



SMOKE SIGNALS

THE WISE MAN - Adapted from "The Star Thrower" by Loren Eiseley

Once upon a time there was a wise man who used to go to the ocean to do his writing. He had a habit of walking on the beach before he began his work. One day he was walking along the shore. As he looked down the beach, he saw a human figure moving like a dancer.



He smiled to think of someone who would dance to the day. So he began to walk faster to catch up. As he got closer, he saw that it was a young man and the young man wasn't dancing, but instead he was reaching down to the shore, picking up something and very gently throwing it into the ocean. As he got closer he called out, "Good morning! What are you doing?" The young man paused, looked up and replied, "Throwing starfish in the ocean." "I guess I should have asked, why are you throwing starfish in the ocean?" "The sun is up and the tide is going out. And if I don't throw them in they'll die."

"But, young man, don't you realize that there are miles and miles of beach and starfish all along it. You can't possibly make a difference!" The young man listened politely. Then he bent down, picked another starfish and threw it into the sea, past the breaking waves and said, "It made a difference for that one."

There is something very special in each and every one of us. We have all been gifted with the ability to make a difference. And if we can become aware of that gift, we gain through the strength of our visions the power to shape the future. We must each find our starfish. And if we throw our stars wisely and well, the world will be blessed.

Nice thoughts to start the year 2011
HAPPY NEW YEAR!!!!!!

Dennis Osik

JANUARY 2011

Early Flying Machines PT 1

Octave Chanute went on to be the main enthusiast for the Wright Brothers during their early aerial trials...



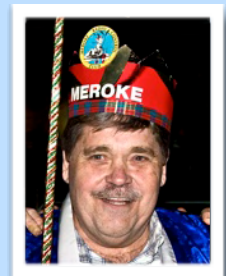
Parrot AR. Drone

It is a groundbreaking device combining the best of many worlds, including modeling, video gaming and augmented reality (or AR).



A Conversation with...

"Mr. Meroke" 2010
Dave Bell



New Club Meeting Hall
Full Information on Page 10

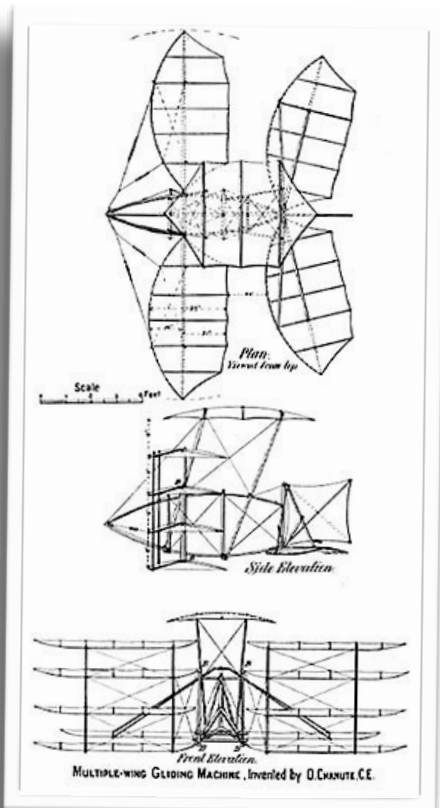
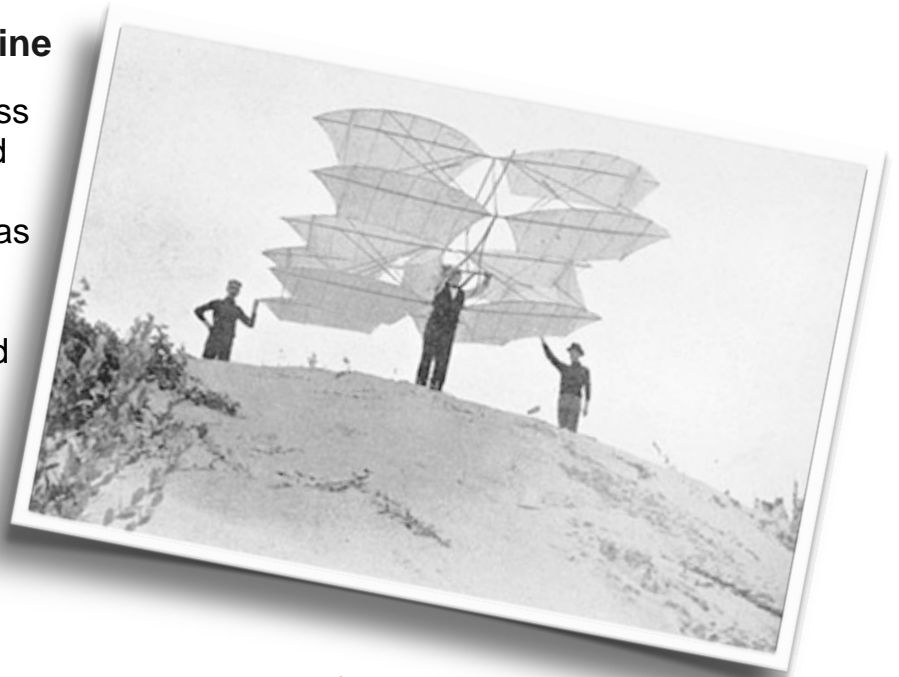


TOP 10 QUIRKIEST EARLY FLYING MACHINES

Here is something that I stumbled upon on line, here is the first installment 10 through 6. The remainder, 5 through 1, will appear in next in next month's issue. The article was found at www.listverse.com, unfortunately the author is not listed otherwise I would credit them.

10 - Chanute's Gliding Machine

We all know the trite adage that less is more, but apparently no one told Monsieur Octave Chanute – he seemed to think that more is best as is demonstrated by his ungainly multi-winged flying machine! French born Chanute was a retired engineer living in Chicago, Illinois, when he began to dabble in aeronautics. In 1896 he started testing his “gliding machines” in Dune Park, Indiana, on the shore of Lake Michigan.

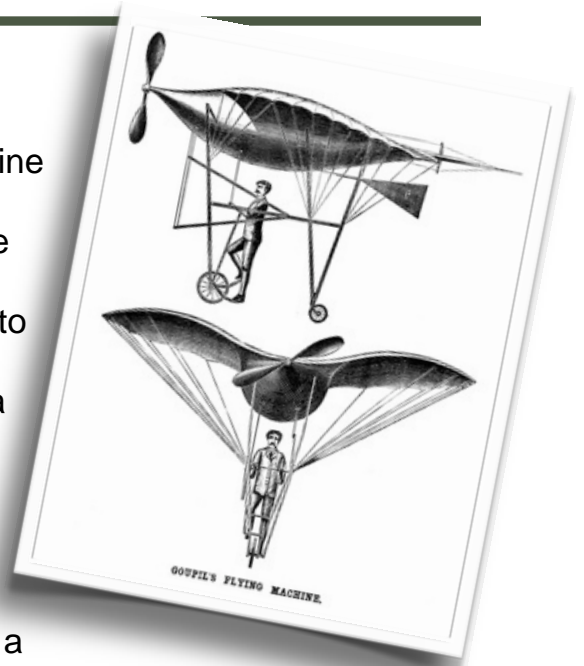


The bizarre appearance of this machine with its wings that swung back and forth, caused many people to ridicule the concept – especially as later “classic” designs used trussed and fixed wings. But, even though the glider was a failure, its design contained the germ of an idea that was later used in numerous designs of military aircraft: pivoting movable wing surfaces (seen most notably in the F-111, and B-1).

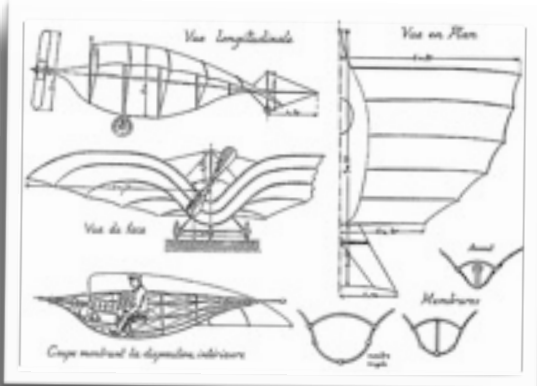
His glider was built to test the idea of using pivoting wings to control the center of wing pressure – providing stability. Chanute invented the “strut-wire” braced structure that would be used in all biplanes of the future. Before his interest in aviation, Chanute was a well respected railroad engineer who designed and constructed the Chicago stockyards and the Kansas City stockyards. Octave Chanute went on to be the main enthusiast for the Wright Brothers during their early aerial trials, encouraging them and supplying them with the latest aerial information.

9 - Alexandre Goupil's Sesquiplane

Alexandre Goupil was a well regarded and well known French engineer who designed this bird-like flying machine in 1883. The sesquiplane (a monoplane with additional half-wings) was meant to be powered by a steam engine mounted inside the rounded body of the machine. The engine was to drive a single tractor propeller and it was to have a wheeled landing gear. A rudder was to be mounted below the tail surface. Goupil built and tested a version of his design without the engine. The test machine had a wing span of just over 19 feet 8 inches.



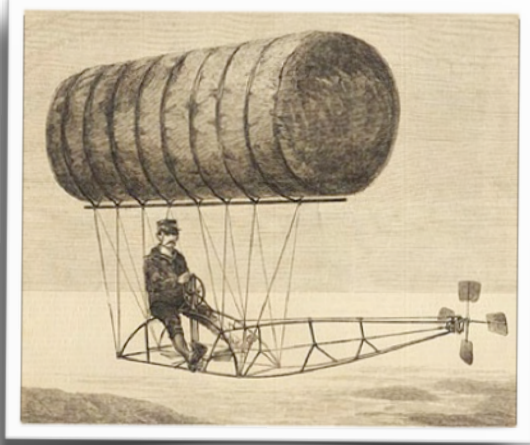
Surprisingly it had considerable lift – hoisting itself and two men into the air in a wind of around 14 MPH. Goupil's design foreshadowed modern “blended lifting body” configurations.



Pictured to the left we have the initial machine-driven design, while the image at the top shows the unpowered test version.

8 - Charles Ritchel's Flying Machine

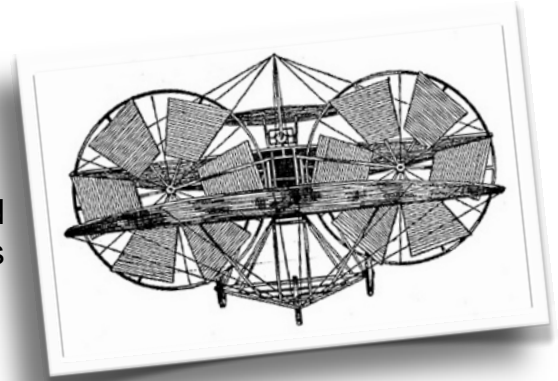
Charles Ritchel's flying machine was first demonstrated publicly during May and June of 1878. The framework was constructed of brass tubing and it held a gas bag of rubberized fabric. Mabel Harrington was the first to fly this hand-cranked machine though Mark Quinlan is believed to have made the majority of the future demonstration flights, including two lasting over one hour each. Eventually Ritchel would go on to build and sell five of these machines.



Ritchel had plans for a trans-contentinental airline comprising aircraft hand-cranked by 11 men each. This was not to eventuate. Not satisfied with just aviation, Ritchel was actually a prolific inventor – with his most famous invention being the funhouse mirror. He also invented a mechanical money box in which a coin is placed in a monkey's hand which then tilts the coin back in to a hole in its stomach. Some people attribute the invention of roller skates to Ritchel. Ritchel died in poverty.

7 - Thomas Moy's "Aerial Steamer"

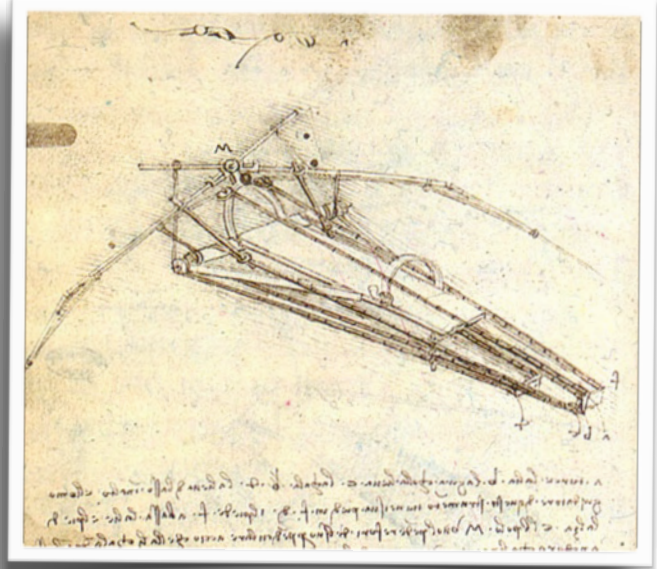
Thomas Moy's tandem-wing monoplane called "Aerial Steamer" was a large machine with twin propellers each six-foot in diameter. It was powered by a steam engine (also built by Moy) which reached 3 horse-power at 550 RPM. His plane used a tricycle landing gear. In June 1875, Moy tested his machine in the Crystal Palace in London, England. It managed to reach 12 MPH while running on a track, but it did not generate enough lift to leave the ground. Despite the failure, some design elements (such as the twin-propellers and tricycle landing gear) made their way in to other future plane designs. There is some documentation to suggest that the plane may have lifted 6 inches off the ground, but this not conclusive.



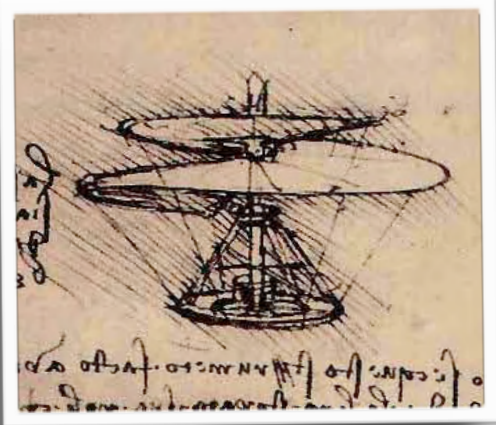
6 - Leonardo DaVinci's Flying Machine

Leonardo Da Vinci was an Italian polymath who was probably the first European to seek a practical solution to flight. He designed a large number of devices, including parachutes, and he studied the flight and structure of birds.

In 1485 he drew a very detailed plan for a human powered ornithopter (a wing-flapping device designed to fly). There is no proof that he attempted to build the device. For the next four centuries, the concept of flying devices designed around birds occurred again and



again. For much of his life, Leonardo was fascinated by the phenomenon of flight, producing many studies of the flight of birds, including his c. 1505 Codex on the Flight of Birds, as well as plans for several flying machines, including a helicopter and a light hang glider. Most were impractical, but the hang glider has been successfully constructed and demonstrated. He conceptualised a helicopter (pictured left), a tank, concentrated solar power, a calculator, the double hull and outlined a rudimentary theory of plate tectonics.





PARROT AR.DRONE - RC Universe Article by Greg Covey

COST: \$300

The Parrot [AR.Drone](#) is the first quadricopter that can be controlled by an iPhone, iPod Touch, or even an iPad. It is a groundbreaking device combining the best of many worlds, including modeling, video gaming and augmented reality (or AR). Equipped with two integrated video cameras, ultrasonic altimeters, gyro sensor, an accelerometer, and an intelligent autopilot, the AR.Drone is incredibly easy to fly both indoors or out.

In this month's issue of AMP'D, we test the AR.Drone, and meet the gamers head on, as they invade the world of R/C!



Augmented Reality

For those not familiar with AR, or Augmented Reality, it is an environment that includes both virtual reality and real-world elements. For instance, an AR user might wear translucent goggles; through these, he could see the real world, as well as computer-generated images projected on top of that world.

In the Terminator movies, Arnold Schwarzenegger's character sees the world with data superimposed on his visual field. These virtual captions augment (or enhance) the cyborg's scan of a scene.

An augmented reality system is one that combines real and virtual elements, is interactive in real-time, and is registered in three dimensions. In James Cameron's 'Avatar', we transported to the world of Pandora using augmented reality.

The Parrot AR.Drone uses both cameras to create Augmented Reality video games. The AR.Drone software includes AR functions such as detecting other AR.Drone in flight, detecting and positioning markers on the ground and on the walls.





THE MEROKE RC CLUB - EST. 1963

How it works



Thanks to the AR.Drone's on-board Wi-Fi system, you control it using an iPhone®, iPod Touch®, or an iPad®. Although it was initially designed for the Apple platforms, other platforms will be available in the near future.



The quadcopter is made with carbon fiber and high resistance PA66 plastic. Micro-Electro-Mechanical Systems (or MEMS) and video processing are used to ensure very intuitive piloting.



Four 15-watt brushless motors spin the plastic gears and high-efficiency props that were specially designed for the AR.Drone. A 3-cell, 1000mAh LiPo pack provides powered flight for 10-12 minutes.



The device features a number of sensors, including a front camera, a vertical camera and an ultrasound altimeter. Once paired with your iPod or iPhone, the two integrated video cameras, ultrasonic altimeters, 2-axis gyro sensor, 3-axis accelerometer, and intelligent autopilot provide incredibly easy flight to a distance of about 150 feet. On the bottom of the AR.Drone, the vertical camera, in combination with the ultrasound altimeter, provide stabilization up to about 20' even in a light wind. The front camera uses a 93° wide-angle diagonal lens to stream live images to your iPod or iPhone.

Note that safety is designed into the AR.Drone as it will stop all blades if anything (including a finger) gets caught in any of the four blades. Further, the iPod application, called [AR.FreeFlight](#), has an Emergency/Reset button right on the screen. When pressed, the AR.Drone locks all four rotating blades and falls. The AR.FreeFlight app is the official piloting application for the Parrot AR.Drone and is available for free at the iTunes app store.



The [iPod Touch®](#) is a music box, pocket computer, and a great portable game player. It includes a built-in three-axis gyroscope. When paired with the built-in accelerometer, the gyro makes the iPod touch capable of advanced motion sensing such as user acceleration, full 3D attitude, and rotation rate. A perfect controller for the AR.Drone!





In The Box



The AR.Drone comes well packaged in a custom box that can easily be used for storage or travel. Two hulls are included; an indoor hull with safety bumpers that protect objects it touches from hitting the propeller blades and a lighter outdoor hull that drops the flying weight about 40 grams.

There is nothing to assemble and the battery pack comes ready to plug into the balancing charger. The LiPo pack charging connector is E-flite/ElectriFly compatible.

A multi-language manual and Quick Start Guide get you up and running fast!

The AR.Drone is connected to the iPod Touch or iPhone by an ad hoc Wi-Fi link. The AR.Drone creates its own Wi-Fi network and the iPod can then connect to it just like with any Wi-Fi network.

The connection with the AR.Drone is secure because it is paired with one iPod at a time. However, you can delete the pairing by pressing the "Unpair" button on the bottom, so that it can be controlled with another iPod Touch or iPhone.

Summary

The AR.Drone is a groundbreaking device combining the best of many worlds, including modeling, video gaming and augmented reality. Although it was initially designed for the Apple platforms, it will be mated to other platforms in the near future.

The AR.Drone is so incredibly easy to fly that even children will pilot it instinctively, using the iPod or iPhone, without any learning curve. Note that safety is designed into the AR.Drone as it will stop all blades if anything (including a finger) gets caught in any of the four blades.



Another major feature not mentioned above is the use of several AR.Drones on a network. Thanks to its own generated Wi-Fi network, players can create a game party where others players can join and play against each other. The multiplayer game, named AR.Flying Ace, makes it possible to have a battle (or dogfight) between multiple AR.Drones. The hulls are available in three different colors to easily identify your AR.Drone. This game incorporates the augmented reality concepts, especially for modeling missile fire.

The AR.Drone is available at Brookstone stores or on-line at Amazon.com and ParrotShopping.com. Whether you are a gamer, or an R/Cer, or both, the Parrot AR.Drone is an exciting flying creation. The technologies used both in this product and the Apple controlling devices take us one step further into the realm of augmented reality.

When you fly electric, fly clean, fly quiet, and fly safe!



THE MEROKE RC CLUB - EST. 1963

AWARDS DINNER Photos by Bobby Adelman

Last month on Friday December 3rd the Meroke awards dinner was held at the Asian Buffet in Hicksville. The event was a rousing success. The food was delicious and plentiful and the conversation lively.

Club President Ted Evangelatos did the honors as host of the evening but whose MC skills need a little work so maybe next year Ted should think of recruiting a sidekick a la Johnny Carson and Ed McMahon. My vote goes to newly elected treasurer Nick Guiffre "Heeere's TEDDY!"



One of the highlights of the Awards Dinner was the showing of the Lufbery Dedication video, which was warmly received and sparked new conversation.

The main event of the evening was the naming of "Mr. Meroke" for 2010. The honor was given to a surprised but truly deserving Dave Bell who was then honored with robe (Maybe one of the past "Mr. Meroke"s can explain that one to the members and be assured that I won't publish the real answer) staff and crown, anyway it looked like a crown.

Seriously, congratulations to club member Dave Bell, who genuinely deserves this honor and who truly can call himself "Mr. Meroke".



SUGGESTION BOX

Send all suggestions to:

newsletter@meroke.com

TIP OF THE MONTH

Here is a tip I pulled from the December 2007 issue of SMOKE SIGNALS in the series "Ask DR PHIL" and it went like this:

Q - "I'm always trying to think of any little gadget I can carry in my field box to make my life easy at the field. Any Ideas?"

A - I sure do. Ed Wiemann and I used this little trick just the other day at the field, after a successful bench check of Ed's new engine. The engine would not start when installed in his airplane. He thought that the problem was coming from the fuel tank. To disassemble the plane at the field would be too difficult.

I have a small 2 oz. gas tank that I keep in my field box to use as an over flow receptacle. We took this tank filled it up, disconnect the tank from the plane and connected this tank and started the engine. We know now that there was indeed a problem with the fuel system on board the aircraft. Get yourself a small tank you'll save on fuel, keep the environment clean and have a little testing tool to use when you doubt your fuel system.



A CONVERSATION WITH DAVE BELL

Dave Bell was born in March of 1949 to his parents Fred and Ruby Bell. They lived in Maspeth Queens and in 1954 moved to Massapequa where he grew up and graduated from Massapequa High School in 1967.

Dave enlisted in the US Navy in September 1967 and was Honorably discharged in 1971. He found employment with British Airways and worked at Kennedy Airport from 1973 to present day holding the positions of Technical Officer then Supervisor Technical Offices in the Technical Services department.

Dave is the proud father of four children ranging in age from 20 - 30 years old, Krysten 32, Meredith 29, Lisa 22 and Michael 20 years old. Today Dave lives in Massapequa Park where he likes to garden, work on his house and of course work on his planes. He does some building and likes to keep his planes in operating order.

Dave currently holds the position of Recording Secretary and has been re-elected for the year 2011. Since he joined the Meroke's in 2005 Dave has served the club holding the positions of President, Vice President, Recording Secretary and Tag Program Coordinator.

Dave owns an Aerostar 40, a Falcon II, a Cap 232 and a Skyraider. Right now Dave likes to fly his Aerostar exclusively.



Question - HOW DID YOU GET IN OUR HOBBY?

Answer - Bob Reynolds and I have worked together for 25 years and he came into work one day and invited me to a meeting, explaining all about the hobby and how much fun he was having. I took him up on his offer and here I am.

Question - WHERE DID YOU LEARN TO FLY?

Answer - I am still learning, but I actually started with friends on a control line at what is now Burns Park in Massapequa. When I got out of the Navy, I built an RC plane from a kit and took it off at Burns Park, watching it climb out of sight, into the Great South Bay. I never had control of it. As a Meroke, Bob Reynolds was my official Instructor, but I have flown with other Meroke Flight Instructors.

Question - WHAT IS YOUR FAVORITE TRICK OF THE TRADE?

Answer - I don't really have one. My intention is to fly without having to pick up the pieces. As flying is the second greatest thrill, landing is the first, so I am looking for that thrill.

Question - What are your favorite foods?

Answer - Being of Caribbean and English heritage, I have to say Caribbean food first, meat and potatoes second, but Italian is very close behind.

Question - ONE THING ABOUT YOU THAT WOULD SURPRISE US?

Answer - Prior to becoming a Meroke, I was very involved with the AMVETS and other Veterans groups, assisting Veterans at the VA Hospital in Northport

Question - WHAT WERE YOUR THOUGHTS WHEN YOU WERE NAMED "MR. MEROKE"?

Answer - I had no idea that I was thought of with such high regard to be a Mr. Meroke, so I was completely caught off guard. As I said, to be affiliated with the past Mr. Merokes, it is a true honor.



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NEW CLUB MEETING HALL

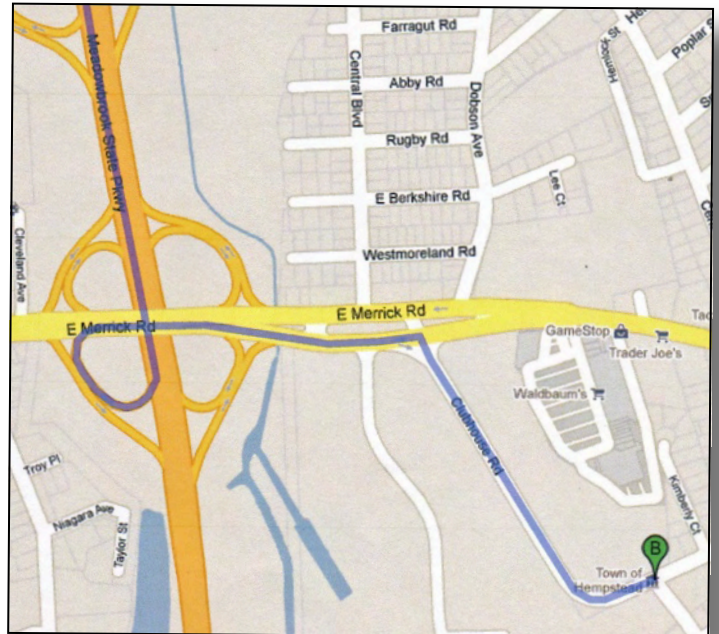
As of January 1, 2011 the MEROKE RC CLUB meetings will be held at:

THE MERRICK GOLF COURSE

**2550 Clubhouse Rd
Merrick, NY 11566
(516)868-4650**

Take the Meadowbrook Pkwy S. Jones Beach
Take exit #M9E Merrick RD - go .4 mi
Turn Right on CLUBHOUSE RD

The first meeting at the new facility will be on Thursday January 6, 2011. Please note the new time for meetings is 7:30p to 9:45p. The meetings will still be held the first and third Thursdays of every month but the TIME AND PLACE HAVE CHANGED.



Calendar

***** NOTE: Winter Meeting Hours**

7:30p to 9:30p

@ Merrick Golf Course

January 6, 2011

Club Meeting

January 20, 2011

Club Meeting

January 30, 2011

Nassau Flyers Swap Meet

Levittown Hall

The Meroke RC Club has reserved 2 tables for its members exhibits.

BIRTHDAYS

- Jan 2 Philip Hajohn
- Jan 5 Mike Ebers
- Jan 6 Carl Russo Jr.
- Jan 7 Gregory Bernard
- Jan 7 Jerry Leibman
- Jan 10 Matthew Comerford
- Jan 13 Tony Pedalino
- Jan 22 Charles Lando
- Jan 23 John Raparelli
- Jan 29 Peter Heinz

It is with deep regret that I write of the passing of Meroke Member Phil Micili. Phil was laid to rest on December 3, 2010. All Meroke members are truly saddened by Phil's passing and want to convey to his family our deepest sympathy, along with our prayers, for their loss.