

## A Brief History of Experimental Aircraft Association Chapter 287 1967 / 2009

**Our Chapter was originally known as The “Atlantic City Boardwalk Chapter”**

And we received our charter from EAA Headquarters in 1967

**Our first president was Tony Spezio.** Tony was an A&E mechanic employed by the FAA at NAFEC in Pomona, NJ. **Tony** designed and built the “Spezio Tuholer” a rakish low wing two place airplane also known as the “Spezio Sport” .

Among the **Charter members** of the Chapter were **Gene Beatty, Roy Gilmartin and Walt Hoster.**

Chapter meetings were held at the **Atlantic City Airport** until January 1969 when member **Lou Filling** offered the Chapter the use of his shop which was located at his home in Absecon

Also in 1969, Chapter members began building an airplane. It was a Corbin Ace, which incidentally is not yet finished. After a succession of owners, it is currently owned by Chapter member Jim Toland.

The use of **Lou Filling’s** shop ended after a visit from **the fire insurance inspector**, who objected to welding equipment and an oil heater on the premises.

**Charlie Ricketts**, also a resident of Absecon, volunteered the use of an **unused chicken coop**, and after some renovations it became the Chapter meeting place and workshop; work on the Corbin Ace project continued.

**The Chapter was incorporated in in the State of New Jersey in July 1971**

During the intervening years the Chapter’s Atlantic City identity slowly faded as it moved from the early locations in Atlantic County south to Cape May County. First at Ocean City Airport, Then to Richard Smith’s Tic Toc Airport in Palermo, Followed by a move to Walt Hoster’s new home in Marmora and now to its current location at Woodbine Airport. Where, incidentally, **the first Chapter 287 Fly-in** was held **forty years ago** on **May 4, 1969**

### **Chapter Activities**

- \* In 1977, EAA Headquarters constructed a replica of Charles Lindberg’s “**Spirit of Saint Louis**” to celebrate the fiftieth anniversary of his solo flight from New York to Paris by retracing his flight around the United States which followed that epic achievement. Bader Field in Atlantic City was one of the stops on the original trip and Chapter 287 hosted that visit. The Chapter coordinator for this event was **Walt Hoster.**

### **Chapter 287 has traveled**

- \* **We made Group Flights** at various times to various destinations including Tangier Island, Virginia, Delmar, Maryland, Rehoboth Beach, Delaware and to 3-M airport in Bristol, Pennsylvania. (*Sad note, three of those airports are now closed*)
- \* **We sponsored Numerous bus trips** to the National Air & Space Museum restoration Facility at Silver Hill, MD

- \* As well as several trips to the National Air & Space Museum in Washington, DC
- \* And we have also visited the Udvar Hazy section of the National Air & Space Museum at Dulles International Airport
- \* **Last but far from least**, Chapter members travel each summer to Oshkosh, Wisconsin for the annual week long EAA AirVenture

### **Chapter 287 has been involved**

- \* We Participated in **Trans Fair** at Atlantic City Airport in **1977**
- \* We participated in the **EAA East Coast Fly-in** at Wilmington, Delaware for several years
- \* We are active Participants in and co-sponsors of the annual **Ocean City Airport Festival**

### **Chapter 287 has been proactive**

- \* **In 1986 and 1987** . in cooperation with the **Boy Scouts of America**, we organized and conducted weekend Fly-in's and **Camporees** at Cape May County Airport.  
**In 1987** we hosted **seventeen Boy Scout Troops** from Cape May and Atlantic Counties for a three day weekend and during that encampment we helped over one hundred Scouts to obtain their **Aviation Merit Badges** with hands on classes in the theory of flight followed by orientation flights in a De Haviland Dash Seven fifty seat regional air liner provided to us by South Jersey Airways.
- \* **We have been active in the Young Eagles Program since its inception in 1992**  
Our first young Eagles Events were organized by **Ike Harris**
- \* **In 1994 We partnered** with the Woodbine Port Authority in the organization, development and production of the original **"Festival of Friends"**
- \* **In 2002 We organized** and conducted several **"Flying Start" Ground Schools** at Cape May County Airport which helped to prepare over **seventy five** interested people from the surrounding communities to take the FAA written test for their Private Pilot's License.  
Those Ground Schools were inspired, organized and conducted by **Bill Craft**.
- \* **In 2007 we sponsored** a graduating Absegami high school student to attend the EAA Air Academy at Oshkosh Wisconsin
- \* **We have hosted** several Fly-in Pig Roasts, thanks to the cooperation and generosity of the Woodbine Port Authority
- \* **Our Fly-in Breakfasts**, held several times each summer, attract pilots and planes from New Jersey, Delaware and Pennsylvania and have the reputation of being the best in the area.

**None of this** could have taken place without dedicated **leadership** and hard work. Over the past forty two years we have been fortunate to have had many outstanding Chapter Presidents, men like Tony Spezio, John Tatham, Fred Flynn, Fred Boyle, and now **Jim Romano** - - - - - **Let's greet our Chapter President**

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