

SWIFT MUSEUM
FOUNDATION, INC.
223 COUNTY ROAD 552
ATHENS, TENNESSEE 37303

OFFICE 423-745-9547
PARTS 423-744-9696
FAX 423-745-9869

WEB SITE:
SWIFTMUSEUMFOUNDATION
.ORG

EMAIL:
SWIFTMUSEUMFOUNDATION
@AOL.COM

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Swift Museum Foundation, Inc.



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Executive Director Report — by Scott Anderson

I'm sure many Swift owners and their mechanics are aware of the problem with the Stratus oil filter adapter assembly that the NTSB addressed in a safety report back in November. There have been several accidents related to this issue and we want to be sure our members are well aware of this.

Below are links to Stratus/Tempest/F&N installation guides, both old and new.
NTSB announcement.

<https://www.nts.gov/investigations/AccidentReports/Reports/ASR2005.pdf>

Stratus/Tempest/F&N Installation Guide (OLD) For Fiber Gasket.

<https://tempestplus.com/wp-content/uploads/2019/01/C6LC-L-Installation-Instructions.pdf>

Stratus/ Tempest/F&N Installation Guide (NEW)

For Copper Crush Washer and new safety wire holes.

<https://tempestplus.com/wp-content/uploads/2019/01/CO-300-Installation-Instructions-.pdf>

In this issue a new Swift member, Douglas Evans, tells of his experience regarding this problem with his Swift. While the story is written in a very entertaining manner it is potentially quite serious and everyone with a C-125, 145 or 0-300 should check to see if this applies to them. It will be in two parts due to it's length but it is definitely worth reading. Thanks Douglas.

We also want to thank all the members that have answered the call for sharing items for our newsletter. It makes the newsletter a better cross section of what is going on in the World of the Swift and not just what is happening here at Headquarters. Please keep sending in articles of interest. We really appreciate it!



In Memory of Andrew "Colt" Sowders

We are saddened to report the passing of Colt Sowders, son of Sandy and Paul Mercandetti, on January 1, 2021 at the age of 34. Colt will be remembered with much love by all who fortunate to know him. Our heartfelt thoughts and prayers go out to Sandy and Paul as well as Colt's entire family, caregivers, and many, many friends.

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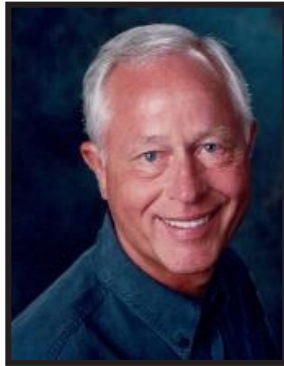
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In Memory of Charlie Sidenstricker



We are saddened to report the passing of long time Swift member and friend, Charlie Sidenstricker of Anderson, SC.

Charlie was the faithful caretaker of his beautiful Super Swift NI57TC. He passed peacefully at his home on Wednesday, December 30, 2020. Charlie's welcoming smile and kindhearted soul will be greatly missed by all of us. Our thoughts and prayers go out to Cindy and all of Charlie's family and many friends. Godspeed dear friend.

I Could Never Be So Lucky Again — Part I A new Swift pilot overcomes a catastrophic in-flight oil leak

By Douglas B. Evans

Author's note: If your Swift is equipped with a spin on oil filter adapter made by F&M Enterprises, aka Tempest Aero Group, aka Stratus Tool Technologies, pay close attention to this story, and before your next flight, you would be very wise to comply with the Mandatory Service Bulletin which directs a comprehensive and detailed inspection of your spin on oil filter adapter ASAP.

All one could see, in every direction, was brilliant blue sky. The effect made it seem as if the sky reached into the heavens, and this day I was going to fly into the cobalt blue above Texas. Light winds. Mild December temperatures. It was the pilot-perfect day you wished you could wake up to every time you had the notion to fly your Swift.

A year had passed since I bought my 1946 GC-1B, C-145 powered, mostly original, polished dream come true. I worked diligently to log about 75 hours and a solid understanding of what it takes to maintain and safely fly history, convicted by the responsibility that one day I will, and hopefully in the same or better condition, pass it along to the next caretaker.

My passenger was just as special as the day. My son Zach is a 21 year old college engineering senior with a solo endorsement in his logbook. He was just as eager to aviate, and the grandeur of the day saw him looking skyward through the frame of the open hangar doors with great expectation.

Little did we know the blue skies would end with black oil streaked down the belly of the Swift, dripping in sheets onto a private runway we never imagined would be the prettiest patch of black asphalt we could hope for in a sea of wild Texas hill country.

It all started off simple and innocent. Our route was planned at just over an hour, flying at 1,000' AGL along a course which flew airstrip to airstrip, deep into what is known as the Swiss Alps of Texas, all within reach of our Fredericksburg (T82) home airport. Like many parts of the Lone Star State, this area is beautiful, rugged and somewhat remote.

The event began with three small drops of oil on my son's left hand, only noticed because he was checking the movement of an elapsed second hand on a vintage Omega Speedmaster—the moon watch made famous by Apollo astronauts—he was lucky enough to pick up at a garage sale price. I wish I could avoid the easy pun which naturally arises here, but truly it was a timely piece of information, this just 18 minutes after takeoff.

A quick scan of oil pressure, temperature, and all things tied to the health of my humming Continental O-300D revealed nothing out of the ordinary. I looked hard at the cowling, windscreen and wings. All scanned clean. Somehow my mind jumped back in time to a toddler Zach, one who could find mud in a desert, and so I asked “What did you touch before you got into the airplane?” He answered with a shoulder shrug and at this point I pondered the idea that a well known, small and persistent nuisance of a generator leak had somehow become worse.

So it begins. The first tracks of the Gremlin were stumbled upon and usher in the “Startle Factor”- an age old mental box every aviator flies into when the improbable becomes possible- which now began to steal precious time as measured by the sweeping second hand on an old Omega watch. Outside the rugged portion of the hill country grew closer in the windscreen.

As I was coming to reconciliation with it all, Zach put his iPhone flashlight to use in the only shadow to be found in the brilliant blue aloft. “Dad! Oil is pooling at my feet.” Instinctively I began a 180 degree turn to the last airport we flew over- a life boat in the distance known as Silver Wings (TS36). I traded airspeed for altitude and resisted the urge to command more from my faithful Continental by pushing up the power, knowing now the race against time had begun and the life blood of the motor was bleeding onto Texas and my son's shoes at a rate I could only pray was slow enough to give us hope for a soft landing. Curious, I snuck a glance at my size 11 1/2 cowboy boots and was relieved to find them dry.

This was to be the first of many epiphanies that day. Unwittingly my son was the canary in the coal mine. If he wasn't there to catch the oil leak which found its way through the cabin air duct centered on the co-pilot's side, who knows if I would have caught it in time. Truly a lucky discovery.

In the midst of the impending, everything appeared completely ordinary, almost on the verge of boring, according to the oil pressure gauge. Clearly it was oblivious the Aeroshell 100W, sometimes known as black gold or Texas tea, was being served in the cockpit with no useful container on hand. I used the moment to refine my course for Silver Wings and mentally prepare for a dead stick landing. In my best, “it's-really-no-concern-voice,” I told Zach to keep a close eye on the oil pressure. With the airspeed now indicating 95 MPH, my trade for altitude was about played out. 90 MPH is my minimum engine out airspeed and I told Zach to keep me honest.

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Paul Barnett

P. O. Box 546
Brookhaven, MS 39602
pbarnett@pbnissan.com

Vice Chairman

Paul Mercandetti
4716 Buffat Mill
Knoxville, TN 37914
mercandettipaul@gmail.com

Scott Anderson

779 Highway 39 East
Athens, TN 37303
swiftmuseumfoundation@aol.com

Mark Holliday

P. O. Box 243
Lake Elmo, MN 55042
markh85@aol.com

Pat Moore

2574 Buffalo Street
White Bear Twp., MN 55110
swift49@gmail.com

Jim Roberts

P. O. Box 11744
Knoxville, TN 37939-1744
jimswift46@comcast.net

Sam Swift

580 Harpeth Trace Drive
Nashville, TN 37221
flyboycpa@aol.com

Bryce Ulmer

75 Teal Court
Locust Grove, GA 30248
bryce.d.ulmer@delta.com

Roger Weber

757 Luscombe Street
Independence, OR 97351
rogermichaelweber@hotmail.com

Executive Director

Scott Anderson

779 Highway 39 East
Athens, TN 37303
swiftmuseumfoundation@aol.com

Honorary President

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1061 Devon Drive
Madison, GA 30650
jim@dixie-industrial.com

Historian

Kenneth B. Coughlin, Jr.

Oklahoma City, OK
swiftlyken@aol.com

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The view at 2,000' AGL was infinitely better than it was at 1,000' AGL. The hills knitted together by craggy dry creeks along which live oak and mature cedar trees grew densely soon yielded a glimpse of the only asphalt in the universe inside of the arc which extended from my left wingtip to the, thankfully still spinning, Sensenich propellor. In the distance, tantalizingly visible, was home. Fredericksburg. Twenty miles. 10 minutes. Just.

Once again, I was convinced this was a generator leak. — Pilots, despite all personal assurances to the contrary, are not sky gods but merely human beings hoisted temporarily into the air, and unfortunately, our greedy human nature is not diminished with altitude. “I wonder if I can make it all the way back home” was the fleeting question which was definitively- and very thankfully so- answered with a look at the oil pressure gauge. Zach saw it too. “Dad. We are losing oil pressure.”

The gravity of the situation was now driving the needle to the left. Anyone who mastered the concept of a number line in grade school knows that far left is a negative proposition and objects weighing 1600 pounds don't have much hang time even in the bluest of sky. The engine was dying. It was a race to the lifeboat.

Silver Wings was our last best hope. —I started my approach by pulling the power back in hopes of preserving what was left of the engine, this to power me out of any mistakes I was capable of making during my self induced- and more likely with each passing minute- forced, dead stick approach. Thankfully I started off with good energy. In fact, I likely had too much energy. I was a touch inside of a mile and a half from Runway 35 on a high and tight left base. 2000' AGL is manageable, so long as you don't have the monster tailwind I had that day. Gremlins are rarely considerate of such things.

A great many complex things came together with the next few rudimentary decisions, the next few white knuckle control inputs, the next track I carved into the sky that I was no longer welcome to be in. Minutes before, altitude was something I craved. Now I could not get rid of it fast enough. And there was that tail wind.

Initially I considered flying a traditional pattern landing into the wind. Instantly I dismissed that as foolish. I then considered a straight shot at the approach end and a forward slip to dump the altitude. I wasn't convinced it would be enough. I instead made a slight bid for a modified downwind, careful to keep the runway inside the wingtip. When that “I-really-cannot-stand-what-I-am-doing-right-now” feeling became unbearable, I turned left base and concentrated on the mid point of the runway as my touchdown point, knowing I would shorten up as able to keep us from going off the end of the runway. And what about the effect of that monster tailwind?

Check speed. Gear down. —The Swift responded with, well... a swift descent rate. The runway was starting to look less like trying to jump into a tiny lifeboat from the deck of a cruise ship and more like a runway you intend to land on. It was at this time my son said, “We don't have much oil pressure left.”

Speed, glide path, and descent rate was good. Even the tailwind at altitude began to die off and the windsock on the field, pointing completely all wrong, seemed manageable. The engine sounded fine. It was faithfully windmilling at idle, just as I had asked, and if I didn't know any better, the loss of oil which brought us to this place and time almost seemed like an afterthought. But with my son's warning came the thought that hit like a sledgehammer- there is no possibility of a go around. Best to accept this engine has given its last full measure of devotion and ask for no more.

My next thought became my only thought. "I have to stick this downwind landing." Far better to go off the end of the runway at 30 MPH rather than land off airport at 90 MPH. In full disclosure, this new Swift pilot has never landed downwind in a Swift. No pressure here today.

This is where I made my first mistake. I extended the flaps too early. Suddenly everything that looked right, didn't. I physically restrained my right hand from adding power.

I love second chances. We all need them. Rather than trying to find a way to live with what I just did, I undid it. Up came the flaps and right was the world. Almost there.

I continued a stabilized approach while the oil pressure settled to about a fat needle's width above the round dot at the bottom of the original, blue faced Swift gauge. It wasn't zero but it wasn't at the minimum 10 PSI either. We were a quarter mile out.

On short final to a runway I have never landed on, I could only now finally see the pronounced downhill slope this strip was built with when the early aviation pioneers unhitched their horses from the wagon and dared to cut into the Texas limestone. Realizing you can easily move dirt but not the entire planet of rock underneath, they accepted what I now must- a downhill runway. And downwind. Suddenly gravity seemed much stronger in this part of the world. Was I going to get it stopped in time?

Check speed. Flaps down. — I don't think it helped much at this point, but like the little boy who leaves the light on in hall to deter the night monsters, I felt a lot better.

One last look approaching the threshold to verify the landing gear was indeed down— because it would be embarrassing to come this far only to forget— and then it was all stick and rudder to touch-down. With a 8 knot left quartering tailwind on a tall skinny latte sized private airstrip no one invited me to, it was in fact, a wondrous amount of stick and rudder. I touched down in the first third of the runway and was most pleased, but according to my hawk-eyed son's blistering critique afterwards "that was great but you were a little left of centerline, Dad." Kids.

Once I lowered the tail and was tracking centerline I shut down the engine using the mixture control knob in hopes that I would not do any damage. Was there any oil left? That thought can wait.

Stopping did not require any heavy braking, but perhaps that was because my heavy breathing acted like a thrust reverser. NASA is still reviewing the telemetry data to update the Globe/TEMCO landing roll charts. Has anyone ever seen those, by the way?

I turned off at the end followed by another turn onto the taxiway with my heart pounding, my head a little cloudy, wondering how Bob Hoover did all that and more in a big Shrike Commander with both engines feathered and yet still had the energy to taxi to show center. I didn't make it nearly as far.

The Omega Speedmaster on my son's wrist recorded an elapsed time from oil spots to landing of just 9 minutes. Total flight time was 27 minutes. It was a humbling and brief flight, one which started out with the boldest expectations.

I'd like to go on record at this point and say what I did that day was a natural product of over three decades of flying. What I did was trained into me by many exceptional instructors to the point it became instinct. Maybe it was. Or maybe it was just sheer dumb luck. In the weeks since the event, with

intense reflection, aided by the magic of ForeFlight, GPS and the three dimensional track log and timeline with airspeed and altitude read outs down to the second that program produces and allows one to replay to the point of near insanity while safely on one's living room couch, I have re-lived the last four minutes of my approach and landing seemingly into eternity.

Looking back, I would not have changed much, but there are things- some minor and others more consequential- I would have done differently to effect the exact same outcome. I made some mistakes, but in the end none were so great they could not be overcome or simply accepted until landing was assured. As my Swift checkout instructor told me after hearing my event- "You got it down safely. The airplane is reusable. Good job."

I was lucky in many respects. I will offer some lessons learned after I reveal what the cause of this event was found to be. And pay very close attention, all you who have a spin on oil filter adapter.

So what Gremlin wrestled me to the ground? Post flight inspection revealed a completely torn, catastrophically failed, fiber gasket on the Stratus Tool Technologies (brand name Tempest Aero Group, formerly F&M Enterprises) Spin On Oil Filter Adapter (Model CO-300). Incredibly there is an NTSB report released on December 3rd- just 14 days before my flight- about this very issue. My failure matched the report to the letter. Thankfully I did not add to the numerous fatal accidents and incidents this poorly designed product (my opinion based on my experience) has caused. After all, there is a reason why the NTSB recently urged the FAA to issue an Airworthiness Directive.

Would you believe me if I told you that I had no oil leaks coming from the adapter before the event? In my best Astronaut Gus Grissom- "The hatch just blew."

An important word of warning to all Swifters who have this device- I urge you to comply with the 19 DEC 2019 Mandatory Service Bulletin and carefully check your Stratus Tool Technologies / Tempest Aero Group / F&M Enterprises spin on oil filter adapter BEFORE your next flight, even if you have flown trouble free for years. The Service Bulletin, one you've likely never heard of, directs a mandatory inspection prior to flight. It is detailed. It is comprehensive. Most of all, it is not a "one and done" event. The part requires constant maintenance and every so often, a fresh fiber gasket.

Before I was lucky on this day, I was quite unlucky. — I make it a point to keep up with aviation news, and most especially, safety issues. In a past life I was an Air Force pilot and accident investigator. The experience forged a part of the aviator I am and I continue to think about managing risk every time I fly. AOPA is a great resource for challenges we face in general aviation, and they did in fact publish a story which I read just before my fateful flight. Unfortunately they made the same oversight the NTSB did- they referred to the spin on oil filter adapter by the parent company no one knows- Stratus Tool Technologies. If you are new to an old Swift as I am, you probably do not realize that your Tempest Oil Filter may be attached to an F&M Enterprises adapter, also referenced in the NTSB's report. I know my part by the Tempest brand and dismissed the warning.

Imagine my shock after I connected the dots and discovered my issue was not only known, it was preventable.

(To be continued next issue.)



For Sale

1948 GCIB — Serial Number 3542 — \$35,000

C-125 1080 SMOH

C-150 Seats

P-51 Gear Doors

Garmin GDL-82 ADSB-Out

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S43 Snohomish, WA

Dave Menzimer

dmenzimer@gmail.com

(425) 367-2004



Spats for your Swift

By Jim Roberts

We're all aware of the damage that can be done by mice or other rodents building nests inside our planes. Here's an easy way to protect your Swift over winter, to keep the critters from crawling up the main gear legs or tailwheel assembly and making their home inside.



All you need is some hardware store roof flashing and three large binder clips. The idea is to construct tall fences from the flashing, to wrap around each tire as a barrier to rodents. I used 10" wide flashing, cut into three five-foot long strips. Make a ninety-degree bend across each end, leaving about an inch of flashing bent up. Then bend that piece down on itself so you have a double-width strip of flashing on each end.

Wrap each strip of flashing around a tire, and use a clip attached to the ninety-degree bent ends to secure your spats, making sure the flashing is flush to the floor. If you're a "belts and suspenders" person, set a glue trap next to the flashing.

When not in use, roll them up and clip the roll together. Simple as that.

I want to give credit to the EAA "Sport Aviation" magazine, where I first saw this tip a few years go. Another good reason to be an EAA member!



Looking forward to the next Swift Newsletter — From the Archives

Many thanks to Jim Roberts, of Knoxville, Tennessee for his extensive research and compilation of articles taken from the Globe Beam Magazine (Globe Aircraft Corp. company publication).

Jim will be sharing a series of articles which we will published in your upcoming newsletters. Be watching your next issue for the first installment of a look into the history and workings of Globe Aircraft through the Globe Beam. ***“The Globe Beam Magazine” – Chronicles of the Globe Aircraft Corporation in the War Years by Jim Roberts.***

Thank you Jim for your continued contributions to Swift!

This title is embossed in gold on the dark maroon leather binding holding the twenty-two magazines, and there’s certainly “gold” within.

