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# VAGABOND NEWS

# 16

NOV 79



Working on the Cowling to the first plans/kit Wag-A-Bond to be completed and flown N51AT. It was built in about 17 days by 21 of us as students in a school flight industrial education course at Southwest Mo. State U, Springfield, Mo. this last summer. the plane belongs to Tom O'Loughlin of Jackson Mo who provided the materials



and chased parts and materials the entire time we worked on it. Bill Ghan an Industrial Arts Instructor of Mansfield, Mo was the Instructor, Bill says this was the 17 home built he has done or taught and supervised on. This was a fun course and gave me another 3 units of unrelated college credit. Wag-Aeros kit was gathered rather hastily for this course as the course was actually only validated to happen 2 or 3 weeks ahead of the convening date. The Kit was generally of good quality, I didn't like the glue joints in the spars (these were doubled with 1/8" ply in areas where Bill felt it was required) there was lots of cutting to fit and grinding to fit that lots of the people involved felt should just slide together, but any custom constructed item always requires custom fitting. All in all to take 21 people who had never worked together and some who had never worked on any aircraft and complete such a project in this length time is quite a feat. The FAA got a little sticky about the final inspection, the FAA had not produced the registration so the GADO bunch brought it with them but then wrote the plane up for not having the numbers on it along with several placards, for example Fuel was not on the placard that said 80 oct 12 gallons. Then on Sept 18 when all was corrected and it was signed off for flight Bill Ghan was going to fly it but the FAA strikes again they want to see all Bills papers, and would you believe he didn't have a current Bi-Annual flight check, so Tom O'Loughlin got to make the first official flight even after having lost on the flip of a coin for the privilege to Bill. Another of our class mates had some excitement too--Jon Sadler took his Cardinal and went to Las Vegas later in the summer and upon departing Henderson Field the old bird got the violent shakes and wouldn't develop much power so he got approach control on the horn and told them he was going to put it on hiway 41 and did so without any harm except he excited a pickup truck driver rather bad. His main problem was in convincing every one concerned that he should be able to have the plane towed back to the field without taking it apart and he finally won.



Wag-A-Bond N 51 AT ready for flight



Tom Clark, 194 P. O. RD, Enfield, CT 06082 PA-15 4370H Cont 85  
 My Vag is currently on 1320 floats with an experimental certificate to comply with FARs, I am pursuing a one time STC. with about 10 hrs on it the plane has excellent performance and I am very happy with the water characteristics.

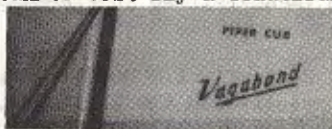


Editors Comment...Denis Morin C-FZII 15-34 ask about floats some time ago and included the following article from 1964 Flying "Fiberglass epoxy floats for experimental and amateur-built aircraft are available in kit form. They are designed for aircraft of 1,650 pounds gross weight, or less, using 65 hp to 145 hp powerplants. These NA-1000P floats will be installed on a Piper PA-17 Vagabond for Certification test work. Stanley J. Dzik is the float designer. This gent has since died and I now see the plans to these floats advertised by Wag-Aero currently. This is the first Vag I am aware of that has been on floats leagally.

Denis Morin, 280 La Flamme, St-Hyacinthe, Quebec , j2T 3Y5  
 At last I meet a Vagabond owner who speaks French. Last Apr my wife and I had the pleasure to visit France on vacation for the first time in Europe. while there we took the occasion to visit Claude Prost and his charming wife Annie. (See page 3 this issue) They greeted us like long time friends I got to fly in Claude's Vag F-BFMR which is one of the nicest I've seen.

During May I made the corrosion check on my struts with the Maule tester no rust or weak spots but one very tired arm after 4,239 80lb pushes of the tester. Also had the pleasure of attending the Vag fly-in in Ansonia, CT, USA with our Vag. Have just cut a Vag logo from mylar and placed on the tail. Ferried a Piper Pawnee from Vincennes, Ind in Jun with 9 hours and 15min flight time and in Aug had the fortune to test fly a beautiful 1957 Super Cub after a complete rebuild.

To the right Denises tail markings



Ed Busse, PO Box 5, Carversville, PA 18913 4458H

Last fall old number 4458H was dismantled for refurbishing. At present she's in our garage being fitted out with new upholstery, instrument panel and white and orange butyrate. As you undoubtedly know, projects like this seem to take forever. But with continued fine, though sometimes tardy, support of such fine supply houses as Airtex, Wag-Aero, and Aircraft Spruce, we should be enjoying some beautiful fall flying. Sorry to have missed Jim Jenkins fly-in hope he has another next year.

Claud Prost, Choisy-Rosieres, 74330 - La Balme De Sillingy, France

Unfortunately I'm the only Vag owner in France so, none to meet and have flights or even discussions with, therefore Vag News is a great pleasure for me.

PA-17 F-BFMR is still flying and in good condition. I'm slightly in trouble with our aircraft inspector as I've treated internally my struts with a commercial compound just after reading issue #13. By Sep 78 a French regulation has been initiated prescribing internal corrosion check and treatment by aircraft workshop. Our regulation is quite tight as I've a "regular registration" F-B instead of F-P for homebuilts. I'll ask to obtain such "registration" for the Vag.

May I tell you I'm a bit jealous about so many British and American pilots owning a private field. I think it is the top dream to have one and three years ago I tried to have one but still have not full authorization. So I land time to time and take off from this field like a pirate, the fine would be heavy if I were to be caught by a policeman. The forbidden fruit taste is stronger than the fine!

Collecting my Vag from where I found it to my home. I found F-B FMR on a field at about 30 miles from home. 600 yards behind home is a 300 yard width by 700 yard long piece of land. It was used as a landing zone for Lysanders during World War II nights. What a temptation! I discussed this with a friend of mine, and a aircraft mechanic and we took the decision to land there by surprise. We had to mark out a landing area but the main problem was and still is the wild boars digging the earth.

So in the evening we leveled the "runway" but at 5 AM next morning, the job had to be done again. We had a fast drive to collect the VAG and we took off at 10:45 AM. At 11:15 AM we landed in the pasture, engine at idle and moved the plane under big trees. As previously arranged, my wife arrived with the car and all necessary tools. Forty five minutes later, the plane was dismantled and stored in my garage.

Believe it or not, none of the neighbours had seen anything and I had no troubles with police. The drink we had at home was really full of taste, this one from forbidden things.

I keep in touch regularly with the British Vag owners. You had them in Vag news.

Each year, I join Sywell international convention; as I live near Swiss border it's flight about 1250 miles there and back. Once per year these British Vags visit me in France and it's a great occasion for a dinner and jokes.

Willard Woodruff, P O Box 15, North Syracuse, NY 13212 1117H & 4405H

I currently own two Vagabonds, one modified with 2 doors and electric starting 15-332 11117H. The other one is stock 15-90 4405H and is currently being rebuilt. Neither of my 2 birds are now registered. In 1970 I sold a Vag 4152H to a man in Canada

Dan Deger, 1008 Reinli #114, Austin Tx 78723 15-4475H

I'm afraid that I might not be the owner of my Vag much longer, for you see my little Vagabond flunked it's last annual and since I am a student at U of T, I do not have the money to fix it. But all is not lost; even with the fabric bad and the compression check low, two mechanics here say I could get my money out of it. So if anybody knows a good home for my airpalne please call or drop me a note. ph 512-453-4519



Bill Hinde, Huron Airport , 1909 Boos Road Huron, Ohio

Here is a short history of my Vagabond involvment:  
I bought my first one 4495H from Frank Sabo Costalia, Ohio, then sold it to George Bowers in 1975 of Sanduskey, Ohio.



I then bought 4333H from Elge of Delaware Ohio I bought it less engine, then installed a Cont 85 out of an Ercope. It had lots of pep. I then sold this Vag to John Elders of Milan Ohio

In 1976 I bought 4123H PA-15 Lyc from Law in Portsmouth Ohio, Mr. Law had restored the plane. This plane had ser #6 and was used as a demosntrator and flown all over the US by Piper salesmen. 4123 is on page 12 of the Nov 76 Vag News with Long Beach back ground. This plane was first bought by Paul Fowler , formerly of Norwalk, Ohio he was a ferry pilot for Piper in 49 Fowler at that time bought 4 Vags 5000H, 4120H, 4530H and 4123H. I sold this plane (4123H) to Bill Byrd of Delhardt , TX He bought two Vags and planned to paint them alike and tour with them.



I then bought 4813H from Price of Ashland Ohio a PA-17 with TT750 hours with Ceconite, the yellow on the fuselage was faded so I had it redone and it came out good I sold this plane to Bill Pupikoffer of Detroit, Mich. 4495H and 4333H are still on my airport. All I had against the Vag was hand propping I always tied the tail to start them. There are not as many fellows around

that I trust to prop a plane anymore. I also had two Piper clippers PA-16s. I had one on floats 5600H , I sold it ot a Dr in Mass, back in 1950. They were wounderful on floats.



Bob Morris, 4225 Young St. Zachary, LA 70791 4876H

After a little over 3 years my dear wife and I finally finished recovering and assembling 4876H. The job is not really complete as it still lacks a differential pressure check on the cylinders and the final inspection for relicensing. It also lacks the trim stripes on the paint job, at any rate we are relieved and pleased that it is over. I am transferring to Atlanta and only hope for a good tail wind down I-20 so it won't take so long. The cover is Stits all the way right by the book with Aerothane finish. Also hung a Radair 10 crystal radio with an antenna on the rudder to minimize the engine static which is probably wishful thinking. On the third twist of the prop the old Continental 65 roared into life and of course I did two back flips. Lost the tach cable probably when we trailered it from the house to the farm strip. Anyway it should not be nearly as long before it is in the air again.



Joseph J. Sonner, 23 Deerfield Dr., Chaffee, NY 14030 4838H 17-143

I purchased the ship from John Ball of Niagara Falls NY in Oct 78. About a year prior to that, John bought the ship from T Peterson in Forrestville NY, the aircraft is in my garage and basement undergoing a general cleanup, repainting and recovering. Given enough time and money it should be in the air by the summer of 1980. The only unusual thing about my plane is it's owner, I am not a pilot, needless to say I have received a lot of good kidding from my friends. I live on a street named Deerfield Dr, which has been dubbed Airfield Dr. by my friends, my garage is now a hangar and I grin and bear it as there isn't much else to do about it.

Normand D Gange RFD 2, Swanton, VT 05488 The Collector of all kinds, at the right is a photo of Norm's latest completed plane it is a PA-20 Pacer 135 that cruises at about 125mph and will climb with two and full fuel at a reported 1200 fpm. Norm is currently restoring a J-3 and a Luscombe



H. P. Buller RR 1 Box 275, MT Lobi, Minn N4600H 17-17

I have owned my Vag since 1970 and have enjoyed flying it very much. We have taken 4600H to Oshkosh four times and probably this summer as well. In Dec of 1970 I paid \$1,800 for the Vag. Inflation has done quite a lot to that \$1,800 airplane. We fly 4600H regularly from a 60' by 1,300' strip on my farm.



Dell Haverland, 4675H

I flew old faithful to Fla last Feb, 13° below zero when I left Elgin, Ill. It was 5° below in Nashville when I got there! But it was three days of following I 75 and the Turn Pike--no radio yet. Some planed fuel stops had to be changed due to many airports being closed. However I landed at Cornelia Fort in Nashville in 9" of new snow. Should have left on my Skis! I love Fla and will send a photo of 4675H nestled among the palms.

Lee Tomac, Keldron, S.D.. 17-182 N4883H

I still have the Vag, it is in good shape yet. I have it tucked away in a hangar on a farm where I live. The past three yeras I just haven't had time to fly much at all. I'm lucky to even get 10 hours a year in. I keep planning to fly more in the future. My wife and I flew to Mpls Minn three years ago then my brother in law and I flew on to the Oshkosh bash in his Balanca. I would like to take the Vag next year.

Vern Bean, 7086 206th St, RR #4, Langly, B. C. Canada PA-17-93

I am rebuilding a PA-17 serial 17-93 I purchased it in 1963 when I was living in Calif. it was in very sad shape, no engine, no instruments, broken left rear spar and so on. I have since moved back to Canada and have built a Bowers Fly Baby. I have always been in love with a Vagabond, thats why I have hauled this one all around the country stored it any place I could find and finally about a year ago I started work on it. it is now covered and has a A-65 installed along with original instruments except for oil pressure and temp which I can't find. what color was the interior.

Info... interior was Piper Trainer Blue on inner boot cowl, instrument panel with overhead and baggage compartment Cub yellow.

Don and Jim Randolph, 5001 E 27th St. Kansas City, MO 17-195 4894H

My first plane was a Vag PA-17 bought it in 1962 and sold it 2 years later, after learning to fly in it. My son and I bought this current PA-17 about a year ago and flew it for 6 months and tore it down , we rebuilt it with a chrome 85,800 x 6 wheels radio and electric system except for starter. It had been flown about 6 or 7 hours since rebuild and flew like a baby, then we took off on a Sat for a short trip of 50 miles for pie and coffee, after leaving to come home, we were 8 miles from the airport when we developed a severe buffing in the tail. Rudder peddles and stick shook violently. So elected to put it on a 4 lane highway. had virtually no control of the plane, came in some what hot and took two sign post with the left wing which put us in ditch getting a landing gear and prop and struts.





4615H 15-95  
Dave Feather  
Antrim, N. H.



4534H 15-301  
Jim Jenkins  
Monroe, Conn.



4434H 15-223  
Dave Harmon  
Short Hills, N. J.



The line up and the Vag Gang



4344H 15-129  
Wally Powell  
Clinton, Conn.



4404H 15-189  
Harold Lyons  
Lewiston, Maine



4641H 17-53  
Larry Reynolds  
Norfolk, Mass.



C-FZ11 15-34  
Denis Morin  
Quebec, Canada



4882H 17-181  
Harvey Thomasin  
Northboro, Mass



4441H 15-230  
Martin Goldfarb  
Cheshire, Conn.



5056H 17-215  
Marshall Jones  
Wettstown, PA  
(original owner since new)



4814H 17-112  
Bruce Clark  
Salem N. H.



## FIRST ANNUAL N. E. VAGABOND FLY-IN.....

Sunday morning June 24th dawned clear but overcast with winds to 25 kts plus. Two early arrivals on Sat were the most distant flyers, Denis Morin, Montreal, Canada and Hal Lyons Lewiston, Me. By 10 AM Sunday the weather had not improved, but Wally Powell of Clinton, CT arrived and this was the begining of the gathering which totaled eleven before the day was over. One thing that impressed Jim Jenkins (sponsor of the fly-in) was that everybody is devoted to the Piper Vagabond. I would like to thank my parents and girlfriend who made it all possible to get the fly-in off the ground, and especially thanks to all the Vag owners who braved the winds and clouds to make this event a true fly-in, because without the Vags there wouldn't be much of a fly-in. the fly-in was well worth the effort and I look forward to better weather and a larger turn out next year. The photos were provided by Jim Jenkins and Dave Harmon .



Jim Jenkins turning up  
4534H in 1970 prior to  
rebuild

Editors Comment... it is great to see these flyins for Vags growing, the second annual Wisc Vag fly-in took place on 16 Sept 1979 with eleven real Vagabonds, a Wag-A-Bond and a converted Piper Colt with the third wheel at the rear where it belongs, and a Piper Clipper, Terry Railing says it didn't take long for the bragging and hasseling to take place and a Vag really looks good doing loops. Eleven seems to be the magic number as both fly-ins had that number this year, we hope to have a west-coast Vag fly-in in the spring in Washington State as Wash and Ore have the big populations out here. Four Vags made the Antique Aircraft Assn. Fly-in in Blakesburg, Iowa Aug 26-27-Jim Jenkins, Dick Cooper, Bob Kumferman and 4402H which has new owners. Jim took the following with 4534H Best Vag Award, Best East Coast Antique of the Year, and Iowa Chapter Choice Award for the little flat four cylinder award.



Another view of the East Coast  
gang at Ansonia Field, Conn

To the right is a view of  
Jim Jenkins next Vagabond  
well along, he says it will  
fly next year to the fly-ins  
it is very original with  
exception of the rear D  
windows, it is a PA-17 N4811H



FROM THE PENNSYLVANIA ALLEGHENIES TO THE  
PRAIRIES OF MINNESOTA IN A LIGHT AIRPLANE  
by Craig Aurand  
PA-15 Ser #302

June 11, 1978, Aurand Airport, Big Ridge, PA---It certainly was great to be home for a few days. In fact I wasn't overly enthusiastic about leaving home to return to the lonely Sylvan Prairie. A career decision can have its drawbacks but life continues just the same.

My bags are packed and the plane has been found safe and airworthy. Hopefully the pilot is likewise. There are light winds from the NW and visibility is about 8 miles with considerable haze. The last farewells are said, hugging complete and of course the camera clicks, doesn't every monumental flight start with pictures? Dad pulls the prop through and the engine starts on the second swing, not bad. The take off is uneventful as was hoped so I come back and buzz the folds at home. With a waggle of the wings I climb out and take up a course for my first check point, Belleville. The navigation is a cinch so far, however the haze and bumpy air are both getting worse, there is another check point, Spangler in Cambria Co. Indiana should be coming into view soon, these power lines should take me there. The compass is reading anywhere from N to W so I put little faith in it. There seem to be a lot of quarries around here not marked on the map, these maps are noted for mistakes. Time passes and I am obviously not where I should be. The combination of rough air and a blurr in my navigation does not really make me feel to great. Oh well I have lots of fuel. On the horizon appears a town that must be in Indiana, I think I can see IUP's dormitories, can't I? I realize that this isn't Indiana like it is supposed to be. A quick scan at the map doesn't help a lot. That high school does look familiar, didn't we play a basketball game there once? It sort of looks like...but that can't be cause I'm too far south for that but the letters painted on the local airport confirms my suspicions. I am over Punxsutawney home of some famous groundhog. So I collect my wits and the map and pick out a railroad that leads to the Allegheny River which should get me back on course. It is amazing but the air now seems a lot smoother and I feel a lot better. Well that was only a 15 minute disorientation, this area has nothing but quarries, a good bit of timber and some very poor farms. Not many steep mountains but some kinda rugged country. The open pit coal mines certainly don't leave a nice picture. Upon reaching the Allegheny without further incidents, I find a combination of boats, skiers, and power plants. The river cuts a very steep bank in these hills. At least this unplanned detour gave me the opportunity to see Ford City and Kittanning for the first time. I've been flying two hours now and could use a break, so McVillage airport is selected which is a small 2300' grass strip located on a hill right above the river, there are gliders and planes everywhere, it's really busy down there. Lots of people just there watching the planes, something you don't see at home. I get gas and call home to report in, reluctantly I tell that I detoured through Punxy and my Mother asked if there was some reason for that, of course there was, I was lost. How's that for instilling confidence and assurance in your family. It is getting to be hot and sticky, must be 90° and the ole Vag is climbing like a sick dumptruck. A westerly heading takes us over the Ohio River at Rochester, there are lots of coal powerplants and steel mills everywhere. The river is filled with pleasure boats and barges, the air is hazy and filled with smoke. I follow the Ohio SW avoiding the many stacks and towers, not over them, but around them. At Wellsville I follow a railroad and powerline



leading to Canton, Ohio. The division between PA and Ohio is very plain, PA drops away very rapidly from hills to Ohio's flat land. This is definitely farming country, dairy, some swine and a few laying houses. The farms are well kept with a lot of Harvestore and concrete silos. A lot of wheat froze out in this area last year, all of the low spots in the fields are full of weeds, no wheat. Visibility is great and I can see for miles. I never realized the mountains held the smog and haze so. The countryside is quite interesting but would be dull for someone not interested in agriculture. At Canton I land at Martin Airport north of town gas up and check the weather, the local hanger fliers are attracted by the Vagabond. The weather is reported good except for some winds so I press on to Kenton where the lodging and meals are very reasonable rather than stay in Canton. On departure I pick up my longest nav aid, Route 30. There is lot of field work going on for a Sunday, this is definitely grain country. Every town has an elevator, mostly Purina, Landmark Coop, and Wayne Feeds. The road and railroad are super straight and stretches out endlessly. I now have a 25mph SW wind and am crabbing about 20 degrees to stay on course. There are lots of open fields to use in the event of an emergency so I fly at about 500' so I can see the model numbers of the tractors. Massey Ferguson and John Deere seem most common. At Wooster I try to find Ohio State's Ag experiment station but can't. It's a very pretty evening to fly, the wind is constant so it is very smooth. Steering clear of the Mansfield control area I fly over a lake just covered with sailboats, a very peaceful scene. The freeway around Mansfield is just packed with traffic, it's sure nice to be above all that mess. As long as the weather is good this sure beats driving. Ohio continues to be the same, grain fields and elevators. As interested as I am this can get boring. The plains are a very dead scene. Either the water tower or the grain elevator boasts the towns name which is helpful but it is hard to get lost when flying 500' AGL along a major highway. Instead of climbing to go over the small towns I just fly around them, this uses less fuel anyway. I compute my ground speed to be about 60 mph, the airspeed indicates 82. Luckily there is little traffic on Rt 30 to embarrass my slow progress. Following the railroad into Kenton I fly directly into the wind, the leaves on the trees are flat but the plane flies so smooth, but things sure go slow. Hardin Co. airport is desolate, I circle and have one of the best wheel landings ever, Katherine and Clayton have been waiting for 5 min so at least someone saw that terrific landing. Certainly is nice to have relatives all over to take over at night. Landed at 8 PM with 6 hours flying I'm tired and my nice new seat is awfully hard. We ate supper and visited till the news and weather came on. The weather report indicates that I might have to skirt around some thunderstorms in the morning, just a narrow frontal system. After breakfast and a thermos full of coffee Clayton takes me to the airport. With a freshly fueled plane I depart at 8 AM, circle Kramers on my way to Rt 30, and it's a nice morning to fly, not so rough and the visibility is good. There is a very dark area to the far West however. I have now given up on the compass for it is at least 20° off, someday I'll get around to correcting that problem. Western Ohio drones on and finally I cross into Indiana. I can see absolutely no difference in the two states. This area is grain country but the farms are not as well kept, lots of machinery just sitting outside. The sky is now overcast with a 4,000' ceiling, the weather is not bad enough to cause me to stop at Fort Wayne so on to Warsaw. About 10 miles west of Fort Wayne things begin to look worse, the sky is now quite dark and I abandon all thoughts of reaching Warsaw. There is a small grass field here somewhere and I begin earnestly looking for it, if this search fails I will race back to Fort Wayne. No Mother, I am not rattled or shook, I still have control of the situation. The airport in quest is spotted and I immediately start an



approach from two miles out, how could one miss this place? The barn, house, hangars, and grain bins all have orange rooves. It is just starting to rain as I touch down and by the time I taxi to the buildings it is really RAINING. Hard rain on the fabric wings make a lot of noise. I get soaked while tying the plane down. An instructor and student who landed just ahead of me are in the hangar, at least that gives me someone to talk to, but they soon leave for home and I go to the house to call home. Mother was quite concerned as expected but somehow she still maintains confidence in her young pilot. This was my first encounter with a thunderstorm and it certainly broaden my awariness. Upon returning to the hangar I find some interesting contents, this is no ordinary airport. Not only does it have fuel and instructors but there are two John Deere 130 HP tractors, green combine and lots of other machinery. Apparently this airport is nothing more than a fancy grass strip, I'm sorry the owner isn't around to chat with. This farmer is not doing to bad, owns a mooney and a Cessna 150, times are tough all over. After checking the weather having some coffee and cake the sky looks safe and legal enough for me. I decided to return to Fort Wayne for some good old 80 oct and a specific weather briefing, about 5 miles out the sky goes solid IFR and I make another 180 and head for Warsaw. I did hit a few sprinkles but nothing exciting. Again Rt 30 and some powerlines take me right to the airport. Warsaw is a big fancy airport but I elect to land on a grass cross runway. Obviously this airport doesn't service vintage aircraft too often. They don't have any 80 and you don't taxi up to the pumps but a tank truck comes to you. It sure feels good parking between two Cessna 310's, Flight Service reports light sprinkles but rapid clearing to the West. Sure enough visibility improves along with the light rain that is encountered, nothing to worry about. All of a sudden the sky is clear but the winds are picking up, ground speed is now down to 55mph. It is not only a good idea but the law, a panel truck serves as my companion for about 50 miles, a passenger train offers a race, the train surges ahead between towns but I catch up when it slows down for the towns, I call it a draw. We separate when it heads into Gary and I stick with the roads. So this is what they call pollution. The area around Gary is filled with smoke and haze and stinks. I had heard that Gary would be the worst spot on the trip. Not to be a do gooder ecologist but this area is very sickening. I guess we need industry also. Surprisingly enough the factories and towns are surrounded with farms. Over Chicago Heights someone turned on the lights, and all of a sudden I burst into an absolutely clear blue sky. Turning and looking back at the smog the clouds and smoke create a very distinct wall, it was amazing. My concrete navigator is now accompanied by three railroad tracks. It is hard to get lost, the area is completely industrialized, no farmland anywhere. I land at a small grass field called Wilhelm SW of Joliet, it didn't look to active but there looked like a Vagabond parked there. What I thought was a Vag from the air was a homebuilt. No fuel available so I head north to Lewis Lockport N of Joliet. Lots of oil and gas refineries here, this airport must be the private airport for suburban Chicago. Hangars and private planes everywhere. Lunch here consisted of a can of pop and some peanuts, my stomach is not to hungry probably cause i'm so keyed up. A thunderstorm is passing south of the airport so I wait till it is clear, once again I find the familiar highway and head west. This area is more diversified, grain is most prevalent but there is also hay and dairy, and this scene remains the same for miles and miles. I thought central Minnesota was drab. Its getting rough now and I'm glad I didn't eat much for lunch.



Rock Falls appears and I decide to land for a little fuel and to decide if I should stay or fly on. It is now 4pm and this is another big airport not used to my type, I taxi up to the fuel pump and part and after getting out discover that this is jet fuel and I have parked in front of the local commuter line terminal, tough they will get over it, I'm not in the road. Again the fuel truck rumbles up and I take a whole 6 gal. I can tell that I am among the elite brand of pilots for no one even asks what I am flying. Since this place is not the most hospitable I decide to fly some more. It is about 4:30 so I have plenty of daylight and can cover 100 miles before 6, Plateville, Wis looks like a good place to go and it should have some services available for it is a college town. The terrain so changes as I fly West. The plains change into rolling hills and primarily hay and dairy country. By this time I have been following Rt 30 for approx 600 miles, soon I will change nav aids to the Mississippi River, Man is it big at first glance, must be a mile wide at this point. There is much more timberland near the river, the river will be my nav aid into Brainerd except for a detour around Minneapolis. Branching from the Miss I find a powerline that leads into Platteville. A lot of quarries in the area and I'm not sure what they are quarrying. Before heading into Plateville I cross the river into Iowa. Now I can say I flew over five states in one day; Ohio, Indiana, Ill Iowa, and Wis. Not to bad for and old slow airplane. Plateville (Grant Co) airport is fairly busy, lots of student activity and transient traffic. The operator is an older fellow that appreciates old planes like this one he is very friendly and gives me good service, I am given the use of the airport courtesy car and head to town for a motel and supper. First over night expenses, no relatives here. Weather looks good for the morrow and I decide to sleep in to 6AM which will give me plenty of time to cover the remaining 325 miles. Tuesday begins as a perfect day to fly, no wind or clouds. I have to wait to takeoff at 7 Am for a forage harvester and a wagon to clear the runway, some farmer makes hay up to the runway edge. I pass over lots of hay fields one field must have had 75 acers raked, silos and dairy cows everywhere. it is a very pretty area with all the rolling hills and the river, lots more interesting than the previous flat lands. Progressing farther north the Miss. River cuts a deeper slice into the earth. the bluffs are at least 150' high in many places, flying at 500' above the river, between the bluffs is a most scenic and awesome picture of the whole trip. Barges haul coal up and down the river to the many powerplants along the river, there are many towers and powerlines to keep the flyer alert. It is nice and calm, but I finally have my first tailwind of about 15mph and now my ground speed has actually reached 100 mph, astounding. Upon entering Minnesota again Winona looks like a good place to land not only for 6 gal of gas but to kill time before getting into Brainerd, here I do find a PA-17 tied down. It's condition is not that great but it does have radios and a generator. Someone said that the owner starts it at half throttle and has come close to seeing it take away without him. The airport operator had been to Lock Haven to ferry SuperCubs and knows where Lewistown is (that's home). They didn't have 80 so I took on some 100LL. heading out again into this perfect day, and finally after flying the midwest I have seen no turkeys until about 50 miles E of St Paul. It looks like a group of confinement barns. Again I land not out of actual necessity but to check out a small interesting airport. Benson airport has many old Pipers and Taylorcrafts plus a lot of gliders. The owner was very glad to talk to me since he had owned some Vagabonds years ago and hadn't seen one for quite some time. His airport was a collection of lots of junk may be a good spot to hunt for airplane parts in the future. Have to be alert leaving Benson to avoid Mpls TCA, don't want any airliners to get



in my way! Once again I pick up the Mississippi to follow to Brainerd. Flat lands again with lot of hay and corn. As to e expected I see a lot of lakes and even some turkey farms. there are a lot of irrigation systems running, mostly on corn but some ofn potatoes. My tailwind has deserted me and fickled into a headwind once again. Soon I can pick out landmarks that look familiar, this trip is ending way to fast, over Little Falls I circle Linbergh's home, I don't know how he did it, his plane must have had softer seats than this hard one I have. At 1,200 ' I can just pick out the turkey barns at the home I have chosen via my career. At least I can pick out something silver flashing in the horizon, now I have to stay east of the river so I will av oid Camp; Ripley, I sure don't need the Nat'l Gaurd after me. The area is getting more and more like Pillager, sand jackpines and poor farms. I head out toward the farm and circle the place I don't go very near or I will scare the turkeys. Heading for the Brainerd airport fot the final stop I think what fun this trip has been and that I would really like to do it again. The weather really went to peices the next day in Pennsylvania and Minnesota so someone was definitely looking sfter me. I saw a lot of the country that one can't see while driving. Upon landing the lineboy is amazed that I flew so far in That with no radios. I am very fortunate to have the opportunity to be able to fly a vintage airplane with some personality. I am also extremely gratefull to my parents for putting up with all my frustrations and moods while recovering the plane and for letting me have the plane out here in the Minnesota plains, your support and tolerance were unbounding and I thank you so very much.



Craig's Vagabond  
4530H

Craig also says...I've had some problems with the engine this past year first the exhaust manifold conectors on cyl 1 and 3 corroded off. Called Lycoming for blueprints which received a laugh from thier service dept. finally took the worn pieces and headed for a machine shop where we made 4 sleeves out of stainless steel. With some dry ice they screwed right into place, not approved mfg, but better than original. Later some carbon wedged into the oil pressure regulator giving me pressure well over red line. A crochet hook works just perfect to loosen up the piston and remove the carbon. The sales girl looked at me strange when I needed a crochet hook to fix my airplane, but it works.

The Vagabond didn't fly much during the winter since most days were way below zero and we had 70" of snow. I guess a guy can't fly all the time. The Vag is hangared with two Mooneys, a Navajo, a Navion and a Cessna 411, guess who gets shoved in the back all the time. I just found a new Schenuit 800 X 4 tire and tube, the fellow had no use for it anymore and only wanted \$10, not bad was it.



The following persons donated to the kitty to cover printing and postage..

Russ Hawks	Geo Bickel	R. C. Peterson	Sarah Kaeiser
Don Goold	H. P. Buller	Robert Morris	Floyd Lafler
Gary France	James Pinkerton	T. L. Tomac	Don & Jim Randolph
Phil Dodds	Tom O'Loughlin	John Riley	Ed Busse
Ron Peck	Dick Ervin	Billy Chandler	Dell Haverland
Denis Morin	R. W. Cooper	Rich Revoir	Ken Knight
Earl Ewing			

You will note that the folding job went one more fold this time to meet new postal regulations or the News would cost 22¢ each for postage.

A good place to get your AN hardware is BON AERO, 11644 Pearl St, Northglenn, CO 80233. Send for their list, they have good prices and excellent service.

If you need any fittings for a Vagabond they are all available from Wag-Aero the fire wall for the Wag-A-Bond is also an exact replacment for the Vagabond and is nicely made.

Following is available from H & P AERO, 448 C Ave, Coronado, CA 92118

reproductions of PA-15 and 17 flight manuals	\$1.50 ea	
reproductions of original Vagabond parts manual	\$5.00 ea	
reproductions of original Piper PA-20 parts manual	\$13 ea	
List of all registered Vagabond owners PA-15 & 17	\$3	} or \$10 for all three list
List of all registered Clipper owners PA-16	\$4	
List of all registered Pacer owners PA-20	\$4	

## PLAN Now 000

### NORTH WESTERN VAGABOND FLY-IN

28 & 29 June 1980 at the FLYING B located 14 nautical miles 93 degrees from Olympia VORTAC on the Seattle Sectional, this is home for Ron and Hillary Peck and their two Vagabonds. There is plenty of room to camp and there will be a Spaghetti Supper for those arriving on Sat.

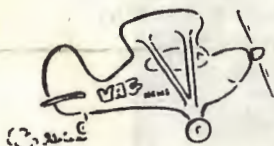
More details and info in May Vagabond News.....

#### COVER PHOTO...

Ben and Jan Cooper of Manor Farm Cottage, Sherborne St. John, Basingstroke Hampshire, England with two of their prize possessions



Dick Wagners PA-17 N4681H  
With a Wag-Aero Wing-A-bago  
over the right wing.



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