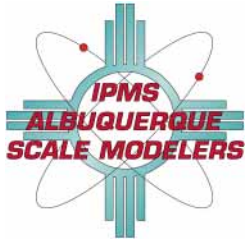


ALBUQUERQUE SCALE MODELERS



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March 2019

NOSTALGIA TONY HUMPHRIES

Part 1 (of a 1 part series)

[Editor's note: as this is literally the only article submitted this month, it is being run here in the printed section in a highly-abbreviated form. The entire—and much longer!—article appears in the Bonus Pages for our electronic readers! -JW]

As members of our own esteemed club will be aware, I am generally an armor, diorama, and/or figure modeler. But sometimes even I feel the need for a change. Maybe it is the smell of styrene on the wind. For reasons best known to myself and my therapist, I have decided to hang up my armor hat for a while and have a stab at a few aircraft kits this year. Well, nobody's perfect, after all. I have devel-

oped an interest of late, in WWII aircraft that flew from the county that I grew up in. Wiltshire (in the southwest of England) was not one of the front-line locations for the Battle of Britain or the Blitz really, although it did feature to some degree in both. It was home, however, to a huge range of RAF aircraft throughout the war and was one of the main bases for US Airborne forces in the runup to D-Day, Market Garden, and Operation Varsity.

Why pick these subjects? Well, nostalgia I suppose. Back in the day, we found WWII surplus all over the place, but of course weren't sensible enough to keep it. We were more sensible than some though—the kid that I remember vigorously hitting a "live" 40mm Bofors shell with half a brick to see

February Meeting highlights, left to right: Modeler of the Year recipients (L – R: Aleya Montaño [looking a lot like Ken Liotta], Jeannie Garriss, Chuck Hermann, and Tony Humphries), setting up the swap meet, and the business meeting in progress.



what happened, for example. He's still alive, remarkably enough, although I don't think his eyebrows ever grew back.

In conjunction with this of course, there is also a desire to commemorate the men who risked their lives daily, flying from these now mostly forgotten places. My own local airfields at Ramsbury and Membury were also busy places. Membury was home to a number of USAAF Recon squadrons using Spitfires and P-38 Lightnings before becoming a home base and a major service depot for P-47s. Ramsbury was a training base for RAF pilots who had learned to fly in the far-flung Empire, on single-engine death-traps before converting to more modern, twin-engine death traps—I mean, *aircraft*. They also had to get used to flying in almost permanent rain and fog of course... After a year or so of this, and seventeen documented air crashes in the immediate vicinity (almost all Airspeed Oxfords), you Yanks arrived and the skies and runways of both Ramsbury and Membury were then filled with C-47s and gliders, as far as the eye could see. The really weird thing (to me anyway) is that British glider pilots from the Glider Pilot Regiment were trained to fly powered aircraft first, before giving up their engines and sitting in a wooden aircraft that was uglier than Gary Busey and even less controllable. Brave men indeed, and if they aren't worthy of commemoration, I don't know who is.

So, to cut a long story short, yes I will be building at least one Horsa and a CG-4A Waco this year among my other projects.

Year 2019 Contest Quick Reference Chart
 Titles in **blue** indicate contests for points

- 04 Jan SPECIAL CONTEST #1:**
SCI-FI/SCIENCE/REAL SPACE/FANTASY
Sponsored Contest: "Frickin' Laser Beams" (Patrick Dick)
- 01 Feb ASM Swap Meet**—no contest
- 01 Mar Open Contest**—Any kit/subject/scale
- 05 Apr SPECIAL CONTEST #2: PRESIDENT'S CHOICE: FABULOUS FIFTIES**
- 03 May Automotive**—Any kit/subject/scale
- 07 Jun SPECIAL CONTEST #3: D-DAY 75TH ANNIVERSARY**
- 12 Jul Man in Space**—Any proposed/realspace crewed subject
- 02 Aug SPECIAL CONTEST #4: BEGINNING OF WWII 80TH ANNIVERSARY**
- 06 Sep ASM Swap Meet**—no contest
- 04 Oct Enter the Dragon**—Any DML/Dragon/Cyberhobby kit
- 01 Nov Open Contest**—Any kit/subject/scale
- 06 Dec SPECIAL CONTEST #5: BATTLE OF THE BULGE 75TH ANNIVERSARY**
 Plus *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>

So to bring this rambling narrative to an end, nostalgia is going to be powering my building efforts for the coming year. I don't have my own personal service to look back on. But I do have intense memories nonetheless. Remember how everything used to be cheaper, bigger, noisier, less safe, and peculiar shades of brown and orange? How about immortalizing some of that in plastic? I certainly intend to.

Master		Basic	
Ken Liotta	6	No Entries	
Patrick Dick	2		
Intermediate		Junior	
Charles Petrilli	4	No Entries	
Logan Carbin	2		

2019 MODELER OF THE YEAR POINTS
 As of 10 Jan 19



President:	Josh Pals	jpals871@gmail.com
Vice President:	Tony Humphries	abkhumphries@gmail.com
Secretary/Treasurer:	Frank Randall	fcr40.fr@gmail.com
Contest Director:	Chris Kurtze	aggressivekill@yahoo.com
Members Pro-Tem:	David Epstein	sf49erinnm@gmail.com
	Jack Garriss	jgar319113@aol.com
	Ken Piniak	kpiniak@yahoo.com
Webmaster:	Mike Blohm	BlohmM@aol.com
Newsletter Editor:	Joe Walters	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!

NOSTALGIA

TONY HUMPHRIES

Part 1 (of a 1 part series)

As members of our own esteemed club will be aware, I am generally an armor, diorama, and/or figure modeler. I enjoy the challenge of 750 tiny individual track-links and enough brass to equip an entire orchestra. Sometimes. But sometimes even I feel the need for a change. Maybe it is the smell of styrene on the wind. The stirring of the sap in springtime. The irresistible urge to gargle tequila, wear sandals (with socks) and Bermuda shorts, and head (farther) south for the winter. Anyway, for reasons best known to myself and my therapist, I have decided to hang up my armor hat for a while and have a stab at a few aircraft kits this year. Well, nobody's perfect, after all. I have developed an interest of late, in WWII aircraft that flew from the county that I grew up in. Wiltshire (in the southwest of England) was not one of the front-line locations for the Battle of Britain or the Blitz really, although it did feature to some degree in both. It was home, however, to a huge range of RAF aircraft throughout the war and was one of the main bases for US Airborne forces in the runup to D-Day, Market Garden, and Operation Varsity.

Why pick these subjects? Well, nostalgia I suppose. Many traces of WWII airfields still existed when I was a young whippersnapper, and we explored them endlessly at the time. Kind of like the movie *Stand by Me* but with surplus gas masks and live ammunition. Sadly, they are gone for the most part now, and I was terribly disappointed to see just how much has gone on my last trip to the old country. Call it progress if you like. Cultural vandalism is probably nearer the truth though... Back in the day, we found WWII surplus all over the place, but of course weren't sensible enough to keep it. We were more sensible than some though—the kid that I remember vigorously hitting a “live” 40mm Bofors shell with half a brick to see what happened, for example. He's still alive, remarkably enough, although I don't think his eyebrows ever grew back. Part of it was also sparked by my father, a metal detector enthusiast and historian who recently found yet another cache of Garand M1 ammunition (a change from the Roman stuff that he often turns up) and now probably has enough to start his own civil war. Actually, if Brexit isn't delivered as promised, he might very well be tempted to do so...

In conjunction with this of course, there is also a desire to commemorate the men who risked their lives daily, flying from these now mostly forgotten places. Wiltshire was home to a number of significant airbases including RAF Colerne, which was a major night-fighter base throughout the war and which was also home to the first official RAF jet fighter squadron (Meteors, Mk.I and III, of course) right at the close of the war in Europe. Spitfires were manufactured in several locations throughout the county, along with Short Stirlings, a stone's throw away (literally) from my old office in South Marston. RAF Lyneham, then and now home to the main transport units of the RAF and Wroughton, once home to one of the largest aircraft maintenance and storage facilities in the country—now a branch of London's Science Museum and home to a spectacularly good Fish and Chip shop. I'm not sure that those two facts are directly related, but you never know.

Then there's RAF Boscombe Down—home to most experimental and test aircraft flown throughout WWII, including many captured German subjects. It truly was the home of the weird and wonderful. It's basically Area 51 for the country gentleman. A bit more refined and a lot damper, but with at least one good pub just around the corner. And the ever present and far less pleasant nasal assault from the pig farm nearby—a smell so intense that it has both a physical presence and personality. In fact it occasionally buys a round in the public bar of the Horse and Hounds, according to local legend. Of course, with some of the bowel-loosening test flights in ill-advised experimental aircraft, that may have been a familiar odor in the cockpit too... There are many hair-raising stories told about that place. For example, Boscombe Down was home to the only B-25H flown by the RAF during WWII. One of the first tests of the bloody great on-board cannon resulted in a shell that went straight through the earth bank and brick wall that it

was aimed at, and straight into the fuselage of a Whitley parked behind it, which just happened to be loaded with half a ton of marker flares. Quite a sight to behold, I'm sure. There are probably still scorch marks on the tarmac even now. I wonder if that's why the RAF decided not to adopt the "H" variant?

My own local airfields at Ramsbury and Membury were also busy places. Membury was home to a number of USAAF Recon squadrons using Spitfires and P-38 Lightnings before becoming a home base and a major service depot for P-47s. Ramsbury was a training base for RAF pilots who had learned to fly in the far-flung Empire, on single-engine death-traps before converting to more modern, twin-engine death traps—I mean, *aircraft*. They also had to get used to flying in almost permanent rain and fog of course... After a year or so of this, and seventeen documented air crashes in the immediate vicinity (almost all Airspeed Oxfords), you Yanks arrived and the skies and runways of both Ramsbury and Membury were then filled with C-47s and gliders, as far as the eye could see. What makes a man jump out of a perfectly good airplane, or even worse, sit in the pilot's seat of an un-powered aircraft filled with fuel, ammunition, or a platoon of swarthy and bad tempered soldiers and then submit it to a series of barely-controlled crashes, I will never know. I guess they had to keep training pretty intensively to crash in just the right way before D-Day came along, though. The really weird thing (to me anyway) is that British glider pilots from the Glider Pilot Regiment were trained to fly powered aircraft first, before giving up their engines and sitting in a wooden aircraft that was uglier than Gary Busey and even less controllable. Brave men indeed, and if they aren't worthy of commemoration, I don't know who is.

So, to cut a long story short, yes I will be building at least one Horsa and a CG-4A Waco this year among my other projects. As a lad I remember, in the mid-1970s, seeing the front section of an Airspeed Horsa in a local scrapyard about a mile from my home, actually. As kids we looked longingly at it, but attempts to retrieve parts of it would, however, have been both illegal and even more dangerous than piloting the damn things, due to the presence of a junkyard dog that was surely at least 50% T-Rex. And that 50% was the nicer part...

So to bring this rambling narrative to an end, nostalgia is certainly going to be powering my building efforts for the coming year. Many of you probably have similar motivations. Maybe you build aircraft that you flew yourselves, armor that you practiced flattening sheep in (I've seen the RAC Chieftain and now Challenger tanks on manouvers on Salisbury Plain...) or ships that you were personally sick in. Being one of the few members of our club who did not serve in the military (due in part to a lifelong refusal to do as I'm told), I don't have my own personal service to look back on. But I do have intense memories nonetheless. Remember how everything used to be cheaper, bigger, noisier, less safe, and peculiar shades of brown and orange? How about immortalizing some of that in plastic? I certainly intend to.



BONUS PAGES! MISCELLANEOUS



On one hand it was a 40 million dollar plane,
on the other hand the spider was
inside the cockpit.





Sandia National Laboratories' Secret Nuclear Testing



Image: courtesy of the presenter.

Sandia Labs was heavily involved in the underground testing conducted in Nevada Test Site in the 60s and 70s, with personnel from the lab and from Kirtland and Los Alamos traveling back and forth each week to support these tests. This talk, by retired Senior Member of the Technical Staff at Sandia Lab Dave Straub, will show



"It's like college without exams, big fees, or long-term commitments."

actual secret test site photos and discuss the tests, including their large scale and large number of support personnel needed.



Saturday, March 9 • 10:30 a.m. — 12:00 p.m.

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