Seattle Chapter News

Seattle Chapter IPMS/USA October 2021

Greetings All! We will be having one more model give-away at our upcoming meeting this Saturday where (hopefully) we can finish with Ernie and Kelley's fathers' collection. All kits are 1/72nd, except for the ship models, and the estate spans the entire spectrum of modeling. If you missed last month, I am hoping you can come and participate on October 9.

Once again, our meeting is a 'mask-required' event, and we strongly recommend that only vaccinated members attend. We are an older group (what what?) and we have been very lucky with this virus so far. Thank you in advance for your help in keeping us all safe and healthy.

Using Filters - Revisited

I would like to revisit a key finishing technique called Filters for this month's column. Products and approaches change constantly so I thought it important to have another look-see.

Simply defined, a Filter is a thin layer of heavily diluted medium (oil, enamel, acrylic or gouache), hand-brushed over the surface of a model to subtly change the hue and saturation of the underlying color. The effect is not unlike putting on a pair of colored sunglasses, or a tinted camera lens, hence the name filter.

In the past, I used to paint a German cockpit, for example, by starting with a dark pre-shade, followed by a lightened-RLM Grey base color, a smoke-colored post-shading, and then a detail painting of all the little cables and levers, etc., followed by a wash and dry brushing. Similarly, an armored vehicle required attention to all the little pieces of equipment stowed within or on top; different types of canvas bags, steel ammo canisters, wooded steering wheels, fire extinguishers, etc. When finished, sometimes the stark contrast between the colors I used looked odd to me, even under a wash. I see this a lot in model contest entries as well.

But when I look inside a (real) combat-worn and faded cockpit (any Navy plane at an air show, for example) or an armored vehicle interior, a sense of 'color' doesn't really jump out at me. In my mind's eye, I see an overall faded, beat-up shade with hints of green here and black there. What colors might have been there originally have faded with sunlight and/or dirt and dust – leaving everything a little blander and more monochromatic. On the flip side, sometimes I see finished models that are a single color, and carry no variations whatsoever in their monochromatic finish. Either way, achieving an interesting, and in my opinion a more realistic, finish is simple – using filters.

In a nutshell, I start with a very light base made from mixing the color I intend to use with a different, analogous color along the same spectrum. For example, I will lighten RLM Grey with a bit of Flesh or Blue; Olive Drab with Yellow or Bone, German Dark Yellow with Brown or Deck Tan, etc. The result is the base color I will use for everything (including radio sets to fire extinguishers) on to which the filters will be added. That may sound wrong, but, for example, if I put enough thin (filter) layers of Cavalry Red over my lightened 'German Grey' fire extinguisher, it will appear 'red' to the eye, and not RED like a brand-new one from Home Depot.

My Preferred Weapons of War:
I normally use Tamiya/RealColor paints for my base colors, but I have successfully used just about every other type of paint as well. I normally make my filters out of oil paint, but I often use Mig/Ammo/AK Interactive pre-mixed filters as well, which are 'hot' enamels. I do not use acrylics for creating filters since I feel that the paint dries too quickly, and can leave tide-marks if I am not careful (oils and enamels are more forgiving). I thin all of my filters using Mona Lisa Odorless White Spirit, which can be found at Michael's, Ben Franklin's, etc. Mona Lisa will not affect the base-coat paint, or other (cured) underlying weathering, no matter what I've used or flat coat I've applied. It's great stuff – 'Mona' does what she is supposed to do (thin distillate-based products) and nothing more.

SEATTLE CHAPTER CONTACTS

President:	**Vice President:**	**Treasurer:**	**Show Chair:**
Eric Christianson	Terry Moore	Fuzhou Hu	David Dodge
10014 124th Ave NE	7014 Lake Grove St. SW	19012 3rd Dr SE	
Kirkland, WA 98033	Lakewood, WA 98499	Bothell, WA 98012	
Ph: 425-591-7385		Ph: 412-215-7417	Ph: 425-825-8529
ModelerEric@comcast.net	terryandjill@comcast.net	fhu.ipms@gmail.com	ddodge@nwlink.com

IPMS Seattle Web Site (Web Co-Ordinator, John Kaylor): **http://www.ipms-seattle.org**

Public Disclaimers, Information, and Appeals for Help

This is the official publication of the Seattle Chapter, IPMS-USA. As such, it serves as the voice for our Chapter, and depends largely upon the generous contributions of our members for articles, comments, club news, and anything else involving plastic scale modeling and associated subjects. Our meetings are generally held on the second Saturday of each month, (see below for actual meeting dates), at the **North Bellevue Community/Senior Center, 4063-148th Ave NE**, in Bellevue. See the back page for a map. Our meetings begin at 10:30 AM, except as noted, and usually last for two to three hours. Our meetings are very informal, and are open to any interested modeler, regardless of interests. Modelers are encouraged to bring their models to the meetings. Subscriptions to the newsletter are included with the Chapter dues. We also highly recommend our members join and support IPMS-USA, the national organization. See below for form. Any of the members listed above will gladly assist you with further information about the Chapter or Society.

The views and opinions expressed in this newsletter are those of the individual writers, and do not constitute the official position of the Chapter or IPMS-USA. You are encouraged to submit any material for this newsletter to the editor. He will gladly work with you and see that your material is put into print and included in the newsletter, no matter your level of writing experience or computer expertise. The newsletter is currently being edited using a PC, and PageMaker 6.5. We are in the process of transitioning to InDesign. Any Word, WordPerfect, or text document for the PC would be suitable for publication. Please do not embed photos or graphics in the text file. Photos and graphics should be submitted as single, separate files. Articles can also be submitted via e-mail, to the editor's address above. Deadline for submission of articles is generally twelve days prior to the next meeting - earlier would be appreciated! Please call me at 425-885-3671 if you have any questions.

If you use or reprint the material contained in the newsletter, we would appreciate attribution both to the author and the source document. Our newsletter is prepared with one thing in mind; this is information for our members, and all fellow modelers, and is prepared and printed in the newsletter in order to expand the skills and knowledge of those fellow modelers.

Upcoming Meeting Dates

The IPMS Seattle 2021 meeting schedule is as follows. All meetings are on Saturdays from **10:30 AM** to **1:30 PM**, except as indicated. To avoid conflicts with other groups using our meeting facility, we must **NOT** be in the building before our scheduled start times, and **MUST** be finished and have the room restored to its proper layout by our scheduled finish time. We suggest that you keep this information in a readily accessible place.

October 9	**November 13**
December 11	**January 15, 2022 (third Saturday)**

Newsletter Editor:
Robert Allen
7919 133rd Ave. NE
Redmond, WA, 98052
425-885-3671
baclightning@yahoo.com

The most important thing about using this technique is that the base-coat must be FLAT before applying the filters. I want even coverage – this is not a wash that I want to flow into nooks and crannies. In fact, if the filter accumulates in the recesses, I 'wick' the excess product out with a tissue to leave an even color coat over the entire surface I am working on.

With oil paints, the finer the pigment the better. I thin oils heavily (90-95% thinner vs. paint) with Mona Lisa in a shallow tin. Here are my favorites Oil Paints for filters:

Old Holland Warm Sepia Extra
MIG Abteilung 502 Wash Brown
Artists Oil Color Van Dyke Dark Brown
Artists Oil Color Van Dyke Burnt Umber
Windsor Newton Payne's Gray
MIG Abteilung 502 Light Rust
MIG Abteilung 502 Dark Rust
MIG Abteilung 502 Buff
MIG Abteilung 502 Black
(I also use Mig/Ammo Oilbrushers for other color options)

Application Steps:
Once my base coat of paint is dry (and treated with some kind of flattening agent – I use Vallejo Matt Varnish), I will brush a thin coat of pure Mona Lisa on to the area where I will be applying a filter. This will help the filter flow and prevent tidemarks. Once the surface is reasonably dry, I will brush on the filter, layer by layer, until I get the color I am looking for, allowing each layer to dry before adding the next one. The highly thinned mixture will stay usable for quite some time. In the armor image example, I started with a lightened Olive Drab overall. I then added a Wash Brown filter to the main hull areas to darken that, and a Payne's grey filter to the extra track links, and a Black filter to the two smoke dischargers.

Once I have the effect I want, I apply a gloss coat to the entire surface to prepare it for decals, a pin wash and some streaking. For armor models, I blend everything at the end with road dust and another layer of flat varnish.

Hopefully, you will find this simple technique of using filters worthwhile and add it to your arsenal of finishing steps. As always, if you have any questions or suggestions, feel free to e-mail me directly.
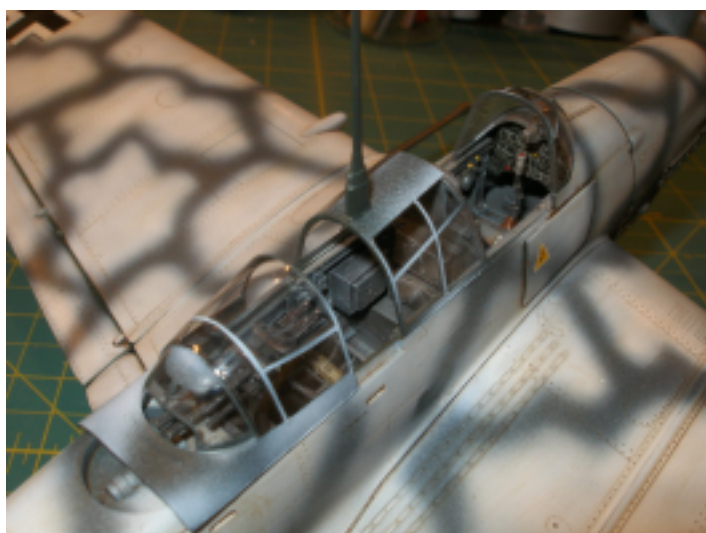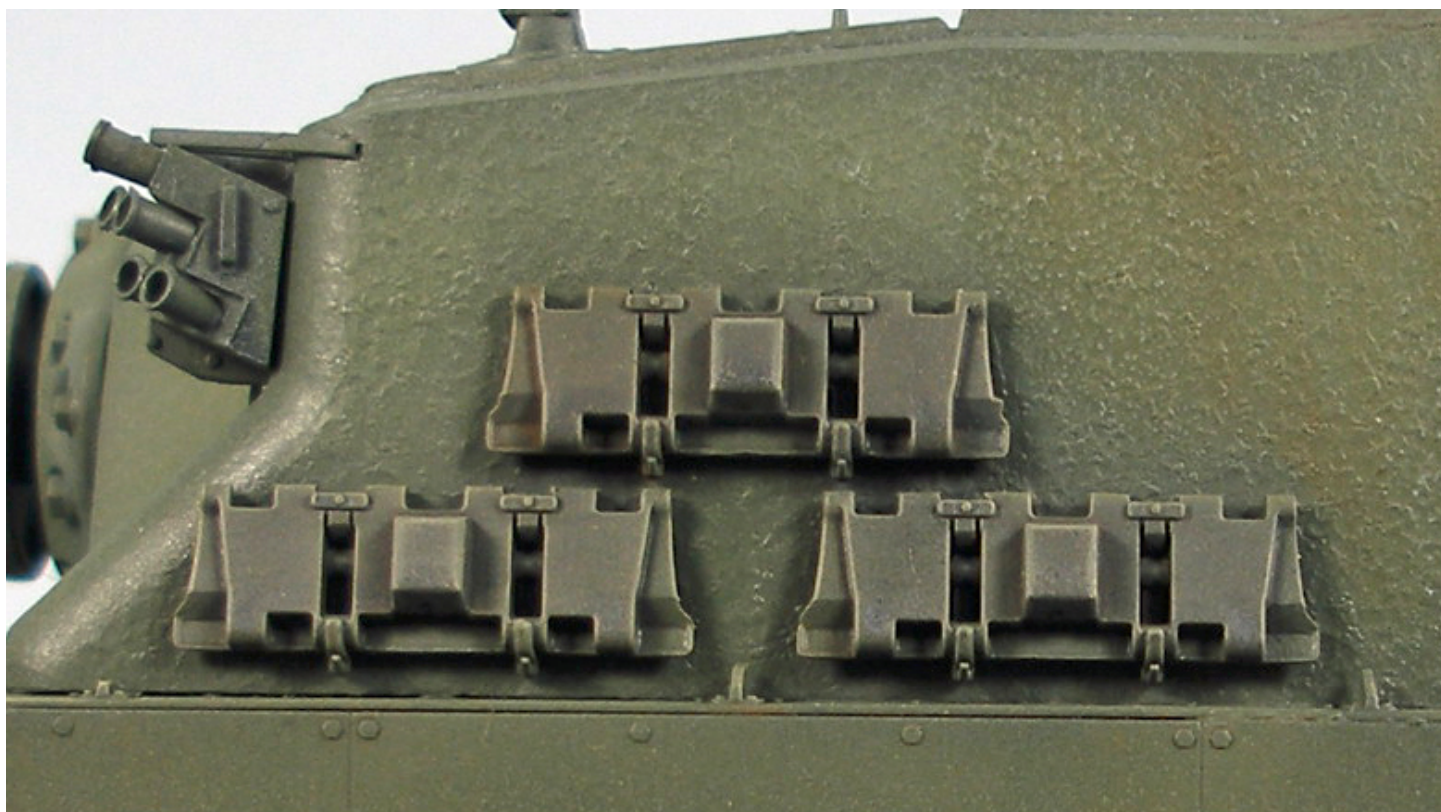
Photo of the Month

Thanks to Dave Hansen for sending me this great photo from the Tacoma Public Library Collction.

Caption: "In November of 1945, Cy Sims was ready to fill the Christmas shopping lists of the boys and girls of Tacoma with models from his shop at 103 South 9th Street. Cyril A. "Cy" Sims, standing at the front door of his store, opened The Model Shop in the old "Uhlman Block" building in 1945. Born in England, his family moved to Tacoma in 1917. Before opening his model store, Mr. Sims worked as a commercial artist for the Hamrick Theaters in Tacoma. He died in 1953 at the age of 46. The "Uhlman Block" building, which was built at the corner of South 9th and A St. in 1889, was demolished in 1951. Photo: Dick Yost and Nelson Richards. TPL-6481"

Building Meng's 1/72nd Scale Fiat G.91

by Chris Banyai-Riepl

The Fiat G.91 is a small fighter-bomber design out of Italy that first took flight in 1956. The G.91 entered service with the Italian Air Force in 1961 and the German Luftwaffe shortly thereafter, with Portugal operating the type later on. While the plane did not have a large number of operators, it was a fairly common sight in the skies over Europe, with nearly 800 produced. The interesting design undoubtedly led Airfix to produce the first kit of the G.91 in 1959, which remained the only game in town for the next 40 years if you wanted to build a G.91 in 1/72nd. In 1999, Revell Germany released a new tool G.91, and it was much better than the Airfix kit. Now, though, we have another addition to the G.91 world, this time a new tool kit from the world of Meng.

Meng released their 1/72 Fiat G.91 back in 2012, and like with many models, I was excited to move this one to the workbench. The kit comes with just about everything you could need to build up a nice G.91, with just a couple of notable exceptions. The first essential replacement is an aftermarket seat, and I replaced the kit seat with a Pavla replacement. The other replacement is not necessarily essential, but as most of the Luftwaffe G.91s carried them, I grabbed some F-86 Sabre fuel tanks to replace the skinny tanks in the kit. With those changes, I jumped into the build.

The Cockpit: Aside from the seat, the kit cockpit is quite nice, with raised details on the sidewalls and instrument panel. So I had no problem with just using these kit parts and giving them a nice bit of detail painting. Everything got a base layer of gray, then the sidewalls and instrument panel had their details picked out with various colors. The resin seat was a huge improvement over the kit seat, and I probably spent more time painting up the details on the seat than the rest of the cockpit all together. The seat did pose one problem though: when placed in the cockpit tub the canopy would not fit closed. It wasn't too high, though, so I just sanded the bottom off the seat a bit and planned to have it posed with an open canopy.

With the interior pretty much done the next step was getting the fuselage together. This kit comes with separate panels for the guns in the nose, allowing for either the R3 option with two 30mm cannons or the R4 option with four 12.7mm machine guns. Since the Luftwaffe aircraft were R3s, I glued the 30mm cannon panels in place and rushed it, resulting in a mediocre fit that would definitely require filler.

With those panels in place, I added all the cockpit bits and other interior necessities such as the exhaust pipe and wheel wells, tossed in a fair amount of nose weight (there's a lot of plane behind the main wheels), and glued the fuselage together. One area that I thought about updating, but ultimately didn't, was the intake blanking plate that results in a pretty short intake. Fixing that would have taken more work than I wanted to invest in this, especially seeing how much work I'd need to do on those side panels.

The resultant fuselage assembly ended up needing filler on the gun panels and the main wheel well insert, so I broke out the Tamiya Basic putty and went to work on those areas. The side panels were the most challenging as I had to work around a bulge for the gun barrel (luckily the gun barrels were separate). I also glued the nose cone and intake lip on at this point, and luckily both of those fit well, as did the wings. However, after gluing the nose cone on, I realized that I forgot to drill out the camera port openings on it, and that coupled with the filler on the side panels frustrating me, I relegated the kit to the shelf of doom, where it resided alongside far too great a number of other kits.

With the combination of a new dedicated modeling workspace and a global pandemic, I turned my attention to the shelf of doom and decided to finish as many of those as possible, with a goal of trying new things out where possible. Percolating up in the pile was the Meng G.91, and it just so happened I had an old Microscale decal sheet with some Luftwaffe examples on it. Thus inspired to see if 45-year old decals were still of use, the G.91 made it back on the bench with a vengeance.

As the goal now was to experiment with old decals rather than build the absolute best 1/72nd G.91 that had ever been seen, my concerns over the filler diminished drastically. I still smoothed it out as much as possible, though, and attempted a bit of rescribing. I completely ignored the solid nose, and planned to just paint the openings black and call it good. That meant that the kit was dangerously close to the painting stage, so that's where I turned next.

I discovered that I had close enough matches to the three colors worn by Luftwaffe G.91s, consisting a light aircraft gray on the underside and a dark green and dark gray on the upper surfaces, so I proceeded to paint things up. I gave the entire model a coat of the underside gray, both for the underside color and to see if there were any glaring errors to fix. I then masked off the underside and proceeded to freehand the upper surface camouflage. For all three colors the Vallejo Model Air paints worked flawlessly.

That covered the basics, but another feature seen on Luftwaffe G.91s was the fluorescent orange-red bands around the F-86 drop tanks. I had a bottle of Vallejo's fluorescent red, so I thought this would be a perfect time to see how good it was. I started with a base of white and slowly built up the fluorescent red. I wanted to have it be a faded look, which has the color shifting more towards the yellow, and I was curious if building up the color slowly would yield that effect. I was pleasantly surprised when it did just that, and when compared to the dense application I did on my Folland Gnat, the differences are significant.

After a clear coat, it's time to turn to the decals. As noted earlier, I chose to use an old Microscale sheet that had decals for F-4Fs, F-104s, and G.91s, all in Luftwaffe markings. The original sheet is so old, the sheet number is two digits. I'm pretty sure the sheet I have is one of the original 1975 releases, as it has been in my decal stash since the 1980s, so this experiment will definitely be an interesting one. Concerns I had right off the bat was having the decals explode immediately upon dropping them in water, the decals not sticking, or the decals sticking too much. So I used a couple of the decals I wouldn't need as a test. Surprisingly, none of those issued showed up and the decals performed amazingly, being thin and reacting well to my classic standby of Solvaset. So, on they went to the model.

One nice thing about the Microscale sheet was that it included a lot of stencils in addition to the basic markings. The kit decals had the bare minimum in that regard, and I am a strong proponent of adding stencils to models. They just add that tiny bit of extra detail that cranks up the realism factor. As this sheet dates back to the 1970s, it was designed for the Airfix kit and I was worried that the red wing walkway markings (which are all but useless in the kit decals) wouldn't fit. But apparently Airfix got the wing shape right in their kit, as they matched up nicely with the Meng wing. Another thing that really impressed me with the Microscale decals, given their age, was how the clear film just disappeared instantly. Even without the addition of a setting solution, the pressed-on decals looked painted on. I am now definitely rethinking my thoughts of getting rid of all these old decal sheets I have.

With the decals on, the Fiat was looking good. So good that I decided to replace the kit gun barrels with some metal tubing. That, plus the addition of the landing gear (follow the instructions here, people, as that main gear is a weird one), the seat, and the canopy, and I was calling this one (mostly) done. I have the drop tanks on the inboard pylons but nothing on the outboard pylons, yet. I left the nubs for now, as I'm planning on adding either rocket pods or bombs, once I find the right kind for 1970s Luftwaffe aircraft. If I can't find any, I'll slice those off and add mounting details, but I'm sure I'll find something in the spares pile.

Despite languishing for nearly ten years, and lacking the nose clear ports, I am pretty pleased with how this little Fiat turned out. The Microscale decals really impressed me, and with new Phantom, Tomcat, and Crusader kits out there, I think I'm going to dip back into those old sheets and build up some US Navy planes soon.

[Thanks to Chris Banyai-Riepl and **www.internetmodeler.com** *for permission to use his article. - ED]*

Miniart 1/35th Scale Focke Wulf Triebflugel "What if Series" with boarding ladder

by Terry D. Moore

There is an entire genre of modeling called "Luft '46" that suggests that if World War II in Europe had continued, all sorts of fanciful subjects would have been encountered in the skies over Europe. Jets, rockets, flying wings, and all manner paper airplanes actually were built and put into production for the defense of Germany. One of those that fascinates me is the Focke Wulf Triebflugel, an exceedingly odd design. It's one of those "what were they thinking" designs that couldn't possibly have worked.

Kit wise, the Triebflugel has been issued in all the most popular scales and when this one showed up at the local hobby emporium, I just had to have it. This particular version is actually 1/35th scale but considering it's not real, would look great next to any 1/32nd scale subject. The kit is very well engineered and easy to assemble. Parts fit is excellent and minimal, if any filler putty was used on this kit. The only difficulty I encountered was fitting the cockpit tub into the nose section. The instructions aren't totally clear on how it goes in but a bit of sanding stick took care of that minor issue. It only took me three weeks to build and paint the aircraft, but the included boarding platform is rather fiddly and I'm not quite finished with that, being rather ham-fisted as I get older…

The kit includes decals for six different "what if" schemes: German Army Corps Africa Corps, 1946, Air Defense Battery, Antarctica, 1946, Imperial Japanese Army, 244th Sentai, 1946, Hungarian 101/1 Szazad, 1946, Romania Ploesti defense, and "Unit Hydra"(a Marvel comic reference).

I finished mine in the markings of the McDonnell Aircraft Model 82T. The company obtained the Focke Wulf plans at the conclusion of the war and attempted to build it to compete with the Convair, Lockheed, and Ryan VTOL projects.

Monroe Purdue Studios 1/35th Scale Zimmerit Set for Tiger II Henschel Turret

by Eric Christianson

Perusing the website of Monroe Purdue Studios (MPS), out of Simi Valley CA, will uncover a variety of unusual modeling products, including a growing set of very affordable laser-cut wood and paper zimmerit sets, among a lot of other interesting items. Visiting their booth at the 2021 Las Vegas IPMS Nationals, I looked at a dozen or so build-ups in various stages of completion, demonstrating the uniqueness of their products. I came home with two sets; one a complete zimmerit set for the 1/35th scale HobbyBoss King Tiger II (the subject of this review), and a 1/35th scale laser-cut wood set for cases of wine (the subject of a separate review on page 14).

The set for the King Tiger is purpose-designed for the HobbyBoss (Henschel Turret) kit, but also closely fits the Tamiya kit as well, parts of which I used for this review since I do not own the HobbyBoss offering.

The product comes on a single, laser-cut 'paper' sheet that is very thin yet somehow stiff enough to hold its shape. Think of something in-between the floppy latex zimmerit and stiffer photo-etch/metal zimmerit offered by other manufacturers. Each piece has just a few tiny 'nubs' that connect it to the overall sheet, much like photo-etch. For example, the long, single-piece side panel of the Tiger has only four tiny nubs to push your hobby knife through to release the piece – very nice.

MPS suggests that the zimmerit be applied with a white glue over primer as it will not adhere well to bare plastic. The glue is applied with a brush to the primed plastic, not to the zimmerit. Once pushed down into the glue, you have some time to adjust things before the product starts to cure. Once cured, it is set and will take all types of paint and weathering products.

I started by marking the various holes and attachment points on the hull side with a drill, so once the zimmerit was set I would re-open what I needed from the inside of the hull. Once that was done, I laid down a coat of my go-to primer for small projects, un-thinned Alclad II (lacquer) ALC309 Black Primer and Microfiller. The lacquer adds 'bite' to the plastic surface and burns through any mold release agents and oils.

MPS suggests any kind of white (PVA) glue, so I used Testor's Clear Part Cement and Window Maker, a thin, white glue used for aircraft canopies. The key here is to create a thin coverage over the entire surface, thin enough to help minimize any glue from squeezing out of the sides, which can be cleaned up with a damp cloth or paper towel.

Once the zimmerit is down it can be adjusted until placed right where you want it. MPS doesn't provide any specific drying time, so I followed the instructions for the brand of glue I was using (one hour).

After drying, I carefully opened the holes I had drilled before, and used a scalpel to shave off a tiny amount of overhanging zimmerit along the bottom edge. Once satisfied, I painted the hull side following my typical late-war German camouflage and weathering routine. This would show me if the zimmerit pattern would survive the layers of product typical in (my) building process.

Products used, in the order given:

1.   Lacquers - Alclad II (lacquer) ALC309 Black Primer and Microfiller along the edges and panel lines.
2.   Acrylic-Lacquers: Tamiya German Yellow, followed by AK Interactive RC47 OliveGreen and RC68 RedBrown, followed by a dusting of Tamiya XF-57 Buff.
3.   Oils and distillate thinners: A filter of Mig Wash Brown, thinned with Mona Lisa White Spirit.
4.   Acrylics: A glossy coat of Pledge floor product (Future) for decaling and washes.
5.   Enamels, Linseed-free Oils and distillate thinners: Layers of Mig enamel washes and Mig 'Oil Brushers', stumped with Mona Lisa.
6.   Acrylics again: A final coat of Vallejo Matt Varnish.

I was pleasantly surprised to see that the thin paper zimmerit physically held up to multiple layers of various products, and the light zimmerit pattern held through as well.

I really like these MPS products; simple to use, affordable, and they can turn your good 'eh' model into a nice build if you take your time and go easy on the glue. The zimmerit pattern itself is very light, but it takes a wash well, and it is probably more in scale with the real thing than many of the other zimmerit products on the market, most of which are over-scale.

I would like to thank the good folks at Monroe Purdue Studios for providing this product for review, and to IPMS USA for giving me the opportunity to review it.
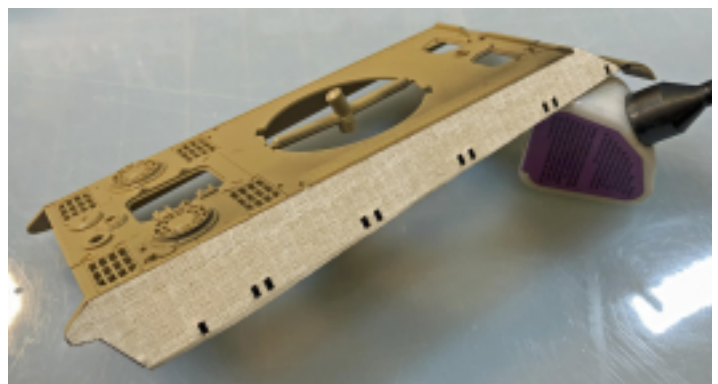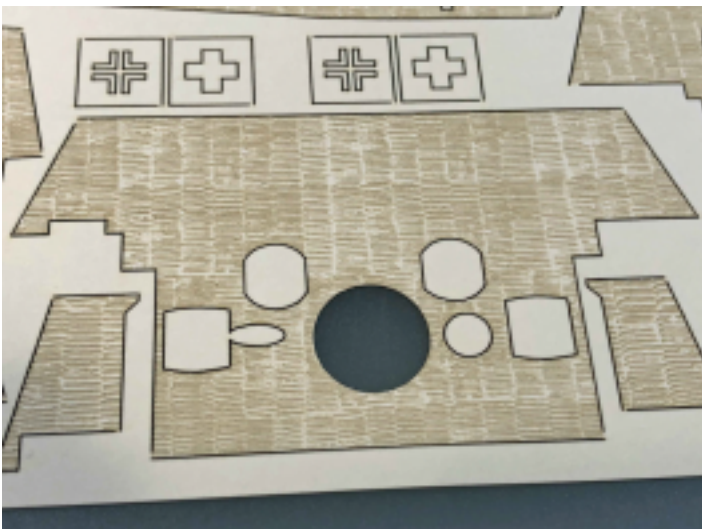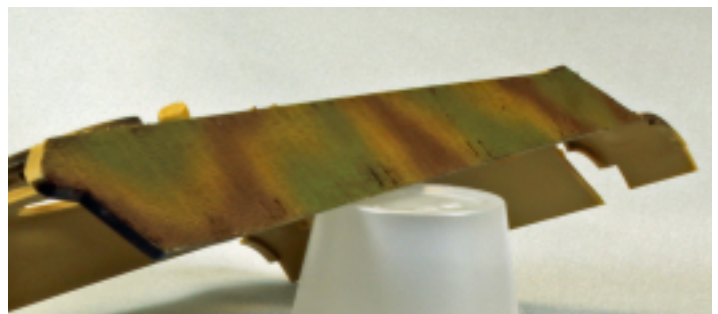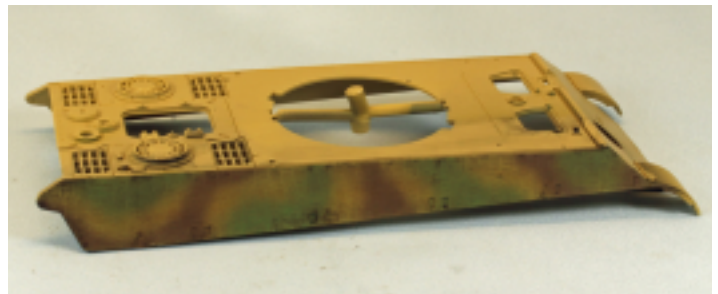
Old Kits Must Be Disposed Of?

by Scott H. Kruize

Virtual meetings are the only kind our model club members been able to have with each other, till quite recently. We're still having such, in-between now newly-rescheduled monthly get-togethers.

In the course of one such virtual get-together, the matter of kit disposal came up. A very large collection of old models came to our IPMS Chapter President from the widow of a modeler we didn't know. The conglomeration was mostly aircraft models in 1/72nd scale: perhaps a grand-and-a-half boxes, some of which had more than one set of sprues inside. A handful may have some value to kit collectors, but the vast majority were from the common run-of-the-mill period, when kits were mostly intended for young boys to put together. That used to be an extremely common hobby…before the advent of video games. The estate collection had no desirable, expensive modern kits at all. The discussion revolved around whether it'll be possible to even give away so many old kits, recognizing it would be quite impossible to sell them. The ugly word 'landfill' came up more than once...

Newer kits are orders of magnitude better than the old ones: dimensionally more accurate, with finer detail - augmented by photoetch and resin parts far tinier than can be produced even by advances in plastic injection-molding technology. Parts fit is better, sometimes so superbly done with the help of CAD/CAM that even a thin airbrushed trifle of paint prevents parts from fitting together as they ought. Panel lines are now always recessed. Often, equipment is detailed for use in bays normally covered by access panels or engine cowlings. Representational decals are gone, replaced with well-researched, highly detailed marking sets for particular aircraft in particular times and places, in particular service units, and sometimes as flown by particular pilots! There may well be not one, but several such decal sets in a modern kit. Unimaginable back Then.

All well and good…and priced accordingly. Back Then, commonly-scaled kits had to sell for a dollar or two, but now we Aging Baby Boomers have enough liquid assets - or at least credit cards not yet maxed out - to enable purchases of multitudes of $30-$100 'gems'.

While all this was discussed, a participant referred to the old kits - specifying Airfix and Monogram by name - as being 'shoddy'. Actually, he used a different word, implying that the old kits were waste material that were best disposed of immediately, with nose pinched tightly shut, washing hands thoroughly afterwards. But we'll use the less extreme word 'shoddy' here...

It's certainly true that some of the older kits had actual conspicuous flaws, that at least would frustrate young builders back Then...when glues were marginal, at best, with few of the tools we take for granted now, and perhaps no hint that putty and filler might be available. But were they all 'shoddy'?

I've built a bunch, and have a large number of unbuilts in my stash. As a whole, in general, I find the old kits quite good, and certainly easily buildable. Fit is nearly always just fine, needing little or no filler, even with the far higher build standards and expectations I have Now. Quality of the details molded-in are entirely adequate, given the skills of its intended builders and the financial constraints of mass-marketing back Then. Pictured are some of my builds in the Now, from old kits, and while all have all the limitations I describe a couple of paragraphs back, once built and put on the table top, they do a reasonable job of representing the originals. OK: I admit to being a 'hack' builder, entirely without the ambition to win First Place trophies in highly-contested categories at major IPMS contests. But sometimes I pull an old kit from my stash, and build it just to have a good time…which I do!

Some clarification is in order here. During that same virtual meeting, following the comment about old 'shoddy' kits, I ventured to observe that many of us - perhaps most - build plastic model kits for quiet relaxation and satisfaction. Others - and I don't know what proportion of us we're considering - actually have the 'hobby' of trying to win awards in contests. Those two motivations are not at all the same thing, do not entail the same effort and expense. The former requires only devoting such time as the builder wants. The latter requires serious devotion and determination to triumph in the eyes of other modelers and contest judges.

I'm not criticizing the latter approach here. To the contrary, I can admire the really good, dedicated perfectionist modelers' work at contests...they nudge me towards improving my own modeling skills. That's a good thing. What would not be a good thing for me: to lose that satisfaction and relaxation; the joy of just building for its own sake. I know where I'm comfortable in this hobby, and intend to stay there. Others may do as they feel compelled...but I'm not obliged to follow their lead.

Worth repeating is that slogan I inherited from the former writer of this column at *Internet Modeler*: Build What You Want, The Way You Want To, And Above All, Have Fun!

Monroe Purdue Studios 1/35th Scale Wooden Wine Crates

by Eric Christianson

Perusing the website of Monroe Purdue Studios (MPS), out of Simi Valley CA, will uncover a variety of unusual modeling products, including a growing set of very affordable laser-cut wood sets, among a lot of other interesting items. Visiting their booth at the 2021 Las Vegas IPMS Nationals, I looked at a dozen or so build-ups in various stages of completion, demonstrating the uniqueness of their products. I came home with two sets; a 1/35th scale laser-cut wood French Wine Crates set for cases of wine (the subject of this review), and a complete zimmerit set for the 1/35th scale HobbyBoss King Tiger II (the subject of a separate review om page 10).

The French Wine Crates set comes with enough pieces to create a dozen cases of wine. The product comes on a single, laser-cut 'wood' sheet that is to scale yet sturdy enough to go together easily. Each box has six pieces, four of which fit together via a delightfully working dovetail-joint design, with the remaining two pieces (top and bottom) added last. Each piece has just a few tiny 'nubs' that connect it to the sheet, much like photo-etch. You just push your hobby knife through the nubs to release the piece – very nice. The best part is the laser-cut relief burned into the outer box surfaces, representing the artwork and verbiage on the sides, and box lines along the top and bottom.

MPS suggests to weather the raw wood sheet up front, before assembly, since doing so afterwards is problematic – all six sides of each box sports detail so there is no 'blank' side to place down during weathering. I used a thin filter of Mig Dark Brown Wash (enamel), mixed 20/80 with Mona Lisa White Spirit. Once dry to the touch, I assembled each box using Mig Ultra Glue, mostly because I have more experience with that product then other white glues. The key here is to add just enough to do the job so that glue doesn't squeeze out of the joints, which can be cleaned up with a damp cloth or paper towel.

MPS doesn't provide any specific drying time, so I followed the instructions for the brand of glue I was using (about ten minutes).

The first boxes took about four minutes each to do, the last ones about half that time as I worked down the learning curve. The crates – which are, in fact, made of wood - will take all types of paint and weathering products, although I am betting that paint will cover up all that artwork on the outside of the boxes for good.

The relief detail on the outside of the boxes popped as expected to render a nice set of wine crates, ready for any modeling application or diorama. I am currently building the ICM G4 Staff Car, where a few of these cases will look perfect in the back seat.

I really like these MPS products; simple to use and affordable. The stenciling and the inter-locked pattern of the dovetail joint on the boxes absorbs the dark filter well and really pops – just like the real thing.

I would like to thank the good folks at Monroe Purdue Studios for providing this product for review, and to IPMS USA for giving me the opportunity to review it.

IPMS Seattle Dues

Your IPMS Seattle renewal form is included below. Dues will be **$15**, which includes monthly e-mail delivery of the newsletter. Because of the disruption caused by the pandemic, we have changed the former January-December dues year to August-July. You can renew by writing a check to IPMS Seattle and mailing it to the address below. Or you can bring the form and payment to the October meeting, where Club Treasurer Fuzhou Hu will be happy to assist you.

IPMS Seattle Dues

Remit $15 to:
IPMS Seattle
c/o Fuzhou Hu
19012 3rd Dr SE
Bothell, WA 98012

Full Name _____

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Telephone (Area Code) (_____) _____
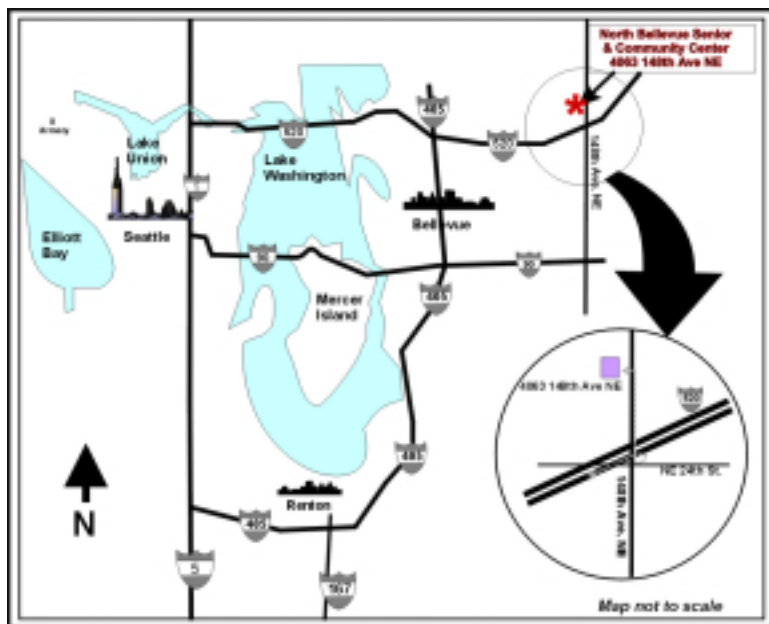
E-mail address _____

[   ]   Please do NOT release my e-mail and phone information for distributed club rosters.

Meeting Reminder   October 9
10:30 AM to 1:30 PM

North Bellevue Community/Senior Center
4063 -148th Ave NE, Bellevue

Directions to NBCSC: From Seattle or from I-405, take 520 East to the 148th Ave NE exit. Take the 148th Ave North exit (the second of the two 148th Ave. exits) and continue north on 148th until you reach the Senior Center. The Senior Center will be on your left. The Center itself is not easily visible from the road, but there is a signpost in the median.