



The AMA History Project Presents: Biography of MARGARET (DOLLY) WISCHER



August 12, 1919 - October 17, 2013
Started modeling in the 1960s

Written by AMA Staff (12/1988), BU & RU (12/2013); Transcribed by JS (06/2008), Reformatted by JS (02/2010), Updated by JS (12/2013)

Honors:

- 1988: Model Aviation Hall of Fame
- 1974: AMA Fellow
- 1986: President's Legion of Honor Award.

The following was published in the December 1988 issue of Model Aviation magazine. Dolly was a 1987 Model Aviation Hall of Fame Inductee.

Dolly Wischer has served AMA and the sport of model aviation in many ways.

She has been a Nats volunteer for more than 20 years. She has a unique talent that allows her to produce signs for any purpose, almost at once, from almost any raw materials. For this ability alone Dolly has been invaluable at the Nats, where signs to direct people are always a necessity.

As a modeler, she has been a Nats contestant. She has also designed her own aircraft, and one of her early designs, the *Super Zue*, was picked up by Goldberg Models and developed into the famous *Falcon 56*. Her knowledge of electronics enabled her to create and produce her own pulse-proportional radio, which she used to control *Super Zue*.

Apart from that, Dolly served as Scale Team Manager in 1984, and again in 1986, for the U.S. teams, which traveled to France and Norway in those years. Dolly managed the teams, taking care of all the many chores that fall to a manager. Accompanying her husband, Bob, who writes the Scale column for *Model Aviation* magazine, she did a great job and was well respected by the foreign teams.

Always interested in AMA and a strong supporter of the National Center, Dolly started her own retirement program for the building mortgage. Beginning in 1982, she purchased raw materials and made, by her own hand, many teddy bears. She then donated them to AMA, and also helped sell them at trade shows (Toledo, typically) for \$25 apiece. All proceeds have been given to AMA, either to the Building Fund or to the Scale Team Fund, with all out-of-pocket expenses being absorbed by Dolly. To date, more than \$3,000 has been given to the Academy through her personal efforts.

Selected as an AMA Fellow in [1974], Dolly was again honored in 1986 with the President's Legion of Honor Award. Her selection for the Hall of Fame is richly deserved. We know that the

many people who have worked with her for so many years, and who have enjoyed her perpetually cheerful manner, will be pleased.

The following was published in the January 2014 issue of Model Aviation magazine, in the In the Air section.

Margaret “Dolly” Wischer
August 12, 1919-October 17, 2013

Modelers and friends worldwide will be saddened to learn of the passing of Margaret “Dolly” Wischer on October 17, 2013, at age 94.

Affectionately known as “The Bear Lady,” Dolly earned that title following the 1980 Wilmington, Ohio Nats. Through the years that followed, Dolly produced several thousand handcrafted teddy bears of various sizes.

First sold from the AMA booth at the Toledo Show for \$25, they appeared at Oshkosh, Wisconsin, and FAI World Championship events. All of the proceeds were donated to AMA projects such as the AMA Headquarters building [in Reston, Virginia] debt retirement and the Scale Team Fund. Dolly was awarded a Legion of Honor Award in 1986 for her monetary contributions.

Dolly competed in the Nats and even designed her own aircraft. One of her designs was picked up by Goldberg Models and became the Falcon 56. She also created and produced her own pulse-proportional radio system.

For many years, Dolly worked behind the scenes at the Nats producing directional and identification signs. Her unique ability to locate and utilize materials at little or no cost was extremely helpful.

Although Dolly was more often recognized standing next to her husband, Bob, at the many local, national, and international events as his mechanic, they shared many other modeling tasks, too. They were a team while Bob served as an FAI Scale Subcommittee member from 1977 until 1993. Bob and Dolly helped staff members in the AMA booth during the EAA Fly-In at Oshkosh. Many people from around the world often showed up around lunchtime because they knew Dolly had food and a cold drink to share!

Dolly and Bob have been described as true pioneers born in the wrong century. Bob, a draftsman, designed their home as well as its radiant heating system. Together, the “scratch-built” it with their own hands!

On their 10 acres of land, Dolly maintained a large garden, and prepared and canned most of the vegetables and fruit they consumed. She collected, kept, and used everything. If one dissected one of the thousands of larger teddy bears, they would find that the moveable joints consist of two Ball canning jar lid inserts and a brass band to hold them together.

In addition to the Legion of Honor Award, Dolly was also selected as an AMA Fellow in [1974] and was inducted into the Model Aviation Hall of Fame in 1988. Known for her perpetually cheerful manner and her many good works, she will be sorely missed by AMA and the world aeromodeling community.

-Bob and Rae Underwood
bobrae@sbcglobal.net

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AMA History Project
National Model Aviation Museum
5151 E. Memorial Dr.
Muncie IN 47302
(765) 287-1256, ext. 511
historyproject@modelaircraft.org

