

In 1935, 10736 had a Model A Motor

PIETENPOL

While Velie M-5 weighed about the same as a converted Model A, (225#); being air cooled, it needed no water pump or radiator, saving about 30 pounds. Conservatively rated at 55 HP @ 1815 RPM, it offered 35% more power. His log book shows a test flight on 4-28-31. With this motor the plane was an immediate success. Now Bernard and Don Finke could easily haul heavy passengers at their Sunday afternoon air shows. More important, they could give flying instruction in a plane with a reasonable reserve of horsepower. It became a favorite.

It is a tribute to their combined skill and caution that Bernard Pietenpol, Don Finke, and Orrin Hoopman were never involved in any serious aerial mishaps. But they sometimes came very close. Don Finke once related an incident involving this Velie powered Air Camper.

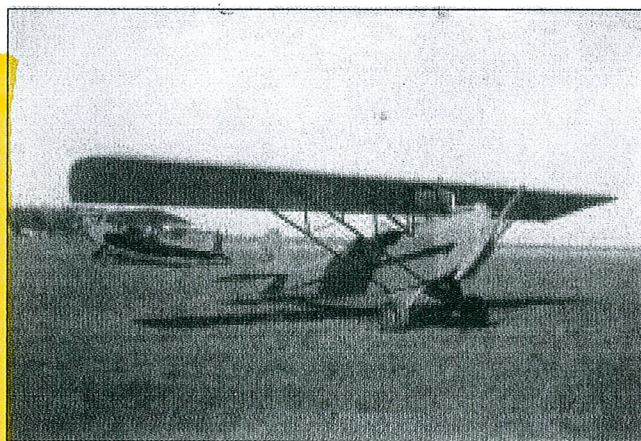
*"We used the Velie powered plane for dual instruction. It had a little more power and was a real good flying airplane. We used it almost exclusively for flight instruction but after I left, Bernie sold it, and whoever the guy was revamped the control system or the front cockpit or something.*

*"I don't remember just what the deal was, but he came over to see Piet one day and wanted Piet to check him out in some tail spins, how to spin it... So Piet said "Sure" So they went up...I don't know how high they were, but I imagine they were up at least four or five thousand feet high when he kicked it into a spin. Piet told him to take it out, but it kept on spinning. Piet said 'Take it out', thought he didn't hear him, and 'Golly' he said 'I reached down and felt the controls and he had all the controls where they were*

*supposed to be'. He said the blame thing was just kind of flat spinning...just would not come out of the spin, and they were getting closer to the ground all the time. Piet said 'I realized that I had to get the stick farther forward with our weight in it or something. He was kind of a heavy fella, I guess, and he was in the back seat of course'. Piet said he didn't know how to get that tail control forward because the stick was up against the dashboard up front, and they were getting closer to the ground.*

*"He finally put the aileron way over to one side where he could get the stick under the dash and pushed forward on it. Then it came out, but to get the thing to stop rolling, why he had to do the same thing...put the stick over there so he could get it back out. I think they were about 300 feet off the ground when they straightened out. Piet said there were a few anxious moments, and I don't doubt there were".*

Author's Note: In the summer of 1941 I had just received a Limited Commercial license and was looking for a plane in which to build up time. A Mr. H. A. Anderson, of St. Ansgar, IA, had a Pietenpol for sale and sent me the photo shown below. A close examination of the tail number shows that it is 10736! I didn't buy the plane, because it was "unlicensed".



10736 in 1940

AUTHOR

One of Pietenpol's contemporary photos, next page, shows the plane labeled "STEGES VELIE". No identification number is visible and the landing gear is a split-axle type with large airwheels. The engine is obviously a Velie. Whether this is a different plane or a modification of 10736 is not known.. A companion photo shows the plane dismantled and loaded on a cattle truck.