



TAIL-DRAGGER And "Nose-Dragger" too!



Volume 25 Issue 6

June, 2012

Restoring My Challenger II

It has been almost two years since I landed the Challenger on 18 R at MDH and was involved in a cross-wind incident. The landing was entirely normal; however, during the roll-out a sudden gust caused the airplane to "balloon" to the left. At that point the aircraft was stalled completely and rolling out partially off the left edge of the runway. Consequently, the left side of the nose cone and left landing-gear leg struck a "blue light" and a "shadow box".

Immediately after the incident occurred, it drew quite a crowd; although the whole affair was something of a "tempest in a teapot" the airport Manager's office advised me that they would call someone in order to move the airplane back to the hangar. After waiting for over an hour for the equipment to arrive, I drove into Carbondale for lunch. As soon as I arrived at my apartment, the phone rang with an urgent message to return to the airport posthaste. Consequently, I made the trip back in record time. A tow truck had arrived; however, the driver had no equipment suitable for moving the airplane. His only solution was to hook on and drag it from the grassy area adjacent to taxi-way "Charlie" over to the hangars. Fortunately, during my absence, John Cotter and his students had gone out to view the situation. I here wish to express my deep appreciation to John for preventing the driver from doing his thing, which undoubtedly would have resulted in considerable unnecessary damage from dragging my disabled airplane behind a tow truck. John and his students simply lifted the left wing (the left landing-gear strut was broken) and wheeled the airplane back to my hangar on the remaining landing gear and nose wheel; thus the possibility of additional damage was avoided.

In order to make the necessary repairs and restore the Challenger to airworthy condition, an agreement was entered into with a local A&P; this included the understanding that all parts ordering would be my responsibility. However, all work would have to be performed in his shop. The wings, lift and jury struts were removed and left in my hangar. On September 30, 2010 the fuselage was transported to the Harrisburg Airport. I ordered a new landing-gear leg from "Skyles The Limit" in Phoenix, Arizona. The windshield, tail surfaces, tail wheel and fabric covering were removed. A list of parts needed from Quad City was emailed to me which included the larger dorsal fin and vertical tail. The damage to the fiberglass nose cone was repaired, a reinforcement was installed on the left-side main longeron and the new landing-gear leg was installed. At this point with the airplane dismantled, the entire repair project was summarily abandoned. It would remain abandoned and scattered around the shop in various pieces for the next, approximately, ten months.

I received a phone call from Steve in early July, 2011 offering to get a trailer and bring my Challenger back to Carbondale. Needless to say, that was the best news I had received in a very long time. On July 11, 2011 my bird was finally back to its nest in hangar B-11. The men of Chapter 277 then set to work to begin the recovering job on the fuselage with Vic directing the effort. The air temperature that day was 100 °F with a heat index of 113°. After the bottom of the fuselage was covered, we decided to wait for some cooler weather. On August 18, 2011 the recovering of the fuselage was completed in very good order. Consequently, I owe a debt of gratitude to the following: (the "magnificent seven") Steve, Vic, Clarke, Ron, Bill, Rex and Charley. Their assistance, advice and encouragement proved invaluable as I girded myself for the arduous task of completing the restoration and customization of my Challenger.

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During the month of December, 2011 the fuselage, wings and tail surfaces were all transported over to Don Jewell's shop in Murphysboro where the snappy red, white and blue paint job was applied.

Since I had reached the point in the repair and reconstruction process which exceeded my limited technical acumen, I called on Zac Fager of Southern Sky Maintenance. Zac is not only an experienced A&P with impressive credentials, but he is also a fixed-wing pilot. Zac had not previously worked on a Challenger; however, he accepted the job with the statement: "well, it's just another airplane". Incidentally, "Southern Sky Maintenance" is a much-needed asset at Southern Illinois Airport. On January 9, 2012 we moved the fuselage, wings, tail surfaces, engine and other miscellaneous parts over to Maintenance Hangar #1. With Zac's expertise and my assistance, we set to work. On April 25, we started the Rotax, which had not run for many months; we tested it up to full throttle at 6,000 RPM. It seemed to me that the little engine started, ran better and sounded better than it ever did before.

The initial test flight was made on May 11th with Bob Carter as test pilot. My beautifully reconstituted Challenger II fly's like a "puff of warm air". And, "all is well that ends well".



Frank H. Graff

Sad News

On Saturday, May 26, 2012 our chapter lost an accomplished and well liked member, Bon Hartline. He died at his home in Anna, Illinois. He was 94, born March 22, 1918.

Aviation was only one of his many interests; he was the owner/operator of Hartline Fruit Farm and Holly Nursery in Anna. Bon was a member of the American Rhododendron, American Magnolia and Azalea Societies. In 1998 he received the Hall of Fame Award for distinguished service to the fruit industry from the Illinois State Horticultural Society. He was also a member of the Holly Society of America, a life member and president from 1980 to 1981. From 1945 to 1995 Bon was the Official Weather Observer in Union County for the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration. For this he received the Edward H. Stroll Award from the United States Department of Commerce.

Other achievements include; seats on the Anna-Jonesboro Community High School Board of Education and the Board of Governors of Illinois State Colleges and Universities.

Bon planted 200 varieties of holly; eight of which he discovered. He identified, hybridized and registered many new cultivars of holly and magnolia and contributed hollies to arboretums across the United States.

The 277 Chapter News Letter from March, 2006 contains an article that outlines Bon's aviation achievements which are impressive. The following is taken from the article with pictures of some of his many airplane projects.



BUSY-BUSY BON

TAIL-DRAGER AND "NOSE-DRAGGER" TOO
March, 2006



Bon Hartline has been in aviation for a number of years and accomplished many feats. We sat down to talk with him, and with the aid of his log books, put some of his aviation history into a chronological order.

Bon first started flying on August 20, 1944 at Valentine Air Service of Marion, IL. Fred Valentine was his first flight instructor flying a J-3 Cub. On September 3, '44 he soloed in the J-3 after 8 hours of instruction. His first cross-country was to Cape, Cairo and back to Marion on Oct. 1st, '44. His student time was acquired in J-3s & a J-5. Bon took his CAA (before FAA) pilots test at Lambert Field on Dec. 21, '44. He took his wife up on the 23rd and his brother up on the 24th. He received his license by "Special Delivery" on Dec. 25. What a Christmas present! The CAA did things in a more expeditious manner than the FAA. Bon, individually and in partnerships, owned a J-3 first, then two Luscombes (65 hp and an 85 hp model). The planes were kept at an airstrip in Anna-Jonesboro. On March 11, 1945 he had to fly the plane out to keep it from being damaged by flooding. Several flights were made in 1944 and 1945, and in Sept. '45 he made a trip to Benton Harbor, MI to chase down a guy and collect for some peaches that had not been paid for (determined businessman).

After Nov 29, 1951 he quit flying for a number of years with only 1 flight in '55 and one in '56. Then in Feb. '65 Bon started flying again in a flying club "Champ" at Cairo.

From 1968 to 1986 his flying was sporadic (that is the regularity of, not his flying ability).

Between Sept. & Oct. 1986, Bon received 5 hours dual auto-gyro time at Paducah, KY.

Bon constructed nine aircraft in sequence since 1987: Kitfox (N156PH), Kitfox (N383BH), Pulsar 582 (N72BH), Kitfox (N73BH), Kitfox (N1670B), Kitfox Speedster (N594K), Pulsar XP 912 (N795P), Glastar (N897G) and Kitfox Speedster (N998K).

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Bon flew his first Kitfox I on March 15, 1988. This plane was sold to a man in England that owned 4 Kitfox's before this one. A man from Canada bought his Kitfox II.

Bon said either # 4 or 5 suffered complete loss when it caught fire at Jack Kiel's strip at Dongola when the engine was started.

In 1988, Bon had a 6 bypass heart surgery at Cape Gireadeau hospital. This did not keep him down—he went back to building airplanes.

When Bon completed the Glastar kit, he took the airplane to Arlington, WA to have a Subaru engine installed. When they FINALLY finished the engine installation, Ron Diggs & Bon flew it back home. This aircraft was destroyed later coming back from Sun-N-Fun when the engine quit. Ron Diggs & Bon were both injured.

To top it all off, Bon completed a tandem parachute jump on his 85th and 90th birthdays. Larry Flesner was his pilot.

NOTE: We believe Bon holds the Chapter record for the most aircraft built (9).



Pat Mc Guire

BOARD MEETING MINUTES

June 4, 2012

Purpose: To handle business items, leaving more time at Chapter meetings.

Members Present: Bob Amunrud, Dick Cannon, Clarke Deacon, Ron Farver, Janet Hartwig, Pat McGuire, Charley Rodriguez, Steve Schlager, John Williams, Marshal White. The meeting was held in the conference room at Midwest Aviation, Marion, and called to order by Steve Schlager at 7:08 PM.

- The Treasurer reported a balance of \$2960.22. This was before receiving expenses for the "Coffee & Donuts" program.
- The "Coffee & Donut" program at Hartwig's in Hurst was one of our better get-togethers. Reportedly, 13 aircraft were there. The weather was perfect too. The next "C & D" program is a viewing of Roger Followell's P-51 at his home on July 21, 9AM-11AM.
- The breakfast on June 16 will include a "Fly Market". A classified ad appears in "Fly Low" newspaper.
- A B-29, B-24, and P-51 will arrive at Carbondale on June 18 and depart the next day on their way to their next airshow. B-29 "Fifi" is the only flying B-29 in the world!
- Chapter 277 was represented at Bon Hartline's funeral last week.
- The meeting adjourned at 8:15 pm

Membership Meeting of Monday, May 14, 2012

Weather: perfect Attendance: a little below average
One guest

- The Meeting was held in the SIU AvTech classroom in Carbondale, and called to order at 7:03 PM by President Schlager.
- Because of time constraints, WSIL-TV's weatherman Jim Razor opened the program with a presentation Weather Alert Information. The system of tornado sirens was not timely in the recent Harrisburg tornado even though the TV station had tracked the weather for 30 minutes before it struck the city. He recommended two "weather apps" and the latest design in weather radios.
- Sam Hoskins presented the status of the Big Muddy Air Race which is to take place on June 9.
- Clarke Deacon showed another EAA "Hints" video.
- President Schlager announced that 3 aircraft had been sold this week: Clarke Deacon's RV4 went to Ann Arbor MI, Bob Amunrud's Ercoupe went to Painton MO, and Steve Schlager's Kitfox went to Evansville IN.

Bob Amunrud, Secretary

REFRESHMENTS

June: Southern Illinois Airport Authority
July: Paul Smith & Vic Vicari



COMING EVENTS

Mon, June 11, 2012 [7:00 pm]—Membership Meeting, Emergency Operations Center, 3470 New Era Rd., Southern Illinois Airport.

Sat, June 16, 2012 [8:30 am]—Pancake Breakfast & Fly Market, Midwest Aviation, Marion Airport.

Mon-Tue, June 18-19 [Time TBA]—B-29 "FIFI", a B-24 & P-51 of the Commemorative Air Force, MDH.

Mon, July 2, 2012 [7:00pm]—Board meeting, Midwest Aviation, Marion Airport.

CHAPTER 277 YEAR 2012 OFFICERS

President—Steve Schlager
Vice-President—Ron Farver
Treasurer—Clarke Deacon
Secretary—Bob Amunrud
Newsletter Editor—Pat McGuire

YEAR 2012 BOARD MEMBERS

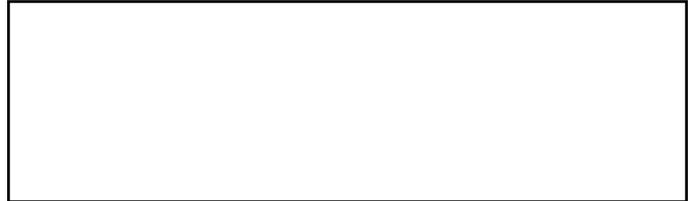
All of the above—Plus:
Membership—Marshall White
Young Eagles Cord.—Charley Rodriguez
Member—at-large—John Williams
Past President—Charley Rodriguez

2012 Chapter Dues will be accepted at our membership meeting Monday night. They are \$20.00 for the year and entitle you to a monthly copy of our newsletter and a choice of either a beige or grey chapter cap.

MEETING PROGRAM

A program on future developments at Southern Illinois Airport will be presented by the southern Illinois Airport Authority.

Pat McGuire
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Carbondale, IL 62901



President's Column

June finds us at the start of what could be a busy flying season for those of us in Chapter 277. We just finished our first "Coffee & Donuts" fly-in/drive-in get-together at Scott & Janet Hartwig's airport home at Hurst. We had a great time!

We have another one scheduled for July 21 at Roger Followell's home south of Marion, where he's building a P-51 Mustang. Drive in only, there.

I understand that Mt. Vernon is once again having their breakfasts back at SRT Aviation's hangar on the first Saturday of every month. See? Another place to fly to.

Remember, the June meeting is NOT in its usual spot, but across the east side of the airport, at the new maintenance facility (Emergency Operations Center, 3470 New Era Road). Watch for the yellow EAA sign to lead you in.

See you there!

Steve Schlager, President