

The History of the Buc-Le Aero Sportsmen

The Buc-Le Aero Sportsmen can date its beginnings back to the year 1969. That is when founding members Don Wolfe, Bruce Knerr and Tom Santee began flying single channel aircraft controlled by early escapement radio systems out of a cow pasture on the Lichtenwalter Farm in Lanark, PA Lehigh County. More early members, Roy Hicksonbach, Harold Weil and Lee Beninger joined in the fun as the group expanded and the radio control model aviation hobby matured in these early days.

You may ask where did the Buc-Le name come from? It is short for Bucks-Lehigh (Counties). The club initially started in Lehigh County and settled in Bucks County where we have resided since late 1970.

In late 1970 the group moved to its then, new flying field, located on Lux farm off Heller Rd. in Quakertown, Bucks County. This was when the Buc-Le Aero Sportsmen were officially born. Harold Weil was credited with the club name and original crest for the club. The initial runway was a 200 ft. circle, but it was smooth, unlike the former cow pasture in Lanark. Over the years more land was leased from the farmer and the runway eventually grew to a length of 750 ft. This property would be the home to Buc-Le until early 2005.

During these years radio control model aviation advanced from the early small single channel aircraft all the way to giant scale gasoline powered and turbine powered aircraft we see today. In 1980 the International Miniature Aircraft Association (IMAA) was founded as a special interest group for large scale model aircraft. Don Wolfe, Bruce Kane and Dick Mindler were early IMAA members promoting large scale model aircraft and the "Bigger Flies Better" motto. As a result giant scale model aviation took off through the 80's and 90's. We have also witnessed massive advancements in electric powered flight. Early electric power was severely limited by the batteries at the time and brushed motors. Current electric power utilizing lithium polymer batteries and brushless motors rivals and in some cases exceeds the performance of the best internal combustion engines.

Radio control equipment evolved from early escapement systems that were assembled by hobbyists to digital proportional AM and FM fixed frequency systems to the current state of the art frequency hopping 2.4 GHz systems we now utilize.

The club enjoyed 35 good years at our Heller Rd. location along with a multitude of fly-in events. In the early 2000's the property was put up for sale and ultimately we had to move after the property was sold. Driven by the guidance of our club president at the time, Jon Fritzges, an exhaustive search for a new location ensued. We were fortunate to find our current location off Kumry Rd. in Quakertown, Bucks County where we have resided since early 2005 to present. We look forward to many more years and many more fly-in events at this location, enjoying the wonderful model aviation hobby.