



# The AMA History Project Presents: Biography of DR. WILLIAM E. (BILL) GOOD, SR.

April 25, 1916 - May 18, 2001



Edited and Transcribed by SS (07/2002), Reformatted by JS (08/2009), Updated by JS (02/2012)

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Watch *The Pioneers*, an AMA film produced by Jay Gerber, at  
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=jduj1wkGFT0>



– Published on YouTube by the AMA on January 28, 2016.

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## Career:

- Together with his twin brother, Walter, created and made the first flying Radio Controlled (RC) model airplane; first flew it in May 1937
- That first RC plane, the Guff, is in the Smithsonian with a replica in the AMA Museum
- Worked as a renowned physicist for Westinghouse Research Laboratories during World War II and for General Electric Company (GE) for 28 years

## Honors:

- Named a fellow of the Institute of Electrical and Electronics Engineers
  - Recipient of the Steinmetz Award for Technical Advancement from GE
  - Recipient of the Braun Prize for Outstanding Achievement from the Society of Information Display
  - 1959: Recipient of the Fellows Award from the Institute of Radio Engineers
  - A member of the Society of Antique Modelers' Hall of Fame
  - 1977: Recipient of the Distinguished Alumni Award from Kalamazoo College
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*The following article appeared after the death of William Good. For further information, please see the biography on his twin brother, Walter Good. This article appeared in the December 2001 issue of Model Aviation magazine. A similar one appeared in the Kalamazoo (Michigan) Gazette about the same time.*

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**William E. (Bill) Good**  
**May 18, 2001**

William E. Good, Sr., one of the twin brothers from Kalamazoo, Michigan who pioneered the development of Radio Controlled (RC) model airplanes in the 1930s, died in Liverpool, New York on May 18, 2001. He was 85.

Bill Good and his twin brother, Walter, who lives in Port Richey, Florida, were born in Hillsdale, Michigan, and graduated in 1933 from Kalamazoo Central High School, where their father taught science. They graduated in 1937 from Kalamazoo College.

“Bill’s hobby was amateur radios and mine was model airplanes, so we combined our hobbies to try to develop a working RC aircraft,” wrote brother Walt in an article in *Model Aviation* in March of 1986. Their hobbies lead to the first RC flight in May of 1937.

The brothers were working on a college science project at what is now the Kalamazoo/Battle Creek International Airport. In a sense comparable to that of the Wright brothers three decades earlier, one of the brothers operated the controls while the other sprinted down the runway with their aircraft, the Guff, a slang word from the college campuses. The aircraft had an eight-foot wingspan.

Since that historic day 64 years ago, the original Guff has found a home in the Smithsonian in Washington, D.C., and a replica is in the AMA’s National Model Aviation Museum.

The brothers competed together in several National Aeromodeling Championships in the next few years before marriage, careers and children became their priorities.

The brothers both became renowned physicists, establishing separate careers. Bill, who received a master’s degree from the University of Illinois and a doctorate from the University of Pittsburgh, went to work for Westinghouse Research Laboratories in Pittsburgh, then for General Electric Co. in Syracuse, New York.

Bill retired from GE in 1977 after 28 years as a physicist there, the last 20 years of which were spent working on large-screen television projection.

A Fellow of the Institute of Electrical and Electronics Engineers, he received during his career the Steinmetz Award for Technical Achievement from GE and the Braun Prize for Outstanding Achievement from the Society for Information Display.

In 1959, he received the Fellows Award from the Institute of Radio Engineers for his work in “pioneering development in microwave spectroscopy and other contributions to color television receivers.”

During World War II, Bill did radar research for Westinghouse and was part of a team of scientists who worked at unlocking the secrets of nuclear energy.

Bill was a member of the Society of Antique Modelers Hall of Fame. He was also a member of the Liverpool First United Methodist Church and the Liverpool-Syracuse Masonic Lodge 501 and was a past Commodore of the Onondaga Yacht Club.

Bill and Walter, who was a specialist in missile control systems at Johns Hopkins University during his career, received the Distinguished Alumni Award from Kalamazoo College in 1977.

Bill was preceded in death by two wives, Carolyn in 1957 and Antoinette “Trudy” in March of this year.

Surviving besides his brother are two daughters, Judith Hackbarth Swartz of Salt Lake City, Utah and Cindy C. Good of Denver; four sons, William E. Jr. of Boston, Massachusetts, Richard J. of Miami, Florida, Gary L. of Liverpool, New York, and Gregory L. of California; six grandchildren and three great-grandchildren.

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