

HEROES OF AVIATION



Model 33 Little Dipper Replica N189SE

“LITTLE DIPPER, Aerial Flying Motorcycle & Air Trooper” are significant names describing the original aircraft designed by John Thorp. John was educated at Lockford,

California and the Boeing School of Aeronautics in Oakland, California. He worked on the final assembly line of the Boeing 247 before returning to the Boeing school as an instructor and began designing personal aircraft. John became Assistant Preliminary Design Engineer for Lockheed and was responsible for the preliminary design of the naval patrol bomber, the P2V “Neptune”. The P2V, in 1946 completed an unrefueled distance of 11,236 statute mile record that stood, until a Boeing B-52H Stratofortress based at Minot Air Force Base, North Dakota broke that record in 1962.

The Lockheed Model 33 Little dipper was one of Thorp’s original private venture single-seat monoplanes, built by Lockheed at Burbank, California. Lockheed’s Vega subsidiary made the agreement in April 1944, to build the “Little Dipper” and gained the interest of the United States Army looking for an alternative to paratroop deployments in placing special troops behind enemy lines with a method that would reduce cost during wartime materials restrictions and authorized the building of two prototypes. The U.S. Army concept envisioned the Little Dipper as an aerial flying motorcycle under the name “Air Trooper”. The first flight in August 1944 was successful but soon after touring of Army bases with the Little Dipper the Army had lost interest.

Lockheed intended to market the Little Dipper as a single-seat, inexpensive light, low-wing cantilever monoplane with a fixed nose-wheel landing gear, powered by a 50 hp (37 kW) Franklin 2A4-49 engine with STOL performance. The Maximum speed was 100 mph, with a service ceiling of 16,000 ft., and take off distance in 100 ft. with a gross weight of 725 lb. With the lack of interest in the prototype development both planes were scrapped in January 1947.

John Thorp made a significant contribution to aircraft design in his lifetime. John started flying in 1929 and by 1946 had over 600 flight hours in 62 different aircraft types and by 1953, fifteen light aircraft designs are attributed to John Thorp. The legacy of Thorp’s development of light aircraft design had a strong influence on Paul Poberezy when in 1953 Poberezy founded the Experimental Aircraft Association (EAA) and assumed the duties of President and CEO with its headquarters located in the basement of his home before the association’s first headquarters was built in Milwaukee, Wisconsin. Since its inception it has grown internationally with over 180,000 members with nearly 1,000 chapters, worldwide with its current base in Oshkosh, Wisconsin.



Jack & Allen



Jack, Allen & Robert

Allen Eke, Jack Smith and Robert Heavirland are chapter members of EAA 237 located at the Anoka County-Blaine, Minnesota Airport (Janes Field). Allen developed an interest in the Little Dipper in 1962 and considered this to be a project that looked like a real aircraft rather than the ultra-lite crafts that were being produced. Based on

The Thorp specifications and a few photos of the original Little Dipper, Allen began sketching designs and developed a team of about 20, EAA members and colleagues that had a desire to see a replica of the Little Dipper fly again. Meetings were held every Thursday to develop the project that eventually produced an FAA approved, **2014 Lockheed Model 33 Little Dipper Replica N189SE**. A Lycoming O-145-B2 engine rated at 65 hp (48 kW) gives the N189SE added horsepower over the Thorp model. The “B” model was the major production model produced in 1938 to the late 40s.

First test: **April 21, 2014** Test pilot Jack Smith. Second test: **May 5, 2014** Test pilot Jack Smith. Test flight: **June 10, 2014** (Flight aborted) First runway flight: **Aug 22, 2014** Test pilot Robert Heavirland. First High Flight: **Aug 26, 2014** Test pilot Robert Heavirland.

