

80TH ANNIVERSARY GATHERING OF SPARTAN EXECUTIVES



by Jim Savage

Eight Spartan Executives

During the last week of July 2016, history was made when eight Spartan Executives assembled for an 80th Anniversary Gathering that was held in conjunction with AirVenture 2016. These eight survivors represent nearly one quarter of the 34 Spartan Executives built from 1936 through 1940. Prior to this gathering, the largest known number of Spartan Executives ever assembled was six.



Background

Contents

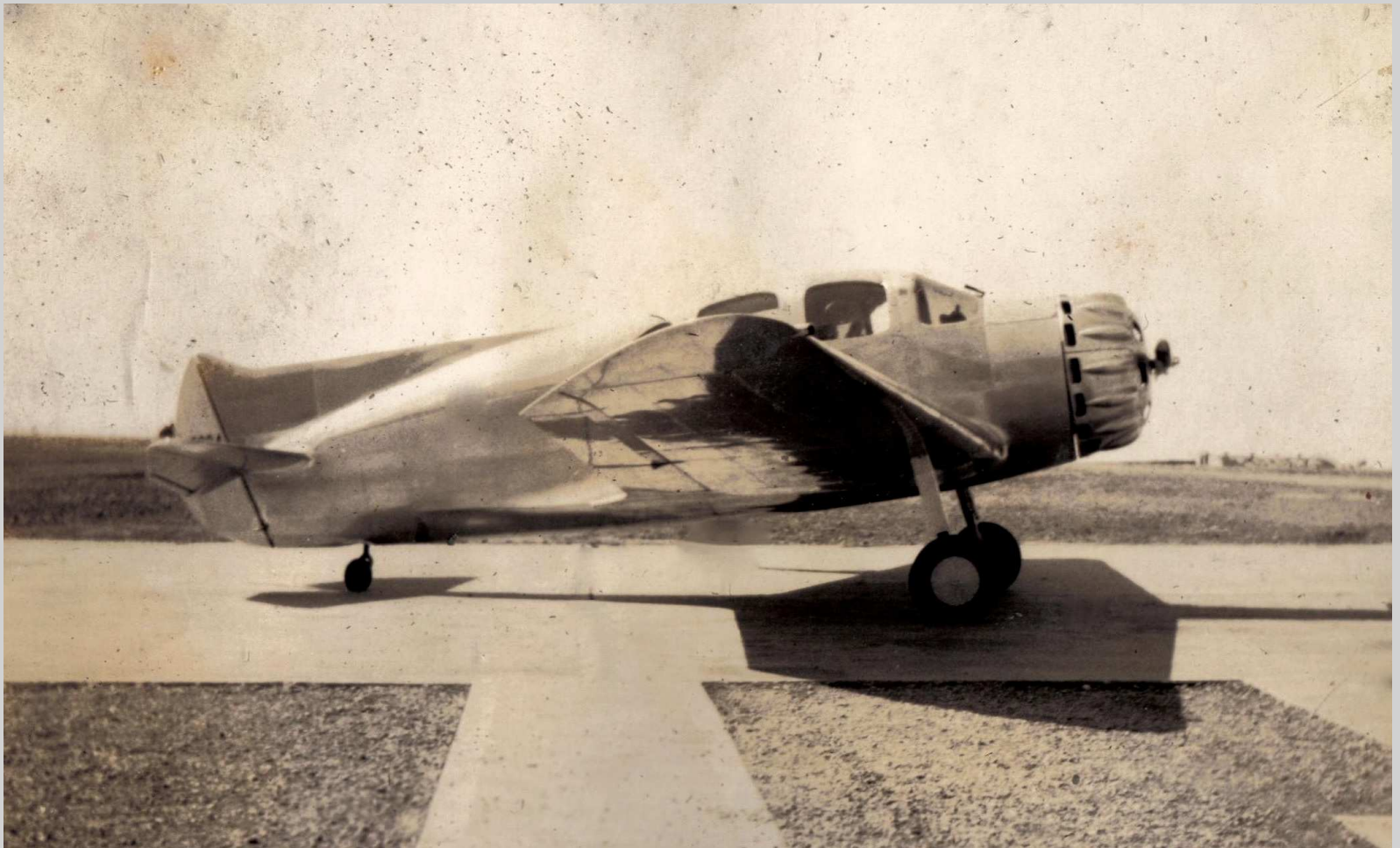
Eight Spartan Executives	1
Contents and Background	2
Historical Perspective	3
S/N 2 NC 13993	4 / 7
S/N 6 NC 17601	8 / 11
S/N 11 NC 20200	12 / 15
S/N 12 NC 17613	16 / 19
S/N 13 NC 13PH	20 / 23
S/N 15 NC 17616	24 / 27
S/N 17 NC 17634	28 / 31
S/N 28 NC 17662	32 / 35
The Participants	36

The production run of 34 Spartan Executives began in 1936 and continued through 1940. Few opportunities have existed to have a large gathering of Spartans and prior to this event, the largest known number ever to be assembled in one place was six. 2016 was the eightieth anniversary of this magnificent aircraft and to mark the occasion, eight made their way to Oshkosh, Wisconsin to attend EAA's AirVenture 2016.

This book captures some of the many thousands of pictures that were taken during this once in a lifetime display.

Historical Perspective

The prototype of the Spartan Executive was designed by James Ford in 1935. While it was intended to be a radical departure from the tube and fabric airplanes of the day, the results left quite a bit to be desired. After considerable refinement, the Spartan Executive emerged in its final form and production began in 1936. What began life as an "ugly duckling" was turned into a timeless art deco masterpiece.



NC 13993

This is the oldest surviving Spartan Executive. It is serial number 2 and is currently on display at the EAA Museum in Oshkosh, Wisconsin.









This airplane is unique with "stick" controls instead of the normal control yokes seen on other Spartan Executives. This was a conversion performed in 1952 using the "Field Approval" process.



NC 17601

This is the oldest flying Spartan Executive. It is serial number 6 and is currently based in Winthrop, Washington.









NC 20200

Serial number 11 wears the unique trim design originally seen on Arlene Davis' "Dream Ship" that participated in the Bendix Trophy Race in 1939. This Spartan is based in Livermore, California.









NC 17613

Serial number 12 is one of the Spartan Executives used by the US military during World War II. This one is currently based in Lexington, Kentucky.









NC 13PH

Serial number 13 is currently based at the Triple Tree Aerodrome in Woodruff, South Carolina. This Spartan was the Bronze Age Champion at AirVenture 2016.









NC 17616

Serial number 15 was used during the War Bond campaign during the Second World War and was flown by Howard Hughes. The home airport of this Spartan Executive is located in Nye, Montana.





This instrument panel retains many of the original design features.



Spartan Executives were built as a five place airplane and the fifth seat was a fold out jump seat in the middle of the rear seat. This Spartan has one of the few remaining original fifth seats.



NC 17634

Serial number 17 represents the midpoint in the Spartan production run of 34 airplanes. This was one of three Spartans to serve with the RAF during World War II. It is currently based in Butler, Pennsylvania.









NC 17662

Serial number 28 was owned and operated by Spartan Aircraft and the Spartan School of Aeronautics from the time it was built until the late 1960s. It is currently based in Santa Fe, New Mexico.









The Participants

This event would never have occurred without the support and participation of the owners of the eight Spartans that were on display at Oshkosh. Thank you for being part of this historic gathering.



