



CORBEN COURIER

Published for the members of the Experimental Aircraft Association, Chapter 93, Madison, Wisconsin
NOVEMBER 2007

The Chapter 93 monthly meeting will be held at **7:00, Thursday, November 15**, at the Chapter clubroom, Blackhawk Field, Cottage Grove, WI. We will have **Ken Gei shirt**, who was in Hawaii during the attack on Pearl Harbor, talk to us about his military service in the South Pacific as a tail gunner on a B-17.

From the Local section of the Wisconsin State Journal, Sunday, October 27, 2007

Wil Bremer of Madison pilots his Champion high-wing two-seater, built in 1960, over Cottage Grove. Bremer and more than 40 other pilots flew their aircraft to Blackhawk Field to attend a four-hour fundraiser for the Madison Chapter of the EAA, or Experimental Aircraft Association, on Sunday, August 27.

Great publicity for Chapter 93, Wil !!



Photo by Christopher Guess—Wis. State Journal

ANNUAL BANQUET

We will have as guest speaker at our 2008 banquet, David **Jensen**, the Deputy Director of the Dane County Regional Airport. He will show a video presentation on the history of Truax Field, airport improvements, and other information. Mr. Jensen will be very interesting and we should get as many people to attend as possible. The banquet will be held again at Lake Windsor Country Club on January 12, 2008. Further information in the December newsletter.

THE GIMLI GLIDER INCIDENT

From an article in Soaring Magazine by Wade H. Nelson

If a Boeing 767 runs out of fuel at 41,000 feet, what do you have? Answer: A 132-ton glider with a sink rate of more than 2,000 feet-per-minute and marginally enough hydraulic pressure to control the ailerons, elevator, and rudder. Put veteran pilots Bob Pearson and cool-as-a-cucumber Maurice Quintal in the cockpit and you've got the unbelievable but true story of Air Canada Flight 143, known ever since as the Gimli Glider. (*Continued from October newsletter.*)

Why did Pearson select 32L instead of 32R? Gimli was uncontrolled, so Pearson had to rely on visual cues. It was approaching dusk. Runway 32L was a bit wider, having been the primary runway at Gimli in prior years. Light stanchions still led up to 32L. And the "X" painted on 32L, indicating its inactive status, was reportedly quite faded or non-existent. Having made an initial decision to go for 32L, the wide separation of the runways would have made it impossible for

Pearson to divert to 32R at the last moment. Pearson says he "never even saw 32R, focusing instead on airspeed, altitude, and his plane's relationship to the threshold of 32L."

The 767 silently leveled off and the main gear touched down as spectators, racers, and kids on bicycles fled the runway. The gigantic Boeing was about to become a 132-ton silver bulldozer. One member of the Winnipeg Sports Car Club reportedly was walking down the dragstrip, five-gallon can full of hi-octane racing fuel in hand, when he looked up and saw the 767 headed right for him. Pearson stood on the brakes the instant the main gear touched down. An explosion rocked through the 767's cabin as two tires blew out. The nose gear, which hadn't locked down, collapsed with a loud bang. The nose of the 767 slammed against the tarmac, bounced, then began throwing a 300-foot shower of sparks. The right engine nacelle struck the ground. The 767 reached the tail end of the dragstrip and the nose grazed a few of the guardrail's wooden support poles. (The dragstrip began in the middle of the runway with the guardrail extending towards 32L's threshold.) Pearson applied extra right brake so the main gear would straddle the guardrail. Would all of the sports car fans be able to get out of the way, or would Pearson have to veer the big jet off the runway to avoid hitting stragglers?

The 767 came to a stop on its nose, mains, and right engine nacelle, less than 100 feet from spectators, barbecues and campers. All of the race fans had managed to flee the path of the silver bulldozer. The 767's fuselage was intact. For an instant, there was silence in the cabin. Then cheers and applause broke out among Flight 143's passengers. They'd made it; they were all still alive. But it wasn't over yet. A small fire had broken out in the nose of the aircraft. Oily black smoke began to pour into the cockpit. The fiery deaths of passengers in an Air Canada DC-9 that had made an emergency landing in Cincinnati a month before was on the flight attendants' minds and an emergency evacuation was ordered. The unusual nose-down angle the plane was resting at made the rear emergency slides nearly vertical. Descending them was going to be treacherous.

The only injuries that resulted from Pearson's dead-stick landing of Flight 143 came from passengers exiting the rear emergency slide, hitting the asphalt. None of the injuries were life-threatening. The fire in the aircraft's nose area was battled by members of the Winnipeg Sports Car Club who converged on the plane with dozens of hand-held fire extinguishers. Pearson had touched down 800 feet from the threshold and used a mere 3000 feet of runway to stop. A general aviation pilot who viewed the landing from a Cessna on the apron of 32R described it as "impeccable." The 767 was relatively undamaged.

Air Canada Aircraft #604 was repaired sufficiently to be flown out of Gimli two days later. After approximately \$1M in repairs, consisting primarily of nose gear replacement, skin repairs and replacement of wiring harness, it re-entered the Air Canada fleet. To this day, Aircraft #604 is known to insiders as "The Gimli Glider." The avoidance of disaster was credited to Capt. Pearson's "knowledge of gliding which he applied in an emergency situation to the landing of one of the most sophisticated aircraft ever built." Captain Pearson strongly credits Quintal for his cockpit management of "everything but the actual flight controls," including his recommendation of Gimli as a landing spot. Captains Pearson and Quintal spoke at the 1991 SSA Convention in Albuquerque about their experiences. Pearson was, at the time, still employed and flying for Air Canada, and occasionally flying his Blanik L-13 sailplane on the weekends; he has since retired to raise horses. Maurice Quintal is now an A-320 pilot for Air Canada, and will soon be captaining 767s, including Aircraft #604.

An amusing side-note to the Gimli story is that after Flight 143 had landed safely, a group of Air Canada mechanics were dispatched to drive down and begin effecting repair. They piled into a van with all their tools. They reportedly ran out of fuel enroute, finding themselves stranded somewhere in the backwoods of Manitoba.

PHOTO RECONNAISSANCE

From The Badger News, The Eighth Air Force Historical Society

When the USAAF went in on Normandy Beach, they went in shooting with everything they had. But there was a bunch of boys that went in without guns. Led by Major Norris Hartwell, the 7th Recon pilots were the first ones over the beaches on Tuesday morning. The pictures they brought back were the first reliable source of information the allied command had of the situation in that sector. Radio messages can be garbled, but pictures don't lie.

On June 14, 1944, Richard P. Hottelet, a war correspondent with CBS, interviewed Major Hartwell on a radio broadcast from London.

Hottelet: "Here is Major Norris E. Hartwell, who was the first reconnaissance pilot over the beaches on D-Day. How has your job gone since H-Hour, Norris?"

Hartwell: "We've been as busy as the proverbial one-armed paperhanger. In the first two days, our group flew 80 missions and took over 5,000 photographs. You see, we don't go out in bunches. We go out one or two at a time to different sectors on different assignments."

Hottelet: "I'm told they don't put machine guns in your planes because they're afraid your boys would stooze around looking for a fight instead of taking pictures."

Hartwell: "We don't need guns. The P-38s we fly are fast enough to keep us out of trouble."

Hottelet: "You've been over the invasion beaches from one end to the other more than once. How does it look?" Hartwell: "The last time I flew from Le Harve to Cherbourg, there were still a lot of ships out *in* the bay unloading men and equipment. They've set up terrific balloon barrages at various sectors. When we fly low, we have to be very careful so as not to run into any of them. I could see troops moving inland. There was quite a lot of activity. I saw concentrations of tanks and other vehicles in assembly areas. With our terrific fighter cover, it didn't look as if our boys were at all concerned about enemy aircraft. Even with all the activity, the beaches didn't look very crowded."

Hottelet: "How did it look farther inland?" Hartwell: "It looked as if there was quite a lot of movement behind our lines, but I didn't notice much activity in the German positions. The only things I saw back there were fires and ruins. I saw one

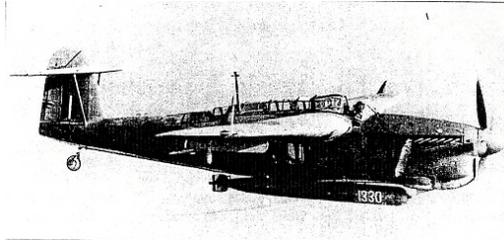
railroad train on fire from engine to caboose and several towns were burning as well. I flew over the enemy airfield at Caen on my last trip. It was in ruins, but the AA gunners were ready for me and they let me have it. I gave them a couple bursts with my camera and went on my way. At several places, I saw red, green and orange parachutes and more gliders than on the first day. And I'm very glad to say - less artillery fire." Hotelet: "How was it on D-Day?"

Hartwell: "You know, D-Day was a relief. We'd been working pretty hard and I guess it was a nervous strain for us like it was for everybody else. I flew along the coast shortly after seven in the morning. We had expected to have the daylight shot out of us by anti-aircraft fire and to have German fighters on our tails all the way. But we didn't see any enemy fighters and the anti-aircraft fire was enthusiastic but wild. We had a grandstand seat for that show. Looking down, we saw men in landing crafts which were dragging white wakes behind them. There wasn't as much shore fire in some places as in others. One time, we got caught between the fire from the ships and the return fire from shore and we got out of there in a hurry." Hotelet: "When Major Hartwell says his boys were working pretty hard before D-Day, he's putting it mildly and he's not giving you any idea of the importance of the job he and his buddies did. Thank you, Major Hartwell - and thanks to your photo recon pilots. We wish you good shooting."

In all the weeks before the invasion, the photo recon boys were General Eisenhower's eyes. Through them, Ike was able to see the German defenses, to see how they were standing up to our bombing offensive and to allow for dress rehearsals of the big event.

AIRCRAFT IDENTIFICATION

This British dive bomber credited with the sinking of the German warship Tirpitz, had as its nickname a predatory sea creature. What was its full name?



Last month's aircraft was the Japanese Nakajima Ki-27, the most prolific Nipponese attacker at Pearl Harbor on December 7, 1941.

AWAY FROM IT ALL

From the September 2007 issue of *ASEE Prism magazine* SPACE - that final frontier - has lured astronauts for 46 years. Now, here come the tourists. British entrepreneur Richard Branson's Virgin Galactic expects to begin commercial space flights in 2009 at \$200,000 a pop. His ship, VSS Enterprise, will carry two pilots and six passengers, soar 68 miles into suborbital space and hit a speed of 2,500 mph - nearly three times the speed of sound. It was designed by Burt Rutan and is modeled after his SpaceShipOne, which captured the \$10 million Ansari X Prize in 2004. Amazon.com founder Jeff Bezos' Blue Origin project intends to start weekly flights by 2010. Its planned ship, New Shepard, aims to take three passengers 62 miles up into zero gravity territory for a few seconds of thrills before heading back to Earth. Last November, Blue origin successfully launched a cone-shaped test vehicle to a height of 285 feet before gently landing. Another group, Oklahoma's Rocketplane Kistler, also wants to launch tourist flights by 2009 in a plane that will haul three passengers and a pilot. Can space motels be far behind?

SECRETARY'S REPORT

Chapter 93 Membership Meeting, October 18, 2007 Gary Chenier informed the group that the profits from the Ford Tri-Motor event were in excess of \$600. A thank you goes out to all the members who helped to make the Ford Tri-Motor event a success... thank you.

The Chapter received an invitation for the Annual Banquet of the Wisconsin Aviation Hall of Fame which was held on November 10, 2007.

The time for ordering the new 2008 EAA calendars is here. You may place your order at the next meeting or you may contact me at **825-3286** (home) or **920-255-0094** (cell), or e-mail at earlpmartin@excite.com with 2008 EAA calendar in the subject line.

Members, mark your calendars for **January 12, 2008**, which is the date of the Chapter 93 Annual Banquet and I hope to see you all there.

We had **Tester Lea**, a World War II veteran and personal pilot for Ray Kroc (McDonald's founder) talk to the Chapter about his aviation experiences. Thank you, Tester, for sharing your experiences with the Chapter.

Earl Martin

PRESIDENT'S REPORT

It's hard to believe, but in only six weeks, it will be Christmas! But before then, Chapter 93 will be having its annual Chili Fly-in on **December 1**. We will be looking for volunteers at this month's meeting to bring chili, crackers, cookies, etc. We will also be holding the election of Chapter officers and Board members.

It is not too early to pay your annual dues. Remember, you get a discount if dues are paid before the end of the year. Our annual banquet is **January 12**, and we will ask for a preliminary head count. If any members can make a trip up to OSH, we need to pick up some door prizes for the banquet And finally, don't forget to order your new EAA calendar. You may pay for them when they arrive, but we need to get a total so they can be received before Christmas.

Fly safely!!

Gary Chenier

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EAA Chapter 93 publishes *Corben Courier* once a month for and about its members who are interested in all phases of aviation. Articles to be submitted must reach the editor by the first Saturday of the month. Meeting night is the third Thursday of the month unless otherwise stated. Members may advertise items free of charge. Business card size ads are \$5 per month or \$50 per year.

Disclaimer: The *Corben Courier* newsletter serves as a clearinghouse of ideas and suggestions for homebuilt aircraft and owner operated aircraft. No responsibility or liability is assumed, expressed, or implied for the suitability, accuracy, or approval of any information contained in this newsletter. Any parties using suggestions or ideas expressed herein do so at their own risk without recourse against anyone.