



The AMA History Project Presents: Biography of JON BARNES



Written by JS (04/2017); Added to HP files by JS (04/2017)

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

I Am the AMA **Jon Barnes - Author, photographer, and videographer**

Jay Smith: How did you become involved with model aviation?

Jon Barnes: While working at my first job out of high school, several of my workmates and I decided to get into RC cars and trucks. After receiving a Tower Hobbies catalog in the mail, we decided to try flying RC airplanes. My first model, a Sureflite J-3 Cub, lasted all of two flights, but I was smitten.

I was self-taught and went through dozens of models trying to learn. I eventually cracked the barrier using a grossly underpowered Enya .09-equipped Sig Kolt.

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

JB: Although I have often fantasized about getting a full-time job within the industry, my various secular occupations have never really had any connection to the hobby.

I have been able to use some of my aerial vehicles for work-related endeavors. I have often used my DJI Inspire One or Phantom 3 Pro for capturing aerial media and was even able to work closely with the local fire department as it did a controlled-burn training exercise.

JS: In what disciplines of modeling do you currently participate?

JB: My current favorites are electric ducted fan-powered jets and scale airplanes, although I enjoy flying nearly any type of electric-powered aircraft. I have not owned or flown a gas or nitro-powered model for almost a decade.

JS: What are your other hobbies?

JB: Another hobby that I am quite passionate about is photography and videography. My grandfather worked at Goodyear Aerospace as a staff photographer during the era when the company was big into airships.

He bought me a Pentax K1000 camera when I was about 14 and that kicked off a lifelong enjoyment of photography. I love my newest camera, a Pentax K1 Full Frame, and am still blown away by the continuing advances in digital camera technology.

I also love shooting videos of my aircraft and enjoy trying to edit short, enjoyable videos. I wish my grandfather could have lived to see and enjoy the video editing capabilities that are available using nothing more than an average PC and software.

I also enjoy riding horses and currently have two mares. One is a Quarter/Paint and the other is an Appaloosa. My wife and daughter and I often trailer our horses to the beach or one of the many trails here in Northern California. We ride almost every day during the summer and I am amazed at how intelligent and trusting horses can be. The relationship is rewarding and keeps us close as a family.

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

JB: My father was probably my greatest influence. Although he never shared, or for that matter understood, my love of model aviation, he shaped my goals and gave me a good work ethic. He and I shared a love for running, bicycling, and golf.

As far as the hobby goes, my greatest influence was probably the industry's print magazines. Each month, I would go into my local hobby shop or bookstore and walk out with the latest issues of *Radio Control Modeler*, *Model Airplane News*, *FlyRC*, and any other magazine related to the hobby that I could find. I loved reading about all of the new models and eagerly devoured every article.

I had no idea that this, and my enjoyment of photography and writing, would one day converge in the form of my getting to write for several magazines. I enjoy shooting studio and in-flight media of the latest and greatest models, especially when my efforts capture the models in their native element and make them appear as if they are the real deal.

JS: What advice would you give someone looking to take photos/videos of aircraft in flight?

JB: A decent DSLR can be had for almost nothing these days. Although some of the cameras embedded in cell phones have pretty amazing capabilities, potential photographers who want more and are on tight budgets should check out the used-gear section at B&H Photo and Video. I have bought a bunch of used gear from that site and have never been let down.

The digital era is a great time to be in photography. You can shoot hundreds of photos in an outing and delete the blurry or less-than-great shots and use the ones that are in focus and pop!

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