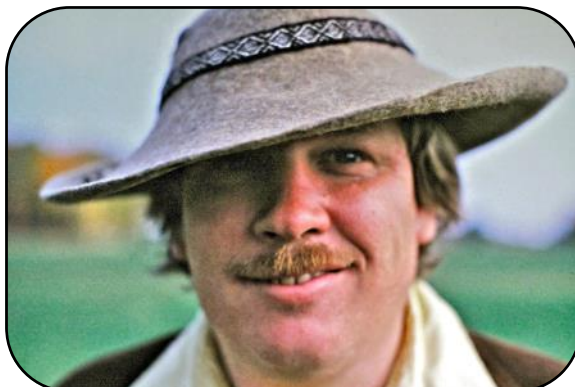


Robert Dodds Meddock, Jr.
Inducted into the U. S. Ballooning Hall of Fame on July 26, 2015
By the Balloon Federation of America at the
National Balloon Museum, Indianola, Iowa



Dodds showing an early interest in aviation



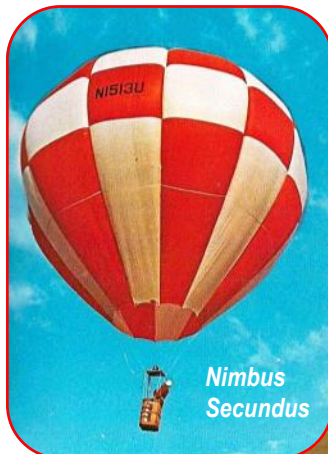
Dodds Meddock



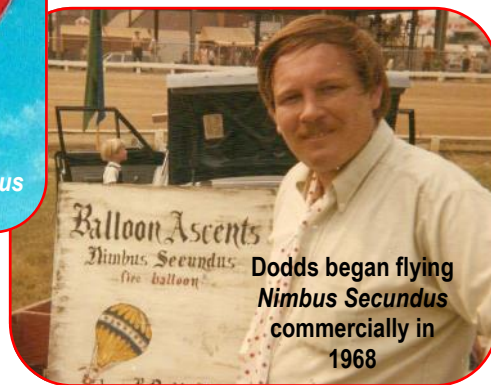
Balloon Works Leadership Team in the Early 1970's:
 Karl Stefan, Dodds Meddock, & Tracy Barnes



Dodds on Polar Balloon Expedition in 1980



Nimbus Secundus



Dodds began flying *Nimbus Secundus* commercially in 1968



Dodds preparing to fly at the 7-UP International Balloon Race at the Ohio State Fair



Dodds in balloon with Famed French balloonist Charles Dolfus ▶

Dodds Office at the Balloon Works was upstairs in this tobacco drying barn ▼



Dodds in his later years



Robert Dodds Meddock, Jr. March 23, 1940 - March 10, 2014 Durham, South Carolina

Robert Dodds Meddock, Jr., known to his friends as “Dodds” was born March 23, 1940 in Lebanon, Ohio, and grew up in the Dayton, Ohio, area where he was impressed by the feats of the home town aviators Orville and Wilbur Wright. He was the son of the late Mary Alice Fox and Robert Dodds Meddock, Sr. In 1961 Dodds married his high school sweetheart, Susanna Lea Downey and they had a daughter, Adrienne born in 1962, and a son Justin born in 1965. *Pictured at right is Dodds being held by his father in 1940.*



Education: Dodds earned a B. A. degree at Miami University in Oxford, Ohio, and in 1964 entered the University of Illinois, at Urbana where he completed the coursework for a Ph.D. in philosophy. In addition he was a graduate of the Small Company Management Program at Harvard University School of Business. He was also a member of Delta Kappa Epsilon fraternity.

Professional and Ballooning Career: He was a philosophy professor, hot air balloon pilot, and academic administrator. In college Dodds co-founded the Oxford Free Balloon League with Will Charles, a descendant of the first gas balloonist (the Charliere flown in in 1783.) In 1967 he joined the faculty of Valparaiso University in Indiana where he taught in the Philosophy Department. While teaching he was also becoming involved in ballooning as evidenced by his hosting a university balloon symposium that brought famed French balloonist, Charles Dollfus together with Henry Malpass from France to the school to speak. The symposium also included a balloon race. During the 1960's Dodds trained to fly with Bob Trauger and quickly became one of the earliest sport hot air balloon pilots in the United States. He and Trauger worked together in commercial hot air ballooning and smoke balloons, supervised by famed smoke balloon pilot Captain Eddie Allen. Dodds bought a Piccard AX-4 balloon from Trauger and began flying *Nimbus Secundus* commercially in the Midwest and on the east coast. Dodds did much to introduce ballooning to the east coast region through his ballooning history exhibits, balloon mail sales, and daily flights. at the Kutztown, Pennsylvania Dutch Folk Festival. Dodds' Kutztown crew was lead by Captain Eddie Allen and the Meddock and Allen families grew close and joined each other each summer in Kutztown and later in Indianola at the Nationals. *(The picture at right shows Eddie Allen left, and Dodds in the basket after landing in Amish country.)*



In 1972 Dodds left teaching to pursue a full-time career in ballooning; and together with Tracy Barnes and Karl Stefan, co-founded, **The Balloon Works**, a hot air balloon manufacturer in Charlotte, and later Statesville, North Carolina. Tracy was the primary designer, Karl did the engineering and FAA certification procedures and Dodds handled the marketing, and later served as president and CEO. *(Picture at right shows L to R: Barnes, Stefan and Meddock)*



In 1973, Dodds conceived, and co-designed with graphic artist Gary Hixson, *Dream of Flight* based on Greek temple design and celebrating mythological legends of flight from Icarus to Winnie the Pooh. In 1976 *Dream of Flight* was selected as one of the ten finest examples of American design and craftsmanship by the National Collection of Fine Arts and the American Academy of Design in a US Bicentennial contest sponsored by the US State Department. The balloon was exhibited at the Renwick Gallery of the Smithsonian Institution throughout the Bicentennial year and was part of a three-year U.S. Government exhibit at capitals around the world. *Dream of Flight* was commissioned by Ballooning Hall of Fame member Chauncey Dunn and later owned by HOF member Malcolm Forbes, who exhibited her at Forbes Magazine's Museum Montgolfier, Chateau de Balleroy, Normandy, France.

Dodds was devoted to the Balloon Federation of America (BFA). His activities for the BFA include six years as the first Awards Chairman. He initiated the Shields-Trauger Award, the BFAs highest honor, and the Honorary Life Membership award. He established the practice of awarding a gold Montgolfier replica to the National Champion. Dodds was one of the first BFA balloonmeisters for any official race, the 7-Up International Race held at the Ohio State Fair. He was dedicated to world ballooning and was responsible for the first influx of European pilots to the U.S. in those pre-World Championship days at the 7-Up and Balloon Fest events. In 1976, Dodds received The President's Award for service contributions to the BFA. He had major input into the formation of the BFA museum, serving as its first curator. The Museum was officially incorporated in 1977 as the National Balloon Museum after having had temporary displays in Indianola beginning in 1972.

Dodds was a diversely published author. Now it can be told that Dodds was the scribe behind *Ballooning* magazine's Icarus Q. Downdraught's "Helpful Hints" humor column. The secret identity of IQD was well-kept in ballooning. Dodds always replied when asked, point blank, if he were IQD, "No, but I am in contact with him."

In 1978 Dodds was selected as one of 115 presidents of smaller companies around the world to participate in a three-year program in executive education at the Harvard Graduate School of Business Administration. His class included the presidents of Martin Aviation, Hiller Helicopter, and ATE executive advanced flight training school.

Dodds loved adventure. He and Tracy Barnes travelled to South America in 1974 for the International Explorers Society and the Government of Peru to examine if native materials could have been utilized to build pre-Columbian smoke balloons. The famed plains of Nazca drawings can only be seen from the air, so the theory was balloons were used to view them. This research led to the Nazca balloon flown by Julian Nott.

In 1979, Canadian pilots Sid Conn and Dale Lang contacted Dodds to put together a cold-tolerant balloon system that could easily be carried in a Twin Otter, the primary flight transport of the Arctic, and joined the expedition to fly over the North Pole, which they did on April 11, 1980. (See pictures on page 1 & at right)

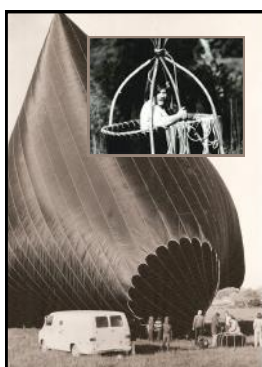


In the early 80s, Dodds successfully argued for the first reversal National Transportation Safety Board finding of aircraft manufacturing defect since the inception of the NTSB, and worked closely with the legal team to defeat a product liability suit against The Balloon Works. Years of teaching Logic had served him well. By 1983, Tracy and Karl sold their interests in The Balloon Works to Sid Conn, but the new business relationship was not harmonious. Dodds sold his interest to the Conns and joined the administration at Duke University Zoology Department, where his business and academic backgrounds were welcomed. He worked as safety officer on a few balloon races but essentially left ballooning to his brother Gary, and sister, Marsha, both pilots. Dodds and his family relocated from Statesville to the Durham, NC area, where his children, granddaughters Caroline and Claire, and wife Sue still reside.

Dodds was the first man to have flown in all four categories of balloons: hot air, solar, smoke, and gas as shown below:



Dodds in hot air balloon



Solar tetrahedron balloon



Smoke balloon



Dodds aloft in Gas balloon

While some of the early modern pioneers of ballooning are known for their scientific advances or record flights, Dodds was there to make sure that the romance, beauty and artistry of ballooning were not forgotten.



Dodds with mother and siblings (Dodds 2nd from left)



Dodds' birthday in 2013 with Susanna in front row & Adrienne, granddaughter Claire & son Justin back row

Dodds developed serious neurological issues which placed him on disability from Duke University in the late 90s. In later life Dodds was a volunteer reading tutor for the kindergarten classes in Hillsborough, North Carolina. In his last years he was diagnosed with Parkinson's Disease and received care in a nursing home where he had served as an officer on the Residents' Council where he was known as Bob, using his board skills from BFA days. On March 10, 2014, he died from complications of Parkinson's Disease, his immediate family by his side.

Timeline of Dodds Meddock's Ballooning Accomplishments, Honors and Awards

Academic:

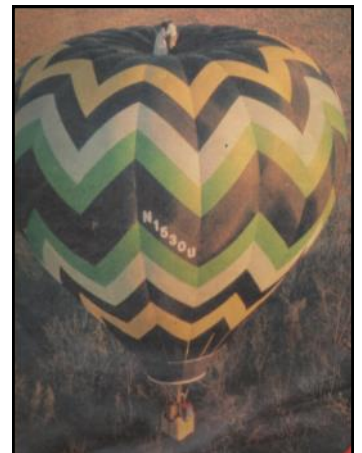
- 1962 - AB Miami University, Oxford, Ohio (Economics)
- 1964 - MA Miami University, Oxford, Ohio (Philosophy)
- 1964 - Instructor, Indiana University (Philosophy)
- 1965-69 - University of Illinois-Completed course work for his Ph.D. (Philosophy/Economics)
- 1969-72 - Instructor, Valparaiso University (Philosophy)
- 1979-81- Harvard Graduate School of Business Administration, 1981 SCMP Diplomate
- 1984-96 - Duke University, Zoology Department Business Manager

FIXED WING AIRCRAFT:

- 1956 - Solo Pilot, Fixed-wing Airplane, Single Engine Land
- 1965 - Solo Pilot, Airplane, Tow-launched sailplanes
- 1969 - Sail Plane pilot

BALLOONING ACTIVITIES:

- 1959 - Co-founder, Oxford Free Balloon League
- 1966 - First solo balloon flight
- 1967 - Dodds bought his first balloon, "Nimbus Secundus", a Piccard AX-4 (*See pictures on page1*)
- 1967 - Organized the 7-UP Balloon Race at the Ohio State Fair
- 1968 - Commercial Lighter-than Air Pilot (USA)
- 1968 - Founder, Balloon Ascents, Ltd.
- 1968-72 - Balloonmeister, 7-Up International Balloon Race, Columbus, Ohio
- 1970 - Co-founder, Aera Firma Aerostatic Society
- 1970 - Participated in the National Hot Air Balloon Championship, in Indianola and Des Moines, Iowa
- 1971 - Organized Balloon Fest, Valparaiso, Indiana, BFA sanctioned
- 1972 - Organized BFA Intercollegiate Balloon Meet, at Balloon Fest, Valparaiso, Indiana
- 1971 - 780 km Trans-Alps gas flight with Fred Dolder: Switzerland, Germany, France
- 1971 - The Observer International Balloon Race, Rugby, UK (French Team)
- 1972 - Co-founder, The Balloon Works, Inc. in Charlotte, North Carolina
- 1973 - First aspirated hot air balloon pilot ignition system ("The Slurper" utilizing the Venturi effect)
- 1973 - First solar-powered aircraft team with Tracy Barnes & Karl Stefan. Witnessed and homologated by the National Aeronautics Association and the Federation Internationale Aeronautique
- 1973 - Conceived and co-designed Dream of Flight, internationally renowned design (with Gary Hixson).
- 1974 - Research trip sponsored by International Explorers Society and the Government of Peru to explore design of balloon *Nazca* using pre-Inca materials and methods (with Tracy Barnes)
- 1975 - BFA National Balloon Museum Committee, named first curator and directed to begin accession of memorabilia
- 1975-82 - CEO, The Balloon Works
- 1976 - Survived first smoke balloon trapeze parachute jump in 20 year, becoming first to fly all balloon fuel types: gas, hot air, smoke, and solar
- 1976 - Co-designed one of the world's largest tension structure pavilions (using Simpson College water tower as a mast) for The Balloon Works sales display, Nationals, Indianola
- 1976 - Recipient BFA President's Award
- 1977 - Conceived & co-designed the Dragon Fly, first FAA Standard Category balloon retailing under \$4000
- 1977 - Made first fully controlled solar powered flights at high northern latitudes
- 1978 - Designed Bunny Balloon for Playboy Magazine, first "Sky Yacht"
- 1979 - Developed a FAA certified system for photographers (and other nuts) to fly outside the balloon baskets by a trapeze suspended from the top of the balloon
- 1980 - Designed 3.9 ShockFlex balloon carriage
- 1980 - Joy of Sound Polar Balloon Expedition, FAI/CIA First Flight over the Geographical North Pole by hot air balloon.
- 1981 - Won first ever reversal of National Transportation Safety Board finding of aircraft manufacturing defect
- 1981 - Pilot for first balloon marriage with bride and groom (Gary & Tamara Meddock) riding atop on crown (*See picture at right*)



Information provided by the Meddock family, *Who's Who in Ballooning*, Balloon Federation of America and National Balloon Museum Archives.