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US Women in Aviation 1940-1985 Research Materials - Evelyn Johnson

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The Knoxville L[[cutoff]]
119TH YEAR KNOXVILLE, TENNESSEE, TUESDAY, APRIL 29,
19[[cutoff]]

One Dead, Pilot Injured In C[[cutoff]]

THE JEFFERSON COUNTRY STANDARD
Wednesday, April 30, 1958

Jefferson [[Wyatt J Bryan]] Aviatrix Saves Life Of Helicopter Pilot

Virginian Killed

Climbing too rapidly and banking more sharply than his helicopter was built "to take", is given by experts as the most probable reason for the Murriel Field, Alpha, air tragedy Monday afternoon when Davis McNeil, 49, Jonesville, Va., was instantly killed.

Mr. McNeil was general manager of the Powell Valley Electric Co-Operative, and was on a routine line-inspection trip when the pilot, John Ryan, stopped over at the station to refuel. Mr. Ryan is in a Knoxville hospital suffering from a broken back and hip.

The tragedy was witnessed by the field manager, Mrs. Evelyn Bryan, of Jefferson City.

"Almost immediately after the machine hit the ground much smoke began to come from around the engine, and the first thing that I did was to crawl under the wreckage, and turn it off," she said.

"Mr. McNeil evidently was killed instantly. I felt of his pulse, and could find no trace of action. Mr. Ryan was unconscious, but revived shortly."

First Tragedy

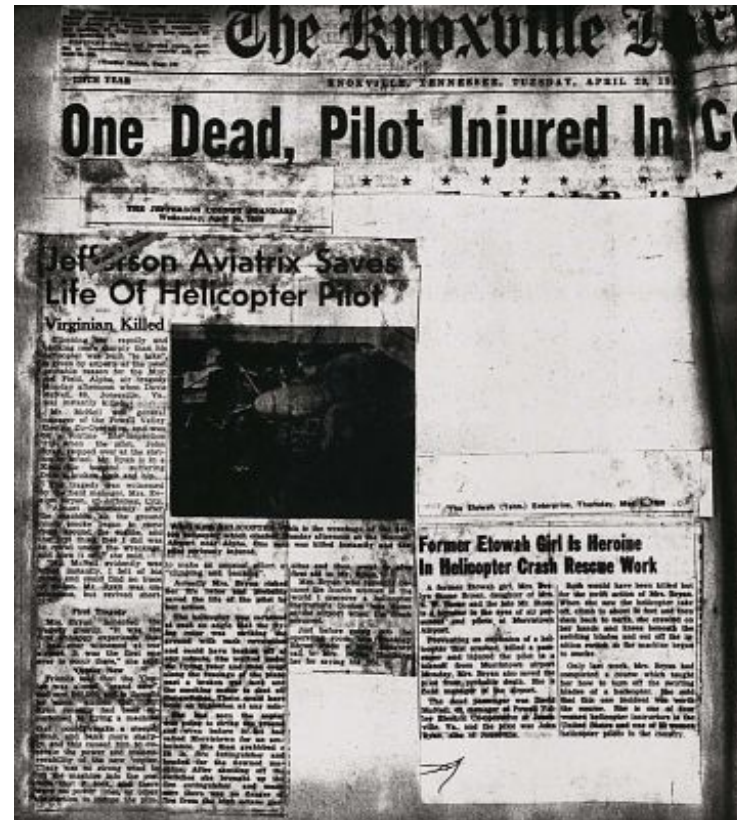
Mrs. Bryan lamented the tragedy greatly. "It was the first unhappy experience that I had ever witnessed at our airport. It was the first one ever to occur there," she said.

'Copter New

Friends said that the 'Copter was almost "brand new", and cost \$40,000, and is thought by some airmen that Mr. Ryan recently had been accustomed to flying a machine that could make a steeper climb, and bank more sharply, and this cause him to overrate the power and maneuverability of the new 'copter. There was no strong wind to lift the machine into the position that it took, and there were no power lines, or other obstruction to induce the pilot to make an unusual effort at "climbing and banking".

Actually Mrs. Bryan risked her life twice and probably saved the life of the pilot by her action.

The helicopter was careened at such an angle that the flying rotor was



striking the ground with each revolution and could have broken off at any minute. She walked under the flying rotor and then crept along the fuselage of the plane past a broken gas tank and the smoking motor to shut off the switches. There could have been an explosion at any min-
[[cutoff]]

She had seen the copter was going to strike the ground and even before it hit had called Morristown for an ambulance. She then grabbed a 50 lb. fire extinguisher and headed for the downed machine. After shutting off the switch she brought up the fire extinguisher and made sure there was no danger of fire from the high octane gasoline and then went to give first aid to Mr. Ryan.

Mrs. Bryan recently became the fourth woman in the world to receive a helicopter instructor's license was alone at the airport when the crash occurred.

Just before going into the operating room late Tuesday Rhyan made a long distance call to Mrs. Bryan thanking her for saving his life.

[[newspaper image description]] WRECKED HELICOPTER-This is the wreckage of the \$40,000 helicopter which crashed Monday afternoon at the Murreil Airport near Alpha. On man was killed instantly and pilot seriously injured. [[newspaper image description/]]

The Etowah (Tenn.) Enterprise, Thursday, May [[?]] 1958
Former Etowah Girl Is Heroine In Helicopter Crash Rescue Work
A former Etowah girl, Mrs. Evelyn Stone Bryan, daughter of Mrs. E. W. Stone and the late Mr. Stone is a heroine in the eyes of the air personnel and pilots at Morristown Airport.
Preventing an explosion of a helicopter that crashed, killed a passenger and injured the pilot in a takeoff from Morristown airport Monday, Mrs. Bryan also saved the pilot from probable death. She is field manager of the airport.
The dead passenger was David McNeil, 49, manager of Powell Valley Electric Co-operative at Jonesville, Va., and the pilot was John Ryan, also of Jonesville.
Both would have been killed but for the swift action of Mrs. Bryan. When she saw the helicopter take off, climb to about 50 feet and then slam back to earth, she crawled on her hands and knees beneath the swirling blades and cut off the ignition switch as the machine began to smoke. Only last week, Mrs. Bryan had completed a course which taught her how to turn off the swirling blades of a helicopter. She said that this one incident was worth the course. She is one of four women helicopter instructors in the United States and one of 22 women helicopter pilots in the country.

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