



The AMA History Project Presents: Biography of ART LALONDE

October 5, 1922 –October 1980



Written by JM (06/1981), Transcribed & reformatted by JS (04/2012)

Jim McNeill, at the time AMA Historian, wrote the following for Model Aviation (June 1981 issue) about Art after his passing in 1980.

Everyone at AMA Headquarters, and all of us who knew him, were deeply saddened last fall when Mr. Art LaLonde of New Carrollton, Maryland passed away. Only 58, he was struck down by lung cancer in the very prime of his Academy career. Art was our chief printer and overseer of small publications, both at Academy home offices and at every Nationals for thirteen years. He was a colorful figure at both places, made his presence felt, and entertained everyone who came near him.

He is survived by a loving wife Lucy, four children – Arthur Jr., William, Robert, and Mary – and by six grandchildren. Art loved modeling and became very devoted to AMA. He organized a Control Line club in Seabrook, Maryland, working through the local VFW. He helped kids with building and with flying and with great encouragement. He was a judge of CL Stunt and an active Contest Director in his area. A tireless leader of boys and men in model airplane activities.

Some sample testamentaries: Johnny Clemens, four term AMA President said of Art, “The most devoted, the best employee AMA ever had!”

Les Hard, nationally recognized newsletter editor and *Nats News* editor: “Art was one of a kind, rough and gruff on the outside, soft on the inside. If you listened to him you could learn something....”

J.E. Albritton, world champion Control Line team race competitor who placed second individually in Warsaw, Poland in 1980: “Art and my Daddy were good friends who flew CL together. Art was a club leader and certainly had a great influence on my modeling career.”

His devoted wife, Lucy: “Art made every Nats and he never missed a single day’s work. The AMA was his whole life.”

Art LaLonde came up the hard way. Born in Michigan in 1922, he was sworn into the U.S. Marines at the tender age of 17 in 1939 and finished his high schooling in the Marine Corps at Quantico, Virginia. He was assigned duties in Cuba, Puerto Rico, Iceland and elsewhere. A decorated, heralded soldier, he was discharged with honor from the Fifth Marine Division at Camp LeJune, North Carolina in 1952.

When the funeral services were held at the St. Mary’s Church in his community, the VFW sent four of its members to carry his casket proudly. The United States Marine Corps dispatched 10 of its finest, a full regalia elite color guard wearing dress blues, white gloves, white hats and

rifles, to pay homage to a fallen comrade. Before the coffin was lowered into the ground, the American flag draped over was carefully removed and folded and handed to his widow. During the lowering ceremonies, a U.S. Marine slowly blew a tearful, soulful Taps to say goodbye.

Today a Xerox 9400 does the work Art used to do in the office, but no machine or no person will ever be able to do the other things Art could do so well to provide inspiration and laughing entertainment to everyone around him. That part of him can never be replaced and he will never be forgotten.

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