



Matty's health. He suffered from attacks of influenza and fatigue that drained his energy, but he and his workers got the job done and helped win the war.

In 1945, Matty's thoughts returned to building commercial airplanes. Before the global conflict began, he had developed a four-seat, high-wing monoplane design that he deemed viable for the post-war market. Despite four years of war, Harold Ames retained his interest in aviation and was prepared to ally himself with Laird in the new venture, but Matty was hesitant to proceed. There were plenty of danger signals—a flood of cheap, surplus airplanes was about to hit the market. The introduction of new, advanced aircraft

such as the Beechcraft Bonanza, North American Aviation's Navion, and Cessna Aircraft Company's Model 120 would provide serious competition in what was destined to become an overcrowded market.¹²

In addition, in 1946, the Aeronca, Taylorcraft, and Piper companies were producing hundreds of new airplanes that only exacerbated the situation. The chief obstacle, however, was Matty's reluctance to accept outside capital to finance development and production of his little monoplane. Ames offered \$80,000 to move the project forward but Laird refused—the risks were too great and the rewards too few. Matty's decision, however, proved providential because in



E. M. Laird is shown holding a scale model of the Super Solution. The bullish LC-DW-500 represented the pinnacle of Laird's aviation career that had spanned more than 30 years. (Joan Laird Post Collection)