

### The First Transpacific Flight.

Clyde Edward Pangborn, a stunt pilot, and flight instructor during the First World War, arrived in Wenatchee on October 5th, 1931, after 41 hours and 15 minutes of flying. He and his partner, Hugh Herndon Jr., had just made a historic flight from Shabishiro, Japan, the first time the Pacific had been flown across. What's exciting about that historical trip, is that they completed it in Wenatchee. They had been scheduled to land in Seattle, but couldn't do so because of bad weather. I had heard about this flight a long time ago when I first came here, but I didn't really think much about it until I went to the museum the other day. There was a free day for the public on Friday, so I took my children and another friend to explore. The children ran around like rats, going into all of the different rooms, the art display, the electric miniature railway room, and a real apple sorter from the last century. I followed them into the room that was dedicated to the transpacific flight, and read them a few of the details that were written on the walls. The plane that they used was called the Miss Veedol. There is a model of it hanging from the ceiling. There are also maps, signatures, and details about the lives of both pilots. I was amazed to find out that before leaving Shabishiro, they were both imprisoned, and nearly lost their maps. Then, when they actually took off, the landing gear of the plane (the wheels) were supposed to fall off to decrease the weight that they would carry. Well, they didn't. So what did they do? Pangborn got out of the plane, and at 14,000 feet, got onto a wing, barefoot, and detached the landing gear himself. What a brave man! Being a stunt pilot, he was used to taking risks, so he was the right man for the job. I can't even imagine climbing out onto one of the wings while the plane is in flight. That's crazy! But they did it, and they managed to land in Wenatchee safely almost two days later. An airport was built later on in Wenatchee at the place where they landed; it's called Pangborn airport. It's very much celebrated here in Wenatchee; there is even a sister-city connection in Japan. Most years during the Apple Blossom Festival, representatives from Japan ride in the parade. It's great to think that, even though Wenatchee seems far away from most places, there is a historic international connection that keeps this place on the map.

Grammar notes.

Related vocabulary: to detach, celebrated (as an adjective), to be on the map.

1. You have to detach the safety brake before the remote control car will work.
2. He is a very celebrated artist; his work is on display in the National Gallery.
3. That amusement park really put this town on the map.