



The AMA History Project Presents: Biography of ROBERT (BOB) FORBES



Written by RH (03/2013), reformatted by JS (03/2013)

The following was published as an online exclusive article for Model Aviation magazine in 2013, written by Rachele Haughn. Bob is an AMA Model Aviation Hall of Fame inductee.

Robert “Bob” Forbes

Bob Forbes found a way to combine the two loves of his life: his library job and model airplanes. This resulted in children and young adults learning how to fly model aircraft, and later becoming AMA members.

He began his model aircraft career in the 1950s as a member and then-president of Canadian model aircraft club, the Park Lawn Prop Busters, where he built and flew Scale, CL, and FF airplanes.

He later obtained his Canadian Pilot’s License and his United States Pilot Certificate. He became a member of the Royal Canadian Air Force, an Air Traffic Controller, and a Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) Aviation Safety Inspector.

Bob is a certified FAA Aviation Instructor and a National Weather Service Certified Observer. His career has included teaching FAA classes at Bethune-Cookman University and Embry-Riddle Aeronautical University, both located in Daytona Beach, Florida. He has made presentations during a Teacher Aviation/Aerospace Workshop, and to the Civil Air Patrol. Bob’s work with kids has also included introducing disadvantaged inner city children to aviation and aeromodeling through the Aviation Career Education (ACE) Camp in Lakeland, Florida. After retiring from the FAA, he became a librarian for the Mississippi Northeast Regional Library.

“His crowning achievement in this occupation consisted of five-and-a-half years of instructing disadvantaged, and physically and mentally challenged, at-risk children and young adults in the building and flying of rubber, electric, and glow-powered model aircraft,” Kathy Warren wrote in her nomination for Bob to be inducted into the AMA Model Aviation Hall of Fame.

“Each day, the library was transformed into a building and teaching facility with flying taking place on weekends at a sports complex located in Burnsville, Mississippi, and many fieldtrips to AMA club flying fields and fly-ins,” Kathy added.

For several years, The Magic Valley Air Force club hosted and trained Mississippi students at the club’s flying site. Bob has produced several DVDs and flyers depicting the program, and travels to churches, 4-H clubs, and other organizations to promote model aviation.

Bob's honors include an award from the Aircraft Electronics Association for Significant and Lasting Contribution in Support of the General Aviation Electronics Industry. He was honored in 2011 with the American Library Association's Excellence in Library Programming Marshall Cavendish Award.

He retired from the Mississippi Library Commission in September 2011, but continues to instruct local children in model aircraft building and flying. He currently works at Space Camp USA.

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