

# Chapter VII

## 1931 - The Last Tour

The Seventh Annual National Air Tour attracted only fourteen contestants. For in July of 1931 the business of buying and selling and operating airplanes was all but paralyzed in the business depression, which afflicted every industry in the country. Banks failed and closed their doors, factories declared bankruptcy, once prosperous investors stood in bread lines. United Aircraft stock, which had sold for \$160.00 in 1929, was now worth \$6.00, while Curtiss-Wright tumbled from \$30.00 to 88 cents.

Detroit's mighty Ford Tri-Motor was doomed, if not by the depression then by a new generation of low-wing speedsters, the Northrop Alpha, the Lockheed Orion and the Boeing 247. The Travel Air, the Bird, the Buhl and dozens of others would be finished; even the popular Great Lakes could not be saved by its spectacular record for outside loops: Tex Rankin, 78 loops, and his protégée Dorothy Hester, 62 loops.

Record flights did continue. Post and Gatty went around the world in nine days; the *Graf Zeppelin* carried passengers on three round-trips from Germany to Brazil and eleven Italian Army flying boats also crossed the South Atlantic. Boardman and Polando flew a Bellanca from New York nonstop to Istanbul, 5000 miles in 49 hours, and Pangborn and Herndon flew another Bellanca from Tokyo to Wenatchee, Washington. The country's scheduled airlines carried a record half million passengers in 1931 and Federal officials conceded the airplane might now be safe enough that government employees could be authorized to travel by air.

But there was little support for an Air Tour, even among old time Detroiters; none of them talked much any more, of their city becoming the air capital of the world. But the tour committee persisted, and nine manufacturers rallied 'round and the tour was scheduled, with fourteen contestants.

Old stand-bys were conspicuously absent. For the first time in tour history, there were no Wacos hopping up and down to set their unbelievable stick

and unstick records. And no Curtiss or Curtiss Wright ships, with a carefree Casey Jones stowing his golf clubs or a calculating Walter Beech studying the rulebook. There was only one airplane from Wichita, a venerable Cessna, and there were no lady pilots. And for the second year, no accompanying Army planes.

There was at last one Autogiro, going along just for the ride, and three flivver airplanes, one of which jolted the old timers by setting the highest Figure of Merit for any ship in the tour. And just to remind everyone of the good old glory days, the Buhl people entered their *Spokane Sun God*, still resplendent in its Texaco red paint of 1929. The ship was flown by a showman and circus barker type named Jack Story and as the 1931 tour made the rounds, Jack made the most of it, telling and retelling of the Buhl's triumph of two years before, a happier time when everybody everywhere was setting records....

The *Sun God's* endurance flight of 1929 was made by Nick Mamer and Art Walker, of Spokane, Washington. Mamer planned his flight to show how a transport, or bomber, might be refueled during a useful long distance mission. And while he went ahead with his plans, another similar and competitive effort was in preparation by a larger group: Boeing, Pratt and Whitney, Boeing Air Transport, the Post Office, and the Army Air Corps. This other flight was designed to speed up the Air Mail, was called the *Boeing Hornet Shuttle* and was directed by Captain Ira Eaker, capable and well-known Army pilot.

There was no avowed rivalry between the Mamers and the Eakers, but nonetheless the coffee shop hangers-on at Boeing Field, Seattle, where the Mamer passenger planes stopped over on a daily passenger run, had great fun reminding the Spokane underdogs of the more promising preparations by the Boeing-Air Corps group.

And the Mamer activity, for all that he had the backing of Texaco and Buhl, did leave much to be



The Buhl Spokane Sun God, #3 in 1931 tour, at Spokane just before the 1929 endurance flight. At left, refueling pilot R. M. Wilson stands by Buhl tanker NC1451, at right, Art Walker crouches over Sun God's windshield, assisted by unidentified helper.

(A. W. Walker)

desired. The plan for coast-to-coast deployment of refueling planes was somewhat vague, one of the mother ships was fitted with a battered gasoline tank salvaged from a wrecked Ford Tri-Motor and another refueler was a quite elderly Ryan. None of them had radio: the pilots would communicate by notes dropped in flight, by messages chalked on blackboards and held up in cockpit windows, and by plain arm waving and obscene gestures.

The crew restroom facility in the endurance ship consisted of a round, life-preserver shaped cushion laid over a trapdoor in the cabin floor, a primitive arrangement that turned out to be “mighty cold on the bottom,” and which led to obvious references about placards seen in railroad coaches: “Do not use while train is standing in station — or plane is over cities.”

A delegation of real Spokane Indians christened the Buhl, offered prayers to their own Sun God, and on August 15, 1929 Mamer and Walker were off into the night; south along the Columbia and down the coast to San Francisco. They refueled there next morning, then headed for Wyoming, and trouble.

The next appointed refueling ship was tracked down only after prolonged searching and circling and anguished cries, “Goddamn it, we talked this over at least a hundred times in the goddamn office.” And when the two airplanes finally were lined up, the refueler managed to drag his hose neatly into the *Sun God's* prop and have it snipped in two. And the old Ryan could barely struggle aloft in the thin air over Rock Springs and bring up enough gasoline to make it worth the trip.

Deliveries improved next day over Cleveland, by experienced crewmen of the St. Louis Robin gang and on Sunday afternoon the Buhl appeared over Armonk, New York, circled Westchester Airport and dropped a note, “Which way to Roosevelt Field?”

An airplane flown by Leon Allen came up to lead

the way, and then scores of other planes appeared like migrating birds, to convoy the *Sun God* in a grand procession as it took on gasoline over Long Island and dropped an “air mail” letter from San Francisco’s Mayor “Sunny Jim” Rolph, to New York’s Jimmie Walker. Then the Buhl headed west again, with Texaco’s own Frank Hawks leading the way across the Alleghenies to Cleveland.

Monday evening found the plane grinding along over South Dakota, almost home. But Mamer and Walker were ready to give up; their motor was shaking itself to pieces, the scheduled refueling ship was lost somewhere behind them, the visibility was near zero in heavy smoke from a thousand forest fires in the mountains ahead of them. But they lasted the night, and at dawn on Tuesday old friends from Miles City came roaring alongside in a Whirlwind Eaglerock, its front cockpit crammed with five-gallon milk cans full of gasoline — and a Montana cowboy who calmly and expertly lowered them with his rope. The Indians’ prayers had not been in vain....

Home safe over Spokane, Mamer and Walker kept the Buhl circling while they shaved, changed clothes, and watched their own company Ford Tri-Motor bring sight-seers up to have a look: twelve passengers per trip, at five dollars each, cash. The *Sun God* landed as the sun went down; just short of 116 hours aloft, with eleven refuelings and a distance record of 7,200 miles — much more, if all the circling were counted.

Two weeks later, the *Boeing Hornet Shuttle* was ready. Ira Eaker fired up his big biplane and took off from Oakland Airport, eastbound. He got as far as Cleveland, and there the refueling crew dropped a five-gallon can of oil squarely through the center-section of his upper wing.

“Oil? Good Lord you never saw so much damned oil....”

Eaker tried again, accomplished one non-stop

westbound, and then near Salt Lake City his engine quit; suddenly and completely; starved for gasoline by dirt in a fuel line. Eaker brought the Boeing down in a crash landing on the side of a cliff, miraculously ground-looping to a stop just short of a sheer thousand-foot drop into a canyon. And that ended that.

Mamer and Walker meanwhile, returned to the humdrum Spokane, Portland, and Seattle passenger run. But now they could swagger just a bit, stopping in for coffee with the gang at Boeing Field.

“That Boeing endurance flight — something about a ‘shuttle’ — what was it you guys were telling us?”



Boeing 95, modified as NR397E for the endurance try. Lt. Bernard Thompson in cockpit.  
(The Boeing Company)



Now, in 1931, the old Buhl *Spokane Sun God* was off with the other tour planes, heading east through Windsor and along Lake Erie to Le Roy, New York.

The tour route crossed New York State, and then led back across the mountains to Wheeling in the great valley of the Ohio. And here, for the first time in any tour, a pilot was killed: Charles Sugg took off from the Yorkville, Ohio airport, turned his little Buhl “up the hill” as he climbed out, and crashed into the hillside.

There’d been accidents before, and at Wichita, Kansas a tour spectator lost his life when he walked

too close to a whirling propeller. But this was the first pilot death. And when the others talked of this later, they remembered too the accidents that befell other planes, the hazards of flying in the narrow valleys and jumbled up mountains in this country, the arguments between contestants and tour officials — as though the fear and uncertainty of those depression times were reflected in needless angry words and bickering.

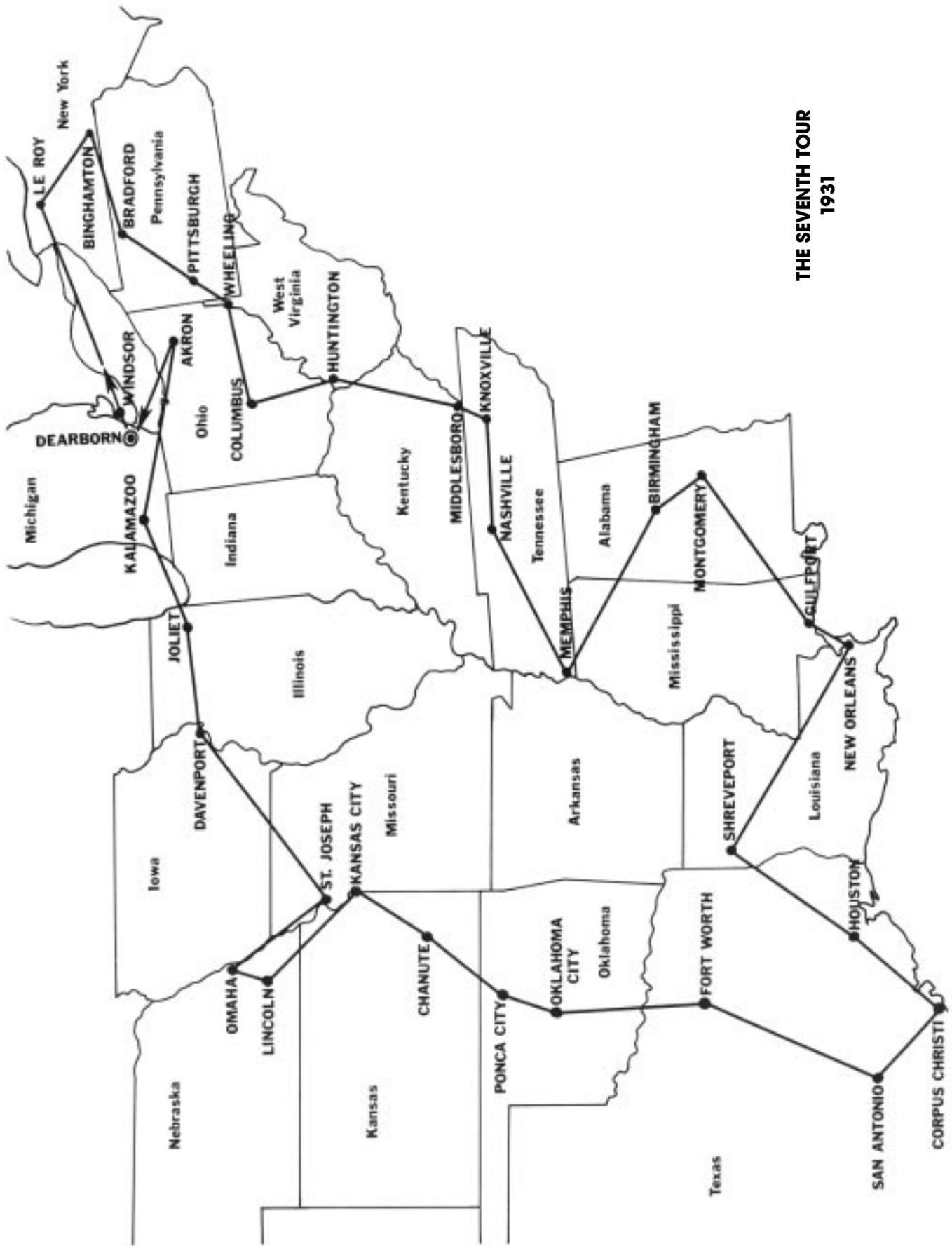
There were only nine planes left in the running as they went on through rain and thunderstorms further south. Fort Worth was remembered as “two days to rest up and dry out;” Kansas City, “another cloudburst;” Omaha, “almost cancelled because the local committee ran out of money and volunteers.”

But Iowa and Illinois were easy flying again, rolling hills and meandering rivers, red barns and white farmhouses and silvery windmills shining in the sun.

A writer-flyer named Wolfgang Langewiesche wrote of this farm country. He flew one day along a section line, one of those checkerboard divisions of the land surveyed and marked off by government men a long time ago, and still apparent from a low flying plane....

“First it (the line) was a dirt road, narrow between two hedges, with a car crawling along it dragging a tail of dust. Then the road turned off, but the line went straight ahead, now as a barbed wire fence through a large pasture, with a thin footpath trod out on each side by each neighbor as he went, week after week, year after year, to inspect his fence. Then the fence stopped, but now there was corn on one side of the line and something green on the other. Next it was a narrow dirt road again with farms on either side, and then suddenly, a broad highway came curving in, followed the line for a while, and curved away again. For a short stretch it didn’t consist of anything, but the grass, for some reason, was a little greener on one side and a little more yellow on the other. Was it because one owner was in the grace and the other was not? Again it was a hedge until it broadened and became a road, dignified itself and became for a few blocks the main street of a small town, filled with parked cars; people stepped out of stores to look up at me. Then it thinned out again. When I climbed away and resumed my course, I left it as a fence, which had cows on one side, and no cows on the other. That’s a section line.”

The tour flyers sailed on across the section lines of Illinois and Michigan and Ohio with Harry Russell holding an easy lead of ten thousand points



**THE SEVENTH TOUR  
1931**

| <b>ITINERARY<br/>1931</b> |  |                   |
|---------------------------|--|-------------------|
| <b>Date</b>               | <b>City and Airport Name</b>   | <b>Miles</b>      |
| Saturday,<br>July 4       | Dearborn, Ford<br>Windsor; Walkerville Air Harbour<br>Le Roy, Woodward | 15<br>260         |
| July 5                    | Binghamton, Aero Club  | 123               |
| July 6                    | Bradford; Airport Club, Emery  | 145               |
| July 7                    | Pittsburgh, Butler<br>Wheeling; Scott, Yorkville, Ohio                 | 123<br>49         |
| July 8                    | Columbus, Norton<br>Huntington; City, Chesapeake, Ohio                 | 120<br>110        |
| July 9                    | Middlesboro, Colson<br>Knoxville, McGhee-Tyson                         | 145<br>45         |
| July-10                   | Nashville; Sky Harbor, Murfreesboro<br>Memphis, Armstrong              | 138<br>225        |
| July-11                   | Birmingham, Municipal  | 215               |
| July-12                   | Montgomery, Maxwell  | 84                |
| July-13                   | Gulfport, City<br>New Orleans, Wedell Williams                         | 213<br>67         |
| July-14                   | Shreveport, Municipal  | 279               |
| July-15                   | Houston, Municipal   | 214               |
| July-16                   | Corpus Christi, Municipal<br>San Antonio, Winburn                      | 186<br>132        |
| July-17                   | Fort Worth, Meacham  | 238               |
| July-19                   | Oklahoma City, Municipal Aviation Park<br>Ponca City, Taylor           | 190<br>89         |
| July-20                   | Chanute, Municipal<br>Kansas City, Fairfax                             | 112<br>107        |
| July-21                   | Lincoln; Union, Havelock   | 163               |
| July-22                   | Omaha, Municipal   | 50                |
| July-23                   | St. Joseph, Rosecrans<br>Davenport, Cram                               | 118<br>253        |
| July-24                   | Joliet, Municipal<br>Kalamazoo, Municipal                              | 128<br>137        |
| Saturday,<br>July-25      | Akron, Municipal<br>Dearborn, Ford                                     | 225<br>118        |
|                           |  | <hr/> Total 4,816 |

to win the trophy for the second time.

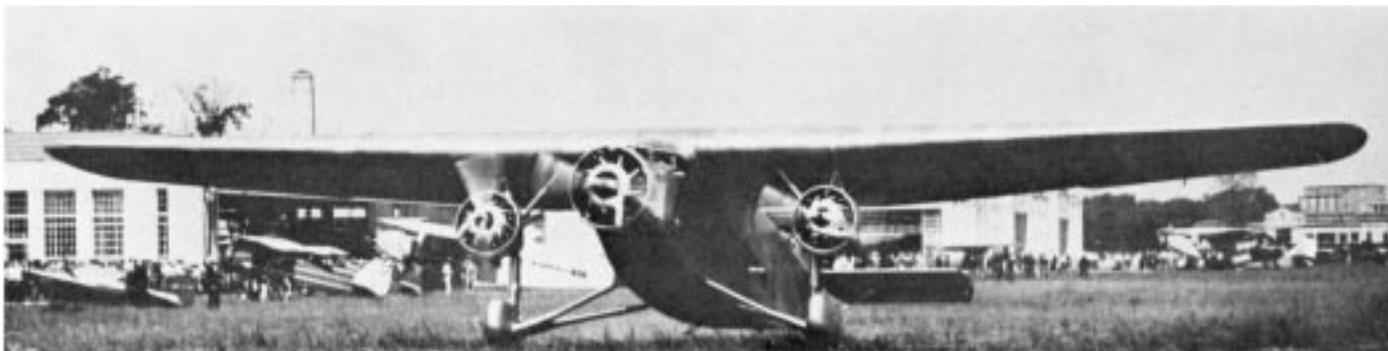
But two other underdogs were given a great hand at the last banquet: George Dickson, for having finished at all in his tiny Aeronca and Harvey Mummert, who had been down and out way back in West Virginia somewhere, then patched up his airplane and rejoined in time for the last lap, around the lake from Akron to Dearborn. It was the same last lap where Mummert had gone down in the rain and darkness back in 1925 - surely an appropriate finish in this final competition with the giant Ford Tri-Motors for a game sportsman who had flown in five of the seven air tours.



**American Eagle Factory and Porterfield Flying School, Fairfax Airport, Kansas City.**  
(NASM)



**Omaha Legion Airport, October, 1929. Curtiss Robin at left, Travel Air at right.**  
(NASM)



Harry Russell running up NC433H.

(Ford/Hudek)



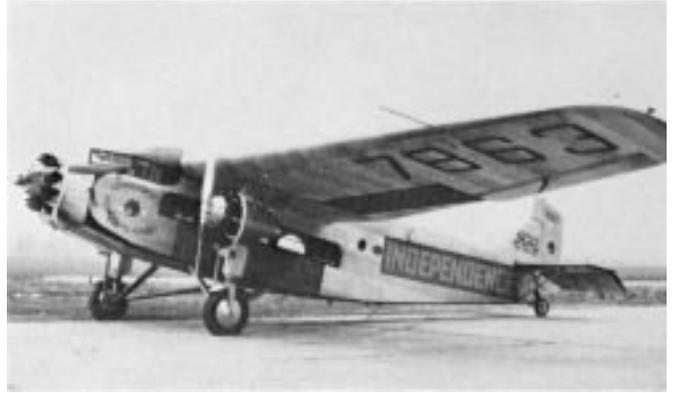
Ford NC8485, flying its third tour in 1931, and, left to right, Charles Bunch of Pratt & Whitney, pilot James Hudson Smart, his mother, Mrs. Ann O. Smart, mechanic Tony Wallach.

(Mrs. Ann O. Smart)



Tom Colby's Laird. Bird #10 at right, Pratt & Whitney Stearman in background.

(S. J. Hudek)



The Ford flown by Vernon Johns for Reid Murdock Wholesale Grocery Company. Nose is placarded "Monarch Foods, Leadership for 75 years," "Independence" on side refers to independent grocerymen who sold Monarch foods.

(S. J. Hudek)



Z. D. "Granny" Granville, and Gee Bee NR2101.

(S. J. Hudek)



Gee Bee YW, accompanying as far as Wheeling.

(NASM)



Lowell Bayles and Gee Bee.

(Ford/Hudek)



**Bob Dake**  
(Western Flying)



**Jack Story**  
(University of California)



**Bert Kinner**  
(University of California)



**Lee Gehlbach**  
(NASM)



The Bird Cabin model, shown in much marked advertising paste-up photograph. The plane does not appear in various pictures of the tour departing Ford Airport, indicating that it may have started late. And it went down with engine failure on the second day out, near Ceres, New York, just short of the Bradford stop.

(NASM)

**Lee Gehlbach's Bird.**

(S. J. Hudek)





This Pitcairn PCA-2 Autogiro advertising Pure Oil Company's Tiolene, was similar to the Champion Spark Plug Company ship flown by Lon Yancey.  
(J. Victor Dallin)



Pitcairn and Bird compete in takeoff contest at Roosevelt Field. Pilots are not identified.

(NASM)



Buhl Flying Bull Pup NC387Y. Charles Sugg crashed in this ship; Walter Henderson dropped out of four in the other Bull Pup.

(S. J. Hudek)



George Dickson

(Kenneth Boedecker)



Buhl Bull Pup posed with Shell Lockheed. Man standing in cockpit of Buhl is believed to be Charles Sugg.

(NASM)



The 1931 tour pilots heard of Louie Meister's death as they passed through Oklahoma City on July 19. Meister was killed in a Verville trainer, similar to this one shown in tests of special landing gear for the National Advisory Committee for Aeronautics.

(The National Archives)

# Famous Aeroncas...No. 1



*2300 hours - in two years  
...and still going strong!*

It's one thing to make claims . . . and another thing to show actual proof! Aeronca NC 11420 was the first two-seater to leave the factory. That was in March, 1931. Eric D. Leche flew it for 13,000 miles on a demonstration tour through 17 states. On the first of July an extra tank and compass were installed. It was entered in the Ford Reliability Tour. After placing first in the Figure of Merit test, in competition with 20 other ships of all types, George Dickson flew and finished the 5000 mile grind . . . to make the Aeronca the first and only light plane to ever complete this supreme test of stamina and reliability.

In August, 1931, Ed. Ritchey of Fort Worth purchased the ship. For exactly one year, he used it continuously in student instruction. He averaged over 100 hours per month and, due to the low operating and maintenance cost, made more money by far than any other operator in his vicinity. Scores of students received their training and licenses on this ship; hundreds of passengers, their first ride. And, then, Ed. Ritchey bought another Aeronca . . . from the money laid aside for depreciation. The ship had literally paid for itself, besides earning an average of over \$5 per hour net profit.

- Chrome-moly fuselage
- W" wing spars
- Air Wheels
- All roller and ball bearing motor
- Oleo landing gear
- Impulse on Magneto
- Center throttle
- Side-by-side seating
- Large luggage compartment
- Dual controls
- Leather Upholstery
- Winter enclosure
- Exceptional visibility
- 70 M. P. H. Cruising
- 25 miles per gallon
- Hands-off stability

Richard Spencer, former navy instructor and nationally known cartoonist, then started the now famous "Dixie Legion." He needed a thoroughly reliable, economical training plane. He bought NC 11420 from Ritchey. The price was \$1100. That was six months ago. Since that time the ship has been flown more than ever. Scores of new students have earned their wings with it. Hour after hour, day after day, time was piled up until today . . . that ship has flown over 160,000 miles. An average of over 3 hours per day for two years.

That's what we mean when we say Aeroncas have reliability—stamina—ruggedness—economy—strength—safety—and performance. That's why the Aeronca is the leader in its class. That's why Aeroncas were the biggest money makers in the industry last year . . . and will again be this year. And that's why you can't afford to carry on during 1933 without one of these ships. Write for money-making details today.

AERONAUTICAL CORPORATION OF AMERICA  
LUNKEN AIRPORT • CINCINNATI, OHIO



A 1933 magazine ad featured Dickson's Aeronca.

(Antique Airplane Association)



An Aeronca C-2, NC568V flown by F. M. Johnston to a record 14,400 feet over Oakland, California, July 29, 1930.

(Mrs. Carl Bigelow)



Jean Roche, left, was an engineer at McCook Field when he built the monoplane which became the Aeronca. He worked in his garage, assisted by a friend and fellow hobbyist, J. H. Quentin Dohse, right.

(H. E. Morehouse)



Stinson NC403Y may have been the one flown in 1931 tour by Eddie Stinson.

(John W. Underwood)



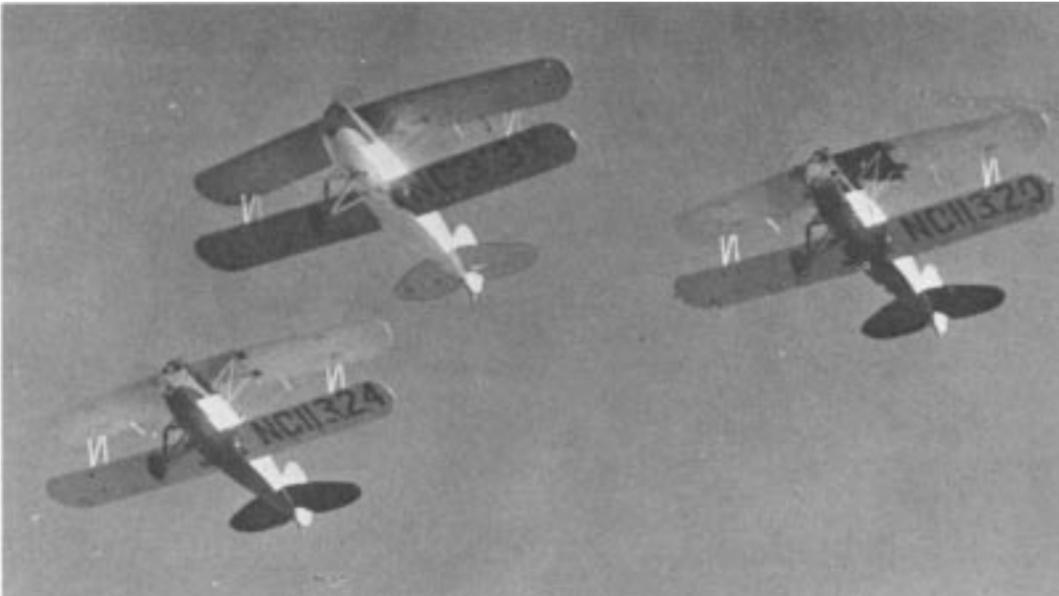
Jimmie Doolittle

(NASM)



Peter Altman

(L. S. Smauey)



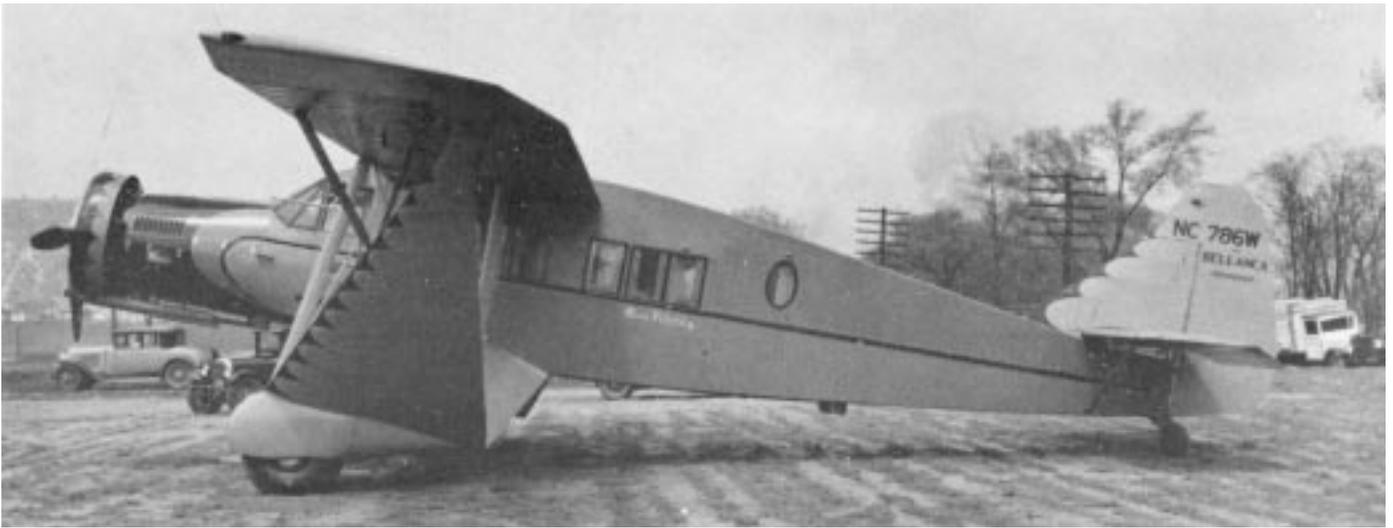
Great Lakes Sport Trainers at Claude Ryan's school in San Diego. Air tour arrivals often looked like this, as friendly enemies ganged up in final dash across finish line.

(NASM)



Great Lakes #13. Sandbag ballast and scales for weighing load can be seen on ground aft of left wing.

(Ford/Hudek)



Bellanca Miss Fidelity, owned by Fred M. King's Fidelity Investment Company of Wheeling, West Virginia, and flown by George Haldeman.

(NASM)



Another majestic Air Cruiser, NC785W, taxiing on the Delaware River, near the factory.

(NASM)



The Packard Diesel Waco, a Taper Wing in 1930, now become a Straight Wing. Walter Lees at right, back to camera.

(Ford/Hudek)

Despite the four rules being written to encourage competition by multi-engine cabin planes and amphibians, only a few did compete. These are examples of six which did not.



The Loening Amphibian. HR42 served in the Navy at Hampton Roads, Virginia.  
(Keystone Aircraft Corporation)



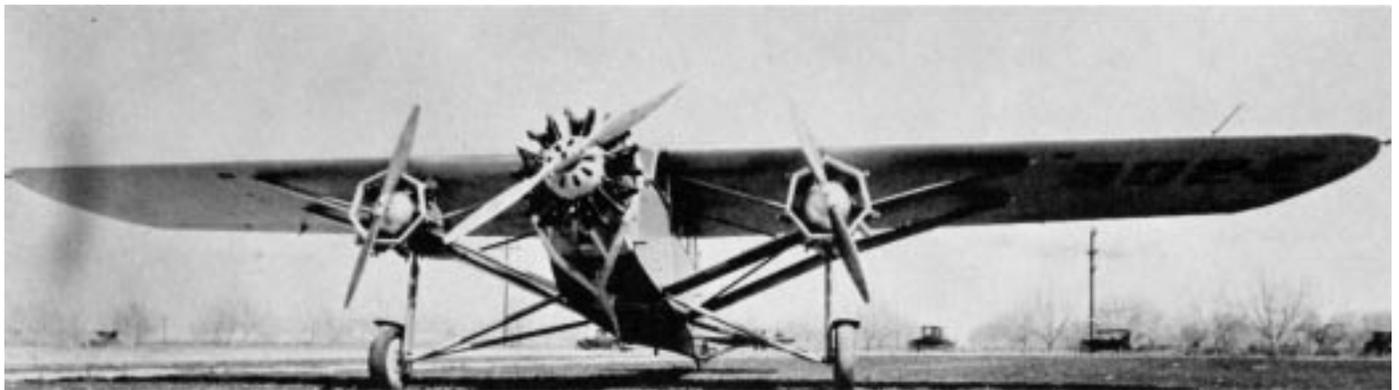
The Stinson U. Consolidated Airlines served various California cities from home base at Alameda, on San Francisco Bay.  
(M. L. Cohen/University of California)



The Keystone Patrician, seen at Ford Airport April 12, 1929.

(William T. Larkins)

The majestic Boeing Model 226, in the service of Standard Oil of California. Note copilot rests his arm on sill of big open cockpit window.  
(Standard Oil Company of California)



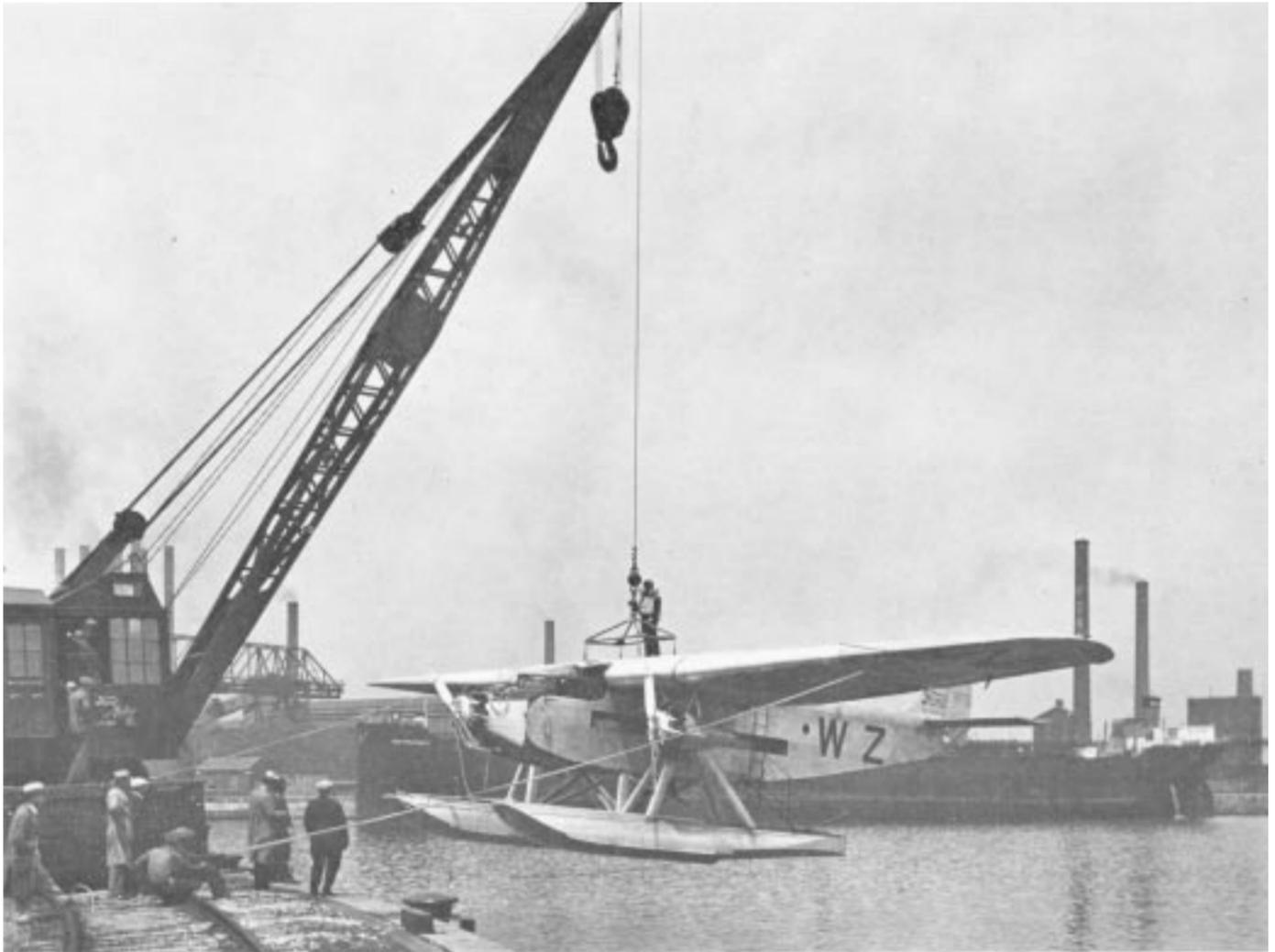
The Bach Air Yacht, built in Van Nuys, California. This one has a Hornet in the nose, two Comets outboard.

(American Aviation Historical Society)



The four-engine Fokker F-32, seen at Mills Field, San Francisco, January 9, 1931. The English Bluebird G-ABDS was passing through on a round-the-world trip, flown by a Mrs. Bruce.

(M. L. Cohen/University of California)



Unusual Ford on floats, being lowered into River Rouge at Ford factory on May 12, 1929, for tests and subsequent delivery to Royal Canadian Air Force. The man standing on top the wing appears to be Harry Russell.

(Mrs. S. L. Manning)

And four low-wing speedsters which within a very few years would make the Ford Tri-Motor obsolete for service on the major air lines....



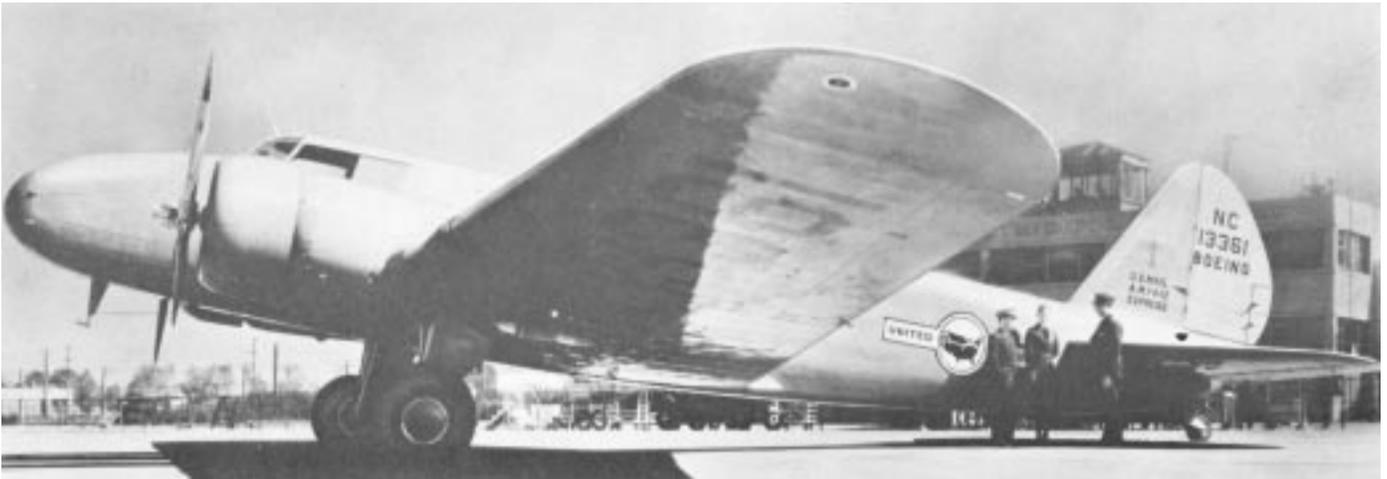
The Northrop Alpha, carrying the Indian head insignia of Transcontinental and Western Air.

(Edward Peck)



The Lockheed Orion. These two are the North Wind, and South Wind, of Varney Speed Lines, at Alameda, California.

(M. L. Cohen/University of California)



The Boeing 247, in service with United Air Lines in 1933.

(United Air Lines)



And the Douglas DC-2. NC14285 was owned by Standard Oil Company.

(Standard Oil Company of California)

**OFFICIAL RESULTS: SEVENTH NATIONAL AIR TOUR FOR THE EDSEL B. FORD RELIABILITY TROPHY  
AND THE GREAT LAKES LIGHT PLANE TROPHY**

July 4 - July 25, 1931

(Contestants listed in order of final standing.)

| PILOT                                     | RANK | REG. NO. | AIRPLANE TYPE and ATC                    | ENGINE TYPE                                     |      | WEIGHTS   |       |           | SECONDS |       | AVG. <sup>1</sup> SPEED | FIGURE OF MERIT | FINAL SCORE | AWARD         | PASSENGERS <sup>2</sup>                                     |
|---|------|----------|--|---|------|-----------|-------|-----------|---------|-------|-------------------------|-----------------|-------------|---------------|---|
|   |      |          |  | DISPL.  | H.P. | EM'TY WT. | LOAD  | GR'SS WT. | ST'K    | UST'K |                         |                 |             |               |   |
| Harry L. Russell                          | 5    | NC433H   | Ford Tri-Motor<br>13-A 431               | (1) Wr. Cyclone<br>(2) Wright J6-9<br>3770 1175 |      | 7,844     | 5,156 | 13,000    | 11.5    | 12.2  | 143.20                  | 13.9            | 63,764.3    | \$2,500       |   |
| J.H. Smart                                | 4    | NC8485   | Ford Tri-Motor<br>5-AT-C 165             | (3) P&W Wasp C<br>4032 1260                     |      | 7,960     | 5,540 | 13,500    | 9.7     | 10.3  | 143.20<br>(?)           | 12.4            | 53,813.0    | 2,000         | Tony Wallach, Charles Bunch, Mrs. Ann O. Smart              |
| Eddie A. Schmieder*<br>(youngest entrant) | 17   | C9092    | Cessna AW<br>72                          | Warner Scarab<br>422 110                        |      | 1,267     | 993   | 2,260     | 10.3    | 15.3  | 120.99                  | 13.5            | 44,343.7    | 1,750         | Ollie Walker  |
| Lowell Bayles                             | 14   | NC46V    | Gee Bee Sportster<br>E 398               | Warner Scarab<br>422 110                        |      | 912       | 488   | 1,400     | 8.1     | 10.7  | 140.78                  | 9.9             | 44,106.3    | 1,500<br>+500 | Great Lakes Trophy winner                                   |
| Jack B. Story                             | 3    | NC9628   | Buhl Airsedan<br>CA6 128                 | Wright J6-9<br>975 300                          |      | 2,478     | 1,722 | 4,200     | 11.5    | 14.6  | 126.06                  | 10.1            | 42,910.6    | 1,250         | Walter Carr   |
| Wm. N. Lancaster                          | 9    | NC919V   | Bird CK<br>388                           | Kinner B5<br>441 125                            |      | 1,318     | 985   | 2,303     | 9.2     | 14.1  | 97.35                   | 12.7            | 40,488.4    | 1,000         |   |
| Lee Gehlbach                              | 10   | NC914V   | Bird CK<br>388                           | Kinner B5<br>441 125                            |      | 1,318     | 985   | 2,303     | 13.8    | 15.7  | 102.75                  | 12.4            | 40,147.9    | 750           |   |
| Edward A. Stinson (oldest<br>entrant)     | 18   | u        | Stinson SM8A<br>295                      | Lycoming R680<br>680 215                        |      | 2,222     | 1,043 | 3,265     | 7.2     | 13.9  | 119.48                  | 9.9             | 38,237.0    | 550           |   |
| Joseph A. Meehan                          | 13   | NC302Y   | Great Lakes 2TIA<br>228                  | Amer. Cirrus<br>310 90                          |      | 1,016     | 564   | 1,580     | 8.9     | 13.0  | 100.34                  | 11.2            | 36,167.2    | 400           |   |
| Geo. E. Dickson                           | 20   | NC11420  | Aeronca Collegian<br>C-3 396             | Aeronca E113<br>113 36                          |      | 461       | 414   | 875       | 16.5    | 12.3  | 64.10                   | 15.6            | 32,514.0    | 300           |   |
| Harvey C. Mummert                         | 7    | NC883K   | Mercury Chic T2<br>235                   | LeBlond 90<br>508 90                            |      | 935       | 578   | 1513      | 5.6     | 11.1  | u                       | 12.4            |             |               | Out at Knoxville  |
| Walter Henderson                          | 2    | u        | Buhl Flying Bull<br>Pup LA-1 405         | Szekely SR3<br>191 30                           |      | u         | u     | u         | 21.8    | 8.9   | u                       |                 |             |               | Out at Columbus   |
| Charles Sugg                              | 1    | NC387Y   | Buhl Flying Bull<br>Pup LA-1 405         | Szekely SR3<br>191 30                           |      | u         | u     | u         | 18.1    | 10.3  |                         |                 |             |               | Crashed on take-off, Yorkville, Ohio**                      |
| Leonard S. Flo                            | 11   | NC855W   | Bird Cabin Model<br>E 2-362 <sup>3</sup> | Kinner B5<br>441 125                            |      | u         | u     | u         | 10.9    | 12.1  |                         |                 |             |               | Al Molo, Louise Shepherd, Floyd Hermon.<br>Out at Bradford. |

**NOTES:**

<sup>1</sup> Average speed was full-throttle, or nearly so. Tour scoring based on most points for most speed, each leg.

<sup>2</sup> Tour publicity severely curtailed for 1931; therefore many passenger names unlisted.

<sup>3</sup> ATC was dated 7-6-31. Certification tests were completed at Detroit by Leonard Flo and Inspector Harold Neely.

**OTHER ACCOMPANYING AIRPLANES**

| PILOT              | REG. NO.      | AIRPLANE TYPE                            | PURPOSE   | PASSENGERS <sup>2</sup>  |
|--------------------|---------------|--|---|--|
| Thomas B. Colby    | NC10402       | Laird LCB300<br>Wr. J6-9                 | Official Tour Airplane, Berryloid                         | Tour Manager, Ray Collins  |
| Walter E. Lees     | NR4N          | Waco HSO<br>Packard Diesel DR980         | Official Tour Airplane, Packard Motor Car Co.             | James Findlay  |
|                    |               |  | Advance Pathfinder Plane.*                                |  |
| James H. Doolittle | NC539M        | Lockheed Vega 5A<br>P&W Wasp             | Official Tour Referee, Shell Oil Co.                      | Jack Dalton, Mrs. Doolittle, Mrs. Ray Brown  |
| E.W. Cleveland     | NC9965        | Travel Air B6000<br>Wr. J6-9             | Official Tour Plane, Cleveland Aerol Co.                  | Arthur Schlosser, E.P. Crocker, Ralph Young, Ray Brown, Frank Hawks, back from Europe tour joined group at Wheeling. |
| Robert E. Dake     | NC861N<br>(?) | Bellanca CH300<br>Wr. J6-9               | Official Tour Plane, Kendall Oil Co.                      | Frank McKay, Thomas Kinkade  |
| L.A. Yancey        | NC11609       | Pitcairn PCA-2<br>Wr. J6-9               | Champion Spark Plug Co.                                   | Louis Foley  |
| Myron W. Gould     | NC769H        | Stearman 4-D<br>P&W Wasp Jr.             | Official Tour Plane and Pratt & Whitney Aircraft Service. |  |
| Z.D. Granville     | X11049        | GB Sportster YW<br>P&W Wassp             | Granville Bros. Aircraft.                                 | Mrs. Granville   |
| George W. Haldeman | NC786W        | Bellanca Air Bus P-200<br>Wright Cyclone | Fidelity Investment Co.                                   | F.M. King, Don Mockler, Findlay Carter, Ray Liedom   |
| u                  | NC967W<br>(?) | Stinson SMBA<br>Lycoming R680            | Davenport (Iowa) Airways plane                            | Ralph W. Gram, Chas. Gatschette, Davenport Democrat newspaper.   |
| L.M. Atkinson      | u             | Monosport<br>Warner 110                  | Accompanying, vicinity Ponca City.                        |  |
| Arthur Hargrave    | u             | Inland Sport<br>Warner 110               | Accompanying, vicinity Kansas City.                       |  |
| B.J. Wickham       | 9911          | Travel Air 2000<br>OX5                   | Accompanying, vicinity Omaha.                             |  |

\*Publicity on Pathfinder trip was not clear; was probably flown by Tom Colby in Laird.



Ford Airport on the last day, 4:15 P.M., Saturday, July 25, 1931. Tour ships lined up at hangars, military planes in precise rows beyond. Two planes taxi toward balloons at right, poised for Detroit News Trophy Race, won by Tracy Southworth who landed near Pittsburgh next day. Dearborn Inn, at left, survived through the years, but in November, 1936, Ford Airport became engineering center, auto proving ground, and museum site; air tours and balloon races only nostalgic memories.

(Detroit News Photo by William Kuenzel from Detroit News Autogiro NR799W flown by Frank Byerly)