

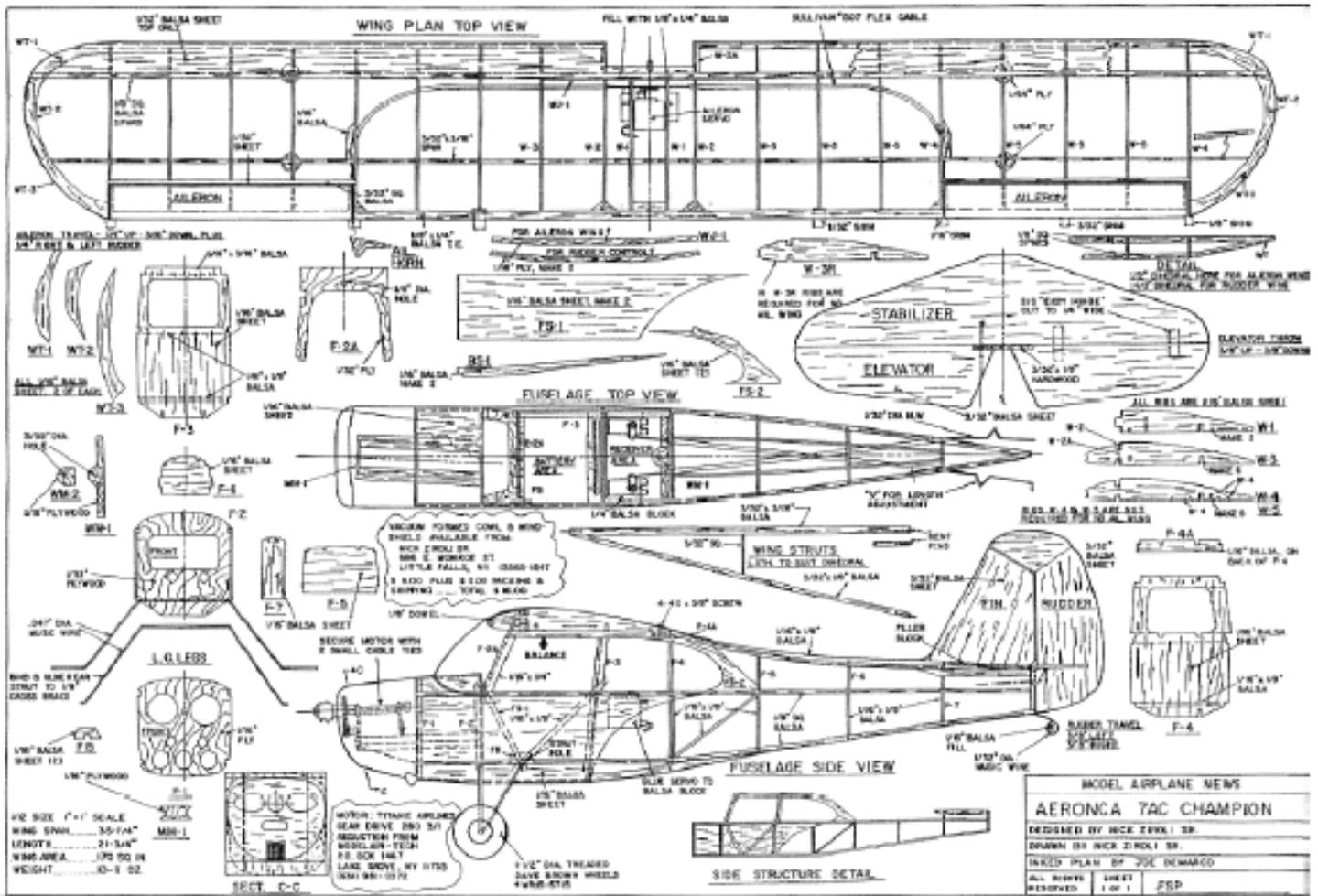


63" and 35" Plan



Aeronca, contracted from Aeronautical Corporation of America, located in [Middletown, Ohio](#), is a US [manufacturer](#) of [engine](#) components and [airframe](#) structures for [commercial aviation](#) and the [defense industry](#). In the 1930s and 1940s, the company was a major producer of [general aviation aircraft](#), and also produced the engines for some of their early designs.

Aeronca has now become a division of [Magellan Aerospace](#), producing aircraft, missile, and space vehicle components at the same location adjacent to Middletown's Hook Field.





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The **Aeronca Aircraft Corporation** was founded November 11, 1928 in [Cincinnati, Ohio](#). Backed by the financial and political support of the prominent Taft family and future Ohio senator [Robert A. Taft](#) who was one of the firm's directors, Aeronca became the first company to build a commercially successful [general aviation aircraft](#).^[1] When production ended in 1951, Aeronca had sold 17,408 aircraft in 55 models.



Aeronca C-2 registered *CF-AOR* in the [Canada Aviation Museum](#), Rockcliffe (Ottawa) Ontario, 2006

Production began with the [Jean A. Roche](#)-designed [Aeronca C-2 monoplane](#), often called the "Flying Bathtub", in [1929](#). The next major model was the [Scout](#) of [1937](#), a two-seater, which was developed into the [Chief](#) and [Super Chief](#) the next year.

In 1937 there was a major [flood](#) at the [Lunken Airport](#), resulting in the entire airport area being washed away. Aeronca's factory was destroyed, along with the tooling and almost all of the very early blueprints and drawings. At this time a decision was made to move the operation to a more stable area. Middletown, Ohio was chosen, and the company has remained there ever since. All of the airplanes produced from the start of production in 1929 to 1937 are known as the "Lunken" Aeroncas. The first Aeronca built in Middletown was produced on June 5, 1940, and after this time all Aeroncas were built here.

World War II



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The [Defender](#), a tandem trainer version of the Chief with a higher rear seat, was used in training many of the [pilots](#) who flew in [World War II](#). Several observation and [liaison aircraft](#) designs were also produced during and after the war, including the [L-3](#), [L-16](#) and [O-58](#).



1940 Aeronca 11AC Chief

Postwar

In 1945, following the end of World War II, Aeronca returned to civilian production with two new models, the [7AC Champion](#) and the [11AC Chief](#). While the Champ shared its tandem seating arrangement with the prewar tandem trainer and the Chief shared its name with the prewar Chief designs, both were new designs. A benefit of the concurrent development was that the new designs had about 80% of their parts in common. Nevertheless, the Champ was favored by the public, evidenced by its outselling its sibling at a rate of 4 to 1. Between 1945 and 1951, nearly 8,000 Champions were manufactured; while over the same period, approximately 2,000 Chiefs were produced.



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1946 7AC Champion

New ownership

Aeronca ceased light aircraft production in 1951, and in 1954 sold the Champion design to the new [Champion Aircraft Corporation](#) of [Osceola, Wisconsin](#), which continued building variants of the Champion as well as the derivative design, the [Citabria](#). The venerable aircraft design was acquired again by the [Bellanca Aircraft Company](#) in 1970 and again to [American Champion](#) in 1988, where it remains in production.

In 1978 Aeronca planned to start aircraft production again with production of a prototype [Foxjet ST600](#). The project was eventually cancelled due to lack of WR-44 engine availability.^[2] Aeronca now builds components for aerospace companies including [Boeing](#), [Northrop Grumman](#), [Lockheed](#) and [Airbus](#). In its 23-year history as a general aviation and military aviation manufacturer, Aeronca produced 17,408 aircraft spanning 55 different models