

NEWS RELEASE



NATIONAL AERONAUTIC ASSOCIATION

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1999 Elder Statesmen of Aviation Selected

Washington, DC - The National Aeronautic Association announced today that six persons have been selected to receive the prestigious Elder Statesman of Aviation award for 1999. They are Max Bleck, W. Barron Hilton, Corwin A.Corky@ Meyer, Margaret Ringenberg, Paul Sanderson, and Frank Smith.

The Elder Statesman of Aviation Award was established in 1954 to honor outstanding Americans who, by their efforts over a period years, have made contributions of significant value to aeronautics and have reflected credit upon America and themselves. All of the selectees must be at least 60 years of age. Nominations were solicited from hundreds of organizations and aviation leaders in the United States and 42 individuals were nominated. The selections were made by a distinguished committee of 22 aviation leaders from all segments of the aerospace community. The awards will be presented on November 4 during the NAA Fall Awards Ceremony to be held in Washington, DC.

NAA President Don Koranda stated, AAll of the 1999 Elder Statesmen are very deserving of this prestigious honor. Their career efforts have directly contributed to making aerospace in the United States the most reliable, advanced, and safest in the world.@

The 1999 recipients of the Elder Statesman of Aviation Award are:

Max E. Bleck - Mr. Bleck has been a contributor to general aviation for his entire career. Beginning as an aeronautical engineer, Mr. Bleck progressed to executive positions at several U.S. airframe manufacturers including Cessna, Piper, and Raytheon. His influences at these organizations led to the introduction of many of general aviation=s prominent aircraft including the Cessna Citation, the Beech 1900D airliner, and the Piper Malibu. Mr. Bleck has also served on the boards of the General Aviation Manufacturers Association, the Aerospace Industries Association, and NAA, and is a 2000-hour private pilot.

W. Barron Hilton - For over 50 years, Barron Hilton has been associated with aviation as a strong financial and inspirational supporter. Mr. Hilton acquired his pilot's certificate in Hawaii during WWII. Today he owns several aircraft and flies them all. In 1955, he founded Air Finance Corporation and began leasing and selling commercial aircraft. Using the income from his non-aviation related businesses, Mr. Hilton has supported many valuable aviation ventures including the Barron Hilton Cup for soaring and round-the-world ballooning attempts. Hilton's contributions have helped keep sport aviation prominent in America and the world.

Corwin W. Meyer - Corky Meyer's test pilot career spans more than 55 years in more than 125 different military and civilian aircraft. Meyer joined Grumman Aircraft in 1942 as an engineering test pilot and was the senior project pilot on aircraft including the Hellcat, Tigercat, and Bearcat. In 1974, he was elected President and CEO of Grumman American, a subsidiary who manufactured the Gulfstream business jet and other commercial aircraft. Meyer eventually led other aerospace companies to success including Enstrom Helicopters and Falcon Jet Corporation. Meyer has also written several articles for prominent aviation publications.

Margaret J. Ringenberg - Margaret Ringenberg took her first airplane ride at the age of seven. She was immediately fascinated with aviation and earned her private pilot's license by the age of 21, just in time to be called by the U.S. Army Air Force to join the Women Airforce Service Pilots (WASP). Since WWII, she has been deeply involved in air racing winning many trophies and awards and, as recently as 1994, she piloted a Cessna 340 in an "Around the World Air Race." Her story has been documented by numerous news media and, with over 40,000 flying hours, she has truly opened many doors for women in aviation.

Paul Sanderson - Mr. Sanderson was born in 1922. In 1942, he joined the U.S. Navy and became an instructor in the Aircraft Instrument and Link Trainer School. He then went on to become the head of the Link Trainer Department of Embry-Riddle. Sanderson started his own aviation ground school in 1956 and concentrated on creating the best learning environment possible. His techniques using tapes and pre-printed notes quickly made the Sanderson courses a tremendous success. In 1974, his company, Sanderson Films, was merged with Jeppesen to become Jeppesen Sanderson, Inc., a worldwide leader in aviation information and training.

Frank Kingston Smith - Frank Smith was born in 1919. In 1955, Mr. Smith developed a desire to fly and his new interest launched his aviation writing career with the publication of two books, *Weekend Pilot* and *Flights of Fancy*. In 1962, Smith became a regular columnist for *Flying Magazine* and became Executive Director of the National Air Transportation Association (NATA) in 1966. In 1988, Smith was

hired by Stuart Millar as Piper Aircraft's Aviation Ambassador, flying around the country promoting Piper and aviation in general. Smith is still active in aviation, contributing to several publications and accepting frequent speaking engagements.

The National Aeronautic Association is the National Aero Club of the United States and the nation's oldest aviation organization, founded in 1905. Its primary mission is the advancement of the art, sport, and science of aviation and space flight. NAA is also the United States representative to the Fédération Aéronautique Internationale, the 88-country organization that oversees all aviation and space records established worldwide. NAA consists of more than 100 member organizations. Collectively through its member affiliates, the association works to serve more than 400,000 individuals of whom 250,000 are active aviators.

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