



The AMA History Project Presents: Biography of JOE MICALIZZI



Written by JM (c. 2003); Transcribed, reformatted and edited by JS (06/2010)

The following is an autobiography excerpt from the publication "Who's Who in AMA, 2003, District V." Note: Joe Micalizzi is an AMA Associate Vice President for Puerto Rico; he has held that office for many years.

My name is Joseph Micalizzi. I was born in Brooklyn, New York in 1931. I started building and flying model airplanes while attending P.S. 24 in Brooklyn. At age 10, we moved to Kings Park, Long Island. While attending school there during WWII, we built silhouette models of warplanes. Most of our models were made of pinewood, so we had to use wood files.

I built and flew many rubber-powered models at first. My first engine was a Thor, and it cost \$8.88. My next engine was an Ohlsson .60, which I put in a Super Buccaneer.

After the war, I purchased my first radio, an Aerotrol. I built it by hand. To tune the transmitter, you made a coil of copper wire by wrapping it three times around a pencil, and then soldering a light bulb to the ends. All this was held over the transmitter antenna and you would move a slug in the transmitter until the bulb glowed brightest. The receiver was a one-tube job built and held with rubber bands. The escapement and flying were two more nightmares.

In 1975, I moved to Puerto Rico and have been flying there ever since. I helped form the Demajagua Radio Control Flying Club, of which I am still President. In 1979, we started the El Coql. This is our 22nd year running this two-day event. It is held over the Labor Day weekend; we call it our mini-Nats.

Also in that year, our club started a model aviation program at a local middle/high school. We hold classes three times a week. Two days a week, we build. Most is scratch building, as we don't have enough money to keep buying kits. On Fridays, we take the students to a parking ramp and they fly for two hours.

Looking back on 60 years of modeling, I have many memories and many friends. One of my goals is to get one of these kids to pass it on.

-Joe Micalizzi – a happy modeler.

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