



The AMA History Project Presents: Autobiography of ERVIN E. FRIERSON

Born November 17, 1930

Started modeling in 1936

AMA #7761



Information submitted by EEF (03/2003); Written & Edited by SS (03/2003), Reformatted by JS (08/2009)

Career:

- Helped organize the Texas Chiefs model airplane club in 1953 and remains a member today (2003); has held every club office
- Started competing in local contests in 1954
- Competed in the 1960 and 1964 Nationals
- Competed in FAI competition in 1974 flying his own design
- Won the sportsman award at a Southwestern Model Championship
- Designed the *Poison*, *Spectre* and *Boo Ray*; currently (2003) designed Radio Control airplanes
- Has been an AMA contest director since 1958
- Serves as an associate vice president for AMA District VIII
- Involved with Chick's Hobby Shop in Haskell, Texas, since 1953
- Taught modeling at Boy Scouts and in elementary school summer programs
- Appointed an AMA industry leader in February 1958

The following biography was written by Ervin Frierson and submitted to the AMA History Project (at the time called the AMA History Program) in 2003.

The Beginning

Ervin's local Ben Franklin Store had a hobby department with completed models suspended from the ceiling. These models fascinated Ervin and he became interested in modeling at the age of six. He started building Comet 10-cent rubber and solid models from kits by himself.

For young Ervin, the gluing was the hardest part. The glue, which was dissolved in water, didn't stick well. He found that building the tail surfaces was the easiest for him to do, but he enjoyed the wings the most. Soon he found that modeling magazines were a good source of information. He started reading Model Airplane News magazine in 1939 then became a subscriber in 1941.

Though he started modeling early, Ervin did not join his first modeling club until 1953 and then it was one he helped organize. He helped form the Texas Chiefs model airplane club in Haskell, Texas, and remains a club member to this day (2003). Two years before, in 1951, Ervin graduated from Texas A&M University with a Bachelor of Science degree.

Competition

A year after joining his first club, in 1954, 24-year-old Ervin competed in his first competition in Abilene, Texas, with a U-Control model. Ervin did not place in that first contest, but later that year placed first.

A few years later, Ervin competed in the Nationals. In 1960 and 1964, Ervin competed with Free Flight power models in ½-A, A, B and C. A decade after his last Nationals, Ervin competed in

power at the Bryan Semifinals in an FAI event. He flew a FAI glider at the Caddo Mills, Texas, finals and at the Taft, California, finals. In the FAI events, Ervin flew an original design.

Ervin was recognized for his good attitude in competing. He won the sportsman award at one of the Southwestern Model Championships.

Experimenting

Throughout his modeling career, Ervin also experimented with and designed various models that have been published in modeling magazines. He designed the following models:

- Poison, a U-Control model
- Spectre, a Free Flight model with a three-view published in the National Free Flight Society (NFFS) magazine
- FAI models
- Boo Ray, a semi-scale Radio Control Pattern model

Currently, in 2003, Ervin is designing Radio Control sailplanes. His models have been successful. The 2001 Nationals winner flew a plane built by Ervin.

Leadership

Since Ervin helped organize the Texas Chiefs model airplane club in 1953, he has held all offices and currently (2003) serves as the club's secretary/treasurer. Ervin even served as editor of the club's newsletter, Smoke Signal. He has also directed various local contests including U-Control, Free Flight, and Radio Control contests after become an AMA contest director in 1958.

Ervin has also served the AMA as an associate vice president for AMA District VIII under George Aldrich and Dr. Sanford Frank.

Industry Involvement

Ervin has been involved in the hobby industry for 50 years (as of 2003). In 1953, he started working in Chick's Hobby Shop in Haskell, Texas, and continues to work there.

He also helped promote the hobby through teaching modeling to Boy Scouts and in elementary summer school sessions.

Ervin's hobby involvement led to his appointment as an AMA industry leader in February 1958.

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