

The WingNut

EAA Chapter One Flabob Airport (RIR) Riverside, CA



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We make flying FUN!

January 2009

An historic flight...an unhappy ending

This past Sept. 10-18, three historic airplanes departed from New York City and flew to San Francisco, retracing the original route used by airmail pilots in the 1920s. The commemorative flight, sponsored by Bill Boeing Jr. and Jeppesen, included the only flying 1928 Boeing 40C, flown by Addison Pemberton, the world's oldest flying Stearman, a C3B flown by Larry Tobin, and a 1930 Stearman 4E Speedmail, flown by Ben Scott. The flight was successful and widely publicized.

After the landing in SFO, Pemberton and Tobin headed north for their home airports in Spokane, WA. Unfortunately, Larry Tobin's Stearman C3B was destroyed in a crash landing, as the pilots were returning home. They were flying over the Columbia River Gorge between Cascade Locks and Hood River when the Stearman's engine quit and Tobin was forced to land in a field. The left wings hit trees, destroying the airplane. Luckily, Tobin was unhurt.

Following is an account of the historic airmail trip, and the subsequent crash, by the C3B's pilot. Larry said his Stearman was the fourth and last one built by Lloyd Stearman in Venice, CA, before Stearman opened a plant in Wichita, KS. The plane was flown by Stearman, who also signed parts inside the wing. He also said he had the aircraft insured through Avemco, who gave him a check within a week. Larry bought the historic bird back from the insurance company and is in the process of rebuilding it. —Ed.

By Larry Tobin, ret. TWA Capt.

The planning for this trip started two years before. I was restoring the world's oldest Stearman—a 1927 C3B—and my friend Addison Pemberton was restoring a 1928 Boeing 40 which had crashed in 1928. We had a dream to fly the trans con mail route and see what it was like for the mail pilots of that day. We invited a friend, Ben Scott, with a 1930 Stearman 4E, to join us. He had with him Al Holloway, who built our engines. We also invited George Perks from Spokane to ride and assist in the flying and take pictures. He also sent e-mails.

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Larry Tobin's Stearman C3B

HAPPY NEW YEAR, CHAPTER ONE!

EAA Chapter One

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**Featured airplane for
January:
Jim Pyle's
Pietenpol project**

Calendar



January 2009

1st – Happy New Year!

10th – Young Eagles Rally
Chapter One Hangar - 8 a.m.

11th – Chapter Meeting
Chapter One Hangar - noon

11th – Board Meeting
Chapter One Hangar - 3 p.m.

February 2009

6th -- First Friday Flicks
Chapter One Hangar - 5 p.m.

7th -- Young Eagles Rally
Chapter One Hangar - 8 a.m.

8th – Chapter Meeting
Chapter One Hangar - noon

8th – Board Meeting
Chapter One Hangar - 3 p.m.

March 2009

6th -- First Friday Flicks
Chapter One Hangar - 5 p.m.

7th -- Young Eagles Rally
Chapter One Hangar - 8 a.m.

8th – Chapter Meeting
Chapter One Hangar - noon

8th -- Board Meeting
Chapter One Hangar - 1 p.m.

28th – Riverside Air Show



The Prez Sez...

Happy New Year!!

I hope everyone had a great Christmas and New Years. I would like to welcome everyone back and welcome back our new and returning 2009 Chapter One board. Just like last year we have another busy year ahead of us.

Jerry Cortez

There is justice...!!!

One of the chief architects of the 2003 demolition of Chicago's Meigs Field has been arrested on federal bribery, corruption and fraud charges that include trying to sell the vacated U.S. Senate seat of President-elect Barack Obama.

John Harris, 46, was taken into FBI custody on December 9 along with Illinois governor Rod Blagojevich. Harris joined Blagojevich in 2005 as chief-of-staff after working nine years for Chicago mayor Richard Daley in a variety of positions that included deputy commissioner of aviation. Harris was widely seen throughout Illinois as the state's acting governor as Blagojevich became increasingly preoccupied with federal authorities investigating him since 2004. While deputy commissioner of aviation, Harris was the top city official overseeing the secret midnight demolition of Chicago's Meigs Field on March 30, 2003, and was present when the bulldozers rolled onto the runway. A framed photo of himself at Meigs that night hung in Harris's office and was said to be one of his prized possessions.



"I said rotate...rotate!!!"

FAA Seminars upcoming

The FAA Safety Team is sponsoring two seminars in January you might find of interest.

On Tuesday, January 13, "Flying High Performance/Complex Airplane [an OCPilots FAA Safety event]" will be held at 7:00 PM at the John Wayne Airport Administration Building, Airport Commission Room, 3160 Airway Avenue, Costa Mesa. Come to learn and have fun as Rod Machado presents ideas, tips and techniques about high performance and complex single-engine airplanes from his over 38 years in aviation.

On January 14, "Operating Safely at a Non-towered Airport" will be held at Corona Municipal Airport. Robin McCall will review the standards expected of pilots operating on and around non-towered fields, especially Corona Muni.

Local hearing to be held on proposed TSA rules

The TSA announced that it will hold five official public hearings this month for the business aviation community to provide feedback on the agency's proposed Large Aircraft Security Program (LASP). In its current form, the plan would require Part 91 operators of aircraft with an mtow of more than 12,500 pounds to create a TSA-approved security program, subject flight crew to FBI criminal background and fingerprint checks and run all passengers, including family members and employers, against the TSA's watch lists.

The meetings will each begin at 9 a.m. local time at the following dates and locations: January 6, White Plains, N.Y.; January 8, Atlanta; January 16, Chicago; **January 23, Burbank, CA**; and January 28, Houston. The public comment period on the proposal ends February 27.

Transcon Airmail flight ends in crash

(Continued from Page 1)

The aircraft were positioned in New York at Republic Field, Long Island, on Sep 8, 2008, for a departure Sep 10. I had not been back to NY since 1997 when I departed JFK in the left seat of a TWA 767 on my last flight to SFO.

I had already learned from flying my Stearman across country to get to NY that this would be a hard-to-handle aircraft due to pitch instability of the early Stearman. Any rough air made this a very hard plane to fly. Within a year Stearman had fixed the pitch problems with the C3-R.

We departed Republic Field on a great morning Sep 10th with a fly-by of JFK tower at their request at 400 ft. From there to the Statue of Liberty at the same altitude and flew around the statue for pictures. From there over EWR at tower request. The route took us to Bellefonte, PA, a 216-mile flight over the rugged hills of PA with no place to land if the engine quit. Those airmail pilots earned their pay on that stressful leg. A crowd of 400 was

there to greet us and we stamped the mail we were hauling. Then on to Cleveland Lakefront for the overnight, where a huge crowd greeted us. The weather was great the first day.

On Sep. 11th, we left Cleveland in the morning for arrival Bryan, OH. Another nice weather day. Landed Bryan mid morning and departed for Chicago Lansing. Another big crowd. We were now fighting weather to our next stop, Iowa City, so we got in the air as soon as possible. The old planes are very blind ahead so running weather is a problem. We had good GPS with weather so we knew what was ahead. One thing the mail pilots did not have to fight was towers and wind farms so they could run low over the railroad tracks to the next stop. Weather finally forced us to the ground in Rochelle, IL, 140 miles east of Iowa City. It was very windy and we had our hands full getting the planes on the ground.

We were able to get a nice hanger and we sat for five days waiting for the weather to clear. We got to know the people of Rochelle very well. Finally got going on Sep 15 and had to run some weather to Iowa City. Got in the clear on the way to Omaha and had great weather to Grand Island, NE, for the overnight. It was a long day but we were glad to escape the weather of the Chicago area and resume the journey.

Sep 16th found clear skies and light winds for a long day to North Platte, NE, Cheyenne, WY , Rawlins, WY, and

finally Rocks Springs, WY. We were whipped by the time we got to the hotel. Picked up Mary Weber of the USPS to ride from Rocks Springs to Reno and handle the mail. She rode the Boeing 40 and had the time of her life. The C-3 was very hard to handle on this long day as the Wyoming airports go to 7000 feet and I had to fly alone because of density altitude. I would normally have George Perks with me to help fly. The air was rough and I fought the plane all day.

Sep 17th found clear skies and smooth air for the leg to Salt Lake. I had George to help me fly. The Wasatch range into Salt Lake is very stressful in a 1927 airplane and we were glad to get over the range to lower ground. SLC tower requested a fly-by and we obliged on the way to the Salt Lake 2 airport. We had lunch at Salt Lake and continued to Elko, NV. The terrain is still pretty high out of Salt Lake but was able to take George. We had a great flight across the Salt Flats. Speed week was going on, so we saw the cars running from overhead. The air got very rough the rest of the way to Elko and George was a big help flying the C-3. The last leg of the day was Reno, NV, for a good home cooked meal and bed at Ben Scott's house . Big crowd at Reno for our arrival.

(Continued on Page 5)



Historic Stearman is now being rebuilt

(Continued from Page 4)

We woke to clear skies and no wind for the last day to San Francisco. The climb to altitude was difficult over the mountains out of Reno. And we flew the freeway all the way. Was very glad to get over the lower terrain. Arrived at Hayward in the East Bay to complete the trans con. Had a good crowd.

After lunch we flew the three aircraft by the Golden Gate at 400 feet for pictures, then landed at SFO to visit the museum. I had not been back to SFO in the cockpit since I landed that final TWA 767 there in 1997, so I came full circle in my 1927 Stearman. A nice flight from SFO to Hayward over the Bay and we were in for the night. Many TWA people to greet us.

The weather was clear for our morning departure north for home, having completed our mission. Addison and I said goodbye to Ben Scott and headed for Oregon. We flew over the crash sight of Addison's Boeing 40 at Canyonville, OR, on the way to overnight in Portland OR. The Boeing crashed there 80 years earlier running weather up I-5.

The morning of Sep 20th we woke to cold air and clouds at 3000 ft for our trip through the Columbia River Gorge. If you have ever flown the Gorge, you know how rough the terrain is. We had just passed the airport at Cascade Locks and the next field was Hood River, 20 miles ahead. This is the area where you say "don't quit now" to the engine. All of your life flying single engine you are always looking for a place to put it down.

At the halfway point, the unthinkable happened and the engine quit. My pal Addison was on my wing as I tried to get it going to no avail. I headed for the only green field in sight on the Washington side of the river. It was small, about 10 acres, with big trees on the edge. I was coming down like a rock. Old biplanes don't glide well with the engine windmilling. My airspeed was 40 MPH and it seemed I was headed straight down to keep flying speed. Addison kept an eye on me and kept saying, "Push over...don't stall!"

As I neared the end of this flight I found the field's last half sloped away severely and I couldn't get on the grass. A short road was ahead and I turned to get on it. I was looking at a barn and a big tree to the left of the road. I banked sharply to put the left wing into the tree to keep from hitting the barn. I told Addison just before I hit—"I am dead!" He watched my plane explode into little pieces as it flew into the ground and tree at the same time. The noise was awful and the jolt severe but in two seconds it was over. I still had my thumb on the transmit switch and told Addison, "I am alive and okay."

I shut down and got out as I was worried about fire. It did not burn. The homeowners were there to assist me. I was not hurt except for a sore shoulder and back. The wood wings absorbed the crash and saved my life. I had also turned into a 25 knot headwind just before impact, so I was going very slow. The time from engine quit to crash was 50 seconds.

Addison called in the emergency people and flew overhead until they arrived. He then landed at Hood River and waited for me, so we could fly home in the Boeing.

I flew this plane 7,000 miles and 110 hours during this trip. It just about made it. On the test run we found a piece of gasket got into the main jet of the carb, and shut of the fuel. I am rebuilding the plane and it will fly in two years.

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FROM THE EDITOR'S DESK

On looking back...and ahead

When I was a little sprout, running unattended and unafraid around the streets of Bellwood, PA, summers seemed to last forever. I couldn't wait for the last day of school and freedom! But about six weeks later, the freedom became boredom...one long day after another. By mid-August, I was actually looking forward to going back to school. Summers seemed to last forever!

Now that I'm a seasoned citizen, they don't seem so long. Now, in fact, it's like, where did the spring/summer/fall/year go? Seems like yesterday, I was writing a year's end wrap-up article for *The WingNut*. Now I'm doing another.

Why is it that as life gets shorter, the days get shorter? The months and years go by faster? Days become hours, hours become minutes, and minutes become time between bathroom visits. I don't care who you are...this getting' old ain't all it's cracked up to be. My Pappy loved to quote the Amish expression, "Too soon old, too late schmart."

A short time ago, we were looking forward to a busy and event-filled 2008. Well, it's come and gone...and it was busy and event-filled just like we anticipated.

On Feb. 2, we had a huge turn-out for the EAA Founder's Night Banquet in the Chapter One hangar, which was highlighted by a teleconference between Ray Stits and Tom Wathen here at Flabob and Paul and Audrey Poberezny in Oshkosh.

On March 29, Chapter One volunteers did PR work at the Riverside Airshow. In April, Pat Halloran flew the Schoenfelt Firecracker home to Flabob from Sun 'n Fun in Florida. Shortly thereafter, Ray Stits did a complete aeronautical evaluation of the plane and pronounced it unfit to fly. Also in April, we hosted the Pientenpol gathering, and in October, we had the Starduster/Biplane Fly-In.

We had our usual Fourth of July do-it-yourself picnic/fireworks show. We hosted EAA's Sport Air Workshops—two in March, two in September and a large one in October. We had a host of interesting speakers at our monthly Chapter Meetings.

And there was our Open House. 2008 will be remembered for its Open House—a once-in-a-lifetime gathering of aviation greats that had an overflow crowd listening to great speeches by Tom Poberezny and Burt Rutan, then photo ops with Tom, Burt, Ray Stits, and Tom Wathen. What a day, and what a night! It's a wonder our stage held up with all those aviation heavies on it.

Our annual Christmas Banquet drew about 100 attendees, and was enjoyed by all. Then it was over...time for families and the holidays.

Now, it's 2009. Another year dawns for Chapter One, and it promises to be a busy one again. And once again, we are asking for your time and participation. Jump in and join us for our monthly Chapter meetings. Offer a helping hand at our numerous events. And, for heaven's sake, help your poor downtrodden newsletter editor find things to print before *The WingNut* becomes another four-page poster for upcoming activities. If you know of any

progress on projects, interesting events, historic stories, funny stories, or just stories...let me know. Lord knows, I need all the help I can get...psychiatric and otherwise.

I hope you all have a fabulous and fantastic 2009! My advice: Don't read the papers, don't watch the news, don't listen to the media "experts," don't hope for a big jump in the stock market, and don't despair. If we work together, and stay connected, and give freely of our time and our talents, we will have a wonderful year. We will enter 2010 with a smile...knowing that we've made a difference and have had the joy of being part of a caring, loving family. I hope you'll be part of the Chapter One family.

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A look back at “Sky King”

Remember the old aviation-themed TV show from the 1950s, *Sky King*? Well, it’s back...so to speak.

All episodes of the show are now available online, thanks to the pilot training company, American Flyers. The episodes can be viewed from the company’s website at <http://www.americanflyers.net/entertainment/skyking.asp>.

Sky King began in the 1940s as a radio show, based on a radio story by Roy Winsor, and first aired in 1946. Several actors played the part of Sky, including Earl Nightingale and John Reed King.

Like many radio shows of the day there were many “radio premiums” offered to listeners. On November 2, 1947 in the episode titled "Mountain Detour," the Sky King Secret Signalscope was used. Listeners were advised to get their own for only 15 cents and the inner seal from a jar of Peter Pan Peanut Butter (produced by sponsor Derby Foods). The Signalscope included a glow-in-the-dark signaling device, whistle, magnifying glass and Sky King's private code. With the Signalscope you could also see around corners and trees. The premiums were innovative, such as the Sky King Spy-Detecto Writer, which had a "decoder," magnifying glass, measuring scale, and printing mechanism in a single package slightly over two inches long. Other notable premiums included the Mag-ni-Glo Writing Ring, which had a luminous element, a secret compartment, a magnifier, and a ballpoint pen all in the crownpiece of a "fits any finger" ring. The radio show ran until 1954, being aired simultaneously with the television version.



The television version starred Kirby Grant as Sky King and Gloria Winters as his teen-aged niece, Penny. Other regular characters included his nephew Clipper, played by Ron Hagerthy, and Mitch the sheriff, played by Ewing Mitchell. Unlike many "lawman-acquaintance" characters on other shows, Mitch was competent, intelligent and skilled. He was always coming to Sky for help, due to friendship and recognizing the utility of Sky's flying skills.

Many of the storylines would parallel those used in such dramatic potboilers as *Adventures of Superman* with the supporting cast repeatedly finding themselves in near death situations and the hero rescuing them with seconds to spare. Penny was particularly adroit at falling into the hands of spies, bank robbers (the best place to hide stolen loot was apparently in the Arizona desert) and other n'er-do-wells. After taunting the doomed Penny and mocking her uncle, they would invariably leave her tied up at the bottom of an abandoned mine with (take your pick) a ticking time bomb, rapidly rising water, collapsing ceilings, or crackling flames licking at her chair. Inexplicably, the bad guys would leave Penny in easy reach of a radio transmitter that would not only be turned on but switched to the frequency used by Uncle Sky who at that very moment would be circling above in the Songbird with an anxious Clipper at his side. Working the device with her shoulders and tongue, Penny would shout out "Help, Uncle Sky, Help Help!" Sky would shoot a quizzical look to Clipper and proclaim, "That's Penny!! And it sounds like she's in trouble!" Uncle Sky would make a steep bank and fly over the bad guys who would be instantly thrown into a state of complete confusion. All looking upward in complete anguish and fear, they would fire up at the Songbird in vain before losing control of their escape vehicle and plowing into a culvert where, through another set of incredible circumstances, Sheriff Mitch would be waiting for them after being alerted by Uncle Sky. The action would then cut back to the ranch where the happy throng is reunited without any explanation about how they found Penny and got down the mine without all of them getting killed. It was never explained why anyone would have an FAA spec radio transmitter at the bottom of an abandoned mine or how it would work 300 feet underground but such was the glory of imagination in the mid fifties!

(Continued on Page 8)

“Sky King” episodes can now be viewed online

(Continued from Page 7)

Largely a show for kids, although it sometimes aired in primetime, Sky King became an icon in the aviation community. Many pilots (including American astronauts) who grew up watching Sky King name him as an influence.

Though plot lines were often simplistic, Grant, despite his not being a pilot, was able to bring a casual, natural treatment of technical details which led to a level of believability not found in other TV series involving aviation or life in the American West. Likewise, villains and other characters were usually shown as intelligent and believable, rather than as two-dimensional. The writing was generally well above the standard for contemporary half-hour programs, though sometimes the acting was not.

The later episodes of the television show were notable for the dramatic opening with an air-to-air shot of the sleek, second Songbird banking sharply away from the camera and its engines roaring, while the announcer proclaimed "From out of the clear blue of the Western sky . . . comes Sky King!" The short credit roll which followed was equally dramatic, with the Songbird swooping at the camera across El Mirage dry lake, then pulling up into a steep climb as it went away. The end title featured a musical theme, with the credits superimposed over an air-to-air shot of the Songbird, cruising at altitude for several moments then banking to the left and turning away (similar to the opening shot).

Another memorable feature was Penny's radio calls from the ranch to Uncle Sky. They started like this: Penny- "Flying Crown to Songbird, Flying Crown to Songbird, come in Uncle Sky". Uncle Sky would then respond by asking Penny what she wanted. Penny would then say something like: "Uncle Sky, there are rustlers on the south forty." Then we would see the plane bank sharply as Uncle Sky would once again save the day.

The show also featured spectacular, low-level flying, especially with the later Songbird. Many shots showed the Cessna "down amongst the rocks and the trees," a way to show the speed of the plane as the desert flashed by in the background.

At the beginning of the television series, Sky flew a Cessna T-50 twin-engine "Bamboo Bomber." The plane, a WW II surplus UC-78B, was owned by legendary Hollywood pilot Paul Mantz and flown by employees of his Paul Mantz Aerial Services for filming of the flying sequences. At least two other T-50s are known to have been used for on-ground and in-the-cockpit scenes.

The best-known Songbird was a twin-engine Cessna 310B. The airplane used was the second production 310B (N5438A), which was provided by Cessna at no cost to the producers and piloted by Cessna's national sales manager for the 310, Bill Fergusson. Fergusson got the job after the motion picture pilot already selected was deemed unqualified to land the airplane at some of the off-airport sites required. Some months after a library of stock footage had been compiled, additional sequences were filmed using a different airplane. The original 310B was eventually destroyed in a 1962 crash at Delano, CA, that killed its owner-pilot. Cockpit sequences were filmed using the static test fuselage, also provided by Cessna.

Though set in Arizona, the series was filmed in the high desert of California. The ranch house used for exterior shots of the Flying Crown Ranch is an actual home in Apple Valley, although it has been extensively remodeled since its use as headquarters of the "Flying Crown Ranch." Other locations were shot in and around Apple Valley and the nearby San Bernardino Mountains, George Air Force Base and Naval Air Weapons Station China Lake. Interior filming was done at the General Service studio.

While expensive for a kids' show, most of the budget went into aircraft, vehicles and sets. This meant that some standard production methods had to be abandoned, giving the series a more realistic look. For instance, in some shots, pilot Bill Fergusson actually did taxi the 310B rather than the more common (but time-consuming, thus costly) method of simulating movement by towing or dolly shots.

The budget issue also forced the frequent reuse of stock footage, sometimes flipped over to show planes banking the opposite direction, thus sometimes letters and numbers were seen in mirror-image.

The black-and-white film masked the actual paint scheme of the Cessna 310B, which was done in a rich multi-color pattern of Coronado Yellow, Sierra Gold and White, with a gold interior.

The series Sky King ended production in February 1959. There were no additional episodes filmed after that date.

(Lifted from Wikipedia, The Free Encyclopedia)



Good for the soul...

A professor stood before his philosophy class and had some items in front of him. When the class began, he wordlessly picked up a very large and empty mayonnaise jar and proceeded to fill it with golf balls. He then asked the students if the jar was full. They agreed that it was.

The professor then picked up a box of pebbles and poured them into the jar. He shook the jar lightly. The pebbles rolled into the open areas between the golf balls. He then asked the students again if the jar was full. They agreed it was.

The professor next picked up a box of sand and poured it into the jar. Of course, the sand filled up everything else. He asked once more if the jar was full. The students responded with an unanimous 'yes.'

The professor then produced two beers from under the table and poured the entire contents into the jar, effectively filling the empty space between the sand. The students laughed.

“Now,” said the professor, as the laughter subsided, “I want you to recognize that this jar represents your life. The golf balls are the important things---your family, your children, your health, your friends and your favorite passions---and if everything else was lost and only they remained, your life would still be full.

“The pebbles are the other things that matter like your job, your house and your car. The sand is everything else---the small stuff.

“If you put the sand into the jar first,” he continued, “there is no room for the pebbles or the golf balls. The same goes for life. If you spend all your time and energy on the small stuff you will never have room for the things that are important to you.

“Pay attention to the things that are critical to your happiness. Spend time with your children. Spend time with your parents. Visit with grandparents. Take time to get medical checkups. Take your spouse out to dinner. Play another 18. There will always be time to clean the house and fix the disposal. Take care of the golf ball first---the things that really matter. Set your priorities. The rest is just sand.”

One of the students raised her hand and inquired what the beer represented. The professor smiled and said, “I’m glad you asked.

“The beer just shows you that no matter how full your life may seem, there’s always room for a couple of beers with a friend.”

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