

Ralph E. Hicks
Senior Air Safety Investigator
AS-ERA

Date: 1/29/2025

Subject: ERA25FA037, Interview with Monique Hertz

On 1/29/2025, this investigator spoke by phone with Monique Hertz, who was the wife of Joshua Hertz (the pilot of N8110S).

The following is a summary of the conversation.

I introduced myself as the NTSB investigator-in-charge for the accident on October 31, 2024, involving her husband, Joshua Hertz. I informed her that I would take written notes during the interview.

Mrs. Hertz did not find any logbooks for N8110S. She did state that Joshua was in contact with the previous owner and there was maintenance performed before the sale, including replacing the engine (due to a previous accident). Also, the airplane was flown to Peachtree City, Georgia for a pre-buy inspection. The mechanic in Peachtree City found a couple of things and those repairs/replacements were made. The new engine was tested before the sale and her Joshua was aware of that.

Regarding any documents or logbooks, Mrs. Hertz returned to Peachtree City after the holidays and found a flight gear bag on her front porch. She does not know who left the bag there, but it was her husband's bag and it contained flight-related items, including her husband's pilot logbook. She was shocked when she found it. It was undamaged and she does not believe it was in the airplane. It also contained aircraft registration, medical, notes, and his passport. She made copies of the pilot log and would provide it to the NTSB.

The accident flight was a personal trip. On the morning of the accident, Joshua came by the house to pick up a couple of things (they were going through a divorce process). She did not see him in the afternoon, nor was she aware that he was flying that day. They did not speak at all while he was on his trip.

Joshua was not under the care of a physician for any reason, as far as knew. She did not believe that he had a primary care physician or was under the care of any specialist. He would not go to the doctor....he was not that kind of person. He would self-medicate if he was sick, but he was normally pretty healthy. Not aware of any prescription medications he was taking. She will check with Blue Cross.

I informed her that an anti-seizure medication was found in his urine and liver. She was unaware that he was taking this drug.

After the accident, she spoke with Joshua's flight instructor, Brent (Clancy). Brent was his only flight instructor that Joshua was flying with at the time. She stated that Brent knew that Joshua was flying to Chicago. Brent was aware that the weather was not good and he told this to Joshua; however, he also conveyed to her that he was following his flight and Joshua had stopped in Crossville (Tennessee) and he was fine.

Mrs. Hertz expressed concern that her husband, as a student pilot, could take off from two different airports with the weather at the second airport (Crossville) not being good. I informed her that I would review Joshua's logbook endorsements.

Mrs. Hertz stated that she would do whatever she could do to assist in the investigation.

Interview concluded.

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Date: 1/29/2025

Subject: ERA25FA037, Interview with Don Jackson, Owner of Pappy's
Aviation, Carthage, MS

On 1/29/2025, this investigator spoke by phone with Don Jackson, who is the owner of Pappy's Aviation

The following is a summary of the conversation.

I introduced myself as the NTSB investigator-in-charge for the accident on October 31, 2024, involving N8110S. He was aware of the accident. I informed him that we have not located the aircraft logbooks and we were trying to reconstruct the maintenance history.

The previous owner, Ben, flew the airplane to Carthage, left a tow bar on the airplane when he left Alabama. Landed, tow bar hit the prop and caused a big mess. He tore the engine down; it was about 2,000 hours past recommended overhaul. The engine parts were sent out for overhaul and the crankshaft was red tagged. All the parts came back in good shape. Crankshafts for that engine are very hard to find. He took a second look at the crankshaft and it had minor pitting on it. Had magnaflux and narrow eddy current inspections done on the crankshaft and did not find any evidence of cracks so he recertified the crankshaft. In his opinion, the condition of the crankshaft did not warrant replacement. Engine was solid, he put it back together with new fasteners. Once the engine was reinstalled, they flew it about 8-10 hours to make sure everything was correct.

The airplane was in good shape. There was a little bit of corrosion on one of the ailerons, and he advised the owner to get that taken care of.

The airplane was then taken to Alabama, Alabaster Airport, where some additional engine work was done. He did not have the details. He was told that the carburetor and magnetos were removed.

Interview concluded.

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Date: 1/29/2025

Subject: ERA25FA037, Interview with Lane Mitchell, Mitchell Aviation
Services, Peachtree City, Georgia

On 1/29/2025, this investigator spoke by phone with Lane Mitchell, who the owner of Mitchell Aviation Services. He performed a pre-buy inspection of N8110S.

The following is a summary of the conversation.

He stated that there were some discrepancies found with the engine, specifically the engine was not running smoothly. The carburetor was replaced with an overhauled carburetor. The engine continued to run rough, and the no. 4 cylinder induction tube was found to be not properly secured to the cylinder induction pipe. The connection was secured and the engine ran smoothly after that.

The pre-buy inspection was not an annual-type inspection but covered the safety of flight items. He found no other discrepancies with the aircraft.

Mr. Mitchell will provide the logbook sticker and any other paperwork associated with the inspection and repairs.

Interview concluded.