



The AMA History Project Presents: Biography of DIRK MASON



Written by JS (2017), Reformatted by JS (07/2017)

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

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

Dirk Mason: For my 11th birthday, my dad took me to the hobby shop where I got my first string Control Line] and it blew me away. I was the happiest kid ever in the whole world. A moment I feel every dad should have with his son! That day I was marveled by him - he made an investment in his son that will last through eternity.

We entered the hobby shop, and to a kid it was like entering into a dream world, or to coin a phrase, "a candy store." I went to the right side of the store where my friend told me the string control stuff was and that's when I saw it: a biplane called the Li'l Red Baron.

I stayed up all night [to] build my first string control and I have been hooked in this hobby world ever since, thanks to a dad who loved his son enough to invest in his happiness.

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

DM: My first job after I got out of college was at the GE [General Electric] aircraft engine group, where I spent seven years of my life working on GE aircraft in Albuquerque, New Mexico. I was awarded a \$500 gift certificate for a clamp I designed to hold the part of a GE F110 engine inner working part that had to be made in a vacuum chamber under extremely high heat at zero atmospheric pressure, so the part could be metabolically changed in structure to ensure it was durable enough to handle the stress of the power this fine engine could produce!

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

DM: I participate in lots of things, but one right now is racing drones with MultiGP. Right now I am not doing so well. [I] had some mechanical problems that have grounded me on a couple of races, but I am still trying.

JS: *What are your other hobbies?*

DM: Too many to count. I am a lover of all hobbies and right now, since the summer season is about to begin, DadsWorkShop is supporting boat racing. I have yet to find time to fly my first love - airplanes. We are now promoting the new on- and off-road FPV racing of cars and truggies and I just became a Bachman Train dealer working on getting trains in the shop, along with scale-size tanks and submarines.

Hobbies outside of my shop are hunting, fishing, and shooting firearms, and safety is always important.

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

DM: My dad. He was my dad as well as being one this nation's silent heroes whom we honor every May on Memorial Day. He served in World War II, the Korean War where he received three Purple Hearts, and in Vietnam where he received the Bronze Star that is displayed at the corporate hobby shop.

I was blessed with an angel from heaven from whom I learned as he passed from this world back into the charge of God. This man who was sent by God loved me and he will be my dad eternally. I can only pray now that he is proud of his son. I created my dream to try and give some kid that same feeling I had when my dad took and invested his hard-earned money in his loving son. Hence the motto, "Welcome to DadsWorkShop where love is a good investment!"

JS: *What do you feel the role of the local hobby shop is today?*

DM: Well, many things, and one where the joy and love of a hobby can be shared with every family member. Girls are not to be left out here. The hobby shop is where you can come and start a loving experience with your loved ones, get involved with them, and help them shape who they want to be or have locked up inside of them.

Look at the story of Shaun "Nyt fury" Taylor. It's a little different, but he didn't know he had a gift until he unlocked it by doing what he liked. Now he is one of the world champions racing what? Drones!

Wow, how far we have come with technology and it is changing so fast. We need a place where we can be dads who are revered as what we really are - guardians of our most prized loved ones. It is priceless to share the hobby shop experience where love is a good investment! Thank you for allowing me to share my investment with the world!

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