

NAA NEWS

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Six Named NAA Elder Statesmen of Aviation

A woman test pilot and a renowned aerospace artist are among the six individuals selected to receive the prestigious Elder Statesman of Aviation Award for 2002. The Award is given to honor Americans who "have made contributions of significant value to aeronautics" over an extended period of time. NAA established the Elder Statesman Award in 1954 and has since honored over 200 men and women for their contributions to the aerospace field.

"Elder Statesmen of Aviation may be unique individuals from all sectors of our industry and from all areas of our country," said Don Koranda, President of NAA, "but they are united in their vision, skill, determination, and in their passion for aviation and space flight. These individuals have made exceptional contributions to our industry, and to our history and heritage, for which we are all beneficiaries."

The six winners for 2002 are:

1. Anne Bridge Baddour of Massachusetts. A woman of many talents, Ms. Baddour has been involved with aviation much of her life, and has experience as a pilot in 42 types of aircraft. For 20 years, she worked as a research pilot for Lincoln Laboratory at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology--the first female pilot employed by the Lab. She was assigned to programs for the Department of Defense and the Federal Aviation Administration including work as an early tester of the Global Positioning System (GPS). She has competed in 16 air races, beginning in 1954, and set 27 world speed records between 1985 and 1991. She has been active in a leadership capacity with a variety of aviation organizations, such as the Society of Experimental Test Pilots, the Aero Club of New England, the Ninety-Nines, the Smithsonian Air & Space Museum, the Amelia Earhart Birthplace Museum, and Daniel Webster College (a school in New Hampshire that offers science degrees in aeronautics and related subjects).
2. Charles N. Coppi of Georgia. Not too many aeronautical engineers can claim they spent almost their entire career building one airplane. For Charles Coppi, this is figuratively, though not literally, true. In 1956, when he was just 25 years old, Coppi was chosen by his employer, Grumman Aircraft of Bethpage, New York, to lead one of two engineering teams in a head-to-head competition tasked with designing a new aircraft for executive transport, the Gulfstream I. For the next 40 years, until his retirement in 1996, Coppi shepherded the Gulfstream through a series of five models based on the principles of that first low-wing design put together by his team. His design philosophy dictated the use of a robust and reliable airframe coupled to engines with power to spare, conservative wing sizing to improve performance, a large fuel capacity with room for growth, and a evolutionary design making maximum use of technological advances that would result in operator efficiencies. Coppi is also credited with persuading company executives to adopt a T-tail for the Gulfstream II and Rolls-Royce Tay engines for the Gulfstream IV. Coppi began his aviation career in 1952 after graduating with a degree in aeronautical engineering from New York University. No longer part of Grumman, Gulfstream Aerospace Corporation is now a wholly owned subsidiary of General Dynamics and is located in Savannah, Georgia.
3. Verne Jobst of Illinois. No less an expert than the National Air & Space Museum's senior historian, Donald Lopez, calls Verne Jobst "one of the most highly qualified flight instructors and examiners in the world." He is one of only two instructors of the original eight still in the National Designated Pilot Examiner Registry. In this role, he evaluates pilots desiring to obtain type ratings in all categories of vintage aircraft except flying boats. Jobst holds ratings in 23 aircraft

categories, including land and seaplanes, gliders, and balloons. He began his career as a DC-3 copilot in 1951. Thirty years later, when he retired as a Boeing 747 captain, he was United's most senior pilot. Jobst qualifies as a "Statesman" in many other respects as well. He has administered more than 950 seminars on aviation safety in the United States, Canada, and Europe. He has served as a director of the Experimental Aircraft Association's annual Oshkosh Air Show since 1971. He is a recognized scholar on Charles Lindbergh, having flown as the chief pilot of a replica of Lindbergh's airplane, the "Spirit of St. Louis," on a 1977 tour of the United States to celebrate the 50th anniversary of Lindbergh's historic transatlantic crossing. In 1987 during the 60th anniversary of Lindbergh's flight, he landed the replica at Le Bourget airport in Paris where it was on display during the Paris Air Show.

4. Robert T. McCall of Arizona. McCall is known to millions of people not by name but by his work of their hands. He is an aerospace artist whose paintings have been published in magazines, displayed in public buildings, used in motion pictures, and reproduced on U.S. postage stamps. Perhaps best known to the aerospace community for his massive "Space Mural-- A Cosmic View," McCall's masterpiece depicts the evolution of America's space program and greets visitors to the National Air & Space Museum in Washington, D.C. The mural, measuring six stories tall and almost 70 feet across, is his largest creation. Among many other projects, he documented in art America's space program for the National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA), painted scenes for such Hollywood films as "2001: A Space Odyssey" and "Star Trek: The Motion Picture," and produced images of spacecraft for the U.S. Postal Service in the 1970s. McCall served in World War II as a bombardier on a B-29, then moved to New York to pursue a career in commercial illustration. He found his niche when *Life* magazine hired him to illustrate a series of articles on space exploration. He continues painting today, at age 82; he is now working on a mural for NASA on the first century of powered flight. The mural will be installed at the Dryden Flight Research Center in California.

5. Leo J. Schefer of Virginia. An authority on airports and the impact of air service on regional economies, Schefer is President of the Washington [D.C.] Airports Task Force, a group of almost 1,000 representatives of business, government, and civic organizations. The Task Force addresses such issues as noise, land use, ground transportation, landing rights, and economic impact. A tireless organizer and worker, Schefer has been actively involved in all such matters as they affect the metropolitan Washington area. Because of his background in aeronautics (he started out as an engineer with Vickers-Armstrong Aircraft in his native Britain), he brings technical knowledge as well as practical experience to his job. Beginning in 1984, he lobbied for the National Air & Space Museum to open a facility at Washington Dulles Airport--a project now coming to fruition. In 1989, he helped organize the United States Airports for Better International Air Service (USA-BIAS), a coalition of American communities seeking air links with other countries. He is an advocate of an "Open Skies" policy for the U.S. and worked to bring 40 U.S. and Canadian cities together in support of a bilateral agreement in 1995.

6. Hartley A. (Hap) Westbrook of Iowa. "Hap" Westbrook has been a drumbeater for general aviation ever since he became an airport manager and fixed base operator (Hap's Air Service) in Iowa in 1946 after serving with the Army Air Corps in B-24's during World War II. Soon after launching his business, he signed on as a dealer for Cessna Aircraft and continues representing the company today--proprietor of one of only a handful of Cessna dealerships still around from the 1940s. Over the years, Hap's Air Service has provided flight instruction, charter flights, aircraft maintenance, and other services. Westbrook has personally taught over 1,400 pilots and logged over 30,000 hours in the air. Among private pilots in the Midwest, he has acquired something of a legendary status for his assistance to customers in emergency situations and his encouragement of people interested in flying. In 1954, he helped start the Iowa Air National Guard and remained active with the organization until 1968. Also in the 1960s, he wrote material, purchased equipment, and otherwise functioned as prime mover behind a new course for aircraft and powerplant mechanics at Iowa Western Community College. Despite his life-long association with aviation, he has never forgotten his roots as a farm boy and the early years when planting crops between runways helped keep his airport and FBO operation afloat. In 1989, the Flying Farmers of Iowa named him their Airport Operator of the Year.

These Elder Statesmen of Aviation will be honored on October 21st at a special Fall Awards Banquet at the Hilton Crystal City at National Airport in Arlington, VA. For more information contact Nicole Regele at 703-527-0226 or e-mail her at nregele@naa-usa.org.

NAA is a non-profit, membership organization devoted to fostering opportunities to participate fully in aviation activities and to promoting public understanding of the importance of aviation and space flight to the United States. Additional information on NAA can be found at www.naa-usa.org.