



*HISTORY OF THE*  
***BARRINGTON AIRPORT***



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***BARRINGTON HISTORICAL SOCIETY***  
***BARRINGTON, NEW JERSEY***

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# **HISTORY OF THE BARRINGTON AIRPORT**

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## **Acknowledgments:**

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In memory of Conrad G. Merrill, founder of Merrill Airport

Cover Photo by Don Harris – 1946 Cessna 140 Trainer

**The Barrington Airport  
1945 to 1951  
Elevation 70 Ft.**

The Barrington Airport, located in Barrington, New Jersey, opened in June 1945 and was originally named the “Merrill Airport.” It was situated on a 116-acre tract of land along East Gloucester Pike, directly across from Edmund Scientific and where the Barrington Industrial Park is now located. This land had been farmed by the Bobetski family and was originally part of the old Howell Estate. The Daniel Smith family was the last family to live and farm there.



**Center of Picture, Construction Site of Merrill Engineering's New Machine Shop.  
Foreground, Culbertson School - 1945**

In 1939 Conrad G. Merrill formed the New Jersey branch of Merrill Engineering Company, located at 35 E. Kings Highway, Audubon, New Jersey, primarily for the purpose of designing and manufacturing special electronic and mechanical equipment. The first product was the Merrill Electronic Wheel Balancer. This wheel balancer set a new standard in the automotive industry. It was a new technology used to balance wheels electronically while they were still on the car. Stewart Warner Manufacturing secured a license from Merrill Engineering and used the trade name “Stewart Warner Electronic Balancer.”

During World War II and shortly after the Japanese bombed Pearl Harbor, Merrill Engineering swung into action and set aside other work to devote 100 % of their efforts to defense work for the Navy. They even placed ads encouraging and supporting the buying of war bonds. The new work was highly classified. Most of the contracts were in areas of radar, guided missiles and the Merrill Propeller Balancer. It was the only defense plant in Audubon.



## 87 times straight - I've been lucky!

87 times I've gone out—and come back.

When your score gets that high, they usually let you quit for a while.

But sometimes that ain't possible. You just have to keep on going—perhaps till your number is up.

Out here, you got to understand these things. There's no question of quitting—no matter how much you've done.

Back home. The same way about buying War Bonds. You feel good

when you count up and realize what a high score you've got. You feel you deserve a rest, too.

But the war ain't over yet. And until it is, I'll make a bargain with you: You keep on buying, and I'll keep on fighting till the last Jap drops!

\*\*\*

The 6th War Loan is on. And it's every American's duty to invest in at least one extra \$100 War Bond. If you haven't bought yours yet, do it today!



**Buy at least one extra \$100 War Bond Today!**

THIS SPACE CONTRIBUTED BY

**MERRILL ENGINEERING CO.**

Aircraft Parts and Instruments

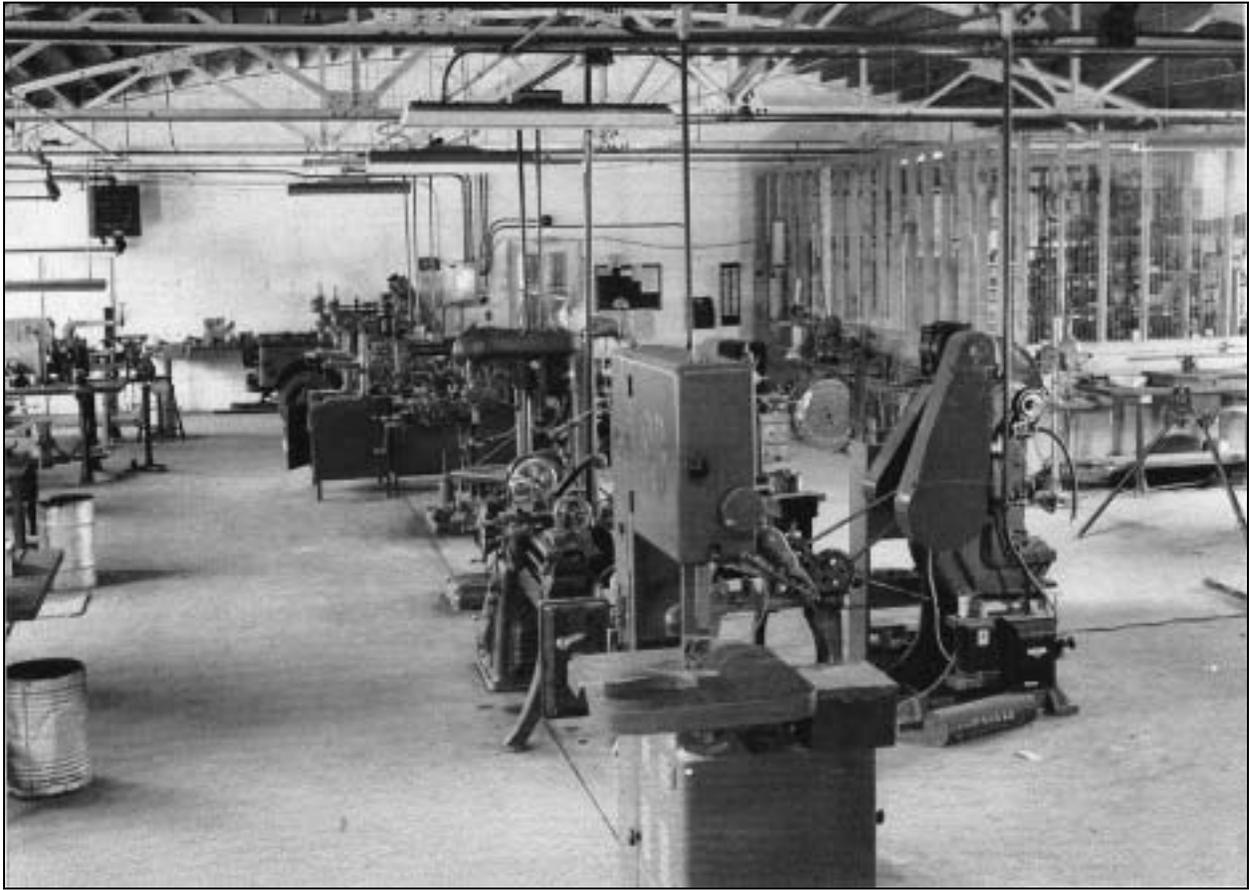
Our Equipment is Used All Over the World

"AUDUBON'S ONLY DEFENSE PLANT"

35 EAST KINGS HIGHWAY

AUDUBON, NEW JERSEY

Because of the increased workload it was necessary to find larger facilities. On March 22, 1945 Conrad Merrill purchased land from the Borough of Barrington. A building permit was issued for the erection of a 30,000 square foot building. Conrad Merrill's infatuation with flying and his need to expand the machine shop and electronics business influenced him to combine all operations.



**Merrill Engineering Company's Machine Shop, Gloucester Pike, Barrington 1945  
Building Presently Occupied by "Kids Castle Daycare Center."**

The picture above shows the backend of the Jeep (near the wall left-center) that was used in experimental work on shielding vehicle ignition system radiation. Ignition system radio frequency (RF) discharge, from Jeeps and tow-motor vehicles used on aircraft carriers, could be detected by enemy radar. During WWII Merrill Engineering was the only company that developed shielding for this radiation.

Runways at the Barrington location were created for aircraft to land. The main runway ran West Northwest by East Southeast and was not numbered. The landing field was the beginning of the Merrill Airport. The hangars and administration building replaced the old farmhouse on Gloucester Pike (then known as “Sandy Lane.”)



**Foreground, Gloucester Pike & PA Railroad Tracks. Center Left, Airport With Hangars & Administration Building. Background, Culbertson School. 1947**

In June 1945 a new subsidiary, “Merrill Flying Service”, was formed with complete facilities for major aircraft repair, student instruction, commercial flight, charter service and passenger flights. During the war, the Barrington Field was used as a base for Civil Air Patrol (CAP) and Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) planes. For a time Conrad Merrill trained civilian pilots for Coastal Patrol (CAP-CP.)



**Conrad With His 8A Luscombe Airplane, NC 25210 – Merrill Airport, Barrington, NJ – Fall of 1945**

When Merrill Engineering began digging the foundation for their building, jobs were created. George Gesnaker was hired to cut trees and clear the land for a runway and buildings. It took him all summer. George also did carpenter and maintenance work. George’s father, George worked to make shelves, cabinets and shipping boxes for government projects. Young Dan “Bud” Faunce worked with George after school. This gave Dan the opportunity to drive a Caterpillar bulldozer to pull out tree stumps. Dan also took flying lessons and learned to work on planes. Victor Chludzinski laid the cinder block work for the building. Tom Barry ran errands and flew with Conrad Merrill.

By June 1945 the Merrill Flying Service had its complete facilities in operation. Everyone in town noticed the increased activity. You could hear and see many planes fly over and circle the town to enter the landing pattern. During the war many small airports up and down the east coast were closed. When the war ended aviators were eager to fly. New pilots as well as seasoned ones enjoyed flying from Barrington to different airports for cross country experience and just to visit. Although in its early stages, the Merrill Airport was in full swing.

The Airport was the beginning of a new, modern, progressive era that brought pride to the town. The G. I. Bill allowed honorably discharged veterans of WWII to further their education. The financing from the G.I. Bill gave a great boost to the Airport.

The types of airplanes that flew out of the Airport were Cessna 140, E-2 Cub, J-3 Cub, Stearman PT 17 Biplane, Fairchild PT 19 & PT 23 and a handful of other privately owned airplanes. The instructors were Base Operator and Chief Instructor Al Snyder, Norvel Matthews, Otto Pobanz, Bill Corolla, Graham Denham and Walter Kuhner. The Chief Mechanic was Tom Marcario and the Second Mechanic was Bob Brion.



**Conrad G. Merrill Landing at Barrington Airport in His Luscombe Airplane - 1945**

The following people flew at the Airport as a passenger and/or took flying lessons.

Conrad “Connie” Merrill	Bob Hunter
Ginny (Merrill) Elliott	Sylvia (MacIntyre) Hearne
Connie Mae (Merrill) Stanko	Walt Uron Sr.
Joe Barber	Richard Kenders
Lawrence “Bud” Barber	Rich Faunce
G. I. Bill – Larry Williams	Dan “Bud” Faunce
G. I. Bill – Harry Stone Jr.	Tom Barry
G. I. Bill – Ray Dillon	Allen “Pop” Gravenor
G. I. Bill – Ruth (Dixon) Appel	Dave Gravenor
G. I. Bill – Virginia (Plumb) Purnell	Lloyd J. Hayney
Don Harris	Max Reihmann
Grace Newell	George Gesnaker
Bill Hunter	Harmal “Bromo” Seltzer
Otto Pobanz	

On November 24, 1945, 38-year old Conrad Merrill lost his life while flying in his own Luscombe Airplane. That morning he was going on a business trip. Before leaving he was making a trial flight around the Airport. It was witnessed that Mr. Merrill was attempting to land and he did not have sufficient altitude to clear wires by the Pennsylvania Railroad tracks. While trying to gain more altitude the engine sputtered and stalled. The plane went into a spin and nose-dived into the Miller’s farm on Davis Road. His nephews, Lawrence “Bud” and Joe Barber were waiting to go on the trip with him when they saw the plane go down. Lloyd J. Hayney, another pilot and Lester Laird who was hunting in the field, saw the crash. Charlotte Warner and other children coming out of Borough School #2, (Culbertson School) on the corner of Gloucester Pike and Clements Bridge Road, also saw the plane go down. They were heading to the Airport to take the twenty-five cent plane ride.



**Crash Site & Wreckage of Conrad Merrill’s Airplane. Miller’s Farm, Davis Road.  
November 24, 1945**

# Airport Owner Killed In Crash of Monoplane

Illustrated on Page 3

Conrad Merrill, 38, owner and operator of the Barrington, N. J., airport, was killed yesterday morning when his two-seater monoplane nosedived into a field adjacent to the airport.

According to a pilot standing near the hangar, Lloyd J. Hayney, 28, of 124 E. Franklin ave., Cullingwood, N. J., Mr. Merrill took off at 9:30 A. M. and circled the field for about 15 minutes at 4000 feet.



CONRAD MERRILL.

Dropping to 1500 feet, Mr. Merrill cut his motor in what seemed an attempt to come in on a long glide, the observer said. The small plane did not have enough altitude to clear some electric wires at the east end of the field, however, and it apparently stalled out.

About 500 feet from the southeastern end of the air field, the plane crashed head-on into a field, "Miller's Farm," on Davis road. Standing 100 feet from the scene was a

# Airport Owner Killed in Plane

Continued From First Page

hunter, Lester Laird, of 1030 N. Merrimac road, Camden.

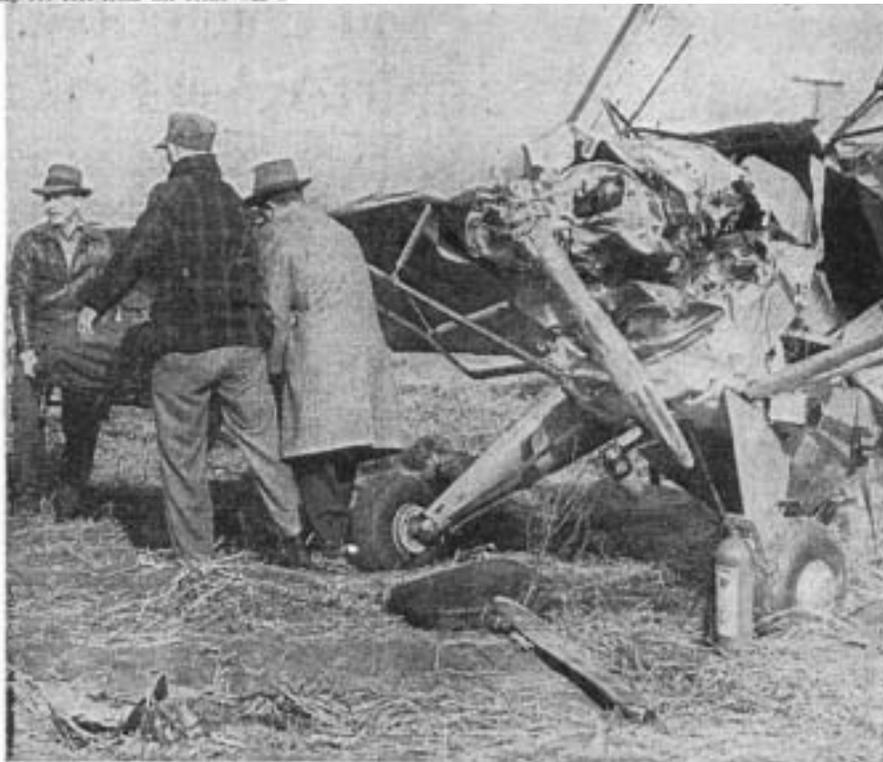
He rushed to the plane, which was upended on its nose, and found that Mr. Merrill was already dead. The motor and wings of the aircraft were badly damaged.

Airport personnel summoned a Haddon Heights ambulance and Barrington police. Dr. Ralph W. Davis, Jr., of Audubon, said the pilot was killed instantly.

Mr. Merrill, who lived at 730 White Horse pike, Audubon, was also owner and operator of the Merrill Electrical Engineering Co. at Audubon. He opened the airport last September. Well known in local aviation circles, he had flown extensively for the past 10 years.

Mr. Merrill, well known in skiing circles, was Colorado ski champion and runner-up for the 1924 American Olympic ski team.

Surviving are his wife, Mary, and two daughters, Virginia, 11, and Connie Mae, seven.



PLANE IN WHICH AIRPORT OWNER CRASHED TO DEATH.

Edward C. Gardner, Camden county coroner (grey coat), removing the body of Conrad Merrill, owner of Barrington, N. J., airport, from the monoplane in which he crashed to death yesterday. Witnesses said Mr. Merrill was preparing to land after his customary morning flight when his small plane nose-dived into a nearby field.

After his death, his widow, Mary "May" Merrill, with the help of her brothers, Lawrence and Horace Barber continued the construction of an administration building. This housed offices and conference rooms. For a short time May and her mother Mary Barber ran a restaurant and dairy bar. Sylvia (MacIntyre) Hearne and Eleanor (Catts) Harrington remember the ice cream fountain and peach colored lights. Marion (Keim) Truax remembers dances and music from a record player.

The Airport including hangars was leased to Albert Snyder Jr. Al Snyder formed a flight school (Snyder Aviation, Inc.) Madeline Trexler worked in the administration office. The New Jersey branch of Merrill Engineering was closed in 1947.



**Aircraft Being Refueled - Barrington Airport 1947**



**Al Snyder Standing With Max Reihmann, Bob Hunter and Bill Hunter. Barrington Airport Administration Building 1947. Presently Occupied by "Red Lion Insulation Co."**

On the 4<sup>th</sup> of July 1946 Barrington had their usual 4<sup>th</sup> of July activities with an added event. Walt Uron, Sr. flew over Moore Avenue playground and dropped peanuts. An air show at the Airport was also featured that day. It started at 4:15 P.M. Albert Snyder thought these air shows were a must. On September 22, 1946 the Airport had another air show. There were a large number of sponsors. The program book was filled with individual names, businesses, corporations, American Legions, and boosters. Many were from Audubon and other towns up and down the White Horse Pike. They were showing their support for the Merrill family. At this show a Squadron of Army Air Corp AT-6 planes did a flyover. Also, Rich Faunce remembers seeing for the first time someone jumping out of a plane and coming down on a parachute. After the show the Airport had sightseeing flights. Rich's brother Dan "Bud" who worked at the Airport took him to the office and paid for a ride. Rich was 6 years old and sat on his brother's lap. It was his first plane ride. The air show was the first many people had seen. It was like a circus had come to town. The air show was undoubtedly the biggest attraction ever seen in the history of Barrington and surrounding towns. After the air show Barrington knew it truly had an airport.

**Barrington Plans  
Big Aerial Show**  
An aerial show will feature the Fourth of July program of Barrington.  
The schedule will start at nine a.m. with Mayor Atkins delivering an address. At 9:30 the Flag will be raised under the auspices of the commanders of the American Legion and the V.F.W.  
The baby parade at 10 will be followed by a baseball game at Shreeves avenue at 11 o'clock.  
Following the game there will be track and field sports on the Baseball grounds. Another game will be played at 2 p.m.  
At 4:15 p.m. will be the aerial show by the Snyder Aviation Inc. A six-act vaudeville show and moving pictures will start at 7 p.m.

July 1946

**"The Program"**  
COLOR GUARD DRILL\*  
Murray-Troutt Post No. 262 (Jr. State Champions)  
AERIAL CROP DUSTING EXHIBITION  
HOW NOT TO FLY  
GRAHM A. DENHAM, Owner D. & L. Dusting Service, V.F. M. Memorial Airport  
BOMB DROPPING CONTEST  
BY Snyder Aviation, Inc.  
ACROBATIC EXHIBITION FLIGHTS  
By WES NYCE, Pottstown, Penna.  
Former Test Pilot for Republic Aviation  
STARTING AIRPLANE IN MID-AIR  
BY SHERWOOD E. COLE  
PARACHUTE JUMP  
SHERWOOD E. COLE, Former Test Jumper for Swit-lik Parachute Company

September 22, 1946

\*The Bon-Bons, the Audubon All-Girl Drum and Bugle Corps



**Aerial Views During the Air Show September 22, 1946**



**Audubon All Girl Drum and Bugle Corps Director J. B. Bernert Presenting Retiring Lead Majorette Betty Carmody With Flowers – Air Show September 22, 1946**

Director J. B. Bernert's son Bill Bernert was the music and drill instructor for the Audubon All Girl Drum and Bugle Corps. Bill remembers the Corps rehearsing on the edge of the field while there were Airport activities going on.

Many other fond memories of the Airport are still being talked about today.

In the 1940's, lifetime resident of Barrington, Marion (Faunce) McClintock's house was considered the edge of town. It is on Gloucester Pike near the Wilmont Avenue intersection. Marion (known as Aunt Lou) and her son Bob remember sitting on her front porch watching the farmers doing their chores with their animals. When the Airport was built she could see the planes, as they took off and landed. It was thrilling to see them just clearing the Culbertson School. There was the frame of an abandoned airplane sitting on the Airport grounds. All the children in the area liked sitting in the cockpit. You could still operate the throttle control and kick at the rudder pedals. Some of those children were Robert Edmund, Ken Jackson, George Uron, Dan Smith and Rich Faunce.

The Howard Page family lived across from the Airport. Tom Page, at age nine, saw the beginning construction. He would go over to watch the large earthmoving equipment and sometimes he got a ride on them. Tom also watched planes pick up banners that advertised the auto dealerships on the Admiral Wilson Boulevard.

Larry Williams fell in love with aviation early in life. He built powered model planes and flew them on Fitzgerald's farm and Williams' farm. He was noted to choose "favored" boys to retrieve the models after each flight. Living on Shreve Avenue, which faced the Airport, made it easy for Larry to test his model planes' flying abilities against the large planes. Unfortunately, one of his model planes flew in the wrong direction and hit the rudder of a tied down plane, punching a small hole in it. Larry enlisted in the U.S. Army. Completing his service hitch he returned home and signed up for flight school with Al Snyder. Having obtained his private pilot's license, he decided to build his own plane, scrounging for materials including a VW engine. The construction took place in several places, including Jim Elliot's garage on Moore Avenue. At this time Tom Page and his family lived on Moore Ave. One day Tom heard a strange sound coming from Jim Elliott's yard. When he went to investigate he found Larry had the tail wheel of his plane tied to a clothesline pole and was running up his engine. Albert Escher who also lived on Moore Avenue heard a strange noise coming from Jim's garage and asked him about it. Jim told him it was an airplane. Al thought Jim had gone around the bend. Later, much to his surprise, Al found the airplane in the yard. Neighbors Dot and Chuck Pawling also were amazed to hear airplane sounds coming from Jim's garage. Larry, after spending many enjoyable hours flying this plane sold it. Larry and a good friend later bought a damaged Cessna 150 and restored it back to flying service.

Harry Stone Jr. says he was instructed, while taking off, to steer his plane just to the left of Culbertson school. It seems a lot of pilots gave a sigh of relief as they passed by the school.

Thomas Dillon a special police officer in town also worked at the Airport. He was a general handyman and maintained the grounds and runway. He pulled a huge concrete roller to level the runway. There was a horse drawn grass cutter hooked up to a jeep. Young Joe "Buddy" Diaz worked with Thomas just for the opportunity to drive the jeep. In August 1945 Thomas Dillon was sitting on the front porch of his home located on Shreve Avenue and saw an airplane take off from the field. It circled the field at a low altitude and went into a stall. The motor seemed to stop and the pilot, Allen Atkinson of Haddonfield, tried to glide back to the partly built Airport. The plane crashed on the edge of the Airport at Davis Road on the Reading Seashore Lines. The pilot and passenger Harry Simpson of Philadelphia were critically injured. William Carter also saw the crash and was one of the first to reach the scene. Vincent Ferguson and Joseph Naphas, both of Glendora and WWII veterans, were passing by in a truck. They extricated the men from the plane. Tom Dillon and John Bradley of the Barrington Police Department interviewed Ferguson and Naphas about the crash as seen in the picture on the next page.



**WRECKAGE OF PLANE IN WHICH TWO WERE INJURED**  
Joseph Naphas (center) and Vincent Ferguson (right), both of Glendora, show Thomas Dillon and John Bradley, of the Barrington police department, the wrecked cockpit of a civilian airplane from which they extricated two men after it developed engine trouble and crashed in a field at Barrington last night.

## Two Civilians Badly Injured In Plane Crash

3 Witnesses See Monoplane Fall in Barrington Airfield

Two men were critically injured last night when the civilian airplane in which they were flying crashed on the edge of a partly built airport at Davis road on the Reading Seashore Lines in Barrington.

Those injured, both of whom are in Cooper Hospital, Garden, are: Allen S. Atkinson, 38, of 48 West 30th ave., Haddonfield, and Harry M. Simpson, 25, of 509 S. 41st st., Philadelphia.

According to hospital attaches Mr. Atkinson is suffering from a fractured right leg, probable internal injuries and severe lacerations of the face and head.

### CONDITION CRITICAL

Mr. Simpson sustained a fractured left leg and head injuries. Their condition late last night was given as critical.

The crash occurred shortly after 7 P. M. and was witnessed by at least three persons living nearby.

Patrolman Thomas Dillon, of Barrington, was sitting on the front porch of his barn at 463 Schreves ave., when he saw the airplane, an Aeromax monoplane, take off from a field across the street.

### NOTOR STOPPED

According to Patrolman Dillon, the plane, piloted by Mr. Atkinson, circled the field once at a very low altitude and then suddenly went into a stall at a height of not more than 100 feet.

"It seemed to me that the motor of the plane stopped and the pilot tried to glide into the open field for a landing," said Mr. Dillon.

"He barely missed a barn on the edge of the field and then crashed in the edge of the field which is full of high grass," he added.

### GARDENER SEES CRASH

William Carter, who was working in his garden on the opposite side of Davis road, also saw the crash. He was attracted by the noise of the low-flying plane and was one of the first to reach the scene of the accident.

Vincent Ferguson, 25, and Joseph Naphas, 24, both recently discharged World War II veterans, of Glendora, who were passing in a truck, were summoned by a small boy. They extricated the men from the plane and rushed them to the hospital.

### Flew For Private Field

Mrs. William Leon, of Haddonfield, who operates a recording house, said that Mr. Atkinson had been living at her place for the past three years and had formerly lived at Mena, Arkansas. She said he had recently been flying an airplane for a private field near Barrington.

According to Barrington police the plane had been kept at an airfield to be operated by Conrad G. Merrill, of Audubon. The field is still under construction. Employees of the airport said that they had just made adjustments to a carburetor on Mr. Atkinson's plane before he took off.

Walter Uron Sr. took flying lessons. Albert Snyder, lessee/operator of the Airport, gave him his flight exam and handed Walt his license (see Courier Post article below.) Mr. Uron was the Chief of Police, a member of Borough Council, and Director of Public Safety. He used his flying skills to survey weekend and holiday traffic conditions along the White Horse Pike. Walt was also the pilot who flew over the Moore Avenue Playground on the 4<sup>th</sup> of July to drop peanuts.



## Barrington Police Chief Takes to Skies In Attempt to Solve Traffic Problems

Barrington's police chief is now a flying cop.

Chief Walter Uron received his private pilot's license yesterday, after completing a course of flying instruction at Barrington airport.

Uron intends to use his new-found skill to survey weekend and holiday traffic conditions along the White Horse pike.

In this way, Uron hopes to be able to police and control the flow of traffic through the borough more efficiently.

Albert Snyder, owner-operator of the airport, described Uron as

an adept pupil. He solved in an Ercoupe after five hours of flight instruction and completed the course after logging 25 hours of flying time.

Immediately upon receiving his license, Uron took his wife, Elsie, for her first airplane ride.

Uron, who was a police officer for five years before becoming chief, is a member of borough council and director of public safety.

The 36-year-old chief resides with his wife and three children, Walter S., George G., and Joyce K., at 414 Clements Bridge road, Barrington.

Ruth (Dixon) Appel and Virginia (Plumb) Purnell worked in the administration office. Both of them joined the U. S. Navy Waves. Returning home after their tour in the service and classified as WWII veterans, they each took flying lessons under the G. I. Bill. It seems Virginia performed the most memorable bouncy landing. Her approach for a landing was a little fast. She applied the wheel brakes when she touched down, causing the aircraft to flip over on its back in a cloud of dust. The plane was badly damaged. Virginia was unhurt, except probably for her pride. On behalf of Virginia there were many bouncy landings by students. In aviation and around airports the saying goes “Any landing that you walk away from is a good landing.” Max Reihmann, while taxiing the Fairchild PT-23, was instructed by his Instructor Norvel Matthews to slam the brakes. By doing this the plane went on its nose. Then all Max could see was dirt.

Don Harris of Haddonfield, New Jersey took lessons and soloed in a J3 Cub. Receiving his private pilot license he bought a “Taylor Craft A” with a 40 horsepower engine for \$600 from Tom Macario, Chief Mechanic. He kept the plane tied down at the Airport and continued flying to obtain a commercial and multiple engine rating. Because of the New Jersey Turnpike construction through the runway he moved to the Moorestown Airport along with the former personnel of Barrington Airport. Mr. Harris was a regular writer for the South Jersey Magazine. His articles told facts about the Barrington and other airports of South Jersey. His interest in flying continues today. A comment by Don about flying out of the Barrington Airport is “While taking off, I was happy when I cleared the school.”

Rich Faunce remembers sitting in the classroom of the Culbertson school seeing the planes coming in his direction in a rolling yawing dance as they were climbing for altitude. Dan Faunce Sr. would routinely go to the Airport to get his son Dan “Bud” for dinner. Dan Sr. enjoyed watching the activities and liked taking pictures. Sometimes he would take some of the neighborhood children (see picture below.)



**Center of Picture – June Faunce, Jean Engels, Richie Faunce  
Lillian Rowe and Lillian’s Cousin**

John Bigum was a crop sprayer living in Almonesson. Occasionally he flew out of the Almonesson Airport to Barrington. There he would pick up his brother Ed and they would fly to Cape May to visit their father. Ginny (Merrill) Elliott remembers her father flying her and her sister Connie Mae Stanko to Ocean City where the family stayed for a two-week vacation. Ed Bolton Jr. remembers standing in Frank Bolton's backyard watching the planes tip the treetops. The Bolton's backyard bordered the runway. Sylvia (MacIntyre) Hearne was 16 years old when, after saving her allowance money, she went for a sightseeing trip that cost \$1.50. For Sylvia it was something new that brought progress to town. She still has her ticket! (see below)

<b>Passenger Flight</b>		
<b>SNYDER AVIATION, Inc.</b>		
<b><i>Barrington Airport</i></b>		
<b>N<sup>o</sup>.</b>	<b>560</b>	<b>BARRINGTON NEW JERSEY</b>
<b><u>1.50</u></b>	<b>2.00</b>	<b>3.00 4.50 5.00 10.00</b>

Around 1950 a heavy windstorm hit the area and blew the roofs, supporting trusses and the 40 ft. doors off the "T" hangars. These "T" hangars were 165 ft. long by 34 ft. deep.



**"T" Hangars, Barrington Airport - 1948**

Al Snyder ran the flight school at Barrington Airport from 1946 to 1950 then moved it to the Moorestown Airport. In 1951 construction of the New Jersey Turnpike divided the Barrington Airport property into two separate smaller parcels. Owens Corning Fiberglass Co. purchased the east portion as a site for a manufacturing plant. The west parcel along Gloucester Pike eventually was subdivided and became Barrington Industrial Park. The Weyerhaeuser Co. occupies a large portion. Mrs. Merrill sold the last piece of the Airport property in 1984.

A final note about Mr. Merrill; Conrad Gordon Merrill, sometimes called "Merrill" was born November 28, 1907 in Steamboat Springs, Colorado. He formed the New Jersey branch of Merrill Engineering Company in 1939. He was well known in local aviation circles and had flown extensively for over 10 years. Conrad served as a Civil Air Patrol (CAP) pilot during World War II. He was also known for his skiing and was Colorado's ski champion and runner-up for the 1926 American Olympic Ski Team.



**Conrad Gordon Merrill – Barrington Airport**  
**11/28/1907 - 11/24/1945**  
**Born in Steamboat Springs, Colorado**

The Barrington Historical Society expresses their gratitude to Conrad Merrill and to his family for their contributions to the growth of the Borough of Barrington. Thanks to his efforts and achievements he provided our town with a unique vision for the future.

## BARRINGTON EARLY AVIATORS

Before the Barrington Airport was built Barrington had some pioneer aviators. They bought balsa wood “stick model airplane kits.” Stick by stick they were glued, and straight pins were used to hold the prefabricated pieces together over the engineering drawings. Each piece was laid into position to form the fuselage, wings, and tail section. Each part was covered with tissue, dope and paint. All parts assembled, the plane was ready for its first test flight, but first the plane sat on the kitchen table for Mom and Dad to see. Generally the plane had to be balanced by adding some weight to the nose. Also, the trim tabs may have required adjusting. Sending the plane off into flight, giving it air speed and watching the reactions to the air currents as it strove for altitude had the owner right in that little cockpit. His feet may have been on the ground but in his mind he was flying.

Some of those aviators would meet regularly on Sunday afternoons in Joe Fitzgerald’s field and on Williams’ farm to fly their planes. Some of those flying enthusiasts included: Larry Williams, Les Githens, Bill Davis, Ralph Maxwell, Dave Gravenor, Don Licorice, Jack Dicus, Harry Tennant, Dan “Bud” Faunce, Bill Schaeffer, Joe “Buddy” Diaz, Pete Clayton, Jerry Jeitner, and Bill Kilmer.



Sign Located on Weyerhaeuser Property



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