

# Arthur A. Collins Legacy Association

## Annual Report 2024



Arthur and Michael Collins discussing the C-System Computer

# AACLA President's Letter

24 October 2024

**To: AACLA Volunteers and Arthur Collins & Collins Radio History Enthusiasts**

The Arthur A. Collins Legacy Association (AACLA) is pleased to provide this annual report for our Fiscal Year 2024 (ended September 30, 2024). This Annual Report provides an overview and status of the various projects AACLA has performed, and the current financial status.

It has been an exhilarating couple of years for our Documentary Film Team and for our Museum Historians. We have transitioned the re-branding to The Collins Story, led by and with the tremendous assistance of Fuel, Inc. We have continued to see 800 to 1,000 patrons visit the Museum each year, supported by Becky Woodward and the Museum Historians. And we are nearing completion of the next documentary:

## **The Collins Story: The Internet Connection**

Encouraged by former Rockwell International Chairman and CEO, Mr. Donald R. Beall, the Arthur A. Collins Legacy Association took on the huge documentary project that explains the integral role that Collins played with the Defense Advanced Research Projects Agency (DARPA) **developing the Internet**. Mr. Beall graciously introduced us to the Fathers of the Internet, Dr. Robert (Bob) Kahn and Dr. Vincent (Vint) Cerf, which led to 3 hours of video recorded interviews in Virginia and a total of 5 hours of raw video footage. This huge 2-year project also led us to Palo Alto California and an extensive interview with the Father of DSL, Dr. John Cioffi and others. It has led us to explain how Collins Radio's Kineplex technology of the 1950s brought key technologies to this Internet development, including connections to current-day 5G networks. It explains how Collins interfaced with the invention and the inventors of TCP/IP (Drs. Kahn and Cerf). And much more. We are excited to share this little-known history, and we anticipate the documentary release the Spring of 2025.

**Financial Status:** AACLA has completely exhausted our available monetary funds primarily in the production of the above-mentioned Internet documentary. This documentary is our most extensive to date and has required over 2-years of research, significant travel costs to interview Drs. Kahn, Cerf and Cioffi, plus obtaining support from our Script Writer & Producer, Videographer, Music Composer and Graphics Animator.

We would very much appreciate your considering the Arthur A. Collins Legacy Association in your charitable giving ... to complete this Internet project, and the commencement of the next documentaries, **which may include:**

- Collins' role in the WW2 Battle of the Atlantic; Collins' Direction Finders facilitated the sinking of German U-Boats, mandatory logistics support to the war effort in Europe, North Africa, and Sicily. Many of us have ancestors who fought in Europe and North Africa.
- History of Collins Broadcast Products & Systems
- Dr. Alexander Lippisch, Director of Aeronautical Research at Collins Radio Co.
- History of Comm Central, Collins Radio Co.

## **Memorials/Obituaries**

**Myron (Mike) Wilson** – Longtime AACLA Director who provided excellent guidance to our operations, Mike Wilson passed away on September 9, 2024. He advocated for upgrade of the Museum, which sadly remains not yet accomplished. He was the first Director of Collins Radio Quality organization, and served as Vice President of Production Operations in Richardson, Texas, and Vice President of Engineering. We will really miss our association with Mike.

**Cornelis (Coen) van der Linden** - Collins Aerospace engineer, and served for several years as Treasurer of the Arthur A. Collins Legacy Association. Coen was instrumental in converting AACLA's mandatory reporting as a nonprofit to the IRS. This was a most difficult task. We will miss Coen for those reasons, but also for his upbeat attitude and financial coverage. Coen passed away on September 12, 2024

## **Going Forward**

AACLA is dedicated to the heritage of Collins Radio Company and its founder. We are also dedicated to preserving, honoring, and interpreting the legacy and memory of Arthur A. Collins and Collins Radio and the profound contributions that shaped world events in communications, navigation, aerospace, avionics, and defense technologies. This heritage is important to inspire the youth of today to “build a more meaningful and decent world.” In addition to inspiring students in the areas of science, technology, engineering and math, our work consistently promotes the message of optimism, doing your best, and the rewards of working together during difficult times.

AACLA needs to preserve/document the stories of hundreds of artifacts in AACLA storage. There are white papers to be written, and short videos created for streaming on YouTube, and public presentations.

## **AACLA Officers and Board of Directors as of Nov. 11, 2024**

President & Director: Mike Dupree

Vice-President & Director: Rod Blocksome

Secretary & Director: Rebecca Woodward

Treasurer: M. Frank Wilson

Directors: H. Keith Erickson, Dave Nieuwsma, Don Stulken, Jim Stitzinger, Emily Shindler, Larry Tjaden, Paul Veenstra

The Collins Museum remains open to employees, family, and the general public - Wednesdays 11:30-1:00 pm; tours will continue to be available by appointment. We need additional Museum Historians.

STEM activities and teacher training modules are planned. We need volunteer assistance in these areas. We thank each of you for your support of time, energy, and nonprofit, tax-deductible monetary donations.

The AACLA Board of Directors invites you to be a part of this great work. As you can see, we have exciting plans. You might consider including your family in this historical research, to serve with you, side by side. Come join us!!

Mike Dupree

President, AACLA; ph. 319/651-4666

# The Arthur A Collins Legacy Association FY-2024 Annual Report

## AACLA Purpose

The purpose of the Arthur A. Collins Legacy Association (AACLA) is to preserve, honor, and interpret the legacy and memory of Arthur A. Collins and the significant contributions he and Collins Radio Co. made in the world of communications, aerospace, and defense technologies. In carrying out this purpose, the AACLA has a special focus on education in Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics (STEM). The organization works to inspire and teach future generations by the preservation, interpretation, and display of artifacts, conducting educational events, and by producing historical documentation in various media.

This report documents for our donors and volunteers the activities and accomplishments of AACLA during fiscal year 2024 (Oct. 1, 2023 to Sep. 30, 2024). AACLA was incorporated nearly 11 years ago in the State of Iowa on January 3, 2014 and became a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization that same year in October 2014.

## AACLA Personnel

The organization consists of a Board of Directors, who elect the officers, who in turn lead a cadre of dedicated volunteers. The Board meets quarterly with its annual meeting held in November of each year.

### **The FY 2024 Officers and Board of Directors are:**

**Mike Dupree**, President/Director – Retired Rockwell Collins (1975-2019)

**Vacant** – Vice-President

**Rod Blocksome**, Secretary/Director – Retired Collins Radio/Rockwell Collins (1968-2010)

**Cornelis van der Linden**, Treasurer – Collins Aerospace engineer

Coen passed away on September 13, 2024. Treasurer position is currently vacant.

**Rebecca Woodward**, Director – Retired Rockwell Collins (2005-2020)

**Mike Wilson**, Director – Retired Collins Radio & Rockwell Collins (1951-1990)

Mike passed away on September 9, 2024.

**H. Keith Erickson**, Director – Retired, Head of Linn County Public Health (1980-2008)

**Jim Stitzinger**, Director – Businessman, Director Collins Collectors Association

**Don Stulken**, Director – Retired Rockwell Collins (1975-2015)

**Larry Tjaden**, Director – Retired Rockwell Collins (1973-2003)

**Dave Nieuwsma**, Director – Retired Rockwell Collins (1991-2022)

**Paul Veenstra**, Director – Retired Rockwell Collins (1977-2021)

**AACLA Officers and Board of Directors Vacancies** – AACLA Bylaws authorize a minimum of 5 and maximum of 11 members Board Members. The four Officers, President, Vice-President, Secretary, and Treasurer, may or may not also be members of the Board. Ending FY2024, there were nine Directors and thus two (2) vacancies on the Board. Also, the offices of Vice-President and Treasurer are vacant on September 30, 2024.

The AACLA Annual Board of Directors Meeting is scheduled for November 11, 2024.

### **AACLA Volunteers and Their Primary Work:**

The AACLA recognizes the following (in alphabetical order) for their continued volunteer work this year:

\*\* = Retired Rockwell Collins    Film Team also listed separately

\*\* Rod Blocksome – Documentary research & artifacts, Museum Historian, AACLA Secretary

Michael Collins (Collins Radio, Arthur Collins' son) – Public relations, research, consultant

\*\* Mike Dupree – General AACLA business ops, including Contracts; Museum Historian

\*\* Alan Erickson – E-book project, Museum Historian

Keith Erickson (Retired Linn County Health) – Documentary research

\*\* Gordon Fabian – Indexing Collins publications

\*\* Jim Jones – Collins 233D transmitter restoration

Eric Miles – Facilitator on the Echo Hill monument project

\*\* Bob Ocken – Documentation support & VIMEO archiving

\*\* Larry Pinkston – Museum artifact restoration & historian

\*\* Jim Pruitt – Documentary research & video editing

\*\* Charley Snodgrass – Museum Historian

\*\* Don Stulken – Documentary research & donations

\*\* Larry Tjaden – Websites content, Documentary research

\*\* Steve Tyson – Documentary research, public relations

Coen van der Linden (Collins Aerospace) – Treasurer, IRS Interface, Records Accuracy

\*\* Mike Wilson – Director, Artifact support, Donor, Advisor

\*\* Becky Woodward – Legal advice, Museum Coordinator

Christina Wright (Collins Aerospace) – Book: Radio Wizard 2<sup>nd</sup> ed.& documentation

**Film Team:** Annette Busbee, Rod Blocksome, Don Stulken, Jim Pruitt, Steve Tyson, Larry Tjaden, Mike Dupree, Eric Freese, Myron Blocksome

## **AACLA Projects in FY 2024**

AACLA Projects fall into five (5) broad categories summarized below:

### **1. Collins Historical Documentaries**

Since 2015, the AACLA has been engaged in producing and distributing professional-grade video documentaries on the history and legacy of Arthur Collins and the Collins Radio Company. Our first documentary entitled “***The Arthur Collins Legacy – A Culture of Innovation***” premiered at Coe College Sinclair Auditorium on October 9, 2015.

In 2018, the AACLA undertook a much more ambitious project to produce a trilogy of documentary videos telling the little known story of Collins Radio's contribution to the success of the American Space Program to land a man on the Moon. It was titled **“The Collins Story – Connecting the Earth to the Moon”**.

**Episode #1 – “Steps to the Moon”**, tells the story of early research and innovation at Collins Radio in the 1950s and early 60s that put the company in position to win significant NASA contracts for the Apollo program. Work started in September 2019 and it premiered at the Collins Road Theatres on May 5, 2021.

**Episode #2 – “Moon Talk”**, focused on Collins' role in the early Apollo missions culminating with Apollo 8. *Moon Talk* premiered at the Collins Road Theatres December 24, 2018.

**Episode #3 – “Live from the Moon”** was completed in time to premier at the Collins Road Theatres on July 21, 2019 – exactly on the 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Apollo 11 Moon landing.

**“The Collins Story – WWII Production Defending Liberty”** completed in 2023, reveals the incredible production accomplishments by Collins Radio during World War II. The 13-minute documentary features rare color film of the Army-Navy E-Award Ceremony that took place on the front lawn of Collins Main Plant on Sept. 19, 1942. At the end of the war, Collins Radio had earned five stars on its E-Award flag – a level achieved by only 1/2% of the 85,000 U.S. companies engaged in World War II production.

**“The Collins Story – The Internet Connection”** is our current project, started in 2022, documenting Collins' role in the birth of the internet. Historians point to a demonstration held in the San Francisco Bay area in November 1977 as the beginning of the Internet. This event interconnected three existing, but much different, data networks together for the first time and digital messages were successfully exchanged between distant users across these different networks. One network was a mobile packet radio data network using equipment designed and developed at Collins' Richardson, Texas facilities.

At the urging of Don Beall, AACLA undertook production of a documentary video of this historic event that reshaped how the world communicates. Mr. Beall introduced us to Dr. Bob Kahn and Dr. Vint Cerf, the widely acknowledged “Fathers of the Internet” which enabled the AACLA film team to conduct exclusive interviews with them. Also, interviews and other key individuals included Don Nielson and Ron Kunzelman, both SRI retirees, John Cioffi, Stanford University Professor, and Marc Weber, Curator at the Computer History Museum.

In 2024, the script has been completed and fully fact-checked. Professional narration has been accomplished and the animations, video editing, and music composition are in process. The documentary is planned for release in Spring 2025.

All AACLA documentaries are available on DVD through the AACLA website: [www.TheCollinsStory.org](http://www.TheCollinsStory.org) or by streaming from our YouTube Channel, [@TheCollinsStory](https://www.youtube.com/@TheCollinsStory) These award-winning documentaries are made possible by financial contributions from our generous donors. The production quality is due to a carefully organized team composed of unpaid volunteers and hired professionals in these areas:

- Dedicated volunteers:
  - Historical research
  - Meticulous fact checking
  - Locating historical film, photos, and artifacts
  - Organizing people to interview.
  - Fund raising
  - Publicity and promotion
- Hired professionals:
  - Script Writer/Producer
  - Video Editor
  - Digital Artist (animations)
  - Narrator, Music Composer, and Sound Mixer

## 2. AACLA Publications

**AACLA Branding and Virtual Museum Improvement** – AACLA has partnered with FUEL, Inc. in a joint project to improve and expand the AACLA presence on the Internet. This project began with “Brand Development” and progressed through “Website Development.” The project started in September 2021 and was completed in 2024. We now have a much enhanced website that is easily found by our target audience and is geared to expanding the demographics of the target audience and retaining those visitors. The new website URL is: <https://TheCollinsStory.org>

[ArthurCollins.org](http://ArthurCollins.org) website remains active but redirects patrons to the new website.

[CollinsAerospaceMuseum.org](http://CollinsAerospaceMuseum.org) remains active, and is also directly accessible from the new TheCollinsStory.org website.

## 3. Collins Historical Exhibits

**Collins Aerospace Museum** – AACLA provides volunteer museum historians (or docents) to staff and manage the company’s museum and artifact collection in Building 120. The museum is open by a historian each Wednesday from 11:30 to 1:00 to “walk-in” employees. AACLA board member, Becky Woodward, coordinates this activity as well as arrangements for group tours of employees and/or visitors by appointment and at other times. Many AACLA volunteers regularly support this activity as well as managing the historical artifacts, documents, and photographs donated to AACLA or the Museum.

Recently the volunteer historians significantly expanded and improved the museum displays with the addition of many items from our artifacts storage. This effort is continuing, especially related to commercial avionics.

During recent years, there has been a significant increase in the number of visitors to the museum, 800 to 1,000 patrons per year since 2021. Our count so far for 2024 is over 800 museum visitors; one tour had 97 third graders from the Linn-Mar School District attend the museum and a history presentation. Last year, in addition to 1,000 museum patrons, an event separate offsite from the museum included 400 production employees that viewed many artifacts and viewed the initial release of “*The Collins Story – WWII Production Defending Liberty*”. Also in Dec. 2023, 100 employees viewed “*The Collins Story – A Culture of Innovation*” followed by museum tours.

#### **4. Artifact Collection and Preservation**

The AACLA collection of artifacts and documentation continues in protected storage at a Collins Aerospace building separate from the Museum. Collins Aerospace is donating this climate-controlled storage space to the AACLA.

Bill Sheka Estate Donation – In Sept. 2024, AACLA received a Collins 75A-4 Receiver and KWS-1 Transmitter from the estate. This equipment was the first commercial Collins HF SSB and was used on the historic SAC demo flights in 1957.

This artifacts donation is just one of many large and small donations that arrive monthly, or at least bi-monthly at AACLA or the Museum. Past annual reports list significant artifacts donations in past years.

#### **5. Public Events and Presentations**

**AACLA Volunteer Docents at Collins Aerospace Museum** – AACLA Volunteers do double duty working on AACLA projects and as volunteer museum Historians at the Collins Aerospace Museum located in building 120. The museum has artifacts dating from the very beginning of Collins Radio (1933) to 1983. The museum website is [www.CollinsAerospaceMuseum.org](http://www.CollinsAerospaceMuseum.org) which includes many stories, documents, and photos. One of the unique and outstanding features of this website is the high-resolution scans of Collins Radio’s magazines, with a search tool that allows anyone to search at no cost all the publications by any of the following criteria:

- A Person’s Name
- Collins Equipment Type Number
- Events and Places

There are currently over **93,534** entries in this online searchable database of Collins historical library; this is thanks to many years of dedicated volunteer work by Collins retirees Gordon Fabian and Larry Tjaden. This library of Collins Publications includes the following publications:



Publication	Time Period	No. Issues on Website	No. Issues Missing
The Collins Signal	1933 – 1971	70	None
The Collins Column	1943 – 1957	138	None
The Collins Pulse	1961 – 1975	139	13
The Collins Personnel Services	1975 – 1977	20	1
The Rockwell Pride	1977 – 1985	7	29
The Rockwell News (CR Edition)	1974 – 1990	245	48
The Rockwell Contact	1981 – 1985	17	3
The Rockwell Vision	1995 – 1996	5	None
The Rockwell Millennium	1997 – 2001	14	None
The Rockwell Collins Horizons	2001 – 2015	63	None

Efforts continue to locate, scan, and index the missing issues. This collection and database is a great resource for those researching a family member and/or the company's history.

## **AACLA Fiscal Year 2024 Financial Report**

The AACLA fiscal year is Oct. 1, 2023 to Sept. 30, 2024. Our Balance Sheet as of Sept. 30, 2024 shows:

### ASSETS

Savings Acct	\$ 2,254.07
Checking Acct	\$ 61,251.58 (10/31/24 balance \$27,182.28)
PayPal Acct	\$ 0.00
CCU Business Acct	\$ 6.00
CUNA Brokerage	\$ 16,966.57
Other Assets	\$ 800.00

TOTAL ASSETS \$ 81,278.22

### LIABILITIES & EQUITY

Internet Documentary	\$ 71,000.00 Wired (\$58K), Busbee (\$9K), Animations, etc.
Museum Dedicated	\$ 15,000.00
Retained Earnings	(\$ 4,721.78)
Net Income	\$ 0.00

TOTAL LIABILITIES & EQUITY \$ 81,278.22

**AACLA Development (Funding)** – The AACLA relies primarily on monetary donations, and also on sales of DVDs, posters, and books for operating funds.

**AACLA Donations** of cash and/or Collins artifacts during fiscal year 2024 were received from the following (in alphabetical order):

Beall Family Foundation Rod & Elizabeth Blocksome Tom Brennom Barry & Nancy Brown Barry & Pattie Buelow Donna Butikofer Dennis Day Alan & Barbara Erickson Bob Erlandson Don & Marjorie Grimm	Charles Hammond Vern Jackson Shirley Lamb James Menke Dave Nieuwsma Ruth Palma Ann Petrzeka Steve Rowe Paul & Maribeth Shanley	Terry & Gail Smith Mary Le Smyth Jim Spencer Cynthia Stretch Don Stulken Phil Topf Solveig Walstrom Paul & Gail Williams Rick Zinkus Juanita Zuber
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The AACLA officers and Board of Directors sincerely thank all our past donors who have enabled our accomplishments to date. We would also like to thank the dedicated volunteers who have put in countless hours, the individuals and companies who did considerable pro-bono work, and Collins Aerospace for their continued support for providing facilities for our use.

We also recognize and thank FUEL, Inc. of Hiawatha, Iowa who has worked closely with AACLA providing pro-bono professional services in developing an improved brand identity for our organization.

Meeting room accommodations are generously provided by Noelridge Christian Church in Cedar Rapids.

The AACLA officers and Board of Directors operate without pay and rely on donations of funding and in-kind goods and services to accomplish the goals and objectives. AACLA Board Members are also monetary donors to the organization. AACLA encourages donations of Collins Radio artifacts such as equipment, documents, photographs, and other media per our collection policy found on our website: [www.thecollinsstory.org](http://www.thecollinsstory.org)

**Your contribution will be gratefully accepted by contacting:**

**AACLA President Mike Dupree** [mike.dupree.acla@gmail.com](mailto:mike.dupree.acla@gmail.com)

**(319) 651-4666 or**

**AACLA Secretary Rod Blocksome** [rod.blocksome@gmail.com](mailto:rod.blocksome@gmail.com)

**(319) 329-7676**



Drs. Kahn and Cerf with the ACLA interview team



The interview set in Reston, Virginia



Shooting a scene on the 1970's film set



Kids playing early video games on the 1970's set