

IN THE HANGAR WITH...

...Mike & Shaun Elmore

How did you become interested in RCM modeling (RCM)?

Mike - My mother started me off when I was just five with a little balsa glider. Later, I met some guys that flew at a field ½ mile from our house. I joined the club there and some guys helped me out. Thanks, Roskill Modelers.

We had a guy who was one of the famous five from the 1960 world championship in England. He was going around to the various clubs in NZ trying to generate interest and asked the club to sponsor a junior for the Nats and I was selected. So I had all my expenses paid by the club. We went by train and spent 10 days at the NZ Nationals this was '61-'62.

There I won hand-launch glider and I took a third place in free-flight scale. This was at age 15. And it took me another 10 years to place first again in '71-'72 there were a lot of 2nd and 3rd in between NZ junior/senior record holder.

Just before I left NZ, I did dabble in radio flight and that was with a Royal Galloping Ghost and Futaba radio.

You're originally from New Zealand.

I'm a New Zealander. (*Said with pride. ~Ed*) Had a buddy in NZ and he said why don't I go to the states. I was single, but couldn't go directly to the states, so I immigrated to Canada in '75 did some commercial sheet metal there and a little aviation work worked in Alaska and then into the states.

I'm an aircraft engineer by profession for 28 years full-time and 10 years part-time. Currently, I'm a maintenance mechanic for Munroe Hospital getting close to retirement. I've had two careers: I had an aviation career and, parallel to that, I had a modeling career made a living making models.

What advice would you give someone interested in RCM?

Go for it! If you're interested, join a club. Get in with a bunch of guys. The biggest draw back is the cost. Back when, if you wanted to build a model it was cheap. Now you got your club membership, AMA so this covers your flying generally plus you're insured. Then you got to buy your radio and model, so it's rather hard for say a young kid that comes. He's looking at \$5-600 to start with.

A lot of these kids come from single parent homes and I really don't know what to do to overcome it. There are a lot of cheap models available that you can buy and fly, but any boy that's interested, I would encourage and say, "Come along to the club and we'll go from there" quite a few guys will probably give you stuff to get you started.

KennyWorld's not the closest field to you. Why the OWLS?

Well, we went to all the other clubs Ocala, Dunnellon and others but just liked the OWLS field. It was relaxed flying few rules just behave yourself and be careful flying. No politics very nice people there. So, Shaun & I decided to join the club in 2008.

We checked out all the other clubs and weren't too crazy about the numbers and politics. At the time we were mainly free-flight, so could only fly Sunday afternoons at the other fields. At the OWLS we can fly anytime.

Did you ever fly full-scale?

Shaun got 8 hours toward his private pilot's license in a Cessna 172. So he has full size experience, which has helped him with his radio flying.

I'm an A&P mechanic, not a pilot, but I've flown right-seat many hours. I'm an engineer, but I cover the whole field: engines, air frames, a little avionics, hydraulics, electrical, pneumatic, sheet metal, painting, aircraft salvage and rebuilding, general maintenance. I've done it all. Maintained a Huey Medivac Heli in Naples for three years. And seaplanes I've worked on a lot of seaplanes and that was great.



Mike's Hand-Launch Story

It was the '61-'62 NZ NATS. On the last flight of the first day, I lost a glider at about two in the afternoon.

A farmer was out in the field with his sheep about 6:30 that night and saw it coming in and land amongst his flock. So we know it was flying from the racecourse we were flying at.

It was recovered on the way home ... had gone 26 miles in just over 4 hours.

It was a very advanced design for its time - named Zingara.

Some Ruminations:

On High Performance Diesel Power

So we flew diesels because we liked them, and they were alright for radio up to a point. They didn't develop the power of a glow, but they could swing a larger prop at a slower speed, and you could fly about 20 minutes on two ounces of fuel.

We added amyl nitrate as an octane booster, which in the medical field is a heart stimulant so you had to be careful when you mix it up or your heart would go pitter-patter-pitter-patter. (*laughs*)

On Building Models:

Shaun & I do things a little different. We build models: Delta saucers, autogyros, pterodactyls. Not just the straight airplane, you know? I was the same in free-flight, but Shaun's been fortunate enough from day one growing up with a knife in his hand. From about five years old or so, he's been exposed to all these

different types of models that I used to fly or my friends flew, and he's built a lot of them. So he can build anything, install the radio, run and maintain engines. Some little things I still help him with other things he has learned to do and gone way beyond anything I can do. He is a highly skilled modeler.

On a Father's Pride:

I dabbled a little bit in radio, but I mainly encouraged Shaun. I like to see him excel. I've built quite a few models, and he flies them occasionally, but he likes the power planes. I mainly do it for him to make sure he enjoys the hobby, and I get the benefit of watching without any hard work. (*laughs*)

And to have a son that enjoys the hobby as much as you do and be able to teach him and watch him take those lessons and go way beyond what you could ever do and be successful is a wonderful thing. And it's been that way for 30 years.

Not to forget my wife, who has put up with both of us all these years and she still supports us.

On Building: ~ Shaun

This is an F4 Phantom, a Dumas kit. ("See the exhaust there, he turned them out," says Mike.) It's all 1/8th inch sheet laminated and belt sanded to get the outside. The inside is bored out with a drill press and drum sander.



This concave area (above the exhaust ports) is copy paper with a balsa pattern printed on each side. Then I cut out the parts.



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**Prominently displayed in their living room is this amazing hand-crafted 'Ocean-Going Tug'**

I built this over a 15-year period. Patterned after an Ocean-Going Tug used by the Shell Oil Company in Indonesia, the full size is 150' long with a range of 6000 miles.



All the lights work. It weighs 68 pounds, has two electric motors, two reduction gear boxes, two 4-blade props, forward and reverse.

Ran it once in the bath tub, and it put out a rooster tail about 4' in the air. It's capable of pulling two people in a row boat.



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Airboats...

We took a couple of our airboats out to the field when it was raining and ran them over the wet grass.

Bond ... James Bond

I met a guy in Naples (FL) that had a sheet metal part he needed repaired. I asked him what it was from, and he said it was from the autogyro, *Little Nellie*, used in a James Bond movie. I never did see the whole airplane, but I fixed the part for him. That shows you, it's a small world.



The Beagle-built WA-116 modified for use in the 1967 film *You Only Live Twice*

Always Been on the Cutting Edge

In New Zealand, 1968, I did a model for the FAA. It was a model of a modified Stearman with an R-1340 single-row Pratt & Whitney engine. At that particular time, it was the largest single engine AG plane in the world. The load it could carry was the greatest of any plane at the time.

In order to get the airplane certified in the states, I built a model of it so the FAA could have something to refer to as it went through the certification process.

The airplane eventually went into production up here in Marianna near Pensacola. There was another company that built it in Texas, also.



And what are the father & son team working on now?

An Osprey Autogyro powered by a nose mounted engine. The dual hand-crafted wing mounted rotors rotate freely in the wind to provide lift.

