

1:32 CF-104 “MGH CICU”



My 1:32 rendition of CF-104 “12704”, in 1:32, on permanent display at the Montreal Aviation Museum. On the fuselage of the “MGH CICU” model, “MGH” will replace “704”, and “CICU” in lieu of “RCAF” (same number of characters as on the original “12704” above; same font, color, and size). On the vertical tail surface, below the Canadian flag (not the Red Ensign): “104 MGH CICU”

Introduction

The above model was built using the 1:32 1994 Hasegawa 08061 F-104 G/S Starfighter kit, itself a rebox of the same 1980 Hasegawa kit. CF-104 “MGH CICU” will be assembled using the far newer (2013) and superior 1:32 Italeri 2502 Lockheed Martin F-104 G/S Starfighter kit; to date, I have built two models of this Italeri 2502 kit, with two more on commissioned orders. For example, this Italeri kit features prototypically correct inboard engine intakes, spaced from the fuselage, which also makes it a lot easier to paint by simply inserting a business card between the intakes and the fuselage; the Hasegawa kit intakes are cemented directly onto the fuselage; not prototypical, and complicated to paint. Refer to CF-104 photograph on the right. Only some minute modifications are required to the Italeri 2502 F-104G kit to turn it into a Canadair CF-104.



Why will this model end up on my workbench?

I recently suffered a heart attack/life-threatening respiratory distress which, mercifully, did not paralyze me at all; ergo, I can keep modelling, and I have several commissioned commitments to fulfil (refer to “Current projects”). Everything I do now requires advance planning, and takes longer to accomplish than it did prior to my medical misadventures. My airbrushing respirator mask reminds me of the bipap oxygen mask I had to wear for three long days at the hospital; that bipap mask, and its associated forced breathing equipment, was instrumental in saving my life.

The real heroes: the health care hospital staff

The real heroes are the nearly one hundred members of the MUHC, especially those from the Montreal General Hospital (MGH) Coronary Intensive Care Unit (CICU) staff, whom, over the course of my 2-month hospitalization, brought me back to life; my appreciation and esteem for their dedication grew exponentially with each passing day; due to Covid-19, they were risking their well-being (and that of their families), for a total stranger.

I had to do much more than simply thanking them verbally. Contributing to their X-mas party was out of the question (“No X-mas party; Covid-19”). In any case, that concept felt too impersonal to me. Lying in my hospital bed, I had a thought: print 12-month calendars, using photographs of my models for each month (which I since had done at Staples). However, I wished to do more. By the end of my stay, my aircraft modelling activities were known to many staff members, so I proposed building a 1:32 CF-104 Starfighter, and gifting it to the CICU staff for display in their station, 11th floor West, at the MGH, and it was accepted. Appropriately, “Starfighter” sums up succinctly the CICU staff’s courage, encouragement, and fighting spirit; to boot, the CF-104 Starfighter is my favorite Cold War aircraft. Expected completion date: December 2021.

Heritage Model Aircraft



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