



The AMA History Program Presents: Biography of LARRY RENGER

Modeler since 1950s Born: 1942



Written by MA staff (12/2010)

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The following was published in the January 2011 issue of Model Aviation magazine. Larry was inducted into the 2010 Model Aviation Hall of Fame.

Larry Renger was born in 1942 near Richmond, Virginia. His first models were stick-and-tissue airplanes, made from cardstock and hardwood because of World War II material shortages.

“When painted with house paint, the planes were, of course, unflyable,” he wrote. “But I was hooked.”

The next few years took Larry from gliders and rubber models to self-designed Jet-X aircraft and stick-and-tissue HLGs. “Modeling hit me big-time when I moved to California and fell in with a group of control-line fliers,” he wrote. “We ended up forming two clubs, the ‘Cratermakers’ at Jack O’Blennis’ hobby shop in Hermosa Beach, and the ‘Screamin’ Deamons’ at Mira Costa High School, our home field.”

Larry joined the Tech Model Aircrafters at MIT when he left for college. Legendary Indoor Free Flight modeler, Ray Harlan, who held numerous national records, had returned to school for his Master’s degree and became Larry’s flying tutor. They flew in the school’s Armory, a Category II-rated site, and as a result, Larry picked up several records of his own including Indoor A-ROG records in Senior class, Indoor Stick, and Indoor HLG.

Larry saw a notice for Estes Industries’ monthly model rocket design contest. He designed the *Skyslash* rocket boost glider.

“Up until that time, all BG [boost glider] models looked pretty much like rockets with big fins,” he wrote. “*Skyslash* looked like a conventional aircraft with the engine above the nose.”

The model was made to appeal to Larry’s concept of rocketeers, but its performance bested previous records and the configuration is used in competition today. Estes modified the design and it became the *Astron Falcon*.

Larry graduated with a degree in aeronautical engineering, began a career in aerospace, and *hated* it. When he was laid off in 1969, he revived his aeromodeling interest, which eventually led to a job with Estes.

“Joy unbounded,” Larry wrote. “I was free forever from the aerospace industry!”

In his aeromodeling career, Larry has worked with Estes, Fox, Cox, Mattel, Model Builder, and 2 companies that specialized in fast-food and cereal-box toys. He has had more than 20 designs published including Free Flight, Control Line, and Radio Control aircraft.

Larry has written a number of technical help and how-to articles that appeared in magazines including *Flying Models*, *Model Airplane News*, and *Model Aviation*. He has reviewed a number of kits for various publications and authored a column in *Model Builder* from 1976 through 1982.

Larry's many kits, ARFs, and RTFs were manufactured through M&P Models, RSM, Estes, and Cox among other companies. His engines include the *Black Widow*, *QRC*, *Killer Bee*, *Tee Dee R/C 05*, *Tee Dee R/C 09*, and *Venom*.

Currently, Larry flies competition Control Line Aerobatics with the Knights of the Round Circle and the Valley Circle Burners clubs near Los Angeles, as well as the occasional park flyer and Indoor Radio Control model.

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