



Sabot Away!



Newsletter of the Austin Armor Builders Society

April 2024



Two Book Reviews on Operation Dynamo

By Eric Choy

Lately I have been fascinated by *Operation Dynamo*, the evacuation of over 338,000 Allied soldiers from Dunkirk after Germany routed the British Expeditionary Force, French, and Belgian armies in Northern France in May 1940. I read books, watched movies, and I still crave for more! Here are reviews of two photo-essay titles on the subject I would like to share with you all:



Dunkirk 1940 Through A German Lens by Alan Ranger

Camera ON Series #3,
MMP Books, 2017
Softcover, 88 pages,
MSRP: USD \$25

ISBN-13:978-8365281722

This 2017 title from MMP offers the reader the German's perspective of the event. I ordered my copy from one of my favorite military history booksellers, For The Historian (forthehistorian.webstoreplace.com).

Unlike other titles on Dunkirk that utilize materials from *Wehrmacht's Propaganda Kompanie*, the photos in this book were taken by regular German soldiers and have only recently become available from private collections. As the author Alan

Ranger suggests, they certainly give us a fresh view different from what we used to see through the eyes of the German propagandists in Berlin.

Despite the lack of a table of contents, the photos in this book are organized in six sections:

1. Wrecked Allied warships and boats
2. Materiel left behind on Dunkirk beaches
3. Destruction of the city of Dunkirk and its inner harbor
4. Abandoned Allied armored and softskin vehicles
5. Destroyed Allied aircraft
6. British and French POWs

All photos are captioned and appear to be well researched. Only one map of Northern France and Flanders is

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CALENDAR OF EVENTS

- ◆ **April 3 - AABS Club Meeting**
- ◆ **April 11 to 13 - AMPS International Convention,**
Century Center, South Bend, IN
- ◆ **May 1 - AABS Club Meeting**
- ◆ **May 4 - Modelmania 2024,** Stafford Center, Stafford
(Houston)
- ◆ **June 12 - AABS Club Meeting**
- ◆ **June 15 - OkieDokieCon (formerly OKC MetroCon),**
Council Road Baptist Church, Bethany OK



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Schedule of Upcoming Program Presentations and Newsletter Articles

| Month | Program Presentation | Newsletter Article |
|--------------|-----------------------|------------------------|
| January 2024 | Chris Chany | Ted Paone |
| February | Bill Zych | Eric Choy |
| March‡ | Eric Choy | Kevin Hutchison |
| April | Mike Reeves | Stuart Wetterschneider |
| May | Mike Bird | Greg Beckman |
| June‡ | Bob Bethea | Mike Bird |
| July | * KIT AUCTION * | Bob Bethea |
| August | Rick Herrington | Rick Herrington |
| September‡ | Martin Hebda | Martin Hebda |
| October | Craig Bland | Craig Bland |
| November | Mike Maloney | Bill Menzie |
| December‡ | Chris Chany | Chris Chany |
| January 2025 | * OFFICER ELECTIONS * | Ted Paone |

Here is a list of members who are responsible for providing articles for the newsletter and program presentation at our monthly meetings.

Please note any member may contribute as many articles as he wants any time. The purpose of this schedule is to ensure we have at least one article in the newsletter each month.

Prompt submission of your article is much appreciated. The deadline is always **11:59PM on the last Wednesday of the previous month** (e.g. Ted Paone's article for January 2024 is due on the last Wednesday of December 2023).

‡ Quarterly contest month



From the Turret

Happy April! This month's meeting is only five days away from the end of the world or maybe just a solar eclipse. I read that we should stock up on food and fill up the car before April 5th because of the influx of people to see the eclipse will put a strain on the supply chain.

Eighty years ago was the Battle of Lyme Bay and the Slapton Sands disaster. Before landing at Normandy on D-Day, the Allies decided that a full-scale dress rehearsal was necessary. *Exercise Tiger* sent the US 1st Engineer Special Brigade and 4th Infantry Division to attack the shores of England at Slapton Sands in Devon. The location was picked because it was a lot like Utah Beach.

Well, things went wrong from the start. Ike decided that there should be live firing, but several of the landing ships were arriving late. The American Admiral Don P. Moon in charge decided to delay the H-hour by 60 minutes, and the preliminary bombardment was to start 50 minutes before H-hour. Some landing craft did not get the change in orders in time and landed at the original H-hour, thereby coming under bombardment ten minutes later. It was estimated that approximately 450 soldiers were killed.

To make matter worse, the next night German E-boats attacked the convoy of LSTs, sank two and damaged another. One LST was also damaged by friendly fire. Casualties were 749 killed and another 200 wounded. At one point, ten officers with knowledge of the D-Day plans were missing-in-action, prompting Eisenhower to seriously consider



The exercise in progress. (Wikipedia)

postponing *Operation Overlord* until all the bodies were found! Casualties for the 4th Infantry Division on D-day were only 197. Approximately another 700 Rangers and naval personnel were casualties.

Our talk this month is by **Mike Reeves** on his experience in Iraq from 2008-2010. See you at the meeting.

Chris Chany
President



A memorial built by Devon resident Ken Small who bought the submerged tank in 1974 from the US government and had it raised in 1984. (Wikipedia)

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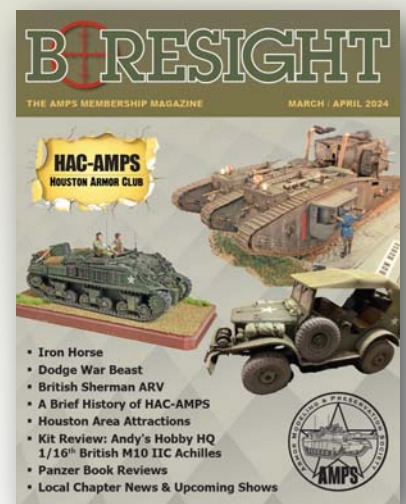
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TABLETOP GAMES PUZZLES CHESS RPGS CCGS

AMPS Boresight (Volume 32, Issue 2)

The latest issue of *Boresight* is out. Here is a quick look inside:

- ♦ **Iron Horse** by Vince Barrale
- ♦ **Dodge War Beast** by Brandon Jacob
- ♦ **British Sherman ARV** by Mike Stucker
- ♦ **A Brief History of HAC-AMPS** by Keith Middleton
- ♦ **Houston Area Attractions** by Drew Matalamaki
- ♦ **Kit Review: Andy's Hobby HQ 1/16th British M10 IIC Achilles** by Tom Moon
- ♦ **Panzer Book Reviews** by Tyler Moore
- ♦ **AMPS Local Chapter News & Upcoming Shows**



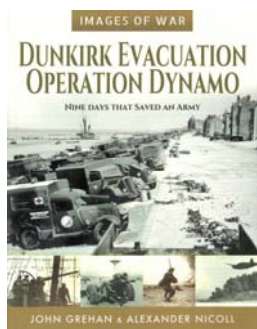


(Continued from page 1)

provided. Unfortunately, it is a period map with all the names of the cities and towns in German only!

As an eyewitness account of what happened at Dunkirk, this book fulfills its aim of showing the devastation of the Allied forces and the city itself. However, armor modelers looking for diorama ideas from this title will be somewhat disappointed; only eight pages are devoted to armor vehicles while there are over 26 pages of wrecked ships and boats!

Even though this is a title more suited for historians than modelers, I can still recommend it to anyone who is interested in the Dunkirk evacuation and the early success of Germany's Blitzkrieg during WWII.



Dunkirk Evacuation Operation Dynamo

by John Grehan &
Alexander Nicoll

Images of War Series
Frontline Books 2020
Softcover, 166 pages
MSRP: \$26.95
ISBN: 1526770350

This title opens with an introduction that gives the reader a fairly detailed background on why and how almost half-a-million Allied troops were trapped on the Flanders coast by the invading German armies. The rest of the book is a day-by-day pictorial account (nine chapters for nine days) of the evacuation plus one chapter on the aftermath. All of the photos are arranged chronologically which correspond to what happened on each day of *Operation Dynamo*.

Similar to Alan Ranger's title, the photos in this book are not sourced from the usual wartime archives (e.g. Imperial War Museum or *Wehrmacht's Propaganda Kompanie*) but from the authors' own collections and Historic Military Press archive. Much effort has been

spent on identifying objects/people in the photos as most captions contain not just one or two sentences but a whole paragraph worth of information. There are lots of "in-action" shots, but unfortunately not too many are AFV related.

Of particular interest are photos at different angles of the improvised piers that enabled troops to get out into deeper water to reach larger boats. They were built by simply driving trucks full of sandbags and other heavy objects onto the beaches. Once there, the tires were slashed (to stop the trucks from moving when the tide came in), and wood planks were lashed to the roofs to allow soldiers to walk on. Even handrails were laid out along the piers' length! There are plenty of shots of these temporary jetties during low and high tides. Modelers interested in replicating one in a diorama setting will find these photos very helpful.

The authors also made efforts to identify the pilots and the squadrons they belonged to from the wreckage of RAF Spitfires and Hurricanes that landed wheel-down on the beaches. Some were casualties from German anti-aircraft firing on the ground, but most were damaged by *Luftwaffe* Bf.109s while providing protection for the evacuation ships. Tracking down these aircrafts was no easy task as most were set ablaze to prevent being fallen into the hands of the enemy.

In addition, this book includes quite a few wide-angled shots from afar to give the reader a sense of the scale of the operation and how impossible the task was to rescue so many soldiers on the beaches.

In the final chapter, the Aftermath, are photos of British soft-skin vehicles, Universal Carriers, and light tanks left behind on the beaches and the surrounding areas of Dunkirk. AFV modelers will definitely be able to find inspiration for their next projects.

This is by far one of the best pictorial references on *Operation Dynamo*. Highly recommended.

Eric

Free Stuff!

We have a couple of modeling related furniture giveaways from two of our members.

The first one is a secretary desk/display cabinet combo from Bob Bethea:

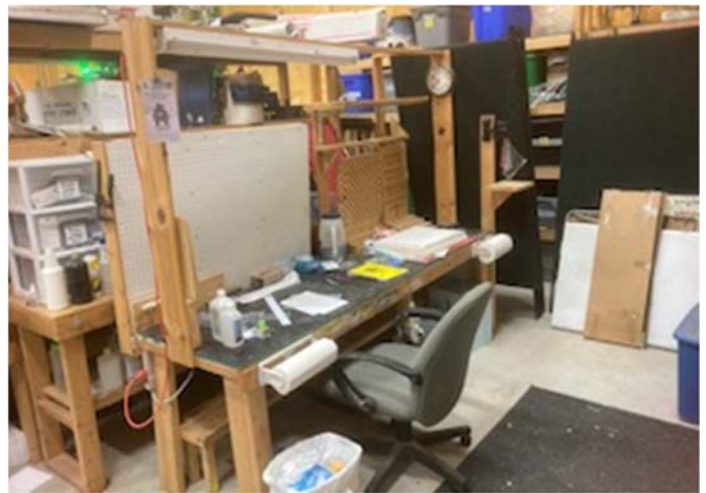


Dimensions: 36”L x 12”D x 48”H. It has a hinged desktop in the middle, but Bob does not have the key

to open it. Whoever interested in this combo will have to find his/her own way to open it.

Bob can be reached by phone (512-784-7002) or email (bobbethea@sbcglobal.net). The secretary desk/display cabinet combo is currently inside Bob’s garage in South Austin.

The second one is a modeling bench built by Kevin Hutchison:



Dimensions: 96”L x 27”D x 29.5”H. It has the following amenities:

- Large white pegboard (32” x 48”)
- Light fixture is 48” long with daylight bulbs
- Shelf under tabletop (96” long, 9” deep)



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- TV mount with hardware and DVD shelf
- Two paint racks: the big one holds "standard" acrylic paints and the small one holds Tamiya paints (large and small)
- Two electrical power strips: 6 outlets on one, 4 on the other
- Extra: bunch of cool and model friendly things on the bench

Kevin can be reached by phone (512-589-3474) or email (fishhead32002@yahoo.com). The bench is currently at Kevin's old address in Smithville, TX.

Both items are absolutely free, but no delivery is available (i.e. you have to make your own arrangement to haul them home!)

Editor

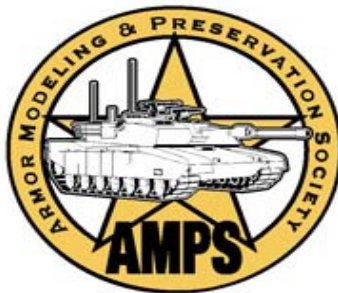


AMPS 2024

International Convention

South Bend, Indiana • April 11-13

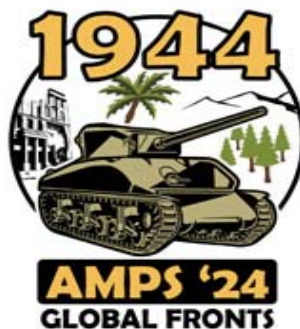
**Contests
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Vendors**



**Seminars
Demos
Raffle**



The convention theme is "1944." It was a year the world was at war and Armor units played a huge part in the titanic struggles that were occurring all over Europe, the Mediterranean, and the Pacific.



From the steppes of Russia, the hills in Italy, to the far off shores of tropic Islands, mechanized battles raged that would change the course of World War II and tighten the noose around the axis powers.

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Regular and Junior Memberships include a subscription to two printed issues *Boresight* magazine per year and all six online issues of *Boresight* magazine per year. Regular+All Printed Issues Membership includes a subscription to six printed issues of *Boresight* magazine per year as well as access to the same issues online. This is only available to members within the United States.

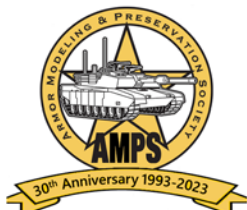
International Membership includes all benefits of a Regular membership except for printed issues of *Boresight*.

Family membership does not receive an individual printed copy of *Boresight*, but can enjoy the online version of *Boresight*.

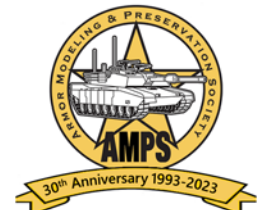
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NEW ON THE BLOCK



Airfix's new 1/35th Ferret Scout Car Mk.2 is out already, but we haven't got any in our local hobby shops yet. I wonder what's the holdup?



Star Decals has already released not one but three decal sheets for Airfix's new Ferret Scout Car. The sheet that gets everyone's attention is the British Army Training Unit Suffield (BATUS) vehicles. Check out those colorful schemes!



Also new from Star Decals are six more sheets in its War in Ukraine series (see above). Of particular interest are: The Wagner Group coup in 2023 (C1408), Russian TOS-1A (C1410), Russian BM-21 Grad (C1411), and Russian BMP-3 (C1413). All six sheets are available in both 1/35th and 1/72nd scales.

About Us

The Austin Armor Builders Society (AABS) started in 1999 when Don Jones, a member of the local IPMS chapter, decided "what a good idea to get out two nights a month, and on least one night talk tanks."



AABS is the first scale model club in Central Texas devoted solely to armor modeling. We don't build planes because they are just plain! Our passion is armored fighting vehicles and military figures. Subjects of our interest range from WWI, WWII, Korea, Vietnam, Middle East, to the most recent Gulf War conflicts.

At each monthly meeting, we talk tanks, swap kits, and share our building techniques. We also hold regular in-house model contests and organize out-of-town trips to museums and modeling events. Every odd-numbered year, AABS hosts the biggest armor modeling show that attracts some of the best armor modelers in the Lone Star as well as neighboring states.

Since inception AABS is a local chapter of Armor Modeling and Preservation Society (AMPS), a national organization dedicated to the promotion of scale modeling and armored vehicle preservation.

For more info, please visit www.ampscntex.org