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WOMEN AND AVIATION

Number 10

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Twenty-six Plus

The weather was only so-so, but, at that, four of the twenty-six women who came together in a hangar at Curtiss Field, L.I., on November 3, 1929, to form an organization of licensed women pilots arrived by air. Ruth Nichols flew over from the Long Island Aviation Country Club; Margery Poig flew down from Bridgeport, Conn; Mary C. Alexander came by air from Baltimore; and Fay Gillis flew back to the field from Massapequa, L.I., just in time for the meeting. A number of other pilots had planned to fly in from points as far distant as the Dakotas and Ohio, the weather permitting, but it failed to permit.

The other twenty-two pilots having arrived by train and by automobile, they cheerfully set about the business of getting organized in the midst of the din in the hangar, whose stalwart steel walls picked up the outside noises of spinning motors and the inside noises of hammers and paint sprays and sent them re-echoing into the meeting corner of the women pilots in a manner most disconcerting. In fact, as a meeting place a hangar, it developed, has nothing to recommend it, unless you count the mechanic's bench on wheels which served as an admirable tea-cart, or the friendly mechanics who helped arrange the chairs and oust the chisels and bracing-bits and dust from the improvised tea-wagon in favor of the tea-cups and lemons and sugar.

It was decided to make the organization as informal as possible, with a committee composed of pilots from different sections of the country to do the governing, instead of having a long list of officers. Representation on the committee is to be pro-rated according to the number of licensed women pilots in each section. Membership in the organization is to be limited to licensed women fliers, and the purpose of the organization is to be social as well as professional, from the standpoint of encouraging other women to take up flying both for

business and for pleasure and of assisting each other in securing positions as pilots.

After some discussion, during which everything from Gadflies and Climbing Vines to Woman's Association of Pilots came up for consideration, it was decided, at Amelia Earhart's suggestion, to use the total number of its charter members for the club's name. Since thirty-one pilots who were unable to appear at the meeting in person came by mail, by telegraph and by telephone, it was decided that they also should be eligible to charter membership.

And since there are many more pilots than those whose addresses were available at the time the call for the meeting was sent out, it was decided to appoint a committee of two, consisting of Amelia Earhart and Neva Paris, to send a new letter to all licensed women pilots and ask them whether they wish to be charter members. The sum total of their yes's added to the twenty-six who came to the first meeting will be the name of the club, and the figures will be used in the club pin.

All licensed women pilots who do not receive the letter of invitation are asked to communicate with Miss Earhart at Cosmopolitan Magazine, 57 Street and 8 Avenue, New York, or with Mrs. Paris at Curtiss Wright Flying Service, 27 West 57 Street, New York, sending their correct address.

Neva Paris presided at the meeting, Fay Gillis acted as secretary, and Wilma L. Walsh was appointed to act as treasurer when the membership fee had been fixed at a dollar and paid by those pilots at the meeting. The club will meet next on or about December 2, at the home of Opal Logan Kunz, at 137 Riverside Drive, New York.

Among the pilots at the meeting were five mothers, seven commercial pilots, five National Woman's Air Derby fliers, two school teachers, three editors, and at least two magazine writers. The twenty-six women present, in the order of their arrival were: Mary C. Alexander, Lynchburg, Va.; Jean D. Hoyt, Syracuse, N.Y.; Fay Gillis, New York; Sylvia Nelson, Philadelphia; Betty Euyler, New York; Neva Paris, Great Neck, L.I.; Opal Logan Kunz, New York; Marjorie Lesser, Albany, N.Y.; Irene J. Chassey, Hartford, Conn.; Mary E. Goodrich, Wethersfield, Conn.; E. Ruth Webb, Llanerch, Pa.;

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Meta Rothholz, Brooklyn, N.Y.; Dorothea B. Leh, Allentown, Pa.; Wilma L. Walsh, Belleville, N.J.; J. M. Miller, New York; Amelia Earhart, New York; Frances Harrell, Mineola, L.I.; Margery Brown, New York; Teddy Kenyon, Boston; Ruth R. Nichols, Rye, N.Y.; Keet Mathews, Dedham, Mass.; Margaret Fzandee O'Mara, Port Washington, L.I.; Margery Doig, Bridgeport, Conn.; Viola Gentry, Mineola, L.I.; Nancy Hopkins, Garden City, L.I.; Candis Hall, New York.

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Ground School Course for Junior College

The Mason Junior College and School for Girls, a school for sub-debutantes at Tarrytown-on-Hudson, N.Y., has added a course in aviation to its curriculum. Professor Roland H. Spaulding, Guggenheim Professor of Aeronautics and head of the Curtiss Wright Flying Service Ground School in New York, goes up to Tarrytown twice a week to lecture to the class of girls on the characteristics and tendencies of aircraft, on the history of aviation and its status as a modern means of transportation. Mrs. C. E. Mason, head of the school, says she believes it essential that girls of today be given an opportunity to become well informed on the subject of aviation, not only for the purpose of learning to fly themselves but because she believes there will be a big demand in the near future for reporters and editorial writers on aviation.

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Speaking of Coincidences

Anne Lindbergh returned recently from an air trip over the ancient Mayan villages during which she exhibited excellent scouting and photographic ability, as well as proving herself a most engaging en route hostess. Shortly after her return another Anne, who belongs to the generation in which the name was spelled "ie," announced her intention of conducting an aerial expedition over the Aztec ruins in South America. Who knows, perhaps Annie S. Peck, vigorous and energetic at seventy-two, as she was thirty years ago when she established a record as a moun-

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tain climber, was inspired by the volume of work which was accomplished in a short time by the Lindbergh expedition to use their mode of travel.

Archaeological research demonstrated that it could boil down five years of work into some twenty-five hours by using the aerial method in the recent flight of Colonel Lindbergh, Mrs. Lindbergh and party. No doubt Miss Peck's expedition will bring to light much valuable information about the aztec ruins also. Although she has never yet been up herself, she says she has no fears whatsoever of flying and is greatly interested in promoting air travel over commercial routes.

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Lesson Number II of Female Fledgeling

Place: Valley Stream, Curtiss Field. Time: 6:45 A.M.

Going aloft for the second time was even more wonderful than the first. Here's why!

First of all I knew what was going to happen - at least from the take-off to our conventional climb for altitude. But here was a bigger thrill. My instructor was to fly "hands off" and I was to take control of the ship. On our first trip up, I had been taught "familiarization of controls." This was a test of how familiar I really was - did I say familiar!!!

The nose went up - then down - the ship rolled to one side then the other. It was all so wonderful up there though that it didn't matter. Gradually I reached a point where I was able to fly the ship straight for a given distance - "level off" they call it.

With the guiding hand of Mr. Reiss, my instructor, we tried a few gentle banks, and then I was able to do it alone - imagine!

Finally we came down - another beautiful landing - How I envy that man Reiss. But, thought I, my day is coming. ANONYMOUS.

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One of the earliest airport jobs held by a woman in the field of aviation was that of secretary to the manager of the old Curtiss Field at Mineola, L.I., held by Marie A. Meyers. She first began work at the field in September, 1929, and worked there steadily for nearly two years. She did all the stunts of an airport hostess and more so, although the title hadn't been invented at that time. At the present time Mrs. Meyers is serving as secretary to Major E.H. Brainard, vice president in charge of operations of the world's oldest and largest flying organization, Curtiss Wright Flying Service.

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