

June 2010

Seabee Club Newsletter



Who are they? See *History* below.

Hello Everyone,

I'm going to mix up a few axioms here to see if any of this stuff makes sense! If good judgment comes from experience, experience usually comes from bad judgment, and we know experience is something you don't get until just after you need it. That means we're doomed! Unless, we avoid all the bad judgement and learn from the mistakes of others. But, what fun would that be? Okay, so Confusius I'm not.

I guess because of this newsletter I tend to watch the Bee market. I've often said, "I wish I could be buying Seabees right now...It seems like there are some really great deals." Maybe it's a good thing I can't buy, not only is this one costing me enough, I know two serious buyers, and they both have expressed frustration in finding a nice SuperBee at a reasonable price. On the other hand, I've heard from two sellers and they are frustrated with all the tire kickers trying to find a real bargain. Good thing I'm broke, I can just sit back and see what everyone else is going to do. Who knows, I may actually learn something. maybe

All that being said, I'm excited for the a few new Bee owners I think we're about to have. Mike Dunlap from Clear Lake, CA has sold their airplane and is seriously shopping. Mike's been on fire for a few years now. Most recently, I got a call from Robert Hovard from San Diego who just got his

SES rating and then got a MES in the Twin Bee at Lake Havasu. Robert is coming up to fly with an instructor later this month and is convinced there is a Bee in his future too. Oh, then there is John Davidson from KY who had told me he had lots of Republic Piston time but very little in a Seabee! Boy did that start my wheels turning! My favorite war bird? Yup! We've had some interesting discussions since then and I think he may BEE in the market too. Welcome to the family guys!

Stuck, or, I hate that sinking feeling!

Okay... so the stuck story from last month's picture... It's real close to where I got stuck the previous time! Just so you know! Our lake Cushman is a wonderful place and they drop the water each fall for reasons unbeknown to me. I know in the spring it has to be down for the spring rain and run off, but I don't know why they have to start dropping it right after Labor Day. There is so much good weather here throughout September.....

Well, in this particular area of the lake I'd been out of the water many times, and since I've been stuck there only once, and in the fall, it was now spring and the water is rising, right! I'd also read Don Kytes "Seabee Beaching and Ramping Techniques" (which I've included as an attachment for you) So, I figured I knew what I was doing. Don and everyone else has suggested to approach the beach wheels up and survey the site. Been there, water's clear, didn't need to do that, hummmmm. Approach at an acute angle so if you start to sink in you can turn toward deep water.... usually. I might add too that it really helps if the tailwheel is unlocked. Since it's spring and the lake is coming up the ground shouldn't be saturated, looks good and hard..... part of the problem was the shallow slope of the beach and the fine gravel which does not make for a good ramp. Also as early in the spring as it was, they may not have been filling the lake yet either. It had actually been up and down a little over the previous weeks. So, as the upslope wheel started to sink and since the tailwheel was locked, turning back to deep water just didn't work. Those of you that fly a locking tail wheel know it won't release if there is a side load on it. In this case a side load in the wrong direction.

Had I just unloaded everyone at that point and pushed it back into the water we would have been better off than what I did next! I tried to power out and since it wanted to pivot on the upslope wheel I unlocked the tailwheel and let it go around. It did too. I made a nice 180 and now really had that one wheel buried. I had also proceeded to get the other wheel dug into the axle. Here's an interesting perspective.... that nice folding shovel that we use on camping trips did me absolutely no good packed away in the hangar. Fortunately my nephew is built like Charles Atlas and after several full power attempts between bouts of digging, we were able to muscle it back into deeper water. Trying to go backwards on the tailwheel is next to impossible. If it's not locked it will turn 90 degrees. If it is locked it still wants to roll under. One thing that helped us just before the picture was taken was that the tail was in deep water and even though the tailwheel was still in the bottom we had some buoyancy and the port side was toward deeper water. Since the tailwheel comes up first in the normal sequence and since there was little weight on it, by selecting the gear up and putting some pressure on the system, we were able to retract the tailwheel. Once the tail was mostly afloat and the little wheel wasn't stuck in the bottom, it was much easier to push off the beach. We were only goofing around there for a little over an hour.

Our buddy Stan Edburg from E. Washington sent me his story from more than a few years ago..... Your "stuck" picture reminds me of when several years ago I landed in front of our cabin on Pend Oreille lake. It was in early May and as you probably know they lower the lake in the winter. It usually does not come up to full pool until June. Anyhow, I was slowly moving toward the beach with the gear down when all movement stopped. I thought I was touching the bottom even though I was

quite away from shore, so I increased power slightly. There was no movement, I shifted the prop into reverse and still no movement, I then shut down to inspect things and found the gear was thoroughly tangled up on a series of submerged stumps. Tried slowly hand retracting gear while in reverse and forward, paddling, and using my pike pole, eventually went swimming in very, very cold water to get to shore. Drag the small aluminum boat and motor to the water then spent a long time before finally freeing the beast. Luckily I had warm clothes and heat at the cabin. Thanks for sharing that Stan, I can't imagine if the lake were going down at that time.

History

Many of you that are familiar with Seabee History know of Mike Brown and the history of the Bee at Lake Tahoe. If so, you are no doubt familiar with the history of seaplanes at Lake Tahoe. Would you believe, as large as that lake is, that there is a group that wants to effectively ban seaplanes. They just had their annual splash-in and you can read about it on their web site.

www.mikebrownsplashin.com

The Seabee pictures above was taken in the late forties or early fifties after WW II. Our friend Garth Vickery writes... "Capt. Bob Clouthier flew B-26, Hudson, and C-47 aircraft across the Atlantic to North Africa and Great Britain during the second world war. After the war he returned to his home province of Quebec and flew a Seabee for the family outdoor recreation business. These photo's taken by Bob and his family are donated to help keep the memory of the stellar service provided by the Republic Seabee over many years." Thanks Garth! I'll try to scan the rest and continue to include them for all of you to enjoy.

Safety

Last month I had the picture of the corroded strut and asked, "Does anyone know, can you fly without the fairings?" I didn't hear back from anyone. Anybody know?

Here's a really clever piece written by Ben Visser. He writes a column for General Aviation News...

I've often wondered what ever happened to Common Sense. Ben provides the answer

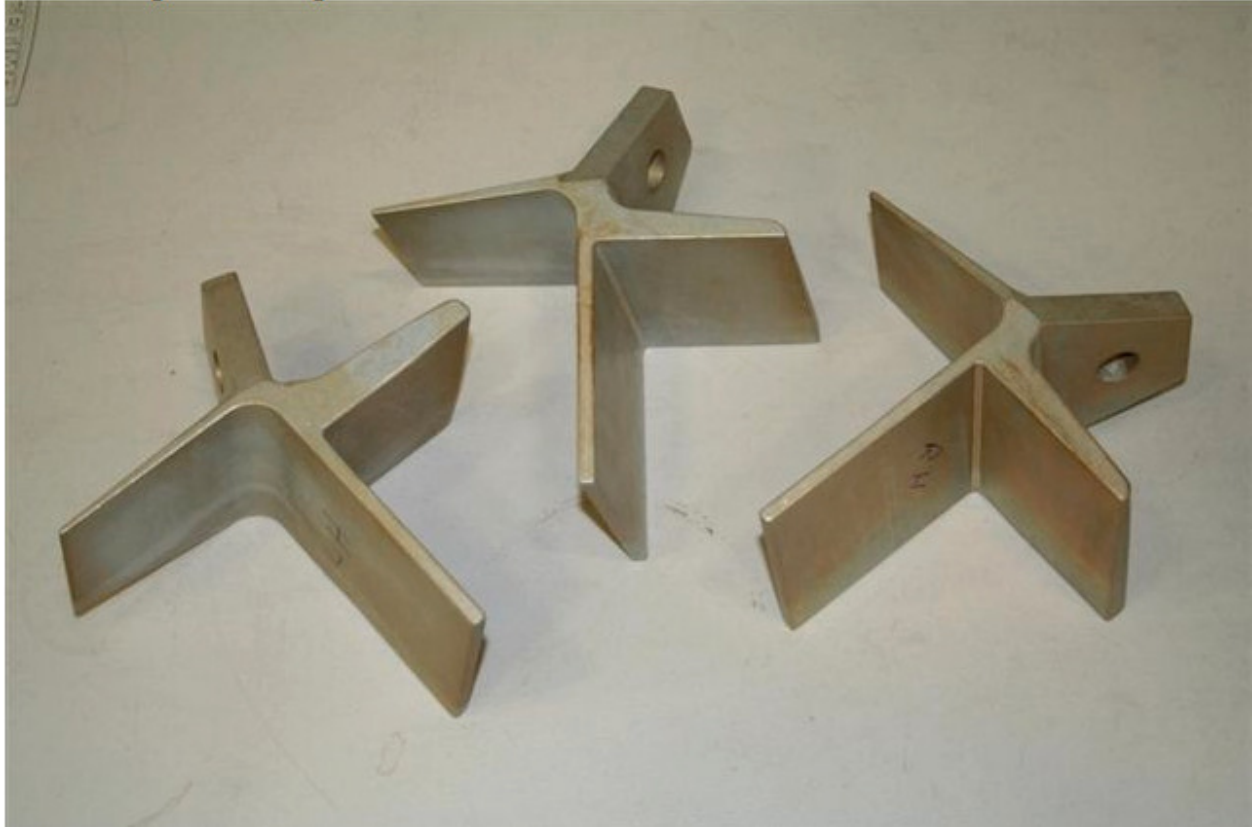
<http://www.generalaviationnews.com/?p=22081>

Classifieds Listings will be for 6 months unless I hear from you. After that, they will be gone... renew or update your ad as long as you like! Cleaning out your hanger, sell it here! Need some parts, let us know!

(2) LOW TIME GSO-480 ENGINES ! ☐ **AVAILABLE FOR SALE** ☐ 265.4 / 48.4 S.M.O.H. by Columbia Aircraft Services, pickled condition, still in nacelles & stored. Also have other GO-480 Engines and Parts. Contact Gregg Cadieux, located Scotia NY Telephone: 518 424-8235 twinbo550@aol.com 6/10 this is a great deal folks!

HARTZELL 3 BLADE PROP ☐ \$2,500 ☐ **ACCEPTING OFFERS** ☐ 3 Blade prop for GSO-480 Lycoming, Spline shaft chrome spinner, no damage complete Model HCA3V20-1B ☐ Contact Neal York, Owner - located Mead, CO USA ☐ Telephone: 970-290-3828 . 6/10 ☐ [Show all Ads posted by this Advertiser](#) ☐ [Recommend This Ad to a Friend](#) ☐ [Email Advertiser](#) ☐ [Save to Watchlist](#) ☐ [Report This Ad](#)

Lower Wing Strut Fittings



Tough times generally involve great sales prices and I have a great sale price that I'm hoping someone is interested in. I ran a batch of 5 sets of RC-3 fuselage mounted, lower wing strut fittings and they ended up costing me a bit over \$1k for each piece to make. I need to try and get some financial recovery out of the two RH's and one LH that I still have. I'm willing to take \$300.00 per piece and will consider offers if you are interested. This is only 25% of what it cost to produce them. Know these parts were produced under the original RC-3 drawings. Metallurgical testing was performed from an aerospace metals lab on an original piece and they determined what modern alloy would be equal/better to use as a replacement since the original alloy is no longer produced. I can provide all of the certifications paper work.

Disclaimer: Although the parts were produced professionally, they are allowed for use on Experimental aircraft only as they weren't produced under an FAA approved process for Type Certificated aircraft. If anyone wants it, I could also sell the C&C program that I paid for, should you ever want to make more. Contact, Bob Mortenson The Pitstop, Inc. PH: 406-777-3163, 406-370-5860 Cell

N3N Floatplane for sale or TRADE for a Seabee!



This USN file photo shows an N3N (not mine) on floats. My N3N, N45129, is currently hangared in Colorado. It's in the landplane configuration, although I have a 100% complete set-up to re-configure the airplane for water operations.

My N3N was built in 1940 (S/N 1962). It remained in US Navy service until 1946, when it was surplused and became a crop duster. In 1969 it was placed in hangar storage in Texas, where it remained until 1980 when it was ferried to Arkansas for restoration. It underwent a ground-up restoration from 1980 until 1989 when it was certificated in Standard category. From 1989 until 2001, it had flown 401 hours when the owner died, then went into a hangar until July 2004 when it was purchased by me. I flew it to Texas and installed Redline disc brakes, using FAA Form 337 on a field approval.

In February 2005, I took a job in Singapore, flying the N3N to a museum in Arizona where it remained on display until April 2008. In April 2008, I flew it to Colorado and put it in a hangar there, where it remains today.

It has a 300-hp Lycoming 9-cylinder radial engine with Hamilton Standard 2B20 constant speed prop. Both engine and prop have 437 hours of operation. There is no wood in this airplane, as the US Navy manufactured them using aluminum extrusions left over from the dirigible program. The fabric is now 20 years old and shows its age, but is good for many years. It would benefit from a new paint job.

Regarding spare parts, I have a core 300-hp Lycoming engine with mount, pristine upper wing, right and left lower wings, two elevators, rudder, vertical and horizontal stabilizers, "N" struts, eight ailerons and a multitude of spare parts too numerous to mention. My float set is 100% complete, including 20-foot centerline float, 6-foot wingtip floats, all struts, braces and attach fittings, and newly manufactured stainless steel flying wires.

I'm still working in Singapore and have decided to take up permanent residence in Asia, which is why I've put the airplane on the market. I have approximately \$105,000 USD invested in the airplane, spares and floats, but will consider any reasonable offer. Upon purchase, it will be given a fresh annual. I would also be able to provide delivery and a check out, with CFI endorsement. General historical and factual N3N information can be obtained via Google.

Should you have further interest, I'll send copies of logpages, 337s and other relevant maintenance documents.

Please reply to my Yahoo e-mail address: usnavy_n3n@yahoo.com

Best regards. Richard Ries 2/10

SuperBee! GO 480 Simuflight Conversion, fuel injected. NEW ENGINE and PROP!



Recent engine overhaul. New 3 bladed Hartzel propeller with Beta Ring pitch control, fully reversible. Droop tip extended wings. Collins microline VHF, transponder, ADF. VIR and Morrow Apollo Loran C. Digital fuel management system Miniflo □ L. Steerable tail wheel. To inspect airplane, call (253)752-4987 to arrange an appointment. Ben Blackett wbnsurgconsult@comcast.net 02/10

Lycoming Prop. and parts



I bought this new HC-A3VF-SAL / VL9333 CH-4 as a spare propeller for my Sea-Bea in 1980, later I cannibalized hub for few parts namely one clamp. There are three new blades and partial hub for sale. Asking \$9 000 -OBO. Also have pair of prefabricated longitudinal steps - STC - SA 575NW. No paperwork, \$200 8 feet of keel extrusion asking \$100. Location Miami
JAN BEM Tel# 305 866 1408 Cell: 786 999 9829 e-mail: janbem@centrum.cz Tel# in Czech Rep. 011 420 602 203 660 01/10

1954 C-180 Representing a 1965 U-17C of the RVNAF

Approx. 6900 hrs TTAF, 975 TTSMOH McCauley 88" prop installed 2006 MARCH annual KY-197, KMA-24, and Northstar M1 □ VFR only Same owner 20 years, always kept in hangar Located at Hicks Airfield Texas (T67) Seen in several magazines, books, video, and Trade-A-Plane cover. \$80,000 Phone: (817) 658-8637 wrsanders_98@yahoo.com 12/09

Right Wing Needed for Seabee!

AS MENTIONED I NEED A RIGHT WING....., FOR NOW? RICHARD LAWRENCE
250-675-3008 or email richard@airspeedwireless.ca 11/09

Seabee Art!



Ginny Ivanicki is an artist and Seabee lover. Ginny does some incredible oil paintings of the 40's and 50's that include other seaplanes and warbirds too. You can see her works at www.elliottlouis.com/dynamic/artists/Virginia_Ivanicki_Strell.asp. Contact her at ivanicki@telus.net or 604-709-0190 9/09

Turbocharged SeaRey



Options include; Hydraulic gear, Heel brakes, Electric trim, Whelen strobes, King com radio, King transponder, 121.5 mHz ELT, Nav lights. Rotax 914.turbocharged engine 115 hp. Full electrical system. Dual electric fuel boost pumps. 137 total hours. Built by an A and P mechanic. Always hangared. \$45,000. (A new Rotax 914 sells for \$31,000 by itself.) Contact Tom Watkins 253-549-4549 Cell 602-284-0770. 8/09

PRICE REDUCED AGAIN- SEABEE with Ground-Up Restoration FOR SALE



\$65,000 □ 1947 Republic Seabee N6755K, S/N 1043, , T.T. 650, Engine & Prop 17 SMOH, Spare A/W B9F, Alternator, Airwolf oil Filter, new glass paint and interior 07, wide spray rails, wing ext's., overhead quadrant, Cleveland brakes., new fuel cell, inboard strakes, steerable T/W all logs □ for two other photos, visit Barnstormers website
http://www.barnstormers.com/ad_detail.php?ID=171092 Contact Sam czechride@canby.com -
http://www.barnstormers.com/contact_seller.php?to=50500&id=171092&title=Republic RC-3
[Seabee&return=%2Fad_manager%2Fmy_ads.php](#) located Wilsonville, OR phone: 503 678-5114 **07/09**

Harzite Blades 4 sale! (I would have jumped on this tailwheel had I not already found one, I believe the Bendix is superior to some of the others out there. Go ahead, ask me why? These blades are absolutely beautiful, they belong in a museum!)



2 Brand New Hartzite propeller blades Design # L8427... These blades were manufactured by Hartzell for the Seabee and Navion, in conjunction with Franklin engine, at the time they were called the first composite blades and I will sell both for \$1900.00.

Contact Kim dos Santos at jaspat4kim@gmail.com, (203) 915-2000 Cell, (203) 877-7750 is Home, or (203) 877-7750 Fax

LS-6 powered 350 HP Corvette "BEE" for sale, NOW U.S. registered!



Don't miss this rare "BEE", it is a great aircraft. No oil required between oil/filter chgs. BURNS LESS THAN 10 USG PER HOUR ON PREMIUM AUTO FUEL.

- MGTW 3350 lbs., Usable load 1200 lbs., rate of climb, over 600 F.P.M. at Max Gross @ SL.
- Hartzell wide cord composite fully reverse-able prop w/spare COMPOSITE & Metal blades.
- Wide spray rails w/propellor" No-Spray shield " at hull step, works great.
- Spectacular T/O performance, even off calm water, at full gross weight, 19 sec's
- All new windows, all new stainless control cables, bow door w/auto hold open feature.
- Aircraft totally re-wired, standby alternator, split-able dual battery system.
- Cabin heater & defog system, free fall undercarriage with positive downlock feature.
- Black stainless disc brakes, good tires and positive tail wheel lock, new 75 gal. fuel bladder.
- Capacitance type fuel tank gauge system, Removable 15 gal long range aux fuel tank.
- New paint & new upholstery & carpet 1 year ago. Short wings, splate tips, flasher beacon.
- All new Inst. panel with COM, transponder, stdby nav/com, Garmin GPS, vertical compass,
- Vac.gyro horizon, some spares, and many more extras too numerous to mention. Meets all specs for import into U.S.A.

Contact Ken at winterhawk23@hotmail.com or Phone 604-943-3380 (home) 604-813-7794 (cell)

Asking price \$115,000.00 US 01/09

Roger Duke's **Super Seabee** (New Price) and Home are 4 sale.....



Serial #56, Simuflight GO480-B1A6, 270 HP, logs since new in 9/16/46. Hangared, TTAF 2188, Engine only 600 since overhaul. Reversible Prop 322 since overhaul, 5 yr. AD last year (same as overhaul), Landing light each wing tip. Overhead engine controls, Large spray rails, Locking tail wheel, Cleveland brakes, Whelen strobe system, Daubenspeck droop wing tips, KT 76A transponder, KR 86 ADF, KY97A Comm., Narco 122 Nav., Northstar M2V Loran/GPS, **\$95,000**. Contact Roger Duke 360-321-1537. email rduke@whidbey.com 02/09

Airpark Home on Whidbey

Roger is also selling his home. If the following link doesn't work, go to Windermere's website and type in the following MLS # 27025608. WOW

<http://www.windermere.com/index.cfm?fuseaction=Listing.ListingDetail&ListingID=17411843>

G 21A Grumman Goose



Serial Number B 32 is one of the best fresh-water Gooses in existence. It is a straight, corrosion free, always-hangared and well maintained aircraft perfect for long-range exploration. It has only 4,000 hours since it was rebuilt in 1982 for the late Bob Richardson of Seattle.

Total airframe time: 8,638 hours.

Clean, smooth-running P&W R985s with 890 hours and good compression.

Heavy Hartzell props and Twin Beech cowlings.

Retractable water rudder and McKinnon retractable floats

Electric up and crank down landing gear.

Mallard Goodyear wheels and brakes (Great!)

Electric fuel pump and long-range fuel tanks

Bubble windows in cockpit, picture windows in cabin.

One-piece front bow hatch.

Full King IFR package including HSI, RMI, and Radio Altimeter

New interior with six quick-release original Goose seats on tracks.

Original paint since 1982 rebuild. Still has good gloss.

Complete logs, beginning with original 1943 delivery logs.

For more details and pictures, please see <http://www.tanglefoot.org/gooseforsale.html>

Price: \$650,000 with new annual.

Editor's note: This owner KNOWS Grummans. If he says it's one of the finest, you can count on it. 1/09

Other Interesting Web Sites

<http://www.tanignak.com/More%20Amphibian%20Adventures.htm> which has some wonderful Widgeon, Goose and other amphib stories,
More history from our friend Andy Shane if you are interested in the Pan Am flying boats. Check out....

<http://www.flyingclippers.com/main.html> or <http://www.rbogash.com/B314.html>

<http://web.mac.com/chankwitz/BlueHorizons/Movie.html> Carl Hankwitz's republished 1949/50 family Seabee movie.

<http://shaunlunt.typepad.com/shootings/>

www.dunk-you.com emergency egress training.

www.sfahistory.org Society for Aviation History

www.clearlakesplashin.com

www.aerocheck.com

www.hu-16.com

www.SeaPlaneOps.com

www.flightcontractservices.com

www.rcairplane.net Easy to build Seabee with a 72" wing span, other great models too. Contact Bill Price bprice@puc.edu

Canadian Information

<http://www.alaska.faa.gov/flyak/>

<http://www.bcfloatplaneassociation.com/>

Seabee Products And Information

Bubble Windows Aircraft Windshields in Los Angeles is run by a lady named Judy. They do a great job according to Steve Lantz. The bubble molds are there and all she needs is your old windows as pattern for size. Call 562-430 8108

Wing Walks, those things you put on the wings when you want to get up and clean up the oil mess...

Jim Dixon's dad is a retired carpenter and will make these for \$100 each. He does a great job from the original plans, they just aren't quite as wide. Which is nice, they are a lot easier to handle. I have two one for each side. He also puts felt on the bottom edges so they don't scratch the wing and carpet on top. Contact Jim page@earthlink.net 253-973-9985 or at home 253-232-9463.

Walk Around Inspection

<http://www.aircraftwalkaround.com/seabee/seabee.htm> is an interesting series of pictures of a walk around. Note the high polish job and a very interesting water rudder.

Leading Edge Wing Tanks (I want some of these...)

Second generation Seabee Guru, Henry Ruzakowski, has developed tanks that will hold at least 15 useable gallons per side. They are made of carbon fiber and Kevlar and will gravity feed to the main tank with the operation of one lever. They will be done on a field approval, so you'll have to take your airplane to him in Florida. **So, let's plan a trip to Sun and Fun!!!** Call or email Henry for more information. 561-436-0821 amphibs1@aol.com

The Seabee CD and the new Newsletter CD! The Seabee CD contains all the Bulletins, Flight Manual, Parts Manuals, etc.. He states ..."Everyone I have sold this CD to has found it most useful. I have re-typed all of the Service Bulletins and reformatted the parts manuals for easier reading. The **Newsletter** CD contains most of the old Seabee news letters by George Mojonnier, and Richard Sanders. No special software is required. All files are in Adobe Acrobat format and I include a reader with the CD. Once the Acrobat Reader is installed, just put the CD in the computer and it starts automatically! Contact Steve at smestler@pbtcomm.net **I have them both, they're a great reference!**

The Seabee Experts

Simuflight

Ken Thompson runs the 6000 sq ft facility in Fallon NV and their engineering and operations are run by Scott Henderson out of Anchorage Alaska. They also offer a traveling A&P/IA Seabee expert supported by their shop that can handle anything that is wrong with a Seabee. Simuflight's Fallon facility is a complete Seabee maintenance station. Please contact Scott Henderson (scott@simuflight.net) 907-339-8085 x6101. You can also visit their website at <http://www.simuflight.net> for more information. In addition to Simuflight's many STC'd and non STC'd kits they are also working with the FAA to begin producing replacement parts for the Seabee.

Scott is looking for intersted parties concerning replacement floats. They are working on a new design as parts are getting hard to find. He writes... The Floats will be STC'd

* I am guessing carbon fiber and should be very light.

* They will be one piece so no seam, they will look better. The actual shape will not change since changes like this would require flight and water testing. I am just going to get rid of the seam.

* Less drag? maybe but nothing to right home about.

* No corrosion - we are going to make sure these have no parts that will corrode.

* Off the shelf replacement - We spend a lot of time straighting bent floats because there is no more replacements. The one we are doing now have \$600+ in labor and heat treating in it.

* Price - Who knows, FAA is going to beat me up a little but my hope is to bring each float in under \$1000 but I am guessing a starting point would be \$995 per float. This price would assume fairly good volume. The engineering on this is going to take some time to get through the FAA. I can't just make a look alike float out of carbon fiber I have to design the layup and write a specification for the resin and manufacture and then get it all approved. I am guessing I will have about 160 hours of engineering by the time I am done with the FAA. Then we still have to make them as well.

Bottom line is if there is no interest I am not going to jump into this project. Jereme still has a few float halves

available so we can work with those for the time being. The problem with his floats is, they are not heat treated and when we heat treat them they like to warp on us.

New From Simuflight*

We have not officially announced it but McHugh Aviation completed an STC for an electric trim replacement for the Republic Seabee (RC-3) this last year. Due to the extensive FAA rules on PMA it is still not ready for shipping but we are taking pre-orders at this time and I am hopeful shipping will occur sometime this fall.

This STC was the final project my father (Joe McHugh) was working on for the Seabee and took an additional three years after I took things over to complete but is a nice kit. The FAA put us through the ringer on this one (primary flight system) but in the end they were very happy with the results. This system completely replaces the original trim system and replaces it with three servo motors (two for the elevator, one for the rudder), the entire installation weighs less than a pound. This system also adds a rudder trim. The installation removes ALL the original hardware. Actuation of the trim is via a typical hat switch on the yoke and/or alternate panel switches.

The system was extensively flight tested (both our internal DER and the FAA flight test staff) with special attention to management of flight controls and the system in trim runaway situations. The result is a clean and simple system that addresses one of the high maintenance systems on the aircraft and of course adds that long desired rudder trim. For more information please check our website at: <http://www.simuflight.net/content/view/30/29/> or e-mail me at scott@simuflight.net.

Scott Henderson, McHugh Aviation Inc. <http://www.simuflight.net/http://www.simuflight.net>

IRSOC (International Republic Seabee Owners Club) Now at www.republicseabee.com It's still the best source of information and experts on the old beast that you will find. If you haven't checked out the IRSOC and Joined? Go ahead, it's free, with free classifieds for members. The 337 database and clearing house for 337 forms and field approvals is also a free service to IRSOC members. For the time being all forms would have to be faxed to Jim: May to November (315) 531-9168; November to May (386) 767-0706.

"Frankenstein Guru" Rich Brumm in Long Island, N.Y. is also one of the experts. If you ever heard of a problem with the Franklin, he has the fix for it! He's also done some interesting things to fix other plagues that continue to give Bee owners headaches. Tired of changing wheel bearings? Ask him about the "Double Lip Seal!" brummricken@aol.com Phone: 631-779-3178 Office: 516-885-5879

Seabee Discussion Group This is a great Discussion group that gets lots of activity. If you post a question, you'll be sure to get a quick response with good experience behind it. <http://groups.yahoo.com/group/Seabee> If you don't want to join the group right away, you can log in as "seabee guest" with a password of "Seabee". Enjoy, it's a great site with lots of great pictures and links.

www.seabee.info/seabee.htm The author of the discussion group has created this fabulous website that is fast becoming the place to go for knowledge and history on the old Beast. Steinar has done a great job and you can spend hours looking at all his information.

T.A.C. Transition Aircraft, Randy Komko's business is now at <http://temp.seabee-transition.com.officelive.com/default.aspxhttp://www.seabee-transition.com/>

Bee Sea n'ya,

Bruce Hinds, President

Washington Seaplane Pilots Association

Seabee Club Newsletter

360-769-2311 home or 360-710-5793 cell www.wa-spa.org

Seabee Beaching and Ramping Techniques

Written by Don Kyte

This article will deal primarily with the Republic Seabee, since that is the aircraft that I am most familiar with. Lake owners may find some useful information as well. While I don't claim to be an 'expert,' after some 2000 hours and 28 years operating my Seabee, I guess you could call me "experienced."

Even at idle power the Seabee moves through the water at a pretty fair clip - fast enough to get you in trouble before you can do much about it when approaching shallow water, especially if it is murky. At the same time, oil pressure, which makes the prop respond to reverse pitch inputs, is too low at idle RPM to allow the rapid response you would want to avoid an obstacle.

To overcome these dual problems, I recommend moving your reverse control lever an inch or so out of the forward detent as you approach an area that might require you to stop suddenly. At the same time, adjust the throttle to give you between 1200 and 1500 RPM. Forward speed is controlled, from this point on, with the reverse lever. You may have to readjust the throttle to keep the RPMs within the above limits.

The speed you choose depends on many factors but the main point is that you want to be going slow enough to stop if you come to an underwater obstacle, or at least be going slow enough that you won't do any damage if you do hit it.

Let us assume you are approaching a regular ramp designed for seaplanes (amphibious type) or a boat launching ramp that will accommodate aircraft. With the gear extended in deep enough water to insure the gear doesn't touch bottom until fully extended and locked, you will proceed until your wheels touch. If all looks well, move the reverse lever to the forward detent and then come right up on the power to complete the ramping maneuver.

Beaching

Now let's talk about beaching. If you are unfamiliar with the beach, I recommend keeping the gear up and very slowly approaching the shore until the bottom is contacted (gently, we hope). After it has rested there, power ahead just enough to slide slightly forward, usually no more than a few inches.

Now, shut down the engine and hop out the bow door with a rope tied to the bow cleat so you can secure it while you check out the beach. As you deplane, you will notice that the plane (being more buoyant without your weight) might drift free (the main reason for sliding up the beach those few extra inches). You will also notice that you are probably 2 to 6 feet from shore and have leaped into a foot or so of water. For this reason, a good pair of knee length boots are a handy item to carry on board, or a pair of sneakers you don't mind getting wet. At any rate, you should have something on your feet for the next step in the beaching maneuver.

After securing the plane so it won't drift away, either with the rope or having someone stay and hold the plane, check the beach for firmness. I have found that if I can't stomp my heel into the beach more than an inch or so it is probably firm enough to taxi out of the water on your gear.

Assuming the beach is firm enough, bringing your Bee to shore on the gear is by far the preferred procedure. Besides eliminating all the problems associated with securing it in the water and possible damage from water and wind action, it is very convenient to have your Bee up on the beach where you can get at your supplies without wading. This is also the perfect opportunity to impress everyone with the Seabee's rugged versatility. Done properly, few things are as spectacular as a Seabee roaring out of the water to park on a remote beach. By the same token, nothing is more embarrassing than to get stuck in the process if you have done it improperly or miscalculated. I hope my advice will make you look like a hero and not a fool.

Besides the firmness of the beach, you want to be sure you have enough clearance for your wings (usually 30 to 40 feet) between the waterline and brush or trees, and no rocks larger than baseballs. Frequently, you will have to clear away some rocks and driftwood. ALWAYS plan to bring your Bee up at a 45-degree angle to the shoreline and make a 90-degree turn (at least) back toward the water so it is always heading downhill before you stop. Clear a path accordingly.

Now you're ready for your grand entry. Offload your passengers and whatever gear you can get to easily to lighten the plane. Have them stand beyond where you plan to stop so you won't sandblast them when you make your turn. Push the Seabee back until it is just barely floating and then get in while your biggest, strongest passenger holds the bow. Start up and reverse off (with a shove from your bow tender if needed). Make sure you are in deep enough water to allow the gear to be pumped down without contacting the bottom because if it does before it is down and locked, you could break the gear clevis attachment and be unable to raise or lower the gear hydraulically. (You could still lift it to an up and locked position manually for a water takeoff and landing but you couldn't move it in flight. You could also force it down and locked manually but it would be extremely difficult due to the buoyancy of the tires).

As stated before, approach the beach at a 45-degree angle. When the gear touches as in ramping, put the reverse lever in the forward detent and come onto the beach with enough power to allow you to make at least a 90-degree turn back toward the water without stopping. Try to use little or no brake when making the turn as this may cause the wheel to dig into the sand. Also, make sure your tail wheel is unlocked (if it is the locking type). This is not a major problem if you have forgotten it, as it will usually drag through the sand OK.

If you have managed to end up on the beach headed back down toward the water, you're home free! Set the parking brake, shut down and accept the accolades of your admiring public. If, however, you become stuck before completing your 90-degree turn, get it unstuck right away. The longer it sits the more stuck it is going to get. If it was just a rock, remove it and complete the maneuver, but if you miscalculated and the beach was not firm enough, this would be a good time to break out that folding shovel you carry (you do have one don't you?) and dig out the sand or obstruction. You might even want to firm up the footing with some twigs, fir boughs, or cardboard. The main thing is that you want to get your Seabee out of the mess NOW. Later it will just be worse.

If you find yourself very stuck and you're not sure you can power out with the engine alone, your passengers can help. I would caution you, however, that your passengers probably aren't as familiar with a pusher aircraft as you are and it would be very easy for someone to slip and be hit by the prop. The safest method for them to help would be to tie a sturdy rope to the strut fitting where it attaches to the wing. By pulling from a safe distance and well outside of the propeller arc, they would be in no danger, even if they slipped and fell.

As you can imagine digging out a stuck Seabee can be a lot of work, so if in doubt, a more prudent plan might be to leave it in the water. There are a number of ways of doing this depending on how long you intend to stay and if there is a tide or not.

A Beach Too Soft to Taxi Onto

For short visits with no wind or tide action, probably nothing more is needed than a line from the nose to something solid on the beach. If nothing else, you can use your anchor, which you can bury firmly into the sand. For longer visits I would suggest, in addition to the nose line, a line from each tiedown ring or wing strut fitting to the shore to prevent a breeze from swinging the plane into the beach and allowing a wing float to contact the bottom. If a float is allowed to do this, you can count on waves or boat wakes developing that could damage the float bottom or strut. Unless my Seabee was in constant eyesight, I would ALWAYS have wing lines attached.

Gear Down, Bow to Shore

If the bank is rather steep or gets deep close to shore, I would suggest that you put the gear down and taxi in until the main gear barely touches bottom. Don't bring it any closer to shore as this will raise the nose and lower the tail. Remember that those "water tight" compartments AREN'T. They are all open at the top of the bulkheads and if the tail is too low (anything much lower than when it sits on an airport) water might work its way over the top of the last compartment and progressively sink your Seabee from the stern. Not a pretty sight. WARNING! If the water level

should drop after securing your Bee (tide, etc.), the effect would be the same as if you had rolled your wheels up onto the bottom. A good candidate for the "tail sinking syndrome." For this reason, I don't recommend the bow to shore method in tidal water.

Gear Down, Tail to Shore

This is the most secure method of leaving a Seabee floating in the water. Tie a sturdy rope to the tie down ring under the tail (or to the tail wheel itself, if you want something stronger). That's about all there is to it. The only precaution worth mentioning is that if the water level should rise after securing your Bee, make sure your rudders (air & water) won't contact something on shore.

The extended gear will ensure that it contacts the bottom before anything fragile does. If the tide goes out, you're aimed downhill in the right direction. If you have to leave before the tide comes in again, give it a try. If you get stuck in the mud, you're no worse off than if you had waited for the tide in the first place. When it comes in you'll float free and be on your way. No need even to get out and dig. I was stuck this way a few summers ago at Mole Harbor in Southeast Alaska where the tides can run 20 feet or more. I had to wait several hours for the tide to float me free but they were two of the most enjoyable hours I have ever spent. The water rose at the rate of an inch every few minutes. It was fascinating watching the water flow rapidly around me and as the water reached 6 inches deep or more, the spawning salmon started swimming by me. Taxiing free was no problem after that.

I can't give you firm guidelines for every situation but perhaps these techniques will help keep you out of serious trouble. After all, if you didn't have an adventurous spirit and some pioneering stock you wouldn't have a Seabee.

Few things can match the fun and adventure of visiting or camping in some wild, remote area. The Seabee is the most rugged, versatile aircraft I know of for this purpose. Go out there and enjoy it. A plaque I once read said, "A ship in port is safe, but that's not what ships were made for."

Lake Tahoe Seaplane Pilots

Lake Tahoe Seaplane Pilots Confront Closure Threat, Face Financial Hurdles

Long a premier destination for seaplanes in the Western United States, local governing bodies threaten to severely restrict seaplane access to the largest alpine lake in the Western Hemisphere. Bisected by the California – Nevada border, Lake Tahoe, often called “The Jewel of the Sierra,” is 6200 feet above sea level, 24 miles long, 12 miles wide and the second deepest lake in North America.

Seaplanes have been operating there for at least 75 years since Lake Tahoe Airways operated Sikorsky S-38 Amphibians on the lake in 1934. The first scheduled airline that serviced the then-new South Lake Tahoe Airport over 50 years ago was a seaplane airline; Mike Brown operated Cal-Vada Aircraft for over 30 years on the shoreline of Lake Tahoe, providing charter services, scenic tours and seaplane training. Called “Homewood Seaplane Base” on the charts, seaplane pilots just called it “Mike Brown’s” and still hold an annual Memorial Day Splash-In in his honor. See www.mikebrownsplashin.com for the story.

Now that history and continued seaplane access to the shores of Lake Tahoe is imperiled by a noise ordinance proposed by the staff of the Tahoe Regional Planning Agency (TRPA). The TRPA is a federally chartered bi-state agency created to preserve and enhance the beauty of the Lake Tahoe Basin. The Tahoe Regional Planning Agency (TRPA) is charged with protecting this national treasure for the benefit of current and future generations. As a part of that charge they are required to regularly update their Regional Plan, which process is underway now.

Without input from the seaplane pilots, during the local stakeholders’ meetings held to formulate the Plan Update, some concerns were reportedly expressed about noise caused by one large seaplane operation. This has resulted in a heavy-handed and bureaucratic response. The current staff proposal is to ban all seaplane operations within one mile of the shoreline (even taxi operations) and to further ban seaplane bases and docking facilities. Given that seaplane operations are already quite rare on Lake Tahoe, further limited by nature to those days when the winds and waves permit landing on the lake, the seaplanes’ overall impact upon the serenity of the Lake Tahoe experience is far less than that of any other motorized recreational user. To ban this one recreational use while continuing to allow all other motorized uses seems both discriminatory and overly punitive; as if using a sledgehammer to swat a gnat.

Lake Tahoe Seaplane Pilots

At present, the proposal to ban seaplane operations of all types within one mile of the shore line will go to the TRPA Governing Board on June 9 to be acted upon at the June 23 Board Meeting. To be clear, the TRPA Board is not going to decide whether to enact that proposal at that time but rather whether to authorize the staff to further pursue that “solution” to the perceived “problem.”

Having learned of this threat only recently, local seaplane pilots, friends and supporters have been galvanized to respond to and deflect this challenge. Using the strategy of communicating, educating and cooperating with the agency staff to provide a solution that meets the needs of the environment while preserving access for seaplanes, the group is attempting to get the proposal removed from the TRPA Regional Plan Update regarding Noise Goals, Policies, and Implementation Strategies prior to submission to the full TRPA Board.

A small group of pilots have a meeting scheduled meeting with TRPA Staff on June 4. They have engaged an attorney and a noise consultant to help guide them through the process. At this meeting, we hope to have this sledgehammer solution removed from the Staff Proposal to the TRPA Board. Later, working with the TRPA Staff, the Lake Tahoe Seaplane Pilots plan to work towards a solution that satisfies the needs of all the stakeholders.

Given the short timeline and critical nature of the issue, a lawyer has been retained as well as a noise consultant to help guide the ad-hoc “Lake Tahoe Seaplane Pilots” group through the process. These retainers are costly and beyond the means of individual pilots, nor should the many benefit from the contributions of a few. As a consequence, donations will be solicited from local seaplane pilots, the public and anyone with an interest in preserving the historic access and beauty of seaplane operations on Lake Tahoe.

The Seaplane Pilots Association, headquartered in Florida, is providing research and resources regarding the access and safety issues involved. They may be able to provide, through the SPA Foundation, a means to collect tax-deductible donations to support the local groups working to preserve seaplane access to this, “The Jewel of the Sierra.” Further support from the SPA is actively being sought.