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## Autobiography of KENNETH E. RUNESTRAND

Modeler since 1947

Birth Date: June 5, 1934

AMA Number: 2499

Written & Submitted by KER (3/97)

Transcribed by NR (6/97)

Edited by SS (2002)

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### Career:

- Contest Director
  - Q.S.A.A. Pioneer, P-024
  - I.M.A.A. Founding Sponsor, FS-34
  - Served as I.M.A.A. District Director
  - Writes column in Radio Control magazine, "Big is Beautiful" from 1985 to the present (1997)
  - His Eagle Squadron newsletter, "Flight Report," had a nation wide mailing list.
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At 62 years, born in 1934, still breathing, just another modeler for over 50 of those years.

After orange crate bipes and solid model kits, flying models began with AJ Interceptors, stick and tissue in the early 1940s. (Who hasn't set one on fire and chucked it from the barn roof?) Couldn't wait for the new box of Shredded Wheat that had the World War II profile models printed on balsa sheets that separated the biscuit layers.

Powered modeling began in 1947. Free Flight with Dakota bipes and .049 OK Cub engines, Scientific P-51 U-Control. Stepped up to Torpedo 29, O&R 23 and Veco engines and Kits such as the Warrior, Brave, Goldberg Shoestring and, of course, Ringmasters. RC started in mid 1960s with Sterling Mambo Special, reed system that took the whole fuselage, TriSquires with Bonitron Galloping Ghost system had some success. Bought a Kraft Gold Medal with KPS-10 servos in 1968 and never looked back. Still on hand, the radio was used into early 1980s even, with 9' span, Quadra powered models. Also still have a PCS, (Proportional Control Systems), that Cliff Werick marketed, generic Kaft radios with stacked pc board receiver and brown vinyl tranny. Loved those ads and then Cliff married her – broke my heart.

Goldberg Skylarks and Falcons, Ugly Stiks, then began designing and scratch building foam-winged, door skin models. Built about four a month, would sell three to club members to finance the hobby.

First pattern ship was Bridi Kaos that flew oh so nicely after my "hot" little creations. Didn't have the patience to become a "real" pattern pilot. Started building bigger beginning with the Senior Telemaster, Nosen J-3's and Citabrias in the mid 1970s. OS-80, Fox 74 just wouldn't do it but Quadra gas engines appeared just as Eddie Morgan was getting a gang together for a 1/4th scale meet in Las Vegas in 1977.

The Citabria and a Quadra Q-35 made it and I became Pioneer Member, P-024, in Q.S.A.A., as did about eight giant nuts from the Sacramento area who went. During this time, I was doing my own article, "Aerie," for club newsletters.

In 1978/1979, a local giant scale interest group was formed with myself as president, chief cook and bottle washer. The club, Eagle Squadron, later became Chapter 1, I.M.A.A. when it was

founded in 1980 and I became a founding sponsor, FS-34. My Eagle Squadron newsletter, "Flight Report," had a nation wide mailing list. My "Aerie" column began regularly in the I.M.A.A. newsletter, "High Flight" and the Q.S.A.A. newsletter, "The Quarter Scaler," the club sponsored/co-sponsored 11 annual Giant Scale Fly Ins at the Merwin Ranch, Sod Farm near Sacramento. I was contest director since 1983, for the last seven of those meets between 1979 and 1991. The annual event even drew the German B-17 team as well as notables such as Bob Beckman and Norm Goyer. It was a model flyer heaven until Bill Merwin retired and we could no long use the event location.

I served as I.M.A.A. District Director, District X, 1984-1986. I regularly attended the annual Q.S.A.A. events. Then, at the October 1984 meet in the desert, I was approached by Dick Tichenor of RC Modeler. Dick Phillips had left the magazine and the "Big Is Beautiful" column. I was asked to pick up the reins and my first column appeared in the March 1985 issue of RCM and has continued to this day.

I became a published designer as such in 1978. A plan was drawn up, at the urging of others, for my 9' Piper L-4 design, which appeared in Scale RC Modeler, Dec. 1981. A 9' Piper PA-18 Super Cub followed in 1982 and my 10' Pober Pixe, EAA parasol design, appeared in Nov. 1984 issue of Scale RC Modeler.

Float plans followed as well as other designs and all plans have been available to others but I never endeavored to make a business of the plan service. The designing is done to please myself and offered to others. Designing and drawing continues but is done for my own enjoyment with CADD programs and on a computer and information usually appears in the "Big is Beautiful Column."

I have never been more than another modeler and my writing endeavors have only been an effort to share the fun I have with others of the wonderful world of modeling.

*(Signed) Ken Runestrand AMA 2499*

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