


A Brief History of

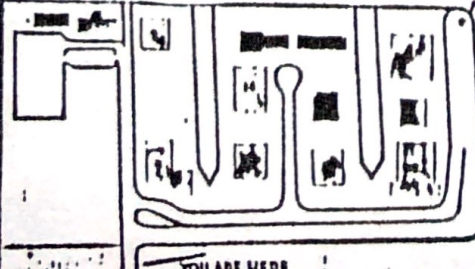
# REID-HILLVIEW AIRPORT

compiled by  
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## REID-HILLVIEW AIRPORT

CONSTRUCTED AND OPERATED BY COUNTY OF SANTA CLARA



YOU ARE HERE

|   |  |   |
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| <p>1 TERMINAL BUILDING<br/>RED BARN RESTAURANT<br/>TIN AIRPORT SHOPPE<br/>DAVID ALLEN INSURANCE</p> <p>1A MAINTENANCE BLDG.<br/>CIVIL AIR PATROL</p> <p>2 SKYLINE MAINTENANCE<br/>ALPS AVIATION</p> <p>3 PROGRESSIVE AVIATION<br/>AIRCRAFT MAINTENANCE<br/>CHEVRON FUEL</p> <p>4 FLYING COUNTRY CLUB<br/>FAA WHITTEN TEST<br/>CENTER</p> <p>5 CAL AIRCRAFT INTERIORS<br/>CollectAir</p> | <p>6</p> <p>7 SKYLINE PROPERTIES<br/>MEDEVAC, INC.<br/>CALIFORNIA AVIATION</p> <p>8 AFRO TRENDS, INC.<br/>THE FLYING QUI SHOP<br/>THE FLYING CLUB<br/>OORDON AVIONICS</p> <p>9 AMELIA REID AVIATION<br/>FLIGHT SCHOOL<br/>RENTALS</p> <p>10 SKYLINE AIR CENTER<br/>AIRZ AVIATION CORP.<br/>TEXACO FUEL<br/>UNICAL FUEL</p> <p>11</p> | <p>12 AIRPORT PROPERTIES<br/>OFFSHORE DATA<br/>CAPTAIN DONB</p> <p>SIA CLARA MECH<br/>JELMAN<br/>JIF LIFE<br/>CRC UNDERGROUND<br/>CONSTRUCTION<br/>AEROTECH<br/>CSF PUBLICATIONS<br/>CAL FORECLOSURE<br/>TRIMARK ADVERTISING<br/>AMCON CONSULTANTS<br/>CHRISTIAN SCIENCE<br/>PRACTITIONERS</p> <p>14 GEN. AVIATION SERVICE<br/>AIRCRAFT SALES</p> |
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## THE PRESENT -

Reid-Hillview Airport encompasses 179 acres of land, houses approximately 25 businesses, and accomplishes nearly 200,000 departures and arrivals per year. Center field is located at Latitude 37°19'58"N, Longitude 121°49'08"W with a magnetic declination of 17°05'. The altitude of the field varies from 121' Mean Sea Level (MSL) to 133' MSL.

Both runways are 3,100 feet long, 75 feet wide, and are capable of handling an aircraft weighing over 8 tons (the runways are stressed to 17,000 pounds).

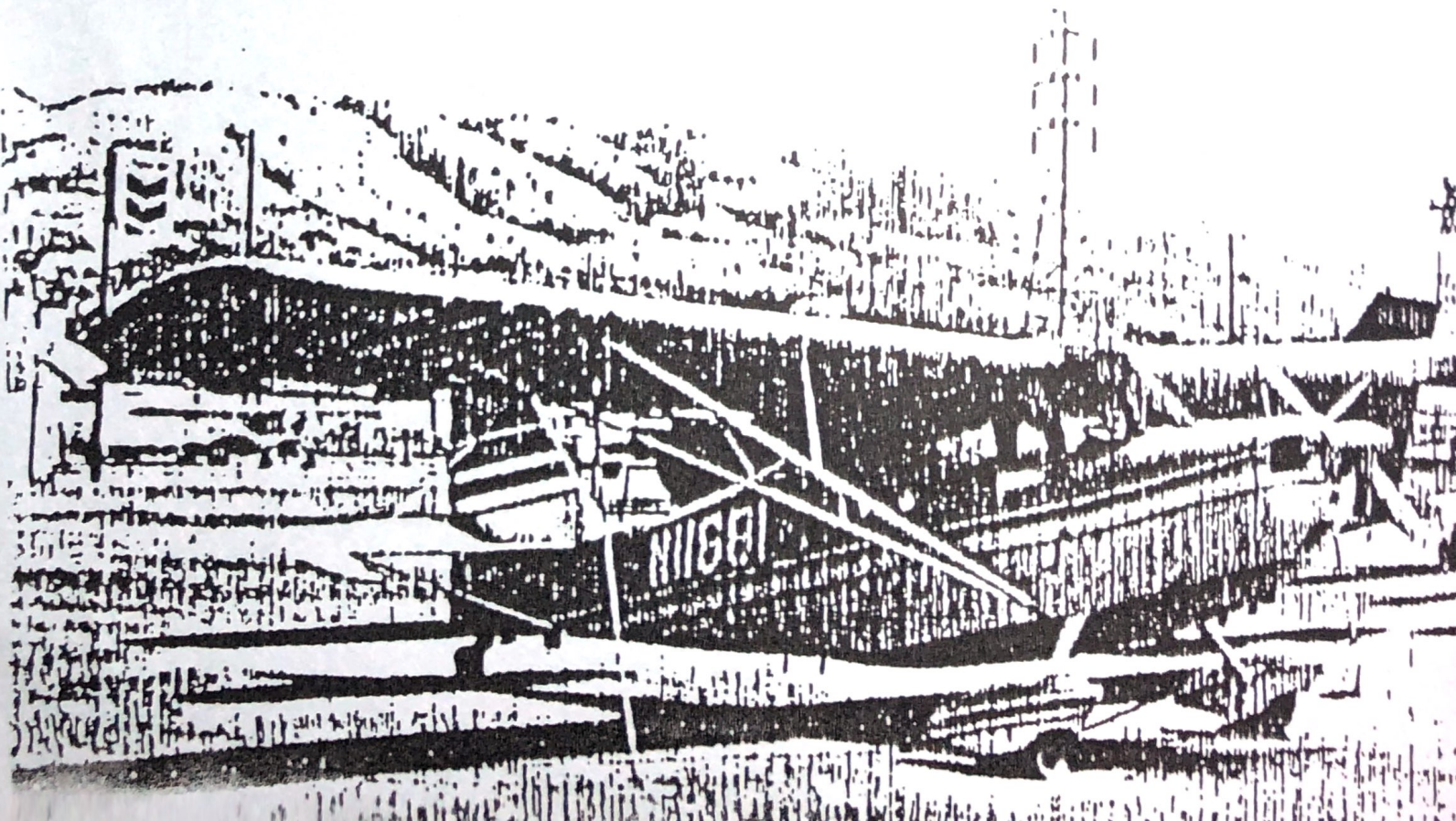
Five hundred and fifty "General Aviation" (privately owned and operated) aircraft are based at Reid-Hillview Airport at this time. Approximately one dozen flight schools currently operate here, serving a local and an international clientele. Several of the aspiring pilots are originally from the Orient or Europe, and have the doubly difficult task of learning English while also trying to acquire their pilot's license.

The most commonly used aircraft for instruction are Cessnas, Taylorcrafts, Piper Cherokees, and the aerobatic Citabrias and Decathlons. Instruction is also provided for twin engine aircraft and helicopters.

## THE PAST

### THE "REID" NAME -

It has been said that some of the first settlers in California had, as their surname, "Reid." Originally trekking over the Sierras with the Donner Party years ago, the Reid name is associated with the first white woman actually born on the land we now call California in 1846 at Sutter Fort. The Reid name passed down through generations until it reached Bob and Cecil Reid, two brothers infatuated with aviation and filled with a dream of building and owning their own airport.





## PREDECESSORS OF REID-HILLVIEW AIRPORT -

The first airport initiated by Bob and Cecil Reid was called "The Garden City Airport." In 1933, with the help of Howard LaMarr (a professional gambler), construction of the airport began. At that time the San Jose area was primarily agricultural and dotted with several small, privately owned, airports. The original construction site was between the current locations of San Antonio and Story Road.

The grand opening of the Garden City airport was held in 1935. The first 3 aircraft based there were a Kreider-Reisner 21, a Kreider-Reisner 34, and a Curtis Robin. At this time the Santa Clara Valley was experiencing only the beginning of a great influx of General Aviation Aircraft.

In 1937, a passage had to be cleared for the Bayshore Freeway (Highway 101). Unfortunately, the Garden City Airport was on that route. The government bought the land. The Reids, undaunted, had to find another area for their airport.

## WWII -

December 7, 1941, Pearl Harbor was attacked and the U. S. became involved in WWII. All airports within a 150 miles of the Pacific were ordered to close and remove all planes to a distance of at least 150 miles inland. Cecil Reid refused this order and met with the authorities. This discussion had 2 results; First, Reid-Hillview was allowed to keep their planes here on the condition that the propellers were removed, along with other critical engine parts, until the end of the war. Second, it was agreed that Reid-Hillview would be allowed to open 24 hours after the war ended and remain open around the clock.

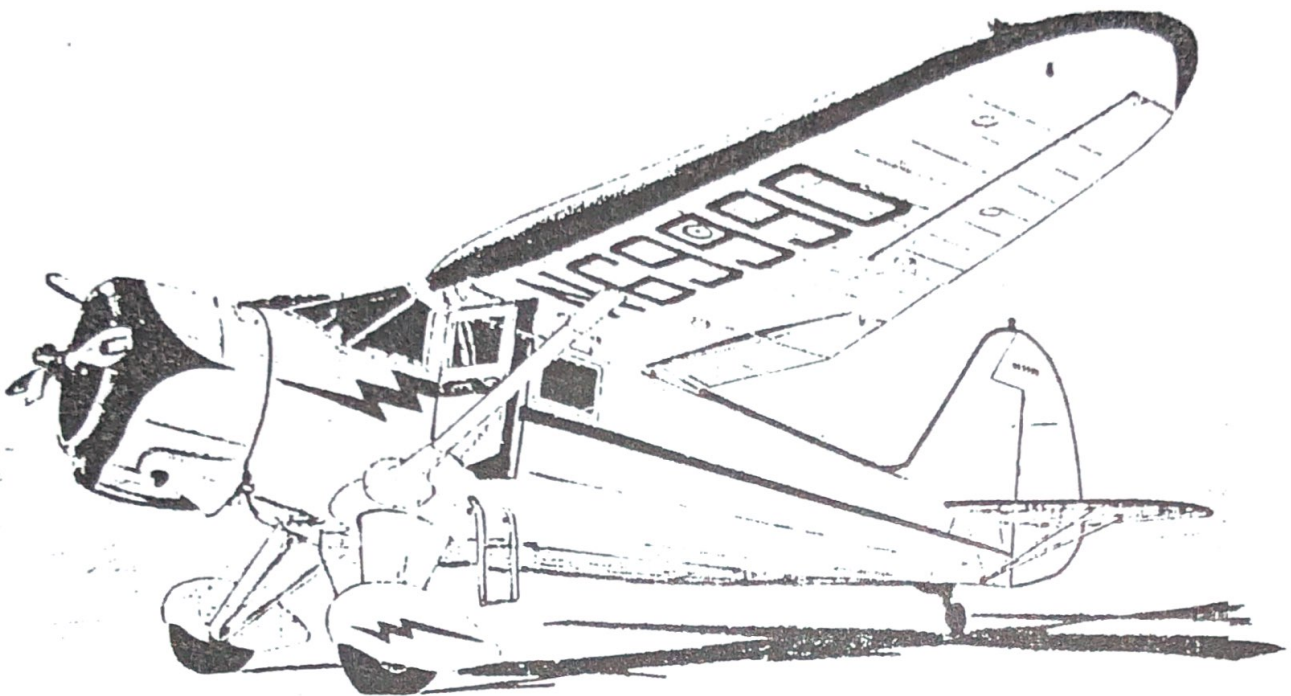
August 14, 1945, the end of WWII, it was decided that only commercial and military airports would be allowed to reopen, despite the previous agreement. The Reids requested a meeting with the Major General in San Francisco. During the meeting, "...an altercation ensued," and Reid-Hillview was allowed to open as per the prior agreement. Reid-Hillview was then the first operational General Aviation airport to legally open after the war. This reopening marked the beginning of a great influx of people, business, and aircraft into the Santa Clara Valley.





In 1939, with the help of Earl ("Bud") Heple (of Heple Construction) and Joe Lumello (of San Jose Steel), the Reids and LaMarr began ground breaking at the sight of their new airport. The surrounding area was predominantly dairy farming, except to the southeast where the "Hillview" golf course existed. The Reids incorporated the golf course name into their new airport, so originating the name "Reid-Hillview."

Upon the opening of Reid-Hillview airport, the first to land here was Earl Heple in his Kreider-Reisner 34 B1-plane. He landed on a single dirt air strip, surrounded by the agricultural Santa Clara Valley. The Reid's Kreider-Reisner 34 B1-plane was one of the seventeen planes originally based here.



In 1946, a paved runway was added to Reid-Hillview Airport. In 1950, the famous Goodyear Race was held. Reid-Hillview expanded during these years from 17 aircraft to 17 Fixed Base Operators. The Planes began to get bigger. In the early 1960's improvements were badly needed. The land was sold to Santa Clara County and leased by the airport until 1965. The County then took over and a second paved runway was added. In October of 1967 the Reid-Hillview Air Traffic Control Tower became operational.

In the early 1960's, private houses were under construction near the borders of the airport. Steps were taken to maintain a buffer zone around the airport. The City Council developed Ocala Park as a buffer zone at that time. In 1971, the Hillview Golf Course was replaced by an aviation safe building complex with fortified roof tops and underground wiring known as the Eastridge Mall. In 1980, Amelia Reid and Velma Million successfully urged the city of San Jose to develop a buffer zone on the northeast side of the airport, now known as Lake Cunningham.

In October of 1989, Reid-Hillview airport pilots and aircraft made over 150 flights and air lifted approximately 250,000 pounds of necessary goods to the Loma Prieta Earthquake victims in and near Watsonville. The local businesses and neighbors around Reid-Hillview were responsible for donating most of these goods.

Amelia Reid personally carries on the Reid name and love of aviation even today.