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# The AMA History Project Presents: Biography of SHERWOOD E. (GENE) LAROCHE



Born September 12, 1934      Started modeling in 1938

Transcribed, edited, and formatted by JS (11/2007), Reformatted by JS (10/2009)

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*The following autobiography was in the publication "Who's Who in AMA, 2003, District V"*

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In the year 1938, at the age of four, I watched a boy two years my senior build a model airplane. That evening, after crying and begging, I received my first five-cent Comet model. I have not been without one since.

I was 12 before I got one to fly. I won my first contest at 16. At 17, I joined the U.S. Air Force and stayed for 22 years. During the Korean War, in 1953, I built models on my cot in a tent. By 1956, I married and attended my first AMA contest. In 1957, my first son was born and I attended my second AMA contest, and so on.

It was not until 1971 that I joined my first chartered club, the AMPS of Southern Florida. I cut grass, was the Vice President, and could not fly Radio Control, but I loved it.

After retiring from the Air Force in 1974, I taught myself to fly Radio Control in the hayfields around my area. My first runway was 75 feet by 25 feet. Needless to say, I learned to land in one spot and in one piece. I now belong to the AMA, International Miniature Aircraft Association (IMAA), and four chartered clubs in the tri-state area.

I have never designed, invented, or written any "deep" articles. I am a prolific builder (six to eight models a year,) flyer, and building instructor. I am a firm believer in AMA's BOM (Builder of Model) and that ARFs (Almost-Ready-to-Flys) are a lazy man's toy.

I still have Comet models under my workbench and I still have trouble making them fly.

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