

Airport Advisor

January 2005

CLARE MUNICIPAL AIRPORT - 48D

Volume 50

Edited by Richard Acker

As the World Turns

After several years of “wishing ‘n’ hoping” the old east-west runway has been refurbished. The runway known as 08-26 was first paved in 1964 through a sponsorship by the Holley Carburetor Company. The company desired a paved runway they could use to fly parts in and carburetors out. Thus, the first paved runway at Clare Municipal Airport became a reality.

Forty years later the runway had received little or no maintenance or repair. The base under it was apparently good because there were no pot-holes. However, there were many large cracks produced by weather and time with grass and weeds growing in them. Much of the runway surface was beyond repair, so it was decided to grind it up and re-pave.

Central Asphalt Company from Mt. Pleasant entered the low bid for the project and was awarded the contract. The work was completed in September, 2004.

There were two interesting issues that came up during the project.

First, in 1964 when the runway was paved, the Federal Aviation Agency rules covering obstacle clearances were different than they are today. The current rules made it necessary to shift the entire runway ten feet to the west. Since the runway was to be completely ripped up, there was no problem at all in dealing with this requirement. They basically started paving ten feet west of the old east end and stopped paving ten feet beyond the other end. This moving of the runway will allow a greater safety margin for those airplanes approaching to land.

The second issue is a little more difficult to explain. For those not familiar with runway designation, a short explanation is necessary. Every runway in the world is identified with a two-digit number. The number, and thus the runway designation, is determined by the magnetic direction an airplane would have to fly during the approach and landing on that runway. For example, if the compass direction of a runway is 170 degrees then the runway would be designated as “17.” A runway with a compass direction of 040 degrees would be “04.” Notice how the last digit is dropped and only the first two digits are used.

Back in 1964, the newly paved runway was determined to be 086 degrees. The last digit dropped and using the first two, the runway was designated as “08” for an

airplane landing to the east and “26” for one landing towards the west. Thus, runway 08-26 was put into use.

Time passes and an interesting thing happens. The Magnetic North Pole moves. Not very fast and not very far, but it does move. It is approximately one degree every ten years. Since 1964 it has moved four degrees. If that four degrees is added to the old runway the new heading is 090 degrees, enough to require renaming the old 08-26 runway. It is now 09-27.

Regardless of the heading and the numbers painted on it, it is really a great asset to the airport. Many thanks to our engineers, URS Corporation, the contractor, Central Asphalt, and MDOT-Aeronautics for all the help and cooperation in this great improvement to our airport.

Dick Acker, Certified Flight Instructor

It was never really a dream, it just sort of became apparent that it was finally time. Time to give back to the aviation community some of the forty-two years of flying experience gained as a private pilot.

It didn't happen over night. It has been almost two years since the decision to become a FAA certified flight instructor was made. It probably would not have happened if it weren't for Nicki's support and encouragement. There were times while flying with Courtney Bauer that it didn't seem like it would ever become a reality. But Courtney stuck with it and did all he could to pass on some of his ability, training and experience. Apparently some of it stuck. The generosity of Nyle and Betty Haggart has to be included as a significant part of helping to accomplish this major aviation goal. On November 14, 2004 Designated Examiner, Kevin Spaulding signed a piece of paper making it official: Dick Acker, CFI.

Finally, thanks to family and friends in the area, and also those at neighboring airports like Midland and Mt. Pleasant, for all your well wishes, moral support and encouragement.
THANK YOU!

Why don't they make the airplanes out of the same material that the “black boxes” are made of? The boxes always seem to survive any accident.

Pilot Association Dues Due

Are you currently a member of the Clare Area Pilots Association? If you are, your annual membership dues are due. If not a member, perhaps you would like to join.

Why on earth would you want to join, you ask? Let me tell you! Perhaps the most important aspect of the association is its members: the folks who really enjoy aviation and being associated with others of the same mind. The desire to become a member is wide spread. In addition to many friends of aviation from the local area, there are members from as far away as Flint, Detroit and even a couple of members from Ohio.

2004 was another great year for fun and entertainment, including, but not limited to:

- Movie Night
- Breakfast at Airport
- "Souper" Sunday
- Model Airplane Contest
- Fly-In Breakfast
- Canadian Lakes Fly-Out
- Ice Cream Social and Band Concert
- Fly-Out to Michigan Air Zoo
- 9/11 Memorial Fly-Over
- Flying Poker Run
- Chili Cook Off
- Toys for Tots Breakfast

and many other assorted gatherings and fine food feasts.

The dues for 2005 are due by January 31, 2005. Voting membership is \$20.00 and associate membership (non-voting) is \$10.00. Please submit your membership dues to:

Richard Acker
9015 E. Coleman Road
Coleman, MI 48618

Or you may put an envelope in the "Drop Box" in the airport terminal. You may also bring your dues with you when you attend the association's annual meeting. The meeting this year will be Saturday, January 29, 2005. Old members, new members, potential members - everyone is welcome. Plan to be there by 6:00 p.m.

Dinner will consist of deep-fried turkey, roasted ham, mashed potatoes and gravy. If you would like to, you may bring a dish to pass.

Be there if you can. If you can't come, but want to renew your membership, please let us know.

Editorial

The opinions expressed in this publication are the opinion and sole responsibility of the editor.

Comments should be addressed to: Richard Acker, 202 West 5th Street, Clare, MI 48617, Phone 989-386-0445.

Security Cameras



A while back the Clare Airport was visited by a representative from the Department of Homeland Security. They are interested in what security measures are being implemented by airports with runways 3,000 feet or longer. Clare's 04-22 runway is 3,500 feet.

At this time there are no measures being mandated, mostly because there are no federal funds available. It is a relief to know that Homeland Security will not require small airports to spend large amounts of money without having federal funds to work with.

At a meeting of the Clare Airport Advisory Board the issue was discussed and it was determined that it would be possible to purchase and install security cameras that would cover the airplane parking ramp, the automobile parking lot, and the main room of the terminal building.

Members of the pilot association provided the labor to install the equipment which significantly reduced the cost.

Next time you visit the airport, smile, you're on security camera.

Two New Students Taking Lessons

Acker Aviation, LLC provides aircraft rental and flight training at the Clare Airport. In the last few weeks two new students have started down the path towards becoming private pilots.

Jeff Wilkerson started flying with his grandfather several years ago. Recently, in a meeting with Nicki at C. M.U. he mentioned flying and she told him to call the Clare Airport and get started. He did call and has logged about six hours of flying toward his goal of becoming a pilot.

Rick Barterian recently moved to Clare and was driving by the airport when he decided to stop in and ask about flying. He has wanted to learn to fly for eighteen years, and finally decided to do something about it.

If you see Jeff or Rick around the airport be sure to say "Hi" and make them feel welcome. You can recognize them by the grins on their faces and their feet not quite on the ground because their heads are in the sky!