



The AMA History Project Presents: Biography of VERLIN (BUD) ATKINSON

July 11, 1925 – March 21, 2007

Started modeling in 1937



Written by MA Staff (01/2008); Transcribed by JS (02/2008)

The following information was published in the January 2008 issue of Model Aviation magazine.

Boy Scouts are considered outstanding American citizens. They possess courage, initiative, loyalty, and leadership. Anyone who has had the pleasure of meeting Verlin “Bud” Atkinson could see that this great aeromodeler got his start within this prestigious organization. Bud learned skills in the Scouts that would shape the rest of his life.

Bud Atkinson was born July 11, 1925 in Kansas City, Missouri. He was active in sports in high school and earned his letter in football.

While still in high school, Bud enlisted in the AAC and attended school to become a mechanic and radio operator. He served our country during World War II as a tail gunner and co-pilot on B-24 bombers. Bud earned the American Campaign Medal, the Good Conduct Medal, and the World War II Victory Medal during his service.

Encouraged by his father and the Boy Scouts, Bud began building and flying models at the age of 12. He experimented with many aspects of model aviation before choosing Radio Control Scale in which he quickly excelled. His experiences included Free Flight, Control Line, indoor gliders, hand-launched gliders, Pylon Racing, and Scale. Bud was even the first person in the Kansas City area to fly Radio Control helicopters.

Bud began his professional career as a cabinetmaker and furniture finisher – both skills acquired from his uncle – at the age of 21. He started out at the Duff & Repp Furniture Company and later spent 16 years at Emery, Bird, Thayer as furniture finisher and service representative until it closed in 1968.

Bud took a position as the top furniture finisher for Paynes Furniture until his retirement in 1981. Conceivably, all this experience explains Bud’s extraordinary aptitude for applying award-winning finishes to his airplanes.

Bud designed, built, and kitted many models throughout his model aviation career. Among these were the Stits *Flut-R-Bug*, Corbin *Super Ace*, Stits *Playboy*, Mooney *M-20*, *F-4U Corsair*, and many more. Some of Bud’s designs were kitted by companies such as ACE R/C, Sig, and Midwest Products. Various modeling sources still have his plans available. He was featured on the cover of several magazines with his models.

Bud often shared his knowledge with other modelers. He wrote a column titled “Let’s Talk About Scale” that ran for three years in *American Modeler*. He has written several articles on the construction of his models that were published in various magazines. Bud was always eager to help others get started and excel in model aviation.

As a competitor, Bud took part in countless flying events. He kept many of his trophies on display in a special room set aside in his home. His wife Alice guessed Bud acquired more than 500 awards for his modeling activities.

The earliest trophy in his collection dates back to 1942. His most notable awards include a Testors Award plaque for best finish on a model and first-place trophies in numerous Scale and Nats events.

Bud passed away on March 21, 2007 after an extended illness. The 49th Mid America Jumbo Squadron held its annual Jumbo Jamboree in Bud’s memory on August 25, 2007.

Bud had a hand in the formation of the squadron – the only International Miniature Aircraft Association (IMAA) club in the Greater Kansas City area. Jim Cianciolo, AMA District VI associate vice president, presented Alice with his award for the Model Aviation Hall of Fame during the jamboree.

Susan Alvin, sponsor for Bud’s Hall of Fame nomination, wrote, “All who have known Bud have benefited from his life example and his untiring efforts to improve model aviation and those who participate in it.”

Throughout adulthood, Bud continued as an active supporter of Scouting and often invited Scouts to his home for model airplane building.



c. 1943-1946 Bud’s service photograph



1963: Bud Atkinson at California Nats with Mooney Mite and first place trophy



Bud adjusts the wing of his model



Bud with model and award



Bud with scale model

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