



MOTOR POOL MESSENGER

the official monthly newsletter of the
MILITARY TRANSPORT ASSOCIATION

visit us online at www.MTAofNJ.org

Issue NOVEMBER 2020

Editor: Dave Steinert

THEN



NOW



In This
Issue...

THEN AND NOW!

On the Cover: June 1944: Boats full of US troops wait to leave Weymouth to take part in Operation Overlord. 5 April 2014: A view of the harbour of the English town today. This location was used as a launching place for Allied troops participating in the invasion of Nazi-occupied France on D-day. *Photographs by Galerie Bilderwelt/Getty (THEN) and Peter Macdiarmi/Getty (NOW).*

THEN & NOW...

Whenever I have the opportunity, I enjoy leafing through a copy of the magazine *After the Battle* at the local Barnes & Noble. For those that are not familiar with the magazine, it is a magazine that is published in the United Kingdom whose content contains articles and photos of battlefields across Europe that were fought during WWII. What is unique about this magazine is that in each monthly issue they publish photographs that were taken during the actual battle and based on landmarks in the original photographs, the editors try to find the exact current location as it appears today. A “then & now” perspective that could sometimes look exactly like it did over 70 years ago, *or could look completely different!* I recently received emails from MTA members Bill McKelvey and Harold Ratzburg that are good examples of “Then & Now”.



June 1944: American craft of all styles pictured at Omaha Beach, Normandy, during the first stages of the Allied invasion. 7 May 2014: A view of the beach near Colleville-sur-Mer, France. *Photographs by Popperfoto/Getty (THEN) and Peter Macdiarmid/Getty (NOW).*

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ATTENTION MEMBERS!
THE NEXT MTA MEETING WILL BE HELD ON THURSDAY, NOVEMBER 5th AT 7PM AT THE WHIPPANY AMERICAN LEGION, 13 LEGION PLACE, WHIPPANY
We will be meeting upstairs, food at 6pm, meeting at 7pm.

Bring your face masks!



6 June 1944: Troops of the 3rd Canadian Infantry Division land at Juno Beach on the outskirts of Bernières-sur-Mer on D-day. 5 May 2014: A view of the seafront and beach in Normandy today. 340 Canadian soldiers lost their lives in the battle for the beachhead. Photographs by Galerie Bilderwelt/Getty (THEN) and Peter Macdiarmid/Getty (NOW).



1944: A French armoured column passing through Sainte-Mère-Église receives a warm welcome from its inhabitants. 7 May 2014: A view of the high street today. Photographs by Popperfoto/Getty (THEN) and Peter Macdiarmid/Getty (NOW).

Military Transport Association

MTA Meeting Minutes – October 1st, 2020 at the American Legion, Whippany, NJ

AI opened the meeting with the Pledge and Moment of Silence. He then requested everyone wear their mask and social distance while meeting at the Legion Hall in accordance with Legion policy and most important, to protect all members of the MTA Family. AI asked for a motion to approve the Aug 5, 2020 Minutes. **Gary Schultz** made the motion to approve the Aug 2020 Minutes, **Pat Dolan** seconded. With the new by-laws having been reviewed and published for the required 30 days. AI requested a motion to approve the By-Laws. Motion was made by **Jim Mescher**, seconded by **Dennis Dutcher**. Motion was put to membership for a vote but only 19 members were in attendance. A quorum (20) was needed to approve the motion. One more member arrived late, which gave us our quorum. The motion carried and the By-Laws were approved. They will be posted on the MTA website.

Financial Report

Aug 31, 2020

Beginning Balance:	\$47,639.88
Income:	86.33
Expenditures:	<u>(600.03)</u>
Ending Balance:	\$47,126.18

Sep 30, 2020

Beginning Balance:	\$47,126.18
Income:	122.10
Expenditures:	<u>(2,581.74)</u>
Ending Balance:	\$44,666.54

Donations

\$500 donation to the Fire Department for the use of Fireman's Field for the picnic. For 2021, **Tim Swanick** reports he would be booking the field for our meetings once the temperature was above 45 and the date for the Picnic as well.

Liability Insurance

AI informed the club that he had acquired both the D&O and basic liability insurance. Premium payments (provided by AI) (\$1300 for 2M for D&O) and (\$600 for 1M liability)

Events

Al mentioned that Clifton has cancelled their Veteran's Day parade in November!

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MTA Family Picnic – September 19th

Fireman's Field, Rockway, NJ

We had a great picnic, with 43 people and 13 vehicles were on display, from Humvees and motorcycles to Jeeps and ambulances. Hoods up! Perfect Fall weather and great camaraderie. Let the minutes reflect that we are changing **Jim Mescher's** first name to Rich, because Al can't remember his name. Al thanked the Food Committee: **Jim Mescher** did the grilling—dogs and burgers. **Jeff Bennett** did the delicious, tri-color corn. **Anna Cave** made her awesome cupcakes and milk chocolate brownies, **Dennis Dutcher** baked his triple

chocolate gooey brownies and **Anita Roberts** made the pound cake. A variety of sweets and fruit, as well as a Box of Joe was donated by **Fred and Sue Schlesinger** and **Tim and Jean Swanick**. The picnic also provided an off-roading experience with good times for all. **Mark Mellini** decided to drive his Al's M38A1 into a creek bed, but left the muffler on the bank. *Ouch!!*

Al asked the membership to think of what we can do to maintain interest during this trying time. Al asked for suggestions and for us to think about it. About using our vehicles, for overnight trail rides, bowling, movie night, museums. There was a good suggestion of our Club attending car shows in the area and exhibiting. Al is looking for a volunteer to help organize (thank you **Pat Tipton** and **Gary Schultz** for volunteering). **Members should give Al a call or send him an email with their suggestions.**

As always, **Pat Dolan** gave an excellent OMS 7 report on the different types of helmets used by both the Army and the Marines, during US wars and engagements. He pointed out the different exterior finishes and interior caps and which helmets made re-appearances in different wars, with some helmets still in use from WWII.

Motion to adjourn the meeting was made by Jim Mescher and seconded by Pat Dolan.

Respectfully submitted by Anita Roberts

THE FALL 2020 MTA TRAIL RIDE
By Gary Schultz

What a beautiful day in all that attended! Epic MTA Trail Ride! Those of who live here in this part of North Jersey, Sussex County now this is the jewel of the State...Sixteen MV's from a Harley Davidson, a contingent of different era Jeeps to a 5-Ton on this epic ride through the rolling hills of Sussex County with a perfect explosion of Fall foliage color in full bloom! Beautiful weather, good breakfast, friendly comradery and no need for any road-side assistance!

A big shout out to Pat Tipton for pulling the ride together today!





“Knock ‘Em All Down”: The American Tank-Infantry Team in Urban Combat-Part V

Jim Swanick

During the fall of 1944 American formations encountered heavily built-up urban centers for the first time in the Second World War. Far behind the primary advance William S. Simpson’s Ninth US Army isolated and assaulted the port city of Brest at the tip of the Breton peninsula; a few weeks later, First Army enveloped and reduced Aachen, the ancient seat of the Holy Roman Empire. Urban warfare was a phenomenon that American formations adapted to with impressive speed and outstanding results. Army doctrine regarding street fighting was well-developed, outlining the difficulties of fighting in built-up areas in detail and offering solutions to many of these tactical problems. It failed, however, to specifically address combat in cities, limiting its input on the matter to making a series of vague presumptions regarding potential objectives. It also failed to appreciate the necessity of employing tank-infantry teams within the city- a deficiency that experience would soon correct.



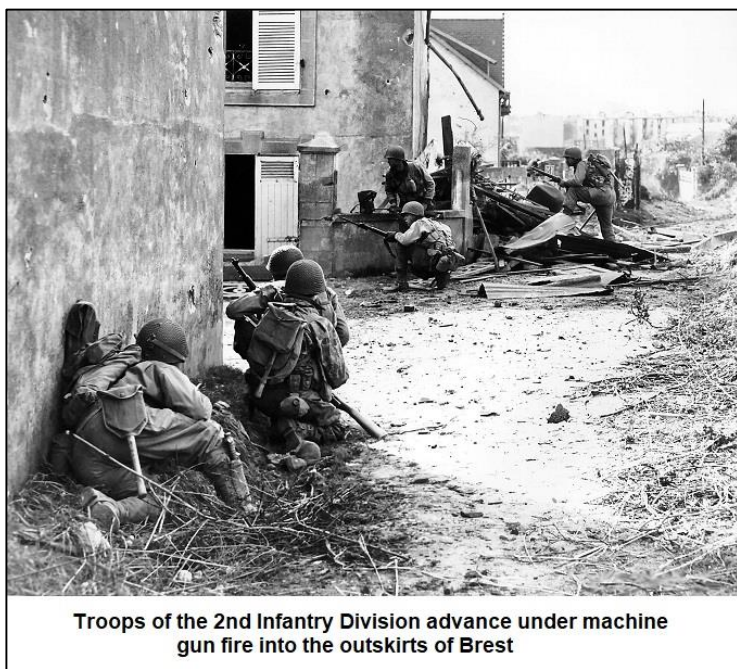
...the end to a perfect day!



A US tank destroyer fires on a German pillbox in Brest

Urban warfare is an animal all in its own. The battlefield transforms into a three-dimensional space in which threats are generated from all directions, whether it be up, down, forward, back, left, or right. For the defender the city is a dream. Buildings provide good cover and excellent concealment, combining with streets, avenues, squares and parks to give the defender a plethora of choices in which to place his strongpoints. By emplacing a minimum of automatic and anti-tank weapons to cover a series of street corners the defender can create a killing zone that extends for several blocks in several directions, incurring severe casualties on the attacker and delaying or outright stopping the advance. The natural defensibility of a block or neighborhood can be augmented considerably by utilizing strongly built buildings as strongpoints and by the installation of roadblocks, mines, booby traps, or purposeful demolition or firing of buildings. Cellars and upper floors provide the defender with firing positions and ambush points by machine guns or rocket launchers, while sewers, tunnels, and subways constitute means of subterranean travel both laterally and into the enemy’s rear. Back yards provide

protected positions for mortar teams, whose high-trajectory fires are precious in the city, and the compartmentalization of the battlefield lends itself well to positioning necessary supplies far forward, making it possible to shut off utilities in front line sectors so as to deprive the attackers of their use. For the attacker, meanwhile, the city is a riddle to be solved, combining the worst characteristics of heavy fortification and woodland fighting with special ingredients unique to urban fighting. Because bunched buildings of varying heights diminish the accuracy and concentration of arcing trajectory fires, defensive positions in built-up areas are capable of absorbing considerable attention from field artillery without incurring extensive destruction or casualties. Furthermore, once a position is reduced to ruin its defensibility can still remain quite high as a fighting position, and as combat in cities is inherently *close combat* it becomes very dangerous to call for supporting fires once forward elements are in contact with the enemy.



Troops of the 2nd Infantry Division advance under machine gun fire into the outskirts of Brest

Rubble caused by bombardment or purposeful demolition can block streets, preventing access by armor and vehicles and funneling the advance into new kill zones. Tanks, with their reduced visibility, are especially vulnerable in cities, and as a result they can only be employed in tank-infantry teams or from areas where they can be protected. Infiltration effected via sewers, subways, tunnels, back yards, rooftops, or alleys is a constant threat- its only guard is to conduct a methodical and thorough advance in which all buildings and avenues of transit are physically secured through house-to-house fighting. To fight through a city as the attacker without incurring excessive loss requires inordinate amounts of manpower, firepower, ingenuity, or a mixture of all three. Facing a distinct lack of manpower at Aachen and ammunition shortages in both cities the 1st and 2d Divisions turned to a prudent but overwhelming use of firepower mixed with battlefield improvisation to accomplish their goals.

The siege of Brest represented the US Army's first experience in large-scale urban warfare. VIII Corps first isolated the city by capturing surrounding high ground and terrain features, and once this had been completed sent the 2d

Division in to wrest it from the Germans. First Army acted in similar fashion a month later, orchestrating an envelopment of Aachen by VII and XIX Corps before handing over responsibility for reduction of the city to the 1st Division. This had the effect of cutting both garrisons off from the outside world, preventing them from receiving reinforcements or supply and trapping them. In both cases the garrison had to be destroyed, as Brest was desperately needed for its deep-water port and First Army did not have the manpower to bypass and contain Aachen.



American soldiers fight their way through Aachen

It is unclear whether lessons learned at Brest were incorporated into 1st Division planning at Aachen, but both battles were fought in very similar fashion. Faced with a constricted battlespace, attacking formations were assigned extremely small frontages dedicating entire rifle companies to one or two blocks. Within this scheme rifle platoons were assigned to clear certain rows of buildings, with rifle squads taking responsibility for clearing single houses or securing streets by fire.

On occasion enemy defenses commanded that these frontages be reduced even further, with platoons taking buildings and squads individual rooms. Conventional maps fell out of favor, replaced by hand-drawn schematics of a company's objective area for the day that included numbering and labeling systems identifying individual houses as the targets of rifle platoons and squads. Phase lines were constituted by prominent buildings and streets and attempts to maintain a uniform advance were discarded. Wire communications usurped radio sets due to the difficulty of getting transmissions past surrounding buildings, and the advance stopped at night so that units could reorganize and rebut German attempts at infiltration. It was rapidly identified that all streets were covered by fire from multiple automatic weapons and the occasional antitank gun, and so to facilitate forward movement in the face of such fire the infantry decided to avoid it altogether, moving through conjoined cellars and calling on engineers or utilizing bazookas to blast holes in the walls of buildings. This latter technique, referred to as "mouseholing", was often done at night to create jump-off positions for the next morning's attack and proved excellent in keeping the advance moving with the added bonus that the explosion often stunned German defenders on the other side of the wall. The need for direct fire support from armor and

artillery was quickly realized, and so tanks, tank destroyers, and self-propelled 155mm guns entered the city to aid the riflemen in its reduction.

The "final form" of the urban tank-infantry team was based on exuding an enormous amount of firepower, and it included more than just the rifle squad and individual tank or tank destroyer. Heavy machine guns were emplaced to fire down streets and protect the flanks of the attack, while mortar teams displaced to fire on enemy positions with both HE and WP and provide smokescreens. Antitank guns were kept on hand should they be needed for direct or antitank fires. During the attack, the machine guns and mortars opened fire to fix the enemy in place and pin him down, opening him up to being destroyed by the assault teams.



The Battle for Aachen

The assault tactics adopted by rifle companies in the city were similar to those utilized in attacking heavy fortifications and fighting in dense woods. Platoons discarded the squad organization in favor of forming an assault and a support group; the former, armed with at least two BAR's and a bazooka and supported by flamethrowers and demolition teams, conducted the assault while the latter provided cover by fire and kept watch for counterthrusts. Some outfits formed searching and covering parties out of rifle squads. In fighting through rooms GI's reconnoitered by fire, preferring to precede their entrance with grenades. Every room was considered occupied. When possible buildings were cleared from the top down, which was much safer than fighting from the ground up; when this was not possible the floor that the team entered on was cleared first, followed by floors above and then by floors and basements below. Holes were often made or blasted in ceilings and floors so that part of the assault team could pin the enemy in place by fire while other riflemen prepared to assault through the doors or windows of the room. Armor, bazookas, antitank guns and self-propelled 155mm guns were used to blast strongpoints, emplacements, and buildings in order to eliminate or neutralize the enemy. Tanks and tank destroyers remained just behind the forward assault elements, protected by security teams of four riflemen. Like the infantry they

reconnoitered by fire, blasting cellars, storm drains, pillboxes, windows, and high points with machine guns and main cannon alike in an effort to destroy unseen enemies. They took up positions at intersections, firing down all streets with machine guns and cannons to suppress the enemy as the attacking riflemen moved from one block to the next. Although the role of armor within the city was quite simple, its effect was extraordinary, as it provided attacking infantry with the firepower that they needed to batter their way through the streets without excessive loss. German urban warfare doctrine held that well-built structures be used as strongpoints due to their natural durability- as a result, the firepower of the tanks and tank destroyers was an absolute requirement to reduce each position without unnecessary casualties. Experience showed that even this was insufficient on occasion, as self-propelled 155mm guns were used to apply point-blank direct fire on buildings in both Brest and Aachen. The presence of combat engineers was also critical, as they provided the assault troops with the demolitions needed to "mousehole" buildings and cleared mines, booby traps, debris, and roadblocks.

CLASSIFIEDS

To add or remove listings from the Classifieds, please email Dave Steinert at dsteinert@mtaofnj.org, or call 973-347-9091.

For Sale: Two 1952 Dodge M37s. One restored and in good condition, \$4500. Another 1952 M37 unrestored, \$3200. I also have many Jeep and M37 parts for sale, call Tom Weaver @ 973-627-9448.

FOR SALE - M725 \$3,800.00, Ammo trailer \$350, 1957 DAF 1- ton troop carrier. Rare, not many of these around \$6,000, M109A3-shop van with benches and shelves. Good shape \$4,500. Call or text Jude Meehan 732-433-3359.

Parts for Sale- 230 CI M725 motor, ran when pulled, burns oil \$200, M725 litter racks-best offer, M725 Rear doors, some dents, no rust \$200 for the pair, M715 windshield frame, minor surface rust \$150, NOS in packing Southwind heater for M725 possible M-43 best offer, M37 windshield frame outer only \$75, M725-M715 rims with lock rings -make offer. Many more items available, too many to list. Call for more information. Call Matt Ziegler, cell 973-445-3890, email : Matrziegler@gmail.com

For Sale: 1964 Ford M151, current Odometer: 34252. Currently registered and inspected in New York State. Comes with Army radio, mounted machine gun (disabled firearm) w/ mount and cartridges, trailer, plastics to go over vehicle (no photo included, but available at request) as well as two large boxes of extra parts. Vehicle has always been garage kept. Buyer is responsible for pick-up or to arrange for shipment for out of town sales. This vehicle has not been cut. Asking \$18,000. Located in Pine Island NY. Please contact Lodzia - 845-258-4493 or Vince - 845-728-9191.

For Sale: Replica 81mm mortar. M1 tube and bi-pod. M4 sight. Has incorrect M23A1 two-piece base (Nam era?). The tube is original with 1 pin cross welded and a dummy cup welded on. Comes with one practice round (inert) in a newer tared tube. And a wooden ammo crate. Asking \$3000.00 . Will take a M35a2 ring mount in trade. Kirk Stinson 862-209-0933

Military Transport Association

P.O. Box 391
Budd Lake, NJ 07828

The next MTA monthly meeting
will be held on **Thursday, November 5th**
7:00PM at the **Whippany American**
Legion Hall, Legion Place, Whippany, NJ



a chapter of the Military Vehicle Preservation Association

The Military Transport Association is dedicated to the education and preservation of historic to present military vehicles. Members enjoy restoring, displaying, and operating military vehicles of all types, from bicycles to tanks.

But trucks and Jeeps aren't all we do! Join today and participate with us at our annual Toys for Tots train ride and toy drive, help at our annual Swap Meet at the Sussex County Fairgrounds, or attend our special events for veterans. Our lively, informative monthly meetings are held in Whippany, NJ.

You do not have to own a military vehicle to be part of this exciting and active hobby - you just need a desire to do your part in keeping our military history alive. All you need to join the MTA is to fill out the the form below, include your dues payment, and mail it to the address below. Alternately, you can give your form and dues to any MTA member you meet at any of our events.

for more information, visit our website at www.MTAofNJ.org

Name: _____

Street: _____

City: _____ State: _____ ZIP: _____

Phone: (____) _____ - _____ (cell preferred)

Email: _____

MTA Membership Level: Single (\$30) Family (\$35)

Are you a member of MVPA? Yes No

Military vehicles owned: _____

Return form with \$____ annual dues and \$____ donation to:

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P.O. Box 391
Budd Lake, NJ 07828

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