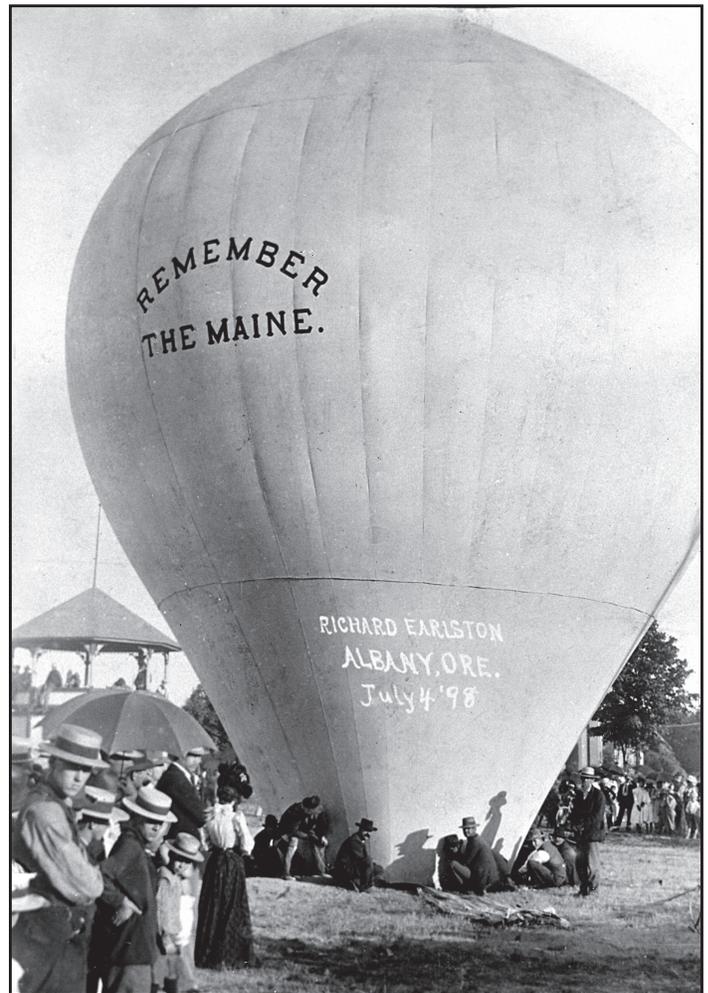


ALBANY THE BEGINNING OF AVIATION IN OREGON

From rockets to hot air balloons to airplanes, Albany was among the first to venture into the great blue yonder.

- **In 1875** Quing Sing, an Albany business man was the first to demonstrate rockets in Oregon. The demonstration took place during the Chinese New Year.
- **In the 1880s** the first experimental steam powered aircraft in the Northwest - Albany resident Henry Flindt built a steam powered "flapping wing" machine launched from a second story platform of his house at 4th and Montgomery. It failed to fly.
- **In the 1890s** Albany boasted: the first hot air balloons in the Willamette Valley and the first man to parachute in Oregon (Professor Hagel), and an Albany man was the first to launch an experimental glider in Oregon. Launched from the roof of his house at 3rd & Montgomery, the pilot sustained leg fractures in the crash that soon followed.
- **In 1908** Albany's John C. Burkhart was the first man born west of the Mississippi to achieve a successful flight. He flew a record 3 miles in five minutes.
- **April 1910**, John C. Burkhart, with the help from his cousin Elmer Burkhart and William C. Crawford, built the first powered aircraft in the Northwest to successfully fly.
- **In the 1910s** Albany housed the first airfield in the Northwest: Elmer and J.C. Burkhart built the first experimental float plane in the Northwest.
- **October, 1920** Charles J. Langmack of Lebanon contracted with Albert and Lena Sternburg to use what is now Albany Municipal Airport for flying operations. He was 13 years old.
- **In the 1920s** Albany established the oldest air field in Oregon that is still in use.
- **In 1929** the "National Aeronautics Association" issued Charles Langmack an actual pilot's license signed by Orville Wright. At this time the federal government had not started issuing licenses.
- **July 2, 1931** the Albany Municipal Airport officially dedicated, attracting 12,000 people. A first-day-of-issue stamp was used to commemorate the event.
- **In 1958**, two hangars and the beacon tower were moved 350 feet east and 100 feet south of the original location to make way for Interstate 5.
- **In 1998**, the airport became the first airport in Oregon to be listed on the National Register of Historic Places, and was the City of Albany's fourth National Historic District.

Historic Albany aviation information provided by The Colonel Charles Langmack Aviation Museum Association, the nomination for listing on the National Register of Historic Places, and excerpts from Linn County Historical Society Newsletter and Journal (May 2002 issue). Special thanks to Glenn Harrison for sharing his research for this publication.



Above: A hot air balloon ascends from the vacant lot North of the Linn County Courthouse July 4th 1898. Photo Courtesy of the Albany Regional Museum, from the Robert Potts Collection, Remembering When Vol I #125.

Opposite: Albany's 1929 hangar, attributed to local architect Cleo Jenkins, is a rare example of lattice truss, superseded by a stronger, more economically fabricated bowstring arch truss. The post and truss hangar has an 80 x 100 foot plan and 20 feet of interior height. In 1957 interstate freeway I-5 was to pass through the hangar site. The hangar and ancillary workshop were moved 300 feet to the southeast. Photo Courtesy of the Albany Regional Museum.