



The AMA History Project Presents: Biography of DAN KANE, SR.

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Dan Kane submitted the following autobiography to the History Project in October of 2008.

I was born in Chicago, Illinois in 1947. I started modeling at about the age of eight. I used to watch the older kids and men flying in a prairie across from my house. Then I started with Free Flight and flew in my first Nats in 1957 or 1958 at Glenview Naval Airforce Station.

At about 12 years of age, I started working at the local hobby shop where the owner of the store took the time to teach me how to wind coils and solder. This man also made early radio control systems under the label of MC. I was also taught how to wire up and install radios in Radio Control airplanes and especially boats. One of our biggest customers to the store was the late great Jimmy Grier. I even fixed the Illinois Governor's kids' slot cars.

In 1962, I was the first person to go over 30 mph with a radio controlled class C hydroplane. The previous record was 25 mph. I was also flying Radio Control airplanes at this time.

I went to school on the South Side of Chicago at 35th and Wabash. Top Flite Models was located at 26th and Wabash. I went to work a couple of days a week after school at Top Flite, working in the woodshop under the direction of Sidney Axelrod. I continued to work at the hobby shop Monday and Friday nights as well as Saturday and was now building up World Engine kits that we sold in the store as assembled models. Another hobby shop in Chicago by the name of Trost hired me to build Controlaire kits for them as well. This led to my employment by Joe Stanton of Stanton Hobby Shop, where I did most of the radio installations and repairs.

When I got out of the military, I still worked for Joe and Sid and was now doing machinery repair as well as some design work for Top Flite. You will find my name on the plan for the *SchoolMaster II*. I worked for both Top Flite and Carl Goldberg until the closing of both plants and still communicate with Joe Stanton on a regular basis.

I then devoted my time to Radio Control Pylon Racing and was President of the Chicago Pylon Club for quite a few years, flying at the Nationals wherever they were. At this time, I met up with Don Dombrowski and Fred Reese from House of Balsa, which Don had purchased from California Models.

In my regular Radio Control club in Chicago, Carl Goldberg was a member as was Jimmy Grier, Jerry Nelson of Midwest Distributors, and Big Stoop of Midwest Products. It was during this period that I started repairing machines for Carl Goldberg.

When I was just a teenager, I used to mix my own fuel and sell it at the boat pond. After breaking the world record, I started mass-producing the fuel under the name “Go-POP” until the mid-1980s. In its heyday, we mixed 600 gallons of fuel per week. Every hobby shop in the city of Chicago and the surrounding suburbs carried this fuel.

Once my reflexes were no longer good for flying Pylon, I got back to my roots with Free Flight. I flew some Free Flight Duration for a couple of years. My wife and I were Contest Directors for the Nats in Muncie in 1996. At this time, I was President of the Illinois Model Airplane Club, one of the oldest model airplane clubs in the U.S. This is where I met my mentor, Ed Konefes. Joe Konefes and Charlie Sotich were also members of this club.

I then turned my attention to Flying Aces Club (FAC) and rubber-powered Scale models, as well as some CO2 and electric models. I am heavily involved with the Cleveland Free Flight Society and still manage to be a Contest Director at least once or twice per year.

My wife, Carole, has her own business called Shorty’s Basement and has her own line of kits. Don Dombrowski of House of Balsa does all our laser cutting. Carole ships Free Flight supplies and kits worldwide.

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