

# The Aero Historian



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December 2016



## Revell 1/48 F9F-5P

By Mark Rossmann

### History:

After WWII, peace and prosperity came to an abrupt end when Communist North Korea smashed into South Korea on June 25th 1950. The Air Force threw everything it had from Japan, but there was still a need to get more aircraft into the region, U.S. aircraft carriers (the nearest was the USS Valley Forge CV-45) in Hong Kong) were over 1000 miles away.

Within hours all personnel were back on board and Valley Forge was steaming to Subic Bay to be readied for combat. Arriving off the coast of Korea on July 1, she joined up with HMS

Triumph as part of Task Force 77, with Carrier Air Group (CVG 5) and two squadrons for F9F-3's with VF-51 and VF-52.

VC-61 Detachment 'E' (tail Code 'PP') brought the first recon Panthers (F9F-2P's) into the fight aboard the USS Princeton (CV-37) in early December 1950, with the VF-191 Panthers. Cameras in the nose replaced the four 20mm cannon. VC-61 detachments flew the majority of the Naval photographic intelligence missions in Korea, as they gradually replaced the venerable F4U-5P Corsairs into 1951.

The advantages over the

piston Corsair were:

- 1) Reduced battle damage over the target, because of the increased speed
- 2) Escorts were generally not needed unless in 'MiG Alley'
- 3) Lack of vibration from the props provided clearer images.

F9F-2P's were converted from F9F-2's during 1949 and 50. Since Grumman built only a small number of the -2P's, detachments equipped with this type typically deployed 3 of the aircraft.

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## TCAH Officers

**President**, Bernie Kugel

**Vice-President**, Jeff Fries

**Secretary**, Marty Agather

**Treasurer**, Dennis Strand

**Historian**, Tom Norrbohm

## 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

The monthly meeting will be held Saturday December 10, at Fleming Field, South St. Paul, beginning at 1:00 pm. Vendor baiting will begin about 12:00, so come early.



## President's Report

*by Bernie Kugel*

To all the members of TCAH, I want to thank you for letting me have this opportunity. I'm going to give my best to making an enjoyable time for all members over the next year, or years if you like me.

I know when I stood up at the October meeting and nominated myself, I seemed a "little" harsh. And I believe I put off a few people. I just felt that I needed to say those things and to let the membership know that I wanted to make some changes in how our club runs. And in no way am I making a statement about former club officers. They ran the club as best as they could and I am grateful to them. I hope most of you read my article in the November newsletter or heard me speak at the meeting and hopefully understand where I am coming from.

Now I'll get off my soapbox.

I am looking forward to some members bringing the books that they are reading to Show N Tell. I think it would be great to have more members active in our club. And if anyone has a tool or technique they would like to share, that would be awesome.

For the December meeting we are having our annual White Elephant challenge. If you want to participate, please bring a gift wrapped unstarted kit (around \$20 value) or book. If you have never been part of one, it is a lot of fun. Then in January, we are having our annual club contest and the "Floatplane, Flying Boat" challenge. And then we can't wait for February for "Hope It Don't Snow".

One issue I need to bring up is finding a new "Head Aircraft Judge" for NordicCon. I have been doing it over the last several years and am burning out. Since we are the model aircraft club, the judge should come from our organization. Please come see me if you have any interest or questions.

Well, it's a short newsletter article. Just starting to get the hang of this. I want to wish all the members a Merry Christmas, Happy Holidays, and a Happy New Year.



## Treasurer's Report—August

*by Dennis Strand*

I will begin this month's report by urging any members who have not paid their 2017 dues as yet, to do so at the December meeting. If you cannot attend our scheduled meeting, you may send a self-addressed stamped envelope and \$15.00 to me at: Dennis Strand, 833 Manomin Ave., St. Paul MN 55107 and I will be happy to send you a 2017 membership card.

We currently have 36 paid members and 7 "life members". Our club roster lists 73 members for 2016, so we have a ways to go. Remember, besides the auction, this is it for revenue.

As I write this report, we have had \$30.00 in expenses for club officers IPMS membership fees in November and we have received \$120.00 in annual membership dues. This gives us a grand total of \$5984.56

See you at the December meeting.



## Airline Chatter

by Terry Love

UPS ordered 14 Boeing 747-800 freighters. Deal is worth \$5.3 Billion. The deal included an option for 14 more Boeing 747-800 freighters. This order will keep the 747 production line open another one and a half years.

Doughai Airlines of China ordered 5 Boeing 787 Dreamliners via the Chinese Communist Government. Deal is worth \$1.32 Billion.

United Airlines has converted their order for 65 Boeing 737-700s to Boeing 737-800s. The -800 model has 30 more seating capacity.

Embraer announced that they sold 24 of their Embraer E-175s airliners to United Airlines. Cost is \$1.8 Billion. The E-175 holds about 130 seats. The E-175 is operated by over 100 customers around the world. Embraer has delivered over 1,200 E-175s and they have about 1,700 more on order.

Peach Airlines, a budget airline of Japan, ordered 13 more Airbus A-320s for a cost of \$1.4 Billion. Peach currently operates 18 Airbus A-320s. Peach is a subsidiary of All Nippon Airways, also based in Japan.



## Election Results

**President,** Bernie Kugel

**Vice-President,** Jeff Fries

**Secretary,** Marty Agather

**Treasurer,** Dennis Strand



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The next detachment of F9F-2P's arrived with the USS Boxer (CV-21) in early spring of '51 in the form of VC-61 Detachment "F". Between January and mid-February of '51 the -2P's were kept very active, flying 48 sorties. While VF-191 with F9F-2's dwindled to 17 aircraft and 28 pilots, VC-61 did manage to keep all three -2P's at strength.

U.S.S. Boxer from March through April sat off the coast of Songjin and Hamhung launching heckler strikes. Many jet launches were cancelled because of bad weather. Panthers flying armed reconnaissance were fully loaded with 20mm ammo and six 5-in HVARS, while jets flying recce escort had no pylon mounted ordnance. May brought better weather with VC-61 Det "F" recording 87 hours.

In November of "52" Valley Forge (a CVA-9 type carrier) operated F9F-5 Panthers and reported no issue with catapulting the larger heavier jets with the newer H4B catapults. Since the fully loaded -5 was 19,000 lbs, the shorter carriers needed to get plenty of wind across the flight decks to get the maximum performance from the -5's.

Later in December of "52", the USS Philippine Sea, CVA-47, was making its final war cruise with VC-61 Det "M" with F9F-5P's; these were built specifically as recon jets and were not converted from -5 stocks. The nose of the -5P, housing the camera bay, was about 12 inches longer than the standard -5 model. These aircraft came unpainted allowing for higher speed. In the end though, salt water corrosion took place and the deep sea blue color went

back on.

Intelligence asked Det "M" to fly 50 sorties for pre and post strike images. Once printed, the film was sent to four carriers in the task force. F9F-2's flew top cover to take on marauding Mig-15's, but none were encountered. The more powerful and faster -5P's were in and out of the target area quickly, cutting down the enemy gunner anti-aircraft reaction.

Recon revealed, in the first 10 days of February "53", the communists were challenging the gauntlet, when over 3392 trucks moved into the Wonsan area.

Det "D" returned to the U.S.S. Princeton in mid-January "53" with new -5P's to finish out the war. -5P's also served for Det "B", USS Valley Forge CVA-45. No photographic Panthers are known to have been flown by the Marines during Korea, per my references.

In all, the following recon Panthers were lost:

1. Three -2P's were lost from Det "D", on the USS Antietam (CV-36) (10/21/51, 11/2/51 & 1/29/52)
2. One -2P from Det "H" on the USS Valley Forge (CV-45) (3/11/52)

## Models and Markings:

#1: F9F-2P (#155) - Trumpeter 1/48th

This is a well produced kit. It allows for the canopy to be open or closed to show a reasonably good cockpit which I used from the kit. I did take a page from the Monogram F9F-5P, took card stock, and placed a black dot from a medium sharpie to represent a camera lens. I then

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cut to size and placed on the inside of the jet behind the window to represent a camera lens. Do not attach this to the clear window. Since many pictures show aircraft on carriers with wings folded, I chose that option.

Paint is rattle can Testors gloss Sea Blue, silver and Testors acrylic chromate green. Kit decals representing VF-61, Det "G", USS Bon Homme Richard (CV-31).

#2: F9F-5P (#8) – Revell 1/48th.

This is one of the

best Monogram/Revell kits available at that time. It is an excellent representation of the Grumman F9F-5P, of which only 36 were built. The kit comes with the paper lenses to place behind the photo glass. There is no option for folded wings, but there is an option for an open canopy displaying a fairly good interior with pilot.

Paint is rattle can Testors gloss Sea Blue, silver and Testors acrylic chromate green. A very poor job using Testors white, was attempted for the canopy framing. The kit comes with two Marine Corp decal options; I used VCMJ-3,

stationed at El Toro California in 1956. No decals at the time of my build, about 2005, were available for a Korean variant.

#### References:

F9F Panther Units of the Korean War – Osprey Publishing, by Warren Thompson

F9F Panther in detail & scale – Aero Publishing, by Bert Kinzy

Revell Instruction Sheets.







## 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

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Minneapolis, MN 55407

Return address requested

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 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.

Mail Newsletter material and address changes to the treasurer.

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