

AVIATION News

Florida & National

Happy Landings

January - 2024

● YESTERDAY ● TODAY ● TOMORROW

PUBLICATION OF FLORIDA AVIATION HISTORICAL SOCIETY

Florida Air Museum at Sun 'n Fun
and the
Florida Aviation Historical Society
present the



First Annual
**FLORIDA AVIATION
HALL OF FAME
INDUCTION CEREMONY**



Lakeland, Florida

Wednesday, December 17, 2003

CLASS OF 2003

**Douglas Baker; Jacqueline Cochran;
Percival E. Fansler; Anthony H. "Tony" Jannus;
Joseph W. Kittinger, Jr.;
Edward Vernon Rickenbacker; Juan Terry Trippe**



President's Message

Happy New Year!
Hope everyone enjoyed the Holidays.



Mary Fletcher Candidates for the Florida Aviation Hall of Fame have been chosen and Page 3 gives you a short bio of the two selected.

The cover shows the first program when the Florida Aviation Hall of Fame started and inducted seven into the Hall of Fame.

Douglas Baker

Born in Tampa, Florida
Military Test Pilot
Flew for Howard Hughes



Anthony "Tony" Jannus

Pilot of World's First Scheduled Commercial Airline -
St. Petersburg-Tampa Airboat Line, 1914



Joseph Kittinger, Jr.

Military Test Pilot and Balloonist
World's record parachute jump
First man to exceed the sound barrier in free fall



Jacqueline Cochran

First Woman to Break the Sound Barrier
Director of Women's Air Force Service Pilots (WASPS)
Received Distinguished Service Medal for war services.



Percival Fansler

Founder of the First Scheduled Airline; the St. Petersburg-Tampa Airboat Line, January to April, 1914.



Edward Rickenbacker

World War I Ace- 26 Victories
Received Congressional Medal of Honor, Medal of Merit, Legion of Honor, Distinguished Service Cross
President of Eastern Air Lines



Juan Terry Trippe

Pioneer Aviator
Founder of Pan American World Airways

January Edition - 2024 AWAPS building
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FAHS meets the first Saturday of each month, unless otherwise noted, at the AWAPS building, Albert Whitted Airport, Gate 5, 10:30 AM. All are invited to attend.

2024 Florida Aviation Hall of Fame Inductees



The Florida Aviation Hall of Fame was founded by the Florida Aviation Historical Society in 2000, to recognize and honor individuals who have made a significant aerospace contribution

and/or achievement. The inaugural induction ceremonies took place on December 17, 2003, which was the 100th Anniversary of the Wright Brothers first powered flight at Kitty Hawk, North Carolina.

Owen H. Gassaway, Jr.



Owen's first love was aircraft mechanics and the aviation industry. During WW II, he enlisted as a tank mechanic in the 565th Heavy Maintenance Tank Company attached to General Patton's Third Army in the final advance into Germany after D-Day. After the War he learned to fly and licensed in single and multi-engine aircraft, then type certified for DC-3s. He established Florida Airmotive, Inc. of Boca Raton. He spent his years supporting and promoting general aviation.

2nd Lt. James R. Polkinghorne Jr. USAAF



James enlisted as a private in the US Army Air Forces and reported to Tuskegee Army Air Field July, 1941. On February 16, 1943 he was commissioned as a 2nd Lt. in the US Army and awarded his silver wings to reflect his designation as a US Army Air Forces pilot and was assigned to the 301st Fighter Squadron of the 332 Fighter Group. Assigned to Montecorvino airfield near Salerno, Italy. His P-39 went missing during an aerial attack over Italy and was never found. 143 hrs of P-39 Airacobra flight time; 617 total flight hours

The Florida Air Museum at Sun 'n Fun, Lakeland, Florida is the home of the Florida Aviation Hall of Fame, in cooperation with the Florida Aviation Historical Society.

The Museum was designated as **The Official Aviation Museum and Education Center of the State of Florida** in a bill passed by the Florida State Legislature and signed by Governor Jeb Bush.



In 1991, the City of Lakeland approved funding for the construction of the current museum building and lease of the adjacent land. Originally planned as a restoration and education facility, the building is now the core of the Florida Air Museum

with current and projected expansion on all sides. The main building was formally opened to the public during the April 1992 SUN 'n FUN Fly-In.

Nicholas Mathes is the Museum Director.



The date of the Florida Aviation Hall of Fame was not available at press time but it will be held during Sun 'n Fun, April 9-14, 2024.

The March issue of Happy Landings will give all the details. FAHS is looking forward to inducting Owen Gassaway and 2nd Lt. James Polkinghorne, Jr. USAAF into the Hall of Fame.

Sun 'n Fun will be celebrating 50 Years in 2024.

Flight Gallery Takes Flight



Executive Director, Rui Farias, and three of his Board members, accepted a check from the Florida Aviation Historical Society for the renovation of the Flight Gallery at the St. Petersburg Museum of History.

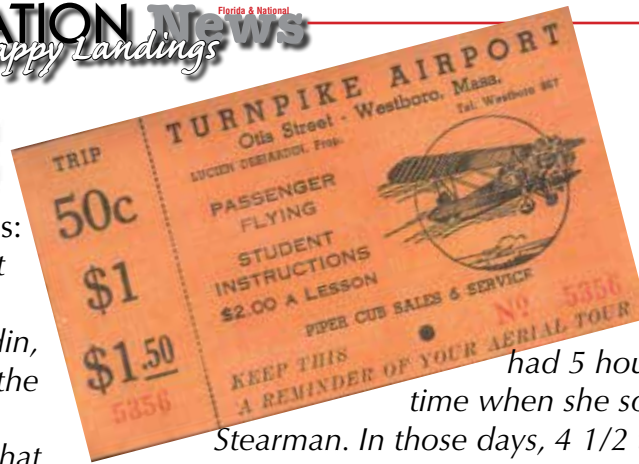
While there, FAHS Board members lowered the full size Benoist and spent an hour wiping off the entire plane before it was raised up again to hang for visitors to admire.

This Benoist airboat #13 was built by the Florida Aviation Historical Society and flew across the Bay in 1984 to commemorate the 70th Anniversary of the first commercial scheduled airline flight in 1914 by legendary pilot Tony Jannus. It was fitting that the St. Petersburg Museum of History would be its home.



We Get Letters:

Pauline Douglass of Clearwater, Florida writes: "I thought you would enjoy this copy of what it use to cost to go for an airplane ride and to take a flying lesson. My father, Lucien Desjardin, his brother and my mother Grace use to run the airport in Westboro, Mass. in the 1930's. My father's first airplane was a Jenny #1313 that he owned 1925-1928. His pride and joy



plus two Stearmans. My mother had 5 hours of flying time when she soloed in the Stearman. In those days, 4 1/2 to 5 hours was the norm to solo students."

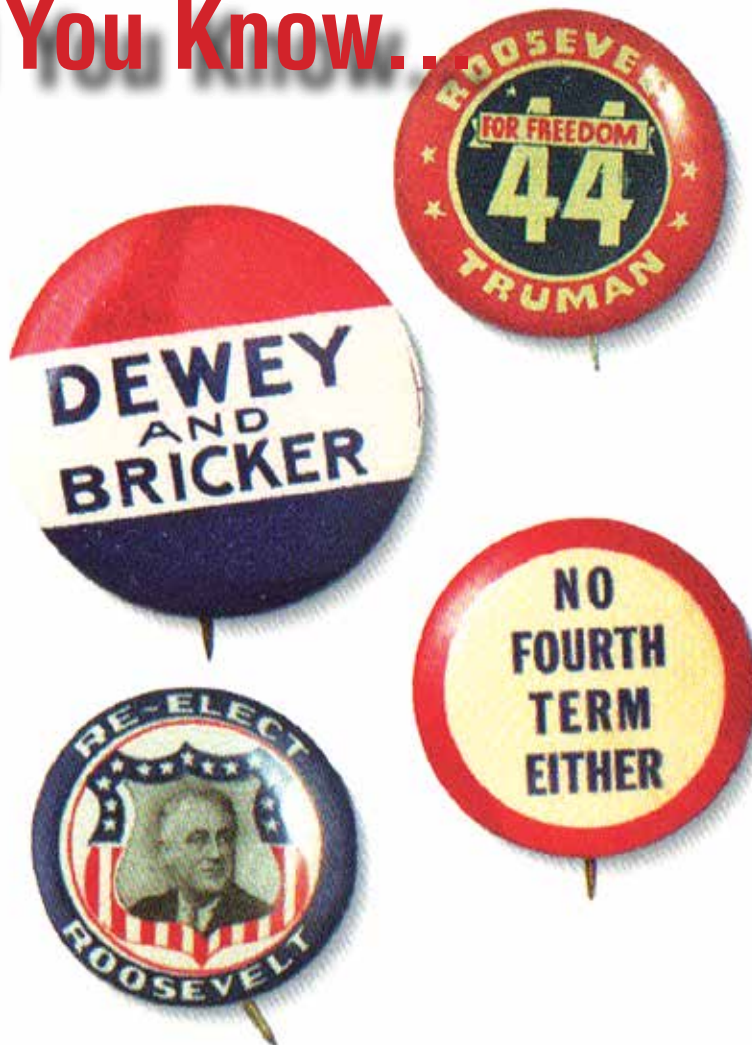
John Johnson of Treasure Island, Florida writes: "I really, really miss the jokes in the new *Happy Landings*. Did the jokes come out of an old joke book?"

Editor's note: We do not know where former editor, Warren Brown, got all those jokes from and when he stopped doing the newsletter, no records were passed on.

Gary Henderson of Hampstead, North Carolina writes: Do you have Lifetime or Military Membership?

Editor's note: We have held the line on not raising the membership dues of \$20 a year. So many organizations have done that. We value our members and want to keep them at \$20. So no, we do not offer any other membership designation.

Did You Know...



Campaign buttons attested to a presidential election that fought for attention amid the headlines of World War II.

November 7
 President Roosevelt wins an unprecedented fourth term and Harry S. Truman became Vice President.

World War II - 1944



Walter Cronkite (far right) flew with B-17 crews to cover air combat and even manned a machine gun on one of the first U.S. raids on Germany.

He wrote, "In the spring of 1944, the Ninth Air Force offered me an opportunity to go on a special mission. It would be dangerous.

In a B-25 Mitchell medium bomber, at low level against a lot of flak that bounced us around a bit, we dropped our bombs on something I could not identify—a sort of L-shaped concrete structure that looked like it might be a ramp of some kind.

Only after the V-1s began hitting London did I realize that what I had seen was a V-1 launching pad!"

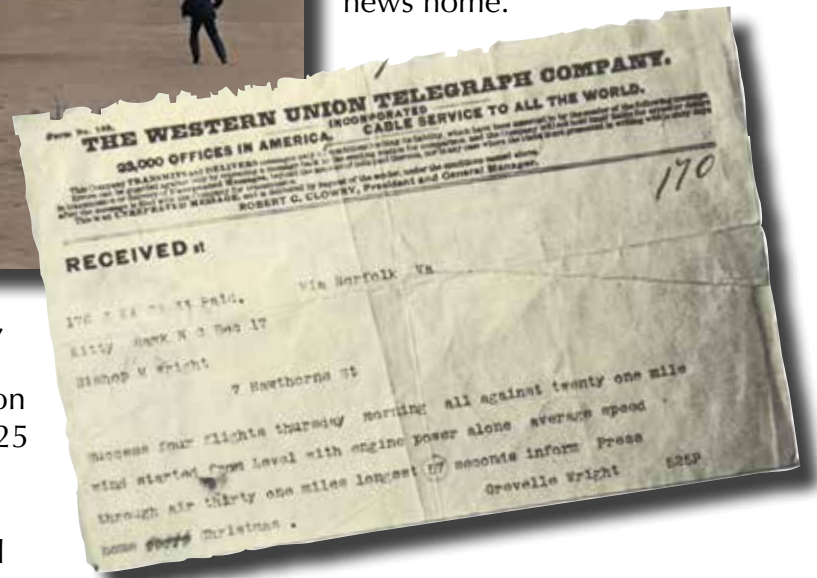
Walter Cronkite, in postwar years, became "the most trusted man" in America as anchor of CBS evening news.

Celebrating 123 Years of the Wright Brothers Flight Into History



The dream comes true:

Orville Wright makes the first manned, powered and controlled flight, December 17, 1903 as brother Wilbur watches. Later, in a telegram they sent the news home.



The morning of Thursday, December 17, 1903, did not seem particularly right for a test flight. Pools of rain water lay under thin sheets of ice on the dunes, and a north wind blustered at 20 to 25 miles per hour. But winter was upon them and the Wrights had to take the days as they came. They moved their machine out early and tacked up the customary flag as a signal that a test was about to begin.

By 10:30 a.m., the brothers had positioned the launching track pointing it into the north wind. Five observers had arrived from the lifesaving station. As the engine crackled in the chill air, Wilbur and Orville, dressed as usual in business suits, peaked caps, neckties and starched white collars, stood apart from the other men. The brothers gripped hands as one spectator recalled later; "it almost seemed that they weren't sure they'd ever see each other again."

Then Wilbur watched his brother walk briskly to the machine and slip into the pilot's position. The men from the lifesaving station began to clap and shout words of encouragement...it was 10:35.

Orville listened to the chattering engine and whirling propellers and felt the vibrations beneath him. He released the restraining wire and the machine moved slowly forward into a 27 mile wind. The craft reached a speed of seven or eight miles

per hour before lifting into the air about 40 feet along the track. Orville raised the elevator and the machine rose suddenly to about 10 feet, dipped, climbed again, then headed for the ground a little more than 100 feet beyond the end of the track.

The brothers knew full well what they had accomplished. The flight had been short, but as Orville wrote later, "It was nevertheless the first in the history of the world in which a machine carrying a man had raised itself by its own power into the air in full flight, had sailed forward without reduction of speed, and had finally landed at a point as high as that from which it started."

The Wright brothers were far from finished for the day. Three more times that morning they took to the air, each time covering a greater distance and gaining a better feel for the controls.

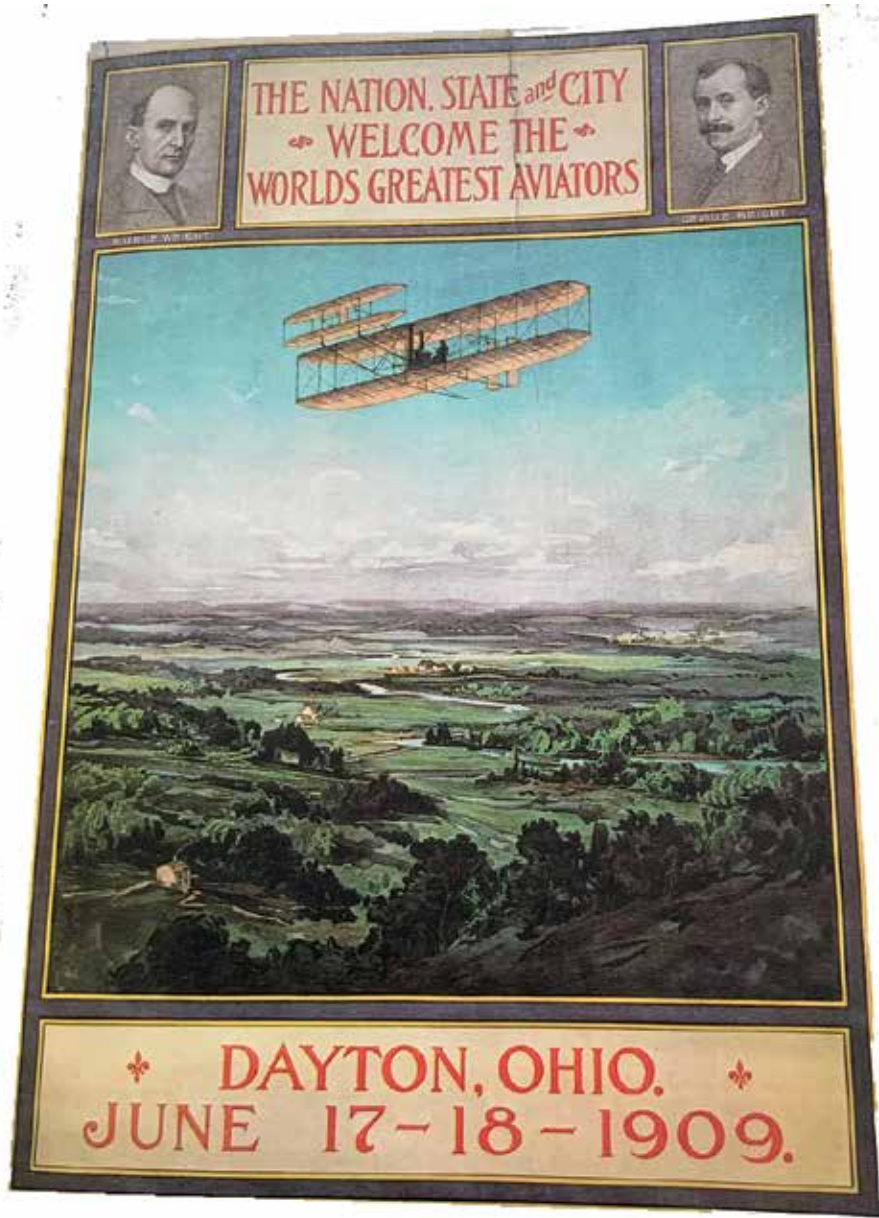
By mid-1904 the Flyer was history and Flyer II was sailing serenely over a cow pasture about eight miles east of Dayton. Now that the brothers had a successful powered machine and a degree of skill

in handling it, they did not need the unlimited space, high winds and soft sands of Kitty Hawk.

It took a long time, almost six years in fact, before Dayton, Ohio, fully realized the monumental achievement of its two native sons in launching the age of flight. So in 1909, Dayton made up for earlier indifference with a triumphal celebration.

Their hometown was decorated with banners, Chinese lanterns and electric lights. A crowd of 10,000 cheered them. A two-day celebration followed in June with three parades, a huge banquet and a public presentation of which all the city's school children were invited. The Wrights received medals from Congress and from the state of Ohio and the City of Dayton. A fireworks display in which huge images of Wilbur and Orville was lit against an American flag.

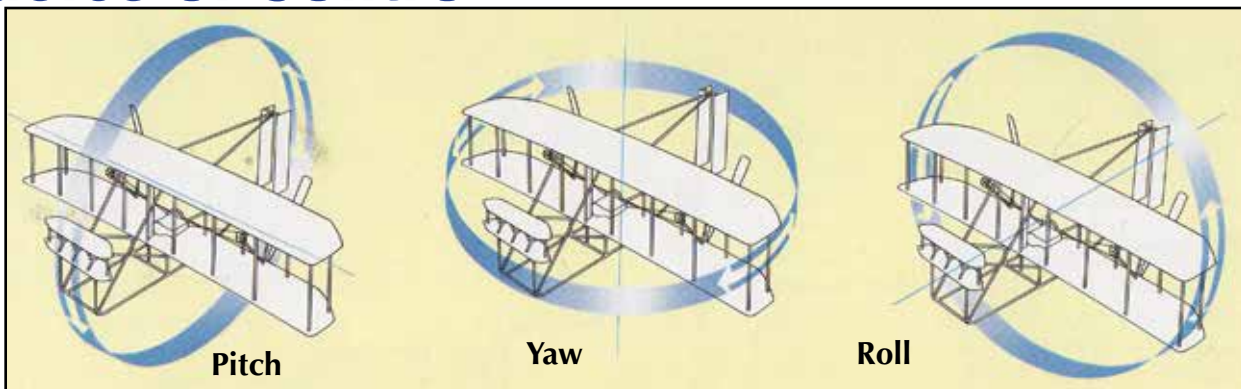
Man's earliest chronicled trial flights were attempts to emulate the birds. Surviving records show that experimenters working in almost every corner of the world contributed to the first true powered flight, which at last was achieved near Kitty Hawk, North Carolina. In 1903 following a chronology of principal milestones, that historic flight was achieved.



The Basics of Control

The Wright brothers achieved control in powered flight by devising means to regulate an airplane's basic movements: pitch, yaw and roll.

In the 1903 Wright Flyer, pitch



was controlled by the elevator, yaw by the rudders, and roll

by the ingenious wing-warping system.

Joanna Geraghty - Tony Jannus Recipient



Joanna is shown accepting the Tony Jannus Award from last year's winner, Brad Tilden, Chairman & CEO of Alaska Air Group

The Tony Jannus Distinguished Aviation Society honored Joanna Geraghty, President and Chief Operating Officer of JetBlue Airlines at their 58th Awards banquet, November 2, 2023.

Joanna is responsible for JetBlue's operations and commercial performance including airports, customer support, flight operations, inflight service, system operations, and technical operations, safety and security, network and airline partnerships, advertising, brand and marketing and revenue management and sales.

Her focus is on delivering a leading customer service experi-

ence and enhancing operational and commercial performance while nurturing JetBlue's unique culture and standing as one of the best places to work.

She received her B.A. from the College of the Holy Cross, her master's in international relations from Syracuse University's Maxwell School of Citizenship and Public Affairs, and her J.D. from Syracuse University College of Law.

She is only the second woman to receive this distinguished award.



Wednesday evening, November 1, a reception was held at the Hangar Restaurant at Albert Whitted Airport for Joanna.

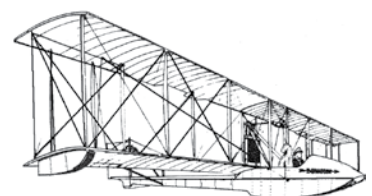


Florida Aviation Historical Society was represented by Terri Griner and FAHS President, Mary Fletcher.



Tony Jannus (Michael Norton) was present to tell all about his historic flight across Tampa Bay, January 1, 1914 and to welcome guests.

His presence always sets the festive mood and is a reminder of the historical flight of the Benoist airboat from St. Petersburg, Florida.



T *a look back into the archives of history* THE WOMEN OF AVIATION N

Baroness Raymonde de Laroche

became the first woman to earn a pilot's license.

She was delighted when Charles Voisin, one of the great air pioneers of France, offered to teach her to fly. On October 22, 1909, shortly after her twenty-third birthday, the baroness presented herself at the Chalons airfield, France, where Charles and his brother built and tested their planes.

The Voisin, which looked like a pair of box kites joined by a skeletal frame, was a one seater like most of the planes of the time. Following Charles Voisin's instructions, the baroness settled herself in the open cockpit and taxied the length of the



airfield to get the feel of the controls. After taxiing once around the airfield, she announced that she was ready to fly. A startled Charles Voisin watched her open up the throttle of the 50-horsepower engine, race the machine down the airstrip and rise to a height of about 15 feet. Moving on a perfectly even keel, the plane skimmed through the air for a few hundred yards, and then settled gently and came taxiing back.

Contributing a paragraph to aviation history, the baroness passed her qualifying tests and on March 8, 1910, obtained from the Aero Club of France, the first license issued to a woman anywhere in the world. Flying was ideal for women, she told the gathered reporters. "It does not rely so

much on strength as on physical and mental coordination." When a reporter suggested that flying was dangerous work for a woman, she shrugged: "Most of us spread the hazards of a lifetime over a number of years. Others pack them into minutes or hours. In any case, what is to happen will happen."

Something did happen to Raymomde de Laroche exactly four months later. She was competing in an endurance contest, the only woman flier in a galaxy of performers including such stars as Hubert Latham and Louis Bleriot. As she was rounding a pylon, another airplane suddenly darted in front of her. She made a gallant effort to regain control,

but was too near the ground. The machine side-slipped and was completely wrecked as it hit not far from the pylon. She had been caught in the turbulent prop wash of the other plane

She was alive, but barely.



With serious head wounds, internal injuries, one arm and both legs broken, it seemed unlikely that she would recover, much less fly again.

But she mended and was racing again within two years.

In 1913 she won the Coupe Femina, a cup established by



the French magazine *Femina* to honor women fliers.

"It may be that I shall tempt Fate once too often," she acknowledged to her friends. "But it is to the air that I have dedicated myself, and I fly always without the slightest fear."

Ironically, she was not at the controls but flying simply as a passenger when she was killed in the crash of an experimental plane in 1919.

Spectators and cavalymen mill around the wreckage of the box-winged craft.



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