



RECORD OF CONVERSATION

Timothy N. Sorensen
Aviation Accident Investigator
Central Region

Date: March 21, 2022
Person Contacted: Jay Smith -- Pilot
NTSB Accident Number: CEN22LA121 – Furlow, AR

Mr. Smith provided the following supplemental statement:

Subject: Investigation of the cause of the crash of N7337D on 2/14/2022

When Don Adamson, A&P who retrieved N7337D from the woods after my forced landing on February 14, 2022 called me to tell me the NTSB had released the airplane back to me (actually, N7337D is technically my wife's airplane and registered to her), I asked what he knew about what had been found.

I have no idea how such an investigation works and since I read on the preliminary report that no NTSB employees had travelled to the scene of the crash, perhaps Don Adamson actually did the investigation as an A&P/IA. Whatever the case may be, he told me that there was fuel in the right wing tank but that the left tank was empty and that the carb was empty although the gascolator, located near the carburetor at the bottom of the engine compartment had fuel in it (even though the gascolator had detached from the airplane during the crash). This investigation of the airplane seems to have happened well after 48 hours after the crash.

Another A&P, Ralph Chapman, who lives here at the airpark where I live assisted Don Adamson in retrieving the airplane out of the woods. Prior to the investigation, Ralph had mentioned to me that "there was fuel all over the place" at the crash scene and that he had seen fuel running down the left side of the fuselage. He also mentioned that the left wing was the higher wing as the airplane was laying. Ralph Chapman's written statement about fuel being in the left tank is attached. Also attached are two photos of the airplane clearly showing the left wing higher than the right while N7337D was in the woods.

Robert Schulte, an attorney who specializes in aviation matters advised me to not expect an in depth investigation of the cause of the engine failure but rather to expect an open and shut quick, easy conclusion. I certainly hope that Mr. Schulte's opinion is not accurate in this case.

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N7337D on two occasions before the crash experienced sudden rough running/loss of power that in both cases cleared up after 30-45 seconds. Prior to the most recent annual inspection, I discussed these two rough running/loss of power incidents with Russell Jackson, the A&P who conducted the inspection and worked on the airplane and engine. Mr. Jackson finished the annual inspection and returned the airplane to me on February 1, 2022 after flying it himself.

From my perspective, on the day of the crash two weeks after getting the airplane back from annual inspection, the engine did what it had done before only this time it died completely. Mr. Jackson told me that the carburetor had previously been set excessively rich and that he had leaned it "way down" in his words. Might this be why the plane died on the day of the accident when on the previous two occasions it kept running until clearing up? That certainly seems plausible. Carburetor issues seem to me to be one potential cause of my crash at this point.

The airplane was not out of fuel. I checked the fuel quantity before the short flight on February 14, 2022 (which was planned to simply be once around the pattern) and then sumped both tanks for water before taking off. Mr. Chapman's statement that there was still fuel running down the fuselage from the left tank two days after the crash confirms that the airplane was not out of fuel.

Perhaps it has already been noted in the investigation that there was fuel present in both tanks at the time of the crash that had drained out in the intervening time before it was looked at in depth. Mr. Adamson's remarks to me made it sound otherwise but as I have stated, I have no knowledge of how an NTSB investigation into an airplane crash works. A simple conclusion that the left tank was out of fuel would prevent a deeper look into the real cause of the loss of engine power and subsequent crash.

I appreciate your consideration of the information I'm providing along with Ralph Chapman's statement pertaining to seeing fuel coming from the left wing tank and running down the fuselage two days after the crash.

Am I entitled to any findings coming from this investigation along the way prior to the eventual final report?

Thank you for your time and consideration of these matters,
Jay Smith

cc: Johnny Victory