

Airport History

Whitney Memorial Airport –

The 1st location of the "Albert G. Whitney Memorial" Airport was 3 miles southeast of the town of St. Cloud, as described in the Airport Directory Company's 1933 Airport Directory (courtesy of Chris Kennedy). At some point between 1933-38, the airport was relocated to the location described here (1.5 miles northwest of St. Cloud), as described in the Airport Directory Company's 1938 Airport Directory (courtesy of Chris Kennedy). The airfield was described as consisting of a 3,320' x 2,574' rectangular sod field. According to John Evans, "The Whitneys were a very wealthy family that owned a lot of Northern States Power Company & gave the land for use as an airport."

According to the [St. Cloud Hospital](#), Whitney Memorial Airport was built in the late 1930s. The airport had a revolving beacon light marking the airport, But this disturbed the sleep of patients in the nearby hospital, so the city & the hospital agreed to move the beacon to the roof of the hospital. This allowed the patients to sleep in peace and gave the beacon light a wider range since the hospital was the highest structure near the airport. John Evans recalled, "The beacon for the Whitney Field was on top of the nearby St. Cloud Hospital. We lived directly across the Mississippi River from the hospital. The beacon was a constant in my life each night. I would fall asleep with the reassuring soft green & white light coming through my bedroom window."

The 1960 Jeppesen Airway Manual (courtesy of Chris Kennedy) depicted Whitney Memorial Airport as having 3 paved runways, with the 4,000' Runway 5/23 being the longest. Taxiways led to a ramp on the east side of the field with several buildings arranged in a semicircle. The 1962 AOPA Airport Directory described Whitney Memorial Airport as having 3 bituminous runways: 4,300' Runway 5/23, 3,500' Runway 1/19, and 3,000' Runway 13/31. The airport had hangars & offered charter services. The operator was listed as St. Cloud Flying Service, Inc.

The new St. Cloud Municipal Airport opened in 1970 at a site 3 miles east of the city, at which point Whitney Memorial Airport apparently closed.

http://www.airfieldsfreeman.com/MN/Airfields_MN_Minneapolis.htm

Airport Timeline

1912

- First Flight in St. Cloud on Oct. 8 by Dr. F.M. Bell
- Took off from Lake George, but was forced to make an emergency landing just outside the city

1935

- Whitney Memorial Airport was first St. Cloud Airport
- Located 1.5 miles Northwest of St. Cloud
- 173 acre grass field
- Land donated by Alice Whitney as a memorial to her late husband, local businessman Albert Whitney

1943-44

- Whitney Airport undergoes capital improvements
- Runways extended and an administrative building constructed
- Airfield increased to 200 acres

1957

- St. Cloud Flying Service opens
- Airport's first full service fbo

1969-70

- Construction of new St. Cloud Airport
- Located 4 miles East of the city
- Whitney Airport closes due to land constraints
- St. Cloud Municipal Airport opens
- Operated by the City Of St. Cloud

1993

- Northwest Airlink / Mesaba Airlines begins commercial service
- Flights to Minneapolis and surrounding communities
- Service utilizes 19 seat turboprop aircraft

1995

- Airline terminal building opens
- 10,000 square feet
- Project cost \$1.5 million

1996

- Mesaba improves air service
- Begins operating 34 seat turboprop aircraft

2000

- Master Plan updated
- Runway improvement project

- Resurfaced / Lengthened Main Runway 13-31

2004

- Coffee shop opens at airport
- Air Traffic Control Tower becomes operational

2005

- Snow removal equipment storage building completed
- Airport perimeter fencing heightened