

MEMBER OF THE MONTH

On March 30, one year last Century, a new baby was born in a Hospital in Louisville, Georgia named Sheila Elaine Usry, the baby to four older sisters. Not long after Sheila was born the family moved to Gibson, Georgia. Unfortunately, Sheila's father passed away shortly after she was born, so she was raised by her mother, Clara Usry, who was a long time writer for the newspaper in Gibson. Sheila was very active during her formative years being a good student as well as being a basketball player and cheerleader at Glascock County High School. One night, while cruising around the movie theater in Gibson, Sheila met a nice man named Johnny Langham and they soon started dating. The couple went on to get married and were bestowed with the "apple of their eye", a daughter, Kimberly.



After graduating from high school, Sheila went to work for a cannery in Gibson. Having a tremendous work ethic and overall pleasant disposition (traits that she applied to every facet of her life both professionally and personally), Sheila was an outstanding employee at the cannery. Since Sheila was such an asset to the cannery, her bosses begged her not to leave to take a job at Fort Gordon she was offered after working at the cannery for about a year and a half. Sensing that the Fort Gordon job was a good opportunity, Sheila, took the job with mixed emotions of excitement about her new career while knowing she would miss her friends from the cannery. Further testament to Sheila's value to any organization that she becomes a part of, is the fact that Sheila was promoted several times during her tenure with Fort Gordon and was 2nd in charge over the entire housing department when she retired after 35 years on the job with the Army base.

After the end of her marriage to Johnny, and after a long period of being single, Sheila was swept up by an extremely lucky fellow, EAA 172 Charter member, Charlie Connell. Charlie and Sheila were married in 1996. It was through Charlie that Sheila was introduced to and/or corrupted by, her exposure to aviation and the members of EAA 172.

Sheila has not slowed down a bit since retirement. She has many passions and activities that keep her extremely active. Always being a caring and sharing person, Sheila spent much of her time shortly after retirement volunteering at St. Joseph Hospital. Not only has she become quite popular in the social circles at Mount Vintage Country Club, even though she did not "take-up" golf until after she retired from work, she is now one of the most competitive players among the women she plays golf with at Mount Vintage! She is also a member of Warren Baptist Church and always makes time for her *entire* family. It doesn't matter how busy Sheila is, she will come running, "at the drop of a hat", to spend time and/or take care of any or all of the 5 kids fortunate enough to have Sheila call them "her Grandchildren"!!

Whether it is cruises to Alaska or trips to France for the "Paris Air Show", Sheila has become quite the adventurer and world traveler. It would be difficult to tell by her "Slim and Trim" figure that another one of Sheila's favorite activities is dining out, especially if she has the opportunity to try out a recently opened restaurant (It is rumored that she has a bit of a sweet tooth also!). Even though Sheila enjoys going out to restaurants, according to a very good source (her husband), Sheila is an extremely good cook!... Our Source, (her husband) also wanted to state for the record, that Sheila is also, ...lets see...how did he phrase it... "a damn good wife!" Although I am confident that there are many reasons why he feels this way, I know he appreciates that she makes sure he has plenty of light bulbs!

Anyone who has had the privilege of meeting and spending time with Sheila understands what a unique and special person she is. All the members of EAA Chapter 172 were able to experience Sheila's endearing qualities first hand as we have been fortunate enough to benefit from her OUTSTANDING leadership for the past three years as President of the Chapter! Sheila was an extremely effective "Chief Executive" and she lead with graciousness, class, and eloquence that is enviable and admirable!! Even though Sheila is not a licensed pilot, her passion for aviation, the EAA, and especially her fondness for the people of chapter 172, instilled a work ethic that led to her many, many accomplishments during her role as President. To list all of her accomplishments would take more space than is allotted for the entire newsletter, however, the following is just a brief list of some of the Highlights:

- Grew the membership substantially.
- Brought much positive exposure and "press" to the club and the EAA.
- Was instrumental in getting the Founder of Chapter 172, Al Patton, inducted into the National EAA Hall of Fame.
- Contacted many local newspapers and other media outlets that ran stories on some of the club's well deserving members and their contributions and accomplishments including: Al Patton, Phil Colman, Joe Miles, Gary Ward, and others.
- Continued in the tradition of other past Presidents of upgrading the Clubhouse facility.
- Organizing work days.....and Much, Much More!!!

As Sheila steps down as President, and while Chapter 172 will certainly miss her leadership, her legacy will live on due to all of her accomplishments!!...On behalf of chapter 172 we would like to thank her for a great big "JOB WELL DONE"!!...and introduce this month's "Member of the Month".....Sheila Connell.