



The AMA History Project Presents: Autobiography of LOUIS JOYNER



Written by LJ (2013); Reformatted by JS (09/2013)

The following was published on the Model Aviation magazine website, describing columnists for the magazine, and added to the AMA History Project (at the time called the AMA History Program) files in September 2013.

Louis Joyner

My dad owned a hobby shop in downtown Memphis, Tennessee, so I had an early exposure to all sorts of models and model magazines. We had back issues of all the American ones, as well as the British publication Aero Modeller. We also had Frank Zaic's Model Aeronautics Year Books.

These publications, especially the Zaic books, really opened the broader world of FF and the scientific aspects of model design. At that age I didn't understand much of what I was reading, but I began to realize that there was more to modeling than guesswork.

By age nine I had built several Gollywocks and a 1/2A Zeek. After that, most of my models were my own design. Throughout the last half century, I've flown a wide variety of Power, Glider, and Rubber events. But Wakefield Rubber has been my favorite since childhood; I've built well over 60 Wakes, starting with a very crude attempt at age eight. One of the high points of my modeling career was seeing my 50-gram Wakefield published in the 1964-65 Year Book; the other was making the US Team in F1B for the 1995 World Championships in Hungary.

I have lately been concentrating on the FIG Coupe event, but I'm also giving electric power a try. I like designing and building as much as flying, especially exploring new materials and construction techniques.

Professionally I was a writer, photographer, and senior editor at Southern Living magazine from 1973 until retiring in 2000. The writing and photography carried over into modeling. In 1988 I began guest writing the "Duration" column in Model Aviation and have been the regular columnist since 1993. In addition, I have been a frequent contributor to the National Free Flight Society's annual Symposium Report; I edited the 2003 Sympo. During the 1990s I served as a NFFS vice president. In 2012 I was selected for induction into the NFFS Hall of Fame.

For me, writing about FF has been a way to repay all the help I have had throughout the years, both from published articles and one-on-one from more experienced modelers.



Louis' "FF Duration" column appears quarterly in the February, May, August, and November issues of Model Aviation. His email address is joyner28@comcast.net

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