

Col and I lived in adjoining suburbs in 1948, Col was building rubber powered models and I had built a control liner for my Frog 100. We met at the local park and as aeromodellers do became life long friends.

Col's family owned a grocery shop which had a large shed at the rear for stock where Col had cleared an area in the back corner with a bench for model building. He had built his own valve radio for his bedroom. This shed and shop, which no longer exist, have marvelous and happy memories for me. Saturday mornings would see Col and I on the tram to town, then another tram to Arthur Gorrie's Shop at 604 Stanley St., South Brisbane. After much talk and fun with Arthur and other modellers, and acquiring model building needs, and the shop closed, we would head back to Col's shed. This was where speed building really happened. Small diesel powered control liners and free flighters were designed and built, afternoon and night, some times all night.

As we would fly these models on the **Sunday**, for fuel proofing we would add ether to the clear Dulux so it would dry fast.

Often in the afternoon we would run in new motors in the shed, it's a wonder shop customers didn't complain as the whole shed including shop, stock area, and all would be full of model engine exhaust fumes. Col's parents, like him, were very tolerant people. This shed was where the Stardusters Model Aero Club was formed. Col was the first secretary and I was treasurer. Members of this club went on to win and place in many state and national championships. We would go by tram and train loaded with free flight models, tool boxes, and fuel all the way to Wacol where the Sir David Longlands Correctional Centre is today where we would then fly, and, at other times, we would go to Carina near where Carindale Shopping Centre is today.

There were times when tram conductors and passengers were not too excited about our smelly models.

We flew control line models as entertainment at The Brisbane Show, Exhibition Speedway, Queensland Industries Fair, Caboolture Ambulance, Warwick Rodeo and many other events organised by Arthur Gorrie as the Public Relations Officer for the Model Aircraft Association of Queensland. We joined the Newtown Model Aeronautical Association also. At the National Championships held in Toowoomba at Christmas, 1952-53, Col placed in the Wakefield rubber event which made him eligible to represent Australia at the World Champs. Alas in those years this representation cost an unbelievable amount of time and money to our modern eyes. At these Nationals Col received his much cherished VH-16. These were fun times at nationals as the majority of flyers camped at the same venue. Toowoomba was camp

stretchers in the animal pens at the show grounds, at Bendigo you filled your hessian palliasse with straw, and that was your bed for the duration of the nationals. These were good times because we got to know a lot of aeromodellers. Nights at these Nat's were spent repairing and getting models ready for the next day, Col, as up until the end, was always helping fix something for other people.

Col was not only tops at fixing things, he invited me to a party where I met Noela and this was the best thing anybody could have done for me. In 1955 I comenced building a fullsize model in my spare time- our house- and got married in November. Col continued modeling till he married Jean in 1960.

Aeromodelling was put on hold for the next few years. During this time we became involved as officals in motor racing at Lowood, then Lackside when it opened, and Surfers Paradice circuits. We were on the committee which formed the Queensland Motor Racing Officials Association.

In the early 70's we came back to aeromodeling and as you might say the rest is history..

Last weekend,I had a phone call from Keith Murray of Sydney, a great friend of ours from many nationals. Keith reminded me of the time at the Richmond Nats in 1988 when he had a new Indian Mills :75 which he could not start . Col dismantled it, reshaped the inside of the piston, straightened the conrod, reassembled it, started it and gave it back to Keith, all on the flying field, in between competing in events. Keith went on to beat Col in the scramble event with that motor.

There are few things in life that give us real joy and satisfaction but having Colin Somers as my friend has made my life by far richer than I can hope to convey to you today, so let me just say Goodbye old friend.

Des Slattery