

# THE C.A.R.

DEC 2014



# COURIER

*Multa paucis qui coeperit finiatur*



Testor's origins stretch back to the late 1920s and stem from the efforts of two Swedish immigrants named Axel Karlson and Nils F. Testor. When Karlson emigrated from Stockholm to Rockford, Illinois, he brought with him a formula for nitrocellulose-based shoe cement. In 1928 he established a new company, Karlson's Klister, to market his product. In February 1929, Karlson convinced Testor, then the manager of an F.W. Woolworth store in Rockford's Swedish district, to serve as office manager of his new enterprise. It was a relatively risky move for Testor, who began his career as a stockroom boy in Woolworth's Chicago store on State Street and had worked his way up over the course of four years.

Karlson's Klister ultimately proved unsuccessful, and Karlson returned home to Sweden. Seeing a new opportunity, Testor borrowed enough money to purchase the firm's assets and founded The Testor Chemical Co. After reformulating Karlson's shoe cement, Testor began marketing the adhesive as Testor's Household Cement. Sold in convenient tubes, the new product had a wider range of applications and became especially popular during the Great Depression, when it was necessary to maximize the life and utility of a variety of household items.

During the 1930s, Testors expanded in size and product offerings. It was during this time that the company began marketing to hobbyists by making cement intended for wooden model airplanes. By 1936, the company offered a line of cements and paints especially for hobby and model airplane enthusiasts. The company had established itself as a leading company in the hobby industry. In 1940, the company strengthened its commitment to hobbyists when it became a founding member of the Hobby Industry of America. Although Testors was prepared for continued growth and expansion, a number of roadblocks would slow the pace of progress during much of the decade.

One major challenge was the advent of World War II. Among those affected by the war were U.S. manufacturers, as resources became scarce and large amounts of raw materials were devoted to wartime production. In the wake of this and other challenges, Testors began marketing scale model airplanes made of balsa wood. The popularity of these wooden planes enabled the company to weather a difficult period in its history.

Following the success of its balsa wood planes, Testors began selling engine-powered balsa planes that hobbyists could control from the ground via an attached line. Working in partnership with model engine manufacturer McCoy Products, these kits were marketed in four different skill categories--freshman, sophomore, junior, and senior. Each kit contained an airplane, propeller, and fuel (all manufactured by Testors), as well as one of McCoy's engines. These kits were sold until approximately 1952, when Testors turned its attention to making balsa wood hand-gliders.

Testors experienced a setback one month after the company moved into Rockford's Buckbee Building when, on February 1, 1944, a fire completely destroyed the interior of the five-story structure. Several days later Nils Testor--who at the time of the fire was in New York on business--commented on the loss in the *Rockford Morning Star*, proclaiming: "Out of the ashes will come an even better thing." As predicted, the company's fortunes improved, and by the end of the 1940s they were able to focus on growth and expansion. It was around this time that Testor's unveiled new products, including a line of enamel paints and plastic model cement.

As the 1950s began, Testors prospered in the climate of a thriving American economy. The company added a second factory to its operations in 1951. This enabled the production of a greater number of products, including gloss enamel paints in 48 different colors, new adhesives, and fuel for model airplanes. The following year, Testors began to produce balsa wood hand gliders on a large scale, as well as model airplanes with plastic landing gear and propellers that were powered by rubber bands.

January of 1952, Testors increased its manufacturing capacity. With the expansion of both its manufacturing facilities and its line of products, the company began to grow as an enterprise during the 1950s. Midway through the decade, the firm made its first acquisition, purchasing Duro-Matic Products Co. in 1955. Based in Culver City, California, the company had manufactured the McCoy model airplane engine since 1941. In conjunction with the rapid expansion underway at Testors, Charles D. Miller, who had served as Duro-Matic's president since 1947, was named as Testors vice-president in charge of manufacturing. He and Nils Testor had enjoyed a close working relationship in previous years. Miller was serving as president of the Hobby Industry Association at the time of his appointment.

In 1955, Testors sold more than 50 million units of merchandise. By this time, the company had evolved into one of the nation's largest buyers of small glass bottles and plastic tubes, respectively used to package its PLA enamel paints and cement. Additionally, the company had become the world's leading consumer of balsa wood, which it imported from South America. In addition to using balsa wood to manufacture toy airplanes, they also sold the wood in board, sheet, and strip form to consumers for hobby use. By the mid-1950s, Testors was also producing approximately 100,000 bottles of its enamel paint each day. In addition to paints and glue, the company sold lighter fluid in cans for 15 cents each.

In spring 1956, Nils Testor announced that his firm had opened a branch in Stockholm, Sweden, called Testor Produkter A.B. In the April 29, 1956 *Rockford Morning Star*, Testor said that the objective of the new office was to capitalize on the Western European market, which then consisted of approximately 275 million people. Two years later, Nils Testor revealed that he would move from Rockford, Illinois, to San Juan, Puerto Rico, where he had established the Testor Balsa Co. for manufacturing toy airplanes, as well as the Testor Adhesive and Paint Co. Inc. These firms handled functions once performed in Rockford. By this time, operations in Rockford consisted of the Testor Corp., which held the primary responsibility of assembling, packaging, and selling the firm's products, and the Testor Chemical Co., which focused on the manufacture of paint, enamel, lacquer, and adhesive. In late 1958, C. Roderick Stroh was president and general manager of Testor Corp., and Forrest K. Elson was president and general manager of the latter company.

Enterprise growth continued in the 1960s. By February 1963, Charles Miller had become president of Testor Corp. In order to serve customers in Canadian and European markets, Testor established a Canadian subsidiary in Weston, Ontario, in 1964. Four years later, Testor's bolstered its Duro-Matic line when it acquired Wenmac Corp., a manufacturer of engine-powered cars and planes. In 1965, the Jupiter Corp., a Chicago-based holding company, acquired Testor. At the time of the sale, Testor's employed approximately 450 workers, 200 of whom were based in Rockford, Illinois. Nils Testor, who maintained residences in San Juan and Westport, Connecticut, remained the company's chairman. Miller continued to serve as president and chief operating officer.

In 1969, Testors pioneered sniff-proof glue by adding mustard oil to its formula. The additive, which was intended to protect youth from inhaling harmful fumes, made sniffing glue extremely unpleasant, if not impossible. Testors made its formula available to other glue manufacturers at no charge and supported legislation in several states, including New York and New Jersey, which intended to make such additives mandatory. The company ended the 1960s with another acquisition. Testors 1969 purchase of the Hawk Model Co. added plastic model kits to its product line. Hawk reportedly produced the industry's first plastic model.

In 1970, another acquisition followed the purchase of Hawk Model Co. That year, Testors acquired Detroit-based Industro Motive Corp. (IMC) to strengthen its production of plastic model kits at the Rockford plant. By that year, in addition to Duro-Matic and operations in Rockford and Canada, the Testors family had grown to include Testor R-C Corp. and the JTW Corp. In 1970, Forrest Elson was placed in charge of the company's operations in Rockford and was named Testor Corp.'s executive vice-president. In order to accommodate rapid growth, Testor announced plans to expand its Rockford facilities in January 1973. Specifically, the firm revealed it would build a 50,000-square-foot addition to its warehouse, along with a new manufacturing facility totaling 30,000 square feet. Together, the additional space increased Testor's total warehouse and manufacturing space to 300,000 square feet. Although fluctuating plastic prices initially had a negative effect on

Testors production of plastic models, by the mid-1970s the company was fully committed to producing them. At that time, the firm also was selling drop cloths, knives, gluing tips, and sandpaper that could be used with its model kits. Testors continued to prosper and by 1978 achieved annual sales of \$24 million. Around this time, Testors entered a partnership with Italeri and Fujimi (among others like Gunze), importing model kits under the Testors logo.

Shortly after the 1980s arrived, Testors introduced a new line of high-quality snap-together model kits for intermediate-skilled modelers. Although the kits were relatively simple to assemble and did not require the use of paints or plastic cement, they were designed with great detail so as to satisfy more advanced modelers. Among the models offered in this new line were the Rolls Royce Phantom II and a Peterbilt Conventional semi-truck. At the time, the latter model was the most complex snap-together product ever produced by Testor and was composed of over 50 different parts.

On January 17, 1984, RPM Inc. (Republic Powdered Metals) of Medina, Ohio, acquired Testors. At the time, RPM also operated such well-known companies as Bondex, Bondo, Mohawk, Rustoleum, and Zinser. That same year, Testors extended its international reach even further by forming an Australian subsidiary.

During the 1990s, Testors acquired English airbrush manufacturer Aztek. During that decade, the company continued to produce a wide array of interesting models in addition to modeling paints and adhesives. By this time, Testors model kits had evolved considerably from simple hand gliders made of balsa wood to plastic facsimiles of military aircraft like the SR-71 Blackbird Spyplane, the RF-4 Phantom II Spirit of America, and the V-22 Osprey, as well as land vehicles like the Sherman M4 A1 tank.

In 1994, Testors added the S4 UFO to its lineup of models. According to the September 26, 1994 *Rockford Register Star*, the company based the design of its UFO on descriptions from a former government scientist who supposedly worked with such craft at Nellis Air Force Range in Nevada. Based on input from the same man, Testors released a model of Grey--The Extraterrestrial Life Form. In 1997, Testors unveiled its Roswell UFO model, based on the alien craft that supposedly had crashed in the desert near Roswell, New Mexico, 50 years earlier.

By the early 2000s, Testor remained a dominant force in the hobby industry. In addition to its operations in Rockford, Illinois, the company had manufacturing facilities in Europe and the Far East.

\*This article was condensed and modified from an original author (unknown). The original can be seen at the website Reference for Business via Wikipedia

## **CLUB BUSINESS SECTION**

**December 2014**

### **MEETING NOTES** Edgar Linz

24 members and guests were present at the November meeting. The end of year contest tables held 94 models from this year's winners.

The Board asked that members start paying their 2015 dues.

The Board asked for kit donations as an option to participating in the Christmas gift exchange. The club will provide food, but you are responsible for your own drink.

Door Prize and Raffle winners: '86 El Camino -Steve Bowser, 32 Ford Street Pick-up- Ron Scheffel,'56 T-Bird-Jim Wilkens

**Special Note: The April 2015 meeting will be the first Monday of the month**



## **FROM THE PRESIDENT** by Rockne Riddlebarger

Season's Greetings Model Citizens!

As December brings us to the close of 2014 we start to look forward to a new year. I hope 2015 brings good health, good fortune and abundant happiness to all of the members of C.A.R. and their families. We are fortunate in having the friendship and comradery of our members and to be able to enjoy the awesome talents that each of us brings to our hobby.

December also means that is it the time for our party on the 8<sup>th</sup>, at the usual time and at the usual place. Don't forget to bring a wrapped kit if you wish to participate in the gift exchange or donate the price of a kit to the club instead. Dues are being accepted for 2015 as well. "Thank you!" to all whom have already paid.

2015 marks the 30<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the formation of the Cincinnati Auto Replicas Model Car Club. Look for new historical information on the website and at the meetings during the entire year. An uninterrupted thirty year span makes us one of the longest lasting model car clubs in the world. Be proud and do all that you can to keep the club alive into the future.

## **VP VIEWS** by Randy Wilson

## **WINNER'S CIRCLE** by Curtis Epperson

Hey Guys it's the end of the pizza party and gift exchange. The awards for last month's contest will also be handed out along with the model of the year. So bring a sealed and wrapped kit for the gift exchange and bring your own drinks.

See Yall Monday.

## **FROM THE EDITOR** by Mike Jinkens

Where would we be without the Testor's line of glues and paints? Growing up, I used their glues and paints, I never saw any other brand until I found some Pactra paints in the late 1970's I even suffered through the 'safe glue' era when retailers would only sell a youngster that crappy lemon scented stuff that didn't work. Testor's model putty left a lot to be desired too. It never seemed to stick to plastic and dried out too quickly. I still use Testor's products as the main source of glue and paint, they are still the easiest to find and are still made here in the USA. Their glue that comes in the plastic bottle is such an improvement over the old tube stuff and easier to use than the liquid. I still use the old square bottle stuff, let alone the new spray lacquers.

As we become better model builders, we often forget about the problems some newcomers have. I'd like to start a series of 'Building Better Models' series and would welcome contributions. Just the basics, and eventually move up to more advanced stuff.

## **Model Rambling** *By Dennis Tull*

My boyhood memories abound when it comes to thinking about model cars. I can relate one story or another about model building, which could involve practically every guy that I knew while growing up. Some were inspirational and others were disasters, but they all usually bring a smile to my face now, while I reminisce. However, my childhood contemporaries are not the only ones that come to mind when I wander down model memory lane. Parents, teachers, grandparents, neighbors, many relatives, my wife and children and even the nice lady that ran our local hobby shop have all contributed their unique mark on my auto modeling experience. I believe that when you find something you love to do and you become enthusiastic about it, good things happen. Having the great fortune of being surrounded by thoughtful people who have provided ongoing

encouragement has made all the difference for me. Now, after fifty-some years in the hobby, I find myself in the midst of a group of fellow modelers that go by the name of Cincinnati Auto Replicas. What an amazing collection of individuals! This is where I continue to draw inspiration from the knowledge, experience, encouragement and camaraderie of the members of this club. Being a part of C. A. R. is definitely one of the good things that have happened to me.

Have yourselves a great holiday season!

## **BUILDING BETTER MODELS**

Let's start with the most basic principles of building better models. First there is the subject. If you are enthusiastic about a subject, chances are you will be more determined to see your project through to the end. Many model builders take on a build that just turns boring to them after a couple days. A guy who's really into Ford Mustangs, probably doesn't care for building Camaros or Toyotas.

Once you've picked a subject, do a little research. Not only on the car, but on the kits that are available too. There are plenty of reviews of kits, either online or in the model magazines. Sometimes, your decision to build, say a 1972 Mustang, may be hindered due to a lack of kits. The alternative would be to look for a 1971 or 1973 version as they are easier to find. Ask other model builders for advice too. A lot of us have been around a while, and know a thing or two. A guy like Bill Bench, who is not only a Mustang enthusiast, but a long time builder as well, could probably tell you which Mustang kit is the best choice.

Some kits are a real joy to assemble, some, not so much. The Japanese company, Tamiya, offers kits that are usually considered to be some of the best, but they are expensive and in the automotive kit world, they don't do too many American subjects. There's AMT/ MPC and Revell/Monogram, the two main US kit manufacturers. Both of these companies offer several model car kits, some of which have been around since the 1950's. Some of these older kits can be troublesome to build, multi-piece bodies should be avoided if you're a novice (long time builders don't like them either). I'm not saying older kits are bad, but there are a few dogs out there... Revell's newer kits are pretty darn good, almost Tamiya quality for half or even a third of the price.

So your subject is a 1972 Mustang. Your research finds that kits for 1972 Mustangs, with the exception of the recently re-issued funny car kits, are few and far between and get really expensive. Going with the similar, but easier to find 1971 is a good alternative, and offers a similar body style. You find that although AMT and MPC offered this kit as an annual, there has only one available for past few years and it's an MPC kit. Mostly accurate, it may not be perfect, but it fills your desire to build that body style. A couple searches on the internet, a magazine article or two, leads to color choices and how the car will be built: factory stock, drag car, street machine, etc.

This may seem overly complicated, and it is easy to research something to death (and you won't get anything built). Some guys will not touch a kit if it doesn't scale out correctly or has some other 'fault'. If it looks right to you, then it is right, so build it.



Next month we'll cover prepping your model for paint, types of paint and some assembly guidelines.

# THE FINAL LAP

## C.A.R 2015 THEMES:

- JAN.12** VANS & TRUCKS - CONTEST NIGHT  
**FEB.9** UNFINISHED  
**MAR.9** 4X4'S - CONTEST NIGHT  
**APR. 6** BLUE VEHICLES  
**MAY 11** NEW PONY CARS -CONTEST NIGHT  
**JUNE 8** RAG TOPS & LONG TOPS  
**JULY 13** EL CAMINO'S & RANCHERO'S - CONTEST NIGHT  
**AUG. 10** PINK VEHICLES  
**SEPT. 14** HEAVY HAUL - CONTEST NIGHT  
**OCT.12** SAME KIT NIGHT- **REVELL '67 CAMARO**  
**NOV.9** END OF YEAR CONTEST  
**DEC. 14** AWARDS AND PIZZA PARTY

## UPCOMING EVENTS

- FEB 21 2015      BLIZZCON  
ALADDIN SHRINE 3850 STELZER RD.  
IPMS COLUMBUS EDDIE RICKENBACKER  
GRAHAM HOLMES 614-379-BLIZ (2549)
- MARCH 14, 2015    I.P.M.S. ROSCOE TURNER CHAPTER MODEL CONTEST AND SWAP MEET  
RAYMOND PARK MIDDLE SCHOOL 8575 EAST RAYMOND STREET  
ROSCOE TURNER CHAPTER  
CHARLES HAINES 317-507-8898
- MARCH 22, 2015    BUCKEYE CLASSIC MODEL CAR CONTEST  
FRANKLIN CO. FAIRGROUNDS 4100 COLUMBIA ST. HILLIARD, OH 43026  
INFO: RON FRANCIS 740-501-7665

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