

Chief Operating Officer's Message

The 2023 year has swept past, with both highs and lows for the Society. Our Endowment Fund didn't provide the expected returns (as experienced by many Americans, certainly!) but the Society has been named the recipient of two different bequeathments, to be received in 2024. In consolidating our offices to Flabob HQ (closing the Huntington Beach office) we lost the support of several dedicated local volunteers, but operating costs have been reduced by 40%.

Volunteers have finished the cataloging and entering all our 5,600-plus aviation books into our "Book Connect" library software – a first! This is a huge win, as we can now search for a title, author or subject on behalf of members or researchers needing specific information. We still have 60 or more boxes of aviation magazines to log in, however, and do not (yet) have a method to enter more than the magazine title, volume, date, and subject key words (versus each article title).

Due to excessive delays in city permitting and approvals, Flabob Airport authorities have delayed planning of the long-discussed aviation library building, where the AAHS aviation books will eventually reside. We may not see this project begin for another 3-4 years. Flabob manager Beth Larick provided some on-site storage space so we can use our office areas for the book collection. We have also successfully connected with the Flabob Aviation Preparatory Academy (FAPA) who are planning to allow students to utilize the AAHS library via a dedicated computer station, donated by AAHS, to view our "Book Connect" and check out books of interest.

Through the sales of the Larry Klingberg model collection, AAHS now has \$16,500 in the Aviation Scholarship Fund. With the loss of volunteers, a scholarship award program has yet to be finalized, but we look forward to setting up the process and providing more news on this soon.

The *AAHS Journal* has been published nearly on schedule in 2023, and the FlightLine newsletter has made all its publication deadlines. We struggle mightily, however, with the collection of material for our members to enjoy. This deficit however, CAN be addressed by you, our members! Your experiences, stories, and photos are what we MOST need to publish the quality publications you receive in your mailbox and inbox.

Make it a point this year to collect those papers, recollections, stories and photos and forward them to the AAHS office. We can help organize and write up your thoughts with our available resources. 2024 will bring new opportunities and new challenges, certainly. We continue to work for you to make sure there are more "highs" than "lows"

Jerri Bergen
AAHS CEO