



EAA CHAPTER 515
 Fort Collins/Loveland
 Colorado
 www.eaa515.org



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<http://www.eaa515.org>

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**Road Trip 2003 -
 The Sequel**

By Thomas Lucas

Those of you who have known me for more than 15 minutes know that I have a passion for high performance military aerial hardware. This seems slightly at odds with being a member of EAA, since the hardware involved with the two environments is at opposite ends of the spectrum. It's kind of a Walter Mitty thing.

A little history is in order. This article is titled 'The Sequel' since the inaugural trip to Edwards Air Force Base was made in 2002. In recent years, Edwards AFB has held an open house during the month of October. Part of the open house tradition is a sonic boom to officially open the event, and for the last few years that sonic boom has been performed by Brig. Gen. Chuck Yeager in an F-15 Eagle. In 2002, the open house event at Edwards would be last time that Chuck Yeager would perform the sonic boom in the F-15. This was obviously a once in a lifetime event, both for Chuck Yeager and for me if I were lucky enough to attend. This was an "I have to be there" event for me. I did go and figured that it was a one time event for me...little did I know. This was affectionately called Road Trip 2002.

I had not even contemplated going back to Edwards for the open house event in 2003 until I checked their web site in late spring or early summer of this year. The folks at Edwards really know how to get to me. In the time span that I have been aware of this event, it has been a one day affair, usually on a Saturday. The Edwards web

site indicated that for 2003 that it was going to be a TWO DAY open house. If there is anything better than a one day air show, it is a two day air show. There were several items of interest listed, but the one that grabbed my attention the most was that the F/A-22 Raptor was going to fly both days. This was going to be the first time that the Raptor would fly in front of the public! Guess what.....another "I have to be there" event, hence the "Road Trip 2003 - The Sequel" designation.

Like last year, I went with a friend of mine who has the same passion for high performance military aerial hardware.

Mike and I left Fort Collins at 0530 on October 23rd, traveling via Buick airlines. Like last year, we planned on staying overnight in Las Vegas. One of the side benefits of the Edwards event happening in late October is that it coincides (at least for the last 2 years) with Red Flag Exercises going on at Nellis Air Force Base in Las Vegas.

Arriving in Las Vegas on the evening of the 23rd, we could see some of the participating aircraft departing Nellis to take part in the early evening exercises. During Red Flag, sorties are usually flown 3 times a day, morning, afternoon and early evening. These exercises comprise icing on the cake for this trip, just like last year.

On Friday October 24th, we left Las Vegas early enough to arrive at Mojave by

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EAA Chapter 515 Presents

When: Tuesday, December 2, 2003 7:30 PM
Where: Hair Dynamics, 6464 S. College, Ft. Collins
Program: To Be Announced



2003 & 2004 Chapter 515 Activities

December 2nd

Program to be arranged by
Dave Klink

January

Installation of Officers.
Hugh Beckham: Centenary re-
enactment on December 17, 2003,
of Wright Bros.' flight at Kitty
Hawk.

February

Potluck Banquet, with
Chapter 515 providing the meat
(more details later)

Road Trip *(continued from page 1)*

noon since we had one more useful piece of intelligence. The USAF Thunderbirds were on the program for the Edwards open house and were scheduled to practice at 1300 on the 24th. We figured that if we were near Edwards at 1300 we might be able to see some of the Thunderbirds practice, even though the flight line would be a fair distance from highway 58 leading into Mojave. This strategy was a good one and produced a bonus.

There is a rest area on highway 58 at Boron, CA about 20 or 25 miles from Mojave. We had planned on stopping at this rest area, whether we needed to or not, given it's proximity to Edwards. We were actually a little ahead of schedule when we arrived at Boron and discussed whether to go on to Mojave and check into the motel and then come back out to see if we could catch some of the Thunderbird practice. While this decision was being discussed, I thought that we had been bombed. In the milliseconds that followed the 'explosion', the realization set in that due to our proximity to Edwards that it could have been a sonic boom. Indeed, shortly after recovering from the initial shock, we could hear jet noise overhead. Since we were somewhat early for the Thunderbird practice, we decided to just hang out at

the rest area and see if there was going to be any more action.

About 15 minutes after the boom, we noticed a pair of aircraft approaching the rest area at an angle, but one that would line up with Edwards. While the aircraft did not fly directly overhead, they were close enough to easily identify both of them. The lead aircraft was the F/A-22 Raptor and the wing aircraft was an Edwards F-16 chase aircraft. Shortly thereafter, a KC-135 tanker followed the preceding aircraft on what was apparently final approach into Edwards. I can't say for sure that the Raptor was responsible for the sonic boom, but no other aircraft landed at Edwards after the KC-135.

We then proceeded on to Mojave and checked into the motel and then returned back to a spot near the Boron rest area, but a little closer to Mojave, to check out the Thunderbird practice. Sure enough just shortly after 1300 we could see the smoke trails of the diamond formation climbing out of Edwards. Given the size of the F-16, there wasn't much other than a dot trailing smoke from our location, but a little jet action nevertheless.

The gates at Edwards were scheduled to open at 0800 on both Saturday the 25th and Sunday the 26th. We arrived at 0805 and were fortunate enough to be in the early arrivers so that we got a parking spot somewhat close to the security screening facility. We actually parked on Rodgers Dry Lake, although only about a 100 yards onto it. Still, when one thinks of the history that this lake has seen, it is very sobering.

There was one other event other than the Raptor that I was really interested in and that was some record attempts by the B-1B bomber. The B-1B was going to attempt to set 52 world speed records over the 2 day event.

I'll try to get into the Readers Digest mode now or I'll end up being windy since there was much to see. As a matter of fact, there is so much to see, that 2 days is not enough to try to see everything on the ramp, in the hangars and still see what is flying. We started with a plan of watching the flying activity on Sat. and then scoping out all the static displays on Sun. When there

is something flying, you just can't take your eyes off of it, or at least I can't, so that strategy didn't work. As a result, there was much that we didn't get to see.

Both days opened with a C-17 Globemaster III demonstration. If you haven't ever seen this thing fly, it is very impressive. At 1000, we were supposed to get a sonic boom by an F-15 Eagle flown by the base commander. The contrail was visible, but no boom. I was very disappointed, but then remembered that since this was a 2 day affair, there was another opportunity. I also took into account that we got a bonus boom on Friday that most people on the ramp didn't get to hear. There were several other inventory aircraft that flew, but the most impressive on either day were the Raptor and the B-1B.

The B-1B attempted records at a gross weight of 330,000 lbs. over 100 Km, 500 Km, and 1000 Km courses. The B-1B would pass show center just prior to entering the timing gate on the outbound pass and again upon the completion pass, at 550 MPH. That is one awesome machine! I could have spent the whole day with B-1B passes along the flight line. On Sunday the F-15 did produce a sonic boom in the morning and the B-1B did a sonic boom in the afternoon.
Ooouuurraahhh!!

The most impressive thing flying, at least for me, was the F/A-22 Raptor. The web site had advertised that the Raptor would fly, but in a 'limited performance' mode. From what I saw, there are other folks around the world who need to be concerned about what this thing can really do. What did I see that makes this thing impressive? For one thing, from brake release to rotate is an impressively short distance. Then once airborne it appeared that it could kick the F-15 or F-16's butt in climb performance. This was somewhat confirmed by a C-130J driver on Sunday. I was talking to him on the ramp and mentioned that the performance on Saturday seemed to suggest that the Raptor could 'wax' the F-15 Eagle. His response was....."It can".

By the end of Sunday the B-1B

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Chapter 515 November Minutes

By Larry Larkin, Jr.

President Hugh Beckham opened the meeting at 7:30 PM on November 4, 2003. Hugh announced that some members had brought in magazines to share with other members. If you have old magazines lying around, feel free to bring them to the meetings to give to the membership. Hugh then announced that he and Merry are planning on attending the 100th anniversary celebration in Kitty Hawk, NC. He will give all the details of the event at the January meeting. Dave Klink is putting together the December meeting. Don't forget that our February meeting is a pot luck dinner at a location to be announced. If you know of a location that would work or you would like to help with this event give Dean Hall a call. Hugh told the membership that the Chapter's trailer has been located and if you would like to use it contact Hugh or Scott Doyle. As a reminder, the trailer's use is limited to members only and must be kept in the state of Colorado. Hugh made a motion to accept the nominees for the Chapter 515 officers as previously published. The motion was seconded and accepted by all. The next Board meeting is scheduled for Nov 17th at 7:00 PM at Dean Hall's home. A new program was started to help introduce the Chapter members to each other. It was appropriately called "On the Spot." Hugh selected three members and had them tell a little about themselves. Thanks to Mary Beckham, Steve McClintock and Dave Nabus for sharing your background and interests with the members. There was also one new person in attendance. His name is Dick Stratmeyer from Berthoud and he is building a Glastar with a Subaru engine. Dick is getting close to finishing his project and is looking for a Flight Advisor and Technical Counselor.

Britt Crowell announced that 43 kids and 15 teachers were flown at Chapter 515's Young Eagles Fly-in. Congratulations to Britt and a big thanks to all of the pilots who volunteered their aircraft and resources to plant the seeds of aviation in some young fertile minds. After a brief recess, our guest speaker, Jim Crisman, was introduced. Jim has been an A&P IA at FNL for 23 years. Jim answered questions from the membership on several topics dealing with aircraft systems, maintenance, and repairs. Thanks Jim for a great program. The meeting adjourned around 9:30 PM.

Mountain AWOS System

The Division of Aeronautics has received funding from the Aeronautical Board to proceed with installation of the four remaining mountain AWOS sites and are also considering moving the Corona AWOS.

Input from the pilot community is important to this process. EAA chapter members can provide their input and comments to:

T.K. Gwin, AWOS Project Engineer
303-261-4418
TK.Gwin@dot.state.co.us

They are looking for representatives from EAA to attend meetings to review sites for future AWOS units, the possible relocation of the Corona AWOS and the directions the program is going over the next few years. Would you like to be a representative to these meetings? Meetings will be held on or near airports in the Denver Metro area.

Contact Hugh Beckham if you are interested.
Darci Wert
Aviation Education & Promotion
CDOT Division of Aeronautics
P: 303-261-4418
F: 303-261-9608

Pres Sez

By Hugh Beckham

I have been a member of EAA since February, 1962. During that time I have met, and enjoyed meeting, thousands of other EAA members. As I recall, there was one fellow who was a little hard to take but all the rest became friends. When you get to know another EAAer, you make a new friend. Trouble is, I have never been a dynamic outgoing person who rushes up to someone I do not know and starts a conversation. As a result, I am sad to say, Merry and I have been attending meetings of Chapter 515 almost every month since we moved to the area in 1987 and there are still a lot of you that I have never gotten to know. I think that I have identified one of your shortcomings too. Have you visited with all of the other people who come to our meetings?

At our November meeting we met three of our members who have been coming on a regular basis but who have kind of disappeared into the crowd. I called it, "putting them on the spot" but we can call it anything you like.

We met Merry Beckham and much to the surprise of many, found out that Hugh is her second EAA husband and that following the death of her first husband in the test flight of a Jodel D9 she got her pilot's license to prove to herself that she could.

We met Steve McClintock and learned that he is a very serious inventor, a new member of our board of directors, interested in all things that fly (including ladies that fly) and Ballroom dancing.

We discovered that Dave Nabus is a TV and electronics repairman and that he does all of his "flying" between midnight and 6:00 AM and that he does his flying with his eyes closed.

I hope that all of you now feel that you know and are friends with these three. Now you can visit with them like you know them and you know, I'll bet that they will respond like you have been friends for years.

I plan to continue with this program. You can count on having to face that terrible intimidating three minutes with everyone staring at you. When it is over you will have a whole room full of new friends.

EAA Chapter 515 Newsletter

c/o Larry Drake (publisher)

5925 Sacajawea Way

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December 2003

EAA Chapter 515 Newsletter

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Road Trip *(continued from page 2)*

had set several world speed records, but they didn't reach the 52 record level. The way that this works, according to the C-130J driver is, if you set a speed record at the gross weight of 330,000 lbs, then you also have all the records for any weight below that weight. It was, all in all, a wonderful weekend. There were a couple of JumboTrons on the ramp and when the Thunderbirds performed, there was live in-cockpit video. I have seen the Thunderbirds probably a hundred times and this was a first for me and it was wonderful.

On Monday the 27th, we headed back to Las Vegas for a 2 day stay. We were somewhat lazy in going from Mojave to Las Vegas and as a result didn't arrive back in Las Vegas in time to catch any Red Flag action. On Tuesday the 28th, we went out to the north side of Nellis Air Force Base and watched arriving and departing aircraft participating in the Red Flag Exercises. While we were at this location we saw

F-16s, F-15s, F-18s, A-10s, B-2s, B-1Bs, F-117s, tankers, and AWACS.

You have probably seen any of the aircraft mentioned take off at air shows. I always wondered if at the typical air show if the take off of a military jet is a maximum one. I believe that in most cases the answer is no. When the aircraft take off at Nellis for a Red Flag exercise, they really get with the program. I love jet noise.

On Wed. morning the 29th, we headed back home to Colorado with some great memories. If you have a propensity towards military aviation, a visit to the Edwards Air Force Base open house is a trip that I would definitely recommend.

Chapter 515



TOOLCHEST

*Here is a list of tools and equipment either owned by the chapter or available for use by members.
CONTACT: Walt Ellwood, 635-3436, wellwo@aol.com*

Engine hoist
Flat bed trailer (call Scott Doyle)
Instrument panel hole cutter
Nico press, with gauges
(bolt cutter style)
Scales
Stoves
Torque wrench

Tools that members may loan out
Lycoming Engine Overhaul Stand
(Mel Callen, 587-4824)--may work
with a Continental
Cable Fitting Swaging Tool
(Hugh McTeague, 586-5910)