

## Capt Bud E Wielt

1920 - 2000

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Chapter 91 KC, MO EAA 11496



Bud was born in Mt. Vernon, IL, the youngest of two brothers and three sisters. His passion for airplanes and flying was born with him since he started building and carving model airplanes from a very early age, eventually graduating to powered flying models.

At the age of 15, Bud paid a farmer to mow a landing strip in a field on the outskirts of Mt. Vernon so an instructor could fly in from nearby St. Louis and teach him how to fly. That field is now the site of Mt. Vernon Municipal Airport.

His first flight was on May 21, 1935 behind the stick of a Ryan. His first solo flight was on December 11, 1938 in a Cub, he received his solo ticket in the same plane on February 20, 1939. He received his private ticket on September 16, 1939, and went on to study aeronautical engineering at Parks Air College at Parks Airport in St. Clair County, IL. On March 12, 1941 he received his commercial certificate, followed by his instructor rating on April 23, having now a total 318.2 hours flying time.

In Mt. Vernon, that mowed grass strip had now become an active airfield and Bud was now the flight instructor. In January 1942, Bud, newly married to Eleanor, joined the AAF Flight Training Detachment, Cuero, TX. At 23 he was now a flight instructor at the primary flying school where he taught classes of Army Air Force cadets the techniques of flying they would use in the wartime skies over Europe and the South Pacific.

In July 1944, with 2,511.18 hours flying time, Bud and Eleanor moved to Kansas City, Missouri where he joined TWA. First flying co-pilot in the DC-3, he became Captain on September 7, 1946. In the 36 years Bud was with TWA he flew as Captain in the DC-3, Martin 404, Convair 880, Constellation, Boeing 707, Boeing 747, and helped raise two daughters Rebecca and Judy. Bud retired from TWA on January 9, 1980 with 27,478.10 hours flying time.

Throughout the sixties, Bud had been busy building a Smith Miniplane. Its maiden flight was on July 25, 1969, the logbook records, "Very pleased with flight." N41W became a regular at every fly-in in the Midwest, often in an inverted attitude. Bud's retirement was tirelessly and joyfully dedicated to flying, and the people involved in flying. He taught countless pilots how to fly. He once told a pilot student, "You're a good pilot, you know how to fly, but you're not having any fun." Bud believed in having fun. He was much sought after for his raconteuring, his impartiality, his friendship and his wonderful Santa Claus. He was a lifetime member of the EAA, president of Grain Valley Airport Corporation in Kansas City, a member of Quiet Birdmen, Combat Pilots Association, Piper Short Wing Club, and TWA seniors.

Bud's last flight was on November 7, 1999. He had logged 30,484.45 hours, in over 50 different makes of airplane. He was a good man, he had a good flight, and he had fun.

