

President's Message

It's getting warmer, and time to hang out at the local airport; follow the sounds of engine noise to a runway, where you can find people rebuilding worn out engines, families barbequing with friends among the kit plane projects, young (and old) student pilots earning their wings and hangar bums telling their stories.

Its not just stories as told by the people who lived them, but also the sites and aircraft themselves that contribute to our understanding of history. The AAHS supported the Flabob Airport DC-3 Fly-in recently, and got to hang with 10 DC-3/C-47s and their pilots, owners and fans from all over the United States and other parts of the world. Although

a relatively small event, people flew in from such places as Austria, Brazil and Iceland just to see a group of these famous aircraft fly together again, and be part of their histories (see photos on our AAHS Facebook and Flickr sites).

The level of interest in these 75-year-old aircraft from individuals outside the United States might be surprising to Americans, but entirely reasonable when you think of the history Europeans and other countries have with these aircraft.

We Americans haven't had the experience of watching waves and waves of dark green twin-engine transports flying purposefully overhead (some formations taking 45 minutes to pass by!) moving towards a war front to stop an enemy advancement, to drop food to starving cities cut off from other avenues of aid, or to pick up soldiers and return them home again. Americans weren't the citizens who watched these aircraft taking enemy fire overhead, sometimes crashing nearby, engines afire, or rescuing a pilot or crewmember who managed to escape the wreckage.

We Americans can also overlook the lineage of our modern air transport system that traces its roots back to the same DC-3. Developed prior to WWII to answer to the budgetary, speed and range needs of early airlines, the DC-3 was key in developing our modern air travel system that accommodates over 941 billion passenger miles flown per year (as of 2016), by the descendants of this venerable airplane.

It should give us pause to know that we can be the stewards of aircraft history that has meant so much to so many different people, for different reasons, in different times. We look to share the interests of AAHS with new friends and members of ASAA, AAA and EAA, and pool our combined resources for a much more effective future.

Speaking of new associations, we are very excited to plan for an AAHS week at Oshkosh 2017! With a table at the Vintage Hangar, we hope to reach out to more aviation enthusiasts and get more people involved. We've reserved an AAHS Clubhouse near Whitman field, (walking distance!) for afternoon get togethers and are now working to possibly lead a forum at some point during the week. We're looking for volunteers to help us in this recruiting effort (see page 129). If you can't physically participate, maybe you will consider making a donation to help defray the expenses associated with promoting the Society.

Plan to spend more time with AAHS this year; we'll all benefit!

Jerri Bergen
President



Photographers and attendees line up on the flight line at Flabob to catch a C-47 making a fly-by. (Photo by Jerri Bergen)