



# "STICKY FINGERS"

## IPMS HORNCHURCH - NEWSLETTER



**The club display at Brampton**

<b>Alan's "Annotations"</b> .....	<b>2</b>
<b>Peter's "Prattlings"</b> .....	<b>3</b>
Ted Taylor.....	3
IPMS Hornchurch Show 2002.....	3
IPMS Brampton.....	3
Penguin Picks Up Army Honour.....	4
Flipper.....	4
'Best penguins'.....	4
<b>Ricky's "Ramblings"</b> .....	<b>4</b>
You're Probably Addicted to Modelling if.....	5
Tricks & Techniques.....	5
Two Ethical Questions to Ponder.....	5
United States National Insignia 1939-45.....	6
<b>Mick's "Musings"</b> .....	<b>8</b>
<b>Carol's "Cutting's"</b> .....	<b>9</b>
My Story Article.....	9
<b>IPMS Hornchurch Annual Competition</b> .....	<b>10</b>
August Miscellaneous Voting Results.....	10
Armour.....	10
Non-Armour.....	10
IPMS Hornchurch Trophy (Miscellaneous) – Current Positions.....	10



# "STICKY FINGERS"

## IPMS HORNCHURCH - NEWSLETTER

Events Schedule 2001/2002.....	13
Wrighty's References.....	15
The Naval Treasures at the Bottom of the Sea.....	15
Bismarck and HMS Hood.....	15
Battle of Midway.....	15
U-534.....	16
U-869.....	16
I-52.....	16
Scharnhorst.....	17

### Alan's "Annotations"

I would like to start this month's missive by apologising to all my fellow club members especially Steve Smith and Mick Pitts, Rick, Peter Bagshaw. If tonight's meeting is a real bummer it's down to me. I had Kevin Nunn booked for the September meeting, whilst at the Avon Show Kevin asked if he could move to the October meeting. I quickly saw Mick to see if he could get Richard Smith from the Purfleet Heritage Museum, Tilbury as the evening coincides with the Battle of Britain. Ah, I thought saved by my quick thinking, then at the last meeting Rick told us that Steve Smith is doing a talk, Argh! Help, the secretary has bodged it! Couldn't cancel Richard or we would risk not getting him back. So, apologies for the double booking and that is not the reason why I'm not there tonight, we are in Italy, I hope getting some sun.

Back to last month, Peter B gave us an insight into attaching Kit Kat silver wrapping to plastic to represent natural metal and very effective it is. But you will have to be quick as the wrapping is changed and the silver foil is no more. A thought occurred to me. If you have ever bought an Indian take away the Nan bread comes in a paper bag which is foil covered on the inside, if you carefully burn the paper away would you be left with some nice thin foil and a life times supply of keema nans!

Reading Alan Wright's piece in last month's "Sticky Fingers" re model shops had me wondering, at present we have two Scale Aircraft Modelling mags in the UK plus Military Modelling, Scale Models is coming back. Plus Scale Auto Modeller and I have seen a bi-monthly aircraft-modelling mag in the shops. Added to that there are the various American modelling titles available, but the model shops are disappearing so are we seeing re emergence of the hobby or just a lot of readers and more business for Hannants, who knows?

The Brampton show went well and congrats to Wally on winning the sub 1/72<sup>nd</sup> class and best of luck to him for the ALM show this month. As to our show for 2002 I will be contacting Lee's school for a date in May to get us away from Southern Expo in March.

That's a wrap, and happy modelling.

**Alan**



# "STICKY FINGERS"

## IPMS HORNCHURCH - NEWSLETTER

### Peter's "Prattlings"

#### **Ted Taylor**

I've heard from Steve Hubbard that Ted has had his triple by-pass operation and is recovering well. By the time you read this he should be home.

#### **IPMS Hornchurch Show 2002**

For those of you who have read the possibly cryptic end of Alan's Annotations regarding our show in 2002 a little bit of background. Lee asked a few meetings ago whether the club would be interested in staging a model show at his school hall. The hall is available for bookings at weekends and we would only be expected to donate a proportion of the profits to the school for the privilege. As the response was favourable Lee has supplied Alan with the necessary contact details.

The trick to the booking as Alan has stated is getting the right date. We didn't want to go for a March or April date as this is a little close to Southern Expo, no point in treading on Wally's toes. Hence the thought of a date in May. Please feel free to "get your thinking caps on" for any ideas about suitable dates, people we could invite either club or trade or any other suggestions. Contact either Alan or myself with anything, which you think, may be of use to get this project off the ground.

#### **IPMS Brampton**

A very pleasant day was spent by the club at St Neots, see pictures below of the display. The competition was a very different one, it was very informal, the judging being undertaken by the Brampton members on all the models on display on the club stands. Wally picked up the less than 72<sup>nd</sup> scale prize with his airliner models, well done Wally.





# "STICKY FINGERS"

## IPMS HORNCHURCH - NEWSLETTER



### *Penguin Picks Up Army Honour*

Regimental Sergeant Major Nils Olav has been given a unique honour by Norway's King Harald. Unlike many soldiers, his flat feet have not hindered his progress in the military and although he has never served under fire, he remains ice cool under pressure. Sgt Maj Olav is a 10-year-old penguin at Edinburgh Zoo who was adopted by the Norwegian King's Guard as their regimental mascot. Now he can add the word 'honourable' to his title. The rank was specially created for the seabird after top secret talks between the country's monarch and a handful of advisers.

### Flipper

At a 10-minute ceremony at the zoo, Nils Olav was led out of the pool to the sound of the guards' band. A silver badge was placed on his right flipper before he was offered the opportunity to inspect the 18 soldiers on parade - which he ignored. The Norwegian army has been sponsoring penguins at Edinburgh zoo since 1972 when the first bird was adopted and also given the name Nils Olav. The first Nils, who reached the rank of sergeant, died in 1987 to be replaced by the present incumbent. The adopt-a-penguin tradition began when a lieutenant in the king's guard, Nils Egelien, visited the zoo. The bird was named after him and the then king, Olav.

### 'Best penguins'

Mr Egelien, now a retired major, said the seabird was promoted as a result of "extraordinary good" reports from the zoo. Keeper Rob Thomas stated: "He is certainly one of the best penguins here." The zoo started its sponsorship scheme during the Second World War and has since attracted 1,500 sponsors who bring in £70,000 in donations.

### **Peter**

### **Ricky's "Ramblings"**

Now it's not very often I think of Alan Wright (sorry Alan) especially when I'm on holiday!! 'Er indoors and myself went to Jersey for a week for a well deserved break, looking at the free map from the tourist Information place the island has got its own "model flying field". Well if that's the case they must have a decent model shop about somewhere.

Wrong !..... they have a small, very small flying model shop in St Hellier and next door a toy shop selling the Airfix and Revell range and that was it. That's when Alan came to mind and his comments last month in "Sticky Fingers". Yes its true we are bereft of actual model shops around Romford but then how lucky we are that we can, within a few hours journey, go to the many model shows that are held around the country.

Any modeller on Jersey would have to get the ferry to Weymouth or Poole for their bits or pieces!! However I do agree with Alan on the lack of a local model shop in fact I know of only two places left to buy the basics. At Roneo Corner is a Model Train shop and the other one is at Elm Park in a



# "STICKY FINGERS"

## IPMS HORNCHURCH - NEWSLETTER

small tool shop opposite Woolworths. They sell Airfix kits and the basic glue and paints. This also brings to mind a point I brought up a few "Sticky Fingers" ago about letting us know of Model Shops you know of when you go on holiday.

### ***You're Probably Addicted to Modelling if...***

- You divide the dimensions of an actual vehicle by 72, 48, 35, etc. just to see how big it is "in reality."
- You spill a bottle of paint on the new rug and worry if you'll have enough paint to finish your project.
- You build a vacation around the Air Force Museum.
- You think of your car as 1:1 scale.
- You don't think your skin has a realistic flesh colour.
- You can't remember your anniversary but you know the dates and locations of the next three IPMS national conventions.
- You use your beer money to buy a new kit.
- You start, but never finish, a new kit every other day.
- You obsess about how many photo etched parts you can cram into a 1:72 scale cockpit.
- You rent a mini-warehouse for storage of your excess kits.
- You buy aftermarket parts and decals for out-of-production kits on the off chance that you can someday find the kits.

### ***Tricks & Techniques***

- Place open paint bottles in a spray can top to prevent accidental tipping.
- Use your airbrush to blow off unwanted dust before painting. Make sure the paint control is *closed* first!
- Paint stretched sprue on all sides at once by pulling it through a paint-soaked rag, like wiping off an auto oil dipstick.
- Mask radial aircraft engines by making a shallow cone from a paper disk with a slit from the centre out. Slip the cone inside the cowling.
- Chopped leafy spices (try a food processor) make convincing ground cover.
- Simulate wiring, hydraulic lines, conduits and hoses with various diameters of electronic solder.
- Clean styrene dust out of files and grinding bits by soaking them in liquid cement, paint remover or lacquer thinner for several hours.

### ***Two Ethical Questions to Ponder***

Q1: If you knew a woman who was pregnant, who already had 8 kids, three who were deaf, two who were blind, one mentally retarded, and she had syphilis; would you recommend that she have an abortion?

Read the next question before scrolling down to the answer of this one.



# "STICKY FINGERS"

## IPMS HORNCHURCH - NEWSLETTER

Q2: It is time to elect the world leader and your vote counts. Here are the facts about the three leading candidates:

Candidate A - Associates with crooked politicians and consults with astrologists. He's had two mistresses. He also chain smokes and drinks 8 to 10 martinis a day.

Candidate B - He has been kicked out of office twice. He sleeps until noon. He used opium in college. He drinks a quart of whiskey every evening.

Candidate C - He is a decorated war hero. He's also a vegetarian. He doesn't smoke. He drinks only an occasional beer. He hasn't had any extramarital affairs.

Which of these candidates would be your first choice?

Candidate A is Franklin D. Roosevelt

Candidate B is Winston Churchill

Candidate C is Adolf Hitler

and by the way: If you answered yes to the abortion question, you just killed Beethoven.

### ***United States National Insignia 1939-45***

US National Insignia and placement changed considerably from 1939 to 1945. From 1925 to 1939, US aircraft wore bright, easily recognisable paint schemes, and were beyond doubt the easiest aircraft to recognise in the air.

The US National Insignia at this time consisted of a circle with a 5-point star and red roundel in the centre of the star. The USAAF prescribed Spec. 3-1 Flag Blue # 24, FS# 15044. The Navy utilised ANA Insignia Blue 605. This colour was adopted in 1943 as the ANA standard. The white star was Insignia White 601, and the red roundel in the centre of the star was Flag Red # 15 (FS#11105). Prior to February of 1941, roundels were applied to both upper wing surfaces, underwing surfaces, and fuselage sides.

In February of 1941, all bright squadron and section markings were ordered removed, the right upper and left underside roundels removed, and rudders painted with alternating red and white stripes. In January of 1942, roundels were again applied to all 4-wing positions. The use of Flag Red # 15 (FS#11105) was dropped in favour of Insignia Red ANA 618, a RAF colour, in January 1942. The RAF red was considerably more subdued, it was better suited to camouflage schemes. Four months later, on May 12th, 1942, the red centre of the national insignia was ordered removed from all combat aircraft, as were the rudder stripes. Two weeks later, Spec. 98-24102 ordered the red centre of the National Insignia removed from all aircraft.

In February of 1943, orders again called for the removal of the right upper and left lower wing roundels. This was realised by combat pilots, who were often reacting to shapes and positions of national markings rather than colours. Japan utilised Hinomarus on both upper wing surfaces, and



# "STICKY FINGERS"

## IPMS HORNCHURCH - NEWSLETTER

from a distance, two circles on both upper wing surfaces often caused considerable tension, even when white stars were present. This did not provide a viable solution to the problem, so in June of 1943, bars were added with an Insignia Red 618 border. In September, Insignia Blue 605 replaced the red border. This remained the standard insignia throughout the remainder of the war.

Several variations to the national insignia existed, including the standard late June 1942 roundel with a yellow surround. This "temporary" roundel was carried by aircraft operating in North Africa during Operation Torch, August-September 1942. Another variation to the U.S. National Insignia occurred late in the war, and was not official practice. In March 1944, the US Navy ordered fighter aircraft painted overall Glossy Sea Blue 623. By October 1944 the rule applied to all carrier-based fighter, torpedo, and bomber aircraft. Due to the similarities between Insignia Blue 605 (FS#35044) and Glossy Sea Blue 623 (FS#15042), Insignia Blue was often deleted in national insignia. The result was a white star and two white bars with no apparent circular surround. The practice was quite common, however, its use was not officially recognised until June 1946, when the Navy authorised the blue background and border could be deleted on aircraft painted overall Glossy Sea Blue 623 or Black 604.

**Ricky**



# "STICKY FINGERS"

## IPMS HORNCHURCH - NEWSLETTER

### Mick's "Musings"

To produce a more unified club display theme for Southern Expo and beyond, the following people have volunteered (and my arm still hurts – Ed!) to make the models listed below. If you aren't on the list and fancy making something please contact me as soon as possible.

Aircraft	Squadron	Base	Who?
Sopwith Pup	46 Squadron	Suttons Farm	Alan Carr
Demon	65 Squadron	Hornchurch	Alan Wright
Spitfire I	222 Squadron	Hornchurch	Bob Ryan
Spitfire LF IXB	222 Squadron	Hornchurch	Bob Ryan
Trucks			Brian Lay
Trucks			Dave Ryan
Spitfire IIA	603 Squadron	Hornchurch	Ian Brown
Lysander	287 Squadron		John Bennett
Spitfire I	19 Squadron	Hornchurch	John Hone
Spitfire IIA	54 Squadron	Hornchurch	Jon Lowe
Mustang I	239 Squadron		Ken Sparks
Spitfire I	54 Squadron	Hornchurch	Kevin Curley
Blenheim IV	114 Squadron	Hornchurch	Lee Lacey
Tempest V	287 Squadron	Hornchurch	Mick Pitts
Spitfire I	92 Squadron	Hornchurch	Paul Kirby
Siskin IIIA	111 Squadron	Hornchurch	Peter Bagshaw
Gloster Gauntlet	74 Squadron	Hornchurch	Peter Bagshaw
BE 2C	23 Squadron	Suttons Farm	Ricky Prager
Blenheim IV	600 Squadron	Hornchurch	Robin Bellamy
Defiant I	264 Squadron	Hornchurch	Steve Smith
Bulldog IIA	54 Squadron	Hornchurch	Wally Arrowsmith
Camel	78 Squadron	Suttons Farm	Wally Arrowsmith

### Mick



# "STICKY FINGERS"

## IPMS HORNCHURCH - NEWSLETTER

### Carol's "Cutting's"

#### My Story Article

#### MY STORY

## Angels In The Mist

In the summer of 1935, when I was 14, I visited Uncle Theo in America, a vet in the country town of Stockertown, Pennsylvania. I was thrilled when he said I could help on his rounds and in the first few days I saw a cow having a difficult calving, a cat hit by a car and a horse with a damaged leg. Everything fascinated me, as one day I hoped to become a doctor like my father.

One day a policeman arrived, keeping a tight lead on a well-muzzled Alsatian. The dog had bitten two people and had to be put down. Uncle Theo took the dog on to the back lawn, gave him a calming injection, and said: "This won't hurt him. Don't worry if the dog pees, he does this as he relaxes and dies."

On September 3, 1939, I enlisted in the RAF and became a fighter pilot, flying Hurricanes and then Spitfires. At the end of the Battle of Britain I flew Hurricanes in 43 Squadron at Tangmere in West Sussex. We were then posted to the north-east of England for a rest, and a month later, in December 1940, to Drem, in Scotland. I was on shipping patrol over the Firth of Forth when I was hastily recalled by the area controller. "A



RAF fighter pilot Christopher Doll

haar is coming in fast from the sea. Return immediately." I had never seen one of these thick Scottish mists which blot out the landscape in minutes.

Drem was a grass aerodrome. By the time I was over the field the haar had arrived, so I headed towards the small bit of grass still visible. I put my wheels and flaps down, opened the sliding cockpit hood, and came in to land at 85mph. It had rained heavily. The wheels hit the mud and dug in deep. The Hurricane went on to its nose and over on to its back. I was now upside down, as if on a cross, with my arms flung out on either side of the cockpit. Gradually my

head and face – covered by helmet, goggles, radio and oxygen mask – sank into the mud. I was unable to move or breathe. Suddenly, I felt a trickle of warm liquid running down my stomach and over my chest, and my mind flashed back to holding that Alsatian in Stockertown, watching it pee and die. I knew then that I was dying, and passed out.

Ground crews from two dispersal points ran out into the fog, dragged me out and ripped off my headgear. As the air reached my lungs, I opened my eyes and saw three ambulance men dressed in white. I was in heaven, and they were angels. But I owed my life to an inexcusable flying error. Before landing a Hurricane or Spitfire, you pulled a lever to the right of the seat to raise it six inches which enabled you to see the runway over the side of the cockpit. In all my flying hours, I invariably did this. Except this one time. If I had pulled that lever, my head would have been six inches above the cockpit and my neck would have been broken as the plane flipped over. So a real angel *was* guarding me, after all.

– Christopher Doll, Brighton.



# "STICKY FINGERS"

## IPMS HORNCHURCH - NEWSLETTER

### IPMS Hornchurch Annual Competition

#### *August Miscellaneous Voting Results*

##### Armour

Position	Entrant	Entry	Votes
1 <sup>st</sup>	Steve Smith	M-26 Dragon Wagon and Cromwell	90
2 <sup>nd</sup>	Kevin Curley	Guy Armoured Car	78
3 <sup>rd</sup>	Kevin Curley	Bedford ML	62

##### Non-Armour

Position	Entrant	Entry	Votes
1 <sup>st</sup>	John Hone	Fiat 806	74
2 <sup>nd</sup>	Brian Lay	Predator	62
3 <sup>rd</sup>	Brian Lay	Silver Surfer	48
4 <sup>th</sup>	Ian Brown	Lotus 25	40
5 <sup>th</sup>	Ian Brown	Renault LM	49
	Ron Newbold	American Fire Engine	32
	Ricky Prager	MG Magnette	21

#### ***IPMS Hornchurch Trophy (Miscellaneous) – Current Positions***

Brian Lay	44
Kevin Curly	44
Ian Brown	36
John Hone	25
Steve Smith	25
Ricky Prager	5
Ron Newbold	5



# "STICKY FINGERS"

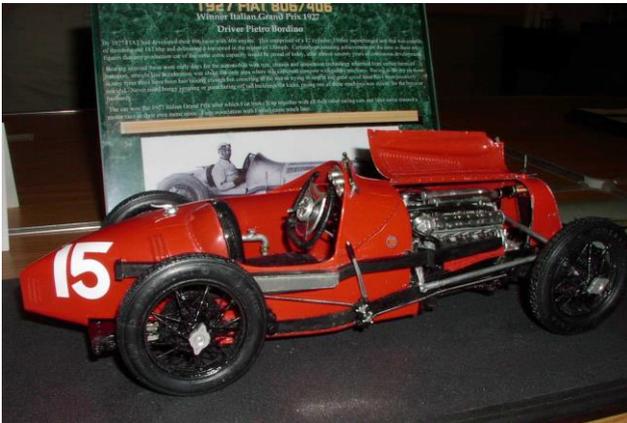
## IPMS HORNCHURCH - NEWSLETTER





# "STICKY FINGERS"

## IPMS HORNCHURCH - NEWSLETTER





# "STICKY FINGERS"

## IPMS HORNCHURCH - NEWSLETTER

### Events Schedule 2001/2002

Items **highlighted** are where IPMS Hornchurch have space booked.

<p>Sunday 23 September</p>	<p>IPMS Farnborough announce their annual show will once again be held at the Frogmore Community Campus, Yateley, Hampshire, which is situated just 2 miles off the M3 at Junction 4. Free Parking, Refreshments, selection of Model Clubs and Traders attending. IPMS Farnborough will once again be supporting the Phylis Tuckwell Hospice based in Farnham, which cares for the terminally ill. Contact - Pete Readman, 12 Beaufont Road, Camberley, Surrey GU15 1NF, Phone 01276 681818, E-mail: <a href="mailto:preadman@compuserve.com">preadman@compuserve.com</a></p>
<p>Sunday 23 September</p>	<p>IPMS Coventry &amp; Warwickshire in association with the Midland Air Museum announce a model show to be held the Midland Air Museum, Coventry Airport, Bagington, Coventry. Contact - Dianne or Barry James, Midland Air Museum, Phone 02476 301033</p>
<p><b>Sunday 30 September</b></p>	<p><b>Mildenhall Scale Model Club are holding their 29th Annual Model Show in the AYA Centre on the A1101 Beck Row, adjacent to RAF Mildenhall. Parking and admission is free. For further information contact: Jeff Hickford on 01638 714 676 (evenings).</b></p>
<p>Saturday 6 October</p>	<p>IPMS Glasgow and the Miniature Armour Group once again present an annual model show and competition for the sixth successive year to be held at the Glasgow College of Nautical Studies, Thistle Street, Glasgow. Attractions include a 39 class open competition, Branch &amp; SIG stands together with Glasgow MAFVA and a selection of associated traders. Show will be open from 10am - 4pm, admission will be Adults £1.00, Children 50p. Catering will be available including some home baking and there is ample free parking at the college. Contact - Geoff Crow, 13 Merrygreen Place, Stewarton, Scotland KA3 5EJ, Phone 01560 484578</p>
<p>Sunday 7 October</p>	<p><b>Halton Model Show, the biggest model exhibition in Southern England now in its 23rd year is to be held at RAF Halton Airfield, Wendover, Nr. Aylesbury, Buckinghamshire. Show open 10.00 am - 4.30pm. Attractions include Models used in Films &amp; Television, War Games, Model Engineering, Circus &amp; Fairground Models, Railway Layouts, Radio Control Aircraft, Boats and Cars together with Aviation Models, Plastic Models, Preservation Societies, Stationary Engines, Art &amp; Craft Stalls and Trade Stands. Admission Adults £5.00, Children and Senior Citizens £2.00. Last year, the show organisers raised approximately £10,000 for the Royal Air Force Benevolent Fund and £1,000 was raised for the local Lion's group. Come and have a good day out and support a worthy cause. Contact - Edgar Brooks, 26 Sandygate Road, Marlow, Buckinghamshire SL7 3AZ</b></p> <p style="text-align: center;"><b>We have 4 tables allocated to us.</b></p>



# "STICKY FINGERS"

## IPMS HORNCHURCH - NEWSLETTER

Sunday 21 <sup>st</sup> October	Chiltern Show Cancelled
Saturday 3 Sunday 4 November	<b>IPMS (UK) Scale Modelworld 2001: IPMS (UK) are scheduled to hold the second World International Model Show at the Telford Exhibition Centre, Telford, Shropshire, England. IPMS Chapters from across the world are invited to attend the show which will be the biggest modelling event ever staged. E-mail: Nick Allen: <a href="mailto:nick@ipmsuk.globalnet.co.uk">nick@ipmsuk.globalnet.co.uk</a></b>
Sunday 18 <sup>th</sup> November	<b>St Edmundsbury Scale Model Show. Horringer Community Centre, Nr Bury St Edmunds, Suffolk  We have 2 6x3 feet tables allocated.</b>
Sunday February 3 <sup>rd</sup> 2002	<b>Milton Keynes ModelKraft, Bletchley Leisure Centre.</b>



# "STICKY FINGERS"

## IPMS HORNCHURCH - NEWSLETTER

### Wrighty's References

#### *The Naval Treasures at the Bottom of the Sea*

##### Bismarck and HMS Hood

Naval matters have hardly ever graced the pages of "Sticky Fingers", it's time to redress the balance.

Did you see the Channel 4 documentary "Hunt for the Hood" on August 6<sup>th</sup>? The expedition to locate and photograph the battleships Hood and Bismarck's watery graves some 3 miles below the waves.

Firstly the Bismarck had been located by another expedition in the early 90's but her position was kept secret. The amazing technology that enables such missions to take place is really a wonder to behold on its own, which in its own way must be almost as amazing as the technology in getting to the moon.

However back to the story, Bismarck was located, 3 miles down, it was found the vessel rolled over in her dive to the bottom and all the gun turrets, which were seated in barbets held in place by gravity and their own weight, all fell out of their seating. The hull hit the side of an extinct volcano and slid down the final mile to the bottom, the huge swathe she cut was the actual first sighting to pinpoint the location of the hull. Remarkably clear pictures show the battered hulk, with the turret openings and the huge swastika on the foredeck (for aerial recognition) still visible.

Bad weather had put the expedition behind schedule and gave even less time to find the Hood. Time was running out when sonar etc located a huge crater some 2 miles down on the seabed, some 300 feet wide, but Hood was 700 feet long, was this something else? With time running out, the team took the decision that this could be the Hood and work started. After early problems the team established that the 350 foot crater was caused by the Hoods mid section of the hull striking the bottom with terrific force, this was now buried upside down in the mud, so apart from the bottom plating little was visible. The Hood was blown apart by the explosion that sank her, and eventually in the area some 1½ miles away the stern section was found standing upright on the seabed, propellers clearly visible. Later further away the forward section was located by following an anchor cable, this section was buried lying on its side. In the debris trail the ships bell was also located among other bridge fittings. So the expedition was successful.

##### Battle of Midway

Since Bob Ballard discovered the Titanic, he has undertaken many other similar missions, they have all been shown recently on Sky Discovery channel, which is a very good reason to have this channel.



# "STICKY FINGERS"

## IPMS HORNCHURCH - NEWSLETTER

Some were not so successful, like the hunt for the Japs 4 carriers lost at Midway, extensive searching failed to find any of them, but the U.S.S. Yorktown was located and photographed before the expeditions time frame ran out.

### U-534

U-boats have proved a fruitful source for the searchers most notably U-534, which was located, found almost intact, with live acoustic torpedoes still in her tubes, these were of a special type used later in the war and apparently only 36 were ever made, indeed a rare find. This vessel was sunk in April 1945, she was actually lifted in a cradle between 2 huge barges, raised to the surface and pumped out, later landed ashore in Norway. Untold treasures were found as all the mud and silt was washed away but no treasures like Nazi gold, that as legend had it was aboard. This rusted hulk is preserved and was presented to Liverpool where it is now on display at the Albert Docks site, so if you are up that way a visit is surely worthwhile.

### U-869

Another U-boat was found by divers in shallow water off the US coastline near New Jersey, but records showed that no U-boat had ever been sunk or even attacked there. The many dives failed to come up with anything as to its identity, the engine room area was inaccessible due to damage that had sunk the boat, and it was here that it was most likely that spare parts in crates with the vessel number were stowed. However a seamans knife was found with an unusual German name (Horenborg) engraved on the handle, it was found that only one man with that name ever served in U-boats. From U-boat archives in Hamburg it was found that he was on U-869, but alas this U-boat was sunk in the Mediterranean in April 1945. So what boat was off the U.S. coast? A year later an extremely brave diver managed to gain access to the engine room of the stricken boat and in spite of the dangers of twisted metal gained access and brought out a small box containing a bearing. When the box was cleaned up the U-boat number place was indeed U-869. A study of Hamburgs records showed U-869 was originally detailed to operate off the U.S. coast, but whilst on-route was ordered to turn around and enter the Mediterranean, no confirmation of these orders was ever received, so obviously U-869 never got this message. Also the attributed sinking in the Mediterranean was another U-boat which got away. So who did sink U-869, in a final "twist of fate" she unbelievably sunk herself! Explanation, the vessel carried a new type of homing torpedo, which had been known to be unstable. The vessel arrived on her U.S. station must have fired at a target ship, where upon the unstable torpedo ran off course, turned in a circle and the homing device cut in on its own ship and send U-869 to the bottom. (This story appeared in 2 parts on August 7<sup>th</sup> and 14<sup>th</sup> on the Sky Discovery channel).

### I-52

Another extremely interesting U-boat story was entitled "The Jap Submarine I-52". My memory on this one isn't quite as clear and it was about 4 months ago, but basically the story was something like this:-

In late 1944 the Germans were desperate for certain materials and as part of the Axis pact, Japan stocked I-52 with these precious materials (including some for use with the Nazis attempt to



# "STICKY FINGERS"

## IPMS HORNCHURCH - NEWSLETTER

produce an atomic bomb), also aboard were some 20 senior scientists and technicians to assist the Germans.

The vessel was a much larger submarine than the German U-boat and was to run the Allied blockade, which in late 1944 was very effective. Leaving for Penang the vessel sailed to Singapore, then across the Indian Ocean, around the tip of South Africa, this was probably trying enough, but the hardest part was still to come. They sailed up the African coast in the South Atlantic, then into the North Atlantic, where the Allied patrols were at their strongest. The ship had no backup or refuelling tankers, and maybe by trying to advise U-boat HQ of their progress, with the "ENIGMA" code machine, they also told the Allies. The A/S carrier search teams in this area of the North Atlantic were alerted, Avenger aircraft readied from U.S.S. Block Island, were directed on search, the large submarine was caught on the surface (recharging batteries) and depth charged by several planes. This submarine wreck was located by the underwater search team, then photographed, numerous anti-aircraft gun shells still in clips were found and the badly damaged conning tower seen in detail. One of the original U.S. pilots was with the team and told how the U-boat sank very quickly after a direct hit, at the time he did not know that the submarine was an Imperial Japanese Navy one or what was aboard. The sinking was in early 1945 and according to the film if it had reached its destination, Bordeaux, about 200-300 miles away, who knows what may have happened, it may have been the most important kill of the war.

### Scharnhorst

Another well known vessel discovered recently was the Scharnhorst sunk on Boxing Day 1943 in the battle of the North Cape in the Arctic waters off Northern Norway, the Allies exacted vengeance for this vessels tag of "being a thorn in their side". The sinking of the aircraft carrier Glorious off Norway 1040, Brest 1941, Channel Dash 1942 helped build this reputation. Again the wreck was found by the expedition in the freezing Arctic waters, I can't remember the details of this film, but again it was photographed in deep water. I believe the weather curtailed this expedition, the difficulty with the cold waters and the "time frame" running out.

There are probably videos of all these stories, so if you see any of them in your library or local video hire, I guarantee you will enjoy each and every one of them.

**Alan**