



The AMA History Project Presents: Biography of GREG GIMLICK



Written by GG (2013), JS (2017); Reformatted by JS (09/2013)

The following was published on the Model Aviation magazine website, describing columnists for the magazine in 2013.

Greg Gimlick

I caught the aviation bug as a kid when my mother was secretary for the airport commissioner at Hancock International Airport in Syracuse, New York. On my days off from school, I spent time running all over the airport. I discovered model aviation in junior high when an Air Force colonel who lived at the end of my street tolerated my standing around his shop watching him build airplanes. I got one of his cast-off airplanes and converted it to a CL “Mini-Mambo,” since radios were too expensive.

In college I built two hang-gliders from plans with moderate success; they didn’t kill me, but they didn’t fly too well, either. I then enlisted in the Army and went from basic training to flight school. I spent my career as an instructor pilot flying a wide range of helicopters before retiring from an Apache Attack helicopter battalion.

My RC career finally began in the late ’70s when I bought a radio and a Mambo Special. I liked it all, from Pattern to Sport to Scale; sizes ranged from 1/2A to Giant Scale. By 1991, I was becoming somewhat bored with it, until a friend came into my shop and threw an electric Cub on the floor in exasperation declaring, “this damned thing won't fly ... you keep it.”

I fixed it, gave it a try, and decided that although it wasn’t great, it was a very cool idea to power things electrically. The rest is history. I started flying all Electrics and have enjoyed the development throughout the years. It never got boring for me again. I now fly everything from indoor to helis to Giant Scale, and except for one airplane they are all electric. I’ve been writing columns and articles about electrics for several magazines since 1994.

When I’m not flying, I’m traveling with my wife and dog in our RV. I



You can read Greg’s “Electrics” column bi-monthly in the February, April, June, August, October, and December issues. His email address is maelectrics@gimlick.com.

occasionally do some substitute teaching since teaching is what my degree is in, but I try not to let it interfere with my travels and modeling.

When it comes to model aviation, I love it all; it's a lifestyle now!

The following was published in the September 2017 issue of Model Aviation magazine, in the "I Am the AMA" column, written by Jay Smith.

I Am the AMA
Greg Gimlick, *Model Aviation* and *Park Pilot* columnist
By Jay Smith

Jay Smith: How did you get involved with model aviation?

Greg Gimlick: I grew up just off the end of Syracuse International Airport and Hancock Field US Air Force Base in New York, so I was always watching things fly over. My mother was the airport commissioner's secretary, so I spent a lot of time running around the airport and getting to see things from places many didn't. I loved it all!

I built all of the Guillow's kits as soon as I was old enough to understand the instructions and as I got older, I replaced the rubber motors with Cox glow engines and converted them to Control Line models.

A neighbor, who was an Air Force colonel, saw me flying them one day and invited me to see his remote control models and I was hooked. I spent every spare moment watching him build and fly them.

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

GG: Model aviation gave me a love for all things that flew. In college, I built two homemade hang gliders and somehow managed not to kill myself. When my draft number came up #9, I immediately tried to find a way to enlist and fly. The Army was the branch that accepted pilots before they completed college and I enlisted for Army Aviation Warrant Officer Flight Training.

I spent my career in helicopters while trying to do some RC flying too. When I retired, I got heavily back into model aviation and have stayed in touch with my love of aviation that way. I started making annual trips to Muncie, Indiana, to visit the AMA Headquarters and met the people who keep our organization running. Model aviation not only influenced my career but my entire life. It's who I am.

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

GG: My primary interest is electric-powered airplanes and helicopters. I fly all aspects of them from micro to Giant Scale. I recently hopped aboard the crazy train of FPV flying and I am enjoying learning that side of things.

Incorporating my photography hobby into my RC flying seemed to be a natural course to follow. It also reminds me of flying the visual simulators in the Army. My new quadcopters travel with me wherever I go.

JS: What are your other hobbies?

GG: I enjoy traveling in our RV with my wife and dog. We both enjoy photography and seeing the country together. It has allowed us to attend flying events all over the place and meet people I never would have met otherwise. I've been a woodworker since high school and still dabble in that a bit, but not like I used to.

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

GG: There have been so many people. I guess I would have to say it's the community of modelers as a whole that has shaped me as a modeler and person. It's the only group that compares to my military brothers when it comes to connecting with each other and developing friendships for life.

I found that the people at the very top of our hobby are "regular folks" such as those you'd meet at any flying field. Keith Shaw was my electric [power] inspiration and remains so today. Writers Jim Ryan and John Kauk work for a different magazine and although we "compete" we work together to support and motivate each other, often corresponding several times a day.

When I became deathly ill a few years ago, the modeling community supported my wife and me through hard times and recovery. This community of modelers has taught me much about people and myself. Modeling has been a lesson in living life well and for others.

JS: What advice would you give someone looking to write hobby-related articles?

GG: Never think you're not good enough to write an article that will teach or help someone else. We all come to the table with different interests and skills but we all share a common bond of wanting to learn more about the hobby. Just because something you do seems "ordinary" to you, doesn't mean others have heard of it.

You might do something simple that makes your hobby task easier that nobody else has thought of. We have modelers all around the world - some in remote sections - who don't have the benefit of groups of people nearby. Your idea, how-to article, etc. might be just the thing that person is looking for.

Submit an idea to an editor. Check out the writer guidelines all magazines provide. Get off the

sidelines and get involved. Write an article, design a plane, and publish it. Just get out there and do it!

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