



Walker Aviation

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Afton Wyoming

Flymall.org

One of the best kept secrets in the state of Wyoming is found in the heart of what is known as the Valley of stars or the star of all valleys.

Rich in folklore Wyoming is locked and loaded with many secrets of the old days in the Wild West

The valley offers year around activities and local attractions. Many of those activities include

- Hiking & mountain biking
- Fishing & hunting
- Snowmobiling & rafting
- Skiing & many other outdoor activities

Walker Aviation believes that we hold the keys to your next Wyoming visit. We invite you to make your first step into the deep banks of the [Salt River Valley](#) with a splash.



In 1929 [Reuel Call](#) was the first to bring an airplane in the Valley, sparking a great deal of interest.

In 1937 the people of the valley joined hands and the dream of [CallAir](#) was born. The height of that dream was the growing demand for agricultural aircraft at the end of WWII. The factory also provided many other products and services throughout the war and after the war until its closing in 1959.

The Call Aircraft Company went through a long list of changes before its assets were sold to the [Intermountain Manufacturing Company](#) in 1962.

There became a surplus of their aircraft and snow cars and at one point the factory built wind tunnels for the testing and design of new vehicles for snow travel or the snowmobile.



Somewhere in the mix of over 70 years of aviation history I became hooked by the deep rich smell of the aviation world. In 1994 I took part in a high school program that allowed students to learn working skills for a grade. This was the start of my aviation profession. In 1996 I returned from serving a LDS mission in the state of Arizona.

I first took a job as a barracker at a local textile factory when an offer came to go to work at the local aircraft factory (I took the job right away which meant a pay cut). It was a-dream-come-true for a kid of 21 years of age with his head in the clouds. At that time I was planning on getting my A&P. What a break, I was getting paid to learn and I was working towards my A&P certificate.

Little Stinker—hand built by designer Curtis Pitts—is now the oldest Pitts aircraft in existence. Revolutionary because of its very small size, minimal weight, short wingspan, and extreme agility, the S-1 would dominate the Unlimited aerobatic competition category in the late 1960s and early 1970s.

In August 1948 Little Stinker was purchased by Betty Skelton, who flew it to victory in the 1949 and 1950 Feminine International

Aerobatic Championship at the Miami All American Air Maneuvers. As one of the few women aerobatic pilots of the day, Skelton's impressive flying proficiency heightened awareness of aerobatics and the Pitts design.

Flying upside down, she became the first woman to perform the inverted ribbon-cut maneuver. And she was the first woman inducted into the International Aerobatic Hall of Fame, which, in 1988, established the Betty Skelton First Lady

of Aerobatics Trophy, awarded to the highest scoring woman in national competition.

Skelton sold Little Stinker in 1951, when she traded flying records for automobile speed records. She and husband, Don Frankman, later reacquired the airplane and donated it to the Smithsonian in 1985. Volunteers at the museum's Paul E. Garber Preservation, Restoration and Storage Facility restored it between 1996 and 2001.



My first job in the factory was in the parts department managing inventory and delivering parts to each part of the assembly factory. I soon found myself in the fabrication shop cutting and

bending metal to form each hand built part of the Husky, Pitts, and Engel Aircraft. I was later moved to the paint and fabric department where I received my first aircraft project. It was a little Pitts S1 that had a little secret of its own.



This [little stinker](#) was once owned by [Betty Skelton](#), who flew it to victory in 1949 and 1950 and was an aircraft hand-built by [Mr. Pitts](#) himself.

A year later I was recruited into the factory's

R&D department, nick named the Skunk Works. I played a vital part in the development of the Pitts S 1-11 B and S 2-C program.



The Pitts Black Hawk Team was the first project that was done.

Next, it was time to build # 3 - boy it was a work of art. There were a lot of people involved and a lot of

work went into that project. It's too bad that it never went in to production. It would have blown the doors off of any pilot that would roll the dice and step in.

But not all was lost, most of the best ideas were taken and used on the prototype for the Pitt's S 2-C.



I spent much of my time developing tooling for the new design and later was moved to the wing shop to introduce new changes to the line. I was eventually promoted to the Pitts final assembly.

I was on the team that built the first Pitts S 2-C that went out the door.

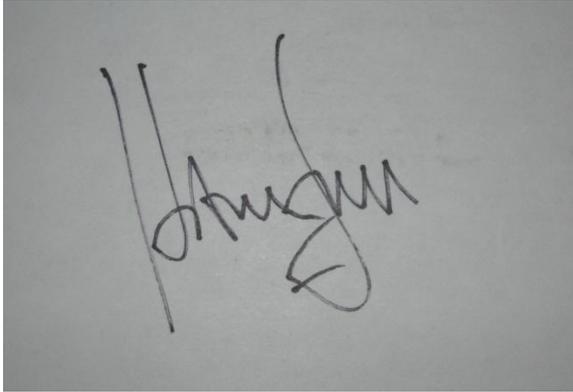
I stayed with the factory for another year and in 1999 I left to earn my A&P at Utah State. At that time a lot of schools were closing or

cutting programs to meet the school's budget. That same year Utah State moved their program putting the cost of school out of my reach.

I decided to take a job over the hill in Brigham City Utah for a shop maintaining [Aerostars](#). This job lasted for just a few months, and after that I worked as a welder and a painter for a short time building



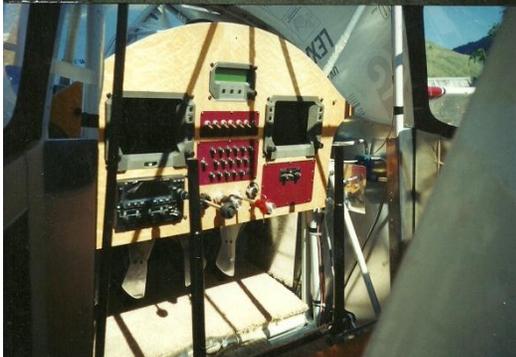
utility trailers. Next I returned to Wyoming and went back to the factory. This time I was put on the Husky line because of my experience working in Pitts final assembly line.



We built 80 Husky aircraft that year, one of which was built for [Harrison Ford](#), the actor.



In 2000 I once again left to pursue my A&P, this time in Utah's Dixie or southern Utah. I up rooted and moved just as we were starting the 110 Special (or better known as the money pit project).



This was one of the factory's last genuine R&D projects. We were working on a mid-wing Pitts.

But the program was canceled and much of the S 1-11-B tooling was destroyed and lost forever. The 4000 or 4 place Husky was a lead sled that never got off the ground. They would have been better off to stick with what they are known for and that is rag and tube. I believe that the idea was in the right place but the attempt was poor.



Wyoming is my home and is a place where it takes guts to live. But leaving it was one of the hardest things I had to do in my early life. Unable to get the schooling that I was seeking and needing to stay with the factory I left for southern Utah where I started working at the [St George Airport](#) as a painter.

The company also had a shop in [Mesquite Nevada](#).

I worked for 6 months in Mesquite with school

escaping me one more time due to cuts.

The paint shop was also having problems so I found employment in [Hurricane Utah](#) for the next 3 years with an A&P/IA that had just set up shop for himself at the Hurricane Airport - [Jorgensen Aero Services](#).

I started with Jerry in 2001 and timing was everything. The housing market was going through

the roof and cash was flooding people's pocket books. Jorgensen Aero Services was starting to grow and needed more room so we moved into a larger hangar on a growing airport. We kept picking up new jobs and clients almost daily so we decided to expand the business in the growing Southern Utah market by building a paint booth and offering paint and fabric services. The expansion was



profitable almost right away. We started by recovering a Pitts S2B that was having delamination problems on the top wing and later moved to an Extra 300 that was once owned by [Patty Wagstaff](#).



N444PW had spider cracks showing up in its wood fiberglass covered wings. We striped the wing and redid the fiberglass for its new owner.

At that time the experimental aircraft builders' market really took off in Southern Utah because of the new Light Sport market. We took part in this

new market by setting up a builder's workshop and offering flight training for the sport pilot certificate. Many of our flights were over [Zion National Park](#) and the Southern Utah desert land.



Business was good up until 9/11. It slowed up a lot as new regulations came in that were supposed to make aviation safer. Then the boss was in a Ultra-light crash and was nearly killed. And at that time we were right in the middle of a Husky A1 project.

I completed that project on my own. I also took a job with a friend back in Wyoming doing concrete



work until I could get back on my feet.

Jerry's recovery was slow but he did get recover and went back to work.

But by that time the business was falling apart, the hangar and Ultra-light owner

demanded back pay and forced my boss out the door and quickly tried to replace him with a new IA that had just come into the area.



By this time I was on my own. Without my A&P I kept working with the



homebuilders and [EAA](#) members. I also picked up a job building a flight simulator (using a husky A1) for the [USDA](#). That job lead to another flight simulator job that was for a safety outfit in Alaska. For this one I used a Piper PA 18.



I also took a job in a gun shop building custom guns for a time between building flight simulators.

But the home builders' market was slowing up and it was not hard to see that the housing market was out the door and ready to burst.



So I unknowing took one of my last aircraft projects in Southern Utah as trade work for a friend. By this time my old boss had moved to the next town over the hill and had restarted his business. We worked together on the old Champ L16A. Oddly it also was one of the first aircraft that I had set in all most 20 year before.



The shop today has been a long and hard road. In 2005 we stopped our service for a few years in order to move back to Wyoming and build a home and rebuild a better shop where we could provide more services.



The shop now has a 500 square foot paint room for larger aircraft and we can paint more parts at a the same time saving time and money.



More room plus more sheet metal and welding tools have been added.

1000 square foot of working area.



500 square foot living area for the visitor or if you're just passing by for the night.

Walker Aviation or Pioneer Paint & Custom Aircraft
It's up to you to decide.



PP&D is the part of the business that provides quality rag and tube restoration / aircraft home builder aid. And we will do our best to help the guy that just can't find what he is looking for. At this time the R&D shop is limited in its ability's but we do have tooling experience.

Walker Aviation has an addition this year when we teamed up with Flymall.org to list high quality new and used parts. We will do our best to keep high standards for the parts and aircraft that we sell and we will do the best we can to help you find the parts that you need.



Thank you for your time and business

Ira walker

Walker Aviation/PP&D

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