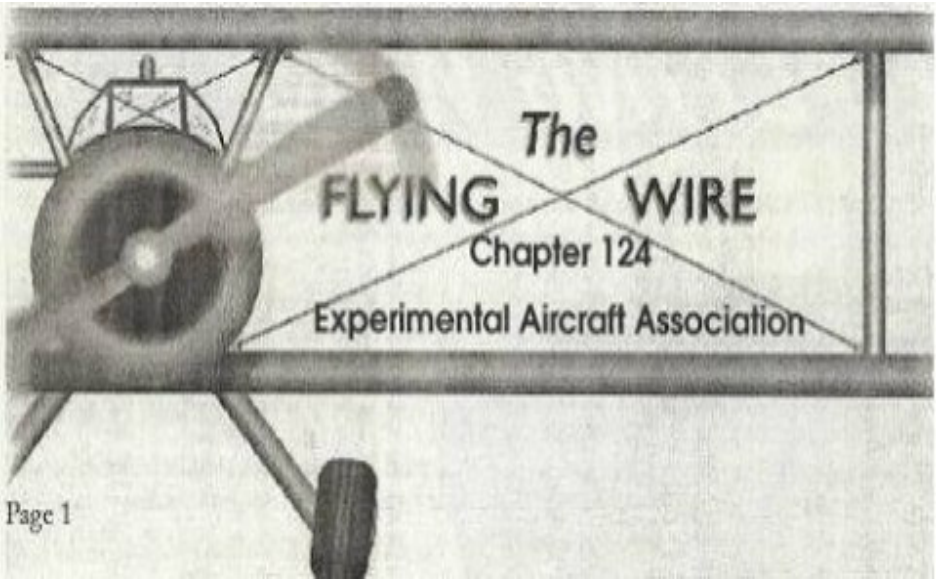

June 7, 2006
Volume 45
Number 06

Board Meeting:
June 7, 2006 6:30pm

General Meeting:
June 7, 2006 7:30pm

WWW.EAA124.ORG

WWW.CAFEFOUNDATION.ORG

SPECIAL ANNOUNCEMENTS:

June 7, 2006 PROGRAM: Kregg Victory from San Jose will discuss the balancing of propellers. (Thanks, Rolf Unternaehrer)

SONOMA COUNTY AIRPORT OPEN HOUSE
June 17th and 18th, 2006

Young Eagles Day June 17, 2006

EAA 124 will be participating in the Sonoma County Charles M Schultz Open House on June 17, 2006. We will be having our Young Eagles event on that Saturday. I am very excited about being part of the event. It should be really great, and we should get a lot of kids to our Young Eagles Event. The airport management will be strongly promoting the Open House and the Young Eagles "Flying for Kids".

To help make this successful for the kids, however, *the Chapter is going to need your help*. We need both pilots and ground crew to support all our kids from the local area. When I asked for volunteers at the last meeting I got four pilots and five ground crew. *We are going to need more than that*. If you would like to volunteer and make some kids really happy, then call me at 707-578-2087 or email me at lynchdavidb@yahoo.com and let me know. (Thanks, David Lynch)

OIL BUY…OIL BUY…OIL BUY

Bill Massey plans to have an oil buy this month. Please contact him at the June 7th meeting if you'd like to be part of this buy. All prices are per case, and are inclusive of all taxes and fees.

Aeroshell 15W-50	$54.91 per case
Aeroshell 100W	$37.15 per case
Aeroshell 80W	$37.15 per case

The next Chapter 124 Day is Golden West, June 9 – 11. President Bob will be going over early Saturday morning and returning Sunday following the air show. Please let Bob know if you would like a ride over.

THE FLYING WIRE

MESSAGE FROM THE FRONT DESK…
JUNE, 2006
Bob Gutteridge, President

Joe Lacchia's Starduster II has flown! Congratulations on hatching the new bird. Joe, you do realize a *first flight report* will be required at the June meeting, don't you? **Bill Massey** is going full bore on his 601. **Paul Reinders** is gathering parts needed to add a few more gallons of fuel in his 701.

The **Angwin Airport Day** was attended by several 124 folks. Tom and Rita Casebier drove in, Tim Peterson and Jerry Rench, both flew over separately, and Joe Wiegand and I took the Champ. Joe and I tried our hand at flower bombing which neither of us had done before. Good thing no one was shooting back! But we had fun!

Next 124 day is **Golden West, June 9 – 11**. I will be going over early Saturday morning and returning Sunday following the airshow. Let me know if you would like a ride over.

Sonoma County Airport's Open House is now just around the corner, scheduled for **June 17 and 18**. **Steve Fredericks**, EAA 124 chairman, is in need of a few good men and women to man our booth. **David Lynch**, Young Eagles Chairman, is also asking for pilots with airplanes and a few additional folks to help run our first **Young Eagle** flight on Saturday only, June 17th. Pilots, please be advised that there is a fuel discount for those giving rides at this event.

The **Board meeting** will be held on **Wednesday, June 7th at 6:30 pm** preceding the general meeting.

****

SONOMA COUNTY SKYPARK EAA CHAPTER 1268 PLANS TRIP TO OSHKOSH:

Sonoma County Skypark EAA Chapter 1268 will be putting together another group fly-out to Oshkosh this summer. If you went on or heard about the 2002 trip, you know that the group, 23 airplanes that time, had a great time on the way back and also while at Oshkosh. We would like to do the same again. The plan is to leave on Saturday, July 15, and make the first night at the Prospect, Oregon Fly-in and steak and chicken barbecue. Second night will be at Cavenaugh Bay, and the rest of the trip will be wherever we all land each evening. We will take the northern route up through Montana, North Dakota and over the Mississippi to Brodhead, Wisconsin for the Pietenpol Fly-In the weekend before Oshkosh. If you want to go but have doubts about the gas cost, consider sharing expenses with someone who wants to go but doesn't have an airplane. Give Darrel Jones a call at 707-996-4494 to get on the list. We will have a planning meeting sometime in the second half of June. **(Thanks, Darrel Jones)**

****

BOB PEDROTTI

Former member **Bob Pedrotti** passed away recently. His auto license number was F4U JOCK. He was flying a Champ based in Petaluma, and had an unfinished rag and stick plane under construction at the time of his death, complications from old age. (Thanks, David McIntyre)

MACH 3.18 IN-FLIGHT BREAK UP OF AN SR-71 BLACKBIRD

(Thanks to a friend of Henry Beadle who thought the Chapter might enjoy reading this email.)

Among professional aviators, there's a well-worn saying: *Flying is simply hours of boredom punctuated by moments of stark terror.* But I don't recall too many periods of boredom during my 30-year career with Lockheed, most of which was spent as a test pilot. By far, the most memorable flight occurred on January 25, 1966.

Jim Zwayer, a Lockheed flight-test specialist, and I were evaluating systems on an SR-71 Blackbird test from Edwards. We also were investigating procedures designed to reduce trim drag and improve hi-Mach cruise performance. The latter involved flying with the center-of-gravity (CG) located further aft than normal, reducing the Blackbird's longitudinal stability.

We took off from Edwards at 11:20am and completed the mission's first leg without incident. After refueling from a KC-135 tanker, we turned eastbound, accelerated to a Mach 3.2-cruise and climbed to 78,000 feet, our initial cruise-climb altitude.

Several minutes into cruise, the right engine inlet's automatic control system malfunctioned, requiring a switch to manual control. The SR-71's inlet configuration was automatically adjusted during supersonic flight to decelerate airflow in the duct, slowing it to subsonic speed before reaching the engine's face. This was accomplished by the inlet's center-body spike translating aft, and by modulating the inlet's forward bypass doors.

Normally, these actions were scheduled automatically as a function of Mach number, positioning the normal shock wave (where air flow becomes subsonic) inside the inlet to ensure optimum engine performance. Without proper scheduling, disturbances inside the inlet could result in the shock wave being expelled forward-a phenomenon known as an "inlet unstart".

That causes an instantaneous loss of engine thrust, explosive banging noises and violent yawing of the aircraft---like being in a train wreck. Unstarts were not uncommon at that time in the SR-71's development, but a properly functioning system would recapture the shock wave and restore normal operation.

On the planned test profile, we entered a programmed 35-degree bank turn to the right. An immediate unstart occurred on the right engine, forcing the aircraft to roll further right and start to pitch up. I jammed the control stick as far left and forward as it would go. NO RESPONSE. I instantly knew we were in for a wild ride. I attempted to tell Jim what was happening and to stay with the airplane until we reached a lower speed and altitude. I didn't think the chances of surviving an ejection at Mach 3.18 and 78,800 feet were very good. However, g-forces built up so rapidly that my words came out garbled and unintelligible, as confirmed later by the cockpit voice recorder.

The cumulative effects of system malfunctions, reduced longitudinal stability, increased angle-of-attack in the turn, supersonic speed, high altitude and other factors, imposed forces on the airframe that exceeded flight control authority and the Stability Augmentation System's ability to restore control.

Everything seemed to unfold in slow motion. I learned later the time from event onset to catastrophic departure from controlled flight was only 2-3 seconds. Still trying to communicate with Jim, I blacked out, succumbing to extremely high g-forces.

Then the SR-71…literally…disintegrated around us. From that point, I was just along for the ride. And my next recollection was a hazy thought that I was having a bad dream. Maybe I'll wake up and get out of this mess, I mused. Gradually regaining consciousness, I realized this was no dream; it had really happened. That also was disturbing, because I COULD NOT HAVE SURVIVED what had just happened.

I must be dead. Since I didn't feel bad---just a detached sense of euphoria---I decided being dead wasn't so bad after all. As full awareness took hold, I realized I was not dead. But somehow I had separated from the airplane.

I had no idea how this could have happened; I hadn't initiated an ejection. The sound of rushing air and what sounded like straps flapping in the wind confirmed I was falling, but I couldn't see anything. My pressure suit was inflated, so I knew an emergency oxygen cylinder in the seat kit attached to my parachute harness was functioning. It not only supplied breathing oxygen, but also pressurized the suit, preventing my blood from boiling at extremely high altitudes. I didn't appreciate it at the time, but the suit's pressurization had also provided physical protection from intense buffeting and g-forces. That inflated suit had become my own escape capsule.

My next concern was about stability and tumbling. Air density at high altitude is insufficient to resist a body's tumbling motions, and centrifugal forces high enough to cause physical injury could develop quickly. For that reason, the SR-71's parachute system was designed to automatically deploy a small-diameter stabilizing chute shortly after ejection and seat separation. Since I had not intentionally activated the ejection system---and assuming all automatic functions depended on a proper ejection sequence---it occurred to me the stabilizing chute may not have deployed.

However, I quickly determined I was falling vertically and not tumbling. The little chute must have deployed and was doing its job. Next concern: the main parachute, which was designed to open automatically at 15,000 feet. Again I had no assurance the automatic-opening function would work.

I couldn't ascertain my altitude because I still couldn't see through the iced-up faceplate. There was no way to know how long I had been blacked-out or how far I had fallen. I felt for the manual-activation D-ring on my chute harness, but with the suit inflated and my hands numbed by cold, I couldn't locate it. I decided I'd better open the faceplate, try to estimate my height above the ground, then locate that D-ring. Just as I reached for the faceplate, I felt the reassuring sudden deceleration of main-chute deployment.

I raised the frozen faceplate and discovered its uplatch was broken. Using one hand to hold that plate up, I saw I was descending through a clear, winter sky with unlimited visibility. I was greatly relieved to see Jim's parachute coming down about a quarter of a mile away. I didn't think either of us could have survived the aircraft's breakup, so seeing Jim had also escaped lifted my spirits incredibly.

I could also see burning wreckage on the ground a few miles from where we would land. The terrain didn't look at all inviting---a desolate, high plateau dotted with patches of snow and no signs of habitation.

I tried to rotate the parachute and look in other directions. But with one hand devoted to keeping the face plate up and both hands numb from high-altitude, subfreezing temperatures, I couldn't manipulate the risers enough to turn. Before the breakup, we'd started a turn in the New Mexico-Colorado-Oklahoma-Texas border region. The SR-71 had a turning radius of about 100 miles at that speed and altitude, so I wasn't even sure what state we were going to land in. But because it was about 3 pm, I was certain we would be spending the night out here.

At about 300 feet above the ground, I yanked the seat kit's release handle and made sure it was still tied to me by a long lanyard. Releasing the heavy kit ensured I wouldn't land with it attached to my derriere, which could break a leg or cause other injuries. I then tried to recall what survival items were in that kit, as well as techniques I had been taught in survival training.

Looking down, I was startled to see a fairly large animal---perhaps an antelope---directly under me. Evidently, it was just as startled as I was because it literally took off in a cloud of dust.

My first-ever parachute landing was pretty smooth. I landed on fairly soft ground, managing to avoid rocks, cacti and antelopes. My chute was still billowing in the wind, though. I struggled to collapse it with one hand, holding the still-frozen faceplate up with the other.

"Can I help you?" a voice said. Was I hearing things? I must be hallucinating. Then I looked up and saw a guy walking toward me, wearing a cowboy hat. A helicopter was idling a short distance behind him. If I had been at Edwards and told the Search-and-Rescue Unit that I was going to bail out over the Rogers Dry Lake at a particular time of day, a crew couldn't have gotten to me as fast as that cowboy-pilot had.

The gentleman was Albert Mitchell, Jr., owner of a huge cattle ranch in northeastern New Mexico. I had landed about 1.5 mi. from his ranch house—and from a hangar for his two-place Hughes helicopter. Amazed to see him, I replied I was having a little trouble with my chute. He walked over and collapsed the canopy, anchoring it with several rocks. He had seen Jim and me floating down and had radioed the New Mexico Highway Patrol, the Air Force and the nearest hospital.

Extracting myself from the parachute harness, I discovered the source of those flapping-strap noises heard on the way down. My seat belt and shoulder harness were still draped around me, attached and latched.

The lap belt had been shredded on each side of my hips, where the straps had fed through knurled adjustment rollers. The shoulder harness had shredded in a similar manner across my back. The ejection seat had never left the airplane. I had been ripped out of it by the extreme forces, with the seat belt and shoulder harness still fastened.

I also noted that one of the two lines that supplied oxygen to my pressure suit had come loose, and the other was barely hanging on. If that second line had become detached at high altitude, the deflated pressure suit wouldn't have provided any protection. I knew an oxygen supply was critical for breathing and suit-pressurization, but didn't appreciate how much physical protection an inflated pressure suit could provide.

That the suit could withstand forces sufficient to disintegrate an airplane and shred heavy nylon seat belts, yet leave me with only a few bruises and minor whiplash was impressive. I truly appreciated having my own little escape capsule.

After helping me with the chute, Mitchell said he'd check on Jim. He climbed into his helicopter, flew a short distance away and returned about 10 minutes later with devastating news: Jim was dead. Apparently, he had suffered a broken neck during the aircraft's disintegration and was killed instantly.

Mitchell said his ranch foreman would soon arrive to watch over Jim's body until the authorities arrived. I asked to see Jim and, after verifying there was nothing more that could be done, agreed to let Mitchell fly me to the Tucumcari hospital, about 60 mi. to the south.

I have vivid memories of that helicopter flight, as well. I didn't know much about rotorcraft, but I knew a lot about "red lines", and Mitchell kept the airspeed at or above red line all the way. The little helicopter vibrated and shook a lot more that I thought it should have. I tried to reassure the cowboy-pilot I was feeling OK; there was no need to rush. But since he'd notified the hospital staff that we were inbound, he insisted we get there as soon as possible. I couldn't help but think how ironic it would be to have survived one disaster only to be done in by the helicopter that had come to my rescue.

However, we made it to the hospital safely—and quickly. Soon, I was able to contact Lockheed's flight test office at Edwards. The test team there had been notified initially about the loss of radio and radar contact, then told the aircraft had been lost. They also knew what our flight conditions had been at the time, and assumed no one could have survived. I explained what had happened, describing in fairly accurate detail the flight conditions prior to breakup.

The next day our flight profile was duplicated on the SR-71 flight simulator at Beale AFB, California. The outcome was identical. Steps were immediately taken to prevent a recurrence of our accident. Testing at a CG aft of normal limits was discontinued, and trim-drag issues were subsequently resolved via aerodynamic means. The inlet control system was continuously improved and, with subsequent development of the Digital Automatic Flight and Inlet Control System, "inlet unstarts" became rare.

Investigation of our accident revealed that the nose section of the aircraft had broken off aft of the rear cockpit and crashed about 10 mi. from the main wreckage. Parts were scattered over an area approximately 15 mi. long and 10 mi. wide. Extremely high air loads and g-forces, both positive and negative, had literally ripped Jim and me from the airplane. Unbelievable good luck is the only explanation for my escaping relatively unscathed from that disintegrating aircraft.

Two weeks after the accident, I was back in an SR-71, flying the first sortie in a brand-new bird at Lockheed's Palmdale, Calif., assembly and test facility. It was my first flight since the accident, so a flight test engineer in the back seat was probably a little apprehensive about my state of mind and confidence.

As we roared down the runway and lifted off, I heard an anxious voice over the intercom:
"Bill! Bill! Are you there?"

"Yeah, George. What's the matter?"

"Thank God! I thought you might have left." The rear cockpit of the SR-71 has no forward visibility—only a small window on each side—and George couldn't see me. A big red light on the master-warning panel in the rear cockpit had illuminated just as we rotated, stating "Pilot Ejected". Fortunately, the cause was a misadjusted micro switch; not my departure.

Bill Weaver flight-tested all models of the Mach-2 F-104 Starfighter and the entire family of Mach 3+ Blackbirds—the A-12, YF-12, and SR-71. He subsequently was assigned to Lockheed's L-1011 project as an engineering test pilot, and became the company's chief pilot. He later retired as Division Manager of Commercial Flying Operations.

THE FLYING MARKET

***

Hangar Wanted: to buy, to rent or share. Must be able to fit a Starduster Too. Ray or Sher at (707) 584-9682.

***

New set of RV4 wings for sale. Call or email Dave Pinsky at davepskier@yahoo.com Phone 575 7900.

***

WANTED: FLYING RV6A 180Hp/CS Prop
Low Time/NDH Finder's fee for the right aircraft!
email specs & pics to: info@nblaser.com or contact:
Pete Sand @ (707) 333-1899
Chris Wallner @ (707) 364-1195

DORM ROOM AT OSHKOSH FOR SALE: Call or email Donna Turrentine if you need a dorm room at Oshkosh. 707.823.6132

JUNE, 2006 CALENDAR OF EVENTS

June 9 – 11: The next *Chapter 124 Day* is **Golden West Air Show.** Please let Bob Gutteridge know if you would like a ride over.

June 17 – 18: Sonoma County Airport's Open House and Chapter 124 Young Eagles Day. Please volunteer to do something…ground crew, pilot with airplane, or "man" the Chapter 124 booth. ***The Chapter needs you!!!***

Schellville Antique Escadrille

The Schellville Antique Escadrille meets at noon every 2nd Saturday of each month (except June) at the Sonoma Vintage Aero (George Dray) hangar at the Sonoma Valley Airport. No-host BBQ follows. Aircraft display – noon to 4pm.

Sonoma Skypark EAA 1268

Sonoma Skypark EAA 1268 meets at 7pm on the 2nd Tuesday night of each month at Sonoma Skypark, hangar N-3. Dinner is served ($5) and business meeting/program follows. Provides "Historical Aircraft Display" Days. Contact Darrel Jones 707-996-4494 for info.

May 3rd, 2006 Board Meeting:

President Bob Gutteridge called the Board Meeting to order at 6:30 PM.

Bob Gutteridge, Pres.	**P**	**Rolf Unternaehrer, Board**	**P**
Mike Tovani, VP	**P**	**Steve Fredricks, Board**	**P**
Joe Lacchia, Sec.	**P**	**Paul Reinders, Board**	**A**
John Whitehouse, Treas.	**P**	**Pat Fanning, Board**	**A**
Larry Rengstorf, Facilities	**P**	**Dave McIntyre, Board**	**P**
Brian Cluer, Board	**A**	**Donna Turrentine, Editor**	**P**

Minutes: Minutes from the prior Board Meeting were approved.

Treasurer's Report: John Whitehouse reported on activity this year to date, and on finances and parking fee collections. The report was approved.

Reports:
Mike Tovani reported that Barnstormer.com would like to advertise in our newsletter. We will consider this and discuss it at our next meeting. It was pointed out that our policy in the past has been "no ads".

Facilities: Larry Rengstorf is in the process of getting locks for the filling cabinets and reported that the completion of the projector mount is in the works. We need to repair the fence behind the Hamilton hanger, which can be done during our next workday. We are looking at the 1st or 2nd week in June for a workday. Mowing is continuing.

Donna Turrentine reported that this is the last opportunity to order nametags. She will be sending the list of tags to the printer after this meeting.

Bob Gutteridge reported that Jim Elliott has completed the hand-off of lease information to the new lease committee. C. J. Stevens is anticipating a meeting with Mary Hamilton during the coming month.

The 'Sonoma County Airport Day' meeting was held today. Airport Day: Dave McIntyre will head up the booth setup and we are looking for volunteers to man the booth. Joe Lacchia will bring his Starduster Too for display, other planes will be required. We will have to create a one page information sheet for Airport Day. We need to get free handouts from the EAA National for the event. There will be a pancake breakfast in the morning with lunch around noon during the event. Young Eagles will be on Saturday only and there will be a fuel discount for participants. Steve Fredricks is our Airport Day Chairman and will coordinate all activities.

Jeri Gutteridge scanned the history of past Chapter 124 motions into a Word document and Joe Lacchia will clean this up over the next several months.

Rosters are available for distribution tonight, one to a customer.

Meeting adjourned 7:22 PM.

Respectfully Submitted,
Joe Lacchia, Secretary

May 3rd, 2006 General Membership Meeting

President Bob Gutteridge called the meeting to order at 7:45 PM. 68 members were present.

Minutes: Minutes from the prior General Membership meeting were approved.

Treasurer's Report: John Whitehouse reported on activity this year to date, and on finances and parking fee collections. John also reported that the rosters are available for distribution at tonight's meeting.

Mike Tovani reported that tonight's program would by presented by Brien Seeley with the subject being PAV.

Committee Reports:
Facilities: Larry Rengstorf reported that mowing is progressing on a continuous basis due to the heavy rains this winter.

Announcements:
Donna Turrentine reported that this is the last opportunity to order nametags. She will be sending the list of tags to the printer after this meeting.

Bob Gutteridge reported that the "show and tell" for the county supervisors is being postponed to the fall because of their tight schedules during election time.

He also said that Airport Days handouts are available for the taking. The Airport Days Open House is scheduled for June 17th and 18th with our Young Eagles event on the 17th. Steve Fredricks is our 'Airport Days' Chairman and will be coordinating all activities. We are looking for volunteers to help. Joe Lacchia, Steve Barnes and Larry Ford will show their airplanes during the event.

Larry Rengstorf reported that there is an "all you can eat" shrimp feed benefit dinner for PCAM at the veterans building.

Builders Reports:
Bob Archibald's Zodiac project is in the paint stage. He invites all to stop by and take a look.
Mike Heintz has scheduled a rudder kit assembly on May 6th at his facility in Cloverdale.
Steve Barnes talked about his vibration problems and discussed possible sources.
Joe Lacchia reported that his Starduster Too has yet to leave the ground, but will soon.
Kevin Quirk told of hanging the engine on his RV-6.
Art Beer reported on the installation of a Subaru engine in a PA-20.
John Whitehouse talked about getting licensing and flight information from the FAA and the EAA.
Bill Price from Angwin reported that there would be a fly-in at the Angwin Airport in the morning of May 14th. All are welcome. Bob Gutteridge has scheduled this mouth's EAA Day for a fly out to Angwin leaving around 9:30 on Mother's Day, May 14th.

Evening Program:
Brien Seeley will discuss the PAV.

Respectfully Submitted,
Joe Lacchia, Secretary