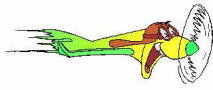
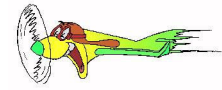


Huron County Airport



Scud Runner



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"Pilots track their lives by the number of hours in the air, as if any other kind of time isn't worth noting."

Michael Parfit
Smithsonian Magazine
May 2000

Pilot's Lounge: *The Question Mark*

By Sandy Gordley, Airport Manager

January 1-7, 1929: In an era when America was already "endurance conscious" because of marathon dancers and flagpole sitters, the Air Corps set a world flight endurance record of 150 hours, 40 minutes and 14 seconds. A tri-engined Fokker C-2A, named the Question Mark, took off from Metropolitan Airport at Van Nuys, California in January 1, 1929. This was not history's first air refueling mission, but it played a crucial role in the beginning of air refueling efforts. It circled over California while being refueled 42 times (9 at night), and landed on January 7 when one of its engines failed. Because of their unreliability at this early period, no radios were installed in the Question Mark or the two refueling Douglas C-1s.

Communications were maintained by notes dropped to the ground and by hand signals, flashlight signals, ground panels and messages written on blackboards carried in the planes. Since it was not practical to transfer oil for the engines by hose, cans of oil were lowered to the Question Mark by rope, as were food, water and other supplies.

During the flight, they made 43 contacts with the tanker aircraft. Each contact lasted about seven and a half minutes, with the two aircraft about 15 to 20 feet apart. Day-time contacts took place at an altitude between 2,000 and 3,000 feet and night-time contacts took place between 5,000 and 7,000 feet above ground.

The flight was of great value to the Air Corps. It thoroughly tested the reliability of the plane, its engines and accessories, and the effects of continuous flight upon its crew members. It also had an impact upon civilian aviation, for it triggered a rash of civilian endurance flights which focused an even

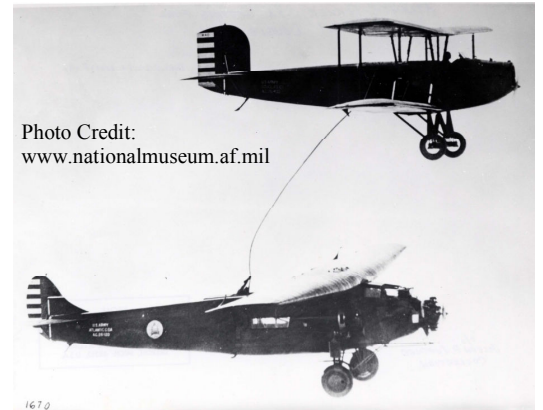


Photo Credit:
www.nationalmuseum.af.mil

greater public attention on aviation.

Air refueling still was considered by many to be a modern marvel, and it had humble beginnings. The first attempts were in 1921 with the employment of five-gallon gas cans when a U. S. Navy lieutenant, in the back of a Huff-Daland HD-4, used a grappling hook to snag a gas can from a float in the Potomac River. In another attempt, a wing walker, with a gas can strapped to his back, climbed from an airborne Lincoln Standard to a Curtiss JN-4 to pour gas into the aircraft's tank.

While these two publicity stunts deserve mention, the first air-to-air refueling, using a gravity flow hose, occurred in 1923. Earlier that year, the Army Air Service had equipped two de Havilland DH-4Bs with in-flight hoses. After installation, testing and preparation, the Army Air Service was ready to put it to use. On June 27, one of the DH-4s flew a six-hour and 38 minute flight that included two air-refuelings.

By 1928, the U. S. Army Department shelved the idea of air refueling for another 12 years. Still, in its primary objective, the Question Mark was a huge success.

Squawk: *Emergency Services Available to Pilots* (AIM 6-2-1)

By Sandy Gordley

ATC can help you but they cannot be the decision-maker.

Radar equipped ATC facilities can provide radar assistance and navigation service (vectors) to VFR aircraft in difficulty when the pilot can talk with the controller, and the aircraft is within radar coverage.

Experience has shown that many pilots who are not qualified for instrument flight cannot maintain control of their aircraft when they encounter clouds or other reduced visibility conditions. In many cases the controller will not know whether flight into instrument conditions will result from ATC instructions. To avoid possible hazards resulting from being vectored into IFR conditions, a pilot in difficulty should keep the controller advised of the current weather conditions being encountered and the weather along the course ahead and observe the following:

1. If a course of action is available which will permit flight and a safe landing in VFR weather conditions, non-instrument rated pilots should choose the VFR condition rather than requesting a vector or approach that will take them into IFR weather conditions; or
2. If continued flight in VFR conditions is not possible, the non-instrument rated pilot should so advise the controller and indicate the last of an instrument rating, declare a *distress* condition; or
3. If the pilot is instrument rated and current, and the aircraft is instrument equipped, the pilot should so indicate by requesting an IFR flight clearance. Assistance will then be provided on the basis that the aircraft can operate safely in IFR weather conditions.

Touch and Go: *The Go-Around Procedure*

By Sandy Gordley

Know the elements related to a go-around:

1. Make a timely decision to discontinue the approach to landing.
2. Apply maximum allowable power immediately and establish a pitch attitude that will top the descent.
3. Retract flaps to initial approach setting.
4. Retract landing gear after the positive rate of climb is established, or as specified by the manufacturer.
5. Trim the airplane to accelerate to V_y before the final flap retraction then climb at $V_y +$ or $- 5$ knots.
6. Maneuver to the side of the runway/landing area to clear and avoid conflicting traffic.
7. Maintain maximum allowable power to a safe maneuvering altitude, then set climb power.
8. Maintain proper wind-drift correction and obstruction clearance throughout the transition to climb.
9. Complete appropriate checklists.

Compass: *Space Available*

By Sandy Gordley

There are two hangar spaces left in the large East hangar/Building complex. These rent for \$115/mo. Please pass the word around. The building also has office space available for rent.



Winter Operations: Our airport is experiencing budget constraints like most other places. We will continue to offer the best service we can, however, we need your help. With regard to snow plowing: in previous years, we have plowed the taxi

streets and the hangar driveways. This winter, we are going to eliminate plowing the driveways. We will do our best to keep from plowing snow onto the driveway, however, we will not be removing most of the snow from the driveway itself. For your convenience, we do have a heavy-duty snow blower available for your use. Just contact Sandy at the airport and she can schedule a time to get a key to you. Hopefully, we won't have much snow this season.

