



The AMA History Project Presents: Biography of MARK FERRY



Written by JS (03/2009); Transcribed by KE (05/2011), Reformatted by JS (05/2011)

The following is from the In the Air section of the March 2009 issue of Model Aviation magazine.

The 3-D-Flying Pastor

“From everyone who has been given much, much will be required” sums up Pastor Mark Ferry’s approach to RC. He received a lot of help when he started in aeromodeling and wants to help others in return.

To accomplish this, Mark has a blog called “The 3-D Flying Pastor,” where he corresponds with modelers from around the world. His main focus is flying 3-D with models made from EPP foam, but he is willing to help anyone.

Mark has been the pastor of the Imperfect Baptist Church in Camillus, New York, since 1995. He had wanted to be a pilot from as far back as he can remember until his freshman year of college, when he felt the calling to go into the ministry.

“...being a pastor for me isn’t a job; it’s a calling,” he said. “Paid or unpaid, this is who I am and this is my life’s work.”

He tried RC with a Micro Stick in 2005 but had difficulty flying it. He put it away until he received an RC flight simulator for Christmas. After a winter of practice on the computer, he was able to fly the Micro Stick. Following is his account of the first flight.

“I put the Micro down on the floor, pointed it diagonally across the room to give me the longest runway possible and, just as I’d done a million times on the sim, I hit the throttle. The plane jumped into the air within a couple feet.”

“I flew the length of the room, circled back around and then did several laps left, then turned and did a couple right, then settled into figure eights, which required some pretty precise flying in that tight of space with that plane. On my fourth or fifth figure eight, it hit me I was flying!”

“I was flying a micro in a very small space on my maiden flight!”

He quickly moved up to aerobatic airplanes and then to EPP-foam models, which he has found the most enjoyable to fly. Another big thrill for Mark was teaching his two sons to fly. Christian is 10, Corban is 12, and both have enjoyed learning to fly with their father.

Mark started the 3-D Pastor Blog in January 2008 and has had a great response from people all over the world. He saw it not only as an opportunity to help others with RC, but also as another avenue to spread the word of God.

He gets e-mails asking him questions about getting started in the hobby, flying 3-D, and the best place to get models and supplies for 3-D flying. As do many of us, he also gets a lot of questions from people who pass by when he flies outdoors.

Mark even uses RC in his sermons at times.

“I love this hobby, but God says my family needs to come first,” he said. “So, if I’m preaching on family responsibilities, for instance, I might illustrate what God has to say on that by sharing how it affects me and the choices I make between my hobby time and my family time.”

His congregation has been supportive of his hobby and has even given him gift certificates to the local hobby shop for Pastor Appreciations Day.

I happened across Mark’s blog when researching EPP foam for an upcoming article and found his to be a unique way to interact with people on both a spiritual and recreational level. If you would like to correspond with Pastor Mark or want more information, you can contact him through www.3dpastor.blogspot.com.

-Jay Smith
MA Assistant Editor

This PDF is property of the Academy of Model Aeronautics. Permission must be granted by the AMA History Project for any reprint or duplication for public use.

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

