

# The Cleco

Official Publication of the Experimental Aircraft Association  
EAA Chapter #393 POBox 272725 Concord, CA 94527-2725

March 1997

## CHAPTER MEETING:

Meetings normally begin at 7:30 PM on the 4<sup>TH</sup> Wednesday of the month in the terminal building at the end of John Glenn Drive. Latecomers who expect to sit should bring their own chairs. The next meeting will be on March 26, 1997. Speaker to be announced.

## Chapter Meeting Minutes :

February 26, 1996, the meeting was called to order at 7:30 PM by President Bruce Seguire. It was moved and seconded to accept the December minutes as per the Cleco.

Our speaker, Jim Griswold, spoke about being a fighter pilot in the Italian campaign during WWII.

Bill Cartwright from Paso Robles announced the Fly-In and Meet they are sponsoring on May 2, 3, and 4. This event will be devoted to Ultralights and Experimentals only.

## BOARD MEETING:

Board meetings are normally held in Bruce Seguire's hangar at 6:30PM on the Wednesday after the chapter meeting. This month's board meeting was held March 5th.

Present were Bruce Seguire, Bruce Hobbs, Louie Goodell, Fred Egli, Bob Belshe, and Linda and Ken McKenzie. Subjects discussed were the Golden West Fly-In, future meetings, flyouts.

## Treasurer's Report:

Bank Balance	Checking	1005.68
	Savings	<u>2746.36</u>
		3752.04

At this time just 52 members have paid their 1997 dues. Please bring your \$20 dues to next meeting or send to Louis Goodell.

**Petars** has been reserved for our annual Christmas party on December 14th, mark your calendar.

## New member:

Welcome to our newest member, Jerry Morgan. Jerry's project is a GP4.

## President's Message

Our Swift has been down for the last three weeks and even though we can't fly, it has been a pleasure to have all the folks drop by to help, give advice, and to even offer a ride for lunch on our Sat. fly-outs.

On Feb. 26 I had the pleasure of flying with Ron Robinson up to Lampson (Clear Lake) for lunch. There were just enough clouds to make it pretty and enough turbulence to let me check out the stability of the Glasair. It sure is a solid airplane and the panel is laid out so well that I felt right at home. Seems as though every thing was right where you would expect it to be.

Some of the other folks that went along were Scott Achelis and his father-in-law, Bob Decker, Phil Jenkins and Rick Young. Rick was right at home with the RV boys that had flown in from the Sacramento area.

Scott's father-in-law was a big hit as he was the designated WW II rep. with all the appropriate stories. I could listen to that all day. He had seen action on both fronts and spent a lot of time ferrying planes across the pacific by the seat of his pants. It seems as though maintenance stripped most of the good gear out of the planes before they sent them back home for repair. What an interesting luncheon that was.

As usual, on the next two weekends here was the group again and I just couldn't find my way clear to go along. But, with any luck, our swift will be ready for the flight this coming weekend. There is just too much fun to be had to be stuck on the ground. It's getting to be summer -- so let's go flying!!!!

## Member News:

**Terry Gong** has new baby daughter, and at the same time has ordered parts to make a Harmon Rocket out of his RV4.

**Gerry Greth** announced that the fathers day flyin this year will be bigger than ever, still with EAA planes on display, and with auto racing as an added attraction

**Rick Young** is planning to move to Payson, AZ (E69). Payson is 60 NM northeast from Phoenix at an altitude of 5156', with a 5500' runway.

According to **Glen Werner**, the highlight of his trip to Florida was a ride in a ultralight seaplane. Most of us would be happy to just fly his red Lancair.

We hear **Al Humbert** took a ride in a 2-place hang glider. Urp!

**Harry Heckman** has built a "work of art" air scoop so he can partially break in the engine before flying his Lancair 290.

#### **Fly-out schedule:**

The next fly-out will be the Saturday (Mar. 29) following the meeting (Mar. 26). Come to Bruce and Nancy's hangar on the west ramp around 10:30 a.m. Phone (510) 825-0766

#### **There were fly-outs this month!**

Saturday, March 8, was a beautiful day for flying. Rick Young got his first ride in a Lancair, when Bob Belshe and Rick, Ron Robinson and Mike Dias, and Lyle and Ellen Powell flew to Auburn for lunch. Stopping for fuel in Rio Vista, we observed a potentially dangerous situation when a RV6 (not from our chapter) landed on runway 25 while several others were in the pattern and landing on 32. The perp flew away after being severely reprimanded by Rick.

#### **Places to fly:**

Trinity Center, CA, USA

*by Ross Oliver*

Trinity Center Airport is located in the Trinity Alps, the mountains of northwestern California. Trinity Center is a small resort town on the north end of Trinity lake. The lake is one of the three lakes that make up the Shasta complex (Trinity, Whiskeytown, and Shasta). Airport elevation is 3,190 feet, and is in a narrow valley surrounded by peaks topping 7,000 feet, so be sure to brush up on your mountain flying skills before venturing into this field.

The airport could be considered a residential airpark, as there are several homes built on the edge of the airport which have aircraft hangars and direct airport access.

Also on the airport is the Airporter Inn. Its Sunday brunch is a favorite draw for pilots from all over the state. For more information, contact the Airporter Inn at (916) 266-3223.

Nearby the airport is Wyntoon Park Resort. This resort has tent and trailer campgrounds, cottages, boat rentals, and a small grocery store. Wyntoon will provide transportation to and from the airport for its guests. For more information, contact Wyntoon at (916) 266-3337.

#### **FLIGHT ADVISOR INFORMATION**

*From EAA Chapter Gram*

It has come to the Government Programs Office's attention that some Chapters are appointing their own Flight Advisors. While we encourage every Chapter to have a Flight Advisor, we would like to remind all Chapters that each Flight Advisor must be approved and registered with EAA Headquarters. Likewise, a Flight Advisor is not allowed to claim that he or she represents a Chapter unless that Chapter's President has approved him or her to do so. On each Flight Advisor application form, there is a signature block for a Chapter President. No Flight Advisor is listed as representing a

Chapter unless Headquarters receives an application with a Chapter President's signature.

If you have someone in your Chapter who you think would make a good Flight Advisor, please encourage him or her to apply to become one. Applications are available by calling Joyce Reynolds at (414) 426-6522

### **After 50 years, the Clippers are remembered**

**By Richard Pontziou**

*Thanks to Doug Page for submitting this article from the November 17, 1985 San Francisco Examiner.*

IT WAS A DREAM that captured the imagination of the world 50 years ago this month.

Think of it: A flying boat, the largest airliner built in America, as of the 1930s. It was 90 feet long, weighing 26 tons, big enough and strong enough to push its way through the air at 135 miles an hour, carrying 32 passengers and a crew of 10 across the Pacific Ocean. It covered the distance from San Francisco to Manila in a week.

It was a feat not to be believed. Only eight years earlier Lindbergh had made the first successful solo crossing of the Atlantic. Surely it was not yet possible to fly 8,210 statute miles across the Pacific in 59 hours and 43 minutes, as Pan Am claimed.

It was. Mail service to the Philippines via Pan Am's China Clipper was inaugurated Nov. 22, 1935. Passenger service would begin a year later, Oct. 21, 1936.

Said President Franklin Roosevelt, "I thrill to the wonder of it all."

Today, it's nothing. A Boeing 747SP can fly for 14 or 15 hours non-stop to Hong Kong at 43,000 feet, virtually above any kind of weather. On Nov. 22, 1985, Pan Am will celebrate its 50 years of service across the Pacific with a commemorative flight that will retrace the steps of the original China Clipper.

Under the command of chief pilots Donald Pritchett and William Frisbie, a giant 747 will fly from San Francisco to Honolulu, Midway, Wake, Guam and finally Manila. The trip is expected to take 40 hours and 55 minutes, including an overnight stop in Honolulu.

Ironically, it will be one of the airline's last trips in that direction. Later this year or early next, Pan Am will give up its Pacific routes to United Airlines in exchange for much needed cash.

Fifty years ago, the China Clipper was such an adventure that crowds would gather at the dock in Alameda to see the Martin M-130 lift off from the water and fly out under the Bay Bridge and over the Golden Gate, still two years away from completion.

Businesses and restaurants adopted the name "China Clipper." Street names were changed. A dance was created called the "Clipper," and Hollywood came out with a film it called "China Clipper," starring Humphrey Bogart and Pat O'Brien. It was a terribly dangerous but exciting thing to do, recalls Carlton Morse, 84, who flew on the first passenger flight. "My most vivid memory is seeing the water come up over the

windows as we moved through the water for take off. The flight was the biggest adventure of my life."

It would have been for anyone. Setting out across the Pacific was risky. The M-130 flew at an altitude of 6,000 of 8,000 feet through whatever weather blew up in its path.

Landing on smooth water was tricky because, explains former Pan Am pilot Ken Beer, "it was like looking into a mirror. You couldn't tell where the water was. In heavy waves you could easily damage the hull if you didn't touch down just right." Taking off in the heat and humidity of the Orient was inevitably a white-knuckle affair, remembers pilot Horace Brock in his book, "Flying the Oceans".

"When we had the whole ocean ahead of us, we just roared along at full power, hoping the cylinders wouldn't blow up, until we got off the water or it became apparent we were not going to."

Navigation techniques were primitive. There was an automatic pilot, but it was unreliable. Courses were fixed by dead reckoning and celestial navigation. "It meant we had a good chance of getting lost," says Beer.

There was no emergency oxygen, no air conditioning, "and there were no movies," he adds.

Still, there were some comforts. While former Pan Am pilot Horace Brock remembers the M-130 as a "clumsy, unstable" aircraft whose high level of vibration and noise left the flight crew drained, passenger Morse recalls its "quiet, gentle ride" The main passenger cabin was divided into compartments that made up into lower and upper berths. There was a lounge amidships for meals and drinks, with tables and chairs of bamboo and rattan designed by Gump's of San Francisco to seat 14 people.

Passengers were served by two male pursers who would buy all the food for their flight and then prepare it in the plane's kitchen along the way. "It was an awfully gracious in-flight service back then, says Ray Scott, a Pan Am purser for 31 years, who heard the Clipper ship stories first-hand when he went to work for the company. The pace was much slower and there was none of the fast-food kind of thing we pass out today. It was slow, easy and comfortable."

It was also during the depression, when jobs were hard to get. The average wage for a Pan Am employee on the atolls was \$100 a month. Flight navigators made three times that.

Pan Am crews today speak in awe of the men who flew the first Clipper ships. "The pilots were a different breed," says Bob Harrell, a pilot with 20 years experience. "When they said something, it was law."

So strict was the hierarchy, that crews used to march two-abreast to the plane, the chief pilot and his first officer leading the way, pursers bringing up the rear, all of them decked out in the navy blue uniforms and white visor caps that have remained as Pan Ams uniforms today. No one dared call a pilot by his first name, Harrell recalls. It was 'sir' or 'Captain,' or you were out."

None of the three M-130s made for Pan Am survived the Second World War. The first of the three, the original China Clipper, was the last to go down during a night landing at Port of Spain, Trinidad, Jan. 8, 1945. The Philippine Clipper

preceded her on Jan 21, 1942, crashing into Mt. St. Helena, near Ukiah, on a flight from Honolulu to San Francisco.

The first to be lost was the Hawaiian Clipper, which disappeared July 28, 1938 a flight from Guam to Manila. No trace was ever found.

Captain Edwin C. Musick, who flew the first flight across the Pacific, lost his life at the controls of a Boeing Clipper ship, the second generation flying boat, while trying to land in Pango Pango.

"It was a tough landing under the best conditions," Boyle explains, "requiring a pilot to practically belly-slide down the side of a mountain to get into the lagoon. Musick got caught in some weather, and that was it.

Musick's navigator on his first trans-Pacific flight was Fred Noonan. Acknowledged as the best in the world at the time, Noonan was an alcoholic, and that cost him his job with Pan Am. He later lost his life in the Pacific in an attempt to circumnavigate the globe on a flight with Amelia Earhart.

Stories from the boat era are endless, although the people who can tell them first-hand are growing fewer in number.

Grant Wells worked in the atolls for Pan Am and remembers the day's "blood, sweat and tears."

"There was a never-ending battle against nature," he recalls: "Riding out typhoons in Quonset huts lashed to the ground with steel cables; racing to change an engine before a typhoon struck; saving a Boeing clipper from a watery grave when she ran aground on a reef; crawling out on a wing to right a ship that had dipped its other wing into the bay."

"Empires are not built without sacrifices. A lot of us made them. That was a part of what we called 'Clipper Glory.' I'm afraid its lost forever."

**A Great Flying Season starts with a  
GOOD BREAKFAST  
23rd Annual EAA Chapter 512 Fly-in Pancake  
Breakfast**

**Saturday, April 26, 1997**

**8:00 am to 11:00 am**

**Placerville Airport**

Placerville Airport (PVF) is located in the foothills of the Sierras at a field elevation of 2583', with a paved 4200' runway. Unicom frequency is 122.8, runways are 23 and 05 (use 23 if wind calm, use right traffic for 05) Enjoy a breakfast of pancakes, sausage, fruit, juice and coffee or tea for only \$4.00 adults, \$2 00 for children.

Proceeds support Young Eagles and our annual Toys for Tots effort Our EAA hangar is located on the northwest side of the field and has a beautifully landscaped adjoining picnic area. When approaching and landing at PVF take in our magnificent view of the Sierras. No rain date - our hangar is large and heated. We'll be signing up youngsters (8 through 16) for a Young Eagle rally to be held later in the year (date to be announced) We'll also have static displays of antique and homebuilt aircraft.

Come join us for breakfast and our anniversary celebration! For additional information call: Bill George at (916) 642-8063 or Al Herron at (916) 626-4165.

**If computer Operating Systems were airplanes ....**

*Contributed by Ken McKenzie*

**Windows 95** - Would crash on takeoff!

**UNIX** - Climb rapidly to extreme altitudes and then crash spectacularly!

**DOS** - Take off quickly, climb to altitude, and run out of fuel

**MAC** - Long take off run, slow climb, no payload!

**NT** - Come out to the airport with photographers, reporters and TV. Make a big splash. Fail to fly.

**OS/2** - Stealth fighter. Millions sold. Very few have actually seen one in flight. Program may be canceled any time due to lack of funding.

**Monthly Tips:**

There is not a word in all the dictionaries of all the languages that can serve as an alibi if your plane runs out of fuel while in flight.

Statistics show that security of flight is 1500 per cent greater when knowledge and expert supervision are the background.

The difference between a three-point landing and a one-point landing is that after the first you can fly the airplane again.

The superior pilot relies on his superior judgment so that he rarely, if ever, has to rely on his superior flying ability.

Weather need not be feared, even though it is often capricious, but always respected. The smart pilot always has a clear cut and reliable alternate plan to cope with nature's little surprises.

It takes three things to fly a plane; airspeed, altitude and brains. You can never run out of any two of these at the same time and survive.

In any field of human endeavor, mistakes are bound to occur. Stay alert and take nothing for granted if you plan on a long flying career.

**SHORT FINAL...**

Aircraft Wildlife Squawks (or, software isn't the only thing with bugs):

Problem: F/A's complain of numerous roaches in the galleys.  
Solution: Roaches deplaned.

Problem: Live cockroach seen disappearing in forward galley.  
Solution: Live cockroach transferred to HIL (Hold Item List).

Problem: 3 roaches in galley.  
Solution: 1 roach killed, 1 wounded, 1 got away.

Problem: Mouse in radio stack.  
Solution: Cat installed in radio stack.

Problem: Weather radar went ape-%@#&!  
Solution: Opened radome, let out ape, cleaned up %@#&!

## Calendar of Events

- Mar 23 and Apr 20 **PANCAKE BREAKFAST** 8:30 a.m. to Noon  
Everyone is Welcome!! Fly-In or Drive Over! Sponsored by the Mt. Diablo Pilot's Association MDPA Club House, Buchanan Field Airport (CCR), West Side, 200 Sally Ride Drive (510) 685-7073  
Pancakes, Sausage, Juice, and Coffee \$3.50 (members and non-members) Bring your family and friends!! Fly-in and park right in front of the Club House in our spacious, paved tie-down area. Just ask the tower to taxi to MDPA for breakfast!
- Mar 14-16 The Incredible Universe Aviation & motor Sport Spectacular, Williams Gateway Airport Mesa, AZ 602-941-0061
- April 6-12 Sun'n Fun EAA Fly-In, Lakeland, FL.
- April 26 EAA Chapter 512 Anniversary Breakfast, Placerville Airport, CA
- April 26-27 Warbirds in Action Airshow, Minter Field, Shafter, CA
- April 27 Pacific Coast Dream Machines, Half Moon Bay Airport, CA
- May 2,3,4 Paso Robles Fly-In and Meet. Ultralight and Experimental aircraft only. Information: Bill Cartwright 707-745-8747.
- May 3-4 Great Valley Fly-in, 9am to 5pm, Watts-Woodland Airport, CA
- May 16-17 Northern California EAA Fly-In, Corning, CA
- May 17 Corning Antique Airshow and Fly-In, Corning, CA
- May 17-18 West Coast Pilots Expo, Fairplex and Brackett Field, Pomona, CA
- May 23-25 West Coast Antique Fly-In & Airshow, Watsonville, CA
- May 30-Jun 1 48th Annual Moonlight Fly-In, Porterville, CA
- Jun 16 Annual Father's Day Airshow, Concord, CA
- Jul 9-13 Northwest EAA Fly-In, Arlington, WA
- Jul 12 20th Annual Grass Valley Air Fest, Nevada County Airport, CA
- July 19th Chapter 393 Picnic, Prior to Oshkosh.
- July 31-Aug 6 45th Annual EAA Fly-In Convention, Oshkosh, WI.
- Dec 14 Chapter 393 Annual Christmas party at Petar's.

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## **Chapter 393 Video Library**

The Video Library has again been expanded with some items donated by Mike Parker. New titles include:

Flying Aces of WW II  
All About Aviation Oil, from Shell  
Flying Saucers are Real, Volumes I and II

The complete list of titles is listed on the box which is brought to each of our meetings. Check out the offerings, and, if something interests you, CHECK IT OUT.

The rules of use for the library are very simple. It is run on the honor system. You sign out for the tapes you borrow; and you return them at the next meeting so they are available for others.

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## **NEWSLETTER SUBMISSIONS**

All contributions for the newsletter are welcome! If you have something to say or share with the rest of the club members, do it here! Please submit any articles and/or photographs you think others will enjoy and learn from. Submissions should be done in writing and mailed directly to the newsletter editor. Submissions may be **e-mailed**, hand written, typed, or on any IBM diskette (in ASCII or MS Word). The deadline for submissions to the editor is the 14th of every month (newsletter is produced and mailed by the 17th). The editor's e-mail address is: **rab@netcom.com**.

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## **CLASSIFIED ADVERTISING**

Items for sale by club members may be placed in this newsletter for **FREE!** *Please submit your **FOR SALE** items to me in writing no later than the 14<sup>th</sup> of the month. Normally, your ad will run for two issues, unless you request more or tell me that the item is no longer for sale.*

### **FOR SALE: Comanche-1959 PA24-180:**

4 Place Intercom, full IFR, Alternator system, 4043TT, 1124 SMOH, 689 SPOH, 3 Light Marker Beacon, Lycoming Engine, Painted 1990, New one-piece Windshield, Dual Nav Com. Annual new 1/97, \$32,000.  
Call: Richard O'Connor (510) 798-0743

THE EXPERIMENTAL AIRCRAFT ASSOCIATION  
CHAPTER #393 NEWSLETTER, MARCH 1997

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Next Meeting March 26, 1997