

## CAHA ACQUIRES L-T-A ARTIFACTS

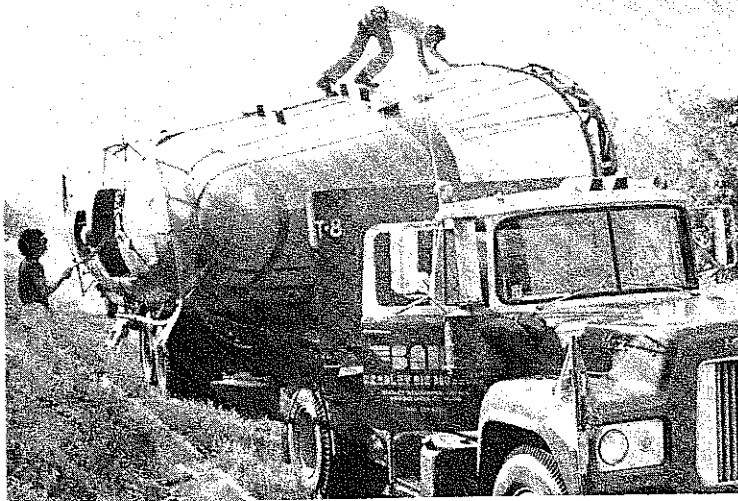
Early in July, CAHA member Dave Smith, of Bloomington, IL, called and informed Museum officials that the Goodyear Aerospace Company was planning to dispose of a gondola from a World War II vintage airship. Steps were immediately taken to investigate this lead, which proved to be valid, and acquire the airship car. As a matter of fact, this led to the acquisition of TWO important airship cars.

In August, Don Murray and his crew of transportation experts travelled to Akron, Ohio, to bring home the latest additions to CAHA's growing collection of L-T-A artifacts.

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 The World War II airship car
 

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When the K-28 was moved from Ohio to the BAM, the large load attracted attention all along the way. When passing through Middletown, NY, the crew stopped to check their load. Chuck Fadely, photographer for the local newspaper, happened by and took the above photo. It appeared in the next day's edition of the Middletown Tile Herald Record.

Jeff Livermore, on top of the car adjusts the load under the direction of Don Murray, on the left. Ritchie Ritchert and Chris Mard, although not in the photograph, also assisted in the move.

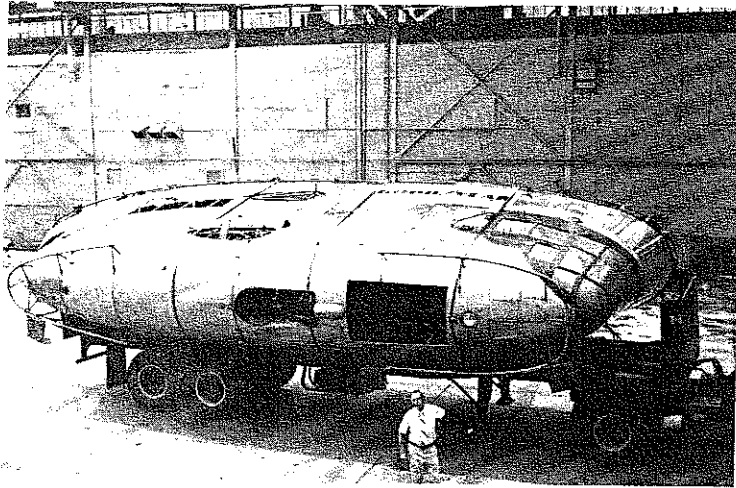
turned out to be the K-28 gondola. The K-series of airships formed the backbone of the Navy's L-T-A activities during World War II. 133 K-ships were built by Goodyear between September 1941 and April 1944, and were used by the Navy for anti-sub patrol and convoy protection. K-28, USN BuAer 04378, was powered by two 550-hp Pratt & Whitney Aircraft R-1340-AN-2 Wasp engines, and its envelope had a capacity for 425,000 cubic feet of helium.

After the war, Goodyear acquired K-28 from the Navy and modified it to experiment with the Trans-Lux running-copy type sign on the sides of the envelope. Renamed the "Puritan" and given the civil registration NC-21A, it first flew under this revised configuration on March 27, 1947. The "Puritan" operated from April to November 1947, when it covered most of the eastern and mid-western states on an extensive tour. The complex Trans-Lux message system proved to be uneconomical and after only a few more test flights, the "Puritan" was deflated and put into storage on April 20, 1948. It was to remain in storage at Goodyear until acquired by the BAM in August.

The second airship car, also offered by Goodyear to us, is the French Challais-Medan CM-5 "Capitane Cassin" built in 1918. Powered by a 9-cylinder Salmson engine, the CM-5s envelope had a capacity of 320,000 cubic feet.

The CM-5 was originally purchased from the French by the U.S. Navy who planned to use it in coastal patrol operating in Europe. It did not receive a Navy serial number.

After the war, Goodyear purchased the CM-5 from the Navy with the intent to start an eight-hour air service between Akron and Detroit. This plan never reached fruition and the CM-5 was placed in storage at Good-



The K-28 home at the Museum. In the foreground, Nick Nichols gives some indication of the size of the airship car. (Horner)

year until, again the Museum acquired the historic car in August.

Both airship cars are in surprisingly good condition, and should require little effort before they are ready to make an impressive display.

We are sincerely grateful to Dave Smith and Lyle Schwilling, Public Relations Manager for Goodyear Aerospace, for their help in enabling us to acquire these impressive L-T-A artifacts which someday will be used as the focal point of a future Bradley Air Museum exhibit on lighter-than-air activities.

### 'TORNADO' PARTY

On October 3, 1980, the first anniversary of the devastating tornado of '79, the Museum Staff held a "Tornado" Party at the Bradley Ramada Inn, Windsor Locks.

About fifty CAHA and Museum Staff members and friends enjoyed a delicious dinner and then reminisced about the events, not only of that memorable day, but about everything

that has occurred since, especially those events of a positive note.

Kenn Venit, Weatherman of WTNH-TV Channel 8, New Haven, was the guest of honor, just to demonstrate that the BAM bears no permanent ill will against all weathermen. Venit gave a very enlightening talk, in layman's language, on the intricacies of weather forecasting, and in particular, the difficulties for the forecasters on October 3, 1979.

### FIRST ANNIVERSARY AT THE MUSEUM

The first anniversary of the tornado was also celebrated at the Museum, courtesy of United Technologies Corporation. They sponsored a two-day Open House at the Museum on Friday, October 3rd and Saturday, October 4th. All visitors to the BAM were admitted without charge, guests of U.T.C. The Open House began at exactly 2:56 p.m., the time frozen on the Museum's clock when the tornado hit. Once again we are indebted to United Technologies for their generosity.

### ATTENDANCE DROPS AT MUSEUM

As might have been expected, with no public display at all for much of the year, attendance at the Museum is down significantly from last year through the middle of November (publication date for this issue). And while there was no display available for the remaining month of 1979, thanks to the tornado, there is no hope of picking up the difference in December 1980.

Attendance through the middle of November 1980 was about 16,000 which compares quite unfavorably with over 35,000 for the same period in 1979.

However, income for the same periods of time in both years was relatively equal, thanks to special shows and donations.

# K-SHIP/PURITAN

by Russell E. Magnuson

The "Puritan II" began life as a U.S. Navy "K" type, an anti-submarine patrol and rescue airship during World War II. The airship, K-28, was the 28th in a series of 134 "K" type design flown by the Navy, numbering K-2 through K-135. (K-1 was an earlier, smaller design.)

NEAM's K-28 was built by Goodyear Aircraft Corp. at Akron, Ohio, a division of Goodyear Tire and Rubber Co. It was delivered to the Naval Air Station, Lakehurst, NJ on December 10, 1942. It was assigned to Airship Training Squadron ZP-14 at Weeksville, NC.

On June 3, 1944, it participated in the search and recovery of a pilot of a Navy F4F aircraft. K-28 was later transferred to Airship Utility Squadron ZJ-1 at Key West, Fla., where it continued its patrol activities.

It should be noted that during World War II, approximately 953 persons were rescued as a result of airship operations. This was an outstanding record when it is remembered that the main mission of the airships was anti-submarine patrol.

At the close of World War II, K-28 was declared surplus at the Lakehurst, NAS. It was purchased by Goodyear on July 31, 1946 for \$5000 from the War Assets Administration (original cost was approximately \$300,000). It was placed in service with the Goodyear fleet on March 27, 1947.

It was renamed "Puritan" and bore Civil registration No. NX-21A. The "X" indicated experimental; the "A" signified airship. It was actually the second Goodyear airship to be named "Puritan". The original "Puritan" flew in the mid-1930's.

Acquired by Goodyear, the for-

mer K-28 began a short but significant life as an experimental and then commercial aerial "Signboard."

Aerial night sign operations had first been introduced in 1930 when the Goodyear logo was fitted to a blimp. In 1934, a neon sign rigged to the original "Puritan" airship, flashed election returns. By 1935, four blimps were fitted with these "Neon-O-Gram" signs. The signs consisted of 10, 4-foot by 6-foot aluminum frames that included neon tube letters.

In 1947, beginning with the post-war "Puritan (II)," (the ex-K-28), a new form of sign was introduced by Goodyear. This sign had 10 panels, each having 182 individual incandescent lamps. It was called a

"Trans-Lux" running copy type sign and was similar to those signs used on the New York Times Building at Times Square. Messages on the sign were programmed through the use of punched paper tape and a tape reader.

The "Puritan," Goodyear's sole "K" type airship, was the largest of the Goodyear fleet, making its first post-war flight on March 27, 1947.

Unfortunately, the heavy weight and the complexity of the new "Trans-Lux" sign system, which required the larger airship, was not economical to operate. However, in spite of its drawback, the "Puritan" covered most of the eastern and mid-western states on a extensive tour. During the tour, it bore the

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## WARTIME SPECIFICATIONS OF K-28

Overall Length	251.7 ft.
Control Car Length	42.6 ft.
Volume of Envelope	425,000 cu. ft.
Weight empty (approx.)	18,000 lbs.
Useful Lift (approx.)	8,000 lbs.
Gross Lift (approx.)	26,000 lbs.
Engines	(2)P&W R-1340-AN-2 Wasp 425 hp each, geared 3:2
Propellers	(2)Hartzell No. 5694, 3 blade 12.5 ft. dia. ground adjustable
Maximum Speed	67.5 knots / 77.7 mph
Cruise Range	1910 nautical miles (at 50 knots)(approx. 2200 st. miles)
Average Endurance	48 hours
Crew	9 or 10, depending on mission
Armament	1 Browning .50 cal nose mounted machine gun, 4 (325 lb.) depth bombs, carried internally
Airship Number	K-28
Serial Number	04378
Control Car Number	C-86
Envelope Number	D-201 (original) D-282 (close of WWII) D-237 (1947 to end)
Cost of Construction	\$300,000