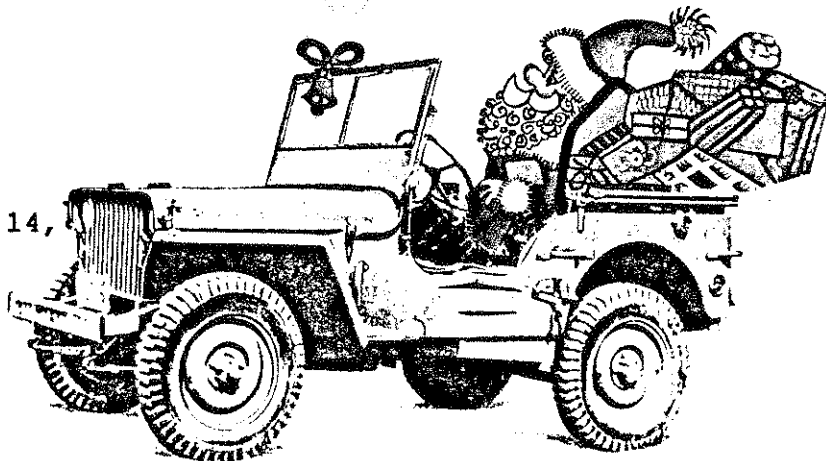


MOTOR POOL MESSENGER!!!

MEETING == The next Meeting will be December 14, 1992 at SEPTEMBERS. Usual time.



Note: We will have our annual Mid Winter Pizza Feast at Pistilli's on January 11, 1993.

Dues are Due again. As usual \$10. Send a check to Peter Berendsen in the enclosed SASE. Advise me if there is any correction needed in your address or phone number. Send as soon as possible so that your name will appear on the new membership and mailing lists. Members who have shown vehicles in five or more parades this year are dues-free. If you qualify this is noted at the bottom of this page.

In February we will send out the 1993 membership list with this news letter. Rather than repeated mailings of membership lists, we will list new members names, addresses and phone numbers in this newsletter so that you can copy them onto your annual list.

MARK YOUR CALENDER!! Pa's. Red Ball Express Chapter is having their Second Annual Winter indoor Flea Market February 6, 1993 at Stroudsburg, Pa. Come to the next meeting for details.

GOODIES FOR SALE

For Adoption: Friendly M170 looking for loving, caring home. Mostly complete, disassembled. Make offer. John Marko or message machine at 908-766-3784.

Wanted: Books on Military Architecture, Fortifications, Buildings, Construction or Engineering. Doug Stober - 201-543-9355.

Wanted: Hard Top for M-352A 6x6 truck. Contact A.H. Axelrad 201-884-0051 after 6pm.

THURSDAY, OCTOBER 29, 1992

Surplus goods catalog gives the real lowdown

The Associated Press

WASHINGTON — Many consumers are being cheated by groups falsely claiming to have inside information on how to get surplus government property at rock-bottom prices, the General Services Administration said yesterday.

To combat the schemes, the GSA has published a free guide that lists the federal agencies that sell used goods, the types of items each offers and how to buy them.

But be forewarned, there are no \$44 Jeeps or \$1 yachts, said GSA Administrator Richard Austin.

"Goods are usually sold at fair market value," he said. They are sold at auctions around the country which are widely advertised locally.

The new guide tells what is avail-

able from various federal agencies.

It is full of phone numbers on how to get more information and it warns readers not to be fooled by those who advertise they can provide catalogs of goods for a fee.

The free guide is available by writing Federal Sales Guide, Pueblo, Colo. 81009. □

Let's Give Our Tanks To People Who Like To Play War Games

* * *
Armored Cars Come Roaring
Out of America's Garages;
'Drive One Before You Die'

By ERIK LARSON

Staff Reporter of THE WALL STREET JOURNAL

PORTOLA VALLEY, Calif. — A tank roars from Jacques Littlefield's garage, with Mr. Littlefield's green-helmeted head bobbing from the driver's hatch. Two small lizards leap for cover, but a visiting reporter holds his ground, doing his best to direct Mr. Littlefield out of his garage with minimal destruction.

"There's a fire extinguisher inside in case anything weird happens," shouts Mr. Littlefield when his M24 Chaffee tank has cleared the building. "Now why don't you hop aboard. It's hard to hear, so if you make any loud sound, even if you just go 'woo woo' from excitement, I'll assume it's an emergency and stop."

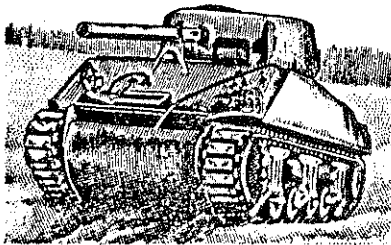
Suddenly two heads ricochet off the hatch rims; two hearts swell with the hubris that comes from rumbling across the landscape in a thick lozenge of armor. Soon the turret is swiveling, the cannon barrel rising, the scenery tilting at crazy angles.

The usual, here on Mr. Littlefield's ranch.

Behind Closed Doors

Take a close look at your neighbor's garage, America. From Birmingham, Ala., to Puyallup, Wash., ordinary Joes — some veterans, some not — are buying and restoring their own personal tanks. A prominent Washington lobbyist owns at least seven, including three Shermans. An Indiana judge owns five. Tom Clancy's wife got him one for his birthday. Where there is one tank owner, there are others, galvanized to purchase theirs by the simple revelation that just about anyone can own such machines, sometimes for the price of a new car. With a federal license, you can arm your tank with live cannons and machine guns. If your tank has rubber tracks, you may even be able to register it with your local motor-vehicle department.

"There's no difference between owning a tank and a Ferrari," explains David



World War II Sherman Tank

W. Uhrig, a private tank broker in Chilli-cothe, Ohio, "except four inches of armor."

The trade in private armor is surprisingly brisk. Would-be tank commanders scan the sale ads in Supply Line, published by the 10,000-member Military Vehicle Preservation Association. If you'd like a Soviet tank, you can order one now through Tanks A Lot Inc., Pennsauken, N.J. Mr. Uhrig, the tank broker, recently ran an ad in Shotgun News offering a Nazi tank — to be specific, a *Sturmgeschütz Ausführung G mit der Stuk 40 L/48* — for \$145,000.

He got five serious inquiries, including one offer now pending.

The Pentagon sold lots of tanks to civilians after World War II. In 1960, however, it got stingy and barred the sale of intact tanks to consumers, thus unintentionally ensuring robust prices for vintage armor. Mr. Uhrig, for example, bought a World War II Stuart tank for \$500 in 1973 and immediately resold it for

\$1,200. Subsequent owners restored it. Acting as a broker he sold it twice more, most recently for \$52,000.

The demand doesn't surprise him. "Tanks are fun," he says. "You've got to drive one before you die, that's all there is to it."

America's civilian tankers tend to be law-abiding citizens. "The number of instances of tank warfare among street gangs is fortunately zero," says Jack Killorin, spokesman for the federal Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco & Firearms, to which civilian tankers must apply if they want live guns. Tanks may pose the greatest hazards to their owners. One tanker took a sharp turn only to have a hatch cover fall on its owner's unprotected head, fracturing his skull. Another time, one of his tanks broke loose and crashed through a wall. Tanks are notorious too for causing divorces. "Oh yes," says Jacques Littlefield. "It happens to a lot of guys. It happened to me. You get a tank, you get divorced. You get divorced, you lose the tank to pay the settlement."

Armor can become an obsession. Mr. Littlefield remembers checking out a book on tanks in third grade. While an undergraduate at Stanford University, he built a 180-pound remote-control tank complete with working flame-thrower. He bought his 450-acre ranch expressly to indulge his passion, and now owns 15 tanks, 50 military vehicles in all. The huge 1976 merger of General Electric and Utah International, founded by his grandfather, gave him the buying power.

On a walk through his parts barn (one of seven ranch buildings devoted to his collection), he lovingly points out hard-to-find components: assorted missile racks, air-coolers and tank engines. An armored car transmission remains sealed in its original World War II shipping case. "That's the kind of thing that makes your little heart skip a beat," he says.

The passion to collect old warhorses, left unchecked, can become extreme. Mark Sunday, owner of Sunday's Vans in Kenosha, Wis., owns 16 tanks and more than 100 military vehicles in all. Now he wants a submarine, specifically the decommissioned U.S.S. *Swordfish* last used in the

"You have to understand," he says. "There is an element of ego involved here."

Tankers put their vehicles to a host of worthy uses. They tool around in parades and stage occasional mock amphibious landings. They lease them to Hollywood for such movies as "Red Dawn" and "The Blues Brothers." Mostly they like to form convoys.

Thomas Gould, a Grand Island, N.Y., collector and part-owner of a chemical company, once mounted his own 30-vehicle armored column and set out in a line for a Rochester air show.

This was great fun.

The temperature was 105. Plagued by breakdowns, the 60-mile trip took 12 hours, so long that air show officials dispatched a squadron of World War II fighters to look for Mr. Gould and his friends.

When the fighters found the column, they gleefully strafed it with propane machine guns.

Mr. Gould also provides three armored cars for use by regional law-enforcement officials — on the condition that he drives them — for use in battering down the doors of fortified crack houses. "I've got two-inch armor on all sides," he says. "It's probably the safest part of the day for me."

Pat Thelander of Oroville, Calif., put

her late husband's collection of armor and other military vehicles to more somber use. In Bob Thelander's last hours, he made a request: He wanted to be hauled to his final resting place in the last vehicle he had restored, a World War II ambulance.

When the sad day arrived, the ambulance had a flat tire and wouldn't start. At last, however, it picked up Mr. Thelander and set out for the crematorium in Paradise, Calif., some 20 miles away, mostly uphill.

Halfway to Paradise, the radiator sprang a leak. The driver fixed it. The procession advanced. The radiator boiled over. "We figured he was just laughing away at us trying to get him there," says Mrs. Thelander.

Now Mrs. Thelander wants to sell two dozen vehicles. She won't sell the ambulance, but she did sell her husband's beloved tank to a friend who had lost his own tank to divorce. She knew the friend planned a loving restoration. Still, it was a dark day when the flatbed truck winched that big old machine aboard.

"Well, I'll tell you," Mrs. Thelander says, her voice wavering. "It really broke my heart to see it going out of the yard. Because that was something Bob always wanted, a tank."