

“Spirit of Columbus” Background Information

To: COPAMA Webmaster, Lowell Dowler
From: Cliff Kelling
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Re: Jerrie Mock

Hi Lowell,

I had the privilege to work on two aircraft owned by Jerrie Mock. The first was a Cessna 180 that indeed now resides in the Smithsonian. The other was a Cessna 206 that was given to her by the Cessna Aircraft Corp.

The Cessna 180: She brought the aircraft to us at Lane Aviation in the Fall of 1963 to prepare it for a “special” flight. A former Charles Taylor Award recipient, Wesley S. Hines (deceased) was in charge of Lane’s maintenance facility when I hired in at Lane and he was instrumental in my training as an aircraft technician. I also worked with other highly qualified technicians, such as “Bill” Robinson, Gary Bailey, Cortland Woodward and others I cannot recall in preparing Jerrie’s aircraft for what became a world record setting flight. We basically performed an Annual Inspection and paid particular attention to anything that might jeopardize the flight during the long legs. The electronics were installed in Florida and the long-range fuel tanks in Kansas (to the best of my knowledge). The engine was sent to Continental Motors in Michigan for special overhaul and testing. Wes left employment with Lane Aviation before the aircraft was finished, and I was left in charge. With help of all the fine gentlemen just mentioned, we were able to get her aircraft ready in time. The flight was made in March-April of 1964.

The Cessna 206: Her Cessna 180 eventually was donated to Cessna and in turn she received a new Cessna 206. The Cessna Aircraft Company then sent the 180 to the Smithsonian.

Jerrie then proceeded to try to set another record by flying from Hawaii to New York City, non-stop!

We also helped to prepare the aircraft for that flight. Alcor Instrument Company donated one of the new 6-cylinder CHT (Cylinder Head Temperature) systems that made it possible to monitor all six cylinders instead of just one. Normally, cylinder head temperature is monitored by only one cylinder when making a mixture control adjustment. This system allowed for one to be able to monitor all cylinders. When over the Pacific Ocean we got an in-flight call from Jerrie on this matter. One cylinder indicated that it was running exceptionally hot. With the help of many others the decision was made to adjust the mixture according to the conventional method instead of trying to set it to the “cold-side of lean” with the Alcor system. This resulted in unnecessary use of fuel that prevented her from setting another world record. The problem turned out to be a defective sensor.

Non-the-less, Jerrie set many world records. I feel that her story needs to be told. She is a native of Newark, Ohio where her sister still lives and is working hard to preserve her history. I am not sure if she is still living. She was living in Florida. More information can be found on the Internet. See References below.

Thanks,
Cliff Kelling

References:

http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Jerrie_Mock

<http://www.historynet.com/jerrie-mock-record-breaking-american-female-pilot.htm>

<http://womenaviators.org/JerrieMock.html>

http://soloflights.org/mock_text_e.html

<http://www.three-eightcharlie.com/>

<http://www.ctie.monash.edu.au/hargrave/mock.html>