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- News ▾
- Aircraft ▾
- Airshows & Fly-Ins ▾
- Opinion ▾
- Classifieds
- Publications ▾
- Subscribe

Home → Airshows & Fly-Ins → Back to Blakesburg



Back to Blakesburg

October 6, 2013 by General Aviation News Staff ▪ [Leave a Comment](#)

By SPARKY BARNES SARGENT

Though the weather was sizzling hot in Iowa during Labor Day weekend, hundreds of aviators, friends, and families enthusiastically made the annual pilgrimage “Back to Blakesburg.”

The **Antique Airplane Association** had its genesis in 1953, when founder Robert Taylor placed a classified ad in *Flying*. The first annual fly-in was held in 1954 at Ottumwa; the first fly-in at the Taylor family’s privately-owned airfield was in 1971. (The event has been held at other locations throughout the years, but the majority of the fly-ins have been held at Antique Airfield.)

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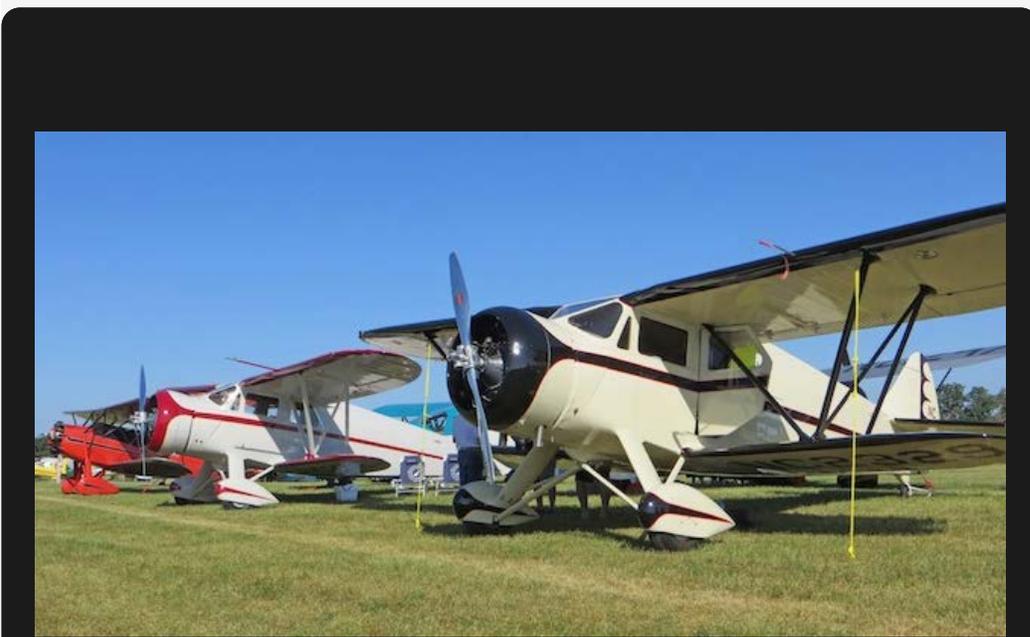
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A proud pair of finely-restored cabin Wacos turned out to be sister ships. NC2329 (right) received the Classic (1936 to 1941) Grand Champion award. It's a 1938 Waco EGC-8, owned by Dave

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The AAA's 60th Anniversary Diamond Jubilee celebration attracted 398 airplanes — the highest number since the fly-in was shortened from a 10-day event in the 1970s and 1980s to a five-day event.

Several of the antique aircraft that attended the first fly-ins were flown to this year's fly-in, including a the Pietenpol (1954), Fleet 1 (1955), Ryan SCW (1958), Waco UIC (1957), Waco D (1964), and a Puss Moth (which represented the one that attended in 1956).

The 75th anniversary of the Luscombe model 8 was also celebrated during the event, which was apropos, considering that Don Luscombe was an Iowa native. This year, a precision count by Steve Butler revealed that 68.5 Luscombes were present. "The half Luscombe," explains AAA Executive Director Brent Taylor, "is due to Nathan Rounds hauling in a set of Luscombe wings for Toby Hanson's Luscombe project. Toby is one of our great volunteers from Minnesota."

An official USPS commemorative Air Mail flight, complete with specially-designed 60th Anniversary flight covers, was flown between Antique Airfield, Ottumwa, and Oskaloosa on Friday.

On Saturday, the 10th anniversary of the 2003 National Air Tour (NAT) was celebrated by a reunion supper for the NAT pilots. Eight of the NAT aircraft were on the field: The Travel Air 6000, Alexander Eaglerock, Waco UEC, Stinson Tri-motor, Fairchild FC-2-W2, Bird CK, and two Travel Air 4000s.

As if all these anniversaries weren't enough, yet another one was recognized with a model airplane race: The 80th anniversary of the radio program, "The Air Adventures of Jimmie Allen."

There was at least one more notable and happy event during the AAA-APM's invitational fly-in. A wedding was held in the field of flying machines! David Mars and Anne Rowles of Mississippi were married Friday evening right beside his Piper PA-18 Super Cub, dubbed the "Honeymoon Special." It is the fourth time that a couple has wed at Antique Airfield.

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