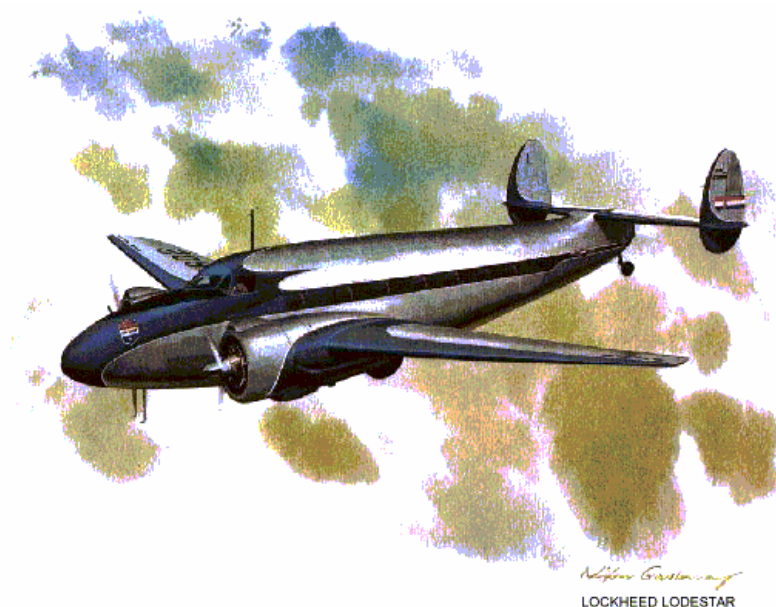


Restoration project

"Lockheed L18 Lodestar"

1. Association history
 2. The aircraft : description, history, current state
 3. Restoration
 4. Exploitation
 5. Annexes
-



*"The essentials? They are perhaps neither the strong joys of the trade, neither its miseries, nor its dangers, but the point of view to which they raise
L'essentiel ? Ce ne sont peut-être ni les joies fortes du métier, ni ses misères, ni ses dangers, mais le point de vue auquel ils élèvent"*

Saint-Exupéry

Prepared on 15-09-2006 by :
Daniel Stockmans, Henry Reding, Paul Baré, François Latour,
Directors and members of the association.



On May 23rd, 1998, at the time of the 75 birthday of Sabena, the "Old Timers" presented their new acquisition, a **Lockheed "Lodestar"** builds in 1942. The challenge was launched: to restore the plane in perfect in-flight status and to transport passengers on the historical road **Léopoldville - Brussels** for the 80eme birthday of Sabena in 2003. Following the events of 2001 and the bankruptcy of Sabena, we have to re-examine our projects.

1.

HISTORY OF THE ASSOCIATION.

Who are the "Sabena Old Timers" ?

The ASBL "Sabena Old Timers" association has as an aim acquisition, the restoration and the maintenance in in-flight status of planes of historical interest and the presentation of these aircraft in flight and on the ground, as well as the promotion of aviation in general and the Belgian wings in particular.

In 1982, a small group of future retired employees of the Sabena conscious of their "know-how" and still highly air minded, dreamed to restore a plane of the Royal Museum of the Army in Brussels (M.R.A/ K.L.M.). They contact the persons in charge of the Air Museum of the Air and agree to try to restore with the in-flight status, the "Westland Lysander" the Museum proposes to them.

After 6 years and more than 40.000 working hours of a restoration qualified a true exploit by the aeronautical press, on August 27th, 1988 the Lysander OO-SOT alias MA-D finds the way back to the sky which it had left for a forty-two years before . It becomes then the only Westland Lysander in in-flight status in the world. The plane of the hero Jean Moulin, the symbol of the French resistance, is again in service. It is with a legitimate pride our team of volunteers presents her Lysander to the public during air demonstrations.



▲ First "Show" in France in 1988



At the Le Bourget salon

► In 1995

The Lysander was presented more than one hundred of times, always with an enormous success in various commemorations and air demonstrations through all Europe. We carry out an average of 25 "displays" each season and a "Airshow" can accomodate from 20.000 to 200.000 spectators. Million spectators applauded this restoration of an enormous historical interest. It became a classic for the organizers of air air shows. Our plane also took part in several historical films, reports, emissions and television shows and it is the object each year of many articles in the press and the specialized Belgian, French, English, American, Dutch, German or Czech press...

The "Sabena Old Timers" are today an always growing group of volunteers dedicated to old aeroplanes. We work all in the same spirit: "Keep' em flying". The Association is strong of more than 120 members, including 35 persons active with the restoration of the Lodestar, the Tiger Moth and with the maintenance of Lysander.



2. THE AIRCRAFT : DESCRIPTION, HISTORY, CURRENT STATE

THE LOCKHEED L18 LODESTAR :

L18-56, Ser.n° 2427, Fab. 1942, former reg. N7001

TECHNICAL DATA :	Span	19,95 m	
	Length	15,20 m	
	Height	3,60 m	
	Engine	2 x Wright <<Cyclone>> 1820/56 de 1200 CV	
	Passengers	14 + 1 cabin + 2 crew	
	Empty weight	5760 kg	
	Weight on takeoff	9530 kg	
	Maximum speed.	415 km/h	Cruise
	speed	380 km/h	
	Range	1800-2850 km	
	Constructor	Lockheed Aircraft Corporation Burbank (California)	

History :

This plane is of an enormous historical interest.

Civil :

The family of the Lockheed L10,12,14 and L18 were built from 1933 to 1945 in great quantities. These aircraft held during years quantities of records of exploitation and performances. In 1936, a L12 beats the record for the crossing of the USA. The Lockheed was faster than the fighters of the time. At the beginning of 1937, Amelia Earhart prepared her Lockheed Model 10E in order to carry out a round the the world flight from East to West. She will disappear at sea and each one knows all the mystery which surrounds this disappearance on which the assumptions are still quite contradictory. In 1938 Howard Hughes beats the speed record in flying around the world in 3 days and 17hours flying a model L14. This will remain the fastest airliner of the world until the arrival of Lockheed Constellation. Rapid and profitable, L18 is the lengthened version of the L14 and is bought to hundreds of specimens by many companies like *Pan Am*, *TWA*, *Northwest*, *KLM*, *British Airways*, *LOT*, *Air France* and **SABENA**.

After World War II, in 1945, SABENA reopen the line Leopoldville-Bruxelles with a L18 Lodestar.



▲ OO-CAJ : Lodestar remis à la Sabena et immatriculé au Congo le 03.08.1941



AT WAR :

The Lockheed were used by thousands (6486!) in several versions ("Hudson", "Ventura" and "Harpoon") in the bombardment, transport, anti-submarine roles. It was a Hudson who shot down the first German plane destroyed by a RAF aircraft in WWII. "Hudsons" also attacked the *Scharnhorst* et *Gneisenau* battle cruisers.



◀ A Lockheed L 14 "Hudson"

Another Model 14-WF-62 registered G-AFGN owned by British Airways Ltd was the actor of an another important historic event. This aircraft transported the British Prime Minister Neville Chamberlain and his suite to the too famous conference of Munich with the chancellor Adolph Hitler, on September 22th, 1938.

In 1942, the King of England personal Lodestar was delivered to the British secret service for use by Squadron 161. The Lockheed was then used for clandestine operations at the sides of Lysanders and carried personalities like *Charles De Gaulle*, *François Mitterrand*, or *Jean Moulin* ...

The Lockheed L18-56, Lodestar N7001, acquired by the association :

From a letter of Mr. Patrick Fourticq, Commander at Air France, Director of the Operations of the Aeropostale company and ex-owner of the wreck:

"This aircraft was bought by Moët&Chandon in 1986 for a media operation which consisted in remaking the round the World flight performed by Howard Hughes in a Lodestar in 1938. This operation was a considerable success. The plane, bought in Miami, had been completely rebuilt, with large expenses by the IGN in France. Work of very high level by professionals. In 1987, the aircraft was in a mechanical state higher than a new plane! (Modifications, instrumentation etc...). Only the interior had remained in cargo version. The plane was US registered (N7001) but all the taxes having been discharged it has freedom of movement in Europe. It is always classified FAR125 (transport of passengers and freight). We flew without any concern to destinations like Paris, North Pole, Fairbanks, Los Angeles, Miami, New York, Alexandria, Sanaa, Mombasa, La Réunion, then Egypt etc. Nearly 400 hours of flight"

Our L18 will be the **only flying specimen** in Europe. Our first research leads us to think that it does not remain about more than six in the world. Our Lodestar is so a rare plane.



▲ Dismantling and transport of the aircraft to Brussels



HISTORY OF THE SABENA LOCKHEED :

The Lockheed is an important aircraft of the history of Sabena. During the Second World War, it represented the will of the Belgian aviators exiled in Congo, to continue the combat at the sides of the allies, in spite of the occupation of their country.

Here following is an extract of the history of the planes of Sabena ", by A. Vanthemsche one of our members unfortunately today deceased, published in the Brussels Air Museum Magazine (AELR):

"The declaration of war, September 3rd, 1939, puts an end to the majority of flying activities of the SABENA in Europe. After the armistice of June 25th, 1940, the planes of the SABENA are put at the chain. In August, all these aircrafts, based in Oran and Algiers, are confiscated by Vichy and given to the Italians (Régia Aeronautica and Ala Littoria). All the fleet of Europe thus disappeared in the storm..."

In Africa: "The colony, under the energetic control of the general governor Pierre Ryckmans, decides to continue the fight at the sides of the British. In a completely unexpected way the air potential will be reinforced with two Lockheed L 14 "Electra".... Two planes at the disposal of the Vichy government travelled towards Madagascar: "During the return flight, the two planes make a technical stopover at Elisabethville (Lumbumbashi)... The occasion was too beautiful and as retaliatory measure for the arbitrary act of Vichy, the general governor Ryckmans makes seize both Lockheed "Electra". They are registered in Congo. F-ARIY becomes the OO-CAG and F-ARIV is registered OO-CAH. They are placed at the disposal of the SABENA. The legend wants that the pilots Van Opstal and F Henquin, without any preparation, take off Electra..."

The aircraft of SABENA unceasingly fly the African sky from Takoradi to Cairo and from Elisabethville to the Cape During the Imperial Conference in Brazzaville in February 1944, under the presidency of General de Gaulle, the French personalities are not only transported by French planes, but Lockheed OOCAG, OO-CAS and OO-CAV are also of the part.

In Europe, after June 6, 1944. "One of the concern of the Pierlot government was the re-establishment of the connections between the colony and Europe. .On September 13th, 1944, a first flight takes place between Léopoldville (Kinshasa) and London, via Lagos Casablanca, Lisbon. Pilot chief OJ Van Ackere is at the control of the Lockheed. The link with Brussels is not made, because the town hardly has been just liberated and Belgium was still within the immediate proximity of the war zone. It will take still almost a year to attend the first connection between Léopoldville and Brussels. On July 8, 1945, the OO-CAV leaves Léo and arrives to Brussels the 10. The Lodestar followed the road Gao, Aoulef, etc... On July 14th the return flight towards the colony takes place via Algiers and Lagos. The first links towards London and Paris, on September 1st 1945 are also performed made by French Lockheed, but Lodestar OO-CAG, OO-CAS and OOCAG are used on this road.



✦ Arrival of the first flight
Léopoldville- Bruxelles,
Flow by chief pilot Jo Van Ackere
on July, 10th 1945



3.

RESTORATION :

A committee of 7 pilots, engineers and technicians was formed to supervise the restoration of the Lockheed. This committee is charged to develop a restoration program, a program of maintenance and a handbook of operations. These documents will be presented to the approval of the Technical Management of the Administration of Aeronautics and the Lodestar will be registered on the civil aviation register. A navigability certificate will be obtained allowing transport of passengers and the flights by bad weather conditions (IFR).

A team of 10 voluntary technicians began the restoration works in April 1999. The duration of 3 years for the work is estimated with current manpower.

The total cost of the restoration is estimated at 136.341,00 €. This sum will be obtained by the benefits coming from the exploitation of the Lysander and by sponsoring.

RELATION SABENA TECHNICS – SABENA OLD TIMERS:

In May 1998, Sabena Technics S.A. recognized that of the restoration work of Sabena Old Timers, not only highlights technical qualities of Sabena Technics but also generate publicity for Sabena, mainly at the time of the presentation on the ground and in flight of the restored planes. It was recognized that Sabena Old Timers have a essential need for support and close cooperation of Sabena Technics in various fields to complete their restoration work and that Sabena Technics S.A intend to support the Sabena Old Timers.

A Convention between Sabena Technics and Sabena Old Timers ASBL/VZW was written and will be adapted to the new rules established by the European Authorities. Our plane being a plane of collection, it would be exempted of certain constraints.



◀ Dismantling the wings



Arrival of the aircraft at the Old timers facilities in
Zaventem ▶





4.

EXPLOITATION :

OTHER EUROPEAN EXAMPLES OF EXPLOITATION OF HISTORICAL PLANES :

- Berlin: Lufthansa restored a Junker 52 and exploits it successfully since many years everywhere in Europe and all the year.
 - Zurich: Swissair accomplished historical flights Zurich - New York on a DC4. The operation initially planned for 2 months was prolonged during 7 months due to "overbooking".
 - Paris: Air Inter exploits a DC3 called "l'envolée Air Inter".
 - Amsterdam: The Association "Dutch Dakota" uses 4 planes (DC3 and DC4).
- There is not similar initiative in Brussels, the place is thus to take.

THE EXEMPLE "JUAIR".

Flying personnel and mechanics of Swissair exploit since many years Junkers "Ju52". One of Ju52 is sponsored by "Milka". These planes accomplish "historical" flights each year from April to October. The success of these promotional flights is such as it is necessary to hold the places more than 9 months in advance. The request for this kind of flight is such as the operation initially started with only one aircraft, now three and a fourth is in the course of restoration.

During the airshow of Paris/La Ferté 1999, in which our Lysander took part, "JUAIR" proposed flights in a Junkers 52 to the 40.000 spectators present. The plane flew without interruption during the 2 days, always full loaded.





HOW WE PLANTO OPERATE THE LODESTAR :

THE CREWS :

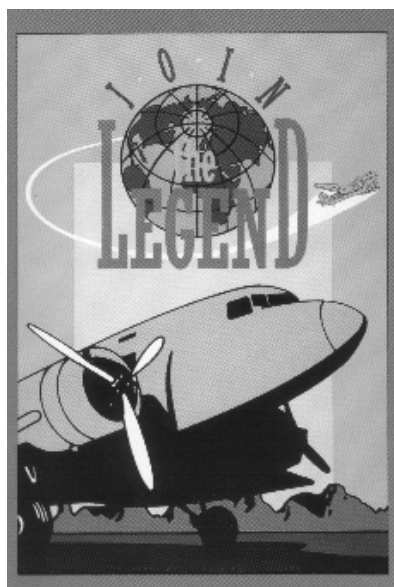
The board of directors of the ASBL will decide who will operate the plane. The pilots and copilots all will be of the professionals wishing to control Lodestar voluntarily. They will be selected among the airline pilots according to their experience and their aptitude to operate this type of historical machine. They will follow a qualification on Lodestar inspired by the methods in force in the Belgian companies in the tradition of our old company Sabena.

THE MAINTENANCE :

Maintenance will be performed by the qualified mechanics of the association. The seat of flight engineer, non obligatory legally, will be reserved for voluntary having taken an active part in the restoration and maintenance. They will receive a qualification of flight engineer "interns", delivered by association as a recognition.

Considered operations:

- **Air shows :**
At air shows, aircraft of the same class as our Lodestar often perform "first flight" making so possible to reduce the expenses of participation. Our experiment with Lysander enables us to hope for about fifteen annual participations in air shows.
- **Historical flights :**
The experience of Lufthansa *D-AQUI*, "*Dutch Dakota*" and *JUAIR* show the interest from the public for flights in historical aircraft. This kind of flight could easily be organised with the Lodestar from Zaventem or from regional airports.
- **The Raids :**
Some raids were performed in the last years on the tracks of aviation's pioneers *The Course à la Vanille*, *Londres - The Cap*, *le record d'Howard Hughes*, *Opération Okavango*, *sur les traces de l'Aéropostale...* Followed by TV teams, thoses raids had, every time, an strong impact in the media. We propose to reanacte the flight on the **Léopoldville** (Kinshasa), **Lagos**, **Casablanca**, **Lisbonne**, **Bruxelles** road, 65 years after the historic flight of 1945.
- **Incentive flights :**
"Incentive" operations are more and more organised by companies. We received some requests to offer this kind of services. The Lodestar will answer theses needs.



Dutch Dakota propose "incentive" flights
To Dutch companies



Postal address of the ASBL/VZW :

Sabena Old Timers ASBL/VZW

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Administrator :	Mme Cammaerts	Promotion and boutique responsible
Administrator :	Mr. Kok José	Retired Technician
Administrator :	Mr. Barré Paul	Engineer, retired technical manager

Membres :

In January 2006, the membership of the association was 122 members including 44 acting, 76 sympathizers and 2 members of honor

This history of our association had been written by our pilot Yves Cartilier. We thank him.

The update was performed by Daniel Stockmans with the agreement of the author.