

**MARY E. VON MACH COLLECTION**

**MS-013**

International Women's Air and Space Museum  
Burke Lakefront Airport, Room 165  
1501 North Marginal Road  
Cleveland, Ohio 44114

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## MARY VON MACH Collection, MS-013

### INTRODUCTION

The Mary E. Von Mach Collection was accessioned into IWASM in May 1975. The papers and objects were donated by Mary Von Mach to the Museum Trust of the Ninety-Nines which formed the beginning of the International Women's Air & Space Museum. The collection is listed on the original Museum Trust inventory list as "1 plaid suit case of Mary Van Mock [sic] items". A 1975 written inventory list is in the accessions file drawer under "Von Mach".

The papers in the collection date from 1928 to 1935 and are organized into the following series:

1. Biography
2. 1929 Women's Air Derby
3. Organizations
4. Newspaper articles and Clippings
5. Photographs

In addition to the archival material, there is a list of accessioned items at the end of the Finding Aid. The material fills one Hollinger box and there are no restrictions on the use of these materials.

### BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH

Mary Elizabeth Von Mach (1895-1980) was the first woman in the State of Michigan to be granted a pilot's license (#4117) and was the first woman to own and operate a plane in the state. She received a Travel Air airplane from a relative and traveled to Phoenix, Arizona to complete her training. She was the first woman accepted at Parks Air College in St. Louis, where she graduated in 1931. Also in 1931 she became the first woman in Michigan to receive an air transport license and earned a flight instructor's rating. During WWII, Von Mach worked as a final inspector for Pratt-Whitney on their B-24 engine line at the Willow Run plant in Michigan. She later became a saleswoman for a paint company [what company?].

Mary was a participant in the first Women's Air Derby and a charter member of the Ninety-Nines. She established the Michigan chapter of the Ninety-Nines in 1934, holding many offices in the organization.

### SCOPE AND CONTENT NOTE

The papers in this collection are arranged into six series. They comprise items relating to the 1929 First Women's Air Derby. The file folders and the papers within each folder are generally ordered chronologically.

### Hollinger box FOLDER LISTING

#### Series 1 Biographical Information

##### Folder 1/1 Biography

Three-page handwritten resume dated May 3, 1969 marked "copy"; *Women In Aviation* article (Jan-Feb 1991) "Mary von Mach: Michigan's Quiet Pioneer" by Helen Powers; article by Mary Flick "The Skies the Limit" on Park College (one page).

#### Series 2 Women's Air Derby 1929

##### Folder 1/12 National Exchange Club

WU telegram 8/13/29 from H. W. Hutchinson re; "City of Paterson" with penciled reply by George L. Von Mach; WU telegram, no date, from Floyd Logan Air Race Chairman, re Exchange Club emblem on planes. Letter, 8/19/1929 from William Deale, Sec ExC, re Phoenix visit; letter, 9/10/29, Herold Harter, Nat Sec, thank you for participating; magazine, *The Exchangite*, 10/1929 "Mary E. Von Mach" written on cover; Program "Third Annual Aviation Banquet 4/9/30, Book Cadillac Hotel, Detroit Michigan, (insert) banquet ticket "Miss Mary Von Mach" (typed)

Folder 2/12 Pre-race

Entry blank; 2-page note from Phoebe Omlie "Room 711" asking for loan of ship; "Bulletin #4", 7/24/29, from Albert Dorris, Publicity Director, re: photographs; "Bulletin #5, 7/24/29, from Frank Copeland, Managing Director, re: rules and regulations; WU telegram, 7/23, to Miss Marvel Crosson from Don Forker; telegram, 8/13/29, MvM from Richfield oil; 2-page Official Schedule Women's Derby Santa Monica to Cleveland"; letter NAR stationery, 8/7/29, from Floyd Logan, re: personal history; letter on NAR prospectus, 8/12/29, Floyd Logan, re: race number #5; 2-page letter National Women's Air Derby stationery, 8/16/29, "To All Contestants", Floyd Copeland; 2-page mimeographed questionnaire, 8/18/29; Contestant Bulletin, "The Aeronautical Huddle", listing airports of Derby [original encapsulated and moved to 1929 Hollinger box in Drawer A 19]; Contestant Bulletin, "The Aeronautical Huddle", listing officials at control stops; "To All Contestants, The Route of this race...", Frank Copeland, Managing Director (penciled note at top, "start at 2 o'clock Sunday."

Folder 3/12 Clover Field to San Bernadino, California, Sunday, August 18, 1929

Program, Federal Air Port, San Bernadino, Calif. (hand-numbered in ink); blueprint map of Federal Airport; blueprint map of San Bernadino.

Folder 4/12 Calexico, California to Yuma, AZ, to Phoenix, AZ, Monday, August 19, 1929

Western Union telegram [no date] Detroit, Michigan Olson to Norris "Frisco United reports Miss Van Mocks plane forced down minor adjustments.....", penciled reply Keep in the race, do not drop out, a poor start always brings a strong finish, I will see you in Cleveland"; blueprint map Calexico Airport/Mexicali Airport.

Folder 5/12 Phoenix to Douglas, Arizona, August 20, 1929

Invitation "El Club Social de Agua Prieta, S. A.", 8/20/29, for Mary Von Mach, verso has stamp, "Official Opening Aug 20, 1929 With Women's National Air Derby; yellow ribbon, "Women's National Air Derby, Douglas---Arizona"; Flyer, "Sweethearts of the Air", Douglas Arizona, [encapsulated and moved to 1929 box Drawer A19]; WU telegram, 8/20/1929 to Mr and Mrs Von Mack [sic], "Arrived Safely at Douglas...keep praying fro my successful trip =Mary".

Folder 6/12 Columbus, TX to El Paso, TX, Wednesday August 21, 1929

Western Union Telegram, 8/21/29, to ME Von Mach, 829 Chicago Blvd. "Answering your wire Mary Von Mach is officially entered Women's Derby=Floyd J. Logan.

Folder 7/12 El Paso-Van Horn-Pecos-Midland, Texas, Thurs. August 22, 1929.

Western Union telegram, to Mary E Von Mach, Air derby Contestant, Midland Texas...Please wire us collect your experiences in Derby....City Editor, Evening Graphic"; WU telegram, 8/20/29, "Good luck....Mable Britton, Ypsilanti, MI"; small Air Navigation Map, Midland, Texas to El Paso, TX; large Air Navigation Map, Midland to El Paso, Texas with handwritten notes; blueprint map of Pecos, Texas Air-Port.

Folder 8/12 Abilene to Fort Worth TX, Tulsa, OK to Wichita, KS, Friday, August 23, 1929

Letter, Fort Worth Association of Commerce, 8/21/29, to "Pilots and Passengers, Women's Air Derby, Ft Worth Exchange Club, City of Ft Worth, Ft Worth Assoc. of Commerce; flyer, Sweetheart of the Air (lyrics by W. L. Vennell, Music by Dan Caslar), "Dedicated to the Contestants in First Woman's Aerial Derby, at Fort Worth"

Folder 9/12 Kansas City, MO to East St. Louis, IL, Saturday, August 24, 1929.

Map of Kansas City showing City Airport and Fairfax Airport; map "Airports in the St. Louis Metropolitan District."

- Folder 10/12 Terra Haute, IN to Cincinnati, OH to Columbus, OH, Sunday, August 25, 1929.  
Blueprint map Terra Haute, showing Dresser Field; two blueprint maps Cincinnati, Ohio showing railroads and Municipal Airport; Western Union telegram, 8/25/1929, from R. Reid Vance, President, Columbus Exchange Club, re: invitation; program from Aeronautical Banquet, Deshler Wallick Hotel, Columbus, alphabetical listing on Starting Flyers on back, hand numbered (20).
- Folder 11/12 Columbus, OH to Cleveland, OH, Monday, August 26, 1929.  
Paper, "Instructions to Women Pilots" (Cleveland Airport approach); letter, NAR stationery, "Welcome: Contesting Pilots..." Signed Floyd J. Logan, Air Race Chairman; 1929 NAR prospectus with latter on front, 8/26/29, "Doorman: Please contact Mr. Cliff Henderson and have him approve of two extra seats...for Von mach party" signed Edith Kosbab, Air Race Headquarters; paper "Official Guest Car, National Air Races, Aug. 24 to Sept. 2<sup>nd</sup>"; Letter 8/16/29, invitation to Aviation Achievement Dinner, 8/26/29, signed Frank Copeland Exchange Club; Invitation for Aviation Achievement Dinner, Hotel Statler; Achievement dinner ticket.
- Folder 12/12 Miscellaneous 1929 Air Race  
Letter, 8/25/1929, "To my Fair Derbyists, and Gang from Clover Field;  
Congratulations...signed Duff Willson, 1<sup>st</sup> Lt. U.S. Army (Rtd); letter National Women's Air Derby stationery, 9/6/29, Dear Miss Von Mack...[Willson letter, hotel St Louis]..Frank Copeland; copy of letter, 10/11/29 to Floyd Logan, thank you from Mary von Mach stapled to thank you letter from Floyd Logan, 9/10/29; letter (copy) 1/4/30 to F. T. Copeland.

Series 3 Organizations

Folder 1/1 1930-1933

Membership approval (with notes in ink); 2-pages Constitution, Approval/Disapprove (inked marks); Name and Emblem suggestions (with penciled notes); membership Form (with penciled note); "To Derby Entrants", own organization; invitation Zonta Club Flying Trophy to Amelia Earhart, 11/3/32; List of Governors, 1932-33.

Series 4: Newspaper articles and Clippings

Folder 1/1: two 11/18/28, *Detroit News*, "Michigan's First Woman Pilot Gets her License" [photo]; 2/7/29, *Detroit Tribune*, "N.W. Girl Flier On Long Air Hop" 2/26/29, *Phoenix Evening Gazette*, "Woman Pilot Here on Hop Across U.S." [2 copies]; 4/5/29, *Detroit Times*, "Girl Hops here From Texas"; 6/11/29, *Detroit Evening Times*, "One Air Tour of State" (Michigan Air Tour) [photo]; 8/17/29 "Detroit Girl Ready for Air Race"; 8/5/29, *Wichita Eagle*, "Bless Travel Air Plane for use in Derby" [photo]; 10/29/29, *Wichita Eagle*, "Derby Flier's Ship Will be Overhauled"; 2/2/30, *Detroit Sunday Times*, "Sells, Joins Firm" (Airplane Sales Company) [photo]; 9/19/42 "Ford Inspector in Factory Garb" (Willow Run) [photo] [no date] *Detroit Evening Times* "Head Pilots" [photo]; 12/3/1942, *Detroit Evening Times*, "Honor Rollee" (Willow Run) [photo]; two [no date] "Getting Ready" (Hartung Airport, 4<sup>th</sup> Girls' Air Day) [photo]; [no date] "Teacher Now (instructor's license) [photo]; [no date] "Wants to Visit a friend, So Will Fly 1,800 Miles" (to Phoenix); 1/4/1930 "Women Aviators Organize Club to Promote Interests" (Ninety-Nines "86 Charter members")

Series 5: Correspondence

3/2/29 from Willard E. Holt, Chamber of Commerce, Lordsburg, New Mexico re: 1,800 mile Air Hop photos; 5/25/1932, Coldwater Daily Reporter, from Ruth re: Congratulations on Transport license; 12/19/32; letter (copy?) 11/10/1932, Mary Von Mach to Franklin D. Roosevelt re: Congratulations on election victory; 12/19/32, Secretary of the Governor (FDR) Executive mansion Albany, NY, acknowledging letter; 1/14/35, Mary Von Mach to Hon. Clark Howell, re; permanent Federal Aeronautics commission; 5/15/1931 telegram E. R. Strong, Aeronautics Branch Dept of Commerce re; only woman with transport license in Michigan; Jan 23 [no year] telegram, Mable Britton to MvM,

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Parks College re: "Impossible to raise a thing, Congratulations on your LC"; note from Mary Von Mach, re: "maps given to me before take off"; [no date] telegram from Richard to Mrs Von Mach "Mary passed transport test..."; 5/6/35 telegram, George and Grace to MvM, re; congratulations on transport license; envelope with note "1932-1969 Save do not destroy, 99-news enclosed, Emlie Earhart.

Series 6: Photographs

5 x 8 signed (in green ink) 6/10/28 full length portrait; large full length portrait (same); Mary in sweater and jodhpurs standing next to MaryAnn (1929); Mary with group of 8 women [no date]; Mary in MaryAnn (C-6 Travelaire OX5); Mary in white flight suit (Aug 1929 Race Take off #5); Mary next to plane with Wichita bracelet, cross pin wings (Parks Air College Photo); Mary in Terra Haute 8/27/29; Leah Higgins and Mary, AWTAR 1961 TAR # 49; Bellanca "Airbus; list Of Babe Ruth slides.

Accessioned items

1975-001	Trophy lid with airplane on top World's Record 1929
1975-002	National Air Race Bracelet
1975-003	Hotel Broadview Bracelet engraved "Mary Von Mach" 8/23/29 "Courtesy of Hotel Broadview, Wichita, Kansas" given to all contestants.
1975-004	Pin with two birds
1975-005	Gold Cross stick pin
1975-006	Sterling Cross pin
1975-007	FIA Eagle sterling silver pin - engraved - 7215
1975-059	Framed photograph Achievement Dinner
1986-044	1929 enlarged framed telegram "O. E. Carr, City manager of Fort Worth, TX welcome telegram"
1975-66-1	1929 Women's Air Derby Program
1975-66-2	1929 paper NAR Guest Pass (unsigned)
1975-66-3	1929 brass NAR Guest Pass in red leather wallet
1975-66-4	Poster: "Do You Remember"