

Reporter Didn't Want Blimp Ride; Winds Up Taking Two on Same Day

By ERNIE HALLIGAN
I didn't really want to fly in a blimp, you understand.

Kid stuff, I was thinking; probably no kick to it. I just happened to be at the Torrance Municipal Airport. I just happened to be standing beside the Goodyear "Enterprise," the only commercially operated blimp in the world with the exception of the "Ranger" in Florida.

And, it was only by coincidence that I met Bill Wilder, one of the pilots who was about to take off.

I was going to ask him if youngsters enjoyed blimp rides, was going to ask him if blimp flying wasn't quite routine.

Wilder told me to climb aboard. I didn't even have a chance to protest; didn't have a chance to ask questions. I admit, though, in fairness to blimp-craft, that I nearly tore my camera in half rushing up the ladder to get into the cab.

Boy, do I get a jolt out of flying. Take-Off
The ground crew adjusted our ballast, we did a little jockeying on the field, then Wilder gunned the motors and we took off.

Wilder, a Redondo Beach resident who has been blimp flying for three years, headed west over Torrance Lake towards the ocean, and our 123,000 cubic feet of helium soon floated us up to the thousand-foot level.

It isn't being on the ground that gets me or being one thousand feet in the air that gets me, it's what happens in between. When an airplane or a blimp heads up I always feel like grabbing hold of something.

On this ride I wished I had made at least a cursory inspection of the struts that hold the cab onto the bag. (Or do the struts hold the bag onto the cab?)

Seaward
At any rate, we flew over the ocean and headed south along the Palos Verdes shoreline towards Long Beach. Wilder explained to me that blimp controls are like airplane controls, the only difference being that the blimp had a three foot hand-wheel on the floor beside the pilot which is used to raise and lower the ship.

The "Enterprise" is 150 feet long, stands 51 feet high on its landing wheel, carries six passengers, and is powered by two 145-horsepower engines mounted on outriggers. It has a cruising speed of 50 m.p.h. and a range of 800 miles.

Aside from the purely factual, it is probably one of the best advertising gimmicks on cards, etc. Mrs. Grace Griffith has classes in artificial flower making. The class is open to the public, and is held from 9 a.m. to 11. Jim Daniels is the host in the evening. So if you are a stranger in our midst or a native, who is lonely and don't know what to do with your time, take a trip to 1318 Cravens Ave. and I know you will return.

On Wednesday evening, 14 friends of Dorothy Hollowell, 4316 W. 230th St., came through the pouring rain, waded through the rising waters to attend a gift and gadget party at her home. The demonstrator was Milly Klein of Santa Monica. After the demonstration, coffee, tea, and cupcakes were served. The next day the area was impassable.

A congregational meeting was held Sunday evening, Jan. 29, at the Seaside Community E. and R. Church, located at Ocean Ave. and 230 St. A number of things were discussed, after which a recording of Christmas music by the choir was played. Coffee and cookies furnished by the consistency were served during the fellowship period that followed.

I guess we can be thankful that we are so lucky to escape a lot of damage from the rains. The only serious damage was when the City workers put up sand bags to force the water in the storm drain at the corner of Susana and Palos Verdes Blvd. The drain became overloaded and backed up in the pipes of the residence at 22621 Susana. Then the workers moved the sand bags to the outside of the sump and put up barriers. They all worked hard out in the rain and we have them to thank.

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the west coast. Who can resist looking at a blimp? And, of course, it has the "night sign" on its side which is composed of hundreds of small incandescent bulbs that spell out a message readable from the ground. The changing copy is controlled by an inch wide tape perforated by standard typewriter keys. If the typist misses a letter the whole world knows about it.

Landing
By now we were heading inland over Torrance. We flew north along Pacific Coast Hwy. and began to nose down towards the airport.

Wilder eased the ship to the ground and the wheel bumped along over the soft dirt runway. Blimps don't need asphalt for landing.

Two men in the ground crew grabbed the nose ropes and others pushed against the cab to slow it down, and the flight was over.

I thanked Wilder and climbed out of the cab. He leaned out the window as I was walking away and said, "Did you get all the pictures you will need?" I said, "Well...." A few minutes later I made the same flight again.



LINK FLYERS... Civil Air Patrol Cadets, left to right, Perri Fitch, Pat Kamfonik and Anita Wood, view the Navy Link Trainer set up at Torrance Municipal Airport as part of the Ninety Nines Club flight safety clinic program held last Saturday. The girls are looking forward to the day when they can fly alone.

Women Flyers Sponsor Clinic

Flyers by the hundreds descended on Torrance Municipal Airport Saturday for the Flight Safety Clinic Program sponsored by the Long Beach Chapter of the Ninety Nines Club.

Purpose of the program was to brush up flying techniques for pilots and to discuss a series of subjects ranging from weather problems to radio usage and light plane traffic problems.

Mrs. Lris Critchell, chapter chairman of the Ninety Nines Club, explained that the organization is composed entirely of women flyers, 25 in the local chapter and 1300 throughout the nation.

2000 Invited
The club issued more than 2000 invitations to the Saturday meet and authorities from the Civil Aeronautics Administration and the Los Angeles Airport were on hand to instruct classes.

Councilman Willys G. Blount and other civic officials from Torrance were present and a Link Trainer from the Los Alamitos Naval Air Station was set up at the Vegas Air-

way hangar for simulated flight testing. Many of the visitors flew their own planes to the meeting and pilots who drove to the airport were given a chance to rent aircraft at reduced rates.

According to Mrs. Betty Lourek, publicity chairman of the Ninety Nines Club, the group was organized in 1925 by Amelia Earhart. It was named for the number of charter members.

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TAKEOFF... Heading skyward is the Goodyear blimp, "Enterprise," one of the world's two commercially operated blimps. The ship is based at Torrance Municipal Airport, is 150 feet long, and contains 123,000 cubic feet of helium. Top speed is 62 m.p.h.



IN FLIGHT... Veteran pilot, Bill Wilder, checks controls of the Goodyear blimp, "Enterprise," while flying over Torrance. The ship recently returned from a flight to Arizona and is now moored at its home base, Torrance Municipal Airport. "Blimp flying is almost entirely safe," says Wilder, "but sometimes a motor conks out and we have to land on one engine—we have our troubles."

WEST SEPULVEDA

Twelve Girls Celebrate Twelfth Birthday at Slumber(less) Party

By VIOLA KLUG
FL. 5-5928
A meeting of block tenants for the Mothers' March, Tuesday evening, Jan. 31, was held at the home of Capt. Pat Drumright, 5313 Sharynne Lane, Wednesday, Jan. 25. Last-minute instructions were given, and then coffee and almond crescents were served. Present were Mrs. Martha Kolbeck, Viola Klug, Doreen Stevenson, Madge Graham, Jean Daniels, and Marge Miller.

Judy Lynn Scott, 5614 Clear-site St., was 6 years old Jan. 25, and celebrated with a birthday party Saturday, Jan. 21. Present were Nancy Scott, Cheryl Livingston, Grace, Barbara, Yvonne, Christine and one lone male, Kenny Hoyt.

Cheryl was the victor in putting the most clothespins in a milk bottle. She also won in pinning the tail on the donkey. Then the youngsters were all blindfolded and their shoes put in a heap. Barbara found hers first, after which they had circus cake and ice cream. The decorations were red and white.

Joan Terry, 3421 W. 229th St., held a slumber party for 12 of her girl friends in honor of her 12th birthday. They came for dinner and found the table decorated in pink and white. Desert was birthday cake and ice cream sundaes. The evening was spent in dancing. Then they retired and had a good gab fest that lasted until 3 a.m. They slept until 6 a.m. when they arose and finished the celebration. There's no doubt about their having a good time.

Now that the polio drive is over, it is time to think of the Girl Scout Cookie Sale, which takes place Feb. 17 to the 25. Mrs. Edith Perkins, 5331 Linda Drive, is chairman for Seaside and Walteria. The kick-off will be a Cookie-Rama Feb. 5 at the Civic Auditorium in Torrance, exhibiting at 1:30 with movies and exhibits until 2:30. From 2:30 until 4 there will be a show. Among

those taking part will be Brownie Troop 1662 meeting at Seaside School, with Marion Terry as leader. These Brownies will put on "The Brownie Story." Taking part will be Lynn Carpenter, Marcia Binford, Susan Aidred, Barbara Yackie, and Linda Gunn. The prologue will be by Georgiana Kirkpatrick.

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