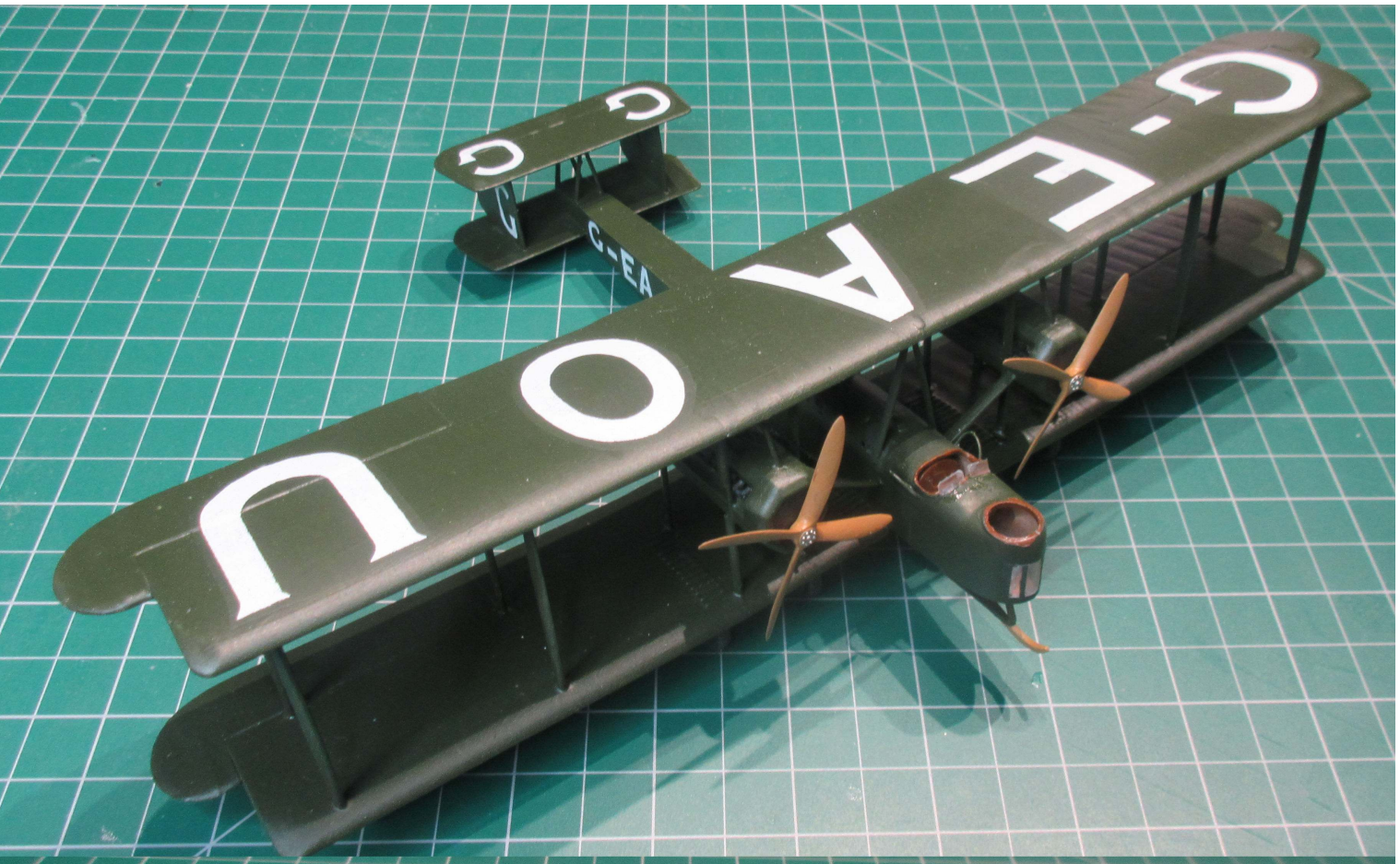


2025 Scale Models

My 2025 has been a year of trying to get my life into order again after the severe disruptions of the previous couple of years. The beginning of the year saw me moved to my new home here in Park Street with all my possessions in no discernable order and the work of the year has been to return order to that chaos. Here, at the beginning of 2026, I feel as though that has been achieved; as much as I am able.

It's been an exhausting year. I started the year with a very long 'To Do' list and everything always took longer than expected to complete. The solar panels and battery were all installed by the end of January but not connected to the grid until the end of June. The garage extension was not completed until May and the shelves erected in it some time later so that the boxes of kits and models could be put on them. The boxes then had to be put in order and the inventory of them and their contents was only completed in the past fortnight. The books are all on shelves and in rough category order, but still need to be arranged as they were before I moved. I spent most of April in Europe visiting museums, meeting friends, going to conventions and catching the mother of all infections, which left me drained through the middle of the year.

Scale modelling has helped to keep me sane and motivated during all of this with the evenings set aside for the mindfulness and relaxation of making models. My airbrush was not fully operational until May which gave me a period of experimenting with hand painting in acrylics - not always with great success. Consequently more unfinished models than usual have found their way into my rubbish bin. Even so, I'm pleased with what I did get done in 2025 which makes me feel the year was not a complete waste.

The words under the photos are the placards I prepare for each of the models and the descriptions of the build experiences were written for the newsletter of my local club, the Modellers of Ballarat.

There are several ways in which I keep in touch with the world

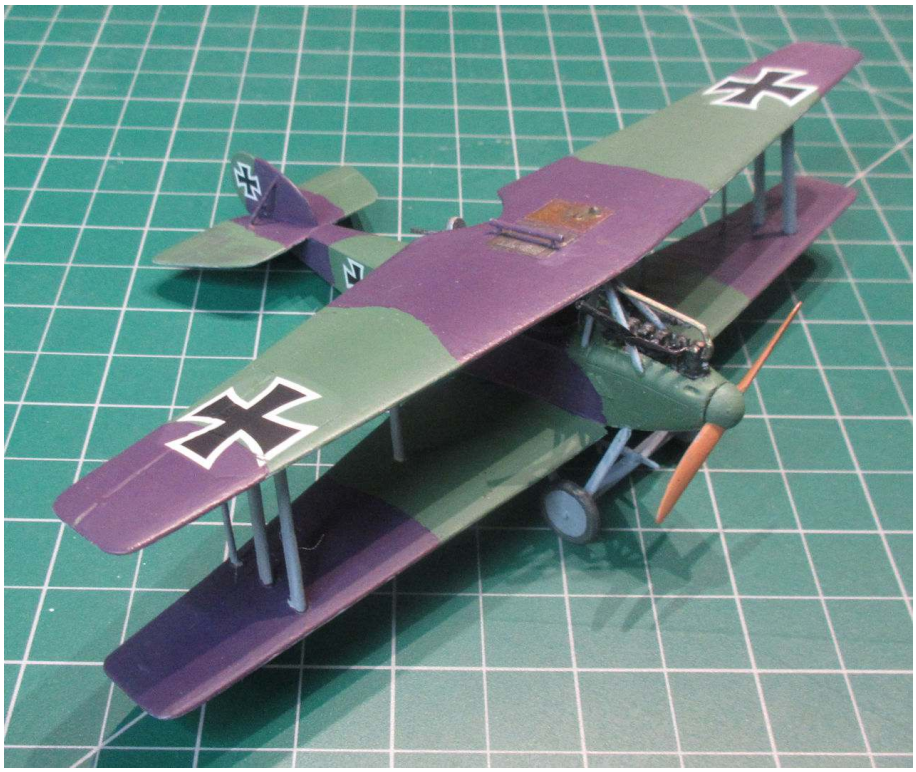
My email account
leighedmonds01@gmail.com

My general facebook page
https://www.facebook.com/leigh.edmonds.12/

My scale modelling facebook page
https://www.facebook.com/profile.php?id=61585662764432

The Little Aviation Museum website
https://thelittleaviationmuseum.au/

Leigh Edmonds
January 2026



AGO C.IV

The AGO C.IV was a reconnaissance aircraft designed and built in Germany during World War 1. It was unsuccessful because of the complexity of its construction and because it was unpopular with its crews due to instability.

AGO Flugzeugwerke began design of a new high performance reconnaissance aircraft in 1916. It was of conventional layout for the time and designed to give the observer a good field of view from the rear cockpit. An unusual design feature was the tapered wings and the strut arrangement.

An order for 260 of the C.IV were placed with several companies and they began entering service at the beginning of 1917. However, the complexity of the design, and the wing in particular, resulted in less than 100 being made. Additionally, this aircraft was unpopular with their crew because of instability problems.

This model represents an AGO C.IV in service with 3 Fligerabtuilung 284a, Imperial German Air Service, in 1917..

Data: Reconnaissance aircraft *Engine* one Benz Bz.IV six cylinder piston engine of 160kW. *Wing span* 11.9m. *Length* 8.25m. *Gross weight* 1,350kg. *Maximum speed* 190km/h. *Armament* two machine guns. *Crew* 2.

Kovozavody Prostejov 1/72 kit.

AGO C.IV in 1/72 by Kovozavody Prostejov

The AGO C.IV was not a very successful observation aircraft made for the German Air Service during World War 1. It was fairly standard for an observation aircraft of its time with a pilot and observer/gunner but unusual in its mixed material fuselage construction and tapered wings. The wings made it a difficult and expensive aircraft to make and the crews didn't like it because of it was unstable so, while about 250 were ordered only about 70 were made. They began entering service at the beginning of 1917 but did not last long in the field. I can't help but wonder why any company would want to offer a kit of such an aircraft but perhaps there is one preserved in a museum somewhere that inspired this kit.

The reason I made this model is because I'm having fun with the AK 3G acrylic paints which I'm finding useful to hand paint models, or at least part of models that need hand painting. They are the only colour range I could find that offers Royal Flying Corps colours which I've used on a couple of models and liked. I also find them useful for things like biplanes that are too difficult and fragile to mask for airbrushing with lacquers. So, having enjoyed making British aircraft from this period I bought the AK World War 1 German aircraft paint set which includes that lovely lilac colour that was used on some German aircraft. The AGO C.IV was the first kit I found that used this colour, so I made it so I could use that paint. It looks rather nice but I wouldn't paint my walls with it.

Sometimes I wonder if the people who make these kits actually make them to find out if the parts fit. Perhaps they don't or perhaps they do and expect that the modellers who make these kits know enough about what they are doing to take care of problems with parts that don't fit as they should. The most glaring example with this kit is the nicely detailed (for 1/72) cockpit and engine. However, it you try to fit both into the fuselage they won't fit - one or both being too long. The solution was to start cutting pieces of the rear of the engine and front of the cockpit floor until they did fit. Also, the engine includes a nice sump but it won't fit into the nose of the model without a lot of surgery until none of it is left.

Apart from that, assembly is fairly straight forward though the struts are a little more challenging than usual. The forward struts from the fuselage to the upper wing meet at the top so I glued them first and used that as a guide to how far apart the two wings should be.

As usual, I used blobs of blu tack to hold the upper wing in place while I fitted the wing struts, left everything to set for a day and then gently removed the blu tack. This is perhaps the most nerve wracking part of the process because you don't want to put too much pressure on the glued parts otherwise the whole thing falls to bits.

Getting the piping to and from the radiator to the engine was also a bit nerve wracking because the pipes are butt joined with no real indication in the instructions about their exact location. There aren't very many good photos of this aircraft either so eventually I found, on the interenet, some detailed photos of a previously made C.IV which I used as a guide.

Painting is also fairly straight forward. I'm starting to get the hang of how to hand paint with these new paints which is a technique somewhat different from painting with enamels. Two coats of each colour was all that was needed for good coverage while touching up is dead easy. The kit offers two decal options and I chose the more colourful one. Then a couple of coats of Tamiya rattle can matt lacquer and it was ready for the final details.

I don't know whether it is me or the kit. The forward facing machine gun is supposed to go on the inside of the forward fuselage struts but I couldn't get it to fit despite some harsh words of encouragement. Maybe the pipes to the radiator aren't in the right place or perhaps there isn't enough room between the struts for the piping and the gun in this kit. Anyhow, after some struggles I managed to break one of the pipes, part of which was consumed by the carpet monster. (This missing section is hidden under the top wing so you probably wouldn't notice if I hadn't mentioned it.) Even with the missing part the machine gun wouldn't fit inside the strut so I glued it to the outside, which is not accurate but better than not attaching the gun at all.

The end result is a strangely attractive little model. I think the lilac and green colour scheme has a lot to do with it. If I was to make another model of this aircraft I'd do a couple of things around the engine differently. But I can't see that happening.

Airbus A.340-300

The Airbus A.340 is a long range version of the Airbus family of jet airliners. They began entering service in the early 1990s and became popular with long range airlines around the world.

The A.340 began life with plans to develop the Airbus A.300 and uses many of the fuselage components of the earlier airliner with improved avionics and a new four engine wing. It was designed to replace the old Boeing 707s and DC-8s. The first A.340 flew in April 1992 and was certified towards the end of December that year. A.340 deliveries commenced in early 1993, flying with Lufthansa and later with more than 30 airlines. By late 2001 309 had been orderd and 205 were in operation.

This model represents OH-LQF in service with Finnair in 2015

Data: long range high capacity airliner. *Engines* four CFM International CFM56-5C turbofan engines of151.24kN thrust each. *Wing span* 60.3m. *Length* 63.69m. *Maximum take-off weight* 276.5t. *Cruising speed* 871km/h. *Range* 12,408km. *Maximum payload* 52t or between 295 and 335 passengers depending on seating layout. *Flight crew* 2.

Revell 1/144 kit with *F-Dcal* and *Draw decals*

Alenia C-27J Spartan

The Alenia C-27J is a medium capacity transport aircraft designed and manufactured as a joint venture between Italy and the United States. It is operated by a number of air forces including the Royal Australian Air Force..

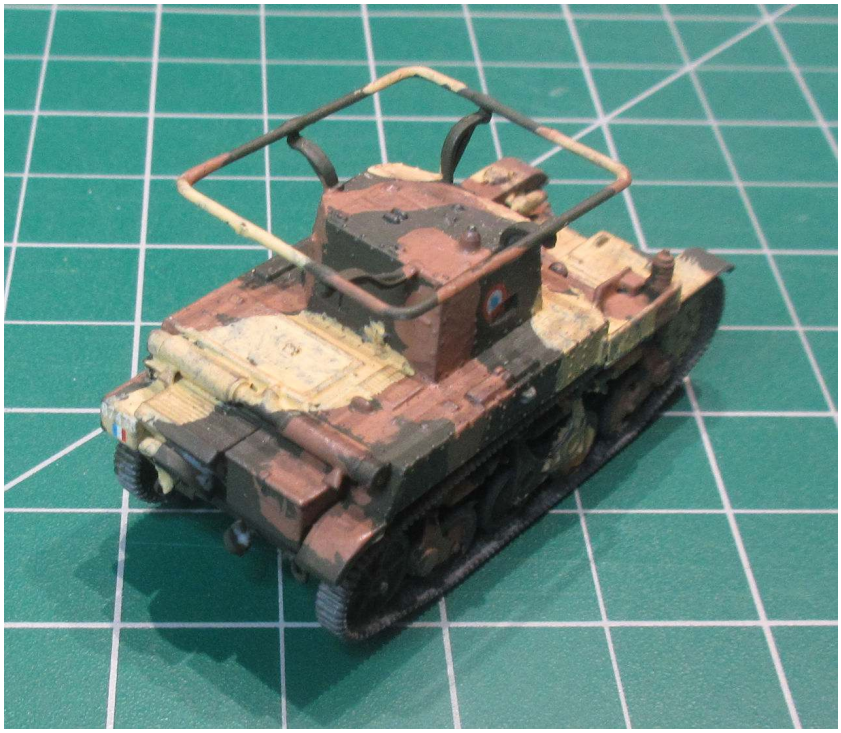
The Alenia C-27J Spartan is a development of the earlier Aeritalia G.222 light transport aircraft. It was developed for the United States Army and Air Force to replace earlier aircraft including the military version of the G.222 which was given the military designation C-27A.

The C-27J first flew on 24 September 1999 and first entered service with the Italian Air Force in 2007, and the United States in 2008. Australia ordered ten C-27Js to replace its retired DHC-4 Caribou fleet. They were delivered between 2014 and 2018.

This model represents A34-003 serving with 35 Squadron, RAAF, based at Amberley in 2020.

Data: medium capacity air transport**.** *Engines* two Rolls Royce AE2100-D2A turboprop engines of 3,458kW each. *Wing span* 28.7m. *Length* 22.7m. *Maximum take-off weight* 32,500kg. *Maximum speed* 602km/h. *Range* 1,759km. Maximum payload 11,300kg. Crew: 2 plus loadmaster when required.

Welsh Models 1/144 kit.



AMR 35 ADF1

The AMR 35 ADF1 was a command version of the light AMR 35 tank in service with the French Army at the beginning of World War 2. It had no armament but radio sets used to co-ordinate unit operations.

Development of the AMR 35 light cavalry tank began in 1933 with 200 ordered in five versions, two armed with machine guns, two armed with anti-tank guns and a command version.

The ADF1 was the command version. It lacked armament but was fitted with two radio sets and a casement on the hull for the commander and radio operator. It was designed to look like the turret on a standard AMR 35 to prevent it becoming a priority target but the large radio antenna rather gave it away. Thirteen were ordered in the total production run, six of them were delivered in 1938 and were in service with the French Army's cavalry units by 1940 and the others were seemingly in reserve.

This model represents an AMR 35 ADF1 in French service in early 1939.

Data: *Engine* one Renault V-4 engine of 82hp. *Hull width* 1.76m. *Hull length* 3.84m. *Combat weight* 6.51 tonnes. *Maximum speed* 55km/h. *Maximum range* 200km. . *Crew* 3.

First to Fight 1/72 kit.

Avro Anson Mk.I

The Avro Anson was a general purpose aircraft designed and built in Britain between 1935 and 1952. Over a thousand Ansons were used by the RAAF during World War 2, mainly as training aircraft.

The Avro Anson was initially designed as a relatively cheap maritime reconnaissance aircraft for the Royal Air Force. Development began in 1933 and the prototype first flew on 24 March 1936. Soon after the outbreak of World War 2 the Anson was found to be obsolete for front line service but became one of the main aircraft used to train aircrew during the war. Over 11,000 were manufactured.

A total of 1,017 Ansons were brought to Australia from 1936 for service with the RAAF, initial for coastal patrols and later as trainers . Some were later converted to civil use.

This model represents Anson W2083 flying with No 3 EFTS, RAAF, at Essendon in 1942.

Data: *Engines* two Armstrong Siddeley Cheetah IX seven cylinder radial piston engines of 250kW each. *Wing span* 17.22m. *Length* 12.88m. *Maximum take-off weight* 3629kg. *Maximum speed* 303km/h. *Range* 1060km. *Armament* two 7.7mm machine guns and up to 160kg of bombs. Crew 3-2..

Airfix 1/72 kit with *Dekl's* decals and *Tasman Models* turret.

Avro Anson in 1/72 by Airfix

I made one of these Airfix kits fairly soon after the kit was released in the early 1960s. I didn't think it was a very attractive aeroplane then and I haven't changed my mind now. I did pick up another Airfix kit of the Anson in the 1980s because they were going cheap in the newsagency I walked past on the way to work but I doubt that I ever planned to make it. Then, only last year, I became involved in a heritage project about the No 1 Wireless and Air Gunnery School that was based at Ballarat Airport during World War 2 where they flew Ansons and Wackett Trainers. Having thought that making an Anson now might be a good idea I looked around for more recent Special Hobby kit, but it is discontinued and the only one I could find was going to cost me about $100. So I decided to get out the old Airfix kit instead.

This ancient fossil of a kit is not impressive, but it's only an Anson so what did it matter. The cabin interior is basic, but there is enough to occupy the space reasonably well so, with some painting and a tiny bit of detailing, the interior doesn't look too impoverished. Besides, I thought, the thick transparencies would make it very difficult to see more detailing inside if I went to the trouble making it. The construction progressed with no great dramas but there was enough filling and sanding to keep me busy for a couple of modelling sessions.

A few years back I had acquired a set of Dkels decals for Australian Ansons. I hoped that I could make a model of an Anson the flew from Ballarat during the war but this turned out to be difficult or impossible, partly because they moved around so much that it was difficult to track them down. At this point I also discovered that the first 48 Ansons imported into Australia were given A4- numbers but the vast majority retained their RAF serial numbers and also their RAF camouflage, at first at least. The decal sheet had decals for several Ansons, including several of the A4- numbered ones. However, I also discovered that the first batch of Ansons had the earlier swept back windscreens and the following imports the later more upright windscreen. The Airfix kit offers only the later windscreen which meant I had to make the later RAAF Ansons with RAF camouflage and markings.

Painting the Anson is fairly simple in the Dark Earth, Dark Green and Sky scheme. The complexity comes with the cabin windows which have raised lines, vertical and at an angle. This had me perplexed for a while until I happened to be at the Aviation Heritage Museum up at Nhill where they have a restored Anson. It turns out that the diagonal lines on the transparancies are part of the internal bracing and the vertical lines are the window framing. I attempted to replicate this by painting the internal bracing interior green, then painted several coats of gloss varnish over the windows and then painting the vertical

windows standard camouglage colours. The result is reasonable and probable better than having internal and external parts which would look cumbersom in 1/72 scale.

Since my airbrush is still not in operation I hand painted the model in AK's 3G Acrylic paints from the RAF World War 2 set. I'm finding this very agreeable paint and getting used to the technique for hand painting. Only a couple of coats of each colour was necessary, as was the yellow for the wing and fuselage stripes. I'm also discovering that this paint is a lot softer than the lacquers I'm used to using so the painted tended to brush off easily and the model needed a bit of touching up before applying the decals and then a couple of coats of Tamiya rattle can matt varnish. I was concerned about any potential reaction between the acrylic and lacquer paints but no such issues emerged.

My 2025 attempt to make an Avro Anso is better than my early 1960s version. It is still not a great model and I blame that on the quality of the kit, naturally. My main disappointment is that this model is not one of the A4- series Ansons in an all doped aluminum scheme. Since finishing this model I have found that the Special Hobby Anson comes in 'early' and late' versions with the two different windscreens. This means I am not on the look out for an 'early' version Special Models Anson so if you happen to have one I might well be interested in relieving you of it.

British Aerospace Harrier GR.9

The Harrier GR.9 was the final version of the improved Harrier II which began service with UK air forces in the mid 1980s. It flew for the Royal Air Force and Royal Navy before being taken out of service in 2010.

An improved version of the Harrier was developed, mainly in the United States. It had many improvements including an enlarged wing and more powerful Pegasus engine. The first one flew on 30 April 1985.

Britain took part in the development program and began introducing its version, the Harrier GR.5 to service in July 1987. Slightly improved versions, the GR.7 and GR.9 were later introduced and took part in several conflicts. They were withdrawn from service in December 2010.

This model represent ZD477 flying with 800 Naval Air Squadron in the livery it wore on its final flight on 15 December 2010. It is now on display at the RAF Museum, Hendon.

Data: *Single seat V/STOL strike fighter*. *Engine* one Rolls Royce Pegasus Mk105 vectored thrust turbofan engine of 96.7kN thrust. *Wing span* 9.25m. *Length* 14.12m. *Maximum take-off weight* 14,061kg. *Range* 560km. *Armament* up to 3650kg of weapons including rockets, missiles and bombs. *Crew* 1.

Airfix 1/72 kit with *Xtradecals* decals.

Hawker P.1127 and BAe Harrier GR.9 in 1/72 by Airfix

On the first full day I was in London earlier this year I went to the Science Museum in Kensington. Right up the back where you'd have to know where to look is the aircraft collection including many wonderful aircraft. Among them was the prototype Hawker P.1127, XP831, which led to the development of the Harrier. It made its first flight on 19 November 1960.

The next day I went out to the RAF Museum at Hendon where, among the wonderful things to be seen, was a collection of relatively modern RAF aircraft including a Harrier GR.9, ZG477, in the livery it had flown on 15 December 2010, the last day the RAF flew Harriers. The markings on it were for No 800 Naval Air Squadron but I assume the curators knew what they were doing when the put an aircraft allocated to the Fleet Air Arm in the RAF Museum.

At the time I was working on the Airfix GR.7/9 kit so I thought it might be nice to make a model of the first and last Harriers. This involved ordering a decal sheet for all the Harriers that flew on the final day from Hannants and digging the old Airfix P.1127 kit out of my Treasure.

The P.1127 kit was first published by Airfix in 1963 and I made it as soon as I saw a copy. I thought it was a pretty good kit with rotating jet exhausts. Sixty-three years late the kit is truly of its time. I don't recall whether or not the first bagged kit included optional parts for the second prototype with a blunt nose and shorter tail thruster but the 2000 version that I had did, along with a nice decal sheet for both aircraft.

The main work I did to improve this model was around the cockpit and intakes. The cockpit is a vast echoing chasm so I built it up a bit, not that you'd notice since the entire

thing is painted black. I has a nice Martinn Baker Mk.4 ejector seat left over from the epidemic of Lightnings I made earlier so I put that in. I'm not sure if the P.1127 was fitted with a Mark 4 but it looks right.

The other thing that needed fixing was the air intakes. On the kit there is a big step down in the kit parts for the intake that shouldn't be there. Fixing this involved some plasticard and lost of filler to smooth out the work. To be completely accurate the intake should slope into the face of the engine, as it does in the GR.9 kit, but it would have entailed a lot of work and it would be hard to see. So I didn't bother.

Then trouble came when it was time to fit the cockpit canopy which, it turns out, is almost 2mm wider than the fuselage where it fits. What to do? After lots of worrying I hoped that the plastic of the canopy was thick enough that I could thin it down and get away with it. Which I did, but only with a great deal of worry that every time I sanded off a little more I'd break through the plastic and the model would be ruined. A little bit of filler was involved so the upper edge of the intake is not as well defined as it should be. But it doesn't look too bad.

After all that there didn't seem to be too much that needed to be done to the rest of the model except lots of filling and sanding to fill gaps and merge the wings into the fuselage. When that was satisfactory an overrall sanding to remove the rivets and smooth the entire model for a couple of coats for Tamiya AS12. The decals went on nicely, they are not quite the same as how the aircraft appears in the Science Museum, but photos show that the markings changed from time to time over the flying life of the aircraft.

After that, the much more modern GR.9 should have been easier but it is a rather complex kit so I didn't enjoy making it very much. I found it a very fiddly kit and the instructions didn't help. The kit has parts from the GR.7 and the GR.9 but peering at the instructions to figure out which parts to use for the GR.9 had me scratching my head at times. The assembly process also allows quite a few opportunities to get things wrong and not quite fitting properly, which resulted in some radical filling and sanding in a couple of spots. This might have been my fault for not fitting parts properly, or perhaps the kit. In any event, everything went together eventually.

The painting and decaling should have been simple, but wasn't. The scheme is basically grey but the interior parts are white. Masking, particularly for the little wheels in the wings, was very fiddly and very cranky making. The decals were thin and difficult to get off the backing paper, making the tiny stenciling very annoying to try to get into the right positions. In addition, some of them fell of after a while so I began using watered down PVA to make them stick, which made the whole process even more difficult. After two or three nights of this frustration it had stopped being fun, so I stopped doing it.

SMS flat lacquer gives the model a nice dull look very similar to the real thing. There were a few times that I was glad that I'd taken a few pictures of the aircraft in the museum because the instructions for the final pieces were not very precise on occasions.

Eventually, the model was more or less finished, I was pleased because it looked okay but relieved that the ordeal was over.

I saw a few other Harriers in my recent travels, so don't be surprised if you see me making a few more in the future. I think the GR.3 looks very nice with that long snout.

Bell XF-109

The Bell XF-109 was a supersonic fighter designed in the United States in the 1950s. It would be capable of vertical take-off and landing and perform many roles. However the project was cancelled before an aircraft had been built.

The Bell D-188 was designed to meet a requirement of the US Air Force and Navy for a vertical take-off and landing supersonic fighter. In US Air Force service it would be called the F-109 and in US Navy service the F3L.

Work on this highly ambitions project began in 1955. It would fulfill a multitude of roles for the two services. It would have eight engines, two in the tail, two in each rotating wing-tip pod and two buried in the fuselage behind the cockpit for additional vertical lift.

However, the US Navy lost interest in the project and the USAF finally cancelled it in 1961 without an aircraft being built.

This model represents the XF-109 nock-up in 1960.

Data: *Engines* eight General Electric J85-GE-5 turbojec of 12kN thrust each. *Wing span* 7.25m. *Length* 18.90m. *Gross weight* 10,849kg. *Maximum speed* mach 2.3. *Range* 3.900km. *Armament* four 20mm cannon and rockets and bombs. *Crew* 1.

Anigrand 1/72 kit.

Bell XF-109 in 1/72 by Anigrand

Depending on who you talk to there was never a F-109 because that designation was first alloted to what became the F-101B or was never allocated at all. Others say the designation was allocated to, or at least reserved for, the Bell D-188D which was a proposed vertical take-off and landing supersonic fighter designed in the second half of the 1950s. It was a very ambitious project which was also planned to serve with the US Navy, possibly under the designation F3L. In any event, it was such a very ambitious project that made little progress and was cancelled by both services around the end of the 1950s. It did get as far as a mock-up which was photographed in both US Air Force and US Navy colours.

Having developed, a few years back, the urge to make all the USAF's Century Series fighters I had laid in this Anigrand resin kit of the XF-109 that was just waiting to be built. After having struggled to make the Anigrand kit of the North American XF-108 a few months ago I approached this kit was very low expectations, and I was not disappointed.

To start with there is the matter of accuracy. For example, the Wikipedia entry on this aircraft says that it had eight engines but I can only count six on the model and the mock-up. There are also some differences between the appearance of the mock-up in the photos I've seen and those of the kit. Perhaps the model is based on some drawings rather than photos and it would not be unusual for there to be differences in appearance at the early stage in designing the aircraft. I decided not to worry about the differences too much because the finished model promised to appear more like what the XF-109 might have looked like than almost every other aircraft ever made.

Building this model was not a process to gladden one's heart. None of the parts fitted with any exactitude, many were warped or poorly shaped and there is no detail to speak of. The only way to get everything together and looking reasonable was with a lot of test fitting and adjusting before gluing the parts together, and a lot of sanding and filling and sanding and filling after they were glued. The work hiding under the finishing layers of paint includes standard superglue, slow drying black superglue, Tamiya white filler and Mr Surfacer 500. The engine pods were very annoying with tiny air bubbled in the engine air intakes that I

could only make halfway decent with a lot of the black super glue and what seemed like an eternity of sanding and shaping. And they layers of Mr Surfacer 500 to smoothen everything out nicely.

The cockpit canopy in this kit was vacformed, only after this kit did Anigrand go to moulded canopies. Cutting this one out was a serious challenge because the area to be trimmed away was not well defined so there was a great deak of very fine trimming and fitting before the clear canopy and the fuselage fitted, and then only in half hearted fashion. After figuring that I had done as well as I could I used G-S Hypo Cement to attach the canopy to the fuselage, then several layers of Mr Sufracer 500 and body putty to fill the gaps, and then a lot of very delicate sanding so as not to do too much damage to the clear canopy part.

After all this, the painting was relatively simple. First were the two or three coats of Tamiya rattle can grey primer to find, fill and elaminate the blemishes, Next I tried a couple of coats of Tamiya TS-17 Gloss Aluminum to try replicating the appearance of the mock-up. That was okay but too glossy so I gave the model one thin coat of Tamiya AS-12 Bare-Metal Silver and quite liked the result. Then some black anti-dazzle panels and a touch or red and it was ready for decals. After all my trouble with the resin parts the decals went on easily and settled down perfectly without an argument. The kit decal sheet didn't have the red stripes that were necessary to finish the model off so I scrounged them from the spares box.

What do I think about the finished model? I think it looks quite nice and interesting. I can see that the idea of hanging four big and heavy engines at the ends of the wings wasn't one of the world's great ideas, but in the 1950s the aviation industry was still trying to figure out what worked and what didn't with these new jet engines, and what may have been the XF-109 proved to be one of many dead ends.

Boeing KC-46A

The Boeing KC-46 is an aerial refueller and military transport aircraft developed in the United States in the 2010s. It is replacing earlier generation of the aerial tankers in service with the US Air Force.

The United States Air Force began seeking a replacement for its ageing fleet of KC-135 aerial refuelling aircraft around 2001 but it was not until 2011 that the air force selected the KC-46 for production. It is a militarized and updated version of the Boeing 767 airliner that first flew in 1981.

The first KC-46 made its first flight on 25 September 2015 and they were introduced to service in 2019. It is planned that 179 of these aircraft will be manufactured and 93 had been delivered by the end of 2024.

This model represents a KC-46 flying with the 64nd Air Refuelling Wing in 2025.

Data: Aerial refuelling and military transport aircraft. *Engines* two Pratt & Whitney PW4062 turbofan engines of 280kN thrust each. *Wing span* 48.1m. *Length* 50.5m. *Maximum take-off weight* 188,2404kg. *Cruising speed* 851km/h. *Range* 11,830km. *Payload* 29,500kg including passengers, freight pallets, 58 patients or 118,200 litres of fuel. Crew 3.

Welsh Models 1/144 kit.

Boeing KC-46A in 1/144 by Welsh Models

The Boeing KC-46 is the US Air Force's replacement for its ageing KC-135 fleet. It's design is based on the Boeing 767 airliner and it is produced on the old 767 production line in Seattle. It's development and procurement has been controversial, dating back to about 2001 when the USAF began seeking replacements for some of its oldest KC-135s but problems with design, contract arrangements, and on and on, mean that the first KC-46 were not cleared for general operational use until 2022. The USAF plans to procure 197 of these aircraft by 2027 and 93 had been manufactured by the end of 2024.

Welsh Models is a small company that specializes in 1/144 aircraft kits. It has been doing so for decades and has now got its products to a very high level of acceptability. Depending on the size they will be either moulded resin kits or a combination of resin details and vacformed parts. The detail is not as refined as the latest injection moulded 1/144 kits but Welsh Models provide kits for aircraft that are unlikely to be of interest to the major kit making companies so this company's kits are something of a trade off between the latest modelling perfection and the ability to make models of less well known aircraft types.

I would not be surprised if a major kit manufacturer offers a kit of the KC-46 in 1/144 at some time in the future when the aircraft has been in operation around the world for a few years. In the meantime, this Welsh Models kit is the only option available and is more than adequate in this scale. I'm particularly interested in this aircraft because it is a variant of the venerable Boeing 767 airliner and I was interested to make this model to stand alongside the airliners I have made, bearing in mind that 767 have virtually disappeared from airline service while these KC-46s are just entering world wide service.

This kit comes with vacformed fuselage halves and everything else in resin. The detail is adequate and the resin parts are very nicely moulded. There are none of the modern conveniences such as locating pins for the various parts and the instruction sheet gives only minimal direction, assuming, I assume, that people who make these kits know what they are doing and do their reference research before starting - or, if they are like me, when they run u against a problem that they should already have been aware of.

The first stage is to release the fuselage halves from the plastic sheeting and then, using little bits of left over plastic sheet, make tabs so that the halves will go together well. Then there is lots of filling and sanding to fill and smooth out the joint. Wings, tail planes and stabalizer are all resin and pretty well formed, but figuring out how to attach them to the fuselage takes a lot of peering at photos in the hope of making sure that the models looks accurate. Then there is a lot more filling and sanding, etc.

In theory the paint scheme is simple, darkish grey. However, the instructions give no detailed specifications so, after a lot of head scratching and searching in the interwebs, I

settled on FS36320, Dark Ghost Grey. (I should have written this on a piece of paper because, after being away from this model for three weeks, I'd forgotten this detail and had to do all the research again when it came to fixing problems with the paint work.)

There are, however, all the metallic parts that need to be masked and painted separately. This is a challenge because the decals have to be attached to the model before the overall grey areas are clear and matt varnished. This means masking over the already attached decals so I used thinned Aquadhere to glue them more firmly and then covered them all in Maskol before doing the extensive masking.

I'm sure I've mentioned before how much I hate masking but there is as lot involved in this model. First was the masking for the white undercarriage details. I was not as careful as I should have been, resulting in white bleed-through in several places. This is when I had to relearn which shade of grey I'd used to paint the airframe. As a result of this drama I was much more careful in masking for the metallic leading edges and so on. It took almost two sessions to complete the masking to my now more exacting standards, about two minutes to paint the model and about ten minutes to unmask the model. There are a couple of places where my work was less than perfect and I'm going to have to live with that.

Overall, this is a model that I can live with. It's far from my best work, but I think I've been saying that for the past two or three decades. If a kit manufacturer decided to issue an injection moulded kit of this aircraft in a few years time I might be tempted by it, but by then I will probably have forgotten the problems with this kit and the problems I had in making it.

Bristol 138A

The Bristol 138A was designed and built in Britain in the mid 1930s specifically to set new world altitude records. It reached an altitude of almost 54,000 feet during a flight on 30 June 1937.

The Bristol 138 was a research aircraft designed specially to set a world altitude record during the period when rapid technological developments and national prestige combined to lead to many innovations in aircraft design.

The idea for an aircraft capable of climbing to 50,000 feet was first proposed in November 1933 and the aircraft was ordered in June 1934 after Italy had set a new attitude record in April that year. Two Bristol 138s were ordered and the 138A flew for the first tine on 11 May 1936. On 28 September it reached an altitude of 51,000 feet and on 30 June 1937 the aircraft achieved an attitude of 53,937 feet. Further tests continued but the second ordered aircraft was not completed.

This model represents the sole Bristol 138A in June 1937.

Data: Experimental aircraft *Engine* one Bristol Pegasus PE6S Radial piston engine of 370kW. *Wing span* 20.12m. *Length* 13.41m. *Gross weight* 2,409kg. *Maximum speed* 198km/h. *Crew* 1.

Frog 1/72 kit with *Rising Decals* decals..

Bristol 138A in 1/72 by Frog

Before its kits suddenly disappeared from view Frog was one of the leading kit manufacturers with a range to rival Airfix and American kit makers. To add a bit of variety to their offerings they introduced the 'Trail Blazers' series which included a few unusual aircraft for that time which included the Vickers Vimy that had crossed the Atlantic, Amy Johnson's DH-60, the 'Spirit of StLouis' and, among others, the Bristol 138. I hadn't heard of it back then and I don't know much more about it now.

The Bristol 138 was a one-off aircraft designed specifically to beat the world altitude record. Only two were ordered and the second one was never completed after the finished one set a new world altitude record of 53,937 ft (16,440 m) on 30 June 1937. It was then used for other tests and gradually drifted into the mists of time, where it remained until Frog remembered it.

By the standards of the 2020s this is a very rudimentary but when it was first published in 1964 it was a top shelf kit with nicely moulded raised surface detail, a separate pilot and seat and separate control surfaces. In those days there was not much in the way of new kits in my local newsagents so when this kit arrived I got it because it looked different to the usual Spitfires, Messerchmits and Mustangs. It didn't take long to make and some silver and black paint from the local hardware shop finished if off.

Some time in the past twenty years I came across a copy of the original boxing of this aircraft at a Swap and Sell for not much. I bought it, not for the contents of the box but for the nostalgia value of the box itself. Frog invented the idea of the kit box that opened up so the young modeller could use it as a tray in which to make the model without losing any of the parts, an interesting innovation that Frog used for a few years. The box was a bit worn but not too bad so I was happy to have it. I probably didn't even look at what was inside the box. Why would I, the parts would be primitive and the decal sheet yellowed with age?

Then, about thirteen years ago, Rising Decals published a new decal sheet for this aircraft and that stirred some more interest so I bought it. Coming across the sheet again only recently, and reading about the aircraft on the interweb, I thought I might see what I could make with this primitive kit. On closer inspection I found that a few parts were missing but nothing that couldn't be replaced. Most notable was one of the horizontal stabalizer halves which I replaced with a bit of plasticard sanded to shape and one of the undercarriage legs that I replaced with some airfoil strut from the spares box. I also replaced the pilot's seat from the spares box. I gave some thought to replacing the rather puny looking engine but decided to be authentic to the original kit and so used what was in the box.

There's nothing that needs to be said about the construction process, it was simple and

straight forward. Painting was also relatively simple with Tamiya's rattle can Mica Silver and then some brighter silver around the nose in an attempt to simulate the fabric covering of the fuselage and wings and the metal around the cowling. This did not work so well and the difference between the two shades was not as obvious as I would have liked. The black wing upper surfaces and fuselage decking came from a Tamiya semi-gloss black and then it was time for the decals.

For old times sake I used the kit decals for the under wings - where they look very yellow and impervious to setting solution - and the new decals for the rest of the aircraft. The decal sheet includes several small stencils that are not on the original decal sheet but I applied them to add a little visual interest to the large areas of black and silver. (Looking again at the reference photos I found I can't see them on the aircraft either, but I reckon that Rising Decals must have better information than I so I left them on.)

However, the new decals were very glossy against the silver and semi-gloss black so something had to be done about that. After testing it on another model, I decided to give the entire model a coat of Tamiya semi-gloss varnish to meld everything together somewhat, and also masked the metal cowling panels in the hope that they would stand out a bit more. The end result looks okay but the metal panels still don't stand out as well as I would have liked.

And now, back to the 21st Century. Happily I now have the model, and I still have the box too.

CAC CA-6

The CAC CA-6 was a light training aircraft designed and built in Australia in the early years of World War 2. They were used for initial pilot training and later to train wireless operators. Some were later flown in civil service.

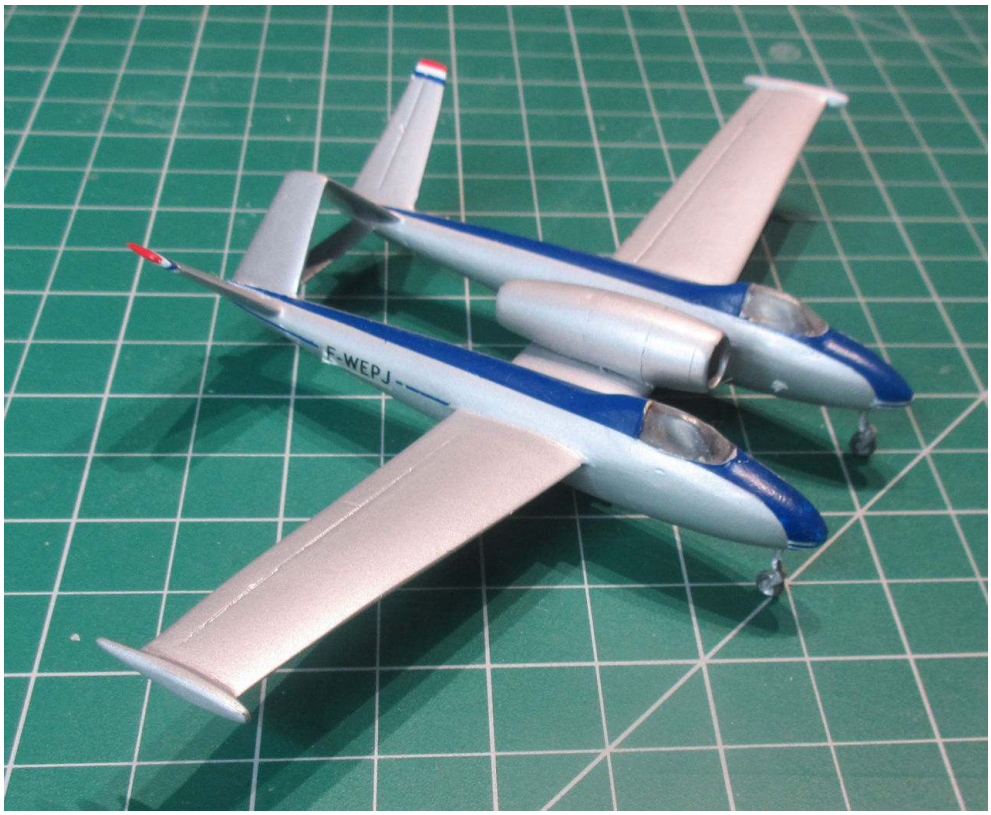
The Commonwealth Aircraft Corporation CA-6 Wackett Trainer was the first aircraft designed by that company. It was intended as an initial training aircraft for the RAAF. Design began in October 1938 but the first prototype did not fly until September 1939.

The CA-6 began entering service in March 1941 and 200 were manufactured. They were largely replaced as initial training aircraft by the cheaper and simpler deHavilland DH-82 Tiger Moth but found other uses including training wireless operators. About a third of these aircraft were written off during training accidents during the war but several dozen were later sold to civil users.

This model represents A3-15 serving with No 3 Elementary Flying Training School, RAAF, at Essendon Airport in 1941..

Data: training aircraft. *Engine* one Warner Scarab radial piston engine of 130kW. *Wing span* 11.28m. *Length* 7.92m. *Gross weight* 1,175kg. *Maximum speed* 185km/h. *Range* 684km. *Crew* 2.

CMR 1/72 kit..



Castel-Mauboussin CM.88R Gemeaux V

The Castel-Mauboussin CM.88R Gemeaux was a specially build test bed for turbojet engines. It combined the fuselages of two CM.8 gliders with a centre section on which several different jet engines were mounted and tested.

After World War 2 Castel-Mauboussin designed several gliders including the CM.8 which first flew in June 1949.

The CM.88R was designed to be a flying testbed for a range of jet engines being developed by Turbomeca. It combined two CM.8 fuselages and wing panels joined by a central section and a strut between the tails. Two were built, each being flown with several types of turbojets.

The first version, Gemeaux I, flew in March 1951 with two 100kg thrust jets, one mounted on each fuselage. Four more versions were flown, each with an increasingly large engine mounted n the centre section, culminating with the Geneaux V in 1952.

This model represents Gemeaux V, F-WEPJ, which first flew with the Aspin II engine fitted on 21 June 1952.

Data: *engine* one Turbomeca Aspin II engine of 360kg thrust. *Wing span* 10.770m. *Length* 6.65m. *Loaded weight 1094kg, Maximum speed 249km/h*.

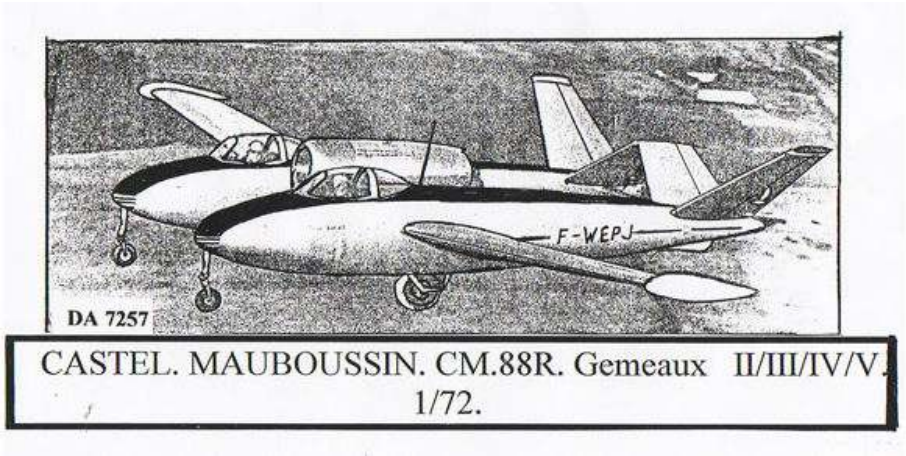
Dujin 1/72 kit.

Castel Mauboussin CM.88R/V in 1/72 by Dujin

Anybody who has heard of this aircraft before now raise your hand.

I thought so. I hadn't heard of it either until I started making this model and tried to find out about it on the internet. Even on the internet there's not much.

After World War II Castel-Mouboussin designed several gliders including the CM.8 which first flew in June 1949. I've already made a model of this aircraft from a Dujin kit so I knew a little about the CM.8 series but nothing about this version.



The CM.88R was designed to be a flying testbed for a range of jet engines being developed by Turbomeca. It combined two CM.8 fuselages and wing panels joined by a central section and a strut between the tails. Two were built, each being flown with several types of turbojets.

The first version, Gemeaux I, flew in March 1951 with two 100kg thrust jets, one mounted on each fuselage. Four more versions were flown, each with an increasingly large engine mounted on the centre section, culminating with the Geneaux V in 1952. This model represents Gemeaux V, F-WEPJ, which first flew with the Aspin II engine fitted on 21 June 1952.

It will be no surprise to you if I tell you that I like French aircraft so when I come across a kit of one I buy it. Many kits of obscure French aircraft were made by Jean Pierre Dujin, in his shed in regional France and in resin. These are not easy kits to find these days and have become collectors items since Dujin died. After that some of his followers obtained his moulds so they were reissued with better instructions and decal sheets at not inconsiderable prices, and I have a few of them too.

Having collected many of these kits over the years I take one out and start on it when I feel like a challenge. They are not easy to make and require a lot of preparation before I can even start on the assembly phase. For this reason I sometimes take a few Dujin kits with me when I'm travelling to do that preparation work in some motel room in the evening. This takes a lot of time and keeps me occupied but does not involve getting any work further than the early construction phase so the model won't get damaged while in transit.

I started work on this model in a motel room in Las Angeles early last year but stopped when the main parts were assembled, partly because it would become too fragile to travel with it if I went any further and partly because I could find out so little about the aircraft that I was not sure how to proceed.

A year later I had another look on the internet and found more information about this aircraft so I felt able to continue. Part of the problem was how the completed aircraft looked,

what colour was it and what colour were the markings. For example, one image, which looked like it might be a cigarette card, depicted the aircraft painted red but most photos were black and white, which was no help at all. Finally, only recently, I found another photo which suggested that the painted panels along the top of the fuselages were blue rather than the red I was thinking about using.

The kit comes with four jet engines to be mounted on the central wing section so that it would be possible to make the four versions of the Gemeaux, but I chose the largest jet engine option because the others are so small that it is not obvious what they are. The kit parts are glued together with a combination of superglue and five-minute epoxy, depending on how strong I needed to joint to be and whether I needed time to make sure the part was properly aligned before the glue set.

The metallic finish is good old Tamiya AS-12 Bare-Metal Silver and the blue is also from a Tamiya rattle can. The registrations came out of my computer. It looks pretty good and it looks unique, which is probably because it is. There were only two of the original aircraft and I haven't seen a model of this aircraft on any website or competition/display table. Which is a pity because I think it looks rather nice.

Dassault Falcon 50

The Dassault Falcon 50 is a business jet with intercontinental range. They were introduced to service in the 1970s and were popular with over three hundred being manufactured. Many remain in service today.

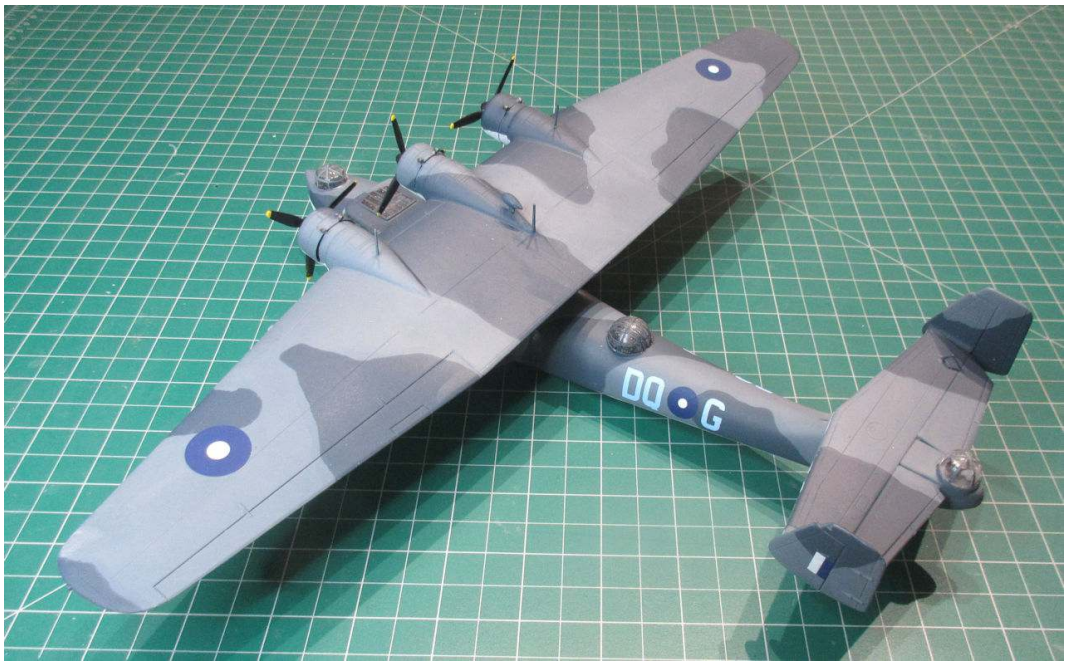
The Dassault Falcon 50 is a development of the popular Dassault 20 business jet.which was designed and introduced into service in the mid 1960s. The Falcon 50 was designed to complete on intercontinental flights with a lengthened fuselage to increase its passenger capacity, a third engine and new wings. The prototype first flew on 7 November 1976 and 342 were built between 1976 and 2008.

When it was introduced to service it was the first private jet on the market with intercontential range and the ability to carry eight passengers over three thousand miles at mach .80.

This model represents the Falcon 50 oflown by Stockham Construction Inc in 2023.

Data: business jet. *Engines* three Honeywell TFE 731-40 turbofan engines of 16.46kN thrust each. *Wing span* 18.82m. *Length* 18.52m. *Maximum take-off weight* 39,701kg. *Maximum cruising speed* 759km/h. *Range* 5,695km. *Typical payload* 9 passengers. *Crew* 2.

Amodel 1/72 kit.



Dornier Do24K

The Dornier Do24 was a flying boat designed in Germany and first used by the Netherlands Naval Aviation Service in the Netherlands East Indies (now Indonesia). Six were later used by the RAAF as transport aircraft.

The Dornier Do24 was designed as a long range flying boat for the Luftwaffe but lost in a competition against the Blohn & Voss Bv138. However, it was then offered to the Royal Netherlands Navy for service with the Naval Aviation Service in the Netherlands East Indies and 37 had been delivered before the German occupation of the Netherlands in June 1940. Subsequently another 242 were used by the Luftwaffe.

Of the 37 Dutch Do24s six came to Australia after the Japanese invasion of South-East Asia and were pressed into service with the RAAF as transport aircraft. They were withdrawn from operations in late 1944 due to poor serviceability.

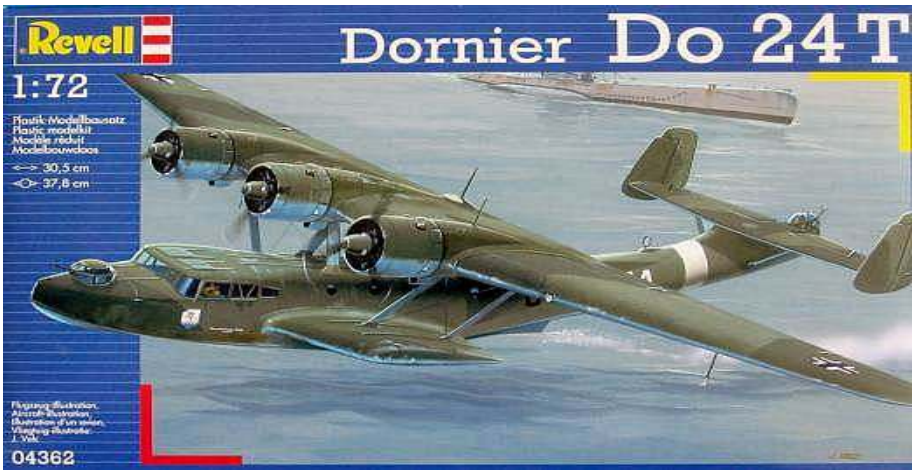
This kit represents Dornier Do24K, A49-1, in service with 41 Squadron, RAAF, in November 1943.

Data: transport flying boat. *Engines* three Wright R1820 radial engines of 750kW each. *Length* 22.05m. *Wingspan* 27m. *Maximum speed* 330km/h. *Range* 2,900km. *Crew* 4 to 6.

Revell 1:72 kit.with *DK Decals* decals.

Dornier Do24K in 1/72 by Itlaeri, Red Roo Models and DK Decals

The Dutch government acquired 32 Dornier Do24K flying boats for service in the Netherlands East Indies. These Do24Ks differed from others of their type by being fitted with Wright Whirlwind engines rather than the usual Junkers Jumo engines because the Dutch already used Whirlwinds on their NEI bomber fleet. In February 1942 six of the Dorniers arrived in Australia and were taken over by the RAAF. They were used as transport aircraft but were withdrawn from service at the end of 1944, mainly due to the shortage of spare parts.



The Italerie kit of the Do24T is a pretty decent kit, given that it was first published in 1978. Apart from a rudimentary cockpit and guns for the turrets there is no interior detail to speak of but, then again, for such a large aircraft there are few openings to see the interior through anyhow. Revell issued this kit in 2005 with no alterations. This is the version I made and it is quite enjoyable to put together. The conversion parts come originally from Blackbird Models and are reboxes by Red Roo Models with a more extensive instruction sheet. In themselves, the conversion parets are very nice, the only problem comes in using them on the Italerie kit. While putting this kit together I discovered that I had both the Blackbird Models conversion parts and the Red Roo Models reboxed conversion parts, so if anyone is interested ....

The rear of the RAAF aircraft is slightly different in shape from the Do24T to the Do24K and the replacement part is fairly good except that the instructions for attaching it are vague and the resin is thin so that the kit and conversion parts don't match very well. Some reinforcement and a lot of filling and sanding is required before this part of the conversion is completed.

The conversion set comes with three transparent resin parts which are supposed to replace the kit parts. But they look awful and don't fit. The kit transparancies might not be entirely accurate for a Do24K but at least they look like turrets and you can see through them. So I stuck with the kit turrets and, when I finally stumbled across the Geoff Goodall website on Australian Dorniers, I see that the turrets on RAAF Dorniers look more like those supplies by Italeri than Red Roo. (I did look hard for picture os the Dutch Dorniers but if you don't put in the right serch words you don't get the right results.) Since these Dorniers were used as freighters I didn't use the kit suppied machine guns.

I wish I had come across the Goodall website when it came time to replace the kit engines with the conversion ones becuase the kit instructions give no assistance in saying how this should be done. In the end I decided that I should cut off the existing engine nacels about three mm in front of the wing leading edges where there was an engraved panel line. In retrospect, I should have made the cut right at the leading edge but the difference is not too obvious. The engine, cowling and mounting parts are very nicely moulded but no suggestion is given as to how they should be

attached to each other, or to the wings. Looking at the website photos I founf later it seems that my guesses were pretty close, though I did forget the small air intakes on the tops of the nacels.

There were a couple of bumps on the fuselage and wing that had to be removed but that was basically it. Painting was not too challenging, using the scheme recommended by the decal set. Trying to follow that set's colour instructions drove me crosseyed in trying to follow them and I finally figured out the problem was that the colours were the wrong way aroub from one side of the fuselage drawing to the other.

Apart from these problems this was not a difficult model to make. Dornier made some nice looking flying boats and it is good to have a model of one in RAAF colours and markings.

Embraer 505 Phenom 300

The Embraer 505 Phenom 300 is a very popular light business jet designed in Brazil and now manufactured in the United States. Over 800 had been sold by the end of 2024 and upgraded versions are planned for future sale.

The Embraer 505 Phenom 300 is a larger version of the earlier Phenom 100 light business jet. Development began in 2004 with more powerful engines, spoiler equipped swept wings and detachable winglets. The prototype first flew on 29 April 2008 and it was granted type certification in December 2009.

By 2013 the Phenom 300 was the most delivered business jet and in 2016 production was moved to a plant in the United States which could deliver more aircraft. The 500th aircraft was delivered in March 2019, 700 had been delivered by February 2023 when it was in used in over 30 countries.

This model represents CS-PHN in service with NetJets Europe in January 2025.

Data: light business aircraft. *Engines* two Pratt & Whitney Canada PW535E1 turbofan engines of 15.47kN thrust each. *Wing span* 15.91m. *Length* 15.64m. *Maximum take-off weight* 18,551kg. *Maximum speed* 859km/h. *Range* 3,723km. *Typical payload* 6-8 passengers. *Crew* 2.

Welsh Models 1/144 kit.

Embraer Legacy 650

The Embraer Legacy 650 is a large business jet designed and manufactured in Brazil. It is similar in some ways to the ERJ-135 airliner but with enhanced range and other feathres, making it a popular aircraft in the bizjet market.

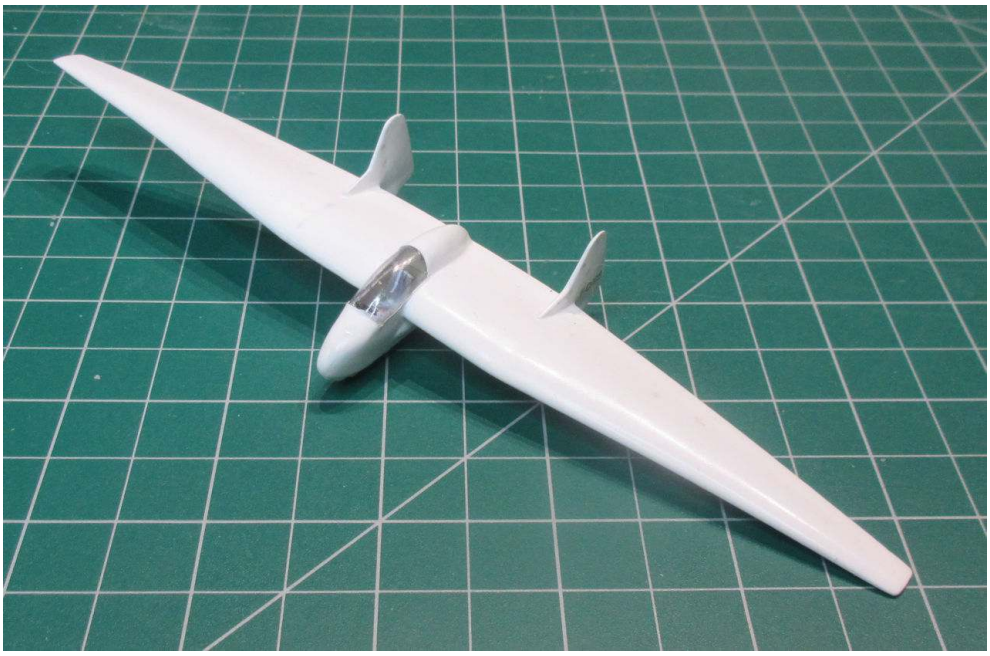
The Embraer Legacy 600 is a lage business jet that was launched in 2000. It is based on ERJ-135 airliner and has enhanced range and extensive drag reduction including winglets. The first one flew in June 2000 and they entered service in February 2002.

The Legacy 650 was announced in 2009. It is a longer range version of the Legacy 600 which is also 15 per cent longer. .Embraer announced that it was stopping sales of the Legacy 650 in August 2020 in favour of the more advanced Legacy 650E A total of 289 Legacies had been delivered by the end of 2020.

This model represents N376ND of Aircraft Solutions Inc in May 2024.

Data: business jet. *Engines* two Rolls Royce AE3077A2 turbofan engines of 40.1kN thrust each. *Wing span* 21.17m. *Length* 26.33m. *Maximum take-off weight* 53,572kg. *Maximum speed* 850km/h. *Range* 7200km. *Typical payload* up to 14 passengers. *Flight deck crew* 2.

Welsh Models 1/144 kit.



Fauvel AV.361

The Fauvel AV.361 was a glider designed and built in France after World War 2. It's unusual flying-wing design made it light, simple and easy to transport. Many were home built from plans or assembled from kits..

Charles Fauvel became interested in gliding before World War 2 with the unusual emphasis on flying wings. After the war his interest continued and resulted in the AV-36 prototype which made its first flight on 31 December 1951.

The virtually flying wing design (AV standing for Aile Volante - Flying Wing) created a lighter and simpler glider but the idea was not widely accepted. The AV-36 was also easy to transport by folding in the fins and detaching the nose so it could be towed as a trailer on French roads.

The improved AV-361 version first flew in 1960. It had a slightly longer wingspan and more rounded fuselage, Hundreds of these gliders were made, many from kits or off plans.

This model represents F-CRRB when it was on display at the Musee de l'Air et Espace at Le Bourget in 2005.

Data: *Wing span* 12.75m. *Length* 3.2m. *Empty weight 125kg*, *Gross weight* 215kg. *Never exceed speed* 220km/h. *Crew* 1.

Dujin 1/72 kit.

General Atomics MQ-1C

The General Atomics Aeronautical Systems MQ-1C Grey Eagle is an unmanned aerial vehicle operated by the United States Army. They were first deployed in 2008 and remain in active service.

The MQ-1C was developed in response to a US Army requirement for an extended-range multi-purpose UAV issued in 2002. It was a development of the earlier General Atomics MQ-1 Predator with a more powerful engine, lengthened wings and an enlarged fuselage. They were first introduced into service around 2004 and 204 were manufactured.

The US Army's 1st Infantry Division'c combat aviation brigade deployed to Iraw in June 2010. By June 2012 the MQ-1C had complted 10,000 successful automatic launches and recovteries. By July 2012 the aircraft had accumulated over 35,000 flight hours since it was first deployed in 2008.

This model represents a MQ-1C in service with the US Army during the 2010s.

Data: *Engine* one Thielert Centurion 1.7 heavy-fuel engine of 123kW. *Wing span* 17m. *Length* 8.53m. *Maximum take-off weight* 1,633kg. *Maximum speed* 309km/h. *Endurance* 25 hours. Armament four AGM-114 Hellfire or eight AIM 92 Stinger missiles.

Clear Prop 1/72 kit.

Gloster Gladiator Mk.II

The Gloster Gladiator was the final biplane fighter to enter serve with the Royal Air Force. It entered service in 1937 and was still flying late during the war, in secondary roles. It also flew with a number of other air forces.

The Gloster Gladiator was based on the earlier Gloster Gauntlet fighter. The prototype first flew in November 1934, the RAF ordered it in June 1935 with the first production fighters began entering service in February and March 1937. The RAF took delivery of 231 Gladiators Is and, although it was rearming with Hurricanes and Spitfires, ordered another 252 slightly improved Gladiator IIs as a safeguard against problems with the more modern aircraft. Gladiators were used in front line service in several theatres early in the war and continued to serve in a number of secondary roles until 1944.

This model represent a Gladiator Mk.II flown by Flight Lieutenant Pat Pattle of 80 Squadron, RAF, in around January 1941.

Data: *Engine* one Bristol Mercury VIIIA radial piston engine of 62615kW. *Wing span* 9.83m. *Length* 8.36m. *Maximum take-off weight* 2206kg. *Maximum speed* 414km/h. Armament four 7.7mm machine guns *Crew* one.

*Heller*1/72 kit with *Microscale* decals.

Grumman J4F

The Grumman J4F was a military version of the G-44 light amphibious utility aircraft made in the United States during the 1940s. They were very useful for carrying passengers and freight so many remained in service long after the war.

The Grumman G-44 was originally designed for the civil market and first flew in 1940. With the advent of war the first aircraf in production were for the US Navy which designated it as the J4F. During the was it served with the Navy, US Coast Guard , the US Army and the Royal Navy where it was called the Gosling.

After the war Grumman redesigned the aircraft to make it more suitable for civil use with improved water handling and six seats. A total of 317 of these aircraft were nanufactured, 41 of them the post war version and 30 under licence by SCAN in France.

This model represents a J4F in service with the US Navy in 1943.

Data: Light amphibious utility aircraft *Engines* Two Ranger L-44 air cooled inverted six cylder engine of 150kW each. *Wing span* 12.19m. *Length* 9.47m. *Gross weight* 2,053 kg. *Maximum speed* 246km/h. *Range* 1,480km. *Accommodation* for 6 including the pilot.

Kovozavody Prostejov 1/72 kit.

Hawker P.1127

The Hawker P.1127 was a vertical take-off and landing experimental aircraft develeoped in Britain in the 1950s and tested in the early 1960s. It was then developed into the range of Harrier and AV-8 strike fighters.

During the 1950s military planners became concerned about the vulnerability of runways, the destruction of which could keep air forces grounded. One solution to this problem was to make aircraft that didn't need runways. One result was the Bristol Siddeley Pegasus engine which had four nozzles that could swivel to direct its thrust to lift an aircraft off the ground vertically and then rotate to give power to vertical flight.

Hawker built the P.1127 test aircraft aroubd this engine. It made its first flight on 19 November 1960. It was subsequently developed to become the Harrier strike fighter.

This model represents the P.1127 prototype in 1961. It is now on display in The Science Museum, Kensington.

Data: experimental aircraft. *Engine* one Bristol Siddeley Pegasus 5 vectored thrust turbofan engine of 67kN thrust. *Wing span* 6.99m). *Length* 12.95m. *Maximum take-off weight* 7,711kg. *Maximum speed* 1143k/h. *Crew* 1.

Airfix 1/72 kit.

McDonnell Douglas AV-8A

The McDonnell Douglas AV-8A was a licence built version of the British Hawker Siddeley Harrier GR.1 ground attack fighter. It served with the US Marine Corps between 1971 and 1987,

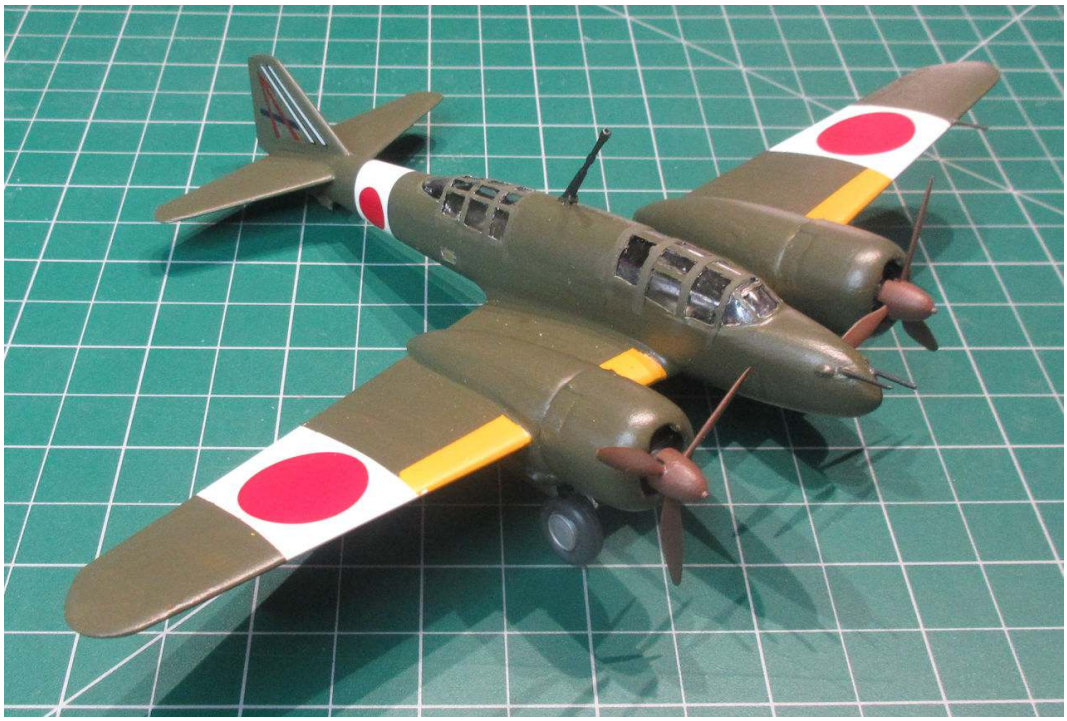
Development of the Hawker Siddeley Harrier began in 1957 and the first one flew on 28 December 1967. They began entering service with the Royal Air Force in 1969.

The United States Marine Corps became interested in using the Harrier to replace other aircraft in its attack squadrons. A slightly modified version, suitable for seaborn operations, was evolved under the designation AV-8A and 102 were ordered. .The Marine Corps used them from ships and ground bases close to the front for close air support of ground forces. They were replaced in service by the improved AV-AB.

This model represents an AV-8A flying with VMA-542, US Marine Corps, in 1976.

Data: VTOL fighter. *Engine* one Rolls Royce Pegasus 101 turbofan engine of 96kN thrust. *Wing span* 7.75m. *Length* 14.27m. *Maximum take off weight* 11,431kg. *Maximum speed* 1176km/h. *Range* 670km. *Armament* two 30mm cannon and up to 2.268kg of external weapons. *Crew* one.

Airfix 1/72 kit with Midcoscale decals.



Mitsubishi Ki-46-III KAI

The Mitsubishi Ki-46-III KAI was a modification of the successful Ki-46 reconnaissance aircraft. It was armed to intercept the Unites States B-29 bombers then attacking Japan but was not very successful in that role.

The Ki-46-III KAI was based on the highly successful reconnaissance aircraft which was modified to intercept B-28 bombers. Modifications included redesign of the nose to make space for two 20mm cannon and replacing the top centre fuselage fuel tank with an obliquely mounted forward firing 37mm cannon. The first one was completed in October 1944 and aircraft of this type were soon issued to various units operating in defence of Japan. However results were disappointing as the aircraft did not have the climbing speed required for an interceptor and because of a change in B-29 operational tactics.

This model represents an aircraft of the 17th Dokuritu Dai Shijugo Chutai in, Japan in early 1945.

Data: Interceptor *Engine* two Mitsubishi Hai-112-II radial engines of 787kW each. *Wing span* 14.7m. *Length* 11.49m. *Gross weight* 6,228kg. *Maximum speed* 630km/h. *Range* 2000km. *Armament* one 37mm and two 20mm cannon. *Crew* 2.

LS 1/72 kit.

Morane Saulnier 474

The Morane Salunier 474 Vanneau (Plover) was a naval version of the Morane Saulnier range of early post was training aircraft. They remained in service with the French Air Force and Navy into the late 1960s.

The Morane Saulnier MS 474 Vanneau IVwas a naval version of the MS 472 training aircraft. Design work began in Vichy France and the prototype, the MS 470, made its maiden flight on 22 December 1944, not long after liberation and before the defeat of Germany in 1945. Production of the MS472 began in 1946 and its success interested the aviation branch of the French Navy, the Aeronavale. Consequently a single MS 472 was given carrier equipment, leading to the MS 474, with deliveries beginning in December 1947. A total of 70 MS474s were delivered to the French Navy and a total of 506 of all versions of the Vanneau were produced.

This model represents a Morane Saulnier 474 flying with Aeronavale Escadrille 54S in about 1952.

Data: Training aircraft**.** *Engine* one Gnome-Rhone 14M radial piston engine of 426kW *Wing span* 10.65m. *Length* 9.05m. *Gross weight* 3,125kg. *Maximum speed* 445km/h. *Range* 1500km. *Crew* 2.

FCS Dujin 1/72 kit.

Nord 701

The Nord 701 Martinet was a German designed light transport and training aircraft built in France during World War 2. After the war they continued to be built in France where they remained in service until 1963.

After the German occupation of France in 1941 the French manufacturer Nord was ordered to construct Siebel Si204 light transport aircraft for use by the Luftwaffe, After liberation the French government decided to continue production and eventually 350 were produced. There were two versions, the 701 with the glazed nose that was used as a radio trainer and the 702 with the conventional nose that could carry eight passengers.

In France this aircraft was used by the air force and navy, and by Air France for a short period. They were also used in Poland and Sweden for aerial photography, The final one was retired from service in 1963.

This model represents the first produced NC701 in 1946..

Data: light training aircraft *Engine* Two Renault 12S-00 twelve cylinder air cooled engines of 440kW each. *Wing span* 21.83m. *Length* 12.81m. *Gross weight 5,600*kg. *Cruising speed* 325km/h. *Range* 810km. *Accommodation* 5 students. *Crew* 2.

R V Aircraft 1/72 kit.

Northrop Delta 1D

The Northrop Delta was a single engined transport designed and built in North America. One Delta came to Australia in 1939 and was flown by the Department of Civil Aviation and then the RAAF.

.The Northrop Delta was designed as a single engined light airliner capable of carrying eight passengers. The first one made its first flight in May 1933 but a change in US Government regulations limited its use as an airliner so Northrop only built 12. A further 20 were built by Vickers in Canada for use by the Royal Canadian Air Force as survey aircraft.

One Delta flew for several years in the US before it was used on an expedition to Antarctica. After that it was bought by the Australian government to be used by the Department of Civil Aviation to test radio navigation aids. It then served with the RAAF until it was lost in an accident in 1943.

This model represents this aircraft in service with 35 Squadron, RAAF, in early 1943.

Data: Transport aircraft. *Engine* one Wright Whirlwind SR-1820-F2 nine cylinder radial engine of 548kW. *Wing span* 14.55m. *Length* 10.08m. *Gross weight* 3,334kg. *Maximum speed* 352km/h. *Range* 2,655km.. *Capacity* 8 passengers. *Crew* 1.

Special Hobby 1/72 kit.

Northrop F-89D

The Northrop F-89 'Scorpion' was an all-weather interceptor designed and built for the US Air Force. It's role was to intercept and destroy Soviet bombers and the main version, the F-89D, was armed with small rockets to do this.

The Northrop F-89 was one of the first jet powered fighters to enter service with the US Air Force. Initial planning began in 1945 to create an all-weather interceptor and went through a series of redesigns until the prototype first flew on 19 August 1948. They began entering service in 1950..

A total of 1,052 F-89s were built. The earliest versions were armed with six 20mm cannon but with the F-89D this was replaced with an armament of 104 small unguided rockets. They remained in service until 1969 . This model represents a F-89D of the 74th Fighter Interceptor Squadron, US Air Force, in 1956

Data: Interceptor. *Engine* two Allison J35-A-35 afterburning turbojet engines of 24.2kN thrust each dry and 32kN with afterburner. *Wing span* 18.20m. *Length* 16,39m. *Maximum speed* 1038km/h. *Maximum take off weight* 19,160kg. *Range* 2,198km. *Armament*, 104 70mm 'Mighty Mouse' aerial rockets. *Crew* 2..

Hobbycraft 1.72 kit.

Pilatus P-2-05

The Pilatus P-2 was the first aircraft designed and built by the Pilatus company in Switzerland. Fifty-five were built, serving initially with the Swiss Air Force and then proving popular with civil owners.

In the early years of World War 2 Pilatus was unsuccessful in obtaining permission to build German or Italian trainers under licence. As a result the company decided to design and build its own aircraft and work began in 1943.

The prototype first flew on 27 April 1945 and the P-2 began entering service with the Swiss Air Force in 1946. Two versions were produced, the unarmed P-2-05 and the P-2-06 with a single machine gun for training..

The Swiss Air Force operated the P-2 until 1981. Subsequently they have been popular with private owners and during 2008 at least 23 were being flown in various European countries and the US, sometimes in Luftwaffe colours.

This model represent an ex-Swiss Air Force aircraft registered as D-ETAB at Weeze Airport in May 2013.

Data: Training aircraft. *Engine* one Argus As 410A-12 inverted air cooled piston engine of 280kW. *Wing span* 11m. *Length* 9.07m. *Maximum take-off weight* 1,970kg. *Maximum speed* 340km/h. *Range* 865km. *Crew* 2.

FCS Dujin 1/72 kit.

Pilatus P.2 in 1/72 by FCS Dujin

So you've never heard of the Pilatus P.2? Neither had I until I decided to make this model. It is a trainer developed by Pilatus in Switzerland between 1942 and 1946 which remained in service until the 1980s and then ended up with lots of private owners. We've alll seev seen one but didn't know it. Remember the scene in *Indiana Jones and the Last Crusade* where Indy and his dad are shot up by a German aeroplane? That's a Pilatus P.2.

Having completed a model of the Pilatus PC-9 recently I thought I'd have as look at what earlier Pilatus trainers looked like. The kit was originally offered by M Dujin in its simple plastic bag but, after he died, the folks at FCS acquired some of his moulds and reissued them in kits including an etch fret, decals and instructions and I bought as many of them as I could. The reissues are better because of the decal sheet and instructions but, generally speaking, the mouldings are not as good as M Dujin's originals. Either way, these kits are not the kind of thing you're likely to see at competitions because people still like their BF109s, etc, etc, etc and ad nauseam.

There were two versions of the P.2 so you get the option of two noses and propellers so you can make either. The etch fret gives a part to make the rollover pylon visible in the cockpit, which saves having to make one, as well as nice little instrument panels. If your Francaise is good the instructions will tell you the order in which to stick the pieces together but not where they go. This is definitely not a kit for people who don't have experience in making old style resin kits who also lack any reference material.

The decal sheet is a good example of this. It has what appears to be markings for four or five different aircraft but there are no instructions or drawings telling what the versions are or where the markings should be applied for any of the variants. There are side view drawings for two versions of the P.2 which look as though they come from Dujin's original header sheet, but that's all. The rest has to be found from doing a deep dive on the interwebs.

The kit parts themselves are adequate. I'd like to have a copy of Dujin's original kit to see how they compare to the new version because I suspect that the older kits would appear more detailed. Anyhow, the parts fit together tolerably well with some significant encouragement in a couple of cases including the fuselage halves. I used Ammo's Black and

slow drying super glue because it gives a little time to make sure that the parts are lined up properly before setting and because the black glue also acts as a filler. I used wire pins when attaching the wings and tail planes to the fuselage as protection because of the problems superglue has with shear forces and also to help align them properly.

The most annoying problem was the bubbles in the resin wings. The best solution to these is to drill them out fully and then fill the holes, where I again used the black super glue. I did this two or three times and discovered more every time I sanded back the parts. After all that I see that I still missed one on the leading edge of the starboard wing.

The cockpit presents problems because there is no indication about where the seats, instrument panels and other bits and pieces should be placed. In retrospect the front seat in my model should be about three millimeters back from where it is to be more accurate. The kit canopy is another problem. It's vacformed, which would put some people right off, but I'm used to them by now. Even so, this one was a bugger to liberate from the celluloid and when I finally got it out, found that it wasn't right for this model. It is much longer and taller than required for this kit so it needed a lot of trimming to make it fit. I can't imagine that M Dujin would have made this mistake so perhaps the new people had to improvise.

After as lot of scrounging I finally found on the interweb photos of one of the aircraft that was replicated on the decal sheet. It is highly polished but my experiment in trying to replicate that finish using Tamiya TS-83 without a gloss black base were not as successful as I would have liked. Also, I used the lacquer straight out of the rattle can and should have decanted it and added a little thinner to make the finish better and shinier. Such is life and a lesson for next time.

The other problem was the kit supplied undercarriage. The legs were too fragile and the wheels were not the same thickness, so replacement parts had to be found in the spares box. There is a pitot tube on the etch fret but I replaced it with a thin sewing needle cut to length.

This is the kind of kit that would make your modern day kit reviewers shake their heads in dismay and/or disgust as being unmakeable and complete rubbish. It's not that bad but it is challenging. More importantly, it is the only available kit of this aircraft in 1/72 though I see, on Scalemates, that there is a much more recent kit of this aircraft in 1/48 which is presumably better. So if you want to replicate that scene from *Indiana Jones and the Last Crusade* that's probably the better and easier way to do it.

Pilatus PC-9/A

The Pilatus PC9 is a Swiss designed turboprop training aircraft. It began entering service in the late 1980s and a version of it remains in production. It was operated by the Royal Australian Air Force between 1988 and 2019..

The Pilatus PC-9 was an improved version of the earlier PC-7 training aircraft that had been developed during the 1970s. Work on the PC-9 began in 1982 and the prototype first flew on 7 May 1984. When production ended by 2000 265 had been manufactured. A version built under licence in the United States by Beechcraft, the T-6 Texan II. remains in production with over 900 having been made.

The Royal Australian Air Force took delivery of 67 PC-9/As, starting in 1987. The first two were built by Pilatus and the remained assembled from kits or built under licence by Hawker deHavilland. They began training in 1989 and were retired from service in .2019.

This model represent A23-002 flying with No 2 Flying Training School, RAAF Pearce, in 1988.

Data: Training aricraft. *Engine* one Pratt & Whitney Canada PT6A-62 turboprop engine of 857kW. *Wing span* 10.13m. *Length* 10.14m. *Maximum take-off weight* 3,200kg. *Maximum speed* 593km/h. *Range* 1,537km. *Crew* 2.

Kovozavody Prostejov 1/72 kit.

Pilatus PC-9 in 1/72 by Kovozavody Prostejov

The PC-9 is another of those models one has to make it one wants to have lots of RAAF A- series models in one's collection. Until recently the only kit available was the OzMods limited run one which was not very attractive to look upon and so not something I felt inclined to make. More recently Kovozavody Prostejov have released several kits of the PC-9 which is, as I read elsewhere, basically the same kit parts with different decal sheets. One of them is for three RAAF aircraft. Having been put off by the OZMods kit I thought I'd have a go at the Kovozavody Prostejov kit but, having completed it, I wonder if the earlier kit might not be the better one, at least for making the RAAF PC-9.

I suspect that the Kovozavody Prostejov kit is not the most accurate of the two but then, after looking at quite a few pictures of RAAF PC-9s, it seems evident that the airframes went through quite a few modifications during their operational lives, and not all the same modification at the same time, so it would probably be very difficult to say what any of the RAAF's PC-9s looked like at any particular point in time. The other thing that turned me in favour of making the Kovozavody Prostejov kit was the decal sheet which looked very nice and included markings for the Roulettes, a tactical grey version and a standard trainer, while the OzMods has the Roulettes and the one flown by the Chief of the Air Staff, but not a trainer scheme.

This Kovozavody Prostejov kit gives the strong impression of having been rushed to market with not a lot of quality control. The instruction sheet is very poor and so poorly printed that I had a lot of trouble trying to make sense of the directions. This led to me being completely confused about the wing assembly process which seemed unduly complex. This might have been due to the kit including two sets of wing roots but not indicating clearly what the options were and how they should be used. This led to me spending a couple of evenings sanding and filling them to an acceptable shape. The flash was so intense in places, and the instructions so vague, that it took me a couple of hours to work out what the seats should look like by looking at photos, and then making the plastic parts look a bit like I saw was in the photos.

Unsurprisingly, installing the cockpit was largely guesswork since there were no

positive location points in the fuselage halves and the instruction were useless on this point. I'm pretty sure I got it right but was not shocked when the rear ejector seat would have been too tall when it came time to fit the canopy. Radical surgery to the top and bottom of that seat was the only solution.

There's more that I could go on with about more annoying little problems with this kit. Perhaps the best summary is that this is not a kit for people who get easily frustrated and are lacking in the oceans of patience. However, I don't know that the OzMods kit would be any better in this department and I can see a few frustrations from just looking at that kit parts without even test fitting the parts.

On the plus side the decal sheet is very nice and I had no trouble in applying the markings for a trainer version. It seems as though there were two or three teams working on this kit and they weren't talking to each other, with the result that this is not an easy or pleasant kit to make. On the other hand, the good decal sheet (and instructions on the back of the box) and the orange and white colour scheme, makes such a pretty little model that I can almost forgive all the annoyance generated in getting the kit parts together.

Ryan FR-1

The Ryan FR-1 was a fighter aircraft designed during World War 2. It was fitted with both a piston and a very early jet engine. They entered service in 1945 but did not see combat and were withdrawn in 1947.

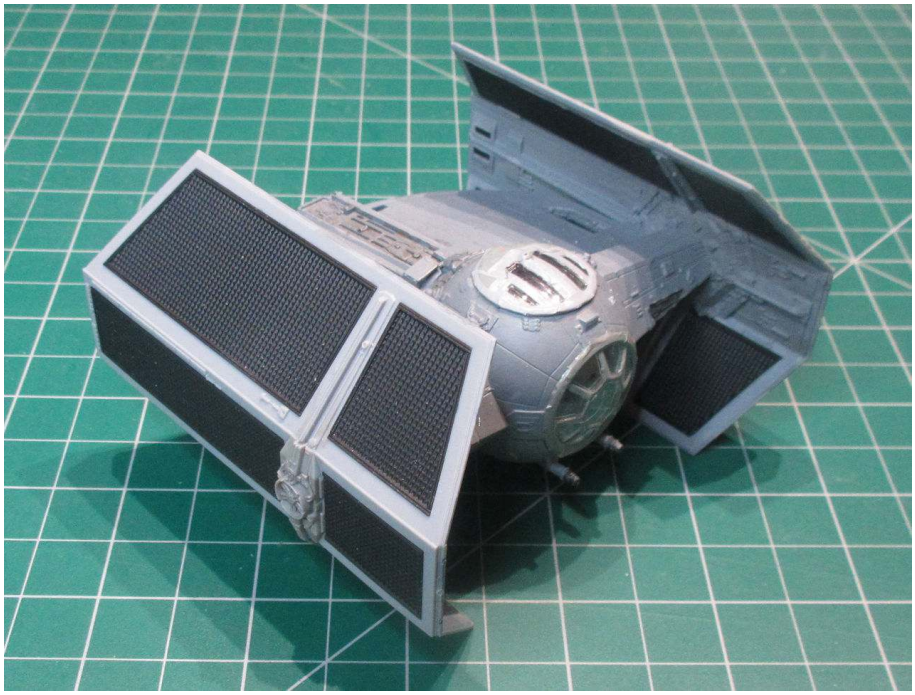
The Ryan FR-1 Fireball was designed with a jet engine and a piston engine because early jet engines were considered unsafe for carrier operations but offered higher speeds than piston engines.

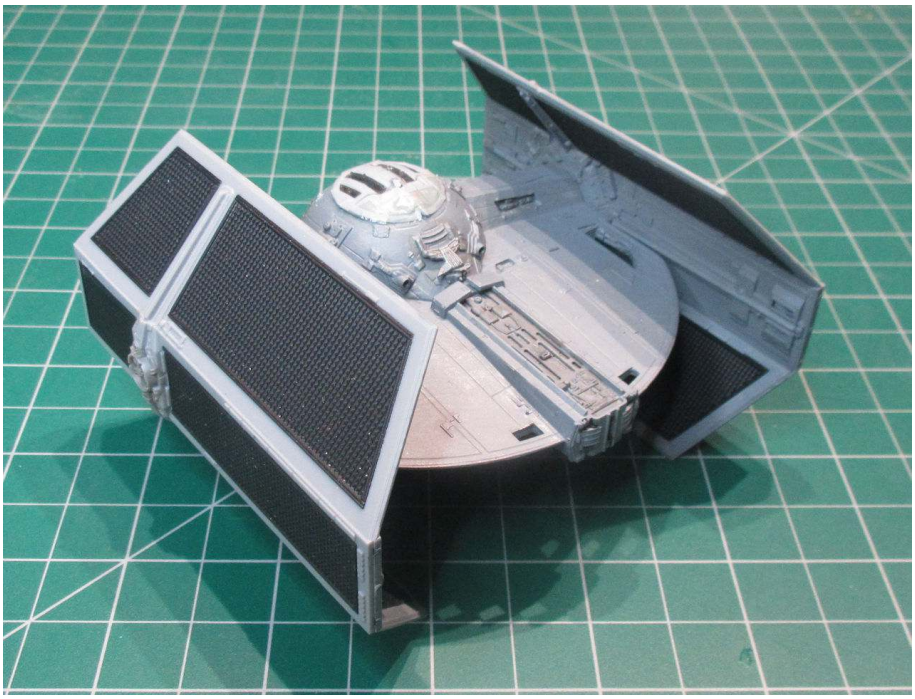
Design began in 1943 and the prototype first flew on 25 June 1944. Over 1000 were ordered but the contract was cancelled following the end of World War 2 and only 71 were built. They entered service in 1945 with one squadron but were found to be not rugged enough for carrier operations and were withdrawn from service in 1947.

This model represents a Ryan FR-1 flying with VF-41, US Navy, in October 1946.

Data: Experimental fighter. *Engine* one Wright R-1820-72W Cyclone 9 ctlinder radial piston engine of 1010kW and one General Electric J3GE-3 turbojet engine of 7.1kN thrust. *Wing span* 12.19m. *Length* 9.85m. *Gross weight* 5,285kg. *Maximum speed* 650km/h. *Armament* four 12.7mm machine guns and bombs or rockets. *Crew* 1.

MPM 1/72 kit with *Microscale* Decals





Sienar Fleet Industries TIE Advanced v.1

The Sienar TIE Advanced v.1 was a highly developed version of the standard TIE fighter. Although produced in only limited numbers if was a favourite with many elite units and aces of the Imperial forces, including Darth Vader.

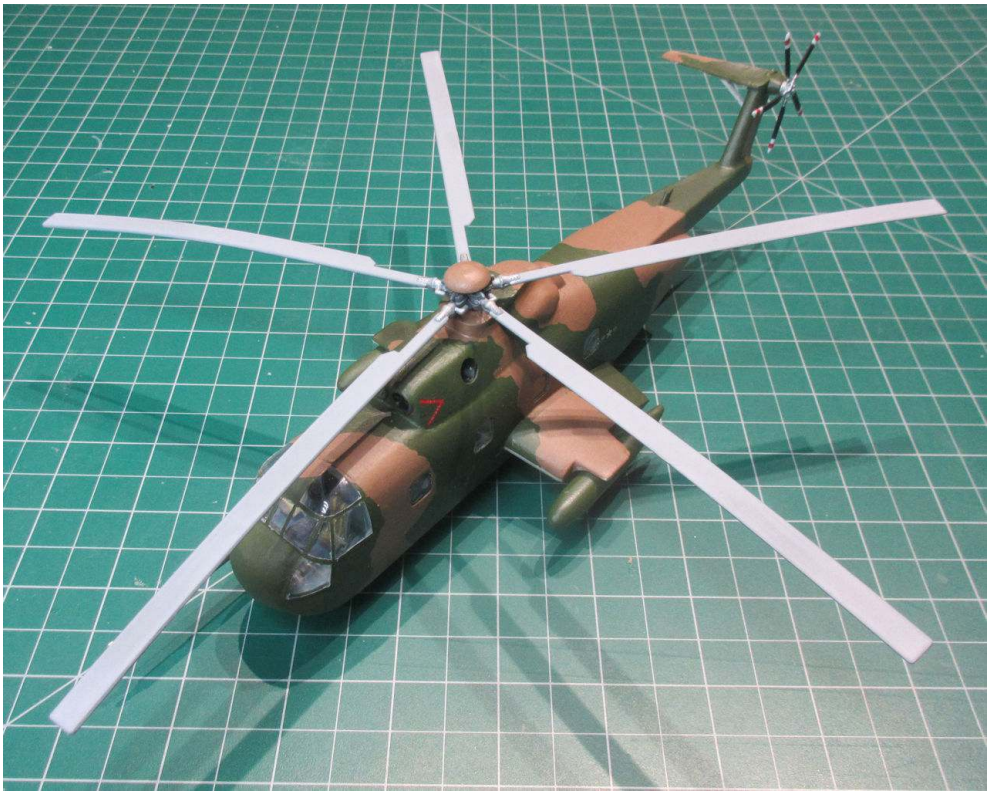
The TIE Advanced was a development of the standard TIE fighter. It featured localized improvements and secret technological breakthroughts. It boasted a hyperdrive and deflector shield generator and had greater speed and heavier firepower.

The TIE Advanced saw only limited production but became a favourite of elite units and was flown by many of the Empire's ace pilots. Lord Darth Vader flew a modified early prototype with a custom built cockpit to accommodate his armoured suite which also included high-performance solar cells..

This model represents the TIE Advanced v.1 flown by Lord Darth Vader during the Battle of the Death Star (also known as the Battle of Yavin) in 0 BBY.

Data. *Engines* two P-s56 ion engines. *Wing span* 6.2m. *Length* 5.8m. *Weight* 8,000kg (approx). *Maximum atmospheric speed* 1,200km/h. *Duration* 5 days. *Armament* two L-S9.3 laser cannons and cluster missiles. *Crew* 1.

Bandi 1/72 kit.



Sikorsky HH-3E

The Sikorsky HH-3E was a search and rescue helicopter introduced into service by the United States Air Force in the 1960s. They found and saved many downed aircrew lost over enemy territory during the Vietnam War..

The Sikorsky HH-3E (nicknamed the Jolly Green Giant) is one of many variants of the very successful Sikorsky H-3 helicopter. They included the Sea King anti-submarine aircraft and the CH-3E heavy cargo helicopter. The HH-3E was a conversion of the CH-3E developed specifically as a search and rescue helicopter for service during the Vietnam War. Fifty CH-3Es were converted to HH-.3E standard with armour plating, door mounted machine guns, additional fuel tanks and an extendible refuelling probe that allowed the helicopter to be refuelled in the air. They entered service in Vietnam in 1967.

This model represents a HH-3E flying with the United States Air Force in about 1970.

Data: long range search and rescue helicopter. *Engines* two General Electric T58-GE-10 turboshaft engines of 1,000kW each. *Rotor diamater* 19m. *Length* 22m. *Maximum take-off weight* 10,002kg. *Maximum speed* 265km/h. *Range* 1,443km. *Armament* door mounted machine guns. *Crew* 3.

Revell 1/724 kit.

Sukhoi Su-7B

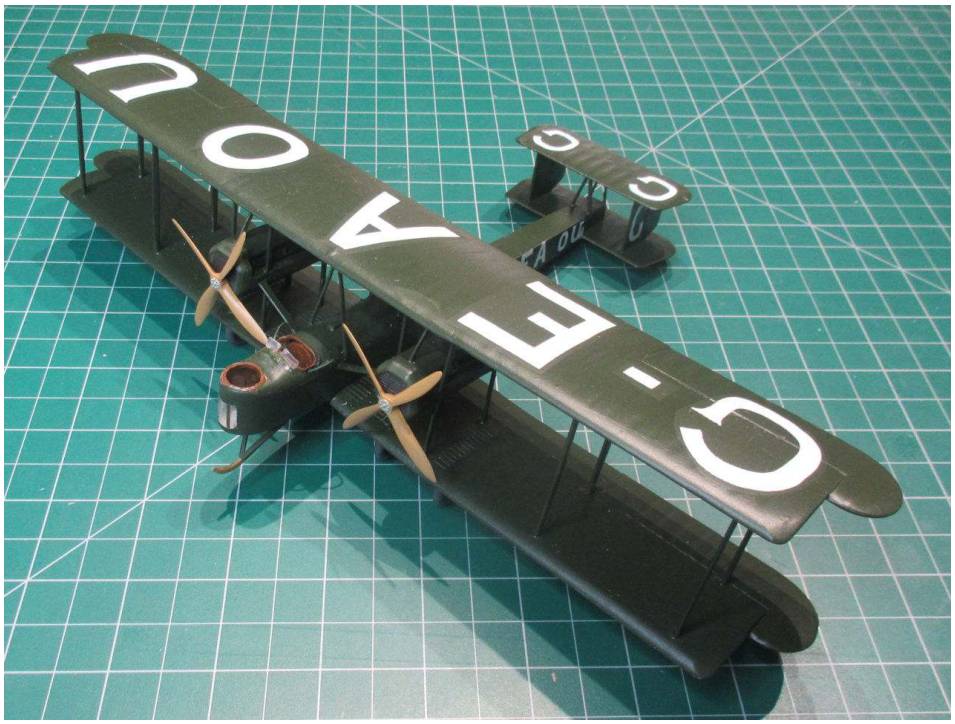
The Sukhoi Su-7B was the Soviet Union's main fighter-bomber from the 1960s into the mid 1980s. It had severe limitation on range and payload but was stable, rugged, could survive serious damage and was popular with its pilots.

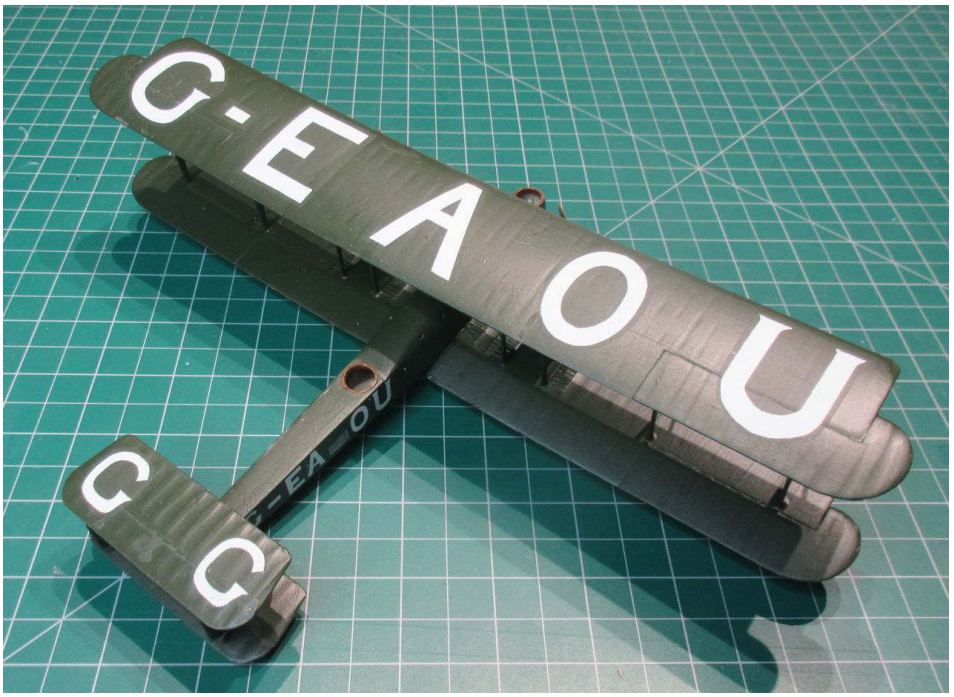
The Sukhoi Su-7 first flew in September 1955. It was designed as a low-level dog fighter with many technical innovations but was unsuccessful in that role and the USSR standardised on the MiG-21 instead. The Su-7 was revised to fill the ground-attack role as the Su-7B and 1,847 of them were built. Because of its engine's high fuel consumption its range and payload were limited but it became the USSR's main ground attack fighter into the 1980s. It was also used by other countries including North Korea and India.

This model represents a Su-7B in service with the USSR Air Force in the 1970s.

Data: single-seat fighter-bomber *Engine* one Lyulka AL-7F afterburning turbojet engine of 66.6kN thrust dry and 94.1kN with afterburner. *Wing span* 9.3m. *Length* 16.8m. *Maximum take-off weight* 15,210kg. *Maximum speed* 1,150km/h at sealevel and 2,150 at high altitude. *Range* 1,650km. *Armament* two 30mm cannon and up to 2,000kg of rockets and bombs. *Crew* 1.

Modelsvit 1:72 kit.





Vickers Vimy

The Vickers Vimy was a heavy bomber produced in Britain in the late 1910s. It became famous in 1919 as the first aircraft to fly across the Atlantic Ocean and also the first to fly between Britain and Australia.

The Vickers Vimy heavy bomber was designed towards the end of World War 1 but entered service to late to play an active role in it. Subsequently it remained in front line service with the RAF until the mid 1920s and remained flying in secondary roles until 1938. A troop transport version with an enlarged fuselage, the Vickers Vernon, and a similar civil airliner version were also produced.

In 1919 Vimy's made the first trans-Atlantic flight and the first flight from Britain to Australia. That flight covered almost 18,000 kilometers in just under a month and a flying time of 135 hours and 55 minutes.

This model represents G-EAOU, the first aircraft to fly from Britain to Australia.

Data: Heavy bomber *Engine* two Rolly-Royce Eagle VIII engines of 220kw each. *Wing span* 20.75m. *Length* 13.28m. *Maximum take-off weight* 4,937kg. *Maximum speed* 160km/h. *Range* 1,400km. *Armament* two .303 machine guns anf 1,123kg of bombs. *Crew* 3.

Frog 1/72 kit with *Red Roo* decals

Vickers Vimy in 1/72 by Frog

The Vickers Vimy is a very old aircraft, a bomber that was just too late to fight in World War I but good enough to stay in RAF service for the coming decade. In 1919 they also made record setting flights, the first flight across the Atlantic Ocean and the first flight from Britain to Australia. The one that flew to Australia is preserved at Adelaide Airport so you can go and look at it if you happen to be in the vicinity. It looks rather large sitting alone in its shed but it isn't so big in comparison to the big white airliners parked nearby at the terminal. I can't help but wonder at the courage, or foolhardiness, of the men who flew this strange and fragile aircraft those great distances so long ago.

There is only one kit available of the Vimy in 1/72 though it has appeared in numerous boxings. The kit was first published in 1964 by Frog as part of their Trail Blazers range of aircraft that made history, in this case the Vimy flown by Alcock and Brown across the Atlantic ocean. Another few Trail Blazers that come to mind are the deHavilland DH-60 flown by Amy Johnson, the Bristol 138 high altitude aircraft and the Southern Cross flown by Kingsford Smith and Ulm (that it preserved at Brisbane Airport if you know where to look for it). They were all pretty good kits by the standards of the 1960s, but kit making has moved on somewhat since then.

I've been aware of this kit since 1969 when the petrol company, BP, released a version of it to celebrate the 50th anniversary of the flight to Australia. I didn't buy one then because it was only available at BP service stations and I didn't get to one since I didn't have a car at the time. Instead, the version I acquired - I don't know when - was the 1973 Frog boxing which has machine guns, bombs and RAF decals added to what was otherwise the original kit.

This is one of those kits that I've put off building because it looks too difficult in the box. Maybe it was that apparently endless supply of struts to go between the wings, knowing how challenging it can be to get the two wings together with struts going in every direction conceivable except into the holes they are destined for as you try to get the wings together, and then keeping everything square while all the glue sets. Finally inspiration came when I rediscovered that I had the Red Roo Decals decals for G-EAOU, the registration for the Britain-Australia Vimy. That, and the fact that all my kits are currently in boxes in the garage and I found this kit in the first box of kits that I opened at random, drove me to finally making this model.

Making this kit into a reasonable model is challenging. For one thing, there is less reference material for this aircraft than you would imagine. A few external photos of G-EAOU and other contemporary photos of RAF aircraft, but only one photo I could find of the

inside of the cockpit and nothing for the rest of the aircraft's interior. All I could really find out is that there is a bench seat in the cockpit, which is provided in the kit, but there is nothing for the other openings so I just painted the interior a fabric colour and left it at that. I also used something from the spares box to make the window in the nose which was probably the bomb aimers window.

Being an old kit there was a lot of sanding and filling and filling and sanding on the fuselage. There was a lot of sanding in the flying surfaces also to knock down the excessive ribbing on the kit parts. Then came the nerve wracking part of attaching the upper and lower wings. The trick was to get all the struts between the wings, and the wings and engines of the central section, lined up and all together at the same time, and then square. There were a lot of, shall we say, tense and fraught moments during this process, not helped by some vagueness in the instructions about what goes where. Eventually all the pieces were more or less where they should be so I lined everything up square and let the glue set for a day or two.

With the main construction work done the next question was what colour to paint the model. The original in its shed in Adelaide is a dark green colour all over. I do not know, however, if that is the colour it appeared in when it flew out to Australia because that Vimy has been nicely restored and no doubt repainted in something similar to the original that was probably on the shelves of the local hardware shop. After a bit of pondering, and some discussion of Facebook, I decided that the Vimy in 1919 had come out of RAF stocks so it was probably painted in standard RAF paint, which was PC10 at that time. In fact, it turns out that the current green scheme on the Vimy and PC10 are only slightly different with a greener tinge to the Vimy as it appears in today.

My decision to use PC10 was aided by the simple fact that I happened to have a bottle of it to hand, in the AK 3Gen range. This is an acrylic that is designed to be hand painted and two coats was all I needed to get a good covering. The Red Roo Decals went on easily though they were nice and thin and needed careful handling but settled down well. I cut out each letter separately and lined them up separately across the top and bottom wings. There should be a couple of 'lift here' signs around the tail but I didn't read the instructions properly and made a complete mess of them, so they don't appear on this model.

This is one of those models that I'm glad to have made but I don't recall getting much pleasure out of the build process. All those struts and big and heavy pieces of plastic in the wings was a real pain to have to deal with but, with all those parts brought together successfully, the result looks impressive rather than nice.