



**PIPER MEMORIAL AIRPORT  
353 PROCTOR STREET  
LOCK HAVEN PA 17745**

For Immediate Release:

## **Out of the Mines, Into the Skies**

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**Lock Haven, PA, 16 July 2018** – AvSport of Lock Haven, the sport aviation school on the Piper Memorial Airport, is pleased to announce that another of its primary students has just achieved his first solo flight. William Harkleroad Jr., a retired mining maintenance superintendent from Huntingdon PA, today demonstrated his competence to safely fly a Light Sport aircraft as its sole occupant. Harkleroad came to Lock Haven to train last October, after having received several flight lessons at Mifflin County Airport, Reedsville PA, in a Piper J-3 Cub which had actually been born in Lock Haven more than seventy years prior.

“Bill’s Cub experience gave him a solid foundation on which to build,” notes Harkleroad’s flight instructor, AvSport founder Prof. H. Paul Shuch. “It was a pleasure to transition him to a modern, 21<sup>st</sup> Century aircraft (though I must admit that he and I still share a fondness for the antiques).”

This first solo flight makes Harkleroad what Shuch likes to call an “airplane driver.” His next step, according to Shuch, is to return to Lock Haven during the flight school’s upcoming Fall academic quarter, to receive the advanced training which Shuch says will “take him from airplane driver all the way up to licensed pilot.”

Upon completion of his successful first solo flight, Bill’s wife Galene cut the back off of his t-shirt, and Prof. Shuch autographed it to mark the occasion. This ritual dates back to the Golden Age of aviation, when barnstormers frequently had to patch rips in their fabric-covered aircraft with pieces of their own garments. Bill’s shirt is now displayed on the wall of the AvSport office, proudly joining 18 others representing the students who have achieved this same milestone since the flight school was established in January of 2010.

The Sport Pilot license, in which AvSport specializes, is the newest portal of entry into the world of aviation, allowing prospective pilots to become licensed in half the time, and at half the cost, of the traditional Private Pilot license. Sport Pilots fly solely for pleasure, in fair weather, during daylight hours, in simple, low-performance Light Sport aircraft. Piper Memorial Airport is the ancestral home to the legendary Piper Cub, arguably the world’s first sport plane. Modern Light Sport aircraft allow pilots to recapture the bygone fly-for-fun Cub era, with increased reliability and improved safety. Anyone interested in learning more about sport flying is invited to browse the school’s extensive website at <http://AvSport.org>, where a wealth of free training materials awaits.

DOWNLOADABLE PHOTO: [http://www.avsport.org/photos/solo/Bill\\_H.jpg](http://www.avsport.org/photos/solo/Bill_H.jpg)

CAPTION: Galene Harkleroad does the honors in a ceremony that dates back to aviation’s Golden Age, by cutting off the back of her husband Bill’s shirt following his first successful solo flight. That piece of fabric was signed by his flight instructor, and now adorns AvSport’s office wall, along with shirts of other successful solo pilots trained at AvSport of Lock Haven.