

**Joseph Mathews Mathias, Jr.**  
**Windsor, Virginia**



Inducted in 2005, Joseph Mathias began his flying career in May 1939 and received his private certificate in 1941, just before graduating from Maury High School. In 1942 he enlisted in the Reserves and in 1943 earned his flight instructor certificate and began instructing for Woody Edmondson in Lynchburg, Virginia. He was activated into the Army Air Corps in 1944 and entered instructor training at Brooks Field, Texas. On March 24, 1945 he participated in Operation Varsity, flying across the Rhine River in Germany in a CG-4A towed by a C-47. After WWII, Joe flew for Norfolk-Cape Charles Airlines and was a corporate pilot for the Smith-Douglas Co., Norfolk Motor Co., and Southern Concrete. Joe was hired by Piedmont Airlines and during a 25-year career he flew the Douglas DC-3, Fairchild 27, Martin 404, YS-11 and Boeing 737. He has been an active member of the EAA since 1955 and was a co-founder of EAA Chapter 156 in 1957. He also co-founded Chapter 339 and is a Charter Member of Chapter 1377. In 1964 Joe co-founded the Tidewater Soaring Society and served one term as chairman of the Norfolk Air Safety Committee for the ALPA. Following his retirement from Piedmont in 1976, Joe and Al Jenkins founded Custom Antique Aeroplanes in Virginia Beach where they have restored many aircraft. He is widely known as a master craftsman in antique aircraft restoration. Joe's lifelong passion for aviation has helped promote civilian aviation in the Commonwealth and has greatly contributed to the development of others in aviation.