
Biography of EDWARD L. HENRY

Modeler Since 1938 Birth Date: April 9, 1919 AMA Number: 25158

Transcribed and Edited by SS (7/02)

Career:

- Has flown Radio Controlled (RC) models with local clubs in Europe and South America while traveling the world
- Was an illustrator and writer of military aircraft instruction manuals for various companies for 40 years
- Helped found the McDonnell Douglas RC Club (MDCRC Club) and was the first club president; has held numerous other positions in the club and been a member of the club's Board of Directors for 10 terms
- Between 1985 and March 1998, made 4,970 flights
- Trained an estimated 100 students from 1983 to 1998
- Holds membership with five different RC clubs in the Saint Louis area
- Starting with the first one in 1956, was contest director and assistant contest director for 17 years of the MDCRC regional RC contest
- Invented the first RC Dogfight (RC Combat) performed in the U.S.
- Organized the first RC night flight contest
- Invented the Add-A-Trickle charger manufactured and distributed by Ace RC, which sold 70,000 units and brought in half a million dollars by 1998
- Invented, designed, built and operated the original Fly Seat, a full-size cockpit for flying model aircraft; sold the planes to various military operations
- Designer of various models with many unique features, such as snow skis
- Wrote the original AMA Safety Code in 1970
- Creator of the Microhenry Cartoons which started running in Model Aviation magazine in 1988; by 1998 more than 1,000 of these cartoons had been published in the magazine
- Published a well-received 190-page book with more than 600 of his cartoons

Honors:

- Recipient of six Model-Man-of-the-Year awards from MDCRC
- 2000 – AMA Hall of Fame

The following information was taken from an AMA Hall of Fame application submitted on behalf of Edward Henry by Robert D. Dickerson on March 16, 1998. Edward was later inducted into the Hall of Fame.

Background

Ed Henry was born in Murphysboro, Illinois in the year 1919. He attended all his early schooling there and attended Southern Illinois University in Carbondale, Illinois.

I have known Ed for 45 years. We have built and flown model airplanes together all those years. Because of his outstanding contributions to model aviation, I feel he should be inducted into the Model Aviation Hall of Fame.

Hobbies

Ed has built model airplanes practically all his life. During his young years, he built solid wood models, hand-launched gliders and rubber-powered models. He has many hobbies including astronomy, amateur radio and world traveling, but he says his primary interest has been with Radio Controlled (RC) model airplanes. During his world travels, he has flown RC in Europe and South America with local clubs.

Aviation Life

He has been close to all phases of aviation all his life. His working career consisted of 40 years as an illustrator and writer of military aircraft instruction manuals with Cessna, Boeing and McDonnell Douglas Aircraft, later becoming a manager in the publications department. He also spent two years in the Air Force during World War II as an instructor in a military aircraft mechanics school. His son is an airline pilot flying the MD-80 aircraft between Mexico and Alaska. Ed himself has been a pilot of small aircraft.

McDonnell RC Club

Ed helped found the McDonnell Douglas RC Club (MDCRC Club) in 1956 and was the first club president. Between 1956 and 1998, he has been president for two terms, treasurer for three terms, chief flight instructor of eight terms, field manager for two terms, safety officer, tech director, club paper editor and member of the club Board of Directors for 10 terms. Some of these positions ran concurrently. Ed started counting his flight in 1985 having made 4,970 contest and sport flights up to today's date (March 16, 1998). That is a lot of flying. Approximately 500 of those flights were made while training students. He estimates he had trained maybe up to 100 students in the last 15 years. Ed never tires of flying RC. At age 78 (in 1998), he says RC flying makes him feel young and happy and is always ready to fly (even on windy days). Ed Henry is a member of five different RC clubs in the Saint Louis area.

Contest Director

In 1956 Ed was the contest director for the first MDCRC regional RC contest and was either the contest director or the assistant contest director for the next 17 years. This contest has been conducted for the last 38 years and normally draws contestants from five Midwestern states. In those early days, contest directors were not always appointed by the AMA.

Through the years, he has helped organize and performed in model air shows, mall shows, funflies, major RC auctions, benefits for Boy Scouts, schools and the Civil Air Patrol.

Ed invented the first ever RC Dogfight (RC Combat) ever performed in the U.S. This is documented in the December 1969 issue of Model Airplane News. This credit was given to Ed years after he conducted his first indoor RC dogfight event.

He created the club's Model-Man-of-the-Year Award, which he has won six times. He also invented the Flight-A-Month Award. He himself has flown every month for the past 14 years.

He organized the first RC night flight that was a contest with prizes. Up to that point, night flying was demonstrations only.

Add-A-Trickle

Ed Henry invented the Add-A-Trickle charger, which is a simple inexpensive device that keeps your received and transmitter batteries on constant trickle charge, thus allowing your radio gear to always be ready to fly. Ace RC manufactures the Add-A-Trickle and has sold 70,000 units bring in a half million dollars to Ace RC. Ace RC has said that Add-A-Trickle has been the best seller in the Ace RC history. Ace RC pays Ed a handsome royalty for the idea.

Fly Seat

Ed Henry invented, designed, built and operated the original Fly Seat, which is now owned by the AMA Model Aviation Museum in Muncie, Indiana. The Fly Seat is a full-size cockpit for flying RC model aircraft. It consists of a full-size bucket seat, control stick and foot pedals that control an RC transmitter on a boom in front of the rotatable bucket seat assembly. Photographs and multi-page articles about the Fly Seat have appeared in about 60 publications around the world resulting in a nine million circulation. This all occurred between the years of 1970 and 1975. Correspondence was received from every civilized nation on earth. Ed sold construction plans to the U.S. Air Force, Massachusetts Institute of Technology, Taiwan Air Force, U.S. Air Force Academy, Iran Air Force and others. The U.S. Air Force sent Ed a photograph of the Fly Seat they had built. The famous newscaster, Paul Harvey, described the Ed Henry Fly Seat to the world. He said Ed Henry looked like Rube Goldberg sitting out in the middle of a cow pasture in that seat. That newscast was broadcasted over 600 radio stations and the overseas Armed Forces Radio Network with a two million listening audience.

Wild Hare

The August 1987 issue of Model Aviation magazine featured a nine-page article of a three-engine sport RC model that Ed designed, built and prepared construction plans for. It had a six-foot wingspan and flew great. He named it the Wild Hare. Ed has built many types of models including models with floats, snow skis, parachute drop, bomb bays, camera equipment (still and video) and bays for dropping candy for children. He once headed up a successful noise reduction plan because the neighbors were complaining about engine noise.

AMA Safety Code

Ed wrote the original AMA Safety Code. In the late 1960s, he was appointed safety observer by John Worth for the Nationals (Nats) held at Olathe Naval Air Base. At the end of the Nats, John asked Ed to write up a Safety Code because the AMA did not have one. Ed carved out a Safety Code as requested by John Worth. Since 1970, a number of items have been added to that

original Safety Code, doubling its length. But, the original words that Ed wrote are still in the code today.

Microhenry Cartoons

Ed Henry is the creator of the Microhenry Cartoons that have been published in Model Aviation magazine. A full page of Microhenry Cartoons has appeared in Model Aviation during the past 10 years with over 1,000 cartoons. Ed is very proud of this accomplishment. He published an attractive 190-page cartoon book containing 600 of his cartoons. The book sold fast and he may put out a second printing. Ed sent copies of that book to Charles Schulz, the creator of Peanuts, Mort Walker, creator of Beetle Bailey, and Jim Davis, creator of Garfield. Each of those three very famous comic strip artists replied to Ed with great compliments about the Microhenry cartoons, which put Ed on "cloud nine." Jim Davis wrote that he especially liked the clean art style of the Microhenrys. Mort Walker commented he liked the gentle humor. Ed was invited to the home of Valette Greene. She inked all of the Garfield cartoons. Valette prized the Microhenry cartoon book that he gave to her. She, in turn, gave him a Garfield hat that he proudly wears. Valette lives in Muncie, Indiana. You should see the boxes of fan letters Ed has received from Model Aviation readers. I feel the success of the Microhenrys alone qualifies Ed for entry into the Model Aviation Hall of Fame.

*(signed) Robert D. Dickerson
March 16, 1998*

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