

# The Navigator

The Newsletter of Alamo Squadron

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

April 2017



IPMS/USA Chapter of the Year:  
1998-1999 & 2004-2005

## GUNPLA CONTEST SAN ANTONIO STYLE!



**Strut Oh! Eric Syverson Fixes a Glitch  
On His P-38 "Greased Lightning"**



**Michael Buckley Modifies a Lindberg "Q  
Ship" into a Tramp Steamer**



# President's Column

By Dick Montgomery

IPMS #14003



## President's Message – April 2017

The C&BL states that elections for E-Board offices will take place at the April meeting, so it is “Election Night”. You have been receiving emails from the “President's Account” regarding the procedures and processes so I won't take up space here to repeat that information. Suffice it to say that we have a nominee for each office, additional nominations can be made during the upcoming meeting, and the oath of office will be presented to the newly elected officers.

And with this election, my time on the E-Board is closing. It has been my great honor to serve as President of Alamo Squadron for the last two years. In my view, during those two years, the high level of achievement to which Alamo Squadron has risen is due to the last two E-Boards functioning very well, and more so, to those members who have stepped forward and led the various programs, committees, and activities that are now the hallmark of Alamo Squadron. Let's review some programs being directed by some of those members.

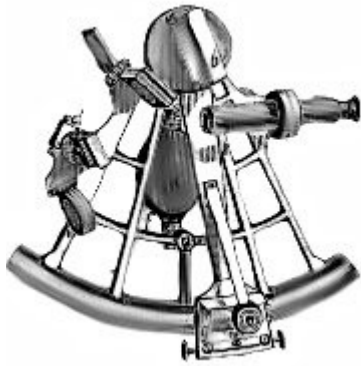


The ABC program is not new to Alamo Squadron, and in fact, Alamo Squadron is the birthplace of that unique and successful program. Craig Gregory has built upon the solid foundation that Tony Ivone and Lee Forbes laid down and the ABC has evolved, with Craig as its Director, into a first-rate teaching device as well as a member magnet. It isn't just the design and curriculum of ABC that makes it such a dynamic

tool. Upon analysis, there are two factors which makes the ABC a very successful program. Members have stepped forward, at the invitation from Craig, to demo a technique or skill. We are a social organization with a focus on modeling, and there is no better evidence of that goal than what one sees when one looks at the ABC. The second factor that makes the ABC such a success is the leadership and dynamic thinking provided by Craig. Thanks to Craig and thanks to those who have made “skills presentations” at the ABC meetings.

While Craig directs the ABC program, he also launched another program labeled the “Model Summit Program” in 2016. This year (2017) saw the first “graduates” of that program being recognized with the presentation of a Certificate to each of the “graduates” at the March meeting. The MSP encourages members to start new projects and bring them to conclusion in a timely manner, and to share those projects during the Works In Progress portion of the monthly meetings. It's been enjoyable to watch these projects go from unpainted or primed parts to a fully completed model. Thanks to Craig for his leadership and for his enthusiasm.





# President's Column

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We've seen a succession of excellent programs through 2016-2017, a process that got underway with Henry Nunez in the previous administration and then built upon by Herb Scranton in the current administration. Herb's program outline has included programs such as "Soldering PE Parts", "Building Paper Models", "Masking Canopies", "Decaling and Future Floor Wax", and "Ship Building Techniques". Alamo Squadron is defined as a "modeling social organization", and as such, the primary nature of the monthly programs should focus on models and modeling. The intention of focusing the monthly program content on modeling and modeling skills is quite evident and was, by all accounts, very successful over the last two years. Thanks to Henry and Herb for administering the schedule of presentations, and many thanks to the presenters who shared their knowledge, stories, and modeling techniques with the membership.



The club newsletter underwent a total makeover and became a new "creature" with a unique and particular personality. Receiving the name, "The Navigator", the newsletter became a publication filled with articles that

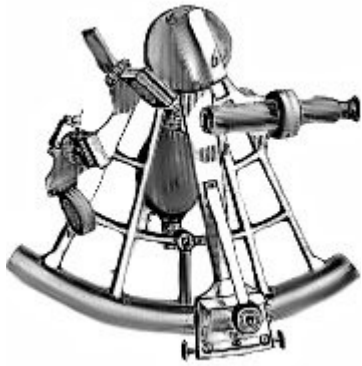
have been copied and shared by other modeling clubs. The quality of content, images, and articles continued to evolve into the first-class publication that is the current "Navigator". Len Pilhofer has led this effort in his role as the editor of the Navigator. I thank him for his effort, and thank the contributors who provide content to Len for inclusion in the Navigator.

Money makes the world go round. There were times

when the membership had no information provided regarding the club's financial status, its expenses or its income. That changed in dramatic fashion. Our previous treasurer, Lee Washburn, and current treasurer, Dana Mathes, have given a financial statement to the membership every month during their time in office. During their time in office both acted with transparency and accuracy in their management of club finances. Thanks to both Lee and Dana for their effort in this regard. Regarding the Treasury and the nature of Alamo Squadron, things have changed in dramatic fashion over the last two years. The C&BL now requires that the Treasury provides a monthly financial report as a standard feature of the business handled at every meeting. Lee Washburn in the previous administration and the current Treasurer, Dana Mathes, have done an outstanding job, making sure the membership is aware of the financial resources of the club. The club also is now a recognized 501-c7, which defines Alamo Squadron as a Social Organization rather than as a small business or with the treasury being held in a personal checking account.

The Constitution and Bylaws for the club was updated and revised, a process that some members embraced with enthusiasm, and some much less so. The result was that the C&BL was made relevant in the digital age with wording edits, with duplicate and contradictory sections removed, and with a goal of making the administration of the club more transparent and functional. Those changes to the C&BL worked as intended. The end result has been successful because of the work accomplished by the members of the Constitutional Committee who listened to all members, whether the members backed the revision of the document or not. Every member gets a big Thanks for contributing to this success.





# President's Column

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ModelFiesta 36 was a huge success. Thanks to the Evt. Director, Len Pilhofer, and his ModelFiesta Committee for a job well-done. The numbers generated by ModelFiesta (entry and entrant totals) make it one of the 10 largest model-



ing events within IPMS for the entire country. The ModelFiesta committee began by responding to an E-Board request for a detailed budget, a budget to which, it was made clear, that they must adhere to. The budget was prepared using data from previous shows, it was accepted by the E-Board, and the event was conducted well within that budget. Fiscal responsibility was present at every “decision point” along the way. Our membership is owed a big Thanks for volunteering to serve during ModelFiesta. We also owe a Big Thanks to the modelers from other clubs who come to ModelFiesta, who fill out the judging ranks, as well as contribute to the bank accounts of the vendors.

As a club, we still have room to grow and expand. There is a pool of talented modelers into which we have yet to fully tap, inviting them to demonstrate their techniques at both ModelFiesta in seminar sessions and at club meetings for the benefit of the membership. The ABC course and the Model Summit Program are giant strides (not just steps) in the proper direction to attract and retain members. Contributing content to the website (thanks Gilberto and Len!) and to the Navigator has not yet reached the level of “flow” that should be the case, but the website is in the best condition its ever attained, measured by quality of content, timeliness, and design and the newsletter is, as previously stated, breaking new ground. There are more things we could do, but have yet to

consider or implement, to publicize Alamo Squadron and to bring in more members and the website can take a major role in that effort.

In my view, the club has never been as vibrant, well rounded in modeling genre interest, and populated with as many talented members as it is now. As a measure of the success of the club and as evidence of the outstanding status of the club, Alamo Squadron was recognized at the IPMS National Convention in 2016 as the IPMS Region 6 Chapter of the Year!

I leave you with these thoughts. The club belongs to the members. More to the point, Alamo Squadron belongs to each individual member. When a member participates in the Works In Progress presentation the club benefits. When a member participates in the Model Summit Program the club benefits. When a member participates in the Bachelor Build Night and the ABC the club benefits. When a member contributes to the newsletter, website, or Facebook page, the club benefits. When a club member dedicates a Saturday to pull duty shifts and ModelFiesta, and to serve as a judge, then the club benefits.

It is individual participation and the contribution of time, treasure, and talent to club activities that powers club growth and increases the value of holding membership in Alamo Squadron.

It has been my honor to serve as President of Alamo Squadron for the past two years. Thank you for that opportunity, and I look forward to continuing to serve the club as an active member.



# Club Announcements

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## **Bachelor Build Nights**

Bachelor Build Nights are growing in popularity and this past month proved this point. We had 5 modelers in attendance at Len Pilhofer's house on the 23rd of March. Here is a quick run-down of what everyone was working on:

Devon McCullough was working on the fuselages (yes, two of them) from a 1/48 scale Modelcraft F-82 kit. Jeff Simonds continued work on his Adult Build Class model, the 1/48 scale Revell A-7 Corsair. Chris Lenahan was putting the final build touches to a Dragon 1/35 King Tiger while Jose Valdenegro was putting some effort into a 1/48 scale Fujimi Aichi Type 99. To rounds things out Len was putting touches on a 1/144 scale Bandai RX-78-2 Gundam in preparation for the HobbyTown Gundam contest.

Craig Gregory and Len Pilhofer will continue to host build nights/meetings for 2017. The focus of these meetings is to build models as well as comradery with a secondary goal of watching, discussing, and learning different techniques. There will be no official club business at these meetings; only modelers sitting with their kit, building it, and talking about any topic you desire. Each build night will run from 5-9 PM.

Build night dates for the first-half of 2017 are as follows. All dates fall on a Thursday night. If you wish to host a BBN please let Len or Craig know and we can add to the dates listed here:

13 Apr - Len's  
11 May - Craig's  
8 Jun - Craig's

27 Apr - Len's  
25 May - Len's  
22 Jun - Len's







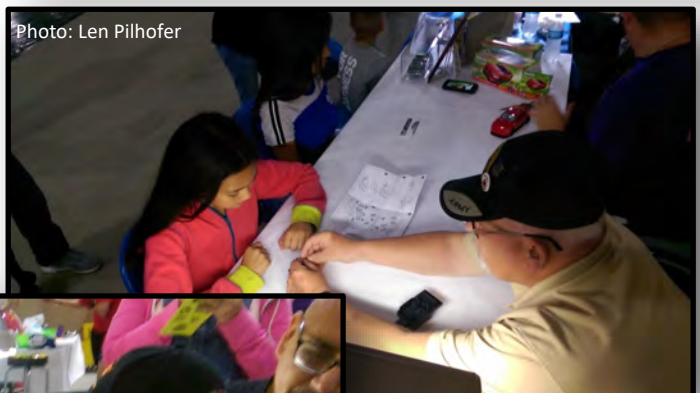
# Club Announcements

## San Antonio CarFest Make and Take

On the 1st of April Alamo Squadron was invited to participate in the San Antonio CarFest: Unity In the Community. The event was held at the Freeman Coliseum Expo Hall and members of the club conducted a Make And Take for the young car fans that were in attendance with their car loving dads (and moms!). Herb Scranton, Paul Blackmon, John Kress, Dick Montgomery, and Len Pilhofer were on-hand to build Revell snap-tight kits—both Jeeps and Mustangs—with the young ones as well as work on our own kits as a demo to the public and garner interest in Alamo Squadron and model building in general. Club members spent about 4-5 hours with the kids (until we ran out of kits!) We also handed out numerous club flyers with info about what IPMS and Alamo Squadron are all about. In all, it was a really fun time and well worth the effort to reach out to the San Antonio car community as show them what we are all about.



MSG (Ret) Scranton is telling LtCol (Ret) Pilhofer to shut-up and let him do the driving. Ah, memories....



Herb Scranton and Paul Blackmon worked tirelessly with youth all day showing them the ropes of their first-ever kit!



# Club Announcements

## March Club Contest: Open Subject

First Place: Rick Stanley  
**Die Cast Hot Rod**



Second Place: Chris Lenahan  
**British Cromwell Mk. IV**



Third Place: Herb Scranton III  
**Sikorsky H-19**







# Remembering Rick Stanley

By Dick Montgomery, President, Alamo Squadron

**R**ick Stanley passed away very unexpectedly on March 25, 2017. The cause of his passing appears to be a massive heart attack. Rick was at the March meeting on the 2<sup>nd</sup> of March and appeared to be in good health and rather good spirits.

Rick joined Alamo Squadron in June of 2005 and became a regular fixture at club meetings. It was a rare meeting at which Rick was not present. Along with his good friend, David Walker, Rick participated in all aspects of the activities of Alamo Squadron. It was not uncommon for Rick to serve as the source of a nomination for another member to run for office. Rick, himself, was, on occasion, nominated to various positions within the E-Board, with that nomination usually being provided by David. Rick participated in other aspects of the “administrative” or “business” side of Alamo Squadron. He was known to participate in the various discussions about club policies, most recently about the revisions to the C&BL and to the acquisition of 501c-7 status.

Rick also appeared to enjoy the White Elephant gift exchange at the December meetings, often laughing when he was able to “steal” a car kit from another member and manage to hold onto that kit throughout the evening, taking it home with great pleasure.

Rick was a participant in every ModelFiesta from his entry into the club up through the most recent event, ModelFiesta 36 in February, 2017. Sometimes Rick worked at the Raffle/Door Prize table, or like this past event, he manned the Alamo Squadron Club Table with his friend David.

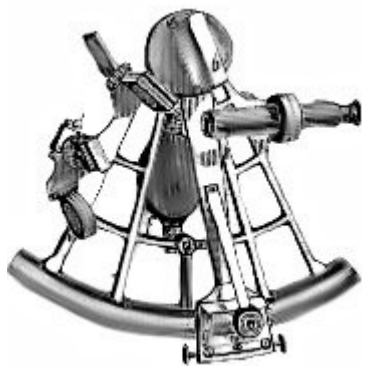
One could always find one of Rick’s models on the Works-In-Progress table and, on occasion, on the Monthly Contest Table. In fact, one of Rick’s cars

won 1<sup>st</sup> place at the March meeting in the club contest, an honor that certainly gave Rick much satisfaction.

Rick’s friendly and folksy presence will be missed.







# Cover Story

## Hobby Town Gundam Contest

Story by Josh Comeau, Event Director

Photos by xxxx

On March 25th, HobbyTown USA in San Antonio had its first ever Gundam model competition. All in all, it was a great success, and I was incredibly impressed with the skill and passion of my fellow modelers in this fast-growing and exciting corner of our wonderful model-building hobby. I wanted to show you all some of the amazing work on display that weekend.



First, since Gundam models have sharp details and are cast in color, we included an out-of-box, straight build category. This category focused on the cleanliness of



the build, properly removing sprue gates and careful application of stickers and panel lining. Minor painting was allowed, as long as it did not majorly alter the look of the bare plastic. Of note were the red High Grade Sinanju, and the devilish Deathscythe Hell. Sinanju by Kyea Benevidez seriously impressed us as judges for the spot-on ornate gold work all over the body. Deathscythe Hell, Ricardo Cordero, took first place in this category for a

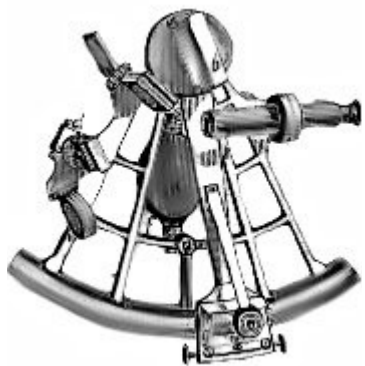


consistently clean and smooth finish, a perfect representation of the Gundam as seen in its anime.

Next, the custom category. This is where the ability of our modelers truly shone, with exquisite paint jobs, unique kitbashes, and detailed dioramas. These are just a few that stood out in this category. This diorama showcased a unique burned-out building and a GM Sniper that has clearly seen some use. The damage was blended well with the camouflage.



This one showed off plenty of variation on battle damage. All four fighters bear wounds, whether they be slashes or bullet holes. We were impressed with the all-out approach to wear and tear.



# Cover Story



This was the 3rd place winner for the category. The metallic finish on the gold and silver inner frame was exquisite, and the preshaded flat finish on the armor accented it perfectly. It's truly a sight to behold!



The 2nd place winner was a heavy custom piece, and towered over almost all the other entries. The flag was made from heat-shaped plastic, and a real fabric scarf was cut and shaped for a dash of vivid color. The custom additions all along the body were almost perfectly seamless.



1st place went to this magnificent Full Armor Gundam from Mobile Suit Gundam Thunderbolt. Heavily weathered to show use in an unforgiving debris field, this heavily armed and armored Gundam blew away the judges with its attention to detail and consistent quality throughout. (see cover photo)

Throughout the day, the builders and anyone interested could cast their vote for whichever entry they liked best. After the final tally, this audience vote went to this heavily damaged dual piece. The builder certainly didn't hold back in depicting two warriors locked in a battle to the very end!



# Cover Story



The Best in Show award went to this Sazabi, a unit usually known for its red color, repainted into a striking blue and orange scheme. Detail showed in every seam, with sparkling metallics shining from the frame through gaps in the armor.



But there's still more! We included categories for children and teens, and even they showed amazing skill and eagerness to impress. The star was the custom piece in the Teens category, taking a surprising

principle color of brown and making it work magnificently.



All in all, the event was a great success, and we look forward to the next contest, when I'm sure even more Texas talent will be on display.



# Feature Story

## Building a Tramp Steamer

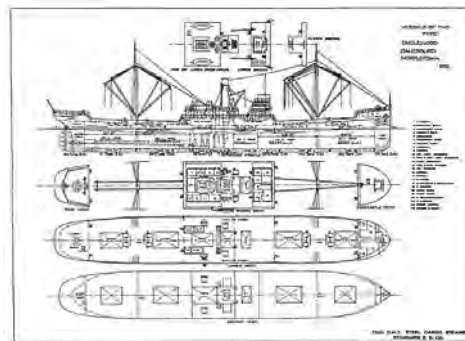
Story, Model, and Photos by Michael Buckley

The Tramp Steamer was the most ubiquitous of all merchant ships built between the 1920s and the mid-40s, appearing virtually in all maritime markets throughout the world. Immortalized in novels, photos, and atmospheric paintings, the distinctive shape of the "three islands" profile, with an elevated bow section, midsection with superstructure and bridge, and elevated fantail shed, as the distinguishing characteristics. A thin single smokestack and rudimentary main cabins attested to the primary function of the two boom cargo ship.

The sole exception is a crude modification of the World War II "Q Ship"--- a merchantman converted to gunship for the purpose of luring German U-Boats into surface attacks ---issued by Lindbergh. The Lindbergh model is in the unusual scale of 1:390 and the detail is quite crude in spite of the imaginative rendition on the Boxcover artwork:



Drawings exist for a wide variety of Tramp Steamers--as each was modified by shipyards for regional owners, and only the basic shape of two Cargo Boom Masts, the raised Bow and Stern, and the Central Island with single Smokestack, designated these vessels:



Various drawings found on the Internet illustrate the layout of the Central "island" including the Bridge and Smokestack which are key visual elements. These drawings,

and the various artwork depicting Tramp Steamers in heavy seas, or on the Thames in London, belie the very crude treatment of the superstructure in the Lindbergh model as shown below:



Many artists drew the ships in dramatic atmospheric quality---and writers fantasized about shipping out on a Tramp Steamer to exotic lands such as in Conrad's "The Heart of Darkness", while the vessel was portrayed as a Cinema icon in King Kong. For ship modelers however, no models are offered in plastic or in wood.

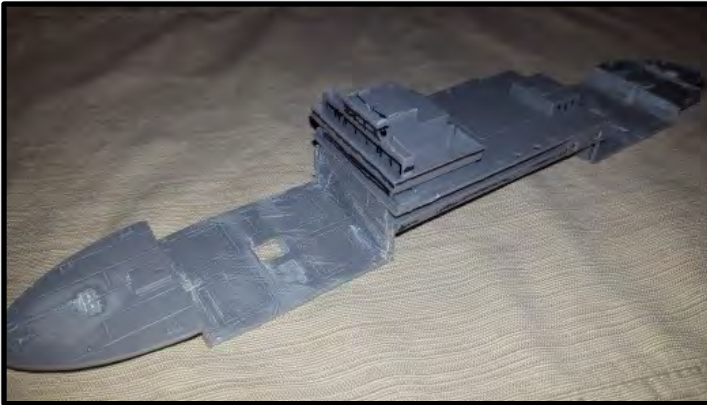




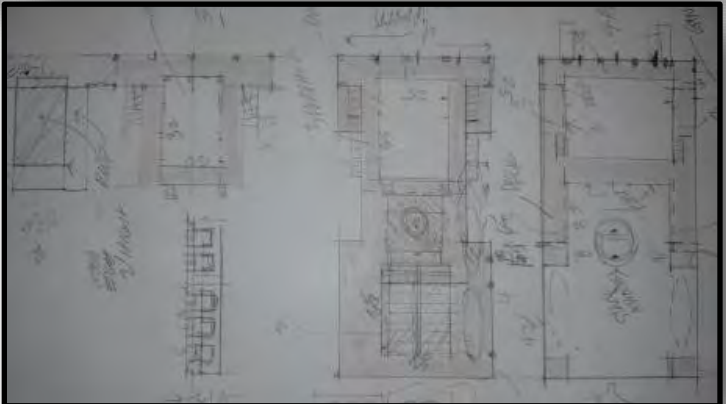


# Feature Story

## Building a Tramp Steamer



The heavily molded Lindbergh model has no differentiation between superstructure and railings and shows no fenestration. However, I determined the Lindbergh Hull could be modified to form the base for a Scratch-Built upper Superstructure and Kit-Bash of selected parts from a Trumpeter Victory Ship model in 1:350 Scale, close enough in scale to use Lifeboats, Ventilators and Cargo Booms. An aftermarket set of Photo-etch Ship Railings in 1:300 scale would also provide ships ladders and assorted railing--- close enough to Lindbergh scale.



First step was to remove the featureless Superstructure, and to augment the existing Hull. Then to create Drawings of the Superstructure to be built from Sheet Plastic as follows:

Scratch building the upper levels and test fitting carefully along the way, yielded promising results, with punched out Porthole windows and brass jewelry clasps as Porthole frames, as shown below with new scratchbuilt components compared to original Lindbergh Superstructure parts:





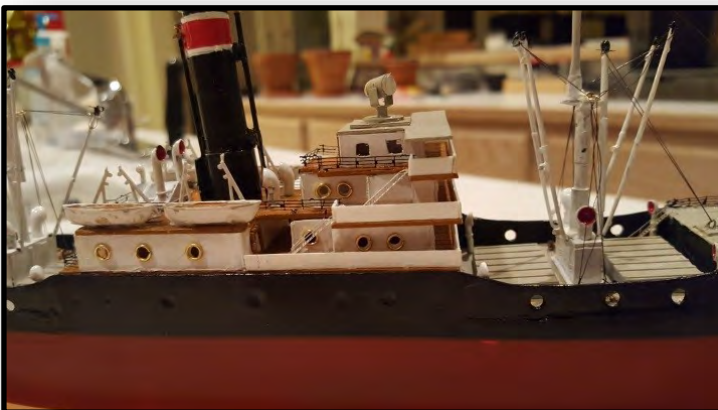
# Feature Story

## Building a Tramp Steamer

Punching new drainage holes along the Hull's gun-wales, modifying the Lindbergh Smokestack with an extension and brass tubing to represent steam whistles, scoring the plasticard decks and painting teak color, repurposing the cargo hold covers from the Victory ship model, creating a Ships Shed structure on the Stern, and assembling the new Superstructure on the hull, began to dimension a new fresh look for the tired Lindbergh model, as seen below:



Borrowing lifeboats and anchor winches from the Trumpeter set, installing ship's railing and ladders, relocating ventilators, creating a new engine skylight behind the now taller Smokestack, crafting a searchlight atop the Captain's Bridge, and finishing the Cargo Boom assemblies rigged with Wonderwire, gave the model the true look of a vintage Three Islands Steamer. Mounting the Tramp Steamer with brass finials on a walnut-stained wooden base completes the presentation.





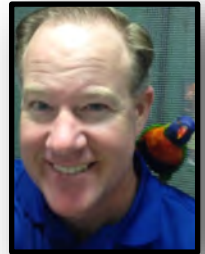


# Feature Story

## Strut Oh !

### Fixing my Strut Error and Other Greased Lightning Shenanigans

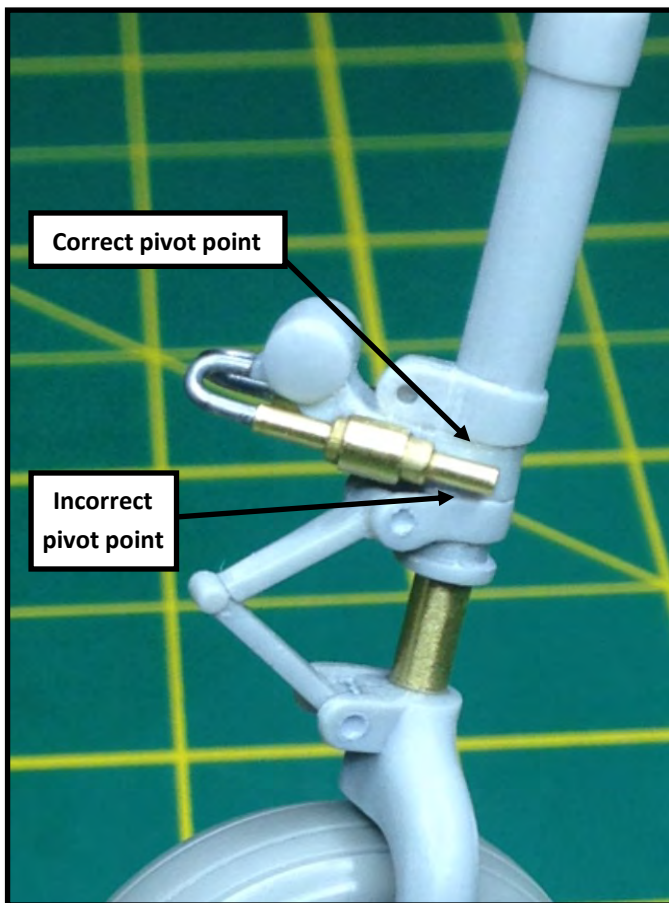
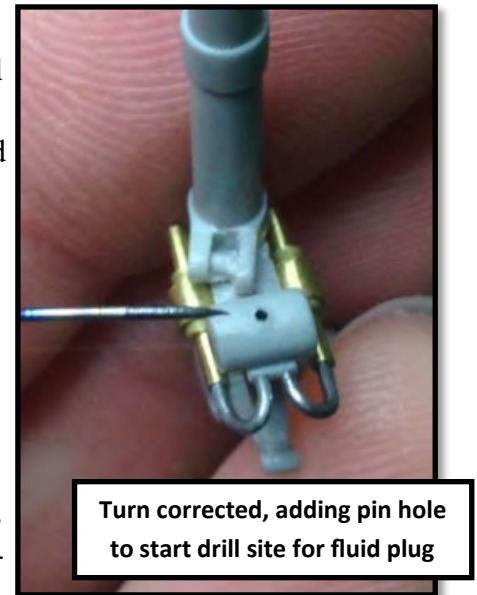
Story and photos by Eric Syverson IPMS# 50324



So there I was “Strutting Struts” in the February issue of the Navigator. Then in a twist of apropos title irony I realized - right after publication of course - that I placed the wheel’s pivot point in the **WRONG** place! Fortunately the epoxy that I used did not have great torsional strength,

the second installment of Greased Lightning’s build. I hope you enjoy it and give me a good ribbing at the next meeting!

After correcting the pivot point I decided to add a prominent fuel plug that existed on the real thing. Before drilling I always begin with a pin to make sure my start point is centered. I then drill using a drill bit one size smaller than the fill item size. In this case I used cannulated brass and drill bit to construct the plug.



so after a few cuts around the strut’s drill bit core using a Tamiya finger saw, I was able to twist and break loose the incorrect pivot point using two narrow tweezers, and then create the correct pivot point.

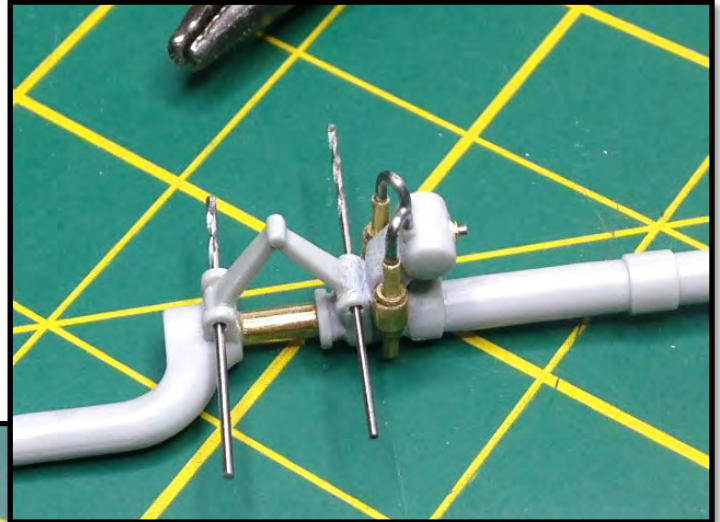
I also looked at some more pictures and continued to add detail to the front landing gear, eventually moving on to the main struts. The results are provided here as



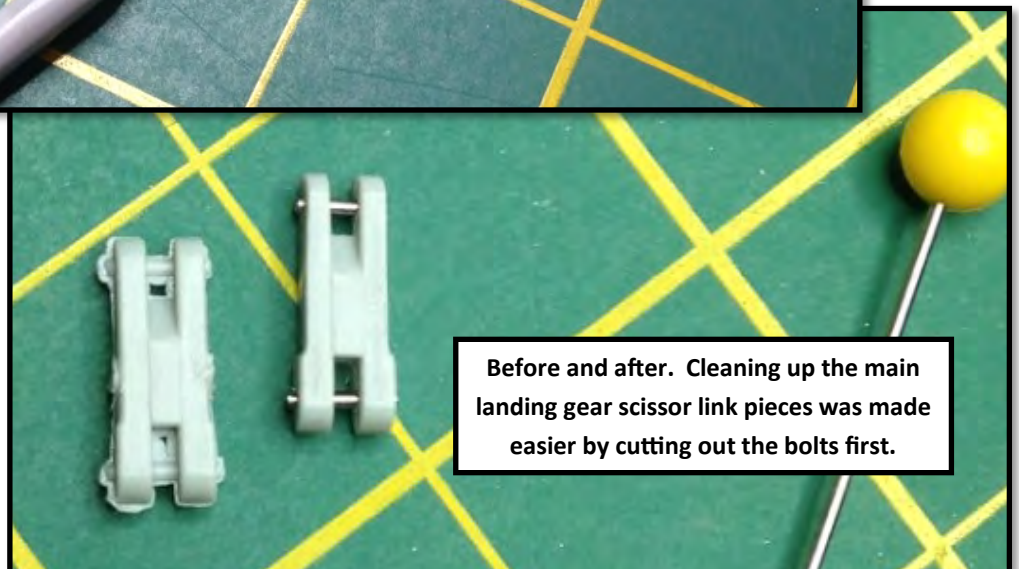
# Feature Story

## Strut Oh !

Looking at more pictures, I realized that the front gear on the real thing had rather prominent bolts at the scissor link locations. Interestingly the bottom bolt was very long - apparently to accommodate being hooked up for tow. Again, using small drill bits, I carefully created the prominent bolts to add more detail.



Moving on to the main struts I really didn't want to spend more time on scratch building but the main scissor link pieces had so much flash that I decided to cut the molded bolts out to make clean-up easier, and then replace the bolts with metal again.



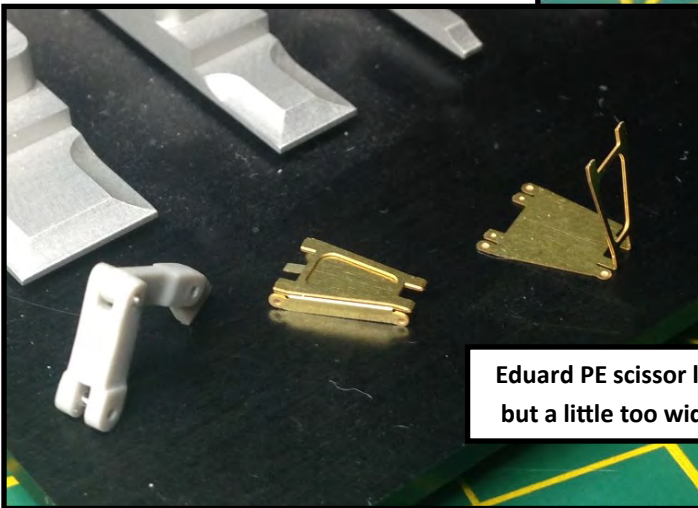
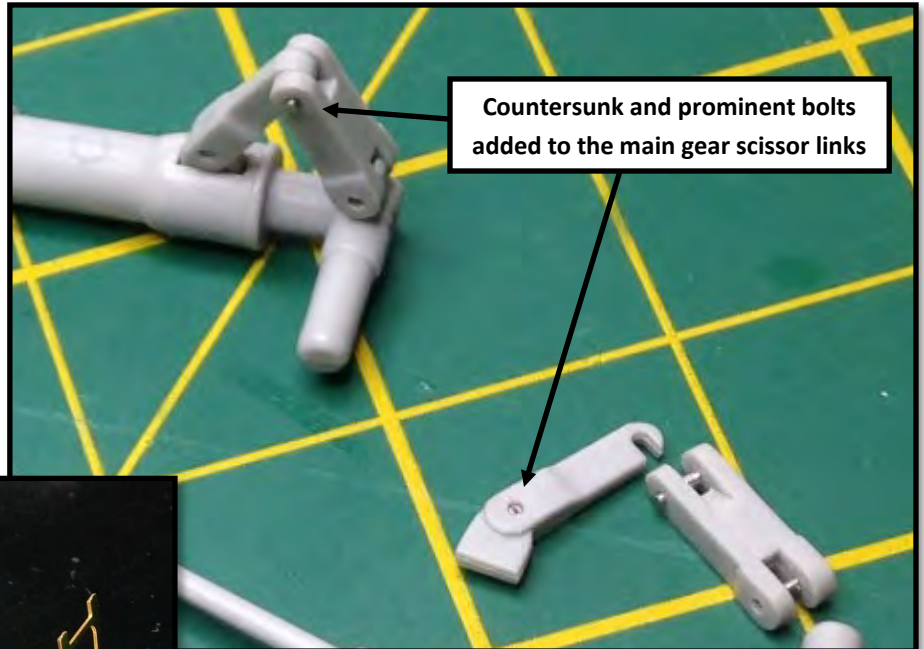




# Feature Story

## Strut Oh !

Looking at the real scissor links I noticed they were nothing like the Trumpeter effort. I also noticed that some bolts were countersunk and some prominent - so I replicated the same on the Trumpy pieces while waiting on an Eduard PE undercarriage option in the mail.

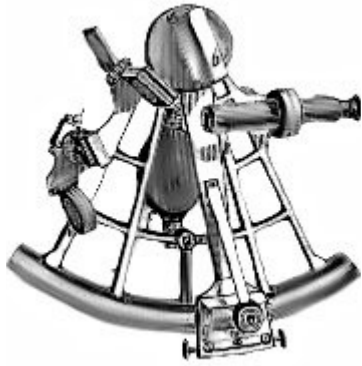


When the Eduard PE came in I folded my first non seat harness PE. So much of the fun in this hobby is trying new things! Unfortunately when provisionally mounted on the struts the scissor link PE is noticeably large - like slices of Big Lou's pizza. With the good work I did on the Trumpy pieces and appreciating their sturdiness, I concluded they might bolster the weight of this kit better than the PE and so opted to use them for the time being.

As a final bit of landing gear fun the strut support on one main gear broke. So I replaced this part on both main struts with drill bits. You may remember from the first Greased Lightning article that drill bits are also IN the struts.



**Stay tuned for more Greased Lightning shenanigans in future issues ...**



# Upcoming Events

IPMS Region 6

***Next Meeting: Thursday, April 6th, 2017 at 7:00PM***

***Location: Northside Ford of San Antonio***

**April 8, 2017**

**Super-Invitational 2017**

**New Orleans, LA**

<http://ipmsneworleans.wix.com/flyingtiger>



**April 8, 2017**

**Tulsa Modeler's Forum Open Contest**

**Bixby Community Center**

**211 N. Canbiss Ave**

**Bixby, OK 74008**

<http://tulsaipms.org/Contest2017.htm>



**April 29, 2017**

**Modelmania**

**Stafford Centre**

**10505 Cash Road**

**Stafford, TX**

[http://www.ipms-houston.org/?page\\_id=11](http://www.ipms-houston.org/?page_id=11)







# About Alamo Squadron

## Executive Board 2016-2017



**President:**  
Dick Montgomery  
IPMS #14003  
president@alamosquadron.com



**Vice-President:**  
Herb Scranton III  
vp@alamosquadron.com



**Treasurer:**  
Dana Mathes  
IPMS #43781  
sec-treas@alamosquadron.com

**IPMS/USA Alamo Squadron** was founded in 1977 in San Antonio, Texas, for the enjoyment of building scale models and the camaraderie of the members. It is a hobby-centered social organization which, at its core, is focused on scale modeling of all kinds. It is an excellent source of information for those who wish to enhance their modeling skills and improve their modeling techniques, and is open and inviting to visitors and guests. Dues are \$24.00 a year, due to the treasurer on September 1st of each year.

Alamo Squadron has been hosting ModelFiesta since 1981. Locations have included the Wonderland Mall, a Holiday Inn, the Seven Oaks Motel & Convention Center, the Live Oak Civic Center and the new location for 2013, the San Antonio Event Center.

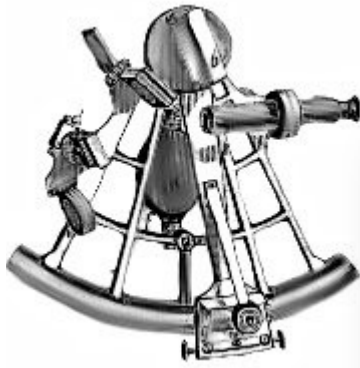


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# Final Words...



IPMS/USA MEMBERSHIP FORM			
IPMS No.:	Name: _____		
Address:	_____		
City:	State:	Zip:	
Phone:	E-mail:		
Signature (required by PO): _____			
Type of Membership	<input type="checkbox"/> Adult, 1 Year: \$30 <input type="checkbox"/> Adult, 2 Years: \$58 <input type="checkbox"/> Adult, 3 Years: \$86 <input type="checkbox"/> Junior (Under 18 Years) \$17 <input type="checkbox"/> Family, 1 Year: \$35 (Adult + \$5, One Set Journals)    How Many Cards? _____ <input type="checkbox"/> Canada & Mexico: \$35 <input type="checkbox"/> Other / Foreign: \$38 (airfare)    Checks must be drawn on a US bank or international money order		
Payment Method: <input type="checkbox"/> Check <input type="checkbox"/> Money Order			
Chapter Affiliation, (if any): _____			
If Recommended by an IPMS Member, Please List His / Her Name and Member Number: _____			
Name: _____		IPMS No.: _____	
<b>IPMS/USA</b>		PO Box 56023	
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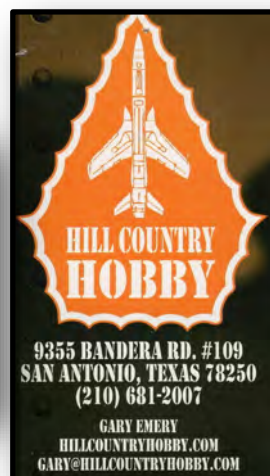
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