

The Flying Wire



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**Chapter 124
Experimental Aircraft Association**

**Volume 63 Number 7
July 3, 2024**

Board Meeting (Quarterly)- 5:30 pm

Dinner - 6:15 pm \$10

General Meeting - 7:00 pm

www.EAA124.org

www.CafeFoundation.org

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July 3, 2024 Program

Presentation Topic- Building a Carbon Cub!

Please join us at our July meeting to welcome EAA 124's own Dr. Elaine Gee! Elaine will present on her experiences going through the factory assisted build process with Cub Crafters in Yakima, Washington.

Elaine is not new to aircraft building or aviation. She and her partner Fred previously built a beautiful Lancair Legacy hangered here at KSTS which they fly often. Her new kit she is currently building is an NX Cub, a tricycle geared backcountry aircraft being constructed of Composites, Aluminum, and Carbon Fibre!

Come listen to Elaine's story of why she chose this plane, the myriad of decisions that comprise her finished airframe, what it's like to participate in a Factory Assisted experimental aircraft build, and her journey as a woman and aviator embarking on this monumental task. It's sure to be a great talk!

Added Bonus! EAA 124 Chapter member Bill Conklin, a friend of Elaine's, just happens to have a newly finished Carbon Cub that he flies out of Healdsburg and has agreed to bring it down to the EAA hangar for the July meeting for members and guests to check out!

See you there!

Dinner Menu:

July dinner is Hamburgers and hot dogs with lots of fixings. Baked Beans and Cole Slaw. Ice cream and cookies for dessert. \$10

Letter From Uncle Russ

(from Mike Tovani)

August 1967

Major Russell P. Knoebel Jr.

Bien Hoa AFB

South Vietnam

Dear Mike,

The sky to the southeast looked grim as we taxied our 3 small A-37's into the arming area. Beneath the wings of each bird were five bombs and a 7.62 Gatling gun capable of spewing 6000 rounds a minute. It was a new and heavy load to be tried for the first time. Two 750 pound, two 500 pound, and one 250 pound general-purpose bombs almost dwarfed the tiny high powered A-37. We sacrificed any comfort margin of fuel to see how effective this type of ordinance would be on targets within 50 miles of the Base. Our target today was a V.C. base camp 41 miles from home. The weather did not look too promising either. Bad weather could make the difference. The sergeant worked grimly to arm the gun under the wing and the gun tucked in the nose. Finally all three aircraft were armed and ready.

The lead aircraft gave the signal and we started our second engine. Since the thirsty jet engines use so much fuel we taxi on only one and start the second just before take off. Number two aircraft could not get a successful start and had to abort the mission. So I became number two and the lead aircraft taxied to the number one position and called the tower "Bien Hoa (Ben WA) tower Dragon61 ready for take off" - "Roger dragon 61, hold your position, we have 4 F-5's minimum fuel for landing."- "Roger dragon 61 holding." This was unexpected. And the next ten minutes used more precious fuel than we could spare.

Finally after the F-5's landed we were cleared to take the runway and run-up. Bien Hoa is the world's busiest airport sometimes reaching 76,000 landing and take-offs each month. With one runway only that is quite a workload considering the number 3 airport in Chicago has five runways and has 45,000 T/O and landings per month. So while we were getting into position we were not too surprised to see several aircraft land over our head in front of us - a practice never allowed in the United States, but here necessity dictates many procedures considered unsafe elsewhere. At last, the clearance to roll. The lead nods his head as he releases brakes and we start rolling down the 10,000-foot strip. I jockey the power to maintain position as the A-37's lift off the runway. My right wing wants to drop due to the uneven load, but a little aileron pressure holds me "in" on lead's wing. Gear-up, tucked in the well, flaps up, airspeed 150 and lead noses up to grab altitude before reaching the field perimeter just ¼ mile from the runways end.

Ground fire has damaged many aircraft just on take-off and landing here at Bien Hoa. We turn left to avoid the artillery firing to the north one mile. As we climb to 10 thousand the storm looks bigger. Might be a problem on the return. Seven minute's later contact is made with the forward air controller, a pilot flying a small slow propeller driven L-19 or O-1 aircraft. He is the man who will mark the target and direct the strike. He asks us to hold since he is directing a flight of B-57's on a target. More delay. Fifteen minutes later we are cleared to the target area. The FAC is flying a light gray aircraft. Easy to spot from above in contrast to the dark green jungle, hard to see from the ground against the blue gray sky. We find the FAC and watch as he describes the target and fires a smoke rocket into a bunker complex below. Lead rolls in calling "Dragon 61 in I have your smoke." The FAC replies - "We have a strong wind from 270 at about 35 knots. You're cleared in - drop 30 meters north of my smoke." A streak of blue gray, lead aircraft accelerates toward the plume of white smoke on the ground. Get the airspeed - get the piper on the target, adjust for wind check the rapidly falling altimeter - altitude, airspeed, bombsight perfect release! A seven fifty falls away from the tiny bird. Back on the stick - 3 - 4 - 5 g's left wing hard to keep level. Too much weight difference between the left and right side - - get that nose up - whoom! The concussions from the 750 pounds of TNT throw the aircraft about. A

large ball of fire followed by trees, dirt, foliage, and pieces of bunker climb slowly to an altitude of 1,000 feet. Timing my pass so the debris will be gone when I pass over but soon enough to keep the guns on the ground from getting set again. I roll in with the call "Two in hot - what's my adjustment." FAC reply - cleared in hit 50 meters west of leads bomb. And so it goes - closely following each other we adjust each pass according to the instructions of the FAC. Finally lead calls "Dragon 61 bingo". His fuel is down to the absolute minimum and he must return home. All ordinance delivered, all armament switches off we climb for altitude toward home. The FAC - calls in Battle damage assessment. "5 bunkers destroyed 5 bunkers damaged, 30 meters of trench destroyed, 2 tunnel entrances destroyed - nice job." Leads reply is garbled, radio trouble it seems. I thank the FAC and lead calls a channel change. Radio switched to channel 2, lead calls the home base and asks for weather. Then comes the grim reply. "Heavy thunderstorm over field, visibility "0", suggests you hold for 15 minutes." Lead tries to answer but is un-readable. I pull on his wing and he points to me and points forward. OK that means I've just been given the lead.

My fuel is low but number two has even less, better check. I give the visual signal for fuel. He has 700# not enough to hold for 15 min. I signal and we shut down # one engine. So we'd better land at our alternate field 50 miles away - just enough fuel to make it on one engine. I reach down and set in the radio station in my navigation ADF only to find the station is not operating or I can't pick it up on my ADF. My TACAN (another navigation aid) tells me I am 22 miles from Bien Hoa but between me and home is that big black thunderstorm. I call again - "Hawk control - we are unable to hold any longer min fuel on number two and no radio transmitter, can we make a radar landing?" His reply isn't too encouraging - "Maybe it will ease off by the time you get on final" - "give it a try." "Roger - Dragon 61 channel 5." "Paris control this is Dragon 61 we are 22 miles east of Bien Hoa navigational aids inoperative minimum fuel - request a radar let down and hand off to GCA (ground control approach) for straight in landing runway 27. Be advised this will be a one shot try." "Roger Dragon 61 radar contact turn right heading 300, what are your angles? Dragon 61 angles 7 (7,000 feet)" - "Dragon 62 pitot heat on, defrost on." His nod tells me he is receiving.

That storm looks dark - so I turn my navigation lights up to bright so #2 can see me better in the clouds and rain. In seconds we are in the center of heavy rain - visibility about 20 feet - I concentrate on flying as smoothly as possible using only available instruments in the cockpit. My wingman grimly hangs on to me as the turbulence buffets us about. "Dragon 61, turn left two degrees to 298 degrees." - "Roger left 298" - I reply to the ground controllers instructions - Hope he doesn't lose contact on his radar, I think - if we miss this time or if number two gets shaken out of formation he will have to bail out. "dragon 61 start descending to 1500' "Roger dragon 61 descending to 1,500' - dragons speed boards down now." We both drop our speed breaks and increase our descent. At 1500 feet I slowly ease the nose up to level flight and call number two "start up engine" we both touch the "air start" switch and move the throttle on the dead engine to start it up. This is done without looking at the switches for we must memorize the position of each switch blind folded for just such [a] reason.

Neither of us can afford the diversion that hunting for a switch would take. I turn p the cockpit lights. It is dark in the storm. GCA controller is steadily advising me. "Further left to 273, you need not acknowledge further transmissions start your descent now, your gear should be down and locked". At this point I signal #2 to lower gear and flaps and together we get set for landing. Each throttle change, each configuration - (gear, speed brakes, flaps) change must be done at exactly the same time or #2 will drop back 10 and lose me in the dark clouds and rain, or he will catch up and hit me. So he has his hands full being the worlds best formation pilot. GCA continues, "You are on glide path, slightly high on glide slope, increase your rate of decent, correcting nicely, back on glide slope resume normal rate of decent, you are ½ mile from runway at GCA minimums." Normally at this time we would level off and try again or fly to another air field if we could not see the runway at this time but our fuel means we "make or break" it on this pass - GCA continues "Lined up nicely, passing over the threshold" - now see it. Just below, the most beautiful strip of concrete in the world - I signal idle power and we slowly round out for a perfect formation landing. Easy on the brakes, flaps up - stop on the runway a moment and get the right taxi way - there it is - rain pouring down. Wet crew chief grinning from ear to ear. I stop the aircraft slip out of

my chute and raise the canopy long enough to get out and join the crew chief in a summer shower. Lloyd jumped out of #2 aircraft and held out his hand. "I shut down with no gas. - Thanks" I grinned - rain is nice to stand in not fly in - Another day another dollar, today I earned it. End of war story.

No life isn't too dull here.

Regards

Uncle Russ



Actual photo of Maj. Knoebel in Vietnam 1967



This model depicts the amount of armament the A-37 could carry.

Happy Birthday

(by Stuart Deal)

A day of admission and celebration. On turning a page to a new decade, my son, Wesley Deal and his long time John DeGenarro worked out a plan to help me celebrate. The admission was that I had not flown a plane for about 15 years. To help me celebrate, John gave me the opportunity to fly the airplane he and his wife Christina own and fly.

Some members may remember when John was our presenter for a meeting and he recounted what some might call the “Korbel Miracle”. This occurred when John was flying over west Sonoma county with a passenger and had his engine quit. As you likely know, landing spots are rare over the hills of the west county, near the Russian River but, thinking quickly, John spotted a straight section of road with no power lines. That was River Road just past the Korbel Winery as you go toward the coast. He landed with no damage and got help pushing the plane, a Cessna, onto a vineyard service road to get it off the road. It helped to have a high wing as

there is a fence on either side of the little drive where he stashed the plane.

As you can imagine this was rather traumatic for a young pilot and as he was always welcome at our house, he dropped by to help settle his nerves before going home that night. At that point in time he was concerned that it might reflect on his career, but it did not.



As John flies for a well known airline and still instructs he made it

easy for me to remember what I was doing. As you can see in the picture, we were flying a Piper Archer which is related to the Cherokees that I trained in. Since it is a fixed pitch prop it was very familiar. Push the throttle, some right rudder fly it off at Vr, head to cruise climb and turn toward the coast.

We soon saw that the coast was fogged in so did a turn toward Lake Sonoma, took in the sights in Alexander Valley, flying over the grass airstrip that the Jordan Vineyard folks have over there.

We asked for a straight in for one four and with a few speed adjustments I landed just fine after not flying for so long.



Obviously, I could do more to get back current than I have. Flying regularly is better, no doubt than once in a while. I am particularly grateful to John DeGenarro whose other claim to fame was flying for the Oracle Aerobatics Team besides being an airline pilot for sharing his time and airplane to celebrate my arrival in a new decade.



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Interesting Aviation Links

(thanks to David Heal)

[e](#)

Pricey Toys [Click Here](#)

Charge! [Click Here](#)

Newsletter Editor Notes:

from Stuart Deal

I really enjoy reading through the articles that folks contribute to the newsletter. Please keep it up.

Everybody has a story I would be very happy to put your story into the newsletter for everyone.

Happy Fourth!!

EAA Chapter 124 Board Meeting Minutes

June 5, 2024

Board Members In Attendance: Dominic Cerniglio (President) Marlon Young (Vice President) John Whitehouse (Treasurer) David Franco (Secretary) John Fluno, Jeremiah James, George Marshall.

Meeting Convened 5:35 pm. CAFE Hangar update- The present tenants have secured a different hangar from which they will be able to base their planes. It was reported to the board that the tenants have inappropriately removed the Zenith project that is EAA Chapter 124 property.

The action could result in additional criminal action if it is not returned to the club's possession. It was also reported that the tenants are tampering with the in-ground scales that were permanently installed in the hangar floor. It was noted that the scales were being pried upon and that the deflection has resulted in the scale no longer zeroing out when unladen.

The damage to Sonoma County Airport equipment could, it was noted, bring serious legal repercussions. A motion was made to a lot \$500 for legal counsel Marlon Young to file an unlawful detainer, which puts the tenants, that they no longer have any occupancy rights.

The motion was unanimous with one abstention. Fly-in Debrief- The Fly-In was a fabulous success. The sales of food and beverages raised \$740. Scholarship Outreach coordinator- The chapter would like to have someone be the official lead to head up the scholarship acquisition effort.

Treasurer's Report- Chapter coffers remain in a steady state despite a small dip this month.

Meeting adjourned 6:00 pm

EAA Chapter 124 General Meeting Minutes

June 5, 2024

Meeting Convened 7:15 pm.

The president called the meeting to order. He then extended great

thanks and appreciation to Sam Werback and her crew of helpers for creating another wonderful meal. He then welcomed newcomers, of which there were many. One newcomer recounted a few details of his 40 year career flying jets. He concluded his flying career flying a business class jets for individuals related to the founders of Motorola electronics.

Builder's Reports- Andy Werback related a story about a Lancair fixed gear project that has finally been completed. 20 years ago Andy worked on his plane next to the owner of the fixed gear Lancair. The two men were receiving Lancair factory builder assist instruction at the same place. Andy went on to finish his complex retractable plane in expedited fashion. The owner of the fixed Lancair has only now completed and flown his creation.

Andy shared pictures of the two project planes side by side while under construction and showed of the recently concluded Lancair fixed gear plane, which was featured in a magazine.

Mike Tovani updated the meeting on his Rans S21 project. His build was frustrated by needing an 11' spar. The factory supplied it, but shipping the single piece cost \$1,100. This serve as a cautionary warning about today's shipping rates.

Fly-in Debrief- The recent event was a resounding success. The chapter banked \$740 and many new faces came to enjoy our facility. Special thanks went out to Cingari's for spearheading the food prep.

Treasurer's Report- The coffers remain in a healthy state despite running a small deficit the previous month.

Presentation Topic- The Wright Stuff. Presenter Bill Wright shared his adventures flying corporate jets for unnamed celebrities. Concurrent with those activities he actively instructed students in airplanes ranging from tailwheel aircraft to swept wing private jets. His particular hands-off brand of instruction allowed students to initiate their own novel approaches even though he knew it would be challenging. This technique lent itself to many stories of disasters averted, either by his direct intervention, or by the student rectifying their own mistakes.

Meeting Adjourned 8:45 pm

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Chapter meetings are held on the first Wednesday of each month at 7:00 pm. FOOD (\$7 sometimes \$10) AND SOCIALIZING (free) from 6:15 to 7:00 pm. EVERYONE IS WELCOME!

Directions: The site is located on the west side of Sonoma County Airport. Take the Shiloh Road exit from Highway 101 in northern Santa Rosa. Turn left at the stop light (west) and continue to a "T" intersection. Turn left again and follow the road to the EAA sign on the left.

Members are invited to submit articles of interest. You will be notified whether or not an article will appear in the current issue.

Please email articles to: eea124newsletter@sonic.net

Deadline for newsletter submissions is the 20th of each month. Articles submitted after that date will be included in the newsletter at the discretion of the editor. All articles are copyrighted. To reproduce any article, please contact the editor.

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