



The AMA History Project Presents: Biography of JIM PORZIG



Written by JP (c. 2003); Transcribed and edited by JS (12/2007), Reformatted by JS (01/2010)

The following excerpt of an autobiography was in the publication "Who's Who in AMA, 2003, District V"

I was five years old when I built my first model aircraft. It was a balsa and tissue rubber-powered model of a Spitfire. I continued building rubber-powered model aircraft and gliders for a few years and then stopped. There were school athletics and electronics to consume all of my time. My university time was spent in acquiring a degree in physics, and most of my professional career I served as a managing engineer.

I have many interests, but a few years after retiring I decided to add another by returning to building model aircraft, especially Radio Control. I joined the AMA in 1993 and became a member of the Tampa Radio Control Aircraft Club, Inc. (TRAC) in Florida. I started building an *Aero-star .40*, but because of unexpected health problems, did not get to complete the model and learn to fly until 1994. With this model, I relearned how to build, fly and repair, repair. Shortly after soloing, my wife, Bernice, and I moved to Unicoi, Tennessee in early 1995.

In May of 1995, I joined the Johnson City Radio Controllers (JCRC.) They had lost their flying site and work was to start on a new location, a retired landfill. Along with other members, I spent many a workday picking up rocks and attempting to get grass to grow. In 1996, I was asked if I would consider serving as an officer in the club. I was not told I would be president. I served the JCRC as president for four years. My administration took a bare plot of retired landfill and developed the Bowser Ridge Model Airport

In order to promote the hobby and the JCRC, I was quite successful in obtaining newspaper and television coverage for most club activities and events. Because of this coverage, we were able to receive the maximum amount of money allowed each year from the Radio Control Hobby Trade Association (RCHTA.) This was a good addition to the club finances. During these four years, the club membership increased by 560%. I compiled and wrote the history of the JCRC and it was published in a 1290-page book called *History of Washington County, Tennessee*.

In 1998, I became a Leader Member of the AMA. I have now "retired" from the presidency and am able to get in some flying time instead of working all the time. Although I still have several other interests that prevent me from building as much as I would like, another group of builders presented me with an AMA Master Builder patch, which I proudly wear on my club shirt. Every year since 1995, my wife and I have officiated at the Indoor Nationals, which are held at the East Tennessee State University Mini-Dome in Johnson City, Tennessee.

My two grandsons are members of the AMA. The youngest, Neil, had his first Radio Control flight when he was four years old. He is the builder and flyer. His older brother, Erik, prefers to just fly.

I am a sport flyer with no desire to compete. I had enough of the competitive environment during my working years. For me, this is just a hobby to enjoy and share with friends. I do some design and build and fly electric, glow and gasoline-powered aircraft. I am working on my seventh year of the AMA All-Season Flyer patch.

This PDF is property of the Academy of Model Aeronautics. Permission must be granted by the AMA History Project for any reprint or duplication for public use.

AMA History Project
National Model Aviation Museum
5151 E. Memorial Dr.
Muncie IN 47302
(765) 287-1256, ext. 511
historyproject@modelaircraft.org

