



AMA #1256  
**2010 Club Officers**  
 President: Chet Thayer  
 VP: John Gardiner  
 Treasurer: Elliott Smith  
 Secretary: Mike Hunter  
 Editor: Tim Mihalski  
 District IV AVP: John Kirchstein

**Volume 37 Issue 4**



**Official Newsletter of the  
 FIRST STATE R/C CLUB**

Established 1973 – An AMA Gold Leader Club  
<http://www.firststaterc.org>



**APRIL 2010**

**UNOFFICIAL MARCH MEETING MINUTES**

**Members In Attendance:** Frank Donnelly, Joe Berry, Ron Becker, John Gardiner, Charlie Hruska, Randy Weaver, Bob Cyr, George Shertenlieb, Mike Hunter, Tim Mihalski, Larry Nolan, Bill Mull, Chet Thayer, Mike Sobieski

**Minutes:**

**Show & Tell:**

**Ron Becker and Joe Berry** brought in their 1/4 scale Clip Wing Cub that the two of them have been working on. It appears that Ron is heavily invested in the project from a monetary stand point, but Joe seems to have done most of the fabrication to date. Ron and Joe did covered the wing together using a relatively new process that uses chemicals (solvents and glues) to attach a fabric that can then be shrunk (using a standard heading iron). The results on the wing were spectacular. Although they will need to paint the plane later, this process results in a much stronger bond and better coverage around difficult curves than a plastic shrink product can achieve. Joe and Ron plan to have the Cub flying sometime in April. Ron has a 1.5 stroke glow engine that he plans to put into the model.

**Frank Donnelly** brought in his Fomie-3D that he built scratch from plans that he got off the internet. The plane is made of 3mm Dacron sheets cut to the specs of the wing, fuselage, and horizontal stabilizer. The wings are strengthened with carbon fiber tubing. He had an E-Flite 450 engine with a 1000 ml battery. Frank also did a fantastic paint job.

**Frank Donnelly** also brought in a video from some recent flying club members did at the Bellanca hanger in February. Chet Thayer, Ron Becker, Larry Nolan, Elliot Smith and Frank participated in the flying. They flew both helicopters and airplanes. The video even included aerial shots taken from a camera Frank mounted in on one of his helicopters.

**Chet Thayer** told us about what the Spectrum people found with his receiver from his crashed Supersporter. Apparently the receiver experience a brown out (voltage falls below 3.5 volts) and the receiver took three seconds to reset (enough time to lose and airplane). Spectrum gave Chet a new receiver module and informed him that it has improved software that recovers from brown out situations almost simultaneously. Chet also plans to go to a six volt system for future models.

**MEETING MINUTES continued...**

**Call to Order:**

President Chet Thayer called the meeting to order at 7:50 P.M. He also thanked John Gardiner for conducting the meeting in January that he could not attend.

**Reading of the Minutes:**

Mike Hunter summarized the meeting minutes from January. There were no minutes from February as that meeting was cancelled because of weather.

**COMMITTEE Reports:**

**Treasury Report:** There was no treasurer report.

**Safety Report:** There was no safety report.

**Field Report:** Ron Becker reported that he will get the mower blades sharpened and oil changed for the April Field Clean Up day scheduled for April 10<sup>th</sup>.

**OLD Business**

**Solar Charging Station:** The club purchased a solar panel for building a possible Solar Charging Station at the field. Mike Sobieski will see about getting a battery. Once the components are available work will begin on constructing the charging station.

**The Annual Spring Field Clean-up Day** is scheduled for Saturday, April 10<sup>th</sup> (Rain Date the following week) at 9:00 am. Please plan to attend and help out. All flying will stop at

nine sharp and work parties will be assigned for various duties. Ron Becker will be in charge of the assigning the work.

**Committee Assignments:** Frank Donnelly confirmed that he will be in charge of the Fun Fly in May. Ron Becker will be in charge of the Picnic in September. Thank

you Frank and Ron.

**New Business**

**Friends of Bellanca Airfield:** Mike Sobieski gave a brief overview of the agreement that First State RC Club has put together with the Friends of Bellanca Airfield (FOBA). Any member of the First State RC Club that has an active membership in the club and an active AMA Membership (requirement for being an active member of First State RC Club) may join the FOBA for an annual fee of \$25. This will give the FOBA/First State RC Club member flying privileges at the Bellanca Hanger or outside at the airfield with the following restrictions:

Members must have a copy of their membership cards in both the AMA and First State RC Club on file with the



MEETING MINUTES continued...

Treasurer of FOBA. Admission to the site will be limited to First State RC Club members and members of their family. For events where others may want to attend, the FOBA must be notified in advance.

Only Electric powered models will be permitted

No smoking will be allowed at the site.

Members must sign-in and sign-out posting date and time of entry and departure.

Members will be responsible for any damage that might result from their flying activity (broken windows, lights, other fixtures, etc.)

Keys and security codes will be limited to some number of members.

Members of the First State RC Club will be required to conduct flying demonstrations to the extent possible when request by the FOBA.

There will be two FOBA Coordinators (currently Frances Ianni and Bill Morrow) and two First State RC Club coordinators (currently Mike Sobieski and Frank Donnelly) FOBA reserves the right to have priority scheduling over the hangar and site and will notify the First State RC Club coordinators when the site is not available for flying.

Anyone wanting to join the FOBA as a First State RC Club flying member should contact Mike Sobieski for an application form.

**EAA Meeting:** Frank Donnelly reported that he was asked if representatives from the First State RC Club could give a brief presentation at the EAA meeting that will be held Monday, May 3<sup>rd</sup> at the New Garden Airport near Kennet Square.

Frank expected that the presentation would be about 20 minutes. Frank asked if anyone would want to accompany him and help with the demonstration. Ron Becker volunteered. We will follow-up on details at April's meeting.

**EDIS Flying Site:** Chet Thayer asked if there was any interest in using the EDIS site near Interstate 495 as a flying site. We had been approached by them to see if we had any interest. John Gardiner visited the area and thought that it was too restrictive for our use as it was enclosed by an eight foot high chain link fence and relatively close to 495. There was also concern that the odor from the activity there was too oppressive at times.

**2010 Fuel Order:** There was minimal interest in submitting a club fuel order at this time. However, it we will address this at a later date if there is interest in a club fuel order. Anyone that needs fuel should contact Ron Becker as he does have some fuel available for purchase.

**Adjournment**

The meeting adjourned at 8:17 pm.



*Respectfully Submitted,*  
Mike Hunter  
Secretary  
First State R/C Club



MARCH'S MYSTERY AIRCRAFT

**AD Skyraider**



**Design and development**



Douglas XBT2D-1 Skyraider prototype.

The piston-engined AD Skyraider was designed during [World War II](#) to meet requirements for a [carrier-based](#), single-seat, long-range, high performance [dive/torpedo bomber](#), and was a follow-on to earlier dive bombers and torpedo bombers used by the Navy such as the Helldiver and Avenger. Designed by [Ed Heinemann](#) of the [Douglas Aircraft Company](#), prototypes were ordered on 6 July 1944 as the XBT2D-1. The XBT2D-1 made its first flight on 18 March 1945 and in April 1945, the USN began evaluation of the aircraft at the [Naval Air Test Center](#) (NATC).<sup>[2]</sup> In December 1946, after a designation change to **AD-1**, delivery of the first production aircraft to a fleet squadron was made to VA-19A.<sup>[3]</sup>

The AD-1 was built at Douglas' [El Segundo](#) plant in Southern California. In his memoir [The Lonely Sky](#), test pilot [Bill Bridgeman](#) describes the routine yet sometimes hazardous work of certifying AD-1s fresh off the assembly line (quoting a production rate of two aircraft per day) for delivery to the [U.S. Navy](#) in 1949 and 1950.<sup>[4]</sup>

The low-wing monoplane design started with a [Wright R-3350 radial engine](#), later upgraded several times. Its distinctive feature was large straight wings with seven hard points apiece. These gave the aircraft excellent low-speed maneuverability, and enabled it to carry a tremendous amount of ordnance over a considerable combat radius and loiter time for its size, comparable to much heavier subsonic or supersonic jets. The aircraft was optimized for the ground-attack mission and was armored against ground fire in key locations. This was unlike faster fighters adapted to carry bombs such as the [F4U Corsair](#) or [P-51 Mustang](#), which would be retired by U.S. forces long before the 1960s.

## [MYSTERY AIRCRAFT continued...](#)

Navy AD series were initially painted in [Midnight blue](#), but during the 1950s following the Korean War, the color scheme was changed to gray and white. Initially using the gray and white Navy pattern, by 1967 the USAF began to paint its Skyraiders in a camouflaged pattern using two shades of green, and one of tan.

Used by the USN over Korea and Vietnam, the A-1 was a primary close air support aircraft for the USAF and VNAF during the Vietnam War. The A-1 was famous for being able to take hits and keep flying. Battle damage images from the Korean and Vietnam wars speak for themselves. There was added armor plating around the cockpit area for added pilot protection. It was replaced in the early 1970s by the [A-4 Skyhawk](#) as the Navy's primary light attack plane.

The Skyraider went through seven versions, starting with the **AD-1**, then **AD-2** and **AD-3** with various minor improvements, then the **AD-4** with a more powerful **R-3350-26WA** engine. The **AD-5** was significantly widened, allowing two crew to sit side-by-side (this was not the first multiple-crew variant, the **AD-1Q** being a two-seater and the **AD-3N** a three-seater); it also came in a four-seat night-attack version, the **AD-5N**. The **AD-6** was an improved AD-4B with improved low-level bombing equipment, and the final production version **AD-7** was upgraded to a **R-3350-26WB** engine.

In addition to serving during Korea and Vietnam as an attack aircraft, the Skyraider was modified into a carrier-based airborne early warning aircraft, replacing the [Grumman TBM-3W Avenger](#). It served in this function in the USN and [Royal Navy](#), being replaced by the [E-1 Tracer](#) and [Fairey Gannet](#) respectively in those services.<sup>[51]</sup>

Skyraider production ended in 1957 with a total of 3,180 built. In 1962, the existing Skyraiders were redesignated **A-1D** through **A-1J** and later used by both the [USAF](#) and the [Navy](#) in the Vietnam War.

### **Operational history**



Workhorse of the U.S. Navy in Korea: the **Able Dog**. Though the Skyraider was produced too late to take part in World War II, it became the backbone of [United States Navy](#) aircraft carrier and [United States Marine Corps](#) (USMC) strike aircraft sorties in the [Korean War](#), with the first ADs going into action from the [USS Valley Forge](#) with [VA-55](#) on 3 July 1950.<sup>[61]</sup> Its weapons load and 10-hour flying time far surpassed the jets that were available at the time.<sup>[51]</sup> On 2 May 1951, Skyraiders made the only [aerial torpedo](#) attack of the war—successfully hitting the Communist-controlled [Hwachon Dam](#).<sup>[71]</sup> On 16 June 1953, a USMC AD-4 from [VMC-1](#) piloted by [Major](#) George H. Linnemeier and CWO

## [MYSTERY AIRCRAFT continued...](#)

Vernon S. Kramer shot down a Soviet-built [Polikarpov Po-2](#) biplane, the only documented Skyraider air victory of the war.<sup>[81]</sup> AD-3N and -4N aircraft carrying bombs and flares flew night-attack sorties, and radar-equipped ADs carried out radar-jamming missions from carriers and land bases.<sup>[51]</sup> During the Korean War (1950–1953) A-1 Skyraiders were flown only by the U.S. Navy and U.S. Marine Corps, and were normally painted in dark navy blue. A total of 101 Navy and Marine AD Skyraiders were lost in combat during the Korean War, and 27 were lost to operational causes, for a total loss of 128 Skyraiders in the Korean War.

On 26 July 1954, two Douglas Skyraiders from the aircraft carriers [USS Philippine Sea](#) and [Hornet](#) successfully shot down two [PLAAF La-7s](#) off the coast of [Hainan Island](#) while searching for survivors after the [shooting down of a Cathay Pacific Skymaster airliner 3 days previously](#), also by La-7s.<sup>[91]</sup>



A VA-176 A-1J loaded with ordnance for a mission in Vietnam, 1966.



A 602nd SOS A-1H in June 1970.



A-1E Skyraiders fly in formation over South Vietnam on way to target on 25 June 1965. The aircraft are assigned to the 34th Tactical Group, based at Bien Hoa, South Vietnam.

As American involvement in the conflict in Vietnam began, the A-1 Skyraider was still the medium attack aircraft in many [carrier air wings](#), although it was planned to be replaced by the [A-6A Intruder](#) as part of the general switch to jet aircraft. Skyraiders from the carriers [USS Constellation](#)

## [MYSTERY AIRCRAFT continued...](#)

and [Ticonderoga](#) participated in the first US Navy strikes against [North Vietnam](#) on August 5, 1964 as part of [Operation Pierce Arrow](#) in response to the [Gulf of Tonkin Incident](#), striking against fuel depots at [Vinh](#), with one Skyraider from [Ticonderoga](#) damaged by [anti-aircraft fire](#), and a second from [Constellation](#) shot down, killing its pilot.<sup>[10][11]</sup> During the war, U.S. Navy Skyriders shot down two Soviet-built [Mikoyan-Gurevich MiG-17](#) jet fighters: one on 20 June 1965, a victory shared by [Lieutenant](#) Clinton B. Johnson and [Lieutenant, junior grade](#) Charles W. Hartman III of [VA-25](#);<sup>[12]</sup> and one on 9 October 1966 by LTJG William T. Patton of [VA-176](#).<sup>[8]</sup> While on his very first mission, Navy pilot [Lieutenant \(j.g.\) Dieter Dengler](#) took damage to his A-1H over Vietnam on 1 February 1966, and crash-landed in [Laos](#).<sup>[13]</sup>

As they were released from Navy service, Skyriders were introduced into the [South Vietnamese Air Force](#) (VNAF). They were also used by the USAF to perform one of the Skyraider's most famous roles: the "Sandy" helicopter escort on combat rescues.<sup>[14]</sup> [USAF Major Bernard F. Fisher](#) piloted an A-1E on the 10 March 1966 mission for which he was awarded the [Medal of Honor](#) for rescuing Major "Jump" Myers at [A Shau Special Forces](#) Camp.<sup>[15]</sup> [USAF Colonel William A. Jones, III](#) piloted an A-1H on the September 1, 1968 mission for which he was awarded the Medal of Honor. In that mission, despite damage to his aircraft and suffering serious burns, he returned to his base and reported the position of a downed US airman.<sup>[15]</sup>



VA-115 A-1H loaded with ordnance for a mission in Vietnam. After November 1972, all A-1s in U.S. service in [Southeast Asia](#) were transferred to the South Vietnamese Air Force (VNAF) and their former roles were taken over by the subsonic [A-7 Corsair II](#).<sup>[16]</sup> The Skyraider in Vietnam pioneered the concept of tough, survivable aircraft with long loiter times and large ordnance loads. The USAF lost 201 Skyriders to all causes in Southeast Asia, while the Navy lost 65 to all causes. Of the 266 lost A-1s, five were shot down by surface-to-air missiles (SAMs), and three were shot down in air to air combat; two by North Vietnamese MiG-17s. The first A-1 was shot down on 29 April 1966, and the second A-1 was lost on 19 April 1967; both were from the 602 Air Commando Squadron (ACS). The third A-1 Skyraider was from Squadron VA-35 and was lost to a Red Chinese MiG-19 (J-6) on 14 February 1968. [Lieutenant \(j.g.\) Joseph P. Dunn](#), USN, had flown too close to the Communist Chinese held island of Hainan, and had been intercepted. [Lieutenant Dunn's](#) A-1 Skyraider was the last U.S. Navy A-1 lost in the war, and he did not survive. Shortly thereafter, A-1 Skyraider naval squadrons transitioned to the [A-6 Intruder](#), [A-7 Corsair II](#) or [A-4 Skyhawk](#).

## [MYSTERY AIRCRAFT continued...](#)

In contrast to the Korean War, fought a decade earlier, the US Air Force, in Vietnam, utilized the naval A-1 Skyraider for the first time. As the Vietnam war progressed, USAF A-1s were painted in [camouflage](#), while USN A-1 Skyriders were gray/white in color; again, in contrast to the Korean War, when A-1s were painted dark blue.

In 1965, to highlight the dropping of the six millionth pound of ordnance; [Commander](#) Clarence J. Stoddard, flying an A-1H, dropped a special, one-time only, object in addition to his other munitions – a toilet.<sup>[17]</sup>



A-1 Skyraider of the VNAF 520th Fighter Squadron being loaded with napalm at Danang AB in 1967.

The A-1 Skyraider was the close air support workhorse of the [South Vietnamese Air Force](#) (VNAF) for much of the Vietnam War. The US Navy began to transfer some of its Skyriders to the VNAF in September 1960, replacing the VNAF's older [Grumman F8F Bearcats](#). By 1962 the VNAF had 22 of the aircraft in its inventory<sup>[18]</sup>, and by 1968, an additional 131 aircraft had been received. Initially Navy aviators and crews were responsible for training their South Vietnamese counterparts on the aircraft, but over time, responsibility was gradually transferred to the USAF.

The initial trainees were selected from among VNAF Bearcat pilots who had accumulated 800 to 1200 hours flying time. They were trained at Corpus Christi, Texas., and then sent to LeMoore, California for further training. Navy pilots and crews in Vietnam checked out the Skyriders that were being transferred to the VNAF, and conducted courses for VNAF ground crews.<sup>[19]</sup>

Over the course of the war, the VNAF acquired a total of 308 Skyriders, and was operating six A-1 squadrons by the end of 1965. These were reduced during the period of Vietnamization from 1968 to 1972, as the U.S. began to supply the South Vietnamese with more modern close air support aircraft, such as the A-37 and F-5, and at the beginning of 1968, only three of its squadrons were flying A-1s.<sup>[20]</sup>

As the U.S. ended its direct involvement in the war, it transferred the remainder of its Skyriders to the South Vietnamese, and by 1973, all remaining Skyriders in U.S. inventories had been turned over to the VNAF.<sup>[21]</sup> Unlike their American counterparts, whose combat tours were generally limited to 12 months, individual South Vietnamese Skyraider pilots ran up many thousands of combat hours in the A-1, and many senior VNAF pilots were extremely skilled in the operation of the aircraft.<sup>[22]</sup>





## APRIL'S MYSTERY AIRCRAFT

A mystery aircraft for you to ponder... you can read all about this mystery ship in the May issue of *Contact*...

## IMPORTANT REMINDERS...

### APRIL CLUB MEETING

Monday 7:30 P.M. 04/19/10@ Stahl American Legion Post

### MAY CLUB MEETING

Monday 7:30 P.M. 05/17/10@ Stahl American Legion Post

Saturday 10:00 A.M. 05/22/10 Fuel/Electric Fun Fly. Contact Frank Donnelly

Saturday 10:00 A.M. 05/29/10 Fuel/Electric Fun Fly. (Raindate)

### JUNE CLUB MEETING

Monday 07:30 P.M. 06/21/10 Club Meeting @ Stahl American Legion Post



Timothy I. Mihalski, Editor  
First State R/C AMA # 1256  
13 Jacqueline Drive  
Hockessin, DE 19707-1008

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