

Albert Hansen, 1932 - 2017



We are sad to report that long time AAHS member Albert Hansen passed away on June 5, 2017, after a short illness.

Al was an early member of the Society, Member #81, and actively engaged in Society activities up until recently. He was a long time editor of the *AAHS Journal* "Forum of Flight" and served on the Board of Directors for a number of years. He also served as Executive Editor of the *Journal* as well.

In addition to Forum of Flight, Al contributed well over 30 other articles to the *Journal*. His primary interest was in Golden Age aircraft - Waco, Stinson, Lockheed, etc. He was the go-to person for those of us in AAHS office on early aircraft and general aircraft identification. He regularly attended the EAA fly-in each summer in Oshkosh, Wisconsin.

Al's interests also included air racing from both the 1930s as well as more recently. He was a regular attendee of the Reno National Air Races until recently.

Al served in the U.S. Navy in the early 1950s and spent a long career as an engineer with North American Aviation and later North American Rockwell.

Al's calm, warm friendly presence to those around him and contributions will be sorely missed by all of us in the Society.

Now it was up to the forecasters. Had not skilled meteorologists using modern methods correctly foreseen tiny chinks opening in the lowering winter and spring of 1944 in Western Europe, almost as fleeting as glimpses of blue sky between storm clouds (and had not the military commanders taken their word), all the mighty preparations for D-Day might have gone for naught, and the war in Europe might have gone on for years. Had the meteorologists been mistaken and the landing ships and the artificial harbors and the equipment and the men been dashed to destruction by an angry Channel against the hostile shores of France, the war might have been lost. A final bit of irony is that Major Heinz H. Lettau mentioned earlier, the chief German meteorologist, and his staff had agreed that the weather following June 4 would be much too bad to permit an invasion attempt, because new storms moving in from the North Atlantic. As a result, the German high command had relaxed and many officers were on leave, and many troops on maneuvers. Poor meteorology on the German side, therefore contributed to the success of D-day, as well as modern methods on the side of the Allies.

He continued:

General Eisenhower probably has never known how bitter were the divisions and arguments within the

forecast team around June 1 and 4, as to whether the next few days would provide any weather opportunity at all for the invasion. But at last the decisive word was taken to him that the weather should be "possible," and he ordered the great movement to start. A forecast ruling the weather "impossible" might well have delayed for a year the ending of the war.

Finally Krick left the following:

When the weatherman's memo analyzing the terrible weather of the next possible invasion period after D-day, June 17 or 21, was shown to him, General Eisenhower wrote this comment: "Thanks, and thank the gods of war that we went when we did!" As it was, a four-day storm, June 18-22, did smash up the artificial harbors, and set back the tempo of the invasion for weeks.

- 12 Paul W. Tibbets, "Training the 509th for Hiroshima," *Air Force Magazine*, LVI (1973), 49-55.
- 13 Helen Nace Satterlee, "Weather For Sale," *Saturday Evening Post*, Feb. 10, 1940, 68.
- 14 Norman A. Phillips, "Carl-Gustav Rossby: His Times, Personality, and Actions," *Bulletin of the American Meteorological Society*, LXXIX (June, 1998), 1109-1110.