

Hall of Fame - Vintage Aircraft Association

EAA AVIATION CENTER, OSHKOSH, Wis. - (November 8, 2004) - Eight people who contributed greatly to the world of flight were honored as the newest members of the EAA-affiliated Halls of Fame at the November 5 induction ceremonies at the EAA Aviation Center, Oshkosh, Wisconsin. Vintage Aircraft Association's inductee is:



Butch and his human powered "flying" machine at the age of 3. By age 5 he was allowed to walk across the road and visit the small airport adjacent to the homestead. Butch's willingness to hop into anyone's airplane to go for a ride resulted in a couple of long "discussions" with his mother! His pal on many of his journeys across the road was his dog, Studebaker.

Later in that decade, Butch became involved with an aircraft group whose primary interest was older airplanes. That group, now VAA Chapter 3, rekindled his love for antique and classic aircraft, and he would go on to own and fly a Staggerwing Beech, Monocoupe, UPF-7, Clipped Wing Cub, and a Model 35 Bonanza, among others. Starting on the Antique/Classic Board as an advisor in 1981, he was elected president in 1988, and held that position until 2004, a span of 16 years.

Butch says that he's most proud of the fact that in 1991, in cooperation with the Aviation Unlimited Agency, he initiated the creation of the VAA Aircraft Insurance program. He credits his wife, Norma, for keeping the program running well in an ever-changing insurance market. The program has grown to become one of the VAA division's most popular benefits, and has helped create growth that has seen the division's membership more than double, from 3,200 to 8,400 members.

Espie "Butch" Joyce

Butch Joyce's first logbook entry for a half-hour of dual instruction at age 10 in a J-3 Cub was made on September 9, 1954, but his roots in aviation go all the way back to his birth. His father, Espie Sr., was a pilot and owned a variety of aircraft when his son was growing up next to the local airport near Mayodan, North Carolina.

While in college and serving in the Army (where he served with the elite Special Forces Green Berets), he built a Pitts Special biplane and became an EAA member, serving as EAA Chapter 8's president during the 1960s.



Norma and Butch Joyce



He began the Type Club tent in 1982 and has served as the chairman of convention activities. He served as president from 1988 until 2004, a remarkable tenure unmatched by any other VAA president.

During that time he has also served as the chairman of VAA's activities during EAA AirVenture Oshkosh. He was presented with the EAA President's Award in 2004.

After stepping down as VAA president in 2004, Butch was elected to continue to serve on the VAA Board, where he will continue to serve the membership of the VAA.