

Congress of the United States
Washington, DC 20510

December 7, 2023

The Honorable Louis DeJoy
Postmaster General and Chief Executive Officer
United States Postal Service
475 L'Enfant Plaza SW
Washington, DC 20260

Dear Postmaster General DeJoy:

We write to encourage the United States Postal Service to issue a commemorative stamp honoring Brigadier General Charles Elwood “Chuck” Yeager. Chuck Yeager is an American hero and a legendary figure in the history of aviation, and it is our strong belief that his historic accomplishments in service to our nation merit celebration and recognition on a commemorative stamp.

A native of Myra, West Virginia, Chuck was raised a few miles up the Mud River in the small town of Hamlin, where his family moved when he was five years old. Chuck demonstrated an affinity for machines from an early age, and by the time he was a teenager, he commanded an advanced knowledge of complicated mechanical systems. Chuck graduated from Hamlin High School in June 1941, six months before the United States entered World War II. Three months after graduating high school, Chuck enlisted in the Army Air Corps. He was selected for pilot training in July 1942 and earned his pilot’s wings with Class 43-C on March 10, 1943, and from that moment on the course of aviation history was changed forever.

After earning his pilot’s wings, Chuck joined the 363rd Fighter Squadron, 357th Fighter Group, and departed for Europe shortly before Christmas 1943. He entered combat in February 1944 and claimed one Messerschmitt Me 109 before being shot down on his eighth combat mission. Chuck evaded capture and provided details of his evasion to British intelligence, which helped other downed pilots, prior to rejoining his unit. He resumed combat operations in August, having carried his appeal to return to combat all the way to Supreme Allied Commander General Dwight D. Eisenhower. The Allied forces benefitted tremendously from his persistence and superb pilot skills, and Chuck earned the “ace in a day” title by achieving five aerial victories on October 12. He achieved another four victories on November 27 and completed his final flight on January 15, 1945, having totaled 64 combat missions and 12.5 aerial victories.

Following the war, Chuck was hand-picked by Colonel Albert Boyd to enter the Air Force’s new Flight Test Division at Wright Field. Only the service’s very best pilots were selected for the new test pilot school, and Colonel Boyd considered Chuck the best instinctive pilot he had ever

seen. Because of his piloting skills and the tremendous character he demonstrated under pressure, Chuck was selected to test pilot the rocket-powered Bell XS-1 in an attempt to do what many aviation experts deemed impossible: exceed the speed of sound. On October 14, 1947, on his ninth powered flight in the Bell XS-1, Chuck achieved the impossible and broke the sound barrier, attaining a top speed of Mach 1.06.

Chuck dutifully served his country for another 28 years after his record-breaking flight until his retirement from active duty on February 28, 1975. Over the course of his distinguished career, Chuck fought for his country in two wars, accumulated a total of 10,131.6 flight hours in 361 different types and models of military aircraft, and was the first commander of the Aerospace Research Pilot School, where he mentored a new generation of American aviators who would pioneer spaceflight. Chuck remained busy in retirement, serving as a consultant to government and industry and an advisor to presidents. And, of course, continuing to fly the most advanced aircraft in the world.

Chuck's distinguished career and historic accomplishments were justly commemorated with many awards, and he was inducted into the National Aviation Hall of Fame in 1973. Congress awarded Chuck a Congressional Silver Medal in December 1975, which President Gerald Ford presented to him in a ceremony at the White House. Chuck was also inducted into the International Air & Space Hall of Fame, the International Space Hall of Fame, and the Aerospace Walk of Honor.

Chuck passed away on December 7, 2020. He left behind a legacy of service not just to his country but to all of humanity. From his humble beginnings in the hollers of Appalachia to the skies above war-torn Europe to accomplishing what no human being had done before in an aircraft, Chuck was the embodiment of the very best of America: service to his country and fellow citizens, the willingness to sacrifice in the defense of freedom, and the spirit to push beyond the boundaries what is possible to go where no one had gone before.

Today, on the third anniversary of his passing, Chuck becomes eligible to be honored on a commemorative stamp issued by the United States Postal Service. We encourage you to issue a new stamp celebrating Chuck's life at the earliest possible date, so that his legacy may be remembered and his contributions to our nation and to humanity may be celebrated.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,



Joe Manchin
United States Senator



Shelley Moore Capito
United States Senator



Doug LaMalfa
Member of Congress



Carol Miller
Member of Congress



Alex Mooney
Member of Congress