

David's lifelong love of aviation began as a young boy. Though very poor, whenever he could save the smallest amount of money doing odd jobs for virtually anyone (which took a very long time), he would purchase a small kit to make a model airplane or a book about aviation. One time the local theater was holding a contest to see who could make the best model. David couldn't afford to buy what he needed to make a more elaborate airplane, so, shy as he was (and very young), he went to the local hobby store to speak to the manager. He nervously asked the manager if he would give him the materials he needed, and in return after the contest was over he would give the finished model to the store to put on display, to garner the interest of other children to buy kits and materials. The manager agreed, apparently with no expectation that he would ever see David again. When David later returned to the store with the winning model in his age group, the manager, surprised to see him, told him he could keep the airplane - a gesture of kindness he never forgot and carried forward to others throughout his life.

David attended the High School of Aviation in New York City, entrance to which was extremely competitive, scoring in the top 10% on the entrance exam. When the US entered WWII, he enlisted in the Navy with aviation duties. His fondest memories were working with the F6F 'Hellcat', Squadron VF-3.

Throughout his life David's interest in aviation only grew. He continued making an abundance of models and became an incredibly knowledgeable aviation historian, amassing a vast collection of models, books, drawings, art work, posters, periodicals, videos and photographs. David volunteered as a guide at the Cradle of Aviation Museum at Mitchel Field, Long Island, New York and also renovated vintage, historic aircraft for display in the museum. He was also a long standing member of the Long Island Early Fliers club. Over the years David met and corresponded with famous, pioneering aviators, such as Elinor Smith (youngest licensed pilot in the world at the time, who set a women's solo endurance record) and 'Wrong Way (Douglas) Corrigan' (who, in 1938, flew solo to Ireland across the Atlantic to achieve Charles Lindbergh's 1927 cross-Atlantic feat; his aircraft was deemed unstable by regulators, so he intentionally filed a flight plan to California, hence the nickname), as well as Paul Garber (curator, National Air and Space Museum, Washington, DC). He also flew with Cole Palen, founder of the Old Rhinebeck Aerodrome, a living museum of vintage aircraft in Rhinebeck, New York. Traveling on vacation, David always visited aviation museums in countries around the world, always adding books or memorabilia to his collection. His wife Barbara was the biggest supporter of his passion for aviation, visiting museums with him, attending club meetings, and as she always joked, was the only spouse who was happy to have aviation art work and commemorative plates displayed in her living room.

Most important, David was a wonderful husband and father. His family was always his first priority. He was always saddened by the thought that one day his collection would be disposed of, and it is the NC State University Department of Mechanical and Aerospace Engineering's great honor to absolve that fear with the help of David's wife and daughter.