



Southern Navion Air Group

Newsletter

FEBRUARY 2013

FROM OUR PRESIDENT

This week I began planning our yearly trip to ANS convention. It seems a bit early since convention does not begin until June 23rd, but I like to have plenty of time to examine the route for restricted airspace, high terrain, fuel stops, and locations to join up with other SNAG members along the way. For 2013 the ANS annual convention will be held at Paso Robles, California. This one will be a very long trip for me. When I take off on a clear day I can see the Atlantic Ocean, and Paso Robles is almost at the Pacific Ocean! Long trips out west are usually broken up into 2 days of flying and an overnight with our friends. Over the years SNAG members have met or overnights at Watunga, Broken Bow, Santa Fe, Hot Springs, and others. In 1971 enroute to Carson City we had lunch at Waco and supper at El Paso. In more recent years I have flown outbound most frequently with Dick and Ann McSpadden, but have flown with many others including Bud and Sylvia Brown, Mitch Midyett, Paul and Ginger Wright, and Bobby Herrington just to name a few.

The airport cars and restaurants along the way can be quite memorable. One of my favorite enroute lunches was eaten with Dick and Ann McSpadden at the Hi-De-Ho in Watunga, Oklahoma. We arrived in Watunga early afternoon for an overnight stay and borrowed the lesser of two courtesy cars, the other being reserved for a visiting doctor. Using experimentation Dick found that he could actually make the old police cruiser move forward most of the time. In town we spied the Hi-De-Ho which appeared to be the only place to eat and was set up in an old Tasty Freeze that had long ago closed down. There were no other customers when we arrived so the four of us sat at a large table in the middle of the rather small establishment instead of in one of the many booths that lined both sides of the place. The food was quite good and we enjoyed our meal until the restaurant regulars arrived and found four strangers sitting at their community table. We finished that meal with many of the booths filled local residents who all stared at us intently. On this particular night in Watunga the only motel in town had only one small room available, but we were told that a bed and breakfast was available downtown. Dick opted for the motel while I chose the bed and breakfast which was in a historic building that was reported to have been a house of ill repute at some time in the past. Fortunately for the four of us there was a very fine restaurant located downstairs in the former cat house. Wanda and I were very pleased with our room that night as well.

We have overnights at Santa Fe a couple of times in recent years. The FBO and tower have been very friendly. On the trip to Cedar City we made 2 fuel stops on the way to Santa Fe and met up with other SNAG members there. The next morning I called the tower by telephone and introduced myself to the tower operator. The tower happily arranged for our group of five Navions to depart together. We all loaded our selves and luggage and had just started engines when the tower called "Rusty, are you ready?" only to discover that someone forgot to pull his chocks. A week later I called the Santa Fe tower from 20 miles out for a fuel stop when the tower responded, "Rusty, is that you?" I replied, "Yes sir and I have seven Navions in tow."

This year we have another journey across our great navion to get to convention. Yes the trip is long for some of us SNAG members, but getting there with our friends is a large part of the fun.

Wanda and I will see all of you soon at Shade Tree Airport on March 8th, 9th, and 10th!

- Rusty Herrington

HOW TO TOAST YOUR ENGINE

As I write this there are six freshly-overhauled nickel plated cylinders for my 260 horsepower Continental IO-470, complete with new pistons, rings and what-all, lined up in a neat row on my work table waiting to be installed on my engine. Got to get it done so N8747H can make it to Shade Tree. How did I get into this predicament? What prompted me to have my cylinders overhauled, you ask? My cylinders and pistons were toast, that's why. How did this happen? Well, nobody knows for sure, but there are some clues...

Maybe we should start with a little background. According to the engine log, I had the engine majored in 2007. Installed brand-new Millennium cylinder assemblies, supposed to be the greatest thing going. Flew behind the engine for five years and a little over 500 hours. She ran great and every year at annual the compressions checked right in the mid-seventies, right where they were supposed to be. Oil usage was normal. In late August of last year, I flew over to KOPL to have the \$100 hamburger with Scott Burling and she was running great, just beautiful, smooth as silk! On my return, I dumped the oil, cut open the oil filter and found some metal. Mostly very fine, black magnetic stuff, with a few shiny flakes. If you have looked at the picture of the metal on the end of the magnet in Mike Bush's *Savvy Aviator* column in the January, 2013 edition of *Sport Aviation*, well, I could have taken that picture with the metal found in my filter. The same amount, the same appearance. The dreaded quarter teaspoon of the stuff. Then, I fished around in the bottom of the used oil bucket with my magnet and wound up retrieving two pieces of shiny, magnetic metal that can best be described as the same size and shape as grains of rice. Now it was time to get a little concerned...

Did a lot of looking, thinking and asking people questions... We did a compression test (the test was flawed, but I digress) and spent some time looking through a bore scope. Most of the cylinders had compression readings that were a lot lower than those taken at the last annual, just four months earlier. Bore scopes are not easy to use, at least for the inexperienced. I did find some streaks in number 1 that turned out to be cylinder wall scoring. Finally decided to pull the cylinder with the lowest compression. That was number 2, the middle cylinder on the left side. It did not look too bad, probably was still serviceable. After much soul searching, I decided to keep pulling cylinders until I found the problem. I found broken oil rings in numbers 1 and 5. The rear-most and forward cylinders on the right side. There was scoring, apparently from the broken rings, at the 4:00 and 8:00 o'clock positions as you look down on the top to both cylinders. These two cylinders had the best compression when tested, only slightly below the values from the last annual, but that is just another digression. There were pieces of the oil ring missing that were the right size to account for the "rice grains" and there was a wear spot on one that actually looked like where one of the pieces had rolled around until it was smooth. All three cylinders on the right side of the engine (1,3,5) were worn beyond limits, but the left side cylinders (2,4,6) were not. What's up with that? The shop where I took the cylinders also found cracks in the spark plug bosses on cylinders 1, 2 and 3. Cylinder overhaul time!

Still wondering what could have caused this mess, I think, maybe the fine black ferrous stuff was wear-metal from the scored cylinder walls and broken rings, the shiny flakes were the chrome plating off of the broken oil rings and the "rice grains" were pieces of the oil rings? Makes sense to me anyway. Then I looked at the pistons from number 1 and number 5... There were chunks missing in the piston ring lands. The surfaces of the places where the chunks were missing were very smooth, like they had melted and re-hardened with a glaze. Like someone had hit the piston with a torch. And curiously, on both pistons these burned or melted places were at the same 4:00 and 8:00 o'clock positions as the cylinder wall scoring. In the bottom of the oil ring groove in the piston are small holes in the piston wall for the oil to pass through. At least one of these holes, at the bottom of the spot where the chunk was missing was enlarged. I expect the "rice grains" passed through the enlarged hole since there was no evidence they had gone down along the cylinder wall. Another thing, I don't think you are supposed to be able to take the top compression ring and bend it 180 degrees like a pretzel without it breaking, but I could do just that on the rings from cylinders 1 and 5. People I've talked too seem to think this is a result of running the engine really hot!

That's a summary of the damage and my observations. You definitely do not want this to happen with only 500 hours on your cylinders. It is no fun for the old wallet. What happened? How did my engine get toasted? Like I said, don't know, but there are some clues. I sure would like I have a handle on what caused the damage so I don't have to do this again. Now, I'm no expert on operating and maintaining the engines we run in our Navions, and I will happily listen those of you who have a lot more knowledge and experience than I do. So your thoughts and input are welcome. I know there will be questions about how lean I ran and what the cylinder head temperatures were. I expect Susan will print your comments in our SNAG newsletter. Go ahead and write them down! And if there is any interest, I will bring the bad parts to a SNAG Fly-In for a show-n-tell.

A PARTING THOUGHT

Some of us Navion pilots are earning our promotions Senior Pilot status, as in Senior Citizen Pilot. I'm just thankful to still be flying. But you get to thinking about the prospect of (a little) short term memory loss that's likely to come about in due time. But maybe that little short term memory blip is not a bad thing. Which is better: To wonder "Did I put the gear down?" Then re-check and find the all the green lights glowing and repeat the mantra "Three in the green!" once again. Or would you like to have supreme confidence that your memory is fine and that you already did, in fact, put the gear down and just bore on, with your head up and locked, down the approach until you hear that awful scraping sound! Think about it...

... Mitch

A WORD (OR TWO) FROM PAUL

Nick and I and a friend of his flew over to Shade Tree a couple of weeks ago and spent some time talking with Danny & Janet. It was lunch time so of course we borrowed Janet's SUV and went to lunch at "The Shed ". They are just wonderful people. We hung out for a while and Nick and his friend took some pictures in the T6 that was in Danny's new hanger. His new hanger is fantastic. The runway was in great shape and as usual everything else on the airport looked great as well. All manicured and ready to go. Ginger spoke with the hotel and they have 15 rooms booked and 5 left. Now that we are getting close they will probably go pretty fast.

I gave Nick's buddy a flight lesson on the way over to Shade Tree and back. He did real well and thinks he might like to take flying lessons. He is the public information officer for the Sheriff's Dept. I also took my favorite Senator to Victoria, TX recently. I took a phone cam picture of him flying 95K so he could put it on his Facebook page. He was like a kid a Christmas. He likes to be chauffeured around in my Navion and he doesn't seem to mind 4 or 5 hours of me bitching about how I don't like the way things are going in politics. Seems like a fair tradeoff. He is a good guy trying to make a difference and he is involved in all sorts of interesting things so it always makes for a lively conversation.

Well, there you have it. That's what's going on in my part of the world. I think I'll go fly my Navion.

- Elmo

2013 DUES ARE DUE

A large number have already paid, some of them twice. Check your label BEFORE paying me. If you haven't done so, please send in your dues. **Checks should be made out to "SNAG"** and can be sent to Susan Holmes, 151 Autumn Circle, Belton, TX, 76513. Dues are \$20.00 per family. If you are unsure whether or not you have paid, give me a call or email me. Email: susaneholmes@sbcglobal.net. Phone: 254-780-9338.



PRE-SUN N' FUN FLY IN
APRIL 5-7, 2013
CANNON CREEK, FL

It's confirmed! The SNAG pre-Sun n' Fun fly-in is scheduled for April 5 - 7 at Cannon Creek in Lake City, Florida. The weekend will be hosted by Art & Ann Hutchison, Jack & Judie Wells and Jack & Shirley Gordon. Registration will be on Friday the 5th with the cocktail party that night at the Hutchison's.

Participants whose last name begins with A-H are asked to bring fruit or nuts, I-P brings appetizers, and Q-Z should bring desserts (or you just bring something filling and delicious!). Usually we have enough to make a meal out of this party!

Golfers will probably hit the links on Friday so let Ann know if this is an interest of yours and she will make tee times.

On Saturday, registration will continue. There will be a fly-around in the area then on to a nearby location TBD for brunch/lunch and reasonable gas—leaving at 9:00 am. This is the laid back and late “dawn patrol”! Upon the return there will be a spot landing contest and a tech session followed by the BBQ that night in Jack and Judie's hangar.

Also on Saturday, spouses, or anyone else who wishes, will be taken to lunch and then on to afternoon activities, which are now being planned.

Sunday morning we will have a civilized departure time at 10:00 for Sun n' Fun.

Recommended hotel rooms are at the Holiday Inn (with a Ruby Tuesdays) and Jameson Inn. These are right next to one another and across the street from the cracker barrel. This makes transportation coordination and any additional meals you might want easily accessible. The costs (based on the AARP rate) and contact info is as follows:

- Quality Inn (formerly the Jameson Inn) 386-758-8440 the quote was \$89.99 for two doubles or king, continental breakfast included.
- Holiday Inn 386-754-1411, the quote was \$119+ tax for two queen beds or a king. There is a full service restaurant at the hotel.

We will not leave anyone stranded but if you wish to rent a car for convenience, they are available from Hertz, 386-754-3774 or Enterprise 386-755-4005.

Registration costs will be \$15.00 per person, which will cover the water, soft drinks, snacks and the cocktail party. The BBQ on Saturday night will be \$15.00 per person. RSVPs would be greatly appreciated so we have some indication of those intending to come—we understand the uncertainty of flying!

For further information you can contact:

Art and Ann Hutchison, 386-755-1096
Jack and Judie wells, 386-719-2411
Jack and Shirley Gordon, 386-758-1745

We would love to see you and it is great to get to Lakeland early before the crowds. Hope you will join us in Lake City!

HELP NEEDED

Thank you to Mitch for his article this month. Until we have some fly-in reports, I am running out of newsletter ideas. If you have learned something new, want to share some technical expertise or just have a great story to share, LET ME KNOW! Email them to me at susaneholmes@sbcglobal.net.

-- Susan Holmes, Editor

I was looking through old newsletters since I became the editor. Found this from the August 2010 newsletter. Thought I'd share it again for our new members as it's pretty cool.

I asked my now 21 year old (yes, Andrew is really 21) if he knew who General Douglas McArthur was. His comments, "I've heard of him. I know there's a park named after him!" Sigh!!! I was afraid to ask where said park is located. He was probably making a general assumption. Is this a failure of my husband & I, a failure of the schools or just a sign that I am getting old?

GENERAL MCARTHUR'S RIDE



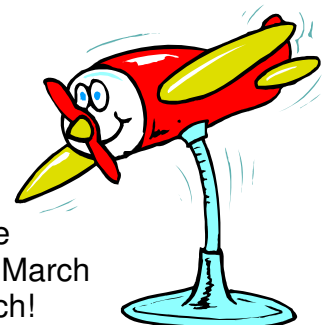
Here are two great shots of General Douglas McArthur, boarding an L-17 in Korea. Notice the star plate on the cowl door (fabricated in the field). Also the "audience" standing in the back of the picture and the three tail Lockheed Constellation that has no doubt flown the general in from Japan. The amount of help the General is receiving while boarding is also interesting. The best part is the young Captain Army Aviator shown waiting patiently on the wing to get in and fly the General to the destination. Nowadays so high ranking an officer would be flown in a military Gulfstream, complete with two pilots and flight stewards. What an awesome amount of responsibility for the young Captain (would love to know his name) flying McArthur single pilot/ single engine in the combat zone.

Photos from the San Diego Air and Space Museum. Commentary from Ron Paliughi at <http://nav41680.blogspot.com/>

Fly-in season is almost upon us...you only have about 3 weeks before Shade Tree to get your plane flyable. We have a great season planned, check out the fly-in schedule & get ready to let the good times roll!

CONTACT INFORMATION

Have you moved? Changed email addresses? Gotten a new cell number or home phone number? New tail number? **Call or email me to update your information on the SNAG Member Roster. Susan @ 254-780-9338 or susaneholmes@sbcglobal.net.** Last year's member roster is on the Facebook page (under documents). I will publish a new roster in the March newsletter and on Facebook. Make sure your friends can stay in touch!



FIRST 2013 FLY-IN
MAR 8-10, 2013
SHADE TREE, MS

The Shade Tree fly-in is set up for March 8, 9 & 10. Danny & the airport are good to go. The hotel is set up with 25 rooms blocked at the Comfort Suites just a little further down the street from the Ramada.

Paul & Ginger, Al & Barbara and Mitch & Jack have been hard at work planning a fantastic weekend for us.

Friday night dinner is Jack bringing his big cook pot and making jambalaya on the spot. Paul is brining brisket and Mitch is "gonna find some more something" to bring. ☺

Friday Night and Snacks:

Last name beginning with A-H bring CHIPS AND DIP

Last name beginning with I-P bring NUTS. FRUIT

Last name beginning with Q-X bring SWEETS.

Rusty says that Wanda is making some OOHEY GOOEY bars as well.

Hotel information: Comfort Suites
Manager: Santino Castillo
9121 Hwy 49
Gulfport, MS 39503
(228) 678-9001

When you call and make your reservation, tell them you are with SNAG. King or Double Queen Room is \$82.00/night plus tax.

2013 FLY-IN SCHEDULE:

April 5-7, 2013: Canon Creek FL (Pre Sun-N-Fun)

May 24-27, 2013: TBD hosted by the Burlings

Aug 30-Sept 2, 2013: Fredricksburg TX hosted by the Holmes

Oct/Nov 2013: TBD - open

KEEP THOSE NAVIONS FLYING!



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SNAG