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Flying Luck

Are women fliers still superstitious?

The Baroness de la Roche, first woman to fly a plane, always wore a bright green sweater for luck; Harriet Quimby, America's first woman pilot, had a little brass idol as a luck charm. Mathilde Moisant, another American pioneer, had the number 13 as a luck symbol; Helen Dubreau of France carried a pair of her father's army gaiters in her plane for luck, while Jeanne Harvieu, French speed flier, carried a baby pig until he got so big she had to keep him in the hangar and only had him put into the plane for a moment before she took off. Mrs. Jimmy Martin took along a wisp of her husband's red whiskers when she went for a flight. Small wonder that Harriet Quimby said in 1912: "It is a curious thing, but all women fliers are superstitious."

Superstition, as many persons hold, having more to do with imagination than with any other human faculty, and fliers on the whole being an imaginative lot, the chances are that many of the women fliers today are as superstitious as the pioneers. Frances Marsalis, for example, carries a rabbit's foot on all her flights, Dorothy Hester takes a string doll, and Betty Gillies a pair of old white golf shoes with a black saddle vamp.

It would be interesting to reproduce a list of all the lucky tokens, symbols and so on of women fliers today. Won't you pilots all drop a line to the Ninety-Niner editor and tell what your lucky charm is if you carry one with you when you fly?

In Reply to a Medical Man

"At the risk of being 'jumped on' by all of America's 516 (600 at least, C.B.- The last Department of Commerce list of May 6, 1933 had 594 names on it and from that list was omitted the name of no less seasoned a pilot than Betty Huyler Gillies) licensed women pilots at the same time, Dr. Clarence W. Lieb, specialist in stomach diseases took issue today with the implication in a series of newspaper articles by Ruth Nichols that women are as qualified as men to act as airplane pilots provided they have had comparable flying experience."

That was the introduction to a story by C.B. Allen in a recent issue of the New York World-Telegram. But why does he limit the "jumpers-on" to women pilots? How many women does he know who are ready to admit that "the average normal woman's nervous nature causes her to be emotionally unstable at least two-thirds of the time" as Dr. Lieb asserts.

This stomach specialist - who feels called upon "to sound a warning against any such fallacious theory as that advanced by Miss Nichols," and who feels that there are undoubtedly lots of jobs in aviation that women can handle well, and in some cases better than men" but that "the actual piloting of planes is not one of them" - may know a great deal about what to eat and why, but he certainly knows very little about aviation or women, more particularly women pilots as I know them.

Admittedly never having flown in his life he certainly cannot be considered an authority on the technique, mental or physical, and the reactions it involves of flying. Further he obviously is unaware of the rigid examination by a Department of Commerce-authorized physician which the nervous reactions of every candidate for a transport pilot's student permit must pass through before he receives such a permit. Nor that 63 women have passed that examination, which is identical for men and women, as well as the tests for a transport license given by a Department of Commerce inspector, likewise identical with that given to men. Nor that 44 other women have passed the Limited Commercial physical examination as well as the Limited Commercial license tests.

In my opinion Dr. Lieb, since he feels so strongly that the poor, poor public should be protected from womankind as pilots, should seek to discover why the U.S. Department of Commerce sees fit to consider that 63 women are qualified to fly passengers for pay for any distance, while 44 others may fly them for pay within a radius of 10 miles. Personally I believe his pronouncement is founded on a very broad generalization whose soundness I for one question. I would suggest that he do a

little studying-up on the mental reactions of the "rank and file" of the 598 other women pilots - the Doctor graciously considers that it might be safe to fly with Amelia Earhart or Ruth Nichols because of their unusual ability - before he issues any more public warnings.

I note that one Dr. Ales Hrdlicka, physical anthropologist of the Smithsonian Institution in Washington, who has made a lifelong study of the differences between the male and the female, doesn't, in a recent newspaper article, seem to know about the Great Endocrine Gland Handicap which women are up against. Unfortunately I am too pressed for time at this moment to go in person and find out what some of New York's other medical men think about the subject. By next month I will find time though and go on from here.....

IN THE KITCHEN
SO THEY TELL US

Hurrah for Ruth Nichols
Who knows of the pickles
That keep women out of "air" jobs.
We want dimes, not nickels
And muckles not mickels.
Hurrah for the feminist mobs!
O Nichols and Earhart
You know how we all smart
Beneath the injustice we face.
Gal fliers take our part
Against man, the upstart,
Say! Where is a free woman's
place:
In the air?
In deep-sea diving?
In the home?
On a ship?

Woman Pilot

(From a recent issue of the New York Evening Post)

The Margaret Kimball Cup
(as reported by Mildred H. Chase, Chelsea, Mass.)

A cup to be awarded annually to the New England Ninety-Nine receiving the most merits has been donated by Margaret Kimball of Lexington, Mass. Merits are to be awarded for acts tending to improve flying conditions, such as improving airports, marking buildings with the names of the cities they are in and so on. This cup offers a fine incentive to New England Ninety-Nines to do constructive and worthwhile things. A list of the members with their respective merits when it is made up at the close of the year will be an interesting record of concrete achievements by women in aviation's cause.

AE's New Job
(Item V - Bread and Butter and Aviation Series)

Permanent all-year operation was begun August 11th over Boston-Maine Airways, Inc., with Paul Collins, as president, and Amelia Earhart, as vice president, in charge of the service. This air line which is operating five daily schedules in each direction between Boston and Portland, Me., and two daily between Boston and Bangor, is using ten-passenger tri-motored Stinson planes. It is a subsidiary of the Boston and Maine Railroad and the Maine Central Railroad, and is the first passenger service wholly sponsored by railroads in this country.

Amelia Earhart's own list of "firsts" included "first woman airline executive" as early as 1929 when she was appointed assistant to the general traffic manager of Transcontinental Air Transport. Later she was vice president in charge of traffic of the Ludington Line, which inaugurated the first hourly New York-Washington schedule. In both these positions Miss Earhart was also associated with Paul Collins. She served as guest pilot of one of the Stinsons in a final preliminary flight, although she had previously of course made several flights over the line.

Lunching Amy Mollison

Two summers in succession now women pilots have come in for a ticker-taped trip up Broadway from the Battery to City Hall. Last year Amelia Earhart returned from Europe after reaching there by air; this year Amy Mollison came to America by air. And America, particularly the woman pilot sector of it, was genuinely glad to

greet its first woman visitor by airplane from abroad. Honors, coeducational, official even presidential were accorded to Amy Mollison, and on August 7th the Ninety-Nines entertained her at luncheon. The account by the New York-New Jersey sectional reporter is reproduced here as completely as space permits.

We had a grand time at the luncheon we gave for Amy Johnson Mollison at Hicksville, L.I., the Aviation Country Club. Forty-three of the girls flew or drove in for the occasion. Since there are only about 30 licensed women pilots in all of England, it was nice that 43 of the 600 in this country could attend. I have figured up that the girls flying in collectively flew 3,675 miles to get to the luncheon, while our guest of honor only came 3,600 miles. And the gals had to fly home again too.

Luncheon was scheduled for 1 P.M., but as some of the girls came a little late we did not get started until 1:30. Maude Irving-Tait came in from Springfield, Mass. over the field in her Wasp Gee Bee, but because of a cross-wind and the small field went on to Roosevelt Field and drove over, so we waited for her. The last arrival was "Tiny" Goddard who flew down from her summer home near Montreal, Canada, to pay her respects. Tiny missed the luncheon -- just about -- but when she dragged the field in her Monocoupe another plate was quickly added.

The tables were placed on the lawn in front of the clubhouse. After lunch we all scattered around the lawn and on the terrace where we did about an hour's hangar flying. Mrs. Mollison told us of her experiences in flying to Australia, Africa and across the ocean. She said that she will stay in this country while her husband goes home for another ship. And while she is here she plans to try her hand at some American planes. In England, she said, they have no such variety of airplanes as we have. Only the light ones for sport flying and then a big jump to the large transports. She is keenly interested in the speed of our planes, since all of her flying has been on the Moth, a relatively slow plane.

The swimming which had been planned for after luncheon in the Club pool was cancelled because all the Ninety-Nines were so interested in what Mrs. Mollison had to say that before we knew it the afternoon had passed and many of the girls who were flying back had to be off.

Those present, besides the guest of honor were:

From NEW YORK: Amelia Earhart, president of 99; Frances Marsalis, governor, New York-New Jersey 99's, Jessamine Goddard, Clara B. Gilbert, Annette Gipson, Peggy Ringston, Viola Gentry, Marjorie Ludwigsen, Margaret Gilmartin, Elvy Kalep, Margery Brown, Manila Davis, Peggy Remey, Isabel Ebel, Miriam Blagden, Marka T. Loening, Lanna Ingalls, Betty Gillies (who supervised arrangements very capably) and Opal Kunz, representing the Betsy Ross Corps.

From NEW JERSEY: Helen Marie Boyd, Newark, Novetah Holmes, Elizabeth.

From PENNSYLVANIA: Dorothea Leh, Allentown, Governor, Middle Eastern 99's; Helen MacCloskey, Helen Ball and Sally Callahan, Pittsburgh; Helen Richey, McKeesport; Sylvia Nelson, Ardmore; Lockhart Cortright, Bethayres; Betty Kennedy, Yardley; Lillian Perkins, Langhorne, and Mary Tillotson, Lansdowne; Peggy Haynes, Ardmore.

From MASSACHUSETTS: Maude Irving-Tait, Governor, New England 99's, Springfield; Mrs. Lloyd B. Dunne, Boston; Dolly Bernson, Revere; Lucy Humphrey, Boston. Lorraine Defren Frankland got up early in the morning and Boston and found that the weather reports were uncertain, so at 4 A.M. she left Boston in her car bound she would attend the luncheon "weather" or no.

From RHODE ISLAND: Edna Gardner, Anita Purinton, Margot Kirwin, all of Newport; Mrs. "Brownie" Sisson, Providence.

From CONNECTICUT: Mary Sansom, Hartford

From OREGON: Edith Foltz, Governor, Northwestern 99's, of Portland, who happened to be in New York City at the time.

Signed: Novetah Holmes

Hot (water) News out of Novosibirsk

(Out of an informal letter to the editor from Fay Gillis, 99er Russian correspondent)

"Wiley wired me to be here by the 1st, but I came before just to be sure I got here. Never can be quite sure about anything over here so you always have to start plenty ahead of time just in case. As a result I have been spending most of my nights hanging out of the hotel window wishing for some of the green cheese on the moon. The airport people have assured me that they can carry out instructions in the required time so all I can do is pray. The interpreter of the Herald Tribune is coming tomorrow - I'm covering for the Associated Press - and we've got to find someone who will give us a break on the communication system. Can only talk to Moscow by phone between 7-8 mornings, 2-3 days and 12-12:30 nights. Lightening telegrams can only be sent 25 words a telegram and they get there eventually. Now I ask you, how can you cover a hot news story that way. The A.P. and Herald Tribune men have been working on the people in Moscow to give us a special line for the occasion, but how will they know when Wiley arrives? We will send them a message when he is sighted over Omsk but

heaven only knows when they will get it....This is the craziest town imaginable, but the natives all seem to be so proud of their newly constructed city that far be it from me to disillusion them. All I can say is "these poor people." Have been having myself a time trying to get a bath. There hasn't been any hot water in the hotel for four days so in sheer desperation I took a cold shower this morning. Took a lot of nerve. I'm not one of the big out-door people. The girl in the next room heard me telling my sad story to the floor girl so she is going to take me over to some factory tomorrow where they have hot water so I can have a bath. At that point I will probably get a wire saying that Wiley has taken off from Berlin ten hours before....

Fay

Flying News Notes

Mrs. Floyd Bennett decided recently that she was ready to learn to fly, first to keep her flying hero husband's name in the air, second as one concrete thing she could do to encourage women to fly, supplementing her constant and loyal support of all flying activities by women. And so she is learning at Floyd Bennett Field with Jack Bishop teaching her in his Warner Ayriscocrat, with the Gulf Company at Al Williams suggestion donating the gasoline and the BG Corporation the spark plugs. Already Mrs. Bennett's decision to fly has had nation-wide publicity and so has begun to fulfill its dual motive....Margaret Spitz of Detroit, who was sworn in as a flying deputy sheriff of Wayne County last spring, has passed her L.C. test in her instructor-father's Stinson. She is the first woman to take the test in a cabin plane and the first to spin one or do any other excessive stunting with a cabin, which she specializes in. Miss Spitz has been acting as ^{aviation} hostess at one of the large department stores in Detroit....Helene Boucher, French pilot, claims a new altitude record of 20,013 feet for women in the light plane class.....Laura Harney, private pilot is in Germany this summer studying at the University of Berlin. She promises that every spare moment will find her at Tempelhof practicing her German on the personnel and pilots at the airport. Incidentally Mrs. Harney, who is a science teacher in Washington Junior High School of Mt. Vernon, N.Y., is the author of The Skycraft Book, published by D.C. Heath, which offers an excellent foundation for an understanding of all branches of aviation for children of the sixth to the twelfth grades. She revised it recently for a second printing....Emma C. Encinas, Mexico's sole woman pilot, was married recently to Don Wellman of Los Angeles. They will remain in Mexico for the present, later moving to California....Mrs. George Green of Dayton, Ohio, is the newly elected president of the Women's National Aeronautical Association....During her recent visit in New York Mrs. Ulysses Grant McQueen, founder and vice president of the Women's International Association of Aeronautics was entertained at dinner at the Hotel Savoy Plaza in New York by members of that organization....Manila Davis of New York, private pilot, bought a Great Lakes and recently flew it to her home in West Virginia....Laura Ingalls, Transport, and Althea Murphy, private, both of New York, flew out to Chicago in Miss Ingalls' Lockheed to see the World's Fair.....Downie Tepsie, new Pittsburgh pilot, has 43 hours toward an L.C. license to which she hopes to switch her solo rating soon.

ABOUT THE NINETY-NINES

Fay Gillis, who was one of the four signers of letter calling women pilots to an organization meeting, writes from Russia: "The 99's certainly have come up in the world since that day at Valley Stream. I think they should have an anniversary dinner on November second this year, just four years since the first meeting. How I wish I could be home to help them celebrate!"

New Members

Helen McCandless, Anaheim, Calif.; Katherine Sui Fun Cheung, Los Angeles, Calif., Henrietta L. Sumner, Los Angeles; Josephine Wice, Santa Monica, Calif (Southwestern Section) -- Beatrice J. Mack, Omaha, Nebr. (South Central Section)--- Hazel Black Huntley, Cleveland, Ohio --- Mary Barrows, Fairbanks, Alaska.

Sectional News

The New England Section held its last meeting for the year at the Rhode Island State Airport at Hills Grove....It was well attended and a lot of business was done. The new New England Constitution and by-laws were accepted and Maude Tait addressed the members regarding the Margaret Kimball Cup. Mildred H. Chase, Sectional Reporter

Note: Most of the sectional news for this month is of such general interest that it appears this time on the general pages.