

JOHN D. HARTNESS, D.D.S., FECD, FICD

“UNCLE JOHN”

TRIPLE TREE AERODROME
330 MARY HANNA ROAD WOODRUFF, S.C. 29388

Diplomate
American Board of Endodontists
Practice Limited to Endodontics

Cell 252-903-1099
jhdhds@aol.com

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HISTORY OF PIPER CUB J3 N88073

PAT'S STEPSON RYAN MILES ALWAYS WANTED TO BE AN AIRLINE CAPTAIN. HE FIRST GRADUATED FROM DAVIDSON COLLEGE. HE THEN ATTENDED FLIGHT SAETY SCHOOL IN VERO BEACH, FLORIDA. UPON GRADUATING FROM FLIGHT SAFETY SCHOOL, HE HAD OBTAINED HIS COMMERCIAL RATING.

THIS IS RYANS PERSONAL STORY ABOUT HIS TRIP ACROSS THE UNITED STATES IN THE J3 N88073, FROM THE ATLANTIC TO THE PACIFIC. HIS STORY IS EXACTLY AS IT HAPPENED.

Uncle John:

My cross-country Piper J-3 Cub trip in 88073 was in March of 1999. I had about 830 hours and had recently completed my Instrument Instructor rating. I wanted to make the trip while it was still a little cold for the lower density altitude while flying across the high desert. The trip took 73.4 flying hours spread out over fourteen days. I stopped at 23 airports on the way westward and 17 airports in the way home. When I left Greenville, SC, I flew down to Charleston and crossed out into the Atlantic before I headed west otherwise it wouldn't have been truly a cross country flight. I had several people ask me along the way what my plans were when I got to California. My plan was to fuel up and turn right back around again. That is exactly what I did in Oceanside, CA on March 18th. I did, however, make sure to fly out over the Pacific to complete the first half of the journey. One memorable experience was when I was departing the Culbertson County Airport in Texas headed westward. The airport is at about 4000 feet MSL. The Cub had been performing well, but it was later in the day and therefore warmer and I had to deal with gradually rising terrain along my planned route of flight. The Cub had a wooden prop which was pretty but not as efficient as a metal one. The aircraft was climbing, but slowly, and I was wasting daylight. Earlier that day, I had seen several gliders catching thermals so I decided to see if I could find one also and get the Cub up to altitude faster. I flew over the nearby town of Van Horn in search of some rising air. Sure enough, the buildings and concrete of the town were generating a nice thermal and I rode it up to my cruising altitude. Outside of Van Horn I followed Interstate 10 through a pass in the mountains and was rewarded with the sight of a P-51 Mustang just above me following I-10 eastward. As the Mustang passed me at a much quicker pace than I was obviously flying, the pilot wagged his wings in salute, and I did the same back to him. It immediately struck me that both airplanes were probably manufactured only a few years apart, albeit for totally different purposes. Yet here were two airplanes from a pivotal era in world history passing each other and exchanging salutes over fifty years later over a lonely stretch of Texas highway. It was quite a memory.

RYAN NOW FLYS A 777 FOR FEDEX.

SO NOW WE ARE BEGINNING A NEW ADVENTURE WITH PIPER CUB J3 N88037.