

"A Summary of Joe Wells Life and Career" submitted by Lindy Lusch

I finally found all the data that Uncle Joe has accumulated over the years & I am sure I don't have it all.

February of 2005, he received "The Wright Bros. Master Pilot" which was given in appreciation for his dedicated service, technical expertise, professionalism, and many other outstanding contributions that furthered the cause of aviation safety and presented by the FAA.

May 1999 he received the coveted "The Charles Taylor Master Mechanic Award" which was presented to him for his years of continued support to the Aircraft Maintenance Technician and Federal Aviation Safety Program. Presented by the FAA to realize the sacrifice of a maintenance technician who has made the stringent training requirements of the FAA's Aviation Maintenance Technician Awards Program.

Uncle Joe went to a one-room school house from 1st to 8th grade, then to high school and after graduation, worked as an auto mechanic. This was all during the "Great Depression".

In the summer of 1941 he was drafted into the Army. One of his jobs became a crew chief for the Barrage Balloons which were used to defend against the Japanese aircraft.

After 2 years in Seattle, he was sent to Airplane Mechanic School in Oklahoma (during this time Pearl Harbor was attacked). From there he was sent to Fort Poke (Louisiana). He was discharged from the Army in 1945 & went home to work as an auto mechanic.

In 1946, he married his true love Micki, (Evelyn), & took the job for the government as a mechanic. He worked for the Federal Civil Service in Toledo and then transferred to Columbus where he joined the Ohio Army National Guard. When the Korean Conflict broke out, he was sent back to Fort Pole to work as a Mechanic. He fixed single engine army airplanes such as the L4,L2,L3 and L5. He had been told that he was being sent to Korea but the war ended before he was sent.

Uncle went back home and had 2 daughters kept his job with the Army & Federal Civil Service. He continued all of this until he was 60 years & retired. But he never slowed down. Another accomplishment was starting a flying club (Central Ohio Flyers Assoc) with his friend Tim Edwards. Then, Uncle Joe sold his Piper Cub and went to Seattle to buy and build a Glasair with his partner Bill Freeman. He built the airplane there and flew it back to Columbus.

In 1982, after finishing college, Uncle Joe and I became fast friends and I started flying in COFA. I had been flying gliders before and now I was going to fly my dream, thanks to Joe Wells. During the years 1986 to 2003 I had the privilege of flying the Glasair and becoming the "chief pilot" for over 1200 hours. This Glasair won Reserve Grand Champion in 1987 .Quite a feat for someone who had never built a plane before

His wife was diagnosed with Alzheimer's at age 75 and Uncle Joe tried to take care of her but finally was sent to the military hospital in

Sandusky, Ohio. On June 8th, 2005, she passed away. They were married for 56 years.

At the age of 85, Uncle Joe knew he couldn't meet his medical due to a stroke in his eye. That's when I really became the "single pilot" qualified to fly the Glasair & 99% of the time was spent taking him wherever he wanted to go, including trips to Oshkosh & Sun'n'Fun. WE made 15 consecutive trips to Florida and as many or more to Oshkosh in the Glasair. I will always remember N83BJ as it was sold in 2003.

Uncle Joe has flown over 4000 hours and had 1 accident. He still has his sense of humor for his 94 years and loves his family of 2 daughters, 3 grandchildren and 2 great grandchildren. He is an incredible person and I have had the pleasure of knowing him, flying many hours with him, having him be the best mentor one girl could have, and the respect & integrity that is hard to find in people in the present day.

Thank you for allowing me to present such a case for the gentleman. They don't make them like this any more.

Respectfully,
Lindy Lusch