

# President's Message

There are key times in every organization's history, significant moments that alter trajectories, create new cultures, and forge new directions that can be successful or fail miserably. AAHS is approaching such a key turning point in our own history, with the confluence of several factors that, with good decision-making and a little a luck, will set up AAHS to be successful for years to come. We're referring to three concurrent events here at AAHS HQ; the opening of our new AAHS Headquarters at historic Flabob Airport, the bequest of a large endowment of funds from an AAHS member, and the review of AAHS operations by a local University MBA course.

The move of HQ has been in the works since 2017 (We cannot thank AAHS member John Turgyan enough for his contributions to the update of the Flabob AAHS HQ building that made it possible!) The bequest of a portion of the Jerrold Sloniger Estate to AAHS (AAHS member 1967-2008), and the Master of Business Administration (MBA) Organization review has come only recently. Jerrold was the son of E. L. 'Slonnie' Sloniger, American Airlines Pilot seniority number 1, barnstormer, WWI pilot and aviation pioneer (documented in the book available on Amazon, *One Pilot's Log* by Jerrold Sloniger, and in the novel *Fate is the Hunter* by Ernest K. Gann). The bequest will significantly support AAHS operations for a number of years. The Redlands University MBA Business Management College has devoted one of their 2019 capstone courses to the study of AAHS, the aviation history industry and how a non-profit of our ilk can succeed or fail in the coming years.

These three events, put together, constitute a rare opportunity for AAHS to examine our processes with an eye to real improvement, in an environment where we can support AAHS objectives and the aviation industry for future generations, and have resources to build our infrastructure where it is really needed. The funds are being professionally managed by an investment firm that specializes in long-term, non-profit objectives, and our MBA course project won't be complete for several weeks; but we'll make sure to keep our membership apprised of the outcomes of these exciting new developments.

What should an aviation-history-preservation organization like ours look like in 10 years? Should we be partnered with an educational institution? Should we be a publishing entity? Should we remain a members-only photo collection or be a public resource, more available to the general user on the web? These questions and several others we hope to address and explore in the coming months. What we do know now, is that the static organization we've been for the last 60 years will not take us forward with any degree of success. Change is necessary for our survival, and it is up to us to orchestrate that change for the benefit of our current and future members.

Would you like to participate in this discussion of our future? Let us hear from you! Send us a note of what you'd like to see us become, or what we could do better and we'll make sure to include it in our considerations.

We look forward to hearing from you!

Jerri Bergen  
AAHS President