

Discovering Virginia's Eastern Shore

Last September John Milhous and I packed up our trikes and headed to [Campbell Field Airport \(9VG\)](#) on Virginia's Eastern Shore to do some exploring. Man, did we have a great time!!! Come see for yourself.

The last time I'd been to the eastern shore I was not particularly impressed. Driving up route 13 was pretty but not very exciting -- flat lands with nice farms and some small quaint towns. Buy nothing in the way of terrain relief.

I am a mountain lover and need some varying terrain, at least on the horizon. Unlike the previous trip; however, this time I had my trike with me. I would be exploring parts of Virginia that can only be reached by air (not even a boat could get to some of the places we would fly).



John and I arrived at [Campbell Field](#) shortly after lunch on September 2nd. Gordon Campbell, the owner of Campbell Field, met us and showed us where to set up camp and the airplanes. Gordon bought Campbell Field several years ago while living in Connecticut. He and his wife dreamed of moving to the Eastern Shore and Gordon fell in love with this underappreciated airport, so he bought it. Now he and his wife Christine have realized their dream and relocated to their new home a few miles from the airfield.

Gordon has done a beautiful job with the runways and is a great host for visiting aviators. Because Campbell Field is one of the few public grass strips in the state, he is often visited by official aircraft who are only allowed to land at public airfields (fields published in the AF/D). These include Civil Air Patrol (CAP) aircraft practicing soft field landings and takeoffs and Navy helicopter pilots in the middle of the night practicing low light/no light landing and takeoff operations. John and I hoped to be awakened by Navy helicopters in the middle of the night but unfortunately none came our way.



Gordon has started a "[Soup on Sunday](#)" tradition to entice aviators to this beautiful part of the state. Every Sunday from 12 to 3pm, weather permitting, Gordon feeds hungry pilots and whomever they bring with them in the way of friends. Everything about the atmosphere of this field makes me nostalgic for the early days of flying. Campbell Field is

more like an aerodrome than an airport. This field is not about the business of flying -- it is about the joy of flying. That joy includes spending time with others who love flying as much as you do. Swapping stories, sharing dreams, comparing airplanes, and exploring a little bit of paradise from the air together.

Gordon is also the president of Virginia Aviation Council, Inc. and has the lead in putting together Virginia's annual Festival of Flight. In 2008 it was held, for the first time, at [Suffolk Executive Airport](#) in Suffolk, VA. If you haven't been to one of these events I would highly encourage you to go. You'll find light sport aircraft, homebuilts, antiques, new GA aircraft, and lots of good company. For more information go to <http://www.virginiaflyin.org/index.htm>.

Ok, ok, enough introduction -- what about the flying? Since a picture is worth a thousand words why don't I let them do most of the talking? We made several flights during our stay. Below are just two examples. The yellow lines highlight our routes.



The western and eastern shores of the peninsula are vastly different. The western shore consists of beautiful bays and sandy beaches. The eastern shore is made up of exotic salt water swamps with lush

green grasses, weird creek and mud patterns, and lots of birds. We did not make it to the outer islands but Gordon tells us that they are made up of beautiful beaches firm enough to land on. That will have to be our next trip (either September or October 2009).

About the Author



Terri Sipantzi is a Sport Pilot Instructor and Examiner as well as a Light Sport Aircraft Repairman and DAR. Terri & Beth Sipantzi own and operate Precision Windsports, Inc. (www.PrecisionWindsports.com). Precision Windsports is a full-time AirBorne dealership, providing aircraft sales and support in conjunction with concentrated flight training. They are centrally located in Lynchburg, VA and are responsible for eastern US sales.