
The Alameda Aero Club Newsletter

February 2004

Avionics For The Complete...

Matt DeSeelhorst of Bay Avionics will speak at our March meeting (3/10, usual place & time). He asked what we would like him to cover. I said I'd ask you-all, so that's what I'm doing.

Here's your chance to learn everything you always wanted to know about avionics but were afraid to ask! Please email me with your ideas and I'll pass them on to Matt.

Also, please pass along any ideas, such as who you would like to see at the May meeting, and I'll see what I can do...

Dave Penney, Volunteer Coordinator
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New Solo Students

Plane rental, \$80 per hour. Instructor, \$40 per hour. Doing your first takeoffs and landings all by yourself - priceless! Chad Scott found out what it's all about January 3, 2004 on Oakland's RWY 27L, doing three excellent landings. Way to go Chad!

John Ewing, CFII

1/11/04
Congratulations to Brandon Onstott who soloed 739UL on Oakland's 27L. Better start working on that RV soon!

Ben Freelove, CFII

Maintenance Update

The last month has been quite busy, considering all the cloudy weather. 12R, 05D, and 4JG have been running well.

4AC's rigging was adjusted during the last 100 hour inspection, to address its left-wing-low ten-

dency and the handling has improved. We're still working on getting replacement carpeting for 4AC.

9UL's door hinges were adjusted, so the doors are much easier to close. The mode C function of 9UL's transponder was intermittent; the problem was traced to worn-out heating ducts. Turning on the cabin heat would heat up the altitude encoder, since the ducts were full of holes and routed nearby. Installing new, rerouted ducts should solve the problem.

The worn out Velcro on the access panel at the back of 12R's baggage compartment has been replaced, so it should no longer rattle.

12R, 4AC and 9UL have all been plagued with unreliable landing/taxi lights and wiring. 9UL's problems have been vexing - numerous repairs within a 2 month period. A review of repairs last year showed that taxi/landing light repairs resulted in much expense and loss of use, so a LoPresti landing/taxi light was installed in 9UL.

This STC'd lighting unit replaces both bulbs with high-intensity discharge lights. One beam is wide, for taxiing and the other is narrow, for landing - same as the original lights, but that's where the similarity ends. The new lights are far brighter and draw significantly less current. The bulbs, wiring and power supplies are guaranteed for 5,000 hours or five years, so you can just leave them on during training or anytime you need to be more visible to other traffic. As a courtesy to others, use these lights carefully while taxiing at night as they are quite bright.

The new lights should reduce repair costs, increase reliability, and enhance safety. If they are as reliable as we expect them to be over the next two months, the club will consider installing them in 12R and 4AC.

John Ewing, Maintenance Director

Ten Reasons to Get an Instrument Rating

It's not just so you can fly through clouds, make it home on foggy afternoons, and get out of town in time for brunch. Nope, it's because...

...you will finally, after stumbling around in the sky for years, truly learn how to control an airplane.

...the whole system of aviation will reveal itself to you, instead of your playing blind man's bluff even though you could see the ground.

...you will enter into the cooperative illusion that is air traffic control as a participant rather than an obstacle.

...your understanding and awareness of weather will make you gaze upon the sky in knowing awe wherever you are.

...the discipline you learn is as empowering as any martial art.

...it's better than the best video game.

...it's a great excuse to buy more avionics.

...having the rating will constantly remind you of how well you are supposed to fly.

...you might well learn more about your-self than in four years of college, ten years of marriage, or twenty of psychotherapy.

...looking at clouds from both sides makes you a little more than human, and yet more humble than ever before in your life.

Ginny Wilken, Secretary

A Student Pilot's Tale

Shot landings at Half Moon Bay Monday morning.

As I didn't wreck the plane, I got six off in an hour or so. Light crosswind from the southwest on 12. HMB 12 is interesting in that it slopes downhill, maybe 25 feet or so in its length. Conversely 30 is uphill. No glide path lights on 12. On final there are breakers on a rocky shore, then a low bluff, houses, and trees

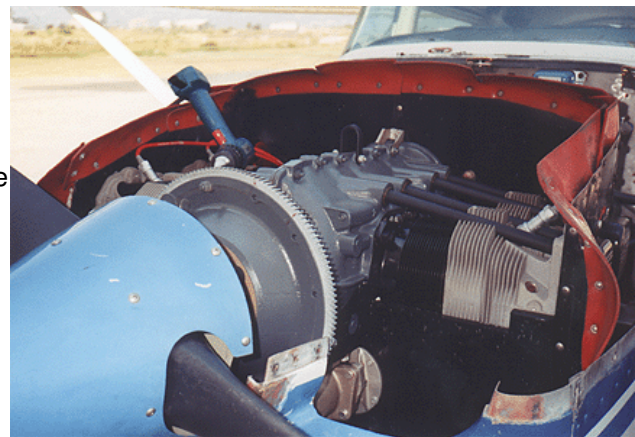
at the end of the runway too. The Beech Skipper takes lots of right rudder trim for straight, so slipping right for cross wind requires a bit of effort on the left rudder.

My instructor, an old Air Force fighter jock, says most of my landings still look "Navy", which he defines as survivable crashes. I won't take offense. They're getting a bit smoother.

Also went out a few miles, south of the golf course, and tried to take a picture of the field. We'll see if it comes out. While in the pattern I flew by a pair of redtail hawks, at 1000 feet! Saw them early. No problem of collision avoidance. Close encounters of the wonderful kind.

The clouds were lovely. There was a scattered deck of stratus at about 2000', another scattered deck at about 5000' and a broken layer at maybe 20,000'. The sun shone through from time to time turning the ocean silver in the south. 25+ miles visibility underneath. I didn't notice while in the air, but on the road home the Farallon Islands and Point Reyes were both visible as gray shadows against lighter gray clouds to the north. Warm front. Rain started late this afternoon.

Charles Warren



Recognize this photograph?

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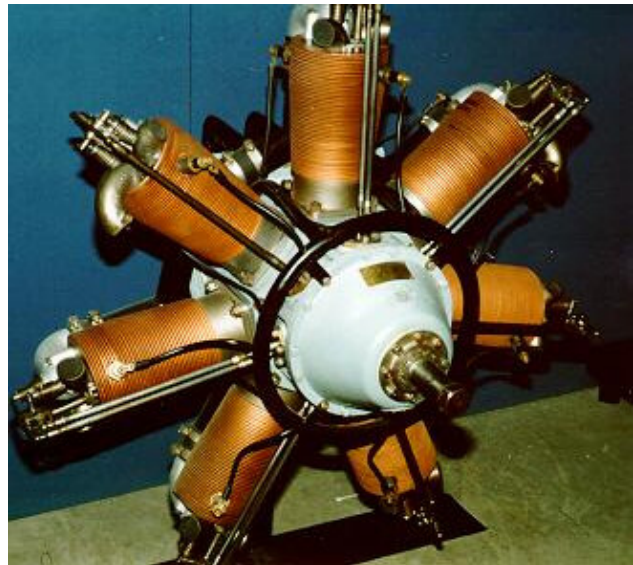
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ABC Wasp, a failed WWI design.