

# Bob Hoover Statue to be Unveiled at Museum Celebration Saturday, April 2, 2016

SOURCE: [AVIATION FOUNDATION OF AMERICA, INC.](#) MAR 4, 2016

**Washington, D.C. (March 3, 2016)** — The Aviation Foundation of America will unveil a life-size statue of beloved aviation legend R.A. “Bob” Hoover at a reception at the National Air and Space Museum’s Steven F. Udvar-Hazy Center on Saturday, April 2, 2016. Hoover’s contributions to aviation and aerospace have advanced the United States’ global leadership in the industry as well as safety and skill for millions of pilots and passengers.

“So many people love and admire Bob Hoover and the moment seems right for all of us to join together and celebrate this great occasion,” said Greg Herrick, president of the Aviation Foundation of America (AFA), the 501(C)3 organization responsible for the statue and its fundraising.

The effort to create a life-size statue of Bob Hoover began during discussions at EAA AirVenture 2014 in Oshkosh, Wis., as a way for generations of pilots to recognize and honor their hero, the man who General James “Jimmy” Doolittle named, “*The greatest stick and rudder man who ever lived.*”

The Bob Hoover statue is a life-size bronze statue of Hoover waving his iconic straw hat as he used to do following so many air show performances. The sculpture itself is the work of Benjamin Victor, an American sculptor and Artist-in-Residence and Professor of the Practice at Boise State University. The celebration will be held at the Udvar-Hazy Center because Hoover’s North American Rockwell Shrike Commander 500S is on display there, along with other artifacts belonging to the legendary pilot.

“I can think of no better way to honor his outstanding contributions to general aviation than to have Bob’s statue on display in a museum or similar institution,” said Pete Bunce, president and CEO of General Aviation Manufacturers Association (GAMA). “Like millions of other pilots and general aviation enthusiasts, I’ve looked up to Bob Hoover since I was a kid for both his thrilling acrobatics in the air and his true gentleman spirit.”

## **Aviation Legend Charts Course for the Future**

Among Hoover’s many accomplishments he has been awarded the Distinguished Flying Cross, Soldiers Medal, Air Medal and Purple Heart. He flew 58 missions in World War II before being shot down and held prisoner of war. Sixteen months later he escaped, stealing a Nazi FW-190 fighter from a nearby airfield. He taught himself aerobatics at a young age and has flown more than 300 different types of aircraft and most fighter aircraft.

Hoover performed experimental flight test work on the Navy FJ-2 jet fighter, the F-86D and the F-100. He demonstrated the safe handling and flying qualities of the F-86 and F-100 series fighters to pilots throughout the world. He was the first man to fly the XFJ-2 Fury Jet and the Navy’s T-28 trainer.

In addition to the statue, a purpose of the project is to establish a national award recognizing an aviator who espouses the skills and value shown by Hoover throughout his illustrious career. This award, "*The Bob Hoover Trophy*" will be presented annually to "a living aviator who exhibits the airmanship, leadership, and passion for aviation and life demonstrated by R.A. 'Bob' Hoover during his distinguished career as a pilot and aviation advocate while also serving as a source of inspiration and encouragement for current and prospective aviators."

More information on the statue and project may be obtained by visiting [www.BobHooverTrophy.org](http://www.BobHooverTrophy.org) or by email to: [BobHooverTrophy@AviationFoundation.org](mailto:BobHooverTrophy@AviationFoundation.org)

**About Benjamin Victor:**

"A gift from God" is how Benjamin Victor describes his ability to create spectacular works of art. Benjamin joined the ranks of Michelangelo, Bernini, and French by receiving his first large commission at only 23 years old. At age 26, he became the youngest artist ever to have a sculpture in our Nation's foremost collection, the National Statuary Hall in the United States Capitol. Nine years later he became the only living artist to have two works in Statuary Hall. Art critics and organizations, including the National Sculpture Society in New York City, continue to recognize the aesthetic and conceptual integrity of Benjamin's artwork. His passion and drive clearly show in each of his unique and profound creations. With expressive features, exquisite detail, and thought-provoking content, the work of Benjamin Victor is sure to take its place among the great masterpieces of art history. See: [www.BenVictor.com](http://www.BenVictor.com)