

EZ Man of the Millennium

ED - As an era ends, I reflect upon land mark events and people who created them. One of the biggest events for me has been involvement in canard related activity. None of it would have been possible without Burt's creative genius of course, but the person I give credit for most Long-EZ development is Mike Melvill.

Among thousands of others, I was in the crowd watching Dick Rutan land the Vari-Eze at OSH 75. I watched Dick set the World distance record that week and, later marveled at the number of Vari-Ezes that appeared at OSH. The Long-EZ was next introduced and appeared to be the airplane for me! I bought plans, studied them carefully and judiciously complete the "education section". I took my book end to OSH and hoped for an audience with Burt for his blessing. Such was not to be; Burt was much too in demand.

I was fortunate enough to find a man, at the RAF booth, who seemed very knowledgeable, appeared genuinely interested in my building an airplane, carefully examined my book end and flat plate samples, tactfully made suggestions, listened to my questions and concerns and finally announced I could build a good safe Long-EZ. Buoyed up with such genuine and positive assurance I launched into construction. When things didn't go as planned I thought of that man's quiet reassuring words and pressed on. When I couldn't figure out how to do something I learned the answer from that man. He was accessible and seemed genuinely interested.

Three years later I flew my Long-EZ, thanks in a big way to his encouragement. He went on to further flight test many EZ mods and freely share all experiences with others. He conducted the "bull sessions" at OSH wrote the Canard Pusher and was on the front line of communication with canard enthusiasts. If I didn't have my plans number handy but needed some technical assistance he gave it. He developed the "1145 MS rain canard", solution to the rain induced trim



Mike, recent winner of the highest honor a test pilot can receive. The Ivan C. Kincheloe Award, has been won by such luminaries as Neil Armstrong, Crippen & Young, etc. The trophy is kept at the National Air and Space museum in Washington DC.

problem. Continuous cooling problem investigation led to his development of the Berkut style arm pit cooling cowl for the Long-EZ. He developed a long range fuel system and flew it around the World. He has made most of the first flights at Scaled Composites. Most recently he was awarded the highest test pilot award, the SETP Kincheloe Award. The list could go on for paragraphs; the man is of course,

Mike Melvill.

Michael – A Born Adventurer

Sally Melvill (CA) - Michael is a born adventurer and risk taker, (mostly educated risks!) He truly believes that

unless a person pushes their limits, they will not know themselves. He also thoroughly believes when someone wants something done, they should commit themselves and go for it. He believes if we commit ourselves, doors open, opportunities arise that we dared not think of. One must think about it certainly, but don't wait too long; at least give it a try. He has so enjoyed the homebuilt movement over the years. One of the many reasons is he personally has had such fun building and flying, he would like others to share that same feeling.

Mike was born and raised in Johannesburg, South Africa. He was the gymnastics captain for his high school. After completing school, he went by boat from Durban, SA to Venice, Italy and crossed Europe on his motorcycle. I joined Mike in En-