



The AMA History Project Presents: Biography of JOHN P. MALONEY

1922 – 1987



Written by AMA staff (10/1987); Transcribed & Edited by SS (01/2003), Reformatted by JS (10/2009)

Career:

- Started World Engines in the early 1950s; was a manufacturer and supplier of kits, engines, radio and accessories
 - Was a strong supporter of the AMA
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The following article ran in October 1987 issue of Model Aviation magazine after the death of John P. Maloney.

Just a few days after his 65th birthday, John P. Maloney – “Mr. World Engines” – ended a long bout with cancer. In a classic case of mind over matter, he had managed to carry on despite steady physical erosion for several years. Right to the end, John was his usual feisty self, adamant and aggressive in his attitude and actions. He refused to give in mentally, although he could not prevent his body from deteriorating.

John Maloney was always known for his spirit. It centered on his love for flying, with both models and full-scale aircraft. Although he rose in the model industry ranks as a manufacturer and supplier of kits, engines, radios and accessories, he never let the business keep him from enjoying his love for flying.

For over 30 years, since the early 1950s, John Maloney and World Engines were major names in the model industry. John was a pioneer, an innovator, a strong progressive personality in a field full of modelers who built a business based on the activity they enjoyed the most.

He was outspoken – those who knew him were always aware of how he felt about issues and people. He was often aggravated, but always for good reason and for good purpose. John Maloney seldom settled for status quo; he was always pushing to improve, to find new and better ways of doing things. He was creative, in business as well as modeling, and was not easy to satisfy.

John was a strong supporter of AMA, often crucial, but constructively so. He backed his support financially, in effect putting his money where his mouth was – like a father who might be angry with a son who did things he didn’t like, but always ready with a helping hand.

People often remarked that they always knew where they stood with John. He could be very abrasive, but also very kind. John was a thinker. One of his characteristics was to reflect, around Christmastime, about where modeling and the AMA were going. He would often get on the phone at that time of year and simply talk about what he thought – about what was happening, where he had come from, where we were all going.

He became a giant in the model industry, a leader. Industry people listened to him – not always agreeing, but never dismissing his thinking. He was a survivor in an industry that is often treacherous, subject to modeler fickleness in choices of kits and equipment. Model industry history has a long list of failed companies and forgotten names. This is typical in a field where many people try to combine their hobby with business, since too many are not good enough as businessmen, brilliant though they may be as designers and product developers.

John Maloney kept World Engines going through thick and thin. It's reassuring, therefore, to know that his company will continue even though he is gone. His employees and his family have passed the word: World Engines is staying in business to carry on in memory of John and of the tradition he established. Thus, the greatness of the man will live on through his company, just as it has with other greats: Carl Goldberg, Lee Renaud, Matty Sullivan, Sid Axelrod, and many others.

The model industry won't be the same without John P. Maloney, but he left a legacy that won't easily be forgotten. John left his imprint on the model world through many stories told by and about him – stories about how he often landed his models in trees or often had problems with needle valve settings. Wherever his friends and associates gather those stories will be retold many times. But John will probably be remembered best for his laugh – as big and booming as he was, before disease caused a severe weight loss.

John enjoyed life, and he shared it heartily with close friends. There's a big hole now where John was, but the name World Engines will help fill it. World Engines is still John's company, no matter who keeps it going, and the Maloney shadow will be hovering overhead. John is free of pain now and doing what he liked to do best: flying. No doubt he's got his flying site all staked out now, waiting for the rest of us to join him in the biggest fun-fly ever.

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