

Another problem is that of brakes. Modern-day operations call for much taxiing about, but the old-time thin wheels don't have brakes, nor can they be easily adapted. A possibility is to modify motorcycle wheels by turning out new hubs and increasing the spoke slope, but this will call for other modifications to the strut-axle combination. Still another problem is whether to use original wire bracing in the fuselage or to simplify the structure by adding diagonal tubes.

Those who are interested in this project, or who have opinions on the subject, are invited to contact me at 13826 Des Moines Way, Seattle 88, Washington. Results won't be evident right away, but everything will go into the hopper, and we'll come up with something workable.

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### BOEING P-12E RESTORATION

by

Ed Maloney

Of all the aircraft in my historical aircraft collection my most proudest possession is a Boeing P-12E Pursuit, Serial No. 32-17. This trim little fighter of the early thirties was one of 110 P-12E's built out of a grand total of 554 ships in the P-12/F4B series.

This P-12E was built in 1932 by the skilled hands of Boeing craftsmen and was the first fighter to go into service with an all metal monocoque fuselage. Up to this time all previous Air Corps pursuits had had fabric covered fuselages. The P-12E was a favorite among all pilots, streamlining was improved and this pursuit was exceptionally fast and maneuverable for its day.

As far as it is known this is the last remaining P-12E in existence. This P-12E was the 244th P-12 built in the series by the Boeing Airplane Company of Seattle, Washington.

The P-12E was used as a front line pursuit from 1932 until 1936 and served at all the major Air Corps bases in the continental United States. In 1938 it was relegated to training duties in gunnery and acrobatics at Kelly Field, Texas. A number were also exported to serve in Panama, Hawaii and the Philippine Islands. After their training tours were completed and more modern equipment became available, the remaining P-12E and F models were assigned to various Air Reserve Squadrons and so it was that P-12E Serial No. 32-17 was assigned to the Long Beach Air Reserve Squadron and was the number three ship of that squadron. At that time all reserve aircraft were painted silver all over, the yellow and O.D. color scheme having given way to the modern reserve silver. This ship served with this squadron until late 1941, when the reserves were called up and the few remaining P-12's were placed on the inactive list.

At this time this P-12E was given to an aeronautical school in Northern Calif., where it remained as a classroom instructional aircraft for students. As the years passed, WWII ended and more modern equipment became available for school use, the trim little P-12E was relegated to the lowly position of an engine test stand. This writer found it outside and beginning to weather away and managed to save it from

being destroyed.

In 1953 it was moved down to Claremont, and was complete except for engine, exhaust stacks, instruments and cowl. I began the extensive task of restoring the P-12E in late 1953 and completed the fuselage in August 1954, having spent the entire summer dressing up the pert little fuselage. A complete set of instruments was installed, the nameplate replaced, and a new original P-12 P&W R-1340 engine was found and installed in the ship. The exhaust stacks were the hardest items to uncover as they were the old bayonette type and were practically non-existent by 1954. On day while in search for other antique aircraft I uncovered a complete set of stacks rather beat up and unrecognizable to the average person, however with the help of two body men I was able to make them like new once again. The only major item missing today is the ring cowl and I am keeping my fingers crossed as I have a lead on one.

In restoring the P-12E fuselage every removable nut, bolt and fastener was removed, inspected, and replaced if necessary. Several hundred fasteners were badly corroded from exposure; these were removed, cleaned, and rechromed to their original finish and to preserve their useability.

After spending over two hundred hours cleaning and restoring the fuselage it was given a thorough painting in the original U.S. Army Air Corps olive drab and yellow colors. Also added is the insignia of the world famous 95th Fighter Squadron, the "Kicking Mule" that this writer remembers so well when they were based at March Field California.

In working on the P-12E as with working on other Air Force fighters - P-40, P-47, P-51, P-63 etc., and including experience on several Japanese aircraft; Zeke, Frank, Baka etc., and a German Messerschmitt 262 Jet Fighter, one can get fairly acquainted with how an aircraft is put together and the thoughts and inspiration behind their design. I can truthfully say from past experience that the Boeing P-12E is by far the best constructed. Its neatness of parts design, and well-made castings and hardware stand above any other plane thus far worked on.

Considering its age the P-12E is in excellent condition and is as good as the day it was rolled out of the Boeing factory in Seattle way back in 1932.  
(See photo on page 160)

#### "WANDERING ORION'S"

At least ten members have sent in various notes and photos describing Lockheed Orion's that were "not" included in the article "A Survey of Lockheed Orion History" on page 4 of the Journal. To their embarrassment, as well as ours, we have been forced to point out that all of the so-called "missing" items are on page 24, where the article is continued. Our sincere apologies for not putting a "continued on page 24" on the bottom of page 6.