



# The AMA History Project Presents: Biography of DON BUTMAN



Written by JS (03/2014), reformatted by JS (07/2014)

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## I Am the AMA Don Butman, Black Sheep Squadron member and Free Flight modeler

*JS: How did you get involved with model aviation?*

**DB:** Back when I was seven years old in 1938, a neighbor boy whom I went to school with and I started building models and it has continued all along.

*JS: How has model aviation impacted your life and/or career?*

**DB:** I'm an aeronautical engineer graduate, but worked as a mechanical engineer. It pointed me toward model and full-scale airplanes. I started flying Control Line in 1944. I attended the second and third Plymouth Internats in Detroit in 1947 and 1948.

I joined the Air Force and later worked for Northrop and then North American Aviation in engineering. I continued building models throughout that time and got involved with RC. I retired in 1995 and started flying Indoor and rubber-powered Free Flight. I joined the Black Sheep Squadron and have been involved with them.

*JS: What disciplines of modeling do you currently participate in?*

**DB:** Mainly indoor rubber and electrics, outdoor electrics, and CO<sub>2</sub>. All Free Flight. I haven't flown Control Line in a while because I have hip issues and getting down on your hands and knees to crank the engine doesn't work well.

*JS: What are your other hobbies?*

**DB:** Other hobbies? I bowled for a number of years, but haven't done that for a while. It's mainly airplanes.

*JS: Who (or what) has influenced you most?*

**DB:** I had some very good friends in school and they were my biggest influence before I went into the Air Force.

*JS: What advice would you give someone looking to get started in Free Flight?*

**DB:** Start with a Delta Dart and work up from there. The Delta Dart is more informative than a Sky Streak because you actually have to put the covering down.

Depending on how much, if any, model building you've done before, start simple and learn the basics and move up from there. This will help keep you from getting frustrated.

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