

May 2, 2008

Dear Sir or Madam:

I tried sending this via e-mail.. But it came back both times. So will try snail mail.
Will print out the photos to enclose.

Karen Ravencroft

Juliaetta, ID

Subject: 1949 blizzard pictures enclosed.

Enclosed you will find a few pictures of the snow blizzard.
Floyd was my father, I was a whole 6 years old so only remember some of the stories
being told. These pictures and stories are from Grant, Nebraska
Hope you find the pictures and stories interesting.

Floyd Pankonin was owner of those aircraft in those pictures and he himself in one of them. The
one you can see a windmill in, is a post card. Says "Blizzard Jan 1949 Worst since 1872.

He told of strapping 25 gallon propane tanks to the bottom of his J-3 cub and putting groceries in
gunny sacks in the back seat. He would take these out to the farmers in need of such items.
When he got their attention he would fly low over the site and hand drop the gunny sacks into the
snow.. With the propane tanks he would cut away the ropes holding them. He told of one time
the tank going under the snow about 1/4 mile. Those receiving the propane
usually would start at the hole where it entered and dig around 3 to 6 feet to reach the tank. This
one time it went so far Floyd could see the bump of where it stopped. And took quite a time to
get those on the ground to under stand that the wing over he was doing was actually to point to
the propane tank!!

Another story he told; was landing in a corral... There was a 12 year old girl in dire need of a
hospital. He put the child in the back seat. Set a post about 3 feet from the fence with the idea if
he didn't make it out, he would hit the post and bounce over the fence saving damage to his
plane. He then had the folks hold the tail of the plane up higher then the opposing fence until he
got speed up and tell them to let go... He said he made it out of that corral with
room to spare!! Really much to his own surprise.

Another time he landed to take a heart attack victim to the hospital. The wife was quite angry
with him when he grabbed a horses saddle cinch to cinch the gent back into the seat, as he was
falling on the plane controls. She complained that Floyd was treating her husband like a animal.

And to make matters worse Floyd would not let her go with him, as the plane is only a two seater, and he needed to keep the plane as light as possible..

I know of three times on taking off that winter he hit snow banks and laid that poor J-3 over on her back. His brother-in-law would bring out his wheat hauling truck and pull it back up on its wheels. Each time the prop was broke (it was wood) and the horizontal stabilizer bent. He would straighten it and put on a new prop and take off to continue his deliveries.



After the 3rd time of laying it on its back. The kid that worked for him painted the name "Miss Ruthless" on the cowling.
Never again did she go over on her back.