



Founders' Wing

Preserving EAA's history and culture

Tom Poberezny, President

I would like to share a story with you. A few years ago, EAA members Lew Shaw and John Dunham wanted to expand the EAA mission in the field by sharing the spirit and excitement of flight and the camaraderie that was and is part of aviation. They funded the purchase of an airplane that would travel around the country to fulfill this mission. Unfortunately, the plan did not work as envisioned, and the airplane was sold.

Over a period of time, we had extensive discussions as to how the proceeds from the sale could be used to support EAA's mission and goals. As a result, Lew and John sent me a letter indicating that they "heartily supported bringing the Paul Poberezny library and artifact collection into the EAA museum.... His love and passion for aviation are present in the minute details of carefully catalogued notes from the beginnings of the EAA and the numerous articles about or by the nearly famous members, most of whom are long departed. Perhaps think of this as fuel that will help fly the EAA into the future."

I responded: "Your letter struck an important chord with me. Innovation, culture, dreams, and high standards are among the core values that have made EAA successful. They are also the intangibles that can be lost if we do not maintain focus and dedication to the ideals established by our founders.

"My dad's collection represents more than memorabilia. It preserves the culture and the history of an organization that has truly made a

difference in aviation. Organizations spend millions of dollars to rebuild their history after it's too late.... EAA has not made that mistake. The EAA AirVenture Museum stands as a testament to the spirit of EAA members. My dad's collection represents the core culture that fosters that spirit and innovation."

This highlights why we are establishing the EAA Founders' Wing, which will be the future home of the Paul and Audrey Poberezny collection. These historic artifacts and documents represent decades of

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EAA's history, telling the story of how an organization that started in Milwaukee, Wisconsin, in 1953 has made a major impact on aviation globally. They highlight the friendships made over the years and the camaraderie that grew from shared interests. They document private moments in our history and capture the spirit and innovation of EAA's members.

The Founders' Wing will consist of a number of important elements. The Paul H. and Audrey L. Poberezny Library will include "The Way It Was" ... a replication of the basement office, with the authentic furniture

that was the first home of EAA. The library will display many artifacts, photos, and letters that will build a better understanding and respect for EAA's early years and the development of its culture.

The EAA legacy will be told on the mezzanine of the Founders' Wing, highlighting EAA's impact on aviation for more than five decades. Many have asked the question, "Did you ever think that EAA would become the organization that it is today?" We are going to answer that question through photos and displays so visitors can view, firsthand, the impact of EAA member efforts on aviation's growth and development.

The third aspect of the Founders' Wing will be a multi-purpose event space that will host aviation-related educational activities for youth as well as adult aviation programming. This area will also present the exciting history of EAA AirVenture Oshkosh, the world's most significant aviation event.

The Founders' Wing will preserve the culture and core values of EAA, which are essential to our future. The spirit of volunteerism, the importance of relationships, and a passion for innovation has made EAA successful. The Founders' Wing will preserve those and many other values for future generations of EAA members and leaders. Over the next few months, we will update you on the progress of the Founders' Wing, sharing how you can participate and be recognized. The Founders' Wing will be unveiled at EAA AirVenture Oshkosh 2009. 