



International Cessna 120/140 Association

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In This Issue

My Best Friend the 140A *by Member Ron Bland* page 3

Virginia Fly In Review page 8

Lessons Learned—Again *Member Pete Salas* page 10

Tech Talk—Corrosion *by Victor Grahm* page 12

What a Trip! - Part 1 *By David Hoffman* page 17



Ron Bland's Cessna 140A

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My Best Friend the 140A

By Ron Bland

A few years back, 1969 to be exact, I received my brand new shiny private pilots license. I am sure I was not much different from most new private pilots in that I thought I was the world's greatest pilot. I mean after all, I had earned that license in the minimum time required by the FAA and shortly after receiving the certificate I got checked out in some high performance aircraft such as a Cessna 172 and even the rocket ship Cessna 182.

My goal back in those days was to climb the ladder and someday be seated in the left seat of a big passenger hauler working for a major airline. I knew I had to build millions of hours to accomplish this task and the idea of owning my own aircraft to do so seemed like the best economic solution.

At the time, I was working for a fixed base operation at a field in Western Kansas. One of our customers had a plane in for annual inspection. It was this little Cessna. It looked a lot like the Cessna 150 I had taken my initial training in but they had stuck the nose wheel on the tail. Turned out the plane was being put up for sale. As we did the maintenance on the plane I knew it's mechanical history and

that it was airworthy. The price was also attractive. I made the decision to go for it and bought the little Cessna without ever having flown, nor even taxied it. But then how hard could it be to fly, after all, had I not flown the mighty Cessna 182?

So now I was a proud owner of my own airplane. I remember quite vividly walking out on the ramp, Ray Bans on of course, and climbing in that little two seater to taxi

it down to the T-hanger I had just rented. As I scanned the instruments I didn't see anything that really looked out of the ordinary and I proceeded to go through the motions of starting it. A couple shots of primer, master switch



9694A as purchased

on, mag switch to both and then turn to start. But wait a minute; the switch wouldn't turn any further. Confused, I looked around and saw a knob on the lower right part of the panel that said, "pull to start". I pulled, the prop moved and within a couple blades the mighty Continental roared into life. OK now, I have a running aircraft, the rest should be easy. I applied right rudder and some power and all I did was rotate in a tight right circle. Full left rudder and I just got a tight left circle. I glanced out the window and the old grizzled mechanic, who for some reason seemed to hate my

guts, was bent over laughing. Now I was getting frustrated so I started jamming rudders, brakes and anything else that would move. Eventually I got the tail wheel out of freewheel and back into detent and the plane moved forward. Needless to say the trip to the hanger was not all that pretty.

After that little embarrassment, I spent several hours just taxiing my new plane around on the tarmac. My home base was an old Army Air Base so it has large expanses of asphalt, which was good as my taxi skills were a bit erratic at first. Eventually however I mastered the little wheel on the back and was able to move about on the field at will and look like I knew what I was doing in the process.

Soon after purchasing my plane, I quit my job at the FBO and began working for a local crop dusting firm. The owner was a WWII Marine fighter pilot and a test pilot after the war. The only thing he currently flew however was his crop duster, a PT-17 Stearman. To supplement his crop dusting he ran cattle on pasture in the winter months. One evening we had one of those Kansas storms, which come with a lot of wind. This usually means the thistles pile up on the fences and sometimes knock them down. This happened to the fence that held my boss's cattle. The next day he instructed me to go rent a Cessna 172 so we could go look for the cattle. As I was heading out the door I thought, why would I want to rent a plane when I own one? I told him as much and so he said go get it. Proudly I retrieved my new plane and taxied, quite impressively I might add, to the crop dusting hanger. My boss got in and we were ready to go look for cattle.

I must take a moment here to explain a little about my boss. He was of German

ancestry, had a nasal drawl, close cropped hair and the doctor had told him to stay as far away from cigarettes as possible, so he used a cigarette holder about 6 inches long. He was the perfect image of a Nazi SS officer and sometimes had an attitude to match. So here he is sitting next to me and telling me to get going.

I taxied out to the appropriate runway and lined up on the centerline. Now this was the first time I was going to apply full power and actually try to fly this craft. The "big boys" had told me that you want to add power gently, especially with a tail wheel aircraft, as the P factor would most certainly take you off into the weeds. I therefore started applying power gradually. The little Cessna responded nicely and we



tracked straight down the centerline, that is until we increased our speed to 20 or 30 mph. About then the plane started to dart right, then left and the tail was doing some weird up and down movement. I heard the tires screeching with each twist and turn and then my boss had his hand on the back of mine and shoved the throttle in. He made some comment like "get us off the ground before you kill us!!" Soon we were airborne and climbing and the little Cessna that had just tried to kill us was as docile as any other aircraft I had piloted.

My heart was just starting to slow to a somewhat normal beat when we saw some cattle wandering around below us. My boss told me to circle them. I went into a death defying turn of about 20 degree or so bank and began circling them. My boss looked at me and said, "give me the plane", and then he proceeded to dive on the cattle. I was certain he was intent on knocking one over with a wing so he could read the brand. He finally determined they were his cattle and put the plane back into a climb, headed for the airport. As I took over the controls and climbed back to a safe altitude the realization came over me that I was going to have to land this little monster!! All I can say is thank goodness for WIDE runways. With the help of my boss, lots of it I might add, we managed to connect with terra firma without breaking anything or losing our lives. I will never forget his words as he exited the aircraft, "who the \$%#@ taught you to fly, you don't know \$%#@". My plane was intact but my ego shattered.

After that nightmarish experience, my boss must have taken pity on me as he told me to go get my plane and he would show me how to fly. I did as ordered and we went flying. I learned many things not taught me by my flight instructors. Things like Dutch Rolls, slips, spins and all sorts of different ways to land a plane with the nose wheel on the tail.

I put several hundred hours on that little bird. We became the best of friends. It was, as I discovered, a very honest airplane, it did exactly what you asked it to do, but it did not tolerate mistakes. I grew extremely confident with it. We could land on any field, even some country roads, in most any condition. Kansas's winds blow constantly and you need to be well versed in how to handle a stiff crosswind.

In 1973, I took one of my friends and we flew the little Cessna to the old Perrin Air Force Base in Sherman-Dennison, Texas. Our mission there was to see the annual National Aerobatic Championships. It was there I fell in love with aerobatics and decided I had to do that.

In 1974 I took a job in Fort Collins, Colorado. As I wanted to pursue aerobatic flying and my little 140 just didn't offer what I needed, I ended up selling it to some guys I worked with. Oh, we didn't sever all ties; I still got to fly it on a fairly frequent basis. I soon began flying aerobatics. I flew a Belanca Decathlon and finally acquired a shiny red Pitts S-1. For the next 12-15 years I flew competition aerobatics. About 1990, I determined my aerobatics and my Pitts were not exactly "family activities" so I made the decision to sell my pride and joy and I bought a sailboat. My flying was essentially zero for many years.

About 2001, I moved from Fort Collins, Colorado to Greeley, Colorado. The two towns are only a few miles apart. Greeley has a very nice little uncontrolled field with a fine little restaurant on it that serves great breakfasts and has Buffalo Burgers. I had tried to stay away from aviation as much as possible because I knew it was addictive. I did however end up going to the airport and eating at that restaurant on weekends. In the warmer months there would be all sorts of neat, mouth watering, aircraft show up for that so called \$100 hamburger. I got the bug.

Since there was no FBO on the Greeley field I made arrangements at the Fort Collins field to get my bi-annual. I ended up flying a Cessna 172. Other than about a hundred extra fuel drains I had to check it was pretty much the same plane I had

flown many times years ago. We went through the usual check out, some air work and a few take off and landings. I passed with flying colors and once again had an inflated ego. As I was walking back to the FBO after my check out, I spotted my old 140 sitting on the ramp. It had a for sale sign in the window. I couldn't resist, I bought it. Here's the kicker, the guys I bought it from are the very same guys I sold it to in 1974. The only drawback is they wouldn't sell it back for what they bought it for.

sonably safe manner. I must admit however, each time I would line up on the active the prairie dogs along side the runway would run for cover.

I finally decided it had to be more than my piloting skills that was causing the erratic handling. I found the entire tail wheel assembly was in dire need of attention. As a result I ended up with essentially a new assembly, leaf springs and tail wheel. It now tracks and handles like the old friend I knew and loved back in the early 70's.

My little bird is a Cessna 140A. Paperwork says it was actually built in Kansas in 1949 but registered in 1950. That is special to me as I was built in Kansas in 1949 as well. It is your standard 140A, all metal with the Continental C-90. It was damaged on landing in 1978. I helped the owners rebuild it. At the time the engine had a complete major overhaul as well and it received a brand new shiny paint job. They didn't fly it much after that, only a few hours a year.

When I bought it back there was only about 350 hours on it since major rebuild.

It had sat much of the time and was in need of some TLC.

After I purchased it, I hired an experienced tail wheel instructor to fly with me and check out, I guess maturity does include a certain amount of logic. I was all over the place again. It was if I had never flown a tail wheel aircraft, even though I have hundreds of hours in various types. It was even a handful for the instructor. I did manage, after several hours of take offs and landings, to get it up and down in a rea-



I have had a great time with my little 140 since I reacquired it. I have also learned a lot about these little birds of ours. I would like to take this opportunity to thank all of the members of the 120/140 association for any and all of the assistance I have received through the forums. I would especially like to thank Neal Wright. He has been a godsend with support and information on various issues. Thank you Neal.

My flights these days are generally around the patch. I enjoy my take offs and landings. The little 140 will challenge me on each and every one and when those wheels gently touch the runway with only a minimal chirp I feel great satisfaction. We have had about 36 years of association so far and I look forward to many more enjoyable years, as we both grow "older" together.

If any of you 120/140 owners ever get a hankering for one of the fine "\$100" Buffalo Burgers at the Greeley airport (KGXY), give me a call. I will buy.

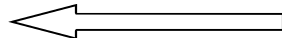
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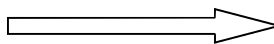
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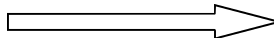
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**New additions to the
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Eric Papon and
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For Sale



For Sale, 1950 Cessna 140A, N5305C. Owned since 1983, C-90, 620SMOH,
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Please call for pictures or more information: Bernard P. Edwards. (276) 865-5374,
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Virginia Section has Fall Fly-In



State Rep, Lonzo Cornett, looks to the sky as the first 140 approaches.

The skies were brightly over Virginia on November 4 when the Virginia Section held its Fall Fly-In. Bright, not only for the perfect weather, but because of the many beautiful 120/140s that graced her skies. In addition to having the most 120/140s assembled in one place in Virginia in many years, numerous former, yet loyal, 120/140 drivers showed up in their Taylorcrafts, 170's, 172's, U-3's and Malibu's (Chevrolet).

Several celebrities were on hand...

Sara Parmeter – Virginia's Department of Aviation

own poster Child.

Ray Tyson – Virginia Aeronautical Historical Society Hall of Fame member, Hugh Woodle – Virginia's most notorious 120/140 driver.



Special

thanks to Bill Kelly, Manager of the New Kent County Airport, (Richmond) for the use of the facilities, and John Noble for his expertise cooking some of the best 'Bubba Burgers' ever grilled outside of Texas.

Also, thanks to Jack Pettigrew, editor and Fred Keuster, photographer.



Just a few of the best pilots Virginia has to offer!



Into the friendly skies of Virginia!

How would you like to get involved in this Association???

Dayton Ohio is where flight began so come to the convention and begin your involvement in the International Cessna 120/140 Association.

At the Convention, we will be voting for three open positions:

Vice-President
Secretary-Treasurer
Newsletter Editor

If you are interested in running for one of these positions, please let any of the Association Officers or Board Members know!
Come to the Convention and Get Involved!

This issue will feature the duties of the **Secretary-Treasurer**.

1. Maintains the Association database that includes all domestic and international member's information.
2. Build and send out New Member packets.
3. Organizes Type Club dinner at Oshkosh AirVenture.
4. Take notes and write up business meeting minutes.
5. Organize member information and compile for publication as the January Newsletter/Membership Directory.
6. Maintain Association banking and financial history. Insure payment of all Association related expenses.
7. File Association tax documents at the end of the business year.

Helpful Skills? You guessed it, computer skills are a must. Organizational skills would be quite a plus also!

For Sale

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Lessons Learned... Again

(Member Pete Salas sent us this note. We are sorry to hear of his loss)

Pete Salas

N912Z

It is with much regret that I have report this, but Tuesday Jan 15, 2008 approx. 5pm, my airplane, a 1946 antique Cessna 120 was destroyed in a ground related mishap. **No**, I was not in it or even at the airport at the time.

What happened was my mechanic friend had been making a carburetor idle speed adjustment. It is customary to run the engine when doing this. He taxied it to the end of the runway & the engine quit running. At least it was not in the air when that happened. He got out of it & went foreword to open the engine cowling. He reached out to move the propeller & the engine started. It seems he did not shut off the mag. switches. Due to the throttle setting being more advanced than idle power the airplane started with no one in it which resulted in a runaway airplane. My airport, Lakeview airport (30F) is located beside the lake & the airplane was heading for the water.

He chased it & caught up with it, but not in time before it struck a stack of steel building materials that was piled up alongside the runway. The left landing gear struck the steel beams which tore off the left landing gear. it ended up on it's nose & left wing tip. The propeller was twisted up badly when it struck the ground due to sudden stoppage that bent the engine mounts & probably destroyed the engine. The wing was bent, the

metal wing skin rippled, the wing tip damaged, also the fuselage bent at the wing attach area. The left landing gear box area was ripped out when the gear was torn out.

I was called after this happened & I went out to the airport with my trailer. With the help of some of my friends we were able to put it on the trailer. It is now back in my hangar. The insurance agent came out yesterday & declared it a total loss.

I am thankful to God that there was not a serious or fatal injury. He was struck by the propeller when it started which badly bruised his hand & elbow. He was lucky that he was not more severely injured.

As can be expected I am in fact saddened by this unfortunate event. It hurts me to have to write this report but I must get it out of my mind so I have to relay this story.

Will I purchase another airplane?.....Yes. I am glad that I did have insurance coverage however.

I know that this is just a pile of aluminum & is merely a material thing which can be replaced. I can understand losing an airplane as that has happened to me before but I can't stand losing a friend. There are many lessons to be learned here. Especially not moving a propeller before insuring that the mag switches are indeed turned off.

Respectfully,

Pete Salas

1946 Cessna 120

N 912Z

Now deceased



Did you enjoy your 2008 Calendar? Would you like to see your airplane in next years calendar? Please start early by sending me your best pictures so I can get a head start on the 2009 calendar! Email or send them to the Editor!

Our Website
www.cessna120-140.org

Our website is located at www.cessna120-140.org Our website Committee is staffed by the following members:

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Tech Talk—Corrosion

By Victor Grahn

As our aircraft age probably the number one thing on many owners mind is corrosion. I see many references to corrosion both on our website, other “aging aircraft” literature and websites and especially in the professional journals I read that have to do with Aviation and Aircraft maintenance.

Obviously, corrosion is bad for a variety of reasons. It can deteriorate the strength of your aircrafts’ structural components and can also affect your re-sale pricing if and when you go to sell your aircraft. It can also be unsightly and ruin an otherwise great paint job.

Probably the biggest thing that comes to mind for me concerning corrosion is structural failure. To do such a thing, certainly the corrosion would have to be pretty severe, but not necessarily so. Consider what a small amount of corrosion can do in one of the landing gear step holes. If this corrosion gets to the point of starting a crack, and then the gear leg fails on a landing, this little bit of corrosion could cost you the price of the airplane. So, small amounts in just the wrong places could be worse than a large corrosion patch in a less sensitive area, such as a non structural wing fairing for instance.

To be able to combat corrosion, first you have to recognize it, be able to spot it or at least know where to look for it. Like other obnoxious critters and things that cause grief in your life, by and large, corrosion doesn’t just jump out and smack you when you walk up to the airplane. Mostly, it hides in out of the way places, such as between skin lap (overlap) joints, under the battery box, under the seat pans, or wayyyy in the back, bottom of the tail cone section. The kinds of places you don’t see every day, but, you expect your mechanic to find during an annual inspection.....Right??!!

Well, I’m realistic enough to know that not every airplane gets a thorough check out by a certified, knowledgeable mechanic. There are things such as mechanics just starting out in the business, working under an IA, or unfamiliar with your type of airplane, or an owner assisted annual, where the owner opens the airplane up and then the IA comes around and “Inspects” the airplane and then the owner closes the airplane back up. I’ve seen all sorts of variations on the above themes, with all sorts of degrees of results.

So, for the more knowledgeable aircraft owner, which we all want to be, what is it we’re looking for and what do we do about it?

Corrosion simply put is the reversion

of solid base metals losing their strength and integrity by breaking down, and reverting back to their initial base, which in the case of steel, is iron ore. Corrosion can be white and powdery, in the case of aluminum, or a rust colored brown in the case of steel/iron.

If you have channels, or extruded pieces of formed aluminum, then you can get exfoliation, which makes the formed piece look like it's internally rotting, or blowing up from the inside out.

You can get corrosion from dissimilar metals. You can have steel in any form, right next to aluminum and add a little water, or moisture, or humidity, or any one of some other fluids and you end up with basically a battery type action. One metal decides to surrender and give up, or worse, or it can turn traitor and join the other side, and try to become part of the other metal.

You shouldn't always look for corrosion on

the bottom of something, such as the belly of the airplane. I've seen numerous aircraft where the corrosion started out and was nicely working away under the roof skin, on top of the carry through spars. It was just peaking out of the edges of the carry through spar skins where they rivet to the roof skin. To see and access this area, the headliner probably has to be removed.



www.cessna120-140.org

Is THE *official website* of the International Cessna 120/140 Association. www.cessna120-140.org offers club information, Officer and State Rep contacts, membership information, a guestbook, merchandise and club calendar. The discussion Form is a favorite place to communicate with members. The photo album is available to show off your "baby". You can update your contact and aircraft information in the Members Only section as well as join or renew your membership and purchase club merchandise from our online store. There are links to member sites, printable membership applications and merchandise order forms and much more. Stop by and sign in!

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One of the worst cases of “overhead corrosion” I’ve seen was on a Cessna Cardinal. This has a large and beefy “I” frame carry through spar. Just one each, installed, and you don’t want it to fail, because you don’t carry a spare. Cessna made many of these airplanes with no corrosion protection at all painted or otherwise on these pieces.

In the Cardinal headliner area is routed quite a few feet of scatt type ducting, (but it’s paper, so not true scatt) in which runs the ventilation air for the cabin. As the tubing gets old and leaks, air and with it moisture fills the top cabin area, above the headliner. This moisture then attacks the carry through spar and the roof skins. This particular carry through spar, was well on its way to becoming swiss cheese. There was only one fix, replacement.

Basically we removed the wings, un-riveting the top skins, removed and installed another carry through spar. Aligned it, then riveting in the new carry through spar and top skins. Then we re-installed the wings. Total cost over 10 years ago when I did this particular job was just under \$10,000.00.

Now, how does corrosion get up there? Why doesn’t it just stay in the lower recesses of an aircraft? Well, simply put, Cessna when they built the airplane, in all honesty, probably didn’t expect the aircraft to still be in circulation, 40-60 (or longer) years later.

And anywhere there is unprotected metal, and you add the necessary ingredients, you can get corrosion.

Cessna for instance, relied on the Al Clad form of aluminum to provide corrosion protection. Al Clad means that the aluminum sheet has both sides covered in a very thin sheet of Al Clad, simply put another layer of aluminum, in this case pure Aluminum to the measurement of about .005 per side is formed as the outside layer. This pure aluminum will protect the inner layer or core aluminum by sacrificing itself. However as with all things, this only lasts so long or it can be scratched off, or drilled off or polished off and then the layer underneath is exposed and can start corroding.



Corrosion on a wing skin. Corrosion has even corroded off this rivet head!

At least Piper, unlike Cessna painted the inside and out of most of their aluminum aircraft with Zinc Chromate primer. But even the Zinc Chromate primer can only last for so long. You may think because the primer is still there and still green, it's doing it's job, but you would be incorrect for a 50-year-old airplane. Zinc Chromate and other similar paints, protect by giving up their components to protect the aluminum underneath. This is not an infinite process. At some point the active ingredients are used up and even though the surface is green, there is no more protection left in the tank so to speak.

Corrosion can basically be anywhere including under the paint or on the outside of an aircraft, where salts, water, abrasive materials, can get at a base metal. This is why we paint airplanes, or in the case of polished airplanes, we continually polish them and leave a layer of wax or protective film on the metal.

So, you say, this is all great and grand, what can I do about it?

Well, as they say an ounce of prevention is worth a pound of cure.

Any time you discuss prevention there are several other things to consider. The most obvious is location of the aircraft. This is, if you live in an area around salt water, your air is much more corrosive than inland areas or the desert southwest.

Also, heat accelerates corrosion. If you live inland, in a very cold environment such as central Canada, the Dakotas etc, your air is generally less corrosive than say, Florida.

Keeping an aircraft inside, and out of the weather will certainly help also, no matter where you are located.

Given that prevention only goes so far, or you may have bought an aircraft and found corrosion in or on it, we need to do something about it, first of all you have to find it. I've given you some places to look, but don't just look in those places, get creative. You are looking mostly for white powdery Aluminum Oxide, which is the most common. This is where the aluminum just breaks down. At this point you have several choices if (and lets hope) it's "not" too bad you can coat the area with any one of several anti-corrosive products such as; Corrosion X, ACF 50, NO COR etc.

In the past we used to use LPS 3. This product worked well enough, basically a liquid, oily wax that could be sprayed into an area and flowed out and around. When the solvents evaporated the waxy oil hardened up and stayed in place. Today there are better products, listed above, since LPS 3 if sprayed over corrosion will act the same as paint or anything else, it will simply

keep the corrosion locked away where it can continue to do its dirty work until it gets so bad that it bursts through.

The products listed above will stop corrosion, although they tend to stay fluid much longer and shouldn't be used shortly before painting an airplane since they will continue to seep though and will not allow paint to properly adhere to the surface.

If your corrosion is so severe it requires "repair", then you have some options here. Depending on the area, or the extent of the corrosion, full scale replacement may be the only option. In which case get out your rivet set. However considering the parts availability situation you may want to look into saving what you have. In the case of skin lap joints, you can always un-rivet the section and clean in between the skins, paint them with a good quality epoxy paint, (or Zinc Chromate in various forms is still around) and then rivet the area back together.

Some more structural pieces may have to be replaced, such as stringers, brackets etc. What you want to do is make sure you remove all the present corrosion. You want nice shiny metal. At this point you can go through several processes, beginning with the tried and true Etch and alodine method. Or if the part can be removed and sent out, such as engine baffling you could have it anodized. Anodizing is the gold color, or these days they

can do it in several colors, that gives Aluminum a golden hue rather than its standard silver finish. (or whatever color you choose of the ones they have available)

A good quality primer and paint should then follow over the cleaned and prepped metal. Allow it to nicely set up before use. I will say here that on interior skin areas (that are not external and painted), several high dollar business jets companies build their aircraft "wet". In other words as the aircraft are assembled the parts are coated with a fresh, wet coat of anti corrosive paint and the riveted together. This makes for a great long lasting preventive method to keep your airplane lasting a long time.

If there is anything I can recommend, if you do see corrosion lurking anywhere in or on your aircraft, do something about it, one thing is certain, it isn't going to get any better.



Corrosion in a corner.

WHAT A TRIP! Part 1

By David Hoffman

Allow me to preface this article, by noting that I made a round trip flight (when still single) from my home here in Idaho to Cedar Falls/Waterloo, IA in '04 that, in retrospect, was a dream trip! No bad weather, and the only clouds I saw in my path were a few puffies over Iowa, and the winds were very favorable going east, and very light headwinds going west on the return. Also, turbulence and sink were moderate over the Rockies.

With the above noted, I can now tell you of our flight to Benton Harbor, MI (BEH) and the Assn. Fly-In which was a very different experience! My wife, Peggy, and I were married in July of '06, a "first" for both of us, and this trip was to be her first long distance flight in a light plane. Actually, we had "three souls" onboard this flight since our baby was still in Peggy's tummy at this time, but now is a healthy baby boy of five weeks, named John Christopher!

Peggy was a super assistant in the restoration of the interior of '46 Cessna 140, NC90025. She bucked the rivets for the windshield, 'D' windows, and skylights, and was dynamite in the headliner installation! (Thankfully we were wise enough to order Lorraine Morris' excellent instructional video on headliner installation. I shudder to think what it would have looked like if we had not done so!) We also installed our new product, an OVERHEAD CONSOLE which has four of our MOD1-W, and

two of the MOD1-R cockpit lights installed. (see: www.cockpitlights.com)

So Peggy was definitely deserving of a nice vacation flight! It was a rush to complete in time for the trip, but we did manage to get the final sign-off from our A&P, and have the transponder checked. Regretfully I did not have the new (yellow-tagged) antenna checked. We left one day earlier than planned just in case there was an extra overnight somewhere en route, and that was my second mistake! (We actually caught up with the bad weather on the other side of the Rockies.

The first leg was from here at Sunrise Sky Park (ID40) in S.W. Idaho to American Falls, Idaho (U01). A great little airport with great staff and good gas prices, but no computer terminal. Wx was severe clear all the way. After opening our flight plan I tried to get Salt Lake Center for Flight Following, but got no response. That should have been a warning sign. At American Falls I spoke to a briefer in Nashville who didn't know any of the three letter identifiers out west. He indicated that Lander, Wy (LND), our next stop, was not reporting, but Casper, Wy (CPR---appropriate letters!) was 3,500 ft. (AGL) but clearing, and we should find scattered clouds at Lander. Also he said that more weather would be coming in the evening.

We were blessed with great upslope lift going over the Wind River Range of the Rockies and got to 13,200 ft.

until reaching the last ridge of mountains and got into some sink and dropped down to 11,100 ft, but still high enough to go between two peaks with room to spare. When we cleared the last ridge all we saw was a deck of clouds just below us clear to the horizon, and another layer off in the distance thousands of feet about our altitude. I got on the radio at 122.0 for Flight Watch, but got no response, and so tried SLC Center again, and even Denver Center, but got nothing. I then dialed up Lander's ASOS, but got nothing. I then dialed up FSS to amend my flight plan, but got no response. I realized that with the humongous westerly wind at our backs would become a humongous headwind if we turned around and headed back to, let's say Afton, WY, and we would be up against the big "sink" coming over those mountain ridges, so having enough fuel would be a major concern.

Our newly installed intercom was working perfectly, so I told Peggy that we would have to head on to Casper, WY., and that we had plenty of fuel, especially since our tail wind en route pushed us to 140 kts ground speed at times, as indicated by our little Garmin 89 (a relic, from the 20th century, but still a great little device). I dialed up the CTAF at Lander to try to have Gary Loose, the airport manager, amend my VFR flight plan by land

I hollered:
"MAYDAY, MAYDAY, MAYDAY,
but got no
response!

line, but got no response. By this time I was very aware that my radio or antenna was not working properly. I had no problem activating my flight plan with Boise Flt. Service (now decommissioned, b-t-w) when leaving ID40, our home, however (?)

The clouds above were now converging with the layer below our wheels at 11,100 ft. and I told Peggy that we now had no other choice but to go on into the soup. I briefly thought of the late John Kennedy, Jr., and quietly told myself to believe my instruments!

The outside air temp gauge read 2 degrees C, and I told Peggy to PRAY that it wouldn't get any colder in the clouds or ice-up the airframe. Remembering the four "Cs", I Confessed that we were in deep du du. Climbing was out, so I squawked 7700 on the transponder, dialed in 121.5 mHz and hollered: "MAYDAY, MAYDAY, MAYDAY, but got no response! Now we were in the soup, IMC!

Peggy was noticeably frightened by now. I noticed on the chart that the small mountains and hills leveled out as we approached Casper so had Peggy measure, with the plotter, how far my finger was out from Casper. Well, during the time to instruct her which scale to use and where the airport was our little 140 had "precessed" (needs a bit more rudder trim) about 90 degrees to the left,

which was not good, still being near lower level mountains! I got back on track with the GPS and then, there it was: a small “sucker” hole, and I could see the ground! PTL! Yep, I was a “sucker” and chopped the throttle and made a tight left descending turn, but got only half way around and was back in the clouds again! Yikes! I reduced the bank angle to a one minute turn and continued on around and back on track. Actually flying in the soup, in my opinion, is easier than flying under the hood in training since I didn’t have to worry about accidentally “cheating” and looking for the horizon! Ha!

The GPS was a lot easier to follow than our vertical card compass in this case. At this point I was very happy that we’d installed a brand new RC Allen attitude indicator, and we were not getting any icing, just a lot of water vapor on the airplane. We began a gradual (200+ ft. per minute) descent, just watching the altimeter since the VSI was reading cabin pressure and showing a continual descent of about 1,000 ft/min descent since leaving ID40 due to a cracked case gasket, which we found after returning home.

We maintained our GPS track, and it took approximately 20 minutes to descend down to 7,400 where we broke out, but into very hazy air. Boy! Did that ever feel good! We had just one little ridge to clear by 1,000 ft. below us just ahead. In retrospect, I would have delayed the descent to allow us to arrive about 20 miles

west of Casper to be on the safe side, but I was concerned about interfering with the “heavies” at Casper even though squawking 7700. I finally reached Casper APC/DEP on 120.65 MHz: to my amazement! I told them our situation, but Flt. Service at Casper (now decommissioned, b-t-w) had already informed them of our situation since they were tracing the 7700 squawk intently.

Approach told us to just come on in and take any runway! It was now starting to rain, and the ceiling was starting to drop, but I could see both horizontal bars of lights from their VASI glowing red out in the distance. I didn’t even bother to look up the airport diagram now that I had my choice. I saw a UPS B-757 on or near the rwy. (3), which favored the wind, but instead decided to stay clear and land on rwy (8) which was dead ahead and beckoning with its fancy light show but it had a direct left crosswind. The wind sock was straight out and whipping. I was surprised to encounter so much wind with those low stratus clouds. Thankfully it wasn’t too gusty.

I homed in on that beautiful strip of asphalt, and elected to touch down at or about 80 mph on the left (upwind) wheel in the “wing low” attitude. I told Peggy that now the real excitement would begin, but it turned out to be quite easy when the left wheel

set down. The standing water on the runway occasionally tugged at that wheel, and I was glad the plane had wheel pants to catch some of the spray rather than the wing; but then when the tail finally set down I had to maintain full right rudder and even drag the right brake to stay on the runway centerline! Yikes!

We finally slowed and turned off to the right (using more right brake, and came to a stop on the ramp. Whew! We did it! PTL! The tower gave us taxi instructions and told us to turn of our transponder! It was now really beginning to rain, and by the

time we shut down and got out, we couldn't see across the airport! We were both very thankful to be on the ground. A ramp guide walked out to the plane and handed me a little slip of paper with a phone number on it. I knew what it was. Yep, I was to call the FAA after tie down. The FAA person said that I did everything correctly, and they just wanted to know we were O.K.. He did say that they were worried when they saw us make the tight turn to go down through that sucker hole, because we went off radar for awhile until we got closer to Casper.

After tiedown we unloaded and took the van to the South Parkway Plaza hotel for a nice night at a nice \$55.00 rate! Along with us was a flight crew for a CJ7 consisting of pilot, co-pilot and two flight attendants.

The drive took us nearly 30 minutes, and so I related our experience to all on board. The two ladies listened intently and even asked questions, but the two pilots became very still and hunkered down in their seats in front of us. I initially thought that they were ashamed of my foolish flying performance, but some of my friends have suggested that there may have been other reasons.

The next day, Monday, was beautiful and clear! We rolled the plane into the great instrument shop (Natrona Avionics) where they treated our plane with reverence. They said that they liked "140s" and gave us special treatment,

I was to call the FAA
after tie down.

and reduced hourly rate. Conclusion was that the antenna was very weak on the upper frequencies. We elected to pro-

ceed on with the trip in lieu of finding and installing another antenna. I would just have to plan the rest of the flight to avoid airports with active towers or at least sneak up on them, watching for traffic, and then transmit. Ha! We had the opportunity to look at a brand new Columbia 400 (now Cessna 400) plane in the radio shop hangar with cowl off and both doors open. Peggy snapped two pictures of the headliner sporting two of our MOD1-W lights in the front cockpit and two in the rear. It was my first viewing of the installation in the "400".

Continued in the next issue!

Editors Note:

David Lowe called me the other day. Apparently, there was a Cessna 140 that went down in a field a year ago, and David has been waiting for the FAA's official determination of the cause of the 'incident' since then.

Well, the results are in, and there was a failure inside the engine. (I don't know the exact details.) The FAA determined that one of the factors contributing to the crash was the fact that it had been too long since the major overhaul. This engine had only 275 hours on it in the last 16 years.

Apparently there is a Continental Service Bulletin, SIL 98-9A, that states our engines should be overhauled every 1800 hours, or 12 years, regardless of the time on it.

A copy of Service Letter SIL 98-9A can be found at:
<http://www.tcmlink.com/serviceBulletins/pdf/sil98-9.pdf>

AAF-AOPA (Aviation Action Forum of South Africa & Aircraft Owners & Pilots Association of South Africa) issued comments on Concept (12 year overhaul) and that can be found at:
http://www.awsa.co.za/pdf_files/AIC18-18_AOPA_Response.pdf

In a nutshell, the AAF-AOPA document points out that there is a note on the bulletin that states it is a guideline only. It also goes into lots of info pertaining to South African flying, and makes for interesting reading.

David Lowe is concerned that some insurance companies may use the FAA's ruling on this latest incident to deny coverage if an overhaul is more than 12 years old. He suggests calling your insurance company and getting a clarification on their view before you need it!

In fact, Continental Service Letters are advisory only, and are not mandatory. (But sometimes insurance companies get carried away).

Why we belong to this organization! Here is an exchange taken from the Parts Wanted forum on the Website...

Q. Does anybody have any parts for the retractable landing light for the 140? I need the snap ring that holds the bulb into the housing. MH

A. I got one, send me your shipping info. AP

Q. Shipping info for landing light snap ring: MH (*address deleted*) Advise price and shipping cost. Thanks MH

A. It's on it's way USPS. Cost? let's see maybe \$.50 shipping, the envelope maybe \$.25, I wasn't going to do anything with the part anyway. How about you buy me a beer if we ever meet? 😊 AP

**What we have been up to
this winter!**
**Pictures from the Website
ski plane flying discussion.**



Jerry and Kelly Highland after leaving their
New Year's Day Brunch stop. Bonfire,
Pot Luck and BBQ Venison!

Michel Charette digs out!



FOR SALE

I am selling the radios and instruments from my wrecked 140. The aircraft is gone, so I don't have any parts other than this. This acft had a full panel to include localizer and glide slope with a 720 radio/and a 360 radio mkr beacons mode c and more. I would like to sell this as one unit, and not part by part, so please make offers accordingly. I will be available Monday, March 10th, or after March 25th. Chuck cell 678-414-9835, email: av8tr52@bellsouth.net

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