

Melvin H. Nuss is inducted into the Pennsylvania Air National Guard Hall of Fame in recognition of his service to the Commonwealth, the community, state aviation, and the Pennsylvania Air National Guard during a distinguished career as a founder and manager of the Reading Airport.

Melvin H. Nuss was appointed Secretary of the Reading Airport Commission which developed and financed the Reading Airport. When the airport opened in 1939 Mr. Nuss was appointed as the manager, continuing in this capacity until he retired in 1960. Mr. Nuss developed a close relationship with the Pennsylvania Air National Guard during his service as airport manager, always giving his personal attention and support to the units stationed there.

When the United States entered World War II, most civilian airports were utilized in some capacity to support the Army Air Corps. The Reading Municipal Airport, with Mr. Nuss as its manager, was renamed Reading Army Airfield and soon became the site of a significant Air Corps training base. The airport was greatly enlarged with the construction of three new runways along with hangars and other facilities. Mr. Nuss' aviation experience and know-how was essential to the operation of this Air Corps facility.

Following the end of World War II, Reading Army Airfield and its facilities were turned over to the City of Reading with the understanding that a certain portion be leased to the Federal Government for use by the Army Air Forces, soon to become the United States Air Force. The 148th Fighter Squadron of the Pennsylvania Air National Guard was organized in February 1947 taking up station at the airport. Mr. Nuss welcomed this addition and made certain that the new squadron had adequate facilities and operation areas. In June 1948 Mr. Nuss helped to facilitate an Air National Guard competition consisting of five Air Guard fighter squadrons from four different states and the District of Columbia. The event brought much community attention and support to the Pennsylvania Air National Guard. In 1950 an airshow was sponsored by the airport management which included the 148th Fighter Squadron and jet fighter aircraft from the Maine Air Guard as well as civilian and commercial aircraft from all over the country. It was clearly another milestone for the Pennsylvania Air National Guard and for the Reading Airport.

The Reading Airport, which was renamed Carl A. Spaatz Field, had many changes ahead to include the activation of the 148 Fighter Squadron for the Korean war in 1951 and its subsequent conversion to the aeromedical evacuation mission in 1956, as well as many Air Guard training exercises and encampments. Mr. Nuss was always helpful and welcomed the Air National Guard units that deployed and trained at the airfield from many states.

Mr. Melvin H. Nuss' leadership and dedication to the Commonwealth, the community, state aviation, and the Pennsylvania Air National Guard warrant his induction into the Pennsylvania Air National Guard Hall of Fame.