



The AMA History Project Presents:
Autobiography of GRAHAM H. HICKS
Modeler, Contest Director, Writer, Club Organizer
Born January 20, 1936 Started modeling in 1956
AMA #7994



Written & Submitted by GHH (06/1996); Transcribed by NR (11/1996); Edited by SS (2002), Reformatted by JS (09/2009)

1948: Received my first gas engine for Christmas – a Genie .29 ignition job. Never got it to run.

1950: Got an Orwick .29 and a Key team racer for Christmas (Keith Storey design). Never got the Orwick to run on ignition, but a kid in the lunch line at school told me about the new glow plugs and loaned me one. The Orwick ran like a top on glow and was my one and only Control Line engine for about five years. Flew it in two Ringmasters, a Trixter Barnstormer, a Maverick, Two Testors Freshman models, and others.

1953: Entered one of the Ringmasters (gearless) in a stunt contest at Vicksburg, Miss. Won third place, and a Trixter Barnstormer kit, donated by Balthis Cycle and Hobby Shop of Vicksburg. Married Mr. Balthis' daughter, Barbara, 17 years later. Still married.

1957: Built my first Radio Control model, a Babcock plastic Piper Tri-Pacer. Learned enough with it to advance to a Midwest Esquire and Fox .15 a year later. Radio Control gear was all single-channel, all home or kit built.

1962: Navy stationed me at NAS Atsugi, Japan. Became friends with Azuma Kudo, Japan's leading single channel designer and flier. Built several of his designs (Tokyo Echo, New Daigo, Alpine, Micro) and integrated local Japanese club with our modelers on base. Graduated to multi-channel reed gear made by O.S. in Japan.

1969: Stationed at NAS Glenview, Illinois. Organized loosely knit Radio Control club of local military and civilian flyers (no name, no AMA charter). Was NAS Glenview's Liaison Representative to AMA for arrangements of 1969 and 1970 Nationals (Nats). Competed in Novice Pattern with a Top flight Contender. Appeared on WGN's Jim Conway TV show with Dave Platt and Jimmy Grier to publicize the Nats.

1971: Was instrumental in initiating arrangements for Top Flite to donate Dave Platt's record-breaking SF3D Dauntless to Naval Aviation Museum in Pensacola, Florida.

1973: Stationed at NAS Lemoore, California. Organized ABC Modelers of Lemoore, chartered with AMA.

1981: Now retired from the Navy, living in La Grande, Oregon. Organized Grande Ronde Bush Pilots with 7 charter members. Club affiliated with AMA about 1984 (Club #1856).

1988-present: Have had five major feature articles published in *RC Modeler* magazine and *Model Aviation* magazine (most recent: "Build a Converta-Cradle!" in September 1995).

1992: Became a contest director; have directed three of the past five AMA Class AA Scale Meets sponsored by Grande Ronde Bush Pilots. Am contest director for this year's meet, August 17-18.

1993-1994:- Spearheaded campaign which resulted in Grande Ronde Bush Pilots being District XI's first club to attain AMA Gold Level Leader Club status. Have led numerous Delta Dart sessions each year for local school and church children; next one is June 27-28.

I feel quite self-conscious sending you all this stuff, but if you're looking for some of the little details of what makes this hobby so wonderful, here is a handful!

(signed) Graham Hicks

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