

Ken Emmings DGEng BUGLE - hobbies, etc.

Idly sitting at my computer one day and concerned about the dwindling pile of Bugle stories; I had this flash of inspiration. Why not get the Boys to write a paragraph or two about their Toys? Silly?, of course! however here is the first story written by Ken Emmings (with very little arm twisting from me) as he has a great model collection. A small section is shown in Fig.1. Here are his thoughts.



KEN

I cannot actually remember when I first started to collect die-cast aircraft models but know that it was driven by dissatisfaction with my own inability to make models that I was happy with. Construction was not the problem but the subsequent painting was. I do however remember the first model that I purchased (latest count for my collection is 150 plus) which was the Singapore Airlines 747-400 (Fig.2) having the most elaborate paint scheme that I had ever seen. This aircraft, one of two painted in this scheme, has a rather sad memory as the second aircraft was involved in a tragic accident in Taiwan during a typhoon when it attempted a takeoff from a runway which was undergoing repair hitting a crane and several large concrete blocks. There were survivors but I do not recall how many.

Many of the models have a particular meaning for me in that I have either flown in them at some time or have had a work connection with them. Particularly the Handley Page Hastings (Fig 3) in which I flew as crew for nearly three years in the Far

East in one of 4 VIP versions. Unfortunately the manufacturers do not always get the details correct and I am still awaiting a Mk4 version which I have commissioned privately.

Since I started collecting there have been quite dramatic changes in the quality of the models now available on the market. In the early days manufacturers still used transfers for decoration which deteriorate after time. Now tamp and laser printing are used which

provide the most incredibly detailed images. Nearly all of the manufacturers are, not surprisingly, in China although there are still some in the UK.

Scale is always a problem as collections become larger and I basically adhere to a scale of 1:400 for larger models and 1:200 for commuter type aircraft. This means that the C54 Spirit of Freedom model (Fig 4) commemorating the Berlin Airlift is approximately 5.5 inches long whilst the Hastings are about 5 inches in length. At the other end of the scale a model of the Airbus A380 (Fig 5) in 1:400 scale comes out at about 7.5 inches.

My association with many of the models may be of interest. The Valiant (Fig 6) was the first aircraft that I worked on following my apprenticeship in the RAF, the Hastings I have already referred to, the VC10 (Fig 7) Conway engines were my responsibility for many years and I also flew the Atlantic on several occasions (facing backwards) in this aircraft. Boeing 737's, 747's, 757's, Tri-Star's, Tridents and BAC 1-11's (Fig 8) took me to many interesting meetings in Europe and the USA. These were the days when flight deck visits and jump seat rides were allowed if you made your interest known to the flight crew and I have many happy memories of take off and landings into London City, Heathrow, Paris, Athens, Washington and many others. I am a bit of an Anorak where aircraft and aviation in general is concerned but I hope that you may have found the above interesting.



1. Collection - part view.
Collection - part view.



2. B747 - Singapore Airlines.
B747 - Singapore Airlines.



3. Handley Page Hastings.
Handley Page Hastings.



4. C54 - Berlin Airlift.
C54 - Berlin Airlift.



5. A380 - China Southern.
A380 - China Southern.



6. Vickers Valiant.
Vickers Valiant.



7. VC10 - RAF.
VC10 - RAF.



8. British Caledonian - BAC 1-11.
British Caledonian - BAC 1-11.

Ken Emmings

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