

May - June 2003



the official newsletter of the

Radio Control Club of Rochester

AMA charter 465 since 1957



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DEDICATED TO RESPONSIBLE R/C FUN
SAFETY BY CHOICE NOT BY CHANCE

The purpose of the Radio Control Club of Rochester is to aid and encourage interest in the design, construction and safe operation of radio-controlled model aircraft, boats, and cars.

All visitors are always welcome at the Northampton Park Model Flying field and at regular meetings.

Meetings are scheduled for the second and fourth Wednesday of every month at 7:30 PM at the Salem Church, 60 Bittner Street, just east of the Inner Loop exit at St. Paul Street.

FOR THE LATEST INFO:
RCCR HOTLINE: **FIX-RCCR (349-7227)**
RCCR WEB PAGE: <http://fly.to/rccr>
Email: airflow@rochester.rr.com



Hey,

Needless to say we have had a great start to the season this year compared to last year. If I remember correctly we were still under water and mud this time last year. All the fields are open and very dry. Northampton was the last to open and it opened on the 25th of April. Now if we get a little rain at night and some warm (not hot) weather during the day we will have a great year.



Congratulations to **Ed Britton** for receiving his contest director status. Ed will be a contest director for one of the combat meets later this year. We need a few more contest directors. If you like to organize, run events, and make great money, request a test and review book from the AMA. All you need to do is fill out a form, understand the responsibilities of a contest director by answering twenty questions (it's an open book test), and get three references.

The first installment of "The Story of a Marine Aircrew Man in WWII" was in the last issue of the newsletter. Hope you got a chance to read it. **Judy Foster** is presenting a condensed version of **Gerry Merz's** book for the newsletter. In the first issue, Gerry got as far as the West Coast waiting for his deployment into the Pacific Theater of War. The next installment is in this issue. It's very interesting, exciting, and yet some how it is frightening to think about what dangers he is going to face. Sitting here now we know the outcome but back then it must have been nerve-racking experience, if not for Gerry, for his parents, sister and the girl he left behind. Let's read on. **(Great job Judy)**

The Clubs first flying event this year is a combat meet on May 24th. **Pete Durante** is the contest director and he has asked for help scoring the contest. The scoring task is easy to do, and can be exciting, so don't be bashful come out and help. Pete has chosen a chef for the concession stand and I am sure he/she could use some additional help so let's make this a successful event and volunteer to help. The event is from 9 a.m. to 1 p.m.

June Fun Fly is June 7th and 8th. We expect to hold it at Northampton this year since the weather is cooperating and the grounds are drying up very nicely. **Paul Weigand** is the contest director again this year. **Tom Forsyth** will coordinate the concession stand and **Dick Foster** has agreed to help Tom with the up front organization strategies but Tom will need help during the event. **Pete Durante** is the raffle coordinator. We have a great set of prizes this year so be sure to get your tickets and try to sell a couple to your spouse, kids, in-laws, relatives and neighbors. **Randy Meyers** will be the guardian of the transmitter impound again this year and **Matt Kirsch**, the VP and Program Director, will get the information of all our events out to the proper media this year. So it looks like everything is falling into place for another great year. Thanks to all who volunteered.

Last fall we discovered that Bolling field was infested with grubs. The grubs were bad enough but the skunks did quit a job turning over the sod to get at the grubs, which didn't do much for a smooth landing strip. Last fall a group of us worked to level the runway but on Friday the 25th we did a lot to bring the field back to flying status. A work party that included **Ed Barrows, Richard Brook, Jack Butler, Jim DeTar, Chip Edmonds, Phil Evans, Trevor Ewell, John Floyd, Robert James, Jerry Joseph, Bernard Kulbacki, Charlie Lechliter, Mike Mance, Gerry Merz, Norm Marasco, Eugene Pareschi, David Perkins, Joe Somers, George Steger, and Bob White** was assembled to work on the East/West runway. The "party" spent about six hours raking and spreading three truckloads of soil and then seeded and rolled the runway and field. Now with some nice rain and good weather we should be back in business. If you were one of the work party be sure to have John Floyd sign your work card so you get credit for next years dues.

Bud Kelly and **John Floyd** spent a good part of the day on Tuesday the 29th moving maintenance equipment into place for the season. Last week they built four new AMA style startup tables for Northampton. We have found that these tables are the best design for safety and functionality. Any new tables we build will be of this design. The existing tables at Northampton that were in good condition were moved to Bolling or Hasman.

RCCR participated in the 100 Years of Flight Celebration sponsored by the ASME at the Rochester Museum and Science Center on April 26th. RCCR members presenting were **Trevor Ewell, Ed Britton, Tom Forsyth and Paul Weigand**. **Don Steeb** was there also there but he was representing the WNYFFS (even though he was wearing an RCCR shirt).

Thanks to **Gene Pareschi, Don Steeb, Jerry Joseph** and **Mike Rotherforth** for manning the RCCR booth for the static display at the Piedmont hanger at the Rochester Airport on May 3rd. We had some interest in the display and some interest in the club. We have had a lot of requests for displays this year and it is nice to see different people stepping up to the task. Talking up the hobby and our events is a good thing. Thanks everyone.

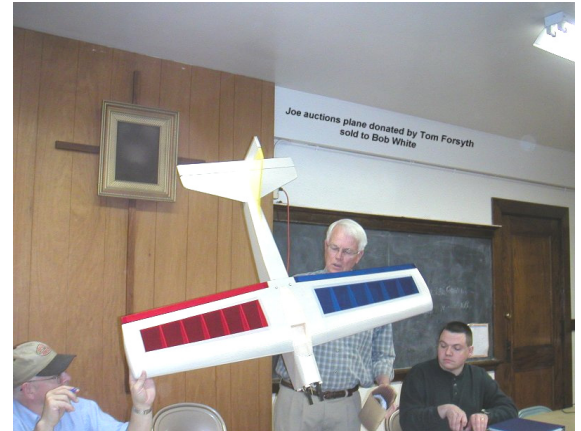
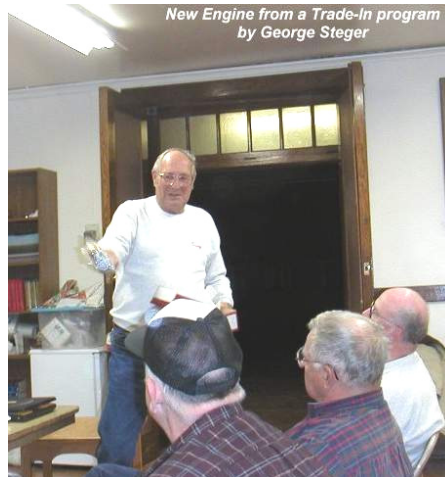
When I was at the Piedmont hanger, Donald Mammarello, the Operations Supervisor at the Greater Rochester International Airport, approached me about having the club put together a static display for the airport terminal during the month of August. He would like scale or near scale model airplanes that could be displayed with the Chummy in the main area of the terminal. Planes as small as the club's display model of the Spirit of St Louis would be displayed in locked glass cabinets and larger models would be hung from the ceiling to keep them safe. If you have something that you would like to display let me know. I think a large sailplane would also be a nice addition. The idea is tentative as of now but could be firmed up in the next few weeks. We will discuss this at the next few meetings.

Training for the Edison Tech RC class began on Wednesday April 30th. **Trevor Ewell, Charlie Leichter and Bob Guay** transported the students from the school to the field and back again. The four students (**Mike, John, Louis, and Juan**) got at least two training flights in each. Mike and John flew last year with us. Trevor used the newly refurbished club trainer and **Bob James** used his newly constructed Telemaster.

Next week, Tuesday May 6th, will be the first day of training for the year. Training is at Northampton from 4 p.m. until sunset every Tuesday from May through September. Hope to see you there. We can always use trainers, pit crew and observers.

SAFETY FIRST AND FLY QUIETLY JOE

SHOW & TELL AT RCCR MEETINGS



The story of a Marine Aircrew Man in WWII

Edited by Judy Foster

Chapter Two

When we last left Gerry he was heading towards the rest of his life full of anticipation and fear. The USS Cape Bon wasn't like anything Gerry had ever experienced. The hold was the place where the Sailors and Marines would spend their sleeping hours five high in bunks made of pipe frames and stretched canvas. It was hot and stuffy in the hold, and Gerry found refuge on the ships deck.

Gerry loved the ocean, and was a good sailor; *"that is to say I didn't get seasick."* He found himself watching from the bow of the ship, the wake, the flying fish, and the sunsets. There wasn't much to do aboard for a Marine. Oh sure the Sailors would have drills: *"you would hear, general quarters...man your battle stations."* Sometimes they would launch a large balloon and let the Sailors shoot it down. Occasionally the Marines would gather on the fantail and shoot clay pigeons.

Day turned to night and back to day again. After ten such rotations of the earth they passed the Hawaiian Islands. It would have been a thrill for Gerry except the islands were only a speck on the horizon and it meant no land for a very long time.

Crossing the equator on a Naval ship is an event with great significance even today. This is when any man or woman becomes a Shell Back. Others who have already experienced this help to 'initiate' the new ones. Costumes are worn, butts are whacked, and there is the swallowing of the dreaded pill. Which by the way will make you pass blue urine. But once a Shell Back always a Shell Back and the experience is one most don't forget. *"The next day we were all issued cards that proclaimed that we were full fledged Shell Backs, I still have mine."*

Twenty-eight days after leaving the United States the ship sailed into Iron Bottom Bay...Guadalcanal. For a Marine this place was special, there had been such a famous battle there just a year prior. For a guy from Upstate, New York it appeared ominous, *"with its dark green mountains and groves of coconut palms along the shore."*

They weren't there long, and it was on to the Russell Islands only a day's trip north. They passed a native settlement and the inhabitants as Gerry puts it *"not the South Sea girls you see in the movies."* These were descendents of cannibals that had inhabited the area many years ago.

Their camp on the Russell Islands was a series of Quonset huts located in a coconut grove. This was great until the wind would drop a coconut onto the roof in the middle of the night. For a moment they would wonder if they were under fire. They stayed there for eight days before moving on. It was a great 'vacation' you could say; pitching horseshoes, watching movies, and roasting a side of beef the Aussies left behind.

A C47 cargo plane flew Gerry and his group to Munda, New Georgia. He was officially assigned to VMSB 241, MAG 24, 1st Marine Air Wing. Munda had been a battle "hot spot" just months earlier in the Solomon campaign. The airstrip had been started by the Japanese, but it would take the Navy Sea Bees to finish the job. It was built of crushed white coral and had mounds of coral piled up around each plane to protect it from bombing and strafing raids. It was here that Greg 'Pappy' Boyington had operated. Boyington was the leading ace at that time, and would later get shot down by the Japanese and sent to Japan. For those of you that may not know, Pappy was the leader of the now famous Black Sheep Squadron.

Gerry was quite comfortable here, he bunked with 3 others, and they called their tent the *"Mishafillyyorkfornia. After the locations we lived in at home."* There was one small problem out there in the "boondocks" Coral Rats. *"They were small, about the size of a mouse but when you turned out the lights they were out and about. You couldn't leave anything out that was edible... we slept under mosquito nets not only to protect us from mosquitoes but also from the little critters."*

Gerry also got to experience first hand a natural phenomenon the migration of the land crabs. Now I've seen this on the Discovery Channel, but it's a little different to be up close and personal. *"...we woke up to an invasion of land crabs. They were everywhere! When jeeps and trucks dove on the road along the airstrip they crushed them by the hundreds. In a day or so in the hot sun, they began to smell pretty bad."* The crabs come to shore to mate and lay eggs before returning to the sea.

By now Gerry had met his pilot, 1st LT Jack Hickson, from Honolulu. They were also issued their gear: *"a parachute, a Mae West, flight suit, leather jacket, 45 cal. Pistol, helmet and goggles. We thought we were pretty hot stuff in our new gear."*

The planes had arrived and it was now time for combat training. Flying over these islands was a feast for the eyes that Gerry enjoyed very much.

"On one occasion we flew up the middle of a channel known as the Slot. The previous year, this had been the scene of several night naval battles. The Japanese Navy would come down the Slot from Rabaul to raid the US forces that were hanging on desperately, to Guadalcanal. Our Navy lost ships in these waters, including the cruiser Astoria." This is also the area where JFK's PT 109 was sunk and he was later rescued.

Soon it was time to move again, and this time to Bugainville Island. Only this move would be different. This was where Gerry, his squadron, and the others would prepare for the invasion of Luzon. He splashed ashore on Thanksgiving Day 1944 K-rations were the menu for the holiday meal.

Bugainville is the furthest island north of the Solomon chain it had an active volcano that spit smoke on a continuous basis. *"It seemed to me a dark and sinister place, with thick damp jungle and low hanging clouds around the mountain. The jungle was so thick in places you couldn't see through it."*

Gerry was able to enjoy a USO show in person Bob Hope, Francis Langford, and Jerry Cellona were the stars. It was a thrill he still remembers fondly.

A skeleton crew stayed back, and for two weeks they loaded the gear on barges and small boats in order to get to the ships in the harbor.

Gerry boarded the USS President Polk. That said... the boarding is one that Gerry will never forget. Trying to climb up cargo nets in high swells was a feat that took a great amount of effort and a little luck.

Once at the Navy base in Manas harbor Gerry was assigned a great work detail. He was to go ashore and bring back beer! He as any good, thoughtful person would, had to make sure it wasn't 'poison'.

The next morning in the thickest of fog Gerry watched as the Battleship Missouri passed on it's way out to sea like a ghost...she made no sound.

The convoy was on the move again getting close to the Philippines. Life was soon to change forever.

Continued next issue

Rochester Museum and Science Center

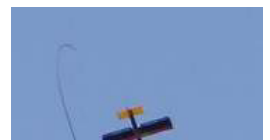


Upcoming Events:

Training – every Tuesday evening 4 pm to dusk

May 17-18 Honeoye Float Fly Honeoye, NY (C) Honeoye Float Fly. Site: Sandy Bottom Park. Dick Parshall CD, 3131 Oakmount Rd Bloomfield NY 14469 PH:585-657-6433. Best float fly in western NY, 70 mi E of Buffalo on US Rt 20A in village of Honeoye, follow signs ½ mile. 9AM to 5PM both days. Food, refreshments on site, four flight lines, rescue boat. Enjoy good relaxed fun. Sponsor: CANANDAIGUA SKY CHIEFS

May 24 RC Combat, RCCR Bolling Field , Pete Durante CD 585 225-7394 AMA Sanctioned, flying Open B & slow survivable as a provisional class (not listed in the AMA rules as of yet). RCCR Combat Contest for 755(JSO). RCCA scoring, hard hats required, entry fee \$5, registration 9AM, start 10AM, food & pop available. Sponsor: RCCR



June 7-8 RCCR Ray Edmunds Memorial Air Show & Fun Fly. Site: Northampton Park Model Flying Field, Brockport NY. Paul Weigand CD, 283 Strathmore Rd Rochester NY 14612 PH:585-621-8524. For any RC model aircraft, open flying from 10AM to 5PM. Campers welcome, no hook ups, free Saturday night picnic at Northampton Ski Lodge for all pilots. A great weekend get together. Sponsor: RCCR



RCCR - Ray Edmunds Memorial Air Show & Fun Fly.

June 14 Canandaigua, NY (C) Chiefs Electric International RC Fun Fly. Site: Club Field. Andrew Eggleston CD, 511 County Rd 26 Newark NY 14513 PH:315-331-4916 e-mail andy@rochester.rr.com . Site open to all guests Friday and Sunday as well, \$5 and AMA/MAAC license required. Camping is available and encouraged onsite all weekend (hook ups \$10 per night). Field open Fri & Sun for open flying. Come fly at our great new field! For addl info contact Lynn Bowerman PH:585-394-7273. Sponsor: CANANDAIGUA CHIEFS

June 14 RAMS Open Fly-in at Fordham Field

June 21 RCCR Combat, HASMAN Field, Jim Warner CD jamesm@arczip.com 585 227-4964 AMA Sanctioned, flying Open B & slow survivable as a provisional class(not listed in the AMA Rulebook yet).



June 21-22 Sky Rovers will host their annual flying event at Ford Field, McBurney Rd, Phelps NY. For more info, contact Dave Reid at 315-548-3779 or e-mail at dreid@capital.net., Sky Rovers club president John Gee at 315-483-2170.

July 3-6 Dave Landers "4th" Blow Out Arkport NY

July 19 RCCR Combat, HASMAN Field, Ed Britton CD eplane@rochester.rr.com 585 352-6463 AMA Sanctioned, flying Open B & slow survivable as a provisional class(not listed in the AMA rules as of yet).