

# Centennial Airport Celebrates 50 Years; Releases News On New Admin Hangar



(Photo by John Leyba)

Above: left to right-Robert Doubek, Chairman of the APA Board, Sarah Dolliver, and Capt. "Sully" Sullenberger, at the pre-event Meet & Greet.

Capt. "Sully" Sullenberger was the keynote speaker at Centennial Airport's 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary celebration.

(See article on page 2, left column.)



(Photo courtesy of Steve Kelly)

Lt. Col Ken Overturf (left) and CAHS Director & Secretary Keith Shaddox stand alongside the UH-1M at Wings Over The Rockies Air & Space Museum. (See photo - left.) (See article on Page 2, right column.)



(Photo courtesy of Keith Shaddox)

# Centennial Airport 50th; “Sully” Tells His Story!

by Guest Contributor-Robert Olislager

Centennial Airport initially opened as Arapahoe County Airport in 1968. George Wallace, a laureate of the Colorado Aviation Historical Society, was the planner most instrumental in its original design and construction. Through the next 50 years, the airport has been a magnet for economic growth in the South Metro area and has won national and international awards for excellence in airport design.

On May 25<sup>th</sup>, 2018, Centennial Airport (APA) celebrated its 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary in grand style with Capt. “Sully” Sullenberger as the keynote speaker. Governor Hickenlooper dedicated the day “Centennial Airport Day” and Sen. Cory Gardner (R-CO) flew the Stars & Stripes over the U.S. Capitol in Washington, D.C. to further commemorate the day.

“Sully” kept everyone glued to their seats with a riveting tale of the life lessons that prepared him for the fateful decisions he made to ditch US Airways Flight 1549 in the Hudson River. He and First Officer Jeff Skiles managed to save the lives of all 155 passengers and crew after multiple bird strikes caused the windshields to crack and both engines to fail on their Airbus 320. Hailed as a hero, Capt. Sullenberger became the subject of the Clint Eastwood movie “Sully” with Academy Award© winner Tom Hanks in the lead role.

Some 650 people attended the luncheon which included a presentation of the colors by the Buckley AFB Color Guard and the singing of the national anthem by USAF Tech. Sgt. Kristin Johnson. Ken Sain, CEO of Jeppesen and Presenting Sponsor gave a brief overview of the long history between Jeppesen and Centennial Airport. Robert Olislagers, the airport’s CEO gave a state of the airport address, unveiling for the first time “The Hangar” a new aviation community center that will be built at Centennial Airport. The hangar will include space for special events, retail, a coffee shop as well as the airport’s new administrative offices. The facility is expected to open in the fall of 2019.

Maj. Gen. John Barry (USAF-Ret.), CEO of the Wings over the Rockies Museum and former classmate of “Sully” at the USAFA, introduced him with some personal anecdotes. Proceeds from the luncheon will go to the Centennial Airport Foundation to support scholarships and grants for aviation and aerospace programs, as well as STEM education.

(Editor’s Note: Robert Olislagers is the current CEO of Centennial Airport, Centennial CO.)

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## UH-1M Bell Huey Joins Wings Museum In Loan

Guest Contributor-Keith Shaddox

In November of 2017, Wings over the Rockies Museum received for permanent display, a Bell UH-1M Huey helicopter with deep roots in the Vietnam conflict. This aircraft is owned by an organization named the Gunship Ministries.

The Gunship Ministries was formed by Colonel Bill McPherson of Cripple Creek, and Lt. Colonel Ken Overturf of Colorado Springs (both US Army Ret.)

Col McPherson flew as a Huey pilot in Vietnam for 3 tours in the late 1960s. McPherson primarily flew the Huey “Mike” models that were equipped as gunships in support of the Air Cavalry missions.

Lt. Col Overturf was trained on the Huey but flew a large part of his time as a scout pilot flying an OH-6. Overturf actually flew Scout missions in 1<sup>st</sup> Air Cav with McPherson in gunship support during the war.

A number of years ago McPherson began the effort to locate a Huey gunship that could be used as an outreach tool to educate the public on the Bell Huey, and more specifically the gunship missions flown by that variant. He located two such aircraft that had been decommissioned and were sent to the desert to be used as remote controlled target drones.

These aircraft had been fully removed from Army inventory and the drone program had been curtailed. This made it a simple matter to purchase the aircraft as is, without need of Army authorization.

McPherson and Overturf, along with other volunteers began a restoration process on one of the aircraft to use in the tour effort. This even included mockup of the Rocket launcher pods mounted on each side along with four remotely fired M60 machine guns. The machine was even equipped with M60 door gunner mounts and guns. This brought the aircraft back to its war time configuration.

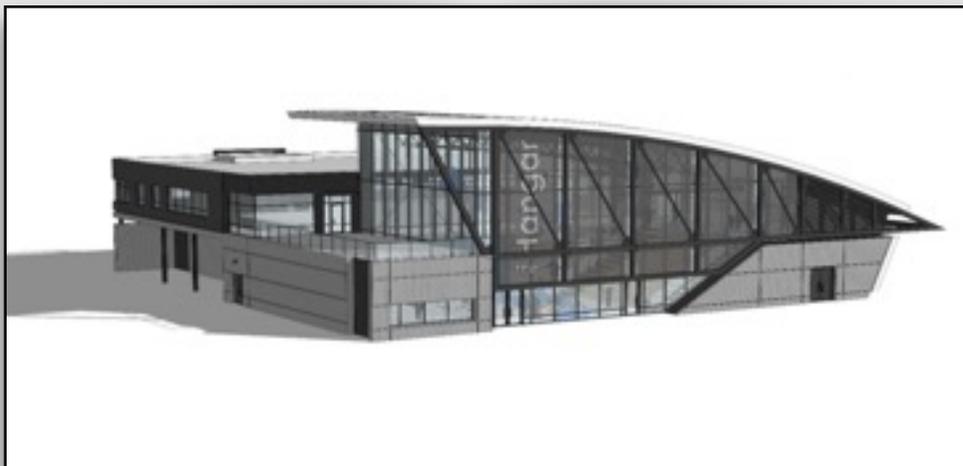
. . . Article continued on Page 7

# "Hangar News" from the Chairman...

"The Hangar" is the artist design drawing of the new Arapahoe County Public Airport Authority (ACPAA) administration building recently approved by the Airport Commission.

The centerpiece of the new building will be our Alexander Eaglerock, which will be hanging center top of the building on a canted angle. Facing the open meeting/banquet room area, visitors can view into the aircraft. This area will be perfect for CAHS meetings and events in the future. There will be a small visitor's museum-like room being proposed directly next to the main entrance for Colorado aviation history.

CAHS submitted a commitment letter to the Airport Commission on May 10<sup>th</sup> which was fully accepted by the Commission. The Commission is looking forward to working with CAHS on display of the Eaglerock, Colorado aviation history, and future organizational events. More detailed drawings and building design will be featured in coming Journals. ...



"The Hangar" design by Ryan Dawson, Stantec.  
Engineering by Jeff Mason, Mead & Hunt.



Lance Barber

### CONTACT US!:

To contact CAHS or to send feedback, via postal mail at: **CAHS, P. O. Box 201615, Denver CO 80220, or visit at 7711 Academy Blvd, Denver.** You may also call directly to **303-341-7711** and, if no answer, please leave a message. Copyrights 2010-2017. All rights reserved by the Colorado Aviation Historical Society. All logos found on the websites and e-mail communication, as well as in the printed versions of all publications, are registered trademarks, or copyrights in the U.S by/of Colorado Aviation Historical Society or Contributors or respective Owners. Other logos and/or organization names mentioned herein may be trademarks of the respective Owners. No use nor reproduction of any content herein may be used commercially in any manner or form without the express and written permission from the Colorado Aviation Historical Society Board.

[www.colahs.org](http://www.colahs.org)



A limited quantity of CAHS 50th Anniversary Challenge Coins are available for Donors to the Society. Contact Lance Barber.

Phone: 303-946-9901 • email: cba1974@aol.com



Steve Kelly

# President's Message

Members may have recently received a request for assistance with the refurbishing of the Colorado Aviation Historical Society Hall of Fame at "Wings over the Rockies Air & Space Museum".

Established in 1969 to honor ten aviation pioneers, "Wings" museum became the home of the Hall of Fame in 1999. By the end of last year, 223 laureates had been inducted into the Hall. The accomplishments of our laureates span the years between 1910 and the present, and include the entire scope of aviation from barnstormers, fixed base operators, general aviation and commercial pilots, to military flyers and astronauts. A diverse group, they are all linked together by the strand of the pursuit of excellence in their aviation careers.

This past spring, our Board of Directors began planning to upgrade the present Hall of Fame to the current standard promoted by "Wings over the Rockies" Air & Space Museum. The plan that is envisioned will create a space that honors the heroes of Colorado aviation in the manner in which they truly deserve. This will include revitalized exhibit cases with new museum quality lighting, large flat screen panels to display our laureate's stories and historic photos, and enhanced fire protection and security features. The new room will be dominated by a 17 foot wall mural taken from Harvey Doering's original oil painting of an Alexander Eaglerock biplane in the CAHS collection (see copy of Eaglerock painting, below).

The new Hall will be engaging to young and old and will highlight the inventions and innovations of the pioneers of aviation together with the courage and sacrifice of those who fought for our freedom and security throughout a tumultuous century.

We are asking the Colorado aviation community to assist in this project by contributing any amount to insure that our great heritage is properly preserved for future generations. And, I would like to thank those who have contributed to date, with special recognition to Penny and Bill Hamilton who have come through with a significant contribution for Fire and Security fixtures — one of our five major goal milestones. Please see inside the front mailer cover of this issue for the contribution form.

The recently inaugurated Community Affiliate program is another means we are employing to raise the funds needed to complete our mission of documenting and presenting Colorado's tremendous aviation history. This month, I am pleased to welcome Event Rents of Englewood, Colorado as our newest corporate affiliate. Please contact the CAHS office (303 341-7711) for more information on this program. ...

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Remodel Our Heritage  
Hall of Fame Room!

See Donation Form  
Inside Front Mailer  
Cover



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Donation  
to Heritage Hall  
Renovation



Manufactured in Englewood, Colorado, USA!

Aviation ARcheology:

"Notes from the Field"

**World War One Aviators Memorialized  
in the Colorado Hall of Fame**

2017 marked the 100<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the United States' entry into World War I. 2018 marks the official Centenary celebration of the end of that terrible, tragic calamity, which cost an estimated 16 million lives, worldwide. You and I, today, can little know nor ever fully appreciate the immense suffering that this incredible tragedy caused. Never again can humanity allow this!

If you were to casually flip through your Hall of Fame Honoree Album, you might notice that eighteen of our Hall of Fame laureates served as aviators during the First World War.

All volunteered and trained to perform in a fledgling branch of the military that had yet to be tested. Indeed, many historians point out the fact that more would-be airmen died in training than in actual combat operations throughout that war. Some would actually engage in life-or-death combat above the front-lines. Others would serve as flight instructors both here and abroad; still risking their lives daily in flimsy contraptions with neophytes at the controls.

These laureates are listed (alphabetically) herein: **Ivy Baldwin, Allan Bonnalie, Clarence Braukman, Edward Brooks, John Curry, John Gower, Ralph Hall, Albert Humphries, Aubrey Keif, Oliver LeBoutillier, Frederick Libby, Neil McMillan, Orval Mosier, Will Parker, Chriss Peterson, Carlos Reavis, Reginald Sinclair, and Jerry Vasconcells.** A handful of Hall of Fame laureates even went on to earn the coveted status of Ace, having destroyed at least five enemy aircraft in aerial combat.

Few military airmen today would recognize some of the simple dangers involved in being a combat pilot during World War I. Built to withstand incredible speed, punishing damage and protect the pilot, modern military aircraft have nothing in common with their progenitors. Although *Boelcke's Dicta* is still a fundamental taught to all military pilots worldwide, little else in the way of basic aerial technology has survived from that time.



Brian Richardson

Suffice it to say, WWI airmen must have had a substantial constitution. Aircraft construction techniques and quality control were rudimentary at best during that time. Maintenance technician training was extremely limited and usually "On-the-Job Training" based skill-sets. Knowledge of reconstruction, testing, and approval for flight in-the-field was extremely limited. It has been suggested that nearly 50% of all allied pilot fatalities died during training missions; I've yet to find any equitable source to prove this statement wrong.

I encourage all CAHS members to reference their personal **Hall of Fame Honoree Album** to learn more about these historic Colorado heroes. If you've yet to purchase a copy of this unique book for your own personal library, I suggest you visit our website at <http://www.coloradoaviationhistoricalsociety.org/> to learn more about these valiant patriots.

As a side note. . . several CAHS members are planning to attend the annual WWI Rendezvous/ Dawn Patrol in Dayton, Ohio, over the weekend of September 22/23. This venue is an incredible look back into time with actual aircraft, re-enactors, lectures, and multiple vendor booths. As if this isn't enough to entice you, the event is held on the grounds of the USAF Museum, which would take at least two days to investigate.

Join fellow Society members in having a good time in Dayton this year. For specific details, contact **AvAr** program director Brian at [aviator\\_b@msn.com](mailto:aviator_b@msn.com). . .

## Redstone SSM-A-14 Display



Redstone Missile display panel recently setup at Spirit of Flight Center, Erie, Colorado as a part of the Balloons to Ballistics educational mission of the Colorado Aviation Historical Society.

## CAHS Provides Mercury-Redstone Display at Spirit of Flight Center

A display panel documenting the history of the Redstone Ballistic Missile is now on display at the Spirit of Flight Center in Erie, CO. The Redstone display was researched and assembled by CAHS volunteers.

Following the production, the panel was transferred in time for the Museum's annual "Scott Carpenter Day" celebration on May 12<sup>th</sup>.

This panel depicts the Army and NASA versions of the Redstone Missile and the McDonnell built Mercury space capsule in which America's first six astronauts-including Colorado's Scott Carpenter- rode into history.

A liquid fueled surface-to-surface missile, the Redstone SSM-A-14 was used as tactical nuclear armed missile by Army artillery units in Germany from 1958 to 1964.

The civilian version was utilized in the launches of satellites known as the Jupiter-C, and propelled America's first two astronauts, Alan Shepard and Virgil Grissom, on sub-orbital flights as Mercury/Redstone (MR) 3 & 4. ...

# Lake Meredith Splash-In Summary

Ray Hawkins, Guest Contributor

This year's event was a little unusual due to the boating co-event. The combination event was used to demonstrate that seaplanes and boats are, in fact, compatible users of a waterway. This was a **real test** due to the unlimited nature of vessels present and the speeds at which they traveled.

We thank the Crowley County Water Rescue unit for towing an aircraft safely to shore. One of the seaplanes suffered a mechanical issue that was resolved by the pilot with the assistance of Seaplane Pilots Association's Executive Director, Steve McCaughey. Steve had specific knowledge of aircraft systems that proved invaluable. It was unfortunate that this issue prevented the aircraft from further participation in our event. We were happy to learn that the aircraft made it safely back to its home base. We hope to see him again in years to come.

Pilots and aircraft in attendance were: Carl Mattson, CO, Lake 200 *Turbo*; Todd Dickey, AZ, *Grumman Widgeon*; and Mike Smith, KS, Lake 250. Special guests were: Steve McCaughey, Executive Director, Seaplane Pilots Association; Kimmi Lewis, Colorado State Representative, District 64; and Tobe Allumbaugh, Crowley County Commissioner.

The **Kenney Reservoir Splash-In, July 14, 2018, was the next UAS Splash-In.** As a special activity, Ricky Thomas, a builder of large-scale remote-controlled seaplanes, demonstrated his skills. Ricky has been unable to fly his aircraft on any Colorado lake because they are, unfortunately, "prohibited." ...

*(Ray Hawkins is Director of CPA-Colorado Seaplane Initiative, Seaplane Pilots Assoc., Field Director, CO.)*

# Viet Nam Era Artifact Speaks Volumes To America's Newest Generation

by Keith Shaddox (...continued from Page 2)

The original deployment of Huey helicopters to Vietnam began with the "C" model primarily used as medivac "DUSTOFF"\* birds. Many of these "C" airframes were upgraded to "M" models by updating the rotor assembly, engine, airframe and adding offensive armament. This resulted in a gunship that could be used in support of the H-21 Shawnee (nicknamed the "flying banana") in the Air Cav missions.

H-21s in the very early stages of the war were used as troop carriers. Later improvements in the Huey would lead to replacement of the H-21 with UH-1 Hueys and, for a while, the "M" models continued gunship support for the Huey "slicks". A "slick" was the term that was used for a Huey helicopter that was not a gunship. This gave the Huey a slick appearance as opposed to the "M" models with all of the guns and rocket pods on them.

In researching this aircraft the original serial number was deduced from Army records even though the data plate had been removed by the Army. The Huey gunship now at Wings was purpose built as an "M" model gunship instead of a modified "C" model. That is, it came out of the factory as an "M" model.

It is known that the aircraft spent 3 years serving in the Air Cav in Vietnam, from 1966 to late 1969. The bird was heavily battle damaged and was brought back to Bell for rebuild. After completion of this rebuild the aircraft was placed back in Army inventory and was assigned to the Nebraska Army National Guard, where it served for another 25 years.

When Sweet Sue (the nickname given our new artifact by Col. McPherson) arrived on temporary loan in 2016, I was asked to prepare a presentation for volunteers at Wings to give some back-ground on Huey helicopters. I served with D-Troop, 1<sup>st</sup> Squadron, 10<sup>th</sup> Cav in Vietnam in 1970 and 71. I was a communications Sargent for the troop in support of all Helicopter operations. This presentation was eventually used in the "Artifact Speaks" lecture series. Much of the information here comes from that presentation and conversations with Col. McPherson.

The Air Cav mission in Vietnam was pioneered by Col. Hal Moore of the 7<sup>th</sup> Cav in lessons learned in the battle of Ya Drang Valley in 1966. The Air Cavalry units were primarily comprised of resurrected units whose legacy dated all the way back to the Native American Indian wars in the American West. In factoid ironically, Col. Hal Moore's 7<sup>th</sup> Cavalry was Lt. Col. Custer's unit.

The concept was to deploy and fight in traditional Cavalry method. The Cav always deployed scouts to search out the enemy then fall back to call in the rest of Cav units that could engage the enemy with rapid response mounted patrols and additional fire power.

So it was with the Air Cav. Small scout helicopters would search out the enemy sometimes even intentionally drawing fire. With the enemy located the scouts would mark the area with smoke grenades and fall back.

Then gunships would lay down fire in the area to suppress enemy activity. Finally Huey troop carriers would land in LZs to engage and capture the enemy. By the time I arrived with D-Troop in 1970 all of the M model Huey gunships had been replaced with Huey Cobra gunships and H model Hueys as slicks.

Service records show that 7,500 Hueys served in the Vietnam War. Although the other services flew variants of the Huey, most of the aircraft in the war were Army. There were 3,305 destroyed with the loss of 2,202 pilots and 2,500 enlisted crew members.

Army UH-1 helicopters totaled 7,532,955 hours in the Vietnam conflict between October 1966 and the end of 1975. Combined, Hueys have more combat flight time than any other aircraft in the history of warfare.

It is well to remember that we live in a country where dialogue and discussion often lead to disagreements. It is the grit of freedom. Most of us will hold dear those things that stand true to honor and commitment. We will always discuss the merit of that long ago conflict in the jungles of South East Asia.

But we will never forget the men who flew and fought from the Huey. In the final analysis the pilots and crew were the finest tradition of the US cavalry as they held their mounts steady under withering enemy fire while their fellow troopers were fighting and dying around them.

If you are not familiar with the Bell Huey helicopter be sure to stop by and take a look at this new artifact at Wings. You might even catch the Colonel there and get to talk to him about what it was like to fly this remarkable machine.

*\*Foot note: DUSTOFF = a call sign requesting aeromedical evacuation in Vietnam. Begun in 1962 with the 57<sup>th</sup> Medical Detachment (helicopter ambulance).*

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## Summer Morning Members Meet Slated for August 11

### Author Steve Snyder to Speak on "Shot Down"

The CAHS Summer meeting is approaching. This year we will conduct the meeting at the Lafayette Foundation Museum at Platte Valley AirPark, from 10:00AM to 12:30PM.

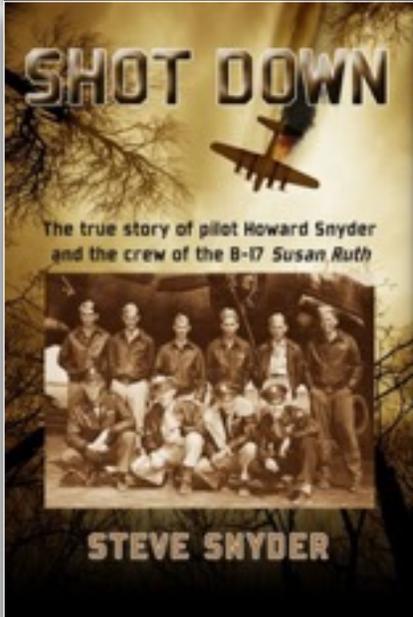
Join fellow Society members as we approve the candidates for this year's Colorado Aviation Hall of Fame induction; review the Society's recent activities; and take a look at our long-term plans for the future.

Our guest speaker will be Steve Snyder, author of "Shot Down," the true story of Steve's father, Lt. Howard Snyder and the B-17 crew of the *Susan Ruth*.

Through the letters and journals of Howard Snyder; the dairies of men and women who aided the crew when they went down in occupied Belgium; and including actual historian interviews, Author Snyder has created a vivid narrative.

This group of young American airmen clearly became heroes to the people of Belgium. Mr. Snyder, the Immediate Past President of the 306th Bomb Group Historical Association, will have copies of his book available for purchase after our meeting. ...

Not Just Another Book;  
Written by One of Our Own!



And from the Critics:  
"A masterful work..."  
"A wonderful read... and compelling!"



Without a doubt... the book about the Greatest Generation...

### AvAr Takes a Walk in the Woods

Right: (Left to right): David Seniw, David Ulane, Larry Liebrecht, Brian Richardson, Ernie Leroy, and Ron Miller.

Below: David Ulane, director of the Colorado Division of Aeronautics, is shown holding up the leading edge of the left wing.



### AvAr Explores 1956 Tie Siding Crash

On July 7<sup>th</sup>, the Aviation Archeology (AvAr) team conducted a survey of the 1956 crash site of a Stinson aircraft. Six members of the group hiked to a location near Tie Siding, Wyoming to document this crash site. The AvAr group is actively engaged in conserving the aeronautical heritage of Colorado and adjoining states. (Photos courtesy of AvAr.) ...