

Airport for sale



Stephen Cherry photo

Robert and Winifred Miller would like to sell or lease their little country airport, complete with grass runway, in Keymar.

Keymar Airpark

*'Pretty expensive
for a toy'*

By **RAMESH SANTANAM**
Times Staff Writer

KEYMAR

Anyone interested in buying or leasing a small airport? If so, Robert Miller may have a deal for you.

Miller and his wife, Winifred, have a 15 3/4-acre airstrip literally in their backyard. A few area pilots keep their planes parked there.

The Millers built Keymar Airpark, as the airport is officially known, in 1970 at the initial cost of about \$40,000 — “pretty expensive for a toy,” Miller says.

He says he decided to build the airport when he started taking lessons to get his pilot's license.

“I just enjoyed it, really,” Miller says. “It's beautiful up there. I'd watch the traffic and how the roads would go.”

But about seven years ago, he lost his desire to fly, and he has been trying to sell the airport for the past two years.

“I've not been trying to sell it too bad,” he says, “but I'd like to get rid of it.”

After caring for his “toy” for 25 years, Miller wants to hand the airpark to someone else.

Maintaining the airport requires, among other things, mowing the grass runway (2,000 feet long, 120 feet wide) twice a week in the spring and summer — a task that takes about six to seven hours each time. And whenever a plane happens to bust a runway light, the

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on road, Westminster, with the Rev. Dale Kidd officiating. Interment will be in the Lake View Memorial Park, Sykesville.

The family will receive friends from 2 to 4 and 6 to 8 p.m. Saturday at the funeral home.

**Mary Ellen W. Shipley
87, of Westminster**

Mary Ellen Wagner Shipley, 87, of Westminster, died Thursday, Jan. 12, 1995, at Cherrywood Manor Nursing Home, Reisterstown, after an extended illness.



Born July 16, 1907, in County, she was the daughter of the late Elias J. and Catherine Häines Wagner.

Before her retirement, she was employed at the Westmins Co. for 45 years. She was a member of the Westminster Methodist Church, where she was a member of the Friends and sang in the choir.

Surviving are daughter F. Sinnott of Westminster; Bertie Gosnell of Winfield; and Goldie Mummaugh of Westminster.



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pounds, 3 ounces.

A son, Alexander Michael Blanch, born Jan. 5 at 11:45 p.m. to Debbie and Michael Blanch of Baltimore. He weighed 6 pounds.

A son, Phillip John Grimes, born Jan. 6 at Greater Baltimore Medical Center to Michael and Andrea Grimes. He weighed 8 pounds, 15 ounces. The grandparents are La-

Rain chance 40 percent.

Extended outlook: A chance of showers Sunday with the possibil-

Today's sunset: 5:09 p.m.
Saturday's sunrise: 7:30 a.m.

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Fire
Wednesday
6:23 p.m., Sykesville, Winfield County fire co.

Airpark

From A1

Millers have to replace the bulb. "I'm getting too old for it," says Miller, who'll turn 73 in May.

When the airport first opened, "We had a flying club," Miller says. "It was a lot of fun."

Fellow pilots gathered for camaraderie and good food. But then, says Miller, the club had a run-in with the Internal Revenue Service about six years ago.

The IRS wanted the club to pay an amusement tax because food was sold at these events, Miller says. "They said that was an amusement, but it sure didn't make sense to me. So, we decided to disband the club and say the heck with it."

The Keymar Airpark has been an attention-getter since it opened, Miller says. Curiosity seekers still stop by to inquire about the planes parked behind his home.

In the summer, the airport often becomes a weekend landing strip for ultralights and paraplanes.

Miller says he loves seeing the light aircraft land in his back yard and enjoys talking to the pilots.

"They've gotten to know us now," says his wife. "They stop in on a Sunday to shoot the breeze."

And occasionally, helicopters

drop by, too.

"A gentleman stopped in and gave me a ride years ago," Winifred Miller recalls. "I really enjoyed that."

Owning the airport has been quite an adventure, filled with many memorable moments, the Millers say.

They fondly remember when, in the early '70s, a plane took off and at about 50 feet, slumped into a nearby cow pasture because the pilot had inadvertently switched to an empty fuel tank.

"No one was injured," Miller recalls.

On another occasion in the '70s a Maine couple and their two children found themselves flying in a rainstorm on their way back from Florida, Winifred Miller remembers.

Their plane landed at the Millers' field.

"They said they had never been so thankful to see an airport," Winifred Miller says.

Despite these fond memories, Miller says he has neither the desire nor the stamina to continue the airport's upkeep.

"It's for rent, for lease, for sale any of the above," adds his wife.

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Thank You

Thanks to all who visited, sent cards, prayers and other expressions of kindness during the illness and passing of R. Irvin Martin. Special thanks to Rev. Alston, Dr. Steven Shaffer, the pallbearers, Mt. Zion Ladies Aid, Pat Hentz and members of Hampstead Baptist church.

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