

STICKY END

for a childhood friend

The news that plastic kit makers Airfix have gone into administration has prompted a flood of nostalgic from those of us that recall spending childhood pocket money on the plastic models.

The name 'Airfix' has become almost a generic term for the plastic model kit. For many, memories of assembling models of aeroplanes and warships conjure up vivid recollections of

childhood. As well as military vehicles, ships, and planes we also had soldiers, sailing ships, hovercraft, space rockets, classic cars, dinosaurs, historical figures, and much more.

As well as being great fun, these model kits also taught generations of children some useful life skills (as well as a fair bit about history and science too). Things like patience, problem-solving (sometimes the instructions could be a bit vague...), ability to work to a plan, creative skills, and also the satisfaction of working on a project from start to finish.

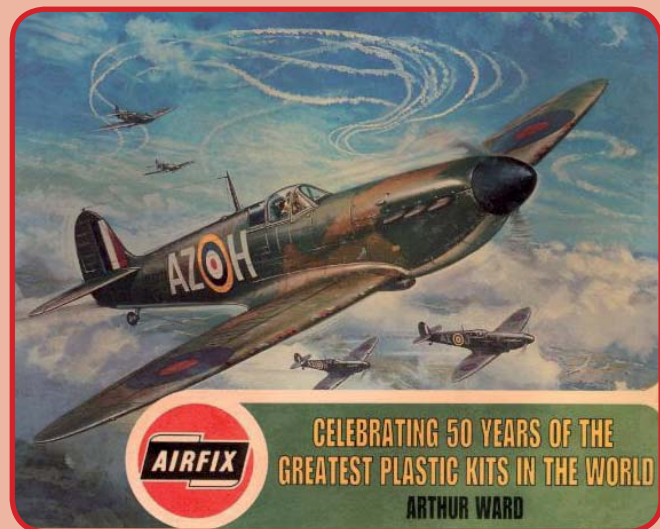
So why has the popularity of the plastic kit waned? Many claim that computer games have laid waste to the traditional toy market – today's child expects instant gratification and doesn't have the patience to spend ages having to build his toys! Today's youngster may still be learning about history but only through the virtual world of a computer game.

In recent years, Airfix have been losing market share to the computer game market and stopped producing new kits some time ago, preferring to re-issue models from the golden age of Airfix – much to collectors' delight no doubt. Indeed many of the original Airfix kits from the 1960s and 70s regularly change hands for incredible amounts on Ebay – although only if still boxed and unmade.

But sadly, as parent company Humbrol go into administration, it seems the days of Airfix may be numbered.

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