



The AMA History Project Presents: Biography of LIN REICHEL

September 21, 1927- June 16, 2008



Written by AMA staff, DN, BB (08/2008), transcribed and reformatted by JS (10/2011)

The following articles were published in the September 2008 issue of Model Aviation magazine.

“In the Air” section of MA Lin Reichel: 1927-2008

Lin Reichel, Commander-in-Chief of the Flying Aces Club (FAC), passed away the evening of Monday, June 16, 2008. He had been the driving force behind the FAC since 1980, when he took over leadership of the club from co-founders Dave Stott and Bob Thompson.

To read more about Lin and the impact he had on aeromodeling, see Bob Brown’s District III column on page 159.

-AMA Staff

District III column By Bob Brown

Lin Reichel, who was the commander of the International Flying Aces Club (FAC), passed away on June [16,] 2008. He was well known and respected for his leadership of those around the globe who pursued quality craftsmanship and good-natured competition of Scale Free Flight model aircraft.

Lin was the chief editor of *Flying Aces News*, a bimonthly newsletter mailed to members of the FAC and others, including members of other Free Flight organizations, newsletter editors, and members of the hobby industry. Each issue contained an editorial, announcements for contests across the country, results of contest, building tips, photos, several full-size plans, kit reviews, aircraft histories, news of the membership, and much more.

When Lin accepted the head position of the FAC in 1980, there were approximately 80 members, mostly in the northeastern part of the country. Members would send in items of interest, plans, and cover drawings. Each article was retyped and then placed in the newsletter format via the cut-and-paste method. Copies were collated, folded, stapled closed, hand addressed, and postage applied – all on Lin’s dining room table.

For the past several years, with many thanks to the PC and other advances in postal automation, much of the manual labor had been reduced. Today nearly 1,500 newsletters are mailed to members around the world.

In 1978, Lin organized the first biennial FAC Nats: a national contest flown to FAC rules near Philadelphia, Pennsylvania. It was a success with 78 contestants. Recent FAC Nats have had as many as 180 contestants, more than 200 scale models, and more than 1,000 official flights in addition to all the non-scale models and flights.

The last 10 FAC Nats have been at Geneseo, New York, home of the 1941 Historical Aircraft Group Museum, of which Lin was a member.

Several years ago, FAC members wanted to get together on the off year for a large-scale version of the nationals, so Lin created the biennial “Non-Nats.” Attendance and the number of flights grew to nearly match those of the regular Nats. The FAC also meets at the AMA site in Muncie, Indiana each September with the FAC Outdoor Championships.

Early in Lin’s command, he created the “Kanone Awards.” This is a system of keeping track of FAC-event wins to compare one’s success with other FAC members across the country.

Most recently, Lin accepted a position to represent the GAC on a national Free Flight commission with National Free Flight Society and Society of Antique Modelers representation to help keep the AMA aware that Free Flight is alive and well.

The FAC will miss Lin, but his legacy will soar each time another stick-and-tissue model heads for the clouds.

Thanks to Ross P. Mayo, the new FAC commander, for providing this information.

Free Flight Scale column

By Dennis Norman

Lin Reichel, commander-in-chief of the FAC, passed away the evening of Monday, June 16, 2008. He had been the driving force behind the FAC since 1980, when he took over leadership from co-founders Dave Stott and Bob Thompson. Under Lin’s capable leadership, the FAC grew from a small, dedicated group of FFlers to an organization that numbers more than 1,500 and is growing.

Those who knew Lin respected his gentle but firm way and his total commitment to making the FAC the joy it is. He will be missed, but his leadership has given the FAC an inspiring model by which to continue his excellent work.

Mindful of our mortality, the FAC wisely set up a GHQ Council, which is now taking charge of the organization. Upon learning of Lin’s passing, the Council saw that the latest issue of the *FAC News* was mailed out promptly to the membership. The publication comes out bimonthly and members are assured that it will continue to be on time.

It is also important to know that the 2008 FAC Nats will take place as scheduled in Geneseo, New York, July 16-19. All other scheduled FAC contests will be held as announced.

Fitting tributes to Lin and his excellent work will be presented at the FAC Nats. Our hobby was greatly enriched because of his selfless devotion and hard work.

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