



WE HAVE A NEW TREASURER!

Ralph Vawter

I would like to thank the Board for considering me to follow Steve Rockwood as the Treasurer of Skyline Soaring.



After hearing several of his presentations at the club annual meeting, I realize that I have some very big shoes to fill.

My first glider lesson was at the Warrenton Air Park in 1987 under the guidance of Lin Buell. I then found a group closer to my home in Richmond at Wakefield, VA, whom I stayed with until 1995. Searching for other gliding opportunities, I joined

Skyline when we were based at Valor Field in New Market. I went inactive for quite a long time returning to Skyline in the spring of 2016. I enjoy the camaraderie as well as the soaring opportunities that membership in Skyline offers.

My background includes degrees in Finance and Information Systems from VCU. I worked for several companies in the IT field for thirty years, developing and maintaining financial systems.

My last employer was with Circuit City Stores. I like to say that Circuit City just happened to go out of business on the first day of my retirement. I now live in Walkerton, which is in King William County about forty miles northeast of Richmond. Though not conveniently located to Front Royal, my wife - Lisa - and I have a house situated on a river where we enjoy water sports during the summer months. I look forward to being the Treasurer of Skyline

Soaring. The challenge is tremendous and I hope to serve the club well.

Editor's Note: Ralph and Steve are working to make the transition to a new Treasurer smooth over the next several weeks, so until notified by them of any changes, file transfers and mail remain the same.

CURMUDGEON'S CORNER

Musings About Members

The "Friends of Front Royal" recently took on a project to clean up the F-86 that marks the entrance to the airport – it now looks a LOT better than before! And it brought back memories of a story



told by one of Skyline's Founding Members and the recipient of the Gogos Memorial award for sustained

outstanding contributions to the club in 2002, the late Jim McCulley.

Jim was a very active towpilot and overall aviation "renaissance man" – building and flying airplanes, flying gliders, towing gliders, you name it. And he really knew his aerodynamics of everything he flew!

He was also an F-86 pilot in the Korean war. On one occasion, he and a wingman flew a low-altitude SAR mission out to sea looking for a downed airman. They found him and radioed the coordinates but were at that time perilously close to their point of no return. The wingman turned for home with a power setting for max range at low altitude, while Jim opted for a best climb to ca. 15,000' before setting out for home with a minimum fuel flow and slow descent. The wingman never made it – punched out and had to be retrieved himself. Jim, on the other hand, also ran out of fuel, but flew his low-performance motorglider the rest of the way home for a dead-stick landing!

As Fred Mueller used to say, "It's good to know stuff"! And Jim certainly understood the finer points of the F-86's flying characteristics!



GIFT SUGGESTIONS

Looking for a gift for that special someone, family, significant other, friends and neighbors? SSC offers some good options. We have Club tee-shirts in various sizes to fit all. It's also a good way to show SSC spirit by proudly wearing such spiffy apparel. There are small, medium, large and extra large. There are both high tech, quick dry types and



regular cotton. Most are long sleeve but there are some short sleeve. They are in plastic containers by size in the shelf behind the right elevator of the Husky. It's an honor system. Grab the ones you want, let the DO know and either pay him or charge your account. The quick dry ones are a mere \$16 and the cotton are but \$15. In addition there are also some black tote bags with the SSC log available at \$16 each.

>Jim Perlmutter



CONGRATULATIONS TO SSA'S NEW CHAIRMAN OF THE BOARD!!

Yep, Skyline's own Jim Garrison – our SSA Regional Director – has been elevated to chair the SSA Board. He'll be bringing his expertise to the entire nation now, as well as to Region IV. Well done!



Here's Jim in a Duo-Discus at the 2017 Seniors at Seminole gliderport in Florida.



BLOWING IN THE WIND Phil Jordan

With the 1902 glider the Wrights had the answer—all they needed was a motor.

At the end of 2014 I retired as an art director for Stamp Development, USPS after 24 years and 300 postage stamps. It was the semi-final act in a 55 year graphic design career. I will always be grateful for the experience and particularly the gifted people I was privileged to work with.

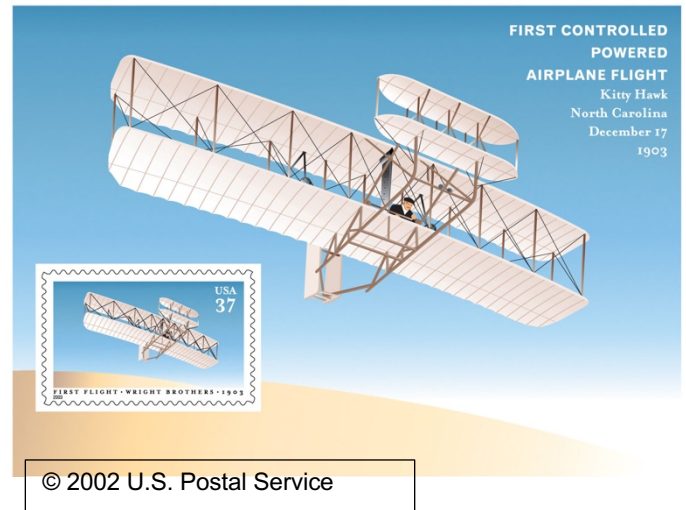
I was delighted to be assigned the “100th Anniversary of the First Powered Flight” commemorative postage stamp. I started the project in the summer of 2000 by selecting two artists that I felt would produce excellent design from two opposite directions and styles—Bruce Morser and McRay Magleby.

Bruce had illustrated a wonderful poster for Air & Space magazine on the Wright's 1902 glider which had solved 3 axis control and from which the 1903

Flyer was built. Bruce is a sailboat enthusiast with a keen interest in flying.

I knew McRay by his tremendous stature in the design community, his Utah Commemorative stamp design, and the wonderful posters, many aviation themed, he had produced. (Stamps are just miniature posters.) McRay is a recreational pilot with great interest in all things that fly.

Each artist responded with a series of rough concepts which I presented to my fellow art directors and the Citizens Stamp Advisory Committee's Design Subcommittee. (This is always an exercise in humility building.) After much spirited discussion, we selected one of McRay's concepts to take forward to stamp completion. We also decided to take one of Bruce's concepts to final for possible use in collateral material.



The format of this sheet allows the buyer to tear off the bottom nine stamps for mail use and collect the top part, with its lone stamp for posterity—a plus for stamp collectors.

One of the most valuable members of the stamp team is PhotoAssist, an outside contractor also, who provides research and validation as well as many other absolutely essential services to all the Stamp Development team. PhotoAssist selected a group of experts to review the art and recommend changes, if any were called for. A few minor omitted details of the flyer, difficult to confirm in the reference photos, were found by Ken Hyde (who built the replica used for the 100th anniversary ceremony) and corrected. I then took the art to the NASM and stood under the Flyer for a final check.

In the process of verifying details of the art, several comments were made relative to weather on that date in 1903. A common thread was “of course it wasn’t clear that day, but was cloudy, blustery and cold”. In their journal the brothers never recorded the cloud cover. I had studied those 4 photos taken on that day often over 45 years and was about 95% certain it was a clear day. Both illustrators concurred. (Blustery it surely was as the Weather Bureau reported winds averaged 27MPH at flight time!)

If one studies the first and most famous of the 4 photographs taken that day, a very distinct, hard-edge shadow appears on the work bench, a clue that sunlight was strong. If the photo is magnified several times one can see Wilbur, the Flyer wing and the rail are casting shadows. The photo of flight number 3 is unquestionably in full sun. A close study of the other photos taken that day show distinct shadows that can only occur in direct sunlight.



I suspect the plates took some abuse over time and it takes an expert to read these old black and white scenes and accurately interpret color values in the sky and land. Confusion in interpreting the black and

white color values led subsequent artists and authors to assume that it was cloudy.

Deciding to settle it once and for all, I asked PhotoAssist to try to find the official US Government weather report from Kitty Hawk Life Saving Station for December 17, 1903. I also asked them to order exhibition quality prints from the Library of Congress of all 4 photographs taken that day. These extremely sharp photographs made from the original glass plates convinced me even more that Bruce, McRay and I were right when we all three were convinced it was clear on the first flight.

I was sitting in a meeting in Kansas City when I was handed a set of faxes with a cover page saying, “This will make Phil’s day!” It was the official weather report from J.J. Doshier who had played a pivotal role in the Wright’s decision to go to the Outer Banks in 1900. For Dec. 17, 1903 under the heading “Clouds” and sub-headings “Amt.”, “Kind”, “Direction” Doshier entered “0”, “0”, “0”. In the column heading “State of the Weather”, he entered “Clear”.

The Committee wasn’t actually concerned about what the weather was. They were happy with the art which we all agreed expressed the triumph of the event with great spirit. On the other hand, I was concerned with the irate letters I knew would come and being able to answer them with absolute confidence.

There probably isn’t another 12 seconds in the history of the 20th century with more significance— I think McRay’s art captures this unparalleled moment with grace and simplicity.



Skyline Soaring Club, Inc.

is a private, 501(c7) non-profit organization, dedicated to the enjoyment and promotion of the sport of soaring. SSC is based at the Front Royal-Warren County, Va. Airport and is an affiliate club of the Soaring Society of America.

For information about the club go to www.skylinesoaring.org

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