George Edward Haddaway
1909-1998

George E. Haddaway, founder and driving force behind the History of Aviation Collection and the Doolittle Library here at the University of Texas at Dallas died of leukemia at Durango, Colorado on Saturday, September 26, 1998. He was born on July 6, 1909 at Fort Worth and lived most of his life in the Dallas-Fort Worth area. He moved to Durango three years ago. Survivors include his wife, Doris, of Durango; two daughters, Gail Bramer of Mobile, Ala. and Mary Anna Smith of Denver, Colo.; two sons, John Haddaway of Los Angeles and James Haddaway of London; nine grand-

children and one great-grandchild. He was preceded in death by a son, William Haddaway.

A private service was held for the family at Durango. A memorial service will be held at Episcopal Church of the Epiphany, 421 Custer Road, Richardson, Texas at 2 p.m. on November 7, 1998.

George Haddaway's life was allied with aviation since he watched the barnstormers fly into local cow pastures to sell rides in surplus World War I Jennies. He made his first flight in one of those Jennies piloted by a barnstorming neighbor at age 12. After that he spent much time at Fort Worth's Meacham Field doing cleanup chores to earn some rides. He experienced his first flight emergency in 1925 in a way few others can claim. He, along with other Eagle Scouts, was honored by being allowed to help the dirigible Shenandoah moor at Fort Worth for replenishment of its helium. A line was dropped to them and they were to grasp it and pull the tail down as the nose settled onto the mooring mast. A gust of wind caught the dirigible and its tail rose with George still clinging to the rope. He hung on until the wind subsided and gradually was lowered to the ground unharmmed. The incident did not deter him from wanting to fly. He began taking lessons while a student of journalism at the University of Texas at Austin. He soloed in 1929 in a Waco 10 and received his private licenose in 1930, two years before he graduated. In his lifetime, he owned several aircraft and flew many single- and twin-engine types for nearly 4,000 hours of flying time.

During the summers at UT, George worked as a deck hand on freighters serving Central and South America. Following graduation with a degree in English literature and journalism, he sought work with the Fort Worth Star-Telegram but the Great Depression had begun and the only job he could find was with the merchant marine. He spent the next two years sailing the seven seas.

With a desire to be involved in journalism and a zest for flying, he started an aviation magazine and the first issue of Southwestern Aviation was published in 1934. But with the Depression still in full flower and the aviation business remaining in the doldrums, he had a tough time selling ads and making ends meet. But he survived and published for over 40 years, never missing an issue. The magazine underwent several name changes to reflect his observations as commercial and private aviation matured—Southern Flight, Flight and Flight Operations. He moved his publishing office from Fort Worth to Dallas in 1939 because he felt Dallas was the center of aviation in the southwest. He sold the magazine in 1974.

The years of publishing brought Haddaway into contact with
most of the aviation “greats” of the country: Jimmy Doolittle, Charles Lindbergh, Frank Hawks, Roscoe Turner, Art Chester, Wiley Post and others. He was a regular attendee at aviation events in the U.S. and the international air shows at Farnborough and Paris seeking fodder for his magazine. And his reputation as an indefatigable raconteur won him a myriad of friends among aviation journalists. He was a charter member of the Dallas Press Club, charter member of the Aviation/Space Writers Association and president of the Dallas Chapter of Sigma Delta Chi, a journalism fraternity.

In September 1941, wanting to prove that civilian aviation had a role to play if the war in Europe should involve the United States, Haddaway backed a plan to form the Civil Air Patrol (CAP) under the Office of Civilian Defense then directed by Fiorello La Guardia, former mayor of New York City. After the CAP became official on December 1, 1941, six days before the Pearl Harbor attack, Haddaway was appointed a Captain and formed the Base 10 unit at Beaumont, Texas. The unit was assigned anti-submarine patrol and ship escort missions over the Gulf of Mexico until 1944 when the Navy and Army Air Force took over. He was promoted to Major and awarded the Distinguished Civilian Service Medal.

After the war, with the aviation industry struggling to adjust to a peacetime economy, Haddaway took up the cudgel in his magazine to promote general aviation, development of the helicopter and support of short-haul “feeder” airlines to serve regions needing air service. His editorials and speeches garnered national and international attention.

A sideline for which he became eminent was his co-founding (with Jim Fuller) of the Chili Appreciation Society International in 1946 because after the war, “chili had sunk to an all-time low.” He and “Wick” Fowler, a reporter, concocted special recipes and sent club information to chili lovers all over the country. He credited chili’s importance to aviation development by saying, “Without chili, aviation would have died back in the Twenties and Thirties because that’s what kept the barnstormers going.” He clarified this by adding, “Every little ol’ airport had its green-fly chili joint where you could fill your gut for fifteen cents, including catsup and crackers.”

One of Haddaway’s outstanding humanitarian achievements was the formation of Wings of Hope, founded in 1962, to provide light aircraft, pilots and equipment to fill medical, rescue and supply needs for remote areas in Alaska, Latin America, Africa and the South Pacific. As board chairman, he raised funds, wrote articles and gave speeches to maintain the organization’s momentum over the years. As former Wings of Hope president Joe Fabick told a Dallas Morning News reporter, “No doctor has saved more lives than George Haddaway through his involvement in Wings of Hope. His humanitarianism knows no bounds.”

It was inevitable that Haddaway, the aviation journalist and world traveler, would accumulate a wealth of memorabilia and a large number of valuable books on aviation subjects. He established the History of Aviation Collection (HAC) at the University of Texas at Austin in 1963 and donated his personal collection. He persuaded other aviation enthusiasts to donate their memoirs and accumulation of records, photographs and memorabilia to the university where they would be permanently protected and available for future researchers and students. The HAC outgrew the space at Austin and moved into the newly constructed McDermott Library on the University of Texas at Dallas (UTD) campus in 1978 where it resides today.

The HAC continues to grow steadily as more former and current flyers and aviation organizations learn about it. In 1985, Haddaway received approval from Jimmy Doolittle to establish the Doolittle Library as a tribute for his lifetime of aviation accomplishments. After Doolittle’s death in 1993, his personal library, correspondence files, awards, plaques and medals were received for permanent retention. The famous Tokyo Raiders, the group he led on the historic mission against Japan in April 1942, were the first to make a donation that established the Doolittle Endowment Fund. Their records have also been donated to the Doolittle Library.

Other collections that were attracted to the HAC include the mil
lion-item Admiral Charles E. Rosendahl Lighter-Than-Air Collection, the China Air Transport-Air America Archives, the George H. Williams World War I Collection and 200 other smaller collections. The Aviation/Space Writers Foundation made a generous grant to further the work of the HAC and the Doolittle Library.

It was inevitable that the large number and size of many of the three-dimensional historical aviation items donated to the HAC would be too much for the space allotted in the McDermott Library building. In 1990, the Frontiers of Flight Museum was opened at Love Field to house and display the priceless aviation heirlooms that had accumulated. Each year, as a tribute to Haddaway, the museum awards the George E. Haddaway Medal to pilots, astronauts and others who have distinguished themselves in aviation.

There are as many stories about George Haddaway as there are people who tell them. Loquacious, gregarious and with a remarkable memory for names and events, he was outspoken in his endorsement of all aspects of aviation. He supported a strong Air Force and was labeled a “windmill-tilter” because he did not allow unbelievers to get away without them knowing how he felt. His legacy to all of us was his dedication to further aviation knowledge through the History of Aviation Collection and thus assure that future generations would have access to the priceless records of aviation’s progress.

He was an uncommon man whose likes we will not see again.

George Haddaway and Me by Larry D. Sall

George Haddaway entered my life November 1978 when I came to the official dedication of the History of Aviation Collection here at the University of Texas at Dallas. Three weeks later my tenure with the University’s Special Collections Department began, and until George’s death in September, his influence was a dominant factor in my life and the development of the collection he began.

His incredible connections and indefatigable character drove the History of Aviation Collection forward toward greatness. His prestige in the aviation community gave the program here credibility as well as momentum.

Anyone who knew George realizes that he did not let details trouble him; that was my job. It was not easy working with George. He rarely accepted the idea that something he wanted to do could not be done, and to my surprise, he was more often right than not. It was George who brought us the Rosendahl Collection, the finest of its kind in America, thanks to his personal relationship with Admiral Rosendahl. He also brought us wonderful material from General Doolittle, again thanks to his close personal connection with that great American hero. In fact, George was so close to General Doolittle that he served as one of the honorary pallbearers when the General was buried at Arlington National Cemetery. Those are just two examples of so many great collections he secured for us.

It is interesting and somewhat daunting to contemplate the future without George’s immediate input. However, the impetus, the direction and the vision he provided will insure that the History of Aviation Collection will continue to serve aviation researchers for many many generations to come. The grandchildren of generations yet to be born will honor George Haddaway for having created this incredible historical resource.

Memorial Donations

Donations to George Haddaway’s memory may be made directly to the History of Aviation Collection, and all donations of $50.00 or more will be acknowledged by the plating of a book in George’s memory with the donor’s name included. Checks should be sent to History of Aviation Collection, University of Texas at Dallas, P.O.Box 830643, Richardson, Texas 75083-0643. These donations are tax deductible.

The University of Texas at Dallas History of Aviation Collection Web Site is www.utdallas.edu/library/special/index.html

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