

Tom Grossman

Model Kit Report

The American LaFrance Eagle

It's the classic fire pumper in 1/25 scale from Trumpeter.

Firefighters are born heroes. I don't know very many people who haven't dreamed of becoming a fire-fighter at one point or another in their lives, and I'm no exception. Like most of us, though, it was something dreamed about as a kid when we drove those great Tonka fire trucks around the house and yard. Later we watched Roy and John as *Squad 51* saved lives in white knuckled rescues. All this is what came back to me as I anxiously opened Trumpeter's new 1/25 American LaFrance Eagle Fire Pumper and prepared to get started on the project.

American LaFrance has been blending traditional craftsmanship and groundbreaking innovation in their emergency vehicles for 174 years. Their products include a wide range of emergency vehicles from fire rescue boats to aerial equipment. The vehicle in this kit is a Type E Fire Pumper, commissioned by the College Park Volunteer Fire Department in 2002. The unit, Engine 121, was assigned to Station 12.

Trumpeter's Eagle Fire Pumper (#02390) is a real modeler's model, and modelers will enjoy it. The kit delivers a great adventure in white styrene, chromed, rubber and photo-etch parts at a reasonable price point.

Speaking to the kid in all of us, this replica gives automotive and broad interest historical modelers a well designed kit with many of the key features of the actual vehicle.

The kit contains 10 trees of detailed styrene parts with light to minimal flash. Great care was taken in packaging, as just about everything was bagged separately; the cab is even in its own section in the box. There is a sheet of photo-etch diamond plating for the trim and working



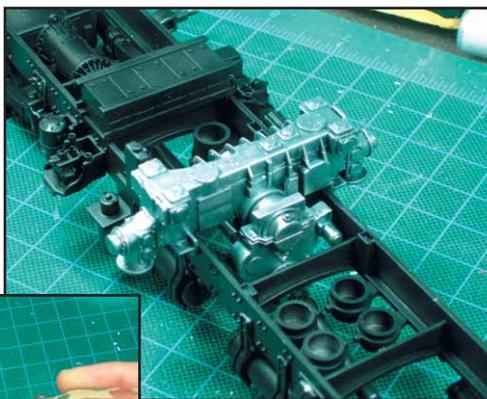
surfaces of the unit, and a packet of metal sheets for the adjustable stainless dividers in the hose body at the rear of the truck. The decals are crisply printed on high quality paper, with more than 50 great Eagle pumper detail photos and College Park Engine 121 markings and regalia.

The instructions include a complete parts map and inventory — and everything gets used. The steps are presented in clearly rendered, understandable diagrams with brief English callouts. The special instruction icons are easily understood, and further explained in a key on the cover of the instruction booklet. A brightly colored decal placement and painting guide on glossy paper is also provided, with references for Gunze-Sangyo Aqueous Hobby Color and Mr Color paint.

The kit has 326 parts that give the kit a great level of detail and an enjoyable build, which begins with construction of the parts for the chassis. The frame is injected in a single piece that also contains the portion of the engine included with the kit. To this is attached

all hardware including the 2000 GPM Hale pump, transfer case, transfer case, batteries front and rear suspension and battery for the pump, transfer case and batteries are all multi-part assemblies. More detailed hardware assemblies decorate the frame. A little trimming on the ends and the replica Meritor axles slipped into place.

My LaFrance buildup will continue in two more segments, so stay with me. It's worth the wait. **HM**



Chassis detail abounds on Trumpeter's Eagle. Prominent are the Hale 2000 GPM pump with the 6-inch side intakes, the drive train, rear differential and suspension. Tom Grossman uses K&S Hobby Drill and the round burr from the accessory pack to hollow the end of an exhaust pipe.