

IN THE HANGAR WITH...

...Dave Kreiton

When did you become interested in RC Modeling (RCM)?

I had made gliders when I was a kid; in fact my first plane was a hand-launch balsa glider. It had a three-foot wing, wood frame, tissue covered, not RC controlled. I had a lot of fun with that plane. But I drifted away from aviation after awhile and about three summers ago in July it was hotter than blazes. I decided I needed to do something inside and thought I would build an airplane. So I ordered plans for an Olympic, a 650 I think it was, and built it from scratch and flew it and crashed it, flew it and crashed it. After the Olympic, I bought a Calypso. Then found a used Great Planes, can't remember the model, pretty beat up - took the motor out of it and put a new nose on it. It's been re-built a few times, too.



When did you join the OWLS?

About the same time, I needed a place to fly. Art Scheurer tried to teach me how to fly. (laughs) My lack of ability has nothing to do with his teaching, he's a great teacher. I just don't seem to be able to fly very well.

How often do you fly?

Not too often. I've been about 4 months now. From here, it's a little bit of a production to load everything into the car and drive about a half hour to the field. I usually crash around the 4th flight. I suppose if I took all my planes, I could get in maybe a dozen flights before I was out of aircraft.

What line of work were you in?

I was a scientist and engineer in the paper industry; worked out of a research lab in Westbrook, ME. My degree was Engineering Physics with a minor in electrical but took a lot of mechanical and chemical courses. I started with a company called SD Warren that manufactured coated printing papers, which you see in glossy magazines and automobile showrooms and heavy weight stuff like the Channel No. 5 boxes, anything with a high quality coating on it that held the ink so you had a nice printed surface.

Do you think the paper industry has suffered because of the digital world we have now?

No, it's suffered primarily from over-capacity, and it's a very capital intensive industry. And a lot of the paper is produced offshore, because the cost of building and labor is lower. Many of the paper mills in the U.S. have closed, except for some coated paper mills and ground-wood mills that make newsprint and corrugated mills that make liners for corrugated cartons.

Has RCM influenced your life in anyway?

It's given me something to do and meet some nice people. I think I'm more into it for the building than the flying. I really like to build things.

Would you have done anything differently over the years?

Not much. I've been really lucky in my life. I've done a lot of different things. I liked my job up until the last couple years - it was a great job. Since retiring, I've done bagpiping, built kayaks, built harps and taking lessons, model railroading, and HAM stuff (callsign WD1D). And my wife and I travel.

Where?

We've been to every state. Alaska was the final state last spring on a 32 passenger cruise ship. We've been to Africa a couple of times: Kenya for a safari many years ago, then last year Rwanda/Uganda bird watching and tracking gorillas - no hunting, just photography. We flew to Manaus, Brazil and boarded a little riverboat for a trip up the Amazon that held 14 passengers plus crew. Now we're talking about going to the Antarctic in 2016 on a 58 passenger cruise ship out of Argentina or Chile.

How did you get interested in Harps?

About three years ago, I was at the Jacksonville Highland Games competing with my bagpipes. When I got done, I happened upon the Harp competition, and they were holding a workshop, which I found interesting. I've always liked the harp, we had a harpist at our wedding, and I told Kathryn about it. I ordered plans for a 22 string lap harp and built that - never having plucked a harp (laughs). It sounded okay, so I started another one but couldn't find a teacher. Went to a concert in Gainesville last spring to hear Lisa Lynne, kind of a new-age harpist out in CA, whom we had met at the Ocala Art Festival. She introduced us to a local teacher in Gainesville, so we now take lessons from her. I've enrolled in a music theory course at U of F that starts at the end of this month. If you're over 60 years old and a FL resident, you can audit classes for free. I've taken several Astronomy classes there, also.



What advice would you give someone interested in RCM?

Two pieces: Find a good club like the OWLS. Pretty hard to fly without a club when you think of all the liability issues today. You really need to belong to AMA and join a club. And the other thing is if you're really interested in flying, follow the advice Art Scheurer gave me. He said, "Get a simulator package and practice on your computer. Crashes are an awful lot cheaper there than at the field." I have one and I crash more often than not on that. (laughs) I haven't mastered anything yet, but I'm slowly getting better.