



The AMA History Project Presents: Biography of WINFRED (WINDY) URTNOWSKI



Born August 16, 1948 AMA #72618

Written & Submitted by BH (01/1998); Transcribed by NR (12/1999); Edited by SS (2002), Updated by JS (10/2008), Reformatted by JS (01/2010)

Career:

- He has written about 100 articles
- Ran PAMPA for seven years
- A leader and innovator who believes in growth and change

Honors:

- 2003: Model Aviation Hall of Fame

The following biography was taken from a Model Aviation Hall of Fame application. John Gunn submitted the application on March 14, 1997.

Gentlemen:

The Control Line Stunt section of modeling has had a new breath of life given to it through the videos from Windy Urtnowski.

I was ready to give up on model planes until I discovered Windy and his videos. He has never been too busy to help me or any of my club members on the phone and sends videos on loan at times. This has helped many modelers step up to another level of modeling. I have used his videos to build my club and his advice to help raise a scholarship fund. This fund will be given out to the winners at our local contest in May of 1997. Without Windy's advice, this would not have happened. When you are at the Nationals (Nats), think about how many planes are finished in a professional manner, compare that with a few years ago when you had a few shiny planes. The gathering of knowledge, putting it in a form that can be transferred visually is a new concept. Now you see many others doing the same thing, the efforts to learn show, explain and bring in new members to the hobby is good. The Control Line stunt group has grown a great deal in the past few years, more than any other group.

The five bade prop, molding of wood, crutch development, securing a source for canopies, flying the pattern and what to look for and how to avoid mistakes is not new, but was limited knowledge for a few. I am one of those people, and there are many others like me that work better by a visual presentation. Windy was a leader in the field and still is. For the most part, he changed the hobby and made it better for all parties.

He has written about 100 articles over the years, ran PAMPA for seven years and many other things. The best things are the effort to bring new people into the hobby, research to build better

planes and videotape the work and pattern information for new people. This created an accelerated growth for Control Line members from building to flying and competing with 14 others. What other person has done more? You have other suppliers that do not do anything but sell and promote their own products; some write articles occasionally.

Windy is a leader, innovator and believes in growth and change. To some people this is a danger to a secure little world. Louis Pasture, the first heart surgeon that did a heart transplant, and Robert Fulton were all innovators and made changes in the way we live and do things. All of these men were hung out to dry before we realized what had been accomplished and how it would benefit us as a society.

This same set of facts and events have taken place in the Control Line society. Once again, there are about 20 people who build and fly in the Texarkana, Texas area because of Windy's tapes. I could not have built this club without the ability to transfer the knowledge in a timely fashion to the new members of the hobby.

Gentlemen, I ask you to place the name of Windy Urtnowski in the [Model Aviation] Hall of Fame for the things he has accomplished for the Control Line sector and leadership he shows for all of us.

*John C. Gunn
Texarkana, Texas 75501*

Below are comments from Winfred Urtnowski that were submitted as an attachment to Gunn's application form.

- The Spitfire design was accepted for publication in *Model Aviation* (M.A.) magazine this year.
- Among the original technology are canopy moulding, fiberglass cowls, carbon fiber 5-blade props, and many articles contributed to the PAMPA newsletter detailing these methods, several articles in M.A. on vacuum bench construction and building a workbench. Five years as flying model columnist contained many leading-edge articles that are now standard practice in F-2-B.
- Videos by Windy is business started in 1987 and since then has sold 14,000 tapes covering F-2-B, construction, finishing, composites, propellers, Nationals (Nats) coverage back to 1987 and contributed footage to John Worth for the AMA. "Gathering of Eagles" – many tapes donated as prizes or in other ways to promote the hobby.

Dear Sirs: Please attach this to form previously submitted by John Gunn; it contains supplemental information not on original form.

I have contributed back to model aviation in many ways but these are the things I hope you will consider as part of my payback to our sport.

In 1987, I started the first video business dedicated to Control Line stunt. In 11 years we've gone through 14,000 tapes – many donated, many loaned – and have added that dimension to Control Line Stunt. That business was so successful I quit my full-time job and began manufacturing model airplane products of my own design. I also have an interest in Joe K. Inc., which manufactures many unique parts for Control Line and was an innovator in parts like 4" bell cranks that are now standard equipment for competitors.

I have published six designs, many technical pieces, but my flying models and stunt news finishing articles I believe to be among the best ever written. I have won four Concours awards – that is the most of anyone in the history of the event.

I had taken a defunct PAMPA in 1983 and put out the newsletter at my own cost for almost a year to save the organization. It now has over 1,700 members worldwide. Without my tenure, it is doubtful we would have that organization today.

I've been in the Walker Flyoff top five 11 times and finished as high as second overall. I have also have been our F-2-B alternate three times.

I am currently waiting for M.A. to publish my Spitfire construction article with many innovative features, a state-of-the-art canopy article and am working on another piece making carbon fiber spinners.

I believe I've been the only one in the history of Control Line stunt to fly with a scale 5-blade carbon prop in Nats competition.

I have also documented all our Nats on video back through 1987 and the two most recent World Championships. This library of video is not available anywhere else.

My Cardinal kit is one of the most popular since 1992 and I was very proud to be on three different magazine covers: American Aircraft Modeler Annual, 1969; Flying Models, 1980; and Model Aviation, Oct. 1992.

I am currently the District II director for PAMPA and F-2-B. Thank you for your consideration. I developed and produced first fuel tanks for inverted Control Line and Radio Control flight. Control Line first. These “positive flow” tanks used a mechanical swivel for pickup, not a “clunk.”

Howard Bonner invented the clunk style tank. Dmieco produced that style also.

1977: I am proud of this:

There was no engineering data available for autogyros. I spent a year of constant effort determining what made them work and what the needs were for successful rotary wing flight.

The findings were passed on in the April 1977 issue of Model Aviation.

I developed a successful, reliable autogyro based on Civerals first styles. A constructive article for this was in April 1977 issue of Model Airplane News (M.A.N.). Many have reported success with duplicates.

1990s – Investigated various aerodynamic airplane features using comparative flight-testing. Several reports were in Model Aviation.

1980s: Investigated the use of various plastics for model structures. Reports in M.A.N.; feature was giant scale RV-4.

In mid-1970s had to close Dmieco for health and personal reasons.

Joined Midwest Products as a design engineer for three years. After that went with IC&S engineering as product development engineer.

Then retired.

Migrated to Florida in 1983.

Have spent the past three years developing model version of the wingless and rotor only control gyro.

Objective: A practical craft comparable to the average Radio Controller's "pet airplane." Many mysterious needs were uncovered, took much development.

Such a gyro is reported in Radio Control Modeler (RCM) in the January 2000 issue.

Progress reports predate that in RCM. Progress is just now in the final objective stages. Much has been learned! Looks like there is no end to what can be done!



Windy's new Scale North American B-25 Mitchell project. Will Hubin took this photo.



Windy flying his semi-scale Supermarine Royal Navy fighter at the Nationals in 2001. This photo, taken by Will Hubin, and appeared on the cover of the March/April 2002 issue of Stunt News.

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