



R/C GUFF, *The Life Story*

By DR. WALT GOOD
PART THREE

• Again, Bill was available for most of the summer of 1940, so we were able to join forces and go to the AMA Nats in Chicago for the R/C event. The R/C Guff was in top shape, and we had added a third escapement to give a hi-lo engine speed control for extra contest points. As we had only two channels in the radio, we would have to decide before the flight whether to use rudder and elevator or rudder and engine speed. If one of the receivers was not working that day, then it would be rudder only. That happened more often than we care to admit.

The morning after we arrived in Chicago for the 1940 Nats we found that our car had been looted, and among the missing items was the R/C transmitter! Bill went to the Newark Radio store with our problem, and the manager allowed Bill to build a new transmitter overnight! I spent the night repairing the wing which had been bashed by the looters.

PHOTO 40

Here's the old transmitter which was stolen.

PHOTO 41

Here's the "overnight" transmitter with one tube for each channel. Don't touch any bare wires; you'll get a 400-volt shock!

PHOTO 42

This is at the 1940 Nats at Chicago show-



Photo 42.

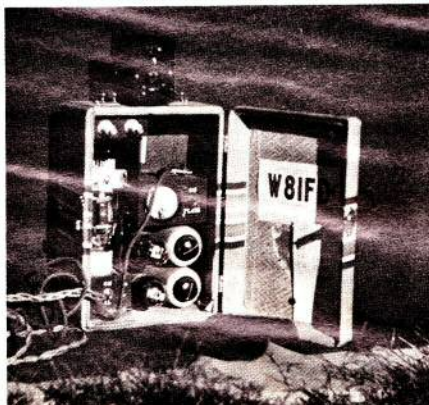


Photo 40.

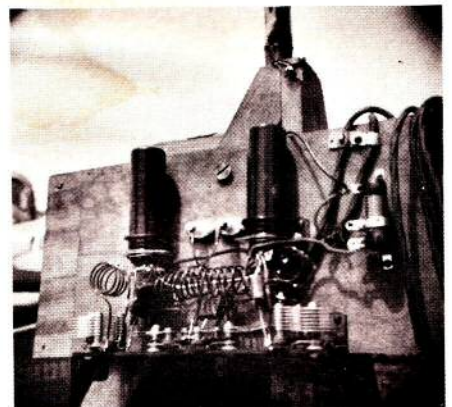


Photo 41.

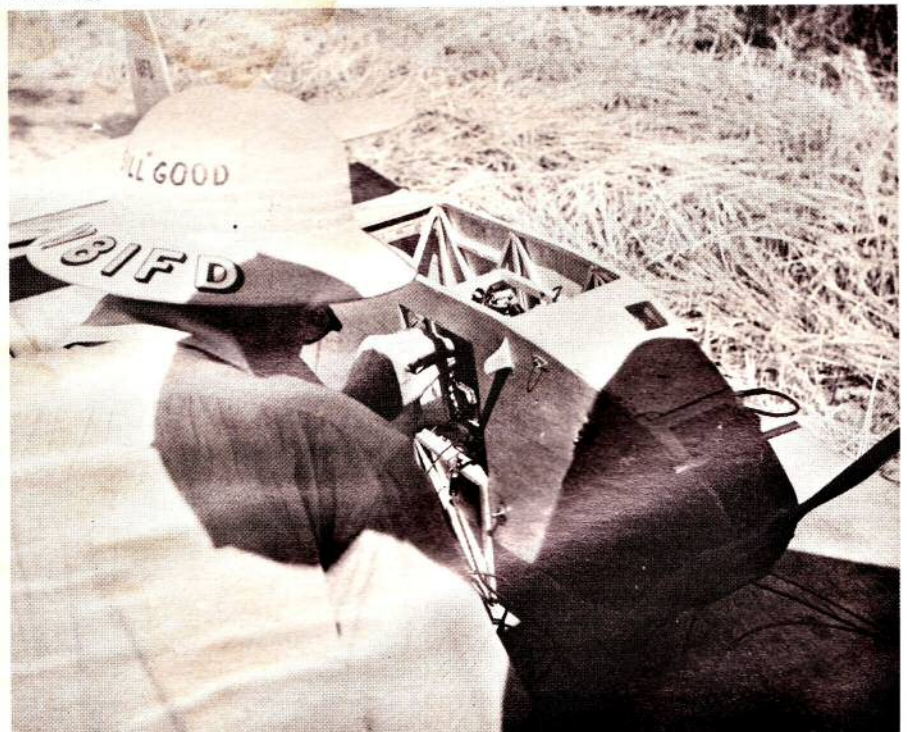


Photo 43.



Photo 44.

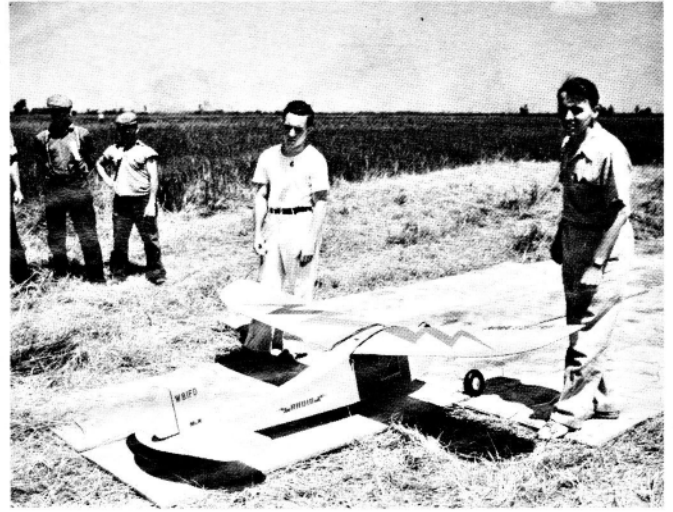


Photo 45.



Photo 46.

ing the "overnight" transmitter in lower right. The R/C Guff now has lightning bolts on the top of the wing. I am on the left and Bill is on the right with the control box. See the newsreel cameras on the tops of the cars in the background?

PHOTO 43

Here Bill is in the process of tuning the receiver. Note the piece of yardstick for rear wing rubber hold-down.

PHOTO 44

Bill, under the helmet, watches as I check the engine.

PHOTO 45

Ken Davis and I are waiting for judges' signal to launch. Plywood sheets were used for the runway, which made a wingtip launch necessary. The picture shows maximum decorations used on the Guff. Note "RADIO" on side and Bill's Ham call "W8IFD" on fin. All the decorations are in turquoise blue. The plane was International Orange by Berryloid nitrate dope.

PHOTO 46

Bill is piloting while I cup my ear to hear if the engine has cut. Note Jim Walker as a very interested spectator on the left. Jim entered his first R/C Nats the next year in 1941. The man with the paper in his hand on the right is a judge. This was an official flight.

PHOTO 47

The 1940 Nats had 11 entrants who actually made flights which garnered points; the biggest R/C Nats yet. Well-known names, Siegfried, Raspante, Custin, and Shershaw, placed in the first five. The Guff



Photo 47.



Photo 48.

won again, but with less margin than before. This time we both held trophies. This gave us two wins on the Roberts trophy.

I've often stated that Bill was the better pilot because he didn't worry about having to repair a damaged plane; that was my department. His department was the transmitter... and what could happen to that... except for being stolen once in a blue moon!

PHOTO 48

I just had to include a Good family photo, with (left to right) Walt, dad Lester, and me, at the end of the meet, and mention the constant support from our parents over the years. As a high school science teacher, Pop knew the value of learning through doing it yourself, and he gave us his quiet encouragement at every turn. He even did one winter when we first ran the engine in the living room! After all, we did have the window open, but we didn't realize that the smoke would be sucked down the cold air register and then be blown back through the whole house! We didn't think to take a photo that time. Just as well.

A few demonstrations were made in 1940, but the one in the fall, just before Bill and I left home for the last year of Graduate school, will be the best remembered. Steve Corbett, Director of the Detroit Recreation Department Model activities, invited us to give a demo of the R/C Guff at the Ford airport in Dearborn. The occasion was the annual model show which the Recreation Department arranged for the general public.

During the day we made our three demo flights and then proceeded to pack the Guff away for the trip home. We were almost ready to leave when a young lad ran up and asked if we would make another flight so his grandfather could see it fly. We hesitated for a moment before answering, and then he said his grandfather was Henry Ford!

By the time that young William Ford returned with Henry, the plane was back together and Bill had checked the batteries to see if we could squeeze out another flight. The flight went well except the landing was so close that I almost had to pull Henry out of the way. He didn't flinch and apparently thought such close landings were normal. We didn't tell him otherwise.

Henry toured us through the nearby hangars, where he showed us old aircraft and engines destined for his museum, which



Photo 49.

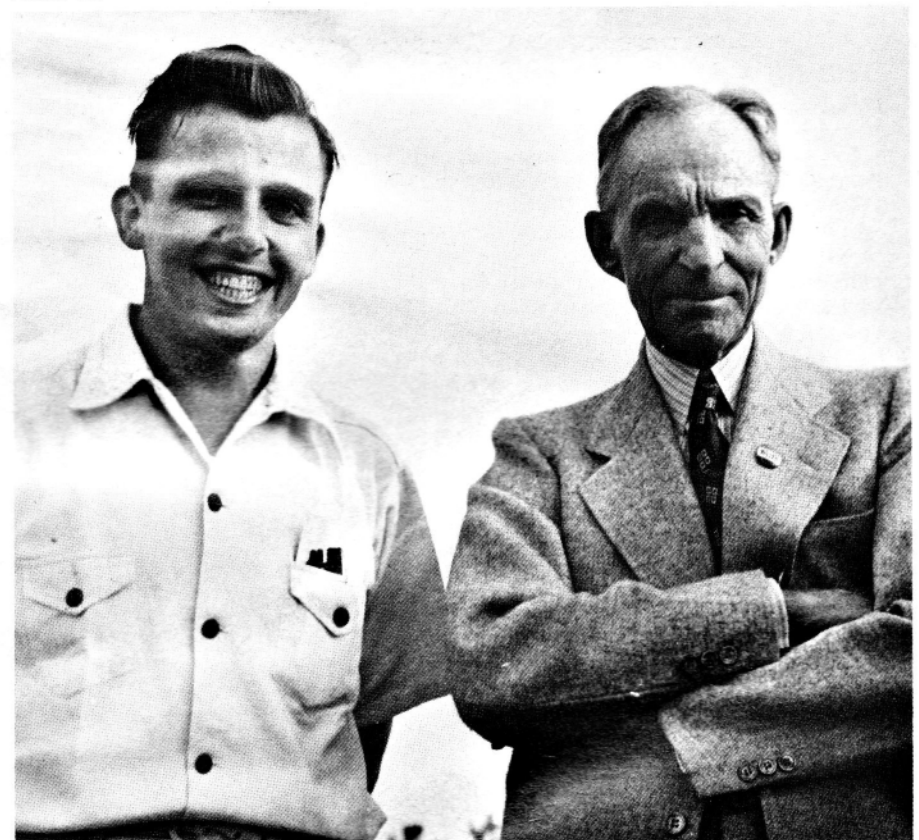


Photo 50.

was yet to be built. His last words to us were, "Boys, keep on experimenting," which is what we're still doing almost 50 years later.

PHOTO 49

At the Ford airport August 1940 are (left to right): Me, (?), Steve Corbett, Henry Ford,

(?), and Bill. The (?) are Recreation Department personnel, I think.

PHOTO 50

Here's Bill and Ford. Henry is wearing a Willkie button in favor of the U.S. Presidential candidate.

What a special experience that was!