

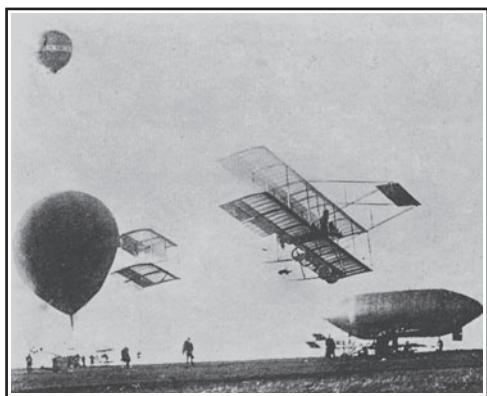
## Special Membership Insert



# Aero Club of Pennsylvania

### What is it?

Organized in December 1909 and chartered on May 13, 1910, the Aero Club of Pennsylvania is the nation's oldest continuously operating aviation club.



SOLVING THE PROBLEM OF THE AIR

### It's Purpose

The Aero Club has a long and proud history. Originally founded in Philadelphia primarily for the purpose of "educating the public on the matters of aeronautics." This goal still remains important as the aero Club sponsors programs throughout the year to help communicate and promote aviation. Such programs are:

- ~ The annual aviation dinner/program to honor the Wright Brother's First Flight.
- ~ The Annual Scholarship Grant Dinner honors several deserving young persons with scholarships to help them pursue a career in aviation.
- ~ Career Day co-sponsored with the FAA to provide opportunities for youth to learn about careers in aviation.
- ~ Seminars co-sponsored with the FAA and other aviation groups to continue pilot education.

### A Brief History

In May, 1910 Henry S. Gratz, First Vice-President, presented the club with his 35,000 cubic foot balloon "Initial", capable of carrying 3 persons.

At the December 17, 1934 First Flight Dinner, the Aero Club sent a telegram to the Wright Brothers, honoring the 31st anniversary of their historic flight.

The Aero Club sponsored the Aero Memorial, dedicated and erected in June 1950, opposite the entrance to the Franklin Institute on Logan Circle. It honors the lost fliers of World Wars I and II.

In 1938, the Aero Club began rewarding scholarships under the auspices of the Hollinshead N. Taylor Memorial Scholarship Fund. The tradition of awarding scholarships to deserving young aviation students endures to the present day.

In 1993, Paul Heintz, Esq. obtained 501(c)(3) status for the Aero Club of Pennsylvania Memorial Scholarship Fund.

### A Testimonial

Aviation enthusiast and board member Lou Fitzpatrick speaks about why he is a member of the Aero Club...

"Several years ago, somebody asked me to join the Aero Club of Pennsylvania. I think the dues were then \$10. I joined because I was asked. As a result, I was rewarded by meeting and becoming friends with some very nice people. That's been great, but after a little thought, I realized that was not the main reason why I continue as a member. I belong to several aviation organizations and subscribe to many aviation magazines. But all that is basically "what's in it for me" kind of thing i.e. become a better pilot, socialize, or get better treatment for my plane or me. Being a member of the Aero Club gives me the opportunity to belong to an organization whose sole purpose is altruistic. For the price of my dues, I help the all-volunteer club pursue its mission, which is to preserve the history of aviation, promote present and future aviation, and to provide scholarships to aspiring pilots. One hundred percent of my dues goes to this effort and for me, that's a small payback for all the enjoyment I've had in this great world of aviation."

### You Too!

You too can become part of the Aero Club's History. You will find an application at the back of this insert.



## The History, Then and Now

On December 17, 1909, the first licensed balloonist in Pennsylvania, Arthur T. Atherholt assembled fourteen citizens of the city of Philadelphia to propose the formation of a new aviation organization. Its purpose was to supervise and encourage the growing interest in aviation in the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania. On January 10, 1910, rules were adopted, officers elected, and Jurisdiction assumed in Pennsylvania through the Aero Club of America. Incorporation was established on May 13, 1910 through the granting of a State Charter. In the same year, four leading balloon groups, the Aero Club of Philadelphia, the Ben Franklin Aeronautical Society, the Aeronautical Recreational Society, and the Ben Franklin Balloon Association, merged with the new organization.

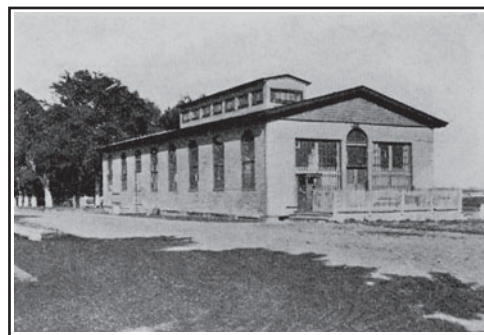
At this time the Aero Club became one of the first chapters of the National Aeronautic Association (NAA) with its "first NAA Flying Unit." The Aero Club's initial club grounds were at Clementon, NJ. There, members developed an airfield in 1910 that had been utilized by the Philadelphia Motordrome Association. A logo was adopted which depicted a witch on a broomstick. This likely came directly from a letter written by Ben Franklin in 1783 to an English friend after seeing the rapid progress of aviation, which said, "...the idea of witches riding thro' the air upon a broomstick, would have appeared...impossible and ridiculous."

The first decade was marked by much activity, predominantly with balloons. In these early years, four members owned aeroplanes, and others were building their own.



BALLOON "PENNSYLVANIA I"

Through the efforts of Henry M. Neety of the Aero Club, the largest aviation show ever held in America opened at the Armory in Philadelphia on November 3-10, 1910. Thirty thousand spectators attended the accompanying Air Show that was held at the Philadelphia Driving Park at Point Breeze RaceTrack. The Aero Club also had a balloon entry in the Gordon Bennet Race of 1910, called the Pennsylvania II.



HANGER AT POINT BREEZE

In 1912, the Aero Club established Eagle Field in the town of Manoa, three miles west of Philadelphia. A concrete block hangar was built from which Grover C. Bergdoll made the first airplane flight from Philadelphia to Atlantic City. By 1915, ten members were pilots. Many noted persons were members in this period including Rodman Wanamaker, Grover and Lewis Bergdoll and Hugh Willoughby who had built several airplanes of his own design. The club was a leader in calling for the enactment of laws and regulations to curb recklessness and incompetence. As early as 1913, the Aero Club submitted a bill to Congress captioned "For the Federal Control of Aviation" and contributed to several other pieces of legislation throughout this period.

Also in this decade, Robert Glendinning and other Aero Club enthusiasts were instrumental in the establishment of a facility to train pilots in the techniques of water operation. This was known as the Philadelphia School of Aviation and was located on the banks of the Delaware River south of the Philadelphia Navy Yard. This Essington Seaplane facility, managed by Frank Mills, was one of four sites when the United entered the World War in 1917. Also during this time, an early Aero Club president, Joseph A. Steinmetz, established the School of Aircraft Building in Philadelphia.

## THE TWENTIES AND THIRTIES

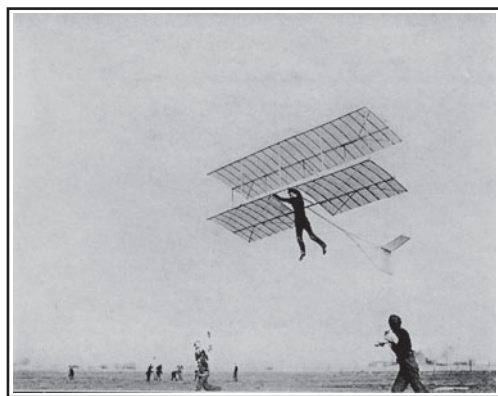
The twenties ushered in increasing activity in aircraft and the club included among its members several aviation businessmen such as W. Wallace Kellett, C. Townsend Ludington and Harold F. Pitcairn. At that time the Aero Club was headquartered at Pitcairn Field at Willow

Grove. It was at this field that the Pitcairn-Cierva autogiro was assembled and test flown. A contributing aerodynamic designer was Ralph H. McLaren, a former Aero Club president.

Members supported the idea of more airport facilities, and later established a clubhouse on the small Municipal Airport in Philadelphia. Aero Club members also developed and managed the Central Airport in Camden, NJ that was dedicated on September 21, 1929. Camden Central Airport would become "Philadelphia's Airport" for over 15 years.

The number of pilots continued to grow. Airlines began operation, autogiros were introduced, and the need for an adequate municipal airport was recognized. At this time, in April 1931, Amelia Earhart set an altitude record of 18,415 feet in a Pitcairn-Cierva autogiro at Willow Grove's Pitcairn Field. The club opened a combined airline ticket office and club room on the street level of the Fidelity Building at Broad and Walnut Streets, which was the first such operation in the city of Philadelphia.

Membership numbered several hundred, with public meetings held to encourage support for better airport facilities. Both the Aero Club and the Aviation Committee of the Philadelphia Chamber of Commerce approached the City of Philadelphia to point out that rapid non-aviation growth would very quickly use up all available space in Philadelphia, leaving none for an expanded airport facility. Philadelphia Municipal Airport, dedicated by Charles A. Lindbergh in October 1937, was regarded as "too small." The Lecture Hall of the Franklin Institute was used for many of the public gatherings that followed. These meetings finally led to a grand affair at the Penn Athletic Club in December 1939. This was the true beginning of tangible progress towards the start of a modern city airport.



*THE JUNIORS AND THEIR GLIDER*

Through the joint efforts of the Aero Club of Pennsylvania, J. Victor Dallin, another early president,

and Alfred L. Wolf, C. Townsend Ludington, the Philadelphia Chamber of Commerce, and others, the Philadelphia International Airport came into being and was dedicated by Mayor Robert E. Lamberton in 1940. The annual tradition of the Aero Club of Pennsylvania honoring the Wright Brothers on the anniversary of their First Flight began with a dinner on December 17, 1934. A telegram complimenting their accomplishments was sent to Orville Wright by the Aero Club on the 31st anniversary of this historic event. Also during this period, in 1938, the Hollinshead N. Taylor Memorial Scholarship Fund was formed. This scholarship was founded by a bequest from the Hollinshead Taylor estate in memory of Mr. Taylor who was president of the club in 1938. It was established to award scholarships to deserving candidates between the ages of 18-22 who lived within a radius of forty miles of Philadelphia's City Hall to further their careers in aviation. The scholarship program still exists and is now known as the Aero Club of Pennsylvania Memorial Scholarship Fund.

#### THE FORTIES, FIFTIES, SIXTIES, AND SEVENTIES

World War II called Aero Club members to serve their country in many different capacities. Flying activities were curtailed and didn't resume until 1949. In June 1960, The Aero Memorial, sculpted by Paul Manship, was dedicated and erected opposite the entrance to the Franklin Institute on Logan Circle. The Aero Club was responsible for this memorial that was initially proposed in 1918 and jointly funded by the Fairmount Park Art Association at a final cost of \$35,000. It honored the lost fliers of World Wars I and II.

After World War II, Philadelphia became the center for rotary wing development through the Piasecki Aircraft Company. Private flying and airline travel began to grow in earnest. Aviation had reached a stage of acceptance and maturity with the general public. The Aero Club's early advocacy role led to this acceptance. During this period, the club began to award scholarships on a regular basis. Between 1962 and 1979, thirty-seven scholarships were awarded. In 1971, the Bob Shannon Memorial Fund was created to award scholarships to candidates between the ages of 16-19 who lived in the Delaware Valley.

Also at this time, local chapters of the Aero Club started in counties surrounding Philadelphia, including the Aero Club of Chester County, Inc. and the Delaware County Aviation Association. Support for regional airports was undertaken, and several major activities were sponsored, such as Sportsmen Pilot Races, Powder Puff Derbies, and Air Shows.

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## THE EIGHTIES AND NINETIES

A concerted effort was undertaken to renew the earlier strength of the Aero Club. The club undertook a new membership campaign and created stronger bonds with other aviation groups, including the Pennsylvania Aviation Council in Harrisburg. A regular newsletter and member discount program was initiated. A newer modern logo was approved and adopted and the by-laws were reformulated and approved reflecting present day Aero Club operations. The scholarship program was restructured and reinstated in 1967 by Paul Heintz, Esquire, as the Aero Club of Pennsylvania Memorial Scholarship Fund.

Additionally, the club sponsored a visit of a B-17 to the Willow Grove Naval Air Station and participated in the 200th anniversary celebration of the First Air Voyage In

America (FAVIA). The club also established an annual Aviation Career Night and Aviation Awareness Day and sponsored numerous FAA Aviation Safety Programs focusing on pilot proficiency.

In 1993, the Aero Club of Pennsylvania Memorial Scholarship Fund received tax exempt status from the IRS. This was done to position the Fund to actively solicit financial contributions for larger future scholarships. With the restructuring of the fund and the tax-exempt status the Aero Club has awarded to date an additional 31 scholarships since 1987.

## ONWARD TO A NEW CENTURY

...with your participation.

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## Join Now!

Enjoy the camaraderie and friendship that is the hallmark of the Pennsylvania Aero Club, the nation's oldest organization fostering aviation awareness for it's members and the general public. You need not be a pilot to join.

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## What you will receive?

- ~ Quarterly mailing of this Aero Club Newsletter
- ~ Invitation to the Scholarship Dinner in June
- ~ Invitation to the Wright Brother's Dinner in December
- And if you wish...

- ~ Opportunity to serve on the Board of Directors
- ~ Chance to work on the Aero Club Newsletter
- ~ An invitation to bring fresh ideas and enthusiasm to the Aero Club of Pennsylvania in this new century of aviation.

JOIN ONLINE at [www.aeroclubpa.org](http://www.aeroclubpa.org) or

CLIP OR COPY APPLICATION

NAME \_\_\_\_\_

ADDRESS \_\_\_\_\_

CITY \_\_\_\_\_ STATE \_\_\_\_\_ ZIP \_\_\_\_\_

Optional..... AIRCRAFT OWNER? Yes \_\_\_ No \_\_\_ MODEL \_\_\_\_\_

CERTIFICATES/RATINGS \_\_\_\_\_

E-MAIL: \_\_\_\_\_

ENCLOSE A CHECK FOR \$30.00 AND MAIL TO:

**AERO CLUB OF PENNSYLVANIA, 1399 Narcissa Rd, BLUE BELL, PA 19422**