



The AMA History Project Presents: Autobiography of REV. DR. ROGER WILLIAM WEEKS



Born February 3, 1941 - Feb. 19, 2015
Started modeling in 1951 AMA #309434

Written & Submitted by RW (08/2005); Edited by JS (10/2005), Reformatted by JS (02/2010); Updated by JS (02/2015)

Career:

- 1976: “Self-taught” Radio Control flier, used Kraft Apollo four-channel system
 - 1984: Organized AMA club with Roy Cedarstam
 - 1980s: Joined the Fern Prairie Modelers, the Barnstormers, the Stardusters, the Evergreen Aero Modelers (TEAM) and Kelley Point Flying Club.
 - Late 1990s-present: Judge for US Scale Masters
 - Docent, Evergreen Aviation Museum, opening flying site at Museum
 - President, Portland Area Model Aircraft Association
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The following autobiography was written and submitted by Roger Weeks in October of 2005.

The Story of Roger W. Weeks: A Builder and Flier of Model Aircraft September 2005

I saw my first aircraft as a nine-year-old farm boy in Northern Iowa, when the neighbor had his corn sprayed for insects. He hired a local crop sprayer who had a little yellow Piper Cub with a modified frame and motor. I remember watching with unabated awe and excitement all that afternoon, and also walking up close to the plane when it landed.

On my 10th birthday, my parents gave me a small package that contained a rubber band-powered model airplane: a Piper *Cub*. A tube of Amberoid glue was included, as well as a small bottle of clear dope. I built it on my bed that day, and then flew it off my parent’s dining room table, from which it flew beautifully but right into a roaring fireplace. I had to save for three months to have enough money (.25 cents) to buy another kit.

I flew rubber band for many years after that all by myself. In college, I roomed with a fraternity brother, Ted Fancher, who was one of the best Control Line Stunt builders and fliers in America. He introduced me to Control Line flying.

Due to difficult financial situations, going to school and raising a family, it wasn’t until 1976 that I got into Radio Control. I bought a Kraft Apollo 4 channel system, which I still have. I lived in a remote part of Eastern Oregon, so I began teaching myself to fly with disastrous results. Finally, I found a group of Radio Control fliers who taught me how to

fly. I have been building and flying Radio Control ever since, with an occasional Control Line plane thrown in throughout the years.

In 1984, I moved to Hood River, Oregon, on the Columbia River where a friend, Roy Cedarstam, and I organized my first AMA club. I have forgotten the name, but it still continues to this day under another name. I moved to the Portland, Oregon metro area where I have joined several clubs including the Fern Prairie Modelers, the Barnstormers, the Stardusters (no longer in existence), the Evergreen Aero Modelers (TEAM), and Kelley Point Flying Club.

I helped found two of these clubs. The Hood River area club is now known as the Full Throttle Radio Control Club, and TEAM, based in McMinnville, Oregon, flies on the grounds of the Evergreen Aviation Museum. The Museum is home to the *Spruce Goose* and 73-plus other airplanes, helicopters, and missiles.

For several years, I have been President of the Portland Area Model Aircraft Association (PAMAA), an organization made up of representatives from the model clubs in the Portland/Vancouver/Salem area. PAMAA has the express task of finding, securing and/or helping clubs find flying sites that can be used for modeling and flying activities. As the President of this organization, I have been instrumental in finding and securing at least four sites that are active club sites at this time. Also, as President of PAMAA, I worked with our state's Senate and House of Representatives to modify farmland-use regulations to allow the flying of model aircraft of all types on farm-use properties. Our governor signed this legislation during the summer of 1998. There have been at least two legal attacks on our legislation since then, but both have lost in the courts.

The program and site I am the most proud of is the one that TEAM (The Evergreen Aero Modelers) has secured and uses. TEAM (The Evergreen Aero Modelers), a club associated with a rapidly growing and internationally recognized air museum, has an incredibly beautiful model aircraft site. A local model enthusiast contacted me some four years ago and indicated that he had some money available and wanted to find a spot for a permanent flying site. I was, and still am, a docent with The Evergreen Aviation Museum. When this friend approached me, I immediately thought of the grounds around the museum. The prospective donor and I approached the "powers that be" and we now have a paved and a grass runway for Radio Control airplanes and helicopters, and a paved circle and a grass circle for Control Line flying. All of these areas have automatic sprinkling systems, electrical service, and are completely landscaped with trees, plantings, grass, fences, and parking. Plentiful room has been set aside and paved for set-up areas, and parking areas are situated near the flying sites. A twenty-five year contract is in place with the museum, with an additional twenty-five year option available. About half of the funding has been used putting this incredible flying site together, and the other half has been given to the museum for the educational and enrichment program. I am very proud of my involvement with this program of flying site development and educational outreach.

I have been, over the past 8-10 years, involved in US Scale Masters as a judge on both a local and national level. I am currently building a Curtis JN-4 "Jenny," a Proctor kit. I plan on competing in Scale Masters in Team Scale, with another person doing the flying for me. My nerves will not take the pressure of competition anymore.

Over the years, I have worked with schools and aviation educational programs, doing mostly rubber band-powered AMA Delta Dart planes as a beginning for young aviators. I work with the monthly educational program at the Evergreen Museum School. Children are brought to the museum for tours and educational classes that are closely worked together, with volunteers and docents of the museum, such as myself, providing the leadership.

I am currently working on learning about electric flight and all that this new way of powering modern model aircraft brings to the present and to the future. It is my belief that within the near future the majority of model flying will be with electric powered aircraft of all types and kinds. We live in an exciting and exhilarating time.

As I look into the future, I continue to work with PAMAA and several area AMA flying clubs, endeavoring to find and secure flying sites for model flying enthusiasts here in the Pacific Northwest. I believe that with the advent of electric flight, with it becoming cost and energy effective, this task will become easier and easier. Noise has and will be a problem with model aircraft, but with quiet electric aircraft, many areas are starting to become available for flying.

As a final reflection on my life and model aircraft, it appears that three areas have been of deepest interest to me. First, the idea of flight itself and my desire to fly; a desire sublimated to building and flying model aircraft. Secondly, the idea and the thought of learning new ideas, acquiring new knowledge, and then sharing all of that with those around me, young and old. In other words, education. Finally, actually building the models themselves is so very enjoyable, so challenging, and so much fun. Most important of the three is flight itself: how I long to fly free and loose just like the birds in the sky. Model aircraft brings me as close to that reality as anything else in life. With model aircraft in my life, I am a contented man.



2004: Ugly Bipe, built by Roger Weeks.
Specs: Laser-cut BMJR Kit, 33" wingspan, 12.05 oz, .010 Astro geared, brushless, covered in transparent Ultracoat



2002: Lazy Ace kit built by Roger Weeks.
Specs: Chuck Cunningham design, 87-inch wingspan, 11 lbs 5 oz, O.S. 91 two-stroke 13X6 prop, covered in Monokote



2004: Hog Bipe, built by Roger Weeks.
*Specs: Sig kit, powered by Saito Golden Knight
80 engine, J.R. 7803 radio, five J.R. servos,
flag design and work taken from an article on
RC Universe website, covered in Monokote*

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