

## Things You Find While Looking for Other Things: Charles Lindbergh Visits Buffalo, 1927



FROM THE ARCHIVES OF BUFFALO STANDARD PRINTING

**W**e've all been there, especially in the history business. A research project takes us to a repository, or a book on the shelf, or even into our own collections room. We're digging through this source or that box or file and suddenly – bam! – out pops something completely unrelated, yet fascinating in its own right. In many cases, it is something we didn't even know existed – at least not where we found it. Mind you, this doesn't do much for one's research timetable, but such discoveries can often provide enjoyable diversions all their own. They can also provide great mental filing for a project down the road. So it was with our colleagues at Buffalo Standard Printing, the folks who publish the *Am-Pol Eagle* and *The German Citizen* newspapers. While trolling through their archives not long ago, this wonderful photo of Charles Lindbergh's visit to Western New York came to light.

It is common knowledge that Charles Lindbergh took off from Roosevelt Field on May 20, 1927, in his purpose-built aircraft, the *Spirit of St. Louis*, with the goal of making the first solo flight across the Atlantic Ocean. When he landed in Paris less than 34 hours later, he became a worldwide hero. Upon his return to the United States, Lindbergh set out on a three-month tour, covering all 48 states and more than 90 cities between July 20 and October 23. The

Commemorative buttons and medals were created to mark Col. Charles Lindbergh's stops along his nationwide tour. These examples commemorate his stop in Buffalo on July 29, 1927, and feature both the aviator and his mother.

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tour was sponsored by multimillionaire Harry Guggenheim and his father, David, and changed the way Americans viewed the viability of air travel.

Eighty-five years ago this past summer, and little over a week into his tour, Lindbergh arrived in Buffalo on July 29, 1927, having flown from Rochester with flyovers at Batavia, Lockport and Niagara Falls. He was presented with the key to the city and stayed in the area for several days before departing for Cleveland on August 1.

As can be readily seen, the photo shows Lindbergh riding in the back seat of a sedan during a parade in his honor. He is flanked by Buffalo Mayor Frank Schwab on his left and a second individual whose identity is unknown. On at least some of the stops along his tour, the aviator was joined by his mother, Evangeline, though it seems she did not fly with him and often rode in a separate vehicle in parades, as was evidently the case in Buffalo. Her presence in Western New York is highly likely, given the buttons and medals created for the occasion, which bear the likeness of both the flyer and his mother.

Western New York is fortunate to have numerous archives and repositories, in all shapes and sizes, which contain a wealth of documentary and photographic information. And yes, most of them contain fascinating items that the custodians of the collection themselves don't even realize are there. It is always rewarding to come across such items, and I would like to thank our colleagues at Buffalo Standard Printing for sharing this "out of left field" reminder of a defining moment in aviation history. 🛩

