



**FÉDÉRATION AÉRONAUTIQUE
INTERNATIONALE**
Ballooning Commission

Hall of Fame

**JACQUES W SOUKUP &
KIRK S THOMAS**
INDUCTED 2006



JACQUES W. SOUKUP

Virgin Islands
Sport balloonist
Inducted 2006
16 Oct.1950, Tyndall, SD

KIRK S. THOMAS

Virgin Islands
Sport balloonist
Inducted 2006

Jacques Soukup and Kirk Thomas have been avid balloon pilots, supporters of ballooning and collectors of ballooning memorabilia for decades. Both pilots flew hot air balloons, gas balloons and hot air airships. In their most active ballooning years they were owners of the world's largest fleet of privately owned balloons.

Jacques Soukup has competed in British and US national championships as well as many gas ballooning competitions. He is past President of the CIA and has served on the BFA Gas Events Committee. Soukup was awarded the Tissandier Diploma in 1990.

Kirk Thomas served as a Vice President of the Fédération Aéronautique Internationale (FAI), then in Paris, in the 1990s. He also served as Secretary of the FAI Aviation and Space Education Commission for 10 years and is an FAI Companion of Honour.

The ballooning memorabilia that Soukup and Thomas collected is now a major part of the Anderson-Abruzzo Albuquerque International Balloon Museum.

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Who's Who of Ballooning

By Ebert Lecky

SOUKUP, Jacques W. USA (1950- (HB/GB)

See APPENDIX-BP. Sport balloonist.

b: 16 Oct.1950 Tyndall, SD.

e: Univ.of S.Dakota; S.Dakota State; Aquinas Inst.of Theology; BS-Biology;
BS-Zoology; MA-Moral Theology; MA-Divinity.

p: Inactive Roman Catholic Priest; Medical Ethicist; Investor, Co-Owner
(w/K.Thomas) of Bosque Holdings, Ltd.; Co-Owner (w/K.Thomas) of world's
largest fleet of privately owned balloons.

f: First B-Flight 3 Sep.1979 with K.Thomas & J/Toler; First B-Solo 26 Oct.1980
from Albuquerque, NM; FAA B-License #503660152 issued 21 Dec.1980;
More than 1100 B-Hours (22 Gas starts) by 1987.

l: 1981, Winner of Farmington (NM) Hare & Hound Race;1984, Competed in
the British open B-Championships;1985, Placed 4th in U.S.National GB-
Championships; 1985, Established 8-World Records for AM-Class balloons;
1986, Placed 3rd in U.S.National GB-Championships; 1986, Placed 4th in
World GB-Championships; President of the CIA 1994-5.

m: BFA, Gas Events Committee.

h: P.Tissandier Diploma, FAI-1990; Trauger-Shields Award (?). ***Epic flight
1984 (details unknown) from Wales (UK) in "Chic-I-Boom." Landing safely in
England after crossing the Severn Estuary (98Km,) after 3 hours 35 minutes.

a: Resident of the U.S.Virgin Islands.

Jacques W. Soukup

Jacques is a resident of Wilton Manors, Florida, a South Dakota native (October 16, 1950), and a dual citizen of the USA and Great Britain. He started ballooning in hot air balloons in 1979 and received his gas balloon rating in 1983. He has extensive international ballooning experience with over 3000 hours in hot air, gas, and roziere balloons. Along with his friend, Kirk S. Thomas, Jacques is a pioneer in the development and popularization of special shaped balloons, such as the heads of Uncle Sam, Carmen Miranda (Chic-I-Boom), Chesty (the US Marine Corps Bull dog mascot), Balloon Hilda and Matrioshka (the Russian Nesting Doll). A major player on the ballooning world's political stage, Jacques was elected by over 40 countries to serve as President of the Ballooning Commission of the Federation Aeronatique Internationale (FAI), the world's air sport and record setting Federation, for nearly 4 years. He also served as a Vice President of the FAI for 6 years. Jacques was also President of the Balloon Federation of America (BFA), Founder of the Virgin Island Aero Club, Chairman of the United States Gas Balloon Division of the BFA, and in 2007 was inducted into the International Ballooning and Airship Hall of Fame. Jacques has a BS in Biology and Zoology, hold two Master's Degrees in Medical Ethics and Moral Theology and by profession is an investor and "retired" adventurer.

Record Setting and Competition Flying

Jacques W. Soukup is a pioneer in the use of roziere (combination gas and hot air) balloons. It is a roziere balloon which he and his two co-pilots attempted their round-the-world mission. In March 1985, Jacques and co-pilot Don Cameron established eight world records in roziere balloons and in March of 1987 Jacques added eight additional altitude records in that small balloon launching from the Anderson Vineyard, Albuquerque, N.M., USA and was sent off by Patty Anderson, raising his world records to a total of 16.

In 1986, Jacques placed third in the US National Gas balloon Championship and fourth in the World Gas Balloon Championship with Mark Sullivan in Phoenix, Arizona, USA. In October 1988, Jacques and David Levin finished third in the World Gas Balloon Championship in Augsburg, Germany. He also won the Robert Maxwell Trophy at the Leeds Castle (UK) Meet and has flown in three Coupe Gordon Bennett gas balloon long distance races. Jacques is pleased to have given Troy Bradley and Mark Sullivan their first gas balloon rides and is delighted they have far surpassed his own abilities. The late Steve Fossett had his first Rosiere balloon Flight with Jacques from Jacques' South Dakota Farm.

Awards

1987 Shields-Trauger Memorial Award, the highest award in the BFA (shared with Kirk S. Thomas).

1990 Certificate of Sustaining Membership, awarded in "recognition of his interest in and support of the mission of the National Aeronautic Association, the National Aero Club of the United States."

1991 Tissandier Diploma, awarded by the Federation Aeronautique Internationale (FAI), for being "widely recognized as a leader in the sport in the USA and throughout the world."

1993 FAI Air Sports Medal in recognition for services to ballooning in the world.

1998 Made President of Honour of the FAI Ballooning Commission (CIA).

1998 Made an FAI "Companion of Honour" in recognition of his services to world air sports.

Service to Ballooning

1985-1989 Balloon Federation of America Gas Balloon Events Committee, Chairman 1986-1989.

1987-1990 Board of Directors of the Balloon Federation of America (BFA), President 1989-1990

1989-2005 Founded the Soukup & Thomas International Balloon & Airship Museum in Tyndall (later Mitchell), South Dakota. Board President from 1989-2005. The entire collection was then transferred to the Anderson-Abruzzo Albuquerque International Balloon Museum in Albuquerque, New Mexico. Jacques is pleased to have played a major role in collecting and preserving the world's largest ballooning and airship collection and donating in to the United States of America.

1990-1994 FAI Ballooning Commission Rules Sub-Committee. Chairman 190-1994.

1991-1997 Board of Directors of the Virgin Islands Aero Club. President 1991-1997.

1992-1997 Council of the Federation Aeronautique Internationale (FAI). Vice President 1992-1997

1990-1997 FAI Ballooning Commission of the FAI. President 1994-1997.

1997-present President of Honour—Ballooning Commission of the FAI.

2005-present Board member of the Anderson-Abruzzo Albuquerque International Balloon Museum Foundation, Albuquerque NM.

2007 Inducted into the International Ballooning and Airship Hall of Fame of the CIA.

2012-present Master of Ceremonies for the annual International Ballooning and Airshipping Hall of Fame.

2016-present Jacques was appointed by the FAI President to serve as the "FAI Coordinator" for the FAI 2020 World Air Games bid from New Mexico USA. Currently entering stage 2.

Event Organization

During the 1980's Jacques organized many of the national gas balloon competitions and in 1990 he organized and was the Assistant Event Director for the 6th World Gas Balloon Championship and the 1st World Roziere Balloon Championship held at his farm in South Dakota, USA. He immediately followed up these two events by organizing and directing the 1st Virgin Islands Hot Air Balloon Championship on St. Croix, Virgin Islands and the 2nd US Open Hot Air Airship Championship in Tyndall, South Dakota USA.

He also has been appointed to serve on many international Juries at FAI sanctioned events and has often served as Jury President.

BFA Lifetime Member

BBAC (British Balloon and Airship Club) Member

Honorary Member of the Augsburg Balloon Club, Germany

Founding Member of the Capitol (London UK) Balloon Club

Organized (with Wynn Morgan) Wales first Balloon Rally, Llandovery Wales, UK

First US citizen to fly over Leningrad (now St. Petersburg) Russia and from Communist Tabor Czechoslovakia. Also From Communist Lithuania.

Married Edward L. Winters