

GARY FISK

A SURVEY OF ANTIQUE AND REPLICA AIRCRAFT
OWNERS IN CALIFORNIA - 1959

Last summer I spent two months in California as the guest of R. T. "Doc" Hood of Torrance. During this time I had an opportunity to see just about all of the old airplane projects in the state of California. The following notes concerning these old airplanes, engines and replicas were made during this time and may be of interest to many members.

All of the credit goes to Doc Hood, who made it possible, and I wish to add my sincere thanks to him and to the many other fine fellows who supplied me with information for this article.

Doc Hood and Al Kiefer

Doc and his partner Al Kiefer were rebuilding a Curtiss "Jenny" to flying condition. This JN-4D was owned after World War I and up until 1935 by the Huff Brothers of Redwood City, California. Then they sold it to Robert L. Ficklin of Fairbury, Illinois. When Doc and Al found this plane it was in a small shack in the middle of a grape vineyard, on a farm owned by Mr. Ficklin's family, located just outside of Madera, California.

The Air Service Serial Number of this plane is 34135, and it carried civil registration number N-1217 after the war. Doc and Al now have it newly licensed and when it takes to the air again it will carry number N-6898C. At latest report (April 1960) they have the fuselage completed and resting on the landing gear. The motor, radiator, turtle deck and empennage are installed and construction on the wings will begin soon. They hope to have it flying this summer.

Doc and Al have two engines for the Jenny; an OX-5 and an OXX-6, both of which are in fine running condition. They intend to use the OXX-6 for flying purposes because it generates 10 more horsepower than the OX-5 and has dual magnetos. The OX-5 will be kept as a spare.

For more information on this particular Jenny, see the following:

1. Sport Aviation, May 1958, page 16.
2. AAHS Journal, Volume 4 Number 1, pages 47-49.

Ernie Freeman

Ernie Freeman (2817 Sonoma Street) also lives in Torrance. He owns and is restoring a Thomas Morse S-4C "Scout". He has the fuselage completed and resting on the landing gear, with an 80 hp. Le Rhone rotary mounted in the nose. Ernie also owns a near-complete set of parts to a Jenny, which is stored in the attic of his garage. Then he has most of the parts for a Standard J-1, and these are stored in one of Jack Canary's garages. Last, he owns an unrestored Thomas Morse

S-4C fuselage, which is stored in one of Rudy Hazuka's hangars. Ernie plans to rebuild each of these planes as the time and money become available.

Ernie also owns two OX-5 engines and another 80 hp. Le Rhone besides the one installed in the "Scout" fuselage.

Whiteman Airport, Pacoima, Calif.

Here we saw most of the planes used in the filming of "The Tarnished Angels". They were:

1. De Havilland D.H. -60 Gipsy Moth (NC-916M), co-owned by W.H. "Hank" Coffin and Ed Clark. C/N is unknown because nameplate is blank.
2. Waco GXE "Hank's Crank", (N-4008), C/N - 1149. Owned by "Hank" Coffin. OXX-6 engine. Minus engine and wings when I saw it.
3. Fleet Model 2, (NC-748V), C/N - 333. In very good condition. Owner unknown.
4. Dart Manufacturing Co. Model "G", (N-20917), C/N - G26, no engine or tail when I saw it. Owner unknown.

For photos of these planes, see Air Progress, Spring, 1958, Pages 54-57.

San Fernando Airport, San Fernando, California

Here we found Harry Provolt's hangar, and we got to see his replica Fokker DR-1 Triplane (N-5505V), and authentic Bleriot XI (N-1398N). The Bleriot was built Sept. 7, 1909 and is presently powered by a 40 hp. Continental engine. When I saw it, it had red-white-blue vertical rudder stripes painted on with water paint, probably old make-up from its appearance in "Lafayette Escadrille". For information and photos of the replica Fokker Triplane, see American Airman, July, 1958, Pages 12-13.

Also at San Fernando was a beautiful Curtiss "Robin", Model C-1, (N-395K), C/N - 562. It is owned by E. Brandt Freeman of Los Angeles, and is used for sky diving activities. For photos of this plane, see American Airman, July, 1959, Pages 15, 18.

Last, we saw an Aeronca C-3 (N-17438), C/N - A 747, and a Monocoupe 90A (N-19429), C/N - A 780, here and both were in fine condition.

Harry Provolt

Harry Provolt (7839 Kyle Street, Sunland, Calif.) has several old and interesting planes out in his yard. There is a Bleriot XI two-seater replica (N-7899C), C/N - 3, which he built in 26 days and was completed in June, 1958. There was also a partially finished Nieuport 17 replica which he built around a steel tube fuselage with an 80 hp. Le Rhone mounted in the nose.

Next to the Nieuport was a home-built pulse-jet helicopter (N-822OH). Harry told us that only one attempt was made to fly it and it failed because the

fabric covering on the rotor began to peel off.

Harry also owns the Pearson-Williams P-W-1 "Mr. Smoothie" (NX-94Y) National Air Race plane. It is rather sad shape, with no engine, wings or tail. The remarkable thing about this little racer is the wing spar, which is solid wood and measures 7 1/2 X 8".

The finest plane that Harry owns is his Aircraft Engineering Corporation "Ace" biplane, (N-69097), C/N - 1, which he had stored in his garage when I was there. This is a trim little sport plane built in 1919 and powered by a 40 hp. Aircraft Engineering Corp. engine. This plane was beautifully restored a few years ago by Lorill Lowery of San Francisco. It is presently painted a light blue, with yellow markings. Harry also has a black-maltese cross painted on a white field on the rudder to make it look like an early Albatros observation plane for work in the movies. For more information and photos of the "Ace", see the following references:

1. American Modeler, April, 1957, Page 19.
2. American Airman, August, 1957, Pages (?).
3. Air Progress, Fall, 1959, Page 51.
4. American Airman, July, 1959, Page 16.

Harry owns three 80 hp. Le Rhones, a Gnome rotary, and an OX-5. He told us that he intends to sell all of his old airplanes, and go in for boats, so it should be interesting to see who buys up all of his old planes.

Portal of the Folded Wings

In Burbank, California, near the Lockheed plant, we saw the Portal of the Folded Wings, a large building in Valhalla Memorial Park (a cemetery). On the walls of this building are three plaques in memory of Billy Mitchell, Amelia Earhart, and Richard Byrd. On the floor are six more plaques in honor of Bertrand Blanchard Acosta, Jimmie Angel, James Floyd Smith, W. B. "Bert" Kinner, Charles E. Taylor, and Walter R. Brookins,

Arrigo Balboni's Aircraft Junk Yard

We drove out to Balboni's junk yard, near Ontario, Calif., to see the remains of this once-famous aircraft scrap heap. This area looks like someone dropped a lot of rusted, rotted junk in the middle of a desert weed patch. Little remains today except a few skeletons of wing sections, and scattered parts here and there. Nevertheless, we got nearly a trunk full of Jenny wing spars, turnbuckles, and fittings. This "junk" is, for the most part, useable after being de-rusted.

Frank Tallman

At Flabob Airport, Riverside, California, we saw most of the planes owned by Frank Tallman (1821 Via Visalia, Palos Verdes Estates, Calif.).

In a "T" hangar we saw his Travel Air 2000-T, which is painted as a Fokker D-7 for movie work. This is the plane that Frank flew across the U.S.A., accompanied by a Nieuport 28 replica, in 1957. It carries license number N-6268 and is fitted with two authentic Spandau machine guns. Also in this hangar were several old engines; an Aero Tank engine (an air-cooled OX-5), a Ranger, a large radial of some kind, and the Bliss Jupiter engine and cowlings from "Gulfhawk I".

Parked outside, on the line, were five World War II airplanes owned by Frank, as follows:

1. Curtiss P-40E "Warhawk", (N-1207V), olive drab with tiger teeth.
2. Chance Vought F4U "Corsair", (N-3440G), Navy blue, grey undersides.
3. North American F-51D "Mustang", (N-5467B), natural metal.
4. North American F-51(?) "Mustang", (N-7721C), "Lt. Bob Abrams" stencilled below cockpit canopy. In fair condition, natural metal.
5. Grumman FM-2 "Wildcat", (N-90523), Navy blue, grey undersides.

Nearby we found Frank's main hangar, and once inside we found the following airplanes:

Bleriot XI replica, (N-6683C, formerly CF-HDG-X), C/N - L. It was built in 1953 by the students of the Provincial Institute of Technology and Art (Calgary, Alberta, Canada) under the direction of Stanley Green.

Maurice Farman "Shorthorn", (VH-UBC, formerly G-AUBC), powered by an 80 hp. Wolseley-Renault V-8. This plane was built by The Aircraft Co., Ltd., of London, England. It was bought after World War I by Mr. Graham Carey of Australia, who later sold it to Fred H. Edwards, of Victoria, Australia. Edwards sold it to Frank in 1956, but it has never been uncrated due to its size and complexity. Frank told us that it takes something like ten men, ten hours to assemble and rig this plane. It is in airworthy condition, and was flown occasionally in Australia.

Pfalz D-XII, (N-43C), C/N - 7511/18, powered by a 180 hp. Mercedes. This was beautifully restored about a year ago by Bob Rust, and it looks like it just rolled out of the factory.

Curtiss-Wright CW-1 "Junior", (N-10967), powered by a Continental engine, painted blue with white trim. Frank uses it for air-to-air photography.

Al William's Curtiss 1-A "Gulfhawk I", (NR-982V), C/N - 1. This plane had been in the Manhattan High School of Aviation Trades, in New York City, since World War II, and was used for rigging instruction. It was in rather poor condition when I saw it, but it will be completely restored to its original flying condition. Its successor, the Grumman "Gulfhawk II", is preserved in the Smithsonian Institute.

Garland Lincoln Model LF-1, (NX-12237), C/N - 3. Built sometime in the 1930's by Garland Lincoln to resemble a Nieuport 28, for movie work. It is the Garland Lincoln which accompanied Frank's Travel Air "Fokker D-7" on its flight across the U.S.A. It is powered by a 220 hp. Continental W670-6A radial engine, and is fitted with two authentic Vickers machine guns, mounted in Nieuport 28 fashion. It carries the French markings and camouflage, plus the personal markings of Douglas Campbell of the 94th Aero Squadron.

Nieuport 28 mock up. This is a hurriedly-made machine for background shots in an aviation adventure on T.V. It looks very realistic from a short distance, but of course is a non-flying dummy.

Frank also owns three other old airplanes, which we didn't get to see:

1. Sopwith F.1 "Camel", (N-6254), C/N - 3, Military Serial Number - A 1171, 110 hp. Le Rhone engine. Fitted with two Vickers machine guns. (See True magazine, April, 1956, Pages 50-53.)
2. Curtiss JN-4C "Canuck", being restored to flying condition. (See American Airman, May, 1959, Page 16.)
3. Kreider-Reiser KR-21, (N-962V), Grandpa "Josh" Collins' plane on the "Bob Cummings" T.V. show.

Frank also owns three 80 hp. Le Rhones, a 100 hp. Clerget, 10 extra old wire wheels, 24 extra props, and two extra machine guns. In addition, he has six different aircraft machine guns of WW-1 vintage mounted on the wall of the den of his home, plus two Lewis .30 Cal. machine guns on a Scarff ring.

For more information see the following:

1. Flying, August, 1954, Page 50-e. Bleriot XI replica.
2. Aviation Week, August 19, 1957, Pages 135-139. Tallman aircraft.
3. Air Progress, Spring, 1958, Pages 50-53. Bleriot, Fokker, Nieuport.
4. Sport Aviation, June, 1959, Pages 14-16. Pfalz D-XII.
5. A.A.H.S. Journal, Volume 4, Number 2, Pages 77-79. Pfalz D-XII.
6. Cavalier, October, 1959, Pages 40-43. Pfalz D-XII.
7. Air Progress, Spring, 1960, Page 61. Pfalz D-XII.
8. American Airman, February, 1960, Page 28. Sopwith "Camel".

Rudy Hazuka

Rudy Hazuka (343 1/2 East Opp Street, Wilmington, California) has several old planes and many old engines which he keeps in his hangars at Torrance Municipal Airport. He has two Thomas Morse S-4C fuselages, unrestored and minus the wings. Both are sitting on the landing gear and one has a good 80 hp. Le Rhone mounted in the nose.

He also owns a near-complete set of parts for a JN-4D "Jenny", plus a Monocoupe with two Velie engines for it.

Rudy owns three OX-5's, two 80 hp. Le Rhones (besides the one in the "Scout" fuselage), and a Hall Scott A7A engine.

Jim Brown

In Sacramento, we stopped at Jim Brown's house (2221 Fruitridge Road) to see his Curtiss JN-4C "Canuck". Work is progressing well on this plane and he has the fuselage finished and on the landing gear, with motor, wing center-section, and empennage installed. For photos of this plane see American Airman, May, 1959, Page 17. Jim also owns the following engines:

1 Hall Scott A7A, 2 OX-5's (one mounted in the "Canuck"), 3 Le Rhone 80 hp., 1 Wright J-5-CA "Whirlwind", 1 Hispano Suiza 150 hp., 1 Lawrence 28 hp., 1 Liberty 400 hp. (Navy version, made by Packard Motor Co.), and a 125 hp. Super Le Rhone (converted to a non-rotary engine by Quick Mfg. Co., Wichita, Kan.).

Jim Mathiesen

We also drove out to San Jose Municipal Airport, San Jose, California to see the old planes owned by Jim Mathiesen (1912 Monterey, Berkeley, Calif.). We saw the following planes:

1. Fokker D-7, C/N - 2071/18. One of the "Hell's Angels" planes. Formerly owned by Dewey Ward of Oakland, Calif. Bought by Mathiesen in 1954. The fuselage has been restored and is on the landing gear.
2. Curtiss JN-4D "Jenny", C/N - unknown. Unrestored and minus wings, engine and landing gear. Fitted with round-bottom JN-4H type radiator. Bought in 1958 near Portland, Oregon. For photo of this plane see American Modeler, April, 1957, Page 18.
3. Thomas Morse S-4C "Scout", C/N - 235, Air Service Number - 38978. Bought from Garland Lincoln in near-mint condition, after being used in the movies. Being restored using 100% original wood.
4. Brunner-Winkle "Bird", the last plane built. Completed after the factory closed. Powered by a Le Blond radial. Will be restored to fly. Jim also owns the following planes, which we did not get to see:
5. Bleriot XI, no C/N because it was built from a kit in 1912 by James Moser of San Francisco. Stored in a warehouse since 1914. Jim Mathiesen got it in 1953.
6. Boeing FB-5, in practically brand new condition. Will be rebuilt to flying condition. Navy serial number A-7114. Former Marine Corps fighter powered by a Packard 2A-1500 liquid-cooled engine.

He also owns the following old engines:

- [illegible]

1 - 165 hp. Gnome	1 - Ashmussen (1912 vintage)
1 - Le Blond 60	1 - Le Blond 85
1 - Nakajima "Homare"	1 - Hall Scott L-6, 200 hp.
1 - Pratt & Whitney R-985-B "Wasp"	1 - Pratt & Whitney R-1340-27 "Wasp"
4 - Le Rhone 80 hp.	3 - Packard 2A-1500
1 - Elbridge 60 hp.	

Jack Canary

Jack Canary (309 Eucalyptus Drive, Apt. C., El Segundo, Calif.) is rebuilding a Sopwith 7F.1 "Snipe" which was, until recently, on display in the Los Angeles County Museum. It is one of three Snipes imported by Reginald Denny for the movie "Wings", and is C/N-E. 6938, from a production batch of 100 Snipes built under license by Ruston Proctor & Co. Jack has the fuselage complete and on the gear, with an engine mounted in it. The wings are built and covered, so about all it needs to fly is the fuselage covered, and all the parts assembled and rigged. It has what at first appear to be a pair of Vickers guns mounted on it, but upon very close examination they turn out to be well-made wooden mock-ups.

Of main interest at Jack's were his many old engines, some of which he has sold recently:

2 - Le Rhone 80 hp.	1 - Le Rhone 120 hp.
1 - Hall Scott A7A	1 - Gnome 100 hp.
1 - Gnome 160 hp. Sold to Vic Grahn Coloma, Mich.	1 - Gnome 160 hp. Sold to Air Carrier Engine Serv. Co. Miami 48, Fla.
1 - Le Rhone 80 hp. Sold to Hud Weeks	1 - Le Rhone 80 hp. Sold to William J. Clark
1 - Le Rhone 80 hp. Sold to Jim Petty for Standard E-1	1 - Le Rhone 110 hp. Given to Jack by Tom Sigsworth
1 - Le Rhone 80 hp. Sold to George Neal Downsview, Ontario, Calif.	1 - Bentley B.R. 2A, 230 hp. Made by Ruston Proctor & Co. Mounted in the "Snipe."
1 - Gnome 160 hp. Sold to Carl Swanson, Sycamore, Ill. For a Nieuport 28 replica.	1 - Le Rhone 80 hp. Sold to Carl Swanson Sycamore, Ill. For a Nieuport 17 replica.
1 - Le Rhone 120 hp. Sold to Roy Wicker, Atlanta, Ga. For a Nieuport 27 replica.	1 - Lewis .30 Cal. Machine gun. Ground Model, in mint condition. Has 2 different magazines.

Last of all, Jack had two 11mm, .30 Cal. Vickers aircraft machine guns when we were there, and when we left, Doc Hood was proud owner of one of them.

Jack told us about a Sopwith "Pup" replica which was recently completed in Canada. It was built by Stanley Green and Tom Sigsworth (2015 - 23rd N.W., Calgary, Alberta, Canada) and carries license number CF-RFC. It is complete and authentic in every respect and, of course, flyable. After Jack finishes restoring the "Snipe", he too plans to build a Sopwith "Pup" replica. He has already collected most of the component parts for it, so the main problem will be assembling them into an airplane.