

MY FIRST AIRPLANE RIDE

By Juanita Sparks

Well, what would you do if a handsome young man asked, "Would you like to go for an airplane ride with me?" I knew this young man was going to night school to get his pilot's license.

Many farmers and ranchers, returning from World War II took flying lessons on the G.I. Bill to obtain a pilot's license. Like I said, I knew this one rancher was working on getting his license, and I admit I pestered him about taking me up in a plane when he was qualified.

One day, after I was through with work, this handsome young rancher showed me his newly earned pilot's license. Then he said, "I can get a plane, are you ready to go fly with me?" This was the moment I had been waiting for. "Oh yes," I replied. "I'll meet you at the airport."

True to his word he was waiting for me, standing beside a bright blue Cessna. "It is a perfect day for fly", my friend assured me. "There isn't a cloud in the sky, and no wind." My friend then helped me into one of the two seats in the plane. Revved up the engine, and in no time, we were airborne!

The first five or six minutes of the flight were delightful. There were blue skies overhead, green fields below and the mountains were off to the west. I felt as if I was seeing the whole world at one glance.

Then the newly licensed pilot started showing me aeronautical maneuvers he had just learned. Straight up to the heavens, then plummeting toward the earth, flying low over homes, and barns, and lush green fields were just a few of the antics that were part of the flying curriculum.

I was petrified. Why hadn't I packed a parachute? I began to feel dizzy. The landscape became blurred. My eyes wouldn't focus. My stomach felt queasy. Oh my, what if ...? Would this anguish never end?

After what seemed like eons, although it may have lasted thirty minutes, the ride was over.

I thanked the pilot for the ride. Then and there I resolved that I would never, ever fly again.