



# The AMA History Project Presents: Autobiography of DONALD (DON) T. LOWE



Born February 16, 1925      AMA #L21

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Written & Submitted by D & PC; Transcribed & Edited by SS (8/2002), Updated by JS (10/2008), reformatted by JS (10/2009)

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## Career:

- 1952: Worldwide Air Force Champion
- Earned a B.S. in mechanical engineering
- World War II pilot who flew B-24s, B-25s, and B-26s
- Has commercial, single and multi-engine aircraft licenses
- Worked in research and development at Wright-Patterson Air Force Base
- Retired from the military as a major
- Worked for 33 years as a civilian at Aerospace Engineer in research and development at Wright-Patterson Air Force Base
- Directed the development of remotely piloted vehicles for 12 years
- Served as AMA vice president for four years
- Served as AMA president for nine years
- Designed the Phoenix series
- Flew RC aerobatic in competition for years
- Judged various contests, including international contests
- Writer for the modeling press for 27 years

## Honors:

- Received the Paul Tissandier Diploma from the Federation Aéronautique Internationale for services to aeronautics and airsports
- 1979: AMA Meritorious Service Award
- 1988: Vintage Radio Control Society Hall of Fame
- 1988: Howard McEntee Award
- 1991: Model Aviation Hall of Fame
- 1996: AMA Meritorious Service Award
- 1996: AMA Fellow

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*The following was written by Don Lowe but submitted by Dixie and Pamela Cutrone.*

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I have been in aeromodeling over 65 years. I hold a B.S. in mechanical engineering and have taken some advanced courses.

I served as a pilot during World War II and flew B-24s, B-25s, and B-26s in addition to smaller aircraft. I hold commercial, single, and multi-engine aircraft licenses. Since I was a reservist, I was recalled to active duty during the Korean War, remaining in research and development at Wright-Patterson Air Force Base (AFB). I am now a retired major.

I have had 33 years experience as a civilian aerospace engineer in research and development at Wright-Patterson AFB. My work encompassed propulsion systems and remotely piloted vehicle (RPV) development. I spent 12 years directing a pioneering effort in RPV technology, which called on extensive use of my background in model aircraft. Our most important work involved flight demonstrating destruction of a variety of ground targets with low-cost Remote Controlled (RC) aircraft.

I served four years as a vice president and nine years as the president of the Academy of Model Aeronautics, receiving a Model Aviation Hall of Fame award and the Paul Tissandier Diploma from the Federation Aéronautique Internationale (FAI) for services to aeronautics and airsports.

My model flying has been varied; I've flown virtually every type of aircraft except Indoor. I built my first RC model (a Good Guff) in 1942 and have concentrated on RC since 1952.

I designed the Phoenix series and flew RC aerobatic models in competition for many years. In 1952, I became the Worldwide Air Force Champion. I was a competitor a number of times in the Las Vegas Tournament of Champions, and in recent years, I have served as a judge for that event. I have also served as a judge in international (FAI) competition.

My passion at this time is technology development. I am much interested in devices and techniques, which expand the sophistication of our hobby and enlarge our ability to fly with precision and in safety.

I am currently working with a manufacturer in designing large-scale aerobatic models. To me RC aerobatics is an art form, a thing of beauty in three dimensions. Remote control makes this possible.

I have been writing for the model press for 27 years and am currently writing a technical monthly column called "Flying Lowe" for *RC Modeler* magazine.

*(signed) Don Lowe*

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