

## Goodyear Airship "Pilgrim"

After having experimented with a series of small Pony blimps in the early 1920's, The Goodyear Tire and Rubber Company of Akron, Ohio designed the first blimp to be inflated with helium. The Pilgrim was completed on May 25, 1925 and made first flight on June 3. For the first flights the airship was inflated with hydrogen. After six weeks, on July 18, the Pilgrim was inflated with helium and christened by the wife of the president of Goodyear, P. W. Litchfield.

The Pilgrim had a magnesium-coated steel-tube framework. The envelope was made of 2-ply, rubberized fabric coated with aluminum. The envelope initially had a 47,400 cu. ft (1,340 m<sup>3</sup>) capacity. It was later replaced by a 55,000 cu. ft. (1,1560 m3) envelope.

It was powered by a single 3- cylinder Lawrence air-cooled engine with a 4-bladed Reed push propeller. A 40 gallon fuel tank gave it a 525 mile range (at 40 mph, 60 km/h). At half speed it had an endurance of 13 hours. The gondola could seat 1 pilot and 2 passengers. The payload was 921 lb (417 kg).

The Pilgrim last flew on December 10, 1931. In 4,765 flights it carried 5,355 passengers, logged 2880 hrs, and flew 94,974 mi (152,845 km.). It was dismantled in 1932.



*The gondola is on display at the Smithsonian's Steven F. Udvar-Hazy Center in Chantilly, VA*



*The Pilgrim atop the O'Neil's building in Akron, Ohio*