



Skywriter



Oct 2017



Water Bombers taking water to fight one of the many fires that caused the smoke we enjoyed this summer

Next Meeting Wednesday Sept 13 at the AeroSpace Museum

Monthly Newsletter of the Calgary Recreational & Ultralight Flying Club – COPA Flight 114

Our Mission: To promote safety and camaraderie amongst aviation enthusiasts.

President's Message

By Ed D'Antoni

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Ed D'Antoni



Presidents Message, October 2017

The September meeting was a great success. It started with the Transport Canada recency requirements review. In the past we had members presenting and reviewing sections then soliciting or providing answers. This year groups of five gathered at tables and discussed and answered each question. Member feedback indicated this was a bettered learning experience. After one hour a coffee break was called, but most of the members remained at their tables to finish the review. Without time to prepare or any photo's Bashar presented a verbal description of his flight to and from the East Coast. He did a great job. Vividly covering the entire flight in an amazingly short 22 minutes. It was impressing to witness his ability to be so concise and descriptive that one could easily visualise the scenery and cockpit situations.

We will have two members presenting at the October meeting. Bashar will present a photo and verbal essay of the previously mentioned flight. Carl Forman will do a PowerPoint presentation of the museum tour taken over a 10 day period in Bob Kirkby's Cherokee.

Over the summer I introduced a few passengers to flight. A memorable one was a retired eastern European engineer. We flew south along the mountains west of Cu Nim then

northeast to the Bow River. At that time asking the passenger if he would like to take control he quickly agreed. He had no trouble with straight and level flight so I suggested he follow the bow river. He flew along the Bow for about one-half hour then always maintaining altitude he used the GPSD to get back to Ben's. I asked how he could fly so well. His answer "I watched you carefully and then just did what you did". I was amazed.

Election of 2018 officers is coming up soon. Positions to be filled are President, treasurer and secretary.

President Ed

Calgary Recreational and Ultralight Flying Club

COPA Flight 114

Meetings are held on the second Wednesday of every month, except July and August, starting 7:00 PM at the Aerospace Museum, 4629 McCall Way NE Calgary.

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Bob and Rob's Great Adventure

Originally I had planned to fly to Vancouver Island in the week after the Labour Day weekend with Sheldon P. Sheldon flies a Challenger. The Challenger Ultralight community back East have a yearly winter flyin called Montebello. Westabello has occurred in Wetaskiwin for the last 10 years.

<http://www.challengerwest.com/westebello.htm>

This year they planned on Coastabello at the Courtenay Airpark on the Island the weekend after the long weekend.

Sheldon asked me about joining him. Since I grew up in the area, my family still lives in the Comox Valley and I was planning on flying there commercial for my yearly visit, I thought "are you out of your ### mind!" But after a great deal of thought and reflection I thought "why not?" So the planning stage started; Sheldon got two life vests for us for the over water leg. Questions were asked of those who had gone before us (thanks to Stu for your advice that day in Linden; never got to harass you more about it but I will in the future).

Route Planning 101 was next. Do we follow the highway or can we fly the valleys? Well, as we all know the forestfire situation in BC put an end to that adventure, much to my wife's and my family in Courtenay's relief.

So what could we do? We had taken the time off. Rob Jaap mentioned about flying to Wolf Lake for another overniter

but apparently they won't allow under-the-wing camping. Somehow Milk River came up. Never been there before and did not know where it was. It proved to be south of Taber (never been there either) and after Taber comes Warner (north of Milk River apparently)

So early on Sept 7 Rob and I set out for our great adventure. Sheldon had decided to spend his time off working on his hangar so it was just the Rob and I. I could not believe just how flat the country became south of Calgary and how many canals snaked across the land. There was some smoke in the air and I did have some difficulty spotting the runway at Taber. Rob had already landed and had his potty break and I was not too far behind him.

Take note that there is no fuel for sale at Taber but it may be possible to buy fuel from the airspraying outfit that headquarters there. It would depend on if anyone was around when you landed. We decided to take our chances in Warner and/or in Milk River. We had taken extra fuel with us so we both topped up our tanks but I knew that I would need to buy fuel for the trip back. Rob actually had enough Avgas for him to make the return trip in his Cessna. Nice little terminal building there with a couple of comfortable looking couches by the way.

Short hop to Warner but no fuel there as well. Rob and I then hiked into town about 1-1.5 miles away or so. First stop was the only gas pump convenience store in town. Inside were about 6 or so

older citizens sitting around drinking coffee. Introductions were made, questions about fuel asked, another round of coffee bought (by Rob and I) and we now had 6 new friends!

Really shows how small towns are so friendly to visitors. They did have Regular gas with ethanol but as I burn Premium I passed and hoped Milk River would have my type of fuel because the town was bigger with 800 citizens. New friend Vern said if I had no luck finding Premium we could try the UFA cardlock there and he would drive the short distance to Milk River to use his card for me. I did not know that UFA farm gas is Regular but has no Ethanol in it. Good to know.

New friend Terry gave us a ride back to the field in his brand new truck that he had changed all dash info back into Imperial values from Metric! Said he wasn't into that Metric #####! Terry used to be a pilot himself and owned a Cessna 182 but now just flies with one of the other local guys. If I remember correctly there was 2 hangar/buildings there.

We had an interesting talk about how these small towns are trying to stay viable as a lot of Government offices and banks etc are trying to centralize thus leaving these low population areas for the bigger centers. Many of these towns are coming up with new ways to try and bring in more revenue and as I noticed in Warner there was a golf course and RV park there. Terry says that is becoming one of the new

retirement adventures, go from small town to town and golf and camp. He did say it took him and his wife 5 days to reach Calgary last year.

Goodbyes were said and off we went on our next leg of Bob and Rob's Great Adventure! To Milk River!

On the ground at Milk River and town a good 2 miles away! Too far to be lugging a full 5 gal jerrycan back and forth so I pulled out Vern's card and gave him a call. He was about to make lunch and I told him we would buy him lunch if he would come down and assist me in procuring said fuel.



He arrived in about 20 minutes and off we went. We had a late lunch/early dinner at a Chinese restaurant that was very good, staff very friendly. Great conversation was had, mostly by Vern I should add. Afterwards to the UFA and then a quick stop at a certain type of store for some "liquid refreshments" and off to the airfield we went. Vern stayed and visited for a bit but soon Rob and I were on our own.

I will not soon forget that day and night. Rob and I sat in our camp chairs talking and eating and visiting as the sun went down and the full moon came up.



I won't say that I monopolized the conversation that night and Rob barely got a chance to verbalize, but he might if you ask him. There was some smoke coming up from the US and the moon came up full and blood red that night. We took a late night walk the full length of the runway and back and had the coyotes serenade us all the way. *"One thing we did both remark on as we walked the length of the runway at Milk River was how all three runways we landed on that day were in very good shape; lines and numbers very clear and the asphalt had minimal cracking and repairs done to it. Nice to see how some of these small towns keep up their airfields compared to others. Helps keep the Spirit of Aviation alive."*

We could see lights to the south of us; we were about 10 miles from the US border I believe.

As it was so dry there we did not have a fire but there also was no bugs or mosquitos there to bug us so we ended up sleeping out in the open under the stars. Strange to say but it was an

incredible over night experience. Thankfully no Rattlesnakes came to share our sleeping bags with us. There was one open hangar there that had a KitFox on a trailer in it and we camped out in front of it.



Up early next morning and we did have one Aha! moment; next time we both agreed that we bring our folding camp cots with us. No breakfast (we ate all our food the night before) cleaned up the area and left the few emptys for the KitFox owner and in went the UFA fuel from the day before.



Wheels up around 0730 ish we followed our Foreflight track back to Warner then Taber and then Innisfail. With visibility now down because of the smoke that came with the tailwind from the southeast, I stayed low between 700 and 1000 ft AGL. Rob was higher. Forward visibility was about 4-5 miles so I did not get a real good sense of the vastness of the land and it was with some relief I got out of my plane back at Innisfail.

So in all it was an incredible but short experience. All told I think my Foreflight had it about 190 miles one way. Flying time was for me 2.6 hrs down and 2.2 hrs back with first a headwind then the tailwind on the way back. I landed and cleared the active 12 minutes after Rob did.

We want to do more of this type of adventure in the future. Rob mentioned about flying more rural and looking for some of the small and forgotten hamlets, homesteads and towns that exist out there on the Alberta and Sask prairie.

Rob was thinking ahead and brought a small step ladder to make refueling that much easier. A tent may be not necessary if you enjoy sleeping out in the open like we did but should have one if weather turns. Again a good air mattress or a folding cot is a must. Don't rely on your plane's seat cushions to give that restful sleep! Head mounted flashlights would be an asset; leaves your hands free to do "paperwork". Also suggest tie downs as well. We did not

use them that night but again we all know how the weather can change in Alberta.

I am sure there are lots of other items that should be considered but we were nominally prepared for our trip (shoulda brought more food I be thinking)

Any feedback or insights on future trips would be appreciated. Does anyone have a destination in mind that is off the beaten track? Would love to hear about it.

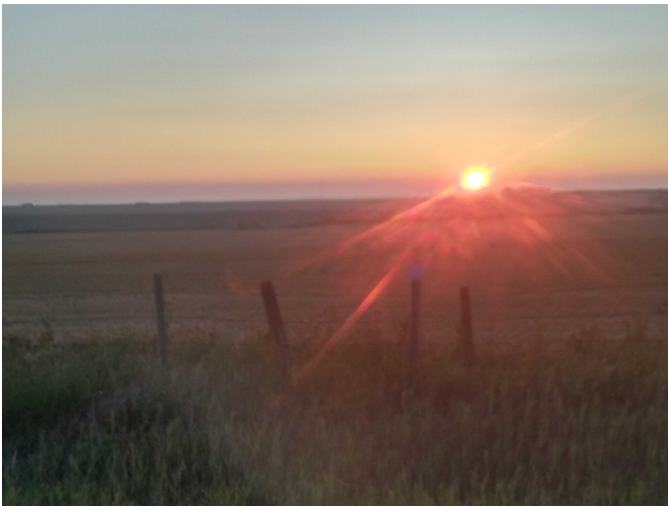


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September and October have afforded some great flying opportunities. I got out with Mike and his KitFox and flew to Indus from Carstairs. I got to the field as the sun was coming up.



Flying beside Mike and his Kitfox was something we had talked about for some time but it just never seemed to happen.



Hopefully we will have a few more chances for some KitFox adventures.

I also got a chance to fly with President Ed in his Sportstar. A quick flight to Vulcan revealed the golf course closed so not food there.



We caught a great tailwind from Vulcan to Linden and made it there in no time. We had some breakfast and then back to Ed's homefield. It was one of those days where I was packing a lot of living in one day.

I had to be to Carstairs for a round of golf with an old friend from Red Deer.

The next day a trip was planned to Ram Falls. Rob Bruce and I in my KitFox, Jim Corner in his KitFox and Royal in his Savage Cub headed west.



Rob took this picture from the cockpit. The mountains were large and majestic.

Unfortunately this picture does not do it justice.

Royal mentioned he had some things pressing for the afternoon so we decided to head to Red Deer Forestry strip first, then the Clearwater strip and Ram Falls if time permitted.



We made the first two strips but decided to pass on Ram Falls and leave it for another day. All in all a good day but not done till we paid a visit to Country cousins for some peanut butter pie before heading home to put the plane away.

As I said the flying weather has been fairly good and if your not getting out enough, well maybe your not trying hard enough.

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