



NEWS AND COMMENT

BELLANCA'S FIRST AIRPLANE

Referring back to the Spring 1965 JOURNAL, Vol 10, No 1, and the excellent article regarding Giuseppe Bellanca's developments—by Felipe E. Ezquerro—I believe I may have a minor piece of history to add.

I took my flight instruction from the Heinrich brothers at Hempstead Plains in 1913 and continued in association with them in 1914-15. It was probably in 1914 that Giuseppe M. Bellanca appeared on the field with his "Y" Anzani powered little monoplane, shown by the copied photo below. This photo, by Wm H. Sheahan, a pupil off and on, of the Heinrich school is dated on my original as 1915. As may be seen the airplane is the essence of simplicity and bears a relationship to the Santos-Dumont "Demoiselle." The fairly flat (at least lower surface) wing is noteworthy.

Of course, thinking back 50 years is not too certain. but while I recall seeing the plane, with Bellanca aboard,

do considerable taxiing, I cannot recall seeing it perform any more than a straightaway hop. However, I was at the field relatively little in 1915 and may have missed his original triumph. It may be that members of his family could provide further detail, or that the few present survivors who were at Mineola/Hempstead Plains in 1914-15 could add some information.

George A. Page, Jr., RR 1, Taylor Road, Reynoldsburg, 0.

CHAMBERLIN C-82 - GREEN RIVER WHISKEY PLANE

Since a photo of the "Green River Whiskey" aircraft with a request for its identification was run in the Spring 1966 issue of the JOURNAL, a number of letters have been received. Three of these are as follows:

The most interesting photo of the "Green River Whiskey" monoplane shows the little-known Chamberlin



Top: Giuseppe M. Bellanca in his first airplane at Hempstead Plains Flying Field, New York 1915. (Photo - William H. Sheahan of Philadelphia, Penna) Below: Two photos of one of the de Havilland DH-4 aircraft modified with Lifting Struts by G. M. Bellanca—mentioned in Bellanca article in Vol 10, No 1, p 42. (Photos - James J. Sloan)



C-82. This plane, NC-69K, manufacturer's serial number 3, was issued Department of Commerce Bureau of Aeronautics Memo No. 2-343 on May 4, 1931 as a seven-place cabin monoplane powered by a Wright R-975 of 300 hp.

The initial registration was issued May 15, 1931 to the Chamberlin Flying Service Inc., 372 Lembeck Avenue, Jersey City, New Jersey. This registration continued in effect to the same owner until July 1937 when it seems to fade away.

Another of Clarence Chamberlin's designs, the C-81 (c/n 2, NC-60W), was issued Memo 2-355 on June 9, 1931 as an eight-place aircraft. It seems to have had an even shorter life than the C-82. Perhaps some Member can give us the details of what finally happened to these two aircraft.

William T. Larkins, 175 Clarie Dr, Pleasant Hill, Calif.

Out of my files comes a letter from A.A.H.S. Member William Fleming of Passaic, New Jersey. Bill and I were trying to clear up a "color" problem on the "Columbia" at the time, which became acute in that it was mixed up with another plane and its color scheme. Bill says: "...the report that the 'Columbia' was brown and cream can be easily dismissed--and for the following reason. Sometime around 1929-1930 Clarence Chamberlin became associated with an outfit called Crescent Aircraft. They built a 5-6 place J-5 (Wright engine) powered high wing monoplane which in many respects resembled the 'Columbia.' These included deeply curved upper longerons, wide wing struts, squarish wing tips and other 'Columbia' characteristics. This plane was painted brown and ivory, and as it was flown almost exclusively by Chamberlin the source of the confusion is readily apparent. I saw this plane buried in the back of the old Fokker factory at Teterboro, New Jersey in the late thirties--in fact, climbed all over it. The license had long expired and the plane was no longer airworthy. It was too dark to get photos, but superficially the plane was a 'dead ringer' for the Bellancas...."

Well, I do have one photo of the plane which is a right side view which shows the NR-69K registration, and the typical Bellanca design influence of squared wing tips, etc. It had the usual large (automobile type) wheels and tires of the early 1930s. These features are not readily visible on the "Green River Whiskey" shot, which shows the plane no doubt rebuilt later on. The plane has a different paint job, air wheels, a tail wheel and a radio mast. This, plus the "picture" on the side of the fuselage. All this is quite indicative of a post-war 1946 to 1950 revamp job. So that is

all I know for the moment. Perhaps some Members will have some facts, and maybe Clarence Chamberlin himself can add something constructive.

Gregory C. Kohn, 3944 N 67th St, Milwaukee 16, Wisconsin,

I have a photo of the Chamberlin C-82 (above) with the following information on the back: "The Chamberlin Transport--six to eight place cabin monoplane powered with a 300 hp engine (Wright Whirlwind or Pratt & Whitney Junior)--has been built for the economical carrying of 'payloads' in all kinds of weather. Its careful engineering gives it a combination of extreme stability and maneuverability that makes blind flying comparatively simple. Slow landing speeds, with quickly responsive controls at all speeds--even far below the stalling point--are characteristics of Chamberlin planes without complicated devices. A useful load of 2100 lbs and payload of 1385 lbs permit a wide cruising range with a real earning capacity. It is especially adapted for use on 'feeder' lines, air express service, special charter work, and passenger hopping."

Specifications were given as follows: Span 48 ft, length 28 ft 6 inches, weight empty 2400 lbs, passengers 7, high speed 130 mph, cruising speed 110 mph, landing speed 45-50 mph, rate of climb 800 fpm. Henri D'Estout, 4914 Richmond Ave, Fremont, California.

Identifying information was also received from Member Wallace L. Smith of Southville, Massachusetts.

CURTISS R2C RACER CORRECTIONS

In the article, "The Curtiss R2C Racers", Vol 11, No 1, a printer's error led to both photo captions on page 11 being incorrect. In the top caption the main phrase should read: "...first R2C became the R-8 Army racer...." Main phrase of the lower caption should read: "...A-6692 became the R2C-2____" Observant readers will have noted that a further correction should be made on line 14 of page 12 making that sentence read: "The R2C A-6692, redesignated R2C-2____"

DOUGLAS C-U7D BuNo 138820

This U. S. Navy Super DC-3 has had a unique history insofar as its actual configuration and designations. Initially it was delivered to the U. S. Army Air Force as a C-47. Western Airlines obtained the aircraft next



Douglas C-117D at Patuxent River, Md. (J. G. Handleman)

and upon suitable de-militarization it became a DC-3A. When Douglas decided to go ahead with the project of updating the DC-3 to the DC-3S configuration, the aircraft was purchased from Western Airlines and became the prototype Super DC-3, in 1949.

The airplane again changed configuration and designation when a 30-ft landing chute, JATO bottles and dual landing wheels were installed for a USAF escape and evacuation air competition. In this guise it was designated YC-129. However, upon delivery the designation was changed to the YC-47F, in 1951. The USAF kept the airplane only a short period and turned it over to the U. S. Navy who had previously received 100 of the re-manufactured aircraft. During the modification period in which the landing chute, dual wheels and JATO bottles were removed and the U.S. Navy equipment installed, the aircraft was designated R4D-8X, becoming R4D-8 when all work was completed. With the McNamaraization of the United States military designation system it became the C-117D. Yes, BuNo 138820 has been around.

Harry S. Gann, 21662 Bahama Lane, Huntington Beach, Cal.

A.A.H.S. ASSISTS ON B-29 PLASTIC KIT



Toward the end of 1965, Airfix Products Ltd of London, England brought out a 1/72 scale plastic model of the Boeing B-29 Superfort which has been acclaimed as one of the finest kits ever produced. The Boeing Company and the A.A.H.S. both assisted in the development of this model and have been given due credit by the manufacturer. Decals with the kit make it possible to produce either of two famous B-29s, the EDDIE ALLEN or JOLTIN' JOSIE, THE PACIFIC PIONEER (see the JOURNAL,

Vol 7, Nos 3 and 4, for the full story of these and the many other B-29s of the 20th Air Force).

The completed model of JOLTIN' JOSIE, shown here, was turned out by Member Martin Kishpaugh (and photographed by Member Tom Doll) for the Editor. It has been customized only in the addition of HisAirDec national insignia decals. The outstanding and accurate detail of the kit is largely due to the work of Airfix's Chief Designer, Mr. John C. Edwards.

DISPLAY AIRCRAFT IN PENNSYLVANIA



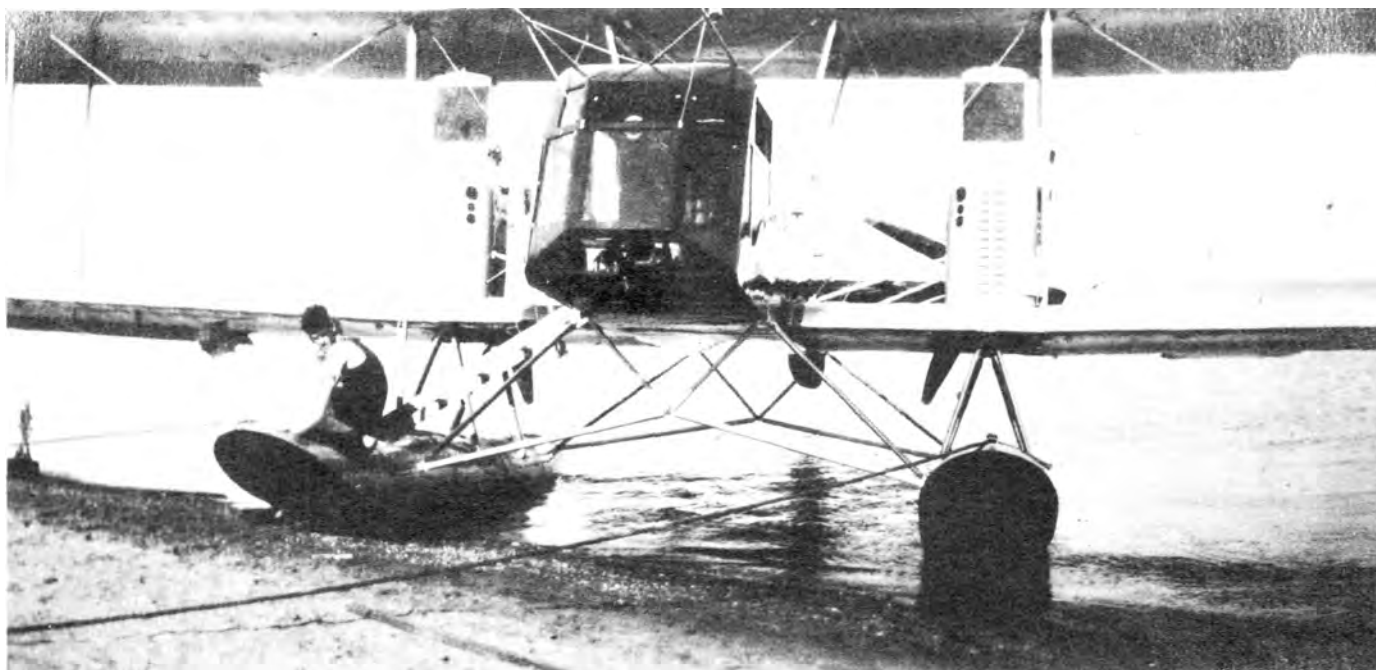
Along the road leading to the area of the Greater Pittsburgh Airport occupied by the 171st Air Transport Wing and 112th Fighter Group (PA A.N.G.) are mounted three aircraft--a Republic F-84F and a North American ETF-51D and an F-86L. Two of these should be of interest to fellow Members.

The Mustang (above) is unusual for several reasons. Notice that it has the high fin and rudder of an H model while the remainder appears to be a D model. According to the serial listing in the JOURNAL Vol 6, No 2, and Robert O'Dell's letter, Vol 6 No 1, this is a Dallas-built D model. However, this aircraft has ETF-51D-25-NA stencilled on the right side of the fuselage, while the serial number, 44-84900N, is on the left side in the usual location. I do not know if the aircraft was ever flown with this tail or if it was installed at the time of mounting. Can anyone shed any light on this bird?

The Republic F-84F-15-RE, serial 51-1508, (below) is the aircraft in which Colonel (then Major) Peter R. Philpity captured first place in the 1957 Ricks Memorial Trophy Event. This competition, which involved 12 Air National Guard squadrons, consisted of a flight from Fresno, California, to Washington, D.C. Flight time for the event was 4 hours, 13 minutes, 42 seconds, for an average speed of 638 mph. A memorial plaque was placed on the aircraft in July 1964.

Howard W. Smeltzer, 826 Sewickley St, Greensburg, Pa.





EARLY CURTISS OR EARLY WRIGHT?

The two prints (above and below) were copied from small and slightly faded originals loaned to me by a bird-watching acquaintance of my wife's. He has no interest in airplanes and is therefore a little hazy on the details. Fortunately, the prints are dated (August 20, 1921) and he is sure that they were taken on the shore of Lake Erie in Monroe County, Michigan, about 20 miles north of Toledo.

He remembers that Orville Wright was said to be present when the pictures were taken along with two of his engineers. A deepening mystery, eh? I have shown them to Gil Trimmer who started out with Curtiss in the early/middle twenties, and we both agree that there seems to be more Curtiss than Wright in the layout. The vertical tails are clearly related to the Fledglings, the wing cellule and floats are said by Gil to be typical early Curtiss (except for the tips), and the float bracing is similar to a torpedo bomber Curtiss built for the Navy about the same time.

After 45 years, it would be very easy for a person only casually interested in airplanes to remember Wright for Curtiss, and we suspect this may be the case, but on the other hand....

Karl Bergey, 2002 Avilla Avenue, Vero Beach, Florida.



CURTISS TRAVEL AIR TANAGERIZED

Supplementing the article by Frederic Howard on the Safe Aircraft Competition, Vol 10, No 1, is the photo (below) of a Curtiss Travel Air Tanagerized. This was apparently an installation of the Tanager floating ailerons on a Travel Air 4000. Although the photograph is dated 1928, registration data indicates that the plane was built after the Safety Competition. Registration was as follows (from the 1930 Civil Register): Travel Air Tanager 4000-T, I.D. 165V, c/n 1400, mfg. 1930. Owner Travel Air Company, Wichita, Kansas.

Jack McRae, 34 Westcliff Dr, Huntington Station, N.Y.



VULTEE VENGEANCE IN AUSTRALIA

As some may be aware, we of the Aviation Historical Society of Australia have what we believe to be the last Vultee Vengeance in existence. We have been in touch with Convair for information on the Vengeance but their records, in the main, have been disposed of...it has been over 20 years since the type was in production and records do have a habit of vanishing over such a period.

This particular aircraft was built by Convair as an A-31A and was bought by the RAF as a Mk.1A and serialled EZ999. It eventually wound up on charge to the RAAF when the order was diverted to Australia. The serial A27-99 was allotted to it but it was not actually worn. The plane was put into storage for a few years and then sent to the Sydney Technical School for the training of



apprentices, and we were able to acquire it from there.

It is in excellent condition except for the rudder, tailwheel assembly, tail cone and associated fairings, which we will make up from scratch. The electrical wiring at the main fuse panel was cut and/or removed by the apprentices for some unknown reason, and we have been endeavoring to complete some of the systems by trial and error. This has unfortunately become a little difficult, although not insurmountable, as we get into the bomb, gun and radio circuits. We will eventually restore this aircraft to an airworthy state. It has only 30 minutes flying time so far and the engine is new.

We need to contact someone willing to loan us the following items, which we could copy and return to him: 1) Maintenance manual of the A-31A model, 2) Pilot's handling notes of the A-31A, and 3) closeup photos of the tail section, front and rear cockpits and the twin gun mountings in the rear cockpit. All material will be carefully treated and any costs refunded.

The photograph (below) shows the plane as it is now. It is finished in wartime RAAF colors, although not correct as it never in fact wore them. Neville M. Parnell, 30 Alfred Road, Moorebank, Sydney, New South Wales, Australia.



WACO CRASH AT OAKLAND

Jay Wright's article, "Pacific International Air Races" in the JOURNAL, Vol 10, No 4, was read and enjoyed very much by this writer. The paragraph concerning the Waco crash sparked an action in my mental data retrieval system. Sometime ago I was given an excellent collection of racing photographs and material by Bob

Dittmar who was one of Larry Brown's mechanics. One of the photographs was of this unfortunate crash and, in spite of the gruesome aspects, I am sending it (above) to merely add to Jay's fine piece of reporting. According to a pencilled note on the reverse side of the photo, it was taken by a Mr. Bolducci Cooley. He receives my "Johnny on the Spot" award for this picture. Harry S. Gann, 21662 Bahama Lane, Huntington Beach, Cal.

NEW MEMBERS

Buzz ALPERT, 890 Merchandise Mart, Chicago, Ill. 60654.
Interested in WW II fighters, mainly British but also German and American.

M. J. ALVRUS, 1935 Ricardo Ave, Fort Myers, Fla. Interest in military and general aviation history; modeling.

M. Keith BAIRD, 811 W Main, Crawfordsville, Ind. R/C modeler and interested in air history of WW II.

Donald F. BALDOCCHI, 225 Locust St, San Francisco, Cal.
Been around flying all his life, licensed since 1947 and likes WW I and later.

John R. BARKER, 138 Escanyo Dr. S. San Francisco, Cal.
Interested in all phases of aviation history, collects photos and drawings, and is a plastic modeler.

Carl J. BOKMULLER, 29804 Elmgrove, St Clair Shores, Mich.
In US Navy aviation from 1943 to 1946. Presently scale aircraft modeler with high emphasis on authenticity.

Knut BRINCK, Brannkyrkagatan 41 IV, Stockholm SV, Sweden,
General interest in aviation since 1934.

David D. BROWN, Star Route, Box 222, Lacey's Springs, Ala.
Great uncle owned building in which the Wright brothers established their bicycle shop. 1/72 modeler.

Charles F. BURDEN, P.O. Box 176, Meadow Vista, Calif.
Commercial pilot, flight instructor, SMEL, glider and manager of the Auburn, California, Municipal Airport.

Albert B. CHERRY, Jr., 7113 Alvern St, Los Angeles, Cal.
Licensed aircraft and powerplant mechanic for United Air