

Ford Tri-Motor Crash Site, Mt. Taylor, NM

DATE September 3, 1929

AIRCRAFT Ford model 5-AT Tri-Motor, Registration NC9647, the “*City of San Francisco*”

GENERAL LOCATION Cibola National Forest, Mount Taylor Division

PEOPLE ABOARD The crew and passengers totaled eight people

REFERENCES FS regional newsletter (circa late 2005 or early 2006): TAT 1929 Mt. Taylor Plane crash; MILITARIA INTERNATIONAL magazine, April 2006, *The Tragic Fate of the “City of San Francisco”*

HISTORY

The following information may be found in the references. The reader is encouraged to consult them for more detail.

This was a historically important crash in the history of commercial airline travel in the United States. The aircraft was a Ford Tri-motor that belonged to the *Transcontinental Air Transport* (T.A.T.) company. This organization set up a scheduled coast-to-coast service that would allow travel between Los Angeles to New York City in 48 hours. To do this, the airline would fly passengers by day in conjunction with them riding in railroad sleeping cars by night. This plan halved the time to do the same trip by rail only. The air route was established by Charles Lindbergh, then the T.A.T. technical director. Service was initiated on July 8, 1929 and all went well until Ford Tri-motor NC 9647, *The City of San Francisco*, left Albuquerque, New Mexico, for Winslow, Arizona in the morning of September 3, 1929. Bad weather was encountered and the plane crashed on Mount Taylor in what is now the southern

corner of the Cibola National Forest east of Grants, New Mexico. Everyone aboard perished in the event. The effect of this particular crash caused a lot of uproar in the fledging airline industry. Articles appeared throughout the USA and T.A.T. suffered economically. The organization eventually went under but was later bought up by another company and many years later became part of Trans World Airlines.



Photo of a restored Ford Tri-Motor visiting Albuquerque in 1970's

Over the years, several crash explorers have found their way to the crash site. However, this is a very fragile site of great historical importance. For that reason, it is a prime location for collectors who might want to illegally acquire artifacts, either for themselves or for subsequent sale on the Black

Market. Therefore, the U.S. Forest Service does not want the location publicized. **Remember that since this event occurred more than 50 years ago, it is against the law to remove them as they are now archaeological objects and it is illegal to remove them from this site**

