

GGG 2022 Report

by Roy E. Smith

The 2022 edition of the Great Grape Gathering, held every year at the National Warplane Museum airfield in Geneseo, NY, is now in the history books. I say that it is held every year – it would have been if Covid hadn't prevented it from occurring in 2020 and 2021. The GGG is an unusual contest in that it is a joint Canadian/US effort and while Canadians couldn't cross the border the contest became irrelevant in some way. Now we are back!

2020 was to have been the Quinquagenary year for the GGG, so instead we have treated 2022 as the Quinquagenary edition. Every entrant received an engraved commemorative craft knife, donated by the manufacturer, Swann Morton, in honour of our fiftieth year. Unfortunately, these had already been engraved with the year 2020 – when our Quinquagenary was intended to be celebrated.



I should mention here that there is some doubt about when, exactly, the first Great Grape Gathering was held. When I inherited the task of acting as Contest Manager the documents I received from the late, great, Jim Anderson recorded the contest as being "since 1971". I have learned since that there are memories of it being held as far back as 1964. If that can be documented, or supported anecdotally by more than one person, we might soon be celebrating

our Sexagenary! Not bad for a bunch of largely geriatrics.

Being late in the season for the Northeast coast, the weather for the GGG is always a little chancy. For the week before the joust the forecast held steady, predicting near-perfect weather for all three days. I looked forward to a 3-day contest such as we haven't had in a long time. That forecast held true for Friday and Saturday and a lot of fun ensued. Sunday, however, saw our luck run out - fairly steady rain beset us.

Sally and I arrived at the field on Friday morning and began the process of setting up contest headquarters, with the help of many others, including Joe and Heather Mollendorf, Brad and Ruth Ann Bane, and Priscilla and Lyle Whitford. We had set up the trailer adjacent to the access road on the South side of the field on Thursday afternoon – on the basis of the weather forecast saying that the light wind would be from the South and, amazingly, that is what happened. In very short order the process of registering the entrants, and setting up the flight line, began.

The day was in many ways a perfect one for flying. South winds are the best for the NWM field – providing the longest distance and crop fields beyond – and that is what we got. I am mystified, however, by the fact that very little flying occurred in the non-FAC events. The results sheets at the end of this report illustrate that point – and also illustrate that the FAC events were well competed.

Another factor that can be seen from the results is that, despite the seemingly ideal conditions, thermals were very elusive for many folks. There were stunningly rapid 'down' air streams on many occasions. I witnessed Brad

Bane's Hustler (¼A Nostalgia) gain excellent altitude in the power phase and then end up back on the ground in 68 seconds. Its descent rate was staggering. A little while later my 850 Dixielander (C Nostalgia) descended equally quickly. Being a bigger model it achieved a higher zenith in the power phase but fell quickly from there for a time of 98 seconds. Similar fates befell both Joe Mollendorf and Simon Blake in the first flyoff flights of the A/B Classic Gas event.



Joe Mollendorf's A/B Classic Astrowhip

As has always been the case, the FAC events drew significant levels of competition in all of the scheduled categories. Among the many flights worthy of mention is Vic Nippert's final effort in the No-Cal Scale event. His third flight of 7 minutes and 23 seconds gave him a commanding lead. Having previously remarked on the amount of sink that was being found, this flight makes it clear that Vic managed to find some really good air. It also illustrates how little drift there was for such a small aeroplane to remain in sight for that length of time.

Friday evening saw 17 of us gather at the "Leisures" restaurant at the Rodeway Inn, in nearby Lakeville. A very good time was had by all – giving us an opportunity to catch up on all

that had occurred during the three years since we had last met on the field of battle.



Matt King launches

Saturday morning saw us all reconvened at the field, along with a few more who had not been able to make it for Friday. As forecast, the day promised to be an exact copy of its predecessor – sunny with light winds from the South. No need to move headquarters or the flight line – just break out the models and get flying.



A Sample of the GGG Prizes

The flying continued but, inexplicably to me, the same pattern emerged as had been seen on the previous day – FAC events were well fought

jousts, but there was a noticeable lack of competition in many of the non-FAC events. Out of 13 events, 3 had no entrants, 6 had only one flier, 3 had 2 fliers, and 1 (HL/CL Glider) had 6 participants. Considering the excellence of the weather, with relatively short retrieves, it is a puzzle to me. This is not particularly unusual, but there has been a drop since the last time this contest was held, in 2019. We had about the same number of fliers, but less actual flying.

Around noon we held a brief ceremony of remembrance for those we have lost since the last time that the GGG was held – in 2019. The modelers mentioned were Bob Langelius, Dave Acton, Les Sayer, Don Steeb, Walt Kornrich, and Vince Sadgwick. Bob Langelius was instrumental in designing the small beginner's model, the Blue Ridge Special, and making it available widely. In recognition of this, and as a tribute to Bob, we held a mass launch of the little jewel immediately after the memorial.



Nine Participants Launch Blue Ridge Specials

These little aeroplanes performed remarkably. One went almost OOS – I am not aware whether its owner recovered it.

An interesting, and somewhat peculiar, event held at the GGG is the Ebenezer. This is an import from Britain – the home of eccentricity – and involves the flying of 'things' that are not normally associated with flight. Dog kennels, lawn mowers, and many other strange apparitions have been witnessed. They must be made from all-sheet construction and be powered by an engine no larger than .049 cu.in.



Robert Blair launches his flying saucer in the Ebenezer event

On Saturday evening one of the highlights of the GGG was held – Heather's Barbecue. The museum allows us use of Swanson Hall, on the field, for the event. 26 people attended and, as usual, Heather Mollendorf provided us with a delightful repast of chicken, salad, beans, potato salad, and all of the other 'fixins' – bread rolls, butter, a variety of dressings, and fruit. As if this wasn't enough this was all followed by brownies and other goodies for dessert.

This event is a highlight, not just because of the excellence of the repast, but also because of the opportunity for camaraderie, chatting with old friends and making new ones.

Sunday morning brought a very different day – the light wind was still from the South, so a move of the flight line wasn't needed, but there was more-or-less steady light rain.

As usual, we held a raffle of model aero paraphernalia in conjunction with the contest. Lots of treasures were donated by contestants, who then bought tickets to see if they could take some of them home. Lyle Whitford, in particular, brought a large supply of highly desirable items. Lyle and his wife Priscilla had volunteered to organize the raffle – for some years this task has been fulfilled by Jim Moseley but, sadly, Jim wasn't able to be with us this year. The draw took place on Sunday morning and many folks found that they had become the new owners of some items to be treasured.

Not surprisingly, very few flights were made. One stalwart, Jerry Gross, made three quick flights in SAM Small Rubber Fuselage – with a tissue-covered model. He started right at 9:00 am, completed his three flights and had left the field by 10:00 am because he had to get back to State College, PA, in order to sing in a choral tribute for the victims of 9/11. Malav Shah, a very welcome newcomer to the meet, flew his E-20 to some very creditable times and I flew my A Nostalgia Gas 550 Dixielander, missing my third max by 3 seconds because of a premature DT.



Alan Petersen launches in SAM Small Stick

Another newcomer to our meet was Alan Petersen – all the way from Arizona. Some might recognize his name as the NFFS Webmaster. Alan was in the area, on a grand Northeast tour with his wife, and flew SAM Small Stick on Saturday. He flew his F1B style model in the Mulvihill event on Sunday.

It is quite noticeable that the few flights that took place, in the rain, found better air than had been typical for the previous two days. I'm sure that experts on atmospheric behaviour would be able to explain that. Not surprisingly, 12 of the 16 events scheduled for Sunday were not flown, including all of the FAC events.

I would like here to express my thanks to those who pitched in to help with the operation of this year's GGG. Heather and Joe Mollendorf, of course, for the Barbecue, Lyle and Priscilla Whitford for running the raffle, Brad and Ruth

Ann Bane for the loan of a shelter and some tables (and for loaning me a retrieve bike when mine became inoperable this summer). Jerry Litschi took most of the photographs that I include here.

I will make special mention of the great sacrifice made by my wife, Sally. Not only did she 'man' the headquarters operation for the whole weekend – she agreed to travel to Geneseo from our home in Kingston, Ontario, on the day before the contest was to start – and that day was our 60th wedding anniversary!!! Now that is a sacrifice above and beyond the call of duty and I thank her most profusely for supporting me in pursuit of this idiosyncrasy of mine on that special day. I hasten to add that, in order to mark that occasion, the Mollendorfs and Banes arranged a special pre-prandial celebration for us (with delectable goodies) at our motel, including the Whitfords, before we all had dinner in Piffard. We both thank you for your extreme kindness on that special day.



Cheers to everyone – see you next year!

Because the field was more-or-less deserted by early afternoon it was not possible to present awards and trophies to the winners. We will have to consider how to manage that situation – mailing costs would probably be prohibitive for anything other than the event stickers. As a footnote, by the time we had packed up everything and the contest would have been

officially over, at 4:00pm, the skies cleared and the sun began to warm us! A further footnote – a table and folding chair were found on the field after everyone had left. The owner should contact Brad and Ruth Ann Bane, who took the items into custody.

The complete results follow.

GGG 2022 Results

Friday, September 9th

C Nostalgia Gas

Brad Bane	120	111	120	351
Roy Smith	98	118	120	336

.020 Replica/¼A Nostalgia Gas

Brad Bane	68
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AMA A/B Classic Gas

Simon Blake	120	120	120
78		438	
Joe Mollendorf	120	120	120
69		429	

P-30

Jim deTar	120	120	120	360
Bob Clemens	120	81	120	321
Dave Pishnery	109	30	120	259
Lynn Miller	68	88	65	221

Senator

Not flown

FAC No-Cal Scale

Vic Nippert	69	121	443	633
Mark Whalen	79	72	133	284
Matt King	43	40	59	142

FAC Jet Catapult Glider Scale

Vic Nippert	62	31	110	203
Mark Rzdca	43	22	23	88
Matt King	7	8	13	28

FAC Combined Race Planes Mass launch

Jim deTar	1
Bob Clemens	2
Vic Nippert	3

Matt King	4
Campbell Blair	5
Robert Blair	6

FAC Modern Military Scale

Mark Rzdca	82	91	94	267
Jim deTar	69	114	65	248
Matt King	62	50	36	148

FAC Simplified Scale

Jim deTar	92	77	99+0	268
Matt King	60	84	70+0	214
Vic Nippert	63	59	73+10	205
Matt King	50	62	52+10	174

Saturday, September 10th

Vic Smeed Design

Campbell Blair	31
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HL/CL Glider Combined

Vic Nippert	42	<u>72</u>	<u>77</u>
43	5	<u>48</u>	197
Joe Mollendorf	22	25	<u>111</u>
<u>34</u>	<u>27</u>	27	172
Malav Shah	<u>45</u>	<u>61</u>	<u>56</u>
44	36	42	162
Bill Klepser	37	28	<u>53</u>
<u>42</u>	<u>45</u>	30	140
Dave Pishnery	<u>32</u>	<u>26</u>	23
16	18	<u>37</u>	95
Jerry Gross	<u>9</u>	4	1
2	<u>6</u>	<u>17</u>	32

36" Bungee Launched Glider

Lynn Miller	60	60
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Diesel Duration

Simon Blake 95 87 82 264

B Nostalgia Gas

Simon Blake 120 120 120 360

Roy Smith 117 115 120 352

Early ½A Nostalgia Gas

Not Flown

AMA C/D Classic Gas

Brad Bane 120 120 240

½A Old Favourites

Not flown

E-36 Electric

Drake Hook 120 120 120 360

Cloud Tramp

Mark Rzdca 60 70 70

60 64 194

Nostalgia Rubber

Dave Pishnery 109 75 93 277

Bob Clemens 66 53 70 189

SAM Small Rubber Stick

Dave Pishnery 107 120 120 347

Alan Petersen 86 120 206

SAM Large Rubber Stick

Not flown

FAC Half Wakefield

Jim deTar 75 76 76 227

Vic Nippert 78 47 89 214

Lynn Miller 57 55 53 165

Matt King 35 40 47 122

FAC Dime Scale

Jim deTar 85 73 98+15 227

Vic Nippert 63 69 84+15 231

Matt King 35 40 30+1 106

Mark Rzdca 47+1 48

Matt King 40 31 32+15 118

FAC 2-Bit Plus One, OT Rubber

Mark Whalen 120 120 79 319

Mark Rzdca 120 91 95 306

Jim deTar 81 98 83 262

Matt King 51 68 84 203

FAC WWII Mass Launch

Jim deTar 1

Matt King 2

Campbell Blair 3

Mark Rzdca 4

Vic Nippert 5

Robert Blair 6

FAC Jimmie Allen

Matt King 72 75 118 265

Jim deTar 120 120

Robert Blair 41 41

Ebenezer

Campbell Blair 35 36 71

Robert Blair 45 45

Sunday, September 11th

A Nostalgia Gas

Roy Smith 120 120 117 357

½A Nostalgia Gas

Not flown

ABC Ignition

Not flown

½A Classic Gas

Not flown

Unlimited Towline Glider

Not flown

E-20 Electric

Malav Shah	90	90	90	
97		367		

Jr HL Glider

Not flown

SAM Small Rubber Fuselage

Gerald J Gross	53	68	73	194
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SAM Large Rubber Fuselage

Not flown

SAM Commercial Rubber

Not flown

Mulvihill/Unlimited Rubber

Alan Petersen	120	11	83	314
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FAC Embryo Endurance

Not flown

FAC OT Rubber Fuselage

Not flown

FAC Modern Civilian

Not flown

FAC Golden Age Scale Monoplane

Not flown

FAC Golden Age Scale Multiwing

Not flown

TROPHIES

John Magee Memorial Trophy

Jim deTar

Bob Gordon Memorial Trophy

<u>Simon Blake</u>	1062
Roy Smith	1045
Joe Mollendorf	429
Brad Bane	419
Malav Shah	367
Campbell Blair	31

Jim Anderson Memorial Trophy

<u>Dave Pishnery</u>	883
Alan Petersen	520
Bob Clemens	510
Jim deTar	360
Lynn Miller	221
Mark Rzacca	194

Jack McGillivray Achievement Award

<u>Jim deTar</u>	28
Matt King	19
Vic Nippert	19
Mark Rzacca	10
Mark Whalen	6
Bob Clemens	4
Campbell Blair	4
Lynn Miller	2
Robert Blair	1

NWM Grand Champion

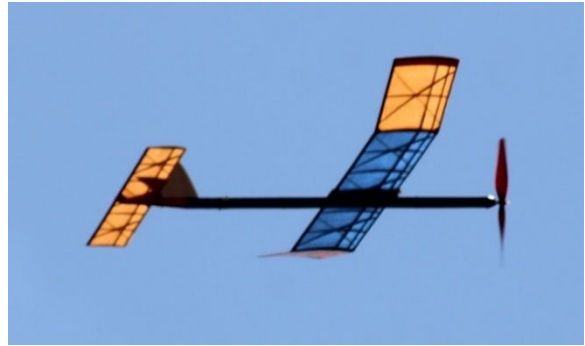
MAAC Can-Am Free Flight Trophy

<u>Dave Pishnery</u>	15
Joe Mollendorf	8
Brad Bane	7
Bob Clemens	7
Jim deTar	7
Jerry Gross	6
Lynn Miller	5
Mark Rzacca	4

More pictures.



Simon Blake launches his Diesel Duration Entry



A P-30 in flight



Bob Clemens and his P-30



Jim deTar and his P-30



Brad Bane's Trusty B/C Dixielander in Glide mode



The contest manager test flies his Blue Ridge Special prior to the Bob Langelius Memorial



Matt King demonstrates ROG technique



Malav Shah with his Blue Ridge Special



Jim de Tar in classic form



Bob Clemens' very pretty Prowler



Roy Smith's B Dixielander spirals upwards



Launching the B Dixielander



Alan Petersen's SAM Small Stick in flight



Campbell Blair and his Vic Smeed Tomboy



Another SAM Small Stick?