

The Phantom Focus

Volume 2, Issue 5

Birmingham, AL

Special points of interest:

- Coverage of IPMS Birmingham's 2008 Contest!
- Dr. Phil
- The Mind of Will
- Building an A-4
- Book Reviews
- And much more!

Inside this issue:

Interview with AMS Resin	2
Dr. Phil	4
Mind of Will	5
Building an A-4	6
Something-funny	6
Book Review	7
Editor's Note	8

In Memoriam: Bill Powers & Darryl Epperson

In the past few months two long time members of the club & local modeling community have passed away. In February Bill Norman lost his battle with esophageal cancer, & in March Darryl Epperson passed from complications of a recent illness.

Both are deeply missed & have been honored at our recent contest with memorial awards. To honor Bill Norman we are now giving the 'Best Marine Corp Aircraft' every year. To honor Darryl, a private award will be given by several of

his friends to a different modeler each year on the scientific of basis of "Darryl would have liked this [kit] the best' at the contest every year.

I would like to express my gratitude for everyone who has paid their respects to Bill & Darryl's families.

There will be a special issue of the newsletter in the near future dedicated to both Bill & Darryl

Please continue to pray for their families.

2008 Contest Coverage

The annual Contest has come & gone yet again. Eighty-five modelers braved the weather on April 2 in Anniston this year. Those eighty-five modelers brought nearly four hundred models of all types & scales to the show.

There were nearly two-dozen Phantoms in three scales present competing for the Best Phantom Award, which was a print donated by Jack Lucky bearing the signatures of all the Air Force Phantom

Aces of the Vietnam War.

The raffle was well represented this year with nearly two-hundred items from planes to tanks to ships to autos. If the number of tickets in the box were any indication of sales, the raffle brought in a fair of money for the club.

Please bring your contest winners to the May meeting to I can get pictures for future newsletters & the website.

An Interview with Harold Offield, owner of AMS Resins

Phantom Phocus: Please introduce your self.

Harold Offield: My name is Harold Offield. The name of my little company is AMS Resin (a prescription for Advanced Modelers Syndrome) I am located in southwest Portland, Oregon.

Phantom Phocus: What are your interests as a modeler?

Harold Offield: My interest has gone from the Golden Era and WWII to early jets. I find the early jets have become my favorites.

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Phantom Phocus: How did you get into modeling?

Harold Offield: I started many (many) years ago, when I received a plastic kit that was a little yellow bi-plane. I believe it was called a "Yellow Peril" trainer. I only built one or two "airplanes". I got into model cars around that time. However, I lived near an airport that had a grave yard of old military planes. I would climb the fence with some of my buddies, and play "war". I would sit in the cockpits and "shoot" the bad guys. (I wish I could remember what kind of aircraft). I always wanted to be a naval aviator, but my eyesight was too bad to do that. So, I had an interest in aviation all along.

Phantom Phocus: Do you go to model shows?

Harold Offield: I went with a club group to a contest in '94. I took one model with me to put on the table. I actually won a third in the category. After that I was hooked. I attended about every show and contest on the west coast. (1994 to 1997) I competed in several Nationals (Virginia Beach, Albuquerque and Santa Clara) I stopped competing due to a problem with a bleeding cornea. I started going again last year.

Phantom Phocus: What made you want to start an aftermarket company?

Harold Offield: While I was modeling, I used a few after market resin pieces. I found that I was getting more and more frustrated with the fit, smell, broken parts and lack of quality. When I quit modeling, I sold all my sealed kits, but kept the opened boxes and partially completed kits.

I moved two years ago. While moving boxes, I realized how many I still had. Mostly the older kits with raised panel lines. I wanted to actually build them, and finish the started ones. That's when I realized how few of the older kits had really good updated resin cockpits and other pieces that would make them shine. On a lot of the older kits that I did build, I had to scratch build nearly everything. I felt that if I did build these, I would still have to scratch build a lot of the parts. So, why not offer them to others in my predicament?

“My interest has gone from the Golden Era and WWII to early jets. I find the early jets have become my favorites.”

Interview with Harold Offield Continued...

Phantom Phocus: What were the challenges of starting the company?

Harold Offield: First was the hardest part, a name! It came to me in a dream (really). AMS (Advanced Modelers Syndrome).

Second was to see if there was a market for the stuff I had a personal interest in.

Third was to see if I could do the masters in the highest quality and still be able to sell the parts at a reasonable price.

Fourth was to get my products in the hands of the modelers.

Fifth was having an understanding wife!

Phantom Phocus: What determines the subject matter for your parts?

Harold Offield: At first it was for the kits I wanted to build for myself. Then, as my parts were used by others, I started to receive request. I then posted on my website, for people to send me suggestions. I still try to keep my interest in the early jet age.

Phantom Phocus: Do you enjoy making parts?

Harold Offield: Yes, very much so. I found that I really enjoy the engineering challenges. I have had resin sets from other top of the line resin makers. I found that some were extremely well mastered, but, hard to use. I wanted to see if I could make parts as well as the others **AND** make them easier to use. That is my challenge and my satisfaction when it all comes together.

Phantom Phocus: Is there anything else you would like to say? The floor's yours.

Harold Offield: I just want to thank all the people that have been so supportive of my endeavor. It is very satisfying, when I receive a positive comment from someone that has used one of my resin pieces.

Thank you all!

Ed. Note: Harold was very generous and donated seven sets of his products to the club for the raffle. If you have never seen his work or visited his site, please do so!

Go to: <http://mysite.verizon.net/resqt29j/>

Harold can be emailed at: hairold@versizon.net



Caption describing picture or graphic.

“This will be a recurring column to let members of the club to introduce themselves.”



Caption describing picture or graphic.

Dr. Phil by Phil Hale



“You are IPMS at it’s absolute best.”

Dr. Phil originally appeared in the IPMS Memphis newsletter, and will be running is our publication. The original publication date for this article was April, 2006.

Howdy boys. I surely do appreciate you gentlemen making the trip to Anniston for the Birmingham Show. It was a great show but we couldn’t do it if you all did not attend. You guys always jump in and help in any way you can. You are IPMS at it’s absolute best. Great guys, great modelers and most important GREAT Friends. My most heartfelt thanks.

Kevin had asked about bomb markings and while that is a wonderful question, I just did not have time to properly research it this month. Kevin, I promise I’ll get on that and write it up in May. I thought since I was pressed for time, I would cover the scratch building techniques we discussed in March. I’m the kind of guy that needs to see something done to fully understand it. I hope that the demo in March was helpful and that you see how easy scratch building cockpits/detailing parts can be. It is not hard. It just takes time and good research material. If you have good photos

or drawings you can easily make you cockpits/landing gear/wheel wells/engines/guns, etc. more realistic. When you can scratch things, you are not tied down to all the aftermarket companies. Aries doesn’t make a cockpit for you latest masterpiece, No problem. Break out the books and the tools and before long you have a highly detailed cockpit or whatever and the best thing is, it fits.

Well, got to go for now. I hope to see you all in May in Tupelo or as we say down here To below. Take care and thanks again.

Meet the Club- A Monthly series

This month will feature David Wilks, a new member from Tuscaloosa, AL.

How Long have you been modeling: I have been modeling since age 5 ,with about 5 years off for college. My Dad started me building models.

What was your first model: The first model with my dad was the Aurora 1/72 CH 54 Sky-crane, the Revell P 40

was my first solo attempt.

What is your favorite subject: 1/48 WW2 allied and German aircraft.

What is your favorite finished model: either the 98' Bobby Labonte Pontiac Grand-Prix Nascar, the 1/48 Tamiya Swordfish, or 1/48 Eduard P 39Q.

Do you go to contests: Been in one con-

test in 2000 no award but Scale Auto put my car in the magazine.

Is there anything else you would like to say to the Club: Lets try to get some more guys down around Tuscaloosa in the club.

Are we model builders or model collectors? Seriously. Think about it for a moment. How many prized possessions do we have in our “stash’s” compared to finished models in the display cases?

Let’s look at the word ‘stash’ for a moment. According to my collegiate dictionary, stash is defined as: *a hidden or secret supply*. Now, I know I have said: “Mine! Mine! Mine!” -in my best Daffy Duck voice more than once when I have finally procured a much wanted kit. But when the kit is safely stored in Ali Babba’s Cave, erm, the basement shelves, what is it good for besides stroking the ego? It’s all good & fun to go “hey baby, look at what I’ve got here,” but if no one sees it, what good does it do?

Now most of us do share our recent purchase with friends & at the occasional meeting, but then we consign them to the depths of the Fortress of Solitude.

Case in point: I have a

Hasegawa A-4E/F Skyhawk in 1/48 with Cartograph decals for ‘Lady Jesse.’ Never mind how much I paid for it on Evilbay or where it came from. Some things are best left in the dark. For over three years the kit sat collecting dust on one shelf or the other, until March of 2008 I decided to build it. And here’s the kicker: I’m not even using the Cartograph decals on this Scooter, which was the main reason I wanted that particular kit! In fact I am using a Fox One sheet for Marine Corp A-4’s that I intended for a Monogram A-4. The best laid plans of mice & modelers...

Now, three years, 1,200 some odd days after it was purchased, I am building the kit. I am also using a now hard to find resin update. So, that is a rare kit, a rare decal sheet, & a hard-to-get update set. Some modelers would call me nutz (at times it is an accurate assessment) for using these products instead of either selling them for mucho dinero or let them collect dust.

In fact I am having the time of my life building them! Yes, I am enjoying building them. I have not had as much fun as I am having on this Scooter build in a very long time. Yes, I AM ENJOYING BUILDING A MODEL! Didn’t mean to go all Tom Cruise there, but I just had to get my point across.

I’ve spent the better part of the past decade being a model collector. I had amassed a sizeable stash, & for the most part I have liquidated that stash, save a few exceptions (old Daffy Duck impersonations are hard to let go of). What I have now is what I want to build; something I promise you will see more of at meetings & the few shows that I attend each year.

So, I hope I have made you think for a moment about being a modeler, instead of a model collector. I promise being a model builder is much more fun than being a model collector.

“Are we model builders or model collectors?”

Building an A-4 part 2 by William Nichols

In the last installment of this build I had just gotten the cockpit ejection seat painted. To refresh everyone's memory, I am building the Hasegawa 1/48 A-4E, using the Cutting Edge cockpit upgrades, & Fox One Marine Corp decals.

Before assembling the wings, I first painted the safety red on the inside of the flaps & slats. This was accomplished by first spraying Tamiya XF-2 flat white, followed by Tamiya X-7 red. The paint was thinned roughly 50/50 with 91% isopropyl alcohol. Opening parts on Navy planes are either red or trimmed in red to make them more visible on the crowded flight decks.

From there the wing tops & bottom, & the fuselage halves were assembled.

One deviation I took from the instructions was to make my own exhaust pipe. The kit piece is good, but presented in two pieces. 7/16" Evergreen tubing is the appropriate diameter, so I cut a piece to size, then I gently beveled one end with some rough sandpaper. This let the home made pipe fit snugly inside the lip on the exhaust nozzle. Once finished, the new pipe was sprayed Alclad II jet exhaust, & then streaked with various brown & tan weathering pastels from Tamiya.

After the glue had dried on the fuselage halves, I filled any minor seams, as I always have at least one to deal with, with either thin super glue or Mr. Putty White Putty from Gunze. This is a very fine-grained, easy to sand, low shrinkage contour putty, and so far, I have enjoyed using it. As long as I can keep a tube, it will be welcome on my work bench.

One area of slight fit problem was the cut-out for the chaff bucket. The fuselage plug just did not want to fit very well, leaving me a seam all the way around to be filled.

Next month we will paint & decal the A-4.

Something Funny by Jim Barnett

A man in his 40's bought a new BMW and was out on the interstate for a nice evening drive. The top was down, the breeze was blowing through what was left of his hair, and he decided to open her up. As the needle jumped up to 80 mph, he suddenly saw flashing red and blue lights behind him.

"There's no way they can catch a BMW," he thought to himself and opened her up further. The needle hit 90, 100.... then the reality of the situation hit him. "What the hell am I doing?" he thought and pulled over.

The cop came up to him, took his license without a word, and examined it and the car. "It's been a long day, this is the end of my shift, and it's Friday the 13th. I don't feel like more paperwork, so if you can give me an excuse for your driving that I haven't heard before, you can go."

The guy thinks for a second and says, "Last week my wife ran off with a cop. I was afraid you were trying to give her back."

"Have a nice weekend," said the officer.

Book Review: *FUBAR: F***ed Up Beyond All Recognition: Soldier Slang of World War II* by Gordon L. Rottman

Hardcover: 296 pages

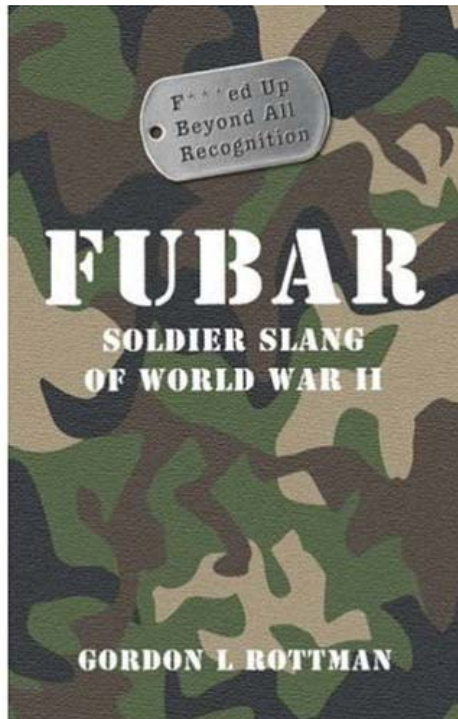
Publisher: Osprey

Price: \$15.95

This book is just about what the title says it. It is "G.I., Gyrene, Tommy, Aussie, German, Russian, & Japanese" slang of the Second World War.

The book is laid out by nationality, then alphabetically. The author makes a point in his introduction not to apologize for the language used by soldiers, claiming he would not succumb to political correctness or to sugar coat how soldiers talked day to day.

Just reading a few entries proves this point:



Ass-chewing: A harsh rebuke or reprimand, usually delivered with all the panache of a wound up pit-bull terrier.

Aviation Beer: A French beer, also called 'P-38 Beer' (referring to the P-38 fighter) -you drank

one and pee thirty-eight times.

Ack-willy: (Tommy Talk) From the phonetic letters for "AWOL"- Absebt Without Leave.

Energietropfen: (LandserDeutsch) Energy Drops. Alcohol issued before an attack to spur soldiers on (i.e. render them numb).

Appendices cover slang from the Red & Japanese armies.

This little tomb is a riot to read. Its in-your-face, non-apologetic nature for the language of soldiers in the Second World War.

Highly recommend.

AMS 1/32 F-4 Phantom & 1/48 A-6 Intruder FOD Covers Review

AMS 48013 A-6 Corrected FOD Covers \$6.00

AMS 32013 F-4 FOD Covers \$10.00

These are just simple, drop in additions for the intended kits. Paint the Phantom FODs red, and pop in place. The A-6 FODs are the soft type, and must be masked off the corrected intakes. Glue in place. Paint the appropriate color, and enjoy.

I cannot recommend these two products enough!

IPMS Birmingham, The Phantom

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*Phantom
Phocus*

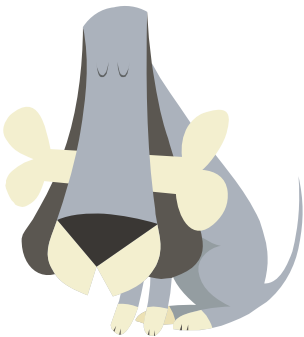
www.phantomflashers.org



Special points of interest:

- Contest Coverage!
- Interview with Harold Offield of AMS Resins!
- Dr. Phil!
- The Mind of Will!
- Meet the Club!
- And a whole lot more!

A Message From Your Editor



The Puppy at the left is happy now because y'all tossed him a few bones, but if he becomes hungry again, he'll be begging again.

Thank you to everyone who has sent content, whether it has been biopics for the 'Meet the Club' segment, modeling articles, build reports, jokes, or what ever— every word is appreciated.

I appreciate, the puppy appreciates it, and the club appreciates it.

I think this is the foundation for the one of the best newsletters out there, and it will only get better from here. As we get in the habits of contributing, everyone will benefit.

Not only will members of IPMS/USA see your work, but people from all over the world. Cur-

rently the site has been visited by folks from five continents.

Show off your stuff. Someone in South Korea, Africa, or maybe even good ole Birmingham, Alabama will enjoy it.

So, thanks again, and keep the little blue pup well fed!

-William Nichols