



# Smithsonian

*National Air and Space Museum*

## Women in Aviation - Beech Aircraft Company - Parade of Champions

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2021

National Air and Space Museum Archives  
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## Collection Overview

<b>Repository:</b>	National Air and Space Museum Archives
<b>Title:</b>	Women in Aviation - Beech Aircraft Company - Parade of Champions
<b>Date:</b>	1929-1966
<b>Identifier:</b>	NASM.XXXX.0311
<b>Source:</b>	Ninety-Nines (Organization)
<b>Extent:</b>	0.35 Cubic feet (1 flat box)
<b>Language:</b>	English .
<b>Summary:</b>	This scrapbook is a pictorial history of women in aviation, particularly the contributions of women with a connection to Beech Aircraft Company.
<b>Digital Content:</b>	<a href="#">Image(s): Women in Aviation - Beech Aircraft Company - Parade of Champions</a>

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## Administrative Information

### Acquisition Information

The Ninety-Nines, Gift, NASM.XXXX.0311

### Processing Information

Arranged, described, and encoded by Jessamyn Lloyd, 2021.

### Preferred Citation

Women in Aviation - Beech Aircraft Company - Parade of Champions, NASM.XXXX.0311, National Air and Space Museum, Smithsonian Institution.

### Restrictions

No restrictions on access

### Conditions Governing Use

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## Biographical / Historical

Walter Beech, along with Clyde Cessna and Lloyd Stearman, founded the Travel Air Manufacturing Company in Wichita, Kansas in 1925. Travel Air was known for producing highly successful racing aircraft and several entrants in the 1929 Women's Air Derby flew Travel Airs, including the winner Louise Thaden. Shortly after Travel Air merged with Curtiss-Wright Corporation in 1929, Walter Beech left the larger company and founded Beech Aircraft Corporation with his wife Olive Ann Beech and three others in Wichita in 1932. The first

aircraft produced by the company was the Beech 17 Staggerwing, designed to be a personal aircraft faster than military craft. Olive Ann Beech proposed that Beech Aircraft could increase sales of the aircraft by sponsoring a woman pilot, Louise Thaden with Blanche Noyes acting as co-pilot, to fly the Staggerwing in the 1936 Bendix Trophy Race. Thaden and Noyes won. Beech Aircraft continued to produce numerous successful civilian and military aircraft, and support women pilots, and Olive Ann Beech played an integral role in the company. In 1950, after the death of Walter Beech, she was named president of the company and remained in that role until Beech Aircraft was purchased by Raytheon in 1980 at which time she became a member of Raytheon's board of directors.

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## Scope and Contents

This scrapbook is a pictorial history of women in aviation, particularly the contributions of women with a connection to Beech Aircraft Company. The scrapbook is in a three-ring binder that measures approximately 11 by 11.5 by 3 inches and features many captioned photographs and some ephemera. Many of the photos were taken when various pilots visited the Beech Aircraft Company and many include Olive Ann Beech. Some photographs show pilots posed beside aircraft. Pilots shown in the scrapbook include Gladys O'Donnell; Iris Louise McPhetridge Thaden; Alma Arlene Palsgraff Davis; Ruth Rowland Nichols; Amy Mollison; Charlotte Frye; Lee Ya-Ching; Martha Ann Woodrum; Mildred Harshman; Joan Houbec; Mary Jane Sasala; Nadine Ramsey; Blanche Wilcox Noyes; Joan Fairfax; Mrs. G. S. Bustamente; Frances S. (Ceniceros) Bera; Lucile Wright; Edna Gardner Whyte; Janet Munkres; Peggy L. Pierce; Jacqueline Auriol; Viola Gentry; Jacqueline "Jackie" (Bessie Lee Pittman) Cochran; Gene Nora Jessen; Joyce Case; Patricia Z. McEwen; Edna D. Bower; Hideko Yokoyama; Grazia Sartori; Ann Roethlee; Mary Landis; Rachel Henry; Dorothy Magoffin; Margaret Ringenberg Grabill; Marion Rice Hart; Louise Sacchi; Velma Lee Copeland; Marilyn Copeland; Marion Dietrich; Jan Dietrich; Geraldine Lois Fredritz "Jerrie" Mock; Felicity Burnolli; Suzanne Beech; Toni LeVier; Jacqueline Cousins; and Joan Wallick. Aircraft shown in the scrapbook include the Travel Air Model B-4000 (J-5-C); Beech 17 Staggerwing; Beech Baron; Beech Queen Air A80; Beech Bonanza; and the Beech Musketeer.

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## Arrangement

Collection is in original order.

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## Names and Subject Terms

This collection is indexed in the online catalog of the Smithsonian Institution under the following terms:

### Subjects:

- Aeronautics
- Beech 17 Staggerwing, General
- Beech Bonanza Family
- Women air pilots

### Types of Materials:

- Scrapbooks

### Names:

- Beech Aircraft Corp
- Beech, Olive Ann, 1903-1993
- Ninety-Nines (Organization)

Thaden, Iris Louise McPhetridge