HOW FORTUNATE WE are to have EAA! Being close to Headquarters and privileged to work closely with the people who are EAA, I am often overwhelmed and impressed at their attitude, determination and foresight in EAA matters. I attend numerous meetings as Division President and Museum Foundation Trustee. Each time, I come away feeling “good all over” to have EAA and the people of their calibre, “working” for me, for our Division, for “us”, for all of sport aviation.

Numerous subjects are always at hand . . . museum planning, fund raising, planning and building committees, sport aviation problems, Watch Dog Committee, magazine, bulletins, Chapter matters, fly-in plans, Convention items and Division activities. I see the Warbirds at work. The IAC President hammering out copy. The entire office staff has the dedication that would make any personnel manager green with envy. Headquarters is always a bee-hive of activity.

. . . “Blue Leader”, always overflowing with enthusiasm, will appear in the midst of this activity, impress a new sense of direction to someone and then return to his office to work on another, perhaps more pressing, subject. Busy as he is though, he seems most always available, and willing to listen, should “you” have a problem, and rarely is he any further away than your telephone.

General Manager, Business Manager, Editor-in-Chief, Executive and Division Secretaries, Accounting, Membership, Mailing, Receptionist, they are all busy, all day, and its all for “you”, the member, EAA, sport aviation. How fortunate we are to have them. It is their efforts, from “Blue Leader” on down who keep “sport aviation” alive and well!
HOW TO JOIN THE ANTIQUE-CLASSIC DIVISION

Membership in the EAA Antique-Classic Division is open to all EAA members who have a special interest in the older aircraft that are a proud part of our aviation heritage. Membership in the Antique-Classical Division is $10.00 per year which entitles one to 12 issues of The Vintage Airplane published monthly at EAA Headquarters. Each member will also receive a special Antique-Classic membership card plus one additional card for one’s spouse or other designated family member.

Membership in EAA is $15.00 per year which includes 12 issues of SPORT AVIATION. All membership correspondence should be addressed to: EAA, Box 229, Hales Corners, Wisconsin 53130.
GASTONIA '73

By Jack Cox
(Photos by Author)

The Carolinas-Virginia Antique Airplane Foundation, Inc. - alias EAA Chapter 395 - annually stages a Spring and a Fall Fly-In at various airports in the three state area. The Spring Fly-In has been held at the Wings and Wheels Museum Airport in Santee, S.C. for the past several years and the Fall Fly-In has traditionally been staged at the Gastonia, N.C. Municipal Airport just west of Charlotte's Douglas Airport.

These Fly-Ins are antique/classic oriented and have grown over the past decade into very large and well organized events. Well in excess of 100 show planes are always expected and some really exotic aircraft keep showing up - many of which are not often seen outside of this area due to the difficulty (and danger) of flying them over the densely forested and cloud covered Appalachians to mid-west fly-ins. The result is that the meets attract antique/classic enthusiasts from all over the nation, making them more than simply regional in flavor.

The 1973 Gastonia Fly-In was, in a word or two, a tremendous success. Despite dire predictions by the weather bureau of rain and low ceilings every day, it simply didn't happen. Skies were beautiful and what wind there was - was right down the active runway every hour of every Fly-In day! Somebody had been paying the preacher, to use a good ol' Tar Heel expression.

In addition to the usual goings-on, the National Waco Club held a Fly-In meeting of their members at Gastonia in conjunction with 395's Happening. The area has always been a hotbed of Waco activity, so it was only natural that Waco Club President Ray Brandly of Dayton, Ohio, call the faithful together there. A fine turn out of more than a dozen of the Troy, Ohio products pleased Ray to no end, particularly the rare birds . . . like Dick Austin's ARE with a sparkling new red and white Alumigrip paint job, Dick Jackson's mighty "D", Bob Ring's side-by-side UBA, Walt Weber's JYM and Chuck Weber's beautiful CUC-2. It is not often that two QCF-2s are seen flying together any more, as were those of Ted Perrotti and Frank Fox. The Cabins were well represented: Ken Davis' newly restored VKS-7 (which Ray Brandly once owned), the YKS-7s of Wayne Hayes, Joe Hurdle and Tom Whisnant/Walter Prestwood and Col. James Matthews' YKS-6. Oddly, the normally ubiquitous UPF-7s were just two in number - and those, owned by Gordon Sherman and George McKiernan, are based at Gastonia Municipal. Ray says that he rates George McKiernan's UPF-7 in the top five or six in existence.

The only thing missing in the Waco line-up was the Texas entourage . . . held out by horrendous rains in the Mississippi valley. Ray Brandly was so encouraged with this Fall Fly-In concept that he left pretty well convinced to try it again next year. Watch these pages for confirmation.

Below, Buck Buchanan’s beautifully restored Cessna 170B, Best Classic Monoplane award winner.

To the amazement and extreme pleasure of the host Chapter, 1973 was a year for a great many planes flying in from far-off reaches of the land. New England led the list. A flight of three rare and beautiful Wacos flew in from Rochester, New Hampshire: Ted Perrotti and his son in their 1931 Waco QCF-2 (Hometown: Melrose, Massachusetts), Bob and Hilda Ring in their newly acquired 1932 Waco UBA (Hometown: East Kingston, N.H.) and Dick and Pat Jackson in their famed 1934 Waco S 3HD. These aircraft are based at Dick’s private airport/museum near Rochester where another eight or ten flyable Wacos are hangared! The F-2 and UBA are equipped with 220 h.p. Continentals and the D, of course, a 450 h.p. Pratt & Whitney. Dick flew the trip at greatly reduced power with lots of mushing along and an occasional circle. At fuel stops they found the big R-985 was using the same amount of gasoline as the 220 Continentals.

Another Waco from the hinterlands was Wayne Hayes’ 1937 YKS-7 out of Yardville, New Jersey and we should mention John Turgyan of Trenton - but he and his 1943 Howard DGA-15P are no longer considered “company” at a Carolinas-Virginia Fly-In. He’s one of the bunch now.

Mr. and Mrs. W. Leedom were also down from Trenton, New Jersey in their classic 1946 Cessna 140. Mr. and Mrs. Harold Averbuck flew in from Newton, Massachusetts, in their 1943 Beech D-17S - red, naturally. Bob and Ginny Martin breezed in from Wheaton, Maryland in their 1946 Fairchild F-24R, Adolph E. Moebus flew north from Clearwater, Florida in his 1946 Swift, and Joe Fichera should have special notice for flying vast distances (at least “vast” behind a Kinnet!) in his very rare 1934 Kinner Sportster from Clinton, Maryland... as should Joe Araldi who flew in the opposite direction - up from Lakeland, Florida in his 1942 Ryan PT-22.

And then there were Chuck and Nancy Weber from Barrington, Illinois (Chicago area)... but more about them later. Also, let us not forget the dedication of Kelly and Edna Viets of Stilwell, Kansas who had to forsake their beautiful Ercoupe and drive through the rain across the Smokies to reach Gastonia. Kelly is the leader of the Ercoupe Club and found numerous kindred spirits in the Carolinas.

After all was said and done, it was established that the New Hampshire trio had flown furthest - so to settle the matter, the person with the oldest airplane out of the three was declared the winner of the Longest Distance Award, and that was Ted Perrotti and his 1931 F-2 Waco.

For readers in other parts of the country, it should be noted that a large number of aircraft and enthusiasts were also in attendance from the state of Georgia... and that no fuss is made about them 'cause they are considered “home folks” also by the Carolinas-Virginia Chapter. The Georgia people have always strongly supported these Fly-Ins and have some tremendous airplanes that would be an asset to any event.

The great paradox of an antique airplane meet is the fact that while the ostensible purpose is to enjoy old...
machines, nevertheless, the thing that gets everyone in a twitter is the new... "new" old airplanes, that is. Gastonia '73 had much to work up a good twit over... like:

- Red Nichols of Marion, N.C. had his really superb Piper J-2 out for its first public appearance. It is a 1937 model powered with a Robert Thompson overhauled Continental A-40 and is in that Cub yellow and black stripe paint scheme that is fast becoming a prestige item at sport aviation meets across the nation.

- Another Clip-Wing is flying, Monocoupe fans! Morton Lester of Martinsville, Virginia had his yellow and blue 110 Special on its first trip away from home base. This is a very unique plane in that it is not a factory 110 Special. It was built up from a 1931 110 in much the same way that Johnny Livingston did the original Clip-Wing in the early '30s. Morton's little speedster is powered by a 185 Warner which swings a long F-220 Aeromatic prop. Note on the cover photo that the "N" number is N-110SP!

- Chapter 395 President Herb Puckett had his newly restored Fairchild PT-19 on display for the first time in a completed state - beside his PT-23. This PT-19 is unique in all the world because it is the only one with a new center section. Herb, assisted by several strong armed friends who were needed to turn the structure over occasionally, is the only person to have built a new PT center section since the factory stopped production during World War II. Herb says it may well be the last, too, as he is not anxious to tackle such a job again. The airplane is authentic down to the placement and size of the last stencil.

- Ned Garber, age 13, (son of Chapter 395 Vice President Dr. Ed Garber of Fayetteville, N.C.) trailed in his Penguin practice plane built from drawings found in the 1932 Flying and Glider Manual. It was surprising the amount of attention the tiny craft attracted - it was literally mobbed on Sunday by the general public!

- John Dekle of Thomasville, Georgia, flew up a beautifully restored 1928 Travel Air 2000, NC-4952. He and his parents, Mr. & Mrs. Jim Dekle have restored the Travel Air Blue and silver biplane over the past few years and have done a magnificent job. Many veterans of the dope and fabric wars were really wowed by the absolute mathematical precision of the spacing and alignment of the rib stitching. This Travel Air was fitted with a speed ring and full wheel pants. We never did establish just who actually owns this prized machine... but we noticed that mom and pop drove to the Fly-In while son John and a friend had the fun of flying it up. That's what happens, men, when you raise your offspring to be airplane nuts! Everyone got a kick out of a neatly engraved metal placard in the rear cockpit which read: "Operating Limitations - Do Not Fold, Bend, Spindle or Mutilate."

- Perhaps the real show stopper of the week-end was the appearance of Coke Darden's 1934 Douglas Dolphin. This is the famous Model 8 Dolphin purchased by William...
Boeing as a tender for his yacht. Named the "Rover", NC 14205 was used by Boeing until World War II when it was purchased by the CAA and used in Alaska during the late unpleasantness of the early 1940s. Returned to Los Angeles the old water bird bumped from one owner to the next, serving as a sight seeing hack variously between Lake Tahoe and Frisco and Long Beach and Catalina Island. In 1968 new owners flew it across the country to Miami and on to the West Indies where it was to be used in charter service. It wasn't long before it wound up back in Florida - dismantled and apparently at the end of its rope. But then, enter antiquer Coke Darden to rescue "Rover" from the junkman's cutting torch and the corrosive effects of Florida's salt-laden sea breezes. For the past two or three years, work has progressed at an uneven pace, but, finally, Coke took delivery of his latest prize this summer. The 01' "Rover" has a dark blue fuselage and silver wing and horizontal tail. It is a big hoss of an airplane with a 60 foot wing and a fuselage/hull that is very obviously meant for rough seas utilization - a "blue water" ship, as you old salts would say. Powered by Pratt and Whitney R-985s of 450 h.p. each, the Dolphin is not fast - it sort of rumbles along in a very stately fashion . . . reminding all below that here is the sole survivor of an era when Dolphins were about the ultimate in private transportation. William K. Vanderbilt and Powell Crosley, Jr. were a couple of other notable owners of Dolphins.

Coke, more properly Dr. Darden, is a nuclear physicist with the University of South Carolina and has his own private airport just southeast of Columbia, South Carolina. His antique airplane collection also consists of a Douglas DC-2, Lockheed 12A, Spartan Executive, a Meyers OTW and a Swift.

Because of the good weather a lot of formation flying was done for the gratification of the pilots involved and, particularly, the camera freaks on the ground. Outstanding gaggles were those of the Cessna 195 gang, the T-6/SNJers, Waco lovers and several of the homebuilders.

Stan Sweikar of Patuxent River, Maryland, James Larsen of Alexandria, Virginia, and Ron Bolick of Hartwood, Virginia . . . sometimes joined by Bob Martin of Wheaton, Maryland, in his Fairchild 24 . . . flew their 195s constantly in beautiful, tight passes. Ron's yellow and white bird did double duty, because when he came down for a break, his wife Pat, who can just barely reach the rudder pedals, was out bending the big bird to her will.

Jerry Walbrun, formerly of Chicago and a past President of the Warbirds of America, has been transferred by Buick to Charlotte. His SNJ-5 went south also and was at Gastonia to join in the fun. Jerry, Danny Dunagan of Atlanta (SNJ), Capt. Walt Ohrlich of Virginia Beach (SNJ-5), Tom Austin of Greenville, Tennessee (AT-6F), Jeff Michaels of Lexington, N.C. (T-6)
Left. Len Povey, left, famous as the "Cuban Hawk", was the featured speaker at Gastonia. On the right is Johnny Crowell of Charlotte, N.C. Johnny was a well known air show pilot in the 1930s and was famous for an act in which he had himself handcuffed to the cabane struts, then took off and flew an entire low - level aerobatic routine! To this day, he will not reveal how he did it.


and Don Awkin of Charlotte, N.C. (AT-6G) did some beautiful and noisy formation fly-­bys as only 'Sixes can.

If you know Waco owners, you know they were in the air as long as there was gasoline in their tanks - and having a ball! Everyone of them was up at one time or the other - often all together.

Although an Antique-Classic Chapter, the Carolinas-­Virginia group welcomes all sport aviation types to their events. A lot of homebuilts attend and really attract a lot of attention. Jim Clevenger of Black Mountain, N.C. had his new Starduster Too there this year. It is powered by a geared 260 h.p. Lycoming swinging a 93 inch Aeromatic! Yes, it does really moan and, yes, it does go straight up! He and Dwight Cross, Jr. of nearby Huntersville, who owns a 180 h.p. four aileron Pitts Special made many passes together and the Too did a creditable job of staying with the smaller biplane. Jimmy Dean of Sanford, N.C., who owns a Pitts with a Jack Lowers Biplane Class racing engine, also did a lot of tight formation work with Dwight . . . in fact, Dwight was seen flying wing on about everything at Gastonia. Once he flew and flew just off the right wing of Barbara O'Conner’s Bonanza. Next year a timer should be put on Dwight and John Turgyan to see who is really the king of the Fly-In fliers!

On Saturday night the Awards Banquet was held in the local Armory with several hundred people present. The speaker for the evening was Len Povey, the famous Cuban Hawk, himself. Len now lives in retirement in the scenic Blue Ridge Mountain area of western North Carolina and enjoys coming down to the flatlands to meet with fellow aviation enthusiasts. His talk covered the period of the '30s when he was asked to come to Cuba and organize and train an air force by one-time dictator Batista. High points were his experiences in his personal Curtiss Hawk, his "favors" for Batista that gave a measure of job security - like buzzing and breaking up an anti-government mob on the streets of Havana . . . right down on the deck between the buildings! And, of course, his "invention" of the Cuban Eight. Len is a fine speaker and was very warmly received by the audience.

The award presentations were made by Chief Judge Evander Britt of Lumberton, N.C. - in his own inimitable style! The winners were as listed below:


Chuck and Nancy Weber, Barrington, Illinois

The first official arrivals at Gastonia were Chuck and Nancy Weber of the Chicago suburb of Barrington, Illinois in their beautiful 1935 Waco CUC-2. They came early to avoid a bad front that was moving into the Chicago area - and still had to file to get over the mountains. But they made it. On Saturday night they were rewarded for their efforts when their Waco was declared the Grand Champion of the Fly-In.

Chuck is a 727 Captain for United Airlines and Nancy is a former stewardess. They purchased the CUC-2 many
Right. Waco Lovers! Chuck Weber, left, was the winner of the Grand Champion award. Center is Ray Brandly, President of the National Waco Club, and right is Gordon Sherman, UPF-7 owner and winner of the Red McCord Memorial Award for 1973.

WILLARD F. SCHMITT
4027 ROCKY RIVER DR. NO. 22
CLEVELAND, OHIO 44135

Below. Dick Austin's Waco ARE. The outsize windows were installed on special order for the original owner of the plane, The New York Daily News.

years ago and have carried out one of the longest and most exacting restorations ever. This aircraft, according to Ray Brandly, is the most authentically finished Waco anywhere - even to the "pollywogs" on the cowling bumps.

The CUC series was introduced in 1935 and original planes had the Wright R-760 of 250 h.p. Chuck's airplane has been updated to the R-760-E2 of 350 h.p., however, and is quite a performer. The engine was just recently given a complete overhaul.

Nothing that could be expressed in words here can add to the beauty of this airplane. If you were at Gastonia, you know.

SWEEPSTAKES AWARD
BEST ANTIQUE MONOPLANE
BEST ANTIQUE BIPLANE
BEST GOLDEN AGE MONOPLANE
BEST GOLDEN AGE BIPLANE
BEST CLASSIC MONOPLANE
BEST CLASSIC BIPLANE
BEST 65 H.P. AIRCRAFT

Waco ARE NC20553
Dick Austin, Greensboro, N.C.
Piper J-2 Cub NC13RN
Red Nichols, Marion, N.C.
Travel Air 2000 NC 4052
John and Jim Dekle, Thomasville, Ga.
Monocoupe 110 Special NC110SP
Merton Lester, Martinsville, Va.
Waco GCF-2 N 14882
Frank Fox, Rockville, Maryland
Cessna 170B N 5247A
Buck Buchanan, Decatur, Ga.
Beech G-17S NC 61306
Piper PA-15 N 4853H
Warren Hall, Burlington, N.C.

BEST WARBIRD
BEST EXPERIMENTAL MONOPLANE
BEST EXPERIMENTAL BIPLANE
LONGEST DISTANCE AWARD
EAA HEADQUARTERS AWARD
BEST CUSTOM BUILT
EAA HEADQUARTERS AWARD
BEST ANTIQUE
EAA HEADQUARTERS AWARD
BEST CLASSIC
EAA HEADQUARTERS AWARD
BEST WARBIRD
HUMBLE OIL TROPHY
RED MC CORD MEMORIAL AWARD
FOUNDER'S TROPHY
SPECIAL AIRCRAFT AWARD
POTOMAC AERO SQUADRON CHOICE
NORTH GEORGIA CHAPTER CHOICE
SPECIAL SERVICE AWARD

North American SNJ N 66253
Danny Dunagan, Atlanta, Ga.
Wittman Tailwind N1119J
Roger Jennings, Greensboro, N.C.
Pitts Special N 517L
Ronne Proctor, High Point, N.C.
Waco GCF-2 NC 11468
Ted Perrotti, Melrose, Mass.
Spezia Tu-Holer N 3695
Ronald Mangum and Monty Meadenhall
High Point, N.C.
Waco S3HD N 1404B
Dick Jackson, Somersworth, N.H.

Globe Swift GC-1B N 3750K
Robert Dickson, Charlotte, N.C.
Fairchild PT-19 N 52913
Herb Puckett, Charlotte, N.C.
Douglas Dolphin NC 14205
Coke Darden, Columbia, S.C.
Gordon Sherman, Gastonia, N.C.
Jack and Golda Cox, Hales Corners, Wis.
Curtiss Robin NC 583N
T. L. Westen, Columbus, S.C.
Luscombe 8E N 1827
Larry G. Jones, Burlington, N.C.
Piper J-2 NC 13RN
Red Nichols, Marion, N.C.
Evander Britt, Lumberton, N.C.
Dwight Cross, Jr. of Huntersville, N.C. and his four aileron Pitts. Dwight was elected vice-president of Chapter 395 for 1974.

Gene Padgett of Marion, N.C. and his sharp Luscombe 8A. He has owned the plane for over 10 years and just recently rebuilt it completely.

SPECIAL SERVICE AWARD
Clem and Martha Armstrong, Rawlings, Md.


(Evander Britt is a well-known antique airplane authority and attorney from Lumberton, N.C. Some years ago he originated his mildly tongue-in-cheek "Poor Boy Awards" as a device to reward especially deserving aircraft owners and other individuals who, for various reasons, do not make the regular awards list at a given Fly-in. Lumberton is in a farming district and years ago it was the custom of local storekeepers to reward farmers who paid their accounts promptly after harvest time with a new pocket knife of their choice... thus, Evander's "Poor Boy Award" is a shiny new expensive pocket knife.)

To a visitor, a successful Fly-In looks easy. It isn't. It takes a lot of work months in advance to bring the thing off - even if you also get a break from the Weather Man. 1973 Chapter 395 President Herb Puckett and his wife Skip of Charlotte, Secretary-Treasurer Liz Pace of Gastonia, George and Geneva McKiernan of Charlotte, and Gordon Sherman of Gastonia were perhaps the most visible of those who labored to make Gastonia '73 enjoyable for the rest of us. Our gratitude to them and all the others who assisted in so many ways.

An election of new Chapter 395 officers for 1974 was conducted with the following results:
President — Jim Clevenger, Black Mountain, N.C.
Vice-President — Dwight Cross, Jr., Huntersville, N.C.
Secretary-Treasurer — Elizabeth Pace, Gastonia, N.C.
Ted Perrotti’s Waco OCF-2 on a fly-by. The fore-shortening effect of the telephoto lens makes the plane appear over the crowd — he wasn’t.

Red Nichols’ Piper J-2. Yep, we know about the number! This one had the old timers drooling.

John and Jim Dekle restored this Travel Air to perfection.
 Generally in a lifetime you meet a few people who make a lasting impression, and one of these could very well be Edna Gardner Whyte, renowned pilot during the past four decades. During her amazing career, she has been dubbed with sobriquets such as: "The Flying Nurse", "Flying Grandmother", "The Flying Schoolmarm" and "The Flying Saleswoman", all of which help to depict the many facets of her life.

Edna M. Gardner was born November 3, 1902 at Mankato, Minnesota, and because she was left an orphan early in life, she lived with an aunt and uncle until she graduated from high school in West Salem, Wisconsin. She then entered into training as a nurse in the La Crosse County Hospital of La Crosse, Wisconsin and graduated from there three years later as a Registered Nurse (1921 - 1924). Chatfield, Minnesota was considered as home for some time, and she tried to make an annual visit each fall.

It was while on duty as an R.N. at the Virginia Mason Hospital in Seattle that Edna had her first introduction to flying. A young Naval flier was in her ward with a broken leg that he had received in a car accident, and after talking with him, she became so interested in flying that she made her first solo flight from the Renton Field in 1927. Much of her $70.00 per month pay check from the Hospital went for flight instruction at $35.00 per hour. It was an ambitious undertaking for the fledgling pilot with an extreme desire to learn to fly.

By 1928, with Student License No. 4013, Edna was on active duty with the Bureau of Medicine and Surgery in the Navy Nurse Corps, Washington, D.C., and was spending much of her off-time flying and preparing for competitive flying. Subsequently, she carried passengers and taught flying at the Congressional, Beacon, Washington Hoover, College Park and Hydro Valley Airports, all near Washington, D.C. She was making more money and enjoying flight instructions so much more than nursing that she finally resigned from the Navy Nurse Corps in 1935. Currently, her Commercial Pilot's License No. 20000 is endorsed for Single and Multi-engine Land, Seaplane, Rotorcraft and Glider. Also, Flight Instructor with Airplane and Instrument, Ground Instructor Link Trainer.

An early-day Washington Press interview with Betty Hynes quotes a couple of Edna’s candid remarks, typical of her approach to flying: "I try not to take any more chances than necessary . . . I'd rather put my money into new spark plugs than a new dress.” Such eagerness marked her for a long flight through life. However, the promising flying career was nearly nipped at an early stage except for a twist of fate. As the only registered nurse with a commercial license in the country, Edna was selected as co-pilot of "The Flying Nurse" during the summer of 1932. She was to assist William Ulbrich in flying Dr. Leon Pisculli to Rome in the reworked "Miss Veedol" Bellanca which Pangborn and Herndon had flown on their world flight. However, in the finale, rather than resign from the Corps at the request of the Bureau, Edna returned to active duty. It was Edna Newcomer who flew on the ill-fated trans-Atlantic flight in September of that year. In the meantime, Edna Gardner had flown at the National Air Races in Cleveland and carried professional parachute jumpers for the Triangle Parachute Company.

Edna Gardner received her commission in the U.S. Navy Nurse Corps, serving from 1929 through 1935. She served 2 years at Great Lakes Naval Hospital, 2 years at the Newport Naval Hospital and 2 ½ years at the Washington Naval Hospital. She also received overseas orders for a year of duty with the 249th General Hospital in the Philippine Islands. This was probably her "least flying year". After returning stateside, she resumed flying commercially except for a couple of years during a polio epidemic when she nursed at Peter Smith Hospital in Fort Worth, and Parkland Hospital in Dallas for the American Red Cross Polio Nurses.
Schoolwise, Edna owned and operated the New Orleans Air College at Shusham Airport from 1935 to 1941, using three Taylorcrafts and three J-3 Piper Cubs for primary and a Ryan STA and a Cessna Airmaster for advanced training. She also instructed USAF and USN pilots in WTS programs both at Meacham Field and the Spartan School of Aviation. After her release from military service, she assisted her husband George M. Whyte, in fixed-base operations at Fort Worth, Aberdeen, Mississippi and Flushing, Michigan. Even today, when most people would be thinking about retirement, Edna Gardner Whyte is going strong. With Aero Valley Estates Airport, Roanoke, Texas as a homeport and owner, she finds time to do some instructing and admits, “I am happiest when I am teaching students to be good safe pilots”. Currently, Edna says of her work: “I am instructing in a busy pilot school. I keep going; so all this keeps me flying everyday. I have five planes to use - Musketeer, Cessna 150, Cessna 120, Aeronca 7-AC and Aero Commander 200. I am now teaching children of students I taught to fly 30 years ago. A man in New Orleans said I had taught his instructor’s instructor and asked what relation that made us. I told him he was my great, great grand pilot! I do not know any other woman pilot who flew in 1928-29 who is still instructing actively and flying commercially for a living, and believe me, I am grateful!”

This peerless pilot has taught flying since 1931 with 462 students soloed and has logged an impressive 18,182 hours in the air in over 42 years active flying, mostly instructing and competition. The flight hours continue to increase practically on a daily basis while flight instructing.

Next to her love of teaching good, safe pilots, no doubt competitive flying (both cross country and closed course) must be rated a close second followed by her desire to nurse very sick people back to good health. Mrs. Whyte is holder of 112 trophies won in competitive flying, as well as numerous outstanding awards. The walls of her den are completely lined with impressive trophies which she modestly refers to as "dust collectors". She enjoys reminiscing over the awards of 30 years ago, which would often be such items as leather jackets, helmets and goggles, luggage, gasoline, leather boots, etc., given as prizes for winning. Shown below is a partial listing of trophies she has won (there are many air races, bomb droppings, spot landing contests, tape cutting and other competitive flying events not shown as she is not sure of the dates):

Edna Gardner with Beech Staggerwing C-17B, N17072, at Patterson, La. in 1938 — while serving as a pilot to the May Lumber Company.
Edna Gardner with Beech Staggerwing C-17B, N17072, at Patterson, La. in 1936 — while serving as a pilot to the May Lumber Company.

1958 Won Dallas Doll Derby Efficiency Race, Cessna 120
1958 2nd Michigan SMALL Race Efficiency, Cessna 120
1958 Won IAR, Welland, Canada to Bahamas
1958 W/T
1958 Hayward, Calif to Las Vegas, Nev. Race
1958 Won Spot Landing Contest, Texas N.M. Air Meet, Cessna 120
1958 3rd High Sky Efficiency Race, Musketeer, Texas 120
1958 2nd Skydive Derby Efficiency Race — Cessna 120
1958 Nashville to Shreveport, La.
1958 Skydive Derby — Shreveport to Little Rock, Ark.
1960 Won IAR, Miami, Fla. to San Salvador, El Salvador
1961 Won IAR, Fort Meyers, Fla. to Nassau, Bahamas
1962 15th IAR, Houston, Texas to Nassau, Bahamas
1963 5th Skydive Derby — St. Louis-Little Rock-Tulsa
1964 1st U.S.A. Rally, Men and Women, Winter Haven, Fla.
1964 3rd Skydive Derby, St. Louis, Mo.
1964 Won Dallas Doll Derby, Dallas, Texas
1965 Won U.S.A. Rally, Men and Women, Winter Haven, Fla.
1965 Won Dallas Doll Derby, Dallas, Texas
1965 4th IAR, New York City to Nassau, Bahamas
1965 4th Skydive Derby Efficiency Race, St. Louis, Missouri
1966 6th Hayward, Calif to Las Vegas, Nev. Race
1966 19th IAR, Monterey, Mexico to Waco, Palm Beach, Florida
1966 2nd Washington National Air Races, Frederick, Maryland
1967 Won Skydive Derby Race
1967 11th IAR, Montreal, Canada to Miami, Fla.
1967 Won Two heats at Texas Pylon Races, Ft. Worth, Texas
1967 Won Three heats at Cleveland National Air Races
1967 4th Celebrity Race to Reno
1968 16th IAR, Managua, Nicaragua to Panama
1969 5th Maryland Air Races, Frederick, Md.
1969 3rd Reno National Championship Air Races
1969 4th Florida National Air Races, Ft. Lauderdale, Florida
1969 9th IAR, New Orleans to Managua, Nicaragua
1972 1st IAI, Ottawa to Ft. Lauderdale, Fla.

Following are a few interesting highlights:

There have been moments of glory as well as frustration along the way. One of the more disconcerting incidents occurred at the 1934 First Women’s National Air Races at Dayton. After winning the 50-mi. feature pylon race in her Waco Taperwing, Edna was ruled disqualified for crossing over a pylon to avoid a collision. Such are the rudiments of competitive flying! Edna flew at this Meet in competition with, among others: Alma Arlene Davis, Annette Gipson, Jimmie Kolp, Jeannette Lempek, Helen MacClosky, Frances Marsalis, Ruth Barron Nason, Gladys O’Donnell and Helen Richey.

Clare Bunch came to the rescue at the January ’39 All-American Air Maneuvers in Miami and loaned Edna his Warner powered clipped-wing Monocoupe 110 Special. She flew it to first place in the K.K. Culver Trophy Race (50 mi.) in competition with Florence Boswell, Arlene Davis, Edith Descomb, Nancy Love and Bebbie Owen.

At the January ’41 Maneuvers in Miami, Edna flew a sleek Culver Cadet to first place in the 25 mi. race at a speed of 119.05 mph. Catherine Rawls Thompson, in another Culver Cadet, was second at 118.58 mph.

After WWII and the return from the Philippine Islands, Edna ferried WWII surplus single and multi-engine planes as well as Luscombes and Swifts from the Texas factories.

When the National Air Races were resumed and the female pilots raced in the AT-6 class, Edna was ready with an SNJ-2 (NX-62382, racing No. 42). At the ’47 NAR with a speed of 210.789 mph, she finished in the “show” position, closely behind Ruth Johnson and Grace Harris.

Jean Ross Howard headed the movement to organize the Whirly-Girls in 1955. Edna Whyte had her Rotor rating in 1951 and became charter member No. 10 of the select group of 13 women.

Edna currently flies the pylon races with such well-known pilots as Pat Arnold, Mona Coons, Mara Culp, Dot Etheridge, Mary Knapp, Elaine Loening, Berni Stevenson and Judy Wagner. The late Dorothy Julich was another contender with whom Edna enjoyed racing.

1967 proved to be a stellar year for the veteran pilot. Favoring, north winds made a fast race of the IAR from Montreal to Miami, however, with a plus 17.78 over her 196 mph par speed, Edna finished in 11th spot, flying her Aero Commander 200. However, she did win the Skylady Derby, two heats at the Fort Worth, Texas NAR and three heats at the Cleveland National Air Races.

The ’67 Cleveland races were held at the Burke Lakefront Airport and the 20-mile heats were flown on the 2½ mile, six pylon oval course, mostly over water. Edna qualified in first position at 185.95 mph and finished second overall at 176.961. In addition to other awards, she was honored with the Howard Johnson Motel’s beautiful trophy and check for the man or woman displaying the best sportsmanship during the Cleveland NAR. Also during the year, Mrs. Whyte was presented the Tiny Broadwick Trophy by theOX-5 Club of America at their convention in Birmingham. Then, to make it a complete sweep, the Women’s National Aeronautical Association awarded Edna their 1967 Aviation Woman of the Year citation!

Edna Whyte has always been a feminist and humanist at heart, an avid booster for general flying, she has devoted her life to selling aviation. Cliff and Phil Henderson, early-day promoters of the National Air Races, always said that Edna was one woman pilot who flew in a dress, even in the open cockpit airplanes, at their races. When the Aero Commander was ordered, she told them to paint it white with pink and blue trim and white mink seat covers, realizing that women pilots can still be feminine. Her garb is usually a pink dress or suit, sometimes made by herself, and mechanics across the country know her as the trim and stylish lady who talks with ease regarding the aircraft engines, clearances, assembly, break-in, etc.

Edna is the only pilot who has won the International Air Race four times. Although she flew solo to victories in both the ’53 and ’58 IARs, she generally crews with a neophyte co-pilot so that the newcomer can experience the thrills, challenge and intrigue of cross country racing.

Edna utilizes her impressive past to accomplish her desires for the present and the future, and says, "I
INVINCIBLE CENTER-WING MYSTERY SOLVED

By Jack Cox

Remember our "Whatever Happened to the Invincible Center-Wing?" in the August issue? Well, as often is the case, we found the answer to this one right in our own back yard!

Dean Crites, twin brother of Dale Crites - well known to you EAA Convention goers as the pilot of the 1912 Curtiss Pusher (now in the EAA Museum) - filled us in on the history of the Center-Wing and provided ancient negatives from which the accompanying photographs were made.

The story goes like this. After the Invincible Metal Furniture Company of Manitowoc, Wisconsin built their Center-Wing in the late '20s and did some test flying, it was dismantled, the Curtiss Challenger engine removed and the airframe stored in their plant. We can only assume that the coming of the Great Depression knifed any plans for production.

At any rate, in the fall of 1934 Dean Crites of Waukesha, Wisconsin (just west of Milwaukee) purchased the Center-Wing and trucked it home. He purchased a Challenger in Chicago and installed it on the old bird using aluminum signs to make substitutes for missing cowling. On May 17, 1935 he test flew the plane from a farm field near his home on the outskirts of Waukesha. The flight lasted one hour and forty minutes and his log book "Remarks" column states that the flight was for the purpose of taking pictures of the then-new Waukesha airport north of the city. (His brother Dale would later become the manager of the airport and would remain so until his retirement in 1969.)

Dean estimates he flew the airplane about 10 hours before a fellow from Ohio came along and bought it - the buyer's name is long since forgotten. Through the grapevine, the Crites brothers heard that the new owner bought the plane. Below. The Center-Wing completed and awaiting the spring thaw and a test flight.
had removed the Challenger and had substituted a Hisso. Shortly afterward, they learned the plane had crashed killing the new owner. This, as far as we can determine, was the end of the Invincible Center-Wing.

Dean says the airplane had an odd characteristic. He would be flying along smoothly when the airplane would suddenly shudder all over - as if the tail were fluttering. He was glad to get rid of the thing! Dean and Dale laugh about the whole episode today. Dale says they had both been flying worn out Jennies and a Velie Monocoupe - so that the Center-Wing was "big airplane" experience for them. They felt they were stepping up into the "transport" class!

No conversation regarding flying in the Milwaukee area can go on very long without a mention of Dean and Dale Crites. They started their aviation careers in the late '20s and have been a prominent part of Wisconsin and Midwestern civil aviation ever since. Retired today, both are nevertheless still involved in sport aviation activities. They are restoring a Straightwing Waco and Dale is well along to getting another early Curtiss Pusher flying - when he isn't flying his Davis or 85 h.p. Cub.

Dean Crites, left, and his twin brother Dale of Waukesha, Wisconsin.

(Continued From Page 14)

am grateful I can fly all I want and hope it will be for many years more". She likes to practice the Golden Rule; has given an award trip to air races for CAP cadets to encourage them, and has taken into her home two children of an ill missionary pilot who could no longer fly alone due to a heart attack. Edna taught the seventeen-year-old girl and twenty-year-old boy to fly a Cessna 172 to enable them to carry on the work with Medical Mission and Supply at Cat Island, Bahamas, 122 miles southeast of Nassau. She currently gives flight instruction time to deserving young boys and girls.

By the mid-30s, Edna Gardner was one of the three women fliers to gain recognition in "American Women", and "Who's Who" reference book of outstanding women in America, the other two being Amelia Earhart and Helen Richey. At present, she is a member of Silver Wings, OX-5 Club of America, AOPA, Women's National Aeronautical Association, Pioneer Pilots, Professional Race Pilots' Association and the Ninety-Nines. She served as fourteenth International President of the Ninety-Nines, Inc., 1955-57.

She is presently graciously giving her time and talents in speaking engagements to numerous clubs and organizations, encouraging interest in women's participation, and expounding their history since 1883 when they first began to fly in France, in all phases of aviation. Her enthusiasm is admired by everyone.

Although a speedster around the pylons and on the cross-country dashes, Edna has a far different concept of speed when it comes to automobiles, for she considers them much more dangerous. She admits to being a little afraid of them and slows the driver down to 50 mph. Stopped at a red light recently, she was hit from the rear and suffered a whip lashed neck, however, there is no end to her vitality. Her latest interest is the building and flying of a midget biplane and organizing a group of women pilots with a similar desire, intent on more competitive racing in another category, supplementing the stock plane class. With the advent of co-ed racing, Edna plans to be in there doing her best, anxious to win but always a sports flier first.

Edna is a firm believer in never looking back but living for the present and the future. Juan Ponce de Leon sought the Fountain of Youth - Edna Gardner Whyte has found it - in the wide blue yonder, and she is a legend in her own time.

References:
Correspondence with Edna Gardner Whyte
IAR, AWTAR and Skylady Programs
Ninety-Nines News
Women With Wings - Planck
Women in Aeronautics - May
Of Monocoupes And Men - Underwood
Racing Planes, Vol. IV and V - Kinert
Aviation photographer Ted Koston of Chicago attended the Antique Airplane Association's annual fly-in at Blakesburg, Iowa and spent a couple of days snapping pictures for the Vintage Airplane.

Oshkosh 1973's Antique Grand Champion Alexander Eaglerock was also declared the '73 AAA Grand Champion. The runner-up or Sweepstakes Award was won by Jack Greiner of Boulder, Colorado for his beautiful 1929 Stearman C3R.

Our congratulations to Eaglerock owners Ormand/Brouse/Boren, Jack Greiner and other award winners... and to Ted Koston for still another batch of beautiful camera and darkroom work.

Right. Antique Airfield at Blakesburg, Iowa and the 1973 Fly-In. Buildings house Airpower Museum and AAA Headquarters. Grass runway is just off the left of the picture.


Right. Mickey Hardin's sharp Aeronca C-3. She flew it in from Justin, Texas. That's Buck Hilbert's Razorback just down the line.

Below. Tom Eanes of Grand Prairie, Texas owns this big red Travel Air 4000 — converted to a 300 Lycoming.
This 1935 Taylor Cub E-2 is the pride and joy of Bob Whittier (EAA 1235) of Duxbury, Mass. Bob found it languishing on Cape Cod in 1962, got it going for a year in 1964, put it in storage due to pressure of work, got it going again in 1972, and in the past year has taken it to several New England Fly-Ins. Color scheme is a very attractive Diana Cream and red. The 40 h.p. Continental engine turns a one-bladed “Everel” propeller which was marketed briefly in 1937; as far as Bob knows, it is the only such prop still flying. This ship is N-15009 and in its earlier silver and maroon color scheme is pictured in the E-2 Cub write-up in Volume 5 of Joseph Juptner’s “U.S. Civil Aircraft.”

**CULVERCADET NEWSLETTER**

For you lovers of the perky little Culver Cadet there is a newsletter published every three months. Back issues are available. For further information, contact Mr. Vic Schroeder, P.O. Box 22125, Dallas, Texas 75222.

**CURTISS ROBIN CLUB**

Likewise, you Curtiss Robin fans will want to join your own Type Club. The Chairman of the Robin group is W.L. Tufts, 4138 Santa Rosa Drive, Moorpark, Calif. 93021.

**BACK ISSUES OF THE VINTAGE AIRPLANE**

Limited numbers of back issues of THE VINTAGE AIRPLANE are available at .50¢ (up a dime due to postal increases) each. Copies still on hand at EAA Headquarters are:

- December 1972 - SOLD OUT
- January 1973
- February 1973 - SOLD OUT
- March 1973
- April 1973
- May 1973 - SOLD OUT
- June 1973
- July 1973
- August 1973
- September 1973

**CALENDAR OF EVENTS**


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