Dolphin D. Overton, III  
2 April 1927–25 March 2013

Dolph Overton was one of the icons of this organization and was one of our most senior members. He collected and had restored over ninety vintage airplanes and built what was at the time the largest private collection of antique airplanes and autos in the country. Dolph had a 10,000 volume personal aviation library. Aviation and aviation history was his life.

In 1972, I flew up to Santee, SC to Dolph’s Aviation and Transportation museum with Frank Kea...the flight was a story in itself,...but...when we landed, Dolph came up to the airplane and greeted us. At the time I had no clue about him and the many people that worked with him who would become friends. I certainly didn’t anticipate owning one of his display aircraft. Later that year, I attended my first Chapter Fly-In. Dolph provided the fly-in venue for several years in Santee. These were all historic events. Having three Ford Tri-motors on the same small airfield in the late sixties and seventies was a pretty big deal. It was also at Wings and Wheels, that Dolph took on this Chapter’s then newsletter editor, Jack Cox, as a historian, script writer, and promoter. In a few months, Jack was snapped up by EAA, where he and Golda gave us the absolute best in EAA publications and media support.

I also didn’t know at the time, that Dolph was a highly decorated Korean War fighter pilot. His Air Force experience is legend. During 1952, he flew 102 interdiction missions in the F-84. On a second tour in 1953, now flying the F-86F, Dolph became an ace in four days after shooting down five MIG-15s, and most likely a couple more. Unfortunately, he was following an unofficial, but common practice of crossing the Yalu River and shooting down some of these aircraft over Chinese territory. This action was observed by a UN mission in China. The Air Force, in an attempt to deny the action, retracted some of his victories, denied recognition for his heroic efforts, and sent him back to the States. The Air Force eventually corrected this travesty and restored full credit and all of decorations in a public ceremony led by the Air Force Chief of Staff.

Dolph was an extraordinary military airman, industrialist, and vintage airplane collector. More importantly, he was a good friend to many in our organization and to this Foundation. Our sincere condolences to his wife, Sue, five children, family, and many friends.