



The AMA History Project Presents: Biography of DWIGHT HALE



Written by DKN Staff (02/1981); Transcribed by KE (04/2012); Reformatted by JS (05/2012)

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Dwight Hale - - The Fledglings **-by Dale K. Nelsen**

It warms the cockles of our hearts when we learn of someone who is an inspiration to others in modeling, especially to youngsters. Here is a small glimpse at Dwight Hale, schoolteacher extraordinary.

While putting this story together, I found myself rejoicing that an RC airplane flies only because the will of the builder allows it no other option. This brings people into the act. Combine an RC airplane with a guy who flies it in some special way, because an inborn compulsion allows him no other option, and that's what C modeling is all about.

Dwight Hale, schoolteacher at the Glenmore Elementary School in Fremont, California, is one of those guys who builds and flies a very special way.

Dwight has been an active member of the SACRATS (Southern Alameda County Radio Control Club) for some 10 years, and is known to all as a builder's builder. Scratch building is his forte, and he scratch-builds models with the same ease as one who builds consistently from kits with plans and all of the parts.

Dwight recently finished his second *Devastator* that is a prime example of projecting photographs of the real airplane on a wall, and designing and cutting all of the parts to finish the project. But for his expertise in scratch-building, there would be no Quarter-Scale *Devastator* flying the skies of Alameda County, as there are no kits available. In fact, I don't think there is a kit of a *Devastator* available in any size, unless it is a plastic model.

Dwight builds superb airplanes, and spends most of his free time building and designing something new. His expertise is available to everyone. Just ask him, and he will help out at any time!

Teaching elementary students for five days a week would be enough for the average man, but not for Dwight Hale. He has found a lot of interest in a number of students who want to build and fly RC models, and he took it upon himself to set up a special class where all were welcome.

Instead of being in the classroom at 8:00 a.m. and going home around 3:30 p.m., Dwight and his

fledglings get to class around 6:30 a.m., and after regular classes are over, they stay on till five or six in the evening.

One of Dwight's most interested students was an original "Peck's Bad Boy," who not only straightened up and became a good citizen, but is now planning to go on to a career in flying. This same boy was the first one there in the morning, and the last to leave in the evening. This same boy's mother called Dwight and complained that her son was spending too much time in school!

Now and then, Dwight manages to take his class to the SACRC flying site for field training, and on occasions he puts on a flying demonstration in one of his latest designs, such as his four-engine "no name airplane." Two of the engines are tractors, and two are pushers.

Dwight takes off his "no name airplane," and wrings it out for the astonished kids as if it were an aerobatic type—which it isn't. It's really a four-engine cargo-type that thinks it's an aerobatic airplane, so Dwight, reluctant to hurt its feelings, goes along with the gag—and flies it like one.

When his act is over, and his airplane is safely on the ground, Dwight relaxes and looks as serene as a smiling guru on a mountaintop. This obviously impresses the kids. They think if Dwight can do all those offbeat things, then man, let's get us one and not do all those other offbeat things.

Dwight teaches his students: "It's just a matter of knowing your airplane inside-out. Never ask it to do anything beyond the limits of its design. And know exactly what you're doing all the time." This promotes safe flying, and assures many happy and successful flights.

Our hats are off to Dwight Hale for his devotion to modeling. The time he spends with the younger generation surely will make better men of them all.

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AMA History Project
National Model Aviation Museum
5151 E. Memorial Dr.
Muncie IN 47302
(765) 287-1256, ext. 511
historyproject@modelaircraft.org

