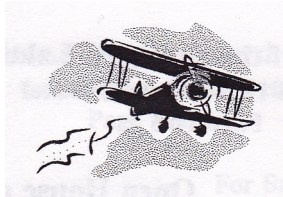


SHORT



FINAL

The Quarterly Newsletter of the Brainerd Lakes Regional Airport
Issue Seven / Fall 2011

From the Airport Commission....

With the days getting shorter, realization is hitting that fall is fast approaching! Summer 2011 was busy for the customers and businesses at the Brainerd Lakes Regional Airport!

Your Airport Commissioners, staff and local businesses continue to remind our customers and citizens that we currently have, and will continue to have, a regional air carrier at our airport. Enplanement numbers continue to be ahead of past years, which prove that we are a very viable carrier airport. Most of the CRJ 200 and Saab flights were near capacity during our busy summer months. Steve Sievek, our Airport Manager, attended a meeting at MN DOT on September 7, 2011 along with the other local airport managers, representatives from MAC and Delta, and the CEO of Great Lakes Aviation, Doug Voss. We are hopeful that we will have answers in the next few months as to what our regional carrier service will look like and are feeling optimistic at this time!

The terminal remodeling project continues with Phase II showing progress. The steel has been erected and the building will soon be re-connected with the outside walls going up. The Airport Commission will be looking at working with local artists to add artwork to the new areas. Regional Elite and Airmotive employee Nate Kruger has some beautiful photography on display in the General Aviation portion of the building so perhaps we can enlist his help as well!

On August 9th Airmotive Enterprises and WINGS Café hosted a potluck barbeque with Mike Petersen grilling the delicious brats. Over 60 people attended this fun summer activity. The evening of good food and friendship was wonderful.

The "Airplane on a Stick" refurbishing project is slowly progressing. At the September Commission meeting the airport manager was directed to have the plane off the pedestal and on its way to the Park Rapids facility for renovation within a month. The delay has been in facilitating the proper way to lift the airplane so as not to damage it in removal and transport. We are so grateful for the generosity of our benefactors as well as the other volunteers who have been assisting in this worthy project!

The Brainerd Lakes Regional Airport is proud to be the host for the Chamber of Commerce CHOW Time event which will be Thursday, September 22, 2011 from 12-1:00 p.m. at the airport. Bob and JoAnne Tuil of WINGS Café will be providing the lunch which will be held in the General Aviation portion of the building. Tours will be provided to interested participants at 1:00 after the noon Delta flight departs. This is an opportunity for Chamber members and other interested participants to learn about our airport as well as get a first-hand look at our facilities including the

airport businesses, terminal remodel project and General Aviation area. I firmly believe that the most important main street in any town or community is its longest runway, paraphrasing my all time favorite DVD, "One Six Right." Our business community benefits financially by having a viable and vibrant airport community.

We look forward to a safe and colorful fall flying season. Please feel free to contact one of your Airport Commissioners with any questions or concerns. Until next time, fly safe and fly often, but ALWAYS fly out of the Brainerd Lakes Regional Airport!


Beth Pfingsten, Chair
Brainerd Lakes Regional Airport Commission

Land Sale Near Airport

Just off of the northeast corner of Brainerd Lakes Regional Airport lies approximately 2,000 acres of pristine wilderness with approximately 2.7 miles of Mississippi River frontage. Currently owned by the Potlatch Corporation the land is slated for sale and development in 2013.

The Trust for Public Land, a non-profit organization dedicated to procuring and preserving land for public use, is spearheading the effort to purchase this land for state ownership. Working with several partners such as The Nature Conservancy, Anglers for Habitat and others, they have negotiated first right of refusal to purchase the property from the Potlatch Corporation. This will protect it from development and put the property in public hands. The airport stands in support of this project to conserve the natural resources of the property and to eliminate the issues that often accompany residential development in close proximity to airports.

This \$14.5 million dollar project named Mississippi River Northwoods Habitat Complex may be funded by the Minnesota Outdoor Heritage Fund. Becca Nash of the Trust for Public Land made a presentation to the Outdoor Heritage Fund Council on September 7. Of the 43 projects presented for funding from the \$207 million dollar fund, this project was ranked ninth. The council will soon make recommendation for funding to the legislature for the 2012 legislative session. With the solid public support that has been demonstrated at public meetings there is a good chance this project will be funded in 2012. If the funding receives legislative approval the transaction must take place before December 31, 2012 when the first right of refusal expires and the land returns to the market.

Stay tuned to the next issue of *Short Final* for updates on the Mississippi River Northwoods Habitat Complex. 

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Upcoming Events.

October 4 Airport Commission 9:30 a.m.
October 25 BARC Meeting 6:30 p.m.
November 1 Airport Commission 9:30 a.m.
November 22 BARC Meeting 6:30 p.m.
December 6 Airport Commission 9:30 a.m.

**note - Airport Commission meetings for Oct.- Dec. at the Historic Crow Wing County Courthouse due to construction of terminal.*

VFR *(Very Frivolous Ramblings)*

Question #1. Today the event in Oshkosh is called EAA Air-Venture Oshkosh. It has been in existence, though not by that name, since 1953. What cities have hosted this event?

- A. Oshkosh and Green Bay
- B. Oshkosh, Milwaukee and Beloit
- C. Oshkosh, Milwaukee and Rockford, Illinois

Question #2. How many years was THE CONCORDE in service - catering to the rich and famous?

Question #3. The Phoenix space craft successfully landed on Mars in May of 2008. How long did the Phoenix take to get to Mars?

- A. Approximately 10 days
- B. Approximately 10 weeks
- C. Approximately 10 months

answers on page four) ☺

Terminal Remodel Update

Our beautiful new terminal is taking shape. Phase one is now complete with Delta Airlines and both National and Hertz car rental in their permanent locations. Operations are back to somewhat normal considering that about 1/3 of the terminal is still under construction. The interior finishes are very nice, and all areas are bright and full of natural light. If you have not yet visited the new area please take the time to investigate this exciting project. Comments from our travelling public have been overwhelmingly positive.

Regardless of any air carrier changes in the future, our new terminal will provide a comfortable, safe, and up to date facility for our travelling public.

The remaining two phases are underway and one can now see much better how the entire building will look when completed.

While the final completion dates are currently uncertain, projections as of this writing are for completion during the month of January 2012.

Shortly after completion of all construction, the Airport Commission will be sponsoring a gala grand opening to show off the entire building. Please watch the December issue of "Short Final" for complete details. ☺

It Happened in Aviation

October 4, 1909... More than a million New Yorkers watch as Wilbur Wright makes a flight along the Hudson River.

October 14, 1947... Captain Charles "Chuck" Yeager becomes the 1st person to fly faster than sound. Yeager "breaks the sound barrier" in his Bell X-1 airplane, Glamorous Glennis, named after his wife. He was able to reach 670-mph or Mach 1.015 at Muroc Dry Lake, California.

November 12, 1921... The 1st air-to-air refueling is made when American Wesley May steps from the wing of one aircraft to that of another carrying a five-gallon can of gasoline strapped to his back.

November 28, 1929... American Commander Richard Byrd and crew make the 1st flight over the South Pole, in a Ford 4-AT Trimotor monoplane, November 28-29.

December 2, 1986... A Concorde airliner carrying 94 passengers returns to Charles de Gaulle airport after an 18-day round-the-world journey; total flying time amounted to 31 hours 51 minutes.

December 24, 1944... The people of the Philippines receive a surprise when airplanes of 43rd Bombing Group flew over to drop a million Christmas cards; each one contains the words:

"Merry Christmas and Happy New Year 1944 -
General Douglas MacArthur" ☺

The Cougar Comes to Brainerd (part two)

(Editors note: For nearly 30 years the F9F6 Cougar display aircraft has stood vigil at the entrance to the Brainerd Lakes Regional Airport. Our summer issue chronicled the first part of Dick Dean's trip to bring the airplane home to Brainerd in 1981. This details the remainder of the journey.)

Negotiating the Hampton tunnel with the tail tapping the top of the tunnel proved to be just the first of many adventures en route to Minnesota.

Heading west out of Virginia, Dick and Carla faced a formidable obstacle in their path, that of the Blue Ridge Mountains. Not having taken the time to procure the oversize load permits the duo breathed a collective sigh of relief as they passed weigh station after weigh station and saw CLOSED signs on them. They were nearly out of money due to the delays they had already encountered, and Dick's right hand was still swollen and very painful. Adding even more urgency to the trip was the forecast for a major winter storm in the mountains that they must traverse. If they continued quickly the storm might hold off long enough for them to get through, if there is any further delay they will likely be in the mountains at the height of the storm.

A wire transfer of money from home gave them enough to complete the trip barring any unforeseen expenses. The money transfer however did not provide enough for permits and the escort car required for the load to move through the mountains. So with no further time ahead of the storm, or money available to procure permits and hire an escort the pair pressed on into the Blue Ridge with the F9F6 Cougar in tow.

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Now the Blue Ridge Mountains may not be the stature of the Rockies or the Alps but negotiating them with an over width and over length load is no small feat!

Steep upgrades and downgrades put the test to the old truck's engine and brakes. Tight hairpin turns put the driver's skills to the test, often stopping traffic to allow the rig to negotiate a turn. It most certainly must have been a sight, but fortunately failed to attract any attention from law enforcement. Persevering slowly and steadily, the Blue Ridge Mountains faded in the rear view mirror.

The joy and relief of getting through the mountains and beating the storm was soon replaced with concern. Looming ahead on the highway was the first weigh station coming out of the mountains. As the big rig approached both Dick and Carla looked for the sign that said CLOSED in the hope that their string would continue. This time it was not to be, as all commercial trucks would need to stop at the open weigh station. Knowing that this could be a major delay they pulled in with the rest of the trucks.

The patrol officer that came out to inspect the truck incredulously queried Dick, "Did you just bring this rig through the mountains?" and he dutifully answered "Yes we did." The next question that was the really tough one, "Can I see your permits please?" Dick explained to him what had happened and why they were working without the proper permits or escort car. Expecting the worst he simply stood by to await the officers "verdict." He was pleasantly surprised when the officer said "Sir, if I start writing violations now we will be here for days. I want you to get back in your truck and go on down the road, you were NEVER here!" Not always one to follow directions, Dick knew he had better follow this one and quickly too! Thanking the officer he got back in the truck and followed the trooper's instructions to the letter. As it turned out, that weigh station was the only open station they encountered in the entire trip.

So far, the pair had been blessed by a truck that had not given them any problems. That too would soon come to an end. Twice between the Blue Ridge and Chicago the truck came to a grinding halt. Stalled along the side of the highway in frigid weather, Dick's mechanical abilities were called into play. Replacing a couple of parts, including the fuel pump they were able to get back underway, but repairs quickly depleted their remaining financial resources. Without additional hotel money, and seeing the prize in sight they decided to drive the rest of the trip straight through. Once again, the resolve of the couple would be tested.

Nearing Chicago the old truck decided to start acting up and quit again. Stopped along the roadside it was discovered that the air cleaner was building up ice and was killing the engine. The third time was the charm and this time a make-shift fix got the truck running and on the road again. Tired but happy that things were going better they pressed on for home.

The last major roadblock to their success still lie ahead, the Chicago tollbooths. Missing the last exit before the tollway, he was first told that he could not proceed through the tollbooth. With limited options he was able to convince the authorities to let him try to get through, as according to his calculations he should have an inch or two on both sides of the airplane. After squeaking by very slowly he proceeded on, with the confidence he could get through all the others. When challenged at other tollbooths he simply asked them "How do you think I got here?" and there could be no argument to his logic.

Their goal was in sight and soon they would arrive home. Nineteen days after they started Dick and Carla rolled into Brainerd. The airplane was first delivered to City Hall where photos were taken with Dick and several city dignitaries. Take a look at that historic day on the airport website: www.brainerdairport.com/about-us/airport-history.html. The airplane was then delivered to the airport where over the next eight months it was re-assembled and painted to prepare it for permanent display.

After all the challenges that had been met one hurdle still remained at the airport for Mr. Dean.

Since he first committed to the project Dick had in mind that the airplane was a memorial to those who have served and are serving their country. As such he was determined to mount it on a rotating pedestal allowing the aircraft to turn into the wind. Perhaps his determination can best be summed up in this verse he wrote about the airplane in 1981:

Freedom: The Right To Choose

*As this aircraft ever freely turns,
To face the unseen forces of the winds;
It stands here in Memorial of all
The Armed Forces of the United States of America;
Who have in great boldness,
Altered the course of their lives,
To turn in opposition to the enemies,
Who would rob us of our freedom.
We citizens have the right to do as we please,
As long as we please to do right.*

God Bless America.

Twice the airport commission denied him approval to construct and mount the airplane on a rotating pedestal. His perseverance finally led to commission approval as long as he designed and built the pedestal at his own expense. Undaunted, Dick engineered and built this unique mount to complete the journey of the Cougar to Brainerd.

In November of 1981, the Cougar returned to the air, up on it's mount and proudly looking over the Brainerd Airport. 