



# The Flightline



Volume 48, Issue 20 Newsletter of the Propstoppers RC Club AMA 1042 November 2018



## President's Message

Hello all,  
Now that the outdoor season is now pretty much over, I have good news. I have secured permission to use the Brookhaven gym for indoor flying on Saturday nights. The schedule will be, starting in November, 7:00-9:00 pm, the second Saturday after the monthly meeting.

I have been giving a lot of thought to different events we can fly, perhaps races for the different classes, carrier landings, and anything else you can think up.

As in previous years, we plan to collect \$2.00 per person to tip the janitor. After you catch a plane in the lights or rafters, you will know why.

On the first night session in November, we will discuss what types of planes most people want to fly and establish any size limits and flight categories at that time.

I'm looking forward to a good turnout, the more the merrier. Give me a call with any questions or suggestions.

Chuck Kime  
President Elect

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## Agenda for November 13th Meeting At

**Gateway Church Meeting Room**  
7:00 pm till 8:30

1. Call to Order and Roll Call
2. Approval of minutes
3. Treasurer's Report
4. Old Business
  - Safety Committee rules review
  - Elwyn Field Flying Hours
5. New Business
6. Show and Tell
7. Adjournment

## Minutes of the Propstoppers Model Airplane Club

October 9, 2018 at the Christian academy meeting room

Call to order took place at 7:05 PM by the Secretary in the absence of the President and Vice President.

Minutes of the September meeting as published were approved by the membership.

Roll call showed nine members were present.

Treasurer's report was presented by Pete Oetinger.

### Old Business:

The newly adopted bylaws are now posted on the club web site. The club is also preparing to transmit them to the AMA. The safety committee has written a revised set of rules and regulations for the club. They are planning to make these available to the membership for comments.

### New Business:

The club decided that we would again hold our holiday meeting at the normal Tuesday evening December meeting. We plan to have food and other refreshments available. In the past this has been a very enjoyable meeting for members to get to know each other better.

Nominations for club officers for 2019 were opened. The nominees include:

President: Chuck Kime  
Vice-President: Pedro Navaro  
Secretary: Dick Bartkowski  
Treasurer: Pete Oetinger

The group then approved the new slate of officers by acclamation.

The group voted to award the current President Dick Seiwell the recognition of President Emeritus in honor of his many years of effective service to the club.

### Show and Tell:

Dick Bartkowski showed a thin foam plate that several indoor flyers have found useful for indoor models. There is a flat center section about 1mm thick that is very light and suitable for indoor model parts. When obtained from 9 in plates there is a 5-6 inches circle across available for building.

Adjournment took place at 8:00 PM

## Propstoppers RC Club of Delaware County, Pennsylvania.

### Club Officers

<b>President</b> Dick Seiwell (610) 566-2698	reslawns@verizon.net
<b>Vice President</b> Chuck Kime (610) 833-5256	chuxtruk@yahoo.com
<b>Secretary</b> Richard Bartkowski (610) 566-3950	rbartkowski@comcast.net
<b>Treasurer</b> Pete Oetinger 610 627-9564	Pete202@juno.com
<b>Membership Chairman</b> Ray Wopatek 610 259-4942	raywop@gmail.com
<b>Safety Officers:</b> Eric Hofberg 610 566-0408	bgsteam@comcast.net
Ryan Schurman	Throttle152@hotmail.com
<b>Newsletter Co-Editors:</b> Dave Harding (610)-872-1457	Davejean1@comcast.net
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Propstoppers Web Site; [www.propstoppers.org](http://www.propstoppers.org)

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## 2018/19 Indoor Flying at the Brookhaven Gym

Saturdays 6:30-9:00 pm.

Nov. 24, Dec. 22, Jan. 19, Feb. 23, Mar.23

Flying after Tuesday Breakfast 10.00am

## Calendar of Events

### Club Meetings

Monthly Meetings  
Second Tuesday of the month.  
Gateway Community Church. Doors open at 7:00

#### Gateway Church Meeting Room

Tuesday Breakfast Meeting  
Tom Jones Restaurant on Edgemont Avenue in Brookhaven. 9 till 10 am. Just show up.  
Flying after in the summer at CA or Elwyn Field 10 am. Weather permitting.  
Flying Indoors in winter at the Brookhaven Gym 10:00-11:00 (subject to availability of the gym).

### Regular Club Flying

At Old Christian Academy Field (Gateway Community Church); Electric Only  
Monday through Friday after school till dusk  
Saturday 10 am till dusk  
Sunday, after Church; 12 pm till dusk  
At Elwyn Field; Gas or Electric  
Monday through Saturday 8 am till dusk  
Sunday 12 pm till dusk  
INDOOR Flying, see attached dates.

### Special Club Flying

Saturday mornings 10 am  
Wednesday Helicopter evening in summer  
Thursday evenings in the summer  
Tuesday mornings 10 am weather permitting after breakfast.  
Check our Yahoo Group for announcements;  
<http://groups.yahoo.com/group/propstoppers/>

### Beginners

Beginners using due caution and respecting club rules may fly Apprentice or similar models without instructors at Christian Academy Field.  
The club also provides the AMA Introductory Pilot Program for beginners without AMA insurance.

## **FLYING PRIVILEGES ARE NOW SUSPENDED FOR ANY MEMBERS THAT HAVE NOT PAID 2018 DUES**

*Membership renewal for 2018 is now required. You can renew by mail or at the club meeting*

***Bring cash or check and your AMA card.***

***Dues are \$60.***

To renew by mail, please send a check made out to the *Propstoppers* to:

**Ray Wopatek  
1004 Green Lane  
Secane, PA. 9018**

Please enclose a **copy** of your current  
A. M. A. Membership card,

**And Please, Please enclose a  
Stamped self-addressed envelope.**

**Ray Wopatek Membership Chairman**

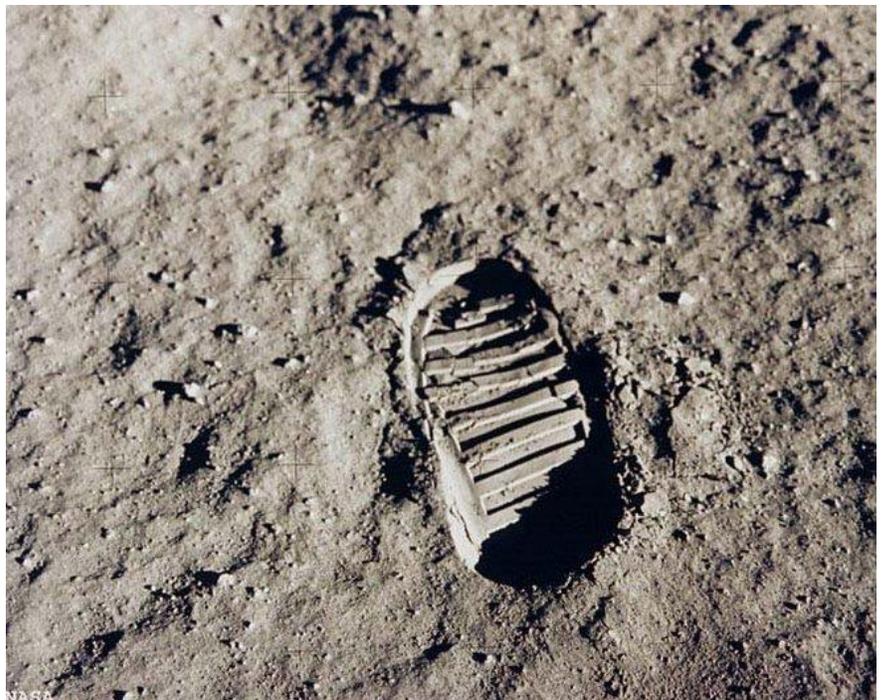
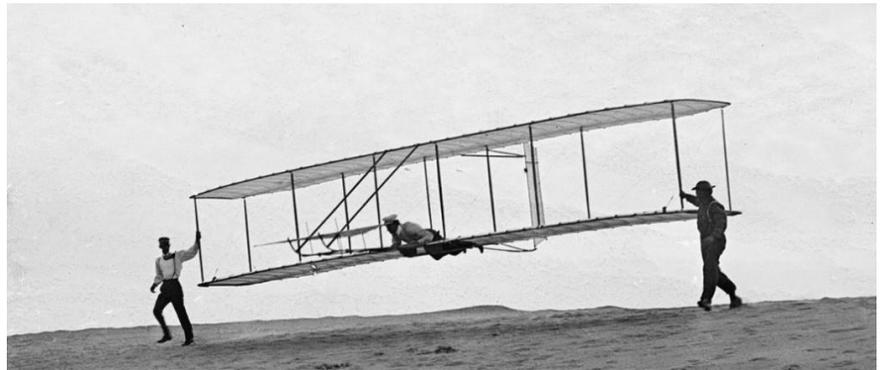
## Editor's Note

Whenever I am asked about why I got “hooked” by Propstoppers, I am quick to say that, even if I never got to touch a model plane, I would still be a member just to have access to the interesting group of people. The level of knowledge, skill and experience represented in our membership is truly inspiring and a privilege to be part of. Whether at the field, in the gym or at a meeting, the conversation is always friendly, informative, interesting and sometimes even inspiring.

In this month's newsletter I have included a reprint of an article from *Vertiflite*, the journal of the Vertical Flight Society, by Robert Beggs that chronicles the important history of the Philadelphia Region, and Delaware County in particular, during the early to mid-20<sup>th</sup> century development of rotary wing aircraft.

If the 21<sup>st</sup> Century is the era of technology, then the 20<sup>th</sup> Century was the golden age of engineering, when good old Newtonian Physics ruled and men and women of skill and imagination “designed” the way through the future of aviation. I would often point out to my students that in roughly one person's lifetime, my father in fact, the course of aviation went from the Wright Brothers' first step into powered flight, 1903, to Buzz Aldrin's first steps onto the Moon, 1969, a mere 66 years. By the end of the 20<sup>th</sup> century .the scope and role of aviation in society was ubiquitous and irreplaceable.

For much of this period of history, Propstoppers were not only witnesses, but actually contributed significantly through their roles in various aircraft industries located here and around the world. Among the most significant of these of course was, and is, the Boeing Company. Next time you are in the area, stop a moment at the site of the original plant on Woodland Ave. in Morton, now a [BJ's outlet.](#) In 2016, the site was designated The AHS International Vertical Flight Heritage Site Piasecki/Vertol/Boeing “Morton” Site Springfield, Pennsylvania.



On this site, Frank Piasecki and the Piasecki Helicopter Corporation developed the world's first production tandem rotor helicopters in 1947, giving birth to what later became the Boeing Company. A plaque erected on the site explains, "The tandem rotor helicopter has demonstrated enduring design and utility, with the CH-46 Sea Knight and CH-47 Chinook continuing in service for more than 50 years and improved versions of the Chinook manufactured well into the 21st century."



Propstoppers has members today that worked at this historic plant and, with many others, followed the continuing development of these aircraft at today's Ridley Park facility.

So, next time you run across one of these fellow Propstoppers with ties to Boeing, ask him what it feels like to be part of American aviation history.

Larry Woodward  
Editor

- Alan Baker, 1966 – 2000, Lead Structures Engineer
- Dave Bevan, 1967 – 1995, Manager of Aerodynamics, Manager Wind Tunnel
- Dave Harding, 1962 – 2001, Director of Future Programs
- Euan Hooper, 1962 – 1993, Director of Vehicle Technology 1972- 1993
- Joe Mesko, 1985 – present, Instrumentation and Data System Design
- Mike Simmons 1989 – 2016, Flight Simulation Technician
- Bill Tomasco, 1965 – 2010, Engineering Technician, Wiring Management

# Dick Seiwell, President Emeritus

By Dave Harding

Dick has been a very active stalwart of our club for almost fifty years. It seems a natural threat to model airplane clubs is loss of a flying field. Yet without a field a club is a rather hollow entity. It was with this background that Dick made his first of many contributions to our club.



They had several early fields, one of them being the “compass rose” on the Boeing, then Piasecki test field behind the Morton plant. Then for some years they flew behind Cardinal O’Hara High School. But then when this was developed into a soccer field, Dick made his first contribution by arranging the use of the back field on Moore Farm, behind the pit side tree line from our current Christian Academy field. He also began what became a continuous task to perform the maintenance of the fields.

In addition to the Moore Field another was acquired with more open space and fewer trees on Dallat Farm near Cheney University. This worked for some years until a change in Township management took place and allowed conversion of the farm to housing. So we lost another field.

However Dick with Mike Black and others searched for a replacement and arranged for the use of a field adjacent to and part of the Sleighton School, a hundred year old Quaker school originally for truant boys. This worked for a few years until the School was sold to Elwyn Institute and the field returned to agriculture. But the lower part of the property was acquired in this deal by Middletown Township and Dick arranged for us to use it.



This worked for some years. But, there is an old lady whose house is right across the road from the field. She basically complained about any use of the field, particularly the noise. The township governors listened to these complaints for a while but eventually the lady arranged for someone to video and audio record a helicopter flying in the field. Now I am sure the Township didn't know that such recordings can have augmentation to the video so you can hear it normally, but in any case they decided we could no longer use the field. This field was eventually developed into a soccer field complex so we wonder if it is now quieter!

Amazingly on exactly the same day, the Moore family told us we could no longer use the Moore field either. There had been a misunderstanding between someone driving onto the field and another person riding a horse which might have led to this event. Or maybe it was just the Moore family deciding to house more horses and to do so you must have so many acres per horse, but it was a done deal and we were completely without a field.

Once more Dick came to the rescue and arranged our use of the current Christian Academy field.

Meanwhile Dave Bevan held discussions with the Elwyn Institute on our possible use of another piece of the old Sleighton property which they now owned. This didn't work out but eventually we were offered the use of the piece of the main Elwyn property which we now use. Of course Dick arranged the preparation of the field, which at one time, like the Granite Run Mall property, was a quarry, hence the need to remove a ton of rocks.

In November of 2005 then President Steve Boyajian had to step down and Dick Seiwel took over the role as President, a role in which he has served ever since.



As Dick's health has suffered over the last few years he has continued to perform the functions of President but at this time has decided to step down. But we couldn't just allow him to slide away from us. So the members have heartily endorsed recognition of his accomplishments by electing him as President Emeritus of the Propstoppers. Hopefully he will join us for the December Christmas Indoor Picnic where you can personally thank him for his long and fruitful contributions.

# The Philadelphia Region: The Cradle of Rotary-Wing Aviation in the US

By Robert Beggs

Excerpted from the [Sept/Oct 2018](#) issue of *Vertiflite* [[pdf](#)]

The City of Philadelphia, located in the beautiful Delaware Valley of Pennsylvania, is most notable for its rich history, its lawyers, its cheesesteaks and more recently its Super Bowl winning professional football team. In 2019, Philadelphia will again be center stage as it hosts the Vertical Flight Society's [Forum 75](#)! Celebrating the Society's Diamond Anniversary in Philadelphia is quite fitting and a homecoming of sorts for our Society. Philadelphia is undeniably the cradle of rotary-wing aviation development in the US and was the location of the inaugural meeting of rotary-wing aviation pioneers on April 3, 1945, at the Engineers Club of Philadelphia on Spruce Street, just a few blocks from where Forum 75 will be held.

The aviation history of Philadelphia could fill volumes, but this short summary will help you to appreciate how it all began and why we still say there are more “rotorheads” in Philadelphia than anywhere else in the world.

In 1928, **Harold Pitcairn** imported a Cierva C.8W Autogiro, which made the first rotary-wing flight in America on Dec. 18 in a small town just north of Philadelphia named Bryn Athyn. The next year, Pitcairn acquired rights to Cierva's patents and formed the Pitcairn-Cierva Autogiro Company of America. The company began



**Pitcairn** imported Cierva C.8W Autogiro over Bryn-Athyn Cathedral below.

manufacturing and operating Autogiros from Pitcairn Field in Willow Grove, Pennsylvania. In 1931, the Pitcairn PCA-2 became the first certified Autogiro in America. Pitcairn and his associates received the 1930 Robert J. Collier Trophy from President Herbert Hoover in April 1931 — pilot James G. “Jim” Ray landed a PCA-2 on the South Lawn of the White House for the ceremony. Between 1930 and 1940, Pitcairn Aviation was issued 270 US patents.

In 1929, the brothers **W. Wallace Kellett** and **Rod Kellett** formed the Kellett Autogiro Corporation and began manufacturing Autogiros, under license from Pitcairn-Cierva Autogiro Company in Upper Darby, Pennsylvania, and later near the Philadelphia Municipal Airport. In 1934, the Kellett KD-1 achieved first flight and was sold to the US Army Air Forces over the next seven years as the first US military rotorcraft to enter into service. In 1939, Eastern Airlines flew the KD-1 Autogiro to deliver mail five times daily from Philadelphia's 30th Street Post Office to the Camden, NJ, Central Airport.



Kellett KD-1 flying off the Philadelphia Post Office roof.

Between 1928 and 1931, inventors **Gerard Herrick** and **Ralph McClarren** of the Franklin Institute in Philadelphia developed the world's first "**convertiplane**" that flew both as a fixed-wing aircraft and an autogyro. The unique craft was a technical marvel for its time, being able to convert in flight. The HV-2A Vertaplane, made its maiden flight in 1937 at Boulevard Airport in northeast Philadelphia; it soon demonstrated the world's first of more than 100 conversions from fixed-wing to rotary-wing flight.



Herrick-McClarren "Convertiplane, 1937

The year 1938 was an inflection point in the history of rotary-wing development. In a district where Harold Pitcairn's Autogiro business created scarce jobs, **US Representative Frank J. Dorsey** from Philadelphia proposed \$2M for the War Department to purchase Autogiros for test and research.



Representative Frank J. Dorsey- center

However, the Navy was not interested because of the craft's limited speed and endurance, and the Army was disappointed with the Kellett Autogyros they operated. **Dr. Alexander Klemin**, Dean of New York University's Guggenheim School of Aeronautics, was an influencer advocating funding for "any aircraft with a rotating wing." He had been impressed by the public demonstrations of the Focke-Wulf Fw 61 helicopter in Germany. When the Dorsey-Logan Bill became law in June 1938, it was designated for research, development, purchase and testing of "rotary-wing and other aircraft."

[The Franklin Institute](#) of Philadelphia hosted the "First Annual Rotating Wing Aircraft Meeting" in October 1938. It was described as "the first free discussion in this field of science open to all engineers in the aircraft industry." The event was attended by many of the aforementioned pioneer inventors and engineers of the fledging vertical lift industry, including Dr. Klemin. *Flight* magazine that year noted that the Rotating Wing Aircraft Meeting was held in Philadelphia because, "this is the town in which practically all the rotary-wing activity in the United States takes place."

W. Laurence LePage teamed up with fellow autogyro engineer Haviland Platt to form the Platt-LePage Aircraft Company in Eddystone, Pennsylvania, and the team began designing an experimental helicopter, the PL-1. The Platt-LePage Aircraft Company won an Army Air Corps competition to build the XR-1 helicopter using funds provided by the Dorsey-Logan Bill. After many developmental issues, however, the program was cancelled in April 1945, by which time the Army had already been using the much more capable Sikorsky R-4 for more than a year. However, ex-Platt-LePage engineer Robert Lichten went to Bell Aircraft (as it was then known) and developed the tiltrotor idea into the Bell XV-3.



Platt-LePage XR-1

In 1945, the P-V Engineering Forum determined that a tandem rotor configuration would best meet the US Navy requirement for a helicopter that carried at least a one-ton payload. The XHRP-1 design was completed in three months in Sharon Hill, Pennsylvania. The Navy ordered 10 HRP-1

**Frank Piasecki** began his career as a young engineer at Kellett and Platt-LePage while he attended school at the University of Pennsylvania in Philadelphia. While still in college, he founded the P-V Engineering Forum with a classmate, Harold Venzie. In 1943, Piasecki's group designed the PV-2, a single-seat, single-rotor helicopter. Piasecki became the second person to design a successful helicopter in the US, and the first person to be issued a federal helicopter-specific license.



Piasecki PV-23

helicopters in 1946, and another 10 in 1947. Production was established at a new facility in [Morton, Pennsylvania](#), and P-V Engineering Forum became the Piasecki Helicopter Corporation. The successful tandem rotor designs would form the basis of what is now Boeing Vertical Lift in Ridley Park, Pennsylvania.



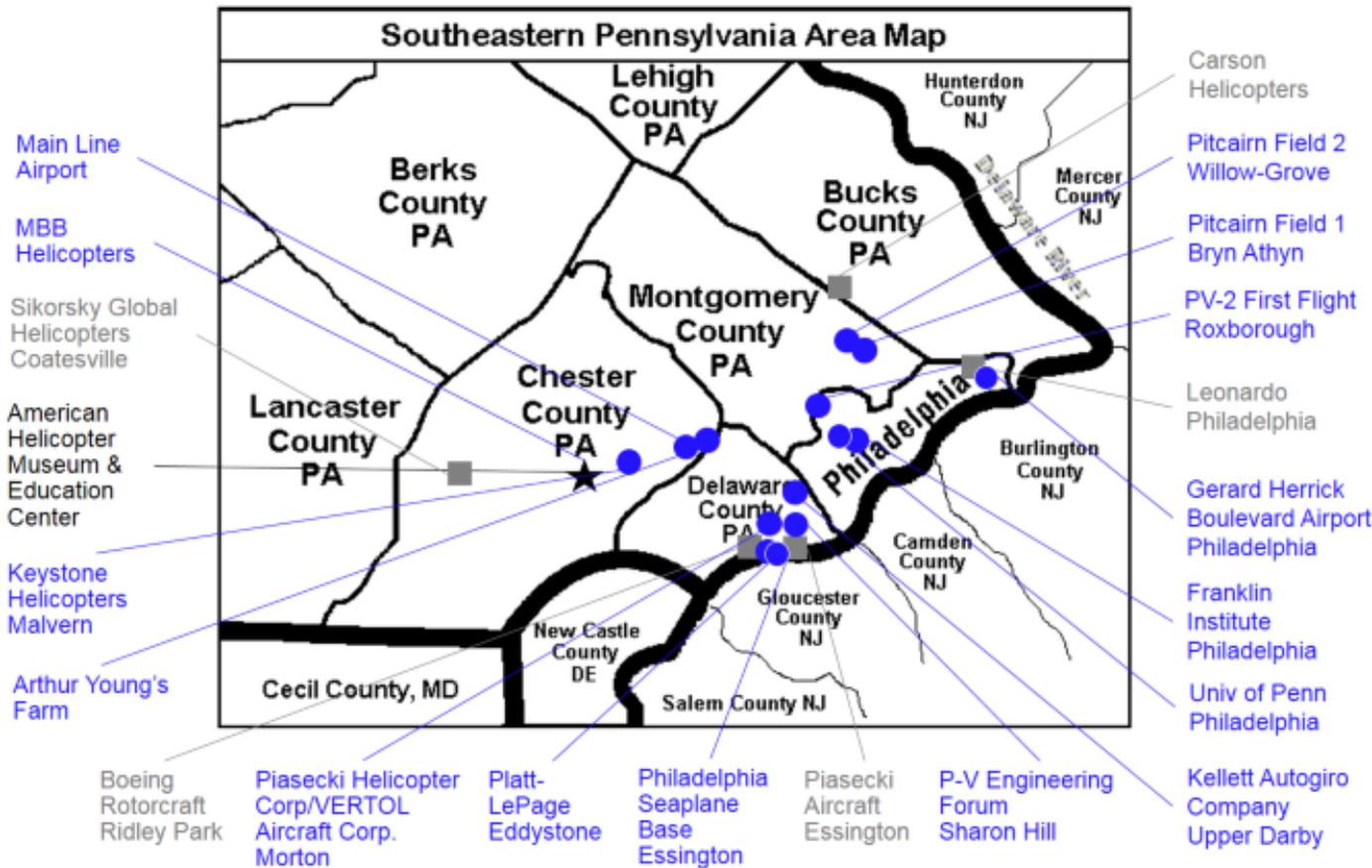
Arthur Young with his remote control helicopter in Radnor Pa

In 1931, **Arthur Young** began experimenting with rotary-wing models at his home in Radnor, Pennsylvania. Later, he bought a farm near Paoli to work on larger models. Skeptical of rotor theories espoused at the 1938 Rotating Wing Aircraft Meeting at the Franklin Institute, Young presented a paper entitled “A New Parameter of Lifting Rotors” at the second meeting, held at the Institute in 1939.

In 1941, Young and his friend **Bartram Kelley** flew their model helicopter in and out of their Paoli barn by tethered remote control. Later that year, they demonstrated the stability of the model with a teetering rotor and “stabilizer bar” to Bell Aircraft in Buffalo, New York, leading to the creation of the Bell Model 30. The design became the signature rotor

system for Bell helicopters, continuing into the 1980s.

These are but a few of the many talented engineers, craftsmen and pilots who shaped the early days of rotary-wing aviation in the Delaware Valley. Their accomplishments went on to influence an entire industry, and that legacy continues to this day. The Delaware Valley remains home to four major design and manufacturing centers including: Boeing Vertical Lift, Leonardo’s AgustaWestland Philadelphia Company, Piasecki Aircraft Corporation and Lockheed Martin/Sikorsky’s Coatesville plant.



This is the history that is preserved and celebrated every day at the [American Helicopter Museum & Education Center](#) in West Chester, Pennsylvania. It is only fitting then that the Vertical Flight Society's [75th Annual Forum & Technology Display](#) is located on the hallowed ground that gave birth to America's rotary-wing aviation industry. We look forward to seeing you in Philadelphia!

**About the Author**

Bob Beggs is a co-founder and trustee of the American Helicopter Museum & Education Center, in West Chester, Pennsylvania: [www.americanhelicopter.museum](http://www.americanhelicopter.museum)