



# GRAMPAW PETTIBONE

## Memo from Gramps:

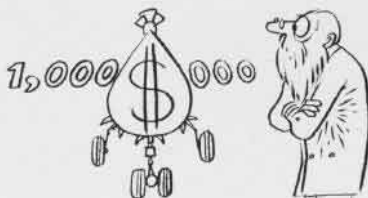
My desk has completely vanished in its quiet corner under a deluge of letters from whirly-bird pilots who regularly use a road atlas, oil company road maps, and just plain "hoss sense" to travel from point to point.

Judging by the volume of mail from irate private citizens complaining of mink eating their young, chickens dead in pile-ups at the hen-house door, unauthorized low flight and hovering over congested national shrines, this is all too true.

OPNAV Instruction 3710.6A DOES state that when ferrying helicopters OFF airways that they should be navigated primarily by reference to prominent landmarks and should normally follow major highways or railroads. It also states that except in emergencies they will be landed ONLY at established airports or heliports while in a ferry status. The flight in question in my "Born Too Late" story was via Red 30 JAX to Tallahassee with a fuel stop at Lake City, which is approximately 18 miles south of the airway.

Specific rules for the conduct of helicopter flights are virtually non-existent and for the most part are contained in "exceptions" to the regulations of CAR-60.

The helicopter accident rate has gone crazy and we've already lost eleven whirly-birds this fiscal year through collisions with trees, wires, vehicles, and other structures. Of



*It gives you  
ulcers just to  
look at planes  
now a days!*

Gramps could write a book on the subject, but my gal Friday threatens to quit if I answer you all, so I'm ahoisting the truce flag till I get this thing bore-sighted.

## Whoops!

A short 35 minutes after being catapulted in an F11F Tiger from an attack carrier cruising off Okinawa, a fighter pilot noticed excessive engine vibration, followed shortly by complete power failure.

He was at an altitude of only 9500 feet, so he quickly trimmed the air-

craft in a *nose down* position, wings level, speed 260 knots, and prepared for ejection.

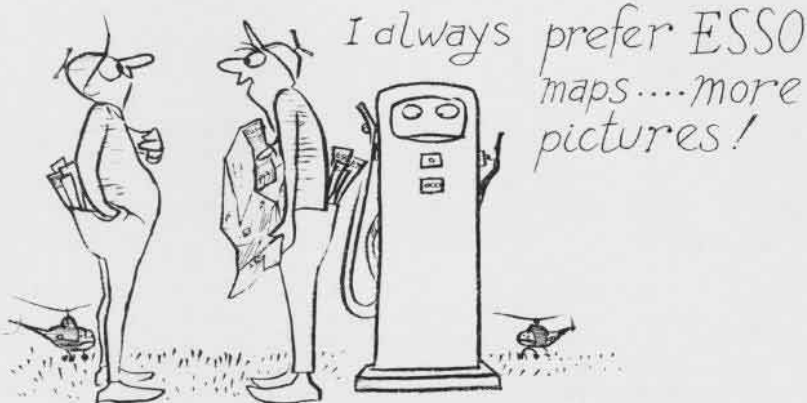
The first pull of the face curtain fired the canopy, but not the seat. A good hard second pull fired the seat, to his immense relief, and from there on, the automatic lap belt and barometric chute release functioned.

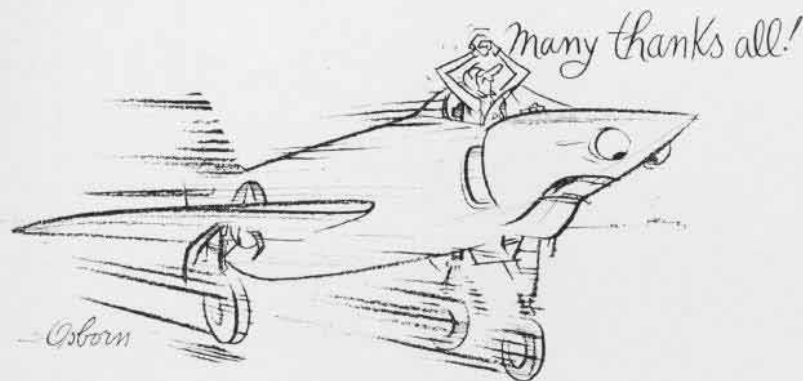


At 8,000 feet the pilot *inflated his Mae West* in preparation for a water landing and tried to pull himself up to sit in the sling of the chute, but found he was unable to do so. He oscillated gently as he floated down. The inner parts of his thighs seemed extremely sore, so he released his leg straps to relieve the pain. Immediately, to his horror, he slid down in the harness; the chest strap coming up to his chin and finally catching on his NOSE!

With new-found strength, he seized the chest strap with both hands, pulled it back down to chest level, and maintained this hold until hitting the water some 6,000 ft. later.

The pilot collapsed his chute with difficulty after being dragged 300 feet over the extremely rough water and inflated his paraft, retaining the chute as a sea anchor. For the next 1½





hours he had a rough time, being tumbled into the water periodically and having great difficulty keeping the raft upright and pointed into the oncoming waves.

Flares contained in the survival kit were rusted together, but one did work. He was finally able to attract the attention of a searching destroyer, which threw him a line and hauled him aboard.

 **Grampaw Pettibone says:**

Whew! What a hairy experience! A few more like this, and you'll be strikin' for old Gramp's job. They say "If it isn't fatal, Gramps has done it," but this is a new one on me!

A few quick comments

1. When you gotta eject, if the aircraft is under control, zoom off the excess speed or at least try to get it level. No use losin' valuable altitude while you're pullin' the curtain.

2. If you'd had a tight chest strap (and I'll bet you really wear 'em cinched up now), the Mae West inflation woulda turned you purple.

3. Lucky you had a long nose.

After you get through beatin' the parachute riggers to death for the rusty flares you found in your kit, a review of Bail Out and Ejection Sense, coupled with your experience, ought to make you the hottest survival man in the business, a real Tiger!

## Perilous Chatter

An F3H pilot had returned to his West Coast base after the completion of a night round robin training flight. He had completed one GCA to a touch and go and was cleared for a second GCA pass to a final landing.

This second approach and landing progressed normally and the *Demon*

touched down 800 ft. from the approach end of the 8000-foot runway at 135 knots. During the rollout, GCA cleared the pilot to shift to tower frequency and then continued to comment on the last approach. Still rolling, the pilot thanked them for their assistance, looked down to switch to tower frequency and suddenly realized he was passing the arresting gear (the 6100-foot mark) with 90 knots of speed!

He immediately applied heavy braking, but soon realized his deceleration was inadequate and attempted to make a 90° turn onto the taxiway at the runway end. The starboard wheel locked, the tire blew, but the *Demon* failed to complete the turn, going approximately 60 feet off the taxiway into soft dirt. The starboard landing gear collapsed, and the aircraft came to a stop with its right wing tip dug into the soft ground.

The pilot had elected to turn off at the taxiway rather than hit the 4000-foot hard-packed overrun because there had been considerable construction activity on the overrun for the past several months, and he was afraid of the possible presence of heavy equipment or ditches in the area.

 **Grampaw Pettibone says:**

Sonofagun! When will people learn that the flight isn't over as soon as the wheels touch down! Our aircraft today represent a lot of iron rolling down that runway and roll out faster than any locomotive can travel wide open. Only trouble is, they ain't on a track. Every single word spoken on a control frequency has gotta be *strictly business!*

When shore based, every outfit should procure an airfield scale drawing from Public Works, stick it under plexiglass,

mark obstructions or unusual conditions on it in grease pencil, and either brief from it daily or make SURE every pilot KNOWS the airfield condition *all the time!* This lad woulda come out of this smellin' like a rose if he'd of had the word on the newly completed overrun.

## Good Head

On a wave-off after an attempted landing on a carrier in the Atlantic, an S2F pilot lost power on his port engine. As the RPM unwound from 2800 to approximately 1000, he raised his gear, bled his flaps up from full down to  $\frac{2}{3}$  and controlled the aircraft by use of emergency rudder assist and the starboard engine.

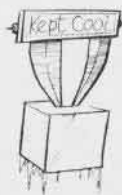
In the process of feathering the port engine, the mixture control was pulled back to idle cut-off. At this point the engine caught and delivered 30 inches HG at 2200 RPM. When the pilot moved the mixture back to normal, the engine quit again.

The pilot put his engine back in idle cut-off, got his 30 inches HG again, called the carrier and secured approval for a precautionary single engine approach.

Using what he could get from the port engine, a mirror approach and landing was made, with a cut given by the LSO. The hook caught No. 1 wire. As power was reduced at the cut, the port engine failed completely.

 **Grampaw Pettibone says:**

Son, you handled your emergency just fine, analyzed your problem, kept a cool head and caught that wire. Lots of experienced S2F men will disagree with you and say you should have feathered the engine, trimmed up and made an actual single engine pass, especially if you were light.



Most of us feel that the best bet is to use any power you have available as long as oil temp, oil pressure and fuel pressure are within limits and it looks like you might keep it for use in a possible bolter or wave-off. I know of only one S2F bolter on single engine and that was at night and was successful.