

The history of-

Tidewater Radio Control Club

By Larry Wollard

Edited by Kenny Sprouse



Chesapeake, VA



How it all began

The club was originally a part of the Norfolk Aero modelers, and we were flying single channel radios at Norfolk Industrial Park in 1962. Most of the flights turned out to be free flights as the radios just did not work very well.

We started to grow in numbers and the radios were advancing quickly so we started looking for a better place to fly!

Forming the club

We decided to form a club that was for R/C flyers only. We were meeting at individuals' homes and in late 1962 we decided to hold a contest to name the club. At a meeting at Harvey Bruff's house, Ronald Coffee won the contest submitting the name of Tidewater Radio Control. At that time AMA required ten members to form a Charter Club. To the best of my memory in 1963 we chartered the club. I believe that the following is the list of the original members

Charter Members:

1. Pete Bailey
2. Harvey Bruff
3. Larry Woolard
4. Dick Ambrose
5. Burley Miller
6. Eugene Fentress
7. Donald Orr
8. Adolf (Andy) Anderson
9. Paul Martens
10. Fred Hall
11. Dick Bonney
12. Duggie Consolvo
13. Bobby Shoemaker

Finding a place to fly

Someone in the club had a contact with the Navy and we were able to secure a flying site at Fentress Airfield. At that time Fentress was closed and there was no air traffic, the runways were just broken concrete with weeds.

During the sixties the club grew and the Navy made some improvements to Fentress to allow Reserves to practice. During the Sixties and Seventies

Fentress became the R/C flying site of choice. In the eighties the Navy made Improvements to Fentress, and this had an impact on the field use for R/C flying. Many new clubs were formed in the area, in fact all of the clubs that formed in the eighties and nineties were break off's from TRC and the Hampton Club SEVRCG.

The time of flying during the sixties and seventies at Fentress are the best memories of my life. It was a real struggle during those times with engines and radios, but when you had a good day flying, especially winning a contest, you had a good memory.

I remember one day at Fentress with my first flight on my single channel Vanguard, Cox 049 engine and Orbit Radio which was a new state of the art radio which had a new

1965 Advertisement Orbit Radio



mechanism that required less batteries to operate. It had only one button on the transmitter, hold the button down for full left rudder, double click the button for full right rudder.

After starting my engine and setting the needle valve, I launched the Vanguard into the sky. My first lesson learned, when mounting the switch on the side of your model, make sure that you mount the switch so that the on position is towards the tail so that when you hand launch it, you do not cut the receiver off! I pushed the button for right, then left, nothing, so the model was just climbing and turning to the right but it was a perfect flight! It climbed until the fuel ran out and then started a gentle circle to the left descending until it made a perfect landing just twenty feet in front of me! I was so proud I just turned my transmitter off, picked up my model and went to the pit area and sat down. I did not fly any more that day, because I was twenty years old and had made a major accomplishment and I wanted to go home with a good memory!

Fond memories

At that time there was a new product on the market called monocoat which was applied with an iron-on covering. What! no more late-night dope sessions! I had to be the first to try it! I covered a glider in orange and it looked great!

Dick Ambrose had a really large model that he had built to tow gliders and away we went!

You know that film on monocote that you are supposed to remove before you iron? Have you ever seen a glider soar with no covering on the wings? It is not pretty! It looks something like a naked turkey!



Then there was the time when Duggie flew a Taurus into the Outhouse with someone in it! We gave him a nice trophy at the next meeting!

Yes, the sixties and seventies are filled with memories mostly because we were part of the growth of R/C flying. If you had told us that RC flying would be as advanced as it is today, we would have laughed you off the field.

R/C flyers today enjoy the best equipment that we could have never even dreamed of in the Sixties.

At the time of this writing, TRC is turning sixty years old! I know there will be another sixty years to come because the future is looking bright!

Take the time to make some memories for yourself.

Larry Woolard