

## A Brief History of the Fluvanna County Radio Control Flying Club, Inc.

The first official meeting of the Fluvanna County Radio Control Flying Club (FCRCFC) was held at the Lake Monticello Fire and Rescue Building on January 30, 2000. Eleven founding members assembled to formalize the structure of the club, and agreed that John Kaiser would become the first President, David Beazley the Vice President, and Eddie Hammers the Secretary/Treasurer.

Two weeks later, February 17, 2000, the Academy of Model Aeronautics (AMA) officially issued Club Charter #4113, AMA District IV, to FCRCFC. *Article II of the FCRCFC Constitution states the club's Purpose and Objectives: The club is established to unite Radio Control Aircraft Modelers as an organized group. The objectives of the club shall be to promote Fluvanna County, Virginia, Radio Control Aircraft Modelers in: (1) Radio Control Model Flying; (2) Model Aircraft Construction; (3) The advancement of model aviation in all its phases as a recreational, sporting and educational activity; (4) To support the programs and activities of the Academy of Model Aeronautics (AMA); (5) To generate good will through our actions within the community.*

This first, formal, January 30, 2000, organizational meeting, and issuance of the Club Charter were in fact the culmination of efforts which actually began earlier, on July 9, 1999, when John Kaiser called together Fluvanna County members of the Charlottesville club at the site known as "Pleasant Grove." Fluvanna County, Virginia, had recently purchased approximately 1,000 acres of land which was not slated for specific use for some years to come. Negotiations with county officials led to authorization of a portion of Pleasant Grove for purposes of RC flight. On September 25, 1999, the founding members met a second time and concluded that the time was right to move toward formation of a new, AMA-sanctioned club.

The formation of FCRCFC, as with many clubs before it, began as a response to changing circumstances: flying sites were difficult to establish; RC airfields and surrounding areas were sometimes incompatible; flyers from other established clubs began looking for other airfields to use; some clubs emphasized aspects of RC flight not well attuned to various members' preferences and needs.

FCRCFC pilots began to realize that the Pleasant Grove site was not compatible with the flight of larger RC aircraft because of nearby trees, and the club considered moving to a more suitable, cleared area. A recently opened, 50+-acre site was found near the junction of Virginia State Roads 647 and 648 just west of Palmyra, and flight operations were moved to this site. Plans were made to improve the driveway leading to the runway, and to eventually add a concrete takeoff area and establish electrical power. By 2004, however, the construction of new homes nearby and the property owner's changing priorities dictated that a new site would soon have to be found.

Negotiations were again conducted with Fluvanna County, and a new flying site was established just west of the Fluvanna County Landfill. By the 2005 summer flying season, the site had been cleared, a runway and flight-line established, flight stations designated, and a shed constructed to house mowers and other equipment. By October, 2007, FCRCFC felt established and confident enough to present its first Open-House/Fly-In -- a successful event attended by almost 50 vehicles whose occupants were treated to free hot dogs, hamburgers and soft drinks, and entertained by fixed-wing and helicopter fly-bys and demonstrations. This initial event was so successful that FCRCFC scheduled an annual Fly-in to take place every third Saturday of October. In 2009, this schedule was moved up to September to take advantage of better weather without conflicting with other regional RC field events.

With the planned closure of the Fluvanna County Landfill and its change in function to a Recycling- and Refuse Transfer Station, discussions with county officials were initiated to consider possible use of the reclaimed site as a location for a smoother, larger, multi-runway, RC airfield. However, regulations governing the configuration of landfills would have rendered this site less suitable than the current location. The club's relationship with Fluvanna County continued to be cordial and accommodating, and in mid-2009 FCRCFC was able to renew its four-year Memo of Understanding with the county for use of the present RC airfield which now also includes a control-line circle.

FCRCFC is a small club of approximately 45 members, many of whom are experienced "old timers." They build and fly (and repair!) 'glow'-, gas-, turbine- and electric-powered fixed-wing and rotary-wing aircraft of all sizes and designs. The membership also includes both old and young novices who are just beginning to experience the thrill and satisfaction of radio-controlled, control-line and free-flight sport-, scale- and aerobatic flight. Come and join us at our field, or attend our meetings as welcomed guests. The club meets every fourth Monday of the month, 7:30pm, presently at the Lake Monticello Fire and Rescue Building, Slice Road, Palmyra, Virginia.