

## Flying Saucer History

There have been sightings of strange objects in the night skies throughout recorded history, but it was an incident at Roswell, New Mexico in 1947 that really captured the attention of the public and unified thoughts of strange visitors from other planets. The apparent crash of an alien spacecraft at Roswell had people searching the sky for flying saucers and other unidentified flying objects.

There was also a strange sighting in Skokie, Illinois in the early 1950s. This wasn't in the night sky, but rather on the drafting tables at Lindberg Products, one of the leading manufacturers of those new fangled plastic model kits that were pushing the traditional wooden models off the hobby shop shelves. While the most popular subjects for plastic models were aircraft, cars and ships, manufactures were quick to exploit the advantages of injection molded plastic and were coming up with a variety of subject matter, including trains, horse drawn fire engines, wagons, bicycles and even fish! The designers at Lindberg tried something totally unique, something tied in with the news reports of the day - a flying saucer!

The timeline of the Saucer kit has gotten a little muddled over the years, but reports indicate that it was in development as early as 1952. The kit may have been on store shelves that year, but 1953 or early 1954 seems more likely. What is certain is that this silver Flying Saucer with its little green pilot was the very first plastic spacecraft model kit made for retail sale. (An unassembled plastic moon rocket intended as a promotional item in Europe might have preceded the Lindberg kit.)

As the '50s progressed, development of guided missiles was at a fever pitch and the race between the United States and Russia to get into space was daily news. Kit manufactures turned out an endless array of kits of real, hypothetical and totally imaginary missiles and spacecraft. Lindberg followed up their Flying Saucer with four spacecraft of original design in 1958. The Saucer was included in the "5 Space Ships of the Future" gift set that was also released that year.

Lindberg kept the Flying Saucer and the other four space kits in the line until around 1965. By 1970, the space kits were back under the series name, "Mars Probe", but the Flying Saucer was missing and remained so, even when the kits were reissued as "Star Probe" in 1977. Apparently, Lindberg felt that the Flying Saucer wouldn't fit into an assortment with the other kits because of differences in package size and price point.

That changed in 1978 when the Saucer, renamed UFO Unidentified Flying Object, was given new life in a glow-in-the-dark reincarnation. The UFO, in two different boxes, and the "Star Probe" kits remained in production until 1981. Fifteen years passed before the UFO became available again, this time in Glencoe Models packaging. The Glencoe edition reverted to the silver color of the original kit, with just the alien pilot molded in glow plastic.

### The Design

Lindberg never stated a scale for their Saucer kit, but 1/48 was the most popular scale for aircraft kits in the early '50s, and the size of the pilot would seem right for this scale. With the model at 6¼", the prototype would scale out as 25' in diameter, making it a good scout ship, but in need of a much larger mother ship to make the long trip from its home planet.

There seems to be a contradiction of design elements in the makeup of the Saucer. The guns, podded jet engines and cockpit indicate a linear direction of travel, but the four edge mounted rocket exhausts suggest a spinning motion. The most likely explanation is that the outer rim ring rotates around the fixed center in order to stabilize the entire craft.

### The Film Star

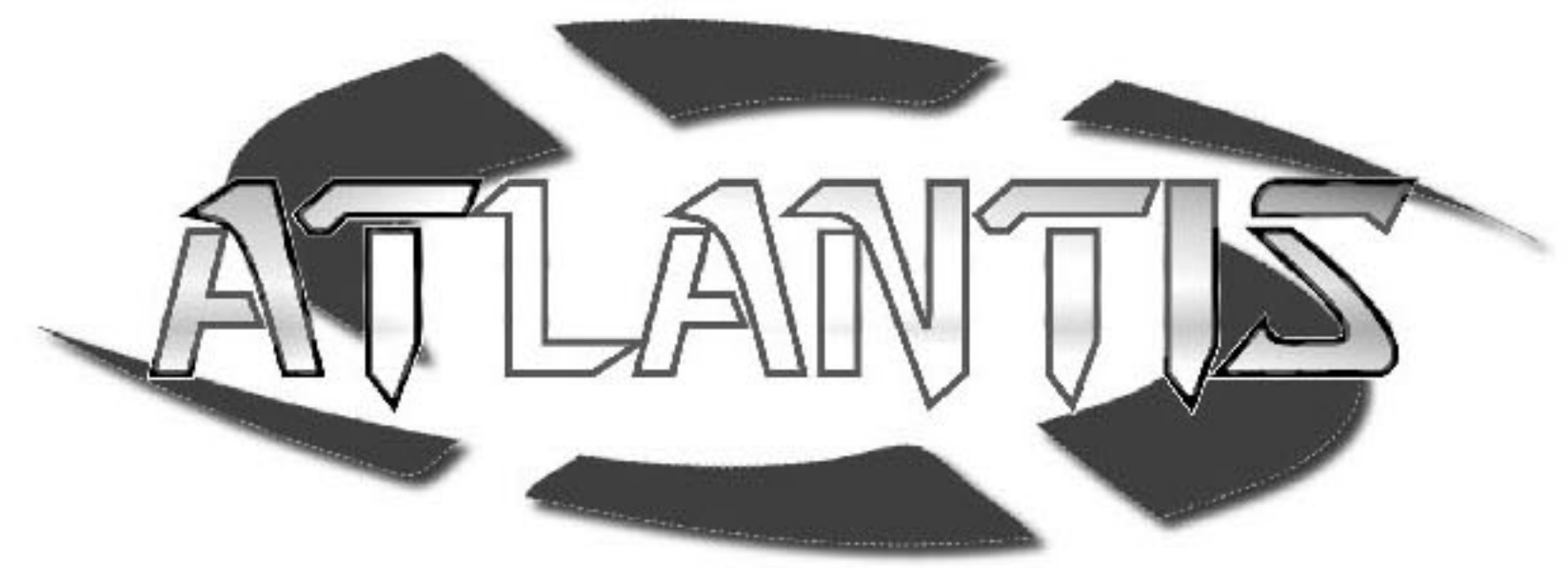
Scale models have been used as stand-ins for the real thing since the earliest days of film making. So, it's rather appropriate that the first plastic space model kit was, in all likelihood, the first such kit to be used in a movie. In 1956, film maker Ed Wood used a few Lindberg Flying Saucer kits in his "Plan 9 From Outer Space." Minus their jet engines and suspended on wires, the Lindberg models were mistakenly thought to be spinning Chevy wheel covers, a myth perpetuated by Tim Burton in his biopic of Wood.

### Atlantis

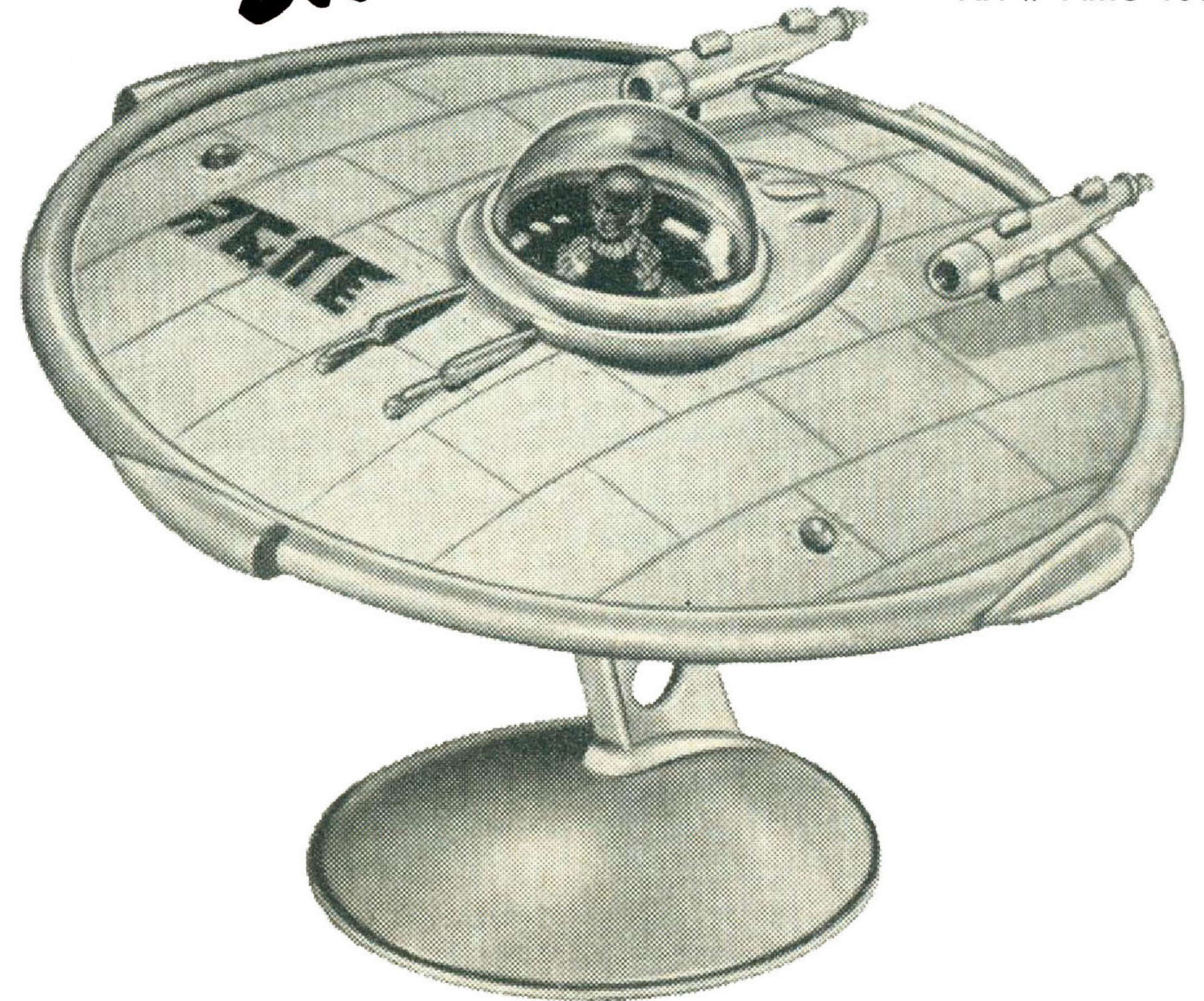
Atlantis Models proudly keeps this rich history going with this latest release of a great, classic model. There have been many kits of flying saucers and UFOs over the past 55 years, but this is the one that started it all. The original invader from outer space is back, and you have the power to control its future!

ASSEMBLY INSTRUCTIONS FOR THE

# UFO FLYING SAUCER



KIT # AMC-1003



## The ORIGINAL INVADER from OUTER SPACE!

1/48 SCALE PLASTIC MODEL KIT

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### IMPORTANT - Read this first!

Read the instructions and study the drawings before assembling the model. Carefully remove parts from the runners using a hobby knife or cutters to avoid damage. Excess plastic can be cleaned up with a small file or emery board. Test fit parts together dry (without cement) to familiarize yourself with how they go together, and note the points where cement is to be applied. Use only a cement suitable for styrene plastic. Details can be painted to match the box illustrations using enamel or acrylic paints. Lacquer based paints will damage the plastic.