

## NAME THAT PLANE

### **GRUMMAN "WIDGEON" G-44, 44-A, ATC # 734 4-5-41**

The Popular Grumman "Widgeon" followed Grumman's larger G-21 Grumman Goose powered with two 450 hp Pratt Whitney radial engines, first produced in 1937. A real work horse, it was a success from the start. There was a popular demand for a scaled down version of the G-21, with less than half the horsepower, (with 2-200 hp Ranger In line engines). The Widgeon G-44 was a typical Grumman with all the good characteristics. It was first flown June, 1940 and deliveries to the U S Coast Guard by 1945 (25) and 132 to the Navy, with 15 of them going to England under Lend-Lease. The U S Army Air Corps acquired 16 of the "Widgeons" from civilian owners. 75 of the postwar G-44-A "Widgeons" were built and the last delivered in 1949. Without competition the G-44-A was in great demand with many (most) converted to more modern engines.

With the Ranger engines empty weight 3050 #, gross weight 4500 #. Max speed claimed 150 mph at 3000 ft. Cruise speed at 6000, 135 mph.. landing speed 62 mph with 45 deg. Flaps. (hydraulic control), 15 deg. for take off. The hydraulic accuated land gear folded into the side of the fuselage. The standard propellers were wood, which would not fly the airplane on one engine. Metal props were desirable but the controllable propeller was preferred. The French built 40 "Widgeons" from 1949 to 1952 after buying rights.

After WW-2, Champion Paper Co., near Asheville, NC, had a Widgeon and used around Western North Carolina lakes. My brother, an avid fisherman and pilot was fishing on Lake James near Morganton, NC when the Champion paper Widgeon was observed practicing landings. One landing the aircraft began porposing badly and soon plunging headlong in the lake. My brother quickly boated to the sinking airplane. The pilot was rescued as the upside down wreckage went to the bottom of the lake. The "Widgeon" was known for occasionally porposing uncontrollably.

The Grumman Widgeon was a fun airplane to fly, particularly if one had a good instructor as I did at Cherry Point Marine Station in post war years checking out in the G-44-A. (we didn't do any porposing!)

*Baldo Patton*

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