

April 2018
Vol 42, Issue 4

The Pylon



The newsletter of the Western Reserve Chapter of the International Plastic Modelers Society

Next Meeting:

Sunday, April 15
Euclid Public Library
631 E.222nd St.
1:15PM

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Need Volunteers
and Donations for
Regional

Build and BS
meeting

From the President

Joe and his Wife are taking Mime classes and therefore while he had something to say, I couldn't understand a damned thing
– *the Editor*

It's Regional Time

To paraphrase Charles Weller, "Now is the time for all good men to come to the need of their club." Less than two weeks after this Sunday's club meeting we will be hosting the **2018 Region IV Convention** at the Crawford Auto-Aviation Museum, across from the Cleveland Museum of Art. And to pull off such an event we need you. Many of you volunteer for our annual Cleveland Model Show and this one is the same idea but bigger, which means if you only thought about it before, now is the time to act.

We need volunteers to work two-hour shifts at the following areas:

General Admission – Friday 8am and 10am
Make & Take – Sat 12 noon
Security – Friday 4pm, 6pm and 8pm as well as
Saturday 8am, 2pm and 4pm
Vendor Set-up – Friday 8am and Saturday 7am

We are also accepting donations, both cash for trophies and kits for the Raffle. The trophy packages are \$25 for a full one or \$12.50 for a half if money is tight. For the Raffle we'd prefer sealed kits but if you have a complete kit with the interior bags still sealed that would be great too. Keep in mind the winner of your kit could be a fellow club member who is also on the SWAT team. No need to make enemies because of an incomplete or started model.

So, if you haven't gotten the gist yet, we are asking for your help to make this Regional a winner. Volunteer at the Sunday meeting. Thanks.

Kirk



(not actually Joe or his Lovely Wife)



Meeting Minutes from March



Hugo would be disappointed if you didn't help out at the Regional.

Very Disappointed.



Librarian Yaya rejoices that the US Library of Congress was established in this month back in 1800.

The Phoenix Chapter sent a letter to sponsor a trophy package for the IPMS/USA National Convention. The cost is \$85 and a motion was brought forward, seconded and carried to sponsor a racing themed trophy package. Additionally, the Western Reserve club will sponsor a trophy package for the **2018 Region IV Convention**. Speaking of which...

Help is still needed for the Regional Convention. Volunteers are needed to help set up starting Friday morning at 0800. The show is being held at the Crawford Auto-Aviation Museum located at 10825 East Blvd, Cleveland, OH 44106. It opens at 2pm on Friday 4/27 and at 0900 on Saturday 4/28.

So far we have a few volunteers for Make n Take, General Admission and set up. We ask that volunteers park at the VA lot across the street which will be free on Saturday.

We had a new face at the meeting this month: Rob Goldberg Rob is a medical student at Case Western Reserve University (ironic!) and he likes to build anything military in 1/48 and 1/35th scale. He also brought in a sample of his work, an outstanding 1/48 Yak 9. Welcome Rob!

Last month was our first Quarterly Contest for 2018: The Divine Scale! It was a shout out to one of the other modeling groups in the area, the Divine Scale Society, a group of guys from the area clubs with a common interest in 1/72 models. There were eleven entries on the table, eight in the themed group and three non-themed. The Themed group was split – US/Russian based and All Others.

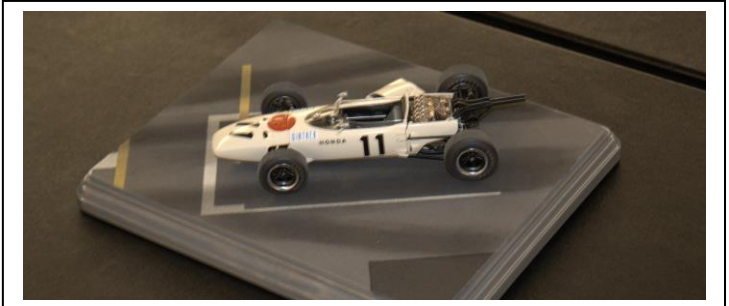
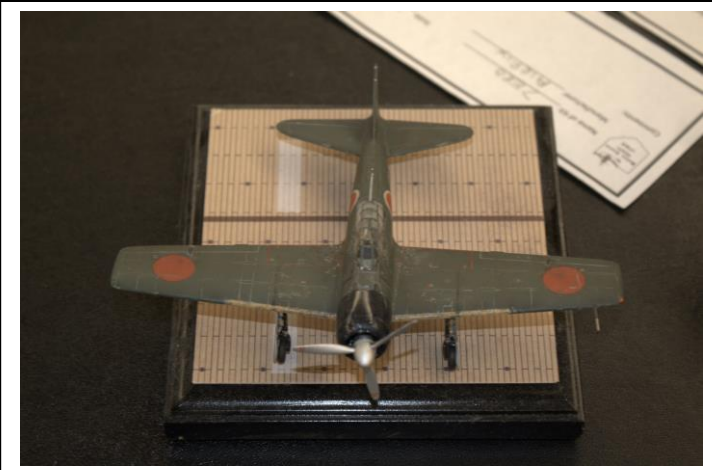
On the US/Russian side of the divide, John Vitkus took first place with an La-5, John Camper came in 2nd with his A-7 Corsair II (despite his tendency to twist parts off sprue trees!) and Ted Bamber got 3rd with a T-34 tank. The winners on the All Other side of the split had Ted Bamber taking first with his Zero, Jon Hudak took second with his Ju 87 Stuka and rounding out 3rd was Jim Davis and his Arado Ar 196.

Non-themed winners were Jim Wentzel in first with his stunning Honda racer and fresh face Rob Goldberg came in second with his ICM Yak 9. Good job by all and thanks for the participation! Also, a big thanks go out to the judges!

John Vitkus brought in a few of the DSS Group Build displays -- the "Tiger Meet" build, the "Many Planes Heading Midway!" and the current build "Seaplanes of WWII." These models were built by members of the DSS for competition and represent work of some really excellent modelers. He also explained why he sometimes puts a coin in his displays.

See you all on Sunday.

John Camper, on behalf of Jon Hudak, WR Secretary



What the Heck is That?

Last month the *What the Heck?* was the Bishop, a British self-propelled artillery vehicle combining a 25-pounder howitzer gun and a Valentine Mk.II chassis. The name came from the tall superstructure which reminded the tankers of a mitre, the traditional headgear of a bishop.

The Bishop was a quick solution to the problem of the fast-moving desert campaign and of lugging a 25-pounder with a tractor, trying to keep pace with the armor and the front line. The requirement went out in spring of 1941. In June the Birmingham Railway Carriage and Wagon Company had the contract and a prototype was ready for trials in August and by November an order of 100 was placed and production began. A total of 149 would be produced during 1942-43 before being replaced by the more capable Sherman-based US built M7 105mm "Priest" and Canadian built Sexton (25-pounder).

Aside from the height (10-foot high compared to the 8'-4" high Priest) which made it stand out in the desert dunes the mounting of the 25-pounder gun limited the elevation to only 15 degrees, reducing the gun's range to only 6400 yards, about half of the same gun on a wheeled carriage. In combat the crews would build up earthen ramps and drive the Bishop onto them, tilting them back to increase the range of the gun.

The Bishop first saw action during the Second Battle of El Alamein in North Africa and stayed in front line service into the Italian Campaign in late 1943. The slow speed of the Valentine chassis and the limited firing range did not endear it to its crews and in less than two years they were relegated to the training corps.

Congratulations to Fred H via email and John V and Jerry H from within the WR Club for getting this one right.

This month we drivin', in class and with the wind in our hair. Good luck.



Gathering of B-17s in Urbana, Ohio

I don't have much on this and the Fan Page on Facebook is just as vague. I am confident that there will be at least two B-17s at Urbana to celebrate the rollout of the restored Memphis Belle at the National Museum of the United States Air Force. You can do an internet search for "B-17 gathering Urbana" or visit this site <http://www.champaignaviationmuseum.org/>.

What's in a Name?

Naming Aircraft of the WWII Era

By John Vitkus



United States Naval Aircraft

In this installment of a multi-part series that looks into the names given to aircraft of the WWII-era, we will look at designation codes for United States Navy (USN) aircraft. These codes were also used for Marine Corps (USMC) and Coast Guard (USCG) aircraft. Once again, if you have any questions, comments, corrections, or additions, let me know.

The 1922 United States Navy Aircraft Designation System

In 1922 the US Navy adopted a letter-number-letter-number-letter system of aircraft designation. The codes used in WWII were largely defined by a list published in 1939 and modified during WWII. This system continued until 1962, when a combined Department of Defense system was adopted, largely following USAAF/USAF lines.

This system described five important elements of the aircraft: mission, design number (for that mission within the manufacturer), manufacturer, subtype, (relatively minor) modification letter. For example, take the famous F4U-1A Corsair:

F = Fighter

4 = 4th fighter design by Vought

("1" omitted for 1st design, e.g. SBD Dauntless, not SB1D)

U = Chance Vought (United Aircraft Corp.)

1 = 1st F4U subtype

A = First modification of the F4U-1 ("birdcage" to blown canopy)



Mission Codes

The primary mission (or missions) of an aircraft was noted by a letter(s) code, as published in 1939. Several additions were made to these codes during WWII as a result of new technology and combat experience. Mission codes were rationalized and unified in July 1944. An aircraft with an "X" prefix was an experimental prototype.

- A Ambulance (used for Attack starting in 1946)
- B Bomber (often combined: PB, SB, TB)
- D Drone (often combined: BD assault drone, TD target drone)
- F Fighter
- G Transport (single-engine)
- H Hospital (1929-1942)
- H Helicopter (1944-1962)
- J Utility (liaison, target towing, VIP transport)
- K Drone (D changed to K after July, 1944)
- L Glider (often combined: LN, LR)
- M Miscellaneous
- N Trainer (often combined: KN, LN, ND, SN)
- O Observation (ship-launched spotter/reconnaissance)
- P Patrol (long range reconnaissance)
- R Transport (multi-engine, later all transport)
- S Scout (short range reconnaissance) (often combined: OS, SB, SO)
- T Target (used for pilotless drones, TD changed to KN in 1944)
- T Torpedo
- X Experimental (used as a prefix)
- Z Lighter than Air Ship



Manufacturer Codes

What started out to be a nice, coherent system eventually ballooned out of control. By late in WWII, there were approximately 65 separate manufacturers assigned USN codes (compare this to the 14 manufacturer codes assigned by the Japanese navy). Worse, because there are only 26 letters, many times different manufacturers shared the same letter code. So, for example, there were three A's, four K's, five V's, and six(!) R's. Worse, there was no effort to distinguish these, so "A" could refer to Allied Aviation Corp., Brewster Aeronautical Corp., or Noorduyn Aviation Ltd. Because of the large number of manufacturers, I will list only the more prominent ones with designs used widely in WWII.

- A Brewster (F2A Buffalo)
- B Beech (JRB Expeditor)
- C Curtiss (SB2C Helldiver, SOC Seagull, SO)
- C Culver (TD2C anti-aircraft training drone)
- D Douglas (SBD Dauntless)
- D Radioplane Company (TDD, where Marilyn Monroe worked)
- E Piper (AE-1 Cub ambulance)
- F Grumman (F4F Wildcat, F6F Hellcat, TBF Avenger, JRF Duck)
- G Goodyear (FG-1 Corsair)
- J North American (PBJ Mitchell, SNJ Texan)
- L Bell (XFL-1 Airabonita)
- M Martin (PBM Mariner, PB2M Coronado)
- M General Motors Corp. (TBM Avenger, FM Wildcat)
- N Naval Aircraft Factory (N3N Canary primary trainer)
- O Lockheed (PBO Hudson)
- S Boeing Stearman (N2S Kaydet primary trainer)
- S Sikorsky Aircraft (JRS flying boat)
- T Northrop (BT dive bomber)
- T Timm (T2N Tutor primary trainer)
- U Chance Vought/United Aircraft Corp. (F4U Corsair, SB2U Vindicator, OS2U Kingfisher)
- V Vultee (SNV Valiant)
- V Vega Aircraft Corp. (later Lockheed) (PV-1 Ventura)
- Y Consolidated (PBY Catalina, PB4Y-2 Privateer)





Subtype Numbers

In most cases, subtype numbers reflected a gradual improvement of the design (e.g., SBD-1 through SBD-5). Occasionally, though, a change in subtype number reflected something larger. Some of the more famous examples are:

F4F-3 to F4F-4 Wildcat: change from fixed to folding wings

F4U-1 to F4U-2 Corsair: night fighter variant

PB4Y-1 Liberator to PB4Y-2 Privateer

Modification Letter

Modification letters were rarely used in common practice; generally the subtype number was enough. There are a few exceptions.

F4U-1 to -1A to -1D Corsair: as stated above, the A modification letter denoted a change to a blown canopy; the D represented the fourth significant change in the design, in this case the addition of hardpoints that were stressed for bombs and plumbed for drop tanks.

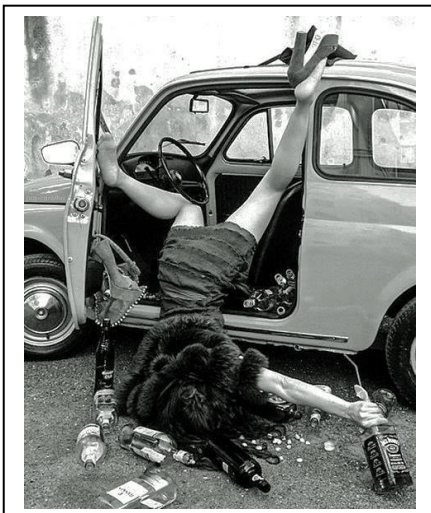
PBY-5 to PB5Y-5A Catalina and PBM-5 to PBM-5A Mariner: for both flying boats, the additional modifier denoted the adoption of retractable landing gear, changing both designs from pure flying boats to amphibians capable of landing on runways.

References:

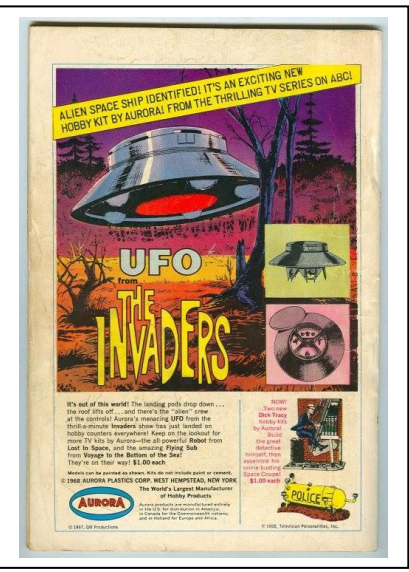
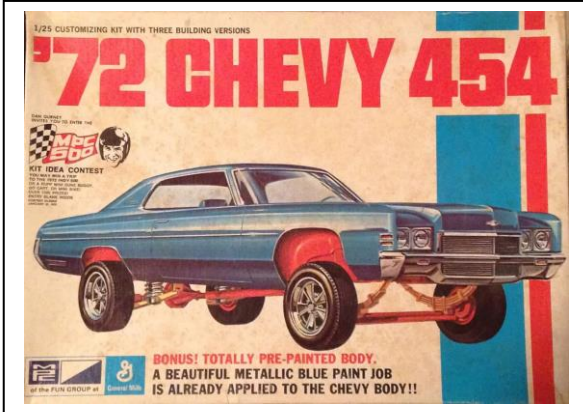
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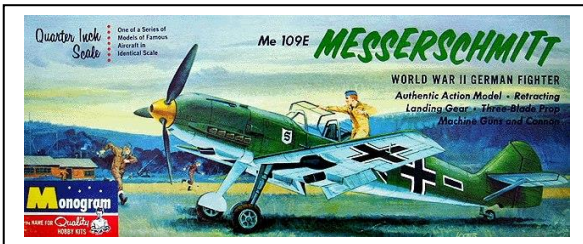
And Now, Some Filler Pictures to Even out the Pages



Art imitating Life (kudos to the builder! – Ed.)



I just love the old box art. Some kits I've been tempted to buy just for the boxes.



Don't forget about the Regional

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Visit us on the Web!

See us at:

www.ipmsusa.org

The *International Plastic Modelers Society* is dedicated to promoting the hobby of plastic modeling through meetings, demos, seminars, conventions, contests and most importantly through friendship and enjoyment of the hobby.

Visit us on the web at or join, either online or with the form at right and enjoy the full color magazine, discussion forums and vast knowledge and experience to help you enjoy the hobby to the fullest.

Upcoming Events

Western Reserve Meetings and Events - still on SUNDAYS

- | | |
|--------------|---|
| Apr 15, 2018 | General meeting at Euclid Library Lake room – Build & BS Meeting (bring something to work on) |
| May 20, 2018 | General meeting at Euclid Library Babbitt & Erie rooms – Seminar Prepping and Masking Canopies |
| Jun 16, 2018 | General meeting at Euclid Library Shore room – Quarterly contest: theme of “D-Day 75 th Anniversary” |
| Jul 21, 2018 | General meeting at Euclid Library Shore room – Build & BS Meeting (bring something to work on) |

IPMS and Regional Events

For any show listed go to the IPMS/USA Upcoming Events page for more information, or if you don't have web access contact Kirk Ballash

- | | |
|------------------------|--|
| Apr 27-28, 2018 | Region IV Convention – Cleveland, OH |
| May 3, 2018 | AMPS National Convention – Dayton, OH |
| May 19, 2018 | MMCL Annual Show – Louisville, KY |
| Jun 2-3, 2018 | Wonderfest – Louisville, KY |
| Jun 16, 2018 | SVASM Summer Swap Meet – Sharon, PA |
| Aug 1-4, 2018 | IPMS/USA National Convention – Phoenix, AZ |
| Sep 8, 2018 | TOL-CON 2018 Show – Toledo, OH |
| Sep 15, 2018 | SVASM Annual Show – Shenango PA |
| Oct 6, 2018 | CanAm Challenge – Warren, MI |
| Oct 20, 2018 | Cincinnati Scale Modelers Annual Show – Cincinnati, OH |
| Nov 4, 2018 | Cleveland Model Show 22 – Cleveland, OH |

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Type of Membership Adult, 1 Year: \$30 Adult, 2 Years: \$58 Adult, 3 Years: \$86

Junior (Under 18 Years) \$17 Family, 1 Year: \$35 (Adult + \$5, One Set Journals) How Many Cards? _____

Canada & Mexico: \$35 Other / Foreign: \$38 (Surface) Checks must be drawn on a US bank or international money order

Payment Method: Check Money Order

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If Recommended by an IPMS Member, Please List His / Her Name and Member Number:

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