



March 2008 "THE TAILDRAGGER" EAA Chapter 972 Gladewater, Texas

Next Meeting: Thursday, March 13, 6:30 p.m.
Gladewater Airport Office
"New" Guadalupe's for dinner at 5:30 p.m.

Roger That! By Roger Wieting.

Did you happen to read Richard Collins' column in the January edition of Flying Magazine? Entitled "Sleep Tight, Old 40 RC", this monthly installment chronicled, in brief form, the analysis and events that led Collins to "retire" the Cessna P210 he had owned for over 28 years. I'd be surprised if any of us hasn't at least heard of Richard Collins, whether by reading one of his zillions of aviation writings, watching a training DVD or simply by thumbing through a Sporty's catalog. He's been at this game a long time and his trusty P210 seemed almost synonymous with him; almost iconic, really.

For me, the article was rather shocking at first, almost eliciting an involuntary exclamation of "...hey, you can't just.. just.. just DO that, Richard...!" But the article was persuasive—the analysis seemed sound and the options limited, when the situation was really thought through. As a backdrop, the airplane had a total time just shy of 9000 hours; certainly not the highest time piston single out there, but not altogether young, either. And Collins makes the point that the life of the overall pressurization system is an unknown—I suppose the point could be argued, but it seems intuitive that the cyclical stresses could eventually take their toll. A more tangible issue was a string of fuel system problems which Collins says stemmed from an engine overhaul a few years back. Sounds like he never did get comfortable after the fuel delivery problems started, even though he says he believes they eventually did get fixed.

With the ages of both the airplane and the pilot at substantial levels (and increasing), insurance had become very expensive. That, combined with the hefty cost of maintenance and a marked decline in flight hours, had zoomed the effective hourly operating cost way up. On the other hand, there were nice new airplanes (the glass panel kind) readily available for rent—ostensibly with less operational risk and with the latest whiz-bang features, at 'competitive, pay-as-you-go' rates.

Attempting to sell the airplane didn't drum up any serious interest, save one potential buyer who ended up backing out for health reasons. To recap, we have an airframe which might have been considered nearing the end of life; ongoing concerns about reliability of a critical system; and high/increasing operating costs. And all of this in contrast to the lure of much newer equipment, available at a fixed hourly rate, with the latest navigation technology in the panel. What's a mother to do...? The final flight of N40RC was to the aircraft bone yard in Griffin, GA.

It was interesting to read some of the reader feedback in the subsequent issue of Flying. Several readers thought the retirement of this airplane was sad, but understandable. A couple seemed 'unclear on the concept' and asked for clarification on whether the term meant "retired" or, you know, "retired". One guy railed that Collins was screwing up the market for P210's by publicizing his decision. Perhaps the best letter suggested that N40 RC be donated to a museum for display—I like that idea. At any rate, I can't find a flaw in Collins' logic and even though these two "old buddies" are now separated, pilots everywhere can be

thankful for the many hours of quality video they shared with us. So, why is it that aircraft owners (and even vicarious non-owners in this case) tend to be so sentimental about these hunks of aluminum (or wood & fabric, or carbon fiber, as the case may be...)? Some of us might have a car in their past that conjures up a smile and some soft words but generally speaking, there isn't much that compares to an airplane. I had a '61 Rambler station wagon (named "Louise") that I was pretty fond of, but even that great velocipede struggles to compete with a '56 Bonanza that I never really wanted to own in the first place. I have heard Harold reminisce about a motorcycle he used to ride, but if you want to really see his eyes sparkle, ask him about the C-130 Hercules. We may spend more time (lots more time, actually) in, on and around machines with wheels, but it seems that machines with propellers win hands down when competing for our affection. Perhaps the simplest and most accurate answer is that it has something to do with that "aviation gene" Bart talks about.

I should take a minute to point out that, despite all the big talk in this column last month and despite having all the necessary ingredients on hand and having a willing workforce in place, the Runway Gumbo event planned for February 23rd was a bust. Unfortunately, low ceilings proved stubborn and hung around most of the morning and after a good deal of waiting, watching the computer and waiting some more (sounds kind of like aviation, doesn't it...?), we called it off. Thanks to all of you who showed up ready to cook—we'll take another run at it this month—mark your calendars for the 22nd.

Don't forget the meeting on March 13th. And till then, have a great month and fly every chance you get!
Roger

Newsletter Editor Needs Help.

Last month I sent out a request for someone to help with the newsletter when I leave town. I did not hear from anyone. I guess you guy think that I am serious. Well, I am and we will do without a newsletter some months this year. You may say, so what? Well, as a past member, president and newsletter editor once said, the late Tom Southern:

***“The newsletter is probably the most important tool the organization has.
It is the life blood of the chapter and keeps everyone informed of the
happenings of the chapter.”***

I could not agree more with Tom. It is a shame that some do not think this. You might say that you can always read the Newsletter on the website. But did you know that someone has to write and send it to the website editor? That is the job of the newsletter editor. The newsletter is like a newspaper in your home. It may set around a few days and you might read it a couple times. This is not a big job and can be done by anyone. Please give me a call. *Editor.*

Once in a Life Time Flight!!

You have the chance to fly in a B-17, B-24 and or B-25 this month in Tyler. Collings Foundation will be at the Historic Aviation Memorial Museum on Pounds Field and the old Terminal building on the 24th (Monday) thru the 26th (Wednesday). You can call or email the following for your reservation. Hunter Chaney, director of marketing, hchaney@collingsfoundation.org. The cost for the flight (around \$400) is a tax deductible donation to Collings. Make your reservation now. I learned on 3/5 that the Tyler flights are selling up very well, to Collings surprise, so you better contact them now. They will do just so many flights but the told us at HAMM that they have put on another B-17 flight on Tuesday afternoon to cover all the flights. *Editor*

New Members of 972.

I have collected four new members for our chapter. All are pilots and aircraft owners and one was a previous member from a few years back.

Le Roy Hamilton is a retired Longview police chief and owns a hangar on 07f. He flies a beautiful Piper Cherokee. You can usually find Le Roy around the airport drinking coffee in the morning, in his hangar and driving his nice BMW sports car.

Charlie Ritter lives in Gladewater and owns a Piper Tri-Pace that he keeps in one of the airport patio hangar spaces. I believe Charlie also owns a Cessna 175 that I have seen around the airport. Charlie is a nice guy and becoming a regular person around the airport.

Lee Todd is the owner of the skydiving business on the airport and owns several aircraft and owns the second biggest hangar on the airport.

Jim Freeman lives in Mineola. He was a member of our chapter a few years back and was a pretty regular member between American Airline flights. He is now a retired AA captain and flies a beautiful RV-8 which he hangs in his nice hangar on Wood county airport. He was telling me that he has a new RV-7A on order and will be flying it soon. At that time he will be selling his RV-8, a beautiful airplane! He had left the chapter because he was going to build a hangar on Pecan Plantation south of Ft Worth near Granbury. However, that did not materialize. I understand he owns a house in Colorado and is renting a space in Bart Robinette's hangar up there.

We want to welcome these new members. Be sure to say Hi and Welcome to them when you see them at the airport.

Editor

Night Time Flying Tips.

Whether you realize it or not, depth perception and other visual clues suffer greatly at night. The effect is compounded at altitude, where the thinner air reduces acuity. To combat these effects, consider using supplemental oxygen above 5000 feet MSL at night. You'll be amazed what you've been missing. Also use low-altitude en route instrument charts at night. In addition to less-cluttered presentation when compared with sectionals, they offer minimum safe altitudes in sectors and along airways, as well as substantial radio navigation information. You probably won't be navigating by pilotage anyway. Be sure to check your batteries in your flashlight and make sure your flashlight has a red lens to help your eye adapt to the night and reading charts. Reduce your panel lights to minimize glare and this will enhance your outside vision.

Courtesy of Aviation Safety and TxDot Aviation.

Gumbo Lunch on Saturday March 22nd.

Do not forget the Chapter Gumbo Lunch on the Saturday of the 22th. We will need the chapter members to come in force to help out. Hopefully the weather will co-operate and we get lots of airplanes and friends to attend.

The F-22 Raptor Will Return to AirVenture in 2008.

EAA received confirmation from the U.S. Air Force that two Lockheed Martin F-22A Raptors will return to Oshkosh this summer for an extended appearance at EAA AirVenture 2008. The advanced jet fighters will rumble into Wittman Regional Airport on Thursday, July 31, and perform flight demonstrations each day August 1-3.

The 56th annual edition of the EAA fly-in convention will be held July 28-August 3. You must attend to see this beautiful demonstration of this Billion \$\$ airplane that your tax dollars are paying for. It is a wonderful aircraft that no other country could even consider to compete with. It is a must to see, because you own part of it, not matter how small of a part may be.



**A Day on the Beach:
What was that that washed up? Oh, just a big Convair!**

Quality Aircraft Maintenance	J L Aero Fox Stephens Airport 903-734-4378 Jesse Loffer, Owner FAA Authorized Inspector
	48 Aviation Drive Gilmer, TX 75645

March Local AvFuel Prices (3/05/08)	07F (gladewater)	\$3.82
	KJXI (gilmer)	3.99
	F12 (Henderson)	3.77
	KJDD (Wood co.)	3.99
	4F2 (carthage)	3.90
	KOSA (mt pleasant)	3.96

Coming Aviation Events	March 14 EAA 972 Meeting (07F) March 22 EAA 972 Gumbo Lunch (07F) March 24/25/26 B-24, B-17, B-25 at HAMM in Tyler Rides available March ?? Wood County Airport open house. 1st. Saturday La Grange BBQ Fayette (3T5) 2nd. Saturday Fajita Fly-in Lufkin (LFK) 3rd. Saturday BBQ Lunch Jasper (JAS) 3rd. Saturday Breakfast CAP Tyler (TYR) 4th. Saturday fly-in Lunch Leesville, LA. (L39) 4th. Saturday Fly-in Lunch Shreveport (DTN)
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More to come

Chapter Officers	President Roger Wieting Vice Pres. Garnet McClure Treasurer Robert Caldwell	Secretary Denny Renwick Young Eagle Co-Or. Bill Vawter Newsletter/Historian Jerry Gardner
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