The Aero Historian

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Revell 1/28 Sopwith Camel

by Ken Hornby

July 11th Guest Speaker

Ken Rohde 1st Lt. USAAF retired, copilot of B-17G 954Q, 748th Squadron, 457th BG, 8th AF.

Drafted before Pearl, Ken Rohde became an infantry soldier and served in the South Pacific. Applying for pilot training, it took more than a year and a half to process the documents, then passing the written test that his orders were finally cut for the USAAF.

Flying in the ETO, from August to December 1944, Lt. Rohde was the first crewman of the 457th to complete the 35 mission limit, flying as copilot for "Queenie" and on his very first mission and others as spare co-pilot for the lead ship. Turning down a 6 year extension offer in the USAAF after VJ day, Lt. Rohde retired and became a successful engineer with SPX.

Please join us to hear one of the last remaining hero's of WWII.

Modelers, bring in your 8th Air Force B-17 and B-24 models for display.

Revell Sopwith Camel
by Ken Hornby

The Model

This kit was first released in 1959 and has been re-released once about every 5-10 years since. It's a remarkable piece of plastic engineering for its era. There are a few problems with the kit, namely the over-long length of the struts, but it can still be built into an acceptable model out of the box. However, I decided to correct or improve as many of the shortcomings of the

(Continued on page 5)

TCAH Officers

President, Robert Maderich II

Vice-President, John R. Ross

Secretary, Marty Agather

Treasurer, Dennis Strand

Historian, Tom Norrbohm

Newsletter Info

Article Submission Deadline: 22nd of each month

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TCAH This Month

The monthly meeting will be held Saturday July 11, at Fleming Field, South St. Paul, beginning at 1:00 pm. Vendor baiting will begin about 12:00, so come early.

From the Prez

by Bob Maderich II

Welcome to the July edition of the TCAH newsletter. Many thanks to Bob Steinbrunn for a great presentation at the June meeting. Like he said, modeling is modeling, no matter the subject. Sure, there are definite differences between genres, but the skill and craftsmanship remain the same.

We also put our club challenge on the calender for completion in January, 2016. We'll make it a part of the club contest and award it in some unique way. So.....dig into the dark recesses of your model closet and find something that qualifies for the (cue scary music here) "Dungeon of Doom" challenge. Remember, any genre is fine, it just has to be something you've had for a LONG time and now, behold, you have a chance to build it.

I want to pose two questions to the membership this month.

1)After seen Dennis Strand's excellent B-29 at the June meeting, I was thinking, wouldn't it be great if we had an extended article in the newsletter on the build/ history of that plane? So, from now on, let's find a model that's on the table and ask the builder to do an article. Kind of a "Model of the Month" thing.

2)I went with my Dad, a vet, to the "World War Two' days at Fort Snelling recently. The guys from MMFS had a great display of models and dioramas there. They even were building right there! It seemed to be a great success with lots of people observing and asking questions. So.....how could TCAH reach out and be seen in the wider community? It seems local air shows would be a perfect spot for a club display.

Let's discuss this over the summer months. Start churning up some ideas for the future, especially with the clubs 50th Anniversary coming up!

See you in July, and don't forget, we have a guest speaker courtesy of the hard work of our own Mark Rossmann.

Airline Chatter
by Terry Love

Delta Airlines fleet updates are as follows:

1- 22 more Boeing 717s are scheduled for delivery by December 1 (66 of the 88 have been delivered),
2 - Boeing 737-900s are being delivered 2 per week (have 39 out of 100 ordered),
3- 10 more Airbus A-330s,
4 - 25 Airbus A350s ordered with deliveries beginning in 2017,
5- 45 Airbus A-321s on order with deliveries beginning in February of 2016,
6 - The Big Boy fleets now has 636 airliners, with 144 on order.

Malaysia Airlines has gone into bankruptcy. They lost two Boeing 777s last year and ridership plummeted. They will probably lay off about 8000 of their 20,000 workforce. The airline will get a new name, logo, and color scheme.

Airbus is planning to increase the production rate of their most popular A-320 series to 60 to 63 per month. Presently they are building 50 per month. An Airbus A-320 cost just over $100 million each.

Boeing is currently building their 737-800 airliner at the rate of 52 per month. A Boeing 737-800 cost just over $100 million each.

Federal Express is retiring 7 MD-11s, 3 Airbus A-300s, 4 Airbus A-310s, and1 MD-10. All are freighters. On March 1 of this year, Fed Ex had 63 freighters in service.

Boeing announced that the reliability of the Boeing 787 Dreamliner is above 99%.

Delta Airlines is going to spend $229 million to upgrade their facilities at
Los Angeles.

Air France is retiring their last Boeing 747-400 this coming winter.

The following is the report out of the Paris Air Show

Airbus received 426 airliner orders at the Paris Air Show worth $57 Billion. Airbus has a backlog of 6,300 orders.

Boeing received 331 airliner orders at the Paris Air Show worth $51 Billion. Boeing now has a backlog of 5,700 orders.

Ruili Airlines of China ordered via the Chinese Communist Government 60 Boeing 737-800s, valued at $6.1 Billion.

Frontier Airlines ordered 10 Airbus A-321s and 2 more A-320s. Frontier currently has 110 Airbuses.

Shenzhan Air of China ordered 46 Boeing 737-800s for $4.4 Billion.

Delta Airlines bought 40 more Boeing 737-900s. This is in addition to the 100 Boeing 737-900s that Delta has on order already. Cost for the new 40 airliners is $4 Billion.

Aeroflot, the Russian airline, cancelled the order for 22 Boeing 787 Dreamliners.

Enter Air of Poland ordered 3 Boeing 737-800s.

AerCap Holdings, a leasing company, ordered 100 Boeing 737-800s.

Korean Air Lines ordered 40 Boeing 737-800s.

Garuda Airlines of Indonesia ordered 60 Boeing 737-800s.

Volga-Driepr of Russia, ordered 20 Boeing 747-800 freighters and 21 Boeing 737-800s.

Ethopian Airlines ordered 6 Boeing 787 Dreamliners.

Wizz Airlines of the Netherlands ordered 110 Airbus A-321s valued at $12.5 Billion.

Avianca Airlines of Brazil ordered 62 Airbus A-320s, 7 Airbus A-33-s, and 10 Airbus A350s.

Qatar Airlines ordered 14 Boeing 777s worth $4.8 Billion.

Treasurer's Report
by Dennis Strand

Our expenses for this month were all gift certificates turned in by our busy model builders. These totaled $120.00, and gives us a balance of $4731.50.

As I mentioned in my report at the June meeting, I went back though our records and found that in 2014 our income was $2073.00 and our expenses were $2356.90. We no longer have the newsletter postal expense and Nordic Con remains a separate fiscal entity. So, it appears we are financially balanced. That is, we will not gain or lose a substantial amount of our funds during 2015.

At the June midway point of the year, we have spent $1061.67 to date. If we retain our membership numbers, our club coffers will remain about even with our previous year.

Secretary's Notes
by Dennis Strand

The meeting was called to order at 13:08 hrs.

John Roll gave his vender's report which included the following new items:

-Lukgraph resin kits
1/32 Curtiss A-3 Falcon
1/72 Boulton Paul P-12 Bodmin
1/72 English Cork Mk. III
1/72 Norman Thomas N.T. 2B

- Military Miniatures in Review
B-35/B-49 book

-Big batch of Warbirds/Kits World decals

-Skyline/Daco
737's re-released

-Daco
F-104 plastic correction and improvement sets

-Kagero
"3D"; Type VIIc U-boat (mostly re-released)
Monograph #60, Dornier Do 17/Do 215

-Quickboost and Airies stuff

-Valiant Wings
Macchi MC. 202, Technical Guide
D-Day to VE Day: The Air Battle Over Europe

-KP or Kovazody-Postejov
1/72 new versions of early Merlin Mustangs
1/72 Piper Cub

-Airfix
1/72 Boulton Paul Defiant
1/48 Hurricane I
1/48 Spitfire I

Mark Rossman talked about a newsletter entitled "High Ground" which announced an aviation display put together by Mark Doolittle, a relative of James Doolittle, and will be open to the public from July 1-August 31 in Neillsville, Wisconsin. Also mentioned was the anniversary of the 1945 "Black Friday" mission of the "Sun Setters". They lost 27 Mustangs and 24 pilots in a single mission when they flew into extremely poor weather conditions on June 1 of that year. There were no loses due to enemy action from fighters or flak. All loses were attributed to the storm they flew into.

Mark also reminded us of our guest speaker for July. Captain Ken Rohde was a B-17 copilot and will relate his experiences. Please think about bringing in your B-24 or B-17 model (8thAF markings would be a plus).

David Kopydlowski made note of the fact that the "Blue Angles" will be at Eau Claire, Wisconsin on July 4th and the "Thunderbirds" are scheduled to perform at Mankato on June 27th and 28th.

President Bob stated that World War II Days would be honored on June 20th and 21st at Fort Snelling in St. Paul.

Finally Bob Steinbrunn gave an excellent presentation on the building of his 1929 Duesenberg

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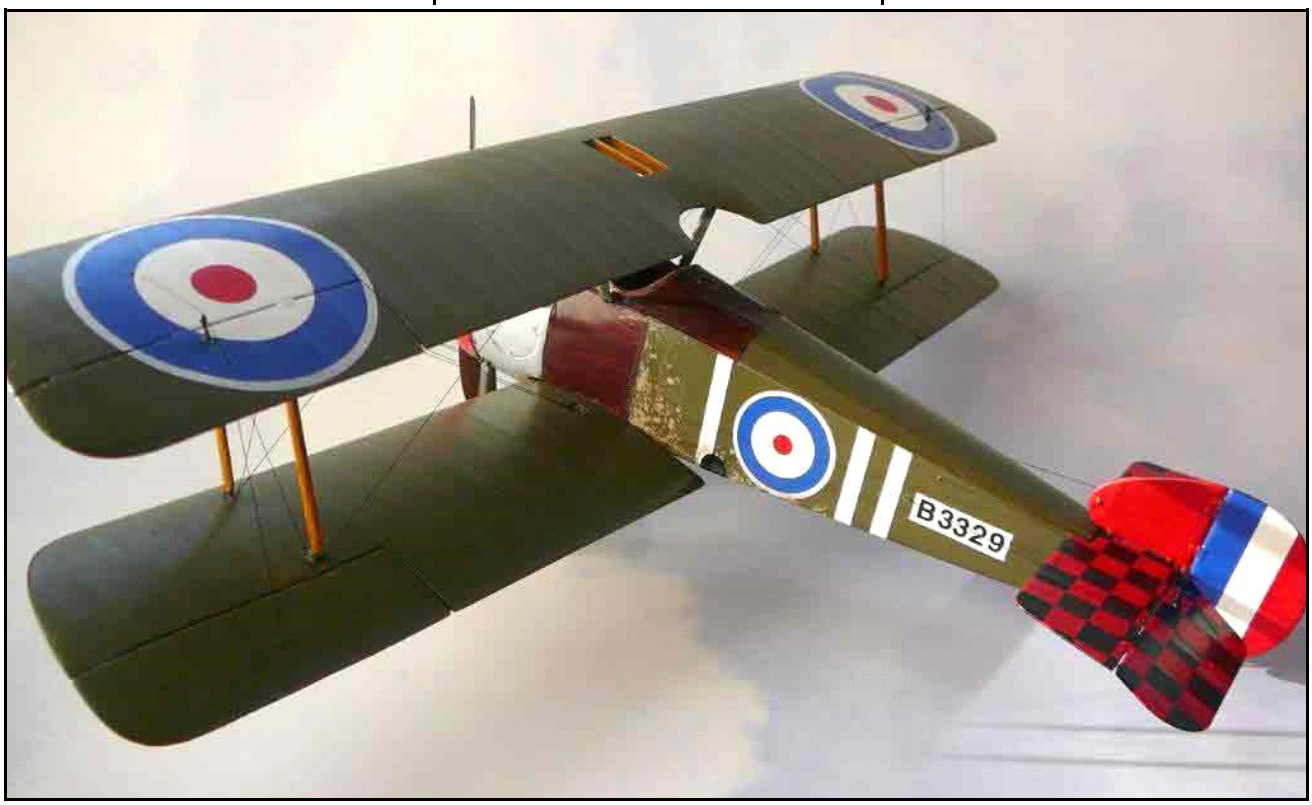

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SJ model. He covered many aspects of the project, from soldering suspension parts and rebuilding spoke wheels, to getting the right "leather" look to the upholstery. I know it inspired me to try some of these creative techniques.

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kit as I could. To that end I scratch-built a complete cockpit that, of course, can't be seen. I shortened the struts to a more correct length and added details from Copper State Models. These included resin and photo-etch guns, and also instrument faces courtesy of esteemed member Mark Krumrey. All other detail was scratch-built or created from modified kit parts. The only cockpit parts from the kit are the floor and rudder bar and they were each modified for a more accurate appearance. The seat was made from fabric, plastic sheet and a paper clip. The seat cushion is laminated plastic sheet and putty covered with a homemade decal representing a "requisitioned" chair cushion. The lap belt is masking tape, Scotch tape, and plastic. Creating and fitting the cockpit was the most time consuming portion of the build.

The Clerget 9b engine got new, thinner, wire pushrods for a more in-scale look. I also added spark plug wires, but again, they are so small and inconspicuous, they can't really be seen. The wind-driven generator for the fuel pressure pump was moved from the cabane strut to the landing gear strut as was often seen during the war. I scribed through the axle fairing until I could bend the axle enough to represent the weight of the aircraft on the ground. I used upholstery thread for the bungee cord shock absorbers. I sanded down the prominent ribs on the wings and cut out the missing apertures through the lower wing for the double flying wires. Rigging is all invisible thread colored with a black marker.

I had decided before starting the model that I would build the Camel of Lt. (later Air Vice Marshall Sir) Francis Mellersh, who took part in the last flight of Manfred von Richthofen as a member of 209 Squadron RAF. I relied on a painting of Mellersh's aircraft that he commissioned in 1920 and also on period photos of 209 Squadron aircraft for the paint scheme, staining, and weathering. The decals that came with the kit were beyond repair. Since this kit had just been re-released again, I contacted Revell of Germany to see if they could provide replacements. I got no response

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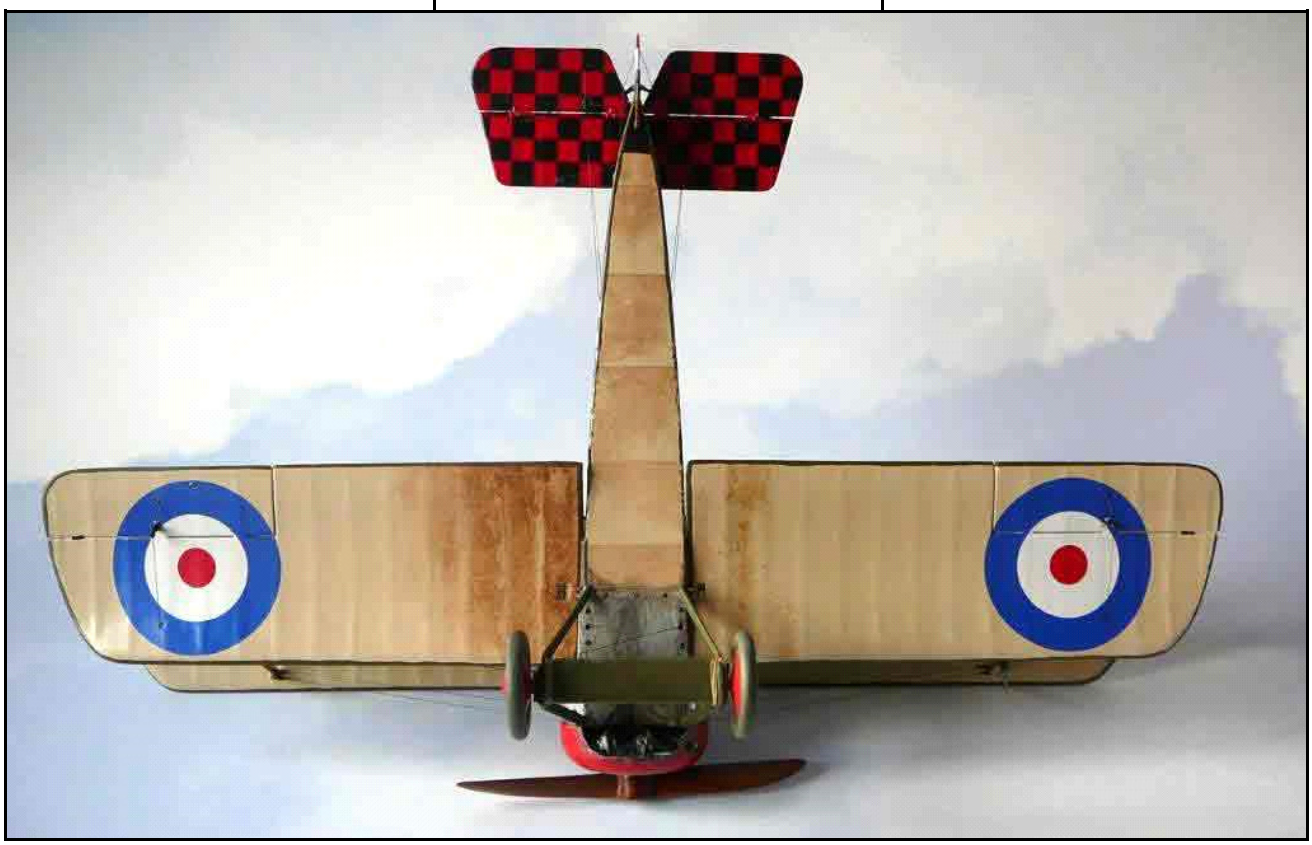

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to my inquiry until weeks later, when a large envelope arrived in the mail with decals from an older release that included marking for multiple aircraft including Roy Brown and Manfred von Richthofen! I must say that I've commonly found model manufacturers and the modeling community in general to be a very generous group. Unfortunately, the only markings I was able to use from the sheet were the British roundels. The decals splintered on entering water and the white portions were transparent enough to require white paint underneath. The black checkerboard markings on the tailplanes are ancient decals from an unknown manufacturer. The squadron markings and serial block were made from white stripe decals and rub on numbers. For paint I used a mix of enamels and acrylics, but the majority are Humbrol colors.

I have a feeling that now that I've built this, Wingnut Wings is sure to announce a Sopwith Camel as a future release!

The History Behind the Model

Francis John Williamson Mellersh was commissioned in the Royal Naval Air Service in 1916 and had been posted to 9 Sqn in June 1917. He claimed 5 victories with the squadron, which became 209 Squadron on 1 April 1918, including one on 21 April in a combat during which 209 Sqn fought Manfred von Richthofen's "Flying Circus" and the "Red Baron" was killed. Mellersh was 19 years old at the time and was considered one of the more experienced pilots. His role in the battle was small, but significant, since the Royal Air Force later used his testimony to support Capt. Roy Brown as the victor over von Richthofen.

That day 209 Squadron's A Flight consisted of Brown leading, with Lt's Mackenzie, Lomas, May and Mellersh. They left the ground at 9:20 but Mellersh soon returned with engine trouble. He took off in another Camel and rejoined his flight. B and C flights of five planes each followed within about 15 minutes. Lomas of A Flight and another pilot of C Flight also had returned with mechanical trouble. At the end of their assigned patrol sectors A and C Flights spotted AA fire and went to investigate. They found a mixed formation of Albatros and Fokker triplanes of Richthofen's "Flying Circus" attacking two RE8's and Brown led his eight Camels into the attack. Mellersh, following closely behind Brown, singled out a triplane with a blue tail. He fired a burst which apparently wounded the pilot or damaged the controls, as the triplane rolled over and fell, seemingly out of control. It leveled out near the ground and began making its way unsteadily to the west. As Mellersh closed in for the kill, two Fokkers fixed themselves onto his tail. When another Camel came to his aid, he spun down to shake off his pursuers and the triplanes abandoned the chase. Before Mellersh was forced to break off his second attack, he saw the blue tailed Fokker crash land inside German lines. This was later credited as his fourth victory. During the fight Mellersh again experienced engine trouble and decided to head for home. With a misfiring engine he made his way back at treetop height along the Somme River valley. According to Mellersh's statement, "Whilst so returning a bright red triplane crashed quite close to me and in looking up I saw Captain Brown's machine." Brown turned away, and an enduring controversy began.

Mellersh survived the war and in 1919 was granted a permanent commission as a pilot in the RAF. In October he reverted to the rank of Flying Officer and two months later joined the Unemployed List. He rejoined the RAF in August 1921. On 8 June 1922 he was slightly injured while flying a DH9A, which stalled and spun into the ground during takeoff from Shaibah, Basra Province, Iraq. After a tour of duty in Iraq and the Middle East, he instructed pilots in England. During World War II he commanded an Air Group, then an Air Force in Ceylon and Southeast Asia. He returned to England as commandant of the RAF Staff College, then held command positions in the Far East and Malaya and upon his return to Great Britain was made Commandant-General of the Royal Air Force Regiment, which he held until his retirement in 1954 at the age of 56. He was awarded the Knight of the British Empire (KBE) for his services in Malaya between 1 December 1949 and 31 May 1950, becoming Sir Francis. In May 1955, he and Lieutenant-Commander M. Baring of the Royal Navy were killed in a bizarre helicopter crash at Itchenor, England.

A member of the Itchenor Yacht Club, Mellersh had arranged to cruise over to Cherbourg that weekend with his friend, Lt. Commander Baring. Lt. Commander Baring had a helicopter bring him down to Itchenor where the pilot hovered it over a jetty allowing him to step out. While Baring was

(Continued on page 7)

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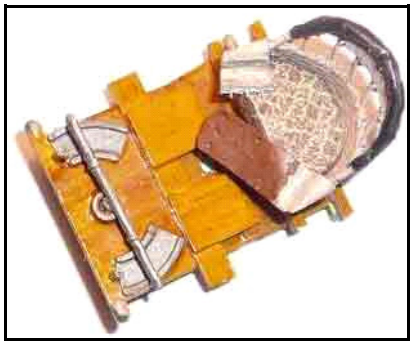
being greeted by Sir Francis, the helicopter was ascending to depart when its rotors struck the mast of a yacht and crashed on its side. The main rotor struck Sir Francis on the head and Lt Commander Baring was struck by the tail rotor, both being killed instantly.



On The Table—June 2015

Modeler	Kit	Manufacturer	Scale
Mark Rossman	F6F-5 Hellcat	Hasegawa	1/48
Mark Rossman	P-51D		1/48
Bob Steinbrunn	Duesenberg		1/18
Dennis Strand	B-29 Superfortress	Monogram	1/48
Don Stauffer	Eindecker	Eduard	1/48
Bob Maderich	Renault FT-17		1/35
Bob Maderich	Stearman PT-17		1/48
Scott Harvieux	Yamato		1/350

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 1-494, west of Concord Street and East of High*way* 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

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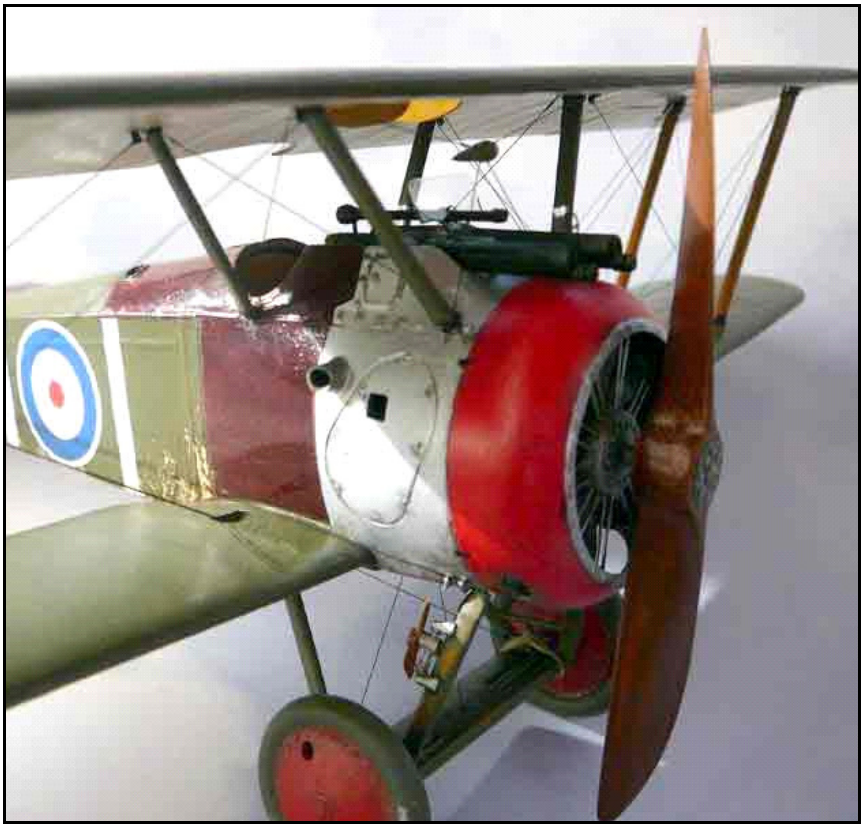
The Aero Historian is published montly by the Twin City Aero Historians, Inc., a joint chapter of the American Aviation Historical Society and International Plastic Modelsers Society/USA, for members and readers as part of their annual dues or fees.

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 Larry Donovan at 651-501-4755.

The Twin Cities Aero Historians (TCAH) meet the second Saturday of every month at 1:00pm.

See above for the new meeting locations and directions.

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