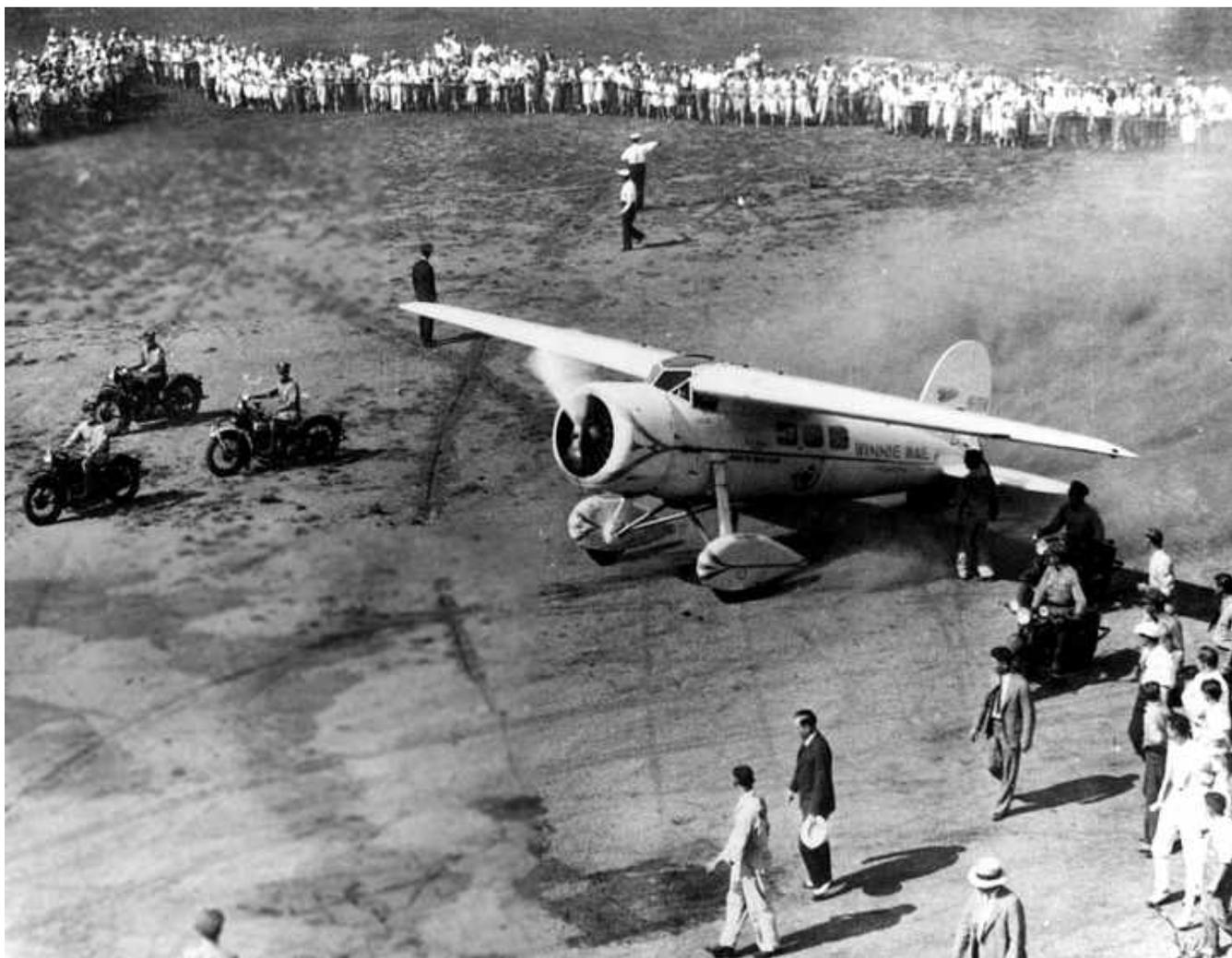


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## Curtiss-Wright Field / (Original) Wiley Post Airport, Oklahoma City, OK

35.57 North / 97.57 West (Northwest of Downtown Oklahoma City, OK)



A 1934 photo (courtesy of Jeff Wilkinson) of the Winnie Mae on the ground at Curtiss-Wright Field.

The original name of this airport was Curtiss-Wright Field.

It was located north of Oklahoma City, near the Bluff Creek Reservoir (later known as Lake Hefner).

Curtiss-Wright Field was established in 1928 (according to Kristopher Crook).

According to Jeff Wilkinson, in 1928, "a hangar was built to showcase Curtis-Wright products.

Wiley Post the aviator used that hangar from 1929 until his death in 1935 for his own projects."

Curtiss-Wright was also the original base for Braniff Airways (according to Kristopher Crook).

"Braniff was based at Curtiss-Wright throughout the 1930's, maintaining operations at the field

even after the opening of the Municipal Air Terminal (now Will Rogers World Airport) in 1932."



The December 1935 Oklahoma City Sectional Chart (courtesy of Chris Kennedy)

depicted Curtiss Wright as a commercial or municipal airport.

The Airport Directory Company's 1937 Airports Directory (courtesy of Bob Rambo) described Curtiss-Wright Field as a commercial airport with a 2,640' square landing area.

According to Jeff Wilkinson, the field was sold to Mr. John Burke in 1940.



The field had been renamed Wiley Post Airport by 1941, as that is how it was listed in The Airport Directory Company's 1941 Airports Directory (courtesy of Chris Kennedy).

This aerial photo from the directory looked northwest at the field.

The directory described Wiley Post Airport as consisting of a 2,640' square grass area,

and one of 2 buildings (hangars?) were depicted along the east side of the field.

The April 1944 US Army/Navy Directory of Airfields (courtesy of Ken Mercer)

described Wiley Post Airport as having a 3,000' unpaved runway,  
and indicated that Navy flight operations were conducted from the field.

Jim Shaw recalled, "I remember Wiley Post well.

I grew up 3 blocks south & one block east of the intersection of May Avenue & Britton  
Road, (the southeast corner of the field).

Dad used to tell stories of me toddling around the yard (1944-45), constantly looking up  
at the yellow Navy PT-13s

that were constantly overhead & repeatedly falling on my face as I wasn't watching  
where I was going."

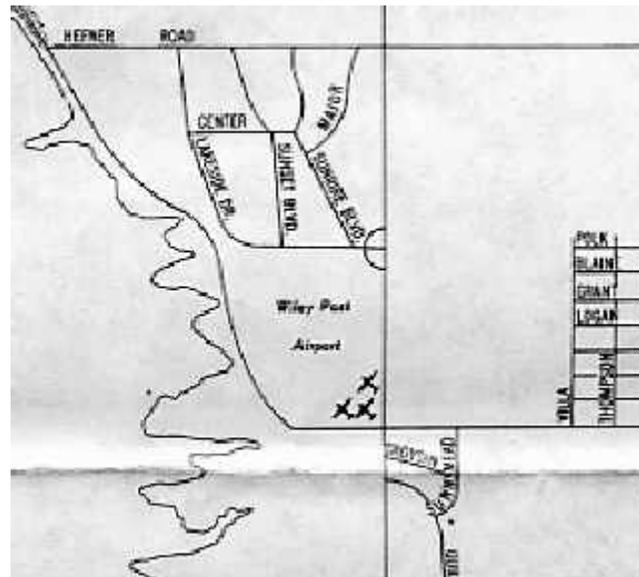


The March 1945 Oklahoma City Sectional Chart (courtesy of Jeff Wilkinson)

depicted Wiley Post as a commercial or municipal airport.

It also showed that the Bluff Creek Reservoir had been constructed adjacent to the west side of the field

(note the reservoir was not present on the 1935 chart).



As depicted on a 1949 street map (courtesy of Jeff Wilkinson), Wiley Post Airport was bounded by Britton Road to the south and May Avenue to the east.



An aerial photo looking west at the original Wiley Post Airport from the 1950 OK Airport Directory (courtesy of Chris Kennedy).

The directory described Wiley Post as consisting of a 2,640' "allway" field, which offered major repairs, fuel, and hangars.

The manager was listed as John Burke.



A circa 1950 photo looking southeast at the ramp of the original Wiley Post Airport, showing Mooneys, Bonanzas, a Navion, a Piper, and Cessnas (courtesy of Wesley Horton).

Jim Shaw recalled, "I remember one incident (I think I was still in grade school), when a bootlegger overloaded his plane & attempted to takeoff to the south after dark. He got off the ground, but failed to clear the line of trees on the south side of Britton Road.

Word spread throughout the neighborhood like wildfire & all the dads rushed to the scene

(bear in mind that Oklahoma still had prohibition until 1959).

Everything that wasn't broken was cleaned out before the police arrived. I don't know what became of the bootlegger."

Jim continued, "The Goodyear blimp always operated out of Wiley Post whenever it was in OKC,

and I remember a Navy blimp or two there on occasion."



A circa 1953-55 aerial photo looking east at Wiley Post's hangar, with 4 single-engine aircraft parked to the right (courtesy of Charlie McClure).

According to Jeff Wilkinson, Wiley Post Airport was closed in 1955.

“I can imagine that what led to the closure was the nearby Tulakes Airport, built in 1942 as an auxiliary to the Army's Will Rogers Field located at the Oklahoma City Municipal Airport

[Tulakes Airport eventually became known as the current Wiley Post Airport].

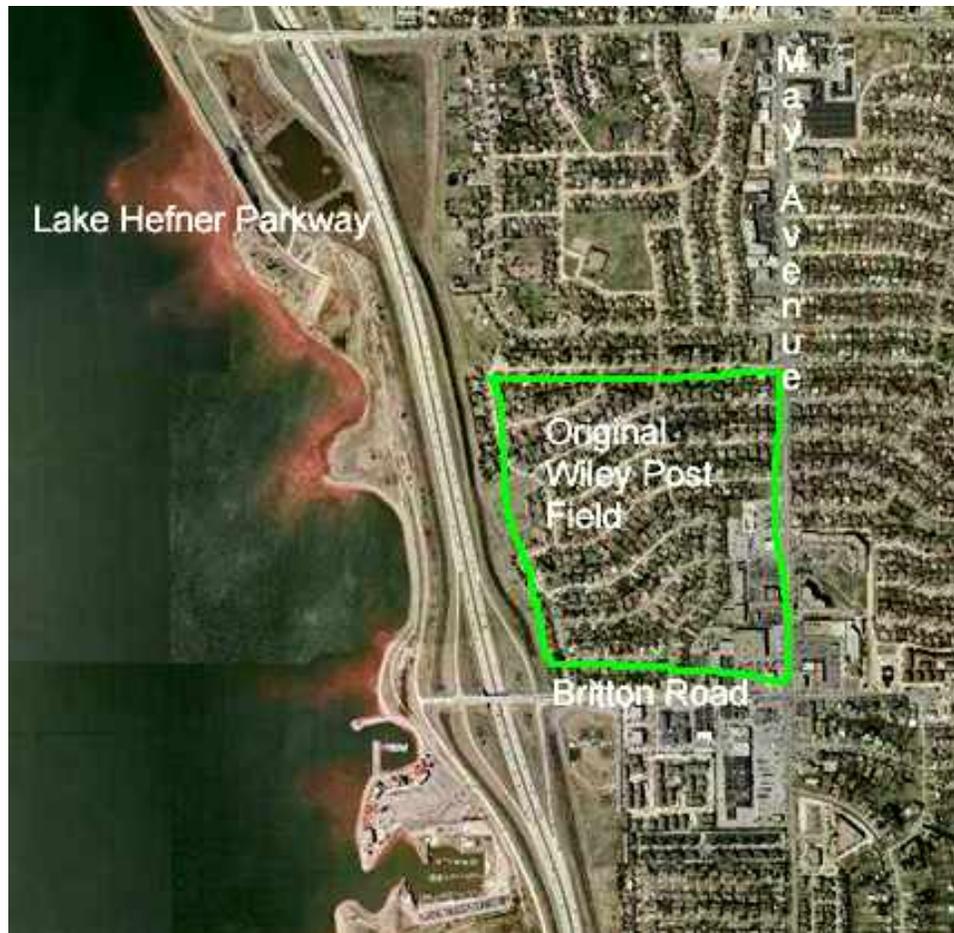
The field was subsequently developed into a residential neighborhood.”

According to Jeff Wilkinson, the hangar that Curtiss-Wright Company had built at the field in 1928

was, in 1960, converted into first a shopping center & then a church.”

According to Christopher Crook, a car dealership occupies the southeast portion of the former airport site.

The 1991 USGS aerial photo showed that the location of the original Wiley Post Airport had been redeveloped with housing.



The location of the original Wiley Post Airport has been superimposed over the 2002 USGS aerial photo by Jeff Wilkinson.

According to Jeff Wilkinson reported in 2004 that the 1928-vintage former hangar had "stood empty for a time when it was purchased by the auto dealership located nearby.

The dealer wanted to demolish the building, but (thanks to the intervention of a group of pilots) the hangar was carefully dismantled. An area of the current Wiley Post Airport has been dedicated for the reconstruction of the hangar.

It will be reconstructed to be historically accurate, but up to modern standards."