



GRASSFIELD RC CLUB, INC. • BROOKLYN PARK, MN • www.grassfieldrc.org • AMA CHARTER #1405

FROM THE PRESIDENT

by Ron Gage

Well my first meeting as president feels the same as before, except we are getting older.

There are many people to thank for helping to get the meeting going last month. First off, Dan Peterson did an excellent job explaining the setup procedure of one of his planes. It is always helpful when we can all learn from others. Thanks, Dan.

Richard Steine brought in his warbird model of the Val and told us all about his first flight episode. I found this very interesting. Thanks, Richard.

I also want to thank Al Schwartz for all the time he spent getting our records in shape and letting us all know where we stand financially. At the moment, we are in pretty good shape. The board will discuss ways to maintain and improve our financial stability.

Phil Zuidema recently lost his youngest brother at a very young age. We all at the Grassfield would like to let Phil and his family know how sorry we all are for his loss.

On the brighter side, Phil has arranged to have Mr. Charles Eide give us a presentation on Radio Control Aerial Photography at the December meeting. So be prepared to be amazed. (See page 3 for more information.) Our December meeting is also our big potluck, so bring some goodies to share and any show-and-tell that you have.

Hoping you all had a great Thanksgiving Day,

Ron

PLUM PUDDING

A Christmas Story by Phil Zuidema

“I’m sorry sir! I can’t help it”, Simon sputtered between heaves of vomit. Wiping his face, he tried to catch his breath. “The castor oil, I must be allergic to it. Every time it flies up on my face I get sick instantly.”

“Don’t you want to go out and bomb those bastards? Shoot them down like they shot down your buddy, Charles! You have to let your anger overcome your sickness! Get back in that SE 2 and try another landing.” Simon’s flight instructor, Maynard, barked his words, riding on a stream of deep anger. Anger fueled by the loss of his brother, Winston, in the very first days of this, what would later be known as the World War. Then later on, the First World War.

“Sir, you know how much I like to fly. This SE 2 is all I could ever hope for. Yes, I want to bomb the Germans like nothing else. I want to save our England from those lousy Huns. But, I don’t think I can do it from a cockpit.”

“You know I’m going to have to wash you out, don’t you? You’ll probably end up going to the front, and who knows what will become of you?” Maynard sputtered with a tremble in his voice. *(continued on page 2)*

Our 4th Annual Christmas Potluck Buffet

at the Grassfield RC Club Meeting
Friday, December 13, 2013 (Doors open at 6:00 pm)

Osseo Community Center
415 Central Avenue in Osseo, Mn

Special Presentation on Drones
by Charles Eide, expert on unmanned aerial vehicles
You don't want to miss this!

Bring some food to share and get 2 free raffle tickets!

*Bring your plane for Show-and-Tell ~
or you can bring a video or slide show.
(Our projector works with a flash drive,
a DVD or a VHS tape.)*

*You don't have to
bring anything
except yourself!
JUST COME!*

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PLUM PUDDING — A Christmas Story by Phil Zuidema

(continued from page 1)

Simon knew going to the front was a near-death sentence. Hundreds of his fellow countrymen died every day. Sometimes for a few feet of land, other times retreating to last week's trench. Trenches filled with blood, water, filth, mud and excrement. The thought turned his stomach, and he heaved again.

"Sir, I wish that I wasn't such a weakling. I can't serve my country flying, but I can serve it carrying a rifle." Simon cast his eyes downward.

Maynard shook his head. Disappointment washed over his face, followed by pity. He knew this would be the last time he'd ever see Simon, such a promising young pilot. He could out-fly almost every student he'd ever taught, but his sickness would be a certain death.

"All right. I'll put in the orders to transfer you to the front. If you change your mind, let me know immediately."

Both of them knew Simon wouldn't change his mind. Both of them knew what that meant.



Simon gripped the Enfield rifle tightly. Then, slowly, he relaxed his grip and began squeezing the trigger. WaHoom! Another in the black at three-hundred yards.

"Nice job, sport." Ethan his sergeant exclaimed. Touch off another magazine and then bring the target to me.

Simon walked into the field hut with his target. Only two of twelve rounds were not in the black center of the target.

Ethan proudly exclaimed, "I think you're ready to go punch the lights out of those crazy Germans. Do it for us, do it for your country."

Simon smiled, happy with his marksmanship and confident he could go make a difference for his country.

He stepped aboard the ship. Finding a place upon the deck, he looked out. Another recruit approached him.

"If I could have found a way to make a graceful exit from this mess, I would have taken that route out."

Simon replied, "I wanted to be a pilot of an SE 2, but I couldn't stomach the bloody castor oil. I had no choice. But I'm looking to make the best of this."

"If we come home alive and in one piece, we'll be the exception. I figure this will be the end of me. And, that's all right by me; one man dies, so another can stay home and take his girlfriend." contemplated his shipmate.



Simon found himself in a nasty trench in Belgium. He struggled to find a place to rest himself that wasn't mud.

"Simon, you're here to do a job for your country. May God be by my side and bring me home," he encouraged himself.

A shot rang out over his head. Then another and another.

Soon, individual shots were no longer heard, but a continuous evil plume roaring feet above his head.

"All right, ready for a charge!" The sergeant bellowed orders like a king on a throne. "Last person over the top, I shoot myself. Charge!"

Over the top of this mud pit piled his fellow recruits. Simon flew into the face of nothingness, moving forward while trying to fire his Enfield at the same time. His trench mate fell to the right, mortally wounded. Simon had no idea why he was running in to the face of this withering death. One after another in to the mud and wire.

"Why am I not hit?" he wondered. "What makes me special?"

Immediately he fell to the ground as a shell landed before him, knocking him silly. After a few moments, he could hear again. His face full of mud, he wiped his face so he could breathe again, looked around and saw no one moving. Slowly Simon peeled himself from the mud and crawled backward to the trench. He had only come thirty yards. Half his trench mates were no longer moving; the rest were screaming in agony.

"Why am I doing this? What is this for?" Simon was shaken to his wet, muddy and cold boots.



Today was Christmas Eve. He had never been outside England at Christmas before. He had always been with family. The feeling he felt now, was pure loneliness. It was the same feeling he had when his parents dropped him at camp in the summer, where he knew no one. Not connected. Alone. That's how he felt now.

Simon looked for a happier place for his thoughts to go. The joys he had known as a boy on Christmas Eve moistened his eyes. Mum's plum pudding, one of his favorites, filled the whole house with a cloak of happiness. It was as English a recipe as could be found at Christmas, even though Mum had spent her first fifteen years south of Munich, in Bavaria.

As they trimmed the tree, they would sing carols together, knowing them by heart. His sister would sing a solo as Simon, his mother and father hummed the harmony. Louise had a wonderful gift in her voice. Simon could hear it now, singing "Silent Night".



It wasn't his sister singing now. He distinctly heard "Silent Night", but it was a chorus of deeper voices — and, it wasn't in English.

"What could it be?" He carefully peered over the trench and saw the German line standing up, with empty hands held high, singing to us!

Simon knew some German. "All is calm, all is bright. 'Round yon virgin mother and child. Holy infant so tender and mild". *(conclusion on page 6)*

RADIO CONTROL AERIAL PHOTOGRAPHY

UAV Presentation by Charles Eide to be at Grassfield's December 13th meeting



Charles Eide, unmanned aerial systems expert, is coming to Grassfield RC's meeting on December 13th. Recently published in the December, 2013, issue of Model Aviation (on page 35 of the issue), he will give a presentation on drones, specifically how to capture incredible aerial footage and photos, using cameras mounted on radio control helicopters and multi-rotor systems.

Eide, who grew up flying RC models, knew there was no turning back the day he got his first AMA card in the mail. Now the owner of a company called EideCom Media, he creates some amazing commercial work.

Be sure to attend the December 13th meeting to see this special presentation (and enjoy the ever-popular Christmas Potluck Buffet too).

P.J.'S POOR HABITS

by Paul Johnson, Safety Officer

Hello everyone, I'm Paul Johnson, and recently I was asked to join the Grassfield Board as the club Safety Officer. For those who don't know me, I'm probably most recognized as "the helicopter guy". It was a true honor for me to be accepted into the board, but I was also a little apprehensive at first as I never thought of myself as a role model for safe flying. To be honest, I will admit that I've done my share of "not-so-smart" things while at the field. I'm not perfect, and I won't pretend to be. But that does not mean I can't change my ways.

All members should be aware of the Grassfield club rules, and for the most part, I believe we all do a fairly good job of following them. What I am guilty of (and I know I'm not alone) is picking up several poor habits. Most often, these poor habits do not break any rules. They usually don't scream out as being unsafe. Poor habits come to exist when many people practice it. When many people do something that could potentially be unsafe, then it often turns into a poor habit that will be replicated over and over until something bad happens. Each issue of *The Clippings*, I would like to highlight a poor habit that I'm personally guilty of committing and have witnessed many times. My hope is we can all start to change our ways to keep our club safe.

For my first poor habit, I'd like to discuss electric models and plugging in battery packs behind the flight line (orange fence, in case you forgot). Something that I will admit that I've done in the past is that I've plugged in battery packs of

my electric models while being far behind the flight line. I've also seen people plug batteries into models while the prop rests in their arms.

Equally alarming is someone who carries a plugged-in model with the prop touching themselves to and from the flight line. It may seem safe enough as the motor remains off. Very few people engage the throttle on their electric motors until placed on the flight line. However, just because the "spiny thing" doesn't turn doesn't make it safe. A plugged-in electric model should demand every bit of respect as a running nitro or gas model. All it takes is a simple bump of the transmitter or some other unforeseen item, and that harmless electric motor can instantly turn into a colossal nightmare!

Trusting in technology that the engine will not start up till we want it to is a poor and scary habit. I can tell you firsthand what happens when you accidentally reverse the throttle direction in your radio with a plugged-in model. Luckily no one was hurt that day, but the stains never came out of those shorts!

Please, try to make it a habit of not plugging in your electric-powered model until you are at the flight line. After landing, reach down and unplug your battery before carrying your model back to the pit area. This is not a rule, but a reminder. Last thing you want to do is be that guy that had to cut his flying day short because you let your electric-powered model get the best of you.

GRASSFIELD'S NOVEMBER 8TH MEETING

The November 8th meeting was held at the Osseo Community Center, with our new president, Ron Gage presiding. Al Schwartz gave a treasurer's report.

Dan Peterson's Talk about Aerobatic Plane Setup

Dan Peterson talked about setting up an aerobatic plane and showed how he set up his Extra 300. Dan, who is an excellent flyer, provided lots of tips that he has learned through his years of experience.

Dan's Extra 300 now has a DLE 35R engine. He originally had a Mentor engine in the plane, but is now using that engine as a paperweight! He said that the longer the servo arm, the less torque there will be. If you are using long-arm servos, you should be sure to purchase servos that are powerful.

Dan has a HiTech receiver with a touch screen for easy setup, and he used Seacraft connectors for the rudder, which are easy to hook up.

For his fuel tanks, he prefers using Fiji water bottles, because they are stronger than normal fuel tanks and, since they do not have any seams, they take a lot of impact. He also said that Fortitude premade fuel tanks are good.

He used a Miracle Dual switch, which is a double-throw, double-pull switch. He stressed that you make sure to isolate the wires coming off the switch to avoid wire vibration.

Dan said that, while a lot of people set up their aerobatics with three rates, he just sets his up with two. He sets his planes up at 50 percent exponential on high rates and 20 percent expo on low rates, but setting up the exponential is



a matter of personal preference. When flying, Dan doesn't fly at full throttle on high rates.

Speaking from the experience of a "garage door man", (Dan has his own garage door company,) he said that cables will stretch over time and will need to be tightened.

Dan said he can't stress it enough that planes need to be kept light. As for all planes, the lighter you can build the plane, the better. If the plane is too heavy, it will stall, especially if flying 3-D. He also said that redundancy is a big deal with bigger planes.

While some will use two smaller servos instead of one large servo, there is really no cost savings in doing that (unless, of course, you already own the smaller servos and want to make use of them).

In Dan's hanger, he also has a 33-percent Sukhoi Krill composite, a beautiful (and spendy) plane.

Richard Steine's Val

Richard Steine brought his Val model, which he purchased from Sky Hobby. The plane has a Zenoah G-26 gas engine with an electronic ignition.

He said the plane runs great, although he flew it tail-heavy on its maiden flight and had a bad landing. As a result, he had some work to do on the plane, repairing one of the wheel pants and fixing a hole in the underside of one of the wings. To camouflage the hole, he added plates to give the look of access panels, adding a panel to both of the wings for an authentic look.

To rebalance the plane, Richard put two pounds of lead in the nose. He has yet to try flying it again, and hopes it's not nose-heavy now.

Richard said the plane has a very durable paint job. He has permanently glued the bomb in place. As Randy Etken pointed out, the pilot bears a striking resemblance to Richard.



OUR NEW PROJECTOR USED FOR PRESENTATIONS

A new projector was purchased by Grassfield RC, which adds a new opportunity for our meeting agendas. The projector can be used to view media from videos on DVDs or flash drives, or even old VHS tapes. And slide shows work equally well. So feel free to bring your favorite media to the meetings. If you have any questions, call Del Berryman at 612-799-6247.

Trying out the new projector, Al Schwartz brought some of his archived VHS tapes. Del hooked up our combination VCR/DVD player, and we played the videos which brought back memories for many members.

Then Del showed slides of the beautiful planes that he and Rita saw at the Crawford Auto Aviation Museum of the Western Reserve Historical Society in downtown Cleveland. If you get to Cleveland, be sure to stop by the museum (photos shown here), which also features many antique cars; it is well worth the visit.



The Western Reserve Museum featured three beautiful aircraft, the P-51, the Howard Pete, and the Wedell-Williams.



Del Berryman built a model of the Wedell-Williams, which he brought to one of Grassfield's meetings. Del hasn't flown it yet and says he's waiting until Jerry Elert brings his Wedell-Williams "Red Lion" to the field.



Richard Steine has a beautiful model of the P-51 Mustang fighter plane. Also shown is the P-51 at the museum.



Dave Anderson flew his model of the Howard Pete at this year's Big Bird Fly-in. Dave's plane is modeled after the full-size racing aircraft on display at the museum.

PLUM PUDDING

(continued from page 2)

A lump formed in his throat. He could almost smell Mum's plum pudding.

Simon was dumbstruck. His fellow soldiers peered over the edge of the trench. James, a new friend, raised himself up over the trench. He set his rifle down and crawled over the top of the trench. Others followed.

The two enemies, now singing together approached each other cautiously, but with friendliness. This was unreal. Simon's commanding officer, Dwight, yelled, "Get yourself back here. They'll shoot you, you ninnies!"

No one heard him. All they heard were the voices that filled each of their past Christmases, now coming from the enemy troops. There was precious little alcohol in the trenches, but all spirits, found their way to the battlefield.

"What a crazy scene", Simon thought as he walked carefully over dead soldiers that were his trench mates just yesterday. Some of the men began picking up their friends' bodies and carried them back for a final grave. As he approached his first German, he shouted, "Grusse Gott!" meaning "Grace to God". It was a common greeting used mostly in Bavaria, an idyllic place, with mountains, forests and streams. Simon had heard his mum say this to her friends visiting from the old country. Then they would hug.

Simon shouted back, "Grusse Gott." Herman offered Simon a very tiny Christmas tree he had made from tatters of things and a few small branches he found shot off a tree. Simon opened his hands, palms up, with nothing to counter with. Immediately Herman made him feel O.K. about not having anything.



They started chattering in German as if they were neighbors, meeting for the first time while caroling. They talked of Christmases past. They found they shared some of the same traditions, some brought home by his mother.

"I love plum pudding at Christmas", Simon shared. Herman agreed. It was a special holiday treat both their mothers made.

Then the collective mass of soldiers began singing "Oh Christmas Tree." The battlefield was transformed from a place of death, to a celebration of the birth of Christ Jesus. Differences set aside, they all felt the Holy Spirit moving among them.

The little alcohol that existed disappeared. It was a time of sharing and realizing that they were more the same than different. After a few hours, Simon, Herman and all the rest made their way back to their trenches, waving at each other the whole time.

The next day, Christmas, would be silent. Simon knew that the day after next, he would be trying to kill Herman again.

This story is based on the Christmas of 1914, where at many places along the Belgium front, German and English troops shared an informal truce, along with singing Christmas carols. More can be found here:

<http://www.history.com/topics/christmas-truce-of-1914>

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