

"AVIATION MAN OF THE YEAR"

C. M. BELINN

President

LOS ANGELES AIRWAYS, INC

May 26, 1955

## Space Age Notebook

## Whirlybird Earlybird

By KARL R. EDGERTON  
Sun-Telegram Military Editor



CLARENCE BELINN  
... Airlifter

Los Angeles Airways, the world's first helicopter airline, has been whirling through the sky from San Bernardino to Los Angeles for more than 20 years now without mishap.

The commuter airline serves 200 cities and communities in Southern California and last year carried 404,000 passengers, an increase of 28 per cent over the previous 12 months.

Heading LAA, as it is called, is one of aviation's pioneers, Clarence M. Belinn, 64, a "grandfatherly type" who numbers among his friends the late Carl Sandburg, poet laureate to the nation's presidents.

Belinn, who was named "Aviation Man of the Year" in 1955, abounds with energy, is an articulate speaker and a shrewd judge of people.

The helicopter line is undoubtedly the result of an ambitious dream, nurtured during the days he served as vice president of Kansas City Southern Airlines (1938-1940) and later as vice president of Hawaiian Airlines, Ltd. (1940-1944).

Belinn founded Los Angeles Airways in 1944, shortly after leaving his executive job with Hawaiian. Three years later, the Civil Aeronautics Board certified the line and on Oct. 1, 1947, the world's first airmail by helicopter service was inaugurated.

In those early years, LAA used five S-51s to pioneer its routes and greatly speed the pickup and delivery of airmail through the greater Los Angeles basin, including San Bernardino.

In 1953, the world's first air-express-by-helicopter service was started, with passenger service starting the following year aboard the seven-passenger Sikorsky S-55, the first helicopter certified for scheduled passenger transportation.

The remarkable increase in the number of passengers flown (210 in 1954 to 404,019 last year) reflects the dynamic growth in

the use of helicopters for travel in metropolitan areas.

LAA has been cited by the National Safety Council for an outstanding safety record.

L.A. Airways has flown 39,964,077 passenger miles (through 1966) with a 100 per cent safety record, while providing needed service between Los Angeles International Airport and the following cities:

Anaheim, Corona, Glendale, Monrovia, Newport Beach, North Hollywood, Ontario, Pomona, Riverside, San Bernardino, Santa Ana, Van Nuys and Whittier.

LAA operates a fleet of six 28-passenger, 140-mile-per-hour Sikorsky S-61S (valued at \$1 million each) with a seventh ship scheduled for delivery early this year.

Today, you can catch any one of the 13 flights from San Bernardino and arrive at Los Angeles International in a little over half an hour. Cost is about \$10 and in many cases, the major airlines will pick up a large portion of the tab if you are making connections for flights to other parts of the country.

LAA's impressive growth hasn't all been a bed of roses, however. In 1965 it lost its government subsidy and for the first time lost money — nearly a million dollars.

But thanks to the increase in demand and service, the world's first helicopter airway is slowly struggling out of the red. When the new, larger and faster helicopters come in to service a few years hence, LAA will undoubtedly become one of the major businesses in the Los Angeles Basin.

"We are entering a new and exciting era," says LAA's Belinn, "We are already evaluating advanced flight equipment proposals and plan to remain at the forefront of development in direct-lift aircraft operations."

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## AVIATION MAN OF THE YEAR AWARD

Clarence M. Belinn, President of Los Angeles Airways, world's first helicopter air carrier, is "Aviation Man of the Year", marking the second man to be so honored by the 7,000 employees of eleven airlines serving Los Angeles International Airport.

The honor came on the eve of the inauguration of helicopter passenger service to San Bernardino by Belinn's company, marking the third and longest helicopter passenger route to go into operation in this area; the others being Long Beach and Santa Ana - Orange.

Edward H. Heinemann, chief engineer of El Segundo Division, Douglas Aircraft Co., and the winner of the first award presented the gold and mahogany plaques during ceremonies at the Airline Ball at the Hollywood Palladium.

Selection of Belinn was made on behalf of the airlines' employees by a panel of Southland aviation writers who were asked to select the Southern California person making the greatest contribution to Aviation in the year 1954.

### CITATION

1. As an individual he founded and directed the company which developed the helicopter into a useful method of transportation, evolving techniques for the Armed Forces as well as commercial operations in other U.S. and European cities.

On October 1, 1947 he pioneered helicopter air mail service from Los Angeles International Airport to roof of Los Angeles Terminal Annex Post Office. This service now reaches 155 cities and communities in Southern California.

In 1953 the first Air Express service became a reality. On November 22, 1954 Los Angeles Airways began passenger service from International Airport to Long Beach, the first link in a passenger program designed to connect cities in the Los Angeles Metropolitan area and to provide direct airline connections to all points of the United States and the world.

2. To achieve such a service, Belinn and his company pioneered:
  - The art and technique of night flying for helicopter.
  - The art and technique of instrument flying by helicopter.
  - The concept of municipal heliports.

In addition, Belinn was cited for making these developments available to the United States Air Force, Navy, Marines and Army.

Belinn, age 52, resides with his wife Malvina and three children in North Hollywood. The children are Larry, 24; Elliott, 21; Christina, 7.

Thirty years ago this month (May 1925) Belinn began his aviation career with the Army Air Corps at age 22. After being discharged he joined the old Washington-New York Airlines. In 1933 he helped organize what is now known as Northeast Airlines. During the war he served as director of Air Transport Division of Matson Navigation Company and vice-president of Hawaiian Airlines, resigning these positions in 1944 to come to Southern California.

He came here to create a 'Shorthaul' airline service to interconnect our many cities, using a new dimension in transportation, the helicopter.

Three years later, after approval of the Civil Aeronautics Board and many, many organizational problems, Los Angeles Airways came into being and became the first helicopter mail-carrying company anywhere.

He is a Fellow of the American Helicopter Society; a member of the Helicopter Institute of Great Britain; a member of the Institute of Aeronautical Sciences and Society of Aeronautical Engineers.

May 26, 1955

# Aviation News



BY JERRY MAHER, Mirror-News Staff Writer

Clarence M. Belinn is an incurable optimist, but there must have been times during the past few years when even he wondered where he was going.

There were moments of triumph, but there were times of frustration and disaster, too.

But last night Belinn, on the eve of inaugurating passenger helicopter service between San Bernardino and International Airport, probably felt it had all been worth while.

**For last night Belinn was named Aviation Man of the Year by the people who could be counted on to be his severest critics, the 7000 employees of the 11 airlines serving International Airport.**

The award was made at the second annual Airlines Ball of the Airlines Activities Committee in the Hollywood Palladium.

To show you the class of company Belinn joins: Last year's winner was Edward H. Heinemann, chief engineer at Douglas' El Segundo Division and the man behind many of Douglas' advanced designs.

And it isn't just a regional award. The city's aviation writers, who made the selection, considered dozens of names from throughout the nation's aircraft industry before settling on Belinn.

**He was named not only for founding Los Angeles Airways, the pioneer helicopter mail service, but also for evolving techniques used by the armed forces in Korea and commercial operators everywhere.**

From a technical standpoint, he pioneered the art of night flying and instrument flying by helicopter and the entire concept of heliports.

Belinn, 52, lives in North Hollywood with his wife Malvina, and three children, Larry, 24, Elliott, 21, and Christina, 7.

He founded Los Angeles Airways Oct. 1, 1947, with air mail service from the airport to Terminal Annex. In 1953, he began air express and on Nov. 22, 1954, started passenger service to Long Beach.

Tonight, at 5:10 p.m., Congressman and Mrs. Harry R. Sheppard of San Bernardino will arrive at International Airport on the first flight extending service to that area.

**The first scheduled flight will leave here at 5:25 p.m. and arrive at the National Orange Show in San Bernardino at 6:20 p.m.**

In the future, two trips daily will be operated at a one-way fare of \$7.27.



**WINS AVIATION AWARD**—Clarence M. Belinn, left, helicopter service pioneer, wins Aviation Man of the Year award. With him after presentation are Mrs. Belinn and Edward Heineman, who won award last year.

## Belinn Named Aviation Man of the Year

Clarence M. Belinn, founder of the world's first helicopter airline here, was announced as Aviation Man of the Year last night at the Palladium at the annual Airline Ball of employees of 11 airlines at Los Angeles International Airport.

Belinn, president of Los Angeles Airways, was honored on the eve of the inauguration of helicopter passenger service between International Airport and the National Orange Show Heliport, San Bernardino. The first flight of the seven passenger S-55 Sikorsky helicopter, is set for departure at 5:25 p.m. today from the Los Angeles air terminal.

### Plaque Presented

Edward H. Heinemann, chief engineer of El Segundo division, Douglas Aircraft Co., and winner of the first award last year, presented the gold-mahogany plaque to Belinn at the annual dance.

Belinn was selected by a panel of aviation writers, including Marvin Miles of The Times, for his efforts in pioneering helicopter service for air mail, air express and passengers. He lives with his wife Malvina and three children in North Hollywood.



—MIRROR-NEWS Photo

### AVIATION MAN OF THE YEAR

Clarence Belinn gets a kiss from his wife, Malvina, after receiving award of Aviation Man of the Year from Edward H. Heinemann, last year's winner. (See Jerry Maher's Aviation column on Page 8, Part II.)



# Citizen-News

FRIDAY, MAY 27, 1955

## C. M. Belinn Named Aviation 'Man of Year'

Clarence M. Belinn, president of Los Angeles Airways, the world's first helicopter air carrier, has been honored as "Aviation Man of the Year" by the 7,000 employes of 11 airlines serving Los Angeles International Airport.

Edward H. Heinemann, chief engineer of El Segundo Division of Douglas Aircraft, winner of the first annual award last year, presented the gold and mahogany plaque to Belinn in a ceremony at the Airline Ball last night at Hollywood Palladium.

Selection of Belinn was made on behalf of the airline employes by a panel of Southland aviation writers, who were asked to select the Southern Californian making the greatest contribution to aviation in the past year.

Belinn was chosen for having pioneered the helicopter into a useful transportation method, and developing the technique of night flying and instrument flying for helicopters.

Belinn, who is 52 and lives with his wife and three children at 12312 Viewcrest Rd., North Hollywood, started his aviation career 30 years ago with the Army Air Corps.

In 1947 he pioneered helicopter airmail service from the airport to Terminal Annex Post Office. Los Angeles Airways mail routes now serve 155 Southland communities. Last November the line began passenger service to Long Beach, and passenger service to San Bernardino is soon to be inaugurated.



Citizen-News photo

### HONORED FOR HIS WORK WITH THE WHIRLYBIRD

Mrs. Clarence M. Belinn holds plaque presented to her husband (left) last night by Edward H. Heinemann (right). The plaque

named Belinn "Aviation Man of the Year" for his pioneering work with the helicopter. Heinemann, of Douglas Aircraft, won last year.



**CLARENCE BELINN—'AVIATION MAN OF YEAR'**  
Helicopter Pioneer, Left, Is Presented Award by Edward  
Heinemann; In Center Is Mrs. Belinn

## Clarence Belinn Feted as 'Aviation Man of Year'

Clarence M. Belinn today was "Aviation Man of the Year."

The announcement of the honor to the founder and president of Los Angeles Airways was made before 4000 persons last night at the annual Airline Ball at Hollywood Palladium.

A panel of aviation writers selected Belinn, who heads the world's first helicopter airline.

They acted on behalf of the 7000 employes of the 11 airlines serving Los Angeles International Airport.

The gold and mahogany plaque was presented to the dynamic young executive by Edward H. Heinemann, who won the honor in 1954.

Heinemann is chief engineer of the El Segundo division of the Douglas Aircraft Co.

Belinn's honor came as he prepared to start helicopter passenger service to San Bernardino. The first flight of the 7-passenger S-55 Sikorsky helicopter was scheduled at 5:25 p. m. today.

Belinn pioneered helicopter mail service from Los Angeles

Airport to the roof of the Terminal Annex Post Office in 1947.

His line now serves 155 Southland communities.

Belinn, 52 began his career in the Army Air Corps 30 years ago. He lives with his wife, Malvina, and three children in North Hollywood.

# Belinn Man Of Year In Southland Flying

Clarence M. Belinn of North Hollywood is Aviation Man of the Year for Southern California.

President of Los Angeles Airways, the world's first helicopter air carrier, Belinn is the second man to be so honored.

Edward H. Heinemann, chief engineer El Segundo Division, Douglas Aircraft Co., winner of the first award, presented the gold and mahogany plaque in a ceremony during the Airlines Ball at the Hollywood Palladium last night.

Selection was made by a panel of Southland aviation writers on behalf of 7,000 employes of 11 airlines serving Los Angeles International Airport.

The presentation comes on the eve of the inauguration of helicopter passenger service to San Bernardino, the third and longest such service to operate in this area.

## New Techniques

Belinn, a pioneer in helicopter aviation, was selected for his contributions in this field. He founded and directed the company which first developed the helicopter into a useful method of transportation and evolved techniques for the Armed Forces and commercial operations in U. S. and European cities.

Belinn is a fellow of the American Helicopter Society, a member of the Helicopter Institute of Great Britain, a member of the Institute of Aeronautical Sciences and Society of Automotive Engineers.

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**KISS FOR WINNER** — Clarence Belinn of North Hollywood gets kiss from wife Malvina after receiving aviation man of year award in Los Angeles. Right is Edward H. Heinemann, last year's winner.—AP Wirephoto.

## Aircraft Workers Cite Belinn

### 'Copter Line Boss Named Man Of Year

(See Picture On Page 2)

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#### Reasons For Selection

Selection of Belinn was made on behalf of the airlines' employes by a panel of Southland aviation writers who were asked to select the Southern California person making the greatest contribution to aviation in the year 1954.

Belinn was selected because:

1. As an individual he founded and directed the company which developed the helicopter into a useful method of transportation, evolving techniques for the Armed Forces as well as commercial operations in other U.S. and European cities.

On Oct. 1, 1947, he pioneered helicopter air mail service from Los Angeles International Airport to roof of Los Angeles Terminal Annex Post Office. This service now reaches 155 cities and communities in Southern California.

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2. To achieve such a service, Belinn and his company pioneered: The art and technique of night flying for helicopter.

The art and technique of instrument flying by helicopter.

The concept of municipal heliports.

In addition, Belinn was cited for making these developments available to the United States Air Force, Navy, Marines and Army.

#### Varied Career

Belinn, aged 52, resides with his wife Malvina and three children in North Hollywood. The children are Larry, 24; Elliott, 21; Christina, 7.

Thirty years ago this month, Belinn began his aviation career with the Army Air Corps at age 22. After being discharged he joined the old Washington-New York airlines. In 1933 he helped organize what is now known as Northeast Airlines. During the war he served as director of Air Transport Division of Matson Navigation Co., and vice president of Hawaiian Airlines, resigning these positions in 1944 to come to Southern California.

He came here to create a "short-haul" airline service to interconnect many cities, using a new dimension in transportation, the helicopter.

Three years later, after approval of the Civil Aeronautics Board and many, many organizational problems, Los Angeles Airways came into being and became the first helicopter mail-carrying company anywhere.

He is a fellow of the American Helicopter Society; a member of the Helicopter Institute of Great Britain; a member of the Institute of Aeronautical Sciences and Society of Automotive Engineers.



**NAMED AVIATION MAN OF YEAR**—Clarence Belinn of North Hollywood gets kiss from wife, Malvina, after receiving the Aviation Man of the Year award last night from 7,000 employes of 11 airlines serving International Airport. At right is Edward H. Heineman, last year's winner. Belinn is head of Los Angeles Airways, Southern California's helicopter mail and passenger service. See story on Page 11. (AP Wirephoto.)