

Member Spotlight

Joe and Cindy Britt

This month's Member Spotlight is on Joe and Cindy Britt. They have been EAA 172 members since December 2008.

Joe was born and raised in North Augusta graduating from North Augusta Senior High in 1974. Joe's first airplane flight came during Junior High School when he worked at one of his uncle and cousin's farm baling hay and working with the livestock. They told him if he did a good job they would take him flying. That was his first flight and he was hooked.

After high school he attended The Citadel in Charleston, SC where he earned a Marine Corp Scholarship in his freshman year. During his junior year he was designated a Naval Flight Officer candidate with a slot to attend flight school to



become a Bombardier/Navigator in a A-6 Intruder which was the Marine Corps all-weather attack aircraft at that time. Joe graduated from The Citadel in 1978 with a B.A. in History, and then was commissioned as a 2nd Lieutenant of Marines. He then attended the Marine Corp Officer Basic School in Quantico, Va. At that time they decided to begin phasing out the A-6

aircraft from the Marine Corp inventory. Therefore, he lost his slot to flight school but secured a slot to Armor Officer Basic School in Fort Knox Kentucky where he learned about the M-60 tank and armor warfare instead. Graduating from Armor School, he was assigned to the 3rd Tank Battalion located in Twenty Nines Palms,

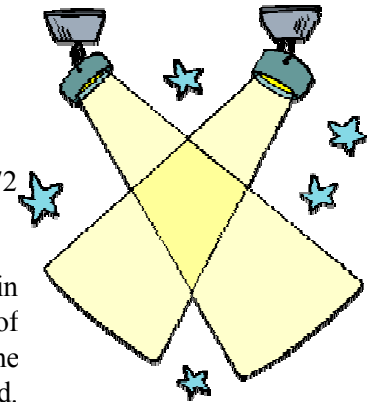


California. This base was in the high desert of California about 70 – 80 miles northeast for Palm Springs. Twenty Nine Palms was a great place for armor warfare training but was not known for its exciting social life. Since Joe was still interested in flying he started flight lessons at the base flying club where he received his private certificate in 1980. One of his friends owned a C-172 and Mooney 201 and they would run to Phoenix or San Diego during the weekends. Flying in Southern California was great with the vast majority of time being VFR.

Joe was then re-assigned to San Diego in 1981 at the 32nd Street Naval Station aboard an amphibious ship in the U.S. Navy. This ship serviced Marine Corp light, medium & heavy lift helicopters along with Cobra attack helicopters. Additionally, he had a roommate that was a corporate pilot and flew a Beechcraft King Air for a local business man. Joe joined the Armed Forces Flying Club at Montgomery Field and flew C-152, C-172 along with C-177 & C-177RGs. There he received his complex endorsement. His flying hours lagged at times due to being deployed to Hawaii, Philippines Islands, Hong Kong, Western Australia, Japan, Indian Ocean and other exotic locations the USMC visited.

Joe transferred off the ship in the Philippines Islands and traveled back to the United States in early summer of 1983 to his next duty station at Quantico, Va. at the Basic School. He taught new lieutenants what was expected of Marine Corp officers along with the basics of armor warfare. Again he joined the base flying club and added to his hours with more C-172 and some Piper Arrow time.

Joe decided to leave the Marine Corp in 1986 to further his education and returned home to North Augusta. He started pursuing an Electrical Engineering degree first at USC Aiken and then transferred to Clemson University where he finished in May of 1991. During this time he was unable to continue flying due to finances and the time need for his engineering studies. At Clemson he co-oped at Plant Vogtle in the System Engineering Department where they offered him a job after graduation. Joe has worked at Vogtle as an Engineer since 1991.



Cindy was born in Greenville, SC and then raised in the little town of Six Mile, SC, close to Clemson. Her parents still live there and they enjoy visiting and coming home with fresh eggs and vegetables from the garden in the summer.

Joe and Cindy met in a church single's class in Greenville, SC. They started dating while Joe was at Clemson and Cindy was teaching third grade. They decided to marry in June 1991 after he graduated from Clemson. Cindy left her family in up-state SC and they moved back to North Augusta so Joe could work at Plant Vogtle. Joe and Cindy do not have any children, but they do have one spoiled rotten cat who expects breakfast at 5:00 every morning – and doesn't understand the concept of sleeping in on weekends and holidays!

Joe is an instrument and controls (I&C) design engineer at Plant Vogtle specializing in digital systems (computer hardware & software including networking). Prior to that he was a systems engineer maintaining digital systems.

Cindy taught school for 14 years, but now works at Augusta State University managing the Curriculum Center, a small library for education majors. She enjoys the chance to work with young adults after years of being with children. Cindy has a masters degree in elementary education from Furman University and a masters of library science from University of South Carolina.

Joe has always been interested in flying and the military possibly due to his father's influence. Since he does not have 20/20 vision, the military would not accept him as a pilot, but he was able to become a Naval Flight Officer candidate at the Citadel.

Joe became interested in homebuilding because most flying publications, AOPA & Flying magazine, seem to focus on aircraft that is beyond his means. When he looked into getting back into flying after school and some medical problems, EAA and homebuilt aircraft seemed to fit the bill. He likes the camaraderie and the depth of knowledge of multiple aircraft types and aviation subjects of our chapter members. Since the majority of pilots in EAA 172 are male, the chapter makes a special effort to include the wives in some manner. He knows it has helped Cindy understand his interest in aviation and she completely supports his aviation activities. Joe has a private pilot's license with Airplane/Single Engine/Land with a complex endorsement and now has about 150 hours.

