





The first 3 years of the newsletter were typed on my portable typewriter at home and Xeroxed courtesy of Boeing (I was working as a weight and balance engineer) after hours. These were mailed out to all the Yankee owners and renter pilots that we could get addresses on. During that time we settled on the name of the Association – since it was for preservation of the American Yankee, it obviously had to be the “American Yankee Association”. I donated to the Association the master molds for the wings and the right to use them and our membership ranks began to grow.

At this point we weren't really thinking about the 4-place airplanes. Actually, it was after quite a discussion that we decided to admit them – as “Associate Members”. After all, they were sort of “grown-up” Yankees, and they wanted in. After the whole line was dropped from production, there was no longer any question but that they were a part of the action.

Now, of course, our membership consists primarily of Grumman American and Gulfstream American aircraft, not American. But let us not forget that it all started with a sporty little airplane called an American Yankee, and a handful of people who were dedicated to preserving the aircraft and the image of the Yankee Pilot as something to be very proud of. Many of our early members who are airline pilots, fighter pilots, ex-fighter pilots or commercial bizjet pilots – pilots who proudly wear the Yankee wings – are more apt to tell strangers that they own or fly a Yankee than that they fly a 747 or F-16 or Gulfstream III or that they flew a P-51 or a Thunderbolt in WWII.

Today we are at a crossroads in our organization. Those of us who started it and nursed it along with the endless hours and personal financial support are tired and it is time for others to carry on. When I think of all the crises we have surmounted to be where we are today, I have the utmost faith in the Association and the membership to grow and keep growing. Keep the American Star rising. I firmly believe that eventually the aircraft will be back in production and the little Yankee birds and their descendants will once more be coming off the line!

I had acquired a nice little Cheetah and was looking forward to joining y'all at the convention, but unfortunately had another little problem with my heart – not serious enough to lose my medical permanently, just while on medication. But it was enough to make me decide that my Cheetah was too expensive a toy for me to support in my retirement, so I am back to passenger status. Maybe on one of those days I can manage to beg a ride with someone from the area.

As for the present, I retired from Boeing 3 years ago and moved to Mesa, Arizona. McDonnell Douglas Helicopters promptly recruited me to work in the Weight Technology Department. After fixed wings, helicopters are certainly different, but “weights is weights” and I am getting along real good and enjoying the challenge. I also have a small consulting business, primarily in creating custom loading systems for airliners. At the moment, America West and Evergreen are my primary customers, and they, along with my “regular” job, keep me pretty busy. If any of you would like to talk about the AYA (*or offer her an airplane ride – Editor*) you can reach me at home at (602) 985-6922 or work at (602) 891-6655.