



The AMA History Project Presents: Biography of JOHN W. SCHNEIDER

April 5, 1924 – December 10, 1997 Started modeling in 1934
AMA# 34606



Written & Submitted by JWS (06/1996); also LS (04/1998); Transcribed by NR (02/1997); Edited by SS (2002), Reformatted by JS (01/2010)

Career:

- 1953 -1967: Model photographer for *Air Trails* and *American Modeler* magazines; attended and photographed all the Navy Nats
 - Did most of Berkeley's photo work for their kits; also did photo work for Bill Winter, Paul DelGatto and Don McGovern
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I started modeling in 1934 flying rubber (Wakefield). In 1938, I got into gas with a Red Zephyr powered by a Brown Jr. Engine. I still have that engine. Flew in the Long Island, New York, area at Holmes Airport and Creedmore with Sal Taibi, Joe Raspante, etc.

Was in the Coast Guard during World War II. After the war (1946) flew U-Control with Drone Diesels at Flushing Airport.

When glow plugs made their appearance, I made and sold thousands of glow plug adapters until Champion came out with the V1 size glow plug. Then I bought and sold a couple of hundred surplus Sigma 4F relays that were used in home built receivers using the RK-61 radio tubes.

In 1947, I got into radio using the fore mentioned receivers with a Gyro transmitter. We also used Aerotrol and Babcock when they came available. A small group at old Curtiss Field in Valley Stream, Long Island, did most Radio Control flying.

I was instrumental in acquiring the U-Control site at the World's Fair. I think it is still in existence.

From 1953 to 1967, I was the model photographer for *Air Trails* and *American Modeler* magazine and all the names the magazine had in between. I worked for Al Lewis (editor, then / former AMA President #2). He was a good friend and a great boss.

I attended and photographed all the Navy Nats during that period. They were great years. During that period, I made friends with John Worth and we still keep in touch.

I did most of Berkeley's photo work for their kits. I also did photo work for Bill Winter, Paul DelGatto, and Don McGovern. Those were the busy years.

In 1984, I donated all of my Nationals negatives and captions (over 5,000) to the AMA through John Worth. They have used some of the photos, but not nearly as many as I thought they would.

I retired to Florida in 1986 and have been active in Society of Antique Modelers' (SAM) competitions. Besides the AMA, I belong to SAM #2187 and the Vintage RC Society #68. Modeling has been my whole life and I have enjoyed every minute of it. It has brought me some great friends.

John Schneider 6/96



On December 10, 1997, John (Johnnie) Schneider passed away at the age of 74. All who knew Johnnie grieved at the loss of this great guy. Below is an article written in 1998 by Art Schroeder, model designer and former Model Airplane News magazine editor.

John Schneider

April 5, 1924 – December 10, 1997

“The AMA/Nats Photographer – 1950s through 1960s”

If it is true that a picture is worth a thousand words, then John Schneider has written volumes on the hobby/sport called model aviation. He did this over three decades with outstanding excellence; but not with a pen. John did his work with his trusty twin lens Rolleiflex camera.

John Schneider was premier photographer for most modeling publications with the greater body of his work appearing in Air Trails. While he handled a variety of assignments, his best-known work was done at the Academy of Model Aeronautics Nationals, the biggest and best-known

modeling event in the world. John has left an amazing album on the history of model aviation with his annual coverage of this event.

Through John's lens one can see the growth and development of all modeling phases – Free Flight, Control Line, all types of scale and the incredible growth of Radio Control during the 1950s and 1960s. Many modelers that never attended a Nats garnered a real feeling for the excitement and texture of the event through his photographs. Much of his work remains in preserved copies of the publications he worked for, and an incredible photo collection will be donated for the archives of the AMA's Museum.

John's photographs had outstanding composition, focus, and contrast. But, the real art was how he captured the faces of the contest participants. There was drama and we all saw it. He has left us with much to remember, and in doing so, we will not forget the man.

The following is a note sent to John's family from model manufacturer and hobby specialist, Leon Shulman.

I am sorry to learn of John's passing – I will always remember his smiling face and “up” attitude, especially when it came to model airplanes. I can't help but believe he had and enjoyed a wonderful life. I share your loss.

Leon Shulman

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