

National Air and Space Museum

Steven F. Udvar-Hazy Center

National Aviation and Space Exploration Wall of Honor
HONOREE PROFILE

Honoree:

Elrey Borge Jeppesen

Wall of Honor Location:

Foil: 019 Panel: 03 Column: 02 Line: 021

Wall of Honor Level:

Sponsor

Honored by:

Mike Pound, Manager, Corp. Communications,
Jeppesen Sanderson



Profile:

Elrey Borge Jeppesen was an aviation pioneer whose "little black book" of notes and hand-drawn diagrams grew into the Jeppesen Airway Manual, which is known and trusted by pilots all over the world.

In the earliest days of flying, there were no aeronautical charts. Pilots navigated with road maps or followed railroad tracks. When the weather deteriorated, they had to land in fields and wait for it to clear.

Elrey Jeppesen, a young air mail pilot, witnessed the unfortunate loss of many of his fellow pilots during the winters of 1930 and 1931. "Jepp," as fellow pilots knew him, often spoke of one day being able to fly through, or even over, the weather. While many older pilots thought he was a dreamer, Jepp was so convinced of this that he began making notes in a ten-cent notebook. In it he recorded field lengths and elevations, slopes, drainage patterns and information about obstacles. He even went so far as to spend days off scaling towers, smokestacks and other obstacles in order to accurately record their elevations.

As word of the "little black book" spread, requests from other pilots for Jepp's navigational information became so frequent that he began to offer copies of his book for \$10. Many pilots even collected additional data on their own routes and reported it back to Jepp so he could add it to his growing collection of airport and route information. Thus was born the Jeppesen Airway Manual.

