

WOMEN AND AVIATION

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Selling Ships

A girl walked into an aviation company salesroom recently and said, "I want to learn to fly because I want to sell airplanes. I have sold hundreds of automobiles, and I see no reason why I cannot sell planes. Do you?"

The answer to her question was "No" -- not because they wanted to sell her a flying course, but because there is no conceivable reason under the sun why a woman cannot sell an airplane to a good or a bad "prospect", as the case may be, or why she cannot go out and dig up prospects on her own initiative. Women have successfully sold everything. Subscriptions to magazines, life insurance, real estate and automobiles, as well as ribbons and hosiery over the counter. They have also sold airplanes, and successfully, too.

Louise T. Allen, women's derby winner, was in charge of the Oakland, California sales division for Travel Air planes, and during two year's time, she sold twenty-five ships. Ruth Nichols, who is now executive secretary of the Chamberlin Technical Bureau, as well as secretary and treasurer of the Sportsman Pilot, was connected with the sales department of an aviation corporation for a time. Numerous other women pilots have sold planes throughout the country, as well as some non-pilots.

It is probably very helpful in making a sale if she who sells a plane can demonstrate its talking points in person to him or her who buys. And yet, women who are not themselves fliers, have also sold planes right briskly. Three baby amphibian Savoi-Marchettis were sold to one customer, namely, the Police Department of New York City, under the direction of Morilla Del Carveth, who is general manager of an airplane distributing corporation. She supervises the work of twenty-five people, only four of whom are women.

Mary Victoria Wesson has just been given the sales agency for Springfield, Massachusetts, and surrounding territory for Bellanca, Moth and Stearman planes, and one Sikorsky special "job". She hopes to interest manufacturers in the vicinity, who have a nation-wide business and a great deal of traveling to do, to use airplanes. Miss
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Wesson has enough flying time for her private license.

Mary Von Mach of Detroit, licensed pilot and woman's air derby flier, has assumed duties as a saleswoman with the Airplane Sales Company of Michigan, distributors of Consolidated Fleet machines. She supervised the work of twenty-five people, only four of whom are women.

Curtiss Wright employs several women to sell planes, as well as flying courses. Their most recent appointee is Lorraine Defren of Boston who sold a Gypsy Moth to a New England mother as a surprise gift for her Harvard student son at Christmas time. Miss Defren was learning to fly when she became ill last year, and, as soon as the Department of Commerce says the word, she will continue her flying instruction. Madeleine Kelly and Betty Russell are on the sales staff of Curtiss Wright at Alameda, Cal.

Helen Cox, Hostess at Curtiss Airport, Valley Stream, L. I., demonstrates and sells planes also. She formerly sold planes for the Main Aeronautics Company, Greensburg, Pa.

Statistics showing the total number of planes sold by women, and how many were sold to women and how many to men, would undoubtedly be interesting if they were available. Comparative figures on the number of planes sold by women and the number bought by women would also be interesting. The Curtiss Wright Woman's Department is endeavoring to get together complete information on the subject.

Who Are the Fledglings?

Is she who is learning to fly today, old or young, prosperous or not, American-born or foreign-born, a society woman or a professional woman, distinguished or just "ordinary folks"? In other words, are the women who are flocking together into flying courses all over the country apt to be prospective "birds of a feather" or not?

A glance at a list of recent women fledglings in Curtiss Wright Flying Service schools seems to show that the most consistent thing about the types of women who are learning to fly is their variety.

Olga Gabriel, of Sofia, Bulgaria, graduate of a Bulgarian University, is learning to fly at Toledo, Ohio. She is planning to go on through to her limited commercial license and probably her transport, as she plans to return to Bulgaria and teach aviation to the women of her native country. Mrs. Gabriel, who is twenty-three
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years old, has been longing to take up flying ever since she played with toy airplanes in her home when she was a little girl.

At Alameda Airport, Alameda, California, Mrs. A. M. Kleavland who is fifty-six years old, recently signed up a course at the Curtiss Wright Flying Service school. She was the first member of her family to drive an automobile and will be the first to fly also. Her daughter will enter Stanford University in the fall and will specialize in courses that will be helpful to her in learning to fly later^{on}.

The daughter of the superintendent of schools of McKeesport, Pa., Helen Richey will soon have her private license as she soloed recently at Bettis Airport, near Pittsburgh.

The daughter of the Minister of Austria, Miss Loranda Prochnik is the first of the group of "diplomatic daughters" in Washington to take up flying. Daily, or whenever the weather is favorable, she goes to the Congressional airport, and recently made her first solo flight. She is making rapid progress and will soon have her private license. Miss Prochnik was presented to Washington Society last season.

Gladis Normand, who bears a striking resemblance to her celebrated and popular screen actress sister, the late Mabel Normand, has signed up for a flying course at the Curtiss Wright Los Angeles school.

And down in Washington, Mary Lincoln Beckwith, grand-daughter of Abraham Lincoln, has signed up for a limited commercial course with Curtiss Wright Flying Service Baltimore school. Several times a week an instructor flies over from Baltimore in Miss Beckwith's Gypsy Moth and she gets aboard at the Washington Airport and puts in dual instruction time. She owns a Waco plane as well as the Moth in which she is learning to fly.

Two Atlanta society matrons are among the students of the Atlanta school. Mrs. Floyd McRae, wife of an Atlanta physician, and Mrs. Winship Nunnally, whose husband is in business in Atlanta, are learning to fly at Candler Field. Mrs. McRae has already made her first solo flight. The Nunnallys own a Gypsy Moth plane of their own.

Pilot's License Notes

This week there are two new private pilots and one new limited commercial pilot to be reported, making the total number of women pilots 207, with 21 of them transport, 36 L.C., and 160 private pilots.

Berthina Johnston, aged 16, of Bisbee, Arizona, qualified for her private license on March 12, but notification of the fact sent in at the time evidently went astray. Miss Johnston is the second woman in Arizona to receive a pilot's license. She learned to fly at Phoenix.

Jean Lenore Stiles of Hollywood, Florida, graduated recently into a private license from the Curtiss Wright Flying Service School at Miami. Her father is editor of the local paper, and her brother is a pilot of ten year's experience. Once, while flying with him up in Massachusetts, she had to make a parachute jump to safety. Miss Stiles will put in time toward a higher license rating during the summer.

Ruth Alexander, of Coronado, Cal., who holds the woman's altitude record in light planes, has qualified for her limited commercial license. Miss Alexander also holds a glider license and has been appointed chief instructor at the Bowlus Glider School at San Diego, Cal. This school operates from Lindbergh Field and covers both glider training and sail-plane training.

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