

## The *Graf Zeppelin* (LZ-127) Makes the First Airship Flight Around the World



*A 1929 German postcard commemorating the event*

In August of 1929 the German airship *Graf Zeppelin* made the first flight by an airship around the world. Because the flight was primarily financed by William Randolph Hearst, the American newspaper publisher, the flight started and ended in Lakehurst, New Jersey.

The *Graf Zeppelin*, with Dr. Hugo Eckener at the helm, flew from Friedrichshafen, Germany to Lakehurst in late July. It began its historic flight around the world on August 7<sup>th</sup> at 11:42 PM. It flew to Friedrichshafen where it had a four day layover. During this time a meticulous inspection was made to ensure everything was in tip-top shape for the longest leg of the flight.



*Doctor Hugo Eckener*

On August 15 it left Friedrichshafen bound for Tokyo where it arrived in the evening of the 19<sup>th</sup>. Originally it had been planned that the airship would fly over Moscow, however, due to the prevailing weather conditions; it was deemed to be unwise to do this. Stalin was incensed and felt slighted. To appease him a flight was scheduled for the following year that would fly over Moscow.

The flight from Tokyo to Los Angeles began on August 23<sup>rd</sup>. As the airship was approaching the Pacific coast of the United States, Dr. Eckener decided to time the flight in such a manner that they would fly over San Francisco and the Golden Gate Bridge just before sundown, which made for spectacular views as the ship gleamed in the evening sunlight. The dirigible arrived in Los Angeles on August 26 in the early morning.

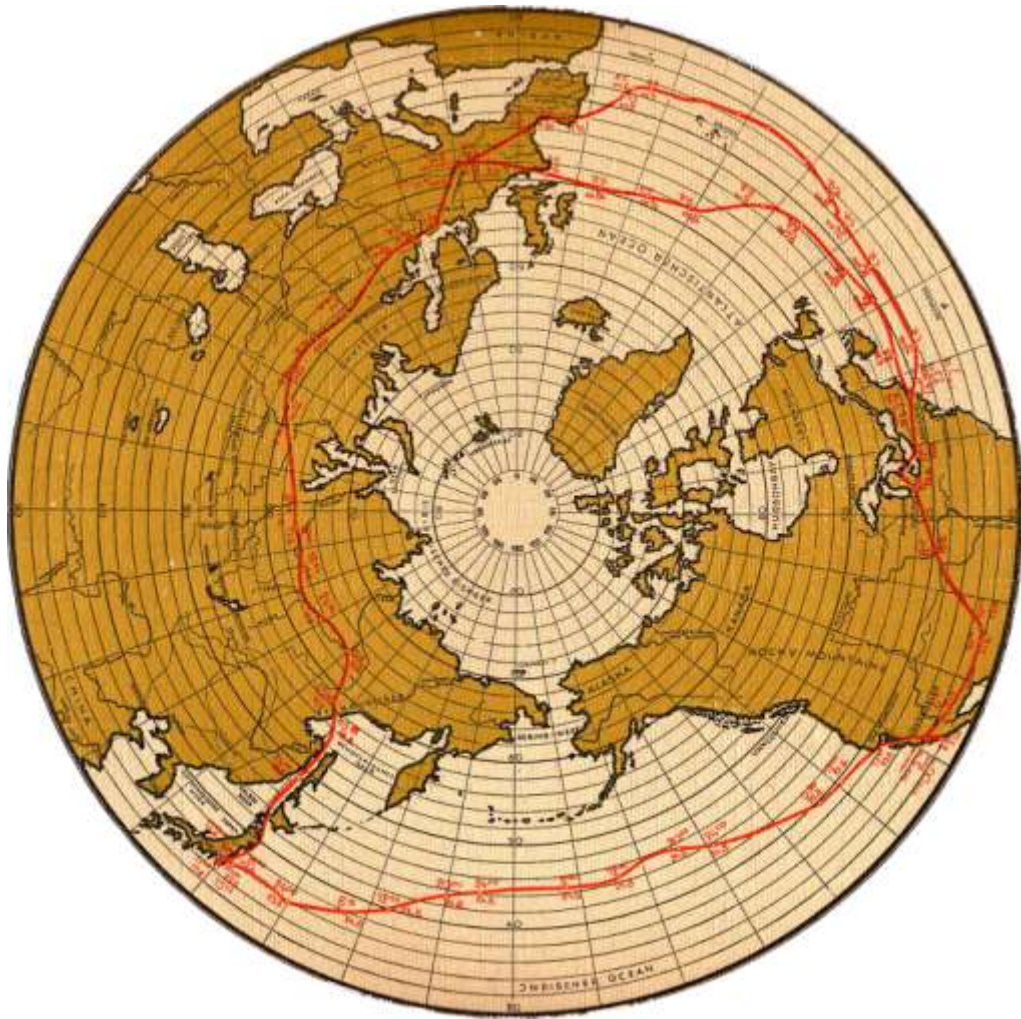
The last leg of the flight began shortly after midnight, August 27. On its way to the East Coast and Lakehurst the *Graf Zeppelin* flew over several cities including Kansas City, Chicago, Detroit, Cleveland and Akron. It moored at Lakehurst in the morning of August 29.

Although this concluded the round-the-world flight sponsored by Hearst, in Germany the round-the world flight was deemed to have originated and ended in Friedrichshafen where the airship arrived on Sept 4.

<b>From</b>	<b>To</b>	<b>Depart</b>	<b>Arrival</b>	<b>Kms flown</b>	<b>Miles flown</b>
Lakehurst	Friedrichshafen	Aug 7 11:45 PM	Aug 10 1:05 PM	7067	4391
Friedrichshafen	Tokyo	Aug 15 4:30 AM	Aug 19 6:30 PM	11243	6986
Tokyo	Los Angeles	Aug 23 3:15 PM	Aug 26 5:15 AM	9653	5998
Los Angeles	Lakehurst	Aug 27 12:15 AM	Aug 29 7:15 AM	4822	2996
Lakehurst	Friedrichshafen	Sep 1 7:15 AM	Sep 4 8:45 AM	8478	5268

The last leg from Lakehurst to Friedrichshafen followed a more southerly path, thereby increasing the flying time and distance.

In addition to having been the first round-the-world flight made by an airship, it was the first round-the-world flight carrying passengers. It was also the first non-stop crossing of the Pacific Ocean by an aircraft. Lady Drummond-Hay who was on the flight covering it for the Hearst newspapers, became the first woman to cross the Pacific ocean by air and also the first woman to fly around the world.



*Time Magazine cover  
September 16, 1929*