



Sabot Away!



Newsletter of the Austin Armor Builders Society

February 2015
Volume 19, Issue 2

Farewell to Our Friend Robert Mesch

We were saddened to hear long time AABS member Robert Mesch passed away on January 23, 2015. He is survived by his loving wife Sheri of 38 years.

Born and raised in Tucson Arizona, Robert relocated to Texas twenty five years ago when he landed a job with



Motorola Inc. He stayed with the same company throughout his career and was an engineer with Freescale Semiconductor, a spin-off from Motorola, at the time of his passing.

From an early age Robert's interest included building plastic models and working on automobiles. His love of gadgetry earned him the nickname "Inspector Gadget" at work, and he was exceptionally good at adapting common power tools to his hobby of scale armor modeling. In many occasions he came to our rescue with his ever ready suitcase of wonder tools. He was generous, kind, and was always ready to assist fellow modelers in need of anything.

While Robert was known to us all a WWII German armor enthusiast, he also had a sizable collection of US WWII and Cold War armor kits. He was a true armor modeler of all era.

We send our heartfelt sympathy to the Mesch family. Robert will be missed by all of us.

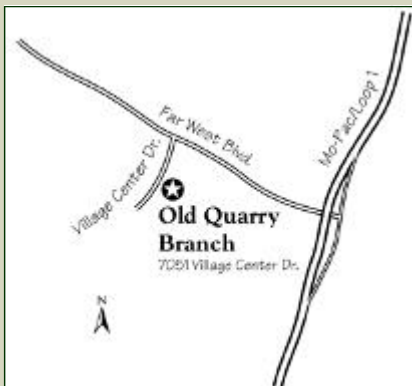
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Austin Armor Builders Society (AABS) meets at 7PM each month at the **Austin Public Library Old Quarry Branch**. Our next meeting is on

February 4, 2015

Annual dues for full membership are USD **\$12** to be collected at each January meeting. Upon receipt of payment, a membership card will be issued. This card is valid for one year, and it entitles holder to discounts at various local hobby shops in the Central Texas and San Antonio areas.



Sabot Away! is the official newsletter of AABS and is published twelve times a year on/before each monthly meeting. Any inquiry on subscription issues or assistance on article contribution please contact editor Eric Choy via email aabsco@gmail.com.

The views and opinions expressed in this newsletter are those of the authors. They do not necessarily reflect the official policy or position of AABS.



CALENDAR OF EVENTS

- ♦ February 4 - AABS Club Meeting
- ♦ February 21 - Modelfiesta XXXIV San Antonio Event Center, San Antonio, TX
- ♦ March 4 - AABS Club Meeting
- ♦ March 12 to 14 - Lone Star Figure Show 2015 DFW Airport Marriott South, Fort Worth, TX
- ♦ April 1 - AABS Club Meeting
- ♦ April 11 - Lone Star Military Miniature Society Modeling Day Shady Hollow Community Center, Austin, TX
- ♦ April 25 - Modelmania 2015 Stafford, TX



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Upcoming Program Presentations and Newsletter Articles

Month	Program Presentation	Newsletter Article
January, 2015	Tom Pachalos	Tom Pachalos
February	Tom Pachalos	Dave Bourland
March	Jake McKee	Jake McKee
April	Dave Bourland	TBA
May	TBA	TBA
June	TBA	TBA
July	TBA	TBA
August	TBA	TBA
September	TBA	TBA
October	TBA	TBA
November	TBA	TBA
December	TBA	TBA
January, 2016	TBA	TBA

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/she wants anytime. 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. Tom Pachalos' article for January was due on the last Wednesday of December).



From the Turret

We had a good time at our January meeting with both quite a few models and figures to share and a new recruit. Let's all keep up with inviting friends and family to join us and grow the group.

I like to consider the historical significance of what we do and why armor modeling is not only interesting, but why it even exists. From this historical perspective we have quite a few interesting anniversaries in the near future. A century ago the trenches of WWI were getting well established and locking the fronts into a stalemate and a war of incredible attrition. Seventy-five years ago, in the middle of the "Phony War" period between Germany and the French-British alliance, the Soviets fought the Finns in the Winter War. Although the Winter War was a lopsided fight and should have been a major disaster for the Finns, with the Soviets employing 1500 tanks to almost none for the Finns, and six times the manpower, the Finns were able to manage a negotiated peace, which ultimately convinced Hitler and the entire world that the Soviets were a weak shell of a military force.

And finally, seventy years ago the western allies had breached the Siegfried Line and entered Germany while the Soviets were consolidating their gains up to and across the Oder, less than 50 miles from Berlin in some locations. Hopefully one of these anniversaries will inspire one of us to create a memorial to one or more of these events.

Bringing our attention back to today, we have a couple of exciting things to look forward to in the near future. Tamiya will be releasing what looks like a great 1/35th French SOMUA S35, and Meng has a new WWI German A7V tank reproducing the early KRUPP manufactured models. The A7V even has interior details for both driving and combat compartments, and it can be built with open or closed hatches and ports. This should be a very interesting model.

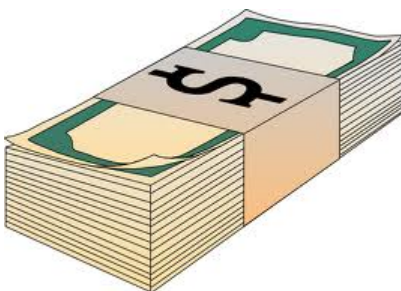


We hope to see you all at the meeting on Wednesday and look forward to seeing what you've been working on!

John Talley
President

2015 Club Dues are Due!

It is that time of the year again. Please have your club dues (\$12) ready at the January meeting. We accept cash, check or money order.



Eric Choy
13213 Marrero Drive
Austin TX 78729

Please DO NOT send cash by mail. Be sure your check or money order is made payable to "AABS."

For those who prefer to make a mail-in payment, our treasurer's address is:



HobbyTrax Track Tools Product Review

by Dave Bourland

I enjoy trying out new tools. I decided to give **HobbyTrax** track tools (url: <http://www.hobbytrax.net> email: Sales@HobbyTrax.net) a try. Each tool is a set of metal templates shaped like the track around the boogies, return rollers, and drive sprockets. Tracks with one guide horn have two templates, one for each side of the horn. Tracks with two horns have three templates, one for the middle and each side. They are connected by screws with washers used for spacers.

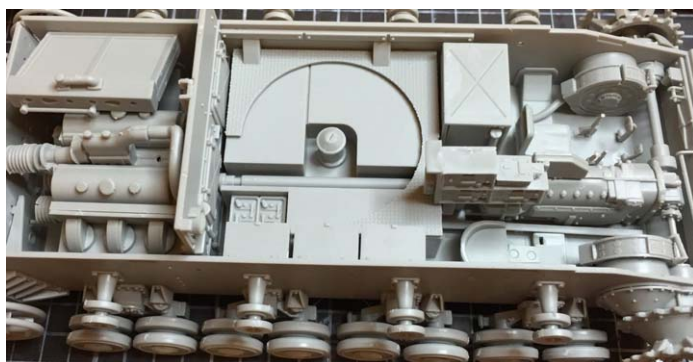
They each cost about 22 bucks. That puts them on the low side for most anything else you buy as an add on, decals, metal tracks, photo etch, even a set of resin figures. Unlike those items you can use these over and over again. That is assuming you are smart enough to label them — I have a job for my Sharpie. HobbyTrax is kind enough to engrain an arrow pointing forward along with the part number, but “Panzer IV” in Sharpie will be more useful to me than H007.

I much prefer styrene tracks over the “rubber band” type. Vinyl tracks take paint differently, and they are difficult to glue. They don't sag right, and over time they may degrade. Many modelers like metal tracks, but they are both expensive and heavy. I love length and link; you give up some flexibility, but they go together so quickly. Indy links are the most common in my collection. I find the wider tracks okay to deal with, but I truly dread building the narrow tracks on early war tanks.



I had been curious about the HobbyTrax products for some time and finally got two sets to try. One was for the Valentine and one for the German Panzer IV.

These pictures are my first use of the Panzer IV set on the Trumpeter Wirblewind kit. It is a very nice kit with an extensive interior.



First I applied glue to one link, flipped it over and put on the tool. This didn't feel right. I made a short run of six to ten links with the horns facing up, then flipped them over and put on the tool. I found it was easy to make one run stay connected to the next if they ended on the bottom or top. So I made longer runs to bend over the ends. The process went quickly.



I debated about the connection point. At first I thought I would put it on the bottom. But then I wanted a nice smooth run on the bottom. I decided to have the last connection on top where an adjustment up or down could be made to look like sag.





I had thought ahead and left the drive sprocket loose so I could adjust its teeth to the track rather than the other way around. That made it a lot easier.

I used Testor's tube glue with the needle applicator. This let me put just a tiny pick in each link, and the slow setting time gave me flexibility. Once I completed a run, I set my timer for 10 minutes.



Once I got the run on the vehicle and pressed it tight, I ended up taking out one or two links. I bet this varies depending on the sag and the play in the idler. They vary from company to company. I am glad I didn't have it set over night.

It was quick, easy, and I like the results. I think HobbyTrax will be getting more of my business.

Dave Bourland



2015 Lone Star Figure Show

March 12 - 14, 2015

**DFW Airport Marriott
South
4151 Centreport Blvd.
Fort Worth, Texas 76155**



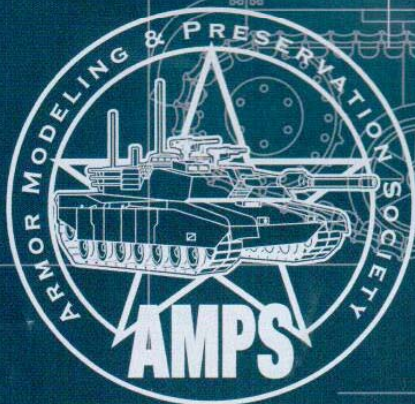
From the
drawing
board
to the
battlefield

There was always a first in line,
a MK.1, a Series A. We are celebrating
that innovative first model – the one
that led the way – with the
AMPS 2015 International Show theme:



Join us at the
WW2 Victory Museum
in Auburn, Indiana
from April 30 - May 2, 2015

Plan to be there!
More information to come at:
www.amps-armor.org





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NEW ON THE BLOCK

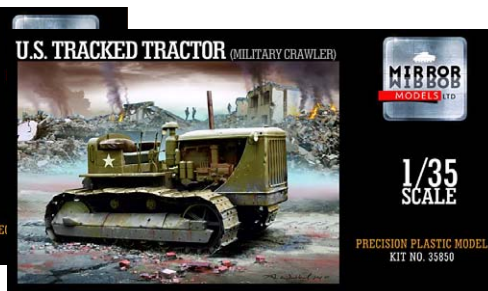
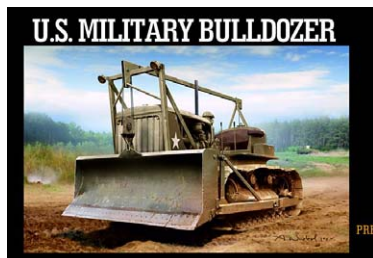


British Infantry

Somme Battle Period, 1916



More WWI figures on the way from MasterBox in 1/35th.



Mirror Models just released

1/35th WWII tractor and bulldozer based on the same D7 7M chassis.



Bronco finally delivered its version of the KV-85 in 1/35th as promised many many moons ago.



Meng continues its 1/35th Leopard series with the 1A5.

AMPS Boresight (Volume 23, Issue 1)

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

- ♦ **M48A3 Patton** by Henry Milton
Dragon's second kit of this old battleaxe.
- ♦ **M114 Towed Howitzer** by Mike Del Vecchio
Rounds complete! Building the Bronco 155mm "Pig."
- ♦ **M109 155mm Self-propelled Howitzer** by Carl Wethington
Firebase veteran from AFV Club.
- ♦ **AMPS Officer Election**
It's your turn to have a voice.
- ♦ **AMPS Local Chapter News**
What's going on in the AMPS community.

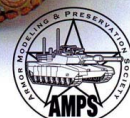


Inside this issue:

Dragon's M48A3 Patton

Bronco's M114 155mm towed howitzer

AFV Club's M109A2 155mm self-propelled howitzer





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."



Since then AABS is the only modeling 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. Subject of our interest ranges 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 and tricks. We also hold regular in-house model contests and organize out-of-town field trips to museums and model shows.

Every odd-numbered year AABS hosts the biggest armor model show in AMPS South Central Region (AMPS CENTEX). Known as Lone Star Armor & Figure Expo, we attract some of the best armor modelers in Texas as well as in the neighboring states to come participate.

To find out more about AABS, you can visit our website or pick up a club flyer at your local hobby shop.

We are on the web @ AustinArmorBuilders.com

*A beautifully finished 1/35th WWI FT-17
by Bob Bethea. He built this Meng kit
straight out-of-the-box.*

