

James J. Parks
CAHS Honored in 1989

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Jim Parks was born in Rapid City, South Dakota on January 30, 1929. He had his first flight with the legendary Clyde Ice, in a Cessna AW in May of 1930 on a cross-country flight with his father.

His solo flight took place in August 1965 at Sky Ranch Airport, Aurora, Colorado in a Piper PA-28. and Since that time, he has flown many types of private airplanes, mostly for enjoyment and he has become intimately associated with aviation.

Jim Parks is a medical doctor, specializing in obstetrics and gynecology, and he also holds a Ph.D. degree.

Jim's has a keen interest in World War I aviation, both with its pilots, and its aircraft. Jim commissioned Morris Quick to build a replica of the famous WWI German Fokker D-VII aircraft, which was flown on its first flight by LaMar Steen. This flight landed short of the intended airport and it was out of circulation for a while. This aircraft is on loan to the Wings Over The Rockies Air and Space Museum.

Dr. Parks carried his specialized interest to the point of establishing a WWI museum in his home, where he had memorabilia, manikins dressed in authentic WWI military uniforms and many very rare items connected with his avocation. This collection is also on loan to the Wings Over The Rockies Air and Space Museum.

Jim helped establish the WWI Aces and Aviator's Day in 1984, which was instituted by President Reagan in the White House, with eight American Aces and their families present. He was the cochairman of the reunion of the surviving Aces of WWI in Paris on November 11, 1981. Of the 105 Aces contacted, 45 accepted. This, considering the great age of the men, was a magnificent achievement. For this, he received a number of honors from organizations, such as the Lafayette Foundation. In 1983, Jim organized and hosted the last reunion of the Lafayette Flying Corps, of which is an honorary member.

Dr. Parks was a founding member of the Lafayette Foundation and he served as its first president. This organization dedicated its efforts to establishing a military aviation museum at Colorado's United States Air Force Academy, an initiative that did not materialize. The Lafayette Foundation also obtained a WWI JN-4, Jenny, aircraft that was later donated to the Colorado Antique Aircraft Association, and now hangs in the United Airlines concourse at Denver International Airport.

Based on his research of WI aviation, he is writing a history of the First Pursuit Group, AEF, 1917-1918, This effort is intended to generate a four-volume set

Jim has served as president of the Colorado Aviation Historical Society. He remains active in the EAA, AAA, QBs, Daedalians and a number of WWI aviation related organizations.