



## Editor's Note

It is unfortunate. For all our adulation of distant, legendary heroes, we have so little knowledge of what our fellow TCAHers may have done in their youth. Our friends look like ordinary men, and they certainly do not feel special nor want to be treated as special. But they are. And their experience can bring a special authority when they write on subjects of which they have experience. Our own Bob Steinbrunn flew helicopter gunships in Vietnam. Above are his medals, helmet, and a model of his chopper. Thus Bob is specially qualified to write the following review.

## US Army AH-1 Cobra Units in Vietnam

by **Jonathan Bernstein**  
reviewed by Bob Steinbrunn  
*Ruthless Tornado White 23*

This title in the Osprey Combat Aircraft series (#41) tells the fascinating story of the design, development, and deployment in Vietnam of the Bell AH-1G HueyCobra. It is also the story of the United States Army units which operated this versatile helicopter in combat. First fielded in 1967 as the Vietnam conflict was rapidly approaching its zenith, the Cobra proved invaluable in stemming the tide of invasion by North Vietnamese regular army

units in numerous battles. Known popularly as the "snake", the Cobra was feared by both the VC and NVA and was responsible for extracting victory from the jaws of defeat on a number of occasions. The AH-1G was produced in smaller numbers (about 1108) than is generally appreciated, a testimony to the effectiveness and reputation of this, the world's first purpose-designed armed attack helicopter. Despite its lengthy and legendary exploits, the Cobra saw only six brief years of combat before the end of the Vietnam conflict.

The story begins in 1962 when the Howze Board of the U.S. Army

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## TCAH This Month

The monthly meeting will be held Saturday August 13, at Fleming Field, South St. Paul, beginning at 1:30 PM. Vendor baiting will begin about 12:30, so come early. August is a vacation month, so let us think of the airliners which take us on vacation. This will also be our last chance to discuss plans and arrangements for Nordic Con.

## General Meeting Minutes

July 9, 2005

by Johannes Allert

President Ken Hornby made a quick appearance to start the meeting at 1:30 pm. A long overdue appearance was made by Former Club President Ken Sallman who was able to make today's meeting.

Update on the MN Air Guard Museum – Museum is in process of getting the kits donated to the facility.

Books – Ken Hornby has the books that were offered to the club at ½ price.

Member who signed up, see Ken..  
IPMS Update – Updates to the IPMS Constitution/By Laws have been put forth for a vote. IPMS members are reminded to submit their vote. To date, only a small percentage have been received. Also, they are in the process of starting a membership drive, and may have a table at Nordic con.

TCAH Newsletter for September – Due to George Mellinger's schedule that month, it's "iffy" that we will have a newsletter that month. He will let us know for sure in the next month.

RPM – President Bob Maderich from RPM shared info. Regarding their club and it's plans to donate kits for the Nordicon raffle as well as sponsor a trophy

Nordicon – Johannes Allert gave summary - - All materials and supplies related to Nordicon have been gathered for use in September. Registration forms will still need to be printed. Vendor room is full. Trophies have been ordered. Sign up sheets are available for the membership. Tables have been ordered and will be delivered to the terminal the day before the contest. Detailed and final preparation will be done at next month's meeting in August. If you are on a committee, plan on being there.

Positions needed to be filled – Dave Pluth will be stepping down after September as Webmaster and co-ordinator for the Yahoo groups. Johannes Allert also mentioned that Club Officer positions will be vacant after this term. Members are encouraged to step up and get involved or there will be a form of Government shut down, and it will not be caused by any political party, but by the members themselves.

October Guest Speaker – Axel Korn-

fer made it to the meeting later than he expected, but he wanted to let everyone know that Wolfgang Samuel will be speaking at the WW II Historical Roundtable about Intel Ops. In Germany at the end of WW II. He plans to be in town through that weekend in October and will be at the TCAH meeting as well. Axel is giving the membership a choice of what they want him to speak about. Either "Watson's Wizards" or Electronic warfare over the former Soviet Union and Vietnam. To be determined at the August meeting.

Johannes Allert conducted the show & tell. The raffle was held afterwards and the meeting adjourned at 245pm, but not before saying a goodbye to our own Terry "Texas" Love. Terry has been with the club for many years and his upbeat attitude and can do spirit will be truly missed. The November Club Auctions will never be the same. Farewell Terry and God speed !

## Business Meeting

June 11, 2005

There was no business meeting this month.

## Treasurer's Report

July 2005

By Tom Norrbohm

First of all, please welcome a new member, Claude Funston of St. Paul. He comes to us by way of Traverse City, Michigan. Welcome aboard Claude! As of 7-17-05 we have \$5836.13 and 84 members. Our expenses for the month of June was \$476.73. This included the newsletter/postage, donation to the MNG Museum and trophy package to the Nats in Atlanta. Our income for the same month was \$483.00. This included Nordic-Con, the raffle and club shirts.

I also want to take this time to let the membership know that the dues renewals are coming due soon! I will not be able to take dues at the September meeting (Nordic-Con) and the October meeting (another commitment). So I would strongly encourage you to pay your dues via mail again this year. Many of you

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## From the President

By Ken Hornby

There are several important events coming up within TCAH. First, obviously, is NordiCon in September. August is the month we need to make sure everyone and everything is prepared for this occasion. I want remind everyone that NordiCon will fall on our regular meeting day, so there will in effect be no meeting in September other than gathering for NordiCon. Steve Macey and Johann Allert, the co-chairs of the event, have everything well in hand and I will leave it to them to determine whether or not they wish to hold a business meeting this month. Regardless, I encourage all committee chairmen or a designated proxy to attend this month's meeting and be prepared to give an update to the general membership on your progress and needs for NordiCon. Even though this is a one-day event, let's not leave anything to chance. I'm sure there will be other information regarding NordiCon elsewhere in this issue.

The second item I wish to remind everyone of is the impending loss of our web page meister and Yahoo Groups coordinator, Dave Pluth. Dave announced last month that he will be stepping down from these posts immediately after NordiCon. Dave will be available for the next several months to help someone take over responsibility for our website and has said it generally takes about an hour each month to keep our site updated. Anyone wishing to take on these duties is encouraged to contact Dave Pluth. If no one takes over these tasks we will lose two significant means of communication for our club. That means no more newsletter available online and no easy internet email group to send and receive important news and interesting updates to other TCAH members. Dave has been mentioning at meetings for the past eighteen months that he has wanted to take a step back from these responsibilities due to other commitments on his time. Up to this point no one has expressed an interest or followed through on a commitment to take over. This club

is what you make it.

The last item I wish to bring to your attention was preemptively announced last month by Johannes Allert. Falling back on the 22<sup>nd</sup> Amendment to the U.S. Constitution, I have decided not to run for a third term as President of TCAH. My understanding is that the incumbent President, Vice-President, and Secretary will not be on November's ballot. We will, therefore, be taking the first nominations for these posts this month. That means one of you reading this will need to be dedicated (or foolish) enough to run for one of these positions. If you find yourself contemplating a run for club office, reading the TCAH Constitution and By-Laws available on our website is a good place to start. I will be glad to discuss the responsibilities of the office with anyone interested in running.

One final note: If you ordered books from the SAMI special offer in June and have not yet received them from me, I will have them at the August meeting. Please try to make the meeting and be prepared to pay your bill. If you cannot make the meeting please contact me to make arrangements to pick up your books.

## Squadron/Signal Publication Schedule For the Rest of 2005

By Terry Love

July - *F-15 Falcon In Action*  
August - *Seprat Jaguar In Action*  
September - *Fi-156 Storch In Action*  
October - *F-102 Delta Dart In Action*  
November - *MiG-15 Walk Around*  
December - *U S Armor Camouflage and Markings World War II Special.*



## On The Show Table

July 2005

Aircraft		
John Dunphy		
Fujimi 1/72		MiG-21MF
Tamiya 1/48		Spitfire I
Steve Hustad		
WIP 1/72		Lippisch Delta
WIP 1/72		Lippisch DFS194
Steve Jantscher		
Hobbycraft 1/48		A-4B
Bob Maderich		
1/72		Ju-87G
Fletcher Warren		
Eduard 1/72 WIP		Fokker E.IV
Eduard 1/72 WIP		Junkers J.1
1/72 WIP		P-51D
Armor		
Steve Jantscher		
Tamiya 1/78		Hetzer
Bob Maderich		
1/35		21/2ton Truck
Bill Read		
Tamiya 1/35		M-1026
Tamiya 1/35		M-998
Fletcher Warren		
1/72 WIP		Elefant SP
Figure		
Fletcher Warren		
US Army Ranger 54mm WIP		

## Nordic Con Update

By Johannes Allert

In another month, TCAH will host Nordic-Con at the Fleming Field main terminal. This will be the first of its kind since we've normally hosted events like this in hotels. We are starting to ramp up operations and so far; we've accomplished numerous items on our "to do" list. They include the following: Centralization of materials - We now have all the leg extensions, lights, and judging materials, and signage in one place. Johannes Allert has agreed to store the items at his place. Table covers have been purchased as well. Awards - Tom Norrbohm & Johannes Allert have finalized the awards and have ordered the items related to them. Vendors - The vendor room is full. Volunteers - TCAH members have signed up for; judging, set up/take down, model escort/security, and

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Contest Calendar	TCAH Calendar	The Master Builder "Smoke Rings" By Frank Cuden
<p>9-10-05 NordicCon Twin Cities AeroHistorians South St. Paul, MN www.aerohistorians.org</p>	<p>September - Contest Month. No theme.</p>	
<p>10-1-05 The Show XI IPMS Will Cook James Hart Cafetorium 18211 Aberdeen Street Homewood, IL 60430 Contact: Ed Mate 915-478-4432 obviouschoice@juno.com</p>	<p>October - School is under way, so this month we focus on trainers</p> <p>November - Club auction &amp; elections - No theme.</p> <p>December - Another chilly month, so naturally, Aircraft of the Cold War. Merrill Anderson Fokker Challenge.</p>	<p>Well, we've gone through the evolution of the hobby in, sometimes, leaps and bounds. We've all seen canopy masks, Eduard "colored" seat belts, even pre-painted interiors. Are these modeling aids a positive or negative influence on the hobby? You be the judge. I still hand paint the belts and various other bits and pieces indigenous to a cockpit. I mask and spray canopy frames, thus negating the need to shell out moola for the canopy masks. Don't get me wrong: I'm not condemning all the new "gadgets" for modeling. It's just that my comfort zone has been realized. In other words, "If it isn't broke, don't fix it."</p>
<p>10-29-05 IPMS Glue Crew Contact Joe Drew jdrew@dwave.net</p>	<p>January - Tired of Winter? Its summer in Australia. So we'll honor Australia &amp; New Zealand's Air Forces.</p>	
<p>2-4-06 Hope it Don't Snow Show IPMS Zumbro Valley Stewartville Civic Cntr Contact: Ed St. Denis edwardstdenis@msn.com</p>	<p>February - Ski-equipped aircraft.</p> <p>March - The Spanish Civil War. Polikarpovs. Fiats, Heinkels....</p> <p>April - Bloody April! Bring your World War One models.</p>	<p>Enter smoke rings. How many of you have thought of building one of the Italian Macchi World War II fighters, only to be put off by the green "smoke rings", necessary to achieve accuracy in the scheme? "Such statements as: "My airbrush won't spray that tight of a pattern", or "My hand is not steady enough", or "I can't get my airbrush to consistently spray such a narrow line."</p>
<p>2-24-25-06 IPMS Pathfinders Raddison Inn 517 Grand Canyon Dr. Madison, WI</p>	<p>May - Victory in Europe month. So bring late war aircraft of the victors.</p>	
<p>3-18-06 LOCON 2006 IPMS Fort Crook Mid-America Center Council Bluffs, IA Contact: Mike Cavil 402-493-9669 mcavil@tconl.com</p>	<p><i>(Nordic Con Continued from page 3)</i> registration. The list will be brought again to the August meeting for anyone still interested in helping out. Registration Forms – Registration forms have yet to be printed up. Johannes Allert to take copy to printers. In August we will cover duties and responsibilities one more time as well as review floor plan, this will be our only meeting before September, so again if you are interested in helping out, please be there. Most important, don't forget to build something for the show. Come to play!</p>	<p>We've all been there in one way or another. Therefore, I was quite surprised to see a product offering from Mike Grant decals the other day. The whole decal sheet is composed of randomly-designed rings that appear to be tightly airbrushed. Simply applying them to the painted surface completes the intricate camouflage scheme so often seen on various Italian World War II fighters.</p>
<p>3-18-06 11th Annual Show Mad City Modelers Radisson Inn 517 Grand Canyon Dr. Madison, WI 54719 Contact: Jim Turek 608-329-7222 jjtmodel@yahoo.com</p>		<p>When one stops to think about it, the "smoke rings" are a natural progression. Remember first seeing invasion strips in decal form? Same principle. I've also noted the discussion on Internet sites regarding these decals. Such statements as: "Real" men/modelers won't use them", "What is this hobby coming to?", etc., should keep the discussion alive for awhile. We all are reaping the benefits of modeling, 2005-style. Gone are the days of huge rivets dominating a fuselage</p>
<p>3-25-06 IPMS Quad Cities Holiday Inn Center Davenport, IA Contact: Glen Broman 309-523-3671 gbroman@aol.com</p>	<p><i>(Treasurer Continued from page 2)</i> did so last year and I would like to see a repeat of that this year. I will keep you posted on the TCAH Groups and the newsletter.</p>	<p>(Continued on page 7)</p>

*(Cobras Continued from page 1)*

outlined requirements for the formation of Air Cavalry units. Bell Helicopter of Ft. Worth, Texas, responded with a small series of prototypical armed helicopters as proof-of-concept vehicles. As the war in Vietnam escalated it was seen that the ad hoc arming of the Vertol (Piasecki) H-21s was, at best, a stop-gap measure, and thought was given to more effective armament kits for the new Bell UH-1 series of helicopters.

A great variety of armament kits were designed for the Hueys, including two flown by this reviewer in combat while assigned as a gunship pilot to Alpha Troop, 7th Squadron, 17th Air Cavalry. (see: ) and () Mounted on my unit's UH-1C helicopters were both the XM-21 weapons sub-system and the XM-5 weapons sub-system. The XM-21 system was comprised of two General Electric GAU-2B/A 7.62mm "mini-guns" on flexible mounts, and two seven-tube 2.75" Folding Fin Aerial Rocket (FFAR) launchers in addition to the two 7.62mm M-60 machine guns wielded by the door gunners. The XM-5 system had the two rocket launchers plus a 40mm grenade launcher mounted in a turret in the nose. Representing awesome firepower, the weapons sub-systems on these aircraft were heavy and came at a cost. We could either carry a full fuel load and half an armament load, or a full load of machine gun ammunition and rockets and half a load of fuel. The takeoff profile involved dragging the aircraft on its skids along the ground until the machine entered Effective Translational Lift at about 15-20 mph and decided then to start flying. Or not. The UH-1C was not as effective a gunship as was desired because of these limitations on weight and available power and it became clear that a new design was required. Bell began studies on a new design which could carry a complete load of fuel and armament, yet utilizing many of the drive train components of the proven UH-1 series to shorten development time. This process spawned the remarkable AH-1G Cobra.

This reviewer was in (the former republic of) Vietnam when the first AH-1G units and pilots were brought in-country. The initial aircraft had blue-tinted canopies to reduce cockpit heat since they were not air-conditioned. We frequently refueled at the same facilities as the Cobras during the heat of action and marveled at what supermen the pilots must be. Sitting there with our UH-1C cabin and cockpit doors open, shirt sleeves rolled up and staying cool in the tropical heat, we watched in some astonishment as the Cobra pilots would land, open their canopy hatches, and fall out of the cockpits on the ground. There they'd lay, wilted and swilling canteen after canteen of water, shriveled up with dehydration. We wondered who covered their break from a gun run since they had no door gunners who could fire aft and down, forcing the NVA to keep their heads down while the aircraft vacated the neighborhood.

Having watched - but never flown - the Cobra, it was with some eager anticipation that I looked forward to reviewing this book when asked. I was not to be disappointed.

This volume contains 91 black & white photographs, 15 color photographs, 12 color plates containing 36 color profiles of AH-1 aircraft with camouflage schemes and unit markings, three sketches, and captions for these profiles towards the end of the book. Printed on semi-gloss coated stock, the reproduction of the photographs runs from average to good, although one could wish that many weren't quite so tiny. It could also be wished that many of these were more in focus. Still, having said that, it must be noted these are combat photographs usually taken by the crewmembers involved under the press of combat conditions, and as such have a striking effect on the reader.

Also annoying were the number of blank margins inside many pages adjacent to the center binding. These appear as a blank inside vertical column of the three columns each page allows. This seems a waste of space which could be better filled with text, allowing reproduction of the photographs in a lar-

ger size.

Overall I found the book to be well-researched and written: I was unable to find any facts, accounts, or author's conclusions which were not in accordance with either my recollections or other reference books on this subject which reside on my shelf. He clearly has done his homework.

Many Vietnam veterans – including myself – have difficulty reading much about the war, especially if the book in question is well written and gives a sense of immediacy. One is whisked back in time and forced to relive that which may not be altogether pleasant. These were not happy national times: the country was divided regarding this unpopular war, several Presidencies were foundering over it, the national budget took a sound thrashing over its cost, and world opinion was against U.S. involvement. Returning veterans were reviled and shunned by their countrymen. Many who served asked, and perhaps still ask, "Why?"

Was it worth the extreme experience of one year of your life spent in combat for a nebulous cause? Was it all worth the severing of a nation along these political/military lines? A saying running rampant in the Army at the time went something like this: "We, the unwilling, led by the incompetent, are doing the unnecessary for the ungrateful." These are questions only the veteran who fought there can answer for himself, and this title may be one piece of the puzzle for him.

I found this book to be somewhat disturbing – no fault of the author or Osprey – and this was simply because it places the reader in the context of the times and back in combat. In this it does an excellent job. Thrilling, perhaps, for the armchair reader; not so thrilling for one whose unit lost fully a third of its pilots in the first seven months of combat during 1967-68. If you'd care to sample a taste of what it was like to fly, crew, and maintain AH-1 Cobras in Vietnam, this title will serve you well. Be warned: you may not enjoy it; this book reads that well. You will also find flamboy-

*(Continued on page 7)*

## Airline Chatter

By Terry Love

Northwest Airlines took delivery on May 20, its 74th Airbus A-319. It will be fleet number 3174. It was the third of six A-319s that NWA will take delivery of this year.

Northwest Airlines took delivery on May 26 of the 75th Airbus A-319. It will be fleet number 3175. It was the fourth of six A-319s that NWA will take delivery of this year.

Northwest Airlines took delivery of its 17th Airbus A-300-300, fleet number 3310, on Tuesday, June 21.

Northwest Airlines is pulling pretzels and magazines off of their flights to save weight, jet fuel, and money. Savings are in the millions of dollars.

Northwest Airlines will begin service Memphis to Columbia, South Carolina on October 2.

Republic Airways, which operates Regional Jets, will pay \$100 million to buy 28 Embraer 170 jets, and other assets, from U S Airways.

Alaska Airlines ordered 35 Boeing 737-800s for \$2.3 Billion Alaska Airlines also optioned 15 more of the same aircraft.

American Airlines will begin service from Chicago to New Delhi, India on November 15. This will be American Airline's longest route with 7,500 miles. American will use Boeing 777 on the route.

Ryan Air ordered 5 more Boeing 737-800s. Ryan Air presently has 91 Boeing 737-800s worth 230 more or order. This order brings the total to 235 on order. Ryan Air is the Southwest Airlines of Europe. Iraqi Airways has 16 Boeing 727-200s parked at Amman, Jordan. China Eastern Airlines ordered 2 Boeing 747-400 freighters for \$428 million.

All Nippon Cargo Airlines ordered 4 new Boeing 747-400 freighters. Singapore Airways bought 20 Boeing 737-NGs with options for 20 more Deal is worth \$1.1 Billion. Japan Airlines, JAL, ordered six new Boeing 767-300ERs for \$800 million. Three of them will be freighters.

Vietnam Airlines bought 4 Boeing

787 Dreamliners for around \$600 million.

Egypt Air ordered 12 new Boeing 737-800s for \$850 million.

Korean Air ordered another Boeing 774-400 freighter for \$230 million.

Airbus has delayed by six months, the delivery timetables for the new super jumbo A-380 airliner.

Boeing projects a demand for 25,700 airliners worth \$2.1 Trillion over the next 20 years.

ILFC, a leasing company, ordered 20 Boeing 737-800s and six Boeing 777-300ERs and two Boeing 777-200ERs for a purchase price of \$2.9 Billion.

Varig, the airline of Brazil, had 11 Boeing airliners repossessed by a leasing company for non-payment. Ethiopian Airlines converted an option for 5 more Boeing 787 Dreamliners, to a firm order. The total for Ethiopian Airlines is now 10.

Qatar Airways ordered 20 new Boeing 777-300s worth about \$4.6 Billion. Qatar also ordered 100 Airbus A-350s.

Kuwaiti Airways ordered 18 Airbus A-350-800s. Cost is \$2.9 Billion.

Kingfisher Airlines of India, ordered 5 new Airbus A-380s, and 10 Airbus A-320s for \$3 Billion.

IndiGo, the low cost airline of India, has ordered \$6 Billion worth of Airbus A-320s.

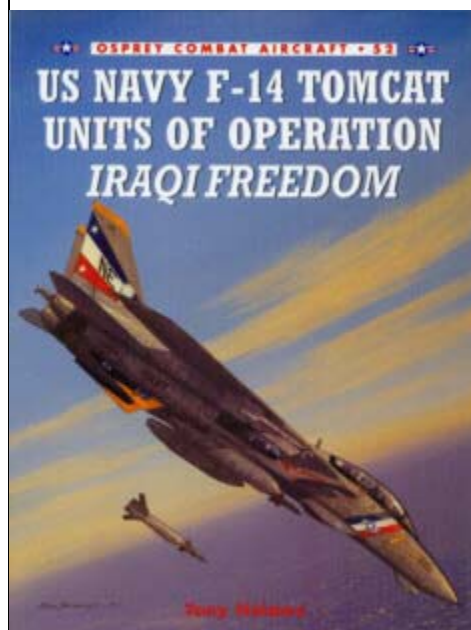
LAN Airlines of Chile, ordered 25 Airbus A-318 and Airbus A-319s for \$750 million.

## The Tomcat's Final War

by George Mellinger

The Grumman F-14 Tomcat has never lived up to its promise as a superstar of naval aviation. The F-14 A entered service in 1975, just too late to see combat over Vietnam. During the next fifteen years only twice did the Tomcat have an opportunity for brief air combat against Libyan fighters. Again, during Gulf War I, the Tomcat had few opportunities for air combat as its main duty was to defend the fleet from attacks by Saddam's bombers, attacks which never came. Late in the conflict the F-14 managed to find and destroy only a couple of Iraqi aircraft, and spent more time flying reconnaissance missions with

its TARPS pod. There were two problems with the Tomcat. Its engines never overcame their operational problems, and the Tomcat was designed for air-to-air combat with limited provision for ground support. Only late in its life was the Tomcat modified to enhance its surface attack potential. By the turn of the century the F-14 was being replaced by the F/A-18 Hornet, which was supposed to fill both the fighter and attack missions. Once again, during Operation Iraqi Freedom there was little likelihood that the F-14 would play a dramatic role.



### So, *US Navy F-14 Tomcat Units of Operation Iraqi Freedom*

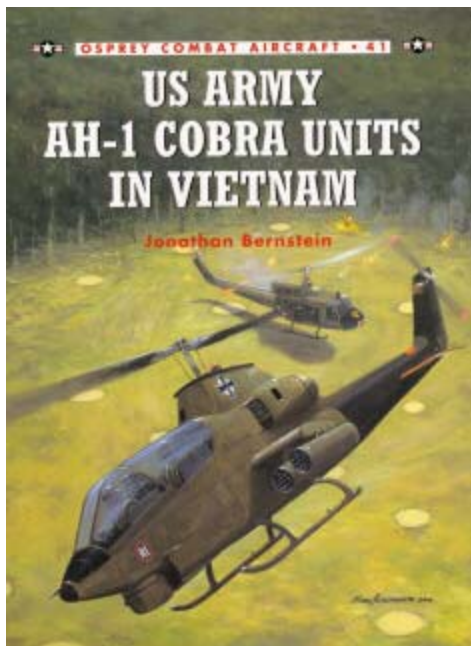
(Osprey 2005) would seem a difficult topic for an exciting book. However Tony Holmes has taken the seeming difficulty and transformed it into an opportunity for a masterful detailed study of naval aviation operations and procedure.

He begins his story before the war, a brief outline of the F-14s earlier career, and the decision to utilize it to carry the AAQ-14 LANTIRN night targeting and navigation pod, originally designed for the F-15E. He then gives a history of Tomcat operations during Operation Southern Watch, during the 1990s, the continuing operation which served as a link between the two gulf wars. Since the Iraqi air force again declined the American challenge, the

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*Cobras Continued from page 5)*

ant flight suits, macabre nose art and markings, and aircraft names such as "Happiness is a warm gun", "VooDo Lady" (sic), "Squatter Swatter", "Satan 10", "Executioner", "Hulk", "The Crystal Ship", "V.C. Birth Control", and "Sound of Silence". You'll find color art work with more than a few shark mouths. If any of this offends you, you should bypass this book. You might do well to bear in mind that all these represent the G.I.'s innate sense of dark humor, the tool he needs as a coping mechanism, and these are manifestations of pride in one's self, one's unit, and serve to build that combat essential, es'prit de corps. These young men needed that to survive, to fly again each morning, and to become the world's very best helicopter pilots.



Based on the above, I therefore give this book my subjective rating of 1.7 thumbs up. I wish to thank Osprey Publishing for the opportunity to review a title of a subject which carries such meaning and emotion for me.

US Army AH-1 Cobra Units in Vietnam has a recommended price of \$19.95.

*(Smoke Rings Continued from page 4)*

and wing. Gone are the days of scratchbuilding cockpits. Gone are the days of scrounging through the parts box for a different set of wheels. Simply emailing or calling John Roll or other mail order houses will yield just about anything in aftermarket, a modeler needs/wants for any given kit under construction. I can remember thinking how neat Aeroclub white metal ejection seats were. Add a little detail here and there and one had a good representation of said seat. Now, with the advent of resin, what isn't possible? So I view the "smoke rings" decals as just another bright idea that somebody (read Mike Grant) had. I suspect many modelers, formerly put off by having to spray on the rings will now embark on that modeling journey and produce some fine-looking models of Italian World War II fighter aircraft. The only potential danger to using those rings I see is the dreaded word, "Silvering." Having that happen could certainly ruin one's Italian model-making day! Obviously, if Mike did them in green we will no doubt soon see them in sand, thus replicating yet another Italian scheme from the 1940's. And that ain't all bad! Oh yeah, one must remember to put them on the model before adding the Italian National insignia! Think about that one for awhile.

*(Tomcat Continued from page 6)*

Tomcats were used as ground attack aircraft alongside the Hornets, often using their LANTIRN pods to provide target lasing support, as well as for aerial reconnaissance using the TARPS pod, and waiting for the dogfights which never came. In 1998 Operation Desert Fox was another air campaign which foreshadowed "Iraqi Freedom" in a number of respects.

During the coverage of OIF itself, this book gives an almost day-by-day synopsis of operations, and on significant missions, there is detailed coverage of actions by various crew during the mission's course. Several accounts are given of losses and close calls. And yes, even without enemy fighters, the is

always danger from SAMs and ground fire.

Due to the relatively small number of units involved, Tony Holmes is able to provide an appendix giving not only VF squadrons and their carriers participating in OIF, but also the complete list of aircraft numbers and serials for each squadron. Such detail is seldom possible, and the modeling community ought to be properly appreciative.

This book features the usual center section of outstanding color profiles by Jim Laurier, several of which give detailed examples of individual nose art. Among the approximately eighty photos, only a handful are grayscale, mainly of aerial recon photos, and falling bombs, and the like. The great majority of the photos are in glorious contemporary color. Not only are the photos informative, but a number of them are truly works of art deserving re-use in a calendar.

While several of these photos were official US Navy photos, many others were the personal photos taken by Tomcat flight and maintenance crews. And here is another detail that helps to make this book special. Tony Holmes, who is a naval aviation specialist, was granted access to interview many Tomcat pilots and radar intercept officers, and other key personnel just after their return from their combat cruise. Then the book was reviewed by Navy officials further to insure accuracy. If this book has any fault it may be the Author's overly easy familiarity with the abbreviations and acronyms so beloved by the US military. Sometimes this alphabet soup is introduced without an immediate explanation, which may make it a little harder for the novice to understand everything on a first reading. My advice - be patient. You'll catch on to the jargon quickly enough, and the book will be easy on your second reading. And we all read our airplane books several times anyway. I know I do. And Tomcat Units is one book which certainly will bring you back for re-reading.

Cost is \$19.95, or cheaper from Roll Models. And well worth it.

## Directions to the Club Meeting Location

**Where: South St. Paul Municipal Airport, a.k.a. Fleming Field,** located on the southern extremity of South St. Paul, south of I-494, west of Concord Street and East of Highway 52.

### If coming from the western Twin Cities going east on 494:

- Exit at the 7th and 5th Avenue exit (Exit No.65)
- Turn right (South) on 7th Ave and go approximately .6 miles to a 4-way Stop sign. This is South Street W. To your left there will be a McDonald's; to your right front there will be a Walgreen's.
- Turn left (East) at the 4-way Stop onto
- South Street W and go approximately .6 miles. Along the way you will encounter three more Stop signs—the third Stop sign (Henry Avenue) will be a "T" intersection. At the "T" intersection on your left will be homes and on your right softball fields.
- Turn right (south) onto Henry Ave. and go approximately .2

miles toward the Fleming Field airport terminal building.

### If coming from east Twin Cities on westbound 494:

- Exit at the 7th and 5th Avenue exit (Exit No.65)
- Turn left (South) on 7th Ave and go approximately .6 miles to a 4-way Stop sign. This is South Street W. To your left front there will be a small strip mall; to your right there will be an Amoco station.
- Turn left (East) at the 4-way Stop onto
- South Street W and go approximately .4 miles. Along the way you will encounter two more Stop signs—the third Stop sign (Henry Avenue) will be a "T" intersection. At the "T" intersection on your left will be homes and on your right softball fields.
- Turn right (south) onto Henry Ave. and go approximately .2 miles toward the Fleming Field airport terminal building.

The terminal is on the right with parking available.


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The Aero Historian is published monthly by the Twin City Aero Historians, Inc., a joint chapter of the American Aviation Historical Society and International Plastic Modelers Society/USA, for members and readers as part of their annual dues or fees.

The group is open to aviation enthusiasts from teenagers on up who are interested in aviation modeling, photography, collecting, art and writing. For more information contact Ken Hornby at 651-552-0888

The Twin Cities Aero Historians (TCAH) meet the second Saturday of every month at 1:30pm.

See above for the new meeting locations and directions.

Mail Newsletter material and address changes to the treasurer.