

EAA Chapter 866 Smilin Jack Newsletter July, 2012



Chapter member Don Garrison - after a couple of years of steady work on this shiny RV8 says he's about 90% finished and only has 40% to go and N58DG, his speedy 2 place tandem taildragger will be ready to fly.

President's Notes July 2012



Funny but true story. Carol and I are in the process of buying a couple of investment rental properties. We figured that it would be a good idea to get an umbrella insurance policy, just as extra protection in case there was an incident at one of these rentals. Carol spoke with our local agent and he quoted what seemed like a fair price. As part of the application process we had to provide copies of all the current insurance policies we had. At the time it included the house we live in, one rental, two cars and my pickup, the Model A, and the Pietenpol. She paid the quoted premium in the office. A week later we received a bill for an additional \$580! Suddenly this policy didn't seem like such a good idea. Carol called the agent and he said he'd look into it. I figured it was probably the Pietenpol that had caused

the jump. It turns out it was the Model A! Even though it is fully insured (not with the same agent), and only sees about 40 mph and 500 miles/year.

If you haven't driven a Model A lately, you might agree that a homebuilt experimental airplane is safer!

I haven't been able to hang out at the airport nearly as much as I'd like. My airport bum status is in jeopardy. Extra hours at work, combined with the crappy weather we've had the last few weeks have made my airport visits brief. After tropical storm Debby cleared out I was able to convince Carol that we needed to go flying to take some pictures of two of her new real estate listings. I consider myself lucky that she is so willing to fly with me. After all the rain and wind it was nice to take off in calm winds, cloudless skies, and a nice cool temperature. Mission Accomplished!

Ben

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Sam Beddingfield: Space pioneer helped launch America to the moon

Sam Beddingfield



4:58 p.m. EST, June 15, 2012|

By **Leslie Postal**, Orlando Sentinel

As a kid, Sam Beddingfield saved his money to pay for flying lessons, thrilled by the speed and the notion of flight.

That boy, who loved "just being up in the air," went on to become an engineer who helped launch the nation into space.

Beddingfield was a pioneer in the country's space program, arriving in Florida in 1959 to work at what became the [Kennedy Space Center](#). He was lured to [NASA](#) by his friend Gus Grissom, who that year was named one of the country's first seven astronauts.

During his career, Beddingfield worked on the Mercury, Gemini, Apollo and space shuttle programs and was deputy director of space shuttle management when he retired in 1985. Archival footage used in the 1983 film "The Right Stuff" showed him helping astronaut Alan Shepard prepare for his historic flight.

Beddingfield, 78, of [Titusville](#), died Wednesday after battling [lung cancer](#).

"Sam was one of the most important people in the first three decades of the space program," said Jay Barbree, [NBC's](#) long-time space correspondent.

When he arrived, NASA had 33 employees — Beddingfield got badge No. 4 — who worked out of hangars, without air-conditioning, near the Banana River.

"The cape was the most exciting place in the world then" and Beddingfield was in the thick of it, Barbree said.

Young, hardworking and under pressure, the newly minted NASA engineers launched rockets and fixed problems on the fly.

"People have always been impressed with what we've done," Beddingfield told the *Orlando Sentinel* in 1983 when the newspaper featured him in Sunday magazine article. "But if they really knew what we did, they'd be *really* impressed."

Beddingfield often told people that when he was first asked to take the NASA job, he protested that he didn't know anything about rockets. Don't worry, he was told, nobody does.

He described a crew so new to space flight that they didn't always know what to worry about, and technicians who came to rely on special green missile tape to make most any repair.

"It got to the point that people said, 'If you don't have something taped up with green tape, it won't fly,' " he said.

Born in Clayton, N.C., Beddingfield went to North Carolina State University and earned an mechanical engineering degree. He then joined the Air Force and worked as a flight test engineer on new aircraft. Stationed at Wright-Patterson Air Force Base in Ohio, he met and became friends met Grissom, who was a test pilot there.

He had first taken flying lessons when he was about 14, paying for them with money he'd saved, said his daughter Nan Lafferty of DeBary.

Flying remained a central part of both his professional and private life until health problems forced him to stop piloting his own planes.

"He flew always, as long as I knew him," Lafferty said. "He liked speed, danger ... just being up in the air," she said.

After his retirement from NASA, Beddingfield was an active volunteer, giving tours at the space center and at the Space Walk Museum of Fame.

"One of the things he was really good at was making complicated things simple," his daughter said.

That is part of what made him a popular guide at the museum, said Charlie Mars, also a retired NASA engineer who worked with Beddingfield for a number of years and now runs the Space Walk.

"He was very outgoing, very friendly," Mars said. "People got to really asking for him. ... He had a good stories. He had a good memory."

Beddingfield worked with Mars to gather handprint casts of astronauts to be used in space industry memorials.

"He was one of us who felt very passionately about what we did and that it should be preserved for the younger generation," Mars added.

Beddingfield and his late wife, Barbara — his high school sweetheart — also loved to travel and watch birds together. He served on the board of the Merritt Island Wildlife Association, among other volunteer work.

Cheerful, giving and fond of playing the piano, Beddingfield seemed to make friends wherever he went. He was also a dedicated family man who relished that role even more than his professional accomplishments, Lafferty said.

"He sure was a good dad, and a good husband and a good uncle and a good grandfather, and all that stuff meant more to him than the other — though that meant a lot to him," she said.

In addition to Lafferty, Beddingfield is survived by daughter Beth Mathis of Titusville and four grandchildren.

EAA Chapter 866 and Sam

Sam was a chapter 866 member and may have even been one of the charter members of our chapter, I don't have that history to refer to. When Wayne and Neale were building the chapter Pietenpol they were looking for an engine for the plane and our treasury was down to about \$700.00. We found a couple of Continental engines in Pennsylvania that a friend of mine was trying to sell at a reasonable price but, we didn't have enough money to buy even one of these. At one of our meetings this was being discussed and Sam stood up and said he'd donate the money for the engines and we might as well buy both of them. We bought the engines and still have one of them. The

Pietenpol project was sold without an engine and the one Continental is still in our shop and the other, I think Ben bought for his Pietenpol.

Les Boatright sent me a link to an interesting story that Sam wrote for a magazine about Gus Grissom. I found it very interesting. Want to read it? Try this link. (www.ispyspace.com/Gus_Grissom.html)

My Sam Beddingfield story
Larry Gilbert

For many years Dunn Airport tenants have gathered at Patti Patch's hangar on Saturday mornings and this one Sat. morning Sam and I were there and standing outside watching a man flying an experimental airplane called a Bobcat. He was attempting to land on rwy 33 while he was on the base leg for the runway I made the remark to Sam that his glide looked too shallow and Sam said "yeah, he's too slow." Moments later the plane just seemed to snap and disappear. We knew he'd gone down so we hopped in Sam's car and drove South on Williams ave. Just off the approach path to rwy 33, over by the edge of Oak Lawn Cemetery we saw parts of the fabric off of the plane in the top of one of the trees. Sam said I know an easy way to get there and drove to Garden St. and in the main entrance to the cemetery and back to the corner where the accident was. In what was left of the fuselage the pilot was upright with his arm hanging out the side. His face was a bloody mess and he wasn't moving at all. The rescue crew was coming in from Williams ave. to pull Faye Skidmore out of the thing. Sam said to me, "he's dead, lets go get some breakfast." We left and went down to Cloibers to eat. We drove back to the airport and parted company after that. The next day, Sunday, Faye Skidmore was walking around the airport with superficial scratches on his head and scalp! He told us he was conscious the whole time during and after the crash but, someone told him not to move so he just sat in that fuselage with his eyes closed not saying anything and not moving at all. Sam and I would talk and chuckle about that morning at times.

We will miss Sam!

Larry

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Coming up at the August meeting

The Sun N Fun organization at Lakeland has changed hands recently and Chapter member Steve Quickel was over at the Lakeland airport to a little event and met the new President, "Lites" Leenhouts. This President is interested in meeting with some of the flying organizations in Florida and has offered to speak at one of our meetings. We have arranged for him to speak at our August meeting and he intends to fly over on Weds. August 1st for our meeting. He is interested in learning how they can make the annual Sun N Fun fly – in better so he's looking for input from people like us. We should be able to give him some information and maybe some ideas as quite a few 866 members go to that event every year. Opportunity for some recognition of our chapter too. Come to the meeting and speak your mind!

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Little Bit

Member Bob Rychel has been diligently flying the time off on 'Little Bit, his Zenair 650XL. Every morning he is at Dunn around 7:00am and flies 1- 2.5 hrs in it. He is at 28 hrs now and only 12 to go and the plane will be legal to fly out of the 25 mi. circle aroundDunnAirpark



Note:

There are some items that belonged to Gil Jones and were donated to the chapter by Claire Fielding. Headset plus handheld transceiver & misc. These items are in the chapter meeting room on a shelf. Interested? Make this known at chapter meeting.

Benson Autogyro

Single place, open cockpit, Subaru engine, partially completed, all parts available. This gyrocopter has never been exposed to weather and can be purchased as a project or parts. Made from a Benson kit. Previous owner had receipts for parts purchased in 1989-1991.

Call Sally Townsend at 321 383-1256

Chapter Officers

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Chapter Meeting
Weds. July 4, 7:00 pm
Dunn Airpark Bldg. 10
Titusville, Fl

Monthly Breakfast
Sat. July 7, 8:00 – 10:00
Dunn Airpark Bldg. 10
Titusville, Fl