



Mark Schaden's gorgeous Commonwealth

# Society for the Preservation And Restoration of Skyrangers

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## In this Issue

In spite of best intentions, no, I didn't make it to Ottumwa for the 1999 Antique Airplane Fly In. Eric Rearwin, a couple of Skyrangers, and a few more Skyranger pilots did, however - see Eric's report below for photos and details. Me? I was on the ground with a damaged prop. Nothing too serious, it turned out, but we couldn't get it fixed in time to make the pilgrimage to Mecca this year. See below for details of this too.

Didn't accomplish nearly as much as I'd planned this summer. Not enough flying, not enough issues of SPARS, not getting around to having an East-by-Midwest Skyranger fly-in.... Ah well, there's time. Until then, please keep sending me your stories, pictures and questions. I can publish this newsletter until I die of old age, but unless I keep getting new Skyranger info, it's going to get stale pretty fast. Many thanks, and keep the pointy end forward! -David

## Another Skyranger Takes to the Skies

This issue's masthead bears the beautiful result of Mark Schaden's year-long restoration effort on N73801 on its first fly-by. Those of you on the SPARS email list have become acquainted with Mark, who bought a basketcase Skyranger just over a year ago. In fact, the previous issue of SPARS carried a note from him asking for some advice on restoring his bird. Mark's no newcomer to aviation, though most of his air time these days is measured out in Mach numbers in a LearJet rather than miles per hour.



Mark's nicely restored panel



From humble beginnings...

Well, Mark works quickly. Through a lot of diligence and a little help from other Skyranger pilots, he's has now become an expert on the aircraft, and to show for it, he has N73801 (serial #1861), a gorgeous restoration which took to the air on September 20th. A future issue should contain a more in-depth story from Mark, but for the moment, he offers special thanks to fellow SPARS member Bob Riffle for "his never ending support and pieces parts that he sent me....he truly made the project complete!" Photos of Mark's project are available on the web at <<http://www.flightinfo.com/skyranger>>

## Commonwealth Hats!

When Wayne showed up to help me put '395 through its paces for the annual, he was sporting a quite nifty cap embroidered with the Commonwealth logo in full color. I was impressed by the detail and quality of the logo, and immediately offered to trade my airplane for the cap. Well, no I didn't, but I was impressed, and asked how I could get one, too. Wayne tells me he had a friend make it up for him and is happy to make some up for other Commonwealth owners. They've got the Commonwealth logo and the name Skyranger below it - Wayne's also has his N-number, but he can't get them all customized, so you'll have to add your own if you want it. Cost is \$18 + \$4.50 shipping. Contact Wayne at at <w.a.forshey@worldnet.att.net>, by phone at 317-891-0803, or by post at 10274 Thames Court West, Indianapolis, IN 46229. (No word on a Rearwin logo, though I'd bet if we got enough folks together, we could muster up one of those, too).



## Skyranger A/P, IA available in Midwest

As mentioned above, 33395, my own Skyranger, has just been put the paces of its annual by Wayne Forshey, a charter member of this group. I'm fairly uneducated when it comes to aircraft mechanics, so expertly Wayne coached me through all the bits of the inspection that I could help with. It was a great experience - most folks who I've had work on the Skyranger would rather not have the owner get in the way, but with Wayne's expertise and guidance, we gave 33395 the most thorough annual I think it's had in years.

Unfortunately, one problem the inspection revealed was a circular groove my spinner had slowly been carving in my prop over the past couple of years. It wasn't deep, but there wasn't any technical data available from Sensenich on "acceptable repairs" to the hub. My calls to the company were stonewalled - they wouldn't let me speak to an engineer; but kept repeating their mantra "We recommend that you remove the prop and send it to us for inspection. No, we can't give you any numbers over the phone. We recommend that you remove the prop...."

Wayne somehow managed to get through to the engineering department, and got the hard data - the groove could be filed out and burnished, as long as a minimum hub thickness was not exceeded. Whew! \$40 to a local shop for an hour's work was a lot quicker and cheaper than sending my prop to Sensenich. I still ended up missing Ottumwa, but I've got an airworthy airplane again.

While working on the Skyranger, Wayne mentioned that he'd like to try to build up a Skyranger clientele in the Midwest. He's just moved to Indianapolis, but travels extensively in the region - Ohio, West Virginia, who knows where else. As a very very happy customer, I offered to publicize his availability in the next issue of SPARS. If you'd like an IA who doesn't freak out at the sight of something that isn't a CessnaPiperBeech, and who knows Skyrangers inside out, give Wayne a holler. It was great working with him. You can reach Wayne by email at <w.a.forshey@worldnet.att.net>, by phone at 317-891-0803, or by post at 10274 Thames Court West, Indianapolis, IN 46229.

## Notes from the 1999 AAA/APM Fly-in

By Eric Rearwin

Kudos to the Taylors for organizing another successful fly-in at the Airpower Museum in Blakesburg, Iowa. For those of you who haven't been able to make the trip, I highly recommend it. Again this year, there were upwards of 300 planes, including many Cessna, Great Lakes, Fairchild, Stinson, Waco, and of course several Rearwins. (To see the fly-in photos on the internet, go to <http://www.rearwin.com>). Jeff Spencer (sky1743) made the trip again this year in his Skyranger, as did Lyle Hardman (sky1578) and his dad.

Lyle was good enough to give me a ride in his newly acquired Skyranger. I was very excited because I had only flown in a Skyranger once before (thanks again to David Cohn). As Lyle banked smoothly over the green Iowa farmlands, I could appreciate the simplicity of design of the plane that's over a half a century old. The aircraft was easy to control, and responded well to Lyle's deft piloting skills. The sky was clear of other planes as we cruised over the airfield near the top speed of the Continental engine. Our flight, although brief, was enjoyable and sparked in me a bit of envy for those pilots fortunate enough to own a Skyranger.



The Rearwin Club met, and there were about 20 people in attendance. Among them were Melvin Miller (clo879, sky1557), Dick Weeden (spo406), Doug Sockwell (sky1605), Don Pellegrino, and Dean Kramer (spo601D). Jerry May was also on hand, the owner of Sportster # 502. He is working to restore the plane which he has owned since 1954!

During the meeting, Ken Rearwin recounted several adventures he had while selling airplanes such as landing in a fierce rainstorm outside of Dallas (having flown over the rugged Arbuckle Mountains outside of Oklahoma). Upon landing, a man at the local airport asked, "How's the weather between here and Oklahoma City?" "Terrible", Ken replied. The man then said, "I thought it must be pretty bad because the airlines quit flying." These stories sure give you an idea of the risks inherent in air travel in the 1930's!



Another interesting story is the Rearwin purchase of the LeBlond engine company. In 1937 Rich LeBlond called Rae Rearwin and offered to sell the company. The company had to be sold by December 31 for tax purposes and the previous buyer had dropped out of the negotiations. Rae met with LeBlond officials and purchased the engine company for \$25,000 including inventory. Within 2 months, Rearwin Airplanes received an order from South Africa for \$18,000 worth of engines, recovering most of the initial investment.

Ken also described the sale of 25 planes to the "Aero Club of Iran" in 1940 and the story of the Rearwin Junior that went up for auction last year in Montana.

*The entire audio from the Rearwin Club meeting on the web. The address is:*  
<http://www.rearwin.com/rda/RearwinClub99.rm>

## **Another Restoration in Progress**

Just before Oshkosh, I got a note from Dick Pratt, on behalf of Doc Wething, who's getting himself into what Mark's just gotten himself out of. Perhaps some of the more knowledgeable Skyranger folk could give him some pointers?

*Doc is in the process of stripping the fus to bare bones at which time it will be sand blasted and powder-coated. He would like to be added to the Skyranger newsletter list. Back issues would be greatly appreciated. Doc is looking for a maintenance manual that would show cable routing, lengths, pulley locations, gas line routing, rib stitch spacing etc. Maybe a better name for the reference source would be an "Overhaul Manual" Doc is Duane Wething, 1241 Summit Ave, Detroit Lakes, MN 56501. Doc is EAA# 44496 am I am #43515. I'll be volunteering at the north Admissions Building All of OSK99, Stop By. Appreciate your advice and help. Best regards, Dick*

## Skyranger Ribs

There seems to be a lot of interest in replacing/rebuilding Skyranger ribs. Kyle Hardman (and wife Rebecca) have found a potential source. Kyle writes:

I just got back from the Antique Aircraft Assoc. fly-in in Iowa. While there I got a contact for Skyranger wing ribs. Rick Davis (425.483.6869) makes ribs for the Skyranger. I plan on contacting him to try and buy patterns. I would just as well make the ribs myself. I have not done business with him, so I know nothing about him. If you do contact him, let me know your impressions.

Hope this helps.

Kyle Hardman  
'41 Skyranger N37890

(Kyle and Rebecca recently acquired N37890 from Gene Hyatt in Massachusetts, and flew it home to Texas. We're hoping for a write-up of their trip for a future issue!)

## What is SPARS?

*[A lot of folks are new to the list with this mailing, so I'm including a repeat of an earlier message describing just what SPARS is all about. -dac]* SPARS is a few things: it's a paper newsletter that gets compiled and printed about four times a year. It's also an e-mail discussion list that goes on whenever anyone has a question or anything they'd like to discuss with other Skyranger owners. It's also a Skyranger support network of about 45 people, some of whom know a lot more about their planes than you or I do. Some do metalwork and can fabricate parts. Some have copies of the factory drawings. Some have been flying theirs longer than I've been alive.

### What services does SPARS offer?

**Web** -- Eric Rearwin maintains electronic web pages with information on the whole Rearwin line. He has all the back issues of SPARS archived there, with names and addresses of SPARS members. You can find the Rearwin pages at

<http://www.rearwin.com>

**E-mail** – I manage the “skyrangers” electronic mailing list. This list is maintained for the use of owners and fans of the Rearwin/Commonwealth Skyranger. Its purpose is to allow the exchange of information about Skyrangers.

To send email to the (approximately 25) members of the Skyrangers mailing list, address it to

skyrangers@ai.mit.edu

To subscribe, unsubscribe, or send corrections or complaints, address it to

skyrangers-owner@ai.mit.edu (me, the "owner" of the list).

**Good Old-Fashioned Paper** – I try to compile and send out a “paper” issue of SPARS about four times a year. It generally consists of notes, photos and Skyranger stories people send in, as well as any news I'm able to rustle up myself. I don't ask for any dues to send this out – I only ask for people to send me their stories. Ask me (via mail/phone/email) for old copies of SPARS to see what sort of information we've put together so far. -David

## SPARS Mailing List, October 1999

This list is to be used solely for the purpose of communicating with other Skyranger owners and Skyranger fans on matters directly relating to their aircraft. Any other use could endanger the continued operation of the SPARS newsletter.

I'm sure I've left off some folks and some relevant information. Please let me know if there's anyone or anything I've omitted, by sending me email at <David.Cohn@acm.org> or post to 1347 Malvern Avenue, Pittsburgh PA 15217. Thanks! –David



**Antique Aircraft Association, Route 2, Box 172, Ottumwa IA 52501**

**Zot Barazzotto, 1943 Whitetail Ct., Xenia OH 45385-9112, <zot@erinet.com> 937-429-2119**

**Skyranger 92940**

Former maintainer of the SPARS list. Has all sorts of documents, and a molds for a couple of cowling bits: nosebowl and bottom centerpiece.

**Al Barbuto, 620 Old Windsor Rd, Dalton MA 01226**  
**Skyranger N34135**

Very knowledgeable about all things Skyranger related. Has reworked landing gear fittings.

**Erich Bauer, 3929 Tomahawk Dr, Medway OH 45341, (937) 878-7348 (between 5-9pm EST)**

**Skyranger 92987**

Hasn't started restoration yet; looking for complete windshield and prop, expects to need more things as project progresses.

**Joe Bauer <joe@flyingjoe.com>**

**Don Belcher, 5806 47th St, Tampa FL 33610, (813) 626-5511**

**Skyranger N92900**

Restoring - needs tachometer cluster.

**George Bovenzi, 270 St. Andrews Dr, Rochester NY 14626, (716) 227-0409 <GBovenzi@frontiernet.net>**

**Skyranger N73804**

**Tom Bovington, P.O. Box 670, Helena MT 59624, (406) 227-6792**

**Skyranger N34123**

Panel has original master switch, without the solenoid  
Dick and Valerie Brinkworth, 3633 Road 106, Elizabeth

**CO 80107, (303) 648-3332**

**Skyranger N90684**

Plane is original except for Cleveland brakes (even has original wheel fairings). Has been in the family for 36 years.

**Jon Brosseau, 1638 Randolph Pkwy, Los Altos CA 94024, (650) 965-0540**

**Skyranger 92954**

Has 30 years experience as an aeronautical engineer; looking for drawings, and a copy of the original owner's manual.

**Christopher Brown, 10673 Rainier Ave S, #4, Seattle WA 98178, (206) 772-9667**

**Skyranger N33380**

Has the original Commonwealth factory prototype. Also lots of spares that will only be available after restoration is complete: fuselage with repairable damage, wing hardware, boot cowl, modified panel.

**Marvin Bullis, HC1, Box 57, Tintah MN 56583**

**R.E. Burton/R. Barth, 1209 NE 139th Ave, Vancouver WA 98484, (360) 254-5146**

**Skyranger N90682**

Restoring, looking for picture of original cockpit layout

**Richard Chase, 321 Graben Ln, Rhome TX 76078, (817) 638-2361**

**Skyranger N92941**

Looking for landing light

**David Cohn, 1347 Malvern Ave, Pittsburgh PA 15217, (412) 681-0762 (before 9pm EST)**

**<David.Cohn@acm.org>**

**Skyranger N33395**

Current maintainer of the SPARS newsletter and mailing list. Has copies of original Rearwin and Commonwealth sales literature, factory drawings of exhaust system, other miscellaneous documents.

**Larry A. Farmer, 3996 E. Stimmel Rd, New Cambria, KS 67470-8562, (785) 825-1256 <KXXX24A@Prodigy.Com>**

**Skyrangers N92927 and N92916**

Looking for L&R cowling, including bottom nose bowl-to-firewall piece, and Grimes landing light. Also any info on original paint schemes and colors

**Alex Fodor, 4805 Southwind Ct., Mulberry FL 33860**

**Brad Foltman, 5611 Hill Rd, Boise ID 83703,**

**(208) 342-1679**  
**Skyranger N92828**

**Wayne Forshey, 10274 Thames Court West, Indianapolis, IN 46229**

**Skyranger NC92940**

A&P and IA. Very experienced doing annuals on Skyangers. Has owned 92940 since 1979 - learned to fly and earned license in it. Also owns 3 Interstate Cadets. Looking for anything and everything, especially original advertising literature and blueprints.

**Don Fraser, 400 Rudder Ridge, Seneca SC 29678**

**Ray Freelin, 6713 Weaver Ave, McLean VA 22101, (703) 821-2481 <RayFreelin@aol.com>**

**Skyranger 32398**

Has lots of Skyranger time, +recovering experience.

**Daren Fuller, 10477 Dune Lake Loop SE, Moses Lake WA 98837**

**Jon Goldenbaum, PolyFiber Aircraft Coatings, PO Box 3129, Riverside CA 92519**

Purchased Skyranger project for teaching covering procedures to PolyFiber employees

**John E. Gormican, 980 W. McCormick Rd, Apopka FL 32703 (407) 889-9252**

**Skyranger N92925 (#1651)**

In the midst of a re-cover – hopes to get it flying next year.

**Ken Griffin, 3017 W. Opal, Pasco WA 99301**

**Patrick Groover, 3206 W Joe Sanchez Rd, Plant City FL 33565, (813) 757-6754**

**Skyranger NC 34742**

Metalwork – can repair or build duplicate cowling and other pieces for Skyangers. Looking for instrument panel layout and landing light. Rebuilding wings, looking for fuel transmitter for original 12-gallon tanks.

**Neil Hammond, 8978 Tuttle Creek Rd, Manhattan KS 66503, (785) 485-2838**

**Skyranger N34117**

Has fairly original panel; willing to talk with/send photos.

**Joseph Hannum <j.r.hannum@worldnet.att.net> Skyranger 92988**

In midst of restoration, rebuilding wings.

**Kyle and Rebecca Hardman, 62 W. Hidden Valley, Shady Shores TX 76208, (940) 498-0177**

**<rlhardman@lucent.com>, <kbhardman@prodigy.net>**

**Skyranger 37890**

1941 Skyranger 180, purchased from Gene Hyatt



**Gary P. Henry, 7198 Gum Rd, Carthage MO 64836, (417) 358-1221**

**Skyranger N34703**

**Joel Hornick, 534 Turnpike Rd, Corry PA 16407, (814) 665-6544**

**Skyranger N92906**

Owned since 1965 - all original except prop. Learned to fly and passed checkride in '906.

**Gregory Johnson, RT 316, Greenbush VA 23357, (757) 787-7240**

**Skyranger 92914**

Flying '914 for 12 years, did panel and O-200 installation

**Dennis Katthoeffer, 36059 Providence Rd, Lebanon OR 97355**

**Skyranger N73802**

Has done some modifications, with FAA field approvals, to accommodate tall folk like himself (6'4").

**Douglas Kempf, 4403 NE 290th St, La Center WA 98629, (360) 263-1597**

**Skyranger 33390**

Good knowledge of entire aircraft - totally restored his Skyranger ("best neo-classic" at Arlington '95); has numerous copies of original service bulletins, some diagrams of fuel system and oleo gear strut. Looking for history stuff - new or old articles about Skyangers.

**John Lorence, 853 Cessna St, Independence OR 97351, (503) 838-1292 <JLore56871@aol.com>**

**Skyranger N90697**

New owner. has O-235 conversion and Cleveland brakes

**Brett Lovett, 3128 W. Mount Vernon St, Springfield MO 65802-5206, (417) 832-8195**

**<blovett1@earthlink.net>**

**Skyranger NC67048**

Has copies of many of the engineering drawings - able to make copies of some drawings on a limited basis.

**D. Neal Mallow, HC 32 Box 37B, Upper Tract WV 26866**

**Richard Mangekian, 108 Windsor St, Nashua NH 03063 Skyranger N93253 (#1758)**

Currently being restored as a group project at Boire Field  
**Bolduc Martin, 4020 30th Ave, St. Georges, Quebec,**

Canada G5Y5B7 <mtbolduc@globetrotter.net>



**Harold Miller, 5206 Iris Ct, Ft. Collins CO 80525**

**Thomas Morris, P.O. Box 133, Imlay City MI 48444,  
(810) 724-7495 <tmorris@cardina.net>**

Has a project, hopefully with enough parts for a complete Skyranger; looking for 337s and STCs. Interested in copies of the old SPARS newsletter.

**Tim Mulvey, 31 Exchange St, Lockport, NY 14094**

**Ken Oder, 560 Townhill Road, Taylorsville, KY 40071  
<noken@aol.com>  
Skyranger 92999**

**Leon Orton, 2008 N 600 W, Logan, UT 84321  
<LEONORTON@aol.com>  
Skyranger 32399**

Interested in finding proper prop pitch 175 Skyranger – not seeming to turn 71x46 prop fast enough?

**Jay Parker, 7404 Crosswicks Cir, Fort Worth, TX 76137**

**Paul Pechura, 16156 Shedd Road, Middlefield OH 44062**

**Dale Peterson, 110 Winding Way, Fayetteville GA 30216**

**Jerry Petro, 1105 Lafayette Street, Williamsburg, VA  
23185-2905, (757) 229-4550 <PittsS2A@aol.com>  
Skyranger N34135**

In storage awaiting recover - currently still in Irish linen!

**Carl Prather, 1258 Kottenberg Avenue, San Jose CA  
95125, <carl\_prather@hotmail.com>**

**Eric Rearwin, 2333 Del Monte Dr, San Pablo CA 94806  
<eric@rearwin.com>  
Grandson of Ken Rearwin, maintainer of [www.rearwin.com](http://www.rearwin.com)**

**Jack Reiser, 701 S. Dobson Rd #738, Mesa AZ 85202**

**Bob Riffle, 3527 Shorecliff Dr, Tacoma WA 98422  
<btrif@gte.net>  
Skyrangers 90699, 90680, 67051**

A man with too many Skyrangers. Rebuilding ribs on 90680,

looking for drawings to build rib jig.

**Mark Schaden, 15829 Claridon-Troy Rd, Burton, Ohio  
44021 <mark@modex.com>**

**Skyranger 73801 (#1861)**

Just finished complete restoration of plane, photos at  
[www.flightinfo.com/skyranger](http://www.flightinfo.com/skyranger)

**Tom Scott, 4518-6th NW, Seattle, WA 98107,  
<Thomas.M.Scott@noaa.gov>**

Former owner - restored 33395 from scrap to trophy winner

**Stuart and Kit Smith, 409 N. Sunset Drive, Camano  
Island WA 98292**

**Douglas Sockwell, 1237 Granada, Lewisville TX 75067  
<skyrange@gte.net>**

**Skyranger 33384**

Rebuilding ribs and cowl on otherwise airworthy Skyranger.

**Jeff Spencer, 5035 C.R. 20, Rushsylvania OH 43347,  
(937) 468-2578 <Jeff\_Spencer@ham.honda.com>**

**Skyranger 93238**

Family also used to own N32383, a Rearwin 175

**Louis E. Spink, 1161 Flint Road, Stoughton WI 53589**

**Phil Stewart, P.O. Box 1923, Cupertino CA 95015  
<XPlane@earthlink.net>**

Aeronautical engineer. Looking at Skyranger project.

**Richard Sutton, 5803 111th SE, Bellevue WA 98006,  
(425) 747-4296**

**Skyranger N27233**

**M Lee Thompson, 2628 Forest Hill Blvd, West Palm  
Beach FL 33406, (941) 357-0270**

**Skyranger N92999**

Likes his Skyranger quite a bit, but needs to trade it in on a four-place aircraft

**Bob Tilden, 3640 County Route 16, Montour Falls, NY  
14865, (607) 535-2217 <RTilden@aol.com>**

**Skyranger 92971**

Experience re-aligning landing gear.

**Donald E. Veness, PO Box 4, Petersburg OH 44454**

**Chris Watson, 255 Cannon Rd., Sharpsburg GA 30277  
<cfwatson@yahoo.com>**

Looking to purchase Skyranger. Family owned one in the 40's and 50's.

**Duane Wething, 1241 Summit Ave, Detroit Lakes MN  
56501**

In process of stripping airframe to bare bones for rebuild.

**Edgar Woods, 110 Vista Ave, Thurmont MD 21788**

David Cohn  
Rearwin/Commonwealth Skyranger  
1347 Malvern Ave  
Pittsburgh, PA 15217-1142