



Smithsonian Institution

Smithsonian National Air and Space Museum Archives

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

Extracted on Apr-16-2024 08:34:45

The Smithsonian Institution thanks all digital volunteers that transcribed and reviewed this material. Your work enriches Smithsonian collections, making them available to anyone with an interest in using them.

The Smithsonian Institution (the "Smithsonian") provides the content on this website (transcription.si.edu), other Smithsonian websites, and third-party sites on which it maintains a presence ("SI Websites") in support of its mission for the "increase and diffusion of knowledge." The Smithsonian invites visitors to use its online content for personal, educational and other non-commercial purposes. By using this website, you accept and agree to abide by the [following terms](#).

- If sharing the material in personal and educational contexts, please cite the Smithsonian National Air and Space Museum Archives as source of the content and the project title as provided at the top of the document. Include the accession number or collection name; when possible, link to the Smithsonian National Air and Space Museum Archives website.
- If you wish to use this material in a for-profit publication, exhibition, or online project, please contact Smithsonian National Air and Space Museum Archives or transcribe@si.edu

For more information on this project and related material, contact the Smithsonian National Air and Space Museum Archives. [See this project](#) and other collections in the Smithsonian Transcription Center.

Jay D. Smith

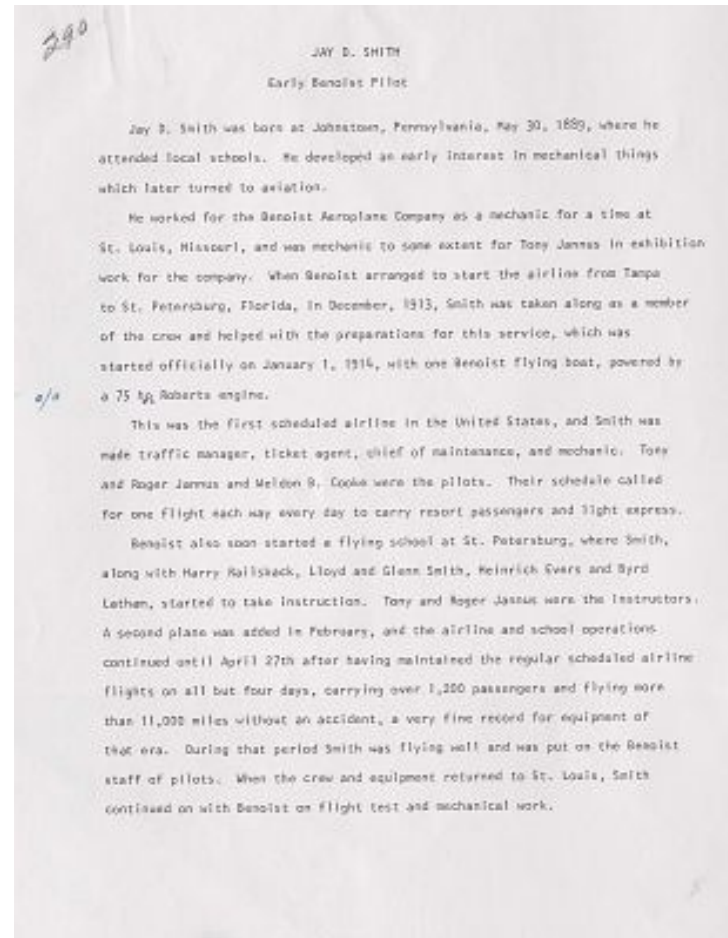
Early Benoist Pilot

Jay D. Smith was born at Johnstown, Pennsylvania, May 30, 1889, where he attended local schools. He developed an early interest in mechanical things which later turned to aviation.

He worked for the Benoist Aeroplane Company as a mechanic to some extent for Tony Jannus in exhibition work for the company. When Benoist arranged to start the airline from Tampa to St. Petersburg, Florida, in December, 1913, Smith was taken along as a member of the crew and helped with the preparations for this service which was started officially on January 1, 1914, with one Benoist flying boat, powered by a 75 hp Roberts engine.

This was the first scheduled airline in the United States, and Smith was made traffic manager, ticket agent, chief of maintenance, and mechanic. Tony and Roger Jannus and Weldon B Cooke were Pilots. Their schedule called for one flight each way every day to carry resort passengers and light express.

Benoist also soon started a flying school at St. Petersburg, where Smith, along with Harry Railsback, Lloyd and Glenn Smith, Heinrich Evers and Byrd Latham, started to take instruction. Tony and Roger Jannus were instructors. A second plane was added in February, and the airline and school operations continued until April 27th after having maintained the regular scheduled airline flights on all but four days, carrying over 1,200 passengers and flying more than 11,000 miles without an accident, a very fine record for equipment of that era. During that period Smith was flying well and was put on the Benoist staff of pilots. When the crew and equipment returned to St. Louis, Smith continued on with Benoist on flight test and mechanical work.



Harold E. Morehouse Flying Pioneers Biographies Collection - Smith, Jay D.
Transcribed and Reviewed by Digital Volunteers
Extracted Apr-16-2024 08:34:45



Smithsonian Institution

Smithsonian National Air and Space Museum Archives

The mission of the Smithsonian is the increase and diffusion of knowledge - shaping the future by preserving our heritage, discovering new knowledge, and sharing our resources with the world. Founded in 1846, the Smithsonian is the world's largest museum and research complex, consisting of 19 museums and galleries, the National Zoological Park, and nine research facilities. Become an active part of our mission through the Transcription Center. Together, we are discovering secrets hidden deep inside our collections that illuminate our history and our world.

Join us!

The Transcription Center: <https://transcription.si.edu>

On Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/SmithsonianTranscriptionCenter>

On Twitter: [@TranscribeSI](https://twitter.com/TranscribeSI)

Connect with the Smithsonian

Smithsonian Institution: www.si.edu

On Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/Smithsonian>

On Twitter: [@smithsonian](https://twitter.com/smithsonian)