

GOODYEAR BLIMP NAMES, OPERATING YEARS

LISTED BY FIRST INTRODUCTION



OVERVIEW ON BLIMP NAMES, DATES, LIFESPANS

- Over the company's 125+ year history, Goodyear has built more than 325 airships. The vast majority of these were for the U.S. Army and U.S. Navy.
- This document covers only airships that flew as the Goodyear Blimp; that is, branded airships flown by Goodyear for public relations purposes. That program begins with Pilgrim in 1925 and continues to this day, celebrating its centennial in 2025.
- Much like car models, Goodyear Blimp names have come and gone throughout the last 100 years, with the same name being applied to multiple different airships over spans of decades. This document tracks the calendar years in which each name operated. Please note that a name reoccurring after an absence does not indicate the same physical blimp returning to service, but rather a new blimp donning a familiar name.
- In all, there have been 31 officially christened Goodyear Blimps, donning 24 different names.





PILGRIM

- 1925 – 1928
- 1929 – 1931
- Goodyear's first branded public relations blimp
- The first airship built with a control car mounted flush to the envelope
- The first commercial airship designed to be lifted by helium, rather than hydrogen
- Over its two lifecycles, Pilgrim made 4,765 flights, carrying 5,355 passengers and crossing nearly 95,000 miles



PURITAN

- 1928-1929
 - 1930-1935
 - 1935-1938
 - 1947-1948
-
- A regular winter visitor to Miami, in February 1932 Puritan spent a week in Havana, Cuba
 - Puritan begins a nearly 50-year-long tradition of Goodyear Blimps named after racing yachts that won the America's Cup





VOLUNTEER

- 1929
 - 1931-1937
 - 1937-1939
 - 1946-1949
-
- The first Goodyear Blimp to spend significant time on the West Coast, Volunteer spent the 30s crisscrossing from Ohio to Los Angeles and back on a near-annual basis



MAYFLOWER

- 1929-1931
 - 1947-1949
 - 1959-1963
 - 1963-1976
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- In 1962, Mayflower completed Goodyear's longest "summer" tour, departing Miami in May and traveling all the way to the World's Fair in Seattle in July and August, then touring the northeast as far as White Plains, New York, and returning to Miami in November.





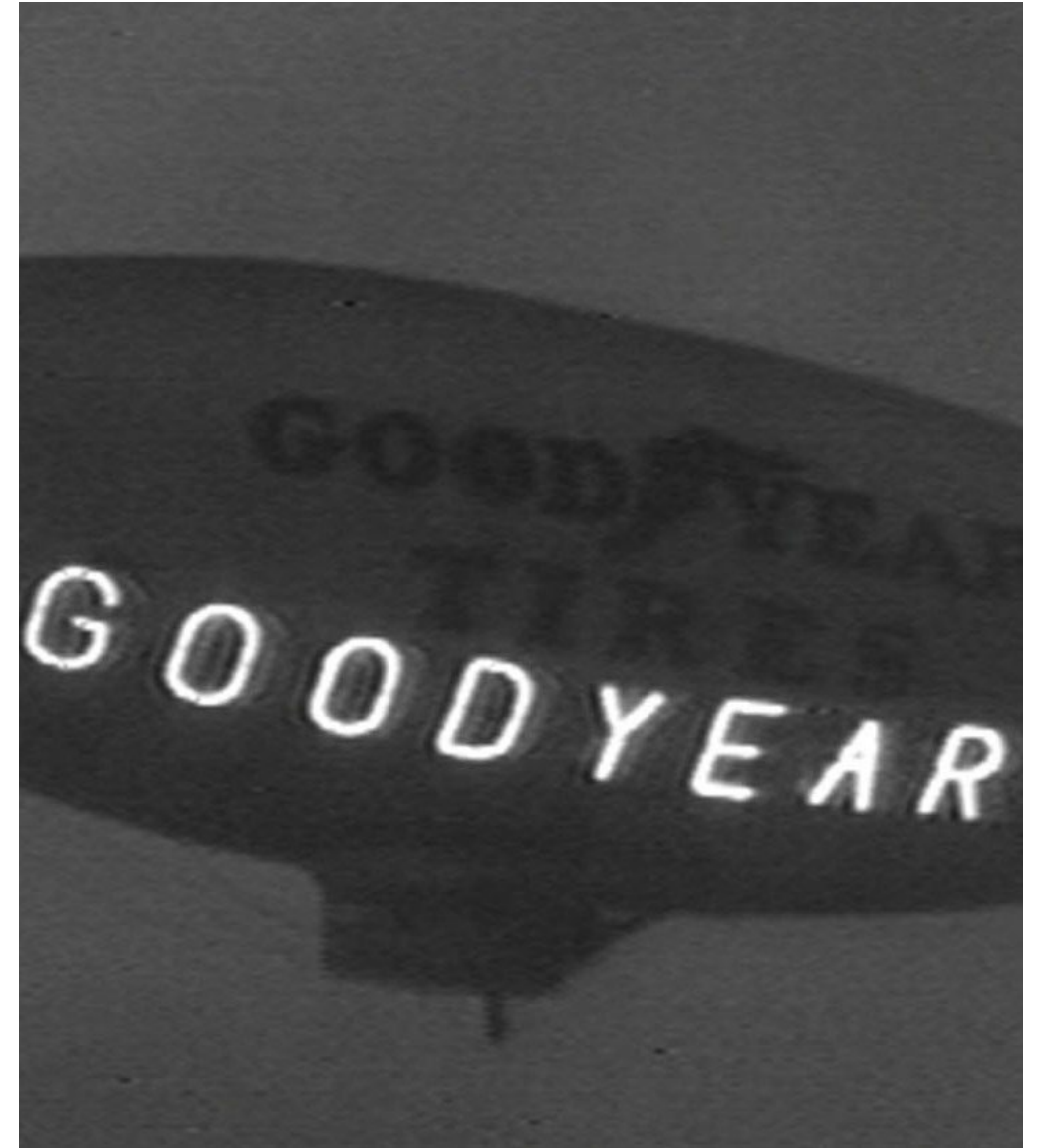
VIGILANT

- 1929-1930
- Originally flying from June 1929 to November 1930, Vigilant is the least operated Goodyear Blimp name



DEFENDER

- 1929-1934
- The first of two Goodyear Blimps (along with Resolute) to be christened by Amelia Earhart
- The first airship in the world to carry a lighted sign, Defender's "Neon-O-Gram" was made of 10 removable aluminum frame panels holding neon tubes. Each panel was 6 feet high, 4 feet wide, and weighed 35 pounds.





COLUMBIA

- 1931-1932
 - 1963-1969
 - 1969-1975
 - 1986-1992
-
- In 1967, Columbia was overhead to broadcast the first Super Bowl
 - Columbia was covering the World Series in San Francisco in 1989 when the Loma Prieta earthquake struck. Immediately, the blimp transitioned to broadcasting vital images of damage to first responders and news stations



RELIANCE

- 1931-1937
- 1938-1942
- Spent the summers of 1933 and 1934 in Chicago at the “Century of Progress” World’s Fair
- One of five Goodyear Blimps transitioned into the U.S. Navy fleet during World War II





RESOLUTE

- 1932-1935
- 1936-1938
- 1938-1942
- The second Goodyear Blimp to be christened by Amelia Earhart
- Spent the summer of 1939 operating from the New York World's Fair
- As the only airship on the West Coast at the time of Pearl Harbor, Resolute operated first under privateer status before ultimately being drafted – crew and all – into the U.S. Navy



ENTERPRISE

- 1934-1942
 - 1946-1947
 - 1949-1956
 - 1958-1959
 - 1979-1991
-
- The longest utilized Goodyear Blimp name
 - On January 1, 1955, Enterprise pioneered the world's first live aerial video for a national broadcast, capturing unprecedented views of the Rose Parade and Rose Bowl Game





RAINBOW

- 1939-1942
- Spent summers of 1939 and 1940 operating in New York for the World's Fair
- In 1940, Goodyear began a pilot training program at Wingfoot Lake, anticipating future needs by the U.S. Navy as airship production increased, with Rainbow serving as a primary training ship



RANGER

- 1940-1941
- 1946-1949
- 1951-1958
- Typically Miami-based throughout its post-war life, in 1951 Ranger took on a unique assignment and a temporary new name: a promotion for the 100th anniversary of Stag Beer saw the blimp operate throughout the Midwest as “Century”





AMERICA

- 1969-1982
- 1982-1992
- In 1969, America introduced not just a new name but an entirely new model, the GZ-20. At 192 feet long, with a 202,000 cubic foot envelope and two 210 horsepower engines, the GZ-20 would serve as the basis for the Goodyear Blimp for almost 50 years.
- As if being the first of a new model wasn't enough, America was also the first resident of a Goodyear Blimp base in Spring, Texas. Both the blimp name and base operated until 1992.



EUROPA

- 1972-1987
- Europa, Goodyear's first internationally based blimp, was built by shipping parts from Akron to Cardington, England, where it was assembled. Once operational, it flew to its home base in Capena, Italy
- In addition to regular appearances at racing events across the continent, Europa provided aerial TV coverage of major cultural events including the Royal Wedding of Charles & Diana, Easter Mass at the Vatican, and the Live Aid concert at Wembley Stadium





SPIRIT OF AKRON

- 1987-1999
- The only GZ-22 model ever flown, the Spirit of Akron was an attempt to chart a new future for the Goodyear Blimp. The GZ-22 is distinguished with tailfins in an X-configuration and is the only Goodyear Blimp to ever be powered by jet engines, with each vectoring turboprop able to produce 420 horsepower



STARS & STRIPES

- 1992-2000
- The final Goodyear Blimp to be named after an America's Cup winning yacht
- Following the destruction of Hurricane Andrew, Stars & Stripes assisted recovery efforts by broadcasting emergency messages on its electronic sign, directing those without power to their closest relief stations





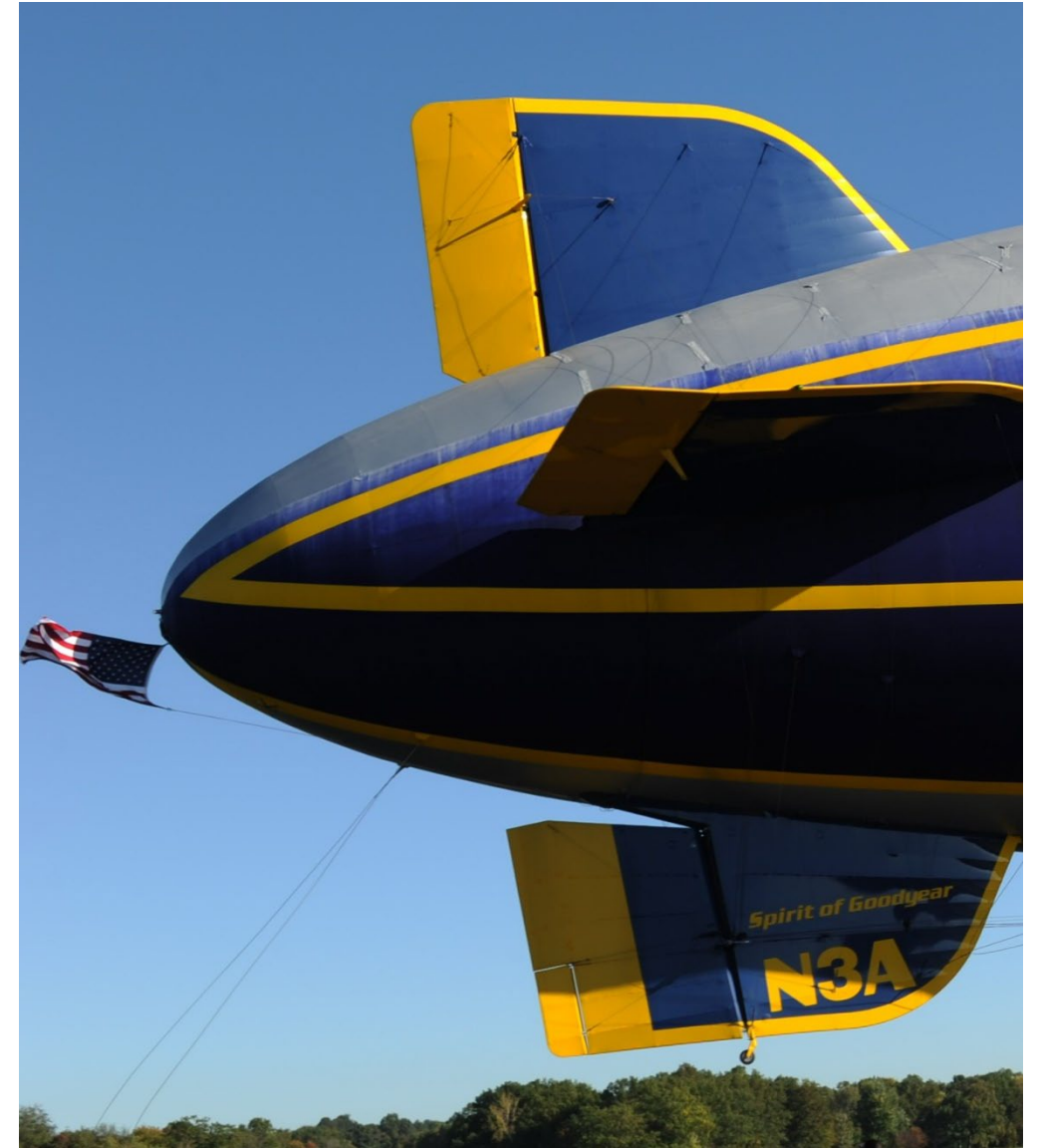
EAGLE

- 1992-2002
- Without leaving the West Coast, Eagle had a global summer in 1994, first watching over the World Cup in July and then traveling to British Columbia, Canada in August to provide 11 straight days of TV coverage of the Commonwealth Games
- In May 1995, flights in Eagle served as an off-day excursion for the long-sequestered jury in the O.J. Simpson trial



SPIRIT OF GOODYEAR

- 2000-2014
- Christened by Sally Ride, the first American woman in space
- Almost 50 years after Enterprise pioneered aerial TV coverage, Spirit of Goodyear kept pushing the feat forward, becoming the first blimp to broadcast in high definition
- After almost exactly 14 years of service, Spirit of Goodyear was honored with the Guinness World Record for the “Longest Continuous Use for a Blimp”





SPIRIT OF AMERICA

- 2002-2015
- The only instance of an existing Goodyear Blimp being rechristened under a new name without any intervening maintenance, Eagle was renamed Spirit of America in a ceremony near the one-year anniversary of the September 11th attacks.
- Christened by Letitia Driscoll, whose son Steven was one of 23 NYPD officers who died in the line of duty on September 11th



SPIRIT OF INNOVATION

- 2006-2017
- The first Goodyear Blimp to ever be named by the public via a “Name The Blimp” contest
- The final GZ-20 model Goodyear Blimp, Spirit of Innovation flew until 2017, a full 48 years after the America introduced the model back in 1969





WINGFOOT ONE

- 2014-present
- After three years of collaboration, parts shipped from Germany were assembled by Goodyear and Zeppelin engineers in Ohio to create the first NT model Goodyear Blimp
- Wingfoot One and the NT program mark the first time a Goodyear Blimp is in fact not a true blimp, but rather a semi-rigid airship. The new model's internal framework of carbon fiber and aluminum allows vectoring engines to be mounted on the envelope, creating the fastest, most maneuverable and most technologically advanced Goodyear Blimps ever



WINGFOOT TWO

- 2016-present
- Before it was even officially christened, Wingfoot Two made history. The US Air Force “Wings of Blue” skydive team leapt from the cabin to deliver the game ball ahead of the Battle at Bristol college football game, marking the first skydive attempt from a Goodyear Blimp in over 50 years





WINGFOOT THREE

- 2018-present
- The newest of the three U.S.-based Goodyear Blimps, Wingfoot Three was christened by Shaesta Waiz, who was the youngest woman to fly solo around the world in a single-engine aircraft
- Despite being the youngest of the current Goodyear Blimps, Wingfoot Three has already visited over 20 states and Canada



EUROPEAN GOODYEAR BLIMP

NOTE: ALTHOUGH CONSIDERED PART OF THE CURRENT FLEET, THIS AIRSHIP WAS FULLY BUILT IN GERMANY BY ZEPPELIN

- 2020-present
- As part of the renewed partnership between Goodyear and Zeppelin, one of the German company's own airships is a branded Goodyear Blimp.
- This airship operates both passenger flights for Zeppelin from its bases in Germany, as well as traveling Europe covering events like the 24 Hours of Le Mans race for Goodyear

