



The AMA History Project Presents: Autobiography of ROBERT (BOB) A. LAYBOURNE



Born June 22, 1929 Started modeling in 1935
AMA #3798

Written & Submitted by RAL (03/2003); Transcribed & Edited by SS (03/2003), Reformatted by JS (10/2009)

Career:

- Won seventh place with a Comet sailplane at the 1948 AMA Nationals
- Is an AMA leader member and contest director
- Served as a Society of Antique Modelers (SAM) district vice president
- Was the contest manager for the 2002 SAM Champs
- Ran a hobby shop in Donnelsville, Ohio, for 23 years

I began modeling around 1935 when I was 6-years-old. I started with those old Strombecker solid models. You couldn't make very many mistakes with those!

I went from solid models to rubber-powered 10-cent kits and had a terrible time until someone told me you used a razor blade to cut out the parts instead of scissors. If I remember correctly, the first model I have to fly was a Staggerwing Beech.

I joined the Howie Wing Flying Club sometime in the 1930s and saved up Kellogg's Cornflakes box tops to send for a Quaker Flash kit. This was my first experience with engine-powered models, and, I must admit, I never got it finished.

I think the first gas model I was able to fly was a Scientific Flagship powered with a Brown D engine. I saved up \$10 and the hobby shop owner let me take the engine home and pay him the balance of \$2.50 later. From there I eventually moved up to a Comet sailplane with a McCoy 49 engine and won seventh place at the 1948 Nationals (Nats) in Olathe, Kansas.



Bob (left) talking with former AMA president, Don Lowe, at the 1999 AMA Nationals.

Several years of Free Flight contest followed without too much success in the winner's circle. I then decided to try U-Control. This was back when the popular stunt model was the Trixter Barnstormer and the Ringmaster was the combat model of choice. How things have changed!

From there I got into Radio Control (RC) using a single-channel receiver designed by Jack Port in a Berkeley Brigadier powered by a Delong 30.

I eventually joined the Society of Antique Modelers (SAM) movement and finally built my Quaker Flash with RC assist. I have almost exclusively built Old-Timer models ever since. I flew RC assist Old-Timers for several years and am now enjoying Free Flight rubber models.

I am a leader member and contest director in the AMA, a past SAM district vice president and am a member of the Flying Aces Club. I belong to several local model clubs and SAM organizations. I have organized various model contests, both Free Flight and RC Old-Timers and was the contest manager for the 2002 SAM Champs.

I ran a hobby shop for 23 years in Donnelsville, Ohio.

I have thoroughly enjoyed building and flying model airplanes for more than 65 years.

*(signed) Bob Laybourne
March 2003*

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