



# The AMA History Project Presents: Biography of Eric Rule

Born May 5, 1942

Started modeling in the early 1950s

AMA #426767



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*The following biography is by Charles Mackey, submitted in 2006.*

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## **AMA Biography of Eric Rule**

By Charles Mackey

How did a young Canadian boy who built stick rubber-powered model airplanes grow up to be one of the world's largest producers of Control Line stunt model airplanes? Well that would be the biography of Eric Rule.

Eric was born in Toronto, Canada on May 5, 1942. His can-do attitude may have come in part from his family, who always considered his father to be a World War II hero. King George VI decorated Eric's father for bravery at Buckingham Palace.

Eric's interest in model airplanes began when he was in the fourth grade. He built model airplanes in the warm, cozy basement during the cold Canadian months. His first gas-powered model was a Cox .049 Goldberg *Wizard* that he flew in his back yard.

Eric attended Queen's University in Kingston, Ontario, Canada and majored in English and history. He graduated in 1967. Larger Control Line airplanes became a lifelong interest to Eric in 1971 after he purchased a Fox .35 and a *Ringmaster* model airplane. This model is now kitted by Eric and is one of his top sellers.

After Eric left college, he started his own business as an insurance broker. That lasted until 1985 when he acquired a sporting goods store. Eric met Anne, his wife, on a blind date arranged by friends in 1969. He likes to brag about marrying a woman with five children. Eric knew, and boasted, that he was going to marry Anne weeks before he asked her, a point that she affectionately reprimands him for to this day. They decided to move to the United States in 1985, a decision made easy by the fact that three of their children already lived in the U.S.

Eric went to work for Premier Industries, a Fortune 500 Company, in 1986 as a sales manager. He was responsible for overseeing 27 sales representatives in the southern California area. In 1988, he changed companies and went to work for Bowman Distribution in Los Angeles County. When the company downsized in 1990, Eric did some computer programming for American Services Resources and worked as a vice president of sales and marketing.

In 1990, Eric came to the realization that he would never be satisfied working for someone else, so he started his own business, RSM Distribution. That business started with hardware supplies,

expanded to balsawood supplies and then began manufacturing Control Line kits. His first kit was his own design, a *P-40*. The manufacturing was all done with a band saw and sander until 2001, when he acquired a computer-driven laser that greatly improved his quality and capacity.

Eric was a member of the Balsa Beavers Model Airplane Club in Ontario, Canada and has been active in the Knights of the Round Circle in Orange County, California for eighteen years. He served as a newsletter contributor and editor and was a past president of the club.

One of Eric's strong beliefs is that model airplane heroes should be recognized and honored while they are still living and he has backed-up this philosophy by sponsoring and directing the Charles A. Mackey Open Contest since 1998.

As a young boy in Canada, obtaining kits was a major problem for Eric. The nearest hobby shop was 30 miles, and at best, had a very limited selection of airplane kits. Eric is now proud of the fact that he makes his kits available around the world. He currently offers thirty-four kits for sale and usually adds three new kits annually.

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We are happy that Eric and Anne chose to move to America and become citizens. Thank you, Eric and Anne.



*Eric Rule (L), 2005 President of Knights of the Round Circle and  
Dennis Coleman (R), 2006 President.*



*Rule helping a fellow modeler with his model.*



*February 2006: Eric Rule receiving the  
Ed Southwick Memorial Friendship*



*February 2006: Eric Rule holding his Ed Southwick Memorial Friendship Award.*



*February 11-12, 2006: Rule served as a judge at the Ed Southwick Memorial Stunt Contest.*

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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

