

THE GREAT GRAPE GATHERING 2016

by Roy E. Smith



Robert Blair, Mark Rzdca, Jim DeTar, Matthew King, Vic Nippert, and Jerry Crawmer launch for the first round of the WWII Mass Launch event. A proud Campbell Blair is observing from the far left and Bob Clemens photographs the action. Photo: Roy Smith

Well, The Great Grape Gathering has come and gone for another year! Once again the weather gods didn't look terribly kindly upon us – although we have had worse years. Having had absolutely perfect weather in the area for the previous weekend, it was too much to expect a repeat on 'our' weekend. On Friday we set up our headquarters shelter about halfway across the field in the N/S direction and somewhat closer to the West side than the East. There was some grumbling about the location but the organizers felt that the likelihood was for fairly light and variable winds and so this seemed like the best location. In the event, they were proved right, for once – a result of pure luck, not any celestial connection providing insider knowledge. The winds were mostly light, with some breeziness at times, and came from every point of the compass at various times throughout the day. Maximums could be achieved within the confines of the field in whichever direction the fickle wind chose to take the models.

The flying conditions on Friday were mostly good and many took advantage of that by getting their flights in for the two-day events as far as possible, the forecast for Saturday calling for much stronger winds and possible rain.

P-30 had eight fliers and FAC Embryo had seven, which is an indicator that folks were taking advantage of the opportunity to fly.



The WWII Airplanes. Photo: Roy Smith

The FAC WW II Mass Launch event was held in honour of a long-time supporter of the GGG, Jack Barker, who we lost earlier in the year. We knew that Jack had

developed an abdominal cancer, but expected that he would survive for some time, when he suddenly died of an unexpected heart attack. Jack's wife, Sue, and their son, John, attended for the event and a small ceremony was held on the field, featuring a watercolour painting by Jack on display and some words about Jack from Matt King. This culminated in the release of a set of helium-filled balloons to which was attached one of Jack's fine rubber scale models. The model slowly spun under the balloons during its initial rise into the sky, as if surveying the field, then steadied in direction as the assembly rose higher, purposefully flying onwards and upwards until it was out of sight.



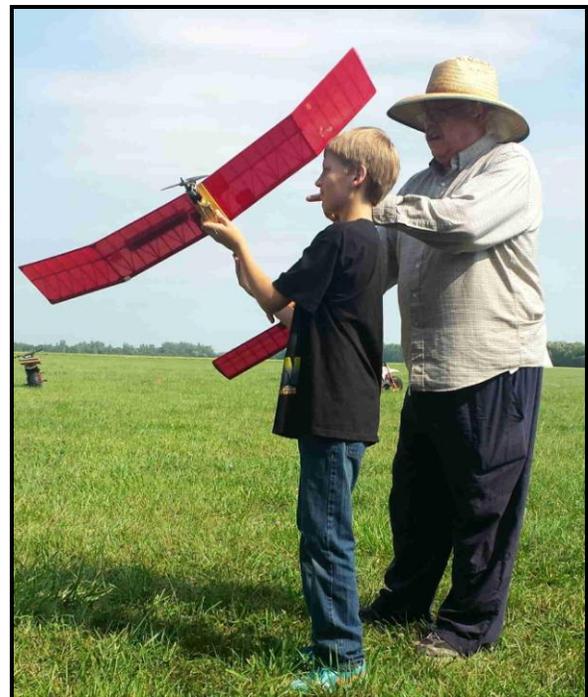
John & Sue Barker Release the Balloons Carrying Jack's Plane Aloft.

Photo:Bob Clemens

Over twenty people attended our Friday evening Fish Fry at Leisures Restaurant in Lakeville and a very good time was had by everyone. Many flying stories were told – and some of the stories were even based at least partly on fact.

Saturday turned out as forecast – strong winds from the South. By the time the rest of the organizers reached the field in the

morning an intrepid member of the team, Jerry Litschi, already had the headquarters tent and tables, etc., set up in the best location. A number of brave souls did get flights recorded. Most worthy of note was the flying of a junior, Bobby Vidovich, who flew 1/2A Old Favourites, Jr. HL Glider, and the Open HL/CL Glider Combined events. He was the only person to record flights in the Old Favourites event, none of the more seasoned fliers were prepared to demonstrate their skills under the conditions prevailing. Bobby showed us the way, putting in three flights without damaging his aircraft. He won a kit for the 1/2A Fortastrop, donated by the manufacturer, BMJR products, which he was very excited to receive.



Bobby Vidovich Reads his 1/2A

Photo:Mel Vidovich

Despite the wild gusts, more flying than Bobby's was done, as witnessed by the results at the end of this report. The forecast rain did not materialize, fortunately.



**Don and Bonnie Myers Always Enjoy the GGG.
Photo: Sally Smith**

Jim Smith flew his beautiful Vic Smeed design cabin model, which was performing well. Unfortunately, Jim did not use an engine shut-off timer and so was subject to some quite variable engine run times. His last flight had a particularly long run – I don't know whether he had perhaps tweaked the needle setting but it ran for 45 seconds and the model was very high when the engine finally quit. It landed within the confines of the airfield, but in a beanfield just North of the runway. Multiple searches have been organised but, as of this writing, the model hasn't been recovered.



**Jim Smith starts his Coquette, a Vic Smeed Design.
Photo: Patti Smith**

Saturday evening saw about thirty of us gather in Swanson Hall, on the airfield, for the traditional chicken barbecue. For a number of years now Heather Mollendorf

has taken on the task of organizing this event, which is one of the highlights of the weekend. Her decorative touches, along with the quality of the food she procures, and in some cases prepares, for us, make this always an occasion to remember. This year was no exception. With help from Pat Barlow in transporting the feast to the venue, and Priscilla Whitford's assistance in checking that nothing had been forgotten, Heather provided us with a memorable repast. The Crest Hill Motel, where many fliers stay, provided a large bottle each of red and white wines, for those who didn't have winnings to imbibe. There was a draw for two door prizes – coffee mugs emblazoned with the GGG logo – won by Cindy DeTar and Sally Smith. As the husbands of both these wonderful ladies are involved with the running of the contest, I anticipated some calls of 'fix' but, to my relief, none came.



The BBQ Door Prize Photo: Roy Smith

On Sunday the winds were forecast to be from the West, veering to the North West during the day and strengthening. We set up on the West side of the field, towards the NW corner, and flying began.

At 11 minutes past 11:00 am on Sunday, September 11th, we held a minute of silence to mark the 15th anniversary of the attack on the World Trade Centre and also to recognize the loss of four members of the

GGG-related model airplane community during the last year. Those recognized were:-

David Larkin of Ontario – a founder member of SAM 86, one of the two sponsor organizations of the GGG.

Jim Mayes of Florida – a solid supporter of the GGG.

Noel Kirby of Ontario – a long-time supporter of the GGG who had been unable to fly for many years, because of infirmity .

Jack Barker of New York, a member of the WNYFFS and enthusiastic participant in the GGG.

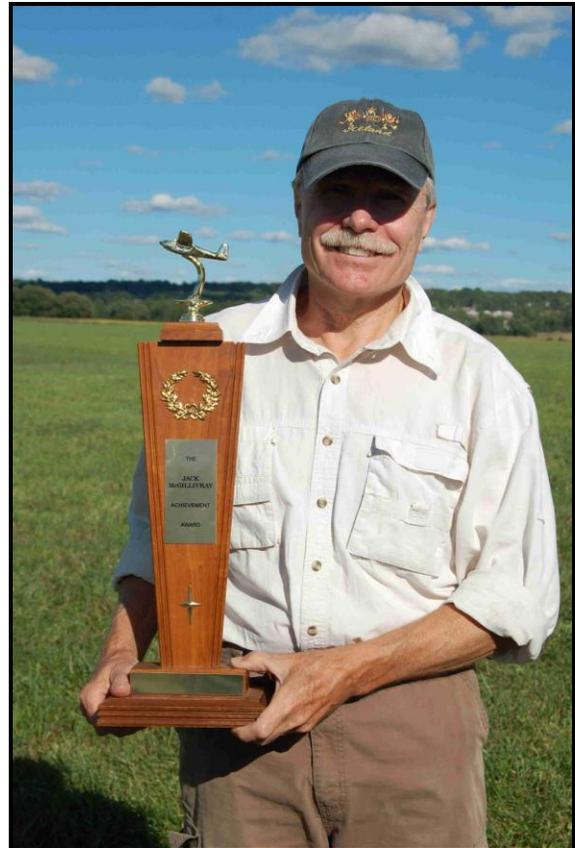
I had hoped to fly the A Nostalgia event on Sunday morning but upon assembling the model I found that there was damage to the tailplane. This model had been ‘treed’ at the end of the ESFFC and I had repaired minor damage to the wing. Clearly my inspection of the tailplane had not been sufficiently careful because I found a ‘ding’ in each of the tailplane upper spars as I assembled it. Needless to say it was immediately disassembled and now awaits further repair. Just a reminder of how important it is to inspect very carefully after a model has experienced unusual trauma.

Unfortunately, many people left early on Sunday because of the early wind direction (N) and the forecast that it would worsen – that was a mistake. As it happened, the wind gradually reduced in strength through the day and backed to Westerly, the long direction of the field, and although the breeze remained stiff, it was definitely flyable. That said, Jim Moseley and I decided to fly in the Mulvihill event – we wound and flew, just as the wind veered to Northerly, and both of our models landed in

trees immediately to the South of our launch point. Mark Rzdca was later able to retrieve Jim’s with the aid of a pole, but mine remained high in the branches of what I believe to be a hickory tree. The good news is that, since our return from the contest the model has blown down from the tree and is safe indoors.

Now let’s turn to the awards presented at the GGG.

The John Magee Trophy was won by Vic Nippert, who also received a framed commemorative print containing a picture of a Spitfire, a photograph of John Magee and a reprint of his well-known sonnet “High Flight”.



Jim DeTar with the Jack McGillivray Achievement Award. Photo: Roy Smith

The Jim Anderson Trophy (for highest aggregate in rubber), and the Jack

McGillivray Achievement Award (for highest total points in FAC events) were both won by Jim DeTar. At the award presentation time it was erroneously announced that David Acton had won the Jim Anderson Trophy. David had already left so, luckily, the trophy had not been presented. Subsequently, when the scores were double-checked, it was found that some of them had been accidentally transposed and that, in fact, Jim DeTar was the winner.



The Jim Anderson Memorial Trophy, won by Jim DeTar. Photo: Roy Smith

Once again, the Dave Andrew Trophy was not competed for – no-one was prepared to put up an unlimited rubber flight in the winds prevailing on Saturday.

The Don Reid Memorial Trophy was won by Dominic Algieri flying his Gollywock in SAM Small Stick.

The Bob Gordon Trophy (for highest aggregate score in power) and the MAAC Can-Am Free Flight Trophy (for highest total points in all non-FAC events) were won by Roy Smith.



Roy Smith with the Bob Gordon Trophy and the MAAC Can-Am Free Flight Trophy. Photo: Jim Moseley

This year, I'm pleased to report, there was much more competition for the title of NWM Series Grand Champion – the winner being awarded the MAAC Can-Am Free Flight Trophy. The ESFFC, held in August, saw better attendance this year and eleven of the fliers who had recorded scores there were present at the GGG to contend for the trophy. It is unfortunate that the leading scorer at the ESFFC, Dave Pishnery, was unable to attend the GGG to continue his bid for the Championship. It is to be hoped that the existence of this award will encourage more people to attend both the ESFFC and the GGG, and to fly in more than one specialist category, and more total events, in order to compete for it. It is a very handsome trophy to have on one's

mantelpiece for a year – providing a focal point for some very satisfactory bragging.

I should have been awarded the “Height of Foolishness” prize but luckily, we don’t have one. On windy Saturday I flew my B Nostalgia Dixielander fairly early on. The flight was good but it landed on the far side of the second beanfield North of the runway, after some entertaining aerobatics in the turbulent air on its way up. Feeling that discretion was probably the greater part of valour in these circumstances, I placed the aeroplane, upside down, to the lee of my field box, intending to fly it again later if the wind calmed a bit. As might have been anticipated, I was then distracted by having to go into the village of Geneseo to procure some supplies and while there I got a phone call from my better half telling me that the headquarters shelter had suffered some damage from the wind and could I get some rope and tent pegs. When I got back with the needed items I found that, not only had the shelter been damaged, the chair next to my field box had blown over – neatly separating the left outer wing panel from the inner one of my “Dixie”. No more flying for that model on that day. As usual – the result of my foolishness, leaving it on the field in strong wind with a chair nearby. No-one else ventured to fly the B/C Nostalgia event so I was not required to fly my ‘C’ model – which would have been a challenge in that blow.

Total entries were good this year – 28 fliers signed up, five more than last year, despite the fact that at least six ‘regulars’ were unable to attend for one reason or another. Also 16 events were flown – compared with 11 last year. The only number that was down was the total number of official flights made – 153 compared with 168 last year, a reflection of the difficulty of fitting in the

flights between periods of extreme gustiness.

I want to thank all those intrepid fliers whose efforts to oppose the law of gravity, in challenging conditions, made the contest successful.

Brian Malin of BMJR Models provided us with the prize of a 1/2A Fortastrop kit for the 1/2A Old Favourites event and Larry Davidson provided two 10’ sheets of polyspan polyester tissue as the prize for the B/C Nostalgia event. Our thanks to both of them.

I also want to thank all of those helpers who worked diligently to make the event happen. Lyle Whitford was our CD and dealt with the AMA bureaucracy. Jim Moseley and Jim DeTar were event directors for the non-FAC and FAC events, respectively. Sally Smith manned the desk a lot of the time, ably assisted at times by Heather Grigg and others. Heather Mollendorf’s organisation of the Barbecue was a triumph. There were many others who lent a hand throughout the weekend, and their assistance is much appreciated. One person in particular, however, is due some special thanks. Jerry Litschi, as usual, was here there and everywhere, setting up and tearing down, laying out the flight line, etc., but this year he took on the extra task of gathering and organising the wine bottles throughout the day, for presentation at the end of each day. This took an enormous weight off my shoulders and made the end-of-day scramble to prepare everything for the award-giving far less onerous (for me). As a result I think I can say without reservation that the little day-end ceremonies went off in a much more professional fashion.

Thanks again to everyone – see you again next year.

Roy Smith – MAAC 7759

GGG 2016 RESULTS

Friday, September 9th, 2016

.020 Replica/ ¼ A Nostalgia Gas
Brad Bane 360
Roy Smith 190
Ruth Bane 171

P-30
Thomas Juell 360
Bob Clemens 320
Jim DeTar 285
Dave Acton 285
Lynn Miller 281
Jim Moseley 240
Lyle Whitford 236
Dominic Algieri 212

Senator
Richard Barlow 172

FAC No-Cal Scale
Vic Nippert 231
Mark Rzacda 187
Bob Clemens 136

FAC Embryo Endurance
Jim DeTar 340
Vic Nippert 249
Dominic Algieri 209
Matt King 140
Robert Gosse 132
Robert Blair 121
Mark Rzacda 79

FAC Dime Scale
Mark Rzacda 307
Jim DeTar 299
Matt King 270

FAC WWII Mass Launch
Vic Nippert
Jim DeTar
Jerry Crawmer

Saturday, September 10th, 2016

Diesel Duration
Roy Smith 250

Vic Smeed Design
Richard Barlow 162
Jim Smith 79

HL/CL Glider Combined
Vic Nippert 185
Jerry Crawmer 147
Jim Smith 147
Lynn Miller 113
Don Myers 112
Jim Moseley 70
Bobby Vidovich 28

Jr HL Glider
Bobby Vidovich 46

36" Bungee Launched Glider
Vic Nippert 129
Roy Smith 98
Richard Barlow 76

B/C Nostalgia Gas
Roy Smith 111

½ A Old Favourites
Bobby Vidovich 147

Cloud Tramp
Mark Whalen 189
Richard Barlow 162
Robert Blair 126
David Acton 108
Mark Rzacda 54

SAM Small Rubber Stick
Dominic Algieri 172

FAC 2 Bit + 1
Matt King 296

FAC Golden Age Scale
Jim DeTar 177
Matt King 108
Mark Rzdca 26

Sunday, September 11th, 2016

½ A Classic Gas
Roy Smith 126

E20 Electric
Jim DeTar 240
Joe Mollendorf 233

SAM Commercial Rubber
Mark Rzdca 221
Jerry Crawmer 207
Jim DeTar 146

Mulvihill/Unlimited Rubber
Mark Rzdca 120
Roy Smith 86
Jim Moseley 64

FAC Simplified Scale
Jim DeTar 83
Mark Rzdca 45

FAC Half Wakefield
Jim DeTar 316
Lynn Miller 149
Robert Blair 132

Don Reid Memorial Trophy
Dominic Algieri 172

Bob Gordon Memorial Trophy
Roy Smith 677
Brad Bane 360
Jim DeTar 240
Joe Mollendorf 233
Ruth Bane 171
Richard Barlow 162

Bobby Vidovich 147
Jim Smith 79

Jim Anderson Memorial Trophy
Jim DeTar 431
Mark Rzdca 395
David Acton 393
Dominic Algieri 384
Thomas Juell 360
Richard Barlow 334
Bob Clemens 320
Jim Moseley 304
Lynn Miller 281
Lyle Whitford 236
Jerry Crawmer 207
Mark Whalen 189
Robert Blair 126
Roy Smith 86

The Jack McGillivray Achievement Award
Jim DeTar 17
Vic Nippert 10
Mark Rzdca 7
Matt King 4
Jerry Crawmer 3
Lynn Miller 2
Dominic Algieri 1
Robert Blair 1
Bob Clemens 1

**The NWM Series Grand Champion
The MAAC Can-Am Free Flight Trophy**
Roy Smith 17
Richard Barlow 15
Jim Moseley 12
Jim DeTar 12
Tom Juell (D) 10
Vic Nippert 10
David Acton 9
Mark Rzdca 9
Lynn Miller 6
Ruth Ann Bane (D) 6
Joe Mollendorf (D) 4
(D) – disqualified, only one category flown.