

Runoff



VOLUME 35, ISSUE 5 JULY 2008

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GO J.W. GO



J.W. French flew into Sierra Skypark at the beginning of July as part of a flight originating out of Florida and intended to touch each of the 48 lower states as a partial recreation of a flight made by Sam Burgess back in 1974. Story inside.

GENERAL INFO

- Kings River Runoff
EAA Chapter 376
- Visit us at
www.EAA.cc
- Submit articles,
photos, etc. to:
flybum@comcast.net

NEXT GENERAL MEETING

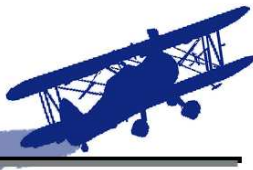
Tuesday, August 26, 2008

Location: Yosemite Falls Cafe (Ashlan & 99)

Time: 6:00 PM Dinner 7:30 PM Meeting

Program: Oshkosh Air Venture 2008

Photos and videos from Oshkosh. Review of some of the new aircraft announcements. Stories from members who attended.



PRESIDENT'S CORNER

Greetings members and friends. We did not schedule a barbeque or general meeting this month due to the likely heat and the Oshkosh AirVenture event. We did have a watermelon feed event on July 1st with the arrival of J.W. French. J.W. is completing his tour of EAA Chapters through the lower 48 states on what he has dubbed the Sam Burgess Memorial Junket. EAA chapters all over the country along with Paul Poberezny are following his progress through his daily updates which are posted on our website at www.eaa.cc.



J.W. arrived at Sierra Sky Park about 10:30 a.m. coming from an overnight visit with the EAA chapter in Visalia. Tim Cone and I met him upon arrival and settled him and his Acro Sport at Tim and Clari's home. Jim Coelho, Phil Moradian, Tim Cone and I went out for lunch with J.W. and had a great visit.

After lunch Bill Darnell and Steve LaFerrera took J.W. and me on a golf cart tour of Sierra Sky Park that included history about Sierra Sky Park and the homes. J.W. is a big fan of residential airparks and lives on one himself. The airstrip where he lives in Florida was created in 1940 but it was not an airpark at that time so it does not predate Sierra Sky Park as a residential airpark. During the tour we came upon Ted Nickel at his hangar and talked shop for some time.

Tim Cone and I took J.W. out for dinner where we learned more about his adventure. J.W. bought the Acro Sport II biplane specifically for this trip. It is his first experience with flying a biplane. He installed an extra fuel tank in the front seat where he also carries a little luggage and some supplies.

Jim Pratt's article will tell about J.W.'s talk during the watermelon feed which will include some information about who Sam Burgess is. The following is J.W.'s report which was e-mailed to chapter members all over the country after his visit with us:

The flight to Sierra Sky Park was less than a half-hour and uneventful. No mountains or big rocks to deal with, but I managed to distinguish myself by bouncing an attempted wheel landing and turning it into a crow hop ping three point landing. I'm glad there was not a large welcoming committee on hand to witness it. I was met by the chapter president and facilitator for this visit, Doug Betts, and my RON and hangar host Tim Cone. We went to town for a great lunch.

After lunch I was given the royal tour of Sierra Sky Park which is the oldest residential airpark in the U.S. It was started in 1946 by Mr. Bill Smilie. His widow, Doris Smilie has donated a tract of land to EAA Chapter #376 for the Bill Smilie Aviation Center. It will contain the San Joaquin Valley History Museum, the World Museum and the Youth Aviation Resource Center. The purpose of the Youth Aviation Resource Center is to use aviation to inspire youth toward math, science, and technology education.

A watermelon feed was put on by the chapter this evening to welcome the Sam Burgess Memorial Junket. After all the watermelon anyone wanted to eat I gave a short presentation on my recollection of the life and times of my late friend and mentor, Sam Burgess. I continue to be amazed by the people who had met Sam and/or know about his magnificent journey around the country is the his first Jungmeister, and remember the awesome turbine powered Bucker Jungmeister that he started at the age of 69 and completed when he was 74.

“We did have a watermelon feed event on July 1st with the arrival of J.W. French.”

I look forward to seeing you at our next event.

Doug

YESTERDAY'S HEROES AIRMEN: CADETS, INSTRUCTORS AND OFFICERS OF SEQUOIA AND RANKIN U.S. ARMY FIELDS

By Wes Nelson

This month our "Yesterday's Heroes" are the cadets, instructors and senior officers of Rankin and Sequoia Fields. Both of these U.S. Army fields were located near Visalia and Dinuba. Sequoia was sometimes referred to as the Visalia-Dinuba School of Aviation. This month I would like to give you a short book report from **Propwash**, compiled and written by Bruce Baird, for the Sequoia-Rankin Reunion Committee. The Committee's last known address was: 9322 Melba Drive, Garden Grove, CA, 92841.

This is a most interesting book. It has many chapters, photos and collected stories written by the cadets many years later.

But because of limited space in this newsletter, I would like to review only the weekly progression of the cadets through their nine-week primary flight training program.

Week 1

Cadets arrived in groups of 250. Upper classmen addressed them as "Dodods." They were given the basics of military procedures. A surprise was that they found their wooden beds had mattresses and springs, not just military-type cots. They were marched to and from meals. Clothes were stored in metal lockers. Taps was at 22030 hours. At 05:45, reveille was sounded. At 0600 they fell in to hear the plan. At 0700 they marched to the flight line. Until solo, the "Dodods" were required to wear their goggles around their necks. Flight instructors were then met. Their first ride was called a "dollar ride." It was one lap around the practice area.

While half the cadets were flying the other half attended ground school. When not flying, life was hard, routine but not dull. Quizzes were frequent and cadets had to score at least 80%.

Week 2

Those who scored high were given "open post" on Wednesday nights. Knuckleheads were given compulsory. "Open post" included trips into Visalia to meet with wives and family,

Week 3

Week 3 was a time for solos. Training continued... Athletics were stressed. The author noted that a USO tour group arrived during his second week... Flights continued and proficiency was gained. A group photo was taken for the local newsletter, Propwash.

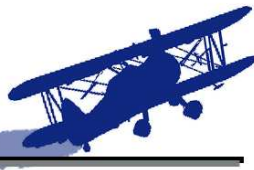
Week 4

The highlight of the fourth week was the pay line. Otherwise the busy routine continued.



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YESTERDAY'S HEROES CONTINUED

Week 5

Twenty-hour checks were given. Names would appear on the chalkboard for scheduling. This week the upper class departed for basic training. It was also time to greet a new "Dodo Class."

Week 6

"Passing the 20" was the goal to remaining a cadet. Elementary flight maneuvers gave way to chandelles and other aerobatics. Dress parades began. Temperatures reached 105 degrees.

Week 7

The seventh week was one of "no time outs." Solo flights were now of three hours duration. The clock was the cadet's enemy as there just wasn't enough time. Link trainer training had begun.

Week 8

During the eighth week the final army check ride loomed. They were reminded that "Nobody leaves Sequoia Field with a failing grade in any subject.: Finals were given in weather, engines, and navigation, Running to study hall became common. Trips to the PX cut into study time and were made in great haste.

Week 9

During the last week at Rankin or Sequoia, the one big challenge was the check ride. Those who survived the check ride and had all passing grades were sent off to basic training. No mention of how many of the original 250 proceeded to basic training.

It is interesting to note that the trainer used at Sequoia was the Ryan PT 22. As a teen I used to watch planes from both Sequoia and Rankin perform stalls, loops and spins. A neighbor, Lisle Oliver, a civilian instructor at Rankin took me to see Tex Rankin demonstrate aerobatics for the cadets. He used his Great Lakes biplane with a Menasco engine rather than one of the PT 17's.. Included in his routine was a "square loop" which was a trademark of Rankin. He is also known for setting a world-record number of loops in his Ryan STA.

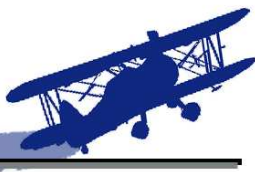




Update from Wes Nelson

This is Dr. Joseph Pascuzzo who spoke to us about his F-16 experiences. Some highlights of his talk were: Landing on ice in Northern Norway using a drogue chute; Five trips to Iraq doing flyovers; seven refuelings to get from Norway to US. He flew at reduced speed to stay in formation with the tankers and to conserve fuel.

Dr. Pascuzzo is Flight Surgeon for his New Jersey based squadron. He also spoke of the necessity for flight surgeons to experience what the F-16 pilot goes through in order to serve their medical needs. He spoke at the March meeting as I remember.



FOURTH OF JULY AT TEHACHAPI AIRPORT

Article and photos by Jim Pratt

For the third year in a row, Carol, Michelle and I went down to Tehachapi to celebrate the 4th of July at the airport where my son-in-law David Zweigle is the airport manager. It gives us the chance to see my two oldest daughters and their husbands and my four grand kids. Last year it was made better when David arranged for me to fly in an L-29 with the Thunder Delphins Flight Demonstration Team. What a kick that was. This year David succumbed to political pressure and the rides were doled out to some of the city officials. Too bad, so sad. I did get to talk to the pilots who were ex-military. What a way to spend retirement, flying jets at airshows.

We spent the day at the airport watching the Thunder Delphins perform and checking out all of the neat planes that were coming in for the celebration. You can meet some of the most interesting people there. One guy was an active test pilot for the Lockheed Skunk Works and claimed he was working on some sort of research dirigible. The highlight was running across Mike Melville (of Spaceship One fame) at his hangar. We had a long conversation about his space flight. He is retired now and lives in the Tehachapi area, most likely in Bear Valley Springs. I didn't want to put him on the spot, so after we returned to Fresno, I sent him an email asking whether or not he would be interested in coming to Fresno to speak to the chapter. So far there has been no reply, so maybe not.

Doug Shell's Wheeler Express resides at Tehachapi and it is owned now by a friend of David's whose name is also Doug.

For those of you who haven't noticed, Tehachapi airport has a real nice park area at the south end of the airport. There is a



FOURTH OF JULY CONTINUED

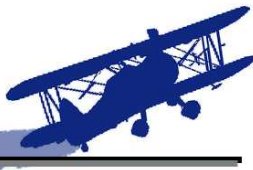


large grassy area with lots of shade trees, picnic tables, and barbeques. I imagine they would let you camp there if you were inclined to do so. We operated out of there during the day and watched the fireworks from there that night. All of the towns people come to the airport to watch the fireworks so there was quite a crowd there after dark.

David had a run in with one of the hangar owners while we were there. It seems that somehow this guy acquired the town's air raid siren and had it in his hangar. David was given the unenviable task by the city of retrieving it and the guy refused to give it up until the cops got there.

We had a real good time this year since two of my brothers and their families showed up along with my nephew James who is in the Marines and is about to report to OCS. It was quite a family reunion.





P-38 OVER CHINA:

MEETING PRESENTATION BY JIM HEITKOTTER

Article and photos by Jim Pratt

We sometimes roam far and wide looking for guest speakers for the meetings. For the June meeting we did not have to look very far because we have a member who had a very interesting story to tell. Jim Heitkotter, a long-time member of Chapter 376, started his flying career with the U.S. Army Air Force. He completed his flight training and then was sent to the China Theater and went on to fly P-40s, C-47s, and the P-38. As most of us know, flying in the China Theater was no picnic since most of the attention and the military resources were being applied elsewhere, in Europe and the Pacific theaters.

Jim told of several of the missions that he flew, including freight hauling missions and ground attack missions. His final mission was to a coastal harbor for a strike on Japanese shipping along with the rest of his squadron. Apparently the P-38 had a problem with fuel venting overboard when doing high-G maneuvers and this caused Jim's aircraft to run short of fuel on the return mission. He flew formation with another squadron member whose aircraft had developed engine problems and they both had to bail out in the same general area. On his exit from the aircraft, Jim struck the rear empennage and badly injured his leg. After landing on the top of a mountain, and spending the night there, some Chinese villagers, who had witnessed the bailout, came up the mountain to rescue him. He was a long way from his base so he was eventually taken to a mission run by a German couple who took care of him and arranged for his return to his unit. (Imagine Germans caring for him during wartime. They must have been really good people).

Jim had the good fortune of being returned to the United States to recuperate from his leg injury.

In later life, he became a school teacher and retained his interest in flying. He was one of the first people to complete a Rutan Vari-Eze and he and his wife flew it to places as far away as the Caribbean.

I know that my short synopsis of his story does not do it justice, so I promise that I will try to get him to write a better ren-

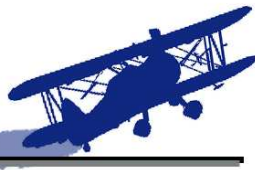
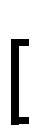


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P-38 OVER CHINA CONTINUED





CALIFORNIA AIRSHOW SCHEDULE FOR 2008

- 7/28-8/03 EAA Air Venture Oshkosh
- 8/01-02 Thunder in the Valley Airshow, Auburn
- 8/16-17 Wings over the Wine Ctry Sonoma CA
- 8/16-17 Camarillo Air Show Camarillo, CA
- 8/23-24 Thunder Over The Valley Santa Maria, CA
- 8/30-31 Travis AFB airshow Fairfield, CA
- 9/10-14 Reno Air Races Reno ,NV
- 9/13 Travis Air Expo Fairfield, CA
- 9/26-27 Chico Airfest Chico CA
- 9/27-28 California International Airshow Salinas, CA
- 10/03-05 MCAS Miramar Air Show San Diego, CA
- 10/04-05 Redding Air Show 2008 Redding, CA
- 10/11-12 San Francisco Fleet Week San Francisco, CA
- 10/17-19 Huntington Beach Air/Water Huntington Beach, CA
- 11/08-09 Nellis AFB Airshow Las Vegas, NV



GO J.W. GO

Article and photos by Jim Pratt

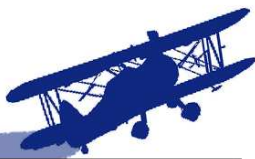
J.W. French flew into Sierra Skypark at the beginning of July as part of a flight originating out of Florida and intended to touch each of the 48 lower states as a partial recreation of a flight made by Sam Burgess back in 1974

J.W. is visiting EAA Chapters throughout the country and turns out to be real interesting guy who fit right in with the Chapter 376 bunch who were there to greet him. Doug Betts provided the watermelon and we all sat around that evening swapping stories and listening to J.W. talk about Sam Burgess who apparently is one of J.W.'s heroes. Sam was a former military pilot with lots of adventures under his belt, including flying in all 50 states. He had built a Bucker Jungmeister and at different times had installed three different engines in it including a standard, radial, and turbine engine. He suggested to J.W. that he try the same flight someday and J.W. carried the dream for several years, having to wait for retirement from his business to have the time to do it. His first attempt several years ago ended about half way through the intended trip.

J.W. French's flight originated in Florida and will include a stop at AirVenture 2008. He made his way west to California and visited Visalia just prior to coming to Skypark. The map included in this article shows the planned route. EAA Headquarters reports that J.W. had made it as far as St. Paul as of July 22.

J.W. is a member of EAA Chapter 66.





JOHN SYMONS'S WHATINTHEHECKIZZIT

WHATINTHEHECKIZZIT #11: ANSWER

The airplane featured in "Whatintheheckizzit #11 is the Martin-Baker M.B.5. built to an air ministry specification for a high-speed heavily armed fighter.

The design incorporated many unique features one of which was the use of a patented tubular steel girder type truss construction for the basic fuselage that was then covered with a light alloy skin. The wings had a single main spar built from laminated steel plates, and alloy steel ribs, all of which was covered with a light alloy skin. Forward of the main spar a "D" section was formed to provide a strong torsion box.

An earlier model of this airplane was fitted with a Napier Sabre "H" type 24 cylinder engine coupled to a De Havilland hydromantic airscrew but when the airplane was developed into the M.B.5. Model it sported a 2340 H.P. Rolls Royce Griffon engine coupled to a Rotol contra rotating propeller and that combination provided a very respectable performance of 460 M.P.H. at 20,000 feet.

Many of the hard learned lessons learned from squadron experience in the early part of the war were reflected in the design such as the introduction of a "Bubble" type canopy to provide the pilot with better all around visibility, a wide track landing gear for improved ground han-

dling, a placing of the cockpit well forward on the fuselage to improve visibility over the wing leading edge and a heavy armament of wing mounted Hispano 20MM cannon mounted in the wing panels firing outside of the propeller blades.

Airplane design at wars end was in a precarious position what with the introduction of jet power and like so many other promising designs the M.B.5. never made it to the starting gate.

Fortunately all was not lost for the Martin Baker Aircraft Company since they very quickly became the world leader in the design and manufacture of ejection seat systems for modern military high performance aircraft.



JOHN SYMONS'S WHATINTHEHECKIZZIT



WHATINTHEHECKIZZIT #12

The airplane illustrated was produced as a two-place tandem seat trainer for the Civil Pilot Training Program.

A couple of clues are:

- ◆ It was built by a company with experience in building and selling high end (expensive) four place airplanes in Hollywood in the thirties.
- ◆ It came with three optional engines ranging from 125 to 160 H.P.



MEETINGS / EVENTS

Next General Meeting

Tuesday, August 26, 2008

Location: Yosemite Falls Cafe (Ashlan & 99)

Time: Dinner 6:00 PM Meeting 7:30 PM

Program:



Next Board Meeting

Tuesday, **August 5, 2008** 7:30 PM

Wes Nelson's Home

Sierra SkyPark

Next Barbeque Luncheon

August 9, 2008 Sierra Skypark

Location: Jake's Park

Bring Desserts. Please volunteer to help with setup and serving.

EAA 376 End O' Summer Flyin

September 5-6, 2008

Call Dr. Charles Touton (559) 264-3165 or any Board member.

Next Young Eagles Rally

To be announced. There will most likely be informal rides given at the End O' Summer Flyin in September.

Dawn Patrol Fly-Out Planning Luncheon

Every Wednesday at 12:00 pm

Meet at Silver Dollar Hofbrau on Shaw at Hwy 41

Dawn Patrol Flyout

Every Saturday Morning 0730 (location posted on www.eaa.cc each Thurs.)

Email notification is also sent out

Next General Meeting

Tuesday, August 26, 2008

Location: Yosemite Falls Cafe (Ashlan & 99) Time: 6:00 PM

Dinner, Meeting at 7:30

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