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## **Harold E. Morehouse Flying Pioneers Biographies Collection - Smith, Jay D.**

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using a Benoist hydro aeroplane, and was granted F.A.I. Hydro license No. 51 on June 28th, 1916.  
In February, 1917 Smith flight-tested a new Verville twin-float pusher hydro ~~aeroplane~~ <sup>airplane</sup> with 2 Curtiss OX engine for the General Aeroplane Company of Detroit, Michigan. There is evidence that he was engaged in aircraft inspection and maintenance work during World War I.

In 1919 he became engineer in charge of the building of a Verville-Packard ~~special~~ <sup>here</sup> plane for Major R. W. Schroeder to compete in the 1920 Gordon Bennett Races in France. Following tests in America of the plane ~~here~~ <sup>and its 12-cylinder Packard engine of 638 hp.</sup> Smith was mechanic in charge of the crew that went to Europe in October, 1920 for that competitive event. The Verville-Packard did not win because of difficulties with engine cooling and carburetor air intake.

In 1920 Smith was mechanic in charge for Major C. C. Moseley ~~in the Pulitzer Races held on Thanksgiving Day at Omaha, Nebraska.~~ <sup>in the Pulitzer Race held at Mitchel Field, Long Island on Thanksgiving Day, November 27.</sup> With its previous faults corrected, Moseley flew the airplane at an average speed for the four laps of the 116 mile course at 156.5 mph., winning the race. Later he flew it over a measured mile at 186 mph.

Following his early aviation career Smith settled in St. Petersburg, Florida and became a real estate speculator, at which occupation he remained for the rest of his life, except for a period in World War II, when again he was an aviation engineer for the government in Florida.

On January 1st, 1950 Smith assisted in a ceremony at St. Petersburg commemorating the first airline there in 1914. This was a local civic affair and a flight was made from St. Petersburg to Tampa by a commercial airline plane, with Smith as honored guest passenger.

Smith passed away at St. Petersburg, Florida on March, 11, 1963 at age 74, survived by his wife, two brothers and a sister. He had joined the Early Birds in 1936 and was a member of the Masonic Order.

~~Early Bird~~ <sup>Flying Pioneer</sup> Jay D. Smith was a hard working, energetic aviation enthusiast who did a lot of flying with no serious accidents. He also contributed much toward the development and maintenance of the early aircraft of that era and rightfully deserves a worthy place in the annals of American aviation history.

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