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Durwood “Skip” Ringo to Receive the 2015 Cliff Henderson Trophy

Washington, DC, June 15, 2015 – The National Aeronautic Association (NAA) is proud to announce that Durwood “Skip” Ringo has been selected as the recipient of the 2015 Cliff Henderson Trophy.

The Henderson Trophy, which is in the collection of the Smithsonian’s National Air and Space Museum, was established in 1960 to honor the creator and Managing Director of the world-renowned National Air Races from 1928-1939. His work stimulated a generation’s interest in aviation and challenged the state of the art in aviation development.

The trophy is awarded to “...a living individual, group of individuals, or an organization whose vision, leadership or skill made a significant and lasting contribution to the promotion and advancement of aviation and aerospace in the United States.” Previous recipients include Colonel Joseph Kittinger, USAF (Ret.), Joe Lombardo, Marion Blakey, The United States Air Force Academy, Anne Morrow Lindbergh, Lieutenant General James H. Doolittle, Senator Barry M. Goldwater, Clarence L. “Kelly” Johnson, and Scott Crossfield.

Ringo received his Bachelor’s degree in Civil Engineering from the Citadel in 1967 and also holds a Master of Engineering degree in Industrial Engineering from the University of Florida and a Master of Arts degree in National Security and Strategic Studies from the College of Naval Warfare. Ringo has also completed the Kennedy School of Government’s Program for Senior Executives in National and International Security at Harvard University.

Commissioned in the U.S. Marine Corps in June 1967, he was designated a naval aviator in 1969 and departed for Vietnam to serve with Marine Corps Composite Reconnaissance Squadron One. Ringo had two tours as an aide-de-camp, was assigned as the Industrial Engineering Officer at the Depot Maintenance Activity in Barstow, California, and was the Aviation Liaison Officer for both the 4th and 9th Marine Regiments in Okinawa, Japan. He was then assigned as Maintenance Officer and jet flight instructor for Training Squadron Twenty-Six in Beeville, Texas.

After graduating from the U.S. Naval Test Pilot School in 1982, Ringo was assigned to the Strike Aircraft Test Directorate, Naval Air Test Center, Patuxent River, Maryland and Head of the Flight Systems Branch. Collaterally, he served as Executive Officer of the Marine Corps Aviation Detachment. During this time he was a finalist for NASA's Shuttle Astronaut Program.

Ringo graduated from the Naval War College in 1987 and subsequently served as the Marine Corps Liaison Officer to the U.S. Senate. He then became Director of Senate Affairs for the Assistant Secretary of Defense for Legislative Affairs at the Department of Defense, where he was selected for promotion to Colonel. Upon retirement in 1989, he joined the Professional Staff of the Senate Armed Services Committee where he was responsible for both development and procurement issues for all tactical aircraft and aviation munitions programs in all branches of the Defense Department. He also provided staff support for arms control and treaty issues until 1994 when he joined the General Electric Washington Office.

During 15 years with General Electric (GE), he managed military engine programs for GE Aviation throughout all agencies of the Department of Defense, and collaterally represented these programs as well as commercial and international engine programs, and various aspects of other GE business sector interests to the United States Congress. Upon his retirement from GE, Skip joined DRS Technologies where he was the Senior Vice President for Government Relations and Land Warfare Programs until retiring in December of 2012. On January 1, 2013, Ringo founded the Ringo Group, an independent government relations firm.

Ringo currently serves as the Vice Chairman of NAA, on the Board of Directors for The Naval Aviation Museum Foundation, on the Board of Trustees for The Marine Corps University Foundation, on the Board of Advisors for Thomas Associates, Inc., is a life member of The Society of Experimental Test Pilots, and is a member of The American League of Lobbyists.

NAA will present the trophy to Mr. Ringo on July 15, 2015 at the annual NAA Henderson Trophy Luncheon at the Crystal Gateway Marriott in Arlington, Virginia. The speaker at the luncheon will be the Honorable Deborah Lee James, Secretary of the Air Force.

The National Aeronautic Association 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. NAA is the caretaker of some of the most important aviation awards in the world, and certifies all world and national aviation records set in the United States. For information, visit www.naa.aero.

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