

Thirteen Culvers Congregate at Blakesburg

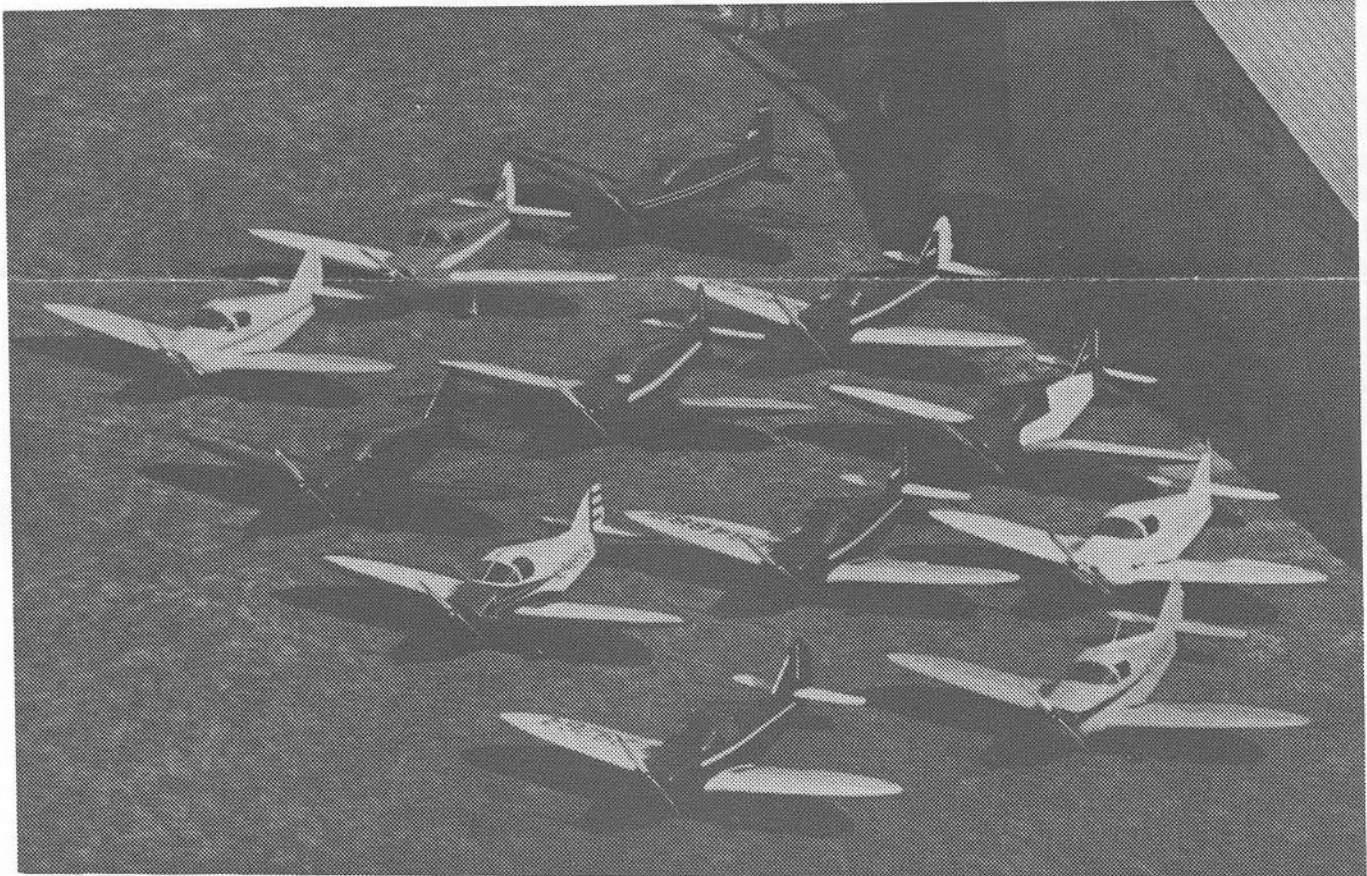


Photo by Burke Bell

Al Mooney would have been proud.

To celebrate the Fiftieth Anniversary of the Culver Cadet, Culver owners and enthusiasts from all across the United States met in Blakesburg, Iowa on Saturday, September 2, 1990 as part of the AAA's 1990 National Reunion. The 13 Culvers in attendance represented the largest known gathering of the Mooney-designed Cadets at any fly-in to date.

Saturday afternoon at Antique Field, Anniversary Chairperson Burke Bell (Boulder CO) greeted more than 45 people to an informal group meeting. Some of the people in attendance bragged about the Culvers they'd flown to the Reunion, while others bragged about Cadets that are promised to be ready for tentative future get-togethers. Burke and Judy, along with Dan Nicholson and Pat Botts, supplied snacks.

The Culver Fiftieth Anniversary reunion was a tremendous success thanks to the hard work and warm hospitality of lots of people. Thanks should go out to the staff and crew at Blakesburg, and a special note of thanks to the entire Taylor Clan at Antique Field in Blakesburg.

Award Winners

The Culver Fiftieth Anniversary Reunion was capped by the awards ceremony. Steve Givins (Anderson IN) swept most of the awards, but nobody seemed to complain. Steve's Culver LCA #133 (NC 29264) gets attention and awards wherever she goes, including a beautiful cover shot on the January 1990 edition of *Vintage Airplane*.

Steve and #133 collected both the "Best in Class" award from the AAA, as well as the "Culver Owners Award" from the other Cadet owners present at the Fiftieth Anniversary celebration. Burke Bell and his blue and white Culver LFA #452 (NC 41730) was selected "Chapter Choice of the Potomac Antique Aero Squadron."

To commemorate the Golden Anniversary of the Culver Cadet, the Anniversary Committee presented the "Al Mooney Award." Named in honor of the designer of the Cadet, the Mooney Award recognizes the owner and plane with the

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highest combined ages. George Cottrill (St. Louis MO) and his 1941 Culver LFA #334 (NC 37829) took the award. With #334 nearing her fiftieth birthday, and George past his seventy-fifth, neither are planning on slowing down anytime soon.

The original owner of #334, George got the plane in an interesting deal with Al Mooney back in 1941. Culver Aircraft had moved to Wichita, Kansas and was experiencing financial difficulties. The owner of Airpath Instruments, George was offered a new Culver Cadet from Al Mooney in exchange for an extension of credit and more instruments.

George took delivery of #334 from the factory and spent the next 25 years using the little wooden flyer to make sales calls for Airpath. One of those many calls was to Piper Aircraft in Lock Haven, Pennsylvania, where the Bill Piper, Jr. became interested in the purchasing one of the plywood planes.

On returning to Lock Haven, the new Culver was rolled and damaged on landing. George remembers that the splintered little Cadet was stored in a shed at Piper for years.

George says that his #334 is now "sitting in my hangar down in St. Louis, just growling at me 'cause it's out of license."

Culver Info Available

The following is a list of old Culver Club newsletters and magazine articles available to interested parties from the Cadet-O-Gram Newsletter for the cost of copies and postage.

NOV-DEC	'72 newsletter
JAN-FEB-MAR	'73 newsletter
JUL-AUG-SEPT	'73 newsletter
OCT-NOV-DEC	'73 newsletter
APR-MAY-JUN	'74 newsletter
JUL-AUG-SEPT	'74 newsletter
OCT-NOV-DEC	'74 newsletter
JAN-FEB-MAR	'75 newsletter
APR-MAY-JUN	'75 newsletter
January	'81 newsletter
April	'82 newsletter
1990 FAA Owners Registration List	
<i>Plane & Pilot</i> , 1969 (Paul Schuyler's plane)	
<i>Model Airplane News</i> , 1946 (Culver V)	
<i>Airpower</i> magazine, 1949 (PQ-14)	
Pilot Report of Bob Hathaway's 1941 LFA, NC 34855	

Culver Group Fly-By Wows AAA Crowd

The definite highlight of the AAA Labor Day gathering was the fly-by of a formation of fully restored Culver Cadets. "Mountain Man" R.J. Hardin (Gunnison CO) helped organize the exercise, described by one spectator as "the largest flying lumber yard I've ever seen!" The six-plane

"That's the largest flying lumber yard I've ever seen!"

formation was indeed a sight to see, as two ranks of three of the little wooden plane buzzed overhead at beautiful Antique Field.

R.J. was doubly busy for the Reunion. He worked non-stop for three days to get the museum's own Culver ready and licensed, and then stayed busy throughout the weekend, helping ensure that everyone at Blakesburg had a great time.

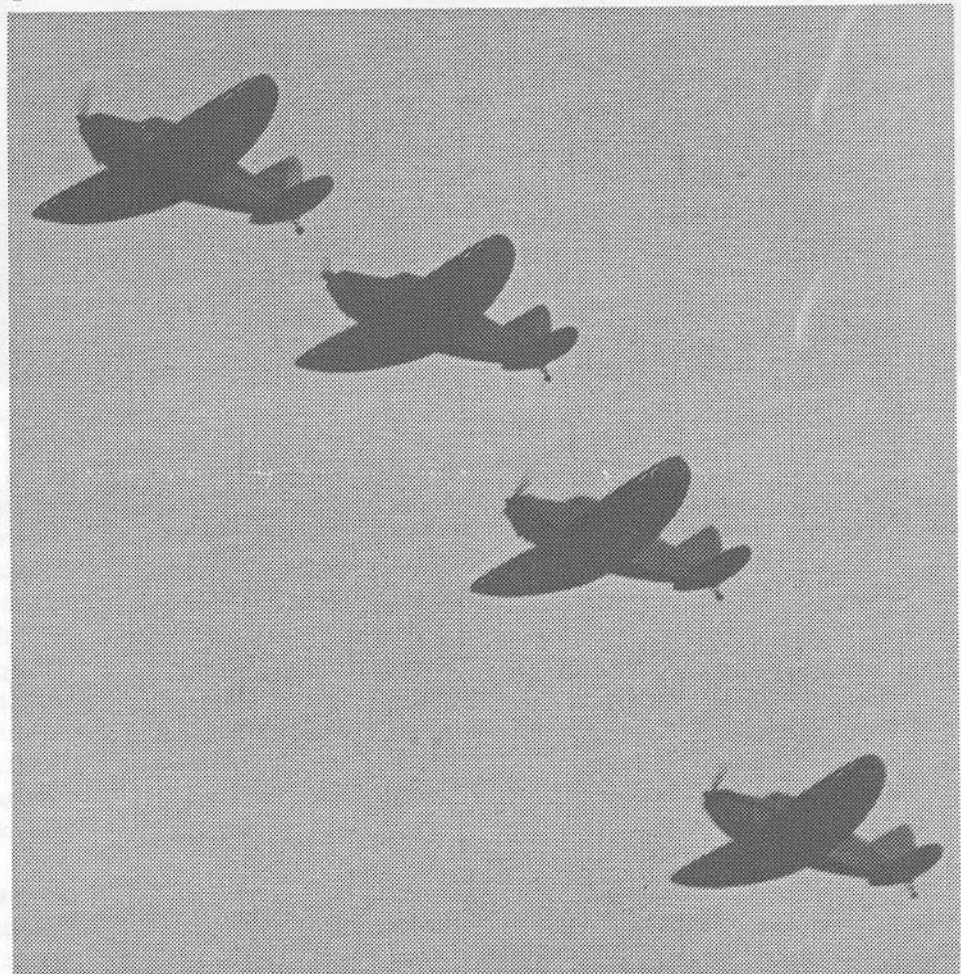


Photo by Burke Bell

People People People

The Culver Anniversary gathering featured a number of interesting people with stories to tell about the Cadet. BOB SHORT (St. Louis MO) stopped by over the Labor Day weekend and shared his Culver knowledge with the other attendees. From 1941 to 1945 Bob worked for Al Mooney in the development of the PQ-8 and the PQ-14 target drones, so he was able to talk about many Culver features that other owners had not heard of. Bob says to call him at (314) 821-8873 if you want to talk about Cadets.

Al Mooney's company worked closely with the Air Corps during World War II. In fact, Bob's work on the Cleveland brakes for retractable landing gear of the military drones led to the development of the "clips" used on all modern Cleveland brakes.

AL OWENS (St. Louis MO) also has some interesting tales about the Culver PQ-14 drones. Al worked as a ferry pilot in the southern U.S., delivering the target drones to Air Corps bases throughout the South.

NEAL LAFRANCE (Wichita KS) is another Culver fanatic. He is currently building a steel-tube fuselage Culver at his home. Neal can offer any Cadet owner some interesting ideas about rebuilding the little plane. He is available at (316) 722-2494.

DON and DELL DETRICK (Jacksonville FL) are first class Culver fans. Dell has painstakingly assembled an indexed album of 20 Culvers, complete with pictures. Call them in Florida at (904) 771-2164 to talk about color scheme ideas, but be sure to ask about Don's own #274.

On the other side of the country, GLENN SNAVELY

(Carlsbad CA) says that #458 is nearing completion. Glenn can brag that he has the last registered Cadet from Culver. Number 459 was built but destroyed before being registered and then the Culver plant turned over to production of the PQ-8's for the war. Glenn also has some information on gear fairings he is willing to share. Call him at (619) 729-9601.

STAN SWEIKAR is currently converting #290 from a 90-horse Franklin to a Lycoming O-235. He said that he has "some Franklin stuff, if anyone is looking for it." His number is (301) 872-4055.

DANE JORGESON (Doylestown OH) says that he hopes to have #446 back in the air soon. He also has quite a collection of old Culver newsletters and other information that he shared with the other owners at Blakesburg.

Longtime Culver owner AL PATTON (Augusta GA) dropped by Blakesburg to talk about LFA #365 (NC 37822). Al said he'd be glad to show off #365 if anyone is in the Augusta area.

DAN NICHOLSON (Tomball TX) is re-building #249 and hopes to have her ready for any 1992 gatherings. #249 was built in 1942, wrecked in 1943, sold more than 15 times and moved more than 12! When Dan got her, #249 was not much more than a pile of wood and a bunch of boxes. He says that he *thinks* he's got all of her parts, but...

AND, don't ask how, but FRANK HAY (Brainerd MN) has managed to get a COMPLETE SET OF ORIGINAL CULVER PLANS! The plans are too fragile to photocopy, so if anyone MUST have a copy, call Frank at (218) 829-4133 to discuss the cost of having the plans professionally retraced.



Photo by Burke Bell

Culver 50th Anniversary T-Shirt

Show the world what kind of plane you'd rather be flying with one of these poly-cotton blend shirts emblazoned with the CULVER logo.

The shirts are available in either blue or red, in men's sizes S, M, L, and XL for only \$11.00 each. Please include \$1.00 postage for single shirt orders, and \$2.00 for orders of two or more.

Send check or money order to:

Culver T-Shirt
c/o Burke Bell
3795 Smuggler Place
Boulder CO 80303

"Dozen Culvers" Photo

Order your own COLOR copy of the photo on the front page of this newsletter. Taken at the Culver Fiftieth Anniversary Reunion, the photo is a professional full-color enlargement of twelve fully-restored Cadets and is perfect for framing.

5 x 7 copies are \$8.50 each, and 8 x 10 copies are \$17.50 each for one, or 17.00 each for two or more. Price includes all postage.

Send check or money order to:

Culver Photo
c/o Burke Bell
3795 Smuggler Place
Boulder CO 80303

The 13 Cadets

The thirteen Culver aircraft that made it to Blakesburg for the 50th Anniversary Reunion represent the largest known gathering of Cadets. A very special word of thanks and appreciation should go out to all the people that have worked to keep these unique planes airworthy for events like the Reunion.

The participants in the Reunion that made it such a memorable occasion include:

AIR POWER MUSEUM (Blakesburg IA)

1942 LCA #443, NC 41725

BURKE BELL (Boulder CO)

1941 LFA #452, NC 41730

LEROY BROWN (Zellwood FL)

1941 LCA #329, NC 37818

DAVE CONOLEY (Midland TX)

1941 LCA #208, NC 32476

BONHAM CROSS (Hopkins MN)

1941 LFA #258, NC 34797

JOHN DAGLE (San Luis Obispo CA)

1941 LCA #189, NC 29396

STEVE GIVINS (Anderson IN)

1940 LCA #133, NC 29264

R.J. HARDIN (Gunnison CO)

1941 LCA #214, NC 32482

BOB HATHAWAY (Hollywood CA)

1941 LFA #303, NC 34855

JIM JENKINS (Goshen CT)

1940 LCA #118, NC 29250

CARL McGINNIS (Enid OK)

1942 LFA #398, NC 41705

DAN NELSON (Hollister CA)

1941 LFA #303, NC 34890

STAN PITEAU (Holland MI)

1941 LFA #292, NC 34882

Let's hope to see even more Culvers at future Reunions.

Reunion '91?

The gathering of Culvers at Blakesburg was so enjoyable, the owners discussed making it annual event. One suggestion was to have the 1991 Culver Reunion at an established fly-in such as Watsonville. DAN NELSON and BOB HATHAWAY both showed interest in helping to organize and promote such a gathering, and DANNICHOLSON is trying to contact LARRY LOVE (the last known president of the Culver Club) in California to see if he can offer any advice.

DAN and DELL DETRICK, along with LEROY BROWN (Zellwood FL) have been contacted to see if they might help organize a 1992 Culver Reunion in Florida, perhaps in conjunction with The Sun & Fun Fly-In.

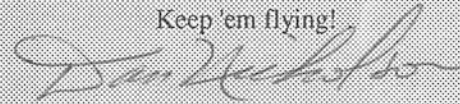
Another possibility is a return visit to the AAA National Reunion in 1993. The 1990 Culver Reunion was such a tremendous success, it would be a shame not to make such gatherings an annual event.

Publisher's Note

I hope this newsletter is as much fun for you to read as it was for me to put together. I need to mention Burke Bell and his camera work at Blakesburg. The photos he allowed me to use add a lot to this project. Also, if anybody out there has any interesting Culver news or photos, send them in and I'll try to use them in any future newsletters.

I would like to take this opportunity to again publicly thank all of the people who worked to make the Culver 50th Anniversary Reunion such a great happening. To fly one of those little wooden birds across the United States in two days, half a century after it was originally built, is indeed the mark of a rare individual in love with an equally rare piece of aviation history. In other words, a Culver owner.

Keep 'em flying!



Dan Nicholson

Culver Cadet-O-Gram Newsletter

c/o Dan Nicholson

773 Baker Drive

nball TX 77375

