

AirVenture 2006 – Are You Going?

By Eric Wagner

Have you thought about going to Oshkosh and Airventure 2006? Maybe you want to join some fellow club members for the annual club trek to the busiest airport in the world during the week of July 24-30. Check out the Airventure website <http://www.airventure.org>. Want to learn more about how this trip works? Well, keep on reading as I'll try to give you a sense of how it works, what to expect and highlights of last year's adventure.

The Club organizes an annual group trip to Airventure. Typically all of the 4 place planes in the fleet are reserved for this trip beginning the Friday prior to opening day. This year that will be July 21 through the following weekend. You will find a sign up sheet on the bulletin board at the club. Both pilots and non-pilots are invited to join the trip. You will need to reserve your spot with a deposit, typically \$100. The aircraft expenses will be shared amongst all of those joining in on the trip. Last year we had 7 club members spread amongst 2 Mooneys and 1 Warrior. Several others traveled in their own planes like George Scheer, John Hunter, Dick Kenney and Chris O'Toole to mention a few.

You're probably wondering things like, where do we stay? And, how much does it cost? If you haven't made hotel arrangements already, it's unlikely you'll find a room. However, you can do what we did last year and camp out along side the club planes with thousands of other pilots. The camping costs are minimal at \$18 per night with a 3 night minimum for EAA members. If you aren't a EAA member you should expect to spend the \$40 to join as you're likely to save that much in the preferred admission rates. The number of days each plane stayed varied to accommodate weather and the preferences of those traveling. You'll want to spend at least 3 days to see as much as you can. Trust me, it's not enough time to see the air shows, attend a few seminars, visit the exhibits, the museum and the seaport. I didn't make it to the seaport and probably some other really good stuff.

When considering your travel plans, you should be flexible since you never know what's going to happen with the weather or unexpected airplane squawks. Just ask someone that made the trip last year. Stationary fronts that just sit on the North Carolina coast can really make it tough to get home even if you're an IFR pilot not to mention a low overcast and mountain obscurations that will keep most VFR pilots from crossing the Appalachians.

The travel itinerary goes something like the following; leave either Friday or Saturday with a plan to rendezvous at Watertown (RYV) airport about 50 miles short of Oshkosh early Saturday afternoon, than travel the remainder of the arrival route as close together as possible. This gives us the best opportunity to park our planes as close together as possible in the "famous North 40" camping area. We must arrive at Oshkosh before the airport closes around sunset. The flight to RYV is roughly 650 nautical miles. So, you'll be leaving very early Saturday morning or flying a leg or two on Friday in the 172s or Warrior to arrive at a reasonable time at RYV. Whichever way you choose, you want to be alert for the arrival at OSH. There are lots of planes arriving Saturday and Sunday. You'll want to prepare by downloading and reading the special NOTAM with arrival and departure procedures. You can find it by following [this link:](http://www.airventure.org/2006/flying/index.html)

Depending on what each group assigned to a plane decides, departure could be anywhere from Thursday to Saturday. Weather is likely to be a factor in some of the decisions depending on pilot ratings and comfort levels.

Last year was my first Oshkosh Airventure experience. It was something that I have thought about doing since getting my private pilots license 30 years ago. I am glad that I finally made the time to make it happen. I haven't been to a place where I could see so many different planes from ultra-lights, to light jets, to war birds, to Voyager and Spaceship One. Plus you can find every make and model of experimental aircraft, avionics and pilot gadget that you could imagine. There are opportunities to learn about building, buying and flying just about everything you can imagine. Did I mention the awesome air shows everyday?

I hope this may have sparked your interest in joining me again this year at Airventure. You can expect to see some announcements and organizing meetings for those interested in making the club's annual trip to Airventure.

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New Ratings and Recent Solos

Sara Harrison - Private
McCracken

Joe Sheffield - Private
McCracken

Todd Synan – Private
McCracken

Giselle Hartl – Instrument
Kevin Duck (AZ)

Ashok Gopalarathnam – Private
Moss

Sara Posey – Solo
McCracken

Congratulations!!!

New Members

Sean Fillincich
Ed Green
Mike Bruno
Jim Brooking
Havner Parrish
Steven Joseph
Pete Fenger
Tom Sisk
Skip Mann
Yuichi Tsukada
Paul Hanlon
Mike Trevillian
Bruce Shankle
Hartwell Neal
Jordan Barone

Welcome!

Upcoming Regional Airshows

June 3&4

Danville, VA Southside SkyFest

Lightly Loaded

Turning Pages

By Carl Dowdy

Spring is here. Flying activity picks up, but so do family commitments, home repairs, gardening, and school finals. Thankfully there are even more reasons to be excited, such as the beautiful weather and the chances for rest and renewal. There are trips to the beach, weekends without studies, and time spent relaxing on the deck. Perfect opportunities to pick up a good book! Turning pages of a book, one that really speaks to us as pilots, can often fill the void left when we aren't able to be behind the panel of a plane. Books can temporarily transport us to another time in aviation, to another place, or maybe remind us of the emotions that we had as children that pushed us to pursue this passion we call flying. Great authors can put words to page in such a way that we live with them the stormy night spent camped out under a wing, the harrowing close-call of an airborne adventure, or the people met that will never be forgotten.

What follows are some aviation books to consider for your spring and summer reading list. They are in no particular order. Some are considered classics. Some are humorous looks at the foibles of pilots as they try to live up to their own images of themselves. Others are autobiographies or accounts of some of the more inventive and interesting people in aviation history. You should note that some are no longer in print. Don't let this dissuade you. For those titles that can't be located at your local bookstore or Amazon, try Abebooks, an online resource that links tens of thousands of used bookstores across the world. They can be located at <http://www.abebooks.com>. You can find new and old books there, often at incredibly low prices depending on book condition. Now go get lost in a book!

Once Upon a Thermal – Richard Wolters

Written in the 1970's, *Once Upon a Thermal* is the humorous account of one man's search for a new hobby and finding what he was looking for in soaring. Known in the book as "Old Dog" due to the contest letters of his Libelle sailplane, Wolters was previously a well-known author of books on training hunting dogs.

That's My Story – Douglas Corrigan

The autobiography of one of the most interesting aviators of Lindbergh's era, *That's My Story* is the account of Douglas "Wrong Way" Corrigan and his flight from New York to Ireland in 1938. Mistake or mischief? You be the judge.

A Gift of Wings – Richard Bach

A collection of forty seven short stories, many of which originally appeared in flying magazines in the late 60's and early 70's, *A Gift of Wings* will help you rediscover that an airplane is more than a collection of mechanical parts and flying more than a reason to get from one place to another.

Man Flies, The Story of Alberto Santos-Dumont – Nancy Winters

You've heard the name and may even know of his famous Demoiselle and 14-bis airplanes, but did you know of his record-setting balloon and airship flights? Or, how about his wealthy lifestyle or connection with Cartier? A quick read, *Man Flies* is equally interesting for it's high quality photographs.

Father Goose – William Lishman

The real story behind the movie Fly Away Home, *Father Goose* is the autobiography of the man who taught Canada geese to fly with his ultralight as a way to reintroduce them to their migratory routes. More than the whim of an environmentalist, you'll gain an appreciation of the effort and planning that made the project successful.

Voyager – Dick Rutan and Jeanna Yeager, with Phil Patton

"The last first", *Voyager* is the amazing story of the first non-stop unrefueled flight around the world. Surprisingly enjoyable to read, you'll learn of the huge effort that went in to fund raising that enabled the project, the emotional and physical hardships encountered during the many test and training flights, and the fantastic final flight around the world on one tank of gas.

Logging Flight Time – William Kershner

Learn more about one of the best-known instructors of our time. *Logging Flight Time* is collection of stories, both humorous and exciting, from Kershner's life as a naval aviator, test pilot and corporate pilot for "Mr. Piper", and as flight instructor. Never afraid to laugh at himself, you'll wonder what mess he'll get himself into next.

Flight of Passage – Rinker Buck

The true story of two teenage brothers and their 1966 across-America flight in a rebuilt Piper Cub. *Flight of Passage* is as much a story of their relationship with their ex-barnstorming father as it is a Huck Finn boyhood adventure.

Artful Flying – Michael Maya Charles

If flight hours and years of experience were all it took to avoid problems with planes, we wouldn't have airliners running off runways. *Artful Flying* attempts to teach us mental approaches to the complexities of being a pilot. A recently published book, you may have to order directly at <http://www.artfulflying.com>.

Tips to Fly By - Richard Collins

Maybe you are looking for something a little less romantic, a little more practical. We often wish we could distill years of

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A First Solo Story

By Lee Leewood

A pilot experiences more than one solo in his career. Every time he checks out in a new plane, that is, takes, it up for the first time sans instructor or check pilot, he's "pilot in command" - that's a solo flight.

One memorable solo flight for me was the DC-10, because I knew that aircraft would be my last command before retirement.

Of course I was thrilled when I soloed the DC-8-71 since it was once the "Queen of the Fleet" and the largest aircraft I'd ever flown to date. Could I ever forget the French Caravelle, my very first jet, affectionately called Fifi by it's crews? And then, there was my very first solo with United - my first command, the Viscount, a 4-engine turbo-prop from Great Britain. There were others, but these were the highlights of my career.

I can remember all those solo flights, but I am rather vague about the details. However, recalling the experience of my very first solo is as vivid as though it were yesterday. It was an early December morning in 1944, a small grass field just north of Monroe, Louisiana. A yellow Piper Cub -- metal skid for a tailwheel, no starter (we used the "Armstrong" method), no brakes (wasn't built with any), no radio or lights, in fact no electrical system. I had some six and a half hours of instruction up to that morning, practicing stalls (oh yeah, no stall-warning devices either), slow flight, steep 360s, slips and of course spins.

The last couple of hours we concentrated on takeoffs and landings. You know how it goes for those first six hours or so: first couple of lessons everything is just great, then you have those days where it seems you can't do anything right.

"Darn it, I guess I just wasn't cut out to be a pilot." Next lesson you're back in the groove and just about the hottest thing in the air since the Red Baron. Then comes that day when you know you're ready. You just know it ... you just do.

Pappy's going to let you solo. (Every grass field back then had an instructor called Pappy - anything over 500 hours and 30 years of age qualified you for the title. Years later he would be called Ace, today I suppose it would be Top Gun.) Pappy doesn't tell you you're ready, and you never ask (it wasn't macho back then), but you know ... and somehow Pappy knows. He knows without asking or telling you, he knows you feel ready, and from your performance he knows tomorrow is the day. But he never says a word about it.

Tomorrow finally comes and I'm at the field bright-eyed and bushy-tailed ready to dazzle him. We fly out to the practice area, which is about five miles north, and I do my steep 360s, stalls, slips and spins, then follow the road back to the airport. Now this is it; if I can just give him three good landings in a row he'll let me go. The first one is picture

perfect; second one had a slight skip to it (of course, to me it felt like a 10G carrier landing); the third one felt pretty good. He never said a word.

We just taxied out for another takeoff.

"Well, I guess he doesn't think I'm ready to solo today," so off we go again around the pattern.

Chop the power abeam the touchdown point, hold 70 mph, turn base, 65 on final, and land in the first third. I start to taxi back to the tie-down spot when he pulls the throttle to idle, the Cub eases to a stop, Pappy opens the side door, climbs out of the front seat and says, "Okay, kid (I was a kid then, all of 19), take it around three times. Just remember without me it's going to look real big, and without that weight she'll get off in half the distance." And then he walks off. I mean he walks off - just plain walks off. Leaving me alone in that huge, complicated airplane with my hand on the throttle of that powerful 65 HP Continental. All alone. Just me and that momentary terror in the pit of my stomach.

I think I kept a pretty straight face, trying to look matter-of-fact but the smile I suppressed inside me grew until it got the size of a canyon.

Settle down, Lee, don't goof up now 'cause you haven't done it yet. I pull up the bottom door half, pull down the top one half, latch it, and got into position for takeoff. Okay, Trim - set. Fuel - On, Mixture - Rich, Controls - Free , Runup-complete.

Now ... do It! Lord , that cockpit is big -- looks like a B- 17 . Ease the throttle forward, and before I even have time to check the airspeed, I'm in the air. I'm flying! I mean I'm really flying! And I'm all alone. "Oh Lord, can I really do this? You've gotta help me; I really really need your help," and from somewhere, "No, son, it's all ... up to you. It's all up to you!" On downwind 800 AGL. There's my point. Chop the throttle, turn base at the road, roll in a little trim, turn final, a little slow, drop the nose just a hair. On profile and looking good. Easy now. Nice and easy. Now the ground is coming up at you, and that's where you start your flare, easy, hold it off, hold it off ... oh, that was sweet! I taxi back for another takeoff glancing just over to the shack just to make sure Pappy's not waving me back in.

Off I go for my second circuit of the field. Now I'm really feeling good . Didn't I just land this plane by myself? Wasn't that probably the greatest landing the world? On the downwind leg I start singing at the top of my lungs (The Army corps song, of course). I am a pilot! I'm really a pilot and in control of this beauty.

Well, the second landing has a light skip to it and as I start taxiing back for the third and final one, here comes Pappy waving me to a stop. "Oh no, it wasn't that bad! You goofed, Lee. That's what you get for bragging too soon. He's going to shoot you down." I open up the top half and come to

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a stop trying to look nonchalant as he comes up behind the strut.

"Hey, kid, take it out to the practice area. Do whatever you want for about 20 minutes, bring it back in one piece and we'll sign you off." Wow! Off I go, out to the practice area. I can do whatever I want. I'm in charge! When I get out to the practice area I fly some sloppy turns and skidding turns, forward and side slips. It feels good not having to perform, to be free, to be able to screw up on purpose without having to watch the back of Pappy's neck turn crimson. I look down and see a farmhouse and this couple walking to their car. They look up to watch me fly overhead and I feel sorry for them because they can't fly. So, naturally Ace has to do a couple of steep 360s for them. (My entire repertoire.)

Well, the great air-show is over. Now if I don't get lost on my long five mile flight back to the field, everything will be okay. I am so engrossed in navigation that I don't have time to worry about the landing ... yet. I follow the dirt road south, and by God, there it is. Is this great or what! I flew five whole miles by myself and found the airport beside the dirt road where it's been for the past millenium.

Enter downwind on a 45. (Now it's time to start worrying.) "Make this good, Lee." You always want the last landing of the day to be really good, but especially this day. Abeam the landing spot, chop the throttle, base is perfect, turning final, speed slowing to 65. Now don't flare too soon, right about here start the flare, ease the stick back, back, and I hear the tires ticking off the grass blades - just hold it. My God, we're on!

Now I have to do is get this beauty to the tie-down without screwing up, right between the other two Cubs, cut the mags and glide to a stop. Oh yes, perfect. Now don't fall on your face getting out and you'll be okay. Just look cool walking back to the shack and get that stupid grin off of your face. My roommate Mitch, Pappy, and two other students are greeting me with "Guess we can send the crash trucks back." "Gonna take a week to fill the holes you left in the runway." "Rather have your dumb luck than skill any day." After they cut the tail off my shirt and Pappy endorsed my logbook and license, I was on my way back to the barracks in that little Crosley Mitch had won in a craps game. Though it couldn't go over 45, the tires never touched the ground. I was on cloud nine all the way back to the base. You know the one thing I don't remember about that day? The ride home!

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flying experience into a small container we could easily open when needed. Collins has come as close to this as possible in his book, *Tips to Fly By*. An invaluable list of practical techniques for approaching the complexities of flying.

The Sky Beyond – Sir Gordon Taylor

One of Australia's pioneering aviators along with Kingsford Smith, Taylor tells of the early days of transoceanic flight. Many of the stories take place in a Catalina airboat as Taylor and his crew open new routes across vast expanses of ocean. Some of the best of aviation literature.

Member Meetings

Membership meetings (Pizza Nights) are held on the 2nd Wednesday of every "even" month. Meetings begin at 6:30 PM and include free pizza, a business meeting, and a program of interest to pilots. The next meeting date is 6/14. In addition to club members, these meetings are open to local and prospective pilots who may have interest in the club – the more the merrier!

Board meetings routinely occur on the second Tuesday of each month from 6:30-9 PM. Board meetings are held in the Wings of Carolina Flight Center. All members are welcome and are encouraged to attend. Occasionally there will be a change in meeting date. Please keep an eye on your e-mail for any additional meetings

Second Saturday Cookouts occur at the hangar on the second Saturday of each month, 11:30 am-2:00 pm. Members and guests can buy lunch for \$5 for adults (>12) and \$3.00 for children (6 - 11).

If you know someone who may be interested in joining the club, please bring them along with you! It's a great opportunity for them to meet some of the members & learn more about the club.

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Contributions to the newsletter are always welcome & should be e-mailed to the editor at av8npa@earthlink.net