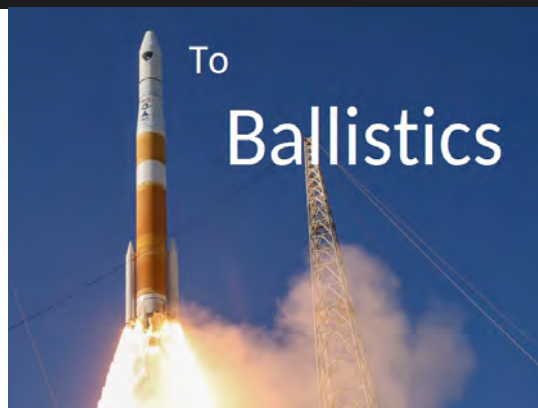


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**Balloons**



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Cover Photo: P-51D in colors of the Colorado Air National Guard displayed at the 100<sup>th</sup> anniversary celebration of military aviation in Colorado. Mike Bingham owner. (Photo: Steve Kelly)

## **Your article in *Balloons to Ballistics***

The Colorado Aviation Historical Society is soliciting articles that relate to Colorado and aviation from interested contributors. We're looking for submissions that speak to any subject that you would like to see in print (i.e. aeronautical memorabilia, airports, aviators, aviation businesses, astronauts, etc.). If you have something to offer please forward it at your earliest convenience.

Articles should be submitted in a Times New Roman (12 font) format, and have an unjustified right edge. Please do not insert photos into the article, but add them each as an additional jpg. attachment and include a caption for each.

Submit your article(s) or questions to:  
aviator\_b@msn.com

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## President's Report:

# Moving Ahead

Keith Shaddox



Hello to all current members and welcome to new members. The organization is continuing to push in to the 21st century with new initiatives and fresh ideas. We also continue our mandate of preserving the memories and artifacts of the past as well as honoring the enormous contributions of Colorado's many aviation achievers.

Many of you are aware of the passing of Bea Wilhite this spring. With the passing of Bea and before her-Jack-we have lost two very influential people within this organization. The aviation community has always been filled with strong personalities who blazed the trail ahead of us. Bea will always be remembered for an outsized influence in the annual banquet. We cannot begin to set up the tables and places without thinking of what Bea would do. She and Jack will be missed but not forgotten.

We also learned just recently about the passing of Dewey (Charles) Reinhard. With Dewey going west we have lost one of the true pioneers of lighter than air flight in this state. More about Dewey near the end of this report. *(Note: Dewey's biographical article is found on the next page)*

The Alexander Eaglerock long wing that the society was given many years ago was returned to Wings Over the Rockies Lowry hanger in the early spring. There has been agreement between the society and Wings Museum that our Eaglerock will be hung above the door to the Hall of Fame. Although the move of the aircraft to Lowry was successful there was an abortive attempt to get it hung. We hope to complete the task of permanent placement of the aircraft in September. Stay tuned. We would like to move one of our large display cases over by the door to the Hall of Fame and dedicate the display case to the Alexander Company just beneath the aircraft. (continued on page 9)

## Mystery Quiz Winter Journal 2023



*The challenge for the last issue was to identify this Colorado native, record setting NASA astronaut and 2000 Hall of Fame inductee.*

Kent Vernon Rominger was born in Del Norte. He earned a BS in Civil Engineering from Colorado State University and an MS in Aeronautical Engineering from the U.S. Naval Postgraduate School.

A rated Naval Aviator, he was initially signed as a F-14 pilot, deploying on the USS RANGER and the USS KITTY HAWK. After attending the Naval Postgraduate School/Test Pilot Program he was assigned to Naval Air Station Patuxent River, MD.

In 1990 he deployed to the Persian Gulf aboard USS Nimitz. As a pilot he logged over 5,000 hours in 35 types of aircraft.

Rominger went to NASA in 1992 and trained as a space shuttle pilot. He flew 5 missions, logging over 1,600 hours in space. He was the first pilot to dock the shuttle with the international Space Station. He held several management positions with NASA including chief of the Astronaut Office from 2002 to 2006.

Del Norte's airport (KRCV) has been named the Astronaut Kent Rominger Airport.

Congratulations to the winner for our quiz, Dr. Penney Hamilton (submitted at 7:25 on March 31<sup>st</sup>.)

## Flown West

### Charles “Dewey” Reinhard



Dewey Reinhard at the dedication of the new Colorado Aviation Hall of Fame in 2019. (Photo: Dave Kempa)

CAHS laureate and former society president, Charles “Dewey” Reinhard passed away on June 29, 2023.

Dewey was born in Pueblo, Colorado, September 1, 1930. He graduated from Colorado Springs High School in 1948, and served in the Navy from 1951 to 1955 as an electronics technician. During his Naval service he flew as a crew member in a variety of aircraft-including a K-type Blimp. Dewey soloed in 1966 at the Colorado Springs Fountain Airport. He began his long and distinguished career in ballooning in 1974.

Dewey became internationally known as a balloonist, using both gas and hot air balloons. He participated in the Gordon Bennett balloon races and many other competitions. He was the organizer of the Colorado Springs Balloon Classic (now called the Labor Day Lift-off) and, in 1980, won the National Gas Balloon Championship in Belgium.

Dewey and Steve Stephenson made an attempt to cross the Atlantic in a balloon in October of 1977, which landed in the ocean after 46 hours aloft. His film record of this effort "Impossible Dream", won an "Emmy" award for edited sports special in 1978.



Beginning of Dewey Reinhard's and Steve Stephenson's transatlantic attempt in 1977 aboard the "Eagle" (photo: National Ballooning Hall of Fame)

Among Reinhard's many awards are the prestigious Montgolfier Diploma for service to ballooning (1989), the Balloon Federation of America's (BFA) Distinguished Aeronaut award (1984), the BFA President's Award (1986), and the Shields-Trauger Memorial Award (1996). Dewey was an inductee into the Colorado Springs High School Alumni Hall of Fame (1985), the US Ballooning Hall of Fame (2011), and the Colorado Springs Sports Corps Hall of Fame (2016). In April of this year, it was announced that Dewey has been accepted into The Federation Aeronautique Internationale's (FAI) International Balloon and Airship Hall of Fame.

Dewey was inducted into the Colorado Aviation Hall of Fame in 1983, and served as the president of the Colorado Aviation Historical Society in 1987.



The Labor Day Lift-off in Colorado Springs September 5, 2021 (Photo: Colorado Springs Gazette)

## Centennial of the Colorado Air National Guard

The 140th Wing, Colorado Air National Guard celebrated the 100th anniversary of military aviation in Colorado by hosting a family day for its members on May 7, at Buckley Space Force Base, Aurora, Colorado.

The COANG has a proud history that can be traced back to June 27, 1923 with the 120th Aero Observation Squadron, part of the Colorado Army National Guard. The 120th was the first military aviation unit in Colorado. When Air Guard units were reorganized after World War II, the 120th (now a Tactical Fighter Squadron) became part of the 140th Fighter Group based at Buckley Field.

In 1951 more than 1500 officers and airmen of the 140<sup>th</sup> were ordered to active duty during the Korean War, and in 1961 the unit was activated for the Berlin crisis. In 1968 the 140<sup>th</sup> was activated for service in the Vietnam War. The Colorado ANG has been deployed overseas as part of Operation Enduring Freedom in Afghanistan and Operation Iraqi Freedom in Iraq. The unit has received four Presidential Unit Citations since its inception and it received the 'V' for valor for Vietnam combat flying.



This Douglas O-2H was flown by the 120<sup>th</sup> Aero Observation Squadron (Photo: CAHS Archives)

A number of Laureates of the Colorado Aviation Hall of Fame were members of the Colorado Air Guard. Carlos Reavis, Virgil Vaughn, Ray Wilson, Harry Combs, Dan Kearns, Charles France, Ralph Hall, Dr. Nolie Mumey, Noel King, Aubrey Keif, Joe Moffitt, and Stanford

Gregory were all members of the original 120<sup>th</sup> Aero Observation Squadron when it was based at the first Lowry Airfield located at 38<sup>th</sup> and Dahlia St.

Walt Williams, Robert Cherry, John France, Wynn Coomer, John Lowell and Ed Mack Miller flew as part of the Minuteman aerial exhibition team in the 1950's.



One of the CAHS Founders, Ed Mack Miller was the program announcer and reserve pilot for the Minute Men demonstration team (Photo: CAHS Archives)

Coomer and Cherry, along with Don Neary, and Jack Wilhite were members of the 120<sup>th</sup> Tactical Fighter Squadron when it deployed to Pham Rang, Vietnam.

Walt Walliams retired as a Brigadier General; Joe Moffitt, John France, and Stanford Gregory advanced to the rank of Major General. Major General Moffitt, Major General Gregory and Col. Jack Wilhite all served as presidents of CAHS.



CAHS members Dave McCord, Larry Liebrecht, and Bob Rushforth were on hand to set up a display on our Aviation Archeology program at the COANG celebration (Photo: Steve Kelly)

## Notes From the Field

# Buzzin the Prairie

By Brian Richardson

Captain John Rodolf is perhaps best remembered as one of seven young Army Air Force officers that survived an extremely difficult nighttime ditching in a C-47 on the Pacific Ocean. He spent eleven days in a life raft adrift upon the sea, and then endured another sixteen days as a prisoner of Japanese soldiers on the island of Tanimbar – eleven days after Japan announced its surrender! John Rodolf went on to enjoy a successful career in the United States Air Force, retiring with many accolades and medals as a photo-reconnaissance pilot in the jet age. But what you probably won't read about in the mainstream history books is a little-known highlight from this gentleman's early Air Corps training days when, on a lark, he decided to buzz Adobe Creek Reservoir, fifteen miles North of Las Animas, Colorado.



**Capt. John H. Rodolf**

Second Lieutenant John H. Rodolph earned his Army Air Force pilot wings on 22 June 1943. Shortly after this, he was assigned to the 10<sup>th</sup> Photo Squadron, 2<sup>nd</sup>

Photo Group, 3<sup>rd</sup> Air Force, stationed at Peterson Army Airfield (AAF) in Colorado Springs, for photo reconnaissance transition training. The mount he would train on and later fly in combat was the twin-engine Lockheed P-38 "Lightning."



Lockheed P-38 "Lightning" (Photo: CAHS Archives)

Just as the sun started to dawn on Thursday morning, August 19, 1943, Lt. Rodolph took-off from Peterson AAF on a transition training flight in a P-38H, A.F. No. 42-66782. His flight plan was simple; fly direct to Garden City, Kansas, then return to home base, simulating a photo recon mission. Rodolph had calculated approximately two hours of flying time at cruise (275 mph) power settings to complete his mission.

At about 07:45 hours Mountain War Time, on his return leg, Rodolph passed over the tranquil waters of Adobe Creek Reservoir and, just like most every other airman at his age stationed in the area, couldn't resist the temptation to buzz across the shimmering, flat expanse of this massive body of water. Misjudging his distance above the surface – a very common problem for all airmen – he pulled-up too late and caught the propeller tips on the lake's surface. The left propeller was ripped from its crankshaft and disappeared into the lake, where it remains to this day, while the right propeller, now distorted and causing serious vibrations through the engine and into the airframe, caused a fire in the right engine nacelle. According to his original statement in the 1943 report, Rodolph managed to successfully crash-land the aircraft in a field adjacent to the shoreline and extricate himself before the aircraft was largely consumed by fire.

(continued on next page)

### Buzzin' the Prairie (from page 6)

The official United States Army Air Force (USAAF) report includes documents that recommended Lt. Rodolph undergo evaluation to determine his suitability for photo reconnaissance work, but the case ends there in this somewhat modest collection of documents. Obviously, Lt. Rodolph was exonerated and went on to distinguish himself with a lengthy and exceptional career in the United States Air Force, which included operational assignments in three conflicts: World War II, Korea, and Viet Nam.

During AvAr's 2006 expedition to Adobe Creek, which focused on the 1942 AT-17 accident (See the 3Q15 issue of the CAHS Journal), we spent a couple of misguided hours searching the southeast shoreline for Rodolph's P-38, based on intelligence from a "supposedly" reliable, eyewitness source. (Note: The official USAAF report did not indicate a direction of flight nor impact location other than the 'shoreline'.) Besides the many rattlesnakes and tall saw grass encountered in this swampy area, we found no substantiating evidence of an aircraft accident. While this was actually an ancillary operation "piggy-backing" off the principal mission of locating the AT-17, we made a note to resume this search at a later date. However, as is often the case when we have little to go

on, John Rodolph's P-38 sort of slipped by the wayside in favor of more promising discoveries over the years.

Update: On March 25, 2007, senior AvAr researcher Duke Sumonia, tracked down Col. John Rodolph (USAF Ret.), then residing in Tulsa, Oklahoma, and conducted an online interview. It was learned that Rodolph had actually made his pass over this reservoir from the south to the north, crash landing gear-up, in a field just beyond the shoreline. He also stated that most of the aircraft was consumed in a post-crash fire, but that the empennage was left relatively intact.

Given this revelation that Rodolph crash-landed on the north shore, rather than the southeastern shoreline, AvAr is planning a new expedition to the north-side of Adobe Creek sometime in either 2023 or 2024. We'll keep CAHS members apprised of our progress as details develop. If you're interested in aviation archaeology this will be a perfect opportunity for you to join our team in the field and learn, firsthand, about aviation archaeology. Oh, and as far as the rattlers go; we plan to conduct this expedition during winter months when most of the little critters are on vacation.

*Ed note: information on future AvAr activities may be obtained by emailing Brian Richardson at [Aviator\\_b@outlook.com](mailto:Aviator_b@outlook.com)*

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## Laureate Profiles

# James H. Harvey III

This July 13<sup>th</sup> marks a special day for Hall of Fame laureate Lt. Col. James Harvey III. As Harvey was born on July 13, 1923 in Montclair, New Jersey, he will celebrate his 100<sup>th</sup> birthday.

Harvey attended high school in Mountain Top, Pennsylvania. He became the President of his senior class and class valedictorian.

In 1943, he took the Cadet Training exam and was admitted to Tuskegee Flight School's Aviation Cadet Training Program. He graduated from Cadet Flight Training at Tuskegee, Alabama in October, 1944 and was assigned to the 99<sup>th</sup> Pursuit Squadron of the 332<sup>nd</sup> Fighter Group.

He stayed in the Air Force after World War II ended and in 1949 was one of a group of three pilots to win the first U.S. Air Force "Top Gun" Fighter competition. This 10-day competition comprised six events: aerial gunnery at 20,000 feet, aerial gunnery at 12,000 feet, dive bombing, skip bombing, rocketing firing, and panel strafing. Harvey's 332<sup>nd</sup> Fighter Group team flying the P-47N aircraft lead from start to finish.



1<sup>st</sup> Lt. Harry Stewart, 1<sup>st</sup> Lt. Halbert Alexander, 1<sup>st</sup> Lt. James Harvey III, Capt. Alva Temple at the U.S. Air Force Fighter competition (Photo: U.S. Air Force)

In 1950 Harvey became the first African American jet fighter pilot to engage in combat during the Korean

War. He flew 126 combat missions with the 49<sup>th</sup> Fighter/Bomber Group flying the F-80 aircraft and was awarded the Distinguished Flying Cross.

After the Korean War, he had assignments with fighter units in Japan, California, and Newfoundland. He became the Operations Officer for the 71<sup>st</sup> Fighter Interceptor Squadron at Selfridge Michigan. After serving 22 years, Lt. Col. Harvey retired from the Air Force in 1965. He was hired by the Oscar Meyer company and moved to Denver in 1972. He later became a prominent motivational speaker for schools and organizations throughout Colorado and the mountain states.



A regular attendee at CAHS Hall of Fame banquets, this photo of James Harvey was taken in 2019. (Photo: Dave Kempa)

In 2007 Lt. Col. James Harvey was presented with the Congressional Gold Medal for his service with the Tuskegee Airmen of the 332<sup>nd</sup> Fighter Group.

James Harvey III was inducted into the Colorado Aviation Hall of Fame in October 2012.



### President's Report (from page 3)

What about those fresh ideas? The bylaws of this organization allow the board to set up an advisory council. Steve Kelly began this process late in 2022 and continued this in the winter of 2023. We have had our first advisory council meeting and we are absorbing the amazing suggestions that were put forth. You will hear more about this soon.

The board recognizes that your Colorado Aviation Historical Society has seen the passing of the last of the original organizers of the organization. We are looking to the future and hope to maintain the influence and prestige of CAHS.

When I learned of Dewey Reinhard passing it occurred to me that I had not read about Dewey's exploits in a long time. Did you know that when Dewey was getting his check ride in a balloon in Jefferson County, he was signed off by an FAA official riding in a car as a chase vehicle? But the amazing story of Dewey Reinhard and his attempt to cross the Atlantic under a balloon is the true story of a pioneer. Then the educational outreach that Dewey did in the years that followed helped to inspire another generation of aviators.

### Mystery Quiz Summer 2023 (2Q23) Journal Question

In each issue of the Journal we will present a photograph from the Society archives and challenge you, the reader, to provide information about the subject. Anyone who responds with the correct answer will be mentioned in the following issue, and the first person to answer will win a CAHS commemorative challenge coin. Send your response to [aviator\\_b@outlook.com](mailto:aviator_b@outlook.com) at your earliest convenience to ensure your submittal is included in the next Journal. Please make sure to include a mailing address where you'd like to receive the coin.

The challenge for this issue: *Identify this unique, ahead-of-its-time, Colorado designed aircraft.*



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## Colorado Drone Airshow 2023

The Colorado Drone Airshow is CSU's first annual airshow and will provide an immersive drone experience for all. Join us at Christman Airfield in Fort Collins for two exciting days of unmanned aircraft systems excellence. Oct. 6 will be our industry day focusing on the new and emerging technologies of unmanned aircraft systems with over 50 exhibitors. While Oct. 7 will be community day with drone racing, UAV demonstrations, fly overs, food trucks, and much more. For more information please go to Home-Colorado Drone Show ([colostate.edu](http://colostate.edu))

## Introduction to Aviation Archaeology Trip

In clear and calm weather at 1:14 p.m. on Friday, October 2, 1970, a chartered Martin 404 airliner carrying players and coaches of the Wichita State University football team crashed into a mountain eight miles west of Silver Plume, killing 31 of the 40 people on board.

Members of AvAr will be hosting a site-visit to the Wichita State crash site on Saturday, August 5, 2023. While there is a decent – but rocky – trail from the car park, this hike will be of moderate difficulty. At around 11,100 feet mean-sea-level (MSL), you will ascend approximately 500 feet over the 1.7 mile hike. Estimated hike time (each way) is about one hour and thirty minutes. As always, please assess your own physical condition before attempting this hike. If you're interested in attending this expedition please contact Brian Richardson at [aviator\\_b@outlook.com](mailto:aviator_b@outlook.com) for further information and details.



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