

April 1937
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The 99 NEWS LETTER has been moved to Burlingame, California, where in the future it will be mimeographed and mailed by Janet Knight, one of the 99 members. This will not only be a great convenience to the editor, but it will entail no extra expense, as Janet has consented to print it at the same nominal cost.

The MAY ISSUE of the News Letter is to be sent gratis to every licensed woman pilot in the United States, so we are especially desirous of having a good number. Please send in any feature articles as early as possible.

RECORDS - Evelyn Hudson, 28 year old stenographer, claims a special world record for women's solo endurance flying on March 29, 1937 at Ventura, California, after remaining aloft for 19 hours, 57 minutes, 14 1/5 seconds in her light monoplane.

APPOINTMENT - Annette Gipson has been appointed Chairman of the Air Race Committee to succeed Blanche Noyes, resigned.

WHY I LEARNED TO FLY - At about the age of eight years, I saw my first airplane, an old Curtiss Pusher type. Was I thrilled! This was at a Southern County Fair where we lived at the time. For days I could think of nothing else but flying through the air on wings-even decided to try it, and with the aid of my brothers and sisters we decided to repeat the County Fair in the barn. Among other attractions I was to "fly" off the top of the barn with a new silk umbrella as "wings". This umbrella was a recent gift to my mother and a much prized one. Needless to say, the flight was a flop, the umbrella turned wrong side out, I was knocked almost senseless and got a good spanking to boot for tearing up the umbrella.

A long time elapsed until I was to take my first flight in an airplane, and I paid quite a sum for five minutes in an old war type Curtiss Sea Gull at Atlantic City. Heard later that it cracked up next day and I wasn't surprised, but I was so thrilled at the time I never gave a thought to safety, but was determined more than ever to fly one myself. After that I spent all my spare money flying on airlines between New York and Washington when they first opened up and always sat where I could watch the pilots. In fact I've never ridden on anything that I didn't want to "run".

Selling the Captain of an ocean liner to let me take the wheel from the Quartermaster for a "watch" was a cinch compared to selling an engineer of a big locomotive engine. Somehow, all my life from South Carolina to New Hampshire I always got the same answer from them all, "Would lose my job." Well the time came some

summers back when the train made up in a little New York town where I had gone to attend a wedding. Naturally I was in my "Sunday-go-to-meetin'" outfit, but I had fifteen minutes in which to work my high pressure salesmanship on the engineer and the fireman. They finally agreed under the condition I got on, give up my ticket, get off at the next stop on the opposite side of the conductor and run up to the engine. I had to run like the wind to make it- broke a heel off my pumps on the crushed rock-- and with black, greasy hands they pulled me aboard. Well, I thought I had stepped into the jaws of Hades! It was one of those hot, stuffy June days and I'll vow the fireman kept the furnace door open ninety percent of the time shoveling in coal to get up steam to make the mountains. They were grand scouts although I'm sure they thought I was "touched in the head". I did as I was bid and hid in the coal tender when we came into a station, and they turned the throttle and bell cord over to me and we were "coming 'round the mountain" at full speed when I pulled the wrong lever (the brake) and I thought surely we had left the tracks. I heard later that the passengers did leave their seats! I got out several stations before we arrived at the New Jersey Terminal. As a grand gesture I threw my withered corsage up to the crew and ran back to the coach to join my party. When they saw me they gasped and said I looked like a coal miner, but I had a smile of victory on my face--I had done it!

What's that got to do with flying, eh? That comes next: Well, one evening a few years back, after I had just arrived from Washington on an airline, I sat with a party on a raft off Oyster Bay, L.I. telling of my recent flight and how easy a plane seemed to be controlled. The young man to whom I directed my conversation happened to be a pilot of about twelve years experience, and with an Air Corp rating. He invited me up for a ride in a new Stinson the next Sunday and let me take to controls. I'll never forget the thrill, both the flight and the company. That pilot became my husband six months later! I gave up my position in New York City and became a barnstormer with my husband from Maine to Florida. It was fun too. I was ticket seller and found it wasn't hard to sell 'em either - guess my enthusiasm got 'em. I took time on various types of ships, but never soloed. My husband decided (and I too) that a man can't teach his wife anything. He even went so far as to say I might solo, but would never make a pilot.

In the meantime we settled down here in South Carolina where my husband was made airport manager. I soloed our Billy boy a year ago. We took him up for his first flight at four weeks of age and he was two months old when my husband decided he needed a pilot to ferry the Cub to airshows while he flew the Air Sedan and tried me on solo. Guess I surprised him no little. He now brags that I am good and an alert pilot. I decided that because he was such an expert pilot himself, it gave me an inferiority complex and I only spread my own wings when I was alone.

April 1937

Bad weather has tied my wings this winter, but before spring is over I hope to have an L.C., and I think I should have a mechanic's license for the many types engines I've helped overhaul. That young son of ours is going to beat us all, for he already knows what the stick does and how to handle a monkey-wrench, and he continues to keep the record for private flying hours and has made the front page many times for his many eventful flights up and down the coast in good and bad weather without even a murmur. He sleeps as long as the motor is going, and the only time he seems never to be hungry is in the air, but the instant we land he is looking for his food.

Usually a nice mechanic or airport attendant warms some milk or cereal with the aid of a blow torch and a tomato can and off we go. He's never been sick a day and weighs over 33 pounds.

It is a small world that I should finally solo a plane only a few miles from the place I took my first flight on the umbrella twenty-seven years ago! In my heart I'm still that same small girl in my enthusiasm for flying!

--Nell F. Behr

EMERGENCY LANDING - Mrs. Alyce Pashburg of Portland, Oregon seems to have had her share of forced landings. She writes that her first one occurred while flying down from New York to Albany. The weather got so bad that an emergency landing was necessary and it turned out to be on President Roosevelt's Hyde Park estate. It was a happy landing in more ways than one, as the president was home at the time.

Her second one she doesn't tell us about, but her third occurred while she and Miss Irma Westover were flying from Portland to Spokane to attend the Northwest Women's Air Meet. They had only flown a few minutes when a dense fog settled about them, and in trying to get under it, a mountain suddenly loomed into view directly in front of them. There was nothing to do but cut the switch and put the Bird down on the side of the mountain in the densely wooded area. Although the ship was badly wrecked, neither of the young women was seriously injured and they were able to start their long trek down the mountain side. They walked through the underbrush for several hours, cutting a trail as they went, so that they would be able to retrace their course if necessary, and toward nightfall they built a fire and ate some blackberries. To add to their troubles, a drenching rain set in, which lasted for hours. It was not until the next afternoon that the girls were sighted by rescue parties which had been combing the country for over 24 hours. Both emerged none the worse for their harrowing experience and those who saw the plane were loud in their praise of Mrs. Pashburg's skillful landing.

Mrs. Pashburg comments that for one her size (5 foot, 1 inch, 105 pounds) she can certainly get into plenty of trouble.

NEWS FROM THE SECTIONS

NORTH CENTRAL SECTION - Northern Ohio Chapter - Alma Arlene Davis has recently received her Radio Transmitter's license.....Mary Winstanley has had her private license renewed and Mrs. Charles King obtained her transport a short time ago.....Our most active member, Florence Boswell, has been flying all around the country. Recently she piled Miss Stroup and Miss Winstanley in her Cessna and flew to Detroit for a Michigan Chapter meeting.... Several of our members were guests of the Cleveland Aviation Club at its annual Aviation Ball last Saturday night.....We are making plans to entertain the North Central Section the week-end of the 17th of April. We hope every girl who is around this part of the country will drop in on us.

--Abbie Dill

Michigan Chapter - The March luncheon meeting of the Michigan 99's was held at the Detroit City Airport with Major Sweeley of the Air Corps from Selfridge Field as a guest speaker. An excellent view of Air Corps flying, particularly of the attack groups, was given us and many questions were answered on the subject. We were pleased to have with us Mrs. Sweeley, who is a former transport pilot and 99'er from the southwest section, and four members from the Cleveland chapter who flew up in Florence Boswell's Warner Cessna. Helen Lehtio was hostess at the delicious luncheon and had very attractive photographic aviation place cards at each member's place. Leila Baker had a young son, Vernon Wade, the evening before the meeting; we had trusted her to manage it for at least a day later, so as not to miss the meeting.....We are making plans for the raffle of an all-wave radio in the near future to raise money for the chapter. We feel that this is an object which will be equally attractive to both flyers and non-flyers. We will have no regular meeting of the Michigan Chapter next month, as the sectional meeting is to be held in Ohio about the middle of the month, and most of the girls are planning to attend it.

- - Dorothy Carpenter

NEW YORK-NEW JERSEY - The first Monday of each month having been decided upon for the monthly meetings, the members met March 1st at the Cafe Rouge, of the Hotel Pennsylvania, which lately has become the prevailing scene for such occasions. We have dinner together and then the hotel allows us the use of one of their conference rooms for the meeting. We had as guest speaker, Commander Weems, who gave a highly interesting and instructive talk on navigation. He also let each of us have a guest ticket to his lecture on celestial navigation at the Hayden Planetarium, March 3rd.....Among members present at the meeting were: Lucille Boudreau, Mary Reifschneider, Jessie Wachenheim, Althea Lister, Evelyn Mae Waas, Magda Tisza, Novetah Holmes Davenport, Amy Andrews and Patricia Thomas.....There was some discussion of holding a dance, however, it was thought best to defer such an event until such time as Margaret Cooper was back and more members present to decide upon the question and 99's had recovered from

their winter social activities.....Several New York-New Jersey 99's are Laura Harney, Jean Trunk, Ora May Luscombe, Eleanor B. Lay and Viola GentryRuth Nichols is instructing her friend, Jane Hyde of Maine, in the art of flying, at Holmes Airport.....Mrs. Seeley, of AIRWOMAN, 55 W. 42nd St., New York City, would like photographs of all 99's (Aside to Ethel Peckham) sorry for misspelling your name in last month's letter, but after typing Ethyl at least a million times in the last few years, it is only with the greatest effort that I can make my fingers spell it the other way. See you all next month.

--Kay Tisza Traulsen

SOUTHWEST SECTION - Bay Cities Chapter - Our meeting of March 2nd held at the home of Ruth Rueckert, marked the fifth anniversary of the Bay Cities Chapter. The following thirteen of the chapter's 28 members were present: Ruth Wakeman, Rita Gerry, Velma Johnston, Ruth Rueckert, Afton Lewis, Harriet Isaacson, Anna Cort Meyer, Pat Kendall, Olive Bledsoe, Phyllis Birchfield, Beatrice Nadon, Janet Knight and Maude Miller. A pleasant surprise to all as the honor guest of the evening was Helen Richey. Neda Anderson of Oakland was also a guest. A gesture worthy of comment and commendation was made by Janet Knight, our present chairman, when she turned over the gavel for the evening to Ruth Rueckert honoring her as the leading organizer of the Bay Cities Chapter and its first Chairman. Letters from many absent out-of-town members were read and enjoyed. After the business meeting, games were played and then a delightful supper was served. Very fittingly Ruth carried out the wooden motive in her table decorations--wooden candle sticks with colorful candles adorned the center of the table and the crowning touches were the airplane decorated birthday cake with its five lighted candles and the ice cream cunningly frozen into airplane shapes. Needless to say, thanks to Ruth Rueckert, our anniversary party was a huge success and enjoyed by all v Helen Richey, breaker of aviation records and an all-around swell person to know, is now operating out of the San Francisco office of the Bureau of Commerce (Aviation Division) assisting in its campaign on Air Marking. We are happy to have Helen here and only regret that her stay with us will not be permanent..... Harriet Isaacson kept a 5:30 A.M. breakfast date with Bessie Owen the other morning. Worth getting up for, too, because Bessie is just back from a jaunt over Europe and elsewhere, in her Waco airplane and had swell stories to tell of her travels. Everyone who has heard Bessie tell of her experiences on this trip insists that she should put them into book form so we less fortunate ones can get some thrills, too, even though it will be just reading about them. Think it over, Bessie !..... Ruth Wakeman will soon be moving into her lovely new home now being built in Burlingame if it ever stops raining in "sunny" California.

----Maude Miller

April 1937

LOS ANGELES CHAPTER - Bessie Owen, our recent "member at large", has returned to the U.S.A. After many months of sojourning in European countries, winding up in China, and finally upon reaching Manila, Bessie decided the lovely red Waco cabin plane in which she had been flying all over the continent, needed a new guardian, so she sold it and is now visiting the Aircraft Show in hopes of finding another one.....Ethel Sheehy and husband, Bill, just received their transport licenses, taking the test in their Great Lakes. Congratulations !.....Congratulations are also extended to Evelyn Kilgore of Riverside. She has just been presented with her Limited Commercial License.....Dorothy George, Elizabeth Hayward, and Cecile Hamilton recently flew a Stinson down to Palm Springs, where they visited with Clema Granger, who by now is a "native down thar".....Onita Thorley flew a Fleet up to Oxnard, but much to her disappointment, found the field all buttoned up..... At the March meeting, Los Angeles Chapter had as guest speaker, Mae Noble Rineman, who is very much interested in writing about women in aviation. She has had a novelette entitled "Healed Wings" published in the New York Magazine "This Week", and is desirous about writing about 99's, using the various members in a book she intends to have published.... Hilda Jarmuth is the first girl on the Pacific Coast to have flown the new Arrow Sport V-8. A grand little plane, Low wing, open, side-by-side cockpit, dep control, very easy to handle. This plane can be seen at L.A. Municipal Airport, Hangar #4, Mr. Pierce. The Aviation Ball, in conjunction with the Aircraft and Boat Show was a tremendous success, and 99's are listed second in the ranks of tickets sold. Just about everybody who ever has been, is now, or intends to connected with aviation was there, and how !

--Hilda Jarmuth

SOUTHEASTERN SECTION - The Carolina Aero Club will hold its next meeting at Goldsboro April 10th and 11th. The 99's have been invited to participate in this meet, and a breakfast meeting of the 99's will be held Sunday morning, April 11th at 10 o'clock at the Goldsboro Hotel.....Nell Behr has been doing quite a bit of flying up and down the coast lately in their Waco F-2. In January she and her husband attended the Aviation Show in New York City.....Clayton Patterson has been complaining about the weather of late in North Carolina. However, it did break long enough for Clayton to dust off her "Lollypop" and go skyward a few times this month.

--Clayton Patterson