

Stratford History - Always Amazing

By **David Wright, Editor**
Stratford Historical Society's
UPDATE

Whether or not you believe Gustav Whitehead flew his No. 21 in Stratford 2 years before the Wright brothers flew the Wright flyer at Kitty Hawk, one thing is certain: Stratford was THE place to be in aviation beginning in 1911. The very first air show ever held in America was held in the summer of 1911 at Aerodrome Park (aka Avon Field) which is now the sight of St. Michael's cemetery. Aspiring aeronauts from all over America, seeking to build their reputations, came to Stratford to demonstrate their flying prowess.

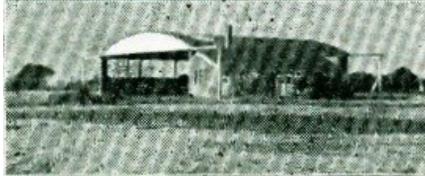
As a result of events such as the 1911 air show, America's fascination with air travel began to focus on flying centers of expertise including Stratford. This explains how Igor Sikorsky learned of Stratford, and why one of the first airports in America was built in Stratford. 90 years ago. In order to help you better appreciate why we have an airport in Stratford, we'll spend the next few articles sharing airport reminiscences of 90 years ago.

The Lordship Booster

October 1928

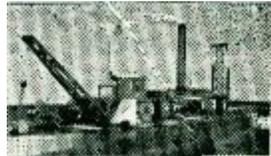
THE BRIDGEPORT AIRPORT Airport Opens Unofficially, Oct. 1.

The local airport opened unofficially on Columbus Day, Oct. 12. The official opening will take place in the spring when the field is completed.



VIEW OF HANGAR AT THE FLYING
FIELD IN THE FOREGROUND IS PART
OF ONE RUNWAY

Photos from *The Lordship Booster*,
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THE DREDGER WORKING IN
THE HYDROPLANE CANAL

While the airport is not yet entirely completed, the landing ways of the field are in such a condition that they can be used, together with the hangar at the north end of field.

The dredging of the seaplane harbor is almost completed and needs only a few more weeks before it will be wholly finished. Also almost all of the trees on the slope, at the Lordship side of the port, have been cut down and this work will too require but a few more weeks.

The port will have three aeroplanes, two of which arrived Oct. 12. One of the planes is a Curtiss Robin Monoplane, the other is a Curtis Travel-Air Biplane. These planes will be kept in the hangar which is practically finished except for a few minor completions.

Mr. William Hamon is the Operation Manager of the field and he is very enthusiastic over the completion of the airport. He believes that when finished, it will be the best in New England, and that will improve the Lordship and Stratford residential sections and other territories.