



The AMA History Project Presents: Autobiography of ALAN ABRISS

Born June 30, 1952 Started modeling in 1959
AMA #53207



Written & Submitted by AA (08/2005), edited by JS (08/2005), Reformatted (2009)

Career:

- 1959: First built and flew a Guillow's *Neuport 28*.
- 1975: Bachelor of Fine Arts degree in Photography, School of Visual Arts, New York City
- 1985: Joined Brooklyn Skyscrapers, NYC
- 1990-2004: Produced videos of National Championships
- 1998-2001: Editor of *Flyoff*, Brooklyn Skyscraper's club newsletter
- Contest Director for local contests
- 2000-2002: President, Brooklyn Skyscrapers club

Honors:

- 1985: Won 3rd place, at Bam Bash, with Peck *One Nite 28*
- 1993: Queens Public TV's *Best Director for a Performance Video Award* and *Best Videographer for a Series Award*
- 1994: Queens Public TV's *Best Producer for a Performance Award*
- 2004: 1st Place, Nats, for 1/2A Free Flight design, scaled down for Pee Wee 30

The following was submitted by Alan Abriss and edited by Jackie Shalberg, Archivist and Assistant Historian, AMA.

Alan Abriss has been a modeler for forty-six years. "My dad started a Guillow's *Neuport 28* but never finished it. [At the age of seven] I found it in a closet and asked if I could try to finish it. I did, but being a Guillow's model, it never did fly." The hardest part of building that first model was "learning to cover it with silk. Building the framework was easy. I enjoyed the fact that the model flew and I didn't crash it!" "[My] family moved to Queens, New York in 1961 where I found a group of teenagers flying Control Line and they let the 'little kid' join them." His second model was a Goldberg Control Line *Shoestring* from a kit, with a Johnson .32 engine. It was built with "minor assistance from my Dad."

In 1975, Alan earned a Bachelor of Fine Arts degree in Photography at New York's School of Visual Arts. Using this degree to promote aeromodeling, between 1992 and 2004 he produced "model airplane video tapes. Each tape documents various events at that year's Nats." His videos have won him several honors: the "Queens Public TV's Best Director for a Performance Video and Best Videographer for a Series" awards in 1993 and the "Queens Public TV's Best Producer for a Performance" award in 1994.

Alan's participation in clubs and contests started in the 1980s and 1990s. In 1985, he joined a New York City-based club, the Brooklyn Skyscrapers. His first competition was in that year, at the "Bam Bash." At thirty-three, Alan flew a "Peck *One Nite* 28 in P-30 rubber" and won third place with a fly-off. His participation in the AMA Nats first occurred in 1995 at the age of 43. He has competed continually since then. "In 1998, I designed and successfully flew my own 1/2A Free Flight design. [I] scaled it down for Pee Wee 30 and finally in 2004 finished first at the Nats."

Alan was elected president of the Brooklyn Skyscrapers in 2000 and held that office through 2002. He served as "editor of *Flyoff*, the Skyscraper's club newsletter, from 1998 to 2001" and as a contest director for "local club contests... too many to count." It has been twenty-plus years since he joined the Skyscrapers, and he continues to be an active member to this day.

Please note: Alan recently donated nine videotapes of National Championship footage to the AMA's Lee Renaud Memorial Library. If you would like to peruse our selection of videos, please contact our librarian at (765) 287-1256 ext 506.

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