

Aug 2008



EXPERIMENTAL AIRCRAFT ASSOCIATION CHAPTER 429

Jefferson City Bluebirds

President's Message

President's Radio Call, EAA Chap 429, July 30, 2008

Our next meeting is Sat. Aug. 9, 10:00 AM, at the Columbia Airport Tower. Tim Boos is our host for a tour of the tower, and we'll get to see what Tim does as an air traffic controller. Personally, I think this will be very interesting and it would be good to learn more about Columbia AP too. After that we'll be having bratwurst etc. for lunch, provided by our club. I'm hoping several new people, whom we met at the B-17 Tour, will attend.

Directions to the COU tower: North of Ashland, turn off Hwy 63 to Columbia Regional Airport and go east on Route H. I believe one continues past the airport road turnoff for about $\frac{3}{4}$ mi. to where H turns south. Go another $\frac{1}{2}$ mi. to where H turns east again, then take South Rangeline Road to the right (south) for about $\frac{1}{2}$ mi. and look for the driveway to the tower. Please see the attached map.

American Barnstormers, about 18 vintage planes, were at JEF June 29-30. Many people came out to take \$50 rides and photograph the beautiful biplanes, despite the wind. The pilots and crew wore period clothing.

Congratulations to EAA 429 for doing a superb job on the B-17 Tour at JEF, July 7-10. We were a bit discouraged after the B-17 arrived Mon. about 10:30 AM. I noticed that engine #3 (right inboard engine) was shut down as they landed and taxied in. After parking on the north ramp their two mechanics immediately started checking the engine. They ran it up with a fire extinguisher in hand. Turns out that #3 was running at low rpm on the way from Lee's Summit, so they shut it down to save the engine in case something was really wrong. It ran up but it coughed a bit, so they got a ladder, removed the cowl, and started checking everything. So, our planned media flight for the afternoon was cancelled. That hurt, but no avoiding it. They worked hard on it and found a weak valve spring and bad valve (I think) from lack of oiling, so they replaced those parts and that jug (cylinder). I'm not sure what all they replaced.

Tues. morning they had it running fine, and there were three paid flights as planned. Unfortunately, we did not get a media flight in. I should have insisted on that. By mid-afternoon the chief pilot decided to shut everything down because he thought thunderstorms were coming, but they didn't. They were not predicted to hit JEF. So, we lost several hours

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Chapter Officers

Bill Elliott— President

myotis@embarqmail.com

Mike Sullivan —Vice President

msully912@embarqmail.com

Ron Dallmeyer—Treasurer

rgdplg@wildblue.net

Blake Lewis—Web Master

Blake.lewis@gmail.com

**Chet Hartley-Secretary,
Newsletter**

chethartley1@mchsi.com

Board of Directors

Bob Gumm

2rgs@ktis.net

Lanny Crawford

crawfords@juno.com

Bill Harman

Harman2009@aol.com

Dale Carlson

carlsondcarlson@earthlink.net

**Bob Stewart-Technical Coun-
selor**

Bob Lynch-Flight Advisor

rv6lynch@embarqmail.com

Young Eagles Coordinator

Bake Lewis

Blake.lewis@gmail.com

Visit the chapter web site at:

<http://eaa429.tripod.com>

for the latest information on
chapter events.

of ground tours. We were frustrated, but we stayed out there until about 6:00 PM to show visitors around the outside of the plane, apologize, and ask them to come back Wed. if possible. Some of them did.

Wed. worked out fine, and we had three flights and lots more people came out. I had extracted a promise from the ground crew to keep the plane open until 6:30. Many came out after work and we had good crowds going through the plane. Lots of people enjoyed the free B-17 videos we ran constantly in the terminal building, in the empty room that was LC Flight Shop. We and EAA got lots of compliments for everything. We raffled off a fine Franklin Mint die-cast B-17 model ("Carolina Moon"), which was painted almost the same as Aluminum Overcast. I think we took in \$245 for that, for a \$135 value (but I had bought it for \$75 at the Shepherd of the Hills Store in Lebanon, MO). Dr. Weiss from St. Louis won the model for his son. We sold some of our special posters designed by Tisha Spencer too, as well as EAA merchandise at their trailer.

Several B-17 veterans came out, and we had a state oral histo-

March Meeting Minutes

EAA Chapter 429 Minutes

No minutes to report for the month of July

Upcoming Events

9 Aug Chapter Meeting	10:00 am

rian, Jeff Corrigan, interview them. He will do some more interviews soon. I hope that we can work with him to capture some of their histories and put some of it on our website. We talked a long time with Homer Barnhart (mechanic) and Maurice Markway (Mickey Operator), both from Wardsville. Homer brought a big photo album of WW2 photos, including crews he worked with. He often rode in B-17s to test the engines and avionics, and he later worked on B-29s. What the heck is a Mickey Operator, you say? That's a radar operator, and some B-17s at the lead of the wing were equipped with radar. He could get them into and out of Germany by seeing radar patterns of cities ahead of them. He said they once had a bad north crosswind, 120 mph, and it pushed them south into Czechoslovakia. The pilot didn't believe him when he told them where they were. They dropped their bombs on the wrong city, then had a heck of a time getting home because they didn't believe the radar man.

Three other veterans, Bob Scherfus, pilot, Wilburn Rowden, radio operator, and Robert Hunter, pilot, were around, but they escaped before we could interview them, so we hope that Jeff will find them soon. Interesting stories from these guys!

We had another surprise Wed. when I was standing in the shade of the wing and two Air Force officers walked up in camo uniforms. One introduced himself as "Gen. Victor Renuart, chief of NORAD from Colorado". I invited them to come in the plane, since active military and veterans were free, but they were very polite and did not want to intrude. Then I looked on his shoulder and saw four stars! And the other man was a brigadier general (one star)! I apologized for not noticing their ranks right away, but they were very nice. So I walked them around the plane, gave its history, showed them the ball turret and talked about that crewmember. Then the chief pilot walked up and took them through the back door and up to see the cockpit! Very good.

We won't know how much we made until the B-17 Tour folks do all their books, then we will get a check in the mail. We probably will clear about \$1,000 or so on this event, but not as much as we had hoped for, owing to the loss of the media flight and ground tours on Tues. However, many people thanked us, and we provided some good history education for families and kids. We invested over \$1,000 in advertising, videos, model etc. for this event. I think we will receive \$1,290 for our cut on the flights, plus more for our part of the ground tours and merchandise. We collected about \$453 from raffle tickets and poster sales already. Keep in mind that we use this money to benefit aviation and the community as a nonprofit chapter of EAA. Even though we did not make a large amount this year, we made lots of new friends and potential, new members too.

Many thanks to the following members and friends for helping us out during the B-17 Tour, especially Tim Boos and Eddy Neuhart. Other members who worked were Robbie Barnhart, Lanny Crawford, Mike Sullivan, Ron Dallmeyer, Jack Kennedy, Doug Kincaid, Bob Gumm, Bob Lynch, Bill Harman, Dale Carlson, Ron Craft, Stan Mehrhoff, Chet Hartley, Bob Stewart and Ted Forester. Special thanks to Tisha Spencer for the free design work and assistance in getting us three, low-cost billboards with Lamar Advertising. Ron Craft, our airport manager, was instrumental in facilitating this event and let us use the conference room and empty store, so thanks Ron! If I forgot anyone, please let me know.

Robbie Barnhart, Bob Gumm and I got to ride in the B-17 in unsold seats. It was a thrill and I took lots of photos and video clips. Tim Boos, Eddy Neuhart and Doug Kincaid rode in the plane to Champaign, IL, on Thurs. On the way Tim was invited to take the controls! So, now we have to salute him as a B-17 pilot!

Afterwards I called Sue Strehlow at EAA's B-17 administration. She asked me to talk with George Daubner, B-17 pilot who arranges the tour stops. He came to JEF in 2004 and was very pleased with our chapter and the stop. I asked George what kind of feedback he got from the crew about the stop at JEF. He said they were reasonably pleased, despite weather problems and the cylinder change. No complaints about our chapter. He was very nice and listened when I told him about the problems we had. I asked that next time, in two years, if EAA Chap 429 does host the B-17 again, that we want a weekend event instead of a weekday event because this is a working community with lots of state employees who can only come out after 5:00 PM. He said he would like to do it, but was not sure if it was feasible yet. So, I am hopeful.

Thanks again for all your hard work. See you at Columbia Tower!

Bill Elliott, EAA Chap 429 President

Like to map of Columbia airport. The control tower is on the East side of the airport, just follow Bill directions

<http://www.mapquest.com/mq/5-WMBMP6ggpkx4YcECz>

