



The THUMB PRINT
Thermal Thumbers Of Metro Atlanta

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Nov.-Dec., 2015

HEADS UP

Welcome to the last issue of the year. Merry Christmas and Happy New Years! At this time of the year, this writer is always tempted to look back and appraise how it all went. Frankly, our club has much for which to be thankful. No one shuffled off this mortal coil, and everybody's still on the right side of the sod, one year older and hopefully only a bit more worn. We had a lot of fun locally at the sod farm and St. Luke's, and we ventured far and wide and made our mark at the indoor and outdoor Nats, and elsewhere. Quite a few of us got our mugs in some magazines and penned an article or two.

Not that we should rest on our laurels, though. Our club's continuing success as a functioning enterprise depends on two things. First, we benefit greatly from the large group of volunteers who selflessly give their time and effort on our behalf. Second, we benefit from the large numbers of members who participate in our contests and other activities. These two vital ingredients need to be present again in 2016. In the immediate future, we've the annual banquet on January 30 at our usual venue, the Petit Auberge on North. Druid Hills Road. The flyer will be emailed by Dohrman shortly after the New Year. Also, there's the Peach State Indoor Champs on March 12, and that flyer follows. Don't forget about the upcoming indoor meets at St. Luke's, too. No excuses, make it happen!

Time for me to get out of the way. Ciao, y'all!

PREEMPTIVE MEMBERSHIP NAG, NAY, SUGGESTION

We'll keep this nag brief because no one's incurred any righteous wrath yet. It's time to renew your club memberships, my fellow Thumbs. The appropriate form follows. No need to look around for suspects, either. After New Years, everybody is guilty. So, send Karl "Karats" Hube that check to the amount and address indicated. The fangs and barbs will come out in the next issue. If the past is any indication, there'll be plenty of guilt to go around then. You will know who you are.

THINGS TO DO, PLACES TO BE AND PEOPLE TO SEE

Dohrman's been slaving over a hot calendar the last few weeks and offers the following dates for next year's modeling adventures. Behold, our usual full slate of indoor and outdoor contests with the Nationals inserted into the mix for planning purposes. If you're very happily married or just the opposite, you can do both the USIC and USOC, Bowling Green being more or less on the way to Muncie from our points south. (For the conveniently living alone, it shouldn't matter, financial considerations asides.)

You can't say we don't provide plenty of creative opportunities to dissuade your own baddself from general idleness, unpleasant honey-dos, pointless drinking, bad cable TV and potentially destructive *ennui*. Build a model airplane and show up somewhere, sometime!

Jan. 9: Indoor. St Luke's. CD-Bill Gowen
Jan. 30: TTOMA Banquet, Le Petite Auberge. N. Druid Hills Rd.
Feb. 13: Indoor. St Luke's. CD-Nick Ray
March 12: Indoor. St Luke's. Peach State Indoor Champs. CD-David Mills
March 19-20: West Baden Indoor Contest
April 9: Indoor. St Luke's. CD-Bill Gowen
April 24: Outdoor. N GA Sod Farm. April Fools Annual. CD-Karl Hube
May 22: Outdoor. N GA Sod Farm. CD-Dohrman Crawford
May 28: Indoor. St Luke's. CD-Nick Ray
June 18: Indoor. St Luke's. CD-Josh Finn
June 25: Outdoor. N GA Sod Farm. FAC/June Bug Jamboree. CD-Jim Altenbern
June 26: Outdoor. N GA Sod Farm. FAC/June Bug Jamboree. CD-David Barfield
July 9: Indoor. St Luke's. CD-Bill Gowen
July 17: Outdoor. N GA Sod Farm. Peach State Champs. CD-Whit Russell
July 20-23: USIC @ Bowling Green, KY
July 25-29: USOC @ Muncie, IN
Aug. 13: Indoor. St Luke's. CD-Nick Ray
Aug. 21: Outdoor. N GA Sod Farm. Pop Purdy's Contest. CD-Graham Selick
Sept. 10: Indoor. St Luke's. CD-Josh Finn
Sept. 25: Outdoor. N GA Sod Farm. Summer's Swan Song. CD-Gary Morton
Oct. 2: Outdoor. N GA Sod Farm. Last Fling til Spring. CD-David Mills. (Dove season thing)
Oct. 15. Indoor. St Luke's. CD-Bill Gowen
Nov. 6: Outdoor. N GA Sod Farm. Turkey Shoot. CD-Gary Baughman
Nov. 19: Indoor. St Luke's. CD-Nick Ray
Dec. 10: Indoor. St Luke's. CD-Josh Finn
Jan. 14: Indoor. St Luke's. CD-Bill Gowen

THUMBS IN PRINT

The Thumbs received a bit of exposure in the November issue of *Model Aviation*, photographically at least. Graham Selick and his grandson Hayden Ashworth serve as cover boys, no less. It's a great shot, and if you ever wondered what the eye-of-the-tiger looks like on a twelve year old, take a good look at Hayden. Elsewhere, on the Table of Contents page there's a great shot of the flip side of Frank Perkins's midsection with his Sidewinder CLG. (Thankfully, Frank neglected to tuck in his shirttail; otherwise, we would've seen some perky butt cheek. Ooh, puh-leez!)

THUMBS IN PRINT II

The September issue of *Free Flight*, the NFFS digest, carries a full recount of the recent F1D team selection trials in Lakehurst, NJ, complete with blow-by-blow reportage, plans and photos. Our own Josh Finn is well-represented with a mix of all three. Not to be outdone by her lesser half, Hope Finn made some noise in the accompanying Labor Day Record Trials, where she scored high times in both F1R and F1D! Well done, Finns!

THUMBS ON THE TRAIL

Since moving down to Warner Robins, Josh Finn has been on the lookout for flying sites, and he found a few, including his new homestead. (More on that later!) Turns out, his research institute (MERC), the Warner Robins RC club and Mercer University have acquired the use of a 400-acre sod farm in the area. It's adjacent to I-75 and available for their use on a monthly basis. He provides a Google Earth photo that follows. He says it's a tad smaller than our sod farm in Whitesburg but with a useful rectangular shape and pretty much flat. Most of the outlying area is farmland and accessible, albeit with the associated I-75 challenges.

It'll be fun to see what activity is generated at the Super Sod field in the years ahead. I hope some of us can make it down there as things develop. Josh says it's about ninety minutes south of downtown Atlanta during "minimal" traffic hours and thirty minutes west from downtown Warner Robins.

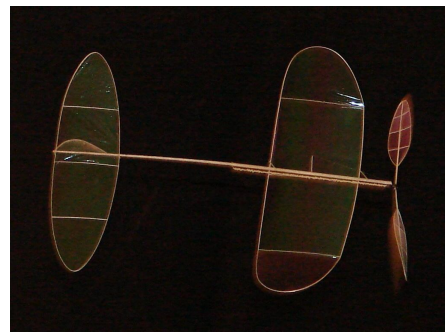
He has his eye on some farmland further west of I-75 in the Perry/Warner Robins/Douglas area that holds the promise of being much larger. He cautions us to remember that all of it is productive agricultural land in the aggregate of several owners. Readers from other parts of the country need note: God loves the state of Georgia, and all of our land is worth a lot and useful for many things. Nothing is deserted, unwanted or purposeless, except for a few toxic waste dumps. Think I'm kidding? The EPA has a list!



THUMBS ON THE MARCH

St. Luke's continues to be the place "indoor records go to die". At the November indoor meet two, new national records were set. Bill Gowen broke the back of the F1M record, passing the vaunted 16-minute mark, and Josh Finn reset the F1R record, besting the previous one by 1:40! His F1R is shown alongside, setting the record. Well done, sirs.

On a related front, Nick Ray informed these offices that he was appointed the F1D WC Team manager for the trip to the salt mines in 2016. TTOMA continues to make its presence felt "behind close doors". Best of luck herding the cats in Romania, Nick!



THUMBS ANSWER THE CALL

A few issues back, I beseeched the membership about being members of the National Free Flight Society. At that time, there were 24 members of same of which I was aware. Turns out I left out Josh Finn, making it an even 25. This is a pretty good number, given we've a membership in the mid-thirties.

I doubt if there's many clubs that can boast that, both in percentage and head count. This writer won't nag about it until this summer. Thanks for your due diligence. And don't forget to renew!

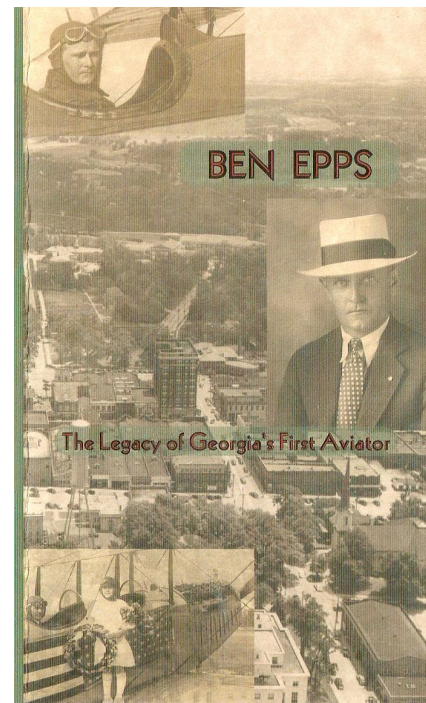
A REMINDER OF GREATNESS

The local model airplane *cognoscenti* know well the name of Ben T. Epps and his descendents. The bare facts are out there but little is known outside the Peach State. Imagine my surprise when I spied the video cassette, scanned below, for sale at my local library on the life of Ben T. Epps, Georgia's undisputed first aviator and his family's later legacy. (I'll mention in passing the cassette was produced and released by the University of Georgia, copyright 2001, and good job done, as usual.)

The cassette is a must view and covers Ben Epps's hardy life, full of adventure and business success, all centered around family and his love of all things aeronautical. I won't bog the reader down with too much detail, but a few nuggets are worth discussing here. The young man from Athens left for Georgia Tech after high school, but dropped out due to financial concerns and returned home. He started an electrician business and fixing automobiles, the first in town. Like many young men with a pulse at the time, the aviation bug bit him with the announcement of the Wright brothers' achievements at Kitty Hawk in 1903. He began experimenting in his spare time with engines and airplane designs and building experimental prototypes. Finally, at the ripe age of 19, his 1907 Monoplane was coaxed into the air in front of an astonished group of townspeople, making it the first such flight in the state. He continued to build ever more competent designs, always in isolation and without support from anyone. Too old and with a family, he was ineligible for military service in WW I. He began building airplanes and cars after WW I, and with a partner, established a small airport outside Athens, the site of its airport today, named in his honor. He was also instrumental, along with several prominent Atlanta businessmen, in establishing an airport south of Atlanta, the present site of Hartsfield International. He taught all his sons and daughters to fly, and his daughters were among the first female pilots in the South. He pioneered several civil aviation businesses such as mail and light freight delivery, pilot training and aerial photography.

He and his family managed to stay in business during the Great Depression, partly with barnstorming, at a time when many of his peers failed. Along with the national recovery, the Epps family fortunes began to improve, too. However, Ben T. Epps was killed in an airplane crash in 1937.

Many of his descendents, to this day, are involved in aviation. The Epps Flying Service is a big part of the operation at Peachtree-DeKalb Airport. The Epps name comes up regularly in aviation matters around the southeast. For example, the Epps family was very involved in the recovery of the WW II aircraft from the Greenland Icecap, not too long ago. Acorns and oak trees.



REPORT FROM SANTA CLAUS

This just in from Santa, by way of his agent, Karl Hube:

"Last Thursday dawned dark and wet....low clouds and drizzle that made for a dreary morning. However, it was time for Santa to make the TTOMA Christmas Basket run to the N GA Sod Farm to show

appreciation for being able to fly on the farm. All eight cylinders of the Hemi Team had been checked. Rudolf was on standby, in case he was needed. And, the baskets were loaded along with cards for the staff and owner of the farm. Good, cheap fuel was on board for the journey. The plan was to launch at 11:00 am when traffic should be lighter and allow arrival about 1:00 pm when the staff returned from lunch. The office there has no chimney, and a break-in would not be wise. Because of the low visibility, Rudolf was called out of reserve and added to the team. Santa launched at 11:04 am, but FAA sleigh regulations would not permit flight above ground-skim altitude because of the weather conditions. In ground-skim mode, Santa was jammed up in heavy traffic and did not make the turn onto I-20W until 12:45 pm. After that, the sleigh turned its nose into a fresh wind off a new front coming in, and at last the cry "Run, Rudolf, run!" rang out. About this time, Blitzen started to complain, and Santa had to tell him to see the elf in HR if he had a problem!

"After 2.5 hours, Santa flew a smooth low approach to the farm and landed safely in the parking lot next to the office. Upon entering, he was greeted by five pretty girls and a very friendly dog. Things were slow at the farm, and several of the girls were visiting their friends there. Old Santa always blushes when the girls say "Aww, how sweet." when gifts are delivered! A large basket was given to the staff, and an even bigger basket was delivered for the owner and his family. Each basket carried a card with a note of appreciation for allowing the club to fly on the farm. After a brief visit, Santa launched on a run to Aircraft Spruce in Peachtree City to pick up some supplies for the toy shop. Traffic remained thick, and on the return to base, all ground-skim lanes were jammed. There were some unfortunate incidents of knuckleheads speeding through traffic and cutting across lanes. Santa took down license plate numbers, and those individuals have been moved to the "Naughty List". Happily, Blitzen did not offer any more complaints during this part of the trip! The sleigh finally touched down at home base at 5:00 pm, another Christmas mission complete. Rudolf is resting for next week's work, and the Hemi Team is cooling down. Old Santa may have had an adult beverage and pondered the state of Christmas, which is always enhanced by the farm trip.

"And to all a Merry Christmas!" Respectfully submitted by Santa Claus.

NEXT ISSUE

Look for something after the banquet, and expect a full report on it. Expect a thorough pimping of the Peach State Indoor Champs. We'll have a few indoor contest reports, and we'll throw in whatever items of merit that comes over the transom. And once again, I beseech the multitudes for anything in the way of articles, photos, plans, rants and raves. Don't make me work too work! Ciao, y'all!

2016 TTOMA MEMBERSHIP FORM

Name _____ **AMA #** _____

Address _____

State and Zip Code _____

Other Family Members and AMA # _____

Telephone _____ **E-Mail** _____

\$20.00/yr. adults, plus \$1.00/yr. for all juniors and additional family members in same household. Send check, payable to TTOMA, to Karl Hube/104 Smith Forest Ln./ Alpharetta, GA 30004/770-886-0104.

Contest report
TTOMA Indoor Contest
St. Lukes
Nov. 21, 2015

A small but mighty group of fliers enjoyed another exceptional day at St. Lukes. Josh Finn set another national record in F1R, adding 1:40 to his old mark with an outstanding 23:33. I finally managed to break through the 16 minute mark in F1M with a new national record of 16:31.

Official flights were made in F1M, F1R, A6, Ministick, Embryo, and Phantom Flash.

Here are the complete scores:

F1R

Joshua Finn 23:33

F1M

Bill Gowen 13:46, 15:17, 16:31

Joshua Finn 11:55, 12:33

A6

Bill Gowen 4:49, 5:06, 1:09

Phantom Flash

Hope Finn 112, 119, 102 (5:33 total)

Joshua Finn 63, 97, 134 (4:54 total)

Embryo

Hope Finn 38, 36, 53 (2:07 total)

Joshua Finn 38, 38, 44 (2:00 total)

Ministick

Nick Ray 7:14, 6:19

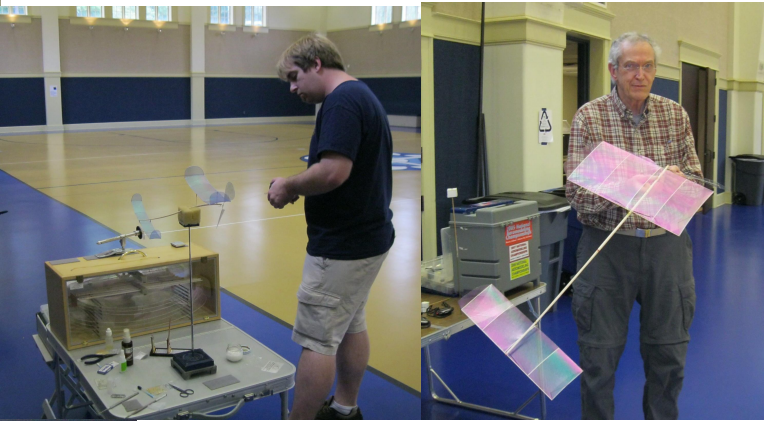
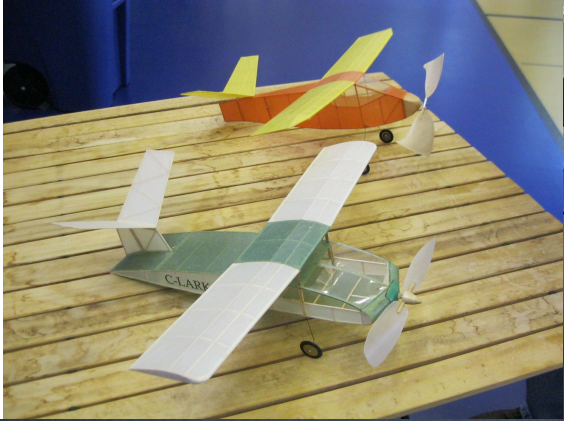
December Indoor Contest Report

We only had two official scores this due to the shortened flying session. We worked with David on the PSIC events and schedule. Nick Ray, CD, reporting.

F1R

Nick Ray 12:31 + 21:55 = 34:26

Joshua Finn 22:55 + 0 = 22:56



Fifth Annual Thanksgiving Turkey Shoot a Hoot

“Maybe it should be called a “gobbling success.” A good turnout of fliers and spectators gathered at the Sod Farm under fair skies, a warm autumn sun, and variable winds that gave the participants some much needed exercise during the retrieval process. The turnout of fliers and spectator/timers was the largest of the year. The Turkey Shoot is always held the first weekend in November, the end of the calendar year for outdoor flying. We have always been blessed with excellent weather until this year. The Turkey Shoot was postponed when the original date was washed out by a week of rain and wind. I had 6.7 inches of rain in my gauge during the week of original Saturday date. Thanks to long-range forecasts by the Weather Channel, we moved the Shoot to November 14 and were rewarded with a good flying day. The annual Turkey Shoot is characterized by zany but challenging events conjured up the by “Head Gobbler”, Gary Baughman. There isn’t another contest like it. The best fliers and best models don’t always win. Eleven fliers put in flights topped by Ed Hardin’s spectacular 223-second Gollywock flight at high noon that managed to land on the field.

“The opening event, FAC Scale Combat, was contested by six fliers. Three advanced into the second round. Gary Morton’s Waterman Racer topped the field with a near max, two-minute flight.

“At 11:00 am a flock of five embryo models took to the air and the winner of the mass launch was Karl Hube flying his “pogo stick” design. It was definitely the class of the field.

“The High Noon Horn event was won by Ed Hardin and the aforementioned high flying Gollywock. Ed’s flight was aided by a monster thermal. Thermals abounded all day long with many ships climbing out during their flight.

“Only two intrepid souls entered the Grand Prix event. On signal, contestants prepared a previously disassembled model, loading rubber or fuel, and flying for at least one minute to win. The CD dreamed up this event as a comedy to entertain bystanders as fumbling fingers hurriedly strapped on wings and stabs and prepared their respective models for “fame and glory.” Ed Hardin again showed his prowess under fire. He got the vaunted Gollywock’s wings and stab strapped down, motor loaded, wound and got into the air ahead of Scott Lapraik and his Kiwi Gassie. Scott held up to watch. Ed seemed to be a lock to win, but Scott’s luck changed when Ed’s model had a rear peg slip free and spoil the glide for only a 45-second flight. Given a reprieve, Scott fired up the Kiwi and flew it well past the necessary one-minute goal for the win.

“A mass launch of P-30 models was next on the agenda at 1:30 pm. Again, thermal air made the difference as David Mills’ model flew very high and far out and either over or into the Hooch for the win. David’s model was the only one lost on the day.

“Due to some long chases occurring, the Catapult Glider tournament was scrapped, and a mass launch was utilized. Frank Perkin’s Cat glider bested the field of eight as the last one down. No times were taken, but Frank’s model made an easy max prior to the DT. Frank’s model utilizes a home grown electronic timer and other refinements making it a real 21st century glider. Take a look at it if you ever have the chance.

“The Blue Ridge Special “Old Goat Smackdown” was won by Gary Morton. His model made three consecutive 90-second maxes plus more time on just four of five possible timed flights. His cumulative time was over a minute longer than the next competitor. The Blue Ridge Special is an amazing flier for such a simple model.

“The target time event was won by Dana Russell who hit the 43-second goal perfectly early on in the day. During the rest of the day nobody else came close to a tie. Dana went home with a Publix \$25 gift card as did all the other event winners.

“Thanks to all who participated and congrats to the winners. I hope each one of you use the gift card to put a turkey on your Thanksgiving table or donate it to charity. To all Thumbers who didn’t show, you missed a lot of fun and good flying. We would love to see you out on the field in 2016. Mark your calendar when the Turkey Shoot date is announced next year.” Gary Baughman, Head-Gobbler-in-Charge, reporting.



PEACH STATE INDOOR CHAMPS

“America’s Flyingest Indoor Contest”

March 12, 2016

Great Hall, St. Lukes Presbyterian Church

Dunwoody, GA

The Thermal Thumbers of Metro Atlanta are hosting our twenty-fourth annual state indoor Free Flight championship. We invite all AMA members, family, and friends to come and join the fun. The public is invited, but only AMA members can fly, so bring your AMA card. However, kids with indoor free flight models who attend can fly; we’ll provide a complimentary special AMA membership.

The contest is sanctioned by the AMA and all events, except as noted, will be flown per the AMA rule book as Class A and Category I. Registration and official flying begins at 9:00 am. The building must be clean and vacated by 8:00 pm. Lightweights will be segregated from the heavyweights per the flight schedule.

A strong effort will be made to fly mass launches in rounds per FAC rules for kanones if possible; otherwise, mass launch events will be flown sudden death with no kanones. Adults fliers are asked to bring at least one kit or suitable prize for any youths that might attend and fly. Advance thanks in this regard.

AMA: F1R

Ltd. Pennyplane (J, SO)

Ministick

IHLG (J,SO)

Catapult Glider-Std/Unltd

Bostonian (J,SO)

F1L

F1D-regional qualifier

A-6

F1M

TTOMA: Chattahoochee Challenge

Hangar Rat

Jimmie Allen Scale

Mass Launches: Hangar Rat

WW I

WW II

Racer

Civilian

Phantom Flash

FAC: Simplified Scale

Embryo

Phantom Flash

No-Cal Scale

Contest Director: David Mills/404-509-4209/davidmillsatl@gmail.com

Fees: The adult (open) fee will be \$10.00 for unlimited events. The youth (senior and junior) fee will be \$1.00 for unlimited events. Adult test and fun fliers will be charged \$10.00.

Directions: The flying site can be accessed from either the Hwy. 400/Abernathy Rd. exit or I-285/Ashford Dunwoody Rd. exit. The church is on Mt. Vernon Rd. about one mile east of Ashford Dunwoody Rd. The Great Hall is at the extreme opposite (NE) corner of the property from the Mt. Vernon entrance. A map is available at <thermalthumbers.com>. There’re numerous hotels/motels in the area with a wide range of costs. Useful search words might be: “Perimeter Mall”, “Dunwoody”, or “Sandy Springs”.

FLYING SCHEDULE

Note the following schedule shows a start time of 9:00 am. We'll try to get in there earlier for set-up and registration, but it'll be an official 9:00 am start. We'll try to stick to the published schedule as much as possible, but the CD reserves the right to make reasonable changes based on circumstances in order to keep everybody happy. No whining allowed. All the CD's decisions are final.

9:00 am registration
9:00-11:00 am lightweights
11:00-noon heavyweights
11:30 am Hangar Rat mass launch
High Noon WW II mass launch
12:00-1:00 pm anything goes, lunch
1:00-2:00 pm heavyweights
2:00 pm Racer mass launch
2:30 pm WW I mass launch
2:00-3:00 pm lightweights
3:00-4:00 pm anything goes
3:00 pm Civilian mass launch
3:30 pm Phantom Flash mass launch
4:00-6:00 pm lightweights
6:00-7:30 pm anything goes
8: pm site cleaned and vacated

Flying heavyweight models (No-Cal or heavier) in lightweight periods always requires CD's permission prior to winding and/or launch. Flying lightweight models during heavyweight time periods is at flier's risk. Special consideration can be given at any time, but all CD's decisions are final.



The Great Hall at St Lukes Presbyterian Church, Dunwoody, GA
“Where Indoor Records Go to Die”