

FARM Newsletter

AMA Charter 1654

May 2016

PRESIDENT'S CORNER

Dave Rothbart



Here is a tale of an on line purchase with Hobby King. When you first open up their web site you should first go to and click on the US warehouses East or West Coast locations. Other wise you end up in Hong Kong with great price, an enormous shipping tab with at least six week wait for your order. I placed an order with Hobby King on 12/25/15.

It is a challenging site that requires some degree of knowledge and patience. But having purchased a number of items from them I know where to look for product and necessary related information, so I thought. The current purchase was for two 5S 5000 mAh Zippy packs along with two 2S 500 mAh Lipo batteries. Both sizes showed in stock according to the Arkansas warehouse web page.

There is a way to check on the status of an order at the bottom of the home page. Each time I checked the order was shown to be still in the warehouse for shipment. After several weeks I tried using the On Line Chat function to find out what the delay was. This is a hit or miss function when it comes to its reliable operation. After several days

and attempts I finally managed to chat with someone who was probably located in Hong Kong.

After about 30 minutes of going back and forth the status of the order was finally revealed. The 5S 5000 mAh batteries were not in stock. But not only were they not in stock they were not sure if their supplier was going to manufacturer any more and if they did when they might receive them. The Chatter asked if I would like to backorder them. I said yes if they would forward the 2S packs, which I assume were available. The answer was we do not split orders once the order goes to the warehouse. Hobby King had my money with no expectation when I might receive entire order.

So I told them to cancel the order. Next came the shocking response from the Chatter person. They could not issue a credit until the Arkansas warehouse authorized it. The date and time of this blessing could take weeks or longer or maybe never occur.

After a number of additional emails back and forth with Hong Kong I decided it was time to bring in the heavy armor. I use Papal for just such a potential problem. A protest was issued for the outstanding amount. Low and behold within minutes a credit for the full amount appeared on my Papal account.

It's pretty clear that Hobby King does not understand customer service or how to conduct business. With multiple locations they could have if available found the Lipos else ware in their system. The rigidity and poor response will probably limit my relationship with this company. I ordered the 2 S batteries from a responsible supplier, which shipped them the same day.

For fun I sent an email inquiry a few days latter to Hong Kong asking if the Zippy 5000 mAh batteries were available in the US. Three days later I received an affirmative answer.

Post Script: I reordered the 3S 5000mAh batteries this time from the West Coast warehouse. Lo and behold the order went through immediately. The following day I

checked the status of the order which showed that they had been shipped. Three days latter I received the batteries.

The moral to the story, caveat emptor.

Happy Flying,

Dave Rothbart

EDITOR'S NOTES – Upcoming Events

Jeff Killen

- 1. Spring Pattern Contest, at the field, all day, 5/21 – 22/2016**
- 2. Club Meeting, at the Warrenton Community Center, 7:00 PM, 5/24/2016**
- 3. Fun Fly #3, at the field, 1:30 PM, 6/5/2016**
- 4. Club Picnic & Float Fly #1, at Lake Ritchie, 9:00 AM, 6/25/2016**

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SECRETARY'S REPORT

Jeff Killen

The April club meeting was held on April 26 at the Wright Experience in Airlie. Fifteen members were present for the tour of the facility, led by Bill Hadden. Highlights from the tour follow:

1. The facility is owned by Ken Hyde. He employs a handful of men to work on several antique aircraft restoration projects. From the tour, it appeared that roughly five projects were underway at the time of our visit.
2. A Wright Model B from 1909 was being built. The plane features wing warping, chain drive for the two propellers, driven with an 8:1 reduction system. The original plane weighed in at 800 lbs. It was powered by an engine designed in 1906 that developed 35 HP. One of the original engines was there, #79, of about 100 that were originally built.

3. A picture of a Curtiss Jenny was shown; it was used as a primary trainer for pilots back in the day. Ken Hyde's father flew this aircraft.
4. The Wright brothers made their own engines.
5. A picture of a 1902 glider was discussed. This model was very successful. Bill Haddon did a lot of research on this aircraft (as he has done on many of the projects being worked by the facility).
6. A 1909 plane was discussed. This model may be found in a local College Park museum. It was the first military plane, and called The Military Flyer. It was used for 2 years back in the day.
7. A wing for a Parks P-2A was in work. It features a rather unique silver landing light.
8. One of the wall pictures showed a 1906 patent on an airplane control system.
9. In 1911, and Wright EX Vin Fiz was flown across the USA. During the transit, the plane flew at about 55 MPH; there were 7 crashes along the way. One of these was being built by the facility. The plane featured a 32' wingspan, and art work saying "Vin Fiz" (some kind of soft drink of the times). Scott Rawlings (father of past club member Pete Rawlings, was involved with the art work in some way.) When the plane flew across the USA, it landed in pastures (as there were no airports to use). A newspaper crew followed the flight. The plane is built with spruce and ash woods. It has no seat belt, a foot pedal is used for throttle control, and the landing gear uses off-centered wheels.
10. A Curtiss OX-5 engine was on display.
11. A Curtiss Jenny aircraft fuselage was under construction. Copper wraps were used at the end of struts to prevent wood splits.
12. On a tight schedule, a complete Wright Flyer can be built in a year at the facility.
13. A racing plane of the times, called the Wright Racer, flew at 80 MPH, and was powered by a V8 engine.
14. A Parks fuselage was being built. Complete blue prints were shown. The plane featured 2 riders and a pilot. It used a 7 cylinder engine, could fly at night, and could be flown on instruments alone.
15. A rebuilt Jenny engine was on display. This engine has been run.
16. A room showing many handmade propellers was toured. A typical propeller was built from slabs of laminated wood weighing about 45 lbs. A finished propeller weighed about 8 lbs.
17. As the 100th anniversary of WWI is approaching, there is some interest in building planes which flew in that conflict.
18. Dave Mitchell is one of the mechanics employed by the facility. He flies rubber-powered free flight models and showed us one of his planes (a low-winged model, with 15" wingspan.)



Scenes from a visit from one of our friends in southern California a while back. He owns/flyes the twin engine Seneca pictured (to the right). He took me for a quick run around the airport at Manassas (below) before continuing his trip. Above, he and his wife, along with me (Jeff Killen) and my wife are pictured.



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The group which saw the tour of the Wright Experience at the April club meeting.