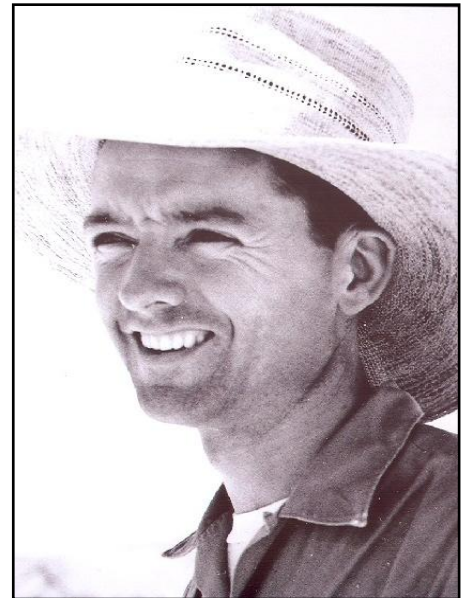


LLOYD M. LICHER (1982)
(1927-)

At the March 9, 1957 meeting of the SSA Board of Directors, the decision was made to establish a full time paid position for SSA Executive Secretary (later Executive Director) with the aid of a generous grant from the du Pont family. Lloyd Licher was selected and served in that capacity for almost twenty years.

Lloyd was born in Beloit, Wisconsin on August 2, 1927, two months after Charles Lindbergh flew the Atlantic – perhaps somehow instilling a love of aviation in this new born. As is true so often of young to-be aviators, his main hobby was building model airplanes and hand-launched gliders. This activity inspired him to start flying lessons while in high school but he did not continue at this time.



To satisfy his father's desire that he become an engineer, Lloyd entered MIT in Cambridge, Massachusetts and chose the Aeronautical Engineering Department due to his interest in flying. At the end of his Freshman year, he enlisted in the Army Air Corps in which he served until May 1947 and then returned to MIT. It was about that time that he discovered the MIT glider club – Aeronautical Engineering Society. The club acquired a Schweizer 2-22 in which the members taught themselves to fly. Soon the club acquired two Schweizer single-place gliders – 1-7 and 1-19 and a two-place Laister-Kaufmann LK-10A sailplane. For the large sum of \$1.00 they obtained a souped-up Piper J-3 which had been surplused by the Helioplane company. It became the towplane. At the time *Soaring* magazine was being published in Cambridge by Dick Comey (1947 National Champion). It was there he made his first contact with SSA management. He graduated from MIT in 1950 but stayed in the area a while longer working for various helicopter companies. He earned his private glider rating in May 1951 and his “C” Badge in July 1951 soaring the 1-7.

He left for California (Douglas Aircraft) in 1953 stopping along the way to marry Rose Marie (Pratt) Licher who had been a tow pilot with the AES. He joined the Douglas Flying club and the Douglas Soaring Club. He soon had his private ASEL rating – hoping he someday could be a tow pilot. Soon he was SSA State Governor for Southern California, writing a column, *West Wind*, for *Soaring* magazine and Chairman of the SSA Record Homologation Sub-Committee. In 1957, he became the SSA Executive Secretary.

SSA membership at that time was under 1,000 members so his first task was to start a membership drive. By the time he left in 1977 membership was around 14,000 and continued growing to about 16,000 in 1980. Also the magazine was being published every other month so another goal was to make it a monthly magazine which he did in 1959. Magazine paid circulation reached a peak near 19,000 in 1979. Both membership and magazine circulation have been declining since those days.

Lloyd enjoyed flying the Torrey Pines Meets with the 1-7 but was not able to get beyond the “C” Badge in that low performance glider. Paul Bikle loaned Lloyd his Schweizer 1-23E to make Silver distance which he did in September 1956. He also achieved Silver altitude during that flight but needed the duration requirement. In 1959 he crewed for Harner Selvidge for his attempt to complete his Diamond Badge in Odessa, Texas. On a day not good enough for such a long flight in a 1-26, Harner let Lloyd try for his duration requirement of five hours. Lloyd made it and was awarded Silver Badge #366 in 1959. Lloyd then purchased a 1-26 in partnership and flew it at the Nationals in Wichita, Kansas in 1961. Unfortunately a health problem discovered less than a year later ended his flying days.

Lloyd received an Exceptional Service Award in 1967. In 1970 he and his wife at the time, Rose Marie, received SSA's highest award – The Warren E. Eaton Memorial Trophy.

