



NEWSLETTER

EAA 297 - KITTYHAWKERS

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PRESIDENTS CORNER

Kittyhawkers! We held our latest board meeting in the "No Whining Saloon" this past week. The chapters biggest challenge is preparing for the Fall Fly-in and Car Show which is scheduled for Saturday the 12th of November. It is always fun! Some new challenges that we are facing include; facilities clean up, and maybe some equipment updating, i.e. bathroom clean-up, possible painting, refrigerator clean up and similar galley cleaning. Painting the "No Whining Saloon" seemed to be unanimous! We'll have to scope the work since we're great pilots and aircraft builders but may not to great brush painters. We are planning to paint the clubhouse on Saturday October 15th. We will discuss the details of the effort and seek volunteers during our next meeting.

During the November chapter meeting we'll need everyone to sign up for fly-in support. We've done this before and already have a sign-in sheet ready for your signature. If you're new to the chapter you will find there are lots of opportunities to help direct aircraft to parking areas or to help folks find the BBQ.... It is really a lot of FUN!

Thanks for your continued support of our chapter activities!

Dave

SEPTEMBER MEETING

STAG AIR PARK - Our monthly meeting was delayed until the second Saturday of the month in order to maximize attendance. Apparently we made a good decision because the meeting was well attended and all appeared to enjoy themselves. Our President missed the meeting while on a bus tour of the western United States. Our Vice President missed the meeting because he was on a bike ride. On that Saturday he peddled over one hundred miles. I suspect there were times when he wished he was with us, sitting quietly in an air-conditioned clubhouse. With our leadership otherwise absent, Mark Thoman was railroaded into substituting.

So for that Saturday he not only presided over the meeting, but also gave the presentation.



The Western North Carolina Aviation Museum was the topic of his presentation. Mark, and his wife Nancy, visited the museum while on vacation at Lake Lure while they were celebrating their 40th wedding anniversary.

Mark explained the history of the museum and showed pictures of the museum's collection of antique aircraft. Many of the museums aircraft are still in flying condition.



Following the presentation Chef McGee delighted the hungry crowd with a delicious lunch of Italian Sausage. He served them on a roll with onions and peppers or

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sauerkraut. And there was potato salad and coleslaw to go along. The main course was followed by a delectable dessert of hot apple pie and ice cream. There were lots of satisfied smiles, and plenty of amiable conversation, during lunch. No one left the clubhouse hungry.

STAG AIR PARK FLYING CLUB

STAG AIR PARK - Jim Flippen determined that flying a tail wheel aircraft had become “boring”. In an effort to make his flying experience a bit more exciting he has decided to purchase a helicopter. That should do it....

To that end he has offered his Aeronca Champ to the chapter on some very generous terms. At our last meeting we discussed the possibility of forming a flying club and there was a positive response from the membership. Jerry Collins has taken a leadership role in this endeavor and performed two important preliminary steps. First he researched the administrative hurdles required to create an LLC; to insure an aircraft; and he completed a rough study of the financial requirements. Secondly he created and published an opinion poll that canvassed the chapter membership as to their willingness to participate. Jerry reported, at the Board of Directors meeting, that he had a favorable response from the membership and that there appears to be sufficient interest to make the flying club financially possible. The board voted to proceed with the project. The next steps will include: a further conversation with Jim Flippen to clarify the details of the transfer of ownership of the aircraft; and to begin the process of administratively creating the flying club.



If you imagine yourself flying this beautifully restored, historical aircraft, and you are interested in becoming a member of the flying club, it is important that you contact Jerry Collins. Without the active support of committed participants this rare opportunity will “never get off the ground”.

RESTORATION OF THE NO WHINING SALOON

STAG AIR PARK - We have been discussing the sad and worn condition of our clubhouse since Gary Henderson was the President. Yeah - it has been that long. At the Board of Directors meeting we concluded that the project was not going to magically complete itself, so with a bit of inspiration we selected Saturday October 15th as Painting and Maintenance Day. This should have our clubhouse well prepared for both the November Fall Fly-In and the December Christmas Party.

On our list of tasks includes painting the clubhouse, and other maintenance tasks that are long overdue. If you would like to lend a hand please come by the clubhouse, dressed in your work clothes. We will discuss the details of the project, and the assistance needed, during the October meeting.

SULLY – A CRITICAL OBSERVATION

by Mark Thoman - Spoiler Alert: The aircraft lands in the Hudson River and all of the passengers and crew survive. If you haven't seen the movie “Sully” you might stop reading now and finish this article at a later date. I certainly do not want to be responsible for spoiling the suspenseful ending.

When my wife Nancy expressed an interest, and asked if I wanted to go, my first reaction was rather negative. I expect to see “aviation” portrayed accurately on the screen, and most often Hollywood fails to meet my expectations. But a conversation with Jerry Collins, and then Nancy's smiling invitation, caused me to change my mind.

During the weekend that it was released “Sully” grossed more than any other movie. From a purely financial perspective it can be called a “box office hit”. I am happy to report that I enjoyed the movie thoroughly.

That does not mean that it was without certain flaws, (and I will discuss those in detail) but it does mean that I can recommended it to other “aviation” friends without fear of reprisals. So let me elaborate on the good stuff first.

Clint Eastwood did a great job of simply telling the story without a lot of gratuitous emotion. He creatively begins the movie in the middle, after the landing, as the NTSB investigation starts. As the NTSB proceeds we become immersed in “the controversy” and soon we are begging to experience the actual flight so that we can make our own investigative decisions. I thought that that was an imaginative way of pulling us into the movie. Mr. Eastwood also uses scenes that are out of the actual time sequence to portray Sully’s early flying experiences, and his recurring vision of what might have happened if he had chosen a different course of action. Both of these directional techniques make the movie both interesting and viewable.



Tom Hanks and Aaron Eckhart do an excellent job of portraying Captain Sullenberger and his copilot Jeff Skiles. They are a typical pair of airline pilots who enjoy their work, perform their flight duties professionally during normal operations, and admirably when things go terribly wrong. They reminded me of the airline pilots that are members of our chapter. Confident professionals. As a side note; the real copilot, Jeff Skiles, is the author of the monthly articles published in our EAA Sport Aviation magazine.

The “flying scenes”, whether computer graphics or actual aircraft footage, are quite accurate. I found myself often asking the question, “How did they film that?” The scenes portraying the cockpit operation were also well done. Of course the script for the cockpit scenes came directly from the cockpit voice recorder, so Mr. Eastwood took very little “artists license” with the action on the flight deck. The post landing evacuation was particularly well done. The surprise of the passengers to find themselves having landed on the water; the water filling the aircraft from the rear; and then the evacuation onto the wings and the slides had me gripping the armrests of

my seat. Again I wondered where and how they filmed these sequences. That was a feat of movie production. Did they purchase an Airbus, put it in the water somewhere, and then have stunt folks escape so that they could film it? It was that real. And finally the portrayal of the rescue effort was really well done. The cavalry did come to the rescue!

The problem that the script writers, and Mr. Eastwood faced at the outset was simple - there had to be a villain. Someone had to be the bad guy. Even Walt Disney cartoons have villains. Without a scary villain to defeat you can’t have a happy ending. Mr. Eastwood created two villains, the NTSB and the modern press. One is portrayed accurately, and the other has suffered a very inaccurate portrayal, solely for the dramatic success of the movie.

I have personally dealt with members of the press following a fatal helicopter mishap. They were self-righteous, ignorant, ghouls. They were not interested in the facts, but only in making themselves look good on camera. I thought that Mr. Eastwood perfectly portrayed the pack of jackals that were competing to scoop the news.

On the other hand I felt the portrayal of the NTSB was terribly inaccurate. Of course if you are looking for a bad guy, the government can easily fill the bill. It doesn’t take much imagination, considering recent current events, to believe that the investigators of the NTSB were officious government bureaucrats, commanded by some omnipotent director, bent on a mission of personal destruction.

As a trained aviation mishap investigator I was taught to use deductive reasoning when conducting a post mishap investigation. That simply means that you gather all of the facts first; and then based solely on the facts you then make your analysis, and then finally your conclusions. The investigators in the movie did not do this. During the very first “interview” with Captain Sullenberger it was clear that the team had already concluded that Sully had made the wrong decision, to land in the Hudson, and they were supporting their preconceived conclusion with “filtered facts”. This is a completely inaccurate portrayal of an NTSB investigation, but it certainly created the tension that our hero had to overcome. The NTSB immediately became the “bad guys with the black hats” that we learned to distrust.

Since the actual event I have read [Fly By Wire](#) by William Langewiesche. It is an extraordinarily detailed analysis of the mishap flight. Following the movie I read the NTSB Accident Report AAR 10/03 and the Wikipedia article titled US Airways Flight 1459. The two hundred

and thirteen pages of the Accident Report are a bit tedious, but are quite readable, and of course reflect the facts and final conclusions of the actual investigation. The Wikipedia article is accurate and thorough without having to plow through as many pages. I recommend both to any who are interested in the details. Nowhere in any of these documents did I get a sense that the government was attempting to do anything but investigate the events as they occurred. Captain Sullenberger was “not on trial”, and in all cases the final conclusions were drawn from the evidence and the facts.

That leads to the second part of the movie that was patently inaccurate. In the final hearing it was Sully himself, forced to defend his decision to land in the river, that introduced the concept of the “human factor”. It was the human element that accounted for the delay in initiating a turn back toward the airport. In the movie it was Sully who proved that the governments simulations were inaccurate because they did not account for this very human delay. In the movie, the NTSB hearing became the Hollywood attempt to stage the final showdown - “the shoot out at the OK Corral”. In fact the actual NTSB is staffed with many “human factors” experts, and they themselves recognized the fallacy of the “immediate response”. Human factors have become a large part of most post mishap investigations. In the modern era of aircraft design and manufacture it is quite rare for a mechanical failure to cause a mishap. The largest percentage of mishaps are primarily caused by human error. During the actual investigation the NTSB performed multiple flight simulations with well briefed crews, and the pilots did complete successful landings at LaGuardia Airport. But the NTSB report states clearly that to land successfully the initial turn back toward the airfield had to be immediate. The NTSB investigators recognized that that was unrealistic. During the real investigation it was not incumbent upon Captain Sullenberger to “save the day” by pointing out the flaw in the simulated scenarios.

I have read two newspaper articles that were published prior to the release of the movie. In one Captain Sullenberger applauded the accuracy of the movie, but stated that he had asked Mr. Eastwood to “tone down” the tension between the NTSB and the flight crew. The article did not indicate whether Mr. Eastwood had complied. In the second article the head of the NTSB investigation rightfully bemoaned the characterization of the investigators and the investigation. And the article stated that fictitious names were used in an effort to shield the innocent. But of course Hollywood would certainly not want the facts to get in the way of a good story. Of course both articles helped “hype” the movie.

So after all that nitpicking I need to repeat that I did enjoy the movie. I can confidently recommend it to all my aviation oriented friends, and of course the hero wins the day and the movie ends well.

If you see the movie, remain in your seat during the credits. There are several emotional videos taken during a reunion of the actual flight crew and passengers. The reunion was held around the actual airplane which is now on display in the Carolinas Aviation Museum at the Charlotte-Douglas Airport. It is an excellent museum with an outstanding collection of aircraft on display. If you are in the Charlotte area make the time to visit. I am sure you will enjoy it.

FUTURE EVENTS

October

Saturday 1st

EAA 297 - Chapter Meeting 10:00 AM in the Chapter Clubhouse.
Lunch in the No Whining Saloon
12:00 PM

Sunday 2nd

South Carolina Breakfast Club,
Woodward Field Airport (KCDN)

Saturday 15th

EAA 297 – Clubhouse Painting and
Maintenance Day

Sunday 16th

South Carolina Breakfast Club,
Sumter County Airport (KSMS)

Saturday 22nd

EAA 1456 - Pancake Breakfast Fly-
In, Sumter County Airport (KSMS)

Saturday 29th

Bill Hood’s Annual Fly-In, Hood
Field (66NC), 5230 Wyse Fork Rd,
Dover NC

Sunday 30th

South Carolina Breakfast Club,
Orangeburg Municipal Airport
(KOGB)

November

Saturday 5th

EAA 297 - Chapter Meeting 10:00 AM in the Chapter Clubhouse.
Lunch in the No Whining Saloon
12:00 PM

Saturday 5th

Cox Grantham Airfield Annual Fall
Fly-In

Saturday 12th

EAA 297 hosts Fall Fly-In 10:00 AM
at Stag Air Park (7NC1)

Sunday 13th

South Carolina Breakfast Club, Mt
Pleasant Regional-Faison Field
(KLRO)

Wednesday 23rd

EAA 297 - Board of Directors
Meeting 7:00 PM, No Whining
Saloon

Saturday 26th

EAA 1456 - Pancake Breakfast Fly-
In, Sumter County Airport (KSMS)

Sunday 27th

South Carolina Breakfast Club,
Fairfield County Airport (KFDW)

December

- Saturday 3rd** **EAA 297** – Chapter Christmas Party in the Chapter Clubhouse.
- Sunday 11th** South Carolina Breakfast Club, (KSPA)
- Sunday 18th** South Carolina Breakfast Club, (S17)

HUMOR - Marine Monkeys

A tourist walked into a pet store and began looking at the animals on display.

While he was there, a Marine Corps Gunnery Sergeant from the local Air Station walked in and said to the shopkeeper, "I'll take a 6114 (Helicopter Mechanic) Monkey, please."

The clerk nodded, went to a cage at the side of the store and took out a monkey. He put a collar and leash on the animal and handed it to the Gunny, saying, "That'll be \$1,000." The Gunny paid and left with the monkey.

Surprised, the tourist went to the shopkeeper and said, "That was a very expensive monkey. Most of them are only a few hundred dollars. Why did that one cost so much?"

The shopkeeper answered, "Ah, that is a 6114 Monkey. He can rig aircraft flight controls, score 300 on the Marine Corps PFT, set up a perimeter defense and perform the duties of SDO (Staff Duty Officer) with no mistakes. It's well worth the money."

The tourist spotted a monkey in another cage. "That one's even more expensive--\$10,000! What can it do?"

"Oh, that one is a "Maintenance Supervisor" monkey. It can instruct at all levels of maintenance, supervise maintenance at the O & I and Depot level, and even do most of the paperwork. A very useful monkey indeed," replied the shopkeeper.

The tourist looked around a little longer and found a third monkey in a cage. The price tag read, "\$50,000." The shocked tourist exclaimed, "That one costs more than all the others put together! What in the world can it do?" "Well, the shopkeeper said, I've never actually seen him do anything but drink beer and chase the female monkeys, but his papers say he's a pilot."

Good judgment comes from experience,
and experience comes from bad judgment.

CLASSIFIED

HUNGRY? – Come join us at the

NO WHINING SALOON

Enjoy a home cooked meal prepared by our master chef.

Lunch is served promptly (not really) at 12:00 following EAA Chapter 297's business meeting the first Saturday of the month.

\$5.99 for fixed with pilots.
\$4.99 for rotary wing pilots.

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