



COMMEMORATIVE
AIR FORCE

LOBO WING CHATTER



WING LEADER BREIFING by Scott Witschger

Greetings from your Lobo Wing leadership. Even though the wing continues to suffer from the lose of a number of active local members we have still made progress on most fronts.

In March and April Maggy and I made a 4900-mile trip to conduct CAF and Grandparent activities. We started in Dallas at the Winter Headquarters Conference. This year we were the only two attendees representing the Lobo Wing. This is the lowest number I can remember since my first conference in 2000. They didn't announce attendance but it was clear that attendance was down. Many wings had no representation and some had only a few representatives. The huge Airbase Arizona group had only two attendees. Cost is surely a factor but there are other reasons as well including a repetitive message.

I also blame headquarters for making good use of social media. They have done a decent job of releasing update videos on-line that have covered many of the issues that would normally only be covered at the conference. Plus, they make videos of all the sessions and make them available after the conference. While they reduce the need to attend, they still don't replace the opportunity to have face to face conversations with staff and other wing officers during and after the briefing sessions. The social sessions provide the opportunity over a cold beer to outline project and wing issues that concern just the Lobo Wing. A free glass of wine can provide you the means to let them know we are here, active, and doing good things.

The training sessions continue to build on youth education but we aren't able to do much in that area so Maggy concentrated on finance and account changes and I focused on maintenance and insurance.

The main thing out of maintenance is documentation. As expected, the result of the P-63/B-17 accident has been additional scrutiny of CAF maintenance and training. We were warned to keep all records current and available at all times as FAA personal are appearing at wing hangars with no forewarning. Also, keep work areas clean, organized and tool certifications current and available. So, we're good on one front at least. An organized work area isn't it. An issue that we will need to rectify.

No big news on insurance and no news on the impact of the accident on future rates. The message as always is don't do stupid stuff!

The main thing in finance was a further clarification of issues with the new headquarters fee calculation and collection system. At this point we still think the financial change for the Lobo Wing should be minimal this year.

There has been no additional information on any financial or operational impacts from the accident.

On to the next stop in Fayetteville Georgia to visit with AT-11 owner John Hess. I have worked with John over the years on joint issues to fix items on our projects and to generally share information. As Johns' plane is only 35 serial numbers older than ours, I had hoped to gain

some real insight on several issues. However, it turns out that on closer inspection John's aircraft is a highly modified version that I had documented about 15 years ago in Kansas. Regardless, I was able to learn things. Most importantly a closer inspection of the turret assembly. I now have a better understanding of how it all goes together. We just lack a bunch of critical parts.



John Hess AT-11 Tantalizing Takeoff

In a major surprise John announced that he had recently acquired a bunch of bomb doors, mostly brand-new left sides and a few right-side doors in various conditions. He offered up some of the new doors at a great price which we accepted. So, we now have two brand-new left-hand bomb doors.

Did I mention that John is President of the Twin Beech Society and has close links to the Beechcraft Heritage Museum? As a result, he did a deal with the museum to get us one of their spare right hand outboard doors that is in many times better condition than our current door. In exchange we would deliver a door they needed along with the hinge castings we had made many years ago before we found originals. Then he offered to let us take some of the bucks his mechanics had made to fabricate some turret parts. Wow, we had a real unexpected haul. So, we packed everything up and headed to the Beechcraft Heritage Museum in Tullahoma Tennessee.



Beautiful Bare Beech Staggerwing



NON-Flying AT-11



Museums Flying Beech D-18

In Tullahoma we met with the museum director and did our bomb door swap then enjoyed a nice tour of a wonderful aircraft museum. It was Maggy's birthday so I at least took her out to dinner at Whisky Trails BBQ House for a nice dinner. We are a dedicated group.

Then it was off to Cincinnati to visit our son, daughter in law and grandchildren. All the stars aligned, the grand kids were on spring break and daughter Jennifer was able to be into town as well. These occasions are rare and we are so grateful when they happen. Had a great time.

You may have noticed that we did eventually work our way back to Albuquerque with all our Lobo Wing Treasures in tow.

LATE BREAKING NEWS

In Dallas I had met with the CAF's new Director of Maintenance Phil Pedron, a mechanic and FBO owner with 30 years of Twin Beech experience. We were arranging for him to come to Moriarty to inspect our project. Wine and beer diplomacy at work. Unfortunately, he recently

passed away after a short illness. I'm very disappointed for the Lobo Wing and the CAF. He seemed like a really great and knowledgeable guy. We wish his family the best.

AMERICAN AIRPOWER HERITAGE FOUNDATION of NEW MEXICO

This month the Foundation is scheduled to receive the final cash payment on the loan made on the R-2600 parts sale. We are still owed an overhauled Hamilton-Standard 22D30 propeller. The propeller is apparently overhauled and is awaiting transport to Moriarty. The current plan is to bring it back when the turret dome buck is delivered.

We will still be owed a completed gun turret Plexiglas dome and a few other random parts. The delay on the dome is on us as we have not yet completed the buck but it's getting close and it's not for the lack of effort.



Current State Of the turret dome buck

LOBO Hangar

Several of the Metal Halide overhead lights in the hangar have failed over the last year. One that



failed several years ago had been replaced with an LED Conversion. This has worked out well so the Lobo Officers decided to convert the remaining 7 lights. The 80-watt LED lights have the same lumens as the 250-watt Metal Halide lights so the power consumption dropped from 8 amps to 2.6 amps so we should see a long-term cost savings, and improved reliability. The 34 ft boom helped!

This is the first project toward making our work space more organized. A nifty storage rack for our previously disorganized aluminum storage. Thanks Mr. Dalton!



Lobo Wing Hangar Tours

We always enjoy having groups come out to our hangar as it gives us an opportunity to advertise our existence and show the public what we are doing. On March 4th we hosted one of the local Porsche clubs for a hangar tour and lunch. Cars and airplanes have a lot in common, lots of maintenance and money. Needless to say these Porsche 356s were beautiful.



Our second tour of the year was a local chapter of the EAA, Chapter 1306. The EAA (Experimental Aircraft Association) consists of individuals who are pilots and maintenance folks who mostly build their

own airplanes, although there are some interested in antiques and warbirds. Most of the individuals in this group had not been to our hangar and were very interested in the Lobo Wing, our two aircraft and the history of the CAF. Twenty-three took the tour and stayed for lunch. We very much appreciated their visit.



AT-11 Briefing by Scott Witschger

I had previously briefed on the cockpit upholstery project and expected it to be completed by now. After several visits the requested preparatory work was completed. The upholstery company was ready to bring their equipment on site to complete the installation of the cockpit interior. This was scheduled for a Wednesday and several of us were in the hangar waiting to assist as needed. The upholster called later to inform us that his son had been shot and killed during the night. As unexpected news goes that was a real zinger. At this time, we have no idea when work might resume.

Recently David Hill had made good progress on the lower wheel well skins so we decided it was time to swing the gear and check out the panel clearance to the gear and the fit of the gear door skins. We bought new batteries for the power cart, put in some fresh gas and got the cart running. We were committed to swinging the gear under power because the emergency gear extension equipment is not yet installed. It would have been safer to do it with the hand crank.



The first gear swing did not go well. Fortunately, we only destroyed one panel! The slave cylinder for the new brake system did not clear, it was close but caught the edge of the panel and did a number on it. It made a lot of very bad noises as it expired. Mr. Hill has now made a very nice modified panel that clears.

With the upholstery project on hold and the ability to power up the aircraft it seemed a good opportunity to test the radio stack. This stack consists mostly of vintage but reliable radios and audio panel. The ADS-B transponder and the intercom system are both brand new. This is a simple day VFR panel utilizing radios purchased on the internet from used avionics dealers.

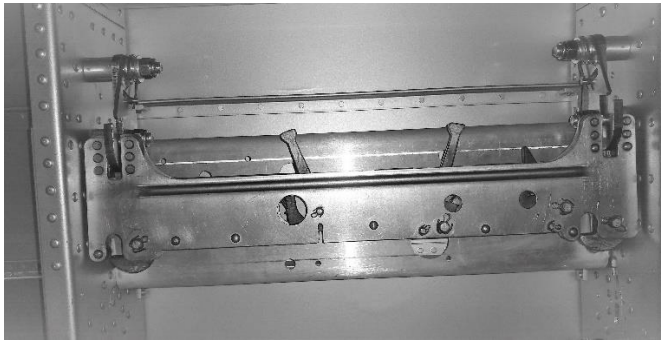
The first test found a non-working pilot push to talk switch. Larry Dalton, after considerable effort, found and repaired a broken wire. The second round of testing showed that radio number two was doing everything correctly but the screen back light is not working. Radio one is receiving and the display is working but it is not transmitting. This error was tracked down to two reversed wires in the radio plug. The wires are side by side so it was a fairly easy fix. Now both radios are operational but we still have the number two back light issue to resolve. Trouble shooting this problem is underway as we go to press. The intercom system appears, on initial testing, to work fine but the software must be loaded into the new transponder and then programmed in order to test that system.



Cowl repairs continue. The cowls need a lot more repair than expected and should probably have been started earlier. However new pieces are being fabricated and installed so progress is being made. The right cowls are far enough along that they could be mounted to assist with the final fit of the starboard nacelle repair panels.

New A&P Brad Hueftle has been making progress on a close inspection and correction of any final issues we find with the engine installations. This is a slow and frustrating process but very necessary.

While we wait on other things to be completed, we continue fill in work on the bomb equipment. The current effort is to mount all the components that actually hang the bombs and release shackles. I continue to search the internet and collector sources for bomb release mechanisms. I recently found a new source and now have a full set of original AN-2 bomb release mechanisms for the left side and two for the right side. It would be really cool if we could make a few function electrically. To replicate all the components that it takes to drop bombs both mechanically and electrically is a big undertaking with a lot of component parts so that will be a project that will get done in the future.



B-9 Bomb Shackle



AN-2 Bomb Release Control

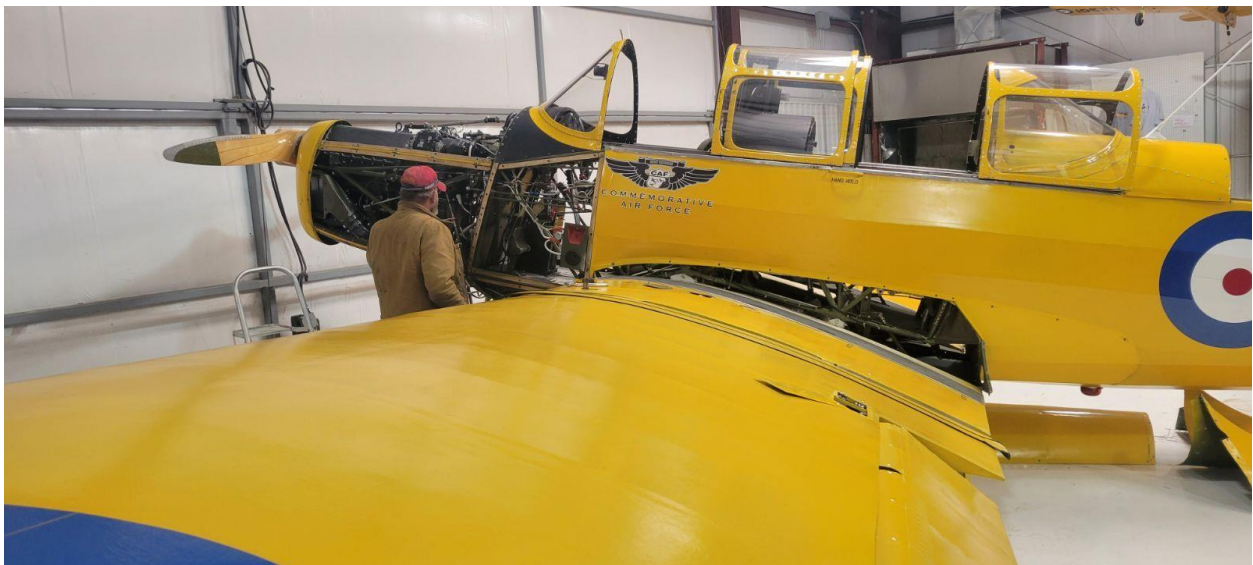
So what happens when we can't find enough originals of the bomb release mechanisms? Well, we 3D scan an original and then print a 3D copy. This is Ryan Witschgers' first attempt at the scan and print of an original. It needs some refinement but its doable, you just need a 3D hand scanner and a water-cooled computer with 64 processors. As the saying goes. Easy-Peasy!



3D printed Bomb Release control box

PT26 News by David McBride

Every year the PT-26 has to have an FAA mandated annual inspection. This year was an extensive annual as there were quite a few “little” things that needed attention. In case you’re not aware, all of the removable panels on the airplane have to be removed so that everything can be inspected. Our new maintenance officer, Brad Heuftle and assistant Billy Lothrop, spent almost two weeks addressing all of these “little” things. Issues such as loose dzus fasteners, missing screws and nuts, chafing wires, bent vent tubes, etc. were repaired completely. As you can see from the photos they were all over the airplane fixing “little” things that had collected over the last year.



PT-26 Rides Program by David McBride

The PT-26 has been in a CAF/FAA rides program for quite a few years which enabled the Lobo Wing to give rides to the public for a fee. This came with strings attached as it required us to pay for every Lobo Wing person who flew or worked on the airplane. This payment amounted to \$50 per person per quarter and we had four people in the program which came to \$800 per year. This fee was charged by headquarters to administer the program which also included a random urinalysis program.

The staff met two months ago and evaluated the usefulness to the wing of this program and decided to take the wing out of the program for a couple of reasons. The first reason was it severely limited who could work on the airplane. We have people who are interested in working on the PT and this limited their participation and it therefore limited our available manpower. Second was the cost of the program. The staff looked at how many revenue flights we have given over the last few years and it was very low as in maybe one or two per year. And with the cost of participation, it just made no sense to continue in the program. Of course, we can still give rides to CAF and Lobo Wing members!

New Prospective PT-26 Pilot

It's been quite a while since we've had more than two pilots to fly the PT-26 and now we have another one in training. Cooper Livingston started training in the PT with instructor Andy Wells on Saturday 03 June. Cooper is a brand new LT Col in the USAF and an instructor in the MC-130 at Kirtland AFB and recently got his tailwheel endorsement so that he can learn to fly the PT-26. Although he has quite a few hours in the USAF he still has to get 10 hours in the PT-26 per CAF regulations. Now he gets to fly a "real" airplane, one with a tailwheel. Hopefully he'll be flying most Saturdays, weather permitting, and there may be score cards available to grade each of his landings.

Oh by the way, if you look close you'll notice a big red A on his ball cap as he is an alumnus of the University of Alabama..." Roll Tide".



On Short Final

Fun Stuff! If you enjoy music from the 30's 40's and 50's you may enjoy the Postmodern Jukebox (PMJ) on the PMJ You Tube channel. They have been around since around 2014 and they perform the 40's classics as well as adaptations of newer hits performed in the 1940's style. Those sometimes are good and sometimes just don't work. There are not big stars and the cast and singers rotate with frequency but they are usually pretty good. There are a few popular performers who have their own separate careers and channels but do return on occasion. My favorites are Morgan James and Haley Reinhart with very powerful voices.

They tour all over the world and it turns out they will be at the Kimo theatre later this year.

Stay Healthy, stay involved, see you soon.

Scott Witschger

Lobo Wing

Wing Leader