

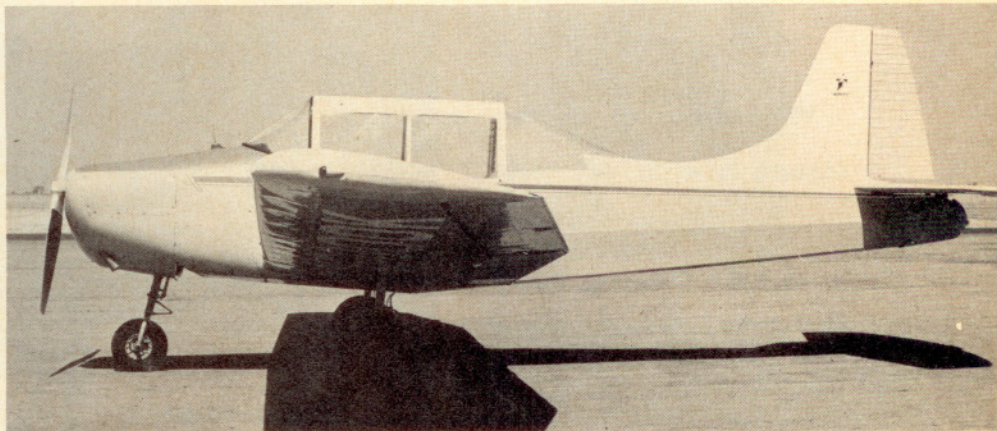
by PETER M. BOWERS / AOPA 54408

■ Throughout its life, general aviation has seen many new airplane designs come onto the market. Some caught on and remained in production for so long that they seem to have been around forever. Others soon disappeared and were quickly forgotten. A very few died out through no fault of their own but reappeared later under different circumstances. An example of the latter case is the Morrisey "Nifty," which was marketed as the Shinn 2150-A.

Back in the late 1940s, William J. Morrisey (AOPA 58975) was chief test pilot for the Long Beach division of Douglas Aircraft Co. Like many "pro" pilots, Morrisey had his own ideas as to what a good sport airplane should be. Unlike most, however, he was able to translate back-of-the-envelope doodles into an actual airplane several years before the "homebuilt" movement got rolling.

Structurally and aerodynamically, the Morrisey 1000C Nifty was an interesting mix of the old and the new. The fuselage was welded steel tube with

the Return of the 'NIFTY'



The original Morrisey Nifties had welded-steel-tube fuselages with fabric covering. This improved 2000 version had a metal wing and crimped-aluminum rudder and elevator. Plans for the 1000C with wood wing are now available to amateur builders.

Principal production of the Morrisey design was by Shinn, who marketed it as the 2150-A. The canopy was unique in that, instead of sliding back, it hinged upward and could be latched open in flight.



fabric cover, and the cantilever wing was wood with plywood and fabric cover. The fixed landing gear was tri-cycle but the seating was tandem, with stick control under a "greenhouse" canopy reminiscent of World War II trainers and dive-bombers. Like the Piper Cub and other small tandems, the instruments were all on the single front-cockpit panel.

Since the Nifty was in the weight range of the ubiquitous J-3 Cub, the initial powerplant was the 65-hp Continental. However, on an aircraft with much less wingspan and area, the 65 didn't produce the desired performance and was soon replaced by a C-90.

The 90-hp Nifty was a delightful little airplane, and a revised 2000 version, with 100-hp Continental, introduced a metal wing. The market potential for such a ship looked good, so Morrisey, who retired from Douglas in 1954, formed Morrisey Aviation, Inc., to develop and produce the design.

Redesigned as the Morrisey 2150 (Model 2, 150 hp), the old Nifty was now all metal, with welded-steel-tube forward fuselage covered with removable metal panels, and an aluminum monocoque structure aft of the rear cockpit. The metal-skinned wings now featured flaps.

Six 2150s were delivered from the little Santa Ana plant by the summer of 1959, before the manufacturing rights were acquired by Clifford Shinn, who built a new plant in Santa Ana to

SPECIFICATIONS AND PERFORMANCE

| | Morrisey 1000C Nifty (1949) | Shinn 2150-A (1960) |
|-----------------|---|---|
| Span | 29 ft 0 in | 30 ft 0 in |
| Length | 20 ft 0 in | 21 ft 3 in |
| Area | 134 sq ft | 144 sq ft |
| Powerplant | Continental C-90, 90 hp @ 2,700 rpm | Lycoming O-320-A2B, 150 hp @ 2,700 rpm |
| Empty weight | 900 lb | 1,125 lb |
| Gross weight | 1,450 lb (normal) 1,363 lb (utility) | 1,817 lb (normal) 1,570 lb (utility) |
| High speed | 125 mph | 148 mph |
| Cruising speed | 115 mph | 135 mph (economy) |
| Initial climb | 1,000 fpm | 1,450 fpm |
| Service ceiling | 20,000+ ft | 22,000 ft |
| Range | 370 mi (20 gal) | 525 mi (35 gal) |
| Price | \$2,695 (1949 estimate) | \$8,950 |

continue production of what was now the Shinn 2150-A. Unfortunately, the 2150-A did not catch its hoped-for share of the market, and production at Shinn ended after approximately 37 units had been built.

For nearly 10 years the old Morrisey/Shinn was just another forgotten general aviation design—almost, but not quite. Its unique features—sporty tandem seating, snappy performance on relatively low power, docile tricycle landing gear, and simple construction—appealed to members of a general aviation group that had been gaining increasing

respect over the years: the homebuilders.

In recognition of this market, Morrisey dusted off the plans for the old 90-hp, rag-covered Nifty and made them available for amateur construction. Information as to price, etc., is available from William J. Morrisey, P.O. Box 606, San Marcos, Calif. 92069. □