



The AMA History Project Presents: Biography of CLAYTON (“SKIP”) MAST



Written by CT (2019); reformatted by JS (2019)

*The following was written by Cliff Tacie and provided to the AMA History Project
in August 2019.*

Sadly, our model aviation community has lost another internationally well-known scale builder, flyer, and friend. Clayton “Skip” Mast passed away on August 14, 2016 at the age of 84 after a lengthy battle with pancreatic cancer.

Skip was a fierce and serious competitor with numerous top-ten finishes whenever he flew, yet he never seemed to have to win first place in order to come away with a smile. However, I’m sure that everyone who knew Skip came away feeling that he was, indeed, a winner. As an example, upon making a hard landing at the 14th Annual OTOW Fall Fly-In in 2014, and breaking away a section of the cockpit and a wingtip, he joked to an *Ocala StarBanner* reporter, “If you let something like this upset you, you’d better take up golf!”

Like most of us, Skip was enthused about airplanes since he was a small boy. For the most part, he built and flew scale models, and although he built a few kits, he was mainly one of those rare breeds today, the scratch-builder. His models were all extremely well engineered, constructed, and detailed, and he made every effort to ensure they were accurately replicated.

Although Skip has been most widely known for his series of C-130 Hercules models in striking red, white, and blue Coast Guard colors, he built and flew other beautiful scale aircraft also, such as his North American P-51 and SIG J-3 Cub. A life member of Radio Control Club of Detroit (RCCD), their website proclaims his true love to be multi-engine aircraft. His early efforts were a DC-3, followed by a B-29. Both models were glow-engine powered, and he supposedly flew them regularly in club pylon and pattern events! His C-130 that followed was large for the time, with a 102” wingspan, and powered by K&B .21 engines. The plans for this model were published in his 1981 article in *Model Airplane News*. He built two in Coast Guard colors and a third one in desert camouflage. Number three presented a special challenge for him (he loved challenges), because he had to build it under 6 kilograms (13 pounds) for it to be within F4C restrictions. It was with this model that he earned a spot on the 1984 and 1986 U.S. Scale Teams.

Never without a project on the building board, in 1999, he collaborated with George Maiorana to build a larger B-29. George made molds from the beginnings of Skip’s traditional balsa-covered foam fuselage. Skip proceeded to build his B-29, “Fi-Fi”, and George built “Miss America 62”. Powered with .40-sized four-stroke engines, Skip campaigned his model at the Mint Julep Scale Meets and AMA Nats, and reportedly damaged it significantly at the 1999 FAI F4C Team Trials due to radio interference. With George’s help (a new fuselage), he rebuilt it to fly again!

Skip’s last C-130 is much larger and electric-powered. At 1/12-scale, it has a 130” wingspan and weighs 38 pounds. Power comes from four Turnigy SK35045 motors turning 14 x 10 props

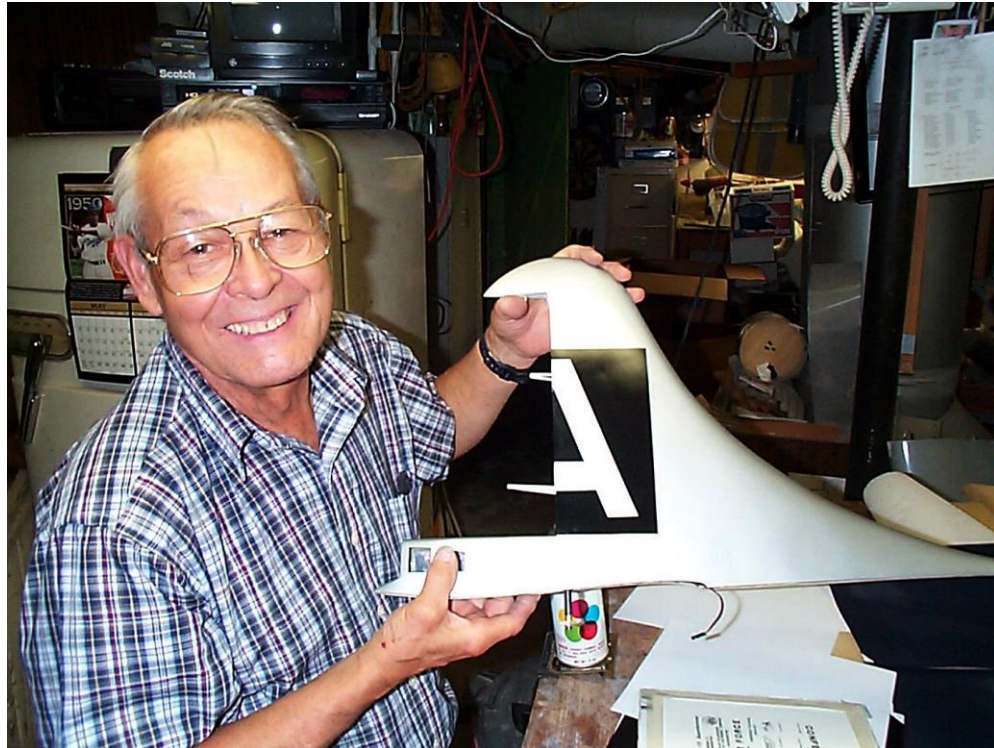
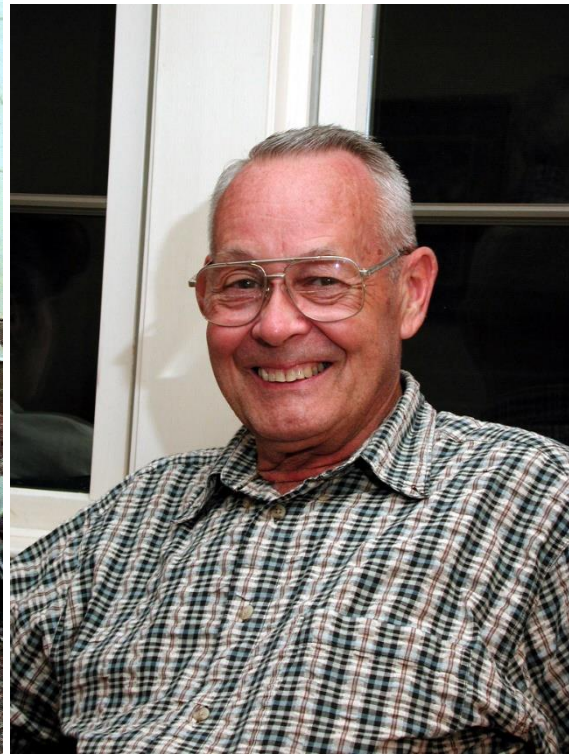
driven by four 6S 500 mAh batteries and 41 amp ESCs. With the help of his good friend, Tom Czikk, he flew the big C-130 at the 2016 Top Gun Invitational and several other scale events around Florida. Skip ultimately gave the C-130 to Tom, who intends to campaign it on the contest circuit this coming year. Watch for it in a neighborhood near you!

Over the years, Skip represented the United States on two U.S. F4C Scale Teams, in 1984 in Paris, France, and in 1986 in Oslo, Norway. He competed in numerous AMA Nats, Canadian Nats, Scale Masters Championships, and Top Gun Invitationals. In 2008, he moved from Michigan to the On Top of the World community in Ocala, Florida with his loving wife, Sue, and was a member of the OTOW RC Flyers.

Personally, I consider him to have been a very close friend. But then, I believe that Skip was a good friend to everyone who ever met him. We miss him.



Source: Above photo provided to the AMA History Project by Cliff Tacie.



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