



Piper Aviation Museum Foundation

November 18, 1999

[REDACTED]
Dear Mike:

I finally have had time to research the history on your Ponca City built Cub. It was built in about the middle of the Ponca City production but was not sold until the plant closed in mid 1947.

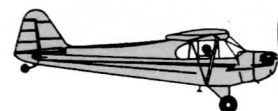
I am enclosing a copy of the factory and sale record on 3496N. I am also enclosing a write-up on the postwar bust which will clarify why your Cub was built in January 1947 but not sold until the end of June.

If you are not a member of our museum, I am enclosing a membership application and we invite you to join. We normally request a small donation to cover our research, printing and postage expenses.

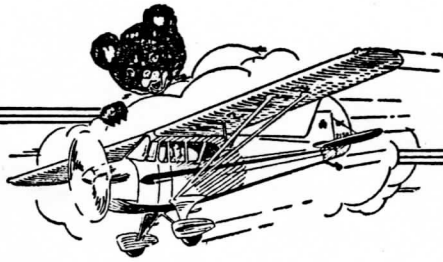
Sincerely,

Harry P. Mutter
Historian, Piper Aviation Museum

ONE PIPER WAY, LOCK HAVEN, PA 17745
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PIPER AIRCRAFT Corporation



No. F 93231

CABLE ADDRESS: CUB

~~POCAHONTAS~~ **PONCA CITY OKLA.**

DATE **June 30, 1947**
SHIPPED TO

- SOLD TO • **Smyer Aircraft Sales and Service**
- **Municipal Airport**
 - **Ponca City, Oklahoma**

YOUR P. O. NO. & DATE		MODEL NO.	NC NUMBER	SERIAL NO.	SHIPPED VIA	PRIORITY	FORM	TERMS
		J3	3496N	22723	Flyaway			Cash
ITEM	QUANTITY		PART NUMBER	DESCRIPTION	ACCOUNT NO.	UNIT	AMOUNT	
	ORDERED	SHIPPED						
			85253-00	J3 Cub Special less 25%			\$2295.00 <u>573.75</u>	
				Net Airplane Cost	040001		1721.25	
				Advertising Charge 1% of Net Cost	200662		17.21	
				Registration Fee Lien: Yes ___ No ___	025060			
				Flyaway Delivery _____ miles @ _____	080050			
				Ponca City Delivery	041101		<u>50.00</u>	
				Total			1788.46	
				Less Deposit				
				Check Received			1508.46	
				Less Trade Allowance			<u>200.00</u>	
				Balance (to be applied against \$400 credit)			<u>80.00</u>	
				Licensed in Name of, <u>Smyer</u>				
				Address,				

MERCHANDISE SHIPPED ACCORDING TO ORDER CANNOT BE RETURNED WITHOUT PERMISSION
ALL CLAIMS FOR DAMAGES SHOULD BE MADE DIRECT TO TRANSPORTATION COMPANY
MATERIAL HEREON HAS BEEN MADE IN CONFORMANCE WITH ALL FEDERAL WAGE AND HOUR LAWS.

FIRST PANCA CITY BUILT CUB

S/N	NC	Delivery Date	(Dist.) To Whom
7701	21991	77500	Aug. 16, 1946 Harte Flying Serv. Leon S. Dittus
7702	21992	77502	Aug. 16, 1946 Harte Flying J. J. Brooks & Otis Dutton
7703	21993	77501	Aug. 23, 1946 Smyer Aircraft Raymond H. Reed
7704	21994	77504	Aug. 26, 1946 Boyd Aero Service
7705	21995	77503	Aug. 26, 1946 Boyd Aero Service
7706	21996	77506	Aug. 26, 1946 Harte Flying Norman Buchler
7707	21997	77505	Aug. 23, 1946 Smyer Aircraft William Eulberg
7708	21998	77507	Aug. 23, 1946 Smyer Aircraft Tom E. Smyer
7709	21999	77508	Aug. 23, 1946 Smyer Aircraft Jerry Johnson
7710	22000	77513	Aug. 30, 1946 Smyer Aircraft Tom E. Smyer
7711	22001	77511	Aug. 30, 1946 Smyer Aircraft Tom E. Smyer
7712	22002	77510	Aug. 30, 1946 Smyer Aircraft Tom E. Smyer
7713	22003	77515	Aug. 31, 1946 Mountain States
7714	22004	77512	Aug. 30, 1946 Smyer Aircraft Tom E. Smyer
7715	22005	77520	Sept. 4, 1946 Boyd Aero Serv.
7716	22006	77514	Aug. 30, 1946 Smyer Aircraft Carl E. Henry
7717	22007	77509	Aug. 30, 1946 Smyer Aircraft Tom E. Smyer
7718	22008	77516	Aug. 31, 1946 Mountain States
7719	22009	77517	Sept. 4, 1946 Boyd Aero Serv.
7720	22010	77518	Aug. 31, 1946 Harte Flying
7721	22011	77523	Sept. 6, 1946 Aircraft Sales Co.

8426	✓ 22716	3491 N	Aug. 28, 1947	V.O.C.
8427	22717	Expert	Feb. 3, 1947	P.A.C.
8428	22718	Expert	Feb. 4, 1947	P.A.C.
8429	✓ 22719	3492 N	Aug. 28, 1947	P.A.C.
8430	✓ 22720	3493 N	Oct. 21, 1947	Barr
8431	x 22721	3494 N	July 19, 1947	P.A.C. P.A.C.
8432	✓ 22722	3497 N	Aug. 28, 1947	P.A.C.
8433	22723	3496 N	June 30, 1947	Smyer
8434	✓ 22724	3498 N	Sept. 2, 1947	B.F. Hines
8435	✓ 22725	3499 N	July 21, 1947	Miss Manned
8436	22726	Expert	Feb. 4, 1947	P.A.C.
8437	22727	Expert	Feb. 4, 1947	P.A.C.
8438	22728	3500 N	June 30, 1947	Smyer
8439	x 22729	3501 N	July 10, 1947	P.A.C.
8440	✓ 22730	3495 N	July 29, 1947	James Aircraft
8441	✓ 22731	3503 N	July 25, 1947	V.O.C.
8442	✓ 22732	3502 N	July 31, 1947	P.A.C.
8443	22733	3504 N	June 7, 1947	P.A.C.
8444	✓ 22734	3505 N	July 25, 1947	V.O.C.
8445	22735	3506 N	Feb. 13, 1947	Wallace
8446	22736	3507 N	June 5, 1947	Aircraft Sales
8447	x 22737	3508 N	July 16, 1947	P.A.C.
8448	x 22738	3509 N	July 18, 1947	P.A.C.
8449	22739	3514 N	June 9, 1947	St. Louis
8450	22740	3511 N	June 9, 1947	St. Louis

YOUR CUB

8869	23159	18417	Apr. 14, 1947	Gillis	
8870	23160	78418	Apr. 11, 1947	Des Moines	
8871	23161	78419	Apr. 15, 1947	Aircraft Sales	
8872	23162	78420	Apr. 21, 1947	P.A.C. Aircraft Sales	
8873	23163	78421	Apr. 15, 1947	P.A.C.	
8874	23164	78422	Apr. 19, 1947	P.A.C.	
8875	23165	78423	Apr. 25, 1947	Burnham	
8876	23166	78424	June 11, 1947	P.A.C.	
8877	23167	78425	June 10, 1947	Midwest	
8878	23168	78426	June 11, 1947	P.A.C.	
8879	23169	78427	June 21, 1947	P.A.C.	Stann's demo.
8880	23170	78428	June 12, 1947	P.A.C.	
8881	23171	78430	June 12, 1947	P.A.C.	
8882	23172	78429	June 12, 1947	P.A.C.	
8883	23173	78431	Apr. 14, 1947	PAC	Lock Haven
8884	23174	78432	June 30, 1947	P.A.C.	
8885	23175	78433	June 14, 1947	P.A.C.	
8886	23176	78434	June 30, 1947	P.A.C.	
8887	23177	78435	Aug. 9, 1947	Bradshaw Flying Serv.	
8888	23178	78436	June 13, 1947	P.A.C.	
8889	23179	78437	March 18, 1947	Midwest Airway, Inc.	
8890	23180	78438	March 18, 1947	Midwest Airway, Inc.	
8891	23181	78439	June 30, 1947	P.A.C.	
8892	23182				
8893	23183				

LAST POWER
CITY BUILT
CUB

6

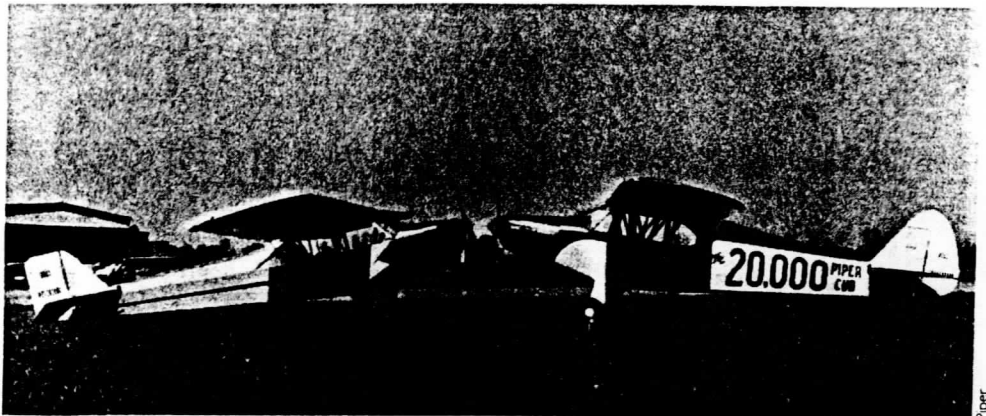
Postwar boom and bust Old and new models

As soon as a return to civil airplane production was allowed late in 1945, the principal builders of prewar lightplanes resumed production of their prewar models almost without change. Piper started postwar production with the J-3 and developed two new models, the PA-11 and PA-12, from prewar designs. In 1948 the PA-14 evolved from the PA-12.

Boom

Business boomed for everybody for a while, and even the release of war-surplus equivalents of the Pipers, Taylorcrafts, and Aeroncas at near-junk prices seemed to have no affect on the flood of factory-new lightplanes (Fig. 6-1). Piper, by far the leader in the movement, produced a total of 7773 civil lightplanes in 1946 in spite of a disastrous Lock Haven flood that destroyed many unfinished airplanes and extensive supplies of instruments and materials. Piper eagerly publicized milestones of production (Figs. 6-2, 6-3).

Demand for Piper products was so great that a new factory was set up at Ponca City, Oklahoma, to provide additional manufacturing capability, and Cub Aircraft in Canada built a specialized version of the J-3 there. Piper also built a number of experimental prototypes aimed at the civil market, but none of these airplanes reached production. Demand for the old J-3 and the new PA-11 and PA-12 provided all the business that Piper could handle.



6-3 Another milestone, the 20,000th Cub, a PA-12 with Piper's second use of the registration number NC20000, posed with E-2 NC15336, C/N 254.

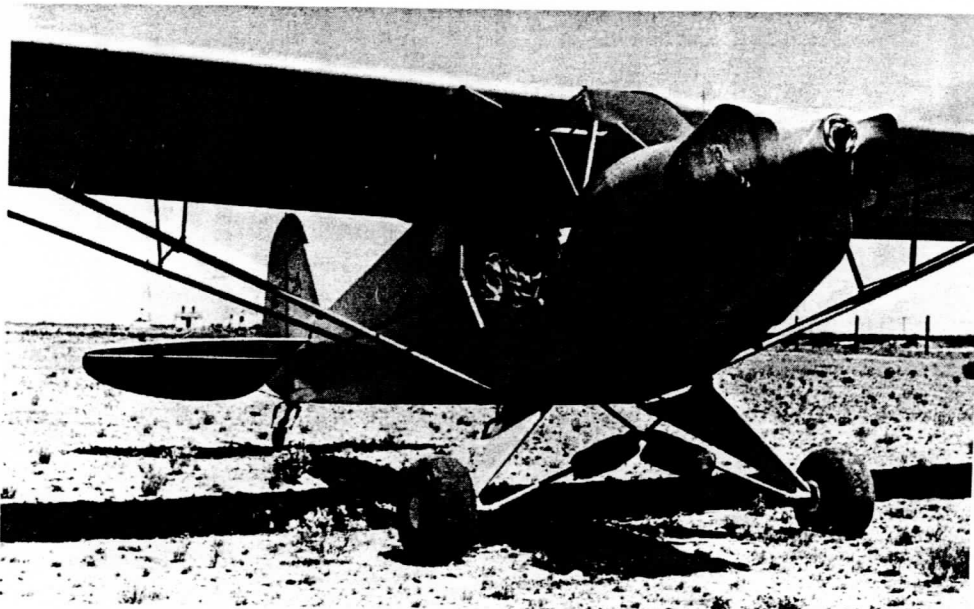
Collapse

Postwar lightplane production soon saturated the existing domestic and export market and sales fell almost to zero by early 1947. By March, the industry had virtually collapsed, with many manufacturers closing their doors forever. Piper, whose payroll was 2607 in February, began cutting back in April. Two-thirds were cut by June, and the Ponca City plant was closed. New York bankers that now controlled the company ceased production at the Lock Haven plant in July but continued an effort to sell on-hand airplanes and unload as much of the materials inventory as possible. By year's end, the payroll was 157.

Recovery

Following a major management shakeup forced by the bankers, the Lock Haven plant reopened to build and sell a new model, the Piper PA-15 "Vagabond," a bare-bones side-by-side two-seater with a 65-hp Lycoming O-145, shortened J-3 wings, and the rest of the airframe built from on-hand materials. The J-3 was dropped from the Piper product line, but sales of the PA-11 and 12 continued and the PA-14 was certificated and put into production.

The postwar J-3 Cub. Outwardly, the postwar J-3 Cub was virtually identical to the 1941 J-3C-65 model: yellow paint, lightning streak, Teddy Bear logo on the tail, and all. Structural improvements were the metal wing spars, the one-piece windshield of the L-4H, a wider skylight like that of the O-59, and a neater carburetor air filter than that of the L-4H (Fig. 6-4). The wingtip bows remained wood, however, and would remain so for all subsequent Cub



Don Downie

6-4 Close-up of a 1946 J-3C-65 shows the main external differences from the prewar J-3: a one-piece windshield and a carburetor air filter that slopes with the cowling instead of projecting forward of it as on the wartime L-4H.

models through the PA-18 Super Cub. The J-3 was still the bare-minimum airplane, however, devoid of an electrical system, and sold for \$2195.

In addition to these changes, which are not discernible at a distance, postwar J-3s can be identified by five-digit registration numbers above 42050 or by four-digit numbers followed by a suffix letter.

Fly-away delivery of J-3s was a great opportunity for low-time commercial pilots and Piper employees who wanted to build up their hours and experience for free, plus expenses. Such pilots eagerly came from as far as the West Coast (Fig. 6-5).

Only the J-3C-65 was produced, the more powerful C-85 and C-90 engines added to ATC A-691 were not production installations.

Gross weight was the same 1220 pounds, and the C/Ns continued the prewar J-3 and wartime L-4 C/N series. C/Ns for the 1190 J-3s built at Ponca City started at 21991. This left a gap of 912 C/Ns from the last one assigned to a Lock Haven J-3.

The last of 20,205 J-3s, including their Canadian and military variants, was C/N 23180, NC78439, rolled out at Ponca City on March 4, 1947.

The Cub Prospector. After the war, Cub Aircraft, the Piper subsidiary in Canada, undertook the manufacture of J-3C-65s adapted to Canadian conditions. Seventeen of these were special variants equipped for Canadian bush