

IPMS SEATTLE
SEPTEMBER 1992

MEETING TIMES: SEPTEMBER 12TH, 10:00 am til 1:30 pm
OCTOBER 10TH, 10:00 am til 1:30 pm

Once again, there will be no vendors permitted at the September meeting. For those who feel this is a hardship, let me point out a couple of items. Firstly, lack of space continues to be a problem with the monthly meetings. Vendors taking up two and three tables at each meeting is ridiculous under such circumstances. Noise is also a problem with sales not ceasing when the business part of the meeting is in progress.

Most serious of all, of course, is the potential for us losing our meeting room for breaching the Library's rules and regulations. It is against the rules to conduct business (exchange cash for goods) on Library premises. At the August meeting there was a representative of the Library outside the room while our meeting was in progress monitoring activity. By a great stroke of luck, we had not allowed vendors at the last meeting. Why we were being monitored, I do not know, although it certainly could have to do with the car loads of models that have been arriving at our meetings for the past several months. These activities can't have escaped the notice of Library personnel.

So, for the near future, no vendors will be allowed at our meetings to protect our rights to hold our meetings at the Bellevue Library, and also due to complaints of crowding and noise expressed by various members. In fairness to our regular vendors, let me list below their names and numbers. Should you require a given kit, give them a call and have them bring it to the meeting and do your financial transactions in the car park. You get your cheap or hard to find kits, the Club abides by the Library's rules and maintains its meeting space.

Michael Abanshin/Aviation International:
discount Hasegawa/DML/Fujimi and Eastern European items 672-3395

Emil Minerich, Discount kits, Rare kits **246-6605**

John Woodman/Jet City Models and Collectables:
Rare kits; Japanese kits esp. Sci-Fi 527-5615

And mentioning Michael and Aviation International, I must point out that Michael was generous enough to supply the National Convention with a number of door prizes. In the newsletter prior to the Convention which listed local sponsors, Aviation International was not listed. For this omission the Editor apologizes, and takes this opportunity to publicly thank Michael for his generosity.

UPCOMING EVENTS:

Firstly, on Saturday, September 19th, the North Whidbey Plastic Modelers Club presents their NAS Whidbey 50th Anniversary model contest. Note the contest IS NOT being held at the base, but at the Oak Harbor Fire Dept, 7105 700th Ave West, Oak Harbor. Shouldn't be too hard to find, with Oak Harbor not exactly the world's largest town. This said, should you get lost trying to find it, just pull up to any telephone booth, dial

911, yell "FIRE!!!" and listen for where the sirens come from.

Model Registration is from 9:00 am until 1:30 pm, Judging from 1:30 until 2:30 pm (room closed) with ribbons placed from 2:30 until 3:00 pm (room closed). There are plenty of categories to enter, with "Specials" including Best NAS Whidbey Aircraft, 1942-92; Best Grumman Aircraft; Best Anti-Submarine Warfare Platform etc. I hope to see you all there, and bring a couple of models. Your humble scribe will have a couple!!!

IPMS VANCOUVER FALL SHOW

Saturday, October 3rd, Sheraton Inn Burnaby, 4331 Dominion St, Burnaby, B.C. Located near the intersection of Canada Way and Willingdon, just off the Trans Canada highway. There will be 55 Senior and 10 Junior categories to enter, as well as 16 "Specials". I won't spend pages rattling these all off. Bring pen and paper to the September meeting, and I will go over both the Shows mentioned above. Tragically, I will not be able to attend this event due to prior engagements.

B-17 PROJECT

Of course, the IPMS Vancouver Show will be the debut venue for the IPMS Seattle B-17 Project. I trust all those who volunteered to build a model are well under way with construction. For those participating, below you will find a little form to fill in with information regarding your particular subject. Please hand these to me at the September meeting and we will get the information printed up to place in front of your model so people know what they are looking at:

TYPE:

SERIAL NUMBER:

UNIT:

BASED AT:

DATES:

Built By:

We are looking at this stage for a couple of reliable volunteers to help transport the B-17's up to Vancouver. Preferably this would be someone who is planning to go up early, ideally Friday night, so that the models can be well in place before the crowds arrive. Please see me at the meeting if you can help. I had planned to take most of them up in our big Oldsmobile, but as mentioned above, will not now be attending the Show.

FREE KITS

No, this is not just an attention grabber. At the September meeting I will be giving away a large number of mostly 1/72nd scale aircraft kits of various ages. Frankly, I have far too many and my wife has asked me to tidy up the family room in the basement. I have therefore removed from my collection all those I don't want, or those which in my opinion have been supersede by better kits. This is an ideal opportunity for those of you with younger modelers to pick up some kits for them to chop up. NOTE: Try and control yourself and show some restraint. Last month there were a number of resin kits handed out free courtesy of Julian Edward, an English vendor at the National Convention. To be blunt a

number of you were rather greedy, taking more kits away with you than I guarantee you will build over the next ten years. This meant that a number of members didn't even have a chance at getting one kit to try out.

NEWSLETTER ARTICLES

For those of you interested, the Editor is always looking for members to write in with articles. Since I have been building more kits since the Convention, I have been less interested in writing items with which to pad the newsletter. If you are interested, please follow these format rules: Articles must be typed, on 8 1/2 by 11 inch pages. Please leave a 3/4 inch margin at the top of each page, and a 1/2 inch margin down the left side of each page. Please insure your articles are checked for spelling, and grammar. I don't expect Pulitzer Prize winning stuff, but at least make an effort at making it understandable, and checking for correct spelling just makes good sense and stops you insulting the reader. Those of you with computers have no excuse for you have "Spell Check". (If you do have an IBM-compatible computer, getting your article on disk would be even better. Call me for specifics). Diagrams are most welcome, photographs not. The later just do not reproduce well without a lot of work. Any efforts on your part would be most appreciated.

HOW GOOD CAN YOU BE?

During the early 1970's, I was building the best models imaginable. At age 14, my construction techniques were perfect, paint jobs were brilliant, and decals went on without a hitch. I was building kits on a regular basis, at least one a month, sometimes two if they were 1/72nd WWII fighters. All around me marveled at what a great job I did with these little boxes of plastic parts.

Things progressed nicely for a number of years, each model appearing better than the last, well on the road to perfection. I amazed myself each time with my incredible skills. I had a great time working away at the desk next to my bed, blitzing along on each new construction project. Then I made two fatal errors. Firstly, I started subscribing to a modeling magazine. The second mistake was to join IPMS.

The magazine subscription was at first a great success. It showed me the great world of modeling beyond the limited shores of my island nation, New Zealand. Being a modeler in NZ back in the early 1970's was like being a lover of live Opera in Tonasket, WA. Subscribing to "Airfix" magazine was like winning a trip to the Metropolitan Opera House. All these great kits that my local toy shop didn't stock, tips on improving your skills (which frankly I didn't think applied to me, but I read them anyway), articles on conversions etc. Great stuff, until I discovered after a number of issues that there was a particular type of article that I wasn't overly impressed with, one that made me begin to question my great skills, question the very models I loved to build, the paint I lovingly applied to my kits. For you see certain authors, unable to derive simple pleasure from building models, set out on the road of heresy (in my opinion). They began to question the accuracy of the models, their shape, scale measurements, the accuracy of the decals. They said the paint I was using was inaccurate, the wrong shade of Duck Egg Blue, worse I was applying it incorrectly. I should be using something called an "airbrush", that using my beloved paintbrushes made for an inferior job.

Joining IPMS just made things worse. It was bad enough having all this nonsense pouring forth from the pages of a magazine, but turn up to a Club meeting, and you had folk getting right in your face about things. The moment you walked into the room with your latest project, over came the "Born Again" modelers, waving their Airfix and Scale Models bibles, spouting forth on the new realities. Did you add two drops of Azure Blue to your Duck Egg Blue in order to get it the correct shade? Did you know that the yellow on your Squadron markings was too orange, and the wingspan on your Beaufighter a scale foot short? I tried to point out that a scale foot in 1/72nd made it less than 1/8th of an inch on each wing, and who could tell. You can just imagine the looks I received for such a statement!!!

I tried to ignore all this hullabaloo, thinking that it may in time just "go away", the way the hula hoop did, or the bully at school when I was 8. Tragically, it not only didn't go away, it got worse and worse. Like a bad dream, or a scene from "Invasion of the Body Snatchers", more and more of my modeling friends' minds were taken over, and they too began to question all that before had been sacred. Worse, it began to affect me. Whereas before I would boldly stride into the local toy store and buy the two models with the coolest looking box art, a Spitfire with guns ablaze downing an Me10, or a Beaufighter unleashing its torpedo at some helpless German freighter, now I would pause to try and remember was it the Airfix or the Revell Me 109 that had the incorrect canopy and the misshapen tail.

Once home with the model, I would sit for hours staring at said kit, wondering should I attempt it straight from the box, or did it require work on the cockpit and undercarriage. Did I need to scratch build an interior for my Sherman, or could I just glue to hatches shut? Straight from the box was no longer acceptable. If I overcame these hurdles, I was immediately faced with others, such as the accuracy of the instruction's color scheme, the kit decals, and could I use the Humbrol or Airfix paints straight from the tinlet? After a short while my modeling ground to a halt, and I would arrive at each month's club meeting with nothing to show. Bringing in nothing was better than risking a kit someone might criticize. My confidence had been shattered, the immense pleasure derived from my hobby, gone.

Now of course you realized this rambling had to be going somewhere, and here it is: we have as many as 50 members turn up at each month's meeting, with the same 10 bringing in their work. I have been wondering if like me, the rest of these members fear bringing in their work, somehow worried that SOMEONE ELSE might not like their work. I know this is true for a number, for when I was soliciting volunteers to work on the B-17 Project, I came across a number of "I am not good enough" comments. Good enough for what? To win a First at the Nationals: probably. But the Project wasn't for the Nationals, wasn't supposed to be a super detailing challenge. Straight from the box was all that was required, to give the Public something different to look at when they visited the IPMS Vancouver Show.

Building a model is a personal thing. You do it for relaxation (otherwise it isn't a hobby, by definition). It shouldn't eat you up inside as you worry about what others will think about the finished article. If you chose to build a kit straight from the box, this does not make it more or less than a superdetailed or completely scratchbuilt model. It makes it different. If your goal is to build in miniature every aircraft the flew for the Germans in WWII, then superdetailing each and every model will result in failure to achieve your goal, as you probably won't live that long. Especially if you have other modeling themes you wish to pursue as well. But because you don't superdetail, or don't get bogged down in the "great color debate", doesn't mean your models are not pleasing to the eye. After all, a straight from the box

kit always beats out a bare spot on a display table.

We can all build competent models if we wish. All it takes is time, caring and self confidence. Learning the basics well will do wonders for you. Remember to plan ahead, so that what you did at the beginning will not haunt you at the end. Test fitting saves many a heartache. If you get stuck with needing putty, apply, sand and apply again if necessary. Also rescribe panel lines if they are damaged during sanding. Whilst time consuming to do, rescribing is not difficult.

Regarding that airbrush I mentioned earlier in this piece. I did something truly novel two nights ago. I decided to beat my fear of the beast, and attacked it with my wrench. I literally pulled it to bits, then sat and stared at it carefully examining how it went together, what each piece did, and how it worked. They are really rather simple devices, whose sole purpose is to atomize paint and direct its flow as it comes out the end of the "brush". Once I had this down, I asked a couple of friends how to mix paint. For if the airbrush simply atomizes paint, then there must be a point at which it is best atomized. "Like milk" they all said. Too watery and it is a mess, too thick and it comes out in large blobs. So I sat and mixed, tried it out, varied the air pressure, until I thought I was about perfect. In other words, I experimented, using the old "trial and error" method. Then I applied a smooth, even one color mix to my German tank. Looks great. I spent five times longer mixing paint and preparing to airbrush, as well as cleaning up later, as I did actually painting. This is how you airbrush well: 90% preparation and clean up, 10% application. I am sure I will blow it shortly, that my first few attempts will go well, then something might go wrong. If so, I will try and analyze what caused the screw up, learn from it, and try to insure it doesn't happen again. This is how we learned to do most things in life which we now find easy. It will be the same for your airbrushing if you decide to risk trying it right. Self confidence is the key to all aspects of life. I am finding it as true in my modeling as any other venture.

Spending time at your tasks is also very important. Just about every error you can make in basic modeling is caused by rushing. Not checking your putty jobs, not eliminating seams completely, not checking for correct wing or track alignment, poor masking of the canopy. If you spend the time, you will get it right. If you get it right, you will be motivated to continue and improve.

As for the experts and their pronouncements on color, scale accuracy, shape etc. Have the confidence to listen to them carefully and decide if what they say matters to your enjoyment of the hobby. I can't believe that 5mm off on the length of a fuselage, or a slightly misshapen tail is anything to really worry about. Something that must be realized is that these experts rarely can find a truly glaring fault on today's kits. They require their reference material, their calipers and a dozen pictures before they can pronounce a kit to be "inaccurate". Without such detailed examination, the kit is fine. As long as it is good enough for YOU, that should be what counts. Many of us lack the confidence to stick with what we believe in the face of people telling us otherwise. When what modelers say is usually "opinion" rather than "fact", we should be at our most confident. As long as you are close, the experts shouldn't count. If you do the job of simple research correctly, you should always be close.

So to all those who think they aren't good enough, I ask you to answer one simple question: Good Enough for What? Everyone is good enough to enjoy the hobby of scale plastic modeling, and the vast majority of us are capable of taking the hobby to any level we might wish to go, if we only have confidence in ourselves, and risk trying new techniques, having carefully studied what is necessary for success. As those repetitious Nike commercials keep telling us: JUST DO IT!!



IPMS Seattle

From: Andrew Birkbeck
3209 N.E. 98th Street
Seattle, WA 98115

To: William Holowchuk
19627 - 133rd Dr SE
Shoemijah WA 98290

29
USA 