARSHAL
TO LET US BUILD AN EAA HANGAR ...

J. RITCHIE 4-17-92

Of Hangars and Airplanes

© 1992 by John A. Ritchie, Jr.

Recently, while rummaging through some old stuff I keep as mementos, I came across several yellowed envelopes containing pieces of glass and fabric that I had collected when I was about 10 years old. In the late 1960's, my brother Greg and I collected baseball and football cards, but I also collected small pieces of old airplanes and hangars. Having always been a victim of IRAS (irreversible aviation syndrome), I realized that since the card companies did not print airplane cards, surely I could collect small pieces of airplane-related stuff. Some of the pieces had actually FLOWN thousands of feet above the ground!

In one envelope was a small one-inch piece of royal blue colored fabric that had been donated by Mr. Clay Swain, the longtime operator of Rowan County

Airport in Salisbury, N.C. in the late '60's. My dad used to stop by this airport with us when we visited relatives in the area. Dad had earned his wings here as a lineboy about 15 years earlier. Clay was a big, stout, well-liked older man with a balding top and glasses. I remember seeing him wearing a blue blazer and clenching a stubby cigar in his teeth. The cigar ashes would always get all over the front of his blazer as he puttered about the premises. Clay had flown submarine patrols off the east coast during World War II, and once he had to ditch a Fairchild 24 in the ocean while wearing a brand-new pair of shoes. He used to tell people how he floated in the water for hours after removing his new shoes and placing them on top of the floating wing.

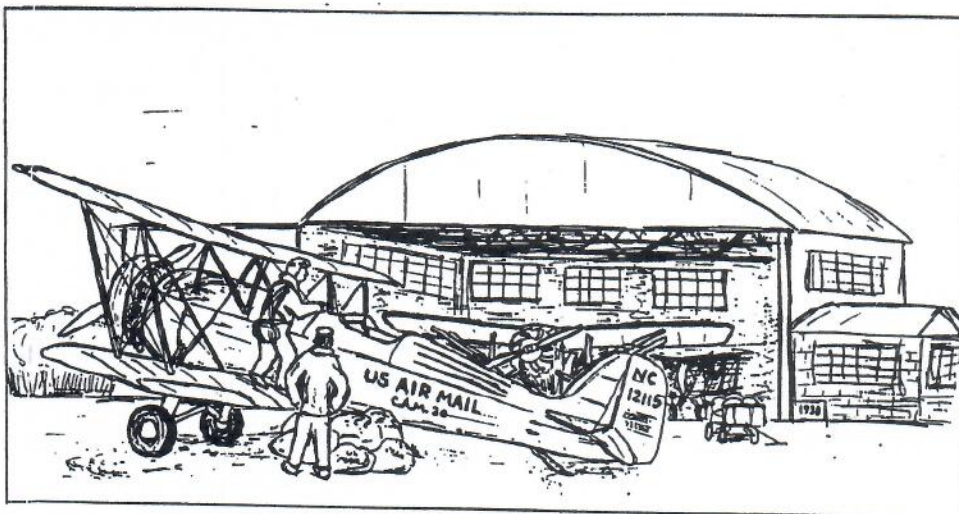
The Salisbury hangar had a cornerstone labeled "1930," and it was one of those large, open hangars with an arched roof and internal trusses for support. The place had a musty oil and gasoline smell from years of airplane maintenance. Inside, against the back wall, were numerous fabric-covered taildraggers, mostly J-3 Cubs, tipped up on their noses or hanging from the rafters for efficient storage. Most of these birds did not fly, but were being kept for future use and were in various states of disrepair (fabric peeling, etc.). At one time, you could buy one for only \$300. I

remember people poking fun at the collection and saying, "You never know, someday those ol' Cubs may be worth \$10,000 apiece!"

The little blue fabric patch had been cut from one of the J-3 fuselages with a pocketknife, in an area that was already ripped open. In those days, many Cubs were any color but yellow since most of the ships were wearing their second skin of fabric, and most people did not want a "plain yellow Cub." To this day, one of my favorite aircraft color schemes consists of royal blue fabric with orange numbers and trim! Through the Cub's torn covering, you could see the words "BUY WAR BONDS" painted on the underside of the Cub's plywood floorboards. Apparently someone had gotten a good deal on aircraft-quality plywood signs. Looking at the fabric patch, I remember marveling that I actually had a piece of a REAL airplane that had flown high in the sky.

In another envelope were small pieces of broken windowpane, silver fabric, and window putty labeled "Salisbury hangar, 1930" collected from the same hangar from which the Cub fabric had come. On another trip to Salisbury I had retrieved these gems and stowed them away as any good 10-year old packrat would do. Salisbury was the kind of airport that you could see, if you squinted your eyes just right





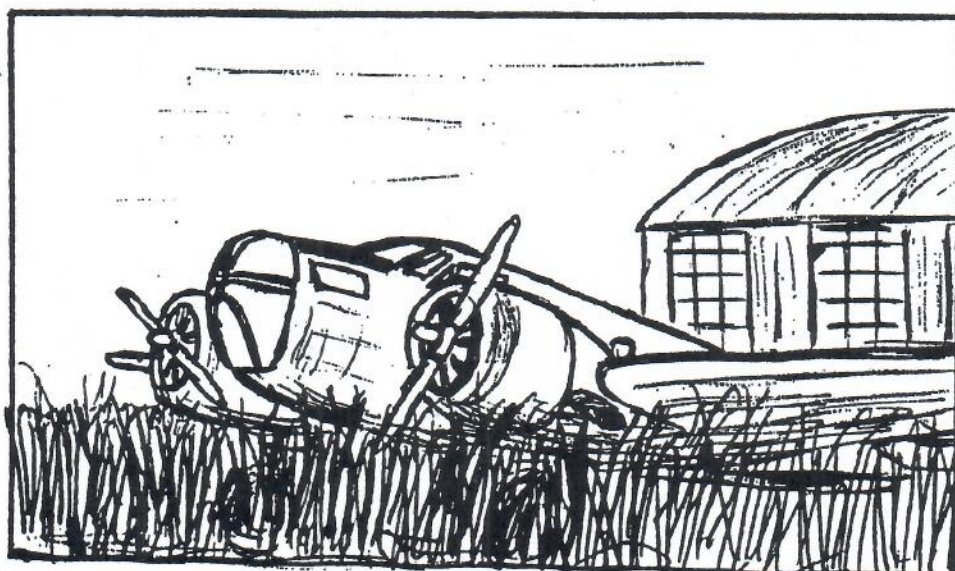
and imagined, big old TravelAirs, Curtiss Robins, and Standard biplanes sitting in and around the hangar. What nostalgia! If only I could have seen what these big multi-paned windows had seen. The windowpanes were somewhat cloudy with age, and each pane had many small, parallel ridges on its surface in order to diffuse the sunlight.

At the time I had collected the treasured glass chip from the ground outside the hangar, I remember seeing tall grass attempting to grow through the broken window. Just behind me was a scuttled, faded silver Beechcraft AT-11 "Kansas" from the war years. The AT-11 was basically a Twin Beech (C-45) with a plexiglas bomber nose installed so that bombardiers could be trained before graduating to full-size bombers in Europe and the Pacific. The once-proud bird sat in chest-high grass, with its big radial engines silent and its bomber nose clouded from years of exposure. Silver pieces of fabric and paint were scattered on the ground all around this airplane, and I picked up a piece for my collection.

In the last envelope, labeled "Pitcairn Aero hangar, Greensboro, N.C., 1927," I found another memento from my hometown that had really seen something interesting. Here again was a piece of windowpane, but this window had seen Lindbergh and the Spirit of St. Louis just after the famous New York to Paris flight. I had collected this souvenir (one of my last) in the early '70's just before the perfectly good hangar was demolished in an airport "improvement" project. I had heard the story of Lindbergh's 1927 visit to Greensboro from local hangar flyers, but I was not sure of its validity until the 50th anniversary of the flight in 1977.

At that time I was reading about the anniversary in the local newspaper, and I was shocked to see a picture of "Lucky Lindy" and his plane tucked into the old Pitcairn Aero hangar in Greensboro. Lindbergh had toured the country after his record-breaking flight and had stopped over in Greensboro for the night.

More recently, in January 1989, I had the privilege of meeting an 85 year-old former airmail pilot, Fritz Schwaemmle, who had been a contemporary of Lindbergh and flown mail out of Greensboro in the '20's. I asked him if he remembered the Lindy stopover in Greensboro. He immediately replied, "Not only do I remember it, but I was there! That was October 24, 1927!" I think he was shocked that someone my age would ever know about a local event that long ago. Fritz has an amazing memory for facts and figures. He related to me that the brand-new hangar had just been constructed on the sod airfield and that the famous plane was stored there for the night. Fritz flew airmail out of the field



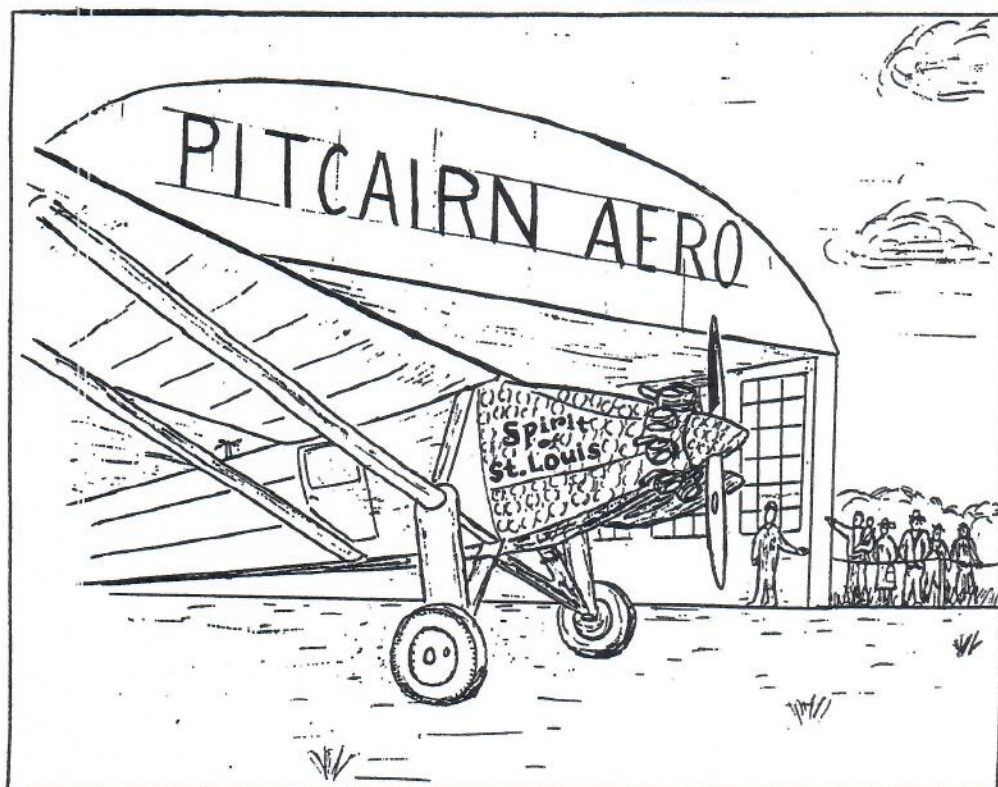
regularly, and he graduated from airmail flying school within a couple of years of Lindbergh's class. The Pitcairn company was involved in building and flying biplanes for hauling airmail, and it later went on to become famous for its autogyro aircraft in the 1930's. When I visited the hangar in the early 70's, grading of the airport had raised the field level several feet, leaving the hangar in a low area, and a white-painted, brick weather bureau station had been constructed next to the grand old airplane hangar.

As I grew into my teenage years, other interests and challenges intervened, and I abandoned my aircraft relic collecting. Such trivial pursuits were put away for more realistic tasks (such as earning a living) instead of daydreaming about barnstorming and flying the airmail in big old biplanes. The National Guard helicopter base came to the

Salisbury airport in the 1970's, followed later by a VOR navigation station. The airport is now officially called Swain Field in honor of its legendary caretaker. Recently, I saw an advertisement touting the opening of the new, modern fixed-base operator building at the Salisbury-Rowan County airport and how the airport would now act as a reliever for the busy Charlotte jetport. Now living in Georgia, I am unsure of what happened to the old hangar and its treasure of taildraggers. The old Pitcairn Aero hangar at Greensboro was torn down about twenty years ago, neglected and hardly noticed at the time.

Now that I think about it, I might just mount and frame these old mementos or put them in a safe place before I lose them for another twenty years. Hey, you never know, someday those ol' relics might be worth \$10,000 apiece!

The End.



Navy Finds Lost Carrier in North Georgia

(Condensed from wire reports)

(API)- Defense secretary Richard Cheney announced today that a U.S. Navy aircraft carrier missing for thirty-two years has been discovered near Cumming, Georgia. The USS Mathis was discovered Wednesday by a Navy fighter plane on a routine practice mission from the Atlanta Naval Air Station.

Major "Slip" Hotenhigh first spotted the lost ship while practicing landing approaches over Lake Lanier in north Georgia. "We broke out of the clouds and there it was- runway, hangar deck, and superstructure. On final approach, we knew something wasn't right when we spotted the banner in the tree because we normally snag ours in the radar antenna," said Major Hotenhigh.

The ship was later identified as the aircraft carrier USS Mathis, which mysteriously disappeared in 1960 after being towed up the Chattahoochee river with a farm tractor. The tractor, driver, and ship were never seen again. The driver, known only as "Mr. G," was never identified.

The 1500-foot ship escaped discovery by several Navy search teams apparently because it has been used as an airport for many years. Grass was observed growing on the flight deck and trees have grown up around the ship. Major Hotenhigh stated that "whoever snatched that ship did a good job hiding it since it's darn near covered up with that

red North Georgia clay." However, a portion of the ship's propeller can still be seen beneath the waters of a pond at the north end of the ship.

The Navy has decided not to attempt to reclaim the ship for practical reasons. "We figured those fellows must be having a good time with it and after all, they are taxpayers and ought to get something for their money" a Navy spokesman said.

?

Kidnapped!

by Gregory Travis, contributed by Theresa Coleman

Ahh, another chapter in my turbulent life is drawing to a close. The pleas have been entered and now it's time to tell (Paul Harvey voice)

"The Rest of the Story"

From today's Bloomington, IN *Herald Tribune*:

"Teen arrested in '91 hijacking pleads guilty to lesser charge"

By Kurt Van der Dussen
H-T Staff Writer

A Monroe County teen charged with hijacking a private plane and its pilot at Monroe County Airport last year has agreed to plead guilty to reduced criminal charges in Monroe County Circuit Court.

Robert A. Sparks, 18, 670 S. Kirby Road, will be found guilty of confinement, a lesser felony reduced by plea agreement from felony kidnapping. He will be sentenced June 15, following his graduate from high school.

Sparks was charged with kidnapping after an incident on the night of Sept. 22, 1991. According to police, Sparks took pilot Gregory Travis hostage with a shotgun and hijacked his private plane, forcing Travis to take off shortly after midnight on what Sparks wanted to be a flight to Montana.

Once airborne, Travis transmitted a secret radio code indicating to Federal Aviation Administration control towers that he had been hijacked. When it started to rain, FAA air controllers tracking him ordered him to divert to Kankakee, ILL., where he persuaded Sparks he had to land because of the weather.

Once on the ground, Travis told police, Sparks seemed to have second thoughts and decided that perhaps he should turn himself in. He unloaded his shotgun and left it in the plane and the two walked into the airport terminal where waiting police arrested Sparks.

Though Sparks was 17 at the time, he was charged with kidnapping as an adult and was eventually released on \$50,000 bond. The plea agreement accepted Monday by Judge Elizabeth Mann would require Sparks to serve 90 days on work release out of the Monroe County Jail and receive psychological counseling for a year.

He could earn reduction of the conviction to a misdemeanor if he successfully completes probation.

Monroe County Prosecutor Bob Miller said he agreed to the plea agreement significantly reducing the charges against Sparks because of Sparks' psychological problems, his youth, his lack of any previous criminal record and the approval of hijack victim Travis.

"It was a very bizarre act by a very emotionally disturbed young man," said Miller.

-----end text-----

Ok, so you get the general idea. Here's an eyewitness account:

The night in question, Saturday September 22, found our hero at the local airport about 9pm cleaning his plane. Of all the things I've had to deal with, explaining what the hell I was doing at the airport on a Saturday night washing my plane has been the most difficult. For the aviation record, yes I love my plane. I also have a real life, though and she happened to be working late that night - we were supposed to rendezvous around 10pm. At 9 I was just finishing up doing a micro-mesh job to the windshield and getting ready to head out.

My plane was in its hangar. The closest source of water was a few hangar rows away. I took my tools (bucket, mops, etc) over to rinse them out. In a few minutes a young man appeared (out of nowhere) with a shotgun and announced that I was his hostage. Well, hey, I've been around the track a few times, been mugged in Cleveland, New York (twice), and San Francisco. A guy in fatigues with a shotgun in the middle of the midwestern plains wasn't terribly scary. So I tried to laugh it off and asked the guy if he had been hunting, thinking that he was, perhaps, just trying to see if he could rattle me.

Well, the guy had it bad for somebody. He wanted to know where the tower controllers were and if anyone else was at the airport. No one was, but I told him the tower controllers would be back VERY soon (they actually wouldn't be back till 7am the next day) thinking that if he thought people were going to show up he might beat it.

Turns out he was looking for authority figures to blow away. He told me he had tried to kill his boss that night, but couldn't find him. Heh-heh thinks I. So, we were going to wait for the controllers to come back and then we were all going to be his hostage. Great, I think, I can't wait to be part of the unholy mess that'll ensue when this guy has a bunch of "hostages" and we call the local police out of the doughnut shops with a fresh load of sugar and caffeine in their systems.

So I ask if we can at least go back to my hangar. He says OK, but no funny stuff. He's real nervous, sweating a lot, says he has lots of weapons. Fine, I think. We get to the hangar, he checks it out, we go inside. I show him my plane and he says "We might be going for a ride later." Bonehead move on my part I think - I was trying to be friendly and show him that we could talk about things other than large, burnt holes in my body - he sees it as a transportation device. I told him it wasn't airworthy - that I was doing some work.

We talk for two hours - during which time he is getting more and more antsy and nervous - starting to wave the gun kind of menacingly at me and stuff. Wants to know where the controllers are. I confess that I lied and that they won't be there until next morning. I ask him what he wants to do. He's not sure. I am, at this point, getting VERY tired of the whole thing and want a resolution. I have this strange feeling that the whole thing is completely unreal and that he will go away and I can go home and sit on the toilet and read Chief Aircraft catalogs and drink twenty five beers. (not in that order)

I think about jumping him a few times. Not sure what he's got under his coat. He intimated that he was packing a pistol also. Never jumped a guy with multiple weapons before. Never really jumped anyone before except Eric Strobel in fifth grade when he punched me. I was totally victorious in that situation. How about this one? But, the situation seems to be relatively stable, although he is getting real antsy. I ask him if he intends to kill me. He says I'll be fine as long as I don't try anything and do as he asks. Sounds reasonable.

I suggest that we walk across to the FBO where there is a telephone. If he wants, I will call the cops and be his hostage (I am not wild about this idea - same reasons as above). Or I can call the FAA, or, or...

We get there. He sees other airplanes on the ramp. Starts talking about how we're going to go to Montana in one of them and I am going to fly. Should be easy to get it going.

I say that if we're going to do that, let's take mine 'cause I know it and its condition. He says "I thought it was broken." I say that it is minor and that I can fix it shortly.

[STUPID! I could have gotten time in the King Air on the ramp, or the AeroStar, for FREE!]

We go back to the hangar. I show him my instrument charts. Show how we'll get there. I told him we only had about 3 hours of fuel because I had been flying earlier. Does he want to stop in Indy first where we can get more fuel? NO! He is very agitated by the mere suggestion of going into a large airport. I told him we could make it into Iowa (the truth) and land at the Quad Cities airport which would be open but was smaller than Indy (not the truth). He accepts that.

During my preflight of the airplane I reach in and set a certain box. I am almost nailed but lie and say I was reaching for a chart (which was next to the box, thank God.)

I am curiously relieved that we are going flying. I like flying. I like being in my airplane doing things that I understand, even though I am pretty scared. I am often scared in my airplane. It is a normal feeling in that environment. I feel, for the first time since 9PM, in control of the situation even though I have no idea what's going to happen.

We taxi out. He is sitting in the back set of my 172 with his shotgun (not pointed at my skull, thanks!) At this point BMG is VFR clear, it's about midnight. We take off and head towards Terre Haute. The box is blinking in a soothing way.

We have on headphones, but I have not used the radio at all. I have the audio turned off because I am afraid someone, somewhere, will yell "Who's the bozo who's <doing the thing I did to let people know my predicament>"

As I pass over Terre Haute airfield I look down and notice that they are flashing a red light at the aircraft and also flashing the runway lights. I do not alert my passenger to this phenomena.

At that point it begins to rain. I have an excuse to confirm my situation! I knew that the "radio code" was probably not sufficient

to really get them going. I tell my passenger that I do not have a good picture of the weather ahead but that I believe we may encounter some instrument weather and that if "they" see us flying in instrument weather without a clearance that "they" will be suspicious and might follow us. I explain that I will call Terre Haute radio to get the weather and to file a flight plan and that he can listen to everything and I won't do anything goofy. He agrees with the admonition that I "better not try anything."

[Caldest, most normal voice I can muster]

"Terre Haute Radio, Terre Haute Radio, N5457E"

"N5457E Terre Haute, go ahead"

"Terre Haute Radio, N5457E is a C-172 at 4,500' directly over Terre Haute Northwestbound like to get the weather into, ahh, Montana. We're doing 110 knots, outside temperature 50 degrees, squawking 7500, heading 330"

"57E, roger, right now we're showing generally VFR conditions throughout although radar indicates a band of showers from Chicago to approximately 100 miles south of your position. Mostly level one And, 57E, confirm that you're <doing that thing that makes them so curious>"

<A bit pissed that they tried to blow it for me> "57E, roger, that's affirmative where does the best area for penetrating that line of rain seem to be [pre-WX-900 days for 57E don't you know...]"

"Ahh, looks like just south of Chicago is pretty good."

"Roger, I'll call you back with an IFR flightplan."

"Roger"

I then turn almost due north so that I am parallel to the line of showers as I work out a flight plan. It seems VERY difficult for me. We are over Danville, IL when I figure out a route that goes, basically, direct Kankakee, direct Moline. My passenger told me he does NOT want to get too close to Chicago.

I call back Terre Haute on the same frequency. They are very scratchy. I give them the plan. They tell me to talk to Chicago Center on XXX.YY for my clearance. A few minutes later I call

Chicago:

[calm voice like nothing is at all weird]
"Chicago Center, good evening, Cessna 5457E looking for instruments to Moline."

"57E, roger, loud and clear, cleared to Moline via radar vectors, climb and maintain 6,000' verify <doing that thing I was doing that got them so friendly in the first place>"

[thinking to myself, in a Homer Simpson voice, "Duh-oh! Radar Vectors! I filed to Kankakee so I could avoid the rain he's about to drive me through! Duh-oh! Why do they keep asking me if I'm really the bonehead they think I must be?"]

I am too tired to fight with the controller though and accept his turn direct Moline. It is about 1AM now and I am becoming alarmingly fatigued and want this to be OVER. It is raining pretty hard now, but the weather does not bother me at all. I actually remember thinking how nice it was to fly at night without worrying about the engine because I am so scared of getting my head blown off. My passenger is getting very nervous due to the rain.

"57E, Chicago Center, Moline airport is CLOSED due to a runway light power failure. Say intentions."

[What the hell is he talking about? Is he serious? Is this some kind of ploy? Or is it really closed? This is a BIG airport after all - I can't believe it closed because of a "runway light power failure" What does he REALLY MEAN? I am tired. I don't want to play games.]

I know I am close to the Kankakee airport because I am close to its VORTAC and I know that Kankakee has a 24-hour FSS but is uncontrolled. "Perfect" I think. "Knowledgeable aviation professionals will see to it that the plane is completely surrounded by able-bodied SWAT members and Secret Service agents as soon as I leave the active. Yet, the size of the airport will not alarm my passenger on approach."

I brief my passenger that we are running low on fuel and should land at Kankakee where we can get fuel. "Have we been flying that long?" he asks "Yes, says I - we've been flying nearly two hours" He heard them say Moline was closed. I tell him that we should be able to get fuel at Kankakee and be on our way.

"Chicago Center, 57E, we're running low on

fuel [we actually had over an hour left] - we would like to land at Kankakee."

"57E, Chicago, Roger, turn right 350 plan the ILS 5 [I believe] into Kankakee."

"57E, we'll plan on the ILS 5." [I get set up]

"57E, Chicago, India Kilo Kilo [Kankakee] has no 100Lima Lima, suggest you try Peoria. Turn left now, 280 vectors Peoria."

[What the heck? "100Lima Lima" is that some kind of code? Why didn't he just say "fuel" or 100 "Low lead" What does "Lima Lima" mean in this context? How does he know? Are they playing games again? What DO they want?]

Peoria is NOT going to work though. I know it is a LARGE airport and that it will alarm my passenger to go there. I am also under the [mistaken] impression that it is quite a way further and I have a genuine concern that I do not have sufficient fuel to make it there. Turns out that it is actually very close. Anyway, I am MUCH too tired to drag out the flightplans, etc. for Peoria and figure out how to get there.

"57E, negative. We're going to land at Kankakee and see what we can find."

"57E, roger, turn right heading 350 vectors for the ILS"

The ILS is very close by and very routine. It is raining hard, but out of a high overcast. I pick up the runway just past the outer marker inbound.

I do not realize it, but we are moving with the wind. Final is very bumpy. Touchdown is not the best landing I've ever made, although the plane and passengers survive.

Now I'm wondering what's going to happen. I realize that my dream of agents in blackface behind every bush and building may not have been the most realistic thing. The airport seems deserted. We taxi to the ramp. I am beginning to wonder if its really going to come to an end here or if, nightmares, we'll take off again with a full load of fuel for Montana.

At this point a cruiser appears without its lights on. My passenger sees it. It is a ways away from us I say "Looks like the airport patrol. Pretty standard. They're just looking for drunk teenagers necking on the runway." Like even drunk teenagers would neck in the

pouring rain.

We get out, I explain that there is a weather office across the road where we could get a weather briefing and that he can come and I won't pull any funny stuff. He says he's going to leave the shotgun in the plane. I wonder what that means? Is he giving up? He starts to talk about those whole thing being pretty dumb. I tell him it's all up to him but I do not like standing in the open so let's go to the FSS.

We pass several large bushes. No agents jump out. What's going on? I see behind us that the cop has started cruising up and down the runway WITH HIS LIGHTS ON. I do not point this out. We go to the FSS and enter:

THE ROOM OF THE STONE-FACED BRIEFERS.

"Hello, I need a briefing for an instrument flight to Montana [where are the cops?]"

They mechanically peck at they keyboard. FINALLY two of Kankakee's finest enter the room, no BURST into the room. The briefer nods at us. We are both grabbed, handcuffed and taken outside where we are thrown against a wall and frisked.

It takes the cops 15 minutes to sort out who is who. I produce a checkbook and my wallet bearing my name and demonstrate to the police how that name matches the registration in the airplane. Passing this hurdle earns me a ride in the FRONT seat of the squad car. Hijackers ride in back!

The police confiscate the gun and some shells from my aircraft.

I am still in a semi-dream state. The whole thing has been totally unreal. It is now between 2AM and 3AM. Earlier I had a fantasy that they would take my passenger away immediately at the Kankakee airport, take my phone number, and allow me to fly right back to Bloomington where I could eat cold Pizza, drink warm beer, and GO TO SLEEP.

As I ride in the squad car, I still think that the police interrogation will only involve a few cursory questions and that I'll then be able to leave. I have the presence of mind, however, to realize that I am in no condition to fly back. We pass a Holiday Inn as we turn into the station. I have no money, but figure my credit cards will be good for a room there in just a FEW MINUTES.

We arrive. The staff on duty is VERY excited to see us. My passenger and I are almost immediately separated. The police allow me to calm down a bit. Give me some soda. Ask me if I need to call anyone. YIKES! You bet I do! I forgot to close my IFR flightplan! I remember the controller at Chicago Center saying, on short final: "Report cancellation in the air or on the ground with Kankakee flight service."

I did not need FAA hassles on top of what I already had. I dial 1-800-WX-BRIEF which is just about the only number I can think of. Luckily, as I expected, it connects me to Kankakee AFSS.

"Hello, this is Kankakee AFSS, go ahead."

"Ahh, this is N5457E, I just flew in there about 1/2 hour ago IFR and I forgot to cancel my IFR. Could you take care of that?"

"Ahh, yes sir, we already took care of that. Chicago center called and wanted to make sure you made it in alright and we told them what happened. Is there anything else we can do for you?"

"No, thanks, I just didn't want to leave that open."

"No problem sir, we were watching you the whole time."

Then I got down to the nitty-gritty of calling people back in Bloomington to let them know what had happened. It's pretty hard to describe the reaction of someone who's been woken from sleep, who's already mad that you've disappeared, when you tell them you've been hijacked.

Then the police are all in a titter. They don't know what to do, they don't even have a FORM for this! So I sit down with an officer and we proceed to turn a "stolen auto" form into an "aircraft hijack" form. 57E becomes a two-door sedan, license plate # N5457E (which turns out to be too many letters, so we leave off the "N"), 160HP, White/Orange Make "Cessna" Model "172". I am not making this up. We use the serial number for the VIN.

All this time they are making phone calls to the FBI and the FAA (which they call the "FFA" - I kid you not). They escort me to the breathalyzer room (which is the only room they have open) and tell me to sit tight and please not to leave. It is about 3-3:30AM now.

At one point, an officer comes in and says "Boy, you're lucky we got to you before 'Shoney' [not his real name] did. he's an ex-marine and was pretty fired up about this thing." Apparently the Kankakee police had thought that a plane was being hijacked FROM the Kankakee airport not TO it.. "'Shoney' [not his real name, which is] was all fired up to shoot the tires out of any aircraft. That was him racing up and down the runway with his lights on." I swear this is true.

Al. I could think was "Gee, it would have heightened the cockpit tension level somewhat if we had our tires shot out on landing."

At one point I ask if I can lie down in a cell somewhere. "No" they say we need you here. More time passes, I try and sleep on the table in the breathalyzer room. I am awakened and told not to do that. I am extremely tired. They come in about every 40 minutes and ask me the same questions.

I fill out a written report.

Around 5AM they get a call back from the FBI, they're not going to take the case because the guy was 17 at the time and within the jurisdiction of the Monroe County Sheriff's department. Can I go now? "No" the FAA is on its way.

At 7:30AM, Sunday, two gentlemen from the FAA O'Hare district office show up. They are FAA "Special Agents": I didn't know they FAA had such personnel. They have been driving all morning down from Chicago.

They ask me the same types of questions, read my report, etc.

The fun stuff starts when they tell me what the reaction on the other end of the line was.

First, I was picked up IMMEDIATELY when I climbed out of Bloomington and I was tracked by Terre Haute. However, because they had no secondary verification they simply watched and waited at a low alert. It was not until I called Terre Haute AFSS on the radio and confirmed what was going on that they really started things going. Still, they were not quite sure that they had a real situation because "I sounded so calm on the radio."

Well, *blush*, that was kind of the whole point.

When I confirmed the second time, while talking to Chicago center, the on-duty controller for that sector had been relieved of his position and I was talking to his supervisor. I was also patched in, live-like, to the Hostage/Hijack (I forget what they call it) crisis center in Washington where officials were listening to my communications with Chicago center. Again, they were unsure of the exact nature of what was going on because my voice was so calm.

The Chicago district FAA security detail was then woken up around 2/2:30AM.

One of the officers told me had got the call just as he and his wife were arriving home from a show.

Apparently there were some more wires crossed and there was some perception, I don't know how deep, in the FAA, that an AIRLINER had been hijacked to Peoria.

We talked some more. I found out that they had been trying to steer me to Peoria because they had the necessary equipment (I don't know what that means, exactly) there. I am also still not sure if Moline was really closed.

I asked why I was asked to verbally confirm my situation TWICE. They said they just didn't believe that I was really being hijacked because I sounded so calm. I still do not know why Terre Haute tower was shining a red light at me ("Don't land here! We don't want a hostage!"). I was asked not to divulge the "secret" code to the Newspapers because it had "obviously helped me, so you can see that we need to protect the next guy." Well, I'm not terribly sure about that.

The security men mentioned that both Kankakee AFSS and Chicago Center were "deeply touched" that I called back to cancel my IFR flightplan; especially since it was totally unnecessary.

Finally, about 8AM I was allowed, given, a ride back to the Kankakee airport where I slept on the sofa until about 10AM at which point the FAA guys came back to wake me and ask me this question: "If I was being hijacked, how come my hangar was so neat and the door was closed?" Apparently the FAA was also all over BMG and had already searched my hangar. I replied that this was a condition that my passenger had stipulated. He did not want there to be any appearance of wrongdoing at the airport.

They liked that and went away.

Soon I crawled out and got back in my airplane. It was good VFR for the midwest, 4 miles in haze, sky obscured. I went back VFR because I had had enough of rules, regulations, authority, etc.

In my plane I felt violated, like someone who's had their house broken into. It still smelled funny. Stale tobacco (hint: I don't smoke) and sickly sweet sweat. I opened the windows for the flight back. When I called 10 miles out from BMG the tower told me it was good to have me back. Made me kind of embarrassed, actually.

When I got back I had to wait another hour at the BMG airport for the state police to arrive. Officer Richardson was actually quite nice and human, even though I had to wait 1.5 hours for him. He took a taped statement, went through my hangar with me, asked questions and told me it was time for me to go home, that the media would be all over me and perhaps I should just take the phone off the hook and have a few Budwiesers.

I followed his advice to the letter. But first I took a nap. I finally got home and into my own bed around 3PM Sunday afternoon, 18 hours after it had begun. At 8PM I awoke and went to some friends for dinner. I drank a lot of beer.

Some random thoughts about the whole thing:

1. Were there things I could have done differently? Certainly. First of all I probably should never have divulged that I was a pilot. But at the time I did, I did not believe I was going to be hijacked.

It was also very difficult to determine WHAT to do. Things seemed to lurch from one situation to another - I'll wax poetic and say I was just a passenger on the train of destiny. *urp*

People kept coming up to me and telling me how well I handled the situation. Well, I don't see it that way at all. There just were not THAT MANY CHOICES to be made. Like an engine failure at night in IMC, you just don't have a whole lot of options. Conversely, you don't have a lot of ways to screw up.

Should I have tried to jump him? Perhaps. But I did not know anything about him. He did tell me that he did not drink. Drugs?

Crazy? Scared? Agitated? Mad as hell? Yeah, I think it was something like that. Perhaps I could have overpowered him. However, it was not until I was actually in the plane that I began to have really MORTAL thoughts. Before that I was operating under the assumption that I was going to be able to talk this guy out of what he was doing. That I could convince him to "go away." That I could conclude the episode at a low conflict level.

2. Has it been, in any way, "fun"? No, not at all. It has been personally embarrassing to me. I am sick of it. What kind of a goof-off is alone on a Saturday night washing his plane?

3. What was his mindset? I had a very hard time sizing up my passenger on the ground. He was obviously very nervous and very mad. Life just wasn't going right for him and he wanted to make a statement. This was perhaps the most difficult of all. He did not want money, or cars, or anything. He just wanted to make a scene either by killing some authority figure or taking hostages. Because he did not really have a plan, I was unable to think very far ahead in the situation.

4. What about my choices of airports? I dunno. Had I known Peoria was as close as it was would I have gone there? Probably not; remember that I was operating under the false impression that things at Kankakee would be smooth and co-ordinated.

Best dilemma:

There was talk about reimbursing me for the fuel costs, etc. They asked me how much it costs me to fly my plane. I said about \$30/hour, at 3 hours (roundtrip time to IKK) that it cost me about \$90-100 for the whole incident. Now, I couldn't care less about the money in this case and I never asked nor expected to be reimbursed. I got to thinking - I CAN'T take the money, can I? I have to at least SHARE the expense with my "passenger." Gee, if I had only finished that commercial back then...

Well, I gotta go work on my airplane...

Greg, N5457E, 'packin Travis

Minutes of the April Meeting

Submitted by Joel Levine, Secretary

The April meeting of EAA Chapter 690 was called to order by President Charles Sego with thirty four members and guests in attendance. It was announced that the May 9 pancake breakfast would be a black tie affair (**NOT!**). Sheryl Black and Ken Sharp will commit holy matrimony during the affair and the Chapter gets to watch Ken break the glass. My first chance to play Rabbi.

Reports: The March minutes were approved as summarized. Treasurer's report made but skipped for the NAV-COM. Frank Flessel reported five members attended the fly-out to Warner Robbins.

Steve Ashby reported on the 1992 Air Fair indicating that he had spoken with several knowledgeable people at Sun-n-Fun regarding our Biplane event. There is no event like it currently scheduled on the East Coast. Steve has contacted Sam Lyons to discuss commissioning a print for the first place winner.

The Chili Cook-off is scheduled for Saturday, April 18 at Frank and Margaret Wilcox's home from 3-6 PM.

Old Business: Frank Wilcox reported on the building situation. Steve Ashby and Ed Tamas visited the county with no success. By law any structure must be within 300 feet of a fire hydrant. The committee will meet at Charlie Sego's to review the situation and report back to the chapter. The dealer will sell the building and guarantee the chapter another at the same price. A deposit of \$1432 is at stake.

Announcements: A program on the A&E channel showing Stone Mountain will be aired on Wednesday, April 29 on First Flight.

Program: Frank Wilcox presented a very riveting lecture on the art of informative.

Respectfully submitted,
Joel M. Levine, Chapter 690 Secretary

Fly Buys \$

For sale or trade: have an O-290-G, 125 hp, a good engine unconverted; one Genave Alpha 200 Nav-Com complete and in excellent condition; one Narco transponder - excellent. I need a small engine, 65-70 hp VW-based, Rotax, etc. or Cont. 65 hp., or cash to buy more tubing! Call Dick Miles (404) 267-7536 (Bus.) or 267-8236 (H). Come see my "factory" at 127 N. Broad St., in downtown Monroe...Open to the public...!

For Sale: Zenair Tri-Z project: airframe 90% complete, no engine, no canopy. \$4,000 or trade for camper. Jerry Cummings 422-9458, 1629 Agnes St. Marietta, Ga, 30060.

1950 Piper Pacer PA-20, 125 HP - 1460 TT, 262 SMOH Annual 3/91. Very, original, STC for autogas, always hangared. 8" Scott tailwheel, complete and original paperwork. \$16,000. (404)938-3515(Eve); 885-8625(Day).

For Sale: Escort 110 NAV-COM (12V) \$375. Includes wired mounting tray and installation/service manual. Tom Reddeck 925-6229(W), 972-6047(H).

For Sale: OHC Lycoming starter, fits up to O-320, \$150. OHC 20 amp generator, make offer. Dave DeWinter, 471-4598. Tri-Q project for sale. All major structures completed. Carbon spar/LS airfoil canard, all parts/plans to complete project including instruments, prop, Revmaster 2100-D engine. Frank Wilcox, 978-2403.

Evans VP-II project for sale. Fuselage and tail group 80%. Lndg gear, instr. panel., 1500cc engine, more. \$1500 OBO. Steve Ashby, 469-0786.

Long Eze project. Fuselage on gear, speed brake, center spar, and Roncze canard complete. Materials and hardware to finish, including canopy. Contact: Jim Sower, 564-0412.

Stearman PT-17, 1941. 4 yr. old complete restoration. Army colors. 220 Cont. 200 SMOH by Mid-Continent. Hangared at PDK. 25% share for \$15,000. Greater share negotiable. Gordy Germany 233-9797(W); 233-8115(H).

About the EAA...

The Experimental Aircraft Association was founded in 1953, with early meetings of a few stalwarts in the home of the founder, past President, and present Chairman, Paul Poberezny. From modest beginnings the movement has expanded to hundreds of thousands of members. The annual EAA convention in Oshkosh, WI hosts more than 800,000 people per year and is the premier aviation event in the world. Today, the EAA is headed by Tom Poberezny and exists to promote the world of amateur-built aircraft and sport aviation in general. EAA provides many services to its membership, from technical know-how to representation of membership concerns to federal entities. Membership is open to anyone who shares the interests of the association. Annual dues are \$35.00 per twelve month period of which \$20.00 is for a subscription to Sport Aviation. To join, see our Treasurer, Sheryl Black (979-4233) or write EAA Aviation Center, POB 3086, Oshkosh, WI 54903.

About the NAV-COM...

The NAV-COM is the monthly newsletter of EAA Chapter 690. It comes free with the dues, and you get what you pay for. (Like sentences ending in prepositions). NAV-COM is for EAA members only. It is a compilation of ideas, opinions, and data from several sources. In presenting it, the Chapter and EAA HQ by no means recommend or sanction the stuff. In other words and for example, we are not responsible if you bust your keester at an event we list in the calendar. Contributions are always welcomed, whether they are facts, opinions, or exaggerations. PLEASE get me your stuff by the 22nd of the month or you will get a nasty phone call. I will gently edit for grammar and curse words, but what you send in is generally what I send out. Magnetic media is appreciated. Send your pearls of wisdom to: Jeff Boatright, 168 Garden Lane, Decatur, GA 30030. Thanks to Claudia, Richard, and Joel for 11th hour aid!

About Chapter 690...

The EAA is made up of hundreds of chapters world-wide. The local chapter for Gwinnett county and vicinity (i.e., anyone else who wants IN) is Chapter 690. We're a raucous group with several projects, both restoration and amateur-built, in progress. Annual dues are \$48.00. See Sheryl Black, the Treasurer (979-4233) to sign up. You'll also need to join EAA National (see above). Membership is open to anyone, especially if you take our great editor to Oshkosh '92. Our meetings are every second Friday of the month, 8:00 pm, at Stone Mountain Airport operations building. In addition to the meetings, which often consist of excellent guest speakers from across the nation and aviation world, the Chapter holds many functions, including hands-on workshops, fly-ins and -outs, and social gatherings.

Our officers and other luckless people are:

President: Charlie Sego - 923-9549

Vice-President: John Goodman - 972-2405

Secretary: Joel Levine - 394-5466

Treasurer: Sheryl Black - 979-4233

Videos and Books: Barney Barnes - 923-7896

Tools and Materials: John Henderson - 449-1946

Chapter Historian: LeRoy Stoutenburg - 981-6041

Technical Counselors:

John Popps - 939-6610

Frank Wilcox - 978-2403

Building Committee:

Chairman: Frank Wilcox - 978-2403

Treasurer: John S. ... - 204-1650

The NAV-COM

Newsletter of EAA Chapter 690
Editor: Jeff Boatright
168 Garden Lane
Decatur, GA 30030

Chapter Meeting

Jim Buckley, the senior meteorologist of the Fernbank Science Center, will discuss THUNDERSTORMS, their causes, predictive factors, damage potential, and general nastiness.

The season is upon us, so avail yourself of the knowledge of an expert.

Friday, May 8th, 8:00 PM at the Stone Mountain Airport Operations Building.

