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small scale*



Radio Control Airplane Hobbyist Frank Tiano Builds WWII Plane For Museum in Hawaii

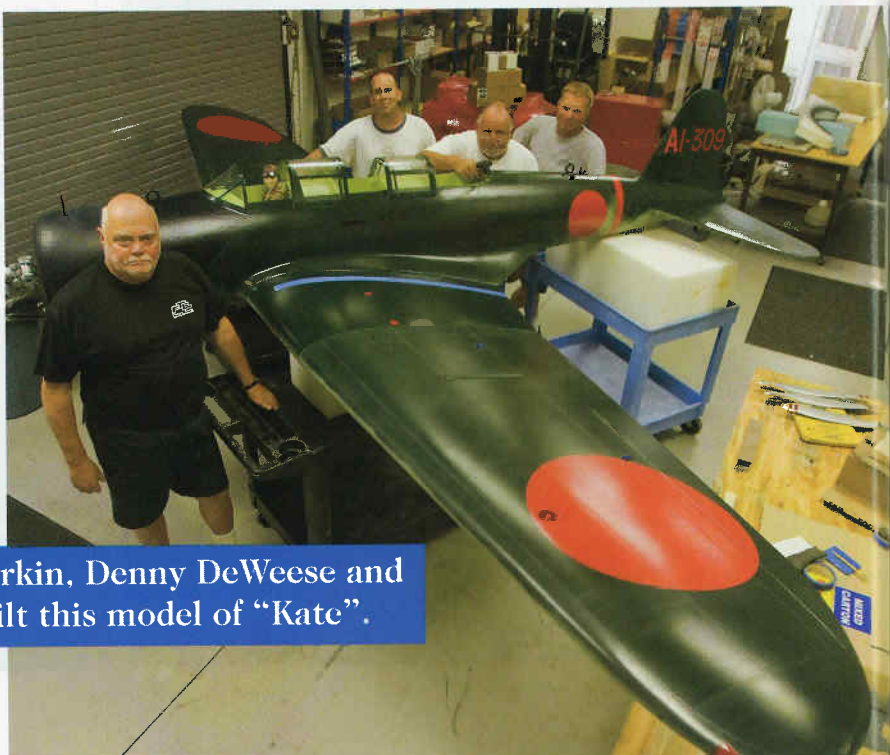
By VONYA GRIFFIN

A new exhibit at the World War II Valor in the Pacific National Monument Visitor Center will have a one-third scale model of a Japanese torpedo bomber used at Pearl Harbor. Built by Lakeland businessman and model airplane enthusiast Frank Tiano; Pacific Studio Inc. in Seattle, WA, commissioned him to build the Nakajima B5N2 bomber, nicknamed Kate. The model has a wingspan of 17 feet and weighs 300 pounds.

Work on the \$36,000 project began in January. "We've been working 50 hours a week on this project, with a minimum of two people and as many as four," said Tiano. He researched the plane extensively to create the



Frank Tiano holds a model of "Kate" at his business in Lakeland. The Nakajima B5 "Kate" was the standard torpedo bomber of the Imperial Japanese Navy for much of World War II.



Frank, Brian Durkin, Denny DeWeese and John Banner built this model of "Kate".





Denny DeWeese checks the fit of a tail gunner gun on the model of a “Kate” bomber.

replica, consulting a professor and poring over out-of-print books and publications. Kate was a single-engine, carrier-borne torpedo bomber that accommodated three crewmembers. “Researching and obtaining documents to generate a set of accurate drawings was challenging,” said Tiano. More than once, he found a new photo from Japan that required cutting something off the model in progress and reworking it.

They built the plane in sections for easier shipping. The body of the plane consists of the cowl, the fuselage, the rear fuselage and the tail section. Tiano said that during the construction, keeping the model lightweight was a struggle. He decided to use high-density Styrofoam assembled on aluminum struts, covered in fiberglass skin, which was sanded, primed and weatherproofed with epoxy paint. Tiano’s team focused on the bomber’s details to make the model come to life; using the Japanese national insignia and numbers, a miniaturized cockpit control panel, scale engine and tailhook. The plane’s propeller is four feet across, and the torpedo is eight feet long.

According to the Pearl Harbor Memorial Fund, the Kate plane is part of the “Attack & Aftermath” exhibit – a diorama depicting the morning’s events on December 7, 1941 with Kate flying in to drop her torpedo on the USS Arizona. The museum display is part of the \$58 million project for the new visitor center campus, which adds more historically comprehensive galleries and exhibits, additional open-air exhibits and other interpretive displays. The new exhibits open December 7, 2010.

“I’m honored to participate in something of national significance, pleased they thought someone out of Lakeland would be the best person for this project and sad that I won’t be able to go see the display,” he said.

Tiano founded Frank Tiano Enterprises in 1979. The business, located at 3607 Ventura Dr. near the Lakeland Lindler Regional Airport; manufactures Zap, high-grade super glue, and hosts three of the largest radio control airplane shows in the world: Monster Planes USA, Top Gun, and FL Jets. Monster



Tiano has been flying airplanes since he was five years old and flying radio controlled airplanes since 1970, building approximately 1100 models throughout his lifetime. He has been featured on Discovery channel, ESPN and the DIY Network, and in magazines, such as RC Sport Flyer.

Planes is a showcase event for model aircraft weighing 35 to 100 pounds. This year’s event is October 7-9 at Lakeland Lindler Airport. Hobbyists from around the world participate, and Tiano anticipates attendance in the thousands. Visit monsterplanes.com or franktiano.com for more information.

