

AYA 2001

FRIDAY, JULY 20, SET-UP DAY

Still a day before the official arrival day, and already the arrival count stands at 50 aircraft. Many AYA members planned their trips to Blue Ash with plenty of extra time, given the unsettled weather in the midwest.

The weather today at Blue Ash certainly was unsettled. But even hot and humid in the morning and a brief thunderstorm in the afternoon didn't keep the AYAers away.



Following the interesting "Follow Me" Studebaker in the rain after arrival.

Many generous volunteers joined Convencion Chair Roscoe Rosché as early as Wednesday to help set up. Roscoe promised those who helped set up today authentic cajun food in the AYA tent at the airport, and the volunteers were not disappointed.

Many AYA leaders arrived today. The AYA board's annual meeting is scheduled for tomorrow.



AYA President Guy Warner and his wife Heidi arrive at Blue Ash.

The first task on arrival was to unload all that stuff from the airplane. And with threatening weather in the area, it was important to secure the aircraft right away. Members were on notice to provide their own tie-down stakes and ropes, and many owners broke out canopy covers.



An amazing amount of stuff came out of many of the arriving Grummans.



Conscientious owners install the canopy cover on a very pretty Grumman.

Volunteers directed each aircraft to a parking space. The grass was wet, but in excellent condition. The ground was firm, the few potholes were marked, and AYAs had mowed many areas within the past few days.



Convention Chair Roscoe Rosché (center) and volunteers Joe "Smoker" Weissman (left) and Greg Amy.



A long line of Grummans parked in the grass along the north side of the taxiway.

Plenty of parking remains along the south side of the taxiway.

Tomorrow is the official "arrival" day, ironic since so many arrived today. Many more attendees are expected to arrive. The forecast is generally good until Saturday evening.

Tomorrow afternoon, in addition to the AYA board of directors meeting, convention registration begins. After dinner, first-timers are invited to a special orientation session. Returning conventioners are encouraged to attend and help make the first-timers feel welcome.

After the first-timer orientation, the traditional welcome reception will be held.

Another AYA International Convention is underway. Whether you are here in Blue Ash with us or at home following along, welcome!

SATURDAY, JULY 21, ARRIVAL DAY

Today was the official arrival day, and by this evening the tally of Grummans tied down at Blue Ash stands at 108 aircraft. Volunteers worked all day to direct arriving members to parking.



Volunteers direct Saturday morning arrivals to parking.

Joe Weissman photographed as many arriving members as possible with the "Welcome to Blue Ash, OH, AYA 2001" sign. The photos were available later in the day for members to pick up in the hospitality suite at the Clarion.

Starting early in the morning, volunteers shuttled members from the Clarion hotel to the airport in large rented vans. Many members with rental cars carried other members to the airport.



Greg Amy drives the rental van Saturday morning.

It was already quite hot and humid by mid-morning. Members gathered in the AYA tent at the airport to stay out of the hazy sun.

The haze restricted visibility throughout the day, and a brief rainstorm arrived around 6:00 P.M. But a great deal of flying went on, in addition to the arrivals. Despite the marginal VFR conditions, AYA members conducted themselves safely and enjoyed the day.

Poor visibility is expected to continue, but for now it is expected that flying events will be held as scheduled.



Blue Ash Airport in the haze at about 10:00 A.M., looking east from about a two-mile crosswind. The taxiway and convention parking is visible at the left. The threshold of Runway 24 is in the center of the image, and the runway extends out of the image to the right.

One unexpected visitor to the airport was a six-week-old black kitten, rescued from the road in front of the airport by Nancy Fella. Lisa Reed had the kitten checked out by a local vet and then introduced her new pet to members at the AYA tent. Lisa and her father, AYA Southeast Region Director Joe Reed, plan to carry the kitten home to Georgia after the convention.

Convention registration was available at the AYA tent in the morning. Members picked up the AYA 2001 apparel they had pre-ordered in a room provided by Schmidt Aviation, the convention FBO. As usual, cancellations and other circumstances made some apparel available for purchase by attendees who did not pre-order.



The AYA 2001 grounds this morning. By evening much more of the parking had filled up. The AYA tent and Schmidt Aviation are just to the right of the center of the image.

AYA members in arriving aircraft were greeted by the words "Welcome AYA" mowed in 100-foot-high letters in the grass at the Runway 24 threshold. The greeting was created by Convention Chair Roscoe Rosché using a riding mower to plow through four-foot-tall grass.



The unique greeting for arriving members: "Welcome AYA" in 100-foot-high letters mowed in the grass.

The AYA board of directors convened Saturday afternoon. Much of AYA's business decisions are made during the annual meeting held at each convention. As in several of the past years, the board found its agenda too large to complete this afternoon, and so will reconvene Sunday evening.



The AYA board of directors meet Saturday afternoon.

The first event in the evening was the first-time attendees' orientation session. Each year, AYA leaders and convention staff hold this session to help first-timers to get the most out of the convention. First-timers were encouraged to ask questions of AYA leaders, longtime attendees, and local members.

This year, about half of the first-timers had joined AYA within the past year. AYA historically has a high turnover, as aircraft are sold to new members. The number of members remains fairly constant at around 2,000, but there are always many new faces.

Color-coded ribbons on the name tags help the first-timers find people who know the ropes. First-timers, in turn, wear a purple ribbon to encourage longtime attendees to seek them out and include them in activities. In the past, AYA has been criticized as too "cliquish," so we try very hard to be inclusive.



The first-timers' orientation session, led by the convention chair and the president.

At the end of the session, a drawing was held for door prizes especially for the first-timers.

Next, a welcome reception was held for all attendees. Members renewed old acquaintances and met new friends. The reception concluded with a long list of announcements and other business. AYA Safety Director Ron Levy addressed the members, exhorting them to keep safety the first priority. AYA *Star* Editor Steve Williams encouraged members to contribute articles and photos to the newsletter.

Williams also recognized the *Star* advertisers in attendance, and made a special point to introduce Patricia Johnston and Scotty Griffin of Frank B. Johnston Specialized Aircraft Services in San Antonio, Texas. Patricia's husband, Frank B. Johnston, passed away last May after many years providing and repairing torque tubes and nose struts for Grumman aircraft. Many of our aircraft would not be flying today but for Frank's efforts, due to the all-too-frequent accidents which damage the nose gear. Now, Patricia and Scotty carry on the tradition of strong support for the Grumman line.

The meeting wound up with another drawing for door prizes, and members continued to chat for several hours after that.



After the welcome reception, members gather for announcements and door prizes.

Tomorrow's schedule includes flying and ground competitions in the morning. Aircraft judging begins in the morning, and the traditional swap meet will be available in the AYA tent. AYA Pilot Familiarization Program Director Mike LeTrello and his band of volunteer instructors will begin the Cockpit Cool course, designed to give non-flying companions the knowledge to enjoy flying more and help out in flight.

After lunch, seminars will be held at the hotel, in the air-conditioned meeting rooms. For those who prefer to fly a bit in the afternoon, a briefing will be held for the self-guided air tour.

Even considering the marginal flying weather, the convention is coming together nicely.

SUNDAY, JULY 22, DAY ONE

Today was the first official day of the convention. Members continued to arrive throughout the day. Some had been delayed by weather.



The parking area filled in nicely by Sunday morning.

The arrival of two AA1Bs was particularly welcome, as they filled the last category for aircraft judging. There is now at least one of each type of Grumman, so awards may be given in each of the new, simplified judging categories. Aircraft judging began this morning and will continue Monday morning.



The volunteer judges who will choose the best aircraft in each category. AYA Technical Director Bob Gibson (right) volunteered to run the aircraft judging this year.

Whereas in past years awards were given for "Best Original Four-Place" and so on, this year simpler categories were established for the best of each type:

- AA1
- AA1A
- AA1B
- AA1C
- AA5
- AA5A
- AA5B
- AG5B
- GA7

The Best in Show award still will be awarded by popular vote of the attendees. As last year in Laconia, those who felt their show aircraft were candidates for best in show were invited to park in a show plane area near the AYA tent. Naturally, attendees were encouraged to vote for their favorite aircraft, whether in the show plane parking or in the regular parking.



Members inspect one of the Best in Show hopefuls. The pink card on the prop indicates this aircraft also vies for a judged award.



One of the best-in-show contenders sports a six-cylinder, highly-modified engine, with plenty of chrome and candy-apple paint, and even gold-plated valve covers.



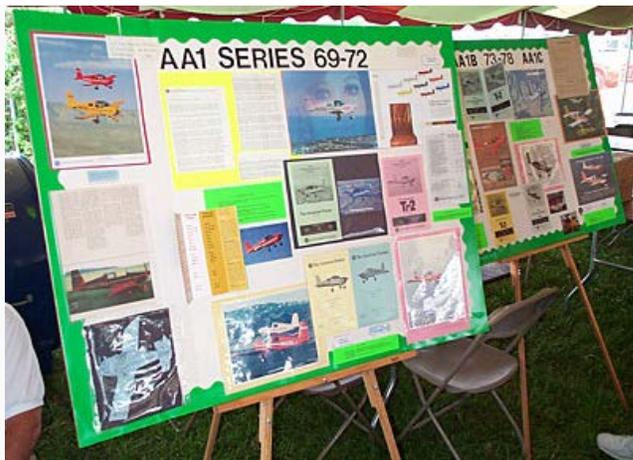
We didn't get the story on this Cheetah project, which showed up Sunday morning.

FletchAir for years has brought many common and obscure parts to the convention Swap Shop, and this year is no exception. FletchAir's David Fletcher and Garner Rice were mobbed all morning by members, many of whom were pleased to learn that many parts thought unobtainable are now available as PMA'd parts from FletchAir.



Garner Rice explains a part to a member in the Swap Shop.

FletchAir provided a special treat this year: They brought from Houston many seldom-seen items from the AYA archives, including large displays of marketing information, magazine articles, photographs, and other documentation of the entire original Grumman line from the '60s and '70s, which were displayed in the AYA tent this morning and in the hospitality suite at the Clarion this afternoon.



Some of the AYA archive materials displayed for the first time in years today.

David Fletcher also gave an impromptu slideshow of slides rescued during the American General auction, including images of American Aviation and Gulfstream officials, many original aircraft, and even the AA2 Patriot.

Cindy Fletcher of Houston served as archivist for many years. Roscoe Rosché has taken over that position, and he announced today that he has worked with FletchAir to put the archives on display indefinitely in space provided by FletchAir in their Houston facility. The archive materials have not been displayed for some time, so he hopes to make the materials more accessible to members in the future.

Pilots met at the AYA tent this morning for the mandatory briefing for the non-flying activities and the air rally and air race.



The mandatory pilot briefing by Air Boss Walt Porter, Convention Chair Roscoe Rosché, and Safety Director Ron Levy (l. to r.).

After the briefing, the rigged preflight competition was held on schedule.



AYA Eastern Canada Region Director Craig Wilker inspects Roscoe's airplane in the rigged preflight contest.

Alas, the Air Rally and Air Race were postponed until tomorrow due to weather. The ceiling and visibility were quite poor in the morning when these events were scheduled.



Hazy, cloudy Blue Ash Airport seen from about a one-mile right base for Runway 24.

The Broken Towbar competition also was delayed until Monday, because the course could not be marked in time.

An event new to the convention this year was the Map Folding Contest, which was held as scheduled. This new competition involves two folding chairs simulating a Grumman cockpit, two flying friends, three unfolded sectional charts, and a large industrial fan! Because points are awarded both for time and for entertaining antics, it helps if the two friends have flown with each other a lot and so are a bit tired of each other's map folding technique.



A pair of Australian AYA members attempt the map folding challenge.

The Cockpit Cool ground school began this morning. The volunteer instructors were ready to fly with Cockpit Cool students today, but the weather delayed these flights until later in the convention.

Around noon, members returned to the hotel for the luncheon. There were several announcements, and many door prizes were given away. The door prizes were donated by individuals and companies, including many advertisers in *The American Star* and other in-the-business members.



Young AYA members Raelene Burke and Fritz Blech entertained the adults during lunch.

After lunch, several seminars were presented:

- ✦ BOBKAT Project Update (Bob Gibson)
- ✦ Self-Guided Air Tour Briefing (Roscoe Rosché)
- ✦ Ask the Experts (Ken Blackman, David Fletcher, and Bill Scott)
- ✦ Technical Director's Update (Bob Gibson)
- ✦ Flying the New Tiger (Ron Levy)

"Bob's Kick-Ass Traveler" (BOBKAT) is the name Bob Gibson has given to his years-long restoration project. Bob said the most common question is, "When will it be done?" He answers, "When the last bolt goes on."

Roscoe invited members to fly a self-guided tour of downtown Cincinnati. He described VFR landmarks and the Class B airspace. He said ATC was ready for our tours, and suggested members might like to land at Lunken Airport to eat at the restaurant there. Roscoe also mentioned that members might like to visit Sporty's Pilot Shop, only seven miles from Blue Ash at Clermont County Airport.

The panel of experts answered several questions, including the ever popular, "How do I make my cylinder heads run cooler." Bill Scott showed several bottom cowl exhaust ramps, and some modifications to enlarge them for better cooling. He also described modifications to the inter-cylinder baffles that he says improve cooling. Other topics included debonding of engine mount attach points and the new Power Flow exhaust under development for the Tiger and Cheetah.



Experts Blackman, Fletcher, and Scott answer questions posed by AYA members.

Technical Director Bob Gibson described his many activities during the first year of this newly-created position, in particular his work with FAA's new Airworthiness Concerns Process. Bob also regretfully announced that he is stepping down as technical director and introduced his successor, Jeff Simon of Approach Aviation. Simon was confirmed in that post by the AYA board of directors during the convention.



Bob Gibson reviews his first year in the newly-created position of technical director.

AYA Safety Director Ron Levy provided many details on Tiger Aircraft's progress toward producing the new Tiger. Ron had expected to fly Tiger's first production aircraft before the convention, but circumstances prevented it. Instead, Ron told what he has learned working with Tiger over the past several months. He noted in particular that much of the delay in reaching production status involved the certification of the new avionics suite standard in each aircraft. Tiger Aircraft announced last week the delivery of their first production Tiger, and Ron was told that aircraft is on its way to Oshkosh for display during Airventure next week. That aircraft could not be present at AYA 2001, because it must be in position at Oshkosh this weekend, before the rest of the Airventure show facilities are installed.

As an alternative to the seminars, some members elected to travel to the Wright-Patterson Air Force Base Museum. They returned this evening saying that many days would be needed to see all of the museums exhibits.

AYAers also toured Exec Aviation's B-17E *My Gal Sal* restoration project at Blue Ash. This bomber ditched on the ice on its way to Europe during the war and was recovered only recently. Exec Aviation graciously allowed AYA members to tour the project. One of those on the tour was longtime AYA member Bob Cooke, who flew B-17s during the war. Bob later recalled that he survived the war in part because of the many hours he spent in Link Trainers practicing his instrument skills. Many crews were lost, he said, because their pilots couldn't fly on instruments well. It was evident that *My Gal Sal* brought back memories to Bob that we are privileged to hear and should remember and treasure.

This evening was "dinner on your own," but Roscoe invited all attendees to dine at Watson Brothers Brew House next to the airport, and many did. Watson Brothers offers great food and many micro-brews.

AYA board members left Watson Brothers earlier than they would have liked to return to the Clarion for the continuation of the board meeting. The board worked through the rest of their planned agenda, including financial matters, the results of the annual election of AYA president and vice president, convention planning, the Lauren Larsen award, and many other topics. AYA leaders will present the results of the board meeting at the general membership meeting tomorrow evening, and in the September/October *Star*.

Today was a successful first day, despite events postponed due to weather. Tomorrow we'll try again to launch the Air Rally and Air Race and hold the broken towbar competition. Flying activities are scheduled for the morning, and more seminars in the afternoon. The swap shop continues, and many local sightseeing activities are available. Aircraft judging continues, and Monday winds up with the general membership meeting. It'll be another busy day!

MONDAY, JULY 23, DAY TWO

By late today, 138 aircraft were tied down at AYA 2001. That's very good attendance, rivaling the largest past conventions.

The first event at the airport this morning was a visit from "Bagelman," a local character in tights and cape, with bagels for eyeglasses. Bagelman brought--what else?--bagels for the members in the AYA tent.

Next to the tent, Mark Conner stood next to his taildragger Yankee, showing off a broken rudder cable to wide-eyed AYAers. The cable parted last night as Mark was rolling out on the runway at Blue Ash, causing the aircraft to groundloop, but Mark kept it upright and the aircraft was undamaged. Members pushed the aircraft from the runway to the aircraft parking.

Mark Conner shows off his broken rudder cable.

The mandatory pilot briefing for the day's flying and ground activities was held in the tent. Some attendees took advantage of local sightseeing suggestions while others got down the serious competition.

The Precision Taxi competition was entertaining, as always. Most of the eggs survived unscathed, but not a few "future chickens" (as Convention Chair Roscoe Rosché calls them) were killed.



A Precision Taxi competitor turns toward the next egg.

Many took part in the Broken Towbar competition. There were only two women competitors this year, and both showed remarkable stamina, requiring more than ten minutes to complete the course. A third woman dropped out after discovering she had been laboring against the parking brake.



Heidi Warner perseveres in the Broken Towbar competition.

The Air Boss crew and the volunteer judges did a great job with the Flour Bombing and Spot Landing competitions. The competitors, too, showed great professionalism in the flying events. A Citation and a King Air landed during these competitions without a hitch. The King Air even did quite well in the Spot Landing.



The Air Boss crew at the approach end of Runway 24: Sarah Barber, Greg Amy, Ron Levy, and Walt Porter (l. to r.).



A Citation lands during the flying events.



The Spot Landing judges at the target zone.



The Flour Bombing judges measure the distance of a bomb from the target.

After the competitions, members returned to the Clarion for an Italian lunch. There were a number of announcements, especially regarding upcoming tours of the Wright B Flyer, the B-17E *My Gal Sal* restoration project, and the General Electric engine plant. It was announced that the Air Race must be canceled because there is not sufficient time left to handicap the racers. The Air Rally will be held tomorrow, weather permitting. Door prizes were awarded.



Thomas Micke (l.) enthusiastically accepts a door prize from Gregg Wilson, as Roscoe announces the winner of the next door prize.

Also at lunch, Safety Director Ron Levy congratulated a flour bombing competitor who detected a fouled plug during his bombing run. The pilot made a quick and correct decision to pull the power, side slip to the runway, and land. A good decision, good execution, and a safe outcome. Nice job!

After lunch, several seminars were presented. Tiger Aircraft had been expected to present a seminar, but their representatives did not attend the convention after all.

AYA Insurance Director Norris and Viviane Hibbler spoke on the AYA group insurance program. One topic is the very high losses recently. Norris reported that there have been as many losses in the last eighteen months as in the previous 25 years. He is working with Safety Director Ron Levy to determine what can be done to restore AYA's group insurance participants to a more typical level of losses.



AYA Insurance Director Norris and Viviane Hibbler speak to AYA members.

Walt Porter was the next seminar speaker, repeating his popular presentation on aerial photography from past conventions. The presentation includes many useful tips and lots of beautiful images. Walt even presented lots of not-so-beautiful images to show common mistakes in photographing other aircraft and objects on the ground from an aircraft.

Jeff Simon of Approach Aviation presented excerpts from the second in his series of Educated Owner videos, to be formally announced this week at Oshkosh. The topic of the second video is the annual inspection. Jeff also spoke on the subject of annual inspections, explaining in particular that, contrary to common understanding, the annual inspection is to be logged as soon as the inspection is complete, whether the aircraft is found to be airworthy or, more commonly, with a detailed list of discrepancies attached. Jeff doesn't like to see airplanes "held hostage" by shops hired to do annual inspections. Owners would do well to view the video to learn how to make the annual a painless and even enjoyable learning experience, and save money in the process.

Finally, Ken Blackman and David Fletcher repeated yesterday's impromptu presentation of historic slides from the original years of production of our aircraft in the 1970s. There were lots of bell bottoms, pork chop sideburns, and disco colors. Ken and David identified many of the characters involved in the original production and told stories from their days selling and flying the original Grummans. After the slideshow, David spoke on the relationship of FletchAir, Tiger Aircraft, and the manufacturers who actually manufacture the parts that will go into new Tigers. He sounded hopeful that production of new Tigers will make it easier to get certain parts to support the older aircraft.

Members were on their own for dinner. Many drove and rode the vans into town to the Montgomery Inn for renowned ribs.

After dinner, the annual General Membership Meeting was held. It is at this meeting that the membership may participate directly in the operation of the association.

President Guy Warner introduced Secretary/Treasurer Stew Wilson, who gave his report on the finances and operation of the association. The membership passed a motion to accept Stew's report.

Guy then introduced *Star* Editor Steve Williams, who discussed the production of the newsletter. Among other things, Steve explained that no further action is being taken to address the relatively slow delivery of the newsletter within the U.S. After years of working with Stew and Karen Wilson and volunteer Charlie Adams, a former postmaster, to improve delivery times, the conclusion is that we can do no better with periodical class delivery. The *Star* is not considered "late" until at least five weeks after it is mailed. Steve reminded members that all time-sensitive information is delivered via the web site and regional mailings in any case.

Steve went on to announce that the AYA board has created the new position of Electronic Services Director and appointed him to that position. He announced that AYA would accept new memberships, renewals, and purchases from the Company Store through the AYA web site no later than the new year. Other personalized web services are under consideration, such as automated reminders of upcoming events. Steve also announced that the board had directed him to develop a system to allow members to specify whether their classified ads are published in any or all of three media: in the print issue of the *Star*, only to AYA members on the web site, or to the general public on the web site. It is hoped this will make Litter Box ads more valuable to members while also accommodating members who prefer to give AYA members first shot at aircraft and other items for sale.

Guy introduced Insurance Director Norris Hibbler, who announced that the board has allocated funds for the purchase of several insurance policies to protect the association, its directors, officers, and other volunteers. The board directed Norris to obtain these policies for AYA, and in particular to ensure they cover flying activities sanctioned by AYA, in particular PFP instructors and AYA-qualified formation pilots flying members' aircraft for photo shoots.

This led to brief comments by AYA Formation Flying Director Gregg Wilson, who announced that the board has approved a program by which pilots may be qualified under rigorous standards to fly members' aircraft in AYA-sanctioned photo flights, assuming the above insurance is obtained. This will allow the resumption of the popular air-to-air photo flights offered at AYA conventions in the past.

Guy Warner then announced that Southwest Region Director Bob and Irene Arnold were stepping down after 21 years on the job! Guy introduced Andreas Blech, whom the board has confirmed to replace the Arnolds in that position. Guy also recognized AYA Technical Director Bob Gibson, who is stepping down due to increased responsibilities at his day job. AYA's new technical director is Jeff Simon.

Guy then introduced an exciting new program: The AYA Scholarship Fund. This new program will raise funds and award scholarships of \$1,500 to deserving young people to begin their flying careers. Guy made the first \$100 contribution, which was rapidly followed by contributions from attendees. Someone sent a box around the room for contributions, and before Guy could even finish his presentation, enough money had been collected to cover the first scholarship. Guy was moved nearly to tears by the generosity of the crowd. As he tried to wind up the presentation, the room spontaneously degenerated to a revival tent atmosphere, illustrating the enthusiasm of the gathered AYA members for the new program.

When things settled down a bit, Stew Wilson returned to the microphone to announce that the AYA membership had elected Guy Warner and Dave Nicholas to another term as president and vice president.

Guy announced that the 2002 AYA International Convention is scheduled for Cody, Wyoming, July 15-18, 2002. He explained that Red Deer, Alberta, was the original destination, but a change was needed because the August schedule planned for Red Deer would conflict with the start of the school year in the U.S., and the Red Deer volunteers were not available to run the event earlier. Cody was chosen by the AYA board as the alternate because it is a popular former location, and so the work of organizing the convention there will be reduced a bit. The president and vice president will act as convention co-chairs for next year's Cody convention.

Whew! That was a lot of ground to cover, and the meeting had gone on for nearly two hours already. But we weren't done yet.

The General Membership Meeting was adjourned, and it was on to the presentation of awards for the flying and ground events. Awards for the best aircraft in each class were presented as well.

We're terribly sorry to leave you in suspense, but there isn't time to post the complete list of award winners in this update. We'll follow up tomorrow with detailed information on the winners.

It was a very full second day of the convention. Tomorrow, the Swap Shop continues in the AYA tent. Some members are flying to nearby Brookville, known to the Grumman faithful as "The Center of the Universe" to visit the cylinder shop there. Some members will attend a tour of General Electric's turbine engine facility. Others will fly to Wright Brothers Airport to see the Wright Model B replica.

Bob Steward and Ken Blackman will present maintenance demonstrations at the airport tomorrow.

The convention will wrap up tomorrow evening with the banquet. The Best in Show award, determined by popular vote of the attendees, will be presented at that time, and more door prizes will be awarded.

TAILDRAGGER INCIDENT HANDLED SAFELY

As mentioned above, Mark Conner's taildragger Yankee was *not* damaged during a landing incident yesterday evening, when a rudder cable broke. Without rudder and tailwheel steering control, the Yankee groundlooped, but Mark's skill and the wide stance of the DMA tailwheel design kept the wings out of the dirt and prevented the plane from flipping. A group of members pushed the Yankee quite a distance from the runway to the aircraft parking.



Mark's broken rudder cable.



The cable parted where it rides on one of these pulleys in Mark's Yankee.

Mark deflected many congratulatory comments, saying that he was just along for the ride, but we're confident that his skill was at least partly responsible for a good outcome.

Mark also showed us the small-diameter rudder pulleys between the seats in his aircraft. He had learned that the pulleys should be replaced with larger-diameter pulleys and promised to submit an article to the *Star* with the details.

Later in the day, Mark showed us photographs of the other rudder cable and the elevator cables, all compromised to some degree precisely where they ride on the pulleys. He urged anyone who would listen to learn from his experience.

TUESDAY, JULY 24, DAY THREE

The last day of the 2001 convention began with tours of the GE turbine engine factory and the Wright B Flyer project.

GE TURBINE ENGINE TOUR

A couple dozen members drove out to the large GE turbine engine factory. They toured the training facility there, which includes an example of each GE turbine engine currently flying on civilian aircraft. The 777 engine was huge! It made the 747 engines look small by comparison. Alas, photos were not permitted inside the facility.



The AYA group who toured the GE turbine engine factory.

WRIGHT B FLYER TOUR

Another group flew to Wright Brothers Airport to visit the Wright B Flyer. A pool was created for two chances to ride on the Flyer, and Michael Rees and Carolyn Brown were the lucky winners.



Michael Rees prepares for his ride on the Wright B Flyer.
Photo: Greg Amy



The Wright B Flyer lifts off.
Photo: Greg Amy

MAINTENANCE DEMONSTRATIONS

Lunch was on your own. After lunch, maintenance demonstrations were presented at the airport. Bob Steward and Jeff Simon installed a lightweight prop spacer and a red rudder cap on Jeff's Traveler. The spacer is a particularly neat item. It saves twelve pounds way out on the nose, and it's available to AYA members at a substantial discount from Tiffin Air. FletchAir donated the red rudder cap.



Jeff hefts the original prop spacer and the lightweight spacer.



Bob Steward installs the red rudder cap.

Later, Ken Blackman demonstrated how to clean and lubricate the canopy tracks. A large crowd gathered for that demonstration.



Ken Blackman (left) shows how to clean and lube canopy tracks.

At the same time, Rob Wallace from Australia was installing new rudder, elevator, and aileron cables in Mark Conner's taildragger Yankee. This was the aircraft that groundlooped (with no damage) Sunday evening when a rudder cable broke.

A brief rainshower moved over the airport while the maintenance seminars were going on. Everyone sheltered in the AYA tent for a bit, and went back to the demonstrations after the rain stopped.

BANQUET AND AWARDS

This evening, the closing banquet was held. As members gathered in the Clarion ballroom, a strong thunderstorm began outside. The tables were decorated with centerpieces created by Convention Chair Roscoe Rosché. After dinner and desert were dispatched, AYA President Guy Warner rose to begin the program.

Guy gave an update on the Scholarship Fund announced earlier in the convention. As of the banquet, \$2,850 in donations and pledges had already been collected. Guy was clearly moved by the generosity of the attendees. He said he had spoken by phone to Pat Metz of Canada, who created the program, and she also was very moved by the members' strong support.

Guy also named the black kitten "Cheetah" rescued by Nancy Fella and adopted by Lisa Reed as AYA's mascot. Cheetah will travel to her new home in Georgia with Lisa Reed and her dad Joe.

Guy then played a five-minute video from Tiger Aircraft. The video is part of Tiger's marketing efforts, and includes dramatic film of AYA members flying their Tigers around the Martinsburg factory. Greg Amy, Denise Waters, and Doug Ilg were featured on camera, and Guy now calls Greg AYA's official "Poster Boy" due to his particular enthusiasm on screen.

Guy introduced AYA's new Technical Director Jeff Simon. Noting the control cable failure in Mark Connor's taildragger, Jeff called for members to provide any information on similar failures or near failures. An AD already requires a repetitive inspection of the cables, but clearly that didn't prevent Sunday's incident, so Jeff wants to quickly find out more about how the AD is being applied.

Jeff also held a drawing for a Concorde RG25XL battery, which was won by AYAer Grover Cleveland.

Joe Reed spoke next, explaining that the AYA watches he had made were now gone, except for the last one, which he presented to Roscoe.

AYA Pilot Familiarization Program Director Mike LeTrello and PFP Instructor Fred Kokaska read the names of this year's 23 Cockpit Cool graduates. They noted that seven of the Cockpit Cool participants also flew during the convention, and one bought a logbook, the first line of which Fred happily filled in with .6 hours of dual instruction.



Some of this year's Cockpit Cool graduates.

Next, Stew Wilson made an especially rare presentation. Only four times in the history of AYA has the association bestowed a lifetime membership. This year, by unanimous vote of the AYA board, outgoing Southwest Region Director Bob and Irene Arnold were named lifetime members of AYA. Bob and Irene spoke briefly of their more than two decades of service to AYA and received heartfelt applause from the attendees.



Bob and Irene Arnold become lifetime members. Stew Wilson describes their long service to AYA.

Guy Warner announced a correction to the dates of AYA 2002 in Cody, Wyoming, and they were revised again after the convention. Roscoe next rose to present a number of AYA 2001 plaques. Barb and Phil Schmidt of Schmidt Aviation received a plaque in recognition of their great service as the host FBO.

Roscoe also presented these plaques:

- * Youngest Pilot: Jill Baughman
- * Oldest Pilot: Bob Arnold, born in January, 1924
- * Longest Distance Flown, Two Seater: Andy Elliot, 1,366 miles from Mesa, Arizona
- * Longest Distance Flown, Four Seater: David Goldman and Ed Manning, 1,772 miles from Watsonville, California, narrowly beating several members from San Jose
- * Most Recently Licensed Pilot: Chris Thompson, who received her license in March, 2001

As promised, here are the complete results of the aircraft judging and yesterday's flying and ground competitions:

- * First Place, Spot Landing: Bob Reed and Harry Fees in N28665, right on the line
- * Second Place, Spot Landing: Gregg Wilson in 28717, minus four feet
- * First Place, Flour Bombing: Matt Drahzal, 22 feet 5 inches
- * Second Place, Flour Bombing: Conrad Pelletier, 32 feet 6 inches
- * First Place, Precision Taxi: Kelly Wallace in N28250
- * Second Place, Precision Taxi: David Goldman in N28003
- * First Place, Spot Parking: Wayne and Anita Hammond in N1369R
- * Second Place, Spot Parking: David Rogers in N1649R
- * First Place, Map Folding: Rob Wallace and Rich Hinsley
- * Second Place, Map Folding: Anita Hammond and her son Chris
- * First Place, Men's Broken Towbar: Ed Manning, 1:22
- * Second Place, Men's Broken Towbar: Roscoe Rosché, 1:34
- * First Place, Women's Broken Towbar: Heidi Warner, 11:20
- * Second Place, Women's Broken Towbar: Bonnie Porter, 16:54
- * First Place, Rigged Preflight: Diane MacDonald
- * Second Place, Rigged Preflight: Craig Wilker
- * Best AA1: Andrew Elliot, N48DE
- * Best AA1A: Chuck Ingersoll, N6293L
- * Runner Up AA1A: Terence Jarog, N9205L
- * Best AA1B: Bonnie Craig, N8965L
- * Runner Up AA1B: Christine Micke, N6211L
- * Best AA1C: Bill Stanfield, N9644U
- * Best AA5: Tom Holer, N1340R
- * Runner Up AA5: Don Nix, N424X
- * Best AA5A: Ron Powel, N26179
- * Runner Up AA5A: Don Cochran, N26270
- * Best AA5B: Tom Reese, N4536V
- * Runner Up AA5B: Laslo Zamohyl, N67GT
- * Best AG5B: Claude Allen, N1193G
- * Runner Up AG5B: Rob Logan, N123VB
- * Best GA7: Ron Levy, N5GJ

And the Best in Show, chosen by popular vote of the conventioners, was Tiger N89MR, owned by Rich and Madelyn Setterberg. The Setterbergs refused to be photographed without all of the attendees, in recognition of all the AYA members who contributed to the refurbishment of N89MR.



Rich and Madelyn Setterberg share the Best in Show award with all of AYA.

The Lauren Larsen award, AYA's most prestigious honor, was presented to Bob Gibson, both for his work to define the new position of technical director and for his long service as regional director, area coordinator, program director, and vice president of AYA. Bob's voice was reduced nearly to a whisper as he choked out a few words of thanks.



Bob Gibson (right) receives the Lauren Larsen Award, presented by Stew Wilson.



It's rare to have so many Lauren Larsen Award winners in attendance. From left to right, standing: Bob Arnold, Walt Porter, Irene Arnold, Bonnie Porter, Stew Wilson, Karen Wilson. Kneeling: Bob Gibson.

Next, Roscoe rose to introduce the surprise speaker. He had refused to give any hint of the speaker's identity. And instead of introducing the speaker, he started a video with images of space flight and a dramatic voice over describing the life and accomplishments of astronaut Neil Armstrong. As the introduction reached it's climax, the speaker was named as ... *Rich Setterberg!*

"Well," Roscoe explained later, "We did ask Armstrong. The answer was: No."

Rich Setterberg ran to the podium and launched into a rollicking presentation on the restoration of an aircraft. He had the audience really rolling as he explained the challenges to finances, sanity, and relationships that such a project can present. Rich is a great showman when he gets going, and the members really enjoyed the show!

Guy Warner presented a special plaque to Convention Chair Roscoe Rosché.



Roscoe (right) receives a plaque recognizing his hard work as convention chair from Guy Warner.

Finally, Bob Steward handed out more than \$4,000 worth of door prizes, some of the best ones reserved for convention volunteers.

Guy Warner reminded all attendees to fly home safely, and another AYA convention was complete. Tomorrow members will start the journey home with many great memories of sharing this great event with so many wonderful friends.

WEDNESDAY, JULY 25, DEPARTURE DAY

Most of the AYA 2001 attendees departed Blue Ash today. Some were headed home, others to EAA Airventure in Oshkosh, and some to other destinations. The weather at Blue Ash was marginal VFR, and many AYAs had weather to deal with on their way to other parts of the country.

At the airport this morning, members said so long, loaded up their aircraft, and taxied away. A crew arrived to pick up the golf carts and strike the AYA tent.

The AYA tent is struck.

By the time we left, around noon, much of the parking already had cleared out.



Blue Ash Airport on departure day. Note much of the parking area has cleared out by around noon, when this photo was taken.

Another successful AYA convention. Thanks for following along with us.

AYA members are congratulated on another safe, fun event. There were no accidents, and the couple of incidents were handled with skill, with the result that no aircraft were damaged and nobody was hurt. We all learned a lot. And we got to spend time with other great Grumman owners.

We hope to see all of you next year at AYA 2002 in Cody, Wyoming