

Feb. 3, 2013 - Ft. Myers and the EAA Breakfast Fly-In

As I have mentioned, in the past, the only thing that pilots apparently enjoy doing as much as flying, is eating. For that reason many of the Florida EAA chapters offer fly-in pancake and egg breakfasts each month. I try to go whenever I hear of one. Yesterday, while I was in Titusville I learned that there would be another such fly-in to Fort Myers, the very next day... Sunday. I elected to attend. I had not yet flown into Page Field which is located under the umbrella of the Class "C" airspace that encompasses Florida's Southwest Regional Airport over at nearby Naples. Although itself a busy Class "D" controlled airport, I found the tower operators at Page to be very patient, courteous and even helpful. It was an easy approach (taking care to stay below of the restricted airspace) to landing, and was followed by detailed taxi instructions to get me over to the EAA hangar and its breakfast function.

While there, and even before I had a chance to sit down, I ran into an old acquaintance, Leslie Dean. I first met Les at the Just Aircraft factory in upstate South Carolina shortly after I had left out with my, then recently completed, Highlander taildragger airplane. Les was at the same space that I had occupied at the rear of the factory, building his own version of this Light Sport Experimental. Unlike me, Les was a competent builder with a vast amount of experience gleaned from when he was a technical engineer with General Motors at one of their Michigan facilities. Les never takes things at face value. He is constantly looking into and delving for better and more cost efficient ways of doing things. He has made many changes and improvements to his airplane's original design and is constantly tinkering and playing around with it's various components. He has a fine looking red and white Highlander and, unlike me, has retained its original tail wheel design. Les trailed his plane down to Florida from his Ann Arbor, MI home base for the winter. I have run into him at several aviation functions, including the LSA Expo at Sebring last month, where he currently lives in his truck camper. He is always an interesting person to talk to, and I have learned more than a few helpful hints from him.

The EAA hangar, in which this breakfast was held, was very nicely appointed for meetings, seminars, workshops and, of course, today's breakfast event. For \$6 you could have all of the pancakes, eggs, bacon, sausage juice and coffee that you could handle. For me, one helping was more than enough. Lately I have been making too many of these breakfast and lunch flights and I am beginning to show their results with pants that have gotten way too tight in the waist.

While at these events I always seem to run into a person that has some link to someone that I know or somewhere that I have been to. In this case I met a fellow pilot who bases out of Punta Gorda, which is just to the north of Page Field. He took an interest in my Highlander, and I told him that I would give him a call the next time that I would be flying over in his direction. Now if I could only locate that piece of paper on which I wrote his phone number. Gettin' old ain't so much fun as it used to be.



My Highlander parked amongst many other visitors



An old acquaintance, Les Dean with his Highlander



Inside of the EAA's Fort Myers chapter's hangar



I may be eating way too many pancake breakfasts!