



The Flying Wire



April 2026

Volume 65 Issue 4

Chapter 124 Experimental Aircraft Association

Next Chapter Meeting: Wednesday, April 1

Dinner – 6:15 pm \$15

General Meeting – 7:00 pm

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Program: April 1 Meeting

Spring Social!

Please join us for our April Chapter Meeting this coming Wednesday, April 1st at 6pm.

It seems we never have enough opportunities to just socialize with each other and spend some time talking shop!

The meetings have been fantastic recently, but with the speakers, the attendance, the agendas, and everything going on, sometimes our social time gets cut short! With the fantastic weather we've been having and the coming of Easter and Spring, this feels like the perfect time for a social.

Don't be afraid because it's April Fools Day! Bring your best prank and come on out and spend some time.

Bonus - the Chapter's **2026 Ray Scholar** will be announced this night as well! There are some great candidates vying for the spot! There can be only one!! It's sure to be a great night!

~ *Dominic Cerniglio, Chapter President*



Dinner Menu: Hamburgers and Hot Dogs with lots of fixings. Baked Beans and Super Salad. Hot Fudge Sundaes for Dessert. **\$15**



News and Updates

Chili Cook-off – Sunday, March 29, Sonoma County Airport

3RD ANNUAL
CHARLES M. SCHULZ - SONOMA COUNTY AIRPORT

CHILI COOK-OFF

Buy tickets online or at the door.
\$15
ENTRANCE
(\$5 KIDS)

SUN. MARCH 29, 2026
1200-1500
Redwood Hangar @ Sonoma Jet Center
6000 Flightline Drive, Santa Rosa, CA

FUN AWARDS! GOOD FOOD!

All proceeds benefiting non-profits at KSTS:
Pacific Coast Air Museum, Santa Rosa 99's, Experimental Aircraft Association
Chapter 124, Civil Air Patrol: Sonoma County, Challenge Air Fly Day

More information and chili team entry forms:
<https://www.santarosa99s.org/events/sts-chili-cook-off/>

Chapter 124 is competing again in the annual Chili Competition! This year, we'll be looking to win with "EAA 124's Airpark Chili" - fabulously cooked and generously provided by Board Member Jeremiah James and his girlfriend Rio! Come on down! Don't miss the chance to sample and vote! The Chapter's pride is at stake!!

Chapter 124's Airpark Chili!



Still Looking for Help with Our Chapter Dinners...

You may have noticed that our Chapter meetings are growing! This is great for the Chapter, but it also means that preparing our delicious dinners requires more and more effort. Our amazing Chefs Extraordinaire, **Sam and Andy Werback**, continue to do an outstanding job pulling it all together so that everyone can enjoy the dinner of the month. But this year, to keep the wheels rolling merrily along, we all need to give them some help.

Don't worry, you don't have to cook the whole meal (unless you want to!) The Chapter is looking for volunteers who can:

- ◆ Shop from a given list of ingredients
- ◆ Prepare vegetables and salads
- ◆ Provide desserts
- ◆ Offer stove top space at home to heat and then transport meals

If this sounds like something you can do, on a monthly or just on an occasional basis, please contact Chapter President Dom Cerniglio (dcerniglio@mac.com or (310) 628 9008) for details. *And thank you - we really appreciate your help!*

Chapter 124 Hosts FAA Safety WINGS Events



EAA Chapter 124 has teamed up with the FAA FAASafety Program to host WINGS Seminars on special topics for pilots and aircraft maintenance personnel.

President Dominic Cerniglio worked with FAA FAASafety Lead Representative Art Hayssen to stage the first of a series of Safety Seminars on March 25th: *Flight Instructor Workshop – Proper Preparation by CFIs of Student Pilot Check Ride Applicants.*

Special thanks to member Mike Tovani for assisting Dominic and Art in setting up the meeting room for the program. The evening's Workshop & Forum's Panel of speakers included FAA Safety Program Manager Kevin Sullivan, plus FAASafety representatives Harlow Voorhees, Rob Clark and Art Hayssen. Besides the main topic, current flight instruction Hot Topics were discussed by the CFI attendees.

Second WINGS Seminar, April 7

The April 7th 6pm evening seminar will be a presentation by Andrew Danovaro, Oakland FSDO FAASafety Program Manager on **AIRWORTHY** and Return to Service.

Andrew will explore the concept of airworthiness, including:

- ◆ Exploring the definition of the term "Airworthy"
- ◆ Learning about objective & subjective decision-making
- ◆ Proper maintenance logbook entries
- ◆ Compromise & lessons learned

I encourage EAA Chapter 124 members to attend this detailed presentation by Andrew. Please bring your questions and concerns to this important meeting on what it means to be truly airworthy. No pre-registration is required.

Future current Hot Topics and Issues will be addressed in future meetings.

Hope to see you at the April 7th meeting.

~ Art Hayssen, EAA Chapter 124 Member & FAA FAASafety Lead Representative

For further information email art@hayssenaviation.com or (707) 321-2040

Aircraft for Sale

**1957 Champion 7FC
Tri-Traveler N7557B
Serial Number: 7FC-59**

\$47,000

**783 Hours since Frame-Up Restoration
(As of 2/28/2026 still flying)
Total Airframe Time – 3839 Hours
Continental C90**

In 1957, Champion brought out the 7FC, a design sharing many parts, including the engine, with their version of the 7EC. The most significant difference in the 7FC was its tricycle landing gear arrangement. The main gear and the nose gear utilized oleo struts, 472 built.



2000 - Restored by Robert Gutteridge, Santa Rosa, CA

2001 - CONTEMPORARY GRAND CHAMPION, Northwest EAA Fly-In, Arlington, WA

2002 - OUTSTANDING LIMITED PRODUCTION, EAA AirVenture, Oshkosh, WI.

2002 - PARTICIPANT National Aviation Heritage Invitational – Reno, NV

2003 - CLASSIC: 2nd Place Copperstate Regional EAA Fly-in, Phoenix Regional Airport

2004 - RESERVE GRAND CHAMPION Golden West EAA Regional Fly-In, Marysville, CA

2005 - CONTEMPORARY PLAQUES - OUTSTANDING CHAMPION EAA AirVenture, Oshkosh, WI.

2013 - CONTEMPORARY PRESERVATION AWARD EAA AirVenture, Wittman Regional Airport, Oshkosh, WI.

Contact: Michael Tovani - 707 321-2740 - mtovani@pacbell.net

Aircraft Based at EAA Chapter 124 Santa Rosa CA

Concorde: Flying at Twice the Speed of Sound

By Paul Hollingworth



In March 2003, my wife Jenny (yes, our newsletter editor!) and I were living in the South-East of England with our two young sons. The following year would see us emigrate to the US, but that year we were still in England and every day, we could hear as the British Airways Concorde flew over the small town in which we lived. This was 32 miles as the crow flies from Heathrow airport, but although the plane was already high up by that point, the ripping, tearing noise Concorde's afterburning engines made was completely distinctive. Also, unlike any other flights, you could set your watch by Concorde's flyover. I always wondered if it was because of the "important" people on board, but it was possibly more about fuel margins - the Concorde didn't have much to spare.



Parked at London Heathrow

Like pretty much anyone even remotely interested in aviation, I had always considered Concorde an engineering marvel and a work of great beauty - a perfect demonstration of the old adage that beautiful engineering is also good engineering.

For at least 10 years prior to that time, I had been traveling as part of my work in the microchip industry; almost every week I was in different cities and countries in Europe, ranging from Finland to Italy, Belgium to Israel.

As a result, I'd built up a huge number of British Airways airmiles, but frankly the last thing I wanted to do in my precious spare time was get on another commercial flight.

But then I read that it was possible to use airmiles to fly on Concorde.

In 2003, a return economy ticket to New York from London cost 40k BA miles. Business class was 80k, first class was 120k, but if you wanted to fly on Concorde, it would cost you 160k per ticket. But what better use would I have for all those miles?

I applied for two round-trip Concorde tickets and held my breath - this was pre-everything-being-on-the-internet so you didn't get an instant response.

To my amazement, I heard back that I had the tickets for my chosen dates – 21st-24th May, 2003. I placed the booking at the end of March 2003.

On April 10th, just *two weeks later*, British Airways announced that they would be canceling Concorde before the end of the year. The ticket price became \$12,000 (\$21,200 inflation-adjusted to 2026). Tickets became impossible to obtain, for love or money. The secondary market was selling them for up to an inflation-adjusted \$50k per person.



My timing had been exceptionally lucky!

We turned up at Heathrow on May 21st and were whisked through to the special gate from which Concorde departed. As it was so much lower to the ground than the big commercial jets, BA had built a special gate for Concorde, with an extremely luxurious Lounge. Smoked salmon, canapes and vintage Dom Perignon were served and at the appointed time, a discreet announcement was made and we were escorted onto the plane.



Concorde accommodated only 100 passengers in two small, thin cabins, with a single aisle and two seats on either side. Jenny was rather unimpressed by the accommodation. "Bit small, isn't it?"

Also, as weight was such an issue, there were no screens or entertainment systems. In fact, the entertainment consisted of the co-pilot making announcements to tell you various cool things about the plane and the journey. Well, it worked for me!

Inside the Cabin

Belted into our seats and craning out of the small windows, we watched as we taxied along the Heathrow runways and lined up for takeoff. The mighty Rolls-Royce Olympus engines went to full power, the afterburners kicked us in the small of our backs, and we were off down the runway at spectacular acceleration.

Concorde took off in full afterburner mode but shortly after takeoff they were turned off because of the huge amounts of noise they made. Once we had reached sufficient altitude and speed, they were turned back on to "throttle up", which was when they took the aircraft through the sound barrier and up beyond the normal flight levels.



The Flight Deck

People often ask if when on-board you could tell when you went through the sound barrier, but the answer is no. In fact, even on the flight deck, the only way the pilots could tell was a momentary dip in one of the instruments.

Normal Boeing and Airbus jets cruise at between 35k-40k feet, but Concorde cruised up at 58k' where the air is a lot thinner. This was necessary because the frictional heating of the air on the leading edge of the wings was so high - lower down they would have melted. The co-pilot, in one of his very entertaining "chats," explained that if we had been taking off next to an RAF fighter aircraft (like the Tornado of the time), they could have climbed like us, they could have achieved the same altitude and airspeed, but then they'd rapidly have to descend because they would be running out of fuel. We, however, would now be flying the thousands of miles over the Atlantic to New York in supercruise mode.

Where commercial airline flights from London to New York today typically take around eight hours, this trip would take us only three hours!

During that time, the third member of the cockpit crew, the Flight Engineer, would be very busy managing the flow of fuel and moving it around the 13 different fuel tanks on the aircraft. This was done for two reasons. Firstly, because it was necessary to maintain the center of gravity of Concorde within extremely narrow margins in order for it to fly so fast at optimal fuel flow. Secondly, because the fuel was pumped past the leading edges of the wings to cool them - it was being used as a heatsink! If you walked along the aisle during flight, you could put your hand on a stanchion that was part of the door and connected to the outside - it was very warm. Concorde grew in length by nearly a foot during supersonic flight due to thermal expansion.

At the front of each cabin was the Mach meter - an alphanumeric display that showed our speed in Mach, the altitude, the outside air temperature and the speed in MPH. It was an amazing experience to be sitting in comfort, and realize you were 11 miles above the surface of the earth, tearing across it at twice the speed of sound!



The Mach Meter

Concorde was of course unique in commercial aviation in doing this. It meant that you not only arrived in New York on the same day you left, but also at a time *earlier* than the one you had left at. It felt very strange. (Even stranger was the effect when coming back. I'd flown dozens of times from the US to the UK and knew that flying over the Atlantic, you always lose a night. But with Concorde, you didn't. You left NY at 10am or so and, after three hours of flying, you arrived in the evening of the same day. Instead of having what seemed like a very, very long day, you instead got a really short one.)

As we approached the coast of America, the co-pilot told us that we would shortly start our descent. He explained that they would first need to slow down and that they would be throttling back to achieve this. He warned us that it would feel like we were in a huge descent and pointing straight down, but that if we looked at the Mach meter display and

watched the altimeter, we would see that in fact we were still at cruise altitude. Only after we had slowed right down would we start to actually descend.

I remember that my neighbor over the aisle still had a glass of wine on his tray table and as we throttled back, I watched as the level in his glass tilted forwards as though we were pitching violently down towards the ground. But sure enough, the altimeter continued to show 58,000'.

After we landed, I asked if we could visit the flight deck and they kindly let us and spent time answering my many questions. By this time, of course, it was public knowledge that the service would soon be stopping. The crew were attempting to put a brave face on it, but you could tell they were universally devastated to be losing the gig - the coolest in commercial aviation.



In the Concorde Cockpit – looking a little younger!

We enjoyed a lovely weekend in NYC and three days later repeated the experience and flew back to Heathrow. Again, the flight crew allowed us to visit the flight deck, and I could personally have stayed there all day, but we were keen to see our small children, so we headed home.

I would never have guessed at that time that 23 years later, there would still be no replacement capability for that remarkable and beautiful aircraft. I feel very fortunate that we had the opportunity to experience it and will never forget it.

Finding an Exception to Murphy's Law

By John Fritsch

An association of loggers March 6th in our corner of the world was gorgeous: the sky was crystal clear with high pressure. STS ATIS reported a gentle fitful breeze from 310 degrees, so with a little back taxi from Delta, I launched from runway 2 with a slight left turn on course to Boonville and the breakfast put on by the Latinas at the General Store around 9. Glorious sunshine with nary a cloud on the horizon and a brimming Lake Sonoma...



...until it looked like Murphy's Law might intervene: the Boonville valley hove into view filled with a marine layer...



Harrumph!

My first encounter with those little clouds hovering around my destination was in maybe mid-1982. Marguerite, my instructor, and I used maybe 700 feet of the 7,000 foot runway at the Air Center to launch a practice cross country in a Tomahawk with the first leg down to Half Moon Bay, but fate and weather conspired against that plan: south from the Golden Gate, the murk went lower and lower, and from scattered to broken to overcast.

After landing and a bite to eat, we gave up on the cross country idea and decided to head back. We launched under a low overcast. The water was steely below us under the marine layer, but ATC gave Marguerite an IFR pop up clearance, so moments later I pulled back and just woolly low clouds filled the windshield. I painted the wings on the artificial horizon in a standard rate, nose pitch up, and maybe 400 fpm on the rate of climb.

After what seemed like hours, but was probably just a few minutes, we reached the Promised Land: we climbed ever so slowly out of the murk and into a cloudless brilliantly sunny sky with the Twin Towers poking out of the cloud carpet to the east and orange towers of the Golden Gate beckoning us northward. Marguerite canceled our flight plan, and I pointed the ever-so-slow Tomahawk northerly towards the old Air Center. Marguerite turned to me, and with her dead serious expression she used exactly twice, she said: "Do not ever do this by yourself...no matter what."

We met up for the next flight, and Marguerite had a special treat: she handed me a little piece of heavy paper card maybe 6 inches by 4 inches, colored light blue on one side, and on the other side, colored gray on one half, and white on the other half. In the middle, there was a half-inch hole. I was flummoxed: what the hell? But Marguerite leaned in: "Carry that with you. Before you fly, hold that card up, and then look through the hole. If the sky looks gray or white....DO NOT FLY! Turn it over: if the sky looks blue, you can fly!!!!"

On March 6th, yep, from 20 miles out, lots of white and gray down in that valley. But as I got down to five miles or so out from the airport, that overcast became broken, with a few holes and lots of ragged clouds. No one was on 122.7 around Boonville. After a circuit above the clouds, I spotted the numbers on 31 through a hole, and thought back over 40 years to Marguerite and her funny card: what if I had that card, and held it in such a way that I could see all the way to the ground through a hole in the white/gray clouds? And what if I had that card, and if I got down to those numbers and for some reason could not land, what if I held up Marguerite's card and saw one mile clear of clouds to the north under the overcast where were some nice looking blue holes in the clouds?

This could be a story about what people should not do, but I will cut to the chase: after chopping the throttle and slipping down through a hole over the field about a half mile east of the 31 numbers, there was plenty of room beneath the cloud layer for an RV4 and excellent visibility.

The runway was clear and no planes anywhere, so after landing, I back-taxed to the ramp and on the way snapped a pic of the final approach into 31 that I had just flown: a hodge podge of glorious blue sky and sunshine, and white and gray clouds fleeing down the valley to the northwest.



I am not sure if Marguerite would have approved of my mental use of her card, but I had a lovely breakfast anyway at the General Store with the always friendly Latinas, and then headed back to D83 where N95JF waited on an empty ramp to backtrack to STS.



EAA Chapter 124 Board Meeting Minutes

March 10, 2026

Members in attendance: Dominic Cerniglio (President), Marlon Young (Vice President), John Whitehouse (Treasurer), David Franco (Secretary), George Marshall, Jeremiah James, Paul Hollingworth, Campbell Potter.

TSA Security Rules: The first order of business had to do with redoubling our efforts at adhering to TSA security rules. Efforts are being considered to have club members issued a non-standard AOA badge that would allow the holder of the badge to qualify as a minder even though they are not plane owner or pilot.

In connection with adhering to TSA rules, **Otis Holt** has graciously offered to purchase collapsible security barricades for the Chapter's benefit. The final style and model of barricades to be purchased will need to meet Otis Holt's approval.

Culinary Supplies: A motion was made to approve the purchase of cooking and serving equipment enumerated on Sam Werback's list. The motion passed unanimously.

Derelict Air Frame: The Chapter has approved the sale of the component parts of the abandoned airplane for whatever the market will offer; subject to board approval.

Ray Scholarship: The final cost of completing the training of our first Ray Scholarship recipient has been tallied. A slate of potential candidates has already been compiled and the review process is in process.

Outreach Efforts: **Paul Hollingworth** is spearheading efforts of holding a Chapter-sponsored Young Eagles event in cooperation with the Petaluma Pilot's group. The board expressed unanimous support for the idea.

Facilities: A motion was made that \$400 be allocated for the repair of the ride-on mower. The motion passed unanimously.

Treasurer's Report: Chapter coffers remain healthy. The treasurer has offered to make Chapter financial records open for annual review. **George Marshall** and **David Franco** have committed to reviewing Chapter finances.

Meeting adjourned 6:15 pm

EAA Chapter 124 General Meeting Minutes

March 4, 2026

The meeting was called to order by the president. He made a special effort to laud and thank **Sam Werback** and helpers for pulling off another St. Patrick's themed feast! The president then urged first-time visitors to introduce themselves and share what facet of aviation they are interested in pursuing.

It was announced that Ray Scholarship awardee **Sam James** has passed his check-ride and is now a private pilot! Recognition was offered for certified flight instructors **Campbell Potter** and **Colin Reynard** as well as **David Franco** for making his Cessna 172, dubbed "Airwatch," available for instruction.

A call was put out to the general assembly for anyone interested in potentially sharing club Treasurer duties.

Presentation: Ben Marsh - Serial Warbird Aircraft Restorer and Aviation Fanatic

Ben opened his talk by sharing his fondness for Sonoma County and the deep roots he has in the Santa Rosa Airport community. His father planted the seeds of aviation fascination, but it took Ben until his 30's to become an active flier, based out of Schellville.

His first War Bird restoration project was a BT-13 Vultee named "Whispering Peril." After enjoying that plane, he found his way into Yaks. In particular, he liked the Yak-55M which he named "Titanium Tart." That model was the last of the aluminum aerobatic air frames.

After enduring good-natured chiding about not owning a "Real Warbird," he happily succumbed to the temptation and acquired a T6 - for which he traded two Yaks! His plane SNJ-4 had taken part in the 1948-49 Cleveland Air Race. It took him 8.5 years and 14,000 hours to complete the plane. In the process of restoration several friends offered their planes for Ben to fly. He demurred and harbored the hope that his first flight in a T6 would be in his own plane. In the end, his first T6 solo happened exactly as he imagined!

It was air racing that connected Ben to Sonoma County and the local aviation community. He came up in an era when air racing was at its zenith. Back then, EAA Chapter 124 was intimately tied to air racing through Chapter member **Lloyd Hamilton**, who built and raced Sea Furys based out of the shared facility. Ben displayed a palpable respect and admiration for all the air racing legends that took him under their wings and encouraged his growth and development. Sadly, many have passed, but the vividness of Ben's recollections imbued their memory with renewed relevance.

After crewing for both Mike Brown's September Fury and Bob Button's Voodoo, Ben joined Aviation Partners headed by Joe Clark who had set his mind upon beating the 3-kilometer speed record. It was at this phase in Ben's career that he dove into engine telemetry. Mastering the monitoring of engine operating parameters was the last unexploited opportunity for gaining more power from the same size engine.

The effort paid off and the team did break the 3km course record! The team pushed the plane to 531 miles an hour, besting the earlier 528 mph record. Disappointment set in when it was revealed that the previous record needed to be beaten by a 3 percent margin. Simply beating the number came to be a point of pride for the crew, regardless of the technicalities.

One of the proudest things Ben does is serve on the board of a charitable foundation established after the passing of his dear friend Ellsworth Hovey Getchell. While few knew the larger-than-life man, all developed a great sense of the man and his lovable idiosyncrasies through Ben's fond retelling. While a master craftsman and airline pilot, many of the stories about Getchell revolve around his notorious frugality - which ultimately redounds to the benefit of succeeding generations of aviation enthusiasts who benefit from his foundation.

Meeting adjourned: 8:45pm

Chapter Business

Chapter 124 Contact Information

President:	Dominic Cerniglio (26/27)	(310) 628-9008
Vice President:	Marlon Young (25/26)	(707) 479-9994
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EAA Chapter 124
5550 Windsor Road
Windsor, CA 95492

Chapter meetings are held on the first Wednesday of each month at 7:00 pm. FOOD (\$10) AND SOCIALIZING (free) from 6:15 to 7:00 pm. **EVERYONE IS WELCOME!**

Directions: The site is located on the west side of Sonoma County Airport. Take the Shiloh Road exit from Highway 101 in northern Santa Rosa. Turn left at the stop light (west) and continue to a "T" intersection. Turn left again and follow the road to the EAA sign on the left.

How to Submit an Article to the Newsletter

Members are invited to submit articles of interest. You will be notified whether or not an article will appear in the current issue.

Email your article to: jennyhollingworth14@gmail.com

Deadline for newsletter submissions is the 20th of each month. Articles submitted will be included in the newsletter at the discretion of the editor. All articles are copyrighted. To reproduce any article, please contact the editor.

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