



## **A lifelong love of model-making and flying Josef Alterbaum**

My age (I was born in 1948) gives me away as a member of the previous generation of aero-modellers. My first-ever model, at the age of 11, was a control-line Focke Wulf, and I continued with tethered models until 1968, when I graduated to radio-controlled flying. My first RC kit back in those days was a Metz, followed by a Grundig Variophon used until 1970, when I upgraded to a Simprop.

In the same year, I got to know Dieter Schlüter at an aero-modelling event in Harsewinkel in Germany. His Cobra, then the latest in a long line of other helicopter designs, was a very good flying model. I was immediately hooked and in 1971 was one of the first people to get his hands on a Cobra kit. It was, I seem to recall, kit number 15. After allowing some time for the kits to be built, a pioneering group of helicopter modellers was invited to an enthusiasts' event in Mühlheim, Germany, where Mr Schlüter introduced us to both the theory and practice of the Cobra.

After many, many hours of hovering practice, step-by-step development resulted in such models as the Graupner Bell Twin and the Kavan Jet Ranger. I was extremely active in the area of model-helicopter flying until about 1975, when other commitments meant that I would have little time for such things for the next 30 years. About five years ago, I once again started to build and fly both old and newly produced model helicopters.

Anyone who has ever been hooked on model-helicopter flying will know what I'm talking about when I say that it's like a virus, which can lie dormant for many years, before suddenly breaking out again.

Meanwhile, I have created various trainers, four Jakadofsky /Jet Cat Turbine-powered helicopters and my large "Turbo Didi" Cobra model with a rotor diameter of 3 m.

Several model kits of varying quality are now available on the market, which is why I have set myself the task of creating a new "starter" model in the shape of a small 1:18-scale plastic "Super Cobra" kit.