

*The History Center in Tompkins County Presents "History at Home"*

# Thomas-Morse Scout S4-B a.k.a. "Tommy Plane"

## All About Tommy

The **Thomas-Morse Scout S4** airplanes, otherwise known as "Tommy Planes", were manufactured in Ithaca N.Y. by the Thomas-Morse Aircraft Corporation between 1917-1918. The single-seat biplane was originally conceived in 1916 by B. Douglas Thomas. In June 1917, a prototype of the Scout, powered by a 100 hp Gnome Monosoupape 9B rotary engine, was flight-tested. It reached a speed of 95 mph and an altitude of 14,000 feet. Over 600 planes were ordered for the U.S. army, and they were the preferred model used to train all American combat pilots for World War I. Tommy planes flew all over the United States!

During this time the Wharton Film Studio was also producing silent films in Ithaca, and a Tommy Plane was featured in the film ***A Romance of the Air*** in 1918.

One of the few surviving Tommy planes was donated to the Ithaca Aviation Heritage Foundation in 2010. After fourteen years of searching, replicating and restoration, this **Tommy Plane took off from the Ithaca Airport in September of 2018; 100 years after it was first built.** Tommy flew for more than 30 minutes over Tompkins County. The Tommy Plane is now on permanent loan from Ithaca Aviation Heritage Foundation for display at The History Center in Tompkins County in downtown Ithaca, NY.



Photograph of Tommy's Centennial Flight over Tompkins County on September 29th 2018.



The History Center in Tompkins County, Photograph of Unknown Pilot in a Thomas-Morse Scout circa 1918

Contact [community@thehistorycenter.net](mailto:community@thehistorycenter.net) with any questions. Visit [www.thehistorycenter.net/learn](http://www.thehistorycenter.net/learn) for more History at Home activities.

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