

CLASSIC 310 FLY-IN

by Bob Thomason, Editor



While small - only three classic 310s and four other Twin Cessnas - this Fly-In was one of the most enjoyable I've ever attended. Guy Maher, TTCF member and owner of a 1956 310, was the organizer and host extraordinaire. Members Rich Disciullo [from Albany, NY] and Bud and Pat Fields [based west of Toronto, Canada] flew down in their gorgeous birds and the show was on!

"The idea for this was just a selfish whim - and it's all your fault, Bob!" Maher explained. "When you introduced me to Rich this past spring, we hit it off immediately and have been phoning, emailing and texting ever since - swapping stories and assistance regarding our respective '56 310's. Quite simply, I wanted more classic 310 friends." He added, "A couple of other owners had planned to attend but were overtaken by last minute events. But I know it's only a matter of time before we get together, as well."

The first thing you need to know is that any of these three airplanes could win awards at Oshkosh. They were jaw-dropping in their beauty and all the time they were on the ramp, people crowded around them. It truly was a special event. While not an official TTCF function (it was a Guy Maher Production) I was honored to be allowed to attend!

We gathered Friday afternoon at the Statesville, NC airport (KSVH). This airport is located in one of the most beautiful parts of NC, in the Catawba River Valley at the foothills of the Appalachian mountains, and the weather was absolutely perfect. Guy had everyone taxi their airplanes to the far corner of the ramp for pictures. We gawked and talked until the sun was

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low in the sky and then all headed off to dinner at a local diner. Don Burton, a local TTCF member and 310R owner, joined us. Don is one of the most senior pilots at US Airways and it was fun to watch such an accomplished pilot act like a kid in a candy store around these amazing airplanes and their owners.

Saturday was the big day with a full agenda. We met out at the airport around 9:30 and people had already started to gather. It started out informally but Guy is nothing if not organized, and he had each owner stand by his airplane and give us background info: When did you buy it? Who from? What have you done to it?, etc. As we met, we had more Twin Cessna visitors. Two were 310Ns and one of those was truly exceptional. TTCF Member Terry Robertson is from Ft. Lauderdale but happened to be in the area. His airplane is not only the best 310N I've ever seen, it is one of the best Twin Cessnas I've ever seen. I hope to do an article on it soon.

Before long it was time for lunch and Guy had a nice adventure planned. The three airplanes would fly about 30 minutes west to the Rutherford County airport (KFQD) which has a nice restaurant on the field, the 57A Cafe. Erring on the side of caution, this airport was a backup to one with a much shorter runway where the crosswinds were gusting to 19 kts. So diverting to the airport with a longer, wider runway made good sense.

I didn't join them, but they reported it was a great flight and there was even live music. Guy reported, "We all flew over the airport together to enter the pattern and as we did, the guy on Unicom said 'What is this, an invasion of the tuna tanks?!'" Joining Guy was his mechanic Jones Barnes. Rich's friend, Skip Demontozon, accompanied him while brothers Bud and Pat Field filled out the formation. Speaking of formation, Guy maneuvered his 310 around the other two while Jones



Left to Right People: Guy Maher, Bud Fields, Pat Fields, Rich Disciullo and Skip Demontozon. Left to Right Airplanes: Guy's 1956 310, Bud & Pat's 1958 310B and Rich's 1956 310.



Three classic 310s and their owners gather on a gorgeous weekend in the Appalachian foothills for fun, flying, eating and storytelling.

used Guy's camera to fire off a few air-to-air shots.

The group returned in time to freshen up and head out to Guy's house for a nice dinner prepared by Guy and his lovely wife, Staci. My wife Sue and I joined them. Guy had already downloaded and processed the photos from the day and handed everyone their own copies on a CD. Wow! But the Grand Finale came after dinner when Guy fired up an episode of Sky King on his big screen TV. "Out of the western sky..." And we were kids again.

Later Guy reminded us, "It's so easy for us to become overly consumed with problems of ownership of these fine airplanes when we should be concentrating more on why we own them. They are fun to fly and great traveling machines. And there is nothing like a group of owners – small or large – getting together to provide those needed 'booster shots' that remind us that owning them is truly worth the effort."

Guy is one of the more interesting pilots I've ever met. He's been flying most of his life. He spent time working for



Rich Disciullo tells the group all about his '56 310.

Cessna Aircraft in the mid to late 70s. As a liaison to the dealerships, he flew most of our airplanes when they were new. He came to know Kirby Grant, the actor who played Sky King in the 50s and 60s. They became friends and Guy used to fly him around to his professional appearances in the 310R that Guy owned at the time.

Personally, Guy has owned numerous airplanes over the years including Cessna Cardinals, Commanders, Robinson helicopters, two 310Rs, and two tuna-tank 310s. Professionally, he currently flies an EC135 helicopter for a local air ambulance program. And if that wasn't enough, Guy also has a flight instruction business and an aircraft brokerage business. Oh, I forgot to mention that he does video and media production as well. Whew! If anyone wants to contact Guy, he's happy to talk to you. He's on the Forum and his email is guy@laniermedia.com.

As I mentioned, the airplanes at this Fly-In were exceptional. You can read about Guy's in the December 2012 issue of The Twin Cessna Flyer. I hope to do full stories on both Rich's airplane as well as Bud and Pat's, although the Field brothers' airplane was featured previously in the April 2009 issue.

Also by the time you read this, I hope to have a short movie of some of the event highlights up on the Events Page of the website.

At the Fly-In conclusion Maher commented, "This was great. I had a blast! And more important, these guys also had a great time and that was most

important to me." He continued, "They put in a lot of time and expense to come down here with no idea as to how this weekend would really go. I didn't want to let them down. I'm thinking this won't be the last time we tuna-tank 310 owners get together." Pat Field wrote, "We had a fantastic time meeting everyone, and the hospitality [Guy] and Staci provided was second to none! It will be a cherished memory for both myself and Bud."

A final note: I wish TTCF had the resources to conduct these types of "mini Fly-Ins" all over the country but with the magazine, tech support, seminars, webinars and Annual Convention we simply don't. But I know there are others like Guy out there who will pick up the banner. If you are one, or hear of one, let me know. I'd be happy to publicize the event in the magazine and on the website.

Last but not least, see more Fly-In pictures on page 28.



Fly-In host Guy Maher tells the story of his 310- the second classic he's owned.

CLASSIC 310 FLY-IN SCENES *Sept. 2013*

Photos by Guy Maher



Top Left: Rich Discullio and his 1956 Cessna 310. Top Right: Thirty years of 310's - the 310 to the 310R. The R belongs to Don Burton, TTCF member and US Airways Captain. Left: N3641D in flight over the NC mountains during lunch fly-out. Below and Third Row: More views of Rich's gorgeous airplane. Note the original paint scheme with the N number on the top of the right wing. It's also on the bottom of the left wing. This airplane is a true 'original.'



Rich's airplane was originally owned by General Electric. The picture to the left shows all the airplanes GE owned in the 1950's. That's Rich's 310 front and center! He found this picture in the Aviation Museum in Schenectady NY. Today, 57 years later, the airplane still only has about 2,300 hours on the airframe. Look for a more complete article in a future TTCF issue. We should all be grateful to Rich and others who preserve these wonderful pieces of aviation history.



Top Left: Pat and Bud Fields and their 1958 Cessna 310B, the "Bullet." Owners of Brantford Air Centre in Brantford, Ontario, they have spared no effort to make this airplane truly exceptional. They bought the airplane from a widow who wanted a good home for her husband's airplane. The Field brothers did not disappoint her! Inside and out, C-GHDK has been restored to showpiece status.



Top Right and Middle Row: Pat fires up the Bullet and prepares for the Saturday lunch fly-out to the 57 Alpha cafe. The inflight photo was taken from Guy's airplane. Bud and Pat told us they polish their airplane about once a year. It's a two-day process and costs over \$1,000 per polish. Needless to say, every flight is followed by a wipedown and cleaning and the airplane is hangared! Left: Guy Maher in his '56 310. See the December 2012 issue for a full report and more pictures of his airplane. Unlike the Fields, Guy's plane was in good shape when he bought it, having already been restored and upgraded. This is Guy's second classic 310. I don't think I've ever met anyone who loves these airplanes more than Guy.



Above: Who says older airplane must have older avionics? Not these two 310s. To the left is Guy's panel. If you include the ADS-B service he gets on his iPad from his Stratus 2 unit, there's not much more he could wish for. Bud and Pat Field's panel is shown on the right. Wow! And what you can't see is the QuietFlight cabin noise cancelling system and external video cameras that display on screens built into the back seat headrests. The Fields own their own maintenance and avionics facility in Brantford.