



From
Balloons



To
Ballistics

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Cover Photo: The Exploration of Flight Hangar at Centennial Airport will be the site of the Society’s General Membership Meeting on March 28, 2026. The meeting begins at 10 am with the election of board members. The President’s and Treasurer’s reports follow. (Photo: Wings Over the Rockies)

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@outlook.com

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President's Report

2025 in Review

Keith Shaddox



The year 2025 was a remarkable year for the Society.

There is new development in the restoration of our DC8 model. As you may know Mike Smalling from the Wings museum restoration staff has taken on the task of methodically bringing the model back from its years of neglect. The resin passenger and crew figures have been restored, and the model is nearing completion with a new refreshed interior. In the process of restoring, parts that made up the overhead bins just fell apart in an unusable state and the process was stalled on how best to move forward. The board of the society with some encouragement from the President has funded the purchase of a small new 3D printer that will be shared with the restorations department at the museum. We have taken delivery of the unit, and we will be installing it soon. Our first project will be the production of the badly needed parts for the interior of our DC-8 model. I must mention here the wonderful technical support we have been receiving from Quinn Matheson. Quinn is one of our younger members of the society who has spent time volunteering both for the Society as well as the museum in the restorations area. This has been a part time endeavor for Quinn because he is in school at Yale.

During the year we have completed a new exhibit dedicated to our recognition of the Tuskegee Airmen as well as completing a new exhibit about the WW2 history of La Junta airport. We are also moving ahead with the support of a WW1 aviation exhibit at the Pueblo Weisbrod museum. I would like to thank Earnie LeRoy, Steve Kelly and Brian Richardson for the wonderful work on these initiatives.

If you weren't at the Hall of Fame banquet, you missed a great time. The Lakewood Country Club upped their game this year. We were welcomed by a professional staff that set us up quickly. The Country Club has a new audiovisual system that was a huge improvement over previous years. We have always been pleased with the food at the Country Club, but this year everything was

especially delicious. Our master of ceremonies, Jim Huffman made a point to invite the chef to meet with Jim and I after the banquet so that we could compliment him on a great meal.

When you walk around the Hall of Fame you will find people who were involved in amazing adventures in aviation. There are people who demonstrate remarkable stick and rudder skills in amazing demonstrations at air shows.

We have one of our laureates who urgently collected as much information as he could about airports and approaches in the 1920s when there was no such data available. Elrey Jepsen saved his life doing this as well as the lives of other pilots.

I believe we are the only aviation Hall of Fame that honors a Vietnam Helicopter pilot who in civilian life stopped a cold-blooded killer with a news helicopter. It is a story that Mike Silva lived to talk about and mesmerized those of us watching TV.

There are a lot of women in our Hall of Fame. Emily Howel Warner is one of our women laureates who refused to listen when being told women don't fly. She became the first woman captain flying the left seat in a major airline.

In the 2025 ceremony we learned about not one but two people who mentor future aviators. We met a real Professor of Aviation, teaching young people about wings, rudders, ailerons, air space and adverse yaw. We also learned the professor has had an enormous influence on flight safety through our mountains. Our first inductee was Bill Standerfer, and he is asked repeatedly to teach mountain flying techniques at Oshkosh.

We also met a man who has flown all over the world behind the windshield of big airliners. But his gift to Colorado aviation was encouraging and nourishing the minds of young people. You can do this too and your future in aviation is within reach, is the message he leaves with every young person he works with. This was our second inductee, Willie Daniels, who has a wonderful legacy lifting the lives of so many young people of all walks of life to aviation pathways.

(Continued on next page)

(President's Report from page 3)

A big thank you to everyone who came. If you weren't there you missed a good one. Make plans to be there next year. A big thank you also to the officers and board members of CAHS for making this year's banquet one of the best.

The first few weeks of 2026 we will be adding the plaques of our new laureates on the wall in the hall of fame.

Here is a word of encouragement from your President. If you or anyone you know is interested in leading this organization's board of directors, please let us know. I would like to move on to some other role for CAHS next year. Now is your time to step forward. Get involved.

Finally, for myself and the board, we wish you a very Merry Christmas and wonderful New Year.

Keith Shaddox, President



The WWII history of La Junta Army Air Base is the subject of this new display case at Wings over the Rockies Air & Space Museum (photo: Steve Kelly)

Mystery Quiz Fall 2025



The image shown in the last Quiz is a 2007 photo by James O'Leary of the former Pueblo Airport Hangar. This photo appears on the Abandoned and Little-Known Airfields website, managed by Paul Freeman Abandoned & Little-Known Airfields

The original Pueblo Airport started as an open pasture used by local aviators as early as 1910. Located on what is now South Prairie Avenue and Route 78 in South-Central Pueblo, this airfield grew to be one of the largest and most active municipal airports in the state, comprising about 546 acres, with four large, paved runways and hosted general, commercial and military operations, as well as a Civil Aeronautics Administration (CAA) Radio Station.

Constructed in 1925, the hangar in the image utilized steel girders and corrugated-sheet metal provided by the US Government, that had been used in France during World War One by the US Army Air Service. Labor was provided by inmates from the penitentiary located in Canon City. The attached control tower was constructed of limestone. The entire project cost \$50,000 in 1925; my inflation calculator says that that is about \$900,000 in 2025!

At the outset of World War Two, the US Army Air Corps (USAAC) elected to build a massive training base just east of Pueblo. Following the war, the base was given to the city. Pueblo didn't need two airports, so by 1954 the original airport was closed in favor of what is now the Pueblo Memorial Airport (PUB).

Like so many other historic airfields lost to the march of time, the only remnant of the original Pueblo Municipal Airport visible today is the restored hangar, which sits on the north end of a large public parking lot. How long will it be before this significant structure is deemed irrelevant? Our winner this quarter was Eric Karnes. Congratulations Eric!

Flown West

Lewis H. Entz

It is with great sadness that we report the passing of Lewis H. Entz. He flew west on Wednesday evening, December 10. He was 94.

Entz was Mr. San Luis Valley. Born in Monte Vista (September 7, 1931) and a farmer from Hooper, he represented the Valley in the Colorado House of Representatives for 16 years from 1982-98, and then in 2001 became state senator when he succeeded then-State Sen. Gigi Dennis following her resignation. He also served in the state senate until 2006, and before any of that served for 14 years as an Alamosa County Commissioner.

Lew had his first ride in a 40 HP J-2 Cub at the age of eight, and it was all uphill from there. Lew went to Korea in the 50's as a Marine ordnance man for Marine Fighter Squadrons, and found what airpower was all about. It wasn't until he returned to civilian life that he took flying lessons and soloed on January 25, 1956 at Monte Vista in a 1941 Taylorcraft. He received his private pilot license in 1966 and went on to fly a number of different make or model of aircraft, eventually owning a J-3 Cub and a Cessna T-210.

Lew Entz made his name in politics and public service, serving first as a county commissioner and as a member of the Alamosa Airport board for 14 years, resulting in the growth and improvement of the facility.

Rep. Lew Entz's contributions to aviation in this state are arguably greatest of any legislator in Colorado history. In 1988 he sponsored the Office of Aviation and the Colorado Aeronautical Board, and replaced the aircraft registration fees with an off-setting increase in in fuel tax used to fund airports, airport improvements and safety projects.

For this he received two awards from the Aircraft Owner and Pilots Association (AOPA), one of which was the Presidential Citation.

In 1990, Lew helped remove undesirable parts of a bill to allow pilots to land on roads and highways, which removed the negative impact on farmers and ranchers. He also worked for the re-diversion of 3% fuel tax to aviation purposes, which had previously gone to the general fund. This has resulted in the return of millions of dollars to be used exclusively for the state's aviation purposes.



Hall of fame Laureate Lew Entz (Photo: Alamosa Citizen)

Lew was an active member of the AOPA, Colorado Pilots Association, J-3 Cub Organization, and the Civil Air Patrol. Lew Entz was one of three laureates inducted into the Colorado Aviation Hall of Fame in 1992.

Lewis H. Entz is preceded in death by his wife, Lorie Entz, who passed away Sept. 7, 2014. They married on Nov. 24, 1952. He is survived by his wife, Kathryn "Kitty" Bigley-Entz.

Whirly Girls Pass The Seventy Year Mark

By Brian Richardson

For some reason most folks envision helicopter pilots as characteristically young, masculine males, clad in olive drab Nomex flight suits, wearing an old SPH-4 flight helmet, and vibrating so much that their voice warbles as they transmit over the radio. No doubt this is as a result of decades of Hollywood's cinematic brain washing (think Apocalypse Now).

The second pilot ever to fly a helicopter was Hanna Reitsch, a female German test pilot, who piloted a Focke-Achgelis-61.



Betty Pfister had a long and distinguished career in aviation beginning in 1941 (Photo: CAHS)

In 1955 a select few rotorcraft pilots came together to form the Whirly Girls, an international association of female helicopter pilots. Comprised of industry enthusiasts, flight instructors and engineers, Whirly Girls represented the interests of all the feminine certificate holders.

Over the years this devout group of specialized aviators has expanded their interests to include promotion of aviation careers for women, initiatives in the field of aeromedical evacuation, as well as safety promotion for all helicopter pilots.



Betty Pfister Became a laureate of the Colorado Aviation Hall of Fame in 1984 (Photo: CAHS)

Colorado Aviation Historical Society (CAHS) was proud to recognize Betty Pfister (CAHoF 1984) as the 52nd woman in the US to be licensed as a helicopter pilot; as a member of the 1973 Helicopter Team competing in the world championships in England, and the 1978 competition in Russia.

Pfister has been named one of the 100 most influential women in the history of aviation. Her contributions are seminal in the development of women's advancement in aviation careers.

Thank you, Dr. Penny Hamilton, (CAHoF 2011), publisher of Grit and Lace, for bringing this very unique anniversary to our attention.

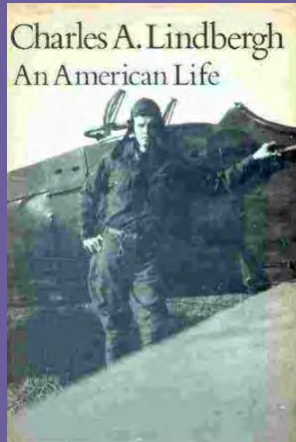
For more information about the Whirly Girls organization, please go to:

Whirly Girls International Female Helicopter Pilots

Lead On A Good Read

Charles A. Lindbergh: An American Life

By Brian
Richardson



I found this gem on the bottom shelf of a used book store in Longmont. With more than a dozen books about Lindbergh in my personal collection, I hadn't read this one so I snapped it up poste haste.

This quick read is actually a collection of papers written about Lindbergh by some very notable authors: Richard Hallion, Judith Schiff, Donald Hall, and Thomas Crouch, to name but a few. Each of these essays represent hours of research, as well as a number of intimate interviews with Charles Lindbergh himself.

If you are unfamiliar with the lifetime accomplishments of Charles Augustus Lindbergh, this is as good a place as any to start familiarizing yourself with one of America's true aviation heroes. However, if you have read any of the plethora of really great volumes written about Lindbergh, then you will probably be disappointed with this choice. While it briefly covers his personal background and, of course, his epic trans-Atlantic flight, it doesn't do justice to the rest of Lindbergh's story; his early airmail experiences, involvement with the America First movement and subsequent struggles with the Roosevelt administration, the kidnapping of his firstborn, self-exile to Europe, scientific experiments, and the such.

All in all, the book is entertaining and does provide a pretty good telling of his New York to Paris flight. It now occupies the space next to my copy of WE, which I'll provide a review of in a future edition of the journal.

Dear Member,

Greetings from your Board of Directors at the Colorado Aviation Historical Society. Hopefully this message finds you healthy, wealthy and wise. (Okay, at least two out of three isn't bad.)

We wanted to reach out early and advise you of a new policy change concerning society membership dues. In the recent past we have taken steps to update how we conduct business and create a more vital, modern organization for our membership. Actions such as going digital with our quarterly journal allowed us to increase the size and add more color while reducing the enormous costs of printing and mailing a hardcopy to everyone. Measures such as this have prevented the need for increased membership costs.

In continuing with this effort, it has been decided to revamp our membership renewal policy. We all get busy and forgetful, and paying annual membership dues on an irregular schedule can be inconvenient and low on the most well-intentioned member's priority list. Add to this the energy required by the society to monitor everyone's renewal dates and then send out monthly reminders is time consuming and inefficient.

Therefore, effective March 1, 2026, annual membership renewal will be due to the society on or before that date (March 1st), each succeeding year. For new and renewing members who paid their annual membership fee on or after 1 September 2025, your next payment will be 1 March 2027. For those members who joined or renewed prior to 1 September 2025, your membership renewal is due 1 March 2026.

There has been no change in the membership fee structure: Yearly is still \$30.00; Family is \$40.00; and a five-year membership is only \$120.00.

Questions, comments or concerns, please don't hesitate to reach out at aviator_b@outlook.com. Your feedback is important to our continual growth.

Brian Richardson, *Secretary*
Colorado Aviation Historical Society
(970) 405-5377

Colorful Colorado Character: Will Parker

By Brian Richardson

There are very few individuals that are truly recognized as early American aviation pioneers. While famous travelling stars like Beachy, Curtiss, Johnstone, Moissant, and Paulhan, took center stage blazing their names across national headlines in those halcyon days of aeronautical exhibition flying, far too many local heroes were overshadowed and remain relatively obscure footnotes in the annals of aviation history.



Billy Parker flies a plane built in Fort Collins between 1913 and 1914. The plane now hangs in the Tulsa Airport Terminal Building (Photo: CAHS archives)

Will D. “Billy” Parker (CAHoF 1969) was not born in Colorado. His family moved to Ft. Collins from Oklahoma when he was but an infant, so for all intents and purposes, he could be considered a native Coloradoan.

An exceptionally bright child who excelled at whatever he put his mind to, Billy was only thirteen when he assembled and flew his first glider from the foothills west of Ft. Collins, early in 1912. As if that isn’t enough to impress you, he also devised a functional parachute recovery system that insured he would always have a safe landing.

Later that same year, working from minimalistic drawings and materials purchased by his supportive mother, Billy built his first powered aircraft, a modified Curtiss-Pusher. Unable to find a readily available engine for his project, this young genius machined his own eight-cylinder vee-type motor out of wood. That’s

right... a functional gas-powered aircraft engine from locally sourced hardwood. In later years he admitted that it didn’t perform all that well, but it supplied sufficient enough power to “propel him successfully around the airfield a few times, before falling apart.” Billy’s reputation grew and, between 1912 and 1917, he built ten similar Curtiss-pusher aircraft for local buyers, but equipped with reliable aircraft engines.

Serving as a United States Army Air Service flight instructor early in 1917, Billy was later commissioned as a Captain in the Royal Flying Corp. (RFC), a position he held until the armistice in November 1918.

Following the Great War, Billy filled his logbook while barnstorming the central plains and Midwest. He worked as a test pilot and also found the time to design and patent the first controllable pitch propeller.

By 1927 Billy was done with the vagabond lifestyle. Phillips Petroleum Company was looking for an experienced aviator to head their newly organized aviation department. This turned out to be a perfect match – Billy Parker and Phillips Petroleum. When he retired thirty-seven years later, Billy was Director of Aviation. During his time at Phillips, he oversaw the development of advanced fuel blending, which improved large-engine-horsepower performance for our Air Force, during World War II. After the war, he contributed significantly to the development of high-altitude jet engine anti-icing fuel supplements. After forty-one years on Phillip’s payroll, Billy retired, but still flew a replica of his old pusher at many airshows. When he finally hung-up his goggles and leather helmet for good, Billy Parker had logged more than 18,000 hours in the air.

Among his many organizational affiliations was the Early Birds, which limits its members to those who piloted aircraft prior to December 17, 1916. In addition, he was a member of the Quiet Birdmen, Conquistadores del Cielo, Veterans Pilots Association, and president of the Oklahoma Wing of the OX5 Club.

Billy Parker flew west in 1981. His significant contributions to aviation development in America are often overlooked in most history books. The Colorado Aviation Historical Society will continue to promote the legacy of this incredible aviation pioneer.

CAHS Moment in Time

Colorado's First Official Airman

By Brian Richardson

Up until recently, when anyone asked me who the first airman was in the State of Colorado, I always responded with the name of Louis Paulhan. Popular history has him drawing more than 50,000 people to a public exhibition of the first airplane in Colorado on February 2, 1910, at the Overland Park racecourse in Denver. While it is true, he was the first pilot (on record) of a heavier-than-air-craft in Colorado, I've recently learned that he was not the first airman to ascend in the skies above the Centennial State.

Actually, that title belongs to a relatively unknown circus performer/acrobat by the name of William "Bill" Anderson. It was in June, 1871, that Bill arrived in Denver with the Lake's Hippo Olympiad and Mammoth Circus, a travelling carnival troupe, that billed as its principal act a manned-balloon ascension every day.

At about two o'clock in the afternoon of Tuesday, June 13th, the tether lines of his experimental hot air balloon were released and Bill ascended rapidly to an altitude of approximately 1,000 feet above the ground. Suddenly, something went terribly wrong and the balloon began a rapid descent, culminating with a crash landing in a yard on Holladay Street, in what was then considered Denver's "vice" district. Aeronaut Anderson was

reportedly shaken, but none the worse-for-wear, and immediately located a saloon to solace himself with a glass of beer, according to an article published in The Denver Times, that same day.

Not long after this event Lake's Hippo-Olympiad and Mammoth Circus folded and declared bankruptcy. As a side note, Colorado's first airman proved his character less than reputable when, a couple of weeks later he was



Early hot air balloon being launched (Photo:Wikipedia)

arrested for stealing a suit of clothing in Denver. Records indicate that he was seriously wounded in an escape attempt from the Denver City jail, but that is where the historic trail goes cold for Colorado's first official airman. If any of our members know of Bill's final resting place or knows of any further history concerning him, please contact Brian Richardson at aviator_b@msn.com or (970) 405-5377.

General Membership Meeting

You are cordially invited to attend the CAHS Spring General Membership Meeting on Saturday, March 28, 2026 between 10 a.m. and 1 p.m., at the Exploration of Flight Museum, 13005 Wings Way, Englewood, CO 80112.

This annual gathering of the society's membership is an opportunity to vote for the society's board of directors, receive a "State of the Society" report, learn of upcoming projects and events, mingle with fellow members, listen to a fascinating presentation, and offer up any ideas you might have for the society. Open to all members, you are encouraged to bring a guest or two or three. Refreshments will be provided and door prizes will be offered throughout the gathering.



Mystery Quiz Winter 2026 (1Q26)

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 at your earliest convenience to ensure your submittal is included in the next Journal. Please make certain to include a mailing address where you'd like to receive the coin.

The challenge for this issue: *Name this unique 1928 Colorado designed aircraft, pictured at Hayden Lake Airfield, near Boulder. Hint: This aircraft combined a proven bi-plane design with a monoplane retrofit in order to meet the [then] new Civil Aeronautics Administration (CAA) requirements.*



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