WINGS OVER THE ROCKIES
AIR & SPACE MUSEUM

“To inspire and educate people of all ages through aerospace”
Dear Members, Volunteers and Friends:

EXCITING TIMES FOR A TIMELESS MISSION

Throughout 2006, the mission of Wings Over the Rockies transcended generations. In new and exciting ways, our mission came to life as Museum programs advanced “education and inspiration of people of all ages through aviation and space endeavors of the past, present and future.”

Since 1903, every generation has looked up to those who have ventured into the frontier of flight. Values passed from one generation to another have helped form our American character. Whether it is acclaimed heroes like Charles Lindbergh and Chuck Yeager, or countless members of the “greatest generation” who flew aircraft like the B-17 during World War II, the heritage of flight has much to offer today’s young people.

Highlights of this 2006 Annual Report include Museum activities that reaffirmed the enduring legacies of Lindbergh, Yeager and B-17 veterans. Thanks to the dedicated efforts of Wings volunteers, members and staff, young people across Denver and Colorado were inspired through educational outreach programs to seek their own horizons… and to learn math, science and skills to reach them.

“RAISING THE ROOF” AT LOWRY

Significant facility improvements initiated in late 2006 will extend the honor of our heritage, and the promise of its potential, to generations of the 21st century. Our landmark Hangar 1 facility, which served over one million service men and women from World War II to 1994, is getting a new roof. We are also removing an unsightly drop ceiling to expose some 90 feet of awe-inspiring, vertical display space.

These significant efforts are the first steps in a comprehensive plan to address serious infrastructure issues in our 68-year-old facilities… water leaks, falling tiles, outdated electrical service, fire protection system failures and inadequate landscaping, to name a few. As 2006 wound to a close, the Board of Directors was reviewing redevelopment plans for the Hangar 2 site, allowing proceeds to be applied to priorities that will upgrade deteriorating infrastructure and add entrance and exhibit improvements worthy of Colorado’s Official Air & Space Museum.

CONTINUING PLANS FOR CENTENNIAL

Progress also continued during 2006 to plan a capital campaign to build a second facility at Centennial Airport, one of the busiest general aviation airports in the country. An outstanding Campaign Steering Committee has been assembled. Complementing Lowry’s focus on heritage and education, the Centennial facility will be home to operating aircraft and futuristic aerospace galleries, state-of-the-art education classrooms, an aviation theater and restaurant. Together, Lowry and Centennial sites will comprise a world-class museum institution.

It is a privilege to be involved in a mission of education and inspiration with an outstanding Board of Directors, staff, members and volunteers. Wings Over the Rockies will strive to be worthy of your confidence and support as we advance a cause for generations to come.

Sincerely,

Greg Anderson
President & CEO
Wings Over the Rockies made several major improvements in 2006 to exhibits and facilities to better serve our visitors, protect our artifacts and improve the overall Museum experience. Here are just a few:

The NASA “Boilerplate” Capsule adorns the lawn outside the Museum, joining the Adam M309 and Lear 24. To enhance the exterior of the Museum’s outdoor exhibits, lighting was installed as well as professional signs.

Following an extensive restoration process by dedicated volunteers, the Air Force Academy’s TG-4A Glider was suspended above the entrance to the Education Department’s classroom.

Work began on a Welcome Center for our visitors inside the main entrance. Visitors will be welcomed and assisted by competent and eager volunteers to make their experience a memorable one.

To say thank you to the Museum’s dedicated volunteers, a Volunteer Lounge began to take shape. This room will offer education, training and “R&R” to hard-working individuals who make Wings Over the Rockies what it is today.

The Restoration Department made great strides in 2006. In addition to the glider, dedicated volunteers re-assembled the F-86 Sabre and repaired a lathe, while work on the B-57 and other aircraft continues.

Members of the Magnificent Mountain Men Flying Club, a local model airplane club, now use the Museum as their permanent base of operations. Sundays, these hobbyists fly incredibly light rubber band-powered planes around the hangar.

After obtaining the artifact in 2005, the Alexei Leonov Training Spacesuit and Airlock was hung over the admissions desk, creating quite a stir with visitors. Russian Cosmonaut Leonov was the first human being to walk in space.

The volunteers and staff of Wings Over the Rockies supported a Fort Carson Aviation Unit based in Iraq during 2006. With great pride, they hosted a “Welcome Home BBQ” for members of Pegasus Troop of the 3rd Armored Cavalry Regiment in August.

Approximately, 91,370 individuals enjoyed Museum activities in 2006. Four types of participation contributed to this total. Regular admissions, including school groups, grew to 34,198. Outreach initiatives off-site increased to 7,169. Other activities including member volunteer programs served 11,292. Smaller, but more numerous, corporate events resulted in a decrease to 38,711.
This was a busy year for the Education Department at Wings Over the Rockies. An average of 1,036 individuals per month participated in education programs - a total of nearly 12,500 for the year.

In March, we celebrated African-American aerospace achievements with Shades of Blue and Tuskegee Airmen at our Red Tails to Shades of Blue Event.

In May, the Wild Blue Wonders Challenge tested the knowledge and abilities of teams from various schools as they learned aircraft identification, flight planning, aviation history and aerodynamics.

Also in May, over 100 youth participated in a day of Paper Airplane Science as part of a special visit by the Guinness World Record Holder for Paper Airplanes, Ken Blackburn.

In June, August and September, the Museum’s Fantasy of Flight Program traveled to fly-ins and gave local students the chance to test their flying skills using Microsoft Flight Simulator and state-of-the-art, traveling computers.

The 2006 Summer Camp Program attracted children from all over the Metro area who spent a week focused on space and flight education. They completed a basic aviation ground school, built and flew airplanes and rockets, toured the Museum, participated in hands-on aviation activities and capped the experience by joining the EAA Young Eagles for a flight in a real airplane.

The Spreading Wings Colorado Barnstorming Tour took place in August, September and October. Students and teachers in 17 communities statewide were part of the tour, chaired by Erik Lindbergh. The Education Department developed a curriculum package including a complete lesson plan, PowerPoint presentation, demonstration DVD, flight planning forms, aeronautical charts and plotters - everything local teachers needed to instruct their students in the basics of flight planning. Teachers were paired with pilots in each community. At each stop, students visited with pilots, got a “hands-on” tour of real aircraft and used their newly acquired flight planning skills to prepare and fly a mission using the Museum’s traveling computer simulators. Thanks to financial support received from the Buehler Trust, Boeing Company and Jeppesen and important partnerships with the Colorado Division of Aeronautics, Colorado Airport Operators' Association, NASA, EAA Chapters and Colorado Pilots Association that provided organizational strengths to this unprecedented initiative.

In November, General Chuck Yeager and area EAA member pilots joined Wings’ education staff in a Young Eagles Flight Rally at Centennial Airport. General Yeager was honored by Wings for his leadership of education programs, and he honored young people and volunteers with his inspirational presence.

The year ended with the annual Kids Days event that brought nearly 400 visitors to the Museum. Participants flew missions in flight simulator labs, experimented with the four forces of flight by building foam rockets and balsa planes, and mixed learning with fun.
Wings Over the Rockies offers guests a one-of-a-kind experience for unique special events in Colorado's official Air & Space Museum. Surrounded by a collection of historic aircraft and unique aerospace exhibitions, 44,000 square feet of main event space flexibly accommodates everything from paper airplane flight competitions and military marching bands to the finest dining and entertainment experiences. Experienced staff and volunteers bring to life an impressive array of corporate and special events.

MUSEUM EVENTS

The 2006 “Wings of Wonder” (WOW) Special Event Series included ten major events, from the “Glory Days” Open House for Lowry residents to “An Evening with Erik Lindbergh” reminiscing over Charles Lindbergh’s visit to Denver in 1927 and extending his legacy today. Several of these WOW events are mentioned elsewhere in this annual report.

By far, the greatest museum special event held in 2006 was the annual “Spreading Wings” Gala in November. Chaired by Peter Coors, over 700 guests enjoyed an evening with the “right stuff,” as Wings Over the Rockies honored General Chuck Yeager for his exemplary aerospace leadership and encouragement for young people to spread their wings in the frontier of flight. Support from X-Jet, Adam Aircraft and Mr. Terry Stevinson, together with generous table sponsors, ticket buyers and auction bidders helped secure over $200,000 in net proceeds for the Wings’ mission of education and inspiration. The annual “Spreading Wings” Gala has assumed a distinguished place among aerospace awards programs.

CORPORATE EVENTS

Wings Over the Rockies had an outstanding year with corporate events in 2006. Guest relationships and revenue generated are a key factor in the Museum’s viability. Quality relationships with caterers, production professionals and equipment providers enabled unparalleled service to event guests. From high school prom participants to veterans’ families, the historic setting and surrounding displays add important aerospace enhancements to guest experiences.

Planned renovations to the Museum’s ceiling, lighting and sound systems will enhance the Museum’s place as a top-class venue for special events in 2007 and beyond. In 2006, Wings Over the Rockies hosted 127 events. Many were nonprofit organizations, from the Denver Art Museum to the Aurora Veterans Salute. Here are just a few highlights . . .

- Central City Opera Antique Sale & Show
- High School Proms
- University of Phoenix Graduation Dinner
- Collector’s Extravaganza Antique Show
- Children’s Hospital Employee Appreciation Dinner
- Recruit Military Veterans Career Fair
- City of Aurora Veterans Salute
- Corporate Holiday Parties
- Collector’s Extravaganza Winter Antique Show
NEARLY EVERY AREA OF THE MUSEUM IS STAFFED BY VOLUNTEERS, FROM GREETERS AT THE WELCOME CENTER TO OPERATIONS PERSONNEL WHO SECURE THE MUSEUM AFTER ALL VISITORS HAVE GONE FOR THE DAY. CRAFTSMEN, EDUCATORS, MECHANICS AND VETERANS ARE JUST SOME OF THE INVALUABLE VOLUNTEERS WHO BRING AVIATION AND SPACE HERITAGE TO LIFE AT WINGS OVER THE ROCKIES.

In 2006, 231 Wings volunteers provided 29,504 hours. In statistical terms, that’s the equivalent of 14 full-time employees. In more personal terms, volunteers bring limitless heart, soul and dedication to the Museum.

Over just six days of the 2nd annual B-17 event at Centennial Airport in June, featuring EAA’s Aluminum Overcast, 130 volunteers worked tirelessly for 1,981 hours. Braving high temperatures and Rocky Mountain thunderstorms, volunteers and staff worked to make the event even bigger than last year and won the designation of best tour stop in the country.

While all areas benefit greatly from staff resources and knowledge, the Research Library, Speakers Bureau and Restoration are just a few of the areas that continue to be completely volunteer-run.

In 2006, in special recognition to one of Wings’ very best, the annual Volunteer of the Year Award was renamed in memory of long-time volunteer Don Welsh. Over ten years, Don contributed thousands of hours to all mission areas of the Museum.

Wings continues to draw volunteers from all walks of life. Many, but not all, are military or commercial aviation retirees. They uniquely provide the “special something” that makes an ordinary visit an extraordinary experience. The common ingredients among Wings volunteers is a love of aviation to share with others.

WINGS OVER THE ROCKIES AIR AND SPACE MUSEUM STORE OFFERS A UNIQUE AND VARIED SELECTION OF GIFTS, COLLECTIBLES AND EDUCATIONAL MATERIALS FOR ALL AVIATION ENTHUSIASTS.

The Museum Store realized its long-term goal of becoming a destination for shopping and gift giving in 2006. The number of sales resulting from non-museum visitors rose significantly, and long-distance orders from previous visitors all evidenced a strong, loyal following.

The increased diversity of visitors and shoppers has continued to drive the search and acquisition of items with greater appeal. Coordinating with other Museum departments has better prepared the Store to meet the needs of specific groups served by the Museum, such as youth and veteran groups.

Apparel is becoming more available, a much larger selection of t-shirts, polo shirts and hats, both for adults and children, with popular aviation themes, all carry the Museum’s logo. Successful relationships with publishers, manufacturers and wholesalers have caused a tremendous increase in the number of high-end distributors who would now like to be represented in the Museum Store. Some of these companies generously supported the Museum’s 2006 Gala fundraiser and its silent auction.

Looking forward to 2007, the Museum Store will continue to pursue opportunities to expand, enhance and complement the Museum’s mission, providing visitors a tangible memory to take with them.
As of year-end, Wings' membership ranks were comprised of 1,112 individuals and families. Membership benefits were increased in 2006 to include gatherings with aviation notables such as Erik Lindbergh, opportunities for limited edition collectibles, Museum Store discounts and special rates at events such as the Spreading Wings Gala.

Wings Over the Rockies achieved administrative efficiencies during 2006 by subscribing to a Web-based program to manage database functions in one organized system. This program allows for the accurate tracking and analysis of membership trends, volunteer participation, donations and pledges. Newsletter, on-line and targeted communications will improve with the ability to update all contact records in one step and to reach specific groups with accurate information. These capabilities will be a primary tool as we move forward with our capital campaign to improve historic facilities at Lowry and to build an exciting facility at Centennial Airport.

Preliminary, unaudited figures for operating income and expenses for fiscal and calendar 2006 are shown below. As noted in pie chart graphics, contributions and membership represent the largest share of income, while museum and education programs make up the greatest share of expenses. Income and expense allocations largely follow typical museum experience, but Wings benefits from above-average corporate event revenues, and its expenses include above-average facilities costs.

**Contributions and Membership**

As the largest segment of consolidated income, contributions and membership represent ongoing priorities for Wings Over the Rockies. Beyond the 1,112 memberships noted above, 349 donors contributed additional support to Wings in 2006.

In 2006, programs like the annual Spreading Wings Gala were improved, while other programs were launched. These new initiatives include corporate sponsorship opportunities for events, an annual support program called the “President’s Circle” and a donor society called the “Fellowship of the Wing” for individuals who provide for Wings Over the Rockies in their estate plans.