



Clifford Beeks

1914-1980

Clifford Beeks was born and raised in Washburn, ND. His aviation career began when he joined the US Army Air Corps during WWII. In the Air Corps he received his instrument and instructor certificates, along with training as an aircraft mechanic. Following his discharge from the service, he returned to Washburn and started Central Flying Service.

Initially services included flight instruction, air taxi and predator control. In 1949 Clifford traveled to California and earned his Airframe and Powerplant Mechanics (A & P) rating. He moved his growing business to the Washburn Municipal Airport in 1950, and in 1954 he added aerial application to his company's services. He was appointed by the Civil Aeronautics Board (CAA) as an Aviation Safety Representative and was a Designated Aircraft Maintenance Inspector. These responsibilities were transferred and continued with the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) when it was created in 1958.

Clifford was a statewide leader in the fledgling industry of small town aviation services and aerial application. As a charter member of the North Dakota Aviation Association (NDAA), he held various offices in the organization. For many years he served as the voice of the NDAA as an advocate and lobbyist during state legislative sessions. He worked closely with the state legislative body and the Aeronautics Commission in developing rules and regulations for the rapidly growing agricultural aerial application industry. These rules and regulations became a nationwide benchmark for the aerial application industry.

Clifford was an active member of the Washburn community, serving as the Commander of the Victor B. Wallin American Legion Post #12 and as a member of the Civic Club and the Masonic Lodge.

Clifford remained active in aviation until his death in 1980. His legacy continues with his son, Bill, currently operating the business Clifford founded. It is still located at the Washburn Airport which is now one of three general aviation concrete airports in the state of North Dakota.