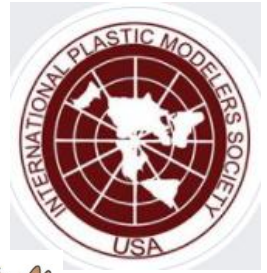




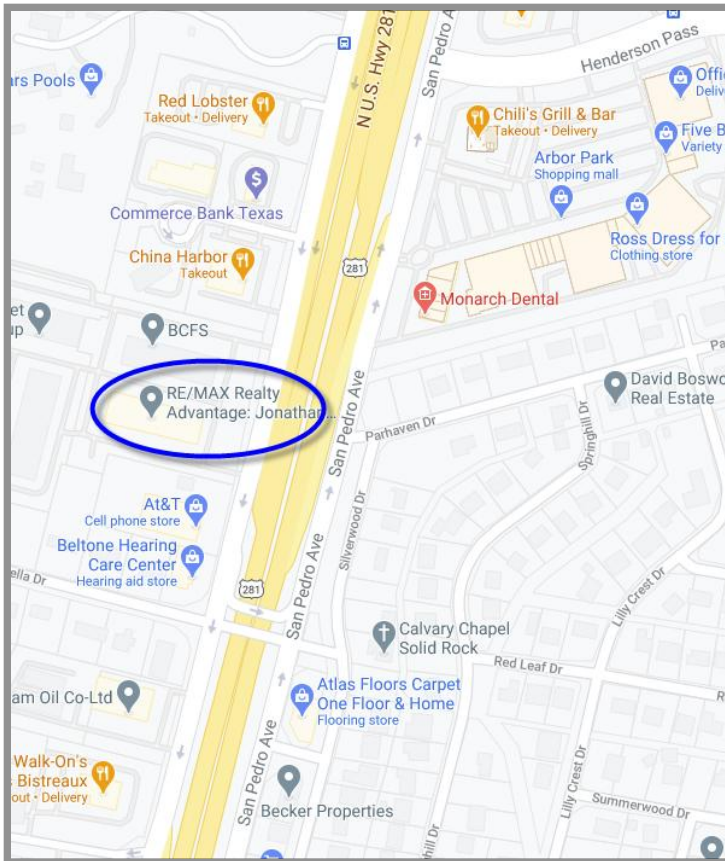
The Navigator



November 2020

For Modelers, By Modelers, About Modeling

Eureka! A new meeting spot has been located!!!



**Hosted by: RE/MAX Realty
17319 US Highway 281 North
Suite 206
San Antonio, Texas 78232**

Thanksgiving Thoughts

"On Thanksgiving I will stop to give thanks that my family is safe and healthy, especially because I realize that, following the tragedies of this year, it is all too real a possibility that they might not have been."

"Cooking Tip: wrap turkey leftovers in aluminum foil and throw them out."

"Most turkeys taste better the day after; my mother's tasted better the day before."

"The Thanksgiving tradition is, we overeat. 'Hey, how about at Thanksgiving we just eat a lot?' 'But we do that every day!' 'Oh. What if we eat a lot with people that annoy the hell out of us?'"

"If there's one thing I've learned over the years, it's that you can't give up on your family, no matter how tempting they make it."

"There is always, always something to be thankful for."

To aid in locating the new meeting spot, two overhead photos (plus an insert of the business front) are shown below:



Of Interest to Me

by Sam Casas IPMS \$40033

When I relocated from Plano to San Antonio in 2006, I managed to infiltrate one of the IPMS Alamo Squadron club meetings and was warmly greeted and welcomed to the society. [Note to self: There are more armor builders in these parts of the state.]

Separate from becoming model aware (i.e., scoping out local area plastic emporiums), there is the matter of finding suitable housing for myself and spouse. This leads me to my interesting encounter.

I was provided the name of a realtor by one of the fellows who work on my team. The realtor's name is Bob Bordelon. In the course of him driving my wife and I around and showing us prospective homes, we started talking about where he was from and where he grew up. He mentioned he was a native San Antonian and so I casually asked him about a high school which I knew of and held in high regard because of its junior ROTC program; Central Catholic. It turns out he was a graduate of the school as was his older brother. This is where it got interesting to me.

His older brother was Staff Sergeant William J. Bordelon, USMC, who was posthumously awarded the Congressional Medal of Honor for bravery during the battle of Tarawa (Gilbert Islands). Bob relayed quite a bit of information and I could tell he was rather humbled when I pressed him for more. I knew how Tarawa was the bloodiest battle for the Marines in WWII but I wanted to learn more about the events and of his brother's recognition. I left the topic alone for the duration of Bob's home tour with us.

When I got to the hotel, I Googled Bordelon's name and learned more about the events that led to his death and of the commendation he was awarded posthumously. He was the first of four Marines to be awarded the CMH for action on Tarawa and the only enlisted man to do so.

I also learned that Sgt Bordelon was originally buried on Betio Island, Tarawa Atoll, and then moved to the U.S. Army Mausoleum at Scofield Barracks in Hawaii. He was then subsequently re-interred in 1995 in the National Cemetery at Fort Sam Houston Cemetery, San Antonio. As part of the relocation process for Sgt Bordelon, his body



was laid in state at the Alamo shrine. This was an honor bestowed to him as a citizen of San Antonio while noting that only four other individuals had ever been honored thusly throughout the history of Texas' most famous monument.

William Bordelon was born on Christmas Day in 1920. He joined the Marine Corps 3 days after Pearl Harbor.

I also learned that a destroyer was named after him. Here are some particulars about the ship (I'm particularly in awe of the intro sentence but the quote doesn't have a cited source).

"There are good ships, and there are wood ships, the ships that sail the sea. But the best ships are friendships, and may they always be."

The Bordelon was a Gearing class destroyer (DD), the last class of US Navy destroyers to see combat in World War 2.

The Gearing class was a modification to the previous Sumner class, a modification which added 14 feet to the length for additional fuel storage to increase the operating range for the vast areas of the Pacific. With the increased length, the Gearing class was marginally faster than the Sumner class. These destroyers were to be the mainstay of the US Navy for over twenty years.

<http://www.navsource.org/archives/05/881.htm>

I suppose my take away and intention with sharing this article is that I enjoy making acquaintances and learning about people's experiences, background and interests. And as with any give and take interaction in our world, one can never stop learning. It's a friendly world out there and all you have to do is be a friend. And you never know about a person (or their family) who may be sitting next to you until you start chatting.

(Postscript: Bob passed away in 2012.)

<https://www.legacy.com/obituaries/sanantonio/obituary.aspx?n=robert-t-bordelon&pid=158609960&fhid=8900>

-30-



Letters to the Editor

From a Loyal Reader:

"Hey. Why don't you have a Letters to the Editor section?"

Editor:

"Because I don't get any letters."



“On the Road” Feature

Article, photos and images by Dick Montgomery IPMS #14003

A Modeler’s Bucket List – the IPMS/UK Convention in Telford. “Going Long – Part 4” Final Travelogue Segment

(Continued from the October 2020 Navigator.)

In this “Going to the Telford Convention” series of articles, we began by making a significant decision at the outset of planning for the trip. We decided that, after the Telford Convention on Saturday and Sunday, we would travel to London and visit several historical sites and locations of interest to modelers. After the convention began to shut down on Sunday, we departed Telford and arrived in London in just a few hours via train.

- On Monday and Tuesday, we visited the Royal Observatory in Greenwich, the Cutty Sark, the HMS Belfast, the Golden Hind, and the HQS Wellington.
- We took a stroll that started at the Wellington Arch, walking to Buckingham Palace and to Churchill’s War Rooms.
- We took some time to do a walk-thru of Westminster Abbey and the nearby Jewel Tower, and then continued to the Imperial War Museum-Lambeth.
- We’ve experienced several forms of transportation while on this trip.
- We traveled by train to get to Telford and then to London.
- While in London we have taken the Tube to a variety of locations and enjoyed a boat ride on the Thames.
- We have yet to take one of those famous red double-decker buses or call a taxi, but the trip isn’t over yet.

In this final installment, we have only one day of touring remaining on our itinerary and a tough choice to make. The choice narrows down to visiting one or the other of two well known and outstanding museums. We can visit the RAF Museum near the Colindale Tube Station in a suburb of London, or we can visit RAF Duxford. We have only one more day remaining in London and we want to make the most of it! And for our final day in the UK, here are our two choices:

- The RAF Museum – <https://www.rafmuseum.org.uk/london/>
- Imperial War Museum- Duxford - <https://www.iwm.org.uk/visits/iwm-duxford>

Let’s start by taking a look at the Imperial War Museum – Duxford.



Duxford is Europe's largest aircraft museum. On display are aircraft dating from World War I to the current day, both military and civilian. A hanger is dedicated to aircraft flown by the United States Air Force. Other hangers contain aircraft flown by the RAF as well other nations. Duxford exhibits are not exclusively "aircraft" related. An entire hanger features armor, or "armour" when in England. Duxford has an active runway and during my 2018 visit I was fortunate to video a Hurricane approaching the runway and landing. There is, of course, a restaurant (snack bar) and a Gift Shop on site as well.



I consider Duxford to be the most outstanding aviation museum that I've visited, on par with the air-related museums at the Smithsonian and Udvar Hazy. The entry fee is a little steep, at about \$20.00 in 2018, but its well worth it. By far, I have more images taken at Duxford than at any other single site I've visited in the U.K., or for that matter, anywhere in the countries to which I've traveled, and sites which I've visited. My "image count" for Duxford exceeds 500 by a handful. (Praise be unto digital photography!)

Duxford is a "full-day" excursion from London. In fact, one of the reasons I chose to stay at the Royal National Hotel in London, was because I had planned to travel to Duxford to visit the museum. The Royal National is only a 15-minute walk from King's Cross Train Station, the starting point for the train ride to Duxford. Doing some research on how one will travel to Duxford is especially important. Some routes will take as little as 50 minutes, while other

routes may be double that figure. It depends on how many stops the train makes on its way to Cambridge, the location where one will disembark the train. The upside in taking the train into Cambridge is that you can purchase a ticket for a non-stop train, with an estimated travel time of about 50 minutes. And believe me, the trains run on time! The downside to going to Cambridge is that it is necessary, upon arrival, to visit the Taxi queue and lay out the extra cost of the Taxi to take you from the Cambridge Station to the Visitor's Center at Duxford. The distance from the Cambridge Rail Station to the Duxford Museum is only 11 miles, but I have no idea what that equates to in taxi fees.

Other options present themselves as one does some research on the transportation issue. Whittlesford is a small town located just two miles to the east of the Duxford Museum. One can walk the two miles in about 40 minutes, the terrain is rather flat so there is little in the way to make it a difficult walk. However, there are no sidewalks, per se, on that route for pedestrians and the traffic on the roads can be a bit.... intimidating. Of course, there are Taxis available for the journey and the fee should not be outrageous. One other factor to consider, however, is that of the time it takes to take the train from London to Whittlesford.

The Duxford website has an excellent page which covers the important issue of "how to get there". There are links to bus service from Whittlesford to the Duxford area, and also links to various train services. And, "how", you ask, "did I get there?" I took a non-stop train from King's Cross-London to Cambridge. In Cambridge I linked up with a friend who was visiting his son and daughter-in-law who live in the U.K. The son drove the four of us to Duxford, and then returned to Cambridge Station at the end of the day so that my friend and I could take the train back to London.

You have three important Duxford is your destination King's Cross to Cambridge about 40 Pounds Sterling. Museum was £17.50.

You have three important Duxford is your destination King's Cross to Cambridge about £40.00. The entry £17.50. I have no clue as to ought to be within reason. £75.00. And then add on a Shop in the Visitor's Center, lunch. Of course, you could Cambridge Rail station for King's Cross. You will spend day excursion, but you will spectacular museum. And that's always fun!



purchases that will be required if of choice. The train trip from and return will run about \$50, or The entry ticket to the Duxford

purchases that will be required if of choice. The train trip from and return will run about \$50, or ticket to the Duxford Museum was the Taxi fee from Cambridge to about £15.00 one way and that The total of these fees is about fee for some food at the Food and perhaps dinner as well as wait until you return to the dinner, or even until you return to around \$100 in U.S. funds for this also find Duxford to be a then there is the train ride, and

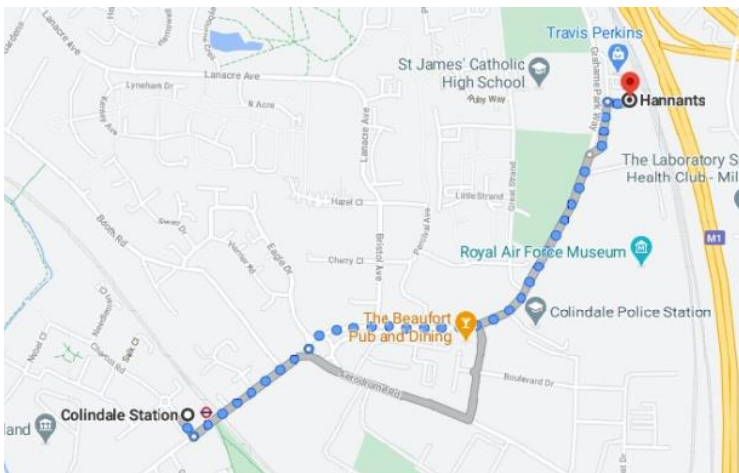
The other option is to spend your last day in the UK at the RAF Museum located near Colindale, a suburb on the northern side of London. This museum is 1st Class, with a wide variety of aircraft on display from the early days of

aviation, WWI, between the wars, WWII, and to modern aircraft. There is a Snack Bar located near the Gift Shop and you can eat lunch sitting at a table under the wing of a Short Sunderland.

The RAF Museum is easier to get to than Duxford. If memory serves, and sometimes it does not, the ride to Colindale Station and then back to the station near my hotel was about £ 7.50 to £ 8.00. The RAF Museum is a short walk from the Colindale Station, taking about 15 minutes. The RAF Museum website is showing that admission is free. I do not remember if that was the case in 2018 during my visit, but my notes do not indicate that there was an entry fee. I have a vague recollection of there being a “Donation Station” at which I deposited some Pounds Sterling.

There are six Exhibition Hangers to visit. Hanger 1 features “The First 100 Years” of RAF stories and a display labeled as “First to the Future”. Hanger 2 features artifacts from the 1st World War. Hangers 3, 4 and 5 cover “War in the Air”, and Hanger 6 addresses “The RAF in an Age of Uncertainty.”

There is another attraction near the RAF Museum, only 5 minutes away. Hannants is a well-known Modeler’s Paradise. Most American modelers know of Hannants, and many have made on-line purchases from Hannants (I’m raising my right hand to signal that I’ve done that). There is a Hannants “outlet” just a five-minute walk from the RAF Museum. It is a small building with little signage. Be sure to check the Hannants website for business hours. Visit the Hannants-Colindale website at <https://www.hannants.co.uk/product/COLINDALE>. Take note of the image of the building that appears on the website. This is not the main Hannants facility, that being in Suffolk. The Colindale location is an “outlet”, but is very well stocked.



The RAF Museum option has the added benefit of a quick trip to the Hannants outlet (again, be aware of the Hours of Operation) and does not require a Taxi or a train ride. It is far less expensive to visit than Duxford, but then that depends on how many models you buy during your visit! Duxford or RAF Museum/Colindale.....it’s up to you.

This has been a spectacular experience! We attended the IPMS-UK convention on Saturday and Sunday. We traveled to London and did quite a bit of site-seeing. We’ve visited several museums, mostly for aircraft modelers but there have been a number of sea-faring subjects as well as a chance to stand in both hemispheres at the same time at the Greenwich Royal Observatory. We’ve used Google-Maps to conduct virtual visits of the various sites, and those virtual scenes helped us to navigate effectively



throughout our stay in London. We've had the opportunity to enjoy some train travel through the English countryside, and we've become very adept at navigating on the London Tube. We've added to our modeling stash with some purchases at Hannants and at the gift shops of the museums we've visited.

Now, it's time to go home. One of the considerations that is important is how to get back to the airport from your hotel. On my inbound leg it took just under an hour to take the Tube from Heathrow Terminal 3 to the Russell Square Station. Both Heathrow and Russell Square are on the Piccadilly Line and that is extremely helpful since no transfers are required. Upon my arrival I tracked the length of time it took to get from Heathrow to Russell Square and, as just mentioned, it was just under an hour. I chose an arrival time that meant I would miss the rush-hour that can make Tube rides unpleasant, so going inbound it would be advantageous to arrive at about 8a.m., local time. By the time you clear Customs and Baggage Claim you will have avoided the morning rush hour. Heading home, you might want to consider a Taxi but that can get pricy. For the same distance on the Tube ride that was £ 2.40, the Taxi ride will be much more expensive. The taxi will be quieter, more comfortable, and easier, but more expensive. And note that the cab ride took about the same amount of time as the Tube ride. When asked, the staff at the Hotel (Royal National) suggested that it would be wise to build in about 4 or 5 hours to depart the hotel, travel to Heathrow, check in your luggage, and go through Customs. I found that 5 hours was a very generous estimate, in my experience it took about 2 ½ hours. But its better to be early for an international flight than be late.

I thoroughly enjoyed my trip in 2018, meeting up with friends in London, at the Telford Convention, and then for the trip to Duxford. My pre-trip planning and research, especially my virtual walking tours on Google Maps were extremely helpful and contributed to the success of the trip. It is my hope that I might, once more, I will be able to attend the Telford convention, and perhaps, I'll see you there. Happy Travels!

Commission Work

When visiting my local Dibbles Hobbies store a few months back, I spied a fine diorama piece being worked on. I share a few pictures to relate that experience. (*Manpower and photos provided by Jeff Chaldek, dibbleshobbies@gmail.com*)



Modeling Specifics:

Manufacturer:
Old Glory

Size: 10mm
wargame scale
(approx 1/144
scale)

Material: Resin

Price for base kit:
\$101.00

Cannons: primarily
10mm, also by Old
Glory (others from
old stuff)

Original kit before project start.



Completed project.



Most of the scratch building was done using:

- Round toothpicks
- Bamboo skewers
- Tablet back cardboard
- Thin sheet plastic strips
- Minwax stainable wood filler
- Built on a base of 1/2" blue foam, laminated to a thin sheet of MDF.



(No, not THESE kinds of tracks)

Club Member's Insight

*(From last months' meeting notes with a summary table provided
by Dana Mathes)*

Modeling Tracks for Armored Vehicles

I. Detailed and Accurate Tracks Add Greatly to an Armor Model

- A. Added Detail: Many surfaces to highlight
- B. Realistic: Track sag, weight, lay on wheels and ground
- C. Weathering and Painting Points
 - a. Wear and damage on rubber parts of wheels and track
 - b. Metal contact surfaces vs. rusting of Metal parts
 - c. Mud and road dust
 - d. Blending with hull and rest of vehicle
 - e. Secondary armor and track spares are weathered differently than running track

II. Judging Criteria

- A. Alignment and Sag
- B. Continuity with Vehicle - weathering, colors
- C. Detailing
- D. Note variability of sag on actual vehicles per references

III. Types of Track (See Table)

- A. Discrepancies of track link count in instructions or references versus what fits
- B. Note post-installation loosening and sag

IV. Tools and Products

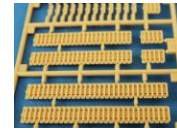
- A. Aluminum track forms (specific to vehicle type) to correctly shape polystyrene. segmented or individual link tracks.
- B. Adjustable wooden forms for handling individual link tracks.
- C. Blackening solutions for white metal links.
- D. Monofilament fishing line to tie track in place.

V. Steps for Painting and Simple Weathering of Tracks

- A. Prime and paint track pads on the sprue if separate pieces
- B. Assemble and prime track as a unit
- C. Base colors: Red Brown for metal surfaces, Flat Black/Nato Black for pads
- D. Wash with Raw Umber oils
- E. Wash with earth colored chalks (in thinner solution),
- F. Apply dark gray chalk to road wheel runs on track
- G. Dry brush with earth colors to match weathering
- H. Paint metal contact surfaces of track aluminum or metallic silver.
- I. Use artist and graphite pencils to highlight contact points

Summary Table

Tracks for AFV Models Dana Mathes



	Workable	Pro	Con	Vendor	Innovations
"Rubber Band" Vinyl Tracks	No	Simplest	Little Detail, Paint Adhesion Issues - Awkward closures - Difficult to get correct track sag	Kit-Supplied	Takom Pin Closure
Injection Molded Segmented Track	No	Good Detail	Difficult to assemble and position correctly	Kit-Supplied	
Injection Molded "Snap Track"	Yes	Excellent Detail	Easiest to assemble and correctly position - Snaps can break off - \$20-30/set	Some Kit-supplied (Takom), WWII Productions, ModelKasten	Some higher-end kits now include these
Injection Molded Individual Link Track	May be Fixed or Workable depending on design of Links	Excellent Detail	May have up to 7 parts per link - some clean up required for ribs and mold lines - \$20-30/set	Some Kit-Supplied (Academy, Takom), AFV Club, Bronco, Takom, MiniArt	Some higher-end kits now include these
White Metal Individual Link Track	Yes	Excellent Detail - Best for correct track sag	Must clean, drill, and pin (wire) each link - 5% wastage - Most expensive \$40-\$90/set	Fruilmodel (Hungary), Spade Ace (China)	

Hear Ye! Hear Ye!

As you know Alamo Squadron is resuming in-person meetings with the proper safety protocol. As you have seen from Keith's recent email, the November meeting will take place at a new venue near 1604 and 281. That means that we have the opportunity to have demos again as part of our club meetings.

This note is an invitation for you to give a demonstration or lead a discussion of a modeling technique, a tool, research methods, painting techniques, or any other modeling-related topic you'd like to share with the club. Being hunkered down this year, there are bound to be many things the group has learned that can help the club advance its modeling skills.

If you'd be willing to present a 15-20 minute demonstration at a club meeting at one of the upcoming monthly meetings (Nov, Jan, Feb, Mar, Apr), please send a note back to me with a brief description of your topic.

Thanks for your consideration, Dana. huskercat@gmail.com

Book Review

Item Reviewed: F6F Hellcat-in detail & scale

Reviewed by: Floyd S. Werner, Jr.

IPMS#: 26266

Review Subject: Aircraft

Type of Review: Reference

Price: \$19.99 and \$12.99 digital version

Author: Bert Kinzey & Chris Sakal

Company: Detail & Scale

ISBN #: 9798625145039

Other Publication Information: Softbound

Product / Stock #: D&S Volume 10

Web Site: www.detailandscale.com

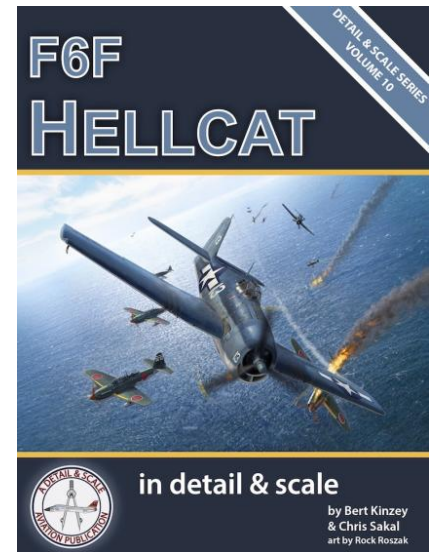
Product provided by: Detail & Scale

Direct Link to info:

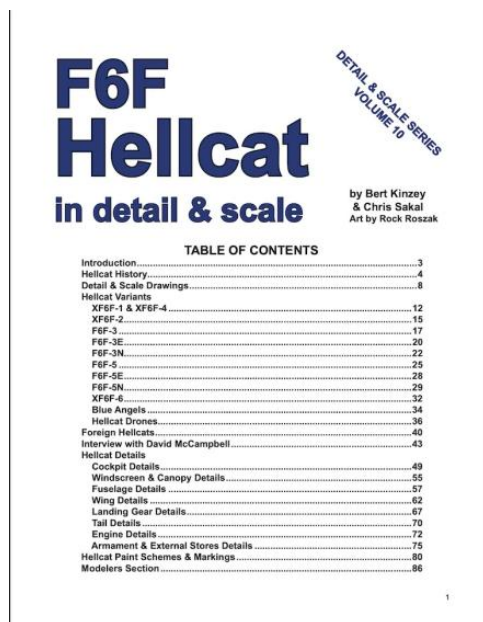
http://www.detailandscale.com/F6F_Hellcat_in_Detail_and_Scale_Book.html

Direct Link to order: https://www.amazon.com/F6F-Hellcat-Detail-Scale/dp/B086FLTD4X/ref=sr_1_1?crid=1S5U7YVIKZC63&dchild=1&keywords=detail+and+scale+books&qid=1603121266&sprefix=Detail+and+%2Caps%2C162&sr=8-1

[Scale/dp/B086FLTD4X/ref=sr_1_1?crid=1S5U7YVIKZC63&dchild=1&keywords=detail+and+scale+books&qid=1603121266&sprefix=Detail+and+%2Caps%2C162&sr=8-1](https://www.amazon.com/F6F-Hellcat-Detail-Scale/dp/B086FLTD4X/ref=sr_1_1?crid=1S5U7YVIKZC63&dchild=1&keywords=detail+and+scale+books&qid=1603121266&sprefix=Detail+and+%2Caps%2C162&sr=8-1)



The latest book, and digital book, from Detail & Scale is actually the third time that the F6F Hellcat has been covered by them. They released the original book in 1987 and then again in 1996. This book is more comprehensive than either of those volumes.

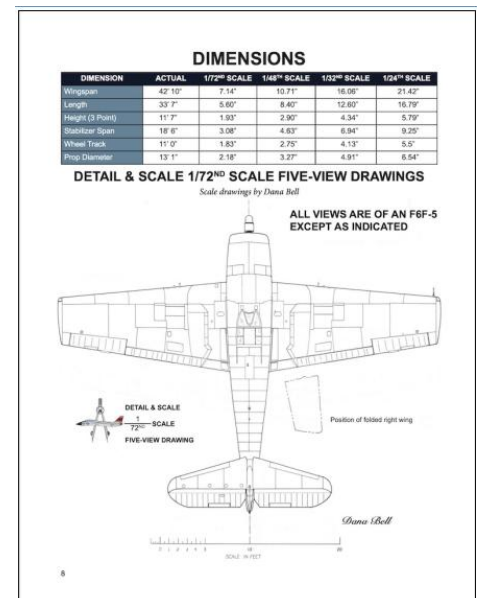


F6F-3 Hellcats warm up their engines aboard USS COWPENS, CVL-25, during raids on the Marshall Islands by Task Group 58.3 in January 1944. (U. S. Navy)

February 1943. The combat debut was on August 31, 1943, with Hellcats from ESSEX, YORKTOWN, CV-10, and INDEPENDENCE, CVL-22, making a raid against Marcus Island. Thus, only fourteen months had elapsed between the time the prototype made its first flight until the Hellcat entered combat. The strike was led by Capt. Jimmy Flaherty who was flying an F6F-3 with three external tanks so that he could stay over the target and direct strikes for the longest possible period of time. The strike was very successful, and although no enemy aircraft got into the air, several were destroyed on the ground during the Hellcat's baptism of fire. Only two Hellcats and one Avenger were lost to anti-aircraft fire, while a third Hellcat had to ditch. The pilot of the ditching Hellcat and the crew of the Avenger were rescued.



Deck crewmen push (left) Blue Angels' F6F-4 and position aboard USS LEXINGTON, CV-16, sometime after June 19, 1944. War's Hellcat carries markings that are typical of those applied to P-51s in operational service from late 1942 until late 1944. These include the VP-13 "Fighting Argonauts" insignia ahead of the windscreen, Japanese flags as dorsal air-to-air victories, and an individual in-squadron aircraft number on the side of the fuselage. It is interesting to note how the Sea Blue over the number 32 extends further down than the rest as Lt. J. J. Carner had been painted out. (U. S. Navy)



The printed version is available from Amazon in a soft bound book containing 102 pages of information. No Detail & Scale book would be complete without excellent photographs and this book is no different. It contains 270 photos, mostly in full color (192), and of course the fabulous artwork of Rock Roszak. In this case, there are 23 profiles and

drawings that highlight the changes and markings of the Hellcat. The line drawings are actually done by noted aviation historian, Dana Bell. Let's see what is inside.

F6F-3N



Many squadrons were not the only ones to employ the Hellcat night fighter variants with success. By the end of the war, five Marine night fighter squadrons flew the Hellcat. This F6F-3N of VMF(N)-534 was up for a mission at Oniz Point Field, Guam. VMF(N)-534 flew from Oniz Point from July 1944 until the end of the war. (USMC)

On April 16, 1942, the same day as the Douglas D-558-2, the U. S. Navy began to program to develop a combined night fighter. Under the name Project Affirm, operations began at NAS Quonset Point, RI. Affirm was to encompass all aspects related to night fighter development including the design of radar systems, adoption of aircraft, the training of pilots and night fighter director officers, and operations. Headed by the design of a new radar system was the Massachusetts Institute of Technology Radiation Laboratory working for the Sperry Gyroscope Company. The result of their intensive effort was designated as the Airborne Interceptor, A-14, for short radar was the A-14 being the first in the series. Better known by its designation as the A-14, the system had two main components. The scanner was a 17 inch parabolic dish that was mounted in a streamlined pod that was to be mounted on the leading edge of the aircraft's right wing. A condenser carrying the wave guide ran from the scanner to the sending and receiving unit in the fuselage. The radar-amplifier, receiver, and antenna were to be mounted in the fuselage as well. The system used a unique "klystron" that displayed on the radar target while a second ground dish located it gave an approximate elevation in relation to the aircraft.

The F4U Corsair and the F6F Hellcat were selected to employ the A-14 system. This was the development of the F4U-2 and the F6F-3N, with the F6F-3N being arguably the better performing aircraft. The F6F Hellcat itself was for conversion to a night fighter. It was easy to fly, had good handling



This color profile illustrates the F6F-3N of VMF(N)-534 shown above. Note how the national insignia wraps around the nose, something often seen on the F6F-3N. (Artwork by Rick Rozek)

22

HELLCAT DRONES



Brightly colored Hellcat drones, like this pristine F6F-3N, were a common sight at U. S. Navy weapons ranges such as Oniz Point and Point Mugu during the 1950s. Hellcats modified to the drone configuration served in a variety of roles until being phased out in 1961. Note the wing tip pods and the relocated and extended pilot probe. (U. S. Navy via Thompson)

The use of drones in modern military aviation to conduct high risk air strikes as well as perform a variety of research, test, and development roles that would be too hazardous for a human operator has been a part of life for over half a century. The antecedents of the modern drone go as far back as the Second World War, and it was after that war that advances in autopilot and remote guidance systems made more reliable and effective remotely piloted aircraft possible.

As mentioned at the conclusion of the F6F-5 section, the Hellcat was rapidly phased out of front line squadron service following World War II. However, not all Hellcats were immediately scrapped. A considerable number of aircraft were placed in long term storage at places such as Naval Air Facility Litchfield Park in Arizona. Although there were exceptions, many of the Hellcats had been produced towards the end of the war and had very few flight hours. This left the Navy with a readily available pool of aircraft from which to select for conversion to drones.

Come again, the F6F's famed handling characteristics, good performance, and ease of adaptability made it an ideal choice as a remotely controlled aircraft.

F6F Hellcat conversions were initially carried out at the Naval Air Development Unit at Johnstown, Pennsylvania, and later at the overhaul and repair (OAR) facility at NAS Pensacola, Florida.

Although outwardly almost identical to the standard Hellcat fighter configuration, the drone modifications altered the aircraft significantly. First and foremost, the P-16 autopilot and all of the radio receiver were installed in the fuselage. Additional antenna wires for the autopilot receivers ran from the fuselage antenna mount to the fuselage sides. As the Hellcat solidified on through the 1950s, it was not uncommon to see triangular blade antennas on the spine of the aircraft as well. Almost as important as the addition of the autopilot, all of the aircraft's armament including the guns, rocket rails, bomb racks, and the gun sight, were deleted. Hellcat drones did maintain the ability to carry a combined drop tank. The most common drop tank carried by the Hellcat drones was the Mark 58 that I wish was the same type carried by the F6F Corsair and F4U Corsair. This tank was distinguishable by its lack of a self-sealing plug on the bottom wing fuel tank.

A number of other visible external changes were made to the aircraft. One of the first was repainting the tail wheel strut by six inches for better ground contact. Due to the longer strut, the tail wheel would no longer fit into the well. The top



An overall Orange-Yellow F6F-3N drone prepares for a flight with a pilot on board at the Naval Air Development Unit at Johnstown, Pennsylvania, where the first drone conversions were initially carried out. (U. S. Navy via Thompson)

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a prominent aircraft. The Grumman Iron Works had another winning Navy fighter on its hands. Each unique night fighter variant is also covered, including cockpit photos and radar photos. Everything that the modeler would need to do it right. The F6F-5 was the last production variant and it is covered in depth. The addition of rockets and the small structural changes are addressed in photos and text. The final prototype, the XF6F-6, is shown including the cockpit and revised cowlings. How do they find this stuff, especially since there were only two every made?

INTERVIEW WITH DAVID McCAMPBELL
THE U. S. NAVY'S ALL-TIME LEADING ACE

Note: Captain David McCampbell, USN (Ret.), is the Navy's all-time leading ace with thirty-four confirmed air-to-air victories. All of these were attained while flying the Hellcat as the Commanding Officer of Carrier Air Group 15 aboard USS ESSEX, CV-9. After attending Georgia Tech for one year, where he took up engineering and diving, Captain McCampbell transferred to the U. S. Naval Academy as a member of the class of 1933. While there, he was an intercollegiate diving champion and was good enough to have been selected for the 1932 Olympics. However, priority went to academics, and he did not compete in the Olympic trials. None of his air-to-air victories came in a single mission on October 24, 1944, and for this he was awarded the Medal of Honor. His nine kills in a single mission is a record for all American and allied fighter pilots, and all of his thirty-four kills were scored during a single tour in combat. This is also a record. After the war, he returned in the Navy until 1954, and among his assignments was a tour as commanding officer of USS BON HOMME RICHARD, CV-31. The following interview was conducted at his home on September 9, 1987, just a few days before Detail & Scale's first Hellcat book originally went to press. In it he discussed the Hellcat, his own experiences, and the markings on his personal aircraft. Questions asked by the author, Bert Kinney, are in regular type, while Captain McCampbell's comments and answers are in bold type. Captain McCampbell died on June 28, 1998, at the age of 66.



Let's start with the Hellcat itself. As someone who scored all of his kills in the Hellcat, what do you remember the most about the Hellcat as a fighter aircraft?

The Hellcat was an outstanding fighter plane. It performed well, was easy to fly, and was a stable gun platform. But what I really remember most was that it was rugged and easy to maintain. I usually landed first ahead of my wingman Ray Rushing. Once I had pulled forward and had gotten out of my aircraft as Ray landed and taxied forward. We gave a thumbs-up sign to the deck crew if the fighter was all right and needed nothing other than refueling and returning before being ready to go again. Here came Ray giving a thumbs-up, yet I could see his number nine piston pumping oil through the cylinder. The damage had not been even noticeable to him. That is what I mean by rugged. It could take a lot of punishment and still fly. Every one of my kills exploded or at least caught fire. The Hellcat just did not do that. And it was easy to maintain. I remember that our mechanics could change an entire engine in just four hours. Most parts of the aircraft were easily reachable, and simple to work on.

You had the chance to fly the F4U Corsair. How did it compare to the Hellcat?

The Corsair was a little faster, and had a little better rate of climb. I had a friend take up a Corsair and I flew a Hellcat. We flew some mock combat, and his speed and climb gave him a slight advantage. Both aircraft were great fighters. I have read about other pilots in other fighters having problems with gun jamming. Did this ever happen you in the Hellcat?

Never. My guns always performed perfectly. None of my

David McCampbell is pictured when he had the rank of commander and was the CO of CAG-15 aboard USS ESSEX, CV-9. (McCampbell)

pilots ever had problems with the guns unless he got real excited and damaged the barrels by firing too long of a burst. We never sighted our guns differently than what was officially approved by the Armament Bureau. We were set up so that ninety-five or ninety-three percent of our rounds were in a three-foot circle at 1000 feet. No aircraft could hope to withstand that.

I would expect that all of those bullets so tightly packed into a three-foot circle would send up a lot of damage to a ship. We actually did not get that close to a ship when attacking it. If there was an aircraft fire we would not go below 1000 feet, but although the bullets dispersed beyond 1000 feet, they still could do considerable damage.

How long of a burst did you usually fire?

No more than three to four seconds.

It has been said many times that the pilots with the best gunnery skills were often the ones that had hunted when they were boys. Was this true in your case?

Oh yes. I had a shotgun when I was eleven and did a lot of quail hunting. I used to hunt with Barry Goldwater (later the Senator from Arizona) when he and I were in Sturgeon Military Academy together. Each of the Naval Air Stations had a skeet range, and I would do a lot of shooting when

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the same applies to the canopy and the engine cowlings. This section is everything that you could hope for as a modeler. While the photos are great the text contains some very interesting facts that the modeler will love to know about.

Hellcat paint schemes and markings are covered in the next chapter. The Hellcat developed throughout the war so its camouflage developed as the war progressed. From the early war blue grey over light grey to the tri-color scheme right on through to the Gloss Sea Blue. Likewise the markings ranged from circle star to the red surround to the white star and bars. Because the Hellcat was used post-war as well there is the star and bars with the red stripe as well.



This book is typical for the whole Detail & Scale line of books and eBooks. They are thoroughly researched, lavishly illustrated and a one stop shop for the model builder. This book is a great addition to any library. It is also available in Kindle version which offers additional options like the ability to enlarge photos. Still for those old school like me, I enjoy the ability to have a book in my hand. The photos and drawings are first rate. The detail photos are really useful for any modeler. The information is really informative for the historian. Another great addition to the Detail & Scale library.

Highly recommended.

Thanks to Detail & Scale for the review copy. You can obtain your copy by ordering on Amazon at https://www.amazon.com/F6F-Hellcat-Detail-Scale/dp/B086FLTD4X/ref=sr_1_1?crd=1S5U7YVIKZC63&dchild=1&keywords=detail+and+scale+books&qid=1603121266&sprefix=Detail+and+%2Caps%2C162&sr=8-1

Then comes the final section, the one that sets Detail & Scale apart from other reference books, the Modelers Section. Older kits in a variety of scales are discussed. Then the more recent kits are discussed from 1/144th to 1/24. This is a very extensive listing.

MODELERS SECTION

OLDER KITS

Elvin 1/200" Scale F6F-5
Other than being mentioned in several model kit collector's price guides, there is no other information about the initial release of this kit. Later it was one of the six "Two Weeks" issued by UIC with the kit number 8025.

Samwa Tokyo Palma 1/110" Scale F6F-5
The only source listed for this small kit is Carlton Shanks's original 1972 issue of "Collectors Guide to Model Aircraft and Rockets/Motors/Space Kits."

Moruan 1/100" Scale F6F-5
This model was released around 1965 and was numbered 485. It was later reissued with the kit number 7063. UIC also reissued this model under its label.

Classic 1/100" Scale F6F-5
The only mention of this kit is in Shanks's 1972 guide. No other information is available.

Lindberg 1/90" Scale F6F
Initially issued as Lindberg kit number 424, it had a one-piece wing and a pilot's head that was molded into the left fuselage half. It was armed with six rockets and had twenty-one

blue pieces and a clear canopy. The main collector's value is in the full color card printed on the back of the box. This model was released by Lindberg circa 1964 as part of the "Fighters Plus" set which also included an F7U-1 Cutlass, F4U-5 Corsair, and an F-40 Shooting Star in 1/90" scale. This kit was also released under the name label.

Nitro 1/77" Scale F6F-5
This was Nitro kit number 5. No other information is available.

Airfix 1/72" Scale F6F
One of the stalwarts of model kit manufacturers is Airfix in England. Their F6F Hellcat kit has been released numerous times as an F6F-3, an F6F-5, and as releases that included parts to build other variants. As with many Airfix models, their

half the rocket bodies. This means that if the modeler does not wish to have the rockets mounted on the model, the stubs must be cut away then glued in place under the wings. They are a fair size in 1/24" scale, so this should be a simple task, especially for a modeler who has the skills to build this kit.

The clear parts are thin and have excellent clarity. They are carefully packaged to avoid being scratched or broken. Full color painting guides and decals for two U.S. Navy, two Royal Navy, and a French Hellcat are provided. A full set of surface stencils is also included.

When building this model, there are two main points that should be emphasized. First, with all of the optional panels, control surface positions, wing folds, and the motorization option, planning ahead on how the finished model will be displayed is essential. This makes a difference in the construction of the model and will make following the instructions easier. Second, it is absolutely necessary that the instruction manual be followed. Deviating from the instructions on a model of this size and magnitude only invites problems. It also goes without saying that patience and care should be taken during assembly to take full advantage of everything that Airfix has provided in the way of detail and engineering.

This is easily the best and most accurate scale model of the F6F Hellcat that is currently available. We hope that Airfix will release this kit as variants other than the F6F-5. Aircraft Models has released conversion kits to build this model as an early F6F-3, early F6F-5, late F6F-5, and Royal Navy F6F-5 along with corresponding decals. A conversion to build an F6F-3 has been announced. Even without a conversion kit or aftermarket accessories, a museum-quality model can be built straight out of the box, and we highly recommend this kit.

Matt Porter contributed to this review.

Upcoming IPMS Region 6 Area Club Events

Provided by Dick Montgomery IPMS #14003

Coordinate with Contacts to verify the schedule and location is accurate before finalizing plans.

Date	Title	Contact	Location	Address
January 31, 2021 CANCELLED	CALMEX 35	Robert Leishman swampclub@yahoo.com	Lake Charles Civic Center	900 Lakeshore Drive, Lake Charles, LA, 70601
February 20, 2021	ModelFiesta 40	Mark Verdi alamosquadron@gmail.com	San Antonio Event Center	8111 Meadowleaf Drive San Antonio, TX 78227
March 20, 2021	RiverCon X IPMS Region 6 Regional	Andrew Bloom 1952@gmail.com	LSUS University Center	One University Place Shreveport, LA 71111
August 18 -21, 2021	IPMS National Convention 			Las Vegas, NV

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One More Thing...



What is a Modeler? *(Reprinted from NCT Newsletter June 2006)*

By Michael Benolkin,
Publisher, Cybermodeler Online

A modeler is someone whose hobby it is to create or recreate an image in three dimensions. I distinguish “recreate” versus “create” because the hobby branches into two disciplines that I’ll call “accuracy” and “art”:

An “accuracy” modeler is one that likes to recreate a particular tank, aircraft, ship, or whatever right down to the most realistic and accurate detail. In the extreme, the accuracy modeler will recreate the subject from a photograph to represent a specific point in time and recreate details down to chipped paint, patched up battle damage, etc.

An “artist” will take the same model and render the subject as an interpretation and take some creative license to make the model distinctive and eye-catching

A really talented modeler is one who can apply the best mixture of both disciplines. After all, unless the photograph is a walk around, there is a certain amount of “art” even in accuracy to interpolate what the other side of the subject looked like!

How many times have we gone to a model contest and ignored an accurate model because it was a recreation of a bland subject? How many times have we seen models that had so much creativity that you want to revoke the modeler’s “artistic license”? Then again, how many times have you seen a model do very well at one contest and get completely ignored at another? Modeling is VERY subjective.

The problem here is that we don’t have a problem – modeling is not a one-size-fits-all hobby. If you take the above definitions and add some dimension to the equation, then the hobby begins to take shape:

A one-dimensional modeler is one who builds a tank, aircraft, figure, etc., and displays the result as-is.

A two-dimensional modeler is one who takes that tank, aircraft, figure, etc., and mounts it to some sort of display base to add a touch of sophistication.

A multi-dimensional modeler is one who can effectively take that central subject of tank, aircraft, figure, or some combination thereof, and tell a story in three dimensions with a vignette or diorama. Some of the more talented modelers in this dimension will recreate a moment in time out of a photograph. Others can tell one or more stories very clearly.

One of my favorites was a vignette of two American soldiers in a foxhole with a Tiger tank sitting above them. One was looking up in horror while the other was on the radio saying “I have a target for you, but you’re going to have to be patient!” This was a recreation of a WWII cartoon published in Stars and Stripes.

So which one is the best? The answer to that is simple – which one (or more) is fun for you? This is a hobby and it is supposed to be fun. Don’t let comments from other modelers sway you from your idea of relaxation. Some are quite vocal about what they view as “proper modeling” but in the end, many of these folks haven’t produced a model of their own in some time. Like photography, car restoration, sports, or any other hobby, each event is a learning experience and each has its share of ‘vocal critics’.

In the end, if you want to learn to improve yourself in this hobby, don’t be afraid to try new things, but don’t accept criticism from those who are not teaching. You can tell the teachers – they don’t knock what you’ve done, they show you how to do more. Remember, this is about building and painting little plastic models, not solving world hunger or nuclear proliferation. Keep it fun! Now go build something!

Executive Board for IPMS Alamo Squadron San Antonio, Texas

President:	Keith Rule	krule1148@gmail.com
Vice-President:	Dana Mathes	huskercat@gmail.com
Treasurer:	Christopher Settle	csettle99x@yahoo.com

The Newsletter of the IPMS Alamo Squadron IPMS Chapter

The San Antonio chapter of the International Plastic Modelers' Society
A registered 501c-7 organization

Team Lead for the National IPMS/USA Convention: 2023
IPMS/USA Region 6 Chapter of the Year: 2016

IPMS/USA Region 6 Newsletter of the Year: 2017
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IPMS–Alamo Squadron San Antonio Texas meets on the 1st Thursday evening of each month. Meetings start at 7:00 PM Central Time for general social catch-up with the business portion starting at approximately 7:15 PM. Monthly agendas usually consist of event (local and regional) updates, members promoting their “works-in-progress, a member vote for the month’s model of choice, a kit of the month feature and presentation or demonstration of a modeler’s technique.

Every attempt is made to communicate with chapter members any last minute changes in the meeting locale. For information on meetings, future agenda items, coming events or general IPMS Alamo Squadron please contact Keith or Dana.

The Navigator is the monthly publication of IPMS–Alamo Squadron used to communicate chapter news, functions, contest information, and other events or items of interest on the local, regional, and national modeling scene. Subscriptions are \$12.00 annual* as part of club membership dues and distributed electronically via email.

The views and opinions expressed in this newsletter are those of the respective authors and should not be construed as the views or opinions of either IPMS–Alamo Squadron or IPMS–USA. Article contributions, feedback and questions for the newsletter are always welcome and actively encouraged. The deadline for written submissions to *The Navigator* is the last Friday of each month prior to month of issue. Written contributions can be provided as an MS-Word or ASCII text file on floppy diskette at any meeting or as a file attachment via an email note to the editor.

Sam Casas – scasas002@satx.rr.com
Newsletter Editor