



The Mid-America Council will be participating in a unique opportunity, commemorating a centennial and making history.

During the week of September 7th, the first light general aviation private aircraft will lift off from Republic Airport outside of Farmingdale, NY on Long Island and begin the first of 15 segments retracing the route of the US Post Office's bold but highly risky plan to fly the mail coast-to-coast in 1920. Aboard that airplane will be the first of some sixteen bundles of commemorative postcards specific to the participating cities in 1920. Postcards will be addressed by Scouts to their siblings, or parents, or teachers, troop or pack leaders, and of course, to the Scout him or herself if they wish. We in the Mid-America Council are fortunate to be able to participate as one of the 16 original cities that comprised the Transcontinental Airmail system.

At each of the sixteen airfields along the 2,650 miles route across Pennsylvania, Ohio, Indiana, Illinois, Nebraska and points West, more postcards, in bundles of 300+, will be added to the plane's mailbags. By the time the last volunteer pilot lands in Concord, California, we anticipate having some 5,000 postcards to deliver to the Postmaster on the exact time, day and location his predecessor accepted the first airmail in 1920.

Once all the cards we've collected along the route arrive in San Francisco, they will be handed over to the postmaster general for special cancellation and mailed to the designated recipients, in the process creating what we hope will become a special keepsake to be passed down to future generations.

*It turns out that Omaha played a key role in that inaugural event but, the city's link to early aviation also includes a short-lived aspiration to become the global center for aircraft development. For a brief moment in time, the city aspired to be what Wichita and Seattle are today and even attracted one of the world's leading aeronautical designers, Giuseppe Bellanca as a result of its experience with servicing the airmail. In fact, several of the most famous airmail pilots lived in Omaha. "Wild Bill" Hopson's home is still standing on North 60th St. in the Benson area.*

### **This is where we need your help:**

We want the Scouts and Adult Leaders to address them to whomever they wish: themselves, family, friends, mentors, people they respect. We ask them to also affix a postage stamp (.35 cents) - the greater the variety the better for historic value – but DO NOT MAIL THEM. Instead, we will collect them and include them in the mailbag on the inbound flight from Iowa City. Using **Millard Airport** as the exchange point, another volunteer pilot will fly on to North Platte, where more postcards will be added, and continue the stops until reaching the San Francisco Bay area.

**See back for how you can participate in this historic event.**

## How can we participate?

Contact [mac@scouting.org](mailto:mac@scouting.org) to make arrangements to get your postcards. (first come first serve basis) Have your Scouts address the post cards and affix a .35 cent stamp to each card. You will then need to return the post cards to the Durham Scout Center **BY** September 1<sup>st</sup>. Our “contingent” post cards will be loaded onto an aircraft at Millard Airport on Wednesday, September 9<sup>th</sup> at 12:15 p.m. Scouts in full uniform are welcome to join us at that time if they happen to have no school and be available. More information will be given to units when the postcards are distributed.

## FOLLOW THE FLIGHTS LIVE

<http://airmail100.com/relay.php>

[AirMail100.com](http://AirMail100.com) website.

Using the landmarks described in the 1921 “*Pilots’ Directions New York - San Francisco*,” the entire 2,560 mile route from Long Island to San Francisco. Using Google Earth, as many of the landmarks as are still visible - many of the railroad beds in the East have long been abandoned. The map and drop down were to around 6,000 feet so it resembles the view out the cockpit of a modern airplane. The screen capture then resulting in “flight” from yellow push pin to yellow push pin. The entire route has been recorded from New York to Omaha. You can view each segment on the AirMail100 Flight Sims channel on Youtube. The estimated speed over each segment is somewhere just below Mach 3!

<https://www.youtube.com/playlist?list=PLAiH2JFTcMthyquCOYHL7oEFaquiX6u2D>

