

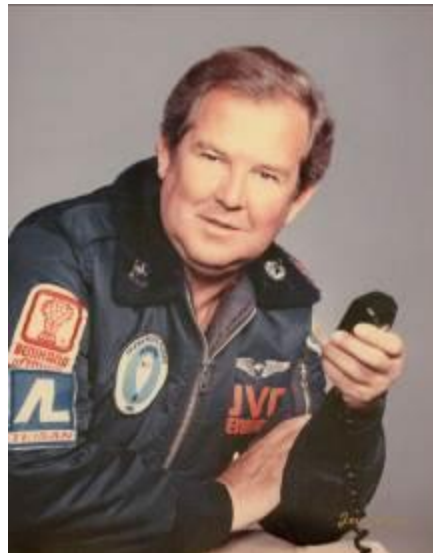


FÉDÉRATION AÉRONAUTIQUE
INTERNATIONALE
Ballooning Commission

Hall of Fame

RON B. CLARK

Inducted 2011



RON CLARK
USA

Inducted 2011

November 3, 1940, Cincinnati OH –
September 26, 2010, Albuquerque, NM

An Albuquerque-based contractor Ron Clark became interested in hot air ballooning in 1979. Ron flew both hot air and gas balloons. Along with fellow pilots Ben Abruzzo, Rocky Aoki and Larry Newman Clark completed the first crossing of the Pacific Ocean in a manned balloon. Ron was instrumental in opening and guiding the growth of the Anderson-Abruzzo Albuquerque International Balloon Museum. He prided himself on encouraging people outside of ballooning to learn more about the sport.

Image courtesy Shirley Clark

Photo and plaque published with permission of the Anderson/Abruzzo International Balloon Museum in Albuquerque, New Mexico, USA

Ron Clark was born in Cincinnati, Ohio on November 3, 1940. His family moved to Albuquerque, New Mexico in 1944. He attended Valley High School and finished his education at New Mexico Military Institute, graduating in 1958.

BUSINESS

He was in the sub-contracting business from 1959 thru 1963, at which time he went into the General Contracting business. He started Enchanted Builders Inc., which were builders of homes and apartment complexes in Albuquerque. From 1967 thru 1974, he continued along these lines as president and general partner of Executive North and Executive Investment Co. Ltd. He built, owned, and operated several hundred units in the state of New Mexico. The projects were built in Farmington, Las Cruces and Albuquerque. Since 1974 he has been involved in real estate – investing in vacant land, shopping centers, apartments, and office buildings.

POSITIONS HELD

He has served on the Board Of Director's of Tamarron Condominium Association for three years and was president of the board. Served on the Board of Director's of Retarded Citizens Association for four years. He also served on the Board of Director's of Albuquerque Title Company and is presently serving on the Board of Directors of the Anderson, Abruzzo, Balloon Foundation, and the Advisory Board for Balloon Fiesta Park.

BALLOONING

In 1979, He became interested in hot air ballooning, and obtained his "private pilots license in lighter than air free balloon." He later obtained a license in helium ballooning. On November 13th, 1981, along with fellow pilots Ben Abruzzo, Rocky Aoki, and Larry Newman, he completed the first crossing of the Pacific Ocean in a manned balloon. The Double Eagle Five was aloft for 84 hours and 31 minutes and traveled a straight-line distance of 5768 miles setting a new absolute world record for balloons of all classes. The flight was Launched from Nagashima, Japan just south of Nagoya and landed near Covelo, California north of San Francisco. This record remained unbroken for fourteen years.

Over the years he has flown in many Hot-Air Balloon Rally's. Thru-out the Eighties he flew competitive gas races in the McDonnell Douglas Aero Classic, Gordon Bennett Balloon Races, Albuquerque Balloon Fiesta and others. He has worked at involving people outside of ballooning, getting them into crewing, inflation of gas balloons and chase. He has helped Hot Air Balloonist to obtain their license in helium ballooning and has worked with the Retarded Citizens, giving them instruction in basic ballooning.

BALLOONING AWARDS & WORLD RECORDS

1. First person to fly across the Pacific Ocean in a Balloon. 9-12 Nov. 1981.

2. Longest distance flown in any size Balloon. 5768 miles in 84 Hrs.
3. NAA Absolute World Record AA-14, AA-15, 9-12 Nov. 1981
4. FAI Absolute World Record AA-14, AA-15, 9-12 Nov. 1981.
5. FAI Absolute World Record Class A. 5768 miles in 84 hours.
6. Lighter Than Air Society 1982 Achievement Award.
7. Coupe De Balleroy Award 1982 – Malcolm Forbes.
8. Albuquerque Sports Hall Of Fame 1982 Achievement Award.
9. Albuquerque Booster Award 1981 Convention and Visitors Bureau.

WRITINGS

“THE FLIGHT OF THE PACIFIC EAGLE” 1985; National Geographic Magazine April 1982; Newsweek November 1981; Time November 1982; Ballooning February 1982 and numerous other articles.

SUMMARY

He has been happily married to his wife Shirley for 47 years and they have Three grown children and Eight Grandchildren. His hobbies are Ballooning (Obviously), Skiing, Biking, and Hiking. His age is 65.