

West Interviews

Screw Hole Maker

By DICK WEST
United Press International

WASHINGTON (UPI)—In covering astronaut Gordon Cooper's space flight last month, the radio networks were at times hard pressed for material to keep the airwaves busy when nothing much was happening.

It seemed to me they interviewed every person who had any remote connection with the space program, and then they interviewed his brother-in-law.

On occasions, when there was a delay in the countdown or some other uneventful interlude, I got the impression they were going out and dragging people in off the streets.

Even so, there was one angle that the broadcasters apparently missed and, in order to make the record complete, I shall attempt to fill in the gap.

I have just been interviewing the man who manufactured the screw holes for Cooper's capsule.

Unaware Of Importance
To the average layman, who has only a limited acquaintance with nuts and bolts, screw holes may not seem very important. I was unaware of how vital they are, and some of my best friends are nuts.

But after talking with Eduard Baruch, president of the Heli-Coil Corp. of Danbury, Conn., who was here this week on business, I will never take screw holes lightly again.

It would perhaps be going too far to say that Cooper couldn't have orbited at all without Baruch's screw holes. However, there is no gainsaying that they represent a major contribution to the space program.

They have made possible advances in the use of so-called light materials—aluminum, magnesium, plastics, fiberglass, etc.—that would not otherwise have been possible.

"These materials had one common limitation," Baruch explained. "The strength of the threads in the material was less than the strength of the screw or bolt used to assemble it to something."

"Under heavy stress, the threads would strip or pull out and the thing that the screws or bolts held together would begin to shake, rattle or come apart."

Hocked Wife's Rings
In 1949, Baruch formed a company to work on the problem, raising capital, among other methods, by hocking his wife's rings. Two years later they had it licked.

Although more than 50 patents cover the process, and others are being obtained all the time, the principle of the Baruch screw hole is so simple that even I can understand it.

It merely involves putting a lining into a threaded hole to reinforce the threads. This doubles the strength of the threads, so that only half as many bolts or screws are needed. Or you can use the same number but make them twice as small.

In rocketry and other fields where weight is vital, the Baruch screw hole is a blessing indeed. His company now does an \$11 million annual business and has plants in six countries.

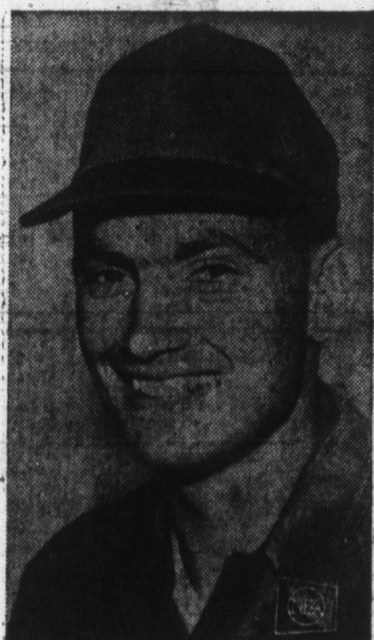
If there is a moral to this story, I think it can be expressed as follows: Don't waste time trying to build a better mousetrap; build a better screw hole instead.

Ironing Aid

A large-sized bottle of the cheapest type of fingernail polish remover you can find, if kept in your laundry, will prove invaluable in removing any "miracle fabric" that may adhere to your iron because of too-great heat. It is also good for removing adhesive tape or excess glue that has bubbled over the mended spots in jewelry or pottery.

Prevent Turnover

Only a hurricane wind can blow your garbage or trashcans over if you set them inside old automobile tires when the storm signals loom up.



FATIGUE WITH FLAIR—What the well-dressed working GI will wear on his noggin at Ft. Sill, Okla., this fall is modeled by Sp/4 Edward Dorrill. The baseball-type cap is to replace the current casual number.

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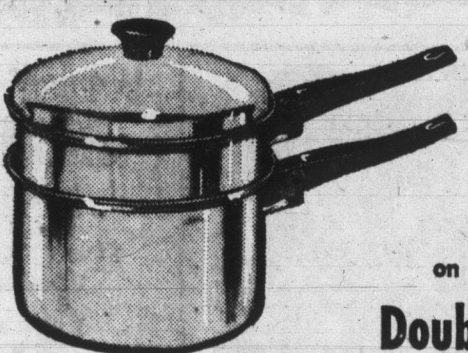
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