



# The AMA History Project Presents: Autobiography of WILLIAM REDEKER

Born June 17, 1924      Started modeling in 1934  
AMA #9027



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Written and submitted by WR (06/2004); Edited by JF (06/2004), Edited by JS (08/2007), Reformatted by JS (01/2010)

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## Career:

- 1937: Joined first model club in Cincinnati, Ohio
  - 1939-1941: Flew in National Championships (Nats)
  - 1940: Designed the “Demon” a class B Free Flight model
  - Set a world’s record in class B Free Flight with the *Demon*
  - Lifetime full-scale pilot
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Bill Redeker has always found airplanes interesting. For over 70 years, he has been modeling. It was around 1937 that Bill joined the Cincinnati Albatross Birdmen in Ohio. He credits his membership in that club as being what helped him get started in full-scale aviation.

One of Bill’s first models was a gas-powered *Miss America*, built from a kit in 1936. Unfortunately, the plane crashed on first flight. Bill remembers how difficult it was to get his engine to run. Bill flew his planes in a large schoolyard near his residence.

Around the year 1938, Bill entered the *Dayton Daily News* competition and entered a Free Flight gas Comet *Clipper* model. He received first place. In national competition, Bill participated from 1939 through 1941. At the 1940 Nats in Chicago, Bill flew the *Demon*, a class B Free Flight of Bill’s own design.

The *Demon* set a world’s record at 9 minutes, 20.3 seconds for class B at the 1940 Nats. Bill received medals each year of competition, and the *Demon* was featured in the March 1941 issue of *Model Airplane News*. From 1940 to 1941, Bill designed several Free Flight gas models and won more contests.

Bill’s world record brought him senior membership in the Cincinnati Albatross Birdmen in 1940. This allowed him to fly full-scale planes later on. He worked part-time at the airport. In December of 1942, Bill enlisted in the Army Air Force. Modeling and the Air Force combined to help set up a lifetime career in aviation.

Bill was involved in crop dusting and as a corporate pilot, for nine years. He was also a fixed base operator for Pinellas Aircraft at the St. Petersburg/Clearwater, Florida airport. At one point, Bill flew for former Secretary of Commerce Charles Sawyer and was a business partner of Sawyer’s son John at Pinellas Aircraft as well as in the crop dusting business.

FAA Ratings:

- Commercial license #155604 for single and multi-engine aircraft, land and sea, glider, instrument
- Douglas DC-3 and Lockheed 18 Type ratings
- Flight instructor, single and multi-engine, instrument
- A + P mechanic #1045037
- Ground instructor #1037952. Subjects: aircraft, aircraft engines, meteorology, navigation
- Quiet Birdmen #12150
- OX5 Aviation Pioneers # 12476
- 10,250 hours. Now retired to flying Radio Control

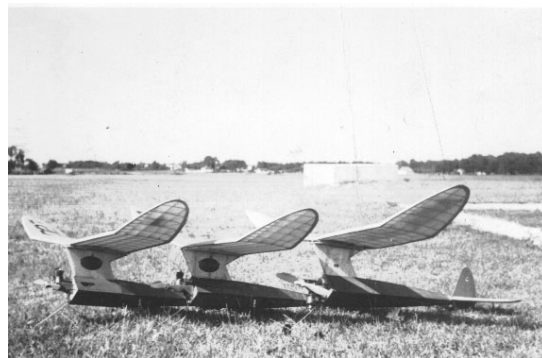
Bill now flies Radio Control models three times a week and has seven flight-worthy airplanes that are flown regularly. After 70 years of modeling, he enjoys it as much as ever.



*Bill, age 12, with his first successful gas model*



*Nats trophies from 1939, 1940, and 1941*



*Three Demons, Class B Free Flight models*



*c. 1985: The Buccaneer that won the Texaco event at SAM Nats*

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**AMA History Project**  
National Model Aviation Museum  
5151 E. Memorial Dr.  
Muncie IN 47302  
(765) 287-1256, ext. 511  
[historyproject@modelaircraft.org](mailto:historyproject@modelaircraft.org)

