

AIRCRAFT IN THE THOMPSON PRODUCTS MUSEUM

by

Frank Strnad

CURTISS SEAPLANE PUSHER - 1910

The first Cleveland owned airplane, it flew one of the earliest air routes in the nation, Jamestown to Mayville, N.Y. The 8 cyl. 75 h.p. engine was flown in 1911 with Eugene Ely from a battleship. Plane was converted to a seaplane in 1912. Color is white with natural wood hull. BUMBLE BEE painted in black on tail. Brown bumble bee with white wings painted on underside of top wings. Black lettering - AL J. ENGEL, U. S. AIR MAIL, ROUTE NO. * A607004 - painted on side panels.

THOMAS MORSE S4-C, ex 5452, c/n 633

An excellently restored example of the famous Tommy Scout of World War I. Powered with a 100 h.p. Gnome Monosoupape engine that was manufactured by the General Vehicle Co., Long Island City, N.Y. This ship was formerly in the Jarrett Museum, N.J. Color, olive drab with red cowling, star and circle insignia on wings, and red white and blue vertical stripes on the rudder.

CURTISS ORIOLE, MODEL 519, NC-1660, c/n 189

Built in 1919, this was one of the first post war civilian airplanes. Powered by a 150 h.p. 6 cyl. Curtiss K6 engine, it featured an oval shaped molded plywood fuselage. Color, international orange fuselage, silver wings and tail. License numbers in black along with "I'm a 1920 Curtiss Oriole" on rudder.

BOEING DH-4ML, N-489, c/n DA-4

This Boeing rebuilt (1925) version of the famed D.H.4 is powered with a 400 h.p. 12 cyl. Liberty engine. Color, all white with black license numbers and 67 U.S. MAIL on the fuselage sides. The ship, registered NS-489, and owned by the U. S. Dept. of Agriculture, Tallulah, Louisiana 1928-1931 was used for some of the earliest crop dusting experiments in the United States.

WEDELL-WILLIAMS "SPECIAL" RACER NX-61Y, c/n 109

Roscoe Turner's famous gold racer in which he won first place in the 1934 Thompson Trophy Race. Powered by a 825 h.p. P&W Hornet, it also set many transcontinental speed records. Color, gold with red license numbers, black 25 on aft fuselage forward of the tail with black lettering aft of cockpit listing records held. Ethyl gasoline and Ring Free Comet emblems on side of fuselage with Champion Spark Plug emblem on wheel pant. Red lettering Pratt & Whitney Hornet on side of engine cowling and Roscoe Turner near cockpit.

NORTH AMERICAN P-51K-10-NA, N-79161

This former Air Force Mustang named "Second Fiddle", flown by Bob Swanson, placed 5th in the 1946 Thompson Trophy Race. Ship is natural unpainted finish with black lettering including race number 80.

Also in the museum's collection, but not on exhibit, is a 1917 Curtiss MF bi-plane flying boat, NC-903, c/n 5543, powered with a 100 h.p. Curtiss OXX-6. In addition to the aircraft displayed, the famous Thompson Trophy is on exhibit along with many of the Charles Hubbell original paintings used for the Thompson Products calendars. Among the engines on exhibit are a 1911 4 cylinder Curtiss, and a 1913 6 cylinder Kemp. Among the smaller exhibits are Thompson valves taken from Lindbergh's first Atlantic crossing, the "Southern Cross", and Admiral Byrd's South Polar flights.

The museum, officially called THOMPSON PRODUCTS AUTO ALBUM AND AVIATION MUSEUM, is located at Chester Avenue and East 30th Street, Cleveland, Ohio. It is open daily except Mondays from 1:00 to 5:00 P.M., and Wednesday and Friday evenings. Admission is free.
