

ON THIS DAY IN WEST VIRGINIA HISTORY NOVEMBER 3



Dedication of Kanawha Airport, 3 November 1947

The Kanawha Airport in Charleston, now known as Yeager Airport, was dedicated on November 3, 1947.

CSO: SS.8.6, SS.8.8, ELA.8.1

Investigate the Document:

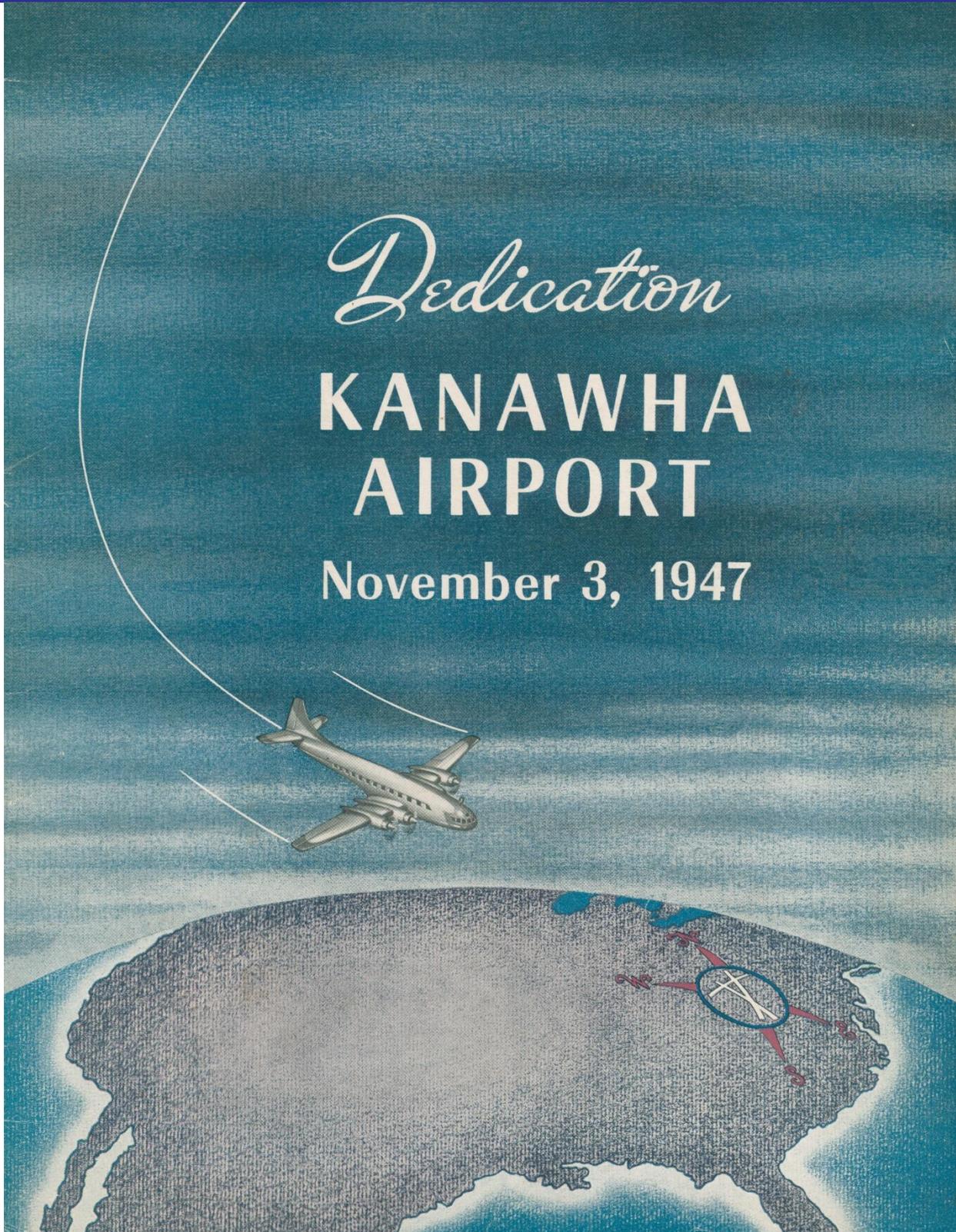
1. How many workers were injured during the construction of the Kanawha Airport (now Yeager Airport)?
2. Were the Senators and Representatives representing West Virginia in favor of the bill that would appropriate nearly three-million dollars towards the construction of the Kanawha Airport?

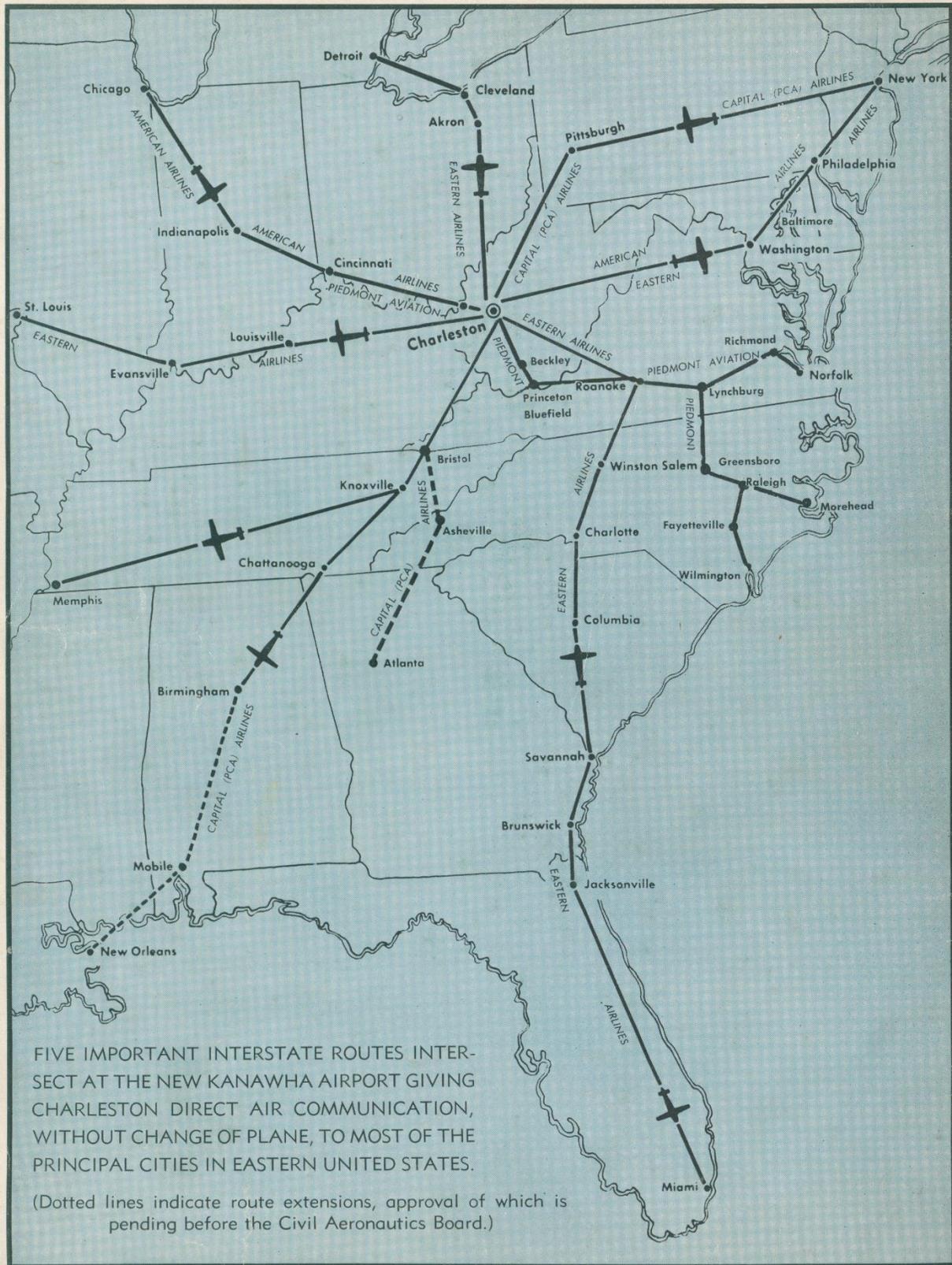
Think Critically: What are the economic and social benefits of having the Kanawha Airport (now Yeager Airport) in Charleston? What nearby cities does the airport have as destinations for travelers in the area? Does the airport allow for interstate commerce and cargo to be transported from place-to-place? What is the name of this airport today? For whom is it named?

Dedication

KANAWHA
AIRPORT

November 3, 1947





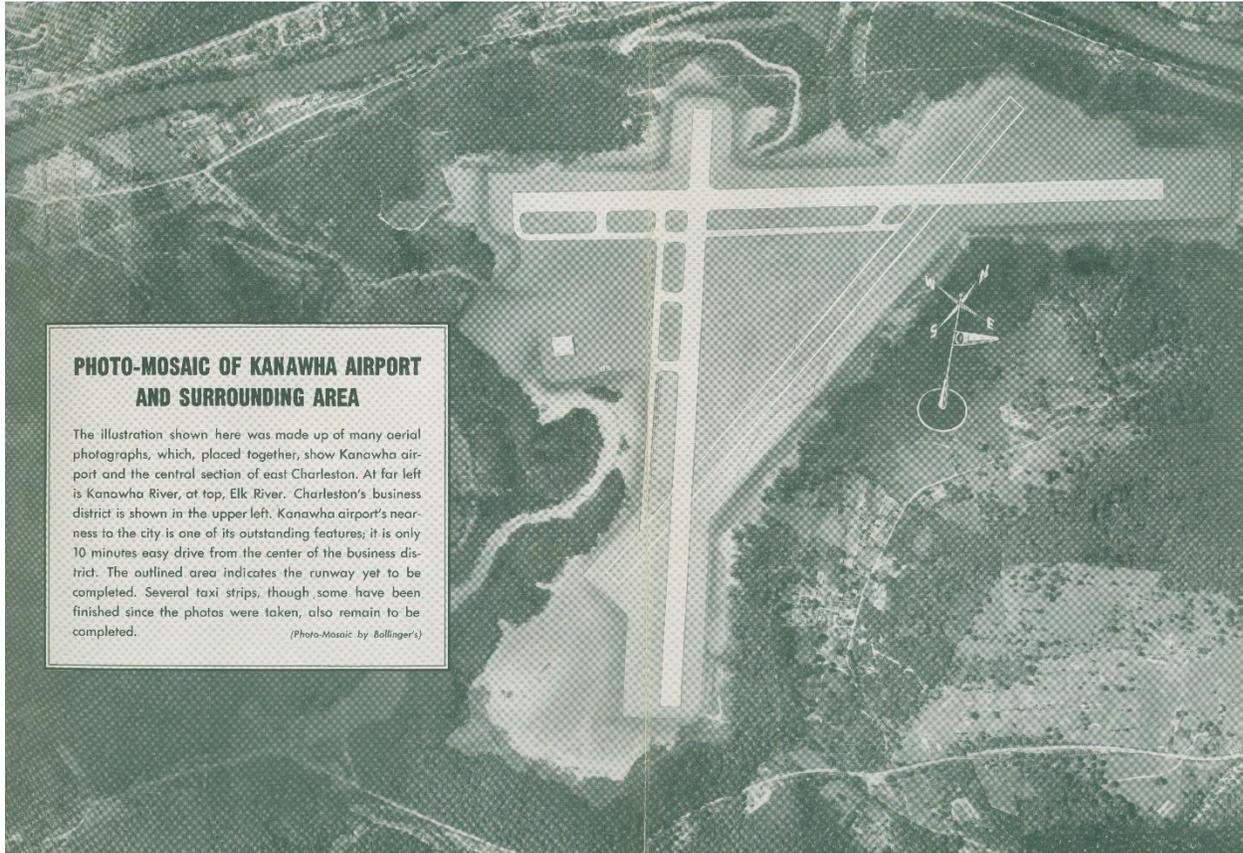


PHOTO-MOSAIC OF KANAWHA AIRPORT AND SURROUNDING AREA

The illustration shown here was made up of many aerial photographs, which, placed together, show Kanawha airport and the central section of east Charleston. At far left is Kanawha River, at top, Elk River. Charleston's business district is shown in the upper left. Kanawha airport's nearness to the city is one of its outstanding features; it is only 10 minutes easy drive from the center of the business district. The outlined area indicates the runway yet to be completed. Several taxi strips, though some have been finished since the photos were taken, also remain to be completed.

(Photo-Mosaic by Ballinger's)



Car approach to proposed Administration building.

THOSE WHO BUILT KANAWHA AIRPORT

MEMBERS OF THE COUNTY COURT OF KANAWHA COUNTY

CARL C. CALVERT, *President*

MONT L. CAVENDER

J. G. CARPER

DALE G. CASTO, *Attorney for the Court*

FRED C. ALLEY, *Construction Representative of the County Court*

W. T. BROTHERTON, *Former President of the County Court*

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G. W. VAN HORN

GEORGE COYLE

C. E. HODGES

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ROGER CREEL

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JOHN WOODRUM

R. G. KELLY

LESTER RIDENAUER

EXECUTIVE SUB-COMMITTEE OF THE ADVISORY GROUP

W. F. FICKLEN

D. M. GILTINAN

R. G. KELLY

DEAN P. REED

JESSE V. SULLIVAN

CHAS. E. HODGES

D. N. MOHLER

Engineers: WHITMAN, REQUARDT AND ASSOCIATES, Baltimore, Maryland.

Supervision of Construction: AIRWAYS ENGINEERING DIVISION OF C.A.A., New York

Grading and Drainage: HARRISON CONSTRUCTION COMPANY, Pittsburgh, Pa.

Paving Contractor: ALLEGHENY ASPHALT COMPANY, Pittsburgh, Pa.

Lighting Contractor: MARIGOLD ELECTRIC COMPANY, Philadelphia, Pa.

Clearing Off Land: F. C. HORN, Charleston, West Virginia

Hangar Contractor: IRWIN NEWMAN COMPANY, Houston, Texas

Architects for Proposed Administration Building: TUCKER & SILLING, Charleston

Temporary Administration Building: KUHN CONSTRUCTION CO., Charleston

*Deceased.

KANAWHA VALLEY AIR SERVICE

Passenger, mail, and express service are certificated for the new Kanawha Airport over the routes listed below. Regular air freight service is also a strong probability soon after the commencement of other services scheduled December 1, 1947.

AMERICAN AIRLINES—Between New York and Chicago, serving the intermediate cities of Philadelphia, Baltimore, Washington, Charleston, Cincinnati, and Indianapolis.

CAPITAL AIRLINES—Between New York and Birmingham-Memphis, serving the intermediate cities of Pittsburgh, Wheeling, Charleston, Bristol, Knoxville, and Chattanooga. Extension of this route to New Orleans, via Mobile, has been recommended by CAB examiners and is now pending.

EASTERN AIRLINES—Between New York and St. Louis, serving the intermediate cities of Washington, Charleston, Frankfort-Lexington, Louisville, and Evansville.

EASTERN AIRLINES—Between Detroit and Miami, serving the intermediate cities of Cleveland, Akron, Charleston, Roanoke, Winston-Salem, Charlotte, Columbia, Jacksonville, and West Palm Beach.

PIEDMONT AVIATION*—Between Norfolk and Cincinnati, serving the intermediate cities of Richmond, Lynchburg, Roanoke, and Charleston. Service is also authorized into Charlottesville, Va., Bluefield, Beckley, and Huntington, W. Va., and into Portsmouth, Ohio, when these latter cities can provide adequate airport facilities. Piedmont was awarded this route in April, 1947, but issuance of the certificate has been withheld pending the outcome of rehearing on successful petition therefor by another applicant.

ALL-AMERICAN AVIATION—Between Pittsburgh and Huntington, carrying only mail and express, and serving more than a score of Western Pennsylvania and West Virginia towns and cities, at most of which, mail and express are picked up and dropped on the fly. The company operates four flights daily, two northbound, and two southbound. Since October 1, 1947, it has been using the new Kanawha Airport. All flights now land at the new airport.

In addition to the above service, Capital Airlines has pending an application to amend its present route certificate so as to permit service from Bristol, Tenn., through Asheville, N. C., to Atlanta, Georgia. Similarly, Eastern Airlines has announced it will shortly seek to amend its Miami-Detroit route certificates so as to permit direct flights between Charleston, W. Va., and Atlanta, instead of via Greensboro, N. C., or Columbia, S. C. (intersections on its New York-Atlanta route) as CAB regulations now require. Either, or both of these additions, if approved, will provide direct and improved service between Charleston and Atlanta.

*Approved but not yet certificated.





AIRPORT BRIEFS

People from all over the United States, from Sweden, England, Cuba, South America and other foreign countries visited Kanawha Airport during its construction. In many instances they were part of commissions sent to make studies of the most modern methods of moving earth.

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An excellent safety record was made during construction. In moving more than nine million cubic yards of earth there were only three injuries, each caused by falling stones.

★ ★ ★

Detailed stories, excellently illustrated, appeared in many business publications and in national advertisements. *Contractor & Engineer* published two stories on the airport, other stories appeared in *Road & Streets*, *County Officer*, *Engineering News Record*, and *American City*.

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Forty feet from the top, or at the 1030' elevation, workmen uncovered millions of fossilized fern leaves, which disintegrated shortly after exposure. Just below this was a deposit of large boulders and petrified tree trunks. Under this was a two and a half foot seam of coal, in a bed 100 feet in diameter. All of which, the workmen concluded, indicated that the spot at one time was a pond, and one of the low places of the area.

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An idea of the magnitude of the Airport project may be gathered from the following facts: 360 acres of mountainous land was cleared and grubbed before the excavation was started. The county purchased over 760 acres in the area, and the airport proper takes up about 365 of this amount. The balance will be developed into parks.

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The paving on taxi-ways, runways and aprons, if converted into 20-foot roadways eight inches thick, would approximate 30 miles of highway.

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A special 1½-inch pipe line, extending 4,000 feet from a rail siding up to the hill-top site, was used by the contractor to bring in the 2,500 gallons of diesel fuel needed daily to operate the more than 200 pieces of equipment. As a consequence, one fuel truck was needed only half-time on the project, instead of two large trucks steadily plying up and down the hill.

The airport has approximately 225,000 square yards of paving on runways, taxi-ways and loading ramps; 27,000 linear feet of electric cable for field lighting; 60,000 linear feet of drainage pipe ranging from 6 to 30 inches; 15,000 feet of telephone conduit.

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The access road to the new airport was constructed as a project of the State Road Commission. The road is 1.061 miles in length from the intersection with the Ruffner Hollow road. The paving is 22 feet wide on a 36-foot graded right-of-way. Grading and draining of the road was itself a major project, requiring removal of 300,000 cubic yards of earth.

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The grading alone, on the big project, cost approximately \$4½ million, or 34 times the cost of the site.

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When the bill providing a \$2,750,000 special appropriation directly allocated to the new Kanawha Airport came before Congress in 1945, all of West Virginia's Senators and Representatives "went to bat" to obtain its passage. Those who shared in this outstanding achievement were United States Senators Chapman Revercomb and Harley M. Kilgore, and Representatives Jennings Randolph, M. M. Neely, E. H. Hedrick, Cleveland Bailey, John Kee, and Hubert Ellis.

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In moving the more than 9,000,000 cubic yards of earth and rock, 2,000,000 pounds of explosives were required.

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Some idea of the magnitude of the construction job may be obtained from some of the contractor's statistics: Maximum fill height, from toe to top, 209 feet; 2,100,000 cubic yards of earth in largest fill; maximum fill depth, 158 feet; maximum cut depth, 130 feet; 1,500,000 cubic yards of earth in largest cut; total excavation, more than nine million cubic yards of earth, 40 per cent of which was rock. The extreme range in the original ground elevation of the working area was 442 feet.

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Kanawha Airport is situated east of Charleston, two miles by air, and four miles by highway. Its elevation is 950 feet above sea level, overlooking industrial Kanawha Valley and the City of Charleston. It is 350 feet above the valley floor.

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To date a total of \$6,000,000 has been spent on Kanawha Airport.