



THE GRAPEVINE



There is a very fine line between "hobby" and "mental illness."

Vol. XXVIII,



No. 11, November, 2009

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Dick Jennings	862-2345
Bob Cowan	373 0555

November Meeting And Program

NOTICE: Our November meeting will take place at 7:30 P.M. on the 5th of November. The meeting will be at the terminal as normal.

Calendar:

Month	Date	Speaker	Topic
Nov	5	Bruce Cruikshank	Attack Jets
Dec	3	Chris Lowery	Aviation Fuel Expert

Our November Program will feature Bruce Cruikshank discussing his aviation career and flying jets in combat. A current chapter member, board member and multiple offender of building and aircraft will share his aviation experiences.



A young guy and his wings.



I think this one would be titled "Boom"?



BIG Important NOTE:

Membership renewal –2010

People can start sending me their membership renewal checks. It is \$30 for 2010. My address is 25 Jacaranda Drive, Fremont CA 94539. I don't need the forms unless it is a new member.

Mark Palajac
Treasurer, EAA Chapter 663 Livermore

MINUTES: GENERAL MEETING EAA CHAPTER 663, 10/1/2009, 7:30 PM, TERMINAL BUILDING KLVK.

Chapter president Ralph Cloud called the meeting to order.

Dee, Trina Anderson's sister and aerial photographer Dick Jones were the only guests.

The minutes for the September board of directors meeting needed one correction. They should have read vote for 6 directors not 8. They were otherwise approved.

Treasurer Mark reported \$3384.51 in chapter funds. He is also accepting \$30 dues for 2010 (Already?!).

Business: The slate of officers that nominating committee chairman Bob Cowan found was elected by acclamation. Ralph Clouds, Don Smith and Mark Palajac will continue as president, vice president and treasurer respectively. New guy Kirk Knight will be secretary. Of the eight members nominated for director, Dick Jennings, John Goldsmith, Brad Oliver, Bob Farnam, Bruce Cruikshank, and Bob Cowan got the nod.

Dick Jennings is the semi-official tool guy when Bob Farnam is not around. He can often be found around his hanger, #69

Ralph reported that the Airport Open House drew a large crowd. It was HOT.

Ralph asked for pictures of member's projects to be sent to Brad Olsen at pictures@eaa663.org

Announcements: Next board of directors meeting will be Thursday 10/15 at Ralph's place. Mark Palajac got a notice that EAA calendars for 2010 can be ordered and sent around the sign-up sheet for same.

Member's Forum: There is a new effort to add/change the airport rules, mostly as relating to use of the hangars. Most onerous to us is a plan to limit the time one can spend building an aircraft in ones hangar to 3 years with the possibility of adding a year for unusual circumstances. Appealing a decision would cost \$250. A meeting is going to be held Oct. 19 with the airport commission in the terminal building at noon.

There was considerable discussion about the fire fighting infrastructure's failure to respond in a timely manner to an on field fire in June. It turns out that if you are using a cell phone to call for help CALL THE POLICE DISPATCHER IN LIVERMORE AT 925-371-4987 to get the locals. Calling 911 on your cell only works for the Vacaville Airport or something like that.

Dave Dent asked if anyone was looking for a project; a VariEze project is available for a very reasonable price.

Break and then Program: Don Smith introduced chapter member Doug Henson who told us of the steps involved in performing safe formation flight. Doug in his Falcon and Doug's friend Dennis Johnson in his Legacy regularly form up to do formation work. Both former Air Force pilots, they learned their trade together at Craig AFB, Selma, AL in the early 70's. Doug showed an excellent video taken from right seat of his Falco by aerial photographer Dick Jones, who was also present. A portion of this video can be seen on You Tube, search Doug Henson. Thank you Doug and Dick.

Meeting adjourned for pie.

MINUTES: BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING,
10/15/2009, 7:45, RALPH'S PLACE.

Ralph Cloud, Dick Jennings, Don Smith, Bob Farnam, Mark Palajac and Bruce Cruikshank were present.

Mark reported \$3544.51 in chapter funds. He also reported that no one signed up for a calendar. It was decided that he would order the minum number to get a price break (about 10).

Ralph mentioned that the deadline for comment on the new airport rule changes has been extended to Nov. 9th.

Planning for the January 23rd annual dinner continues. The caterer, same as all recent years, has been reserved. Menu will be the same as last year. It was also decided to charge the same as last year, \$25 per person. Bob Cowan has been trying to confirm with Lane Wallace to speak at the event but was not present to give us a report. It may be time for plan "B".

Young Eagles: Eric Helms, our Young Eagles Coordinator, told Ralph he signed up more than 190 YE candidates.

Ralph mentioned that he would like the chapter to purchase a folding sunshade similar to the one he lends the chapter during The Airport Open house. Those present agreed.

Don has been trying to confirm with Chris Lowery to come speak at our November meeting. The subject would be aviation gasoline.

Announcement: Next meeting will be Nov. 5.

Meeting adjourned for pie.

Respectfully submitted, Bruce Cruikshank, Secretary

Feedback/Questions/Suggestions

Any and all feedback is welcome. In order to make the newsletter entertaining, informative and above all else, something that you enjoy reading every month please take a few minutes to send suggestions, tips, corrections or any other feedback to: jeffrylite@comcast.net.

Mailbag:

I received the following via email. I hope you used last month's mailbag article to help you engineer your vehicle to accept the gooseneck hitch. This month's article is from a true American hero. I hope you enjoy it as much as I did.

Doolittle Raid on Tokyo:

This is a really excellent first-hand account by the pilot of aircraft #13 on the Doolittle Raid off the Hornet in 1942. Take the time and enjoy a bit of history.

My name is Edgar McElroy. My friends call me "Mac." I was born and raised in **Ennis, Texas**, the youngest of five children, son of Harry and Jennie McElroy.

Folks say that I was the quiet one. We lived at 609 North Dallas Street and attended the Presbyterian Church. My dad had an auto mechanic's shop downtown close to the main fire station. My family was a hard working bunch, and I was expected to work at dad's garage after school and on Saturdays, so I grew up in an atmosphere of machinery, oil and grease. Occasionally I would hear a lone plane fly over, and would run out in the street and strain my eyes against the sun to watch it. Someday, that would be me up there! I really like cars, and I was always busy on some project, and it wasn't long before I decided to build my very own Model-T out of spare parts. I got an engine from over here, a frame from over there, and wheels from someplace else, using only the good parts from old cars that were otherwise shot.

It wasn't very pretty, but it was all mine. I enjoyed driving on the dirt roads around town and the feeling of freedom and speed. That car of mine could really go fast. 40 miles per hour!

In high school, I played football and tennis, and was good enough at football to receive an athletic scholarship from Trinity University in San Antonio. I have to admit that sometimes I daydreamed in class, and often times I thought about flying my very own airplane and being up there in the clouds.

That is when I even decided to take a correspondence course in aircraft engines. Whenever I got the chance, I would take my girl on a date up to Love Field in Dallas. We would watch the airplanes and listen to those mighty piston engines roar. I just loved it and if she didn't, well that was just too bad.

After my schooling, I operated a filling station with my brother, then drove a bus, and later had a job as a machinist in Longview, but I never lost my love of airplanes and my dream of flying. With what was going on in Europe and in Asia, I figured that our country would be drawn into war someday, so I decided to join the Army Air Corps in November of 1940. This way I could finally follow my dream. I reported for primary training in California.

The training was rigorous and frustrating at times. We trained at airfields all over California. It was tough going, and many of the guys washed out. When I finally saw that I was going to make it, I wrote to my girl back in Longview, Texas. Her name is Agnes Gill. I asked her to come out to California for my graduation..... and oh yeah, also to marry me. I graduated on July 11, 1941. I was now a real, honest-to-goodness Army Air Corps pilot. Two days later, I married "Aggie" in Reno, Nevada. We were starting a new life together and were very happy.

I received my orders to report to Pendleton, Oregon and join the 17th Bomb Group. Neither of us had traveled much before, and the drive north through the Cascade Range of the Sierra Nevada's was interesting and beautiful. It was an exciting time for us. My unit was the first to receive the **new B-25** medium bomber. When I saw it for the first time, I was in awe. It looked so huge. It was so sleek and powerful. The guys started calling it the "rocket plane," and I could hardly wait to get my hands on it. I told Aggie that it was really something! Reminded me of a big old scorpion, just ready to sting! Man, I could barely wait!

We were transferred to another airfield in Washington State, where we spent a lot a time flying practice missions and attacking imaginary targets. Then, there were other assignments in Mississippi and Georgia, for more maneuvers and more practice.

We were on our way back to California on December 7th when we got word of a Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor. We listened with mixed emotions to the announcements on the radio, and the next day to the declaration of war. What the President said, it just rang over and over in my head, "With confidence in our armed forces, with the unbounding termination of our people, we will gain the inevitable triumph. So help us God." By gosh, I felt as though he was talking straight to me! I didn't know what would happen to us, but we all knew that we would be going somewhere now.

The first weeks of the war, we were back in Oregon flying patrols at sea looking for possible Japanese submarines. We had to be up at 0330 hours to warm up the engines of our planes. There was 18 inches of snow on the ground, and it was so cold that our engine oil congealed overnight. We placed big tarps over the engines that reached down to the ground. Inside this tent we used plumbers' blow torches to thaw out the engines. I figured that my dad would be proud of me, if he could see me inside this tent with all this machinery, oil and grease. After about an hour of this, the engines were warm enough to start.

We flew patrols over the coasts of Oregon and Washington from dawn until dusk. Once I thought I spotted a sub, and started my bomb run, even had my bomb doors open, but I pulled out of it when I realized that it was just a big whale. Lucky for me, I would have never heard the end of that! Actually it was lucky for us that the Japanese didn't attack the west coast, because we just didn't have a strong enough force to beat them off. Our country was in a real fix now, and overall things looked pretty bleak to most folks. In early February, we were ordered to report to Columbus (Columbia?), South Carolina. Man, this Air Corps sure moves a fellow around a lot! Little did I know what was coming next!

After we got settled in Columbus, my squadron commander called us all together. He told us that an awfully hazardous mission was being planned, and then he asked for volunteers. There were some of the guys that did not step forward, but I was one of the ones that did. My co-pilot was shocked. He said, "You can't volunteer, Mac!"

You're married, and you and Aggie are expecting a baby soon. Don't do it!" I told him that "I got into the Air Force to do what I can, and Aggie understands how I feel. The war won't be easy for any of us." We that volunteered were transferred to Eglin Field near Valparaiso, Florida in late February. When we all got together, there were about 140 of us volunteers, and we were told that we were now part of the "Special B-25 Project.

We set about our training, but none of us knew what it was all about. We were ordered not to talk about it, not even to our wives. In early March, we were all called in for a briefing, and gathered together in a big building there on the base. Somebody said that the fellow who's head of this thing is coming to talk to us, and in walks **Lieutenant Colonel Jimmy Doolittle**. He was already an aviation legend, and there he stood right in front of us. I was truly amazed just to meet him. Colonel Doolittle explained that this mission would be extremely dangerous, and that only volunteers could take part. He said that he could not tell us where we were going, but he could say that some of us would not be coming back. Here was a silent pause; you could have heard a pin drop. Then Doolittle said that anyone of us could withdraw now, and that no one would criticize us for this decision. No one backed out! From the outset, all volunteers worked from the early morning hours until well after sunset. All excess weight was stripped from the planes and extra gas tanks were added. The lower gun turret was removed, the heavy liaison radio was removed, and then the tail guns were taken out and more gas tanks were put aboard. We extended the range of that plane from 1000 miles out to 2500 miles.

Then I was assigned my crew. There was **Richard Knobloch** the co-pilot, **Clayton Campbell**, the navigator, **Robert Bourgeois**, the bombardier, **Adam Williams**, the flight engineer and gunner, and me, **Mac McElroy**, the pilot. Over the coming days, I came to respect them a lot. They were a swell bunch of guys, just regular All-American boys.

We got a few ideas from the training as to what type of mission that we had signed on for. A Navy pilot had joined our group to coach us at short takeoffs and also in shipboard etiquette. We began our short

takeoff practice. Taking off with first a light load, then a normal load, and finally overloaded up to 31,000 lbs. The shortest possible take-off was obtained with flaps full down, stabilizer set three-fourths, tail heavy, full power against the brakes and releasing the brakes simultaneously as the engine revved up to max power. We pulled back gradually on the stick and the airplane left the ground with the tail skid about one foot from the runway. It was a very unnatural and scary way to get airborne! I could hardly believe it myself, the first time as I took off with a full gas load and dummy bombs within just 700 feet of runway in a near stall condition. We were, for all practical purposes, a slow flying gasoline bomb!

In addition to take-off practice, we refined our skills in day and night navigation, gunnery, bombing, and low level flying. We made cross country flights at tree-top level, night flights and navigational flights over the Gulf of Mexico without the use of a radio. After we started that short-field takeoff routine, we had some pretty fancy competition between the crews. I think that one crew got it down to about 300 feet on a hot day. We were told that only the best crews would actually go on the mission, and the rest would be held in reserve. One crew did stall on takeoff, slipped back to the ground, busting up their landing gear. They were eliminated from the mission. Doolittle emphasized again and again the extreme danger of this operation, and made it clear that anyone of us who so desired could drop out with no questions asked. No one did. On one of our cross country flights, we landed at **Barksdale Field** in Shreveport, and I was able to catch a bus over to Longview to see Aggie. We had a few hours together, and then we had to say our goodbyes. I told her I hoped to be back in time for the baby's birth, but I couldn't tell her where I was going. As I walked away, I turned and walked backwards for a ways, taking one last look at my beautiful pregnant Aggie.

Part 2 will continue in next month's Newsletter. Stay tuned.

"Grapevine Talking" This month is on hold again this month due to some scheduling difficulties. For those of you that haven't taken the opportunity, experience breakfast with the chapter every

Saturday morning at 8:00 AM. If you haven't been to the chapter [website](#) lately, take the opportunity to stop by and view the excellent work by Brad Olsen.



Cool video's found on the internet.

[A flying boat in 1929](#)

[Surfing the Morning Glory in Australia](#)

[Does Water really bounce?](#)

[Lights are good for more than just airplanes.](#)

What is it? From last month
Sponsored by:



Last month no one correctly identified this aircraft. One member uttered the correct response during the meeting, but true to the rules of this contest he did not submit in email form the correct response. One respondent suggested it was a Kitfox Lite with a 35hp 2si engine. While it was in fact the exact form that

was previously sold as the Kitfox Lite, this new version is from Belite Aircraft in the Midwest. The wings and tail have been redone in carbon fiber resulting in a significant weight loss while maintaining the strength of the original design. As a result the new Belite, sports a 45 hp engine, a full panel yet remaining within the FAR 103 rules for Ultralight. It's available as a kit or a fully assembled fly away airplane. <http://www.beliteaircraft.com/>

This is the last month of their sponsorship prizes, so please give them a call with your next order and tell them how much you appreciate their generous donation to our monthly newsletter.

Submit your answer to the newsletter editor to be eligible for a prize to be awarded each month at the regular chapter meeting. **You must be present to win.** Winning entries will be decided by the email that is received with the earliest time stamp and the correct naming of the make/model of the pictured airplane. Winners that correctly identified the winning make/model that do NOT attend the meeting will forfeit the prize to the next available submission.

The correct, first answer that attends the monthly meeting will be declared the winner. You will be notified of the winning entry at the monthly meeting. The winning entry that DOES attend the meeting will receive his/her prize at that time.

Should no one correctly respond with the winning make/model, the prize will be returned to the sponsor(s). Being part of a "group" really does make a difference. Join us for the regular chapter meeting and see what prize might be coming your way. I'll give you a hint, it will definitely be aviation related. Don't be late and check your email for the newsletter.

If anyone has something they think is new or unique, send it along. Special prize consideration will be given even though you will be ineligible for the monthly award, but you will have the thanks of the other chapter members for your CONTRIBUTION.

Now, break out your knowledge base and your experience and take a gander at this month's photo.

What is it?
Sponsored by:



Read the AIM and use your VHF for the ATIS (or ASOS) and CTAF and ATC in your ASEL when you're VFR to the NAVAID within MRA of the VOR with the DME (or NDB) AGL through the Class Whatever airspace, and check your ETE for your ETA to look for the ALS with REIL and VASI avoiding LLWS to save your ELT to get to an aviation dictionary to look up and see what you've just done. And don't forget to close your FAA with FSS PDQ or be SOL

I hope you enjoyed reading this month's newsletter as much as I had in doing it for you. If you have any suggestions to make it better or any feedback, please send to me at the following.....jeffrylite@comcast.net. For those that are flying....keep doing it and be safe out there. For those that are building, keep at it regularly, pretty soon it will become an airplane and all your hard work will be rewarded. For those of you sitting on the fence, come on, jump in the water's warm...(and my favorite line from the Mac/PC adds)...trust me.

Jeffry



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