



The AMA History Project Presents: Autobiography of JOEL DANNER BUNCH 1904-1948



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Joel Danner Bunch

Joel Danner Bunch was only 44 years old when he died in 1948, but in his short lifetime, he made a lasting impact on the history of model aviation.

Known to everyone as Dan, he produced many model airplane articles dealing with the design and flying of model airplanes prior to forming his own company. Dan began the Bunch Model Airplane Company in South Central Los Angeles in 1934.

In 1935, Dan and his staff designed and manufactured a gas model engine. It was introduced to the public in 1936 and was reviewed in the August 1936 *Model Airplane News*.

Their next engine was the Mighty Midget, which could be purchased in kit form for as little as \$9.95 in 1937. Other model airplane engines of the day were selling for at least twice this amount, which made Dan Bunch the "Henry Ford" of model aviation. This engine enabled many young modelers to get a start in model aviation.

Other engines followed, including the Mighty Marine, the Warrior, the Speedway, and the powerful Tiger Aero series.

The last engine that Dan was associated with was the Contestor, which was produced in 1946. The Lucas and Smith Mfg. Co. were the manufacturers of the engine.

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