

President's Message

In these unprecedented times, we have seen world priorities change overnight. Circumstances that were not on anyone's radar suddenly become life as we know it. With the COVID-19 virus and its impacts sweeping every country, we want to first implore our members and families to employ every effort to minimize this virus' impact on you and your loved ones' health.

As you see by our Annual Meeting Event Update, in this issue, we had in late February postponed our meeting date as a precautionary measure. Making the move early ensured members that travel plans could change without penalty, and gives us more time to better understand how this situation will develop and affect upcoming events. We'll make sure to update you on the changes and exciting new venues we're planning for at our October Annual Meeting.

With a 'social distancing' protocol now standard practice for many business operations, we will be working to implement more of our operations offsite, and continue our image archiving activities, such as 'Plane Spotter,' that can be performed entirely over the internet.

We have mechanisms, with our new bookkeeping processes, to process memberships without having to make volunteers come into the office. We can continue to scan our 35mm slide collection for the digitizing effort, all remotely. And, we continue to fine tune our new 'Plane Spotter' program, that will allow AAHS members and other interested enthusiasts help identify AAHS archive photos via a simple internet interface.

AAHS operations will continue, albeit a bit slower perhaps. The implications for the aviation industry are tremendous, however, and have already affected commercial aviation operations significantly. Boeing's stock is down 75% since the beginning of the year, and airlines, who could not find enough pilots to fill committed travel routes are now reversing course and performing layoffs as global air travel is severely curtailed.

Some smaller charter and private airline operations have capitalized on a small silver lining in this pandemic, offering flights with just a few passengers in specially sanitized aircraft flying in and out of small and private airports, to get passengers more safely to distant destinations.

Another small opportunity, for me anyway, has come about as a result of the many commitments I had that are now cancelled. I have time to work on a few AAHS articles that have been on my literary back burner for a few months now. In partnership with Steve Johnston, Airport Manager, Kingman Airport, I'm documenting the early military and current uses of historic Kingman Airport, of Kingman, Ariz., as well as a review of a newly published book about fellow AAHS member Bert Zimmerly's father and his involvement in early airline service in the Northwestern U.S. Perhaps this new environment might also be an opportunity for you to begin that research you've always wanted to do but haven't had the time.

For now, let's stay "On Course, On Glideslope.....".

Jerri Bergen
AAHS President