



June 2020

|  |  |       |   |                 |     |                  |     |             |     |               |     |          |   |          |   |             |    |
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| <p><b>MassCar 2020 – Cancelled</b><br/> <b>Wings &amp; Wheels 2020 – Cancelled</b><br/> <b>Downeastcon 2020 – Cancelled</b><br/> <b>Northshore Con 2020 – Cancelled</b></p> <p><b>NorEast Con 2020</b> – Rescheduled to Oct 2 – 3, 2020 - Quality Inn and Suites, 8250 Park Rd, Batavia, NY Contact – David Schwab at <a href="mailto:davidsp51stang@aol.com">davidsp51stang@aol.com</a></p> <p><b>IPMS Nationals 2020</b> - Jul 29 – Aug 1, 2020 - Embassy Suites and San Marcos Conference Center, 1001 E McCarty Lane, San Marcos, TX Contact - Leonard Pilhofer at 210-792-4746 or <a href="http://www.nats2020.com/">http://www.nats2020.com/</a></p> | <table> <tr><td>RECON</td><td>1</td></tr> <tr><td>From the Bridge</td><td>2-5</td></tr> <tr><td>New Board Member</td><td>5,6</td></tr> <tr><td>Book Review</td><td>6-7</td></tr> <tr><td>In Box Review</td><td>7-8</td></tr> <tr><td>Up Scope</td><td>9</td></tr> <tr><td>In Range</td><td>9</td></tr> <tr><td>Hobby Shops</td><td>10</td></tr> </table>   | RECON | 1 | From the Bridge | 2-5 | New Board Member | 5,6 | Book Review | 6-7 | In Box Review | 7-8 | Up Scope | 9 | In Range | 9 | Hobby Shops | 10 |
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| From the Bridge  | 2-5  |       |   |                 |     |                  |     |             |     |               |     |          |   |          |   |             |    |
| New Board Member   | 5,6  |       |   |                 |     |                  |     |             |     |               |     |          |   |          |   |             |    |
| Book Review  | 6-7  |       |   |                 |     |                  |     |             |     |               |     |          |   |          |   |             |    |
| In Box Review  | 7-8  |       |   |                 |     |                  |     |             |     |               |     |          |   |          |   |             |    |
| Up Scope   | 9  |       |   |                 |     |                  |     |             |     |               |     |          |   |          |   |             |    |
| In Range   | 9  |       |   |                 |     |                  |     |             |     |               |     |          |   |          |   |             |    |
| Hobby Shops  | 10   |       |   |                 |     |                  |     |             |     |               |     |          |   |          |   |             |    |
| <p><b>Classic Plastic 2020</b> – Oct 4, 2020 - Elks Hall 652 Andover St, Lawrence, MA Contact -</p> <p><b>Granitecon 2020</b> – Oct 18, 2020 - The Falls Event Center 21 Front St., Manchester, NH Contact – Rodney Currier <a href="mailto:nickmatt2@roadrunner.com">nickmatt2@roadrunner.com</a></p> <p><b>BAYCON 2020</b> – Nov 1, 2020 - Elks Hall, 326 Farnum Pike – Smithfield, RI Contact- <a href="mailto:Robert Magina">Robert Magina</a> – 508-641-5873 or <a href="mailto:treadhead@comcast.net">treadhead@comcast.net</a></p>  | <h2>2020-2021 Dues</h2> <p>If you have not already done so, please renew your dues for the coming 2020-2021 membership year. Dues are still \$10. Dues due June 2020.</p> <p>Please remit your dues to John Nickerson at the meeting or send it to him at 18 Stone Street, Middleboro, MA 02346 .</p> <p>Don't forget to ask for the Family Membership if you have sons or daughters as members in the club as well.</p> |       |   |                 |     |                  |     |             |     |               |     |          |   |          |   |             |    |

## **FROM THE BRIDGE**

### The President's Column

Well, here we are at the start of our 52nd membership year and what a year. You can hear my iconic cry, the membership fee is still only \$10 per year and we accept advanced payment if you wish to get ahead on your membership. There is also a family membership plan. You can catch me at a meeting or send your payments to me by mail, checks to be made payable to Bay Colony Historical Modelers.

Doom and gloom corner... First the March meeting, then April and May, and now, June and July. Yes June and July meetings are cancelled. We established a set of guidelines for holding meetings, back in April. We will try to abide by those guidelines going forward. Unfortunately, those guidelines don't entirely mesh with the guidelines that the states have issued. We may reach a point where we want to meet, but can't, if we try to meet the states social distancing and crowd limiting guidelines.

Currently, the states we are concerned with are limiting gatherings to 10, with social distancing and masks. I am going to post a couple questions on the forum related to this. Please visit the forum and answer these polls. The board has been communicating and is trying to find a way that we can meet and need your input.

Basically, if we could meet, but are restricted to 10, would we want to meet? If so, we would need a registration/reservation system. I expect first come first served. Would we establish a 30 day rule? In other words, if you attended the last meeting, you would be put on the waiting list for the next meeting, to give others a chance? Food for thought. It is possible that some of our members may not want to meet, at least for a while, for their own reasons. We may find that only 6 to 8 people wish to attend, if we could meet. The other reason is we don't want to get the hosts in trouble with their neighbors, and have them call the cops. So, because we haven't had a meeting in a while, I have nothing to report from them.

Currently, BayCon is in doubt. We don't need to make a decision until September, but we need to be in motion by then to get all that needs to be done completed for November 1st. Things are very fluid and continue to change as we learn more about this virus. If the states, in this case Rhode Island, are still talking social distancing, masks, and crowd limits, it makes it very doubtful. Even if they increase the meeting size, there is no way we can maintain social distancing in that hall.

I think of myself, it's in my nature to say hi, and shake hands with a lot of the visitors to our show. I've been doing it for years. It's second nature. If someone extends a hand, I suspect that as a reflex, I will extend mine.

I suspect we may be required to have a bottle of hand sanitizer on the head table. We may have to require masks be worn. We may sell masks at the front table, if we can find some. We will probably provide gloves for the judges. All this is speculative. We may not even be able to get in the hall. Only time will tell.

My suspicion is that come November, many modelers will be busting for a chance to get to a show and talk modeling with someone, anyone. But I also suspect that there will be a certain percentage of our

# Battlewagon

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regulars that won't show due to the virus. Let's face it, a lot of us, and a lot of our attendees are in that highly susceptible age bracket.

This is part of my concern. We know that there are a few odd ducks out there in our little hobby world. Ok, not just in our little world. I just read this story. It's not intended as a political statement, but it involves politics. Pennsylvania legislature, a Republican congressman felt ill, got himself tested, results were positive. He still attended committee meetings, wore a mask, and told the other Republicans on the committee he had tested positive. Some of them self-quarantined. He didn't tell the Democrats. His excuse was that he wanted to protect his family's privacy. I think we will hear more on this in the future. But to get to my point, think about the people that come to our show. Can you see the possibility of someone donning a mask and coming to the show to look at the models and shop at the vendors, and yet know that he is sick?

If anyone has any experience with video conferencing with platforms such as Skype, Microsoft Teams, Zoom, or Google Hangout/Meet, please contact me. The board is considering Tele meeting, and it is also a possibility for remote meetings of some kind.

Revell USA has reported a noticeable uptick in plastic kit sales recently, attributed to people in lockdown. The article claims that Revell was in the process of developing a direct sales web site when the pandemic hit. Paul Champigny has posted a link to the article on the forum.

Shipping from Europe has been erratic. Many dealers are listing stuff from Europe as out of stock. Part of the problem is the lockdown, both here and in Europe. Flights from some countries are prohibited. People aren't traveling, so many of the airlines have cancelled flights. These flights would fill up any empty cargo space with mail, because they get paid for it. So you can see how shipping a package can be impacted. Some of the airlines are now converting their sidelined passenger planes into cargo planes and making the flight across the pond. A sitting plane earns no income. (Didn't Ben Franklin say that?) So some signs of improvement have been seen.

The latest email from Airfix has the 1/72 Northrup P-61 and Savoia Marchetti SM-79, from their "Vintage Classic Range" available for pre-order. The Workbench blog featured two new builds from a modeler, of two old kits, the Douglas TBD Devastator and the Vought OS2U Kingfisher. The Kingfisher he set in water. Nicely done. The Devastator build was a little different. He couldn't find a reasonably priced kit so he took an old build and with a razor blade (his words), sliced and pried apart the model. He provided a photo of the pile of parts. It had been a yellow wing scheme. He rebuilt it into an intermediate blue and gray aircraft from the USS Hornet.

Both are kits I'd like Airfix to New Tool. I have a long list of old Airfix kits I'd like to see them new tool. Some of what they are doing I understand, some I don't. I mean, come on, a new tool of the Avro Vulcan? How many of those are you going to sell, especially on this side of the pond? It's relatively expensive, takes up a lot of real estate, built or in the box, and how many schemes are there? It's not like thousands of them were built. I understand replacing the Blenheim Mk. IV. Their old kit was a nice build, and I really like the Free French sand and midstone scheme, but now we have three different new tool Blenheim kits?

Where's the Hawker Hunter, or the Mirage III? The Mirage was one of the most widely built and operated aircraft of its time, competing with the F-5 and MiG 19 and 21. Besides the TBD and the

Kingfisher, (the Kingfisher, by the way, was operated by the British), how about the TBF/TBM Avenger, (also used by the British), SBD Dauntless and SB2C Helldiver, the Walrus (my nemesis), and P-400/P-39. Airfix used to produce a P-47 and F4U Corsair, both covered in oversized rivets. I think it would be tough to beat Tamiya's offerings of these iconic aircraft. Someplace down the road after Airfix fills in some of the many other blank spaces, they can tackle those two if they wish.

Within days of the April edition of this newsletter being published, and my discussion of the Airfix / Academy armor kits, Kitlinx sent me an email offering the Airfix kits shipped direct from Europe. They indicated the possibilities of delays due to the reduced number of flights. (See comments on this above.) So there is a source, should you wish to obtain one / some. The Airfix website indicates that Washington State has issued a stay at home warning which is in effect until at least June 1<sup>st</sup>. So Airfix USA is not currently shipping. All of the armor kits are listed as pre-order. This may change shortly.

As far as our history lesson goes, its June and 76 years since D-Day. A lot of time and many words have gone into reporting the effort the Allies made to cross the Channel on June 6<sup>th</sup>. Not so much on the planning, and even less on the misinformation/propaganda machine. More has been released lately, I think most of us know that Gen. George Patton was recalled from his command in North Africa to command the "Ghost Army" in east England. The plan was to make the Germans think that Patton commanded an army that he would lead across the Channel to attack the Pas de Calais. If the German High Command didn't fear George Patton, they were concerned enough to keep track of his whereabouts.

Operation Bodyguard was the primary plan of deception developed in 1943. Its concept was to produce numerous streams of false information and operation plans to leak to the Germans in an attempt to misdirect their defenses. This was to be done to support Operation Overlord, and Operation Neptune the D-Day amphibious landings at Normandy. Or to direct attention away from Normandy. One of the main plans of Bodyguard was Operation Fortitude. Fortitude was a two part plan, Fortitude North, being the plan for the fictional British Fourth Army, based in Edinburgh, to invade Norway, and Fortitude South, being the fictional 1<sup>st</sup> US First Army Group led by Gen. Patton to attack the Pas de Calais.

A third part of Fortitude was providing information that the Normandy landings were a decoy to draw troops away from the Calais area. This was supported by Operation Titanic which was the British dropping dummy paratroopers to the east and the west of the Normandy beaches, so as when reports of paratroopers came in, so would the reports of dummies to confuse the issue.

The key element of Fortitude South was Operation Quicksilver. Quicksilver was the actual deception process. Much of that deception was carried out by the 23<sup>rd</sup> Headquarters Special Troops. A 1,100 man force, most of whom had been specially recruited because of their skills as artists, architects, set designers, actors and engineers. The 23<sup>rd</sup> was composed of the 406<sup>th</sup> Combat Engineers, 603<sup>rd</sup> Camouflage Engineers, 3132 Signal Service Company Special, and Signal Company Special. The unit was the subject of a 2013 PBS documentary called the "Ghost Army".

After the success of the Normandy landings, the 23<sup>rd</sup> continued to operate in Southeast England, maintaining the hoax of FUSAG and Fortitude South, tying up German troops in the Pas de Calais area. After a few months they were moved to France to continue their antics as a "traveling road show"

where they staged more than 20 battlefield deceptions, making the enemy think there were troops where there were none.

The visual deception was carried out by the 603<sup>rd</sup> Camo. Eng., which included inflatable tanks, jeeps, artillery, and trucks, and dummy air fields and troop bivouacs. The 3132 Signal Service was responsible for Sonic Deception, playing recordings of armor and troops on the move played from speakers mounted on trucks. The Signal Company was responsible for "Spoof Radio". Radio transmissions designed to mislead the enemy.

I miss you guys!

Stay safe, my friends.

God bless America! Pray for our servicemen overseas.

Happy modeling and give kits to kids!

John J. Nickerson

[bchmaprez@verizon.net](mailto:bchmaprez@verizon.net)

## **September Vote for New Board Member Announced**

On the 76<sup>th</sup> anniversary of D-Day, in the shade of the gazebo behind Bob Magina's house in Plainville, MA, John Gisetto announced his intent to retire from his position as Board Member for the club. Any member wishing to fill the soon to be vacated board seat may nominate himself or herself by sending an email or letter to any of the board members. Members may nominate other members if they wish, and the board will verify the proposed candidate's willingness to run. These nominations must be in by July 11, 2020. On July 25<sup>th</sup> the board will meet to interview all nominees. All approved nominees will then have a window to prepare a campaign statement and submit it to the board for review and Bob Magina for inclusion in the August newsletter. Once approved, these campaign statements may also be posted on the forum and club Facebook page.

Article IV Board of Directors of BCHMA of the Bylaws explains the duties and responsibilities of a board members. Article VIII Election of Officers, explains the voting procedure and the requirements for candidates. If you don't have a copy of the bylaws, you can find them on the club webpage, [ipmsbaycolony.com](http://ipmsbaycolony.com).

The August issue of the Battlewagon will contain voting instructions and dates. On September 19<sup>th</sup> the board will meet to count the votes. This should allow the results to be published in the October newsletter.

Personally, I would like to thank John for his dedication to the club, his effort on behalf of the club to produce the Bylaws as they currently exist, and years of service as a board member. He has been one of my staunchest allies, and yet a vocal opponent at the same time.

John Nickerson

## **Book Review - *Operation Crusader* Tank Warfare in the Desert, Tobruk 1941**

Herman Buschleb, Casement Publishing, Havertown, PA, 1950. Republished by the Association of the United States Army, 2019. 112pp. ISBN 9781612007236. US\$12.

*Operation Crusader* is a look at the British Eighth Army's offensive in November 1941, designed to destroy the German Afrika Korps and break the siege of the port city of Tobruk in North Africa. The book is a detailed analysis of tank warfare during that offensive. Written in the early 1960s when the Cold War was very active, it is a case study on the command and control of armored and mechanized forces. At that time, German tactical and operational experiences from World War II were seen as possible answers to how NATO could defeat the numerical superiority of the Warsaw Pact forces. The author, Herman Buschleb, was a decorated German officer during World War II. After the war he joined the West German Bundeswehr, rose to the rank of General, and commanded numerous formations including a West German Panzergrenadier Division.

The conflict in North Africa had its own flavor from other theaters in World War II. The opposing forces not only fought each other, but also the demanding terrain and arduous climate. For most of the campaign the fighting centered around Tobruk. The city was a major port on the Mediterranean Sea along the North African coast. It was a key strategic logistical objective for any offensive operations moving either west or east. The British captured the city from the Italians in January 1941. However, the tide turned against the British when German General Erwin Rommel and his Afrika Korps arrived in North Africa in February. The Germans besieged the city from April to November 1941. Operation Crusader, launched in November, was designed to defeat the Germans and break the siege of the city. After a number of minor engagements, the Germans defeated the main British thrust by the 7<sup>th</sup> Armored Division at Sidi Rezegh. However, the British supporting attacks were successful, and Rommel was forced to withdraw to a new defensive line to the west. In December 1941, British forces lifted the siege and entered Tobruk. Operation Crusader was the first Allied victory over German land forces in World War II.

This is a quick, but detailed, read. It walks the reader through all aspects of the battle and provides 21 pages of detailed maps to help the reader understand the different phases of the battle. Additionally, the reader is provided a detailed explanation of the terrain, effects of weather, and a comparison of units and weapons. Lastly, the author offers an excellent analysis on the tactical and strategic implications of the British offensive. Overall, *Operation Crusader* is well worth the time of any student of World War II armored warfare and of the campaigns in North Africa.

Mike McNamara

## In the Box Review:

***Master Box LTD. US Machine Gunners, Europe, 1944, 1/35 scale, (no. MB3519)***

Master Box Ltd. Is another of those Ukrainian model companies now producing figure kits in styrene. They produce a wide range of figure sets in a wide spectrum of subject matter, from civilians to military, WW1 to Afghanistan, American West to Civil War, Sci-Fi and Fantasy, in 1/35 and 1/24. One of the most iconic infantry weapons of WW2 was the Browning M1917A1 .30 Cal. Water Cooled, belt fed, Machine Gun that is depicted in this kit.

The box is a thin, one piece cardboard sleeve with end flaps. (10" x 7" x 1 1/2"). The front cover contains art work depicting the US .30 Cal Machine Gun team in action. The back shows a couple full color photos of the completed models, the color grid, the sprue layout diagram, and black line drawings of the figures and MG, also showing the color callouts and part numbers. The color grid suggests 10 colors, providing a single letter code for each one. It also provides a color description in English. There are 5 columns of paint numbers, one each for Vallejo, Tamiya, Lifecolor, Humbrol, and Agama. I am not familiar with the last one.

On opening the box you find a single plastic bag containing a single sprue of tan colored plastic. The kit contains 25 parts. These build into two figures, the gunner and the loader, and the machine gun. The machine gun is composed of 5 parts. Three parts form the ammo belt and ammo box. The remainder of the parts are for the two figures. The figures look well cast. Care should be taken assembling the machine gun tripod, the tripod legs appearing rather slender.

The ammo box for the 1917A1 was originally wooden, by 1944 it should be the metal, expendable can. The ammo belt, (part 23) is shown in the line diagram but no color call out is given. The fabric belt would have been buff, tan or khaki in color. The cover art shows the .30-06 cartridges as lead tipped and brass. Most likely the M2 “ball” would have been copper clad. The cover art also shows a hose coming from the barrel jacket and going to a water can. These parts are not provided. The jacket does have a nub where the hose connection would be, so a gas or water can from the parts box and a length of wire as a hose and bingo. A couple good reference photos should help. Neither the photos on the box, or the line diagram show the belt extending thru the gun breach. When loading the top of the breach was opened. It was hinged towards the front. The belt was pulled from the left, (from the gunners position), to the right so that it extended out the right side, and the breach closed. As the gun was fired a claw would grab the belt and pull the next round into the breach. The M1917A1 was recoil operated. As the expended cartridge was pulled from the breach and dropped out the bottom, at the same time the bolt pulled the next round out of the belt and dropped it into position to be pushed into the breach as a spring pushes the bolt closed. The empty belt would continue to be fed out the right side of the breach.

Although only .30 cal, the M1917A1 was considered a heavy machine gun because of the water cooling. The gun itself, with tripod, weighed 103 pounds. With additional water for coolant and additional ammo, it usually took 4 men to crew it. It was normally placed in some sort of emplacement. Both to help conceal the gun and offer some protection to the crew. Building this set as a vignette with just the figures and gun would work well. Building it into a small diorama would require some sort of emplacement or cover.

The figure poses are action poses but not very dynamic. The gunner is seated and hunched over his gun. The loader is kneeling, assisting by holding up the ammo belt. Because of the lack of a water can, and not depicting the ammo belt properly installed, I’m giving it three and a half thumbs up, out of 5, on the Del scale.

As I have said before, with any uniform that was intended to be drab or to help conceal troops, they can be very ‘drab’ or un-interesting when completed. It was intended when procured that the equipment and accoutrements be the same colors, due to manufacturing practices, different manufactures, different fabrics and materials, most times they were not. Using slight color variations between similar components on different figures, can add some spark and interest.

John Nickerson

## Up Scope

| Jul 11 <sup>th</sup> Meeting | Aug 8 <sup>th</sup> Meeting  |
|------------------------------|--|
| CANCELLED                    | Bob Don<br>11 William Drive Foxboro, MA 02035<br>508-698-2753  |
|                              | <p>Directions</p> <p>Take 95 to Exit 8 (Sharon/Foxboro). Go onto Mechanic Street towards Foxboro. (left if coming from south, right if coming from north). Go to traffic light and go left onto Oak Street. Go ½ mile and go right onto Maura Elizabeth Lane (last street before overpass). Go left onto William Drive. House is #11 (6th house on right).</p> |

## In Range

| Jun 13 <sup>h</sup> Meeting – Pat McColgen | Jul 11 <sup>th</sup> Meeting – Bob Magina |
|--|---|
| CANCELLED                                  | CANCELLED                                 |

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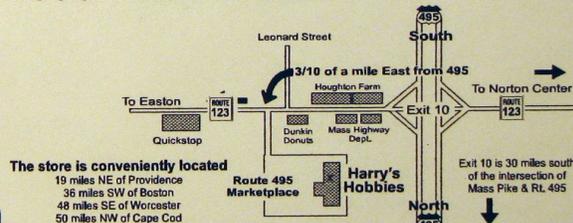
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IPMS Bay Colony Modelers meet the second Saturday of each month from 1:00 to 4:00 PM. The meetings take place at selected members houses. Look at the Battlewagon or the club website for location and directions. Guests are always welcome. Membership is \$10.00 per year. Members and guests are encouraged to bring completed models or works in progress for display and discussion.

The Battlewagon is published six times per year. All opinions expressed are those of the authors and do not necessarily reflect IPMS Bay Colony or IPMS USA views. Submissions relevant to modeling are welcome, and may be published at the discretion of the editor. All material is subject to editing. There is no payment for articles.

## IPMS Bay Colony Historical Modelers

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## 2020 - 2021 Club Dues

If you have not already done so, please renew your dues for the coming 2020-2021 membership year. Dues are still \$10. Please remit your dues to John Nickerson at a meeting or send it to him at 18 Stone Street, Middleboro, MA 02346

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