

# The Aero Historian



Volume 53 Number 3

Website: <http://www.aerohistorians.org>

March 2019



**Tamiya 1/48 AD-3 Skyraider**  
by Mark L. Rossmann

## **Korea 'Raiders** by Mark L. Rossmann

### History:

The F4U Corsair was the prop driven mainstay of post WWII aircraft, despite hearing so much of the Corsair, the AD Skyraider is considered to be the most effective naval aircraft of the war. Too late for use in WWII, it replaced the Helldiver, Dauntless and Avenger on the decks of U.S. aircraft carriers.

Over shadowed by the glitzy new jet aircraft, the Skyraider was ready for duty when North Korea invaded South Korea in June of 1950. Besides the Navy units the Marines had 3 land-based AD units which carried out day and night attacks and electronic counter measures operations.

Not like the operations against Japan five years earlier, with epic sea battles and operations that lasted just days or weeks against enemy held islands with stretches without

direct combat in between the island hopping; the Korean war carriers took station off the Korean coast for nearly six weeks at a stretch from June 1950 through July of 1953. They launched daily sorties that ground the ships crew and aircraft down, with short target distances, heavy flak, harsh winters, cold water - yet with the ability for air-sea rescue. This became the future norm for carriers in the Viet Nam, Operation Desert Storm,

*(Continued on page 2)*

## TCAH Officers

**President**, Bernie Kugel

**Vice-President**, John R. Ross

**Secretary**, Bob Ferreria

**Treasurer**, Dennis Strand

**Historian**, Merrill Anderson

## Newsletter Info

*Article Submission Deadline: 22nd of each month*

*Editor*

**Bob Arko**

**6417 Rice Court**

**Lino Lakes, MN 55014**

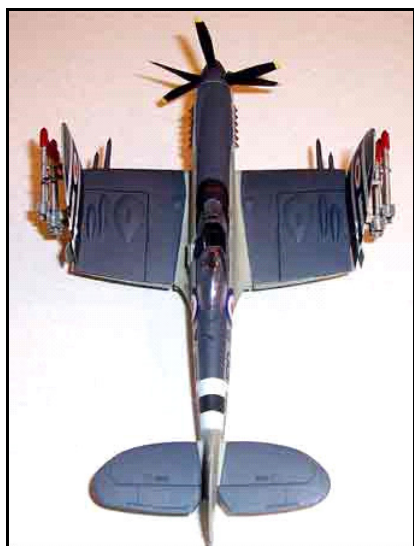
**651-481-8887**

**boba@arkokraft.com**

Send Change of Address Notice to:  
Dennis Strand

## TCAH This Month

The monthly meeting will be held March 9, at Fleming Field, South St. Paul, beginning at 1:00 pm. Come early.



## President's Report

*by Bernie Kugel*

Winter is almost over, and the Contest seasons have begun. Hope It Don't Snow was a very good time and the R5 in Madison is upon us.

We had our Club Contest in February and we had 15 entrants and 61 entries. A little less than last years but great models to view. Dave Perzel won the Club Challenge and decided that next years will be: Minnesota Based National Guard, Reserve, and Air Defense Command Units.

Steve Erickson took home the Dave Hueffmeier Best Luftwaffe award.

This Month is our annual club auction. Please help by bringing in models, books, tools, etc to donate to help our club finances as well as bidding on items as well.

I've been approached by Bruce Kitt, who is the Executive Director of the NorthWest Airlines History Center asking us if we would be interested in having a display at the Annual MSP Airliner Show in October. More information about this coming.

As I'm writing this we have an issue with our April meeting location. Due to is being tax weekend. Libraries are using their meeting rooms for tax preparations. At the March meeting we will have a quick discussion about seeing when and where we can have our meeting. If I can come up with something by then, I will let everyone know.


Model On



## Treasurer's Report

*by Dennis Strand*

Last month we had our club contest. This required the purchase of gift certificates from Hub Hobby. Together with printing costs, we spent \$368.05. There was one membership renewal for \$15.00. TCAH's account amounts to \$4703.02 as of 2/13/2019. The club currently has 54 paying members and 8 "life" members for a total of 62.

March is the month for our annual auction. This event is often responsible for more than 50% of the year's income. So, bring all your books, decals, unbuilt models, aftermarket parts, etc., along with lots of money and see if we can make it a very successful happening. 

*(Continued from page 1)*

Balkans, Afghanistan and Iraq conflicts.

The AD Skyraider saw four versions built by Douglas at the time war broke out. It was a rugged powerful plane that could carry up to 10,000lbs of ordnance including rockets, bombs, torpedoes with its 20mm cannon. The "Able Dog" was built to 865 units before the war, with the AD-4 and sub-variants were the most numerous. The AD-4B's was built to deliver nuclear bombs, one attack and one composite squadron deployed to Korea with the AD-4B.

The U.S. Navy had nine AD attack squadrons at the wars outbreak, three only in the Pacific, one per carrier wing. By wars end 16 attack squadrons and two fighter squadrons had

*(Continued on page 3)*

(Continued from page 2)

the AD, eight of which deployed in the Pacific. Marine units were slated to get the AD in 1950, but didn't receive them till mid-1951. The combat debut of the Skyraider came from the *Valley Forge*, with VA-55, commanded by Lt. Cmdr., Norman Hodson with strikes against the North Korean airfields near Pyongyang, destroying hangers and a railway yard. Along with the HMS Triumph using FireFly's, these two ships were the initial naval compliment for the United Nations forces. In this initial tour, VA-55 lost five aircraft to AAA, two in the second day of combat.

During the initial war deployment the units recommended that the Skyraider should be equipped with four 20mm cannon, as they were devastating in ground attack, the following could be carried, most from WWII surplus; 100, 250, 500, 1000 and 2000lb high explosive bombs, 240 or 260lb frag bombs, ATAR and 5-in HVAR and the largest 11.75 in "Tiny Tim" rockets, Napalm in converted drop tanks and the MK 77 fire bomb, depth charges and torpedoes. AD's weapons configuration varied depending on the strike, three 2000lb bombs for bridge busting, for CAS 1000lb HVARs and fragmentation bombs for flak suppression along with Napalm. Anti-submarine patrols were carried out by the AD which consisted of two Mk 54 depth charges and six HVARs with external centerline fuel tank in the "Gator Role" while and AD-3W/4W "Guppy" performed the search role. Because the Skyraider was in demand, Corsairs were swapped out for the "Gator".

The Hwachon Dam on the Pukhan river 50 miles northeast

of Seoul needed to be breached. If water was released at the right time it could have hampered UN operations. B-29' and a raid by US Army rangers couldn't crack the dam, so call on the Skyraider; On May 1, 1951, for the first and last time a Skyraider carried the Mk 13 torpedo in combat. From the flight deck of *USS Princeton*, CVG-9 under the command of Cdr. Richard C. Merrick, utilized twelve torpedo carrying AD's, eight from VA-195 and four AD-4N's from VC-35, along with twelve escorting F4U's of VF-193 and VF-194 for flak suppression. None of the pilots had ever launched a torpedo and at 1100 hours the attack commenced in pairs at wave-top. Adjusting speed to stay under the maximum torpedo drop speed, two of the torpedoes dropped were faulty, the remaining hit and destroyed the center sluice gate, gashing a second gate and damaging part of the cement structure. The waters flooded the valley for miles and the dam remained in this condition the rest of the war. Thereafter VA-195 has been known as the "Dambusters",

like their RAF No 617 sqn counterparts of WWII.

The U.S. Marine Corps was in-process of reducing its aviation forces when the Korean war broke out. The F4U Corsair fought the brunt of the corps ground attack missions until the Skyraiders arrived in mid-1951. That would be (MWHS) 1 to operate the Skyraider, assigned the AD-4W for AEW missions. Marine Corps also began flying ECM missions when the AD-2Q's arrived, (VMC) 1 (Golden Hawks) was activated under the command of Lt. Col Lawrence Fox on Sept 15, 1951 and initially flew AD-2Q's, -3Ns, -4Ns and -4NLs, flying its first ECM mission on September 18<sup>th</sup>. The ECM

Raiders were able to fly up to 4.5 hours with external drop tanks and they did attract an occasional MiG, with no losses. In June of '53', VMC-1 took on the night fighter role, with the Skyraider shooting down its only kill of the war when Maj George Linnemeir and CWO radar operator Vernon Cramer nabbed a PO-2 that had been bombing (K-14). Unfortunately, another kill occurred, that of an SAAF P-51D of No. 2 Sqn. 2 Lt. John Mohr perished on Dec 25, 1952 near (K-52) Yanggu airfield when the Marine Skyraider mistook it for a rapidly approaching Yak fighter.

VMF-121 a reserve unit out of NAS Glenview, was mobilized, it turned in its mix of aircraft for the well appreciated payload and endurance of the Skyraider. Re-designated as VMA-121, the unit was transported to Korea aboard the *USS Sitkoh Bay* (CVE-86) and deployed to Pohang (K-3) on 19 October, 1951. The unit flew Interdiction strikes and CAS and with the long 10,000 ft runways it could carry up to 10,000 lbs. of ordinance compared to the Navy Skyraiders 8000 lb. load catapulted from a carrier deck.

One CAS mission on August 20, 1952, the Chinese had moved forward attempting to breach the lines held by the British, Capt. Thomas Murphy rolled in with 250lb bombs and napalm along with 2 Lt. Jim Kirk. The Chinese reversed course back to their lines. After the last strafing run, they turned for home and Murphy's engine quit, about ready to bail out an Air Force chopper came into the air. After chatting with him, Murphy was low and had to bail out quickly, the chopper headed his way and helping hands picked Murphy up, he had only been on the ground 5 minutes.

(Continued on page 6)









(Continued from page 3)

This is another report of a VMA-121 loss on July 7, 1952, when 2Lt Ted Uhlemeyer was hit by AAA in his right wing and made a gear up landing at Pyongtaek, he was uninjured.

VMA-251 was the only other VMA deployed from MCAS El Toro to Pyongtaep (K-6) in June of 1953. It totaled 310 combat sorties in just one month and was the last Marine Corps unit to engage in combat, remaining in Korea, the unit provided air defense along the DMZ for another two-and-a-half years after the wars end.

Armistice ended the war on July 27, 1953, the Skyraider was on every attack carrier deployment through 1964. At this time, it was heavily engaged in the Viet Nam war, flying from carriers till 1968 and continuing on with the Air Force till 1972. The Marine Corps had phased out the Skyraider by 1959.

#### Models and Markings:

This is a Tamiya 1/48 U.S. Air Force Skyraider, it was already painted in Navy Vietnam colors and had markings on it

from a variety of units, but not all the parts on it. A friend, at a local IPMS club, brought it in and said anyone can have it. I snarfed it up planning on making it a Korea Skyraider.

It was soaked in water with bleach, causing the markings to come off. After thoroughly drying, I removed antenna, lights and parts not common to the AD-3 Skyraider. The only thing I did not tackle was sanding down the extra armor plating that was not used in earlier models of the Skyraider, didn't want to mess things up. I then added antenna in the appropriate places. Painted it with Testers Deep Sea Blu rattle can along with the green rudder tip. All other parts painted accordingly.

Decals used were AeroMaster 48-402 "AD's Ladies in Blue", which contains markings for:

1. AD-3 of VA-35 flying from the USS Leyte (CV-32), Nov 1950 Korea.
2. AD-6 of VA-65 flying from USS Essex (CVA-9), in Sept 1955
3. AD-3 of VA-923 flying from USS Bon Homme Richard (CVA-31), Oct 1951 Korea.

Using the VA-35 markings; Per the information in the Osprey "AD Skyraider Units of the Korean War, this depicts BuNo122799, carrying a centerline drop tank, armed with two 500lb bombs, ten 250lb GP bombs and two 5-in HVARs. VA-35, part of CVG-3 was the first Atlantic Fleet AD squadron to deploy to Korea on CV-32's only Korean deployment. This aircraft later served with VA-95 and VMA-121 in 1954.

This is but a small history of the Korean Skyraiders. You can read much more detail about them as follows:

#### References:

AD Skyraider Units of the Korean War, Osprey Combat aircraft #114 by Richard R Burgess and Warren E Thompson.

USN Aircraft Carrier Air Units 1946 – 1956, Squadron/Signal Publications by Duane Kasulka.

AeroMaster Decals No: 48-402 AD's Ladies in Blue.





---

**Good Reading in the New Year**  
*by Noel Allard*

If you are like me, you probably like to read books that your friends recommend. I do a lot of reading and 2018 was a great year. I don't think I've read so many well-written and interesting books in one year. So, here are my recommendations. In the science realm, my favorites were books written by one of the writers of Astronomy Magazine, Bob Berman. Randy Koivisto though highly of Berman and so I read three of his best sellers. The best two were Zapped and The Sun's Heartbeat. For a non-techie, they really taught me something. If you are a die-hard scientific thinker, try Who Cares About Particle Physics by Pauline Gagnon.

For aviation, I'm suggesting two books about Minnesotans, An American Hero about Eugene Trowbridge, and Keep Your Airspeed Up, the bio of Dr. Harold Brown, a Tuskegee airman. One that held me spellbound was Lost in Shangri-La by Mitchell Zuckoff. Down in an African valley with angry lost tribesmen after an emergency landing, then being plucked out of the valley by glider. Wow! For

the historical side, the book Birdmen by Lawrence Goldstone relates the court battles between the Wright Brothers and Glenn Curtiss. More about this a little later. If you are an auto buff, there were some tremendous books out there. Enzo Ferrari, the biography of the great man, ran to almost 1000 pages, but it held me enraptured with its racing details and I was disappointed when it was over! The book Go Like Hell by A.J. Baime portrayed the battle between Ford and Ferrari on the international stage and how Ford finally conquered Ferrari at LeMans in 1966 and 1967. But, the best book was Drive, by Lawrence Goldstone. You will see how Henry Ford outlasted George Selden in court while other auto manufacturers in the 1920s and 1930s caved to the presumed holder of the patent on any auto that used an internal combustion engine. The interesting thing was that the same legal teams defended both sides that had defended the Wright Brothers against Glenn Curtiss. You gotta read both books!

If you like extended biographies like I do, you'd like DaVinci, the biography of the great artist, by Isaacson. If you

like to read about espionage, tops on my list for the year were: Brotherhood of Spies by Monte Reel, about the inner workings of the CIA; Plutonia by Katy Brown, about the reactor cities of the US and Russia, a really discouraging read because both governments have kept a lid on news of the radiation that seeped and drained out of these nuclear sites and are still unspoken of even though they continue to poison all of us today. Hitler's American Friends by Bradley Hart portrays the isolationist groups in America during WWII, including the America First Party that used Charles Lindbergh as spokesman and doomed him to dishonor for the rest of his life.

I'm reading a terrific book now that I'd add to the list. Red November by Craig Reed, about submarine espionage and the darkest of days when Russia brought nuclear weapons to Cuba. This is a thriller. Since I don't read fiction, I guarantee any of the above will bring a wealth of knowledge for the historian and allow you many nights of great reading by the fire with a glass of wine! Good luck – and let me know if you have any suggestions for me!



## 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 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.



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.

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.

Mail Newsletter material to the editor and address changes to the treasurer.