

# Beechcraft

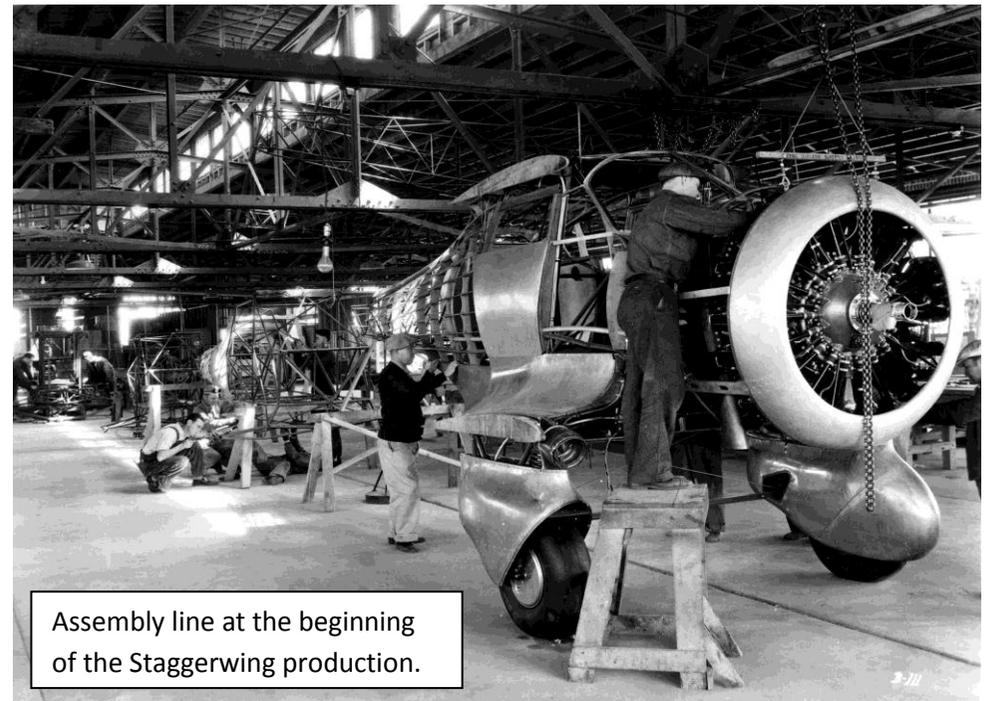
## STAGGERWING BEECHCRAFT Model 17

### Historical Background

During the depression Walter H. Beech (1891-1950) an aircraft executive, considered as one of the founders of the aircraft industry in Wichita, Kansas, and an airplane designer T.A. Wells built the first Staggerwing specifically for the business executive. Powerful and fast, it flew for the first time on November 4, 1932, setting the standard for private passenger airplanes for many years to come. It was the Learjet of the 1930's!!! Even Howard Hughes owned one!

The Beechcraft model 17 commonly referred to as the Staggerwing, due to the wings positioned in a negative stagger. The upper wing is behind the lower; a design that was supposed to increase visibility, improve control at all speeds and reduce stall possibilities. The retractable landing gear was also an uncommon feature for that time; it reduced wind resistance and allowed emergency belly landings, considered as an added safety measure. It was combined with streamlining and light weight materials. The F-17 was a specially redesigned model by W.Beech, featuring a lengthened fuselage that improved the aircraft's landing characteristics. The ailerons were relocated on the upper wings, eliminating any interference with the air flow over the flaps. A foot-operated brake was applied that was synchronized with the rudder pedals. This gave impressive performance compared to other bi-planes and made it a favorite also among pilots—its use of powerful radial engines (ranging from 225 to 710 horsepower) made it faster than most military aircraft of the era.

Its speed/ high performance made it also popular in air races in the 1930's. An early version of Model 17 won the 1933 Texaco Trophy Race. In 1935, a British diplomat, Capt. H.L Farquhar, successfully flew around the world in a Model B17R. Louise Thaden and Blanche Noyes, piloting a Model C17R, together won the prestigious Bendix Trophy Race in 1936. The first time women had won that race! Jacqueline Cochran set several women's speed records flying in a Staggerwing, established an altitude record of over 30,000 feet (9.144 meters), and finished third in the 1937 Bendix Trophy Race. 781 Beech Model 17 were manufactured in eight different series during 16 years of production. It ended in 1948 with the last aircraft leaving the factory in 1949. The Staggerwing so remains a true classic that was in advance for its time.



Assembly line at the beginning of the Staggerwing production.

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## STAGGERWING BEEHCRAFT Model 17

Facts about NC2801 a model F17-D from 1939

Each Staggerwing was normally custom built by hand with leather interior etc., carrying up to 5 passengers.

Our aircraft is from 1939, a Beechcraft F-17D model initially purchased by industrialist Henry DuPont (remember de famous paint), of Wilmington DE, from the Wichita factory, shortly after his founding of the Atlantic Aviation Corporation. With the outbreak of war in the USA, this aircraft, like many other civilian Staggerwings, was impressed into service with the US Army Air Corps. It was mainly used during the war to transport generals and diplomats. To this day it still retains several Army modifications, including its fuselage flare tubes. In January, 1945 the aircraft returned to the US civil register as the first aircraft operated by Ozark Airlines, flying between Springfield and Saint Louis, Missouri. Ozark was bought by TWA in 1986.

We bought it from a Northwest Airlines Captain. The plane had been sitting in a hangar in Seattle Oregon for a many years. The former owner, having lost his medical, kept hoping to fly again but finally had to give it up. It had not been inspected or flown in 8 years. It has been last restored in 1987 and now it needs a lot of care and attention. On its 300 horsepower Jacobs engine, we have installed a Radial Engines Ltd. fuel injection modification to improve the Beechcraft's performance figures and fuel economy, without destroying its classic look. Fuel consumption has been reduced from 70 down to 55 liters per hour at 140knots. We have also installed s the latest avionics and it is certified for IFR flying. We did some basic repairs and paint work (like on the landing gear, the cowling). We want a flying family airplane and will take our time to slowly do the necessary restoration over the coming years.

We have flown this Staggerwing all over the USA - from Seattle, Washington, down to the Bahamas, through San Francisco, Las Vegas, The Grand Canyon and some other amazing places. Where ever we stopped we made a remarkable entry. The plane is just very popular. It was shipped here to Sweden in 2008 from our facility near New Orleans in a container before being reassembled. We keep it in our Hangar in Sjöbo/Sövde airport.

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## STAGGERWING BEECHCRAFT MODEL F17-D - NC2801

### Technical Characteristics

**Aircraft:** Beechcraft Staggerwing Model: F-17 D  
**Avionics:** IFR with Garmin GNS430 GPS/COM,  
GTX 328 Mode S, NSD360 HSI and Garmin MX20 Multifunction Display  
**Engine:** Jacobs R755-A2 300 hp fuel injected  
radial engine (12.4 Liter displacement)



**Manuf.:** Beech Aircraft Corporation  
**Year:** 1939  
**Registration:** NC2801  
**Propeller:** Hamilton Standard 2B20



### Specifications

**Length:** 26' 2"  
**Height:** 10' 3"  
**Wingspan:** 32' 0"  
**Gross Weight:** 3 590 lbs.  
**Useful Load:** 1 037 lbs

### Performance

**Max Speed:** 360 kph (dive limit)  
**Max Cruising speed:** 306 kph  
**Normal Cruise speed:** 260 kph  
**Consumption at NCS:** 55 Liters /hr  
**VFR Range at NCS:** 1 235km

### Miscellaneous

**Tanks:** 3 capacity 292 liters  
**Restoration:** 1983  
**War Service:** 1943-1945  
**First Owner:** H. DuPont, 1940  
**Airline Service:** Ozark Airlines, 1945