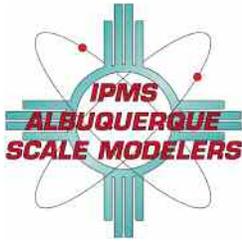


# ALBUQUERQUE SCALE MODELERS



<http://abqscalemodelers.com>

April 2018

## THE EAGLE'S VIEW MIKE BLOHM

The April 6 meeting is an "ASM Clinics Night" so you want to be sure to attend that night. We plan to have four or five simultaneous rotating clinics that will be repeated, so that you can pick and choose the topics that most interest you. Right now the topics include black-based painting, painting white, and diorama weathering. Each will be 30 – 45 minutes long. Stay tuned to the website for the latest on the topics to be covered that night. There are no contests that night, but Works-In-Progress entries can be brought in and Display-Only models are welcomed. We plan to conduct more modeling skills clinics throughout the year.



Here's an update on the model displays that ASM will be conducting in 2018. First, we have the "1918—End of World War I" display at the New Mexico State Fair. That will be on August 24 – 25 when we do the model entries for the contest. In preparation for that, you can build an entry for John Tate's "1918" sponsored contest on May 4. The second display will likely be at the Air Force Ball on September 15. Our participation has not yet been confirmed for this. Models for that would be anything USAF from 1947 to the present. If we are short on models, we could probably sneak some World War II USAAF

March Meeting highlights, left to right: Members checking out model entries; our guest speaker David Allin teaches us some things about Vietnam; and the business meeting in progress.



models in too. The third display is at the Folds of Honor Patriot Gala, which has been moved to October 20. The models for that will be any US Service from 2001 to the present. To generate some new builds for that, the ASM E-Board is hosting the “Global War on Terror (GWOT)” sponsored contest at the September 7 meeting.

To wrap up, here is this month’s short story on an American ace. I have yet to feature an F-86 “Sabre” ace, so this month I’m covering Colonel Royal N. “King” Baker, USAF, with 16.5 aerial victories. Baker was the fifth ranking allied ace in Korea with thirteen scores including twelve MiG-one1 LA-9. He is the 29th-ranking American ace (tie), and 24th-ranking ace in the USAF (tie). Baker commanded the 4th Fighter Intercept Wing from



June 1952 to March 1953, flying 127 combat missions. He was the leading Korean War scorer for much of his tour. He scored 1.5 kills on 7 December 1952 near Sinuiju. During WWII he scored 3.5 kills. He flew Spitfires with the 308th Fighter Squadron (FS), 31st Fighter Group (FG) in the Mediterranean Theater (two Fw 190 and one Bf-109 kills). He also served as 493 FS Operations Officer and 48 FG Operations Officer in the European Theater, scoring 0.5 Bf-109 kills while flying the P-47 Thunderbolt. Baker was 7th AF Vice Commander in Vietnam and flew 140 combat sorties. He was 17th AF Commander from July 1969 to February 1971, and retired as a Lt General in August 1975. Baker died in April 1976.

The model of his aircraft “The King / Angel Face & the Babes” is the Testors F-86E kit, and has the patch of the 336th Fighter Intercept Squadron

“Rocketeers” on the nose. This model was built and put on display at the USAF Academy in 1997. It is finished in Model Master Aluminum Plate—Buffing paint. The decals are from the Micro Scale “Korean War Aces #2” decal sheet 72-244. Eagle Strike has a more recent “Wings Over Korea” decal sheet 72059 that includes Baker’s markings.

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## CONTEST UPDATE

JOHN TATE

The ASM contest year got off to a solid start at the March meeting, with a large number of entries across all skill levels.

There were five entries in Basic, 23 in Intermediate and thirteen in Masters. Intermediate modelers proved yet again they are the club powerhouse, with a good variety of nicely-done model subjects. Best of Show and People’s Choice in Basic went to Steve Miller for his “U.S. Cavalry vs. Cheyenne Dog Soldiers” Old West diorama, and Best of Show and People’s Choice in Intermediate went to Dave Epstein for his WWII I-400 Japanese sub. In Masters, Tony Humphries picked up a People’s Choice for his FT-17 tank and Brian Peck won Best of Show for his Iranian “Ali Cat” F-14, from the new 1/48 Tamiya kit.

Other models that caught my eye as standout builds were Robert Henderson’s Wingnut Wings 1/32 SE-5a, Jeannie Garriss’s “Scooby Doo Biplane” (would love to see Wingnut Wings tackle that one!), and Steve Brodeur’s impressive Mach 2 1/72 Vostok rocket.





The April meeting is a pre-Nationals clinic night but feel free to bring any in-progress builds or display pieces.

Thanks again to all modelers for their hard work and looking forward to a rewarding contest year.

## UPCOMING EVENTS

See the [ASM Website](#) for links to info about these events! (Click on the Articles tab, then the Upcom-

### Year 2018 Contest Quick Reference Chart

Titles in **blue** indicate contests for points

- 05 Jan** **SPECIAL CONTEST #1:**  
**SCI-FI/SCIENCE/REAL SPACE/FANTASY**  
Sponsored Contest: "Frickin' Laser Beams" (Patrick Dick)
- 02 Feb** **ASM Swap Meet**—no contest.
- 02 Mar** **Open Contest**—Any kit/subject/scale.
- 06 Apr** **ASM Clinic Night**—no contest.
- 04 May** **SPECIAL CONTEST #2: TAMIYA VS. HASEGAWA SHOWDOWN.**  
Sponsored Contest: "1918" (John Tate)
- 01 Jun** **O Canada!**—Any kit/subject/scale representing a Canadian subject.  
Sponsored Contest: "Stormy Weather" (Jack Garriss)
- 06 Jul** **Bare Metal**—Any kit/subject/scale.  
Sponsored Contest: "Adversaries II" (Mike & Matt Blohm)
- 10 Aug** **ASM Swap Meet**—no contest.
- 07 Sep** **SPECIAL CONTEST #3: POST APOCALYPSE.**  
Sponsored Contest: "Global War on Terror (GWOT)" (ASM E-Board)
- 05 Oct** **Middle East Conflict**—Any kit/subject/scale, 1948 – present.  
Sponsored Contest: "Get Your Fix—Airfix, That Is" (Gil De La Plain)
- 02 Nov** **Open Contest**—Any kit/subject/scale.  
Sponsored Contest: "Blackbirds" (Dave Epstein)
- 07 Dec** **SPECIAL CONTEST #4: PEARL HARBOR.**  
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>**

ing Events Calendar link.)

**April 7:** Trinity Site Open to the Public. 8:00 A.M. to 3:30 P.M. at White Sands Missile Range.

**April 14:** 31st Annual Tulsa Modelers Forum Open Contest & Show, Bixby Community Center. Tulsa Modelers Forum, IPMS Region 6.

**April 20 – 22:** StarFest 2018. Science Fiction Convention, Marriott Denver Tech Center, Denver, Colorado.

**April 28:** Modelmania 2018. Stafford Center, Stafford, Texas. IPMS Houston, IPMS Region 6.

**May 3:** AMPS 2018 International Convention. Dayton, Ohio.

**May 8:** VegasCon 2018 / Best of the West-23 Show and Contest. East Side Cannery Resort and Casino, Las Vegas, Nevada. IPMS Region 8.

**June 21 – 23:** Squadron EagleQuest 27, Grapevine, Texas.

**August 1 – 4:** IPMS/USA National Convention, Phoenix Convention Center, Phoenix, Arizona. Hosted by IPMS Craig Hewitt Chapter, Region 10.

**August 1 – 5:** Star Trek Convention Las Vegas 2018, Rio Suites Hotel, Las Vegas, Nevada.

**August 24 – 25 (TBD):** New Mexico State Fair ASM-Sponsored Model Contest; Model registration dates are likely on Fri 24 & Sat 25 August from 9:00 A.M. to 5:00 P.M. Judging probably on Monday, 27 August.

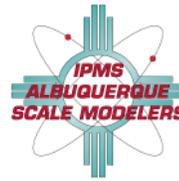
ASM Display-Only Theme: “1918.” The fair runs Sep 6 – 17, 2018.

**August 24 – 26:** Bubonicon 50. Science Fiction and Fantasy Convention, Albuquerque Marriott Uptown, 2101 Louisiana Blvd NE (Louisiana & I-40), Albuquerque.

## IN THE BONUS PAGES! JOE WALTERS

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

- Photos of the March contest winners
- Mike Blohm's photos from his lead article about Colonel Baker
- Ken Piniak finishes that model from his Shelf of Doom!
- Tony Humphries talks about a certain French (!) tank and its use long ago in Afghanistan
- John Tate discusses a model of a plane that failed to save Admiral Yamamoto
- Our old friend Fred Horky talks about Jimmy Stewart
- And more!



### Master

Glenn Bingham . . . . .	300
Brian Peck . . . . .	275
Steve Brodeur . . . . .	250
Tony Humphries . . . . .	175
Chris Kurtze . . . . .	127
Frank Randall . . . . .	125
Fred Franceschi . . . . .	100
Victor Maestas . . . . .	100
Josh Pals . . . . .	100
Ken Liotta . . . . .	12
James Strickland . . . . .	4
Mike Blohm . . . . .	2
Bret Kinman . . . . .	2

### Intermediate

Dave Epstein . . . . .	425
Chuck Hermann . . . . .	329
Robert Henderson . . . . .	325
Henry McHarney . . . . .	293
Charles Petrilli . . . . .	204
John Dodd . . . . .	200
Logan Carbin . . . . .	131
Gil Johnson . . . . .	125
Micheal O'Brien . . . . .	102
Jack Garriss . . . . .	75
Blaine Couch . . . . .	25
Mark Vaughn . . . . .	25
Don Smith . . . . .	6

Jeff Frickstad . . . . .	2
Ken Piniak . . . . .	2

### Basic

Steve Miller . . . . .	325
Jeannie Garriss . . . . .	250
Aaron Schmiedicke . . . . .	225

### Junior

No entries . . . . .	0
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## 2018 MODELER OF THE YEAR POINTS

As of 12 Mar 18

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

# BONUS PAGES!

## MARCH CONTEST WINNERS

Top to bottom: Dave Epstein's *I-400 Sub* (Intermediate); Brian Peck's *F-14 in Iranian markings* (Masters); and Steve Miller's *Cavalry Diorama* (Basic). There were no Junior entries.



# BONUS PAGES! THE EAGLE'S VIEW MIKE BLOHM

Photos from the lead article about Colonel Royal N. "King" Baker, USAF.

This page: Photos of Colonel Baker and his F-86; next page, Mike's model of this aircraft.





BONUS PAGES!

# TALES FROM THE SHELF OF DOOM

KEN PINIAK

## The Final Chapter

Well, December and January turned out to be really bad months for model building. Besides a number of personal issues, the usual family and holiday commitments, and just the real world intruding into my modeling time, I had two problems combine to temporarily shut down construction. First off, my air compressor died. Not fixable, I tried; so I had to shell out for a new one (those things ain't cheap, either). Then my trusty old Aztec airbrush broke. I had inherited a couple of old Paasches (an H and a VL) from my dad, so I dug them out. It took a while to figure out how to get them to work, and even longer to figure out how to use them. The Paasches work quite differently from my old Aztec, and even differently from each other. But I am finally starting to get the hang of it. So now back to modeling.

**Weapons stores and TSU:** I finished up the TOW racks and painted them Model Master Olive Drab. The 19-shot rocket launchers are resin pieces by Fireball Modelworks. They needed just a tiny bit of





cleanup, then paint. Again, MM OD, with silver for the ends. Decals are from the Monogram kit. The Telescopic Sight Unit (for the TOW missiles) is the resin piece for the Supercobra from Verlinden. I painted up the optics with Tamiya metallics, and a touch of clear blue in the day sight. Then I added the clear

cover and photoetch covers and painted it all with more OD. To attach it to the nose of the aircraft, I drilled out the sight turret and its mount, and used a piece of wire, which allows it to rotate. The wire I used is an old bit of actual Army Tripwire, used for setting boobytraps. So there is an actual piece of Army hardware in this model.

**Paint:** With the cockpit finished up, I sealed it up using an old kit canopy. Then primer, and paint. The body color is MM Helo Drab. I let that dry for several days, then used Tamiya clear in the spray can as a base for the decals.



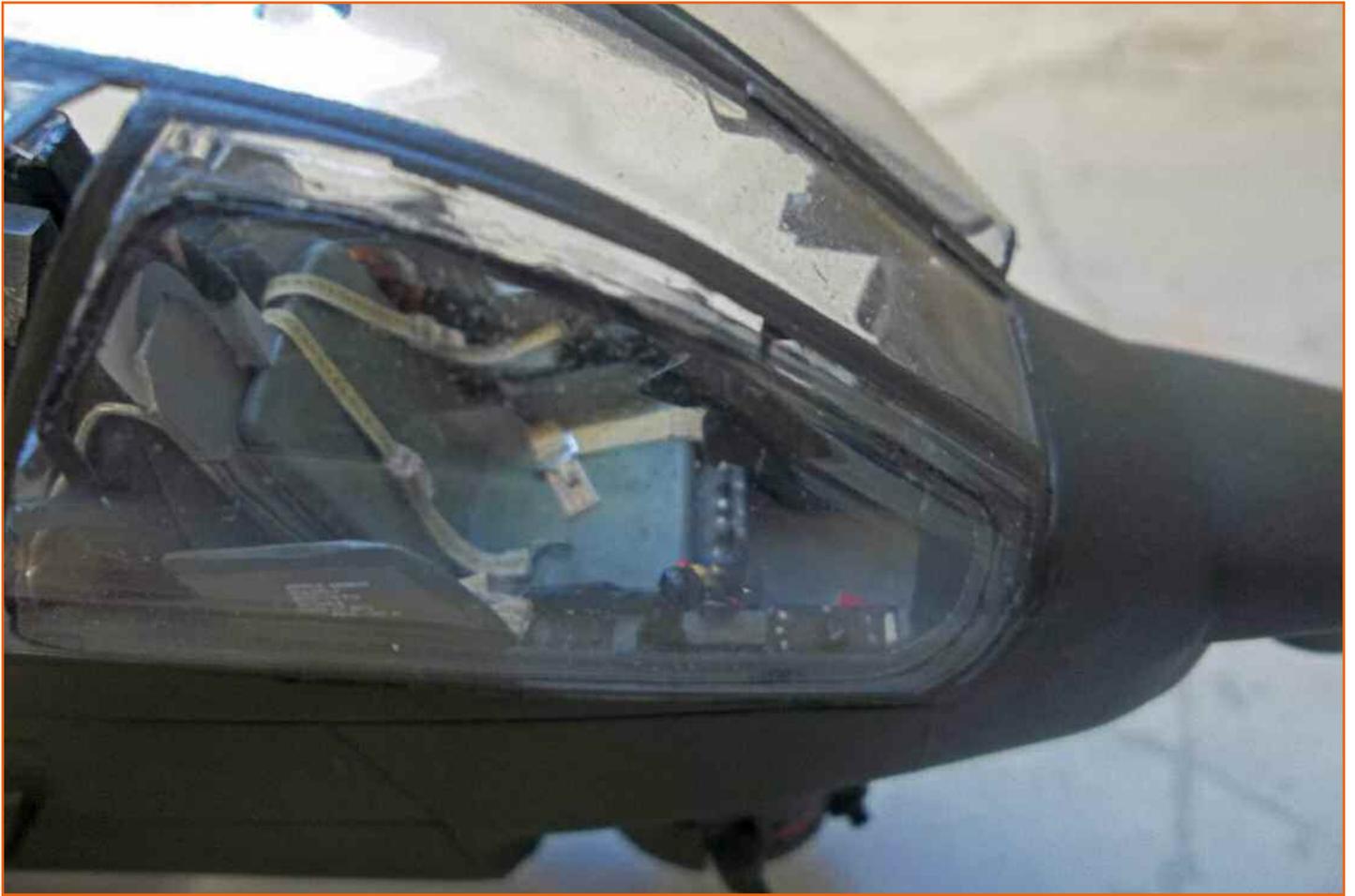
**Decals:** Here I ran into another problem. I had planned to use the excellent set of AH-1S TOW Cobra decals from Fireball. Unfortunately, early in 2017 Fireball Modelworks ceased all production of aircraft-related products to focus on model car parts. This included decals. Oops! So now I had to come up with my own decals. I had a set of Vietnam Cobra markings from Fireball, the kit decals, the decals from the MRC Supercobra, along with some others in my stash. Using bits and pieces from all of these, plus a few custom ones I printed up myself, I was able to make it look how I wanted.

**Weathering:** Once again, this would not even have been a consideration in 1982. Back then I would have just put on the base coat and called it done. One interesting note; looking at the paint on my old original chin turret, I was actually painting it the correct Helo Drab color.

Once the decals were on, I sealed them with a coat of clear gloss. Then I tried out something new (for me), dot filters. I also added some subtle highlights and shadows. Then I sealed it with a coat of clear flat. Then came some pastels (Shep Paine's term for what they now call "pigments"). I am trying to keep the weathering subtle, but I am having as hard time with it; as much of the work just disappears against the dark Helo Drab.

**Canopy:** The final obstacle to declaring this done is the canopy. This is only the second time I have tried using a vacuform canopy, dipped in Future. The other time was my other Cobra. Looking through the huge windows on this thing really shows two of the distinguishing features of the TOW Cobra, the Helmet Sighting System (HSS) and the Det. Cord around the windows. As prominent as these are, they were once again not even a consideration back in 82. I did not even know they existed. These are all scratchbuilt, using instructions and templates I got from Fireball Modelworks. The Det. Cords (part of the canopy removal system) are .032 solder. The HSS is wire and bits of styrene strip. Once installed at the top of the canopy, they look pretty good. To show off all the work and detail I put into the cockpit, I decided that I needed to open up the canopy. Boy, I just keep piling on the extra work, don't I?







**Rotors:** My original main mast was still usable, so I added the kit hub and blades to it. The tail rotor is from an MRC UH-1C, the shaft fit the tail better, and it is much more detailed than the kit part. Following



the example of Floyd Werner, I did a multi-layer paint scheme of silver, zinc chromate, OD on top and flat black on the bottom, and yellow tips. Then I sanded the blades to reproduce the worn paint at the tips.



**Conclusion:** With the canopy and rotors installed, it was essentially done. Finally! I still need to build a nice base for it, and I want to add a couple crew figures to it; otherwise, that's it! And it looks damn good too!



# BONUS PAGES!

## THE RENAULT FT

### AND HOW IT CAME TO BE UP THE KHYBER

TONY HUMPHRIES

As you may already know, given the long-standing enmity between our countries, as an Englishman, the prospect of building anything French always leaves me with, at the very least, an uneasy, uncomfortable feeling—one which, given our history, you can probably also understand. Nevertheless, as an armor guy, the importance of the Renault FT (sometimes [incorrectly] known as the FT-17) needs to be recognized, given that it was really the first modern tank and established the system of placing the driver in front, the engine on the rear and the main armament in a rotating turret on top, that we generally persist with to this day. It wasn't the first tank of course, but it was arguably the first *modern* one. As a result I decided to build the Takom 1/16-scale kit and you may have seen my humble effort on the table at last month's meeting:



Many of you will likely be familiar with at least some of this influential vehicle's history. First produced in 1917, it was widely used in the final months of WW1 by France and the US. After WW1 it was exported to many countries including Poland, Russia, Finland, China, Japan, Spain, Brazil, and many other countries around the world (27 in fact have used the Renault FT at some point and several—including Italy, Japan, Russia and the US—have built their own copies/versions). When WWII came around it was hopelessly out of date but was still used in combat, out of necessity, by Poland in 1939, France in 1940 (and again by Vichy troops in 1941 in Indo-China and 1943 in North Africa). Around 1700 were captured by the Germans after the fall of France in June 1940 and were used for policing duties in occupied territories, in an anti-Partisan role in Yugoslavia, for airfield protection, as an aircraft tug (especially in occupied France), and probably as a source of amusement as well. American troops encountered them (generally abandoned)

in Normandy after D-Day and the final documented combat use of the Renault FT was in the streets in Paris in August 1944, where remaining German forces used them in limited skirmishes with French and US troops. They weren't very effective and by the time American troops had stopped laughing at them, they'd probably all broken down again anyway. Paris of course had been declared an open city by the German authorities prior to the Allies reaching its outskirts, but it seems that some people didn't get the memo. Isn't that always the way...?

To give some background on the vehicle, the two-man FT weighed around 6½ tons and was approximately 13 feet long. It was armed with a short-barreled low-velocity Puteaux SA18 37mm gun, or a Hotchkiss 8mm MG (depending on the variant) and had riveted steel armor ranging from ½" to just under 1" at its thickest. The turret came in two flavors (neither of them chocolate)—either a rounded metal plate version known as the Girod turret or a slab-sided octagonal version known as the Berliet turret (after their relative manufacturers). Either turret could contain either armament type, and various combinations of the two types were quite common. Despite its revolutionary design, the Renault FT had many shortcomings. The vehicle's armor was just about enough to protect the crew against machine gun bullets and shrapnel of the WW1 era but was inadequate by the early 1920s. The FT used a simple steel leaf spring system as suspension which gave a fairly rough ride and was powered by a Renault 35hp gasoline engine which was plagued with fan-belt problems and random fires, amongst others. This engine gave it a top speed of around seven mph, effectively equivalent to an elderly sloth carrying several large bags of groceries. There was no radio, so to communicate with other vehicles, commanders had to open the hatch and wave signal flags. The noise inside was also so serious that French tank commanders found the only way to effectively communicate with the driver was to kick him, generally in the head(!), on the side that he wanted the driver to move in. So concussion was presumably an occupational hazard for drivers, and was probably accepted as such.

The last FTs were scrapped at the end of WWII since they were totally obsolete by this point and they were then consigned to museums and the history books. Or so we thought... The US-led invasion of Afghanistan in 2001, however, led to the discovery of at least two of these vehicles in a scrapyards in Kabul and one in Kandahar, and a lesser known part of the FT's history was subsequently revealed.

Afghanistan's use of the Renault FT apparently originated some considerable distance away in Europe at the time of the Polish-Soviet War of 1919 – 20. The USSR captured some FTs from the Polish army, which they then copied to produce a Russian built version and which was then subsequently developed into the T-18 tank. By 1923, however, they were no longer required and the USSR presented King Amanullah of Afghanistan with eight of the captured (French-built) FTs as recognition of Afghanistan's independence by the Bolshevik government (and possibly as an elaborate joke as well—after all, the Russians love a good laugh—right up to the point where they poison you with nerve agents or radioactive tea...).

There was a rumor that at least one Renault FT was also captured by Afghan forces from the British Army during the 1919 Afghan War but this seems exceptionally unlikely given that the British Army never used them outside of Britain (for training) or France (for liaison during 1918) and all except one of the original 32, which now sits in the RAC Tank Museum at Bovington, were returned to France at the end of WW1.

So time marched on, as it inevitably does, WWII came and went (1939 – 1945 as a reminder for those in the US) and most people forgot that Afghanistan even had these tanks. Possibly including many Afghans, for all we know... The Royal Afghan Army, however, didn't forget and continued to use the now-obsolete FT into the 1950s (it had little else in the way of armor available to it) before slowly retiring them to training duties and then museum pieces. Allegedly. A Soviet officer stationed in Afghanistan during the 1980s war there claimed that for certain, at least one FT was still in drivable condition with the DRAA (communist Afghan army) at the time of the Soviet invasion/occupation in 1980 but this is almost impossible to substantiate. The thought of crewing one of these vehicles and taking on an advancing Soviet T-72 or T-80 is certainly not a pleasant one, and given the suicidal nature of this endeavor, it seems unlikely that it would be true. But who knows?

Below is an image of one Afghan FT-17, photographed after the American military liberated Kabul on 14 November 2001. The plinth behind the FT-17's turret holds an ancient Schneider cannon apparently (I can't see much of the damn thing, but your eyesight may be better than mine) from way back in the mists of Afghan history. Finding an intact FT in the early 21st Century must have been a major surprise and much was said at the time, of the gun, which appears unique when compared to any other known FT. It turns out that there was a good reason for this though. It was initially suggested that the Soviets had fitted a long-barrel Hotchkiss 37mm gun to one of the FT-17s before their transfer to Afghanistan. But later, it was discovered that a length of pipe had simply been slipped over the factory-fitted Puteaux SA18 to make the displayed tank look more menacing! Well, a bit more menacing. I doubt that a rapid change of underwear for the advancing Russian tank crews was really required (or at least, not for that reason, anyway). It may have caused serious mirth, however. Nice try though.



*Picture shows the FT-17 in question with a Northern Alliance fighter in the foreground. It is believed that this vehicle still remains in Kabul today.*

Several Renault FTs have apparently been discovered around Afghanistan since the invasion of 2001, with two subsequently being sent back to the continental US for restoration. The Patton Museum at Fort Knox used to have one of their own, but apparently the French asked for it back again (there's gratitude for you...).

At least one other, a widely traveled ex-Polish, ex-Soviet, ex-Afghan FT was given back to Poland by the Afghan government in October 2012. Relatively intact, this particular tank had been found by the US Army in 2001 and temporarily moved to a barracks of the new Afghan National Army. In November 2012 it was transported by C-130 Hercules aircraft to the Polish army's Land Warfare Training Center in Poznan for restoration, then donated to the Warsaw Military Museum as seen here.



*At left is one of the two FT-17s found by US forces in a Kabul scrapyard in 2003. Both were eventually donated to the US where they are being restored for museum display.*



*The other of the two tanks mentioned above.*



*The engine from one of the two Kabul Renault FTs. It'll take some work to get this one going again... Better call AAA.*



*Image at left shows one of the two Kabul FTs being loaded for transport back to the US on board a USAF C-17 Globemaster III. The tank in front was the one tipped onto its side in the earlier picture (top of page). It was apparently known as the "Ft. Knox tank" as this was its initial destination (although not because it was made of gold, clearly). It has now been completely restored and in 2015 was placed on display at Ft. Benning, Georgia. The FT at the rear of the picture was sent to Aberdeen Proving Grounds and was still undergoing restoration, the last time I checked.*

Additional info:

- 1) The Kabul scrapyards were established by the Taliban in 1996 as an area where old and surplus military equipment could be stored before being sold to Pakistan for scrap. Evidently they didn't sell very much...
- 2) Only Renault-made FTs carried the Renault name plate. The Renault factory built about 50% of the vehicles, the remainder being subcontracted to SOMUA, Berliet, and Delaunay-Belleville. This is likely why neither of the vehicles found in Kabul displays the Renault name plate on the left sponson as they probably weren't built by Renault, despite the official name of the vehicle (*i.e.*, Renault FT—remember that the term "FT-17" was never officially used by the French).

# BONUS PAGES!

## YAMAMOTO'S GUARDIAN

### JOHN TATE

Seventy-five years ago this month, with a small air group in a far-off corner of the world under primitive conditions, the US Army Air Force achieved the impossible—intercepting and shooting down, with split-second timing at extreme long range, an enemy aircraft carrying the most capable admiral of the Japanese fleet. The story of this mission—Operation Vengeance—is well-known to most scale modelers interested in the Second World War; some have even built models of the P-38G Lightnings and G4M1 Betty bombers that were the focus of that event. But with a  $\frac{1}{32}$  Zero on my workbench, I thought I'd tackle a less well-known subject: the escorting Japanese fighter planes that tried but failed to stop the shoot-down of Admiral Yamamoto.

The kit was the 21st Century Toys  $\frac{1}{32}$  A6M3 Type 22 Zero, a plane I didn't know much about when I picked up the kit recently from a local thrift shop. But once I started researching the plane, I realized it wasn't a "generic" Zero but a special long-range version (fewer than 600 built) heavily employed during the Solomons campaign. It also appeared to be the fighter type used to escort Admiral Yamamoto—six Zeros from the 204th Kokutai at Rabaul. Delving further, I learned that the mission pilots were highly skilled, including Kenji Yanagiya (eight victories) and Shoichi Sugita (seventy victories). On the day of Yamamoto's flight—April 18, 1943—these six Zeros flew at the Four O'clock high position in two vic formations above and to the right of the two G4M1 bombers. As the flight was approaching their landing fields at the southern tip



Kenji Yanagiya





of Bougainville island, they were attacked by the 16 P-38Gs of the intercept mission and, although the Zeros dived on their opponents, they were quickly overwhelmed and the two G4M1s downed by the Lightnings. Yanagiya swore to get one of the enemy and turned southeast, where he found one of the P-38s returning to base and shot it up over the sea—probably the aircraft flown by Lt. Raymond Hine, who did not return from the mission.

The Zero pilots all landed in Bougainville without loss and then returned to their base at Rabaul. It was clear a tragedy had occurred that would have an ominous effect on the future of Japan in the war, but the Zero pilots weren't held responsible—it was understood they were outnumbered in the attack.

It was a dramatic story, so I decided to build one of the escort fighters; not much information was available on markings until I discovered an instruction sheet profile from a Hasegawa  $\frac{1}{72}$  A6M3 kit, which illustrated aircraft flown on the mission by Kenji Yanagiya and Shoichi Sugita. Fortunately, markings were simple—just tail codes—with a standard IJNAF Zero camouflage scheme. Replicating the tail codes was easy so I was able to finish the model as Yanagiya's aircraft (T2/169). As for the model itself, it is a curious hybrid of a toy and a detailed replica, but I found it well worth building and forgiving of rough handling. The model went together easily with CA glue and seam lines were filled without much trouble. The only issue I had with the kit was the lack of wing dihedral; I had to shave some plastic off the wing and wing root join surfaces to get the proper angle. However, the model went together easily and I was happy with the final result. The only "inaccuracy" I discovered after the build was that these escort Zeros likely did not carry radios; I had installed a standard radio mast and aerial wire on the model but because I liked the look of it, I didn't remove it.

What I found rewarding about this build was that even after many decades of building WWII models, there was still something to learn about that conflict through scale modeling. In this 75th Anniversary year of the midpoint of the War, take some time to research a well-known event and discover something you didn't know, and model it. So much occurred in 1943—Stalingrad, Tunisia, Sicily, Italy, the Dams Raid, the Ploesti Raid, the Solomons, Tarawa and Kursk—that with a little research there's a good chance you'll discover a new and interesting model subject right in your kit collection.









# BONUS PAGES! BOOK REVIEW FRED HORKY

## **Mission: Jimmy Stewart and the fight for Europe** by Robert Matzen

Print or electronic, available from all the usual sources

Whatever you might have heard before about the military career of James Maitland Stewart before, I can practically guarantee you've not heard the full story."

Among other things, one small point you'll learn that he didn't like the familiar-form "Jimmy," but learned to live with it"(I can identify with that!).

More importantly, you'll learn that he didn't have to go to war."In fact, he had to practically fight to get to the war.

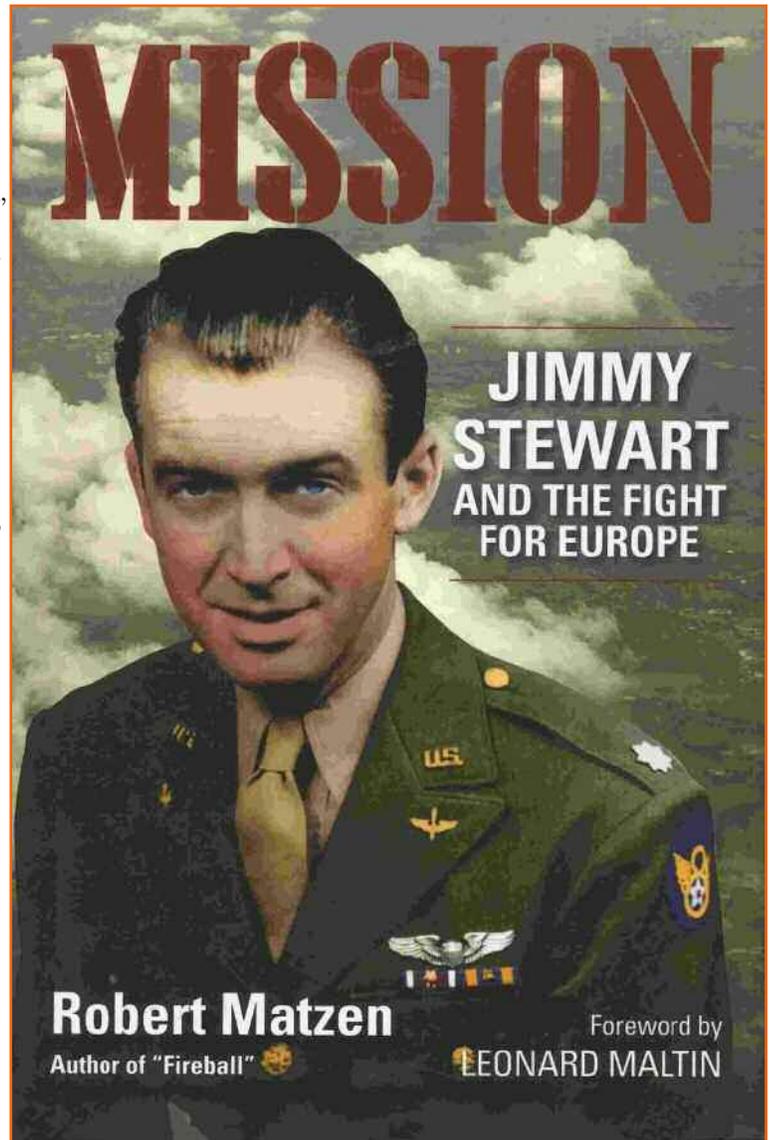
He was already thirty-three years old and an established "star" in Hollywood when the US entered WWII."He could easily have used the clout of the movie moguls to avoid the military entirely, or at very least gone into the service but remained in Hollywood, making training films."That was honorable service for those that did, like one Captain Ronald Reagan.

Already convinced that the United States would become involved in the war and wanting to do his share, Stewart had learned to fly on his own dime, devoting considerable money and valuable time to advance all the way to a commercial pilot's license long before the war."He didn't do it to be an airline pilot, but rather to be ready for "the big stuff" when the opportunity presented itself."Part of his inspiration was his family history of serving, his father having been in both the Spanish-American War and World War One; and his grandfather serving most honorably in the Civil War.

He even flunked his physical (underweight) when drafted, but pulled every string possible to enter the service—as a private."He did all this knowing that by volunteering he might be committing career suicide—the fickle movie industry made no guarantee of stardom for his return, and certainly not at the "A-level" he had attained before the war.

The book has all the details for you to read about a military career in which he ascended—on merit—from a no-stripes Private to full Colonel... in four years.

Along the way he had stops at many training fields all around the country."His story gives a capsule view of how absolutely *huge* the USAAF effort was in "the big war." (The USAAF then had far more heavy bomber *squadrons*, than the USAF today has B-1, B-2, and B-52 *bombers*.) "



One of Stewart's stateside stops was as an instructor pilot in B-17s at Albuquerque's Kirtland Field."Those pilot assignments were all also achieved on skill and merit."(As has so often been so painfully demonstrated: an airplane doesn't give a damn who you are, or what you did before you began flying: give it half a chance, and it'll kill your ass!)

Beyond his stick and rudder pilot skills, his leadership skills were also quickly recognized."After he fought to get out of his comfortable stateside instructing duties, he soon became a heavy bomber squadron commander, then group operations officer."When overseas he took his turn *leading* huge formations of bombers into Hitler's Germany: first his B-24 squadron, then the several squadrons making up the 445th Bomb Group (H group), and eventually several groups as a Combat Wing."On every mission he rolled the dice."He was fortunate to survive."Many, *many* didn't.

All along the way he actively avoided the press just as much as he possibly could; the reporters were always looking for a story about the Hollywood movie star in combat."So you'll find little in this book that came from contemporary in-depth press stories about Stewart, because there weren't any—at least that used Stewart himself as a primary source.

You can't read about Stewart's wartime experiences from his combat memoirs, because he never wrote them."What is in this book is from the official records, and from the recollections of others that he both flew for, and many more who flew for him... and loved him as a real leader.



Above: Stewart in a 1976 photo reminiscent of the opening scene of "Twelve O'clock High", visiting his old B-24 base at Tibenham, home of the 445th Bombardment Group.

Author Matzen does include several other viewpoints "from the other side of the hill" in alternating chapters... one is famous German ace Adolph "Dolfo" Galland. Another is that of a young German girl who survived the bombings on the ground.

And still more are anecdotes from the pilots and crewmembers of his squadron and group.

This thoroughly readable book even has a background of his early days and the lean days as a young Broadway actor, and his prewar personal life in Hollywood."There is just a little titillation about the love life of the stars... including Stewart."

The book goes into considerable detail about his war experiences. "Like many other veterans, Stewart was a changed man when he came back." "On discharge, he was genuinely concerned about whether he "still had it" to return to his vocation... or if Hollywood would want him back." "Like all veterans, the war had affected him—today he would likely be diagnosed with PTSD." "The changes are evident in the style and substance of his movies from pre-war to postwar, and in his personal life." "Stewart remained in what became the Air Force Reserve, eventually flying the B-36 and B-47 (also making a memorable movie about them, *Strategic Air Command*), and even flying a single B-52 mission in Vietnam combat." "Retiring from reserve duty as a Brigadier General, he had also been a founding member (along with the likes of his 8th Air Force commander, Jimmy Doolittle) of the Air Force Association.

If Stewart wasn't a favorite of yours before, I believe he will be after you read the book. "Certainly, you'll have a better appreciation for this true patriot." "We don't see the likes of Stewart around Hollywood these days." "He is unlike a certain pretty face that we've all seen on the Silver Screen—valiantly defending Pearl Harbor in his P-40, flying a Spitfire with the RAF against the Germans over the English Channel, and flying a B-25 on the Doolittle raid." "And that was all in one movie!" "But *that* star never served a day in any real Air Force or any other military unit.

But Stewart can truthfully be said to have been "the real deal."

(For a literary review of the same book, see <https://tinyurl.com/asm1804a>)



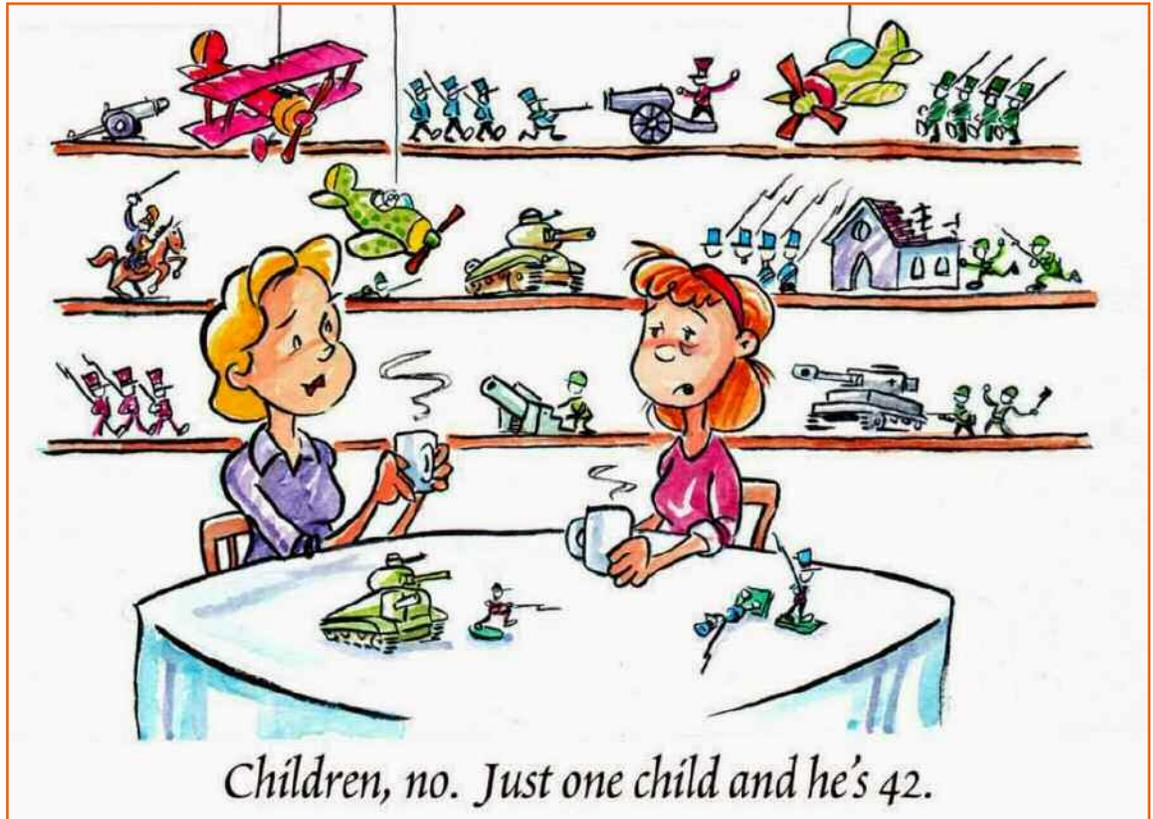
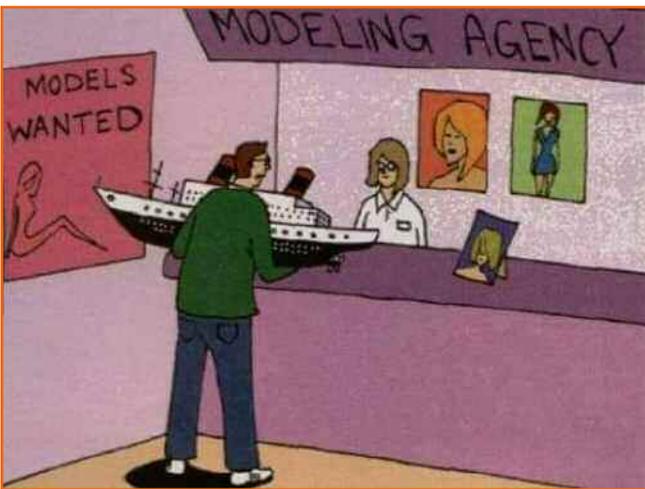
The strain of leadership in combat is evident in this photo of Stewart in a debriefing immediately after he led the entire 2nd Combat Wing of B-24s on its July 24, 1944, mission.



Stewart (circled in photo) is seen with the staff of his squadron, while commander of the 703rd Bombardment Squadron (H), 445th Bombardment Group (H).



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