



Sabot Away!



Newsletter of the Austin Armor Builders Society

December 2024



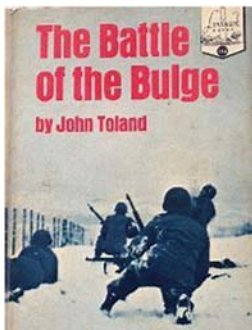
Good Reads On The Ardennes Offensive

By **Chris Chany**

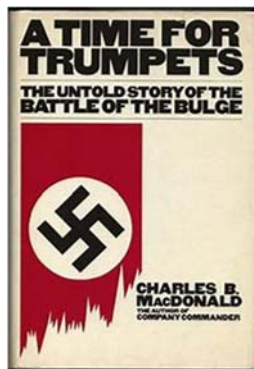
I have always had a fascination for the Ardennes Offensive since my step-uncle gave me the Avalon Hill game *Battle of the Bulge* where I always played the Germans.



Also, around that time, I read *The Battle of the Bulge* by John Toland. I found this book in the children's section of the NYPL. While it was an abridged version of his *Battle: The Story of the Bulge*, it was a great read and had some great



pictures in it. I specifically remember one: the back of a Sherman tank advancing through the snow with infantry following it. The text talked about it being Christmas Eve, and both the Americans and their German POWs singing together each in their own language.



I am in the midst of reading *A Time for Trumpets: The Untold Story of the Battle of the Bulge* by Charles B. MacDonald, Deputy Chief Historian for the U.S. Army and

the author of *Company Commander*. He wrote the former in time to get it out for the 40th anniversary of the battle. This being the 80th anniversary and the fact that I got the book at a very good price at an estate sale, I felt it was time to read it.

Charles MacDonald was a 21 year old infantry company commander in the

(Continued on page 4)

Inside this issue:

CALENDAR OF EVENTS	2
UPCOMING PROGRAM PRESENTATIONS AND NEWSLETTER ARTICLES	2
FROM THE TURRET	3
DECEMBER IS QUARTERLY CONTEST MONTH	3
LIONHEART HOBBY RELAUNCHED!	5
WINTEBLITZ 2025	7
"FALL IN"	8
AMPS BORESIGHT PREVIEW	8
JOIN AMPS TODAY	9
NEW ON THE BLOCK	10
ABOUT US	10



CALENDAR OF EVENTS

- ◆ **December 4 - AABS Club Meeting**
- ◆ **December 7 - AABS Xmas Party.** Rattan Creek Community Center, Austin
- ◆ **January 4, 2025 - ModelFiesta 43,** New Braunfels Civic/Convention Center, New Braunfels
- ◆ **January 8 - AABS Club Meeting**
- ◆ **January 25 - WinterBlitz 2025,** Museum of the American G.I., College Station
- ◆ **February 12 - AABS Club Meeting**



AABS Officers Feb 2023 – Jan 2025

Chris Chany, President
christopherchany@gmail.com

Bob Bethea, Vice-President
bobbethea@sbcglobal.net

Eric Choy, Treasurer
(512) 554-9595, aabsco@gmail.com

Ted Paone, Secretary
(512) 635-9516, theopaone@att.net

Eric Choy, Newsletter Editor
(512) 554-9595, aabsco@gmail.com

Joe Fisher, Webmaster
(512) 350-6936,
fisherjoe2014@gmail.com



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‡	Bob Bethea	Kevin Hutchison
April	Mike Reeves	Stuart Wetterschneider
May	Mike Bird	Greg Beckman
June‡	Eric Choy	Mike Bird
July	* KIT AUCTION *	Bob Bethea
August	Rick Herrington	Rick Herrington
September‡	Martin Hebda	Martin Hebda
October	* KIT-SWAP NITE *	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 at 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

Well, we made it to December. Eighty years ago, the Germans were making the preparations for *Die Wacht am Rhein*, the last major offensive of the German army in the West. What became known to us as the Battle of the Bulge was the largest land battle Americans had during WWII.

We don't have anything special planned for the business part of the meeting this month other than checking to make sure everything is all set up for the Christmas party on December 7th. I will be giving a



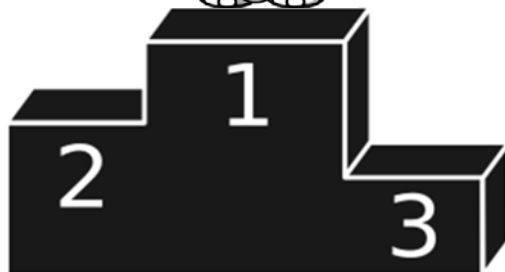
presentation on drybrushing and bringing something for those of you who like to paint figures to try.

The January meeting will be officers' elections. If you are considering running for office, now's the time to decide. It is not a lot of work and is very rewarding.

Chris Chany
President



OR



DECEMBER Is Quarterly Contest Month!

Bring in your completed **White Elephant (WE) Model** this month to win either **\$40** cash prize or the drawing of **Takom 1/35th M48A5** kit. Any contestant, aside from the cash prize winner, who enters his completed WE kit is eligible for the drawing.

There is also a separate "**naked category**" for those built but not painted WE models. The first place winner will receive a cash price of **\$20**.

To enter in our in-house contest, you must be a member in good standing (i.e. You need to pay your 2024 dues!). There is no limit to how many models you enter as long as long as none of them has placed in our previous quarterly contests.

(Continued from page 1)

Ardennes when Hitler unleashed *Watch am Rhein*. The Germans quickly overran his company, but he and a lot of his fellow soldiers were able to avoid being captured. He was then put in charge of defending a crossroad to allow his division to retreat. For this action he won the Silver Star.

MacDonald's work is long over pages. It has hundreds of names, towns, and military units. While only a few photos are included and are mainly of commanding officers, it does have a good number of maps. Unfortunately they are not that detailed, and some are not in the right chapters. Readers will find it hard to use them to follow the text. I had to use my Driving Tour of The Battle for assistance.

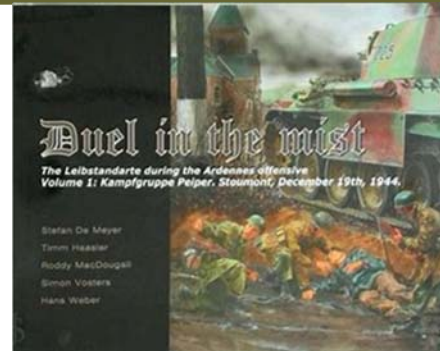
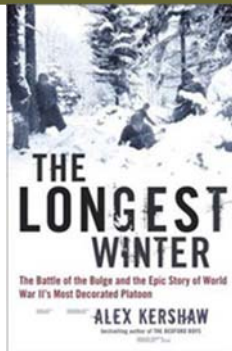
The author divides his narrative up by looking at different areas of the bulge not chronologically. What this does is cause repetition sometimes when a unit crosses from one of its areas to another one. His actions in the Bulge as described above merit about two paragraphs. Now don't get me wrong, I am enjoying this book and the amount of detail it contains. It does have some anecdotes provided by both American and German veterans. It also does not pull any punches; if someone was incompetent, he is not afraid to say so in the book.

The book ends with a couple of pages about the war crimes trial for the Malmedy Massacre. A young Senator Joseph McCarthy started to make a name for himself by accusing the Army of torturing German soldiers to get confessions. Also worth mentioning is MacDonald does not accuse Joachim Peiper of any involvement in the massacre.

Is the book worth the time? I would say yes.

There are other books on the subject I would like to mention. One of them is *The Longest Winter* by Alex Kershaw. It is about an I&R platoon's actions on the first day of the battle. Its defense threw off *Kampfgruppe Peiper's* entire schedule.

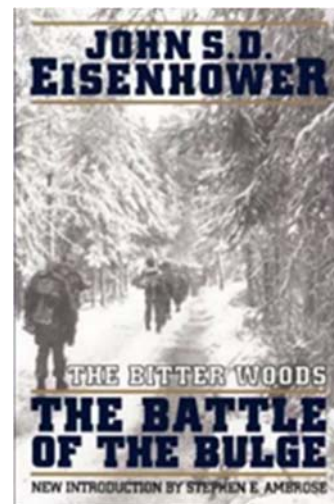
The three volumes of *Duel in the Mists* are also recommended as they have great photos including



stills from a movie shot by a German propoganda unit. I have yet to find the movie online.

Then there is *The Battle of the Bulge Then and Now* by Jean-Paul Pallud. On the cover is probably the most famous German soldier ever photographed.

Lastly is *The Bitter Woods: The Battle of the Bulge* by Eisenhower's son John S.D. Eisenhower.



Tired of reading? On celluloid you have the movie *Battleground* and the episodes in the *Band of Brothers* TV series. Avoid the 1965 movie *The Battle of the Bulge* (with Henry Fonda, Robert Shaw, and Telly Savalas) just like you would skip the 1976 version of *Midway*.

Chris



LIONHEART HOBBY Relaunched!

On November 15th, Lionheart Hobby in Kyle celebrated its extension with another grand opening. Your editor and AABS member Aaron Smischney were there to witness the ribbon cutting ceremony. We were very impressed with the new store. Unfortunately, Aaron and I did not win any of the wonderful raffle prizes. Darn!





MODELS PAINTS TOOLS ACCESSORIES ROCKETS



"Fantastic selection and old-school feel without rejecting the new. LionHeart Hobby has built a gem in Texas!" ~Andrew T.

VISIT OUR STORE 7 DAYS A WEEK!

5500 FM 2770

KYLE, TEXAS 78640

(512) 504-3404



SHOP WITH US!

lionheart hobby.com

**WE SHIP DAILY FROM
OUR OWN WAREHOUSE!**



FOLLOW US!

@lionheart hobby

TABLETOP GAMES

PUZZLES

CHESS

RPGS

CCGS

WINTERBLITZ 2025

A fun laid back model show for armor and figure enthusiasts set amongst real historic artifacts



Saturday January 25th 2025
Museum of the American G.I.
College Station, Texas
www.winter-blitz.com

Please visit the website for rules, forms,
details, sponsors and vending information!



BEST OF AWARDS

- | | |
|-----------------------------------|--|
| Theme Award – Vietnam War | Best NOT Tracked |
| Tank of the Year – T-34 Tank | Best Camouflage/Creative Paint Job |
| Best of Show | Best Tamiya |
| Spirit of the American G.I. Award | Head Judge Award |
| Best Fully-Tracked | Silk Purse From a Cow's Ear |
| Best NOT Fully-Tracked | Her Majesty Award (Best British 1952-2022) |

MAIN CATEGORIES

- | | |
|---|---|
| 100 Youth < 18 years old ** | 1100 Fully-Tracked Desert Shield to Present * |
| 200 Classic Kits – (kits before 1979) | 1200 Paper Panzer/Fictional ** |
| 300 Artillery ** | 1300 Halftracks ** |
| 350 All Things Towed (“tractor and trailer”) ** | 1400 Armored Cars ** |
| 400 1/48 th Scale (Allied) | 1500 Soft Skins ** |
| 450 1/48 th scale (Axis) | 1600 Motorcycles with or without sidecars ** |
| 500 1/72 nd and Smaller | 1700 Misc. Military Vehicles ** |
| 600 Fully-Tracked Orgins to 1934 ** | 2000 Fully-Tracked Full Interior ** |
| 700 Fully-Tracked Self Propelled Vehicles* | 3000 Larger than 1/32 |
| 800 Fully-Tracked WWII Axis* | 4000 Self Propelled Flak Vehicles ** |
| 900 Fully-Tracked WWII Allied* | 5000 Military Figures ** |
| 1000 Fully-Tracked Post WWII Thru 1990* | 6000 Dioramas ** |
| | 7000 US Helicopters in Vietnam War |

* Denotes scale = 1/35 and 1/32 ** Denotes ALL scales and ALL eras

Theme Award – The 2025 theme is the **Vietnam War** and the commemoration of the 50th anniversary of the ending of United State’s involvement. We will pick **ONE** build that best depicts the Vietnam War – a figure, diorama or individual build – any scale and any nation (1965 – 1975).

In conjunction with the 2025 theme, we will add **ONE SPECIAL** main category: **7000 US HELICOPTERS IN VIETNAM WAR**. This category will be all scales and has a limit of **ONE entry per contestant**. Any helicopter that was flown by the United States during the Vietnam War is eligible (1965–1975). Hueys, Chinooks, Cayuse, Skycranes, etc. Show us your birds!!!!

Tank of The Year – We will recognize the BEST T-34 (or variant on T34 chassis). All scales, all eras and all countries. Special note: includes tanks based on the T34 chassis such as the SU-100 and SU-122. Let us know if you have questions.

Sabot Away!

The Newsletter of The Austin Armor Builders

December 2024

Page 8

"FALL IN"



A A B S
recruiting
table at the
ASMS 2024 Capital
Classic show was a
huge success! We
managed to sign

up two new members and make contact with four interested but not quite ready to join "possibles." Many thanks to **Allan Romer** heading the effort and **Bill Zych** volunteering at the table while not occupied with judging. Also kudos to **Rick Herrington** for snapping this photo (right) as evidence of our presence at the show!



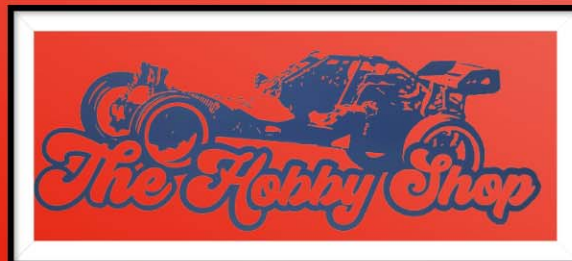
Address

900 Lacy Drive, Leander, TX 78641

Contact

(512) 528-4226

info@thehobbysuptx.com



Find all of your modeling
needs in Leander!



Opening Hours

Monday - Friday: 10:00am - 6:00pm

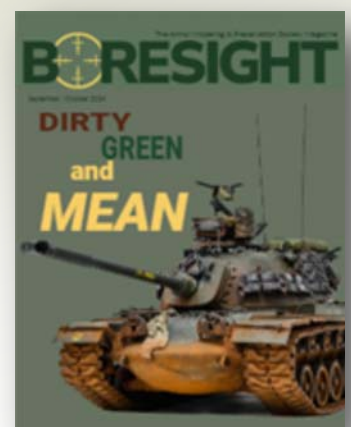
Saturday: 10:00am - 8:00pm

Sunday: 11:00am - 4:00pm

AMPS Boresight (Volume 32, Issue 5)

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

- ◆ **Takom 1:35 M48A3** by Ron Hoague
- ◆ **MAFVA Nationals 2024** by Chuck Aleshire
- ◆ **It's All Safe for You Now!** By Tex Valadez



JOIN AMPS TODAY

NAME: _____

ADDRESS: _____

CITY: _____ STATE: _____

ZIP CODE: _____ COUNTRY: _____

PHONE: _____

E-MAIL:

MEMBERSHIP TYPES	1 Year	2 Year	3 Year
Regular U.S.	<input type="checkbox"/> (\$30)	<input type="checkbox"/> (\$55)	<input type="checkbox"/> (\$80)
Regular+All Printed Issues	<input type="checkbox"/> (\$55)	<input type="checkbox"/> (\$105)	<input type="checkbox"/> (\$155)
International	<input type="checkbox"/> (\$25)	<input type="checkbox"/> (\$45)	<input type="checkbox"/> (\$65)
Junior (17 or under)	<input type="checkbox"/> (\$15)	<input type="checkbox"/> (\$25)	<input type="checkbox"/> (\$35)
Family Membership	<input type="checkbox"/> (\$ 5)	<input type="checkbox"/> (\$10)	<input type="checkbox"/> (\$15)

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*.

To join using PayPal, visit AMPS website: www.amps-armor.org

AMPS also accepts payments by check and money order.

Send your membership dues and completed form to:



AMPS
 Attn: Membership Dept
 P.O. BOX 807, 1140 THORN RUN ROAD
 MOON TOWNSHIP, PA 15108-9998



New On The Block



New kit releases will return next month. In the mean time, enjoy watching Santa's twelve sexy elves taking a break at the beach!

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 war in Ukraine.

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.ampscentex.org