

May 2016

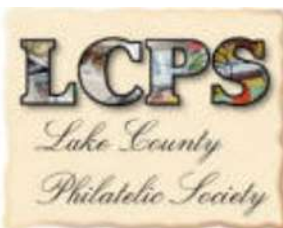
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Newsletter of the Lake County (IL)

Philatelic Society - Established 1933

Website: LCPSHOME.ORG

Perforations



Last month's meeting (in the small "C" meeting room) saw a very interesting discussion of on-line auction sites – primarily **ebay**.

Our "sellers" made note that over the years fee's have grown to about 40% with a very much a "seller-be-wary" as the commerce rules have evolved into a very buyer friendly environment.

This month we will discuss the **Compex 2016 Stamp** show (the second largest in Chicagoland) held at the Forest View Education Center (2121 S Goebbert Rd Arlington Heights, IL) this past weekend (*May 20, 21 and 22 – you may still have time to go since you should get this newsletter by the 20th*).



Before or after the "joke" – you be the judge.



We continue from last month - While Major Fleet was working feverishly on organizing the first nations scheduled Air Mail flight, the Post Office Department continued its publicity campaign with notices/displays in the nations post offices and stories in the major newspapers across the land – 72 hours and counting down until the day before the "Event".

May 14 - "Test" Flights. Webb would leave Belmont Park at 1130 on the 14th and fly the New York mail to Philadelphia; Edgerton would then fly Webb's mail pouch and the Philadelphia mail from there to Washington. When Boyle arrived at Bustleton from Washington, Culver would take the Philadelphia mail, along with the pouches that Boyle would bring from Washington, to Belmont. From then on, these four pilots, plus Bonsal and Miller, would make all the trips during the experiment.



Maj. Ruben Fleet Waiting for Lt.

Boyle 1918 May 15.

Treasures' Report: Total – \$ 3,344.39

Local
Stamp
Shows

Compex 2016

Forest View Education Center
2121 S Goebbert Rd
Arlington Heights IL
May 20-22

MSDA MILWAUKEE SHOW

Crowne Plaza Milwaukee Airport
6401 South 13th St
Milwaukee WI
June 25 and 26



MSDA STAMP SHOW

Country Inn and Suites
600 Milwaukee Ave
Prospect Heights IL
July 9 and 10



MSDA STAMP SHOW

Lindner Conf Center
610 E. Butterfield Rd.,
Lombard IL
September 10 and 11



Next meeting:

7-PM on Tuesday, 24 May 2016
at the Grayslake Library
100 Library Lane - Grayslake, IL 60030



Officers:

Dr Tom Willer – President
Bill Schultz – Vice President
Dave Sadler – Secretary
Ed Pieklo – Treasurer

Fleet's best-laid plans went SOUTH from the start. He took off from Belmont in the late afternoon of May 14 for the 90-mile flight to Philadelphia in thick haze and fog, followed by Edgerton and Culver in their faster JN-4Hs.

Fleet described the flight: *'I climbed through the fog and came out at 11,000 feet, almost the ceiling of the plane. I flew south guided only by magnetic compass and the sun until I ran out of gas and the engine quit. Since we didn't have 'chutes in those days, there was nothing I could do but ride the Jenny down. I broke out of the clouds at about 3,000 feet over lush farmland, so I just picked out a nice pasture and landed. A surprised farmer sold me a five-gallon can of tractor gas but I had trouble getting it in the tank without a funnel. Perhaps three gallons got in the tank and the rest all over me, but darkness was coming and I couldn't wait to get more from town. I asked him to point out the direction Philadelphia was and took off. Two miles from Bustleton Field I ran out of gas again and landed in a meadow. Since no telephone was available, I persuaded a farmer to drive me to Bustleton Field. Culver and Edgerton had just arrived after similar experiences, so I sent Culver with aviation gasoline to get my plane and fly it in.'*

'There were so many things wrong with our planes and their engines that we worked all night to get them in safe flying condition. For example, one gas tank had a hole in it and we had to plug it up with an ordinary lead pencil. Next morning, one machine was flyable, so at 0840. I took off for Washington, where I landed at 1035 at the [Polo Grounds] in Potomac Park. The ceremony was due to start twenty-five minutes later.'

Administrative matters were left to Captain Benjamin B. Lipsner. He was waiting nervously at Potomac Park, wondering if he had taken care of all the necessary details. Although not a pilot himself, he knew he would be criticized if anything went wrong with the arrangements, especially since President and Mrs. Woodrow Wilson and many other VIPs, such as members of Congress, Secretary of the Navy Josephus Daniels and his assistant, Franklin D. Roosevelt, had been invited to witness the takeoff of **'the first plane in history to carry mail at an announced time to and from designated places on a regular schedule irrespective of weather.'**

Lipsner was greatly relieved when Fleet circled the field, squeaked his way among the trees and landed. Lipsner asked him if Boyle did not show up, would he take the first run. Fleet said he would — but Boyle (accompanied by his fiancée, who was holding an armful of roses) arrived at that moment. Producing a road map he had strapped to his thigh, Fleet instructed Boyle to follow the railroad tracks northward out of Washington's Union Station all the way to Philadelphia ...

As they were talking, a long line of shiny black cars chugged into the entrance to the Polo Grounds while Army guards held back a cheering crowd. Secret Service agents surrounded President and Mrs. Wilson as they stepped down from the lead car, smiling. The president's left hand was bandaged because of a burn he had suffered from having inadvertently touched a hot cannon the day before at a military ceremony.



The President, Mrs. Wilson & the letter



Assorted VIPs

As the president shook hands with the two pilots, a siren blared across the field and a motorcycle escort sped ahead of a mail truck. The truck parked nearby, and four mail bags were unloaded that contained 3,300 letters and weighed 140 pounds. Merrill Chance, the Washington postmaster, held one of the bags open and President Wilson dropped in a letter addressed to Postmaster Thomas G. Patten in New York City. The president had written his name at the top of the envelope above the fresh cancellation of a new airmail stamp that had just been released. Six ranking Post Office officials also placed their initials on the white selvage attached to the stamp. Postmaster General Albert S. Burleson called this the 'first aeroplane stamp to be sold by the department.

Burleson presented Boyle with a bouquet of flowers and presented Fleet with engraved watches for himself and the six pilots. When the bags were placed in the plane, Boyle climbed into the cockpit. **'Switch off'** he shouted to Sergeant E. F. Waters. Waters turned the propeller three times.

'Contact!' Waters yelled, and Boyle replied, **'Contact!'** Boyle turned the switch on and Waters used all his strength to spin the propeller. The engine coughed once and died. Waters tried again, and again, AND AGAIN. Fleet, standing nearby, thought the problem might be the spark plugs. While Sergeant Waters tried to find the problem, Fleet heard the president, visibly annoyed, whisper to Mrs. Wilson, 'We're losing a lot of time here.'

'Sergeant, check the gas tank,' Fleet ordered. Waters climbed up on the plane's wing with a dip stick - **it came out dry.** In the excitement, the formalities and picture taking, everything had been checked but the gas tank — Fleet ordered that the tanks of the other three aircraft parked nearby drained of fuel for Boyle's plane. He also sent a truck to the Navy yard to "borrow" replacement gasoline. Several more cans were filled, and the engine was finally started. Everyone, including the president, smiled with relief.

Lieutenant Boyle taxied out and began the takeoff run. Bumping stiffly on its tail skid at first, the frail machine slowly gathered speed—but it was heading for the trees ...

The crowd gasped and fell silent — at the last second, Boyle eased back on the stick, missing the treetops by about three feet. The crowd breathed a collective sigh of relief, smoozed a bit and departed letting the army to figure out the next step.

Except for the fact that Boyle was 45 minutes late getting off, everything seemed to have gone just as the Post Office Department press releases said it would. While Fleet remained to greet Edgerton on his arrival from Philadelphia, Lipsner returned to his office to find a telephone call waiting from New York. After appropriate ceremonies there, Lieutenant Webb had departed Belmont on schedule, carrying mail from New York.

We'll continue next month, following our politically appointed pilot's (Lt Boyle) short 128-mile flight to Philadelphia (or somewhere in that general direction).

