

**Sidney D. (Sid)
Cutter**



**Sidney (Sid) Cutter
Inducted into the U. S. Ballooning Hall of Fame
July 31, 2005
by the Balloon Federation of America at the
National Balloon Museum, Indianola, Iowa**

Sid Cutter was born in Albuquerque in 1934 to aviation pioneer William P. "Bill" Cutter and Virginia (Dillon) Cutter, daughter of New Mexico Governor, R. C. Dillon

Education:

Albuquerque Public Schools; graduated from Albuquerque High School 1952 Attended UNM for 2yrs. and 1 semester at the University of Alaska at Fairbanks.

Associations and memberships:

- National Aeronautic Association (BFA)
- Life Member-Balloon Federation of America
- Life member-Albuquerque Aerostat Ascension Association, Quad A balloon club
- Past United States Delegate to the Ballooning Commission, (CIA) of the FAI
- Member Experimental Aircraft Association, (EAA)
- Member Aircraft Owners and Pilot Association, (AOPA)

Aviation Background:

- Other than flying instruction on Daddy's lap, Sid started to learn to fly, formally, at the age of 10.
- He soloed at the legal age of 16, in 1950.
- Received his Private Pilot Certificate at age 17 in 1951
- Commercial Pilot Certificate at age 18 in 1952.
- Flight Instructor's Rating also at age 18.
- Joined the US Air Force and went through Pilot training as a Cadet graduating as a Second Lieutenant in single engine jets in 1955.
- Transferred into four engine large cargo aircraft flying globally until discharge in 1960 when he then rejoined the family flying business
- Helicopter rating 1960.
- Helicopter Instructor 1961.

- Sid was president of Cutter Flying Service Inc.CFS from 1963 until 1974. CFS is a fixed base operator (FBO), selling aviation fuel, aircraft parts/accessories, repair/overhaul service, new and used airplane/helicopter sales, flight instruction, pilot services and charter flights. He operated an additional location in El Paso. A subsidiary in Phoenix was run by his brother Bill who is now Chairman of the Board. Sid still flies his own Beech Barren but is no longer associated with Cutter Aviation.
- Received Hot Air Balloon Certificate in 1962 (however it was a certification loophole because he never saw a balloon until 1971).
- Sid has accumulated over 20,000 hours in airplanes and helicopters and 5,000 hours in gas and hot air balloons.

Ballooning Accomplishments:

- First hot air balloon flight was by accident when crew released the tether rope, June 4, 1971 (no previous instruction-fast learner)
- He formed the Albuquerque Aerostat Ascension Association balloon club (now known as Quad A) which is the largest balloon club in the world other than national associations.
- He organized the first Albuquerque International Coyote and Roadrunner Balloon Race for KOB's 50th anniversary to be later recognized as the first Albuquerque International Balloon Fiesta in April 1972.
- He produced and directed the First World Hot Air Balloon Championship held in Albuquerque, February 1973. 132 Balloons from 14 countries participated in a 9 day event and established Albuquerque as the Mecca of ballooning throughout the world.
- He staged two Albuquerque events in 1974, one in February with 108 balloons and one in December with 101 balloons. The latter event was to show a "Citizens Committee" (The Albuquerque International Balloon Fiesta) how it works so as to establish a city festival with balloons as the theme. He organized the Second World Hot Air Balloon Championships for the city and was the Balloonmeister for the event in October 1975. 163 Balloons participated from 16 countries.
- He also organized the first through the third Bahamas to the US Balloon Classic, 60 nautical miles over open ocean in the "Devil's Triangle". On the fifth event, Sid didn't make it and had to ditch at sea. (Score Sid 3 - Devil 1), While making a multi-media program he flew across the San Francisco Bay, out of the Grand Canyon, across New York City, over the Louisiana swamps, and across the Chesapeake Bay.
- He has flown balloons in Austria, France, England, Sweden, Germany, Hawaii, Jamaica, Bahamas Canada, and Mexico.
- Sid has organized numerous events in other cities, many of which continue.
- He has also participated in most all the prominent events and city festivals through his ballooning business. Operating balloons for national accounts, he has provided extensive services for these great companies: Anheuser Busch, Sears, PSA Airlines, Swatch Watch, AirStep Shoes, Westinghouse Elevator, Labatt Beer, Parkay, Bryers Ice Cream, Black Angus Restaurants, Maxwellhouse Coffee, Sherman Williams Paints and Pepsi.
- Sid's company, World Balloon Corporation which he has since sold, designed, built, tested, and exhibited two of the worlds largest thermal airships, each containing 229,000 cu. ft. of pressurized hot air. That was larger than Goodyear's gas airships at that time.
- Sid was selected to carry the Olympic Torch in Albuquerque for the Salt Lake Winter Games and, in fact, carried it up in his tethered World Balloon after jogging through a tunnel of inflated balloons on the Fiesta Field.

Titles and Awards:

- Sid is a Team member Champion of the first US National Team Championships held in 1995.
- Sid is a two time National Balloon Champion, winning in 1978 and 1986
- He placed 2nd in the 1979 World Championships in Sweden in January (brrr!).
- He placed 4th in the World Gas Championships out of Tyndall, SD and 4th in the Gordon Bennett Qualifier from Albuquerque as Mark Sullivan's copilot.
- Sid received the Diploma Montgolfier, balloonings' highest award, from the Federation Aeronautic International for Service to Ballooning in his staging the first two Hot Air Balloon Championships.
- Sid also received the first BFA Presidents award for staging the World Championships.
- Sid served two terms as the Southwest Director for the BFA.
- Recently Sid has served three terms on the Board of Directors of The Albuquerque Balloon Fiesta and designated a past president for his early services.

- During the 25th year of the Balloon Fiesta, Sid was honored as the founder with his name, along with those of other contributors, on a granite obelisk on the site of the new Fiesta Field complex. In 2000 the Fiesta hosted 1000 balloons establishing a record however has currently scaled back to about 750.