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NINETY-NINE CLUB

SOUTH CENTRAL SECTION



NEWS LETTER
MARCH 15, 1932



Vol. 1 #4

PERSONALS

Gerry Homomichl, of Tulsa, is assistant Secretary-treasurer of a building and loan company.

Wier Aldridge, of Beaumont, Texas, is a private secretary.

Maurie Craft, of Arvada, Colorado, is a private secretary.

Dorothy Presler, of Oklahoma City, sells and demonstrates airplanes.

Mary Elizabeth Owens, of Fort Worth, Texas, is a pianist, and teaches piano.

Dorothy McBirney, of Tulsa, flew a new Stinson down to Dallas recently, and spent the day with Jean La Rene. Her father came with her, and he is as air-minded as Dorothy.

Evelyn Joyner, of Harlingen, Texas, one our members, is 16 years of age, and the youngest licensed pilot in the State of Texas.

Jean La Rene, of Dallas, Texas, is secretary of the Dallas Aviation School. Flies a Ken Royce, and hops passengers on Sundays.

We have discovered a new use for an airplane. Jimmie Kolp hops from Tyler, Texas, to Wichita Falls, Texas, to get a hair cut, a distance of only about 225 miles.

Mrs. John Lapham, of San Antonio, owns and flies her own Travelair 300. Her husband is an official of the Texas Co.

Joan Shankle, formerly of Ft. Sil, Oklahoma has now moved to Arizona, which means that we have lost her as a member of this section. We hope she will be back with us soon.

Mae G. Smith, of El Paso, is spending the winter in Los Angeles, so she is transferred to that section for the time being. She will be back with us again in the spring.

Mrs. Edith McKanna, of Wichita Falls, spends most of her time playing golf, when she isn't out flying her Travelair. Last year she won the state championship for Texas, and is getting ready now for this year's tournament.

Edwyna McConnell, of Fort Worth, now has a Command-Aire to fly. The city purchased it for the airport manager, and Mae is secretary to the manager, which means that she has use of the ship too.

Suzanne Garvin, formerly of Dallas, is now living in San Diego. Sue has the agency for the Inland Sport, and has made several trips back East recently. She spent a couple of weeks in Dallas at Christmas time. On all her trips "Bugsby", a prize French bulldog, always accompanies her. Bugsby has her own helmet and goggles and sweater, and a tiny little safety belt that fastens on to her harness.

Recently Jimmie Kolp flew her Spartan up to Lincoln, Nebraska, to visit some friends. Jimmie lives at Tyler, Texas, which city is known as "The Rose Center of the U. S.", and she carried 12 dozen roses with her on the trip. Jimmie's favorite color is red, and her ship is painted white, trimmed in red, and she wears a bright red suede suit when flying.

Dorothy L. Stocker, formerly of Houston, Texas, has been out at Elephant Butte, N. M., now for the past several months, starting a vacation camp there on a large lake. She says it is just the ideal spot for tired people to rest and recuperate, with plenty of swimming, diving, surfboard riding, fishing, horse-back riding, and a lot of other odds and ends.

Dorothy drove from New Mexico to New York City recently, and in a letter received from her says: "After being on a camp for several months, it was marvelous to see the bright lights, new shows, cute eating places, and best of all to get new clothes. Mother has been buying me almost a new trousseau, except there is no young man in the offing. You see, I've been wearing knickers for about seven months, and my clothes were just a little out of date."

Dot learned to fly in Houston, and is still keeping up her license.

I am in a perfect quandary as to just what to write about flying. As you know so well, I have made so many speed records that it is mighty near impossible to pick out the most important ones, the ones which have made my name the by-word of all aviation circles. My dear public cries for me continuously but my life's work as "general flunky" at the Fort Worth Municipal Airport has me pretty well chained. Therefore, I must close my eyes and ears to the pleadings of the multitude for more of my wondrous flying and bear my burden as best I can.

To be serious for once in my life, the bare facts of my flying career can be summed up in a very few words. I have always been very much in love with flying. In fact, ever since the war when three training camps were located at Fort Worth. My first airplane ride was taken on Sunday, March 3, 1929, with Reg Robbins, in the Ryan which later he made his endurance flight in. On March 9 I signed up for the solo course, and took my first instruction on March 13, 1929. On May 22 I made my solo flight in an OX-5 Commandaire. In July, 1929, I obtained my Private Pilot's License No. 7500 and in February, 1930, the long sought for Limited Commercial License was mine, all mine.

My total flying time to date is 166 hours, 53 minutes, 30 seconds. So now since I have the use of a powerful Warner Commandaire at my beck and call, maybe a Transport License will soon be mailed to me by the Department as my just reward after three years of playing and begging time off every airplane owner who ever came into Meacham Field, also factory demonstrators.

EDWYNA MCCONNELL, Ft. Worth, Texas.

I do not have much news to tell you—my flying is almost a thing of the past, as I still do well to get in my hours to hold my license.

All that I can contribute to the news letter is about Retha McCulloch Johnson's baby. She was the first woman pilot in Beaumont, Texas. I was the second. She married an aviator, Bill Johnson, who was a Q. B. He was drowned almost a year ago, and she has a perfectly adorable baby boy, about six months old. She is the bravest, sweetest girl I've ever known, and the baby is simply darling.

This town used to be full of girl flyers, but nearly all of them have stopped flying, temporarily, of course.

WIER ALDRIDGE, Beaumont, Texas.

As my flying career has been short and uninteresting, I'm afraid you will find anything I write about it very dull—however, I'll do my best.

I decided to learn to fly after taking my first trip by air from Fort Worth to El Paso. I think I have never experienced so breath-taking and beautiful a sight as the morning we left Midland, (after being forced down there the night before on encountering a storm), when we rose above a solid mass of clouds. The sun was just rising and as we looked back all we could see was the sunlight on those beautiful white clouds. It was a gorgeous sight and I shall never forget the thrill of it.

I took my first instruction June 16, 1930, soloed June 26th and received my Private License July 1st. My training was uneventful, except for a forced landing the second time I soloed. My instructor, having checked me, stepped out of the plane without noticing the gas gauge. I had flown around for perhaps ten minutes when the motor started sputtering—then finally died. I knew that nothing could go wrong as long as I kept the nose down, so I headed it for a nice open field about two miles from the airport. I landed it okay, and then tore out for a farm house to phone back to the airport. The house looked close at first, but it seemed that the harder I ran the farther away it got. By the time I had reached the barbed-wire fence surrounding it, I looked back, and saw my instructor gliding in for a landing right by my plane. As I climbed back over the fence I ripped my trousers nearly off me, and had quite a time deciding what I should do. I finally decided to go over and face the music. After everyone got through kidding me I backed into the plane and went on back to the field. I don't think they ever found out about the ripped trousers.

MARY ELIZABETH OWENS, Ft. Worth, Texas.

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Whether I slept, dozed, or tossed through the night, I'm not quite sure, but the break of day found me wide awake, and I was all excitement when I jumped from my roadster and appeared before Mr. Collier at the airport, all ready for my first lesson.

"Here, slip into this helmet," as he handed me a helmet that seemed to have been made for some little boy, as I could barely squeeze it over my dome. Next he handed me goggles and a big handful of cotton batten with the instructions to split the cotton apart as he was doing, and place half of it under each ear of the helmet. After I had buckled my chin strap he came over and took up another notch in the strap, almost choking me. "Want to lose your hat?" he said smilingly, adding, "as soon as the plane is tuned up, we'll be off."

After opening a compartment in the rear of the back seat he took out a couple of suspicious looking sacks. Opening up the bundle there were many short, long, crooked and funny looking straps. Finally, after strapping my arms, chest, and both legs with these numerous ties, he said, "That's your parachute. Everyone must wear them in flight, for in emergency you never know when you may have to leap." I wondered if it were the pancakes I had eaten that morning that caused that brick or somep'n in my stomach.

Then he explained how to work the parachute. "Reach around under your arm and see if you can grab that ring—that's what you pull on with a hard, steady pull, so the little chute will come out. Now, pull the ring, until you slowly count to ten, after you jump—"

"Are we going to jump?" I was serious now. "Well, I don't think so, but you never can tell. I want you to know what to do if the worst comes. Now don't forget to count." "What if I get excited and stutter?" "That would be your hard luck. But you won't get excited, you won't forget. If I thought you would I wouldn't accept you for a course in flying."

We climbed into our places, and he pulled a control. The plane started to move swiftly along the ground. I watched the ground, and soon the world was dropped away from us very fast. Now the altitude thing—a ma-jig reg stered 5,000 feet, over a mile high. That wind's terrific—seems to be blowing us backward, unless I look at the ground. I feel to see if my parachute is still under me. I may have to use it any minute, for those little wooden posts that support the wings look weak. What if one should break? Keeping an eye on those posts, I see there is a crack in one of them.

I know Mr. Collier is a peach of a pilot, but even a bird can't fly with a broken wing. Now he is beckoning to me. He puts out his hand and makes a cross. What the sign of the cross is in aviation, is all Greek to me, but I'm learning the aviator's language, for when I shrug my shoulders and shake my head, he seems to understand that I "no savvy."

Later, he points to my helmet and in the deaf and dumb language asks me to remove the cotton from my ears. I do so, and as lean closely over to him—"State Line!" he yells. What a relief! I thought he was going to tell me to get ready to jump or somep'n.

Soon we are back on our way to Tulsa. Here is the airport from which we started. After circling above the buildings a few times, he makes a graceful landing. The blades never stop whirling. As we climb out he explains to me the "most important part of flying is landing." I take a good look at those little posts. There is not a crack anywhere. It must have been the reflection of the copper brace wires on the shiny surface of the paint.

Another experience that will be outstanding long after all other girlhood thrills are forgotten was my first cross-country flight alone in a Stinson Detroiter, which D. A. McIntyre graciously offered me. Dad decided I was good enough for him to risk a business trip to Kansas City, with me at the controls.

On the return trip there was a fog and rain storm for sixty miles. After the storm we sat down in a little field close to Ft. Scott, Kansas. I asked a youngster where I was—"You ain't anywhere much. You gotta go further for repairs," he replied, as he looked with awe intermixed with admiration at his first close-up view of a plane.

Upon our safe arrival at Mac's field, father was so pleased to be back on terra firma, and to see his car, that he knows how to control, standing awaiting his pal, and the wheel, that he rushed over to it enthusiastically, saying, "Hello, old pal," and actually kissed it, as I stood laughing at him.

McIntyre's new airport in Tulsa is the apple of our eyes, and I am doing all my flying there now. May I extend an invitation to all 99ers, coming to Tulsa, to land at McIntyre's field?

DOROTHY MCBIRNEY, Tulsa, Oklahoma.

FOR TWO YEARS PREVIOUS TO MY FIRST LESSON, I WAS ALWAYS VERY MUCH INTERESTED in aviation, and flew a few times as a passenger only. All my flying to date has been for pleasure. I learned to fly at home, Pawhuska, Oklahoma, about two years ago, and made my first solo flight in a Travel Air plane. However, on account of being away from home a great deal, I did very little flying the following six months. I now own and fly in Inland Sport, which I like very much. I have attended a few air meets and enjoy them very much. Took part in all of them, and had quite a bit of fun and experience. For the past five months my plane has been in storage as I have been travelling, more or less, in the south and west, however, I expect to be home in about three weeks and again resume my flying. I have only my Private license, my F. A. I. and sport-license.

I was the first woman to solo in Osage County, Oklahoma, and at present am the only one licensed in that county. While my flying activities have not been of much interest to anyone but myself, yet I shall be glad if you care to use any of the data in your news letter.

HARRIETT S. BARRITT, Pawhuska, Oklahoma.

I have never been quite sure why I learned to fly, except that I just had the desire, and I think it is the most enjoyable experience a person could ever have, and aviation has such an interesting past, present, and future. I hope that I may sometime be able to realize some returns from it. I used to be very idealistic, and hope to help the cause along, but dreams are so far away.

Last year a flying club was organized here at college, and was composed of students and townspeople. Because of it I was able to learn to fly much sooner than otherwise. I was the only girl member and had the job of secretary-treasurer wished upon me. I must admit that the first few times I had to go to the Engineer's Building and hunt for a room full of men, I felt a bit timid, but they were wonderful to me, and made me one of the bunch.

My worst fault is having too many interests. I know practically nothing about music, but love it and desire it, and so get a few piano and voice lessons now and then. Also I like art, and am taking Home Economics with an Art major here at Iowa State College. I like English and History too, and just love to write. I flit from one interest to another, and learn very little, but I am going to hang on to my Pilot's license if I have to break my neck doing it.

I made my first solo a few days before school was out last year, and then I had a little more dual in Omaha. I took my examination on July 31st. After it was all over my mother, with her customary concern, walked out to the plane and said, "Why Irene, you've torn your dress."

Of course, there were a few escapades, but maybe I should stop before I tell the family history.

IRENE ADAMSON, Omaha, Nebraska.

I had exalted hopes when I learned to fly, but the depression came along and put a crimp in that. Now, the best I can do is try to do enough flying to keep my license alive. Please don't think, though, that I have lost interest or given it up.

I learned to fly in Beaumont, just for the pleasure of it. Deep down in my mind was the thought that if I ever got to be good enough and got the opportunity I might go into it seriously. My husband could use a plane to excellent advantage in his business, but he steadily refuses to ride in one of the darned things! Another hope dashed!

I learned on an OX Travelair, and have flown a number of ships since then, including a Warner Travelair, Warner Waco, and J-6 Curtiss Robin. I've been lucky enough to have a good bit of cross-country flying, too. Now I stay away from the airport all I can to keep out of temptation's way.

Outside of flying, I do a great deal of riding, and a bit of gardening and sewing. Along with my riding I do a good deal of horse and dog training—not professionally, but just because I like it better than anything, next to flying. This summer and fall I was chairman of the Horse Show Committee that organized and put over Beaumont's first horse show. I took first prize in the ladies' five gaited class, over a couple of professionally trained, registered horses, with my 12-year old horse, that I gaited and trained for the purpose. It's a lot of fun, and the best substitute in the world.

I'm sorry I couldn't tell you more about the flying activities. I had an excellent start and was doing splendidly.

ADELE O. WRIGHT, Beaumont, Texas.

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IN MEMORIAM

In the summer of 1929 I was in England with my family. I was interested in horses and had ridden considerably before I went abroad, and was taking jumping lessons and learning to ride English style. My husband was called to Paris to transact some business the following day, so he suggested flying, and much to my surprise we had flown to Paris in two and one half hours, before I could realize we were even in the air. The plane, the pilot, and the roaring of the motors, held me spellbound, and I wondered if airplanes were really a safe, fast, and economical method of travel.

Evidently my husband was favorably impressed as upon our return home he purchased a six-place Travel Air monoplane. Since several months had elapsed since my first flight I had lost all my curiosity to fly and had decided they were far too fast and far-fetched to be needed in one's business, so for over a month I did not go to see the new plane, though all my friends had flown in it and were delighted with the plane. Their intense interest in the panorama, and the way the pilot handled the plane with such ease and evident pleasure in flying, caused my curiosity to get the best of me, so I went out to see what I thought of it. My first impression was that it looked fleet, yet quite powerful. By the time I had examined the plane from motor to rudder I was wild to make a flight. Seeing how easily it was handled by the pilot I had a decided desire to take hold of the controls myself.

In six weeks my husband had presented me with a J-6 Travel Air plane, and our pilot took me for a lesson in my own plane. After eight hours flying I had soloed with a glorious feeling of much additional confidence, and that I was indeed a capable pilot.

My other interests, which are horses, golf, boating and swimming, I let go for a time, as each day I learned some new trick in flying, most trying to get a three point landing. Knowing practically nothing of flying, I found out later from my instructor that my plane was not a regular training plane but one for advanced student flyers.

In three weeks I had my Private Pilots license, and after receiving it I was very confident of myself and expected to get a Transport some time during the year, and to this date I have not tried for my Transport, however, I do plan to fly more this spring and by fall try for my Transport.

I took instructions in Florida on an Ireland amphibion, and must say that they are more fascinating than the land planes, that is, to take off and land. I have found navigating difficult at times, and hope to improve this.

Accompanied by Transport Pilots I have flown to New York, Mexico, and Colorado, doing part time at the controls. My ship took several prizes in the Colorado Springs Air Meet.

I fly for pleasure and my husband uses his plane for business trips and has his own pilot. He finds his plane saves him both time and money.

I feel that women pilots such as Miss Earhart and Miss Nichols have inspired us and have been most courageous in their flying careers. I hope all women pilots will continue their flying as I feel that with so many women holding Transport, Limited Commercial, and Private licenses, it has induced air officials to look upon us with favorable comment. I am the only woman in Wichita Falls, which has a population of 50,000, with a license. We boast of more private planes and pilots than any city of its size in Texas, and have one air mail line with plans for another. I am even more enthusiastic over flying this year than ever.

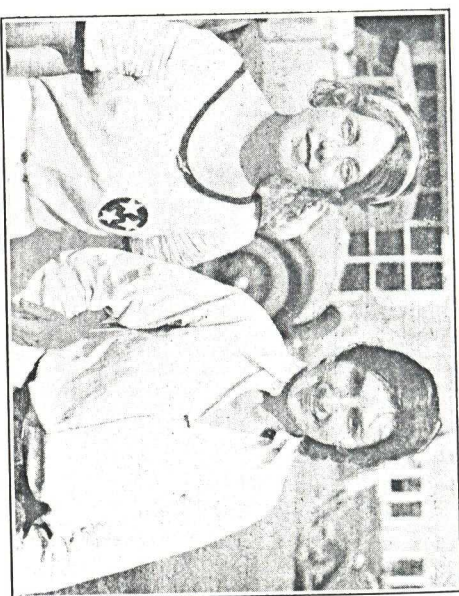
I play golf most every day, and plan to enter in the tournament this year. I will fly to the tournament. I hope all women pilots will do their utmost to make this year an outstanding one as individuals and as a whole. Each year we advance that much farther.

Aviation to me is a safe, clean, and comfortable mode of travel.

EDITH MCKANNA, Wichita Falls Texas.

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RUTH STEWART
St. Louis, Mo.

DEBBIE STANFORD
Houston, Texas

Ruth and Debbie both held Transport licenses, and each had several hundred successful flying hours to her credit. Both girls were participants in the National Air Derby from California to Cleveland in 1931 and Ruth also participated in the 1930 Derby.

At the time of their accident, on January 5, 1932, they were flying from Pittsburg to New York and were caught in a dense fog over the mountains in Pennsylvania. They were on their way to New York to start on a projected flight to Buenos Aires.

Ruth had been a member of the 99 Club since its organization. Debbie had joined us at our sectional meeting in May, 1931.



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OUR SECTIONAL MEETING AT TULSA

This meeting was called in Tulsa, Mar. 24, 1932, after we had been especially invited to hold it there during the dedication of their new air terminal, by C. W. Short, the airport manager, and our members who live in Tulsa. Arrangements were made at the hotel for rates to the girls, and the airport also gave us hangar space and flyway gasoline, free of charge. The Women's Aeronautical Association gave us a luncheon at noon.

The girls that flew in were: Dorothy Pressler, Oklahoma City; Mary Owens and Edwyna McConnell, Ft. Worth, Texas; Edith McKanna, Wichita Falls, Texas; Jimmie Kolp, Tyler, Texas; and Jean La Rene, Dallas, Texas. The other girls present were: Dorothy McBitney, Gerry Honomichl, and Alma Martin, all of Tulsa; and Dorothy Lyons, of Kansas City.

The girls had a place on the program, flying in formation, etc., and in fact, there was something doing every minute, so we had our little get-together right there at the airport. We all had so much fun that it was hard to settle down talking business, so ours was just a social pow-wow.

Mae Hazlip and Phoebe Onlie both flew over for the dedication, and were with us during the day.



NEW MEMBERS

Mrs. Harriett Barritt, of Pawhuska, Oklahoma. She is the wife of a doctor, and flies her own Inland Sport for pleasure.

Elizabeth Ballou, of Brady, Texas. Owns and flies her own Spartan. She is also a dancing teacher.

Irene Adamson, of Omaha, Nebraska. At the present time is attending college at Ames.

Mary Ault, of Fort Collins, Colorado. She is private secretary to her father, an attorney.

Goldie Warren, of Salida, Colorado. Is secretary-treasurer of a law firm.

Alma Martin, of Tulsa, Oklahoma. Is president of the Tulsa Chapter of the Women's Aeronautical Association.

Margaret McCormick, of Bogalusa, Louisiana. Is secretary to an official of the Chicago Railway Equipment Co.

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from Mabel Beard

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