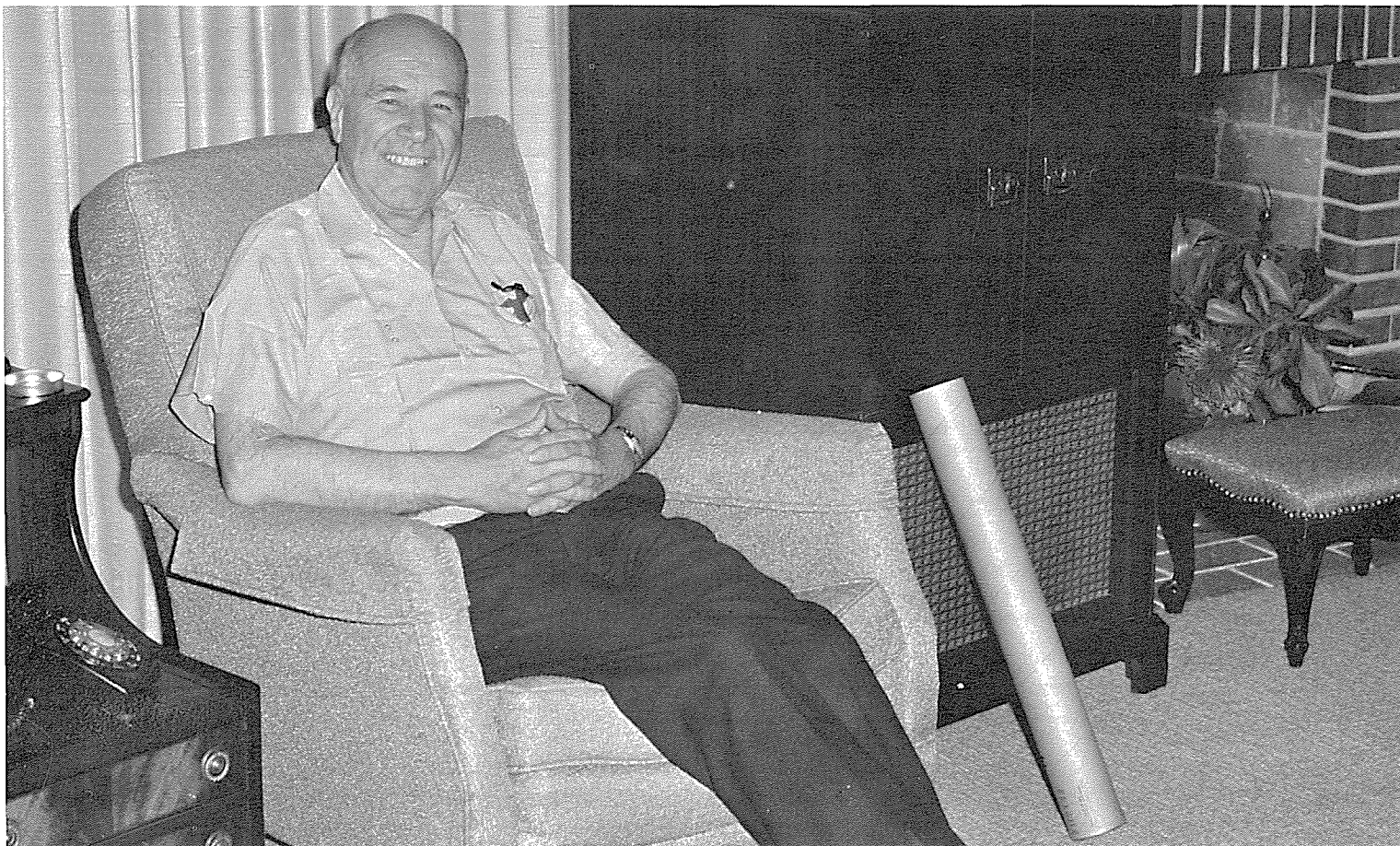




Willis L. Nye update

With the awarding of a Life Membership to Daniel P. Hagedorn, winner of the Willis L. Nye Award, as reported in the 1st Quarterly Newsletter, the Willis L. Nye Memorial takes the second step in fulfilling the original concept envisioned when the Memorial Fund was established five years ago. Not only does Mr. Hagedorn become Life Member No. 100 but he also provides us with a stepping-stone to revitalizing the program and the hopes of reaching the full potential of the Willis L. Nye Award. It is fitting at this time that we review the program, report on the progress, and outline the aims of this living tribute to one of the founding members of the AAHS.

The death of Willis L. Nye in June 1971 was felt throughout the aviation history community. But most saddened by his demise were the members of the AAHS, for it was his faith in an idea that created the American Aviation Historical Society.

With the help of William T. Larkins and Chalmers A. Johnson that idea became a reality and the AAHS came into being. From that beginning in 1956 he provided the steadying influence over the Society with his strong belief in the potential and value of the amateur enthusiast and the dangers of too much professionalism. It was this influence that helped maintain the unique character and personality of the JOURNAL.

It was his strong contention that the efforts of the individual contributors should be rewarded and it was under his guidance that the awards program was established with the Contributor's Award and the Founder's Award, which has since been expanded to include an award for artistic talent.

It was only fitting, that with his passing a lasting tribute be made in his memory, and thus was born the Willis L. Nye Memorial Fund. The Memorial Fund was established by the Board of Directors in July, 1971, as an endowment fund to provide for awarding of grants and/or scholarships to members of the AAHS whose work in the field of aviation history is deserving of special consideration.

As an endowment fund, the Willis L. Nye Memorial Fund subsists entirely from contributions by the members. Donations to the fund are tax deductible, and all monies collected are held in trust and administered by the Board of Directors. Disbursements from the fund can only be made from interest drawn on the principal deposited to the fund, with no withdrawal of the principal permitted for any reason. It is this restriction on the use of the fund that has resulted in the delay in reaching the intended goal of awarding grants and scholarships.

During the first two years of the fund's existence donations were received regularly, but have now declined until, in this past year, nothing was added to the fund. We, the Board of Directors, take the blame for this decline. Aside from the annual awarding of a plaque to the winner of the Willis L. Nye Award, no publicity regarding the existence and purpose of the Memorial Fund has been released in either the JOURNAL or the Newsletter during the past two years. This lack of publicity can be alibied, but cannot be excused, and we accept the blame.

This second step is a bold one, and even though we are still "under funded" we must take it. We feel that it is improper for

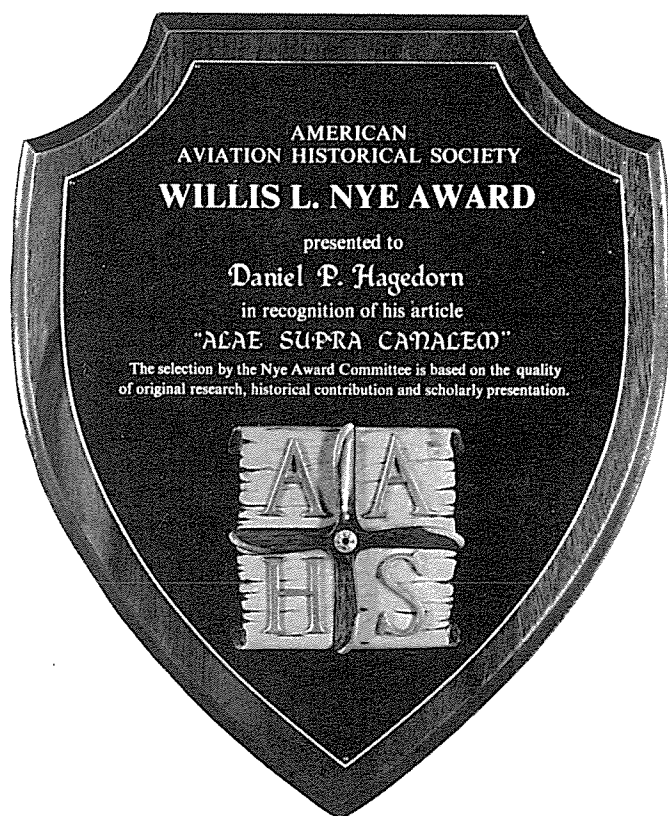
the existing funds to remain dormant and unused for the purpose they were intended. We are confident that in making this move at this time that we will soon be able to implement the full program as it was originally intended. And how do we intend to accomplish this?

The answer is PARTICIPATION. A donation of \$1.00 from each member will be more than enough to put the Memorial Fund on a sound footing. A \$5.00 contribution from each member will enable us to begin the awarding of grants and scholarships in amounts up to \$500.00 per year, and \$10.00 each from every member will make grants of up to \$1,000.00 a year possible. Larger amounts are welcome, in fact we have had contributions of \$100.00 or more. And remember, no matter what the size of the contribution, it is deductible for income tax purposes.

All contributions will be acknowledged by return mail and each donor will receive a black and gold decal. A list of donors will be published periodically in the Newsletter (unless you prefer to remain anonymous). Each year the annual report will include an accounting of the funds collected and disbursed so that you will know where your money is going.

We wish to emphasize at this point, that applications for grants or scholarships will not be accepted until full funding is accomplished to support those grants. We also wish to state that the Life Membership awarded to the winner of the Willis L. Nye Award is an award of merit for past accomplishments, and does not automatically entitle the recipient to receive a grant. Grants will be awarded only on application, and after a thorough review to determine the merit of the project for which the grant will be awarded. Complete rules governing the awarding of grants will be published only after sufficient funding has been obtained to assure a continuing self-sustaining program.

One thing we must all remember. Even though this program carries the name of Willis L. Nye, and is a tribute to his memory, it is your program, your means of advancing the cause of aviation history by providing funds to assist in research that might otherwise not be done.



NEWS & COMMENT

FROM OUR MEMBERS

X MARKS WHAT SPOT?

Dana Bell, Alexandria, VA 22304

I seem to remember a letter in a past Journal raising a question over the "Center of Gravity" crosses on P-38s and P-51s. A check of my Journal failed to turn up that letter, so I submit the following for the News and Comment Section without reference to the first letter:

A telegram recently found at the National Archives casts doubt on several references to black crosses marking the center of gravity for P-38s and P-51s. Dated 23 December 1943, for Eaker from Echols, signed Arnold, it reads: "Lockheed Lightning airplanes modified to include leading edge wing tanks and North American Mustangs modified to include 85-gallon fuselage tanks shipped to your theater are identified by crosses painted on the front part of the fuselage immediately below airplane serial numbers; black cross on uncamouflaged airplanes and a white cross on camouflaged airplanes. This is to facilitate appropriate disposition of these airplanes upon arrival in your theater."

ARTHUR PEARCY, JR.

Llanbedr, Gwynedd North Wales, UK

In Mauno Salo's review of the Ballantine PB DC-3, he raises the question of my having served with a USAF C-47 *Dakota* Squadron (Newsletter #39, pg. 23). As a matter of interest, I was with the USAF 7531st Air Base Squadron, 7500th AB GRP, here in the UK where we found ourselves operating C-47 Dakotas, not Skytrains. We took delivery of new refurbished C-47s from a civilian base and I discovered they were part of a batch of 50 RAF Dakotas returned to the USAF. On the Douglas production line during WWII they were given RAF serials. I have photos of a lot of these which went to NATO countries after being issued their USAAF serials for the very first time.

MORE CURTISS TRIPLANES

Thomas G. Foxworth, Huntington, New York

With regard to Dan Hagedorn's note, yes, I agree, I erred on the date of the Wasp triplane crash in Bolivia—but so did he! The date was May 20, 1920 (not May 18, as he says). Hudson's grand flight across the Andes was made May 19, 1920, undoubtedly the outstanding South American aviation event of the early years. I'm surprised the editor didn't jump in, to remind us all that the JOURNAL itself published a very scholarly piece, well documented, on the entire affair in the 15/1 (Spring 1970) JOURNAL, pp. 69-73, written by Donald L. DeWitt and illustrated by Robert E. Weiler.

JAPANESE WARHAWK

William H. Bartsch, Jakarta, Indonesia

Further to the story, "Japanese Warhawk" (Vol. 20, No. 2, Summer 1975) and the mystery of the identity of the three American pilots who cooperated with the Japanese when they were captured with their P-40s on Mindanao in May 1942, I have now succeeded in identifying the leader, "Major Snead." He was