

## The multi-dimensional man of NAL M S Rajamurthy's tribute to K.S.Raman



K S Raman

K.S.Raman-The multi-dimensional man of NAL and Bangalore suddenly left us on July 16, 2003 on his way to the office. It was indeed a shocking news and the number of people from NAL who visited his home from Dr. T.S.Prahlad to the technicians working in NTAF and C-CADD (F) is a testimony for this silent achiever's skills and the goodwill he had earned.

Dr.K.Srinivas of CTFD first introduced me to Raman during 1980-81. The introduction by Dr.K.Srinivas was quite dramatic. He brought Raman along with him to my office and said in Kannada, here is a man with interests very much the same as yours and so I have brought him here, I am sure you have lot to share. Our sharing of 23 years is what I would like to share here. .

When Raman was introduced to me, the common link was building scaled models - me the mad aero modeler and he the owner of an already established ONE MAN MINI CAR FACTORY. Aircrafts became the common link and soon we realized that we had many other common interests - photography, painting, and music. .

As his dad had flown a Stinton, the urge for flying was in his blood. As I had already done quite a bit of flying on the Pushpak, this love for flying brought us closer. Raman subsequently flew the Aeronca and Pushpak at Jakkur and obtained his PPL. The madness for the aircraft was such that at one stage we explored the possibility of getting a DC-3 Dakota from Hyderabad and put it on display at MG road with the help of a sponsor. Failing this, we even explored the possibility of getting an abandoned Tiger Moth, but did not succeed. .

Raman's modeling skills blossomed from his childhood. He made models using ice cream sticks. He was at ease with wood, metal and plastics. He was always into details, irrespective of the size of the models he built. Getting those tiny components like headlamps, hand made and polished/chrome plated was neither demanding nor boring for him. It was part of the manufacturing process and meticulous care is what is required. He would even match the wood grain of the dashboard of his car models. As another modeler, it was a delight to watch him meticulously build the spoked wheels of his cars, making the spokes out of spruce from plastic model kits and fixing them one by one as per the drawing. This detailing won him great appreciation from Rolls Royce who found his models of their cars quite authentic. .

In the mid-eighties with our model building at its peak, we needed an exclusive home that would not only house them but also enable the viewer to have both their top and bottom views. We found our requirement for a good showcase too expensive and ended up building them ourselves. .

His passion for cars continued to take the lead. Photojournalist Satyan brought out an article on him in SWAGAT- Indian airline's in-flight magazine. Kannada magazine TARANGA also published an article on his car modeling. .

Early nineties saw Raman pick up his painting skills quietly and one fine day surprised us by showing a collection of poster color paintings of aircraft and cars. One of his aircraft paintings submitted to the EAA annual painting competition got a certificate of merit and was on display at EAA for one year. .

The Daimler he owned and his keen interest in car modeling brought him close to many members of the Vintage Car Club of Bangalore. As an active member of the club he participated in Car rallies and contributed in many ways. In this domain, we had a common interest - the Morris minor. While Raman succeeded in having a two door one, our search for an authentic four-door saloon with original engine did not succeed. .

Raman had a formal training in stone sculpture and was good at woodcarving. My showcase still adores the mini Vampire model carved in sandalwood. This ability took him in the direction of doll making. Together with his sister Manorama, he made authentic dolls. They made a special collection of dolls depicting various Yakshagana characters for Dr.Shivrama Karantha's foundation. These were on exhibition at Bharatiya Vidya Bhavan, few years back. .

As a modeller he was an inspiration to many and was an active and important member of MOB (Modellers of Bangalore). .

Raman had interest in classical music - both Indian and Western. The tilt was more on the Western, so when I brought home the classical collection of Bach, Beethoven, Tchaikovsky, Handel and Mozart; we heard the entire collection and compared notes. .

Raman's interest in writing articles in Kannada is known to all the colleagues at NAL. He wrote a number of articles on aircrafts and cars in his own style. He also lectured and recorded radio talks. .

He was an avid reader and we were enrolled into the philosophy of RICHARD BACH. Our practice was to gift a Richard Bach book to friends whenever there was an apt occasion. Forsyth was our other favorite author and Raman had presented to me Forsyth's SHEPARD when I left for Germany on DAAD fellowship. Biplanes he loved and we were strongly drawn into them by Bach's BIPLANE. .

The love for biplanes had inspired him to build on the occasion of Centenary celebrations of Wright Brother's historic powered flight a full-scale static replica of Wright Brothers Flyer, together with a colleague from VITM. Just couple of months back he had got this work approved as an AR&DB sponsored project. .

As president of EAA India chapter, he tried his best to do something that will have an impact at the international level. As we were only a handful of EAA members, we were not able to launch any major activity of flying due to various constraints. Recently, he planned to contribute to the YOUNG EAGLES PROGRAM OF EAA. Towards this he with few of us planned the paper plane contest for school children. .

In the last few weeks, we were busy conducting the paper plane contests in various schools as part of the Centenary celebrations of Wright Brother's historic powered flight. Raman had

visited few schools in this context. .

Raman the unassuming introvert has suddenly left all his friends and beloved ones. May be the destiny was that he would watch the centenary celebrations with Wright brothers?! While he has left his physical form, he is very much alive in our memories through the various mediums in which he was proficient and at ease. I am compelled to modify the famous quote on Dakotas and say 'The true replacement for Raman is Raman'. v I conclude by quoting from Bach's Illusions .

"Don't be  
dismayed at good-byes.  
A farewell is necessary before  
you can meet  
again. And meeting  
again, after moments or  
lifetimes, is certain for  
those who are  
friends."