

GILMAN SPRINGS RC FLYERS HISTORY

Compiled by Bob Estrella in September 2014 (Updated on 2/19/2018)

THE BEGINNING

The Gilman Springs RC Flyers Club was founded in November 1998 by the late George Killeen. George was a salesman, and the Dairy was one of his customers. He negotiated a 5 year lease with the owners for \$360 per year for use of part of the property for our "Model Airplane Strip". This Lease took effect on December 1, 1998. The Club was founded with the principal of having a limit of 40 Members. Those 40 members who started the club are Charter Members. Of those Charter Members, 9 are still in the Club. They are (in alphabetical order) Bob Estrella (Life Member), Darrell Ivie, Mike Killeen (the founder's son), Jim Markham, Duane Neese, Mel Santmyers, Skip Shaw (Life Member), Robert Shiffermiller (Life Member), and Dale Yaney.

THE FIRST RUNWAYS

The initial Field consisted of two dirt runways, a main one running North/South, and a cross runway running East/West. **AND**, Mystic Lake was there, with its shore around 200ft. away from the south end of the North/South runway. George Killeen and Holly Hollingworth were the first club members to initiate the float flying on Mystic Lake. They said it was great!

THE FIRST FIELD FACILITIES

Lots of work was done in 1999 by the Charter Members, setting up a trailer with a covered patio kitchen area, putting up two Pit Area Shade Structures, installing a Septic Tank, and running electric and water lines. Several members also gave generous monetary and material donations which greatly benefitted the effort. In July 1999, the North/South runway was surfaced with a Polymer coating for around \$1200. This was financed by offering Life Memberships to members for \$350 each. Five Life Memberships were purchased.

THE FIRST RC EVENT

The Club's "First Annual 4th of July Fun-Fly Weekend" was held at the Field in 1999 with 40 Pilots and 55 Airplanes.

THE MOVE TO THE CURRENT RUNWAY LOCATION

At the November 14, 2001 Club Meeting, Mel Santmyers noted that there have been crashes very close to where the dairy cows are. He suggested that we move our runway to a location parallel to the existing East/West runway, so that the flight paths would not overfly the dairy cows. At the January 2002 Meeting, go-ahead was given to construct this new runway. Much work followed, much led by then Field Director, Mel Santmyers; grading and packing the new runway, moving the two shade structures using a special trailer set up by Jim Markham, building a new shed (Built by Jim and Leann Markham - Fiberglass roof donated by Frank Britton), installing a Septic Tank (installed by Mark Jarrell), running electric and water lines (done by Holly Hollingworth's sons Dave and Cliff, and Skip Shaw's son Bob). Several of the rest of the Charter Members also worked very hard assisting in all of the above work.

PAVING THE NEW RUNWAY

Late in 2002, the Matich Company was re-paving Gilman Springs Road. Our member, Hal Wondolleck, was working at Johnson Power Company and had contacts at Matich. He got a quote from them to pave our 600'x60' runway with a 1" layer of asphalt paving. Since Matich was already working in the area, their quote was quite reasonable at \$11,392.50. It was then determined that, with our current Bank balance and obligations, we would need to raise an additional \$6000 to be able to go ahead with the project. It was estimated that, if all of the regular flyers in the club donated \$200 each, we would successfully raise the needed \$6000. So, on November 1, 2002, a letter was sent to all of the members requesting a donation of \$200 or whatever amount they could. Within three weeks, we raised \$8,500. Fifty-seven of our 85 members had contributed to the Paving Fund, most of whom donated \$200 or more. So, with this money, and money we had in the bank, we had enough to get the runway paved and do some other Field Projects. On November 21, 2002, the Matich Company laid the asphalt paving on our runway.

OTHER HISTORICAL NOTES OF INTEREST

- In May 2004, Mystic Lake was all the way up to within 15ft of the south edge of our asphalt runway.
- The first "Air Combat Series" Pylon Race was held December 11, 2004 – Last one on March 13, 2010.
- The first Club 40 Pylon Race was held at our Field on March 5, 2011 – Last one on November 5, 2016.
- Over the years, the Membership Limit was raised several times, and now it is unlimited.

The membership count peaked at 135 in July 2006.

GILMAN SPRINGS RC FLYERS PHOTOS FROM THE PAST



The Club Founder, the late George Killeen, with his son Mike and two grandsons. The photo was taken at our Annual 4th of July Fun Fly in 2001. George's grandson is flying off the original North/South Runway.



The Trailer and Kitchen area at our original Field location.



The April 29, 2001 "Spring Fly-In" at our original Flying Site. The photo shows the North/South runway, taxiways, Pilot Stations, and Pits.



Mark Jarrell grading our relocated runway on June 2, 2002.



Mel Santmyers rolling our relocated runway in June 2002.



The late Frank Britton rolling a taxiway at our relocated runway in June 2002.

MORE GILMAN SPRINGS RC FLYERS PHOTOS FROM THE PAST



Members putting up a Pit Shade Structure at the relocated Runway in May 2002.



Dave Hollingworth operating a Ditch Witch, digging a trench for running electric and water lines to the relocated runway in June 2002.



Asphalt Paving being put down at the relocated runway on November 21, 2002.



Roy Truitt trying out the newly paved runway on December 4, 2002.



Roy Truitt, Jeff Vanderpol, and Mel Santmyers spreading gravel in the parking area of the relocated runway on February 14, 2003.



Mystic Lake, just 15ft from the south edge of the runway on May 10, 2004. See the edge of the asphalt runway in the upper right of the photo. This was RC Flyers heaven, being able to fly both land and float planes at our Field.