

1947 Luscombe Silvaire 8E, s/n 5256, N2529K; July 2025 annual inspection.
Airframe TT: 4850 (3/2025)
C-85-12F/O-200 Don's Dream Machines STC hybrid: 550 SMOH (3/2026).

Background:

I purchased this airplane in 2002 and have put about 1,500 flight hours on it in addition to my professional piloting work, including at least 7 flights (3.5 round trips) between California and Anchorage, Alaska (30 tach hours/3-5 days each way), where it has been based for most of the past 14 years. I have landed this airplane as far south as Abre Ojos, Baja California and as far north as Anaktuvuk Pass in the Brooks Range of Alaska; we have been in, around and above the Alaska Range in Denali National Park and Preserve, intimate with some of the most rugged terrain on Earth.

The previous owner imported this airplane back from Canada in January 1995, where it had been registered since the early 1970s. Canada's aviation bureaucracy, as I understand it, destroys all previous records upon importation and re-registration, so there are no known U.S. documents prior to that; however, I have the Canadian logbooks in storage in California, to be included. Of course, all maintenance records since then are on hand and well organized, documenting the numerous upgrades as described below. The previous owner selected "N147E" as its registration upon re-importation. In 2020 I was at long last able to secure its original-issue "N2529K" registration (or "NC2529K," if one prefers to so mark it).

Description and Features, From Spinner to Tailwheel:

McCauley 1B90 propeller, Hartzel-Silver finish-coat, balanced and pitched for 2550 RPM (just short of redline) at full-throttle in level flight; by Dominion Propeller, Anchorage. No nicks sustained, ever; no evidence of nick repair from prior ownership. **Cowling rebuilt** in 2014 by the Luscombe Foundation shop in Chandler, Arizona concurrently with installation of the extensively overhauled engine, as described below. Original factory-specified lower air deflector lip design for **correct downdraft cooling** performance was ensured during rebuild. Zinc-chromate primer and matched white polyurethane applied in 2018. Trim striping not yet accomplished.

Engine Compartment:

The Continental C85-12-F engine was overhauled in 2014 by **Don's Dream Machines** in Georgia per their **C85/O-200 blend** STCs SE02004AT & SE02172AT, delivering approximately **100HP**—and the airplane performs accordingly; Don Swords told me that depending on the individual engine, without putting it on a dynamometer to know exactly, it can range from 97HP to 107HP. I suspect mine is closer to 107 due to items listed below and my personal impression; static run-up RPM: 2250.

This is a premium overhaul; reliability and smooth operation are my priorities, not cheapness. Notably, the overhaul included a **factory-new O-200 crankshaft** and a replacement serviceable C-85 camshaft; in addition, I opted for the **sturdier O-200 crankcase**. I was assured that the connecting rods and other moving parts are

balanced as for a racing engine—and it certainly is smooth-running and strong, based on more than 10,000 flight hours experience with reciprocating engines.

Since then, beginning at 340 hours following overhaul, three of the Millennium cylinders, first #2 in February 2019, then #3 & #4 at 390 hours in April, 2020 were pulled and overhauled with no further issues since. Cylinder #1 has remained normal. These compression failures were caused by lead fouling of the exhaust valves or valve stems, due to mostly un-leaned 100LL usage during that period, corrected by STC-approved use of 90-octane auto-gas (no ethanol oxygenate additive in Alaska) and proper mixture leaning—particularly when burning any 100LL avgas—while idling/taxiing and careful leaning whenever in cruise at less than full-power output (i.e., throttled-back at lower altitudes), per my (rare) Luscombe-expert A&P-IA in Anchorage at the time, who, sadly, for the past four years has been employed by the FAA and is no longer able to work on my airplane due to conflict-of-interest restrictions. July 2025 cylinder pressures: 1-74/80, 2-78/80, 3-78/80, 4-78/80.

Oil, Phillips XC 15w/50 (including a dose of CamGuard), used since break-in completion, is typically drained and replaced at 25 hours or annual intervals along with a new filter. An oil filter (48108) adapter was installed prior to acquisition.

Spectroscopic oil analysis has been performed with each oil change since overhaul; these results, all normal, are part of the maintenance records.

Intake: Air filtration upgraded in 2022 to a **Challenger Aviation** (K&N aviation brand) **high-flow cleanable filter assembly** (STC SA01669CH), providing increased power output over the previous Bracket foam filter element assembly. My impression: it certainly doesn't diminish performance; I can't objectively determine the exact increase in performance, however on a calm day, the engine's pull is appreciable all the more following this and after the previous upgrades listed below.

Carburetor: As part of the engine overhaul, a **factory-new Marvel-Schebler carburetor** (serviced in June 2024 by Alaskan Aircraft Engines during the annual inspection) replaced the original Stromberg in 2014. Since then I've never experienced carburetor icing, which I readily did with the Stromberg when flying through rain. Unlike with the Stromberg, the Marvel runs rich enough to cause lead fouling (as we've concluded after the cylinder overhauls) unless you're careful about leaning; the Stromberg mostly leaned itself automatically, but is not ideal for the upgraded engine.

An aerobatic-type crankcase breather is fitted, only to minimize any loss of oil through the breather in normal operations; never flown aerobatically—not an interest of mine, nor is it an “aerobatic” airframe, despite the claims of some people.

Ignition System: Left Magneto replaced with **SureFly impulse-coupled SIM4P electronic ignition** in 2022 (1500 hour life-limit). This is said to increase HP by at least

10%. I can't empirically quantify that, but as with the upgraded intake filter, it sure didn't hurt. And, starting is immediate, practically instantaneous since installation. The right-position Slick 4301 magneto (also impulse-coupled) was overhauled shortly after the SIM4P installation with about 60 hours on both units since then as of March 2026. New ignition harness installed at time of overhaul in 2014; matched new set of 8 Champion REM40E spark plugs installed 5/2021 at engine time 425.

B&C 320 lightweight starter was factory-overhauled at time of engine overhaul.

Exhaust System:

All **stainless-steel FAA-PMA Hanlon-Wilson** reproduction headers and heat-exchanger shrouded mufflers obtained newly manufactured from the Luscombe Foundation's parts manufacturing division, installed shortly before overhaul, putting an end to chronic problems; the original cheap steel headers and cheaply-made-but-not-cheap aluminum muffs were an ongoing source of disappointment at each annual inspection. Also, this system provides improved cabin heat, particularly when the carburetor heat box overflow port is ducted to the firewall fresh-air regulator, providing dual heat-exchanger-sourced cabin heat input for cold weather operations when carburetor heat is selected off.

Fuel System:

Standard welded aluminum 12.5 gallon (25 total) wing tanks; they have been problem-free, no leaks. Equipped with the modern, Luscombe Foundation **1/4-turn fuel shutoff valves** on each footwell sidewall. It has always been very unusual to find any water droplets during sumping from its machined-aluminum STC'd gascolator manufactured by Steve's Aircraft.

Electrical:

The 14V electrical system is powered by a 60A **alternator**; this alternator has been trouble-free during the entirety of my ownership. The airframe's demand on it is minimal, likely resulting in its longevity. The voltage regulator was replaced during engine overhaul in 2014.

Flight Controls:

A "**Featherlight**" **sealed ball-bearing** (maintenance-free) STC'd pulley kit provided by the Luscombe Foundation was installed in 2012, replacing the original bushing-bearing pulleys, resulting in the lightest possible aileron feel available in a Luscombe 8. The ailerons were expertly re-rigged, per Luscombe specification by my knowledgeable mechanic. It flies elegantly hands-off or by fingertip, trimmed-out in smooth air. The pitch-trim cable was expensively replaced in 2019 (mostly labor cost); rudder cables replaced 2012.

Landing Gear:

The landing gear was upgraded with a Luscombe Foundation-kitted and STC'd factory-new **Grove wheels and hydraulic brakes system** in 2020. My Luscombe-expert mechanic and I made an improvement to the suggested installation by how we routed the 5606 fluid supply line from the engine-compartment firewall-mounted reservoir to the parking brake valve, by utilizing pipe fittings and hand-formed aluminum tubing instead of the supplied flexible nylon tubing. It was more time-consuming, but looks better and is assuredly reliable. During the installation I opted for a genuine, **functional parking brake**, something this airplane had in name-only with its previous, factory original Goodyear mechanical disc brakes; i.e., it was simply useless. I sourced a used Scott/Cleveland hydraulic parking brake valve which we cleaned and overhauled with new, correct seals, mounted it to the interior-side firewall in-line between the master cylinders' T-fitting and reservoir, then installed and routed a new parking brake valve control cable. The brake system is not only elegant, but fully and correctly functional.

The **Grove brake system is correctly sized for the airplane's mass**; over-aggressive braking and tipping forward requires major effort and intention, if at all possible. I have never felt close to doing that while aggressively braking with little in the baggage compartment (i.e. w/forward CG); the brakes never feel "grabby", either with the 8.50-6 or on its standard 6.00-6 tires.

The wheels are mounted with the lightweight and cushy **Aero Classic "Smooth Tundra" 8.50-6** 4-ply low-pressure tires (new in 2020, including new inner-tubes; with protective tire covers since 2024) providing forgiving ground handling and improved performance on low-quality runway surfaces with an approximate 5 MPH IAS drag penalty over the 6.00s (included). Domed hubcaps top off the gear for a clean look and probably decreased drag. Fiberglass OE-style wheel fairings and mounting hardware are included, though in storage in California since 2004. I think it's faster without the fairings and still looks very good with bare tires, especially with the hubcaps; and you can't stand on the fairings while fueling or cleaning the windshield, nor utilize 8.50-6 tires, which, besides enhancing your "ramp presence," have the benefit of improving ground handling, particularly during landings, excellent for pilots new to tailwheel operations or the Luscombe 8 series and its *undeserved* reputation for tricky ground-handling at speed.

The original flying-wire landing gear braces were replaced with the sturdy **ski-gear brace tubes** at the Luscombe Foundation shop in 2014. The landing gear is now less prone to collapse if harshly side-loaded by poor technique, and can accommodate skis with some fuselage mounts added for rigging. Airspeed penalty was undetectable. The shock-absorbing oleo cylinder-spring assembly was overhauled with new internal seals January 2005. It has remained in seep-free working order.

A **Scott 3200 tailwheel** with correct steering springs and chains is mounted to a **correct leaf-spring** per Luscombe foundation specifications for the Scott 3200

tailwheel, all in 2020 along with the Grove main gear upgrades. The Scott 3200 itself came with acquisition in 2002. This leaf-spring ensures that with a full aft CG and at maximum gross weight, the tailwheel's swiveling weight-bearing surface remains correctly oriented to the ground (no less than parallel), ensuring responsive tailwheel steering. On a related note, the **aft-most (#7) bulkhead** received several extra rivets per Luscombe Foundation recommendation (or service bulletin) to increase its structural security due to shear-load stress placed upon it by the tailwheel. I have been especially careful to avoid landing first on the tailwheel due to this knowledge.

Recess-mounted outboard on each wing is a landing light; both were replaced with reliable, blazing **TRW Alphabeam LED** units in 2015, producing **170,000 candlepower** each. It appears that these extremely bright lamps were discontinued by Teledyne, but they're life-rated at 5,000 hours of usage. Welder's goggles are required if you want to look directly at them when powered. The lamps are controlled by a **MaxPulse** control unit (2014) for alternating or synchronized pulsation at 44, 88 or 144 flashes/minute, along with steady L, R or both-on for **maximum inflight daytime recognition** and highly effective night taxi/runway illumination.

An STC **MicroAir vortex generator kit** was installed in 2012, and **it works**. I carefully tested the stall airspeed shortly before installing and again afterwards. Indicated **stall speed was confirmed to be reduced by 5 MPH**, dropping from 50 to 45 MPH IAS; x1.3, a perfect, still-air three-point landing dropped from 65 to 59 MPH IAS, with just enough elevator travel to effect flare, thanks to the stabilizer's underside VGs. Add 5-10 MPH IAS for a wheel landing, and add a little more when operating with a maximum-aft CG. No loss of cruise speed was discernible. A 1990s-era Whelan white & red anti-collision strobe is fuselage-top-mounted just behind the wing. Navigation lights are direct-replacement and bright Whelen LED bulbs (2025) for red & green; the original white incandescent nav-light remains in the tail.

BAS retractable tail-pull handle-equipped before my acquisition. Literally a handy improvement, and preventing mishandling of the horizontal stabilizer.

Avionics & instruments:

Garmin GDL82 ADSB-OUT system installed 2020 by Peninsula Aerotech, Kenai, Alaska; this included installation of a like-new **Garmin GTX327 transponder** from the company's serviceable spares inventory. Also included is an anonymizer switch if one prefers that; I keep it in public mode for search & rescue tracking. Notably, this was a **\$5,500** safety investment. Mid-air collision is the main thing that a pilot has the least control over. And of course, relevant airspace restrictions vanish, simplifying flight operations in Alaska and making them legal overall in the contiguous states.

King KX-155 Nav-Com; with no blank or failing gas-discharge display segments, which if not replaced can lead to a catastrophic voltage spike resulting in expensive (replacement) failure of the radio due to the high voltage such displays require. It has

performed reliably since its failing com display was replaced in 2014, and with helpful side-tone in the headset phones while transmitting. While it was at the avionics shop—and as I stood at the bench watching and listening to the technician explain the gas discharge display's characteristics and cautions—the VOR receiver was tested and passed; however, it has never been able to effectively receive a VOR signal, apparently due to the antenna and cable. I did replace the antenna and cable during an annual inspection a couple years ago, but we didn't get around to figuring out exactly how to connect the cable correctly to the radio; that is, I didn't pursue it beyond that, as I've always had some form of portable GPS—an iPad with ForeFlight for the past decade-plus for reliable service. The matching OBS head includes a glide slope indicator, though it was determined during bench-testing that the receiver lacks LOC/GS tuning capability.

An **RC Allen electric attitude indicator** is mounted. The electric T&B/slip-skid indicator it replaced is included in its padded carton. Otherwise, the panel includes the basic VFR package of altimeter, ASI, VSI and magnetic compass.

Electronics International **E-4 4-channel EGT indicator** (and probe system) equipped, installed during engine overhaul. In retrospect, I wish I had opted for CHT, though I believe it's possible to use this instrument for CHT with appropriate probes/sensors on the engine. The tachometer was sent to the instrument shop for preventive servicing and calibration-check shortly after engine rebuild, at which time its hour-meter was reset to indicate engine time since overhaul. A combined analog oil pressure and temperature gauge accompanies the recording tachometer.

An ACK E-04 **406MHZ ELT** with a panel-mounted remote control installed; battery replaced 6/2024, due in 2028 or 29.; replacement antenna installed during the 2023 annual inspection.

Headset phone and mic jacks are overhead-mounted just aft of each seat. There is a pointless speaker in the ceiling, and it "works," but no speaker is capable of overcoming the inflight ambient noise level; a good noise-attenuating headset, preferably with ANR, is required and has always been used. Also equipped with a panel-mount intercom. Wired with a panel-mounted FAA-PMA cigar-lighter-type fused 14V receptacle for powering/charging electronic devices.

BAS 3-point inertia-reel shoulder harness and lap-belts equipped, allowing upper body movement in normal conditions.

Bendix magneto switch includes starter position, eliminating a separate starter switch.

Ergonomic hardwood stick-grips with PTT switch; equipped since before my acquisition. I like them. The right stick and pedals are removable. I like that.

Luscombe Foundation Comfort Seats memory-cushion seat-bottoms replaced the original-design leg-cramp-and-lower-back-pain-inducing seats (now in storage, included if you want them... *please* take them); the matching lightweight aluminum seat-back frame assembly was special-ordered to have the right seat-back cushion removable (left behind or in baggage area) for easy access to items behind it in solo flight or for larger/longer items in the passenger position. Related to that feature, the right stick and rudder pedals are removable, giving one even more space for cargo. Leaving the right seat-cushion behind also improves utility when solo. The seating system was installed in 2014 at engine overhaul, etc. time.

The **baggage area was expanded aft and opened** with removal of the hat-shelf while at the Luscombe Foundation shop in 2014, **greatly improving the airplane's utility**. The aft floor area measures 27" long x 33" wide forward end; x 27" wide at the aft end. Equipped with its first **Concorde RG-25XC sealed lead-acid battery** in 2006, eliminating any chance of spillage and corrosion; its second, current RG-25XC was installed mid-2019.

A Bruce's Custom Covers full canopy cover in good condition (new ~2020) is included, customized with "N2529K", and extending just outboard of the fuel caps and behind the wings to cover the beacon strobe unit. A set of wing covers in serviceable/fair/repairable condition are included if desired, however in storage in California.

A well-fitted, like-new **insulated engine cover** by Mac's Airplane Covers is included. For the extremely rare cold weather flight operation, I preheat the engine to its core a day ahead or at least overnight to avoid cold-soaked starting by utilizing a 250-500W electric space-heater inside the cowling. I have thousands of hours and cycles of experience operating Cessna and Piper reciprocating single- and twin-engine airplanes in western Alaska year-round, always operating to avoid engine shock-cooling. I operate my own very expensive engine always with shock-cooling in mind. For the past several winters engine operation has only been on the ground to keep the engine lubricated and exercised every couple of weeks, always following a thorough pre-heat.

As with all stock Luscombe 8 airframes, heel brake pedals are on the left side only. I think heel pedals are more appropriate for this airframe, as there's less chance you'll activate brakes at high speed where they're inappropriate and hazardous; brakes aren't meant for salvaging a too-fast touchdown. You'll learn to appreciate heel brakes—if unfamiliar, especially heel pedals linked to hydraulic brake cylinders.

Urethane paint in overall good-fair condition; painted c.1995 in Canada. Metal skin wing spar cap has no signs of corrosion, all applicable ADs complied with. There are several small bare patches where filiform corrosion under the 30-year-old paint has been removed, then chemically treated with Alodyne; Wherever this has been done, the bare spots remain bright and free of corrosion, even 15 years later. There remain such areas of corrosion in the aileron gaps and under the gap seal strips where access can't

be gained without removing the ailerons. If I still own it come next annual inspection, this will be an A&P/AI-approved sub-project.

Annual Inspection performed: July 2025.

My Flight Instructor certificate is current and I am able to provide for a demo flight and/or fulfill your insurance company's make-and-model familiarization sign-off requirements if needed, provided you can legally serve as PIC.

With consideration of market reality, my asking price is, as with airplanes in general, less than what I've put into it.

Some performance observations:

Observed IAS, 8/2024, separate days, moderately smooth air, 1200' MSL;

RPM: IAS-MPH/knots:

On 6.00-6 tires:

2550: 123/107, 2400: 110/096, 2300: 105/91, 2200: 100/87, 2100: 95/83.

On 8.50-6 tires:

2550: 117/102, 2200: 97/084, 2100: 90/078.

Vs: 45 MPH IAS; x 1.3=59 MPH IAS (51 MPH IAS) 3-point landing speed;
55-65 MPH IAS for wheel landing.

Empty weight: 927 lbs. (weighed 5/2020).