

By Cdr. Peter B. Mersky, USNR (Ret.)

Hargis, Robert. *U.S. Naval Aviator, 1941–45*. Osprey, MBI Publishing, PO Box 1, Osceola, WI 54020. 2002. 84 pp. Ill. \$16.95.

We occasionally review examples of Osprey's wide-ranging collection of concise military-oriented publications that deal with many subjects—from military campaigns and their warrior personalities, to aircraft, aces and elite units.

This new volume in the "Warrior" series is a ready reference on the Naval Aviator of WW II. The emphasis is on Navy aviators, with no mention of Marine or Coast Guard flight crews. The main coverage also features aircraft carrier crews, although there are short sections on other types such as patrol and observation squadrons.

Accompanied by photos and artwork showing the men, aircraft and their tactics, this is a good one-volume package with a lot of details on personal equipment and flight gear. The author, a high school history teacher, has a solid general knowledge of the subject, and artist John White has produced illustrations that complement the text. The book includes a two-page presentation of several museums or collections of Naval Aviation aircraft and memorabilia.

The photos are pedestrian. I would have liked more detail in the captions, particularly when people are shown, rather than the generalized description the author probably gleaned from the picture. I am surprised he does not identify the pilot in the photo on page 30, who is none other than James Flatley, one of the Navy's most respected squadron commanders. Instead, he labels the picture "a fine study of a fighter pilot."

Osprey's books vary considerably in length and price, and this volume is in the middle of the range. It is a good summary of the subject.

Nila, Gary. *Japanese Naval Aviation Uniforms and Equipment 1937–45*. Osprey, MBI Publishing, PO Box 1, Osceola, WI 54020. 2002. 64 pp. Ill. \$16.95.

A new volume in Osprey's highly successful and expansive series on men-at-arms and their conflicts, this book adds to the line's esoteric but extremely valuable coverage. Little known, certainly to western readers, the subject of Japanese flight gear is of interest, especially when juxtaposed with Osprey's recent volume on U.S. Navy flight gear of the same period.

This book's presentation includes human models wearing vintage uniforms and flight gear rather than the traditional artwork. It also emphasizes the great use of enlisted aviators by the Japanese. The photographs show a vast array of insignia and paraphernalia, including personal timepieces that were usually worn suspended from the neck instead of on the wrist.

Although this volume is aimed squarely at modelers of aircraft and figurines, historians will also be fascinated by the discussion and pictures of goggles, scarves, boots and primitive flight computers, all shown in incredible detail. The computers are of particular interest and predate the hand-operated slide-and-circular computers of the pre-microchip era.

The author also has written an unusual dissertation on kamikaze units that is also interesting, but the uniquely Japanese sentiments may not go down well with American readers.

This new book is an unexpected, intimate look at a little-known aspect of the WW II flight experience and could be part of any enthusiast's or historian's library.

Tillman, Barrett. *Above and Beyond: The Aviation Medals of Honor*. Smithsonian Institution Press, 750 Ninth St., NW, Washington, DC 20560-0950. 2002. 294 pp. Ill. \$29.95.

One of several recent works on the Medal of Honor and its recipients, this book describes the history and events surrounding those medals from WW I to the Vietnam War. Barrett Tillman uses his considerable knowledge and writing skills to make *Above and Beyond* more than just another recounting of heroic tales and citations earning America's highest military award. His light, occasionally acerbic style assimilates the hard facts and puts a personal face on each account.

The Medal of Honor and its complicated award procedures have had occasionally murky parameters and standards, and Tillman describes this less-than-perfect aspect of the medal. Delving deeply into what groups of aircrews received the greatest number of medals, he suggests that politics sometimes affected whether the medal went to one individual in one theater of operations but not to another equally deserving candidate in another area of war.

From an editorial standpoint, the text has more than its fair share of typos, specifically lower-case initials where capitals should be, such as "flying Tigers," and photos are mainly portraits of the men involved. Some representative views of the aircraft types would have been useful.

The chronological text is broken up into sections on specific services. There are the well-known stories, but many less familiar experiences lift the narrative out of the traditional fact-by-fact style found in other such books. Again, the difference is this author's punchy style and analysis which hold interest. All in all, a good read and a different treatment on an important subject.

Virtual Corrosion Control Consortium

The V-3C is sponsored by the Assistant Deputy Under Secretary of Defense for Maintenance Policy. Its mission is to address the challenges of corrosion prevention and control for Department of Defense weapon systems and equipment, as well as related commercial assets.

The website at www.v-3c.org provides members with free access to extensive collaboration, information sharing and aggregation, and document management tools, as well as a wide range of corrosion-specific technical and application-based data and information. Any organization or individual interested in corrosion prevention and control is encouraged to participate as a user

or member of the V-3C to help prevent, control and treat corrosion of all types. Membership is free.

Reunions

VC-35/VA(AW)-35, 16–19 JUL, Oakland, CA. POC: Chuck Borris, 3400 Wagner Heights Rd. #253, Stockton, CA 95209; 209-477-4132; cmborris@attbi.com.

Bon Homme Richard (CV/CVA-31), 8–9 AUG, Valley Forge, PA. POC: Ron Edlund, 2299 Madalene, Muskegon, MI 49442; 231-773-0441.

PBY Catalina International Assn., 28 AUG–2 SEP, Arlington, VA. POC: Don Mortimer, 2245 Marlene Lane, Mattituck, NY 11952-3349; 631-298-2685; pbaydon@optonline.net.

Salamaua (CVE 96), 10–13 SEP, San Mateo, CA. POC: Ed & Lorraine Kenny, 259 Temelec Circle, Sonoma, CA 95476-8014; 707-938-1777; kennyel@aol.com.

Wright (AV 1/AG 79/CVL 49/CC 2), 10–14 SEP, Dayton, OH. POC: Ed Harvey, POB 9, Calvary, GA 39829-0009; 229-872-3940; edgin@caironet.com.

Salisbury Sound (AV 13), 11–13 SEP, Denver, CO. POC: Marian Bruce, 813 Branding Iron SE, Albuquerque, NM 87123; 505-293-3841; brubru@nm.net.

Wasp (CV/CVA/CVS 18), 14–18 SEP, Fremont, CA. POC: Richard VanOver, 6584 Bunting Rd., Orchard Park, NY 14127-3635; 716-649-9053.

ANA PHOTO CONTEST

The Association of Naval Aviation's (ANA) photo contest is open to everyone except the staffs of ANA, *Wings of Gold* magazine and *Naval Aviation News*. The subject matter MUST pertain to Naval Aviation. Submissions can be in black and white or color, slides or prints, or electronic images. Please include the photographer's name and address, and PHOTO CAPTION.

For details call 703-960-2490. Mail photos to ANA, 2550 Huntington Ave., Suite 201, Alexandria, VA 22303-1499; or email zip@anahq.org.

Cash Awards: Bimonthly—\$100. Annual—First, \$350; Second, \$250; Third, \$150.

Right, PH2 Daniel J. McLain won the bimonthly ANA photo contest with this shot of a Fighter Squadron 2 F-14D Tomcat making a turn in afterburner while rehearsing for *Constellation's* (CV 64) 13 May Tiger Cruise.

