



**March 2020**



Michael Kennedy's F-105B

Twenty six members and family attended the March meeting. Steve Herren was in the hospital and was not able to attend. Steve passed away Tuesday evening, March 10. Our prayers and sympathy go out to his family and to his wife Bea.

I will send more information about services as I receive it from Bea.

Thanks to Michael Kennedy for taking the photos at the March meeting.

Several members paid their dues. Thanks.



Joe Martinez's latest figure



Art Berdicks's Mack Truck



Jim Davis's F-4 Phantoms



Tommie Delgado's Morris Prime Mover





Art Berdick's Scammell Tank Transporter



Richard Macias's A-4

## On the Tables

At Berdick had several models to photograph. He brought the Mack Bulldog dump truck that he had built for Conrad Ottenhoff. Art also had a 1/35<sup>th</sup> scale

Scammell tank transport tractor and trailer. Art also had an ICM Kadet K-38 Saloon .

Jim Davis bought two F-4J Phantoms. Both were marked for the USS Kitty Hawk, May 1972 in VF-114 "Ardivarks" markings. One was a Revell /72<sup>nd</sup> scale model the other an Italeri 1/48<sup>th</sup> scale model.

Carlos Delgado brought two items to show. He had a Monogram "Kingfisher" in 1/48<sup>th</sup> scale and a Trumpter Focke Wulf Condor also in 1/48<sup>th</sup> scale.



Carlos Delgado's Kingfisher



Carlos Delgado's Focke Wulf "Condor"



At Berdick's Kadet K-38 Saloon



Wayne Williamson's B-17G



Wayne Williamson's Enterprise



Wayne Williamson's other Enterprise

## On the tables continued

Michael Kennedy brought a conversion of an F-105G back dated to an F-105B in Thunderbird makings. He used the Falcon F-105B Conversion set. The makings are a mixture of paint and decals. Mike also provided an article that will appear in this issue of the newsletter.

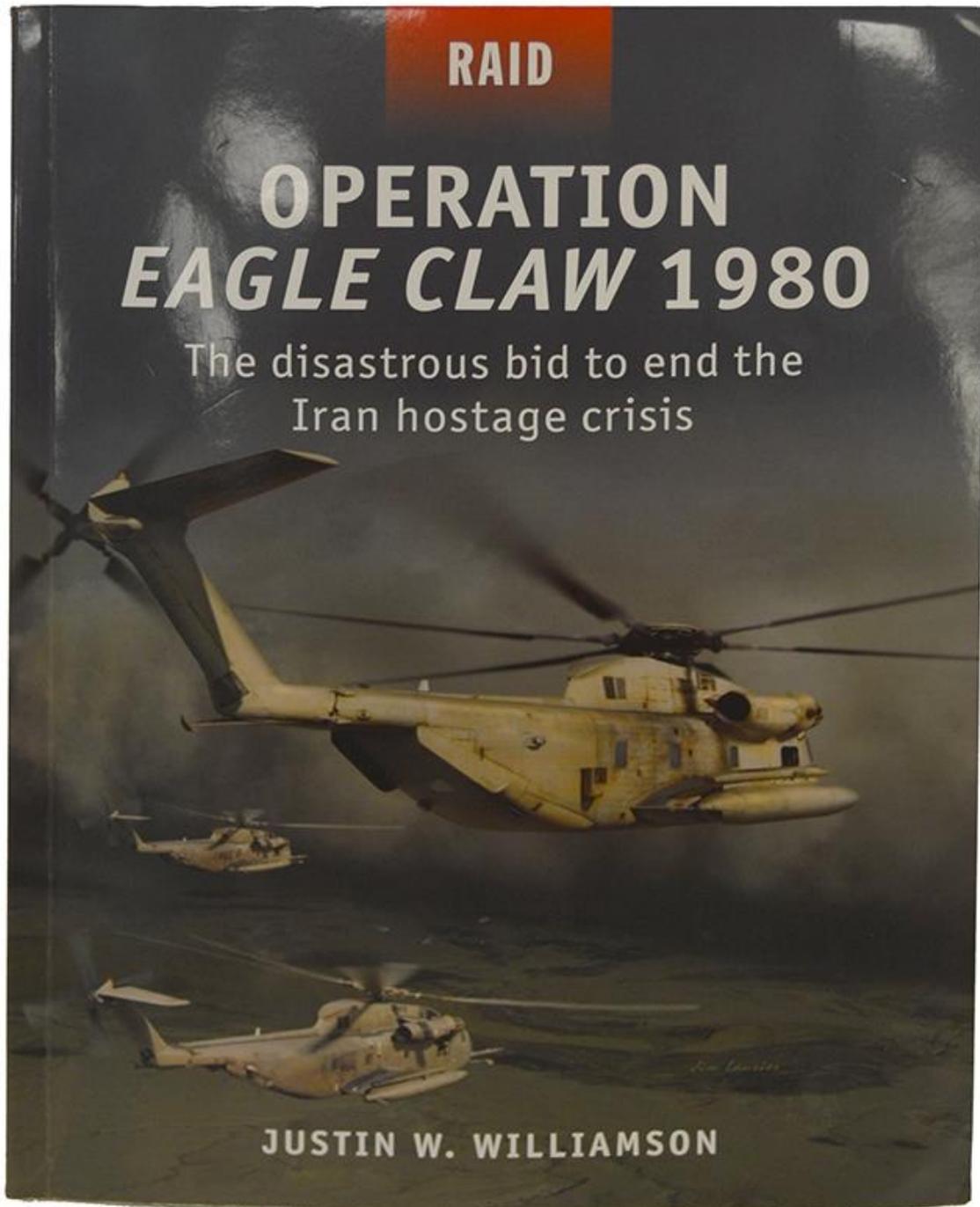
Richard Macias brought a 1/48<sup>th</sup> scale Hasegawa A-4 from VC-1.

Joe Martinez brought his latest figure to show. It was a Romeo Models 54mm American Cowboy. Joe used Vallejo and Andrea acrylics to paint his figure. Nice base.

Wayne Williamson had a Monogram B-17G in 1/48<sup>th</sup> scale. He also had the new Polarlights re-release of the AMT USS Enterprise and the Original AMT release of the same kit. Wayne provided us with the cover of his new book on the attempted rescue of the Iranian hostages as some of the club membership provided some references for his book.

## Notice:

**We will not meet on March 29. Stay home and build a model. Our next meeting will be in May if possible. Call your friends and make sure they know about this.**



# U S A F THUNDERBIRDS F-105B CONVERSION - BUILD

BY MICHAEL KENNEDY

In memory of Capt. Gene Devlin - 1 April 1933 - 9 May 1964. From the outset this project was intended to be a memorial to Capt. Gene Devlin who lost his life while flying an F-105B, Thunderbird Two, Air Force serial number 57-5801.

On May 9, 1964, when the team arrived at the Hamilton Air Base, California, a short time before landing, Thunderbird Two with Capt. Gene Devlin crashed. An eye witness on the ground at the field said that Thunderbird Two was on the left side of the three-plane formation, which had just executed a low pass over the runway. Then, as the three rose into a vertical climb, when Devlin's aircraft was at about a 45-degree attitude to the ground, and traveling about 300 knots, the fuselage snapped in half, just above the weapons bay, and blew up. The cause was structural failure which was later fixed on all F-105s. The crash, along with the need for F-105s in Viet Nam ended the Thunderchief's time as a Thunderbird after only six shows.



Above: Capt. Devlin a year before he flew with the Thunderbirds. Top right: The disintegration of Capt. Devlin's aircraft. Right: The six Thunderbirds pilots in 1964 (Capt. Devlin is second from the right).

## THE BUILD and CONVERSION

The build began with two kits and one set of decals: the 1/48 Revell F-105D Thunderchief kit, the Falcon Triple Conversion Kit which includes the vacuformed F-105B nose cone and the Warbird decal sheet designed for the Revell kit. The F-105D kit is typical of 1/48 scale Revell jet kits but requires much modification to make it into an F-105B (more on that later). The vacuformed nose cone is the only set of parts needed from the Falcon kit in order to convert the “D” model to the “B” model and is provided in two halves. The Warbird decal sheet is rife with problems and inaccuracies which have been well documented but in the end proved very helpful to my build (more on that later).

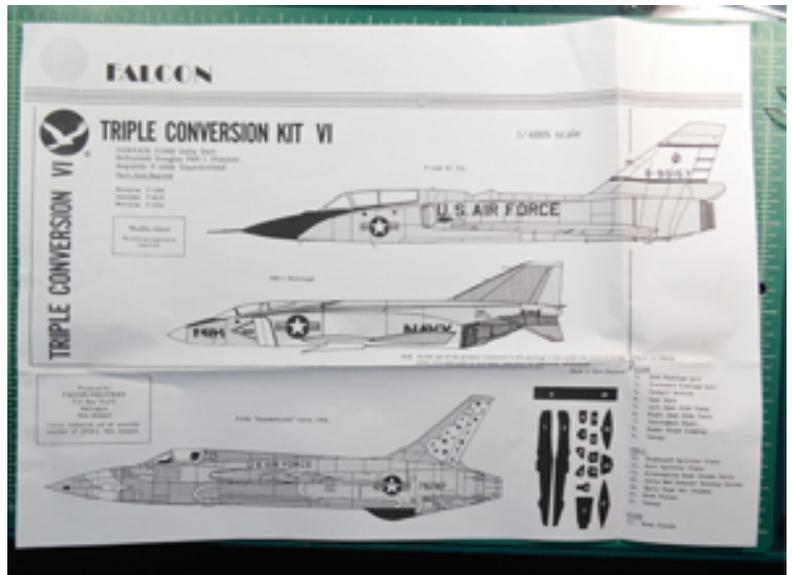
Once the interior parts were in place and the fuselage halves were glued together it was time for the “nose job” which began with cutting out the vacuformed halves of the nose cone from the Falcon sheet, sanding them to the correct fit and then gluing them together. The Falcon instructions indicate where to cut the jet model in



order for the diameters of the jet kit and the new nose cone to match and surprisingly I had no problems there as I used calipers to measure and delicate sanding to make the match. I filled about two thirds of the cone with two-part epoxy putty for reinforcement as well as extra weight to augment the lead weight I glued in the forward fuselage to ensure the model would sit on its nose gear. The new nose was fastened to the jet kit. Regretfully I took no photos of these modifications as this type of conversion was new to me and I was unsure of the outcome. No guts, no photos!

The F-105D model had many structural stiffeners and antennas on the fuselage and wings which had to be sanded off in order to render a reasonably accurate F-105B and so that was done. The rest of the basic assembly was straight forward. Other modifications included the relocation of the pitot tube from the front of the radome to the outboard, port wing as well as the addition of the smoke probe at the rear of the exhaust which was unique only to the modified Thunderbird aircraft. The new pitot tube was fashioned from stretched sprue and the smoke probe from stainless steel wire.

The wings were attached to the fuselage however the horizontal stabilators were not at this point in order to make painting and decal placement a bit easier. The exhaust parts were also treated apart from the main airframe as were the various landing gear parts and gear doors. The entire airframe was given two coats of Tamiya's White Fine Surface Primer with a fine grit wet sanding and polishing with Novus 2 between coats and after the final coat. Being forewarned about the



inaccuracies of the relocation of the pitot tube from the front of the radome to the outboard, port wing as well as the addition of the smoke probe at the rear of the exhaust which was unique only to the modified Thunderbird aircraft. The new pitot tube was fashioned from stretched sprue and the smoke probe from stainless steel wire.

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And now the decals! As stated earlier, the Warbird decals were a mess and for the most part could not be used so nearly all the decal markings were scavenged from the spares stash using multiple sheets from various manufacturers. The two exceptions were the national flags on the forward fuselage under the canopy and the many stars on the vertical and horizontal stabilators. For the flags I had to scan the sharpest Thunderbirds decals I could find which turned out to be from the Tamiya F-16 kit. Using photo references, I manipulated the flags to

represent the display from early 1964, printed them on an ink jet printer and placed them on the pre-measured white rectangle I had masked off during painting. They came out surprisingly good considering my past experiences with printing decals. The stars were from the Warbird sheet and there were a lot of them, in fact there were 82 stars, each one cut out into individual stars and much to my relief, they behaved nicely with the help of Micro Sol, Micro Set and Solvaset solutions. The finished jet was given a clear coat with Future and done, a very challenging and rewarding project in the books.



#### References:

**Backdate Monogram's Thunderchief, Learn how to convert an F-105D to an early B,** Pat Hawkey, Fine Scale Modeler, October, 2008

**F-105 Thunderchief in Action,** Ken Neubeck, Squadron/Signal Publications

**F-105 Thunderchief Walk Around,** Ken Neubeck, Squadron/Signal Publications

**Diamond in the Sky, a pictorial history of the United States Air Force Thunderbirds, C. A. Knotts & Pete Moor, SKM Publications**  
**THUNDERBIRDS**, published by Aerophile  
Internet photo research

**NOTICE**

We have been asked to cancel any meetings and to stay home until the Corona virus is controlled. We have not missed a meeting since May 1970 but missing one or two will not affect our club. I will notify you when we may resume meeting again. Please help us notify the membership by calling them or using e mail to spread the word.



Jim Davis



Conrad Ottenhoff



Joe Martinez



Debbie Afill

Dixi Fischer



Kai Garcia

Michael Garcia



Duane Velasquez



Justin Segovia

Roy Lingle

Sal Samaniego