



# Motor Pool Messenger

**NORTH JERSEY CHAPTER INC.**

**MILITARY VEHICLE COLLECTOR'S CLUB**

Volume 9 Number 10

Thanksgiving 1981

Editors: Harry & Marilyn Rimmer

FROM THE DRIVER'S SEAT: Recently, information and opinions have appeared in this column about problems in the MVCC, both on the National and local levels. This month I will try to bring the whole concept into perspective with a current example. A National Membership Directory is about to be published by the MVCC. The question is who, and what information will be listed in the Directory.

One of the main reasons for the demise of the old NMVCA was the failure of that group to publish a National Directory. Without a Directory, it was hard for the membership to feel like a club, and almost impossible to contact other members.

One of the main problems currently in the MVCC is member apathy. Members don't get involved in club projects, preferring to let others do the work and just read about what was done.

In the Summer 1981 issue of Supply Line a blank form was included so that members could be listed in a new National Directory, along with a list of the vehicles that they own. Less than 10% of the membership has responded with completed questionnaires by the December 1st. deadline.

The deadline has been extended, for how long is not certain. What is certain is that a National Directory cannot and will not be printed without the support of the entire membership. That support is shown by the mailing of a completed questionnaire.

Almost everyone likes to see their name in print. MVCC enthusiasts often go to great lengths to publicize what vehicles they proudly own. All a member has to do to have his name printed with a list of all his prized possessions is fill out the questionnaire and mail it in. So why haven't you done it?

## N.J.C. Night at the USO

Don't wait till the last minute to get your tickets for N.J.C. Night at the USO. Many of your friends signed up at the last meeting, so the number of available tickets is dwindling fast. Any tickets that remain unsold by the December 14th, N.J.C. meeting will be offered to members of other chapters. Don't expect to be able to purchase tickets at the door, this soiree is by reservation only. Contact Jules Feledy any night between 6 & 10 P.M. at (201) 267-5574.

## Trailer Party

A work party is scheduled for Sunday, Dec. 5, 1981 to winterize the Club storage trailer. If this is not accomplished, several newly acquired Club items may be ruined by exposure to adverse weather. The party will be held at the home of John Marko, Washington Corner Road, Bernardsville, N.J. Work will commence at approximately 10 A.M. after a brief competition to see how many bottles and cans of beer and sodas, and pounds of ice, can be packed into a WWII Water Trailer. Members will provide the beer, soda and ice, the Club will provide the Trailer. At approximately 4 P.M. or after the project is completed, a competition will be held to see how long it takes to drink the contents of the beer and soda that can be packed into a WWII Water Trailer. For directions, or other information, contact John Marko (201) 766-3784.

## CALENDAR OF EVENTS

Dec. 14	N.J.C. Chapter Meeting	Florham Park, N.J.
Jan. 11	N.J.C. Chapter Meeting	Florham Park, N.J.
Jan. 16	N.J.C. Night at the USO	Whippany, N.J.

## CLASSIFIED ADS

FOR SALE: 1945 MB Jeep- Missing engine, radiator, windshield, rear seat, trailer hitch, gas tank and speedometer. Has complete body and drive train, 4 split rims. Body has rust under driver and passengers feet, but tool compartment, gas tank well, and rest of the floor is almost excellent. 2 front seats and frames are NOS. \$995.00 Harold Ratzburg, P.O. Box 294, Essex Fells, N.J. 07021

FOR SALE: Personnel Heater Kit for MB or GPW Jeep, the 6 volt, gasoline fueled kit is the only COMPLETE kit I have ever seen. Includes all controls, ducts, defroster unit, wiring, tubing, radiator cover, engine primer, grommets, nuts, bolts, screws, manuals, etc. \$300.00 plus shipping. Harold Ratzburg, P.O. Box 294, Essex Fells, N.J. 07021

FOR SALE: Virgin Jeep Engine - 1945 MB NOS - complete from fan blades thru bell housing- includes starter, generator, carburator, distributor, clutch, etc. Still sealed for GI shipping. Guaranteed to not be frozen. \$1,750.00 plus shipping. Harold Ratzburg, Box 294, Essex Fells, N.J. 07021

FOR SALE: MB carburetor- brand new with 90 day guarantee \$100.00. Josef Lipson, 1809 East Fifth Street, Brooklyn, N.Y. 11223 (212) 998-1576.

FOR SALE: 5/8" Tow cables, 25' long, 1 large hook \$20-35. / (3) M416 1/4 ton trailer bodies, very good condition \$125-150./ Large lifting eyes or lunettes \$10.00 each. Pete Shaw (201) 377-0421, days.

FOR SALE: Jerry Can Pocket Lighter - O.D. solid die cast body - Big Hit at National Convention \$5.50 postpaid in ConUS. Beachwood Canvas Works, 153 Atlantic City Blvd., Beachwood, N.J. 08722. (201) 240-3724 mornings.

FOR SALE: 1940 CCKW Cab and Chassis, Body rough. Many extra parts. John Marko, (201) 766-3784.

FOR SALE: Half ton Command car left front doors (side curtains) \$25.00 each NOS. Pete Berendsen (201) 966-1862.

FOR SALE: Aircraft camera - NOS, lacks lens. Harold Ratzburg, P.O. Box 294, Essex Fells, N.J. 07021.

FOR SALE: M-715 Excellent condition \$3,500. M-715 w/Chevy V8, \$3,500. M-725 Excellent condition \$4,000. Also all types of Military water pumps rebuilt. Parts for 3/4 ton and M series GMC also available. Marc Ziegler, (201) 263-1923, after 6 P.M.

WANTED: MB or GPW Passenger seat, front bumper, horn, top bow assembly, complete windshield, speedometer and all gauges and switches. Also

FOR SALE: 1944 MB, runs good, hood, fenders, grill in good shape, has 5' plow and pump. If this is your ad, next time be sure to list your name in text of the ad.

# French honoring Jersey hero of '44

By BILL RILEY

There are many kinds of war heroes. Some are recognized for the number of men they kill or their gallantry in battle.

Others, perhaps not as frequently, are recalled for the saving of lives, their kindness and dedication.

Such is the case of the late Robert Henderson Bennett, an Army major from Aberdeen being honored Saturday by the French city of Sarreguemines, which is naming a square after him.

The ceremony will be attended by his widow Mildred who still lives in Aberdeen; two of his sons, Peter of Clinton, and Richard of New York.

Returning to France, will be several members of the civil affairs unit Major Bennett commanded when it supervised the civilian population in the region around Sarreguemines. The unit was in the city — located just a few miles from the German border — from December 1944 until March 1945, during Hitler's last-ditch efforts to repel invading Allied troops.

"It's gratifying after all these years to know that his hard work, effort and devotion to duty have not been forgotten," Mrs. Bennett stated, noting she expects the dedication to be "a very moving experience."

"I don't know if I'll be up to saying anything or not," she said.

One of the speakers at the ceremony will be Godfrey (Jeff) Ettlinger of Hastings-on-Hudson, N.Y., who served under Bennett as a sergeant and later a lieutenant at Sarreguemines. Alan Fowler of Pittsburgh, a captain in Bennett's unit, and Werner Hausmann, who served Bennett when he was

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Maj. Robert Bennett  
*'Memory of two people'*

a teenager in 1944 and later became an American citizen, also plan to attend.

Military units from the U.S. and French armies will participate, along with the mayor of Sarreguemines and the governor of the region.

Bennett was a prominent lawyer in Brooklyn and, at age 35, was serving as the youngest vice president of the Brooklyn Trust Co. when he enlisted in 1943. He was commissioned a captain in the Civil Affairs branch and assigned to the Seventh Army's Allied Military Government section.

Before the war, Sarreguemines was a village of about 15,000, but by late 1944, it was described in press accounts as a "living nightmare, devastated and nearly dead."

Patton's Third Army liberated the small town on Dec. 9 after four days of vicious street fighting which left about 11,000 citizens surviving in the rubble. To escape nearly constant shelling, thousands lived in caves on the outskirts of Sarreguemines. Water and power were non-existent, food was at a premium and medical supplies were impossible to obtain.

Bennett, along with 11 American GIs, two French liaison officers and Hausmann, a member of the French underground whom Bennett made an unofficial "private," rolled into Sarreguemines on Dec. 21 during one of the worst winters in European history.

During the next few weeks, his comrades recall, Bennett moved among Sarreguemines' citizens, "prodding, nagging and encouraging." He commandeered every available truck and set up a "gypsy caravan" to ferry supplies from depots in the town of Nancy.

"We admired Major Bennett's fine efforts and never asked him where the vehicles came from," Ettlinger recalled. "We just put them in line."

On Christmas Eve 1944, Bennett and his men were faced with another problem. The Seventh Army's XV Corps began making troop withdrawals from inside Germany. Villagers near the front lines interpreted this as an American retreat and began streaming toward Sarreguemines, sometimes fleeing into mine fields.

To prevent mass casualties and panic in other villages, Bennett took control of the evacuation effort and absorbed the refugees into the population of the town. Included was the evacuation of 2,800 people from a limestone quarry where they had taken refuge.

Sarreguemines "was cold and black as hell without power," remembers Virgil Dahlgren, a sergeant who served as clerk of Bennett's unit. He notes his commander had "absolutely no fear for his own safety" when summoned to some errand of mercy.

By January 1945, the German threat was receding, and under Bennett's direction, Sarreguemines began a rebirth. The water system was repaired, medical assistance was made available and in early February, the town's power was restored.

In March, as Bennett and his men prepared to leave the area, the gratitude of Sarreguemines was expressed for the first time. During ceremonies at the town's Palace of Justice, the mayor presented Bennett with a history of the town, hand copied on gold leaf paper by one of the school children.

Bennett, in a speech reported in the region's newspaper, praised the courage of the populace.

"We have read of the glories of France, but we really had to work among you to find that the true character of the French people is far greater than what we have read in history books. You have shown us the living proof of why we have come to fight — and perhaps to die... We must leave now, but we will share with you forever a beautiful memory of two peoples," he said.

Just a month later, on April 17, 1945, Bennett was killed in a road ambush.

France no less treasures the memory of the American officer who gave life back to a city.

The L.I. Trail ... or How To Survive In The Wilderness

by Barbara Janquitto

What would incline a small group of seemingly sane MVCC persons to forgo the modern comforts of home, such as flush toilets, running water, and the electric blanket and brave the wilds of Eastern Long Island?

Perhaps the crisp clear weather that greeted the Sat. AM arrivals to the campsite (at least we were smart enough to wait for Friday's rains to abate.)

Or maybe the scenic trail runs with the sloshy mud and those impossible (almost) hills,

Or the fall foliage, Suffolk County is lovely this time of year... Trail run leader Stan Poole in 1/2 Ton WC led us to the top of one of the higher elevations where we were treated to an exceptionally clear view of L.I. sound and the shores of Conn.

It must be the gourmet campfire cooking, the aroma of bar-b-que chicken, beef stew,... (Some folks like to go all G.I. and even the C-rations were tasty when hunger prevails)

Or the cheery blaze of a large bonfire to ward off the chill of the frosty L.I, evening.

Among the survivors:

Stan Poole & Co. with their "staff car" and 1/2 ton WC

George & Deb Filchak with MB Jeep

Dan & Barb Janquitto with MB sporting G.I. litter carrier kit.

Pete DeBella earned the "try harder" award with his MB frame and running gear with the big tires and the roll bar cage-a real show stopper!

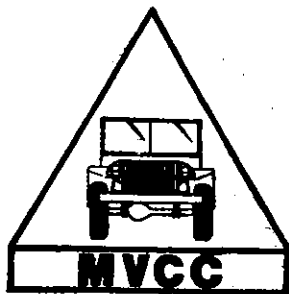
We expect to see it fully restored by next spring!

Bob Costello with M151

The Shultz family with XM211.

Ted & Steve Bromage showed us all how to camp with style in their nicely restored 30's vintage Gilkie camper trailer.

120 Summers Avenue  
Piscataway, New Jersey 08854



George Schultz  
47 K Bellows Lane  
Towaco, N.J. 07080

First Class

