



The AMA History Project Presents: Biography of DONALD (DON) R. CLARK

November 12, 1920 – July 19, 1996

Written by AMA staff (12/1988); Transcribed by JS (06/2008)



The following was published in the December 1988 issue of Model Aviation magazine. Donald was inducted into the 1987 Model Aviation Hall of Fame.

Donald R. Clark has been building model airplanes since 1934. In 1981, he achieved LSF Level V. In the years between those two mileposts, Don built and flew Hand-Launched Gliders, rubber-powered planes in all sizes, Indoor microfilm models, Free Flight powered planes, Control Line, and Radio Control aircraft. His experience has covered the spectrum of model aviation, and he is always willing to share his time and knowledge with anyone who needs help.

Don and two partners developed the *Thermic Sniffler*, well known and used by Radio Control Sailplane fliers in most parts of the country. This product was later sold to Ace RC of Higginsville, Missouri, but Don still repairs *Snifflers* sold prior to 1984. Another aspect of Don's inventive mind was his work with Dr. Walter Good on the *Royal Rudderbug* aircraft (1953.)

An AMA member since the 1930s, Don has always been very active in club affairs. The list is long: he was the first President of DCRC (1952); Secretary of East Coast Soaring Society (1971-1974); and U.S.A. Team Manager, Soaring, at Lakehurst, NJ (1974). In addition, he has chaired meetings and provided leadership in many other areas of the sport.

He was the first recipient of the Schweizer Sportsmanship Award in 1974. He has been a member of the DCRC Air Show Team since 1977. He was a founding member of the Capital Area Soaring Association and a board member of that group for three consecutive terms.

Whether through developing tasks and rules for AMA Sailplane records as he did in 1977, or by monitoring frequencies at the World Aerobatic Championships at Doylestown, Pennsylvania in 1971, or assisting in world record trials at Dahlgren, Virginia in 1969-1970, Don always stood ready to lend his experience and effort to the sport.

His long record of participation, achievement, and generous assistance to others makes him an ideal member of the Hall of Fame.

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