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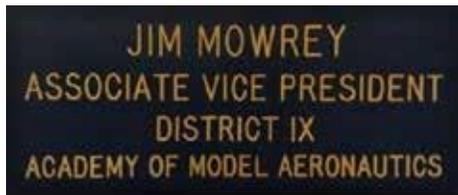
I am very pleased to publish an article by a good friend Larry Mowrey. Since we are retired, Larry and I decided that we always want to fly together. This has been a great decision because we help each other and also it is a lot safer. I highly recommend doing this and avoid flying alone as much as possible. Here is the article.

WALTER JAMES MOWREY (Jim), AMA # 318

Contest Director

Associate Vice President

IP Instructor



Leader-Admin

Classic Pattern Pilot

From the day I was born until the day dad passed last November 2021, our families have lived and breathed model airplanes. It was so much a part of our lives that both our houses had planes in the living rooms, bedrooms, garages, and on the kitchen tables – all the time. Once my wife threatened to destroy most of them if I didn't remove them. So, I

had a shop built on the back of my house! Thanks a lot, dad!

Dad began his model airplane career flying control line airplanes back in the 1940s and then moved on to RC airplanes in the early 50s, particularly pattern flying. I remember when he built a rudder-only high wing plane. The radio was a button type where one push made the rudder turn left and two pushes of the button made the rudder turn right. The rudder itself was actuated by a wound-up rubber band. Dad moved on from rudder-only planes to small nitro planes.



Dad said he only purchased airplane kits, many of them from Sig. His first transmitter was a Reeds but soon moved on to EK Logitrol. When his eyesight began to falter, he stopped flying pattern and tried little electric planes. Several years ago, his health took him away from flying altogether.

Sometime along the way, his youngest son, Thomas, freshly back from the Navy, and him got into radio-controlled boats. Mother even had a RC houseboat. They spent a great deal of time at the sandpit running those boats.

But that did not stop him from enjoying flying airplanes with his middle son, Robert, my youngest son, Jonathan, and myself.

Whenever Jonathan and I would compete in the MACK Pattern Contest in Great Bend, KS, dad was always be there to provide instruction whether we asked for it or not. His persistence and instruction helped guide Jonathan in becoming the 2021 AMA



Masters Champion. With me, not so much – you cannot teach an old dog new tricks!

In dad's pattern flying days, he would always travel to contests with my mother, Gerald Schmidt, and Bob Arnett. Mom went to socialize while the three amigos flew. I

have lost track of the number of contests these four attended. I do know that they traveled to a lot of states in their quest for fun.

I remember when dad and Bob Arnett decided to add brakes on their planes. One day, they were landing at the same time, one behind the other. Bob was in front. He forgot to tell dad when he was applying his brakes and dad ran into the tail of Bob's plane, destroying it. It wasn't funny but we all had a good laugh that day. Several years ago, while holding a conversation with dad, he told me that he designed and built most of his own pattern planes. Gerald Schmidt would build all of dad's fuselages using fiberglass molds. Two of those planes are pictured here in this article. Jonathan has the pink one and it will be converted to electric soon. Several years ago, Jonathan and I converted the other plane, called the Piranha, to electric. We removed the OS rear exhaust with tuned pipe, all the servos and retract gear and installed upgraded equipment. All electric – motor and retract gear. We soon learned that the fuselages on the old classic pattern planes were nowhere as wide as the current pattern plane configuration. Installing equipment was tedious and time-consuming.

Dad was a life-long member of the Academy of Model Aeronautics. His AMA number was 318, wearing a lot of hats with them over the years: District Contest Director, Associate Vice President, IP Instructor, and Leader-Admin. He was always involved in the legislative activity of the AMA, sometimes to the chagrin of the Academy. He was never one to like the new pattern sequences with turnaround maneuvers. He was a believer that the pattern in the center should be the only one judged.

Once I got hooked on pattern airplanes, dad built and designed one for me to fly while I was a student at the University of Kansas. He named the plane the

Jayhawker. A KU friend built a HeathKit radio for the plane and we flew it until the day we crashed it.

Years later after graduating from MidAmerica Nazarene University, I would meet up with dad at whatever contest he was at, and we would fly together. We attended contests in Kansas, Nebraska, and North Dakota. His instruction and pattern sequence calling were some of the most valuable help that I have ever received. In fact, it was nothing less than awesome!

As I began my flying career in control line, dad and I would find ourselves down at South Park in my hometown flying until we ran out of fuel. Many times, he would purchase those heavy Testors' airplanes from the Duckwall's store. .049 engines graced the nose. We had a lot of trouble trying to start those engines. But once they were running, dad would have to whip the plane around as the engine was not powerful enough to fly it. He said that we need to move onto to balsa kits.

In his small shop on the back porch, he would teach me the skill of building balsa airplanes. He taught me that patience was a very important skill in building, studying plans, using Ambroid glue, silkspan and dope, and lots of alignments. He taught me not to be in a hurry when assembling the pieces. I needed to get them right the first time.

Dad was a charter member of the Model Association of Central Kansas, MACK for short.

The patch included here is his design. He held a number of positions with the club: president, newsletter editor, contest director, and trainer. He was a stubborn proponent of model airplane safety. He would sometimes have to ground a pilot for breaking the rules. Dad also spent a lot of time manicuring the field. He spent hours mowing. Their field had a NS and an EW concrete runway and two concrete control line circles. Whenever my family would travel out to western Kansas, we would always stop at the field in Pawnee Rock first, as we knew that dad would, likely, be there flying or mowing or sitting around talking. And we always took a plane with us.



During the last couple of years, dad was not able to get out much. When he did, my brother, Robert, would have to drive him. But dad was never short in providing comment and instruction anytime he made it to the field.

But dad never stopped allowing himself to talk “airplanes.” While in his final days in the hospital, I showed him my 2022-2023



Intermediate Pattern Sequence and he walked me through in flying it correctly. He was very proud of his grandson, who I mentioned earlier finished as the 2021 AMA Master Champion. Even his own 6-year-old great-grandson has an RC Cub that he is flying with his dad.

From my dad to me to my son to my grandson – RC airplanes are our life.

*Rev. Larry J Mowrey*

*AMA # 318*