



# Pioneer Air Museum

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July 2022



## From the Museum...

### Calling for History!

Collection and preservation of objects of significance to Alaska aviation history is one of the ways that the IAAAF serves its stated mission. And certainly, we have many items and aircraft on display in the museum that serve that purpose. Less physically tangible things are also part of our efforts to preserve the unique history we enjoy. We have all heard and read some of the stories passed down from the first aviators in Alaska. Inevitably though, those pioneers have "gone west" and are no longer around to tell their stories. Fortunately, we still have some individuals who made contributions to local aviation in the 1940's and 50's. So we have the opportunity to capture their memories of events and flying conditions from those bygone years. I encourage anyone who knows someone who was involved in Alaska flying as a pilot, mechanic, or otherwise, to bring suggestions to our attention. And if you have ideas on how best to do interviews, record stories, or in some way save these first person accounts of the way things were, to speak up now. We have plenty of advantages with modern technology, but if we don't talk with our pioneers now, while we still can, we risk losing their stories forever.

Please consider who you think can make a significant addition to our collective history so that we can preserve it for future generations.

- Bill Green

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## **An Unmanned Aircraft Systems update...**

Nick Adkins from ACUASI--the Alaska Center for Unmanned Aircraft Systems Integration--at the University of Alaska Fairbanks gave the museum board a presentation on ACUASI and what to expect from them in the future. Read here some information on who and what they do.

For more information, see what they do at <https://uaf.edu/acuasi/>

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## **Our Summer Season - so far...**

With the summer season almost half way gone, we have had just over 4,000 people walk thru the Museum doors! We hope to have just as many the second half of the season. Intern Reid has completed his work on the summer project for the Swallow Tail and will be headed back to Kansas. We wish him well in his future endeavors!

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## **THE QUICKSILVER STORY by Rita Butteri**

On March 9, 2022, The Spirit of Teamwork Quicksilver ultralight opened its flight plan at 11 am with a destination of its new home with the Illinois Aviation Museum.

Read the whole story at <https://www.pioneerair.museum/blog/the-quicksilver-story>

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## **Upcoming Events...**

**30 Jul 2022**     **JBER Arctic Thunder Open House Air Show, 29 July is rehearsal and special needs day**

Joint Base Elmendorf Richardson Public Affairs, 907-552-7477  
(<https://www.arcticthunderopenhouse.com/contact/>)

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**16 Aug 2022**     **Pioneer Air Museum Board Meeting**

18:30 – 20:00: Pioneer Air Museum, 2300 Airport Way, Fairbanks

All members are welcome to attend!

<https://www.pioneerair.museum/calendar.html>

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## Alaska Aviation History...

### **31 Jul 1913      First powered flight in Alaska**

A series of five flights were made between July 3-5. While thrilling for Fairbanksians, it was a commercial disaster for the businessmen. The further plan had been to sell the aircraft in Alaska, but given the limited performance, there were no takers and the plane was taken apart and shipped back to Seattle, where it disappeared from the historic record. Martin's aircraft required high-octane fuel that had been ordered but didn't arrive for several days forcing him to operate on low-octane fuel. The poor engine performance required securing the tail with a spring setup which was released by his wife when full power was developed and even then he barely made it into the air.

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### **20 Jul 1920      U.S. Army Black Wolf Squadron in Alaska**

The U.S. Army Service's famed "Black Wolf Squadron" left its mark on northern history in 1920, when four biplanes passed through the Yukon and Alaska in an attempt to demonstrate the feasibility of long-distance air travel.

<http://www.litsitealaska.org/>

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### **17 Jul 1922      First flight up Inside Passage**

Jones made the first flight up the Inside Passage from Seattle to Ketchikan, landing in the Tongas Narrows where floatplanes now swarm like mosquitoes.

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### **19 Aug 1929      Anchorage Air Transport, Wien Alaska Airways, and Bennett-Rodebaugh Company joined to form Alaskan Airways Inc.**

Anchorage Air Transport was sold and joined Wien Alaska Airways and the Bennett-Rodebaugh Company in forming Alaskan Airways Inc.

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### **28 Aug 1935      First Seattle to Fairbanks Flight**

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### **05 Sep 1940      Gaffney lands the first airplane at Ladd -- "the largest slab in the Territory of Alaska."**

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Here is a unique item that we came across in the collection that has an interesting story. This Mary Jane High Heel belonged to Mrs. Hazel Pollack, wife of pilot Frank Pollack of Pollack Air. While on their honeymoon, the Pollacks crashed near Valdez in a heavy sleet storm. The newlyweds traversed down a treacherous glacier and crossed plummeting crevasses to return to safety. Hazel wore her heels the whole journey back, pointed toes and all.

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Summer 2022 Hours: Wednesday through Sunday and some holidays, 11am to 7pm

Appointments for group visits at other times - Please call (907) 451-0037 or email [info@pioneerair.museum](mailto:info@pioneerair.museum) to arrange your visit in advance.

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*Information for the newsletter? Send me the electrons!  
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