

St. Louis Pioneer Air Mail, October 4 - 8, 1911

The book, *City of Flight*, about the history of aviation in St. Louis, MO, shows the relevance of St. Louis in lighter-than-air flights starting with balloon flights in the 1830s to space explorations in the 1960s. The Centennial Week celebration in 1909 was full of balloon flights, under the sponsorship of the St. Louis Aero Club, chartered in 1907, just three years after the Wright Brothers flight at Kitty Hawk, NC. So, it was that the Aero Club's President, Albert Bond Lambert, for whom the current St. Louis airport is named, himself a pilot, worked with St. Louis Postmaster, Thomas Akins, and arranged to have mail carried by air each day during the 1911 meet using special air meet cancels. This "Air Meet" or "aerial activities" was to be the main feature of "Festival Week" which included the Veiled Prophet Parade and Ball, a marathon foot race, a national automobile show in Forest Park, and motorboat races on the Mississippi River, as some of the main highlights.

Purpose: The purpose of this exhibit is to show the dates, rates, and uses for the five days of posted mail for the meet. Mail posted on October 7 for the hydroplane flight was postponed until the next day, October 8.

Exhibit Plan: Background information is followed by all cancellation dates shown starting with October 4th. Many variations in postage and uses are shown and followed by a postlude. The story is chronological. Black headings are used to introduce new chapters and sub-chapters. Gray otherwise.

Important items are mounted on a salmon background.

Outline: Chapter 1 – First Day of Meet, October 4
Chapter 2 - Second Day of Meet, October 5
Chapter 3 – Third Day of Meet, October 6
Chapter 4 – Fourth Day of Meet, October 7
Chapter 5 – Hydro-Plane Mail
Chapter 6 - Postlude

The pamphlet to the right was prepared for the 1909 Aero Club of St. Louis air events in conjunction with the 1909 Centennial Celebration of St. Louis. It included both balloon flights and Heavier-Than-Air machine events, thus putting St. Louis in line to fly mail on these planes two years later, under the leadership of President Albert Bond Lambert.

**Spherical Balloon, Dirigible Balloon
and Heavier-Than-Air
Machine Contests**

To be Conducted Under the Auspices of the
Aero Club of St. Louis in Conjunction
with the St. Louis Centennial
Celebration.

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