

Mosquito Diorama

A new diorama, depicting the de Havilland Mosquito FB VI of Wing Commander Russell “Russ” Bannock Ont, DSO, DFC and bar, will be on display in the FONFA Heritage Centre, for the 2019 Open Day season. Modelled in 1/32 scale by Henry Goodall, the aircraft is mounted on a mirror base, to enable visitors to see the details of the underside bomb and cannon bays, as well as Rolls-Royce Merlin engine detail.

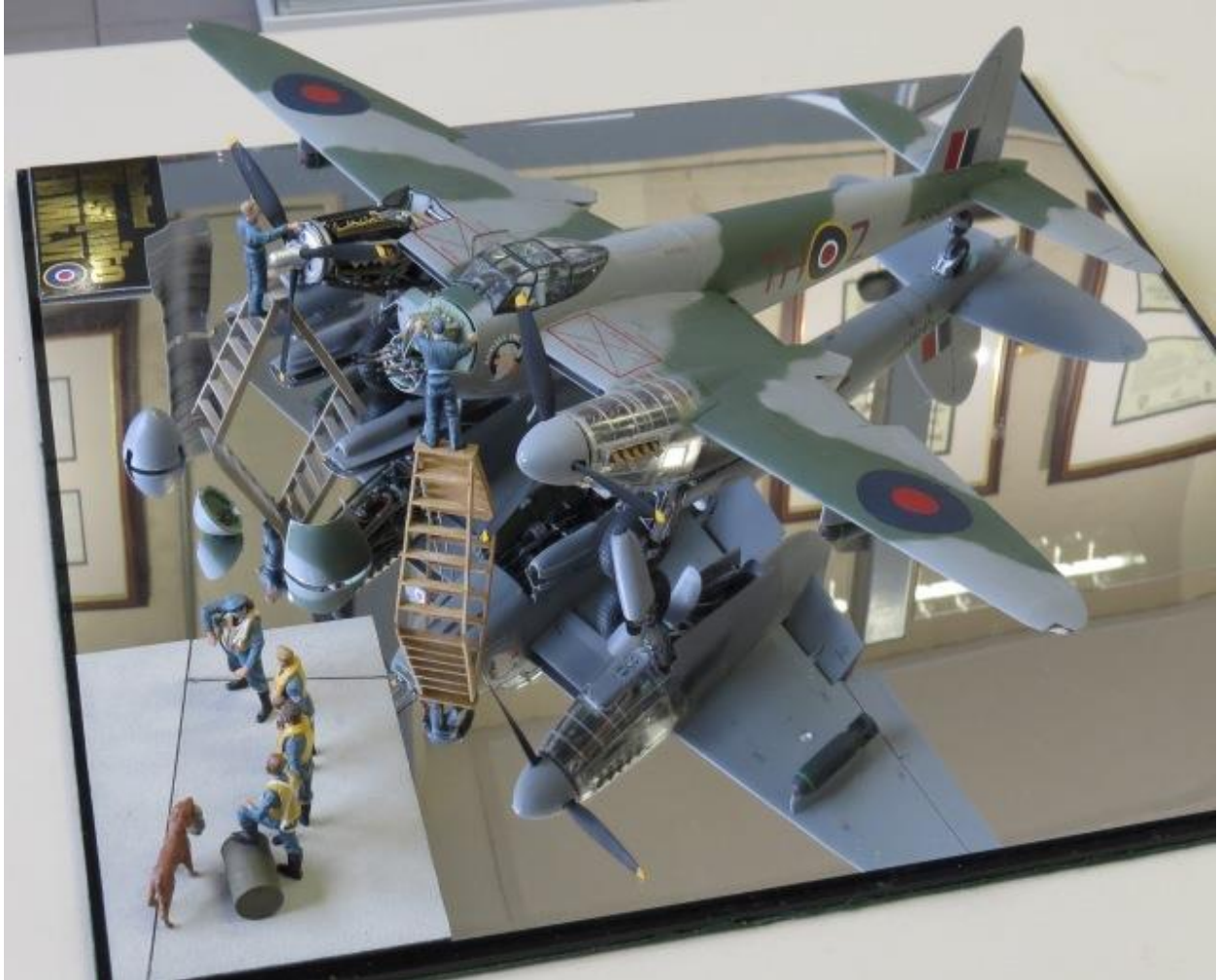
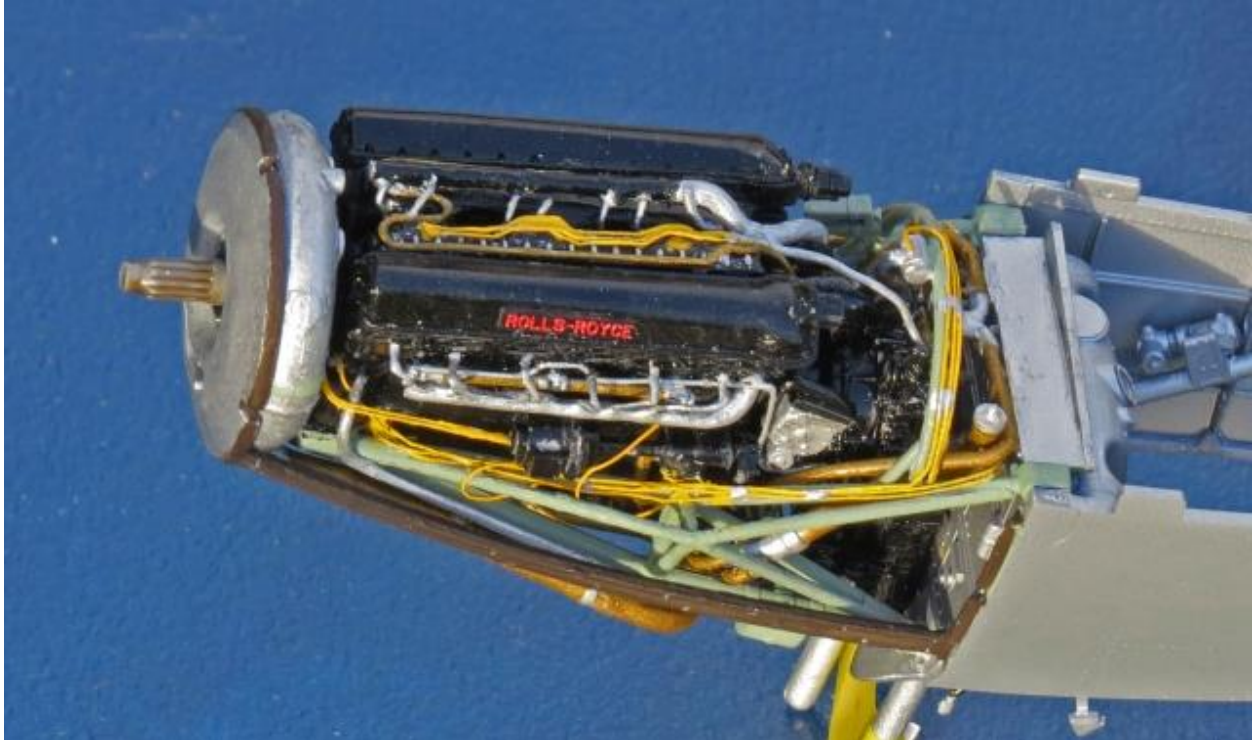




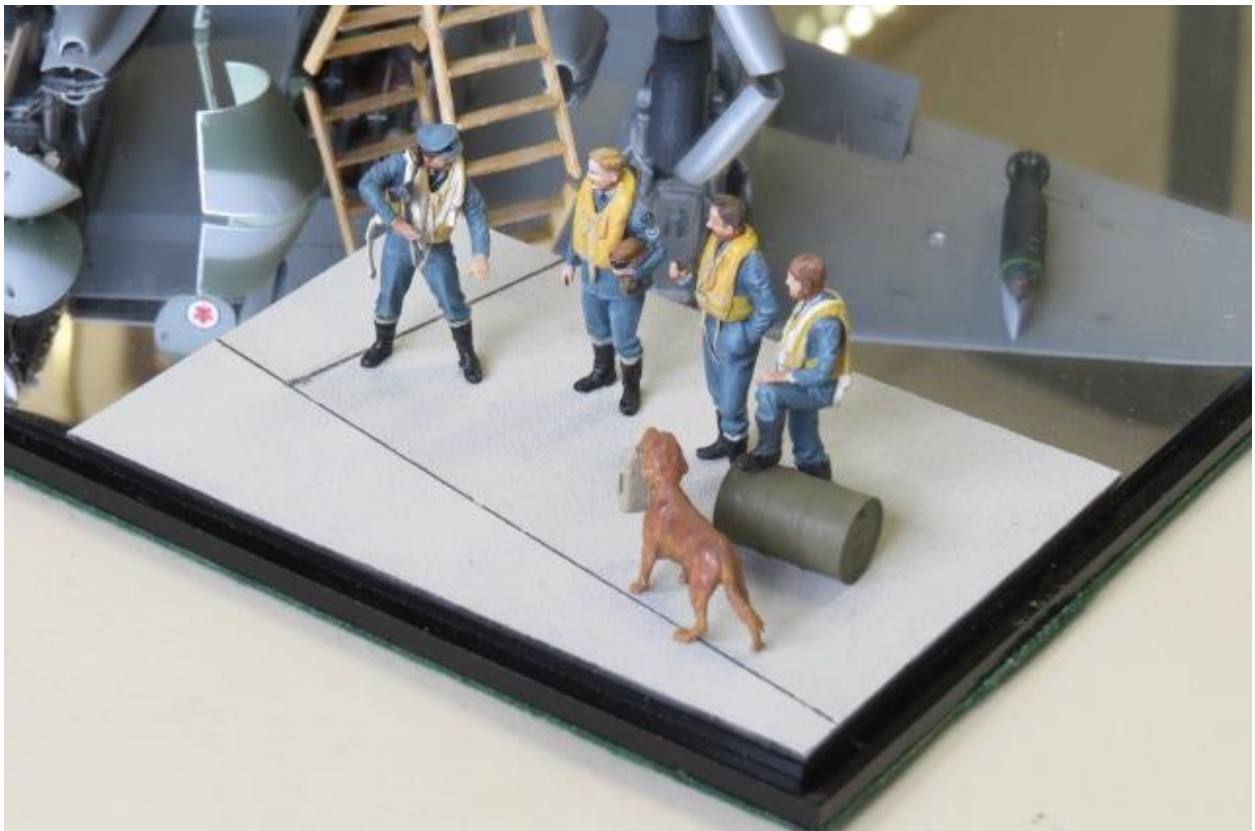
Photo above: “Russ” Bannock (left) with his Observer/Navigator, Robert Bruce. Russ Bannock was Canada’s second highest scoring ace of WWII, destroying 19 V1 rockets and 11 German night fighters for a total of 25.5 aircraft (N.B. V1 ‘Flying bombs’ shot down over the English Channel counted as a full ‘kill’, whereas those shot down over England were only awarded as a ‘half kill’).



In June 1944, “Russ” Bannock was transferred to 418 Squadron RCAF, based at Holmsley South. The squadron flew day and night intruder missions over Europe with the Mosquito FB VI fighter-bomber. Although they had the latest radio navigation equipment, they flew night missions over enemy territory without any RADAR, relying solely on the “Mk.1 Eyeball” to find and shoot down enemy aircraft, in the dark. He quickly became successful at this type of operation and achieved early victories, in his Mosquito, named ‘Hairless Joe’ after the well-known cartoon character of the time.



The figures depict Russ Bannock showing colleagues the best way to attack V-1 flying bombs, diving on them from 10,000 feet and from one side, because attacking from directly astern, and therefore flying into an exploding debris, was not to be recommended.



In October 1944, he was promoted to Wing Commander and took command of 418 Squadron. Bannock also flew 'Diver' operations against the German V-1 'Flying Bombs' launched against London and southern England. On one mission he shot down four V-1s in the space of one hour. A bar to his Distinguished Flying Cross (DFC) was added for his missions against the V-1 'Flying Bombs.

The Mosquito will be displayed alongside a model of a V1, being prepared by its ground crew, for a June 1944 launch towards London.



“Russ” Bannock (left) with Robert Bruce, both in flying gear, in front of “Hairless Joe”.