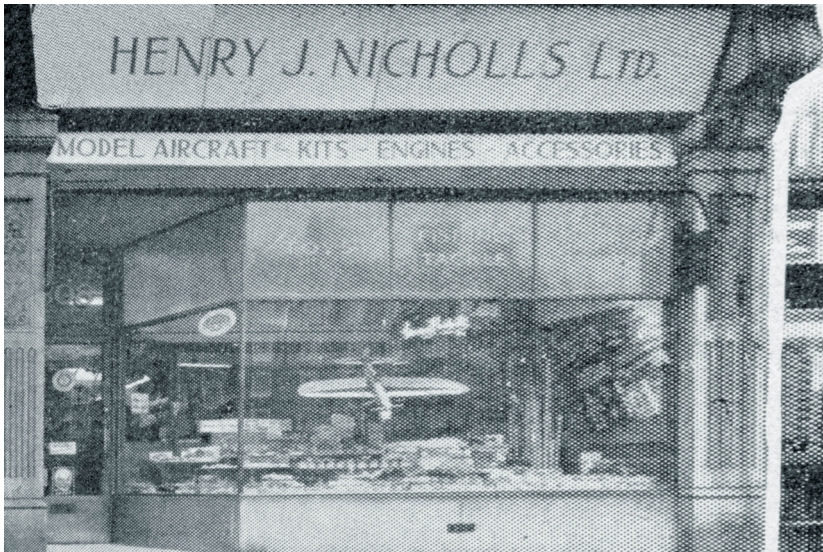


Renovations at “308”

We visit the famous North London model shop



When Henry J. Nicholls opened his model shop in Holloway Road in 1946 it presented a very different picture to the one we saw when we visited him last month. The shop was then partly bomb damaged and the temporary shop front, counters and fittings were largely made from salvaged timber and Essex board, and even those materials were then “on licence”.

In the intervening years improvements have been steadily made until recently the shop had a complete “face-lift” with all new counters, designed especially for the model trade, and a new window which allows the store gazer and passer-by to see right through into the shop.

The resulting improvement is most noticeable to those who, like the Editor, have known “308” since its inception. A bright and tidy appearance is in no small measure due to the efforts of Henry’s son Richard who is now in charge of the retail side leaving father to concentrate more and more on the manufacturing and wholesale side of the business.



While looking round we were impressed by several outstanding features. The amazing array of engines in the glass-topped counters. We counted over eighty different new motors, and there must have been about two hundred motors in stock altogether including the" second-hand ones. On the stacked shelves were several of the very latest American kits including all the latest deBolt and Sterling series and also the Bonner Duramite and all nine of the deBolt servos for radio control. We also had a look through Henry's visitors' book. Some of the worlds' best known modelling names appear there and prove conclusively that Henry's boast that "All visiting modellers come to 308 whenever they get a chance" is not an idle one. What a pity this book wasn't started right at the beginning of the shop's existence! Among recent signatures were those of A1 Doig, U.S. R/C expert, and modellers from India, Finland, France and Australia.

Certainly the cheerful atmosphere of 308 has taken on a "new look" with installation of the specially designed sales counters. We detect a distinctly "continental" air about the new layout—doubtless influenced by Henry's visits to Belgium, Germany, Austria and Switzerland where the standards of shopfitting are perhaps higher than normally found in British model shops. Possibly this feature may stimulate others to have new ideas to change the situation, especially where sales counters are concerned.



With Henry Nicholls and son Richard to look after him, this youthful customer can be assured of first class service, no matter how small his purchase. New, specially designed glass topped cabinets hold sales stock for quick dispensing and staggered arrangement as evident in the general view at top gives ample room for assistants to move from end to end

From Aeromodeller July 1960