

# Turners Falls Airport




ED GREGORY

Chronologically ordered accounts remembering the


## Turners Falls Airport


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ED GREGORY

May, 2024

This digital version is wholly searchable via your computer PDF application.  
No Table of Contents or Index is offered.

This record offers a spacious look at activities related to the **Turners Falls Airport** from  
its emergent years, to its inception as a Town of Montague asset entity, to relatively current  
accounts.





Google Earth (abstract) 5.15.24  
View to the North.

May 3, 1929 **The Northfield Press**

Northfield MA Press 1929-1930 00030.pdf

### TURNERS FALLS—[Franklin County Air Carnival Next Week](#)

The Franklin County Air carnival will be held on May 9, 10 11, 12, at the White Coal farm, on grounds which are now being prepared for the event. The object of the carnival will be to secure funds with which to survey all possible landing sites on Montague Plains, which might be developed into an airport. When the survey is completed it is expected that experts from the Department of Commerce aviation division, will assist in selecting the best site.

It is planned to have five planes here for the carnival, and a program of passenger and stunt flights is being arranged. An aviation ball is to be held during the carnival period, and it is expected that the committee in charge will make it a real event.

The membership of the committees was selected last evening, Committees are: General committee, Abram Roseberry, chairman; vice-chairman George Starbuck; secretary, John A. Taggart; treasurer, C.W. Higinbotham; Jerome J. Shea, Raymond H. Gould, Paul Shumway, Fred C. Haigis, Austin Lawrence, C. W. Schuler, Albert P. Blynn, E. E. Buckmaster, and George Hoyle. The committee on the aviation ball will be Dennis J. Shea, Edward North, Michael J. Conway, and William Connors.

The program committee are C.E. Hazelton, T.P. Frawley, Herbert J. Ward and John A. Taggart. For publicity, the committee are W. H. Ray, Jr., Roger T. Lyman, Fred L. Pomeroy, and Lawrence Comins. Grounds and parking, Thomas W. Bean David Kilgore, Michael J. Carroll, Paul Shumway Earl Meckes, and W. J. Callahan. Tickets, Olaf Hoff, Harold Cuff Stuart Winch, Samuel H. Couture, and John J. McLaughlin. Advertising. Jerome J. Shea, Joseph L. Trudel W. H. Croft, N. P. Farwell, D. R. Smith, J. R. Stinchfield and Gottleib Koch.

April 30, 1929

[Greenfield MA Recorder 1929 - 0271.pdf](#)

### [Franklin County Air Carnival May 9, 10, 11, 12](#)

#### [Citizens Committee of Montague Decides to Investigate Possibilities of an Airport](#)

TURNERS FALLS—The Franklin County Air carnival will be held on May 9, 10, 11, 12, according to the decision of the Citizen's Committee of the town of Montague which held at meeting last evening.

The air carnival will be held at the White Coal Farm, on grounds which are now being prepared for the event The object of the carnival will be to secure funds with which to survey all possible landing sites on Montague Plains, which might be developed into an airport. When the survey is completed, it is expected that experts front the Department of Commerce, aviation division, will assist in selecting the best site.

It is planned to have five planes here for the carnival, and a program of passenger and stunt flights is being arranged. As a special feature it is hoped to have a couple married in the air.

An aviation ball is to be held during the carnival period and it is expected that the committee in charge will make it a real event.

The membership of the committee was selected last evening. Committees are: General committee, Abram Roseberry, chairman; vice chairman, George Starbuck; secretary, John A. Taggart; treasurer, C.W. Higginbotham. Jerome J. Shea, Raymond H. Gould, Paul Shumway, Fred C. Haigis, Austin Lawrence, C.W. Schuler, Albert P. Blynn, E.E. Buckmaster, and George Hoyle. The committee on the aviation ball will be Dennis J. Shea, Edward North, Michael J. Conway, and William Connors.

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**May 3**            [Greenfield MA Recorder 1929 - 0412.pdf](#)

### **[Real Estate Transfers](#)**

The Montague Co. Geo. Commeyer lease (4 days) White Coal Farm for air carnival.

**May 4**            [Greenfield MA Recorder 1929 - 0326.pdf](#)

### **[Races Are on Air Program](#)**

Airplane races will have a piece of the program being arranged for the Franklin County Air Carnival the last half of next week. The carnival will be on a site which is part of the White Coal Farm and which is now being prepared for the meet. A large force of men is at work there preparing the grounds.

The landing field will be on a location which was formerly a part of the irrigation tract. The poles and piping are being removed from the east end of the farm, and any irregularities in the land leveled by a road scraper. A tractor is uprooting the poles.

The first of the races is scheduled for Thursday afternoon, and will be for planes of 100 horsepower. This type of plane is the light sport plane with open cock-pit.[sic] Planes qualifying as entries must be stock commercial, three-plane, open cockpit type.

Another race on Friday afternoon, calls for planes of 225 horsepower or under. Prizes will be awarded for both races.

May 10 Greenfield MA Recorder 1929 - 0451.pdf

### Immediate Survey for Airport is Ordered at T. F.

#### Citizens' Committee Acts at Meeting—Name Men to Engage Engineers for Survey

A survey for locations for a Turners Falls airport is to be started almost immediately, according to a decision of the citizens' committee of Montague, which met last evening at the Crocker National bank.

The committee met to hear final reports from all the sub-committees, and to formulate plans for the further activities of the group. The committee will remain in action, with reduced numbers, indefinitely. comprising for the most part members of the general committee, which was in charge of the recent meet, The members who met last night chose two of their number to engage a surveyor for the mapping, of the proposed airport sites. Abram Roseberry, chairman of the general committee and Charles F. Mosher were elected. They will proceed at once with the engaging of a surveyor and the making of the necessary map.

It is proposed to survey two sites, one on the White Coal Farm,<sup>1</sup> the other on the south side of the state highway The White Coal Farm site, it has been learned, can be developed into an airport with the A-I-A rating, given by the government to only a few of the country's airports. This would entail considerable expense There are few places in the United States of similar contour: high, dry, and level, it is said.

Further, it is not necessary to develop an A-I-A airport for many years, according to committee-men, but the community should expend the necessary sum, a small one, to put the field into a condition which would obtain a low government rating.

The White Coal Farm site can be developed into an airport with runways for 4000 feet in any direction without running to the extreme limits of the available space.

The A-I-A airports require runways of about 4000 feet, and in addition the field must have hangars, lighting, and 24-hour attendance. This is not feasible for the local field, at present, but can quickly be developed whenever the need may arise.

All bills against the committee were approved at last evenings meeting and the committee adjourned subject to call of the chairman.

May 10 Greenfield MA Recorder 1929 - 0380.pdf

### —Air Circus Furnishes Many Thrills.

#### Montague Plains is Scene of Extravanzas of Air—Many Are Attracted

MONTAGUE—May10, Lieut. Carl A. Dixon and his Hartford, Conn., flying circus took possession of the Montague Plains demonstration airport yesterday and by showing virtually every trick in the aviator's bag during an aerial program which lasted throughout

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<sup>1</sup> White Coal Farm was an experimental farm built by the Turners Falls Company. It was managed by Fred Perry of Gill, Mass. It was a successful endeavor. Agricultural and hydro-technical knowledge came from its existence.

the afternoon and early evening, began the deliberate task of making Franklin County "air-minded."

Hundreds flocked to the White Goal farm, on the main highway to Millers Falls, where the four-day air carnival is being held, and many soared aloft during the day as passengers in the five stout planes moored there. According to Lieut. Dixon, the hastily prepared field was pronounced wholly suitable for flying by Lieut. Robert O'Brien, state inspector of aviation, who inspected it previous to the carnival opening.



Aviators in charge of planes at Air Carnival at White Coal Farm sponsored by Turners Falls and Turners Falls trade boards.

Spectacular events of the day included the aerial parade to the limits of the county and into Vermont and New Hampshire, an aerial "wedding" which became a burlesque when no couple could be found who would marry in the air, bomb dropping contest, dead-stick landings, a commercial plane race and a parachute drop from altitude of 1200 feet by "Ted" White, Chicopee aerial daredevil.

The most popular ship at the airfield was the Fairchild cabin monoplane which Lieut. Dixon piloted. This plane is the same one in which he flew with Lieut. Chamberlain to the relief of the marooned Bremen flyers at Greenly Island. It has seating capacity for four passengers beside pilot and is powered by a Wright whirlwind motor.

Other pilots and their planes on the flying circus include Lieut. Emerson Carpenter with his Standard, M.I. (Jack) Ayers with his Eaglerock and James Laneri and Albert Burnham, each piloting Challenger planes with the popular Curtis OX-5 motors. All except the Fairchild monoplanes are biplanes of new construction and are equipped with the latest safety devices.

Some time today, Joseph Baltrun of Northampton and Lincoln Smith, Holyoke and Westfield pilot, both flying Alexander Eaglebrook ships, are expected to arrive at the airport to compete in the air races this afternoon.

"Chum Hour" during which one person buys a ticket and his companion rides free, rides for a penny a pound and exhibition stunt flying also were features of the day's full program of events. The parachute leap was made shortly after 6 o'clock and was witnessed by several thousand persons from vantage points near the flying field. This feature will be repeated each night during the air carnival.

### **Pilot Lands at Turners**

Capt. Charles F. Arnold of the 43d division air service flew a Hispano-Sutza motored Waco from New London to Hartford, Conn., and from there to the landing field in Turners Falls, yesterday afternoon. The entire distance, 120 miles, was covered in 40 minutes making the rate of speed approximately 150 miles an hour.

Capt. Arnold, Capt. B.C. McClellen and C.B. Black are here to prepare for a three-day aerial exhibition which will take place Friday, Saturday, and Sunday at the landing field.

The program will include aerial acrobatics, races, exhibitions of forced landings. Parachute jumping by Frank E. Young, regular army jumper of the 43d division air service at Hartford, during the exhibition.

**May 11**      [Greenfield MA Recorder 1929 - 0403.pdf](#)

### **Aviation Ball Held; Free Air Rides are Given**

Second Day of Franklin County Air Carnival—Program Continues today and Tomorrow

An aviation last mat evening brought to a successful close the second day of the Franklin County Air carnival, now in progress at the White Coal Farm, on the road from Turners Falls to Millers Falls.

The ball was a gala occasion, attended by a large number of dancers. The aviators were present as guests of honor.

Boutelle's Boston Serenaders furnished the music, which was of the best. During the evening airplane rides were given away to a number of dancers who held lucky numbers.

Those who won rides were Annie Bocon, Jessie Johnson, Elsie Summers, of Turners Falls. Gordon Willard of Philips Street. Greenfield, and M. J. Conway and Francis Reen, from Turners Falls The holders of the numbers received tickets which are good for rides at any time, before the carnival ends Sunday evening.

Yesterday's program at the flying field did not draw as large a crowd during the early part of the day as on Thursday, but the late afternoon crowd was much larger, and the planes were in the air most of the time.

Severer hundred persons were present to see Ted White make his 149th successful parachute jump at the close of the program. A perfect landing was made on the flying field The previous evening White landed in a tree at the edge of the field the third time in 149 jumps that he missed the field.

Today s program will be the most ambitious of any yet attended, as the fliers plan a full day of special events along with the passenger flying. Another parachute jump will, conclude the day's attractions. Tomorrow's program is unannounced, but will include several special events which will be sure to please the record-breaking throngs expected to be present.

**May 17, 1929** [The Northfield Press](#) [Northfield MA Press 1929-1930 00040.pdf](#)

Several Millers Falls people, among them women, went up in airplanes last week during the air carnival held on the White Coal farm, between this town and Turners Falls.

**July 18** [Greenfield MA Recorder 1929 - 1049.pdf](#)

### [Land For Airport in Turners Falls is Surveyed](#)

#### [Engineer now Engaged in Drawing Maps—Report is Expected Soon](#)

—A tract of land containing four thousand feet square has been surveyed by Thomas W. Bean, for the aviation committee of the Town of Montague, find Mr. Bean is now working on the maps of the tract, preparatory to making his report to Abram Roseberry, the chairman.

The survey which has been going on for about two months, was made at the direction of the committee, to see where the best location for an airport on, Montague plains was Popular opinion settled on the territory about the White Coal farm, and this tract has been surveyed first.

The map being drawn by Mr. Bean will cover the territory from the state road on the south to the river bank on the north, and from a point 1,000 feet west of the White Coal farm building to another point 3,000 feet east of the buildings. Runways for planes could be made about 2,500 feet long, it is thought. This is an ample length for any plane.

The cleared space used now as an airport is about 2,000 feet long east and west, in the direction of prevailing winds, and is about 900 feet in the north and south direction.

Mr. Bean hopes to have the maps completed next week, and to make his report to the committee then.

**Aug. 6** [Greenfield MA Recorder 1929 - 1226.pdf](#)

### [Airport Survey Expected Soon](#)

#### [Meeting Will be Called When Report is Filed](#)

A repeat on the airport survey which has been made by Thomas W. Bean of the Turners Falls Power and Electricity Company is expected to be made this week by Mr. Bean, who has, completed all, the work incident thereto. Mr. Bean is now waiting for photostat copies of the maps he has drawn from the makers in Springfield.

A meeting of the aviation committee will then be called by Abram W. Roseberry, of Millers Falls, its chairman., who is awaiting[sic] word from Mr. Bean that the report is ready.

The survey has been conducted during the past ten weeks by Mr. Bean at the request of the committee, who raised the money for it by the air carnival in May. A tract of land about the White Coal Farm, and including it has been surveyed.

The tract is approximately 4000 feet square according to Mr. Bean, and will make an ideal airport when cleared.

**Aug. 20**      [Greenfield MA Recorder 1929 - 1433.pdf](#)

### [Airport Survey Ready](#)

#### [Will be Made at Supper Meeting Tomorrow Evening](#)

A report of the recent airport survey will be made by Thomas W. Bean, the engineer in charge of the survey, at a supper meeting tomorrow evening. The Citizens' committee which ordered the survey will have a session at the Greenwood Tea Room commencing at six o'clock sharp.

This meeting will be the start, it is hoped, of active plans for the placing of the White Coal farm in condition for government approved airport. No advance intimation of the report has been given, but citizens interested in the matter look for a favorable report.

It is understood that the committee on the survey, composed of Mr. Bean and C.F. Mosher, will present suggestions and figures on cost, and other points applicable to this field, during the course of the meeting.

It was learned this morning that airplanes will be at the temporary airport over the coming Labor Day week end. George Koch, manager of the White Coal farm, has secured Joe Baltrun and two other pilots for the week end. Mr. Koch hopes to have some special attractions arranged for the visitors, but will give no hint as to just what he is planning.

**Aug. 29**      [Greenfield MA Recorder 1929 - 1445.pdf](#)

### [Airport Meeting to be Held Tonight](#)

Plans for the aviation meet here over the week end are progressing under the direction of J. George Hoch, manager of the White Coal Farm. It is now intended to give some entertainment during Monday's flying, and a number of free rides will be given to persons holding lucky numbers.

Increased interest in the local airport is expected to be shown after the report of the survey committee is made at a dinner meeting tonight at the Greenwood Tea Room. Members of the committee are requested by the chairman, Abram Roseberry, to be punctual in arriving at six o'clock this evening; as some must leave early, and it is desired to transact as much business as possible before any leave.

**Aug. 30**      [Greenfield MA Recorder 1929 - 1451.pdf](#)

[Greenfield MA Recorder 1929 - 1458.pdf](#)

### [Vote Formation of \\$50,000 Airport Corporation in Town of Montague](#)

TURNERS FALLS—Immediate formation of a \$50,000 airport corporation was decided upon by the Montague aviation committee at a dinner meeting held last evening at the Greenwood Tea Room at which the report of the survey sub-committee was heard.

Upon a motion of Olaf Hoff, Jr., a committee of three appointed by the general chairman, Abram Roseberry to take the necessary legal steps for forming the corporation. The committee chosen includes C.F. Mosher, Fred C. Haigis and Mr. Roseberry. After

hearing the report, read by John A. Taggart, those present settled down to a discussion of ways and means, of developing the airport project, from financing to conditioning.

The possibilities of the location were soon made evident to all by Mr. Roseberry and C.F. Mosher. Sufficient area is available, it was learned, to develop an airport of the federal A-I-A rating, of which there are but a half dozen today. The lowest of government ratings, D-5-X, the meaning of which is explained in the report, is easily attained, according to the committee, with a minimum expense. State requirements for airports are far below the federal regulations.

Interesting possibilities for future use of the port were brought out by the committee. The apparent need of locating student training schools for flying in isolated fields with a minimum, of traffic was noted, with instances of conditions in Springfield and East Boston cited. The development of the local port for both land and water planes, and the use of the local field by the surrounding towns, were among the, topics discussed.

The 50 acres it is proposed to develop are at present in the ownership of 12 parties, with the Montague, company the largest holder. The land is at present assessed at prices varying from \$1.25 to \$4.50 per acre.

The area to be covered by the runways, is practically level. The north-south strip has a grade which approximates one-Quarter of one per cent. Government regulations allow an average of 2 per cent.

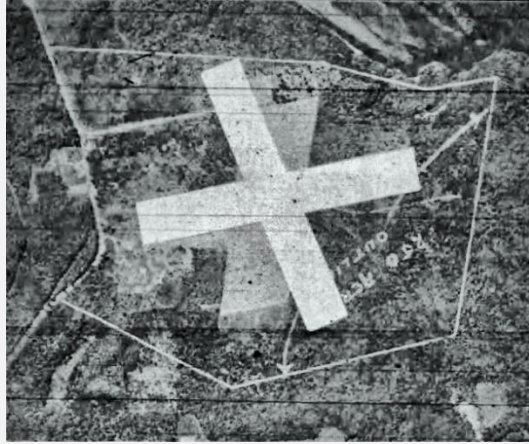
The survey sub-committee's report, given below, was found to be wholly favorable, and last evening's meeting adjourned with each of the 12 men anxious to proceed on the next step. A visit from an inspector of the aeronautics branch of the Department of Commerce is expected next month, to advise the committee.

Those present last evening were: Abram Roseberry, C. F. Mosher, John A. Taggart, C.W. Higginbotham, T.W. Bean, J. J. Shea, O. Hoff. Jr., J. J. McLaughlin, F.L. Pomeroy, R.T. Lyman, W. H. Ray, Jr., and Rev. E.P. Blinn. The committee's report read as follows: "The sub-committee appointed to secure a detailed survey of the proposed airport site engaged Thomas. W. Bean to make the survey and prepare a map.

"This has been done and blueprints-of the map are presented herewith for inspection and comment, together with a bill for the work in the amount of, \$377.30.

"There is shown I white on the map two runways or landing areas approximately 500 feet wide and 3,800 feet long; running east-west and north-south, crossing in the center at approximately 90-degree angles.

"These runway locations are shown tentatively in the manner as indicating the maximum length to be secured within the prescribed area of approximately 250 acres and located so to conform with prevailing winds, most federal requirements, and requiring a minimum amount, of grading.



Runway location overlay.

(Here are inserted details of the contour lines, showing the exact amount of slope on the runways, and. where it is located.)

"The entire area lies between contours 341 and 350 (or only 9 ft feet variation over an area with 3,600 feet diagonals\*).

"This field has been brought to the attention of the Massachusetts Registry of Motor Vehicles and the Aeronautics branch of the Department of Commerce in accordance with attached copies of the correspondence.

"There seems to be no doubt that the surveyed area is acceptable, and can be developed into an airport that will compare favorably with [illegible] in a community of our size and resources, at a modest expenditure provided the land can be secured without too much cost and the prescribed tract will certainly allow of a future development that may at any time seem to be warranted.

"In order to bring this matter to a head for discussion and action, the following plan of organization is proposed,

"To organize an airport corporation under Massachusetts laws, with a capital of \$50,000.

"To secure for the airport corporation all of the land in the indicated areas, paying therefore in stock of the corporation.

"To issue for each sufficient stock of the corporation in clear all of the indicated areas, clear and grade the indicated landing areas, to relocate and alter some or all of the prevent buildings to make them suitable for airport requirements.

"It seems to be quite generally understood that while numerous and adequate airports are essential to development of aerial transport—and if this be true are essential to community development—few, if any airports are at present self-sustaining, whether developed through private capital or as municipal projects.

"It appears probable that if a port is established there will be just about sufficient revenue to pay for upkeep expense, and no more for several years to come, and the land would have to be secured and stock sold on this basis.

"So far as the land owners are concerned, they ought to be willing to accept this proposition and the question is can cash be secured from men with a broad outlook who are willing to dig down in their pockets to further a project that is very likely to prove of lasting benefit to the community and perhaps at some future time may directly or indirectly make a modest return on the investment."

Abram Roseberry, Charles F. Mosher

**Sept. 20**      [Greenfield MA Recorder 1929 - 1683.pdf](#)

### **Planes at Airport Over Week-End**

Several planes are going to be at the White Coal Farm on Sunday, and a large attendance is expected to show that the local airport is being given due support.

Pilots Joseph Bolton and Herman Sweeney of Northampton plan to be at the field ready to take passengers. Pilot Bolton, veteran flier, who has many students of aircraft at his home field, is anxious to give instructions at the White Coal Farm landing field.

September 9, **1930**      [Greenfield MA Recorder 1930 - 0629.pdf](#)

**Shelburne Falls**—Harold Pereault of School Street enjoyed his first airplane ride on Sunday and flew from the Turners Falls airport over the town of Shelburne Falls. As far as to known this to the first time any local person has flown above his home town.

**Oct. 30**      [Greenfield MA Recorder 1930 - 2026.pdf](#)

### **Turners Falls Airport Has Solo Flight by Carlson**

**TURNERS FALLS**—Fred Carbon of Shelburne Falls made his solo flight yesterday and is the first one in Franklin County attempting this feat.

Mr. Carlson is superintendent of the Mayhew Steel Products Company of Shelburne Falls. He stated after making a perfect landing that he intended to use a plane to a certain extent in the business of his company and believes that the time is near when all lines of business of any capacity, will make use of this particular kind of transportation.

Mr. Carlson has had for an instructor, William Rogers, former manager of the Franklin Airport who has been here for the past few weeks, making arrangements for next years' campaign.

**Nov. 1**      [Greenfield MA Recorder 1930 - 2052.pdf](#)

Great Interest is manifested by local friends of P.O. Carlson, an executive of the Mayhew Products Company of Shelburne Falls, over the fact that he made his first solo airplane flight from the Turners Falls Airport. He is the first Franklin County man to attempt this feat and it is believed that Mr. Carlson intends to use a plane in connection with his business for the Mayhew Company.

September 12, **1936**      [Greenfield MA Recorder 1936 - 2516.pdf](#)

### **Flying Activities**

Glenn Parker a licensed transport pilot, has a plane at the Gun Club grounds<sup>2</sup> and will carry passengers today and tomorrow. The usual ride is for ten minutes, but longer

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<sup>2</sup> The "Gun Club" grounds is a 29-acre field owned by the Franklin County League of Sportsmen. Geographically located in Millers Falls, the field is ¾ of a mile east-southeast of the Turners Falls airport just off the Lake Pleasant Road.

flights can be arranged. The ship is a Wasp Stinson, Pratt and Whitney powered cabin plane, a late model. Parker, the pilot, has 2600 hours flying credit.

Interest here in flying has increased in the past few weeks with the purchase recently of a plane by Wilfred Manning. Manning learned to fly at the Turners Falls airport, receiving his lessons from Walter Wilcox of Greenfield.

His plane is a yellow Arrow Sport biplane. Manning has 10 hours flying credit now and is working for the 25 hours needed for an amateur pilot's license. The plane is kept at the airport at the Gun Club grounds.

**Oct. 24** [Greenfield MA Recorder 1936 - 2936.pdf](#)

### [Many Fliers at Turners Falls Airport Expected](#)

#### [Local Pilots Invited to Take Part in Tomorrow's Events](#)

TURNERS FALLS—Besides the scheduled events at the Turners Falls Airport tomorrow afternoon other flyers have been invited to attend the meet, including Don Rood, with his Byrock from Northampton; Bud Drake, local flier with an English plane; Tom Manning with an Arrow sport, from Winchester, N.H., Don Kenney, with a Warner Pottersfield from Millers Falls, and others.

The meet tomorrow, weather permitting, will begin at 2 p. m. and continue through the afternoon. A large crowd today is not expected because of various athletic contests throughout the county.

The parachute jump by William Picune of the Atlantic Airlines outfit, and the stunting of the tri-motor plane by pilot Quentin Cudney will be tomorrow. With these features there also will be an exhibition by Peter Dana, jr., of Holderness, N. H., junior transcontinental record holder, who made his last record early in the summer in 22 hours and six minutes.

Word has not come today if any army, navy or national guard planes would be here today or tomorrow, but officials were expecting to learn definitely today. Selectmen., headed by George Martin, jr., and other town officials and those on the airport project will be present tomorrow.

June 21, **1937** [Greenfield MA Recorder 1937 - 1751.pdf](#)

### [Turners Falls Airport Nearing Completion](#)

TURNERS FALLS—Work on the Franklin County airport is entering the light grading phase on all five runways this week with 70 men being employed, according to John J. Casey, WPA administrator. Work is expected to be completed on the airport within the next three months, he said.

Oct. 25 [Greenfield MA Recorder 1937 - 3108.pdf](#)

### Will Wind Up Franklin Airport

TURNERS FALLS—What may be the last meeting of Franklin Airport, Inc., will be held here Friday night, Nov. 5, at the office of the president. Charles F. Mosher of 1 Avenue A.

Reports of the corporation officers will be heard and action will be taken on dissolution and disposal of assets. The corporation on April 9 voted to deliver to the town of Montague all the corporation real estate under eminent domain proceedings. This has been done and the corporation has received \$2150, appropriated at a special town meeting last year. It was voted then to name the port the Turners Falls airport.

The old corporation owned 113 acres, improved for the use of the airport in recent years. Originally the shares of the company were sold at \$10. When liquidated, the holders will receive approximately \$1.40 a share. Most of them had expected little profit but were willing to invest money in the enterprise to aid the town. With improvements made by the corporation and under WPA, it is said that only two others, the Boston airport and the Westfield airport, are larger. Work is still going on at the ground with fine grading and seeding being done. There about 60 men employed and final work on the project may not be completed.

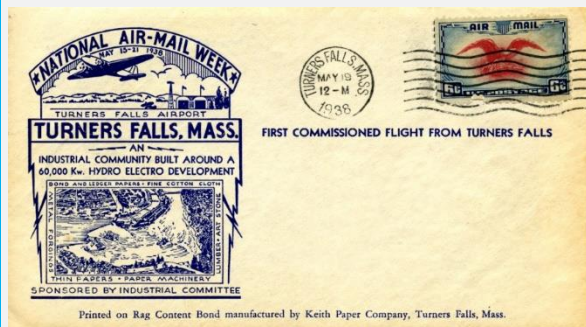
May 12, 1938 [Greenfield MA Recorder 1938 - 2306.pdf](#)

### Air Mail Week Plans

A special air mail cachet sponsored by townspeople will be used to stamp all air mail dispatched at the post office during-air mail week. May 13 to 21. A number of cachet impressions are on exhibition at the post-office also a new six cent air mail stamp will be placed on sale, May 18.

Arrangements have been made to connect with special flight from Turners Falls airport on May 19 and all air mail received on that date before 10:45 a.m. can be dispatched by plane from Turners Falls.

Local people sending letters to themselves can address a letter for that special flight, it will go to Boston, be postmarked on back and returned.



June 12, 1939

[Greenfield MA Recorder 1939 - 1659.pdf](#)

[Greenfield MA Recorder 1939 - 1668.pdf](#)

### **Four Greenfield Residents Die as Plane Plows into Earth During Pleasure Hop Wing Appeared to Sheer[sic] Off 1500 Feet Above Plains**

Four Greenfield young people plunged to instant death in Franklin county's worst air crash at 2:50 p.m. yesterday. A wing sheered[sic] off their biplane in midair sending the ship into a fatal tailspin.

Defying efforts of the pilot to level off, the plane spun about three times, then plummeted to earth with a terrific impact. The crash was heard more than a mile away.

The four killed were: Lester Hodgen, 31, pilot. Katherine L. Walsh, 27. Donald Drew, 22. Howard Glazier, 30.

Federal and state aeronautics officials were expected to arrive in Turners Falls late this morning, to investigate.

According to nearly 20 eyewitnesses, including a Recorder-Gazette reporter, the accident occurred when a wing apparently sheered off the plane, while the ship was flying at about 1500 feet over the Montague plains near Wunsch's sand bank.

Torn fabric trailed behind like a cloud of black smoke as the ship plummeted to earth. The thud as it struck was heard more than a mile away at Green Pond, where several attending the picnic of the Millers Falls Polish veterans watched the fatal fall.

#### **Driven Six Feet Under**

So great was the impact that the radical motor of the four-place Waco cabin biplane was driven six feet into the soft earth, according to Associate Medical Examiner Dr. William J. Pelletier of Turners Falls. The bodies of Pilot Hodgen and Glazier, who had been sitting in front, were buried in debris four feet below the ground level, he said.

A battered watch found nearby ad stopped at 2;50. Within a half hour, dozens from the airport and nearby Green Pond had gathered at the scene of the crash, about a half mile south of the old County Road connecting Lake Pleasant and Montague Roads, in dense shoulder high scrub.

#### **Sullivan Calls Aid**

James Sullivan of Chapman Street, who works at East Deerfield, was watching the ship. When he saw it fall, obviously crippled, he called the Greenfield police. Desk Officer Rufus H. Lilly notified the fire department's first aid squad.

Chief Herbert R. Ferris and Firemen George Billings and William Merz rushed a pulmotor<sup>3</sup> and first aid equipment, and were among the first to arrive at the scene of the tragedy.

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<sup>3</sup> A respiratory apparatus used for pumping oxygen or air into and out of the lungs.

Close behind came Miss Margaret Sargent of Greenfield, graduate Franklin County Hospital nurse, who had been driving along Main Street when she heard the firemen's siren. At the wreck, she examined bodies not buried in debris, but could find no signs of life.

Police Chief William J. Callahan of Turners Falls called the medical examiner, and notified Inspector Wheaton of the Springfield Registry of Motor Vehicles office, aeronautics division. Beauford R. Dake, manager of the airport, said this morning, officials at Washington had telephoned last night, informing him that inspectors would visit the crash today.

Dr. Pelletier arrived shortly after 4 p.m. His examination showed death due to maceration of bodies as the result of an airplane crash.

### **Many See Wreck**

Despite efforts of Chief Callahan to keep the crowd away while bodies were being removed, many remained.

C. Eugene McCarthy of Greenfield took the bodies to his funeral home, where tentative identifications made at the field were confirmed. Pilot Hodgen was identified by a ring he wore, and was brought to the Hodgen Funeral Home by his father. A.L. Hodgen, with whom he had been associated as an undertaker and embalmer.

Confirming reports of eyewitnesses as to the cause of the crash, sections of a wing were found scattered through the brush nearby. One large piece of fabric was found later at the Turners Falls airport, where it is believed to have been blown by the wind.

### **Debris Scattered**

Forest Warden John Bitzer, who arrived early at the scene and banned smoking due to forest fire danger, found a battered gas tank in the brush about 100 feet from the plane. Nearby, a Recorder-Gazette reporter found a metal aileron in a tree a dozen feet away, a large strip of red wing fabric rippled in the wind, and served as a guidepost for the hundreds who trampled through the brush to see the plane.

With the exception of the tail assembly and some metal parts, the ship was demolished. Today, it stood undisturbed, awaiting official inspection and investigation, a twisted, splintered mass, mute evidence- of Franklin county's most devastating airplane accident.

All through yesterday afternoon and late last night, a steady stream of autos poured in and out of the single lane dirt road, as hundreds sped to the scene.

To those returning around 1 p.m., the wind sock at the Franklin flying field looked like a black flag in the dimming evening light.

### **Identities In Doubt**

Some at the Turners Falls airport who had seen the plane leave shortly after 2:30 p.m., later identified those in the plane. For more than a half hour, it could not be learned

who had been in the ship, except for Pilot Hodgen and Glazier, known to those at the airport. That Drew was also among the victims was established later, when a friend appeared, and reported he had seen him board the plane. Miss Walsh was identified soon after.

John Warren of Hartford, formerly of Riverside, Postmaster Lawrence Quinlan of Northfield, and Walter Wilcox of Greenfield, all aviators, were at the scene within a half hour, and aided those in charge.

As police and firemen started shifting the wreckage to permit Undertaker McCarthy to move the bodies, there was a noticeable hissing. The men jumped back in alarm, but returned when Wilcox informed them that an air booster tank was leaking, but that there was no danger. The hissing continued as the men with grim, set, faces aided McCarthy.

### **Plane Flies Over Dead**

More than 100, including many who had come from Green Pond in swimming shorts, formed a semicircle around the area of about 15 feet cleared by the plane as it fell. Overhead, in the direction of the airport, a monoplane droned.

As airport officials awaited the arrival of authorities today, unofficial reports as to probable cause of the accident were being gathered.

Beauford R. Dake, manager of the Franklin Flying Service and owner of the ship, said he believed neither the pilot or the plane was at fault. He characterized Hodgen as a careful, considerate pilot, who had been flying for four years, and who held a limited commercial license. As business had been brisk at the airport, Pilot Hodgen had offered to take up passengers.

The ship had been tested Saturday night and was then in good condition, Drake reported. He said it had been received at the airport on May 15, and had been licensed by civil aeronautics authorities on May 4. It was a four-seater cabin Waco biplane, and weighed about 2700 pounds.

### **Avoided Fire**

Fliers at the airport believed one of the passengers might have lurched into the controls as the ship banked, and sent the airplane into the fatal dive.

They said the pilot undoubtedly attempted to right the ship, and being unable to shut off the ignition, in anticipation of the crash. This prevented the plane from, bursting into flames. The effect of the crash on the future of aviation in Franklin County remained undetermined today, although Dake said he plans to call a meeting of the Franklin flying Club, of which Hodgen was president, to determine whether to continue operating the Franklin Flying Service, maintained by the club, which now has three planes.

Mrs. Dake was reported to have said this morning that her husband was positively going to quit flying. Drake had no comment to make, but said he would issue a statement following the meeting, expected to be called some time[sic] this week.

The three ships operated by the Franklin Flying Service now at the airport include a Great Lakes trainer, a Cub, and an Aeronea. Dake was planning to erect a hangar soon, the former hangar, and six planes having been demolished in the hurricane last September.

Early last April, Lester Hodgen had constructed a hurricane-proof hangar on a plot of land near the airport which his father purchased, the previous fall. About three weeks ago he purchased a new Taylor-craft two-seater training ship.

Col. C. E. Hodge of Boston, state supervisor of aviation; G. M. Jones of Boston, inspector for the civil aeronautics' authority; and W. E. Heaton of Springfield, airplane inspector for the registry of motor vehicles, arrived by plane at the Turners Falls airport about 9 a.m. today and spent the morning investigating.

At 1:30 p. m. today it was learned they had unofficially determined it was the left upper wing which fell from the plane. They were continuing search for other parts of the wings.

One official reported finding a girl's wrist watch, badly battered. Other officials were expected later this afternoon.

**Aug. 13**

[Greenfield MA Recorder 1939 - 2285.pdf](#)

### **Continue Building at Turners Falls Airport**

TURNERS FALLS—An administration building, equipped with public address system, has been erected at the airport, the Whitman-Shaw flying service announced today. Framework for the 10-place 30x80 foot hangar is erected, and additional work will be done this week.

**July 17, 1940**

[Greenfield MA Recorder 1940 - 2169.pdf](#)

### **Turners Falls Airport Opened 11 Years Ago**

TURNERS FALLS—The Turners Falls airport will be 11 years old Friday. Founded on the former White Coal farm owned by George Koch on July 19, 1929, the port has grown to 185 acres with three

The airport was incorporated with Charles Mosher, Albert R. Smith, and Walter Cassidy & original officers but the corporation was dissolved a few years ago.

The field is now-run under the management of Pete Whitman and Steve Shaw, who conduct a flying school and commercial flying.

**June 12, 1941**

[Greenfield MA Recorder 1941 - 0794.pdf](#)

TURNERS FALLS—Cabin plane service enabling connections with airlines to the south and west will be started soon at the Turners Falls airport. The craft, a four-place Stinson with a cruising speed of 125 miles an hour, has been purchased by Hood Aircraft sales. It will be chartered for special trips or to connect with the American airlines at Barnes airport, Westfield.

Greenfield MA Recorder Gazette 1942 - 0552.pdf

## **Aviation Slow to Develop Here Despite Federal Government Aid**

### **Turners Falls Airport Enjoys Several Brief Booms in 12 Years History; Helps Train For Army**

Within a mile of the Connecticut river, whose waters once carried the commerce of this area, stands today the Montague airport which future historians may hail as the first permanent home of the airplane-vehicle which has opened new vistas in the transportation field.

The sandy Montague plains, across which have rolled the rude ox carts of the early settlers, the rumbling stages of the revolutionary and civil war days, the electric car of the Gay Nineties and the automobile of today, have become synonymous with air development within the past decade and may yet become a minor defense base should military men say the word.

Aviation's history is all too brief to be treated with authority. Like a small boy's autobiography, any story on air development in Franklin County may be regarded with tolerant amusement for the tale has only begun.

The county, like other semi-rural sections, had its share of barnstorming veterans of World war I, unable to settle down to prosaic life after the thrills of air combat who bought their Army "crates" for a song and with more daring than sense dropped in on many a local hayfield to take the brave and the curious aloft.

#### **Fall in Meadows**

In the early '20s these nomadic airmen often dropped out of the skies and landed in the Greenfield meadows, where they charged from \$2.50 to \$5 for a 15-minute spin over the town at what is now considered dangerously low altitudes. More planes marked their final days in these self-same meadows than left to continue their way, but it was more often the fault of airmen with planes ready to fall apart rather than of the landing fields.

Prior to that the most notable excursion into, aviation here was that of an itinerant airman, Charles F. Willard, who on an August 1910 week-end conducted a series of flights from Rock Dam in Montague. The Greenfield military band was on hand with about 5,000 spectators, on the Sunday afternoon, the records show also that all of 50 automobiles were at the scene.<sup>4</sup>

The airplane was a crude affair with a total weight of 750 pounds. Top altitude for the occasion was 300 feet while the usual flights were for three minutes and usually covered little more than a mile.

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<sup>4</sup> For detailed information regarding Willard's flights at Rock Dam, visit the Montague Historical Society website and World-Class Database. <https://montaguearchive.org>      [First Altitude Flights 1910 \(montaguearchive.org\)](https://montaguearchive.org)

Deep concern was expressed by one passenger, John A. Taggart of Millers Falls, who weighed about 300 pounds, that the plane might never get off the ground.

### **Want Meadows Port**

The civic pride of Greenfield was deeply stirred in the late 20s by the airports mushrooming throughout the county in small towns and cities. The 1928 town meeting appropriated a committee to investigate possibilities of a port and the committee, remembered the early spectacular flight in the Greenfield meadows settled on that area as best suited.

That opinion was backed by both state and federal aviation authorities and the 1929 town meeting voted their proposals be enacted and that \$40,000 be made available. However, the matter was later the subject of a referendum and the town rejected the proposal.

If there was to be no civic field, then Greenfield was bound to have some sort of airport and one it did have, for in 1930 Clifton H. Daniels of Hartford, Conn., purchased the so-called old Isaac Snow place on the Bernardston Road and turned this flat meadowland east of the Boston and Maine Railroad into a landing field. The house itself, facing the field, was briefly an inn and later became Daniel's home.

By May, 1931, three planes were based at the airport which had received an A-1 rating from the U.S. Department of Commerce department. A hangar erected the previous fall was enlarged with facilities to service planes.

### **First Autogiro<sup>5</sup> Lands**

As an adjunct to the business, Daniels occasionally visited the Whitney farm pasture lands in Ashfield where he took passengers on flights. Considerable attention also was drawn aloft July 31, 1930 when the first autogiro ever to visit Franklin County flew over Greenfield and landed at the Greenfield airport.

The editor of *The Recorder* was among the passengers taken up for brief flights. His open cockpit companion chanced to be a man prominent in the news the day before as result of a police charge but neither referred to that while wedged into the seat.

But the depression struck a fatal blow to the airport on the Bernardston Road by the mid-thirties. Its steel-concrete hanger was gone and plows, rather than an airplane's tailskids were cutting the grassy topsoil.

It was the novelty of the early flights at Rock Dam and later ones by a glider operated by Dana Darling that led to the selection of the present site of the Turners Falls airport in 1930. Secy of State Frederick H. Cook authorized a corporation be formed Feb.

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<sup>5</sup> A form of aircraft with freely rotating horizontal vanes and a propeller. It differs from a helicopter in that the vanes are not powered but rotate in the slipstream propulsion being by a conventional mounted engine.

8, 1930 with a total capitalization, of \$100,000, and with Charles Mosher, Albert R. Smith and Walter S. Cassidy, all of Turners Falls, as incorporators.

### **Buys Plains Farm**

The corporation selected the White Coal Farm, an experimental irrigation employing river water pumped from the river waters far below. The farm, which into financial reversals after the 1929 crash, provided flat lands that had been rolled even natter for agriculture. Stock in the corporation was sold to Montague residents so that land could be purchased and runways started.

By April, 1930 the airport comprised 118 acres, east-west runway had been created and the directors planned a north-south runway. By the following summer, there was a Greenfield Tap and Die corporation hanger, for the Bellanca plane which was used by corporation executives.

That summer, the Reliance Flying service of Watertown, Conn., announced regular passenger service between Turners Falls and Springfield and Hertford, Conn., but public reception of the idea was slow and few made use of the service. The organization dropped back to operating planes for joy-riding over surrounding towns for its main income.

The most spectacular event of the field's history occurred in the spring of 1930 when the New Eng land air tour, a promotion stunt for aviation landed its sections, totaling 22 planes there in one of numerous stops in its 1,000-mile swing through the East. Again, the Recorder editor was aboard.

### **Crowds Watch Stunts**

Over the July 4th. holiday, a three-day meet with stunt flying and parachute jumping entertained a crowd estimated at 3,000. The Recorder forerunner of The Recorder Gazette, flew 500 copies of an early Saturday edition to Orange, making the hop in eight minutes, and using the airport as its western terminal. Much comment was raised by a small blimp over the airport forced to stay aloft for several hours because of non-arrival of its portable mooring mast.

The novelty of a county airport dwindled rapidly during the depression but a small corps of aviation lovers kept flying alive. The port was leased the following summer to the Balboni Flying service of Worcester.

Public interest continued to decline so that by 1937, the corporation sold the field, improved by WPA projects and "private enterprise, to the tow of Montague for a sum "not less than \$1,800." At the time of the" corporation's demise there were 145 stockholders.

### **Depression An Aid**

The depression which struck Turners Falls mills during the middle 30s had proved one of the greatest boons to the airport. It brought federal works relief that increased the port's area to 185 acres, allowed three runways and provided roads leading to the landing field.

Before the WPA workmen had finished clearing and grading the land, the port was one of the largest in the state. One of its runways is 3,600 feet and would allow even medium bombers to utilize the field. Many thousands of dollars were poured into the work, large crews of men were given a livelihood.

Interest in flying also was returning and a school sprang up. Both; suffered greatly on June 12, 1939, however, when the county's worst air tragedy cost the lives of four Greenfield young people, Including Pilot Lester Hodgen who had been a leader in promoting aviation throughout this section. Less than two months later, the port's facilities were transferred to a new group, headed by Pete Whitman and Steve Shaw. In October of the same year, Whitman organized with little fanfare a flying club.

### **CAA Program Helps**

In the ensuing year the port struggled on grimly and then in December 1940, fortune smiled on the field for it was decided that to train pilots adequately. The Civil Aeronautics Authority would open a school, and highest-ranking students would receive air training free. In the three classes subsequently held were found 23 students worth the federal expenditure of funds to be trained and they learned to fly.

Earlier in the year the airport erected a Lester Hodgen memorial hanger-which was dedicated with fanfare. Dana Darling took a glider to 3,500 feet altitude behind a towing airplane and there were 33 ships on the field at one time.

Shortly before the CAA announced its course, in Oct. 7, 1940 the present manager, Donald Hood and George Galipeau, who had owned a sales agency for planes in Northampton, took over the field and brought their agency with them.

Last spring, for the first time in the history of the port a power plane organization, the New England Collegiate Flying club, held its annual meet at the port.

Note: For the above article. A similar write-up—in part—is shown in this writing on page (?). It appears the author plagiarized a portion of the archetype article (above) to embellish *his* account.

**April 4**

[Greenfield MA Recorder Gazette 1942 - 1017.pdf](#)

### **60 Students in New School at T.F. Airport**

Blue and yellow planes doing loop-the-loops and barrel-rolls over the next week should provoke no machine-gun fire from the farmers.

These colors distinguish the acrobatic fliers of the government approved advanced flying school which at the Turners Falls airport.

Dr. and Mrs. Joseph Levy, who have conducted the Bridgeport, Con., Flying Services, Inc., in that city since 1936, have transferred their school here. The school comprises about 60 students, 12 instructors four mechanics and several in that office. The Bridgeport airfield is owned by the city.

The school trains pilots under the civilian pilot-training program backed by the War Department. Dr. Levy said today, and prepares students for service in the armed flight forces. It has 17 planes for its four courses—elementary, and acrobatic or advanced, cross-country and instructor training.

Upon completion of these four courses students have the choice of three professions—instructor in the program, training at an instrument school in order to become a ferry pilot for the army, or a position as flight officer for the Northeast Airlines in Boston.

Students taking the civilian pilot training program must choose one of these three or be referred to their draft board for regular army service. The federal sponsored program demands a written agreement to this from each student taking the courses. More than 200 of the 250 students he [Levy] has trained under this program are now with the armed forces.

The 60 students at the school are from 18 to 26, include 10 in the elementary course from Amherst College, 20 from New Haven State Teachers' college, 10 from Stratford, Conn., under the sponsorship of the American Legion, and the remaining 20 are graduates of previous courses and were sent for further training by the New York regional office, Levy said.

Flying is limited to a three-mile radius of the airport at present but Levy hopes to have this limit increased for the advanced student. Six planes will be in the air daily he expects. No one may now leave the field for longer flights, Levy said, without permission of the clearance officer.

Since all planes used for the government training program must be under cover when not in use. Levy contemplates adding to the present hangar if permission is granted. The present hangar was dedicated in May, 1940, when Whitman and Shaw were operating the airport Don Hood and George Galipeau of Northampton purchased the airport in October, 1940.

**Sept. 10**      [Greenfield MA Recorder Gazette 1942 - 2545.pdf](#)

### [Explains Turners Airport Program](#)

Training fliers for the army and navy was described to the Rotary club at the Hotel Weldon last night by Dr. Joseph L. Levy of the Turners Falls airport Levy is with the Bridgeport air service that took over the port for training purposes.

Tied in with Amherst college, the school gives the pilots training that includes a ground course, primary, secondary and cross-country courses. Planes are restricted to flight within three miles of the airport because of inability to get maps, he said.

All flights are controlled out of Boston, which is in constant contact with the number of planes in the air out of the Turners Falls airport. Those who fail the air cadet exam, 18 to 26 years of age, and those above to 37 are eligible, the speaker explained.

**Sept. 16** [Greenfield MA Recorder Gazette 1942 - 2606.pdf](#)

### **Talks on Turners Falls Airport**

TURNERS FALLS—Dr. Joseph Levy of the Bridgeport Flying Service, operator of the local airport, talked to the Rotary club last evening on training pilots for the army and navy.

Dr. Levy hopes the army will not take over the field here but pointed out it has the right to do so if necessary. Recently several bombers have landed at the field, carrying up to 21 fully-armed troops each who have deployed into, the woods around the field on maneuvers.

At present there are about 46 planes at the field, about 30 being owned by Dr. Levy and his associates. It takes eight weeks to complete the course, after which the pilots go to various training centers for combat pilots. It is stated that it takes a year and a half to make a pilot at a cost of \$25,000, and two hours of ground school are necessary for every hour in the air.

**Sept. 23** [Greenfield MA Recorder Gazette 1942 - 2670.pdf](#)

**Reference only:** Harry Simons, manager of the flying service at the Turners Falls airport, assisted by Mr. Stern, explained the flier's life to Kiwanis.

**Dec. 31** [Greenfield MA Recorder Gazette 1942 - 3529.pdf](#)

### **Greenfield Girl Flier Mechanic at Army Base**

Miss Betty Grader, daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Baltasar Grader of Silver Street has just completed 14 weeks of basic training in the Woman's Aircraft Maintenance squadron at the Westover sub-depot training school located in Springfield and has been assigned to the engineering department at Bradley field, Windsor Locks, Conn., where she will work as an aviation mechanic.

Miss Grader attended the local schools and was graduated from Greenfield high school in 1936. The first local girl to solo an airplane at the Turners Falls airport, she took an active part in the Eastern Airman's club and Woman's Military Reserve corps and is a member of the civil air patrol.

Before her enlistment she was employed at the main office of the GTD.

October 15, **1943** [Greenfield MA Recorder Gazette 1943 - 2585.pdf](#)

### **Three Local Men Teach Flight to French Cadets**

Greenfield has three civilian instructors to the army air forces flying school at Tuscaloosa, Ala., where they are at present engaged in teaching French cadets from the "army of liberation."

Former manager of the Turners Falls airport, B. R. Dake and two of his former students, William D. Short and E. J. Lockhart, are trying to translate U.S. flying methods into understandable language for the French cadets who know little or no English.

Dake began his flying career in 1930 at Westfield after graduating from the Springfield Technical High School. He managed the affairs of the Turners Falls airport from 1932 to 1939, receiving his commercial pilot's license at the Boston municipal airport in 1934. He reported to Van de Graaff field, where he is since 1942 and is now associate present stationed, in 1942. He rector with headquarters at the married the former Miss Eleanore R. Heyde of Montague.

Short had his first flight instruction at the Turners Falls airport under Dake in 1931 He was instructor himself for civilian pilot training course there in 1940 while connected with the Hood aircraft company. He began work at Van de Graaff field in 1941. He married the former Elsie Daysh of this town.

Lockhart was assigned to Van de Graaff field after graduating from Maxwell field. Ala, central instructor's school in March. His flying career began in 1937 under Dake while he was assistant manager of Boston Mutual life insurance company with offices at Greenfield. In 1942 he devoted his full time to flying, completing the CPT course at Turners Falls and Durkerest[sic] College. His wife is the former Mildred Barton of Gill.

Nov. 10

[Greenfield MA Recorder Gazette 1943 - 2823.pdf](#)

### [Turners Falls Airport Adds Control Tower](#)

TURNERS FALLS—A full program of construction and addition is constantly under way at the airport under the direction of the Bridgeport Flying Service, Inc., with a new modern control tower just completed and work progressing on a new hangar to house 20 planes.

The traffic control tower, erected on top of the main hangar, is an eight-foot square structure about seven feet high and glassed in on all sides. Operated by personnel instructors qualified to handle airway traffic, it will control planes landing and taking off by a system of lights. Manager Leon Simons said yesterday. A loud-speaker system will soon be installed to further facilitate handling of airport traffic.

Tie-downs for anchoring planes by both wings and at the tail now number 39, with more still under construction. These are made of a six foot piece of steel bent in half and imbedded in three or four feet of cement, Simons said, and would prevent any damage to planes such as that caused during the hurricane of 1938.

Business and benefits brought to Turners Falls and Greenfield by the flying school were cited by Simons who stated it had been Dr. Joseph Levy's policy buy all local products insofar as was possible. The food for the field restaurant, The Rudder Bar, is all purchased locally as well as all field equipment that can be obtained. He stated most instructors had bought auto, accident, and health insurance from local concerns.

With over [50] employes. Including instructors, the payroll totals more than \$6,000 every two weeks according to records. Most of the men, many of whom are married, make their homes in Turners Falls and Greenfield.

### **Rated Among the Best**

The flight training school at the Turners Falls airport has been designated by the navy as one of the finest in the first naval district. Lt. Benjamin Fitzgerald, resident naval aviator responsible for the administration of the flight program for the navy, announced yesterday. One of 80 such schools in the country, with five in New England, the local field has one of the largest complements of students in this region, he said.

"This school has been able to perform its contract by finishing each course in time," he stated, explaining the cadets three months' training here as part of a log training program. The students, some of whom have now seen active duty with the fleet and others who have just entered the service, first are assigned to a naval air station for "tarmac" duty in which they perform duties such as washing planes, getting them on to the field, and the like, for a three months' period.

The next step is a similar-length training at Williams, Wesleyan or similar college where they have ground schooling, drills, physical education and general indoctrination, learning how to act as student officers. The third step is to a training school such as this, with the accent on flying, and more ground School and physical training at their barracks at Amherst college. After this those qualified go on to bases such as Chapel Hill, N. C, where they receive physical training exclusively.

### **Chief Pilot Visits**

Albert L. Burnham, former chief, pilot with the Bridgeport Flying service and now supervisor of flight operations with Consolidated Vultec at Elizabeth City division in North Carolina, has been visiting Dr. Joseph Levy and other friends at the airport.

Burnham, who has been flying since he was 18, was the first pilot ever to land at the former White Coal Farm on the Millers Falls Road which later became the Turners Falls airport, he declared yesterday.

The airport personnel will hold a roller-skating party Thursday at 8 p.m. at the Rivervue Rollerway which has been donated for their exclusive use for the evening by George A. Merriam. Refreshments are planned and the committee on arrangements includes Louis E. Conklin, chairman. Miss Margaret Gustavson, Mrs. Mary Whiteman and Mrs. Edythe C. Simons.

The field personnel is contributing 100 per cent to the National War Fund drive now in progress, with their contributions to come under the Turners Falls total quota.

**Dec. 7**      [Greenfield MA Recorder Gazette 1943 - 3075.pdf](#)

### **Stern Joins Staff of Turners Falls Airport**

TURNERS FALLS—Clarence & Stern of Bridgeport. Conn., radio technician and lineman, has been added to the staff of the Bridgeport Flying Service, Inc., at the Turners Falls airport, it was announced by Dr. Joseph L Levy yesterday. Stern comes from a family

of radio and electronic engineers, who conduct a business in Bridgeport, now under government contract.

This brings the number of linemen at the field to four, with supervision of landings, fastening planes securely to tie-downs, field traffic, and work in conjunction with the control tower included among their duties. They help to prevent any accidents which are liable to happen on the ground, he said.

May 30, 1944 [Greenfield MA Recorder Gazette 1944 - 1373.pdf](#)

**TURNERS FALLS**—Dr. Joseph S. Levy, proprietor of the Bridgeport Flying service which operates the Turners Falls airport has been named to the committee of the New England Aviation Trade association.

Sep. 5 [Greenfield MA Recorder Gazette 1944 - 2292.pdf](#)

### Turners Falls Airmen Demonstrate to Many

**TURNERS FALLS**—Over 1,000 Franklin County residents attended a two-day airshow at the Turners Falls airport over the week-end, when exhibitions of formation and stunt-flying were featured. In addition, many county people took their first plane rides, with the youngest passenger a year and a half old.

Acrobatics and stunts were done by Chief Pilot Charles J. Jacobs of Millers Falls, flying a 220 horsepower Waco. He buzzed the field several times. Once the Waco disappeared to the west, flew low up the Connecticut, and came zooming down across the field from behind the crowd, surprising several excited youngsters into shouts.

Three cubs also did exhibition flying, piloted by Harlow F. Smith, Robert S. Decker, and Harold T. Winer, Smith and Decker, former instructors for the Bridgeport Flying service, are now test pilots with the Helicopter company in Bridgeport. Both married local girls when they were stationed here.

On Monday, John Hall and Harold Lumb also did stunt flying. The announcements over the loud speaker, describing the events were made by Dr. Joseph Levy on Sunday, and Manager Leon Simons the following day. A special police officer from Turners Falls was detailed to the field for the holiday.



**Acrobatic  
AIR  
SHOW**  
AT  
TURNERS FALLS  
AIRPORT

**SUNDAY and MONDAY**  
Sept. 2 and 3 2:30 and 5:30 p. m.  
**FREE ADMISSION**

CHARTER TRIPS BY AIR  
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One to three passengers per airplane.

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U. S. Gov't Approved Primary and Advanced Flying School —  
Certificate No. 778  
Phone Turners Falls 2121 or 383

Aug. 31, 1945

February 24, 1945 [Greenfield MA Recorder Gazette 1945 - 0488.pdf](#)

### Town Warrant

Note: Only T.F. Airport will be given. e.g.

ART. 32 - To see if the town will vote to appropriate any sum or sums of money for the purpose of improving Turners Falls Airport, or act anything thereon.

February 21, 1946 [Greenfield MA Recorder Gazette 1946 - 0506.pdf](#)

### **Montague Warrant**

*Note: This lengthy article is truncated to show Turners Falls airport content only. e.g.*

Montague voters will consider 25 articles at the annual business meeting of the town, Saturday, March 9 at 1:30 p.m.

Articles of interest are to see if the town will vote to appropriate a sum of money for the purpose of repairing the Turners Falls airport.

**Aug. 3** [Greenfield MA Recorder Gazette 1946 - 2295.pdf](#)

[Greenfield MA Recorder Gazette 1946 - 2305.pdf](#)

### **Northeast Lines View T. F. Port, but Service Uncertain**

TURNERS FALLS—Promise of Turners Falls-Greenfield plane service from Northeastern airlines was delayed at least another day today when, after a 40-minute discussion between selectmen from both towns and officials from the airline company. It was decided that a definite answer must await a meeting this morning in Boston of Turners Falls airport officials and selectmen and officials of the Massachusetts civil aeronautics commission.

At 11:50 this morning, F. E. Barker, superintendent of operations and traffic, and R. H. Herrstein, director of economic development for the Northeastern airlines, flew in and were met at the local airport by Selectman Leo Saulnier of Turners Falls, and Wayne Pleasant, one of the airport commissioners. The inspecting officials were escorted to the main office to discuss possibilities of airline service from New York to Montreal with stops here.

One of the prime requisites for an air base, Barker pointed out, is a weather bureau station. The field, now measuring 3500 feet at its longest, would have to be lengthened 250 feet to meet civil aeronautics regulations. This could be done easily, Wesley B. Foss, chairman of the Greenfield chamber of commerce, pointed out because land on both ends, north and south of "the port, are owned by the town of Montague.

### **Needs Hard Runway**

Barker also said a hard-surface runway would have to be constructed to the length of the field 150 feet wide. This would have to be tressed to bear the weight of large aircraft landing here. Approximately 1000 square feet of office space would be required as well as a lobby for passengers and spectators, and, rest rooms, which are already available. A lunch room would also be necessary, it was pointed out. A small restaurant known as the Rudder Bar stands near the field now.

Jack Casey, superintendent of construction for the Turners Falls airport, pointed advantages to Barker, stressing the fact it is located in a high and dry area. J.B. Kennedy, chairman of the transportation committee of the Greenfield Chamber of Commerce, asserted those in this area are behind the project and will help in every way they can to

push the Job. Herrinstein told the group in a job of this sort it would be necessary for the many surrounding towns to lend aid, but, he pointed out, it would also be to their mutual benefit.

A committee from Turners Falls composed of Daniel J. Kelleher, Carl Lambert, and Frank Kuzmeskus went to Boston this morning to discuss requirements for the field with officials of the Massachusetts Aeronautics Commission.

Today marked the first definite action in present attempts to bring planes from both Wiggins airways and the Northeastern Airlines to the Turners Falls airport.

**Aug. 6**      [Greenfield MA Recorder Gazette 1946 - 2268.pdf](#)

[Greenfield MA Recorder Gazette 1946 - 2750.pdf](#)

### **Prepare to Meet Air Regulations at T. Falls Port**

TURNERS FALLS—Carl Lambert, chairman of the Turners Falls airport commission, stated today repairs and renovations will be effected[sic] soon to comply with the Massachusetts aeronautics commission regulations.

The local commission will call a meeting within two or three days. Lambert said, and a committee will be sent to Boston to determine exact requirements so that Wiggins Airway may service this community.

A series of conflicting reports in the last two weeks has made it difficult for the airport commission to grasp the true situation. Selectman Daniel J. Kelleher said today. On July 27 a report in a Boston paper stated the local airport had been disqualified by the aeronautics commission. Kelleher contacted Thomas Cawley of the aeronautics commission and was told that the report in the Boston paper was erroneous, thus indicating that the Turners Falls airport had been approved.

After it was disclosed yesterday the local airport had been found ineligible Lambert was informed that it had been investigated by an official during the previous week. Lambert said no member of the local committee had been informed of the inspection and that no one had been seen at the airport.

Although the airport has apparently been disqualified because of inadequate facilities, which according to Lambert do not exist a short time ago a Wiggins plane of the type contemplated for use in the proposed service, landed at the local airport with Gov. Maurice J. Tobin. Kelleher said he found it difficult to say why facilities used for the governor were not good enough for use by the public.

It is hoped the meeting in Boston will pave the way for airway service in this district.

Disturbed by Wiggins Airways announcement it would by-pass this area on its Boston to Albany route the Greenfield Chamber of Commerce has offered to assist in removing any obstacle to service. Secretary Wesley B. Foss disclosed today.

Announcement on June 25 that the federal CAB had authorized Wiggins to make Greenfield-Turners Falls stops and Northeast Airlines to serve the county on a north-south

schedule led the chamber on Aug. 1 to write Wiggins its offer of cooperation. Foss said today it had no reply as yet.

Postmaster J.B. Kennedy is chairman of the chamber committee on transportation. Foss reported that group was prepared to assist the Turners Falls airport commission in any way to remove the objections to use of the port as a regular stopping point for airliners.

Northeast apparently would be affected by the same federal requirements as Wiggins, but thus far there has been no disclosure from that line that the Turners Falls airport is inadequate in any respect for the service CAB has authorized.

Although it appeared possible prompt action would be taken to enable use of the airport by Wiggins, it was believed some time might elapse before the airways is prepared to inaugurate Boston-Albany service. The line has made no specific announcement of when it would inaugurate flights over that route, but was believed not to have at this time sufficient planes to open the several schedules which had been authorized as additions to its present operations.

**Aug. 12**

[Greenfield MA Recorder Gazette 1946 - 2338.pdf](#)

**Forum**

**Wants Plane Service**

To the Editor of The Recorder-Gazette: Pursuant to the article on the front page of Thursday's paper concerning the Turners Falls airport becoming a stop-over for the Northeast Airlines.

This improvement would mean a great advantage to all the surrounding communities as well as being a step forward in progress, and would help us to become the place we all wish our town to be. That Is, a "friendly small town", but still a modern city.

I claim Greenfield as my home, yet for several years I have worked in Baltimore, Md. I try to have all my doctoring, dental work and to do all my shopping here in Greenfield when I can get here for a few days, which is every five or six months. This is sometimes difficult. I must travel by train and this is a question of 10 or 12 hours. Yet the trip from Baltimore to Boston can be covered in three hours by plane.

Now, if the Turners Falls airport had a stop-over, this would mean a great saving of time and many of Franklin county's out-of-town workers could be home in just a few hours. I, for one, like a score of others, could plan to be home for the " Labor Day celebration if this were already in operation. Let's all do our bit toward bringing this vast improvement to western Massachusetts.

June A. Cowan

**Aug. 16**

[Greenfield MA Recorder Gazette 1946 - 2387.pdf](#)

[Greenfield MA Recorder Gazette 1946 - 2396.pdf](#)

**Wiggins Asks Right to Bypass T. Falls Airport**

TURNERS FALLS—Wiggins airways, which earlier this month announced it would be unable to serve the local airport in conjunction with its Boston-Albany route, has

submitted to the civil aeronautics board application to have the ' stop removed from the proposed run.

Although local airport officials and selectmen immediately drafted a protest to the civil aeronautics authority, which has ruled the field inadequate. Edward Brewer, assistant to the president of the Wiggins lines, in conversation with The **Recorder-Gazette** this afternoon declared the application was merely a formality required by the civil aeronautics authority in order to operate the route without servicing each of the proposed stops.

Brewer added that "it is unfortunate if there it any misunderstanding about this. The Wiggins airlines earnestly desires to serve Turners Falls. It if only because CAA has declared the airport there unsatisfactory that we have filed this application. In order to make the run permission mutt be received from CAB to bypass this and any other unsuitable ports on the way".

Brewer also said his company received word that the port was inadequate following inspection of a CAA official named Taulch, from LaGuardia airport, with their own operations manager, Mr. Kent, about a month ago. Daniel J. Kelleher, chairman of the selectmen and member of the airport commission, said this morning the application states that among other faults the runways of 2800 3200, and 3250 feet are too short. Although the field has not been measured recently it has been stated by airport commissioners 1 that the ways measure 3400,3250, and 3000 feet. The glide ratio, the Wiggins report claims, is 8-1, 9-1, and 11-1, and, although exact figures have not been secured, local officials believe the ratios actually are longer.

The Wiggins application also states, Kelleher said, that approaches to the field are hazardous and that because there are no hard-paved runways, large planes, specifically the DC-3 type which Wiggins uses, could not land here. Relative to the hazardous approaches it has been stated by local commissioners that the high trees which constitute a danger



DC-3 [wikipedia](#)

could be eliminated as the town owns the boarder property. Local engineers have stated previously that the Turners Falls airport is a solid field and well-drained, and that DC-3s and twin-engine planes have landed here without mishap. The main runways now are in line with prevailing winds, Kelleher said.

Wiggins airways in the application to eliminate the Turners Falls-Greenfield stop from carrier service stated that the facts were gleaned from CAA's airport facilities records, Kelleher said. "It Is the earnest desire of the selectmen and the airport commissioners," he added "that a mutual understanding be reached" and that the figures be corrected and brought up-to-date.

A letter confirming the telephone call made by Kelleher, yesterday, to Reginald Reid, district supervisor of air services for CAA, was reported to have been sent out today and town officials believe a meeting with Reid will be arranged soon. Reid, according to R. R. Lovering, CAA official who visited here, yesterday, in an advisory capacity, can establish definite requirements for a field employing scheduled flights.

**Aug. 29**

[Greenfield MA Recorder Gazette 1946 - 2529.pdf](#)

**Waiting on Uncle Sam** (Editorial)

The further the Turners Falls airport situation with regard to airlines service unfolds, the more incredible it becomes.

The function of government, the taxpayers might properly assume, is to assist the public. The exact reverse has marked federal functioning with regard to opening feeder line service for the convenience of Franklin County residents.

Unless bureaucracy quickly begins to accomplish something where it has done nothing but impede for two months, there will be no air liners flying a schedule out of Turners Falls airport until spring.

This ridiculous situation began on June 25 when CAB granted authorization to two airlines to make stops at Turners Falls without companion agency, the CAA, informing the municipal airport commission that the field in any way fell short of federal requirements. So far as the federal officials were concerned the town might never have learned of it. The first disclosure came weeks later when one of the airlines asked CAB for modification of its route because of CAA rulings. There began promptly a local effort to find and pin down someone who could explain what was bothering CAA.

It was discovered, among other astonishing things, that neither the state aeronautics commission nor the CAA had any accurate idea of the existing Turners Falls airport facilities. It was not until yesterday, apparently, that they learned two runways exceed the dimensions required for night operation and third is only 100 feet short of the lesser requirement for day landings.

Having thus been proven mathematically wrong or uninformed on one of the few regulations which can be pinned down, the visiting officials seemed to take refuge in less specific matters. The Turners Falls runways are not paved, they remarked, but it was added that regulations did not say a grassed field could not be used.

The crowning touch appears in connection with financing improvements. Congress appropriated funds last May 13 which would pay up to 50 per cent of the costs of fitting airports for airline service if the balance was split between the state and community.

More than three months later, no federal forms are available for applying for such funds and it was indicated none was likely to be available until after frosts have made construction practically impossible.

Another familiar bureaucratic manifestation appears to be entering the airport imbroglio. The CAA will furnish a list of engineers "qualified in airport development" from which the local commission can select one to survey the field and draw plans in such a way that they will satisfy CAA. Just why a special engineer should be required to repeat all the work has not been explained.

**Sept. 16** [Greenfield MA Recorder Gazette 1946 - 2750.pdf](#)

### **Wiggins Would Start at Orange Before Turners**

Norwood—Wiggins Airways has formally petitioned the CAB for permission to start its Boston-Albany airline route with a stop at Orange without awaiting approval of the Turners Falls airport and other points designated on the original route certificate last June.

The petition cited "approach hazards and unpaved runways" at the Turners Falls airport which were only disclosed to be less than federal requirements some weeks after the CAB had issued its certificate authorizing airlines stops there.

Wiggins said It "cannot predict when airports will be available for its use", but employment of an airport engineer is under consideration at Turners Falls to prepare for runway construction next spring.

Wiggins stated the Massachusetts aeronautics commission had informed it that "first priority for the construction of airports under the federal airport act will be given the presently certificated towns and cities in that state which are without airports adequate to permit air carrier operations."

When the Turners Falls airport commission recently sought the assistance of federal funds appropriated by Congress last spring it learned that applications forms had not yet been prepared, and probably would not be available until late fall.

President Joseph Garside of Wiggins stated today "the petition does not represent a desire on our part to suspend service, but comes only as a result of safety considerations over which we have no control. It is our desire: to render service to all certificated points at the earliest possible date.

"As a matter of fact." Garside added, "Edward S. Brewer, assistant to the president of Wiggins Airways, has been specially assigned to make a study of airports and airport facilities on our system, for the purpose of speeding their development to the end that they may be made safe for airline operation as soon as possible. He is acting as coordinator between local authorities, the Massachusetts Aeronautics Commission and the airport division of the Civil Aeronautics Administration on this matter."

**Nov. 9** [Greenfield MA Recorder Gazette 1946 - 3193.pdf](#)

**AD: VETERANS !!**

Flight Courses Under G.I. Bill

Bridgeport Flying Service, Inc.

Turners Falls Airport

Tel. T.F. 2121

Sept. 21 [Greenfield MA Recorder Gazette 1946 - 2817.pdf](#)

## Turners Falls, Orange Airports May Benefit

Note: Orange airport not germane to this writing. *e.g.*

Two Franklin County airports are on the list of 61 in the state which would benefit under a plan submitted to CAA this week by the state aeronautics commission for study. They are those in Turners Falls and Orange, each of which would receive a portion of the proposed \$6,000,000 budget earmarked for airways developments in this state.

The Associated Press has reported that under the plan Turners Falls airport would receive three runways each 3,500 feet long. It announced also that other details were expected later and held the port should be developed to a minimum of class three.

January 17, 1947 [Greenfield MA Recorder Gazette 1947 - 0183.pdf](#)

## Airport Prospects Rouse Interest in Greenfield

High interest and promise of cooperation was found in Greenfield last night when Montague officials brought preliminary plans for fitting the Turners Falls airport for airline service before a dinner meeting at the Mansion house attended by about 33 men of the two communities.

There was not at this stage any specific proposal for financing, although discussion tended to focus on the possibility of forming an airport district since airlines would serve more than the town in which the field is located.

### Suggest Joint Meetings

After suggestion by A. Leo Saulnier, clerk of the Montague selectmen, that his board, the Greenfield Selectmen and the town of Montague airport commission meet to decide on a common program to lay before the town meetings, Chairman Frank C. Keegan of the Greenfield board expressed ready willingness for such action. Chairman Daniel J. Kelleher of the Montague selectmen, who presided, had stressed that this dinner was arranged to review what had been accomplished at the port and to invite suggestions and discussion of means of development.

Crocker Snow, state aeronautics director, provided the clearest summary of the complicated federal and state regulatory and financial system as it affects the county project.

The airport has a tentative CAA allotment of \$62,600 toward an initial construction estimate of \$126,000. Snow regarded this as assured, although Kelleher said the tentative notice was received only three days ago and a CAA representative was expected within a week to say what must be done.

### Steps Next Ahead

Snow stated the next steps would be to prepare a master plan, for which two months has been allowed, of possible development over a 10-year period. This, while involving no commitment, was to assure that any partial construction would not interfere with eventual

layout. He said the town must present proof of title to land, and a small area must be acquired to allow runways of the required length. He said it must agree to maintain the airport, if federal and state funds were to be expended on it.

The director said the last legislature authorized state payment of one quarter of the costs of airports development but that no funds were sought at the time. His commission now asks appropriation of one million dollars for the year beginning July 1, which would supplement the current CAA grant and that expected next year. The state may contribute or reimburse towns for its share, but Snow indicated state machinery was such it would probably do the latter.

### **Airport Districts**

It was Snow who pointed to the recent law permitting municipalities to join in an airport district. A recess commission is due to report by Feb. 15 a bill which would detail and define the functions of such a district. Attleboro, North Attleboro and Plainville have already formed a district and Snow said it was possible for towns to make separate appropriations directly to an airport for development without awaiting legislation for district assessments.

Questions on costs of construction and maintenance and of probable revenues bombarded Edward G. Graustein, chief designer of the Thomas Worcester company which has been engaged for the Turners Falls engineering and planning. He was able to give only general and tentative estimates at this time because their work is still in process. Graustein spent five years with the Turners Falls Power company about 30 years ago.

### **Runway Costs**

He estimated \$125,000 would provide a "usable" north-south runway of hard packed gravel with a binder and that available wind data indicated this could be used 80 to 90 per cent of the time. Snow said this would be entirely acceptable for airline use and, while Graustein had spoken of it as a one-year step, that it could be continued in that shape for several years if desired. The chief difference, Snow added, was that more ships of scheduled stops might result.

John Casey, Montague superintendent of streets, said that the strip could be maintained for a small amount each year. At the beginning, Casey said, one gallon of oil a square yard would be necessary to cover the way. Then for the next two or three years, he estimated little maintenance would be needed. Yearly thereafter, he judged that about one-quarter of a gallon would be needed. The cost, he asserted, would be approximately 12 cents a gallon, including labor.

Graustein said: "The revenue from the field would enable the towns to pay for the cost and operating expenses and later to pay something on fixed charges and depreciation." The charges by the port owners to the airline companies are small now, he said, "but you

must bear in mind that there are certain indirect advantages similar to those received from a railroad."

Snow emphasized "the benefits derived are not confined to on community." "Greenfield," he said, "will get twice as much benefit as Turners Falls because Greenfield is twice as big.

### **\$125,000 or \$600,000**

As Charles E. Bankwitz of the electric company put it. the figure of \$125,000 (with half coming from the CAA and a quarter coming from the state) did not cause misgivings, but, when Graustein spoke of \$600,000 costs for completing the single runway with an emergency strip in another direction and of \$1,100,000 as the possible cost of full development and equipment of the] field, both Montague and Greenfield supporters of the project turned cautious and questioning.

Graustein was asked if a "soil" cement top might not serve as well as bituminous and be a lot cheaper, and he agreed it might. He was asked if the soil of the site would not permit less than a nine-inch gravel base, and he agreed it might although his borings had not been fully studied. His audience had some difficulty in following his recommendations for a runway width, taxi ways and surfacing which would bring the costs up to \$800,000, and did not appear greatly comforted by his point that interest rates on municipal loans were now so low they helped to offset higher construction costs.

### **Close Questioning**

Their questions put emphasis rather on whether the \$125,000 job would actually enable airline operation, whether maintenance costs for a gravel-runway would be appreciably greater than for bituminous, and, as repeated several times for emphasis, whether airlines were certificated to a route and stops if they were not bound to continue service regardless of volume of business.

It was Snow who gave reassurance on most of these points. Chairman Carl L. Lambert of the airport commission, said, the contemplated construction would not block present runways.

Preliminary to discussion of development, C. W. Higinbotham of the First National Bank and Trust company reviewed the history of the airport. A citizens committee was formed in 1929 which led to incorporation in 1930 with Charles Mosher of Turners Falls as president and Higinbotham as secretary-treasurer. The corporation acquired 117 acres which were cleared, graded and used for private flying until 1936 when the airport was sold to the town at the price of \$8,100, enabling return to the shareholders of \$1.60 for each \$100 invested Kelleher stated that in 1936 and 1937 the town spent \$21,500 and the WPA about \$90,000 for improvements.

There are now 227 acres in the tract, GI training grants have replaced the wartime instruction, and the USDA is constructing a hangar for the planes it uses in pest control.

Rep. Frederick E. Pierce of Greenfield promised any assistance needed in the legislature, and questions and comments indicated the interest of President Channing L. Bete, Secy. Wesley B. Foss and Transportation Chairman, J.B. Kennedy of Greenfield Chamber of Commerce. Others attending included several who own or have owned private planes, and business and government leaders of both communities.

**Feb. 14** [Greenfield MA Recorder Gazette 1947 - 0502.pdf](#)

### **County Air Travel** (Editorial)

Commercial air liners daily cress Franklin County between north and south terminals. They are authorized to stop at Turners Falls airport, but until the field is improved When it meets federal requirements they will be required to atop there on every schedule, whether there is waiting a passenger, a mail sack or an air express package or not. Obviously the line officials who sought permission expect travelers or cargo to be there often enough to pay the atop costs.

Another airline has authority to fly between points east and west of Franklin County and to make stops at Orange and Turners Falls. The Orange airport is now qualified to handle the type of plane the line wants to use. The Turners Falls airport is not. But, under the present certificate, even if the Turners Falls airport was improved the routes could not be flown and the county stops made until all other scheduled stops along the way have satisfactory airports.

So Northeast is flying today and cannot stop and Wiggins is not even flying its route.

The situation was explained and what is being done about it was told Tuesday evening when Robert Jarret of Wiggins Airways joined the public discussion of the Turners Falls airport project arranged by the selectmen and Rotary club.

Jarret said that Northeast sought and obtained its trans-county route certificate without condition that flight operation wait until all scheduled stops were ready to receive its planes. Thus, it could and does make stops at Keene and Westfield airports enroute to and from New York without waiting for Turners Falls readiness.

Wiggins, on the other hand, its plans more concentrated on smaller community service, holds authorization to fly any or all of four routes between Boston and Albany only when all scheduled stops can be made. It cannot now fly just Boston-Orange-Albany. If the Turners Falls airport were adequate it could not fly Boston-Orange-Turners Falls-Albany-North Adams (to mention only one of several other scheduled stops) today has no airport at all.

So Wiggins, Jarret stated, has now pending with the CAB applications for revisions of its certificates to enable it to start flight services to and from all points prepared to receive its ships. Them he said, Wiggins will be ready to start service including Orange.

Although the Orange-Athol population and business volume are not as great as those of Turners Falls-Greenfield, service at Orange would provide some definite answers instead of present guesses based on experience further afield. How much business can an airline, or two, pick up at the Turners Falls airport? How much revenue can it obtain at the Orange?

When the earnings can be estimated, costs can be more equitably established. A community area wants air service. It needs to cover as much as possible of its airport operation costs and would like to get something back on its investment. To have service, at least in satisfactory quantity, it must enable operators to expect some profit on their investment and effort. So, income by leases or landing fees must be agreed upon somewhere between the levels of what the airport sponsors would like to take in and what will enable basic service.

A general estimate has been given that airport operation costs between one and three per cent of its capital investment. Some authorities argue that any airport can be made to earn a profit although very few do today.

The national average of landing fees has been reported as \$37.50 per week per line making daily stops. If two airlines were operating through Turners Falls and the national average applied, the airport might derive \$900 a month from these users alone.

On the other hand, the west is experimenting with feeder lines on payment of a percentage revenues derived from stops, instead of a flat fee basis.

**Feb. 21**

[Greenfield MA Recorder Gazette 1947 - 0583.pdf](#)

### **Hard Work for Nothing**

Bureaucracy has made another lamentable score. The Montague airport commission and selectmen have labored long and earnestly and more recently the Greenfield selectmen and Chamber of Commerce transportation committee, with interested citizens of both towns, have sought to penetrate the dense but shifting bureaucratic fogs.

These sincere and able local officials have now merged into the clear to find themselves and the central county area exactly where they were last June. There is a partially developed Turners Falls airport, suited only for private light planes. There are two airlines certificated to furnish four-point service from Turners Falls airport. And that is all. There is no prospect for 1937, or for any predictable period, of bridging the gap.

Franklin county residents can now obtain north-south air service out of Keene, N.H. Westfield. It may be that Wiggins Airways will be able to provide east-west service from the Orange airport, although to do so it must obtain federal permission which does not now have. Otherwise, county residents must go to Albany or Boston.

It may be fruitless to review now the obstacles with which Montague and Greenfield have contended, yet it should be in the record.

It had long been known that Northeast and Wiggins had applied to CAB for permits to fly airline routes crossing Franklin County. Nothing was done on the applications for months that grew into years. for the routes. Then suddenly las summer, CAB issued certificates. Its companion agency, CAA, has absolute control over operations which CAB authorizes, had up to that point made no effort whatsoever to inform communities what they would be required to provide before flight service began. Indeed, despite repeated efforts, it was October before any positive information on procedure could be obtained.

Local officials certainly pitched in from that point. They cleared up preliminary engineering and other studies in record time, made repeated journeys to Boston for further information and advice, arranged public meetings and brought in federal and State officials so that voters might be informed of every step.

Then after working so hard in the direction which CAA itself had indicated and having succeeded in reducing many generalities to specifics, they were suddenly flung back to their starting point.

Nothing can now be done in the March town meetings except to provide for continuation of the Turners Falls airport commission and a Greenfield survey committee. Nothing could be done to assure the \$62,500 tentative federal grant before it expires on July 1.

The selectmen of both towns are right in deciding to drop the matter until the federal and state programs are stabilized and definite.

**March 4**      [Greenfield MA Recorder Gazette 1947 - 0699.pdf](#)

#### **Forum**

#### **Airport Cost Sharing**

To the Editor of The Recorder-Gazette: How the tune changes! Turners Falls taxpayers were told their initial airport cost would be \$31.350. Now that the wind has died down, it is explained it wouldn't have cost a red cent. In fact, we make a profit of \$5,645. Will, wonders never cease. This sounds like the figures of an OPA statistician.

Of course there is one low hurdle. We let our neighbor of Greenfield in on the ground floor. All we ask is a measly 70 per cent of the cost, and, just so they won't feel left out, they can reimburse us \$15,050 on our money spent to date. Brother! What an economic approach!

This all would be as simple as getting Greenfield to throw the Thanksgiving classic or finding a parking place on Main Street on Saturday night.

Although personally against this project. I believe any Turners Falls citizen in favor would want, it to be Turners Falls airport in more than name only.      *Montague citizen*

**June 23**

[Greenfield MA Recorder Gazette 1947 - 2116.pdf](#)

### **Darling's Glider Shares Air With Dirigible, Planes**

Three of the four methods of flight were seen Saturday afternoon over Greenfield. They were powered airplanes, a commercial dirigible and glider, leaving jet-powered craft the only absentee.

The power planes were several and varied, including heavy craft passing over and light planes from the Turners Falls Airport. The two-motored lighter-than-air craft circled this area between 7 and 8 p.m. at fairly low altitude.

The glider was designed as a one-man, two-place craft with 72-foot wingspread, designed for the Army training service and of the type which took second and third places in the national glider meet. Owned and flown by Dana L. Darling of Bowker Street, founder of the former Franklin Glider club, it is the first glider in the county in nearly 10 years.

He acquired the glider in a surplus sale and has spent about six weeks in reconditioning it. On Saturday he was towed aloft by Carl Lambert, manager of the Turners Falls airport, for a tour between Millers Falls and Greenfield. On Sunday three more flights were made. On one, Darling cut loose at 4,500-feet for a sustained flight of 22 minutes but conditions were not right for soaring.

**Dec. 6**

[Greenfield MA Recorder Gazette 1947 - 4162.pdf](#)

### **Turners Falls Goes Navy**

After months of disappointment the guardians of Turners Falls airport may have found tenants, is, however, a paradox that it should be the U.S. Navy which is considering beaching itself these 100 miles from the sea.

Should the navy after the forthcoming inspection tour decided to base itself in Turners Falls the move would be no more astonishing than some of its wartime choices. Those who have followed it know that on land as well as sea the navy plies its course.

Acceptance of quarters at Turners Falls airport, however, does not mean that Powertown residents will see navy craft steaming up the Connecticut. Neither will they find any large-scale maneuvers at the airport. The project, as outlined by local representatives of the Associated Naval Aviators of Western Massachusetts, would be primarily for berthing several aircraft here for reserve pilots residing in the area desiring to maintain their flight proficiency.

Since not all naval aircraft wear pontoons there may be reason to hope there would be advantages in Turners Falls airport as a base for reserve pilots. The type of plane which would be stationed there would be small, like those attached to ocean carriers. They would not be hampered by the nearby hills. Their runways need not be vast and perfect in its present condition Turners Falls airport is ideal for small craft, although unable to handle great passenger and freight liners. The navy may find it is the place desired.

With 60 naval aviators resident within the area there is need for a nearby practice base. Development of this would offer employment and experience in administration, operation, and maintenance of the base to others. Surely if the navy wants to drop anchor in Franklin County. Turners Falls airport should offer adequate range for its experiment.

May 16, **1948**      [Greenfield MA Recorder Gazette 1948 - 1557.pdf](#)

### **Northeast Gives Wiggins Route**

BOSTON—Northeast Airlines which last week announced it would resume New York-Keene flights May 28 after winter suspension, today disclosed an agreement with Wiggins Airways to surrender that route to Wiggins. In the post war flurry of applications to establish and extend commercial air routes, the CAB had authorized two routes to include stops at Turners Falls airport (when qualified).

The east-west route was granted to Wiggins, with Orange, Greenfield-Turners Falls and Adam-North Adams stops scheduled on the main Boston and Albany flight and Keene and Bennington scheduled on an alternative northerly route.

Northeast at that time was awarded the New York-Keene, including Northampton and Turners Falls, with extension to Burlington.

The two companies have now filed with CAB a joint application for approval of their agreement and asked immediate hearing. They explain Northeast would retain those parts of its present system which it believes to be best suited to service on a trunk line basis and Wiggins will acquire from it those parts best served on a local and feeder basis.

Although Northeast conducted seasonal operation of its approved routes, the Turners Falls airport, among others, was insufficiently developed to handle its large transport planes. While that airport has been extensively used by smaller planes, including those operating for charter, Wiggins has not sought to start service there or at Orange where the airport is qualified for transports.

**Aug. 25**      [Greenfield MA Recorder Gazette 1948 - 2945.pdf](#)

### **Flight Might**      (Editorial)

The answer to any question relative to the limit of aviation in Franklin County is as complex as it is to the riddle: How high is up? Nevertheless, reports from the Turners Falls airport indicate that flying to and from county soil has been increasing. The future remains as promising as the day the vast fields of the former White Coal farm on Millers Falls Road heard the drone of the first plane to alight there.

Unable to induce airways to include Turners Falls on schedules, a group of county men formed a corporation which during the past year has been making progress with charter service. Although superficial reports do not provide comparisons, there are claims that business has been "better than ever". Anyone spending a few hours at the port in good flying weather soon acquires visual proof of considerable activity.

While the hills and vales of Franklin have caused the absence of large planes from this district, there may be hope for greater air use than recently expected from a report by the state oil industry information committee on airplanes and the farm.

The committee has announced that there now are 9000, many of them owned by individual farmers and others operated by companies doing agricultural work under contract. These are employed in four of six major farming operations. Spraying and dusting insect poisons on growing plants, sowing seed in certain areas, spreading fertilizer, and controlling weeds. They have been especially useful in states like California and Texas, where farms are usually large, but because of their maneuverability can be employed in restricted flying areas. In one day a plane can spray 600 acres of infested grapevines, whereas it would take 20 man an entire week to do that Job.

The small type plane already has been adopted by at least one county farmer and business man. Success of the Jewett Pickle Company of South Deerfield has been due in part to the acquisition of a plane to provide management with swift, frequent transport between the county plant and one in Maine. County manufacturing interests likewise long ago realized the advantages of small craft for personal convenience.

Vast open landing fields are not necessary for the arrival and departure of these planes. If the trend continues at its current pace, Turners Falls airport may be only The first in a network of airways between town and country.

December 28, 1949 [Greenfield MA Recorder Gazette 1949 - 5000.pdf](#)

### [New Hope for Turners Falls](#) (Editorial)

Note: A truncated article. Most is not germane to this writing. *e.g.*

. . . If the new firm settle there will be more cause than ever for improving air transport facilities for central Franklin County. Several times development of Turners Falls airport has been blocked by its geographical location. Surrounded by hills, it has not tempted major air lines to spend money for improvements. The strip is suitable for small craft, but never can accommodate the large commercial planes now in use. Greenfield and Turners Falls may have to search for another site if they hope to get on the air transport maps.

January 24, 1950 [Greenfield MA Recorder Gazette 1950 - 0290.pdf](#)

### [Air Transport Makes History Here Tomorrow](#)

Only the weather can hinder air transportation's big moment in Franklin County tomorrow.

The first scheduled airline route through the county will be marked by the inaugural west bound landing in Orange at 11:37 a.m. and in Turners Falls at 11:56.

Town officials and postmasters will be at both ports as Wiggins Airway lands its twin-engine Cessna on the first flight in segment two of four Boston to Albany, N.Y. flights.

An estimated 5,000 letters will be placed on the two runs through the county tomorrow. The eastbound flight is scheduled to arrive in Turners Falls at 3:09 p. m. and in Orange at 3:30.

Orange and Greenfield post offices have collected more than 2,000 letters each for collectors. Turners Falls also will place mail on the first flight, but the post office department did not provide a special cachet for that office.

With the service came establishment of official U.S. weather bureaus at the two fields. Mrs. Charles Hamilton, wife of the Wiggins agent in Orange, passed a weather observer test in Boston this month with a score of 92 per cent. She served as weather observer during the war in Concord, N.H., and Burlington, Vt.

Edward Gass of South Deerfield and John Bushway of Moores' Corner passed similar tests to serve as Turners Falls observers. Helium balloons will be sent aloft one hour before each flight to determine the weather conditions. Thermometers and other equipment have been installed by the weather bureau, which requires a monthly report.

Two-way teletypes were installed at both county ports last week. This places the fields on a 16-station circuit which includes fields in this state as well as Connecticut, Rhode Island, New Hampshire and Vermont.

At the Turners Falls airport, the airport restaurant has been reopened in anticipation of passengers' purchases and a "radar machine" installed to heat sandwiches in three minutes and dispense them wrapped.

Several titles will be attached to the runs. The federal government will recognize the flight as AM-79. To Wiggins, the westbound trip will be flight 21 and the eastbound, flight 22.

This will be the final of four segments authorized Wiggins by the federal civil aeronautics board in 1946. The southern flights have been in operation since late fall. Segment one, through Keene, N.H., was started Thursday, one day later than scheduled.

In addition to four passenger and first-class mail, the Cessnas will carry air parcel post. Federal restrictions limit each package to 60 pounds. Charges are about five times surface parcel post. Rates are (*illegible*) one and two, up to 150 miles. An additional charge of five cents a pound for each zone increases the maximum to 80 cents a pound for more than 1800 miles.

Landing strips at both ports will be marked. A CAA regulation requires runways be chained off for the safety of passengers. Both ports will provide waiting rooms for passengers. Refreshments and toilet facilities will be available. The Turners Falls airport will be open from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. every day. As the sun sets later, the office will be open until darkness every day.

Reservations will be required by Wiggins on all flights. One-way fares from Orange to Boston will be \$4.70 and from Orange to Albany \$4.90. Round-trip fares will be \$8.95 and \$9.30. respectively.

From the Turners Falls airport fares to Boston will be \$5.45 one way and \$10.35 round-trip. To Albany, fares will be \$4.10 and \$7.80. As with railroad transportation, a 15 per cent federal tax will be added. Reservations for flights out of Boston and Albany to points all over the world can be made at the county ports.

**Feb. 15**      [Greenfield MA Recorder Gazette 1950 - 0578.pdf](#)

### **\$116,250 Airport Bait Does Not Get Nibble**

An invitation to construct a \$155,000 paved runway at the Turners Falls airport at a direct cost locally of \$38,750 met with unenthusiastic response in Greenfield, and Montague today.

Dir. Crocker Snow of the Massachusetts Aeronautics Commission wrote selectmen in both towns his figures show \$155,000 would be needed to construct a paved surface at the Turners falls port. The federal government would contribute 50 per cent and the state 25 per cent. One or more area towns would have to contribute the remaining 25 per cent.

In Turners Falls, Chairman John A. Charron of the selectmen and Chairman Winslow C. Wentworth of the airport study committee said they knew nothing of any new move. Chairman Herbert Darling of the Greenfield selectmen said the same.

Snow said he is preparing his 1951 fiscal budget and asked local officials to notify him soon "whether you will be able to provide your share of the necessary funds."

The move was the first made by the state board since the two towns considered sharing the costs of a \$135,000 runway in 1946. This project fell through when Montague selectmen insisted, Greenfield con in the preceding years on the port.

Darling noted today his board had been willing to pay 60 per cent of future development and runway construction but added, "We don't want to bail Montague out."

Charron said he will take the matter before the Montague board Tuesday evening. Darling promised the same at Friday's board session.

Snow's letter was addressed to Ronald M. Zschau as chairman of the Turners Balls airport commission. Wentworth said today there is no such board in the town. Zschau is a member of the study committee but this morning said he had no communication with Snow.

In another latter to this newspaper today. Snow noted that Northeast airway has a franchise to serve the area on a New York-Montreal run but will not fulfill it until paved runways are constructed for their 20-passenger DC-3 planes.

Asst. Treas. R.H. Herrnstein of Northeast recently advised Greenfield and Montague that "In view of the costliness of improving the field, plus the service now rendered by Wiggins, we would not recommend the making of such an investment."

Wentworth said his committee will submit an article in the March town meeting for an appropriation to make minor repairs. Preliminary plans for paved runways are on file, he said. Snow recommended a 3,500-foot hard-surface, for which there is space at Turners Falls.

"While I don't favor this, I won't stand in the way of those who do." Darling commented this morning.

With both town meeting warrants closed, there appeared little possibility today that even fast action resulting in a financial-support plan acceptable to Greenfield and Montague would place the proposal before the voters at the annual meetings. Action for fiscal 1951, which begins July 1, must be taken soon, however, for the state and federal governments to appropriate funds.

**Nov. 10**      [Greenfield MA Recorder Gazette 1950 - 4419.pdf](#)

[Greenfield MA Recorder Gazette 1950 - 4420.pdf](#)

[Ask Greenfield, Turners to Make Airport Improvement](#)

[Selectmen Take No Action on Letter from Commission, But Will Meet Montague Board](#)

The Turners Falls airport commission today urged selectmen of Greenfield and Montague to consider working together towards construction of an estimated \$160,000 paved runway and taxi strip.

The report to selectmen of the two towns followed a study of airport conditions and brought the contention from the commission provided by Winslow C. Wentworth that the federal government would bear 50 per cent of the proposed cost, the state 25 per cent, and the towns together would, be required to raise \$40,000.

#### **No Comment Here**

Greenfield selectmen at their meeting this morning had no comment on possible action, but decided to meet with the commission and Montague selectmen to discuss the plan. Chr. Frank Keegan said.

In 1946 a proposal that Greenfield pay 75-per cent of development costs and Turners Falls, 25 per cent met with no approval here.

The letter directed the selectmen from the commission follow:

The airport which had a modest beginning by a group of civic mind individuals, who incorporated as Franklin Airport, Inc., about 1930, had an expansion of the field during the depression with the help of governmental agencies. This provided adequate landing strips for that time and a fine training field for aviation cadets during the last war. As a result of that training program, an excellent private development of hangar space, machine shop and other facilities was made. These facilities are now owned by a group of individuals who believe in the future of aviation.

"We find that the runways are fast approaching a condition where major reconditioning will be necessary. If the runways are not properly maintained, financial conditions might arise which would mean the closing of the airport.

### **Has Served Well**

The airport has served the community well, but we feel that the airport has outgrown the community and now serves the area. This service is strictly limited by the sod landing strips which are inadequate for commercial planes. A study of the map showing other landing fields will reveal that the Turners Falls airport is strategically located and can be of vital importance to the area.

Wiggins Airways now provides a limited east-west service which was suspended several times last season because of mud conditions on the field. This can be corrected by paving one runway. Also, Northeast Airlines is certified to provide north-south service through this area, but they have been unable to do so because there is no airport adequate for the airplanes they use.

The First Time for GREENFIELD and TURNERS FALLS			
Scheduled Airline Service Direct to . . . . .			
• ALBANY . . . . .	\$4.10	• ORANGE . . . . .	\$1.50
• NORTH ADAMS . . . . .	\$1.80	• FITCHBURG . . . . .	\$2.40
• BOSTON . . . . .	\$5.41		

OPENS TOMORROW, WED. JAN. 25. Passengers, Air Mail, Twin-Engine Planes

**2** FLIGHTS DAILY

*Wiggins Airways*

"New England's Community Airline"

TURNERS FALLS AIRPORT Phone For Reservations - TURNERS FALLS 2121

### **Indispensable**

"In times of disaster the local airport is indispensable for saving lives and the relief of suffering. With land (illegible) small airplanes could mean life or death to entire communities, providing a suitable landing field is maintained to receive the blood plasma, medical supplies, provisions, etc.

"With these thoughts in mind, we have consulted the Massachusetts Aeronautics Commission as to the minimum requirements for the airport. All that is needed is one paved landing strip 3,500 feet long, a taxi and turn-around area, a hangar and in the future some lighting.

"The committee estimates the runway along with the taxi strip, with some drainage and engineering services to cost about \$160,000. With federal funding contributing 50 per cent and the state funds contributing 25 per cent, the amount to be borne locally would be about \$40,000. The project would spread over a two or three-year period. Incidentally, the federal government will contribute only to one runway at an airport.

"Under existing laws, towns may borrow beyond the debt limit for a term of 10 years for airports. We feel that the town of Montague should not carry the burden alone as the airport will be used primarily by individuals and industries outside of the town. It is no

longer proper to think of an airport serving just one community as it is an area that is served. Therefore, we must think not of town lines but of the whole area.

"As the town of Greenfield, with the largest population in this area does not have a location or facilities for an airport, we suggest and urge that the towns of Greenfield and Montague consider making this a joint airport as provided under Chapter 90, Section 51-M, they concluded in offering to arrange a joint meeting for discussion."

Signers were Wentworth, Whitfield Moretti, Lynton A. Hawley, Olaf Hoff, Jr., and George F. Wrightson.

**Nov. 17**      [Greenfield MA Recorder Gazette 1950 - 4514.pdf](#)

[Greenfield MA Recorder Gazette 1950 - 4521.pdf](#)

### **Greenfield Board Survey Town on Airport Aid**

TURNERS FALLS—Greenfield selectmen will conduct an extensive survey in their town to determine sentiment on helping finance a hard-surfaced runway at Turners Falls Airport.

Even as the Turners Falls Airport the commission met in joint session with Greenfield and Montague selectmen at the Western Massachusetts Electric Company office last night to discuss the possibilities of improving the airport with federal and state aid, the Orange Airport commission was informed by the federal government that no funds were available for its proposed resurfacing program, due to a 43 per cent cut in the 1951 project allocation.

Greenfield selectmen agreed last night no site existed within their town for airport development and Chr. Frank C. Keegan suggested the survey to determine the desires of his board's constituents. It was also decided to determine annual maintenance costs and to call another meeting when these two factors were decided.

The group was informed that no opportunity exists for obtaining federal funds until 1952 but that a date for a proposal would be available whenever the program was desired. A state aeronautical official also pointed out possibility of an airport sponsored on a county basis. Such a field now operates successfully at Martha's Vineyard.

Frank A. Mclaugh of Boston, chief engineer for the State Aeronautical Commission, explained increasing demand for airport facilities by industry, government and private individuals. Chr. Winslow C. Wentworth of the airport commission outlined deed for improvements to the field in the near future if it to be continued.

Although informed by Mclaugh that no federal money could be secured until at least 1952, officials agreed that if any action were to be definitely taken it should be at once in order to apply formally for federal aid, expected to be 50 per cent of the estimated \$160,000 cost.

### **Makes CAA Request**

Wentworth announced that he has forwarded preliminary forms to the Civil Aeronautics authority, requesting federal participation in Turners Falls airport reconstruction, but he added that this was not binding on either the town or the federal agency. It was merely an indication that funds might be sought from the next allotment, he said.

Wentworth explained that the current turf runway is in need of repair and that the nearest hard-surfaced field is 40 miles away. Turners Falls is a good training area; would provide north-south service, and assure better east-west service if developed, he contended in reviewing the commission's recent report.

Melaugh said the airport has a potential of 50,000 people, including large industrial concerns, and he felt the north-south addition would be an important feature. Northeast airlines is certificated to stop here on trips which now run from New York to Keene and then to White River junction, Vt., he said. Any stop by that line would require, full facilities and a hard-surface runway.

From a defense standpoint the field would also be valuable, Mclaugh contended, providing the example, that the army recently flew a DC-3 to a Fall River field to pick up vital supplies used in the Korean war.

"Every large community needs an airfield, especially around manufacturing, the potential is here, but you must make the decision," he declared.

### **Urged Early Decision**

He urged informing the state as soon as possible if the area is interested in securing federal funds, pointing out that 1952 projects are already receiving allotments and that delay would postpone the venture. The state would definitely assist by contribution of 25 per cent.

Olaf Hoff, Jr., member of the commission and newly elected representative from the Third Franklin District, declared that "unless a community is farsighted, and believed in flying it will be isolated in the future. Flying will expand rapidly and I for one feel airports are of vital importance".

The commission, the opinion that Montague should "forget any equity the town has in the airport" in discussing a possible method of determining each town's share in any joint plan.

Wentworth pointed out the Greenfield-Montague Transportation area was based on the ratio of population, 67 per cent for Greenfield and 33 per cent for Montague, as one suggestion of a possible fair decision. He felt Greenfield would utilize any airport to a much greater degree than Montague.

## **\$26,800 From Greenfield**

Such a proposition would require Greenfield to contribute approximately \$26,800 while Montague's share would be \$13,200, officials pointed out.

Present last night were Wentworth, Sec. George F. Wrightson, Hoff, Whitfield Moretti and Lynton Hawley of the airport commission. Chr. John A. Charron, and Chester Sokolosky of the Montague selectmen and McLaugh.

**Dec. 21**      [Greenfield MA Recorder Gazette 1950 - 5036.pdf](#)

## **Majority Favors Airport Assistance by Greenfield**

A cross-section poll of business and professional men, conducted by the Greenfield Chamber of Commerce, revealed the majority replying favor further development of Turners Falls airport, selectmen were informed today.

Sec. Wesley B. Foss of the chamber in presenting Chr. Frank Keegan of the selectmen results the survey, explained that 37 replies were received from 73 requests sent out, twenty-four were in favor, nine opposed and the rest in doubt.

"We believe that all those who desire to do so have availed themselves of the opportunity to express their opinions." Foss said.

Keegan said the board will review replies at the regular meeting tomorrow and inform the commission of its findings.

The survey was requested by the selectmen following a joint meeting with Montague selectmen and the airport commission. Greenfield asked to consider appropriating funds to construct a paved runway at the field and to secure north-south in addition to present east-west feeder service. The Greenfield share was estimated at \$26,800 initially plus a share of an estimated \$3,200 yearly for maintenance costs.

A breakdown of replies, all anonymous, showed that 22 were contacted in the industrial group with 15 answering. There were seven in favor of port expansion, three expressed no definite opinion-and five could see no benefit.

Seven replies were received in the retail store category out of 20 sought and five favored the move with two opposed.

Retail, other than stores, contributed five replies from 13 asked with three in favor and two opposed. Eight commercial replies out of 13 sought, found seven in favor; and one in doubt while two professional men favored the move out of five contacted, three not answering.

Foss, in seeking, answers from a cross section, asked each by letter, if further development of the airport to permit expanded flight service, would be beneficial to their business interests.

Individual replies varied considerably, from one which frankly felt the communities should not be burdened with any part of the cost for "privately owned and operated transportation companies" to one which expressed the opinion that "I felt for sometime that

a mistake was being made in not improving facilities somewhere to keep up with some of our neighboring cities and towns."

Several felt an airport would benefit them little personally but should be improved to benefit generally the county area.

June 20, 1951 [Greenfield MA Recorder Gazette 1951 - 2442.pdf](#)

### **Preserve the Faith** (Editorial)

Franklin Airways, Inc., a group of about 15 Franklin County men, took a major step forward this month in demonstrating their faith in air passenger service.

Reportedly operating at a loss, or at least finding it difficult to break even, the men dug a little deeper and came up with an estimated \$18,000 to buy a new airplane.

In these days of the disappearing loaf of bread and shorter dollar bill, \$18,000 is a lot of fish, as they say in the hangars. Primary reason for purchasing the tingle-engine Cessna was to stimulate a weak public habit of air travel. These men, all welt-known but not necessarily wealthy members of the Franklin community, hope, by demonstrating their faith through a financial investment to assuage-any fears the public may have about the wisdom of this industry.

Air travel passed the infancy stage much farther back than the public seems to believe. In fact, it has reached the stage of having completed high school. It's going to college now, majoring in jet transportation. Far beyond the romper stage, it is, as a matter of fact, safer than auto travel.

Coming on top of defeats (if they can be so called) in Greenfield, where the town meeting members decided not to invest Greenfield money in the Turners Falls Airport, this spurt to increase business is even mere commendable. "Flights anywhere, anytime, is the proud motto now of Franklin Airways, which stands ready to put its best wing forward to convince everyone that air travel is here to stay.

It seems certain that if travel by air is to move toward success more quickly than the local snail pace of the post five years, the, public must become accustomed to traveling on airplanes. That is academic. How, then, is this to be done? Facts and figures, newspaper and radio stories; all these may convince a person but it will never get him into the habit, The only way this can be effected[sic] is to get the person on a ship.

Getting a man into the air is a big problem. By talking it up, pushing the safety in flying and displaying its own faith in the industry. Franklin Airways hopes to increase the flying habit in the county. This is all anyone can do—this and hope.<sup>6</sup>

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<sup>6</sup> Hope? **Hoping** something happens is a waste of time. It's a "feel good" concept. Acton makes things happen. Why sit around and hope, when action can be taken to make it so. Take your pick . . . "I hope I can have a beer." "I'm going to get me a beer." I rest my case. *anon.*

Aug. 12 [Greenfield MA Recorder Gazette 1951 - 3200.pdf](#)

### Hearing Soon on Trailer Camp Near Airport

TURNERS FALLS—The board of health will have a public hearing Wednesday at 8 p. m. in board of welfare rooms on Avenue A to act on an application received from Franklin Airways, Inc., to operate a trailer camp at the Turners Falls airport.

Dir. and vice-president of Franklin Airways, Samuel Blassberg said today because of several requests it was decided to propose the use of the airport as a trailer camp. He emphasized the trailers would have to abide by certain rules and regulations concerning sanitation.

Dir. Samuel H. Couture stated the proposed camp would be established west of the airport buildings and would be a means of income to the airport.

April 23, 1952 [Greenfield MA Recorder Gazette 1952 - 1615.pdf](#)

### Why Hold Certificate (Editorial)

Greenfield would be in a complete spin if its residents were really air-minded.

Possessing no airstrip of its own, Franklin County's shire town has been pulled and hauled for nearly a decade by conflicting forces. Only one of these groups wants Greenfield to have air service within its borders, but all the rest want our help. Meanwhile, the local burghers appear to be content with automobiles.

For several years, we have been invited to help develop the Turners Falls Airport. At one time prospects seemed bright that Greenfield would help finance the enlargement of the nearby field, but the plan fell through when Montague officials thought we should pay our share of past costs there. A year or two later, the airport owners again interested us, but that idea faded when Montague voters themselves refused to go along. Orange meanwhile was casting covetous eyes at something called a certificate, allegedly held by Greenfield, but not to be used. It appeared that Orange could be put on the airlines' map with such a document or right. But the 1930 town meeting [Greenfield]—just as bewildered as its predecessors when it comes to flying machines—decided to retain whatever it was that our eastern neighbors wanted.

Meanwhile, the Turners Falls Airport was proving somewhat of a "bust," so far as producing income for Wiggins Airline was concerned. No fault of the Power Town folks; they just didn't have sufficient facilities for big planes and the Boston-Albany run paid off in peanuts so far as stopping across the river was concerned. Therefore, Wiggins has asked permission to drop Turners, but has announced it will make Greenfield a stop when—and if—it can set up a helicopter service.

Then on Friday appeared regional aeronautical officials. They sniffed at the 'copter idea, said it would take 10 years to become operative and that the selectmen should recommend to the Civil Aeronautics Board that Orange be certified as the airport to serve

Greenfield in the proposed system of intra-regional air. routes for New England. So, the selectmen called for a public hearing on Friday.

Greenfield should be honest with itself. It also should be generous with its neighbors. Thus, the only question is whether assigning this certificate deprives us of important rights. Since it is obvious that we have no site for a major airport, this town has little need for a certificate. And since the cost at Turners Falls appears to be. prohibitive—with neither town especially interested in air travel for more than a handful—Orange appears to be the best bet.

Before the decision is made, however, we hope that county persons with special interests will appear at Friday's hearing. But unless it can be proved that public necessity, demands our holding to this area right, would be both generous and. practical to transfer it eastward; no justification for acting like the fabled dog in the manger.

Aug. 5 [Greenfield MA Recorder Gazette 1952 - 3207.pdf](#)

### [Busy Period at Airport in Turners Falls](#)

TURNERS FALLS—Activity was the by-word at the Turners Falls airport this weekend, Mar. Roland Arsenault reported today.

Friday afternoon a twin-engine C-45, carrying three Greenfield servicemen, landed at the field. They included Air Force Lt. Col. G. W. Stilson. Navy Lt L W. Griswold and Ensign J.G. Raymond. Col. Stilson expressed gratitude at being allowed to land at the field which is so close to home for the three men.

Management was host to a flight from New Jersey Friday night when W. G. Slicker from Sloudsburg, NJ, who was flying home from Lebanon, was forced to land at the port by weather conditions. He was met by Arsenault and Asst. Manager Clesson Field. Slicker is a businessman who has occasion to visit New England quite often He had never before used the local airport because of land difficulty but management stated that he will now make a habit of landing at the local field because of improved conditions

Aug. 18 [Greenfield MA Recorder Gazette 1952 - 3391.pdf](#)



Father & sons inspect a small plane. Pilots and officials with a performance airplane.

### [Thousands View Huge Air Show in Turners](#)

TURNERS FALLS—Several thousand spectators yesterday witnessed the Cole Brothers' air show as a Franklin County Aviation Day highlight at the Turners Falls Airport.

In spite of wind conditions, an act in which a plane is landed on top of an ordinary automobile was the only feat unable to be performed. Highlight of the show was a "man on

the wing" act in which. Eldon Peters stood on the wing of a craft piloted by Marion Cole while the plane went through a series of loops, slow rolls and Cuban eights.

Another spectacular act was a parachute Jump. Peters was released at an altitude of 1,500 to 1,800 feet. During his descent, he was circled by a plane which left smoke trails not less than 300 feet from Peters. Many sight-seeing flights and passenger rides were given before, and after



Local youngsters prepare for a flight around the airport. Event announcer informs show-goers of the upcoming action.

the show. About 150 aircraft were present from all over New England. They were parked on the inactive field following a regulation traffic pattern.

The Franklin County Flying Club was host to the visiting pilots.

Members of civilian defense, under direction of Raymond George, directed traffic inside the field while special police directed traffic in the road. In addition, a cruiser was sent from the Shelburne Falls state police barracks to help patrol the roads.

Tickets were sold by a committee of 30 Rotarians. Recruiting booths were set up by the Army Air Force and Navy recruiting offices of Greenfield. A Civil Air Patrol Army liaison plane was on exhibit, as well as a "Poor Man's Plane", which will fly anywhere in New England from Turners Falls for \$2.07.

In attendance was the Millers Falls fire department, members of the civilian defense and Red Cross. Refreshments were sold by the Millers Falls Drum Corps and the Turners Falls Sea Scouts. Parking arrangements were supervised by Winslow Wentworth.

Purposes of the program were to make continued operation of the Turners Falls Airport possible, and to generate more local interest in air travel.

Sept. 16

[Greenfield MA Recorder Gazette 1952 - 3774.pdf](#)



Oct. 24 [Greenfield MA Recorder Gazette 1952 - 4422.pdf](#)

### [Orange Considers CAB Ruling; No Turners Action](#)

Franklin County it left out in the cold in regard to commercial airline service formerly provided by Wiggins Airways of Norwood, according to a CAB ruling this week denying Wiggins its application for renewal of its operating certificate.

Until last June the Orange airport was included in the daily hop from Boston to Albany and back and until a few months previously the Turners Falls Airport was one of the stops on this flight by Wiggins. The airline has provided southern New England with "feeder service" for several years.

Chairman Clarence Hayden of the Orange airport commission said today his group will meet tonight to discuss the CAB action. The Orange board has for years been attempting to interest Northeast Airlines in establishing a run from Orange to New York City.

The Turners Falls airport commission does not anticipate any action, according to Chairman Winslow C. Wentworth. The flights between Boston to Albany were inaugurated in 1949 but suspended last June when CAB Examiner Vernon Radcliffe recommended abolishment of the service. Mail and passengers were carried on these flights.

February 18, 1953 [Greenfield MA Recorder Gazette 1953 - 0615.pdf](#)

### [Turners Falls Airport Notes](#) by Roland Arsenault

TURNERS FALLS—Our trip to the airport this week finds the weather excellent for flying and all the gang has taken advantage of it. "Bucky" Tardiff, a G.I. student who was unable to fly since last July, was checked out by me and soloed.

Among others who took advantage of the excellent weather were Danny Morgan, Herb Merritt, Dick Fields, and Bernie Lussier. Allan Tucker of Greenfield took a passenger ride.

Harold Fields, Jr., who used to live in Greenfield and received a commercial license at Turners Falls Airport, was around to look the port over and thought it had progressed.

The OAF snack bar had a rushing business so that private pilot Dick Fields assisted Cadets Valeda St. Germain and Jeanette Varrier in making and serving hamburgers.

We are looking forward to pleasant weather ahead and the Korean Vets who will take advantage of the G. I. Bill on learning to fly.

Feb. 27 [Greenfield MA Recorder Gazette 1953 - 0845.pdf](#)

### [Turners Falls Airport Notes](#) by R.F. Arsenault

TURNERS FALLS—Well, we finally got a glimpse at some blue sky. We didn't let the opportunity get by either. Herb Merritt, Bernard Lussier, Dan Morgan, Aurelle Tardif, Stan Dlugosz and I all managed to get some flying in.

Herb flew a couple of passengers. Charles McPherson was first and Sunday H. Green went up.

Aurelle went up for his first flight since being reinstated on the G. I. Bill. He flew with me for an hour. Danny and Bernie flew routine training flights. Stan Dlugosz flew the Cub and had Allan Tucker along for the ride.

As usual the Snack Bar was open and visited by quite a few non-flying people. We are glad to open and visited by quite a few see you up here. I hope we answered all your questions. If you have any aviation questions that you like the answers to and can't get up to the field just drop me a line. I'll be glad to help you if I can. Send your mail to R. F. Arsenault. Turners Falls Airport. Turners Falls, Mass. Hope I can help and I'll be waiting to see you all Sunday.

**April 3**

[Greenfield MA Recorder Gazette 1953 - 2517.pdf](#)

**Turners Falls Airport Notes**

by R.F. Arsenault

Once again the Turners Falls Airport is a lifesaver. The rains this past week have raised the water level so high that Atwood Airport in Northampton has about eight inches of water over the entire field. This would have inflicted quite a bit of damage to the aircraft, based there if we didn't have an airport at Turners Falls.

Unfortunately, all the ships could not be moved and some of them are still in Northampton; The total count of transit ships at our fields because of rains and the rising river was 10 on Sunday. Three of these ships were forced to discontinue their intended flights and remain here over the week-end. The remainder of the 10 are ships based at Atwood Airport. In my opinion, all the fields along the river valley would be flooded before we would get any water on our field.

I don't know if the river's rising during the thaw was taken into consideration by the engineers when they selected the airport site but it has proven to be a life saver time and time again to the airplane owners in Western Massachusetts.

To get into the more cheerful events, a new course has been started at the field. I [R.F. Arsenault] received notification from Washington this week that I have passed the prescribed tests for a ground instructor's license. The first class in civil air regulations started Tuesday night and will be held every Tuesday night. Students presently enrolled are Danny Morgan and Dick Fields of Northfield, Herb Merritt and Bernard Lussier of Greenfield and George Vivier of Turners Falls.

In the past I have stated that I felt our airport was an asset to our national defense. I have prepared for this column a few of the more, interesting statistics that I have based that statement on. The first being. Turners Falls Airport is the operational center for our local squadron of Civil Air Patrol, which is an auxiliary of the United States Air Force. Second; and equally as important, located at the field is the Ground Observer Corps operation post.

This post is a small but contributing part of an intricate network protecting our entire nation.

Third and undoubtedly the least heard of, it has valuable space and facilities that might be utilized in event of an emergency. An example of this was evident to me after a visit to my office from Col. John L. Pickett, chief of staff, 26th Infantry Division. The colonel expressed his intent on using the airport as a bivouac area for their unit on his return from their training maneuvers in July.

I feel that this information has enlightened you to the fact that our airport is an asset to national defense as well as community.

**June 1**      [Greenfield MA Recorder Gazette 1953 - 1347.pdf](#)

[Turners Falls Airport Notes](#)      by R.F. Arsenault

TURNERS FALLS—Yes, it flies and it will fly again at the Turners Falls Airport air show this month. By looking at this photo of a 1912 Curtis Pusher you can get a good idea on the remarkable progress made in aircraft design and engineering. In a span of 50 years the speed has gone from 31 m.p.h. to over 700. Along with the speed came safer airplanes, so safe that flying is considered the safest mode of transportation.

We have been the base of operations for a spraying project throughout Franklin County the past week. The contractor is Raymond Dion of Millers Falls. Ray has enlisted the aid of the Aero Crop Spray Co. owned by Chris Stoltzfus of Coatesville, Pa. Norwin Synnestvedt and George Walters have been doing all the flying so far on the project.

Night flying will, start at the field this week and amongst the first to be checked out will be Bernard Lussier and Herb Merritt of Greenfield and Dick Field of Northfield. Dick O'Hara of Greenfield have enlisted the aid of his brother, Jim, who is home on a visit from Brown University in Providence, to rid the airport of its flock of crows. I'm sorry to say they were not too successful.

The crows create a hazard to ships while they are taking off and landing. For those of you who were wondering what that noisy twin-engine seaplane was that took off early Wednesday morning—it was a Grumman Widgeon, a five-passenger amphibian owned by the Amphibians Charter Co. of New York.

**June 9**      [Greenfield MA Recorder Gazette 1953 - 1547.pdf](#)

[Greenfield Not Air-Minded](#)

[More Daring in Early Days](#)

Except for some exciting stories about barnstorming flights in Greenfield and surrounding Franklin County back in the 1920s this area has played a relatively small part in the development of air transportation. For years this has been the source of consternation for local promoters of airplane travel particularly in view of the fact that Franklin County has two fields that are rated among the best in Massachusetts are in Orange and the other in Turners Falls.

Interest in airplanes existed in Greenfield as far back as the early 20s when wild and daring pilots took just as daring passengers into the skies for a spin over the town. They used the Greenfield meadows as a landing field where some of the rickety old planes cracked up, due largely to the condition of the craft which in those days were hardly reliable.

Even before that an itinerant pilot named Charles F. Willard in August, 1910, conducted a series of flights from Rock Dam in Montague. His first flight was heralded by the Greenfield Military Band and 5,000 spectators. Highest his plane rode was 50-feet, the 750-pound plane's flights lasting about three minutes and generally covering about a mile or more.<sup>7</sup>

The late John A. Taggart of Millers Falls, who himself weighed 300 pounds, created a heavy strain for Willard's unsteady airplane that day and gave the crowd a few shaky moments as it strained to get into the air.

### **Vote for Field**

But as air activity increased in the 20's, Greenfield started to become air conscious and looking ahead into the future the town meeting in 1928 authorized \$20,000 to establish a local air field, with the Meadows receiving first consideration for its location. However, the vote did not meet with unanimous approval and a later referendum rejected the town meeting action and local plans for a municipal field were dropped.

While Greenfield never developed a municipal field, a year after the voters turned thumbs down on this proposal an enterprising and visionary man from Hartford, Conn., bought the Isaac Snow place on the Bernardston Road and turned this flat meadowland east of the Boston and Maine Railroad into a landing field. The man who made a field out of this area was Clifton H. Daniels and, in the fall of 1930, erected a hangar was erected there.

By May, 1931, three planes were based at the airport which had received an A-1 rating from the U.S. Department of Commerce and the hangar was enlarged to service the planes. Daniels conducted many flights to Ashfield and landed at the Whitney farm meadow.

Greenfield's only airport was swallowed up in the depression years that followed and soon this fertile was again returned to agriculture use. That was the only private attempt to establish a commercial field here and if not for financial obstacles that arose in that period, it might well be in operation today.

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<sup>7</sup> For detailed information regarding Willard's flights at Rock Dam, visit the Montague Historical Society website and World-Class Database. <https://montaguearchive.org> [First Altitude Flights 1910 \(montaguearchive.org\)](https://montaguearchive.org)

### **Start in Turners Falls**

At the time Greenfield voters rejected plans for a public sponsored field here, efforts were underway to establish an airport in two other Franklin County towns by private interests. The early days of the Turners Falls were unstable ones and this \$100,000 investment in 1930 brought about a considerable amount of enthusiasm in county flying. But interest declined so far by 1937, that the field was sold to the Town of Montague for not less than \$1,800 and stock certificates were made available the day it was sold.

The Turners Falls airport was developed on the White Coal farm, that employed river water pumped from the Connecticut River some distance away. When the corporation was authorized by the state in 1930, Charles Mosher, Albert R. Smith and Walter S. Cassidy, all of Turners Falls, were listed as incorporators. That summer regular passenger service between Turners Falls, Springfield and Harford land was inaugurated, but this idea was slow to catch on and the service was dropped.

The depression years brought improvements to the field in the form of WPA projects designated to expand the Turners Falls port and to clear brush land, for use as landing area. The WPA work on the field made it the largest in the state and one of its runways was 3,000 feet long was long enough to handle medium type bombers.

### **War Training Done**

During the war years Turners Falls airport served as a training base for Navy pilots and in the postwar years it was on the east-west route of Wiggins Airways which offered passenger service between Boston and Albany.

These flights also carried U.S. mail and included Orange on their stops but last year these flights were discontinued for lack of business.

Wiggins has been experimenting with the idea of helicopter flights that would extend, across the state and as far south as New York City. Greenfield is included in Wiggins plans and the line has even investigated locations for landing its helicopters here.

In 1944 the CAA authorized more than a million dollars for improvement of the Orange airport, making it the largest airport ever built.

### **Gliders-First Flight in `29**

The first time a glider ever went into the air from Franklin County land was on Sept. 30, 1929, when the craft took off from the White Coal farm, on Montague plains, later Turners Falls Airport. By May of the following year the number of persons interested in gliding increased to 20 and the Franklin County Glider Club was organized with W. Scott Keith of Deerfield as the first president and Dana Darling<sup>8</sup> as secretary-treasurer.

The airport [Turners Falls] is now controlled by a special commission which is currently trying to interest Northeast Airlines to establish a route from Orange to New

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<sup>8</sup> Darling, of Mohawk Trail, adopted the hobby of gliding in 1928.

York City, noting that many industrial firms in this area would offer a large volume of business passengers.

Greenfield holds a certificate for an air field but this is only a paper authorization that entitles Greenfield to No.1 consideration when it comes to including towns and cities in any list of stopping places for airplanes. However, because the town does not have an airport it must be served in any future air route over the county by Orange or Turners Falls airports.

*Note: During this period, Greenfield shunned an opportunity to significantly expand its economic base and gain potential future wealth and recognition as a convenient stopover for air traffic. Ironically, the Greenfield socio/economic thought process regarding expansion of industrial and retail prospect remains as of this writing. Greenfield calls itself a city . . . it remains a “bedroom” community. e.g.*

During the life of this gliding club many of the members turned to power flying.

Walter Metelica of Leyden was a power pilot who developed an interest in glider flying, but it was his knowledge of regular airplane flying that perhaps made him overlook a procedure that glider pilots must remember. On a Sunday afternoon in 1940 Metelica was at the Turners Falls airport with Darling and others and he decided to do some glider flying. His glider was pulled aloft but being a power pilot, Metelica forgot to cut loose the rope that sent his plane into the air. The light craft looped to the ground and he died of his injuries four days later.

This spelled the end of the Glider Club which had already been declining due to a dwindling interest. It was enough to bring about a conclusion to active soaring in the county.

### **Trained Air Force**

Nevertheless, Darling's glider activities never lagged even after this crash, in Turners Falls. Because he was one of a relatively few number of experienced glider pilots, he was asked by the Air Force to serve as a glider instructor in 1942 and '43 at Vinita, Okla., where he and Myron Powers, also a licensed glider pilot, answered the Air Force's appeal.

This was a different type of flying, particularly during the night when the only lights available for training purposes were kerosene smoke pots that lined the field, This was tricky flying and one close call for Darling came when he was a passenger with a trainee who hit a fence and ripped the plane's wings off.

In 1947, Darling bought an AF surplus two-seater glider and in the years that followed he has entered national and regional soaring events.

Darling flew considerably over the Turners Falls airport that year and on one occasion went as high as 7,100 feet over the port.

**June 13**      [Greenfield MA Recorder Gazette 1953 - 1727.pdf](#)

**Turners Falls Airport Notes**      by R.F. Arsenault

TURNERS FALLS—I can't give you an eye witness account of the happenings at the airport. The reason? Well, I had a charter flight starting Friday and finally ending on Monday.

George Vivier of Turners Falls, Bernard Lussier of Greenfield, Dick McClary of Montague City and I started out on Friday for Canada. The boys didn't want to call it all off so they suggested that we go to Washington, D.C. to see Bernie's brother. We spent from Friday afternoon until Saturday afternoon in Washington, during which time we saw many of the sights of interest, including the White House, Capitol, Treasury and Smithsonian Institute.

I had the pleasure last week of flying with Irving Conn, president of the Rockdale Co. Conn., was a fine passenger and has since mentioned that it was very interesting. I have been invited to become a member of the National Aviation Writers Association. I feel honored that someone thinks I meet the requirements of the association and also that someone thinks enough of my efforts on the column to recommend me. I don't believe that gentleman would mind my telling you his name. He is Walt Harmon of Springfield.

**July 23**      [Greenfield MA Recorder Gazette 1953 a - 0159.pdf](#)

**Guardsmen Spend Night at Airport**

TURNERS FALLS—Turners Falls Airport was transformed into a makeshift Army—base last night as more than 1,000 members of four battalions of the National Guard took shelter at the field for the night. The group, reported to be from the Worcester area, was returning from two weeks' training at Camp Drum, N.Y. The unit left the airport at 5:30 this morning.

More than 300 vehicles filled the area. Units present included the 191st and 211th Field Artillery and the 1st and 81st Infantry.

**Aug. 26**      [Greenfield MA Recorder Gazette 1953 a - 0825.pdf](#)

**Playground Board Releases Old Park Field House**

TURNERS FALLS—The old field house at Unity Park has been turned back to the town by the playground commission, according to recent action of the commissioners who informed the selectmen of their decision.

The old structure has been replaced by a modern \$16,000 field house which has proven popular at the park this summer.

The park board notified the selectmen by letter that as of Aug. 20 the building is in the hands of the town fathers. The place will presumably be offered for sale for the purpose of razing it since there is no use for it where it stands.

The old field house dates back to the White Coal Farm on the plains where the Turners Falls Airport is located. The farm was well known many years ago for the attempts

by its owners to irrigate the soil for successful practices. However, the land was used for airport construction in 1930, the year the building was moved from the farm to Unity Park.

June 4, 1954 [Greenfield MA Recorder Gazette 1954 - 2472.pdf](#)

[Greenfield Recorder-Gazette. June 4, 1954 - Montague \(Bicentennial\) 200<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Issue.](#)

### **[Airport Has Seen Busy Times in Last 24 Years](#)**

They said automobiles would be run off the road when they were first being made but look at them now! You'll see. Someday everybody will be flying an airplane.

How many times has this been said in the last quarter of a century? A hundred times? A thousand? A million might be closer. But only a comparatively few people fly airplanes today. In Franklin County, as in many other small population areas across the country, development of air travel has been slow. Thanks to two generations of air pioneers, the town of Montague has had an airport for 24 years. Keeping it has always been a problem; running it has always been a struggle.

That the local port has been of great service to the town, to the area and to the nation is not questioned. As small as it is, it has turned out hundreds and hundreds of pilots. It has afforded sightseeing tours and chartered flights convenient for traveling but unprofitable for commercial airline operators. This is the story of the Turners Falls Airport, located near the imaginary line which divides Millers Falls and Turners Falls off Route 2A.

Within a mile of the Connecticut River, at one time the chief commercial artery of Franklin County, is the spacious airfield of Franklin County Airways, Inc.

Turners Falls—Airport—was created in 1930 when Sec. of Frederick H. Cook authorized a corporation be formed, with a total capitalization of \$100,000 and with Charles Mosher, Albert R. Smith and Walter S. Cassidy, all of Turners Falls, Incorporators.

The corporation selected for its site the White Coal Farm, an experimental irrigation project employing river water pumped from the Connecticut River far below. The farm experienced financial reversals following the 1929 crash and in 1930 corporation stock was sold to Montague residents so land could be purchased and runways constructed.

The land, flat when the farm was started, had been rolled still flatter for agricultural purposes.

### **GTD Builds Hangar**

By April, 1930, the airport comprised 116 acres and an east-west runway. A north-south runway was in the planning stages. By the following summer Greenfield Tap & Die Corp. had constructed a hangar for a plane maintained there for its executives.

First commercial use of the field came in 1931 when Reliance Flying Service of Watertown, Conn., announced regular passenger service between Turners Falls and

Springfield and Hartford. But public reception to this service was slow and Reliance soon gave up the flights. The port was again utilized for operation of planes for joy-riding purposes.

During the summer of 1930 were to witness the first full-scale air show in Franklin County's history.

But the air shows proved to be just another bit of entertainment for county folk, for interest in the port lagged more than ever. The port was leased in the summer of 1931 to Balboni Flying Service of Worcester. But public apathy continued and in 1936 the corporation sold the field, which had been improved by WPA funds, to the town of Montague.

Official records show land purchased from the Quinnhetuk Company cost \$1,250; a Vladish interest, \$100; John Kozik \$100; Henry Day, \$200, and George Andrews, \$125.

The port had 185 acres and was one of the largest, area-wise, in the state. With aid of federal money through the WPA, one dirt runway had been constructed. 600 feet in length, long enough to permit a medium bomber to land and take off.

Shortly afterward an interest in flying started to revive and a flying school was inaugurated. Both the interest and the school were to suffer immeasurably, however, when, on June 12, 1939, the port witnessed its only fatal accident. Four Greenfield persons, including the pilot, Lester Hodgen, lost their lives. Hodgen had been one of the area's leading proponents of air travel and in 1940 a Lester Hodgen Memorial Hangar was dedicated.

In August, 1939, the field was transferred to a new group headed by Pete Whitman and Steve Shaw. In October of that year Whitman organized a flying club.

### **CAA Trains Pilots**

After these years of adversity, fortune smiled on the port in December, 1940, when the Civil Aeronautics Authority opened a school to train high ranking students at no cost to students. Twenty-five pilots were qualified during this period. There were, at one time during that era, 33 ships on the field.

Just prior to this the field had been taken over by Donald Hood and George Galipeau, who had owned a sales agency for planes in Northampton. The men moved the agency here.

Oh March 9, 1941, under-weight snow and ice, the back roof of the hangar collapsed, damaging three aircraft and a town steam roller.

Greatest activity in the history of the port was to come following lease of the field March 26, 1942, to Dr. Joseph L. Levy, who operated Bridgeport Flying Service, Inc. Dr. Levy brought a total of 17 planes to the field and hired Huber Tandy as an instructor. During his tenure as head of the port, more than 1,000 pilots received training under the government's civilian training program preparing men for the service.

By November, 1943, the port had more than 60 employes and a \$3,000 a week payroll. Students received three months' training here and then went on to college training, sponsored by the government. With Leon Simons as manager, activity continued through that winter, with planes equipped with eight-foot skis. Snow was rolled, not plowed.

This program ended July, 31, 1944, and the field again reverted to private flying instruction as the main source of incomes.

Field expansion was proposed in 1946 to gain interest of Northeast Airlines to utilize the port as one of its New England stops. At a special town meeting, \$1,000 was appropriated for a survey, made by J.R. Worcester Company of Boston. In the meantime, on April 10 that year, an airport commission had been appointed by Selectmen. Serving on that board were Arthur L. Davis, Edward W. Pleasant, Henry Waidlich, Frank Kuzmeskus and Dr. Levy.

In that year the United States Department of Agriculture signed a contract for five years to house a C-47 at the field. For this the town received \$100 a year. The USDA, which based the plane in the area for spraying purposes, shifted its operation to Oklahoma in May, 1952.

#### **New Runways, Hangar**

The first opportunity for substantial improvement to the port was provided Jan. 10, 1947, when the CAA approved funds for the work. The Montague airport commission had forwarded to the federal agency a master plan of development which called for two paved runways, construction of a large administration building and seven hangars: The proposed landing strips were to be 150 feet wide and 3,700 feet long. Each hangar was designed for 7,000 feet of floor space.

Total cost of this program was to be \$125,000, and of that amount the CAA agreed to provide \$62,600, leaving the town's share at \$62,400. An effort was made to determine whether the state would pay one fourth of the cost.

Montague representatives conferred with officials from Greenfield in an attempt to devise a plan whereby the two towns could operate the port and could pay, jointly, for the costs of modernization. Greenfield was asked for 70 per cent of the local cost, or \$43,750, plus the same percentage in all funds the town of Montague had expended on the port up to that time. Total expenditures had been \$28,000 and Greenfield was asked to pay \$19,600.

While Greenfield considered this proposal, the CAA changed regulations by which it would provide funds and asked that a total of 21 plans, rather than the original figure of three, be forwarded. This would have required appropriation of \$6,300, over and above the \$1,000 appropriated at the special town meeting in September the year previous. Manager of the port during this period of controversy was Carl Lambert.

When no agreement with Greenfield could be reached, Montague, gave, up the project. Officials of both towns made statements that they were, nevertheless, still interested in the port.

In September, 1947, George Lake of Orange, proprietor of the Lake Flying Service, offered limited service through the local port, connecting with Springfield, Boston, Pittsfield, Fitchburg and Orange. Persons desiring service were to call the port which, in turn, would notify Lake. He did not stop here unless such service was requested. Lake's twin engine Cessna was called on only rarely and the service soon was suspended.

#### **\$40,000 Transaction**

Franklin County Airways, Inc., was founded Feb. 3, 1948, when a group of 15 county men purchased port facilities from Levy for \$40,000. First officers of that group were Peter Mackin, president; Ronald M. Zschau, clerk, and Lambert, treasurer. Mackin and Zschau were from Millers Falls and Lambert, Turners Falls.

Directors were Arty. Samuel Blassberg, Frederick W. Macker, Samuel H. Couture, Walter M. Garbie, Henry A. Wasieleski and John C. Krowczyk of the town of Montague, Robert W. Penno, Dr. Rosario C. Charron, James P. Mackin, Clinton W. Bernard and Carl J. Kurtgis of Greenfield and Alec M. Vickowski of Sunderland.

Early in 1950, Wiggins Airways inaugurated a flight through here, linking Boston and Albany. On Jan. 27 the first shipment of mail, 63 pounds, left for Boston. On April 17, 1951, air express was inaugurated but in mid-1953 Wiggins lost its certificate to operate. Actual operations had been suspended long before that date. Among considerations by the CAA was evident lack of interest in the service.

The town's second opportunity to gain federal aid came Feb. 15, 1950, when the CAA proposed a \$155,000 project, with half the costs to be borne by the federal government, one fourth by the state and a fourth by one or more towns in Franklin County.

This would have meant expenditure of \$38,750 locally. However, neither Montague nor Greenfield officials expressed genuine interest in the proposal and it was withdrawn by CAA. When that plan was proposed, John Bushway, then port manager, suggested a \$75,000 runway be constructed, with cost to the town at \$30,000. This plan was not considered.

In July, 1952, Roland Arsenault was named manager. For the past several years the port has been utilized chiefly for giving private instruction and as a base for the Civil Air Patrol. A group of South American students was trained there two years ago.

Port facilities are inoperative during the winter. Again, at a period of low ebb, the natural airport site remains little used. In spite of lethargy of the towns, a few men who believe firmly in air travel cling firmly to their investment. One fact remains certain—air

travel nationally is here to stay and perhaps one day Montague's airport site will be fully utilized for commercial transportation.

**June 19** [Greenfield MA Recorder Gazette 1954 - 2619.pdf](#)

### **Famous People Stop at T. F. Airport**

TURNERS FALLS—Two famous names—William Piper, 73, president of Piper Cub Planes, and Nelson Rockefeller—arrived at Turners Falls Airport Tuesday prior to attending graduation exercises at Deerfield Academy.

Rockefeller was flown from Washington, D.C. in an Aero Commander from Maryland Airlines, Easton, Md. Piper piloted himself in a Tri-Pacer from Lockhaven, Pa. Mrs. Lester Gilbert who manages the airport, reported that both men plan to leave the area sometime today.

Another visitor at the airport this week-end was Howard Shaw, a commercial artist from New York, on his way to a summer home in New Hampshire.

May 14, **1955** [Greenfield MA Recorder Gazette 1955 - 2169.pdf](#)

### **Cancer Drive Donors to Get Airplane Rides**

TURNERS FALLS—Preparations are completed, for the Franklin—County Flying—Clubs part in the current Cancer Fund drive.

The club's role will be enacted Sunday at Turners Falls Airport in the form of free plane rides for all making a \$2 contribution or more to the-drive.

Mechanics report the club's plane, an enclosed two-place Aeronica Chief is in top condition. A last-minute check of the plane will be made before rides are given.

Pilot members of the club will take the controls at 10 a.m. and furnish flights of 10 minutes or longer, depending on the size of the contribution made at the airport, continuing until sunset. Rides will not be given children without verbal or written permission of parents. "In case of poor flying weather, the project will be postponed until the following Sunday.

**July 20** [Greenfield MA Recorder Gazette 1955 - 4256.pdf](#)

### **Spot Landing, Bombing Contest at Turners Port**

TURNERS FALLS—Bombing and spot landing contests will be featured at the Turners Falls Airport Sunday Afternoon.

Port Mgr. Edric Chaffee said about 20 local pilots have signified they will participate. Pilots from surrounding airports art also eligible to contend for prizes. Winner of each contest will receive a case of beer. The bombing contest will require pilots to drop a sandbag in that in a small circular area from 100 feet altitude. The pilot who comes closest to the circle's center wins.

The spot landing contest will require pilots to touch ground as close to a line across the runway as possible. Arrangements are being made by Stanley A. Dlugosz of Turners Falls and Richard McClary of Greenfield.

McClary recently passed his private flying license examination at the port. Among flyers who soloed the past week were Walter Dill of this town, John Hunt, Valeda St. Germain, Dennis A. Chaffee, and 16-year old son of the port manager, and Ward Bryant.

**Dec. 5**      [Greenfield MA Recorder Gazette 1955 - 5510.pdf](#)

**Flying High** (Editorial)

Aviation continues to fly high over Western Franklin County. Whether or not it ever comes down to depend on public demand. As yet there is none.

This should provide a reasonable guide to future discussions on development of Turners Falls airport. When there is a paying public for commercial flights it should be given funds necessary for expansion and development.

The past, present and future of aviation in this county comes before the public regularly, yet trial and error has indicated that up to now this form of transport is desired by a minority. And those who do wish it provide their own. Scheduled commercial airlines have not been able to pay their way here.

It is a problem as simple as that facing other types of transport; Railroads, bus lines and taxi drivers. If moat railroads had their way they would cut passenger service in half. Some would eliminate it entirely. Passenger trade doesn't pay. Bus lines, great and small, in country and town, for years have been operating on shoestrings. Some are beginning to break. And even taxi business isn't what it might be.

The Turners Falls Airport commission, now proposes a \$160,000 improvement program. Montague would pay \$40,000 of this. The project would provide for a hard-surfaced, east-west, north-south runway 3,300 feet long, one taxi strip; engineering and administrative costs and lights.

This is an admirable plan. A suggestion that Franklin County has a future in the air, and a tribute to those with more insight than most of us. It does not, however, guarantee benefits except to a few local industries and handful of individuals. There is no commercial airline actively endorsing the work.

Unless and until there is likelihood of expanded use of Turners Falls airport facilities there seems little, if any justification for costly extensions. When the demand becomes loud and persistent, then Greenfield, Montague and individuals and firms should devise and direct a program to adapt this or some other local site to community needs.

The day of pioneering is past. Aircraft is here to stay. The lines have been formed, skies charted and the ways opened to thousands of miles of daily travel over the world. The future lies in expanding service already existing and reaching into new unexplored spaces.



first year will cover the theory of engine operation and construction, aircraft inspection, the use of technical orders, the maintenance of applicable Air Force forms, cold weather operation, engine systems, and finally superchargers and propellers.

By means of lectures, discussions, visual aids, and supervised work on actual equipment, the reserve aircraft mechanic will regain his former skills and will be ready to advance into the modern aircraft maintenance field.

The new course is open to any veteran having either civilian or military experience, in aircraft mechanics. As enrollment in the course will be closed after tonight's opening class, experienced veterans wishing to enroll are urged to attend the first class on a non-pay, non-credit basis. They will be processed for formal enrollment prior to the second meeting, Sept. 25.

**Dec. 4**      [Greenfield MA Recorder Gazette 1956 - 5409.pdf](#)

[Greenfield MA Recorder Gazette 1956 - 5417.pdf](#)

### **Officials Favor 2-Town Airport Improvement Plan**

A proposal will be made for Greenfield and Montague to own and operate the Turners Falls airport as a joint enterprise, members of the airport investigating committee decided last night.

Members of the two-town committee with the Turners Falls airport commission will meet Montague selectmen to request a special town meeting for initial action to implement the plan for joint ownership.

At the special town meeting, Montague voters would be asked to approve Greenfield's acquisition of half ownership of the field and facilities, valued at \$15,000.

If approval is voted by Montague voters, then the next step would be to insert articles in the Greenfield town meeting for similar authorization.

Less than \$200,000 is needed to bring the facilities up to modern standards and make the airport usable for passenger airlines, air express and air freight.

Development of the airport would create a link with the nation's largest cities and market areas and at the same time make this region, more desirable for existing and prospective businesses.

Fifty per cent of the costs of improvement of the airport will be borne by the federal government, with the state to add another 25 per cent. If the remaining 25 per cent were split evenly between Greenfield and Montague, each community would be in the position of expending only 12½ cents on every dollar invested toward the improvement of the airport.

It was pointed out last night that the funds paid by Greenfield to become part owner of the airport could be used by Montague to apply against its share of the construction costs. This would leave a net appropriation of about \$5,000 for the town of Montague.

A Joint airport commission would be named to direct the drawing of a master plan and work out the details for runway and lighting. This commission would function much like the Greenfield-Montague transportation area trustees who supervise operation of the bus line serving the two towns.

The Greenfield-Montague area can easily and economically be linked with the nation's largest cities, members of the investigating committee noted last night.

This additional service, provided by rapid air transportation in and out of an all-weather air field, is wanted by local industry and needed for natural growth of the towns.

Complete air service, including passenger airlines, air express and air freight, and comparing with the largest communities in speed, convenience, and easy access, is a requirement before the area can be completely desirable to new industry with prospects of settling here, they said.

#### **Moderate Cost**

The complete program, with its benefits of increased business, convenience and the perpetuation of the section as a center of transportation, is now available to the individual towns for less than the cost of a moderate house.

Turners Falls airport with its open approaches, is a natural stop for scheduled airlines, it was noted.

The junctions of existing north-south and east-west airlines, the site of the Turners Falls airport, with its open approaches, is a natural stop for scheduled airlines, it was noted.

The location has already been selected as an ideal one by the Civil Aeronautics Administration and has been placed on their program for improvement. This program awaits' only the acceptance "by the town" and the necessary small appropriations to put the project in motion.

Ownership of the land and all improvements would remain with the towns. The federal and state grants are part of a program to improve airport facilities in better communities throughout the country and soon will be withdrawn if not allocated.

Air transportation's place in present-day economy is well recognized, the committeemen maintained. Already scheduled airlines travel more passenger miles a year than railroads, at less than Pullman rates, and no leveling-off point is in sight.

Air express and air freight services provide cross-country deliveries in less than 36 hours with delivery within the eastern half of the country, outgoing or incoming, in less than 24 hours. Service of this type is not now available here.

Smaller airports provide bulk of this business, it was noted. Given as an example was Keene, N.H. with a population of about 16,000, which now has regularly scheduled flights in-and-out of its airport each day. Additions there are being contemplated.

### **Need Joint Ownership**

Joint ownership of the field at Turners Falls by the two communities must be a reality before the project can be completed. This ownership was likened to the joint ownership of the Greenfield-Montague Transportation area, which has proved very satisfactory, and the mutual maintenance of roads linking the two communities.

Proposals now call for a paved 75-foot runway 3,500 feet long with lights installed throughout its length. Such a runway can be maintained with a minimum of effort under all weather conditions. Both day and night flying in and out of the port will become routine when the lights are installed.

**Dec. 14**

[Greenfield MA Recorder Gazette 1956 - 5636.pdf](#)

[Greenfield MA Recorder Gazette 1956 - 5644.pdf](#)

### **Industry Requires Local Airport, Selectmen Told**

Greenfield and Montague selectmen last night considered seeking town meeting approval for the proposed plan to improve and jointly operate the Turners Falls Airport.

The Montague board appeared unanimous in favoring, the move at the meeting here last night. Greenfield selectmen took no formal stand in the matter as Selectman Joseph R. Charron was absent due to illness and Dr. Spencer C. Flo was unable to remain until the end of the session.

Chairman Jeremiah F. Donovan of the local board indicated he would meet with we other members today to determine their opinions in the matter. Dr. Flo had previously gone on record as being opposed to the move, but last night asked several questions as to the future expansion,

Possibilities and potentialities of the Turners Falls Airport as a benefit to both towns were presented by members of a special airport investigating committee to both boards, in the selectmen's room.

Greenfield selectmen this morning voted to insert an article in the March town meeting warrant seeking approval for appointment of a commission to investigate the proposal for joint operation of a municipal airport in Turners Falls.

Formal request for a special town meeting, presented today by James Campbell, member of the airport investigating committee, was rejected.

Representatives of several area industries also voiced approval of the project and indicated their concerns would make immediate use of the improved facilities, both for their own planes and the air services provided.

Members of town organizations from both communities and other interested spectators occupied every available chair. Present for the hearing was the entire Montague board. Arthur E. Stratton, chairman. John A. M. Trudel.

A summary of the project as planned was presented by Robert Hampton, chairman of the investigating committee, who distributed literature including a summary, of the

proposed improvements, a general map of the area with the new facilities and a resume of the federal aid to airports program.

A definite time limit prevails, Hampton told the selectmen, in the approval of the project. In order to take advantage of federal and state aid now available under present law the federal government will assume 50 per cent of all improvement costs and the state an additional 25 percent. This leaves only 25 per cent of the total cost to be divided by the two towns, Hampton noted.

The time to do it is now, he continued, not five or 10 years in the future when costs will be higher and governmental grants may not be available.

The development project, he advised, would make the Turners Falls Airport meet the requirements of a feeder classification airport. As such it could handle all commercial two-engine aircraft up to a DC-3, including all aircraft now used by airlines and non-scheduled freight planes that would use the field.

Included in the project are the paving of a 3,500 foot runway and two taxiways, turfing, fencing, acquisition of enough land for clear zones and lighting of the landing strip for night operations.

Estimated cost for the project, the committee noted, is approximately \$200,000. This figure, they cautioned, was only an estimate obtained from a CAA airport engineer. The figures had not been confirmed by a contractor and could be higher.

James Campbell, another committee member told the boards how he had learned of the airplanes advantages to business from flying his own plane. (There is a future in aviation, he added, and not all flyers are screwballs.

#### **Keene Airport Active**

Comparing this area and its projected airport to both Keene and Pittsfield, Campbell noted that 12 to 11 scheduled flights a day go in and out of the Keene Airport on the summer schedule. This is business that is bypassing this, area, he cautioned.

Campbell also noted that this area is not only the hub of this section of the state, a railroad center and a junction of north-south and east-west highway, but also a junction of the air-lanes in both directions. This is a natural stop, he advised.

Representatives of three manufacturing concerns who asked they not be identified publicly told of their needs for the port and its rapid air service to all parts of the country. Local industry has to compete with other concerns in air areas, and must be able to match delivery service and parts replacement with them, they said.

#### **Quick Delivery Service**

Air freight service out of the improved airport would give overnight delivery service to the south and midwest and 24-hour service across the country. Campbell noted that it recently took four days for a shipment to reach him from Pittsfield and Hampton added,

that a shipment from here to Worcester by present transportation still had not been delivered in five days.

It was noted that there were no strings attached to the governmental aid. The airport and improvements would belong completely to the towns. Present facilities are sufficient to hangar 40 small aircraft, they said, and a repair shop is already at the site.

Questioned by Trudel as to the maintenance costs of the improved port, the committee indicated that the field should be considered as a municipal asset like the school and highways, a definite benefit to the towns, but that the airport, properly managed, should become a self-sustaining proposition within a vey few years.

### **Town Meetings Needed**

Legal aspects of the proposal were interjected by Town the paving of a 3,500 foot run-'Counsel Felix J. Cerrato. The process would be involved and will require two town meetings for each town. He stated.

First to be taken up, Cerrato advised is the formation of a joint airport commission representing both towns. This committee must make up an agreement as to the financial arrangements to be handled by each town. This agreement must be submitted to the state auditor and the CAA for approval and then resubmitted to the towns for adoption at another town meeting.

The joint commission would have the job of ascertaining the percentage of the costs and other expenses which would be borne by each town. The split could be on a ratio of assessed land valuation or any other basis including a 50-50 split, he advised.

At the close of the session the special committee, requested that the two boards of selectmen ask for the formation of the joint airport commission.

**Dec. 22**

[Greenfield MA Recorder Gazette 1956 - 5600.pdf](#)

### **Turners Falls Airport Aid Parley Tonight**

The possibility of future development of Turners Falla Airport through the combined efforts of Greenfield and Montague, will be discussed by selectmen of the two towns and other interested parties in a meeting tonight at 8 in the selectmen's rooms.

The meeting had originally been scheduled in Turners Falls but was changed to allow Dr. Spencer C. Flo of the local board an opportunity to hear the discussion. Flo has indicated he does not favor the development plans.

Brought about through the efforts of a special airport investigating committee, the meeting will feature discussions of federal and state aid available at this time for airport development and the needs of this section for the additional facilities proposed.

Among those planning to attend are members of the Greenfield Chamber of Commerce and the industrial and development commission. Town Counsel Felix J. Cerrato will attend also.

Expected from Montague are the Chamber of Commerce, members of the Turners Falls Airport Commission and Town Counsel Samuel Blassberg. Members of the investigating committee who will probably give their views are Robert Hampton, chairman, Joseph Keating and James Campbell.

Plans are to open the meeting and turn it over to the Montague board for discussion of the proposal that the two towns unite for economical operation of the field. Available now are federal and state funds for improvements, including a hard surfaced runway, lights and other equipment. All interested in the project will have an opportunity to voice their views.

January 16, **1957**     [Greenfield MA Recorder Gazette 1957 - 0217.pdf](#)

**TURNERS FALLS**—Directors of the Turners Falls-Montague Chamber of Commerce voted Monday to endorse development of the Turners Falls Airport. Also endorsed was a five-year tax plan of the National Association of Manufacturers. Next public meeting will be Feb. 6.

**April 2**     [Greenfield MA Recorder Gazette 1957 - 1418.pdf](#)

[Greenfield MA Recorder Gazette 1957 - 1419.pdf](#)

### **CAA Allocates \$134,700 for Two County Airports**

**Note:** Orange airport not germane to this writing.     *e.g.*

Projects at Franklin County's two airports—totaling more than a quarter-million dollars—were given approval by the federal Civil Aeronautics Authority yesterday. However, the towns involved must provide money in order to receive federal grants.

The CAA has allocated \$34,700 for Orange Municipal Airport and \$100,000 for the Turners Falls Airport in fiscal 1958. The state and towns must match these sums by June 30, 1958, in order to receive the federal grants.

While no official word has been received, it is understood the state has already allocated its shares for these projects. The CAA has allocated a total of \$831,800 for 12 Massachusetts ports, indicating a total of \$1,663,600 is planned

Chr. Stephen R. Tucker of the Montague airport commission said today he hopes Greenfield and Montague special town meetings this year will provide \$25,000 each towards the \$200,000 project in Turnes Falls.

At scheduled now, the projects would be as follows:

Turners Falls Airport—\$100,000 from CAA, \$50,000 from the state and \$25,000 each from Montague and Greenfield, a total of \$200,000 for land acquisition for clean zones, runway construction and lights.

Mr. Tucker, who will assume his new duties as pastor of a Worcester church July 1, said the first of four main steps has been completed towards operation of the Turners Falls

port by a joint Greenfield-Montague commission. Town meetings in both towns last month agreed to establishment of a commission.

Step 2, he explained, is writing of an agreement, which must be approved by the state director of accounts. Massachusetts Aeronautics Commission and the town meetings.

Mr. Tucker said he assumes a special town meeting will be called for acceptance of the agreement and appropriation of money. Part of the agreement would be for sale of half-interest in the Turners Falls Airport to Greenfield.

**July 3**            [Greenfield MA Recorder Gazette 1957 - 3015.pdf](#)

[Greenfield MA Recorder Gazette 1957 - 3016.pdf](#)

### **Engineers Begin Surveys at Turners Falls Airport**

TURNERS FALLS—An engineer's survey to determine estimated costs of construction of a hard-surfaced runway at the Turners Falls Airport was started yesterday.

Greenfield-Montague Airport commissioners were informed at a meeting last night that test pits were dug at the field and an engineer from Boston had inspected conditions.

Also discussed at the meeting in the WMEC offices were the latest classification the field under the national airport plan, an article on airports in real estate magazine and latest returns on the potential use survey instituted several weeks ago.

Chairman James M. Campbell said Joseph Farwell, engineer for the firm of Fay, Spofford and Thorndike of Boston, inspected the field yesterday morning.

He said test Pits had been dug so the official could study sub-soil conditions to determine whether special installations for drainage would be necessary, The study showed little or no drainage would be required.

Preliminary estimates and figures are expected to be ready in two weeks. They will include cost of runway construction and lighting of the strip for night operation.

Campbell received approval to acquire the services of John K. Carr, chief engineer of Tekton Associates of Natick, to survey the field and submit estimates on proposed construction costs.

Carr will make his survey next week and estimates are expected to be available for the next commission meeting.

A letter from Joseph Walls, airport engineer from the Massachusetts Aeronautics Commission, explained a former discrepancy in runway length figures.

There had been some doubt to whether the governments would participate in a program calling for runway length longer than 3,000 feet.

The Wallis letter stated that Turners Falls formerly had been listed as a secondary airport, with maximum runway length of 3,000 feet. Recent revisions in the national airport plan, he stated, placed Turners Falls in the feeder classification, making maximum runway length 3,500 feet plus corrections for altitude and gradient.

Wallis forwarded a copy of new revisions in the general laws pertaining to borrowing money for airport construction.

The law formerly permitted borrowing of money by municipalities outside the debt limit only for initial establishment of a public airport.

The law as revised June 7 permits borrowing outside the limit for acquisition of land, construction, establishment, enlargement improvement or protection, he said.

Recent returns on the commission's survey of Industry to determine the potential use of improved facilities at the field followed the previous trend, Campbell said.

Of 31 additional questionnaires returned, 22 indicated they would use improved facilities, six would not and three questioned their use. This constituted a 71 per cent favorable return, compared with 75 per cent favorable in more than 100 previous questionnaires submitted.

On all survey sheets returned last night, those stating an airport now being used named either Turners Falls or Bradley Field. Additional businesses and Industries who have not returned their questionnaires will be contacted.

A letter to Montague selectmen from Campbell requested the board to act favorably when a proposal is made to them that the town acquire the USDA hanger at the field or one dollar.

The commission had previously made arrangements with the federal department, which will abandon the hangar, to acquire it for that sum. It would be used for headquarters for the Civil Air Patrol and storage of equipment at the field, if obtained.

Read was an article from the magazine. Amo-Grams, published for the Institute of Real Estate Management.

It stated that, "The airport may be the hub of the industrial center for the future." It noted that many fields already are emerging as the nuclei of industrial parks with an appeal to a group of light manufacturing concerns.

The article noted that there is an increasing amount of real estate activity in such areas.

It recommended a sizeable airport be generally calculated to include a radius of 10 minutes driving time rather than mileage, and said a port of this type is of particular interest to manufacturers of small items of high value. These include electronics, chemical products, and small machine parts, it said.

**Sept. 6** [Greenfield MA Recorder Gazette 1957 - 4022.pdf](#)

[Airport Approach](#) (Editorial)

Airport service to the Greenfield area has been the most backward of all forms of public transport. Even now with virtually every other part of the country well into the swim, it stands off as though afraid to take the plunge.

Prospects for immediate scheduled runs to an improved Turners Falls airport received another setback this week from officials of the Civil Aeronautics Administration.

Members of the Greenfield-Montague Airport Commission learned at a Boston conference that the U.S. government will not participate in a runway longer than 3,500 feet corrected to sea level and 35-feet wide. This falls considerably short of the goal. Local officials had sought a strip 4,200 feet long by 150 feet wide.

Despite, the lag, there never been greater need for local air service. The. best travelers here can do now is to shuttle to Orange, a distance of nearly 20 miles, for limited schedules. And more than a few pack bag and baggage all the way to busy Bradley Field in Connecticut, some 50 miles away. If air travel is in such demand, it certainly needs space nearby.

There are still other reasons. For several years days of handwriting of doom has been evident on railroad station walls. If the latter facility wants passenger business, it has exhibited little, if any, evidence of such. Railroads claim it is impossible compete with the family car as a popular means of transport. Gradually they have whittled service to the point where any further cuts will leave none. Freight is now apparently all they want.

Bus service, almost equal to the railroad's, it hampered by immobility. Although more flexible. It lacks the means for speed to those in a hurry it holds no appeal. Only in economy does it excel.

This leaves the airlines superior in speed, comfort, and maneuverability. For long distance traffic they presumably never will have competition Thus we must woo these great liners for at least a token service or forever remain on the back street of world travel.

Why this modern form of transportation has not arrived in the Greenfield area is problematic. Certainly, there is as great a demand for it as in the Orange-Athol region, the Keene and Claremont, N.H., areas, and hundreds of others which long have been on airline maps. The trouble appears runways.

Perhaps Turners Falls airport should start afresh in another area of the Montague plains. There still are acres of relatively level, uncultivated, and unused land in the Lake Pleasant-Millers Falls Turners Falls triangle suitable for port development. The present site was chosen hack in the days of barnstorming and stunt flying. It seemed like a good bet for the local daredevils. Probably nobody at that time gave national air travel much thought.

All the money in the world cannot lure scheduled service to a field hemmed in by hills and houses. All the enthusiasm of mankind cannot win a modern, well equipped airfield without a proper approach, figuratively and in fact.

Nov. 9

[Greenfield MA Recorder Gazette 1957 - 5096.pdf](#)

[Greenfield MA Recorder Gazette 1957 - 5090.pdf](#)

## Turners Falls Keeps Plugging Along Despite Disappointment

**Greenfield Recorder-Gazette** EDITOR'S NOTE: *This is the first in a series of articles on airports. The series will review the history and problems of Turners Falls Airport, and highlights of other parts in the general areas.*

*The trials and tribulations of Turners Falls Airport have been packed into a 27-year span.*

*Now at the turning point in its career, the future of the port will be decided by the towns of Greenfield and Montague within a few months. Decision will come following report from an airport commission studying pros and cons of expansion, and need for added facilities here.*

Turners Falls Airport dates back to Feb. 8, 1930. when Secretary of State Frederick W. Cook granted the charter for Franklin Airport, Inc., of Montague Incorporators were Charles F. Mosher, Albert R. Smith and Walter S. Cassidy of Montague.

On May 29, 1931. the field was leased for the season to Balboni Flying Service of Worcester. During 1931 the Reliance Flying Service of Watertown, Conn., announced regular passenger service between Turners Falls; Springfield and Hartford but public reception of the service was slow and Reliance soon gave up its flights.

### **Town Property**

The field became town property on April 9, 1937, when the area was deeded to the town for \$1800, WPA.<sup>9</sup> work began on a new driveway and entrance, to continue through the fall of 1940.

Oct. 7, 1940, found Don Hood and George Galipeau of Northampton purchasing the Whitman-Shaw Flying Service, then operating the port.

First intimation of combined operation came on April 15, 1941 when Crocker-Snow Aeronautic Commission of Massachusetts, suggested Greenfield and Turners Falls join to secure an airport.

On March 26 of 1942 port operation was taken over by Bridgeport Flying Service. By Nov. 10, 1943, a control tower atop the main hanger had been completed and work was progressing on a new hanger. The "field featured 35 tie-downs on the ramp.

### **Sold Some Land**

At the Montague town meeting of March 10, 1945, the town approved sale of the land on which the hangers were situated to the Bridgeport enterprise.

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<sup>9</sup>The Works Progress Administration (WPA) was an ambitious employment and infrastructure program by President Franklin Roosevelt in 1935, during the bleakest days of the Great Depression.

Authorization of Greenfield as a four-way feeder line station came on June 23, 1946, when Civil Aeronautics Board officials certificated the town.

Wiggins Airways, planning to serve the area from east to west, said the certification cleared the way for the company to make commitments.

Northeast Airlines was also authorized by the certificate to make Greenfield a stop on its White River Junction route.

Less than two months later Wiggins cut Turners Falls from its proposed schedule because of adequate facilities.

The day after the Wiggins' announcement, the airport board started action to have the port improved.

Wiggins officials said use of the field would hinge on CAA<sup>10</sup> approval but Crocker Snow of the MAC<sup>11</sup> stated that the field, with, out improvements, was not suitable for passenger or freight service.

Wiggins said the site might get service by December. The port, had been given top priority classification by CAA of north-south and east-west air service. Paved runways were planned if CAA regulations were followed.

#### **Another CAA Visit**

CAA officials again visited the site on August 15, 1946, but would give no direct answers. They were still bothered by the field not bring up to requirements.

The following day Wiggins petitioned the CAA to have the Turners stop removed from the proposed run. The petition said Wiggins earnestly desired to serve Turners Falls but wouldn't because the CAA had declared the port unsatisfactory. Wiggins also stated that approaches to the field were hazardous and because there were no paved runways they could not land DC-3's.

A confused airport commission asked another inspection of the field by CAA inspectors, which was accomplished Aug. 28. The CAA recommended lengthening the runways and several other projects. Greenfield officials were in on the meeting for the first time and plans were to be proposed to Deerfield also.

On Sept. 16. Wiggins announced they planned to stop at Orange but not at Turners Falls.

Culmination of planning and requests came Sept. 21, 1946. when the MAC announced it had recommended Turners Falls for development under federal funds. During October the airport commission made plans for an engineering firm to make development plans for an engineering survey.

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<sup>10</sup> Civil Aviation Authority.

<sup>11</sup> Massachusetts Aeronautic Commission.

### **Contract Received**

A survey contract was received from a Boston firm on Oct. 26 with the federal government to put up half the necessary funds.

Survey work began Nov. 2, 1946. Planned were two hard-surfaced runways with the possibility of runway lights for night operation. It was figured the port should be ready for service by the following winter.

Plans were completed Nov. 20 and Crocker Snow of the MAC favored allocating money for Turners Falls because it was "one of the best sites in New England".

On Nov. 26 a lease was signed with, the Department of Agriculture allowing (*illegible*) hangar in the south side of the field.

Officials learned Dec. 23 that the state might not approve a grant, but federal allocation was almost assured. Of the \$125,000 cost, the federal government was to pay \$82,500 and it was hoped the state would put up \$3,250. No action had been taken to interest Greenfield in co-operation.

On Dec 30, 1946. The Recorder Gazette published the complete master plan of airport improvement. It included two 3500-foot runways, taxiways and an administration building. Greenfield officials indicated they would help in any way they could.

### **Allocation OK'd**

The CAA approved the federal allocation on Jan. 10, 1947, but it was found the town would have to match this amount as state funds were unavailable.

An eight-point program was outlined by the CAA on Jan. 23, for preliminaries to actual construction, hoped to be started by the first of June. Question was how much Greenfield would appropriate as its share of costs.

A three-hour public meeting was conducted Feb. 11 in Turners Falls where it was noted that regularly scheduled airline stops would be a distinct possibility after construction of a usable strip.

Montague proposed that Greenfield put up 70 per cent of the \$31,250 needed. Greenfield selectmen on Feb. 18 said they were "not interested in the proposition" and asked for a study committee. They refused to inaugurate any town meeting move for funds on the 70 per cent basis.

On Feb. 19, it was found that under the Turners Falls proposition, Greenfield would also be required to pay 70 per cent retroactive, on all former port expenses incurred by Montague.

The same day the CAA revised its requirements to call for 21 plans rather than the contemplated three, covering all phases of the project. This would still further increase the survey costs.

### **Project is Dropped**

The project was dropped Feb. 24, 1947, as Montague selectmen felt that "Turners Falls had missed the boat". Greenfield's dropping out had burdened Montague with all costs.

On July 8, 1947, Wiggins announced it was unable to proceed with any of its feederline[sic] operations.

The field became known as Franklin Airways, Inc., on Feb. 3, 1948, when sold to a group of 15 county men headed by Peter Mackin of Millers Falls. Sale price was \$3,000 in cash and \$35,600 in mortgages.

Carl Lambert, airport manager, announcer, plans for charter flight for freight and passengers to begin May 15 and said he was considering scheduled flights.

A change in federal regulations in 1949, permitting the use of smaller aircraft led Wiggins to announce it would start daily service between Boston and Albany about the first of 1950. They would use twin-engine Cessnas and would stop at both Orange and Turners Falls.

Lambert expressed doubt that the port's runway conditions were adequate, especially in winter. He said summer-time conditions were good, as were the other facilities.

On Sept 19, new airport manager Courtland G. Harrington announced plans to increase activities and promotion of charter flying.

On Jan. 4, 1950, Wiggins announced year-round transport service for Turners Falls to start Jan. 23, with two flights daily, one each way.

### **Would Carry Mail**

The next day Wiggins announced mail would be carried and several areas covered and said service would be used and utilized, passengers and mail.

The inaugural flight Jan. 25 was postponed because of weather and 100 spectators were on hand at Turners Falls on Jan. 27, 1950, when the first flight landed in a splash of mud. It carried 1,486 pieces of mail from Greenfield and 200 from Turners Falls.

After two weeks of flying, Wiggins stopped its Turners Falls service until spring because of heavy snow. On March 7, the Turners Falls finance committee cut the recommended repair budget for the port by one third, from \$1500 to \$1000.

On March 26, Wiggins said operations had been encouraging, with excellent results from North Adams, Fitchburg and Keene. Turners Falls, they noted, was the only port on the route without a paved runway.

Wiggins dropped North Adams from its east-west schedule on July 13, Turners port manager John A. Bushway noted local mail and passenger service had been encouraging to air officials and 96.5 per cent of the June flights had been flown.

The post office cut Saturday and Sunday air mail on Aug. 31, but Wiggins continued operations seven days a week.

A new airport commission was named Sept. 26, 1950, including Winslow Wentworth, Olaf Hoff, Jr., Whitfield Moretti, George F. Wrightson and Lynton Hawley.

On Nov. 10 this group urged selectmen of both towns to consider working together toward construction of a runway and taxi strip at an estimated total cost of \$160,000

Greenfield selectmen desirous of considering the proposals, decided Nov. 16 to conduct an extensive survey to determine the sentiment on helping finance the proposed improvement and to determine annual maintenance costs

The survey was started on Nov. 29 and in December, based on an estimate by a CAA engineer, yearly maintenance of the field was estimated at \$3,200, half to be paid by each town.

### **Cancel Stops**

On Dec. 27 Wiggins announced cancellation of many Turners stops because of the snow. Wiggins announced on March 1, 1951, that it was purchasing 16-place planes and Orange was the only port on the run which was large enough to handle these aircraft.

On March 16 Greenfield's town meeting voted not to join Montague in the project. An article to relinquish the certificate to Orange was also turned down.

Wiggins made change in its schedule on April 1, noting air mail had dropped off considerably due to poor connections. On April 17 they announced the start of air express service.

In late May 1951, under orders from the CAB, Wiggins discontinued Sunday flights. They were flying too many air hours for their certification, CAB said, and Sunday was dropped because it was a light day.

Wiggins, on Aug. 20, 1951, applied for federal authorization for a helicopter run, with a stop in Greenfield instead of Turners Falls. Officials said they planned to use DC-3's which could not land at Turners and that the port would be taken off the Boston-Albany run.

### **Other Stops**

Wiggins also proposed to include Greenfield on the Boston to New York City run via Pittsfield and said they were interested in a Burlington, Vt. to New York route by way of Greenfield.

During August Wiggins carried 13 passengers, 153 pounds of mail and 189 pounds of express out of the local port. The bulk of the passengers went to Boston, the main part of the shipments to the west.

On Oct. 19, Greenfield selectmen agreed to a long-range study of air service here. Wiggins recommended helicopter service which they said would be in use by 1953.

In November, air cargo tripled over October and mail shipments increased but Wiggins ceased operations at the port on Dec. 1 with all nights canceled until spring because of snow conditions. This proved to be Wiggins last flight to the Turners Falls airport.

In January 1952 the CAB refused to renew the Wiggins certificate.

On Feb. 15, Wiggins moved to discontinue Greenfield service through Turners Falls after 23 months of service. They filed an application for temporary suspension and said they would resume service by helicopter when possible.

Reasons quoted by Wiggins for the discontinuance were lack of income, inadequacy of the port for heavier aircraft and the high rate of weather interruption of flights.

On July 6, 1955, Rev. Stephen Tucker was named chairman of the Turners Falls airport commission. It was decided to invite a CAA inspector to discuss the possibility of putting in a hard-surfaced runway.

### **Another Problem**

At a meeting Dec. 1, 1955, CAA engineers told Turners Falls businessmen that improvements at the airport would not bring airline flights. The certificate had been transferred to Orange, they said, and both stops would not be authorized.

If the port should be improved, they said, the certificate might be shifted back but the cost for improvements would be considerably higher than the \$160,000 estimate.

The vote at the meeting showed two-thirds in favor of improvement. Sec. Wesley B. Fous of the Greenfield Chamber of Commerce said his group has always been interested in the Turners Falls port and the matter should be discussed with an eye to future development.

December 1955 found both Mohawk and American Airlines saying they were not interested in stopping at Orange. Not enough business, they said, and Orange was far below other stops on the run.

Preliminary plans in the present phase of airport development were inaugurated Nov. 15, 1956 at the Greenfield Public library. Interested citizens got together and again proposed that the two towns get together for joint operation of the port.

Later meetings with selectmen of both towns have resulted in the appointment of a 10-man airport commission, with five commissioners from each.

This commission is presently engaged in an investigation of airport improvement possibilities and potential use of the field should it be improved with the addition of a hard-surfaced runway.

## Runway in Three Directions

### Turners Falls Largest Sod Field in New England

Editor's note: *This is the second in a series of articles on airports. The series will review the history and problems of Turners Falls Airport, and highlights of other ports in the general area.*

Reputed to be the largest sod landing field in New England, the Turners Falls Airport stretches its 265½ acres north of Route 2A between the highway and the Connecticut River.

Situated at an elevation of 350 feet above sea level, sod runways fan out in three directions,

intersecting at a point near midfield. This allows utilization of any wind direction for planes landing and taking off.

About 15 planes are now based at the field, most privately owned. Two are owned by Franklin Airways, Inc., which is the fixed base operator at the port and owns the hangers and installation.

Airport manager is Robert Hazlett, formerly of Brattleboro, who took over the manager's job about a year and a half ago.



Center of operations are these buildings comprising the main hangar, business office and lounge of Franklin Airways, Inc.



"Jump Club". The original Franklin Airways, Inc. hangar was demolished in 1996.

Courtesy Christian S. Couture

### Many Facilities

Facilities provided at the port include charter and rental services, plane storage, flight school and instruction. Available for pilots are a weather service/hanger and tie-down space, flood lights, control tower, snack bar, wind and traffic indicators, an administration center and airport office.

The field itself is owned by the town of Montague. The hangers and other buildings, with the exception of the USDA hanger at the southeast end of the field, are owned by Franklin Airways.

The town of Montague now appropriates \$1,000 yearly for maintenance. The figure was \$1,500 until 1950 when the appropriation was reduced.

The two runways from southeast to northwest and from southwest to northeast are 3,200 feet long. The east-west strip measures 2,800 feet. A 5,500 square yard parking apron in front of the main hanger lies partially on private land and partly on land owned by the town. Private land extends 50-feet front of the hanger.

According to a survey conducted in 1947 by the engineering firm of Thomas Worcester, Inc., of Boston, the approaches for both long runways [*illegible*] 1,000 feet.

### **Excellent Soil**

The survey, which included a soil analysis, rated the foundation material as excellent and the sub-soil as excellent.

There are presently four hangars at the field, all adjoining, two wood buildings 64 by 19 feet and 27 by 40 feet, and two wood and concrete block structures, 57 by 108 feet and 41 by 37 feet. One of the hangars houses a little used repair shop. A control tower, no longer used is atop the main hanger.

Activity at the field varies according to the season. Heaviest traffic is during the summer months when charter flights average two a week and executive flights into the port average two a day and sometimes as high as four or five on single days.

Hazlett reports that specifically chartered flights during the summer have taken him to Bradley Field, Boston, New York City, Burlington. Vt., Portland and Bangor, Me., Albany and Flushing, N. Y.; Newark and Teterboro, N. J., and Cape Cod, among other places.

Slowest time at the port is during the winter when accumulated snow on the field reduces flying to those aircraft equipped with skis.

### **Flying on Increase**

Private flying locally has been on a marked increase, according to Hazlett. Only six planes were based at the field when he took over as manager last year, he said.

A total of five acres at the port are owned by Franklin Airways, three acres with the hangars and two acres with frame cabins. The hangars, according to town records, are assessed for \$10,000 and the land on which they sit at \$3,000. Land and cabins are assessed for \$175 for a total assessment of Franklin Airways property of \$13,175.

One of the cabins was recently donated by Franklin Airways for the use of Turners Falls Civil Air Patrol Squadron for its headquarters and as a base for local mission operations. The squadron L-16 is based on the field.

Three men are presently stockholders in the corporation. Samuel H. Couture holds 119 shares, Frederick W. Macker owners 123 shares and George Saledas. a minor interest with five shares. Hazlett is not paid by Franklin Airways but derives his income from instruction, gasoline sales, charter flying and plane rides. He has full use of the two

Franklin Airways planes, an Aeronica Champion and a Piper Super Cruiser, although the Piper has been inactive for some time.

March 25, 1958 [Greenfield MA Recorder Gazette 1958 - 1361.pdf](#)

### [Airport Board Report Asked by Town Fathers](#)

TURNERS FALLS—Selectmen last night decided to ask the Greenfield-Montague airport commission for a report on its 1957 activities.

The board wrote a letter to commission Chr. James Campbell of Greenfield asking for a report as soon as possible.

Formed a year ago to prepare plans for joint operation of the port here, the commission is expected to report to special town meetings in Greenfield and Montague.

A letter was read from Crocker Snow of the Massachusetts aeronautic commission, sent the board by Chr. Campbell. Selectman Raymond M. Trudel, noting that Snow's letter asked indirectly if the two towns plan to apply for funds for airport improvement, suggested the board ask Campbell for a report on committee activities of the past year.

In its letter, selectmen asked that the commission report on plans it will recommend to the towns. Snow's letter stated that money is available but, selectmen said the letter's tone suggested it might not be available much longer.

The joint commission made no report at town meeting March 8 Both towns authorized the commission to study the feasibility of a plan to provide a hard surfaced runway at the Turners Falls Airport with operation on a two-town basis.

Aug. 14 [Greenfield MA Recorder Gazette 1958 - 3875.pdf](#)

### [Fin. Com. Approves Seven Montague Meeting Articles](#)

*Note: Just the T.F. Airport will be given. e.g.*

. . . The committee recommends the town improve the Turners Falls Airport, grant \$1,750 to the tree department for removal of diseased elms, appoint a committee to study a site for new town offices, discharge the present local airport commission and dissolve the joint. Greenfield-Montague port study commission.

February 28, 1959 [Greenfield MA Recorder Gazette 1959 - 0894.pdf](#)

### [Plans Made for Dedication at T.F. Airport](#)

TURNERS FALLS—Plans for [a dedication at Turners Falls Airport next summer following installation of a \$100,000 hard-surfaced-runway are being made by the Turners Falls-Montague Chamber of Commerce, Montague Airport Commission and Montague selectmen.

Sec. Albert L. Saumier of the Chamber said today purpose of the dedication is to give proper notice to the region of the importance of the modern transportation facility available to the town, county, state and nation at the Turners Falls Airport.

The Chamber, selectmen and commission will serve as a board of operations for the event and will supervise plans for the program, budget, invitations, and assignments. Organizations which have voted to assist are the Civil Air Patrol, Turners Falls Rotary Club, Montague Auxiliary Police and the Turners Falls Athletic Club.

Plans must be worked out, Saumier said, for a public address system, exhibits, entrance fee sales, parking problems, first aid, rest rooms, refreshment, and concession booths. It is hoped, he said, that at least 10,000 persons will attend. The event is scheduled for, June or July but exact-date will depend upon when the runway is completed.

Bids for the work are expected to be advertised as soon as the local commission and federal port agency agree on plans.

**April 25**      [Greenfield MA Recorder Gazette 1959 - 1839.pdf](#)

### **Federal OK Next Step for Turners Port Surfacing**

TURNERS FALLS—Start of construction of a hard-surfaced runway at Turners Falls Airport is pending approval of the Federal Aviation Agency regional office in New York.

Chr. Alfred E Lucas of the Montague airport commission said today plans of Fay, Spofford A Thorndike, Boston engineering firm, have been altered to meet minor changes demanded by FAA. They have already been approved fey both the Massachusetts Aeronautic Commission and FAA district office in Boston. Approval is expected any day. Lucas said.

Once approved, bids for the \$100,000 job can be advertised.

The USDA hangar, for a time believed in the way of the glide path for the proposed runway. will remain where it is.

Lucas explained the approved glide path is on a 7-1 ratio. An object is in line with the glide path must be removed one-foot distant from the runway for each foot in height, he said.

**Aug. 27**      [Greenfield MA Recorder Gazette 1958 - 4010.pdf](#)

### **Major Projects Before Montague Voters Tonight**

TURNERS FALLS—Several major actions will be requested of voters at Montague's special town meeting tonight at 7:30 In the high school auditorium. Two major construction programs will be authorized if given voters' approval. One Involves construction of a housing project for the elderly and the other, a hard-surface landing strip at Turners Falls Airport.

**Oct. 15**      [Greenfield MA Recorder Gazette 1958 - 4980.pdf](#)

### **Surveying Gets Under Way at Turners Falls Airport**

TURNERS FALLS—Surveying work, first step toward drawing plana for a hard surfaced runway at Turners Falls Airport, was begun yesterday by the engineering firm of Fay, Spofford & Thorndike, Inc. of Boston.

Feb. 15 has been set by the Civil Aeronautics Administration as the deadline when all necessary, project documents including a master plan, detailed plans and specifications and project application must be received by the CAA. This will make it possible, Reginald L. Reed, district airport engineer of the federal agency, advised the Montague airport commission, to issue a grant to the town Dy April 1, 1959.

Estimated cost of the surfaced, 3000-foot-long and 75-foot-wide runway is \$100,000, with the Federal government scheduled to pay half the cost and the state and town to split the remaining half. Montague has already voted \$28,500 as its share.

The Federal government has earmarked \$100,000 for the project but from that amount will pay no more than the combined matching funds of the state and town. The \$100,000 tentative allotment was earmarked by the state more than year and a half ago when estimates of runway cost were guessed to be about \$200,000.

Wrote Reed of the need for haste in completing the engineering work: "In view of the fact that this allocation has been outstanding for over a year and a half, and the town has now appropriated funds and engaged its engineers, we believe it to be appropriate at this time to establish a deadline of Feb. 15, 1959, for submission of all necessary documents."

Joseph Farwell., airport engineer with Fay, Spofford & Thorndike who is in charge of the Turners Falls project for that firm, said yesterday there will be no problem in preparing all necessary data by the CAA deadline. He said it is probable the work will be completed by Dec. 1. Farwell said the project should be ready to submit for bidding by February and that once good weather comes in the spring actual construction should begin. He estimated, once conago[sic] when estimates of runway should be done in about two months' time.

For designs, drawings and specifications the engineering firm will be paid 7.25 per cent of construction cost, according to the contract between the airport commission and it. Other fees will include four per cent of construction cost for inspection of construction and one half of one per cent of construction cost for administrative work. Procurement of data, other than in connection with surveys of approach zones, clear zones and property lines will-cost a single payment of \$1,000 with all other data obtained by the firm for a cost-plus agreement.

April 20, 1960 [Greenfield MA Recorder Gazette 1960 - 1981.pdf](#)

### [Glider Flights at Turners Falls Airport Sunday](#)

TURNERS FALLS—Members of the UM Flying Club will receive instrumentation and demonstration rides in a glided Owned by Dana Darling of Greenfield at Turners Falls Airport this week-end.

First formal meeting of the club took place at UM Thursday with 96 present. Mr. Zates of the faculty was named advisor.

Ground school will begin next week with courses in flight theory, CAA regulations, navigation and meteorology taught by the UM staff at the college and the airport. Thirty members flew at the port this week and others are expected to fly this week-end.

**April 28**      [Greenfield MA Recorder Gazette 1960 - 1953.pdf](#)

### **Air Show June 26 Part of Turners Port Events**

**TURNERS FALLS**—Dedication of Turners Falls Airport's surfaced runway, including an air show, is tentatively scheduled June 26.

An organization to arrange the series of events was formed last night in A.C. Hall with the Montague Airport Commission, selectmen and Turners Falls-Montague Chamber of Commerce as co-sponsors.

Named directors were three representatives each from the port commission and two each from the Chamber, selectmen, Civil Air Patrol, Turners Falls Athletic Club, Rotary Club and Auxiliary Police, a total of the port commission was named general director.

The show, as discussed last night, will include chiefly service units. Maj. Robert Hampton and Capt. Stanley Dlugosz of the CAP were named chairman to arrange activities and program. Working with them will be Mgr. Robert Hazlett of the airport, Samuel H. Couture, president of Franklin Airways, Inc., and a Chamber director; Harold Doran of the port commission and Selectman John F. Bassett.

Serving as general co-chairmen are Lucas, Pres. Chester J. Sokolosky of the Chamber and Chr. John A. Charron of the selectmen. Lucas is head of the entire affair.

A review of air shows at Keene Airport was given by Sec., Albert L. Saulnier, Couture and Kenneth A., Sheridan of the port commission. Couture said Keene officials have expressed willingness to advise Turners Falls in its preparation.

A chart of organization was presented the unofficial committee last night and was approved. Detail committees will be named to plan program, budget, invitations, assignments, PA system, exhibits, sales, parking, traffic, first aid, refreshments and concessions.

Chamber officials said they figure that 10,000 persons will visit the port during the dedication. Purpose of the dedication, they said, is to "give proper notice to the region of the importance of modern transportation facility available to the town, county, state, and nation at the Turners Falls Airport."

Officials said entertainment might include exhibitions of jet flying by fighters and bombers, parachute jumping, judo, model plane contest and other activities.

Traffic control and parking will be the job of Acting Police Chief James P. McHugh and the Auxiliary Police. Service clubs will have the job of concessions and refreshments,

with budget invitations and assignments in charge of the general-committee. Selectmen will arrange first aid and rooms.

Sokolosky said service clubs will have an opportunity to make a profit from their sales, except Auxiliary Police, who will be working with traffic instead off in booths. For that reason, he proposed that service clubs share equally profits from the booths.

Ticket sales will be handled through the directors and general committee. Next meeting will be Wednesday—at 7:30 in—the Western Massachusetts Electric Co. office.

On hand for the initial session were: Selectmen Charron and Raymond M. Trudel; Port Commissioners Lucas, Sheridan, Raymond Dion, Harold Doran and Francis Balboni; Hazlett, Chief McHugh, Capt. Martin, Walter Cadran and Roland M. Welsh, AP; Pres. James Guy, TFAC; Samuel H. Couture and Fred Macker, Franklin Airways, with Couture also representing the Rotary Club; Hampton, Sokolosky, Saulnier and William Carroll, Chamber.

**June 16**      [Greenfield MA Recorder Gazette 1960 - 2733.pdf](#)

[Air Seminars Here Aug. 1-27](#)

TURNERS FALLS—Turners Falls Airport and University of Massachusetts will be headquarters this summer for the eastern part of the country's first Air Youth Science Seminar.

In the planning stage since last year, the seminar is scheduled to start Aug. 1 and continue through Aug. 27. Two two-week sessions are planned and it is expected more than 50 high school students interested in advanced aviation training will be registered.

The first year program will be a survey course on many of the facets of aviation, rocketry, missiles, navigation, light-plane piloting, maintenance, jet aircraft, model aircraft flying, parachuting and air traffic control, among other subjects.

The plans will utilize the facilities of the local port and also those at Orange, Westover AFB and Bradley Field. Technical visits will include United Aircraft and Hamilton Standard Propellor in Connecticut.

Instructors and speakers for the specific courses will be experts from the various aviation fields, contributed by industries, airlines, and allied organizations. The seminar is designed to supplement school textbook training for students interested in further advancement. Included among the first session plans is a project by Maj. Robert Brindley, U.S.- Army youth rocket coordinator, to bring his rocketeers to Turners Falls for a week to build a rocket test stand and actually run live tests. Capt. Malcolm J. Conway of Trans World Airlines, originator of the project has been named seminar president.

June 24

Greenfield MA Recorder Gazette 1960 - 2989.pdf

## Big Turners Program This Week-End

### Two-Day Festivities Formally Open New \$114,000 Facilities

TURNERS FALLS—The Town of Montague will dedicate its new \$114,000 hard-surfaced runway facilities this week-end and the whole darned world is invited to the party.

Two days of ground and air activity have been rounded up by municipal and Chamber of Commerce officials and local volunteers.

Prompted by the Chamber, the committee has designed a busy Saturday-Sunday program that calls attention not only to the airport itself, New England's largest sod landing field until the hard-topping, but to the entire Town of Montague.

**KEYNOTE** of the tub-thumping is transportation, by air and by rail. The new airport's surface is expected to make the port's role more important to Montague and Franklin County.

And, with the Boston & Maine Railroad planning a \$15-million electronic switchyard to serve all of New England on the nearby Montague Plains of Lake Pleasant and Millers Falls, industrial development is on the optimistic Chamber's calendar.

The airport program this weekend serves as a springboard for Montague to host area residents at events ranging from exhibits of antique and modern aircraft to daredevil aerial stunts and from fireworks to a band concert.

Police will detour through traffic off Route 2A during the celebration to keep the vehicles of the anticipated 10,000 visitors moving without delay on the main highway connecting Millers Falls and Turners Falls.

**MANY SERVICE** facilities have been arranged to guarantee comfort for the crowds. Special lavatories, an emergency medical staff, fire and police aid, food concessions and other services will be available.

Starting with tomorrow's 1 p.m. opening, displays will continue both days, featuring military craft, a missile, an aircraft carrier model, commercial planes and light ships.

A hangar dance with Dick Hurlburt's orchestra, fireworks at dusk and crowning of an airport queen will round out the evening program, scheduled to get underway at 7:30.

Cole Bros. Air Circus will offer thrills and chills at 1:30 p.m. Sunday and throughout the afternoon as it presents aerial acrobats. Its acts will be interspersed with a number of attractions, including a Turners Falls Military Band concert and the formal 2:30 p.m. port dedication.

**THE SUNDAY PROGRAM** will be officially launched at 7 a.m. with opening of gates for the displays. Three parachutists will give a jumping demonstration from 3,000 feet at 10:15 a.m.

Scores of persons under-chairmanship of Alfred Lucas of the airport commission have worked several weeks planning the celebration, the first designed to attract throngs of outsiders to Montague since the town celebrated its 200th anniversary in 1954.

Tickets on sale at the airport both days cover all events and free parking. Children under 12 will be admitted without charge.

### **Rain Would Cancel Fireworks, Air Circus**

TURNERS FALLS—Rain—that bugaboo of all outdoor programs—will cut heavily into the week end airport program.

Saturday's fireworks display and the Sunday air circus and concert will be cancelled if it rains. The displays, dedication ceremony, hangar dance and exhibits will go on, rain or shine.

### **Dual Tow Flight by Gliders May be N. E. First**

TURNERS FALLS—Among the features of the Turners Falls Airport dedication this week-end will be a dual tow flight of two sail planes believed the first time the stunt has been attempted in New England.

One plane will be towed from Hiller Airport. Barre, headquarters of the New England Soaring Association, and will be flown by Earl Brooks of Hartford. The other will be guided by a local gliding veteran, Dana Darling of Mohawk Trail, Greenfield. His glider is based at the Turners Falls port.

Darling, with Stewart Cumming of Greenfield, built and flew a glider back in 1928 when a Gliding Club of about 20 members used the field where the airport is now located.

Cumming and Darling built their glider, a primary training type, in Noyes' Pattern Shop on Chapman Street. It was run aground a few years later by a student on a training flight. The club folded during the depression.

### **Port Manager Busy as Jack-of-All-Trades**

TURNERS FALLS—Lessons for 20 flying students, several charter flights, countless details and phone calls and servicing transient and base craft make a busy week for airport Mgr. Robert Hazlett.

Hazlett, who became manager four years ago, has a commercial pilot rating for both single and multi-engine aircraft and is a certified flight instructor. He has more than 7,000 hours flying time logged.

Thirty-seven years old, he is married and has two children, Mark, 9, and Randi, 2.

During a typical day, he said, eight to 10 transient planes land at the field on business and another eight to 10 on pleasure flights. Generally, four or more students show up during the day for lessons.

The new radio is on the unicorn frequency at 122.8 megacycles. set aside for small airports. All types of planes can get that



**Robert Hazlett**

**Port Manager** (continued from page eleven) [Greenfield MA Recorder Gazette 1960 - 2988.pdf](#)  
frequency. Hazlett said it has power to carry a maximum of 65 miles and is for both air to ground and air to air communication.

When he is not on charter flights or giving instruction, Hazlett repairs planes, services them, fills gas tanks, has hangar repairs, answers questions from a host of sources and does other tasks.

He figures now that a surfaced runway has been built the average day's work, so far as actual air activity, will treble in a short time.

**June 26** [Greenfield MA Recorder Gazette 1960 - 2989.pdf](#)

### **With B&M Electronic Switchyard Montague Could Have Big Growth**

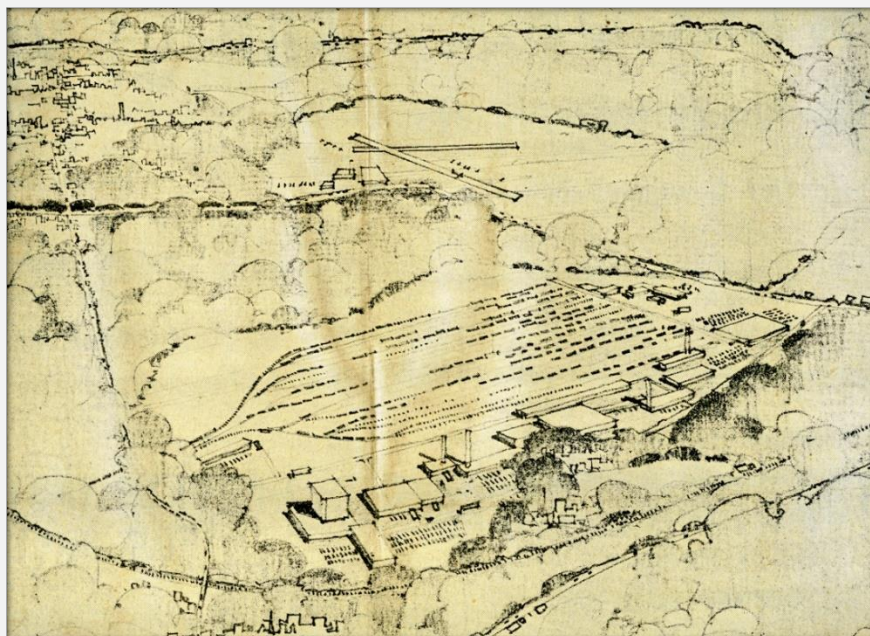
TURNERS FALLS—Turners Falls Airport, now used as a non-commercial port, may become a thriving business airport if the Boston & Maine Railroad builds its proposed electronic switchyard on the Montague Plains, serving all New England.

The railroad has purchased nearly 1,500 acres of land in Lake Pleasant and on the Plain over the past two years with the announced intention of building a 19-million electronic yard.

A portion of the tract has been designated as an industrial park. Officials believe that with both an airport and the switchyard, industry may want to settle here to be near both.

The railroad has given no indication of when such a yard might be constructed. The delay in original plans was caused by refinancing of current B&M loans, officials stated.

That Turners Falls will ever become the metropolis dreamed of by its industrial founder, Alvah Crocker, is beyond comprehension. That it well may return to its leading rank among industrial and mercantile towns becomes each year closer to realization.



Turners Falls Airport and B&M Switchyard should look something like this. James A. Britton, architect.

## Runways Mark Major Step in Three Decades of Trials, Setbacks at Turners Airport [Greenfield MA Recorder Gazette 1960 - 2992.pdf](#)

TURNERS FALLS—More than 30 years of struggle to keep up with an advancing air age will be successfully completed this week-end with formal dedication of the Turners Falls Airport's hard-surfaced runway.

Envisioned as art ideal since the early days of the port, installation of the runway made all-weather operations a reality at the airport, already known as the largest sod landing field in New England.

Following repeated agitation through the years, for runway improvement, including a cooperative arrangement with Greenfield, the runway was finally voted as a Town of Montague project at a special town meeting Aug. 21, 1958.

After several delays and plans, revisions, the contract for runway installation was signed with Peter C. Mackin July 28, 1959, and actual construction started a month later.

**Excavation**, grading and installation of the bituminous concrete were accomplished during the fall and early winter, and final grading completed this spring to terminate the project.

Future plans call for installation of runway lighting to make the field available for night time operations. The field is large enough for additional paved runways if the demand warrants.

The 265½ acre port is town-owned, as is the former USDA hangar recently turned over to the town. Four hangars and other buildings are owned and operated by Franklin Airways, Inc., fixed base operator. Robert Hazlett is airport manager. There are two sod runways in addition to the paved strip.

The airport dates back to Feb. 8. 1930, when Secretary of State, Frederick W. Cook granted the charter for Franklin Airways, Inc. of Montague. Incorporators were Charles F. Mosher, Albert R. Smith and Walter S. Cassidy of Montague.

The field became town property April 9, 1937, when the area was deeded to the town for \$1,300. WPA work began on a new driveway and entrance, continued through the fall of 1940.

A number of operators tried their hand at running the field between its inception and when Franklin Airways took over in 1940. Among the operators were: Balboni Flying Service of Worcester, Reliance Flying Service of Watertown, Conn., Whitman-Shaw Flying Service, Don Hood and George Galipeau of Northampton, and Bridgeport Flying Service, which bought the land on which the hangars are situated, March 10, 1945.

**First Action** toward airport improvement started in the summer of 1946 when Wiggins Airways, planning to serve the area east and west on a recent certification, cut the local port from its proposed schedule because of a lack of adequate facilities.

Survey work on installation of two hard-surfaced runways was started Nov. 2. 1946. Total cost was to be \$125,000. Half paid by the federal government and one fourth by the state. Montague refused to initiate the program alone and Greenfield declined to pay a suggested 70 per cent of the costs.

The port became known as Franklin Airways, Inc., Feb. 3. 1948, when the privately owned portion was sold to a group of 15 county men headed by Mackin. Sale price was \$5,000 in cash and \$35,600 in mortgages. Carl Lambert was then airport manager.

Prospects looked brighter in 1949, when a change in federal regulations allowed use of smaller aircraft and Wiggins said it would include Turners Falls as a stop on its east-west run.

Air mail and scheduled passenger service out of the port was short-lived, however. The first flight landed Jan. 17, 1950. in a splash of mud. suspended temporarily after two weeks of operations, resumed in the spring, continued with periodic interruptions until it ceased altogether Dec. 1, 1951.

In the meantime, a new airport commission, including Winslow C. Wentworth. Olaf Hoff. Jr., Whitfield Moretti. George F. Wrightson and Lynton Hawley was named in 1950.

On Nov. 10 of that year, this group urged selectmen of both towns to consider working together toward construction of a runway and taxi strip at an estimated total cost of \$160,000.

**A Survey** was started in November and on March 16, 1951. Greenfield's town, meeting voted not to join Montague in the project. A petition by Wiggins for a helicopter run. through the area stopping at Greenfield rather than Turners Falls, also went down the drain. In January. 1952, the CAB refused to renew Wiggins' certificate and the area lost its only scheduled air service.

On July 6. 1955, Rev. Stephen Tucker was named chairman of the Turners Falls Airport commission and CAA engineers were brought in again to discuss a runway installation.

This drive for port improvements was kicked off Nov. 15, 1956, at a meeting in Greenfield Public Library. A 10-man joint airport commission, five from each town, was appointed to investigate improvement possibilities and potential use. James M. Campbell was commission chairman.

After the most extensive investigation to date, this board submitted is report and recommended installation of an asphalt business runway by the two towns, without federal and state aid, at a total estimated cost of \$33,000.

Not satisfied with this recommendation, a group of Turners Falls businessmen and officials, armed with figures on installation of a bituminous concrete runway during

discussions and bringing the matter to a special town meeting and it was voted, without Greenfield's participation.

With Greenfield eliminated, the airport commission was revised as a town of Montague function and Alfred E. Lucas was named chairman, a position he still holds.

**Prospects** for regular airline service out of the port, after improvements, suffered a setback when Northeast Airlines, operating on Greenfield's certificate out of Orange Municipal Airport, discontinued all service there in November, 1958, after a trial period of increased flights.

Other proposals for use of the port were brought out last year. The airport commission in January gave its tentative OK to a proposal for an air museum and in June started work on another proposal that the "field" "become a headquarters for a U.S. Youth Aviation Center.

This latter proposal will be a reality this summer when the first Youth Air Science Seminar gets under way. About 50 high school students will use facilities at UM as a base of operations this year with plans to move to the local port later. The air museum is still in the planning stage. Malcolm J. Conway headed both proposals.

Despite setbacks and disappointments, airport backers have succeeded in realizing a main goal in improving the port so it can be used by more modern, faster and heavier aircraft. Officials report a marked increase in the number of business flights in and out of the field and landings by larger aircraft since the runway became available for use.

Works performed at the port has included reroofing and revitalizing of the hangars, resurfacing of the entrance roads and paved areas and conversion of the airport office into a lounge. Eventual use of the former USDA hangar is still undecided.

What the future holds for the Turners Falls Airport remains to be seen. Town of Montague residents' interest in its future in the air age have made it ready for expansion if required. Boston & Maine Railroad plans for a multi-million dollar electronic yard and industrial park close by could make the local port a major center of industrial and air activity in Western Massachusetts.

**Port Service Praised by Flying Execs.** [Greenfield MA Recorder Gazette 1960 - 2988.pdf](#)

TURNERS FALLS—Managerial services at Turners Falls Airport are outstanding.

That is the consensus of fliers and businessmen who use the field, according to a file of correspondence received by Mr. Robert Hazlett.

Typical of the letters commenting on the service is this one from G. D. Mason, vice-president and treasurer of Dunham's Shoe Store, Brattleboro: "I am pleased to have this opportunity to comment on the very excellent service that I have received during the time that my Cessna 172 has been based at the Turners Falls Airport.

"Mr. Hazlett has done a remarkable job in my opinion in cleaning up the operation there and has given diligently of his time and efforts towards the project of surfacing the runway and bringing things into ship-shape condition.

"I have been especially pleased with the very excellent personal service that Mr. Hazlett has rendered in doing me small favors—seeing to it that my airplane was always properly serviced and ready on time, removing the seats promptly for transport of cargo, making telephone calls, etc. These are small things, perhaps, but certainly they have added materially to the real satisfaction I have felt with the type of work that he has done in my dealings with him.

"I believe that Mr. Hazlett has operated his business in a manner which is a credit to the aviation industry and I am happy indeed to go on record in this manner."

### **Hard-Surface Job at \$114,000 Got Town Okay in 1958**

TURNERS FALLS—Following years of talk about making major improvements to Turners Falls Airport, Montague on a "go it-alone" basis took the bull by horns Aug. 21, 1938, and authorized a surfaced runway.

Following that vote and appropriation of \$28,500, one fourth of the cost, there was some delay before specifications could be prepared and bids solicited.

Mackin Construction Co. of Greenfield was low bidder in July last year. Work began a month later with land clearing.

A total of \$114,000 was authorized by the Federal aviation Agency, the federal government to provide one half of the total and the town and state, a fourth each. Alfred P. Lucas was named by selectman as chairman of the airport commission. Others appointed were Raymond J. Dion, Stanley A. Dlugosz, Kenneth A. Sheridan, and Harold A. Doran, Dlugosz, who resigned was replaced by Francis Balboni.

Mackin bid \$82,107 with \$69,775 for the 3000 foot-long, 75 foot-wide runway and \$12,332 for the apron and taxi area. Construction was by the Zalensky Construction Co. of Agawam, to which Mackin sublet the contract.

Although the runway apron and taxi area are done, some work still remains; painting numerals on the runways and some grading.

The day may come when a commercial line will make use of the facility but no one is banking on it. The official view rather, that industry, business and the area's private schools, along with an increased interest in private flying will not only make the port a paying proposition for both the private owners and town but provide a benefit through increased money in circulation to the entire area.

Local officials and pilots and officials from other cities and states agree Turners Falls now has one of the finest ports for its size in all of New England.

### [All to Pay at Port Dedication Festivities](#)

TURNERS FALLS—There will be no getting onto Turners Falls Airport without a ticket this week-end.

The committee has voted to place ticket men at the entry the entry to the port tomorrow starting at 1 p.m. to assure no one gets in and stays at the port to enjoy the festivities free. Says the committee, "One pay, all pay."

Cost is 99 cents and the ticket is good for all activities both days. Children under 12 get in for free.

### [Airport Among Units Pioneering Youth Seminar](#)

TURNERS FALLS—Turners Falls Airport will participate in the first Air Youth Science Seminar attempted in this area Aug. 1-27.

High school students who enroll will be housed at UM and will have classes there in aviation, rocketry, missiles, navigation, light plane piloting and maintenance, jet plane explanation, model plane flying, parachuting and air traffic control.

Participants will come from Air Explorer Scouts, Civil Air Patrols and other units and will represent the entire northeastern portion of the country.

Students will study at UM and get practical experience at the port here and at airports in Orange Westover Air Base and Bradley Field.

Capt. Malcolm Conway of New Jersey, TWA pilot and organizer of the idea, is seminar president. Instructors will be experts from various fields of aviation loaned for the purpose by the industry.

### [—Volunteers Man Food Booths for Airport Affair](#)

[Greenfield MA Recorder Gazette 1960 - 2986.pdf](#)

TURNERS FALLS—Many volunteer workers from Turners Falls Rotary Club and St. Anne's Parish will man concession booths for the two-day Turners Falls Airport dedication tomorrow and Sunday.

Listed by Chr. James C. Humphrey are: Saturday evening, 6 to 10, Armand Berthiaume, Mrs. Ferdinand Abbott, Mr. and Mrs. Ferdinand Chagnon, Postmaster J. T. Shanahan, Ernest Socquet, Mr. and Mrs. Georges Vray, Mrs. Bartholemew Vivier and Philip D. Shanahan, food booths.

Mrs. Randolph Suhl, Mrs. Henry Dion, Lyle Coleman, Mrs. Arthur Girard, Mrs. Anna Guilbault and Eugene Koch, soda booths, Ferdinand Abbott, Randolph Suhl, Arthur Girard, Harold Doran, Dr. Albert B. Giknis, Atty. John R. Dolan, Atty. Francis E. Dolan and Joseph Golonka, refreshment booths.

Sunday, 10 a.m. to 2 p.m., Mrs. Edward Dion, Mrs. Antoinette Emond, Mr. and Mrs. Isidore Paulin, Robert A. Cade, Mr. and Mrs. Paul Richotte, Mr. and Mrs. Henry Dion and Jogn Girard, food: Felix Porlier, William J. Powers, Mrs. Eugene Prunier, Mrs. Albert McCarthy, Mrs. Chester Sokolosky and Francis L. Murphy, soda; and Raymond

Doran, Lloyd, J. Starbuck, Coleman, Dr. Arthur E. Burke, Jr., Joseph Sherman and George Martineau, refreshments.

Sunday, 2 to 6 p.m., Mr. and Mrs. Paul Fournier, Mrs. Charles Care, Mrs. Edmund LePine, Mrs. Leo Bordeaux, Mr. and Mrs. John Paulin, Mr. and Mrs. Paul Socquet and Edward Kuklewicz, food; Miss Doris Paulin, Mrs. George Riel, Edward Reum, Mrs. Lionel Girard, Mrs. Ernest Thibodeau and Camille A. Paulin, soda: and Lionel Girard, Harold Pomeroy, Neil Perry, Robert Sabato, Clarence Sadler, Francis Shanahan, Harry J. St. Germain and Robert Howard, refreshments.

—**Truck, Crew for Port Alert**

TURNERS FALLS—A fire truck and two regular firemen will be on duty during the weekend celebration at Turners Falls Airport.

Permission has been given by the Turners Falls Fire District prudential committee to send a truck from the department out of the district to assist with the ceremonies. The airport is technically in the Millers Falls district.

—**Young people**

TURNERS FALLS—from Turners Falls, Greenfield and Millers Falls will be selling tickets at entrances to the various Franklin County manufacturing plants Turners Falls Airport dedication.

**Advertisement:**      [Greenfield MA Recorder Gazette 1960 - 2992.pdf](#)

**REDEDICATION of TURNERS FALLS AIRPORT**

Among: other good citizens of {vision, Charlei Mother had an abiding faith that eventually Turners Falls Airport would give our Town facilities for airplane travel.

This day has been slow in arriving but Rededication this week of our Airport with its new 3000 foot runway is an important step in the right direction.

Air travel for passengers, express and freight grows in importance every day and air travel is already a necessary adjunct to the progress and prosperity of all sizeable communities.

An adequate airport will create business. Rome was not built in a day and main line service is not to be expected at once but first a shuttle service to Boston, Bradley Field, New York, and Albany, for example, for passengers, freight and express and when growth warrants it, through service is bound to come.

Our own Company and all other Industries in the community suffer every day from the lack of such facilities.

*Montague Machine Company,  
Turners Falls, Mass.*

**June 25**      [Greenfield MA Recorder Gazette 1960 - 3006.pdf](#)

**Sky's the Limit**      (Editorial)

Years of discouragement and frustration will be forgotten Sunday when Turners Falls Airport's new extended runway will be dedicated.

Three decades have passed since the port development began. They have been trying for years. Times of hope and optimism have been followed by periods of defeat and dejection. It often appeared the air age was passing by Montague and its' hill-top flying field.

There still is no indication that the Turners Falls port will ever be a major passenger stop. Its use to the area will nevertheless be great in the years to come despite its limitations in length. As a commercial port it will play an increasing role in the area's economy.

The credit goes to Montague alone. Greenfield teetered on the edge of participation for several years. But when it came to backing interest with money the shire town citizens declined. That left Montague to go it-alone and its people were just as well pleased. The port is theirs and they can go it alone.

A hard surfaced, all-weather runway will not bring immediate prosperity to the Turners Falls Airport. It will attract in the years to come. This latest improvement provides greater prestige in the eyes of those who fly. More commercial planes will use' the facilities. In other words, Turners Falls will be written in larger letters, figuratively, on the nation's airways maps.

Improvements to the airport add considerably to Turners Falls' stature as a transportation point. When the Montague electronic freight yard is built, it will make the field even more important in New England eyes. Air freight shipments will then become a major service and the port will be a shipment center.

Even the unconvinced owe it to themselves and the area to pay an inspection call to Turners Falls Airport Sunday. Not only will they be entertained by a spectacular air show but also they will see a fine small airfield that holds great hope for the future. Facilities for storage and creature comforts have been improved mightily and the entire plant today should be a source for county pride,

As for the people of Montague, congratulations on their vision beyond the horizon.

**June 27**      [Greenfield MA Recorder Gazette 1960 - 3020.pdf](#)

[Greenfield MA Recorder Gazette 1960 - 3028.pdf](#)

**5,000 at Airport Dedication Show in Turners Falls**

TURNERS FALLS—5,000 persons visited Turners Falls Airport Saturday and Sunday during dedication of its new \$114,000 hard-surfaced runway.

Actual dedication, came in mid-afternoon yesterday with about 20 minutes of speech making and cutting of a ribbon held in front of the speakers' platform by two CAP cadets, but most of the crowd, interested in the air show going on, did not witness the brief program.

Miss Patricia Smith of 11 Park Street, 17-year-old beauty who graduated from Turners Falls High School last Thursday, was named dedication queen during a dance in the USDA hangar Saturday night.

Several exhibits were set up with a B-52 jet engine, drawing most attention. With one side of the massive engine uncowed,[sic] visitors had a chance to watch the mechanisms within. This engine, which weighs 10,000 pounds, is newly developed and has 17,000 pounds thrust compared to 10,000 pounds thrust on current type B-52's. There are eight of these engines on the monstrous bombers.

Other exhibits included the model of Aircraft Carrier Quonset Point and a navy Regulus missile. A few commercial aircraft were on display on the ramp near the hangar, including a Cessna 310-C which retails for \$86,000. Many transient planes were parked at the distant end of the field. There was little activity Saturday until evening, when the dance, with music by Dick Hurlburt's Orchestra, and a fireworks display, took place.

Highlight of Sunday, and biggest crowd-pleaser were low altitude passes over the field by three F-100 Super-Saber jets and four F-86 Sabre-Jets. The F-100s, as they neared the ground at 400 miles per hour opened after-burners to provide a deafening roar before catapulting out of sight in seconds. Both of these fly-overs were in the morning and before the large afternoon crowd showed up. The F100s were from the Connecticut Air National Guard and the F-86s from the Massachusetts Air National Guard.

During the afternoon three T33 jets from Westover Air Base made a few passes over the field.

An Army H-21 helicopter gave a demonstration of its maneuverability in both morning and afternoon. There were light plane exhibitions and Ray Dion of Millers Falls gave a demonstration of spraying and dusting. A Westover base judo team showed how its done, and there were several parachute jumps, with a triple jump by James Blaisdell, Fred Morin and Richard Fillmore of the Pioneer Valley Sport Parachute Club. The trio leaped from 7,1000 feet and opened chutes at 2,000 feet, in a free-fall exhibition.

The Cole Brothers Air Circus from Fort Wayne, Ind., got its acts underway at 2 and continued throughout the afternoon with various stunts and light plane maneuvers, including girl on a wing picking a man from a speeding roadster and many aerobatics.

Dedication speeches were made by Chr. Alfred P. Lucas of the airport commission, mayor of ceremonies, Rep. Walter T. Kostanski, Jr., Maj. Robert Hampton of the CAP; Pres. Chester J. Sokolosky of Turners Falls-Montague Chamber of Commerce. Rev. Stephen R. Tucker of Worcester, former pastor of the First Congregational Church here and former chaplain of the local CAP; and Chr. John A. Charron of the selectmen. Also introduced were Miss Smith and Selectman Raymond M. Trudel. Mr. Tucker gave the invocation and Rev. John Klekotka of Greenfield, the benediction.

Chr. Edward J. Lynch of the Massachusetts Aeronautics Commission spoke briefly prior to the formal dedication ceremony because he had to leave for a port dedication in the eastern part of the state.

A sample of glider flying was done by Dana Darling of Greenfield and there were exhibitions of model plane maneuvers by Ray Jablonski of South Deerfield and Raymond Jarvis of Turners Falls.

Montague Auxiliary Police were kept busy throughout the two days directing the heavy flow of traffic to the port. Route 2A was closed to through traffic during yesterday's performances. State police from Shelburne Falls barracks and Montague's regular police were on duty.

Today the port, termed as one of the finest small ports in New England, returned to normal.

February 17, 1961

[Greenfield MA Recorder Gazette 1961 - 0714.pdf](#)

### [Land Damage Case Delays Acceptance of Port Project](#)

TURNERS FALLS—Only settlement of a land damage case remains before final approval of surfaced runway construction at Turners Falls Airport is made by the Federal Aviation Agency.

The Montague airport commission points out in its annual report that additional land, other than that initially taken for port purposes, was needed to comply with FAA requirements. A suit is pending against the town by owners of the land, thus delaying final acceptance.

The delay does not affect use of the port nor installation of landing lights if town meeting March 11 approves a \$3,000 special article inserted by the commission. The commission originally planned to use a balance from the \$100,000 runway to install lights but now it is holding that money in its account pending settlement of the land case.

Total income during 1960 to the town from the port was \$80, the report notes, \$50 from the 26th Yankee Infantry Division of the Massachusetts National Guard, which bivouacked at the port two days last summer, and \$30 for hanger rental. The commission reports the Yankee Division will bivouac at the port July 22.

Mention is made of last year's June 26 dedication of the runway and of the air youth science seminar. A coat of roof cement was applied to the town-owned hangar.

Commissioners are Alfred P. Lucas, chairman. Francis H. Balboni, Raymond H. Dion, Kenneth A. Sheridan and Harold A. Doran.

May 20

[Greenfield MA Recorder Gazette 1961 - 0498 \(2\).pdf](#)

### [Turners Port Manager Buys New Plane](#)

TURNERS FALLS—A \$7,000 single engine, two-seater Piper Colt for use in giving flying lessons has been purchased by Mgr. Robert Hazlett of Turners Falls Airport.

Hazlett said his purchase, which is not associated with Franklin Airways, Inc., will make possible more complete pilot training for students, including instrument flying, a new Federal Aviation Agency regulation.

He said delivery is expected Friday and the plane will be put into immediate use for student training. The plane has a 110-mile per hour cruising speed and six-hour range.

Hazlett said at present 23 student pilots are enrolled in courses he is teaching. In the past five years, he noted, he has given private flying lessons to 85.

The 23 now enrolled will receive 20 hours dual instruction and 25 hours solo flying. Hazlett said he will continue to use a Franklin Airways plane for some of the lessons.

In conjunction with purchase of the Piper Colt, Hazlett, has obtained a Piper dealership for sale of planes ranging from small single engine units to the largest of the firm's twin-engine craft.

Besides giving actual flight training, Hazlett also teaches a ground instruction course.

**June 6** [Greenfield MA Recorder Gazette 1961 - 0619 \(2\).pdf](#)

### [Airways Leases Hangar, May Soon Sign Base Operator](#)

TURNERS FALLS—Franklin Airways, Inc., today accepted rental of two-thirds of the USDA hangar at Turners Falls Airport at a figure offered by the Montague airport commission.

Pres. Samuel H. Couture announced directors voted Monday to rent that portion of the town owned hangar for \$20 per month and a check for that amount has been sent the commission.

Acceptance of the hangar rental may resolve much of the difference between the commission and Franklin Airways.

Couture also announced Franklin Airways is "close" to signing a lease with a prospective base operator. He said if all goes according to schedule, the base operator can be operating at Turners Falls Airport by June 15. Franklin Airways, according to its directors, will then step out of the picture and the lessee and airport commission will do business on acceptance of a use agreement.

The proposed base operator, whom Franklin Airways declined to name until final papers are signed, will provide flight instruction, charter service, plane rental, maintenance, gasoline sales and sell new and used planes.

With a base operator in the flight instruction business, Robert Hazlett, present manager of the port, may be without a base port here from which to give lessons. Hazlett recently announced he is buying a new plane in which to give lessons.

One proposed paragraph of the use agreement of the port commission is that the base operator shall have no competition in those fields of aviation and services he provides.

All hangar facilities at the port, with exception of the USDA hangar, are owned by Franklin Airways, Inc. The other third of the USDA hangar is now leased by the commission to Raymond Dion, who is in the spray dusting business.

**June 12**

[Greenfield MA Recorder Gazette 1961 - 0722 \(2\).pdf](#)

### [Franklin Airways Moves to Lease its Property](#)

TURNERS FALLS—Franklin Airways, Inc. and the B&M Aviation Corporation of Manchester, N.H. plan to complete negotiations for lease of the former's property at Turners Falls Airport Tuesday.

Pres. Samuel H. Couture of Franklin Airways said today meetings scheduled Friday had to be postponed due to bad flying weather. B&M, he said, plans to begin operation of all phases of aviation at the port by Thursday.

It is expected, he said, that B&M officials will meet with Montague's Airport Commission to discuss and sign a use agreement.

Manager of B&M is Armand Morin who will move his operation from Grenier Air Base to Turners Falls.

Franklin Airways owns hangars and all major equipment at the port but the runways, taxiways and a small hangar are town owned. The port is operated under jurisdiction of the port commission. Its facilities include a \$100,000 surfaced runway built with federal, state and, local funds.

Status of Robert Hazlett, currently manager of the Turners Falls port, will presumably hinge on any agreement between him and the new managership and possibly the port commission.

**Aug. 7**

[Greenfield MA Recorder Gazette 1961 - 1551 \(2\).pdf](#)

### [Thousands of Guardsmen at Turners Falls Airport](#)

TURNERS FALLS—A visit by several thousand national guardsmen, 400 army vehicles and four army helicopters highlight activity at Turners Falls Airport during the past week.

National Guardsmen, ranging in age from 18 to 40, bivouacked at the port Friday night. The group, most from Eastern Massachusetts and all members of the Yankee Division, included aviation, infantry, tank, maintenance, and transportation companies.

—The four helicopters, including one large cargo transport were among a group searching for a missing single engine Cessna and landed here to refuel. Francis Balloni, accompanied by two CAP cadets, John Green and Jordan Cohen, flew 120 miles Saturday in search for the missing craft.

**Aug. 14**

[Greenfield MA Recorder Gazette 1961 - 1657 \(2\).pdf](#)

### [Youth Seminar Instructs 35 at Turners Airport](#)

TURNERS FALLS—Thirty-five young men took part in an air youth seminar at the Turners Falls Airport yesterday.

They were given rides in Airlines Pilot Malcolm Conway's plane by Conway, Carl Ellis and Pan American Pilot Capt. James Scanlon who flew here from Hackensack, N. J.

Capt. Scanlon was accompanied by his son, Paul, and they tied up their Luscomb sea plane on the Connecticut River at the Rod and Gun Club dock.

Parachutist Fred Morin had intended to jump from a plane but rough winds prevented it and he gave a ground demonstration and description of sport parachuting instead. He illustrated the use of the parachute, how to fold it and briefed the group on other aspects of the sport.

**Oct. 10**      [Greenfield MA Recorder Gazette 1961 - 2586.pdf](#)

### **Montague Airways Signs Agreement for Airport**

TURNERS FALLS—A long awaited use agreement was signed yesterday by Chr. Alfred P. Lucas, representing Montague airport commission, and Henry Balboni, president of Montague Airways.

The process started last July when the commission made it a requirement for any aircraft business to sign an agreement before it could use town-owned port facilities. Since then, both Franklin Airways and Montague Airways have been using the airport without agreement. Franklin Airways refuses to sign the agreement unless it is revised. Lucas made it clear at last week's meeting of the commission that any agreement signed by one company would have to be the same, or without discriminatory factors, for another.

Since the port is municipally owned, FA and MA have been using the port without profit to the town. This is why a use agreement must be signed. The next step for Montague Airways is to try to lease a piece of land 300 feet square for the purpose of constructing a hangar. This point will come up in the next meeting of the commission.

**April 12, 1962**      [Greenfield MA Recorder Gazette 1962 - 1654.pdf](#)

### **Conway Replaces Hazlett as Port Boss in Unanimous Montague Board Action**

TURNERS FALLS—The Montague airport commission last night named Malcolm J. Conway of Gill as manager of the Turners Falls Airport, succeeding Robert Hazlett.

Conway was appointed, effective Monday, on a motion by Harold Doran, seconded by Clarence Sadler, with a unanimous vote of the board, including Chr. Ronald Zachau and fourth member Daniel J. Kelleher.

Nothing definite was decided as to who should have control of the radio at the port, although there was much discussion. On Doran's suggestion, a query will be sent the Federal Communications Commission to determine if Hazlett is the owner and operator of the radio set.

Hazlett, relieved of his duties as airport manager after several years' service was to be notified but not officially "fired" since board members felt he had never been officially appointed to the unpaid position, only "assumed" manager.

Here, in capsule is how the appointment came about.

Doran felt that when Hazlett left Franklin Airways for Montague Airways he should have been relieved of his duties as airport manager, because the port operation was handled from "Franklin so many years" and he felt there should have been no change.

Kelleher said Hazlett should also be given some consideration and cited his long effort there "without pay".

Doran insisted that Franklin Airways should be considered at this point.

Kelleher said he had talked to both Hazlett and Stephen Richardson, Franklin manager. He said he had concluded that the port manager should be whoever owns the radio.

Chr. Zschau advised that the matter on the radio would have to be shelved. It later developed no one knew for sure if Hazlett should be authorized to have the radio, although the board admitted he does own the set. Zschau said the radio, according to his reading of the regulations, should have been issued to an owner or base operator only, not to an individual. Hazlett, while at Franklin, had applied for it as the operator and was issued it. Zschau felt this might have been an error, pointing out the operator had been Franklin.

Zschau then said he would entertain a motion to discharge the present airport manager and appoint a new one. He said, "This is not a good situation," referring to the fact that a member of one of the airways was port manager. He said this is how it's done at most small airports, however.

Doran moved for Conway's appointment as manager. Sadler seconded. Kelleher said Conway's qualifications were probably indisputable, but "he is not around here very often". Doran said that the place would be covered at all times by someone from Franklin Airways, Inc., probably Richardson.

Leonard Doton, co-owner of Montague Airways, Inc., asked, "Why not elect Richardson? Why go through Conway?" Zschau said here that "Conway carries a certain prestige" for the job.

"In what way?" asked Doton.

"Well, he's a TWA captain," said Zschau. He started to explain further, but was interrupted.

About this time, Kelleher wanted to go into executive session on the strength that the matter was becoming involved in personalities. Zschau disagreed, however, saying this would only start trouble all over again. He also indicated he didn't expect anything serious to develop in the way of personalities.

Kelleher then said he would go along with Conway as port manager with the stipulations, he be under absolute control of the commission, that no preferential treatment

be accorded any operator, that all FAA regulations be observed and that there be cooperation with all interested parties to encourage and develop all airport activities.

Sadler and Doran said they would certainly go along with this, and Zschau indicated he would. Kelleher then asked of Zschau, "Does Hazlett own the radio?"

Zschau said, "Yes." Kelleher said perhaps the board should name Hazlett official radio operator. He said, "Since we're removing Hazlett, I certainly don't think we should be trying to take his radio away from him."

This touched off another discussion on whether Hazlett should, in fact, ever have had the radio. It was then that Doran suggested the FCC be queried.

Zschau said he would send letters to the FCC, Hazlett and Conway, notifying each of the board action and requesting the necessary information from FCC.

Joseph Kurkulonis of Montague Road spoke to the board-several times, mostly "off the record", but indicated publicly flyers might rather work with Richardson than Conway. He was reminded by Zschau and Doran that Richardson would be in charge

**April 13**      [Greenfield MA Recorder Gazette 1962 - 1681.pdf](#)

### [New Port Manager Calls for All to Work in Harmony](#)

TURNERS FALLS—Malcolm J. Conway, new Turners Falls Airport manager, today issued an appeal for harmony among groups using port facilities.

Conway was appointed Wednesday by the Montague airport commission to succeed Robert Hazlett, who had served several years.

Meantime, Pres. Fred Morin of the Pioneer Valley Sky Divers, a parachute jumping club, also issued a statement today expressing the hope the group will continue to receive cooperation at the port. Jumpers have been attracting hundreds of spectators to the area on Sundays this spring.

"In accepting the managership of Turners Falls Airport, I have one wish: that all those concerned will work in harmony to reinstate the public's confidence in the airport by putting their effort into constructive direction that will quickly rectify all previous problems."

Morin's statement follows:

"I feel the removal of Robert Hazlett as airport manager is going to be a loss to the airport and sincerely hope that, whoever the new manager is, he will be understanding as Hazlett has been in the past years."

**June 26**      [Greenfield MA Recorder Gazette 1962 - 3024.pdf](#)

### [CAP Cadets Tour Airport Facilities](#)

A tour of Turners Falls Airport facilities marked the meeting last night of the Turners Falls Cadet Squadron Civil Air Patrol.

The cadets met at the airport under supervision of Lt. Charles Ogren, executive officer, with Stephen H. Richardson, assistant airport manager and manager of Franklin Airways, who guided them through the hangars, showing various aircraft kept there.

The squadron, then met with Robert Hazlett, manager of Montague Airways, to view facilities there. Hazlett spoke to the group on airport layout and airport safety.

The meeting was the first of several scheduled at the airport during the summer. At later meetings there will be orientation flights for cadets and a night set aside for flying model airplanes.

Capt. Harold Crouse, Group 2 air inspector, and SM Joseph Smollens, group assistant supply officer, will make an official inspection of the Northern Berkshire Squadron at North Adams tonight.

It was announced by Lt. Col. William J. Peloskey, Group 2 commander, that Col. John B. Slate, commander, Massachusetts Wing, will visit the group headquarters and squadron, July 11 to present a citation to a senior member.

Due to the July 4th holiday, there will be no meeting next Wednesday.

**Aug. 3**      [Greenfield MA Recorder Gazette 1962 - 3594.pdf](#)

### **High Speed Fuel Service at Airport**

TURNERS FALLS—A new installation at Franklin Airways, Inc., is providing speedy fueling of large aircraft.

In use about two weeks, the rig—called a high speed gas pump—has cut fueling time by as much as a-half-hour in some ported cases.

Prior to installation, fueling of large craft such as twin-engine planes could take from half an hour to 45 minutes, according to Wesley Dandron, Franklin associate.

"Now," says Dandron, "the same process can be accomplished within six or seven minutes." Dandron explained the pump can dispense about 60 gallons of 100 octane per minute. "That's a big help with planes that have around 200-gallon capacities," he said.

Couture Bros., Inc., of Avenue A installed the new pump, provided by Esso Standard. Oil Co. of New Jersey. Esso owns the rig, which cost them about \$4,000 to install here.

Before Esso would allow the Turners Falls Airport installation, it required exclusive petroleum sales rights here, which the Montague airport commission granted.

Pres. Samuel H. Couture of Franklin said Esso "showed faith in the future of the port" by making such an investment here.

Dandron added: "It's strictly private enterprise but should be a real drawing card to - bring more\* business to the whole port and town."

Only Dandron and Franklin' Mgr. Stephen Richardson are authorized to operate the pump.

Small aircraft are still fueled with the original 80 octane pump. Tank capacity on Franklin Airways property in supply the pumps is 10,000 gallons.

**Aug. 25** [Greenfield MA Recorder Gazette 1962 - 3967.pdf](#)

### **Hangar Rental Complaint Filed**

TURNERS FALLS—Franklin Airways, Inc., has complained to the Montague Airport Commission of alleged irregularities in the renting of the town-owned former USDA hangar at Turners Falls Airport. The board will hear the evidence at a special session Monday morning.

Occupants of the USDA hangar currently are Raymond J. Dion, who owns a spraying business, and Montague Airways, Inc.

The subject will come to light at 11 a.m. at the Western Mass. Electric Co. building, Avenue A. Pres.

Samuel H. Couture of Franklin Airways, contacted late Friday, said the complaint is against a former group of commissioners. "The present commission had nothing to do with it," he said.

**Oct. 2** [Greenfield MA Recorder Gazette 1962 - 4595.pdf](#)

### **Port Expulsion Tough**

TURNERS FALLS—Removing one of two rival airways operating at Turners Falls Airport could be a complicated and difficult procedure, a Federal Aviation Agency told the Montague airport commission yesterday.

Edward F. Connor of the FAA explained Sec. 308 of the Federal Aviation Act of 1958 at an informal meeting with the commission, representatives of Franklin Airways, Inc., and Montague Airways, Inc., and others.

No decisions were made in the session at Western Mass. Electric Co. building.

Connor, interpreting federal policy, came up with these conclusions:

1. If only one fixed base operator were to be housed at the port, FAA would like to see it put up for bids.
2. The federal agency would like to see the fixed base operator, if there were to be only one, based on the airport. If that operator were to be Franklin Airways, Inc., which is based primarily on private land, the town might be required to purchase the Franklin property to make it public. The public must have access to federally assisted ports and property at all times, Connor said.
3. FAA will not look for loopholes in Sec. 308, which definitely encourages competition at ports where federal aid has been a factor. The burden of proof, and a great deal of it, he said, will be on the town. Through its airport commission, the town must show that having only one operator is in the best interests of the general and flying public.

The meeting developed from a commission meeting last week at which Chr. Ronald M. Zschau said he understood a "new FAA regulation" prohibited two base operators at certain ports. The commission decided then to seek more information as a possible means towards ending a long running battle between Montague and Franklin Airways.

Connor said Sec. 308 prohibits grant of exclusive rights where federal funds have been expended. Montague has received 50,000 in recent aid. He said the federal government will not approve funds to an exclusive set up unless the port owner or manager can prove the excluded operator could not comply with port regulations or requirements for aeronautical activities.

He said non-compliance could be interpreted to mean: there is an insufficient volume of business for two operators; a second operator would cause a safety hazard; or there is insufficient land to house more than one. He insisted several times, however, that the job of proving these matters would be difficult and would fall on the board alone.

Connor said this was the first instance in which the FAA had been called for information on the exclusion provision. He explained he, personally, could not see any problem of space for two operators at the Turners Falls Airport. He said the town owns the airport and the commission should uphold the best interests of the town by requiring both operators to meet high standards of operation.

The FAA man told Chr. Zschau, in answer to numerous questions, that the federal agency does not list any specific counts on which it will condone exclusion of an operator. "Give us all the information you can," he said, "and we'll let you know if we have questions." He said FAA would be reluctant to approve an exception and that the agency would also like to hear from the operator being expelled.

"This is a relatively new airport," said Connor. "I don't really see how you can know whether there is only room for one operator yet."

Connor answered many questions and the discussion eventually covered many items not in the federal jurisdiction. Among these were the port radio and a lease for Montague Airways. Chr. Zschau said several times he believed it was the commission's job to develop the port "the best way we know how".

He [Zschau] said. "My conviction is that there is only room for one operator." Comm. Daniel J. Kelleher disagreed. He said both operators have worked hard and sincerely and he felt competition was essential to a healthy business for the town.

Port Mgr. Malcolm J. Conway, also a Franklin Airways stockholder, said that airway would like to apply if there were to be only one operator. He claimed public sentiment had been turned against Franklin yet Franklin is the operator which is really accomplishing business at the port. He suggested the other operator has made "a lot of noise" with publicity but Franklin is more active below the surface.

Treas. Francis Balboni of Montague Airways asked that his outfit be allowed to compete and that the laws of economics decide which, if any, operator would be eliminated.

**Oct. 3**      [Greenfield MA Recorder Gazette 1962 - 4604.pdf](#)      pg.1  
[Greenfield MA Recorder Gazette 1962 - 4611.pdf](#)      pg. 8  
[Greenfield MA Recorder Gazette 1962 - 4615.pdf](#)      pg. 12

### Selectmen May Abolish Montague Port Authority

TURNERS FALLS—The Montague airport commission, as it is now constituted, may be abolished next week by selectmen.

Selectman Daniel J. Kelleher last night called for termination of the duties of present port board members and the town fathers to serve as a three-man commission. He issued a formal statement.

Selectman Raymond M. Trudel indicated he will back Kelleher and advised that the move would be legal according to state laws on airport commissions.

Chr. Albert L. Saulnier declined to comment until he could study and evaluate the situation. In deference to the chairman, who will read minutes of commission meetings and reach his own decision this week, th majority postponed definite action until the next board meeting. **(For the text of Kelleher's statement see Page 12.)**

Selectmen have the authority to take this type of action but it is rarely used. Veteran political observers today could not recall any instance of such action in modern history. If effected next week, as expected, the abolition will mark a new procedure in an extremely stormy history of airport development here. In the past year, the commission has been under constant fire, primarily from rival airways operating at the port.

Charged with inability to handle meetings and problems presented it, the commission has itself been in a most unusual predicament and selectmen indicated last night they feel only an unusual solution will lead to constructive and peaceful activity at Turners Falls Airport.

Kelleher opened the subject late in the meeting, soon after Mgr. Robert Hazlett of Montague Airways, Inc., appeared to inquire as to the thoughts of recent airport matters.

Reaching into his coat pocket, Kelleher produced several copies of a statement he said he wrote three months ago. He said he has been carrying it since he was

**Port Board** (continued from page one)

**Page 8**

appointed an airport commissioner. Kelleher volunteered to serve after Raymond J. Dion resigned from the port board and no one could be found to serve.

"I have tried to work with the board," he said, "but have found it impossible. They are embroiled in continual controversy." He said as far as he can determine, the situation is going to continue until town fathers step in, he said. Kelleher explained he felt there should

be competition at the airport, for the good of the town. But his feelings are obviously not in accord with those of the airport commission majority; he added.

"At least a couple members can simply not make an impartial decision he said. Kelleher said he could see no airport business so great that selectmen could not handle it.

Kelleher said the port commission . . . (*illegible*) . . . information from federal aviation authorities and overwhelming sentiment against such a move, is apparently going to try to remove one of two operators from the base. He said the board's inability to make "sensible progress" with the town's investment left him no choice but to act as he did.

Atty. Trudel said no one here has the right to say an operator shall be excluded from the port. He capped his remarks by saying he felt competition is best and that "sport parachuting is here to stay as much as drag racing. "

Chr. Saulnier said in fairness to himself and the commission, he would make no statement until studying minutes of port board meetings since last September. He said he had read them up to that point and found "some things that were not so good."

Hazlett, who had appeared as an individual and not representing his airway discussed the port problem briefly with board members. He left soon after Atty. Trudel made a motion to settle the matter, one way or another, next week. Saulnier and Kelleher agreed.

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TURNERS FALLS—Selectman Daniel J. Kelleher last night issued a formal statement on the Montague airport commission. He has proposed that selectmen abolish the board and assume its duties.

Kelleher's statement:

"As my own personal thoughts and desires may differ from the official selectman's position that I feel must be taken, I wish at this time to record the following statement.

"Having spent thousands of dollars in the clearing, construction and maintenance of the Turners Falls Airport, and in conjunction with the state and federal government having spent approximately \$130,000 for grading and installation of Class 1 pavement for runway and aprons, the Town of Montague has a considerable investment in this airport development.

"For a greater future for the Turners Falls Airport, I sincerely believe that the best interests of the Town of Montague should be the thoughts uppermost in the minds of one and all airport commissioners.

"However, I find the inescapable fact, that the above conclusion has not been apparently followed in recent controversial decisions which have been rendered by the airport commission.

"Because of friendship, business interests and common objectives, the airport commission decisions have not, to my mind, always been decided for the best interests of

the Town of Montague. Without going into detail at this time, decisions have been apparently rendered for the best interests of one company and to the detriment of the further development by another airport company.

"Although certain people have shown considerable interest in the development of the Turners Falls Airport over the past 15 years, and have, to the best of their ability, furthered this airport development, it is quite apparent to most people that competition in business has, and will create better service and greater activity, and a potentially greater future for the Turners Falls Airport.

"As a selectman of the Town of Montague, I feel it incumbent upon me, to so state my unequivocal position at this time, and to so serve notice that prejudiced derisions in favor of special privileged interests cannot and will not be any longer tolerated.

"Definite assurance must be given to all airport companies, and to all others who utilize the Turners Falls Airport, that fair, just and equal consideration in all airport activities will be extended by airport supervisors.

"As selectmen should be held accountable for the actions of airport commissioners that they appoint, I shall feel personally responsible for any future actions of airport commissioners, and sincerely trust that their future judgments and decisions will be reached in an intelligent, forthright and impartial manner."

**Oct. 5**      [Greenfield MA Recorder Gazette 1962 - 4671.pdf](#)

**—Hermon Flyers Open Program at Turners Airport**

TURNERS FALLS—A 22- member student flying club from Mount Hermon School began basing part of its activities at Franklin Airways, Inc., this week, Turners Falls Airport Mgr. Malcolm J. Conway said today.

Franklin will provide aircraft for the club's flight activities and a plane for members to rebuild and eventually to fly and maintain, All club activities here will be supervised by Franklin personnel, Conway said.

The club, which will also have a field at the school, was encouraged to come here for training, atmosphere and assistance. Members are from 14 to 18 years of age. Arrangements were made through Joseph Smoler, student advisor at the school, Conway said.

**—Logical Situation** (Editorial)      [Greenfield MA Recorder Gazette 1962 - 4668.pdf](#)

An end to the controversy over use of Turners Falls Airport would be a service to both the Town of Montague and the cause of aviation.

The situation there has been extremely difficult for the past few years. Rivalry between two airways firms in a limited field of opportunity has caused differences between Montague Airport Commission members. Arguments have often reached the point of bitterness.

As Selectman Daniel J. Kelleher pointed out this week, the taxpayer! of Montague also have made a substantial investment. They are entitled' to at least as much consideration as the professional operators. With differences between competitors and individuals often flaring forth, federal and state agencies have become involved and the port itself possibly endangered. This has disturbed the townspeople. Abolition of the commission is an extreme step, but that is what Selectman Kelleher proposes. The fact he has served as a commissioner adds authority to his judgment because he has had an opportunity to go behind the scenes. When he expresses the belief the commission is prejudiced, its seems most likely that his opinion will carry great weight with selectmen and townspeople alike.

Fundamentally the responsibility is the selectmen. They appoint commissioners and they are answerable to the voters. In view of all the turmoil, their action to assume the authority seems the most likely method of restoring order—if not harmony—to the Turners Fall

April 3, 1963 [Greenfield MA Recorder Gazette 1963 - 1581.pdf](#)

### **Port Board Postpones Meeting to April 16**

TURNERS FALLS—The airport commission meeting, scheduled Tuesday at 8 p.m., has been postponed to April 16, chr. Daniel J. Kelleher said this morning. No reason for the postponement was given. Commissioners met with Massachusetts Aeronautical Commission members and the Federal Communications Commission for information on safety and radio requirements at the Turners Falls Airport while in Boston Thursday.

June 3 [Greenfield MA Recorder Gazette 1963 - 2542.pdf](#)

### **CAP Joins CD in Mock Alert**

Traffic and road condition surveys and communications exercises kept ground and air teams from Group 2 and Turners Falls Squadron busy yesterday during the annual state-wide Civil Air Patrol—Civil Defense effectiveness test called by the Air Force.

The Group 2 L-16 aircraft, piloted by Maj. Robert H. Hampton with W-0 William Campbell as observer- navigator, left Turners Falls Airport for Fitchburg via Worcester at 8 a.m. First problem was to fly to Petersham, survey traffic conditions along Route 122 to Worcester and make periodic radio reports to a relay station on Mt. Wachusetts.

From Worcester they flew to Fitchburg Airport, where they were assigned a similar mission along Route 2 to Concord. The team flew the Worcester-Petersham route on their return to Turners Falls. Five aircraft from other units also participated.

A ground rescue team of five cadets drove to Fitchburg with Lt. Charles Ogren. They were used on traffic survey along Route 2. With Ogren were Cadet 2Lt. John Greene, CS-Sgt. Boyd S. Richardson, Jr., C2c David Wartel, Cb Charles Chapin, Jr., and Cb Rene Jacques. A second ground team under Capt. Joseph Kurkulonis was standing by

at Turners Falls Airport maintaining radio contact with Group 2 headquarters. Members" of the second team were C2Lt. Jordan Cohen, C1c Lawrence McDonald, C2c Louis Chappell, C3c James Caron and C3c James Smolen.

W-O Joseph Smolen, designated a "VIP", was picked up at the airport by a plane from North Adams, flown to Fitchburg for initial briefing, picked up by another aircraft and flown to Tewksbury, where wing and CD officials were directing the mission. The same procedures were used in returning Smolen here.

Operation of radios at Group 2 headquarters was carried on by CI-Sgt. William J. Seretta, Jr., and Cb. Richard Bridges. Lt. Col. William J. Peloskey, Group 2 commander, supervised activities locally. Two checks on Group 2 operations were made during the day by Lt. Col. Richard Carpenter, USAF, wing liaison officer landing at Turners Falls Airport. Capt. Edward Reed from Northeastern Region headquarters also checked local operations.

The entire mission centered around a nuclear attack on airbases and other installations according to mission orders, all electricity in the state was out so all communications equipment was run from portable and automobile systems.

**June 7**      [Greenfield MA Recorder Gazette 1963 - 2633.pdf](#)

### **Airways Ends Operations**

TURNERS FALLS—The town of Montague lost another industry; yesterday. Founded with high hopes in 1931, Montague Airways ended operations at Turners Falls Airport, the victim of man's eternal inability to cooperate. The past two years, "a time of trial" for Henry and Francis Balboni, were marked with charges, countercharges, controversy, and bitterness between all involved in what has since become known as the "the airport mess".

Ironically the major cause of with a use agreement at the air Montague's airport trouble stems port from a donation by the U.S. Department of Agriculture of a 40 by 162-foot hangar to toe town, for \$1, and construction in 1950 with federal funds of a hard-surfaced runway and apron at a cost of \$114,000.

Since Federal funds were used to construct the runway in 1960, the town was required by regulations to have a "base operator, with a use agreement" at the airport.

Franklin Airways, which owns and occupies a hangar on land adjacent to the town airport, seemed to be the logical base operator to the airport commission, headed at that time by Alfred Lucas.

Franklin refused to sign a use agreement because of the possibility the USDA hangar would be utilized by some competitive concern at little cost. Raymond Dion, then a member of the airport commission and operator of an aerial spraying company, has been renting hangar space at Franklin Airway at a cost of \$25 a month. Dion was granted one third of the unpromised USDA hangar by airport commissioners, at a cost of \$10 a month, in May 1961.

Pioneer Valley Aircraft Association, later changed to Montague Airways, began operations locally, by leasing hangar space from Franklin Airways in July 1951. Franklin, in the meantime, applied to the airport commission for lease of the remaining two-thirds of the USDA hangar at a cost of \$20 a month. No action was taken at that time.

In August 1961 Montague Airways was granted a month-to-month rental of two thirds of USDA hangar at \$20 a month and immediately applied for a lease agreement. Just prior to this Francis Balboni resigned his position on the airport commission, on the advice of Atty. George J. Hayer of Greenfield, airport counsel.

Montague Airways signed a use agreement with the town for a one-year period and pressed for a lease to enable the company to proceed with financing—and construction of a new hangar on leased land. On Oct. 27, 1961, Franklin Airways decided to sign a use agreement, similar to M.A.

The airport commission rejected a lease from Montague Airways for a specified piece of land immediately after Ronald Zschau replaced William Sweeney on the commission.

The rift in the airport commission became acute in January, 1962 when Zschau reorganized the board and was named "chairman."

It was ruled this action was illegal and Lucas was reinstated as chairman, but still no action was taken on the Montague Airway lease request.

In March 1962 airport commissioners approved a lease to Montague Airways for land at \$1 per year for 20 years. Montague Airways never signed the lease, Lucas resigned from the commission and was replaced by Daniel J. Kelleher of the selectmen. Zschau was named chairman in April 1962 and airport manager Robert Hazlett was replaced by Malcolm Conway, a Franklin Airways official.

Montague Airways claimed discrimination and appealed to the Mass. Aeronautics Commission. Dion resigned and "was replaced by James Baird in May.

On June 30 last year, Franklin Airways was leased plots one and two at the airport and the hangar rental of Montague Airways was increased from \$20 to \$70 a month.

MA protested this action vigorously and again appealed to MAC. The airport commission was instructed by state authorities to offer Montague Airways a suitable plot of land at the port.

Amid charges and counter charges, Kelleher moved for recall of airport commission appointments. In December, Dion and Montague Airways re-applied for a lease. Selectmen told both to submit lease proposals for approval.

In May 1963, the port radio was assigned to Franklin Airways and last month, tacit approval of five points in a 10-point lease proposal submitted by Montague Airways was given. On May 22, MA refused to sign the lease and on May 29 sent a letter signifying intentions of leaving the airport.

The future course of Turners Falls Airport is now in the hands of selectmen. A scheduled airport commission meeting Tuesday is expected to produce significant action to insure town cooperation for any future developer at the airport.

Some selectmen tend to agree with many of the points mentioned by Balboni in his letter this week.

No industry can be expected to come to the area without adequate safeguards that its future will be aided by cooperation from all public officials.

**June 21** [Greenfield MA Recorder Gazette 1963 - 2872.pdf](#)

### **Montague Airways Leases Field, Plans Operations**

TURNERS FALLS—Montague Airways, Inc., announced today it will relocate July 1 to the Pilgrim Airport, River Road, on the boundary of Hatfield and Whately.

"We will continue our same operations—that is, as a fixed base operator offering flight-instruction, charter and air taxi service, aircraft rental and sports parachuting," Treas. Francis H. Balboni said.

At present, Balboni said, Montague Airways is leasing the Pilgrim field with an option to purchase the site.

Balboni said the field will be certified for commercial use. This will mean meeting such requirements as public health facilities, minimum safety requirements, communications facilities and other requirements set by the state aeronautics commission.

He said the new operation, still to be called Montague Airways, will offer hanger rentals, sell gas and oil and offer tie-down facilities.

The new field will have a full-time flight instructor and aircraft and power plant mechanic, with full authorization for inspecting and relicensing aircraft. Aircraft repair and maintenance service will be offered all pilots.

Balboni said a shop hangar will be added onto the main hangar in the near future. The field is being rented from Mrs. George Englehardt of Hatfield.

"The location will enable us to serve both the Greenfield and Northampton area," said Balboni., Montague Airways, housed at Turners Falls Airport about two years, gave notice it would cease operations there July 1.

**July 22** [Greenfield MA Recorder Gazette 1963 - 3356.pdf](#)

### **State Utilizes Franklin Plane for Air Survey**

TURNERS FALLS—A Franklin Airways, Inc., Cessna 172 is being used by the State Department of Natural Resources for a state-wide survey.

Cecil Blair and Douglas Trefry are surveying every square mile of the state in a gypsy moth defoliation survey. This is a follow-up of the spring's spraying. Pilot Huber Tandy of Orange assisted DNR contractor during the past week and a half, flying out of Turners Falls Airport.

Franklin Mgr. Wallace Corroll has passed his commercial flight test at Hiller-Barre Airport [Barre, MA] after completing his 10-hours' instrument flight maneuvers.

As a result, Franklin is now, offering charter service 24 hours a day to any port in the United States via the four-passenger Cessna 172. Carroll cites these examples of rates: Bradley Field, \$20, a 27-minute flight compared to 95 by car; Boston-Logan, \$35.50, 42 minutes; Albany, \$26, 35 minutes; and New York Idelwilde, \$64, 80 minutes.

Turners Falls Airport is open 7 p:m; and later on 24-hour request for rentals. Daily rides are offered, 15 minutes for three passengers at \$6 or for one or two passengers at \$2.50 each.

Stanley Dlugosz is serving as flight instructor, teaching flying in a two-place Cessna 150.

**Aug. 15**      [Greenfield MA Recorder Gazette 1963 - 3737.pdf](#)

**Financial Loss Unnecessary**      (Editorial)

No town should ask too much of an individual citizen. In the interests of fairness, for instance, Montague should not expect Franklin Airways, Inc., to continue deficit operations at the Turners Falls Airport.

Tuesday night's meeting of the Airport Commission, made up of the selectmen, was inspired by Samuel H. Couture, president of Franklin Airways, that he was losing between, \$2,000 and \$3,000 a year in that enterprise. He made the disclosure during a discussion of his latest requests which include a long-term use agreement in which the firm would receive exclusive rights to the port installations for an annual fee of \$100. He also asked 10 per cent of all USDA hangar rentals as a collection fee. When the latter proposal was questioned, Mr. Couture complained bitterly at the lacked appreciation shown him and told of his financial losses.

Since Franklin Airways, Inc., is a private concern and makes no public financial reports, none can dispute his arguments regarding monetary losses. But many will question his judgment in maintaining a service so greatly to his personal disadvantage. He has always been a public-spirited citizen of Montague but none realized the extent of his sacrifices.

Certainly, the town has tried to do its part in the furtherance of the air age. It has spent thousands of dollars in modernizing the facilities, after neighboring Greenfield declined the opportunity to share in the project. And its people have, added their moral support to the various activities there.

For several years, Franklin Airways had competition from Montague Airways and a spirited rivalry it was. But the latter has moved to the Whately-Hatfield area and Franklin has the field to itself. Perhaps this will relieve the strain somewhat and Montague residents hope Mr. Couture will give the new arrangement a fair trial.

But if flying cannot be made a profitable business at Turners Falls Airport, none will blame Franklin Airways for giving up the fight. And the site would be excellent for the proposed new regional technical school.

**Aug. 16** [Greenfield MA Recorder Gazette 1963 - 3764.pdf](#)

### **Plenty of Flying Behind New TF Airport Manager**

TURNERS FALLS—There's a quarter., century of flying experience behind Huber W. Tandy, newest Turners Falls Airport manager.

Tandy made his first solo flight in 1937 and hasn't really come down out of the clouds since. He came here in August 1941 as an instructor for Hood aircraft.

After the start of World War II, he stayed on with Bridgeport Flying service, one of 20 instructors who turned out new pilots at the rate of 20 each year.

In 1944 he joined forces with William Wesso to open up Orange Airport, continuing for three years until the port was leased to another operator. After that he dropped officially from aviation, but kept up flying for fun.

About a year ago the lure of the prop and wing was too much and he became a regular visitor to the Turners Falls port. He "worked I"around", renewing acquaintance with the business until his official appointment this week, as airport manager and flight instructor.

In the interim between 1947-1963, Tandy tried his hand at a number of money-making ventures. He worked as a \*clerk in a First National grocery store and later operated his own vending business, specializing in industrial installations.

He sold the route and business to Edward Ethier of Greenfield, who in turn sold it to the Coca-Cola Bottling Co. of Northampton.

A cornetist with the Greenfield Military Band, Tandy has also served as director of the Minute Tapioca Band since 1947.

As port manager, Tandy is looking ahead to big things. He hopes to create greater local interest in aviation by working up and offering a variety of shows, demonstrations, and other special events.

He has already started to prepare the field for greater use. Tandy has a work crew preparing two new landing strips which will cross the present 3100-foot paved strip to the north end.

Grass is being mowed and yellow-painted-barrels will be used to mark the strip boundaries as a guide to incoming pilots. Next spring, when the ground is softer, Tandy plans to have the new, strips flattened out to facilitate smoother landings.

Mrs. Tandy is the former Margaret Doubleday of North Dana, assistant teacher at Mahar Regional School. With their four children, they make their home at 30 Burrill Avenue, Orange.

## Airways President, Town Fathers Discuss Future

TURNERS FALLS—Plenty of small talk, filled with flowingly optimistic reports but little action, occurred at one of the quietest and calmest airport commission meetings in years Tuesday.

Samuel H. Couture, president of Franklin Airways, spent almost the entire meeting reporting on port activities. He made suggestions while selectmen, acting as airport commissioners listened. Among Couture's proposals were:

1. Creation of a town committee to promote Turners Falls Airport.
2. Purchase of an anemometer at a cost of \$100.
3. A closer look into possible state contributions on installation of runway lights.

Couture pressed for more official promotion of airport facilities, stating Franklin Airways has spent time and money on promotion but is limited in both time and finances for this type of work. He told commissioners promotion is a full-time job.

Couture indicated that if Franklin Airways were to pull out the airport loss would be a community loss. "If it's a loss to the community, it's a loss to all. "

He proposed formation of a promotional committee whose prime function would be to advance the airport cause.

Wind Measuring The anemometer, a wind velocity measuring device, would be installed at a cost of \$100.

"Some time ago", Couture continued, "selectmen indicate the town would buy uni-com radio. Since, Franklin Airways bought the uni-com privately for \$140. How about taking the money you would have paid for the radio and buying the anemometer?"

Chr. Daniel J: Kelleher disagreed with the statement that the town would buy the uni-com. "We discussed it but never made a commitment", Kelleher said.

Couture said his operation, including training of Air Force ROTC cadets from the University of Massachusetts is handicapped without a wind velocity instrument. Sec. Albert L. Saulnier reported a balance of more than \$300 in the airport account, sufficient to purchase the anemometer, and Kelleher said some consideration would be given the request.

Airport lighting, soundly defeated at town meeting two years ago, came under discussion when Couture revealed he had been told the state aeronautics commission might reimburse the town completely on the cost of runway lights. Couture was told to secure more information and report back to the commission.

### Meet Success

Couture reported on the success of a recent radio-controlled model airplane meet at the airport. He estimated \$5,000 people attended the two-day affair, with immeasurable benefit to the town.

"The meet will be written up in a model airplane magazine which will be distributed throughout the country", Couture said. "This is invaluable publicity for Turners Falls."

Charter flying at Franklin Airways has increased and will become, even larger in the future, Couture reported. Franklin Airways planes shuttle between Hartford, Boston, New York, Lebanon, N. H., and Portland, Me.

Turners Falls Airport was also the base of operations for state inspections of the result of a gypsy moth spray campaign and is the site of a four-month training program for 18 Air Force ROTC students. Couture estimated a total of 30 cadets will be in the training program next year.

Franklin Airways has a weekly payroll of \$350, Couture told commissioners in pleading for more airport promotion.

"Our company is certainly not a detriment to the community and is doing it's best to attract more and more interest in the local airport. I believe the town should help us." he concluded.

July 10, 1964 [Greenfield MA Recorder Gazette 1964 - 2290.pdf](#)

### [3500 Guardsmen at Port](#)

TURNERS FALLS—More than 3,500 khaki-clad members of Mass. National Guard departed for their homes in Eastern Massachusetts early this morning, after camping at Turners Falls Airport last night.

The soldiers, completing a two-week encampment at Camp Drum, N. Y., arrived in long convoys of Jeeps, and trucks, even by air, early Friday afternoon.

Rows of streets were laid out on the western edge of the paved landing strip, and tents were erected throughout the afternoon. A mess quarters, latrines and first aid sections were also installed.

A canteen, operated by Franklin Airways personnel, did a brisk business as the guardsmen, elected to forsake Army food, after the two weeks of field training.

The bivouac, an annual Turners Falls event, takes place here because the area is level, and is midway between Camp Drum and Boston, an Army major said. Arrangements for the use of Turners Falls Airport were made with airport commissioners last month.

Aug. 27 [Greenfield MA Recorder Gazette 1964 - 2942.pdf](#)

### [Ground, Air Events Oct. 4](#)

#### [Big Air Show](#)

TURNERS FALLS—Plans for an Oct. 4 air show to promote Turners Falls Airport got off the ground at a meeting of air-minded citizens in the Franklin Airways offices Tuesday.

The day-long program will feature a long list of attractions and events calculated to attract Montague and area citizens to the town-owned facilities.

"Turners Falls Airport is a community asset, with tremendous potential for development," The committee announced. "The air show and ground demonstration will give all taxpayers, and other interested people an opportunity to see what can be done at an airport. A by-product of the event will be entertainment and fun for the entire family."

While complete plans for the airshow have not been completed, the committee announced the following "definite commitments" Air Force ROTC Drill Team; motorcycle demonstrations; team parachuting; model airplane construction; radio-controlled model airplane meet; demonstration of new airplanes by five major manufacturers; financed show will be used for antique airplane display; and improvements at the airport. Parachute packing demonstrations.

A world-famous aerial acrobat has been hired to entertain, with many more acts and exhibits planned, the spokesman said. Refreshments will be available, and all profit from the privately financed show will be used for improvements at the airport.

The citizens committee will continue to meet each Tuesday evening to complete plans for the event. Ronald Zschau is ticket chairman, Rockwell Craig, treasurer, and Chester Martin, secretary. A general chairman is expected to be named next week.

**Sept. 1** [Greenfield MA Recorder Gazette 1964 - 3017.pdf](#)

—[Licenses were issued](#) to Franklin Airways, Inc., to conduct an air show at Turners Falls Airport Oct. 4, with a rain date Oct. 11.

—[By a 2-0 vote](#) selectmen ruled an article requesting airport lights be installed at Turners Falls Airport will be included in the special meeting warrant. Over the objections of Daniel J. Kelleher, \$3,000 will be asked for the project.

**Oct. 1** [Greenfield MA Recorder Gazette 1964 - 3553.pdf](#)

### [Gala Air Show Sunday at Turners Falls Port](#)

TURNERS FALLS— More 2,000 visitors are expected to attend the first annual Air Show at Turners Falls Airport Sunday, with attractions to begin at 1 p.m.

Rockwell E. Craig, chairman of a citizen's committee planning the event, has expressed confidence good weather will bring out a crowd to see airport facilities, ground displays, and demonstrations and business professional equipment at the day-long affair.

The committee has been working for almost two months to make this the biggest family attraction in Franklin County since Franklin County Fair," Craig said.

Craig said. "We have secured the best in professional and amateur entertainment, and promise an eventful day to all who drive up to the airport."

The Turners Falls High School Band, under direction of Clifton Symonds, will perform throughout the afternoon with a parade on the paved runway just before parachute jumping demonstrations at 1

### **Chutists To Jump**

Chutists[sic] from Para-Jeps Inc. of Greenfield will do both individual and group streamer jumps from various altitudes to open the program.

Featured performer of the day is Harold Dutton, of Haverhill, famed airplane acrobat. Originally scheduled for two performances, Dutton will perform special additional tricks during a pause in the program, created when the University of Massachusetts Air Force ROTC Drill Team was forced to cancel its exhibition, Craig said. The ROTC Unit has had insufficient drill practice to attend so early in die school year, Craig explained

Radio controlled model airplanes will be demonstrated by members of the New England RC Model Airplane Club. The group conducted national championships at Turners Falls Airport last year and termed the local facility "ideal" for radio work.

### **Airplanes On Display**

Various airplanes will be displayed and flown during the afternoon as will special spray airplanes from Dion. Aerial Spray Service. Raymond, Dion is expected to demonstrate his craft over die field, Craig said.

On the ground, antique airplanes will be available for close inspection and high-powered motorcycles and their precision maneuverability will be demonstrated on the hard surfaced runway.

Helicopter and airplanes rides for foliage viewing will be available all afternoon, Craig said. Drawings will be made every 15-minutes with winners to be given free airplane rides any week-end this fall.

### **Clown To Perform**

Red Clapp, famed clown, will perform on the grounds amid a display of new equipment purchased by Franklin Airways and loaned by airplane manufacturers. New 1965 model cars will line the' runway and a parachute packing demonstration is scheduled in the Franklin Airways hanger.

Kiddle rides, pony rides, the 40 & 8 steam car and special concessions will be in operation throughout, Craig said. Tours of airport facilities will be offered by volunteers with emphasis on ROTC flight training equipment, psychological testing civilian training courses, charter flying services and charges, maintenance shop, hangar rental, weather indicator and unicorn radio controls.

Henry Hicken of Richmond, N.H., will describe all events on a loudspeaker system with Carl Ellis of Turners Falls as assistant. Montague Auxiliary Police will assist in parking cars and members of the Turners Falls-Montague Chamber of Commerce, Daly-Solomon Post VFW and Rotary Club will assist on the grounds.

Admission is free to all under 18 years of age, in die event of rain, the air show will be Oct. 11.

1231Oct. 8

Greenfield MA Recorder Gazette 1964 - 3590.pdf

### **Air Show Set for Sunday at Turners Falls Airport**

TURNERS FALLS—Tickets to the air show at Turners Falls Airport Sunday will be on sale at the gates, Rockwell Craig, chairman of a citizen's committee planning the event has announced.

Children under 18 will be admitted free, Craig said. Entertainment and demonstrations will begin at 1 p.m. and all who wish to attend have been urged to arrive early. Ground exhibitions and displays will be open before noon, as will refreshment booths and kiddie rides.

A crowd of 2,500 is expected to watch the afternoon air show, designed to acquaint Franklin County residents with the facilities available at the airport and to provide family entertainment at the same time.

Featured attractions include aerial acrobatics, parachute jumpers, model airplanes, antique airplanes, parachute packing demonstrations, motorcycle exhibitions, new car displays clowns, rides and many more, Craig said.

Dec. 18

Greenfield MA Recorder Gazette 1964 - 4898.pdf

### **Couture Would Sell Port but Wants no Competitor**

TURNERS FALLS—Several things became clear at the airport commission session of the Montague selectmen's meeting last night:

1—Franklin Airways, Inc., base operator at Turners Falls Airport, is "going broke", wants to sell and has established a price.

2—Roger Atwood of Northampton, in flying 24 years and operator of Atwood Airport, Northampton, from 1946 to 1963 might be interested in buying Franklin if the price is right.

3—If Atwood doesn't buy Franklin, he is going to find it extremely difficult to get within sight of the airport. Pres. Samuel H. Couture of Franklin told selectmen that "either he (Atwood) buys or the town takes over".

#### **No Competition**

Couture made it clear he would be interested in selling to Atwood but will not welcome him on the base as a competitor. The latter possibility arose as Atty. John R. Dolan appeared for the ill Atwood and asked If the commission would lease or sell the town-owned USDA hangar or let out port land for construction.

The board's unanimous feeling, summed up by Joseph E. H. Bonnette: "You can't put three horses in a two-horse stall.

Atty. Dolan said Atwood is just investigating several possible courses of action which, he said, makes good business sense. Couture, however, said several times: "Atwood was perfectly satisfied; What is he trying to do?" Later, he said, "If you're trying to use that to dicker to bring the price down, that is out of the question. I thought I had a deal all set

up and we wouldn't get into this thing. I want no wrangling. I'm not going to wrangle as we did before."

### **Private Deal**

Chr. Albert L. Saulnier said any business transaction was between Couture and Atwood but he also indicated as did Selectmen Bonnette and Daniel J. Kelleher, that the board is not responsive to the idea of another full-fledged port operator.

Bonnette said: "We are required to have a fixed base operator, that has been Franklin Airways."—Kelleher and Saulnier both indicated Atwood would be welcomed and receive full cooperation—if he comes onto the airport as base operator.

Atty. Dolan said all he wanted to know was whether the USDA hangar could be sold or leased. Town Counsel Felix J. Cerrato ruled it could, as long as it would continue to be used "for airport purposes".

Dolan said: "We just want to know if we can fit in at the airport and possibly help the people there." In reply to a heated statement by Couture, he said, "In order to get federal aid in the future, you have to allow competitors; there can be nothing exclusive."

### **Experience Cited**

Couture repeated several times. "We don't want anything like we had two years ago.

He said he felt Atwood has the experience to do a good job but he stressed there is no room for an additional operator in standard aviation services: charter, fuel sales, repairs and other services. Couture said he would contact Atwood today to try to come to some kind of "understanding" with him.

Atwood lost his Northampton airport to a highway land-taking. Couture's references last night to wrangling were a back glance at a long feud with Montague Airways, Inc., which, finally relocated at Pilgrim Airport, Whately.

Others attending last night were Samuel I. Couture, Couture's son; Frederick Macker, an associate in Franklin Airways, and Raymond J. Dion. aerial spraying operator who rents part of the USDA hangar. On the heels of the discussion, Dion said he would be interested in buying or leasing the USDA hangar for "expansion" of his business. He said his storage space is inadequate.

Said Saulnier: "We'll hold the matter in abeyance, clarify the situation." The board said it will check with the Federal Aviation Agency to see whether the building could be sold or leased to him and if aerial spraying is considered "an airport purpose."

March 9, 1965      [Greenfield MA Recorder Gazette 1965 - 1150.pdf](#)

### **[Airport Board Delays Lease Request Action](#)**

TURNERS FALLS—Airport commissioners, hampered by lack of information from Massachusetts Aviation Commission, Federal Aviation Agency and Franklin Airways, took no action last night on two requests for lease of the USDA hanger at Turners Falls Airport.

CAP Major Charles Ogren asked permission to use the front portion of the wooden hangar as a base of operations for the Civil Air Patrol. Raymond Dion of Dion Aerial Spray Service, who now rents one third of the hangar, asked for a long term lease of the rear portion, or a land purchase agreement at the airport.

Commissioner Joseph E. H. Bonnette to Dion and Ogren "there are three or four airport developments in the works that we are not at liberty to disclose at this time, which makes any immediate action on the request impossible."

Ogren told commissioners Group 2, Mass. Wing CAP, is one of the few CAP units in the state without a permanent base. He said CAP would house airplanes, communications equipment, electric generators, topographical charts, dispatch boards, field equipment and a 29-passenger bus. Dion said he must obtain a long-term lease, either at the USDA hangar or elsewhere, since he expects to obtain an aircraft dealership and must have modern space before October. He noted he has been waiting for 2½ years for a lease and still has not been able to obtain one.

**March 15** [Greenfield MA Recorder Gazette 1965 - 1250.pdf](#)

### **Tax Rate Up, UP, UP**

TOWN MEETING in 1957 approved formation of an airport commission to govern Turners Falls Airport. In 1963, following two years of bickering, selectmen discharged the five-man commission and took over its duties.

Meeting once a month as airport commissioners, usually during the regular board meeting, selectmen have failed to adequately discharge airport commission duties, primarily because of the pressure of other town business.

They would probably be the first to admit that correspondence, aviation meetings and other items important to the orderly development of Turners Falls Airport have been neglected or given only cursory attention since 1963.

Ray Dion, operator of Dion's Aerial Spray Service, has been attempting to get a lease agreement, or even a definite answer on his position in future airport plans, for more than two years. A leaky roof at the USDA hangar has deteriorated to the extent that Dion was forced to move his equipment from the wet back third of the town owned building to protect it from the weather.

Franklin Airways has tried unsuccessfully to arrange a lease—and the CAP has tried to get action on a request for space in the USDA building. Isn't it about time for selectmen to turn over part of their dirties, to five qualified men who could devote more time to the airport, its problems and its future?

**SPEAKING** of the airport, Leo Saulnier will probably again get up at town meeting Saturday to urge a \$5,000 appropriation for landing lights.

This has been rejected a number of times since 1960, even though the loquacious Saulnier has presented clear, logical arguments for the project.

There obviously must be a re-selling job done by airport commissioners if Turners Falls Airport is again to be considered a town asset.

**June 23**      [Greenfield MA Recorder Gazette 1965 - 3126.pdf](#)

### **Chamber Hope to Have Industry at Airport**

TURNERS FALLS—Formation of a 175-acre industrial park at Turners Falls Airport was announced by Pres. Rockwell E. Craig at a quarterly meeting of the Turners Falls-Montague Chamber of Commerce last night.

The area, consisting of 18 acres west of the paved runway and 123 acres on the river side of the runway, will probably be released for industrial purposes by the Federal Aviation Agency and the Massachusetts Aeronautics Commission in July, Craig told more than 50 members and their wives at Old Stone Lodge.

John J. Carney, director of the state department of commerce's bureau of community problems, described the Massachusetts commercial redevelopment program, which he said could be used in developing the large airport acreage into valuable industrial sites.

In a statement prepared for publication and read to the audience, Craig said.

"The Turners Falls-Montague Chamber of Commerce, with the cooperation of the airport commissioners, is pleased to announce the formation of the Montague Industrial Park, consisting of approximately 175 acres, located at the Turners Falls Airport on Rte. 2A. This industrial site has been in the making for about six weeks, after many hours of work by the Chamber.

#### **Flat, Cleared Land**

"The Town of Montague needs new industry but the question was, where could it be located and what do we have to offer. We decided on an area just west of the airport, which consists of 48 acres, much of which is cleared, flat land. This land is owned by the Town of Montague but is in a grant which is controlled by the Federal Aviation Agency and the Massachusetts Aviation Commission inasmuch as they gave financial support and were instrumental in the development of the present airport. This grant is for 20 years or until 1979, The question was how to get this land released for industrial purposes.

"On May 11, four Chamber members, Eugene E. Koch, a member of the airport commission, together with Rep. Walter Kostanski, who had made appointments for us at the FAA and the MAC to present our proposal for getting 48 acres released for industrial purposes. At this meeting a suggestion was made by the FAA to remap a new plan for the airport, showing the land we wanted for an industrial site plus an additional area on the river side of the present runway which would give us approximately 175 acres. We were gratified to receive this suggestion, which actually exceeded our expectations.

"The next step was to get new maps of the airport drawn up. Winslow Wentworth of the Western Mass. Electric Co. obligingly furnished us with these maps within a few days.

A letter was drafted, stating why we need an industrial site in this area and what we have to offer. The letter was checked and approved by the town counsel and was then signed by the airport commissioners, and in turn was sent to the federal and state government agencies for processing.

### **Expect Approval**

"We were in contact with one of the agencies last Thursday (June 17) and were informed that both agencies approve the new plan and recommend it strongly, but due to the ending of their fiscal year, it is impossible for them to get the necessary paper work completed before July. They did feel, however, that an announcement could be made at this time, subject to the final paper work, since they could foresee no difficulty in the processing.

"The next step will be for the airport commissioners to get permission through a town meeting to sell, rent or lease land adjacent to the airport for industrial purposes. We have full support from the Massachusetts department of commerce to help get new industry in our town

"The Turners Falls-Montague Chamber of Commerce is pleased and proud to have been instrumental in getting your new industrial park. We hope that every business and every resident of the town of Montague will see fit to join hands with the Chamber by becoming members and giving your support to help make Montague a better place to live.

Craig pledged continued Chamber of Commerce support to attract new industry and said members are willing to work with any governmental agency—federal, state or local—to help bring a responsible industry to Montague.

Carney, who arrived late from a speaking engagement in Haverhill, said his department will participate with any city or town in the development of areas for commercial or industrial use on a 50-50 basis. The mechanics of state aid require towns involved to establish a local redevelopment authority by town meeting action, which would then acquire suitable land for industrial development. The land would be developed through cooperative state and local planning and, on approval of town meeting, sold to a commercial developer for industrial building construction.

### **State Aid**

Half the net cost of acquiring and developing the land would be paid by the state over 20 years, Carney said.

Land development would include planning and layout of streets, sewers, lighting, and water facilities but would not include construction costs, Carney said. Income derived from sale of developed land would be deducted from the state share of the program and interest costs would not be included in state reimbursements.

Planning costs prior to the acceptance of the project could be advanced up to 75 per cent by the state, with repayment deferred until the town accepts the project, or some future industrial development project, Carney added.

He acknowledged the redevelopment program has not received acceptance during its eight years of existence, noting that, of the \$1-million a year made available by the state, less than \$61,000 a year has been spent. He attributed lack of participation by cities and towns to complicated wording of the law, and because, until August of last year, the program was "a step-child" being handled by the state housing authority.

He added that six redevelopment programs have been instituted since the new division was started and Northampton, Charlestown, North Adams and Stoughton are actively investing participation.

Pres. Craig welcomed Tower Manufacturing Co. of Canal St. as the town's newest industry and said the company, which employs four, hopes to have as many as 30.

**Aug, 17**      [Greenfield MA Recorder Gazette 1965 a - 0762.pdf](#)

### **Port Board to Check Karting Use of Ramp**

TURNERS FALLS—Possible use of a Turners Falls Airport warm-up ramp for karting was again under discussion before airport commissioners in the town office last night and no decision was reached.

Chr. Thomas W. Judd told a group of fathers and interested adults the commission will investigate the request and check again with federal officials before making a final decision.

In other matters, the board conferred with Airport Mgr. Huber Tandy and Franklin Airways, Inc., officials on routine port procedures. Tandy suggested commissioners consider and approve painting a white line at the east end of the paved runway to enable pilots to see the end of the pavement more clearly.

### **"Stupid Mistake"**

Tandy called an accident at the site last week involving Westover Flying Club personnel, "a stupid mistake" by the pilot, who missed the end of the runway by two feet in practicing short landings. But he conceded a more definitive line could help avert similar incidents. "It wouldn't hurt," Tandy admitted.

Chr. Judd told Franklin officials the board will visit the airport this week to "look things over" and asked FAA Pres. Samuel H. Couture to make his company books available to the commission to help determine the use given the town-owned facility.

Couture agreed to cooperate and offered Franklin property for commission use as a meeting site. The board had scheduled a meeting in the town office conference Room B last night but a meeting of the Turners Falls-Montague Area Chamber of Commerce forced it to meet in the license commission offices.

### Written Requests

Mgr. Tandy was asked to submit in writing any requests for work or improvements to the airport to the commission so it can make judgments.

The board met with the Chamber of Commerce to discuss possible industrial use of airport land, adjacent to the landing strip area.

Harvey W. Sevrens of Greenfield, spokesman for the Greenfield Karting Club.<sup>12</sup> outlined his request for use of the facility two nights a week, from 5:30 to dusk.

A similar request in July to selectmen, then acting as port commissioners, was denied after Reginald L. Reed of the FAA informed the board such use of the town facility would be in direct violation of an agreement between the government and the town. Since then, an FAA spokesman has unofficially indicated to Franklin Airways officials that the request may have been misunderstood. The new commission will investigate.

**Sept. 18**      [Greenfield MA Recorder Gazette 1965 a - 1344.pdf](#)

[Greenfield MA Recorder Gazette 1965 a - 1348.pdf](#)

### Plane Search Centers in Turners Falls

TURNERS FALLS—A five-day, three-state search for a missing Rochester, N. H., airplane has narrowed to northern Massachusetts and Southern Vermont.

Civil Air Patrol search teams today are using Turners Falls Airport as the prime search control base.

CAP flew seven flights out of the local port Friday afternoon. Flights will be made until the plane is spotted or the search is called off, according to Maj. Charles Ogren of Northfield, advance base commander.

The search, begun Monday, was concentrated in the Heath, Rowe, Charlemont area. Friday afternoon, after A. Fay Shippee of Heath notified CAP officials a low flying airplane circled over his farm Monday afternoon between 2 and 3 p.m., then flew east.

This is the only lead uncovered in the search for Mr. and Mrs. Herbert Brooks of Wells, Me. who left Rochester, N.H., in a rented airplane bound for Hartford. The couple filed no flight plan but had talked of a route that would have taken them over Keene and down the Connecticut River.

Civilian and CAP airplanes flew into the local airport this morning from Bowles Airport in Agawam, which has been the mission control center since the plane was declared missing.

The Turners Falls Airport was a beehive of activity Friday, as search aircraft landed, received further instruction from Major Ogren, refueled, and then took off to continue the search rescue operation. In addition to local Group 2 pilots, CAP pilots from North Adams, Springfield were on hand at Turners Falls Friday.

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<sup>12</sup> Go-Karts Go-Carts.

Group 1 operations leaders in Springfield flew to Turners Falls late Friday afternoon to inform Major Ogren Springfield planes would be arriving to assist in the Franklin County search early Saturday morning.

Radio communications are being handled from the CAP equipment on the runway apron, while Capt. Joseph Kurkulonis, Turners Falls squadron communications officer, maintains communications from his home. At the field with Major Ogren Friday were Captain Joseph Smolen of Northfield, Group 2 executive officer, and T. Sgt. Winifred Frazier of Northfield, Group 2 member.

Major Ogren termed the Heath report as the only real lead in the disappearance of the airplane, but added the search would continue from Gardner westward along the Massachusetts border. Other planes have been dispatched to the Manchester, Vt, and Keene, N.H., areas, under special authorization to cross state lines.

**Sept. 20** [Greenfield MA Recorder Gazette 1965 a - 1374.pdf](#)

TURNERS FALLS—Once again the value of Turners Falls Airport to the community and the state is apparent this week as the locally based Civil Air Patrol squadron leads a three-state air search for a missing aircraft, presumed down somewhere between eastern New Hampshire and Hartford.

Chuck Ogren of Northfield, CAP commander and one time R-G fire, court and police reporter, led the search mission, manned the CAP radio and debriefed pilots near the Franklin Airways hanger over the week end.

While the humanitarianistic[sic] values of the search, could hopefully lead to the rescue of a Wells, Me. couple, are self-evident, we noted other benefits to the town and businessmen during our visit Friday.

Countless search aircraft landed at the municipally owned field, taxied to the Franklin Airways gas pump and were refueled by Huber Tandy, the airport manager. At 41.5 cents a gallon, a considerable amount of money was spent on gasoline alone.

In addition the pilots, many from as far away as Springfield and North Adams, ate lunches and dinners in local restaurants between search flights, and some even put up for the night at local motels

It is true the town itself, which does not charge a landing fee at the port, may not have directly benefited much by the activities, but local businessmen did. Besides, Turners Falls Airport received some good publicity from newspapers throughout the country.

**Sept. 27** [Greenfield MA Recorder Gazette 1965 a - 1495.pdf](#)

### **CAP Officials Participate in State Exercise**

Group 2, Civil Air Patrol, based at Turners Falls Airport, participated in a state-wide Civil Defense-CAP exercise "Survival-65", Friday through Sunday, Major Charles Ogren, Group 2 commander, said today.

Ogren, Capt. Joseph Smollen and two cadets, all members of the Turners Falls Squadron, were assigned to the Worcester Airport tower which was an advanced base in the operation.

The simulated exercise was based on the premise that the state was hit by two nuclear explosions, one two miles east of Westover Field and the other two miles west of Weymouth.

Ogren and Smollen were ordered to Worcester, Where Ogren, as advanced base commander, took charge of distribution by CAP personnel of needed medical supplies and personnel. Flights were ordered to airports throughout the state and planes flew four boxes of toxin to Turners Falls and a doctor and CD director to Orange. In addition, traffic surveys were conducted, radiological monitoring practices and assessments of nuclear damages made.

The operation was conducted to test the effectiveness of emergency forces within the region. Ogren said.

While no CAP personnel were based at Turners Falls Airport during the exercise, under actual nuclear conditions the airport would be manned, Ogren said. Capt. Joseph Kurklonis, T.F., manned the local radio during the practice mission.

**Dec. 27**      [Greenfield MA Recorder Gazette 1965 a - 3326.pdf](#)

### [Sam Couture is Making Some Turners Headway](#)

TURNERS FALLS—is Turners Falls Airport just a Sam Couture dream or is it a slow growing embryo of future transportation?

Are residents unconscious of increasing air transportation because so few own or use this modern mode of travel, Just as people were when a few automobile owners wanted better roads while the majority were still driving a horse-pulled buggy? Are proponents men with evil intent on the public pocketbook or are they men of great wisdom with long-range thinking?

**Answers** to these questions can only be debated and history holds the answer. But it is a fact that the trend is toward more and more air transportation nationally.

In March, once again, Montague voters will be asked to consider appropriating 13,100, which is 10 per cent of the total cost of buying equipment to light the field for night flying.

Old prejudices will again be raised and old opinions voiced, for the issue has been put to voters before.

Voters will ask why public funds should back a private enterprise.

Couture answers that what benefits one helps all.

**Samuel H. Couture** is president of Franklin Airways, Inc., base operator at Turners Falls Airport. For nearly 20 years now he has been the Turners Falls-Greenfield area's leading advocate of air transportation and recreation.

At his urging, the town, state and federal governments in 1959 spent \$114,000 to build hard-surface runways at the Millers Falls Rd. field. That helped, Sam Couture says, but traffic indicates more is needed if the port is to maintain its role and to help the area grow.

During November, he says, 97 unscheduled planes landed at Turners Falls. Of these, three were non-scheduled air taxi runs, nine corporate (business) aircraft and 85 general aviation flights.

**The Wall Street Journal** defines general aircraft as "all flying other than military and scheduled airline operations". It states that there are more than 90,000 general aviation planes in this country, up from an estimated 35,000 in 1946. General aviation craft put in about 15-million hours of air time a year, as compared with the 2,100 commercial airliners which fly some 5-million ours annually.

Total cost of the proposed lighting at Turners Falls is \$31,000—\$15,500 federal, \$12,400 state and \$3,100 local.

Supporters claim the facilities cannot expand unless geared for night flying. Thomas W. Judd, Montague's airport commission chairman, says that the original plans for lighting the field have been revised and approval given by the Federal Aviation Agency. "We anticipate a major change in activity when the lights are erected on and near the field," he said.

Indication of interest also comes from outside the area. Couture reports he recently received an inquiry from State Wide Airlines, Inc., which is considering Turners Falls Airport in a daily run from Keene to Bradley Field and New York City. Businessmen to the north want quick access to Bradley and other central points, he says.

**Supporters** also believe that if the airport does not grow it will die out. "If this happens." Couture warns, "And Franklin County folks want to change their minds, they may be out of luck for the land will quickly be taken up for other uses." It is also a fact that open land is at a premium in New England.

Officials and engineer engaged in preliminary plans for the Northfield Mountain hydroelectric installation are already using the field in their travels to and from distant points says Couture, noting men in a hurry want quick methods of transportation.

If the lights are installed, will there be an additional cost to the town? Couture says there will only be the maintenance and electrical charge.

Why put money into someone else's business? Couture's answer: What helps one, helps all. If 100 businessmen and parents of youngsters in area private schools use the field for one overnight trip in one month, they eat, lodge and shop in the area, he says. If each spent \$35 during that overnight stay, Franklin County is \$3,500 richer, he concludes.

**Couture Says** Franklin Airways' annual real estate taxes to the town are \$1,196 besides the personal property tax levied by the state on airplanes owned by the firm. He

adds: "I'm not getting rich, although lots of folks think I'm a millionaire on this airport business. It's been a tough struggle but in the last three years we have seen business increase 25 per cent and are now breaking even."

The field is used by several area groups, including Franklin County Flying Club, Pioneer Valley Sport Parachuting Club (weekends and holidays). Civil Air Patrol (occasional flights) and the University of Massachusetts' Air Force ROTC, which is an annual \$10,000 operation with its participants.

Also using the field as a base is a dusting and spraying operator. Itinerants, says Couture, come from a wide area. An official from Indianapolis wanted to see a new stone crushing machine at the Warner Bros, in East Deerfield. He landed at Turners Falls, took a taxi to Deerfield, and returned in a one-day round trip. Businessmen arrived from Maryland, Illinois and Pennsylvania last month alone, Couture reports.

**Traffic Jams** are a daily occurrence at New York's La Guardia, where general and corporate aircraft land and take off at the rate of one every two minutes during peak hours, says the Wall St. Journal, Turners Falls Airport is a long way from such activity, but it isn't because Sam Couture isn't trying to make it so.

January 14, 1966

[Greenfield MA Recorder Gazette 1966 - 0193.pdf](#)

### **Letters to the Editor**

#### **Turners Falls Airport Worth Improvement**

To The Editor: During recent months there have been several articles in this paper concerning the issue of improving the Turners Falls Airport. With the present facilities, the airport is not much of an asset to the surrounding communities. One large step toward having it transformed into an asset is to provide the necessary lighting to make the airport useful throughout the twenty-four hour day.

One large item on a checklist that industrial establishments utilize when searching for new locations to expand their business is an adequate airport. A good example of a town which has been growing steadily and has just as steadily improved airport facilities is Keene, N.H. Keene has two hard-surfaced runways, lights and an approved instrument approach. They also have major airlines making regular daily stops.

Speaking with experience as a professional pilot. Turners Falls airport is in a much more desirable location than Keene airport. Keene has a steep mountain very close to the west side of the airfield. The only thing lacking at Turners Falls is needed improvements which, of course, cost money.

Should the money be spent to update the facilities, it would be one of the best investments that could be made to aid the entire community. With the airport improved, there is a built-in compliment to make the Greenfield-Turners Falls area even more

attractive to new business and that is interstate 91. Of course, that is assuming that the Massachusetts section is one day completed.

It is my firm belief that each moment's delay in making the needed improvements at the Turners Falls airport is money lost to local business as well as the local government's tax pocket.

Capt. Louie A. Barber

**March 20** [Greenfield MA Recorder Gazette 1966 - 1456.pdf](#)

### **All Around Town**

—A sign of spring was n evidence at Turners Falls Airport Sunday when the port was used as a base for some gilder flying.

### **—Traffic Booms at Airport; Students Busy**

TURNERS FALLS—Turners Falls Airport was busy last week in transient traffic, according to Franklin Airways, Inc., base operator. Gas stops, cross country flights and business trips made up the list of traffic. It was too windy for parachute jumping, airway officials reported. Home ports of craft landing here included: Wiggins Airways, Norwood; Lebanon, N.H., Poughkeepsie, N.Y.; Bridgeport, Conn.; Concord, N.H.; Fitchburg, Waterbury, Conn.; Glens Falls, N.Y., and Granville.

"ROTC and private students are very active," said airway Pres. Samuel H. Couture, "We final exercises at Turners Falls now have a total of eight flight students."

He said the airway has a Piper Colt 108 and a Cessna 150 for instruction; also a Cessna 182, four-place, in operation for charter flights, passenger rides and business trips.

Couture concluded; "THANKS to everybody for the runway lights."

**May 19** [Greenfield MA Recorder Gazette 1966 - 2423.pdf](#)

### **Airport Notes Busy Schedule**

TURNERS FALLS—Last week was reported by Frankin Airways, base operator at Turners Falls Airport, as one of the busiest this year.

A total of 33 transient planes stopped at Turners Falls Airport on business and pleasure trips. The aircraft came from all New England states plus Delaware, New York, Pennsylvania, and Iowa.

One of the planes brought Mayor Collins of Boston to the area in his campaign foe a seat in the U.S. Senate.

Many of the other planes were reported to be persons arriving to attend the 72<sup>nd</sup> Annual] Concert of Sacred Music of Northfield and Mt Hermon School Sunday. Many of the parents who came reportedly stayed overnight in area motels.

Some parachute jumping took place over the week-end, the base operator said.

**Aug. 20** [Greenfield MA Recorder Gazette 1966 - 4339.pdf](#)

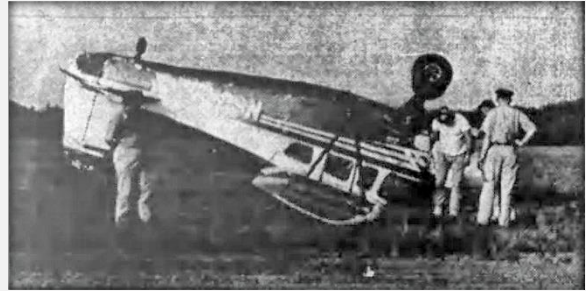
### **Plane Flips Upside Down on Runway**

TURNERS FALLS—A pilot escaped injury Saturday when the light aircraft he was landing at Turners Falls Airport flipped and crashed on the runway.

Reports indicate the pilot, Philip J. Devine, 32, of Hadley, was maneuvering to avoid a parachutist crossing the runway.

Richard James, eye witness and owner of the Howard 450 horsepower craft, gave the following account:

Devine had taken five parachutists of the Pioneer Valley Parachute Sports Center aloft at 5:30 p.m. and dropped them in the area. He was attempting to land when he saw one of the parachutists crossing the runway.



In order to get a better view of the man, Devine pushed left rudder, bringing the plane into a position for better sighting from the cockpit. Aware of the man's position, the pilot then attempted to straighten the craft by applying right rudder.

James said the plane wasn't escaped traveling fast enough to respond to right rudder, so Devine then applied the brakes, causing it to flip frontwards and land on its back.

Devine reportedly was out of the plane and on the runway before anyone could get to the scene, and incurred no injuries. James estimated the \$5,000 plane was a total loss.

Devine is a pilot hired by the Parachute Sports Center, home based at Turners Falls Airport, to lift parachutists.

Following the accident, the plane was righted and pulled by truck behind a hangar to await inspection by an insurance claims adjuster. James said the craft was fully insured.

The Parachute Sports Center will be operating as usual with a plane chartered from Franklin Airways, James said.

**Sept. 27** [Greenfield MA Recorder Gazette 1966 - 4836.pdf](#)

### [All Around Town](#)

Traffic at Turners Falls Airport last week was reported as light by Franklin Airways, Inc., base operator, with 10 transient stops made. The reason for so little traffic was given as rain and high rough winds. Some parachute jumping took place Sunday.

**March 27, 1967** [Greenfield MA Recorder Gazette 1967 - 1552.pdf](#)

### [Montague Meeting Notes](#)

#### [Port Lights it Costs More to Get Less](#)

—TURNERS FALLS—Original plans for a \$31,000 Turners Falls Airport lighting program, costing the town only 10 per cent, or \$3,100 are apparently out the window, town meeting members were told Saturday they appropriated \$2,750 from taxation toward an \$11,700 plan.

The \$3,100 for the first plan, appropriated last year, will also be used to provide the town's 50 per cent. Airport Commission Chr. Thomas Judd explained that because of

numerous airport requests across the nation, coupled with heavy government expenditures, the federal program here had to be postponed indefinitely.

The state, in the meantime has come up with a lesser program. For \$11,500, landing and beacon lights at the ends of the runways could be taken care of on a 50-50 cost sharing.

Judd said that he would call the Massachusetts Aeronautics Commission today to report the town had appropriated the needed money. The MAC<sup>13</sup> will meet within 30 days to determine if it is willing to allocate its funds, Judd said.

The approved motion included a rider requiring expenditure of the entire \$5,850 by Dec. 31. If unexpended, the funds will revert to surplus revenue.

—**FOR YEARS**, airport commissioners and Sam Couture of Franklin Airways, Inc., port operator, have warned the town that it had to appropriate its share of funds to get the benefit of federal and state aid for Turners Falls Airport projects. For years, the town resisted. In 1966, the town appropriated \$3,100, its 10 per cent share of a \$31,000 lighting project.

Chr. Tom Judd of the port commission was back Saturday to report the town was too late in acting. No federal funds are available. But, as an alternative he said, the town could appropriate another \$2,750 to provide its 50 per cent of an \$11,800 project with state cooperation. Then, he revealed, there's a chance the state won't go along. So, after years of warning Montague, port commissioners and Sam Couture can at last say, "We told you so."

**July 5** [Greenfield MA Recorder Gazette 1967 - 3466.pdf](#)

### **Airport Given Approval by Commission**

TURNERS FALLS—Plans for new airport lights have been approved by the Turners Falls Airport Commission and Winslow C. Wentworth, town engineer. The plans, prepared by Joseph Wallis, chief engineer at Logan Airport in Boston, called for a large rotating beacon and lights on either aids, and at the end of each runway, according to Sec. Clyde Falby of the Airport Commission.

Falby said engineers from the State Department of Aeronautics will visit Turners Falls Airport within a week to make preliminary plans for the lighting installation. According to Falby it will be completed by the end of August.

"Once the lights are installed the airport can operate on a 24 hour a day basis and thereby provide an important means of transportation for any industries who might be planning to build in the Industrial Site located next to the airport," Falby said.

**Nov. 7** [Greenfield MA Recorder Gazette 1967 - 5750.pdf](#)

**TURNERS FALLS**—Installation of runway lights at Turners Falls Airport was started yesterday by Fruen Electric Co. of Yarmouth. Some 7000 feet of wiring will be laid. The

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<sup>13</sup> Massachusetts Airport Commission.

installation will include runway lights, a lighted rotating beacon and a lighted windsock. The electrical contractor expects the work to be completed by this weekend.

**Dec. 2** [Greenfield MA Recorder Gazette 1967 - 6240.pdf](#)

**Joining More Than 2,300 CAP Units** in the United States to celebrate the 26th anniversary this week of Civil Air Patrol is the Turners Falls Squadron, based at Turners Falls Airport.

In a commendation from Massachusetts Wing, the Turners Falls squadron ranks first out of 100 radio stations in the state for having communications equipment necessary to meet any emergency.

The squadron is on call for search and rescue missions and cooperates with state and federal agencies in local and national emergencies. The squadron, has also received an Air Force citation expressing appreciation for support given over the year.

**Dec. 14** [Greenfield MA Recorder Gazette 1967 - 6486.pdf](#)

Turners Falls Airport has been active since Nov. 1 due to the new airport lights. Eighty planes have used the landing facilities in that period, according to Chr. Thomas Judd of the Turners Falls Airport Commission. "Of the 80 landings and take-offs, 32 were night flights and landings. We don't have any comparative figures for the same period last year but we know that the traffic has increased greatly, most of the flights recorded as business trips." Judd said.

March 12, **1968** [Greenfield MA Recorder Gazette 1968 - 1295.pdf](#)

### **Town Warrant Town of Montague**

**Art. 19.** To see If the Town will vote to raise and appropriate, transfer from available funds or otherwise provide any sum or sums of money for the purpose of constructing and installing taxi lights, and related equipment on the airport ramp, at the Turners Falls Airport, or pass any vote or votes in relation to.

**Art. 20.** To see If the Town will raise and appropriate, transfer from available funds or otherwise provide any sum or sums of money for the purpose of improving land located within the confines of the Turners Falls Airport, in the Town of Montague, or pass any vote or votes in relation thereto.

**May 2** [Greenfield MA Recorder Gazette 1968 - 2329.pdf](#)

### **Mitchell Bomber Draws Crowd**

TURNERS FALLS—Some people keep Great Danes St. Bernards. The biggest pet you'll ever see is being kept at Turners Falls Airport.

Its owner is the "Damn Yankee Air Force," a group of ex-service pilots "dedicated to the DAMN preservation of World War II Aircraft."

The big pet is a North American B-25C Mitchell bomber. It's the biggest tin bird ever kept at the [Turners Falls] airport. It's so big it won't fit in the hangar and must be tied down outside.

The plane and its have been a great card with weekend crowds of 300-400 at the airport watching parachute jumps and the flying of these former fighting planes.

The B-25 was nicknamed the "Billy Mitchell", its big claim to fame occurred on April 18, 1942, when Lt. Col. James Doolittle, with 16 B-25's and 79 pilots and crewmen, took off from the aircraft carrier "Hornet" 688 miles from Tokyo and performed the surprise early war bombing of that Japanese city.

Thirteen planes dropped pound bombs on Tokyo, two on Nagoya and one on Kobe. Eight airmen were captured off China's coast. Three were shot others imprisoned. Nine died in the raid. One B-25 landed near Vladivostok and was interned by Russians. The crew escaped to Iran but the plane was never returned.

Damn Yankee's biggest supporter is Bob Gardner, a tractor-trailer driver from Sunderland. It was his doing that paved the way for the group's move here.

May 3, **1979** [Greenfield MA Recorder 1979 - 3088.pdf](#)

### **Montague Town Meeting**

ARTICLE 13—runway lighting system at Turners Falls Airport with hazard beacons on two adjacent hills, marks near completion of the airport commission's short-range projects under a 20-year master plan. Finance committee recommends \$104,500 from borrowing in anticipation of Federal Aviation Administration reimbursement and \$5,-500 from airport industrial land account. The master plan's second phase includes construction of a crosswind runway and parallel taxiway.

April 20, **1992** [Greenfield MA Recorder 1992 - 2266.pdf](#)  
[Greenfield MA Recorder 1992 - 2275.pdf](#)

### **An Aviation Hotbed**

#### **Franklin County, Dotted With Airports,— Aas Once a Center of Flying Innovation**

Although Franklin County is fairly well endowed with airports considering its sparse population, it could hardly be considered the aviation capital of the Northeast in this day and age.

But roll back the clock to the 1940s and '90s, Roger Atwood can tell you, and things were different. For starters, in 1953 the Turners Falls Airport was the largest sod field in New England. Now a relatively quiet airport with one paved 3,000-foot runway, in those days there were three runways, two of which were over 3,000 feet.

It was also "the home of aerial spraying," according to Atwood. A lot of research and development—they might have called it trial and error then—on spray planes took place in a

large U.S. Department of Agriculture hangar at the airport. They hung fans below the planes' bellies and put tanks in their fuselages. Then they watched what happened when the pesticide hit the fan.

At one time, the county was home to 150 aircraftman flight instructors and 16 aircraft mechanics, somewhat more than the estimated 100 planes, dozen active commercial pilots and half dozen mechanics you could find here now.

"Most of our valley would have been rich in aviation," said Atwood, recalling Pratt and Whitney, the engine manufacturers; the Hamilton-Standard aircraft builders and other aviation-related businesses that once thrived along the Connecticut "River. But lower labor costs and other factors lured the business elsewhere.

At 70, Atwood could certainly be considered one of the deans of aviation in the area. Except for a relatively brief stint in California, he has been earning his living over the region since he earned his instructor's rating after taking a flight test at Turners Falls in 1939, when he was 19. "I was the youngest commercial pilot in the country at the time," he said.

He now runs Pilgrim Airport, a sod strip that straddles the Whately-Hatfield line. Two airplanes—one a vintage 1948 Cessna—basked on the grass one recent spring morning as Atwood reminisced in the work-worn trailer that serves as the airport office.

A Northampton native, his first work at an airfield was at that town's airport, which used to be called LaFleur. He sold tickets for rides with barnstormers, including a renowned woman pilot, Ruth Nichols, who took passengers up in a plane with a wicker seat.

One day in the early '30s, he recalled, news leaked out that Charles Lindbergh was flying in to visit his then-girlfriend, Anne Morrow, who was a student at Smith College. "As a kid, our hero was Lindbergh," Atwood said, so as soon as the word was out, he and his airplane buddies gathered at the airport fence to watch the great aviator land.

Out of the sky Lindbergh's plane appeared, a newfangled (for the time) single-wing number that fit the hero's image. The aircraft slowly descended to its moment of truth at Northampton: "He had the most horrible landing you'd ever want to see," Atwood said, and another myth was shattered.

During World War II, LaFleur Airport was a Navy training station, drawing student pilots from Williston Academy in Easthampton. Turners Falls Airport, also a Navy training base, drew from Amherst College, Atwood said, and Pilgrim was for emergencies, in case students couldn't land at their regular bases.

Orange Municipal Airport was built during the war as a back-up for Westover Air Force Base in Chicopee. If the Germans bombed Westover, the plan was for U.S. warplanes to use Orange. Atwood remembered that baseball great Ted Williams was among the luminaries who learned to fly at Turners under a Navy program.

In 1946 Atwood started his own airport on a field south of Northampton. It thrived, he said—at one point about 100 planes were based there—but land was taken when Interstate 91 was built.

Soon after that, Atwood split for California, returning in 1978 to work at an aviation business in Turners Falls owned by Sabah Dawlett, an Iraqi.

The Turners Falls Airport had been a farm, he said. It thrived during the '20s and '30s, barnstorming years, with competition in Franklin County from a grass strip by the railroad tracks in Bernardston.

Several businesses sprang up at Turners airport, among them Franklin Airways, Inc., which had a contract to teach flying to students from Colombia; and the Whitman and Shaw Flying Service. "Shaw was a short guy. He went on to fly with Pan Am," Atwood said.

He noted that virtually all that remains of most of these businesses are the foundation stones of their buildings.

For years, every spring and fall, he would fly fishermen to upper Canada in an amphibious plane, he said. Once he made the trip to Hudson's Bay, north of the Arctic Circle, in a canvas-winged Cessna like the one on the grass at Pilgrim Airport that spring day—not perhaps the most rugged vehicle for transportation to the far north.

Of course, there are the occasional horror stories in aviation, the crashes and other events that send shudders up the spine. These cropped up rarely in Atwood's memory.

He recalled one accident at Turners in a Waco, a large biplane owned by a Greenfield undertaker. The brother of Norman Drew, a drugstore owner in town, was killed, and a monument in a field at the airport commemorates the incident.

Another dark chanter of local airport history involved the illegal drug business. The details were unclear in Atwood's narrative, but apparently his one-time employer, Dawlett, was involved in the narcotics trade. The chapter came to an abrupt end, Atwood said, when Dawlett and his, airplane disappeared in the Gulf of Mexico off New Orleans.

November 9, 1996

[Greenfield MA Recorder 1996 - 6818.pdf](#)

[Will Opportunity Fly Their Way?](#)

[Turners Falls Airport Officials Hope for State Money](#)

TURNERS FALLS—Ivana Trump and Bill Crosby have flown the friendly skies above the Turners Falls Municipal Airport. So have politicians, corporate executives, private school parents and area businessmen.

With roughly 300 planes a month using the runway, the airport is viewed as a community asset. But can airport commissioners drum up enough support to go after Transportation Bond Bill money to build a longer runway and navigational aids?

The good news is the Massachusetts Aeronautics Commission has \$76 million in Transportation Bond bill money earmarked for improvements at some of the 44 state municipal airports. These include grant money for runway repairs, environmental studies, navigation systems and other improvements.

But the question is whether the commission would forgo a requirement that airport hometowns like Montague ante up a 20 percent matching grant.

To suspend the matching grant the airport commission will need to prove that an airport has community support and provides regional benefits for Franklin County, according to Armand J. Dufresne, MAC Manager of Aviation Planning

"Unfortunately, little airports aren't seen as part of the transportation picture," said Dufresne. People's perception is that small airports are playgrounds, he said. "You never hear of a company that stayed because the airport was there, but if the airport was to close, we have found it makes a difference."

In a recent study ranking criteria that businesses look for in determining where they want to locate, Dufresne said the availability of a nearby airport ranked sixth in priority. "Taxes were less of a concern than the criteria of an "airport" he said. But in terms of promoting the state's 44 regional airports, "we haven't been proactive enough" he said.

Dufresne flew into Franklin County this week to meet with Montague Airport Commissioner Richard Byam, airport consultant Arnold Stymest and county planner Linda Dunlavy to discuss ways to apply for grant money that might help to make at least part of the airport's 20-year master plan a reality.

If the full master plan were realized, the cost, in 1990 dollars, would be around \$6 million, according to Byam. However, the commission has been scaling down the plan to focus on the following priorities:

- An environmental study required for grant money.
- An archeological study, which is required because two remains of a possible prehistoric campsite have been found on the land in 1987.
- Fence the airport property.
- Pave the tie-down area.
- Purchase of property to expand the current 75-foot-wide runway from 3,000 feet to 3,700 feet.
- Create new ramps and taxiways for new users.
- Install a global positioning system.
- Install an automatic weather observation system.
- Replace the existing runway.

But asking Montague to pay the 20 percent matching grant for such improvements, Dufresne admitted, "would be like asking Montague to pay for Route 2."

Dufresne said \$29 million of the grant money will be used at an airport expansion in New Bedford, a community that will not have to pay a 20 percent matching grant because it is a poor community and has proven that the airport will benefit several communities in the region.

Dufresne suggested that the airport commission get letters of support from area businesses that use the airport. County planner Dunlavy said she will include questions about airport use in a county wide transportation study she is preparing in the next few weeks.

Bruce Bohonowicz, president of airport-based Pioneer Aviation Inc., says about 300 planes fly in and out of the airport each month. More would use the airport, he maintains, if the runway were long enough to handle the landing of small Lear jets now being used by many businesses.

### **Who uses the airport?**

Renovators Supply employees living in Northfield, Erving and Orange commute to and from work using the airport five days a week in a six-passenger Malibu Mirage that's equipped with a conference table. "A couple of times a day, we shuttle personnel back and forth between the companies we have in New England," said Renovators Supply President Claude Jeanloz. Although the Renovators factory is located in Millers Falls, the corporate headquarters are in Conway, N.H. Besides commuting, personnel are sometimes flown to sites where they are looking at purchasing equipment, he said.

AquaFuture Inc. President Joshua Goldman said his Turners Falls company uses the airport at least once a month to bring prospective customers to the hydroponic fish farm. He said the airport has become increasingly useful to visitors as AquaFuture shares its technology

Indeck Energy Systems Inc. used the airport to transport visiting company officials and was the first to land a 12-passenger Citation jet there, Manager Francis Zabek said. Besides a handful of students, alumni and parents going to Northfield Mount Hermon School, Deerfield Academy, Stoneleigh-Burnham School or Eaglebrook School, the Hallmark Institute of Photography uses the airport once a year, when students get a lesson in aerial photography.

Both Ann Hamilton, president of the Franklin County Chamber of Commerce and industrial real estate marketer Mark Abramson of Pratt Real Estate have taken prospective business leaders on aerial tours of the area.

"We sell the fact that the airport is there, when we market the industrial park," Montague Town Planner Denis Superczynski said. "But to be honest, we've had a lukewarm response."

"It definitely is a marketing tool that we have an advantage of, over areas that do not have (airports), said John Ryan, director of economic development for the Franklin County

Community Development Corp. "They may not use it directly, but they want to know that it's there and available for salespeople, managers and out-of-town personnel," he said.

"We don't have a lot of corporate travel here, but as we have more people doing consulting roles, one of our medium-sized handicaps is we're not closer to a large airport," said Hamilton. She said existing businesses don't use the airport much now, but as they grew, the airport may become more important to them as a way of reaching a broader customer base.

Dunlavy said both the Montague and Orange airports are under-utilized assets that could be better promoted.

Last spring, after the Montague Airport Commission proved the airport was generating enough revenue to meet its \$1,550 in expenses, voters OK'd spending \$29,000 for an airport terminal building.

The foundation is now being laid for the terminal, which will house an airport manager's office, a waiting area, telephone and an office for the airport commission. Eventually the terminal might house what's called an automatic weather observation system for pilots.

Ryan remembers seeing the parent of a private school student land a small plane at the Turners Falls Airport, only to take off for another airport because he couldn't find a telephone and other information he needed. "He wanted to rent a car and find a hotel," said Ryan, who was taking a trip to Maine. "We tried to help him, but he felt more comfortable going to Westfield, where he knew there would be the services he wanted."

Montague Selectman Bradford Councilman, who for years called for the airport commission to make the airport self-supporting, praised commissioners at annual town meeting for meeting its operating expenses with user fee revenues.

Councilman said he's used the airport, but he believes any economic benefits it provides are mainly regional ones.

"I think that there's a myth that there's an industrial advantage to the airport," he said. "I remain optimistic that the airport commission is going to operate it (cost-effectively), but I'm certainly not going to be able to advocate that the taxpayer spend money on it," he said. "The airport commission has been looking to obtain grants from the state and, if there is any opportunity, we certainly don't want to miss it."

March 3, 1998

[Greenfield MA Recorder 1998 - 1317.pdf](#)

### [Vandals Wreck Lights at Turners Falls Airport](#)

TURNERS FALLS—Vandals in an all-terrain vehicle ran over eight threshold lights on the runway of the Turners Falls Municipal Airport, causing airport officials to have to close off runway lanes 3 and 4 to approaching planes.

Airport Manager Lawrence Beaudoin said the lights, which cost \$85 apiece, were mowed down by an ATV—an incident that has happened much too frequently at the airport. Beaudoin said he was notified around 2 p.m. Monday about the damaged lights and has posted a notice with the Federal-Aviation Administration that the unlit runway portion will be closed to approaching planes until the lights are repaired.

"This is ridiculous and senseless." Beaudoin said of the damage "The lights are made to break away, so if aircraft hit it, the plane wouldn't be damaged." Beaudoin said the airport has had to spend \$600 during the past year repairing lights that were mowed down by recreational vehicles. With the recently damaged lights, Beaudoin estimates the airport will be spending about \$1,200 or more this year on the runway lights.

The airport is planning to erect a 4,580-foot fence around the airport in the coming budget year, Beaudoin said. "It's too bad, but we have to restrict some of the recreational uses of the land up there," he said. "Because of the poor judgment of some, it's going to have to stop."

November 13, 2003 [Greenfield MA Recorder 2003 - 4455.pdf](#)

### **Turners Airport gets \$75,000 Facelift**

MONTAGUE—The Turners Falls Airport is spending about \$75,000—mostly federal money—to resurface and reconfigure an area of the Turners Falls Airport.

Mark Fairbrother, who is on the Airport Commission, said 600 square feet will be added to the paved lot where transient aircraft park and to another lot that accesses the hangar.

About \$67,500 is federal money, about \$5,250 is state money and the remainder of \$2,250 is being paid by the Town of Montague.

Armand Dufresne is the senior airport planner for Gale Associates Airport Planning, the company Turners Falls Airport contracted for construction.

He said that one consideration for any work in the area is to make sure that there is no impact on archeological sites. The airport area includes sites that have been ruled important Native American locations,<sup>14</sup> Dufresne said, but the area currently under construction has been deemed a "low priority area" by the Massachusetts Historical Commission so the airport is not required to have an archeologist on site during construction.

Fairbrother said no new archeological surveying was done because the project is mostly reconstruction, and the portion of new paved area is small and has been disturbed in the past.

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<sup>14</sup> Into 2024, no Indian (native American so-called) culture artifacts have been discovered at the Turners Falls Airport site. Nothing ever will be.

"The place in the whole general area has been worked over so many times (that) if there was anything of significance, they would know about it," Fairbrother said.

Dufresne said almost all of the airport's land has been surveyed, mostly by UMass Archeological Services, except a portion that is covered by forest and wetlands and for which there are no future plans for construction.

He said the airport does have such plans for the long-term, but intends to work with experts so they can preserve as much as possible.

"There is a significant site, and there have been other projects proposed that would impact it, but this is not one of them," Fairbrother said.

July 20, 2004      Greenfield MA Recorder 2004 - 4400.pdf

### Readers Write

**The Turners Falls Airport** The issue of Turners Falls Airport and the \$38,000 the airport costs to maintain for the year.

I hangar an airplane at the airport and am replying to the view that the Turners Falls airport is not a "money making" enterprise.

Here's some "uncounted" revenue directly tied to the airport:

- A pilot who hangars his airplane next to mine built a \$1.5 million tool factory (he is the president) within walking distance of the field. I'm not sure of the taxes, but would guess it helps fill the \$36,000 quoted,

- Other pilots live in Turners Falls and fly for business. I moved here because of the airport; pilot friends have visited, enjoyed the low-key attractions, even contributing money to the new Great Falls Discovery Center and patronizing the Shady Glen diner.

- the late JFK Jr., reportedly used to fly in to have lunch at the Shady Glen. Bill Cosby, who lives in Shelburne, flies in regularly, there is a population of known artists living and working here. Each semester, every Hallmark student is taken up in an airplane by a local commercial pilot to be introduced to aerial photography.

Cosby keeps an airplane at the field. I'm not sure if that is beneficial for the town, but he is a huge philanthropist so who knows what might be in store for us?

- Before moving to Turners Falls, when I flew out of Northampton airport, Turners Falls was THE summer evening destination for many pilots—for an ice cream at the Countree Creemee.

The airport contributes several times the figure it costs the town; the auditing process used does not reflect that figure.      Name withheld *e.g.*

### Vintage Aircraft Display Saturday Before RC Airplane Club Event Sunday

TURNERS FALLS—The airfield will fill this weekend with the hum of airplane engines, propellers churning the air, and the angry whine of much smaller aircraft doing the same.

The Franklin County Radio Control Club's annual Father's Day Fun Fly, now in its third year, has extended in cooperation with the Turners Falls Airport, encompassing a second day and real airplanes, and with a minimum of planning it should be possible for visitors to take to the air Saturday and pilot from the ground Sunday.

The airport this year decided to piggy-back on the success of the RC event, and Saturday will feature vintage and unique airplanes on display, on the ground and in the air and free airplane rides for children ages 8-17.

Turners Falls Airport Manager Michael Longo said he is trying to generate a little more community involvement with the airport, and figured it made sense to come in on the coattails of the established event.

"I think it's just a great opportunity. I want the community to share some of the benefits of what the airport and flying is all about," Longo said. "Get some vitality back over there."

Saturday's vitality is also scheduled to include a parachute drop by skydiving company Jumptown between noon and 1 p.m., an aeronautics flight simulator courtesy of the Massachusetts Department of Transportation and paid rides in a 1940 Waco airplane for adults. Longo said he believes the fee for rides is \$150 or \$180.

The airplane lineup was unavailable Monday, and Longo said the fees are up to the pilots. Sunday will be the club's day, with demonstrations of the various flying machine built or bought by club members and friends. Visitors may try their hands at the controls, piloting the model craft from the ground with the aid of club members.

David Korpiewski, president of the Franklin RC club, began the event as a means to promote the hobby, which he describes as an affordable alternative to flying a real airplane.

Past demonstrations have included aerial acrobatics synchronized to music, an eight bladed miniature helicopter designed as a platform for aerial filming and photography, and Korpiewski himself has constructed an airplane-style drone capable of streaming video to the operator on the ground, giving a first-person pilot's view.

The octocopter and drone are on the list of attractions this year, and the aerial acrobatics portion of the show will be provided by Korpiewski with a half-scale biplane equipped for sky-writing, a helicopter flier and a new trick pilot replacing last year's main performer, who Korpiewski said is now busy with national competition.

The radio-control air show is scheduled for every hour on the hour and will take about 20 minutes of each hour, the remainder of the—time free for visitors to try the

planes, simulators, and, for the younger set, to visit the kids' table. The kids' table this year includes free gliders and bubbles, while supplies last.

To help cover the expense of the event, the club is raffling off items Sunday including gift certificates donated by hobby businesses, a model plane and sports memorabilia. Donations are also accepted.

The airport is located off Millers Falls Road at 1 Aviation Way, Turners Falls. The event runs from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. both days, with Cliff's Smokin' Backyard BBQ on-hand for food. Both events are free, including admission, parking, demonstrations and activities, with the exception of adult flights Saturday and the raffle. The Saturday event is rain or shine. June 23 is the rain-date for Sunday's events.

June 12, 2014      [Greenfield MA Recorder 2014 - 3464.pdf](#)

### [Flying for Fun](#)

This weekend offers opportunities to take to the air, physically and virtually, with free airplane rides for children and teens in Montague on Saturday and some new twists to the now-annual remote control aircraft fair Sunday, including some aerial destruction.

This will be the second Turners Falls Aviation Weekend, a project of the Franklin County Radio Control Club and the Turners Falls Airport, with events from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. both days.

The airport has the skies and the ground Saturday, with free airplane rides for kids age 8 to 17 from 10 a.m. to 3-ish, paid rides for adults, an antique car show and airplanes on display, food vendors and a flight simulator, and parachutists landing around noon, among other offerings. Entrance and parking are free both days.

The airport is located off Millers Falls Road between the villages of Turners Falls and Millers Falls.

Sunday, events shift to the Franklin County Radio Control Club's newly resurfaced airstrip behind the airport proper, through Gate-4 off Industrial Boulevard.

This year instead of doing a lot of training and hands-on we're doing more of an air show, said David Korpiewski of the Radio Control Club, who began the Father's Day event four years ago.

The club's goal is to reel in members; Korpiewski said the RC flying hobby suffers from the misconception that it's astronomically expensive and the fear of crashing the flying models. Korpiewski said you can get a good starter plane for about \$100, and if you join the club they'll teach you not to crash. In the meantime, there's a good chance of some minor crashes Sunday with an aerial combat game.

Korpiewski said five or six fliers will pilot light planes with paper streamers attached to the tail. The goal is to swoop by and cut the other pilot's streamer, but Korpiewski's own

plane, with a few bits ripped off and reattached, is proof that things are often more exciting than planned. Korpiewski calls it a demolition derby of the sky.

There will also be electric jet demos, a helicopter trick-flying show, a DJ and food for sale. Also new this year, the club plans to project onto a screen what camera equipped planes see—a first-person view from the vantage point of Korpiewski's quad-copter drone or the view from a glider whose pilot Korpiewski said takes pleasure in steering between trees at 60 mph.

Shows run every hour or every other hour, and Korpiewski said there should be something to see in the air at all times. Other demonstrations include a half-scale biplane equipped to trail smoke and a collection of flying warplane replicas, and a kids' table with free gliders. In both cases, organizers aim to attract interest "It's just to kind of give something back to the community and open the airport up to more community involvement, and hopefully spark some interest in aviation," said Airport Manager Michael Longo. "It's a fun event and the price is right if it's free."

## **Ted Williams at Turners Falls Airport**

July 30, **1988**      [Greenfield MA Recorder 1988 a - 0818.pdf](#)

### **Chip Ainsworth - 'Chip Shots'**

Ted Williams, who finished his career with 521 home runs, 1,839 RBI, and a .344 batting average, spent his 23rd, 24th, and 25th birthdays flying a fighter plane in WW II and two more years flying in the Korean War.

"Without that time off," claims friend and former teammate Johnny Pesky, "he would've broken every batting record in baseball without a doubt."

Greenfield selectman Bernie McGarrah recalls that during basic training, Williams and Pesky lived on Millers Falls Road and flew out of the Turners Falls airport.

April 20, **1992**      [Greenfield MA Recorder 1992 - 2275.pdf](#)

### **About Town**

During World War II, LaFleur Airport was a Navy training station, drawing student pilots from Williston Academy in Easthampton. Turners Falls Airport, also a Navy training base, drew from Amherst College, Atwood said, and Pilgrim was for emergencies, in case students couldn't land at their regular bases.

Orange Municipal Airport was built during the war as a back-up for Westover Air Force Base in Chicopee. If the Germans bombed Westover, the plan was for U.S.

warplanes to use Orange. Atwood remembered that baseball great Ted Williams was among the luminaries who learned to fly at Turners under a Navy program.

July 13, 2002 [Greenfield MA Recorder 2002 - 4278.pdf](#)

### Chip Ainsworth 'Keeping Score'

A pair of longtime local baseball fans, Paul Seamans and Walter Kostanski, reminisced this week about Ted Williams.

Seamans recalled walking into Brines Sports Store in Boston when he spotted "The Kid".

"It was 1955 and I was still in the Navy and lo and behold there he was talking with the clerks and I asked one of them if he thought he'd give me his autograph. He looked over and saw me in uniform and talked with me about the Navy and WWII for about 20 minutes. He chatted me up for a long period, shook my hand and gave me an autograph."

Asked if he still had the signature, Seamans paused and said, "I knew you'd ask me. No, I gave it to my cousin. I'd give my right arm to get it back, but he's got it and there's no dice I'll get it back."

Kostanski recalled the days during WWII when Williams and teammate Johnny Pesky took flight instruction at Turners Falls Airport.

"Ted was my idol but I never got to see him personally," said Kostanski. "I'd stop by the airport but I never knew when he was flying. Later I got Johnny for one of our Newt Guilbault League banquets and he asked if Mrs. (Mary) Whiteman was still living. She had a snack shop at the airport and they both ate there."



Ted Williams with unidentified man at Turners Falls Airport, 1942. wikipedia

August 9, 2002 [Greenfield MA Recorder 2002 - 4851.pdf](#)

### Irmarie Jones - 'Just Plain Neighbors'

A NOTE FROM Jean Thurber of Gill brought back memories for m.

"During World War II, 1941 or 1942, probably, the Army based some soldiers at the Turners Falls Airport for flight training. A small lunch room was set up to feed these boys. My mother, Ruby Shirtcliff, was hired to cook and on weekends she would take my sister, Marlene, and me to work with her.

"We'd wash dishes, clear tables and do whatever else we could to help her. Among those young men taking flying lessons were Johnny Pesky and Ted Williams.

"I have also heard that Ted was one of the daredevils who flew under the French King Bridge. Fact or fiction?"

"Does anyone remember those events and know any more about them?"

Well, I do. The 58th College Training Detachment for the U.S. Army was stationed at Massachusetts State College. The men assigned there were beginning their flight training at Turners Falls Airport, traveling by bus every day. I had never heard of Turners Falls until that time when I worked in the dining hall at MSC for the Army.

At the same time, about 1942 or 1943, the Marine Corps also had recruits stationed at Amherst College and that's where Ted Williams was. I never heard of Johnny Peskey.

One cold winter night, one of the girls in the MSC sophomore dorm, the Abbey, (where the graduate center is today) hollered, 'Ted Williams is out front.' I had no idea who Ted Williams was, but, since every one of the young women were hanging out of the front windows, I did, too. I remember seeing a very tall man in a dark green Marine overcoat and a Marine cap. That was my one and only view of the man. I'm sure the Amherst College contingent also trained in Turners Falls."

End; for now. \_\_\_\_\_

Twenty-Fourteen seemed an appropriate time to suspend this account. Why so?

I feel the contemporary history needs a bit more maturing to grow into *history* as a more thoughtful sense of the word. As time advances, it's anticipated that an enthusiastic person—with a bit of luck, a local historian—will take-up the slack and move forward with the next chapter(s) of the Turners Falls Airport's being. . . hopefully so . . . maybe no.

At any rate, I trust you've experienced somewhat of a learning curve flattening, as you poured through the pages of this account of the Turners Falls Airport.

Ed Gregory

*praeteriti temporis non est obliviscendum*

Times past must not be forgotten e.g. 3.22.22

~~ Notes ~~