

1927 Ford Trimotor 4-AT-A



Forward View/Cabin Area



Forward View / Cabin Front



Forward View / Luggage Area



Cockpit / Controls



Rear View / Cabin Area

One of the most important events in selling aviation to the general public was the entry of Henry Ford into aircraft manufacturing. The Ford automobile was, at the time, the symbol of reliability and it followed in the minds of a good many people that a Ford airplane would be safe to fly. The Ford Trimotor was a rugged, all metal, dependable transport airplane which won a permanent place in aviation history.

The first 4-AT (for Air Transport) made its maiden flight on June 11, 1926. Between its first flight and July 27, 1931, 71 4-AT were built. At the time, it was the largest civil aircraft produced in the United States. Powered by three 200-horsepower (149-kilowatt) Wright Whirlwind J4 radial engines, the 4-AT-A version of up the plane could seat up to eight passengers in its enclosed cabin, although the two pilots were exposed to the elements in their open cockpit. Called the "Tin Goose" because of its corrugated metal fuselage, it was an immediate success.

Later versions were larger and heavier, with three 220 hp Wright J-5 engines, it became a successful 12 to 14 passenger transporter. The 5-AT became the most famous of the five Ford Tri-motors. By the time Ford stopped producing aircraft in 1933, 199 Ford Tri-motors had been built. More than 100 airlines from around the world flew the Ford Tri-motor. They were used on the first transcontinental route and were flown by Transcontinental Air Transport (TAT) later to become known as (TWA.)

In addition to carrying passengers, the Trimotors served other purposes, including carrying freight, crop-dusting, fire fighting, advertising, and exploring remote areas. The military version of the 4-AT, designated the C-4, was used to transport military troops. During its years in production, which ended in 1933, Ford built approximately 80 4-ATs and 117 5-ATs as well as a small number of later varieties and a few military aircraft.

This Museum's Ford Tri-motor is the oldest one in existence and has been flown by Harry Brooks, Ford's Chief Pilot. This is the airplane that was used to fly Charles Lindbergh's mother to Mexico City to see her son. Charles Lindbergh himself also flew this airplane.

Original Specifications:

Ford Trimotor 4-AT-A, Serial No. 10
C-1077 and G-CARG "Niagara" in Canada
First Flight, September 10th, 1927
Original selling price: \$45,475

Maximum speed: 114 mph
Cruising speed: 95 – 100 mph
Landing speed: 59 mph
Climb: 750 ft./ min.
Gliding Ratio: 9.7
Fuel Capacity: 231 gal.
Range: 500 miles
Service Ceiling: 15,000 ft.

Height: 11 ft. 9 in.
Length: 49 ft. 10 in.
Wing span: 74 ft.
Wing cord: 154 in. to 92 in.
Wing area: 785 sq. ft.
Empty Weight: 5,937 lbs.
Gross Weight: 9,300 lbs.
Max. seating (exclusive of crew): 10