

The committee for the festivities was headed by Harlan Banks and included Lieutenant W.E.Parker, George Hamblin, Vincent Franks, all from Boston, and John Cassidy, Thomas Galvin, Ralph Sawyer, Leslie Longworth, L.F.Gould, Elmer Gould, Joseph Butler, Roger Patten and Ernest Svenson, all from the local area. Crowds numbering 10,000 attended activities on both days with 22 planes at the field on Sunday, a day which saw 700 passengers carried aloft.

Early in 1931 Framingham Flying Service was incorporated by Arthur O. Young, Jr., owner of the Framingham Coal Company. He hired a young graduate of the Spartan School of Aeronautics, Charles Cowan, to be Chief Pilot and Kenneth S. Fletcher who had just graduated from Orlando (Florida) High School, to help Charlie run the airport. The fleet consisted of three airplanes: a Spartan C-3 biplane, a Spartan C-2 low wing monoplane and a high wing parasol type monoplane Fairchild 22. E.W.Wiggins Airways which was operating flying services then at Hills Grove, Rhode Island, Norwood, Mass. and Fitchburgh-Leominster and was one of the country's leading fixed base operators with those operations at Norwood and Boston, had a substantial financial interest in the Framingham Flying Service.

On May 2nd, 1931 an ad on the Framingham News' front page proclaimed: "A Complete Flying Service has been inaugurated at the Framingham Airport. Passenger Flights, Charter Trips and Flying Instruction at Reasonable Rates. We have new equipment, licensed pilots and competent mechanics. Ingals Aircraft Corp. C/O L.F.Gould, Western Avenue." Heeding the siren call of this almost irresistible come-on was a Framingham resident and Post Office employee, Mr. Harvey Balcom who became E. Fletcher Ingals' first flying pupil at the Gould Airport. Formal opening of the Ingals Aircraft Corp. was observed on May 30th and 31st with George Hamblin, Boston newspaperman, announcing the events. Featured was the Spartan C-2 low wing monoplane with orange wings and red fuselage which had been flown from the factory at Tulsa, Oklahoma by Chief Pilot Charlie Cowan. Rides for high school students were arranged at reduced rates through the Framingham High School Aero Club.

Two weeks prior to the opening, on May 18th, America's Army of the Air consisting of more than 500 airplanes which had been touring the country, held a rendezvous over Framingham from whence a mass flight to the Boston Airport (now Logan International) was made. A small news item of the day reported that the New England maneuvers had been slightly marred when a small pursuit plane ground looped, damaging a wing as its brakes locked while landing at Bowles Airport in Springfield, Mass. The pilot of the plane was listed as; Lieutenant Curtis E. LeMay.

In attempts to gain friends and influence people, pilot William Fletcher of E.W.Wiggins Airways, flying commercially from Gould's talked to and gave rides to members of Framingham Kiwanis Club and Robert Codman, airport manager, addressed the Rotary Club during June of 1931.



During August there were progress reports made concerning construction of the Natick Airport on Worcester Street (Route 9), on the Bennett-Sellew property (now Sellew's Fairway). Two Curtiss Hell-divers from Squantum piloted by Lieutenants Stonemetz and MacIsaacs of the Naval Reserve visited the Gould Field and thrilled onlookers. The Framingham Flying Service was busily engaged in trying to sell orange and cream Fairchild 22 open cockpit monoplanes, being distributors for the craft in this area, and Teddy Gould was proudly displaying a postcard sent him from Istanbul, Turkey by Russell Boardman and Johnny Polando who had just set a record by flying 5,032 miles non-stop over water in their Bellanca Monoplane, the Cape Cod.

In September a rash of altitude records for flights over Framingham were made, Charlie Cowan ascending to 13,500 feet in the Spartan, breaking the record of 12,800 held by Lieutenant R.C. Moffat in a Liberty engined DH-4 flying from the Musterfield in 1921. The next day E. Fletcher Ingals took his Bird biplane to 16,300 feet besting Cowan by 2800 feet. A week later, not to be outdone, Weston Adams, in his Stearman biplane, topped them all with a mark of 19,00 feet and a thermometer reading of 5 degrees above zero.

On October 3rd and 4th a meet was scheduled for Framingham Airport with National Guard Douglas O-38's making an appearance and featuring an aerobatic display by a GeeBee Sportster flown by the well known Lowell Bayles. During the show Weston Adams, (known later as president and owner of the Boston Bruins) went aloft to entertain spectators with an aerobatic performance. In the midst of a maneuver, fabric started to shred from the top wing of the Stearman which snapped over and fell into a spin. After a few turns the ship was straightened out momentarily but then immediately entered a second and more violent spin. As the craft spun out of sight behind a distant hill, the crowd was certain that it had witnessed a fatality. Mr. Young's car, driven by his chauffeur, George Butner and with Ken Fletcher navigating, went to the scene of the crash about a mile away in Sherborn and picked up a very alive Weston who drove the car back to the airport, climbed into another plane and went back up for a flight. The Caterpillar Club, made up of flyers who have been forced to "bail out", initiated a new member that day.

On April 2, 1932 Kenneth S. Fletcher of Beech Street left for New York aboard a Colonial Air Transport tri-motor Ford, part of his prize for winning the Air Facts Contest sponsored in this area by the Boston American. After joining other winners in New York, Fletcher then flew with them via United Airlines to Detroit.

During the month plans for improving the Framingham field were discussed by the Aviation Committee of the Chamber of Commerce, Francis L. O'Brien, Chairman. Spurring these plans was a restriction issued by Captain J.A. Wilson, CO of the U.S. Army Detachment based at Boston Airport which forbade the use of either Framingham field by his reserve pilots without special permission. The heavier and faster aircraft then being used by the Army prompted Wilson's edict. Wilson did state however, that he felt Gould's Airport could be greatly improved by cutting trees and relocating wires.

Over in Natick E. Fletcher Ingals had a bit of trouble on April 19th when his Bird biplane, piloted by Edward Lynch of Natick, later to become Chairman of the Massachusetts Aeronautics Commission, and carrying two passengers, ran out of gas, crash landing in Lake Cochituate just off Kansas Street. Injuries to the occupants included a broken leg for one of the passengers. The plane received some damage, revealed after Natick firemen had towed it to shore. It is rumored that the pilot received a slight injury inflicted by the plane's owner.



On the 30th of April "The Lost Squadron" with Richard Dix, Mary Astor, Erich Von Stroheim, Robert Armstrong, Dorothy Jordan, Joel McCrea and Hugh Herbert opened at the St. George Theater.

On May 6, 1932 a search of an East Holliston swamp was instituted when it was reported that residents of the area had observed a small plane descend there. It was also claimed that moans had been heard coming from the swamp the previous night. Charlie Cowan flew the Fairchild 22 over the swamp trying to sight any wreckage. The reason for this activity was the disappearance of W. Hamilton Lillie, former World War flyer, who had rented a small plane from East Boston Airport a few days earlier. All this evidence notwithstanding, on June 29th it was reported that fishermen off Westport, Nova Scotia had picked up Lillie's body.

During the month of May Charles Paine purchased a new Stearman biplane replacing his old Travel Air. The new ship was painted entirely gold. Joseph "Squeek" Burnett of the Vanilla Burnetts left his Warner powered Travel Air at the Framingham field while on a visit to his home in Southboro. Charles Andrews qualified for a Limited Commercial pilot's license after taking advanced training from Charlie Cowan at Framingham. The OX-5 engined Commandaire biplane which Andrews purchased in March was based at the field. At the Gorman Theater a picture about a flying circus called "Sky Bride" starring Richard Arlen, Jack Oakie, Robert Coogan and Virginia Bruce was playing.

In June E. Fletcher Ingals, General Manager of the Natick Airport, invited the Chamber of Commerce Aviation Committee of Framingham to visit the field which was nearly complete. The north-south runway was 2400 feet long and the east-west 1900 feet. There were three steel hangars, two 60 X 70 feet and one 35 X 45 feet.

Francis L. O'Bryan on June 12th won a free plane trip in a Curtiss Robin piloted by John Polando for guessing the correct altitude of a plane flown at East Boston Airport. On June 21st Lieutenant Warren Higgins, U.S. Army Air Corps, Pursuit Section, arrived at Framingham Airport from Kelly Field, San Antonio, Texas, in a Curtiss P-1C Hawk. The P-1C was a 1929 airplane having a water-cooled engine of 435 horsepower and a top speed of 154 miles per hour.

Charles Andrews and passenger H. Loring Whitney attended the Cleveland Air Races leaving on August 30th in Andrews' Commandaire. The trip out took 14 hours due to head winds encountered. The journey back on September 6th, took but 7 hours to complete. The Chamber of Commerce in September met with A. Pendleton Taliferro in the interests of having the Musterfield established as an intermediate landing field, however Taliferro said that improvements were being made at the Gould site in the expectation that the government had relinquished the Musterfield as an airport. He also stated that the Gould Airport had been enlarged by 23 acres due to stone and stump removal and fillin operations and that ten more acres were being made available.



A U.S. Navy Curtiss Helldiver piloted by Lieutenant Davis from Squantum Naval Air Station on Monday, October 3rd opened the new runway at Framingham Airport, an airport regarded as of sufficient size to accommodate all aircraft then flying.

In November announcement was made that the Framingham Airport was under different management, a new name for the operation had been chosen, Air Services, and operators of the business were Charles "Chick" Andrews and Gordon "Cas" Cameron. A new Cessna DC-6B (no relation to the later Douglas airliner), a four place gleaming red cabin monoplane with a 250 horsepower engine was added to the equipment, the first closed airplane available at the field and so aviation appeared finally to be "off and running" in Framingham. By spring 1933, Air Services was operating full time at the Gould Farm and plans were being made to hold the Massachusetts trials for the National Charity Pageant there in September. It was decided that the trials would be held in conjunction with the 101st Infantry World War Veterans Reunion scheduled for the 7th, 8th and 9th in the town. The Pageant was directed by John W. Lasell of Whitinsville, Mass., member of a prominent Whitinsville family and dedicated flying enthusiast, later lost while flying the "hump" for Air Transport Command during World War II. Lasell said during an interview concerning the trials, "The industries of Framingham will realize the importance of their airport in a very few years. The dollars invested at the airport today will reap a harvest many times over a period of years." Circumstances altered the picture so that this prediction could not be proved, however how much a good municipal airport might have benefitted the town makes for interesting speculation.

Weather throughout the three day meet was generally poor, nevertheless many of the area's foremost flyers, male and female, put in appearances. When the scores had been tallied, Miss Margaret A. Kimball, flying a Travel Air had won the women's competition; Barbara Southgate in a Fleet was second and Mrs. Teddy Kenyon, third. In the men's division, Joseph Burnett was first, followed by Archibald Graustein and Al Zwinck in that order. Others participating included Mrs. Maud Tait Moriarty of Springfield, Mass. and Miss Alice DuPont of Wilmington, Delaware whose summer residence on Cape Cod permitted her inclusion in Massachusetts competition. Also in attendance, flying a GeeBee, was Mrs. Dolly Berenson, famed as the only feminine airport manager east of the Mississippi.

Others who participated in the elimination contests were; Charlie Paine, Melbourne Dorr, James Whittall, Robert Stoddard, Richard Light, Nelson Rich, Paul Bauer, Lewis Parker, Robert Love and Ray Van Arsdale. Helping with the event were Chief Pilot Emerson Carpenter, Airport Manager Robert Codman and Charles Andrews who dropped a floral tribute over the 101st Infantry's parade from an airplane. Judges, headed by Crocker Snow, were Lieutenant Felix L. Baker, Commander of the U.S. Naval Air Station at Squantum, Theodore G. Malcom and Arthur L. May.



Nevertheless, Framingham was once again without a commercial flying enterprise, a condition which, on the 8th of June, 1934, elicited a letter to the editor of the news from Perry Fuller which complained about the Musterfield not being used as an airfield and suggested that some stimulation for aviation in Framingham be instigated. On June 21st three planes from New York City, a Bellanca and two Wacos, landed at Framingham Airport carrying the Langleys and Whitneys (we can only speculate on which ones), who arrived for the racing and show events at Macomber's Raceland on Salem End Road.

Although Framingham had no commercial flying business during the ensuing approximate year and a half, many planes used the field for business, sport and emergencies. Notable among the last mentioned was one which occurred on July 1, 1935. An American Airlines T-32 Curtiss Condor biplane which had left Boston bound for Newark with 8 passengers and a large cargo of mail, developed engine trouble while flying over Framingham. Finding Framingham Airport below, the airliner started its descent. According to Teddy Gould who witnessed the spectacle, "Pilot Shannon swung the big ship around into the wind and slipped gracefully to a perfect landing." A new engine arrived on July 3rd and was installed by mechanic Lou Meade with the assistance of an Edison Company derrick truck. The ship, AA#157, NC 12396, was flown out shortly after noon on the 4th of July by Chuck O'Connor and returned to Boston. On the same evening a small airshow was put on at the town's athletic field by planes from Natick while local hams, Herbert Cocker, Dr. C.R. Crosby and Edward Parsons, conducted air to ground radio experiments.

On August 1st, Framingham Airport resumed commercial operations, Air Services having moved back to the field. Students were instructed in two Fleets, NC 711V and NC 402K and a Wright powered Travel Air was used for passenger hopping. The writer had his first flight in the latter. An addition to the list of tenants at the field was made during August when Walter L. Dusenberry of Wellesley Hills brought his yellow and blue DeHavilland Gipsy Moth, NC 902M to Framingham. August 13th which incidentally was a Tuesday, not Friday in 1935, boded ill for the Hemingway Brothers, Harvey and David, of Auburn, New York, for they crashed in their Savoia Marchetti amphibian just off Western Avenue in Sherborn, but a short distance from the airport. A very hot day, the craft hit a downdraft after clearing the high tension wires and settled into some trees. Fortunately the young men escaped with minor injuries from the accident which wrecked the craft. It had been purchased a short time before from E. Fletcher Ingals. On September 3rd a Stinson trimotor of Atlantic Airlines from Springfield, Vermont piloted by Quentin Cudney of New York, landed for a three day passenger flight stay.