



# The AMA History Project Presents: Biography of HURST GRAY BOWERS

September 18, 1924 – December 15, 2004



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Written by Model Aviation staff (04/2005); Formatted by JS (02/2008)

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*The following was published in the February 1993 issue of Model Aviation magazine, in the AMA News section. Bowers was inducted into the Model Aviation Hall of Fame in 1992.*

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Hurst G. Bowers of McLean, Virginia, is familiar to all who have visited the museum in Reston during the past nine years.

As the first curator of the AMA museum and library, he was largely responsible for the acquisition of much of the original collection. Hurst took great pride in showing visitors around the building and in explaining details concerning special aircraft, engines, and other aviation-related memorabilia.

A special interest for Hurst was the Lee Renaud Memorial Research Library. With his immediate access to the many thousands of books, magazines, photographs, and the extensive documentation house in AMA's archives, he was able to assist modelers as well as students in their research. Hurst is a first-class aviation historian and is well respected for his broad knowledge of the field.

Hurst founded and was president of Flyline Models, Inc., for seven years before selling the company to Herb Clukey. His designs and kits are renowned worldwide for their special attributes and their quality. To support his claim of quality, he built at least one of every kit he produced. Many examples of his art found a home in the AMA museum because of the high standard of craftsmanship and the uniqueness of the airplanes.

His aeromodeling career started in 1933, long before he entered college and the United States Army Air Corps. During World War II and later, he achieved a distinguished record in the service of his country, retiring with the rank of colonel.

His interest in model aviation never waned, and he resumed participation in the full spectrum of the sport after his retirement from the military.

He enjoys flying free flight and RC, with an emphasis on scale reproduction of aircraft he particularly likes. He is an active Old-Timer enthusiast and takes part in many meets. His abilities as a designer, builder, and flier are widely respected by his peers.

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*The following was written by Model Aviation magazine staff and published in the April 2005 issue.*

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Hurst Bowers passed away December 15, 2004. He was the founder of Flyline Models who, along with Herb Klukey, produced more than 30 “schoolyard scale” model kits in the 1970s and 1980s.

A retired Air Force colonel, Hurst was a B-25 pilot in 1944 – 1945, served as Air Attaché at the U.S. Embassies in Paris, France and in Delhi, India. Late in his career, Hurst served tours in Vietnam and at the Pentagon. He retired in 1972 after 30 years of distinguished service.

Hurst was a member of the DC Maxcutters club, the Flying Aces Club, the Capital Area Antique Modelers Association, and the Daedalus Society. He was inducted into the Model Aviation Hall of Fame in 1992.

Close friend Don Srull wrote, “He was an inspiration and mentor to those lucky to have known him. His infectious smile and spirit were special. Hurst was an ardent modeler and aviation enthusiast, but more importantly a warm, gentle, and generous human being.”

Hurst designed, built, and flew all types of models including Old-Timers, Free Flight Sport, and Radio Control models, but his favorite type was Scale modeling. He published many model designs in various American, French, and British magazines, and was particularly fond of vintage aircraft.

Hurst’s neatness and immaculate workshop were legendary. “To us mess makers, this neatness was symbolic of the perfection of his models,” wrote another close friend, John Hunton. “He had a three-view in his files of almost any airplane that ever existed. He would organize a file into the order into which he would build his models.”

Hurst Bowers was asked to create the model displays and design the Lee Renaud Memorial Library when AMA built its Headquarters building in Reston, Virginia, in 1981 - 1982.

John Hunton remembered his friend with this tribute: “While the passing of Hurst Bowers is painful to all of us, having known him has enlarged our hearts, and his spirit will be with us for time to come.”

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