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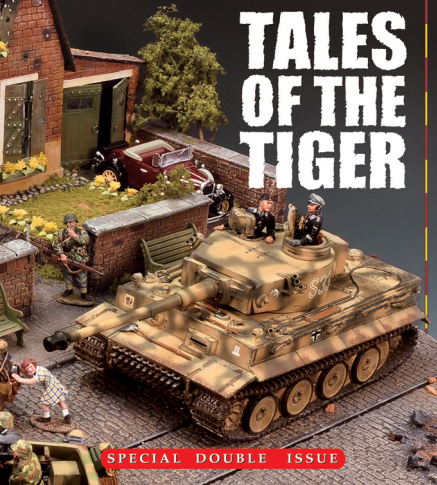
Summer 2010

COLLECTOR

蒐集者

A Quarterly Look at Our World in Miniature

TALES OF THE TIGER



SPECIAL DOUBLE ISSUE

A View From The Trenches...



WS160

THIS SPECIAL DOUBLE EDITION of "COLLECTOR" is dedicated to probably the most famous (or infamous if you prefer) tank of the Second World War... the Panzerkampfwagen VI... the mighty TIGER.

It's almost twenty years since King & Country first attempted to manufacture scale model fighting vehicles to accompany and complement our figures.

During that time K&C Tigers, in one form or another have been an almost continuous presence in the company's catalogue... and an important one too!

The constant improvements in scale... detail... colour... and crew figures have echoed similar developments and advances in K&C's general product series.

And now, even with the imminent release of our latest Tiger (our ninth) we are still, I am positive, not finished with this behemoth of the battlefield... yet! No matter how good we try and make something today we're always looking forward to see how we can make it even better tomorrow.

However, for this moment, let's take a fond, affectionate and informative look back at K&C's family of Tigers and how they came to roam our little corner of the toy soldier battlefield.

Although this issue is all about the Tiger we've managed to "snak" in a little four-page supplement about K&C's latest polystone and metal warbird... Kurt Tank's fantastic Focke-Wulf Fw 190... enjoy!

This hand-carved wooden Tiger being to well-known American K&C collector Louis Rodolatto and is part of his amazing collection and museum in Long Island, New York.



Andy C. Nelson
ANDY C. NELSON
CO-FOUNDER & CREATIVE DIRECTOR
KING & COUNTRY

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Headquarters Room 2301, No. 3 Lockhart
Road, Hong Kong Tel: (852) 2861 3450
Fax: (852) 2861 3806 Shop 362, Pacific
Place, Queensway, Hong Kong Tel: (852)
2525 8603

Email: sales@kingandcountry.com
Website: www.kingandcountry.com

Photo by Krista Elliot



ALMOST 70 YEARS AFTER IT FIRST APPEARED
ON THE BATTLEFIELD... TIGER TANKS ARE STILL BEING PRODUCED!

THERE'S SOMETHING ABOUT A TIGER...

OF ALL THE MANY weapons and military hardware used during the Second World War relatively few became household names... Among the best known and most easily recognized were the Spitfire... the Stuka... the Jeep and, of course, the TIGER!

Acknowledged then and now as the most formidable and famous German tank of its day the Tiger or *Panzerkampfwagen VI* (to give it its formal designation) has also played an important role in the *Krieg & Country* story.

On the following pages collectors can see how K&C's many different Tiger models have progressed and developed over the

years echoing (and sometimes spearheading) the company's own advances. Here you will find out more of the fascinating background details behind the design and development of this awesome fighting machine both as a model and as an actual tank.

At the same time we will provide you with other interesting collector information on production quantities and the various paint schemes utilized in the many

different "Tiger Tanks" K&C has produced.

So, without further ado, let's mount up your vehicle... climb into the turret... close up the hatches... start the engine... and prepare to move off... *Let battle begin!*

A Tiger somewhere in France, June 1944.



This early Tiger is in the hands of 2nd SS Panzer Grenadier Div. "Das Reich" and was hand-painted by K&C's Gordon Neilson.



K&C's FIRST TIGER

IT WAS ALMOST TWENTY YEARS AGO THAT KING & COUNTRY'S CO-FOUNDER AND CREATIVE DIRECTOR, ANDY C. NEILSON FIRST BEGAN TO THINK ABOUT MAKING A MODEL TIGER TANK.

Andy takes up the story... "By the early 1990's, K&C was taking its initial tentative steps into designing and producing WW2 soldiers. At that time the company was a tiny fraction of the size it is today... Basically just Gordon C. Neilson (my younger brother) and three other staff. Both Gordon and myself knew that to do justice to any WW2 subject we had to have more than just toy soldiers... We needed fighting vehicles, especially tanks, to go along with our troops!"

But, how to produce them and in what kind of material?

Andy continues, "Although our figures were made out of metal... either pewter or white metal alloy... We instinctively knew that those metals would be totally unsatisfactory for larger items like tanks. Too heavy and too expensive to produce!" Andy began to consider other alternatives. "I knew nothing of polystone in those days... I also knew that other possible alternatives such as diecast and plastic would also be prohibitively expensive. Plus, the kind of factories that

produced those kinds of vehicles required big, big order quantities and lots of money upfront for tooling and masters. So, that very quickly eliminated them from the scene".

GIRLFRIEND'S INSPIRATION

An answer to the tank problem came from an unlikely source... Andy's Chinese girlfriend at the time, Bettina. One day, when Andy was bemoaning the fact that he could find no suitable manufacturer, material or method of making his tanks, Bettina casually asked whether these vehicles could be "made out of wood?"

Andy replied that was indeed possible... providing he could get enough detail to make them recognizable to the average collector.

Bettina then said that she knew someone who knew someone else who had a wood carving factory in China making copies of birds and other animals. If, she surmised, it was possible to hand-carve and paint miniature models of birds and other wild life, "Would it not be just as possible to hand-carve and paint a model tank!"

"Let's try it", was Andy's swift response.

TRIAL BY BATTLE

After Bettina's suggestion Andy set about building a 1:35 scale plastic model kit of an American Sherman tank for the wood-carving factory to copy and scale up to 1:32 scale (at that time K&C's preferred toy soldier size).

As told in an earlier edition of "COLLECTOR" this first attempt was successful although the



factory did say that any subsequent production order would have to be simpler in detail, more robust and be at least 150 pieces minimum order quantity!

Now, this was a very tall order for K&C at that time... The company was not sure that they could sell 150 of just one fighting vehicle. After long and lengthy discussions a compromise was reached... "Still 150 total pieces", Andy says, "but split into three equal parts of 3 very famous WW2 tanks... the American Sherman... and the German Panther and Tiger".

Almost two months later three very large cardboard boxes arrived from mainland China into King & Country's very small office in Hong Kong. Each box contained 50x Shermans... 50x Panthers and... 50x Tigers.

Andy picks up the story, "Gordon and me unpacked each box in turn... we left the Tigers until last".

As they unpacked they inspected each and every model... "The actual carving", says K&C's Gordon Neilson, "although basic had a certain rough charm to it", Andy agrees with this assessment, "Our main problem however was the painting of the tanks", Andy says.

Although K&C had sent the factory detailed drawings and full colour illustrations of paint and camouflage schemes for each of the 3 models this had largely been ignored. "For whatever reason", Andy continues, "the factory had decided to let their imaginations run riot!"

The U.S. Shermans being basic army drab olive green in appearance had suffered the least. The German armour was a major problem... "Basically", Gordon Neilson says, "we repainted all of the Panthers and Tigers complete with individual hull numbers... divisional signs and other details".

Eventually after a few weeks the two Scotsmen completed their



task and began to sell the finished tank models... both in Hong Kong and through their very, very small network of K&C dealers in America and elsewhere.

TIGER SUCCESS

Among these first three armour models it was, as expected, the TIGER that sold out first! "Those first 150 hand-carved tanks took just over 18 months to completely sell out..." Andy says "The Tiger sold out in a third of that time!"

Those original 150 wooden tanks are today amongst the most highly prized and rarest of K&C's fighting vehicles.

"Occasionally... very occasionally", Gordon Neilson says, "one of these tanks comes onto the secondary market on ebay". The Tiger, being the Tiger of course, reaches sometimes amazing prices. Just recently a "Das Reich" marked Tiger sold for just over US\$2,000... Not bad for a little model that originally retailed for just US\$99 back in the early 1990's!

THE ONE THAT GOT AWAY!

In more recent years it has always been official K&C policy to retain at least two (and sometimes three) of any item produced by the company.

Back in the dim and distant past this was not always possible. Andy explains, "In those early days of K&C was not the successful company it is today... every cent counted!" In reality what that meant was

that anything and everything was for sale... even prototypes and samples. Andy goes on, "At that time it never occurred to either Gordon or me to keep samples... We were just happy to get the sale and the money... That's what helped keep this small, fledgling toy soldier company alive and kicking".

And so it came to pass that King & Country never kept a single model of those earliest Panthers and Tigers. They did, however, manage to retain a single hand-carved, wooden, made in China, Sherman... at least for a little while. Andy explains...

"For some reason, which unfortunately I cannot remember, we did keep one Sherman. Then about a year later we sent our last Chinese-made model off to Vietnam because we heard that you could get hand-carved models made there. Three months later a single Vietnamese-made Sherman copy came back but not alas our original sample. Sad to say, the costs were too prohibitive... both manufacturing and transportation, so, that proved a dead-end".

Today that Vietnam-made Sherman, repainted by Gordon in British desert camouflage, has an honoured place in K&C's Headquarters museum/laboratory... the last reminder of the very first three hand-carved model tanks King & Country ever produced.

"One of these days", Andy finally says, "I would like to find or buy one of those original tanks... especially the Tiger, because they've played such a major part in the company's progress and development. I just have to keep looking... However I'm not sure we could afford the price!"



*Tiger "201" with open and closing hatches
and a main gun that can elevate and depress...
Made in the Philippines.*



*A very early K&C tank crew figure shown
next to the Tiger for scale purposes.*



*These models were beautifully made and
painted but could be extremely delicate and
fragile to pack and transport.*

ALTHOUGH KING & COUNTRY experienced a host of problems trying to manufacture hand-carved wooden models in China and Vietnam they were not about to give up... There had to be a solution... And there was... *The Philippines*.

TIGER HUNTING IN THE PHILIPPINES

Andy picks up the story... "Since 1990 K&C had been designing and producing aviation-related subjects and figures now of course, we needed aircraft models to go with them".

The solution he first came up with was unusual but not particularly original... **Build and paint 1:32 scale plastic kits.** This in itself created more problems than it solved, especially for Andy's brother Gordon.

"Gordon", Andy explains, "had bought just about every Revell plastic model Spitfire, Hurricane and Messerschmitt in 1:32 scale in Hong Kong! Then he had to build them and paint them... It really was far too much for just one guy to do—even with me helping occasionally".

A better way had to be found. Out of the blue one day a pilot friend, who flew for Cathay Pacific, Hong Kong's own airline, mentioned that you could buy excellent hand-painted, hand-carved wooden aircraft models in the Philippines. Within days Andy, with a few relevant contact addresses, flew down to Manila to explore the possibilities. And so began another little adventure in model-making which continues right up to the present.

MADE IN THE PHILIPPINES

After making contact with several manufacturers in the Philippines and reviewing their production capability and quality Andy placed the first batch of aircraft orders... paid the deposits... and awaited the results...

Over the years Andy can recount the many ups and downs of trying to do business with the Philippines... "They are a lovely people", he says, "always friendly and outgoing and... very talented and

skillful. However, and it's often a big however, they seem to have no notion of keeping to a schedule or a deadline". What that meant for K&C were a series of major headaches and delays.

In spite of this K&C still wanted to produce wooden model tanks... especially Tigers! "And so", Andy says, "we decided to try again". K&C selected their best Philippine-based wooden manufacturer to make a small batch of five sample TIGERS.

"We sent the company", Andy continues, "a fully-constructed Tamiya plastic model kit in 1:35 scale along with detailed, enlarged plans to make a 1:32 scale version in wood".

Just six weeks later the first of the samples arrived in Hong Kong. "I was simply astounded", Andy says, "the quality of the detail... the carving and the painting were light years ahead of what I had seen in the China and Vietnam-made tanks... I was deeply impressed!"

Although impressed, Andy still could see problems... The cost-price was considerably higher than the previous models... So were the costs of transportation from the Philippines to Hong Kong much greater... And finally, all of that extra fine detail was also extremely fragile and easy to break.

"I was particularly worried about the fragility issue as nearly all of our production in those days was sold overseas, particularly to the States. It's great to make a beautiful model but it has to reach the end user in one-piece! Especially at the price we have to charge to make even a small profit on the deal".

Andy and Gordon studied the sample Tigers in minute detail and made a list of corrections and other points of advice for the Philippine factory to improve their next batch of models.

"To also show our confidence in them", Andy goes on, "we placed an initial order for fifty Tigers to be completed over three months. Then I would journey to the Philippines to inspect and quality control them before

packing and shipping to King & Country in Hong Kong.

THREE MONTHS LATER...

Well, three months came and went and eventually stretched to five months before word came that the models were finally complete and ready for inspection... Off, Andy drove to Manila.

"The actual factory we were working with!" Andy says, "was about three hours drive outside of the Philippine capital near what had been Clark Air Force base". "I was both nervous and excited all at the same time. I knew that our Filipino friends could produce some fantastic work but their reliability could also let you down".

Another British expat who live and worked in the Philippines for many years said it best, "Hope for the best... but prepare for the worst!"

Eventually, after what seemed an eternity, the small factory appeared at the end of a little village road. As Andy got out of his vehicle the factory boss walked over to greet him, "Your tanks are ready for inspection sir!"

SURPRISE! SURPRISE!

When Andy stepped into the little factory courtyard a great sight met him... Fifty Panzerkampfwagen VI Tiger tanks drawn up in five rows of ten ready and waiting. "After so many hiccups and disappointments it's fantastic to be surprised in a positive way!"

Andy moved slowly down each line scrutinizing, on his hands and knees, each and every model.

"For once", Andy says, "the actual reality surpassed the promise. Each piece was immaculate and perfect. To say I was elated would be a gross understatement."

POLYSTONE is a unique blend of marble dust and polyresin. It is perfect for casting all kinds of sculpted items. You would be hard pressed to find a cleaner, more accurate representation of an original "master sculpture" than a copy reproduction manufactured in polystone.

POLYSTONE REVOLUTION

Polystone also carries a significant weight and "heft" to it, a porcelain-like feel to the touch and an amazing ability to capture even the most minute detail, making it unbeatable in the manufacturing of all kinds of fine collectibles... including... Tiger Tanks!

Towards the end of 1997 a small event took place that was to literally revolutionize the world of toy soldiers and military miniatures... The introduction of polystone into a toy soldier world that had previously only known and cared for pewter and white metal... Here's how it all came about...

"WHAT'S THAT OVER THERE?"

1997 had not been a good year for Andy C. Nelson. Both his parents had passed away within a few months of each other and Hong Kong had just been returned to China after almost 160 years of British rule... There were more than a few uncertainties.

One big bright spot was King & Country. After fourteen years of blood, sweat and tears the small toy soldier company was at last beginning to get noticed and recruit a growing band of loyal collectors and dealers around the world. Two important factors played major roles in this modest success... K&C had, finally found its "style" and "niche" in the market place... World War Two.

With the launch of the "ARNHEM 44" range of British paratroopers fighting for that famous bridge featured in the best-selling book and movie "A Bridge Too Far", K&C had uncovered a treasure trove of toy soldier collectors who were passionately interested in WW2 subjects.

Andy realized fairly early on that although it was great to have lots of toy paratroopers in action it was also essential to have the military vehicles to support them and... oppose them.

There were, of course, ways and means, to solve this. K&C would have loved to produce a whole range of diecast metal vehicles... but the cost of dies, special molds and tooling was horrendously expensive. Plastic was cheaper (but still not that cheap) however a light weight jeep or Sherman tank did

not seem to "fit" with all metal, hand-painted toy soldiers. One day in September 1997 everything changed...

HONG KONG PREMIUM GIFT FAIR

Every year the city hosts dozens of conventions and trade fairs where buyers come from all over the globe to meet manufacturers from all over China.

On this particular September day Andy and Miranda Li (K&C's then Managing Director) were attending the Premium Gift Fair looking to find more factories to produce K&C's toy soldiers in mainland China. From early morning the pair had been walking from one huge display hall to another seeking out potential all-metal, hand-painted manufacturers. Although they had talked to literally dozens of different factory representatives among the hundreds present they had found none who was either interested or, more importantly, capable of producing what they wanted. By four in the afternoon they were about to leave when they came upon a medium-sized booth in one of the less popular areas of the Fair. Among the hundreds of different gift items on display were a selection of vintage-style 1930's American automobiles including some fire engine models.

"This looks interesting", Andy thought and drew them to Miranda's attention, "I wonder what they are made of?"

One of the booth's salesmen came over and started explaining what the products were... what they were made of and... how much they cost to make. As most of the conversation was in Mandarin, Andy left the talking to Miranda and browsed around the booth. Suddenly, his eyes lit up... "What was this little, lovely olive drab vehicle sitting almost hidden in a corner?"

Andy leaned down and picked up the little model and began to inspect it. It seemed to be a strange kind of hybrid combining design elements of a U.S. Army WW2 jeep cobbled together with a U.S. Army Dodge Command Car of a similar vintage.

It was, as he described it later, a "wee bit

crude" but it was approximately 1:32 in scale and had a terrific visual style... rough, ready and battle-worn. "A light bulb went off in my head", Andy says. If, as he surmised, the company could produce this little make shift military look-a-like what could they do if provided with well-researched photographic reference and detailed scale plan drawings. The possibilities were endless... and very exciting!

Andy showed his "find" to Miranda and together they agreed to meet the managing director and sales director of the Shanghai-based company the following day.

THE FIRST TWO PROJECTS

At the meeting the next day, in K&C's Hong Kong office, Andy and Miranda presented the men from Shanghai with the first two projects... A U.S. Sherman Tank and a German Tiger Tank. In addition to showing the Shanghai company 1:35 scale plastic model kits of both tanks Andy also provided scale drawings showing both vehicles in approximately 1:32 scale. Which, at that time, was the finished size K&C wanted each tank to be.

The factory was at first a little reluctant to take on the job. K&C initially requested just 200 pieces (this was eventually raised to 500). Once that was settled agreements were signed... deposits paid... and plans, model kits and hope departed for Shanghai.

One other important point had also been agreed... For the first project just one tank would be produced... The U.S. M4 Sherman. Everyone confirmed that this was the safer option... Firstly, because K&C were committed to 500 models (the biggest order the company had ever made up until that point).

Secondly, all parties wanted to get one vehicle "under-their-belt" before going off and producing another.

And finally, because K&C were already far down the production line on an epic "two front" series that would definitely need a Sherman tank much more than even a Tiger on those famous black sands... The Tiger would have to wait... eventually for over eighteen



months... before it appeared in the summer of 1999.

MICHAEL WITTMANN'S TIGER 205

Finally, early in 1999, K&C began design work on their first polystone model of a Tiger 1 in the markings of the greatest tank ace of WW2... *Waffen SS Hauptsturmführer Michael Wittmann*.

This new tank would be their most creative model yet... It would feature boxes of shells and ammunition on top of the engine compartment, a weathered "zimmerit" finish and a standing figure of Wittmann himself. Andy takes up the story...

"At this time all of the sculpting of the fighting vehicles was done by the Slough factory's own sculptors... We would send them plans, built-up model kits and, of course, actual photos of the relevant vehicle in action".

Normal production time for a tank like this was about 90 working days. "We would see some work-in-progress photos", Andy says, "and a sample or two to approve before final full-scale production began".

Everything would go relatively smoothly unless there was some error that had to be corrected...

"Nobody likes to be told something is wrong", Andy continues, "but with this Tiger we were really going

on a limb. We were ordering 700 in camouflage, summer version plus 300 in "winter-white". So a few minor mistakes were easily corrected and production went ahead. Of this very first polystone Tiger Andy says, "Compared to later models it looks very crude... the Zimmerit effect is not right, try as we might the factory's sculptor just did not understand how the real stuff was applied".

However, as far as the collecting public were concerned this little beast would do very nicely thank you!

Within 14 months all 1,000 Tigers (both summer and winter) were gone and K&C breathed a huge sigh of relief... at least for a little while.

Now, they thought... what's next?

SPECIAL NOTE:

Included with Tiger 205 was a single figure of Michael Wittmann himself. To accompany the "summer" Tiger Hauptsturmführer Wittmann was wearing the short black, wrap-over, Panzer-style

jacket together with camouflage pattern trousers. For the "winter" Tiger that was adapted to white overall trousers.

Collectors also like to know if the "bull numbers" featured on many of our armour models have any particular significance... In this case this first "Wittmann" Tiger bears the actual number "205" that Wittmann was commanding when he almost single-handedly destroyed a British armoured column in the small Norman village of Villers Bocage on June 13, 1944.

It is reported that the German tank ace personally destroyed between 23 and 27 British tanks as well as multiple "soft skin" vehicles... anti tank guns... and even a few armoured cars.



K&C's first winter Tiger complete with standing tank commander.

"TIGER 131"

FOLLOWING THE SUCCESS of King & Country's first polystone Tiger 1 the company quickly realized that there were many collectors, all over the world, who for one reason or another had failed to obtain that particular Tiger 1 for their own collection.

At the same time, Andy and the company also decided that they could produce a much better model next time they tackled a Tiger... Sharper detail, better casting, more figures and a much improved "paint-job".

And so, in Mid November 2000 design work began on a brand new version. Early decisions were soon made on providing two new crew figures (half-bodies)... a tank commander and his gunner. A "cleaner" look to the vehicle also meant that the "Zimmerit" had to go. K&C decided to open the two top hatch covers to facilitate the

placement of the half-body figures. In addition a three-colour late war camouflage scheme was agreed upon.

As for the actual production of the vehicle and its initial carving that again was scheduled to be done by the Shanghai factory.

Finally, a production-run quantity was settled upon... 1,000 vehicles with no winter version this time. At this point in early 2001 this was the largest individual purchase order ever placed for a single fighting vehicle in K&C's short history.

When "TIGER 131" was released onto the market in the summer of 2001 its success took even King & Country by surprise.

"It proved an instant hit with collectors around the globe", Andy says, "And it brought a raft of new dealers into the K&C ranks".

"We must have picked up at least a dozen new trade dealers", Andy recalls "Most of them in the States but a couple from Europe and even one from Japan!"

"Many of them said", Andy continues "That their collectors would come into their shop or store and specifically request one of the new K&C Tigers. That persuaded them to take another look at K&C and what we were offering them".

"So, I'm very grateful for TIGER 131 it brought us many new collectors and dealers"... Andy emphasizes, "and the vast majority, I'm happy to say, are still with us to this day!"

SOMEWHERE IN NORMANDY a tiger lurks...lean, mean and stalking its prey...King & Country's powerful

new TIGER 1 tank and fighting Fallschirmjäger are on the loose and looking for a little action.

Available NOW!

TIGER! TIGER!

WS25 Germany's most-feared tank and it's most famous! Armed with the powerful 88 gun, our model comes with a tank commander and radio operator.

KING & COUNTRY
TOY SOLDIERS THAT TELL A STORY

BY THE END OF 2001, the end was in sight for the 1,000 "Tiger 131's". Brisk sales had ensured that only about 100 were still available from K&C's very own "home depot"... a replacement had to be found.

It was also around this time that King & Country themselves came to a decision that was to have far-reaching consequences... The decision was to set up their own design studio in mainland China. Andy takes up the story... "Up until this point we had either been using the sculpting skills of the factories in China we employed to make our products (figures as well as vehicles) or we had utilized freelance sculptors right here in Hong Kong. Neither situation was particularly satisfactory as K&C was rapidly growing and, at the same time, wanting to produce a much bigger

RETURN OF THE TIGER!

OF THE MANY WEAPONS and
secretive terms
associated with
intelligence... Mustang... Jeep and, of course,
F-16.

Germany's Tiger tank not only became a much feared legend because of the Nazi propaganda machine but also because in the killing it was the most powerful and deadly enemy tank.

For almost 3 years, no other tank could match its swimming capabilities. Its combination of armor, firepower and maneuverability made the Tiger a shifter of the battlefield, and it was an equal force

1994, 1995, 1996, 1997, 1998, 1999, 2000, 2001, 2002, 2003, 2004, 2005, 2006, 2007, 2008, 2009, 2010, 2011, 2012, 2013, 2014, 2015, 2016, 2017, 2018, 2019, 2020, 2021, 2022, 2023, 2024, 2025, 2026, 2027, 2028, 2029, 2030, 2031, 2032, 2033, 2034, 2035, 2036, 2037, 2038, 2039, 2040, 2041, 2042, 2043, 2044, 2045, 2046, 2047, 2048, 2049, 2050, 2051, 2052, 2053, 2054, 2055, 2056, 2057, 2058, 2059, 2060, 2061, 2062, 2063, 2064, 2065, 2066, 2067, 2068, 2069, 2070, 2071, 2072, 2073, 2074, 2075, 2076, 2077, 2078, 2079, 2080, 2081, 2082, 2083, 2084, 2085, 2086, 2087, 2088, 2089, 2090, 2091, 2092, 2093, 2094, 2095, 2096, 2097, 2098, 2099, 2100, 2101, 2102, 2103, 2104, 2105, 2106, 2107, 2108, 2109, 2110, 2111, 2112, 2113, 2114, 2115, 2116, 2117, 2118, 2119, 2120, 2121, 2122, 2123, 2124, 2125, 2126, 2127, 2128, 2129, 2130, 2131, 2132, 2133, 2134, 2135, 2136, 2137, 2138, 2139, 2140, 2141, 2142, 2143, 2144, 2145, 2146, 2147, 2148, 2149, 2150, 2151, 2152, 2153, 2154, 2155, 2156, 2157, 2158, 2159, 2160, 2161, 2162, 2163, 2164, 2165, 2166, 2167, 2168, 2169, 2170, 2171, 2172, 2173, 2174, 2175, 2176, 2177, 2178, 2179, 2180, 2181, 2182, 2183, 2184, 2185, 2186, 2187, 2188, 2189, 2190, 2191, 2192, 2193, 2194, 2195, 2196, 2197, 2198, 2199, 2200, 2201, 2202, 2203, 2204, 2205, 2206, 2207, 2208, 2209, 2210, 2211, 2212, 2213, 2214, 2215, 2216, 2217, 2218, 2219, 2220, 2221, 2222, 2223, 2224, 2225, 2226, 2227, 2228, 2229, 2230, 2231, 2232, 2233, 2234, 2235, 2236, 2237, 2238, 2239, 2240, 2241, 2242, 2243, 2244, 2245, 2246, 2247, 2248, 2249, 2250, 2251, 2252, 2253, 2254, 2255, 2256, 2257, 2258, 2259, 2260, 2261, 2262, 2263, 2264, 2265, 2266, 2267, 2268, 2269, 2270, 2271, 2272, 2273, 2274, 2275, 2276, 2277, 2278, 2279, 2280, 2281, 2282, 2283, 2284, 2285, 2286, 2287, 2288, 2289, 2290, 2291, 2292, 2293, 2294, 2295, 2296, 2297, 2298, 2299, 2300, 2301, 2302, 2303, 2304, 2305, 2306, 2307, 2308, 2309, 2310, 2311, 2312, 2313, 2314, 2315, 2316, 2317, 2318, 2319, 2320, 2321, 2322, 2323, 2324, 2325, 2326, 2327, 2328, 2329, 2330, 2331, 2332, 2333, 2334, 2335, 2336, 2337, 2338, 2339, 2340, 2341, 2342, 2343, 2344, 2345, 2346, 2347, 2348, 2349, 2350, 2351, 2352, 2353, 2354, 2355, 2356, 2357, 2358, 2359, 2360, 2361, 2362, 2363, 2364, 2365, 2366, 2367, 2368, 2369, 2370, 2371, 2372, 2373, 2374, 2375, 2376, 2377, 2378, 2379, 2380, 2381, 2382, 2383, 2384, 2385, 2386, 2387, 2388, 2389, 2390, 2391, 2392, 2393, 2394, 2395, 2396, 2397, 2398, 2399, 2400, 2401, 2402, 2403, 2404, 2405, 2406, 2407, 2408, 2409, 2410, 2411, 2412, 2413, 2414, 2415, 2416, 2417, 2418, 2419, 2420, 2421, 2422, 2423, 2424, 2425, 2426, 2427, 2428, 2429, 2430, 2431, 2432, 2433, 2434, 2435, 2436, 2437, 2438, 2439, 2440, 2441, 2442, 2443, 2444, 2445, 2446, 2447, 2448, 2449, 2450, 2451, 2452, 2453, 2454, 2455, 2456, 2457, 2458, 2459, 2460, 2461, 2462, 2463, 2464, 2465, 2466, 2467, 2468, 2469, 2470, 2471, 2472, 2473, 2474, 2475, 2476, 2477, 2478, 2479, 2480, 2481, 2482, 2483, 2484, 2485, 2486, 2487, 2488, 2489, 2490, 2491, 2492, 2493, 2494, 2495, 2496, 2497, 2498, 2499, 2500, 2501, 2502, 2503, 2504, 2505, 2506, 2507, 2508, 2509, 2510, 2511, 2512, 2513, 2514, 2515, 2516, 2517, 2518, 2519, 2520, 2521, 2522, 2523, 2524, 2525, 2526, 2527, 2528, 2529, 2530, 2531, 2532, 2533, 2534, 2535, 2536, 2537, 2538, 2539, 2540, 2541, 2542, 2543, 2544, 2545, 2546, 2547, 2548, 2549, 2550, 2551, 2552, 2553, 2554, 2555, 2556, 2557, 2558, 2559, 2560, 2561, 2562, 2563, 2564, 2565, 2566, 2567, 2568, 2569, 2570, 2571, 2572, 2573, 2574, 2575, 2576, 2577, 2578, 2579, 2580, 2581, 2582, 2583, 2584, 2585, 2586, 2587, 2588, 2589, 2590, 2591, 2592, 2593, 2594, 2595, 2596, 2597, 2598, 2599, 2600, 2601, 2602, 2603, 2604, 2605, 2606, 2607, 2608, 2609, 2610, 2611, 2612, 2613, 2614, 2615, 2616, 2617, 2618, 2619, 2620, 2621, 2622, 2623, 2624, 2625, 2626, 2627, 2628, 2629, 2630, 2631, 2632, 2633, 2634, 2635, 2636, 2637, 2638, 2639, 2640, 2641, 2642, 2643, 2644, 2645, 2646, 2647, 2648, 2649, 2650, 2651, 2652, 2653, 2654, 2655, 2656, 2657, 2658, 2659, 2660, 2661, 2662, 2663, 2664, 2665, 2666, 2667, 2668, 2669, 2670, 2671, 2672, 2673, 2674, 2675, 26

[illegible]

The third model was the first polymer fiber made in China, and it was awarded 100,000 yuan (US\$15,000) in 1965.

standing tilted straight and unconfined in long water and various camouflage versions. Hundreds of

to 100, an 800-pound and pushing a 1000-lb. into the various polyethylene bags. This one that

[illegible]

After spending an evening with the *Wentworth* cast, we were taken to a private screening of the film. The movie, which was shot in the same period as the TV series, was a surprise. It was a comedy, and it was a very good one. It was a very good one.

MEMBERS & COUNTRIES

www.elsevier.com/locate/jbiotec

Super Bowl XL
 Location: Inland Empire
 Dates: February 1, 2006
 Venue: Sun Life Stadium
 Capacity: 75,000

KING & JONATHAN S.R.
10 Bow Lane, London, EC3A 7DF, England
Tel: 020 7463 8400
Web: www.kingandjonathan.com

A DIFFERENT KIND OF TIGER

standard of end-model for the collector".

K&C decided now was the time to take up the task of designing, sculpting and producing their own "master" figures... vehicles... and other display accessories.

Simultaneously, two of their favourite sculptors who had already been working at one of K&C's factories decided they wanted to work exclusively for K&C.

"These two young sculptors", Andy recalls, "were particularly talented and had worked with K&C on several of our projects before. So we already knew how good they were. They themselves were frustrated working in a large factory environment which could be (and often was) noisy, dirty and crowded!"

"After both men quit work at this particular factory they contacted K&C directly asking if they could work exclusively for us", Andy says.

"Of course we said yes," was the swift reply.

Within weeks King & Country had rented a small house bordering a lake on the outskirts of Shenzhen in southern China and installed the two sculptors there. The pleasant atmosphere and quiet surroundings worked wonders for the sculptors and their productivity.

It also helped that their salaries began to jump dramatically as well! In the beginning their main efforts were put into the figures—and soon the results began to be seen. King & Country's figure sculptures made a giant leap forward in quality, detail and animation.

MOVING INTO ARMOUR

Now that the figures were improving it was just as important that K&F's vehicles also make that major step forward...

Although initially happy with the Shanghai-produced fighting vehicles Andy was less than happy with that factory's unwillingness to improve quality and lack of inventiveness.

"A part of the problem was also", Andy says, "the sheer distance between Hong Kong and Shanghai". It proved difficult, almost impossible, to watch over and correct anything that was almost at the production stage. "This was frequently frustrating", Andy says, "especially as K&C was trying to improve and develop our models all the time to keep pace with the better quality of our newer figures".

On one of his visits up to K&C's new Sculpting Studio Andy discussed the problem with the two sculptors. Each listened intently, looked at each other and nodded...

"What about Ah Cheng?" They said in

unison, both smiling. *It turned out to be K&C's lucky day!* As it turned out Ali Cheng was an old friend of both sculptors and had studied "Industrial Design" at the same Art School as themselves although two years ahead of them. At present he was working as a general sculptor with a factory producing porcelain dolls for the American gift market... *and he was mighty bored!!!* Oh, and one other thing both sculptors said, *he loves building and making model planes, tanks and ships!*

K&C suggested that they contact their old friend immediately and, if he was interested, arrange a meeting for him to discuss face-to-face the possibility of him joining our little design studio as soon as possible.

Four days later the meeting took place in Shenzhen... Our new friend, Ah Cheng brought along several samples of his work. Not only was he a terrific sculptor... he

was also a great figure painter and model builder as well. For the meeting he brought along a large cardboard box, inside which he told K&C, were just a few little items he had been working on. The first model he retrieved from the box was a delicately wrapped, squarish in shape object that when he unwelld it from its wrappings turned out to be an amazing 1:35 scale *Pfizerkampffingens* VI better known to us all as a... "TIGER!"

Although based on a Japanese Tamiya plastic kit, *Ah Cheng* had customized it beautifully with all kinds of extra fine-detail he had gleaned from books and magazines and "scratch-built" to fit his model.

Looking at the superb display in front of him Andy quickly decided to offer Ah Cheng the job of Master Vehicle Modeler for K&C.... One week later Ah Cheng moved lock, stock and barrel to the little workshop by the lake.

His first project would be... Michael Wittmann's last Tiger.

Marked on the hull with the number "007" this was the Tiger in which the most famous tank ace of WW2 would fight his last battle on August 8, 1944 in the fields of Normandy.

Another of Gordon Neilson's special dioramas...
This one was originally constructed for the 2010
West Coast Toy Soldier Show in Irvine Ca.

At the show it featured K&C's latest British
paratroopers... however before that we decided
to showcase our very latest Tiger 1 in a town
setting alongwith some German soldiers and
a few of our upcoming civilian refugees.



The original of this display is now in the collection of K&C's top collector in Holland.



WITTMANN'S LAST TIGER



WS043

Tiger 007

"with Michael Wittmann"

THE APPEARANCE OF ANOTHER NEW TIGER, again with the personal markings of the famous tank ace Michael Wittmann caused quite a stir in the world of toy soldiers when it was released late in 2002.

As described elsewhere in this special edition of "COLLECTOR", vehicles associated with Wittman always have enjoyed great popularity with collectors. Previously, the company had produced a Tiger (hull number 205) that the SS tank commander had used to make his reputation with, on the Normandy front. Now, King & Country were going to produce the Tiger he fought in when fate

finally caught up with him...

This was also to be the first Tiger wholly designed and sculpted by K&C's own master carvers in their new studio. Many new techniques had to be devised and learnt that would allow the company to incorporate the extra detail that was a prerequisite for the model. In addition, all new tank crew figures (including one of Wittmann himself) had to be included with the model.

All in all it took a little over three months for the 'master model' and figures to be prepared for casting at the factory.

Simultaneously, much research had

been done to ensure that the color scheme (three tone, late war) was accurate and realistic. Extra detailing included the painted badge of the "1st SS Leibstandarte Adolf Hitler" on the front hull of the tank. The final touch was a subtle weathering of the model to give an authentic battlefield and battle-worn finish.

DOUBLE SUCCESS

At the time of its introduction in late 2002, the company modestly hoped it could equal the sales of its previous Tigers... By the end of production in 2004 it had easily

surpassed the combined sales of all previous Tigers!

The final number manufactured was just over 2,000 models sold worldwide... a record that was to stand until equaled by the company's other big cat... the *Summer Panther* (WS72) a few years later.

WINTER SURPRISE

That, however, is not quite the end of this particular story (or *Tiger*). A year later, in 2005, just in time for Christmas, a very special "Winter Tiger" was to appear... with a completely different paint scheme... five brand-new figures... very original packaging and... a "Strictly Limited" release...

8 AUGUST 1944

On that ill-fated day, *Michael Wittmann* was leading a troop of *Tiger* tanks in a counter-attack on a British position near *Saint-Aignan-de-Cramesnil* in Normandy.

The town and surrounding area had just been captured a few hours earlier by British and Canadian forces.

Wittmann was leading a group of seven *Tigers* supported by some *Panzer IV*'s when they were ambushed by British tanks including several *Sherman Fireflies*.

The *Sherman Firefly* armed with a 17-pounder gun was to prove a deadly opponent for any kind of German armour... including the *Tiger*!

Several *Tigers* were knocked out by the first fusillade of British shells. *Wittmann*, in "007", attempted to turn his tank towards the hidden enemy. As his *Tiger* was moving around, it was hit by three consecutive rounds from one of the *Fireflies*. One of the rounds penetrated the upper hull and ignited the *Tiger*'s own ammunition. This caused a fierce fire which soon engulfed the whole tank... within minutes the entire turret blew off!

The few remaining German tanks then beat a hasty retreat. This particular skirmish was now over...

Little did the British know that they had killed Germany's most famous tank ace. Some days later *Michael Wittmann* and the remains of his crew were buried in an unmarked grave beside their wrecked tank. It was not until many years later, in 1983, after several exhaustive searches that *Wittmann*'s battlefield grave and that of his crew was discovered.

WS043
Tiger 007 "with Michael Wittmann"



Wittmann and his tank go into their last battle.

Some tank... different paint scheme... very different crew and... "Strictly Limited". Just 999 of this first KGC SL version were produced.

WS70(SL)
Winter Tiger Strictly Limited



While breakfast is being prepared this tank commander is briefing his crew on their next move forward...



ALTHOUGH VASTLY OUTNUMBERED by the Allied armoured forces in Normandy during June and July 1944, the Tiger did more than just hold its own against the "Tommys" and the "Amerikaners"... just one Allied tank posed any kind of threat to the "big cats"... the Sherman Firefly.

By the time of the Normandy invasion on June 6, 1944, both British and American commanders already knew that their main battle tanks were fighting an unequal contest against the German Tigers and Panthers. Tank for tank, the mighty German vehicles outgunned their opposition... and were better armoured to protect their crews. What the Nazis lacked in quantity, they certainly made up for in quality!

The Americans appeared to be less worried about this inferiority believing that their advantages in sheer numbers as well as firepower and a ready supply of reinforcements and replacements, could (and would)

meet any shortcomings of their armoured forces' vehicles. The British by comparison were less confident knowing only too well how the inherent weaknesses of their own British-designed tanks compared very unfavourably against the enemy... especially in their tank guns.

To this end they decided to produce an up-gunned tank that could take on the Tigers and Panthers on a much more level playing field. Exhaustive tests and trials on all of the existing British manufactured tanks showed that none of them were capable of carrying a larger, more powerful gun. The gun that was finally selected to be used was the tried and tested 17-pounder, already in production and in use on the battlefield as a superb towed anti-tank weapon.

JUST ONE CHOICE

The British also rapidly came to the conclusion that the only Allied tank capable of mounting such a large main gun was the American-made M4 Sherman... already in wide use with British forces. The existing



turret however would have to be enlarged and lengthened to accommodate such a large gun. British designers immediately

TAKING ON THE TIGER

00051
Churchill Tank Set

00060
Staghound Armoured Car Set

00065
New British Sherman Tank

00135
British Sherman Firefly

00116
Cromwell MK IV Tank



went to work, and the entire project was given the "green light" and high priority. The race to

get the new tank, by now christened "The Firefly", was on... It had already been decided that all British Armoured Divisions taking part in the upcoming D-Day operations would have a large complement of the new and more powerful Sherman Fireflies in their inventory.

SHARED KNOWLEDGE?

During the entire development stage of this "new" Sherman Firefly, the British had kept their American allies fully informed of the improvements and the advantages of the upgraded Sherman. They even offered to produce Fireflies for the U.S. Forces preparing for the invasion.

DD135



days and weeks to follow in the battle for Normandy.

K&C BRITISH ARMOUR

Over the years, King & Country has designed and produced probably the largest collection of Second World War armoured vehicles in the toy soldier world.

As might be expected most of that large number have been German... with the Tiger, of course, topping the list of tank models built.

At the same time the Allies have not been neglected and an impressive list of Allied armour has also been steadily released by the company among them several important British vehicles... One of the first was the "exclusive British M4 Sherman" (DD065) manufactured on behalf of K&C UK. This particular Sherman was based

DD065



Alas, perhaps for reasons of national pride, the American "Top Boss" rejected the British offer preferring to wait for several more months for their own new 76mm up-gunned Sherman to appear.

Sadly, hundreds of American tank crew men, paid a dear price for not adopting the ready-made British Firefly in time for D-Day and the

on an earlier release (DD045) which originally appeared in U.S. markings. The "UK" version had 3 completely new crew figures and was in the markings of the British 27th Armoured Brigade.

Another favourite British tank was the "CHURCHILL" ... Although seriously "out-gunned" by its German opposition it played a major role in British Armoured Divisions. The K&C "Churchill" (DD051) was in the markings of 3rd. Battalion, Scots Guards of the 6th Guards Armoured Brigade and bore the nickname "DUNKIRK".

Yet another significant vehicle, but not a tank, was the "Staghound" armoured car... our K&C model (DD060), armed with a 37mm gun, belongs to the Canadian 12th Manitoba Dragoons.

Our final British tank is still in production and already a big hit with D. Day collectors... The "Cromwell" ... Although relatively fast this British-designed tank again suffered large losses partly because of its lack of serious firepower. This particular Cromwell belongs to the Irish Guards, part of the Guards Armoured Division.

It was only when the Sherman Firefly finally came on to the battlefield that, at long last, the British had a tank that could "kill" the mighty Tiger.

DD051



DD060



DD116



KING & COUNTRY'S
STRICTLY LIMITED

TUNISIAN TIGER

AK039(SL)
Desert Tiger Tank



IN THE TWO YEARS since the release of the "Strictly Limited" Winter Tiger (WS70SL) in 2005, some exciting developments had taken place in the toy soldier world...

Other companies seeing the success of King & Country, especially in the production of polystone and metal fighting vehicles, had come into the market place... obviously wanting to carve out their own niche.

K&C had no wish to be caught with their pants down and realized very

quickly that these new challengers had to be met and, at the same time, could help K&C raise the quality of their own vehicles and figures.

"Obviously", Andy C. Neilson says, "many of these young companies had learnt a lot from our experience; I felt it only fair that we could learn from them as well!"

Andy continues, "Everyday I like to absorb and learn fresh approaches and new ideas. Competition in any field or business is not only desirable... it's essential. Although K&C is still a major pioneer in the world of toy soldiers, we're not so pompous or as big-headed to believe we know it all... Far from it, we want to learn from others and

you can only do that by being open and welcoming to new blood and fresh, innovative ideas".

The company also strongly felt that the best way they could show collectors their improved knowledge and skills was by producing a brand-new Tiger in a version that had never been released before....

TIGERS IN THE DESERT

As most readers already know, the first Tigers saw action in Russia in late 1942. However it was not until early 1943 that the Western military first laid eyes on this new tank... in Tunisia... in North Africa.

At a village near Tunis, a small force of Tigers attacked some forward British positions. The sight and sound of these massive 56-ton "monsters" bearing down on them forced the British troops

AFRIKA

to retreat in double-quick time. Luckily for the Brits a troop of their own anti-tank guns were sited nearby in a grove of olive trees on the right flank of the lumbering Tigers. A volley of anti-tank rounds struck the vulnerable sides of the attacking tanks and soon disabled two of them... The remainder pulled back.

Later when the British returned, they had the opportunity to inspect the Tigers... up-close. Almost twice as big and as heavy as the nearest Allied tank, the British soldiers were clearly impressed. Also making a forceful impression was the Tiger's huge "88" gun. The British already knew, *only too well*, the awesome "killing" power of this superb gun as it had been encountered on many occasions during the "Desert War". Then it had served as mobile artillery both in its original form... as an anti aircraft heavy flak gun and, even more importantly, as an anti-tank gun. In this last role *Rommel's* 88 guns had devastated countless British tank attacks on numerous occasions... And now, here it was, mounted on a giant new tank!

TIGER 125

For our sixth Tiger, K&C decided to replicate an early-production



The real thing somewhere in Tunisia March 1943

WORLD IN MINIATURE

Today, there is only one genuine Tiger tank left in *operational condition* located at the Tank Museum in Bovington, England.

On 21 April 1943, this particular Tiger tank, was captured on a hill called *Djebel Duffa* in Tunisia. A round from a Churchill tank of the British 48th Royal Tank Regiment hit the

Tiger's gun barrel and ricocheted into its turret ring, jamming its traverse and wounding the commander. The crew bailed out and the tank was subsequently captured.

In June 1990, the tank was removed from display for a major restoration. This was carried out jointly by the museum and the British Army's Base Repair Organization and involved a complete disassembly of the tank. The Maybach HL230 engine from the museum's own Tiger II was installed, along with a modern fire-suppressant system in the engine compartment. In December 2003, it was returned to the museum, repainted, restored and in fine running condition.

The Tiger now takes part in outdoor displays and events throughout the year. When not performing, the tank can still be viewed on display inside the Museum itself at Bovington.

Needless to say it is one of the most popular exhibits in the museum.

Panzerkampfwagen VI Ausf. E typical of those vehicles that were shipped to North Africa in early 1943.

Painted in a realistic desert camouflage, the model comes complete with full tropical filter system fitted above the engine compartment. On this type of Tiger, extra provision was also made for deep wading with a "schwabel" tube and rubber sealing although this kind of provision in the parched desert sands of North Africa seems just a little redundant...

Along with the "Tunisian Tiger", came a full 5-man crew, dressed in tropical *Afrika Korps* uniforms of the period.

Being a "Strictly Limited" release (just 1250 produced), this special Desert Tiger belonged to *Panzer Abteilung 501*, the only Tiger unit operating in Tunisia in February 1943.

POSTSCRIPT

Tiger tanks where are a rarity even in wartime as amazingly only 1,360 were ever manufactured compared to the more numerous Panther tanks (6000 were produced during the war).

WS043

Wittmann Last Tiger
(Afrika Korps Version)

AK039(SL)

TWO DESERT TIGERS...

Long before we actually produced our Tiger 125/Strictly Limited we converted one of our "Wittmann's last Tiger" into a desert Tiger just to see what it might look like.

Once we saw the result we decided to go ahead with our "Tunisian Tiger".





Photo courtesy of Dreamworks SAG.

TIGERS IN THE MOVIES

OVER THE YEARS Hollywood has made a legion of "War" movies... especially about the Second World War... Some good... some bad... but most of them very inaccurate—particularly when it came to portraying German vehicles and armour.

To be fair to the movie makers most WW2 German equipment (tanks, trucks, and aircraft) were scrapped immediately after hostilities ceased. What little remained found its way into museums or a few private collections. That posed major problems for any movie men trying to replicate WW2 battles on the big screen.

Hollywood however was quick to find alternative solutions... and

usually that meant taking retired or current (for the time) U.S. military hardware... giving it a coat of field grey paint... slapping a German cross or swastika on it... and *hey presto...* a Nazi tank, truck or half track!

Perhaps the best (or worst) example of this was the 1965 cinerama epic *"The Battle of the Bulge"*—where relatively modern U.S. built M47 Patton tanks of the Spanish Army were "redecorated" in grey as imitation *Panthers* and *Tigers*.

Although most movie goers would not know the difference (or perhaps even care) to the more military-minded viewer these abominations were cinematic and historical nightmares!

Elsewhere however a few film makers did care and tried their level best to replicate fighting vehicles that at least approximated to the genuine ones in their story and movie.

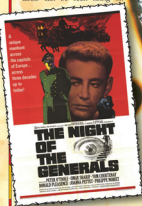
"NIGHT OF THE GENERALS"

One such film maker was noted producer/director Anatole Litvak. His 1967 movie is set in Poland and



France between 1943 and 1944. Peter O' Toole and Omar Sharif portray two German officers involved in a series of gruesome murders played out against the "backdrop" of the Warsaw Jewish Uprising and D. Day.

During several scenes in Warsaw about a dozen "Tiger" tanks can be seen firing on



buildings where Jewish fighters are sheltering. Later, in France before and after D. Day these "Tigers" appear once more in the background of several key scenes.

To create the "Tigers" director Litvak had the movie company purchase twelve obsolete Russian T34 tanks from the Polish military. Then his art department created fibre glass "shells" of Tiger tank hulls and turrets that could slip over the T34's. In addition special Tiger-like muzzle brakes were fitted onto the end of the T34's main gun helping to create a rough approximation of the *Panzerkampfwagen VI*... Sadly after filming was completed all of these replicas were scrapped!

"KELLY'S HEROES"

Movie "Tigers" made their next on screen appearance in director Brian Hutton's 1970 blockbuster "Kelly's Heroes" starring Clint Eastwood. Filmed in what was then Yugoslavia director Hutton had a



wealth of genuine WW2 tanks and vehicles to play with... Dozens of authentic *Shermans*, *M3 Half* tracks and *Jeeps* as well as more than a few German trucks, staff cars and *Kubelwagens*. But, what he really needed were three German Tiger tanks and here's why...

Clint and his GI buddies learn of a fortune in gold bullion that for some reason is in a bank in a village behind German lines. They want the gold all for themselves... Just one problem—actually three problems... the gold is protected by three Tiger tanks!

Director Hutton thought the Yugoslavs might just have three Tigers lying around—after all they had all this other great WW2 stuff. Sorry, they replied, we don't have any... but we can supply you with some T34's.

Hutton remembered "Night of the Generals" from a few years previously and got to work. This time however the "Tigers" had a much more pivotal role in the movie... They had to be seen up-close and so the movie makers had to be much more exact and detailed.

Four T34's were completely stripped down and rebuilt (three for in front of camera plus one spare). Most of the external Russian armour was carefully removed and a special metal frame was built onto the bare hull onto which was bolted and welded a heavy steel Tiger look-alike body.

The T34's own Russian turrets and 85mm guns were replaced with brand-new custom-built Tiger turrets with fake 88mm guns put in their place. These new turrets could revolve around 360° and

depress and elevate their own guns.

What, of course, could not be modified was the unique wheel and suspension arrangement of the original T34. To convert both to the more elaborate Tiger system would be virtually impossible and far too expensive. The final conversions however were the best yet seen on the screen.



"Kelly's" Tigers appeared magnificent in the movie and "acted" superbly. After filming their fate alas remains a mystery to this day... although rumours persist that one of the "Tigers" was sold to a collector in Hungary.



A "Saving Pvt. Ryan"
Tiger at the War & Peace show
in Beltring, England 2006.

"SAVING PVT. RYAN"

It was to be over twenty five years before another movie maker required a few mean looking "Tigers" to prowl around his set... In 1996 director *Steven Spielberg* was beginning the preparatory stages for his ground-breaking D. Day epic "*Saving Pvt. Ryan*".

Filming was to take place in England and Ireland in 1997. Spielberg's tale of a small patrol of U.S. Rangers seeking out a lone surviving American paratrooper was to have its climactic battle in a small village defended by the GI's against a combined force of German *Waffen SS* and... a troop of four *Tigers*!

Spielberg and his star *Tom Hanks*, both serious WW2 buffs knew that there were definitely no "troops of real Tiger tanks" sitting around waiting to be filmed so they would have to employ a little of that "movie magic" to create what they needed.

Fortunately for Steven Spielberg he had worked with a British company before that had made all kinds of weird and wonderful props for his movies. The company was run by an Englishman, *Steve Lamony*, who had

created and built both the experimental German aircraft and strange hybrid tank that appeared in the *Indiana Jones* movies.

Lamony, a military vehicle collector himself, was instructed to build two imitation "Tigers" for the movie... Although four were called for in the script with careful editing and a quick change of "hull numbers" director Spielberg could make two look like four!

This time Lamony chose the later T55 Russian tank for his *Tiger conversions*. The older T34's were now quite rare themselves and were becoming expensive collector's items in their own rights. *Much too precious and costly to bastardize just for a movie!*

Following the "*Kelly's Heroes*" example Steve Lamony's team stripped both T55's down to their basics and rebuilt them with completely new all-steel Tiger hulls and full working turrets. As an added touch these "*Pvt. Ryan*" Tigers had a historically correct covering of "*Zimmeritt*" paste applied before painting.

When fully complete this pair of "*Movie Tigers*" were the most authentic and realistic ones to ever appear at a cinema screen near you.

Fortunately both survive to this day... one remains in the U.K. whilst the other was sold to an American living in

Southern California.

Just a few years ago the author of this article was fortunate to see it "live" at a battle reenactment display near Los Angeles... The sight and sound was both awe-inspiring and jaw-dropping...

Just like a real Tiger!

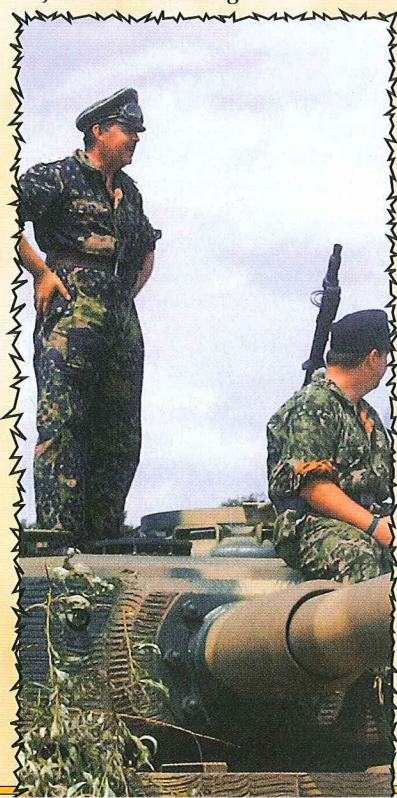


Photo courtesy of Jochen Vollert



WS151
Tiger I

ACHTUNG TIGER!

WHEN THE BATTLE OF KURSK began on 5 July 1943 the Tiger I had only been in service since late August of the previous year. This epic struggle, code named "Zitadelle", would see the largest gathering of Tigers yet seen on the Eastern Front... a total of just 147.

Among them were three Panzer Companies of the three premier Waffen SS Divisions... 1st SS "Leibstandarte Adolf Hitler"... 2nd SS "Das Reich"... and the 3rd, "Totenkopf".

Each company was originally to have nine Tigers plus ten Panzer III's however just prior to the battle this was increased to fourteen Tigers. Of the 42 Tigers allocated to the three SS Panzer Grenadier Divisions 35 were operational at the start of the offensive. From this number only three were lost to enemy action.

K&C's LATEST TIGER

This newest Tiger belongs to the 2nd SS "Das Reich" Division. Bearing the hull number "533" in white. The Tigers of this division were easily identified by their unique tactical numbering system consisting of the letter "S" followed by two numbers... the first designated the

platoon and the second showed that vehicle's position within it.

These particular Tigers left the factory with a base coat of "Feldgrau" or field gray. When they arrived at their Division they were then over painted with a "Dunkelgelb" (sand yellow) camouflage pattern.

For the Kursk offensive, all "Das Reich" vehicles were ordered to use a new divisional sign which was stenciled on the front and rear of each. In addition a small figure of a dancing "Gnauer" was chosen as the emblem for the entire Panzer company. On the K&C model this can be seen on the left of the Tiger's turret towards the front.

"533" has also another, even more unique and unusual graphic symbol on its forward hull... a little piece of Chinese calligraphy meaning "Good Fortune" or "Good Luck".

Where did it come from? ... No one knows.

Who came up with it? ... Another mystery of war.

Our new Tiger I also comes complete with two half-body figures... the vehicle commander and his gunner appearing out of the turret's open hatches.

AFTER THE BATTLE

Following the Battle of Kursk "Das Reich" and its remaining Tigers stayed on the Eastern Front taking part in several major actions. In September 1943 they received

five more Tigers... In January 1944 a further five were delivered. Alas these sparse reinforcements did little however to help alleviate the desperate military reverses the Germans were suffering all along that front.

Although the mighty Tigers fought valiantly and superbly against their Soviet opposition their sheer lack of numbers and continuous use eventually ground them down. By early April 1944 not one single Tiger tank remained operable in "Das Reich's" inventory... The division, or what was left of it, was then ordered to return to the West to reorganize and refit... Just in time for "Operation Overlord"—the Invasion of France and its next trial by battle.



TANKS, no matter how good they are mechanically or militarily, depend on the quality and skills of the crews who operate them...

And Tigers were no exception!

When the first *Panzerkampfwagen* VTs came into operational service in the Autumn of 1942 the crews who manned them had been carefully selected from the cream of the German *Panzer Corps*. The vast majority were combat-seasoned and battle-hardened veterans of the campaign in Poland... the Battle of

the crews brought plenty of practical hard-won experience and knowledge into

Tiger... In one engagement on the Eastern Front between a company of Tigers and a regiment of T34's the Russians lost 37 of their tanks for the loss of just one damaged Tiger, which was rapidly repaired and put back into service.

Throughout the war more Tigers were lost or abandoned because of lack

of fuel (or mechanical failure) than were ever disabled or knocked-out in actual tank-to-tank combat.

That says a lot in particular for the professionalism and training of the Tiger crews.

K&C CREW FIGURES

Almost as long as KING & COUNTRY has produced tank models (especially Tigers) we have designed and produced figures to go in.

around and on top of them.

As you can see in this picture... we've added a few more...

Among them are some famous tank "aces" as well as "working" tankers and a few SS *Panzer* troopers on parade... or guard duty. Whatever they are doing they all help to enliven any scene or Tiger display.

CREW SUPPORT



France and the invasion of Russia, the previous year.

With well over two years of battlefield experience many of

their handling of this new 56-ton "beast". This was obvious as soon as the Tigers took on their opposition. The "kill" ratios between how many of their opponents were destroyed compared to the Tigers' own losses were vastly in favour of the

Focke-Wulf Fw190



IN SEPTEMBER 1941 a mysterious, radial-engined Luftwaffe fighter appeared in the skies over Northern France. Within days it had seized control of the air from the Royal Air Force's Spitfire Mark V. For the next twelve months it would dominate the aerial battles over occupied Europe like no other fighter plane... It was the legendary Focke Wulf Fw190.





FLYING LEGEND

WORK BEGAN on the Focke-Wulf Fw190 as far back as 1937 when the Nazi Air Ministry came up with a requirement for a "back-up" fighter plane to "supplement" the already proven Messerschmitt Bf 109.

The aviation firm of Focke-Wulf was chosen to undertake the project and its chief engineer, Kurt Tank, was given the task of coming up with a successful design.



It would take Tank and his design team almost two years before their prototype aircraft would be ready to be test flown in June 1939... just four months before the outbreak of the Second World War.

EARLY DAYS...

When the first "190" appeared its simple, straight forward lines and excellent handling characteristics impressed the Luftwaffe hierarchy.

There were however a series of major improvements that had to be incorporated into the design before the aircraft could be put into full production. Most of these involved increased engine power and... a better armament mix of machine guns and cannon.

In July and August 1941 several Luftwaffe squadrons operating in northern France converted over from Messerschmitt 109's to the new Fw190's.

With its superior speed, superb maneuverability and high rate of climb

the heavily-armed Fw190's soon gained a nickname by friend and foe alike... The "Wurger" or... "Butcherbird".

DEFENDER OF THE REICH

By mid 1944 a stream of Fw190's were leaving German factories. Over the previous two years a whole host of improvements had been continuously made to ensure the aircraft flew faster... packed a heavier punch... and could be

more adaptable for a variety of combat roles.

Unfortunately for the Germans all of these practical strides forward could not mask the huge reversals that they were suffering on all fronts... both in the East and the West. By this stage of the war the military initiative had moved decisively in the Allies' favour.

King & Country's latest warbird is a Focke-Wulf 190 A-7 in the distinctive markings of one of Germany's highest scoring aces... Major Heinz Bär. Our model represents one of the aircraft personally flown by Major Bär on a very special day... On the morning of 29 April, 1944, Major Bär was flying "Red 13" and leading 27 other Fw190's in their first attack against American bombers heading for the Reich's capital, Berlin. Within minutes Bär shot down a P-47 "Thunderbolt" and a four-



fledgling airline Lufthansa as a commercial pilot.

When the Nazis came to power in 1933 one of their first aims was to rapidly expand the Luftwaffe and for that they needed a lot more pilots. In 1935 Bär joined the Luftwaffe and, at first, trained as a bomber pilot before moving on to Junkers 52 transport aircraft. By this time he knew that what he really wanted to fly was... a fighter plane! As fighter pilots were the most sought-

Later during the Battle of France in May and June 1940 he added two more "kills".

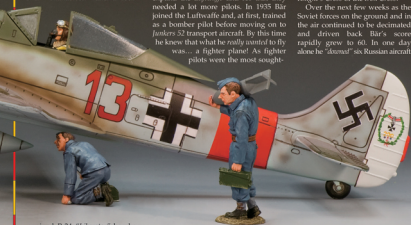
In the Battle of Britain that followed he shot down ten Hurricanes and Spitfires.

It was at this time that he himself was shot down for the first time over the English Channel but managed to bail out and be rescued by a German air/sea rescue launch.

ON THE EASTERN FRONT

By June 1941, following Germany's invasion of Russia, Bär and the rest of JG51 was transferred to the central sector of the Eastern Front. Within days Heinz Bär's total of "kills" had risen to 22. Another two weeks later it had jumped up to 27 and he was promoted to Oberleutnant (First Lieutenant) and received the Knight's Cross of the Iron Cross.

Over the next few weeks as the Soviet forces on the ground and in the air continued to be decimated and driven back Bär's score rapidly grew to 60. In one day alone he "downed" six Russian aircraft!



engined B-24 "Liberator" bomber. These last two victims brought his tally of "kills" to a staggering 202!

ABOUT HEINZ BÄR

Heinz Bär was born in the small town of Sommerfeld just outside Leipzig on 25 May, 1913. Born the son of a farming family the young Heinz had a driving urge to fly. By the late 1920's he had successfully become a glider pilot and was determined to join Germany's

after posts in Hermann Göring's new Luftwaffe the competition to become one was fiercely competitive. It was not until early in 1939 that Heinz Bär finally achieved his goal by joining the 1 Staffel, 1 Gruppe of Jagdgeschwader 51 (JG51)... the famous fighter wing led by Werner Mölders, one of the Third Reich's most famous airmen.

Soon after the outbreak of war, in 25 September 1939, Bär shot down a Curtiss P-36 Hawk of France's "Armée de L'Air".

Promotion followed... by the Autumn of 1941 he was now a Hauptmann (Captain). He was given command of JG51 in early 1942. In the Spring of 1942 he was transferred over to command JG77 supporting the hard fight for the Crimean Peninsula. Now his tally stood at an amazing 103 enemy aircraft.

NORTH AFRICA & THE MEDITERRANEAN

By the summer of 1942 JG77 was moved to another front... *North Africa and the Mediterranean*. Here Bär and his men took part in the air battles over Malta, Tunisia and Libya. It was here that he achieved his 149th victory... Eventually his total grew to 179 in this theatre and a recommendation was sent to Berlin that he should be awarded the "Oakleaves, Swords and Diamonds" to his Knight's Cross. Hermann Göring himself agreed to the first two but denied the "diamonds" as he personally disliked Bär and held a grudge against him.

With the defeat of the Axis forces in North Africa in 1943 another transfer took Bär to France in the summer of 1943. After a spell commanding a training unit early 1944 saw Heinz Bär (by now a Major), leading yet another *Jagdgeschwader* (JG1) in the desperate



defence of the Third Reich itself against the combined 24 hour assaults of the Royal Air Force and the U.S. 8th Air Force.

THE LAST BATTLES

As British and American bombers continued to hammer Hitler's Germany Bär's "kill" total also grew... On 22 April, 1944 he reached the 200 mark. At this time he flew two "personalized" Fw190's... "Red 23" and "Red 13".

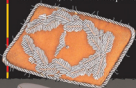
By mid March 1945 he had now converted over to the revolutionary new jet fighter the Messerschmitt Me262 and was beginning to "chalk-up" even more victories. On 29 April 1945, Heinz Bär claimed his last victim... another P-47 Thunderbolt.

His final wartime score was 220 enemy aircraft... British, American and Russian. This made him the eighth most successful Luftwaffe "ace" of the Second World War. His 16 "kills" flying the Me262 ranked him as the third highest "jet fighter ace" of the war.

Tragically after surviving more than 1,000 combat missions in several different theatres of war... Bailing out or crash-landing on no less than 18 occasions and... Being wounded 3 times... Heinz Bär was killed flying a light civilian aircraft in 1957! A sad end to a great pilot!



KING & COUNTRY
AUTHENTIC HAND-MADE HISTORY



KING & COUNTRY HEADQUARTERS

Suite 2301, 23rd Floor, No.3 Lockhart Road,
Wanchai, Hong Kong
Tel : (852) 2861 3450 Fax : (852) 2861 3886
E-mail: sales@kingandcountry.com

KING & COUNTRY SHOP

362, Pacific Place, 88 Queensway,
Hong Kong
Tel : (852) 2525 8803
Website : www.kingandcountry.com