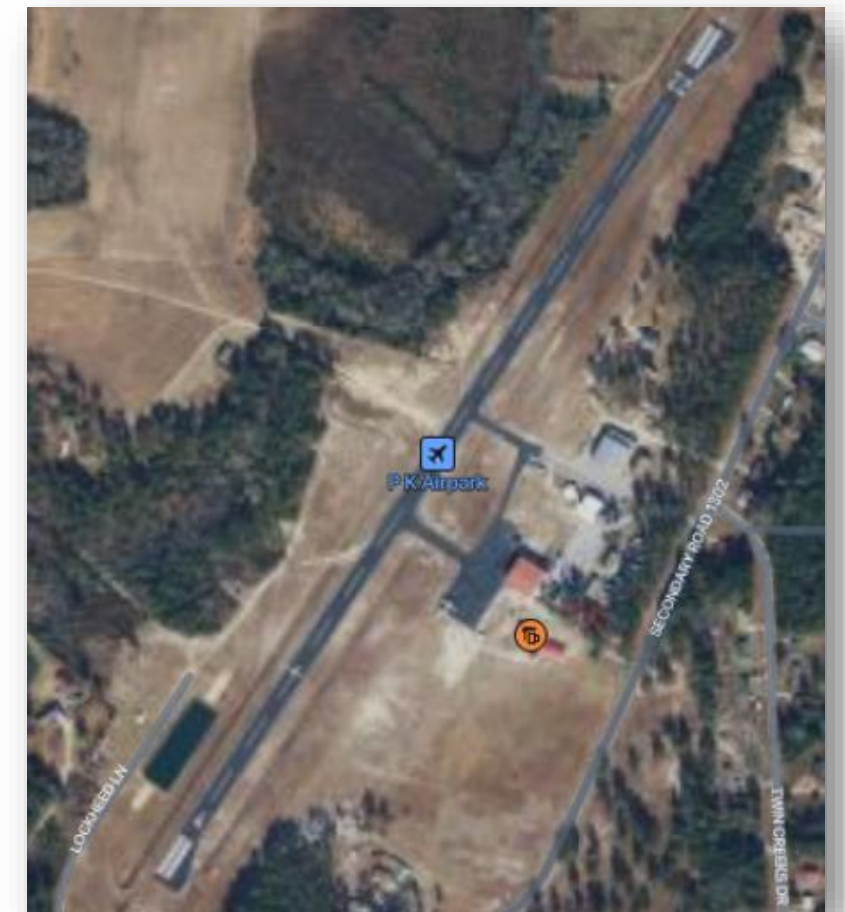


Pope Air Base Outing

- WuFlu Restrictions lifted!
- Await dates, will be a Friday PM
- Tour of Pope Air Base, followed by...
- Dinner at PK's Grill & Pub, PK Airfield
- Peek inside Paraclete Dropzone hangar



SHORTS SC-7 SKYVAN



CASA 212





PINEHURST NC HANGAR #218

QB MEMBER PROFILES

PROFILE NUMBER 8

John H. “Luke” Williamson

QB #8121

Hangar: Atlanta (ATL)



QB Profiles – Luke Williamson Flying Tiger from Ninety Six, SC



QB Profiles – Luke Williamson



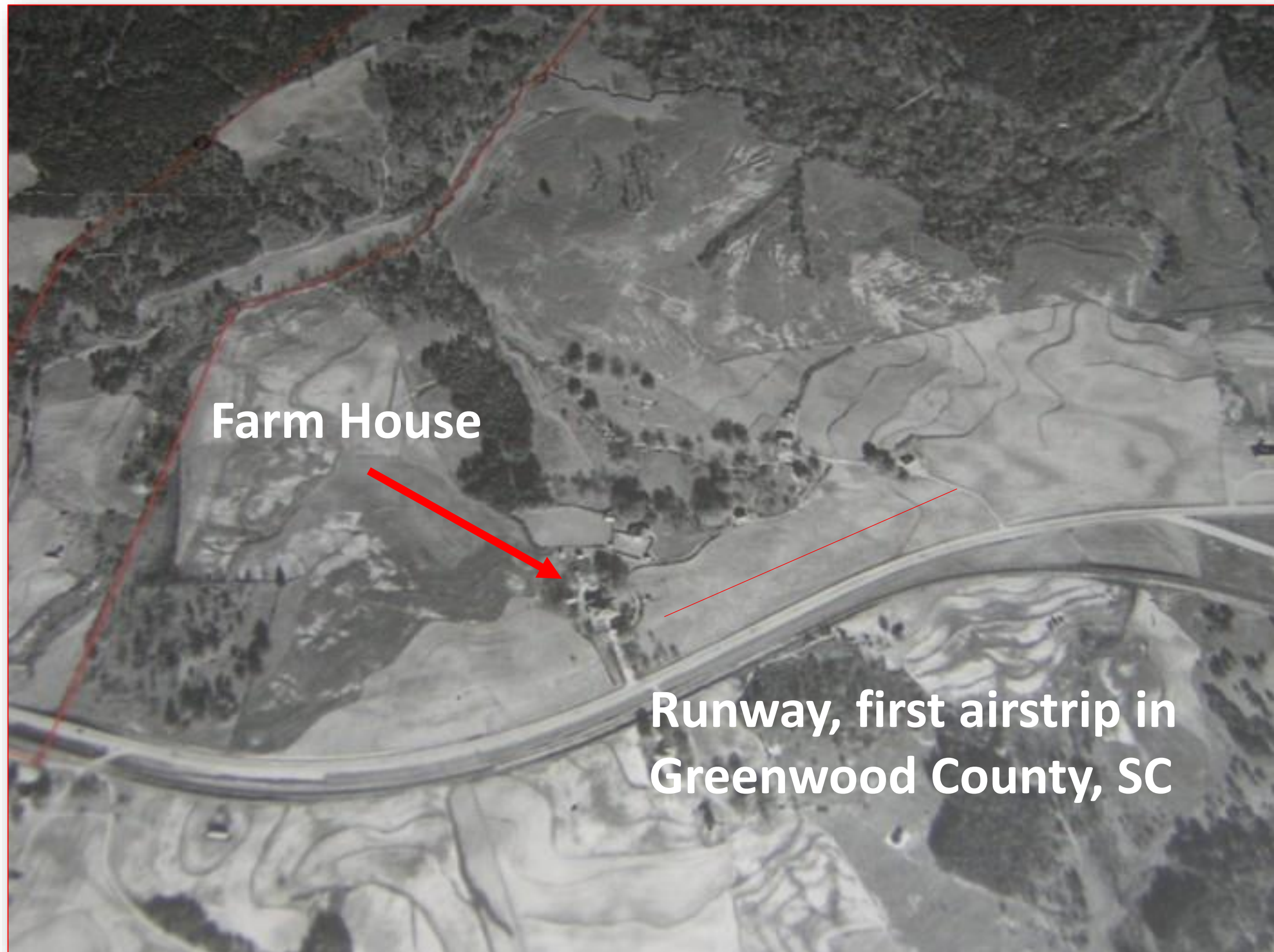
- Was born John Henry “Luke” Williamson on April 18, 1906 and raised on a farm outside **Ninety Six, SC**.
- In 1927, he entered the US Army as an Air Cadet, finished in 1928, and became an instructor of cadets at **Brooks Field, TX** (later Brooks AFB).
- The 14th Air Force Historical Office Staff would later write: “**He was one of the finest instructors ever stationed at Brooks Field.**”
- Williamson went from reserve to active duty in 1930 as an instructor at the Air Corp Tactical School (ACTS) at **Maxwell Field, Al.** (later Maxwell AFB).
- While an Air Cadet and instructor, Williamson would fly his **Boeing P-12 biplane** to his family home in Ninety Six, perform acrobatics for the locals, and land next to his family home on an airstrip he had prepared for this purpose.

QB Profiles – Luke Williamson

Childhood Home near Ninety Six, SC

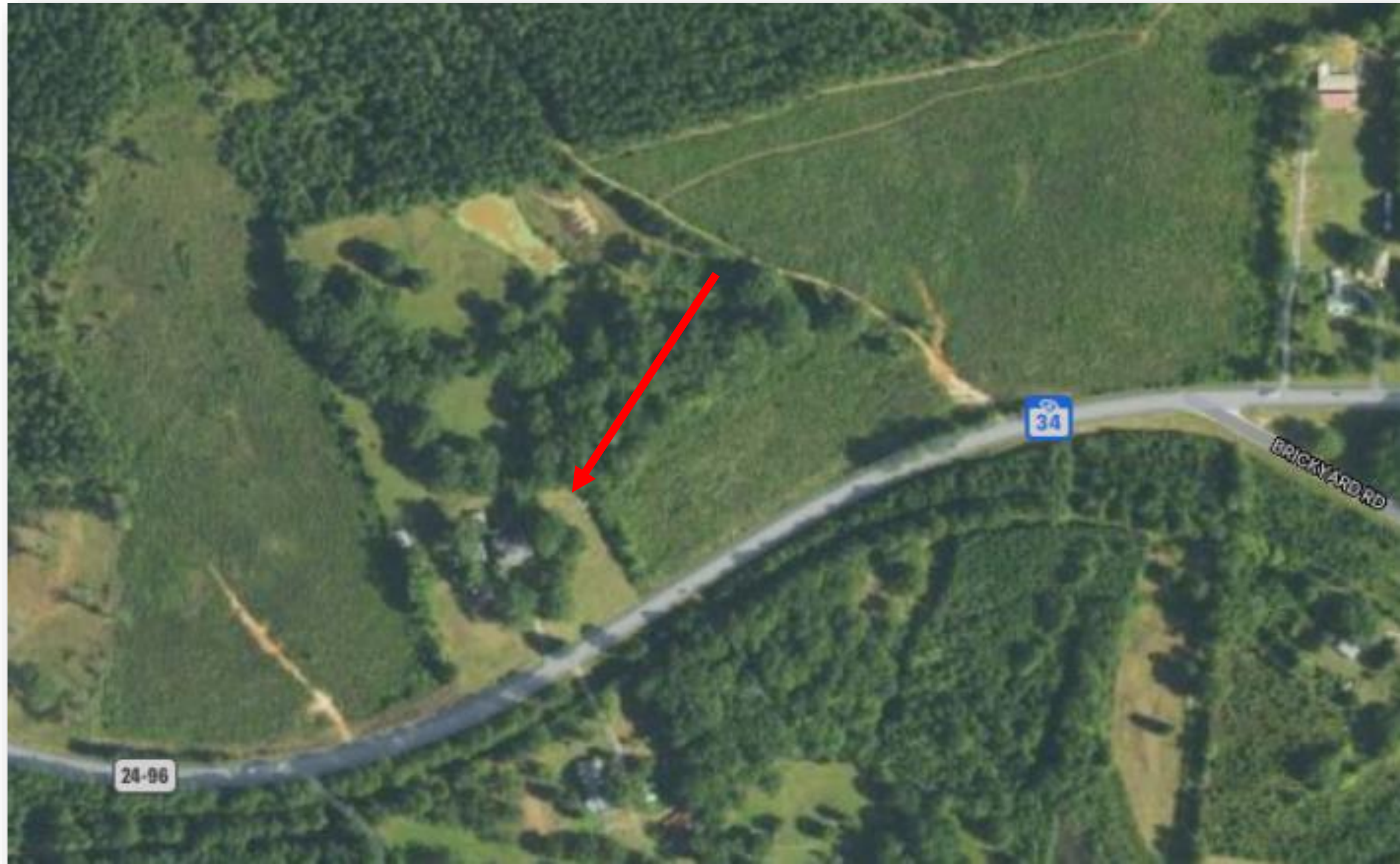


QB Profiles – Luke Williamson



QB Profiles – Luke Williamson

Childhood Home near Ninety Six, SC



QB Profiles – Luke Williamson

Childhood Home near Ninety Six, SC



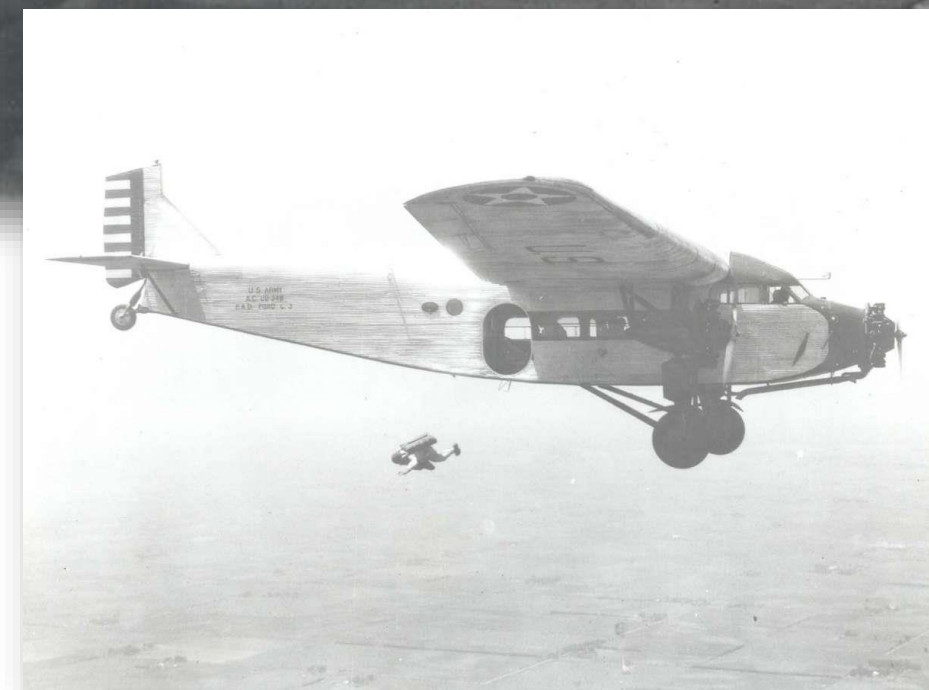
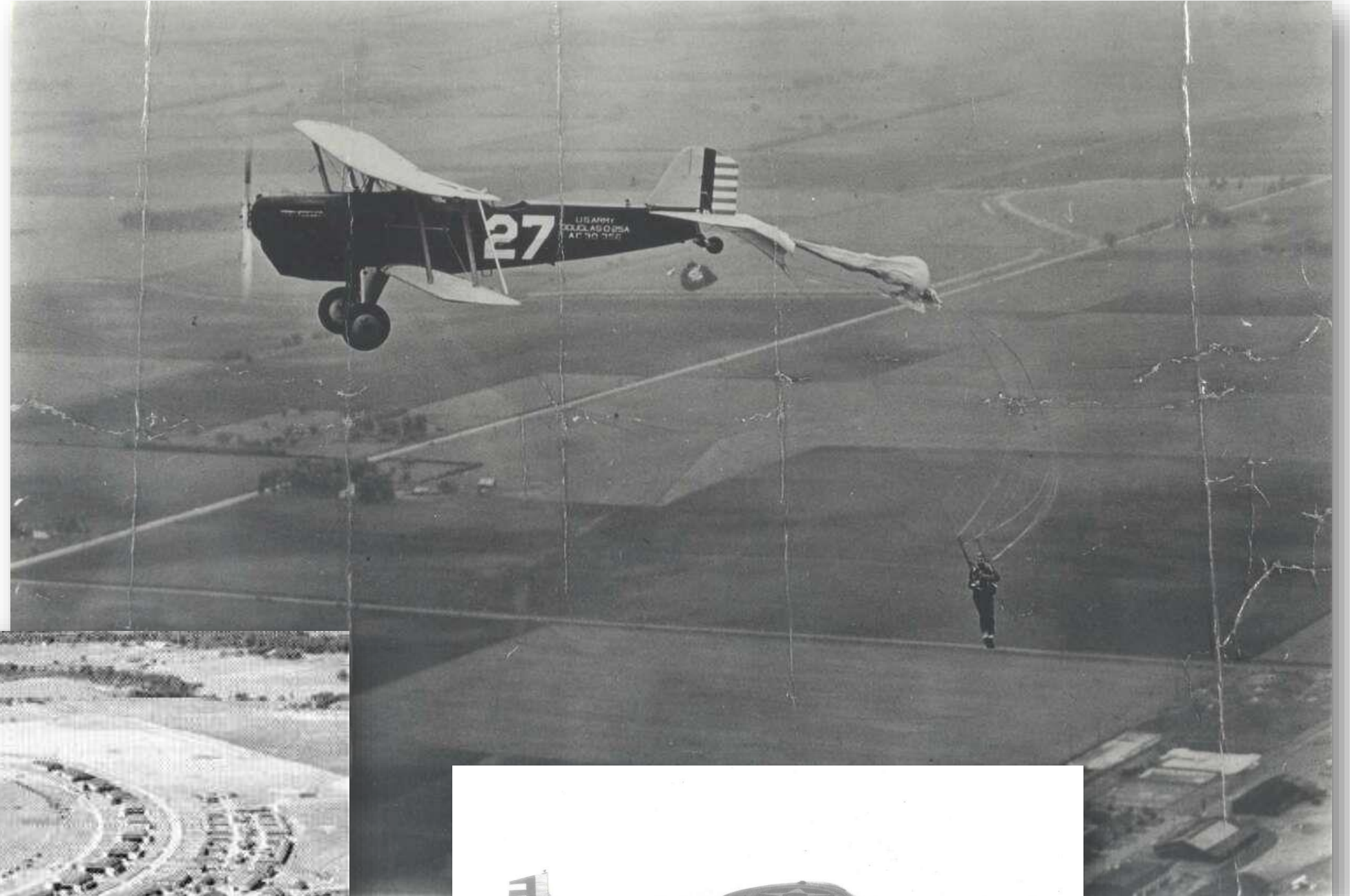
QB Profiles – Luke Williamson

- **Recollections from Grand Nice, Nancy Price:** “My mother lived most of her childhood in the home in Ninety Six, and they experienced many episodes of John buzzing the town, church services, and the grand home itself. Everybody would scream, “Here comes John Henry!!!!!!” One time my mother and her father ran out to the air strip to greet John, and he dove so low to the ground that my grandfather screamed, "hit the ground, jump in the ditch, he's going to kill us!!!!" John was in hysterics. He was quite a character!!!”
- **Bo Bowman, Greenwood County, SC Historian:** “This is the home. Facing the front of the house, the long field to the right is the field Luke would use as his personal airstrip when he would fly his biplane home for visits (and give people an acrobatic show).”



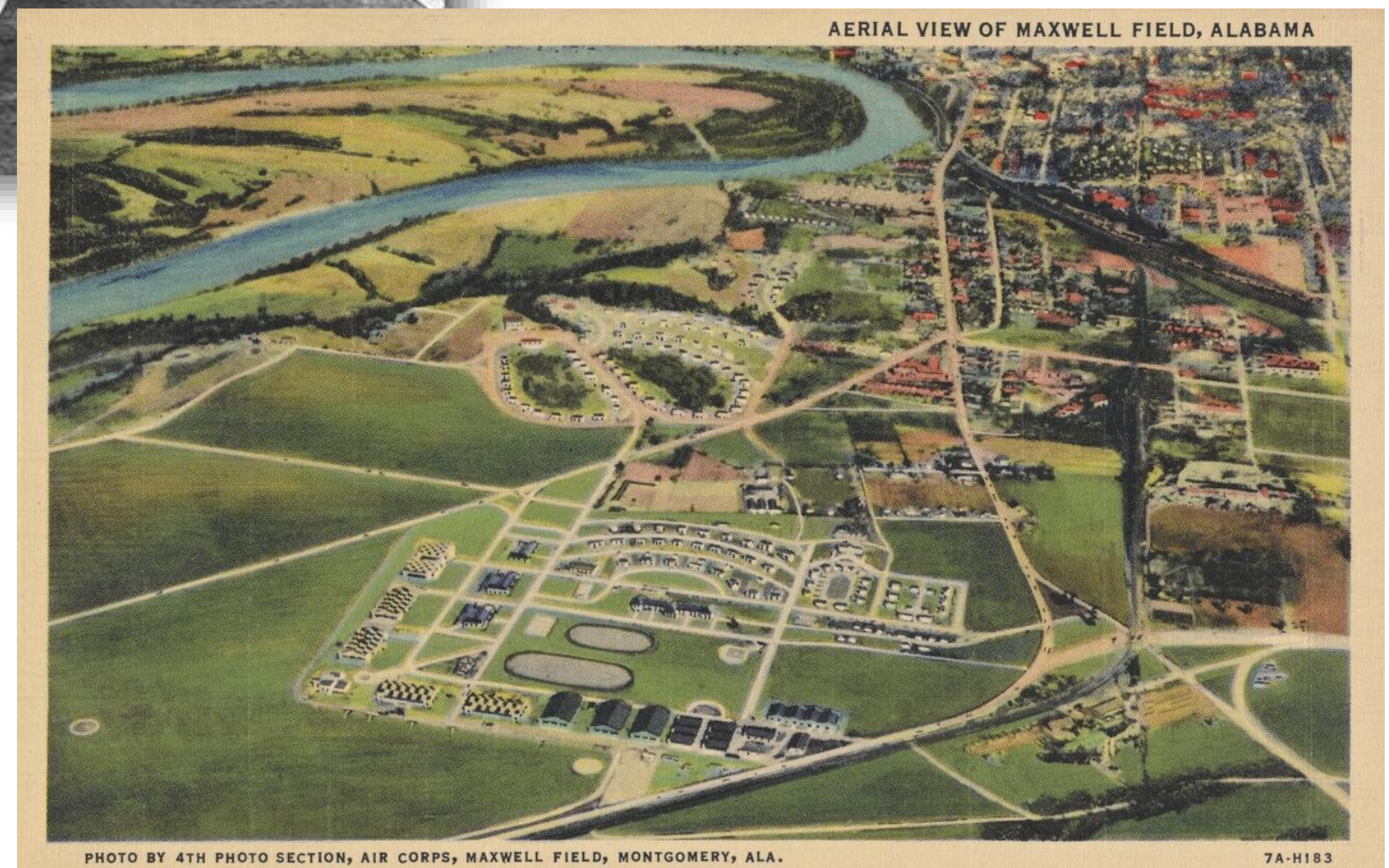
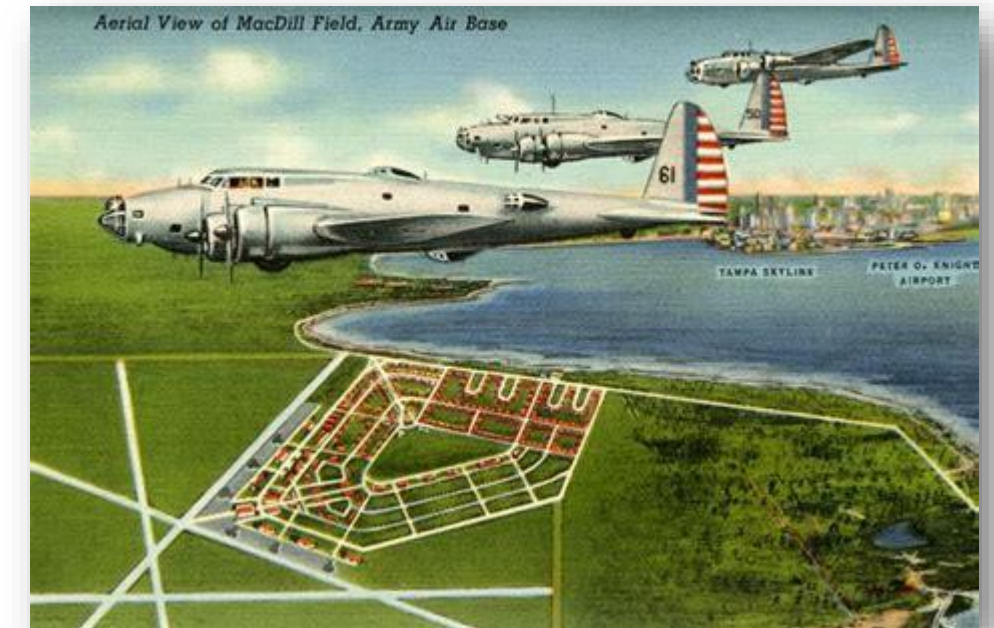
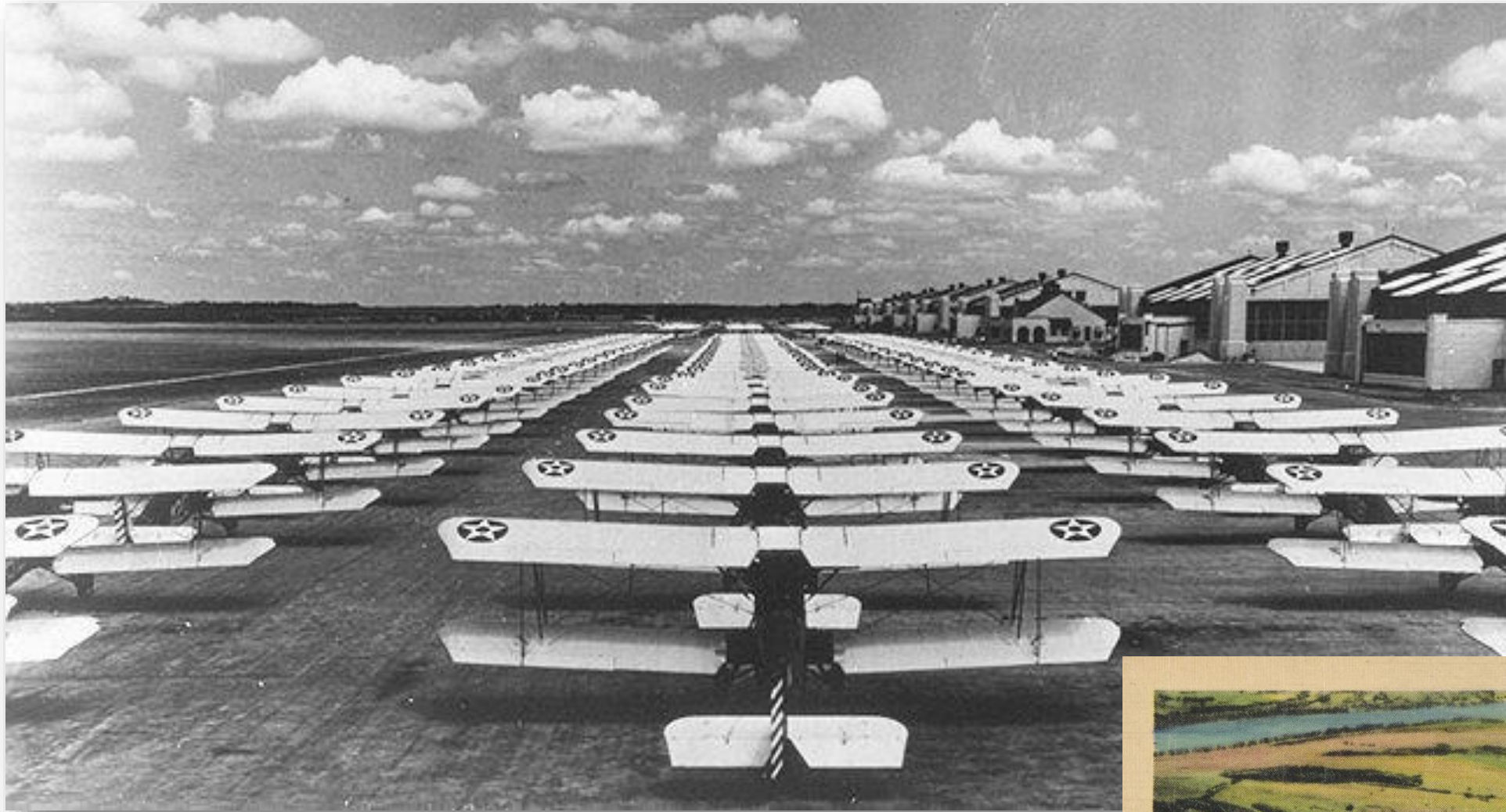
QB Profiles – Luke Williamson

Brooks Field, Texas



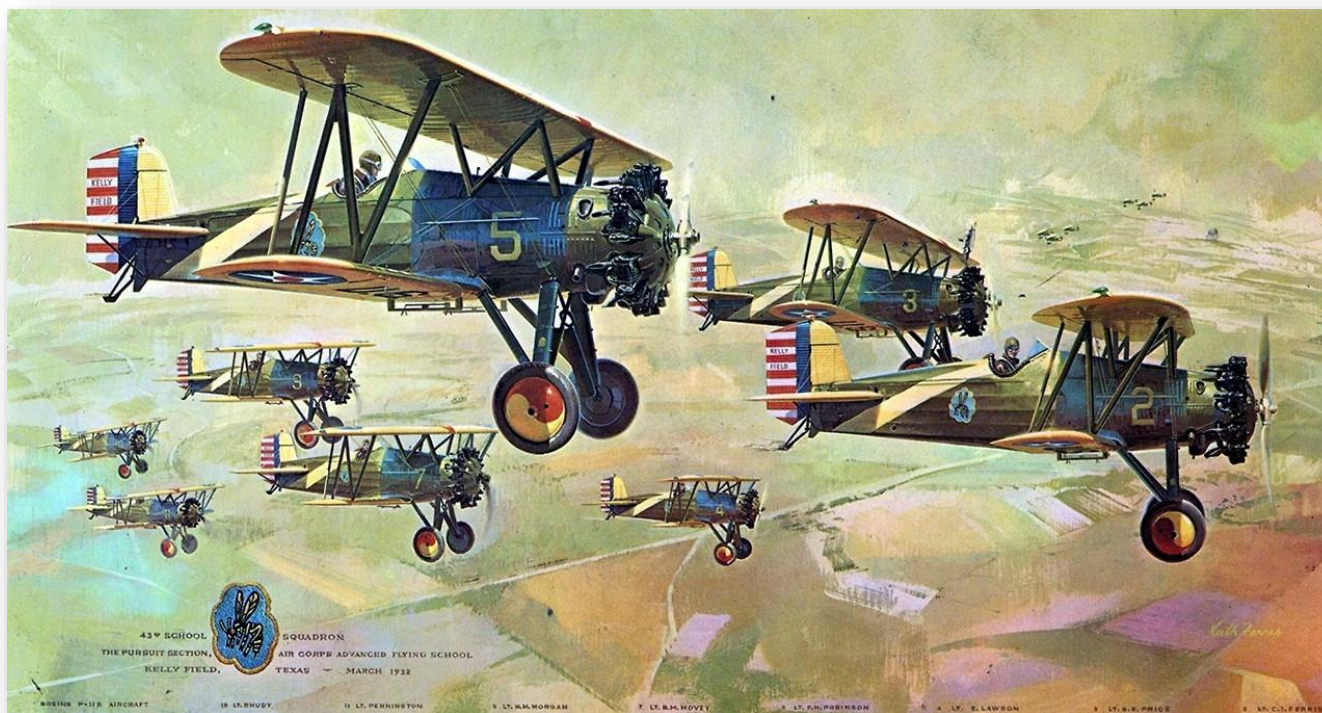
QB Profiles – Luke Williamson

Maxwell Field, Alabama



The Flying Trapeze

- In 1932, **Claire Lee Chennault** (QB #3727) set out to assemble a team of the finest pursuit pilots available. His method was simple: any pilot who could follow on the wing of his Boeing P-12 for thirty minutes would win a job.
- Though many tried, only three made it: **Lt. Haywood "Possum" Hansell and two flying sergeants, John "Luke" Williamson and Billy MacDonald.** MacDonald served as the spare team pilot until Hansell left the team after the first year.
- First named the "Dixie Trio," they soon became dubbed "**The Flying Trapeze**", flying a trio of **Boeing P-12's**. Powered by 450hp radials they could achieve a top speed of nearly 200 mph.



The Flying Trapeze

- At each performance site, the three-man team would zoom in, land and taxi to a stop, then line up wingtip to wingtip before the waiting crowd. The two outside pilots, McDonald and **Williamson**, would clamber out of their aircraft, each carrying a 20-foot length of rope. Displaying great dramatic flair, the two would proceed to tie one end of the rope to his own plane's wing braces and the other end to Chennault's left or right wing braces. Then they hopped back into their cockpits, waved to the crowd and took off once more.
- The team members, **literally linked together by the two thick ropes**, performed a number of slow, lazy loops above the fascinated crowds. Their most spectacular stunt, however, was **a complete 360-degree roll maneuver**. Chennault's plane performed a synchronized tight roll while the two outside craft had to gyrate and perform an up-and-around maneuver, being very careful not to tear off the wing braces of Chennault's plane. It was an absolutely breathtaking display.



The Flying Trapeze



The Flying Trapeze



QB Profiles – Luke Williamson

- **Colonel Mao Pangchu of China** saw Williamson in a show and offered him a position in China as advisor & instructor for the **Chinese Air Force**.
- During WWII, the "Three Men on the Flying Trapeze" served in China with the **Flying Tigers, CNAC and the Army Air Corps**.
- **Maj. Gen. Claire L. Chennault** was commander of the 14th Air Force. **Lt. Col. Luke Williamson** was commanding officer of the 14th Transport Section, and **Bill McDonald** was a captain flying a C-47 transport for the China National Aviation Corp.



Williamson in WWII

- Williamson was a passenger on a **C-46 flying the Hump**, when one engine quit, and the other was over-heating. The young pilot, **Johnny Virden**, ordered everyone to jump. That's when Luke took over. He went up to the pilot's cockpit and said, "**move over son, I've been flying these contraptions long before you were born.**" After that Chennault gave him his **3rd Distinguished Flying Cross**. No one had to jump into the "eternity of the Himalayas".
- In the 1930s, future SC state senator **John Drummond** was a 10-12 year old boy who lived near the Williamson farm. He would sometimes run over when Luke was coming in to see him and "touch" the airplane. Drummond went on to become a **decorated P-47 flyer** himself in WWII and gives Luke the credit for giving him the inspiration to fly. During his time of service Drummond received the Decorated Distinguished Flying Cross, two Purple Hearts, nine Air Medals, and three Battle Stars. He was shot down in 1944 near Giéville, France and held in a German POW camp. He dubbed his P-47D the "**Raid Hot Mama**". Available as a Tamiya kit.



John Drummond, Williamson's neighbor



QB Profiles – Luke Williamson

- Returning home in **1942 at age 36**, Williamson joined **Delta Airlines** as **Chief Check Pilot** and kept that position until he **died of a stroke in 1957** in Atlanta.
- He is buried in the **Williamson family cemetery** behind his boyhood home.



CAVU FOREVER BROTHER QB



Thank You





PINEHURST NC HANGAR #218

**THESE QB MEMBER PROFILES FOUND AT
www.aerosouth.net/QB**

