

## Lockheed Constellation—the “Connie”

**Current Status:** Preventative maintenance is being performed until the FAA approved Maintenance Plan is in place. Spring and Fall of 2010 engine runs were performed with a four engine run during our Fall Hangar dance event. Weather permitting, engines runs are planned to resume in early 2011. The status of its return to the air/Airshows will be added after the Maintenance Plan is started and a projected date can be determined.

### NC6937 History:

- 1957—One of the last three Connies built, originally an H model, but held in storage at Burbank for 2 years due to an order cancellation. (856 total built)
- 1959—Delivered to Slick Airways in California, 9/17/59—Note this hangar was the location of Slick Airways in Kansas City at one time
- Our Connie served as a cargo plane (hailed parts for the military, race horses, bug sprayer, etc.--still has its “H” cargo doors) until it retired in 1975 and went to Falcon Field, Mesa, Arizona
- 1986—Aviation enthusiasts Larry Brown and Dick McMahon were talking about Connies and Dick mentioned he thought it would be great to restore a Constellation and fly it to Airshows. That motivated Larry Brown to go out and find one.
- 1986—Save-a-Connie obtained as a donation from Paul Pristo of Arizona who became a Charter Member and is an ex officio member of the Board of Directors. Paul had the plane because one day he went to an airplane auction. His wife’s last words were, “Don’t buy anything.” During the auction the Connie came up on the block, bidding was started at \$40,000. The auctioneer kept dropping the starting bid until it was at \$5,000. Paul told a buddy, “I’ll get the bidding started,” and bid \$4,000. It was the only bid, so he had to go home and tell his wife he not only bought an airplane, he bought one of the biggest there!
- 1986—Co-founders Larry and Dick were joined by a number of other aviation enthusiasts including then current and former TWA employees and began the undertaking. Over a dozen members, some in shifts, spent nine weeks in Mesa, Arizona making it flyable. It was ferried to KC July 15, 1986
- 1987-88--Major overhaul performed, converted to a Super-G and aircraft painted in 1950’s era TWA color scheme less TWA titles, due to objections raised by TWA lawyers
- 1988--Formally dedicated July 9
- 1990-91--Extended radar nose installed December 1990 - January 1991 during annual inspection
- 1996--TWA titles replaced SAC titles
- 2000--SAC renamed Airline History Museum April
- 2000—Complete paint job in TWA livery donated by TWA for appearances at their 75<sup>th</sup> Anniversary celebrations
- 2002-03--Interior completely renovated winter 2002-2003

- Aircraft is the only airworthy civilian Constellation as all others are ex-military
- Coach seats (green) are made to look like originals but are not.
- Material on First Class (yellow) seats and window curtains are made of authentic material. The original mill in France was contacted, they re-milled from samples provided and donated all the material.
- Cabin configuration is a mix of Connie interiors and not set-up as the originals. Lavatories are in the authentic location. Galley would have been more mid-ship. Connies loaded in the rear, through First Class (located in back because it was smoother and less noise behind the props), lounge in just about the correct area
- Stats:
  - 1) Tip Tanks-609 gallons each, 3900 pounds
  - 2) Total fuel capacity 7,020 gallons with tip tanks
  - 3) Maximum range 4,815 miles
  - 4) Uses 100 low lead fuel