



The AMA History Project Presents: Biography of GEORGE J. JOY

June 16, 1945 - June 17, 2010

Written by BHJ (09/2010); Reformatted by JS (07/2014)



The following letter by Bryan Joy about his father, George Joy, was published in the September 2010 issue of Model Aviation magazine, in the In the Air section.

So Long, Dad!

Following is a letter honoring George Joy, who passed away on June 17.

“Hello, my name is Bryan H. Joy. That’s right, Joy. I am the son of the well-known and respected George J. Joy who, all too soon, recently passed. I am writing because I wanted to share with you who George was to me.

“As a young kid of about 11, my father and I started on a journey together. A friend of my father’s was into flying remote-controlled airplanes, and knew that my father had at one time actually flew real airplanes. He figured we would be interested in trying to fly smaller versions of them.

“We went with him a few times to the Malibu Soaring Society field near Pepperdine University in Malibu, California. It was a small bluff overlooking the sandy beaches and houses. We learned together to control the aircraft and then we were hooked.

“My grandfather, my dad’s dad, bought us our first airplane, which was actually a birthday present for me. It was a simple 2T. My father and I built it together. Our first radio was the old colored flag type. I still remember the colors since they were my favorite.

“We joined a local club near where we lived, the Harbor Soaring Society. We had a field just behind the high school I would later be attending, and an adjacent cliff in Costa Mesa, California.

“We both got better at flying, but my father was very prolific at it. I stayed in the sportsman class, but my father quickly made his way up into the expert class. Along the way we made a lot of good friends, many who will probably be reading this.

“As time went on my father moved on to more advance airplanes while I couldn’t seem to get the hang of ailerons. My all-time favorite airplane was the two-meter Gnome. It was an almost bullet proof model that I tested many times over and over, but no matter how bad it was, my father knew it was my favorite. So time and time again after my mishaps he always fixed it. Good old Dad always knew how to make it right again.

“I recall this one time while flying in Costa Mesa, I was standing by my father and he was flying my two-meter Gnome. We were not flying in a contest, just having a fun time together.

“He was distracted by someone that asked him a question and took his eyes off the model for just four seconds. I kept watching the airplane and when he looked back he asked me, “Where is it?” I pointed to the airplane and he still did not see it. So instead of handing me the controls he had

me try to tell him which way to go. I did my best, but at that time it never entered into our minds to just have me take control of it.

“After several attempts to regain control of the model it was simply too low and too far for him to see. It went down in the apartments near the bluff we were flying at, and we ran to the truck to go chase it down. We found it several minutes later, and to our surprise it was in very good shape. The only damage was the rudder piece was broke and the wing had several small broken pieces. He never yelled at me for not being able to tell him how to regain control, but I could see he was a bit upset.

“We took it home, and yet again dad worked his magic and fixed what seemed like it should be a mangled Frankenstein-looking mess by now, but it looked good as new again.

“My mother, Jo A. Joy, has been with him for 41 wonderful years. She has seen him in good times and bad. The past 11 years she has stood by his side through all the medical issues. Together they seemed to have overcome so many trials.

“My father was a very stubborn man, and this last time it proved to be his downfall. A simple infection should not have ended up in such a tragic loss.

“More than just my mother and our family have been touched by this all too soon departure of such a giving man; as is evident by the many touching and meaningful e-mails and gifts bestowed upon us this past week. The RC community has been very comforting and giving in a time of such great sorrow. I just wanted to say *thank you everyone* for all you have done for us.

“Such a great man and friend will be sorely missed by all those who knew him. I don’t think I ever truly expressed to him how much I loved him, and to the last day I am so sorry that I never did.

“As I stood by his bedside I told him that I loved him, and I would truly miss having him around. He and I were just getting back to the way we were when we flew together; he is flying high on the winds that will never let him down now.

“I love you, Dad”

-Bryan H. Joy

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