

NORTH DAKOTA AVIATION HALL OF FAME

Richard Halldorson

Inducted: 2004



Richard Halldorson was raised on a family farm near Mountain, ND. After graduating from high school in 1939 he studied mechanical engineering at the University of North Dakota. He left to work at Lockheed Aircraft in California at the outbreak of WWII in 1941.

Richard was accepted into the Naval Aviation Cadet program in 1942. After twenty months of intensive training he received his Commission and his "Wings of Gold." Following advanced training in SBD dive-bombers and carrier qualification, he was assigned to the Pacific Theater, operating out of Pearl Harbor. He was discharged in December 1945.

From 1946 to 1948, Richard worked and studied at DePonti Aviation in Minneapolis, receiving his A & P License and Flight Instructor's Certificate. He returned to North Dakota to fly for a construction company and became an instructor and mechanic for the St. Thomas Flying Club. The following year, he began an aerial applicator business.

In 1960 he moved the application operation to the Cavalier, ND airport and founded Cavalier Air Service. He was instrumental in the many improvements to the airport over the last forty years. Cavalier Municipal Airport evolved from one hangar with a sod runway to a 3,300 foot lighted blacktop airport with five modern hangars and support facilities. His wife, Ellyn, played an important role in the success of the business that later became a partnership with their son, John, and his wife, Alice.

Richard officially retired in 1990. A strong supporter of Cavalier and the surrounding community, he has been involved in his church, the VFW, American Legion and Cavalier Improvements, Inc.

A strong safety advocate, Richard stressed good aircraft maintenance and respect for adverse conditions to both his students and other pilots. He encouraged his students and local pilots to learn from each other, work together to improve techniques, promote safety and to accept new innovations that increased knowledge and safety. Richard has been an active supporter of North Dakota Agricultural Aerial Applicators and served many years as the state's northeastern representative. He was instrumental in the development of the rules and regulations and encouraged the business practices that make NDAAA among the best in the nation. In 2001, the FAA awarded him the "Charles Taylor Master Mechanic Award," recognizing his "50 Years" as an aircraft mechanic and aviation pioneer.

Stressing those priorities makes Richard an "Old and Bold" pilot.