

The Discerning Aviator's Annual Pilgrimage - Testimonials

From Naomi Hicks - 2016 Tour

Hi Calvin and Wendy,

Hope all fine your side!

Just a big thank you for last year's Oshkosh. We really enjoyed it and will join you one day again. This email brought back nice memories! You guys are excellent in what you do!

Good luck with this year & enjoy!

Naomi Hicks

From Brian Stocks - 2015 Tour.

Dearest Wendy and Calvin,

I am not in the habit of reacting quickly, so have intentionally delayed this email to yourselves, as I wanted time to deliberate on the "OSHKOSH EXPERIENCE".

It was for me, as it is for many other pilots, a bucket list item and surely should be for anyone who loves machines which soar.

Thank you so much for your remarkable ability to organize a tour which encapsulates all the elements of our love for flying.

It was a truly remarkable experience and so much more for you both being present to share with so diverse a mob.

I was a little apprehensive of going it alone, but this did not last long, as we all became instant friends as we shared the experience.

I received a copy of Abri's fantastic coffee table book of the Oshkosh 2014 experience, which has added to the great memories.

I will no doubt be joining you again in the future, hopefully with some of my sons.

You have probably also heard by now, that I was the very lucky winner of the DJA "Reach for a Dream" aircraft raffle, so I now also own a Piper Cherokee 235, on which my three sons can get their PPL's.

I do hope that you are both keeping well and am looking forward to my next trip.

Warmest regards,

Brian.

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From Willie du Plessis – 2015 Tour

Hallo Calvin

Ek is ook nou trug op d plaas, uiteindelik. Baie baie dankie v al jou en Wendy se moeite en reelings, ons waardeer dit vreeslik baie. Dit was n onvergeetlike ervaring. Die hotelle was perfek en al d busse en vlugte was 100%.

Hoop ons sien weer eendag.

Liefdegroete Willie

From Dave “Terrible” Koller. 2014, 2011 and 2010 Tours.

2014. Good Day Calvin. Thanks for a great tour. I thoroughly enjoyed it and would recommend it to anyone wanting to visit `Kosh. Dave.

2010. Good day Calvin. Thanks for organizing a great Oshkosh 2014, I had a terrible time. Any trip is much better in the company of nice people! It would be very sad if were to be the last one. I would be happy to recommend Bespoke any time. Regards to Wendy.

From George Spencer. 2014 Tour. (to all on tour)

Hi Guys, finally back in SA. It was good to meet all of you and share the wonderful 'Kosh' experience. Bealeton was an absolute hoot and I cannot think of a better way to spend the last week of July. I trust you will all continue to "chase the shouting wind along, and fling your eager craft through footless halls of air".

Thanks Calvin and Wendy for putting together a memorable time.....and for ensuring I made the IAD/ORD flight! Kind regards, George

From Richardt and Irene Lovett. 2014 and 2011 Tours

May I use this opportunity to thank you and Wendy for yet another extremely well organised and enjoyable tour. Irene and I really enjoyed it. In response to your question I must say that for people having been there before something new could be welcome and we would certainly opt for Wright Patterson although the travelling could be a negative considering all the travelling just to get to Washington. We also feel that the time spent in Washington is hardly enough to appreciate all or more of the high quality it has to offer. For first timers Udvar/Arlington is almost a must. Good luck with your ventures.

Kind regards, Richardt and Irene

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From Abri Kriegler (Photo-Journalist). 2014 Tour

Hi all, Wow to think that the trip that I have looked forward to for so long is over so quickly! Thank you for all the good times, laughs and great friendships.

All the best, Abri

From Chris Sparg. 2014, 2007 and 2006 Tours.

Our sincere thanks for a GREAT tour – we really thoroughly enjoyed it.

My sincere thanks for all your planning and for introducing us to how Oshkosh works – we could not have done this on our own. Busses, hotels, air tickets and all – well done and thanks!

Met a great bunch of people and it was fantastic to enjoy a tour that is organized but still gives you so much latitude to do your own thing without always moving in a group. Thanks, Calvin.

From Murray Meirs. 2013, 2009 and 1998 Tours.

This email was sent by Murray to an aviation friend who planned to - and did - join the 2014 tour.

Lindsay, ok, I see you have spoken to Calvin! Last year's was the third trip to Oskosh I have done with Calvin....I can't speak highly enough of this trip.

Calvin is not an aircraft enthusiast himself, but he runs a seamless experience to enjoy this unique show.

It starts off with four nights in Washington....the museums / Udvar Hazy etc, the moving Arlington Cemetery, even a day there at a small airshow with Biplane flights for everyone. The Washington sights – White House, etc , etc....

The five days at Oshkosh are relaxed....you don't of course have to go every day to the show....but there is plenty to see , for some , five days are not enough....

Calvin's group stays in good clean accommodation about a 25 minute bus ride from Oshkosh.....an easy transport arrangement with buses going back and forth every hour through the day.

And if that's not enough, it finishes off on the final day with a visit to the Harley Davidson museum...if you like Harleys even a little bit, this is the icing on a pretty good cake!

Quickly jotting down this mail to you makes me remember, and feel like going again!

Oskosh is one of the biggest airshows anywhere....it seems to cover nearly everything in aviation, and I cannot think of a better way of enjoying it than with Calvin's group.

You will have a great trip!

Cheers , Murray.

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From Mark Mansfield. Aviation Photo-Journalist. 2012, 2011 and 2010 Tours.

2012. Dear Calvin and Wendy, I am back home and still recovering from an amazing 2012 Oshkosh tour.

My sincerest thank you to both you and Wendy for one of the best trips to date, this was by far the greatest one! I have come to expect the best when I travel with you, and once again this year was in fact better than what I had expected, everything just went like clockwork, and once again the tour was of such a high standard, I look forward to seeing what next year brings.

Once again, thank you for a truly magnificent and very well organized tour, and as always, my sympathy to those that do not travel in such luxury and comfort and that have to slum it out in a tent!!!!

I look forward to next year's trip knowing it will be of the highest standards and quality that I and so many have become used to! Until next we chat and meet, go well and safely.

Regards, Mark

2010. Good afternoon Calvin Just a short email to express my thanks and gratitude for a wonderful trip. As you know, this was my first time joining your tour, and it will not be my last. It was a privilege to be part of such a well organised and very well run tour. Oshkosh 2010 will go down in my books as one of the best with your tour, I look forward to 2011.

From Wayne Gibbons. 2012 Tour.

Dear Wendy and Calvin, Just a quick word of thanks again for the wonderful time we had with you guys in the USA. The experience far surpasses anything we have done before. Everything went like clockwork, the accommodation was superb, the company exceptional and all organisational aspects 100%.

If I can at any stage have the opportunity to make recommendations regarding Designer Tours, I am sure I will have a mouthful to offer. Hoping to participate again sometime in the future in a "bespoke" tour with you guys again.....maybe RIAT and Farnborough? Best wishes

From Martin den Dunnen. 2012 Tour.

Hi Calvin and Wendy, Just a quick note to thank you personally for the memorable tour. Everything was as I expected and then some. I will certainly recommend your tours to fellow aviators!

Kind regards, Martin den Dunnen

From Frank Berkeley. 2012 and 2010 Tours.

I wanted to thank you for organising such a great tour to Washington DC and Oshkosh. In particular thank you for persuading me to do the DC leg – it really was worth it.

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Your organisation was great, the hotels were perfectly adequate and all the transport and other arrangements were faultless. I have already recommended the tour to several of my pilot friends. I must also say that your communication prior to the tour was also very pertinent and useful – it also built up excitement and anticipation! Overall the entire experience exceeded my expectations.

From Peter Flint. 2005 Tour.

Just a quick note to say thank you for a wonderful few days, (far too few) on our Oshkosh 05 Tour. Everything was so well organized and I had a holiday of a lifetime.

From Willem and Margie Viljoen. 2011 Tour.

Just a short email to thank you for the greatest experience of my life! It has been my dream for 30 years to go to Oshkosh and it could not have been more perfect. Thanks to you and Wendy for the superb tour and your kind help and advice. It was great to share this with fellow aviation geeks like Brett, Frans, Johan and the rest! I have a few pics of people at Flying Circus as well as at The Machine Shop. Let me know if you would like to have a copy. Kind regards, Willem and Margie Viljoen

Here is a link to my airshow pics on Flickr.

<http://www.flickr.com/photos/willemhdx/sets/72157627421961910/>

From Leon Erwee. 2011 and 2009 Tours.

We are back in JHB after our most fantastic sojourn at Oshkosh with you all. A very special word of thanks to Calvin Fabig, ably assisted by Wendy, for a job well done – even better than 2009 – museums and Oshkosh alike. Calvin, you will more than likely see our faces again... and again. Standing in awe under the Enola Gay which obliterated Hiroshima – gaping at the Spirit of St Louis etc. I must have walked a million miles at Oshkosh – no doodling about like at the local boat show. With in excess of 200 things happening every day I was like a kid in a candy store - attending one technical lecture after another - drooling over warbirds - listening to super aces Bob Hoover and Chuck Yeager and the Hudson river-landing heroes – inspecting turbines for RVs - jet gliders and L-39s in formation – thundering radials – seeing the wild and wonderful designs of Bert Rutan etc. If that is not heaven what is? (Little Megan even shook hands with Harrison Ford – nogal).

Being in your company was great and one's aviation frame of reference expanded no end around seasoned pilots. Hobnobbing afterwards at the Machine Shed put the cherry on the top - beer & good food & aeries.

My high point – as you could not avoid hearing about – was a hour in a T-6. American Ric Woldow who is a member of our local EAA 322 chapter and 'our man in the States'. I was invited to contact him when there for a stint in a Lake Amphibian or their T-6 no TA – 048. For 20min I had the stick in hand – 'PIC' – so to speak. Regards Leon.

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From Richard Becker. 2009 Tour.

I am sorry to have taken so long to write this, no good excuse except the usual load of work when getting back from a holiday. It was all really wonderful and I would like to thank you very much for making the first part so stunning. Anthony and I had a great time and enjoyed every minute of it.

Please think about the air races. Best regards. Richard

From Greg Middup. 2009 Tour.

Just a quick note to thank you for a superb tour. I hope you are safely back in SA and that the tour progressed smoothly.

Calvin, I really enjoyed Washington and could have spent another week there. The Hotel was in an excellent position, and there was so much to do. I will definitely get back there, maybe at another Oshkosh tour. The other South Africans were great company, and I'm sorry I was so anti-social. I just wanted time-out from the madness at work/life, and as you know, the USA is a great place to get lost in. I feel completely re-charged, and ready to be a useful member of society.

Thank you very much. You run a very good outfit, and I hope to use it again.

From John Chambers. 2009 Tour

I'd like to record a big THANK YOU to you and your team for all you did in organizing the trip and in seeing that it went as smoothly as possible. It really was a wonderful experience and for me was definitely the right way to do Oshkosh.

The three days in Washington were undoubtedly well worth while and the excursions to Udvar-Hazy / Arlington and the Bealeton Flying Circus were both memorable. I found the Harrington Hotel very comfortable and its location excellent.

Oshkosh was for me a mind-blowing experience. To describe it as a 'must do' experience for every aviation enthusiast is no exaggeration. The daily transport from and to Appleton was very efficient, comfortable and reliable. (In fact, the quality of the drivers and coaches used by you for all our land travel were outstanding, in my opinion.) The Microtel Inn was comfortable, although as the condition of my feet deteriorated over the week, I found myself wishing that it was nearer to the Machine Shed!

Thank you again for providing a truly wonderful experience. I really do hope I can do it again.

From Rod Lagerson. 2008 Tour.

Lau and I would like to thank you for the wonderful Oshkosh tour that you put together. It was everything we hoped it would be and more. Oshkosh itself was great. It is as spectacular as I imagined it would be, but I actually think that I enjoyed the Garber collection and the trip to the Flying Circus just as much. Thank you for your attention to detail and your kindness to the people in your

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care. You really do go 'the extra mile' and it is most appreciated. Once again thank you for a great tour. Rod.

From Gordon Dyne. 2009, 2006 and 2002 Tours.

Calvin, once again most grateful thanks for organising such a splendid trip. My third time with you was as good as the first two and I cannot imagine any other way to visit Oshkosh other than with Designer Tours. Washington is such a fine city and the Harrington Hotel, albeit quite old, is more than adequate, and is so well situated for all the sight-seeing we wished to do.

It was my first time at the Flying Circus and what a treat that turned out to be. Where else in the world can one fly a Stearman and a Waco in one day for a modest sum and then enjoy a great little airshow? It was a privilege and honour to attend the pilots' briefing. It was a stunning day and one I hope I may repeat in the future. Well done on discovering this jewel in the aviation world.

Our Microtel in Appleton was as comfortable and clean as I remembered it. The breakfast room was a great improvement and the typical American breakfast was perfectly fine. Everything else you organised on the trip went like clockwork and the Harley Davidson museum was well worth the visit. The meals in the restaurant took some beating for size, didn't they?

Congratulations and thank you Calvin for yet another memorable trip. I know Leon Erwee and the Watsons thoroughly enjoyed their first trip.

Regards, Gordon

From Gordon Dyne. 2006 Tour.

Many congratulations on organizing a splendid Oshkosh trip again!

Tremendous! Thank you! As usual your organization was absolutely excellent – nothing left to chance and thanks to a well organized bunch of aviators, no planes or buses were missed! You were as usual the most convivial and genial of hosts and your mating call will be long remembered.

Thank you again for a memorable trip. Well done Designer Tours.

From Dion Dunn. 2005 Tour.

Thanks for the great trip to Oshkosh. You really organized it professionally. Job well done. I am going to try and encourage more pilots from Swaziland to try and join the next year trip.

From Willie van den Berg. 2005, 2003 and 2001 Tours.

Unluckily I am back at work and now I have to get down to some serious business. Marie and I would like to thank you for all your effort and hard work during the tour to Oshkosh. We could not believe

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that everything ran so smoothly with no hiccups at all!! What a great time we had! I feel your choice of hotels, busses, airlines etc as well as your itinerary was excellent. After Oshkosh we had a great time at Florida Keys as well as Disney World and Kennedy Space Centre. Disney World is a must for any person above 40 as it is a great time to feel like a young child again. If anybody told me that I would be going on roller coaster rides 6 months ago I would have told them to get lost. But guess what, we took every single roller coaster and water ride we could find! What fun! Once again thank you for everything.

From Michael Balston. 2003, 2001 and 1998 Tours.

Thank you for a brilliant trip (again). Your organizational skills are unparalleled, we got everywhere at the right time and everything went like clockwork. I had a great time and I am really grateful for the extra time and effort you put into getting me on to the trip at such short notice.

From Quentin Sussman. 2002 Tour.

Again thanks for making such a great trip. We had a marvelous time thanks in large, to you.

From Arnold and Judy Charlton, letter to the editor Aero Africa - 2000 Tour.

My wife and I are well traveled and have visited the USA on quite a few occasions. We are also not good candidates for group-type tours. After due consideration, we nevertheless decided to visit Oshkosh via Designer Tours of Cape Town. In retrospect this was an excellent choice.

The whole tour was well organized using decent hotels and air lines. Coaches were always on time and clean. The organizer, Calvin Fabig, accompanied us most of the time, always seeing to the smooth running of the tour and often improving on the original arrangements at his own cost. We had maximum freedom as individuals, never feeling we were being ushered from one sheep pen to the next.

If we are to go to Oshkosh again we will use the same route as the all inclusive price was very reasonable. We have in fact requested Calvin to arrange a tour to Reno in September 2001.