

AIRCRAFT ON EXHIBIT IN THE FRANKLIN INSTITUTE, PHILADELPHIA, PA.

by

Frank Strnad

WRIGHT MODEL "B" BIPLANE 1911 - NR-14333

30 hp, 4-cylinder, inline Wright brothers engine. The 13th plane built by the Wright Brothers. Last flew on December 14, 1934, during a celebration of the 31st anniversary of the Wright brother's flight. Gift of Grover Cleveland Bergdoll, of Philadelphia, the original owner.

LOCKHEED "VEGA" 5-B, NR-7952, c/n 22

Built 12-4-28. Pratt and Whitney Wasp CB radial engine. Flown by Amelia Earhart on the first solo trans-Atlantic flight by a woman, from Harbor Grace, Newfoundland, to Londonderry, Ireland, a distance of 2,026 miles in 14 hours, 54 minutes, on May 20th and 21st 1932. Presented by Amelia Earhart.

BELL HELICOPTER - MODEL 30, NX-41867, c/n 1A

Built 2-26-44. Franklin 6V4-298 engine. First successful Bell helicopter. Loaned by Bell Aircraft Company. This ship is to go to the National Air Museum, Smithsonian Institution, at a later date.

BUDD AMPHIBIAN "THE PIONEER" - MODEL BB-1 - NR-749N

210 hp Kinner radial engine. Based on a Savoia-Marchetti design, it was the first stainless steel airplane. Built in 1931 by the Edward G. Budd Mfg. Co., of Philadelphia to demonstrate the practicability of the shot weld process of fabricating stainless steel. It flew over 1,000 hours on tours around the U.S. and Europe before being placed on exhibit. Presented by the Budd Co. It has been on exhibit outdoors, uncovered and exposed to the weather since 1936 proving the durability of stainless steel construction.

NORTH AMERICAN "MUSTANG" P-51K - AAF 44-11807

Packard built Rolls-Royce, 1600 hp engine. On exhibit on the floor so that visitors may climb into the cockpit. Purchased from the government.

Two Link trainers are in operation. An early type is employed for the use of young people. Visitors who show an aptitude for handling this machine are permitted to use a late type. A competition is conducted for youngsters under the age of 18. The winner each month receives a gold miniature "wings" pin and is entitled to an hour of actual flying at a nearby airport.

A portion of the Aviation Section of The Franklin Institute is devoted to the display of original note books, calculations and records of experiments connected with the early work of the Wright brothers on their gliders and first airplane. Several cases of balances and airfoils used in these experiments are also on display. All the material shown was bequeathed to The Franklin Institute by Orville Wright.

The history of aviation is shown in a series of 77 scale models and a few actual engines, from the 3 cylinder fan type Anzani used in the early Bleriot's to the Westinghouse X19B turbo jet used in the McDonnell Phantom.

The museum is located at Benjamin Franklin Parkway and 20th Street in Philadelphia, Pa., and is open Saturday 10 AM to 5 PM. Other days, 12 noon to 5 PM. CLOSED MONDAYS. Admission - Adults 50¢, children 30¢, plus tax.

Photographs of these aircraft are available from Frank Strnad, Box 173, Northport, Long Island, New York. See also page 195.

THE OX5 CLUB

What is touted as the fastest growing club of pioneer airmen has recently shown signs of booming all over the place. Every airplane driver or mechanic who learned to fly or was around aircraft in the days from 1916 to the middle 30's was exposed in some way to the charm, or menace if you will, of the OX5. Most of this was through the medium of the Jenny, but in one way or the other most of the persons prominent in the aviation industry have known about, flown behind, worked on or cussed at, an OX5.

This connection with an engine is providing the basis for drawing together airmen all over the country into an organized club, with national officers, state and local governors, committees on programs, events, news, historical data, contests and annual Wingdings. Actually, the requirements for membership are lenient by many standards; it is limited to those who, prior to December 31, 1940: a) Have soloed and flown an OX5 powered aircraft; b) Have owned an OX5 powered aircraft; c) Actively and directly participated in the design, construction, repair, maintenance or operation of an OX5 powered aircraft. This has provided the excuse for many pioneer airmen to get together at local events and renew acquaintances, swap lies, and to get behind still another campaign for spreading the word for airpower to the citizens of the world.

THE OX5 CLUB OF AMERICA was founded August 27, 1955 at Latrobe, Pa., and chartered soon after in Pennsylvania. What began as a two-man conversation now has over 3,500 members as of July this year. A glance at any of the rosters or letterheads of the Club reveals the names of many famous airmen. The current officers are Russ Brinkley, Pres.; Clifford Ball, Sec'y; C.B. Carrol, Treas.; Jon P. Morris, 1st VP; Blanche Noyes, 2nd VP; Asa Rountree Jr, 3rd VP. California Wing officers are Jimmie Mattern, Pres.; Carl Squier, VP; Lloyd Stearman, VP; Norman Larson, Sec'y; Warren Carey, Treas.; Art Goebel, VP. Governors of San Francisco, Los Angeles and Balboa Bay Regions are Roger Q. Williams, Tony LeVier, and Paul Mantz respectively. Just a few of the "Advisors" listed on the California Wing's monthly publication Pioneer Airmen are Cecil B. DeMille, Lt. Gen. K.B. Wolf, C.M. Belinn, Dave Coleman, Zeno Klinker, Eddie Bellande, Vance Breese, Ray Podeen, Otto Timm, Bill Lear, Benny Howard, Hal Gurney, Henri D'Estout etc.

So far the OX5 Club has been in the throes of organization and its doings chiefly social. But a Historical Committee is in being and there is a great possibility that much can be added to the recorded history of aviation through eye-witness accounts of its members.

John Sloan