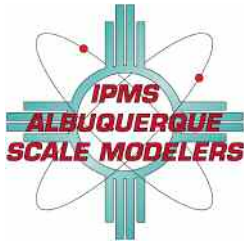


# ALBUQUERQUE SCALE MODELERS



<http://abqscalemodelers.com>

November 2017

## THE EAGLE'S VIEW MIKE BLOHM

We had a super meeting on October 6 with about fifty models on the tables. We had a great presentation by Doug Dildy on the "Desert Storm Air War." If you missed the presentation, you can check it out in his book, *F-15C Eagle vs MiG-23/25—Iraq 1991*. Doug has volunteered to give his "Spitfires Over Dunkirk" presentation again, perhaps at the March 2018 meeting. He is working on a new book on the Battle of Britain, so we may see a presentation on that as well.



The November 10 meeting is the ASM E-Board elections night as well as an "Open" theme contest. We have candidates up for election in the following positions (names listed alphabetically): Vice President (Jerry Little and Josh Pals), Contest Director (Ken Liotta and John Tate), and three Pro Tems (John Dodd, David Epstein, Jack Garriss, Bob Henderson, Bret Kinman, Chris Kurtze, and Keith Liotta). Info on the election process is available on the [ASM Website](#) via a link near the top of the Home Page. Absentee balloting will be available if you cannot make it to the meeting. The "model challenge build" proposal for the Contest Director position will not be done.

Pictures of the ASM model display at the Folds of Honor Gala and the winners of the People's Choice model contest are posted on the Articles webpage. At the November meeting we will discuss whether the club wants to attempt to do a model display at the Albuquerque Comic Con in January 2018.

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October Meeting highlights, left to right: Members setting up the contest entries, and the business meeting in progress.



This issue of the ASM Newsletter continues the “Modeling of History” theme with an article by Tony Humphries commemorating the 75th anniversary of the Battle of El Alamein in 1942. Model builds were done or included for this article by Tony, John Tate, Larry Horyna, Aaron Kreltshheim, Don Alberts, and Mike Blohm. So please check out that article. You might be inspired to do something similar, either on your own or with a group of ASM members.

The short ace story this month is directly related to the El Alamein article, as this ace was the pilot of the P-40F Warhawk built for this project: 1st Lieutenant Roy “Deke” Whittaker. Whittaker was the top ace of the 57th Fighter Group (FG) “First in the Blue” with seven aerial victories, all scored in the P-40. Whittaker launched off the *USS Ranger* in June 1942 and participated in ground attack and bomber escort missions during the Battle of El Alamein. He downed an Italian MC.202 on 26 Oct 1942 as his first victory. His biggest day was on 18 April 1943, when he participated in the “Palm Sunday Massacre” over Cape Bon, Tunisia, where US P-40s flown by the 57 FG and 324 FG and Spitfires from No. 92 Squadron engaged 60 Ju-52 transports escorted by 21 Bf-109s and MC.202 fighters headed for Sicily. Whittaker downed three Ju-52s and one Bf-109G and also damaged one Ju-52 and one Bf-109G. Overall, 59 Ju 52s and 16 fighters were shot down for the loss of 6 P-40s, the best day ever for the P-40 Warhawk. The model depicted in the article is the 1/2-scale Sword P-40F kit “Short Tails Over Africa,” and was flown by Whittaker for his first three victories including the Battle of El Alamein. The profile shown with this article was his assigned aircraft in April – May 1943 when he was a Captain. Whittaker returned to the USA in June 1943, and later commanded the 499 Fighter Squadron near the end of WWII. Additional info on Whittaker and the 57 FG is included in the El Alamein article.

## FRED'S FOTO FILE

### FRED FRANCESCHI

#### Confederate Air Force, B-17s

Additional photos of Confederate Air Force airplanes taken at Harlingen, Texas, in the early 1980s by my brother Jim. Here are some pictures of three different B-17 Flying Fortresses. I don't know if there will be three Flying Fortresses seen at the same time ever again.



B-17 Texas Raiders. No chin turret shown, so it was converted to look like an F model. But recent photos show it with the chin turret installed and indicate that it is with the “Gulf Coast” wing of the CAF.



B-17 Aluminum Overcast. It may now be based at Oshkosh, Wisconsin.



B-17G Sentimental Journey, named after a song of the era. The plane's name really suits the character of these elderly aircraft. Sentimental Journey appears to be based in Phoenix, Arizona. Just a day's drive away. Notice that the chin turret location is covered by a flat piece of sheet metal. It now has a chin turret.

[Editor's note: The full text of Fred's article, and many more photos of this CAF display (larger and in higher resolution) can be found in the [Bonus Pages](#). -JW]

## VP REPORT

JERRY LITTLE

### When You're Not Modelling...

Yeah right... when are we ever “not modeling?” We all wish we could be sitting at the work bench

building on the latest Trumpeter MiG-29 kit, but we all know things like life get in the way of that—you know, food and sleep and such! But if you are like most of us modelers, you at least think about modeling when you're not at your desk. There are still plenty of related things to do when not screaming about the fit of the latest Tamiya kit!

One of the modeling things we need to think about is ASM and what direction do we want the club to go in. We have elections coming up at the November meeting and will have the opportunity to vote on a couple of positions for the club E-Board. Basically, we need to select a Vice President, Contest Director, and some Pro-Tems for the board. I believe they are all good choices (including me!), so we can't go wrong as a club getting people involved. The key is voting!

We get members involved on the board, but we also get members involved in the voting so they can have a say in how the club is run. This is probably one of, if not the, most important activity you can participate in as an ASM member. The key question you have to answer before voting is, "do I like where the club leadership is taking the club?" Sometimes that is as simple as "yes" and you vote accordingly. Other times, that may mean it is time for "new blood" on the E-Board. Whatever the answer is, you have to take the time and make sure your voice is heard.

Another area to think about is what will our club contests look like next year? ASM does a fantastic job of getting members and guests to build models every month. I believe the key is having great subjects. The new contest director will likely call for suggestions soon, so be ready with your favorite idea. You never know what the list will include, so it's always fun to see what comes up and what motivates us to build.

Speaking of the new Contest Director, we have a couple of veterans running for that position. Both are great modelers and will bring different perspectives to club modeling.

Speaking of modeling away from the desk, Nationals is coming to a town near us! As many of you know, Phoenix is hosting the 2018 IPMS Nationals August 1 – 4, 2018. The theme is "Build it!! Bring it!! Show it!!" which means everything is on the table! The show will be held at the Phoenix Convention Center located in the heart of Phoenix.

## Year 2017 Contest Quick Reference Chart

Titles in **blue** indicate contests for points

- 06 Jan** **SPECIAL CONTEST #1:**  
**SCI-FI/SCIENCE/REAL SPACE/FANTASY**  
*Sponsored Contest: "Frickin' Laser Beams" (Patrick Dick)*
- 03 Feb** **ASM Swap Meet**—no contest.
- 03 Mar** **Open Contest**—Any kit/subject/scale.
- 07 Apr** **100 Years of US Involvement in The Great War**—Any kit/subject/scale involved in WWI.
- 05 May** **Star Wars, 40th Anniversary**—Any kit/subject/scale from any of the Star Wars universe.
- 02 Jun** **SPECIAL CONTEST #2: KILL MARKINGS**  
*Sponsored Contest: "General Motors" (Patrick Dick)*
- 07 Jul** **1967**—Any kit/subject/scale that represents the year 1967.
- 04 Aug** **ASM Swap Meet**—no contest.
- 01 Sep** **First or Last**—Any kit/subject/scale that represents the first or last of anything.  
*Sponsored Contest: "Knife Fight / Night Light" (ASM E-Board)*
- 06 Oct** **Red Star**—Any kit/subject/scale that represents Communist-influenced nations  
*Sponsored Contest: "Orange" (Gil De La Plain)*
- 10 Nov** **Open Contest**—Any kit/subject/scale.  
*Sponsored Contest: "Heavies" (Brian Peck)*
- 01 Dec** **SPECIAL CONTEST #3: SUPERSONIC**  
*Model of the Year competition!*

**Note: The most complete and up-to-date details on the contests, as well as detailed rules, as always, are on the ASM Website: <http://tinyurl.com/asmsched>**

The other theme is the convention will be very "club oriented" and we intend to participate with an ASM display. I'll be looking for ideas on that in the coming months. There isn't a limit to ideas for the display.

One last thing to consider regarding the 2018 Nats: It's important to stay on top of hotel reservations. If you call, the reservationist will tell you they will not take a reservation until after 1 Jan 2018. You can still make reservations on the website but you have to "un-click" the "show available rooms only" box. I will tell you that not all nights are still available. You can find more information at the convention website (<http://tinyurl.com/asm1711a>).

# CONTEST DIRECTOR

## VICTOR MAESTAS

The October meeting had a Points Contest Theme of "Red Star," covering any subject that represents Communist-influenced nations. In Basic, Logan Carbin took Best of Show and People's Choice with his T-55A tank on a very nice base to show off his work. In Intermediate, new member Ethan Schwartzmann's Su-100 Tank Destroyer took both People's Choice and Best of Show. This model had very well-done weathering and color modulation to break up the green paint scheme. In Masters, Chris Kurtze's very well-executed F-5E in aggressor markings took Best of Show and People's Choice awards.

The November meeting will be the final points contest of the year with an open theme. All kits,

subjects, and scales are eligible. Please note that Brian Peck will be hosting his "Heavies" Sponsored Contest. Any subject that is considered a heavy bomber for its era is eligible to compete in this contest.

## IN THE BONUS PAGES!

### JOE WALTERS

In this month's **Bonus Pages**:

- Statements from some of our E-Board candidates
- Photos of the October contest winners
- The full text and photos of Fred's Foto File
- An article on the 75th anniversary of El Alamein
- Ken Piniak takes us on a tour of U-Boat U-505
- And more!

#### Master

John Tate . . . . .	1735
Chris Kurtze . . . . .	1479
Larry Glenn . . . . .	738
Ken Liotta. . . . .	666
Bret Kinman . . . . .	506
Frank Randall . . . . .	406
Ray Ayles . . . . .	300
Dave Straub . . . . .	285
Patrick Dick . . . . .	274
Josh Pals . . . . .	253
Mike Blohm . . . . .	199
Victor Maestas. . . . .	152
John Patterson . . . . .	150
Tony Humphries . . . . .	137
Glen Bingham . . . . .	125
Jerry Little . . . . .	112
James Strickland . . . . .	106
Danny Williams . . . . .	100
Steve Brodeur . . . . .	52
Dave Miller . . . . .	4

#### Intermediate

David Epstein . . . . .	2753
Robert Meeker, Jr. . . . .	1360
Chuck Hermann . . . . .	1351
Robert Henderson . . . . .	1190
Len Faulconer . . . . .	781
Scott Williams . . . . .	760
Aaron Kreltszheim. . . . .	532
Michael O'Brien . . . . .	465
Ken Piniak . . . . .	423
Ethan Schwartzmann . . . . .	395
Adrian Montañó . . . . .	355
David Haskins . . . . .	225
Don Goodrich. . . . .	150
Tom Scholer . . . . .	150
Mark Yoder. . . . .	125
Gil Johnson . . . . .	100
Jeff Frickstad. . . . .	50
Partap Davis . . . . .	27
Don Smith . . . . .	12
Jim Mesco . . . . .	4

Theron Brawley. . . . .	2
Chris Kurtze, Jr. . . . .	2

#### Basic

Logan Carbin . . . . .	1544
Aaron Schmiedicke . . . . .	410
Charles Petrilli . . . . .	328
Richard Shryock . . . . .	325
Jeannie Garriss . . . . .	310
Anthony Weaver . . . . .	210
John Dodd . . . . .	150
Elias Clark. . . . .	110
Steve Miller. . . . .	100
Matt Blohm. . . . .	75
Rolf Nitsche . . . . .	6

#### Junior

Aleya Montañó . . . . .	435
Marie Smith . . . . .	150
Josh Kinman. . . . .	2

## MODELER OF THE YEAR POINTS STANDINGS

As of 23 Oct 17

## CONTACT INFO

President:	Mike Blohm	823-9404	BlohmM@aol.com
Vice President:	Jerry Little	280-9038	bravo52@aol.com
Secretary/Treasurer:	Frank Randall	681-5158	fcr40.fr@gmail.com
Contest Director:	Victor Maestas	771-0980	vmaestas@aol.com
Members Pro-Tem:	Jack Garriss	908-1231	jgar319113@aol.com
	Bob Henderson	227-3269	nmroberto@hotmail.com
	Josh Pals	344-4761	jpals871@gmail.com
Webmaster:	Mike Blohm	823-9404	BlohmM@aol.com
Newsletter Editor:	Joe Walters	821-3751	jwalters22@comcast.net

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!

## CANDIDATE STATEMENTS

All candidates for this month's election were offered the opportunity to make a statement in this newsletter. Two responded, both running for Member Pro-Tem, and their statements are presented here in alphabetical order.

### **John Dodd:**

Hello. My name is John. I've been a member of ASM for a couple of years, and would like to have the opportunity to be more active in the club. Like many of us, I used to build models as a youngster, and got away from doing it. I spent a little time in the Navy as a sonarman, and now I'm back to building models, mostly a lot of ships and submarines. I guess that's the Circle of Life. Anyway, I was reading on the website about the outstanding pay, benefits, and opportunities to travel to exotic faraway places as a club Pro Tempore. It sounded really great so I thought I should sign up. Well, as Bill Gates would say, "No, that was just the demo." (And it was the wrong website as well.) Back to reality. I think I have good organizational skills, a willingness to work hard, and I get along with people. I think I can do a good job. Well, that's it. I hope you give me the chance, and trust me. This is not the demo.

### **Robert Henderson:**

Hello modelers.

My name is Robert (Bob) Henderson and I'm running for the position of Pro-Tem member on the E-Board. I am just finishing my first year in that position and I've learned a lot about the club and how it functions, and have enjoyed serving on the board.

I'm retired so I have all the time in the world (no life?) to give for E-Board functions and volunteering to help at events sponsored by the club.

I'd appreciate your vote and I promise not to take any bribes from lobbyists, or start any wars.

Vote For Me And I'll Stop Bugging You, I Swear.

# BONUS PAGES!

## OCTOBER CONTEST WINNERS

Top to bottom: Logan Carbin's T-55A (Basic); Chris Kurtze's F-5E (Masters); and Ethan Schwartzmann's Su-100 Tank Destroyer (Intermediate). There were no Junior entries.



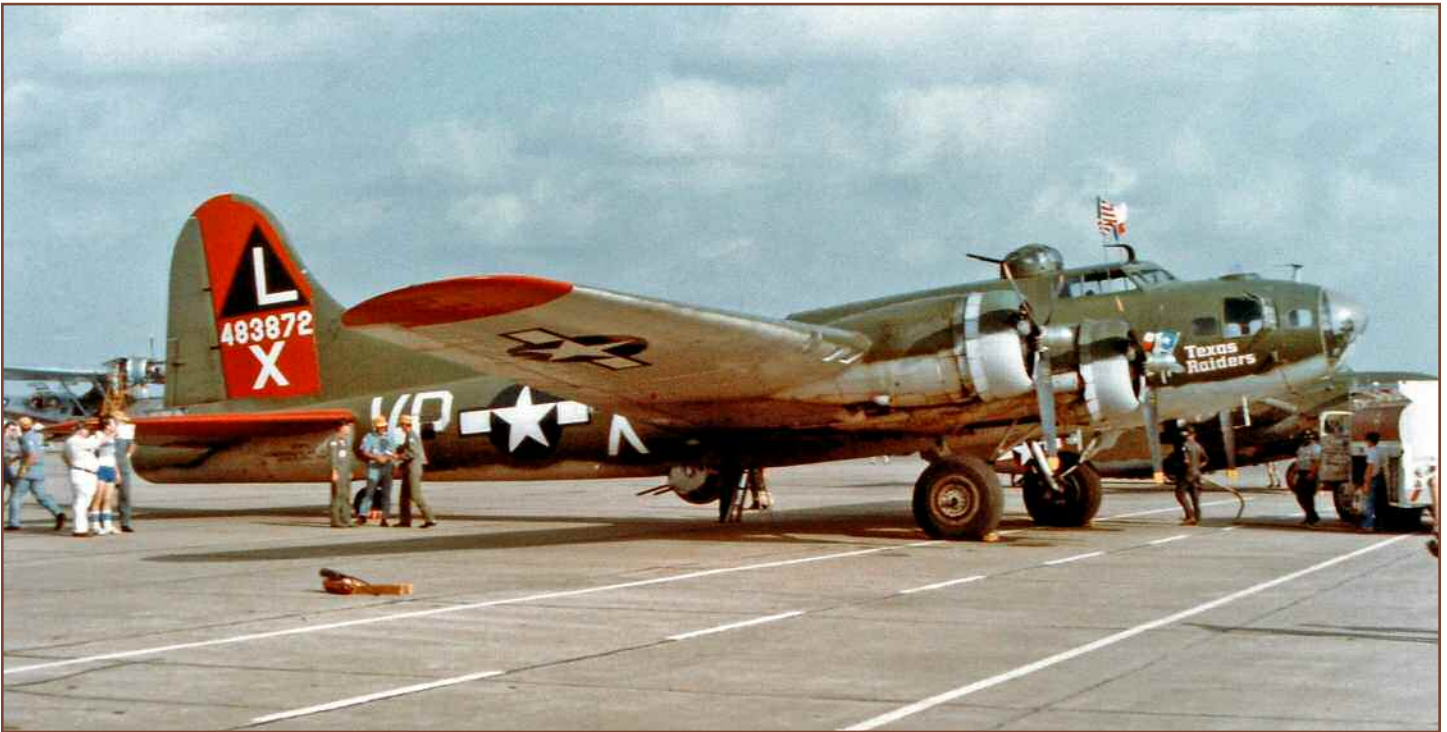
# BONUS PAGES!

## FRED'S FOTO FILE

### FRED FRANCESCHI

#### Confederate Air Force B-17s

Additional photos of Confederate Air Force airplanes taken at Harlingen, Texas, in the early 1980s by my brother Jim. Here are some pictures of three different B-17 Flying Fortresses. I don't know if there will be three Flying Fortresses seen at the same time ever again.

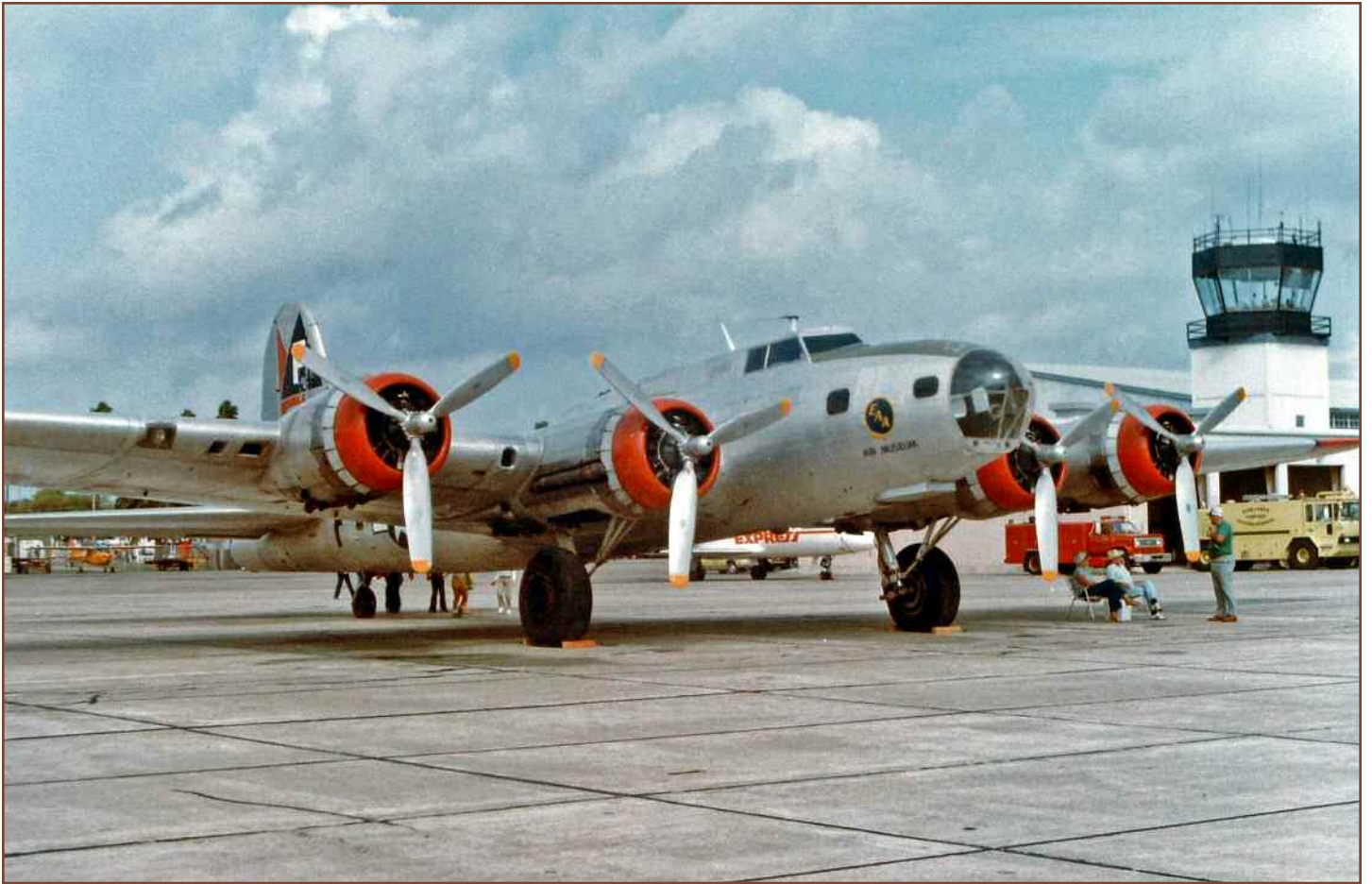


Above: B-17 Texas Raiders. No chin turret shown, so it was converted to look like an F model. But recent photos show it with the chin turret installed and indicate that it is with the 'Gulf Coast' wing of the CAF.

Below and next page: B-17 Aluminum Overcast. It may now be based at Oshkosh, Wisconsin.







Bottom: Texas Raiders and Aluminum Overcast in the same photo.



This page and next: B-17G Sentimental Journey, named after a song of the era. The plane's name really suits the character of these elderly aircraft. Sentimental Journey appears to be based in Phoenix, Arizona.





Just a day's drive away. Notice that the chin turret location is covered by a flat piece of sheet metal. It now has a chin turret.

# BONUS PAGES!

## THE U-505

### KEN PINIAK

Okay, here is a little break from armored vehicles. I like submarines, all kinds of submarines, especially U-boats. The U-505 is my all time favorite submarine; I have visited it many times in my life. The first time I saw it was in the late 1960s; the most recent, so far, was in 2006. The submarine is on permanent display at the Chicago Museum of Science and Industry as a memorial to all those who were killed in the Battle of the Atlantic.

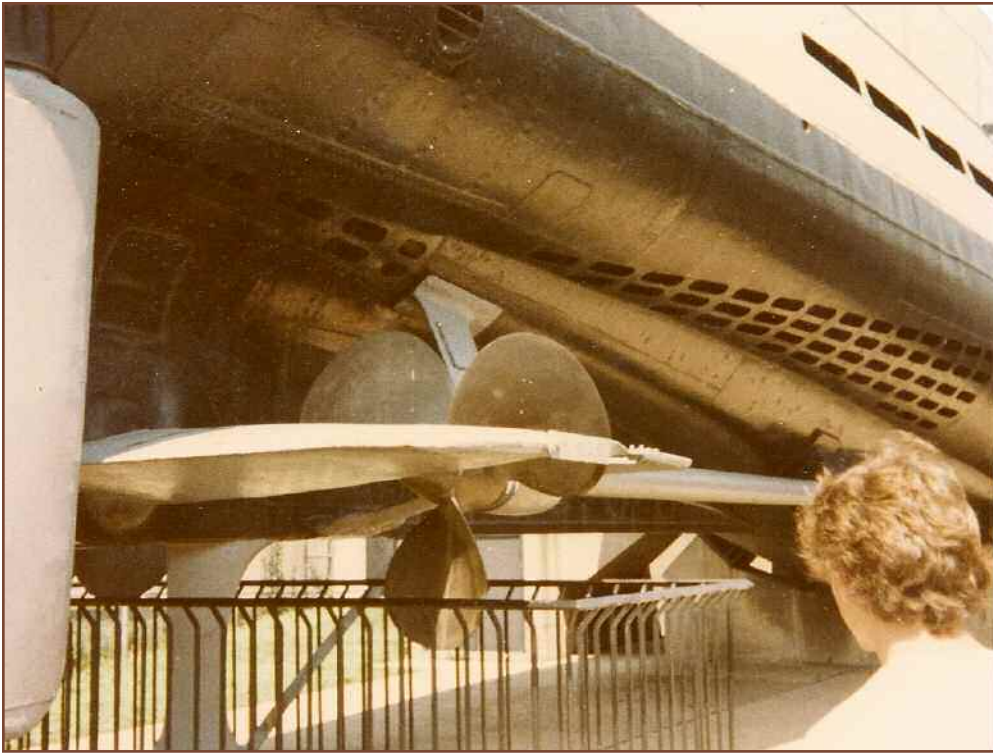
The story of the capture of the U-505 is an epic in itself, but I will not cover it here. There are plenty of books and internet sites available for that. Instead I will look at how the submarine and its display have changed over the years. Since it was captured in 1944, and had no post-war modifications done to it, it is the most accurate U-boat on display—looking almost exactly as it did in WWII (you can still see some of the bullet holes in the conning tower).

When the sub was acquired by the museum in 1954, it was placed outside along the east side of the building. Over time, other buildings and exhibits were put up until you could no longer access the outside of the sub; you could only see it through



small windows (access to the interior was through a covered walkway). During this time it was painted in a number of very inaccurate paint schemes, with U-505 in large numbers on the sides of the conning tower (*Turm* in German).

The tour of the interior of the sub has varied greatly over the years. Sometimes it was a full guided tour with docents showing off everything about the boat, including playing various alarms and whistles, and a recording of the engines running. At other times you were free to explore the boat at your leisure. Docents were positioned throughout the boat



to answer questions and keep people from getting into trouble, otherwise you were free to look around and take photos. At one point in the 1980s, various parts of the boat, including the torpedo room, were outfitted with provisions to show just how cramped a fully loaded U-boat is. They also had a replica of the conning tower complete with a real periscope! You could look out over Lake Michigan and “torpedo” a freighter or fishing boat.

In the late 1990s, the U-505 and the museum itself underwent some major repairs and renovations. In 2005, the U-505 Exhibit reopened in a

new, underground, climate-controlled display hall. When I last visited in 2006, they did not allow photos/videos of the interior of the sub. Not a big deal, you can find plenty of photos on the internet.

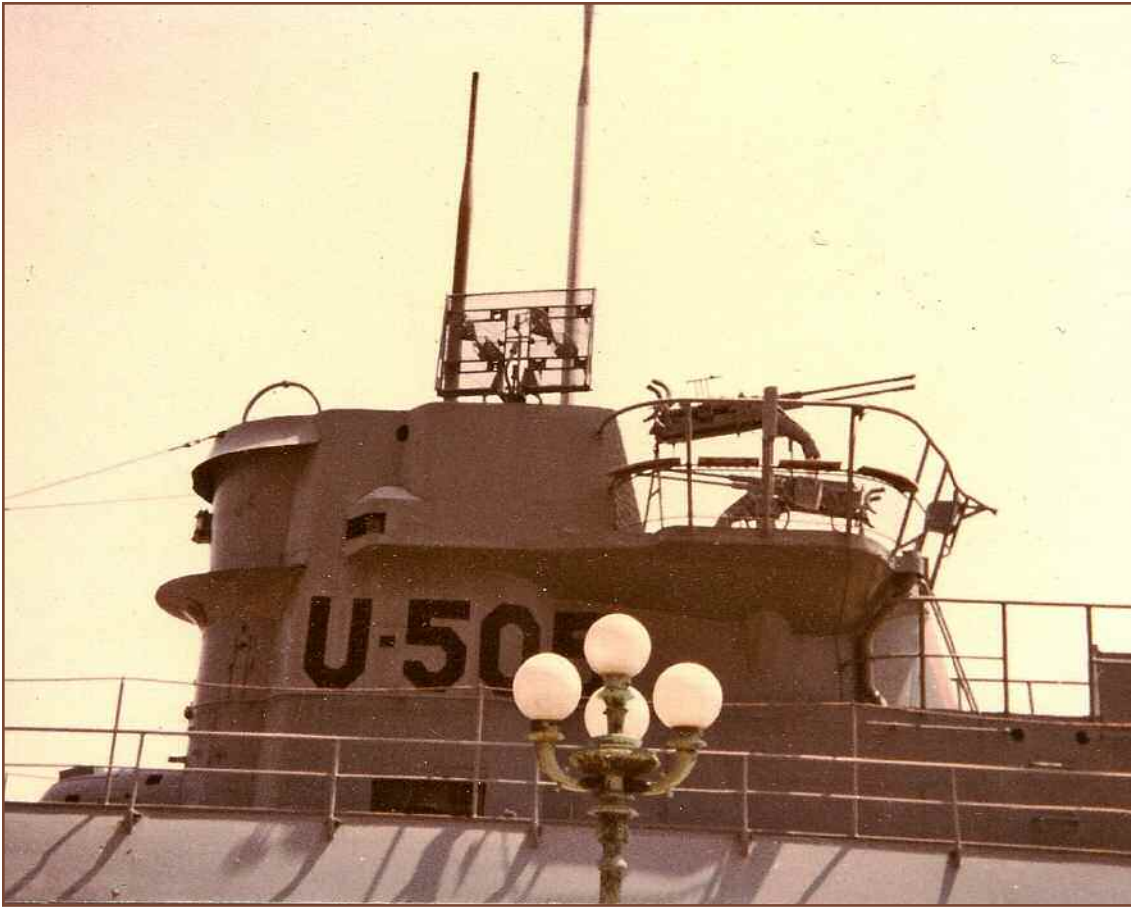
Websites:

<http://www.msichicago.org/explore/whats-here/exhibits/u-505-submarine>

[https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/German\\_submarine\\_U-505](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/German_submarine_U-505)

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=clgyF1R1D88>





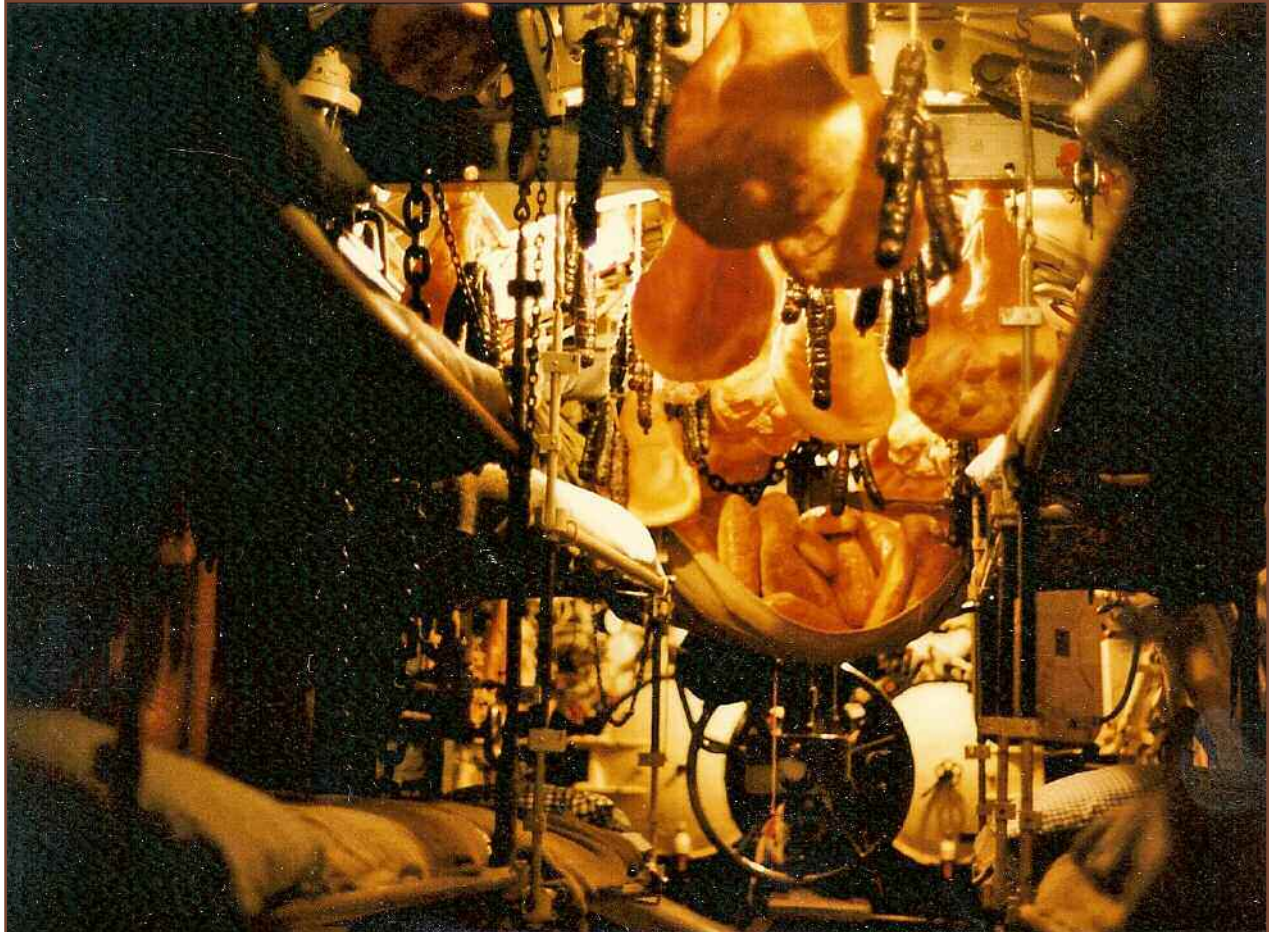
Left: Conning tower with numbers.  
Below: Insignia outdoors.



Right: Hull through window  
Below: Tour guide

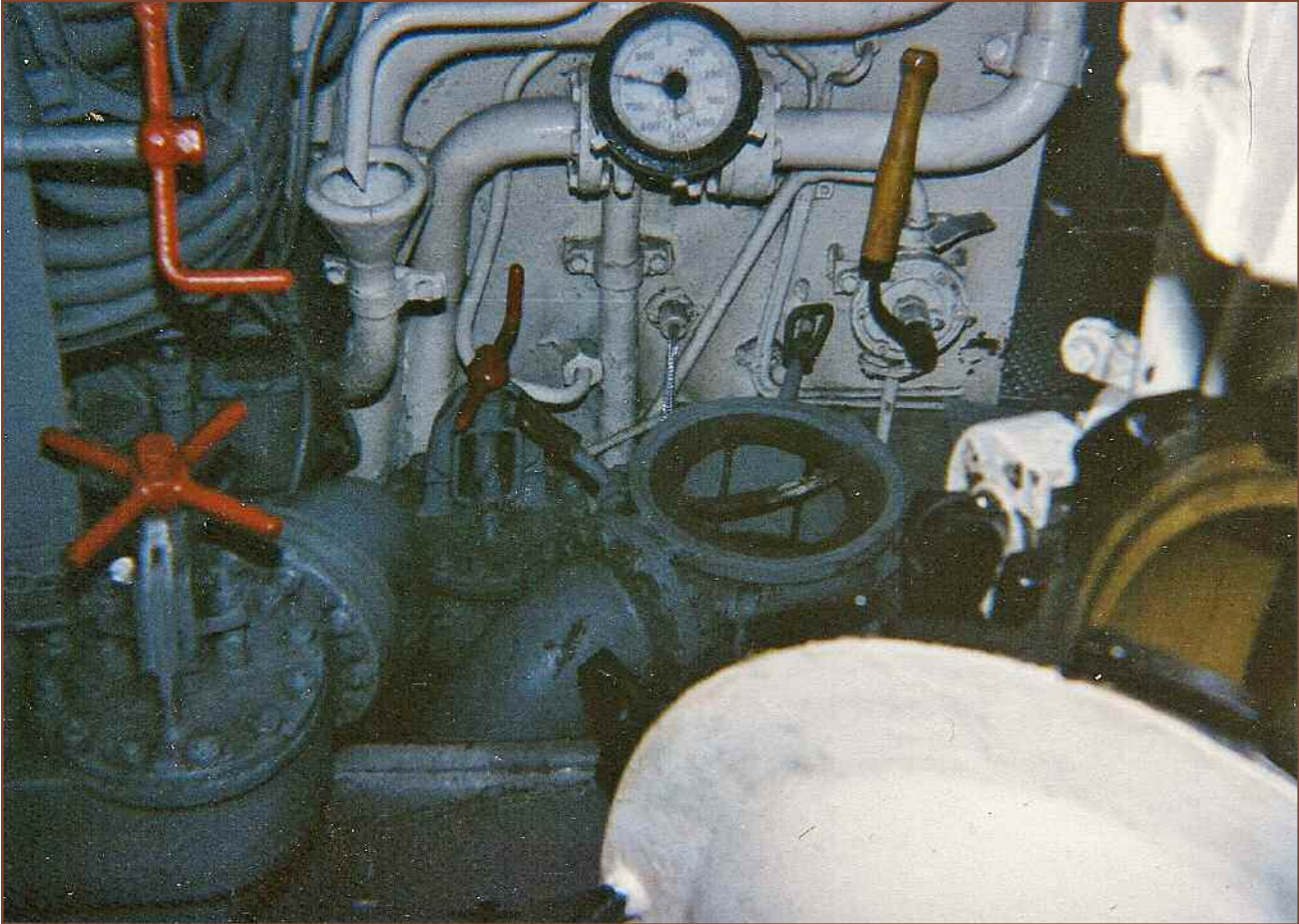
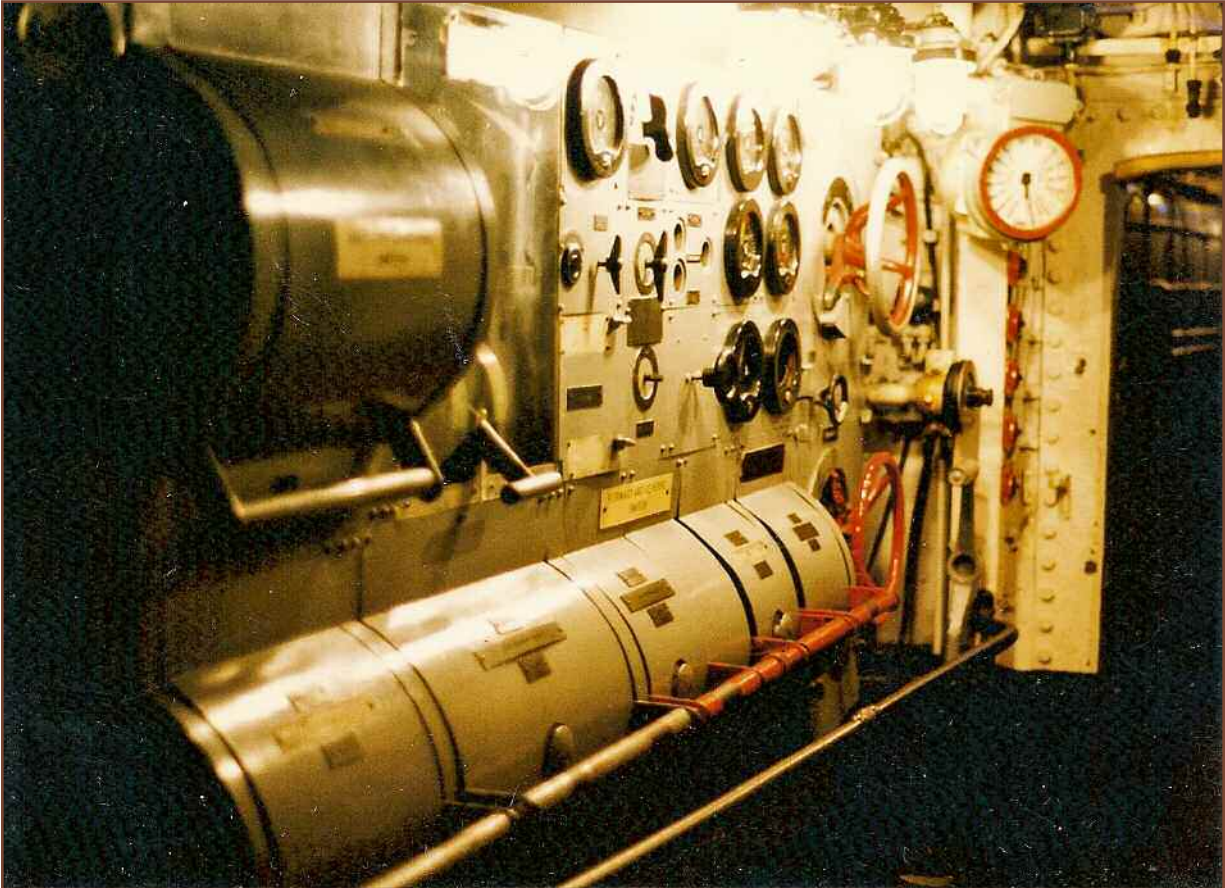


Top to bottom: Provisions, and stocked torpedo room

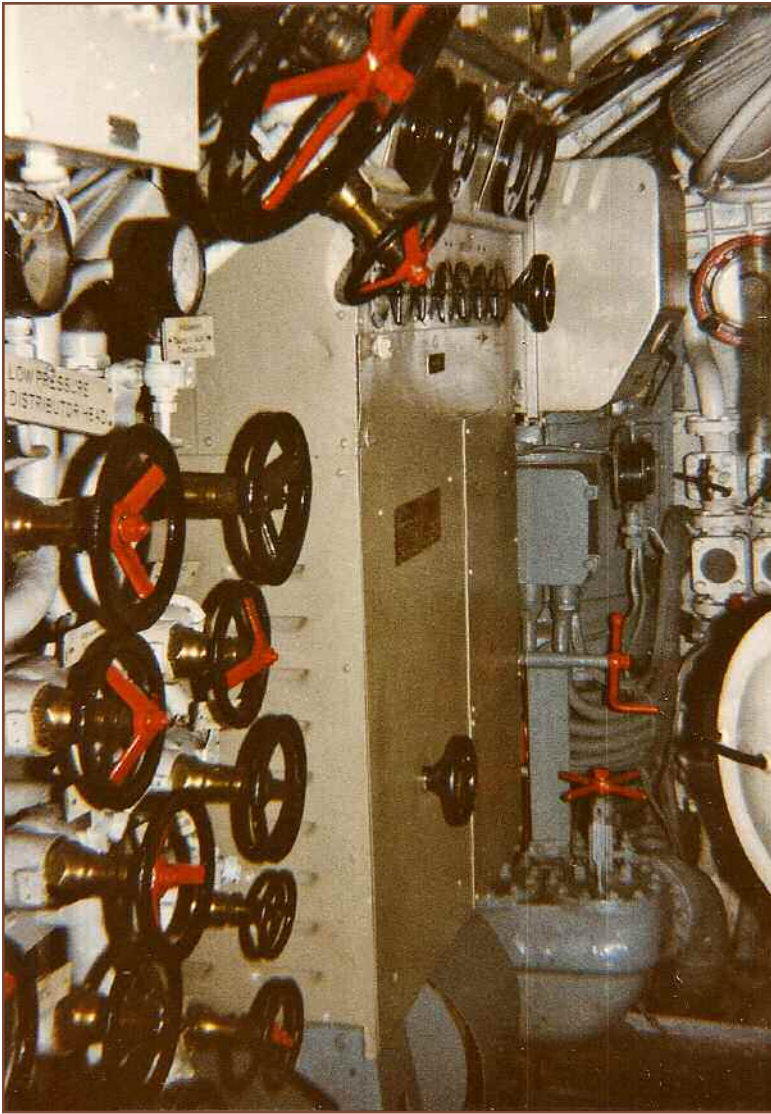




Top to bottom: Electric motor control, and opened vent to sink boat.



Left: Control room right side  
Bottom: Sextant in control room



Left: Captain at controls  
Bottom: Captain's bunk



Top to bottom: Officers' quarters, and officers' quarters overhead.



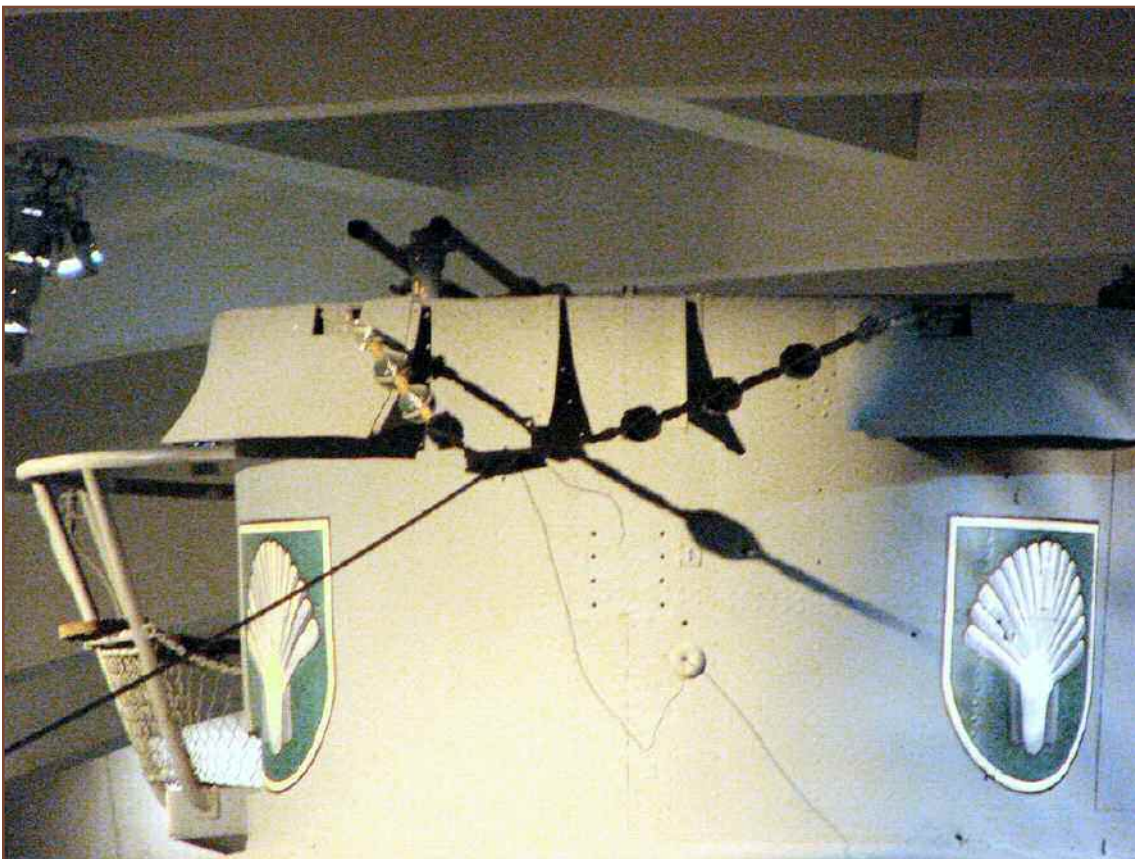


Above: Jason in conning tower mockup; Below: Captain at periscope

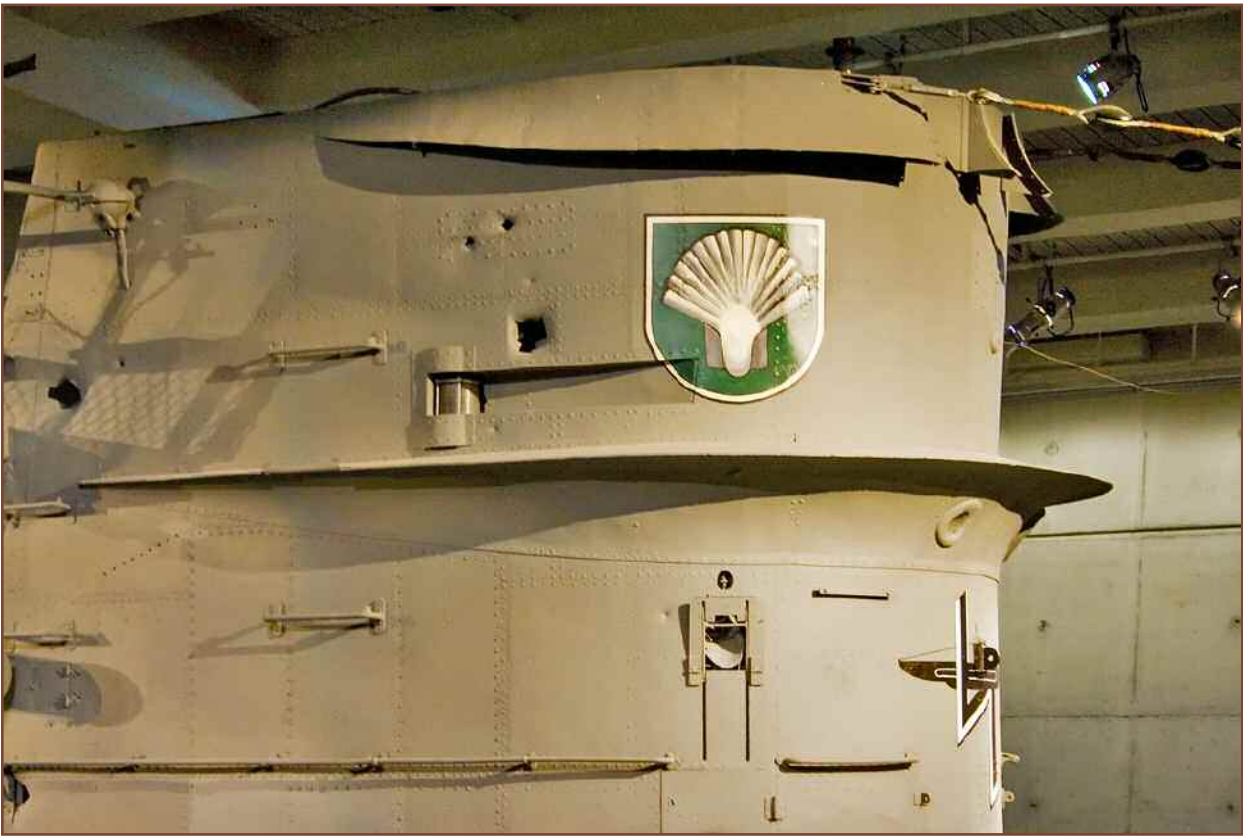


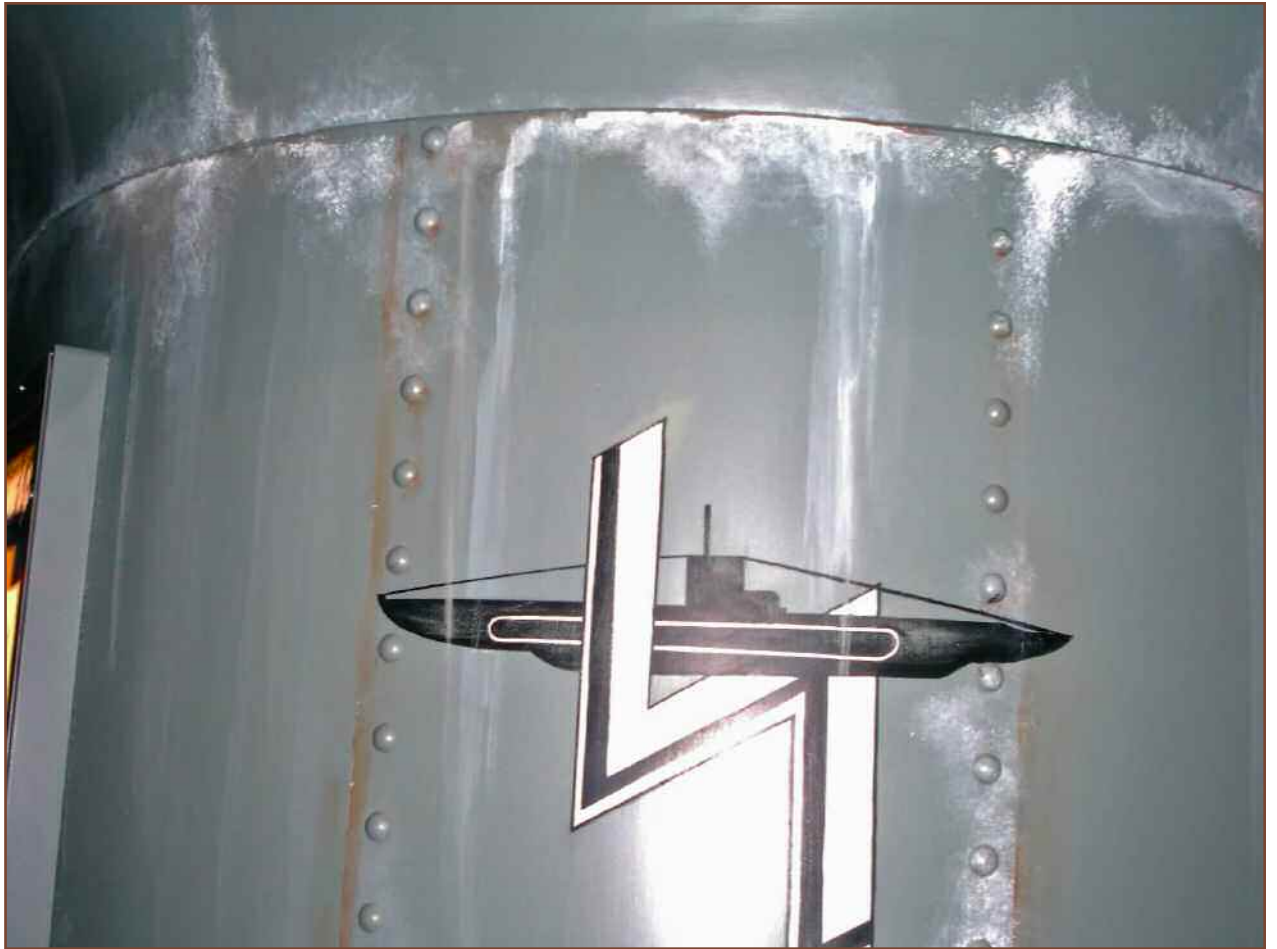


Above: U-505 at Science Museum; Below: *Turm* front



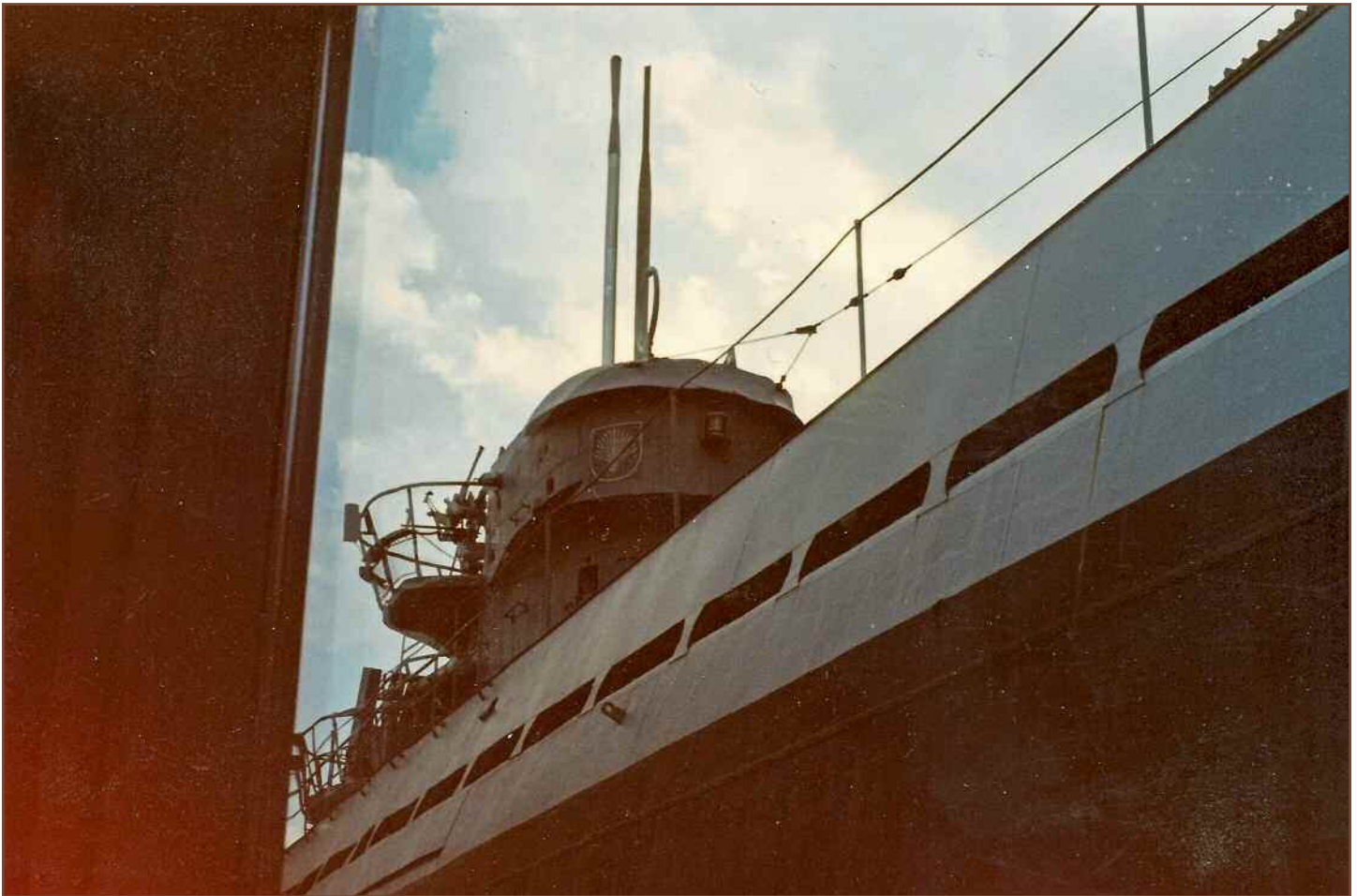
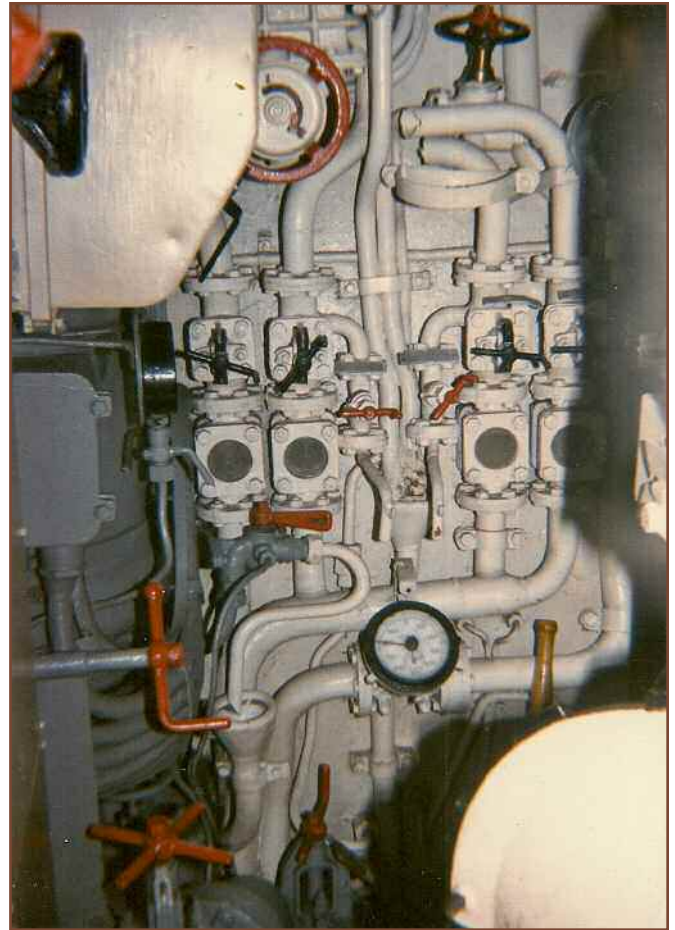
Top to bottom: Tower with bullet holes; air compressor



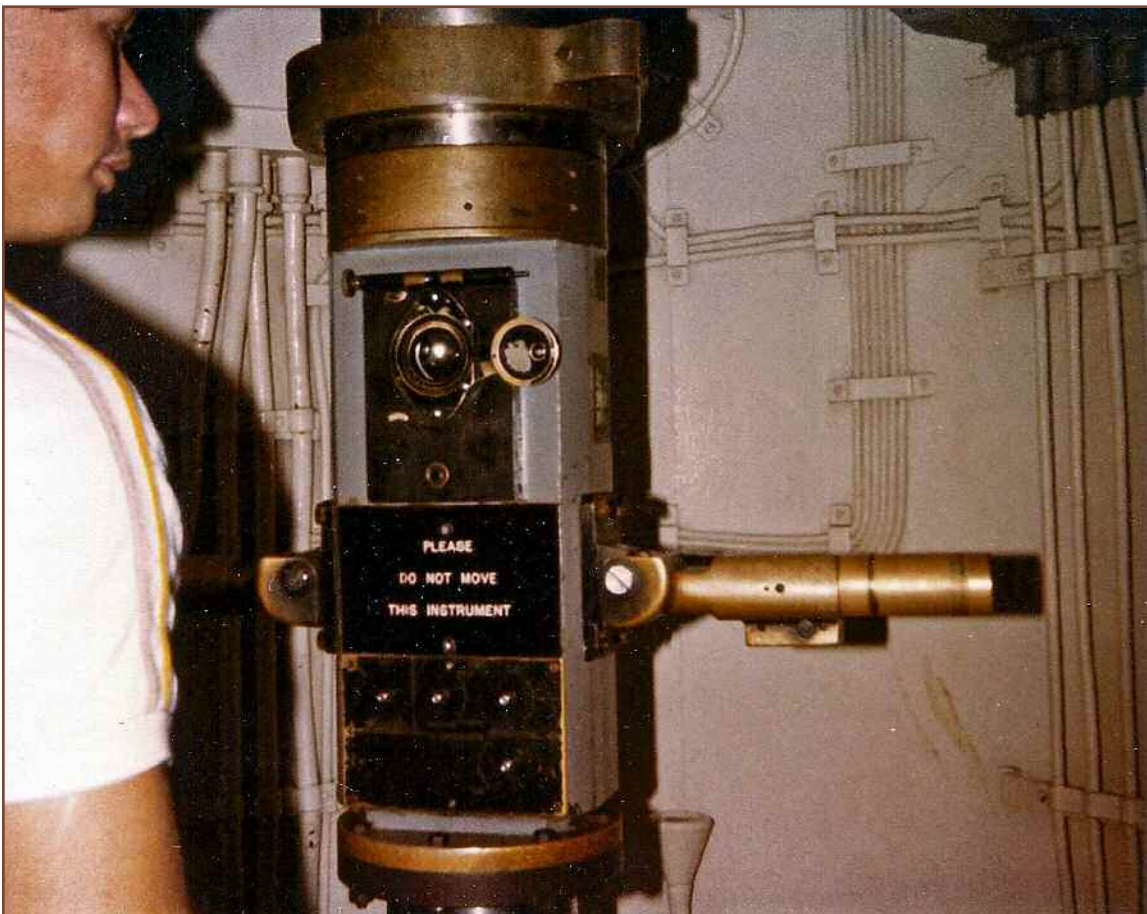
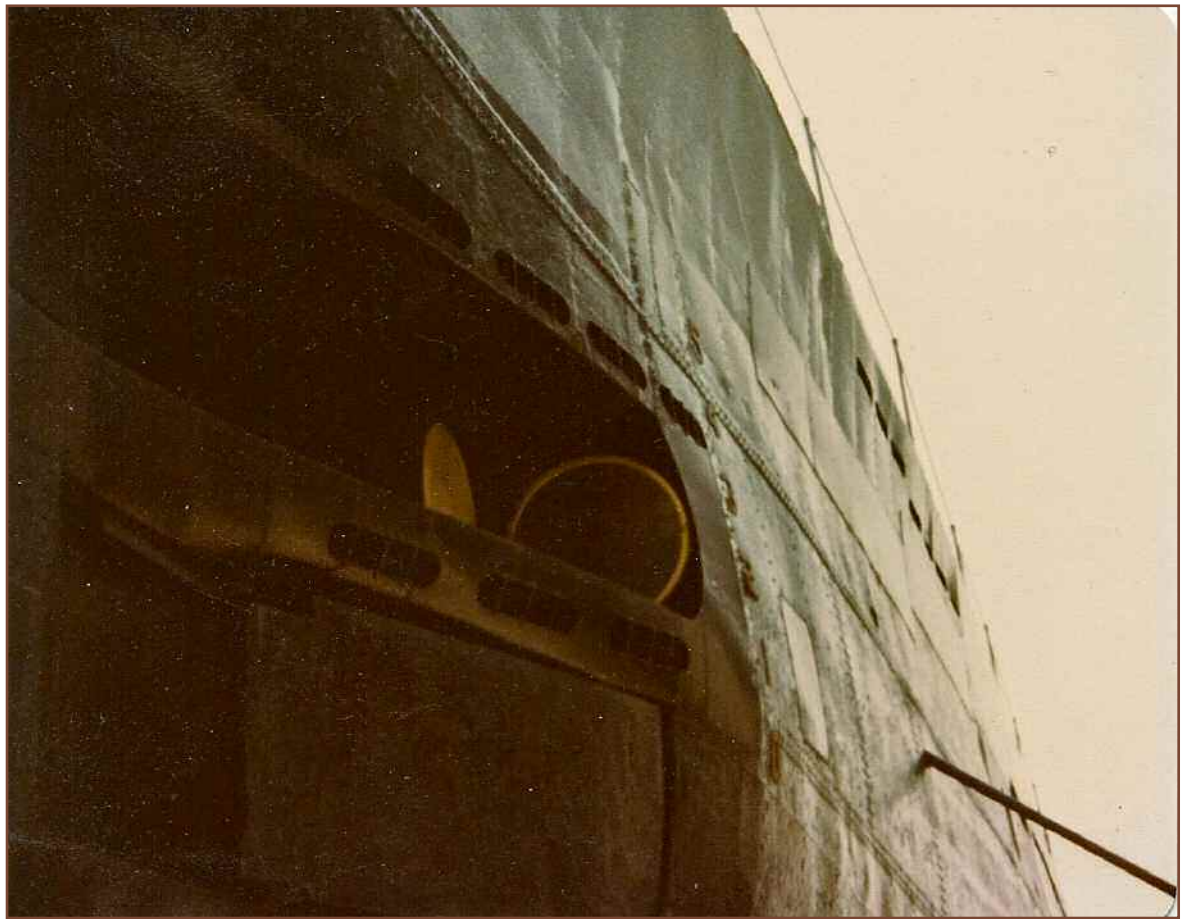




Right: Control room rear  
Below: Looking up at bridge



Top to bottom: Open torpedo tube; periscope

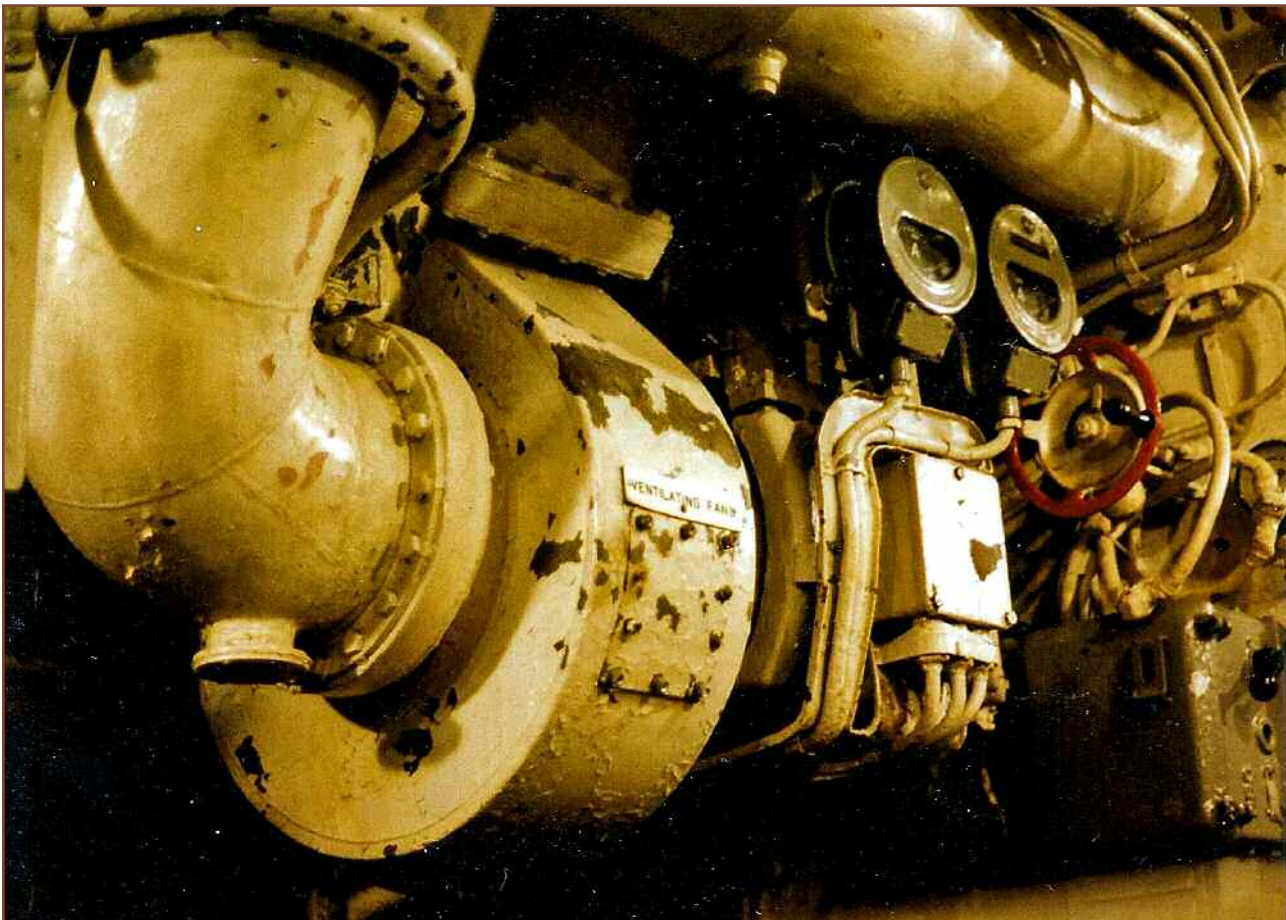




Above: Rear flood vents  
Below: Rear torpedo hatch



Top to bottom: Sextant; ventilating fan



# BONUS PAGES!

## EL ALAMEIN—75TH ANNIVERSARY

### TONY HUMPHRIES

#### **Setting the scene:**

The two battles fought in the area of El Alamein, a small rail stop in the middle of the Egyptian desert, between July and November 1942 marked the turning of the tide of the conflict in North Africa. Indeed, combined with the more or less simultaneous defeat of the Germans at Stalingrad, it marked the beginning of the end for the Germans and their allies in Europe and the Mediterranean. The war in the desert was a conflict that had begun at the end of 1940 with the Italian invasion of British-occupied territories in Libya and Egypt, which swiftly turned into a complete disaster for Mussolini and the collapse of the Italian forces there. The plight of the Italians forced Hitler to intervene on behalf of his ally, and in April 1941 Rommel and his Afrika Korps arrived in Tripoli to begin over a year of highly mobile warfare in the desert. This was a struggle in which much ground was initially lost by the British, but then recovered, only to be lost again. Rommel added greatly to his reputation as a masterful tactician during 1941 and 1942 and several British commanders were promoted and then unceremoniously removed until Churchill finally settled on Montgomery in July of 1942.

At this point in the desert war, the Germans had advanced to a line roughly 150 miles from Cairo, and Cairo, the Nile Delta, the Suez Canal, and the port of Alexandria would all have been threatened by another German breakthrough. The Axis forces, however, had stretched their supply lines dangerously (many miles back to the ports of Tripoli, Benghazi and the recently captured but heavily damaged facilities at Tobruk) and their men and equipment were both worn out from the fighting across vast open, featureless spaces. El Alamein was a point at which the British under Auchinleck were able to stop the Germans dead, and begin to build up their forces for a major counter-offensive. The desert at this point was only forty miles wide, with the Mediterranean Sea to the North and the impassable cliffs and salt marshes of the Qattara Depression in the South. This prevented Rommel from engaging in his usual flanking attacks and gave the British an excellent opportunity to defend in depth.

So the stage was set for a ferocious battle that was at times reminiscent of the battles on the Western Front nearly thirty years earlier. El Alamein was also noted as the first battle in which large quantities of newly introduced US-supplied armor, particularly the Sherman (both the M4A1 or Sherman II and the M4A2, known in the British army as the Sherman III) along with the M7 Priest 105mm self-propelled gun featured. Both of these vehicles were warmly welcomed by the British army at the time as they proved to be a significant improvement on the aging and weakly armed British Cruiser and Infantry tanks and the initially useful but still somewhat flawed M3 Grant and Lee.

El Alamein also marked the debut of the British Churchill tank and the widespread adoption of the 6-Pounder anti-tank gun as a long overdue replacement for the chronically outdated and feeble 2-pounder. Rommel, in his turn had the new Panzer IV Ausf F2 in his armory, but only around thirty of these were available for the battle and his troops were desperately short at this stage of the conflict, of fuel, food and ammunition. He also received limited quantities of the Marder III, whose captured Soviet 76.2mm gun was a welcome addition to the Afrika Korps's firepower. These new vehicles could do little to turn the tide, however—given the supply shortages and the huge build-up of equipment on the British side, there could really only be one winner.

#### **The Ground War**

The 1st Battle of El Alamein began on July 1, 1942, after Rommel had won significant victories at Gazala and Mersa Matruh. Rommel, in buoyant mood despite being aware of the shortages that his forces faced, decided to try one more attack to try and decisively break the British line and move on towards the

Nile and the oil fields of the middle-east, beyond. The Germans attacked but were stopped, and after a counterattack by the British and Commonwealth forces under Auchinleck, the following day (which also failed) a stalemated battle of attrition developed and lasted until July 27, when both sides called a halt and tried to consolidate their existing positions. This was easier for the British since their supply lines were shorter and they held much of the high ground, but unfortunately for Auchinleck, although he had stopped Rommel, he had failed to defeat him and this cost him his job. Churchill replaced him with Bernard Law Montgomery (aka “Monty”) who immediately began to rebuild 8th Army both in terms of morale and equipment in readiness for the offensive against Rommel that Churchill was loudly demanding.

The 2nd Battle of El Alamein began in earnest on October 23, 1942, and lasted until approximately November 11, although much of the fighting had petered out a week or so before. Montgomery had learned much from previous British defeats at the hands of Rommel and was determined to build up a substantial force before attacking. He also realized that although he outnumbered Rommel significantly in numbers of tanks, 8th Army’s traditional strengths lay in its artillery and infantry arms and he was determined to play to those strengths.

Thus, 2nd Alamein began on the night of October 23 with a colossal British artillery barrage of over 800 guns, unlike anything seen since the Western Front in WWI. Rommel had taken advantage of the lull in fighting also and although he had not received anything like the reinforcements that Montgomery had, he had received some, and in addition had spent much time laying complex minefields to hinder the expected British advance. These were to play a major role in the ensuing battle.

Under cover of the initial bombardment, British sappers had been tasked with clearing paths through the German mines, which were up to five miles wide in places, but going was slow due to both their complexity and density. German artillery and anti-tank guns were also well-sited to cover any potential breaches in this defensive layer. The initial plan called for a diversionary Allied attack in the South with the main thrust in the North. “Operation Lightfoot,” as it was called, was the code name for the initial infantry attack—the intention being that the infantry would attack through the mines but the soldiers would be too light to set off German anti-tank mines, hence the name. Initially it did not succeed, however, due to the volume of the minefields and the failure by the sappers to clear enough 24-foot wide paths for the tanks to follow up behind. Even at 24 feet wide, the paths were only wide enough for tanks to pass in single-file, and one stalled, broken-down or destroyed tank held up the entire advance in that sector. After the second night, Lightfoot was called off.

Instead, Montgomery then launched “Operation Supercharge.” Australian infantry formed the initial part of this and fought with such ferocity that Rommel was forced to move many of his remaining Panzers to prevent them breaking through on their own. At the same time, however, Montgomery was moving his British and New Zealand infantry to the south of this developing battle and they took Rommel by surprise. Fortunately for him, a developing sandstorm caused much of the supporting British armor to get lost and they became easy targets for the German gunners. Both 9th and 23rd Armored Brigades for example (the former including my own old local regiment, The Royal Wiltshire Yeomanry, and thus sparking my interest in the battle to begin with) cleared the German minefields in front of the Rahmen Track on the Germans’ left flank, just as the sandstorm was ending and just as dawn was breaking. As a result they were beautifully silhouetted against the dawn and directly in front of the German defensive gun line. With little choice, they hastily organized themselves and charged headlong at the German positions, much like the Light Brigade charged the Russian guns in the Crimean War almost a century before. The result was similar—9th Armored had 123 tanks at the beginning of the charge. They lost 102 of them, but they broke the German line and the result thereafter was no longer in doubt. The British had many more tanks than the Germans and pushed them forwards as the Germans began a fighting retreat. By November 2, it was clear to Rommel that the battle was irreconcilably lost and on the 4th, in direct contradiction of Hitler (who had ordered them to fight to the last man, as usual...), he pulled his men back and began to retreat towards Tunisia.

Rommel was shortly to be caught in a battle on two fronts now, with the Allied invasion of Morocco and

Algeria (Operation Torch) taking place simultaneously and despite skillful defense, Rommel and the Afrika Korps's fate was effectively sealed.

Several ASM members have chosen to mark the 75th anniversary of this momentous occasion by conducting an informal group build. Pictures of some of the significant vehicles and aircraft involved will be posted at the end of this article. It is worth noting that this description of the battle is a very simplified one—a blow-by-blow account would take an entire book to write and indeed many have already been written on the subject. If you would like some further reading on the subject, some of the following may prove useful:

*Alamein* by Simon Ball (published by Oxford University Press)

*Destiny in the Desert* by Jonathan Dimbleby (published by Pegasus)

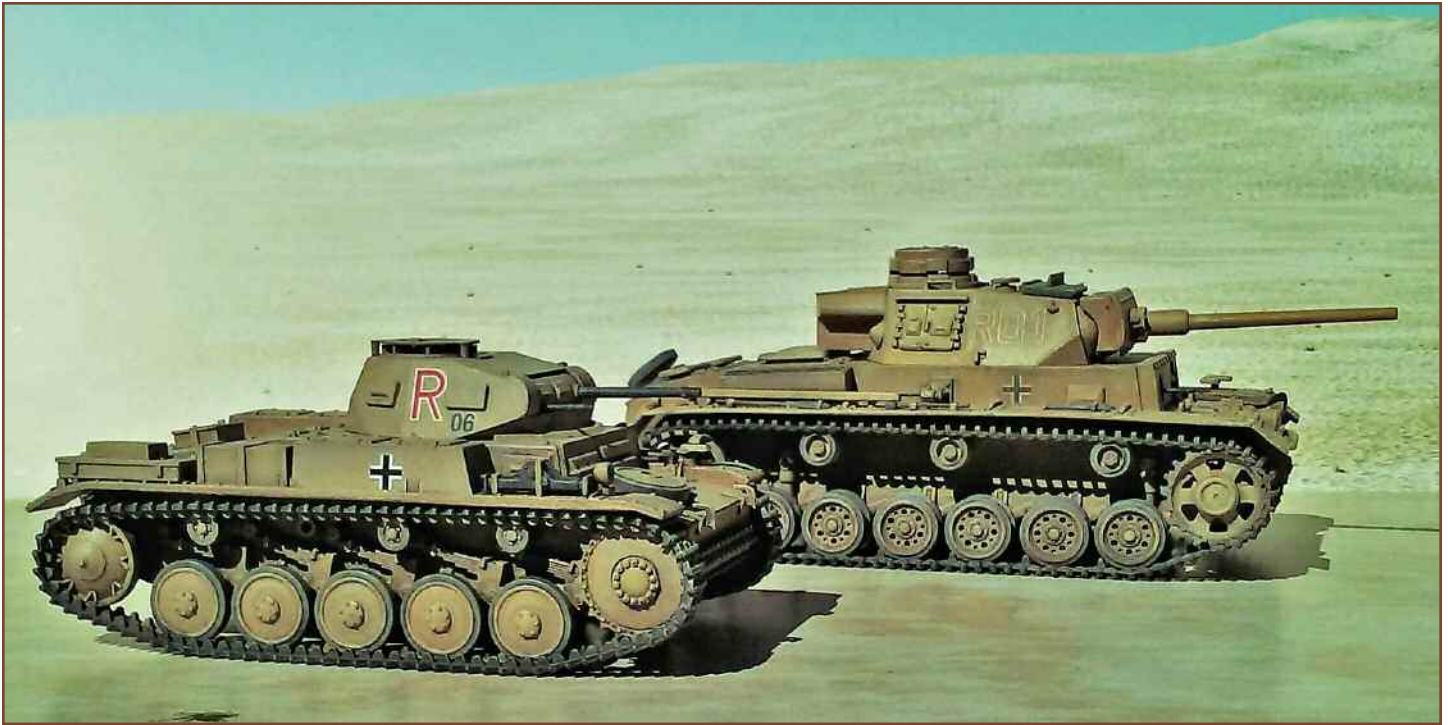
*Pendulum of War* by Niall Barr (published by The Overlook Press)

*El Alamein* by Bryn Hammond (by Osprey Publishing)

And many, many more...



Afrika Korps 8mm Flak 37. Originally an AA gun, the “88” had already earned a fearsome reputation as a tank killer by the time of the El Alamein battles. Kit:  $\frac{1}{35}$  Tamiya; built by Tony Humphries. Photograph and effects by John Tate.

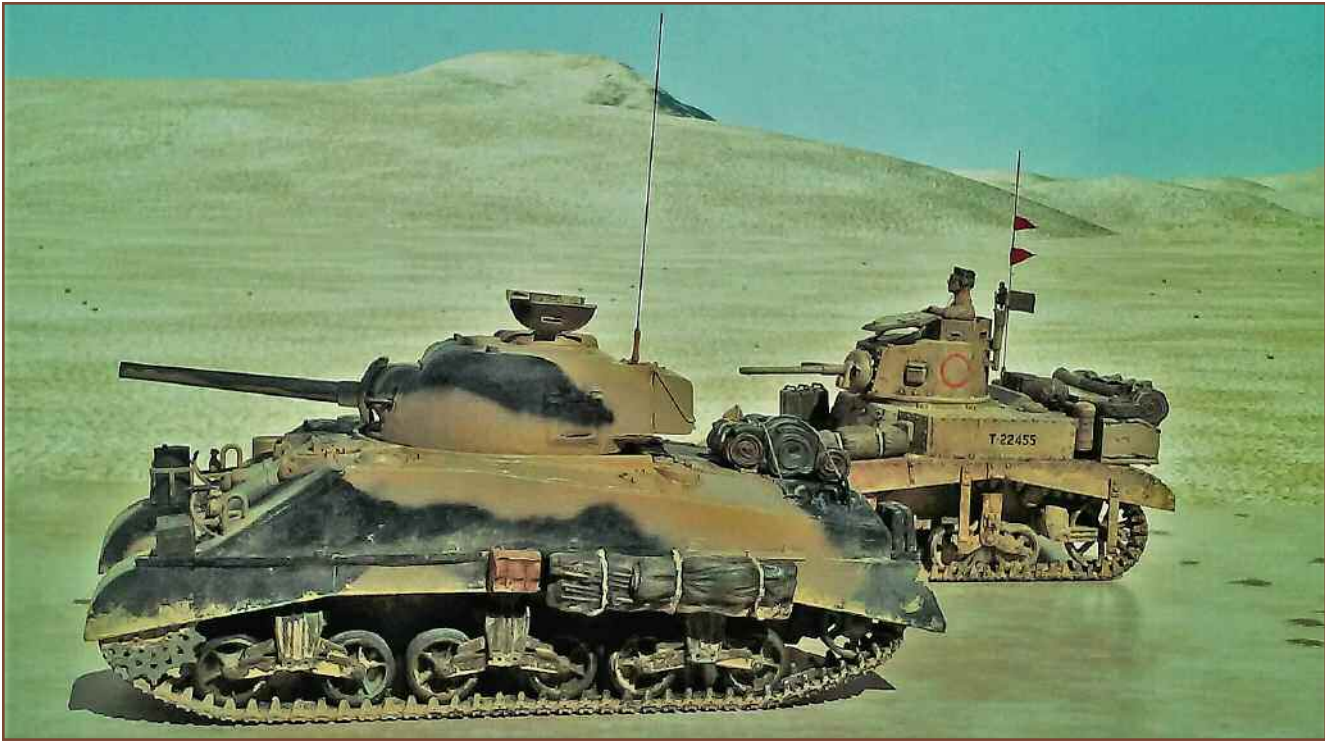


Above: German Panzer II Ausf F (front) and Panzer III Ausf L (back). Both tanks were still in regular use at this period of the war. The Panzer II was primarily used for recon due to its weak armor and gun. The Panzer III was still a match for any Allied tank on the battlefield. Kit: Tamiya  $\frac{1}{35}$  (both). Panzer II built by Aaron Kreltzhaim and John Tate. Panzer III originally built by Don Alberts, updated and repainted by John Tate. Photograph and effects by John Tate.

Below: Grant advancing head-on. Despite its limitations, the Grant could still be useful and approximately 170 were still in use by the British at El Alamein. Vehicle shown here from Royal Gloucestershire Hussars but attached to Royal Wiltshire Yeomanry for the battle. Kit:  $\frac{1}{32}$  Monogram. Built originally by Don Alberts, updated and repainted by John Tate. Photo and effects by John Tate.







Above: British Sherman Mk III and Stuart Mk I. By the beginning of the 2nd El Alamein battle, the Sherman was the most numerous tank in the British arsenal with approximately 252 Sherman Mk IIs and IIIs in use. It was a match for any German tank at this time and was warmly welcomed by the British crews. The Stuart was still widely used in a recon role and, although outdated, was also still popular. Kits: Sherman III,  $\frac{1}{35}$  Italeri base and Legend resin conversion; Stuart,  $\frac{1}{35}$  Academy, built by Tony Humphries. Photo and effects by John Tate.

Below and next page: Valentine Mk II of 50th RTR. The Valentine was reliable but weakly armed and armored even for 1942. Nevertheless, it played an important role at El Alamein and was the most widely produced British tank of WWII. Kit:  $\frac{1}{35}$  Tamiya, built by Larry Horyna. Photos by Larry Horyna.







Left: Desert Encounter—a British Stuart Mk I from 8th Hussars meets an abandoned Panzer IV Ausf F1 from 21st Panzer Division. 8th Hussars were the only British unit entirely equipped with the Stuart. The Panzer IV Ausf F1 was the last version built with the short-barreled 75mm gun, which was obsolete for tank v. tank combat at this stage of the war. Rommel was fast running out of these, with only eight still in use at El Alamein.

Right and next page: Rommel's fuel situation was critical by the time of Second Alamein, thanks to RAF success in sinking supply ships bound for North Africa. Luftwaffe Field Marshal Kesselring ordered Ju-52 transports to make a maximum effort to supply the Afrika Korps, but these aircraft could bring in only a trickle of what was needed—the fate of the Axis forces therefore was already sealed with the battle commenced. Kit: HO Scale Airpower 87, built by John Tate. Photos and effects by John Tate.





Below: The Luftwaffe had lost its chance for air superiority by the time of Second Alamein; its primary attack plane was the Ju-87B Stuka, which faced intense opposition from Allied fighters and anti-aircraft guns and was often ineffective against well-camouflaged, widely-spaced targets in the Western Desert. Escorting these vulnerable aircraft was a primary occupation of the Luftwaffe's hard-pressed fighter force. Kit: 1/48 Hasegawa, built by John Tate. Photo and effects by John Tate.





Above: Hawker Hurricanes were still very much frontline aircraft during Second Alamein, although with Spitfires finally available for fighter vs. fighter combat, Hurricanes were used increasingly for ground attack duties and guarding rear areas from Luftwaffe bomber raids. Kit:  $\frac{1}{48}$  Hasegawa, built by John Tate. Photo and Effects by John Tate.

Right: The last thing any panzer commander wanted to see: a Hurricane IIc hurtling towards him with both 40mm cannon blazing. With escorting Spitfires for top cover, RAF Hurricane IIcs were devastatingly effective against German panzers and softskins, hounding the Afrika Korps from Alamein to Tunisia.



Although the US supplied significant quantities of equipment to the British in North Africa, there was very limited combat involvement by US forces at El Alamein and it was really confined to the air war. The P-40F shown here constitutes part of that effort.

Mike Blohm adds:

These pictures depict the Curtiss P-40F-1 "Warhawk" flown by 1Lt Roy "Deke" Whittaker during the Battle of El Alamein. Whittaker was a member of the 65th Fighter Squadron (FS) "Fighting Cocks" of the 57th Fighter Group (FG) "First in the Blue." The 57 FG, which also included the 64th FS "Black Scorpions" and 66th FS "Exterminators," flew close support missions for Allied ground troops and escort missions for RAF bombers during the battle. Whittaker downed an Italian MC.202 fighter for his first aerial victory on October 26, 1942, on one of these missions. He scored seven total victories to become the top ace of the 57 FG. The 57 FG flew off the carrier *USS Ranger* into North Africa on July 19, 1942—Whittaker was the second pilot to launch off—and arrived in the Egyptian desert west of Cairo on July 30. The 57 FG saw its first combat operations on September 19 under the RAF's 239 Wing. The 57 FG's motto "First in the Blue" has several meanings, including being the first USAAF fighter group to go into action in North Africa.



Additionally, "The Blue" was the RAF's Desert Air Force's (DAF) slang for the vast areas of the North African desert stretching west from Cairo. At the time of the Battle of El Alamein the 57 FG and its three P-40 squadrons were detached to No. 211 Group of the RAF's Western DAF along with the USAAF's 12th Bombardment Group and three of its four B-25C Mitchell squadrons (82, 83, and 434 Bombardment Squadrons). The 81 BS was not detached to the WDAF. Some trivia of note: Capt Phillip Cochran, the commander of the 65 FS, was the prototype for Milton Caniff's comic strip characters Flip Corkin in "Terry and the Pirates" and the title character in "Steve Canyon." Caniff also designed the 65 FS's "Fighting Cock" emblem, which is depicted on the nose of Whittaker's aircraft, based upon the squadron's feisty Rhode Island Red Rooster mascot "Uncle Bud."

This model is the 1/2-scale Sword P-40F "Short Tails Over Africa" kit, which includes decals for a 64 FS aircraft. The aircraft is finished in the "desert pink" camouflage scheme on the upper surfaces.



Whittaker's aircraft and personal markings were accomplished by use of multiple after-market decal sheets and hand-painting. A separate kit review article will cover the build of the model and the problem areas encountered. Model and pictures by Mike Blohm.



# BONUS PAGES! MISCELLANEOUS LARRY HORYNA

John Tate submitted this: "Larry Horyna just sent me these images of a Tamiya 1/32 Mosquito from a GraniteCon model show in New Hampshire he attended over the weekend; he thought we would get a kick out of the Squadron codes."





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