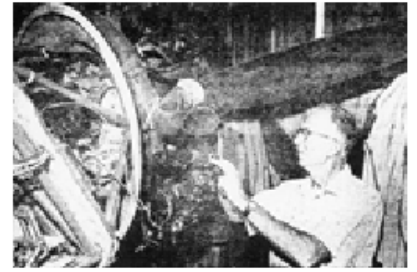




The History of the... **CORAM AIRPORT**



(That's right. We had an airport! Well, **Lester H. Davis** had one. Close enough!)

The **Coram Airport** (or Airpark) operated from 1959 to 1984 and was used sporadically after that. Today it is listed as an emergency landing field. In its years of operation the airport was leased by Tom Murphy who entered into an arrangement with Lester H. Davis, who owned the field. Mr. Davis a flying enthusiast also owned a number of planes.



His son Randall R. Davis (Randy) was also a pilot and invited his science teacher, Carl Verdi, to lunch. Mr. Verdi recounts the experience: "Randy told me he wanted to take me to lunch in the spring of his senior year. I had no idea he meant in Connecticut. When we pulled in to that little airport I was shocked and nervous as it was my first flight on a small plane. Once we took off however, it became an extraordinary experience. Quiet, smooth, and at a low altitude. It was amazing how quickly we got to Connecticut and how beautifully the sound was framed by land. Coming back he flew to the eastern tip of LI and the headed west along the beaches back to the Coram area. We flew about 150 ft. above the island. Spectacular. Taking off and landing was really not that bad. It was a short strip but plenty big enough for his 4 seater. It was however a little bumpy. All in all a great day. Seems like yesterday."

Newsday, Sept 17, 1976 Tom Murphy runs the flight school in Coram from a shack that has no heat, running water, or electricity. But Murphy says he works there all year round. "I don't want the aggravation of a phone," He said. "I'd have to hire someone to mind the phone. If I had heat, I have a lot of friends that would come here and sit. I'd never get any work done. This is a real country operation," he added cheerfully. "I just want to make enough to make a living." Coram Airport is definitely one of the smallest airports on Long Island; Murphy, who leases part of the airport from owner Lester Davis, has three Piper Cub planes.



Tom Murphy working on the restoration on an ancient Waco airplane in his shack at Coram Airport.

The airport itself is on Middle Country Road. The red dirt runway is only 1,800 feet long and is bordered by cornfields, strawberries and pumpkins. Landing on the runway, one pilot said, "...is like flying in a bathtub." In addition to Murphy's flight school, Lester Davis' son,

Randall, runs a flight school and taxi service. Inside Murphy's shack, which serves as a combination garage and office, the walls are covered with pictures of Murphy in his dashing youth. About 6' 2", and gray, and refusing to give his age- he had to think for a moment before he could remember when he first wanted to fly. "I lived near an old airport in Brooklyn when I was young, and me and my brother would go down and see the planes fly in and out. That's where I first got the yen... I got my first plane June, 1930. They were very cheap in those days, \$500 to \$1,200, but then again cars were \$100." He grinned, "After the crash (Wall Street) no one could afford to keep their planes, so all the rich people were selling them off cheap." Murphy insisted that people who take the trouble to find out about him and his flying service are the people who really want to learn to fly. But he acknowledged somewhat sadly that people are no longer interested in flying for pleasure, but for transportation. "People take a lot of crazy chances," he said. "They don't realize that you can't over-extend yourself; you have to fly with caution. People today don't want to do that. They're in a hurry to do everything." Murphy, whose record is accident free, also had some words of advice: "I don't stick my neck out in bad weather."

the Red Baron would Approve



The New York Times/June Malcolm



The New York Times/Louis N

Coram Airport. Tom Murphy, who runs it, says that learning on short fields such as this one helps develop landing skills



Coram Airport- aerial shot 2012



Coram Airport- entrance today; next to Meineke



Coram Airport – runway looking west toward shopping center and bank building.



Coram Airport – runway today; same view as above

The Coram Civic Association would like to thank Mr. Paul Infranco for assembling much of this information.