

RICHARD E. SCHREDER (1962)
(1915-2002)

Adapted from the book by Dick Schreder's daughter, Karen Schreder Barbera: **10,000 feet and Climbing, The Aviation Adventures of Richard E. Schreder.**

When Dick Schreder was four years old, he clipped and folded a simple paper airplane from the the *Detroit News* – with help from his Mother. Dick's interest in airplanes soon grew from the paper clipping to constructing balsa wood models.



When high school years arrived, Dick caddied at a golf course for extra money. At the age of 16 Dick bought a Primary glider for all the money he had with him -- \$8.20 – the airport manager was leaving town because he had not paid his bills. Dick tried to teach himself to fly. That didn't work very well and the Primary was destroyed so he started designing and building his first airplane. When he finished high school, he left home, found a job and studied engineering at Toledo University. With what little free time he had, he continued work on his airplane design and construction.

Upon completion of college, Dick began his Navy career with flight training at Pensacola. He earned his wings and reached the rank of Commander. Dick received the Distinguished Flying Cross for the sinking of a German U-Boat.

He continued flying in civilian life and also pursued his sailplane designs. Finding a need for better drafting tools, he formed The Airmate Company to manufacture Plexiglas drafting instruments. The business was successful and, in a few years, the family bought a home on what became the Williams County Airport in Bryan, OH and moved the business to the airport. Business was good so Dick formed two more companies – an FBO to serve the airport and, now that he had been bitten by the soaring bug, a company to give him an entity through which he could design and build sailplane kits. Dick was also an aircraft sales representative which gave him access to airplanes that allowed easy traveling to support his various interests.

Dick had flown a Cinema in 1955 and, two months later, he purchased a Baby Bowlus for \$600. Three months after purchasing the Bowlus, he entered a weekend meet at Frankfurt, MI and set a new elapsed-time record for the Michigan Soaring Association. Thus began a soaring career of successful World and National competition and World and National records.

There were adventures along the way. For example, he ordered a new Schweizer SGS 1-23D for the 1956 Nationals in Grand Prairie, TX. He was anxious to fly it but there was

a very large storm approaching on the day the sailplane arrived. He rushed to take it out of the trailer, assemble and get launched before the storm. At the last moment he noticed the instrument panel did not have a turn and bank. So he grabbed an instrument and battery, put them in his roomy working pants pocket and launched. The weather became worse than expected and he was soon somewhat surrounded by clouds but also very strong lift. As he approached cloud base and even more clouds, he decided it would be a good time to have a turn and bank so he pulled the instrument out of his pocket and hooked it up.

Soon he was completely engulfed in cloud. He put the nose down trying to get clear but the lift was too strong. After about an hour, he found himself at 19,000 feet, with the canopy iced over – and he was very cold. There was more excitement to come but eventually all worked out OK. Read the details in the book or in *Soaring* magazine, June 2002, page 24. Nevertheless, after repairing the hail damage to the sailplane, he flew it in the 1956 National Championships at Grand Prairie, TX

Many of Dick's designs were Vee-tail although there were others also. He designed at least 18 sailplanes. He won National Competition in Bishop, CA in 1958 flying an HP-8, followed by a distance record and several speed records over defined courses in 1959 and 1960. He was National Champion in Odessa, TX in 1960 flying a an HP-8 and again in Reno, NV in 1966 flying the HP-14. This victory generated demand for HP-14 kits.



Dick Schreder in the HP-14 in which he won the Nationals in Reno in 1966

He was on the US Team for international competition four times – 1960 HP-9 in W. Germany placing 16, 1963 HP-11 in Argentina placing 3, 1965 HP-12 in England placing 15 and 1968 HP-14T in Poland placing 21. He also served the SSA as a Regional Director and Secretary.

The FAI awarded Richard E. Schreder their highest award for soaring in 1959 – the Lilienthal – followed by the Tissandier Diploma in 1986. The Soaring Society awarded him the Eaton Trophy in 1962 and the Exceptional Service Award in 1995. For competition he received the du Pont Trophy in 1958, 1960 and 1966 and the Stroukoff Trophy six times, 1958 through 1961, 1963 and 1965. He flew the Smirnoff Derby once and earned Silver #249 in 1956, Gold #53 in 1956 and Diamond #22 (Intl #255) in 1962.