

# Westheimer Flying Field

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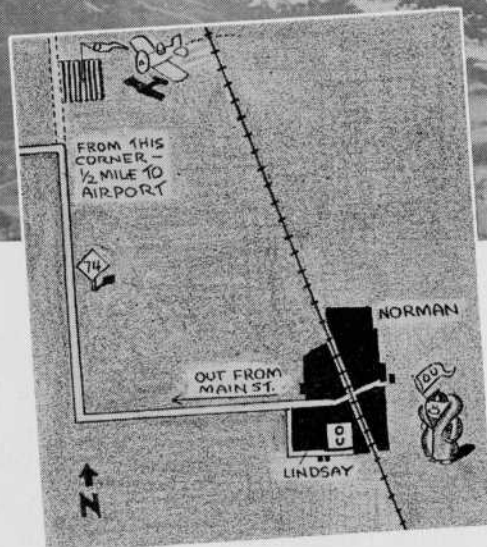
Aviation Takes a Big Stride  
Forward at O. U. With Funds  
Donated for Purchasing Land

**F**ULFILLMENT of one of the greatest needs of the University and of Norman was made possible last month by the presentation of a gift of \$10,500 from the estate of the late Max Westheimer, Ardmore, to the University for the purchase of an airport site for student pilot training.

Walter Neustadt of Westheimer-Neustadt, Ardmore oil firm, announced the gift as a memorial to Mr. Westheimer, his father-in-law. The field will be known as the Max Westheimer Flying Field of the University of Oklahoma. It is a hundred-and-sixty acre tract located two and a half miles northwest of Norman, one-half mile off Highway 74.

Need for good airport facilities became a major problem for the University this fall. In addition to the general progress and popularity of aviation, the extensive national defense program suddenly multiplied the importance of civilian pilot training. The makeshift training field used for the past year with only temporary and reluctant approval of the Civil Aeronautics Authority, sponsor of civilian flying courses, was considered definitely inadequate for 1940-41. University officials were faced with the loss of CAA training unless a suitable airport could be provided.

Widespread investigation by the Norman Chamber of Commerce, working closely with the University, finally located only two pieces of land within a five-mile radius of the city that were available and met the specifications of CAA. The aviation committee of the Chamber of Commerce had fourteen meetings before it located a suitable property and Dr. M. L. Wardell, '19ba, chairman, with various members of the committee, made several long trips to check titles and details on acceptable tracts.



OFFICIAL U. S. NAVY PHOTOGRAPH

*The map shows route from the campus to the University's new flying field, a distance of about three miles. The field is only a half mile off Highway 74*

With no funds available in the University budget for such a project, the finding of a desirable site left the problem far from solution. The outlook was dark indeed until Mr. Neustadt appeared as benefactor, starting the University airport dream on the road to reality.

Since the consumation of the deal in mid-September, work on the airport has rapidly gone forward. Members of the University staff surveyed the land, ran the contour lines, finished the blueprints, and laid out temporary runways. Arrangements were made to move the hangar on the old airport site to the new one until a permanent one can be erected. Dr. Wardell, assistant to President W. B. Bizzell, announced that the University will ask for aid from the Works Progress Administration of the federal government to build the new hangar, other buildings, and for additional improvements.

In Norman less than a week after the land had been purchased, S. E. Travis, Jr., district airport engineer of CAA, unofficially approved the preliminary work on the field and the plans for the entire project. Official notification of approval will be forthcoming, along with the official outline of civilian pilot training during this school year.

Acquisition of adequate facilities virtually assures the University the approval of its application for secondary flight training. CAA divisional officials in Fort Worth, Texas, have already indicated that

Norman is to be one of the few cities in the state in which advanced courses will be given college students. They have also announced expansion of the primary training program for Norman and Oklahoma City.

Unofficial reports are that about sixty men and women will take part in the CPT beginners' courses. Ten to twenty students will be enrolled in the advanced program for sixty-five hours of acrobatics.

The campus has been speculating on the effect of the new CAA ruling making trainees subject to call for military air service. Formerly there was no specific military connection, but it was understood that students have to pass the same physical, age and educational qualifications as those for the air corps training center at Randolph Field in Texas. Even with the new obligation placed on trainees, however, it was believed that the number of applicants would exceed the quota.

At the end of the summer class of training on the temporary airport, George Burke, Norman manager of the Burke Aviation Service, CAA contract holder for flight instruction, announced that ninety-five University students had been licensed since the CAA program was inaugurated last year. There had been no injury among the trainees during the year's program.

For more than a decade interest in aviation has run high at O. U. As early

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## Westheimer Flying Field

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as the fall of 1927 a group of students interested in obtaining facilities for advanced study in aeronautical fields organized Tau Omega, an aviation fraternity, and drew a constitution, rites and by-laws. By February, 1928, the fraternity had received a charter giving it national standing.

Tau Omega organized the first flying school at Norman. The airport was a small pasture, unsuited for use as a flying field. Nevertheless the school, completely unaffiliated with the University, stimulated interest among both students and faculty members. As a result of the increased attention it directed to aviation, two courses in aeronautics were added to the curriculum of the School of Mechanical Engineering in 1929. The late Professor J. C. Davis, then head of the Department of Mechanics taught five credit hours of stress analysis and three hours of aerodynamics.

From those meager beginnings developed the rather complete course in airplane mechanics that is available to a student today. During the thirties, new courses were added gradually and a small wind tunnel was constructed in 1933. Work began on a new and larger wind tunnel in 1937. It is still in the process of completion. Finishing touches will be put on it this year to make it one of the best in the southwest, and to greatly enhance the value of the aeronautical engineering curriculum.

Aeronautics courses listed in the general University catalog this year include both lecture and laboratory periods in flight mechanics, study of aircraft engines, stress analysis, theory of propellers, and others.

The Civilian Pilot Training program is open to a limited number, the quota being determined by CAA. Only official connection O. U. has with CPT is the contract awarded to the University for ground school instruction. Burke Aviation Service, contractor for flight training, is a private commercial concern.

Mr. Burke will again be in charge of flight training and Charles N. Paxton, associate professor of mechanical engineering at the University, will continue to direct the University's part of the CPT program. While the ground school work began concurrent with the regular school term, the beginners will not get training with the ships until the middle of October. All temporary improvements on the new field are expected to be completed by that time.

No date has been set for the completion of the permanent structures, since funds are not yet available. It is hoped, however, that construction will begin on the new hangar by November 1.

Thanks have been going to Mr. Neustadt not only from the University and from students enrolled in the flight training but from Norman businessmen and townspeople as well. With the increasing use of airplanes for quick transportation, more and more persons are expected to fly to Norman for feature attractions at the University including football games, conferences, short courses and conventions. The city will no longer lack the welcome offered by an excellent airport.

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## Campus Review

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ing, museum service, institute of international relations, community leadership, community forums on education, professional writing, book fairs, guidance institute, drum major technique, safety, visual aids, choral music, speech, aerial photographic mapping, geological exploration, gardening and citizenship.

Arrangements are being made this year, directors reported, to adjust short course plans to the convenience of professional groups interested in the special courses. R. Boyd Gunning, assistant director of the Extension Division, is director of short courses.

## Compliment

A tribute to President W. B. Bizzell as a scholar and speaker was paid by the *Wewoka Times-Democrat* following Dr. Bizzell's appearance there as speaker for the Wewoka Public Forum.

Commenting on Dr. Bizzell's discussion of the international situation, the newspaper stated:

Wewoka's year of public forum got off to a brilliant start last night with the scholarly address of Dr. W. B. Bizzell, president of the University of Oklahoma and the short, pointed question and answer period.

Informal, his words coming easily from a great background of reading and travel, Dr. Bizzell spoke for almost an hour on the international picture. First, he sketched the story of the Greek cities of 2,500 years ago, brought his parallel down to date, commented on events of the past twelve months and did a little predicting.

Scholar that he is, Dr. Bizzell stated his position clearly and definitely, admitted by word and tone that it was only an opinion and left every single person in the room free to have his own ideas.

While we enjoyed immensely what Dr. Bizzell said, the thing about the first Public Forum which really impressed us was the attitude and the atmosphere which he brought to the audience and the clear logical reasoning which he used in arriving at his conclusions.

The fine presentation last night was further proof of the wisdom of the Board of Regents of the University of Oklahoma in retaining Dr. Bizzell on the faculty even though some one else will occupy the president's chair in less than a year.

The fine character and the brilliant mind of Dr. Bizzell will thus be an inspiration to young men and women on the University campus and at the same time provide a spark of enthusiasm for older, more mature people throughout the entire state of Oklahoma.

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