

SHORT WING PIPER NEWS

July - August 1983

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from gravel and crushed rock, cut two strips of 2" wide clear flexible tape, 18" long. Taking care, start at the tip and center the tape on the leading edge. Then lay over each side getting all of the air bubbles out from under the tape. Repeat on the other blade. It is a safe, inexpensive way to keep it in the like-new condition. Helicopters have used it for years."

Vag Shock Struts

Roger Bates of Vernon, NY would like to find some old style shock struts for his Vag. He writes, "Back in the 1950's some company made a spring-oil shock landing gear strut brace for the Vagabond. It took the place of the solid fixed gear strut arrangement with the shock cords. It made the Vag gear feel like velvet. The rough ground handling was entirely different." Roger would like to contact someone who might have a pair of these struts, or who might know where some could be located. Years ago someone in Georgia was selling the struts. Bates suggested that maybe someone, who had the plans or a set which could be copied, might be willing to make some up. He felt there would be a good market among the Vag owners since it would take care of one of the drawbacks which the Vags had.

Fuel Pumps

Jim Carr, who operates Aircraft Inspections Inc., 1982 Airway Rd., Lebanon, Oregon 97355, has had several systems for transferring fuel from tanks to planes. At present he sells three systems, two of them are hand pumps and sell

for \$55 and \$95, the other is a 12 volt electric system which costs \$85. All have hoses included. The manual systems include filters and screens too. The electric system can be plugged into the cigar lighter on your car or truck or can be connected to the vehicle's fuse box. A switch is optional. For more info contact Jim direct. He also performs annual inspections, modifications and recovers aircraft. Jim charges \$25 plus parts to install bungees.

Another Milk Stool Lover

"21 Charlie was restored in 1963, by W. VanWormer here in the Schenectady, New York area. He flew the plane for about 13 years. It changed hands and I began doing its maintenance some years ago. Last year I purchased the plane, repainted and refurnished it and use it to haul my wife and two kids around.

"As a 4-time homebuilder (the 5th is under construction), I've grown quite fond of fabric airplanes and the Tri-Pacer. I have my airframe and powerplant ratings and hold an inspection authorization. I do a modest number of annuals and maintenance to pay for my flying. I don't rely (fortunately) on Aviation for my living and am strictly a "shade tree" operation.

Corrosion Warning

"During my work on Tri-Pacers I have found items that required attention (besides the "standard ones") that may be of interest to other owners.

ble that you may have to divide the repair and rebuild of your plane in a half dozen shops or more. One for the engine, another for the carb, a third for the mags. Then a good welder to replace the rotten tubes, another shop to take care of the upholstery, and then finally an old-time rag shop where a top notch recover job can be performed.

How do you find out where to go? Ask a lot of people a lot of questions. And if you get conflicting answers, look some more. The shop in Kansas HAD BEEN RECOMMENDED to my friend by one individual. I guess he should have asked a few more opinions. Go slowly, pick a shop wisely. In the long run it may not take any longer, but it might be a great deal cheaper, and a lot easier on your blood pressure.

Wheel Fairings

Bill Snow of Rohnert Park, Calif., spotted a booboo on my part. On page 80 in last issue's *Shop Talk* I mentioned a nose wheel fairing mod by Steve Marsh of Independence, Mo., however I did not include the story in that issue. It was bumped by other material. I will try to get it into this issue with the photos of how Steve solved the installation problem without having to take the wheel and tire off.

Door Problems

Bill Snow also wants to know more about the solving of leaky doors. Howard Lee of Huntsville, Alabama, could you write to Bill

and tell him some of the things you told me at Sun and Fun. His address is 413 Corte Pintado, Rohnert Park, CA 94928.

Vag Mods

One of the most informative talks I have ever heard on Vagabond mods and restoration, plus tips on tools, hanger layouts, and other goodies was the seminar conducted at the Minden '83 Convention by Cecil Ogles. He had everyone's ears and eyes, with his words and pictures and sample tools and parts. Did you know a stainless steel frying pan can be used on a Vag firewall? Cecil did it to make room at the rear of the engine for accessories. It looked and worked fine. Cecil said that the May-June Plane of the Month, was the same airplane we ran several months ago, only in the earlier picture it was a bare bones frame tied to the top of Cecil's Chevy Luv truck. This is the plane that Bill Wiswell bought in Washington and flew home Calgary. It is indeed a small world. At the time Cecil had bought the future Wiswell Vag, Cecil had an additional seven basket cases around his place. Cecil also commented that he watched Marshall White working on the plane installing some of the mods Wiswell mentioned.

Cecil had this to say in a note he sent me from St. Louis, several days after Minden '83: "Enjoyed the Minden gathering. Had lots of fun, met great people and flew some. Tell the Vagabond clan what they missed in the next issue. In fact give 'em hell for not showing up and the fact that two

awards were waiting for them. One for a PA-15 and also for a PA-17. It was great to see the number of PA 22-20 conversion and the straight PA-20s and PA-16s."

Several Vag owners attended, but they all drove to Minden. It was also a disappointment to me that no Vags were there. I wanted to see what you people had been doing to the Great-Great Grandmother of the Colt. There was a lot of Vag interest at Minden. Cecil's seminar was to a full house. Yep, you Vag hounds missed a good show, and a lot of fun. We are giving you another chance at the same place. See you all at Minden '84.

Fly Market

We missed the boat in another area at Minden. We should have had a Fly Market. Boyd Tietmeyer of York, Nebraska brought his wind sock frame and a shock cord tool, Lonnie McLaughlin had a turn and bank for sale, and several were trying to sell their planes, but that was it. Next year I would like to see you pilots load up your planes, cars, trucks, vans or what have you and bring something to sell or trade. All of us are always looking for bargains, and the best place to buy is at a fly-in or convention. It might just be possible you could sell enough stuff to pay for the trip. You can't ask for a better deal than that, can you?

Mods - Mods - Mods

An avid modifier is William P. Kuyk of Holly, Michigan. Read what he is doing:

"My partner and I own a PA-22-150 1960 Model S/N22-7395 which we have owned for 10 years. Currently we are rebuilding it and recovering with ceconite. I am an AI and able to do the work. We are working on several mods of which are a "Cherokee" type fuel selector knob and cover, a "Cherokee" defroster system, retracting shoulder harness, and rudder pedal toe brakes. The above will require STC's but the FAA said they will only give me a one time STC on the brakes because of the extensive tricky welding and fabrication. (They are afraid it could not be duplicated adequately.)

"I have modified the bird extensively in other areas also. We have a battery master relay system, Alcor alternator kit, custom instrument panels (shock mounted) with standard "T" configuration and 3 1/8" gyros, heated pitot, dry vacuum pump, alternate static source and Airtex interior. I am also adding a transistor dimming circuit for the radios and panel lights and a center cabin and instrument panel light (Cherokee style) and the wiring for strobes (Whelen). We have also installed the utility kit (piece by piece — they don't make it anymore) which makes it fly like a real airplane. (Spins are fun).

"I have many of the Piper blueprints, a Piper parts manual, a set of service bulletins, letters and memos, and the flight with rear door removed flight manual supplements. I also made up a loading chart for ease of weight and balance computations. If some of the members would like more information I can be con-

wondering if all hangar doors have to be as big as they are. Well, in many cases they don't. I have since designed a dolly which allows one to pull an airplane in sideways or at any angle, making it possible to have a much smaller door. In case of the Tri-Pacer a 21' door versus a 30' door. Now you may use the old barn or an oversized garage to store your airplane

in. New construction of a hangar may now be much simpler and cheaper. Before I spend any more time and money on the idea I would like to know if there really is much of a demand for such a dolly. If there is anyone out there interested I would like to hear from you."—**Michael Surovick, 3027 W. 53rd St., Erie, PA 16506; phone: 814/833-6796.**

AIRCRAFT IN THE TPOC ALBUM

PA-15s	4213H C-FZII	4311H C-GUPT	4434H	4441H	4450H	4534H			
PA-16s	5243H	5372H	5386H	5897H	5891H	6807K			
PA-17s	4175H C-GBEH	4309H G-BOVB	4882H						
PA-20s	1100C 6848B C-FNWP	1501A 7090K	2074Z 7054K	2823P 7296K	7738K	8691C			
PA-22/20s	118U 3402Z 6030C	1643P 3947B 6946B	1830A 4913Z 6984K	2165A 5081Z 7660K	2941P 7694K	7796K	8928C		
PA-22s	1166C 1643A 2144A 2606P 2818Z 3108Z 3676A 4456A 4769A 5018Z 5818Z 600A 72CJ 7156B 885A 8530C 8604C 9026D 9501D 9643D 9806D C-FLVL	123WC 1692P 2319P 2653P 2847Z 3157Z 3759P 4515Z 4778Z 5079Z 5858Z 645A 72CV 7335D 8148D 8547D 8767D 9170D 9540D 9684D 9886D C-FMIH	1319C 1697P 2425P 2748P 2972Z 3167Z 3803P 4540A 4786A 5199Z 5862D 6041D 7001B 7311D 8452D 8552D 8805C 9210D 9526D 9685D 9950D C-FMOR	1715P 2470P 2903Z 3211B 3960P 4552A 4787A 5434Z 5939D 6110D 7003B 7519D 8499D 8586C 8982C 9319D 9591D 9762D 9976D C-GNHD	1503P 1793P 2450P 2944P 3226Z 3249B 4590Z 4798Z 5591Z 6933D 7109B 7759D 9430D	7796K 1882A 2524A 2944P 3249B 4814H 4882Z 6940B 7121B 7128B	8928C 1900P 2527A 3323Z 4984Z 7154B	1947P 3405Z	
					G-ARRN	G-APYW			

RECRUIT A FRIEND FOR THE TPOC



VAGABOND NEWS

By Dave Harmon

I first want to say that I am very sorry that I missed the Minden, Nebraska, Short Wing Piper Convention. I know all that attended had a good time and learned a great deal from the many good seminars. Unfortunately I ran out of airplanes — both of them being down for maintenance and out of license and simply ran out of time to drive to the convention and cannot afford the airliner that was my dilemma. However, there's always Oshkosh. I now have my Tri-Pacer back in the air and the Vagabond will be coming apart next week and towed home to the family garage for complete disassemble, fabric work and probably some tube replacements here and there. You always find some surprises, but I say let's look at it this way — it's better to find it home in the garage than up in the air.

I was able to get some photographs of the Vag in the air with the yarn tufts placed at all the intersection points wing attachment landing gear, lift struts, tail feathers, etc. They are very interesting and they will appear in the next issue, under the heading of "Cleaning up the Vag with Speed Fairings."

Please note that we now have a West Coast Regional Reporter and Co-Editor for the **Vagabond News**. I welcome Lee Beery from Hayward, California. On the next pages you will see pictures of his Vagabond and note very nice speed fairing he had installed. Also Jim Jenkins has some speed fairings on his PA15. By the way Jim, how is that conversion coming with your 0-200?

Lee has a flair for drawing cartoons and sketching the cute little Vag. He states that he can do some artwork that would be nice to put on T-shirts, patches and windbreakers. I can provide transferring this artwork to the wearing apparel. I have a local contact that would be very willing to do this at a nominal cost. The question that comes to my mind, how many Vag owners would be interested in this type of thing? I know the first question in your mind is how much would it cost? Well, the more people we can get to participate the better the price. I can say it will be a competitive price as good as anyone can get, and I'll have more on it in the next issue. But, in the meantime, please jot your comments down on a postcard and send them to me.

Also, I am still looking for more regional reporters and more pictures of your Vagabonds to be sent into our historian for the picture album. Again let me thank Lee Beery for offering his talents and we are looking forward to his cartoons and news items.

I am now looking forward to Oshkosh and hoping to meet many of you there.

Letters to the Vag Editor

Dear Dave / Thanks for your note and the extra copy of "Tri-Pacers" news.

I did appreciate getting the prop info from you and will be able to put it to good use. Thanks for your efforts. The STC for the Stoddard Tanks would be a very good item to have on hand. I know some time down the line I'm going to think about more range for my bird and landing access to that STC will be well and good.

Regarding the Vag on floats, this I'm very interested in. Here again if a STC were available it would be great. I had considered checking with M.O.T. regarding float installation and also what would be the circumstances of using homebuilt floats or a certified A/C. I understand that "Zenith" AC in Ontario has or will have a metal float kit available to homebuilders, which would fill our requirements just perfect. All we need here is M.O.T. to go along with it, which of course, is easier said than done.

This is just a note and I hope to get back to you shortly. In the meantime — best personal regards.—**W.J. Wiswell, 640 Dalmeng Hill N.W., Calgary, Alberta J3A1J6.**

Dear Dave / Quite sometime back, I had a letter from you and this was answered. However, that was the last I heard from you.

Recently I found an advertisement in Trade-A-Plane for TPOC of which I learned from answering the ad that Vagabond is now a part of this organization.

I believe it was a step in the

right direction to put all the Short Wing Pipers together — after all they **ARE** in a class by themselves ie., similarity in design and overall dimensions. I hasten to add that from my viewpoint, the eye appeal is outstanding in all respects.

Needless to say, the reply from my request was a sample copy and an application blank for membership in the organization. This was completed and returned to Pennsylvania for it to be acted upon. I suppose one might say that I am now a member of the TPOC.

My sample copy was quite an eye opener regarding the excellent organization of TPOC.

I am still interested in the Vagabond having finally found one to observe and perhaps at long last I will be able to fly along in one. Owner is Dorsey Channel of Massillon, Ohio. It was quite a drive for me to find him, having searched this part of the country to no avail. There are several Tri-Pacers in various states of repair, but still am interested in the Vagabond, which brings up a further question as follows:

Should I not be able to find one to rebuild (found a Clipper but it was in such a sorry state that I bowed out due to asking price and what had to be done to make it air-worthy). Actually longerons rotted out and several pieces came away with fabric, what do you think of Wag Aero's Classic, is it an exact reproduction of the Vagabond in every way? Is it accepted among the Vagabond owners? I have yet to see one in such classic

state. What is your thinking of Wag-Aero Prints? I am asking you all this regarding Wag-Aero which is to be commended for even thinking of selecting the Vagabond to reproduce; however, I have heard several say that one should not go into such a contract, they are expensive. I will agree, but if worse comes to worse, at least it would be a reproduction of this fine aircraft.

We have sold the farm and are planning to move into North or South Carolina around July of this year, at which time I hope to intensify my search for an a/c of this type.

Looking forward to hearing from you when you can find the time. Trust this finds you and yours in the best of good health and happiness.—**Terry Kerns.**

(Ed. Note: The Wag-Aero Prints are excellent. The plane itself is also very good. Wagner made very little changes and the ones he did are for better and safer reasons. Such as using 4130 throughout the airframe, better brakes, etc. I am told by Cecil Ogles, who has flown one, that it flies just like a true Vag but with more power (115 hp Lyc.). A real nice, fun sport plane — but it costs a lot if you use Wag-Aero kits!—D.H.)



Ray Bibik's Vagabond looks as if it had just come off the Piper assembly line.

Dear Dave / Thanks for the use of the Dimpler. After all the fuss, I didn't use it after all. I decided to put the non-resistor plugs in and that took care of the cowling problem. The 85 h.p. Cont. is in and operating nicely. Really, the only modifications I had to make was in the exhaust system. What I had to do was to cut the stacks and tilt it down enough so that the muffler clears the oil temp. probe inlet.

Also, I removed the generator and starter so the engine fits perfectly without dishing the firewall. Really, the only thing I need now are wing tanks. The only fuel I have is the main, which is 12 gal. Have you heard any more about the Stoddard Tank availability? Boy, I sure would like to have a set.

Anyhow, I am enclosing a picture of my PA-17 4838H. Hope to see you and meet you sometime.—**Ray Bibik, Canastota, NY 13032.**

Dear Dave / A note to you to let you know of the hospitality and courtesy extended to me by Vagabond owners.

As stated before being more or less removed from the mainstream of things here on our farm in West Virginia, it has been most difficult for me to find a Vagabond, just to see, let alone have the good fortune to fly. This has at last come to an end after some years of search.

Had contacted a Mr. Dorsey Channel of Massillon, Ohio. Found that he owned N4567H some 200 miles from me. Recently he called me and stated he was bringing his a/c down to take me for a ride! I hasten to add that was a distance of some 200 miles! Thank heavens the weather cleared at long last and when he arrived that flight lasted for approximately (4) four hours.

A letter some years ago from Jim Jenkins had stated that if I ever had such an opportunity I would enjoy it to its fullest, better words were never spoken. I enjoyed it to its fullest and I do hope it will be my good fortune to have such an aircraft.

My flight time exceeds some 10,000 hours — this was the most enjoyable time I can recall.

My health is still excellent and I fly when I can on retiree's income and I do hope the good Lord has it in the cards for me to have such an aircraft.

We will be leaving the mountains the later part of June to make our home near Charleston, South Carolina.

Have contacted Herb Poole of North Carolina, and Bob Mitchell,

both of area near Greensboro, N.C. They too have been most nice to me with letters and photos, as has Jim Jenkins in the past.

It is most interesting to find such gentlemen unselfish as they are connected with the Piper Vagabond aircraft.

All in all this can only leave a pleasant taste in one's mouth and solidify the fact that the air characteristics of the little machine brings on the strong desire to own such an aircraft. I only hope I shall be so blessed during these last years of my life.

The recent happenings have truly been a high point in my life of flight.

Wishing you the best in your work. I have become a member of Short Wing Pipers. Had a flight today in an aerobatic Clipped Wing Cub, enjoyed that also!

Best of luck at Minden, Neb., this June — would like to be there. Also kind letters and pictures from Bob Mitchell just arrived — N4372H.—**Terry Kerns.**

Dear Dave / Here is my reply to your request for pictures and information for "The Vagabond News." I want to encourage you to keep up the column. I realize that coming up with interesting material several times a year is not an easy task. You have my thanks and I am willing to help you as much as I can. If you don't have a regional reporter for the San Francisco area, I am willing to give that a try, also. Could you use a Vagabond cartoon? I think I would like to try that for awhile.

To my knowledge there are only three Vagabonds in this area, but

many Short Wing Pipers. Back in the 50's when I started with United Airlines as a mechanic, I learned to fly in a PA-15, which by the way is still flying up in the northwest. Then two years ago after owning and rebuilding several other types of aircraft, I purchased PA-17 N4870H from Ron Peck who lives in the Seattle area. Ron and his wife, Hilery, each had a Vagabond so I'm sure they still have one in the family. Then last year I purchased PA-15 N4314H from Russ Wheeler who was moving from the Los Angeles area. This aircraft is not airworthy and the plan is for my son (19-years-old and taking flying lessons in 70H) to fix up 14H for his own so we can fly as father and son to all the West Coast fly-ins next year.

Hayward, California, is our home field and we limit our flying to the West Coast. We do all of our own work and enjoy our maintenance projects as much as our flying. The reason we are a Vagabond family is they are so darn much fun to fly. They are so nimble and with those oversize control surfaces, you can do just about anything with one. It never fails to bring out the admirers when you taxi up to the ramp. I guess that's called the ego factor of owning a Vagabond. The fact that it burns less than 5 gallons of fuel an hour and travels 100 miles in that hour gives me a warm feeling also.

Now back to your questions. I am against most of the modifications being done on Vagabonds today. I draw the line at anything more than back windows and disc

brakes. Original factory installed options such as speed fairings, prop spinner and dual controls are fine, but I hate to see a Vagabond loaded with useless gadgets.

In keeping with what a Vagabond was designed for, a Vagabond in good flying condition, mid-time engine with just the minimum VFR equipment should have a value between 5 and 7 thousand. If it has been modified, "dinked with," looks like an IFR aircraft and weighs over 700 pounds, the owner may not be able to get back his investment. If it has a low-time engine, no damage, looks original, it could bring over \$10,000.

As to your question on suggested changes to the Vagabond, I'm not sure any two of us could agree on anything. For sure, Piper put the door on the wrong side but that's no BIG deal. An easy to open cowl door and a full swivel tail wheel would be handy. I would hesitate to make any other changes without real cause. On the other hand, if I lived in the land of lakes and rivers I think I would put floats and a 85 hp engine on one of our Vagabonds. I did install an 8 inch J&M prop spinner on my Vag. It turned out very well; however, it did require more machine shop time due to the closeness of the prop to the engine cowling. This may not be a problem with a flanged crankshaft. Our 70H is just about as it came from the factory as you can see from the pictures. The instrument panel is very original and the only modifications noticeable are hinges in the engine cowl and the rear win-



Even standing alongside a Christen Eagle, which is partly hidden by the Vagabond, Lee Beery does not have to be ashamed of his Short Wing Piper.



Lee Beery believes in keeping the Vagabond as much original as possible. We wonder how many Spam Can drivers, who are accustomed to a \$20,000 stack of Nav-Coms, would be able to get from A to B using the instruments available on 4870Hotel.

dows. If you are flying in an area that requires a radio, a Terra 720 self-contained, hand-held unit works out fine. I have one that works fine even without a shielded ignition. All you have to do is remember to turn it off at the end

of the day's flying or you won't be using it the next day! I have mine sitting upright between pilot and copilot for easy change of frequency by either pilot, mike switch mounted in top of control stick, and we use a David Clark

headset/boom mike — all plugged into the bottom of the Terra radio. This makes a very simple installation. At the end of the day's flying, just remove the radio and headset and take it all home. This is the best way to keep a Vagabond looking like the original.

One last thing before I close. I would like to hear more from Norm Gagne (*SWPN May-June — "Improving the Vagabond"*) about his Jim Jenkins rebuilt Vaga-

bond. My aircraft is a duplicate of his and I find his performance figures are much better. When I first started flying 70H I had the same great numbers, but soon learned my indicated 112 was the only matching of figures that could tell it all. How many gallons per hour is he burning at 112 indicated and what is the aircraft empty weight? More on this subject in my next letter.—**Lee Beery, Hayward, California.**

The Great Magneto Flap

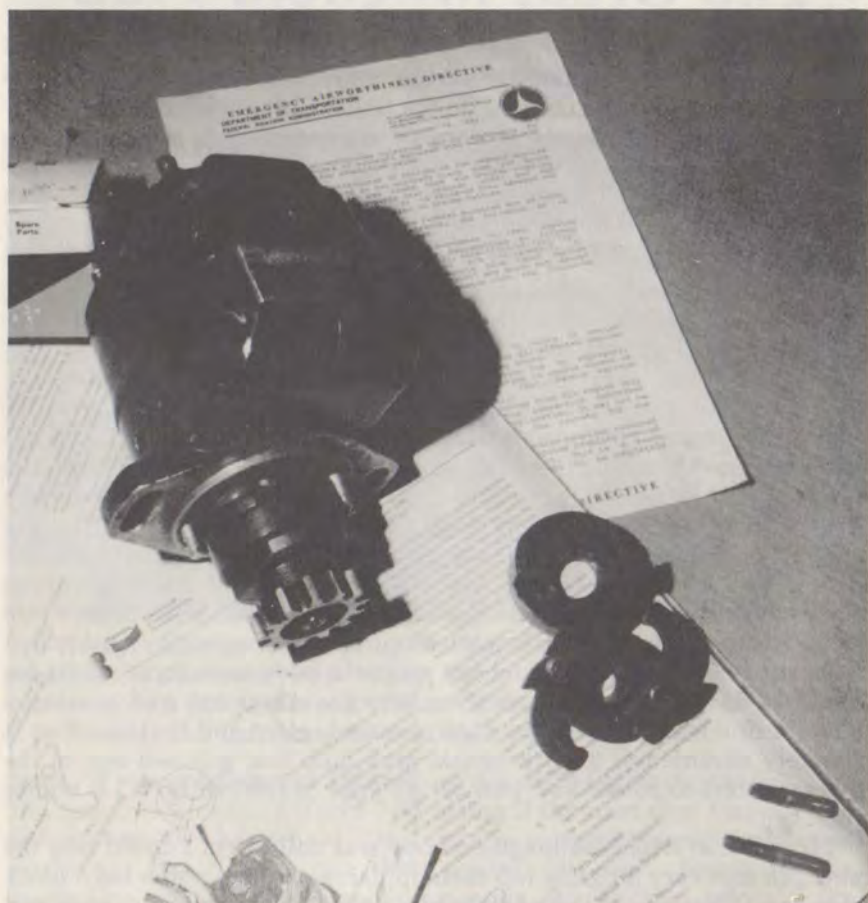
By **Dave Harmon**

You have all heard about the AD and know something about the problems with the impulse coupler on the Bendix Magnetos that are pretty much universally used on our planes. I am not going to talk about how to perform this AD and bore you with such details because when the time comes you will have to very carefully and methodically look through the AD and the Bendix service manual and perform it step by step. However, what I do want to tell you that it is not a big deal and that it can be done in your garage or basement with the help of your kitchen oven. Yes, that's right, the help of your kitchen oven! Here's what I found when I did my magneto.

The disassembly of the magneto is straightforward and so is the removal of the gear and the impulse cover, part number 10-59474 which carries a price tag of approximately \$90.00. The problem that I ran into was the removal of the two pins which are an interference fit into the body of the magneto. The ends of these pins are threaded and by placing a spacer or staking washers and then turning down a nut, you are supposed to be able to draw these pins out of the body of the magneto. However, I only succeeded in twisting the nut off and shearing the pin right at the thread. Now here is where your kitchen oven comes into play. The magneto body is die cast aluminum. If you bring your kitchen oven up to 500° or 525° F. let the magneto body soak in this heat for about 30-45 minutes, then wearing heavy work gloves and making a straight line from the kitchen oven to your biggest and best vise that is securely mounted to a work bench, grab onto that exposed end of the pin and start to rotate and pull for all your worth. PRESTO it comes right out.

I found that while the magneto body was still warm I could take the new pin and very gingerly tap them in using a mallet and a hard block of wood. A little heat in the right place sure makes things come apart and go together a lot easier. Reassembling the magneto is really not dif-

ficult and with a little patience and care new points can be installed and gapped. The cellophane wrap from a cigarette pack makes an ideal feeler gage. The thing here that I want to stress to you is not to be afraid to tackle jobs that seemingly should only be given to a highly certified A&P mechanic and that you, the pilot-owner, should never poke your nose into these mystery little boxes that are bolted to your engine. It is not true, you are probably just as good a mechanic and probably a lot more careful plus you have the time to do the job over and over again until you get it just the way you want it. I feel that the pilot-owner mechanic is a great combination and whether you possess the A&P ticket to satisfy the FAA does not affect the end result of the work. It also is a great educational experience and gives great satisfaction to you knowing that you have done the work on your own airplane — it is very gratifying.



The mag and pins which started the "Great Magneto Flap."

A Saga Of A Vagabond Trek

3000 Miles from Montreal to Edmonton via South of the Border

By Ron M. Hynes
With Pix

Some time back I asked the TPOC members if they would share their experiences with long distance XC flights, and I did hear from one member here in Canada. Since then I have flown my Vagabond 3000 miles from Quebec, in eastern Canada, all the way out here to Edmonton, Alberta, via south of the Great Lakes. Because of tornadoes in Michigan, high winds everywhere and would you believe, 4 feet of snow in North Dakota, and in May! It took 12 days in all. Despite a lot of



There is nothing as mild as a day in May, unless you happen to be at Brandon, Manitoba. Don Hynes is standing, warmly clad, in front of his father's Vagabond C-GBEH.

apprehension before the trip, it went very smoothly. The only required maintenance was to put a little air in one tire, half way across the U.S.

I had already moved out here to North Western Canada, (just a short hop to the Alaska Highway), months ago in February 1983. The Vagabond was stored in a hangar east of Montreal alongside Denis Morin's PA-15 all winter. When April 28th came, I returned via commercial airline to Montreal to ready the Vag for its trip. A week later when the weather finally improved some, my son, Dan and I took the long idled ship up and turned West for one of the most memorable trips of our lives. It was a trip I would highly recommend to anyone. For those people who have long thought of such a vacation, I would simply say "do it now", and go meet some wonderful people right across this vast land of ours. You simply can't imagine the thrill to arrive over your new home field, over 3000 miles from the old one, in a Vagabond. If only victory rolls were permitted in the ship's flight manual.

We met so many great people along the way. People like young James over at Port Huron, Michigan, who drove his truck out on the field to warn us not to go as there were tornadoes in the area. We quickly rolled the Vag into a big steel hangar for the night. Thanks also to Tom Nord, up at Pembina, North Dakota who really went out of his way to look after us. To the Ag pilots, all of them, we met along the way. To all those people we never met unfortunately, who left their airport club houses open for all pilots to make themselves safe and comfortable during storms and bad weather. To them, a special thanks.



The Mississippi River as Ron Hynes saw it in Minnesota in May.

Of the 12 days, we only had three good flying days. Those were days we flew on and on, covering some 700 to 800 miles each. The worst day was when we crossed the Canada/U.S. border from Sornia, Ontario to Port Huron, Michigan. This was a distance of only 20 miles but was the roughest of the trip. Thanks to the CAP Cadets whose leader ordered six of the youngsters out to grab on to our wing lift struts, so we wouldn't risk getting blown upside down. (Saturday, May 7th). They were a great bunch of fellows.

Most days we were up and flying by 5 a.m. Often by noon, winds were high and badly gusting. As a result we loafed most afternoons, using the time to visit town and people, or simply snooze. It was great thrill to fly up the Mississippi River and see, spread out ahead of us, so much history. We couldn't help feeling like Huckleberry Finn and Tom Sawyer.

Landing at Max Conrad's airfield, setting there spread out on an island in the Mississippi, up in Minnesota, was success in itself. We took some beautiful 35 mm slides of his field as we approached from the south. All in all we took some 50 to 60 slides on the trip. We should have taken 500-600 instead. Next time I will take along loads of 35mm color film, and/or an audio video camera such as Sony Betamax, if I can afford one. The Sony would be perfect.



Hynes took this photo while coming on a long final at the late Max Conrad's home field at Winona, Minnesota. The airport is on an island.

One picture we missed because we didn't have the camera at ready, was of a deer running across the runway threshold as we were landing at Hanna, Alberta on Monday, May 16th.

I could fill a book on this trip alone, but I am too busy planning the next trip. The Vagabond, without a doubt, is a real thoroughbred. It had

to be, to survive some of my crosswind landings on those damn concrete runways. I am strictly a grass field pilot.

I am presently trying to negotiate the purchase of a PA16 that needs a rebuild. My Vag has only 60 hours on it since I rebuilt it last year and the PA16 would be excellent along side my Vag. I am thinking of a flying vacation for next spring, either back east or else south to California and I am anxious to get going.

The following is a list of items carried on the trip. If anyone has had experience or need of other items, then let us know, so that a worthwhile list will be available to all club members. This would help many people, as anyone planning such adventures naturally has some prior concerns as to what they will need. **Keep the weight down to absolute minimum.**

1. Credit Card, money and ID cards.
2. Camera and lots of film.
3. Sleeping bags and a very light tent.
4. A very light flashlight.
5. **Strong** nylon tie down ropes — "Extra Long".
6. Appropriate maps and a light plastic ruler.
7. Terra portable 720 ch. radio. (Excellent, but try to install external antenna before leaving on trip-for greater range) and use headphones. We used Telex head sets and they were very good with the boom mike.
8. The usual paper, ie., journey log, etc.
9. A small shoulder strap bag to allow us to keep camera and the Terra radio/charger with us at all times, as we wanted to be able to recharge the radio each night and to take pictures wherever we went. We used the bag also to carry maps and the ruler, etc., as often our flight planning was done during non-flying periods over a beer, with our feet up.
10. Bring minimum extra clothes, but include a good, warm sweater. Remember, nights get cool, if camping out is planned.
11. I carried two pair of glasses; regular ones and sunglasses.
12. Up North bring gloves.
13. A watch and a small pack of kleenex tissues.
14. Make sure you have some kind of lightweight device such as nylon cord to tie the controls each night and whenever you are stuck on the ground due to high winds. This will keep the ailerons, etc., from damage.
15. I always use, on the Vag, a small plastic bag to keep rain/snow out of the gas tank vent cap. Use an elastic band to keep it in place. It is easy to see from cockpit so is not a danger.

If you use earplugs, the soft foam ones seem best. Each package contains two earplugs, but we break each into halves and use only a half per ear.

Warning—remove the plugs before landing, as when you need to hear the engine as well as eye the tach. This avoids that sinking feeling on approach when gliding a Vag in to the numbers. Vags like positive

control of throttle. After an hour or two with earplugs and then when you throttle back for approach, the old ears get a little confused, so remove the plugs when the field is in sight before you throttle back.

Plan your flying from the break of dawn until around 11 a.m. as the air is smoother then. Afternoons were gusty, and are great for sightseeing and meeting people. After supper, possibly go another few hours but get into the habit of talking to the weather office and listen well. **In fact, have a prepared list of questions ready**, and know what questions to ask. The questions are based on **your** aircraft and **your** ability. Don't be afraid to tell him you are **not** flying a 747 but rather a light A/C. Pre-determine your own limits and stick to them. Be patient, the weather will eventually improve to your liking. In the meantime, go for a good healthy hike into town and meet the natives. Isn't that what you always wanted to do anyway? And bring your camera.

The flight was made with the original fuselage fuel tank only, as I have yet to obtain a wing tank. I highly recommend a wing tank as it was the only thing that worried me. Had I had the wing tank, the trip could have been 2 days shorter and a lot more comfortable. Especially crossing Manitoba and Saskatchewan where airfields are few and very far between. Very unlike the U.S. (The heavy snowfall in North Dakota forced us to turn north into Canada sooner than I had hoped to.) Alberta has many fine airfields because the Alberta Government supports General Aviation. We here have some of the best in the world in Alberta. This is the ideal place for a fly-in, up here in Edmonton, especially in June or July. Edmonton is not only a very beautiful Capital City, but up here in summer, daylight hours range from about 0430 in the morning to 2230 at night. Actually the northern sky this time of year doesn't get fully dark as we are close to the "land of the midnight sun". A lot of flying can be done after work in the evenings, and the northern sunsets are beautiful. The climate is very dry. There are many Short Wing Pipers in Alberta and I carry copies of the "News" with me everywhere, to show around. I have made several photocopies of the "TPOC News" cover page, for posting at various flying fields.

In conclusion I can honestly say that this rather long XC flight would never have come about had I not been forced into it. I rebuilt the Vagabond completely and I wasn't about to sell it or give it up in any way. The 3000 miles to its new home originally scared me some, but not anymore. It was a wonderful experience. Both my son and I got a lot of XC experience out of the trip. Experience you cannot get simply flying a pack of radios. And we learned to handle high winds and marginal weather like no Sunday flyer could. Best of all, we learned to make some decisions: go or no go. This part was the most difficult to learn. My son was a good pilot before the trip. Now he is a good pilot and a safer pilot. So the trip was worthwhile in many ways, and the Vag is safely tied down nearby, and looking pretty smug. I swear the darn thing is grinning.