

Warpaint Series #90 - Boeing B-17 Flying Fortress

by Terry Moore

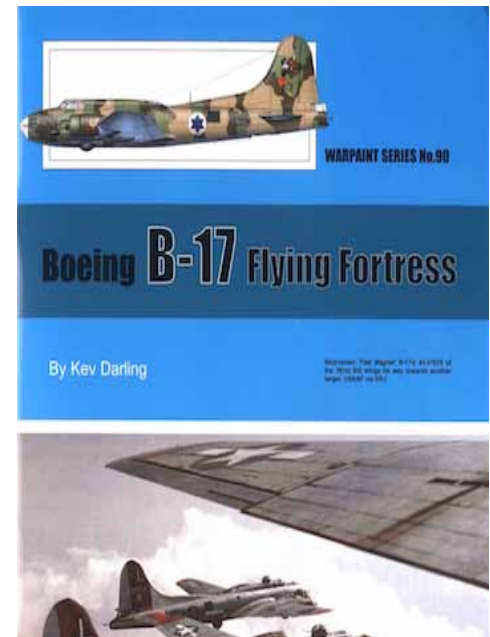
**Warpaint Series #90 -
Boeing B-17 Flying Fortress**
Author: Kev Darling
Publisher:
Warpaint Books
Binding: Softcover
Pages: 64

The latest tome of the Warpaint Series authored by Kev Darling showed up at the local hobby emporium a few weeks ago and as with all things B-17 I just couldn't live without it. I should have saved my money. To say I was disappointed is an understatement as the issue is poorly edited, not proofread, and has more than a few misstatements.

I thought the book was off to a great start when the author describes the prototype as the Model 299, because it was a company owned aircraft and never received the designation XB-17. It rapidly goes downhill from there. He describes the changes made to the Y1B-17A (the first with turbosuperchargers) with the changes that were actually made to the next aircraft in the series, the B-17B. When the manned ventral turret was installed in the

B-17E, he indicated it was a retractable turret (it was not). He goes on with page after page of modifications done at modification centers and in the field that are (at least in my mind's eye) rather trivial. He suggests that the Cheyenne tail turret was designed and tested with a 20mm cannon, but I've never seen or heard of such a thing in my decades of reading about the B-17. Telescopic sights for the waist guns? Radio operator moved to the nose and radio operator as nose gunner? What about the navigator? Where did he move to? Reducing waist gunners to one and the ammunition to the radio compartment? Moving the upper turret on the YB-40 forward?

There are two pictures of the B-17 that was used by Wright to test various engines in the nose. The first picture that is identified as a B-17 that flew "cloud physics" missions is actually the Wright test aircraft without the engine installed. At least the same aircraft (with a fifth engine) is correctly identified on the next page. There are other miscaptioned photos and



drawings; for example a photo of an Arctic B-17 described as a C is actually a B but the drawing on the next page of the exact same aircraft is correct. An RAF Fortress II is captioned as a Fortress 11. Dates are wrong. Events described are in the wrong area of the text. The list of operational units is poorly done. In the kits and decals section the author doesn't even list the Revell 1/48th scale B-17F. I could go on but I think I'll go work on a model. It's less stressful than thinking about this book...