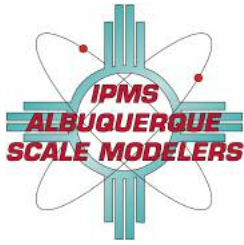


ALBUQUERQUE SCALE MODELERS



<http://abqscalemodelers.com>

December 2013

THE FEZ SEZ TONY HUMPHRIES

While browsing on the Squadron website the other day, in anticipation of some early Xmas shopping and in response to one of their better sales (like the cheapskate that I so obviously am), I noticed several Airfix kits that are flagged prominently “cannot be shipped by air.” Yes, I know—what was I doing looking at Airfix kits? Let’s just say that it was a fit of nostalgia. Either that or I was having some kind of seizure. But either way, this immediately led me to wonder why. Not why I was feeling nostalgic, or indeed having a seizure, but why such rules exist? We know there are some crazy laws and regulations around. For example, it’s illegal in Alaska to wake a sleeping bear for a photo opportunity (it re-

ally is—look it up if you don’t believe me). Of course, why you would wish to do so is anyone’s guess and indeed anyone doing this deserves the sustained, thorough, and savage mauling that will inevitably result. Let’s call that natural selection at work.



But a model shop can’t ship a kit plus a quarter of an ounce of badly-matched acrylic paint, a tube of non-stick glue and a cheap paintbrush that will shed its hair faster than Telly Savalas, by air? Why on earth not? Is the kit incredibly realistic and likely to scare the pilot? Is the box ten feet square? Does it weigh three tons? Will the plastic spontaneously explode? Is it particularly tasty and irresistible to drug sniffing dogs? (Well, that can’t be it—I can’t honestly imagine anything from Airfix being irresistible to *anyone*... or realistic, if it comes to that). Is the plastic so nasty that it

will melt through the aircraft’s baggage hold and fall like a 200lb ice-laden meteor on some poor unsuspecting farmer 30,000 feet below? Are the paintbrush bristles likely to fall out in mid-flight and clog the engines? It really makes you wonder. Clearly the box contents of an Airfix kit could, by some measures, be regarded as a hazardous substance and are probably banned by the Geneva Convention, several constitutional amendments, and at least one Papal edict. But in



November meeting highlights, top to bottom: A row of P-38s for the special contest; and the business meeting in progress.



the end it's just a model kit, surely? I've seen some real styrene monstrosities in my time, as I'm sure have you, and Airfix aren't actually any worse than many others. Well, okay—some others...

In the same vein, the Mr. Surfacer debacle (the product couldn't be imported into the USA for a while due to some change in the environmental laws in California, if I remember correctly) also makes you question what is going on with the world these days. Does it smell so bad that it is considered to be a chemical weapon? Is it radioactive or horrifically and instantly carcinogenic? Have terrorists been using it to hold their shoe-bombs together? Is it so sticky that it requires a Hazmat license to use it? This is actually useful stuff and the inability to obtain it led to genuine hardship in the modeling community. Seams went unfilled. Armor went un-textured. Stocks were hoarded and prices shot up like Argentine inflation. It was a disaster on a par with the Hindenburg bacon frying incident, if you ask me and one that was so easily avoidable. Let's face it. We really need to keep things in perspective—200 Million gallons of oil pumped into the Gulf by BP is an environmental problem. 200 Bottles of Mr. Surfacer sold from hobby shops in several states is not. I'm sure it won't be the last such issue to affect our hobby, though, so beware. The Government will be coming for our spray-guns next. Well (he says, adopting his best Charlton Heston voice) you can pry my Iwata from my cold, dead hands...

VICE PRESIDENT'S REPORT MIKE BLOHM

A Couple of Items of Note

2014 ASM E-Board Elections: The results of the 2014 ASM E-Board nominations at the October 4 meeting and the follow-on election at the November 1 meeting are listed below. Only the position of Contest Director had more than one nomination, and this position was voted on by the membership, with John Tate being elected. Thanks to all who participated in the election.

President:	Tony Humphries
Vice President:	Mike Blohm
Secretary/Treasurer:	Frank Randall
Contest Director:	John Tate
Members Pro-Tem:	Jack Garriss Larry Glenn Victor Maestas
Newsletter Editor:	Joe Walters (appointed)
Webmaster:	Mike Blohm (appointed)

2013 Model of the Year Competition at December ASM Meeting: All ASM members are reminded that the December 6 ASM meeting events include the "ASM 2013 Model of the Year" Showdown. This competition includes all the Best of Show winners at all skill levels (Juniors, Basic, Intermediate, and Masters) from all of the 2013 Theme and Special Contests. Eligible models are listed on the ASM Website (<http://tinyurl.com/asm1312c>).

This list has been updated to include the November contest

Year 2013 Contest Quick Reference Chart

Titles in **blue** indicate contests for points

- 04 Jan** **SPECIAL CONTEST #1**
SCI-FI/SCIENCE/REAL SPACE/FANTASY
Sponsored Contest: "Frickin' Laser Beams" (Patrick Dick)
Sponsored Contest: "Rolls Royce" (Patrick Dick)
- 01 Feb** **ASM Swap Meet**—no contest.
- 01 Mar** **Open Contest**—Any kit/subject/scale.
Sponsored Contest: "Revell 1/48 Ventura" (E-Board)
- 05 Apr** **More Than One Radial Engine**—Any kit/subject/scale.
Famous Motorsports Vehicles—Any kit/subject/scale.
Sponsored Contest: "Best Sci-Fi Spaceship" (Don Smith)
- 03 May** **SPECIAL CONTEST #2**
SINGLE IN-LINE ENGINED AIRCRAFT
Sponsored Contest: "Revell 1/32 He-219" (Hobby Proz)
- 07 Jun** **Cold War**—Any kit/subject/scale.
Cherche la Femme—Female-named subject, any kit/subject/scale.
- 12 Jul** **Open Contest**—Any kit/subject/scale.
Sponsored Contest: "North African Armor" (James Guld, Tony Humphries)
- 02 Aug** **ASM Swap Meet**—no contest.
- 13 Sep** **On the Water**—Anything waterborne, any kit/subject/scale.
Beyond Babe Artwork—Any subject with non-pinup nose art.
Sponsored Contest: "Rotary Winged" (Gil De La Plain)
- 04 Oct** **Axis of WWII**—Any subject excluding Germany and Japan.
Go Figure—Any humanoid figure.
Sponsored Contest: "Big" (Brian Peck)
- 01 Nov** **Open Contest**—Any kit/subject/scale.
Sponsored Contest: "Danny Roberts / Best P-38" (Mike Blohm, John Tate)
- 06 Dec** **SPECIAL CONTEST #3**
JET POWER
Plus *Model of the Year* competition!

winners. The Best of Show winner(s) from the December "Jet Power" Special Contest are also eligible for the Showdown. You do not have to be present at the December meeting for your model to compete, but the model does, so please arrange for someone to bring it if you cannot personally attend. It's



2013 ASM Model of the Year Showdown

Competition amongst Best of Show winners at each skill Level from all 2013 Points & Special Contests

nice to see all the great models built by ASM members during the year, so please ensure we have max participation!

CoMMiESFest V Model Contest in February 2014: The IPMS Colorado Modeling Militia Enjoying Sci Fi (CoMMiES) Chapter is holding CoMMiESFest V on February 15, 2014, in Golden, Colorado.



According to Mike Mackowski, the IPMS Region 10 Coordinator, IPMS CoMMiES has offered to host the 2015 Region 10 Convention. Information and a link to the contest website are on the ASM Website (<http://tinyurl.com/asm1312d>).

KIT REVIEW CORRECTION!

JOHN TATE

Flashpoint Fighters

Apologies to John Tate; in last month's issue, he reviewed two classic kits from Hobbycraft, a MiG-17 and a Sea Fury.

He also supplied photos of these kits, assembled. Sadly, Your Editor ran one of those photos twice instead of each of them once!

So, here is John's Sea Fury build:



FRED'S FOTO FILE

FRED FRANCESCHI

More from Chino

Well, this looks like a conglomeration of photos from the Chino Airport. I think that most of the airplanes were at the Planes of Fame museum there, but I remember the SB2C Helldiver. It was at the Yankee Air Force Museum, a privately owned collection in a separate area of the airport. The Yankee Air Force belonged to the owner of a dairy, and he found a really good way to spend his excess funds. Looking at the photo with my younger brother in the cockpit of an F9F Panther dates most of the pictures to the early 1960s. But the restored P-40 may be the same plane that's shown in its unrestored condition.



My younger brother John sitting in the Panther cockpit. A loooooong time ago.



This is an SB2C Helldiver, pre-restoration. Somewhere I have more photos of it. These planes were so ugly that they were "cool."



Here is an unrestored P-40 Warhawk. A second image of this plane is in the Bonus Pages.

[Editor's note: All of Fred's photos from this Chino set, larger and in full resolution, may be found in the [Bonus Pages](#). -JW]

And here is John's MiG-17 build.



Sorry about that, John!

IN THE BONUS PAGES!

JOE WALTERS

In this month's Bonus Pages:

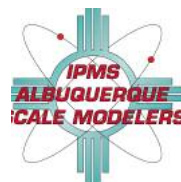
- Photos of November's Best-of-Show contest winners!
- A set of five photos—and some explanatory text—from World War II that have never appeared elsewhere, documenting the aftermath of Operation Market Garden as seen by my father, who provided these photos to our family long ago.
- Fred's photos from Chino are all present, uncropped, and as large as I can make them within the limits of resolution and page size!
- Mike Blohm has an excellent article about General Robinson Risner, who recently passed away.
- We have a kit review of a P-61 from Black Widow by Larry Horyna.
- And we have a report on a visit to London's Imperial War Museum by Lloyd Powell.

CHARITY AUCTION

RICK CARVER

A cryptic note—free of things like details and complete sentences—handed to the editor at the November meeting indicates that a “silent auction” will be held during the December meeting by Rick Carver, the item of interest being artwork of an F-4 Phantom.

Minimum bid is \$200; proceeds are to be split 50/50 between ASM and the USS Santa Fe Committee.



Master

James Guld	2145
Victor Maestas	1300
Mike Blohm	690
James Strickland	597
Brian Peck	332
Josh Pals	284
Glenn Bingham	265
Dave Miller	157
John Tate	142
Larry Glenn	107
Liotta, Ken	62

Intermediate

Bob Meeker	1805
Tony Humphries	1699

Frank Randall	1446
Steve Brodeur	920
Don Smith	824
Gorham Smoker	405
Jerry Little	325
Ken Piniak	318
Blaine Couch	275
Jack Garriss	210
Gil De La Plain	155
Gil Johnson	130
Michel Wingard	102
Allan Highcove	85
Pete Armijo	25
Kyle Garber	20

Basic

Matt Blohm	2448
Louis Gallegos	335
Fred Behnken	325
Jeanne Garriss	125
John Brannon	2

Junior

Caroline Smith	450
Marie Smith	450

MODELER OF THE YEAR POINTS STANDINGS

as of 23 Sep 13

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ASM members are encouraged to submit articles, reviews and other items as appropriate. Contact editor Joe Walters for details and specs. Submission deadline for each issue is the 20th of the preceding month.

BONUS PAGES!

NOVEMBER'S BEST OF SHOW WINNERS

Right: *P-38E* by Victor Maestas, winner of the P-38 special contest.

Below: A *Royal Welsh Fusilier* by Tony Humphries (Intermediate) and James Strickland's *Spitfire Mk 1* (Masters).

There were no Junior or Basic entries.



BONUS PAGES!

MY FATHER AND OPERATION MARKET GARDEN

JOE WALTERS

My father, Ed Walters, was a glider pilot in World War II, and flew the CG-4A Waco (pictured). You may already know that few of these pilots returned from that war; as I was born some years after the war ended, I'm certainly glad he did!



Like so many others, he enlisted in the Army shortly after Pearl Harbor. He was accepted into flight school, and after initial training in the T-6 was assigned to South Plains Army Air Field—now Lubbock International Airport—in Lubbock, Texas, to learn the ways of the Waco (incidentally, he pronounced it like the Texas city, with the long A; I've since heard “experts” pronounce it to rhyme with “taco,” but my dad *flew* the thing, and I'll take his word here, thank you very much).

Coincidentally, his second and third sons would in later decades find themselves in USAF Undergraduate Pilot Training at Reese AFB, also in Lubbock. The weight of heritage was present for both of us during our respective tours!

Following his training, he was deployed to the European Theater, to take part in the ongoing collective effort to dispatch Adolf Hitler straight to hell. Dad came back with a lot of great stories and, like so many veterans of that war, he didn't like to make a big deal of doing what he had considered to be what had to be done—he certainly didn't consider himself to be a hero. We who knew him do, of course.

But he did have some excellent tales to tell! For example, when he was stationed in England, awaiting the inevitable invasion of the European mainland, gliders would arrive by ship, unassembled, in boxcar-sized crates (modelers would have been right at home with this concept). The gliders would then be assembled at the airfield *by the aircrews*. This would constitute powerful incentive to do a good job of assembly! Once the glider was removed from its crate, the crate was generally abandoned in place, and these crates were certainly large enough to occasionally find other uses.

I remember Dad talking about one particular crate that was modified to serve as sort of an enlisted men's club (I gather

this base didn't have one), wherein one could find the sorts of pursuits young soldiers in a foreign land might seek. Thoughtfully, the operators of this establishment left this particular crate unmarked, so the duly constituted authorities wouldn't find themselves unnecessarily troubled by its presence. Apparently you had to know where to find it among the veritable *city* of otherwise-empty glider crates!

There were many other tales of American resourcefulness (for example, an incident back in Lubbock wherein he proved, in opposition to his instructor's flat-out statement to the contrary—and later paying the consequences for doing so—that the Waco could indeed soar, by finding a convenient thermal and staying aloft in one for several hours) but this thing is getting long enough already.

I remember when he and my mother came to visit me in 1987, when I was flying the KC-135 Stratotanker out of lovely Altus AFB in equally-lovely Oklahoma. I got them a flightline tour—probably a lot easier to do then than in today's post-911 world—and we were able to board a 'tanker so I could show him around my office. He took one look at the instrument panel and said, his voice dripping with *faux* contempt, “Hmph. You have four more engines than I needed.”



My brother Jim (in the pilot's seat) and his two daughters touring a KC-135 with me, ca. 1987. Pay no attention to the skinny guy in the flight suit. Photo by Jim's wife Connie.

I regret terribly that Dad passed away in 1989, a few years before I was to learn there *was* such an organization as Albuquerque Scale Modelers. He would have made a *great* guest speaker for us and, though he didn't build models as his three sons would later do, he would have enjoyed the company of this group immensely.

At any rate, his wartime service was in Europe, and the most notable event in which he was involved was Operation Market Garden. The inspiration for the film *A Bridge Too Far*, this operation did not meet its objectives and is generally considered to have been a failure. Much has been written about Market Garden, so place the blame where you will; to his dying day, my father—*who was there*—put it squarely at the feet of Field Marshal Montgomery.

[It is not a coincidence that his favorite movie was *Patton*, and he particularly took pleasure in the scene where “Monty” arrives to liberate Messina, only to find the city already liberated and a grinning General Patton waiting for him there.]

What was it like to take one of these things into combat? I'll let him answer that. Here's an excerpt from a letter that he sent to my mother in Texas in early 1945 (bracketed explanatory text by my brother Jim), detailing a landing near Wesel during Operation Varsity (he tended to refer to these missions collectively as "the Rhine crossing"), finally achieving some of the missed objectives of Market Garden:

...we were slowing down, and just about the time I had her trimmed to fly about 75 mph, we passed over a flak and burp gun nest and started getting it but good. Harris and I both dove to get speed—I lost him in the smoke so I couldn't follow him any more. Later he swore he didn't pull out of the dive until he was practically on the ground—probably why he didn't get hit as much as I did.

Thank God those Jerries weren't sharp on leading a target, 'cause the first burst caught my tail. Besides feeling the bullets hit the glider, it sounded like a typewriter. Besides diving for speed, I'd skid to the right [press the rudder one way and the aileron the other way, to make the glider move to the side]. Then, the gunner would find me again, so I'd skid to the left, etc.

Finally we got on the ground—the fields were so small I had to go through a barbed wire fence. As soon as we stopped rolling, the six boys were out on the ground with the machine guns and so was Janney. I was the last out (naturally, being the pilot), but instead of going out the door, I just dove through the emergency door and when I hit the ground, I was already flat. There was plenty of small-arms firing. As soon as we got a quick look around we headed for a ditch at the edge of the field.

The Sergeant discovered they only had one belt of ammo for each gun, so he and I went back for two more belts each—I didn't know I could run that fast. Later, when things quieted down, Janney and I went back for the Musette bags, and got our first good look at the bird. I knew they were throwing everything at us including the kitchen stove, but I didn't realize how much hit us. From the size of the hole in the right wing, the "stove" must have gone thru there—that was bad enough, but we discovered the kitchen sink went through the middle of the left wing and the hot water heater thru the right horizontal stabilizer. Most of the right stabilizer had been shot away, but the elevator was still there.

Besides the three direct flak hits, there were over 200 machine-gun bullet holes in the tail section. The fabric was in shreds but not a control wire had been shot—some would call it luck, but I say my prayers were answered and God was my co-pilot. Don't know how she kept flying but she did.

Until recently, I was unaware that Dad had sent home a few photographs from his time in Europe. These sat in family archives until a relative decided to get rid of those musty old things, and rather than throw them out sent a batch of photos to my brother Jim. Within the pile of family stuff was a set of five small black and white snapshots from the time of Market Garden. Jim sent them to me to see if I could scan, enlarge, and improve them a bit, and this I've done. The photos were very small, slightly larger than a business card, but of exceptional clarity, so I was able to scan them at high resolution and pull out a lot of detail. They are presented here, starting on the next page.

One photo is of my father at the controls of a Waco in flight; this was taken by his copilot. The other four were taken on the ground, in the aftermath of Market Garden, and we have no idea who took these pictures. It could have been my father, but I think that unlikely—there are only four images, and no negatives. I don't think he even had a camera at that time. I think it much more likely that they were taken by one of his buddies, who was kind enough to supply him with duplicates of some of his photos.

As far as I have been able to determine, **these World War II combat photos have never been published or displayed anywhere before.** These are historical images, and I consider them to be in the public domain. If you'd like to see them in full size and resolution, or even download the original full-sized 300DPI JPEGs, they're available online (<http://tinyurl.com/asm1312b>).

Dad wrote notes on the back of each of these photos, and they are included here as captions. Scans of the backs are also displayed at the address above.

[Note: while writing this article, I got in touch with the Silent Wings Museum (<http://www.silentwingsmuseum.com>) on the grounds of the airport in Lubbock, Texas, which exists to commemorate this particular bit of our history—they even have a fully-restored Waco on site, and I was privileged to get to sit in the pilot's seat of this craft some years ago while touring the facility with Dad! The museum curator was very interested in having these photos in their collection—he'd never seen them before either—and, since they'd be better served there than gathering dust in a box in my house, I have sent the original photos to them.]



The wings of a US combat glider pilot. Ask and they will tell you the "G" stands for "Guts."



This is a shot of my father, Ed Walters, at the controls of a CG-4A Waco combat glider in flight, somewhere over Europe. There is a purple stamp on the back of the photo that reads "PASSED - US ARMY EXAMINER 27423." Written across that, in my father's hand, is: "Taken in actual flight by co-pilot Joe Wilson. Were taking Airborne [troops] for practice hops. Load that day was Joe & I and a trailer loaded with Grave Registration Equipment, Shovels, Crosses, burial sheets, etc., and (7) seven men—gruesome load, eh what? Gruesome picture too!"

A marginal note by my mother reads "rc'd Nov 27;" as Market Garden took place in late September of 1944, this photo was likely taken shortly before that event and took a while to get back to Texas via the military mail service of the time. Photo by Joe Wilson.



Note on the back of this photo, in my father's handwriting: "After Market Garden. See glider in background." Clearly, that one didn't have a smooth landing. But look closely on either side of the crashed glider and you'll see two additional intact gliders sitting in the distance. Photographer unknown.



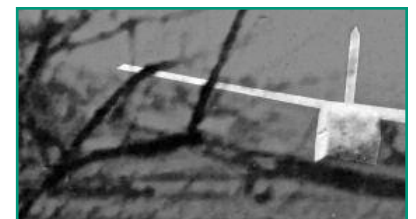
Inset detail; two gliders visible on either side of the crashed glider.



Note on the back of this photo, in my father's handwriting: "After Market Garden. Circle on glider invasion marking to show 'friendly'." There may be two other glider tails visible in the background. Photographer unknown.



Note on the back of this photo, in my father's handwriting: "After Market Garden. Dead Germans with anti-aircraft gun." Apparent damage on the underside of the glider's right wing is actually a damaged part of the AA gun in the foreground; the shield on that gun has a big hole in it, and a ribbon of the material sticks up so that it appears to be on the glider's wing. There is a second glider in the photo, at extreme right and just below the horizon. It's a very light grey in this photo, and is leaning to its left. You can see the square fuselage and tail clearly, and you can just make out the right wing. There may be a third glider just off the photo to the right of the second and much closer—that black diagonally-leaning object looks to be leaning at the same angle as the background glider, and may be the right wing of another. Photographer unknown.



Detail of the second glider, enhanced; there might be a soldier standing just under the left wing, looking into the glider. The thick black line under the glider, parallel to the glider's wings, may be the wing of another glider closer in.



Note on the back of this photo, in my father's handwriting: "After Market Garden. Glider Pilot with German prisoner." The picture is rather badly scratched, but the prisoner appears to be an officer. Photographer unknown.

My brother Jim commented about this photo: "The photo of the GI with the German Officer POW is to me the epitome of the whole ETO. A regular everyday American soldier, perhaps a pilot or just a guy who rode in the back, we don't care... he's well armed, appropriately dressed and equipped, trained and highly motivated. In the background, a piece of Yankee technology (the glider) that typifies all of the LST boats, jeeps, trucks, fighters and bombers that US industry designed and built in a hurry, that won the war. Finally, in the middle of it all, a college-educated aristocratic German officer, one of the supposedly superior race types, overdressed complete with insignia and wheel hat, but poorly motivated *and with his hands up.*"

FRED'S FOTO FILE

FRED FRANCESCHI

More from Chino

Well, this looks like a conglomeration of photos from the Chino Airport. I think that most of the airplanes were at the Planes of Fame museum there, but I remember the SB2C Helldiver. It was at the Yankee Air Force Museum, a privately owned collection in a separate area of the airport. The Yankee Air Force belonged to the owner of a dairy, and he found a really good way to spend his excess funds. Looking at the photo with my younger brother in the cockpit of an F9F Panther dates most of the pictures to the early 1960s. But the restored P-40 may be the same plane that's shown in its unrestored condition.



This is me as a much younger person, many lifetimes ago, in the F9F cockpit.



Here is my younger brother John sitting in the Panther cockpit. A loooooong time ago.



F4U Corsair with a semi-World War II paint scheme, but showing the post-war star with the red bar. Museums may not have the correct markings on their airplanes. Always check your references.



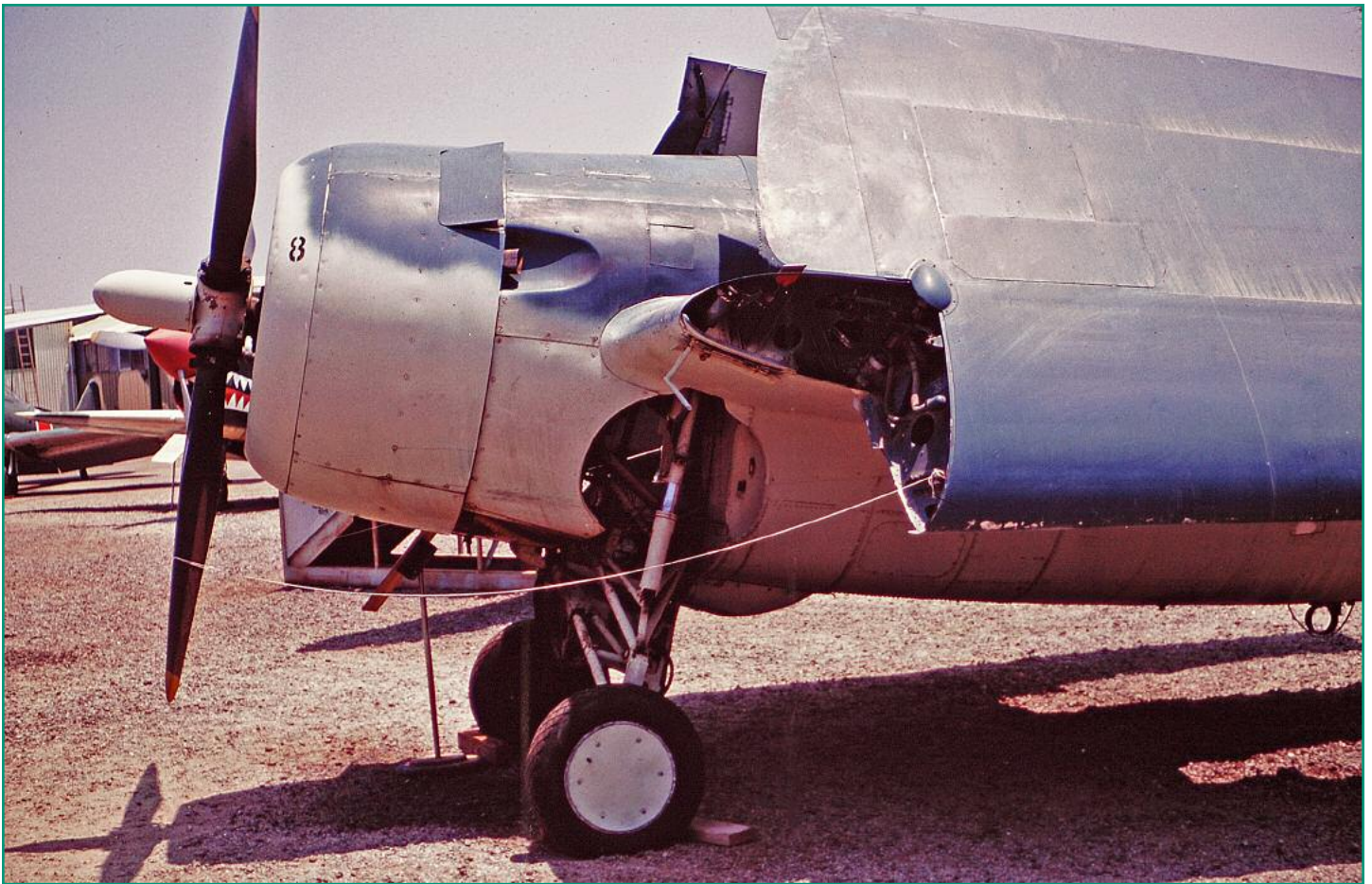
This F4U shows the same #29 as the one in the above photo, but a different number of "kills" to the other one. I don't remember if these are photos of two different aircraft, or the same plane at different times.



Another Corsair, or the same one at a later date. There is something sitting on the ground behind it, maybe a B-24 fuselage.



An SB2C Helldiver, pre-restoration. Somewhere I have more photos of it. These planes were so ugly that they were “cool.”



An F4F or FM-2 Wildcat.



A B-24 fuselage, waiting to be restored. Wasn't the *Lady Be Good* the airplane that crashed in the Libyan desert, with the remains of the crew found many years later? If so, I think the original *Lady be Good* was a B-24D, so disregard any markings shown here.



Two pictures of an unre-stored P-40 Warhawk. The bottom image may be the same airplane at a later date, but I can see some differences in the areas around the engine exhausts, so I'm not sure.





A P-51D, restored. It looks like the invasion stripes were hand painted on the fuselage, which I understand is a lot more realistic than the nice, clean stripe decals we apply on our D-Day models.



Here is an SBD Dauntless. I remember that in those days, some SBDs were used to smuggle lobsters into the United States from Mexico. It seems to me that one time the Mexican Air Force shot one down. So very different to the smuggling that happens in this era.



A Wingless late-model P-38 Lightning. The wings are probably sitting inside a hanger being rebuilt. Which brings up another thought: When you digitize your film photos or slides, set up a directory in your PC that references the envelope you took the shots out of, with the date and location.

BONUS PAGES!

PASSING OF AN AMERICAN HERO: ROBINSON RISNER

MIKE BLOHM



Brigadier General Robinson “Robbie” Risner passed away on October 22, 2013, at the age of 88 after complications from a stroke. He was considered one of the best fighter pilots of the United States Air Force (USAF), and the “Risner Award” for the top USAF Fighter Weapons School graduate is named after him. Risner was an eight-victory ace during the Korean War and was the highest-ranking American prisoner of war (POW) for a long period during the Vietnam War.

Risner was born on January 16, 1925, in Mammoth Spring, Arkansas. Risner became a US Army Air Force pilot during World War II, serving with the 30th Fighter Squadron in the Panama Canal Zone 1944–45 flying the P-40 Warhawk. He separated from the service in 1946, joining the Oklahoma Air National Guard and flying the P-51 Mustang. He was recalled in 1951 due to the Korean War, and trained on the RF-80 Shooting Star. In May of 1952 he transferred to the 336th Fighter Squadron of the 4th Fighter Wing flying the F-86E Sabre. He scored eight aerial victories over the MiG-15 from August 5, 1952 to January 21, 1953, with a “double” on September 21. He was America’s twentieth jet ace in the Korean War. In September, Robinson “pushed” another squadron-mate’s F-86—by putting the nose of his own F-86 into the tailpipe of the other—beyond enemy lines for a safe bailout after it had been hit and was leaking fuel. He received a Silver Star for this action. In 1957 he was chosen to re-enact Charles Lindberg’s transatlantic flight, and flying an F-100F Super Sabre named “Spirit of St. Louis II” flew the route in 6 hours and 37 minutes, a fifth of Lindberg’s time, setting a new transatlantic speed record. He served in various fighter and fighter-bomber units until the Vietnam War. The pictures below show Capt Risner next to and in an F-86 Sabre, Risner’s assigned F-86 (also depicted above), and with a group of 4th Fighter Wing aces that downed a total of





37 enemy aircraft. Risner (8 victories) is second from left, with 2Lt. James Low (9), Col. Royal Baker (13), and Capt. Leonard Lilley (7).

In August 1964 he became the commander of the 67th Tactical Fighter Squadron in Okinawa flying the flying F-105 Thunderchief, and took it to Korat Royal Thai AFB (RTAFB), Thailand for operations. He led the first flight of Operation Rolling Thunder, a high-intensity aerial bombing of North Vietnam. He received an Air Force Cross, second only to the Medal of Honor, for leading air strikes against a strategic bridge in April 1965, resulting in being featured on the cover of Time magazine. His F-105 was severely hit on March 22, 1965, resulting in an ejection over and rescue from the Tonkin Gulf. He was again severely hit by groundfire on September 16 during his 55th mission, had to bail out over North Vietnam, and was taken captive.



Due to the previous Time news story he became a high profile prisoner, and as a Lieutenant Colonel he was the senior ranking American prisoner for most of the war. In this position, he faced particularly harsh treatment and torture, being in blacked-out solitary confinement for three years. As the leader of the POWs, Robinson set up committees, assigned tasks, and helped set up communication systems amongst the prisoners. He was finally released on February 12, 1973, after over seven and a half years as a POW, mostly in the Hoa Lo ("Hanoi Hilton") prison. He received a second Air Force Cross after his release, making him one of four airmen in history to receive more than one. He also earned two Silver Stars—one in Korea and one in Vietnam. The pictures below show Risner on the cover of Time magazine, as a POW, after his release in 1973 at the rank of colonel, and as a brigadier general in 1976 as the Deputy Commander of the USAF Tactical Fighter Weapons Center. The profile on the following page depicts an F-105 from the 18th Tactical Fighter Wing at Korat RTAFB in 1965.





Risner published an autobiography, *The Passing of the Night: Seven Years as a Prisoner of the North Vietnamese*, in 1973. He retired from the USAF as a brigadier general in July 1976, having served in three wars. Risner was inducted into the Oklahoma Aviation and Space Hall of Fame in 1984. An interesting anecdote on Risner follows: In the 1990s Risner met a Russian fighter pilot who had flown a MiG in Korea. The Russian wondered if they might have faced each other in the air. “No way,” Risner replied, “You wouldn’t be here.”

Data Sources: *Stars & Bars* by Frank Olynk; *Korean War Aces* (Osprey Aces # 4) by Robert F. Dorr, Jon Lake and Warren Thompson; *F-86 Sabre Aces of the 4th Fighter Wing* (Osprey Aces # 72) by Warren Thompson; and the newspaper obituaries below.

Links to Newspaper Obituaries

New York Times: <http://tinyurl.com/asm1312e>

Washington Post: <http://tinyurl.com/asm1312f>

BONUS PAGES!

KIT REVIEW

LARRY HORYNA

Great Wall P-61B Black Widow

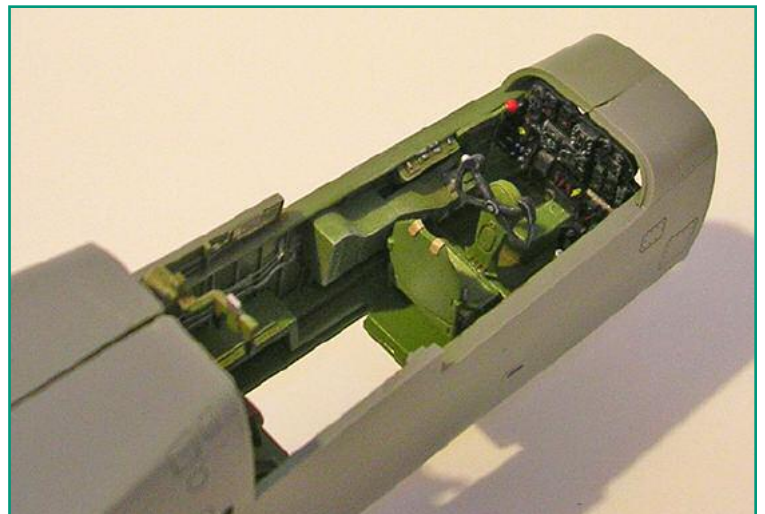
Great Wall models of China has recently released their long awaited and hopefully corrected 1/48 P-61B Black Widow kit. Following on their flawed P-61A, Great Wall has taken steps to correct cowling and other general shape errors in hopes of releasing a better received kit. The first overall impression of the kit shows that they have indeed done the majority of their homework and produced a far more accurate rendition of the United States' first designated production night fighter.



What is in the box: The kit comes with many items that would have to be purchased as separate aftermarket features if one wanted to detail up the model. Photoetched ignition wiring, weighted main gear, and canopy masks are the main features of additional detail. Separate instrument decals coupled with a finely molded instrument panel help the modeler create an instrument panel that rivals any photoetched aftermarket accessory. The injection-molded parts are finely cast in grey plastic. Some of the smallest parts require extreme care to remove from the trees (and even with extra care and some precision sprue cutters I managed to break a few things!). In fact, for some of the finest details, such as the forward crew access ladder and fuselage exterior antennas, I had to use a photoetched razor saw and very carefully cut the parts from the

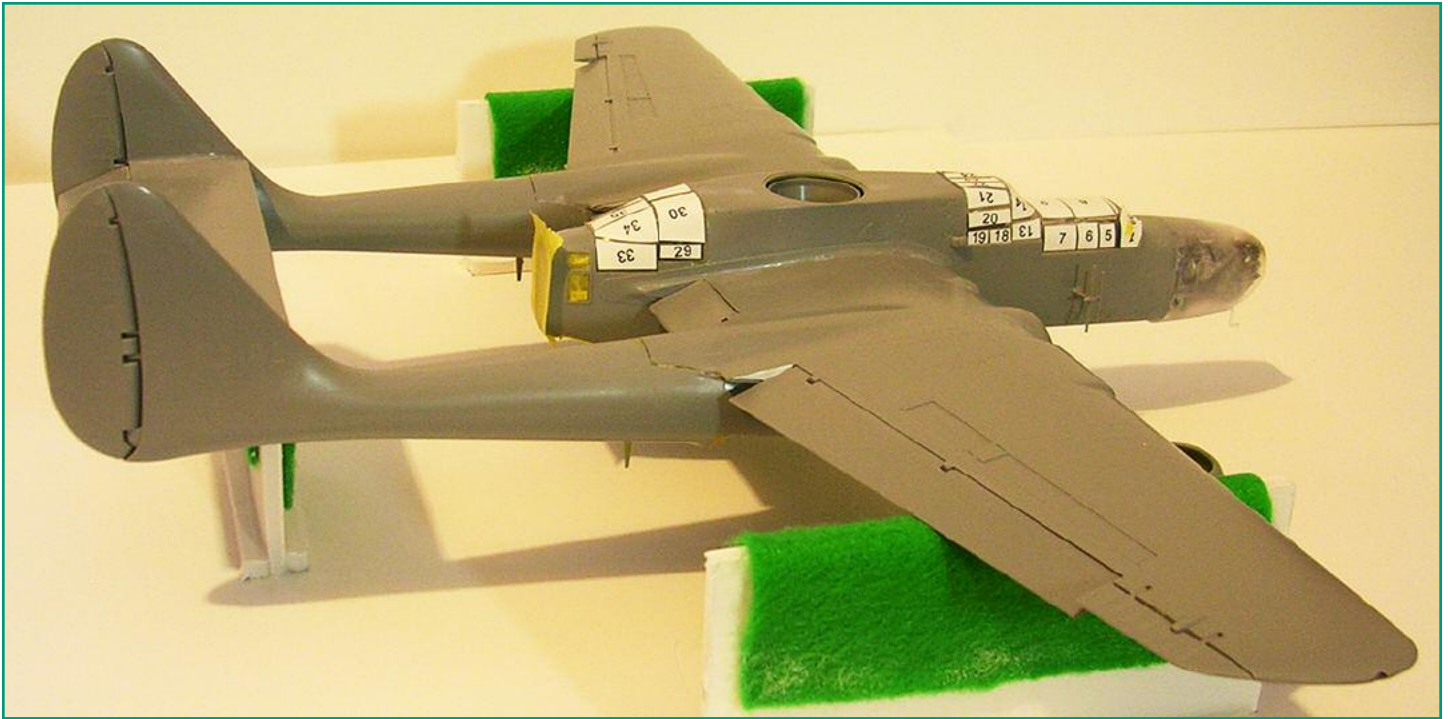
tree. The interior is ambitious and fairly busy. I am not sure why they chose to mold a representation of the upper turret cylinder (it is not visible in any configuration of open panels that the kit provides) as that only complicates getting the fuselage halves together. All I added in the end was a bit of extra wiring to the cockpit.

Construction: Again, fairly straightforward. The fuselage halves fit reasonably well. The four under-fuselage cannon made the alignment of the fuselage halves a bit tricky. It would be much simpler to cut the cannon barrels off and put them in at the end. Also, the kit instructions call for installation of the landing gear during the main airframe assembly. I have never been a fan of this, as it is a pain to mask the gear off and not damage them during the sanding and painting process. You do not have to put the gear in as you assemble the airframe. It was no problem to install the gear at the end. Overall fit of parts was good and very minimal putty was needed to fill any gaps. All of the clear parts fit well and they are very cleanly molded. I was a bit nervous about the wing roots because there really is not much support for them. There are no spars or large tabs to guide the wings, only a small ridge round the fuselage wing root. However, the fit not only proved to be good, the



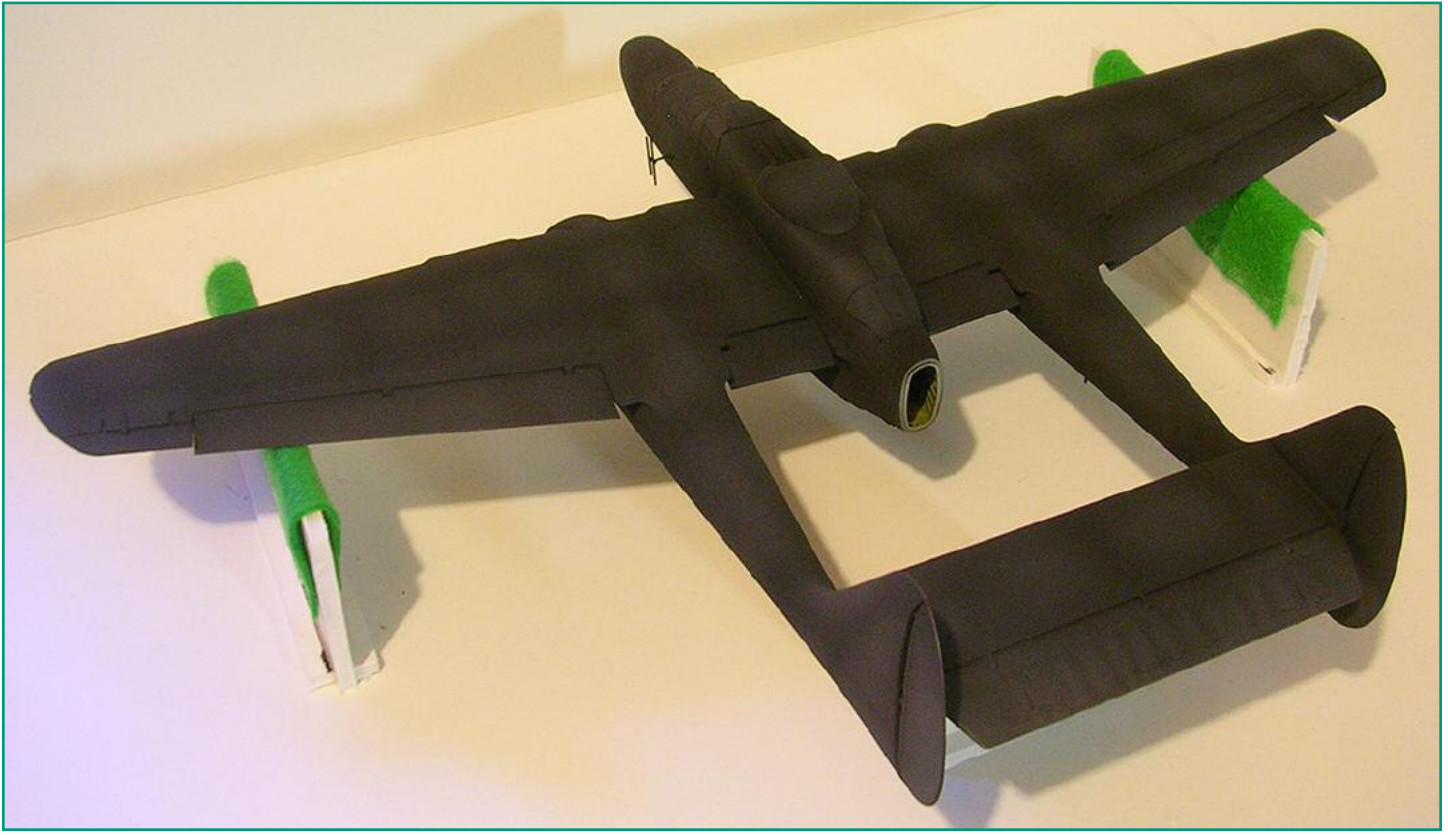
tail booms added plenty of support and the overall airframe ends up quite stout. The only little thing that just looked funny to me was the position and height of the pilot's control column. It looks very high and way too close to the pilot's seat. I simply glued it in forward of the hole that it was designed to go into.

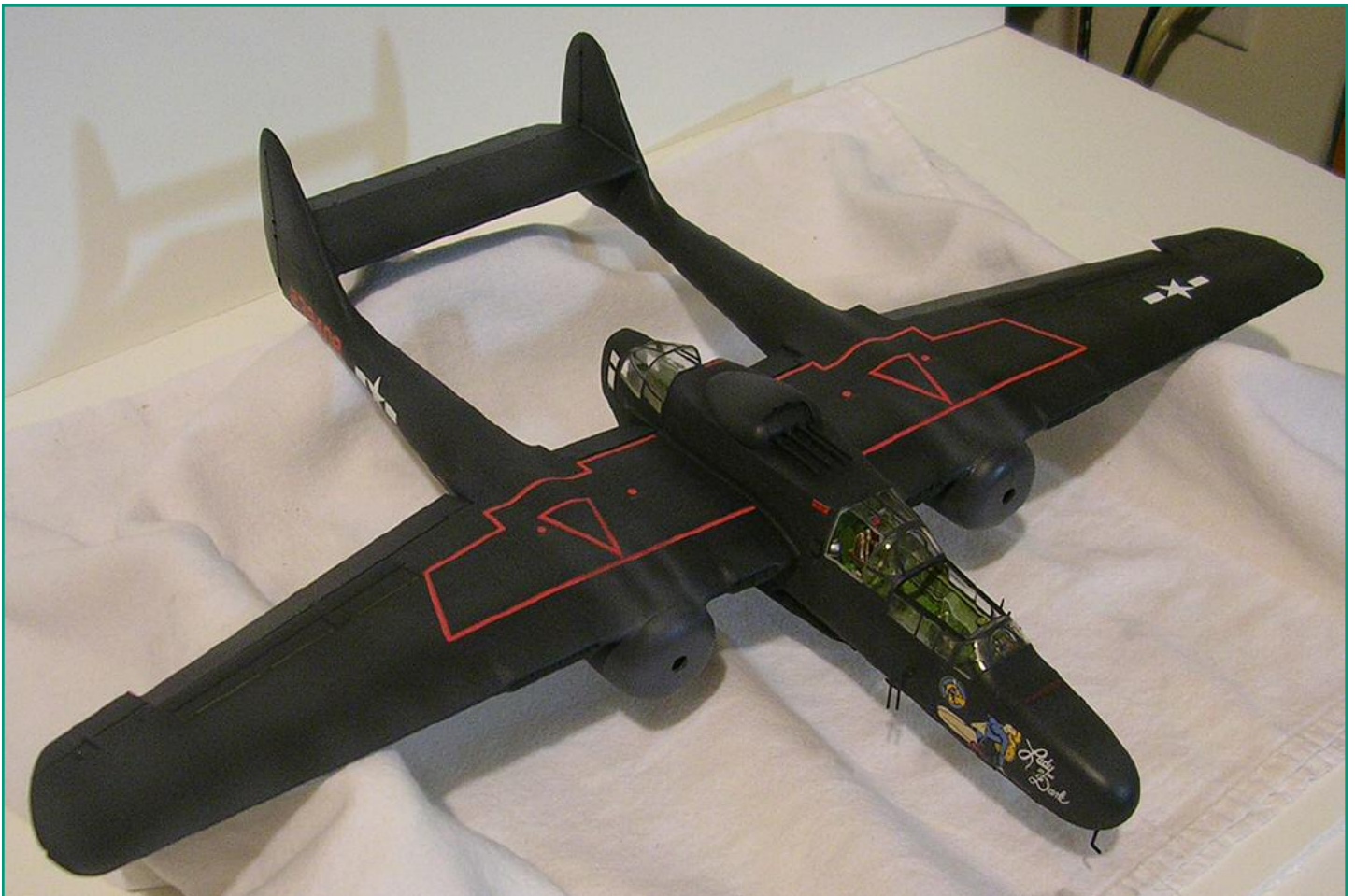
Painting and decals: Here is where a few problems crop up. Firstly, the canopy masks; frankly, I would not use them. Many do not fit the panes in outline; the compound curve areas do not stick well at all; and in the end, the areas that did stick, stuck too well! The masks left a gummy adhesive mess that was very difficult to remove. All in all, it would have been easier to mask them myself given the time it took to clean the clear parts up after removing the masks. Great Wall also completely forgot to make masks for the two farthest-aft windows at the radio operator's compartment. Given the quality of the mask, this ended



up being merciful! Secondly, the decals were not good. The register is slightly off, leaving a very thin white outline on some parts, and they did not react to solvent. I started with Micro Sol, which is what I use 99% of the time. When nothing happened I broke out the old Solvaset, which also did nothing! The decals did adhere well enough in the end, but they did not sink down into the panel lines much. Also, these decals are very unforgiving of a rough surface texture. I gloss coat pretty liberally, but once in a while you end up with an area that is not perfectly smooth even though it has a nice glossy sheen. If these decals end up on anything like that, they will silver. I have found that really nice decals are bit forgiving of this, so long as the surface is shiny. So to reiterate, mask the canopy yourself or get a better made aftermarket mask and use aftermarket decals!

Finish and detail: The last bits of the kit went on without a hitch. The gear are plenty stout. You will need to make sure you add as much weight to the nose as you can. I did not put the radar in the nose since this version had a solid painted nose, and I was still a bit tail-heavy! I ended up having to add some more weight to the engine nacelles to get her to sit on her nose.

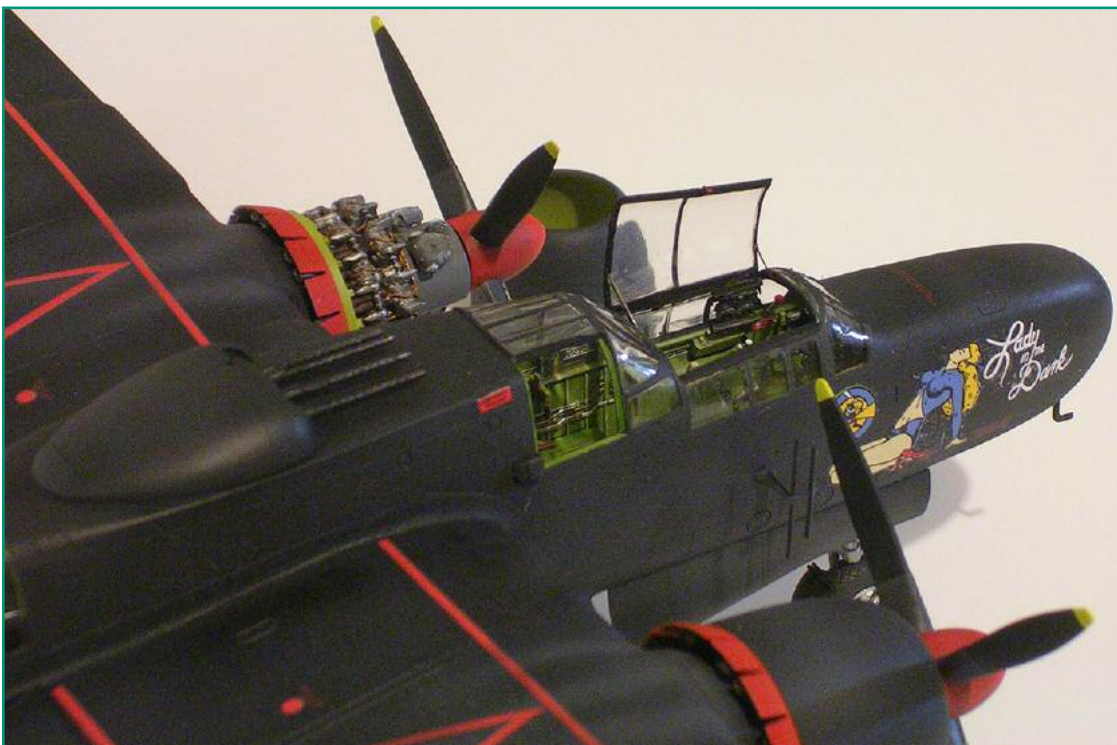


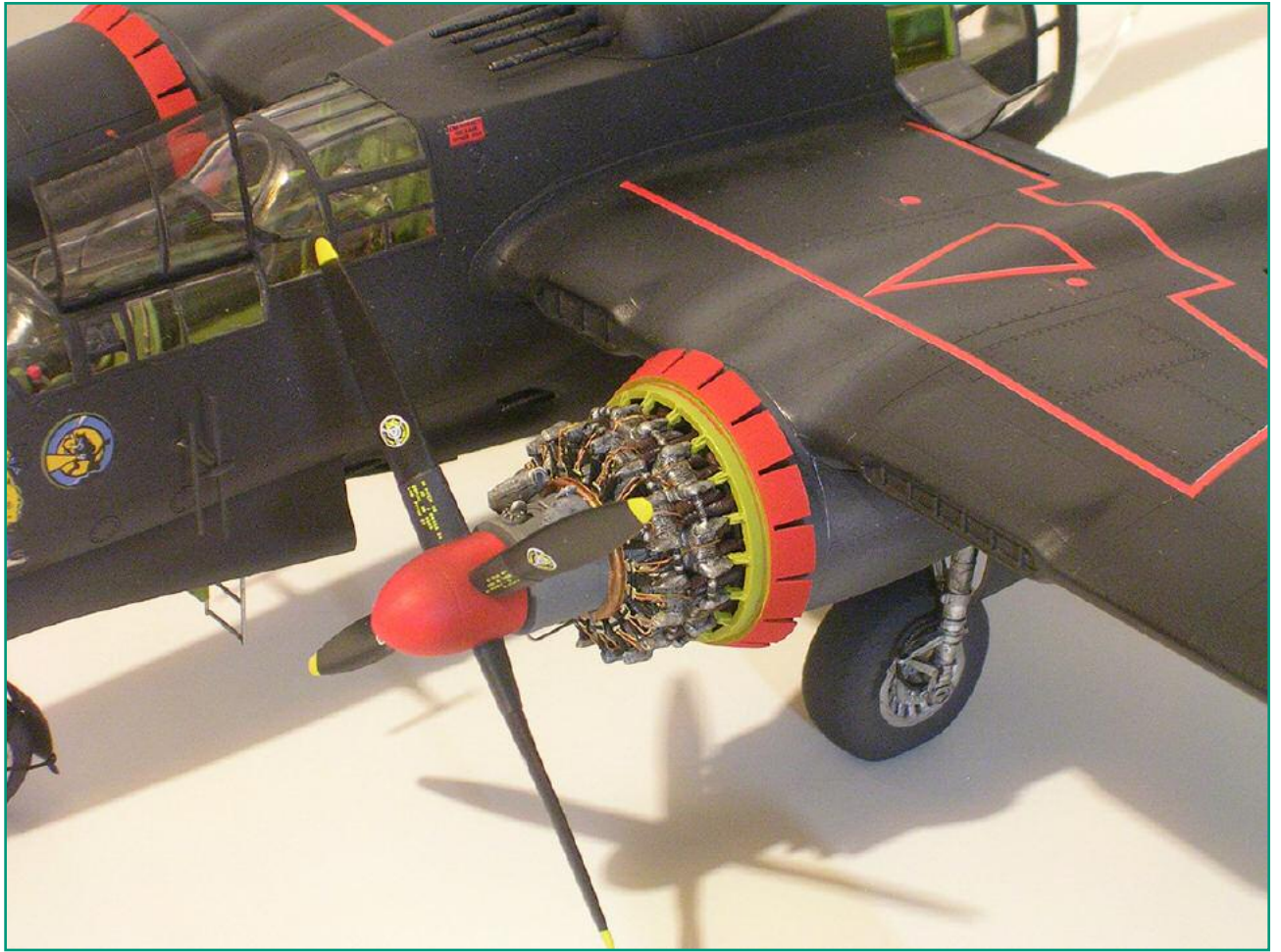


Having said that, I used crumpled lead foil for weight, which is not space efficient. Make sure you use something like lead shot, especially if you have the radar in the nose. The kit engines are beautifully detailed, but I will say they are a bit of a chore to assemble. This was a commission build and my customer wanted one engine exposed. All I added was one little oil drain line coming out of the gear reduction housing. The rest of the engine is all from the kit. Because the kit engine includes all of the exhaust pipes, great care in aligning the two cylinder rows is crucial to getting the pipes to fit correctly. Take your time here

and test fit a lot, and you should have no problems.

Conclusion: This kit will certainly make a nice representation of the P-61B right out of the box (excluding the kit decals). Because this was a commission build, time was of the essence in terms of efficiency in construction and detail. Nothing "bogged" me down (except cleaning the gunk off of the canopy that was left by the masks) and overall, this kit was a pleasure to build. It is certainly light years ahead of the old Monogram kit. I would recommend the kit to anyone interested in a $\frac{1}{48}$ model of this unique and fascinating airplane.





BONUS PAGES!

FIELD TRIP

LLOYD POWELL

Imperial War Museum, London

The Imperial War Museum (IWM) is the mother of all military museums. Dating from 1917, the museum includes five major venues: London, Manchester, Cambridgeshire, Churchill War Rooms and HMS Belfast. At the outset of the Second World War, Imperial's terms of reference were enlarged to cover both world wars and they were again extended in 1953 to include all military operations in which Britain or the Commonwealth have been involved since August 1914. IWM London is currently being remodeled to create new gallery spaces and explore the depth of the IWM collections. The first phase of transformation will mark the Centenary of the outbreak of the First World War in summer, a new atrium, new shops and a parkside café.

A microcosm of WWII tank development is represented in the foyer in London:

M3A3 Grant Tank

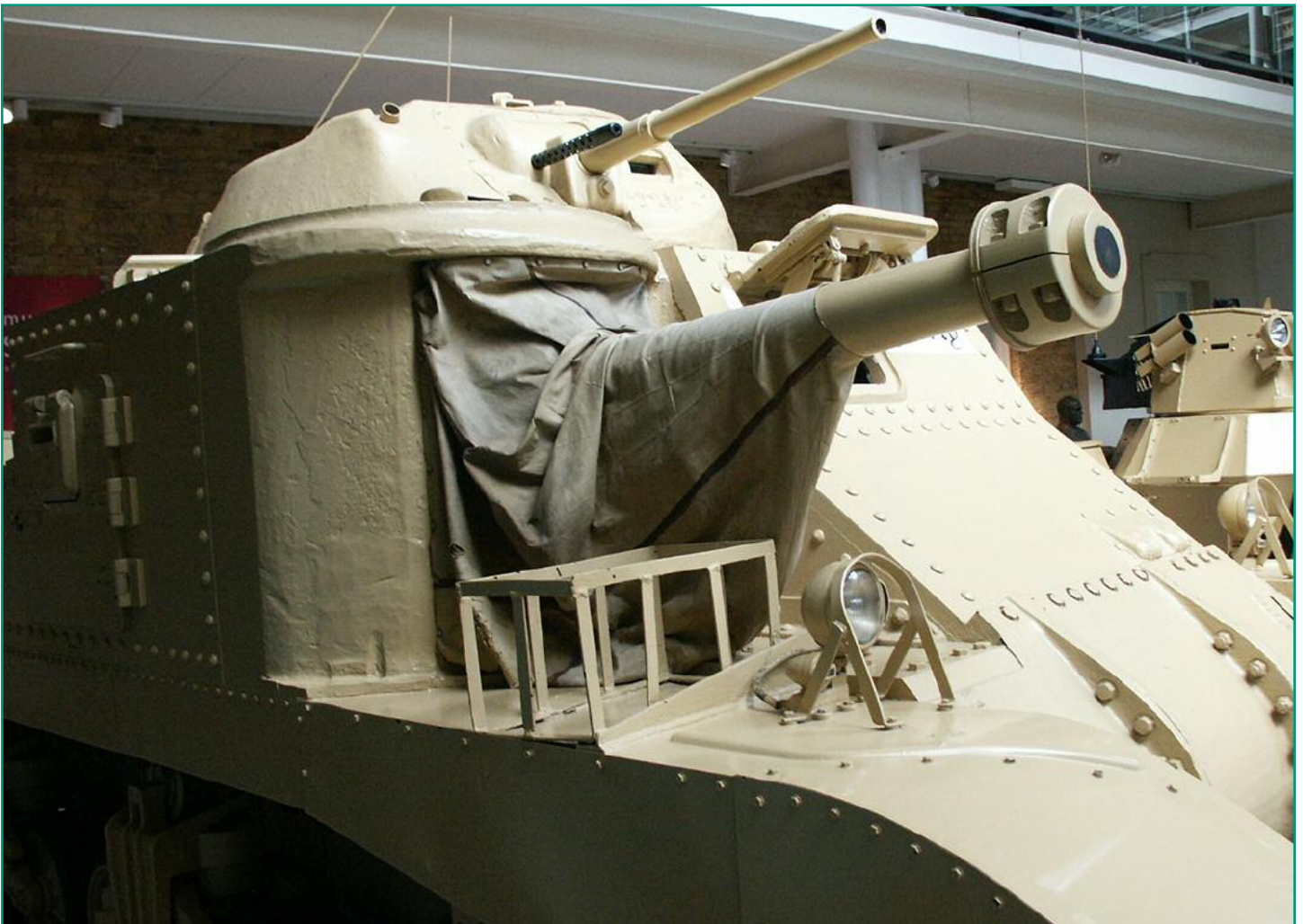
T34 Russian Tank

M4A4 Allied Sherman Tank

Jagdpanther German Tank Destroyer

M3A3 Grant Tank

Early in WWII the British were fighting almost alone against the Germans, having been pushed back everywhere to the desert of North Africa. Churchill rushed over to visit Roosevelt during Christmas 1941, only weeks after Pearl Harbor. News from North Africa was grim for the British, and when Roosevelt asked, "What can we do to help?" Churchill immediately asked for 100 of the latest tank developed by the US, much to the chagrin of the US Army Generals. The American M3 finally gave the British a 75mm gun that could out-range and out-fire the German tanks, thus helping General (later Field Marshal) Montgomery overcome Rommel at El Alamein, October 1942.



Early British Tank Gun



Early British Tank Gun, exterior and interior





Above: British Armoured Car; Below, Russian T34 Tank

Despite its advantages, the M3's shortcomings abounded as the side-mounted cannon meant the whole tank had to be aimed at the target. Further, this pre-war hastily-designed American tank also suffered from a high silhouette and below-average off-road performance. Over 6000 were built before technological improvements introduced by the Sherman M4 made the 28-ton M3 tank obsolete.

T34 Russian Tank

In Russia, the M3 tanks provided by Lend Lease were replaced by the T34 fast (32 mph) medium tank. The T34 became the mainstay of the Russian army through the end of the war. The T34 employed a diesel engine, thus giving it greater range (up to 250 miles) than the opposing German tanks. It was mechani-



cally simple, which fit the relatively inexperienced Russian mechanics. Armor was well sloped and nearly 40,000 were produced by Russia during the war. The 75mm cannon was upgraded in 1943 to 85mm two years after production started. Continuous improvements cut the manufacturing cost by 50% towards the end of the war.

As a testament to T34 durability, a T34 with German markings was recently unearthed in Estonia after 62 years buried in a marsh. This T34 had been captured from the Soviet army and used by the German army and so it had German markings! Even after 62 years with a little tinkering they were able to fire up the diesel engine. A Komatsu D375A-2 bulldozer pulled the abandoned tank from its tomb under the boggy bank of a lake near Johvi, Estonia.

M4A4 Allied Sherman Tank

M4 Sherman was the most widely used tank in WWII with over 39,000 manufactured in the US. Key advantages beyond quantity were simplicity of operation and maintenance, mechanical durability, and interchangeable parts regardless of site of manufacture. These factors lead to quick repair on the battlefield and often resulted in numerical superiority in most battle situations. The Sherman was the first widely-produced tank to feature a gyroscopic stabilized gun and sight. This enabled the crew to fire with reasonable accuracy while the tank was on the move. For the British and American forces, the 32-ton M4 replaced the M3 in 1942. Early Shermans mounted a 75 mm medium-velocity general-purpose gun. Several more powerful variants followed later.



M4A4 Sherman Tank

The M4 would later fall short against the much heavier tanks developed by Germans, but numerical superiority and other advantages helped equalize most situations. Use of gasoline rather than diesel by the M4 made it more prone to fire and the M4 earned the nickname “Ronson” as a comparison to the Ronson cigarette lighter popular at the time.

The 75 mm gun had a white phosphorus shell originally intended for use as an artillery marker to help with targeting. M4 tank crews discovered that the shell could also be used against the Tiger and Panther—when the burning white phosphorus splattered against the German tank, in addition to blinding the enemy gunner’s excellent optics, the acrid smoke would get sucked inside the tank and, together with the fear of the fire spreading inside the tank, cause the crew to abandon the tank. There were several recorded instances where white phosphorus shells “knocked out” German tanks in this fashion.

Jagdpanther German Tank Destroyer

The Jagdpanther tank destroyer was built by Nazi Germany during World War II based on the chassis of the huge Panther tank. It entered service late in the war (1944) and saw service on the Eastern and Western fronts. The Jagdpanther combined the very powerful 88mm cannon of the Tiger II and the characteristically excellent armor and suspension of the Panther chassis. It suffered from the general poor state of production in Germany late in the war. This resulted in small production numbers, shortage of spare parts and poor crew training. The Jagdpanther had a good power-to-weight ratio and a powerful main gun,

which enabled it to destroy almost any type of Allied tank. A total of 415 Jagdpanthers were produced from January 1944 by three different manufacturers. The largest group of Jagdpanther tanks were used in the last-ditch Battle of Bulge.

The particular unit at the Imperial War Museum has three shot penetrations on the right side of the engine compartment, while the left side has been sectioned and opened to public view. This unit has a rippled plaster coating for protection against magnetic anti-tank mines. Overall weight is fifty tons and top speed is 29 mph.



German tank, exterior and interior

