

3000 ATTEND AS 'LINDY' LIGHTS ARE TURNED ON

Mayor, On Sick Bed, Performs
What May Be His Last
Official Act

FRIENDS AT BEDSIDE

New Beacon and Floods Are
First Between El Paso
and Los Angeles

By PAUL H. HENNEGIN

In a dimly lit room in a house on East Third street a man on the point of death last night did what may be his last official act of his life.

At the Davis-Monthan aviation field more than 3000 people saw the results of that act—the field of 280 acres, the largest and most modern airport in the southwest, was flooded with light and a beacon which shall spread a message of cheer to the night flyer over Arizona's arid deserts, cast its beam of light toward the heavens.

John E. White, mayor of Tucson, lying at the door of death, pressed a button, just as the clock on the mantelpiece struck the hour of 8:30 p. m., and turned on the lights at the aviation field, which have been purchased with the dollars of clerks and laborers, the pennies of little Indian children.

The huge flood light cast a beam of light over the entire field until the features of a man in an automobile could distinguished at a distance of 250 yards, and up above, on top of the water tower, the beacon light blinked its message of safety and refuge to the night pilot.

Gathered around Tucson's mayor, who has been seriously ill for several months, were a few of his close and intimate friends and relatives. Al Condron, secretary of the chamber of commerce, placed the little electrical button in his hand and with a bare flickering of his eyelids signifying that he knew, the mayor waited the signal. Then it came and the button, adjusted for the most delicate touch snapped down and out on the field two and a half miles from the little room the 3000 and more people saw the lights come on. Others who were with Mr. White were his two sons, Sheldon and Jack, the doctor and a close friend, Dr. Alvin Kirmise, C. E. Pequignot, city auditor, the mayor's sister, Mrs. S. W. Seany and Mrs. Evelyn Jay.

Makes Night Flights

The ceremony of turning on the lights was preceded by several short addresses by members of the aviation committee, and followed by two flights of the Aero Corporation's passenger express plane, piloted by Lee Wily, the first airplane to take off and land on the municipal aviation field with the aid of electrical night lighting.

Kirke T. Moore, Tucson's father of aviation, and chairman of the chamber of commerce aviation committee, was in charge of the program, extemporaneous in nature. He told of the additional night lighting needs for the field and gave a short history of the municipal fields in Tucson, the first city in the United States to have a municipal aviation field. He was followed by Harold Wilson, president of the junior chamber of commerce, who told of the benefits to be derived from aviation and the value of a night lighted field to Arizona.

Praises Drachman

Harry Holbert, who as chairman of the city council aviation committee, worked with Mayor White in getting the new field, spoke for Herbert Drachman, who as a committee of one, went out among the business houses of Tucson and put on a campaign almost unaided, and raised the major portion of the money to purchase the new lights, getting subscriptions of one dollar each from several thousand persons in Tucson. His efforts even extended to the schools where little children donated their pennies toward the fund. Drachman was unable to attend the ceremony due to illness and Holbert told for him of the campaign to raise the money, making an appeal for additional subscriptions in order that the final payment for the equipment can be made. Holbert told of the last subscription received for the fund—38 cents from 38 Yaqui Indian children.

"Surely if these 38 little children to whom a penny looms larger

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3000 at Flying Field When Lindy Lights Are Turned On

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than a dollar to most of us, can give 38 cents there are many hundred others in Tucson who can give a dollar," Holbert appealed.

Acting Mayor Frank Cordis was the final speaker on the program and he paid tribute to John E. White. He told with a touch of sadness how Mr. White devoted the last few years to the city of Tucson and how he had continually urged further development of aviation in Tucson.

"This airport will bring in ships from all parts of the world and the light will be a beacon of safety to the night pilot flying over our arid deserts. There are not many lighted fields in the United States, and Tucson can be proud to be numbered among those few. It stretches forth a hand of welcome to those flyers of the night. It will only be in later years that we will understand and appreciate what Mr. White has done for Tucson and aviation by his continually urging the building of a bigger and better aviation field and it was Mr. White and Kirke T. Moore, who have worked untiringly for aviation in Tucson, that this magnificent field is here."

In closing his talk, Cordis paid further tribute to Moore.

Mrs. Davis Speaks

Mrs. Davis, mother of Howard Davis, Tucson war ace who lost his life in the service, and for whom the field is jointly named, made a short talk to the audience. She told how it was with a feeling of pride that Tucson had so honored her son and of his intense interest in aviation and its future.

"If my son were alive today he would say no more valuable contribution to aviation could be made than the installation of these lights."

Following the turning on of the lights, pilot Lee Willy made a solo trip in his big Fokker passenger plane and after making a flight over the city, made a neat landing. He reported that the lights were very effective aside from some needed adjustments in the focus, which were made. He made a second flight carrying as passengers S. W. Percy, Hazen Showers, Fred King and Nathan Newby, Jr., attorney for the Aero Corporation.

Later photographs were taken of the aviation committee standing beside the Fokker plane. Among those present were Ralph DePalma, famous automobile racer. DePalma was a passenger on the plane from Los Angeles yesterday afternoon. He left at midnight for Havana where he will race next week. He had hoped to get a plane out of Tucson to take him to New Orleans.

TWO PLANES TO TEST POWER OF AIRPORT LIGHT

Public Is Invited to Wit- ness Demonstration Tonight

Another opportunity to see the Lindy lights function will be afforded Tucsonans tonight. Two planes, a Fokker of the Aero Corporation of California, piloted by Lee Wiley, and a whirlwind-motored Waco with Charley Mayse of Tucson at the stick, will demonstrate night landings and take-offs. It is not expected that the planes will carry passengers. The flights, at 8:30 p. m., are to be made for the purpose of testing the new arrangement of the flood light.

Sgt. Dewey Simpson, of the Davis-Monthan field, said this morning that inasmuch as the planes would make a test tonight and the giant flood lights would perforce be burning, the citizens of the city who were unable to be present on the evening of March 14 when the illumination was inaugurated, could see their contribution to aviation functioning at a designated time.

Wiley, one of the testing pilots, will arrive in Tucson from Los Angeles at 5 o'clock this afternoon. His ship, used in regular passenger transport between the coast and here, will remain overnight at the local field. The pilot, at the inaugural exercises last week, made the first hop off the illuminated field. He offered at that time to make tests each time he came to Tucson until the flood glare is adjusted satisfactorily.

Raising the big lamp from its position in the sheet iron house to a platform approximately 10 feet above the ground, F. W. Percy and his staff from the city electrical department are confident that the field is now correctly illuminated. The temporary position in which the light was installed for the celebration last week was found to be unsatisfactory. No change was made in the position of the beacon light, which is situated permanently upon the top of the field's water tank.

Much interest in the lights has been taken by the public of Tucson since their inauguration last Wednesday when Mayor John White, since deceased, pressed the button to turn on the illumination, according to Sgt. Simpson. All day yesterday a stream of cars wended their way to the field, the occupants of the machine wishing to see the big lamps which their donations had assisted in purchasing.

One of the questions most frequently asked of the grounds superintendent is the time of turning on the lights. The Lindbergh beacon is turned on at dusk and remains lighted until 10 p. m. each evening. The flood lights are only lighted upon the arrival of a plane at the local field after dusk or upon special occasions, explained the army air service man.

AVIATOR TESTS

AIRPORT LIGHTS

Lee Willy Suggests More Light to Outline Area of Landing Field

Dropping from the dark sky last night in his Fokker monoplane, Lee Willy, pilot for the Aero Corporation of California, satisfactorily demonstrated to more than a thousand people that the Lindbergh Light, recently installed in the Davis-Monthan airport will make night landing at the Tucson airport a simple matter.

The test made last night was the second one since the lights were installed. Some minor alterations were suggested by Willy last week at the dedication ceremonies when he took his ship up and landed by the glare of the gigantic flood light. F. W. Percy, of the city electrical department, who has made the changes recommended by Willy, raised the flood light ten feet in order to throw the light further. The light will now show the ground as clearly as before and will also aid the night flyers in seeing the vegetation surrounding the field.

Following his two test flights last night, Willy strongly advocated the installation of boundary lights. These lights would be lighted during the time the beacon light was on and would show the pilots the boundaries of the airport. Pilots who have never visited the field sometimes have difficulty in determining the size of the field by only one beacon and flood lights. With the boundary lights extending along the railroad track on the south end and boundary lights on the other sides, night flying, Willy said, would be as simple as flying by the light of day.

Hundreds of people were present last night to watch these tests. Sergeant Dewey Simpson, who is in charge of the field, announced yesterday that the test would be made following the completion of the alterations recommended after the first test.

The first test of the Lindbergh Lights, which was made possible by voluntary donations from the citizens of Tucson, took place last week when the late Mayor John E. White pressed the button which formally opened the airport for night-flying. This was the last official act done by the mayor. The late mayor had been untiring in his efforts to promote aviation in Tucson and had encouraged the workers for the Lindy Light.

Among those to greet Willy as he landed gracefully on the well lighted field, was Kirke T. Moore, chairman of the aviation committee of the chamber of commerce, who questioned Willy regarding the lights. City officials were present as were representatives from the various civic clubs of the city.

The only suggestion offered by Willy was that the boundary lights should be installed.

Sergeant Simpson stated that the beacon light would be turned on every night from dusk until 10 o'clock and that the flood lights would be turned on only when a plane arrives at the field. In most cases the planes arriving here after dark will notify those in charge the time it expects to arrive. Because of the few night landing fields in the southwest the danger of a plane flying at night without first notifying the airport, is rare.