



# Skywriter...

Monthly newsletter of the Calgary Ultralight Flying Club - COPA Flight 114

## August 2008



***Simply Put... Oshkosh!***  
*Panoramic pictures by Bernie Kespe*

# From The Cockpit

By Pat Cunningham

Well we made it back from Oshkosh and what a trip it was! If you ever get the chance to take it in I highly recommend it.

The trip itself was great as we flew over some very interesting terrain both on the way down and on the way back. The weather was good on the way down with no deviations from the planned route. Although, the trip back did see some change in plans due to weather; we made it down and back in 2 1/2 days each way. We flew for 26 hours return with a little more on the way back and a little less on the way down. Our group consisted of 5 planes and 8 people with all but one from our club.

Oshkosh itself is the Mecca of aviation for this 7 day event and you'll see anything and everything to do with aviation there. It is truly a site to see.

Traveling to an event like this in a group is certainly the way to go if you can. It made the trip very enjoyable as well as took the pressure off when trying to make decisions on things like weather. Ken Beanlands' experience on this trip was a great help to those of us who hadn't made a trip like this before. Everything from border crossings to understanding the Oshkosh NOTAM was made easier by his experience.

After flying for 13 years I finally had the pleasure of receiving my first ramp check. It was after landing in Lethbridge from Havre, Montana on Sunday, August 3<sup>rd</sup>. We were in the customs box and I was preparing for that procedure when a Transport Canada inspector informed me I was about to be checked. I finished the customs deal and then proceeded to go through the ramp check. They are actually no big deal if all your paper work is in order. I would certainly encourage you to take the time and check that all in your

documents are in order and available for inspection. The inspector was quite friendly although very thorough. We'll attempt to put together a presentation for a future meeting both for this topic and our experiences at Oshkosh.

I would like to thank Ed Wozniak for offering to sell the club a used laptop in great condition for a very reasonable price. Ed has also donated a projection screen to the club, thanks for that Ed!

Guy Christie has stepped down as the Website Administrator due to time constraints. I would like to thank Guy for all of his hard work and time that it took to get the site to where it is today. Ed D'Antoni has offered to take on the roll as administrator and will be continuing on where Guy left off, thanks for that Ed.

Gordon Hill, retired fighter pilot, will be speaking at the September meeting so plan on attending. I'm certain it will be a fun evening.

There is still a lot of summer fly-ins going on including the Lethbridge Sport Flyers Breakfast on September 6<sup>th</sup>. I hope to see you out and about enjoying the summer flying season.

See you soon!

→

## Calgary Ultralight Flying Club

### COPA Flight 114

Meetings are held on the second Thursday of every month, except July and August, starting 7:00 PM at the Northeast Armory, 1227 - 38 Avenue NE, Calgary.

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### Skywriter

Skywriter is the official newsletter of the Calgary Ultralight Flying Club - COPA Flight 114, published 12 times per year

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# The AirVenture Air Adventure

by Ken Beanlands

As most of you know, the CUFC has a summer tradition known as the CUFC Air Adventure. Each summer, a group of club members get together and plan a week long flying holiday heading to various locations in Western Canada. The trip used to involve several planes, pilots and an entourage of ground support people and vehicles.

The club has evolved over the years and members are flying more sophisticated aircraft. Over the past couple of summers, the tour was accomplished without the need of ground personnel or vehicles. In fact, the planning for this summer's Air Adventure started on the trip last summer. I was planning to make my forth Oshkosh trip this summer and talked to the guys about making it a CUFC group trip. Almost immediately, Gerry MacDonald, Barry Wood, and Bernie Kespe were on board.

Over the year, the roster went through a number of changes with the last change occurred only a week prior to departure. The final group included Pat Cunningham with his Cessna 120; Gerry Macdonald in his Cessna 182 with Collin Clealand as passenger; Barry Wood and Joel Charest in their Beech Musketeer; Steve Whitenect in his Murphy Rebel with Bernie Kespe as passenger and I flew the Christavia.

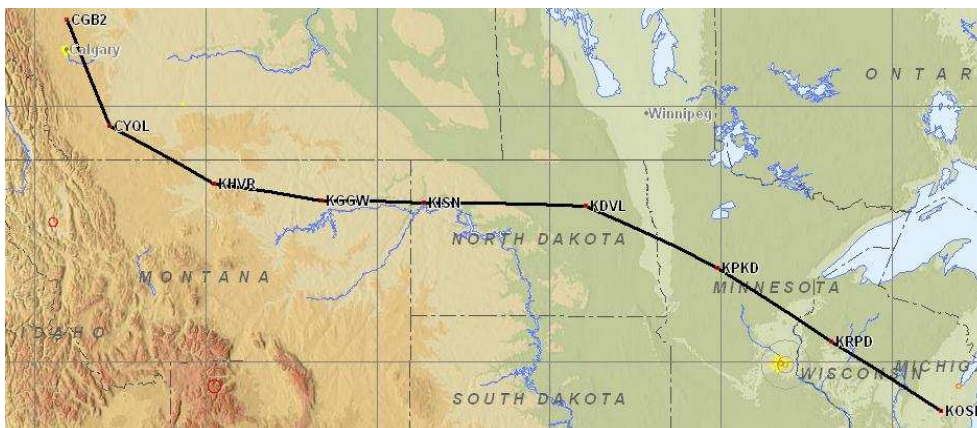
Having made the trip three times before, I handled the organization, but I had a lot of help from the rest of the

group. The first step was to plan the flight down. We decided to do the trip over three days with stops in Leader, SK, Regina, SK, Minot ND, Devil's Lake, ND, Park Rapids, MN, Rice Lake, WI and, finally, Oshkosh. Overnight stops were planned for Devils Lake and Rice Lake.

Amid some grumbling from those who enjoy sleeping in, we decided that a 6:00 AM departure would work best to give us some cool stable air to start the journey. As the July 25<sup>th</sup> departure date approached, I began to worry as about some nasty predictions in the forecast. However, by Thursday morning the forecast had changed to clear skies! We were good to go. Steve flew from his home base in Villeneuve on Thursday and spent the night with Renee and I. I spent the best part of Thursday prepping the plane for the trip. This included a thorough cleaning, some minor maintenance and packing in the 150 lbs of gear (hoping that Customs wouldn't make me unpack it)

Bernie, Steve, Pat and I arrived at Carstairs and departed together as a flight shortly after 6:00 AM. We had planned on hooking up with Barry and Joel along the way. With the faster cruise speed and long range tanks, Gerry and Collin planned a later departure without the stop in Leader.

The maps below show our route to Oshkosh (top) and back home (bottom).



About 30 minutes into the flight we heard from the Musketeer with an ETA 20 minutes behind us. This worked well as the first three planes were just finishing up at the pumps when the Musketeer arrived. Just before landing, we also heard from Gerry and Collin. After four hours of flying, we finally all met up in Regina for lunch.

The border crossing into Minot, ND was relatively uneventful except for the

trouble Steve and Pat had getting their transponder codes. I had decided to climb up to 9500' and was finally able to relay codes back to them from FSS.



*Could this be the ultimate Air Adventure aircraft? This Rotax powered LSA kitplane hails from Quebec and sports seating, eating and sleeping space for two. Now, if I could just find where they hide the pottie...*

We finally made it into Devil's lake after seven hours of flying for a well deserved rest. After an incredibly cheap, but delicious meal in the hotel's restaurant, we decided to head to the DQ for desert. Along the way we were nearly accosted by the local women at the shooter bar (this would be the shooter bar with the drive- thru window!). A few of the guys made a detour in there for Karaoke on the way back. The rest of us were too afraid to go in!

With only four hours scheduled the next day, we planned for a later departure, which was well received by the group. Once again, we were blessed with blue skies and favorable winds all the way to Rice Lake. The only trouble here was the reduced visibility in haze making it difficult to find the airport; but we finally got everyone safely on the ground.

Rice Lake was a great spot. We were given the red carpet treatment with the airport manager out to greet us. They gave us a car for the night which made things so easy. The airport itself is less than 10 years old and is immaculate. The Day's Inn was even newer having only opened in May. After checking in and having supper, we ended up at a second restaurant for desert. This place is well known for its award winning pie and for good reason. WOW, they would give Country Cousin's a run for their money!

Sunday morning we headed out for our last leg into Oshkosh. Again, the skies were clear and we had a nice tailwind to push us along. We had checked out the timing for the mass arrivals in Oshkosh and planned our arrival before these, careful to factor in the last time change. Shortly after take-off I heard a familiar voice on the radio. It was Don Rennie from the RAA Calgary chapter. It turns out that they had a group of approximately 11 aircraft from the RAAC and Calgary Flying Club on their way to Oshkosh as well. However, they had planned an extra stop at Marsh Field, WI for a fly-in breakfast. We opted out and continued into Oshkosh.

As I approached Ripon as the lead aircraft, my head was on a swivel looking for the throngs of traffic I expected to see. Instead, all I saw was a lone twin at 2300'. We chose the lower approach altitude of 1800' so there was no conflict. After we passed Ripon, the Fiske controllers went silent. I was almost on top of Fiske when I heard them clear the twin and call us. The controllers spread the group between runway 27 and 36, but after an uneventful landing, Steve ended up right on my tail as we taxied into the homebuilt camping area. The other three aircraft were planning to camp together in the classic camping section. Due to my miscalculation, we actually arrived at 9:30 in the morning as there was no other time zone change...oops!

I won't go into detail about our week at Oshkosh as I plan to include that as part of my column next month. Needless to say, we had a great time and saw lots of neat things. I will say that this was the first year that we had to deal with Mosquitoes!

They had received a lot of precipitation in Oshkosh this spring and summer and the little pests were out in force as soon as the sun went down. Most evenings we were in our tents by 9:30 PM to avoid them. Of course, that left us dealing with the heat and humidity of the tent. Oh well.

There was one funny story that came out of our stay in Oshkosh. Barry and Pat had planned to stay two nights at a local hotel. On arrival, they found out that their double room was not available. All that was available was the single bed theme room complete with saddle. We never did find out who had the bed and who got the saddle ...

The general consensus was that we start our trek back on Friday morning. Thursday evening we decided to meet at the FSS Center for a briefing. We had planned to reverse our course heading home, but hadn't booked any hotels for the return trip. The weather into Minot (where we had planned our first nights stay) was good for Friday, but they were calling for some nasty stuff overnight for our departure on Saturday.

We decided to go for and take a closer look at the weather when we arrived in Minot. Once again, a 6 AM departure was planned. Despite camping about three miles apart, all but Gerry arrived at the end of 36 at the same time and headed out as a flight. Gerry caught up with us shortly after.

Again, the skies were clear, we did have a slight tailwind that plagued us most of the day. The only weather issues we had to deal with was a large bank of fog over one of the rivers that forced us to deviate off course a bit. We all picked our way over it by different routes but still arrived together in Rice Lake.



*Warbirds were out in force again this year. It's always a beautiful sight!*

Pat ended up with a minor oil leak on final that increased his pucker factor a little, but we were able to determine that it was nothing to worry about.

We arrived at Devils Lake around 5:00 PM. Collin and Gerry had skipped the fuel stop at Park Rapids and headed strait for Devil's Lake where they were going to arrange for lodging in Minot. By the time we arrived,

they had exhausted all the options for Minot, but had reserved four rooms at the hotel in Devil's Lake.

This is where things got a bit tricky. We were all pretty bushed after six hours of flying. However, the weather for this part of the country was supposed to be pretty bad in the morning as a warm front with imbedded CB's stretching from south of Minot north through Regina passed through. Our only other options were to fly on to Minot and then Regina (approximately 3.5 hours), or Williston (a two hour leg) and hope that the front would pass us by. Given all the options and factors, we decided to stay the night in Devil's Lake. This ended up being a good choice. Regina was dealing with heavy rain and CB's the next morning and Minot had been hit with a storm that produced softball sized hail. Glad my plane wasn't in that!

Williston was also hit with a severe thunderstorm overnight but Devil's Lake seemed to stay clear of the bad weather. We had high ceilings and good conditions when we got up the next morning. However, things looked pretty black to the northwest. Our first briefing in the morning was not very encouraging. We started making preparations to stay another night. At 10:00 we got our second briefing which, along with the radar images, suggested that we could head out but we would need to stay well south of Minot. We would still have to cross the warm front along the way.

We finally got in the air at 11:30. For the first 45 minutes everything looked good and we even had a 10 kts tailwind. We had stuck to our track for the first half of the trip but quickly realized that this was a mistake.

We ended up tracking strait south to avoid a low nimbostratus layer with dangerously low visibility. Barry and Joel ended up flying into this but quickly made their way out. Gerry took up the lead and, after heading about 20 nm south, informed us that there was clearing weather to the west. About 20 minutes later, we had passed the front and were in dramatically different weather. We now had hot, turbulent air with haze and our headwind had returned. At 2.5 hours, this was my longest leg of the entire trip. Fortunately, there was nothing on the radar ahead of us so we were looking good all the way to Calgary.

We had planned four legs of about 130 nm through Glasgow, MT, Havre, MT, Lethbridge and home. The next two legs found us following the Milk River Valley through North Dakota and Montana. Our only real issues along these two legs were the turbulence, hot temperatures and Pat's battery refusing to charge. We ended up having to hand prop his plane for the rest of the trip.

We arrived in Havre and started the process of filing flight plans, notifying customs and getting a weather briefing. It looked like we would get into Lethbridge at about 7:30 PM, only 30 minutes before they closed. In addition, there was a SIGMET out for Lethbridge for this time calling for possible thunderstorms. From the ground, we could see a line of vertical development clouds forming to the north. Both the C-182 and the Musketeer had skipped the refueling stop in Glasgow

*One of only eight Lionheart aircraft ever built was camping behind us. This is one huge, but beautiful aircraft. That's a P&W R-985 under the cowl!*



and were ready to go by the time we arrived. As the two planes headed out, Steve, Pat and I were discussing the situation. If we did arrive in Lethbridge only to find it under a CB, we would have no option but to return to Montana. This would leave me desperately low on fuel for that return trip. We decided to stay the night and got on the horn to let the other two know that we would not be following them. Ten minutes later, they were on the ground. They didn't like what they were seeing ahead and with our radio call, they had all they needed to abort the flight.

We set about canceling flight plans and delaying our Customs arrival time to the next day. After that was done, we decided to look for a hotel. The very friendly fuel guy suggested two hotels but said the other motels in town were a bit on the scary side. Two calls later and we realized we were out of luck. He then suggested that we stay in the terminal. At this point, none of us had noticed the pristine terminal building at the other end of the ramp. After a quick inspection, we found that it was a spacious, air conditioned, furnished building with two fully serviced washrooms. With our camping gear, the only thing we were lacking was a shower. The interesting thing is that the terminal had no tenants so we had no fear of being disturbed.

The fuel guy (a real aviation hero, in my opinion) then noticed that there were eight of us and the airport car only fit four. He generously offered us his personal car saying that he would take the truck home for the night instead. What a prince! Off we went to Uncle Joe's Steak House for what turned out to be the best meal of the trip. It was like going to Caesar's Steak House downtown but at 1/4 the cost and no attitude! We had a nice evening of chatting washed down with a few wobbly pops in the terminal's conference room before turning in for the evening.

The next morning was cool and calm. The weather briefing was much better than the evening before. One problem we ran into was an inability to contact flight services, either in Canada or the US via cell phone. The terminal had no phone and the fuel company was closed. Steve decided to call the RCO on the radio and got the briefing for us. He then proceeded to use the same



*This beautiful Hatz Classic took home a well deserved "Gold Lindy, Grand Champion Plans Built". It will likely be featured in a future Sport Aviation.*

Villeneuve before he was done, but that was uneventful as well.

At the end of the trip I had logged exactly 27 hours of air time and 30 hours of flight time. Out of that, 11.9 hours were spent on the trip to Oshkosh and 15.1 hours on the return trip. The great circle distance from Bishell's to Oshkosh is 1117 nm. Our route to Oshkosh was 1151 nm and the return was 1195 nm making our ground speed to Oshkosh 94 kts and return was 79 kts.

I don't know if I'll be able to make the trip next year, but I'm definitely going to try. Doing this trip as a group was a blast and I would not hesitate to do it again. →

method to file our flight plans and became the lead aircraft for the flight. This worked well as it meant that we only needed one transponder code for the group. By 8:00 AM, we were in the air and headed to Lethbridge.

Customs clearance was a simple telephone call after our arrival to get our clearance number. However, as Pat mentioned in his article, Transport Canada was waiting for us. Out of the five aircraft, they checked Pat and Jerry. Andy Cummings arrived shortly after we did and was also ramp checked. A word to the wise, make sure all your paper work is in order and ensure that you follow all the regulations (ie. helmets, secured cargo, survival kits, etc.)

We said good-bye to Joel, Barry, Collin and Jerry before heading out on the last leg home. The weather was a bit unsettled with large rain shower, towering cumulus, and a solid overcast at around 6000'. However, it was pretty calm and the visibility was good. We arrived home at Bishell's at noon. Steve still had a short leg left to get home to

*This beefy Kitfox was certainly an eye-opener with it's huge Tundra Tires and spit-polished finish. With the Kitfox's STOL reputation, I bet it would give those Alaskan Super Cubs a run for their money!*



# For Sale



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**Snowbird 1.** C-IDRM. 64 hrs total time on Rotax 277. 60mph cruise. 38 mph stall. Always hangared. Excellent condition. 2.5 hour range with reserve. Fly's hands off with trim set. Flown regularly. I want to buy a two-seater. Innisfail. Bruce (403) 227-6577. (06/08)

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*Notice: Classified ads are free to CUFC members. Contact Ken Beanlands by e-mail to place or renew your ad (see masthead). Ads will be dropped after 6 months unless renewed.*

**1991 Macair Merlin Taperwing** – 760 TTAF, 250 SMOH on Continental A-75, Marvel carb, Slick mags. 19 gals fuel, wide roomy cockpit, reinforced landing gear, dual sticks, dual brakes, good paint & fabric, good STOL, cargo deck, battery, VHF antenna, 80 mph cruise, 4.5 hours range (with reserves). \$25,000. Call Stu Simpson (403) 255-6998 or [bushmaster@shaw.ca](mailto:bushmaster@shaw.ca) for pictures or video. (08/07)

**GSC Tech Prop** - Wood - 64 X 36 RH Pusher - 2 Hrs run Can be seen at 167 Cove Place, Chestermere, AB Day – (403) 769 7019 Eve (403) 226 7224 – Jerry Bruce Freestone Gull Lake SK (306) 672 4124 \$275.00 firm. (05/07)

**Team Minimax** Single place taildragger, C-IFCZ completely enclosed and streamlined Rotax 503, 3 blade IVO prop. Two 5 gallon wing tanks, 100 hours total time, external radio antenna, located in Vulcan Industrial Airport, always hangared, Asking \$9000. Contact Graham at (403) 601- 6853 or [gramillington@yahoo.ca](mailto:gramillington@yahoo.ca) (04/07)

**RX 550 Beaver** TTE 140 hrs Rotax oil-injected 582 with 3 blade Powerfin ground adjustable prop. Complete with wing tanks. All skins U.V. clear coated as well as wing upgrade. Full panel with GPS, custom cargo bags, and several extras. Dual helmet/headset with intercom and PTT also available. Always hangared. A very reliable airplane! \$12,500 Contact Darrell Booth email: [dbooth1@shaw.ca](mailto:dbooth1@shaw.ca) or (403) 938-3379 (02/07)

**1998 Challenger II** - Professionally built, only 170hrs on LES maintained & chromed exhaust recently installed. Beautiful paint, custom seats, ICom3, always hangared, \$27,000. Call Trey at (403) 698-4820 or email for photos - [trey.petty@gmail.com](mailto:trey.petty@gmail.com) (02/06) →



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# Flying Events

August 16<sup>th</sup>, Westlock, AB – First annual fly-in/drive-in fun night and casino. Bring the family for dinner and an interesting aviation oriented event. Dinner starts at 5 p.m.. Located at CES4. Sponsored by Aspen Aircraft Maintenance and West Air Estates. For more information please contact Kevin by email [aspenaircraft@hotmail.com](mailto:aspenaircraft@hotmail.com).

August 22<sup>nd</sup> & 23<sup>rd</sup>, Nanton – Nanton's (Alberta) annual event. Friday eve. reception, Saturday full of activities started by a pancake breakfast, Merlin engine run-ups, flypasts and much more followed by a hangar dance in the evening. More details at [www.lancastermuseum.ca](http://www.lancastermuseum.ca) or phone 403-646-2270.

August 23<sup>rd</sup>, Cooking Lake (CEZ3F) – Cooking Lake Airport open house & Fly-In. Edmonton Airports is pleased to be hosting the 4th Annual open house & FRE fly-in BBQ from 11 a.m. to 2:30 p.m. For more information contact Edmonton Airports at [fly-in@edmontonairports.com](mailto:fly-in@edmontonairports.com).

August 23<sup>rd</sup>, Moose Jaw, SK – Moose Jaw Flying Club Fly-in/Drive-in Breakfast, in association with 15 Wing annual Armed Forces Day and air show. Come enjoy breakfast at our newly repaved municipal airport before attending the air show at 15 Wing in the afternoon. Everyone welcome. Located at the Moose Jaw Muni (CJS4). For more information please contact Gerald Julian 306-692-8932 or email [gjulian@sasktel.net](mailto:gjulian@sasktel.net).

August 23<sup>rd</sup>, Cooking Lake, AB – Cooking Lake Airport open house & Fly-In. Edmonton Airports is pleased to be hosting the 4th Annual open house & fly-in BBQ from 11 a.m. to 2:30 p.m. Rain or Shine! The BBQ is FREE but we will gladly be accepting donations for Hope Air. Located at the Cooking Lake Airport (CEZ3F). For more information contact Edmonton Airports at [fly-in@edmontonairports.com](mailto:fly-in@edmontonairports.com).

September 1<sup>st</sup>, Stettler (EJ3) – Stettler Flying Club/COPA Flight 135, labour day Monday. All you can eat, pancakes, eggs, ham, sausages from 8:00 a.m. until 11:00 a.m. For more information please contact Dwayne Sutton at 403-742-4354, email [d\\_sutton@telus.net](mailto:d_sutton@telus.net), or Kevin Falkenberg: 403-742-8058, email [autox@telus.net](mailto:autox@telus.net).

September 6<sup>th</sup>, Lethbridge, AB – COPA Flight 24/Lethbridge Sport Flyers is hosting their Annual Fly-In Breakfast in the AirWest Hangar at the Lethbridge County Airport, 8:00 a.m. to 11:00 a.m.. Rain or shine, fly or drive, everyone welcome! Located at the Lethbridge County Airport (CYQL). For more information please contact Joe Harrington 403-308-8343 or email [Lethbridge\\_Sport\\_Flyers@telus.net](mailto:Lethbridge_Sport_Flyers@telus.net).

**CANCELLED!** September 13<sup>th</sup>, Rocky Mountain House, AB – Fly-in Breakfast from 8 a.m. to Noon. All aircraft that fly in and register will be entered to win a PLB (Personal Locator Beacon). Draw around 11 am. Everyone is welcome. Contacts: Rocky Flying Club, Fred Nash 403-844-3511 or Jochen Rubeling 403-845-2534.

September 7<sup>th</sup>, Unity, SK – Fly-in Breakfast, in conjunction with Unity Fly-in Breakfast, the Route 66 Unity Motocross Races will also take place. The hours for the Fly-in Breakfast will be 8:00 a.m.-11:00 a.m.. Located at the Unity Airport (CKE8). For more information please contact Robert Smith 306-228-3730.

September 13<sup>th</sup>, Medicine Hat, AB – RAA chapter 4905 will be hosting a Fly in breakfast 8:00 a.m. till Noon at the club hanger. Located at the Medicine Hat airport. In the event of poor weather we will move to the 14th. For more information please contact Steve Haupt by email [shaupt@canopycanada.net](mailto:shaupt@canopycanada.net).

September 20<sup>th</sup>, Okotoks, AB – COPA Flight 81 will be holding a free fly-in breakfast from 8 a.m. - 11a.m. at the Okotoks Air Ranch. For more details call Flight Captain William (Bill) Zurawell 403-279-4461.  
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