



CHAPTER 42 NEWSLETTER

June, 2004

Anchorage, Alaska

Monthly newsletter from Chapter 42 of the Experimental Aircraft Association

FROM THE LEFT SEAT

Summer. This is the first summer in quite awhile that our family has been without an aircraft. I find myself longing to be in the air traveling to some far off exotic destination.

I looked at my logbook this morning and realized that at this time last year my co-pilot and I were on our way to Serpentine Hot Springs and the Seward Peninsula. Over a span of three days we visited the hot springs, walked on the vast tundra looking at wild flowers, we saw musk oxen, moose, bears and so many different kinds of birds.

The next weekend found us flying off in the opposite direction to Cape Yakutaga and the beaches of the Gulf of Alaska. We landed on many of the beaches along the coast and camped at the old ghost town of Katalla; bear tracks and scat everywhere. I remember lying down in the tent with the shotgun next to me thinking about how silly it would be if I had a dream of a bear attack and blew a hole through the wing of the plane.

Then we sold the airplane, and since then I have not been flying except in friends' aircraft. The flights have been short and mostly for training purposes. I know these training flights are important and necessary and I do enjoy the challenge of keeping my skills sharp, but there is still the longing to be going somewhere.

I miss flying. I miss having an airplane. I miss aero-adventures.

So if you have an airplane and are off adventuring and can't make the meetings this summer, believe me, I understand. I am envious. I wish I were off to some far away exotic destination. I wish I were walking on the treeless expanse of the Arctic tundra, feeling the wind and listening to the songbirds and looking at the wild flowers.

Fly safe. Fly free. Fly,

Mike

NEXT MEETING

The monthly meeting for Chapter 42 will be held at John and Sue Davis' house. The meeting will be a special event and will combine a family (or boyfriend, girlfriend, significant other, etc) get together and a meeting and a BBQ.

The BBQ will take place June 18th, it will begin at 6 pm. Their house is located at 6827 Caravelle Drive (between Jewel Lake and Sand Lake Roads off of Raspberry).

John and Sue have graciously agreed to provide the place, the burgers and dogs, and some great aircraft projects to look at. In case you don't know, John and Sue are repeat offenders of building RVs; their RV 8 was at the Trade Show.

Here is what we need from you:

- Please let me know how many of you will attend. (RSVP me at aurbo@ak.net.)
- Please bring a side dish.
- Please bring folding chairs.
- Please bring a beverage of your choice. There will be drinks, sodas and water, provided but if you have a particular drink you prefer, please feel ok to bring it.

Would anyone else like to help with preparation for the BBQ?

Let's have some fun!

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Sometimes in the rush to get to the latest new sleek sky streakin' wonder toy, we forget about the real basics of what the EAA is all about: the grass roots experimenter. EAAers tend to throw the term "grass roots" around a lot. That's too bad. It sounds basic, simple, and folksy, but the fact is, the world of high tech is fast encroaching upon EAA's domain, and high-tech often means high-dollar tickets. I have read article after article of life-long builders lamenting about sky-rocketing aircraft kit prices, and the dwindling stable of plans-built efforts. Many such articles recall the early days of EAA, when its members actively engaged in experimenting with, building and flying sturdy, stable, and inexpensive recreational plans-built aircraft.

The advancement of composites, alternative materials, production kits, and miniaturization has changed all that. Nowadays, many kits are short on both build and experiment, but long on assembly. Oh, some kits are quite complex to be sure,



Typical KB-3 Ultralight

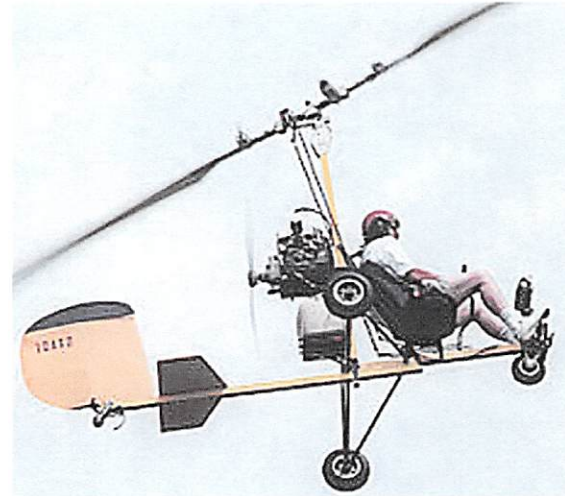
and take thousands of hours to complete, but most of the process is assembly. The EAA was meant to be the average hopeful Joe's opportunity to claim a personal piece of the sky, to learn about flight from a hands-on perspective, to energize the mind/hand experience. Today, as in many other venues, the quest seems to be to have the latest gadgets, the smoothest skins, and the highest cruise. None of that comes cheap. Not very promising for hopeful Joe's like me. Things like this can make you wonder just what has happened to the spirit of EAA past. With that question in mind, I set out on a quest to rediscover the experimenters of the EAA. They're out there, you know, the experimenters, EAA's spirit. Interestingly enough, I found a piece of that spirit quietly tinkering along, right here in our own back yard.

It started with a discussion about another interest of mine: gyrocopters. The discussion led me to conversations with two of our gyro-owning chapter members, which in turn led to an invitation to visit with Ken Richardson.

Ken Richardson is a helpful and knowledgeable senior who owns a KB-3 gyrocopter. The KB-3 is an ultralight version of Ken Brock's KB-2 (you may have noticed that there appears to be two Kens involved, but don't worry, the confusion ends here, because the article is not about Brock). Richardson's KB-3 is about 15 years old, pretty old for cheese or a golden retriever, but not necessarily for a gyro. Ken picked up his KB-3 second-

hand and has been "experimenting" with it ever since. Over the years, he added a lightweight enclosure, cabin heat, a three-finned horizontal stabilizer, and several other modifications, always looking for improved safety and functionality. It is safe to say that Ken is one of those guys who simply just likes to "fine tune" things, an irresistible challenge to an experimenter. That's also a necessary trait for a successful gyro pilot!

Ken has quite a bit of gyro-related information carefully squirreled away in his small "think" space he has set up out back, from articles to complete plans. He is very knowledgeable on basic gyro airmanship, and readily shares his insight, experience, and information to any genuinely interested person. He was very kind to let me drop in on him. I was also privileged to view some of the performance videos that he and Bill Elam made of Ken's gyro in flight. (Ken was quick to point out that training is an absolute must for safe gyro operation.)



Gyrobee in flight

Ken flies his gyro each season. His gyro is not exactly what you would call pretty, and it is not sleek. It bears the marks and scars of a myriad of tests and different configurations. It has character.

It is not slick, and it certainly is not high-tech. It is, however, functional. It flies (something several of our projects have yet to do), and it flies rather well, testimony not only to the basic design tolerances of the KB-3, but also to the efforts of Ken Richardson. Ken has a preference for simplicity and it shows in his mods: simple, functional, nothing fancy. He coned his enclosure with a salad bowl, but you wouldn't have guessed unless he told you. He seems also to have found a number of uses for adhesive goop and a coffee can or two, all workable, practical ideas.

Ken says that stripped, he weighs in at about 150 pounds. I figured more like 140, but since it was a bit chilly, and he was working on another fix-it project at the time, I decided not to scientifically challenge that assumption. He also carries about 30 pounds of emergency gear and supplies when flying. Add those together with the weight of 5 or more gallons of fuel and you tip the scales at a demonstrated useful load of 210 lbs! It all moves along at about 45-50 knots. Not bad for an enclosed ultralight gyro. Note: The KB-3 has similar flight performance

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TRADE SHOW FOOTNOTE by Mike Luther

I would like to thank some folks for giving me the opportunity and assistance necessary to show my Pietenpol at the Aviation Trade Show.

First, I would like to thank Jim Moss for his connection with the Alaska Airmen's Association. Jim's efforts are highly valued and appreciated by our EAA chapter. The Alaska Airmen's Association's Executive Director, Dee Hanson, has all of my respect for her ability to organize and coordinate such a large event. Her energy, motivation and hard-working attitude are highly commendable.

I would also like to thank Duane Burcham, distributor for ARM Aerospace Aero-Lift, for his kind hospitality. His logistical abilities and genuine desire to please the customer are truly evident. When we were done with our set-up at the show, he invited me to join him at the exhibitors banquet. The banquet had a genuine pig-roast and plenty of interesting conversation. Please take a minute to read about Arm Aerospace's latest developments in product improvement on page 4.

Next, I would like to thank Fred Stauber of Fred's Towing for his kind assistance. He treated my project with a great deal of care and respect. His help, especially on Sunday, was greatly appreciated.

Exhibiting my little airplane took a little time, money and effort, but the rewards have been well worth the expenditure. I will always have fond memories of this special event.



Mike Luther's Pietenpol displayed on ARM Aerospace Aero-Lift at the AAA Trade Show

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MONTHLY MEETINGS	4th Tuesday of most months

SPIRIT (con't from page 2)

and load capacities to the Gyrobee, another true ultralight gyrocopter by Ralph Taggart, also a grass roots experimenter. The Gyrobee, based upon Martin Holloman's Bumble Bee, has the capability of safely handling a 240-250 pound pilot. (Taggart makes his complete Gyrobee documentation, aka plans, available on the web, for free).

Grass roots. It really means something here in Alaska. That's what Ken is, and what grass roots is all about, helpful everyday people, inventive, curious, and determined to work it all out through discovery, experimentation, and success in flight. It's good to know the spirit is still out there, still kicking, and still part of the EAA and especially Chapter 42. That's what makes this Chapter what it is, a crossroads of discovery, shared experiences, great friendships, entertaining tales, and yes, trial and error. Experimenters unite! Smooth landings!

FLY MART

Free to members. Contact Tim to place an ad: tim@timrittal.com or 907/248-2249.



PITTS S-1-S, Fuel injected 160 hp Lycoming with 23 hrs SMOH (a Mike Patterson rebuild). Inverted oil system. A/C recovered in Stitts in 1997. A/C failed annual due to some dry rot in lower wing. Fuselage and upper wing in good condition. Easily over 30K in parts, Engine alone worth 14K. I called Aviat about parts cost: If you want a shock call them. I am not a builder so am selling this A/C as a project and do not want the hassle of parting it out. This is a good buy at a reasonable price for a builder. A/C located by ultralite hanger at Birchwood. Dale, 694-2206. \$22,000.

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ARM AEROSPACE ADDS JACKPOINT AND SEISMIC ISOLATION TO AERO-LIFT

Tucson, AZ : As part of their program to continue product improvement and expansion, ARM Aerospace has added two enhancements to their Aero-Lift. The first is a JackPoint System that allows Bonanza, Mooney and other low-wing owners to use their Aero-Lift as a lifting jack so the aircraft gear can be cycled. The second item is a Seismic Isolation System that virtually assures stability of the Aero-lift in the event the ground around it begins to rock and roll as the result of an earthquake.

Utilizing the JackPoint System is a simple matter of removing the three wheel scoops, installing jack rods that will attach to the factory jack points under the wings, tying down the tail to an attached tail bar and then raising the lift to the desired height. This allows any Bonanza, Mooney or other low-wing aircraft to be set in position for maintenance or annual inspections and cycling of the landing gear. The entire process of converting the lift to an aircraft jack only takes a few minutes.

Although the Aero-Lift has been designed to provide excellent intrinsic stability, the Seismic Isolation System adds extra protection for any area that is vulnerable to earthquakes. It employs a base isolator system similar to those used for telecommunications servers and large buildings. The system isolates the Aero-Lift and any aircraft parked on it from the forces of an earthquake. Any forces transmitted to an Aero-Lift are "dampened" within the seismic isolator through the use of Kevlar energy absorption matting. Though the ground may shake around it, the Aero-Lift will remain steady.



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