

The Aero Historian



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June 2024



Hasegawa P-47D Razorback
1/48 Scale
by Mark L. Rossmann

Col. Neel Kearby
"Fiery Ginger"
by Mark L. Rossmann

History

The P-47 was an outstanding escort and ground attack aircraft and was the heaviest and largest single seat fighter built during WWII. It rose out of a humble beginning which saw its ancestors the P-35 and

P-43 fall short of expectations.

Early on the "Jug" was used as an escort to the ETO heavies, but was replaced as the P-51 came on-line; its best role was that of a ground attack aircraft both in the ETO, MTO, PTO and CBI theaters. P-47's were used by the U.S., British, French, Mexican, Brazilian and Russian air forces.

[Col. Neel Kearby History](#)

Born June 5, 1911, in Wichita Falls Tx. Kearby graduated from University of Texas at Arlington with a Bachelors degree in Business Administration. He enlisted into the Army Air Corps in 1937, training at Randolph and Kelly Airfields.

Col. Kearby served with the
(Continued on page 3)

TCAH Officers

President, Mark Copeland

Vice-President, Steve Hustad

Secretary, Bob Maderich

Treasurer, Dennis Strand

Historian, Merrill Anderson

Newsletter Info

Article Submission Deadline: 22nd of each month

Editor

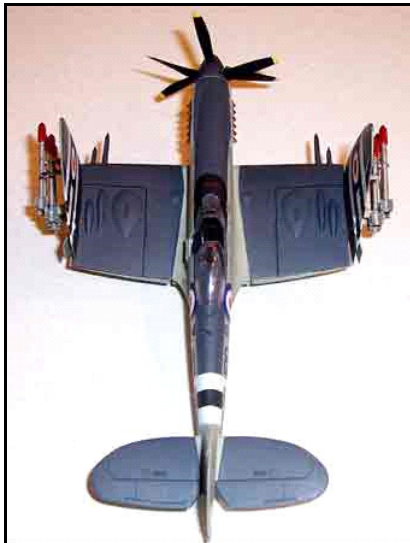
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Send Change of Address Notice to:
Dennis Strand

TCAH This Month

May Theme — Golden Age

The monthly meeting will be held Saturday June 8, at Fleming Field, South St. Paul, beginning at 1:00 pm. Come early.



President’s Address

by Mark Copeland

Summer is finally here!! At the time of this writing, the 2024 IPMS National Convention in Madison, Wisconsin is just 45 days away!! Man....where has the time gone?

Over 800 pre-registrants are already on the books for the Nationals. With that number, there will likely be a record-setting amount of entries. Last year, in San Marcos, Texas, it was close to 3000 model entries, this year will likely be that or more. If you have ANY opportunity to attend the event.... DO IT!!

With the size of the event, the host club, **IPMS Mad City Modelers**, need as much help as possible. They have reached out to the **Twin City Aero Historians** to help with making the convention successful. In other words, they are looking for volunteers to help with specific duties during the convention. They have a sign-up page that you can link to volunteer for specific duties during the convention. Here is the link to the Volunteer page:

<https://myipmsusa.org/EmailTracker/LinkTracker.ashx?linkAndRecipientCode=QgR0IVcJbluKocC9z9%2buoHd2V2AUxBxm5FHnkQt9JbCrFR7VvWKIIRJ7yJ8Jg1EemHbNHvwGXBo4SniJiaHX3c0LCt7DE744KSkTUVBsxFM%3d>

“Many hands make light work” as they say. Volunteer for a few hours if you are able. It makes the IPMS and modeling community even stronger if we all can contribute to make a successful event.

If you read this before the

June 8th meeting, there are two events that will commemorate the 80th Anniversary of the Normandy Invasion. The **Fagen Fighter Museum** will host a commemorative 80th Anniversary of D-Day Airshow in Granite Falls, Minnesota. The show will be on June 6th, 2024 and begins at 10:00am, flying will begin at 11:00am. Hopefully the weather will be favorable.

On the evening of June 6th, 2024 there will be another event to commemorate the 80th Anniversary of D-Day at the **Alliance Francoise – Minneapolis – 227 Colfax Avenue North – Minneapolis, Minnesota 55405**. The program will feature a presentation about the Normandy Invasion, oral veteran personal accounts and a visit with Sgt. James Kangas, an actual WWII Eighth Air Force veteran that flew with the 384th Bomb Group – Eighth Air Force. This amazing 90 year old veteran will share his experiences as a B-17G Flying Fortress – Ball Turret Gunner in 1944 and 1945. A great chance to witness living history and the event is free!!

It is going to be an amazing summer!! See you at the meeting on June 8th!!



Treasurer’s Report

by Dennis Strand

This month our only income was a generous donation of \$40.00 by Chris Simbeck. Thanks Chris! There were no expenses. Our bank account now contains \$6,447.67

Be well and see you at the June meeting.



(Continued from page 1)

94th and 40th Pursuit Squadrons at Selfridge Field, then in December of 1940 commanded the 14th Pursuit Squadron at the Panama Canal, flying P-39's. October of 1942, he was transferred to the 348th FG at Westover Field Ma., taking command with the rank of major. Many months of training in the new P-47 brought the group to Australia, in June of 1943, now with Kearby a Lt. Colonel.

Kearby's tactics utilized the P-47's turbo charger to fly at high altitude, then diving on the lightly armored Japanese planes, using eight(8) deadly .50-Caliber machine guns. He opened his score on September 4, 1943 with a Ki-43 fighter and G4M bomber. He was then promoted to full Colonel on September 23. Kearby named his plane "Fiery Ginger" after his wife, Virginia, and all subsequent P-47's. (Fiery Ginger I through IV).

In January 1944, General McCarther pinned the Medal of Honor on Kearby, for his actions on October 11th, 1943. Leading four Thunderbolts on a fighter sweep over Wewak, they encountered 40 enemy aircraft. The ensuing battle saw Kearby destroy four(4) Ki-43's and two (2) Ki-61's making him the first P-47 ace of the PTO and claiming the record for the most shoot downs by an A.A.F. pilot in a single mission. That was surpassed by Mustang pilot Lt. Shomo, shooting down seven(7) in January 1945. General Kenney recommended him for the Medal of Honor.

In November of 1943, Kearby was transferred to headquarters of the 5th AF, with 12 victories. Continuing to fly missions whenever he could, he was closing in on becoming the

leading A.A.F. ace in the Pacific, hoping to break Rickenbacker's WWI record.

Final Mission

On March 5, 1944 at 4:00pm, a mission took off from Saidor Airfield, piloted by Col. Neel E. Kearby leading a fighter sweep over Wewak with P-47D pilot Captain "Dinghy" Dunham and P-47D pilot Captain Samuel V. Blair. At 5:15pm flying at 22,000' the P-47s reached Dagua and saw the "Nells" flying at roughly 500' in a "V" formation. The bombers spotted them and began to descend to the west following the north coast of New Guinea. The P-47s closed to an altitude of 200' and Col Kearby fired on the lead bomber causing it to pull up on fire then dive into the ground. He was credited for a "Nell", Ki-48 Lily, his 22nd aerial victory claim. Meanwhile, Captain Dunham fired at the Ki-48 Lily on the left and caused it to crash in flames. The third bomber was attacked by Blair and crashed into the ground and exploded.

Intercepting again, Kearby fired on a bomber but did not observe it to go down and made a turn to setup for another attack. At 5:20pm, while turning, Kearby was intercepted by a Ki-43 Oscar from 77th Sentai and never seen again. When this aircraft failed to return it was officially listed as Missing In Action (MIA). Kearby was damaged from gunfire of the Ki-43 Oscar, he managed to bail but became tangled in a tree and died of bullet wounds. Damaged, his P-47 crashed into the jungle inland from Dagua.

Search

Afterwards, Dunham and Blair called for Kearby on the radio but received no answer at 5:30pm they departed for Saidor Airfield. After landing, both pilots

insisted on returning to the area to search for him, Dunham had to be physical restrained from taking off again.

Recovery of Remains

During 1946, Kearby's remains were recovered by a Royal Australian Air Force (RAAF) Searcher Team then turned over to the U.S. Army, then shipped to the United States for permanent burial.

Kearby was listed as MIA until 1948, then officially declared dead the day of the mission.

On June 16, 1949 Kearby was buried at Hillcrest Memorial Park, Dallas Texas at Garden of Devotion Block 13 Lot 19 Space 7 & 8. He is also memorialized on a plaque for Congressional Medal of Honor recipients at Cape Wom Memorial Park near Wewak.

Wreckage

During 2001, the tail section and a .50 caliber machine gun were recovered by Robert Greinert / HARS and shipped to Sydney. then placed into storage at HARS at Sydney Airport (Mascot).

During 2003, the salvaged items were donated to the National Museum of the United States Air Force (USAF Museum) and put on public display in 2005. Both are displayed with P-47D Thunderbolt 42-23278 painted in the markings of this aircraft. The tail section is displayed atop a base and the machine gun is displayed inside a glass display case.

Model

This is a Hasegawa P-47 Razorback, the kit represents a Razorback very well with the
(Continued on page 6)





build taking about 2 weeks. The engine detail is minimal, but allows for what is seen thru the front an accurate portrayal of the radial engine. The flaps and control surfaces are all molded in place. If you want to show off the cockpit area an aftermarket cockpit interior would be better to use.

The decal positioning was easy to follow, although looking at pictures it was important to get the Grey and O.D. demarcation correct, on the cowling, as the 'IV' is in the grey area and the rest in the O.D. Using pure white for the tail, I used an undercoat of AS-20 Insignia White, this worked well to prevent bleed through. I masked off the tail to paint the striping rather than using the decal.

Aircraft:

Note: After the block number, Evansville aircraft were identified by the **-RE** suffix, while

Farmingdale aircraft were given the **-RA** suffix.

Aircraft: 'Fiery Ginger IV', P-47D-4-RA, 42-222668 – Lost over Dagua.

Unit: 348th FG, V Fighter Command, Saidor Airfield, New Guinea - March 1944.

Pilot: Col. Neel Kearby (KIA) – CO 348th FG

Model: Hasegawa 09404; P-47D Razorback 1/48th

Decals: THUNDERCALS – 48002 – Razorback Thunderbolts Pt 2.

Paint:

Tamiya sprays: AS-6 Olive Drab, AS-7 Neutral Grey, TS-27 – Pure White, AS-20, Insignia White, TS-34 Camel Yellow, TS-15 Blue, TS-86 Pure Red,

References:

1. Decal Sheet
2. P-47 Thunderbolt with

the USAAF in the MTO, Asia and Pacific – SMI Library (Kagero)

3. //pacificwrecks.com/aircraft/p-471

4. Osprey Aircraft of the Aces - #26 "Mustang and Thunderbolt Aces of the Pacific and CBI."

5. Picture of Kearby's recovered tail taken by me at the USAF Museum Dayton Ohio in 2014. Was present for my daughter's graduation as a Flight Nurse, for the 109th Air Medical Wing MNGuard.



On The Table May 2024

MODELER	KIT	MANUFACTURER	SCALE
Dave Heffernan	Skyhawk	Hasegawa	1/48
Dennis Strand	BV 141	Hobby Boss	1/48
	BV 138C-1	MPM	1/48
	Curtiss XP-55 "Ascender"	Czech models	1/48
Bob Maderich II	1934 Ford pickup	AMT	1/24
	Caudron 450	SBS	1/72
	Geebee GBH	SBS	1/72
Erik Zabel	P-51 D-5	Eduard	1/48
Gilberto Ojeda	ME 109-E7	Eduard	1/48
Harold Parsons	Spitfire MK VC	Eduard	1/48
	P-51C	Tamiya	1/48
Tom Crayne	STUG III/ 88 gun	I love kit	1/18
Ken Sallman	Fairey Gannet S-1	Airfix	1/48
John Carlson	Chinese J-10A	Trumpeter	1/48
Franklin Haws	A1-F	Monogram	1/72
John Munoz	Robotech Defenders	Revell	1/48
Dave Perzel	JU-87/R-2/B-2	Airfix	1/48
Steve Hustad	Hansa Brandenburg W-18	Sierra Scale Vacform	1/72
Steve Erickson	SB-2C-4 "Helldiver"	Revell-Monogram	1/48
	BF 109G-10	Eduard	1/48
	BF 109K4	Revell	1/48
Bernie Kugel	Spitfire MK XIV	DCM	1/32
	V-1 rocket	Special Hobby	1/32
	Japanese "Kate"	Border Models	1/35

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.

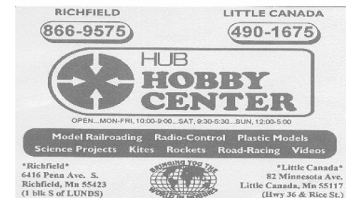
If coming from the western Twin Cities going east on 494:

- 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.

Monthly Themes 2024

January-TCAH Club Contest

February-Water subjects. (ships, floatplanes, etc)

March-Commonwealth subjects. (British, Aussie, Irish, etc.)

April-Club Auction. (Bring all your stuff you don't want anymore)

May-Ugly subjects (you are left to your own opinions here!)

June-The Golden Age (subjects between the wars) (1920-1940)

July-Modern Military subjects (1991-present)

August- World War One subjects

September- Sci fi and real space

October- modeling 'disasters' (again, you decide what that is for you)

November- A "Silk Purse" from a "Sows Ear" (a build from a notoriously bad kit)

December- our annual "White Elephant" kit exchange

