

WEST VALLEY FLYING CLUB

FLIGHT PATH

JANUARY, 2018



REMEMBER THE GOOD OLD DAYS

Before the present day Glendale Municipal Airport existed, at the end of World War II, numerous small airports served the flying needs of the West Phoenix area. Airports that existed in the forties, fifties, and sixties included Airhaven, Paradise, Fram, and Litchfield Park, plus an assortment of dirt strips used primarily for agricultural operations. Those were interesting days for an aircraft photographer like me, as I could regularly see and photograph numerous crop dusters and

sprayers, and military surplus planes straight from Davis Monthan AFB and Litchfield Park NAF, which were the aircraft storage facilities for the entire nation. I managed to get into both of those bases to photograph airplanes, and, of course, the usual lightplanes and corporate types at the local airports.

The airport in the photo above, which I took in about 1980, was originally built in 1955, and it was known as the Isbell Construction Company Airport. The runway ran north and south, was dirt surfaced, and was 2400 feet in length, running almost to the edges of Grand Ave. and Olive Ave. One firm that began operations there was Desert Helicopters, Inc. who among other types, operated several USAF surplus Kamen HH-43 multirotor helicopters for agricultural use. In addition, the strip was used occasionally by Marsh Aviation, whose Stearmans and N3N's were a common sight throughout the Valley. On the sectional charts, the airport was listed as "for private use only".

In 1960 and 1961, Paradise Airport, located at Grand Ave. and Indian School Rd., and Airhaven Airport, on 19th Ave. and Peoria Ave, were closed down for property development, and the Isbell Field became available for general aviation use. The City of Glendale took over operations in 1970, labeling it a city municipal airport. This meant that Glendale would use taxpayer funds to maintain and improve the airport. The name of the airport was also changed to Glendale Airhaven Municipal Airport, although I always heard it referred to as just Glendale Airport. One new hangar was immediately built, and the runway was paved. The ramp was immediately east of the north-south runway, and aircraft were stored in open tiedowns. The photo above shows a total of about 155 airplanes in open tiedowns, including lightplanes, one Stearman biplane, and a few slightly heavier types. For a while it was a pretty busy airport, although it was never equipped with a control tower. There was at least one FBO, and an operation known as Luke Aero Club also rented airplanes there. I rented a Cessna 150 there in 1979, so the "Luke" part of it wasn't absolute, as anyone could rent an airplane there.

In the early 1980's, the City of Glendale planners realized that the airport was becoming overcrowded. In addition, a crash occurred in which a plane taking off hit a truck on Olive Ave., killing both the pilot and the truck driver. That was

probably the catalyst that resulted in the move to the present airport site on Glendale Ave. and Glen Harbor Blvd. The Isbell property was sold for development, although the runway is still there and can be seen from an aircraft flying overhead.

So, that's where we came from. Glendale Airport is now a modern facility with all of the bells and whistles of modern aviation. And we should be thankful for the efforts of the people who created our 'home drome.' Thanks to Ron Chavez for some of the information in this article.



CHRISTMAS PARTY LOTTERY 2017

(Insert Anne's Article)



Bundesarchiv, Bild 102-00778
Foto: o. Ang. 1 Mai 1930



BAKER'S UNUSUAL AIRCRAFT COLUMN

JUNKERS A.50 VH-UCC (1929)

The Junkers A.50 continued a long line of modern all-metal cantilever wing aircraft produced in Germany from the early part of World War I. The armored J.4 monoplane was a very effective close support aircraft and the D.1 single seat fighter was years ahead of its contemporaries in construction techniques, achieving a speed of 128 mph. with a 160 hp. Mercedes water cooled engine. After the war, Germany was restricted to the production and use of civilian aircraft, but Junkers continued building a series of monoplanes with enclosed cabins for passenger comfort, and these were quite successful on the world market. The U.S. Army even bought several. Junkers also built some larger trimotor transports, and the concept and construction techniques were copied by Bill Stout when he designed the Ford trimotor.

The A.50 was intended to be a two place sport plane, and although it was one of the most advanced planes of its day, only 69 were built, as they were expensive to produce. Several variants were made, powered by such engines as the Armstrong Siddeley Genet radial, Walter 59KW, and the Seimens-Halske SH13 radial. A few examples had folding wings. Military examples were flown by the air forces of Argentina, Australia, Bolivia, Brazil, Finland, Nazi Germany, Hungary, Japan, Paraguay, Portugal, South Africa, Sweden, Switzerland, the British Royal Air Force, and Uruguay. From the small number produced, it can be assumed that many of these were bought for demonstration and testing purposes.

My experience with the Junkers A.50 came in 1962, when I was in Australia. Having heard about the plane from other enthusiasts, I drove out to Lower Portland, NSW, near Sydney, where a farmer had one for sale. He had his plane on his farm, where he had a nice airstrip, but the "friendly" government decided to run two power lines across his runway, and since he didn't have another place to keep it, he offered it to me for the US equivalent of \$1500. Of course, I didn't have that kind of money at the time, and it would have cost at least as much to

ship it back to the States, so I had to make do with having him roll it out of the hangar, unfold the wings, and let me photograph it from all angles, as it was a very rare aircraft. I understand that the airplane has somehow survived, and is now on display in an Australian aviation museum. At least it has survived. Too many of those old classic planes didn't. I hate to think of all the fun I missed out on by not being able to fly it to Casa Grande or Oshkosh.

2018 FLYOUT SCHEDULE

Valle (40G)	1/6	800 635-9203	Grand Canyon Inn
Ciriaco Summit (L77)	1/20	760-227-3227	Coffee Shop
Havasu City (KHII)	2/3	928-846-4447	Hangar Brewery-Grill
Globe (P13)	2/17	923-475-7800	Apache Gold C asino
Ryan (KRYN)	3/3	620-444-7467	Richies
Marana (KAVQ)	3/17	520-682-3046	Sky Rider Coffee Shop
Parker (P20)	3/31	928-669-2168	Tx to Casino
Sedona (KSEZ)	4/14	928-282-2400	Mesa Grill

NOTE FROM THE EDITOR

We can always use information and stories to pass on to the club membership. If you have any stories of interest to the club members, do not hesitate to send them to me at [aeronut43b@cox.net](mailto: aeronut43b@cox.net). Don't worry about writing ability, as I'll clean up anything you send. Send me an email if you have any questions. Have a Happy New Year.