

# JON D. CARSEY

## A GREAT SOARING MAN

One of the Greatest Contributors  
of the Past Quarter Century

by E. J. REEVES

We are sad today—all of us in soaring, and many others too. We are sad because Jon Carsey is dead—September 11, 1962. We loved Jon; all in soaring loved him. We did because—well, we did because he was Jon.

I reckon I never knew a better man than Jon, nor had a finer friend. Certain am I that soaring never had a better friend. Jon's very favorite people were soaring people. He liked to be with them above all other kinds. And, he had a vast acquaintance, many, many friends; in the field of his profession; in the business world everywhere. But he liked soaring people best, I know.

It seems strange that I find it difficult here to speak of Jon, but I do. Many times over the past years when I would be trying to write something, figuring a business deal—many things, I would show it to Jon. He would look at it carefully and give me the best benefit of his thoughts on the matter. Maybe he is up there now looking over my shoulder as I write this.

The history of soaring in America is interesting and unique. So many were the times that circumstances were such that it seemed utterly impossible for the movement to continue. Somehow it seems that all of aviation has been like this. But invariably there would come a man. Jon Carsey was such a man. He came actively into the affairs of the Soaring Society of America at a time when things were at one of the lowest ebbs in its history. Almost like a Moses, he led us out of the wilderness. SSA is like that; otherwise, you and I would not be reading this very magazine today.

Jon Carsey came along, a lamp lighter with a bright torch. He rekindled the flame as he marched along through most of twenty-five years. By reason of many men and particularly by reason of Jon, our fires burn brighter and more gloriously today. Let us not forget men

of Jon Carsey's stature. I don't believe we ever will.

Lest I become carried away with my trying to tell of Jon Carsey, let us recount these things.

Jon was the first person with whom I became personally acquainted who had some first-hand knowledge of gliding and soaring. This was more than twenty-five years ago and he, more than any other person, aroused my interest and kept it going all of these years.

He was the one person primarily responsible for the starting of soaring activities in the Dallas-Fort

### DEDICATION

This issue of *Soaring* magazine is dedicated to the memory of Jon D. Carsey, who contributed so much of his talent and energies to SSA. The lead article on this page by E. J. Reeves, who was so close to Jon, and memoriams by two others who knew him well, pay tribute to Jon's contributions and full life.

Worth area and, with the Ross brothers of Wichita Falls, for the advent of the sport in the entire Southwest. He, along with Harland and Vernie Ross, was one of the very early advocates of the possibilities for level country soaring.

He was a Charter Member and primary organizer of the Texas Soaring Association in the mid-forties. He, more so than any other individual, put soaring's show on the road in the Southwest.

Jon was a distinguished president of SSA during the years 1950-51-52-53-54. He served as a director of both SSA and TSA for many years and was TSA's second president.

He was a Life Member of SSA. He would have been even without paying the dues.

His interest in flying extended over a lifetime. He recounted to me how he and a neighborhood group of lads in Oak Cliff (a Dallas sub-

urb where Jon was raised) constructed an early primary glider from a picture they found in a magazine. He told of the fortunate fact that the craft could not be made to fly although many attempts were made. Each resulted in a harmless crash, and back to his Dad's barn (these were horse and buggy days) they would go for rebuild.

Jon might very well have turned to aeronautics as a profession had a proper school been handy. Instead he went into architecture and structural engineering. He attained distinction in that field and was for many years a member of the American Institute of Architects. Many residences and commercial buildings stand in Dallas and Texas which were designed in his office.

Jon Carsey was the prime mover in organizing and conducting the first National Contest in the Dallas-Fort Worth area, the 17th, in 1950.

He played a prominent part in many regional and national contests in Texas and elsewhere. His latest contest activity was in the 28th Nationals at Wichita, Kansas, where he edited the daily contest bulletins. This, incidentally, was one of Jon's many innovations in tournament soaring.

Jon was the first man to show how a newly-formed local soaring club could successfully organize and conduct a national tournament. And, more important, he demonstrated how this could be done and financed in a way so as to leave substantial monetary accruals.

He showed how, through frugality and proper husbandry, a soaring club might be highly solvent, respected by the entire community and effectively advance the general movement. Amazingly enough this accomplishment on Jon's part later brought him considerable personal sadness. But he all the same blazed a new trail and a better pattern was cut. This, of his many contributions, will be to his everlasting credit.

The years 1952-53 were trying times in the life of this our official journal. At that time Jon moved *Soaring* magazine, lock, stock and barrel into his home. There he cleared an entire room to accommodate its composition. This, at a time where there was serious question as to when or whether another issue would appear.

Jon and his devoted followers had  
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