



(continued from previous page)

Righton remembers that there was one petrol motor, an imported machine, in the club he belonged to. Members made their aeroplanes with identical fittings on the nose, and took turns at fitting the little engine on and flying their models.

The petrol motor may develop anything from one-tenth to one-quarter horsepower. It is rationed with a mere eye-dropperful of petrol, enough to last a minute and a-half, and an efficient model climbs about 1000 feet a minute, so there is plenty of room for a long glide.

"More Efficient Than Real Thing"

"As a matter of simple fact," said Mr. Righton, "a model is far more efficient—in the sense of effective use of power and design—than the real thing. If we build models to the exact design of real aeroplanes, they're no good. You have to have a pilot to correct the inefficiencies of a full-sized aeroplane. A model has to be designed to take off neatly and come down neatly—if it does the one all right, it'll do the other. It has to have natural stability, not merely correctable stability. It is in the seeking of these things that features of the model aeroplane have been developed which were later found ideal for the real aeroplane—the Davis wing-section, for instance."

Some hints of the future possibilities of radio-controlled model aeroplanes had been given before wartime emergency regulations forbade the use of radio transmitters by civilians. Remote-control units had been used in New Zealand, with a code system operating the variation of control surfaces (In America some amateurs had got as far as using a joystick to actuate the transmitter). One Wellington man flew a large model out to Kapiti Island and back to the mainland, causing it to brush past the five-foot rod that acted as his aerial.

"After the war, I think we'll see them performing evolutions, rolls, loops, spins and dives," said Mr. Righton. "And, of course, we won't need the large fields that we need now for our unpredictable flights." We'll be able to bring them down just where we want them, and make them do nice, neat, three-point landings."

Model aeroplane club meetings had grown to great proportions before nearly all the members went off to play aeroplanes in a much bigger and more realistic way.

"Terrible Lot of Exercise"

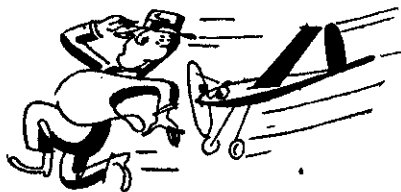
"It's a great social activity," said Mr. Righton. "It combines a certain amount of craftsmanship with a maximum of outdoor activity. It's not like model engineering or anything of that sort, which is purely a workshop hobby. You're out of doors the greater part of the time, and you get a terrible lot of exercise."

In peacetime one club had the use of an inland aerodrome which had been established by an aero club that no longer had any aeroplanes. Hangars, haunted by the shades of real aeroplanes that had crashed long since, were used by "modellers," who brought their machines together for an annual camp at Easter. There were 50 there one year. In the South Island, at a contest for petrol-driven models held in 1938, there were 140 candidates present.

"At a big contest, of course, there's something at stake," said Mr. Righton, "and it's more a matter of temperament. There's a lot in the preparation and launching, and you learn that the hard way. It's not all in the designing by any means. The best built machine isn't a foregone record-breaker, as some clumsy stick models have shown."

Club meetings have had their amusing side—as our artist suggests in his drawings. There was the time when a petrol model resembling a real aeroplane at a distance was being flown up the Hutt Valley, and the wings came off in mid-air owing to faulty rubber, for all detachable and vulnerable parts, including the motor, are strapped on with rubber to minimise crash damage. The motor was still going and the body plunged to the ground—a total wreck. A few minutes later, some motorists came running across to know how many people had been killed!

Mr. Righton assures us that if there is one fence within 30 acres, a valuable model will make for it on landing. "It's psychological," he says. "And if you leave a model in a field where there are cows, you may be sure one of them will come along and take a bite. They seem to like the smell of the dope we use to tighten the fabric."



Beauty Talks

"LET'S Take a Look in Your Mirror," the series of programmes by Stella Unger, actress, radio director and author, is now beginning at 12B. It will be heard in the *Health and Beauty* on Tuesdays and Fridays.

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