



The AMA History Project Presents: Biography of MAXEY HESTER

January 7, 1925 - March 10, 2009

AMA #L56



Written by AMA staff (01/1999), 07/2009); Formatted by JS (11/2005), Updated by JS (03/2009), Reformatted by JS (09/2009), Updated (11/2010)

The following was printed in the January 1999 issue of Model Aviation, in the AMA News column about the 1998 Model Aviation Hall of Fame winner.

Maxey Hester

Maxey Hester, Montezuma, Iowa, brings to the Hall of Fame a long history of competition activity and industry involvement. As a teenager, he built and flew scores of rubber-powered free flight models. However, World War II interrupted his modeling career when he joined the Navy at age 17. Following the war, he started both a family and a business (finish carpentry) in Des Moines, Iowa. It was not until 1953 that he returned to modeling, flying control line.

In 1954, he discovered RC, using a single channel system designed by E. Paul Johnson. In 1958, he moved to reeds and flew them until 1965 when he switched to proportional. Between 1954 and 1987, he flew in hundreds of local, regional, national and international events in both pattern, pylon and scale competition. His credentials include 2nd, 3rd, and 4th place finishes in F4C Scale World Championships. The list of national wins is far too lengthy to list here.

Maxey's list of designs includes over a dozen Scale, Pattern, Sport, and Pylon models. The *Zlin Akroat*, *Ryan STA*, *Komet*, and *Citabria* are but a few. A number of these can still be found on the competition circuit today.

Maxey served as a contest director both locally and nationally. He was a charter member and first president of the Des Moines Modelaires RC Club and a charter member of NMPRA.

In 1967, Maxey became plant manager for Sig Manufacturing Co. Inc. Following the death of Glen Sigafoose, the company's founder, he became Vice President. He always has been a "hands on" manager and is very much involved in the company's operations. He is an active air show pilot in the full-scale circuit and, along with his wife Hazel, flies the Sig "air force" of some seven aircraft. These include three famous Spacewalkers. Maxey is very active in flying youngsters in the EAA Young Eagles Program.

The following was printed in Model Aviation's AMA News column in the July 2009 issue.

Maxey Hester

1925-2009

Maxey Hester, 84, of Montezuma, Iowa, passed away Tuesday, March 10, 2009, at

Mercy Hospital in Iowa City.

Roa Maxey Hester, son of Elbert and Daisy (Whitlock) Hester, was born January 7, 1925, in Alma, Arkansas. As a teenager, he built and flew scores of rubber-powered Free Flight models.

In 1943, Maxey left Alma High School to enlist in the United States Navy. He served on the *U.S.S. Alhena* (AKA-9) Cargo Ship until he was honorably discharged in 1946.

It was not until 1953 that he returned to modeling, flying Control Line.

Maxey married Billie Garrett in Fort Smith, Arkansas, and had six children: Danial, Joyce, Nancy, Doris, David, and Harold.

Maxey loved to build and fly model airplanes. In 1967, he became the plant manager for Sig Manufacturing Co. Inc., started and owned by friends Glen and Hazel Sigafoose.

Billie passed away in 1978 and Glen Sigafoose was killed in an air show in 1980. Maxey married Hazel Sigafoose in 1981 and they continued to run Sig Manufacturing until 1999 when the couple sold the business and retired.

Maxey was an active air show pilot in the full-scale circuit and, along with his wife, Hazel, flew the Sig "air force" comprising seven aircraft including three of his famous Spacewalkers.

Maxey's list of designs includes more than a dozen Scale, Pattern, Sport, and Pylon models, among them the *Zlin Akroat*, *Ryan STA*, *Komet*, and *Citabria*.

Maxey enjoyed flying, building model airplanes, fishing, and playing on his computer. He served as a contest director both locally and nationally.

He was a charter member and first president of the Des Moines Modelaires RC Club, and a charter member of the National Miniature Pylon Racing Association.

Maxey was a lifelong member of the Academy of Model Aeronautics (AMA) and the Experimental Aircraft Association (EAA). He held a Life Membership in AMA and was inducted into the [Model Aviation] Hall of Fame in 1998. He was also active in the EAA Young Eagles program.

Maxey's credentials include second-, third-, and fourth-place finishes in three F4C Scale World Championships, competing in Germany, France, and England.

He is survived by his wife, Hazel; three daughters, Joyce Hester, Nancy (Tony) Lammers, and Doris (Mike) Gretz; his sister, LaMatha; 11 grandchildren; and 10 great-grandchildren.

Maxey was preceded in death by his parents, Elbert and Daisy Hester; his wife, Billie;

three sons, Danial Hester, David Hester, and Harold Hester; his brother, Donald Ray Hester; and a granddaughter, Esther Gretz.

This PDF is property of the Academy of Model Aeronautics. Permission must be granted by the AMA History Project for any reprint or duplication for public use.

AMA History Project
National Model Aviation Museum
5151 E. Memorial Dr.
Muncie IN 47302
(765) 287-1256, ext. 511
historyproject@modelaircraft.org

