

roles in the evolving national air transportation system. That was particularly true in the 1920s and 1930s, when carrying the mail was more lucrative than carrying passengers and the limits of aviation technology required frequent stops along the emerging air routes. During those decades, small city airports witnessed their heyday.

As told by Jan Olive Nash in a short, well-illustrated work, the early history of the Iowa City Municipal Airport was typical of its time. As the U.S. Post Office worked to create a series of airmail routes that would crisscross the nation, it turned to local interests to provide the needed landing facilities. Caught up in the aviation enthusiasm of the time, Iowa City boosters jumped at the chance to place their city on the developing national air map. The airport was originally established through private sector action, but when citizens passed an aviation bond issue in 1929, Iowa City became the first city in Iowa to own its airport.

Like most works on aviation and airports, this history of the Iowa City Municipal Airport focuses most of its attention on the period before 1945, including a very short section on World War II. The decades after the war, when changing technologies as well as shifts in government policy gradually diminished the role of the Iowa City airport, receive less attention. Only a few pages are devoted to the end of commercial airline traffic in 1972 and the transformation of the facility into a general aviation airport.

This history, created in response to the imminent demolition of a historic building, includes a section on that structure, the Boeing Hangar. However, the deliberately modern 1950s-era terminal, built to serve commercial airline passengers, still exists, a reminder of the role played by the airport in the national air transportation system until 1972. This work highlights the vital role played by smaller cities in the development of the nation's air transportation system. It should inspire a more extensive examination of the subject, especially the long competition between several smaller Iowa cities for airline service.

Amish Education in the United States and Canada, by Mark Dewalt. Lanham, MD: Rowan and Littlefield, 2006. viii, 218 pp. Illustrations, tables, appendixes, references. \$60.00 cloth, \$32.95 paper.

Reviewer Frank Yoder is an academic advisor and adjunct professor of history at the University of Iowa. He is the author of *Opening a Window to the World: A History of Iowa Mennonite School* (1995).

In this very readable and interesting account, Mark Dewalt offers historical background on Amish education in North America and a com-

prehensive review of Amish education today. Dewalt's expertise in education shows in his careful description of Amish classrooms, teaching styles, study materials, daily routines, and parental involvement. The book is filled with detailed statistics and narrative accounts that offer readers a comprehensive understanding of Amish education today.

Dewalt's argument is not always explicit, but his analysis highlights the stark contrast between the philosophies that underpin Amish education and those in education in the rest of society. Most people believe that education improves their lives, advances knowledge, increases productivity, enhances their standard of living, and makes them more competitive in the workplace and on the world stage. As a society, we emphasize excellence and individual achievement and celebrate the accomplishments of students who do well. Bumper stickers declaring that the driver of an automobile is the proud parent of an honors student proliferate, local newspapers list students who make the honor roll, and schools whose students score exceptionally well on various achievement tests are lauded.

The Amish reject much of what the rest of us value about education. The most obvious difference is that they educate their children only through the eighth grade. They emphasize the community instead of the individual, cooperation instead of competition, and rather than celebrating knowledge and success, the Amish seek humility and a quiet spirit. Dewalt shows how Amish educators integrate every student into the group and teach students that everyone has value, no matter how they score on the Iowa Test of Basic Skills or how skilled they are in sports or in the classroom. For the Amish, a utilitarian elementary level education serves the wider Amish community by providing basic instruction in language acquisition, reading, mathematics, writing, and a smattering of science. Education in Amish society is not designed to reform or reshape society. Rather, it complements and reinforces the values and beliefs that are taught in church and community life.

Dewalt not only analyzes Amish education but also provides first-hand accounts of Amish schools in action. We learn exactly how the Amish operate a school, what takes place in the classroom, how the community is involved, and what students study. Dewalt observed Amish schools in many different states and Canada, and he offers detailed and personal descriptions of what he saw and heard. He has organized parts of his text as a reference book, with sections devoted to various aspects of the Amish educational system. In a chapter on curriculum and textbooks, for example, we learn how Amish teachers

approach specific subjects, how the community and church are involved in selecting texts, and what students read and study.

Fittingly, the book is appropriate for Amish people who are careful about what they read. Instead of photos of Amish schools, students, and parents, the only illustrations are line drawings of Amish school buildings. In keeping with the Amish desire to avoid personal attention, Dewalt does not identify the Amish individuals who provided information and access to the Amish schoolhouses. The book reflects who the Amish are and what they believe.

Dewalt has done extensive research, and the data he presents is impressive. He is obviously a sympathetic observer of the Amish and their schools, and his accounts and descriptions are generally quite positive. But he does not romanticize the Amish and he does not overlook the challenges they face. His work leaves us with the lingering question that dogs much research on the Amish: Are the Amish relevant to wider society or are they simply a curious group of iconoclasts living on the fringes?

James Van Allen: The First Eight Billion Miles, by Abigail Foerstner. Iowa City: University of Iowa Press, 2007. xx, 322 pp. Illustrations, notes, bibliography, index. \$37.50 cloth.

Reviewer Roger D. Launius is senior curator at the Smithsonian Institution's National Air and Space Museum in Washington, DC. His books include *Frontiers of Space Exploration* (1998, 2004), *NASA: A History of the U.S. Civil Space Program* (1994), and (with Howard E. McCurdy) *Robots in Space: Technology, Evolution, and Interplanetary Travel* (2008).

In 2007 each of the three principals involved in launching the first U.S. satellite into orbit—Wernher von Braun, William H. Pickering, and James A. Van Allen—had biographies published about their lives. That was entirely appropriate at the time of the 50th anniversary of the beginning of the space age. All three deserve well-researched and well-written biographies that seek not so much to glorify but to analyze and understand this trio and their efforts in creating spaceflight. Of these new biographies, all are creditable, but unfortunately only one is definitive. Unfortunately, it is the Wernher von Braun biography, not the biography of Van Allen under review here.

Abigail Foerstner's *James Van Allen: The First Eight Billion Miles* is satisfactory in many respects—and it is certainly engagingly written. It will serve as a useful basic text on the life of a vital actor in the first half-century of the space age, but it is unsuccessful in offering the insightful, critical analysis that Van Allen deserves. Of course, Van Allen