

Kinner, Poyer...Connor?

Ever hear of a Connor three-cylinder radial engine? Neither have we, but we have one, and up until a few weeks ago it was sitting unassembled on an attic shelf. Unfortunately, we have no donor record for it. All we know is that the engine was manufactured by the Connor Motor Co. of Charles City, Iowa. Is this a prototype? Did the design ever see production, perhaps under another name? And what happened to the Connor Motor Co.? Answers or speculations are welcome at Editorial@EAA.org with EAA's Attic in the subject line or write to EAA at P.O. Box 3086, Oshkosh, WI, 54903.

For August's "Instrument Conundrum," Tom Inglin (EAA 577215) came through an hour before I wrote this column. Phew, thanks, Tom!

Tom learned from U.S. Patent No. 1,988,463 that Carl Schenk of Los Angeles invented the airplane attitude indicator shown in

our August photo. His lawyers filed the patent application on September 4, 1929, which was granted on January 22, 1935.

"Basically," writes Tom, "it is a suction-powered gyro configured like a child's spinning top that displays an aircraft's bank and pitch across the hemispherical glass dome as the frame moves with the aircraft, but the spinning top stays still relative to the horizon. Key elements of the invention appear to be the hemispherical cup that the needle on the bottom of the spinning rotor rests within and the movable weights within the rotor..."

The patent doesn't address the skip-slip indicator, so details about that instrument remain a mystery. See

Schenk's attitude indicator patent and an improved version (U.S. Patent No. 1,989,826) at www.AirVentureMuseum.org/attic.

—Kathleen L. Witman

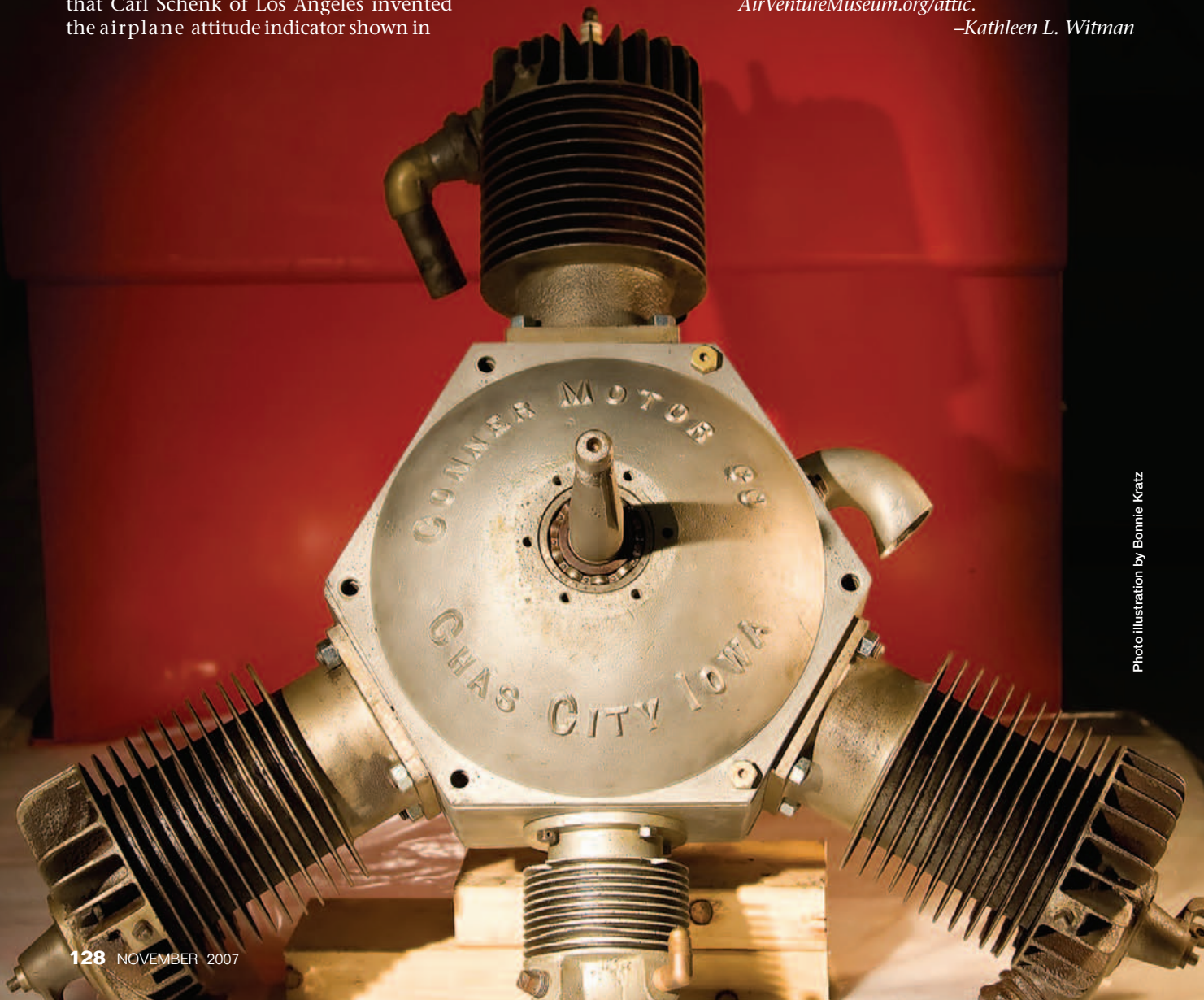


Photo illustration by Bonnie Kratz