

ONLINE

EAA CHAPTER 25

MINNEAPOLIS / ST PAUL, MN

APRIL 2005



L-4J 45-4809

by Jim Maloney

When someone mentions the word “warbird”, what images does it bring to mind?

The sound of a Merlin engine, and flash of a P-51? The lumbering silhouette and drone of a B-24?

When America entered the Second World War, every person and company in the country stepped up to do their part. Piper aircraft and its employees were no exception. They made a few modifications to

(Continued on page 4)

Discovering New Zealand

Part II Article and photos by Dan Carroll

In last month's newsletter, I wrote about the beginning of my trip with some friends to New Zealand and of my excitement and anticipation of flying a Cessna 206 in this small island country. Based out of Matt and Jo McCaughan's Geordie Hill Station, we covered a lot of the South Island's geography by air, and by the end of the trip all of us came home with great memories and lots of photos.

There were many parts of the trip that left indelible im- *(Continued on page 6)*



Old Mandeville Airfield

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2005 Air Camp Scholarship
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Cleared for Takeoff

by Jon Cumpton

The primary role of the Vice President is to step in when the President is otherwise engaged. Pat is wrapped up with annual training at NWA, so he asked me to write this column. Looking back at March, it was a great month for flying, especially so early in the year this far north. I can remember past Marches when there was so much snow on the ramp in front of my hangar it required excavation equipment just to make a path to the taxiway!

It was a unique month for me since I managed to fly more than 25 hours. Usually, this takes about six months for me. (Pat reminded me that he does that in a week.) On March 15th, I had the opportunity to take delivery of a Cirrus SR20 up in Duluth. I had the good fortune to be accompanied by my friend Byron. Byron is the Director of Training for Lynn University's aeronautical program. We are in a sort of partnership that will share use of the airplane during the year. I was elected to take the Cirrus transition training, and Byron accompanied me to observe the training and then to assist me in ferrying the airplane to Florida. Needless to say, we had a great time, even considering we spent a week in Duluth. Although it managed to snow almost every morning, it magically cleared up every day around 11:00 in time to go flying. Besides the normal stuff in this type of training, we also did three cross-countries, which wound up covering most of northern Minnesota, including a brief over flight of Canada. Pattern work at Duluth was made more interesting this particular week by Air National Guard training -- F16's scrambling and C130's doing touch and goes.

We then flew the aircraft to south Florida. All I can say is that the glass cockpit approach to cross country flying is definitely the way to go. I also had the benefit of having Byron in the right seat with roughly 50 years of flying experience. We were fortunate to have VFR weather most of the way. When we hit thunderstorm activity around Tampa, we were able to use the XM Weather overlay on the moving map to steer around the bad stuff. All in all, it was a great experience. Now, for the time being, I have managed to transition back to my tail dragger with a lot less help from the panel!

This month we also selected our candidate for this summer's Air Academy Camp. We had a group of potential candidates, so asked each of them to write a short essay describing their interest in going to the camp. The response made us wish we had more money to spend, but we were able to select one deserving candidate. He is Noah Lorsung and he is a student at Washburn High School. We met him through Peter Denny's aviation class, where he is helping build the Sonex. Speaking of the Sonex, Peter's class continues to make progress. The parts are beginning to look like an airplane. I urge you to visit Washburn – Peter will be glad to see you too.

As you probably know, during the winter months we hold our Young Eagle events over at the Airlake FBO, operated by the Aircraft Resource Center. They have been great hosts, especially for our YE events. Since the beginning of the year, the facility has been managed by Franco Fiorillo. Please be sure to say hello when you visit there and thank him for his support.

ARC was the host when we held our latest YE Rally on April 8th for the Boys & Girls Club. At this point in the year, we already have a good flight count – almost 40 kids. By the time you read this, we will hopefully have flown even more at our regular third Saturday event.

Please note that this month's chapter meeting will be at a different location! We have been invited to visit an aircraft restoration facility at Fleming Field. We will meet at the terminal building, and then go visit Sierra Hotel Aero – look for details on page 3. Next month, we will be returning to the chapter hangar for the summer meetings. We hope to see you there!

Jon Cumpton

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ON FINAL



Minneapolis/St. Paul

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The Leader In Recreational Aviation

This Month—Apr 20th—Fleming Field—6:30 pm

Meeting starts at 6:30 at Fleming Field terminal building

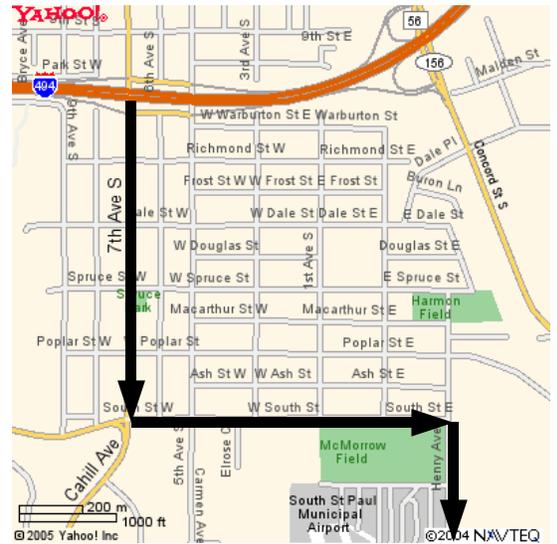
Speaker: Chris Gardner, president and CEO of Sierra Hotel Aero at Fleming Field, has agreed to give us a tour of his operation this month. They are FAA/PMA approved to manufacture parts for civilian aircraft and DOD certified for military part contracts. In addition to part manufacturing, their facility can accommodate most general aviation aircraft for modifications and repairs. Sierra Hotel Aero is especially recognized for their work in restoring and repairing historic Navion aircraft.

We will gather in Fleming's terminal building at the south end of Henry St. in South St. Paul at 6:30 pm for a short meeting before the tour, which is scheduled to begin at 7:00 pm.

Saturday, Apr 16th—Young Eagles Flights at 9am Look for signs giving directions when you arrive at Airlake. We plan to hold the flights at the FBO. Volunteers please John Koser or Jeff Coffey (contact info on page 2).

Saturday, May 21st—Young Eagles at Airlake

Directions to Meeting: From the intersection of 494 and Hwy 52: Proceed east to the 7th & 5th Ave exit. Turn right and head south on 7th Ave 5 blocks to South St. Turn left on South St. and proceed east to where South St. ends at Henry St. Turn right on Henry St. and head south to where Henry St. ends at the parking lot for the Fleming Field terminal building. The terminal building is at the south end of the parking lot. Sierra Hotel Aero is located on the north end of the parking lot at 1690 Aeronca lane. You can enter Sierra Hotel Aero directly from the parking lot.



EAA Chapter 25 Meeting Minutes March 16, 2005

Presiding Officer: Pat Halligan

Location: Washburn High School

Business meeting discussions

- ◇ Pat reminded members of our goal to eliminate paper for the monthly newsletter. For 2006, the chapter is considering charging an extra \$5 annual dues for member wishing to continue receiving paper.
- ◇ Let Pat or Bill Brown know if you need a nametag.
- ◇ Pat congratulated member Lou Martin on receiving the MN Aviation Hall of Fame 2004 award for best aviation writing by a Minnesotan. Lou won the award for his book *Wings Over Persia*.
- ◇ Don't forget the MN Aviation Hall of Fame Banquet in Bloomington on April 23rd (see events p8)
- ◇ Peter Denny announced that he will be opening up Washburn High for students and chapter volunteers to work on the Sonex project on Saturdays. Up to six students will be allowed to participate each Saturday, and one will be required to bring a parent to assist. The sessions will run from 9am to 2pm.
- ◇ Members gathered at the Sonex project after Dan's presentation on New Zealand.

Program

Dan Carroll presented a DVD travelogue of his flying tour of New Zealand. Copies of Dan's DVD are available for a \$5 donation to the chapter.

Submitted by Pete Gavin
April, 2005

Noah Lorsung Awarded EAA Aircamp

by John Koser



Chapter 25 has awarded its EAA Aircamp scholarship for 2005 to Noah Lorsung of Washburn High. Noah is shown with instructor Peter Denny in the photo to the left. Noah is 17, and is enrolled in Algebra2/Trig, AP US History, Spanish I, Aviation Construction, AP Chemistry, and English 11.

Q: Why would you like to be selected for this experience?

A: I would like to be selected because I am in my junior year of high school and I would like to get to know the industry better, so I can make choices about colleges and my future. I would also like to learn more about experimental aircraft.

Q: What would you gain from this experience?

A: I would gain more than just bragging rights; I would be able to make a life altering decision: college. I would be able to enlighten my peers on the pros and cons of the industry, and I would be able to spread the word.

Q: What would it be like to meet other young people from all over America at this camp?

A: It would be very cool, especially if they were into experimental aircraft and could enlighten me with their knowledge. I think it would be very neat if I could meet and discuss our progress (on the Sonex) with another student my age, or thereabouts.

Q: What is it that makes you passionate about aviation?

A: Two words: Mr. Denny. He has elevated my love for aviation to a new height. Before I had his classes I was nowhere as near informed about aviation and the atmosphere revolving around it.



L-4J 45-4809

(Continued from page 1)

the J-3 “Cub” and dressed it in olive drab. It was designated the L-4 (“L” for Liaison), and it was soon to become the most feared sight and sound a German infantry soldier could know.

Weighing less than eight hundred pounds, unarmed, and with a sixty-five horsepower engine, the Piper L-4 series carried two men and a radio, and could bring more destruction than a squadron of B-25s. While circling the battlefield, the pilot and observer would scout enemy positions. Then, using the radio, they would direct artillery fire to accurately eliminate those positions. They caused enough destruction, and were so feared, that the German forces offered a two week pass for R&R to any soldier responsible for the downing of a Liaison aircraft.

The only defense the L-4 had was the ability to stay below the tree line. They would try to get past any place they were open to ground fire before anyone could get a shot at them. When attacked by an ME-109 or FW-190, the slow speed of the L-4 could be employed to make quick, tight turns. This would force the faster fighter to overshoot. There were several occasions where German fighters crashed while pursuing L-4’s.

The last aerial combat over Europe was between an L-4 and a Fiesler Storch. The Storch and its crew were shot down by the L-4 crew. They were armed with nothing more than a Colt .45!

L-4’s were used in the Pacific theater and all other places the U.S. Army and Army Air Forces were deployed. Some were kept stateside to help train the pilots, mechanics, and troops preparing to go overseas. This was the mission assigned to “45-4809”.

“45-4809” rolled off Piper Aircraft’s Lockhaven, Pennsylvania assembly line on April 12, 1945. The Army Air Forces accepted it into its inventory on April 16, and on May 22, it started a long journey to Sheppard Field, Wichita Falls, Texas. It made several stops along the way, and arrived June 24, 1945. It was assigned to the 3706th Base Unit, which was a basic training unit at Sheppard Field, but it was soon reassigned to the 2532nd Base Unit at Randolph Field, San Antonio, Texas. The 2532nd’s role was defined as “Pilot School, Specialized, Very Heavy”. The group moved to San Marcos Field, Texas, and the aircraft was stored there starting in January of 1948. It was then transferred to the 5th Liaison Group, which was part of the Tactical Air Command, based in Greenville, South Carolina. It remained in a storage state in Greenville until it was sent to the Civil Air Patrol in Rock Hill, South Carolina. The last active assignment was with the Civil Air Patrol in Little Rock, Arkansas. It was once again put into storage in June 1954. It was declared surplus in 1975, and purchased by Jesse Millerd of Little Rock. He fell ill, and my wife Sarah and I bought the aircraft in 2001.



Don Eide, daughter Sarah, and son-in-law Jim Maloney

I had just sold my Pitts S-1S and found the ad in Trade-A-Plane. With a pre-purchase completed by an agent, the report came in: “It’s not a creampuff. It won’t win Oshkosh by any means, but it’s a good old Cub that just needs cables.” A deal was struck, so I jump-seated to Little Rock, rented a Ryder truck, and drove to the Pine Bluff airport. When I saw the airplane I had to laugh. Obviously, I should have checked out the latest conversion factor on the word “rough”. We loaded the airplane, and on the way out of town I called my father-in-law, Don Eide. “So? What’s it like?” he asked with excitement. “Well, Don. ... We’ve got a project!” Not the words he really wanted to hear. The word “project” was not as disturbing as the use of the word “we”. Twenty hours of driving later, the world’s largest aircraft model box showed up in Don’s driveway. “No glue needed! Batteries not included. May need some assembly. Ages 5 and up.” My lessons in aircraft restoration and rebuilding were about to begin.

The next day we were ripping fabric off the airframe and discovering more of what we had to work with. It seemed a shame to get rid of the red Naugahyde side panels and wing root covers, accented by black vinyl seats (it was like the worst possible country-western bar had a fire sale). The rear stick had a P-51 stick grip. The N number was adorning the tail in half-inch sticky N numbers (one side was even put on backwards!).

Upon inspecting the airframe, it became clear that a few feet of each lower longeron towards the tailpost would need to be replaced. All window glass would need to be replaced, and patterns for them would need to be made from scratch. The complete in-



(Cont’d on p5)



strument panel, with shock mounted section, needed to be replaced. All four spars had cracks near the spar attach fittings.

The butt ribs needed to be replaced, due to larger than normal screws used to hold the wing fairings on. A few leading edges were dented, and the false spars were suffering from some dissimilar metal corrosion where the aileron attach fittings pass through. At some point a PA-12 rudder had been installed, which has a different shape than the L-4, and needed to be replaced. The floorboards were good for patterns. The straps holding the fuel tank were installed improperly, but the problem had been fixed at some point by wrapping them in several rolls of duct tape to take up the extra space. Every day seemed to end the same way. A sigh, a shake of the head, and a good laugh at the question "What was someone thinking when they did THIS?!"

There were a few positive aspects of the airplane. The original knob to hold the sliding window was still in place. The instruments were all original military. The kickplate curtain at the end of the floorboards was still installed, as well as the sheetmetal that the mag switch mounts to. When we removed the fabric from the right aileron, there were pencil signatures from Piper employees, dated 1944, and a few from the Civil Air Patrol members dated 1952.

Little did we know that the clock had started the countdown of a four-year restoration. It took the entire four years to strip the airframe to its very basic form, make all necessary repairs, and rebuild it from the ground up. After reassembling the major components, we covered the aircraft using the Poly-Fiber process. Every nut, bolt, screw, and washer was replaced along the way. Oh ... and eventually we got around to installing the new cables!

There was very little paperwork with the airplane when I picked it up, so I placed a call to the former owner's son.



When he answered the phone, he was sitting at his desk pondering where he should send a folder he had found. The folder pertained to the

airplane, but he was not sure what information it contained. He dropped it in the mail. It contained the original military logbooks, a



aircraft checker's logbook, airframe and engine history data sheets, Civil Air Patrol logsheets, and a few miscellaneous pieces of military paperwork. We now had papers that had signatures of the instructors that took the airplane out, the students who were being taught, the crew chiefs assigned to it, and the mechanics that assisted them. There are squawks logged and greasy fingerprints left behind when they were repaired. We were no longer just rebuilding another Cub; we were returning a piece of history to the air.

During the four years of restoration, we spent countless hours researching the aircraft type as well as this specific aircraft. We contacted Maxwell AFB, and received a copy of the Air Force's history card on the aircraft to complement the paperwork we had already received. Through the International Liaison Pilot and Airplane Association, I was put in contact with Major Jon Engle (son of famous aviator General Joe Engle, of X-15 and Space Shuttle fame). Jon was excited to see the history of the airplane. He took all the history cards and decoded all the numbers and abbreviations to produce a "plain English" version of the units it was assigned to, and the dates it moved. We then contacted Piper aircraft, who sent us a fax that contained a confirmation that the serial numbers on the wings and fuselage matched the ones installed on the airframe in 1945! They were also able to tell us that it left the factory in olive drab, with grey undersides to the fuselage, wings, and tail surfaces, and had a Beech-Roby prop installed. The L-4 "J" and "H" models were the only ones to use Beech-Roby props, and they were removed by the military due to maintenance costs.

The engine on the aircraft was a Continental O-170. This was the military designation for the A-65. The engine that was on the aircraft was the last engine the military had installed, and was documented as such.

To be continued next month . . .

Jim and Don take off from Airlake



Discovering New Zealand

Part II (Continued from page 1)

pressions, but one particular segment of the trip stands out from all the others. It was without question, one of the more challenging flying experiences of the trip that I'd like to share with you, particularly a visit to the Croydon Aircraft Co. restoration facility located on a small grass airstrip in Mandeville and our flight from Stewart Island to Milford Sound.

At the beginning of the second week of our adventure, we were scheduled out early one morning for an over night trip to Stewart Island, which is just off the southern tip of New Zealand's South Island. The itinerary was uncomplicated. The planned routing for the first day was simply to leave Geordie Hill, head south down the Lindis Valley toward Cromwell and then along the Garvy Mountain Range, pick up the Mataura River and then southeast to our first stop, Old Mandeville Airfield. From there we would make a short hop to Gore for fuel and then head south to Invercargill and then cross the Foveau Straits to Stewart Island.

During breakfast that morning there was some chatter about the weather and the routing through the mountains down to Mandeville. After the first week of flying I was beginning to feel fairly comfortable with the airplane and flying the narrow valleys and the mountain contours. But calling the local Flight Service Station (FSS) for a weather and route briefing wasn't an option. Weather services in New Zealand are a subscription service that can only be accessed by computer. Since Matt had the only computer, I had to rely on his evaluation of the weather and trust his judgment.

The launch this particular morning looked like a "go", and Matt said that the weather for the next two days didn't seem to be a problem. He wasn't sure if we could make it through the valleys along the Garvy Mountain Range, but there was an alternative route to the east. Now all we had to do is preflight and get in the air.

The flight down to Mandeville was uneventful and the winds were light, which gave me a chance to really take in the spectacular scenery. We made an approach to the west at the Old Mandeville Airfield and landed on one highly

manicured grass strip. We had the field to ourselves and taxied right up to what looked like a small cluster of World War I vintage han-

gars, replete with rose bushes in full bloom along the side of the hangar. The setting could easily have been used for shooting the Errol Flynn movie, "The Dawn Patrol".



The Croydon Aircraft Co. is a small operation owned and operated by Colin Smith. Croydon is apparently well known for its restoration of DeHavilland Moths and other DeHavilland aircraft models of an early vintage. To our delight, the hangars were filled with a variety of DeHavilland airframes, Gypsy engines and props and tooling to match.

Some of the airplanes were at various stages of restoration, but the bulk of the inventories were completely restored and airworthy. There were Chipmunks (DHC1), a Puss Moth (DH80A), several Tiger Moths (DH82A), a Fox Moth (DH83), a Leopard Moth (DH85), a Hornet Moth (DH87B), a Dragon Rapide (DH89B), a Dragonfly (DH90), a Moth Minor (DH94), an original all wood 1934 Comet (DH88) used in the London to Sydney Air Race. There was a Simmonds Spartan and the real odd duck amongst them, a nearly completed restoration of a Beech D17 Staggerwing. (The latter is being restored for its U.S. owner who apparently plans on flying it home to Reno, the long way home, i.e., around the world.) Colin was also close to finishing a replica of a Pither 1910 Monoplane (it looks something like a Bleriot).



The few hours that we spent at the Croydon facility were a pure delight. Unfortunately we had places to go and had to make Stewart Island before nightfall.

The winds had kicked up by the time we departed Old Mandeville Airfield and I was grateful to have an extremely wide grass strip for takeoff in a strong crosswind. We made a short stop at Gore, another grass strip about 15 miles from Old Mandeville, (Cont'd on page 7)



Landing at Ryan Creek



for fuel. Our next stop for the night was Ryan Creek Aerodrome on Stewart Island.

By the time we got down to Stewart Island the winds were really blowing hard. I wasn't sure what it was going to be like landing at Ryan Creek, which was a narrow paved strip located on top of a ridge above the small fishing community of Halfmoon Bay. Suffice it to say, it wasn't a pretty landing, but the only damage done was to my pride. The cheers of joy from my passengers when we got on the ground made it seem worthwhile. I was exhausted and couldn't wait to have a well-deserved libation.



The night and the next morning came and went without too much excitement. Although I will say that the fishing around the island was terrific. The rest of the day would be spent in the air, snaking our way through the Fiordlands and the Southern Alps with stops in Te Anau and Milford Sound. It was a breathtaking flight covering 250 nautical miles of mostly mountain flying. For the uninitiated, mountain flying can provide some of the most exhilarating and challenging flying you'll ever do. Flying the narrow valleys and crossing the high mountain saddles into the next valley, sometimes with nominal clearance between clouds and terrain can be a true test of nerve and conviction. Some might say that it was more excitement than they bargained for.

This last leg was the highlight of the two-day trip, particularly seeing the high elevation waterfalls and the approach to landing and departure at Milford Sound. We didn't experience the fierce winds that this area is known for when we arrived at Milford Sound, but we were told that after a heavy rainfall and high winds, the waterfalls fall up on the lea side of the mountains. Imagine that if you can.

The approach to Milford Sound Airport is spectacular. The sight of the mountains rising from the sea vertically to heights of 6000 feet is absolutely magnificent. I can live without the windshear part of the approach to landing though.

The end of daylight was approaching and after a short break on the ground at Milford Sound, we headed for home. With the help of the strong westerly winds coming through the Sound, our rate of climb got us up to 8,000 feet within minutes after takeoff and from there it was a short flight to Wanaka for fuel and then home to Geordie Hill. In reflection, those two days of flying were fantastic.



Milford Sound



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Chapter Events and Fly-Ins

Apr 20th Chapter 25 Meeting
Fleming Field, So St Paul 6:30pm
 (See directions on page 3)

May 21st Young Eagle Event LVN

Future meetings 5/18, 6/15, 7/20,
8/17, 9/21, 10/19, 11/16, 12/21, 1/18

Apr 23 Bloomington Mn 5pm
 MAHOF Induction Banquet.
 For reservation contact Nancy
 Olson, 1101 E. 78th Street,
 Suite 150, Bloomington, MN 55425
 or call 952/851-0066 ext 230

Apr 23-24 Cloquet Mn (COQ) 8-4p
 Swap meet & YE Rally
 218/879-3062

Apr 28-30 Rochester Mn RST)
 Mn Av. Symp. mnairports.org

Apr 30-May 1 Oshkosh Wi (OSH)
 'Coupe Cub & Aeronca Fly-in
 Pioneer Field 715/842-7814

May 6-8 E. Gull Lk, Mn (9Y2)
 Mn Seaplane Pilots Safety Seminar
 Cragun's Resort 218/825-2852

May 20 Blaine Mn (ANE)
 Lindbergh Foundatn. Hangar Party
 featuring Burt Rutan
 www.lindberghfoundation.com

May 21 Alexandria Mn (AXN) 8a-
1p Fly-In Breakfast 320/762-1333

May 21-22 Blaine Mn (ANE) 7a-4p
 Warbird Round-Up and Bkfst
 Hangar dance 8p 5/21 Heli. Rides

May 22 So St Paul Mn (SGS) 8a-

12p Pancake Bkfst, Young
 Eagle rides. 651/292-9497

May 28 Brainerd Mn (BRD)
 8-10:30a Fly-In Bkfst

Jun 4 Amery Wi (AHH) 7a-noon
 Fly-in Bkfst 715/268-6899

Jun 4 Clear Lake Mn (8Y6) 10a-2p
 Bean and Brat Fly-In
 mahoney@cloudnet.com

Jun 4-5 Anoka Mn (ANE) 10a-4p
 1909 Gnome Omega rotary
 aircraft engine run 651/291-7925

Jun 5 Reedsburg Wi (C35) 7a-12p
 Breakfast Fly-In 608/524-5022

Jun 12 Albert Lea Mn (AEL) 7a-
12:30p Pancake Breakfast

Jun 12 Red Lake Falls Mn (D81)
 8a-1p Pancake Bkfst 218/263-4304

Jun 18 Two Harbors Mn (TWM)
 10a-3p Chili and Hot Dog Fly-In
 218/834-4784

Jun 19 Cambridge Mn (CBG) 8a-
1p Fly- in Breakfast

Jun 19 Hutchinson Mn (HCD) 8a-
12p Fly-In Bkfst, Pork chops 4-7
 320/587-3802

Jun 25-26 Cloquet Mn (COQ) 8a-
1p Bkfst & YE Rally 218/879-3062

Jun 26 Aitkin Mn (AIT) 7a-3p
 Fly-In bkfst, lunch 218/927-4104

Jun 26 Caledonia Mn (CHU) 730a-
12p Fly-In Bkfst,
 brianm@acegroup.cc.

Jul 25-31 AirVenture 2005 (OSH)



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OOPS from Lee Hurry

On assignment for a national magazine, a photographer was sent to get photos of a huge forest fire in northern Arizona. The smoke at the scene was too thick to get any good shots from the ground, so he frantically called his magazine to see if he could hire a plane.

"Don't worry about a thing," said the editor. "It will be waiting for you at the airport."

Sure enough, as soon as he got to the tiny, rural airport, a small Cessna was warming up near the runway. He jumped in with his gear and yelled, "Let's get this thing off the ground NOW." The pilot turned in to the wind and they were soon aloft.

"Fly over the north side of the fire," said the photographer, "and make a few low-level passes."

"Why?" asked the pilot.

"Because I'm here to document this fire. I'm a photographer and photographers take pictures," said the photographer with great exasperation and impatience.

After a long pause the pilot said, "You mean you're not the instructor?"



ON FINAL APRIL 2005

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