



# Smoke Signals

Monthly Newsletter of the Meroke RC Club

February 2010

AMA Gold Leader Club #458 - established 1963

## Mr. Meroke Award

The Meroke Annual Awards Dinner was held at a lovely restaurant in Bellmore the night of December 10, 2009. Jackie was the host and did a great job in organizing our Gala party. Good food, drinks, party favors, raffle prizes and great camaraderie, (and even music) made for a wonderful party. Award plaques were given to every person who contributed their services in order to make



Ted receiving Mr Meroke Award

for a smoother and better club.

The single and most important award of the evening went to the (2009) Mr. Meroke. This person is chosen

by only the past recipients of the award and cannot be achieved more than once. It is given on the basis of current and past service to the club. It is given to somebody who dedicated his services of merit, his expertise, his selflessness,

and his involvement in many of the club's activities. He takes on



Mr Merokes present at dinner

the responsibilities of representing our club to the "Flying Community" and the hobby of Model Aviation. It is an award not to be taken lightly and had and has to be earned. This year's recipient was Ted Evangelatos. He

dutifully and graciously accepted the award and then was marched around the room in the Mr. Meroke ceremonial garb with the long robe, the Mr. Meroke hat and the triton staff. Strains of music in the background were of the Miss America pageant. It was all like a 'goof' on a coronation. I think that all the members who were there enjoyed it.

We hope to celebrate this award year after year and continue to make the Meroke R/C Club the prestigious club of Lufbery Aerodrome.

*Submitted by Ron Berg*

## Meroke Calendar

- February 4<sup>th</sup> Club Meeting 8 PM - Show & Tell
- February 18<sup>th</sup> Club Meeting 8 PM - Joe MacDougall on VacuForming
- February 19<sup>th</sup> to 21<sup>st</sup> WRAMS Show at Westchester County Center in White Plains (check their website at [www.wram.org](http://www.wram.org) for show information)
- March 4<sup>th</sup> Club Meeting 8 PM - Show & Tell
- March 18<sup>th</sup> Club Meeting 8 PM - Bargain Basement Auction - Mark Klein
- April 1<sup>st</sup> Club Meeting 8 PM - Show & Tell
- April 15<sup>th</sup> Club Meeting 8 PM - Jet Demo - Chris Mantzaris

Meetings are held the first and third Thursday of each month at 8:00 PM at the First Presbyterian Church of Levittown located at 474 Wantagh Avenue. The church is about 1 mile north of Exit 28N on the Southern State Parkway. Additional information can be found on the club website - [www.meroke.com](http://www.meroke.com).

**2010 Dues are Past Due**

## Club Officers & Volunteers

<b>President</b>	Ted Evangelatos 516-848-9987	tevangela to s@yahoo.com
<b>Vice President</b>	Jaclyn Tavorario 516-679-1926	jrlgems@aol.com
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<b>Membership Committee Programs</b>	Frank Lasala	Lou Pinto
<b>Education</b>	Jaclyn Tavorario	Harvey Schwartz
<b>Friends of Cedar Creek Building Program</b>	TBA	
	Charlie Lando George Carley	Ed Wiemann
<b>Archivists</b>	Charlie Lando Nelson Ramos Ron Berg	
<b>Webmaster</b>	Ted Evangelatos	
<b>Social (Coffee)</b>	Irv Kreutel Herb Henery	Al Hammer
<b>Raffles</b>	Curtis Underdue	
<b>Show and Tell</b>	Ed Wiemann	
<b>Video Librarian</b>	Bob Cook	
<b>Audio/Visual</b>	Tom Cott	
<b>Come Fly With Me</b>	Charlie Lando	Dave Bell
<b>Open Fly-In</b>	Jaclyn Tavorario	
<b>TAG Program</b>	Charlie Lando	
<b>Monthly Fun Fly Dinner</b>	Jaclyn Tavorario	Gene Kolakowski
<b>Picnic</b>	Chris Man tzaris	
<b>Contest Directors</b>	Allen Berg Ernie Schack	Tony Pollio Tom Scotto
<b>Flight Instructors</b>	Allen Berg Douglas Frie Mark Klein Ken Mandel Tony Pollio Bob Reynolds Bill Streb	Ted Evangelatos Dan Gramenga Gene Kolakowski Tim Murphy Mike Hagens* Harvey Schwartz Al Weiner
<b>*Flight Instruction Coordinator</b>	Mike Hagens	516-546-6773

## From The President

Once again this month I would like to address the need for volunteers for our Club's activities. The Meroke RC Club are one of the most active clubs in our part of the country. From Flight Instructing to the monthly Fun Fly, from the TAG program to the Building Club to the Open Fun Fly, we have lined up an impressive array of activities second to none.

All these functions however are carried through by a handful of members who, putting aside their personal obligations to work and family, dedicate the time and energy to complete their projects.

The Club needs these functions. They add value to our organization, and help elevate it to an enviable status, making it a better club that people want to join. People will come to the Merokes if they know that we can teach them how to fly, show them how to better put together an airplane, challenge them to become better pilots by participating in our flying events. And they will come join us because of these added values.

But how many times, over how many months and years will the same people be doing the same, and more. work over and over again? How many articles will "Dr. Phil" prepare for the monthly newsletter, and how many Education lectures will he organize without any help? How many newsletters will Russ Rhine put together with only Dr Phil's help? And how many Open Fun Fly's has Ernie Schack planned and executed for the Merokes in the past and current decade?

It seems that my pleas to the membership have started to bear fruit. I see more people approaching the Board offering help. This is very encouraging. But we need more. We need assistance in several Committees, such as:

- Educational Programs
- Monthly One Fly
- Newsletter contributors
- Open Fun Fly
- Membership

So please step up and help. It is a thankless job, and all our volunteers get in the end is a pat on the back and a "Thank You." But at least we get the satisfaction of giving something back to the hobby, which is what brought us all together in the first place. And the more we give, the more get in return.

I look forward to hearing from you at the next meeting.

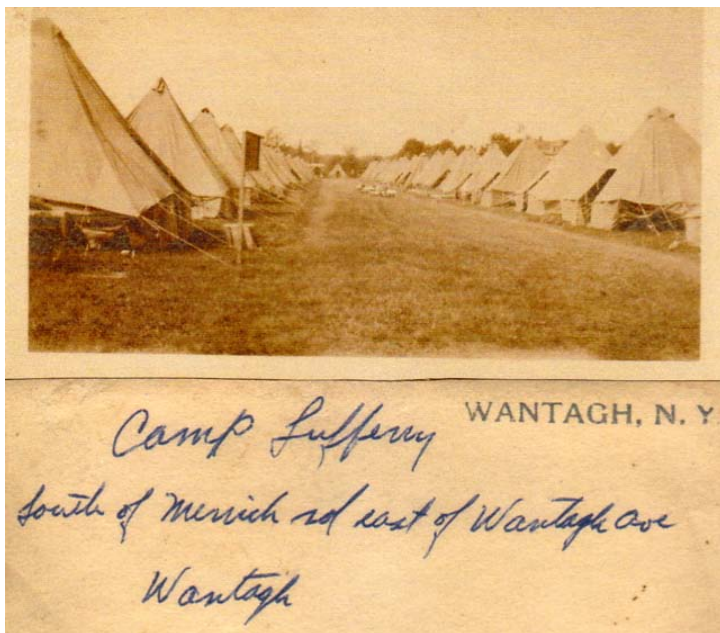
## Lufbery Aerodrome

*With our success in being able to name our flying field Lufbery Aerodrome, I authored an article for the AMA's Model Aviation magazine. It has been approved by the Editor and will appear in a future edition of the publication. There is no indication when they will have space for this article, therefore I have decided to add it to this month's Smoke Signals.*

*It was a true team effort and my thanks goes out to all who were involved in our successful venture.*

One of the problems facing our hobby is the loss of flying fields. As members of the Meroke RC Club, we have been confronted by a number of issues over the past few years jeopardizing the future of our field. Located at the far end of Cedar Creek Park in Seaford, New York, it is one of the few flying fields to survive on Long Island.

Just over a year ago, two of our members - Ernie Schack and Bob Cook - brought to my attention a very interesting fact. In the early 1900s, during World War I, there was a military training facility for pilots on the very spot where our RC flying field is today. What made it more interesting, was that the field was named after a distinguished WW I flying ace - Major Raoul Lufbery.



Sleeping Quarters for the Enlisted Men and Officers Assigned to Lufbery Field (Photo Courtesy of Josh Soren)

Major Lufbery, born of American and French parents made a name for himself while flying with the Lafayette

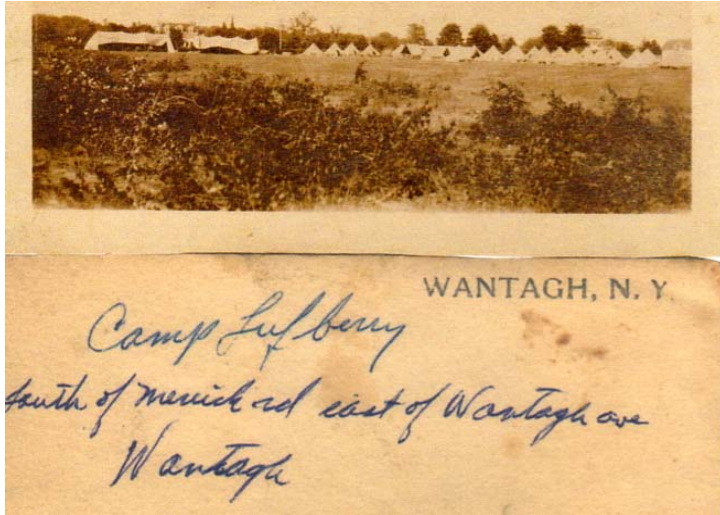
Escadrille. His first air combat kill was recorded in August of 1916 and he went on to record a total of 17 kills - all over enemy territory. Once the United States entered the war, Major Lufbery joined the infamous 94<sup>th</sup> Aero Squadron in the newly formed American Air Service. With his combat experience, Lufbery spent time as a flight instructor and taught Captain Eddie Rickenbacker, who went on to become the top American Ace of the war, how to fly in combat.

On the morning of May 19, 1918, Lufbery borrowed another pilot's Nieuport and chased after a German reconnaissance plane that was flying a low level photographic mission over the airfield of the 94<sup>th</sup> Aero Squadron, near Nancy, France. While pursuing the German aircraft, a tracer bullet from the Albatros ripped into The Nieuport's fuel tank and the Lufbery's aircraft burst into flames. He jumped from his plane at a height of two hundred feet to avoid the slow torture of burning to a crisp. A few years ago, the movie "Flyboys" was loosely written around his life.

On July 31, 1918, the military services of the United States commissioned 4 new airfields on Long Island. One of these, named Lufbery Field, was a facility to train new pilots for eventual deployment to the war in Europe. There were approximately 200 military personnel stationed at the field along with 12 Curtis Jenneys. This field was located in the area where we now fly our radio control airplanes and helicopters. A year after it was opened, the field was closed due to the armistice. Josh Soren, President of the Wantagh Historical and Preservation Society on Long Island, has in his possession a few photos of the field and allowed me to digitally scan the very fragile original prints.

With this in mind, we decided to hopefully give some historical perspective to our field, and maybe keep it active for a long time. The Merokes formed a committee to pursue our goal of renaming the field. Charlie Lando, Harvey Schwartz and myself, along with the Nassau County Historian, Ed Smits, met at the beginning of last summer to initiate our plan. As the Editor of the Merokes newsletter Smoke Signals, I already did a lot of research into Major Lufbery and the field named in his honor. After a few meetings, and endless telephone calls and emails, we had a finished proposal. To strengthen our case, we solicited letters of support from a few very prominent people within Nassau County, including Josh Soren and Andrew Parton, Executive Director of the Cradle of Aviation Museum located a few miles from the field.

Once completed, our proposal along with our support letters was sent to Tom Suozzi, the then Nassau County Executive. In retrospect, our timing might not have been prudent. There was a pending issue of adding facilities to Cedar Creek Park including a go-kart track that could have jeopardized the field. Our proposal for a name change was not a pressing issue for Mr Suozzi as he was involved in his campaign for a third term in office, as well



Flying Field is in the Front, Canvas Hangars are in Right Rear and Support Facilities in Left Rear of Photo (Photo Courtesy of Josh Soren)

as being involved in many other county matters. With the local residents in an uproar, the plans for the park eventually fizzled, and Mr Suozzi passed our proposal onto the Commissioner of Parks - Jose Lopez. With the increased political tensions in the County prior to the November elections, very little happened regarding our proposal for the next few months. After the elections and a lot of behind the scenes work, our proposal was passed onto the County's legal department. Two of the County's legislators - David Denenberg (D) and Dennis Dunne (R) - whose constituents live in the area surrounding Cedar Creek Park, jumped head first into supporting our plan to name the field after Major Lufbery. It was a true bipartisan effort as they were able to quickly move the proposal along.

At the first County Legislature meeting this past December, our committee attended; in order to, present our proposal to the legislative committee responsible for voting for and hopefully passing our proposal onto the entire County Legislature. With the day's meeting starting at 10:00 am, it wasn't until almost 8:00 pm when we got to the podium to present. The legislative committee voted unanimously to have our proposal made into a resolution to be voted on later in the month. We received a great holiday present, when the entire

legislature voted unanimously to approve the resolution on the Monday before Christmas. We are extremely pleased with the behind the scenes efforts that allowed legislators Denenberg and Dunne to move our proposal through the County Government at a difficult time. We officially now have the rights to name our flying field - Lufbery Aerodrome.

Many aviation historians consider Long Island the true birthplace of aviation in the United States. On the morning of July 17, 1909, Glenn Curtiss guided his delicate "aeroplane", the Gold Bug, into the air above the Mineola Fairgrounds. For the next 100 years, Long Island was the scene of intense aviation activity. We initiated our efforts during the centennial year of Long Island Aviation and hoped to reach our goal by year's end and we did with a few days to spare.

We are now left with a few fun tasks after a hard fought battle. There are signs to be made and a naming ceremony to plan for sometime this Spring. We have honored a great war hero and hopefully Lufbery Aerodrome will remain an RC flying field for a long time.

*Russell Rhine - Editor*

## Virtual Fun Fly

In January we started off the year with a very successful Virtual Fun Fly. Six teams of 4 fliers each took to the simulator and competed in 2 events. Team 2, consisting of Gene Kolakowski, Phil Friedensohn, Curtis Underdue and Joe Petrozza took First Place by a mere 5 seconds over the next team. Jacki and Phil did a great job of running the Fun Fly and Russ Rhine handled the scoring. With 24 virtual fliers having a great time - this will certainly become an event that we may have a few times each year.

## February Birthdays

- 2 *George Carley*
- 7 *Jack Stone*
- 11 *Robert Colquhoun*
- 12 *Jack Tramuta*
- 16 *Gene Kolakowski*
- 19 *Richard Boll*
- 23 *Ed Wiemann*
- 26 *Joseph Petrozza*
- 26 *John Townsend*



## The Basis of Everything

There are many attitudes that will guarantee better built, better flying aircraft. Hold yourself to a standard that is as high as possible but doesn't make you give up. A good project has sub-projects. If you're doing it right, then the main and sub-projects are a lot of fun.

***Building an airplane that isn't straight is not acceptable.***

When you adopt this attitude you'll have a better understanding why I am so anal-retentive with some of my building techniques. If a former isn't flat then how do I know where on which edge to measure from?

An aircraft that isn't straight will never trim properly until it is. It doesn't matter how high end your computer radio is. The trim of a crooked model will always be speed-sensitive.

I hope I have just burdened you with a lot more work — devising ways of making sure all your work is straight. You're welcome.

Note for beginning builders: A crooked airplane will fly. Do the best you can. Your building skills will improve with experience and motivation. Your first few airplanes won't be perfect. That's ok and normal.

***Building a model having anything that doesn't work properly is not acceptable.***

Don't jury-rig your planes. Make sure each part works as intended before installing it. Fix any problem you find.

Don't convince yourself that the problem will work itself out on its own.

***Building an airplane that is unnecessarily heavy is not acceptable.***

You have to understand the properties of the materials you work with in order to use them efficiently.

Spend some time destroying some balsa (or whatever material) so you can learn what it can take. Bend it, drop it, twist it, hit it with a hammer. Do whatever you want to it so you can observe the results.

A nose dive into the ground is a lot more force than a soft blow with a hammer and many balsa aircraft survive the impact with nothing more than an easily removed dent or maybe not even a scratch.

***How long it takes doesn't matter.***

It may take six months or more to build a quality model aircraft. A well-built, easily maintained model requires more discipline and planning but if you take the time to build it right you can realistically expect the model to last until you just don't want to fly it any more. And if you change your mind you can put it back in the air with a reasonable amount of maintenance such as a new fuel lines, clevises and an onboard battery pack.

There's not good reason for a model aircraft to just deteriorate to the point where you're forced to ground and retire it.

***Build your plane well and fly it to its limits***

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