



# National Transportation Safety Board Aviation Accident Preliminary Report

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<b>Location:</b>	Bon Aqua, TN	<b>Accident Number:</b>	ERA15FA336
<b>Date &amp; Time:</b>	09/02/2015, 1545 CDT	<b>Registration:</b>	N216LA
<b>Aircraft:</b>	HENDERSON W A/ JOHNSON W L RV 6A	<b>Injuries:</b>	1 Fatal
<b>Flight Conducted Under:</b>	Part 91: General Aviation - Personal		

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On September 2, 2015, about 1545 central daylight time, an experimental, amateur-built RV-6A, N216LA, was substantially damaged when it impacted wooded terrain, following a loss of control from cruise flight near Bon Aqua, Tennessee. The commercial pilot was fatally injured. The airplane was registered to Chelsea Aviation Enterprises LLC and operated by a private individual as a personal flight conducted under the provisions of 14 Code of Federal Regulations Part 91. Visual meteorological conditions prevailed and no flight plan was filed for the planned flight to Shelby County Airport (EET), Alabaster, Alabama. The flight originated from Bomar Field (SYI), Shelbyville, Tennessee, about 1400.

The airplane was fueled with 12 gallons of 100 low-lead aviation gasoline prior to departing from SYI. According to preliminary information from the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA), the pilot was receiving flight following services from air traffic control (ATC). About 20 minutes after departure, while the flight was in radio and radar contact with Huntsville Approach, the pilot ceased communicating with ATC as the airplane reversed course, from south to north. The airplane continued north, climbed from 6,500 feet to 9,000 feet mean sea level and completed two left circuits, before descending rapidly into terrain.

A debris path was observed, beginning with several freshly cut tree branches, extending on a magnetic course about 260 degrees for 110 feet to the main wreckage. Sections of the outboard right wing were located along the beginning of the debris path. The right flap and right aileron separated from the right wing. The left flap and left aileron remained partially attached to the left wing. The left flap was extended beyond its full travel-point and the left aileron was hanging from one hinge. The empennage remained intact and exhibited less damage. Control continuity was confirmed from the elevator and rudder to the pilot's control stick and rudder pedals in the cockpit. Continuity was also confirmed from the pilot's control stick to the point of aileron separation on both wings. Additionally, the elevator trim cable remained attached from the elevator trim tab to the cockpit.

The cockpit was crushed, but the pilot's seat and four-point harness remained intact. The magneto switch remained in the both position and the fuel selector was positioned to the right main fuel tank. The throttle, mixture, and carburetor heat control levers were in the full

forward position. The engine remained partially attached the fuselage. The two-blade propeller separated from the hub. Both propeller blades exhibited chordwise scratching. One propeller blade was s-bent while the other was bent aft.

The engine was separated from the airframe for examination. The top spark plugs were removed; their electrodes were intact and light gray in color, except for the No. 3 top spark plug that was impact damaged. The valve covers were removed and oil was noted throughout the engine. The crankshaft was rotated via an accessory gear drive. Camshaft, crankshaft, and valve train continuity were confirmed and thumb compression was attained on all cylinders. The oil screen and oil filter were absent of contamination. The carburetor had separated from the engine during impact. Its floats and needle were intact and the valve was mid-range. Some fuel was recovered from the engine-driven fuel pump, consistent with 100 low-lead aviation gasoline. Both magnetos produced spark at all leads when rotated by hand.

The pilot held a commercial pilot certificate, with ratings for airplane single-engine land, airplane multiengine land, instrument airplane and glider. He also held a flight instructor certificate with a rating for glider. His most recent FAA second-class medical certificate was issued on June 10, 2015. At that time, he reported a total flight experience of 1,672 hours.

The two-seat, low-wing, fixed tricycle-gear airplane, serial number 60527, was assembled from a kit and issued an FAA experimental airworthiness certificate in 2005. It was powered by an Aero Sport Power O-360-A2A, 180-horsepower, experimental engine, equipped with a Sensenich two-blade, fixed-pitch propeller.

Maury County Airport (MRC), Columbia, Tennessee, was located about 20 miles south of the accident site. The recorded weather at MRC, at 1555, included wind from 190 degrees at 3 knots, clear sky, and visibility 10 miles.

#### Aircraft and Owner/Operator Information

<b>Aircraft Manufacturer:</b>	HENDERSON W A/JOHNSON W L	<b>Registration:</b>	N216LA
<b>Model/Series:</b>	RV 6A	<b>Aircraft Category:</b>	Airplane
<b>Amateur Built:</b>	Yes		
<b>Operator:</b>	JAMES HOUSE III	<b>Air Carrier Operating Certificate:</b>	None

## Meteorological Information and Flight Plan

Observation Facility, Elevation:	MRC, 681 ft msl	Observation Time:	1555 CDT
Lowest Cloud Condition:	Clear	Conditions at Accident Site:	Visual Conditions
Lowest Ceiling:	None	Temperature/Dew Point:	32° C / 21° C
Wind Speed/Gusts, Direction:	3 knots, 190°	Visibility	10 Miles
Altimeter Setting:	30.03 inches Hg	Type of Flight Plan Filed:	None
Departure Point:	Shelbyville, TN (SYI)	Destination:	Alabaster, AL (EET)

## Wreckage and Impact Information

Crew Injuries:	1 Fatal	Aircraft Damage:	Substantial
Passenger Injuries:	N/A	Aircraft Fire:	None
Ground Injuries:	N/A	Aircraft Explosion:	None
Total Injuries:	1 Fatal		

## Administrative Information

Investigator In Charge (IIC):	Robert J Gretz
Additional Participating Persons:	Rocky Davidson; FAA/FSDO; Nashville, TN James M Childers; Lycoming Engines; Williamsport, PA
Note:	The NTSB traveled to the scene of this accident.