



"STICKY FINGERS"

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Alan's "Annotations"

Well now we're well into the traditional English summer, these hot balmy days burn off any thoughts about modelling; it will soon all change. At least this allows a few visits to airshows and similar outdoor events.

Since taking on the club secretary job this year I've had the unenviable task of cancelling two shows which were booked in the club's name. The Salisbury Show was particularly embarrassing as they had not been told that we were not attending; and what dropped through my letter box on the Monday was a pretty angry letter from the organiser, they will not be accepting any bookings from us in the future. Then just recently I had to tell Bournemouth that we were not attending their show either.

Now this is no way to enhance our club's image, so for future shows I will endeavour to make sure that a model show calendar is reproduced in the club magazine so that members have advance knowledge of what's coming. Then if enough interest is shown I will contact the organisers for details. I will also take names of interested members on the night and it will be assumed that these will form the core of our club attendance, so that in future if we say that we are going we actually turn up.

Whilst on the subject of shows I have the passes for the **Chiltern Show on 24th September 2000** to be held at the **Mosquito Museum** just off Junction 22 of the M25. Obviously we have a meeting on 18th September, but if anyone is interested I will take names tonight.

We are also booked in at the IPMS Brampton Annual Show on Sunday 3rd September. This is being held at the Priory Centre, Priory Lane, St Neots, Cambridge. Note this is a new venue from previous years. A suggested route is M25, turn off onto the M11, at Junction 13 turn off onto the A1303 and then on to the A428 and finally the B1428 into St Neots. There is a map at the back of Sticky Fingers for St Neots.

Coys Historic Meeting-Silverstone 21st-23rd July 2000

This year again I took the trip North to get my annual "fix" of classic cars. Due to work problems I was unable to go up on the Friday, but as I had heard that it was a scorcher I dressed lightly for



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Saturday. I did have a surprise when I arrived to find that we had suddenly returned to February. The bottled water was left behind and cups of hot tea with bacon rolls were eagerly sought.

A trip round the paddock area soon warmed me up, truly great examples of Grand Prix, Sports and GT cars were everywhere, whether your interest was pre-war 50's, 60's or 70's it was all there and right up close, no roped off areas here. You can walk round the cars, talk to the drivers and make a right nuisance of yourself. Not only do you have the cars but the programme reads just like a who's who, Moss, Mansell, Stewart plus Robs Lamplough and Spencer Flack and not forgetting Mark Knofler and Tony Mason.

As to the racing, they really meant it, no soft processional trips round the course but proper or to door business, and we had more of the same on Sunday. If you like your cars with just a bit of character I do recommend it, then you'll be hooked and you will just have to sell your Eurobox when you get home.

I hope the photos give you just a taste of what its like, the dark Alfa was particularly attractive, but I didn't get to find out which model, as I said they really race there and sometimes get it wrong. Lastly the John Hone lookalike was in fact Cliff Allison who drove for Ferrari in the 50's, sitting in the fully rebuilt Lancia D 50 Grand Prix car.

Alfa Romeo of undetermined type



Coy Racers





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No it's not John Hone!



Maseratti 4CM



Next month is Battle of Britain theme night. Please feel free to bring along any models, any subject not just aircraft, which are applicable to this period. We will also be having an exhibit and a short talk from the Purfleet Heritage Group.

In October after the Miscellaneous competition has been judged we will be having a short video night featuring the Southern Expo video produced by our own John Bennett.

It just leaves me to say Best of Luck to the entrants for tonight's aircraft competition.

Happy modelling

Alan

Peter's "Prattlings"

Latest Industry News

Accurate Miniatures

After careful consideration, we have decided to cancel the North American B-25G project originally scheduled for release in early 2001. We will however still be releasing the highly anticipated B-25 C/D variant as announced.

Our decision to cancel the B-25G is solely based on our determination as a company to release a broader range of subject material over the next twelve months. To this end we can confirm that we are currently working on a number of different and exciting projects (in several different scales) which cover a time period of pre World War Two to the Gulf War.



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For those fans of the B-25G, we are making a conversion kit which will contain plastic parts required in order to modify Accurate Miniatures' B-25's into dedicated B-25G's.

AeroMaster Paints

"As you are aware, AeroMaster products discontinued their line of Warbird Colours two months ago. The reply of the modelling fraternity has been overwhelming in favour of a quick reintroduction into the market. For two months we have been involved with negotiations with the Testors Corporation (the manufacturers of AeroMaster paints) trying to find a favourable solution for everyone. Very happily, today I am able to inform you that an agreement is imminent. Several ideas for new and exciting products were discussed during these negotiations and with your support, all these ideas will shortly become more products." Or to put it another way. The best acrylic paint range will soon be back! We will let you all know when we have stock.

Hannants

Hannants have re-vamped their website. For those of you who have added it to your favourites or bookmarks you should reselect their main site at

www.hannants.co.uk

Did you spot the aircraft amongst the shock waves? For those that didn't it's an English Electric Lightning.

Peter

Bob's "Business"

First of all congratulations to Trevor Davies with a fine model of a German armoured train, also Alan Wright came joint 5th with Ted Taylor with his 8th Army Desert scene. Tonight is the first round of the Aircraft competition so good luck to everyone.

As you are aware September sees the 60th anniversary of the Battle of Britain, with Duxford on the 9th - 10th and Biggin Hill on the 17th hosting the main shows. If the Flying Legends at Duxford or the Air Fair at Biggin Hill are anything to go by then we are in for a great time. Duxford are trying to get up to 30 Spitfires and 7 Hurricanes plus the modern RAF and a number of warbirds. Biggin is also after the same number of Spitfires and Hurricanes, with also modern jets and other aircraft. As mentioned earlier there are now 6 Hurricanes flying in England after the latest Hurricane from Hawker Aircraft Productions made its debut at Flying Legend. This aircraft is a Sea Hurricane Mk.II and has been painted to represent Douglas Baders Mk.1 of 242 Squadron, coded LE-D. *(editors note - Military In-Scale are featuring a photo spread of this aircraft in their September 2000 issue).*

It was a welcome sight to see 4 Hurricanes flying together. It would have been nice to see 6 but the Battle of Britain Flights 2 aircraft were engaged elsewhere, but Paul Day, C.O. of B.o.B Flight brought a Mk.19 Spitfire and joined in the Spitfire display with 7 others of the breed in a free for all,



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milling about all over the sky, but back to Hurricanes, if all goes well there may be a seventh by September if Hawker Aircraft have got enough time to finish it in time.

Show Diary

August

17 th - 20 th	Eastbourne Seafront Airshow	01323 415998
19 th	Shuttleworth Collection Flying Proms	01767 627288
19 th - 20 th	21 st D.H. Moth Club Rally Woburn Abbey Beds	01442 862077
20 th	Air Day 2000 Compton Abbas Dorset	01747 811767
26 th	Vintage Piper Aircraft Fly-in Old Warden Beds	01353 663450
27 th	Delta Jets Flying Day Kemble Glos	01285 771144
27 th	Air Spectacular Elvington Yorks	012343 867144

September

2 nd	Fleet Air Arm Fly-in Duxford	01935 812470
2 nd - 3 rd	Starduster and Sport Biplane Weekend Northrepps Norfolk	01858 880763
2 nd - 3 rd	R.A.F.A Battle of Britain Airshow 2000 Shoreham W.Sussex	01273 441545
3 rd	Shuttleworth Collection Pageant	01767 627288
3 rd	Shepway Airshow Folkestone Seafront	01303 852321
9 th - 10 th	Battle of Britain 60 th Airshow Duxford	01223 835000
9 th - 10 th	International Airshow Middle Wallop Hants	01264 782086
17 th	60 th Battle of Britain Airshow Biggin Hill	01959 572277
24 th	All Comers Fly-in North Weald Essex	01992 524510

Bob

Steve's "Soapbox"

The Battle Britain, 60 Years On

This month marks the 60th anniversary of the Battle of Britain. A lot has been written about the conflict over the years, much of it with rose coloured spectacles being worn at the time. It is only in the last few years that a more 'human' side of the battle has begun to emerge and authors have started to put the battle into its proper perspective. Not many people realise that Winston Churchill's famous 'Never has so much been owed by so many to so few' speech was actually delivered in mid August 1940, a long way from the end of the battle! To quote Churchill's famous rhetoric again, ".... undaunted by odds, unwearied in their constant challenge and mortal danger....." this was indeed good 'backs to the wall' stuff but it gives a false impression of how the battle actually went. There were indeed times when the pilots were daunted by the odds they faced and, far from being unwearied, they were often close to the point of exhaustion. To see Dowding as a genius and Goering as an over weight fool is to view the battle in 'Boys Own' comic book terms. To pretend that Fighter Command's pilots were undaunted, unwearied and unbeatable is to try and create super heroes from ordinary men. The fact that the pilot's *were* fallible, for me, makes their efforts in that summer of 1940 all the more admirable. As Derek Robinson put it, "It took as least as much courage for a young, inadequately trained, inexperienced pilot to go into combat as it did for an



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ace; and at the climax of the battle there were very few aces left alive". As he also points out, there is a lot more to the Battle of Britain than legend suggests. By exaggerating the triumph of the RAF and deflating the performance of the Luftwaffe, the legend has given Fighter Command both too much and too little credit. The truth is fairer to everyone.

Operation Sealion, Could the Germans have actually pulled it off?

In a word, no. Certainly Hitler knew this and there is documentation that Churchill (who also was fully aware invasion was impossible) deliberately kept this information from the British Public in order to 'keep them on their toes'. However, if you talk to people who lived through that era most will swear blind that we came within an ace of being invaded. Why is this? Well for one thing when (sixty years ago) your Prime Minister told you something you believed it (I can just see that happening today!) and therefore if you challenge that belief it generally doesn't go down too well. Lets look at the facts and I urge the reader to bear in mind the huge logistical operation that the Allies put into operation in June '44 that itself was 'touch and go' for at least the first 24 hours.

There were only two ways that the Germans could have got troops and equipment over the channel at that time. One was with flat bottom barges of which the Germans had some 500 and the other was with the use of Paratroops. Let me deal with the barge question first. As noted the Germans had some 500 flat bottom barges, some were motorised but the majority had to be towed. Assuming that each barge could carry 200 fully equipped troops (unlikely) that would mean that the most that could be transported would be 100,000 troops. Would that be enough men? Again unlikely so there would have to be an airborne assault as well. It would have taken 200 Ju52's to carry some 5000 men, some would have got lost and a few would have been shot down, they would have been very lucky if 4000 men had made it. An airborne assault would therefore have been a probable non-starter and very little help to the invasion so its back to the barges. The channel is a notoriously difficult stretch of water to cross especially under tow and at night without lights. The best speed they could have managed would have been probably an average of 3 knots. Because of the tides in the channel they would have to have gone up channel to allow the tide to bring them back down again. The crossing would therefore have taken some 14-15 hours to complete. If the Germans had wanted to surprise us they would need to land at dawn, this means they would have had to have set out at 1-2pm the day before, and we would have seen them coming. The next question is where? where would they have landed? Calais – Dover? This would not have been possible, apart from the question of trying to get 100,000 fully equipped troops up those cliffs we would have been able to blockade the harbour (as we could have done to them all) at a moments notice. Don't forget we only lost 4 out of 40 ships at Dunkirk. The landing would have had to have been done further round the coast and on a beach, most of the beaches have sand banks just off of them, very tricky trying to get 500 barges and 100,000 troops to negotiate those.

So, assuming they did try it, the state of play at the moment is that they have 500 barges, all under tow without lights trying to cross the channel at night. The RAF has been put out of action (which never happened of course) but our Navy is still very active. How would we have stopped them? We certainly wouldn't have tried either bombing them or shelling them; this wouldn't have been possible at night anyway. In fact the easiest solution would have been to send our battleships and destroyers up and down the rows of barges, we would have sunk them with the enormous wash produced by these big ships. The Luftwaffe would have been ineffective as this would still have been nighttime remember so the Royal Navy would have had a free hand to destroy the majority of



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the barges. Even if the Germans had made it ashore they would have faced an Army of at least 400,000 men and armour. The flat-bottomed barges did not have the facility to carry tanks and, quite frankly, there was no way they could get armour over here until the ports were held. In other words, with the equipment that Hitler had and with our Navy still intact it would have been *impossible* to invade the British Isles.

So why did the Battle of Britain take place at all? On the surface there was nothing the Germans could gain from the conflict because they couldn't invade us so why did they do it? The reasons are actually fairly clear. Hitler had always maintained that Russia was their mortal enemy but, having invaded Poland, he was at war with us and therefore felt obliged to mount some sort of offensive. The reason behind this was, basically, to knock out the RAF and then we would have had to sue for peace, on Hitler's terms of course. This would leave him with a free hand to attack Russia without interference. However, because of their failure to destroy the RAF or bring us to the negotiating table by bombing our cities this plan failed miserably. In fact not only did the plan fail miserably but it also backfired with disastrous consequences for the Germans later in the war. The Battle of Britain proved, to the rest of the world, but more importantly the Americans, that the Germans were not unbeatable. It also proved that we were not a spent, demoralised nation and it gave the British public just what we needed at the time, a victory. The fact that we neither won the battle and that the Germans did not lose it was unimportant, we won simply by not losing. The Battle of Britain was undoubtedly a pivotal point of the Second World War; it proved to be the springboard for a belief that the Third Reich could, and would be, defeated eventually.

Not only does the British nation owe a huge debt of gratitude to those pilots who fought and those who sacrificed their lives during the Battle but also so does the rest of Europe. Without their sacrifice the invasion of 1944 and the subsequent victory in Europe would not have been possible and for that we should be eternally grateful.

A Day in the Life of A Battle of Britain Pilot

The following would have been a typical day in the life of a Battle of Britain pilot. The sequences are based on the works of different authors; this is just to give you an idea as to how a pilot may have spent his day at the height of the battle.

I woke as the airman orderly tapped my shoulder and repeated, "Come along Sir, come along Sir, 4.30" in my ear. It was very cold in the hut and dark, so I wrestled with myself for a few minutes and then jumped out of bed and put on my flying kit quickly. I put trousers over my pyjamas, sweater, flying boots, scarf, Irvine jacket.....I left the hut to look at my aeroplane. I climbed into the cockpit out of which the fitter had just stepped, "Morning Williams, morning French, put my 'chute on the tail please," I checked the instruments one by one: petrol tanks full; tail trimming wheels neutral; airscrew fine pitch; directional; gyro set; helmet on reflector sight with oxygen and R/T leads connected - in fact everything as I liked it for a quick getaway when we scrambled. Returning to the hut I found Hathaway, the orderly lighting the fire by the light of a hurricane lamp, while Chips lay fast asleep in a deck chair, his head lolling down on his yellow Mae West. I lay down, and immediately became unconscious as if doped..... What seemed the next moment I woke with a terrific start to see everyone pouring out of the hut..... I could hear the telephone orderly repeating: "Dover 26,000; fifty plus bandits approaching from south-east." Horton shouted, "Scramble Bill, lazy bastard," and automatically I ran out. Parachute on, pulled into cockpit by crew who had



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already started the engine. Straps, helmet, gloves, check the knobs, taxi out, get into the right position in my section and take off. I put the R/T on, and only then do I wake up and realise I am in the air flying with the distance between the ground and the Spitfire increasing all the time.....

George Barclay 249 Sqn - Len Deighton/ Battle of Britain p122

As the twelve Spitfires manoeuvred into formation, and climbed for the east, I glanced down at my watch. Under ninety seconds. 'Not bad. Hope the old man was impressed.' I started to wonder if we'd be too late again. Somehow the Controllers seemed slower these days. (They were - the communications network had been hard hit. But what they gave was far more accurate....well, sometimes. Everyone was learning.) "Villa Leader, hullo, Villa Leader. Many bandits approaching Dungeness, Angels 15 and above. Buster!" Thin trails of smoke reached back from the exhaust ports. I looked over at my number two, "pull in Chips, pull in, your too far out....and pull up a bit.....and watch that sun, that's where the bastards will be coming from." and from Chips, I wouldn't expect anything else for a reply, "and I suppose you want me to watch me mirror too sir!!!"

I had to start thinking tactics, we should really add a couple of thousand feet to our directed height, better to be a little too high, than caught in the murderous fire raining down from the 109s.... Johnson, rehearsing in his mind his first - and only kill; a bomber nearly two weeks ago. Had it been a fluke? could he ever do it again? Chips, with five to his credit, wondering if was really true that you got the DFM for six kills.....he switched on the reflector sight, and turned the knurled knob until the brightness was exactly right. By now, a hardened veteran at 21, he knew what to expect. We were climbing higher; he set the bars to the wingspan of a 109. Chalky Turner, on his first operational sortie, checking every dial, every setting again and again, practising lifesaving tips he'd managed to pick up from the others. Get the head moving - check above, behind, to the beam.....And Horton, humming contentedly away in his cockpit again, adrenaline pumping already, senses alive. "Jesus Christ, it's the whole of the Luftwaffe....." Shimmering in the morning sun, wave upon wave of bombers, driving for London. Stepped above and behind, the serried ranks of Messerschmitts. Covering mile upon mile of sky, as far as the eye could see. It was at once magnificent and terrible. "Villa Squadron, aim for the bombers. Look out for snappers coming down.....here they come.....Villa, break, break" Suddenly the sky was dissolved into whirling confusion, the headphones filled with snatches of command, of exultation, of warning, of stark terror.

"He's a flamer.....Jeez, that was close.....Hey, look out!" "Go for the bombers.....more at two o'clock....."

"Hold on Hamish, I'm coming. Hold on!" Chips was jinking left, then right, as the tracer flashed past; suddenly, a twin reared up in his sights - long glasshouse, a 110. He let fly, saw little chips float off as the Messerschmitt completed its bunt. One damaged. He dived for the protection of the haze.

I was there again, and cautiously lifted the Spitfire up again, and was once again shocked by the sight of hundreds of black-crossed aircraft in unbroken phalanxes boring for London. What had all the sweat, the turmoil, the sacrifices of the last few minutes been for I wondered. I squirted at a Heinkel, and sank below the haze as it flew solidly on. I headed east, then rose again, hoping to come on the flank of the raid. Still they were there in dozens. By now, I was quite alone, fuel was low and circled long enough to take in the sight of bombs raining down over the docks. Fires springing up from Tilbury, a vast white splash in the Thames Estuary. Probably one of our boys, I



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thought. I swung for home and three 109s slanted across from the right. Instinctively, fired at the nearest; it rolled onto its back and dived away. I couldn't hang around to watch the results, with the other two whipping round to attack. Yellow noses - did that really mean a crack unit? - the thought was fleeting. I fired - the guns clattered briefly, then stopped. Time to go. I shoved the nose down, twisted, jinked, aileron turned, and all the time the 109s clinged to my elusive Spitfire. These boys were really good. With the altimeter unwinding like a sweep second hand, I finally found sanctuary right down among the Slough balloon barrage, and threaded my way carefully to the west.

Douglas McRoberts/Lions Rampant pp97-99

I landed the Spitfire back at the home base, and bumped my way across the grass towards the hangars, throwing the hood back and filled my lungs with fresh, clean English air. I came to a standstill, and the ground staff were immediately taken to task in refuelling and rearming. I jumped out onto the wing, then down to the ground, "Running on fumes now, are we Sir." said the sergeant bending down and looking at me from under the wing. "We both are," I replied pulling my helmet and goggles off and making my way over to 'the hut', "both of us are exhausted." "That bad is it Sir." he said, "....and its going to get worse," I said walking away almost shouting, "the bastards are in London." As I got near to the dispersal hut, I saw a lean figure hurriedly put his head out of the window, "B Flight, "Scramble!!!" he had hardly got all the words out of his mouth as five or six bodies that were lazily lounging around outside sprang to their feet and ran to their awaiting aircraft. If they're going where I think they're going, they're going to be in for it. By the time I got inside, the place was deserted except for the despatch clerk and Horton who had already beaten me down. "Any of the others back?" I asked pouring a cup of tea from the urn. We both walked outside and sat down in the now vacant deckchairs. "No, just me, I was back first for a change," he paused, "....mind you, if it wasn't for being low on juice, I would have gone to Margate....they tell me it's nice there at this time of year." As we sat there, almost in a melancholy silence, the others came back one by one.....Chips, Hamish, Turner, it seemed that we had all made it back, a little tired, a little weary and our thoughts were with the other flight that had gone out to take our place. The rest that we had all looked forward to was short lived. I was just about to go and see 'the old man' when the telephone rang again, there was a short silence then "Everybody up....scramble." There had been hardly enough time to service the aircraft, but we ran all the same, fired up the Merlin's and within seconds we were bouncing across the grass with throttles open, and doing it all over again.

No Margin for Error

The raid on London must be continuing as we were vectored to the same position we had been earlier. Again I started to think tactics, height, gain the advantage of height and again ascended two thousand more than our directed height. With South London below, I caught a glimpse of a formation of enemy bombers as we turn southwest of London. I decide to manoeuvre our section to engage a group of Dornier Do17s from the beam but at the last instant the Germans turn so that a co-ordinated assault becomes impossible. My plan has gone astray, "Villa Squadron, Villa Squadron, okay boys...pick your target, break....break." I instruct the men to break up and make individual attacks, I took the leading Dornier. I turned, then closed fast, I fire a four-second burst before diving underneath and swinging around for a second attack from the other side. Again I fired for four seconds. The leading Dornier seems undamaged but suddenly the second bomber in the formation breaks away and falls into a dive. I turn off, and spot a single Messerschmitt Bf109 below and ahead. I follow it through the thick smoke billowing over the Thames and finally catch up with it over the Estuary. I fired for three seconds. The 109 is hit and I close in to 50 yards and



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fired for the last time. Pieces of the German fighter are torn away before it crashes into the sea. I returned back towards London. The scene below is devastating. A huge cylinder of black smoke from burning warehouses near the docks billows steadily up into the clouds. The docks and warehouses are ablaze as London's East End is hammered. The sun glints on the wings of the German bombers as they turn followed by the flak. Smaller planes dart in and out of the enemy formation, and the German planes are scattered but there are so many that they seem impossible to stop. I make contact with Horton and Chips, we gain height where the air is a little clearer and more room to move in safety as the bombers are below us and with no sign of 109s. A short conversation and I instruct them to go in again. Horton picked a target and banked away and I lost sight of him as he went down. Chips put his nose down and headed for a group of three Dornier's, I follow him to the left and behind. "Villa break, Villa break, bandits two o'clock" I gathered that it would only be a matter of minutes before the 109s would be on us. Chips is still diving down at the bombers. He is ahead of me as he closes in on a straggling Dornier. I continue to follow him down and saw him make a quarter attack on the German bomber. Large pieces fly off the enemy machine, then a wing crumples as it goes down spinning. An instant later I see a Spitfire, which I assume to be that of Chips, spinning down with about a third of its wing broken off.....Has there been a collision? The Spitfire spins wildly and he has no chance to bail out. Another casualty of this wretched war. After doing my best to forget for the time being what I saw, I turned and attacked the bombers, evaded more 109s, I get a Dornier, and a probable, and damage a Messerschmitt, but with ammunition exhausted, and fuel tanks close to empty, we land back at our airfield in ones and twos. Pilots climb wearily out of their cockpits in grim silence carrying in their minds an unforgettable picture of the seemingly impregnable bulk of the German formations and of the terrible firestorm in London.

A Few of the Few/Dennis Newton pp116-117

For the front line squadrons, the daily routine varied little. Dowding had implied that each squadron be allowed one days rest a week, but this was not always possible. A normal battle day with a day fighter squadron could begin as early as 3.30am and carried on until stand down at around 8.00pm. Some flights or entire squadrons would be at readiness to take off within five minutes which, in actual practice, meant two or three minutes. Sometimes there would be a section on standby, with the pilots in their cockpits and able to be off the ground in a minute or so. Breakfast or a sandwich lunch would probably be brought to the dispersal points around the airfield.

It was now just after midday, we had flown two sorties today and that had taken the stuffing out of most of us, we were glad of the rest, no doubt other squadrons had been sent in to relieve us were over London, and we were now enjoying the rest, no matter how brief it may be. In the intervals between flights, we dozed on beds or chairs in the crew huts - or in tents at satellite airfields - or even on the grass. Some read, some played cards, draughts or chess. Tiredness inhibited conversation. Periodically the telephone rang jerking us all into boggled-eyed alertness. More often than not the telephone orderly would call one of us to some innocuous administrative call and the tension of another anticipated order to combat receded. That telephone played hell with our nerves. I don't think any of us pilots ever again appreciated the virtues of Mr Bell's invention. Sooner or later though, the action charged instruction came through. The orderly would pause, listen and then bawl "Squadron scramble, Maidstone, Angels two zero."

Before he'd relayed the message we were away sprinting to our Spitfires, It was on again, the sheer hell of the mornings sorties were now behind us, as was the precious couple of hours rest that we



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had just enjoyed, only one thing remained in our thoughts, and that was to get to those Spitfires as quickly as possible. As we ran, the fitters fired the starter cartridges and the propellers turned with engines roaring into life. From strapping in to chocks away it was just a matter of seconds. We taxied to the take off point on the broad grass airfield, and pausing only to get the last aircraft to get into position, the squadron commander's upraised hand signal then came down and I led a flotilla of twelve Spitfires that were gunning their throttles and speeding away on the take-off in a wide vic formation of flights.

As we got airborne, we snapped the canopies shut, and pulling the undercarriage lever, the wheels sucked into the wells. I glanced around on all sides making sure that the squadron were all in position. "Rastus Villa airborne" I called over the R/T, to which the ground controller replied "OK, Villa leader, one hundred plus bandits south of Ashford heading north west angels fifteen. Vector 130, Buster." Buster meant the fastest speed attainable, so there was no time for sightseeing on this trip, Oh for a nice easy patrol!!

We struggled to gain every inch of height in the shortest possible time we gradually emerged out of the filthy brown haze that perpetually hung like a blanket over London. Suddenly around 12,000 feet we broke through the smog layer and a different world emerged, starling in its sun drenched clarity. Long streaming contrails snaked way above us from the Channel coast as the Messerschmitt high flying fighters weaved protectively over their menacing bomber formations. Our radios became almost unintelligible as pilots in our numerous intercepting squadrons called out sightings, attack orders, warnings and frustrated oaths. Somehow, a familiar voice of any one of our pilots would call out and break through the radio chatter with an urgent "Villa leader, bandits eleven o'clock level."

Battle of Britain/ Richard Townshend Bickers pp141-143

I fastened on to the tail of a yellow nosed Messerschmitt, I fought to bring my guns to bear as the range rapidly decreased, and when the wingspan of the enemy aircraft fitted snugly into the range scale bars of my reflector sight, I pressed the firing button. There was an immediate response from my eight Browning's, which, to the accompaniment of a slight bucketing from my aircraft, spat a stream of lethal lead towards the target. 'Got you' I muttered to myself as the small dancing yellow flames of exploding 'De Wilde' bullets splattered along the Messerschmitts fuselage. Before I could fire another burst, two 109s wheeled in behind me. I broke hard into attack pulling the Spitfire into a climbing, spiralling turn, as I did so: a manoeuvre I had discovered in previous combats with 109s to be particularly effective. And it was no less effective now, the Messerschmitts literally "fell out of the sky" as they stalled in an attempt to follow me.

I soon found another target. About 3,000 yards in front of me, and at the same level, a Hun was just completing a turn preparatory to re-entering the fray. He must have seen me almost immediately, he rolled out of his turn towards me so that a head on attack became inevitable. Using both hands on the control column to steady the aircraft and to keep my aim steady, I peered through the reflector sight at the rapidly closing 109. We appeared to open fire together, and immediately a hail of lead thudded into my Spitfire. One moment, the Messerschmitt was a clearly defined shape, its wingspan nicely enclosed within the circle of my reflector sight, and the next it was on top of me, a terrifying blur which blotted out the sky ahead. Then we hit. The impact pitched me violently forward on to my cockpit harness, the straps of which bit viciously into my shoulders. At the same



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moment, the control column was snatched abruptly from my gripping fingers by a momentary, but powerful, reversal of elevator load. In a flash it was all over: there was clear sky ahead of me, and I thought for a moment, "God, I'm still alive," But smoke and flame were pouring from the engine which began to vibrate, slowly at first, but now, with increasing momentum causing the now regained control column to jump backwards and forwards in my hand. I had to think quick, I closed the throttle, and reached forward and flicked off the ignition switches, but before I could do so, the engine seized and the airscrew came to an abrupt halt. I saw with amazement, that the blades had been bent almost double with the impact of the collision, the 109 must have been just above when we hit. Smoke poured into the cockpit, I tugged at the hood release toggle, but could not release it, how I would welcome a rush of air now, I tried again with the normal release catch, but to no avail. There was only one thing to do, and that was to keep the aircraft under control. The speed had now dropped off considerably and with a strong backward pressure on the stick, I was able to keep a reasonable gliding altitude.

Frantically, I peered through the smoke and flame that was enveloping the engine, trying to seek out what lay ahead. I daren't turn the aircraft, I had no idea as to what other damage may have been done, and at low level, even a small turn would be out of the question. Through a miasmic cloud of flame and smoke the ground suddenly appeared ahead of me. The next moment a post flashed by my wing tip and then the Spitfire struck the ground and ricocheted back into the air again finally returning to earth with a jarring impact, and once again I was jerked forward on to my harness. The straps held fast, and continued to do so as the aircraft ploughed its way through a succession of posts before finally coming to rest on the edge of a cornfield. The now dense smoke blinded my eyes, and my throat felt raw, I tried to keep swallowing, but it was almost as if my tongue was being welded to the roof of my mouth. For the first time, I became frantic with fear, I tore at my harness release pin then battered at the perspex hood in an effort to escape from the cockpit which entombed me. Then at last, with a splintering crash the hood finally cracked open, thus I was able to scramble clear from the cockpit and in the safety of the surrounding field.

Based on an experience of F/Lt Al Deere

For a while I was completely disorientated, come to think of it, where was I, the field was relatively quiet, and peaceful, the sky was clear, but I could see the vapour trails in one direction, "that surely must be over London, no, wait, where did we make contact with the enemy, God I don't know....yes I do, Ashford," the sky was just one huge sheet of silken haze, but a very bright spot indicated to me the position of the sun and that was the direction of west as it was now late afternoon. I relieved myself of my helmet, and unbuttoned my Alvin jacket and decided to walk leaving the burning plane in the empty field. Well, for me, another day over. All I had to do was to get to the nearest airfield and I would soon be back at base. My story would be told, along with the many others that would be told that evening, maybe in the mess, maybe down at the local pub, all it wanted was for someone to come up with a suggestion. After a few beers, or a game of cards, maybe a letter to the folks at home may be written.... yes I owe them a letter, oh, better write a letter to "Chip's" family.....a task we all dread, then the events of the day will soon be a thing of the past, remembered just how I want to remember them, or how I describe them in my letters. Tonight, I will sleep like a baby, lost in another world perhaps, only to be interrupted by that all too familiar call....."Come along Sir, come along Sir, 4.30"

Steve



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Advertisement - Model Store

The advert below was passed to Ken for inclusion in any club magazines.

Here's A Great Way To Organise Your Model Collection On Your P C.

Have you ever wanted an easy to use database program, on which you can store information about your model collection?

MODEL STORE is the answer.

The program runs on windows (R) 95,98, NT based PC's and contains a useful Notes and Graphics section and a Comprehensive Help File. Furthermore, Model Store is developed by a Model Maker who understands the need of detailing each model/kit and ensuring that all details are kept in the same place for ease of reference.

What information can it store ?

The Model kit name	The Model Company (including the address)
The scale of the model	The material(s) of the model
Number of parts to the model	The model category
The era the model belongs to	The models reference number
The condition of the model	If the model is complete (no missing parts)
Number of copies owned	If the model is for sale and the price
Decal options	Notes section
An image of the model	

Why choose Model Store?

Model Store has been especially designed so that you ONLY need to type in a Company, Scale, Era and Category once. This is achieved by entering these in a part of the database specifically set up for them. Then, when you want to enter a model kit into the database, you can select Company, Scale, Era and Category from lists on the screen.

In addition to typing the Category only once, you the user can define your own categories. For example, you may build model figures, therefore you could have a category called 'Figure". However you may want to make this more specific, so you could have categories such as Russian Figures, Germany Figures, British Figures.

Therefore, when you do a search by Category and Scale, you will be able to list all Russian 1/35 figures. The choice is yours.

The data you enter about 'Decals' and 'Notes' is known as Tree text'. This means that you can enter as much information as you like, but please be aware that this depends on the amount of disc space on your P C.

Because we are in the multi-media age, having the ability to add a graphic is now a must. Model Store gives you the option to display an image relating to the model kit.



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What else can it do ?

Searching

The powerful search engine in Model Store allows you to search by:

• By Company and Model	• By Category and Model
• By Category and Scale	• By Category and Company
• By Model	• By Category and Era

From the results of your searches, you can select a model and view the details. If you wish you can also edit the details or delete the model from the database

Reports

You can produce reports of the following:

• By Model (includes a graphic if one is available)	• Complete list of every model in the database
• Individual company list	• Individual category list
• For sale list	

System Requirements

The minimum requirements are:

• Pentium PI 33	• 3Mb disk space for installation
• 32 Mb RAM	• Windows 95/98/NT(R)
• 4 Speed CD drive	• Internet Explorer 4 (For Help Files)

Need to know more ?

TopFox Systems are quite happy to visit model clubs in the South West area of England. They have already demonstrated Model Store at the Salisbury branch of the International Plastic Modellers Society.

A free demo version can be downloaded from www.fowle99.freemove.co.uk or alternatively we would be pleased to send you a FREE Demo CD for your approval.

Please telephone us on (01225) 760324 or e-mail us at Stuart@fowle99.freemove.co.uk

If Model Store does not meet your requirements, or you require extra facilities added, TopFox Systems can do this for you at an agreed price.

To order a copy of Model Show please send a cheque payable to TopFox Systems for £25 (inc P&P) to:

TopFox Systems
5 Smithywell close
Trowbridge
Wiltshire
BA14 7DP



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IPMS Hornchurch Annual Competition

July Miscellaneous Voting Results

Position	Entrant	Entry	Votes
1 st	Trevor Davies	German Armoured Train	58
2 nd	Dave Ryan	Dragon Wagon	53
3 rd	Brian Lay	Dekard	42
4 th	John hone	Porsche 975	32
5 th	Ted Taylor	Western Star Lorry	31
	Alan Wright	8 th Army Scene	
	Peter Bagshaw	KV-1B	22
	Mark Dorrington	Daimler Ferret	20
	Peter Bagshaw	T-55	11

IPMS Hornchurch Trophy (Miscellaneous) - July Positions

Trevor Davies	25
Dave Ryan	23
Brian Lay	21
John Hone	19
Alan Wright	17
Ted Taylor	17
Peter Bagshaw	10
Mark Dorrington	5



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Wrighty's References

I do hope everyone enjoyed last months article on pre-war flying boats as much as I did researching and writing it. When I began, I knew virtually nothing on the subject; it should have been a more interesting read than the usual "stone cold" facts of the usual reference column. I do hope also that the massive 5 parter on Army Co-operation brought some new interest home to you, I suspect few of you realised how many RAF Mustang Squadrons operated under the aegis of the Army.

This month, I have returned to RAF training, you will recall that Fighter OTU's were the subject for February 2000, this month part 2 is Coastal Command OTU's, sadly back to the cold hard facts, but it may come in useful and after all it is a Reference column!

On a personal basis, watching Ted's slide show in June, I realised how little I knew on U.S. Navy aircraft, I was unable to name a fair number of the slides. How about some of our U.S.N. experts giving us an update from 1945 to date?

OTU's in W.W.II - Part 2 - Coastal Command

No. 1 Coastal OTU	General Reconnaissance
No. 2 Coastal OTU	Fighter
No. 3 Coastal OTU	Large Reconnaissance
No. 4 Coastal OTU	Flying Boats
No. 5 Coastal OTU	Twin Engined Torpedo
No. 6 Coastal OTU	General Reconnaissance
No. 7 Coastal OTU	General Reconnaissance
No. 8 Coastal OTU	Photo Reconnaissance
No. 9 Coastal OTU	Long Range Night Fighters

No. 1 Coastal OTU

Formed from the Coastal Command group pool at Silloth in April 1940, the unit operated Anson, Hudson, Beauforts and Botha twin engined reconnaissance types. Hudsons used a satellite at Kirkbride from April 1940 for night flying training.

Detachments of Blenheims at Prestwick from August 1940 to November 1940 and Hudsons to Speke in July 1940, during the units tenure of Silloth.

Later using mainly Hudsons and Blenheims the unit moved to Thornaby in March 1943, soon only Hudsons were used, and the unit disbanded in October 1943. A Liberator conversion course at Beuleigh took place between March 1943 and October 1943 when it disbanded under the aegis of No. 1 OTU.

No. 2 Coastal OTU (Fighter)

ZR (Possible Blenheim code)

Formed in October 1940 at Catfoss with Blenheim (12) and Ansons training Coastal Command fighter crews, later Beaufighters arrived. Lisset was used as a Relief Landing Ground in 1942/43. The unit trained Beaufighter crews from 1941 to February 1944 when it was disbanded.



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No. 3 Coastal OTU (Large Reconnaissance Types)

Formed in November 1940 at Chivenor with Blenheims, Beauforts and Ansons for training Coastal Command crews. Moved out in July 1941 to be replaced by 5(C)OTU.

August 1941 it reformed at Cranwell with 20 Whitley, 9 Wellingtons and sundry training and target aircraft, more Wellingtons were phased in, unit remained until June 1943 when it moved to Haverford West. After some delay with false starts to Banff and Templeton as the proposed new airfield, they finally arrived at Haverford West. The Whitley and Wellington continued on long-range reconnaissance training, with the Whitley eventually being phased out.

Ansons of the OTU from June 1943 to December 1943 used Templeton, a satellite to Haverford West, which then became 12 Radio School. The OTU disbanded at Haverford West in January 1944.

No. 4 Coastal OTU (Flying Boats)

Code TA

Formed from the Flying Boat Training School, who were using Stranraers and Singapores flying boats at Calshot. The unit acquired a few Sunderlands and 3 Heinkel He-115s before moving to Wig Bay (Stranraers) in June 1940.

At Wig Bay training aircraft, including Londons and Lerwicks, in addition to the earlier mentioned and in March 1941 renamed to No. 4(C) OTU, but by June 1941 moved to Invergordon, where some early Catalinas were taken on charge. All types of flying boat operation were taught.

In March 1942 part of the unit returned to Wig Bay for Pilot Initial training at Invergordon (Alness). By 1942 the older types were phased out and had gone by October 1942. In November 1942 the establishment was 16 Sunderlands, but it was 1943 before Alness ran efficiently to the end of the war and into peacetime, finally disbanding in June 1946.

No. 5 Coastal OTU (Twin Engined Torpedo - Later Various)

Formed in June 1940 at Chivenor, the new unit replaced No. 3 OTU which moved out, twin engined types were used, Blenheims, Ansons, Hampdens, Beauforts and Whitleys, until May 1942. The unit then left for Turnberry where Beaufort training continued until December 1942.

In December 1942 it was decided to move No. 5 OTU to Longkesh and its satellite Magnaberry, training was now on Beauforts (33) and Hampdens (11) with some sundry training types. By October 1943 the unit were committed to Hudson training, the earlier types now phased out by February 1944. Hudsons and Venturas equipped with a few Oxfords and the unit moved to Turnberry again where mixed training took place using Beauforts for strike training, Warwicks for Air Sea Rescue, Hudsons for refresher and meteorological etc, finally disbanded in August 1945.



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No. 6 Coastal OTU (General)

Code OD

Formed at Thornaby from No. 2 School Army Co-operation in July 1941, equipment included 36 Hudsons and a satellite at West Hartlepool, was also allocated for use in bombing, gunnery and navigation training and night operation. By March 1943 the unit exchanged places with No. 1(C) OTU also a Hudson unit and went to Silloth with Wellingtons and a few Ansons, absorbing 1429 Czech flight.

From October 1943 Longtown was used as a satellite for Silloth's Wellingtons until January 1944. The Wellingtons used another satellite, Great Orton, from June 1943. The unit also flew Air Sea Patrols from Ballykelly in summer of 194 before finally moving to Kinloss in July 1945 for Mosquito training.

No. 7 Coastal OTU (General Reconnaissance)

Formed in April 1942 at Limanady for ASV and GR training, equipped with Wellingtons and some Ansons, a satellite Mullaghmore was used by the Wellingtons from December 1942, this continued until January 1944 when orders to transfer to Haverford West, also the satellite was last used in February 1944.

In February 1944 Haverford West was used for continuing training with Wellingtons in the same vein, the Ansons were passed to the Radio School. In May 1944 the OTU was re-designated No. 4 Refresher Flying Unit, which was disbanded in September 1944.

No. 8 Coastal OTU (Photo Reconnaissance)

Formed in May 1942 at Fraserburgh from several ad-hoc PR units to train Spitfire and Mosquito PR crews, as the unit grew it was found to require more space and in March 1943 the unit transferred to Dyce. By August 1943 the unit had (37) Spitfires and (25) Mosquitoes with masters and Ansons as support training. During August 1944 the unit carried out operational work over Norway. Eventually in January 1945 the unit completely moved to Haverford West.

Haverford West first used Templeton as a satellite for a month until February 1945, when a larger satellite at Brawdy became available and was used from March 1945. The whole OTU was transferred to Mount Farm in June 1945 to be near Benson, the RAF main base for PR, when it continued into peacetime.

No. 9 Coastal OTU

Formed in June 1942 at Aldergrove as a long-range fighter training unit but by September 1942 it was transferred to Crosby-on-Eden, where its Beaufighter and Beaufort conversion units were set up. The Beaufighter gradually became the aircraft for various tasks like gunnery, instrument and night flying training. The satellite was as Longtown and this was also employed from September 1942 until disbandment in August 1944, the Transport OTU 109 was formed from it.

Alan