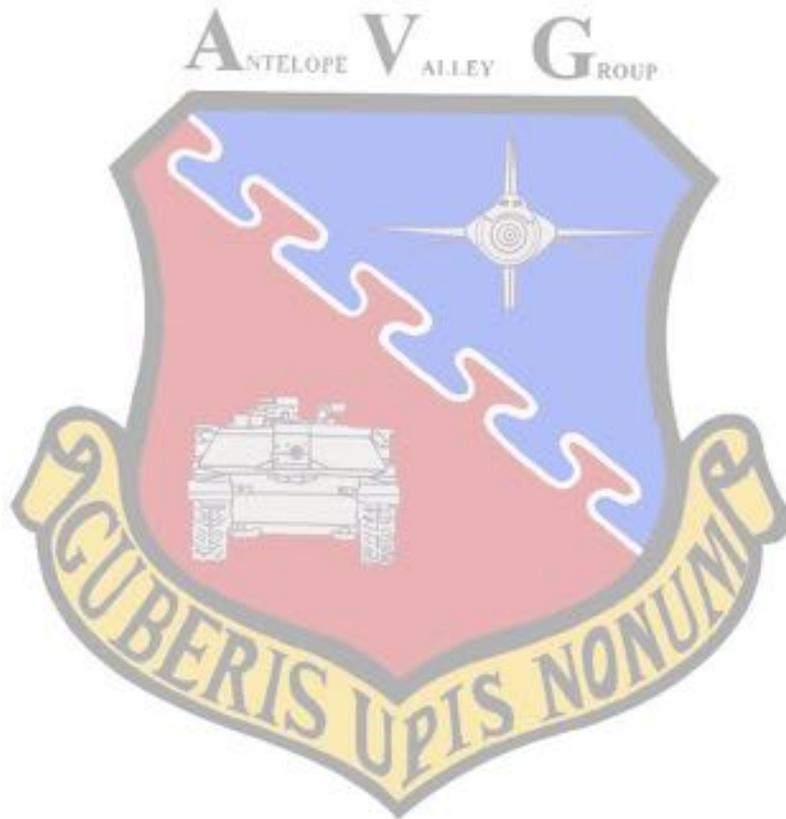


The Smoking Hole

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2020 Club Officers

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Niilo Lund

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Secretary

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flighttester64@gmail.com

Club News and Business

DECEMBER PHYSICAL MEETING IS CANCELLED. VIRTUAL MEETING PLANNED MONDAY 21 DECEMBER, 7-9PM

November Meeting General Meeting Notes:

The November physical meeting was canceled (still...), due to the closure of the Kern County Library system. Nothing to see here...move along.

Latest Club Status

As 2020 grinds to a halt, I'm sure you have all been following the news and are well aware of the spike in COVID cases. The San Joaquin Valley fell below 15% ICU bed capacity, triggering a modified stay-at-home order (as of yesterday, Kern County had 6 ICU beds remaining and there are reportedly 0 beds available in LA County). The only positive note was FDA approval of and the roll-out of the Pfizer vaccine (and now the Moderna). However, it will still be quite some time until quantities of the vaccines are available to the general public, so it is unlikely we will be able to resume in-person meetings in the immediate future.

December Virtual Meeting

Many of us will miss our usual festive December meeting. While not quite the same, our illustrious Prez Dwight has scheduled a virtual club Christmas meeting for Monday evening, the 21st. He's sent an e-mail with the info out to the club membership, but I'll repeat the info here:

IPMS-AVG December Virtual Meeting

When Mon Dec 21, 2020 7pm – 9pm Pacific Time - Los Angeles

Where <https://us04web.zoom.us/j/72321229056?pwd=bHVTZHpHT1N2YIR2UnR0S3BIWGh6Zz09> (map)

Who • dwight.avg@gmail.com - organizer

Dwight Young is inviting you to a scheduled Zoom meeting.

Join Zoom Meeting

<https://us04web.zoom.us/j/72321229056?pwd=bHVTZHpHT1N2YIR2UnR0S3BIWGh6Zz09>

Meeting ID: 723 2122 9056

Passcode: 20SAen

"Secret Santa" Gift Exchange

Hopefully everyone participating in the exchange has received their gift from their "Secret Santa". Great idea from Prez Dwight.

If you're going to participate in the virtual club meeting, we will open our gifts then!

2021 Club Officers

December is when we normally elect the club officers for the upcoming year. At the July meeting of the club officers, the current administration (with the exception of Jay, who has other commitments), volunteered to serve for another year. However, if any other member has a desire to serve as a club officer, any of the current officers would be willing to step down from the position. As we will not be having co-VP's this year, the club will institute a Contest Committee to assist the VP in the monumental job of contest preparation.

2021 Club Dues

Club dues are normally collected in January. However, as our activity has been greatly curtailed by COVID restrictions, our expenditures have been less than expected. Additionally some club members finances may have been impacted by the economic turmoil resulting from the pandemic. The club officers initially proposed a suspension of dues for 2021. Our current proposal that 2021 dues be a voluntary donation. If, as expected, we are able to resume more normal operations at some point in 2021, this will allow additional funds for contest prep and purchase of better items for the raffle. If you can afford dues for the upcoming year, please, by all means pay them (I will be paying mine).

That said, there are still a number of members that are still arrears in their 2020 dues. We have a significant deficit in unpaid dues (well over \$500). Most of these members are still active in the club. I won't embarrass anyone – you know who your are. If you are able to pay your past dues, please contact Nillo (or me) for how to pay them.

2020 Meeting Schedule

Primary	Activities	Refreshments	Demo	Review
18 Jan	Member Dues Collected	Steve/Mike -Main Jim- Drinks Jay - Chips		
15 Feb		Bill, Mike O.		
21 Mar		CANCELED		
18 Apr		CANCELED		
16 May		CANCELED		
20 June		CANCELED		
18 July		CANCELED		
15 Aug		CANCELED		
19 Sept		CANCELED		
17 Oct		CANCELED Virtual meeting planned		
31 Oct		2020 Desert Classic (CANCELED)		
21 Nov		CANCELED		
19 Dec		CANCELED Virtual meeting planned		

2021 Meeting Schedule (Tentative)

Primary	Activities	Refreshments	Demo	Review
16 Jan				
20 Feb				
20 Mar				
17 Apr				
15 May				
19 June				
17 July				
21 Aug				
18 Sept				
16 Oct				
30 Oct	2021 Desert Classic			
20 Nov	2022 Club Officer Nominations			
18 Dec	Gift Exchange			

The Tool Crib

Nothing new this month

Kit Reviews

Sword 1/48th Meteor NF.14



The Gloster Meteor was the first British jet fighter and the only Allied jet to see service in World War 2. Aerodynamically conventional, the Meteor was powered by developed versions of the Whittle jet engine. The first Meteor F.1's entered service in 1944 and were used to chase and shoot down V-1 flying bombs,

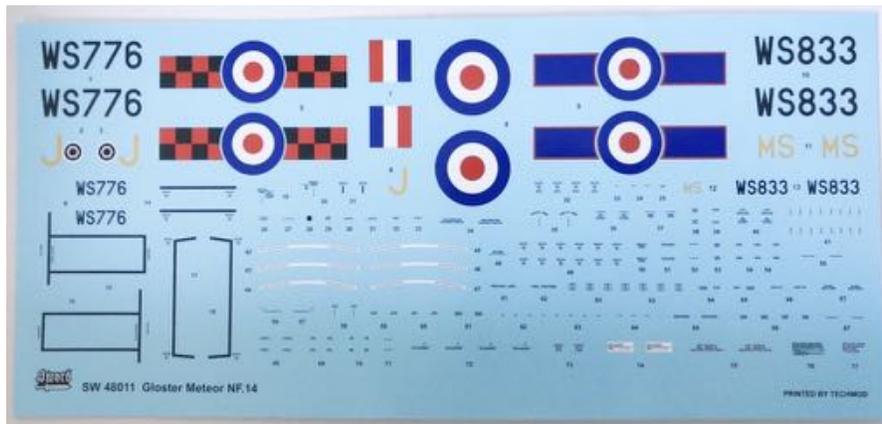
taking advantage of the type's high speed. They were later deployed to the European continent, initially for airfield defense, but later used for reconnaissance and ground attack. Although many Meteor pilots wished for it, no combat between the Meteor and the Me-262 was ever recorded. Due to the similarity to the Me-262, the Meteor was subject to many 'friendly-fire' incidents, so all Meteors on the Continent were painted in an overall white identification scheme. One Meteor was sent to the US for evaluation and was operated from Muroc Army Airfield (hence the Meteor in the Edwards museum).

Post-war, the Meteor was developed into other variants, primarily jet trainers and night fighters. Many were also used for developmental test work. The Meteor became increasingly obsolescent in the 1950's and was removed from front-line service, but did see additional air combat with export air forces, notably Israel, Egypt and Argentina. Some Meteors remained in service as specialized test aircraft into the 1960's, and 2 Meteors are still in operation today, as ejections seat testbeds with Martin Baker.

This kit took me by surprise. I had long hoped for a 1/48th injection molded kit of the final variant of the Meteor, the NF.14 (Aeroclub produced a vacuform kit some years ago). The combination of the long night-fighter nose and frameless canopy make it my favorite version.



This is a limited-run kit from Czech manufacturer Sword, but is quite well done. I initially thought this might be a variation on the old Classic Airframes Meteor kits (Sword produced the plastic parts for those kits), but upon examination, this is an all new kit. The scribing is very crisp and fine, almost rivaling Tamiya and the level of detail is high. As a limited-run kit, it will require some care in assembly, but should produce a fine model.



Decals (by Techmod) are provided for 2 1950's-era night fighter schemes in the standard Dark Green and Dark Sea Grey over Medium Sea Grey, with colorful squadron markings.



I did note a couple of small issues with the kit. One is that the instrument panels have no engraved instrument detail, nor is there any instrument panel decals included. AlrSCALE to the rescue here. The second is the intakes. The NF.14 was equipped with the larger "Large Bore" intakes, but the kit intakes appear to be more like the "Small Bore" intakes. It may be possible to enlarge the opening of the intakes to make them appear more like the "Large Bore" or it might be possible to fit Roy Sutherland's (Barracudacast) resin "Large Bore" intakes intended for the Classic Airframes kit.

Overall, this is a welcome new kit and I recommend it.

LF Models 1/48th Bell H-13J/HUL-1



In the mid 1940's, Arthur Young sold the Bell Aircraft Company on the development of his small single-seat helicopter, which became the Model 30. The Model 30 was so successful, Bell put an enlarged version, the Model 47 into production as a light utility helicopter. The 47 became the first commercially certified helicopter in 1946. Most 47's were very utilitarian, consisting of an exposed tube-frame fuselage with a bubble 3-seat cockpit.

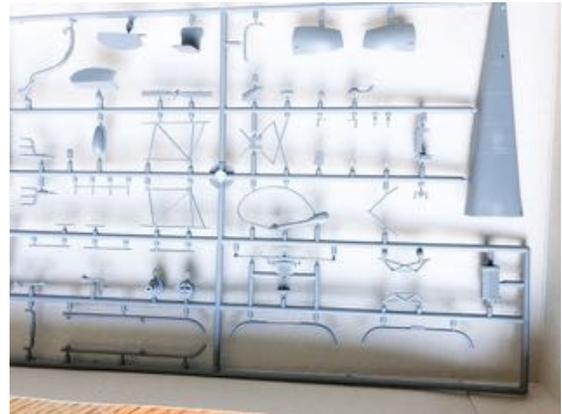
Early Model 47's were notably used for casualty evacuation in the Korean Conflict, and are well-known to the general public as the "MASH helicopter". The 47 was widely adopted by the military, being used for scout observation, casualty evac, instrument training and general utility. It was also a very popular civilian helicopter, used for agricultural application, television news, police patrol and other duties.

In 1957, Bell introduced an 'executive' version of the 47, the 47J Ranger, featuring a fully enclosed fuselage and a new, 4-seat cabin. A more powerful version with a larger rotor, the 47J-2 was introduced in 1961. The 47J became the first helicopter used by the President of the United States, as the VH-13J. Many of us, um, "legacy" modelers may also remember the 47J as one of the stars of the old '60's TV series "Whirlybirds."

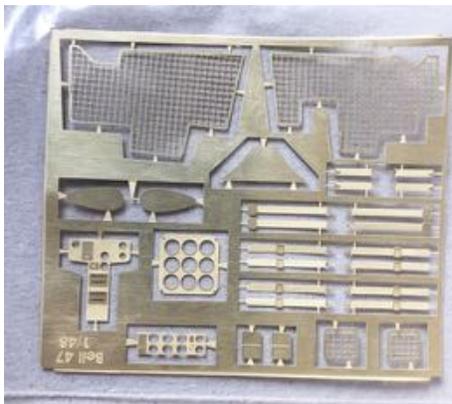
The Bell 47 remained in production for 30 years, from 1946 until 1976, with nearly 6,000 produced, including license-built version by Agusta in Italy and Kawasaki in Japan.

Recently, the type certificate for the 47 was purchased by Scott Helicopters, who intends to produce a new version of the 47 with a turbine engine.

I literally just received this kit today. It is from a new Latvian producer, LF Models. LF had previously produced some resin kits and their first plastic was the 47J in 1/72, which they have now enlarged it to 1/48. The only previous 1/48th plastic kits of the 47 have been the earlier open-framework 47G's from Italeri – there has never been a 1/48th plastic kit of the 47J (although I have a very nice resin kit from Maurizio Di Terilizzi, and there is an ancient, very rare 1960's off-scale plastic kit from a Japanese manufacturer).



The kit is pretty much what you would expect from a limited-run Eastern European manufacturer – medium gray plastic with fine engraved detail and some minor flash, a sheet of photo-etch and decals. The kit includes full engine detail (a plus if you want to model a 47J that operated with the engine panels removed – as a number of them did). Another nice bonus is that both the skid and float landing gear are included. The photo-etch sheet includes the usual seat harnesses and 2 instrument panel designs, as well as the screening for the engine compartment air vents. The air vent screening is a bit coarse, so I will be replacing it on my kit.



LS produces 6 different variants of this kit. All contain the same plastic, differing only in the decals. Each kit contains markings for 3 helicopters. My review sample contains marking for US helicopters, the Presidential VH-13J, a Coast Guard HUL-1G and a Navy Antarctic HUL-1. Other kits contain decals for Italian, South American, and European civil and military examples. The decals appear to be produced by Alps or similar printer, as a caution is included that the decals have continuous carrier film and should be handled gently.

I actually bought 2 of these kits, one to build as a Navy HUL-IT (TH-13L) and one as the float-equipped 47J from the James Bond film, "Thunderball". I haven't seen any US sources for this kit yet. I purchased mine directly from LF and had them in less than a month.

A very nice kit of an important helicopter. Recommended

Club Demos

Little bit hard to do demos during "social distancing", though suppose you could do a YouTube demo or Zoom session.

Anyway, hope to see some demos when we all get back together.

Member Show and Tell, 10th COVID Edition

Didn't see much come across the group email this month, but here's another outstanding build from John S:

John has done another 1/32 scale plane, this time the Special Hobby Tempest Mk. V.





As I also have a Special Hobby Tempest, I asked John if he had any words of wisdom on building the kit. Here's what he said: I spent somewhere between 42 to 45 hours on the build. I spent a good chunk of that time correcting unforced errors, but other errors were caused by vague instruction--particularly how to build the wheel wells. Eight hours were spent on the cockpit, which is a kit in itself. The biggest flaw with the kit is the shape of the nose. BarracudaCast has a replacement nose and prop and a separate intake ring. Along with those pieces, I used CMK's seat (with molded on seat harness) and wheels plus Eduard's instrument panel. I bought the kit on sale last X-mas and the savings justified the extra costs of the aftermarket pieces. Detail on the kit is very good and little in the way of mold seams to clean up. My feeling is that one needs to make a commitment to build the plane, so if you have commitment issues..... I'm glad I built it.

Calendar

Cancelled	Silverwings Silvercon 2021	Sacramento, CA
3/20/2021	Silicon Valley Classic VII	Napredak Hall 770 Montague Expressway San Jose, CA
8/18/2021	IPMS/USA National Convention	Rio Hotel and Convention Center 3700 W. Flamingo Rd. Las Vegas, NV

From the Oval Office – Notes From the Prez

Wishlists

This is the time of year when a lot of media outlets will either publish lists of the top ten items that came out this year, or put forth suggestions for what they'd like to see developed in the near term. I'm in that second group this year. I've been thinking a lot all year about what makes our hobby great, and what could possibly make it better.

Kit Ideas: one of the more devastating stories this year was the implosion of Wingnut Wings, and with it, the indefinite delay or outright cancellation of the large-scale kits they had been developing. The kits produced by WnW continue to have an avid, almost rabid, following, and news I've heard has been that the engineers and designers are being or have been recruited by Chinese firms, notably Meng, who used the same production factories, and companies in Ukraine, the home of Roden. Roden has produced many kits of interesting and otherwise neglected subjects, in the most popular scales, but has not enjoyed the reputation for quality that WnW had. It would be great to have a large-scale Gloster Gladiator or Hawker Fury cast to a high degree of fidelity and fit and ease of assembly. It would also be great to see new firms in Australia and New Zealand seeded by talent from WnW. There was a line of figures and vignettes cast by associates of WnW in the Petits Contemptibles line. It may be time to see more representations of South Pacific and Oceania, beyond Imperial Japan, the United States Army, Navy, and Marines, and Royal Navy and Fleet Air Arm. I would be jazzed to see figures representing Maori and other Polynesian warriors. I'm envisioning vivid haka poses and grimaces, and the intricate tattoo patterns. Indigenous Australian and New Guinean peoples with their complex scarring patterns and body paint would be fascinating, or bring them forward into the modern era, with modern characters cast with facial features and hair texture representative of these peoples.

Additional detail: man, am I a sucker for additional detail. I love the explosion of possibilities brought about with photoetched metals and tightly-detailed resin castings. More and more, too, we are seeing the development of 3D-printed details. This includes opportunities to purchase a 3D model file for printing at home on one's own machine (on my wishlist now!), or to send a request to a modeler to prepare and cast a specific part for you. Masks for canopy frames are now common, and mask sets for hard-edged paint schemes and national insignia have been proliferating, too. I've seen the wonderful things modelers have produced using home stencil cutters like the Cricut, and now that contraption is on my wishlist, too. I would like to see more out-of-the-ordinary markings available in the aftermarket detail market, especially for those smaller air forces that flew (or still fly) Soviet-produced machines, like Belarus, Lithuania, Uzbekistan, or Mongolia. The latter two, especially, offer great possibilities for depicting frightful neglect in the post-Soviet era. Having said all that, I have to recognize that many modelers would prefer to build a kit with good fit and fidelity, that does not require a lot of aftermarket and extra work to look really good. In my stash I have an Airfix 1/72 Hawker Typhoon with incredible detail molded in, and not all mushy and blobby like older-technology Airfix. On my own I acquired the Eduard details to allow me to include finely-detailed cockpit boxes, gauges, and controls, gun and ammunition access doors of scale thickness, brakelines, and the entire inner

wall structure of the wheel wells. Eduard's own boxings include this a lot of the time in their Profi-Pack line.

Instructions: Eduard brings me to the last wish I will share in this column. Instructions. Oh, man. Instructions. Really good, clear illustrations are fantastic, but they are best paired with easily-followed instructions in the builder's language. I've been learning Czech for the last two or three years, and I am still often baffled by not only trying to figure out the different cases for the nouns used in a sentence, and the adjectives describing them, but also the crazy syntax that places the verb, in most cases, at the end of the sentence. This major difference with English, the Romance languages, German, and even other Slavic languages must be at the root of what makes translating Czech so difficult. If I could get my wish for instruction translations, ESPECIALLY from Czech, Chinese, Korean, or Japanese, it would be for a small team to work on the translation: an English-speaking native speaker who is also a scale modeler to tackle the initial translation, then someone who is familiar with the original language but a native English speaker to polish the final publication of the instructions. When I was first building models, Revell and Monogram had very well-done instructions, often calling out parts by not only their number but by the actual part or assembly they depicted. In the mid- to late-1970s, there was a push to make the instructions work for all the markets their products might go, and so symbols were adopted and a lot of extra information was just discarded. Boy, did that make the writers at *Scale Modeller* salty. I recognize I'm asking a lot here, but these are, after all, my wishes. Watch out when Hungarian and Finnish model companies start exporting their products, is what I will leave you with!

In conclusion, thank you all for having me as your club president this challenging year. May all of you and all of your families stay healthy and safe this holiday season.

Oops. Glued my knife to the workbench again.