



THE DISPATCH

March/April 2023, Vol. 62,
Issue 3/4

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COMMANDER'S CALL

Greetings to the entire NCMSS team. Spring is here and the figure and modeling show season is certainly in full swing. The members of the NCMSS have represented the club well at a number of large regional shows, including the recent 80th Annual MFCA show in Philadelphia. Proud to be part of such an incredibly talented group of artists!

Spring is typically when we begin preparations for our own annual show in September. This year promises to be our largest to date! We'll be commemorating the 240th anniversary of the end of America's War of Independence with a special limited edition show figure of a Colonial Militiaman, sculpted and

cast by Mike Stelzel, thanks to Mike for a job well done! I can't wait to see how you all paint them up! Visit our website for show details, program events, awards, and contest info. I look forward to as many folks supporting the show as possible. We always put on a first class event.

We are also keeping a keen eye on the future of the hobby that we all love and our club's role in that future. Aligning with our mission of "Honoring History Through Art", the NCMSS is in the process of expanding our public outreach both locally and online. If you have ideas or suggestions on how we can further this goal please share with Dave, Darci, Bob or myself.

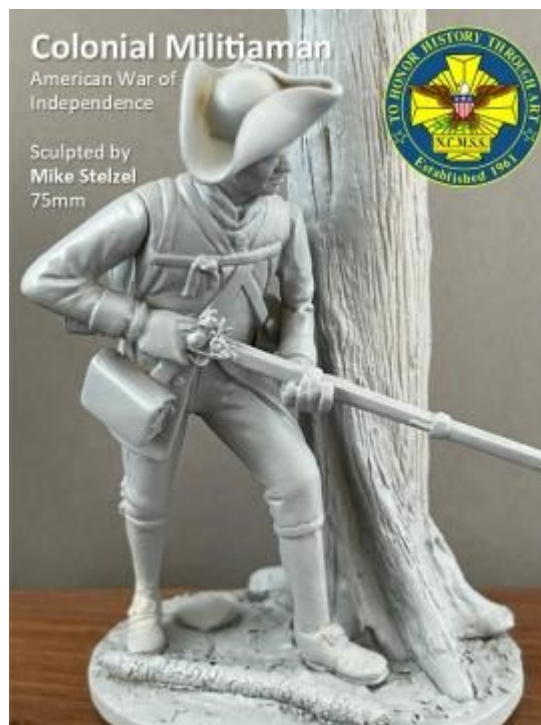
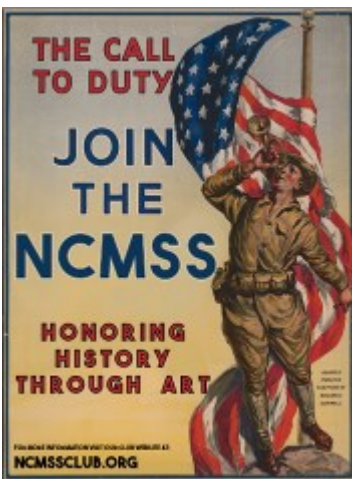
As always, I look forward to seeing you all at the monthly meetings, I thoroughly enjoy seeing your incredible work during our Parade Grounds and learning new tricks of the trade!

Enjoy your Spring time with family and friends!

Paint On!



Burt
NCMSS Commander



Visit our
NCMSS Club Website

For Show News and
Purchasing your Limited Edition

Colonial Militiaman
TODAY!

Honoring The
Revolutionary War's End
1783





March MOTM

"Mug-of-the-Month"



"The Very Vortex of Hell"
Jack Thompson



April MOTM

"Mug-of-the-Month"



**"Down in the Jungle...
Find Them"**
Burt Thompson

MEETING NOTICE

IN PERSON
FOURTH Wednesday
of the month

Jun. 28, 2023

7:30-10:00 PM

Thomas Edison High School
5801 Franconia Road
Alexandria, VA
Room E-112

CLUB NEWS

NCMSS In-Person Meeting — March 22, 2023

Call to Order & New Business [19:35-20:10]

1. **Dave** officially started the meeting.
2. **Dave** said we've started Zoom meetings in preparation for our upcoming show. Links to meetings will be emailed to all. Our show theme will commemorate the end of America's War for Independence.
3. **Darci** mentioned she would like to order about 2000 show posters from VistaPrint.
4. The NCMSS will have a table at the NoVa Model Classic on April 15 with a figure

display. **Darci** will man the table, but anyone is welcome to stop by and help if you're there.

5. **Dave** was head figure judge at the Richmond show which went well. Thank you to everyone who helped out with the judging.

6. **Dave** said to contact Grant if anyone knows of any vendors who might be interested in vending at our show.

7. The group discussed options for running a painting seminar at the show. We also discussed hospitality options.

Parade Ground

[20:10-20:45]

Another great Parade Ground!

Meeting Presentation

[20:45-21:20]

Dave gave a slideshow on the Richmond show.

Meeting Adjourned

[21:20]

Attendees

Jenny Young, Greg Paspatis, Bob Prokop, Jack Thompson, Jim Richey, Dave & Darci Hoffman, Tim Stormer, Bernard Kempinski



NCMSS Virtual Meeting — April 22, 2023

Pre-meeting "chit-chat" [13:50-14:20]

Call to Order & New Business [14:20-14:35]

1. **Dave** officially started the meeting. Dave gave an update on show preparations.
2. **Dave** let everyone know the NCMSS show figure is now available. Members get a discount!

4. **Jim P.** passed on contact info for a new modeling club in the area.

Parade Ground

[14:35-15:30]

Another great Parade Ground. Dave included the pictures from the March meeting for those who could not attend.

Meeting Presentation

[15:30-15:50]

Dave shared some slides from the Richmond and NoVa Shows.

Meeting Adjourned

[15:50]

Attendees

Dave & Darci Hoffman, Dick Perry, Jim Richey, Brian Ford, Rick Sanders, Larry Friedlander

NCMSS In-Person Meeting — April 26, 2023

Call to Order & New Business [19:40-20:15]

1. **Dave** officially started the meeting.
2. Three new attendees introduced themselves and talked about their interests.
3. **Dave** updated everyone on the status of our show preparations. We brought copies of our show figure for members to purchase.
4. **Dave** reminded everyone that all the forms for the upcoming show are on our website. The website also has links to our newsletters and parade ground pictures from our meetings.

5. The link for reserving your hotel room at the Springfield Hilton is now active.

6. The club will have a vendor table at the upcoming MFCA show in Philadelphia. We'll be selling books & kits donated by Rodger Spahr and Joe Bles.

7. Nick Strocchia will be running a Gundam build table at the show. Also we need to finalize plans for a painting seminar.

Parade Ground

[20:15-20:45]

This meeting had another great Parade Ground with several new participants

Meeting Presentation

[20:45-21:20]

Bob Prokop gave an excellent "How To" presentation on molding and casting your own pieces. The outline for the talk can be found in this issue starting on page 35.

Meeting Adjourned

[21:20]

Attendees

Rick Findley & Rick Findley, Jenny Young, Evan Pretzlaff, Luis Andres, Bob Prokop, Jack Thompson, Scott Sheltz, Luis Lacorzena, Jim Richey, Jim Pratt, Burt Thompson



National Capital Model Soldier Society

Member benefits include:

- * Friendly monthly meetings where we share our knowledge of history, painting, and modeling techniques
- * Monthly guest speakers
- * Monthly *Dispatch* newsletter
- * The NCMSS Washington Show
- * Affordable dues

What are you waiting for?

Welcome to the club!



EVENTS AND PLACES



Celebrate at the National Army Museum and the Army Birthday Festival

Saturday, June 10, 2023

9 a.m. – 5 p.m.

FREE Admission

Explore U.S. Army history inside the National Army Museum and enjoy special outdoor activities on the new Warriors' Field with performances by The U.S. Army Band "Pershing's Own," Army vehicle and equipment displays, inflatable bounce house, gaming activities and much more. End the day with a special Twilight Tattoo performance!

2023 Annual Martha Washington Lecture

June 13, 7:00pm-8:00pm

Robert H. and Clarice Smith Auditorium
Mount Vernon, Virginia



Protecting The Past For The Future

Special Offer!
Renew Your Membership with the
ARTIST PRESERVATION GROUP
through **SCALE75** and get **10% OFF** @ SCALE75 for the LIFE OF YOUR MEMBERSHIP!



EVENTS AND PLACES (Continued...)

Listening to Paint Dry with Mike & Dan Podcast



Episode 60: Adepticon Recap

"Hello amazing painters and listeners! We're back with a recap of our very first Adepticon. We laughed, we cried, kissed a lot of money good bye. We took some amazing classes, met new people and hung out with old friends.

Follow us on Instagram, Facebook and YouTube at Listening To Paint Dry. You can also follow us on Twitter @DryListening. We do have a Patreon if you feel so inclined. Email us at Listeningtopaintdry@gmail.com. Like, subscribe and follow wherever

you get your podcasts. (All of links are on linktree).

We'll be back soon with an incredible interview with Aaron Lovejoy of Miniature Monthly.

While not necessary, Cons can be a pro for your hobby journey to become Better, Braver, Happier Painters.

Until next time..



Follow us on: [Instagram](#), [Facebook](#), [Youtube](#), and [Twitter](#)

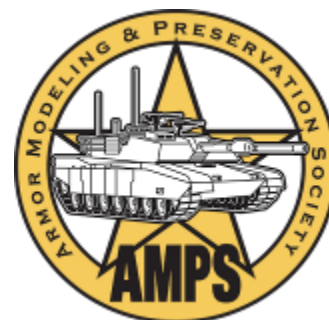
Drop us an email at: listeningtopaintdry@gmail.com



Back to Gettysburg

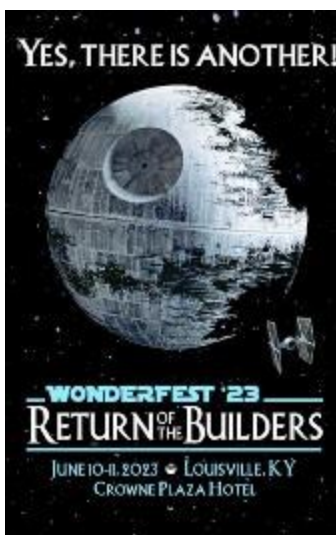
American Civil War Exhibit

17-20 August 2023



HOBBY CALENDAR 2023

- JUN**
 - Jun 10 — [Maryland Toy Expo](#), Timonium, MD
 - Jun 10-11 — [WonderFest 2023](#), Louisville, KY
- JUL**
 - Jul 15 (tentative) — [ScottCon 2023](#), Gen. R.L. Scott IPMS, Warner Robins, GA
 - Jul 19-23 — [Historicon 2023](#), Historical Miniatures Gaming Society, Lancaster, PA
 - Jul 24-28 — [HobbyTown Convention](#), Kissimmee, FL
- AUG**
 - Aug 2-5 — [IPMS National Convention 2023](#), San Marcos, TX
 - Aug 17-20 — [Back to Gettysburg - American Civil War Exhibit](#), Artist Preservation Group
 - Aug 30-Sep 3 — [NOVA Open](#), Crystal City, VA
- SEP**
 - Sep 22-24 — [JerseyFest Model Kit & Statue Fair](#), Newark, NJ
 - Sep 30 — [NCMSS 62nd Annual Washington Show](#), NCMSS, Springfield, VA
- OCT**
 - Oct 7 — [PaxCon 2023](#), Southern Maryland Scale Modelers, Hollywood, MD
 - Oct 13-14 — [ArmorCon 2023](#), AMPS Northeast Military Modelers Assoc., Southbury, CT
 - Oct 20-21 — [MMSI Chicago Show 2023](#), Military Miniature Society of IL, Shaumburg, IL
 - Oct 23 — [HMGS Historicon National War Gaming Show](#), Lancaster, PA
- NOV**
 - Nov 17-18 — [Long Island Miniature Model Show](#), LIMMS, Freeport, NY



If you know of any upcoming events that you would like people to know about, please contact Adjutant David Hoffman at bpchasseur@comcast.net and we'll add the date to our calendar.

☆☆☆ PARADE GROUND ☆☆☆



March “Mug-of-the-Month”

WINNER



March 22, 2023
Parade Ground Participants

*Greg Paspatis, Jim Richey,
Bernard Kempinski,
Jack Thompson, Tim Stormer*

“The Very Vortex of Hell”
Bernard Kempinski

GREG PASPATIS

Greg always tries to bring in figures that represent “this month in military history.” In March 1943 the U.S. Army was in North Africa fighting the Afrika Korps. Greg brought in a “dusty moldy oldie from the ‘70s” set of Tamaya US Infantry which he placed in a desert setting. It reminded him of the scene in the movie *Patton* where they were repulsing a German panzer attack.



☆☆☆ PARADE GROUND ☆☆☆

BERNARD KEMPINSKI



“The Very Vortex of Hell,” depicting the 5th NY Volunteer Regiment at the Second Battle of Bull Run. It was awarded a gold medal, was selected as best diorama, and best in show at the Jaxcon IPMS meet in Jacksonville, FL.

I built the Very Vortex of Hell over 20 years ago. It was on display in the Collinsworth Museum in VA for a few years, then it was on display in the Abraham Lincoln Library and Museum for several years. It finally was returned to my home just before the covid pandemic.

It's a combination of Time Machine, Shenandoah Miniatures, and some scratch-built things. Done in oil and acrylics. The flags are made from 2-part putty.



☆☆☆ PARADE GROUND ☆☆☆

BERNARD KEMPINSKI (CONTINUED)

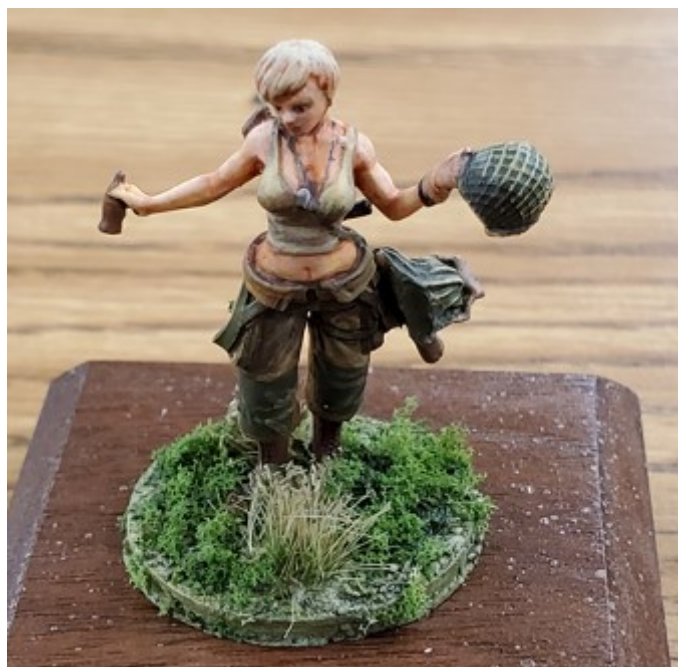
Bernard said that he should have named this tugboat the "SS Covid." He said he built it for his train layout while he was isolating with covid a while back.

It's scratch-built. Based off of photos and Civil War era tugboat plans. Period tug-boats were skinny, not "fat" like they are now. It's mostly wood with some 3-D printed parts. It's "0" scale (1/48th).



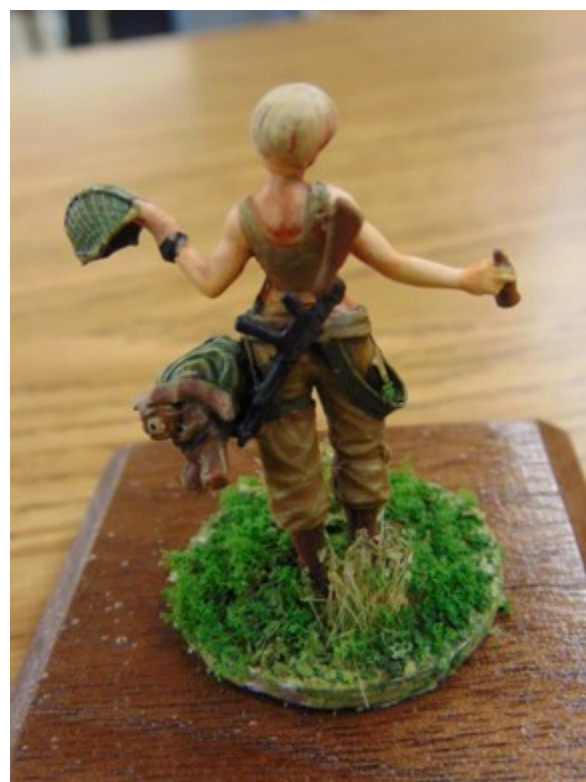
☆☆☆ PARADE GROUND ☆☆☆

BERNARD KEMPINSKI (CONTINUED)



Bernard said he picked up the female character at the Games Workshop in Old Town, Alexandria. It's called "Hot & Dangerous." They're pin-ups. He said "It's very tiny! The sculpting is pretty good, but not great. She's supposed to be a paratrooper."

Bernard also brought in some coins he made at home with his laser printer with the thought he could make a bunch for our upcoming show. They looked great and will make a nice little memento to hand out. Thank you Bernard!



☆☆☆ PARADE GROUND ☆☆☆

JACK THOMPSON

Jack said he picked up this figure at the last meeting from the kits donated by Rodger Spahr. It was in a plastic baggie with no instructions or evidence of manufacturer (possibly Mike Stelzel?). The interesting thing about the piece is that Jack didn't need to do any research whatsoever to paint the uniform. He said he wore the same uniform for many years as a re-enactor. Jack said the resin casting was beautiful, 90mm. The detail was "right on" down to the stitches in his cartridge box.

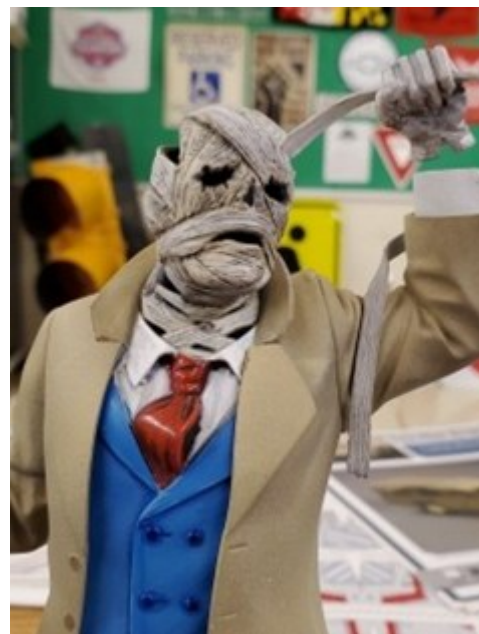
Jack said he really liked the animated pose. It was as if he had just gotten the command "Right shoulder shift, arms forward double-quick march!" I labeled him 1862 because he doesn't have any corps badges. After 1863 most soldiers had some type of corps insignia on their uniform. All painted with acrylics.



☆☆☆ PARADE GROUND ☆☆☆

JIM RICHEY

Jim said he picked this up a few years ago. All the pieces came with the kit except for a bit of rope and the rolled up pieces of paper on the floor. All of the clear pieces had seams, and Jim said that if he were to do it over again he would have used all the clear plastic pieces as templates for recasting in clear resin.

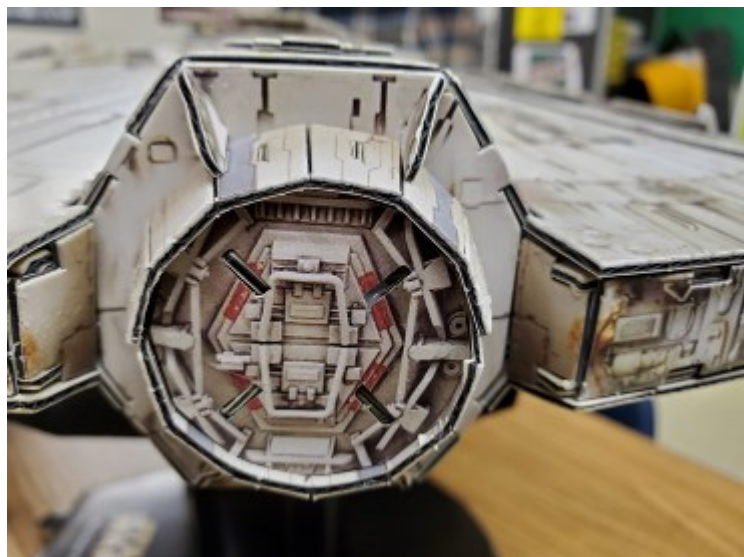
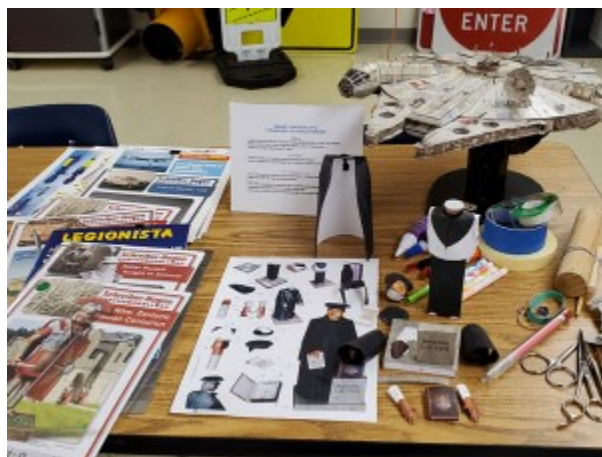


☆☆☆ PARADE GROUND ☆☆☆

TIM STORMER

It was great to have Tim back for a meeting. He brought a collection of paper models to share. Tim said this kirigami, which is the art of cutting and folding paper, unlike origami. Almost anything you can imagine can be the subject of a paper kit.

The cardboard/paper Millennium Falcon was a challenge to build. Tim said it's like a giant 3-D jigsaw puzzle. Fun stuff!



☆☆☆ PARADE GROUND ☆☆☆



Virtual Meeting
April 22, 2023
Parade Ground Participants

*Dick Perry, Robert Huettner, Jim Richey,
 Michael Pierce, Lorenzo Staltari,
 Rob Kempinski, Peter Espada*

DICK PERRY

Dick sent in pictures of two Historex figures he's completed. "Christmas Dinner" is a redo. Dick gave the original away as a gift to a friend. The goose, rabbit, and dog are all Historex parts. The dog is painted in the likeness of his favorite long-gone Labradors. The same with the dog with the "Tambour Major." Dick thought that he might have picked up the bench at Hobby Lobby. He said he had a devil of a time with the primer on this figure!



☆☆☆ PARADE GROUND ☆☆☆

MICHAEL PIERCE

Michael sent in this Work-In-Progress. It's a "1/35 scale original sculpt, head and rifle M/R."

The inspiration for this vignette is a painting by Winslow Homer titled *A Visit from the Old Mistress*. In this vignette the formerly enslaved USCT soldier is visiting his former mistress' home now in ruin. Michael plans on displaying the finished work at Gettysburg. We're looking forward to seeing it!



☆☆☆ PARADE GROUND ☆☆☆

ROBERT HUETTNER

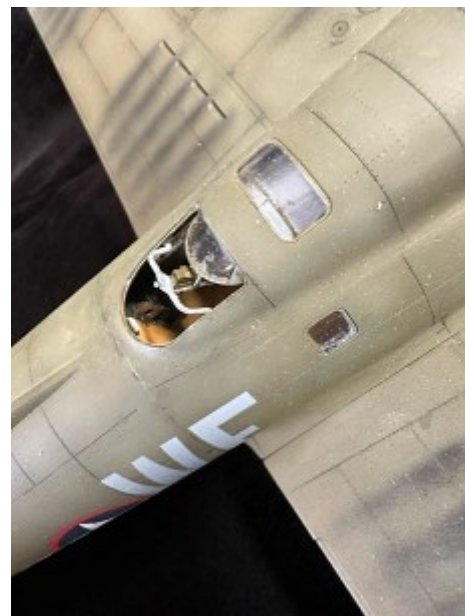
'HK's B-17F 1/48 scale. Used aftermarket for nose section, radio compartment, and waist position. "Wolfess" completed 20 missions and was lost in a midair collision during a training mission. The aircraft was 9 months old.'



☆☆☆ PARADE GROUND ☆☆☆

ROBERT HUETTNER (CONTINUED)

Some detail shots.



☆☆☆ PARADE GROUND ☆☆☆

ROBERT HUETTNER (CONTINUED)



Above is a OH-58D by MRC in 1/35 scale. Bought it in Germany before 2010.

The AH-64D Longbow is the Takom kit in 1/35 (below). Detail is fantastic with complete engines (both), avionics bays and cockpit. All can be displayed open or closed. Fit is nearly perfect with hardly any filler used. Directions are not clear in some areas and sequences are not always clearly explained. Some parts are mis-numbered in the directions (illustrations have right part- wrong number). Painting and decals have to be done prior to final assembly (impossible to get the stencils in the right place without knocking off small parts). Decals themselves are thick and don't settle over rivets despite using setting solution and solvent).



☆☆☆ PARADE GROUND ☆☆☆

ROBERT HUETNNER (CONTINUED)

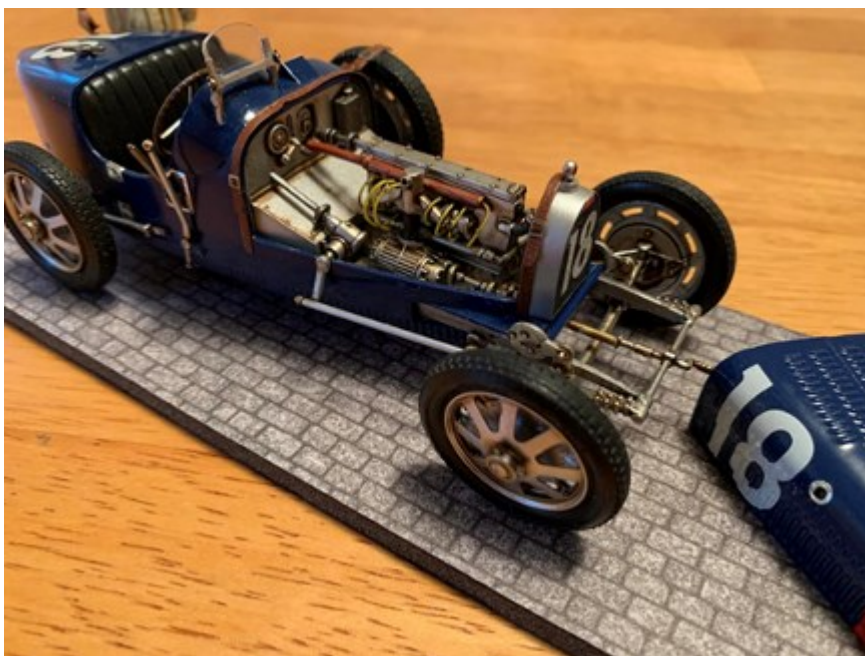
For fun Bob included some photos of a neighbor friend's Chieftan tank. The model is for reference.



☆☆☆ PARADE GROUND ☆☆☆

PETER ESPADA

"I was fortunate enough to win Best of Show (besides Best in Category-Race Cars and Best Civilian Vehicle) at this year's Northern Virginia Model Classic held in Fairfax, Virginia for my 1927 Bugatti Gran Prix Racer in 1/25th scale. The figure is of Louis Chiron, the famous driver of that era. The model itself is the ancient Monogram kit first released in 1966, and considered a real dog of a kit, but nevertheless extremely rare and a Holy Grail for car modelers. I paid a dealer a good bit of money for essentially a bag of miscellaneous parts from which I extracted this model. Here's a couple of pictures."



☆☆☆ PARADE GROUND ☆☆☆

LORENZO STALTARI



ROB KEMPINSKI



☆☆☆ PARADE GROUND ☆☆☆



April “Mug-of-the-Month”

WINNER



April 26, 2023
Parade Ground Participants

*Robert Prokop, Jim Richey,
Evan Pretzlaff, Jack Thompson,
Luis Andres, Luis Lacorzana,
Scott Sheltz, Burt Thompson*

“Down in the Jungle...Find them”
Burt Thompson

ROBERT PROKOP

This was a weekend project. It had only about 12 pieces. He said it’s a Pegasus kit that he got on the Scale Model Facebook page for about \$15.00. With the success of his “Floating Yoda,” Bob thought it would be fun to equip this kit with magnets and a mirrored base as well.

The exterior is painted in metallic acrylics. He wired the interior with the Knight Rider light set. What a fun levitating kit!



☆☆☆ PARADE GROUND ☆☆☆

JIM RICHEY

Jim is officially the first person in the club to have completed this year's show figure! Jim says that when putting it together he found it easiest to glue the left arm to the hand on the rifle, let it dry and then adjust the fit of the shoulder as needed with a little sanding.

One advantage in deciding how to paint this figure is that there is no real "uniform" you need to duplicate. Shirts, leggings, and jackets varied from state to state, unit to unit. There is a lot of room for creativity. For examples check out various militiamen done by Troianni and others.



The bust on the left is of a buffalo soldier done by Pony Soldier. Jim really liked the sculpting on this piece and he plans on taking it to Philly.

☆☆☆ PARADE GROUND ☆☆☆

JIM RICHEY



On the left is a work-in-progress John Paul Jones bust by United Empire. “All done in acrylic, nothing fancy.” Jim thought the pose was a little plain, but not bad. He thought he might take it to Philadelphia if he can finish it in time.

Below is a Civil War Union Verlinden figure which Jim said he’s had for “many many years.” Jim said his cat liked it a lot and knocked it off the shelf several times. He said he spent the last two weeks putting all the pieces back together, repainting quite a bit of it. Jim said the Confederate was painted years ago.



☆☆☆ PARADE GROUND ☆☆☆

EVAN PRETZLAFF

Evan brought a number of figures to share, all beautifully painted. He said he particularly enjoys painting busts.

These two fantasy busts are by [Michael Kontraros](#). Evan described them as “mildly historic.” These two are related to the H.P. Lovecraft’s Kthulu mythos. The first bust is painted in the likeness of a knight Hospitaller and the second is a Roman centurion.



☆☆☆ PARADE GROUND ☆☆☆

EVAN PRETZLAF (CONTINUED)



The female bust is titled Vanitas and is sculpted by Carlo Barella of [Carlo's Miniatures](#). The sculptor was inspired by Marie Antionette.

The reclining figure below is by a company called [Kingdom Death](#). They're mostly known for doing fantasy pin-up models. Evan painted this one in the style of a Warhammer piece. It looks as though she's either camouflaged as stone or is turning into stone.



☆☆☆ PARADE GROUND ☆☆☆



JACK THOMPSON

Jack brought in the first diorama that he ever did where he put more than one model on a single base. Unfortunately it suffered a little damage on the way to the meeting. The soldier's plume got knocked off his shako.

He thought it might be an old Valiant figure and that possibly Shep Paine had something to do with it. The howitzer he believed to be from Imrie Risley.

Jack said he completed this diorama about 45 years ago. It's a Dutch horse artilleryman with a captured French howitzer. Back then he was more into the Napoleonic.



☆☆☆ PARADE GROUND ☆☆☆

LUIS ANDRES

Luis brought his tiny 28mm red Samurai. He said he wanted to create kind of a reddish atmosphere. The tree is made from scratch with wire. He considered making the tree smaller for balance, but several people thought it was fine the way it is. Very artistic!



☆☆☆ PARADE GROUND ☆☆☆

LUIS LACORZINA

Luis brought in a number of pieces that he had sculpted. He's an accomplished 3-D sculptor and his work can be found on Kick-Starter. Over time he's found that D&D style monsters are popular. Warhammer style female figures are also popular.

On the monster to the right Luis said tried glazing and he was happy with the way it turned out. The great thing about being able to do your own 3-D printing is that you can make copies of anything you might mess up.

Luis can be found on Instagram at [3dprintingsamurai](https://www.instagram.com/3dprintingsamurai) and on Kick Starter at [3dprintingsamurai.com](https://www.kickstarter.com/projects/3dprintingsamurai).

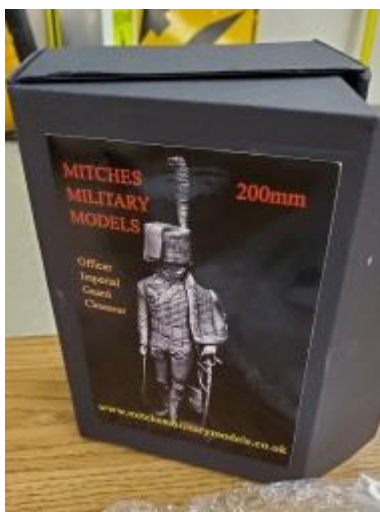


☆☆☆ PARADE GROUND ☆☆☆

SCOTT SHELTZ

Scott brought in his latest acquisition. It's the [200mm Officer Imperial Guard Chasseur by Mitches Military Models](#). It's a great kit and since it's new, the casting is very crisp. It has minimal cleanup needed.

We're looking forward to seeing it completed in a future Parade Ground.



☆☆☆ PARADE GROUND ☆☆☆

BURT THOMPSON

Burt brought in his nearly completed Vietnam jungle masterpiece. He noted that while Jack had completed his diorama 45 years ago it seemed to him like it took 45 years to complete this.

Burt said the base of the diorama is a two-part wine case. The back is balsa wood. Almost everything in the groundwork is scratch except for the Verlinden Buddha and some photo-etched vegetation, but a lot of it is hand done. He said he used clear epoxy to do the water.

The diorama is 35th scale with five figures from Bravo 6, which Burt says he likes. The accessories that came with them are awesome. The helicopter is a 1/35th scale Dragon kit.



☆☆☆ PARADE GROUND ☆☆☆

BURT THOMPSON (CONTINUED)



Burt said that he experimented with adhesive foil that he used to create damage. The 25th Division patch on the nose of the helicopter is hand-painted in acrylics as well as the 3rd Brigade Bronco emblems on the doors, no decals.

Looking inside, from the damage to the placement of straps and harnesses, Burt wanted to give the impression that the helicopter crash landed in the jungle. Burt gave a great deal of attention to line-of-sight and placement of figures & ground cover to draw your eye to the commander with his map.

Essentially, the diorama tells the story of a team looking for their brothers. The title comes from an old song “Down in the Jungle.” The period is 1969 Vietnam.



DISPATCHES FROM ACROSS THE POND

Courtesy of Robin J. Howard

THE HEROIC WRENS WHO WORKED OUT HOW TO DEFEAT U-BOATS



SMARTEST Jean Laidlaw teaches Wrens strategy



NAZI U-BOATS Admiral Donitz admires his fleet



ATLANTIC BATTLE Allies defend their convoy in the ocean

Women who outwitted Hitler

SUNDAY Mirror EXCLUSIVE

By Amanda Killelea and Matthew Dresch
Feb 19, 2023

THEY were a secret group of women who achieved what senior naval officers could not—outwitting the Nazis to win the Battle of the Atlantic.

It was 1942 and Germany had brought Britain to the brink of starvation by sinking Allied merchant ships crossing the Atlantic with food and vital supplies on board. The deadly U-boats were Hitler's secret weapon, stalking the depths of the seas in packs, ready to torpedo the merchant convoys. Allied losses were mounting - and the Royal Navy could not work out how to stop the U-boats.

Tasked by Prime Minister Winston Churchill with sinking the enemy's fleet,

veteran wargamer Commander Gilbert Roberts travelled to the Western Approaches command centre in Liverpool.

There he asked the admiral for mathematicians and specialists to join a crack wargaming unit - only to be told there were no spare men.

So he turned to the head of the Women's Royal Naval Service, Vera Laughton Matthews, who seized her moment.

The Royal Navy mainly viewed female staff as typists and car drivers, but Vera had been recruiting the cream of the crop as Wrens - women such as mathematicians, linguists, and sporting stars, some as young as 17.

Historian Dr. Tessa Dunlop says: "Women were totally undervalued before the war. There was a hierarchy of what

men did and what women did, and basically women were like chattel that stayed at home.

"But Vera was an early-doors feminist. She was writing for the Suffragette, she was pushing the envelope for women."

"Vera was an early-doors feminist, pushing the envelope for women"
DR TESSA DUNLOP ON THE WW2 WRENS CHIEF

The First World War saw women engaged in military services. But the view after 1918 was that there would never be another conflict like it, so the female services were disbanded. However mum-of-three Vera, a Wren in the First World War, continued to push for women's active involvement after 1939. Dr. Dunlop says: "Towards the beginning of the Second World War, Vera, being a bright woman,

knew they didn't have enough manpower and would need woman-power.

"But the War Office was in such

WOMEN WHO OUTWITTED HITLER (CONTINUED)

denial. The Wrens were never taken in under military law, which gave Vera a certain free hand. She was queen of her own castle.”

A new six-part Sky docu-drama, *U-Boat Wargamers*, highlights the important role Vera and her team had in defeating the enemy submarines.

The brilliant Nazi submarine commander Admiral Karl Donitz and his fleet of 57 U-boats had almost brought Britain to its knees. The submariners, nicknamed Aces, were so revered they were treated like movie stars at home in Germany.

Yet British military top brass were rather clueless about how to defeat them - until the Wrens got involved.

Actor Andrew Havill, 59 - best known for his roles in *The King’s Speech*, *The Crown*, and *Downton Abbey* - who plays Gilbert Roberts in the Sky series, says the Wrens’ work changed the course of the war.

Andrew says: “Up to that point, it was just hopeless. They just didn’t know where they were, how to get at them, what they were doing.”

The first Wren recruit to the Western Approaches Tactical Unit wargaming team was Jean Laidlaw - also the first woman to qualify as a chartered accountant in the UK - followed by 66 other women.

Captain Johnnie Walker, a British escort commander, had invented the Buttercup tactic, which involved escort ships moving outside a convoy and firing flares whenever a U-boat was spotted.

But still the submarines often sank as many ships as they had torpedoes.

Gilbert Roberts, Jean Laidlaw and their team analyzed both Buttercup and



TOP TEAM Andrew Harvill as Roberts in docu-drama

U-boat tactics using models, chalk and string.

Told that the range of a U-boat torpedo was about one mile, Jean Laidlaw had a lightbulb moment - convoys were miles across. So for the U-boats to be so accurate in their aim, they had to be already inside the convoy. But how were they getting there? Working late into the night, Jean noticed that a U-boat is faster on the surface of the water. So the subs must be entering the convoys at night on the surface, then attacking the ships at point-blank range.

She discovered that they remained undetected because, having shot their torpedoes, they submerged to 720ft - out of Royal Navy radar range. Letting the convoy pass over them, they then resurfaced behind it, away from the Navy’s escorts.

Jean devised a new tactic - dubbed Operation Raspberry, as it was blowing a raspberry at Hitler - which involved sending escort vessels to the rear to intercept



INSPECTION
Vera at London
1941 WRNS parade



ENIGMA Pat intercepted Nazi code

‘Taking over a man’s job was very attractive’

FLUENT in German, Patricia Owttram joined the WRNS in 1942 aged 18. The petty officer was tasked with intercepting German shipping signals to supply Bletchley Park with Enigma

code. Pat recalls signing up, saying: “I think the phrase that really struck us was ‘Join the Wrens and free a man to join the fleet’, or words to that effect.

“You could absolutely see the logic of that, and also the fact that you would be taking over some job that would normally be done by a naval officer, I found that very attractive.”

She was stationed on the

Yorkshire coast, where she and colleagues picked up German radio signals in the North and Baltic seas. They passed operational messages to naval intelligence or those in Enigma code to Bletchley Park. Pat, now 99, recalls: “A lot of my Wren friends had naval officer fiancés or husbands - and if they were on the Atlantic convoys it was a very tense time till they got back, or got there.”

WOMEN WHO OUTWITTED HITLER (CONTINUED)

surfacing U-boats. Dr. Dunlop says: “These Wrens were bright girls. They were working out with nothing more technical than a piece of chalk and a piece of string how these U-boats were managing to bring down so much of our merchant shipping.”

Many of the Wrens had only just finished school, she points out. “Yet they were telling men who had spent their whole lives at sea that they needed to think differently.”

Throughout 1942 and 1943, the wargaming unit devised many tactics for sinking U-boats, which culminated in a turning point battle around convoy ONS 5 in

“The work that the Wrens did changed the course of the war”
ACTOR ANDREW HARVILL ON MAKING NEW TV SERIES

May 1943, when 43 ships headed from Liverpool to Nova Scotia in Canada. Donitz’s U-boats were constantly frustrated by the Allies’ escorts.

By the end of the engagement, Donitz had sunk 13 ships - but had also lost 14 U-boats. Hitler deemed the losses unsustainable, and Donitz withdrew the subs from the Atlantic.

Dr. Dunlop believes the Wrens might have succeeded where the brightest brains in the Navy had failed because the force’s hierarchical structure could hinder lateral thought.

Yet these exceptional women have barely been recognized for their key role

in the war - perhaps, Dr. Dunlop thinks, because they were brought up to be seen and not heard in a world that celebrated only male heroes. And many will have taken their secrets to the grave.

She adds: “It wasn’t an atmosphere that encouraged women to shout about their achievements. “But women were absolutely key in a war effort which was still run by a military hierarchy which was 100% male.

“They were the handmaidens of war. The women had to almost outwit the men by stealth - and that is exactly what they did.” 🇬🇧



VITAL Wren Christian Lamb

“I plotted to sink U-boats”

At the age of 102, Christian Lamb is one of the last surviving Wrens who played a crucial role in the Battle of the Atlantic. She plotted operations by marking the locations of ships on a map - and, crucially, whether they were an Allied or enemy vessel.

Christian, who recently published her memoir *Beyond the Se: A Wren at War*, says: “If you were a Wren, you wanted to be something useful, and if you could be in touch with the enemy, you would be certainly much more useful to anybody.”

The battle for convoy ONS t in May 1943 was extra stressful for her, as her then-fiancé John Lamb was first lieutenant of the escort destroyer HMS Oribi, tasked with employing Jean Laidlaw and Gilbert Roberts’ tactics.

Other Wrens offered to relieve her of monitoring the Oribi, but Christian refused. She adds: “Naturally, I needed to stay there.”



ENEMY COMMAND
Donitz greets Hitler



THE INSIDE OF THE TACTICAL TABLE, ON WHICH THE GAMES ARE PLAYED: THE WREN OFFICER ON THE LEFT, SECOND OFFICER LAIDLAW, IS READY TO GO OUT TO THE PLAYERS OF WHOM SHE IS IN CHARGE TO INFORM THEM WHAT HAS HAPPENED IN THE PREVIOUS MOVE.

WORTHY READS

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ARTIST PRESERVATION GROUP

The Black Count Glory, Revolution, Betrayal, and the Real Count of Monte Cristo

by Tom Reiss
414pp, Crown Publishers,
New York, 2012

"It's hard to imagine a more colorful or engaging subject than the man who inspired The Count of Monte Cristo and The Three Musketeers. In the wonderful hands of Tom Reiss, Alex Dumas comes to vivid life, illuminating far-flung corners of history and culture. This is a terrific book." —Jon Meacham

"Tom Reiss has literally drilled into locked safes to create this masterpiece...His portrait of a man who was arguably our modern age's greatest unknown soldier is remarkable." —James Bradley, New York Times

On the shelf too long

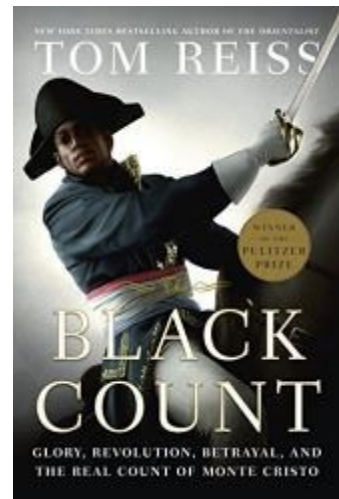
We purchased this book eleven years ago when it first came out and never got around to reading it. Being partial to the works of Alexandre Dumas and a fan of *The Count of Monte Cristo*, I decided to dust off Reiss's book to see if it might make a good subject for a book review. It

only took me a few pages to regret not reading *The Black Count* sooner. When I began writing this review and discovered that Reiss had won the Pulitzer Prize for it, I regretted my delay even more!

From the Publisher

His name is Alex Dumas. Father of the novelist Alexandre Dumas, Alex has become, through his son's books, the model for a captivating modern protagonist: the wronged man in search of justice.

Born to a black slave mother and a fugitive white French nobleman in Saint-Domingue (present-day Haiti), Alex Dumas was briefly sold into bondage but then made



the world's classic works of fiction.

The *Black Count* is simultaneously a riveting adventure story, a lushly textured evocation of 18th-century France, and a window into the modern world's first multi-racial society. But it is also a heartbreaking story of the enduring bonds of love between a father and son. Drawing on hitherto unknown documents, letters, battlefield reports and Dumas' handwritten prison diary, *The Black Count* is a groundbreaking masterpiece of narrative non-fiction. — Crown Publishing

"It's hard to imagine a more colorful or engaging subject..."

his way to Paris where he was schooled as a sword-fighting member of the French aristocracy.

He was only 32 when he was given command of 53,000 men, the reward for a series of triumphs that many regarded as impossible, and then topped his previous feats by leading a raid up a frozen cliff face that secured the Alps for France. It was after his subsequent heroic service as Napoleon's cavalry commander that Dumas was captured and cast into a dungeon—and a harrowing ordeal commenced that inspired one of

Well worth your time

It's won the Pulitzer Prize for Biography and it's been praised by numerous fellow historians including Jon Meacham. There isn't a whole lot I can say about this book that hasn't been said better by smarter people.

Without giving away spoilers, I have to say that Dumas' story, especially at the end, holds valuable lessons for us today. It's sad that the memory of Dumas as a hero has faded over time, but this book should help rectify that wrong. If you get the chance, *The Black Count* is well worth your time.—Darci H.



Un Héros de L'Épopée - Le Général Dumas au pont de Clausen

CASTING YOUR OWN PIECES

Presentation by Bob Prokop

Editor's Note: This presentation was copied in part from Bob's original PowerPoint. Some pictures were removed.

Disclaimer!

I am not a professional. This is purely a presentation that introduces you to the basics of casting parts and accessories for your modeling projects. This presentation is based on the things that I have found that work best for me. There are multiple ways to cast. As you work the process, you'll likely find other ways that work for you.

There are multiple types of mold rubber and casting resins. The items covered in this presentation are what I like to use. I am not affiliated with any company or organization. I'm happy to answer your questions to the best of my ability.

What We'll Cover

- * Material overview
- * Preparing your piece
- * Making your mold
- * Demolding
- * Casting resin
- * The finished product
- * References

What you need to get started

- * Subject to recast
- * Mold Rubber/Putty
- * Casting resin
- * Measuring cups/scale
- * Materials for building mold box
- * Material to seal box seals
- * Rubber Gloves
- * Glue gun and sticks
- * Corrugated Poster Board
- * Rubber Bands
- * Vacuum chamber (optional)
- * Vaseline/mold release

Preparing your piece for casting

This is the most critical part of the casting process!

- * Clean it up. What you see is what you get
- * Remove casting seams, imperfections they will be duplicated in the mold
- * Decide how best to cast the item
- * Determine the orientation of the object in the mold



- * Will need at least one pour hole and one air escape
- * I use rods attached to the object to create these holes prior to pouring
- * You can cut them into the mold after if you prefer

Making the mold box

You can use anything you want to make the box. If the item can fit in a premade item, use it. You can use wood, Lego's, plastic, sheet, or corrugated poster board. Just make sure that the material is not porous, or the rubber will stick to the frame.



CASTING YOUR OWN PIECES (CONTINUED)

When making the mold box seal all seams inside and out. You can use clay, a glue gun, or anything else that will seal the gaps. Keep the mold as small as possible. The bigger the mold the more material it takes to pour the mold. My rule of thumb is to make sure that you item is completely covered and you can't see the item through the mold.

Secure the piece to be cast to the base of the box. I use a glue gun.



Pouring the mold

I use Aluminite to make my molds. It relatively cheap, easy to use, and readily available in most local hobby stores. It can also be ordered online directly from the manufacturer.

The ratio of rubber to hardener is 10 to 1. You can measure it through volume using measuring cups or by weight using a diet scale. I find using the scale is easier and more accurate. My scale is set to measure in grams.

You must mix the materials thoroughly (no streaks) or your mold will remain soft and sticky. You have a 45 minutes of working time.

Casting your part

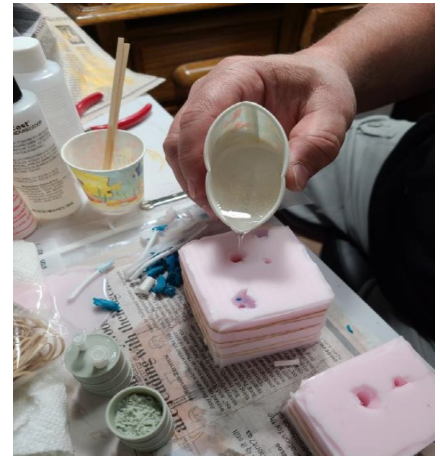
Prior to pouring the casting material you must close up your mold

- * Align all of your exterior seams a close as possible
- * You can use reinforce the mold with plastic sheet, wood, or any other solid material to help retain the structure of the mold
- * Use rubber bands to keep the mold sealed
- * Make sure the rubber bands aren't so tight that they cause the mold become deformed

Once you've close up the mold, mix the casting resin. The Alumilite casting resin is mixed in a 1 to1 ratio and it only has a 3-4-minute working time so I recommend having a something to help you track the time. Mix for 30 seconds to 1 minute and begin to pour.

Pour the resin slowly into the main opening allowing air to escape the mold as you pour. The mold is full once you see resin in each of the air evac openings.

To ensure that the resin is spread through out the mold you can "burp" the mold. Burping (squeezing) the mold helps to force any air trapped in the mold to escape. As the resin begins to cure it begins to warm and move from clear to a

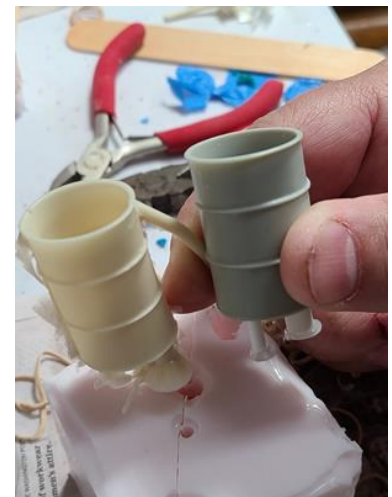


tan color. Once you see this transition happen your pouring time is up. You can demold your cast after approx. 15 minutes

The finished product

Congratulations! You completed your first casting. It may not look perfect but it's probably a workable piece. Take the time to examine your casting and learn from it. If there is a portion that resin did not reach you may need an additional air vent to allow the resin to get into that area. If the seam lines don't meet up the original alignment of the mold was off. The rubber bands could have been too tight, or the alignment was just wasn't quit right when you closed the mold.

As you continue to do castings your final product will continue to improve. As with anything if you take your time and think it through you will succeed.—RP



THE GREAT LOCOMOTIVE CHASE

([Buk's Historical Ad Hockery](#), April 13, 2017)

A special thanks to **Bob Huettner** for suggesting we feature his friend Kevin Bukowski, who has graciously allowed us to reprint his writings.

Please note: The following text is reprinted here in full with no additions or corrections. Any questions or comments should be directed to Mr. Bukowski on his blog [Buk's Historical Ad Hockery](#).

On 12 April 1862, Union civilian scout James Andrews and 22 Ohio infantry volunteers hijacked a Confederate locomotive "The General" in Kennesaw, Georgia. The plan was to stop periodically and destroy track, cut telegraph wire, and burn bridges behind them in order to cut supply from Atlanta to the strategically important Confederate town of Chattanooga, Tennessee. Although Andrews cut telegraph wire preventing anyone ahead from knowing of the train, the former conductor of The General, William Fuller, pursued on a hand car with some rebel soldiers (Andrews' top speed was only 15mph). Fuller eventually commandeered another train and pursued Andrews. Fuller dogged and unrelenting pursuit prevented the raiders from damaging the vital supply route in any meaningful way. Andrews at one point tried to set a car on fire while on a covered bridge to thwart pursuit, but Fuller pushed



END OF THE CHASE—THE STOLEN ENGINE, THE "GENERAL," ABANDONED.
 At the end of the Great Locomotive Chase, the Union group abandons their locomotive, the General, which has run out of fuel. From p. 739 of the 1887 book 'Battles and Leaders of the Civil War, being for the most part contributions by Union and Confederate officers, based upon "the Century War Series", volume 2.

through before the bridge was too damaged.

The Chase lasted almost all the way to Chattanooga when The General ran out of coal and had to be abandoned. Andrews and the Union soldiers split up but were all eventually captured. They were tried as spies and found guilty of being unlawful combatants and sentenced to hang. Seven, including Andrews, were hung but the rest escaped, six were recaptured but because of the outcry were not hung and later exchanged. Abraham Lincoln's Sec. of War, Edwin Stanton, awarded the first Medals of Honor to the soldiers who participated in The Chase, the very first being Pvt Jacob W. Parrott of the 33rd Ohio Infan-

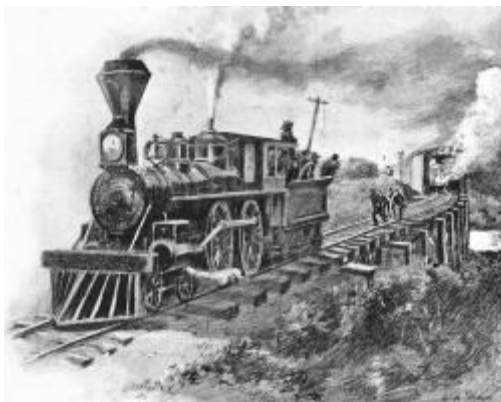
try, due to his particularly brutal time as a prisoner.—KB



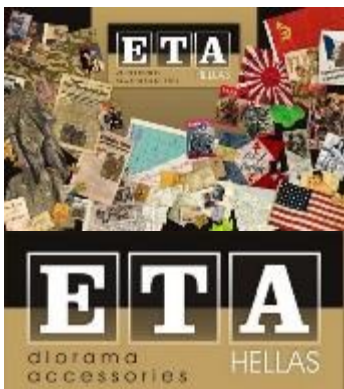
Jacob Wilson Parrott (July 17, 1843 – December 22, 1908) was the first recipient of the Medal of Honor, a new military award first presented by the United States Department of War to six Union Army soldiers who participated in the Great Locomotive Chase in 1862 during the American Civil War.



"The General" on display at the Kennesaw Museum



The Andrews Raiders set a train car on fire to try to ignite a covered railway bridge and thwart Confederate pursuit.



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Richmond & N. Virginia IPMS Shows

Photos by Scott Bricker and Nicholas Kalis, et al



In the spirit of mutually supporting our fellow local modeling clubs, the NCMSS participated in both the Richmond IPMS Old Dominion Open February 25th at the Richmond Raceway Complex and The Northern Virginia Modelers Model Classic on April 15. Our members were exhibitors, judges, and vendors with additionally a club table at the Model Classic where we promoted our club, our show in September and sold our show commemorative Minuteman figures. Our members garnered quite a few awards and well represented the club in many categories.

Both shows were well attended with quite a few vendors and displays. Seems like the hobby is doing very well locally after the Covid turn around. Richmond did not have a large selection of historical figures, but the Science Fiction and Gundam categories were very well

represented. The Gundam tables were packed and at times difficult to get in past the crowd to see the displays, including the judges. As usual the ordnance, ship and auto categories were well represented, as the entry limitations were lifted from the previous show. The raffle was extremely impressive, with many kits donated by both Tamiya and Bandai, along with some local hobby stores. Many members scored some great kits, but alas I did not. The show had 209 Entrants, 946 Registered Models (927 entered), 724 General Admission, and 40 Vendors with 119 Tables. It should be noted that along with the 1st, 2nd and 3rd place medals won by our members, Bob Prokop won Best Figure for his US Special Ops Afghanistan 2001.

The NOVA Model Classic show, held again at Fairfax High School, had many more figures in the historical categories but much less in the Gundam. As in the past the NCMSS sponsored all the figure categories, and the NOVA modelers will be sponsoring the Ordnance and Diorama categories at the Wash-

ington Show. The show had 568 model entries by 121 entrants, 52 vendors, 3 guest authors and 6 exhibiting organizations along with 730 General Admission.

Member Nicholas Kalis attended and sent me some observations and mentioned that there was difficulty seeing the names of the individual modelers and at times even the descriptions of the display. While the names are hidden underneath the forms for judging purposes and this is common at IPMS shows, I also like to see who did the fine work and details on the model, and it may be awkward to lift the form and read, not to mention that you are not supposed to touch the models. The food was supplied by the PTSA Grad Night Committee, who traveled throughout the vendor area to deliver to the hungry folks manning the tables.

Besides many awards garnered by club members, NCMSS Peter Espada got Best of Show for his beautiful 1927 Bugatti Gran Prix Racer in 1/25th scale (see Parade Ground). —DH

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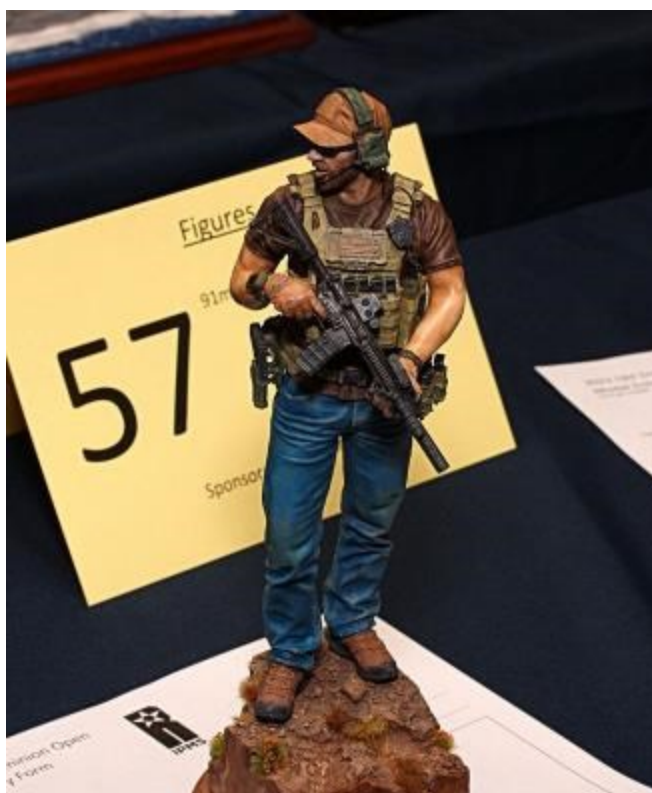
1-22

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Best of Show and Best Military Vehicle ODO "Delta Four One," David Vickers

Richmond & N. Virginia IPMS Shows (Continued)



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Richmond & N. Virginia IPMS Shows (Continued)



HUZZAH HOBBIES
LOUISIAN COUNTY'S TABLETOP GAMING HEADQUARTERS





THE NCMSS DISPATCH SWAP MEET

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Welcome to the place where NCMSS Members and friends of the club can trade, sell, or obtain items of interest and need. Contact your Dispatch editor if you wish to submit a request at bpchasseur@comcast.net



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Brian Ford in Wilmington, N.C. has been getting rid of some of his stash of kits. He says he has plenty from the mid 70's to the late 90's. If you are looking for a particular kit(s), please contact Brian and he'll see if he has it.



Brian has Bartons, Almonds, Poste Militaire, Series 77, Ceremonial, and many others. Contact him at: aford1@ec.rr.com



HUZZAH HOBBIES

LOUDOUN COUNTY'S TABLETOP GAMING HEADQUARTERS



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2023 NCMSS Officers

Commanding Officer Burt Thompson 907-957-0607
thompsonnu84@gmail.com

Executive Officer Bob Prokop
rprokop@hotmail.com

Adjutant David Hoffman 240-912-6499
bpchasseur@comcast.net

Paymaster Darci Hoffman 240-912-6499
dkdickens-h@comcast.net

Show Chairman Burt Thompson 907-957-0607
Thompsonnu84@gmail.com

Vendor Chairman Grant Berry 301-829-6110
Granthberry@aol.com

Webmaster Mike Fleckenstein 540-498-0162
modlrifleck@yahoo.com

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Ads for shows must be submitted by the 15th of the month for a show scheduled for the following month. Business cards may be submitted for continuous running, subject to space availability. Members may also submit sale/want ads as desired. Ads or business cards in compliance with this policy and printed in The Dispatch do not represent an official endorsement by the NCMSS; nor does NCMSS endorse specific shows or vendors.

National Capital Model Soldier Society (NCMSS)

2023 Membership Application / Renewal

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If **renewing** membership and there is **NO CHANGE** in information from the previous year, simply print your "**NAME**" on the **Name** line and print "**SAME**" on the **Address** line of this form.

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Figure Modeling Interests: (tell us what historical era -or- special genre you particularly enjoy modeling or collecting)

Annual dues of \$20 are payable to **NCMSS**. Send check or money order and this form to:
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NOTE: information on this form will be included in the **2023 NCMSS Membership Roster**

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